

BEYOND THE SPIRIT OF BANDUNG

Philosophies of National Unity:
Secular or Religious?



Frans Dokman & Antoinette Kankindi (Eds.)

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Edited by

Frans Dokman and Antoinette Kankindi

**Nijmegen Studies in Development
and Cultural Change**

edited by

Frans Wijsen & Toon van Meijl

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Beyond the Spirit of Bandung

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In a way, 'Beyond the Spirit of Bandung. Philosophies of National Unity: Secular or Religious?' is a testament to the principles of the 1955 Bandung Conference viewed from today's reality. In this book, you will read what different authors – from Africa, Asia and Europe – are telling us about the principles of the Bandung Conference and their contemporary relevance. Thanks to the publisher, Radboud University Press, access to this book is free online.

With gratitude,
Antoinette Kankindi
Frans Dokman

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Introduction

ANTOINETTE KANKINDI AND FRANS DOKMAN

At a time when talk of a third world war, quite superficially given the seriousness of the matter, is gaining traction to describe new global geopolitical tensions, it could sound naïve to direct attention toward the Bandung Conference, a 1955 geopolitical event. On that occasion, it was a very important, especially for the so-called Third World Countries – a category coined at that conference. That importance still motivates a number of scholars to reflect upon what happened to the ideals of this momentous conference. In fact, in 2020, the University of Dar es Salaam and the Radboud University Nijmegen had planned a conference commemorating its 65th anniversary. The conference did not take place due to constraints related to the Covid-19 pandemic. The assumption made by the call for contributions was that, after the 1955 Bandung Conference, most “non-aligned” Asian and African countries opted for philosophies of national unity to guarantee peace and stability. In the African case of Tanzania, the Ujamaa philosophy, which was secular although Tanzania had a ‘civic religion’, informed the shaping of the country’s political identity. In the Asian case, Indonesia adopted the philosophy of Pancasila, understood as a pluralistic and religious worldview; it recognizes six “official” religions. The assumption would pose two inevitable questions regarding what philosophy, secular or religious, succeeds or succeeded in promoting peace and stability, on one hand; and on the other, on whether there could be comparable philosophies of national unity from other countries.

Since the rapid changes of the 21st Century might have rendered the 1955 Bandung Conference not too familiar in the complex debates of the day, the present introduction seeks to make a brief presentation of the conference. It also attempts to elaborate on the idea of philosophies of national unity at play at the conference to establish whether they were of a religious or a secular approach to nation building.

The 1955 Bandung Conference was an Asia-Africa forum, organized by Indonesia, Burma, India, the then Ceylon and Pakistan under the coordination of the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time. Representatives of 29 Asian and African countries met in Bandung to discuss matters ranging from decolonization, peace, economic development, to the role the “Third World” was to play in

international policy and action, especially given the context of the Cold War. The forum sought to promote a new style of economic and cultural cooperation between emerging nations in Asia and Africa, with a clear aim of building those nations' autonomy to resist the then raging colonial systems. One can safely acknowledge that the effort was cognizant of colonial powers' unwillingness to involve these countries in discussions and negotiations regarding independence and development, while others in the opposing camps drew up the cold war plans. The conference insistently condemned all forms of colonial systems, whether it was the Western imperialism or the Soviet imperialism. It downplayed the potential expansionism of the model of communism from China. The Chinese representation at the conference embraced the right of nations to seek their own autonomy, particularly in the choice of their own political and economic systems.

The ten points' declaration of the conference included what could cautiously be called the principles of nationhood for the future of newly independent or soon-to-be-independent nations. These principles constituted what is known as the "spirit of Bandung" in reference to their inspiration in the cultural and religious beliefs as well as practices in the Indonesian culture. To this extent, it could be said that there was a secular, human-rights-based approach to the objectives of the conference, aligned to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on one hand. On the other hand, there was an indirectly religious approach, through the inspiration in the culture- and faith-informing principles of life in Asian countries. In this sense the spirit of the conference, combining a secular and a religious view, was a novelty in relation to imperialist colonial powers' approach, which was utterly secular.

Philosophies of national unity: secular and religious

Years after the conference, countries that participated followed different paths to political and economic development. For instance, it is patent to see that the Asian nations have developed greatly both politically and economically, while a great number of African nations still lag behind. Obviously, there are many reasons that could explain why the two continents moved in divergent directions. Scholars of the conference are bound to keep studying those factors as the world evolves. The 2020-projected conference in Dar es Salaam, which was meant to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the conference, sought to pose the question on these divergent directions taken by the countries on both continents, hinging on whether those countries could have forged their destiny based on secular philosophies of nationhood, or upon religious philosophies of nationhood.

Philosophies of national unity, in countries previously colonized, are unavoidable. Their situation is informed by the shared suffering, cultural humiliations and theft imposed by colonial powers, as well as all manners of exploitation resulting thereof. In the wake of the Bandung Conference, both Africa and Asia experienced a surge of nationalisms for the sake of sovereignty. It is not easy to figure out which ones were secularly inspired, and which ones were religiously inspired. However, one can state that the countries that minimized upheavals seem to have been those that managed to include, in their nation-building philosophies, the unity and diversity not only of their people, but also of their beliefs and cultures. It is possible to see this, even though imperfectly, in India, Malaysia and Indonesia, to name a few. Where a combination has featured in their approach to nation building, prodigious development has ensued. In nations, such as many African countries, where political and economic development have espoused strictly secular Western paradigms, no results similar to the ones in Asia can be demonstrated.

In Africa, right after the independence processes, since most dictatorships that took power were still under the control of foreign powers from outside the continent, no proper philosophy, secular or religious seems to have emerged. Pan-Africanism lost steam under the power struggle shaped by Cold War competition. It is possible to claim that only Tanzania's Ujamaa was a secular nationhood philosophy with some form of a civic religion, both converging into making a truly African nation.

The reality of the contrast between what happened in Asia and in Africa will always inspire more studies. It is in that context that the initially devised thematic areas for the 2020 conference sought to encourage the exploration of the matter, with the perspectives from the 21st century so far. The effort not to miss out the occasion sought to transform the call for conference papers into a call for a book project that would keep the thematic areas as proposed for the conference that could not happen. The suggested themes covered the revival philosophies of unity; the fundamental differences between philosophies of unity in Africa and Asia; a question regarding the possibility of philosophies of unity used to promote tolerance in a global, multi-cultural and multi-religious society; philosophies of unity as tools to promote regional integration and continental unity; the challenge of whether philosophies of unity could contribute to solving contemporary challenges such as ethnicity, tribalism, bigotry, social exclusion and religious cleansing; the possibility of African philosophies, such as Ubuntu, to shape, construct or obstruct the creation of unity in nation-building; and finally the last the question of whether unity was a product of an ideology; and how do philosophy and/or religion inform an ideology.

The book project

The response to the book project was almost as great as the one the conference had attracted. The logistics of getting the project underway delayed the project a little, however the great collaboration amongst those who showed interest in it made it possible. They were all aware that it could not be a delayed celebration of the 65th anniversary. On the other hand, given the lack of familiarity of some sectors of knowledge with the Bandung Conference, a book project about it seems not only fitting but also timely. What could not happen due to Covid-19 restrictions could happen by way of publishing the authors still studying this area of the progress in nation building.

Contributors to the book are all cognizant of the challenges posed by today's world to the Bandung Spirit's ideals. The different perspectives discussed demonstrate that, while the principles and Spirit of Bandung are perennial, today's difficulties facing such ideals are both an opportunity and a potential threat. The diversity of topics covered by the authors are also an illustration of the dynamism of Bandung, even when what is emphasized are its shortcomings. The reader will find enriching insights into an examination of Pancasila's principles captured as the inspiration of the Bandung Spirit and Ujamaa, indicating how they remain a valid and legitimate call for living the values of in digital era. A particular focus is placed on how social media can contribute to social unity from an Ubuntu perspective. A new analysis of Bandung's Pancasila and Dasasila describes how the spirit of the conference can find new interpretation from the point of view of the responsibility for a peaceful world. An inquiry into South Africa's philosophy of "Rainbow nationalism" as a philosophy of national unity, from the global south, offers a substantive critique to the Bandung Spirit. A study of the transposition of Indian Philosophical Perspectives that created a model of unity in Mauritius' religiously-inspired ideals informed an effective resistance to colonial influence. A different angle, in a study from modern Indonesia, explores Pancasila's principles as an antidote to religious intolerance and separatism, especially the principle expressed in the commitment to open dialogue, based upon mutual respect.

A review of the revival of Ujamaa in Tanzania, under the late president John Pombe Magufuli, suggests that it was regarded as a secular philosophy espoused to rekindle a united socialist and secular State. Another inquiry, using principles of Ujamaa, attempts to answer the question of whether philosophies of unity can promote tolerance in a polarized global world, taking advantage of new technologies. An examination of Ubuntu as a possible philosophy of nation building acknowledges the aspirations of people at the Bandung Conference. However, it

finds that, like many international conferences such as the Bandung one, viewed from Ubuntu perspective it failed to capture African values, which would explain why it remained fruitless in Africa. Another investigation endeavors to question whether philosophies of national unity can actually build unity, suggesting that intercultural philosophies could be more up to the task. An original view, from outside of Africa and Asia, makes the case for the consideration of people's religious belief when shaping philosophies of national unity, in the failure of which conflicts ensue, as the study from Estonia confirms. The case study chosen demonstrates that assuming folk's beliefs into philosophies of unity works better than pure secularism. The final contribution to the book reveals, with the example of Indonesia's public diplomacy, that democracy, religion and modern progress are compatible, particularly because of the Bandung Spirit, including Pancasila.

An overview of all insightful contributions to this book suggests that the quest for unity is still an imperative for nation building. The nature of the task seems to require conditions under which religious beliefs and secular approaches should find a convergent aim for the benefit of the people. The problem is that neo-liberal global trends of the contemporary world are showing signs of a new model of colonialism holding back, at least, the less developed countries. The forces driving such trends are mainly the urban elites, powerful global corporations and their networks. These forces are driving an aggressive globalization, which is overriding the sovereignty required to build nations. The urban elites and corporations behind global networks are leaving nations without the wealth they need to build growth. Instead, they are building wealth beyond nations, which seems to indicate that a new ideology is forging a supra-nation polity with an amorphous identity. The worrying aspect of it is that it appears as a society with neither shared universal values, nor faith, though it seems to have a materialistic and technological messianism of its own.

Beyond the Spirit of Bandung

Interestingly, even the global society cannot live without a certain faith and values. That is why the materialistic "messiahs" tend to present themselves as virtuous through a new type of faith called philanthropy, also called effective altruism. However, when the beneficiaries of such a philanthropy are regulators, lawmakers and politicians, what happens is not the building of unity. What happens, instead, is the institutionalization of corrupt systems that undermine nations and their

people. Such systems weaponize government structures against the people. Reflecting “beyond the spirit of Bandung” inevitably calls for a reinstatement of a dialogue that goes beyond a purely materialistic view of society. It means that the terms of the question for further research could change. Research must go beyond the dichotomy of whether philosophies of nation building that have succeeded were secular or religious. The question must open up to the possibility of a convergence between religiously inspired principles, ethical understanding of society, and secular approaches to technicalities of societal development.

The merit of the 1955 Bandung Conference seems to lie in the fact that the convergence of the three dimensions was assumed as necessary for the unity and stability of each individual country among those that were striving to be independent and sovereign. One of the strategies used by colonial powers to destabilize deeply the people in the colonies was precisely to dismiss their religious beliefs, their cultures and their worldviews. This is an important dimension of a united and peaceful society. Once interfered with there is no way of cementing any possible sovereignty. The process sucks out the soul of a people, making it vulnerable to all manners of exploitation. Acknowledging this fact, at this stage of the 21st Century, would explain why the study of the Bandung’s principles will remain relevant to both scholarly circles and popular discourses on the nature of the concept of nation. And more so, on the nature of the ideas such as people, citizenship, human development, polity, rule of law and social justice, as well as human rights. All these concepts are meaningful within a given society, a given territory and a given people, not in an amorphous global society. Today, the latter appears to prioritize pervasive neo-liberal policies, controlled by some elites who, in turn, control both markets and governments, whose interests are in such contrast with the interests of people. They are keen to create prosperity. However, such prosperity invariably forsakes the majority who are not equipped to compete with such forces. Competition is good, though when it happens with competitors who can never win it is unjust. This logic of unfair markets appears also in political processes: who wins in politics? Only those who have control over the reins of power, which turns processes such as elections into futile role-play exercises. The citizens’ vote ends up never contributing to the improvement of their lives. Such processes create power that is accountable only to itself, not to the people, or to interests that control it, including global networks. The Bandung Conference sought to resist such power and open new ways of cooperating, which is why its flame should keep burning.

Indonesia's Public Diplomacy

Interfaith Meetings in the Netherlands

FRANS WIJSEN, RADBOUD UNIVERSITY, GADJAH MADA UNIVERSITY

Abstract

This chapter addresses the question of what policy-makers in the Netherlands and Indonesia can learn from each other in safeguarding national unity. It analyses the Public Diplomacy program of the Indonesian government and bilateral Netherlands–Indonesia interfaith dialogues from the perspective of secularism and religion–state relationships. It uses public–private partnership between the Indonesian embassy in the Netherlands and two non-governmental organizations, namely the Netherlands–Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations and the Special Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama in the Netherlands, as cases. The chapter concludes that the governments and policy-makers in both countries advocate neutral engagement with religions, but that they not always practice what they preach. In the Netherlands the freedom to have a religion is under pressure. In Indonesia the rights of religious minorities and the right to be without religion is under pressure. The chapter concludes that what policy-makers in both countries can learn from each other is to balance extremes.

Keywords: Public Diplomacy Program; secularism and religion-state relationships; Pancasila Philosophy; interfaith dialogues; secular and pluralistic national unity

Introduction

At the launch of the Indonesia-Netherlands Society in The Hague (22 March 2012), the then Indonesian Ambassador to the Netherlands, Her Excellency Retno Marsudi (2012) referred to how the Dutch picture Indonesia being an unstable and corrupt country. In reaction to this, she stated that Indonesia has an economic growth of more than 6 per cent, free media and gender balance. She added: “Today, Indonesia is registered among the 20 biggest economies in the world; Indonesia is the third largest democracy in the world; and Indonesia today is widely regarded as a living proof that democracy, Islam and modernity can thrive harmoniously together.” Quoting the United States’ Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, on her visit to Indonesia in 2009, she also stated that Indonesia is a shining example of “Woman empowerment”. She closed her remarks saying:

We have a vision to promote peace and prosperity not only for the Indonesia people, but also for the rest of the world. It is a constitutional mandate for us to promote a world order based on freedom, peace and social justice.

Similar statements were made by various government officials visiting the Netherlands, and the European Union. During an International Conference organized by the Netherlands Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama at Radboud University, on 19 June 2019, the then Minister of Religious Affairs, His Excellency Lukman Hakim Saifuddin (2019), said:

The Indonesian government certainly does not want to be left behind in creating a peaceful world order. In accordance with the spirit of the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, we have a great commitment to participate in creating a world order, based on freedom, eternal peace and social justice.

As the Minister of Religious Affairs, he considered his statement to be based upon a moderate view of Islam. He said, “I would like to express my sincere hope that this International Conference can articulate Islamic *wasathiyya* [moderation] that could contribute to world peace”. And he continued, “the world Moslem population will increase rapidly from 23.2% to 29.7%. And, Indonesia will become one of the largest demographic bonus contributors, as the majority of its citizens are Moslem”.

Asking “can we imagine if the Indonesian citizens of productive age are not qualified and do not have moderate religious views?”, he answered:

Since Indonesia is the fourth largest population in the world, of course that situation will automatically affect the condition of the world globally. As a result, there is no other choice. We must intervene in shaping perspectives, attitudes and religious behavior of our society so that this nation contributes positively to the world.

These and similar statements of government officials show Indonesia’s confidence that it plays its part in the construction of the present world order, and that Indonesia’s view of Islam has an added value to the Western world, which sees Islam as basically undemocratic and women-unfriendly. Within the main question that guides this volume, that of what philosophy of national unity has succeeded in promoting peace and stability, secular or pluralistic, this chapter answers the question of what policy-makers in the Netherlands and Indonesia can learn from each other in this respect. This is relevant because of the long history that connected both countries – and it might be interesting for other countries as well.

As a theoretical and conceptual framework, I use literature on secularism (Norris, Inglehart, 2011) and religion–state relationships (Fox, 2008) asking if a strict separation of religion and state is necessary for the stability and unity of a nation. A secular state is a state that does not recognize nor support (institutional) religions, and suppresses expressions of religion in the public domain. In this sense, in this model there is no strict separation of religion and state, as the state suppresses religion in the public domain (of course, it recognizes religious freedom of its citizens as individuals). Usually, France and Turkey are mentioned as examples of secular states, although both countries are secular in theory, but not in practice. For example, France recognizes Catholic holidays as national holidays. Turkey supports Islamic organisations, in theory to control and limit them. By a neutral state we mean a state that does not suppress religions and treats them in equal manners.

According to Fox (2008), in distinction to the secular model that suppresses religion in the public domain and sees religion as a purely private matter, three forms of neutralism can be distinguished. First, the state does not suppress religion and does not support religion. In this sense there is a strict separation between religion and state. Second, the state supports religion, but has no preference for one or another religion. Third, in principle the state promotes equal treatment of religion, but in practice it favors one of them, for example because of historical reasons. The

United States of America are seen as an example of the first form of neutrality. Most countries within the European Union switch between the second and the third model of neutrality, depending on the preferences of the ruling government, or mix between these models, applying both of them in different situations.

	Suppressing religion	Supporting religion
Strict separation	The state does not suppress religion.	The state does not support religion.
Neutral engagement	The state may suppress religion as long as the result is the same for all religions.	The state may support religion as long as the result is the same for all religions.
Equal treatment in principle	The state does not have the intention to suppress one religion more than another, but in practice it does so.	The state does not have the intention to support one religion more than another, but in practice it does so.

Within the neutral engagement model, an example of suppressing religion as long as the result is the same for all religions is the norm of the liberal – a democratic rule of law that is adhered to in most European countries (Bader, 2007). Religions are free to express themselves as long as they respect the principles of democracy and liberalism. If they do not do so, freedom of religion may be limited. Thus, the state is not all that neutral, but has a clear preference for specific principles (Van Bijsterveld, 2018). An example of a state that has not the intention to suppress one religion more than another, but in practice it does so, is the Netherlands where religious communities have the right to start schools (under certain conditions), but in practice it is more difficult to start an Islamic school than a Protestant Christian one, because of a basic distrust of and suspicion against orthodox Islam among civil servants who administer the procedure to start schools. The same distrust and suspicion also applies to orthodox Christian schools that do not recognize gender equality or homosexuality (Wijsen, 2020).

We leave aside the notion of state religion, which exists in the Muslim world in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran, and in European countries such as the United Kingdom (Anglican Church), Sweden (Lutheran Church) and Greece (Orthodox Church). An interesting fact for our topic is that while the Netherlands Government promoted a pluralistic or “pillarized” (Lijphart, 1968) model at home in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, recognizing religious differences particularly in the educational system, it promoted strict secularism in its colony, Indonesia, bypassing religious differences, and suppressing political Islam (Kennedy & Valenta, 2006, p. 344).

I first elaborate on the Pancasila philosophy and its contestation in contemporary Indonesia. Second, I introduce the public diplomacy program of the Indonesia government. Third, I analyse the application of this program in the Netherlands, in collaboration with two non-governmental organizations: the Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations and the Special Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama in the Netherlands. I end by drawing conclusions.

1. Pancasila Philosophy

The Preamble of the 1945 Constitution, to which the Minister of Religious Affairs whom I quoted in my introduction referred, is based on a short text known as the Jakarta Charter. This text was written by the members of a Committee that was established by the Japanese to prepare Indonesia's independence. The members were divided between those who opted for a secular state and those who advocated for an Islamic state.

At the last day of the first session, on June 1, 1945, the later president Sukarno formulated five principles (Pancasila) as the ideological foundation for the new state. These were monotheism or belief in the one Lordship; internationalism or just and civilized humanity; nationalism or the unity of Indonesia; democracy or the deliberation among representatives; and equality or social justice for all people of Indonesia.

A small committee was set up to draft the Constitution. The Islamists agreed to withdraw their proposal for an Islamic state, on condition that the Jakarta Charter included the five principles (Pancasila) and that "the obligation to implement Syariah for adherents of Islam" was added to the first principle. The Jakarta Charter was promulgated on 22 June 1945 and became the preamble of the constitution.

The day after independence, 18 August 1945, resistance to the Charter emerged. Christian areas in eastern Indonesia threatened to leave the new republic if the added words were not scrapped. And Balinese Hindus wanted the Arabic word "Allah" to be replaced by the Indonesian "Tuhan". The nationalist Muslim, Mohammad Hatta convinced the Muslim leaders to drop the obligation for Muslims to abide by Islamic law, for "the sake of national unity". Hatta's proposal was accepted, and the constitution was ratified. The above-mentioned obligation was replaced by the phrase '*Yang Maha Esa*', which means "One Divine Lordship". Therefore, the first principle became '*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*', that is "Belief in One Divine Lordship".

Soon after that, the first principle of Pancasila became a subject of controversy between Muslim and Christian theologians. Muslims interpreted *Yang Maha Esa* to be the Islamic concept of monotheism. For Christians, on the other hand, the word *Ketuhanan* (Lordship) permits the interpretation of the first pillar of Pancasila in terms of the religious pluralism of the country (Hidaya, 2010, 2012). Particularly after the resignation of president Muhammad Suharto, there have been various attempts to reinstall the obligation to implement Islamic law (*Syariah/shariah*) for adherents of Islam.

During the New Order era (1967-1998), characterized by Suharto's authoritarian rule, the government controlled the media and the philosophy of national unity was imposed on Indonesian citizens. During the Reformation era that started after Suharto's fall there has been more freedom of speech and decentralization gave space to radical groups to express themselves. An example is the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), Islamic Defenders Front which started in 1998 and was dissolved in 2019. But so far, these attempts failed. The willingness of the Muslim majority at independence in 1945 to drop their demand for an Islamic state, and the rejection of the added "the obligation to implement *Syariah* for adherents of Islam" to the preamble of the constitution, for the sake of the unity of the nation, is seen as a proof that Islam and democracy are compatible. And this opinion is still widely held by the majority of Muslims.

A survey conducted by Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC) in May 2017 showed that 79.3% of the Indonesian population supports the current democratic system and that 9.2% of Indonesians think that the current system should be replaced by an Islamic state. 89.3% says that Islamic State (IS) is a threat to Indonesia and 92.9% says that IS should be banned from the country. 78.4% agreed that the government disband Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), the Indonesian branch of the pan-Islamic movement Hizbut Tahir, a radical Muslim organization that supports the idea of having an Islamic state and implementing Islamic law (Editorial, 2017).

Another survey conducted by the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS) in September 2017 showed that 41% of the Muslims think that Indonesia's regions should be allowed to implement *shariah* law at local level and 39% think that *shariah* law should be implemented throughout the country.

The widely known case of Ahok and some other incidents show that there are tensions between majority and minority groups. Ahok, whose official name is Basuki Tjahajha Purnama, was a Jakarta governor of Christian-Chinese descent. He was doubtfully found guilty of blasphemy and sentenced to prison for two years (News Desk, 2019, 6 January).

However this may be, during the 2019 presidential election, 42.7% of the Muslims supported president Joko Widodo, known as 'Jokowi', of the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), and 39.1% supported Prabowo Subianto who was supported by the Muslim clerics. 18.2% were undecided. A recent survey to explore who will be Jokowi's successor after presidential elections (Malik, 2021) shows that the Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) remains the most popular party in Indonesia, and that support for democracy and pluralism will most probably remain.

2. Public Diplomacy

Pancasila Philosophy plays a significant role in Indonesia's foreign policy, or what is called the "soft power and public diplomacy" (Sukma, 2011). The Directorate of Information and Public Diplomacy was started in 2002 by the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Hasan Wirajuda, and has been organising several regional, intercontinental and bilateral interfaith meetings since 2004. Its establishment was a reaction to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and the subsequent attack in Bali in 2002.

Moreover, it was after Suharto's anti-democratic rule, and particularly, after Indonesia recognised East Timor's desire for independence in 1998 (Alles, 2015a, p. 15), that Indonesia could reclaim its role in the world order. It had shown that Indonesia is a democratic state and that it respects international law (Indonesia's occupation of East Timor in 1975 was condemned by the United Nations).

The *Reformasi* was a turning point in Indonesia's foreign policy. Sukma (2012, p. 85) says that "before 1998 Islam was never a determining factor in Indonesia's foreign policy, because neither Sukarno nor Suharto would allow foreign policy to be dictated by Islamic considerations. Islam became part of national identity only after Reformasi".

After the 2002 Bali bomb blasts, Western countries started to doubt whether the Indonesian government was able to control extremism. It was then that Indonesian diplomats started to spread the message of moderate Indonesian Islam.

The principle of Public Diplomacy uses "soft power" diplomacy in international relations (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 2). It invests in cultural exchange and shared political values, such as democracy. Among others, this is the case in the Bali Democracy Forum that has been held annually since 2008. In the beginning, it was attended by South-East Asian Countries only, but now it has members and observers from all over the world.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is itself secular. However, it collaborates with faith-based organisations, such as Nadhlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 7). This makes it also vulnerable due to controversies between Nadhlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, traditionalist and modernist Islam (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 12-13). Public Diplomacy applies not only to the Western world but also to Saudi Arabia. Being the biggest Muslim community, it strives for moderation of Arabic Islam (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 11). Since the Bali bombing there has been a “less optimistic tone” (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 16).

In the current Public Diplomacy program, there is a parallel with the Bandung Conference in 1955. The Bandung Conference was the first manifestation of Indonesia’s foreign policy. But, to a large extent, it responded to domestic problems such as the proclamation of an independent republic of South Moluccas and the unchanged status of New West Guinea.

3. Interfaith Dialogues in the Netherlands

In the speech of Her Excellency Retno Marsudi (2019), mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, she mentioned that when she came to the Netherlands to work at the Embassy (1997-2001) her superior, while briefing her, stated that Indonesia had “a special relationship with the Netherlands”. And when she became Ambassador herself, she strived to ensure that the relationship “remains special”. This was not always the case. At the end of 1991, diplomatic relationships between the Netherlands and Indonesia became problematic. The then Minister of Development Collaboration of the Netherlands, Mister Jan Pronk, accused Indonesia of human rights violations in East Timor. The Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs reminded the Dutch of their human rights violations during the colonial regime (Van Reybrouck, 2020). Development collaboration between the countries was stopped, but during the presidency of Bacharuddin Yusuf Habibi, the first president after president Suharto’s fall, development collaboration resumed in 1998.

The first bilateral “Indonesia-Netherlands Interfaith Dialogue” was held in The Hague, from 28 February until 1 March 2006, initiated by the Indonesian embassy in The Netherlands. The theme was: ‘Peaceful Coexistence and Interfaith Cooperation’. The dialogue was attended by around 200 people (religious leaders, academicians and representatives of NGOs from the Netherlands and Indonesia). From the Indonesian side speakers were Ft. Ignatius Ismartono (KWI), I Nyoman Suwandha (Chair of Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia), Prof. Dr. Din Din Syamsudin (Chairperson of PP Muhammadiyah), Muhamad Ali (UIN Syarif Hidayatullah),

Dr. Tamrin Tomagola (UI), and Hamzah Haz (PPP, United Development Party, former vice-President of Indonesia).

Similar bilateral interfaith meetings were held in Canada, the Vatican, United Kingdom and Austria (Hoesterey, 2019, p. 8). Altogether, there have been more than thirty-five of these meetings.

The second interfaith meeting in the Netherlands was held in June 2008 in The Hague. In fact, it was an Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) on Interfaith Dialogue, and it was the fourth of its kind. The first ASEM Interfaith Dialogue was in Bali on July 21-22, 2005. The second was in Larnaca, Cyprus, July 3-5, 2006, and the third in Nanjing, China on June 19-21, 2007. In fact, these meetings are not merely bilateral but inter-continental, between European and Asian countries.

Since then, the Public Diplomacy program in the Netherlands has been working more indirectly by sponsoring and participating in conferences organized by non-governmental organizations stimulating public-private partnership, also in this field of interfaith dialogue (Affandi & Assad, 2019). In the following section I give two examples of this: first the interfaith dialogues of the Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations, and second the biannual International Conferences of the Special Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama in the Netherlands.

4. Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations

The Netherlands-Indonesia Consortium for Muslim-Christian Relations was initiated in Yogyakarta in 2010, during a meeting on theological education from 6-8 October (Küster, Setio, 2014). It met for the second time in Kaliurang in 2012, on March 26-30. The third meeting on “Joint in Difference” was the first organized in collaboration with the Indonesia Embassy in The Hague on April 25, 2013, and a further interfaith dialogue (the fourth of the Consortium) was held in collaboration with the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague on “Inclusive Religious Education” in Ambon, from 24-26 August, 2016.

On behalf of the Indonesian Government, the meeting in The Hague in 2013 was attended and addressed by Mr. Ibnu Wahyutomo, Chargé d’Affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, and Mr. Prof. Dr. H. Nur Syam, M.Si, Secretary General, Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia. The meeting in Ambon in 2016 was attended and addressed by the Deputy Governor of Maluku, Dr. Zeth Sahuburua, S.H., M.H., and Dr. Amsal Bakhtiar MA, Director of Islamic Higher

Education, Directorate General of Islamic Education on behalf of the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

One of the conclusions of the second bilateral Netherlands-Indonesia interfaith dialogue on “Inclusive Religious Education” in Ambon was that the educational system in Indonesia is too religious, promoting mono-religious education in schools, and that the educational system in the Netherlands is not religious enough, by not making the study of religion a mandatory subject in all schools despite it being part of the Netherlands’ cultural heritage and the basis of its civilization (Bagir et al., 2019). The educational system, or the right given to religious communities to educate their children according to their own world views, is seen as a litmus test of religion–state relationships.

Since then there have been such interfaith dialogues on “Diversity, Democracy, and Dialogue” (the 5th), held in Nijmegen, on 29 November, 2017, and another one on “promoting Costly Tolerance” (the 6th), held in The Hague, on 20 June, 2019, launching a book prepared by the Consortium on costly tolerance (Suhadi, 2018). In both cases, the welcome speech was given by the Indonesian ambassador to the Netherlands, His Excellency I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, MA. Keynote speaker at the latter interfaith dialogue was Prof. Syafiq A. Mughni, Special Envoy of the President of Indonesia for Interfaith and Inter-Civilization Dialogue and Cooperation. In his address, prof. Mughni stressed the middle path in Islam, balancing extremes (The Jakarta Message, 2018).

The 7th bilateral Interfaith Dialogue was held on 9 June, 2022 in The Hague. The topic was ‘Religion in Colonization and Decolonization. Indonesian-Dutch Confrontation, Confirmation, Transformation’. The welcome speech was given by the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, His Excellency Drs. Mayerfas, and the keynote speaker at the 7th Interfaith Dialogue was Mohammad Mahfud Mahmodin, commonly known as Mahfud MD, an Indonesian politician and lawyer, who is currently serving as the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs of Indonesia.

The 8th bilateral Interfaith Dialogue took place on 20 July 2023 in Yogyakarta. Its topic was Decolonizing Religion, religion defined as both subject and object of decolonization. The Indonesian government was represented by the Director General for Information and Public Diplomacy of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Teuku Faizasyah. On behalf of the Netherlands Government a welcome speech was delivered (online) by Karin Mossenlechner, the Director General for Asia and Oceania at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while the Netherlands embassy in Jakarta was instrumental in organizing the event.

In mentioning the (keynote) speakers, I only mention the speakers who are relevant for the Public Diplomacy program of the Indonesian government.

5. Special Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama in the Netherlands

Another partner with whom the Indonesian Embassy in the Netherlands works is the Netherlands Special Branch of Nadhlatul Ulama. It spreads Islam Nusantara, claiming that Indonesian Islam is moderate and progressive.

The Netherlands branch of Nahdlatul Ulama started in 2014. So far, it has organized three biannual International Conferences, the first at Free University in Amsterdam in 2017, the second at Radboud University in Nijmegen in 2019, and the third again at the Free University of Amsterdam in 2022.

The topic of the first Conference in 2017 was “Rethinking Indonesia’s Islam Nusantara: From Local Relevance to Global Significance”, offering moderation against extremes in Islam (News Desk, 2019, 24 June). Apart from the then Indonesian ambassador to the Netherlands, His Excellency I Gusti Agung Wesaka Puja, four other ambassadors were present, namely Husnan Bey Fananie from Azerbaijan, Achmad Chozin Chumaidy from Lebanon, Agus Maftuh Abegebriel from Saudi Arabia, and Safira Machrusah from Algeria. The Minister of Religious Affairs sent a video message and was represented by the Director General of Islamic Education, Dr. Phil. Kamaruddin Amin.

The second conference was held at Radboud University in Nijmegen on June 19. The topic was “Seeking the Middle Path. Articulations of moderate Islam”. The keynote speaker (from the perspective of Public Diplomacy) was His Excellency Lukman Hakim Saifuddin, the then Minister of Religious Affairs. In his speech on “Religious Moderation Mainstreaming” he said that Indonesia is “a very religious country, with a polite, tolerant character. If we allow it to grow, extremism and radicalism will surely destroy our nation. Therefore, religious moderation becomes very important as our perspective”.

The third International Conference was again at the Free University of Amsterdam on 8 June 2022. Its topic was ‘Reimagining Religion and Values in Times of Crisis’. The vice-president of the Republic of Indonesia, Ma’ruf Amin, addressed the audience via a video-speech.

6. National Unity: Secular or Pluralistic?

The second International Conference of Nadhlatul Ulama at Radboud University raised critique from a right-wing action group called “Nijmegen Turn Right”. Members of the group put big banners near the entrance of the conference hall saying “If you sow Islam, you will harvest sharia”. On the walls they had painted in black “Islam = War”. In an article about the protest in the local newspaper, the leader of the group stated that moderate Islam does not exist, voicing a popular view in the Netherlands. He also said that Mister Lukman Hakim Saifuddin was minister of a country where sharia law is implemented, and that it was a shame that he spoke at a conference on moderate Islam. In an official reaction, the University spokesman said that the protest was unfair (Nietman & Friedrichs, 2019).

Although the statement of the leader of the action group was largely exaggerated, there is some truth in it, acknowledging that rights of religious minorities in Indonesia (e.g. Ahmadiyya, Shia) are not guaranteed under the present regulation, recognizing six ‘official’ religions. It is also not possible to have no religion in Indonesia (people must put a religion on their Identity Card). Since 2017 also ‘local beliefs’ have been officially recognized. They are not perceived of as religion, but sometimes referred to as ‘indigenous religion’.

However this may be, Pancasila is supported by the vast majority of Muslims, and a majority does not favor an Islamic state. For the past decades, overall the situation has been harmonious and stable (apart from civil wars in Maluku and Papua), and the Indonesian government has been quite successful in combating extremism.

From the perspective of theoretical and conceptual framework on secularism and religion–state relations with which I began, one may question the direct state intervention in religious affairs in Indonesia. Is it the task of a state to propagate moderate and progressive Islam? Moreover, is it wise for the Indonesian government to affiliate so closely with one religious organization, Nadhlatul Ulama? There were also times that the Indonesian government was close to Muhammadiyah. But from a Dutch perspective this could be considered to be a violation of the principle of neutral engagement, although in the Netherlands this is also a principle in theory but not always strictly applied in practice.

Is the secular model of suppressing religion from the public domain a better alternative, as some scholars and policy-makers in the Netherlands advocate (Van der Ham, 2022)? This would make one worldview dominant: the secular, religious-suppressing worldviews.

Conclusion and Discussion

Addressing the question, what policy-makers in the Netherlands and Indonesia can learn from each other in safeguarding national unity, the Public Diplomacy program of the Indonesian government and the bilateral Netherlands–Indonesia interfaith dialogues show that the governments in both countries have one thing in common: they reject secularism and they promote some kind of neutrality.

The Indonesian government practices in its domestic policy a pluralistic model of religion–state relations and promotes it to the external world through its Public Diplomacy program. Based on past experiences, it does relatively well in maintaining national unity although it tends to violate the rights of religious minorities and limits inter-religious marriages and education, not in theory, but in practice. It also violates the right to have no religion.

In the Netherlands, the government engages with religions in a neutral way in principle; in practice it does not. It favors a liberal–democratic state, although public discourse and members of parliament in the Netherlands are moving more and more towards the secular model, suppressing religions. This violates the right of having a religion. This applies particularly to orthodox Muslim and Christian communities that do not accept ‘liberal’ values, such as gender equality and same-sex marriages.

The Public Diplomacy program of the Indonesian government promotes the middle path, religious moderation and balancing extremes. Quoting once again from Lukman Hakim Saifuddin’s speech at Radboud University, “Indonesia has agreed upon not becoming a religion-based country, but also not separating religion from its society’s daily life. Religious values are well-guarded, enriched with local wisdom and cultural values. Some religious laws are institutionalized by the state, religious rituals and cultures are intertwined harmoniously and peacefully”. This is what Dutch policy-makers can learn from the Indonesian Public Diplomacy program. But it is fair to say that the Indonesian government, in its domestic policy, does not always practice what it preaches.

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Coping with Intolerance and Separatism in Indonesia

The Pancasila Principles

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Abstract

The Bandung Principles do emphasize an open dialogue based on mutual respect. This standard applies in the international relations between countries in post-colonial Asia and Africa. It is also relevant as a value for building peaceful relations between ethnic or religious groups at the nation-state level. The principles of 'Pancasila' can be perceived as the translation of the Bandung Principles. The Indonesian state ideology aims to an open dialogue as a strategy for coping with the national ethnoreligious – and secessionist conflicts. The political changes in 1998, resulting in the resignation of president Suharto, demonstrated however an approach by local elites to protect their political and economic interests through activating ethnic or religion-based primordial sentiments. The communal violence between religious or ethnic groups continued with the persecution of minority religious groups, emerging in 2004. Since then, step by step the conflicts were fueled by religious intolerance and radicalism. This article aims to describe to what extent the ideology of Pancasila is valuable as a conceptual framework to overcome religious intolerance and separatist conflicts in a national context while promoting the values of plurality in a diverse society. The analysis reflects critically on the applications of the principles of Pancasila and their limits for religious, political, economic and social cohesion. It is argued that Pancasila has shortcomings in serving as a philosophy of national unity. Pancasila is ideological in

its meaning as it aims to promote harmony among diverse population of ethnic groups across Indonesia. At the local level, the application of Pancasila principles is somewhat successful. However, one should not unilaterally comprehend Pancasila only in politics, religion philosophy nor economy. The multiplicity of perspectives on the meaning and strategic position of Pancasila leads to a contest of meanings. A contest that goes beyond a national debate and actually raises tensions and conflicts. It thus contradicts the intentions of Pancasila as an answer to intolerance and radicalism in Indonesia. This study uses literature studies of researches on ethnoreligious conflict, separatism and Pancasila.

Keywords: Pancasila; religious intolerance; secessionism; national unity

Introduction

In Indonesia, a country with an overwhelming majority of Muslims, the state ideology of Pancasila is meant to reunite the ethnic, religious, racial and inter-group diversity. Nevertheless, just as is happening within Southeast Asian countries, the Indonesian national unity is affected by religious conflicts, secessionism and communal violence (Croissant & Trinn, 2009; Sidel, 2012; Kosuta 2017). The imbalance between unity and disunity particularly exists around the integrations of Aceh and Papua. The secessionist conflict in Aceh came to an end with a peace agreement between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian Government in 2005 (Aspinall, 2008). Meanwhile, an armed secessionist conflict has been continuing in Papua, where it coincides with the division of identity and social classes. In this paper identity is understood as the diversity of religious identities (such as Christian and Islamic) and cultural ones (such as Papuan, Moluccan etc.). Religion and culture are difficult to isolate from other, e.g., ethnic, social or national, dimensions of diversity. Intolerance and separatism do express the need for an identity reflected in one's own culture and religion. In Indonesia identities are constructed locally (not all members of island communities favour a national identity or have trust in the state ideology of Pancasila) in their own way; there is a revival of local cultures, religions and political independence aspirations, despite or possibly precisely because of Pancasila.

In the last five years, Papua has emerged as the center of violence, among others visible in the 2014 Paniai – and the 2018 Nduga incident. The Paniai incident represents the shooting of 4 Papuan students by Indonesian military when they protested the military persecutions toward students in the Paniai district of Papua. The Nduga incident refers to the executions by the West Papuan Liberation Army

to 16 Indonesian civilians who worked in road construction in Nduga regency of Papua. Papua, formerly the Netherlands New Guinea, experiences massive development and transmigration policy under Indonesian rule. These practices do make Papuan natives more marginalized, and their number decreases due to the influx of migrant populations from other Indonesian islands. The results are that more coastal districts and cities in Papua land are inhabited by people with a diversity of cultural and religious orientations, living side by side (Upton, 2009; Tirtosudarmo, 2020).

If we identify a set of communal conflicts involving religious issues then the nature of these conflicts do change from violence to communal tension. Deutsch (1973, p. 14) speaks of a latent conflict of religious intolerance and radicalism. However, nowadays these two phenomena occur prominent in cyberspace in the form of hate speech and the proliferation of hoaxes prior to and during the election or post-conflict local election. Altogether, the actual and virtual tensions are a challenge to national unity in Indonesia. A number of conflict studies, especially on religious and ethnic-based communal violence in Indonesia, have been carried out by both domestic and foreign researchers. Lim's study (2017, p. 5-10) shows that the Indonesian Internet space is used for spreading false news and hate speech. Today, the topic of religious-based intolerance is the mainstream in the study of conflict in Indonesia. Liddle (1996) writes of the Islamist turn in Indonesia, that is to say, the development of a more religious orientation among the middle class prior to the end of the New Order. The New Order is a political period when Indonesia was under authoritarian rules of General Suharto from 1967 to 1998. Van Bruinessen (2013) recognizes a rise of religious conservatism, which strengthens the turn towards Islamism and the development of a more fundamentalist religious orientation. The studies on religious intolerance in Indonesia conducted by Menchik (2016) and Menchik & Trost (2018) are stating that tolerance in Indonesia is based on communal rights. Indonesian Muslims are no more and no less tolerant than Muslims in other countries. The crisis of religious tolerance is, however, an effect of the fading culture of tolerance based on national communalism. Hadiz (2017) explains that the emergence of political Islam, next to a weakening communalism, is more due to the characteristics of Indonesia's neo-liberal democracy. The political Islamic groups emerges, in reaction to the global and local oligarchic capitalism, by exercising the religious identity in politics.

Although various reconciliation efforts have been carried out by the Indonesian Government, religious and political conflicts still emerge in Indonesia. The above-mentioned studies do not consider Pancasila as the source of practical values useful to resolve the ongoing conflicts and communal tensions. We are of the opinion that it is due to the opposing interpretations of Pancasila during both the Old Order, Indonesian rule under President Sukarno (1959-1967), and the New Order regime, Indonesian administration under President Suharto (1967-1998).

Sukarno, host of the Bandung Conference, conceived that Pancasila values were consistent with communist ideology due to the second value of Pancasila, namely the recognition of humanity. In turn, Suharto argued that Pancasila principles were inconsistent with communist ideology because the first value of Pancasila demands religiosity and the belief in one God. It is interesting to notice that Pancasila can be interpreted as both consistent and inconsistent with communism, as though Pancasila were a token of a true contradiction. The opposing interpretations brings us to describe to what extent the values of Pancasila can or cannot be used as a conceptual framework to overcome religious intolerance and separatist conflict in a national context, while at the same time promoting the values of plurality in global society. As written before the argument of this study is that Pancasila has failed to serve as a philosophy of national unity to promote tolerance and peace because the basic nature of the conflicts is not only ideological. Another concern is the different interpretations of Pancasila by political Islamic groups and secular nationalists.

Intolerance and Separatism

Martin van Bruinessen (2013, p. 17) concludes that the religious style in Indonesia since at least 2005 has moved in a conservative direction. What exactly does the anthropologist Van Bruinessen mean by conservatism? Conservatism refers to a number of movements that reject modernist, liberal or progressive reinterpretations in Islamic teachings and believe in the importance of established social doctrines and rules. In this context, Van Bruinessen also defines religious fundamentalism as the strict, literal interpretation of religion. The two categories of conservatism and religious fundamentalism reject a hermeneutic interpretation of religious sacred writings. In addition fundamentalists can also reject conservative practices at once if they believe that the practice has no basis in various religious sacred writings.

In addition to conservatism and religious fundamentalism, radicalism is closely related to increased intolerance. Religious radicalism stems from politicization of faith. It means various forms of religious interpretation, all of which encourage all adherents to encourage, actively and passively, the replacement of the prevailing political system in a country (Nadzir et al., 2017). The common understanding of radicalism is usually identified with terror groups such as Al Qaeda or ISIS because these groups have been posing some real, ideological and violent threats to many countries in the name of religious radicalism. Intolerant characteristics can be found in radical groups in their efforts to change the political and religious orientations and structures within the state.

Political change is the aim of several separatist movements. According to Ted Gurr (2015) these movements do have a strong link with ethnicity. Gurr speaks of ethno-nationalists, large groups with a history and dream of autonomy; indigenous peoples, conquered descendants of original inhabitants; ethno-classes, low-status minorities descended from slaves or immigrants; militant sects, communities politically defined by religion; and communal contenders, culturally distinct groups seeking to improve their position. If some politically active ethnic groups, as a result of discrimination, use force to achieve their goals, then political scientist Gurr calls this ethno-political conflict. In this particular sense of Indonesia, Papuans are indeed indigenous people and ethnic nationalists who expressed already during the colonial oppression by the Netherlands their wish for independence. A claim which was later based on the Dutch promise of independence to Papuans in the 1960s. The dream for an independent Papua has never fade away despite the Indonesian military interventions and the so-called Act of Free Choice, the 1969 controversial referendum in which 1,025 people selected by the Indonesian military voted in favor of Indonesian control in Papua (Chauvel, 2004; Drooglever, 2009). Conflicts in Papua include ethno-political dimensions because they seek to reclaim independence in military and political terms. There is also an economic motivation behind the recent conflict stimulated by the competition for resources between international, national and local actors, as seen in the Intan Jaya Regency, which is known for gold mining.

Development of Conflicts and Intolerance in Indonesia

We especially refer to the inter-religious communal conflicts between the Muslim and Christian communities that occurred in Ambon and Poso, both claiming a significant number of lives (Varshney et al., 2004; Van Klinken, 2005), between 1999-2004. The Ambon and Poso conflicts have many similarities (Schulze, 2017). Both communal conflicts manipulated the symbols and identity of Islam and Christianity with the aim to mobilize people. The conflicts involved the Laskar Jihad, who comes from outside Ambon and Poso. The clashes turned into a national issue. Both conflicts have ended through the establishment of the Malino I and Malino II Agreements signed by Muslim and Christian leaders, who control the grassroots communities, from the two feuding regions. The way in which the national government resolved the violent religious conflict peacefully, has its roots in Pancasila values. Namely a human and democratic approach to the dialogue, wisdom expressed in the deliberations and this all inspired by the motto *bhineka tunggal ika* (unity and diversity) (Lindawaty, 2016). Therefore, Pancasila, especially its fourth principle, does promote some consensual dialogues and diversity at a local level.

The more recent developments of religious conservatism coincide with the emergence of religious intolerance in Indonesia in which the majority of citizens is Sunni. The persecution of minority religious groups, such as the Islamic Shia and Jemaah Ahmadiyah Indonesia (JAI) in the period 1999-2012, does mark a shift in the characteristics of communal conflict from inter-religious to intra-religious. The persecution of the Ahmadiyah community in Lombok began in 1999 and resumed in 2004-2005. It compelled 36 families to seek refuge in the Transit Dormitory. When the attack on another Shia community occurred in 2012 in Sampang, members were forced to flee to the Rusunawa Puspoagro, Sidoarjo (Afdillah, 2013, p. 1). Ever since then, the Government has not provided certainty about the status of refugees and their future, because the process of reconciliation at the grassroots has not yet been accomplished and legal repercussions have not been incurred by the perpetrators (Pamungkas, 2017, p. 5).

The two national conflicts contain complex dimensions ranging from different interpretations of religious texts to the sociological contexts of the competing elite organizations. However, the global context of Sunni-Shi'a conflict and increasing religious conservatism at the national level have also played a role in triggering violence against the Shi'ite community. A main barrier for a dialogue of reconciliation between Sunni and Shi'a are their theologies. Shi'a followers believe that Islam should be led by descendants of prophet Muhammad, while Sunnis believe

that the leader of Islam should be appointed by election and consensus. Local reconciliation would be possible using a cultural approach (Mundzakkir, 2018, p. 152-153) and without addressing the different dimensions of theological beliefs. However, reconciliation based on a human rights protection approach to minority groups is difficult to achieve, not because the national Government does not want to implement it because of the sensitive religious relations between the local Sunni and Shi'a communities. Reconciliation based on a theological approach is not easy because of the fundamental differences in religious beliefs (Mundzakkir, 2018, p. 152-153). A cultural approach would be possible considering the fact that the kinship between the refugees and their counterparts has been maintained (Akmaliah, 2018, p. 121-123). This can be concluded from the visits of refugees to their hometown for family events, or visits to take care of their agricultural land, although they are not allowed to stay long in order to avoid conflicts (Pamungkas 2018a, p. 6).

