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Doing Communicative Theology of Social Justice from Christian and ISlamic Perspectives

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Abstract

With a long tradition of mono-religious education in Indonesia, the understanding of social justice inscribed as the fifth principle of Pancasila is subject to a one-sided theological or otherwise secular outlook. While the former lacks in theology's publicness, the latter does not conform with the foundational national consensus. Resembling Pancasila's collaborative spirit, the research question of this article is how to understand social justice from an inter-religious outlook. This library research-based article employs a communicative theology developed by Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath within the scope of Christian and Islamic perspectives. In such a theology, social justice is never speculative, ideological, or ahistorical. Instead, it emerges from factual movements that ignite public awareness required for further engagement for social transformation. A close reading of some sources of both traditions reveals social justice as a God-oriented, people-centered movement with a mustadafun perspective.

Keywords: Social justice, communicative theology, mustadafun perspective, Pancasila

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Introduction

Sujarwoto's 2018 Social Justice Index found that only 63,46% of Indonesians have social justice. West Papua drops the score to 50%.[1] Data collection that regarded Papuan citizens' indigenity[2] may not yield the same result as natives likely find social justice harder than migrants. However, only half having social justice challenges the Indonesian reformation, notably the military, and state. The 1945 Constitution implies that the army should leave politics[3] and the state to promote social cohesion and justice.

Unfortunately, the Social Justice Index indicates weak state control of social cohesion, integration, and non-discrimination, coinciding with the Indonesian Social Progress Index's inclusivity factor of only 39.36.[4] Indeed, some studies show how the state has handled religious harmony since the New Order (even though in Papua, all came very late).[5] Moreover, in June 2001, Papua's interfaith collaboration urged an end to violence and a national inquiry into military human rights abuses.[6]

Nevertheless, religious harmony and interfaith cooperation fail to stop the violence or improve social justice in Papua because the structure of Papua's domination appears more complex than ever. The market, including multinational companies, has interfered with the binary opposition between the state and the resistance

[1] Sujarwoto et al., "Indonesia's Social Justice Indexes 2018," *Journal of Humanity and Social Justice 3*, no. 1 (2021).

[2] Alfini Baharuddin et al., "Heterogen[e]ity of Amber and Komin in Shaping Settlement Pattern of Jayapura City," *Komunitas: International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture* 7, no. 2 (2015).

[3] Setara, *Jalan Sunyi Reformasi TNI: Ringkasan Eksekutif* (Jakarta: Setara Institute for Democracy and Peace, 2019), accessed April 1, 2022, https://setara-institute.org/jalan-sunyi-reformasi-tni/.

[4] Social Progress Imperative, 2021 *Social Progress Index* (2021).

[5] J. B. Banawiratma et al., *Dialog Antarumat Beragama: Gagasan dan Praktik di Indonesia* (Jakarta & Yogyakarta: Mizan - CRCS, 2010), 37-50; Jefri, "Kantor FKUP PB Mulai Dibangun, Gubernur Letakkan Batu Pertama," accessed April 5, 2022. https://papuabarat.kemenag.go.id/blog/kantor-fkub-pb-mulai-dibangun-gubernur-letakkan-batu-pertama.

[6] Neles Tebay, West Papua: *The Struggle for Peace with Justice* (London: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 2005).

movement.[7] Thus, Papua's issue exemplifies how the state, market, and community shape the public domain, whose imbalance breeds social injustice.[8]

Budi Hernawan notes that Wahhabism is a new actor worsening Papua's cultural and social cohesion.[9] The state-supported charismatic, elitist church movement is analogous. The market spiritualizes social injustice as part of God's predestined human fate, preventing the powerless from participating in economic activities.[10] In addition, the movements sowed dissatisfaction with mainstream Christian Protestants[11] and possible conflicts with Muslims. Consequently, emergency aid followed religious-political identities rather than social justice partnerships when mass violence broke out.[12] Social justice partnerships, this study assumes, require a collaboration imbued with theological-friendly inclusivity, resembling what Soekarno, the first Indonesian president, termed g*otong royong to squeeze Pancasila*.[13] Accordingly, should theology go public for social justice, *gotong royong is its locus theologicus*.

[7] Budi Hernawan, "Papua under the State of Exception," *Antropologi Indonesia* 41, no. 1 (2020); Takeshi Ito, Noer Fauzi Rachman, and Laksmi A. Savitri, "Power to Make Land Dispossession Acceptable: A Policy Discourse Analysis of the Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE), Papua, Indonesia," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 41, no. 1 (2014).

[8] B. Herry-Priyono, "Tiga Poros Indonesia," KOMPAS, Januari 9, 2002; Stuart Kirsch, "Rumour and Other Narratives of Political Violence in West Papua," *Critique of Anthropology* 22, no. 1 (2002); Susan Rees and Derrick Silove, "Speaking out about Human Rights and Health in West Papua," The Lancet 370 (2007); J. B. Banawiratma, "Power and Interreligious Relations: An Example from Indonesia," in Religion, *Civil Society and Conflict in Indonesia*, ed. Carl Sterkens, Muhammad Machasin, and Frans Wijsen (Berlin: LIT, 2009); "Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation as Ecumenical Movement," in *Asian Handbook for Theological Education and Ecumenism*, ed. Hope Antone et al. (Oxford: Regnum Studies in Global Christianity, 2013).

[9] Hernawan

[10] Hardin Halidin, "Membaca Kasus Tolikara," The Wahid Institute, accessed April 5, 2022. https://www.wahidinstitute.org/wi-id/indeks-berita/305-membaca-kasus-tolikara.html.

[11] Hernawan

[12] Halidin, ; Budi Hernawan, "Papua," The Contemporary Pacific 31, no. 2 (2019)

[13] A. B. Kusuma, Lahirnya Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 (Jakarta: Badan Penerbit FH Universitas Indonesia, 2004), 165.

