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# Ideological Uniformity and Political Integralism in Europe and Indonesia: A Kuyperian Critique

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## Abstract

This article presents a Kuyperian critique of ideological uniformity and political integralism in Europe and Indonesia. The background of Kuyper's articulation of the principle of sphere sovereignty was his struggle with the liberals, the French Revolution, and the German idea and application of state sovereignty. Kuyper struggled with the liberals because he rejected ideological uniformity. He struggled with the ideals of the French Revolution because he rejected popular sovereignty and, later on, political integralism. Kuyper's rejection of ideological uniformity and political integralism resulted in the articulation of the principle of sphere sovereignty. Such uniformity and integralism also characterized Suharto's leadership in twentieth-century Indonesia, especially his doctrine of Pancasila as the only basis for the state and civil society and his ideology of the integralist state of Indonesia. I criticize those doctrines from the perspective of Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty.

## Keywords

sphere sovereignty – state sovereignty – popular sovereignty – uniformity – integralism – Pancasila – Suharto – Abraham Kuyper

## 1 Introduction

The principle of sphere sovereignty was popularized by Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920). This principle was not articulated in a classroom, nor was it just a textbook idea without any historical context. Instead, Kuyper articulated this principle as he fought the ideological uniformity and political integralism

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that characterized European history in general and Dutch history in particular. *Ideological uniformity* is a uniformity achieved by imposing cultural and/or philosophical values. This uniformity could be achieved by using political power. *Political integralism* is an integralism of the state imposed by political power. This integralism could be achieved by imposing ideological uniformity.

Kuyper strongly opposed the ideological uniformity of the rationalization of society imposed by the liberals. Formulated as a result of this, Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty could be considered as a critique of this kind of uniformity. In addition, Kuyper's struggle with political integralism as shown in the powers of the French Napoleon Bonaparte, the Dutch William I, and the German Otto von Bismarck also contributed to his formulation of this principle. It was Kuyper's response to popular sovereignty and state sovereignty that went farther than their proper positions.

By analyzing Kuyper's criticisms of the French Revolution and of Bismarckian authority, I want to show how these historical struggles provided the historical context in which Kuyper developed his principle of sphere sovereignty. No systematic description or critical assessment of sphere sovereignty will be presented here—I've given these elsewhere (see Un 2020b, 97–114). Also, I won't develop an intellectual genealogy of Kuyper's thought here, since many studies on the intellectual genealogy, development, and influence of sphere sovereignty have already been carried out (see Henderson 2017; Friesen 2019; Harinck 2020).

Now, there are striking similarities between what Kuyper faced in the Dutch/European context, on the one hand, and Indonesian society under Suharto's regime (from 1966/67 to 1998), on the other. For Suharto's presidency was marked by ideological uniformity and political integralism. In the second part of this article, I criticize the uniformity and integralism under Suharto's rule from the point of view of Kuyper's sphere sovereignty.[1] Before we delve into the historical background of this principle, I will first give a brief definition of it.

1 It is not my intention here to systematically or theoretically explain the importance of Kuyper's principle for contemporary Indonesian society. In a systematic study (Intan 2019), Benyamin F. Intan examines the relation between Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty and Indonesia's national ideology, Pancasila, and uses this principle to criticize the government's discriminatory attempts to restrict religious freedom and rights.

## 2 A Brief Definition of Sphere Sovereignty

In his speech at the establishment of the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam in 1880, Kuyper explains the meaning of the principle of sphere sovereignty:[2]

> Just as we speak of a "moral world," a "scientific world," a "business world," the "world of art," so we can more properly speak of a "sphere" of morality, of the family, of social life, each with its own *domain*. And because each comprises its own domain, each has its own Sovereign within its bounds.
>
> KUYPER (1880) 1998, 467

And he continues:

> There is also a domain of the personal, of the household, of science, of social and ecclesiastical life, each of which obeys its own laws of life, each subject to its own chief.

In his lecture at Princeton University in 1898, Kuyper gave a very similar definition:

> In a Calvinistic sense we understand hereby, that the family, the business, science, art and so forth are all social spheres, which do not owe their existence to the state, and which do not derive the law of their life from the superiority of the state, but obey a high authority within their

2 The Dutch term *souvereiniteit in eigen kring* literally means "sovereignty within its own circle." Here is what James D. Bratt says about the difficulty in translating the term (and the title of Kuyper's 1880 speech): "The very title of the piece harbors [an] ambiguity: 'Souvereiniteit in Eigen Kring' can mean sovereignty in *its* circle, referring to the pluralistic ontology Kuyper unfolds in the text. But it can mean just as well sovereignty in *our* circle, spelling out a pluralistic sociology and epistemology which Kuyper also argues for but which does not have ontological warrant. The tension can be resolved by assigning (à la Heidegger's title) the first term to being, the second to time. Or as Kuyper himself would explain later in *Common Grace*, the spheres of existence are given to all in creation under common grace; the divergence of worldviews, and so of human association, emerges under the operations of redemption or particular grace" (Bratt 1998, 461–462). This term appeared previously in Kuyper's other works. According to Harinck, it first appeared in *De Heraut*, on September 9, 1870 (Harinck 2020, 226). Kuyper also used the notion in his 1874 address on Calvinism. For instance, Kuyper, quoting Béza of Vézelay, explains: "'Finally, the power of the legitimate magistrate is not unrestricted.' Therefore he wants parliaments and estates, tribunes and lesser magistrates with their own sovereignty" (Kuyper [1874] 1998, 304).

