



BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM AND PANCASILA'S FIRST PRINCIPLE: A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH INDONESIAN RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

MONOTEÍSMO BÍBLICO Y PRIMER PRINCIPIO DE PANCASILA: UN COMPROMISO TEOLÓGICO CRISTIANO CON EL PLURALISMO RELIGIOSO INDONESIO

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Abstract:

This article examines the theological concept of divine unity as reflected in Indonesia's national philosophy, Pancasila, with a specific focus on its first principle, "*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*" (Belief in the one and only God). The research situates Christian biblical theology within the pluralistic religious landscape of Indonesia, articulating how the understanding of God's unity informs interfaith dialogue and national cohesion. Employing a methodological approach grounded in exegetical analysis, the article elucidates the etymological, linguistic, and philosophical aspects of the Indonesian term '*Ketuhanan*' (Divinity) and examines its implications for theological monotheism. Through a close reading of pivotal Old Testament texts, the article demonstrates that the affirmation of one God is deeply rooted in biblical revelation. This interpretative work seeks to corroborate the national ideology with scriptural truth, arguing that Pancasila can be affirmed by Christians not as a secular compromise but as a value resonant with the core tenets of their faith, thereby providing a theologically coherent basis for full participation in national life. The findings underscore the transformative role of biblical monotheism in shaping ethical citizenship and reinforcing the spiritual foundations of national identity. This article contributes novel insights into the integration of Christian theology with a pluralistic national ideology, critically discussing its implications for Christian inclusivity and civic responsibility within Indonesia's dynamic socio-religious landscape.

Keywords: Monotheism, Divine Unity, Indonesian Pluralism, Christian Theology.

Resumen:

Este artículo examina el concepto teológico de la unidad divina reflejado en la filosofía nacional de Indonesia, Pancasila, centrándose específicamente en su primer principio, "*Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*" (Divinidad Única y Suprema). La investigación sitúa a la teología bíblica cristiana dentro del panorama religioso pluralista de Indonesia, articulando cómo la comprensión de la unidad de Dios fundamenta el diálogo interreligioso y la cohesión nacional. Empleando una metodología basada en el análisis exegético, el artículo dilucida los aspectos etimológicos, lingüísticos y filosóficos del término indonesio '*Ketuhanan*' (Divinidad) y examina sus implicaciones para el monoteísmo teológico. Mediante una lectura detallada de textos pivotaes del Antiguo Testamento, se demuestra que la afirmación de un solo Dios está profundamente arraigada en la revelación bíblica. Este trabajo interpretativo busca corroborar la ideología nacional con la verdad escritural, argumentando que los cristianos pueden afirmar Pancasila no como un compromiso secular, sino como un valor que resuena con los principios centrales de su fe, proveyendo así una base

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teológicamente coherente para una participación plena en la vida nacional. Los hallazgos subrayan el papel transformador del monoteísmo bíblico en la formación de una ciudadanía ética y en el refuerzo de los fundamentos espirituales de la identidad nacional. Este artículo contribuye con nuevas perspectivas sobre la integración de la teología cristiana con una ideología nacional pluralista, discutiendo críticamente sus implicaciones para la inclusividad cristiana y la responsabilidad cívica dentro del dinámico contexto socio-religioso de Indonesia.

Palabras clave: Monoteísmo, unidad divina, pluralismo Indonesio, teología cristiana.

1. Introduction

Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, maintains a constitutionally pluralistic religious identity grounded in the national ideology of Pancasila.^{2,3} The first principle of Pancasila, "*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*" (belief in the one and only God), serves as the foundation for religious harmony within a diverse faith landscape.^{4,5} However, theological discourse on the interpretation of this principle within Christian biblical theology remains underdeveloped. The Christian interpretation of monotheism, deeply rooted in the exegesis of scriptural texts, provides critical insights into the nature of God as an indivisible and transcendent entity. This interpretation not only reinforces the doctrinal convictions of Christianity but also contributes to the broader discourse on religious tolerance and civic responsibility.^{6,7} By engaging with Deuteronomy 6:4 (the Shema), this study investigates the theological consonance between the Shema's ontological claim and Pancasila's transcendent moral framework. Furthermore, the study addresses how Christian theology contributes to interfaith engagement and ethical nation-building within this pluralistic society.