Problem Statement

Theological *gotong royong* for social justice requires openness to other theologies. Unfortunately, however, Indonesians have long lived a mono-religious formation or supported particular religious traditions. Consequently, religions are subject to outsider perspectives' interpretation and judgment. Theological exchange is also prone to religious suspicion of impurity.[14] Thus, the main issue is how theology stays rooted in a total religious commitment with a sincere openness and dialogue with religious others to support social justice.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study focused on understanding social justice principles based on the direct experiences of those who have struggled for social justice, along with their theological reflection and its connection with theological others' perspectives. Accordingly, this study addresses the following questions: (1) how to do a theology respecting the praxis of the social justice struggle and simultaneously accommodating different theological outlooks, and (2) what principles of social justice emerge from such interreligious outlook?

Literature Review

Much literature has been available on various spectra of social justice, the fifth principle of Pancasila. However, theological literature on interreligious outlooks on social justice in the Indonesian context is inexplicably absent. Pranoto Iskandar's comprehensive and critical appraisal of Pancasila may shed light on this vacuum. He argues that most Pancasila proponents are captive to communitarianism.[15] Three simplified approaches that fit Indonesian history may underlie his position, following a state-religion relation since the nation's birth.[16]

[14] Mohamad Yusuf and Carl Sterkens, "Analysing the State's Laws on Religious Education in Post-New Order Indonesia," Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies 53, no. 1 (2015), http://dx.doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2015.531.105-130; Jonathan Fox, *A World Survey of Religion and the State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 202; Albertus Bagus Laksana, "Naming God Together: Muslim-Christian Theology of Mercy in the Indonesian Context," *Journal of Asian Orientation in Theology* 1, no. 1 (2019).

[15] Pranoto Iskandar, "The Pancasila Delusion," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 46, no. 4 (2016).

[16] R. E. Elson, "Nationalism, Islam, 'Secularism' and the State in Contemporary Indonesia,"

The first accommodates secular nationalism through liberal-democracy institutions. Inspired by theological ideals to uphold religious identity under communitarianism, the second method may lead to religious nationalism.[17] Last is *Pancasila*, which is supposed to end religious-secular conflict and lead to a *godly nationalism*.[18] However, Iskandar argues that it has failed to function as a solution because its proponents' comprehension is parochial, whether ethnically Javanese or religiously Islam, whereas modernity requires absolute secularism.[19]

Unfortunately, the secular approach would not be a realistic option since *Pancasila* interlocks the concept of social justice with belief in the deity.[20] Moreover, as a modern concept, the term did not first emerge among the secular progressives but from two Catholic priests defending the religious role to address the French Revolution's challenge.[21] Thus, the religious approach to social justice is more favorable than the secular one. Indeed, in a communitarian milieu, it falls into a single-perspective theological outlook.

Armada Riyanto et al. provide a vast spectrum of local pearls of wisdom that may become frameworks to give meaning to *Pancasila's* values, including social justice.[22] Those researches complement

Australian Journal of International Affairs 64, no. 3 (2010); Azis Anwar Fachrudin, *Polemik Tafsir Pancasila, Laporan Kehidupan Beragama di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies, 2018); Agus Wahyudi, "Perfectionism and Democratization: The Indonesian Mainstream Secular Nationalists (IMSNs) and Islamic Radical Nexus," in *Social Justice: A Sketch of the West and the Islamic World Experiences*, ed. Agus Wahyudi (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 2021).

17 David M. Bourchier, "Two Decades of Ideological Contestation in Indonesia: From Democratic Cosmopolitanism to Religious Nationalism," *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 49, no. 5 (2019).

18 Jeremy Menchik, "Productive Intolerance: Godly Nationalism in Indonesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 56, no. 3 (2014)

19 Iskandar.

20 J. B. Banawiratma, "Bersama Saudara-Saudari Beriman Lain: Perspektif Gereja Katolik," in *Dialog: Kritik & Identitas Agama* (Yogyakarta: Dian Interfidei, 1993); Yudi Latif, *Wawasan Pancasila: Bintang Penuntun untuk Pembudayaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 2018), 74.

21 Robert P. Kraynak, "The Origins of "Social Justice" in the Natural Law Philosophy of Antonio Rosmini," *The Review of Politics* 80 (2018).

22 Armada Riyanto et al., eds., *Kearifan Lokal-Pancasila: Butir-butir Filsafat Keindonesiaan* (Yogyakarta:

considerable literature on *Pancasila* from Islamic and other religious perspectives.[23] However, they do not endorse *Pancasila*, the principle of *gotong royong*, to participate in the dynamics of the respective transformation, leaving the theological method of constructing interreligious outlooks to the audience.

Besides lacking a method for building an interreligious perspective, Budhy Munawar-Rachman disclosed another problem obstructing such a collaboration for social justice. He observed that theological debates colored the concept of Islamic reform in Indonesia appeared useless for addressing social justice because they were unaffected by the oppressed. Justice tends to confine to individual piety. Incorporating social analysis has not yet received serious attention, reflected in the absence of social research in the Islamic studies curriculum.[24]

J.B. Banawiratma had integrated social analysis with theology as part of the so-called *project theology*, which fits Stephan Bevans' contextual theology's praxis model.[25] Banawiratma includes an interdisciplinary and interfaith approach, from which seven layers of dialogue emerge,[26] offering a solid epistemological foundation. It presupposes that theology is not just a mouthpiece for culturally-

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Kanisius, 2018).

[23] To mention some: Wawan Gunawan Abd Wahid, Muhammad Abdullah Darraz, and Ahmad Fuad Fanani, eds., *Fikih Kebinekaan: Pandangan Islam Indonesia tentang Umat, Kewargaan, dan Kepemimpinan Non-Muslim* (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2015); Yusron, *Darul 'Ahdi wa Syahadah: Tafsir Pancasila menurut Muhammadiyah* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish Publisher, 2020); Al Purwa Hadiwardoyo, "Pancasila dan Gereja Katolik Indonesia," *Jurnal Teologi* 02, no. 01 (2013); Arinita Sandria, "Pancasila Values in Tradition on the Bali Hindu Community Reviewed from Bali Adat Law and Hindu's Law," Vidyottama Sanatana: *International Journal of Hindu Science and Religious Studies* 2, no. 3 (2018); Komang Pusparani, "Harmoni Panca Sradha dengan Pancasila," *Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia* (2021), accessed December 15, https://kemenag.go.id/read/harmoni-panca-sradha-dengan-pancasila-v5gge.

