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Constructing Contributive Dialogue Between the Doctrine of God in John Owen Thought and First Principle of Pancasila

Christar Arstilo Rumbay

Sekolah Tinggi Teologia Pelita Bangsa

Christar.indotec@gmail.com

Abstract

The doctrine of God contains of unending discussion and special characterized by trinity, the main doctrine of Christianity, holds specific character, lays on soteriology and relates to the work of redemption. Furthermore, it plays significantly as an antithesis to other faiths, as the consequence, this Christian identity being a subject of dialogue in interreligious society, even within believers' circle. However, this topic encompasses surround disciplines, including, specifically speaking, socio-politics. In the other side, Pancasila, a state ideology of Indonesia, occupies the faith of its citizens by accommodating the humanity-divinity relationship in a very sensitive way. This academic work intends to supply alternative perspectives to theology and socio-politics tension. Specifically speaking, evaluates any possibilities of dialogue between the doctrine of God in John Owen Thought and the first principle of Pancasila. The result of this research suggests numerical code as the possibility of conversation between them.

Keywords: *systematic theology; Doctrine of God; Trinity; Pancasila; politics; socio-religion; John Owen*

INTRODUCTION

Public square shares intensive discussion concerning the relationship between the state and church, politics and theology, and social and religion. However, they occupy rich knowledge in dialogues in order to reach connection, link and possibilities.¹ Therefore, serious evaluation is employed to gain constructive dialogue among them. But the central attention, in which receives more tension, lays on the heart of state-church, in this sense, the exploration on theology and socio-politics. For instance, the first principle of Pancasila, intended to accommodate the heterogenic faith of Indonesians, but at the same time, triggers controversies as it says, “believe in the One and only God,” where bears monotheism sentiment and tend to ignore other forms of religion.

With this in mind, the doctrine of God, owns special attribute and character of

the church, lays on the soteriology and great plan of salvation, plays as the heart of Christian identity,² being provoked by the ideology of the first principle of Pancasila with its monotheism tendency. In response, potential approach could be offered, but systematic theology, however, has more attention where the doctrine of God and trinity are constructed, renovated, explored and evaluated both within Christian circle and cross religion.³ Therefore, constructive dialogue is less hope, but the communication between the first principle of Pancasila and doctrine of God in Christianity is extremely needed. Indonesia contains of five official religions, where Pancasila tries to encompasses all of them. The heart of Pancasila, as the state ideology, however, is to accommodate the faith diversity of Indonesians.⁴ Unfortunately, instead of binds the differences, it receives critics and argumentation, even more, supply contradiction pertaining religious dogmatic issues.⁵

¹See, Eric Batalla and Rito Baring, “Church-State Separation and Challenging Issues Concerning Religion,” *Religion* 10, no. 3 (2019): 197., Cosmin Tudor Ciocan, “Church and State Working Together in Favor of People,” *Research and Science Today* 2, no. 6 (2013): 152–165., and Dina Alontseva, “Modern Concept of State-Church Relationships Interpretation,” in *Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism*, 2019.

²Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 3: Sin and Salvation in Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Publishing Group, 2006), 233.

³For instance, the tension between John Calvin and Peter Caroli, where Calvin declined and mocked the feature of Nicene language, “God from God, Light

from Light, true God from True God”, considers as derogatory to the Son by assuming that the divinity come from the Father. See, Roger Beckwith, “The Calvinist Doctrine of Trinity,” http://archive.churchsociety.org/churchman/documents/Cman_11_5_4_Beckwith.pdf.

⁴Ismatu Ropi and Ismatu Ropi, “Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa: Contests of Meaning and Interpretation,” in *Religion and Regulation in Indonesia* (Springer Singapore, 2017), 89–99, accessed March 24, 2021, https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-2827-4_7.

⁵See, Saiful Hakam, “The Interpretation of the First Verse [Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa] of Pancasila,” *Jurnal Ilmu Agama* 18, no. 1 (2017): 1–9.