Methodologically, the present study adopts an exegetical approach that emphasizes a close reading of pivotal biblical passages alongside a hermeneutical engagement with historical and contemporary interpretations. The selected texts of Deut. 6:4 serves as a critical locus for understanding the nuances of divine unity as conveyed within the biblical tradition. In this context, Christian biblical theology emerges as a potent resource for engaging with national ideology, offering a historically grounded perspective and dynamically responsive to the needs of a pluralistic society. This approach allows for a rigorous analysis of the semantic analysis of '*Divinity*' (divinity), cultural hermeneutics, and philosophical theology, thereby unveiling layers of meaning that are often obscured by conventional readings.

In light of these considerations, the current study is not only timely but also essential for fostering a deeper understanding of the interplay between biblical exegesis and national ideology. By meticulously analyzing scriptural texts through both exegetical and hermeneutical lenses, the research aims to unveil the inherent connections between the ancient affirmation of religious value and its modern manifestation in state policy. Such an inquiry is expected to yield valuable insights into how theological constructs can inform practical governance and promote harmonious coexistence among diverse religious groups. The study, therefore, stands at the intersection of theology, linguistics, and political philosophy, offering a multifaceted exploration of issues that are central to both academic discourse and everyday civic life.

² J. JUNAEDI – D. DIKI – A. ABDULLAH, "Pergumulan Pemikiran Ideologi Negara Antara Islam Dan Pancasila Dalam NKRI", *Edunity Kajian Ilmu Sosial Dan Pendidikan* 2.2 (2023) 232–45. <https://doi.org/10.57096/edunity.v2i2.66>.

³ WORLD POPULATION REVIEW, "Muslim Population by Country 2023", *World Population by Country*, 2023, 1. <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/muslim-population-by-country>

⁴ C. B. MULYATNO, "Pancasila as a Philosophical Basis of Religious Education in the Context of Indonesian Religious Diversity", *WISDOM* 4.3 (2022) 101–11. <https://doi.org/10.24234/wisdom.v4i3.806>.

⁵ Z. SETIAWAN, "Relasi penerimaan Pancasila oleh ormas keagamaan terhadap pengokohan nasionalisme dan kerukunan antar umat beragama (Studi Kasus Nahdlatul Ulama Dan Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia)", *Sosio dialektika* 2.2 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.31942/sd.v2i2.2093>.

⁶ Z. SETIAWAN, "Relasi penerimaan Pancasila..."

⁷ LUMINTANG, STEVRI PENTI NOVRI INDRA., "Lordship and Humanity Principles for The Peace of Indonesia: An Integrative Study of Theology and Ideology", *Analisa: Journal of Social Science and Religion* 6.2 (2021) 199–216. <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v6i02.1470>.

Moreover, this study recognizes the inherent challenges in reconciling diverse theological perspectives within the framework of a unified national identity. The dynamic tension between religious tradition and modern statecraft necessitates an approach that is both critically reflective and contextually sensitive. In this regard, the exegetical method serves as an indispensable tool for discerning the layered meanings embedded in biblical texts, thereby facilitating a dialogue between ancient wisdom and contemporary exigencies. The investigation pays particular attention to the linguistic nuances of the Indonesian term '*Ketuhanan*' (divinity), examining its etymological roots and semantic evolution with the philosophical constructs of the divine in the concept of one and only God. The intersection of biblical theology and national ideology, as explored in this study, holds profound implications for both scholarly inquiry and practical governance. The insights gained from this investigation are expected to foster a more inclusive and resilient national identity, one that embraces the diversity of Indonesia's religious landscape while affirming a common commitment to religious values. In doing so, the study not only reinforces the centrality of "Belief in the one and only God" within the national narrative but also charts a course for future research at the nexus of theology, linguistics, and political philosophy.

2. Philosophical Perspectives of the "Belief in the One and Only God"

The term 'Divinity' derives from the root word 'God' (Lord/God),⁸ denoting a theological dimension that aligns with monotheistic traditions. While Islamic theology predominantly informs its interpretation,⁹ Christian theological engagement provides complementary insights into the divine in the concept of the one and only God.