> own bosom; an authority which rules, by the grace of God, just as the sovereignty of the State does.
>
> KUYPER (1898) 1931, 90

In general, the principle of sphere sovereignty consists of the principles of *structural pluralism* and *confessional pluralism*. Gordon J. Spykman (1989, 79) briefly explains these two terms. The principle of structural pluralism teaches that "God has created the world with various structures . . . which order life and coordinate human interaction," while the principle of confessional pluralism emphasizes "the right of the various religious groups that make up a society to develop their own patterns of involvement in public life through their own associations—school, political parties, labor unions, churches, and so on—to promote their views."

In his 1898 lecture at Princeton, Kuyper explains the historical context of the principle of sphere sovereignty. For example, he refers to "the *Popular-sovereignty*, as it has been antitheistically proclaimed at Paris in 1789" and the "*State-sovereignty*, as it has of late been developed by the historicopantheistic school of Germany" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 85). I explore these historical-theoretical contexts later; first, we turn to Kuyper's struggle with the liberals after the French Revolution.

## 3 Kuyper's Critiques of Ideological Uniformity and Political Integralism in European History[3]

### 3.1 *The Liberals*

In nineteenth-century Netherlands, the liberals took control mainly through the Dutch constitution of 1848, which secured liberal hegemony and continued to give the state control over other spheres such as the church (Van der Kroef 1948, 317–318). As James Bratt indicates, the liberals extended the implementation of "a simple, uniform set of laws to every corner of the kingdom." By taking this step, they tried to remove every local or special exception or privilege. "In short," Bratt concludes, the liberals "stood for the standardization and rationalization of society and economy that are hallmarks of 'modernization'" (Bratt 2013, 66). The implementation of liberal principles embodied in the constitution of 1848 would also be extended to the realm of education.

This implementation sparked a fire of dispute between the neo-Calvinists and the liberals (Harinck 2014, 5–6) over the character of the public school.

3 Section 3 is the revision of a part of my dissertation. See Un (2020a, 158–168).

The debate pitted two political leaders in the Dutch Parliament against each other: Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801–1876), a neo-Calvinist, and Johan Rudolf Thorbecke (1798–1872), a liberal politician. Groen, according to George Harinck (2014), was the only significant opponent of the liberals. He urged that all public schools in the country should be Protestant, since the Netherlands was a Protestant nation. Thorbecke suggested that public schools should be nonreligious, as they would be funded by public money. In 1857, the dispute culminated in the adoption of a law on primary education that removed public funding of confessional religious schools, even though 95 percent of the country's population espoused a confessional religion. Groen and the Christians could do little other than found Christian schools and establish, in 1860, a Christian school association.[4] At that time, there were only 58 Christian schools among 3,422 primary schools. Groen expected the bargaining position of Christians to improve as the growing Christian school movement put pressure on Parliament to carry out a judicial review of the 1857 primary education law. "This experience," Harinck (2014, 6) writes, "made the neo-Calvinists suspicious of the uniform character of the public domain."

Generally, Kuyper's struggle with the liberals, unlike his struggle with state sovereignty (to which we will turn in the next session), was mainly a struggle with ideological, rather than political, dominance and uniformity. The liberals promoted uniformity of rationalization, as shown in the promotion of "the efficiency of uniform standards" (Bratt 2013, 66). Kuyper considered such uniformity "the *curse* of modern life" (Kuyper [1869] 1998, 35), since it "propels us on a road that leads to the destruction of life." It is indeed a curse because this false uniformity "disregards the ordinances of God revealed not only in Scripture but throughout his entire creation." These ordinances indicate that "it is in multiform diversity, not in uniformity, that the finest fiber and deepest principle of natural life is found" (Kuyper [1869] 1998, 35–36).

Thus, the seed of the principle of sphere sovereignty, emphasizing the ontological uniqueness and interdependence of social spheres in a pluriform society, began to germinate in Kuyper's opposition to the liberals. Liberal uniformity was a fruit of the French Revolution. Kuyper rejected the spirit and ideals of the French Revolution, whose basic principles he analyzed in depth.

### 3.2 *The French Revolution*

Popular sovereignty as embodied in the French Revolution further motivated Kuyper to formulate his principle of sphere sovereignty. It was popular