[24] Budhy Munawar-Rachman, "Refleksi Keadilan Sosial dalam Pemikiran Keagamaan," in *Keadilan Sosial: Upaya Mencari Makna Kesejahteraan Bersama di Indonesia*, ed. Al. Andang L. Binawan and A. Prasetyantoko (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2004).

[25] Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology,* Revised and Expanded Edition ed., Faith and Cultures (New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 76.

[26] Banawiratma *et al.*, 231-4; Banawiratma, "Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation as Ecumenical Movement."

shaped tradition and magisterium. Instead, theology learns from science and other religions through personal and shared experiences.[27]

Understandably, Banawiratma accents religious collaboration's significance not as a strategy for approaching religious others but in its praxis trait flowing from genuine faith. He insisted on orientating interreligious communication in conflictual human society to realize social justice unless it would "insinuate a false and unjust harmony."[28] However, since the *project theology* is bound to mono-religious settings, not to mention priestly formation in the Catholic circle, collaborative social theology in religious instruction is hardly feasible.

The so-called new comparative theology may remove such a barrier but assumes that the theologians have immersed themselves in other traditions from which they enrich their faith journey, community, and practice.[29] Albertus Bagus Laksana has contextualized such theology by enhancing the first principle of *Pancasila* from Christian and Islamic perspectives. Nonetheless, he recognizes the sensitivity of departing from the theological subject matter since particular groups find the concept of mutual influences between religious communities theologically problematic.[30]

Thus, this study fills the gap by offering a *Pancasila* approach to its fifth principle, social justice, resembling the normative aspect of *gotong royong*. Hence, its significance lies in its evocative ability to escape from a single perspective outlook on social justice reflected in mono-religious instruction, potentially leading to ethnocentrism or

[27] Bevans, 78

[28] J. B. Banawiratma, "The Fragile Harmony of Religions in Indonesia," *Exchange* 27, no. 4 (1998); "Teologi Fungsional - Teologi Kontekstual," in *Konteks Berteologi di Indonesia*, ed. Eka Darmaputera (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1988), 11-5; "Social Justice and Preferential Love for the Poor: Towards True Harmony in Interfaith Relationships," *Pacifica: Australasian Theological Studies* 3, no. 1 (1990); J. B. Banawiratma and Tom Jacobs, "Doing Theology with Local Resources," *East Asian Pastoral Review* 1 (1989); Banawiratma et al., 12.

[29] Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning across Religious Borders* (Malden, Mass: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 16-7.

[30] Laksana.

religiocentrism.[31] Accordingly, this study aims to do theology on social justice employing an interreligious outlook, limited to Christian and Islamic perspectives in an Indonesian context.

Method

This study uses library research and content analyses of data gathered according to the theological framework for social justice vision. However, first, it is worth mentioning a working definition taken from Thomas Hugson's social justice as "the right ordering of structured social relationships for the sake of the common good and the dignity of persons, for structured cooperation that results in a good of order in a given society."[32] This designation spurns social justice as an individual virtue brought to society as a mere aggregate of virtuous people. Instead, it relies on human communication to create a just society.

Theological Framework: Communicative Theology

This study takes advantage of a communicative theology developed by Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath, who envisage it as a faith reflection in and from a living process of information exchange and mutual understanding.[33] Their continuous cooperation with Muslims has enabled communicative theology to immerse in higher Islamic Religious Education at the University of Vienna.[34] Its foundation is experiences of Christian-based communities in Latin America and Ruth Cohn's theme-centered approach to group

[31] Suhadi et al., *The Politics of Religious Education, the 2013 Curriculum, and the Public Space of the School* (Yogyakarta: CRCS, 2015); Yusuf and Sterkens.

[32] Thomas Hughson, *Connecting Jesus to Social Justice* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 230.

[33] Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology: Introduction to a New Theological Culture* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2008), 11; *Kommunikative Theologie: Grundlagen - Erfahrungen - Klärungen* (Ostfildern: Matthias Grünewald Verlag, 2012), 233; Matthias Scharer, "Communicative Theology," in *Handbook of Theme-Centered Interaction* (TCI), ed. Mina Schneider-Landolf, Jochen Spielmann, and Walter Zitterbarth (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 203.

[34] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 58-9.

interaction (TCI).[35]

That cognizance underscores the social dimension of grassroots movements and the theory of every individual's dynamics, which characterize their complex social identities according to their basic dialogical structure.[36] Communicative theology links academic theology and congregational and pastoral needs.[37] Instead of "conceptual acrobatics,"[38] it encourages life reflection, implying that teachers and learners both have something to learn from each other. Thus, communicative theology views people seriously as subjects of events in their reciprocal relationship and distinct roles, but not static.[39]

In addition, the participants represent the *communio* of believers, which is more about a communication process than an institutional shape. Thus, communicative theology resembles the communicative practice of the believers' communion.[40] However, as scientific reflection, communicative theology does not exclude religious others, even non-religious, since it aims at internal clarification and external plausibility.[41] Similarly, communicative theology deals with other theological reflections primarily with its fundamental plausibility concerns.

Philosophical insights into human dialogical structure enable

[35] Matthias Scharer, "Learning Religion in the Presence of the Other: Mission and Dialogue in World Catholicism," *Journal of Global Catholicism* 2, no. 1 (2017); Bradford E. Hinze, "Introduction," in *The Practice of Communicative Theology: Introduction to a New Theological Culture,* ed. Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2008).