The characteristics of the post 2016 conflict shifted from the persecution of religious minorities to the nationwide development of intolerance and radicalism. Intolerance is an attitude of rejecting the social and political rights of different groups. Radicalism is a religious interpretation that, in the Indonesian context, aims to replace the secular political system by Islamic Caliphate (Nadzir et al., 2017). These developments are clearly a threat to social cohesion and national unity. The use of identity politics in the 2017 DKI (Jakarta Special Capital Region) Governor Election further stirred the development of intolerance movements towards minority groups in other regions (Pamungkas & Hakam, 2019, p. 68-70). Much different from the more political balanced conditions in the 2007 and 2012 elections, the 2017 election was characterized by clashes, beatings and hate speech. There was a common tendency to reject political leaders from different religious or ethnic groups. The LIPI (Indonesian Institute of Sciences) conducted research in 2018 in provinces where Muslims are the majority population. This research found religious-based intolerance phenomena across several provinces in 2018, due to rising Islamic fundamentalism ahead of the 2019 national election (Pamungkas et al., 2018b). After the 2019 national election, the issue of religious intolerance seemed to decline gradually. The Government has since banned two intolerant and radical Islamic organisations, i.e. *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI) and the Islamic Defender Front or *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI).

Table 1. Intolerance Phenomena in Indonesia during 2018

No.	Provinces	Intolerance Phenomena
1.	Aceh	The increasing political influence and power of Islamic traditional conservative organizations.
2.	Sumatera Utara	The use of identity politics in the North Sumatra Governor Election, the governor's voter segregation based on religion and ethnicity in the regencies of Mandailing-South Tapanuli (Islam), Malay-East Sumatra (Islam) and Batak-Tapanulis & Nias (Christian).
3.	Banten	Prohibition of the establishment of worship houses of minority religious groups and the exhibition of certain religious symbols in public and political spaces from the district level to the provincial stage.
4.	DKI Jakarta	The exploitation of identity politics in the DKI Jakarta elections.
5.	Jawa Barat	The Masyumi's, an Islamic political party which used to clash for the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia through parliamentary struggles in between 1945-1960. <i>Darul Islam</i> , a para-military movement, which used to fight for the establishment of an Indonesian Islamic State movement, and they rebelled against the Indonesian government in between 1948-1962. Their legacies are still embedded in the mind of Muslim activists in West Java, and it emerged into the 212 action (The 2 nd December 2016 rally of Islamic groups demanding the prosecution of Governor Basuki Tjahaya Purnama (Ahok) for insulting the Chapter al-Maidah verse 51 in the Holy Qur'an)
6.	Jawa Tengah	Central Java, especially the Solo Residency, is the home-grown for conservative groups.
7.	DIY	Yogyakarta has been constantly experiencing a change from city of harmony to city of intolerance.
8.	Jawa Timur	The discourse and network of intolerant groups have been infiltrating into the largest Islamic organization, i.e. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)
9.	Sulawesi Selatan	The Islamist movements which wish to implement the Islamic sharia have been weakening in the South Sulawesi province. However, these movements transform into anti-Shi'a groups by dispersing Shi'a followers' activities.

Source: Pamungkas et al. (2018b) (this research relates to the 2018 LIPI research)

Regarding the separatist conflict, the political reform in 1998 unfortunately did not stop the cycle of political violence carried out by the Indonesian state in the land of Papua (Al Rahab, 2016, p. 19). In the period 2000-2004, there were a number of incidents of political violence that attracted international attention, namely the Abepura case in December 2000, the 2001 murder of Theys Eluay, the Wasior case in June 2002, the 2003 Wamena case and the Mulia riots in 2004. Political violence also emerged as the Government's response to the ongoing protests of Amungme people against land acquisition by Freeport McMoran. The company acquired the land through various innovative and manipulative methods during the New Order (Pamungkas, 2005, 2009, p. 53-54). The aforementioned incidents do show inconsistency and the lack of commitment of the Government in preserving or nurturing peace in the Land of Papua, and thereby diminishing the meaning of Papua's Special Autonomy. It also adds to the *memoria passionis* that has been accumulating since Papua's integration into Indonesia in 1960s. Most studies (Brundige et al., 2004; Elmslie, 2003; Elmslie & Webb-Gannon, 2013; King, 2004) mention that the state, through its security forces combating separatist movements and through the absence of public services, is the source of Papuan unsafety (Anderson, 2015).

Violations of civil and political rights

To respond to the aspirations of Papuan independence, at that time President Habibie held a dialogue with local leaders in 1999. However, in contrast to the Papuan aspirations, the President and the Parliament enacted Law No. 45/1999 which sets the legal foundation for the division of Irian Jaya into the West Irian Jaya and Central Irian Jaya Provinces. This division is widely rejected in Papua because it does not address the demand for complete independence. The next Government under president Abdurrahman Wahid changed the name of Irian Jaya to Papua and allowed the raising of the Morning Star flag as long as it is flown lower than the Indonesian flag. He was the only president who succeeded in appeasing most Papuan people during his administration (Chauvel, 2006, p. 200-212). In 2002, president Megawati adopted Law No. 21/2001 concerning Papua's Special Autonomy, the drafting of which had been carried out during president Wahid. Papuan Special Autonomy is the result of negotiations between the Government and a few Papuan political elites. Consequently, the absence of negotiations with broader elements

of the Papuan people, including the West Papua National Liberation Army, has implied only a little support for such special autonomy. This autonomy just represented the unilateral concession of Jakarta, and it is not relevant to the strategy for overcoming the separatist movement (McGibbon, 2004, p. viii; Chairullah, 2019, p. 149-150).

In 2012, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's administration established the Acceleration of Development Unit for the Provinces of Papua and West Papua (UP4B) to coordinate the development programs for those two provinces. Nevertheless, this unit does not have adequate authority to direct the ministry's program in Tanah Papua (Viartasiwi, 2014, p. 283-304). Finally, president Jokowi dismissed this unit in early 2015 (Aritonang, 2014). During his first term, president Jokowi brought a new hope to create perpetual peace in Papua. However, he has not yet succeeded in delivering his promise to put an end to political violence there.

As of 2018, political violence in Papua shows no signs of an end. As shown in the following table some categories of violence are increasing and others are growing but the repression does not stop. The increasing number of categories are included the number of reported torture, reported and victims of extra judicial killing, political arrests, and violence against human right defenders.

Tabel 2. Violations of Civil and Political Rights in the Land of Papua

Civil and political rights data	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cases of violence/arrests/threats against local journalists	12	20	18	5	8	10	2	5	2
Cases of violence/deportation/intimidation/ obstruction of foreign journalists and observers providing coverage on Papua- related issues in Indonesia	2	0	2	4	0	3	2	0	0
Number of reported torture/maltreatment cases	28	30	76	19	20	32	21	22	34
Number of reported torture/maltreatment victims	99	67	135	244	64	184	55	126	89
Number of reported cases of extrajudicial killings	11	6	8	10	6	10	11	16	16
Number of reported victims of extrajudicial killings	18	8	12	14	6	10	23	33	25
Number of reported cases of enforced disappearances							2	2	2
Number of reported victims of enforced disappearances							5	6	4
Prosecution of perpetrators (police and military)	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	2	2
Number of political arrests	210	548	370	1083	5361	601	1068	619	384
Number of political prisoners/detainees	40	70	55	57	27	0	25	230	19
Number of public peaceful assemblies/gatherings on Papua-related issues, forcefully intervened by security forces	8	29	14	24	35	13	27	38	37
Violence/threats against human rights defenders	3	1	5	5	2	10	6	8	20
Cases prosecuted with treason charges (Articles 106 and 110 of the Criminal Code)	27	25	31	14	15	0	7	86	18

Sources: ICP (2021)

Since 2019, the attitude of racism towards Papuans has increased according to members of organizations for Papuan students in Surabaya, Malang, Yogyakarta and Semarang (Koman, 2020, p. 8). The most significant case took place in Surabaya in 2019 when a group of militia, accompanied by police and military, uttered racist statements and raided the Papuan student ashram. The reason of this raiding was due to the disappearance of the Indonesian flag before Independence Day on August 17. Without evidence, the militias claimed that Papuan students deliberately throw out the flag. A number of large-scale rallies in the land of Papua were mounted which caused victims and destroyed a number of properties. Security officers detained 87 Papuans who were arrested on charges of treason or riots. Both the militia members and Papuans were sent to prison but law enforcement was arguable because the militia members only faced 6 months imprisonment, while seven Papuans faced between 10-17 months in prison.

So far, we can conclude as follows. Since the 1998 Indonesia's reformation, the history of intergroup conflict in the country has been dynamic. It brought about a shift in the nature of conflict from communal violence to persecution of minority religious groups. Political changes in 1998 prompted the competing local elites to negotiate their political interests through mobilizing ethnic or religious issues in local politics (Klinken, 2007). This provided the context of communal violence between religious or ethnic groups in the 1999-2004 period. After 2004, the persecution of minority religious groups emerged. After 2016, the characteristics of conflict shifted to an increasingly open intolerant attitude of the majority towards other minority religious groups at their provinces. Moreover, there has been armed conflict, some of which has been relatively constant, such as the separatist conflict in Papua. A repressive security approach accompanied by exploitative economic development is not the answer to overcoming the separatist movement. The West Papua Liberation National Army did not aim to secede but to reclaim the independence "assumed to exist" but seized by the Indonesian state in 1965. Therefore, they consider Indonesia to be the colonial state.

It is clear that, despite of the ideology of Pancasila, there are many conflicts between the Indonesian state and its citizens and between citizens themselves. In view of this conflicting context, the question arises if and how Pancasila, as a philosophy of national unity, is able to contribute to more cohesion.

Pancasila as a Common Denominator

Pancasila is a set of philosophical foundations of the Indonesian state, formulated by the founding fathers before the declaration of independence in 1945 in order to support national unity and the relations between citizens. It consists of five principles: belief in one God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the inner wisdom in unanimity out of deliberations amongst representatives, and social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia (Nishimura, 2014, p. 303). These principles provide the fundamental philosophy for national unity. However, the escalation of communal conflicts, oppression of religious minorities, intolerance and political violence against Papuans and other citizens indicate a lack of respect for the values of Pancasila by both the state and its citizens. A better national unity requires more tolerance and civic education in the country.

Yudi Latief, the former Head of the Pancasila Ideology Development Board (BPIP), stressed that Pancasila is philosophically relevant as a foundation for overcoming various social problems including current social conflicts (Nugrahaeni, 16 November 2019). Pancasila directs democracy and Government in the principle, which says, “Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives.” This fourth principle is flanked by the third principle, which urges “the unity of Indonesia” and the fifth principle of “social justice for all Indonesians” (Nugrahaeni, 16 November 2019).

Multiple studies and practical experiences demonstrate that religion is ambiguous. It can obstruct and construct cohesion and national unity. Religion can stimulate inter- and intra-religious collaboration, be of value for community building and contribute to cohesion. Inspired by the third principle of Pancasila, which advocates national unity, it could be considered to start a network of religious groups in order to improve tolerance via inter- and intra-religious dialogue. In the case of Papua, for example, a network of the Indonesian Muslim migrants from mainly Java and the Christian Papuans is a tool for building trust in the ‘other’. Intolerance is mostly pertinent to exclusive social and religious communities. This is confirmed by the study of Tropp et al. (2006) and Schlueter & Scheepers (2010) which revealed that intergroup contact would encourage cohesion and decrease exclusionary reactions in different groups. Face-to-face encounters do help to reduce intergroup violence and prejudices.

The Asia Foundation (TAF), The Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture (PMK) and the Institute for Assessing and Developing Human Resources (Lakspesdam NU) have encouraged more inclusive interaction between

the Ahmadiyah refugees and their surrounding communities. A social inclusion program in 2017 provides an example of how to implement Pancasila's values in reconciling the Ahmadiyah refugees in Mataram (Pamungkas, 2018). However, the Ahmadiyah refugees should decrease their religious expressions in the public sphere so that they could mingle with the surrounding society. The 2017 program does not exhibit significant progress in Sampang, Madura, except that the Shi'a refugees may now visit their own place of origin (Mundzakkir, 2018, p. 151-182). Although the Lakspesdam NU did not explicitly mentioned Pancasila values, their way of reconciling the Ahmadiyah and Sunni Muslim communities was based on the Pancasila principles. Especially with a focus on civilized humanity and the social justice for the completely Indonesian people. As shown here and, in the case of the Malino I and Malino II Agreements, the Pancasila principles do have the strength to promote dialogue and reconciliation.

Pancasila has relevance as an instrument for conflict resolutions in Indonesia; however, the principles of Pancasila are challenged by the continuously intertwined inter- and intra-religious conflicts and the politics around them. Despite efforts to enshrine Islam as the basis of the state ideology during the Suharto era, Muslim political organizations had to face the New Order's de-politicization of Islam. It was only under strong pressure of the Suharto administration that Pancasila was accepted as the single philosophy of national unity. The multiple interpretations of the principles of Pancasila continue to raise a fierce debate on national identity around the question 'are we a secular or Islamic state?'. Among the Pancasila principles of monotheism, justice, deliberative democracy, national unity and social welfare, the affirmation of "one God" is controversial.

The principles of Pancasila do call for unity in diversity. As such, it aims to construct, after colonialism, a national identity for a country that since its beginning has confronted with conflicts around territory and religion. The framework of Pancasila is above the particularity of individual and group ideologies. In the private domain consisting of family and community, each individual and group has the space and freedom to develop their particular ideology (religious, political etc.). However, in public space, all groups ought to prioritize Pancasila as the social cement to cohere despite the various personal and sectarian preferred opinions. The practice of Pancasila in supporting equality through participation of all citizens is more meaningful than a comprehensive doctrine as it was in the time of Suharto and Sukarno's administrations. On the one hand, Sukarno took for granted the coherency and consistency between Pancasila and communism. On the other hand, Suharto argued in that Pancasila is incoherent and inconsistent with communism. Therefore, putting Pancasila as a comprehensive doctrine

leaves it merely as a tool to justify the political and economic interests of parties, no matter how sound and unsound their justifications are.

Conflicts, latent or manifest, do take place between groups with different identities. In principle, these groups can simultaneously share the fundamental values of Pancasila. Pancasila could be the basis of conflict resolution because it touches the basic values of various social and religious groups. These values are foundational to communities and they are embedded in the hearts of most, if not all, Indonesians (Widjojo, 1 June 2021). There can be disagreement based on religious identity, but Indonesian Muslims and Christians share the dimensions of Pancasila ('Menteri Agama RI,' 18 May 2020). However, the conflict in the Land of Papua has a different character because the indigenous Papuans were not involved in the struggle for Indonesian independence including in the formulation of Pancasila (Lokobal, 31 August 2022).

The essence of Pancasila is "*gotong royong*" (mutual assistance or mutual help), in which there is solidarity, the contribution of all parties, unity and common interests. The principles of Bandung are a reflection of the values of Pancasila (Seran, 2016, p. 41-42; Fatharani, 2021, p. 30). As an example of the paramount value, 'gotong royong' is the basis of the principles of advancing common interests through cooperation, resolving international problems peacefully, and recognizing the equality of all nations and ethnic groups. Therefore, implementing Pancasila values means realizing simultaneously the ten principles of Bandung in support of peace and the fight against so-called neo-colonialism and imperialism. 'Gotong royong' is consistent with the spirit of diversity in the third principle of Pancasila (Fadillah, 21 November 2012). President Sukarno and his supporters, mainly secular nationalist groups who are close to socialist or communist groups, claim this Pancasila interpretation. In contrast, political Islamic groups are likely to consider the first principle of monotheism as Pancasila's essence, not 'gotong royong' or 'unity'.

The multiple interpretations of the principles of Pancasila provide a public debate on national identity, for instance around the question 'are we a secular or Islamic state?' Further radicalization and intolerance are a risk to national unity and to the coexistence of groups with diverse identities. Diversity and unity do indicate a paradox in terms of being seemingly contradictory yet interdependent elements. However, concerns for diversity need to be connected with unity. The principles of Pancasila do have the potential to stimulate the advantages of both diversity and unity while declining their downsides. Pancasila provides a basis for national debate and dialogue. Especially in a context of radicalization and intolerance, an effort is needed to strengthen the shared cognizance of the values of

Pancasila through stellar examples provided by the first generation of Indonesian leaders. Pancasila is an ideal ideology for the Indonesian people because its principles epitomize the unity of the diverse backgrounds of Indonesians, the diversity of their religious beliefs and plurality of their community find its foundations. The founding fathers and mothers abandoned all these differences by establishing Pancasila. The Pancasila ideology therefore has open characteristics, and it selectively filters foreign ideologies (Sudjito et al., 2018, p. 73).

National and global dynamics

The principles of Pancasila are able to reduce the dis-unifying sensitivities around religion. The idea of an Islamic version of the Indonesian state is very popular. A number of recent studies (Seftiani et al., 2020) report that a person's degree of identification with their religion and ethnicity along with their socioeconomic status has a significant indirect effect on their intolerance and radicalism through all intermediate variables. It means that, the higher level of identification of one's religion and ethnicity, the more intolerant and radical he or she will be due. It could be because of the feeling of threat from other religious or ethnic groups. It breeds having distrust towards other religious and ethnic groups, showing high levels of religiocentrism, low levels of secularization, and the utilization of social media accompanied with illiteracy (Seftiani et al., 2020, p. 66-68).

This finding reinforces theoretical propositions provided by the Ethnic Group Conflict Theory (Scheepers et al., 2002; Gijssbert et al., 2004). This theory claims that a higher level of perceived threat (or a perceived group threat) by other religious or ethnic groups leads to process in-group identification and de-identification of others (out-groups). Pamungkas (2015, p. 331-333) and Subagya (2015, p. 226-227) have argued that there is distrust, religiocentrism and negative attitudes toward religious diversity and fundamentalism, all expressions of inner determinants besides the feeling of being threatened. These studies find that feeling threatened by out-group members in economic, political and cultural fields is the most significant determinant supporting exclusionary attitudes. The feeling of being threatened arises because of relative deprivation, which is the gap between what is ideal and what is happening both in religious, economic, political and cultural life (Gurr, 2016, p. 24). This is contrary to the principles of Pancasila especially regarding social justice for all Indonesians. Especially religiocentrism is at odds with Pancasila that purposes not be confrontational to religions.

The challenge is to restore a peaceful atmosphere of religious life and mutual respect for differences. Religions require Pancasila to resolve their limitations in accepting the 'other', achieving the common good and reducing deep-seated barriers that have the potential to trigger conflicts. We suspect that one common limitation is that most, if not all, fundamentalist or radical religious groups compel its followers to be either fanatic or overzealous. Mutual consensus based on Pancasila can cover this deficiency (Hanif, 2019, p. 130-131). Moreover, Siswanto (2019, p. 55-58) argues that, along with the development of globalization and changes in international economic and political order, Pancasila needs revitalization to fit the current national and global dynamics. This revitalization aims to restore the values of Pancasila into the hearts of Indonesian people. For example, by talking about whether the extent of the free market economy in Indonesia is in accordance with the values of Pancasila, especially Pancasila's principle of social justice for all Indonesian people. We observe that the current Indonesian economic system is a free market and liberal economy dictated by a smaller number of oligarchs. It certainly contradicts the principle of social justice for all Indonesian people. Another question is whether the electoral system is consistent with the fourth principle in Pancasila, deliberation to reach agreement. This question is essential because the so-called democratic elections in Indonesia only create political oligarchy, strengthen authoritarianism and weaken freedom of expression. Kankindi (2017) states that political participation in Western liberal democracy follows the principle of the survival of the fittest; the fittest are associated with big money. Such liberal democracy comes from Western countries and is not in accord with Pancasila values. Especially the conflict in Papua brought about by economic exploitation via the mining in Freeport.

Conflict between Pancasila and Bandung Principles

Based on the previous paragraphs, we conclude that ongoing conflicts based on ethnic or religious primordial sentiments, intolerance and separatism determined the social situation of the Indonesian people after the 1998 reformation. The values of Pancasila as the basis of state ideology are mostly symbolic and normative but do not enliven the life of Indonesian society, nation and state. As a state ideology, in our opinion, Pancasila is dead because the practices of administering state power are far from the values contained in Pancasila. Therefore, as a result, Pancasila cannot be a binder in relations between religious or ethnic communities when injustice occurs in the structures of power and resource sharing that creates

relative deprivation. Pancasila values are visible in the daily life of the Indonesian people, such as cooperation and helping each other in the grassroots community. However, state rulers and political elites do not fully practice Pancasila in governance. They are more inclined to think about their personal, family and class interests than the public interest. Therefore, there is a gap between the mass and its elites in practicing Pancasila values (Wahyu, 1 June 2022).

Pancasila's values, as mentioned above, have indeed conceptually imbued the Bandung principles. In their own country, Indonesia, the state leaders have made it an ideological slogan but have not practised it correctly according to the founding fathers' aspirations. We recall President Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, which contained, among other things, peace, as follows:

"There is no task more urgent than maintaining peace. Without peace, our independence is of little use. The restoration and development of our countries will mean very little, and our revolutions will not have the opportunity to continue their journey" (Utama, 2017, p. 249).

The spirit of the Bandung Principles, as a reflection of the values of Pancasila, really values and embeds peace in relations between diverse groups of people or nations. However, this peaceful situation borrowing Galtung's (1969) conception of a negative or positive peace has not yet come to fruition in Indonesia. Violent conflicts have still coloured Papua's situation from 1965 until now. While social welfare has increased rapidly compared to the early days of independence, inequality for the Papua citizens is still very high.

Another content of President Sukarno's speech was about the relationship between various religious groups concerning peace. The president said:

Religion has a significant position, especially in this part of our world. Presumably, there are more religions here than in any other area of the earth. Nevertheless, once again, our countries are the birthplace of religions. Should we be divided because of the diversity in our religious life? Each religion has its history, peculiarities, nation d'etre, and the particular truths it wishes to promulgate. But if we do not realize that all major religions are the same in their message to prioritize tolerance and in their advice to practice the principle of living and allowing life, if the followers of every religion are not prepared to in the same way respect the rights of others everywhere, If every state does not fulfil its obligation to give equal rights to adherents of all faiths – if all these are not implemented, then reli-

gion will be degraded, and its true purpose will be polluted and distorted (Utama, 2017, p. 243).

As mentioned earlier, 54 years after Indonesia's independence, conflicts between ethnic-religious groups emerged openly in 1999 after the fall of the authoritarian New Order regime. The spirit of the Bandung Principles is that the state gives equal rights to all believers to worship according to their beliefs. The conflict between religious groups in Indonesia that occurred at the beginning of the 1998 reformation was marked by the use of religious symbols in order to commit violence against other parties. The conflict seemed to occur because of religious differences, but in reality, the conflict actors were political entrepreneurs who competed by exploiting religious symbols to gain power (Klinken, 2007). Most political elites forget Pancasila's values and the Bandung Principles' spirit. Those values and principles do not become a reference for public ethics or ethics in the administration of power (Ardi, 2017).

Finally, one of the essential points in President Sukarno's speech at the opening of the 1955 KAA regarded the rejection of colonialism:

How is it possible for us to be silent about colonialism? For us, colonialism is not something far away. We know him in all his cruelty. We have seen how much it causes great damage to humanity, how much it is abandoned, and if it is, in the end, reluctantly expelled or expelled by the irresistible journey of history. My people and the people of various Asian and African countries know this because we have experienced it ourselves (Utama, p. 249).

The speech shows that the spirit of the Bandung Principle is anti-colonialism. However, the reality occurs in Papua; the relationship between the central Government and the Papuan people resembles internal colonialism (Kusumaryati, 2018, pp. 1-3). One feature arising from the inherent nature of colonialization is the greater dominance of the military and police in political and economic policies. In addition, the policy of transmigration of people from outside Papua has caused indigenous Papuans to become a minority in coastal areas. Finally, Papua has seen the exploitation of natural resources on a large scale, the benefits of which are enjoyed mainly by investors from outside Papua (Sudira et al., 2020, pp. 19-20). Meanwhile, violent conflict continues between the West Papua National Liberation Army and the Indonesian security forces, causing civilian casualties and refugees. So far, the idealistic principles of Pancasila do meet their limits here.

Conclusion

Pancasila Principles do contribute to promote dialogue and diversity in local levels like the ones in Ambon and Poso. However, we conclude that Pancasila fails to serve as a philosophy of unity to promote tolerance and peace on a national level because the nature of conflict is not only ideological but originates more in social and political injustices. Another problem is that the interpretation of Pancasila is always determined by the ruling political regime and, consequently, the interpretation of the five Pancasila Principles changes during all political periods. Since Pancasila has not been implemented thoughtfully by the political regimes in power, the state ideology has not realized the life of the people envisioned by the founding founders. Political regimes follow the interest of their parties rather than that of the people.

On the phenomenon of religious intolerance and the ongoing conflict of separatism, we observe that the application of Pancasila values does not follow the spirit of the Bandung Principle, namely a commitment to open dialogue based on mutual respect and achieving mutual benefits. A dialogue to resolve problems peacefully is fundamental to the Bandung Principles. Although such principles aimed for a global context then, they are still relevant for use at the national and local level today. The increase in religious intolerance, for example, occurred because the tradition of dialogue between different religious leaders, who lived during the colonial period, disappeared after Indonesia's independence. The Government exacerbated this in the New Order era, which did not allow traditions to disagree.

Finally, we observe that the violent conflict in Papua has never ended since its integration with Indonesia in 1963. Papuan church leaders in Papua wonder why the Indonesian Government was willing to have a dialogue with the Free Aceh Movement in 2005 but has not been willing to have a dialogue with the Free Papua Movement. The Indonesian Government could resolve the violent conflict in Papua through dialogue and negotiation with the leaders of the Papuan independence movement. By not implementing Pancasila values, the Government does not commit to dialogue to achieve the peace that is the essence of the Pancasila and Bandung Principles. Dialogue also is a space to correct stigmatization and racism against Papuan natives. The dialogue between Jakarta and Papua also represents the dialogue between races, in this case Malay and Melanesian. It is hoped that an improved application of the principles of Pancasila will serve the living conditions for both Indonesians and Papuans.

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Pancasila and Ujamaa

Philosophies of Unity for Promoting Tolerance in a (Global) Society Which is Multi-Cultural and Multi-Religious

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Abstract

Pancasila and Ujamaa are two philosophies of unity. Pancasila comes from Indonesia, an Asian country with a complex geographical setup, composed of a scatter of islands and a multi-cultural population of Muslim majority with Buddhism, Hinduism and Christian minorities. Ujamaa is practiced in Tanzania, in East Africa. Tanzania has more than one hundred and twenty ethnic groups. Despite the different contexts in which the two philosophies have operated, the end results have been the same; in each country, the respective philosophy has exhibited unity which has played an important role in maintaining tolerance and stability in the respective nations, despite the tensions which exist throughout history between the different groups in the two nations. This chapter attempts to examine the potential of the two philosophies of unity to maintain the spirit of tolerance in a global multi-cultural and multi-religious society. To reach this goal, the author engages in conceptual analysis and comparison of the social-political circumstances of Pancasila and Ujamaa at their formation and practice stages. This work has discovered a host of existential values in the philosophies of unity. The values, if maintained properly and shared through digital methods, may help to maintain the spirit of tolerance within the contemporary digital and multi-cultural world. It is the conviction of this chapter that the application of values present in Ujamaa and Pancasila is important nowadays due to the tendency present in

society of regarding philosophies of unity as belonging to the past, while their impact can influence contemporary life and understanding can promise a better future.

Keywords: Pancasila; Ujamaa; Bandung Spirit; multi-cultural; multi-religious; digitalism

Introduction

Pancasila and Ujamaa are philosophies of unity which appear to converge on respect, peace, equal sharing of resources, tolerance and stability. The two philosophies emerged as an answer to the call for unity after the threat posed by colonialist inversion in Tanzania and Indonesia. Ujamaa is a way of life, coined by Julius Nyerere, with the aim of restoring traditional African values. It presents the principle of human security, which is divided into three main values: namely mutual respect, work for all and the sharing of the product of work. Ujamaa proposes persuasive methods (Nyerere, 1971b). Ujamaa is considered to be a philosophy due to its unsatisfactory call to reform the then present situation through the use of the accumulated wisdom of traditional African life.

On the other hand, Pancasila is a philosophy of the nation of Indonesia which is based on the 'five principles', which are: belief in Almighty God, a Just Civil Society, Human Rights, Democracy and Social Justice (Intan, 2006).

The Bandung Spirit exists as the result of the conference held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955, which was attended by representatives from African and Asian nations. The conference suggested a way forward for the well-being of human existence; it offered a way to preserve the diversity present in the world so as to make place for all people to benefit equally from the resources of the world, regardless of color, race or place of origin. The Bandung Spirit calls upon Africa and Asia, whose inhabitants make up the majority of the world population, to think about the global system of living which will enable all people to live in harmony in the contemporary era and beyond.

Pancasila and Ujamaa are considered to be philosophies of unity because they contributed to the spirit of unity and tolerance in Indonesia and Tanzania. The importance of anthropocentric values and the spirit of tolerance present in Pancasila and Ujamaa motivated me to write this chapter, having gratitude for all who have contributed to the conditions and the environment in which I found myself. Thus, this makes me responsible for participating in the preservation and

propagation of these values, which are in the philosophies of unity which contributed to the political and social stability in Tanzania. The central argument of this paper is that although Pancasila and Ujamaa originated from deferent contexts they exhibit values which reflect the Bandung Spirit and which can be useful in maintaining tolerance in the multi-cultural digital world.

Revisiting the Bandung Spirit

Bandung Spirit can be defined as the totality of the ten principles which were given after the conference. The ten principles of Bandung are Equality for all races of humanity, Economy, Culture, Human Rights and Self-determination, the Problems of Dependent Peoples, Political Freedom, Abstention from Interference in the internal affairs of another country, Respect for Justice and the International Obligation for the Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation (Eslava, Fakhiri, & Nesiah, 2012).

The African and Asian independent nations discussed their liberation from colonial powers, handling and removing the “divide and rule” method and the importance of living in the world based on the existential values open to all human beings. The Bandung Conference calls for peaceful coexistence among nations. It stood against any form of oppression and intervention in internal political matters of nations by the colonial superpowers. Rather, the conference called for solidarity with the poor, the weak and the marginalized. The Bandung Spirit gives the message not only to Asia and African nations but to the whole world. The message is anthropocentric in nature; it embraces humanity based on equality and respect to all human races in the world. It calls for people from all over the world who agree with the message of Bandung to unite and search for an alternative global system which will foster economic development strategies inclusive of the preservation of culture, languages and civilizations which are at the risk of disappearing from the face of the world. The advancement in technology makes the realization of the loss easily accessed. The same advancement in globalization put long-held traditions and cultures throughout the world at risk of disappearing due to the fact that new media technology content is more watched and followed compared to the traditional way of living, putting the diverse culture at stake. The term globalization can be understood as an interdependent form of global exchange in business, information, culture and population which is characterized by cross border trade in services, investment, material and personnel (Baek, 2016).

The type of globalization to which we are referring is characterized chiefly by the dominance in economic and material manner of development of few developed superpowers. These nations, few as they are with minority population in the world, control global systems across the whole world in ways which are not friendly to the human development of the majority of the world's population. Globalization is based chiefly on dimensions of materiality and profit-making by the superpower nations. Human beings are taken as mere consumers; the other dimensions of human existence are simply not taken seriously (Matthies, 1985).

In order for a nation to be able to establish real independence, politically and economically, a good financial condition is crucial. The economic world system does not allow each and every country to use and enjoy the natural resources found in that country. I would like to discuss the monopoly of the few developed nations over the natural resources of other nations and the financial state of the whole world; this issue is addressed by the Bandung Conference. The economic advancement of the few developed countries is not taken as a means to help humanity in poor nations; rather, it makes the poor nations remain dependent. In saying so, this chapter does not intend to blame the developed countries for the economic state of some of the poor African and Asian nations; rather it attempts to call for self-sufficient economic strategies in those nations (Khudori, 2015).

The Bandung Conference clearly acknowledged the presence of a single model of development, which is centered on material and commercial profits for superpowers rather than insisting on development for all. The global system treats people as mere commodities and consumers of the products of the material world and media as well as exhibiting two classes of humanity. The first class is of the superpowers who are the owners and the planners of the current system, whereas the second group is based on the consumers who are poor and, through their consumption, make profit for the rich. The phenomenon shown by globalization pushes people to be greedy consumers while forgetting their cultural and social roots.

A human being is formed and shaped by what they are reading, seeing and listening. The globalization system claims to embrace all, but it is a fact that most countries from Africa and Asia do not have a voice of decision on what is to be in the market or not, an attitude which endangers the identity of nations and young generations. Based on the economic model of superpower control, the Bandung Spirit challenged members of Asia and Africa who have the larger proportion of population globally to consider how to stop the threats to diversity in culture posed by the current model of economy (Ndlovu, 2019). An alternative way may secure

the cultural inheritance of the world and ensure the preservation of the diversity of the marginalized population.

“The moral strength of Asia and Africa should be ranged against the military force represented by the blocs in both East and West” (Matthies, 1985, p. 208).

The Bandung resolutions searched for a system which able to embrace human beings despite their differences in color or ethnic background. It fostered the multi-dimensional civilization of the world as an inheritance for generations to come, just as we have found in the world the presence of different cultural and traditional civilization preserved by previous generations. All races and civilization ought to be treated equally and so each deserves a due respect, for based on human rationality all human beings are equal (Phillips, 2016).

The Bandung Spirit calls for a theoretical and political involvement in the building of the continent, which is free of inequalities and threats to other civilization. It is the fact that, as much as nations may reflect on the presence of inequalities and double standards of the globalization, Africa and Asia are not pure; there are many cases of inequalities to be addressed within the globe as well. Hence, the Bandung spirit is a call for all to rethink the presence of human values and their applicability.

The answer to the challenge posed by the Bandung Conference is partly seen in the philosophies of unity found in Indonesia and Tanzania. Based on existential values, these philosophies succeeded in the past to bring about a spirit of tolerance in the local community; the impact of this is seen today. I propose that the same values can be applied in the contemporary world to promote tolerance. By affirming this solution, this chapter does not claim that the solitary application of the traditional ways of the past can solve contemporary problems, but it would insist upon the importance of treasuring the past for a better present and future. African-Asian Nationalism intends to make a change to economic dimensions, which is crucial for real development and the flourish of human dignity.

Achievements

While looking at history, one can recognize that the Bandung Spirit comes as a result of the human search for freedom and recognition; it is a human quest for identity and dignity. The Bandung Spirit gave an answer to existential questions about the meaning of life. Other movements include Pan-Africanism, Negritude, Black consciousness and non-alignment which are the expressions of human quest for peaceful existential conditions (Ndlovu, 2019).

One of the greatest achievements of the Bandung Conference is in creating awareness with a permanent outcome; that is, resolution based on lasting values of human dignity. The question of social, economic and political independence is like a soil for freedom, equality and respect to all human beings and is an ongoing concern for all generations. The Bandung Conference influenced the formation of the non-alignment movement as it is said:

On the other hand, though, the conference did not create any lasting structures for cooperation and communication among the newly formed countries. Nevertheless the “Spirit of Bandung” lived on, and this was later given concrete shape in new organizational forms (the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77) (Matthies, 1985, p. 207).

After discussing the spirit of Bandung, its origin, message and achievement, this chapter now intends to discuss Pancasila and Ujamaa.

Philosophies of Unity: The Nature and Background of Pancasila and Ujamaa

Ujamaa and Pancasila, the two philosophies of unity seem to share some of the thoughts of the Bandung Spirit. It should be clear that the Bandung Spirit is not the same as the philosophies of unity; rather, its presence came prior to the official declaration of Ujamaa. Pancasila and the Bandung Conference were from Indonesia and were active during the same period. Pancasila as the philosophy of the nation of Indonesia is based on the five principles, which are present in the Indonesian Constitution (Tyesta, 2020). Pancasila is a Sanskrit word which is translated into English language as “five principles”; *panca* is ‘five’ and *sila* means ‘principles’.

Indonesia was under the rule of the Dutch people who dominated the country until 1949. During the World War II, Japan occupied Indonesia as well. These environments provided a catalyst for the native leaders to seek a particular way to organize themselves against the leadership of foreigners; bearing in mind the geographical location of Indonesia with the population in the scattered islands. The presence of inhabitants of different religions, ethnic groups, race and diversity in culture led to the ‘divide and rule’ method used by the colonialists so as to retain power. Hence, the formation of Pancasila intended to build up a nation based on the spirit of unity (Geertz, 1963).

Pancasila as a philosophy has its specific objectives which are reflected in the five main pillars. The first pillar is concerning the belief in one and Supreme God. Having a country with different religious beliefs, this pillar encourage and allow citizenry to follow a variety of religious and spiritual dimensions, by living a life which accepts belief in one God without judging others or showing any sort of superiority. This pillar brings awareness that there is a Supreme God and human life is temporally defined. Based on belief in the Supreme Being, people tend to follow the religious norms and instructions which help to offer a sense of belonging and a spirit of tolerance (Intan, 2006).

The second pillar of Pancasila is the recognition of the other and respect for other creatures and nature. It is an emphasis on showing respect to fellow human beings, animals and the environment. The third pillar stands for the unity of Indonesia. It invites Indonesians to embrace unity despite the difference in ethnic groups, religions and background. All must strive for unity of the nation and its people. The differences need to be recognized and respected so as to unite all citizens, not to bring divisions. It follows that the fourth pillar deals with the issue of democracy, led by the wisdom of deliberations among representatives. This pillar demonstrates the practice of the representative administration. It deals with the political dimensions of Indonesians. The last pillar is about the social justice for the whole of the Indonesian citizens: this pillar emphasizes the importance of work for all people for their living and fostering development for all (Sugara, 2018).

The five pillars of Pancasila reflect the quest for a just and developed society. These pillars call humanity, from the local point of view to international dimensions, to rethink the place of human beings in this world. It is this anthropocentric and existential concern for humanity, which still holds water in contemporary times.

Ujamaa comes from the Swahili term *jamaa*, which means relatives or brotherhood. The prefix U is added to form the abstract term Ujamaa. Julius Kambage Nyerere coined Ujamaa, as a way of living, with the aim of restoring African traditional values that were destroyed during colonialism. It is based on the Arusha Declaration held in 1967. Arusha is a region in northern Tanzania. It is from this Declaration that Ujamaa was determined to be the policy of the nation. The Declaration has five main parts, namely the Tanganyika¹ African National Union (henceforth TANU) creed, the policy of socialism, the policy of self-reliance, TANU membership and the Arusha resolutions. Ujamaa as a philosophy propagates

1 The name Tanzania, as known today, refers to the combination of Tanganyika and Zanzibar into union, established in 1964.

self-reliance education for liberating human being socially, politically, economically and psychologically to foster development, which is human-based (Nyerere, 1974).

Tanzania (then Tanganyika) was under the rule of Great Britain, after the Germans and Arabs. The presence of the colonialist and the impact of their stay in the lives of Tanzanians stirred up movements of national unity, characterized by the ideas of Ujamaa even before independence in 1961 (Hyden, 1980). Ujamaa of Tanzania displays a great deal of existential concern about human beings, as its foundations states:

The foundation, and the objective, of African socialism is the extended family. The true African socialist does not look on one class of men as his brethren and another as his natural enemies. He does not form an alliance with the “brethren” for the extermination of the “non-brethren”. He rather regards all men as his brethren – as members of his ever-extending family. Ujamaa, then, or ‘family-hood’, describes our socialism. It is opposed to capitalism, which seeks to build a happy society based on the exploitation of man by man; and it is equally opposed to doctrine socialism, which seeks to build its happy society on a philosophy of inevitable conflict between man and man (Nyerere, 1971a, p. 7).

The values, which were practiced in traditional families, are intended to be applied in the whole nation to cultivate the spirit of togetherness and brotherhood which was present among Africans before the colonial regime. Ujamaa maintained the principle of human security that enabled all the members of the society to live in harmony. The principle of human security is made up of three values: mutual respect, obligation to work for all and the sharing of the product of labor (Nyerere, 1968).

It proceeds that the first value in the Ujamaa principle of human security, as practiced in African traditional families, was mutual respect, which pertains to human relations in society. The presence of this value enables members to show respect to the other and at the same time to receive due respect from them. The respected person is sure of having their other rights based on the equality of human beings. Respect as a value reflects some sort of equality based on rationality among humans

The second value is the obligation to work for all who are capable to do so. Work enables social life among the members of the society; it gives an opportunity to serve and to receive service, which is part of human life. Work as a value promotes self-reliance from individual level to family level. It continues into the level, which

expands from villages to cities and to the nation at large. The achievement of self-autonomy in the economic dimension can be attained if, and only if, people can embrace this value and teach the next generation the danger of depending on other nations financially, which in most cases threatens individual and national freedom.

The third and last value in Ujamaa deals with sharing of the product of labor, which tends to bring order and eliminate exploitation entirely. It is the value which regulates the ownership of properties in society. The aim is to minimize the ratio of social classes who have to those who do not have.

The Scope and Limitation of Pancasila and Ujamaa

The understanding and implementation of Pancasila is divided into different eras: “Although there are different ways of implementing Pancasila from Soekarno era (1945-1967) and Suharto’s New Order (1967-1998). There is agreement that Pancasila is a philosophy, a life vision, and an ideology of Indonesia” (Sugara, 2018, p. 247). In the first era, also known as the New Order, the practice was undertaken thoroughly with proper teaching of Pancasila in elementary school, secondary school, high school and university. This form of formal education enabled those who attended school to know what Pancasila is. However, the practice was challenged due to the fact that it consisted more of theory, and yet real practical life use for normal people requires proper interpretation and engagement. Absence of integrity in real life makes theoretical instruction lose its taste and hinder the applicability of Pancasila. This can be renewed through discussion, feedback and adjustment (Suwanbubbha, 2005).

The adjustment and commitment to values found in Pancasila is possible through the use of media and technology, which is fast accessed by the majority of the population of the world. The task ahead is to prepare people who are ready to invest their time in preparing posts suitable for creating an atmosphere which is good for the flourishing of the anthropocentric values of unity in diversity, the embracing of the marginalized, equality and respect for all.

On the other hand, Ujamaa, which is found in the current constitution of Tanzania (1977) as well as in the constitution of the ruling political party, managed to establish a foundation of brotherhood among the Tanzanians. The spirit of brotherhood can be seen through the strong national identity, unity and hospitality among the citizenry. One thing is clear: just as Pancasila is better known to the old generation in Indonesia, so too is Ujamaa in Tanzania. Hence, this chapter recog-

nizes the importance of re-establishing strategies which will enable the younger generation to understand the historical, social and ethical foundation and motives of the philosophies of unity, for the stability and identity of their respective nations in the contemporary world and in future.

The goals of the two philosophies were achieved in the past. The achievement was accelerated by the presence of values that fostered the spirit of tolerance. The aforementioned values are applicable to humanity for all generations, including in the current digital environment. The digital world seems to threaten the presence and applicability of the philosophies of unity by its modern and foreign culture thrown into the life of people. However, this can be used by Indonesians and Tanzanians who are well-equipped with an awareness of the importance of their traditional way of living, “but many are struggling with the issue of how to mould these globalising tools for their needs, and how to use them strategically and creatively for the benefit of all” (Khudori, 2006, p. 132). The young generation needs to be involved in understanding the importance of the values present in the philosophies of unity, the part played by these philosophies in history and the formation of national identity. The imparted knowledge may bring about awareness of the necessity for treasuring, guarding and guiding human identity in diversity.

The cooperation occurs between family members, school teachers, education ministries and policy makers, without forgetting the politicians who show integrity and love for their national history and heritage. The philosophies of unity are to be reflected in culture, environment (such as preservation of the natural resources and inheritance), politics, economy and faith. In order to implement these ideas, a strategy which involves social organizations and local government is important, to work together so as to foster unity in diversity. Nyerere, the author of *Ujamaa*, urged that the then-modern problems facing humanity are the result of inequality and division rooted in world systems. As he says:

Poverty is not the real problem of the modern world. For we have the knowledge and resources which could enable us to overcome poverty. The real problem, the thing which creates misery, wars and hatred among men is the division of mankind into rich and poor. We can see this division at two levels. Within nation states there are a few individuals who have great wealth and whose wealth gives them great power; but the vast majority of people suffer from varying degrees of poverty and deprivation (Nyerere, 1970, p. 484).

The ideas of Nyerere from the above quotation are true even in contemporary life. Human value practices require a deep consideration so as to ensure the well-being of all people and, in special way, those who are less fortunate.

After discussing about Ujamaa and Pancasila as the philosophies of unity, their nature, background, scope and limitation this chapter now turns to the applicability of Ujamaa and Pancasila in the contemporary digital world.

Pancasila and Ujamaa in Contemporary Digital Society

The two philosophies began in the period of colonial rule and their search for independence and both flourished in the post-independence context. In contemporary times however, there seems to be vestiges of religious extremism. The context changes as time goes on. Changes occur in the population of some ethnic and religious denominations, which tend to search for identity and recognition. The new generation is more open and occupied with the advancement in science, technology and the digital world. One can state that another change involves the fact that, there is a smaller number of people who witnessed, or still see, the importance of the philosophies of unity. There is also the change in the model of instruction concerning Pancasila and Ujamaa in schools.

The presence of the above-mentioned changes not only diminish the practice of Pancasila and Ujamaa but also endanger their existence in the years to come, the existence of which is important so as to maintain and expand the existential values not only within Indonesia and Tanzania but also to other parts of the world. The presence of unity and the spirit of tolerance among Indonesians from different religions and cultural practices is highly credited to the philosophy of Pancasila which managed to put Christians, Muslims and other religions in the mindset of tolerance since the attainment of independence (Shofiana, 2014). The fact that people are still engaging in research concerning the continuity of Pancasila in contemporary times is in itself the proof of its impact in the life of people. But there are problems with regard to the proper methods which can be used in the contemporary digital world so as to revive the philosophies of unity.

The Internal and External Challenges

Two challenges seem to influence the applicability of Pancasila and Ujamaa in the contemporary time: internal challenges and external ones. This section intends

to begin with the internal challenges which, as the name implies, are the result of inner misunderstandings between the local population and state leadership as well as strategy within the local context. The internal challenges facing Pancasila consist of the differences, which seem to arise between members of different religions, in which people experience division and segregation (Intan, 2019). Some of the major religions seek a more independent recognition in society, an attitude that threatens the atmosphere of tolerance. Another internal challenge is the gap, which exists between the old generation and the young generation with respect to knowledge of these philosophies of unity. The difference is the type of education offered now and previously with regard to philosophies of unity. As stated earlier in this chapter, the early stages of Ujamaa and Pancasila consisted of teaching about their importance in the elementary and secondary schools. The situation is different now, partly due to a natural change of focus; previously the colonial regime was seen as the sole enemy for the state. Since the enemy is no longer there, the strategies also need adjustment. Although the policy makers and leaders can be accountable for not being able to pass the values to young generation, the main issue here seems to be based on the ongoing method and strategies. The improvement of methods of transmitting values can promise stability and the continuation of values found in the philosophies of unity and pass accumulated knowledge and skills from the old generation to the new one. This can be done at home through oral traditions and informal education. The crucial thing is awareness and commitment of the old generation to the identity and unity of their nations respectively.

On the other hand, the external challenge is based on the influence of external factors, including the issue of economic dependence of most African countries and some of Asian nations, globalization and media. The external factors carry the agenda of the superpower nations, thus, they tend to influence people, particularly policy makers and the young generation's way of thinking about socio-cultural and economic dimensions. The main issue for the African countries seems to be:

to free themselves from this system politically, militarily, economically and culturally, these countries are confronted with a historical dilemma. The essence of this dilemma is that for lack of sufficient resources and means of applying pressure they still rely on the help and support of precisely the countries which pose the greatest threat to their autonomy and independence (Matthies, 1985, p. 210),

It follows that the external challenges reveal clearly how the citizens and political leaders of some of the African-Asian nations are prepared to meet the challenges of economic dependence, modernization, media, digital world and the re-introduc-

tion of western civilization as they cannot be left behind, live as an island or sell their independence. Rather, they seek to live as global citizens and at the same time hold on to the values contained in the philosophies of unity; these values enable them to be identified as a nation or as an individual from the African-Asian sphere. Some of the Asian countries, taking China as an example, have succeeded in removing economic dependence and so are able to control, regulate and in some extent minimize the influence brought by external media and modernization.

Proposed Method for Fostering Philosophies of Unity in the Contemporary Digital Society

This chapter acknowledges the presence of existential values of unity, equality, mutual respect and sharing of resources in the philosophies of unity and so invites its practice around the globe. It is a call to strive to eliminate or at least to minimize internal conflict, to foster democratic elections and leadership and to respect the dignity of human beings. The poor and the marginalized are to be helped with strong and lasting strategies, but above all to ensure that collective self-reliance is promoted both in theory and in practice (Acharya, 2016).

The Ethical and Cultural Concern

The contemporary world is characterized by multi-knowledge and multi-tasking among multi-cultural populations. It is a challenging situation, which needs not to be avoided but to be confronted. The type of confrontation ought to be open to the intention of keeping human existential values within the character of the media.

The challenges of globalization for social movements lie in finding ways to dialogue and communicate with communities around the world, to discover how globalization is affecting us all, and to begin forming global solidarities to deal with the negative consequences. Information and communications technologies present them with an opportunity to tackle these challenges, and to build themselves a platform upon which to collaborate, mobilize, observe, and publish (Lannon, 2005, p. 128).

The users of media are human beings coming from different backgrounds and cultural heritage. Variations in culture among inhabitants of the world are itself

part of a diverse heritage which ought to be preserved so as to make the world a better place. Hence, an awareness of different intentions in using technology and internet is indispensable for the users of technology and media.

Pancasila is written in language that is accessible to the Indonesian; this is the advantage of Pancasila over Ujamaa which was written in English. The remedy to this problem of Ujamaa came with the Swahili language, which is spoken by all Tanzanians, so the translation of the anthropocentric values of Ujamaa managed to survive the language limitation. In these philosophies, the issue of the common language played an important role not only to unite and inform people of different cultures, ethnic groups and religious backgrounds but to form a stable atmosphere within the nations as well as the spirit of tolerance. The presence of Swahili language in Tanzania helps to minimize the possible ethnic groups' conflicts (Nyerere, 1998).