In the public square, the tension among religious community concerning Pancasila has appear,⁶ debates exist concerning the heart doctrine of God, in which related to systematic-theology investigation, and first principle of Pancasila, a socio-politics and state ideology treatment. Assuming that the divinity of God and Pancasila do not in harmony, extremely saying, it tunes to Islam alone, who acknowledge the oneness of God, a monotheism religion,⁷ Christianity need to share clarification. Academic works have been placed in order to ground meeting point of Pancasila and Christian teaching, for instance, Paulus Widjaja demonstrates that Pancasila belongs resonance to Christian's specific virtues.⁸ Stella Pattipeilohy elaborates intercultural approach of the first principle of Pancasila.⁹ However, Systematic theology approach is still absent. In his work, Herman Bavinck argues that pursuing

the intention of this essay does not simply for academic exercise or offering intercultural, interreligious, church-state, or political-theology agreement, because the more it reflects on God, the more it will move to the adoration and worship.¹⁰ Even more, efforts to break down the secret is vain. All attempts to unfold are not equal due the mystery of godliness is not adequate for human knowledge.¹¹ It is sufficient for human being but not exhaustive.

John Owen (1616-1638) is known as the "finest theological mind England ever produced",¹² the greatest theologian of English puritan movement, born of Puritans parents at Stadham in Oxfordshire, where he pursued his B.A and M.A. He has large number of works in the doctrine of God, even more, he goes specifically to each person of trinity to offer complete knowledge of Godhead.¹³ However, he owns less of works concerning church-state tension,

⁶Kevin Pramudya, "Analisis Penerapan Nilai Pancasila Di Indonesia," *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 1 (2019). See also, Taqiyudin Zarkasi, "Jalan Panjang Hubungan Antara Agama Di Indonesia," *Al-Riwayah: Jurnal Kependidikan* 9, no. 2 (2017): 443-470.

⁷Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, "Pancasila Tauhid Sosial Dalam Kehidupan Berbangsa Dan Bernegara," *MAARIF: Arus Pemikiran Islam dan Sosial* 11 (2016): 41-78.

⁸Paulus Sugeng Widjaja, "Aktualisasi Pancasila Berdasarkan Etika Kebajikan Kristiani," *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 4, no. 2 (March 9, 2020): 143-168, accessed March 24, 2021, <http://www.sttintheos.ac.id/e-journal/index.php/dunamis>.

⁹Stella Yessy Exlentya Pattipeilohy, "Ketuhanan Yang Berkebudayaan: Memahami Pancasila

Sebagai Model Interkulturalitas," *GEMA TEOLOGIKA* 3, no. 2 (October 26, 2018): 121, accessed March 24, 2021, <http://journal-theo.ukdw.ac.id/index.php/gemateologika/article/view/363>.

¹⁰Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 2: God and Creation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academy, 2004), 29.

¹¹Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 3: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 308.

¹²Carl R. Trueman, "John Owen as a Theologian," in *John Owen: The Man and His Theology*, ed. Robert W. Oliver (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 2002), 43.

¹³See John Owen's works, *Communion with God*, *On Pneumatology*, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, and etc.

but his treatise on God is interesting to be pursued and explored due he bears comprehensive materials to the tensions, consequently, it opens to possibilities to ground contributive dialogue to Pancasila.

Therefore, discovering the agreement of the debates in this essay will offers alternative perspectives to socio-politics discipline, intercultural-religious studies and systematic-theological analysis. It is interesting to explore the possibilities of Pancasila and the doctrine of God in John Owen's thought, connected to trinity. The research question that leads this study is, what can be learned from John Owen concerning the nature of God in order to build constructive discussion to the first principle of Pancasila?