[36] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 123; cf. Hubert J. M. Hermans, "The Dialogical Self: Toward a Theory of Personal and Cultural Positioning," *Culture & Psychology* 7, no. 3 (2001).

[37] Scharer, "Communicative Theology," 203.

[38] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 44-5.

[39] *The Practice of Communicative Theology,* 12; *Kommunikative Theologie,* 115-6.

[40] *Kommunikative Theologie*, 128.

[41] T*he Practice of Communicative Theology,* 15; *Kommunikative Theologie*, 120.

such epistemic humility.[42] TCI promotes lifelong learning through interpersonal communication through dialogical anthropology at the group, subject, and context levels.[43] Thus, a learning process is not the technological strategy of achieving goals quickly and effectively (without conflict or disturbance) but rather an attentiveness to each participant in the communication and to those values that are significant for each individual, the group, and the humanizing change of the respective concrete social context.[44] In figure 1, TCI symbolizes communicative structure as a triangle of four factors (I, We, It, and Globe).

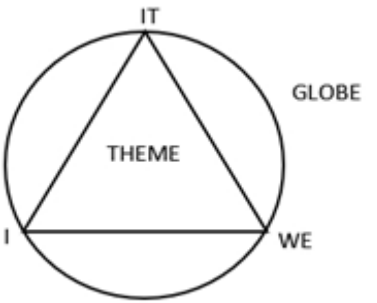


Figure 1 TCI triangle

The TCI's dynamics are vital. First, internal and external factors constantly change the "I" through reflexive queries. Hence, TCI represents a person who grows inwardly and outwardly and can relate to others and things. Only then can autonomy in interdependence be understood.[45] Second, "We" is no longer psychobiological like the "I." Instead, it is an organismic totality emerging from the "I" in its interaction with other "I"s with the same problems, pedagogical materials, or tasks. This factor, seen as a phenomenological-existential entity, stresses human interaction and its conscious and unconscious

[42] *Kommunikative Theologie*, 133-41.

[43] *ibid.*, 63

[44] *ibid.*, 89; Scharer, "*Communicative Theology,*" 205.

[45] Walter Lotz, "The "I"," *ibid.*

effects.[46]

The "It" in Cohn's writings refers to the things, tasks, topics, aspects, parts of the world, and events that bring people together with similar concerns. It attracts people to that community. Thus, not every shared project can be the "It," which always follows TCI axioms and postulates. Cohn's term "It" has the nuance of an object in Martin Buber's philosophy[47] but differs from the "Theme," which is influenced by TCI's four factors.[48] Lastly, TCI's "Globe" provides the context for the other three factors. This context can include an institution or country's economic, political, and social map, the cosmos, and its visible and invisible space-time elements that support I-We-It interactions. All the "Globe" elements interact with the other three TCI factors. It is also culture, the way its people have lived.[49] Furthermore, possibly containing "It" content, the "Theme" is sometimes confused with the "It." It emerges after the group leader clearly states the goal or subject matter, which can be objective (It-themes), emotional and personal (I-themes), diversity of perspectives (We-themes), or especially life context (Globe-themes). The "Theme" encourages discussion.[50]

Scharer and Hilberath develop a new theological culture using TCI. First, they do not view theology as a subject that theologians subsequently communicate to others as if communication were theology's application. Instead, communication is its focus. To some extent, application or mediation becomes part of the content. Still, one cannot constitute the content without a communicative act.[51]

[46] Mina Schneider-Landolf, "The "We"," *ibid.*

[47] Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1965), 8; Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 133-4.

[48] Martina Emme and Jochen Spielmann, "The "It"," in *Handbook of Theme-Centered Interaction (TCI)*, ed. Mina Schneider-Landolf, Jochen Spielmann, and Walter Zitterbarth (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017).

[49] Walter Nelhiebel, "The "Globe"," *ibid.*

[50] Mina Schneider-Landolf, "Theme," *ibid.*; Sylke Meyerhuber, Helmut Reiser, and Matthias Scharer, eds., *Theme-Centered Interaction (TCI) in Higher Education: A Didactic Approach for Sustainable and Living Learning* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019), 323

[51] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie,* 117.

Hence, theology is a communicative event in that if it ceases to be communicative, it ceases to be theology.[52] However, theology's communicative nature surpasses human intersubjectivity because it accepts God's self-communication.[53]

Therefore, they combine the four factors of TCI with the traditional insights stemming from the *loci theologici*. As a result, communicative theology offers four significant dimensions: (1) personal life and experiences of faith (the "I"), (2) social experiences and church attachment (the "We"), (3) Biblical evidence and their living mediation and other religious traditions (the "It"), and (4) the social context and worldly wisdom (the "Globe").

As a communicative event, communicative theology distinguishes between three interlocking levels of theological process: direct involvement, experiential and interpreting, and scientific-reflective. Genuine theological insights emerge only when these three levels are interconnected, which allows all humans to participate in theological processes by introducing their own unique experiences, as long as they have explicitly or implicitly committed to addressing the fundamental existential questions involved in theology.[54] The two-dimensional figure 2 below shows that four dimensions and three levels of communicative theology create a theologically significant critical-conflictual dynamic.[55] The line arrows represent God's self-communication across three levels of the theological process.

[52] *The Practice of Communicative Theology,* 13, 18; *Kommunikative Theologie*, 118.

[53] Bernd Jochen Hilberath, "Communicative Theology: A New Way of Engagement," in *Where We Dwell in Common: The Quest for Dialogue in the Twenty-First Century,* ed. Gerard Mannion (Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016); Scharer, "Communicative Theology."

[54] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 264-5; Hilberath, 191-2; Scharer, "Communicative Theology," 205-6.

[55] Communicative Theology Research Group, *Kommunikative Theologie. Selbsvergewisserung unserer Kultur des Theologietreibens* (Wien: The Innsbruck Theological Faculty, 2007), 86-7; Scharer and Hilberath, Kommunikative Theologie, 287; Scharer, "Communicative Theology," 206.