The Application of Persuasion in the Media

Persuasion is defined as a philosophical method, which appeals to the rationality of human beings. It has three main characteristics: logic, pathos and ethics. The contemporary global environment is mindful about the use of time and systematic discussion concerning the challenges facing human condition hence persuasion is important to improve awareness among people. Those engaged in persuasion using different clips, YouTube videos and online debates need to be equipped with the anthropocentric values of Ujamaa and Pancasila. They have to be invested with the importance of human values in themselves and in the people they persuade and address, to cherish the existential values in society. Above all, the persuaders require the understanding of the moral, social and psychological situation of their audience. The individuals of the current times are very much influenced by advancements in science and technology and it takes systematic strategies to appeal not only to their rationality and to environmental concerns but also to the psychological challenges they face.

Education Based on Cultural Heritage

Checks and balances are important in the education systems to form individuals who are both prepared to bring about new ideas based on the needs of society but also to be able to treasure their heritage and to interpret the signs of the time. The

spirit of globalization and its advancement in science, technology and in the way the media operates exhibits its impact in the life of people in Asia and Africa. This is because the majority of the population in Africa and Asia are not prepared to balance their traditional values amidst globalization and mass communications. The young generation are more inclined towards new inventions due to their curiosity, eager to know new things and lack of experience. This attitude is good, but instructors have to foresee the danger of new ideas in the mind of a young person who is not well equipped in their culture and history, their individual responsibility and the norms and morals of their society (Suwanbubbha, 2005).

Despite the challenges, which seem to threaten the presence and importance of the philosophies of unity, there is still a strong conviction that these philosophies are used whenever there is a threat to the peace and unity of the nation. In Tanzania, for example, politicians tend to go back to the roots of Ujamaa to regain the spirit of understanding among them. The same can be applied to restore the presence of these values among the citizenry and in a distinct way among the young generation who are more exposed to media characterized by western culture. The makers of policies and instructors at different levels need to prioritize contextual use of social media among young generation and children so as to safeguard the unity and strength of their respective nation and the identity of the African-Asian area.

The recognition that each person has a role to play to ensure a continuous practice of the historical values is a task that requires time and commitment. The young generation with its digital ideas and global world is more occupied with new ideas, having very little awareness that it is because of the presence of stability in the country that they enjoy the development and peace. This stability did not come on its own but was deliberately built and needs to be maintained and adjusted according to the needs of the time, without endangering the core existential values, which constitute these philosophies. Hence, there is a great need of continuity based on the protection of the identity and stability of the nation from the external threats.

The saying that history repeats itself can pose a call for reflection about the intentions which makes colonialists come to Africa and Asia; that is, to search for materials for their well-being and to look for markets for their products. The same may be seen in the way the global economy is managed. It is therefore a call for the importance of understanding the plans of rich nations so as to adjust the African-Asian global way of handling an economy. The fathers who established these philosophies managed to see from afar. It is the turn of our contemporaries, in Africa and Asia, to use the same advancement of science and technology to

spread the values of unity in diversity and the importance of real freedom, respect and peace to all inhabitants of the world to counter any form of threat to the poor and the marginalized.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to address the importance of philosophies of unity in promoting the spirit of tolerance in the multi-cultural contemporary and digital world. In answering this question, the author recognized a host of existential human values in Pancasila and Ujamaa. The findings of this work show that, despite the presence of different religions and ethnic groups in the respective nations, the philosophies of Pancasila and Ujamaa played an important role in maintaining the spirit of tolerance and resolving different tensions, which appeared throughout their history.

It is the conviction of the author that the same philosophies of unity can be used to promote the spirit of tolerance in today's multi-cultural society with digital advancements. The prior achievements of maintaining peace and harmony may be shared in an educative manner through social media and other digital means that are fast and instant. This combines the traditional ways of the philosophies of unity with the use of the advancement in communication. This occurs together with the intention of bringing awareness of their influence and need in the past in building a multi-cultural society, which is stable in the present times and in future.

This chapter recognized the importance of the individual and communal commitment cross the African-Asian globe to a continuous plan for the transmission of values contained in the philosophies of unity so as to enable the active generation to contribute to the propagation of the spirit of tolerance in the contemporary times.

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Recycling Ujamaa Philosophy in Tanzania

A Critical Discourse Analysis of John Pombe Magufuli's Speeches

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Abstract

This chapter examines the trends and applicability of Ujamaa philosophy that were regarded as secular after the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's leadership regime (1961-1985). The chapter tries to answer the following questions: is Ujamaa still alive and used to unite the Tanzanians? And Ujamaa philosophy is a lesson that will never be erased in Tanzanians? Using critical discourse analysis, this paper examines speeches and remarks by the late Magufuli at different locations, and consequently compared with practices conducted from 2015-2020, when Magufuli was in office as the 5th President of the United Republic of Tanzania. These speeches were collected from government records available at the Parliament and President's offices. The chapter suggests that there were similarities between the late Magufuli's speeches and remarks and the Ujamaa philosophy/ideology/policy, as reflected in both the adoption and adaption of the Ujamaa principles and unification of citizens as a nation. Such principles were evident in the context of the government emphasis on the control over major means of production versus the private sector, control of the media, stress on public servants' professionalism and ethical conducts, integrity regarding the use of public funds and properties, development through cooperative societies and emphasis on self-reliance and national unity. It can be argued that the return of socialist principles was observed through changes in macro-economic policies in Tanzania. However, contrary to

Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy, which emphasized the separation of religion and state, Magufuli's government embraced the mix of the state and religion. This time the country was united to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Ujamaa; Socialism; Magufuli; Nyerere; Critical Discourse Analysis

1. Introduction

“Ujamaa is a belief; an attitude of mind” (Nyerere 1968, p. 1)

Elaborating on the meaning of Ujamaa in the book entitled “Ujamaa: Essays on Socialism”, Nyerere (1968, p. 1) asserted that “Ujamaa is an attitude of mind”; an individual initiative to care for “other’s welfare”; and “a belief” – attributing it to a state religion and the relationship between religion and secularity. To Nyerere, a socialist individual is one who uses his/her ability, wealth and position in the “service of his fellow men” (Nyerere, 1968, pp. 1-12). According to Nyerere, the ingredients of socialism were justice and fairness, hard work and service to the people, as opposed to the accumulation of wealth through exploitative means, unfair competition and misuse of others. These were principles that informed the actions and policy of the government from 1961 through the Arusha Declaration on 5th February 1967 to mid-1980s.

On the 9th of December, 2021, Mainland Tanzania celebrated 60 years of independence, and 50 years of the Arusha Declaration was celebrated in 2017. The Arusha Declaration was the blueprint that provided a unique strategy for implementing Ujamaa philosophy in Tanzania (Nyerere, 1968; Blommaert, 1997). The Arusha Declaration was guided by seven Tanganyika National Union (TANU) beliefs that hinged on the equity of all humankind, dignity, respect, freedom, social protection, ownership of means of production and the general wellbeing of citizens (Chama cha Mapinduzi, 1967). The Declaration was also informed by twelve TANU aims and objectives that were centered on independence and freedom of people, dignity, democracy, regional co-operation, and mobilization of resources in order to eliminate poverty, ignorance and disease. It also emphasized the formation of cooperative organizations, direct government participation in the development of the country, equity, eradication of all types of exploitation, government direct control over principal means of production and collective ownership. TANU was a pan-Africanist political party with a focus on African unity, ensuring world

peace and security through the United Nations Organisation (Chama cha Mapinduzi, 1967).

Moreover, the Arusha Declaration instituted strict and restrictive leadership codes for public leaders (Chama cha Mapinduzi, 1967, p. 33; Nyerere, 1968, p.36). The codes required public leaders to adhere to ethics of leadership, including refraining from abusing their positions, accumulation of property, privileges and wealth (Nyerere, 1967). The resolution also emphasized self-reliance and economic independence, including refraining from overdependence on foreign loans, reducing income gap among informal, private and public sectors, and raising the standard of living of the poor citizens, especially in the rural areas (Chama cha Mapinduzi, 1967, pp. 34-35).

2. Socialism and Self-Reliance in mid-1980s: A Change of the Wind

The late Mwalimu Nyerere stepped down as a President of the United Republic of Tanzania in 1985. He was succeeded by Ali Hassan Mwinyi. Immediately, Socialism and Self-Reliance policies fell out of favor and became a peripheral ideology (Wijsen & Mfumbusa, 2007; Ndaluka, 2012; Zanzibar Resolution, 1991). From the mid-1970s, Tanzania faced an economic crisis that influenced the succeeding leadership to adopt IMF and World Bank's conditions; hence the state had to implement liberalist policies (Ndaluka, 2012). Liberalism gradually started gaining position in government policies, plans and actions with the help and advice from the World Bank and IMF (Nyquist, 2012). These two international organisations provided the structural guidance for the reforms in Tanzania under the buzz phrase "Structural Adjustment Programs" (SAPs) (Nyquist, 2012).

IMF directed the government of Tanzania to implement seven conditions in order to repair her dilapidated economy. These conditions were (UKEssays, 2018 p. 1):

- i. Currency devaluation (in which the Tanzania Shilling was to be devaluated by more than 80%).
- ii. Postponement of funding staple food.
- iii. The suspension of the government price control system.
- iv. Setting government salaries.
- v. Decrease of the shortfall in the national budget.
- vi. The reduction of state borrowing from the National Bank of Commerce.
- vii. Decrease of central government involvement in the economy and reassurance of private enterprise.

Responding to the above IMF conditions, the government of Tanzania prepared the first SAP (1982/1984-1984/1985) which encompassed the following measures (United Republic of Tanzania (1982, pp. 5-6):

- i. Improved incentives and support for exports.
- ii. Cutback of Government expenditures.
- iii. Control over parastatal finances.
- iv. Improve decision making in allocation of foreign exchange.
- v. Measures to improve parastatal efficiency.
- vi. Liberalization of interregional trade in agriculture and consumer goods and rationalization of pricing.
- vii. Measures to rationalize and increase the efficiency of the industrial sector and to promote industrial exports.
- viii. Measures to increase the capacity and efficiency of the transport system.
- ix. Measures to economise on energy and to expand alternative domestic supply.

Although there were many external forces behind this ideological shift, some quarters attributed the adoption of liberalization policies and SAPs to the attitude of the leaders that succeeded Nyerere as the founder and the first believer in socialism and self-reliance (Maghimbi, 2012). For instance, the second regime under Ali Hassan Mwinyi (1985-1995) favored the market economy – an attitude that nicknamed him *Mzee Rukhsa* (lit: permitted/allowed). Moreover, the late Benjamin Mkapa who was the third president of the Republic of Tanzania between 1995 and 2005 initiated privatization of government and national resources. It was during this time when government-owned industries and properties were sold to business men and women. The underlying idea was that the government has failed to manage them.

Furthermore, during Jakaya Kikwete's leadership (2005-2015), the government emphasized local and foreign investment. It was during this time that many private companies were invited to open operations in the country; in the areas of mining, agriculture, energy, gas and real estate. All these developments, from 1985 when Mwalimu Nyerere stepped down to 2015 when Magufuli assumed office, were advancing toward building a capitalist society, which was against the objectives of Ujamaa and the vision of Mwalimu Nyerere.

This also showed that socialism, as a belief (Nyerere, 1968, p. 1), had converted fewer believers. Individuals, who were ready to preach, protect and stand for Ujamaa's objectives, after the founder stepped down, were either lacking or silenced. As Nyerere was frustrated and critical with the change of ideology, he said:

The Change meant, for example, an end to the prohibition on leaders' participation in the ownership and running of private businesses, exempted spouses from any rules at all, relaxed the rules against landlordism and those, which originally restricted the employment of other human beings for private profit. In practice virtually, all other rules regulating the conduct of leaders have since then fallen into disuse – including the requirement that Ministers report regularly to the President on their assets, wealth, and non-salary income (Nyerere, 1995, p. 15).

Mwalimu Nyerere reacted bitterly to the amendment of the Arusha Declaration code of ethics for public leaders. The amendment was dubbed the Zanzibar Resolution of 1991, as it was made in Zanzibar.

Nevertheless, a shift toward socialist ideology was evident after the 2015 general election, in which the late John Pombe Magufuli was elected the 5th President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Government policies and activities emphasized the implementation of socialist tenets similar to those highlighted by Nyerere (1968, p. vii) in his book entitled “Ujamaa: *Essays on Socialism*”. The tenets included the conversion of freehold land into leasehold ownership, public purchase of the private electricity service company, the emphasis on public ownership of means of economic development, encouragement of marketing cooperatives, the introduction of protective labour registration and minimum wages increases, changes to the system of taxation and formation of appropriate form of democracy (Nyerere, 1968). Additive to the above tenets was work; every individual was expected to work and contribute adequately and meaningfully in society's development.

After assuming power, Magufuli encouraged all people to work hard through his slogan of Hapa Kazi Tu (Lit: ‘here is just work’, or ‘just work’, or ‘strictly business’). He revived peasants’ cooperatives, emphasized government control over natural resources and other means of economic development. He also reviewed tax policies and removed tax and levy on agriculture products at a grassroots level. He also criticized acts of corruption and mismanagement of public funds and properties. He encouraged religious leaders to play their part, but not to interfere with the secular government's business.

3. Theoretical inclination of Ujamaa Philosophy

There have been many debates and arguments regarding the theoretical basis of Ujamaa philosophy. Some quarters have associated Ujamaa with Marxism, espe-

cially the writings of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels on socialism (Blommaert, 1997) and in practice with Marxist Leninism (Maghimbi, 2012, Blommaert, *ibid.*). Marxists believe that socialism emanates from a proletarian revolution, which is envisaged to be inevitable as the capitalist system reaches the apex stage (Rodney, 1974). Nyerere on the other hand disqualified the arguments that associated Ujamaa with any form of Western socialism (Nyerere, 1968; Rodney, 1974). In his book *Freedom and Socialism*, Nyerere described the choice of the word Ujamaa as follows:

For there was nothing accidental in our selection of the word Ujamaa to define our socialist policies; nor did this word result solely from the desire to find a Swahili equivalent for the word socialism.... The word Ujamaa was chosen for special reasons. First, it is an African word and thus emphasizes the African-ness of the policies we intend to follow. Second, its literal meaning is family-hood, so that it brings to the mind of our people the idea of mutual involvement in the family, as we know it (Nyerere, 1968, p. 2).

Therefore, the choice of the word Ujamaa was attributed to the past way of life and also to create a sense of ownership, that is, Ujamaa was designed based on the African way of life using African language (Kiswahili). This is sanctioned in a statement like “we have deliberately decided to grow, as a society, out of our own roots, but in a particular direction and toward a particular kind of objective” (Nyerere, 1968, p. 2).

Whereas Marxism emphasized the transition from capitalism through a revolution by the proletariat or working class (Rodney, 1974; Blommaert, 1997), Nyerere, on the other hand, did not see the need for either building a working class (Nyerere, 1968, p. 3; Rodney, 1974) or passing through specified stages of social development as a pre-condition for socialism (Rodney, 1974). To Nyerere, Ujamaa was built up on African family life which reproduced a unique socialism which related to Tanzania history and tradition (Shirima, 1999; Blommaert, 1997; Nyerere, 1968, p. 3).

To Nyerere, Western socialism as advocated by Marx and Engels (1975) was not applicable in an African setting because it presented an incomplete depiction of human reality that passes on prescribed stages and consequently misrepresented the African experience as based on the day to day experience of life (Shirima, 1999; Nyerere, 1967, 1968). This is properly put by Blommaert (1997, p.139) as: “Ujamaa contained a vision of African culture and of African Man, which deeply

penetrated the structure of the particular version of socialism it propagated” (see also Makulilo, 2012).

With Ujamaa, Nyerere sought to create a critique of not only Marxist theory, but also the capitalist system as a whole (Shirima, 1999). Nyerere spent a great deal of time challenging capitalism (*ubeberu*) and capitalists (*mabeberu*) because he believed that the system encourages exploitation (*unyonyaji*) of humans by fellow humans. According to him, this condition hindered social development of Tanzanians, and Africans in general (Nyerere, 1967; Maghimbi, 2012; Makulilo, 2012).

Moreover, through critical analysis of Nyerere’s works, one could argue that his Ujamaa philosophy was a synthesis of his experience of the African tradition, values and principles especially the life of rural Africans (Maghimbi, 2012; Blommaert, 1997, Rodney, 1974). His upbringing within the Zanaki tribe, in the rural setting of Tanzania where his father was a chief, may had an immense influence on his political view of societal arrangement and disposition (Wijsen, 2022; Blommaert, 1997).

This exposure to communal and egalitarian life might have socialized him to believe that in a communal society everyone works for the interest of the whole community (Maghimbi, 2012) and that the individual has no expectation of gaining individual benefits (Nyerere, 1966). In turn, “the society also worked for the individual” (Nyerere, 1968, p. 4). As Maghimbi (2012, p. 65) asserted, “there were no classes in tribal society”. This inculcated and elevated his views about egalitarianism where the community is above an individual’s interest, hence the view that people were only individuals within a community (Rodney, 1974; Shirima, 1999; Mutungi, 2021). The individuals survive as long as they belong in the community (Shirima, *ibid.*). In the same vein, it was believed that individual prosperity was based on the advancement of the community because “every member will contribute, by his work, to the total of wealth and welfare produced by the society” (Nyerere 1968, p. 5). Hence, the individual was expected to work to the level of their ability for the benefit of all (Nyerere, 1968, p. 5; Maghimbi, 2012).

In fact, in defense of Ujamaa, Nyerere (1968, pp. 2-7) noted that he had created a distinct form of social development, which is based on African traditional values such as respect, upholding human dignity, the equality of man, the freedom of man and the absence of exploitation. Thus, Ujamaa was an architectural drawing engraved from the actual African socio-political belief and a way of life based on pre-colonial, rural African reality (Maghimbi, 2012; Blommaert, 1999; Shirima, 1999). Blommaert explained this by stating that:

The important element in this particular anthropological motivation for African socialism is the self-evident nature of culture. African traditional culture is socialist in itself adapted to and embedded in the African realities.... Culture is the main instrument of social transformation the awareness of traditional values and revival of values will brings about the communalism and solidarity required in the construction of Ujamaa society (Blommaert, 1997, p. 140).

This claim resonates with Kwame Nkrumah's narrative on his Consciencism philosophy, which he claimed to be valid to guide the African revolution (Ajei & Kwesi, 2018). This is also similar to Ubuntu thinking that roots African emancipation and thought on the principles of humanism and egalitarianism (Dokman & Cornelli, 2022). Nyerere was aware of these views, from Nkrumah and other philosophers such as Placide Tempels, and would have affected his thinking about Ujamaa.

Moreover, Western social democracy tradition (related to Fabianism and Swedish social democracy traditions) had much influence on Nyerere's conception of socialism. It is believed that Nyerere's education journey, at the University of Edinburgh, exposed him to Fabian thinking, a socialist think tank that advocated for non-violent political change (Blommaert, 1997).

Although it is not the purpose of this chapter to explain in detail, in the 1880s Fabianism was the socialist movement and theory that rejected "the revolutionary doctrines of Marxism" in Britain (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2016). Instead, the Fabians proposed a gradual transition from capitalism to socialism. This kind of thinking dominated British socialism from the 1880s to the 21st century.

The Swedish Social Democratic Party, on the other hand, was established in 1889 as a response to the extension of suffrage to the working class, trade union members and civic organizations. The party focussed on "establishing an egalitarian society" and a universal welfare system (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020). Tage Fritiof Erlander or, in short, Tage Erlander (1901-1985) was a successful Prime Minister during whose tenure the Swedish Welfare State gained immense international recognition. Sven Olof Joachim Palme or Olof Palme (1927-1986) was a former assistant of Erlander and later on a member of the Social Democratic Party. He became one of the prominent leaders of the Social Democratic Party. He succeeded Erlander as Party Secretary and as the Prime Minister in 1969 (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020). Erlander and Palme were friends with Nyerere and shared a great deal of thinking on socialism; all emphasized an egalitarian society.

In many respects, therefore, Fabian's thinking was much alive in Nyerere's thinking on Ujamaa philosophy and, thus, persuasion rather than the use of force was adapted in the Ujamaa policies and practice. Nyerere emphasized the use of democratic means and rational argument to gain independence from the British Administration and thus, Fabian's influence underlies Nyerere's non-violent approach that he used to claim and achieve Tanganyika's independence in 1961. Tanganyika, unlike many other African countries, received its independence without war (Maghimbi, 2012).

Furthermore, Nyerere's relationship with some members of the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Sweden, such as Tage Erlander and Olof Palme, shaped his understanding of socialism, especially the focus on social interventions. To him, the individual was a target and beneficiary of any social intervention (Blommaert, 1997).

3.1 Ujamaa and social Catholicism

Additionally, Nyerere's conceptualization of Ujamaa was influenced by social Catholicism to which he was exposed through the teachings and life of Catholic missions in Tanganyika. In his work, "Nyerere's Secrets: Catholic Missionaries and the Making of Tanzania", Wijzen (2022, pp. 135-153) attests that Nyerere was influenced by the gospel values that underlie Catholic Social Teaching. While at Makerere College, Nyerere was one of the founders of a Catholic Action group – a Catholic Action movement which preached a pro-solidarity and subsidiarity and anti-Marxist message. This kind of inspiration is reflected in the Arusha Declaration and in other writings of CCM and the government. For instance, although the constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania states categorically the separation of the state and religion, the National Anthem is basically a prayer to God to bless Africa, Tanzania, leaders and citizens.

Article 3(1) states that the United Republic is a democratic, secular and socialist state, which adheres to multi-party democracy (URT, 1977, p. 11). In general, Ujamaa is built on the principles of equality, human dignity, freedom and democracy (Mutungi, 2021; Blommaert, 1997; Rodney, 1974; TANU, 1967). These principles are universal and inalienable (TANU 1967). Nyerere summarized the objective of Ujamaa to be:

The objective of socialism in the United Republic of Tanzania is to build a society in which all members have equal rights and equal opportunities; in which all can live in peace with their neighbors without suffering or imposing injustice, being

exploited, or exploiting; and in which all have a gradually increasing basic level of material welfare before any individual lives in luxury (Nyerere, 1968, p. 340).

Ujamaa envisaged a use of the mind and system that unites the community as one so that individuals in that community can share one purpose, namely building a socialist community where the welfare of all is a priority of each and every member of the community (Mutungi, 2021). It was an attitude of mind where believers in the socialist ethos could practice socialism in their lives (TANU, 1967; Maghimbi, 2012). The question is, do we have anyone to endeavor to pursue Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy since his death in 1999? Is Mutungi (2021) right that "*Falsafa ya Ujamaa ni somo lisilofutika kwa Watanzania*", which translates as: "Ujamaa philosophy is a lesson that will never be erased in Tanzanians"? Is Ujamaa still alive and used to unite the Tanzanians? To answer these questions, we use Magufuli's ideas, as one a former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, to trace elements of Ujamaa in his speeches. We use critical discourse analysis to investigate the way in which Nyerere's Ujamaa thinking and practice is constituted in our contemporary society.

4. About the Late John Pombe Joseph Magufuli

The late John Pombe Joseph Magufuli's political career started in 1990, when, for the first time, he contested unsuccessfully for the parliamentary seat of the Biharamulo constituency. In 1995 he again contested for a parliamentary seat, this time for the Biharamulo West constituency, won the majority vote and was declared the winner. He was appointed the Deputy Minister of Works in 1995 and, in 2000, was appointed the Minister for Works. In January 2006 he was appointed Minister for Land and Human Settlement and from 2008-2010 he was the Minister of Livestock and Fisheries. From 2010 to 2015 he was appointed again to be the Minister of Works.

In 2015, Magufuli ran for the presidency for Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), against political giants such as Edward Lowasa, who was running for Chama Cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA). Magufuli was declared winner. In 2020, Magufuli defended his position, defeating Tundu Lissu, who was contesting through CHADEMA.

Magufuli was notable for his style of leadership, which was translated into actions and measures such as curtailing unnecessary government expenses, inhibiting extravagant foreign trips by government officials, and restricting further government spending (Anudo et al., 2021). In this area, he went further, cutting

down his own salary from \$15,000.00 to \$4000.00, and cancelling state celebrations such as Independence Day (Anudo et al., 2021). Magufuli was tough in the fight against graft – even high profile officials and business people who engaged in grand corruption were not spared (Shivji, 2021, Anudo et al., 2021).

Magufuli was considered to be the advocate of home-grown solutions in the fight against diseases and pandemics such as COVID-19, and for eradication of poverty (Ndaluka et al., 2021; Anudo et al., 2021) basing his views on the tenets of Ujamaa. These called for an end to Western/North dependency and encouraged and/or promoted local solutions to the problems facing the country (Anudo et al., 2021). He discouraged import of second-hand or used products and, instead, encouraged locally produced goods and services (Anudo et al., 2021).

In some quarters, especially his opponents were not short of criticisms. They saw him as anti-westerner, anti-modern and anti-science because of his critical approach toward imported vaccines, COVID-19 testing reagents and face masks. In his writing “the Dialectics of Maguphilia and Maguphobia”, Shivji (2021, p. 4) declares Magufuli as a populist political leader, a demagogic politician and a messianic Bonaparte.

Nevertheless, Shivji acknowledged the fact that Magufuli was the first president who accomplished major development projects, a feat his predecessors failed to achieve (Shivji, 2021, Anudo et al., 2021). Examples of the major developmental projects under the late Magufuli are the renovation of ATCL and shift of the governmental offices from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma. Magufuli also made several meaningful decisions that had far reaching benefits such as the provision of universal primary and secondary school education, the expansion of health insurance, the building of school infrastructure and facilities and provision of identity cards for hawkers, to promote equity and a conducive environment for the success of small scale traders (Anudo et al., 2021, Shivji 2021).

These actions and decisions portrayed Magufuli as a leader determined to address the country’s problems, especially problems that affected the people at the grassroots. His policies earned him the title “*Rais wa Wanyonge*”, i.e, ‘the President of the down trodden’, “*Mtu wa watu*, ‘a man of the people’, and “*Rais wa watu*”, ‘people’s president’ (Anudo et al., 2021, Shivji, 2021:5). This was evident on 17th March, 2021 when the masses were informed of his demise, where they lined along the roads to give farewell to their departed president (Shivji, 2021; Anudo et al., 2021). Magufuli was a person who was concerned about uniting his people as one nation and in doing that he used Ujamaa rhetoric and religion to win the masses, especially the common citizens. During his time, it was difficult to see the demarcation between religion and secular statement. During the COVID-19

pandemic, for example, he urged citizens to participate in nation-wide prayer against the pandemic.

5. Critical Discourse Analysis

This chapter employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as advanced by Fairclough (1992) to analyze the information from four speeches delivered by the late John Pombe Magufuli between 2015 and 2020. The four speeches are the following: Magufuli (2015, November 20) when inaugurating the 11th Parliamentary Session; Magufuli (2017, September 7) a speech delivered after receiving the parliamentary inquiry report on diamond and Tanzanite minerals; Magufuli (2018, October 28) a speech addressing the nation to end the debate on cashew nut prices in Tanzania; and finally, Magufuli (2020, June 16) a speech at the closure of the 11th Parliamentary Session. These four speeches will be used to trace president Magufuli's discourse direction in relation to the Ujamaa philosophy which was emphasized during the Nyerere's era.

Fairclough (1992, pp. 73-78) proposes three levels of analysis: the analysis of linguistic practice, the analysis of discursive practice and the analysis of social practice. In the analysis of linguistic practice, the focus concerns the use of words and vocabulary. In relation to the Arusha Declaration codes of conduct, it would be assumed that Ujamaa philosophy and its proponents used specific wording and vocabulary, such as *ndugu*, *comrade*, *beberu* and *nyonyaji* just to mention a few, to specify the direction and intention of government policies.

As for the analysis of discursive practice, it refers to the process of text production, consumption and distribution: how the text was produced, its distribution channel and how the consumer received the text. This type of analysis also deals with matters of intertextuality; for instance, how the text producer drew on texts that described Ujamaa philosophy, such as the Arusha Declaration document, CCM constitution and the writing works of Mwalimu Nyerere, to make and unmake groups (i.e. to (dis)unite the people through national collective efforts).

In addition to intertextuality, discursive analysis will also examine the interdiscursivity of the discourse (Fairclough, 1992, p. 85). With interdiscursivity, the relationship that a discourse has with other discourses (implicitly or explicit) will be analyzed to make a link between linguistic practice and social practice. This is due to the fact that in speaking, the speaker makes reference to other discourses or, to use Norman Fairclough's words, the "orders of discourse". In other words,

interdiscursivity has much affinity with recontextualization because the former often implies importing elements from another discourse.

The analysis of social practice covers the socio-cognitive effect of the text. It consists in the exploration of the anticipated reproduction of the social order, the status quo, as well as tracing the hidden transformation effect of the text. It assumes that the text, explicitly and implicitly, relates to ideology and power relations (Fairclough, 1992, p. 86). Applied to Ujamaa, it seeks to establish whether rhetoric is a 'member resource', which people use to maintain social reality or social order.

6. Findings and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings from the four selected speeches and remarks by the late John Pombe Magufuli during his leadership as the 5th President of the Republic of Tanzania (2015-2020).

6.1 Analysis of the Discourse as a Linguistic Practice

Fairclough's (1992: pp. 73-78) first stage of critical discourse analysis is the analysis of discourse or text as linguistic practice. In this stage, the focus is on vocabulary and the discourse style that Magufuli used in his speeches.

6.1.1 Vocabulary

This section describes words concentrating on their meaning and semantics from the four selected speeches of Magufuli (Locke, 2004, pp. 42-53).

The keywords in his discourse were "economic liberation", including the control of major means of economy, "self-reliance", "patriotism", "anti-capitalism", "common citizens" and "anti-exploitation". His actions, derived from these concepts, appeared to be anti-capitalist. The government control over major means of production was strengthened, as evidenced by government intervention in the mining, industry and agriculture sectors. For instance, in his speech on 20th November, 2015 in Dodoma (Magufuli, 2015), he emphasized the management of public properties and national resources for the benefit of all Tanzanians, and that common citizens (*watu wa chini*) should reap the fruits of their country. In the meeting with cashew nut business people (Magufuli, 2018), Magufuli accused them of being unpatriotic, selfish, exploiters and plunderers (people who want to profit from others). He also issued a warning of government intervention on the nuts price. He said the government was capable of buying all cashew nuts if the

business people would not change what he called the “exploitative price”. “*Hatutaki wakulima wapunjwe*” (Lit: “we do not want farmers to be profitless”) he remarked (Magufuli, 2018).

Magufuli’s statements were anti-neo-colonialism and anti-capitalism (Magufuli, 2017). According to him, Tanzania has been exploited enough (“*tume- onewa mno*”); “*Taifa letu limekuwa likichezewa*” (Lit: “our nation has been played”) (Magufuli, 2018) and “those who are exploiting the country do not consider us as human beings”, he added (Magufuli, 2018). He said what was happening in the country indicated that Tanzania has not attained independence: “We have a flag... and national anthem but our wealth is taken” (Magufuli, 2018) by foreign investors with the assistance of unpatriotic nationals. And he warned that, “if we continue in this trajectory we will be “slaved” in this country” (Magufuli, 2018). To him, economic liberation is what entails “complete independence”, and economic liberation can make you “feed your children”, “send them to school” and “to hospital”, and you can construct roads for the benefit of all” (Magufuli, 2018).

The choice of words demonstrates a specific choice for uplifting the down-trodden, who constitute about 70% of the Tanzanian population. At the same time, the wording reinstates the return to public ownership of the major means of production, which was similar to what was practiced during Nyerere’s period. Indeed, from 1967 until the mid-1980’s the government and not the private sector was responsible for people’s welfare and economic protection.

6.1.2 Discourse Style

Magufuli used ‘political incorrectness’ as his style. Most of the utterances were considered controversial and unambiguous. He could be equated to people like Trump, who dared to speak their mind. His speeches were critical of the capitalists and corrupt individuals. The language used in his speeches was both plural and personalized. The use of the Swahili phrase “*tuta*” (we will) as indicated in phrases like “*tutashughulikia*”, “*tuzishughulikie*”, “*tutahakikisha*”, “*tutafanya*”, (Lit: ‘we will work on that’, ‘we will make sure’, ‘we will do’) symbolized an inclusive government that engaged different people in dealing with citizens’ issues (Magufuli, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020).

Moreover, in his speeches, Magufuli opted to use the word “*ndugu*” (Lit: ‘comrade’), “*ndugu zangu*” (‘my fellow comrade’) instead of the favored word “*mheshimiwa*” (Lit: ‘honorable’) or “*waheshimiwa*” in plural (Magufuli, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020). The word *ndugu* was very common during the Ujamaa period and symbolized family-hood, which sanctified the genesis of the term *jamaa*, which literally means “relatives” and thus unifies the citizens as one family.

Nevertheless, Magufuli, on many occasions, personalized his utterances to indicate that the actions of the government were under his command. This style can be identified in statements such as: “*ndio kauli mbiu yangu*” and “*serikali yangu*”; that is, ‘my motto’ or ‘my government’, ‘the government that I am heading’, ‘I want everyone to work’, and ‘I will make a government that works for the ordinary citizens’ (Magufuli, 2015). This type of utterance reproduced a context of individualized government where one person makes decisions, which is common to all responsible leaders’ government. During Nyerere’s era the phrase “*zidumu fikra za mwenyekiti wa Chama*”, ‘long live the thoughts of the Chairman’, was dominant and was recited in every CCM greetings.

Moreover, the chosen words of Magufuli were considered impolite, undemocratic and undiplomatic. Population-wise, these comprised peripheral voices from individuals whom he labelled unpatriotic, selfish and money mongers, thus, justifying the marginalization of their voices.

6.2 The Discursive Practice

After the analysis of discourse as a linguistic practice, next is the analysis of discursive practice to identify and interpret the production, distribution and consumption of the discourse (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 78-86).

6.2.1 Production of the Discourse

In this section, production of the discourse is used to refer to the process by which the discourse came into existence (Gülich & Kotschi, 2011, p. 30). It is the process in which the producer of the text can hold himself or herself responsible and can be held accountable by an interlocutor (ibid., p. 30). Fairclough (1992, p. 78) attests that “texts are produced in specific ways in specific social context”. In this chapter the producers (animators) of the texts are Magufuli and Mwalimu Nyerere. These two were responsible for the texts used in this chapter because they spoke words that constructed a discourse of [dis]unity among citizens and combined a mixture of the secular and religious. The CCM constitution and manifesto (2015-2020) still carry the Ujamaa sentiments and Magufuli used them as reference in many utterances. Nevertheless, Nyerere’s utterances were sources of reference to Magufuli and were reflected in decisions and actions such as the shift of the capital from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma, and the construction of the Mwalimu Nyerere Hydropower project and reintroduction of processing industries.

For instance, Magufuli’s speeches draw from his concern for the citizens’ problems, their aspirations, expectations and support for the government. Speaking about corruption and the fight against it, he emphasized that “citizens are fed up

with bribe and embezzlement”, “they are tired”, and “they are not ready to tolerate a government that is embracing corruption and embezzlement” (Magufuli, 2015, 2018). He reiterated that “we will win this war if the citizens are supportive” (Magufuli, 2018). His assumption was guided by the fact that a “patriotic nation will not hesitate to fight against corruption” (Magufuli, 2015). In this, he recalled Mwalimu Nyerere’s speech delivered in the Parliament on May 1960, where he said: “*Rushwa na ufisadi havina budi kushughulikiwa bila huruma kwa sababu naamini wakati wa Amani rushwa na ufisadi ni adui mkubwa kwa ustawi wa watu kuliko vita*” (Magufuli, 2015, 2018). In English, he meant that “Corruption and bribery must be dealt with firmly because bribery and corruption are the major enemies of human’s welfare than war”.

This type of intertextuality hedged Magufuli’s speech with Mwalimu Nyerere’s, making the interlocutor contextualize the speech in relation to the previous era where corruption was dealt with firmly. Moreover, corruption is a sign of class division and inequality. A leader who is against corruption is translated as an advocate of an equal society, where everyone is treated the same and, thus, citizens’ welfare is the priority of the government. His choice of the text from Mwalimu Nyerere is also not accidental. He understood that the majority of Tanzanians respect Mwalimu Nyerere and had memories of the discursive activities against corruption during Mwalimu Nyerere’s leadership.

Moreover, in his speech Magufuli also used interdiscursivity to deliver his message. For instance, referring to the mining industry and mining community (Magufuli, 2017), Magufuli stated that mining companies were not doing enough to uplift people’s welfare and, instead, were contributing to the impoverishment of the mining communities and the nation. Singling out one of the large-scale mining companies that retrenched workers, he said: “I heard others are threatening to retrench workers, but I expected they would say they are closing business, because if they close, we citizens will take over” (Magufuli, 2017). This statement indicated the government’s intention to take control of the mining sector. By the use of the pronoun “we” he was stressing his being part of the common citizenry, who are dissatisfied with the meagre social corporate responsibility of the privately-owned companies. Moreover, the word “I heard others” is a form of discourse representation that borrows from other discourses happening in another context, and used here to affirm the government intention of controlling large-scale mining operations.

In his speech in the Parliament on 16th June (Magufuli, 2020), he applauded members of parliament for passing strict laws that protected national natural resources. His understanding was that some people, especially foreign inves-

tors, were plundering and looting the national natural resources. This however, is constituted on the shift in articulation in the text whereby foreign investment and investors who were regarded as development partners (“*wawekezaji*”) by previous regimes turned out to be plunders and looters (“*mabeberu*”, “*wanyonyaji*” and “*wezi*”) during Magufuli’s era (Magufuli, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020). This was not accidental as Fairclough (1992, p. 63) puts it clearly that “discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning”. Magufuli’s utterance was reconstructing and signifying a new practice where socialism, as opposed to liberalism, was considered and favoured in the country’s economy. This also showed that Magufuli’s government advocated for government control over natural resources and he in doing so aligned himself with the discourse of the Ujamaa era.

Moreover, referring to another discursive event, “the world market” (Magufuli, 2018), Magufuli insisted on offering reasonable prices to farmers. He recalled the world market discourse where he pictured that a first class cashew nut at the world market can never be sold at lower price. In his speech concerning cashew nut businesses, he also drew from other discourses in Vietnam, India and China as the main market for Tanzanian cashew nuts as a matter of inter-contextualizing his speech.

This also shows that there has been a transformation in Tanzania, whereby in the past major exports were to western markets, while in recent years the market has shifted to the Middle and Far East countries, hence signifying the spirit of Bandung. Nevertheless, speaking out on behalf of the farmers who are considered 70% of the population, he positively positioned himself on the majority side hence earning his title of the “man of the people”.

6.2.2 Distribution of the Discourse

Fairclough (1992, pp. 79-81) refers the distribution of the discourse as ways or channels used by the producer of the text to reach his or her audiences. These include complex (written) channels like newspapers, books, articles, news on television, radio and social media on one hand, and immediate distribution like conversation and speeches with simple and immediate distribution on the other. For instance, Magufuli’s speeches were distributed through various public, private, international and local media outlets. All of his speeches were streamed live by the National Broadcasting Television and Radio (TBC), The Chama cha Mapinduzi Media (i.e. Channel Ten and Uhuru Media), other private television channels such as ITV, Star TV and Cloud Media, to mention just a few. His speeches were also available via social media outlets such as YouTube, Facebook, Jamii Forum, Twitter and

WhatsApp. They were available via online television platforms such as AyoTV and Global TV. The speeches were printed in local and international newspapers. He was also popular on international television and news outlets such as the BBC and CNN where, mostly, his political incorrectness was discussed and criticized. However, he was also censored on social media, especially because of his stance on COVID-19. Magufuli also addressed parliamentary sessions, which means that his speeches were recorded in parliamentary archives and can be used for reference with wide dissemination, where their access is free for people.

6.2.3 Consumption of the Discourse

Fairclough (1992, p. 79) declares that “texts are... consumed differently in different social contexts”. A text is consumed when people make effort to interpret the text they are exposed to. Furthermore, consumption of Magufuli’s text were both collective and individual (Fairclough, 1992, p. 79). For Magufuli, as a president of a nation, his audience were not mere individuals but rather the nation and international community as a whole. Therefore, each speech was meant to be consumed by all citizens and the concerned international community. In this case, the consumption of Magufuli speeches was threefold. First, it was consumed directly by those who were present or watching the speech on television. Secondly, consumption happened after the speeches were transformed into other texts such as newspapers articles, speech and archives documents. Lastly, consumption happened when the speeches were processed into presidential or government records which could be used to report on a historical epoch.

In the media and in public opinion, Magufuli was labeled both positively and negatively. With the positive labels, he was referred as a “hoe”, “an iron”, “a stone”, “rock of Africa”, “the army”, and “the bulldozer”. All these words were used to describe his leadership style, as a leader who made strong decisions, was dependable, had a workaholic attitude and held firm in protecting national interests. These interpretations were commonly used in the local and social media, and common people used them, in open meetings, to refer to the way his government dealt with corrupt individuals and those in conflict with the law.

On the other hand, Magufuli was not short of critics. His critics negatively called him a petty dictator, denier of science, undemocratic and against Western investment. Again, the choice of labels was not accidental. Fairclough (1992, pp. 78-86) noted that the use of language is always rooted in the social context and is negotiated by power relations. No wonder Magufuli was labelled as a hero in one discursive event, while on the other discursive event he was seen as a petty dictator. This is so because those who chose to use a particular label ascribed the meaning

to particular socio-political context (i.e. members' resources). For example, criticisms were raised drawing from his action toward COVID-19 when his government decided to be critical of the globally imposed prevention measures such as lockdown, the use of industrial facemasks and COVID-19 vaccines. Some political leaders, especially from the political parties such as Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA) and Alliance for Change (ACT), and Western media like the BBC were critical of him because his style of leadership never favoured open-air meetings and demonstrations. His approach toward foreigner investors was strongly criticized by those who benefited from the previous regime that had less control over the ownership of natural resources and investments.

Discursive practice has established ground that will be further developed in the social practice analysis where the link between social practice and linguistic practice will be highlighted.

6.3 Social Practice Analysis

In this section, we look at the social effect of Magufuli's discourse, as an analytical tool to assess its political and ideological impact in Tanzania. When talking about social practice, Fairclough (1992, pp. 86-100) compares it to the form of ideology and power relations (hegemonic power) whereby ideology in discourse is revealed through the constitution of the subject. Hegemony however is "about constructing alliances and integrating rather than dominating subordinate classes, through concession or through ideological means, to win their consent" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 92).

Magufuli's speech can be explained under the above-mentioned theoretical base. For instance, a statement that "complete freedom" is reflected in "control over the economy" echoes a constant class struggle at different levels (Magufuli, 2017, 2018). First, it implied that Tanzania has not yet attained her full independence because it does not control her economy. Secondly, there are forces (external and internal/Western superpowers and local big businesspeople) that are controlling the economy or denies the country full freedom. Therefore, he was positioning himself as a person who was heading toward attaining complete national freedom by controlling the economy.

This is illustrated in his speech stating that: "in the past years, business men's decision was final, but this government it is not final" (Magufuli, 2018), positioning him on the side of ordinary citizens and thus indicating that his government was "working for the interest of farmers, workers, pastoralists and fishermen" whom he considered victim of capitalists' urge or profit and, therefore, government inter-

vention was for the interest of the lower class – the helpless individuals (Magufuli, 2018).

Statements like the above constructed convergence and alliance with the ordinary people whom he considered marginalized by capitalists and previous regimes. His choice of the target population was critical; i.e. farmers, small businessmen and women, artisanal miners and fishers, etc., whose voices were pushed to the periphery by the previous regimes. And, hence, the resemblance to Nyerere's understanding of Ujamaa (socialism). Nyerere iterated that:

The Arusha Declaration ...is based on the assumption of human equality, on the belief that it is wrong for one man to dominate or to exploit another.... It is a commitment to the belief that there are more important things in life than the amassing of riches, and that if the pursuit of wealth clashes with things like human dignity and social equality, then the latter will be given priority (1968, p. 316).

The above argument by Nyerere (1968) is illustrated in Magufuli's critique over the state of mining operation in the country. Magufuli expressed a situation of exploitation by mining companies and, consequently, a skewed relationship with regard to the profit coming from misuse of national resources. "All our wealth is stolen", and "we have been toyed a lot", he uttered, describing a situation of loss and exploitation by the large mining companies (Magufuli, 2017). Such utterances signified a reconstruction and transformation in the relationship of dominance by transferring power from individual ownership to public ownership of the major means of economy. By speaking about this issue, Magufuli was able to win the heart of the majority and in so doing created alliances with the majority of Tanzanians. Thus, he cemented the direction of the country toward one measure of sustainable utilization of natural resources for the benefit of the people and the nation as a whole.

Magufuli also employed ideological apparatuses such as education, health, media and religious institutions to win the consent of Tanzanians. During the outbreak of COVID-19 Magufuli used religion as one of the mechanisms against the pandemic. At the peak of COVID-19 in 2020, Magufuli urged Tanzanians to participate in three days of nationwide prayers. The question was asked: was Magufuli mixing religion and politics? However, according to Ndaluka et al. (2021, p. 130), this action brought the nation together and hence unified all religions and believers against a common enemy (COVID-19). Ndaluka et al. concluded that:

...the role of religion and God was emphasized in the public rhetoric, but it was a combination of religious and scientific strategies stressing the need for safe, medically grounded behavior (wearing masks, avoiding social contacts [shaking hands], closing of schools and colleges and constant hand washing). In that regard, based on the significance of positive religious practices, religious institutions are encouraged to maintain similar practices in other comparable situations (2021, p. 130).

This hegemonic integration of religion into government businesses and the expansion of the social sector and access to social services accorded the government accolades from the people. Also, the people reciprocated the effort by supporting the government and re-electing Magufuli into power in 2020. The trust he earned from the general public was exemplified at his farewell in his burial ceremony where many people turned out on the road to show their solidarity with the departed president.

7. Conclusions

This chapter has demonstrated that Magufuli's discourse reproduced both discursive and social transformation that was a reflection of the Ujamaa era. The chapter has established that, indeed, the discourse is grounded in the practice of social institutions (Fairclough, 1992, p. 87). The Ujamaa philosophy used by Magufuli played its role in unifying Tanzanians in a similar way as it was in the time of Nyerere's leadership. In doing so, the main aspects included the Ujamaa hegemonic power of integrating the masses through government expansion of social expenditure and control over major means of economy and information. This in turn showed that Ujamaa as a philosophy has the potential to unite Tanzanians.

Moreover, Magufuli's employment of Ujamaa philosophy to unite Tanzanians was effective because Ujamaa philosophy is still preferred by Tanzanians. In other words, Ujamaa philosophy is "a members' resource" (Fairclough, 1992, pp. 72, 80, 82, 85) in which the majority use it when interpreting and creating meaning about their socio-economic conditions. All of this indicates that Ujamaa is still relevant to the general population and what was missing was an advocate of this policy. In this Magufuli 'played smart' and was awarded the compliment by the common citizens.

Nevertheless, efforts to introduce philosophy of unities were not only made in Tanzania. Many nationalist leaders in Africa and Asia introduced philosoph-

ical systems to guide their societies. Kwame Nkrumah, for instance, introduced Consciencism as a philosophical system that was rooted in the principles of humanitarianism and egalitarianism (Ajei & Kwesi, 2018). Like Ujamaa, Consciencism was a decolonizing philosophy that aimed at solving five African problems namely colonialism, imperialism, neo-colonialism, disunity, and lack of development (ibid.). However, unlike Ujamaa where its center is Tanzania, Consciencism was to be applied throughout the African continent (ibid.). Again, narratives in Tanzania indicated that the Ujamaa philosophy is still preferred and desired by the common citizens, feeling that unite the society.

Similar to Ujamaa and Consciencism is the Ubuntu philosophy which is based on the thought and practices of the people of South Africa (Ajei & Kwesi, 2018). Ubuntu is thought to provide a guide and worldview of practical action of the people (ibid.). Unlike Ujamaa and Consciencism philosophies, Ubuntu is not associated with any scientific socialism system or Western Marxist way of thinking (Dokman and Cornelli, 2022). Nevertheless, what makes these three philosophies similar is their emphasis on a just, fair, and equal-based society that is devoid of any forms of injustice, inequality, oppression and coercion (Ajei & Kwesi, 2018).

Furthermore, religion and religious institutions played their part in the social engineering in the country. This was manifested during the time of difficulties, for example, the outbreak of COVID-19, where religion was prominent in the public domain and was used by political leaders as a resource for uniting the people to fight against COVID-19.

This, however, should not be taken to mean that during Magufuli's time, there were no peripheral voices that were struggling and competing for dominance and transformation of social institutions and social structure. In this chapter I have presented critiques levelled against Magufuli's leadership including his approach toward COVID-19, control over private business, political parties and media which signified the voices which were competing for similar status (Shivji 2021). This chapter recommends a similar study at a large scale level in order to bring to light the effectiveness of the Ujamaa philosophy in uniting Tanzanians.

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Earth Religion, “Forest People” and Environmental Disputes

A Case Study on a Pursuit for National Unity and Sustainability in Estonia

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Abstract

This chapter offers a comparative study from Estonia related to the following research topics of this volume: “What philosophy, secular or religious, succeeds or succeeded in promoting peace and stability?” Are there comparable philosophies of national unity from other countries? It gives an overview of the wide-spread self-identification of Estonians as nature-friendly “forest people”, an image that is selectively based on the environmental concepts found in the archival folklore manuscripts describing traditional folk religion, and the role of folklore about natural sacred sites in the rhetoric of active followers of earth religion (*Maausk*). Based on media accounts, participant observation, interviews with Earth Believers and persons who attend events in natural sacred sites, this chapter brings examples how such environmental folklore and national identity building are combined with protest activities for protecting natural objects and habitats. Based on some case analyses related to natural sacred sites, this chapter will explore the potential of Earth Believers and related grassroot initiatives in non-hegemonically supporting local and national identity and promoting environmental awareness and sustainability.