4 In Bratt's record (2013, 69), the association is called The Union for Christian National Education.

sovereignty that finally gave almost absolute authority to Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821). This kind of sovereignty first became manifest in the French Revolution, whose root principle, according to Kuyper, was an antitheistic conviction saying "neither God, nor master" (Kuyper [1891] 2011, 53). This conviction made the French uprising "the first great ideological revolution" (Buijs 2016, 200). In sending King Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette, to the guillotine, the revolutionaries not only ignored and opposed God but also, through the revolution's religious and political scheme, dethroned the sovereign God and appointed humankind to occupy the vacant seat (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 87). Human will determined everything and became the source of all authority and power. The sovereignty of the people, in Kuyper's assessment, became "the deepest fountain of all sovereignty," derived from the authority of the individual free will (Kuyper ([1902] 2016, 93). According to the revolution's adherents, all people have the right to determine their own life. A free person thus stands together with other people who are equally free. This conviction formed the foundation of the French Revolution with its principle of a "social contract," a term from Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Kuyper believed this kind of contract could not be proved historically and should be considered as "pure fiction" (Kuyper [1902] 2016, 94). Furthermore, the French Revolution failed to recognize "a deeper ground of political life," resting only in "the state of nature [that is] the criterion of what [is] normally human" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 87; [1891] 2011, 37). "The ideal of humanity," Kuyper said, was "emancipated from God and from his established order" (Kuyper [1891] 2011, 53). The dethroning of God resulted in the rejection of God's order, in which each creature is subject to God. In its stead, an order was constructed that posits individual free will as the basis of authority and freedom (Kuyper [1891] 2011, 37).

Giving sovereignty to the people, according to Kuyper, would only allow them to abuse it (see Kaemingk 2018, 123). "Authority over men cannot arise from men," he believed, since this authority immediately opens the possibility of "the right of the strongest," as illustrated by the frequent tyranny of a majority over a minority, although "history shows, almost on every page, that very often the *minority was right*" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 82). The tyranny of a majority as it appeared in the French Revolution meant that civil liberty was provided only to the extent that one agreed with the majority group. But that majority was antitheistic and thus for Christians unacceptable (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 109). When individual free will as the source of the sovereignty of the people was applied consistently, and each person had the same right to agree and to oppose, "no comprehensive and overarching administrative government ever arose" (Kuyper [1902] 2016, 94). Often, some people agree with those in authority whereas others oppose them. Yet, under the French

system, the minority had no choice but to submit to the will of the majority. A majority's general will should be embodied in the constitution or the law, as recommended by article 6 of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789), which says that "the law is the expression of the general will." Such embodied popular sovereignty will "dominate" minorities, since a general will has occupied "the seat of God" (Kuyper [1879] 2015, 23). The sovereignty of the people could also give virtually absolute authority to a king, as the power of Napoleon Bonaparte illustrates. Since popular sovereignty thus violates the kingship of Christ, Kuyper asserts that "there could be no question of popular sovereignty in the minds of men who, as church members and citizens alike, worshiped Christ as their King" (Kuyper [1874] 1998, 296).

The designation of Napoleon as emperor with immense authority led Kuyper to conclude that the French Revolution had resulted in "the shackling of liberty in the irons of State-omnipotence" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 88). The French revolutionaries had succeeded in guillotining Louis XVI (who reigned from 1765 to 1793) only to elevate Napoleon Bonaparte (who reigned from 1799 to 1804 as consul and from 1804 to 1815 as emperor). The French historian Pierre Goubert explains: "The all-powerful prefects personified Napoleonic government. They held more powers than the intendants of the ancient regime and were effective instruments of unifying centralism that owed much more to Bonaparte than to Louis XIV" (Goubert 1991, 220). As example, Goubert notes that the top-down system of appointment was extended to all kinds of bureaucracies, including law, finance, and religion, all the way up to 1905. All judges were appointed directly, without a fair selection.

What had occurred in France was replicated in the Netherlands. The Kingdom of the Netherlands was established in 1813; two years later (after Napoleon's defeat in the Battle of Waterloo), the first king, William I (1772–1843), was enthroned. He would reign until 1840. Although Napoleon was defeated, William I imitated his political scheme (Harinck 2014, 3–4). He wanted to force the unification of the country and to rule—I borrow Harinck's term—in "a Napoleonic way."

William I was able to apply the Napoleonic approach because its goal was acceptable to many. His backers attributed the past failures of the Dutch Republic to internal divisions that weakened the power of the federal government. Therefore, the Dutch constitution of 1814 entrusted almost all authority to William I. The result of this entrustment can be imagined. In general, the king swallowed up all the freedom and liberty of the people, as described in Harinck's historical sketch (Harinck 2014). No freedom could exist outside the king's authority.

The constitution of 1814 sharply limited the freedom of social spheres (Van der Kroef 1948, 317). "There was not much room for citizen's political involvement," Harinck (2014, 4) writes, "under the Constitution of 1814." The king also left very little leeway for religious freedom. Church order was regulated by the government. The opening of new churches was controlled by the state, and splinter groups outside the existing churches were closely monitored (Harinck 2014, 3–4). William I established a single central yet powerful administration of the church's synod. As a consequence, this establishment "legally banished in the Netherlands the kingly regime of Christ over his churches" (Kuyper [1911–1912] 2017, 290). The earthly king thus left no room for "Christ's honor in any way" (Kuyper [1911–1912] 2017, 291).