The phrase, originating from the Indonesian language, encapsulates a profound understanding of the one and only God that transcends mere monotheistic assertion. In this context, "God" is derived from the root word that connotes divinity, encompassing attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, and transcendence. The term "One and Only" further emphasizes the singular, unparalleled nature of the divine, reinforcing the idea of an absolute and indivisible God. This linguistic construct, therefore, not only signifies a theological affirmation but also serves as a critical reference point for the broader cultural and religious identity of Indonesia.¹⁰ An in-depth etymological analysis reveals that the term 'divinity' is intrinsically linked to concepts of divinity and sacredness, a connection that is deeply embedded in the historical evolution of the Indonesian language. Scholars have noted that the suffix and prefix structures inherent in the term amplify its meaning, suggesting not merely a state of being divine but also the active presence of the divine in the cosmos. This dual aspect of static existence and dynamic interaction is crucial for understanding how Indonesian society conceptualizes the relationship between the human and the transcendent.

Philosophically, the notion of "Belief in the one and only God" resonates with classical monotheistic traditions while simultaneously inviting reinterpretation considering contemporary epistemologies. The assertion of a singular, supreme deity serves as a counterpoint to polytheistic and relativistic worldviews, reinforcing the idea of an immutable divine order. This concept is particularly relevant in modern Indonesia, where debates about religious identity and national unity continue to shape public policy and social norms.¹¹ The philosophical dimension of this principle challenges adherents

⁸ I. A. TUMANGGOR – Y. A. DONOBAKTI – Y. SINURAT, "Ketuhanan yang maha esa. Tinjauan Filosofis Atas Sila I Dari Pancasila", in: *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Filsafat Teologi (SENATI) I: Hoax Dalam Perspektif Filsafat*, Vol. 1, 2023.

⁹ A. FARIKHIN, "Tinjauan ideologis dan hubungan ekonomi islam dengan ekonomi pancasila" *Perbanas Journal of Islamic Economics & Business* 2.1 (2022) 118–27. <https://doi.org/10.56174/pjieb.v2i1.23>.

¹⁰ E. REGIANI - DINIE ANGGRAENIE DEWI, "Pudarnya nilai-nilai pancasila dalam kehidupan masyarakat di era globalisasi", *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 5.1 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.31316/jk.v5i1.1402>.

¹¹ A. SAPUTRO, "Sociological Foundation of Pancasila Education as the Original Identity of Indonesian Society", *JED (Jurnal Etika Demokrasi)* 6.1 (2021) 45–53. <https://doi.org/10.26618/jed.v6i1.4576>.

to reconcile traditional beliefs with progressive ideas, fostering a dialogue that is both reflective and transformative. In doing so, it not only preserves the integrity of ancient wisdom but also adapts it to the needs of a rapidly evolving society.

Furthermore, the interpretation of “Belief in the one and only God” is enriched by its contextual application within Indonesia’s socio-religious landscape. The significance of Pancasila in contemporary Indonesian society cannot be overstated. As a guiding principle for governance and societal norms, Pancasila provides the ideological foundation upon which the nation is built.¹² Its first principle, emphasizing the worship of one Supreme God, has been instrumental in shaping policies that promote religious tolerance and coexistence. This enduring commitment to the religious values in the first principle of Pancasila is reflected in both legislative practices and everyday social interactions, making it a vital point of reference for religious communities.¹³ This principle functions as a symbolic articulation of the nation’s commitment to religious tolerance and unity, operating both as a theological declaration and as a civic mandate. The interplay between the sacred and the secular is evident in how this concept is embedded in educational curricula, legal frameworks, and public rituals. As such, it offers a powerful paradigm through which the state seeks to harmonize diverse belief systems under a unified ethical vision. This dual function underscores the adaptability of the concept, allowing it to serve as both a source of spiritual guidance and a practical instrument of statecraft.

The meaning of “belief in the one and only God” encompasses a rich tapestry of linguistic, philosophical, and cultural insights that collectively affirm the singularity and transcendence of the divine. It invites both adherents and critics to engage in a dialogue that bridges ancient wisdom with contemporary realities, thereby reinforcing its relevance in today’s pluralistic society. The multifaceted nature of this concept continues to inspire theological reflection and serves as a cornerstone for Indonesia’s collective quest for unity and identity. Consequently, this comprehensive exploration not only clarifies the intricate layers of meaning inherent in the phrase but also provides essential insights informing divine unity and its practical societal implications with clarity.