Keywords: earth religion; national self-awareness; environmental conflicts; sustainability

Introduction

The Bandung Conference in 1955 was a forum where Third World leaders committed to a cooperation in erasing oppressive political and economic approaches that had come into force during the colonial rule. However, it is only seldom highlighted that similar colonial processes also historically took place in several regions in Europe, calling forth grassroots-level or more organized reactions that bear connecting points with the ideas of the Bandung Conference or the Ujamaa-concept promoted in Tanzania, for example, valuing traditional sustainable family and kin structures and lifestyles, characterized by only minor levels of inequality and including non-oppressive relationships towards the environment (cf., Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2018). This chapter offers a grassroots case from Estonia. Similarly as Ujamaa, Estonian earth religion has been mainly viewed as a secular ideology but still has religious features and orientations. The processes related to the rise of national self-awareness in Estonia were opposed to canonical religion but at the same time they still contained elements of traditional local folk religion. Additionally, in Estonian environmental disputes that otherwise belong into a secular realm religious arguments are continuously used. Thus, this study exemplifies how an initiative, although geographically distant from the Asian and African regions that were the focus of the Bandung Conference, bears similarities with the Bandung Spirit in its quest for not letting hegemonic policies exploit human and natural resources, while aiming to enhance local tradition-bound identity and environmental sustainability instead.

As source material, this chapter used media accounts, participant observation, and interviews with Earth Believers (followers of *Maausk*) and persons who attend events in natural sacred sites. From earlier studies, the chapter draws mostly on some in-depth studies (Västrik, 2015; Jonuks, 2013; Jonuks & Rimmel, 2020) that have scrutinized representations of Estonian national identity and the development of Estonian national myth but also the role of Estonian Earth Believers in public environmental discussions (Päll, 2021).

Background of the Estonian Case: Traditional Folk Religion and National Self-Awareness

Estonia is a small country in Northern Europe. It was Christianized and at the same time colonized “with fire and sword” (see discussion on this concept in Vahtre, 1990) in the 13th century. It remained under foreign rule, mainly executed

by German landlords, until 1918 when it became a free republic. In the previous centuries, Lutheran Protestantism has been the dominant religion in Estonia. However, traditional folk religion combining elements of nature worship and vernacular magic beliefs remained vital after Christianization, surviving partly into the 21st century (Hiimäe, 2021). In the second half of the 19th century, in the period of ‘national awakening’ in Europe, the national and romantic-heroic focus of the local folk religions gained wider importance. However, with a certain idealization of the prehistoric pagan worldviews, the foundations of their connection to national self-awareness had already been set by the last decades of the 18th century. In the period of Estonian independence (1918-1940), folklore became the dominant source of the national myth when in 1920-1930s the movement of the Taara faith was established. Its name is derived from Taara who was supposed to be the main ancient pagan god of Estonians. The movement stressed the environmental component of the Estonian traditional folk belief and related its activities to historical and natural sacred sites. For example, the followers of Taara faith were probably the first ones who used the figurative expression “The forest is the church of an Estonian.” This is a phrase that in recent years has been used repeatedly in the Estonian media. The membership of the movement was not great in number but, as they were active in socio-political discussions, the movement was well visible in society (Jonuks, Rimmel, 2020; see more about the movement in Västriik, 2015).

One of the most influential representatives of the national perspective on Estonian folk religion and its nature-boundedness in academic circles was folklorist Oskar Loorits. He is known for the statement: “The proto-democratic equality and equal rights – these are the basic ideas of the Estonian religious and social mentality” (Loorits, 1932, p. 178). The national narrative related to the ‘ancient’ Estonian traditional folk religion determines the vernacular understanding of local folklore and culture even today (cf., Jonuks, 2013, p. 145).

After the Soviet occupation in 1940, the state atheist worldview was officially forced on people for 50 years (Rimmel, 2016, p. 238; see more about Soviet colonization in Estonia and other Baltic countries in Racevskis, 2002). At the same time, research on traditional folk religion was not forbidden and – partly with the aim to avoid persecution based on accusations in dealing with religious matters – researchers often viewed folk religion as ‘nature’ religion or a worldview independent from Christian influences and concepts (cf., similar observation by Jonuks, 2013, p. 158). The interest in indigenous beliefs grew again in Estonia in the 1960s with a general rise of the awareness of ethnic identity among Finnic-Ugric people, pointing to the need to search for one’s indigenous cultural roots. Thus, under the

aegis of studying traditional folk religion, research was made that supported the strengthening of a national perception of identity. One of the important authors in this respect, historian, film-maker and later Estonian president (1992-2001) Lennart Meri should be mentioned. He is credited for his poetical book and film cycle about Nordic indigenous nature beliefs. His work created the impression that Estonians, like several other Nordic nations, are a folk of prehistoric culture that preserved their nature-bounded lifestyle for thousands of years unchanged (Meri, 1976). Several authors (for example, Jonuks, Rimmel, 2020) have argued that in the Soviet period the local pursuits of nature protection were closely tied up with cultural and national identity and a personal, intimate relationship with nature. After Lennart Meri, Arnold Rüütel became Estonian president (2001-2006). The First Lady Ingrid Rüütel was a folklorist, devoted to the research of ancient Estonian runo-songs and her research often again touched upon the topics of national identity. Thus, the ties between traditional folk religion and national identity have been well visible even on the state level during a longer post-Soviet period.

The Rise of the Movement of Earth Believers

Since Estonia regained independence in 1991, an experiential form of folk religion has been represented in a somewhat more organized form by the vernacular Earth Believers' movement (*maausulised*). Their rise came at the same time as the emergence of more economy-focused political ideas like the program of a sustainable self-contained Estonian economy (*Isemajandav Eesti*), first introduced in 1987. This program was never realized in practice but instilled a general hope in the possibility of economic independence (see more on the topic in Hiio, 2009). Some researchers see strong parallels between the followers of Earth Religion (*Maausk*) and the ones of Taara faith from the 1920-1930s, e.g. in valuing rituals related to historically sacred natural sites (cf., Västriik, 2015). Earth Believers understand their beliefs to be a traditional indigenous Estonian worldview or faith that has not been assumed from other nations or religions but has evolved locally, on-site, thousands of years ago (Västriik, 2015). They generally perceive their views not so much as religion, but rather as a consistent worldview, heritage, and lifestyle where loyalty plays a central role; not only interpersonal loyalty but also loyalty towards natural diversity and ancestors, as well as balanced and respectful behavior. Nature is depicted as animated by nature spirits, and main sites of worship are historical, natural sacred sites (e.g., sacred groves). The movement does not consider formal structures important, such as a congregation or church, but was still officially registered

as a non-governmental organization in 1995. According to one Earth Believer, official recognition of the movement was made possible because one of the members at that time was Minister of Internal Affairs who was responsible for issues related to religion (Ringvee, 2011, p. 109). In the last dozen years, the main spokesperson of the organization has been Ahto Kaasik, who was one of the activists of the movement from the beginning.

While the activity of Earth Believers at first concentrated mainly on private outputs in the form of rituals in historical natural sacred sites, since the 2000s a public aspect of nature protection has strongly emerged (cf., Päll, 2021). The activity of the organization obtained a wider societal and political dimension. For instance, they proceeded by representing public opinions combined with their own folk-religion-based argumentations regarding the protection of natural sacred sites and condemning extensive logging in Estonian forests, through numerous media articles, public petitions, events, and legal disputes which are thoroughly documented on the organization's web page (<https://www.maavald.ee/en>). Their activity has even brought about the result that lumber companies sometimes turn to them directly for consultation when planning work close to natural sacred sites.

One of the reasons for their growing popularity was the fact that most Estonians do not identify themselves with Christianity or religion in general. The Earth Believers adhere to folk beliefs and traditions combined with environmental awareness, which enables them to remain outside the constraints of Christian religion. The activists of Earth Religion are rather opposed to Christianity or, at least, point to the unequal treatment of Earth Believers compared to Christians, as the state budget for renovating churches is much bigger than the one for taking care of historical natural sacred sites (See e.g., on their official website maavald.ee). Earth Believers also emphasize the Estonian nature-bound and environment-friendly culture in opposition to the over-civilized and technologized West. To get their voice over to the people, Earth Religion has used music as a medium, for example, by organizing a concert cycle, "Protecting the indigenous sacred groves", with the most popular Estonian folk metal band Metsatöll in order to point to the threat of extinction facing sacred trees and the need to adopt a law for protecting natural sacred sites (maavald.ee).

It is noteworthy that according to a representative national survey of 2014, only 4% of the respondents defined themselves as Earth Believers. However, 61% of the respondents considered Earth Religion to be the proper religion of Estonians (RSE, 2014) – probably because they resonate with its environmental and non-doctrinal beliefs. According to a public poll from 2014, 84% of Estonians consider the protection of Estonian natural sacred sites to be important or very important (Hiite Maja,

Faktum Ariko, 2014). Thus, in the 21st century the ‘ancient’ folk religion, mainly represented by handwritten archival sources from the 19th and the beginning of 20th century, has not ceased to play a role in the discourse of national identity combined with nature protection. Quite the opposite – environmental aspects have been added to the public discussion even more than before. With this, the Earth Believers’ approach tries to offer alternatives to the dictation of modern neoliberal lines of market economy thinking that tend to leave out aspects of local identity and traditional environmentalist spirituality. So, it bears parallels with the Ujamaa-concept and also the ideas of the spirit of Bandung theorists who express criticism on the one-dimensional orientation of neoliberal politics, while additionally stressing that alternative developments and collaborations should take place not only amongst states, but also on the level of the civil society (e.g., Lay, 2016; Haug, 2016; Demenchonok, 2017).

Eco-Nationalism, Sacredness, and the Arguments from Folklore in Environmental Disputes

Based on the motive of Estonians as an ancient nature folk or forest people,¹ a concept of eco-nationalism has developed, tying the continuation of national culture to the preservation of the local historical natural environment (Jonuks, Rimmel, 2020, p. 459). The component of traditional Estonian folk religion and national identity is a consistent part of environmental discussions. It has indeed proved to have a pivotal role in making political, economic, and other decisions. When huge infrastructure or industrial projects arise, such as the pan-European railway Rail Baltic (to ongoing debate), or the planning of a cellulose factory in 2019, the opponents of these projects on a local community level organized mass demonstrations. They used claims based on folklore, related to animated nature and historical sacred sites, alongside arguments of having the right to have a say about the future of their environment (Kõiv, 2020). Thus, these were in line with the arguments of heritage protection, nature preservation, religious freedom, and human rights that the Earth Believers had already highlighted. In 2011, a special political support group for natural sacred sites was formed in the Estonian parlia-

1 The romantized concept of the Estonians as “forest people” started spreading in the media since the 19th century and has continued so in the 20th-21st century on the backdrop of several environmental debates with the contribution of a number of authors (e.g., folklorists, semioticians, Earth believers), thus it is a general self-identification of the Estonians and not related to a specific subgroup or community.

ment after a case of logging activities in one of the forests identified as an indigenous sacred grove in Maardu, near Tallinn (Västrik, 2015).

On the ideological use of folklore in environmental disputes, the emphases and ways of narrating can change based on the circumstances of the situation. For example, the importance of a historical sacred site as a place of active ritual activity can be stressed when there is a danger that the place may lose its status of belonging under nature protection or being a cultural heritage site, because of a lack of archival sources that would prove its sacred status (see more on the topic in Rimmel, 2020). Yet in other cases stressing the existence of plentiful archival sources is the main strategy for proving the site's cultural significance. It is repeatedly stressed in connection with historical natural sacred sites that, historically, these were permitted to be used only for ritual activity. Such a claim occurred, for instance, in a public petition for the protection of natural sacred sites (more about it in Pöördumine, 2014; cf., Päll, 2021, p. 210). However, in traditional folklore this understanding is not that absolutist and a multifunctional use of sacred sites, or their division into ritual spheres and pragmatically used spheres, is also mentioned. Since the 1990s, debates about the logging policy as well as protection of natural sacred sites emphasize the image of Estonians as forest people. They point out that intuitively nature-friendly behavior has been inherent in Estonians from ancient times. At the same time, archival sources show that besides the perception of certain places as sacred, the attitude of the peasantry towards the forest was primarily pragmatic and utilitarian (Jonuks, Rimmel, 2020). Thus, the folklore-based rhetoric is somewhat selective in order to better serve its particular purposes.

Some modern arguments have been also added that draw parallels with Native American attitudes towards nature in stressing the uniqueness of the local beliefs related to natural sacred sites and their importance in preserving national identity. One such case was a comment by well-known Estonian singer Tõnis Mägi in a documentary on sacred sites (ETV, 2014). An additional dimension was given to the perception of local unique nature traditions by semiotician Valdur Mikita who highlighted wider eco-philosophical and mystical trends in his books that became bestsellers in the beginning of the 21st century.

However, despite stressing the rich folklore related to a place and its status of being a cultural monument or under nature protection, environmental conflicts still emerge. In the case of the famous cross trees in the Maardu sacred forest or in South-East Estonia, where they have been felled in recent years, it happened despite the fact that they were under nature protection and their traditional meaning has been publicly talked about a lot (cf., Harju, 2021). Several researchers

and policy makers have raised the question of which group's reasoning should be preferred in a situation where archival texts contain contradictory information (Vaarmari, 2007, p. 282). The question also arises as to how many folk narratives or how many people who define a place as a sanctuary are enough to consider it part of the cultural heritage, and not just someone's individual activity (Päll, 2021). As these issues are not unambiguous in the case of intangible cultural heritage, rhetoric based on the interpretation of folklore on sacred sites remains an indispensable part of the respective environmental conflicts.

Case Analysis 1: Paluküla Sacred Hill

Paluküla Hiiemägi or Paluküla Sacred Hill, in North Estonia, is related to one of the longest-running and most heated environmental conflicts in Estonia. In its rhetoric, folk religion and traditional folklore texts form an important axis. Although Palumäe Hiiemägi was part of a landscape protection area and partly under heritage protection, in 2004 the local Kehtna municipality initiated a development plan to build a recreation and sports center on it. The reaction of local people split into two: some had nothing against the new facility, but others shared the views of Earth Believers and found it inappropriate to change the landscape and scale up commercial activities on a historic sacred site (see more on the topic in Päll, 2021). Narratives related to traditional folk religion were used not only by representatives of Earth Believers and local communities to defend their interests, but also by their opponents to refute these claims.

The conflict between the developers of the recreation and sports center and the defenders of Hiiemägi became especially acute in November 2004. The Kehtna municipality then tried to start construction work on the hill, even though the defenders of Hiiemägi had brought the case to court and the process was still ongoing (Delfi.ee, 2007). People gathered on Hiiemägi and, while singing old runo-songs, prevented the bulldozer from starting excavation works (Vaarmari, 2007, p. 264). The newspaper *Eesti Päevaleht*, which covered the event, took the side of the Earth Believers, postulating in its report: "The right for a sacred hill is a human's fundamental right" (Päevaleht, 2004). At the same time, the development plan for the center to be built in Paluküla had already been approved by all relevant institutions, including the heritage protection board – none of them found here a conflict with the rights of local residents, and the municipality clearly did not want to cancel the plan, as an agreement had already been reached with an investor regarding the new facility.

Meanwhile, the non-governmental organization Maavalla Koda, the official body of the Earth Believers, collected nearly 2,000 signatures against this construction work and sent these to the Ministry of the Environment. The Ministry of the Environment came to the conclusion that the conflict around Paluküla Hiiemäe was primarily heritage-related and concerned local life, and delegated the resolution to the Ministry of Culture and Kehtna municipality, stating in a covering letter that in doing so the ministry contributed to supporting the Maavalla Koda in valuing and protecting Estonia's original indigenous heritage on the state level.

In a publication of the defenders of the natural sacred sites, a reference was made to the abundance of relevant folklore related to the site, pointing to the historically sacred zones, and creating a contrast with the intended new use: "Six-meter-wide trails were also planned in the central sacral zone, which has traditionally been a sacrificial place on the hill" (Keerberg, 2006, p. 25). Kristiina Ehin, a well-known poet who belongs to the ranks of the defenders of natural sacred sites, insisted upon the timeless continuity of the tradition while talking about sacred trees: "It doesn't matter how big or small the tree is, they are the descendants of those trees who have been there and have been sacred" (Keerberg, 2006, p. 25). The incongruity with the mentality of the developers, who were mainly thinking in economic categories, became even more obvious in a statement based on identity and belonging: "For me, already knowing that the sacred site is there is really important. You don't have to go there very often, but already knowing that it is there is necessary for you" (Keerberg, 2006, p. 25).

In 2008, in the annual competition initiated by the organization of Earth Believers, the title Friend of Sacred Groves was awarded to a family involved in the protection of the Paluküla Hiiemägi. In her congratulations, the then Minister of Culture, Laine Jänes took over the vocabulary and views of the earth believers: "Not only me, but many Estonians still subconsciously continue to be earth believers, even if they do not think about it or admit it to themselves on a daily basis, because we already have it in our blood – to get power from the nature!" Also in 2008, the decision of the Supreme Court was delivered, acknowledging the lawfulness of the development plan, but major construction works were still not carried out on Hiiemägi – possibly due to the opposition of defenders both at the local level and in the media.

Once again, the Earth Believers raised concerns in a public letter that the new facilities might hinder the performance of their religious rituals on Paluküla Hiiemägi because the developers had not informed them when planning their project. Representatives of their opponents, on the other hand, emphasized that the ecosystem is a public good, which must take into account the overall use of the site,

and at least a run for snow tubes was built in early 2015 (see a longer discussion in Aadna, 2016). In 2017, the landowner applied for a permit to fell 800 cubic meters of wood. Soon, by a precept of the National Heritage Board, an illegally established disc golf course built in 2014 was removed from Hiimägi and the cutting of trees on the top of Hiimägi was restricted (Kaasik, 2018, p. 16). However, the developers were still interested in realizing the project and tried to find support from statistics. Among the 376 people in the region who answered a survey, only 32 of the respondents stated that they visit the hill as a sacred site or for participating in prayers, while 209 indicated that they go there for sports (Aadna, 2016, p. 32). However, the symbolic value of a sacred place is clearly difficult to measure. Earlier studies (e.g., Hiimäe, 2019) have shown – similarly to the remark by a respondent cited above – that sacred places are meaningful to a high percentage of Estonians irrespective of whether they visit them frequently, seldom, or not at all, and in the development of such views the media work of Earth Believers has surely played a role.

In summary, this case exemplified that the neoliberal agenda that focuses on the utilitarian side or economic gain perpetuates one-sided colonist thinking that neglects aspects that are less tangible but still important (e.g., notions of perceived sacrality). Thus, initiating a dialogue that also takes into account the mental-spiritual dimension has more potential to lead to environmentally and culturally respectful results (see a similar thought in Behrens, 2010); local grassroot movements have often proved to be a successful starting point for such dialogues. There have been comparable initiatives in Africa and Asia (e.g., youth groups described by Assie-Lumumba, 2015) that have grown from identity-based small groups into forces with wider political impact.

Case Analysis 2: Cross Trees in South-Eastern Estonia

The custom of cutting a cross into a living tree during funeral ceremonies on the way from home to the graveyard has been known throughout Estonia in previous centuries. The cutting marked a kind of farewell act between the deceased and the living. This tradition was shared also by neighboring Latvians and Finns and today it is still part of the funeral customs of South-Eastern Estonia. While during the Soviet era (1940-1991) cross trees were, in some places, taken under nature protection, during the last few decades individual cross trees and cross tree forests have been cut more intensely in dozens of places. The removal of cross trees in Rosma, Põlva County in 2005 was widely covered in the media (e.g., Ritari, 2005), as it was one of the oldest and most characteristic of such forests. The officials of

the local government justified the removal as required by the Road Administration, claiming that the trees occupied the building zone. According to the officials who authorized the felling, their quick decision was legal, as they were forced to consider the road repair schedule. However, some officials involved in the case said they had only heard about the removal of the cross trees from the press and some of them condemned the behavior (Vaarmari, 2007). New narrative versions, in line with the motives of the older tradition related to natural sacred sites, reached the media. For example, a newspaper article emphasized that, according to folklore, the person who harms a cross tree will be afflicted by an accident. A reference was made to how the local pastor reminded the road builders of this belief and the men indicated that they just had to follow the command of the authorities. According to the narrative, shortly afterwards, a tree fell on two roadbuilders' minibuses, damaging these but leaving the men uninjured (Ritari, 2005).

After Rosma's case, a more systematic mapping of cross trees took place partly on the initiative of the activists of earth religion, and their cultural meaning was explained to the authorities. In 2006, a map of cross trees was completed by the Estonian Green Movement; since 2012, institutions operating with the participation of Earth Believers have mapped cross trees and disseminated information about them. Later, cross trees were included on a map layer of the map application of Republic of Estonia's Land Board. Currently, the Estonian National Heritage Board has appointed an expert council of natural sacred sites where two members are from the Earth Believers' organization and yet another member is a university lecturer and local heritage activist who is of the opinion that religion-based understanding of nature conservation can sometimes be more effective. So, this is an example where a grassroots initiative has obtained a significant role in national authoritative bodies.

However, the cutting of cross trees has continued intermittently. In most cases, it is followed by public explanations given directly to the companies involved in felling by folklorists or Earth Believers about the cultural significance of cross trees (e.g., Kõivupuu, 2020). Partly because of this information exchange, some cross trees have been left to grow. When the Rauskapalu cross forest was felled in 2014, a spokesman for the State Forest Management Center appeared in the media after the media coverage denouncing it, stating that "heritage culture is an important part of our culture and national identity and the Forest Management Center plans its felling activities so that these values are preserved" and encouraged local people to inform about cross trees (Uustalu, 2014). At the same time, the State Forest Management Center manages nature trails, which often have information boards inviting visitors to notice and value environmental traditions, combined

with wooden sculptures inspired by folklore (see more about using such sculptures in Kõiva et al., 2020).

In 2016, a list of cross forests that need to be counted under nature preservation was compiled. Only eight of the 20 cross forests listed there have survived fully intact by 2020. Folklorists, Earth Believers and conservationists have pointed out that single cross trees left alone or at the edge of a clear-cut site are not a sustainable solution, as such trees break easily even with a slight wind, and thus a wider area needs to remain unlogged. One of the next environmental conflicts arose on this basis, when in 2020 the media covered an approach of the forest industry that was called “barbaric” – the cross trees had been cut down so that the part with the cross remained standing, but the upper part of the tree was removed. According to the company’s representatives, the felling was carried out for safety reasons, as the only remaining cross trees could have fallen onto the road due to wind, which led the Road Administration and the National Heritage Board to demand cutting the trees, but this excuse was not accepted by the public who saw greed and intentional disregard of sacred traditions as the only motives of the company.

The National Heritage Board later took a supportive position towards cross trees, at least in words, claiming that the board was not among decision-makers because it can only give recommendations, and emphasized: “Undoubtedly, the cross trees are a very important part of the cultural heritage of Southern Estonia, and therefore the destruction of every cross tree is regrettable” (Loim, 2020).

It can be said that through public coverage of locally occurring cross-tree-related conflicts, public awareness of the sacredness of cross trees has increased throughout Estonia, as well as a general opposition to extensive logging in Estonian forests. In the same year, 2020, the above-mentioned Rosma Cross Forest was declared a cultural monument by a directive of the Minister of Culture, aiming to protect it from damage caused by people’s ignorance and negligence.

All in all, one of the common denominators in the example above and in the Bandung philosophy is the idea of dispersing political power, so that it would not serve just the interests of an economic-political elite but also consider the voices of the civil society with more focus on tradition- and identity-bound values. Thus, it can be seen that even in some regions of Europe like Estonia awareness of dynamic “decolonial alternatives” (Shilliam, 2016, p. 4) is topical.

Case Analysis 3: Kassnurme Hills

The Kassnurme Hills complex is situated in Eastern Estonia. While debating about the protection value of natural sacred sites, Earth Believers and many others have mostly used reference to their historical sacral use. Yet regarding some sites that are currently used in the function of sacred groves, the spokespersons of the Earth Believers have argued that these are not “true” or “real” sacred sites because there is no recorded older tradition (Kõiva, 2014, p. 152). The active Earth Believers themselves perform their rites in historical natural sacred sites. The opposite is true of Kassnurme sacred grove – there are no data of its historical use as a natural sacred site, and Ahto Kaasik as spokesperson of the Earth Believers has called it a “new” sanctuary. However, the development of the Kassnurme complex has been supported by a similar reasoning that Earth Believers use about historical sites, namely idealizing the ancient pagan Estonian folk religion and seeing Kassnurme as a place for the continuation of this spirituality (see a longer study on the topic in Hiiemäe, 2017).

The Kassnurme complex consists of steep hills surrounded with forest, some water ponds, and large stones – everything else is manmade in the recent 20 years. Nevertheless, in the recent decades Kassnurme has served as a crystallization point for mythological and other expectations of various groups and has become very popular among them. As prerequisite for functioning in such a role, the complex combines several attractive components: a long history, visual appearance (dramatic landscape forms and a newly reconstructed wooden stronghold with wooden sculptures of mythological characters that make the place look “ancient”), proximity to a separated sacred grove area with impressive entering gates, large stones, and wooden wheel crosses. Moreover, a number of folk legends about Kassnurme relate to the mythological giant Kalevipoeg, who is a popular figure in Estonian traditional folklore and who in the second half of the 19th century became the main character in the Estonian national epic *Kalevipoeg*. In recent times, additionally, the place was claimed to be an ancient cult place that centers around a powerful energy pillar.

Archeological findings prove human activity in the place until the beginning of the 13th century. However, there is no information about the later period until the second half of the 19th century, when Kassnurme Hills became a place for folk gatherings, festivals, and students’ daytrips. In the first period of Estonian independence (1918-1940), various cultural events took place here, such as theatre plays or choir singing events. During the Soviet time, social life in the surrounding villages ceased and the Kassnurme Hills became overgrown with bushes. Only

in 1989 (together with a new era of national awakening that resulted in Estonia regaining independence in 1991) a new initiative came from a local non-governmental organization to clean up the site. A big swing and fireplaces were built, later a fragment of the wooden stronghold was erected. Cultural events started taking place again, many of them connected with folk culture, e.g., warrior role-plays re-enacting ancient battles between Estonians and foreign conquerors (Hiimäe, 2017). The most elaborated event, a special festival named Mytofest with the idea of reconstructing ancient Estonian culture, is organized yearly.

The perception of the place as a special site with a unique aura is supported by the narrative part. All popular sources stress that namely the sacred grove of Kassinurme is thousands of years old as a cult place, although there is no such archeological evidence. For example, the web page of the Forest Society of Jõgeva (the NGO that has been dealing with reconstructing the place since 1989) stresses a long historical continuation:

Our ancient forefathers found on the territory of the holy grove an emanation place of Earth energy and started exercising cultic activities. In order to protect themselves from evil forces, a wooden stronghold was erected close to the holy grove. [---] This stronghold here has never been conquered due to its peripheral location (<http://www.kassinurme.ee/kassinurme.html>).

According to the text, ancient people were aware of the emanation of earth energy and the energy pillar, yet in the Estonian preserved older folklore accounts energy pillars are never mentioned. Even the expression ‘energy pillar’ itself has emerged only in the recent decades in the context of the modern esoteric tradition. However, the behavior in the sacred grove of Kassinurme follows the same elements that are described in folklore and promoted by Earth Believers: the visitors knock on the gate with a wooden hammer, leave coins or food on the sacrificial stones, and bind ribbons on trees and bushes. Moreover, ancient-looking pseudo-folkloric innovations as part of role plays were invented in the holy grove of Kassinurme, for instance group charms accompanied by a dance with burning torches. Thus, Kassinurme is not threatened with physical damage or reconstruction works but there are conflicts based on the perception of the ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ use of a place defined as natural sacred site.

Earth Believers have not given longer comments on Kassinurme Hills in the media; they have rather ignored it as a “non-ancient sacred site”. For example, photos of it were not accepted to the Earth Believers’ yearly photo contest of natural sacred sites in 2013 and the web page of the organization points out that there

are no historical or folkloric data of the place as a sacred site. Thus, power and authenticity conflicts have here a rather spontaneous character, but are still fueled by the general discussions on natural sacred sites that are visible in the media with the participation of Earth Believers. The Forest Society of Jõgeva was still mentioned positively in the Earth Believers' 2011 event of appointing Friends of Sacred Groves of the year, in recognition that they had contributed a lot to the awareness of natural sacred sites, but along with the reference to the lack of historical data about Kassnurme as a sacred place (Bioneer, 2011).

New, noisy rituals held in Kassnurme sacred grove are changing the behavior of some more serious and spiritually minded visitors who would want to go there for contemplation and now give up visiting the grove. On the other hand, the looting of the stronghold by vandals in 2010 was widely condemned by the public, without reference to the question of whether it was an authentic sanctuary or not. Thus, people can be expected to act in diverse ways at sacred sites, but there are still some common identity-related ethical values that the Earth Believers' movement has promoted and that have gained wider relevance in the society. Finally, the example above has shown that certain shared ethical and moral principles need to build on local cultural-historical roots in order to be able to function as non-authoritarian tools of personal moral responsibility and shared co-existence – an idea that is expressed also in a number of works on the spirit of Bandung and philosophies of national unity (e.g., Demenchonok, 2017).

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore the potential of Earth Believers and related grassroots initiatives in supporting local and national identity and promoting environmental awareness and sustainability, describing a geographically distant case that nevertheless resonates with the ideas of the Bandung Conference. This chapter showed that, somewhat paradoxically, one of the anchors of the national identity and worldview of contemporary, largely urbanized Estonians is natural sacred sites, and that there is an interaction between this phenomenon and the activities of Earth Believers that bind together belief, tradition, and environmental protection. In disputes over natural sanctuaries, regardless of whether they belong under nature or heritage conservation, it often becomes decisive if a practice of using a natural sacred site is considered to be part of a cultural heritage process that takes place in the public interest and whose knowledge is given a dominant role in defining cultural heritage.

Thus, narratives based on folk religions and bringing religious dimensions to otherwise secular ideologies will continue to play an important role in environmental conflicts, and this will in turn play a role in the historical connection of Estonian folklore with national self-consciousness. As oral tradition and intangible cultural heritage are not something that can be unambiguously determined – as indicated above, there are discrepancies in the archival records – various stakeholders need to continue to prove and substantiate the weight of their positions in conflict situations.

Due to their active role in the current folk religion-based national narrative, the representatives of the Earth Believers are in a significant position. Representative statistics, according to which the majority of the population considers Earth Religion to be the right religion of Estonians and the protection of natural sanctuaries important, confirm that the Estonian folk religion and the vision of the Earth Believers have been presented convincingly and in a suitable manner for the public. In this respect, it can be argued that the Earth Believers' movement has played a unifying role for the public, including in promoting environmentally friendly views validated through references to tradition. Undoubtedly, the widespread 'environmental turn' in Western countries and the growing general interest in neo-pagan groups also had a supportive and guiding effect here.

At the same time, it must be still noted that although the impression may be created that the movement is homogenous there are remarkable variations among its members, for example there is only a limited active group who are engaged in public work (cf., similar thought by Västriik, 2015). The movement has sown even more controversy, leaving some people with the impression of being dogmatic and at times selective when interpreting folklore (for example, ignoring some sacred sites, or strictly accepting only certain limited behaviors related to sacred sites). However, other people are nominally supportive of their clear and persevering views which have, in turn, inspired new grassroots movements, for example the non-governmental organization Eesti Metsa Abiks (Support of Estonian Forest, founded in 2016) that opposes strongly the extensive logging; their arguments involve concepts of the forest as a living being and center of culture that are based on the works of the spokesperson of Earth Believers, Ahto Kaasik.

Emphasizing certain aspects of the traditional folk religion as rhetoric device, while defending the movement's agenda and interests, has been at times successful and effective in making the public think more about its land, environment, national belonging, and heritage, and has in many cases at least temporarily been able to stop environmentally damaging projects. At the same time, national consciousness has been attached more to the positive perception of nature and environmental

protection. The narrative of the unique ancient customs of Estonians, their love of nature and still-existing untouched nature has spread far beyond the level of folk religion; it is used in individual-level identity creation, but also in the rhetoric of mental health, tourism, and advertising, and resonates well with global ecological thinking trends.

Bringing finally a parallel with the meaning of the Bandung Conference, it can be said that although the ideas of the Bandung Conference could not be realized in respective countries in practice as planned. The continuous emergence of similar ideas related to tradition-based unity, equality and sustainability in the world seems to show that such ideals and ways of democratic thinking have not lost relevance in contemporary societies all over the world. Even if these imaginations have often not yet been successfully transferable into real life, they offer food for the soul that has an important role in national identity-building, environmental disputes and dynamic visions for the future.

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Origination, Transposition and Decolonization

Indian Perspectives of Unity in Mauritius as Basis of the Bandung Conference

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Abstract

Mauritius is a land of many cultures, a *pot pourri* of cultural and religious practices garnered from different continents, but essentially from Africa and Asia. Slaves and indentured labourers from the former and latter continents respectively, were successively introduced to the island by European colonizers. Both races faced hardships of various kinds at the mercy of their so-called masters. Against the supremacy of the White Man, they had no choice other than to rely on their respective Ethos. What devices, which values and worldviews were adopted to face the proselytic onslaughts and economic exploitation by a culture which considered itself superior and viewed others as subaltern and thus deserving of annihilation? This chapter exposes and examines the double-sided struggle led by Indian labourers or *Apravasi* (immigrants) to the island, bound by their Contract. While on one hand they strove to reconstruct their uprooted beliefs and customs by transposing their ancient homeland and its timeless ethos, on the other they battled relentlessly against proselytic agendas of missionary-colonizers zealous to extend their following. Transposition was accomplished through the correspondence of geographical and topographical features present on the island. Proselytism was curtailed by fostering a communitarian solidarity and seeking refuge in the perennial wisdom of Indian Philosophy, the origins of which go back to primitive ideas of unity in the Vedas. When placed in the context of the Bandung Conference,

this battle on double fronts led by the Indian immigrants in Mauritius reveals the significance of that historic moment in 1955. This is because both the battle and the Conference, as this chapter aims to demonstrate, are based on eternal principles embodied in an Indian Ethos.

Keywords: Mauritius; Indentureship; Indian Ethos; Unity; Oneness; Proselytism; Bandung Conference

Introduction: The Mauritius Experiment

Mauritius is a small island-nation located in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar, with a land area of approximately 2,040 square kilometers. It has a diverse population of 1.3 million, comprising various ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. The country gained independence from British colonial rule in 1968 and became a republic in 1992. As a democratic and sovereign state, it is member of major organisations (UN, OUA, SADC, etc.) and follows a Westminsterian parliamentary system.

The abolition of slavery, in 1835, ended a crime against humanity but it did not go without repercussions, especially for those who depended on it for their economic gains. A similar scenario happened in Mauritius where the sugar-estate owners, essentially of French origins, found themselves all of a sudden deprived of a form of cheap labour upon which they were utterly dependent. The colonial government, represented by The British East India Company, coming under economic and social pressure, resorted to a type of labour-exploitation called Indentureship or the Indenture system. An economically affordable alternative that was available in India proved salutary for the cane-growers but, for the thousands of Indentured Labourers who signed agreements to work for them, it was a historic decision. The “*girmitiya*”,¹ as they became subsequently known, initiated a chain of events, the consequences of which are still being felt in the life of the country. From 1835 to 1923 thousands of Indian Labourers, often with their families, embarked from several ports of India such as Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and undertook arduous and long journeys at sea, driven by dreams of a better life in an unknown *el dorado*, somewhere in the middle of the Indian Ocean. They were, unfortu-

1 The word is derived from “agreement” and refers to those labourers who had signed the contract that bound them.

nately, disillusioned upon arrival. At the hands of their employers, these *Coolies*, as they were generally called, faced hardships and exploitation that was nothing less than slavery. Stories of their tribulations did not take much time to reach the ears of their compatriots in India. Coming under fire from different quarters in India and the United Kingdom, the British rulers had to end the wave of migration. The visit of Mahatma Gandhi in 1901, during his voyage between India and South Africa, was also a providential as well as an instrumental element in stopping Indentureship (Dabee, 2022, pp. 58-79). By 1939, the year in which a chapter in Indian History known as the Great Experiment came to a close (Bissoondoyal, 1984, pp. 134-135), half a million of migrants formed part of the local population on the island.² Despite their trials and tribulations, very few had returned to their motherland upon completion of their contract. Reasons for this vary from a lack of opportunities back home to recalled fears of the treacherous journey by sea. Most, indeed, were resigned to the idea that there was no going back, choosing instead to adopt the island as their new home and re-construct life afresh.

The overwhelming number of *Coolies* thus settled on the island relegated the rest of the population, including slave descendants known as *Creoles*³ to a minority status. Despite this new *rapport-de-force* and its socio-economic and political implications,⁴ racial and other forms of differences were, nevertheless, gradually overcome to forge a common vision that enabled the country to free itself from the shackles of colonialism. This, it is opined, could not have happened had all communities not resorted to the perennial values inherent in their cultures' Ethos and respective worldview. While an examination of the dynamics of this multi-cultural scenario would be an intellectually gratifying exercise, it is not within the purview of this chapter. The author intends to publish a dedicated paper subsequently. The primary objective of the present chapter is to highlight the philosophical dimensions of Indian perspectives on Unity, their intimate affinity with the spirit of Bandung and their ultimate contribution to the decolonization process in the so-called Third World, including Mauritius.

2 Making Mauritius the only country in Africa where Hinduism is the major religion.

3 These were freed slaves, now referred to as the "creole" population by their former masters, who were essentially of French origins. Migrants had also come to the island from China.

4 For a fuller discussion, readers are invited to read my paper *Political Empowerment, Socio-religious Awakening and Cultural Revival: Mahatma Gandhi's Contribution towards emancipation of People of Indian Origins in Mauritius*. (see Reference List)

The Vedas: Fountainhead of Unity

One would wonder as to how Indian migrants were able to preserve and perpetuate their social norms, cultural practices and religious beliefs in new settings that were geographically different and distant from their native place. How were they able to blend and co-habit with communities from other continents? Through what process did they carve a place for themselves in this unique demographic setting and forge their own identity in it? The answers to these questions indicate the theme of this chapter: to highlight the world-view and philosophical basis, as well as implications of Indian Philosophy, which Indian labourers transplanted in Mauritius exhibited in their daily lives. The context in which they evolved cannot be adequately grasped without a survey of the philosophical background that underlies their spiritual, intellectual and moral beliefs. This background is not a solid mass of foundational concepts and principles related to a particular scripture or person as can be found in other religions.⁵ Instead, it is constituted of accumulated strata of evolving world-views that have their roots in primitive pre-Vedic cultures, stem and branches in the ancient *Mantras* or verses, flowers in the *Upaniṣads* and *Bhagavadgītā* and fruits in the *Darśanas*.⁶ It is a sophisticated process that is both horizontal and vertical with the expansion of the understanding of the nature of the world, the place of man in it and the role of a Divine Being related to them. While one's world-view expands in its comprehensiveness of life, it also rises to higher levels in its comprehension of reality. The threads that run in length, breadth and depth through the different layers are ethical values, religious beliefs, and cultural practices that look at reality from the perspective of unity or *ekatvam*, as this chapter demonstrates in the pages that follow.

Moreover, the process was not confined to the minds of the intellectual elite, but trickled down to other segments of the community, giving it a practical dimension. In this way, in India, philosophy and religion are never divorced from each other. Religious beliefs and cultural practices are nothing but the expression of philosophical investigations and spiritual realizations. It is a methodological necessity among Indian philosophers to survey all forms of beliefs, practices and philosophical positions – whether contemporaneous or preceding ones, before proposing their own improvements (Radhakrishnan, 1923, p. 26). Many go even to the extent of travelling the length and breadth of the country to take the pulse of their people.

5 For instance, the Holy Bible and person of Jesus.

6 *Darśanas* are philosophical systems, some of which are based on Hindu scriptures like the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavadgītā*.

The success of their response is directly proportionate to their capacity for realistically evaluating the societal and spiritual needs of the time. From the galaxy of such individuals, three are worth mentioning, as their influence on Indian Philosophy and religion crossed the borders of India. The first and, perhaps, most ancient was Gautama Buddha, whose impact rippled across the whole of Asia, earning him the epithet “light of Asia”.⁷ The second is the great Ādi Śaṅkarācārya who, during medieval times, re-established Vedic Religion with such force that he became known as ‘*jagatguru*’ (Madhava-Vidyaranya, 2002, p. 166).⁸ Lastly, in our contemporary times, Swami Vivekananda globalized the *Vedānta* school of thought as the best expression of Hindu Religion and Philosophy. He noted that, even in the remotest of Indian villages, one can come across people who, though not educated, are yet able to demonstrate a profound religious and philosophical outlook of life and world (*The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda Vol. III*, 1946, p. 232).⁹ Surprisingly, none of the aforementioned claimed to be creating a new religion or a new path. Their humility and respect for tradition was such that they professed only to be re-formulating the ancient wisdom accumulated through generations of teachers. This tradition has always shared a vision of oneness of soul and matter, rooted in the apprehension of a unique, unchanging substratum, practiced by the laymen, many of whom came to Mauritius.

Genesis of Unitary Views in the Vedas: Discovery of *Ṛtam*

The first and oldest stratum, where ideas of oneness in Indian Philosophy emerge, are the *Vedas* or *Veda*.¹⁰ Considered to be the first book in the library of humankind¹¹ owing to their antiquity, the Vedas evidence the first attempts of man to discern unity. Obviously, pre-historic humans had already realized the benefits of coming together as such unity increases the chances of survival. It is also a common feature in the animal kingdom. The Vedas, on the other hand, bear witness to mankind’s first steps on a long journey into the realm of oneness, until the emergence of a philosophical conception of unity of reality that could be termed as non-dualism,

7 See Edwin Arnold’s “Light of Asia”.

8 Literally meaning “World Teacher”.

9 According to an anecdote where he was asked by a British why he did not wear clothes like a gentleman.

10 The plurality and singularity of the term depend upon context of usage. In the present chapter, the plural will be used.

11 Rev. Philip Morris in *The Teachings of the Vedas*.

or monism. The hymns of the *Samhitā* portion¹² of the *R̥gveda*, which is the first and most primitive of the four,¹³ show evidence of animistic and anthropomorphic tendencies (Phillips, 1895, p. 26).¹⁴ On their basis pantheistic, panentheistic and, later, monotheistic notions evolved to be expressed ultimately in abstract monistic terms (Radhakrishnan, 1923, pp. 63-117). Sāyaṇācārya, a 13th century Vedic scholar, interpreted them as depicting nature worship (Radhakrishnan, 1923, p. 68; Macmillan, 1914). This view is rejected by some Indian thinkers. Aurobindo (1914) for instance, sees deeper esoterism in the hymns (p. 6). On the other hand, Radhakrishnan (1923, p. 8), referring to Gilbert Murray's theory on the development of Religions, concurs with Sāyaṇācārya.

Accordingly, the seers who composed the oldest hymns (*Sūkta*) are often said to represent the childhood of humanity (Nehru, 1989, p. 152), the initial dive, so to say, of man's mind in his exploration of the reality as experienced. Like infants, these seers marveled at the beauty of nature, inspired by her beneficence of food and shelter, awed by her destructive forces (McDonald, 1881, p. 11). In such circumstances, it is not surprising that these composers conceived of each element being inhabited by a spirit (Nehru, 1989, pp. 79-88). They conceived of a form of animism that subsequently gives way to an anthropomorphic vision, whereby the spirit is conferred human attributes. In this way, that entity becomes communicable. Of all the anthropomorphic beings, *Indra*, the personification of thunder and lightning, was most popular and often invoked to bestow protection and victory (Thomas, 1923, pp. 44-55). Similarly, Thomas (1923) states that in this manner the sun is personified as *Sūrya*, wind as *Vāyu*, sky as *Varuṇa*, dawn as *Uśā*, and so on, with the result that the Vedic Pantheon comprises 33 million such beings, spread across three dimensions (pp. 9-24).¹⁵ At a later stage, a tendency began manifesting in some hymns, whereby a particular being was raised to the highest level as being superior to all. This peculiarity of the Indian version of anthropomorphism was called Kathenotheism (*Kathenotheism | Etymology, Origin and Meaning of Kathenotheism by Etymonline*, n.d.), that visualized a particular being's spirit pervading

12 Each Veda has two sections, one ritualistic and one spiritualistic. The *Samhitā* along with the *Brāhmaṇa* constitute the former and the *Aranyaka* and *Upaniṣads* the latter. The four-fold division is both chronological and logical, indicating the historical evolution of philosophical ideas in India.

13 The other three being *Sāma*, *Yajus* and *Atharva*.

14 The *R̥gveda Samhitā* consists of 10600 verses (*Mantra*) contained in 1028 hymns (*Sūkta*). The latter are divided into 10 chapters (*Maṇḍala*), according to their historical evolution.

15 The Vedic world was believed to be constituted of three dimensions (*loka*s): sky (*dyaus*), earth (*prithvi*) and the intermediary space between them (*antarikṣa*) which were regulated by 11 million anthropomorphic beings in each.

across all elements of nature. This tendency in the hymns can be considered as the initial steps in Indian culture towards conceptualization of a unitary vision of the world.

The Vedic mind's quest for an all-encompassing world-view further develops in hymns where the henotheistic inclination is superseded by monotheistic conceptualizations with pantheistic and panentheistic connotations. The *Puruṣa Sūkta* or *Hymn on the Giant Man* (Ṛgveda.X.90), describes the whole process of creation to have been a cosmic sacrifice or *yajña*, whereby the creator, imagined as a cosmic man possessed of thousands of heads, eyes and feet, transformed a quarter of Himself, while three quarters remain unknown (Swami Harshananda, 1996, pp. 8-9). The term *daśāṅgulam*, or ten fingers indicates the “quadruple” conception of an anthropomorphic being (*catuspāda puruṣa*) having pantheistic (everything in God) and panentheistic (everything as God) propensities. The poets of the Vedas imagined that the cosmic man is so huge that He holds the whole of creation in the palm of His hands, yet His fingers remain outstretched. In other words, He is *in* the world as its immanent form (pantheism) while at the same time *beyond* or transcendental to it (panentheism). In other hymns, the Vedic *Ṛṣis*¹⁶ conceive of *Varuṇa*, *Indra* or *Hiranyagarbha* as having characteristics similar to the *Puruṣa*, all of which evidence attempts at a unified view of the world.

This kind of development may have happened as the human mind perfected its understanding of the working of nature. Meticulous observation of natural phenomena and profound reflection thereupon inevitably led to the understanding that all of them are following specific patterns since there is an element of predictability in their occurrence. Alternating of days and nights, movements of the sun, moon and stars, changing of seasons in a pattern that is rhythmic were evidence of the operation of a universal law in the background. This idea took the shape of *Ṛtam* or cosmic order, which is the expression of the cosmic intelligence (Radhakrishnan, 1923, p. 79). It is comparable to the *Tao*, or “The Way”, as conceived in Taoism, which emphasizes values like selflessness, compassion and humility amongst others (Radhakrishnan, 1923, p. 79 b). The *Puruṣa Sūkta* uses the term *barhi*¹⁷ to symbolize the cyclic nature of creation (Swami Harshananda, 1996, p. 39). *Ṛtam* stands for the course of action or nature of a particular entity and is the source of two central concepts in Indian Philosophy: *dharma* and *karma*. In their

16 A seer, poet or sage.

17 *Barhi* is the name given to a grass that dries up completely during summer but comes back to life in spring when water is sprinkled.

loosest sense, they respectively imply what one is and what one does. Ultimately, they become the fountain of all ethical laws and moral values in Hinduism.

The aforementioned hymns portray the emergence of two unitary visions: one of a divine spirit in the form of the cosmic man and, the other, of a divine law, in the form the *Ṛtam*. While the latter may be the outward manifestation of the will of the former, there is no indication that such may be the case. This would be tantamount to a dualistic interpretation of reality. Philosophical traditions like Sāṅkhya and Dvaita for instance (Chatterjee & Datta, 1939, pp. 44-55). The dichotomy of matter and consciousness however cannot hold strong for the reason that consciousness is superior to matter as it informs it. Conversely, matter cannot transform itself without an intelligence acting upon it. It was natural therefore that a further sophistication of the process would be a higher conception, where the two could be viewed from a unitary perspective. The Vedas achieve this in one of the most intriguing hymns called the *Nāsadīya Sūkta*.¹⁸ With profound philosophical implications, the hymn wonders about the state of the universe moments prior to its manifestation. It conceives creation as a materialization of the seed of desire (*retas*) in the mind of an impersonal being (*sat*) which is one without a second and indescribable (*verse 3*) (Thomas, 1923, p. 127).