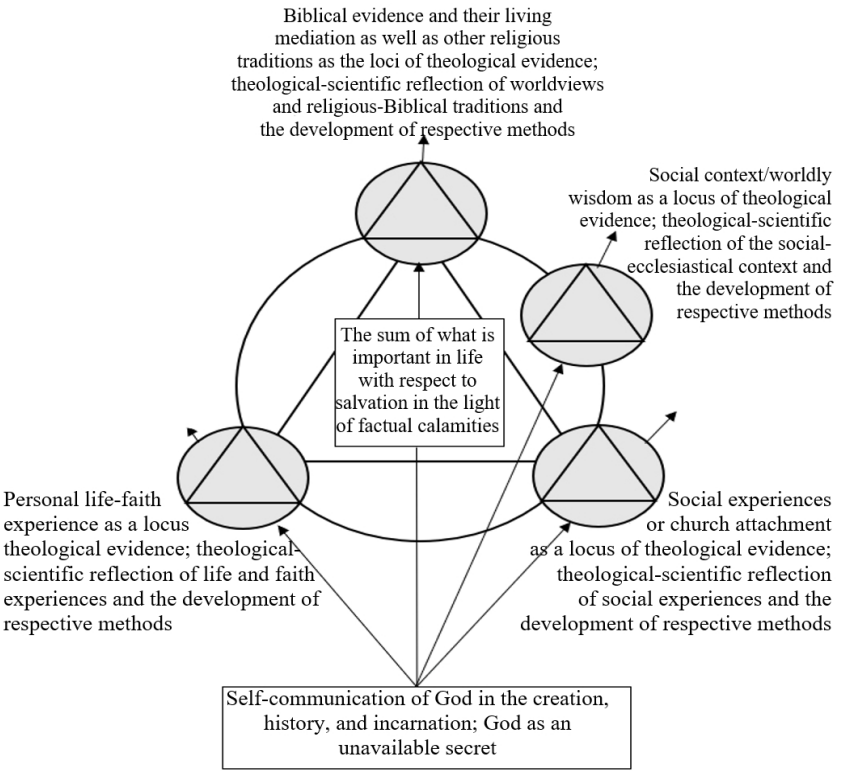


Figure 2 The patterns of thought and action inherent to communicative theology

Communicative theology envisages God illuminating the four factors, accessible in everything but irreducible to anything, transcending the dimensions humans can control.[56] Thus, the believers may capture God's self-communication in the individual (*I*), community (*We*), the topic of collective discourse (*It*), and the context of their life (*Globe*). However, it implies that the theologizing participant has a primordial belief in God's universal grace without absolutizing systematic thoughts that demand specific thematic knowledge about God's will and commands.[57] Otherwise, God stops

[56] Scharer and Hilberath, *Kommunikative Theologie*, 147-50.

[57] K. L. Afrasiabi, "Communicative Theory and Theology: A Reconsideration," *The Harvard Theological Review* 91, no. 1 (1998).

being God, or there are gods besides Allah.

Moreover, communicative theology appends TCI's inseparable axioms and postulates.[58] First, the existential-anthropological premise recognizes that humans engage both constrained and freely. The second highlights ethics: creation and incarnation induce reverence and respect. Third, the pragmatic-political axiom limits human freedom and expands it by God's universal salvation. Besides, the first postulate emphasizes the chairpersonship as the theological power of judgment. Emphases of disturbances as a theological interruption belong to the second postulate.[59] Finally, communicative theology offers some theological options for discerning what is essential concerning salvation in the light of real tragedies. Among others is the preference for the poor and the possibility for contemplation and the mystic-mystagogical.[60]

Steps of the Research

For this literature-based study, the researchers choose "We-theme"—an interreligious perspective on social justice. As a result, Christian and Islamic perspectives emerge, aligning with the researchers' primary religious belongings. Recognizing the diversified character of both views, the researchers identify the unifying factor of the respective religious outlooks: Jesus of Nazareth and the Prophet Muhammad.

Considering the three levels of communicative theology, this study, resembling the scientific-theological reflection (the third level), places both central figures as the ones who had direct experiences of struggle for social justice (the first level). Therefore, the researchers collect data on their social justice movements based on socio-historical inquiries and their followers' experiential interpretations (the second level).

The next step is the elaboration of previous analyses to discover social justice principles championed by those central figures as the

[58] Scharer and Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology*, 113.

[59] Scharer, "Communicative Theology," 207.

[60] *ibid.*; Hilberath, 194.

"We" factor of communicative theology. Finally, the last step is to contextualize those principles within the researchers' "Globe" limited to recent Indonesian history concerning social justice issues. However, the final step in this article will only take the form of some indications to study further.

Result and Discussion

This study finds that Jesus and the Prophet upheld the proper ordering of structured social relationships for the common good and human dignity, opposing social injustice in their surroundings. Jesus dealt with social injustice perpetuated by the *status quo*; the Prophet fought against social injustice catalyzed by oppressive anarchy over God's people. Thus, both movements are against social injustice as they are God-oriented and people-centered, imbued with a *mustadafun* perspective.

God-oriented Movement

The only way to access the social justice vision from the Christian biblical perspective is to retrieve Jesus' central message, the Kingdom of God.[61] Unfortunately, like the depoliticized Christian Messiah,[62] the phrase has been anachronized into an intellectualist idea

[61] A. C. Zenos, "Jesus' Idea of the Kingdom of God," *The Biblical World* 3, no. 1 (1894); Enrique Dussel, "The Kingdom of God and the Poor," *International Review of Mission* 68, no. 270 (1979); Bernard Mallia, "Social Justice: A Biblical Dimension," *African Ecclesial Review* 25, no. 1 (1983); M. Eugene Boring, "The Kingdom of God in Mark," in *The Kingdom of God in 20th-Century Interpretation*, ed. Wendell Willis (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1987); Benedict T. Viviano, *The Kingdom of God in History*, vol. 27, *Good News Studies* (Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1988), 13; *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Heaven."; Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, eds., *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Bart Ehrman, New Testament Tools and Studies, vol. XIX (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994); Bruce J. Malina, *The Social Gospel of Jesus: The Kingdom of God in Mediterranean Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 1; John Fuellenbach, *Church Community for the Kingdom*, vol. 33, *American Society of Missiology Series* (New York: Orbis Books, 2002), 6.

