

Practical Considerations for Paul Ricoeur's “Transformation of Subjectivity” In The Indonesian Context

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Abstract

Hermeneutics is the task of interpreting in the area of action. The purpose of interpreting is the emancipation of a better and fairer life. One of the hermeneutic thinkers is Paul Ricoeur. Ricoeur's hermeneutic project is built on criticism of the subject. Its purpose of producing a “transformation of subjectivity.” By *undermining the illusion* of the absolute, exploitative, and dominant matter manifested in the *homo oeconomicus*. This transformation of subjectivity can be used to analyze the area of action in public space. There are three hermeneutical tasks. The first is a hermeneutical task in poverty; the second is its task in the context of environmental damage (ecology). And the third is its task in the context of fighting economic and political injustice. All hermeneutical tasks are supported by the basic ethics of emancipation, namely “love and justice.”

Keywords: Hermeneutics, Homo Oeconomicus, Public Duty, Transformation of Subjectivity.

Abstrak

Hermeneutik adalah tugas menafsir di wilayah tindakan. Tujuan menafsir adalah emansipasi hidup yang lebih baik dan adil. Salah seorang pemikir hermeneutik adalah Paul Ricoeur. Secara metodik, proyek hermeneutik Ricoeur dibangun dari kritik atas subjek untuk menghasilkan “transformasi subjektivitas” dengan *meruntuhkan ilusi subjek* yang absolut, yang eksploitatif dan dominatif dalam wujudnya di hari ini berupa *homo oeconomicus*. Di Indonesia, transformasi subjektivitas ini dapat dipakai untuk menganalisis wilayah tindakan di ruang publik dan mendapatkan tiga tugas hermeneutik. Pertama, tugas hermeneutik dalam konteks kemiskinan. Kedua, tugas hermeneutik dalam konteks kerusakan lingkungan hidup (ekologi). Ketiga, tugas hermeneutik dalam konteks melawan ketidakadilan ekonomi dan politik. Ketiga tugas hermeneutik tersebut ditopang oleh dasar etika emansipasi, yaitu “kasih dan keadilan.”

Kata-kata Kunci: Hermeneutik, *Homo Oeconomicus*, Transformasi Subjektivitas, Tugas Publik

Introduction

In the global context, the meeting of Pope Francis with the Great Ulema of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmed al-Tayeb, who is also the Chair of the Muslim Council of Elders in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Recalled the meeting between Saint Francis Assisi and Sultan Malik al-Kamil in 1219, which took place in raging the 5th crusade (1217-1221).¹ The only mission of Francis Assisi at that time to meet Al-Kamil was to seek peace and end the war, which has claimed so many lives and breeds mutual hatred and resentment among Christians and Muslims. As Francis Assisi praying for God to be a peace source, so is Pope Francis in the present. It's what drove him to meet the Great Ulema of Al-Azhar, who is also in Egypt. Their mission is the same: to encourage the realization of world peace. Their meeting brought about an important document, i.e., "Documents on Human Brotherhood for World Peace and Living Together," signed by both. It was declared in Abu Dhabi on February 4, 2019. The document was inseparable from the new dynamics of global society, namely the emergence of terrorism, which tarnished humanity's image and dignity.² A strong, sincere relationship that emerges from a clean and deep heart is what underlies the birth of the document.

There are notes above from the global context of Abu Dhabi present social reality as a field of human action interpretation. That interpretation becomes possible because the action itself has various references, among other life values stemming from religion and culture. Here we need hermeneutics that can interpret reality to call for the emancipation of public space. And the hermeneutics knife I mean is Paul Ricoeur's thought.

Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics can be categorized as an anthropological philosophy.³ His thought is also referred to as theology,

¹ Trias Kuncahyono, "Memaknai Pertemuan Paus dan Imam Besar Al-Tayeb," *Kompas*, 9 Februari 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/utama/2019/02/09/memaknai-pertemuan-paus-dan-imam-besar-al-tayeb/>.

² Musthafa Abd. Rahman, "Toleransi: Batu Penjuru Baru," *Kompas*, 10 Februari 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/internasional/2019/02/10/batu-penjuru-baru/>.

³ Marianne Moyaert, "Ricoeur and the wager of interreligious ritual participation," *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 78, no. 3, (2017): 173-199.

namely the theology of humans. As philosophy or theology about humans,⁴ his belief directly connects with public affairs. His discourse on public space first relates to the subject who reaches consciousness because he is open and accepts the plurality of "the other" and his obligation to distance himself. Anthropological philosophy or theology means the public's public duty who has experienced an awareness. to openly emancipate or liberate his public space laden with oppression and injustice.⁵ For Ricoeur, the subject is inseparable from the others but is open to public affairs "aiming at the good life with and for others in just institutions."⁶ The subject who is aware of these public affairs requires hermeneutics support, which functions as a means of interpreting himself to be firm in his ethical emancipatory vocation.

In general, hermeneutics is "the art of understanding."⁷ Understanding reality (public space) where humans live with the universe of their solitudes, including in it. What makes Ricoeur's hermeneutics different from the other is his starting point, which departs from oneself. Hence, his hermeneutics is called "hermeneutics of the self."⁸ The self is emancipated first so that it is free from its closed and selfish tendencies, towards self-openness and involvement in public affairs. The self who acts in this way is the one who lives well with others in just institutions.