The journey in search of unity that begins in the primitive anthropomorphic hymns culminates into the monistic conception in the *Nāsadīya Sūkta* but does not end there. The philosophical implications underlying the hymns of the *Samhitā* are taken to a higher level of unified conception in the *Upaniṣads*, or the last section of the Veda.¹⁹

From *Ṛtam* to *Ekatvam* in the Upaniṣads

The intuitive leaps in the beginning of the *Vedas* take the form of spiritual realizations in the *Upaniṣads*, going through an evolutionary process of sophistication of ideas as the human mind gathers greater knowledge and better understanding of the universe. We will see subsequently how spiritual unity is achieved in *Vedānta*. On the other hand, these intuitive perceptions of unity found expression in the social, political and religious dimensions of Indian society at that time and even now across diasporas, including Mauritius. Of the many hymns, which appeal for

18 Rgveda.X.129.

19 As such, they are also called *Vedānta*, literally meaning “End of the Vedas”. While the number of *Upaniṣads* is disputed (some claiming 108, others 250), 11 of them are recognized as forming part of the Vedic corpus.

unity at social level, there is none which could be as telling as the *Sanghaṭana Sūkta* (Vadalkar Nardev, 1981, pp. 51-53).²⁰ The three *mantras* that compose this hymn call for men to “walk together, speak with one voice, and think with one mind”;²¹ and prays for unity of purpose, inspiration and motivation for individual and social uplift. In other places, the equality of men and women is emphasized as essential for a unified community.²² The terms *ajyeṣṭāso*, meaning “amongst whom nobody is superior”, and *akaniṣṭhāsa*, meaning “amongst whom nobody is inferior”, indicate the ecological, ethical and practical applications of the intuitive experience of oneness (Vadalkar Nardev, 1981, p. 55). These Vedic hymns thus resonate, albeit from a remote past, the Spirit of the Bandung Conference and substantiate the perennial nature of values.

The *Rgveda, Maṇḍala V, Sūkta 59, Mantra 6* could not be a better illustration thereof.²³ It invites men to live harmoniously among themselves and love all beings in nature as a cow loves her calf. Vedic socialism invites wealthy members and leaders of the society to ensure equal distribution of resources of the society for the benefit of mankind,²⁴ to practice charity,²⁵ even towards enemies, and to be friendly towards all. Likewise, hoarding, selfishness and greed are condemned as anti-social as they create segregation among men.²⁶ Such ignoble, *anāryamaṇam*, individuals behave contrary to the noble values of oneness professed by the Vedic Aryans.²⁷ The Vedas enjoin men to follow these principles in terms similar to religious ceremony, including sacrifice. Since society is composed of family units, householders or *gārhasthya* are central in their effective application. The *Brāhmaṇa* section of the Vedas, which deal essentially with Vedic liturgy, binds all married couple to the performance of Five Great Sacrifices known as *pañcamahāyajña*.²⁸ The *Bhūta yajña*, for instance, requires families to protect all forms of life. The performance of such rituals is a symbolic expression of the unity of creation at the microcosmic level and forms part of the cosmic sacrifice performed by the Creator or *Puruṣa* Himself (Swami Harshananda, 1996, pp. 7-13).²⁹

20 *Rgveda*.X.191.

21 *saṅgacchadhvam sam vadadhvam sam vo manāsi jānatām*.

22 *Rgveda*.V.60.5. *ajyeṣṭāso akaniṣṭhāsa ete sam bhrātaro vāurdhūḥ saubhagāya*.

23 *Rgveda*.V.59.6.

24 *Rgveda*.V.60.6.

25 *Rgveda*.X.117.3.

26 *Rgveda*.X.117.2.

27 *Rgveda*.X.117.6. the term *ārya* denotes a person of high moral standards and chivalry.

28 Special rituals for Gods, Ancestors, Teachers, Guests and all beings respectively.

29 See *Puruṣa Sūkta*. *Rgveda*.X.190.

These eco-centric, moral and societal values are further developed in the Upaniṣadic portions of the Vedas. These texts contend for their part, that mere performance of rituals without grasping the spiritual dimension behind them, soon becomes blind, mechanical and tedious (Radhakrishnan, 1968, p. 19). Rituals are nothing but a practical and transcendental display of otherwise incomprehensible esoteric truths. Their charm swiftly fade away if the performers are disconnected with the philosophical principles that underlie them. The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* exemplifies best this condemnation of soul-less practices by narrating the story of Naciketā, a young lad full of “faith” and “inquisitiveness” (Radhakrishnan, 1968, pp. 593-648). The latter denounces his father’s hypocritical observance of rites, whose intentions were to secure a heavenly seat by offering decrepit and unproductive old cows in charity. Ultimately, the boy learns that spiritual unity is the fertile soil for ritual diversity. The *Upaniṣads* cultivate a broadly unitary outlook of existence. The practical implications thereof is beautifully demonstrated by the first verse of the *Īśā Upaniṣad* (Radhakrishnan, 1968, pp. 565-574).³⁰ The first line of the verse establishes the pantheistic view that the spirit of Īśā, the Lord, pervades whatever moves in this moving world. It is the apprehension of the spiritual unity of whole existence. Such vision cannot remain confined to the intellect and needs to be translated into actual practice. What should be the behaviour of man when such apprehension dawns? The second line of the verse provides the answer. It raises the question as “to whom does wealth belong?” and advises us to “enjoy with a spirit of renunciation.” Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of Truth and Non-Violence considered this verse as embodying the essence of Indian Philosophy since, in his words, it teaches not only fraternity of mankind but, in fact, “universal brotherhood.” (Radhakrishnan, 1968, pp. 565-566). The eighth verse of the Upaniṣad validates and justifies the Mahatma’s opinion, when it proclaims that to the one who sees the oneness of life, *ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*, there is no delusion, no sorrow.³¹

The *Upaniṣads* have indeed been a perennial source of inspiration for generations of thinkers who appeared, subsequently, on the Indian philosophical scene; but they have equally left deep impressions on non-Indian thinkers, since as early as the medieval period, when it was known as “Oupnek’hat” (*Bibliotheca Polyglotta*, n.d.).³² The verses are set, often in serene verdant atmosphere of forest hermitages, in the form of dialogues between teachers and their students. At the end of some spiritual instruction, cryptic statements describe a spiritual experience or aim at

30 Īśā Up. 1.1. *īśā vāsyam idaṃ sarvaṃ yat kiñca jagatyāṃ jagat.*

31 Īśā Up. 1.7. *yasmīnsarvāṇi bhūtānyātmaivābhūdvijānataḥ. tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka ekatvamanupaśyataḥ.*

32 Arthur Schopenhauer, Paul Deussen, etc.

provoking one. These *Mahāvākyas*, or Great Utterances, essentially point towards a monotheistic and monistic conception of reality with pantheistic leanings. The Upaniṣadic sage, thus, declares that the body is merely a garb worn by a spirit called *Ātman*, which is not different from *Brahman*, the universal spirit that, in turn, like the *Īśa*, pervades and transcends reality. Both are of the nature of Truth, Consciousness and Bliss (*sat-cit-ānanda*), uncreated, indestructible, indescribable, incomprehensible and eternal.

At times, the spiritual experience is of oneness between the two,³³ while at other time it is that of *all as one* and *one as all*.³⁴ Some see only *Brahman* everywhere,³⁵ while others claim that multiplicity of forms of matter is an illusion, *Brahman* or *Ātman* alone is true.³⁶ The common denominator in all these Upaniṣadic intuitions is the experience of some form of singularity be it of life, of the divine or of the world. Their significance and influence are such that they subsequently become the source of the cultural, religious and philosophical life of Indians. They are the best representations of the Indian Ethos since all Indian values can invariably be traced to them. In the centuries that follow the Upaniṣadic era, teachings of unity flow in two different but complementary streams, prompted both by the need to legitimize and popularize them.

Though highly inspired and poetic, the *Upaniṣads* are essentially axiomatic in nature and lack the solid philosophical foundations, as well as the logic that would make them more appealing to rational minds. On the other hand, the values they inherently carry needed to be brought to the mundane level so that they may benefit humanity and society. What would be the use of such soaring spiritual realizations if they carry no practicability? Theologians, dialecticians and philosophers take up the first task while the second one becomes the domain of poets, dramaturgists, artists and moralists. The former led to the emergence of Indian Schools of Thought known as *Darśana*, while the latter enabled the creation of unique literary masterpieces (*kāvya*), epics (*Itihāsa*) and mythology (*Purāṇa*).

33 Mandukya Upaniṣad, 1.2. *Ayam ātmā brahma*. Also the Chāndogya Up. 6.7.8. *Tat tvam asi*. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up. 1.4.10. *Aham brahmāsmi*.

34 Īśa Up. Verse 7. *Ekatvam anupaśyataḥ*.

35 Chāndogya Up. 3.14.1. *Sarvam khalvidam brahma*.

36 Kaṭha Up. 2.1.11. *na iha nānā asti kiñcana*.

Philosophical and Mythological Expressions of *Ekatvam* (Oneness) and *Advaita* (Monism)

Of the different *Darśanas* that flourished in India, two became the best exponents of the Unitary vision of the *Upaniṣads*: *Advaita Vedānta* and *Mādhyamika* Buddhism. Both hold a monistic metaphysical ideology, though from opposing perspectives. While *Advaita* claims that the Ultimate Reality is a positive entity called *Brahman* or *Ātman*, the *Mādhyamika* takes a nihilistic position whereby nothing positive can be real. Ultimate Reality is *Śūnya*, Emptiness or Void. If one ponders upon the claim of these two systems, it will be seen that in fact they complement each other. The *Upaniṣads* state that *Brahman* or *Ātman* is beyond description, perception and conception,³⁷ and explained through a process called “*na iti na iti*”³⁸ meaning “not this, not this,” revealing thereby a shade of nihilism. The Buddhist insistence of the “emptiness” of the Absolute, on the other hand allows a ray of positivism to pierce through since conceptualization of emptiness is as impossible as is that of “everythingness” (Radhakrishnan, 1923, p. 382). One can find an echo here of the *Nāsadīya Sūkta* mentioned earlier. The Vedic hymn begins with the doubt regarding the conditions before creation came into existence, whether there was something or nothing.³⁹

While philosophical debates on monistic unity were restricted to intellectual elite, the Vedic-cum-Upaniṣadic perspective of oneness also reached the common man in its most practical forms. It became embodied in and symbolized by characters, events and places described in tales and legends found in epics⁴⁰ and *Purāṇas*.⁴¹ Majestic characters in epics (some of whom are gods) like *Rāma*, *Sītā*, *Lakṣmaṇa*, *Bharat*, *Dasaratha* in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, controversial yet inspiring personalities like *Kṛṣṇa*, *Draupadi* and her five *Pāṇḍava* husbands, in the *Mahābhārata*, the *Daśavātāras*⁴² count among hundreds of national heroes that inspire

37 *avaṅgmanasagocaram*.

38 Bṛhad. Up.II.iii.6

39 *nāsad āsīn nó sād āsīt tadānīm...*

40 India has 2 national epics: the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. The former narrates the quest of an exiled Prince to save his wife, abducted by a demoniac king. The latter is a voluminous genealogical record of several dynasties that participated in a Great War opposing descendants of two brothers. It also contains the famous *Bhagavadgītā*.

41 *Purāṇa* literally means old or ancient. They contain intricate accounts of lives and events associated with various deities in Hinduism. There are 18 Major and 18 Minor *Purāṇas*. The *Bhāgavata* and *Śiva Purāna* are among the well-known ones.

42 The *Śrīmadbhāgavatapurāṇa* formulates the theory of *Avatāra* (incarnation) whereby Lord Viṣṇu, the preserver of the world descends among men to protect them against unrighteousness and guides them towards righteousness (*Dharma*).

the average Indian to cultivate unity despite adversity. Geographical locations and features described in these popular texts have become places of pilgrimage, where millions flock with religious fervor to imbibe their hearts and minds with faith and devotion. The main pilgrimage sites are: *Prayāga*, where three mythical rivers meet⁴³ and on the banks of which the famous *kumbha mela* is held every 12 years; *Kurukṣetra* where the Great War took place and where was sung one of India's greatest scripture, the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*; all the places where 12 *vyotirlingas*⁴⁴ have appeared as well as the 51 *śaktipīṭhas*⁴⁵. Other than these popular sites, India count thousands of similar sites that are associated with rivers, mountains, hills and forests considered as portals to connect with the Divine.

The aforementioned national heroes, popular deities and sacred places are indeed unifying symbols of the Indian Ethos and powerful instruments of nationalism that inspired the Indian Independence. The values and principles they embodied were used as slogans by Freedom Fighters like Mahatma Gandhi and others. They transcend the barriers of race, caste and gender, penetrate deep into the Indian Psyche; support the value system of their adherents; and invariably manifest themselves in religious and cultural practices. Festivals of light⁴⁶ and colour,⁴⁷ mass pilgrimages, birth celebrations,⁴⁸ each day in the Hindu calendar is dedicated to that Ethos. The omnipresence of unifying elements across the Indian subcontinent and, even beyond,⁴⁹ ensures their perennial relevance and reproduces them wherever their believers have settled themselves. Mauritius is thus one good example of a place where the insemination of the Indian Ethos culminated into Independence (Dabee, 2022, pp. 58-78).

The celebration of festivals, pilgrimages, idolatry of epic heroes and *paurāṇic* deities are to a large extent the outward manifestations of the internal unity at socio-religious, cultural and political levels. The principles of *Advaita* or monism and *ekatvam* or oneness are, in fact, universal in their outlook and, therefore, natu-

43 *Gangā, Yamuna and Saraswati*.

44 These are special stones associated with the worship of Lord *Śiva*, the Destroyer of the Universe. Together with *Brahma*, the Creator and *Viṣṇu* (see previous footnote), they constitute the Hindu Trinity.

45 *Jyotirlinga* refers to symbols associated to *Śiva* and *Śaktipīṭha* are relics associated with Goddess *Sati*, his consort.

46 *Dīpāvali* or *Divāli* celebrated by lighting lamps.

47 *Holi*, a harvest festival, celebrated by smearing colours on each other, singing and dancing.

48 For instance, *Kṛṣṇa janmāṣṭamī*, *Rāma navamī*, *Gaṇeśa Catūrtthī*, *Kāvadi* celebrate the Birth of *Kṛṣṇa*, *Rāma*, *Gaṇeśa* and *Kārtikeya* respectively.

49 Bhutan, Tibet, Mongolia, China in the north; Pakistan, Aghanistan, in the west, Sri Lanka, in the south; Bangladesh, Burma, in the east and Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore in the south-east.

rally permeate all aspects of life. The universal Brotherhood which Mahatma Gandhi reads, in his interpretation of the first verse of the *Īśa Upaniṣad*, implies not only unity of humanity but also and even more so, the unity of life. The *Upaniṣads* regard every living being, plant or animal, as essentially sentient and inhabited by the same spirit called *Brahman* or *Ātman*. This dimension of unity of life is admirably integrated in the popular scriptures by associating plants and animals to the heroes and deities hailed therein. An association that has profound eco-ethical significance. The cow is considered a mother, the bull is the vehicle of *Śiva*, while the snake cools his throat, the eagle is that of *Viṣṇu*, the peacock is *Kārtikeya's* emblem, Goddess *Durgā* rides a lion or a tiger, *Hanumān* is a monkey-god, *Gaṇeśa* has elephant head, *Hayagrīva* is horse-headed. Reverence towards and respect for animals are ultimately expressed in the form of vegetarianism, non-injury and non-exploitation for economic purposes. The pantheistic experience of one spirit encompassing everything demands therefore reverence for and, by extension, preservation of nature in all her facets.

The Process of Transposition in Mauritius

Vedic, Upaniṣadic, Epic and Purānic expressions of the ultimate unity of reality thus permeate the collective consciousness of much of the Asian continent. They feed the minds of its people with ethical and spiritual values of which they become unconscious practitioners and carriers. They present a world-view that favors selflessness, that shuns violence and upholds justice, and that promotes equality. It is that same world-view that was imported to Mauritius by the indentured labourers. Despite the obvious disillusionment upon arrival, they were nonetheless mesmerized by the island's immaculate natural beauty. From an anthropomorphic perspective, Mauritius has a close affinity with India. This propensity inherent in the Indian psyche to divinize nature and worship its various elements, which was characteristic of the Vedic culture, is illustrated in the Mauritian context as well. In fact, the geography and topography of the island themselves can be viewed as a mini replica of the Indian subcontinent. As discussed previously, the Vedic hymns extolling the beauty of the Indian landscapes, with their majestic mountains and valleys, rivers and hills, etc., reveal the extent to which the *Ṛṣis* were inspired by the scenic panoramas that surrounded them. This aesthetic sense that characterized them found its parallel in Mauritius.

Like their nature-inspired ancestors of the Vedic era, the *apurvāsīs* or Indian migrants could not resist being exalted by the pristine beauty of the new land. Its

mountains, hills, rivers, valleys, lakes, and other geographical elements reminded them of their own geo-religious places and, as such, seemed inhabited by similar spiritual beings. The similarities ignited curiosity, fueled imaginations, inspired reverence and, as in India, became the source of legends and myths that they gradually assimilated into their pre-disposed Indian psyche, but with a peculiar Mauritian touch. There are, indeed, several geographic features on the island which, owing to their ambiguous topography or strategic location, became the source of what can be styled as Mauritian animism. They led to the emergence of a mythological narrative that was uniquely indigenous but resembled much its Indian counterpart, in that they were conceived as being alive though not necessarily attaining religious significance.

Since mountains are the first geographical features visible on any land owing to their towering presence, they exert themselves more strongly on the imagination of people living around them (Bernbaum, 2006, pp. 304-306). In most religious texts, they are the chosen locations for divine revelations or interventions. The Bible narrates how the Ten Commandments were revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai. Mount Olympus is considered the abode of the Gods in Greek mythology. In Amerindian cultures, mountains were believed to be inhabited by spirits. Indian mythological and historical accounts are replete with references to both actual and fictional landmasses. The Himalayas are considered most sacred and recognized as the abode *par excellence* for seekers of spiritual realization. The numerous caves and temples on its various peaks are homes to hermits and yogis since unknown antiquity. From there and down to Cape Comorin, one can come across countless mountains and hillocks that have been objects of veneration at local, regional and national level owing to their association with some spiritually significant historical or mythological event.

The overwhelming influence of mountains on human cultures is thus an inevitable phenomenon and the people who live in Mauritius do not escape it. Mauritian mountains, though much smaller in size compared to their continental counterparts, have such unique shapes that they generate phantasmagorical narratives as can be gleaned from the works of nature-inspired writers like Malcolm de Chazal. The latter's *Petrusmok* is a work abundant in anthropomorphic and animistic references (de Chazal, 1979, pp. 12-13). His prolific imagination transforms the whole island into a living entity and visualizes every mountain as possessing a character of its own. In an almost mystical tone, he converts them into gates that open into unknown dimensions. They were, to a large extent, inspired by folk tales that had grown into the collective imagination of the population decades earlier. *Le Morne Brabant* symbolizes defiance against slavery as it was the hiding place of Maroons.

It has now been decreed a National Heritage Site (Teelock et al., 2005, p. 144). The *Corps de Garde* inspired the construction of a Kovil, a Temple in Tamil, popularly called *L'église montagne* (Macmillan, 1914, p. 150). The *Marie Reine de La Paix* on the slopes of *Montagne Signaux*,⁵⁰ dedicated to Virgin Mary, is adored by Mauritians of Christian faith. The most eye-catching are perhaps the *Montagne Lion* and *Pieter-Both*, according to Macmillan (1914, p. 163) owing to their shapes that seems almost chiseled out of massive rocks, like the famous carvings of Mount Rushmore. The former reminds one of the Sphynx in Greek Mythology. The latter, on the other hand, is loaded with animistic elements and illustrates the transposition of the Indian anthropomorphism in the Mauritian context. Given its iconic shape of a human head it was called *Muḍiyā Pāhaḍa*, “mountain with head” by the Indian settlers. Around it grew the story of Stone Boy (Jain, 1991).

The story describes another geographical feature of Mauritius which carries higher religious and spiritual importance for the migrants. It alludes to a lake called *Pari Talao*⁵¹ where, according to the legend, *Gandharvas*,⁵² *Yakṣas*,⁵³ and *Apsarās*⁵⁴ descend from their celestial abode, in order to sport in its limpid waters. The lake referred to is the Grand Bassin,⁵⁵ a volcanic crater situated in the middle of a forested area in the high grounds of the Central Plateau. The legend behind its discovery replicates similar narratives in the Indian context. Very often, spiritual experiences like trances or premonitions resemble dreams whereby divine beings or deceased loved ones appear to guide or offer revelations to the experiencer. In a similar situation, it is said that Lord *Śiva* visited a priest in his dream to direct him to that location (World Heritage Centre – Laureates, 2007). The purpose was to solve a problem of religious practice. Water from the sacred Ganges needs to be poured on the *Śivalingam* during *Abhiṣekaṁ*,⁵⁶ especially on the *MahāŚivarātri* festival, a very important Hindu festival. Devotees in India undertake long pilgrimages to the banks of the sacred river in order to collect this water in order to perform the ritual. Their compatriots who had migrated to Mauritius, however, could not accomplish this annual journey and complete the ceremony, uprooted as they were from their native place. The Pandit’s premonitory dream was salutary indeed! The mythological and historical dimensions of *Ganga Talao* and the subsequent socio-political

50 “Signal Mountain” in French overlooks the harbor of Port Louis, the capital.

51 “The lake of Fairies” from *Pari* meaning Fairies and *Talao* meaning lake.

52 Divine musicians.

53 Spirits inhabiting physical features in nature.

54 Heavenly damsels or nymphs.

55 Meaning “Big Pond” in French.

56 A special ritual where the symbol is bathed with water from the Ganges, milk and honey.

and religious relevance it acquired in unifying the Mauritian nation are reminiscent of the origins and development of the Indian Spirit of *ekatvam* extensively elaborated upon in preceding paragraphs.

Akin to the *Ganga Nadi* or river in India, the *Ganga Talao* occupies a central place both on the geographical and religious map of Mauritius. Just as the lake reminded the migrants of the epic and *paurānic* myths associated with the river, other locations in the island, due to their scenic beauty, awakened similar subconscious awareness. *Panchavati* and *Chitrakoot* were forested hills where heroes of the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* were believed to have spent some time during their exile. Bearing similarities to topographical features belonging to their counterparts in India, two places were named after them in Mauritius. While the *Ganga Talao*, *Panchavati* and *Chitrakoot* are indicative of the process of projecting Indian religious beliefs on the Mauritian landscapes, the naming of other places also supports this idea, though to a lesser extent. Thus, a village where the soil was reddish brown was called *Lallmatie*.⁵⁷ *Brahmasthanā*⁵⁸ was the name given to a place that reminded of the abode of *Brahmā*, the Creator of the Universe. Very recently, the village which was the birthplace of the Father of the Nation was named after him.⁵⁹

While not all places in the country could reflect 'Indianness' through their names, all villages however possessed socio-cultural and political structures and religious patterns that emulated those in India. Originally labour camps bordering sugar mills, the agglomerations grew into small villages with the influx of new migrants. The presence of a temple – be it a *Śivālaya*, a *Rāma Mandir*, a *Kovil*, preferably on a nearby elevated ground (mountain, hill or hillock) – was indispensable to keep the community united, as were *ghāṭs* on riverside locations for ritual baths (*snāna*) and immersion (*visarjana*) of idols during festivals (*Gaṇeśa Catūrtī*, *Kavadi*, *Gangā snāna*). These were places where the practices of mainstream Hinduism took place. On the other hand, the outskirts of the village where was located the *Kālimāye* or *Kālimandir*, was the scene of secret and occult ones (*Tāntrika*).⁶⁰ Much further away and almost outside the village was found the cremation ground or *smaśāna bhūmī*. All of these places are platforms where the values and cultures of unity based on Indian Ethos are staged in life and death. Along with religious

57 From *lālmāṭī* – *lāl* meaning “red” and *māṭī* meaning “earth” or “soil”.

58 *Brahma* being the name of the Creator and *sthāna* standing for “place”.

59 *Kewal Nagar* – *Kewal* being the house name of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and *Nagar* meaning *village*.

60 *Tāntrism* is essentially associated with worship of Female deities; the most terrible and fearsome amongst whom is *Kālī*. *Tāntrism* is also (wrongly) associated with witchcraft. Hence its location outside the village.

and cultural practices, the socio-economic structure and its accompanying norms and customs were also duplicated. Working, trading and ruling classes, including carpenters, jewelers, ironsmiths, manual workers, priests, etc., as one can see in any Indian village, were reproduced in *Apravāsi* settlements. All were represented in the Assembly of elders called *Panchayat*, the political seat of the village, where democratically elected members took decisions of vital importance. In Mauritius, the *Panchayat* was known as *Baiṭhkā*,⁶¹ which also played a strategic educational and cultural role in the lives of Indo-Mauritians. By the time Mauritius achieved freedom from imperialism, each village looked so identical to its original Indian *grāma* that Prof. Basdeo Bissoondoyal (1984, p. iv) referred to the island with the epithet “Greater India”.

Resistance and Resilience of the Indian Spirit against Proselytic Colonialism

The geographic and demographic transposition on Mauritius was thus achieved through replicating the Indian Ethos. The question that raises itself at this stage is: did this Ethos accomplish in Mauritius what it achieved in its place of origin and all such areas afflicted by the evils of colonialism? Adherence to Unity helped the Indian people navigate ages of alien domination and ultimately free it from the tentacles of colonial powers. Could the same be asserted for Mauritius and all other colonized races and cultures? Can the world-view based on Indian Ethos contribute towards decolonization and forge national identity? The answer to all of these interrogations is in the affirmative and the evidence thereof is the ordeal of the Labourers. Indeed, the *appravāsis* had to wade through numerous obstacles of economic, political, cultural and religious nature before they could enjoy freedom, equality and justice. These came at the price of hard struggle as they had to battle against a colonial attitude that treated them as no more than cattle. Their weapons were their principles and values, their spiritual and cultural heritage, the Indian Ethos, rooted in their timeless religious scriptures. Scriptures which, as examined previously, spread messages of oneness, *ekatvam* and Monism *Advaita*.

The process of transposition suffered its first offensive in the form of the proselytic attempts from Christian missionaries of various denominations on the island who were generally disdainful of the cultural and religious practices of ‘Coolies’, which they labelled as paganism (Hazareesingh, 1975, pp. 58-59). The

61 Literally meaning a place where people sit, it is essentially like a community hall.

missionaries had, in these endeavors, the support of the colonial government and the rich estate owners, which means that they had at their disposal the whole apparatus of the State. The meager wages paid ensured that the migrants and their families remained stuck in poverty. Wealth became thus a powerful weapon of conversion to colonial religions. Their respective missionaries were confident of its efficacy since it had produced the desired results in neighboring Reunion Island (Haokip, 2009, p. 77). Though their missions were successful to some extent among Tamil and Telugu speaking Hindus, economic troubles did not seem to divert most away from their customs and traditions, according to Mooneegadoo (2017). In the face of the limited impact of economic compulsion towards conversion, the State resorted to legal means. For instance, the Hindu marriage ceremony was not recognized by the Law, turning the religiously legitimate wife and biological children into concubine and bastards respectively. Legalization of the latter was only through a Christian marriage, which itself entailed conversion. When resistance to such moves proved tenacious, performance of Hindu Marriages were banned during working days. Mahatma Gandhi had successfully dismantled this strategy in South Africa.⁶² Still, the hopes of seeing mass conversion failed against a mass of laborers who, though poor, were yet united in and emboldened by their Indian Culture.

In the face of the failure to convert adult minds rooted in the Indian Ethos, the Christian missionaries then shifted their strategy towards the immature and innocent minds of children. Education thus became the next battleground. Children of Indian migrants initially did not attend schools and worked in the sugar cane fields alongside their parents. Hazareesingh writes that Governor Higginson noted in 1851 that “savage” children of Indian immigrants were left unattended and needed attention (1975b, p. 58). This Macaulayist⁶³ observation not only paved the way for the introduction of compulsory education,⁶⁴ but also opened the gates of public schools to Christian missionaries. Under the guise of educators, they initiated a process of acculturation, notably through the instruction of foreign language, which had yielded admirable results in Reunion and the West Indies (Haokip, 2009, pp. 84-85). Sensing the attempts at “de-indianization” under the garb of literacy, Indian migrants stopped sending their children to public schools,

62 See his autobiography *Story of my experiments with Truth*.

63 Lord Macaulay laid the foundations of the Indian Education system that facilitated conversion of Indian “natives” into “loyal subjects” of the British Empire (Macaulayism – Wikipedia, n.d.).

64 The Ordinance No. 6 making education compulsory was passed in 1856 and implemented in 1857.

instead taking charge of their education in Indian Languages. This decision not only saved the languages that were the vehicle of culture, but also demonstrated their spirit of oneness. Mauritius is today one of the rare countries outside India where Indian Languages are part of the National Curriculum.

The successful resistance and resilience of the migrants, despite repeated onslaughts of a financially, legally and politically superior power, could not have been expressed without a solid social structure constructed around the Indian concept of community. The focal point of this structure was the *Baiṭhkā*, the Mauritian version of the Indian Village Council or *Panchayat* (Hazareesingh, 1975b, p. 59). Though rudimentary in construction, *Baiṭhkas* acted as impervious shields by reminding the migrants in many ways of the greatness of their Indian Tradition. *Baiṭhkas*, along with *Gita* and *Ramayana Mandalis* (Hindu versions of Church choirs) were venues where various socio-cultural events were held (Hazareesingh, 1975b, p. 60).⁶⁵ They were the religious and cultural centers of the village where a variety of activities ensured that members of the community would remain rooted in their Identity. These ensured that followers did not lose sight of their tradition and culture. They also served as places for marriage ceremonies thereby conferring social recognition to the marital status of the couple and, subsequently, legitimizing their offspring. On weekdays the councils transformed into *gurukulas*⁶⁶ or educational centers, where children were sent for instruction in Indian Languages, Arts and Sciences and exposed to their rich cultural and spiritual heritage. Again during the decades preceding independence, *Baiṭhkas*, *Gita* and *Ramayana Mandalis* were utilized for political rallies and as forums for debates (Bissoondoyal, 1984, p. 58).

Interactions with African Culture – Ubuntu and R̥tam̄

Indian immigrants came to Mauritius as a response to the need for cheap labour after the abolition of slavery; the same need had prompted the forceful capture of Africans, essentially from Mozambique and Madagascar to work as slaves on the island. The latter were exposed to the same proselytizing ventures but were not as fortunate as their Indian counterparts. Easy prey to the wave of missionaries from various sections of Christianity, their native languages were quickly overwritten

65 Epic and puranic literature was staged during festivals, religious ceremonies were performed, etc.

66 The ancient Indian system of Education called *gurukula* (*guru* meaning “teacher” and “*kula*” meaning family) was the backbone of Indian civilization.

by the *French Patois* or the *Patois Creole* and their habits and customs replaced with that of their “saviours” (Kelly, 1947, p. 471). Yet aspects of their culture survived in the form of their music and dance, called *Sega*, which has now become national heritage as along with their culinary and artistic practices. The cohabitation of these two continental cultures was generally a peaceful one, as is evidenced by the linguistic affinities that developed subsequently. The Indian migrants who spoke essentially Indian languages, especially *Bhojpuri* (prevalent in the state of Bihar in India where most of them originated) quickly assimilated and learned the *Patois*, going even to the extent of “creolizing” their mother tongue. The Creolophones, on their side, exposed to Indian Cultural practices introduced several Indian terminologies in their own language. According to Sibylle et al. (2008), words like *karay* (frying pan), *deksi* (cooking pot) *chapati* (flat bread), *farata* (layered bread), *chatini* (chutney), etc. from Indian cuisine; *tamasa* (show), *jalsa* (music show), etc. from Indian music and dance and many other similar phrases were assimilated (2008, pp. 174-176). This process led to the development of a style of Creole and Bhojpuri languages that are unique to Mauritius.

Such linguistic evolution would not have happened without the peaceful dispositions of both cultures. Historically they were united in their fate as victims of colonization, and socially they were condemned to co-exist on this small island. These social, cultural and historical dimensions are, in the author’s opinion, the result of the meeting of the African Philosophy of *Ubuntu* with the Indian conception of *Ekatvam* which is itself the manifestation of the Vedic conception of *Rtam*. While their languages faded and their faith converted, the cultural practices of Africans brought to Mauritius survived, rooted as they were in the philosophy of *Ubuntu*. Despite the ambiguity of the term in various African languages, Leonhard Praeg (2008) highlights that “*Ujamaa/Ubuntu*” is described as a “comprehensive ancient African worldview” (p. 4) and is “the foundation and edifice of African Philosophy” (Ramose, 1999, p. 35). Although not necessarily geographical, there appears certainly a philosophical transposition of Africa on the island. One can venture to stretch the idea further by asserting that a juxtaposition of two continental views on Unity happened in Mauritius, silver-lines of the nimbuses of colonization. The furthest possible speculation that can be formulated would be that their interaction and successful application in the process of building a Mauritian identity, commonly and contemporarily referred to as *Mauricianiste*, reflect and symbolize the process of decolonization in line with the spirit of the Bandung Conference (Bosquet-Ballah et al., 2017).

Conclusion: Indian Ethos as a Foundation of Bandung Spirit

It is most certainly not a coincidence when, upon reflection on the Final Communique of the Bandung Conference, one finds that it bears close affinity with Indian Philosophy. The Ten Principles or *Dasa Sila* that embody the Spirit of Bandung come from Sanskrit, the language of the Vedas (*BANDUNG PRINCIPLES – BANDUNG SPIRIT*, n.d.). *Dasa* stands for the numerical ten (Latin *Deca*) and *Sila* meaning values or principles in both Hinduism and Buddhism. In both these world-views, which are fundamentally expressions of the Indian Ethos, *Sila* stands for ethical perfection characterized by Non-violence (*ahimsā*) and Truth (*Satya*) the personification of which was Mahatma Gandhi himself. There is however, another significant geographic and demographic dimension to the conference which further sustains the idea that the Bandung Conference exhibited principles of an Indian world-view. The observations of Richard Wright in *The Colour Curtain* are revealing:

I rose, walked the floor for a moment, then sat again and read the aims of the twenty-nine-nation conference. ...It was simple; there were no hidden jokers.... The nations sponsoring the conference—Burma, India, Indonesia, Ceylon, and Pakistan—were all religious.... [emphasis added] (Wright, 2010, p. 371).

The countries he mentions were, at one point or another in history, a part of the Indian civilization and adhered to two world-views that were expressions of its ethos: Hinduism and Buddhism. The idea for the necessity of a conference of such a nature could not have happened anywhere else than in one of such “outposts of Indian Philosophy” or place that is part of the “Greater India” (Bissoondoyal, 1984, preface). The *Dasa Sila* and the aims of the Bandung Conference can, in this manner, be considered as emanating from the conception of Unity in Indian Thought and espousing similar views expressed in other colonized cultures, opening thereby possibilities for a new world-order decolonized and de-polarized by Western vision.⁶⁷

Though not an official participant, as it was still part of the British Empire, Mauritius had thus demonstrated the application of the spirit of the Bandung Conference decades before it was held in Indonesia, through the relentless strug-

67 An oft-quoted line from a verse in the R̥gveda states that “the whole world is one family” (*vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam*).

gles of Indian migrants. Subsequent generations had continued resistance against the missionary zeal of colonizers (e.g., in the political activities of the Bissoondoyal Brothers) and finally savored victory in 1968 with Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam becoming the first Prime Minister of an independent Mauritius and the Father of the Nation, much like Jawaharlal Nehru, the first premier of India and one of the architects of the Bandung Conference. They had all realized the significance of and had therefore applied the principles of Unity embodied in the Indian Ethos that their ancestors had introduced, constructed and protected and which ultimately contributed in taking their nation through the difficult process of decolonization (Kumarakulasingam, 2016, p. 51). Mauritius and Bandung being both “outposts” of the “Greater India”, their Unity of Spirit rooted in Indian Ethos becomes inevitably obvious.

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Intercultural Philosophy as Philosophy of National Unity

An African Perspective

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Abstract

Why is it that 68 years after the Bandung Conference, philosophies of national unity are still contested, and the challenges of ethnicity, tribalism, bigotry, social exclusion, and religious cleansing persist? The situation points to the fact that it is either that these philosophies of national unity have not sufficiently addressed the problem of national unity, or that they lack the capacity to address it. It is possible that, instead of these philosophies of national unity focusing on national integration and inclusiveness, they have promoted disunity and exclusivity. One could argue that each philosophy of national unity is birthed from an exclusivist angle, projecting a particular narrative to serve as philosophy of national unity. It is on this note that we present intercultural philosophy as a philosophy of national unity. Intercultural philosophy, in this sense, goes beyond the Global South's quest for epistemic inclusion, against the Global North's epistemic dominance or hegemony. Africa is multi-ethnic and multi-religious as well as multi-cultural; with this in mind, a potent philosophy of national unity must take into consideration all the above superlative factors. Using philosophical methods of analysis and hermeneutics, we propose intercultural philosophy as philosophy of national unity.

Keywords: Intercultural philosophy; unity; epistemic hegemony and marginalization; recognition

Introduction

The nature of what constitutes a philosophy of national unity raises many questions. These questions logically presuppose the lack of, or the inadequacy of, existing philosophies of national unity. The Bandung Conference of 1955 was the coming together of Asia and African countries to form a united front against their perceived common enemies, or oppressors in global politics. The group of Asian and African countries saw in their unity a way out from Western epistemic, economic, and cultural dominance. It was at a time when Western hegemony had permeated all facets of human existence, and had relegated the Global South to the position of non-actors in global politics. It is important to note that 68 years after the conference, not much has been achieved in the area of unity, especially in Africa. Gassama (2017, p. 129) contends that “the conference was marred by deceit and conceit occasioned by unreflective embrace of the rhetoric of false solidarity and grand visions.” The present chapter will interrogate this challenge with a view to proffering a more potent approach to the challenge of unity, especially in Africa.

The chapter would like to argue that the challenge or problem associated with unity is traceable to human nature. This human nature is what Fukuyama (1992, p. 146) called the “struggle for recognition”. It suffices to say that whatever form of unity has eluded Africa or Asia in relation to this discourse stems from this human nature. Historically, Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Hegel, and Nietzsche among other philosophers have all talked about human nature, though using different language (Fukuyama, 1992, p. 162; Zuckert, 1988). Francis Fukuyama expanded and popularized the idea, borrowing from Hegel and Kojeve. For him, there are two powerful forces at work in human history. He calls one “the logic of modern science” and the other “the struggle for recognition” (Fukuyama, 1992). This chapter is more concerned with the latter than the former. “The struggle for recognition” in Fukuyama’s view is the very “motor of history”. It is that human nature that is responsible for all known conflicts in human history. Plato calls it “thymos” or “spiritedness”, For Machiavelli, it is “desire for glory”, Hobbes dubs it “pride or Vainglory” (Fukuyama, 1992, p. 162; Zuckert, 1988). All of these terms refer to that dimension of man, his humanity, which feels the need to place value on oneself above others. It is the political part of the human personality because it is what drives men and humanity to want to elevate themselves over others. The Global North and Global South dichotomy is traceable to this human nature; the desire for recognition. Western epistemic, economic and cultural hegemony is also referable to this very human nature. History has always shown that it is innate in human beings to dominate fellow human beings, once one is in the position to do

so. It is obvious that the Bandung Conference ended up replacing Western imperialism with indigenous dictators and tyrants. At the geopolitical level, there are suspicions that countries that were part of the Bandung Conference (especially China) currently impose economic imperialism on others.

Balasubramanyam (2015, pp. 17-18), writing on China and India's economic relations in Africa, states that there is a growing concern over the sincerity of China's and India's economic relations in Africa. In his view, part of the argument is that China and India use Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as an instrument of control over the government of host countries. Historically, there has never been a time in which the world has achieved unity in its real sense. Even the United Nations cannot be said to be truly united in all intent and purpose. Ramon Grosfoguel (2007, p. 214), writing on the historical divide between the Global North and Global South, thus states:

We [people of the 'Global South'] went from the sixteenth-century characterization of 'people without writing' to the eighteenth and nineteenth-century characterization of 'people without history' to the twentieth-century characterization of 'people without development' and more recently, to the early twenty-first century of 'people without democracy'.

Struggle for Recognition

The struggle for recognition is inborn in humanity and it operates at both an individual and at the geopolitical level. For U. A. Ezeogu (2021, p. 55), colonialism, neo-colonialism, Eurocentrism, and Western epistemic hegemony are all products of the struggle for recognition that seems to characterize human nature. The focus has always been centered on conquest, domination, and exploitation. It appears that while efforts among Third World countries for liberation were underway, there was also a covert intention by some of these countries (especially the Peoples' Republic of China) to replace Western domination with their own.

One can infer a case of substitution in the Bandung project, though there are positives associated with the 1955 Conference. At the base of all this internal or geopolitical maneuvering is the concept or idea of a struggle for recognition, which has also been the springboard for all forms of agitations; intellectual, economic, political, or cultural. These have been the baseline of disunity both at national and international levels. The idea of the struggle for recognition is the view that states that there is an innate tendency in man to place himself above his fellow.

From such a perspective, this chapter attempts to posit intercultural philosophy as philosophy of national unity. Intercultural philosophy is philosophy that promotes multicultural understanding and creates room for satisfactory inter-relational experience, and to a great extent controls this aspect of humanity called the struggle for recognition. Our context of intercultural philosophy coincides with Chimakonam's (2015, p. 36) conversation with Bruce Janz. Here, intercultural philosophy is conceived as a framework in which various philosophical traditions can converge to relate to each other without any one taking the posture of superiority. It is the mutual interaction of equals, moving from their various places to space. This addresses the problem posed by "the struggle for recognition" as whatever form of recognition that comes because of intercultural interaction becomes a product of mutual understanding and not an imposition on the other.

This chapter first considers unity as the spirit of the Bandung Conference. Secondly, it establishes how 'the struggle for recognition', which is part of human nature, has constituted a major challenge to this unity. It further analyses critically some selected Pan-Africanists' efforts at propounding philosophies of national unity, with the view of showing the gap created by human nature's quest for recognition. Additionally, it explores the concept of intercultural philosophy, and how it fittingly addresses the problem associated with the struggle for recognition. In conclusion, the chapter projects intercultural philosophy as the philosophy of national unity.

Unity as the Spirit of the Bandung Conference

Hermeneutically, it is our position that 'unity' is and should be seen as the spirit of Bandung. The Communiqué of the Bandung Conference was built on the premise of cooperation among multiple civilizations and religions. For Eslava et al. (2017, p. 6), the 'Spirit of Bandung' was a phrase made popular by Roeslan Abdulgani, Secretary General of the conference and it was a reawakening slogan that symbolizes unity among Third World countries. The agenda of the conference was not just about asserting independence against Western imperialism. It was also about how to face an uncertain future occasioned by independence (Fakhri & Reynolds, 2017; Eslava et al., 2017). Richard Wright (1956, p. 10) saw the Bandung Conference as the meeting of the despised, the insulted, the hurt, and the marginalized people of the world. It was a case of class, racial, and religious consciousness on the global stage.

What had these nations in common? Wright argued that they had nothing in common, except for their past relationship to the Western world. The conference was perceived to be a kind of judgment against the Western world. Eslava et al. (2017, p. 18) suggested that the Bandung Conference brought together different nationalist projects and class interests in order to create a widespread condemnation of the indignity of imperialism and cultural chauvinism. It laid the groundwork for a larger “Third World” as a political entity, which included some countries of Europe and all the Latin America.

Deducing from the fear and challenges associated with facing an uncertain future, it was imperative on the part of these countries to come together in order to chart a common course. It suffices to say that the unity of the countries of the Global South, from Asia and Africa, constituted the main essence of the Bandung Conference. It is the position of this chapter that ‘unity’ of purpose (economically, politically, and culturally) was the main focus of the 1955 Bandung Conference. To substantiate this claim the first point of contact will be to consider the “Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference” otherwise known as the Bandung Conference of 1955.

From the final communiqué, the conference was poised to consider problems that are of common interest and concern to countries of Asia and Africa. These problems were condensed into three major ones: economy, culture, and politics. This was against the background that countries of the Global North were far ahead of countries from the Global South in these three areas. They felt that the only way their voices could be heard, at a geopolitical level, was by creating a synergy amongst themselves and by presenting one united front. Considering the similarity of their problems, and their inability to challenge Western imperialists individually, they saw in unity the only way that their voiceless voice could be heard and taken seriously.

Appadorai (1955), in stating events that led to the Bandung Conference, pointed out that, prior to the conference, Asians had already started to register their displeasure and critical sentiments over the operation of world affairs. For him, there was a call for Asians to take their rightful place in the consideration of world problems. What triggered this position among the Asian countries, according to Appadorai, was the fact that when “European people think of peace, they think of it only in terms of Europe” (1955, p. 1). To the Asians, he pointed out, in the imagination of European thinkers the world seemed to be confined to the areas inhabited by European races. No consideration was given to the people of other races. Such a high level of Eurocentrism or hegemony was not faced by Asians alone; Africans were also confronted by the same problem. With the level of European

advancement, logically it was near impossible for individual countries of Asia or Africa to challenge them in any aspect of human endeavor. The Bandung Conference was to form synergy among Asian and African countries, in order to challenge the *status quo* of Western dominance. It aimed at forming a united front capable of challenging Western hegemony. The conference laid the foundation of what later became the “Third World” project.

One can foresee from the conference the potential of ‘united’ Third World countries. To what extent was this project achieved? We argue that, though the Third World project was good and seemed achievable, the inability of the conference to address the problem of what Fukuyama (1992, p. 146) called the “struggle for recognition” constituted a major flaw which later frustrated the project. Gassama (2017, p. 129) posited that the leaders at the conference had also inherited one of the most powerful weapons of human domination and destruction from their former colonial masters. In his assessment, Bandung became a stage to consolidate another round of unprincipled, good old-fashioned struggle for power and domination justified with a high rhetoric of cultivated deceit.

Gassama (2017, p. 131) states that there was deceit and conceit at the Bandung Conference. For him, a major deceit and conceit associated with the conference was to be found in the catastrophic politics that later defined much of the Third World countries. Among the possibly powerful nations of the Third World that had adequate resources to make a substantial difference, it became obvious that it was in their interest to have the sort of leadership that challenged what the Bandung Conference propagates. One can infer a case of having another interest outside the main purpose of the Bandung Conference. While unity is their point of convergence, ‘the struggle for recognition’ which is part of human nature, led to the disintegration of the conference goals. Gassama reacting to this kind of situation, thus states: “Rule by terror and mass murder and an unwillingness to give up power at any cost were among the signal lessons engraved in the political cultures nurtured by the Bandung host and participants, almost without exception” (2017, p. 133).

It was a clear case of these leaders trying to eliminate Western imperialism, in order to introduce their own dictatorial leadership. At the geopolitical level it has become a case of survival of the fittest as some participants at the conference are being accused of economic imperialism. This chapter concentrates on driving home its argument that the solution to the problem of disunity, occasioned by ‘the struggle for recognition’, is found in intercultural philosophy. This argument is based on the limitations that seem to exist in some philosophies of national unity. Let us consider some philosophies of national unity in Africa and those termed Pan-Africanist leaders and their conception of national unity.

Pan-Africanist Leaders on the Concept of National Unity

There are no known established philosophies of unity in Africa, but attempts at building a Pan-Africanist ideal of unity on the continent were made by a few of the independence-era leaders. While the Bandung Conference sought to create synergy among Asian and African countries in order to withstand their common enemy, Western imperialism, the focus of Pan-Africanism as a movement was also to create unity among all the nations of Africa, aiming at withstanding their common challenges. After the Bandung Conference, African leaders considered their peculiarities and tried to assert the need for African unity. It is important to note that the Bandung Conference, to a large extent, influenced the coming together of independent African countries charting a new course for Africa. For instance, in the First Conference of Independent African States in Accra, 15-22 April 1958, the Conference Declaration affirms its support to the Declaration of the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung. The first part of the Declaration puts it thus:

We, the African states assembled here in Accra, in this our first conference conscious of our responsibility to humanity and especially to the people of Africa, and desiring to assert our African personality on the side of peace, hereby proclaim and solemnly reaffirm our unswerving loyalty to the Charter of the United Nations, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Declaration of the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung.

On this note, it is important to admit that while the Bandung Conference was at the level of Asia-Africa unity, the Conference of Independent African States was focused on African unity. This Conference of Independent African States was, basically, an offshoot of Pan-Africanism. One cannot discuss unity in Africa without reference to Pan-Africanism. The Pan-Africanism Movement sought to build African unity. Here we will consider some selected Pan-African leaders and their notions about African unity: J. K. Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, K. Kaunda, and Sekou Toure. These African leaders saw the need for and the potentials of a united Africa, especially in the face of their common enemies.

Julius K. Nyerere (1965) argued that Africa as a continent was weak in relation to the outside world. It became even weaker when countries of Africa operated independently of each other. His quest for African unity was based on the view that Africa stands a better chance, at geopolitics, when united together than when they operate as independent states. According to him, in unity lies the safety, the integrity, and the development of the continent. Nyerere maintains that before any

progress can be made towards unity, we must recognize that “it has to come by agreement and agreement between equals” (1965, p. 327). Nyerere’s position is particularly striking in that it points to the very foundation of meaningful unity. By implication, for the unity to be successful, it must be a negotiated or possibly consensual unity, and none of the negotiating units should be seen as superior or inferior to others at the negotiating table.

It is important to note that the major concern of Nyerere is how to prevent outside powers from exploiting Africa, given the different needs and aspirations of its different countries. He then advocated for a United Nations of Africa, in which each member state would retain its sovereignty, while co-operating with the other members to secure common action with them. For him all members would be bound by certain freely acceptable principles, one of which is the principle of collective responsibility (Nyerere, 1965, p. 328). In the same vein, in his ‘East African Federation’ Nyerere indicated the imperialist ‘divide and rule’ as another source of concern in the quest for African development. The ‘divide and rule method’ basically aims at ensuring that Africans are more conscious of their differences than their similarities. He stated that

Whenever we have asked for our rights to govern ourselves, it has been the imperialist who has told us that we are not ready because we still have tribal, religious, communal and other differences. At the same time it has been the imperialist who has encouraged these divisions, in order to continue to rule a weak and divided people (Nyerere, 1969, p. 337).

