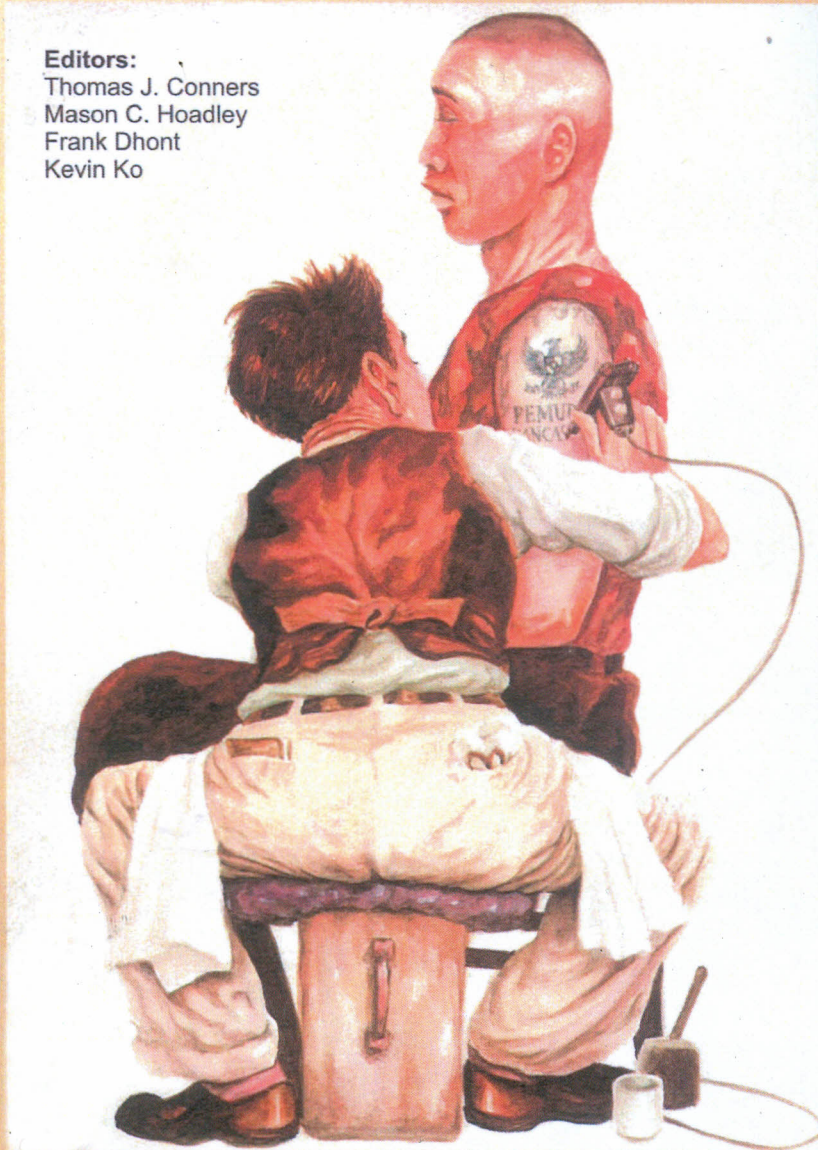


PANCASILA'S CONTEMPORARY APPEAL:

Re-legitimizing Indonesia's Founding Ethos

Editors:

Thomas J. Conners
Mason C. Hoadley
Frank Dhont
Kevin Ko



Yale Indonesia Forum
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Indonesia History Studies Centre, Sanata Dharma University



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Cherished, accepted, ignored, or rejected, the doctrine of Pancasila has been foundational to the fashioning of Indonesian identities. Created by Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, Pancasila was born out of compromise to serve as the new nation's unifying ideology. As such, Pancasila has formed the ideological foundation of the Indonesian state and has helped hold an extremely diverse Indonesian nation together.

During the Second Yale Indonesia Forum International Conference held at Sanata Dharma University in July 2009, a select group of Indonesian and overseas scholars of various academic disciplines convened to discuss Pancasila's contemporary appeal and to explore the ways in which Pancasila continues to play a role in Indonesian politics and public life.