Though the Reformed Church was not an established church in terms of the English model (Bornewasser 1981, 154), Kuyper viewed its central synod, established by King William I, as a "caesaropapist model," in the sense that the church had "an episcopal hierarchy" (Kuyper 2016, 394). At first glance, it would appear as if the officially acknowledged church received special treatment, but this was not substantially the case. As the only "public" church, the Reformed Church did enjoy some forms of government assistance, such as financial support for ministers and church buildings (Bornewasser 1981, 154–155). But the church itself had very little freedom. As the price for its privileges, "the Reformed Church had to accept a degree of State interference" (Bornewasser 1981, 155). The appointment of church deacons and elders was controlled by the government, and the preaching was overseen by the authorities. Local congregations were obliged to fulfill the wishes of the town councils. From Kuyper's perspective, the whole of church life was placed under state control (Kuyper 2016, 400). According to Jeroen Koch (2006, 73), the king actually occupied the top position of the entire Dutch church hierarchy. No wonder the seceders in 1834 complained about the government.

The church secession of 1834 provided William I with a test case for the application of nearly absolute power. A group of orthodox believers came into conflict with the government as they wanted to function outside the existing, officially acknowledged Reformed Church. They did not want to apply for recognition, since one of their complaints concerned state control over church order. The seceders wanted to "return to the standpoint of the fathers" (Bratt 2013, 14), since the existing Reformed Church, enjoying its "special relationship with the authorities" and being "particularly favoured and protected" (Bornewasser 1981, 171), had "violated the Reformed church order" (Harinck 2014, 5). The actions taken against this dissident group were drastic. Sadly, the leaders of the Reformed Church cooperated with the official authorities to crack down on their fellow Reformed orthodox followers (Bornewasser 1981,

171). The meetings of the seceders were broken up, their houses were guarded by soldiers, and several ministers were imprisoned (Bornewasser 1981, 171). "The Secession," Harinck concludes, "was a first sign in the Netherlands that the French ideal of the sovereignty of the people imposed uniformity in the public domain that violated the *freedom* of the people" (Harinck 2014, 5).

The seceders sought a religious ground of freedom, rather than a political one. They found it not in the constitution or the king's recognition but in the Calvinist doctrine of election by grace (Harinck 2014, 5). According to Harinck (2014, 5), as a result of this experience, the next generation of neo-Calvinists, including Kuyper, became more suspicious of the modern state's role as guarantor of the people's liberties.[5] They had to develop a conception of their own that could secure freedom. The principle of sphere sovereignty was the solution.

### 3.3 *German State Sovereignty*

In articulating the principle of sphere sovereignty, Kuyper rejected not only French popular sovereignty but also German state sovereignty. In 1871, Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) came to power in Germany, and he reigned until 1890. Germany at that time consisted of numerous kingdoms (e.g., Prussia, Bavaria), duchies, principalities, free cities (e.g., Hamburg, Bremen), and so forth. Bismarck, who was Kuyper's contemporary, tried to unite Germany by encouraging a national loyalty across all regions, since regional or confessional identities often triggered ideological, social, or political divisions (Lerman 2008, 31). The German historian Katharine Anne Lerman (2008, 33) writes: "Although his methods often proved highly controversial and counterproductive, Bismarck's domestic policies were driven by his determination to consolidate the new national state."

5 In his more recent article, Harinck (2020, 267) says that in "Kuyper's opinion a legal mistake had been made when, in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, founded in 1813, the church had been subjected to the state." According to Kuyper, the state's control over the church was a mistake from the perspective of sphere sovereignty. In his opinion, based on his historical research originally articulated in 1869, "the Dutch Republic was legally a free state with a free church." Roger Henderson further comments upon the context from which sphere sovereignty arose, saying that it was due to "Groen's struggle to overcome the economic and social hardships foisted upon parents and parishioners by certain nineteenth-century Dutch governmental policies that the question of the range and nature of authority became a burning issue in the Netherlands" (Henderson 2017, 78). Henderson continues: "The main hardships and publicly disputed topics surrounding its derivation were: (1) state control of the church institution; (2) ubiquitous state control of schooling and the character of the education it offered; and (3) the vaccine controversy, i.e., mandatory inoculation of all school children using the cowpox vaccine."

One of Bismarck's domestic policies was *Kulturkampf* (cultural struggle), which held sway between 1871 and 1879. It was directed mainly against Catholicism, since Bismarck saw the Catholic Centre Party and the Roman Catholic Church as "subversive forces" opposed to his desire to consolidate the new state (Lerman 2008, 35). He applied state control over the church, such as by intervening in the appointment of the clergy and the running of schools, introducing compulsory civil marriage, and expelling the Jesuit order, which was considered to be serving a hostile power. Bismarck's regime imprisoned members of the clergy, requisitioned church property, and left vacancies in parishes unfilled. The German chancellor also established state censorship of sermons and church publications and attacked the Catholic schools (Bratt 2013, 67). This cultural fight with the German Catholics stirred up considerable national sentiment against Catholicism (Koch 2006, 55).

Kulturkampf, for Bismarck, was an act based on careful political calculation. Nonetheless, he miscalculated. It did not consolidate the new state, and the Catholic Centre Party remained hostile to Bismarck's regime (Lerman 2008, 35). German Catholics were unlikely to forget or forgive his Kulturkampf. Bismarck and his domestic policies, especially Kulturkampf, gave Kuyper a real political example of how a state could become "an octopus, which stifles the whole of life" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 96). This experience made articulating a principle like sphere sovereignty imperative, for it demonstrates how the state should occupy its own place without invading other spheres: "The sovereignty of the State and the sovereignty of the Church exist side by side, and they mutually limit each other" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 107).