Again, in his “Ujamaa: The Basis of African Socialism”, Nyerere saw Ujamaa as the basis of African unity. He argues that in *Ujamaa*, which means family-hood or kinship, the system represents what could be seen as an African socialist system. He contends that socialism, just like democracy, is an attitude of the mind needed to guarantee that people care for each other. African unity was, for him, the only way Africa could wrestle with Western imperialism. The challenge is that, after many decades of African political independence, not much has been achieved in the area of unity. Instead, ethnic leaning, tribalism, sectionalism, and various forms of social and political conflicts have become the order of the day.

Nyerere (1969, p. 327) was right when he posited that, before any progress can be made towards the unity of Africa, Africans must recognize that it has to come by agreement and agreement between equals. Agreement in this context is not the same as a liberal social contract; the focus of this agreement is on how independent nations of Africa can form a synergy for united African states. This position

addresses only one dimension of the problem. It does not take into consideration the tendency in man to dominate his fellow man. The existence of the Organization of African Unity, which has become the African Union, proves that mutual agreement and coming together is possible. Conversely, the undue influence on and workings of the European Union and China behind the African Union questions if there was actually a mutual agreement by the people of the continent. However, the question of whether it has solved the problem of unity in Africa remained unanswered. There are many more problems associated with unity in Africa today than there were during the pre-independence era. Nyerere failed to include discourse on how human nature can contribute to unity or disunity. He probably did not recognize human nature's tendency to assert itself and seek what Fukuyama called the 'struggle for recognition' (1992, p. 146). In his idea of African unity, he failed to acknowledge this very important perspective. The Biafra question in Nigeria can illustrate the matter further. To this day, the indigenous people of Biafra still feel that they are being marginalized in Nigeria, hence they clamor for a country of their own. There is an ongoing perception that some people are 'born to rule' in Nigeria, while others are 'born to be ruled'. The struggle for recognition spurs the 'born to rule' to dominate others, and the same struggle for recognition has also made the 'born to be ruled' refuse to be dominated. The result has led to numerous and unending conflicts and social unrest in Nigeria.

The next Pan-Africanist leader to be considered is Kwame Nkrumah (1963). Nkrumah's argument was anchored on the fact that no individual African country could compete favorably with the West independently. He also thought that there was a high possibility of an unwelcome rivalry and unhealthy competition among the nations of Africa if they operated independently. Based on these premises, he argued for a united Africa. For Nkrumah, despite the fact that Africa lacks what could be seen as necessary ingredients for unity – a common race, culture, and language – there still exists a sense of oneness in that we are Africans (1963, p. 341). The very essence of African unity for him is that Africa needs the strength of its combined numbers and resources to protect itself from the danger of returning to colonialism in a disguised form. Nkrumah's position, unlike Nyerere's, focused mainly on 'why' there should be unity among African countries. However, his approach failed to specify how this unity could be achieved and how it can be managed, considering the differences in race, culture, and language.

Another Pan-African leader who had a vision of an African unity is Kenneth Kaunda (1966). Kaunda was of the view that closer links between nations must be voluntarily entered. His idea was that African countries' unity must not be achieved through the use of force, but rather through the power of persuasion, as

well as preaching of the gospel of unity (1966, p. 348). For him, since Africa is not homogeneous, to achieve unity less emphasis should be made in sharpening a people's consciousness of being a nation (1966, p. 348). "For the more successful the consciousness of people as separate nations, the less likely they are to accept being submerged into new found identity in a wider union" (348).

Kaunda listed about five factors which are likely going to push Africa towards unity. The factors are: the realities of international and continental politics, the existence of a common enemy, the charter for African unity, the richness and diversity of viewpoints on the continent, and finally, the idea that Africa is a young continent (1966, p. 348-349). The first, 'the reality of international or continental politics'. In his view, the dimension or the shape which international politics was taken was such that, no country will want to live in isolation, especially the new independent countries of Africa. The second is 'the existence of a common enemy in Western Imperialists'. The newly found independent countries of Africa understood the exploitative nature of their former colonial masters, and their unwillingness to grant them total freedom. Kaunda hoped that such an understanding would help them in forming synergy amongst them against any future exploitative move. The third is the 'Charter for African Unity'. He gathered the Charter would testify to the fact that individual African nations were ready to place themselves under obligation for some larger good. He argues that the realization of the Addis Ababa Charter was an indication of the possibility of a united Africa. The fourth, 'the richness and diversity of viewpoint on the African continent paradoxically is a powerful aid to unity'. Here, Kaunda posits that, since no one independent state was utterly dominant in the continent, and almost every country had contributed to the common policy, this participatory membership would enhance policy acceptability (1966, p. 349). Lastly is the idea that Africa is a young continent, in a sense implying that Africa is a continent full of young people. The majority group among African populations is the youth. For him, it would be easier to imbue them with the spirit of African unity. Kaunda's fourth factor seems to be very close to the idea of intercultural philosophy, which this chapter is trying to project, though he did not articulate it as such. There was no properly articulated philosophical framework for the achievement of African unity by Kaunda, Nyerere and Nkrumah inclusive. Again, the fact that, after so many decades of projecting his view, Africa is currently more in need of unity than ever, shows the ineffectiveness of his view on African unity.

Next, we turn to Sekou Toure's conception of African unity. Toure pointed out four principles under which unity can be achieved in Africa: the first is equality of all nations, large or small; second, fraternal solidarity in their relationships; third,

the common use of certain resources; and, finally, the respect for the character and institutions of each state (1975, p. 352). He opined that unity cannot be achieved around one man or one nation. His principles were necessary conditions for the attainment of unity. How he arrived at these principles is not clear. There were no historical or scientific proofs as to the workability of his principles.

There are litanies of Pan-Africanist writings on African unity, which cannot all be explored in this chapter. The focus of this section is to show the limitations associated with Pan-Africanist views on African unity, to assert that these limitations are the very reasons why unity has eluded Africa over the years, and finally to propose intercultural philosophy as the philosophy of national unity.

The Struggle for Recognition as the Problem of Unity

The major obstacle to global unity, continental unity, or national unity is traceable to this component of human nature already identified as ‘the struggle for recognition’. Here, we will establish how this concept is a major challenge to unity. Unity is built from the local level up, or from individual level to the larger society; the idea of global unity becomes a chimera when it does not follow this process. The idea of ‘the struggle for recognition’ for Fukuyama (1992, p. 146) is the view that “man was from the start, a social being, his own sense of self-worth and identity is intimately connected with the value that other people place on him.” This man wants not only to be recognized by other men, but to be recognized *as* a man (p. 147). This chapter sees ‘the struggle for recognition’ as the tendency in man to dominate his fellow or to resist such domination. The struggle for recognition is the political part of the human personality because it is what drives men to want to arrogate themselves over others. Fukuyama borrowed this idea from Hegel and Alexandre Kojève’s interpretation of Hegel. Fukuyama’s usage of the term was mainly to prove that liberal democracy is the end of historical ideological revolution because within liberal democracy the struggle for recognition, which is what mainly triggers ideological revolution, is properly addressed (1992, p. xi).

The struggle for recognition, we would like to assert, operates both in the individual human person and at the national level. It is the springboard to all forms of geopolitical maneuvering: economic competition among nations of the world, arm races, the development of nuclear weapons and the like. At the individual level, one may accept that the struggle for recognition has been reasonably tamed, especially within liberal democracy, as there are positive ways to express this desire or struggle; such as sports and other competitions. Fukuyama’s conviction is that

the struggle for recognition, which is the motor that drives human history, is fully satisfied in liberal democracy, hence the end of ideological evolution (1992, p. xi). When we take a cursory glance at the historical past and present, it suffices to say that the struggle for recognition remains a divisive force in geopolitics. It appears that it can only be addressed using intercultural philosophy. The concept of intercultural philosophy can be seen as the philosophical view that promotes the integration of various philosophical traditions without the marginalization or domination of any of the traditions.

Fukuyama (1992) affirms that the struggle for recognition provides us with insight into the nature of international politics. The focus of his argument is to establish a coherent and directional history for mankind that will eventually lead the greater part of humanity to liberal democracy. Almost all the countries of the Global North are liberal democracies, but the existence of various forms of domination or marginalization by these liberal democracies at the geopolitical level has shown that liberal democracy is not the answer to 'the struggle for recognition'. When we consider their ideas vis a vis imperialism (in the past) and neocolonialism (in the present), one thing remains constant: their willful intention to dominate others politically, economically, and culturally.

There is even a clear competitive struggle among these elite countries. The American and Russian or America and Chinese relationships are clear evidence of this competitive struggle. There is obviously no difference between modern liberal democracies and imperialism or neocolonialism in terms of their essence. It is only a matter of linguistic exchange as their major essence has always been to exploit and marginalize. Elsewhere U. A. Ezeogu (2022, p. 42) proposed cultural diplomacy as a dimension of geopolitics. For him, cultural diplomacy is an instrument of competitive struggle by elitist countries to assert their interest on the rest of the world. It is a diplomatic or subtle way of projecting one's culture onto others. He further argued that, through the instrumentality of cultural diplomacy, the Euro-American world has impressed their culture so much into the psyche of the average African that Africans are now rejecting most things that are indigenous to them and have become agents of promotion for Western values and culture (2022, p. 43). The argument subsists when we consider Africa in the light of the following: religion, dress code, language, movies, food, marriage, consumption, systems of learning, and so on.

The question is, who are those engaged in the politics of cultural diplomacy, or what is known as 'soft power' politics? A critical exploration of this question will unveil the activities of 'the struggle for recognition' among liberal democracies. Ruch Doshi (2020, p. 1) prepared a statement, presented before the U.S. Senate

Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transport; Subcommittee on Security, which further exposes this competitive struggle for domination. Attempting to advise U.S. on how to retain their position as the global technology leader, Doshi argues that the challenge posed by China is serious because China is a serious competitor. By implication, China is pursuing a robust state-backed effort to displace the United States from global technology leadership. In his view, “Beijing believes that the competition over technology is about more than whose companies will dominate particular markets. It is also about which country will be best positioned to lead the world” (2020, p. 2).

The question of power assertion points to the place of the struggle for recognition in international politics. One can validly infer that the struggle for recognition, under whatever guise, is major challenge to unity. Furthermore, Tsega Etefa (2019, p. 1) was right when he observed that the major challenges facing many developing countries, especially in Africa, have been ethnic-based liberation struggles, fighting exclusion and chronic marginalization. He suggested that many states in the region of Africa were formed based on colonial manipulation (Etefa, 2019, p. 1). Colonial masters created a sad situation in Africa, where political power was given to a favored group to the exclusion of the rest, to remain in control of leadership and power. This state of affairs has led to mistrust among ethnic groups in the same nation. According to Etefa, “socioeconomic and political marginalization, continued neglect, lack of security, ineffective administration, and poor state-citizen relationships are the main problems in many African ethnic conflicts” (2019, 6).

Meredith (2011, p. 493), writing on the Rwandan Genocide, argued that the cause of the genocide was not traceable to ethnic antagonism, rather to fanatical elite engagement in a modern struggle for power and wealth through the instrumentality of ethnic antagonism. Ethnic and religious antagonisms are just instruments in the elite’s power struggle. Meredith (2011), Aapengnuo (2010), and Elbadaw and Sambanis (2000) all corroborated that tribalism or ethnic hatred has never been the root cause of conflict in Africa, rather the lack of access to power and resources occasioned by marginalization and exclusion are the main causes. In other words, the economic and the political domination of other ethnic groups in Africa is the main cause of conflicts in Africa. If we analyze further, it boils down to ‘the struggle for recognition’ on both sides. Hence if unity is to be achieved, whether at the global, continental or national level, the divisive nature of this human nature must be taken into consideration. It is on this note that we would like to present intercultural philosophy as a panacea to the problem of unity both at national and international levels.

Addressing the Problem of Unity through Intercultural Philosophy

We have been able to establish the lack or non-existence of a philosophy of unity in Africa. The challenge is that even Pan-African leaders, many decades ago, saw the need for unity in Africa, hence their various calls for it. This research seeks to propose intercultural philosophy as an adequate framework to deal with the problem of unity in Africa. The meaning and idea of what constitutes intercultural philosophy is multifaceted. There are as many views of intercultural philosophy as there are intercultural philosophers. The focus of this chapter is to explore and contextualize a specific idea of intercultural philosophy and further propose how it can address the problem of unity in Africa. Ma and Brakel argue that the “phrase ‘intercultural philosophy’ represents every kind of philosophical practice that involves the interpretation of conceptual schemes of one or more traditions, in terms of the conceptual schemes of another tradition” (2016, p. 178).

R. A. Mall posits that intercultural philosophy “is first and foremost the name of a philosophical attitude, a philosophical conviction that no one’s philosophy is the philosophy for the whole of mankind” (2000, p. xii). He further conceives intercultural philosophy as the antidote to the universalistic prejudice that ‘absolutizes’ one particular worldview to the entire world (2000, p. 45). There is a plethora of definitions of ‘intercultural philosophy’; our focus will be to establish the context in which we use the term. From there, we shall argue how intercultural philosophy, within our context, can address the problem of human nature responsible for the domination of others. This will help us establish our position that intercultural philosophy is the philosophy of national unity. However, intercultural philosophy within our context is an all-inclusive philosophical approach that creates room for healthy interaction among various philosophical traditions, without any form of hegemonic tendency. Our idea of intercultural philosophy goes beyond cultural mix at the continental level, where one may talk of Western, African, and Oriental traditions. Within Africa as a continent, though there are certain forms of cultural similarities among its people, it is important to note that cultural variations are abound. Hence, the idea of intercultural philosophy this chapter projects could be said to include what one may term ‘intra-cultural’ philosophy. The focus of this chapter is African unity; in Africa there are a lot of cultural variations. These cultural variations are fundamental in nature to each cultural group. As we advocate for epistemic and cultural inclusion at the global level, there is need for it to trickle down to the continent and nations of Africa as this will, to a large extent, guarantee unity in Africa.

Our notion of intercultural philosophy in this chapter is derived from Raul Fernet-Betancourt, who is considered to be one of the leading figures in the liberation philosophy of Latin America, and intercultural philosophy (2021). In his view, philosophy stems from the experience that the 'tender relationship', supposed to encompass all beings in the historical world, has been broken (2021, p. 5). This has led to various forms of divisiveness. He argues that when the power of unification disappears from people's lives the need for philosophy arises. Intercultural philosophy for him offers healing to humanity in all its diversity. His intercultural philosophy does not include political or legal dimensions, rather, it primarily focused on cultural relationships. Fernet-Betancourt's view of intercultural philosophy is derived from his idea of a 'broken relationship' (2021, p. 5). We can infer that his idea of intercultural philosophy does not take a competitive posture, but a healing posture (2021, p. 6). Intercultural philosophy in this sense tries to understand and accommodate the other. This kind of approach negates the domineering aspect of human nature (the struggle for recognition) which has been accused of being the root cause of all kinds of conflicts in human history. This is more explainable within Martin Buber's 'I-thou' relation as opposed to 'I-it' relation (1937, p. vi). Buber's 'I and thou' relation explains how man's attitude to other people should be. His attitude to other people is a relationship between persons without any diminishment of the other person, while his attitude to things is just a relationship to an object (1937, p. vii). It is logical to infer that conflicts occur when the 'I-thou' relation turns into an 'I-it' relation.

More so then, Wiredu argues, the prospect of a more peaceful coexistence among different peoples of the world can only be achieved through intercultural philosophy (1998, p. 147). His position is that intercultural philosophy can be of great service to humankind's pursuit of a more peaceful coexistence. In the same vein, Fernet-Betancourt argues that to improve human coexistence has little or nothing to do with designing better theories or models; rather, it lies in trying to improve concrete relationships in direct encounters (2021, pp. 6-7). Human coexistence whether good or bad represents a situation of cultural encounter, and intercultural philosophy, a contemporary theory, develops of recognition on a fairer basis within cultural and religious diversity. This idea of recognizing the other as different makes a great contribution towards solving the problems associated with plural coexistence.

Conclusion

The idea of intercultural philosophy is seen at the continental level or at the level of the Global North-Global South dichotomy. Beyond this understanding of intercultural philosophy, the idea can also be used at a much smaller or larger scale; within a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multicultural society. It is important for us to note that, though Africans could be said to have common ancestry and significant cultural similarities, there are still in existence some strong cultural differences. These cultural differences are not necessarily bad because of the mere fact that they are different; rather the challenge lies in one trying to place itself above the other. While there are calls on the global stage for intercultural philosophy, this paper argues on the need for intercultural philosophy or 'intra-cultural' philosophy in Africa. This kind of intercultural philosophy will increase cognizance of Africa's cultural plurality; this will create a healthy ground for cultural integration and interaction without allowing any culture to dominate others. Such guaranteed equity and fairness will help to enhance unity in Africa.

It is this kind of intercultural space that will address the problem associated with domineering human nature: 'the struggle for recognition'. This will create room for better accommodation of various cultures among Africans and will eliminate mutual suspicion, to a large extent, which is the breeding ground for disunity. It is not enough to argue for intercultural philosophy at the intercontinental level, it is also very important to ensure that the same process trickles down within the continent and at national level. Any attempt to marginalize or silence the cultural voice of a people within the continental or national arrangement will always be met with stiff opposition and resistance, as shown through history. No country or people will want to suffer the fate of cultural and epistemic marginalization more than once. Logically, if the essences of the Asian-African Conference and The Conference of Independent States of Africa were to ensure unity among Asian and African countries and among African countries respectively, it is obvious that the only type of unity that can work is inclusive unity. It will be unreasonable for any country to support such a movement if its voice is still not going to be heard within the emerging new system. The only way to ensure unity and the sustainability of the unity is through intercultural philosophy.

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Rainbow Nationalism as a Philosophy of National Unity in South Africa

Interpellation and Disillusionment

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Abstract

Rainbow Nationalism is a Post-Apartheid South African philosophy of national unity. The South African state, and its emergent national elites, sought to mend divisions of a racially oppressive past to successfully construct a nation unified in its diversity, and beyond its previous adversities. As a philosophy of national unity, Rainbow Nationalism is premised on a country unified behind a narrative of *triumph over adversity* through a principled commitment to reconciliation, non-racialism, liberal democracy, and respect for universal human rights. The South African state's commitment to building national unity, from a divisive and oppressive Apartheid past, can be located more broadly in the plight of countries in the Global South to also build their respective unified national consciousnesses, after battling a colonial and contentious history. Interestingly, as a normative orientation and shared political philosophy for states in the Global South, the *Bandung Spirit* can be seen to encapsulate some of the key values manifest in Rainbow Nationalism. Worryingly, attempts to encourage the South African public into assuming Rainbow Nationalism as a normative orientation have been met with continued disillusionment. I contend that the disillusionment that philosophies of national unity like Rainbow Nationalism face results from their inability to maintain a clear distinction between treating the philosophy as a *present ontological state* and as a *teleology*. I argue that the ability to make the teleology of the philosophy of national unity compatible with and in service to the social reality of nations is what may make a principled commitment to the Bandung Spirit exempt from the challenge of self-effacement.

Keywords: Rainbow Nationalism; Global South; Bandung Spirit; ontology; teleology

Introduction

Rainbow Nationalism is a Post-Apartheid South African philosophy of national unity. The South African state, and its emergent national elites, sought to mend divisions of a racially oppressive past to successfully construct a nation unified in its diversity, and beyond its previous adversities. As a philosophy of national unity, Rainbow Nationalism is premised on a country unified behind a narrative of *triumph over adversity* through a principled commitment to reconciliation, non-racialism, liberal democracy, and respect for universal human rights. In order to shape the national consciousness and get South African citizens to embrace Rainbow Nationalism as a normative political orientation, the South African state undertook a process of state interpellation, where interpellation is a process of shaping and giving content to individuals' subjecthood. The South African state's attempt to inculcate a Rainbow Nationalist subjecthood, as will be shown in this chapter, has largely been facilitated by a confluence of state-mandated rhetoric and narratives which aim to convey the existence of a new national identity predicated on an entrancing message of triumph over past adversity and unity in diversity (Riouful, 2000).

The South African state's commitment to building national unity, from a divisive and oppressive Apartheid past, can be located more broadly in the plight of countries in the Global South to also build their respective unified national consciousnesses, after battling a colonial and contentious history. Interestingly, as a normative orientation and shared political philosophy for states in the Global South, the *Bandung Spirit* can be seen to encapsulate some of the key values manifest in Rainbow Nationalism. These shared values include, but are not limited to, a principled stance in support of universal human rights as well as advocacy for peace and harmony amongst people. Worryingly, attempts to encourage the South African public into assuming Rainbow Nationalism as a normative orientation have been met with continued disillusionment. A growing number of South Africans have come to experience what Pumla Gqola (2015) termed as "waking up from the Rainbow Nation nightmare," becoming agitated and increasingly opting out of Rainbow Nationalism, while the state continues to attempt to inculcate it. What may be going wrong here? What is it in the interpellation process, and Rainbow Nationalism itself, that may be resulting in citizens becoming further disillusioned

by it, as well as delegitimizing it in their consciousness as Post-Apartheid national subjects?

In this chapter, I contend that the disillusionment that philosophies of national unity like Rainbow Nationalism face results from their inability to maintain a clear distinction between treating the philosophy as a *present ontological state* and as a *teleology*. I argue that, in the process of interpellation, the South African state has sought to present South Africa as a country that is presently a Rainbow Nation, which has overcome the nature of Apartheid; a situation that has come to undermine the actual social reality of living in contemporary South Africa, where the lingering effects and legacy of Apartheid remain. I argue that the failure to restrict Rainbow Nationalism to a teleology *simpliciter*, and the promotion of it as an ontological state, creates conditions where it appears to obfuscate and marginalize the social reality, to the detriment of the philosophy of national unity. Disillusionment occurs because citizens engaging and, reflexively, relating to the interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism with its effect of obfuscating social reality, perceive it as either being deceptive, obstructing focus on addressing the perpetuation of oppression and conflict legacies, or serving as a bitter reminder of a vision for the nation that remains unrealized.

The *Bandung Spirit*, while having an orientation which can be rendered similar to that of Rainbow Nationalism, carries with it a crucial aspect that allows it not to have the fate I see Rainbow Nationalism to have. The Bandung Spirit, so construed in the literature, remains largely aspirational – meaning that it is employed by and large differently on a global scale from how Rainbow Nationalism is employed by the South African state. Crucially, I observe the Bandung Principles and the talk of the Bandung Spirit as a “movement” to cast a particular image of the Bandung Spirit as being a normative orientation, which seeks not to speak of itself as a kind of complete ontology. The Bandung Spirit is often cast in the literature as something we (and all states in the Global South) should commit ourselves to as people who have faced adversity, *knowing our past and still present circumstances of coloniality, imperialism, racism, and poverty in the Global South* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2019). What we see here is a clear distinction between a teleology and a social reality – a crucial aspect of the Bandung Spirit which I believe saves the Bandung Spirit from threats of disillusionment. Furthermore, it is the ability to make this distinction which I argue could be helpful in rescuing Rainbow Nationalism from this disillusionment it is currently facing.

To make my argument, I will appeal to Louis Althusser’s (2001) theory of state interpellation. The theory allows one to account for the interpellative process on which I consider the South African state to be embarking, while instilling Rainbow

Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity. As Althusser (2001) asserts, interpellation occurs through the Ideological State Apparatus, which can take some implicit and explicit forms that culminate into the state's rhetoric and narratives to 'construct' a citizen with a particular ideological consciousness. I isolate the Robben Island Museum, its rhetoric and narrative construction as an instance of the Ideological State Apparatus. This is because it serves as a good representation of the state's interpellation programme. I look to Charles Mills' (2005) critique of idealization in political philosophy to illustrate the problems of interpellating a philosophy of national unity which is, in fact, a *teleology*, as a present ontological state instead.

I hope my evaluations of the threat of disillusionment will invite critical reflection about how the interpellation of a philosophy of national unity can influence the overall success of the nation building enterprise in South Africa and unification movements of the Global South. This being so, it is taken into consideration that Rainbow Nationalism shares tenets with other philosophies of national and international unity, like those sharing in the Bandung Spirit.

Rainbow Nationalism as a Philosophy of National Unity in the Global South

The national unity philosophy of Rainbow Nationalism is difficult to encapsulate whilst successfully resisting the pejorative associations implied by its opponents and the beguiling affect towards it on the part of its proponents. Nonetheless, to think of a working definition of Rainbow Nationalism that remains neutral on its merits and limitations would be to think of Rainbow Nationalism as a post-Apartheid Southern African political subjectivity which is norm-laden by a principled commitment in universal human rights, non-racialism, liberal democracy, and post-conflict harmony. The emergence of Rainbow Nationalism as a dominant ideology of national unity can be traced from the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1931-2021), a prominent South African Apartheid struggle activist. He coined the term and had a significant influence in shaping Rainbow Nationalism through his role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of 1996. He stated that:

The past, it has been said, is another country. However painful the experience, the wound of the past must not be allowed to fester. They must be opened. They must be cleansed, and balm must be poured on them so they can heal. My appeal is unlimited directly to us all, black and white together, so we can close the chapter

on our past and strive together for this beautiful and blessed land at the Rainbow people of God (Witz, Rassool & Minkley 2017, p. 1).

Archbishop Tutu's remarks provide crucial insight into the premises of Rainbow Nationalism. The democratic South African state and its national struggle elites introduced Rainbow Nationalism, as a way to provide a 'break with history' between the contentious Apartheid past and the new democratic South African present (Riouful, 2000). Rainbow Nationalism aimed to create a *tabula rasa* – an opportunity to become a unified nation against the backdrop of the negative, oppressive apartheid past. Apartheid would be considered a period in South Africa where the notion of racial diversity was perverted, where systemic racism was pervasive, oppressing 'non-white' South Africans, and culminating in an untenable, violent, and racialized conflict. The *new* South Africa, coming from this tumultuous past, would require a new consciousness that would serve as the antithesis of the racial discord of Apartheid South Africa. After Apartheid, racial difference was co-opted under the new South Africa, where claims of the power of racial differences were deflated to unite South Africans under one identity: as members of the Rainbow Nation. By this, I mean to say that South Africans were now to be South African *first* and have their racial and cultural differences 'ornamentalised' as something that can be celebrated culturally but also 'overcome' socio-politically in understanding socio-political subjectivity in South Africa. This underpinned the stressing of non-racialism as a means of going beyond an atrocious past that was marked by racial divisions.

As a philosophy of national unity premised on moving on from the Apartheid past, Rainbow Nationalism assumed the values of universal human rights and the notion of the inherent equality of moral personhood, aiming towards making racial differences irrelevant to the enjoyment of a full life. The ability and willingness of the South African citizenry to go *beyond* race and take on 'unity in diversity' as the primary principle of being South African became crucial to the realization of Rainbow Nationalism. As a philosophy of national unity, Rainbow Nationalism sought to foster a reality where South Africans were to take themselves to *now* belong to and live in an entirely different reality, reflective of the principles of Rainbow Nationalism, and were encouraged, through state interpellation, to take this reality as definitive of who they are as South Africans today.

Rainbow Nationalism as a Philosophy of National Unity is best encapsulated in the following: First, there is a strong emphasis on a divisive and oppressive past being left behind and forming a new national identity that can serve as the direct antithesis of a colonial, imperial and racist past. The national identity which is

thus formed comes about from a need to *not return* to the oppressive, divisive past, and aims to create a *tabula rasa* in the national consciousness, upon which new principled ways of being can be introduced as the bedrock of what it is to belong to a post-Apartheid state like South Africa. These principled ways of being, which culminate into the key tenets of Rainbow Nationalism, are non-racialism, reconciliation, unity in diversity, and a principled commitment to universal human rights. This manifests in a philosophy of national unity that seeks to de-emphasize and superficialize the importance of racial difference to achieve non-racialism. This state emphasizes the need to mend past differences and rise above conflict in the name of reconciliation.

Furthermore, Rainbow Nationalism manifests in a commitment to the formal equality of persons enshrined in a commitment to human rights, and calls for all to be unified *as South Africans* first, and disregard what makes people different insofar as it is divisive and sets back the collective national goal of unity. Its ultimate goal is undoubtedly the continual attainment of freedom for all, which it premises on maintaining peaceful and reconciliatory relations between all South Africans who share a painful and conflict-ridden past. Rainbow Nationalism is a teleological philosophy aimed at restoring human dignity to all South Africans through unity, rising above past differences, and escaping the past.

Locating Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity, within the broader political context of being a nation in the Global South, yields interesting observations. This is the case for many countries in the Global South coming to terms with their colonial, imperialist, and racially repressive pasts. Countries had to think critically about how to relate to one another as nations in the new global order and the kind of national consciousness they needed to foster in their new nations. Interestingly, there is a way in which Rainbow Nationalism emulates the Bandung Spirit in its own circumstantial way. The Bandung Spirit can be understood primarily as a socio-political ideal for the intra- and inter-relation of countries shared amongst nations of the Global South, emerging from the Africa-Asia Bandung Conference of 1955. Here, the countries that attended the Bandung Conference imagined a new reality for themselves, seeking to form a new identity for themselves and *between* themselves as post-colonial states in entering a new global order. It is this ideal of the Bandung Spirit which I argue to have entailed a teleology, a state aspirationalism, or normative orientation similar to that which we see in Rainbow Nationalism, encapsulated in Bandung Principles.

Essentially, the Bandung Spirit was a philosophy of peace and mutual prosperity, aimed at instilling a new imagery of how states in the Global South, emerging from an adversely colonial situation, and finding themselves amidst

internal conflicts with their oppressors. The Bandung Spirit can be found summarized in the following statement by Ruslan Abdulgani:

The spirit of Bandung is the spirit of love for peace, anti-violence, anti-discrimination, and development for all without trying to intervene for one another wrongly, but to pay a great respect to one another (Abdulgani, 1981, p. 89).

While this understanding of the Bandung Spirit may seem relevant only to the relations between nations, I believe that a commitment to it would also call for consistency in the internal affairs of the state. Such consistency would call for a normative orientation governing relations between nations of the Global South to follow organically from a national consciousness committed to the same values of peace, anti-violence, and anti-discrimination encapsulated in the international Bandung Spirit. Simply put, it is reasonable to believe that here, significant affinities between Rainbow Nationalism and the Spirit of Bandung are apparent. The Bandung Spirit emphasizes non-violence and non-discrimination, which can be demonstrated in calls for reconciliation, and avoidance of the conflicts of the past at all costs. There is also an emergence of a commitment to peace and respect for all persons, irrespective of difference, which is intimately tied to the reverence for reconciliation and unity in diversity in Rainbow Nationalism.

As Maake Masango (2002) observed, South Africa's struggle for freedom would be informed by a very similar ideological and normative orientation to the Spirit of Bandung. Such an orientation shares significant affinities with the motivations behind the struggle against Apartheid, and helps to understand better the commitment to Rainbow Nationalism that emerged in post-Apartheid South Africa. The normative nature of the Spirit of Bandung is portrayed in the Bandung Principles, some of which are directly assumed in Rainbow Nationalism. Amongst these principles, there is a commitment to the "promotion of a just, democratic... and harmonious society" and the "promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedom" (Khudori, 2018, p. 2). There are obvious correlations between the Bandung Spirit and Rainbow Nationalism, judging by the Bandung Message of 2015, conveyed on the 60th anniversary of the 1955 Bandung Conference. For instance, both philosophies show a continued commitment to the "building of harmony among cultures, religions, faiths", in addition to a collective commitment to fighting against racism and racial discrimination, whilst "recognizing moderation as an important value in countering all forms of extremism, and to promoting dialogue, mutual respects, understanding and acceptance" (Khudori, 2018, p. 4). The aspirations of Rainbow Nationalism are outlined in the Spirit of Bandung.

Like in the spirit of Bandung, Rainbow Nationalism appears as a philosophy of unity, premised on overcoming racism and social injustice, by building harmony between people. As with the Spirit of Bandung, the attainment of harmony is premised on moderation, a significant principle manifest in the mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa, where Rainbow Nationalism would first come to be institutionalized.

A comparative analysis of Rainbow Nationalism and the Spirit of Bandung aims to make a simple point. I evaluate the challenges that the state might face in interpellating Rainbow Nationalism in the South African citizenry, because it helps with elucidating how countries that endorse the Bandung Spirit can avoid befalling by the same challenges. By establishing the affinities between the central tenets of Rainbow Nationalism and the Bandung Spirit, I hope to show what can be avoided by states who are proponents of the Bandung Spirit from challenges of interpellating Rainbow Nationalism. My intention is to demonstrate that the challenges of Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity may be accompanied with significant lessons for the prospects of actualizing philosophies of national unity *like* Rainbow Nationalism in the Global South.

How Rainbow Nationalism has Been Interpellated in South Africa

Having provided an outline of the tenets of Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity in the Global South, it is necessary to outline how it has been enshrined by the state, in order to better understand the barriers to its realization. Since the interest is in relation to the challenges facing a philosophy of national unity being entirely accepted and adopted by the citizens who are its target, Althusser's theory of state interpellation gives a theoretical account for this process of inculcating a philosophy of national unity, specifically for Rainbow Nationalism in a country with a history like South Africa's. In his theory of state interpellation, Althusser (1971) seeks to account for how the subjects of the state become the embodiment of state ideology, through interaction with various ideological state apparatuses. By apparatuses, Althusser refers to the various institutions such as state media, state rhetoric, state heritage sites, and government institutions which all serve as the key mechanisms through which the state attempts to shape a national identity or citizen subjecthood (Althusser, 1971).

Put differently, Althusser (1971, p. 79) claims that the "Ideological State Apparatus" comprises various institutions under the state, whose role is to collectively

disseminate, maintain, assert, and support a particular ideology into its dominance and its acceptance by a state's subjects. The Ideological State Apparatus permeates all spheres of citizens' political and social life where, if successful, it comes to inform the very consciousness of each citizen, and their relation to the state, as well as each other as members of that particular nation (Althusser, 1971). Althusser asserts that "the [successfully interpellated] individual behaves in such a way, adopts such and such a practice attitude, participates in regular practices which are those of the ideological apparatus on which depends the ideas he has in all consciousness freely chosen as a subject" (Althusser, 1971, p. 82). Here, through interacting with the Ideological State Apparatus, individuals in the state practically and materially live out the dominant state ideology, consciously believing in the ideology as well as willingly taking it on as their own. It is essential to understand the outcome of the Ideological State Apparatus as turning all individuals into subjects who, materially, live the dominant state ideology such that they are the ideology. As such, questioning whether a project of interpellation was successful is the same as considering the extent to which the ideology, or philosophy being inculcated, is fully adopted by those it is targeted at. This question lies at the centre of the present chapter's analysis.

To answer the question, the following steps are undertaken: the first discussion concerns the rhetorisation and narrativisation of Rainbow Nationalism to lay bare the nature and extent of the South African state's project to engender Rainbow Nationalism into South Africans. Points of contradiction are identified to underscore the disillusionment with Rainbow Nationalism increasingly present in South Africa today. The second step in discussion refers to heritage as one key Ideological State Apparatus that offers the most precise lens into how the South African state carries out its interpellation process in its rhetoric and narrativization. As Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998, p. 7) notes, heritage is a "mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past, as a specific way of interpreting and utilizing bygone times that links individuals with a larger collective". For Lowenthal, "heritage ... is both the creative art and an act of faith. By means of [heritage], we tell ourselves who we are, where we are from, and to what we belong" (Lowenthal, 1996, p. xvii). Heritage is often taken as a space of myth-making for present-day national identity formation, especially when deployed by the state, where aspects of a collective past are incorporated or jettisoned according to how they may serve the identity formation and consolidation agenda in the present (Rassool, 2000).

How exactly does the state mobilize heritage to guide citizens into embracing Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity? What can the interpellation

project further reveal about the nature of Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity? It may be fruitful to focus on heritage sites, like Robben Island, as a mechanism for the broader state interpellative project, to answer these questions. Its use as narrative and rhetoric serves as a microcosm of the South African state's more pervasive promotion and acculturation of Rainbow Nationalism. Rassool (2000) explores how heritage sites, like the Robben Island Museum, have been "given the responsibility of constructing, packaging and transmitting images and representations of the new society and its past" for South Africans (p. 5). As Rassool (2000, p. 21) suggests, "having endured and survived the conflict and violence of Apartheid", the government manages heritage in South Africa as a tool "placed on a path of achieving reconciliation as the basis of the new Rainbow Nation". This tool has become a tool of the ideology that the state's ideological apparatus applies, such as through the commemorative museums in this instance, to inculcate it in the individual engaging with the heritage site. What this highlights, in particular, is how a subject as a spectator and target of heritage has its subjecthood shaped to comply with and take on the state's philosophy of national unity.

One of the most explicit sites in which citizens directly engage with the government's attempt to inculcate a Rainbow Nationalist subjectivity is through state-mandated/affirmed institutions like the Robben Island Museum, Apartheid Museum, and Freedom Park. As such, through the Robben Island Museum, one can come to understand how the South African government's attempts to ingrain Rainbow Nationalism and the limitations interpellating a philosophy of national unity like Rainbow Nationalism can face. The Robben Island Museum, declared a World Heritage Site in 1999 as well as a South African National Heritage Site in 2006, is a previous prison island in Cape Town where the Apartheid regime imprisoned Nelson Mandela and other key political figures of the Apartheid Struggle between 1961 and 1991. Even today, as Veronique Riouful (2000) claims, the heritage site at Robben Island was created "to preserve its significance in the new South Africa, the new government has made Robben Island the first and foremost heritage site of the new dispensation and institutionalised its public commemoration through the creation of Robben Island Museum in January 1997" (p. 24).

To understand how the Robben Island Museum, as an institution in the South African Ideological State Apparatus, undertakes the project of interpellating South Africans into Rainbow Nationalism, an analysis of the rhetoric and narrative of this heritage site is needed. Examining the rhetoric and narrative provides an understanding of how the state goes about the inculturation of South Africans into the Rainbow Nationalism and how they frame it as a philosophy of national unity. The rhetoric of the Robben Island Museum, as a representation of the broader inter-

pellative project of the state, consists of the interplay between a *triumph narrative* and a *hardship narrative*. The hardship narrative captures the struggles and treatment endured by the Robben Island prisoners. It can be reported in prison stories highlighting the prison conditions, the treatment of prisoners by the guards and warden, and the day-to-day difficulties of life whilst being imprisoned. In this way, it becomes a representation of the afflictions of the Apartheid past.

On the other hand, the triumph narrative depicts prison conditions, and by extension, the hardships associated with the Apartheid system more generally, with a deliberate emphasis on the perseverance and the overcoming of such hardships through a display of a set of values, akin to a wholesome commitment to Rainbow Nationalist ideals. The triumph narrative is set to give a telos (i.e., goal or aim) to the hardship narrative, such that triumph becomes the *fait accompli* of an overarching constant above the oppression endured.

The triumph narrative serves as an allegory for the triumph of the human spirit and the essential prevailing of the tenets of Rainbow Nationalism in the face of extreme adversity. The hardship narrative consists of those oppressive conditions that the tenacity of the human spirit has overcome. Found in the Robben Island's strategic plan for 2020-2025 are the following words by Ahmed Kathrada, an ex-Robben Islander, which the museum considers to guide its curation as a heritage site:

While we will not forget the brutality of Apartheid, we will not want Robben Island to be a monument of our hardship and suffering. We would want it to be a triumph of the human spirit against the forces of evil, a triumph of wisdom and largeness of spirit against small minds and pettiness, a triumph of courage and determination over human frailty and weakness (Robben Island, 2020, p. v).

Such a statement reveals to us that this heritage site primarily tells a story of disastrous misfortune, with the aim of showing the extent to which hardship is something that has been overcome and conquered by a commitment to Rainbow Nationalism. Kathrada's words of how he believed Robben Island should be represented were vital in shaping the orientation of the museum's narrative in telling a story of the triumph of the human spirit. There is a significant emphasis on the triumph narrative within the history of systemic resistance in Robben Island, where commitments to universal human rights and comradeship are primarily highlighted, whilst de-emphasizing the severity of abuses, divisions, and conflicts in prison during Apartheid. The aspects of struggle and strife in the prisoners' experiences are mollified by the rhetorical appeal of the triumphant spirit of reconciliation.

Richard Marback (2004, p. 21), in his analysis of the rhetoric of the Robben Island Museum, speaks of how the tour guides, who were ex-prisoners, were continuously conscious of balancing the truth of what happened during their imprisonment with the need to foster reconciliation. In particular, Marback (2004, p. 21) notes how they did this in retelling their experiences of depravity while being imprisoned, by stating that “they make the point of wanting their accounts to contribute to a transcendence of past brutalities”. The emphasis is placed on transcending the divisions and adversities of the past, which is the premise of the broader South African reconciliation agenda.

There is a clear assumption that, if the prisoners themselves were not bitter about Apartheid, the foreign and South African visitors should not be bitter about it either. What emerges here is the second moral goal of the “New” South Africa story, starting from a *tabula rasa* or a clean break from the Apartheid. The reference to not being bitter suggests that the past was left behind with the political toppling of Apartheid. The way in which the museum stresses forgiveness and building a new South Africa encourages visitors to leave the past behind. South Africans are encouraged to embody unity, reconciliation, forgiveness, non-racialism, and solidarity, almost as a post-Apartheid reality embodied by the ex-prisoners and political activists. Framing the past as conquered suggests the inevitability and ease at which unity can be made possible if we choose not to remain bitter about the past.

From the above discussion, several observations can be made about the rhetorisation of Robben Island that can enlighten us on South Africa’s approach to the interpellating Rainbow Nationalism, as well as the very nature of Rainbow Nationalism as a normative orientation. The interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism is pursued by calling for South Africans to go *beyond* their past, to *transcend* the past hardships, and be united in this transcendence. A crucial component of Rainbow Nationalism and its attraction, as a philosophy of national unity, can be significantly linked to the dimension of the triumph narrative. Part of the success of Rainbow Nationalism is dependent upon the extent to which individuals buy into the triumph narrative, since triumph over adversity is positioned as a direct consequence of a commitment to Rainbow Nationalism. Interestingly, in a call to never return to the oppressive past, South Africans are called upon to commit fully to the project of conquering the past, where embodying Rainbow Nationalism and uniting under it is taken as a condition for maintaining this triumph. The rhetoric calls for all South Africans to *choose* reconciliation, start afresh, and be non-racial, to be unified despite differences for building a *Rainbow Nation* together. We also get a sense that a principled commitment to the tenets of Rainbow Nationalism is

required from all South Africans to ensure that the triumph over the past is maintained.

Challenges Facing Rainbow Nationalism as a Result of its Interpellation

What may appear to be a positive and hopeful philosophy of national unity has, instead, been met with increasing disillusionment, particularly from the South African youth. In this section, the nature of the disillusionment is explained. Such explanation is likely to provide an account of what it is about the Rainbow Nationalism and its interpellation as a philosophy of national unity that results in the challenge of disillusionment. In 2021, anthropological research was conducted with a focus on South African youth, and their responses to Rainbow Nationalism, as a way to understand better whether the state interpellation project has been successful (Mogomotsi, 2021). Commenting on their experiences of Robben Island as an example, one of the critical insights revealed from the reflections of the South African youth was that the triumph narrative is ineffective in tempering the anger and discontent which follows from the hardship narrative.

One study participant, a 25-year-old mixed-race South African woman, stated that:

Someone living in the country is to be left much more pessimistic after hearing about the injustices that occurred in the prison. It highlights how we didn't achieve what we set to achieve as a country, and Robben Island is a reminder of that in its message of hope (Participant C, Interview, April 2021).

Further, another participant stated that:

It was weird to go from an angry and sad position, where you have just seen injustices and get to hear about the "silver lining", that is the end of suffering under Apartheid. I remember being like: "I hear you, but I am still mad". It did not feel like a resolve to the feelings. Being Black influenced my experience. I cannot escape from being Black. Already when going to the museum, my emotions and expectations were already seasoned. When I got there, it was Black people being mistreated by whites. It felt like a confirmation of my anger towards the unfair treatment of Blacks today (Participant S, Interview, June 2021).

For some South Africans, the triumph narrative inherent in making the Rainbow Nationalism compelling did not have the intended consequences of persuading them to buy into the rhetoric. Instead, the prevalence of a triumph narrative, in the context of the Rainbow Nationalism, may have produced the unintended effect of making some South Africans less invested in the philosophy. Of particular note is Participant C's claim that the message of hope, paradoxically, produces more pessimism, in that the triumph narrative serves as a reminder of how much South Africa has *not* achieved, nor triumphed over as a country since the advent of democracy in 1994. The triumph narrative, in this context, is considered to be more representative of an *unrealized* dream than capturing the reality of present-day South Africa. The triumph narrative, in its message of hope, inadvertently becomes agitating because it shows how much of what was hoped for, regarding the end of racial injustice and inequities, remains wishful thinking. An awareness of this can only create a sense of disappointment at the unrealized hope, with pessimism only compounding the existing negative affect associated with the degenerating socio-economic conditions of South Africa. At best, the triumph narrative's intervention is seen as significantly insensitive, perturbing, and heedless of the gravity and pervasiveness of injustice, *as a continued lived reality*, for many Black people. Even if one acknowledges that there is some truth to the triumph narrative, an acknowledgement of that truth is still insufficient regarding the abolition of the adverse effect entailed in the hardship narrative.

An examination of the work of Meja Mwangi by Ayo Kehinde (2004, p. 228) establishes how African literature, capturing the social realities and plights of post-colonial societies, speaks of a post-liberation disillusionment that is endemic in many African countries. Mwangi uses Kenya as a case study. Kehinde investigates Meja's work titled *Kill Me Quick*, reflecting on how post-colonial societies have all been mired in "frustration or betrayal of trust", marking the "recurrence of undisguised bitterness against the black African rulers who have betrayed their nations" (Kehinde, 2004, p. 238). According to Kehinde, the bitterness is a result of the lack of fulfilment of post-independent aspirations for the nation. Societies were promised that tragedies of the past would be behind them, only to find themselves living in socio-economic conditions that are continually desperate and poor (Kehinde, 2004, p. 231). This is perhaps a disillusionment brought about by a lack of material means, a bitterness endemic in post-independence African societies that seems to rear its head in the sentiments of young South Africans. What emerges is that the triumph narrative ends up being perceived by young South Africans as a dubious multi-layered mixture of bamboozlement and beguilement. An awareness of this can only serve to upset young South Africans further, causing them to

further divert from the Rainbow Nationalism that the triumph narrative compels them to adopt.

Why would such disillusionment emerge in the first place? Witz et al. (2017) assert that we should reject the understanding that the public's engagements with heritage and nation-building projects are an uncritical consumption of state narratives for nation-building purposes. Instead, they argue that we should "see institutions of public culture as critical social locations where knowledge and perceptions are shaped, debated, imposed, challenged and disseminated" (Witz et al., 2008, p. 12). As such, heritage presentations through institutions like the Robben Island Museum come to compete and negotiate social meanings of identity with the complex subjectivities its visitors may come to it with. Witz et al.'s insight shows that propelling the state-authorized heritage may not necessarily guarantee citizens' self-identification with the nation-building project because of the very contestable nature of heritage in the public sphere. As such, the rejection of the state interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism, contained in its disillusionment, is a possibility precisely because citizens respond critically to the state's attempt to interpellate them.

A Philosophical Account of the Limits of Interpellating Rainbow Nationalism

As we have seen in the previous section, the interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism has been met with disillusionment. In this section, I want to take a novel approach to understanding why this is the case. Perhaps political philosophy can help with better understanding what may be going wrong with Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity and its interpellation, such that it is being met with increasing disillusionment. I contend that Rainbow Nationalism is an instance of idealism and, as a result, was self-effacing, which can be said to be one of the things responsible for its disillusionment. To understand what I mean here, it may be helpful to look to Charles Mill's (2005) critique of what he terms *ideal-theory-as-ideology* and his subsequent defence of the non-ideal theory. To best understand the contention here, we should start with the kind of question that would be of interest in motivating the emergence of Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity. At the advent of democracy in South Africa, the question was primarily "What kind of society is South Africa *after* apartheid?". Coming at the advent of a *new* South Africa, such a question comes about where a new national identity is to be imagined. It is here where the appeal of 'ideal-theory-as-idealized' may become

apparent. As Mills (2005) defines it, ideal-theory-as-idealized involves thinking about a particular representation and conception of the social world produced as an exemplar of what the social world *should be like*.

The interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism uses the 'ideal-theory-as-idealized' approach in fostering national consciousness and reality in many ways. It employed several principles like reconciliation, non-racialism, and universal human rights, projecting them as values that everyone who wanted to be a part of the new South Africa *should emulate*. Rainbow Nationalism, in many ways, propelled a rhetoric that was significantly prescriptive of how South Africans *should be* post-Apartheid: individuals who *already embody* a principled way of living according to the tenets of Rainbow Nationalism. However, in current South Africa, this conception of how South Africans *should be* had to compete with the *reality* of what it is to be South African after Apartheid. As Mills (2005, p. 167) observed, there is an inevitable lacuna between how social reality should be and how it is. Post-Apartheid South Africa has continued to grapple with the lingering legacy of Apartheid in a myriad of ways, where an apt description of its present reality would reveal that South Africa, in reality, is still far from the Rainbow Nation that it should be.

As Achille Mbembe notes (2015), a lot remains relatively the same since the advent of democracy in South Africa, further buttressing the idea that today's South Africa is a significant marker of an unrealized struggle for complete emancipation; political, socio-economic, and otherwise. Even after Apartheid, White people still command approximately 90% of the nation's economy, whilst most Black people continue to live in poverty with vastly different lives from their counterparts (Mbembe, 2015). Gqola also suggests a resurgence of White Supremacist violence in recent times, as covered by the South African media. In 2017, a White farmer forced his Black worker to eat faeces and attempted to drown him in a septic tank, calling him a "useless K*ffir" (IOL, 2018). Additionally, racist incidents have continued to take place in public. Penny Sparrow and Adam Catzavelos have publicly proclaimed Black people to be 'monkeys'. While these may seem to be only discrete incidents, they can be appealed to in illustrating that Apartheid's legacy still lingers quite notably and persistently in present-day South Africa. In many ways, if we are to describe the current picture of South African society post-Apartheid aptly, it reveals a country distant from the Rainbow Nationalism picture of non-racial reconciliatory triumphalism.