METHODS

This essay is a qualitative study with a comprehensive approach of systematic theology and socio-politics disciplines. The general concept of the doctrine of God and its relationship to trinity will be explored in the first stage to gain impression that could be linked to Pancasila. Further, the knowledge of Pancasila, especially speaking, the first principle receives special attention, its background, context and praxis will be explored. Moreover, specific investigation

to John Owen's thought concerning the doctrine of God will be discussed together with the values of the first Principle of Pancasila. At the end, the expectation is, could offer alternatives contribution in order to build sufficient communication between the doctrine of God and first principle of Pancasila. However, as a systematic-intercultural study, together with few politics-sociology articulation, but dominated by systematic theology approach, a comprehensive approach will lead this essay.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Divinity of God: Trinity Mystery

The heart of the doctrine of triune God, a very foundation of Christian dogma, becomes the center of attention throughout the decades. Therefore, Herman Bavinck argues that the confession of God's trinity owns the direct impact to the stand or fall of entire Christian belief system including all the special revelation.¹⁴ It supports the core of faith, serves root of all doctrines and beliefs, works as a heart of the entire revelation and the story of redemption. As trinity contains of puzzles and mysteries, it leads to spot of discussion, receives controversy, and regularly becomes the target of critics. A final formula, in which able to

¹⁴Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 2: God and Creation*, 300.

accommodate all the motivation is not prepared yet, rather, complication presents in the public. For instance, Arnold Huijgen argues that the divinity of God, the doctrine of trinity is far from the condition of modernity,¹⁵ further, an effort has been placed to simplify its complication by declaring that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and acknowledge as one God, where the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not the Father, calls trinity, and not quantity.¹⁶ Therefore, trinity is considered, commonly, as a mathematical nonsense, questions are delivered to the deity of three divine persons. How can three persons be regarded as one being, or equalize monotheism to polytheism, and maintaining the singularity of God by describing him in three persons? Clearly, it is indescribable and out of human thought. The common dialogues concerning God and trinity, however, plays around the numerical issue, the essence and nature of God follow the contradiction.

However, trinity remains a mystery in the strict sense. Besides academic ability, it demands divine intervention, it seems, probably, human science has no capacity to

reach heavenly truths about God that are not per se inaccessible to human reason.¹⁷ The combination of humanity and divinity knowledge are needed in order to unfold the treasure of trinity, but still, remains limitation. The description of creator will not adequate to humanity.¹⁸ Therefore, the expectation is, to gain sufficient insight and idea, and not to pursue a complete explanation.

Owen explores that God as a superior agent owns large of mystery where human being receives only few knowledge about his existence. The core intention of God's present is to remove the enmity between him and sinful man.¹⁹ Here the distinction between godhead persons, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are evoked. Actually, their role has been functioned before in the creation (Gen. 1:27-28), but it becomes crowded in the coming of Christ as the sacrifice in the cross. Therefore, the center attention of debates among religious society, even between Christian scholars, takes place in the numerical issue of God. The argument of triune God, however, is the dominant confidence of most Christians. Owen is one of the most figure who shares

¹⁵Arnold Huijgen, "Traces of the Trinity in the Old Testament: From Individual Texts to the Nature of Revelation," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 19, no. 3 (July 1, 2017): 251–270, accessed March 24, 2021, <http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/ijst.12222>.

¹⁶Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 577.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 2: God and Creation*, 27.

¹⁹John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, ed. William H. Gold, 2015, 13.

wide range of God's attribute. Strictly, he argues that divine works are divided to each person who are godhead equally.²⁰ By saying this, he against the assumption that God is a single person, rather, the person of God does not limit to certain agent but more than one as they bear different occupations.