[62] John C. Haughey, ed. *The Faith that Does Justice: Examining the Christian Sources for Social Change*, Woodstock Studies, vol. 2 (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 268; Richard A. Horsley, *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Disorder* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 6-9; "Abandoning the Unhistorical Quest for an Apolitical Jesus," in *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*, ed. James D. G. Dunn and Scot McKnight, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study (Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2005).

that pretends to be culturally neutral, universally applicable, and perennially pertinent.[63] However, Jesus materialized his vision into a performative, liberative movement (Luk 4:18), attacking the ruling class' authority, the *status quo*, despite his apparent indifference to the social order model (Matt 22:22). His renewal of the people resembles the realization of the Kingdom, where God reigns, and the kinship of Jesus' movement transcended parochial-based orientation, including blood relations (Matt 12:50; Mark 3:35; Luk 8:21) and religious affiliations (Matt 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30; Luk 10:25-37).

Similarly, the Prophet waited for God's revelation to guide him in establishing the divine law as the source of justice.[64] As a result, the Prophet overthrew Mecca's social anarchy, establishing a new order with the polytheist Arabs, superseding Arabia's violent circle when Mecca accepted the tawhid principle and the Prophet as God's messenger. Such dependence on God's will is even observable when his wife, Aishah, became a gossip victim after one of his expeditions. Since he had not gotten any revelations, the Prophet consulted Ali ibn Abi Talib and Usamah ibn Zayd about divorcing his wife. After that, however, consultation with companions and Medina's quarrels were only filler before God vindicated Aishah.[65]

Thus, while Jesus' movement invokes the reigning God against the *status quo*, the Prophet's movement institutes God's ummah against anarchy. Accordingly, both movements show the same destination referred to by the tawhid principle, where God reigns as the central orientation of human beings.

People-centered Renewal

Either the Kingdom or ummah does not render an ahistorical ideology. Jesus and the Prophet based their movement on the concrete

[63] John Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom of God: The Message of Jesus Today* (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 58.

[64] Majid Khadduri, *The Islamic Conception of Justice* (Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press, 1984), 3-4.

[65] Q 24:11-21; Maʿmar Ibn Rāshid, *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of Muḥammad* [Kitāb al-Maghāzī], ed. Philip F. Kennedy, *Library of Arabic Literature* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 16.2, Kindle.

people who suffered from a corrupt system or social disorder. Jesus' compassionate work came not from the idea of a merciful God to realize in his moral actions but from his genuine encounters with people (Matt 9:36; 20:34; Mark 6:34; 8:2; Luk 7:13). Besides, Jesus understood the Moses Law indicating his preference of humanity over human-made laws. He performed healings even during the sabbath day when the law of Moses forbade human works (Matt 12:8; Mark 2:27-8; Luk 6:5). A similar tendency is also apparent in his solidarity with those whom the public considered sinners. Jesus condemned the sin, not the sinner. Understandably, he tried to win the soul of the purported sinners and make them blessed by their renewed life (Luk 19:1-10; John 8:2-11). He even chose a public sinner as an apostle (Matt 10:3). In his encounters with pagans and affirmation of their faith, Jesus seemed to prioritize saving souls over defending particular religious traditions (Matt 8:5-13; Luk 7:1-10; Mark 7:24-30; John 4:46-53).

The Prophet had suffered from expulsion by his tribe and saw some followers risking life for his teachings. Besides, the Prophet must have witnessed the great poverty going hand in hand with Arabia's anarchy.[66] Such a situation, more than an ideological vision, triggered him to build social order that could make the participation of more people possible. His inheritance law and zakat exemplify such an order. While the first includes women receiving an inheritance, the latter allows the poor to enjoy the resources. Therefore, based on God's revelations, he established legislation to manage favorable social relationships for as many people as possible. Furthermore, his forgiving wrongdoers without obliterating their leadership capacity shows his respect for their human dignity.

Mustadafun Perspective

Despite their adherents' different interpretations, Jesus and the Prophet's movements share a preference for the poor. Jesus' disciples see God's self-identifying with the poor through Jesus as God's revelation (Matt 25:40), recalling God's association with the powerless in the Hebrew scriptures. Thus, Heraclius' inquiries into

[66] Christian Julien Robin, "Arabia and Ethiopia," in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 309.

Muhammad's prophethood included his solidarity with the vulnerable as one of the criteria.[67] The Prophet's followers believe God revealed the Quran to the Prophet, who follows God's will. Since the Prophet supports the poor, the Quranic God must command it.[68] Therefore, God-oriented movements never neutralize oppressive power in a *status quo* or social anarchy. Instead, they stand for the poor.

However, social justice does not address poverty that charity or economic distribution can solve. William Robert Domeris' study illustrates how poverty was socially constructed "through the initial processes of labeling and demarcation, and the subsequent processes of disempowerment, oppression, marginalization, and alienation."[69] He clarifies some Hebrew terms for the poor, contending that poverty's semantics do not have a fixed meaning but are closely related to several other fields, such as wealth, power, honor, and righteousness.[70]

In this regard, Esack's survey on Quranic terms for those poor sheds crucial light. Against neutrality and objectivity, on the one hand, and the powerful oppressors, on the other, Quran makes a clear and determined preference for the poor.[71] It employs some terms to refer to the poorest and most disadvantaged members of society: the marginalized (*aradhil*: Q 11:27; 26:70), the poor (*fuqara*: Q 2:271; 9:60), and the indigent (*masakin*, Q 2:83, 177; 4:8). Moreover, Esack notes another word, *mustadaf*, from the Moses narrative, which

[67] Ibn Rāshid, 2.7.2.