In Germany, the sovereignty of the state was the result of philosophical pantheism. "Ideas are incarnated in the reality," Kuyper said in his 1898 lecture, "and among these the idea of the State was the highest, the richest, the most perfect idea of the relation between man and man" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 88). The German people already believed in the pantheistic principle that "the spirit of the German *Volk* and the Spirit of God were one and the same" (Kaemingk 2018, 122). The state thereby became "a mysterious being, with a hidden ego; with a State-consciousness, slowly developing; and with an increasing potent State-will, which by a slow process endeavored to blindly reach the highest State-aim" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 88–89). In this line of argument, Kuyper was actually criticizing the political philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831).

Thus, Kuyper criticized ideological uniformity and political integralism in France, Germany, and the Netherlands, and he articulated his principle of sphere sovereignty as a result. Now, using Kuyper's principle, I want to formulate a critique of ideological uniformity and political integralism under Suharto's rule in Indonesia. Suharto's rule exemplifies how political power may

use ideological uniformity to achieve political integralism. In the following section, I attempt to construct a Kuyperian critique of Suharto's rule, especially its ideological uniformity and political integralism.

## 4 Kuyperian Critiques of Ideological Uniformity and Political Integralism under Suharto's Rule

### 4.1 *Pancasila as the Only Basis*

General Suharto (1921–2008) ruled Indonesia[6] for 32 years, from 1966 until 1998. His rule was characterized by ideological uniformity and political integralism. This ideological uniformity consisted in the application of the doctrine that "Pancasila is the only basis" (*Pancasila sebagai satu-satunya asas*) of the state and of society. Pancasila is Indonesia's national ideology. The word is a combination of two Sanskrit words: *panca* means "five" and *sila* means "principles." Articulated by several founding fathers of Indonesia, Pancasila was declared on June 1, 1945 by Sukarno, one of Indonesia's founding fathers and one of the two politicians who proclaimed the nation's independence. Pancasila consists of five principles: the belief in one God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy guided by the wisdom in the agreement arising out of deliberations among representatives, and social justice for all the peoples of Indonesia.

In a 1982 speech before the Indonesian House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat [DPR]), Suharto proposed expanding the doctrine to state that "Pancasila is the only basis" (Intan 2006, 55). By this doctrine, Suharto required all political parties and social organizations to affirm Pancasila as the only basis for Indonesian society, the nation, and the state. British scholar Carool Kersten (2015, 165) says that this "imposition of Pancasila came about in a climate of political repression."

This doctrine would later be legally issued, with the DPR's approval, through two laws: law no. 3/1985 on political parties and law no. 8/1985 on social organizations. One of the most prominent historians of Indonesia,

6 Located in Southeast Asia, Indonesia consists of almost 20,000 islands with a population, according to Statistics Indonesia (2020), of more than 270 million people. It has six officially acknowledged religions, namely, Islam, Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, with Islam being the majority religion. The dictatorial regime of the New Order under Suharto ruled from 1966 to 1998. Since the overthrow of Suharto and his regime by the people in 1998, democracy and freedom have been emerging.

M. C. Ricklefs, describes its background as follows: "The regime's self-confidence and its concentration on preventing Islam's growing determination to coalesce into a dangerous political movement led the regime to seek even greater ideological uniformity across all socio-political sectors" (Ricklefs 2008, 644). Muslim separatist and fundamentalist movements sought to overthrow Suharto and establish an Islamic regime (Intan 2006, 55). For instance, in March 1981, five Islamic extremists hijacked a Garuda Airlines plane in Bangkok (Ricklefs 2008, 639). An Indonesian antiterrorist squad eventually arrested one hijacker and killed the other four, and freed all the hostages. This hijacking made the government even more concerned about Islamic groups as sources of political opposition, especially after members of the Muslim organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) walked out of the DPR session in March 1980. This happened when they were discussing the draft of the election law amid the public call for free elections (Ricklefs 2008, 639).

The struggle to establish Pancasila as the only basis took place in various political and social organizations. Sjafruddin Prawiranegara, a prominent Muslim leader, objected: "We Muslims can wholeheartedly accept [*Pancasila*] as the basis or principle of the state, but as Muslims, it is impossible for us to accept it as the [only basis] for our lives. It's impossible for the Quran and Hadith to be exchanged for the 1945 Constitution based on *Pancasila*" (Prawiranegara, quoted in Intan 2006, 56). This objection contended that the uniqueness of each organization and the diversity of beliefs underlying these organizations cannot simply be homogenized by the doctrine of Pancasila as the only basis. Thus, the two biggest Muslim organizations, the traditionalist NU and the more modernist Muhammadiyah, adopted Pancasila as the only basis while still maintaining their religious identities (Ricklefs 2008, 648–649). Meanwhile, another Islamic organization, Pelajar Islam Indonesia (PII), rejected Suharto's doctrine. Consequently, its members could not hold a congress in 1985, since the government would not give them permission. Finally, in 1987, PII disbanded (Matanasi 2017).