Each divine person has their intentions. The Father bears love by sending his Son, Christ.²¹ The initiative to save the world comes from the Father, the initiator, who arrange the plan of salvation. The bible testifies this great redemption by employing the nature of humanity. It equips patrilineal system in order to echo the deity organization and presents the distinction between the godhead. Certainly, the intention of occupying this pattern aims to reach down the limited knowledge of human being that may help to gain comprehensive notion of the triune God. Actually, attempting to unfold the whole mystery of God will not accommodate the whole motivation due the limited knowledge of sinful man and the majesty of God, therefore God reveal the truth according to human capacity (Deut. 29:29). Furthermore, the Spirit involves in the incarnation of Christ, "to have conceived in her womb of the Holy Ghost,"

(Matt. 1:18), suffer with the oblation of the Son where they are both the same with respect to what misery they experienced.²²

Owen maintains his position concerning numerical issue of God, he elaborates his thinking based on 1 John 1:3, and share no doubt the distinction of the Father, Son and Spirit. The expression of this verse contains of an asseveration in which a very strange reflection.²³ It implies that trinity has a special intention for man and should receive sensitive approach to discover its nutrition. The outward appearance of trinity bears puzzles and confusing due the nature of divinity attached and the limited knowledge of human has no capacity to accommodate its secret. Further, trinity should be considered as a divine proposal to direct human attention to the Creator, then leads to obedience and worship. Moreover, it bears urgency to declare it with further explanation.²⁴ Therefore, effort to see the proper gate of dialogue is a must, trinity should be applied in the Indonesian socio-political context. Materials for the intention to explore the heart of trinity prepared by Owen. He shares two important steps; *understanding* and *believing*.²⁵ Stages and methods, however, are required in order to

²⁰Ibid, 17.

²¹Ibid, 18.

²²Ibid, 29.

²³John Owen, *Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1965), 4.

²⁴John Owen, *A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Ontario, Canada: Devoted Publishing, 2017), 12.

²⁵Ibid.

discover the knowledge of trinity. Afterward, it should be trusted, because it leads to the submission to God. Because all the knowledge in which has been revealed to human being is enough for human to worship God, it is sufficient to enable people obey Him.²⁶

Concerning the idea of understanding the core of trinity, Owen suggests divine assistance in which could share comprehensive information. But consequence follows, faith should be increased, strengthened and confirmed.²⁷ However, the scripture does not prepare the whole signs that may accommodate all the tensions surround, literally and formally does not contained in the scripture, but the idea and conceptions clearly prepared, and sufficient to be trusted.²⁸ The bible testifies the whole messages in which important for human salvation, it has no responsible or urgency to express detailed the mystery of universe, therefore, as argued by Owen, expecting gain literal expression from the scripture is a wasted effort. But it does not mean that the bible is exclusive and closed for investigation, further, it shares witnesses that could help people gaining the expensive knowledge of God.

Furthermore, after exercising and gain understanding in the theology of trinity, Owen moves to trust God. The highest expression of Owen's theology relates to public worship, communion with God as triune must be applied in the adoration.²⁹ In the whole of his works, he does not share the link between trinity and public theology. Owen is simply a pure theologian and has no urgency with social and political tension. Indeed, he had public contribution to his context but does not dominant. He even stresses the importance of personal experience in order to gain the knowledge of God.³⁰ It is less of opportunity to explore the mystery of trinity without divine assistance and experience. With this in mind, Owen puts his position conservatively, renovation and construction of human mind with the guidance of holy spirit is needed. He identifies the knowledge of God as the subjective element in theology while communion with the Father through the Son, and the Spirit gives wisdom, are the object of theology. Further, his position becomes more extreme because true theological system, or method of exercising without personal divine experience is a philosophical approach rather than Christianity.³¹ Here is clear,

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid, 13.

²⁹Ryan M McGraw, "Trinitarian Doxology: Reassessing John Owen's Contribution to Reformed Orthodox Trinitarian Theology," *Studia Historiae*

Ecclesiasticae (SHE) 41, no. 2 (2015): 38–68, accessed March 24, 2021, <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2412-4265/2015/92>.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

Owen gives great attention to the character of theologians.³² The result of exploring the knowledge of God is extremely depends in the motivations and spirituality of the researchers. The expectation of discovering the mystery of trinity should be led to adoration and submission to God, a heart of worship, rather than satisfying scientist curiosity. Therefore, it seems that Owen's reflection on God indirectly avoids any dialogue with other discipline including the Pancasila.