[68] Shadaab Rahemtulla, *Qur'an of the Oppressed: Liberation Theology and Gender Justice in Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 10.

[69] William Robert Domeris, *Touching the Heart of God: The Social Construction of Poverty among Biblical Peasants*, vol. 466, *Library of Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Studies* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 12.

[70] *ibid.*, 14-21, 26; cf. Albert Gelin, The Poor of Yahweh [Les Pauvres de Yahvé], trans. Kathryn Sullivan (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1964), 15-26; J. David Pleins, "Poverty in the Social World of the Wise," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 12, no. 37 (1987); John R. Donahue, "What does the Lord Require? A Bibliographical Essay on the Bible and Social Justice," *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 25, no. 2 (1993): 27-8; Bruce V. Malchow, *Social Justice in the Hebrew Bible: What Is New and What Is Old* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 12-3; Cyril S. Rodd, *Glimpses of a Strange Land: Studies in Old Testament Ethics* (London: T&T Clark, 2001), 169.

[71] Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation, and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997), 97.

refers to an oppressed person, weak and insignificant, and treated with contempt. In its plural form, the *mustadafun* are disadvantaged, marginalized, or oppressed individuals of 'inferior' social standing. In social justice discourse, *mustadafun* means that particular people are responsible for their state. Esack believes *mustadaf* is purely caused by the arrogant and powerful (*mustakbirun*).[72] Accordingly, *mustadafun* is more determinate than "poor" or "victim" because it uncovers structural and systemic factors that cause oppression and marginalization.

Nevertheless, the social justice vision does not envisage exclusion, which opposes the tawhid principle's implication that all people are equal before God. Thus, "solidarity with the poor is not an option to be particular, but an option to be universal."[73] Accordingly, the preferential option for the *mustadafun* against the *mustakbirun* does not aim at excluding the latter but transforming them to be more human.[74] Otherwise, solidarity becomes partial to the qualities of the *mustakbirun*, whose oppressive power perpetuates the *status quo*.

Apart from its divine imperative based on the tawhid principle, the plausibility and importance of the *mustadafun* perspective may be explicable through the dynamic understanding of the Kingdom, which is discussable in three categories: concept, symbol, and liberation. Depending on the starting point, each approach centers on a different aspect. However, despite their differences, they are complementary rather than exclusive.[75]

From Concept to Symbol to Liberation

Many scholars previously considered the Kingdom an intellectualist-elaborated concept, assuming a clear and consistent

[72] *ibid.*, 98; "In Search of Progressive Islam Beyond 9/11," in *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*, ed. Omid Safi (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 81.

[73] Rebecca S. Chopp, *The Praxis of Suffering: An Interpretation of Liberation and Political Theologies* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1986), 61; Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation*, 202.

[74] *Qur'an, Liberation*, 202-3.

[75] Antonio M. Pernia, *God's Kingdom and Human Liberation: A Study of G. Gutiérrez, L. Boff and J. L. Segundo* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1990), 7-28; Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom*, 54.

idea concerning what Jesus meant by the Kingdom. However, it ended up with the Kingdom's eisegeses following its interpreters' concerns.[76] Consequently, the inefficacy of viewing the Kingdom from speculative inquiries prompted theologians to view it as a symbol more than a concept, which is perhaps narrow and deceptive.[77]

However, since the symbol triggers various ideas, it represents a vibrant and multifaceted religious experience expressing a personal relationship with God. Accordingly, its responses imply biblical faith, which the Synoptic Gospels equate to trusting God, who freely committed to the chosen people, promised salvation, and historically kept the promise (Is 7:9; Acts 4:12; 13:38-9; Rom 4:18.21-25). In Avery Dulles' typology of faith, all theories accenting the personal trust element are fiducial,[78] accommodating varied attitudes.

Jean Mouroux, a modern Roman Catholic personalist, exemplifies a fiducial faith that stresses the believer's trust in God or those who speak for God. Conservative evangelical churches and charismatic communities still firmly hold a fiducial belief, as classical Protestant writers did. However, unfortunately, this type's hazard obscures human initiative and responsibility for the world's future.[79] In this case, the Kingdom's embodiment solely depends on God's action at the cost of human efforts.

Unsatisfied with the dualism of the heavenly-earthly kingdoms and their lack of genuine interest in social transformation,[80] Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth challenged classical Protestant doctrines by including obedience to God's word as an appropriate response to

[76] *The Kingdom*, 55; cf. Viviano.

[77] Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 6; John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 2: Mentor, Message, and Miracles, 5 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 240-1; Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom*, 55.

[78] Avery Dulles, "The Meaning of Faith Considered in Relationship to Justice," in *The Faith that Does Justice: Examining the Christian Sources for Social Change*, ed. John C. Haughey, Woodstock Studies (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), 23.

[79] *ibid., 25*.

[80] Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1931), 540; Dulles, 29-30.

God's revelation. The idea of following Christ is their starting point for social reform.[81] While Bonhoeffer employed Christian discipleship to engage in social change, Barth's dialectical theology placed the Kingdom as the meeting point of God's revelation and human understanding.[82] However, while Bonhoeffer emphasized the present reality of the Kingdom, implying costly grace from the human part, Barth underscored its eschatology and future fulfillment.[83] Thus, the Kingdom as a symbol reveals a tensive aspect of its elements.

Jürgen Moltmann thrust the importance of hope to deal with the present-future tension. According to him, Christians' faith inspires great hope for the eschatological Kingdom, which liberates them to act for humanity.[84] Thus, by hope in such a fiducial faith, the Kingdom is a future that "already impinges on the present while remaining outside the present."[85] Accordingly, Moltmann avoided the dualism of the two kingdoms and spiritualistic individualism, which "does not motivate world-transforming hope."[86]

Gustavo Gutierrez contextualized Moltmann's theology departing from concrete experience.[87] He believed hope is vital to a future-

[81] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Prisoner for God: Letters and Papers from Prison* [Widerstand und Ergebung-Briefe und Aufzeichnungen aus der Haft], ed. Eberhard Bethge, trans. Reginald H. Fuller (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), 90; *The Cost of Discipleship* [Nachfolge] (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979), 84, 200-1, 344; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, vol. IV: The Doctrine of Reconciliation, XIII vols. (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 100-1; *The Humanity of God*, trans. John Newton Thomas and Thomas Wieser (London: Collins, 1961), 37-66; Dulles, 28.