The fruits of this intense discussion can be found in this book which contains a collection of both critical and sympathetic views of the social, cultural, and political significance of Pancasila in post-colonial Indonesia. The collection explores in particular divergent understandings and expressions of Pancasila from Indonesia's post-colonial period through to the present. Together these essays give the reader a complex picture of Pancasila's contemporary appeal as part of what it means to be Indonesian.



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INTRODUCTION: INDONESIA'S PANCASILA

Frank Dhont

Yale University

Born during the latter days of the Japanese occupation, the Pancasila became the founding ethos of the Indonesian nation. It was consciously promoted and was ultimately accepted as such into Indonesian society. As a symbol of Indonesia, the Pancasila was, however, challenged from the very beginning. The Sukarno government and subsequently the Suharto regime reinforced the Pancasila and tried to spread it into every corner of Indonesia. When the nation's relative stability was broken by the fall of Suharto in 1998, it released political and social forces, which had long been held down. The prominent place occupied by the Pancasila had now to be shared with other symbols of Indonesian identity.

At the second Yale Indonesia Forum International Conference at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, in July of 2009, a number of scholars gathered to examine the Pancasila within Indonesian society and consider its relevance to contemporaneous Indonesia. The authors addressed such issues as to what degree the Pancasila as the founding ethos

THE CHRONICLE OF PANCASILA IN VISUAL ARTS: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

G. Budi Subanar

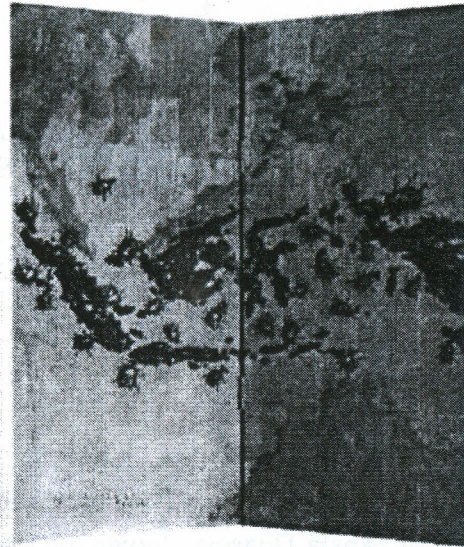
Sanata Dharma University

1. Introduction

At the Edu Art Exhibition, December 2009-January 2010, at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, a participant submitted a visual art piece with nationalism as its theme. The main idea of his visual art was to illustrate Indonesia in a decaying stage. He visualized this idea through an image of a map of Indonesia covered with flies. His visualization was titled "*Seperti Apa Adanya*" (Pic. 1).

The aforementioned visual art piece has encouraged me to consider a discourse on Pancasila as represented in the two-dimensional visual world. Three reasons persuaded me to proceed with the theme. First, there are few discussions on Pancasila in the two-dimensional visual world. Second, in Suharto's administration, the ideology of Pancasila was frequently socialized through visual media especially on television. And third, Driyarkara as the founding father of Sanata Dharma University had contributed two series of thought relating to the

philosophy of Pancasila. He wrote these during the critical transitional periods of 1955-1959 and 1966. (Sudiarja 2006)



(Pic. 01) | Kadek Agus Mediana, "Seperti Apa Adanya" Mixed Media, 163x140 cm.

Please be advised that this writing is based on preliminary research, by which I mean it still requires further development. In order to achieve the intended research goal and to ensure the reliability of the study, I make use of the following research methodology. The visual media to be studied will be limited to two-dimensional media on canvas. The visual art pieces also must be well known to the public. They might have been exhibited or submitted for a sort of competition, such as an exhibition and/or an art competition, which usually publishes a catalog of the proceedings. Hence, the exhibition catalogs are used as visual data. The art pieces to be studied are those published from the beginning of the reform era until today (1999-2009). The locations of the exhibitions or competitions are

limited to Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and Denpasar/Ubud. These locations were chosen because they are the barometers of the two-dimensional visual art world in Indonesia.