The emphasis of Owen's theology on God lies on the trinity and the whole system of theology grounded in the worship attitude.³³ But the nature of worship pertaining the triune God of Owen share important notion concerning the numerical issue of God. Because the triune God, the Father, Son, and Spirit are worthy to be worshipped, and they are connected by divine communions.³⁴ It reflects that the person of God exists as pluralistic, contains of some beings. But Owen has special character on his idea by arguing that communion with a divine person, or certain single person is not recognized, it should involves all three divine persons simultaneously.³⁵ Although

Owen employs the Father as the fountain of the deity, bears from the patristic expression,³⁶ but he maintains the equality of their divinity, Lordship, where human being need to transform an equitable adoration.

Furthermore, the three divine persons do not act in the same way,³⁷ they achieve a single work, creation and redemption, in a threefold manner, and not three parts of a single work.³⁸ The Father's appropriate work is initiation, the drafter, further, the Son fulfil the master plan, and Spirit brings the plan to fruition, and this is called the greatest plan of salvation in the universe, a single intention completed in three dimensions. The member of divine beings, however, bears their own work and responsibility, but they are always similar and simultaneous, lack of any human hierarchy. Although Owen treats the Father as the fountain, but it does not imply that the other divine beings are less power and important, because they are equal in all segmentations. Therefore, Owen emphasizes a highest respect to the communion with triune God, whoever denies Christ as the Son, eternal Son of God, loses the Father. It applies to the Spirit as well, the circle of triune God is

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Owen, *Communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, 268-269.

³⁶Paul Chang-Ha Lim, *Mystery Unveiled: The Crisis of the Trinity in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 190.

³⁷Edward Leigh, *A Systeme or Body of Divinity Consisting of Ten Books, Wherein the Fundamentals and Main Grounds of Religion Are Opened* (London: A.M. for William Lee, 1662), 205.

³⁸McGraw, "Trinitarian Doxology: Reassessing John Owen's Contribution to Reformed Orthodox Trinitarian Theology," 50.

in great pain to summarize it.³⁹ He strictly maintains that God is one,⁴⁰ but when he constructs the framework of God's communion, he does not reject the reality of other divine beings besides the Father. In sum, Owen articulates the oneness of God in the sense of quality nature. Indeed, there are three persons who are equal and bear different works, but in essence and math nature, God is one.

The First Principle of Pancasila: Background, Context, Intention and Its Praxis

Indonesia as a multi-religious community, displays multi-layered of society, receives strong impression as a perfect example of multi-religious country, however, as the biggest Muslim population, able to maintain the diversity and its complexity in practical life of Indonesians.⁴¹ However, it does not guarantee the reality specifically,⁴² but acts as the representation ge-

nerally. The religious diversity among Indonesians is the fact that cannot be denied, known as heterogenic society, and needs a specific philosophy to bind all the dimension. The concept of the state of Indonesia, lays in the ethnicities, religion and linguistic diversity, a very character of Indonesia.⁴³ Therefore, the diversity is one of dominant attribute of Indonesia, it is considered as the glues instead of as obstacles and barriers, and six official religions; Protestantism, Islam, Catholic, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, is the evidence on how the harmony is maintained well throughout the years.

In response to the polemic of diversity, Pancasila was established as an ideology that suggested by the founding father, and the first president of Indonesia, Soekarno, that intended to accommodate the diversity among the various of religions, races and clusters. It aims to avoid specific state identity that affiliated to certain reli-

³⁹Owen, *A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, 14.

⁴⁰Ibid, 13.