Having established cause to believe that there is a disjuncture between the ideal that is Rainbow Nationalism and the social reality in post-Apartheid South Africa, it is now possible demonstrate what went wrong with the interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism, such that it is being met with noticeable disillusionment

and agitation. What went wrong, as I contend, is that the actualization of Rainbow Nationalism, pursued via interpellation, started from an ideal-as-idealized model of South African society, and not from a non-ideal model in its attempt to realize Rainbow Nationalism as a vision for national unity effectively. To see the theoretical appeal of my contention, consider the following passage from Charles Mills' (2005) *Ideal Theory as Ideology*:

How useful will it be to start from an ideal-as-idealized-model of P? Obviously, this question cannot be answered a priori: it's going to depend on how closely the actual P in question approximates the behaviour of an ideal P. And if one wants to change the actual P so it conforms more closely in its behaviour to the ideal P, one will need to work and theories not merely with the ideal, ideal-as-idealized-model, but with the non-ideal, ideal-as-descriptive-model, so as to identify and understand the peculiar features that explain P's dynamic and prevent it from attaining ideality (Mills, 2005, p. 166).

What is considered to be the case in the interpellation of Rainbow Nationalism is that the South African government may have departed from the ideal, consequently obfuscating the social reality of what it is to belong to post-Apartheid South Africa. As has already been shown, the Rainbow Nationalism departed only from its principles in shaping what it was to be South African after Apartheid. The past, and the messiness lingering, was simply treated, narratively and rhetorically, as something to be left behind so as to make way of the new reconciled country, unified despite diversity. Fixation on the past, and taking an approach to address the past in a manner contrary to or in tension with the prescriptions of the Rainbow Nationalism, was considered tantamount to betraying the vision of unity in diversity that Rainbow Nationalism sought to bring about. The fixation on making South Africans the embodiment of the vision of Rainbow Nationalism through interpellation could have arguably created rose-tinted glasses where its attainment was seen as sufficiently possible through its own appeal.

An *emphasis* on the ideal can obfuscate and marginalize the actual. Arguably, focus on the ideal, when the actual is considered far from it, is perceived by some citizens to be a state of pacification and inculcation of docility. In a series of interviews I conducted with young South Africans who had visited Robben Island, a number of the interview lamented how the Rainbow Nationalism rhetoric was continually used to subdue their anger regarding the lingering effects of apartheid in the new South Africa – which led to them being more skeptical of the role that Rainbow Nationalism has to play in actualizing positive post-Apartheid

conditions in South Africa (Mogomotsi, 2021). Here, the continuous rhetorical emphasis on the ideal effaced the ideal primarily because it made citizens feel that they were “drinking the government brewed Kool-Aid”. It is this which I believe, upon citizens being conscious of it, further delegitimized Rainbow Nationalism as an ideal worth emulating. Simply put, an ideal like Rainbow Nationalism is promoted, but the social reality upon which it is being promoted lags behind. The situation raises questions about the prudence of living according to the ideal and not dealing, hands-on, with the hindrances to this achieving the ideal – even in the case where dealing with the hindrances to the ideals lies contrary to the ideal itself. In speaking of South Africa as a Rainbow Nation after Apartheid, I argue that the South African sought to *ontologise* what should have otherwise remained an ideal. That is, in speaking of South Africa as a Rainbow Nation, the government took tenets of Rainbow Nationalism and attempted to make them a current ontological state of the South African body politic. Here, using Rainbow Nationalism, instead of being something to aspirational for a country still needing to *become* a Rainbow Nation the government opted to inculcate the Rainbow Nation *as who we are* now that Apartheid has ended.

In dubbing the post-Apartheid South Africa as the Rainbow Nation, what should have remained a teleological aspiration for the nation became convoluted, with the understanding of it as the *actual* state of the country. By buttressing national identity as constituted in unity in diversity and a commitment to reconciliation, the philosophy constructed a picture of South Africa as a country which *had* reconciled post-TRC and not one *in an ever continuous and contentious process* of reconciling. The political and ideological commitments to liberal values and universal human rights through South African constitutionalism created the illusion that racial differences, which were markers of power, conflict, and privilege, were *no longer relevant* to or in the “New” South Africa as a consequence of Apartheid ending. These political and ideological commitments seemed to undermine the importance of admitting to racial differences, as markers of power and privilege, to the substantive actualization of the liberal values and universal human rights in South Africa. As Gqola (2001, p. 99) puts it, “[Rainbow Nationalism] is a fantasy, yet [it] remains symbolic and constitutive of the new “truths” in a democratic South Africa.”

This demonstrates the importance of using rhetoric of a philosophy of national unity as a teleology, as something a nation should aspire to become, as opposed to rhetorising it as a present ontological reality. It is essential for a philosophy of unity not to obfuscate the social reality onto which it is being projected. If there is not enough intent in the rhetoric to treat it as an *aspiration*, it is bound to crumble

under the pressure of reality. Instead of speaking of South Africa *as* a Rainbow Nation, it is essential to have explicitly projected South Africa as a country on a *journey toward becoming* a Rainbow Nation, by confronting Apartheid and its legacies. Such a nuanced approach would have been more consistent with the current social reality. This is because it would give room for acknowledgement of the current social reality as far from the ideal without abandoning the appeal of the ideal. Instead, the Rainbow Nationalist ideal of a reality antithetical to Apartheid being continually rhetorised as a current ontological reality served to silence the social reality, which in the case of South Africa is still significantly continuous with the legacy of Apartheid. The better approach would be to do the following. First, having a philosophy of national unity that acknowledges that the ontological reality in its non-ideal state may have avoided the resultant conditions of its effacement. Thereafter, the Rainbow Nationalist government could have rhetorised the philosophy of national unity more explicitly as a collective goal which is compatible with dealing with the lingering impacts of being a post-Apartheid post-colonial country. Unfortunately, in the case of Rainbow Nationalism, the interpellative rhetoric encouraged a view of a *tabula rasa* in the national consciousness. This is at the heart of the reasons behind the disillusionment Rainbow Nationalism faces today.

Is the Bandung Spirit any better than Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national *and* international unity? I believe so. A commitment to the Bandung Spirit need not fall to the same challenges as Rainbow Nationalism because it is conceived of as an ideal and normative ideology with the ontological-teleological distinction in mind. As Darwis Khudori (2006) observed, the invocation of the Bandung Spirit is largely “associated with the struggle against the domination by the powerful over the weak” (p. 123). As such, the Bandung Spirit as a movement is geared towards a commitment to resolve the injustices and inequalities evident in the global order. What we see here is the Bandung Spirit positioning itself as a philosophy of international unity in the Global South, with a principled teleology whose primary purpose is to secure better ontological conditions for states in the Global South. Elsewhere, Khudori (2006) speaks of the Bandung Spirit as a “bold and sweeping effort to reorder the world as was attempted with such success starting in Bandung in April 1955” (p. 124). What we see is that, unlike the Rainbow Nationalism trajectory, the commitment to the Bandung Spirit starts with a cognizance of having to continually address the challenges of the Global social reality and then devises a principled way to best address these challenges. As such, a principled commitment to universal human rights, non-racialism, cooperation, and peace functions in a fundamentally different way from how it functions

in the Rainbow Nationalism discourse. Whereas Rainbow Nationalism uses these principled commitments to obfuscate social reality by ontologising them, the kind of principled commitment seen in the Bandung Spirit makes use of these principles to transform social reality. It is this crucial difference – that is, the ability to make the teleological help in resolving the ontological state of being a Global South nation – that makes the Bandung Spirit exempt from the challenges faced by Rainbow Nationalism as a philosophy of national unity in South Africa.

However, this is not to say that the Bandung Spirit is *immune* from the challenges faced by Rainbow Nationalism. Insofar as there are limitations to how the Bandung Spirit as a teleological enterprise can address the challenges of the social reality, the threat of disillusionment may creep into view. Here, I want to focus on one of the principles of the Bandung Spirit which I think may open it up to contradiction, which may also undermine it. Assie-Lumumba (2015) observes a number of abstention clauses in the fundamental principles of the Bandung Conference. First, the Bandung committed itself to “abstention from intervention or interference in the affairs of another country” as well as “abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries (Assie-Lumumba, 2015, p. 6). While I understand how this may serve the goals of “living together in peace with one another as neighbors” and “goodwill’ between nations on the international stage who are seeking global equity, these abstentions may often come at the price of intra-national conditions that undermine the importance of the teleology in the first place. If we were to imagine a country, amongst those who are signatories to the Bandung fundamental principles, who may have questionable human rights and equity practices in their own countries, the principle of abstention threatens to undermine the extent to which the proponents of Bandung Spirit seek to uphold that which they strive for in the social reality of their own nations. Should a contradiction emerge where countries of the Global South commit themselves to the principles of Bandung *between* each other as nations, but not in their own nations, it is likely that the Bandung Spirit may also efface itself as being mere rhetoric whose norms do not go far enough to reshape the reality of living in the Global South.

Conclusion

From this, perhaps there may be a lesson in the philosophies of national unity in the Global South. It is vital for the interpellation of a philosophy of unity in the Global South to be cognizant of the continuances of racial oppression and coloniality that linger in post-independent and newly democratic states. However,

such interpellation should not necessarily seek to subdue a focus on the past and divert the citizenry's attention only to the ideal. Instead, the state interpellation process should also seek to actively acknowledge and address the barriers and social reality, which may be far from ideal, in order for the ideal to be attained. For philosophies of national unity that emerge from the Bandung Spirit, it is worth settling on a principled commitment and embodiment of certain values by the state in shaping a national consciousness, which will need to take place in tandem with ensuring that the social reality reflects the promotion of those values. Luckily for the Bandung Spirit, it has within it already in place a teleology that is geared towards resolving the challenges of being a state and part of a nation in the Global South – whatever the challenges may be, old or new. As I illustrated in my analysis of Ayo Kehinde's observation of the post-colonial reality, many post-colonial societies have been mired in bitterness from their general public because of the failure to fulfil their aspiration for the nations and to live up to the promise that the travesties of the past would truly be in the past. A continuous effort to interpellate people into this aspiration that is a philosophy of national unity like Rainbow Nationalism can only have the effect of showing citizens that their government is oblivious to or aims to undermine their frustrations and disappointment at the pace of having the promise of post-colonial (post-Apartheid) independence fulfilled. The insistence by the state that South Africa is a Rainbow Nation, while the social reality lags in reflecting it as such, can only serve to delegitimize the usefulness of its citizenry continuing to see itself as a Rainbow Nation.

For the principled belief in the Bandung Spirit, I have shown that it need not fall to the same fate as a commitment to Rainbow Nationalism in South Africa – despite their affinities both in social reality and teleology. The “subalternation and peripherization”, as Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2019, p. 213) calls it, is the social reality that the nations of the Global South with a commitment to the Bandung Spirit have to continually fight against both domestically and internationally. What I have shown, that would make a state's commitment to the Bandung Spirit different and largely immune to the challenges of to a commitment to Rainbow Nationalism in South Africa is how the Bandung Spirit, as a philosophy of national and international unity, is premised on the continual resolution of challenges faced in the social reality of being part of the Global South. I have shown how a commitment to the Bandung Spirit shows the potential of a philosophy of national and international unity whose teleology is consistent with the prevailing social conditions – simultaneously being aware of the challenges continually faced by the Global South and preserving the teleology as something which aspires to resolve the challenges in the current ontological state of Global South countries.

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Ubuntu Worldview as a Condition of Possibility for National Unity

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Abstract

The spirit of Bandung can be summarized in the aspiration that the fate of Asian and African countries was neither to be determined by the Cold War divide, nor decided by the great metropolises of the world. Asia and Africa, 68 years later, have followed different paths. The Asian-African solidarity did not survive. The reason for this could be the fact that there was a difference between the *Ubuntu* solidarity and the many ideologies as well as influences that prevailed at the conference. This backdrop explains why the conference has not had a significant resonance in Africa, mainly in terms of national unity, which remains an aspiration. An examination of what was at play at Bandung indicates a few factors that could have made that aspiration achievable, even though such factors were either sidelined or overlooked. Using V. Y. Mudimbe and Kwasi Wiredu's perspectives on African solidarity, this paper explores the different influences that carried the day at the conference. The aim is to show how the principle of solidarity derived from "*Ubuntu*" worldview as a condition of possibility for national unity was overlooked, yet it is the one needed for true nation-building. The conclusion of the paper demonstrates why the Bandung Conference, by inscribing itself in the line of global policy and international conferences underlying such policy, embraced the limitations that come from all globalizing attempts. Those attempts are bound to fail because of ignoring local values. Finally, the conclusion sketches the typically African values that happen to be, in reality, universal and, as such, might be the pillars of a battle against new forms of colonization hidden in global policies.

Keywords: Ubuntu; solidarity; Pan-Africanism; colonization; global policies; conferences

1. Introduction

Franklin B. Weinstein, in 1965, asked the question as to why ten whole years had passed without a second conference as a sequel of the Bandung 1955 one (Weinstein, 1965, p. 359). Indeed, expectations of a certain level of continuity for this historic conference had built up around it. However, as has been written many times, while there was a consensus in considering colonialism and imperialism as the common enemy for participants, there also was an awareness of diverging interests that carried, in themselves, seeds of disagreement in pursuing what was started in 1955. Some saw a second conference as the opportunity that would build solidarity among African and Asian countries, as well as a venue for reconceiving the relations between those countries, in a rapidly evolving context, not only on each continent, but also elsewhere in the world (Weinstein, 1965, p. 362). At this stage in the history of the conference, pervasive divisions among participating countries had put to test the very idea of solidarity among them.

This situation suggests that, though Bandung sought to embrace common principles, the so called “Bandung Spirit” was not clear. Sixty-five years later, it is legitimate to consider that it was, at best, ambiguous. The ambiguity leads us to legitimately ask what the “Bandung Spirit” really was. The term is not often defined. What is clear is that it hinged on the claim of bringing together, in solidarity, a great diversity of people and cultures; as well as on the hope of building an order determined by standards forged by the struggle for the emancipation of African and Asian countries (Weinstein, 1965, p. 362). The effort resulted into what is considered a legacy of the conference: the Third World as a political entity which, according to Weber and Winanti, weaved together “a solidarist internationalist outlook and perspective on world order” (Weber & Winanti, 2016, p. 392). This project, meant to disrupt the colonial stranglehold, was characterized by an intent to push for restitutive justice as a driver of the pursuit of development goals, responding to expectations of previously colonized peoples. While every colonized people agreed with such an aim, it does not seem to qualify as an inspirational spirit that could hold all of them in a tangible and stable unity, once individual countries’ interests would be felt. If a stable unity was not so clear from within the conference, the tense international order of the day would prove another challenge to it, once again posing the question of whether there was such a thing as the “Bandung Spirit”.

Jason Parker, in his review of Kweku Ampiah’s book titled “*The political and moral imperatives of the Bandung Conference of 1955: The reactions of the United States, The United Kingdom and Japan*”, asks the question of whether the confer-

ence was “an episode in the post-war race revolution or a venue for cross-cutting agendas and regional dynamics” (Parker, 2010, p. 758). On one hand, this can only show another angle to the ambiguity of aims at the conference, hinting at the persisting skepticism in relation to its spirit. On the other hand, the conference was meant to show that the newly independent countries had something to offer to the world, based upon the five principles of mutual respect, non-aggression, non-interference, equality and mutual benefit, as well as peaceful co-existence (Wilson, 1967, p. 105). What is interesting is that these principles seemed to be what is referred to as the Bandung Spirit. However, these principles, in all appearances, originate from the five principles of the Indonesian state’s independence. They also appear to be the basis upon which the non-aligned movement would be formed (Grimal, 1978, p. 190). If this should be considered the Bandung Spirit, it has a history that could be directly related to Asian countries, but not so much to African countries.

In reality, some have come to agree that, though the conference was such a historic achievement, it did not mean the same thing for everybody. This is the case for Tarling (1992, p. 74), who says that it meant many different things to different people. For Indonesia, it was an occasion to settle some domestic politics and carve a role in international relations; for India, it was about demonstrating its influence, though the conference also showed its limits; for China it offered a platform for developing a foreign policy, to name but a few (Tarling, 1992, p. 75). Definitely, a difficulty in mobilizing the spirit of so many different interests arises. A difficulty that can be turned into a question of what the prevailing worldviews actually were at the conference. Should they be identified, one could find out if any African worldview was represented there to shape the conference in a way that would be meaningful for the continent.

2. Worldviews at Bandung

It could be more accurate to title this section thus: “apparent lack of convergent worldviews at Bandung”. Worldview here is understood as a philosophy of life, which includes also one’s beliefs about fundamental dimensions of reality. Some have suggested that the political perspectives at present in Bandung were neutralism and non-alignment, though these two could not really be identified in exact terms at that early stage (Parker, 2010, p. 759). However, given the fact that the conference’s delegates, in 1955, were coming from a divided world, it was easy to at least assume that they could not share the same beliefs that make up a nation.

In relation to Africa, most African countries, at that point in history, were not independent just as yet, while some were still charting their way in wrestling their independence from the colonial masters. Dipesh Chakrabarty is of the view that “they were not of the same mind on questions of international politics, nor did they have a same understanding of what constituted imperialism” (Chakrabarty, 2005, p. 4813). It seems that even one of the organizers of the conference, the Indonesian diplomat Roselan Abdulgani, was aware that there were competing currents at the conference (Abdulgani, 1981, p. 26). In Chakrabarty’s assessment (Chakrabarty, 2010, p. 4813), the diversity, the competing interests, and simply little knowledge of some realities in different countries meant that, apart from the lack of trust and respect, the unity of the conference relied only upon its opposition to imperialism, without a working definition of it. He attributes such a situation to the fact that the differences between the countries represented were at once profound, discordant, or incompatible (Chakrabarty, 2010, p. 4814).

2.1 Absence of Shared Philosophy at Bandung

There was, obviously, a challenge of distinguishing a philosophical framework at the conference, or any semblance of a unifying philosophical belief beyond a common anti-colonialism. A case in point is shown, for example, in the position of the prime minister of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), who was of the view that Soviet colonialism over Eastern European countries should be opposed as much as Western imperialism (Abdulgani, 1981, pp. 115-117). According to Chakrabarty, this position “reveals the shallow intellectual unity upon which the conference was based” (Chakrabarty, 2010, p. 4814). It is then fair to agree that, in terms of ideas, in the words of a participant, “not much that is significantly new can be found in the Bandung Declaration. It did help newly independent states to become part of the United Nations’ system” (Appadorai, 1955, p. 29). The absence of a shared worldview at the conference emerges at every turn when trying to understand how the conference would make a difference for specific people. The question that persists is whether seeking to end Western supremacy was enough of an idea to cement strong common action for the future of Asian and African peoples. A question that leads to another one: could Bandung generate a strong movement, beyond the liberal and conservative categories, unifying people from such diversity in terms of race, culture and religion?

The problem of identifying the different worldviews at Bandung indicates that it was even harder to glimpse the possibility of any religious beliefs at play. From the religious point of view, it is prudent to go by Sukarno’s mention of it in his famous opening speech:

“Religion is of dominating importance particularly in this part of the world. There are perhaps more religions here than in other regions of this globe. However, again, our countries were the birthplaces of religions. Must we be divided by the multiformity of our religious life? It is true, each religion has its own history, its own individuality, its own “raison d’être”, its special pride in its own beliefs, its own mission, its special truths which it desires to propagate. Unless we realize that all great religions are one in their message of tolerance and in their insistence on the observance of the principle of “Live and let live”, unless the followers of each religion are prepared to give the same consideration to the rights of others everywhere, unless every State does its duty to ensure that the same rights are given to the followers of all faiths – unless these things are done, religion is debased, and its true purpose perverted” (Sukarno, 1955).

The position on religion in the above extract shows why faith had no significant impact on the conference. It is because religion is assigned the insufficient meaning of tolerance called “live and let live”. This lack of clarity together with the absence of a unifying worldview was not a priority in Bandung. The shared focus against imperialism and development framed the conference. It determined the selection of leading voices at the forum, hence the not-so-noticeable contribution from Africa. It seems that, from Bandung, Africa drew little energy for its emancipating foundation. This is why the contribution of the conference to nation building in Africa remains a challenge.

2.2 Pan-African Movement Loss at Bandung

Joseph Hongoh writes that the political solidarity of the early Pan-African movement “was lost when the context of realizing its goals shifted from continental and transnational spheres to the self-contained nationalist and sovereign territorial spheres of the nation-state” (Hongoh, 2016, p. 375). The assumption is that it was unavoidable because Africa was focused on becoming free to build sovereign nations. Christopher Lee’s view follows this line since the race for sovereign nationhood and the subsequent adoption of the Bandung principles implied that Pan-Africanist solidarity was encouraged but subordinated to national pursuits and interests (Lee, 2010). Priorities could not be otherwise, considering the stage in the process of independence at which African countries stood in 1955.

Instead of any common values, scholars of this momentous conference have found that, in terms of diplomacy, the existing international order was affirmed, not challenged, in substance because of ideological influences that met there. Joseph Hongoh finds that “at Bandung, anti-colonial and anti-imperial sentiments ran side

by side with nationalistic alliances with cold war powers, the pursuit of regional hegemony and interpersonal rivalries. Crucially, such a level of conformity and commitment to the existing structure of the international order prevailed despite the abundance of revolutionary politics and ideological dynamism in the global south” (Hongoh, 2016, p. 375).

The reality was that countries had to build themselves domestically first. The risk of ideological influence from international spheres in shaping them was real. In many instances, it proved to be detrimental, because it showed itself to be another form of domination. A striking example could be the role of the United Nations in the Congolese crisis, then and now. Hongoh describes the push and pull continentally, and at the international level, as “intra-continental polarity and international fragility” (Hongoh, 2016, p. 375), blaming it for continued European colonization on the continent. The double polarity makes it possible to argue that the different influences at play in Bandung could not reconcile the African countries’ quest for much-needed sovereignty and a political type of solidarity promoted by a global policy.

Such a reality is a proof that global policy carries within itself intrinsic limits in terms of nation-building. It is still difficult to let go of the imperialist narrative, despite the contributions of movements such as *Négritude*, *Ubuntu* and pan-Africanism. It could even be a sufficient reason explaining the inconclusive consequences of the Bandung Conference in that regard. Such limits have accompanied the idea of solidarity as seen in the African-American context in the early years of the 20th century, as well as in movements such as the “*Négritude*”, a movement propounded by Afro-Caribbean writers of the same period. Anthony Bogues notes, among them, a form of internationalism in which human solidarity, derived from freedom and equality, would be the foundation of international relations (Bogues, 2011, p. 197), but would weaken the formation of strong sovereign nations.

Apart from Global South influences at Bandung, there was also the inevitable communist influence. This particular aspect indicates the sole area of interest Bandung elicited from powers like Britain and the United States. For instance, Nicholas Tarling is of the view that, “ever since the Second World War, a main aim of [the British] foreign policy had been to ensure stability in the underdeveloped, and to avoid it being dominated by Communism” (Tarling, 1992, p. 74). It would seem that Britain’s approach was two-pronged: to influence the framework by mobilizing those who would want to collaborate, without antagonizing; and avoiding any divisiveness that would risk exposing participating countries to the opportunity of opening up easily to the communist ideology. Britain did not

also want to compromise its image as an empire engaged in decolonizing but “it distrusted international movements that might take a momentum of their own, chiefly, communism” (Tarling, 1992, p. 75).

2.3 Imperialists’ Strategy at Bandung

In all appearances, Britain wanted to, at least, demonstrate to Commonwealth countries that it was willing to help them combat communism. Such a position reveals the awareness that the active presence of Communist China, not yet admitted to the United Nations, was another ideological force influencing proceedings at the conference. About China, David Wilson (1967, p. 96) notes that Bandung was an occasion for its diplomatic contact with other countries. The conference would serve as “a mutual educative process for both communist and anti-communist participants which would both enlighten the Chinese as to the realities of their international environment and to educate leaders of non-communist Asian and African states on the actual attitudes of Peking’s leaders toward both non-communist Asia and the West” (Wilson, 1997, p. 96).

The description above explains why a great deal was at stake for Britain, especially in relation to Africa, where in their estimation they were doing progressive work they did not wish to see disrupted by the conference’s proceedings, which they considered a “demagoguery” (Tarling, 1992, p. 81). Britain feared that African countries would either be lured by China’s communism or India’s neutralism. They wanted to side with participants who thought their style of colonialism was dying, and the communist type of colonialism was rising, and that the latter would be worse than theirs (Tarling, 1992, p. 87). Tarling argues that, behind the scenes, Britain sought to cause maximum confusion at Bandung (Tarling, 1992, p. 88). The confusion suggests that the ideological influences were much stronger than the conference’s rhetoric could wish. It was meant to avoid the formation of a strong Asia-Africa bloc, stressing the fact that Africans and Asians were no more going to be saviors of Africa than the Western imperialists had been.

It must have been difficult to prevent the conference from deteriorating relations between West and East, since that would play into the hands of China, and probably the Soviet Union by extension, who were seeking their own role in shaping new countries. Tarling reports that, to a certain extent, the British could foresee how China would accentuate the differences between East and West, and they felt that there would be a real split between totalitarian states and democracies (Tarling, 1992, p. 99).

Britain’s covert participation brings out more clarity about the ideological lines at Bandung. It also shows how these lines determined outcomes that were never

meant to be lasting, both because of the historical moment and because of the lack of common beliefs among participants. This fact underscores that the focus of the conference sidelined completely not only faith but also the basic tenets of nation-building. Indeed, an international forum with such diverging interests and ideologies would not shape sovereign nations. Later, the diverging developmental paths followed so differently by Asian and African countries remain the reason why this conference is still reflected upon. The advance in Asia denotes the fact that they definitely shared values and beliefs. The question remains as to whether African participants had any philosophy, values or/and beliefs to propose for strong nation building at Bandung. This question could be re-actualized and reformulated and thus be addressed, at least, for Sub-Saharan countries. Attempts at finding answers should start from the idea of *Ubuntu*, commonly understood to be an African worldview by Africans themselves.

3. Ubuntu and African Values

3.1 From Valentin Yoka Mudimbe's Perspective

The Bandung Conference thrust African participants into the wider debate about epistemological claims underlying the question of African rationality. Masolo, an interpreter of Mudimbe, states that Western historical and anthropological studies have had a negative influence on self-identity among Africans. He affirms that “victim and product of this influence, African intellectual history unveils in itself a consistent rupture from its harshly negated past. In the humanities and social sciences in general, and philosophy and religion in particular, African intellectual continue to define their world on the basis of Western epistemological standards” (Masolo, 1991, p. 998). This assessment portrays a valid application of the situation under which the African leaders found themselves in the early to mid-1950s. The control of foreign powers was still strong. For example, due to Ghana's independence negotiations, the British prevented Kwame Nkrumah from a direct participation in the Bandung Conference (Adebajo, 2008, p. 109). Woods reports that “the Colonial Secretary claimed rather dismissively that Asians were not competent to pronounce on the affairs and destinies of Africa” (Wood, 2012, p. 524).

3.1.1 Potential Sphere of Complementarity

The bias might have affected African delegates into letting others define their role at the conference, which explains why little impact of the forum resonated in Africa. As a result, no trace of the conference's outcomes in shaping nation-building on

the continent can be evidenced. The persistence of this bias makes modern Africa appear to be a construct by others. Even educated Africans in international fora cannot be exempted from being considered agents and victims of the alienation affecting them and, by extension, their society. In this regards, the Africa expected to have emerged from Bandung would have been another construct, using the leadership present there.

Africa's delegates at Bandung fall under the category of the intellectuals Mudimbe accuses of being quite far removed from the masses they claimed to develop (Masolo, 1991, p. 998). They no longer speak the same language as those masses, and most probably do not use the same knowledge, and hence, the same values. As Masolo puts it, "there exist a system of power which blocks, prohibits, and invalidates this discourse and this knowledge, a power not only found in the manifest authority of censorship, but one that profoundly and subtly penetrates an entire social network. Intellectuals are themselves agents of this system of power (...)" (Masolo, 1991, p. 1003). If one understands that at Bandung there was another system of power and social control attempting to be built, at least judging by the different ideologies and interests, some of them conflicting, then an explanation of why no echo of the conference persists in Africa begins to emerge.

The deficit affecting African delegates at Bandung was a consciousness regarding the values that characterize the historicity of any given people: its philosophy, culture and religion. Mudimbe considers these three as expressions of the human mind (Smith, 1991, p. 971). These are the pillars of a society upon which every development of people can be structured. Without them, colonialism subdued civilizations, making development an illusion. These pillars are behind the spectacular modernization of Asian countries: China, India, Indonesia, and Japan.

3.1.2 Exploring Cultural Dynamics

For Africa, Ubuntu as a philosophy is taken to encapsulate the worldview that is apt to create conditions for an African polity. Without it, it would be practically impossible understand cultural dynamics and the tenets of how Africa understands itself as a community. Ubuntu has the merit of being a combination of philosophy and anthropology. For the purpose of this paper, Ubuntu is understood in relation to the values it entails to show how they are interwoven in the natural structures that underline a polity, whose legitimacy depends precisely on those natural structures.

Among Ubuntu values, when it comes to religion, there is a difficulty of delimitation of what it means. That is why the belief-centered idea of religion will be avoided, to focus on the awareness of the spiritual nature of the human being,

and an awareness of spiritual communication in African cultures (Kress, 2005, p. 5). Another premise that must also be stated is that Western epistemological standards applied to African realities should be corrected, or at least be considered in complementarity with Ubuntu's worldview. One such case should be precisely the area of knowledge and development. Development as discussed in Bandung was defined within western parameters exclusively, without this complementarity. Mudimbe's view is that such complementarity can be achieved through an interdisciplinary perspective that goes beyond both African ethno-philosophies and adaptations of Western or Eastern philosophies to Africa (Kress, 2005, p. 7). What this means is that investigation into the order of knowledge in African contexts in their diversity is still possible, and it is such investigations that can generate conceptual and practical application of Ubuntu values to the unfinished double tasks of nation-building and development.

3.2 African Values From Kwasi Wiredu's Perspective

3.2.1 Ubuntu and the Principle of Solidarity

For Kwasi Wiredu, it is difficult to systematize the values of Ubuntu as a worldview that structures cohesion in a polity, using Western standards (Wiredu, 2009, p. 10). One of the most important dimensions of it, he explains, is the morality of politics that shuns individual interests because of the risk they pose to the achievement of the common good. He illustrates this in a description of a common art pattern in the following terms: "My own favorite among the art motifs I have found in the Akan culture is that depicting a crocodile with one stomach but two heads locked up in a fight over food. I think this symbol captures both the most fundamental problem of ethics and its solution. The problem is that, although we all as individuals have own legitimate interests (symbolized by the two heads), excessive fixation upon those interests could lead us to lose sight of the fact that, ultimately, we all share the same interest, mainly our common well-being (symbolized by the common stomach)" (Wiredu, 2009, p. 10). He suggests that it is the loss of such a necessary perspective that becomes a determinant of conflicts. The restoration of such an approach is what can create the conditions for a social agreement on sharing, recognizing everyone's participation in the common good. The fact that the African worldview is transmitted in symbols does not mean that it not sufficiently accurate. It only means that it is what Wiredu calls a "non-conforming way of thinking" (Wiredu, 2009, p. 11).

This understanding of the difference and the correct interconnection between individual interest and the common good stems from the idea of humanity or being

human from which the term Ubuntu is derived. It is the same understanding of the deep-rooted concept of solidarity in Africa's traditional communities that still persists today. While the humanism and solidarity underlying Ubuntu are clear in African ontology, they did not find their way into the Bandung Conference. Maybe this is because the initiative of the conference was inspired by another type of solidarity, as will be demonstrated. Indeed, the idea of personhood that constructs the idea of the common good clashes with the modern individualistic culture embraced at Bandung. Modernity as it appears today, and indeed in the last century, is informed by the dichotomy or even dualism inherited from rationalism that divorced the spiritual nature from the material dimension of man. Such a position explains why the so-called modernization of Africa is always formulated in material terms only, hence its complete disregard for the intangible spiritual values of Ubuntu that bind human beings in their shared life and destiny.

Oyekan Owomoyela (1987, p. 89) reminds Africans that cultures tend to put more emphasis on personal ties, with such emphasis playing an important role in social structures, in the transmission of their knowledge and values, though not in writing. Even some of the fierce critiques of traditional Africa have acknowledged that, going all the way back in time, "pre-colonial Africa had undoubtedly amassed a wealth of true knowledge, of effective techniques, (...) to ensure the livelihood of a large part of the population in the countryside and cities" (Owomoyela, 1987, p. 91). Wiredu also recognized the existence of the principle of rationality in Africa, pointing to the application of agricultural knowledge and techniques, weather patterns, as well as the structure and preservation of communities' harmonious relations through concrete ways of investigating and solving conflicts (Wiredu, 1984, p. 153). All these different elements appear, in similar fashion, in the most diverse communities in Africa stressing the fact that, if people do not suffer cultural amnesia, they can acknowledge that solidarity, mutual commensality and natural sociability are part of African identity, leading philosophers to explain Ubuntu in that disconcertingly simple expression of "I am because you are".

It is not clear how the Bandung Conference could have captured such an important element of African society's identity. Without featuring it, there is no way the conference would have significantly contributed to building the newly independent states into true nations. Partly, the cause of the problem is the mis-education suffered by Africans themselves. It would seem that, in some way, even in some parts of Asia, there is still a hypnotic attraction towards Westernism. In Owomoyela's words: "it will take a different type of education to cure the new African of the hypnotic impulsion towards Westernism and almost pathological

conviction that African ways are important only as illustrations of things from which to distance oneself” (Owomoyela, 1987, p. 94).

3.2.2 Ubuntu Solidarity and Bandung Solidarist Internationalism

The operative ethos of African societies is an intrinsic sense of community based on solidarity, also called Ubuntu. Some feel compelled to call it communalism, which is quite inaccurate since it is not an ideology. It forms, together with the principle of hospitality, an authentic organizing directive of the community in terms of aims and means. Wiredu explains it in detail in this way: “This is a kind of social formation in which kinship relations are of last consequence. People are brought up early in life to develop a sense of bonding with large kinship circles. This solidarity starts from the household and radiates outward to the lineage and, with some diminution of intensity, to the clan, at large” (Wiredu, 2009, p. 15). This relationship is balanced by rights and duties of the individual in relation to the others and vice-versa. The reciprocity involved in these normative bonds is the source of the human connectedness called solidarity.

Wiredu argues that this sense of human connectedness was a sense of what is human – “Ubuntu” – rather than just kinship, for the potential mutual benefits of the wider relationships (Wiredu, 2009, p. 16). They could not be lost on those brought up on kinship reciprocities. This is how African solidarity is concerned with the pursuit of the common good, rather than just individual interests.

Ubuntu solidarity stands in sharp contrast with the so-called solidarist internationalism that permeated the Bandung Conference. The solidarist internationalism is understood as opposed to liberal internationalism. In the words of Weber and Winanti, liberal internationalism refers to a certain outlook on development based upon a capitalist framework, meant to further liberal capitalist market economies (Weber & Winanti, 2016, p. 394). The solidarist internationalism followed in the footsteps of the general idea of the socialist international response to the plight of the impoverished and marginalized. However, under the supremacy of development policies of the 1970s-1980s, even the solidarist internationalism perspective of Bandung could not provide conditions for nation-building in Africa. This is because the idea of developing the newly-independent countries, instead of starting from the pluralism of typically African principles derived from Ubuntu, was geared towards copying the former colonial powers’ model of development only. By that, all African tenets of society building were disqualified, ignored or suppressed, even by Africans themselves.

Internationalism at the conference, whether socialist or capitalist, was bound to clash with the demands of national development, creating, in the process, contra-

ditory logics. In this sense, Bandung was bound to prioritize international policies to the detriment of national urgent needs for development, with no particular incentives for African countries who could not find in such endeavor values in harmony with their own. This led to the fact that the apparently shared political project forged at Bandung ended up lending itself, to some extent, to ambivalence in implementation. After these many years, it can be demonstrated that there were undeniable differences in terms of values; there were non-negligible structural inequalities, all of which would, with time, prove that African nations could not build themselves on the basis of this historic conference.

4. Conclusion

Bandung failed to have a lasting positive impact on Africa. The failure of the Bandung Conference in producing a significant difference for African peoples is due to inherent limitations of global policies at national level on the one hand. On the other hand, it is due to the ineffectiveness of international conferences, in solving real people's problems. It does not matter how much such conferences are praised, especially since with the structure of the United Nations' system and the expansion of the world of Non-Governmental Organizations they are still ineffective, at least for Africa. These two systems, moreover, have proved to be channels of a new model of colonization. It is not even clear that it is a new model of colonization; there is an argument to be made that it is the same one only disguised in new garb.

It is true that, in 1955, nations were allowed to dream of an alternative international order where Africa and Asia could play a decisive role. Africans might have hoped that the changing international order, which saw the arising of Pan-African leaders in the post-war period, could make room for the shaping of new forms of human solidarity between emerging polities. Opportunities to mobilize numbers around anti-colonial sentiments were ripe. However, wasn't there a sign of hypocrisy in touting solidarity at Bandung when the Pan-African movement was not given a presence? Homer Jack, an attendee at the conference, rightly noted that "Africa was very much a junior partner in the Afro-Asia solidarity" (Homer, 1955, p. 45). This puts in context the concept of solidarity proposed at the conference, which is completely different from the solidarity derived from the Ubuntu worldview.

4.1 Limitation of Global Policies

The first conclusion then is that the main limitation of global policy to further nation-building and development in Africa, even as early as 1955, is that it is always foreign to the principles that bind African societies together. Not only is it foreign but it is also built upon a covert, or sometimes open, rejection of those same principles, judging them as primitive. For instance, it is reported that even Gamal Abdel Nasser, at Bandung, had “a patronizing view of Africa. He not only endorsed the imperialist framing of Africa as a dark continent, but also signaled Egypt’s duty of ensuring the spread of enlightenment and civilization to the remotest depths of the jungle” (Vitalis, 2013, p. 275).

4.2 Ineffectiveness of International Conferences

The second conclusion is that the ineffectiveness of international conferences, or their failure for that matter, to birth true nationhood in Sub-Saharan Africa is due to their dependency on global policy and funding, always motivated by foreign interests, mostly irreconcilable with local needs, and, much less, with the principles that shape local African communities. As demonstrated earlier, those principles are an integral part of the peoples’ identities as well as the structure of their polities. No nation building can happen without integrating them in the process as a condition of viability, not only of transitions but also of development into transformed polities. For instance, a conference based on Ubuntu orientations would feature and herald a recovery of African principles of identities. The onus is on Africans themselves to revisit what is meant by Ubuntu orientations and rescue from there the most meaningful idea of nationhood, which is what makes people into a common “we”, ready to live with each other, assuming the natural solidarities that make neighbors support each other. While these kind of solidarities have had religious connotation across civilizations, they are mostly natural. They are determined by the fact of living on the same land and sharing the same history and, by that very fact, also sharing the same destiny. It is such orientations that would be localized to rebuild values that characterize Africa first. While such values would not be imposed on the international level, it would nevertheless give Africans grounding to cement their own positions without being forced to embrace foreign values that are not aligned with true progress for such peoples.

4.3 Solidarity and Hospitality as Ubuntu’s Main Tenets

The third and last conclusion is that the African worldview called Ubuntu, in its foundational values of solidarity and hospitality which build the cohesion of a polity from within, remains the only worldview that can build the elusive nation-

hood that global policies prevent from taking root. This is essential, not because of an unhealthy focus on nationalism, but because it is part of personal and social identity. Unless one knows who they are, they cannot even enter into dialogue with others. The quest for harmonious collaboration between countries cannot happen by destroying or ignoring others' identity and values. As Wiredu puts it, seeing oneself as part of an ordered community whose organizing principle of order is precisely the ethics of the community, those same ethics become criteria of self-identity (Wiredu, 2009, p. 17).

The normative perception of personal and social identity is primordial in moral self-understanding, and it also illustrates how Ubuntu might prove to be a foundation to a social and political philosophy. The project of studying it from such a perspective is worth undertaking. It should start from an empirical point of view towards building a stronger theorization of its principles. The study would trace the foundation of what can be considered civic values of African society, which happen to be so close to what moral philosophers call virtues. Ufuoma Omoyibo considers them as basic African values: peace, charity, temperance, faith, honesty, trust, objectivity, discipline, humility and cooperation, among others (Omoyibo, 2016, p. 14). Is this a reaction to the colonial view that thinks in terms of superiority and inferiority? Most probably. The formation of civic virtues in traditional Africa takes a long time. "It is given to children from a tender age so that these habits can take progressively shape in their behaviour by acquiring attitudes, skills and beliefs that enable a human being to fit into a community" (Omoyibo, 2016, p. 15). The above implications of Ubuntu as a worldview were definitely not represented at the Bandung Conference. They are also absent in many other international conferences. Global endeavors and the policies inspired by them do not create room for such values; this means that the African society should recover them by itself, restore them and create opportunities for others to acknowledge them and the cross-fertilization they could inject into the discourse on self-determination and true development.

One could say, definitely, that the beacons for Africans and their national unity, each in their own way, have not only changed, but in most case have been lost. It is sad to hear in ordinary conversations people say we no longer have the Nkrumahs, the Lumumbas and the Sankaras, to name but a few. The reason why these names still resonate with people, is precisely because they were in themselves those beacons of Ubuntu, but also championed an agenda inspired by such principles. It is as if referents for national unity are no longer to be found in ideas or faiths. They have been replaced by political parties with shallow ideologies, or tenets from globalism, which could be everything *but* drivers of national unity.

Unfortunately, party ideologies brought more divisions, which, coupled with the tribal lines shaped by colonial systems and perpetuated later, undermined the possibility of nationhood very quickly. Moreover, these new tenets actively tended to create group thinking whose uniformity carries more influence than the risk of uniformity posed by Ubuntu thinking, against which Hountondji warned. In fact, it is not certain that Ubuntu could give rise to any uniformity because of its scope that has always included a great diversity of communities and peoples. Globalism's group thinking drowns out critical voices that could arise from Ubuntu's ideas; it even seriously threatens the freedom of speech. Globalism demonstrates that the colonial drama is not over. It keeps finding new and more subtle forms that need to be interrogated with more research.

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#Palaver Platforms

An Ubuntu Initiative for National Unity and Social Media

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Abstract

Social media platforms are not politically neutral tools. For that reason this chapter studies the polarizing influence of social media on national unity in Africa. From the social constructivist perspective it examines the conflictual interactions via social media between social movements, state and tech giants. Their polarization prompts a reflection on the validity of the non-dominating concepts of the African-rooted Ubuntu philosophy. The Ubuntu concept of consensus is presented as an addition to the perspectives of the Beijing consensus, Washington consensus and Bandung consensus. The author argues that Ubuntu philosophical orientations reclaim via social media the communal dimensions of serving cohesion within the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture. In the end, the author argues for Palaver Platforms as the alternative dialogue for social media promoting social cohesion.

Keywords: Ubuntu Philosophy; Palaver Platform; Social Media; State and Tech Giants; Social Movements; Seriti

1. Introduction

John Stuart Mill (1859) assumed that in the political arena of a free society, opinions clash until a consensus is hammered out about what the best proposal is. Using social media in the political debate demonstrates that this idea has reached its sell-by date. Social media are defined here as ‘interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify user-generated content’ (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Social media platforms are not politically neutral

tools (Wasserman, 2011); they benefit from polarisation instead of consensus. Social media are instruments for political expression (Dwyer & Moloney, 2019), but, like all forms of hegemony (political, economic, technological, and cultural), social media serves especially those actors already in power, such as states and tech giants, to cement their dominant position. The term *tech giants* refers to dominant, privately owned technology companies which, in addition, have a close connection with their homelands. Examples of such alliances are Google/Apple/Facebook and the USA; Tencent/Huawei and China; Samsung and South Korea; Safaricom/M-Pesa and Kenya; Kaspersky and Russia. The presentation of social media can be compared metaphorically to the double-faced head of Janus. One side presents the face of the state and market, whilst the other side shows the connection of social media with social movements.

African states (including the military and secret intelligence services) and tech giants establish their dominance through the power of shutdown and/or surveillance (Kavanagh, 2017). This means that social media, as a representation of hegemony, hands power to those who control it. Social media then serves as an oppressing technology, a mechanism for strengthening existing state structures, discourses and policies. But in its duplicity, social media also supports social movements, with the ability to mobilise the masses in their demand for systemic change. In its form of *hashtag politics* (Davis, 2013) social media can be marked as a liberating technology (Diamond, 2010), a channel for the marginalised to speak out and challenge societies' order. From this backdrop the social movement of *hashtag activists*, mostly students, of *#EverythingMustFall* were calling in 2015 for a renaissance in South African academia, society, economics and politics. Social movements can be understood as groups of repressed and marginalised people raising their voices in the face of powerful political forces within society. In Africa, social media empowers social movements to mobilise students, professionals, trade unionists, unemployed youth, etc.

The polarization, via social media, between state and tech giants versus social movements in Africa prompts us to reflect on the validity of Ubuntu, philosophical non-dominating concepts of unity and consensus in this digital domain. Now that the political debate is polarizing exponentially online, it is important to research the effect social media exerts on the unity within African states. From this background my chapter addresses the question: what is the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy for national unity through social media?

2. Conceptual Framework

Technology experts will associate Ubuntu with Linux's clunkingly mechanistic operating system. Philosophers however know this African way of thinking through its vitalistic adagio: *a person is a person through other people*. From a philosophical reflection on the contemporary context of social media, a vision evolves for Palaver Platforms as the alternative dialogue for social media and internet. Inspired by the series of Bandung Commemorate Conferences, the text will pursue references for social media between Ubuntu philosophy and Beijing, Washington and Bandung Consensus. The rationale is the Ubuntu argument for a holistic human faced perspective (Du Toit, 2005a), which merges dichotomies such as the individual and community, the state and social movements, leaders and followers, and technology and humanity. Notions which, from an Ubuntu holistic viewpoint, are complementary.

The perspectives for this paper will derive from philosophy, technology and political sciences. There is in this paper no support for the opinion to separate out Ubuntu philosophy from politics in order to assure a pure philosophy free from ideology (Matolino, 2019). The core of politics is the notion of justice and fairness, and philosophical Ubuntu principles on community, justice, consensus and conflict contribute to the political debate between citizens. And, furthermore, it is good to realise that even if philosophies (or politics) are exercised in pure, perfect ways we, in our imperfection, cannot experience and accept it. We will never experience philosophies in a pure and perfect way, simply because we are human...

Next to these considerations, the structure of this paper is influenced by the social constructivist principals such as that a nation doesn't exist in the absence of human society (Foucault, 1970). The messages from actors (state, tech giants and hashtag activists) on social media express and constitute social practice. In accordance with their performative character, social media significantly influence the shape, volume and content of language which is the key instrument for interactions between people. Social media discourses use emoticons to replace words, tweets are limited to a maximum 280 characters which leaves little room for nuance and, as we can see, hashtags ring out as clear as a bell. The *hashtags* of the South African social movements reveal their ambitions clearly: #FeesMustFall, #Racism-MustFall, #ColonialismMustFall, #SexismMustFall, #PatriarchyMustFall, #CapitalismMustFall and, ultimately, #EverythingMustFall.

Via social media, tech giants and states are mining personal data; a technological process with the singular interest of categorizing and calibrating algorithms. The proprietorships and their presentation of news on media has always

been important. However, particularly at a time in which theories (such as Actor-network Theory, or ANT) look upon humanity and technology as equal actors, it has become increasingly significant to make an analysis of the technological discourse on programming language, the technical processes that power platforms, their data mining and the ways in which people are categorized and pigeonholed.

In turn, the activists behind the protest hashtags have a more ideological component. They aim to transform the African academic, social, economic and political system. They are in conflict with the hegemony of state and tech giants and the dominant ideology within academia, society, economics and politics. Therefore, the study of the relevance of Ubuntu philosophy for national unity on social media needs to focus on the ideology of power and the process of social change (Ellul, 1964).

3. The Ideology of Power

The analysis of the ideology of power will be executed per section as follows:

- 3.1 *Technology and Hegemony* summarises the visions of science philosopher Bruno Latour, which address the role of technology as an actor in the process of social and political change. There is additional focus on social media as an actor for creating power by how it is used, by whom and in what context.
- 3.2 As social media moves between global and local contexts, section 3.2 *Africa's neo-liberal context* uses the visions of both sympathisers and sceptics to consider the effects of economic globalisation on Africa (via the domains of technology, politics and culture).
- 3.3 *The Beijing, Washington and Bandung Consensus* section will introduce non-African interpretations of consensus.

3.1 Technology and Hegemony

Our continuation of life on this planet will depend on the manner in which people use and think about technology on a global scale. A major barrier is the lack of good governance (Leonhard, 2016). The effects of technology on humans prompt us to reflect on its concepts from a multi-philosophical framework. This necessarily implies a major change in the approach to prevailing philosophical orientations on technology. In other words, the Western-oriented interpretive framework needs to abandon its assumptions of universalism and allow space to other philosophical perspectives if we are to understand and realise a reflection of technology

that deconstructs the trend towards new forms of Western hegemony. The way technology, including social media, is investigated from the perspective of Ubuntu philosophy, outlines the possibilities to live in a technological world without losing the human values needed for social cohesion and national unity.