The reform movement marked the turning point of the Suharto regime which had lasted for 32 years. During the administration of Suharto, there were many policies and programs to socialize the ideology of Pancasila, starting from the enactment of Pancasila as the Sole Creed to the implementation of it. This socialization was conducted through various visual media. As a result of the dethronement of this regime, we must ask whether the visual media become an instrument of criticism and a tool of expression for the dissatisfaction of society towards the ideology of Pancasila. How do the emerging visual pieces rewrite the practices of the Suharto regime within the present ideology of Pancasila?

2. A Number of Available Data

This preliminary study is based on a number of catalogs and publications that show how visual communication is used as criticism towards the indoctrination and the practice of the power exercised by the former regime. For some the catalogs provide the setting and the social context within which the visual art pieces were produced. The first two publications clearly show how the artists work on the above mentioned theme. The first is the *Katalog Indofood Art Award 2003*. The theme of the event was *Pancawarsa Reformasi Indonesia*, which encouraged artists to explore the experiences under the Suharto regime and the reform movement, as well as to reflect on the unrevealed experiences through their visual pieces. The second publication is *Mencari Telur Garuda* (2008) by Nanang R. Hidayat.

This book investigates and documents the public expression of the symbol of Garuda Pancasila. This effort had gone on long before the reform era. The media studied were three-dimensional sculptures of Garuda Pancasila that are commonly crafted by lay people and placed in public places in several cities. There was no limitation on the locations where the art pieces were to be found. This book also traces the history of the formation of the visual symbol of Garuda Pancasila. Other publications used in the study are a number of art exhibition catalogs that containing art pieces related to Garuda Pancasila.

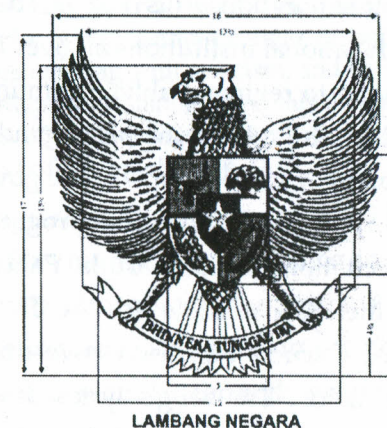
3. Discussion

3.1 The First Effort to Make the Symbol of Garuda Pancasila

The making of the visual symbol of Garuda Pancasila was a long process (Hidayat 2008, 17-39) However, some recently published books raise doubts over who made the last (the one currently used) symbol of Garuda Pancasila. There are several accounts of the process of the making of the symbol and a number of names involved in the search for the shape of Garuda Pancasila. It was based on the image of Garuda inherited from the Java-Hindu culture, with pictures of the Garuda Pancasila both prior to the official one and the official one (Hidayat, 2008). Persons that were involved in the making include former President Sukarno, Mohammad Yamin, Sultan Hamid II, Dullah, and D. Ruhl Jr. The final decision, however, turned out to be different from those proposed. Who made that final decision was not clear. (Pic.02) (Pic. 03)



(Pic. 02)



(Pic. 03)

The symbol of Garuda Pancasila was officially declared in the Government Regulation on the National Symbol, No. 66, 1951. This declaration was then revised with the Government Regulation on the Use of the National Symbol No. 71, 1958. When promulgating Garuda Pancasila as the symbol of the nation, President Sukarno proudly pointed to the picture of Garuda Pancasila shown at the venue where he made the official statement.

3.2 Socializing the Ideology of Pancasila Visually

Historically, the administration of Suharto started with the failed coup by the G30S. One of the milestones that legitimized Suharto was the murder of several Indonesian Army Force's leaders whose corpses were found in Lubang Buaya. This group of high-ranking officers were then acknowledged as Revolutionary Heroes. The first of October was made *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila* to commemorate them and Lubang Buaya was made the official venue for the commemoration. This rite is strongly held in government and educational institutions all over Indonesia.