[82] Karl Barth, *The Göttingen Dogmatics: Instruction in the Christian Religion*, ed. Hannelotte Reiffen, trans. G. W. Bromiley, vol. I (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 43-198; Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 61-86.

[83] *The Cost of Discipleship*, 45-60; Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 323-4.

[84] Jürgen Moltmann, *Theology of Hope: On the Ground and the Implications of a Christian Eschatology* [Theologie der Hoffnung], trans. James W. Leitch (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 224-9, 337-8; *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology* [Beiträge zur öffentlichen Relevanz der Theologie], trans. Margaret Kohl (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1999), 251-4; Dulles, 30.

[85] Boring, 141-2.

[86] Jürgen Moltmann, *The Politics of Discipleship and Discipleship in Politics: Jürgen Moltmann Lectures in Dialogue with Mennonite Scholars*, ed. Willard M. Swartley (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006), 18.

[87] Gustavo Gutierrez, *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People* [Beber en su proprio pozo: En el itinerario espiritual de un pueblo], trans. Mathhew J. O'Connell (London:

oriented life that transforms the present. However, the way of changing the present differs. In Moltmann's theology, the challenge to the present order of things derives from the promise of the resurrected Christ as a human's preparable future by an active hope.[88] In contrast, Gutierrez's hope emphasizes the historical praxis of liberation,[89] the roots of which go beyond the institutional Church and belong to the current task of creating a new society.[90]

Like Marxists' "humanization" and biblical "salvation," liberation means re-creation and fulfillment,[91] recalling the past two centuries of human self-understanding and history.[92] In this respect, the Industrial and French revolutions reveal humans' power to modify nature and society. Moreover, it indicates that history assumes a God-human partnership: God rules history, but humans play a role in it.[93] Hence, history is perceivable as the "kingdom process," implying faith that "does not yet exist in [the] final, complete form."[94]

Thus, liberation stresses the conflictual nature of the process without being limited by political possibilities like "revolution" or overly gradualist and optimistic "development."[95] Based on biblical salvation, liberation is "here and now"[96] and revolutionary, changing socio-economic relations. Therefore, ignoring Kingdom-

SCM Press, 1984), 1-5.

88 Moltmann, *Theology of Hope*, 18, 84.

89 Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* [Teologia de la liberacion], ed. and trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 124.

90 *ibid.*, 141.

91 *Dulles, 34-6.*

92 Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 42.

93 René Coste, *Marxist Analysis and Christian Faith* [Analyse marxiste et foi chrétienne], trans. Roger A. Couture and John C. Cort (New York: Orbis Books, 1985), 72; Pernia, 21-8; Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom*, 56.

94 *The Kingdom*, 57; Dulles, 34.

95 Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 17.

96 Dulles, 36.

aligned action distorts and alienates God's word.[97] Moreover, the Kingdom's hermeneutics exists to change the world through faith's performative approach to liberation. Otherwise, its meaning remains undiscovered.[98]

John Fuellenbach uses a "model" to avoid idolizing ideas and symbols of the multifaceted Kingdom, assuming that human language can only grasp and convey part of reality.[99] Referring to Howard A. Snyder's models, he emphasizes six polarities central to the Kingdom (Present vs. future [already—not yet]; individual vs. social, spirit vs. matter [religious—political]; gradual vs. climactic [eschatological—apocalyptic]; divine action vs. human action [gift and task]; the congruency between the Kingdom and the Church)[100] and claims that any theology of the Kingdom ignoring those tensive symbols is unbiblical.[101]

In this respect, Enrique Dussel indicates the essential link between the Kingdom and the material reality of *mustadafun*, as the enslaved *mustadafun* reveal the need for the Kingdom in their suffering. Their poverty prompts theologians to find the Kingdom's "not yet" while preventing any fetishization of its "already" and giving the Kingdom the dialectical flexibility needed for faith and hope.[102] Thus, social justice imbued with a God-oriented movement always takes the *mustadafun* perspective.

Accordingly, it is not an ideological, speculative, and ahistorical initiative to formulate procedural, distributive, corrective, or

[97] *ibid.*, 35.

[98] Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 10-1; Dulles, 32-9.

[99] Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," in *Conversion: Perspectives on Personal and Social Transformation*, ed. Walter E. Conn (New York: Alba House, 1978); Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom*, 61.

[100] Howard A. Snyder, *Models of the Kingdom* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 16-8; cf. George Eldon Ladd, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Scriptural Studies in the Kingdom of God* (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans, 1959), 18.

[101] Fuellenbach, *The Kingdom*, 63.

[102] Dussel.

restorative justice. Instead, it is a contributive role taken by the Kingdom's people, the ummah, based on their encounters with and the preferential option for the *mustadafun*. Therefore, social justice gets its fundamental meaning only through contributing to a God-oriented, people-centered movement with the *mustadafun* perspective.

Conclusion

Communicative theology does not offer a conceptual understanding of social justice but discovers its principles based on the movement initiated by the central figures of Christianity and Islam. Since the space does not allow, this study limits itself to the "We" factor resulting in the interlocking three principles of social justice: God-oriented, people-centered movement, and *mustadafun* perspective. It leaves the rest for another study to observe Indonesia's recent "Globe" factor as to whether or not those three principles are present in dealing with social injustice issues. Missing one of those principles could turn social justice into a state-centered, religion-centered, or market-centered ideology. The fact that only 50% of Papuans (irrespective of their indigeneity) enjoy social justice may challenge or otherwise confirm this prejudice. Without the *mustadafun* perspective, Papua development perpetuates social injustice, opposing God-oriented and people-centered movements.

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