Thus, Muslims were dissatisfied with the doctrine of Pancasila as the only basis. As Robert Pringle (2010, 108) explains: "To many Muslims this formula went too far towards explicitly excluding Islam, and in September 1984 their unhappiness led to rioting at Jakarta's port city, Tanjung Priok, which the army harshly repressed with many casualties." Ricklefs (2008, 650), however, asserts that the rejection of this doctrine was only one among other motives for the riot in Tanjung Priok.

The Protestant Council of Churches in Indonesia (Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia [PGI]) also disagreed with Suharto's doctrine. The minister of religion at that time, Munawir Sjadzali, related how a Christian pastor had

told him that even "should the sky itself fall in," he "would not accept the [*only basis*]" (Sjadzali, quoted in Intan 2006, 57). PGI tried to solve this problem by being "as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves" (Matt. 10:16, New International Version; see Intan 2000, 190). The council adopted Pancasila as the only basis in its charter, but in the same article, it quoted 1 Corinthians 3:11: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (NIV). This hinted at an unwillingness to accept the ideological uniformity imposed by Suharto's regime. Intan concludes: "In brief, many organizations, especially religious groups, feared that by adopting *Pancasila* as their *only basis*, they would compromise their organization's integrity and even replace their respective *raison d'être* with a secular ideology" (Intan 2006, 57).

### 4.2 *Indonesia as an Integralist State*

Political integralism became manifest under Suharto's leadership since 1980, when Indonesia was declared "an integralist state" (Bourchier 2019, 715). This ideology is closely related to Pancasila as the only basis, since Pancasila is considered "an integralistic ideology" (Ramage 1995, 22). Douglas Ramage defines the concept of an integralistic state as conceiving of "the state and society as an organic totality in which the primary emphasis is not in terms of individual rights or limitations on the powers of government, but in terms of social obligations" (Ramage 1995, 137).

The notion of an integralistic state firstly came from Supomo, a legal scholar and the first Indonesian minister of justice, in the discussion on the formulation of Pancasila. For Supomo, an integralistic state was "a family-like systematic state" (Latif 2011, 29). According to Mary E. McCoy (2019, 16), Supomo's integralism appealed to the philosophies of Benedict de Spinoza and G. W. F. Hegel. She describes such integralism as "a form of corporatism—a statist ideology casting society and government as an integrated whole, whether a living organism or a vast family governed by a father figure who embodies the spirit of the people and therefore can divine their greater interests." The kind of state that Supomo envisioned does not "stand outside the people but *is* the people, led by a head of state who is also one with the people and therefore attuned to their aspirations" (McCoy 2019, 16).

Supomo's conception of an integralistic state with a family-like model would be later copied by the New Order regime. Referring to retired Brigadier General Abdul Kadir Besar, one of Suharto's military politicians, Ramage (1995, 82) concludes that during the New Order regime, the vision of Indonesia was "the integralistic state of which Pancasila is the modern ideological expression." Besar explained that "the family principle of governance means that Pancasila describes an inseparable set of relationships: between all people, between

people and the state, between the rulers and the ruled, between God and mankind, and between 'this world and the universe'" (Ramage 1995, 82). This family principle was also embraced by Mashuri Saleh, former minister of information (1973–1977). For him, all Indonesians belonged to "one great family that [is] supposed to think positively, to live harmoniously, and thus to interact positively" (McCoy 2019, 27).

During Suharto's regime, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia [ABRI]) played a vital role in implementing the vision of an integralistic state and ideology—they were "the main pillar of the Suharto regime" (Ricklefs 2008, 636). "Since the late 1980s," says Ramage (1995, 22), "members of the government, especially from ABRI, perceive new kinds of threats, particularly in the realm of democracy and human rights. . . . There is the re-emergence, largely in ABRI circles, of 'integralism' and an ABRI attempt to redefine Pancasila as an 'integralistic ideology'" (Ramage 1995, 22). A political scholar from the University of Gajah Mada in Yogyakarta, Afan Gaffar summarizes the role of ABRI during the New Order regime "as the shaper of a good atmosphere so that all government policies can be executed or implemented properly" (Gaffar 1999, 39). To foster and maintain this good atmosphere, "ABRI was ready to use violence to relentlessly crush the dissidents," especially the local residents who expressed different interests from ABRI's priorities in particular and from Suharto's regime in general (Ricklefs 2008, 638).

More importantly, the application of the vision of an integralist state depended very much on Suharto's presidency. Gaffar concludes:

> In fact, in the New Order's political journey, presidential power was at the center of the entire political process that took place in Indonesia. This institution was the shaper and determinant of the national social, economic and political agenda. The power of the presidential institution can be said to be so great because the president was able to control political recruitment and had unlimited financial resources.
>
> GAFFAR 1999, 31

Therefore, during the New Order period, there was a famous Indonesian idiom, *Asal bapak senang*—"Keep the boss happy"—which embodied "a supposedly traditional Javanese attitude of deference to authority" (Eklöf 2003, 195–196). Everyone needed to take actions that would keep Suharto happy in order to receive rewards or to avoid political and socioeconomic punishments.