During the Suharto regime, public communication media were often utilized to disseminate the propaganda of Pancasila as the nation's ideology. One of them was the government's TV station, TVRI. Every day, the opening program of the TV station was the recitation of the Garuda Pancasila song by Sudarnoto. While the song was played, the TV screen would show the image of Garuda Pancasila (two-dimensional) as the symbol of the nation. The song's lyrics describe how the Garuda is bearing the shield of Pancasila. "*Garuda Pancasila, akulah pendukungmu....*"

3.3 Rereading the Ideology of Pancasila and its Visualization in Art

The program for the Indofood Art Award 2003 to celebrate the *Pancawarsa Reformasi Indonesia* had the themed "Understanding and Valuing Reform in Indonesia 1998-2003," encouraged artists to create masterpieces around the theme. The documented pieces include those works of art that won the best awards or that were nominated, as well as the proceedings

in the catalogs showed expressions of responses to the actual situations in the then past five years.

Some notes from the board of adjudicators read:

"...the participants in the "Understanding and Valuing Reform in Indonesia 1998-2003" were unpredictable to the board of adjudicators. The interpretations, the obsessions, and the perceptions of the artists on "five years of reform" were overlapping, and visualized esthetically. The participants apparently used their freedom as artists who live in a democratic world. They talked about their land, their country, their nation. There were those (works of art) shining a light of optimism, while others were bursting with criticism, and yet others giving up to the skeptical situations. And this competition indeed allowed all of those to appear in artistic pieces. Aren't all the artifacts of the epochs?" (p.7).

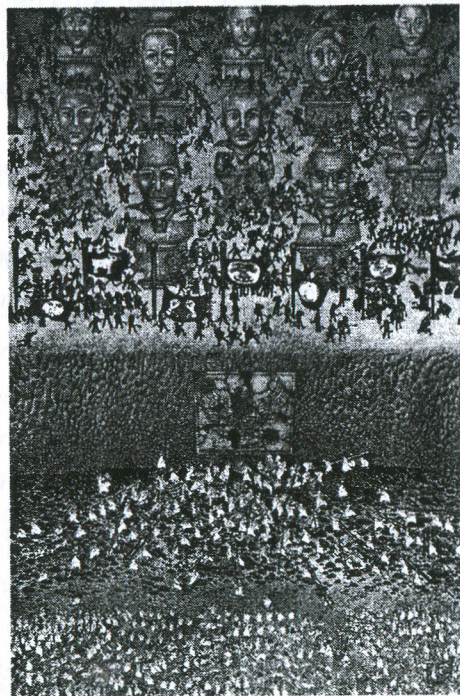
When expressions are associated with expectations of the ideology of a country or its practice in the government's policies, dissatisfaction among the citizens to the regime in power becomes obvious. The government policy in socializing Pancasila that was realized through visual media is in turn responded to through visual forms.

4. Visual Themes in Rereading Pancasila

4.1 The Abandoned and Damaged Garuda Pancasila

There is a picture that shows a monument of heroes surrounded by black figures on a cliff, and under the cliff is a group of white figures (Rahmat 2003). On the wall of the cliff that separates the white figures from the black ones is the symbol of Garuda Pancasila; it is being destroyed. To the side, there is another group of white figures that is preparing themselves to climb the cliff. (pic. 04)