2.1. Linguistic Analysis of “Divinity”

The word ‘*Divinity*’ (divinity) in Pancasila is not merely a lexical item but a composite that reflects the deep cultural and religious sentiments of Indonesian society. Linguistically, it is formed by the prefix ‘ke-’, which denotes a state or quality, and the root ‘*Tuhan*’, meaning God. The resultant term encapsulates the abstract notion of divinity and is employed in various contexts to denote both the essence and the expression of the divine.^{14, 15}

A comprehensive study of the term ‘*Divinity*’ reveals that its usage extends beyond theological discourse into everyday language, where it signifies a broader understanding of sacredness. In academic discussions, the term is often analyzed in relation to its counterparts in other languages, such as the Arabic ‘*tauhid*’ and the Hebrew ‘*echad*’.^{16, 17} Such comparative analysis not only enriches our understanding of monotheistic

¹² I. G. N. SANTIKA – I. M. KARTIKA – I. G. SUJANA – N. M. A. DWINDAYANI, “The Dynamic History of the Journey of Pancasila as the Foundation of the Indonesian State”, *Journal of Sustainable Development Science* 5.1 (2023) 25–32. <https://doi.org/10.46650/jsds.5.1.1432.25-32>.

¹³ A. SAPUTRO, “Sociological Foundation of Pancasila Education...”

¹⁴ D. SUGONO (Ed.), *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia*, Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, Jakarta 2008.

¹⁵ J. S. BADUDU – L. L. LESMANESYA – MUCHTAR – H. WIJAYA KUSUMAH, *Morfologi Bahasa Indonesia (Lisan)*, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Jakarta 1984. <https://repository.kemdikbud.go.id/3155/1/MORFOLOGI%20BAHASA%20INDONESIA-LISAN.pdf>

¹⁶ S. SATRIANI, “Nilai Agama Dan Moral Untuk Anak Usia 4-6 Tahun: Analisis Kebijakan Terbaru.” *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 7.5 (2023) 5418–26. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v7i5.4979>.

¹⁷ D. H. Y. NGGADAS, “Monotheisme Yahudi Kuno Dan Doktrin Trinitas”, *JURNAL LUXNOS* 4.1 (2021) 53–94. <https://doi.org/10.47304/jl.v4i1.123>.

constructs but also highlights the unique semantic fields that emerge in the Indonesian linguistic context. In contemporary usage, *Divinity* functions as a bridge between traditional religious beliefs and modern secular interpretations.

As a noun, the syntactic properties of 'divinity typically function as the subject or object within a clause, often accompanied by modifiers that specify the nature of divine attributes. This syntactic flexibility is indicative of the term's capacity to adapt to diverse communicative contexts, ranging from liturgical texts to everyday expressions of faith. The term '*Divinity*' usage in compound forms underscores its semantic versatility, allowing it to convey complex ideas about the divine concisely. The table below provides a detailed breakdown the term '*Divinity*' is formed via a derivational process involving both prefixation and suffixation. Its structure can be segmented as follows.

Component	Morpheme	Morphological Function	Gloss/Meaning
Prefix	'Ke-'	A nominalizing prefix that abstract the concept, transforming a lexical base into an abstract noun form	Denotes abstraction or a state of being (here, the state of being divine)
Root	'Tuhan'	The core lexical item referring to the divine or God	God
Suffix	'-an'	A derivational suffix that consolidates the meaning, yielding a noun that expresses a quality or state	The quality or state of divinity; effectively 'divinity'

The construction of '*Divinity*' demonstrates the prototypical morphological strategy in Indonesian whereby the addition of the prefix '*ke-*' and the suffix '*-an*' to the root '*Tuhan*' transforms a concrete notion (God) into an abstract noun (the state or matter of God).¹⁸ In syntactic terms, this noun typically occupies positions as either the subject or object within sentence structures. This derivational morphology illustrates the lexical flexibility of '*Divinity*'. Its capacity to appear in compound forms and diverse syntactic contexts ranging from liturgical texts to everyday discourse underscores its semantic versatility. The abstraction enabled by the affixation process allows speakers to articulate complex theological ideas succinctly, thereby shaping and reflecting the dynamic interplay between form and meaning in Indonesian religious expression.

The linguistic exploration of '*Divinity*' encompasses its historical evolution and the sociocultural dynamics that have shaped its usage. Over time, the term has acquired layers of meaning through interactions with other languages and religious traditions, reflecting the syncretic nature of Indonesian spirituality. The term carries not only a literal meaning but also a connotation that varies with context, tone, and audience. For example, in a solemn liturgical setting, '*Divinity*' may evoke a sense of reverence and awe, while in everyday conversation, it might be used in a more metaphorical sense to describe profound experiences of spirituality. This pragmatic flexibility highlights the importance of context in interpreting the term and underscores its role as a dynamic element of Indonesian religious expression.