There were some problems with the integralistic notions involved. Even in the discussion on the formulation of Pancasila, the concept of an integralistic

state with its family-like model had triggered fierce debates, especially because it seemed to conflict with civil and political rights, specifically freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression (Latif 2011, 31). In general, an integralist state is a collectivist one, which conflicts with individualism. In the New Order context, Ramage (1995, 82) concludes: "Pancasila as an integralistic ideology is deeply paternalistic and the government has the duty to protect all parts of the national family equally. The emphasis is on government duty towards individuals and groups rather than on individual rights. Checks on government power are unnecessary because this would hinder government ability to fulfill its protective duties towards all." Suharto's paternalistic model of integralism avoided the checks on his regime's power and thereby endangered democracy. Marsillam Simanjuntak, a former student activist who would become attorney general and minister of justice in the democratic Indonesian regime (the Reformation Order) that began after Suharto's fall, opposed the New Order's integralism. McCoy (2019, 35) explains how, "in teasing out integralism's Hegelian antecedents, Simanjuntak produced a trenchant critique to its antidemocratic tenets and normative authority, warning that Suharto's adherence to Supomo's original vision would 'carry serious consequences for democracy and the people's sovereignty by fostering 'totalitarianism and authoritarianism.'"

### 4.3 *Kuyperian Critiques*

From the perspective of Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty, the ideological uniformity imposed by Suharto and his regime cannot be accepted. From the very first appearance of Suharto's doctrine, various leaders were suspicious of the proposed uniform basis of social organizations and of Suharto's apparent desire to create a homogeneous Indonesian nation. As Kuyper objected to the liberal ideology of uniformity, so did the Indonesian social leaders try to reject the authoritarian ideological uniformity. Though it had been originally a blessing for Indonesia, Pancasila in the New Order regime was used to impose a false uniformity that denied the social and political diversities. It was not Pancasila itself that was a curse for Indonesian life and society, but Suharto's doctrine.

In contrast to Suharto's doctrine, the sphere sovereignty principle embraces structural and confessional diversities in that each social and political organization has its own basis grounded in "its own identity, its own unique task, its own God-given prerogatives. On each God has conferred its own peculiar right of existence and reason for existence" (Spykman 1976, 167). Kuyper's principle encourages religious groups to develop their own patterns of involvement in the Indonesian society and public life. Thus, NU, Muhammadiyah, and PGI can

each base their organization on their own integrity, identity, and reason for existence. Kuyper criticized William I's violence against the Dutch Reformed seceders and Bismarck's Kulturkampf against the Roman Catholic Party and Church in Germany. Similarly, the disbandment of PII due to its objections to Suharto's regime should not be tolerated.

Now, Suharto's doctrine of Pancasila as the sole basis and its violent application during the New Order regime have made Pancasila look like a curse. However, Pancasila can be a true blessing. If we go back to Sukarno, who played the most important role in articulating Pancasila, we will recognize this. Sukarno (quoted in Latif 2011, 41) said:

> Pancasila is one *weltanschauung*, one philosophical basis. Pancasila is a unifying tool, and I am absolutely sure that the Indonesian nation from Sabang to Merauke can only unite on the basis of that Pancasila. And it is ... also, in essence, a unifying tool in our struggle to eliminate all diseases that we have been fighting against for decades, namely, in particular, imperialism.

Thus, even though Pancasila is Indonesia's unifying basis, it is not intended to displace the uniqueness of each religion and create false uniformity. Sukarno explicitly stated that "Indonesia should be a country where everyone can worship their God in a free expression" (Sukarno, quoted in Latif 2011, 75). Mohammad Hatta, the nation's first vice president, proclaimed, together with Sukarno, Indonesia independent and was heavily involved in the formulation of Pancasila. He said: "Each group can understand the meaning of belief in one supreme God [the first principle of Pancasila] according to their religious understanding. But it is evident that the essence of the one Godhead can be shown in the appreciation of humans as God's creatures" (Hatta, quoted in Latif 2014, 35). With this explanation in mind, we see that Suharto's mistake was twofold. Not only did he fail to recognize the uniqueness of each religion and to appreciate human beings as God's creatures, but, worse, he used Pancasila to wipe out religious diversity. In this way, he made Pancasila self-contradictory. Whereas Sukarno, Hatta, and others articulated Pancasila as a blessing for the nation, Suharto turned it into a curse by imposing his doctrine as sole foundation.

As said, Pancasila recognizes the existence of minorities. Franz Magnis-Suseno, the prominent German-born Catholic leader in Indonesia, summarizes the whole process of the articulations of Pancasila and Indonesia's constitution as follows: it was

> the struggle over how two things can be guaranteed at once—namely, that in the Indonesian nation, no distinction is made between the majority and the minority, and that the integrity of all religious aspirations is respected. Pancasila wants to ensure that all Indonesians, in the integrity of their religious, ethnic, and cultural identities, become fully Indonesian citizens, and fully share in owning Indonesia.
>
> MAGNIS-SUSENO 2021, 95

So, Pancasila itself constitutes a critique of the tyranny of the majority. In this sense, Kuyper's sphere sovereignty, criticizing the tyranny of the majority embodied in the French Revolution and promoting the ontological equality of all religious and social organizations, not only is very close to Pancasila but also can play a pivotal role as theoretical support for it.