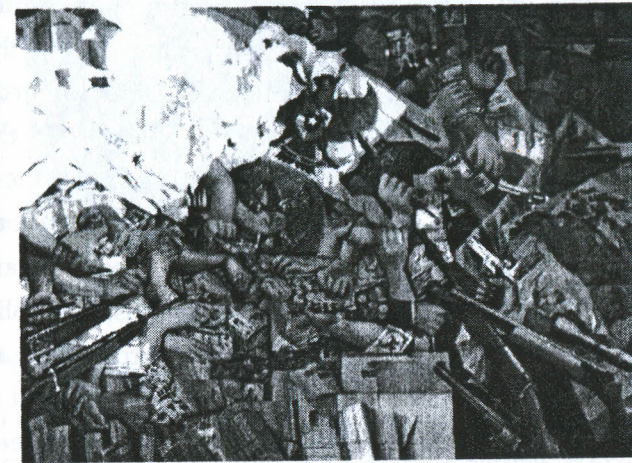
The Kesaktian Pancasila Monument built during the Suharto regime is the closest symbol of the power of the regime. It was the first target of the grassroots' revolution. The symbol of Garuda Pancasila that is being destroyed shows the ideology that was undergoing a reformation, as well as the Revolution Heroes. The revolutionary history of G30S and its victims is here revisited. The artists are trying to reconstruct the history that had long been taken for granted. Pancasila becomes the first target that could easily be reached.



(Pic. 04) Rahmat, Basuki. "Panji-panji Kemunafikan" Pen on canvas, 160x110 cm.

There is another picture that shows reason of the aforementioned rage. It shows some hands that are grasping each other amidst scattered bank notes. Next to the hands are a

torn map of Indonesia that is being squeezed and an image of Garuda Pancasila. On its borders there are the hands amidst the scattered bank notes under a gun point. (pic. 05)



(Pic. 05) Sigit R, "Sama Seperti Dulu". Oil on canvas, 150x200 cm.

Both images illustrate Garuda Pancasila as an ideology that was nothing more than a piece of paper that was stripped of its authority, just like Indonesia was left torn. From the point of view of society, the monument of Garuda Pancasila proclaiming the legitimacy of the tyrant needs reconstruction, i.e. by obliterating the domination and emancipating the "white figures" that were formerly abandoned. The Republic of Indonesia that was previously emphasized and almost without any barriers, along with the transition of authority, should not be left unquestioned. The chaotic situation is represented through the visual art.

4.2 Visuals that Criticize the Chapters (of Pancasila)

Indonesianism. There are various metaphors that are used to show Indonesianism that appear on two-dimensional visual art pieces. There are some metaphors that depict transitional situations Indonesia was experiencing during the regime of Suharto that were constantly directed towards economic development. Yet by the end of the New Order, the economic development had not seemed fruitful. Some of these visual arts exposed the mess in Indonesia. These illustrations are also present in other symbols, both the ones that are representational, representing a subject the way it is, symbolic, subject is exposed in a particular character, and abstract, abstract in that the subject is exposed not in figurative materials, but in elementary visual materials as lines, shapes, colors, rooms, and textures. These are three classifications of art based on IAA 2003.

Hari Prasetyo's "*Sabung menyabung menjadi abu*" presents two roosters fighting. (pic. 06) The title was adapted from the statement: *sambung menyambung menjadi satu* (interconnected as one); the title is a mock idiom. The second representation conveys unity in the message, the third *sila* of Pancasila. The symbol uses a broken gold chain. The chapter is ridiculed by a roosters' fight that ends in destruction.¹ The fighting roosters are red and white roosters. The colors could represent bravery and holiness, as well as indicate the disputing groups in Ambon, Maluku where the groups are differentiated by their head bands; red is worn by the Christians, and white by the Muslims.

¹ Cock fighting is a Balinese rite, a symbol of power plays among leaders.



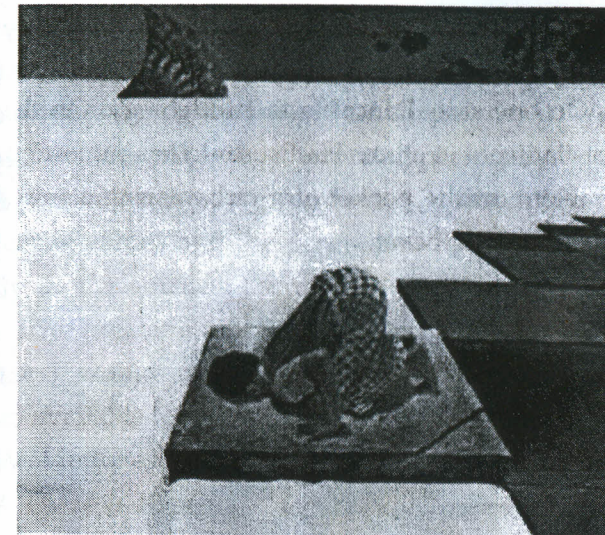
(Pic. 06) Hari Prasetyo, "*Sabung Menyabung menjadi abu*".
Print on canvas. 100x150 cm.