The thesis which I propose in this article is that Ricoeur's thought is in touch with public affairs so that hermeneutical tasks are needed in the realm of human action. The discussion sequence is as follows. First,

Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Biblical Narrative in the Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur: A Study in Hermeneutics and Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 119.

⁴ Boyd Blundell, *Paul Ricoeur between Theology and Philosophy: Detour and Return* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010), 150-169. John van den Hengel, "Paul Ricoeur's *Oneself as Another* and Practical Theology," *Theological Studies* 55, no. 3, (September 1994): 458-480. F. Budi Hardiman, *Seni Memahami: Hermeneutik dari Schleiermacher sampai Derrida* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2015), 257.

⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, and Forgetting*, trans. by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 491-493.

⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, trans. by Kathleen Blamey (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 172, 180.

⁷ F. Budi Hardiman, *Seni Memahami: Hermeneutik dari Schleiermacher sampai Derrida* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2015).

⁸ Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 297. Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. by Don Ihde (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974), 266. Saulias Geniusas, "Against the Sartrean Background: Ricoeur's Lectures on Imagination," *Research in Phenomenology* 46 (2016): 98-116.

as a method and theory, it describes what hermeneutical action is. Second, it discusses public tasks in the *homo oeconomicus* era, which touched on three contexts or three public areas, namely: poverty, ecological damage, and injustice. Third, in conclusion, public spirituality is demonstrated through the global solidarity

Theory: The Hermeneutics of Action

According to Paul Ricoeur, there are two basic gestures of hermeneutics philosophy.⁹ The first, the hermeneutical gesture, is humble. And even tend to uncomplainingly acknowledge various historical conditions that make all human understandings recognize its limitations. The second gesture is ideological criticism that is brave and even tends to arrogant, which is directed at rejecting human communication's distortion. As for the first one, Ricoeur said that he was also part of the historical process, and for the second, Ricoeur opposed the forged human communication, which is guided by a concept of unlimited free communication.

The two gestures above, in fact, are two legacies of the classic struggle between Romanticism and Enlightenment.¹⁰ Enlightenment intends to fight prejudice, while Romanticism, with its fond memories of the past, accepts tradition and authority as just "okay." Then Ricoeur analyzes the main problem of Romanticism because the past is considered more "okay" than the present. Romantic hermeneutics are always obsessed with the effort to restore the past. And away from the possibility of criticizing it. In the public sphere of religion, this problem is seen most clearly. To preserve the traditions, followers of a religion are always obsessed with the past, making it difficult to accept change and hold on to old ways.¹¹ Ironically, religion is also the most difficult to change and is the party most opposed to social emancipation efforts.

⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, ed. by John B. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 87-88.

¹⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 66-67. Kevin Aho, "A Hermeneutics of the Body and Place in Health and Illness," in *Place, Space and Hermeneutics*, ed. by Bruce B. Janz (Switzerland: Springer, 2017), 115-126 (116-120).

¹¹ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 66-67. Kevin Aho, "A Hermeneutics of the Body and Place in Health and Illness," 116-120.

Ricoeur realizes that critical of the context cannot be started from *uncomplaining* gestures to historical solicitude facts. According to him, philosophy's necessary motion constitutes an essential gesture that relentlessly opposes "false consciousness," a distortion of human communication that hides dominance and violence.¹² The critical approach is controlled by the interests of emancipation, also called self-reflection. Self-reflection frees the subject from dependence on glorified power. The importance of emancipation is to change the world.

How is the call to transform the world realized? According to Ricoeur, hermeneutics is not enough to examine awareness. If so, then it only creates an egotistical and solipsistic person. Hermeneutics must be directed into the hermeneutics of action. This is a prominent theme in Ricoeur's hermeneutics, namely the convergence between language and action.¹³ Ricoeur emphasizes the importance of "linguistic turns" by showing the importance of balance between words and deeds. This is in line with his view that discourse is an event and meaning at once. Hence, saying and doing, discourse and action are two poles of experience that cannot be separated. Someone is, at the same time, his words and actions. Words cannot deny actions.¹⁴ This denial only occurs when the word is merely a discourse in post-Cartesian Western philosophical idealism, which has turned rationalistic.

For Ricoeur, philosophy is essentially a reflective process to question and clarify the meaning of our existence.¹⁵ Reflective philosophy aims to achieve self-understanding while at the same time understanding the world and others. The self is understood as a unity between words and deeds, and gives birth to decisive practical wisdom in making decisions and taking fair and appropriate actions. The world and others are interpreted only as a region for just actions and solidarity. Interpreting, in the end, is an effort to be a responsible self. Ricoeur said,

¹² Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 63.

¹³ Sherri Rae Colby and Brett H. Bodily, "Poetic Possibilities Exploring Texts with Ricoeur's Hermeneutics," *International Review of Qualitative Research* 11, no. 2, (Summer 2018): 162–177 (175–176). David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), 8–13.