The linguistic analysis of '*Divinity*' demonstrates its multifaceted character, encompassing morphological structure, syntactic function, and pragmatic usage. The term serves as a linguistic bridge that connects theological concepts with everyday expressions of faith, reflecting both historical continuity and contemporary innovation.

¹⁸ E. SARI - MU'MININ, *Pengantar Morfologi Bahasa Indonesia (Bentuk, Hakikat, dan Objek)*, Lima Aksara, Jombang '2023.

Through detailed examination, this analysis reveals that 'Divinity' is a dynamic and adaptable term that plays a crucial role in the articulation of Indonesia's religious identity. Its rich linguistic features not only enhance our understanding of divine discourse but also contribute significantly to the broader dialogue on the intersection of language, culture, and spirituality.

2.2 An Interpretation of the Divine in Deuteronomy 4:6: A Socio-Historical and Literary Analysis

The term "Ketuhanan" (Divinity) in Pancasila emerged from a socially plural context. Therefore, the understanding of "Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa" (Belief in the One and Only God) within Indonesia's multi-religious setting must be distinguished from the concept of the "one and only God" as articulated in Deuteronomy 6:4. Thus, the term "Ketuhanan" within the framework of Pancasila aims to affirm religious identity as an expression of daily faith practice

The book of Deuteronomy, in its final form, is widely understood by scholars to have been composed during a period of intense national crisis, likely the late Judean monarchy or the Babylonian exile (7th-6th centuries BCE).¹⁹ This context is essential for understanding its message about God.

The ancient Near Eastern world was saturated with polytheistic religions where deities were primarily associated with raw power, natural forces, and capriciousness.²⁰ A nation's strength and prosperity were seen as a direct reflection of its gods' power. In this milieu, Deuteronomy 4:6 subverts the paradigm. Israel's "wisdom" and "understanding" are not demonstrated through military might or economic wealth but through their righteousness and justice, embodied in the Torah (God's law). The divine nature of Yahweh is thus defined not by uncontrollable force but by moral order, righteous statutes, and just decrees. His divinity is revealed through the ethical life of the community He governs

Literarily, Deuteronomy is structured as a suzerainty-vassal treaty, a common form in the ancient Near East between a great king (suzerain) and a lesser people (vassal).²¹ This structure frames the understanding of divinity. The Suzerain's Character Revealed in Law: In such treaties, the preamble and historical prologue established the suzerain's identity and benevolent acts. Yahweh's prologue is the Exodus (Deut. 4:32-40). The stipulations (the laws) that follow are not arbitrary rules but are an extension of the suzerain's own character and will.²² Therefore, the "statutes and rules" (v.5) are a direct reflection of Yahweh's holy, just, and wise nature. To obey them is to align with the very grain of the universe as governed by its Divine King.

Deuteronomy 4:6 is a key part of Moses's persuasive rhetoric. It provides a positive incentive for covenant faithfulness, contrasting with the severe warnings of curses that follow. The revealed divinity of Yahweh is therefore not merely fearsome (though He is transcendent and holy) but also desirable and beautiful. The nations will look upon a community living under God's law and recognize it as the highest form of "wisdom and understanding", a compelling witness to the attractiveness of God's reign.

2.2.1 Divinity Concept in Deuteronomy 6:4

The verse, rendered as "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deut.

¹⁹ D. BOKOVOY, *Authoring the Old Testament Genesis — Deuteronomy*, Draper USA, Greg Kofford Books 2014.

²⁰ J. H. WALTON, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*, Baker Academic, Michigan 2006.

²¹ M. G. KLINE, *Treaty of the Great King: The Covenant Structure of Deuteronomy: Study and Commentary*, Michigan, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1963.

²² G. VON RAD, *Deuteronomy: A Commentary*, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press 1966.

6:4 NIV). serves as a foundational text in understanding biblical monotheism. A meticulous analysis of its Hebrew structure reveals a deliberate emphasis on divine unity, with the repetition of the divine name underscoring the exclusivity of God's nature. The text invites believers to engage in an intimate, covenantal relationship with an absolute deity.