⁴¹Mohammad Imam Farisi, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika [Unity in Diversity]: From Dynastic Policy to Classroom Practice," *JSSE - Journal of Social Science Education* (February 13, 2014), accessed March 24, 2021, <http://bse.kemdikbud.go.id/>. Farisi argues that the diversity of Indonesians is maintained well in the classroom practices where religious tolerance is nurtured by Bhineka Tunggal Ika. See also, Minako Sakai and M. Falikul Isbah, "Limits to Religious Diversity Practice in Indonesia: Case Studies from Religious Philanthropic Institutions and Traditional Islamic Schools," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 42, no. 6 (January 1, 2014): 722–746, accessed March 24, 2021, [https://brill.com/view/](https://brill.com/view/journals/ajss/42/6/article-p722_3.xml)

[journals/ajss/42/6/article-p722_3.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/ajss/42/6/article-p722_3.xml). Sakai and Isbah suggest that religious education has unintentionally limited and becomes plague to the development of religious diversity in Indonesia but religious diversity is supported and maintained legally in Indonesia.

⁴²See, Zakiyuddin Baidhaw, "Negara Pancasila Negara Syariah," *MAARIF: Arus Pemikiran Islam dan Sosial* 10, no. 1 (2015).

⁴³Thung Ju Lan, *Politics of Ethnicity, and Multiculturalism Heterogeneity, Politics of Ethnicity, and Multiculturalism What Is a Viable Framework for Indonesia?*, *Wacana*, vol. 13 (Brill, October 14, 2011), accessed March 24, 2021, https://brill.com/view/journals/waca/13/2/article-p279_4.xml.

gion.⁴⁴ The the main expectation, however, is to share harmony and tolerance, furthermore, preventing any potential religion tensions in the future. Recently, in order to preserve the nature of Pancasila, Jokowi as the President of Indonesia on June 7th, 2017 inaugurated the Presidential Working Unit on reinforcement of the Pancasila Ideology (UKP-PIP), an institution obliged to strengthen the implementation of Pancasila as state ideology in daily life, where connected to state's scheme.⁴⁵

Etimologically, Pancasila contains of two *sanskrit* word, which is *panca* (five) and *sila* (principles).⁴⁶ During the colonization of Japan, where the situation was under the world war II, Indonesia gained chance to own freedom, and Pancasila was formulated as the philosophy-ideology that the state may ground its foundation. Dokuritsu Junbi Cosakai (BPUPK or Investigation Agency Preparation for Independence) was established as an organization that prepared all condition of independency. Therefore, its legal foundation lies on Undang-undang Dasar 1945 and decree of President on July 5th 1959.⁴⁷ State regu-

lation protects the existence of Pancasila and give more attention for its functions. However, the main intention of Pancasila is to unite the complex diversity of Indonesians, even more, strengthen the solidarity and harmony among the civilization, a guideline for the development and sustainable of the country.⁴⁸ As Indonesia forms by heterogenic community, Pancasila receives discussion and controversy regularly, especially speaking, its first principle.

Islam does not receive special treatment as the majority religion, but indirectly, it shares influence and critics on how determining Indonesia.⁴⁹ However, it is painful to accommodate the motivation of other minor religions but at the same time maintaining the attribute of Islam. The first principle of Pancasila does not refer to certain religion, but accommodating all faiths, unfortunately, it implies the nature of monotheism, a concession to Muslim sentiment,⁵⁰ and provoking tension among religious community. It presents a long discussion and contradiction. Therefore, Pancasila, specifically speaking, the first principle needs more clarification, in the

⁴⁴Suparman, *Pancasila* (Jakarta Timur: Balai Pustaka, 2012), 33.

⁴⁵See, <https://www.bpip.go.id/bpip/>

⁴⁶Benyamin Fleming Intan, *Public Religion and the Pancasila-Based State of Indonesia: An Ethical and Sociological Analysis* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 242.

⁴⁷See, St. Sularto and Dorothea Rini Yunarti, *Konflik Di Balik Proklamasi: BPUPKI, PPKI Dan*

Proklamasi (Jakarta: Kompas Media Nusantara, 2010).