Turning to Suharto's ideology of political integralism, we can first observe that, from the critical perspective of sphere sovereignty, his integralism was an octopus-like power, an excessive exercise of political authority. The shadow of Hegelian pantheism can be detected in Indonesia's integralism. Not only was Supomo's integralism (which Suharto copied) close to Hegel's philosophy, but more importantly, there was the coalescence of Suharto's state and the people in the model of family-like integralism. This coalescence indicates the model of pantheism as shown in Bismarckian Germany, which was criticized by Kuyper. In Suharto's integralism, we see an all-powerful state in which the government's power is unchecked. Similar to the Bismarckian state, Suharto's state took the place of God. Fortunately, by the common grace of God, sphere sovereignty defended itself against the false idol of Suharto's state sovereignty. In May 1998, Suharto's regime was overthrown by civil society, specifically by a number of student movements that enjoyed considerable popular support. In effect, other spheres spoke up and regained their sovereignty.

A second Kuyperian critique of Suharto's integralism is that it took away civil society's freedom. In general, citizens could not exercise such basic rights as the freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and freedom of expression. From the very first appearance of the concept of integralism in the formulation of Pancasila, it conflicted with people's basic rights. Under the supervision of ABRI, for example, Indonesians weren't free to have different opinions from those of the government. Also, there was hardly any freedom of the press, as shown by the banning of multiple newspapers and magazines during Suharto's rule (see Hill 1994, 37–44). McCoy (2019, 31) comments:

> Without critical reporting as a check on the regime's excesses, the following decade saw deepening structural corruption and a steep

> increase in Suharto's use of the state to enrich his entourage, particularly his children, whose business empires soon penetrated nearly every sector of the economy.

She continues:

> Reviving the ideology of integralism, Suharto augmented [his control] by transforming the media into an embodied element of state power, making journalists complicit in his regime's legitimating discourse and inculcating a reflexive self-censorship that helped insulate the regime from political challenge.

By contrast, sphere sovereignty encourages freedom of civil society so that every social domain can grow, develop, and flourish according to its own God-given prerogatives. Kuyper even creates a space for the sovereignty of the individual person. In his 1898 lecture, he says: "The sovereignty of conscience [is] the palladium of all personal liberty, in this sense—that conscience is never subject to man but always and ever to God almighty" (Kuyper [1898] 1931, 107–108). From liberty of conscience, Kuyper believes, liberty of speech and liberty of worship are born. Thus, on Kuyper's view, Suharto's integralism, as exhibited in his banning of religious organizations and severely restricting the freedom of speech and freedom of the press, constituted the murder of civil society.

A third Kuyperian critique of Suharto's integralism is that during his rule, there was no "healthy societal differentiation" (Skillen 2011, 13). There were at least two problematic mixtures. First, Suharto's integralism blended the sphere of the family with that of the state. Second, Suharto's own family's interests and business activities were blended with those of the state and of society. It was commonly known that Suharto's family gained many personal advantages through government policies. In a comprehensive sense, the state of Indonesia under Suharto was run like a family business. An important difference, however, between the family and the state is that the former emphasizes love whereas the latter stresses justice (see Un 2021). Kuyper's principle of structural pluralism encourages a healthy societal differentiation between the family and the state, based on what Jonathan Chaplin (2010, 18) calls the "irreducible identities" of each institution. Chaplin also mentions that each institution has its own intrinsic value that must be respected and that each institution must not be treated instrumentally. Clearly, Suharto and his family *did* treat Indonesia's state and society instrumentally, using them for their own interests instead of respecting their intrinsic values and irreducible identities.

Under the New Order regime, there was no healthy interdependence among social spheres, as the Kuyperian principle encourages; rather, Indonesia's state and society were unhealthily and instrumentally exploited by Suharto, his family, and his regime.

## 5 Conclusion

We've explored Kuyper's critiques of ideological uniformity and political integralism—specifically, his criticism of liberal uniformity of rationalization in the Netherlands, popular sovereignty in France, and state sovereignty in Germany. In order to avoid such uniformity and integralism, Kuyper's articulation of the principle of sphere sovereignty was imperative.

I then used Kuyper's principle to criticize ideological uniformity and political integralism under Suharto's rule. From the perspective of Kuyper's principle, Suharto's doctrine of Pancasila as the only basis endangered democracy, civil society, and freedom since it prevented social and political organizations from flourishing according to their own integrity, identity, and reason for existence. In addition, Suharto's doctrine of integralism must be criticized from the perspective of sphere sovereignty, for it made the state play an octopus-like role, whereas the state should occupy its proper place without intruding on other social spheres. Moreover, Suharto's integralism should be rejected because it does not provide a healthy societal differentiation. Suharto's blending of the sphere of the family with that of the state, for instance, is unacceptable from the perspective of Kuyper's principle.

These critiques show that Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty is important to maintain democracy, civil society, and freedom. Indonesia's situation in terms of democracy and human rights has improved since the fall of Suharto and his regime in 1998. Nonetheless, there are several problems that could endanger Indonesia's democracy and the freedom of its people—for instance, the government's oversensitive reactions toward critics. I would therefore strongly encourage other scholars to carry out studies to show the necessity of sphere sovereignty for contemporary Indonesia.

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