Exegesis of Deut. 6:4 involves a careful consideration of its linguistic features and historical context. The original Hebrew word for 'one' (*echad*) implies not only numerical singularity but also a qualitative unity that transcends simple arithmetic. This dual connotation enriches the theological understanding of the passage, suggesting that God's oneness is both quantitative and qualitative. In addition, "the LORD is one" could also gain the meaning "only one," for Deut 6:4. to be interpreted monolatrically or monotheistically.²³ Scholars argue that the structure of the verse, with its parallel construction and rhythmic cadence, is designed to reinforce the listener's awareness of God's incomparable unity. Moreover, the use of the imperative 'hear' serves as a call to active remembrance, urging the faithful to internalize this central tenet of their belief system.

Historical-critical methods further illuminate the significance of Deut. 6:4 within the broader narrative of Israel's covenant with God. The Shema, as it is known, not only functions as a liturgical recitation but also as a doctrinal proclamation that has shaped Jewish identity for millennia. Its central place in daily prayers and religious education testifies to its enduring impact. The verse's formulation has been the subject of extensive scholarly debate, with interpretations varying from a strict monotheistic statement to a more nuanced expression of divine relationality. 'Monotheism' often appears as dichotomously paired with 'polytheism', but many scholars prefer alternative concepts such as monolatry, henotheism, or one-deity discourse.²⁴ Despite these debates, the core message remains unaltered: the absolute and unparalleled unity of God.

Exegetical interpretation of Deut. 6:4 in modern scholarship continues to emphasize its theological centrality. Contemporary theologians argue that the Shema's concise formulation encapsulates the essence of biblical monotheism, serving as a touchstone for both Jewish and Christian traditions. This perspective is bolstered by linguistic analyses that highlight the deliberate use of singular forms and parallel structures in the original text.^{25, 26} Such analyses reveal that the verse was crafted to provoke a meditative response among its audience, thereby fostering an experiential recognition of God's singularity. The enduring influence of Deut. 6:4 is evident in its repeated invocation in liturgical contexts and its role in shaping interreligious dialogues on divine unity.

In summary, the exegesis of Deut. 6:4 provides a profound insight into the biblical conception of monotheism. The Shema not only serves as a declaration of God's singularity but also as a call for ethical and spiritual commitment. Its enduring resonance continues to inform contemporary theological debates on the nature of divine unity. Monotheism is a relational rather than an essentialist concept. Monotheism does not necessarily imply the 'singular'.²⁷ Therefore, the Shema remains a central pillar in the ongoing exploration of divine oneness within the Old Testament tradition, inviting continual reinterpretation and reverence. This rigorous examination of Deut. 6:4 ultimately affirms the exclusive nature of divine reality. It remains eternally relevant.

²³ E. OTTO, "Negative Theology as an Expression of God's Freedom in the Torah of the Book of Deuteronomy and Wisdom Literature of the Hebrew Bible", *Verbum Vitae* 41.3 (2023) 483–97. <https://doi.org/10.31743/VV.16386>.

²⁴ D. S. BALLENTINE, "'Monotheism' and the Hebrew Bible", *Religion Compass* 16.1 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12425>.

²⁵ M. S. HEISER, "Monotheism and the Language of Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls", *Tyndale Bulletin* 65.1 (2014). <https://doi.org/10.53751/001c.29367>.

²⁶ M. S. HEISER, "Monotheism, Polytheism, Monolatry, or Henotheism? Toward an Assessment of Divine Plurality in the Hebrew Bible", *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18.1 (2008) 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.2307/bullbiblrese.18.1.0001>.

²⁷ C. FREVEL, "Beyond Monotheism? Some Remarks and Questions on Conceptualising 'monotheism' in Biblical Studies", *Verbum et Ecclesia* 34.2 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v34i2.810>.

Additionally, in Nehemiah 9:6, “You alone are the LORD; you made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.” This text underscores the uniqueness of YHWH as both creator and sustainer, emphasizing His unrivaled power and authority over all creation.

A thorough exegesis of Nehemiah 9:6 reveals a multifaceted theological vision. The text not only acknowledges the creative act of God but also accentuates His ongoing providence and care for creation. The liturgical tone of the verse suggests a covenantal relationship between the divine and the community of believers. The recurrent themes of creation, sustenance, and worship are interwoven to construct an image of a deity who is intimately involved in the order and governance of the universe. This dynamic portrayal invites readers to appreciate both the majesty and the benevolence of God, thereby fostering a deeper sense of devotion and accountability.