⁴⁸Yuyus Kardiman et al., "Pancasila and Civilized Society," in *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 2019.

⁴⁹Munmun Manjundar, "The Debate Between Pancasila Versus Islam in Indonesian Politics," *Studies in Humanities and Social Science* 11 (2015).

⁵⁰Ibid.

sense of socio-politics discipline, while religious scholar be induced to share theological reflection.

Constructing Contributive Dialogue

Pancasila is less possibilities in order to evaluate the essence of God or Trinity as both of them are contrast elements, in which have clear distinction and discipline. On the other side, the doctrine of Trinity has no urgency and motivation regarding the adjustment to the first principle of Pancasila, or forcing its articulation becomes suitable to Pancasila. Generally speaking, Pancasila was formulated to offers a neutral spot in which religions and faiths could meet in an agreement, however, it is not a systematic-theology task, it works to social-political discipline. The prominent intention of this essay, however, is to see the possibilities of the doctrine of God of Owen's thought that may meet in the place of first principle of Pancasila without renovate its essence.

Owen maintains his argumentation that discovering God its trinity attribute remains a great mystery.⁵¹ It is not the domain of human being, but divine domain. Furthermore, mystery is the lifeblood of dogmatics,⁵² contains of puzzles and

complexity, and requires proper analysis. Obviously, this is a historical evaluation rather than a theological analysis. One official theological position is that the trinity is a mystery, and that humans cannot understand it.⁵³ Consequently, it has no urgency to prove the position of Trinity toward the first principle of Pancasila. Deuteronomy 29:29 says that "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law," confirms that the mystery of God which is trinity is not human's domain, it belongs to God. Therefore, Owen's position toward the mystery of God is clear, that it offers less of possibilities to gain comprehensive knowledge about Him, however, it is sufficient for the faith of believers.

With this in mind, it seems that Owen against any works to build communication between the doctrine of God and socio-politics discipline. His argumentations originally aimed to supply sufficient knowledge for spiritual needed of believers and not for scientific order of human being. However, due the strict and clear explanation of Owen concerning the numerical issue of God and a clear math statement of

⁵¹Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, 13.

⁵²Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 3: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 29.

⁵³Peter Haggholm, "Can the Concept of the Trinity Be Explained Logically? - Quora," accessed March 24, 2021, <https://www.quora.com/Can-the-concept-of-the-Trinity-be-explained-logically>.

the first principle of Pancasila, therefore, the meeting point of them is shared here, the quality and quantity of God. Milton Pardosi insists that Christianity regards God as one in quality while Islam considers God as one in quantity.⁵⁴ Clearly, Owen states that God is one, however, it contains a quality nature rather than quantity, because in his other works, he explains the persons of God specifically. Pancasila, the first principle, who bears the oneness of God is qualified to the doctrine of God in Owen's teaching. Indeed, the doctrine of God express more mystery rather than knowledge that deserve for human to uncover.

Whoever God is, and whatever he may be like, he is essentially unknowable, and speculating about Him is a waste of time.⁵⁵ But it does not mean that the knowledge of God is unreachable. There are special procedures that has been revealed to the believers such as offered by Owen. He shares clear distinction of triune God, in which belongs different work and intention, but equally in godhead.⁵⁶ Of course, there are some points that do not meet scientific pattern. But the numerical issue on the oneness of God offers contributive dialogue

to the doctrine of God and first principle of Pancasila. And the large portion of them that has no agreement does not diminish Christian faith or political status in Indonesia. It can be defended only on the condition that there is no other appropriate conception of the God of Christian faith that the Trinity.⁵⁷ Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith must be the starting point of God's knowledge. It needs to trust God first with the exist evidence, even with the evidence not seen, and afterwards, the investigation could be run. This verse demonstrates that investigating the Trinity does not need conclusive evidence, human learning system cannot be applied in the knowledge of God. They are two different worlds with different treatment. Trinity requires faith to gain more exploration and Pancasila as a socio-political discipline asks evidence. Therefore, match line with those approaches does not prepared in large possibility, but only limited to the numerical issue.