Stefan Buana's "*God Today*" presents a devil figure (with horns and a tail) standing with a *trisula* or trident stabbing an oil jug. A shadow next to it is an eagle (a *garuda*) spreading his wings, and on his chest is an oil jug as his shield. (pic. 07) The title of this visual refers to the first *sila* of the Pancasila, the spirituality in God. The "God" in this image is the oil; Indonesian oil has been exploited by foreign companies.



(Pic. 07) Buana, Stefan. "God Today/Tuhan Sekarang".
Acrylic on canvas, 120x75 cm.

Haris Purnomo's "*Sujud Panjang Anak Bangsa*" shows a child in a *sarong* kneeling and kissing the earth on a chalk rock. But the face of the kid is drawn deep into the floor. Next to him is a field of pale green. Far on the back, an eagle (a *garuda*) is setting down in the horizon leaving a slight view of his wing. (pic. 08) This art work is one of the pieces exhibited on *Di Bawah Sayap Garuda* (Under the Wings of Garuda) (2005) in Jakarta. As part of the 2008 year-end reflection, this piece says a lot, especially about when the Lapindo incident occurred and the victims of it were ignored.



(Pic.08) Purnomo, Haris. "Sujud Panjang Anak Bangsa" Oil and acrylic on canvas.

Several pieces I mentioned above show how the Indonesianism theme in various real situations has induced people's concern and attention. It could also be related to other themes in Pancasila, which are visually present through the symbol of Garuda Pancasila.

5. The Future Fate of Pancasila

As an ideology that comes from a tradition that lived for as long as the history of Indonesia itself, Pancasila is the soul of the nation, one that gives a unique characteristic to the nation. Even when it became the foundation of the country, there some parts of the ideology was within the social scope and the public legal domain. What tends to occur now, however, is that the social aspect is not working. Pancasila seems to be no more than an accessory. Hadisusanto's *Accessory*, shows how the current trend has become apolitical. People put fashion forward

and promote physical appearance. (pic. 09) The ideology that is present in the symbol of the country is treated as a mere accessory. On one side, Pancasila is an ideology. On the other side, Pancasila is put in a box. Hadisusanto has sarcastically put it as an emblem on the pocket of a girl wearing a mini dress. Pancasila is now in a pocket.



(Pic. 09) Hadi Soesanto, "Accessory". Acrylic on canvas, 130x200 cm.

6. The Need for Further Research

The discussions presented above attempts to explain how Pancasila has been revealed in the public domain and how its fate might turn out in the future. There are some other areas that we could explore, including the treatment of Pancasila in the public domain at the beginning of the reform era and before

it. The available images I discussed previously show some delegitimacy expressions towards Pancasila as seen from the appreciation towards the individual chapters in it. We can also see how Pancasila might be interpreted personally.

There remains space for further research. For example, how do the values and the practice of Pancasila functions in a family as the smallest social unit? Another question is how people with greater social responsibility (high ranking officers, legislators) would react to Pancasila. There are still much material available for further studies.

Will Indonesia rot, as imagined by some artists mentioned above? There is hope that it is not as dire as it seems. There are some hopes for a brighter future. An example is what is happening in Bali. At a time when people are facing the implementation of *Sharia* rules, resistance to imposition of these kinds of constraints are placed under the protection of Pancasila formulated by the founding fathers of this nation who had a universalist view. It would further persuade artists to create new artworks from this different perspective. There are abundant materials that need further appreciation.

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