From a literary perspective, Nehemiah 9:6 employs vivid imagery to convey the grandeur of the divine creative act. The description of the heavens, earth, and seas as interconnected realms under the sovereign rule of God serves to highlight the totality of His dominion. This imagery is not merely descriptive but functions as a theological statement affirming that all of creation is sustained by a single, omnipotent force. The text’s rhythmic structure and parallelism contribute to a sense of awe, inviting the reader into a reflective state where the magnitude of divine power becomes palpably real. Such literary devices are integral to the passage’s enduring impact on both liturgical practice and theological reflection.

This section synthesizes the insights derived from Deut. 6:4 and Nehemiah 9:6, integrating them into a comprehensive theological framework. The juxtaposition of these texts illuminates the evolution of the concept of divine unity from a strictly declarative statement in the Shema to a dynamic portrayal of God’s creative and sustaining power. This integration underscores the continuity of biblical monotheism, revealing that despite contextual variations, the underlying assertion of God’s oneness remains consistent. The comparative analysis highlights both the linguistic precision and the theological depth present in the biblical tradition, fostering a nuanced understanding of divine sovereignty.

The theological implications of integrating Deuteronomy and Nehemiah are significant for the discourse on biblical monotheism in the Old Testament. Scholars contend that these texts, when read in concert, provide a robust affirmation of God’s singularity, while also accommodating the diverse literary and historical contexts in which they were written. The synthesis of a declarative affirmation in Deut. with the creative and sustaining aspects in Nehemiah produces a balanced theological vision that speaks to both the immutability and dynamism of the divine. This balance is crucial for understanding how ancient believers conceptualized their relationship with God, and it offers a template for modern interpretations of monotheistic faith.

Further, the integrated reading of these texts highlights the evolution of biblical monotheism from a static declaration to a dynamic, lived experience. It demonstrates that the oneness of God is not confined to an abstract theological principle but is deeply embedded in the lived reality of the community. This understanding encourages a holistic view of faith, where doctrinal assertions are intertwined with ethical practices and communal responsibilities. The implications of this synthesis extend beyond academic debate, influencing the way religious communities interpret their sacred texts and engage with contemporary challenges. In this way, the integrated framework serves as a bridge between the ancient and the modern, reaffirming the timeless relevance of biblical monotheism.

In conclusion, the integration of Deut. 6:4 and Nehemiah 9:6 offers a compelling theological framework that not only confirms the centrality of divine unity in the Old

Testament but also informs contemporary understandings of monotheism. This synthesis provides a robust foundation for further theological exploration and practical application in faith communities. Ultimately, this integrated perspective enriches both academic inquiry and the lived experience of believers. It challenges conventional boundaries between doctrine and practice, inspiring renewed dialogue on the nature of divine oneness with passion.

2.4 The Christian Stance on Religious Pluralism in Indonesia

The biblical affirmation of divine unity provides a solid foundation for interfaith dialogue, as it emphasizes a common ground rooted in the acknowledgment of one Supreme God. This theological premise encourages Christians to engage with followers of other faiths in a spirit of mutual respect and understanding. The inclusivity inherent in the biblical concept of monotheism fosters an environment where diverse religious traditions can coexist harmoniously. In this regard, Christian communities are called to extend love, compassion, and openness to all, irrespective of doctrinal differences. Such an approach not only enriches the spiritual life of individuals but also contributes to the broader social cohesion of the nation. Moreover, the integration of this biblical principle into public discourse reinforces the role of faith as a unifying force in a country characterized by its cultural and religious diversity. By affirming the oneness of God, Christians can transcend sectarian divides and promote a vision of unity that is both spiritually and socially transformative. This inclusive framework challenges exclusionary tendencies and advocates for a more empathetic and dialogical engagement among different religious communities. Ultimately, the application of “Divinity Yang Maha Esa” in the context of Indonesian pluralism serves as a catalyst for peace, understanding, and national solidarity.

Thus, the biblical emphasis on divine unity fosters inclusivity, encouraging Christians to build bridges of understanding and unity with other faith communities, promoting interreligious harmony nationwide with sincere conviction.