Further, gaining the knowledge of God or Trinity requires the revelation from God. Even more, Owen regards the know-

⁵⁴Milton Thorman Pardosi and Siti Murtiningsih, "Refleksi Konsep Ketuhanan Agama Kristen Dan Agama Islamdalam Pandangan Filsafat Perennial," *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia* 1, no. 3 (March 22, 2019): 91, accessed March 24, 2021, <https://ejournal.undiksha.ac.id/index.php/JFI/article/view/16130>.

⁵⁵Gerald Bray, *Contours of Christian Theology: The Doctrine of God* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 13.

⁵⁶Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, 17-18.

⁵⁷Wolfhart Pannenberg, "The Christian Vision of God: The New Discussion of the Trinitarian Doctrine," *The Asbury Journal* 13 (1991): 27-36.

ledge of trinity as a divine proposal that should lead to adoration and worship toward God.⁵⁸ Here the intervention of divine revelation is required, because natural knowledge does not able to reach the knowledge of supernatural power. God is God, all our knowledge of Him comes from divine revelation, for it is impossible for us to know God without His willing to be known.⁵⁹ Even in the scripture, some prophet needs God's revelation and explanation to understand His mysteries. The wide gap between Creator and creature causes wide distinction and a chasm. However, eventually, the effort to unfold the mystery of trinity, will end to the admiration of God. By saying this, Owen shares his strong notion that exploring God and trinity requires knowledge and faith.⁶⁰ Understand the word of God, then leads to believe its message. The effort to see possible communication between the doctrine of God and Pancasila should be ended to the adoration toward the Creator.

The issue in the first principle of Pancasila relates to numerical issues of God. In narrow sense, evidently clear, trinity expresses numerical issue, since

according to Owen that God is one.⁶¹ John Feinberg supports Owen's position on God by saying what is revealed in the scripture is, God is one as to essence and three as to persons, but he against to regard it as a math code,⁶² because discussing the number of God will not end up in a satisfied conclusion, trinity is beyond human comprehension, but even though it is a mystery, its nature does not self-contradictory.⁶³ The bible proves that God is one, but at the same time also it says that God is plural, more than one. Because God is one in quality but three in quantity. The first principle of Pancasila does not specifically mention the deep sense of oneness. It means the oneness of God in John Owen's thought is available as a contributive dialogue. A single verse, Deuteronomy 6:4, offers solution to the tension. But the problem is, the bible contains of passages who are against and contradictive to the concept of monotheism. Discussing the numerical issue of God does not offer exhaustive agreement, again, because trinity remains mystery, it has contrast intention with secular science, and plays around God's domain. Further, the incomparable God is not to be understood

⁵⁸Owen, *A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, 12.

⁵⁹Thomas Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 13.

⁶⁰Owen, *A Brief Declaration and Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity*.

⁶¹Ibid, 13.

⁶²John Feinberg, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2001), 437.

⁶³Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Volume 3: Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 27.

on the analogy of our finite creaturely human being with whom word, act and person are different from one another.⁶⁴ Using human finite thought of the numerical approach cannot reach the high understanding of the incomparable God. But the numerical code of God and oneness in the first principle of Pancasila testify constructive dialogue.

CONCLUSION

The match line or the constructive dialogue here is, the first principle of Pancasila speaks about divinity, divine being, as well as the essence of Trinity is divine and supernatural being. Both of them contains of numerical code, according to John Owen, God is one, but in quality sense, and Pancasila does not specifically narrow the math code of oneness in the first principle, it opens to other numerical concepts of religions in Indonesia. here the possibility is expressed.

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⁶⁴Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons*, 236.

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