The dominating theories in an approach to technology are firmly rooted in the West. The human spirit is often considered as the software of the mind (Hofstede, 2011). Philosophy of science purports that political leaders, thinkers and users are responsible for the technology they choose and its impact on society. Leading philosopher of science Bruno Latour (2005) views the relationships and the interactions between people and technology as an actor network (ANT); networks of human and technological actors influence each other within society. These actors participate as equals in a dynamic collaboration and are only awarded meaning by relating and interacting with each other. By being equal, the actors transcend dichotomies such as: man–technology, subject–object, society–the individual, culture–nature, vitalism–mechanism, etc. The actors' positions *can* vary in power within the relations and actions, but as the actors participate in the actor network, all actors are essentially equal. This 'equality thinking' necessarily implies a major change in the approach of humanity and technology.

Latour's philosophy of science's approach to technology is linked to social-constructivism, which sees social reality as the outcome of a conflict between actors endeavoring to impart meaning to reality. At a societal level, technology is not a neutral actor, as it is embedded in social and moral networks. As a fully-fledged part of society, technology is an actor which stimulates power. A value-free and power-free use of technology is an illusion. Like all forms of hegemony (political, economic, corporate, religious, cultural), technology is used particularly by those actors already in power (states, multi-nationals, religious institutions) to cement their power position.

Technology is both an actor and a factor in the process of social and political change. If there is a crisis situation within a society, both individuals and groups develop plans to maintain or reach the position of power. Technology plays a key role in the strategies for creating and/or maintaining power. The implementation of a successful strategy benefits from embarking on a new way of taking action, such as the use of social media by both the state and tech giants and social movements.

Frantz Fanon had already warned in the twentieth century of the negative and destructive influence of communication technology. Fanon (1967, p. 92) recognized early the manipulative strategy in which media, in this case radio, served the colonial state interests by affecting people's lives, communities and discourses in societies. More than fifty years on from Fanon, a new state power is crystallizing

due to the growing influence of technology and neo-liberalism, namely the merger of states and tech giants. Neo-liberalism represents the global trend towards an increase in the influence of commercial companies on society, at the expense of labour unions and social movements, through privatization of state-owned enterprises. The union of states and tech giants threatens the privacy and personal data of social media users. Through social media, both state and the market tighten their grip on society. African states use surveillance technologies via social media to observe and monitor political opposition, activists, etc. (Kavanagh, 2017). The tech giants benefit commercially from society's growing polarization and help expand this by prominently displaying extreme messages, meanwhile marginalizing the more moderate messaging in the process. Via the Internet of Things, Africans are surrounded, monitored and controlled by devices from tech giants, mostly non-African, that interact with them, with each other, and with third parties including both state and corporate entities (Korff, 2019, p. 129).

Terms such as digital colonialism, data colonialism and techno-colonialism (Madianou, 2019) describe how this combining of digital developments and tech giants revives and recalibrates colonial capitalist relationships of dependency. African states depend on Asian and Western technology companies in exchange for citizens' data and access to African markets (Kavanagh, 2017). At the same time government leaders have their fingers on the buttons which allow them to switch social media (and by doing so social cohesion) on or off. These state interventions are demonstrated by the sixteen-month ban of social media in Chad, or taxing the use of social media in Uganda. For their part, tech giants such as Facebook and Google harvest personal data to be mined as the raw material that keeps the social media boiler commercially stoked. This is surveillance capitalism (Zuboff, 2019) *pur sang*: the process of mining mass personal data like a resource by companies, with the explicit aim of influencing consumers' behaviour and mindsets for commercial or political ends. An example of the latter was Cambridge Analytica's trawling of Facebook accounts for election campaigns.

African social movements confront this dominance of state and tech giants (Prempeh, 2006). Throughout African history, social movements have been dedicated to values such as community welfare and solidarity, and have excluded colonial and neoliberal doctrines. What typifies the current social movements is the way they work in urban Africa via social media. Social media is a game-changer in view of political practices aimed at creating and maintaining power. It brings social change. Political activists reinforce their position by enhancing their visibility and mobilizing support in the political arena via the technology of social media. Social media is, in this domain, defined as interactive platforms through

which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss and modify political content (Kietzmann et al., 2011). A generation of young Africans (Smith, 2019) in particular are utilizing social media to construct political fellowship, with the aim of increasing solidarity and to establish social movements.

Notwithstanding the oppression of social movements, social media nevertheless offers technological benefits for the relation between state and citizens. For instance, in response to complaints from citizens regarding public services expressed on social media platforms, the Kenyan government intervened with useful actions to meet the citizens' demands (Lodge, 2013). Social media can also improve the communications between voters and their political representatives, create new conduits for political participation and provide new mechanisms of responsibility (Dodsworth & Cheeseman, 2019).

One may conclude that the prospective impact of social media on national unity is likewise met with scepticism and fear, due to the risk of it being used by the state to control citizens. Whilst simultaneously playing a key role in the social movements of activists, social media serves the state (including army and secret service) in controlling and manipulating people in their role as citizens and the market in controlling and manipulating people in their role as customers. At this point in time, social media possesses the capacity to connect people. However we should not neglect to touch on the inherent risks of social media offering tools for a neo-liberal hegemony by state and market.

3.2 Africa's Neo-Liberal Context

The African continent is home to a huge diversity of cultures and the contexts of nations vary widely. However, Africa can be considered one entity with respect to the omnipresence of neo-liberalism and globalization, which prompts us to reflect on how Africans' lives are influenced by states and tech giants. Underpinning the free market is an economic globalization supported by technology, politics and culture (Heins, 1999). Within the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture, the visions of sympathizers and sceptics about the role of social media diverge.

Economy

In view of the economy, sympathizers express a shifting discourse about Africa, in which successes are evident and possibilities recognized. Leading consulting firms (McKinsey, 2016; Ernst & Young, 2017) propose Africa as the second fastest growing region of the world, with a transformation to knowledge-based economies powered by technology. Sceptics welcome this news, but although African

states do regionally integrate via economic communities (Ecowas, Eccas, AEC, etc.), mining for the components used in the production of mediums for social media, such as computers, smartphones, etc., is still the largest contributor to an economic growth which benefits only the few. Despite a slightly increasing middle class, the majority of the population still lives in poverty. Therefore a significant number of African adults, 33% according to a 2018 Gallup World Poll, prefer to migrate permanently. The frustrations with misgovernment, corruption and unemployment are a threat for national unity and the main drivers for the desire to leave. A divided population of remainers and leavers-to-be also affects social cohesion.

Technology

In the field of technology, sympathizers point to the rise of social media in Africa. Social media reduces the entry barriers for firms onto the global market. Neo-liberal sympathizers welcome the innovative icon of African technology: Safaricom's M-Pesa (M stands for mobile and Pesa means money in Swahili). First established in 2007, this Kenyan bank is now the most successful mobile payment system in the world and operates in Africa, Asia and Europe. Mobile phones are also seen as the new talking drums (De Bruijn et al., 2009), helping people to connect across the continent and with Africans of the diaspora. However, sceptics would argue that access to the global market for African companies is proactively hindered by Western trade blocks, despite social media. In addition, there is a real gap between users and non-users of such facilities as the internet, e-banking, etc. The internet was used by 43% of Africans in 2021 (www.internetworldstats.com). The infrastructure for further digital development is weak. States also routinely block social media use, which interrupts both local and global integration. Data from the journalism website Quartz states that in the past four years half of African countries have experienced social media blockades. Internet blockages have a negative economic impact. Businesses operating through e-commerce have lost thousands of hours, leading to the loss of billions of dollars. In 2019 alone, internet and social media shutdowns are estimated to have cost the continent more than two billion euros (Ngila, 2022).

Politics

Social media supports social movements from Algiers to Cape Town (Smith, 2019), a development benefiting both democratic change and a new political dynamic. People use social media as a political channel. Listen for instance to the speeches of Plo Lumumba on YouTube, in which he pleads for a so-called *sanitization of Africa's politics*. Sceptics point to anti-democratic state control via social media,

which is increasing beyond accountability. Human rights are challenged as states use surveillance technologies to monitor and spy on political opponents. Social media is presented as a liberating technology; however, it can also just as easily serve as a tool of oppression in a bid to bolster existing power positions rather than challenge them.

Culture

Regarding culture, sympathizers often speak about ‘the African century’. Social media offers *Afropolitans*, African citizens of the world, a global platform for the successful promotion of African movies, fashion, music, dance and literature. Meanwhile, the sceptics point out that *Afropolitans* are made up of only a tiny fraction of young artists and tend to monopolize all the attention. Africa’s image in the world is determined more by conflict and poverty than by culture.

From the visions presented on social media by both sceptics and sympathizers we can conclude that the lives of Africans (just like that of Asians, Europeans, etc.) move between two opposing forces: global and local integration. There is a gravitational pull towards the direction of the universal free market, whilst simultaneously there is the draw of a return to an African context of particularism. A worldwide liberal unity can be observed emerging in the fields of economy, technology, politics and culture. At the same time, however, renewed group formations have emerged in these same fields, in which African local orientation is key to identity. These forces cause tension.

The tension between global and local integration directly influences how African states are governed. Most African states have a dual system of governance, with the traditional ways of governance and decision-making exercised in parallel to Western-style democracy. This twin track approach raises tensions between the roles of democratic governments. The one, serving as a reliable business partner in a capitalist world system based on Western orientations, versus the other, serving as a good steward for African national unities based on African orientations (Lauer, 2007, p. 300).

For further insight on the global neo-liberal case in relation to Africa, I will focus on the 2019 World Economic Forum in Cape Town and the concepts of the Beijing, Washington and Bandung Consensus which, like the Cold War did at the time, affect political processes.

3.3 The Beijing, Washington and Bandung Consensus

During the 2019 Cape Town gathering, African political leaders discussed their continent's future in general and the prospects for younger citizens in particular. The African heads of state all confirmed that much needs to be done to improve, especially, the economic position and prospects of Africa's uniquely young population. The continent has 200 million young people aged between 15 and 24.

In their quest to create jobs, African leaders are also receiving a helping hand from China. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summits, held every three years, make plain the scale of Chinese investment in African economies. As part of Chinese policy, under the names of *New Silk Road* and the *Belt and Road Initiative*, in 2018 Beijing provided \$60 billion of aid and loans, in the form of financial and intellectual capital, technology and logistics (Brautigam, 2018). The West looks upon these developments with a jaundiced eye. Most experts in international relations (Arungo, 2016) find Western governments hypocritical in openly disapproving China's foreign policy in Africa as economically neo-colonial and inconsistent with good governance, sustainability and human rights. The policy of the US Department of State in Saudi Arabia is, for instance, selective and unconcerned about human rights. And while president Macron promotes the philosophical roots of the Enlightenment for the French diplomatic corps (see Macron, 2019), the French policy in Africa is not exactly known for liberty, fraternity and equality.

The debates surrounding the Sino-Africa relationship concern the choice between the so-called *Beijing Consensus* and the *Washington Consensus*. In essence the *Beijing Consensus* stands for state capitalism and national unity through a one-party political system, while the *Washington Consensus* supports free markets and democracy. The *Washington Consensus* is characterized by a doctrine of policies to be adopted by African nations, such as opening up their markets and privatizing public services (Galchu, 2018). The *Beijing Consensus* avoids these unilaterally formulated policy reforms. Unlike the *Washington Consensus* dictating universalism, China stresses African nations should run their own affairs, policies and institutions in accordance to local orientations.

In the relationships of African governments with East and West it is also '*le ton qui fait la musique*'. China encourages influence with soft power in contrast to the West's hard power style. And China's presence is visibly on the rise. For example, government-funded Confucius Institutes are appearing at African universities, teaching Chinese cultural and philosophical orientations.

The *Bandung Consensus*, as it was promoted in the 1965 Bandung Conference, represents principles of respect for human rights, justice, cooperation, integrity of nations, equality of all races, refraining of serving the interests of big powers. But

the Chinese money streams cannot be perceived as a form of Asian-African solidarity inspired by *Bandung*. The consensus does mark a meaningful connection between Asia and Africa, aimed at improving collaboration and offering a bulwark against colonialism. But then again the Bandung Conference never brought about a revolution in thinking about international relations in general, or Asian-African relations in particular. The Bandung Consensus has been overtaken by the geo-economic and political reality of a Chinese hegemony.

In their navigating across global influences, the question is what African leaders and activists do, in their societies polarized by social media, to support national unity whilst maintaining respect for African values. For this we turn to the voice of the social movements on social media and their call for social change.

4. The Process of Social Change

The process of social change will be pointed out as follows:

- 4.1 *#MustFall Movements*, this paragraph reveals the social movement's demands for academic, social, political and economic change in South Africa.
- 4.2 *Africa's Ubuntu context* follows an African philosophical view on the economy, technology, politics and culture.
- 4.3 *#Palaver Platforms and Bandung*, this part presents the opportunity of a space on social media, a platform for public discussions moderated by philosophers, possibly from Africa and Asia. A key term is *Seriti*, a concept which stands for vital communication.

4.1 #MustFall Movements

Calls via social media have resulted in riots of mass street protests in recent years, from Algiers to Cape Town, by those striving for a fairer society (Smith, 2019). If there had been no Covid-19, such protests would certainly have continued into 2022. The relationship between state and social movements, fundamental to national unity, is in deep crisis and both parties are rapidly developing strategies to realise a new political condition. Social media platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, MeWe, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Tinder, Twitter, etc.) are readily available to both the social movements and the state as tools for attempting to influence the power relationship with the other party, for example by mobilising people or closing down the internet.

Social movements can be understood as groups of repressed and marginalized people raising their voices to powerful political forces within society. Social

media empowers social movements, people championing a cause of the repressed and marginalized, such as African students, professionals, trade unionists, unemployed youth who are demonstrating against state governments, financial institutions, universities, etc. The protests are against corruption, high tuition fees, higher fuel prices, and include demands for better salaries, employment or education. Davis (2013) speaks about *hashtag politics*, indicating the role of social media as a political power to define the agenda for national debates. What fuels the *hashtag activism* is the absence of political or economic prospects for the common citizen. *Hashtag politics* are not intended to simply manage the interests of a limited group of people or a specific profession, but rather are hinged on changing the entire society.

The transcending theme (Branch & Mampilly, 2015) is a demand for democratic and economic change, driven by political grievances (e.g., social justice, human rights) of a mostly small middle class and material grievances by mostly a very large underclass of young poor (Mueller, 2018). The grievances, especially political, were for instance illustrated in the 2015-2016 protests by South African students, which the government suppressed by force. The nationwide protests started in reaction to the raising of tuition fees, but morphed into an attempt to correct historical misconceptions with the call for decolonized education and institutes. The students' hashtag #FeesMustFall was quickly followed by #RacismMustFall, #ColonialismMustFall, #SexismMustFall, #PatriarchyMustFall, #CapitalismMustFall and, ultimately, #EverythingMustFall. The hashtags communicated despair and the deconstruction of the trends based on all forms of hegemony.

Important topics for the so called #MustFall movements are Africanisation and decolonization. Africanisation of academia translates as more African PhD students and lecturers, the integration of African perspectives into the curricula and research methods, as well as the visible presence of South African role models through statues and images of Wangari Maathai or Steve Biko in place of the likes of Cecil Rhodes. There is no signal or message from African students about the growing number of buildings of the Confucius Institutes on their campuses. But there is unease in the unions because of the practices of Chinese companies, which consists of bringing their own labour instead of employing local people.

In South Africa the activism connected with the #MustFall movements has led to a power struggle with the authorities governing the state and universities. The dependency on social media makes the social movements vulnerable to state interference and intervention. But despite interventions, discontent is still latent and students, as well as other groups, continue to try to make their voices heard on campus and on the streets. The #MustFall movements have an idealistic inten-

tion, focusing on transforming universities and society, whilst challenging the hegemony within these originating from neo-colonial structures and orientations. The students are united around the removal of all unjust mechanisms nationwide such as capitalism, racism and colonialism; they are united around the restructuring of society in a bid to reflect African values (Booyesen, 2016, p. 328).

The activists come together against a national unity dominated by the political and economic models of state – and market capitalism, against both the *Beijing Consensus* and the *Washington Consensus*. Ubuntu stands in the rich tradition of African humanism and socialism, the philosophy is connected with ethical principles such as Ujamaa (Cornell, 2014, p. 150). The #MustFall movements desire an Africanisation of society and community, a dialogue of encounter based on African values. The urgent call for Africanisation is a “reminder of the need to revisit with considered attention what Nkrumah began in terms of the need to move knowledge production in Africa out of the colonial shadow and its attendant ideologies. Nkrumah was unequivocal about the need to recenter Africa” (Mungwini, 2022, p. 137). As a consequence, there is an imperative for African philosophy to deconstruct new concepts of colonialism or paternalism and to emphasize the African philosophical orientations on social media in the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture.

4.2 Africa’s Ubuntu Context

While section 3.2 explained the neo-liberal influence on African economy, technology, politics and culture, section 4.2 examines the Ubuntu perspective on these domains. According to the *Washington Consensus* and the *Beijing Consensus*, the foundations of a society are formed by, respectively, the free market or the state. A feature of Ubuntu in relation to national unity is the advocacy for consensus. The position of the majority is not pushed through, but one includes the opinion of the minority in the decision-making process. One takes into account the views of all participants (Dokman, 2013). Leadership naturally has the right to make quick decisions, but there should be agreement on important issues and strategies. Consensus is promoted through Palaver, a term meaning conference or gathering. The palaver model can be used within families, communities or organizations. In the local perspective of Ubuntu, community forms the basic condition for society, a foundation to which both state and market are subservient. Africans experience their lives from the perspective of being in relationships. A central notion at Ubuntu is the solidarity in the relationship between the individual and the community (Shutte, 1993). There is the notion that all people are connected to each other. The well-being of the community depends on cohesion (Mnyandu, 1997). Through

the Ubuntu philosophical orientations, the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture reclaim their communal dimensions of serving cohesion via social media.

Economy

The Ubuntu economic concept has as its key principle the inclusion of all people (Kasonga wa Kasonga, 2005), in contrast to the neoliberal view with its dichotomy of centre and margin. Where the included and excluded are labelled accordingly as economic winners or losers. Ubuntu corrects the indifference to those apparently less successful. An important principle of Ubuntu philosophy is the equal economic participation of all members of the community (Mbigi & Maree, 2005). The meaning of Ubuntu is to restore and enhance all forms of economic well-being of current and future generations, without categories such as privilege and under-privilege. Rightly or not, enterprises refer to Ubuntu for their projects such as the Ubuntu Tribe from Ivory Coast, which aims to boost financial inclusion of all by offering digital tools. Or the company Ubuntu, which has changed from a profit machine to a sponsor of projects. Their sale of life bags, shoes and accessories is funding health programs.

Technology

In the connection between the community and technology, sharing knowledge is the key issue according to Ubuntu philosophy. In traditional African societies technology was already a part of the knowledge system, as manifested in domains such as agriculture and medicine (Du Toit, 2005b). Man-made technology belonged to the community. With their knowledge, which also includes the digital part, the creators of technology nowadays help the community to move forward.

The current dominant narrative claims that a monopoly of governments, the military and multinationals have made the internet and social media possible. It is, however, the community-based organisations and social movements who have established internet and social media. They caused the initial growth of the digital social networks, for instance by sharing their knowledge with the global community via free software. These organisations and movements played a pioneering role in the increased influence of the internet and social media with the intention of generating social change (Rohlinger & Earl, 2012; Milan, 2013, pp. 46-47).

Politics

From an Ubuntu perspective, state and market are essential for society, but more important is the community. Due to its emphasis on surveillance and data-mining,

the integration of state and tech giants does not particularly benefit the community. They increase activities that take place away from the view of the community's representatives. The conflicting aims of state and tech giants versus social movements obstruct social cohesion, just as the lack of transparency hinders national unity. These hampers stimulate a reflection on social media through the Ubuntu concept of Palaver. Palaver is a traditional African decision making process based on dialogue with a place for consensus and dissensus. Rather than the Western democratic compromise (Bueya, 2017) Palaver contains a discourse of traditional ethical orientations (Gichure, 2006, pp. 43-50). It contributes to the moral awareness within politics, by pointing out participants' responsibility to the community. Social media has the potential to serve the national unity and community participation via Palaver Platforms (see section 4.3).

Culture

Google and Facebook are increasingly criticized for their platforms censoring African cultural expressions and that the tech giants' policy strives to homogenize lifestyles with regard to culture. Africans, including Afropolitans, may consider constructing *Palaver Platforms* to stimulate discussion about the Africanisation of social media, to share thoughts about the dominating role of tech giants, to debate the ethics of online technology, etc. The insights of Ubuntu support the movement for a more African and more human face of technology and social media. With the assistance of social media, the interest in Ubuntu has grown already beyond the cultural boundaries. From a geographical and historical point of view, Ubuntu philosophy has expanded to a global community. Ubuntu is rooted in the African cultures but also inspiring people from all over the world, beyond a fixed time and space. Consequently, a challenge to Ubuntu as a philosophy is the understanding of the transformations of its principles and what they mean for a global community (Binsbergen, 2001).

4.3 #Palaver Platforms: Ubuntu and Bandung

As we have seen Ubuntu aims, from a counterview, to promote humanity and community values via social media in the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture. As a possible bridge between strong opinions Palaver offers a contemporary framework, based on an older community model for dialogue without dominance because of the respect for all positions of all stakeholders. This principle gives participants, in essence, the space to express their needs and parties are called to account. Palaver provides then an efficient instrument for reaching common ground. Contact between participants is based on human dignity. The

model offers the opportunity for solving conflict, whilst at the same time reinforcing community harmony (Bujo, 1998). Ubuntu advocates community-based solidarity, expresses empathy with the weaker participants and communicates the consensus to be reached via Palaver. Who could be against this process of Palaver?

Well, youngsters and women, for example. The mantra of 'neo-liberalism is the problem, Ubuntu the solution' is clear and convenient, but not entirely complete when bearing in mind social constructivism. For example, within a Palaver, (older) men traditionally assume a prominent social position. However patriarchal Palaver is, the role of women and young people is different; their views are not rejected but a council of men has the final say (Bujo, 2001; Dokman, 2013). This manner is totally different from the western and feminist understanding. Prolonged deliberation or 'palaver' is aimed at reaching consensus in such a way that everyone's interests are named. This is in contrast to the Western meeting technique in which the primacy of reason prevails to such an extent that the interest of consensus prevails over the interest of persuasion.

But presented as traditional harmony and togetherness, Palaver is a 'good-keeper' for the marginalised (Hountondji, 1996). In this way Palaver is an invention that rejects the final decision-making by women and youngsters. Traditional Palaver excludes their final say and thereby stagnates the process of expressing dissensus in contrast to consensus. This misconception of Palaver limits free expression and diversity of thinking, as promoted by social movements and their channels on social media. Hashtag channels like #PatriarchyMustFall and #SexismMustFall are clear protests from social movements against male dominance and the concept of simulated, fake harmony. The Ubuntu-oriented interpretive framework of Palaver, therefore, needs to abandon its paternalism and allow space for other orientations, such as matriarchy, if Ubuntu philosophy is to be realised in its true sense of serving all citizens and the national unity.

A hereby-suggested new style of Palaver should provide a space for public discussion and helps resolve broken social bonds and support the stability of post-colonial African states (Bueya, 2017, pp. 104-105). Palaver can be a form of African participative power which is valuable for community life. For social movements, it can be an instrument to institutionalise their opposition. Palaver is required to find a possible pathway forward through the impasse that exists between state and social movements. It is good to realise however that, if we are to understand and realise Palaver as a humanistic and dynamic concept, it is, like all human other conceptions, imperfect. And even if Palaver was perfect, we in our imperfectness would not be equipped to receive it. A good example is the Palaver model as South Africa's foundation for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As a

model for national unity, the re-establishment of the sense of humanity did not heal all wounds and misconceptions.

But then again, the element which transcends Palaver from other models of dialogue is *seriti*. Seriti means being true to yourself, showing integrity. At the heart of Ubuntu philosophy lies the principle that we are all human beings connected through seriti and participate as equals in the vital force. Only humans are connected via seriti (Setiloane, 1986). It unites humans in their personal interactions with others. There is a flow of seriti when people connect with each other. Vital communication only takes place when participants are physically present; only the physical attendance of the participants contains the exchange of seriti within Palaver. Seriti is the unifying vital force in all human relationships and interactions, from political to communal (Shutte, 1993).

Ubuntu contains the vitalistic concept of seriti as a base for humane interconnectedness and is critical of the mechanistic views of social media. Influenced by technology, the human subject in social media is marginalised. Therefore, a social media with a more human dignity is required, even if this lacks the flow of seriti from a physical encounter. One rationale of this is the holistic perspective of Ubuntu philosophy, which merges dichotomies such as the individual and community, the state and social movements, leaders and followers, technology and humanity. From an Ubuntu viewpoint, these notions are not opposite but complementary.

A social media application of Palaver, a Palaver Platform, provides a fruitful opening for blocked social dialogues worldwide between international institutions such as the AU and African citizens, between tech companies and activists, between academics, etc.

In this recommended form, Palaver Platforms are intended to change human misunderstandings and to process insights. The platforms can provide an international digital stage to debate the implications of social media and ways of governance, as well as various perspectives on realities. This includes the willingness to deconstruct African, Eastern, Southern and Western certainties, whilst constructing new insights.

From the social constructivism perspective Ubuntu orientations are politically influenced too and are used by actors (states, tech giants and social movements) to strengthen their power position. There is the tactic of manipulating the public debates via social media around Ubuntu. For instance, the leading political parties dominate discussions on social media in an effort to push society towards a homogenized ideology. In Burundi and South Africa, catchphrases such as Batho Pele (people first) are promoted via social media and Ubuntu orientations

are included in political practices. The aim is to narrow freedom of expression by creating a comfort zone of consensus without discussion (Matolino & Kwindingwi, 2013; Falisse & Nkengurutse, 2019). This manipulation of Ubuntu emphasizes a static uniform thinking in support of political and economic interests. Meanwhile, within the context of Ubuntu there can't be consensus without discussion; that is what the concept of Palaver is about.

This limiting of freedom of expression is a contradiction to an Ubuntu philosophy that brings people together in the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture. Both traditional Palavers and Palaver Platforms are intended to help build 'speech-communities' with an ongoing continuous communication of meanings. In this dynamic, the platforms highlight an international cooperation between people from all orientations. From a holistic point of view, one could say, all participants of Palaver Platforms contribute to the interconnectedness of humans.

Conclusion

This chapter has studied the question: what relevance does Ubuntu philosophy have for national unity on social media? The analysis has focused on the ideology of power and the process of social change.

African national unities are confronted with an impasse between states and citizens. The weave of state and tech giants is determined by a power factor, in which these actors pursue strategies preventing free speech via shutdowns of internet and implement datamining. Social movements are mobilizing and informing the people to retain or achieve power. The South African #Everything-MustFall have raised demands on political leaders to speak with underrepresented citizens. These requests have been accompanied by calls for decolonizing. The overarching conviction of the hashtag activists is that African orientations are hindered by excessive forms of capitalism, techno-colonialism and globalization, based on neo-liberal power structures. There is a plea for transformation, based on Africanisation which places community at its core. African governments find themselves meanwhile in a dilemma. One, being trustworthy in a capitalist world system based on Western and growing Asian orientations; another, respecting the orientations of their African constituency. A concern that African activists recognize in their own way. They reject the universal claim of Western values and interpret democracy, diversity and freedom via Africanisation.

Ubuntu is confined to philosophical and material aspects as Africans value communal life as well as material wellbeing. Contrary to the Beijing and Washington

Consensus, Ubuntu as an expression of African socialism alters the concepts of economy, technology, politics and cultures. Ubuntu philosophical principles are not intended to present unilateral African values. It does mean 'taking a risk', especially by the privileged African heads of state, for a reciprocal equal exchange. However, African politics could possibly benefit from a type of meeting which is not over-influenced by capitalism and power play. To promote unity in society in general and on social media in particular, both government and social movements would need to take steps towards a dialogue of encounter and consensus based on Palaver.

But the practices of traditional Palaver are debatable and Ubuntu is used by those in power to promote a uniform, homogeneous ideology rather than a lively discussion to reach consensus. Therefore, this paper provides a new possibility. The creation of a Palaver Platform as a forum could motivate parties who are vital for social cohesion, such as politicians, representatives of tech giants and activists, to participate around the table and physically meet in the spirit of seriti. Seriti asks for a willingness to passionately argue out political conflicts, based on contemporary orientations of Palaver such as openness and equality. The outcome of such a process of Palaver Platforms may not be perfect, but it could be as good as it gets in a complex political context.

Just like a Palaver Platform, other social media platforms similar to the #Palaver Platforms depend on their content and on who manages them. The questions around platforms are marked by a mechanistic tone. Who produces the template and the platforms' programming language? Who distributes the contents to whom? Based on which orientations, mechanistic or human (Leonhard, 2016), do algorithms select categories of participants? This paper advocates the importance of addressing these issues. From the Ubuntu Palaver perspective, there will be no national unity if states and tech giants ignore the involvement of Africans and their orientations in economy, politics, culture and technology. The practices of Palaver Platforms will guarantee their status as beacons of free speech:

- Participants' data will not be passed on to state and tech giants. Users' IP addresses are protected.
- The state does not restrict online media platforms.
- No recommendation algorithms or advertisements are allowed.
- The servers are supervised by moderators of social movements.
- The moderators are responsible for ethical expression of views.
- The platform should be transparent about the content of messages.

Inspired by the Bandung Conference of 1955 Palaver Platforms could be positioned with moderators from Bandung countries' universities. An African-Asian cooperation on social media implies an appreciative approach to one another's orientations. And from this benevolence toward each other's points of view, Asian and African politicians and activists can interact and overcome local tensions. As such Palaver Platforms would refresh the spirit and principles of *Bandung Consensus*.

Particularly now that dominant Western theories, such as actor-network theory (ANT), place man and technology on an identical footing, an alternative humanist concept is required to answer questions on the relationship between people and social media. A communicative consequence of the assimilation of humans and technology is the integration of human discourse and technological programming language (algorithms) on social media. A more humane Ubuntu counternarrative is wanted opposite the entirely capitalist and technocratic forms of social media. A narrative in which categorization of personal data is limited, where citizens can have a say in the applications of social media by state and tech giants. Increasingly, social media is shaping our social practices as well as our communications. Currently the polarization and exclusion of people and opinions are a threat for national unity. Palaver Platforms do provide a tool for communal dialogue and for social cohesion.

The suggested creation of Palaver Platforms means opening up space for communicating with fellow-humans and exchanging the various meanings. It is about maintaining human relations, which extend beyond the borders of your own orientation. It means sustaining relations with diverse people. Palaver Platforms need to stand up for dialogue, particularly against the threat of polarization, corruption and neo-colonialism. *This* is the contribution Ubuntu has to offer for national unity via Palaver Platforms on social media.

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Epilogue

A National Unity of Citizens, Believers and Dissenters

FRANS DOKMAN AND ANTOINETTE KANKINDI

The 1955 Bandung Conference seems an almost forgotten conference, a relic of the past. But in the context of globalization and the resurgence of religions, the conference marks the increasing relevance of the choice at the time for a secular or religious philosophy of national unity. A nation can be defined as a community of people with binding factors such as language or culture – though there are communities that do not have these characteristics and still form a nation, such as Switzerland, for example. More decisive is the moral circle that reflects what a national community shares. What is shared are symbols, heroes, rituals and values. With these, the moral circle expresses a national identity. Philosophy, spirituality and religion are of great significance and at the core of creating the values of moral circles (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, pp. 27-29). Much is required of a philosophy of national unity. It should connect and inspire citizens via shared ideals, provide a basis for equal citizenship, construct a national history and national identity, being the foundation for laws and institutions etc. Thomas Ndaluka's paper, *Recycling Ujamaa Philosophy in Tanzania*, examines, via Critical Discourse Analysis, the speeches Tanzania's late president Magufuli made. He emphasized Tanzania's national unity as a socialist and secular state by reconnecting, through both intertextual and interdiscursive means, to Nyerere's inspiring Ujamaa charter. Maintaining a communal stimulus, a moral circle, can be a challenge. From a teleological perspective, Olerato Kau Mogotsi addresses the struggle to follow the moral compass of Rainbow Nationalism. Here the principles of the Bandung Conference present, to a divided nation, a direction toward a renewed alignment with the South African ideal of unity in diversity.

Today the issue of whether a national unity should be secular or religious has become a great source of conflict in (inter)national politics involving global anti-secularist groups, from fundamental Christianity and Hinduism to Islamism (Haynes, 2007). A strong reaction in the face of national unity is fundamentalism.

Fundamentalist groups are convinced that Western-inspired, secular governments want religion to disappear. Christianity and Islam, especially, are world religions with transnational movements and widespread international exchanges of ideas. The radical interpretation by the Jama'ah Islamiya, which has its foundation in the Islamic seminary near Surakarta (Indonesia), has been inspired by Egypt's al-Ikhwan al-Muslimun. And within Christianity, in addition to mainstream denominations, fundamental Pentecostal and Evangelical churches create transnational structures and influence national unities worldwide. There was the assumption (Hofstede, 2010) that people worldwide are secularizing and moving away from religion through a process of advancing understanding. In this scenario, secularization would lead to a decline in religion, both at the level of national unity and that of the individual. However, ongoing globalization, with further rise of migration and demographic challenges, brings to light that religion determines the lives of the vast majority of the world's population.

Francis Fukuyama (1992) announced the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the beginning of an era in which national unities would converge globally toward democracy and capitalism. Such a hypothesis confirms the view of the Global South of neo-liberal globalization as a continuation of colonial exploitation, which was at the time justified by world religions either by their silence or by their collusion with the imperial powers, with the West as the centre of power (Amaladoss, 1999). It is argued that neo-liberalism, as the dominant type of globalization, is just a new form of colonization causing immense inequality. Neo-liberal perspectives lack a unifying vision for society as they claim that economy is autonomous from society. The only value of the individual is financial and the free market is central in all sectors of society. Globalization according to neo-liberal principles obstructs morals based upon humanism and politics based upon solidarity. As an alternative Frans Dokman proposes, in his paper *#Palaver Platforms*, a discourse of Ubuntu Consensus which brings together the promotion of Ubuntu principles and Asian–African solidarity within the domains of economy, technology, politics and culture.

De-secularization theory

Secularization theory assumed that religion would disappear from the public domain as a result of modernization. This theory has since been abandoned or modified by its leading proponents and there is much literature on the global revival of religion and its effect on international relations (Fox & Sandler, 2004; Thomas,

2005). This is the age of religions. Earlier, Samuel Huntington (1996) projected the global resurgence of religions through the migration of believers to secular societies and the explicit public propagation of faith. And Peter Berger, who was initially a champion of the secularization movement, gave his book *The De-secularization of the World* the meaningful subtitle, *Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Berger transformed here to a forerunner on the de-secularization theory:

My point is that the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today, with some exceptions to which I will come presently, is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in some places more so than ever. This means that a whole body of literature by historians and social scientists loosely labelled “secularization theory” is essentially mistaken. (1999, p. 2)

Berger attributes the worldwide resurgence of religions to the fact that religions give people something to hang on to in uncertain times and that the masses have always been committed to some sort of religion.

We hereby would like to emphasize the numerous initiatives for dialogue, worldwide, between religious citizens themselves and with their governments, thereby strengthening civil societies and national unities. Together leaders of faith communities and government officials make it clear that radicalization and anti-democratic expressions are not inherent to religion (Vos, 2017). And as Rajendrakumar Dabee states, in his contribution *Indian Perspectives of Unity*, religion can have constructive roles. The Ten Principles or *Dasa Sila* that embody the Spirit of Bandung do even have their roots in Hinduism and Buddhism. Reet Hiimäe’s paper *Earth religion, “forest people” and environmental disputes* demonstrates also that the traditional Estonian folk religion is a sustainable source for the national identity. The national sense of feeling for nature supports unity, solidarity and democratic decision-making. Herewith it reflects a Spirit of Bandung.

Identity markers

Consistent with research data (Crabtree, 2010) and literature (Thomas, 2005; Haynes, 2007) it can be observed that since the 1955 Bandung Conference, under the influence of globalisation and migration, people have become visibly more religious and less nationally oriented. There is an identity construction where religion is of value. The main question of the *Spirit of Bandung* concerns the relationship between national unity and secular and religious orientations. In our first chapter

Indonesia's Public Diplomacy: Interfaith Meetings in the Netherlands Frans Wijzen concludes that policy-makers in the Netherlands and Indonesia can learn from each other in protecting national unity. The public diplomacy program of the Indonesian government and the bilateral Netherlands–Indonesia interfaith dialogues show that the governments in both countries have one thing in common: they reject secularism and they promote some kind of neutrality.

However, when it comes to religious identity and ‘the good cause’, tensions can run high. Conflicts are also an undeniable dimension of world religions. More than a difference of opinion, religious conflict can also mean violence within a nation by members of one denomination or religion against other believers and dissenters. For instance, in Nigeria people place emotional value on their religious identity. In the past, the power struggle in Nigeria was between the three largest ethnic groups: Ibo, Hausa and Yoruba. Today, the struggle is both intra- and inter-religious. The intra-religious conflict between the Muslim Shi’is and Sunnis is taking shape in the fight between the Nigerian state and Boko Haram. Boko Haram wants a theocracy, a caliphate free of Western influences. There is a shift from an ethnic to an inter-religious power struggle between Muslims and Christians. One can conclude that national unity in Nigeria is also undermined by violence between Muslims and Christians. With an inextricable memory of the Biafra War, ethno-religious tensions are weakening national unity in this West African country. It is for this reason that Nigerian philosophers Uchenna Azubuike Ezeogu and Umezurike John Ezugwu’s article *Intercultural Philosophy as Philosophy of National Unity* pleads for an inter- and intra-cultural philosophy at the national level.

In a globalized world of rapid changes people experience a loss of identity. Religion (Huntington, 1996) provides a way of constructing identity for individuals and communities. In a time of population shifts and economies of scale, many people need an identity marker. Religion, along with language, is such a marker and the most identity-sensitive. Believers’ religious identity includes interaction with fellow believers, dissenting fellow believers and religious dissenters. Believers strengthen their religious identity by turning away from other believers and dissenters. Nationality and religion are important identity markers. It is out of the question to separate religions from national unity because believers are national citizens too. We can observe that people have multiple identities of both a national and a religious nature that can be in an asymmetric relationship. Based on the view that people do not have a discrete identity, but construct it continuously in concrete contexts, social constructivism pays much attention to multiple identities based on nationality and religion (Hall, 1990). A personal identity is not fixed and immutable. People’s public emphasis on national identity or presenting a religious

identity depends on the situational logic. In *Ubuntu Worldview as a Condition of Possibility for National Unity* Antoinette Kankindi debates the colonial context of globalization and concludes that, at the Bandung Conference, the African voice was marginalized. Today's resonating of Ubuntu values in multiple identities, such as community spirit, offers a support for national cohesion.

National and religious identities

The reason for such initially limited attention to religion in relation to national unity comes from a tendency to view humankind from the viewpoint of modernization (Dussel, 2006). Modernity is mainly characterized by the great importance given to technology, rationality, secularization and individualization. Most post-independence governments who took over from colonial rulers in Asia and Africa were based on secular-nationalist ideologies, such as Mao Zedong's Maoism (in reaction to China's semi-colonial status), Kwame Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism and Kenneth Kaunda's humanism, though not necessarily anti-religious. These political leaders were influenced by Western secular views of national unity and they anticipated early on the conflictual pitfalls of religion for social cohesion. In any case, it is clear that in Asian and African societies people place great value on religion, which greatly influences people's behaviour, social interactions and relationships. Their religious orientation influences the philosophies of national unity.

Religion is an environmental factor which, together with economy, politics, technology etc., affects all facets of national unity. But questions of religious identity, about who is a 'pure member' of a religion, often oust social and economic issues across nations (Barkey, 2011). The connected character is visible in Tanzania and Indonesia which are both in a time of transition from authoritarian rule to an open-market economy and multi-party politics. Both countries presume a national unity in diversity but do have autonomy movements in Aceh (Indonesia) and Zanzibar (Tanzania). Both nations struggle with diversities within religions, between liberals and radicals. And their philosophies of national unity found different origins. Pancasila was formulated before independence and inspired the Indonesian independence movement, while Ujamaa was formulated after the Tanzanian independence (Wijsen, 2013, p. 82). Since the 'liberalization' process in Tanzania and the 'reformation' process in Indonesia, citizens experience disunity and diversity; however, shortly after independence they were influenced to understand themselves as 'Tanzanians' and 'Indonesians' first, thus emphasizing their citizenship of a nation. This is not a phenomenon of the past, but currently a minority

tend to elevate their religious identity over their national identity, thus identifying themselves as believers of a religion before citizens of a nation (Ndaluka, 2012). In *Coping Intolerance and Separatism in Indonesia*, Cahyo Pamungkas and Qusthan Firdaus analyse a decline in Pancasila principles and the spirit of Bandung. The main reasons are the nationwide growth of religious intolerance, growing influence of Sharia and the fact that Pancasila has been deployed by successive governments to promote an unifying ideology, embedded in power structures, rather than a dialogue in which participants are allowed to have a diversity of opinions.

Worldwide, religious orientations do affect social cohesion and national unity. Through the Internet and social media, people inside and outside national unities are aware in an instant of affairs under the marker of religion. Neema Franklina Mbuta in her article *Pancasila and Ujamaa* rethinks the significance of philosophies of unity for presenting a spirit of tolerance in today's re-contextualized digital world, which is characterized by religious diversity and by homogenous groups. In the physical world there are tensions between and within nations and between and within religions (Jenkins, 2002). For example, the current number of 2.1 billion Christians will increase over the next 50 years. This increase is mainly due to the Evangelical and Pentecostal churches in the South, but the Catholic Church – with the exception of Europe – will also expand. It is expected that around 2050 about eighty percent of all Christians will live south of the equator. Of the 20 percent of Christians then living in the North, about half will be of African or Asian descent due to migration. Due to the dominance of Christians from the South, a Counter Reformation is developing within Christianity (Jenkins, 2002): an opposition by conservative believers to progressive views such as women in ministry, the ordination of homosexual church authority figures, same-sex marriage and a scientific-critical interpretation of the Bible. There is/was also intra-religious violence within Christianity, such as between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Northern Ireland.

Islamic countries, such as Turkey, had a secular elite in the 1960s and 70s. The Turkish constitution still defines the country as a secular state. It provides for freedom of conscience, religious belief, conviction, expression, and worship and prohibits discrimination based on religious grounds. The top-down secularization process stalled because the majority of the population remained religious. The religious masses then stimulated a Counter-Enlightenment of traditional Islamic values (Hamid, 2016). The current tension within Islam is mainly between conservatives and liberals. Islam is far more heterogeneous, leading to a diversity of interpretations of beliefs and practices. There are two major movements, the Sunni and Shia, with many variants and ramifications within them. Conservative

denominations like Tablighi Janmaat, Salafi and Deobandi are for instance pro-Jihadist, promoting a unity of religion and politics via a caliphate and strict gender separation then more liberal mainstream Sunni, Shia or Sufi. The vast majority of Muslims are moderate and peace-loving. They despise Islamic-inspired violence which affects themselves more often than Christians. These mainstream Muslims are also victims of Salafi and Deobandi militancy via IS, Boko Haram, and Al Shabab as are adherents of other religions (Moghadam, 2009). In some cases moderate Salafis and Deobandis themselves could not avoid the aggression from radical members within their own group (Syed et al., 2016). Their risk is more the (intra-religious) fanatic and not the adherent of another denomination or religion.

National unities, secular and religious modernities

In addition to the *Spirit of Bandung*, there is also the *Spirit of Populism*, to quote a book title by Schmiedel & Ralston (2022). Due to globalization and migration, there has been a growth of religious diversity in Western secular societies. In response, there has recently been a resurgence of populist movements, with positive or negative attitudes toward religion determining the course of political thought and causing polarization. But also, religious leaders are speaking out about their desired form of society and national unity. Consistent with research data (Crabtree, 2010) and literature (Thomas, 2005; Haynes, 2007) it can be observed that, since the 1955 Bandung Conference, citizens have become visibly more religiously oriented. There is an identity construction where religion is of value. The main question of the *Spirit of Bandung* concerns the relationship between national unity, secular and religious orientations. In relation to debates about the 'clash of civilizations' another main question is: How can national unity be promoted in religiously diverse countries?

One logic is that for a nation with religious diversity, it is advisable to follow a national unity of secularism as a starting point. Not in the sense of a modern separation of religion and national unity, because religion is seen by many people as a part of life to which the nation also belongs (Vos, 2017). However, with a diversity of religious views and communities within a country, precisely a neutral, secular form of state indicates that all religions are approached with equal respect. Governing religious diversity begins with a common national model, without glossing over differences in cultural and religious views. In Tanzania the dominant discourse positions Julius Nyerere, as Father of the Nation, and the Ujamaa philosophy as stimuli for a secular state form. On the periphery, there are critical voices from

Muslims who see themselves as second-class citizens. And overly radical dissent is nipped in the bud. Then again, the return of religion to the public domain does not affect a continued strong social cohesion between Muslims and Christians. Citizenship of a nation comes first, loyalty to a religion second (Ndaluka, 2012).

However, the hypothesis that Asian and African countries will develop to only a secular model of national unity is incorrect. Crucial is the theory of secularization, religion and modernization. 'Modern' societies were often defined as Western and Asian-African societies as 'premodern', because – from a more holistic approach – they do not make the distinction between the religious and secular realms, or they make the separation less strict. In the West, the emphasis was and is on the West as the source of superior modernity. Mahbubani (2008, pp. 42-50) coins the term *Western triumphalism*, the hypothesis of mainly Western thinkers that the rest of the world will develop homogeneously, like a clone of the Western model of modernity. Influenced by Western triumphalism, all perspective on the role of religion in national unity has been marginalized. However, Westernization and modernity are not equivalent concepts. There are Asian and African concepts of religious modernity. One of the consequences of globalization is that these concepts become more manifest. Community-focused African Ubuntu and Asian Sangseang do, for instance, follow a scenario of continuing modernization and religion. Africans and Asians have interpreted modernity in an authentic way, not necessarily secular and not individualistic. Under the influence of secular hypotheses the religious factor in philosophies of national unity has been marginalized. But the global development of philosophies of national unities does not equal secularization of the world. The universal secular claim of modernity is rejected in a moderate way. We speak of religious modernities when religion is not at odds with modernity, but when there is modernization, contextually determined, on a religious basis. Some of the so called 'Asian tigers' and 'African lions' are modernized societies in the sense of being industrialized and religious, without becoming Westernized in the sense of becoming secular. For example, Malaysia combines a modern and neo-liberal economy with a national unity based on principles in which Islam is an important factor, thus proving that a modern neo-liberal economy and religion can coexist well in a society.

For many people, religion is not a reaction to modernity, but simply a way of being modern. Modernity is not an exclusively Western concept; apart from secularism, religious dimensions also determine modern national unities. Religion is an important social and political instrument for the construction of national unities – and hardly in theocracies only. In Asian countries, such as China, religion and national unity are interwoven. The religious traditions of Confucianism, Buddhism

and Taoism are promoted by the Communist Party with the aim of improving national unity by emphasizing their harmonious values. In South Korea, Christianity, Buddhism and Confucianism strengthen state legitimacy and national unity (Snyder, 2011). In Indonesia there is national unity, without a strict combination with secularism or religion. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world but it is not an Islamic country. Nor is it a secular country, but a pluralistic one. Indonesian politics has given authentic expression to the institutional values of national unity, neither necessarily secular nor religious, but pluralistic. Pancasila's formal policy is attentive to the multiple identities of its citizens. In its aim to maintain pluralism, tolerance and respect for dissenters and believers, the Pancasila philosophy, notwithstanding Pamungkas' and Firdaus' justified criticism of its shortcomings, plays an important role for national unity (Mojau, 2014).

Studies in Tanzania and Indonesia indicate that religious diversity in itself is not a risk to national unity (Ndaluka, 2012; Cholil, 2014). These studies review the opinions on religion in relation to national unity or the absence of social cohesion. Their research focus is on the production of opinions of Christians about Muslims and Muslims about Christians. The respondents indicate the value of peaceful relations between members of diverse religions and its importance for social cohesion. Remarkable is that the respondents are nationally minded and prefer the Pancasila and Ujamaa ideologies. This is also echoed in the Indonesian elections in which the nationally-oriented parties that opt for harmony always win over religious political parties. Christian values such as love and human fellowship, and Islam values such as peace and justice are perceived by the respondents as politically transformed in the concepts of Pancasila and Ujamaa. The dominant voice of religious respondents in both countries is to favour national unity.

Migration and globalization are creating a diversity of views on the relationship between national unity and religion, and between religions themselves. These changes have only made the question of the role of religion in this post-secular era more pressing. The above-mentioned research refutes a prevailing view that national loyalty and religious affiliation can only be at odds (Laborde, 2002). At the time of the Bandung Conference the participating politicians, closely related to the dominant discourse in international relations, mostly though not exclusively considered secularism to be a hallmark of national unities. The Bandung Conference offered political space for both secular and religious philosophies of national unities. Since then countries have further adapted to the resurgence of religions. They have searched for a new understanding of modern secular and religious philosophies of national unity. Thereby, as the authors critically analyse, promoting with varying success peace and stability across contradictions.

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At the 1955 Bandung Conference representatives of 29 independent Asian and African countries discussed matters ranging from national unity, decolonization, economic development and their role in international policy. The ten-point declaration of the conference, the so-called 'Spirit of Bandung', included the principles of nationhood for the future of the newly independent nations and their interrelations. After the Bandung Conference, most 'non-aligned' Asian and African countries opted for philosophies of national unity to guarantee peace and stability. 68 years after the Bandung Conference, experts from Africa, Asia and Europe address the following two questions in this book: What philosophy, secular or religious, succeeds or succeeded in promoting peace and stability? Are there comparable philosophies of national unity from other countries?

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