2.5 From Pancasila to the Submission and Obedience of the Christian Community to the Indonesian Government

Grounded in a biblical understanding of authority and governance, this perspective holds that the state functions as an instrument of divine order, established to promote justice and societal well-being. The apostolic teachings (John 1:1–3 and 2 Corinthians 13:14), along with the recognition of government as an agent of God’s will, call on Christians to respect and uphold the laws of the land. This obedience is not viewed as a passive submission but as an active, responsible engagement with civic duties, reflecting the belief that true reverence for God includes loyalty to the governing authorities.

Historical and contemporary theological scholarship has consistently affirmed that obedience to governmental authority is a manifestation of a broader commitment to divine order. By submitting to the rule of law, Christians demonstrate a respect for the structures that maintain social harmony and public welfare. This submission is grounded in the belief that governmental authority, as ordained by God, serves not only to enforce justice but also to cultivate a moral community. In this view, adherence to state laws is intertwined with the ethical imperatives of faith, creating a symbiotic relationship between religious conviction and civic responsibility. Such an approach promotes a balanced understanding of power, where spiritual allegiance and national duty are mutually reinforcing.

In essence, Christian obedience to governmental authority is rooted in a profound theological vision that aligns divine order with civic responsibility, fostering a just and harmonious society. It exemplifies faith in action.

3. Conclusion

The study has explored the multifaceted theological concept of “Belief in the one and only God” as articulated within the framework of Pancasila, employing exegetical and hermeneutical analyses of key biblical texts from the Old Testaments. The investigation revealed that the biblical affirmation of divine unity, as seen in Deut. 6:4 and Nehemiah 9:6, provide a robust foundation for understanding monotheism. Moreover, the New Testament perspective, particularly through John 1:1–3 and 2 Corinthians 13:14, expands this understanding by integrating the relational dynamics of the Trinity with the essential oneness of God.

The comprehensive analysis undertaken in this article demonstrates that the principle of “Belief in the one and only God” is not a monolithic concept but rather a dynamic and evolving idea that reflects both historical traditions and contemporary challenges. Through a meticulous examination of the linguistic, exegetical, and hermeneutical dimensions, the study has shown how the Indonesian interpretation of divine unity is deeply interwoven with national identity and social cohesion. The etymological and linguistic analyses reveal that the term ‘*Divinity*’ (divinity) carries connotations that extend beyond mere worship, encapsulating a broad spectrum of divine attributes and relational dynamics. This semantic richness is further illuminated by the scriptural exegesis of pivotal texts, which collectively affirm that divine unity is both a foundational belief and a guiding principle for ethical and communal life.

Practically, the theological findings of this research have significant implications for Indonesian Christians. The affirmation of divine unity provides both a spiritual and a civic framework that supports the nation’s commitment to pluralism. It encourages believers to view interfaith interactions as opportunities for mutual enrichment rather than conflict. The church is thus envisioned not only as a place of worship but also as a mediator in the broader social context, promoting peace and cooperation among diverse religious groups. This dual role of faith, as both a personal conviction and a public ethic, ensures that Christian practice remains relevant in addressing the challenges of modern Indonesian society. Moreover, the emphasis on obedience and civic responsibility, as derived from biblical teachings, reinforces the idea that religious adherence is integrally linked to the well-being of the state.

In light of these findings, it is clear that the biblical concept of divine unity has profound implications for both theology and praxis. The study not only provides an exegesis of seminal texts but also bridges the gap between ancient doctrinal assertions and modern civic ideals. Indonesian Christians are thus encouraged to embrace a holistic vision of faith—one that harmonizes scriptural truths with the demands of a pluralistic society. This vision calls for an active engagement in interfaith dialogue, a commitment to social justice, and a steadfast adherence to the principles of national unity as embodied in Pancasila. Furthermore, it reaffirms that the pursuit of divine unity is not an abstract theological endeavor but a practical imperative that shapes ethical behavior and informs responsible citizenship.

Future research should further investigate the interplay between biblical exegesis and national ideology, exploring how the principle of “Belief in the one and only God” can continue to inform and transform the Christian witness in an increasingly diverse society. This study has set the stage for such inquiries by demonstrating that the integration of ancient theological insights with contemporary civic responsibilities offers a promising path toward a more inclusive and just society. The findings underscore the potential for religious traditions to contribute constructively to national discourse, fostering environments where differences are celebrated and common values are upheld. In sum, the biblical affirmation of divine unity is not only a matter of doctrinal precision but also a vital force for social transformation and ethical governance. Unity transforms society profoundly.

4. Bibliographical references

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