¹⁴ John C. Simon, "Yang Lain' dalam Pemikiran Levinas dan Ricoeur terkait Prinsip Hidup Bersama," *Indonesian Journal of Theology* 6, no. 2 (Desember 2018): 138–162 (150). John C. Simon, "Berteologi Menurut Paul Ricoeur: Sebuah Sumbangan Metodologis," *Jurnal Teologi* 6, no. 2, (November 2017): 155–166.

¹⁵ David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory*, 9.

“contrary to Husserlian’s demands for absolute responsibility for oneself, hermeneutics requires absolute responsibility for others.”¹⁶

Ricoeur described himself as a “post-Hegelian Kantianist.”¹⁷ A Kantianist of this kind recognized the importance of the concept of totality but did not absolve it. He also maintains the universal rationality in its conformity with particular, historical, and temporal values. Its form is a hermeneutical action, namely an ontological belief about what is right and fair. But translated into daily contextual experience. The new is the unity between Words and actions. Ricoeur’s hermeneutics provides an essential basis for the hermeneutic process’s ethical actions. As an attempt to interpret oneself. “Hermeneutics without a project of liberation is blind, but a project of emancipation without historical experience is empty.”¹⁸

Method

The research method used Paul Ricoeur’s hermeneutics. Ricoeur’s hermeneutics is a critical interpretation method that aims to uncover the ideological relations behind social behavior in the context of poverty, ecological damage, and economic-political injustice. Critical hermeneutics is a hermeneutic that takes ideological criticism. The stages of description and context analysis to reveal the dimensions of liberation. A transformative ethical vocation is the mouth of a critical hermeneutic task. Methodically, the order of discussion is as follows. First, we described Ricoeur’s hermeneutic theory. Second, we presented hermeneutic tasks in the context of poverty, ecological damage, and economic-political injustice. And in closing, we will present some conclusions.

¹⁶ David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory*, 24.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, ed. by George H. Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 237. Kaplan notes with a somewhat different formula: “Hermeneutics without the regulative idea of emancipation is blind; the critique of ideology without a concrete content from our practical interest in communication is empty.” See Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory*, 5, 40.

Result and Discussion

According to Ricoeur, the current dominant ideology is *homo oeconomicus*.¹⁹ The most striking appearance of the *homo oeconomicus* spirit is expansion, domination, and oppression in the economic field. Even imperialism is driven by this spirit to survive even though it causes war.

We explained the survival of the dominative spirit from a historical perspective. Ricoeur said, "History would be economic history, history made by the *homo oeconomicus* — and not a political history, history made by *the man of prey*."²⁰ The dominative economic spirit is built on the logic of life that preys on each other to increase profits. It leads to what is Ricoeur called a *catastrophic situation*,²¹ which is a situation that brings death to everyday life because humans prey on each other. This situation also means a situation in which a great danger in the form of injustice, poverty, and ecological damage is integrated into death's power for everyday life.

Modern ideology in the form of *homo oeconomicus* also plays in the area of the process of rationalization with the intention of taming the area of instrumental action and manipulating praxis, namely "a good life."²² Praxis is stressed and squashed because it is diametrically separated from the theory. The theory also manipulates concrete reality or life praxis, causing unethical and immoral actions. *Homo oeconomicus* as an ideology also becomes a tool of the legitimacy of power so that good and just praxis of life never arises.

What Ricoeur has said is relevant to explain hermeneutical tasks in the Indonesian context. Public hermeneutics can be seen from

¹⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary*, trans. by Erazim V. Kohak (Evanston Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 116. See also John C. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," in *Misiologi Kontemporer: Merentangkan Horison Panggilan Kristen*, ed. by C.S. Rappan Paledung, Nindy Sasongko, Indah Sriulina (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia and ATI, 2019), 33-53 (43).

²⁰ Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature*, 119. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 43, f.n. 78.

²¹ Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature*, 121. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 43, 44.

²² Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 99. Paul Ricoeur, *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics*, II, trans. by Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 305. Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 172, 180, 239. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 43.

Ricoeur's statement that expanding the theory of interpretation into the realm of human action is possible because the action itself is a reference from various texts.²³ The interpretation of public space as a text will come in contact with three public domains, namely: (1) poverty, (2) environmental (ecological) damage, and (3) economic and political injustice.²⁴ These three context challenges have actually merged into a "catastrophic situation"²⁵ threatening everyday life.

First, hermeneutics in the context of poverty

Ricoeur's hermeneutics departs from awareness of the history of solicitude.²⁶ He draws inspiration from biblical stories that are laden with narratives of losers. Ricoeur's view is never neutral. So that the emancipation promoted is tethered to solicitude over the context. One of the awareness of solicitudes history is the context of poverty. The poor are mediation via *long detour* (way) to return to achieving a different self-image, which is better and fairer.²⁷

Ricoeur traces the idea of self-relating to the poor. He connects hermeneutics as it about the self with hermeneutics as social emancipation. It is namely poor.²⁸ "The *autonomy* of self will be tightly bound up with *solicitude* for one's neighbor and with *justice* for each individual."²⁹ In Ricoeur's understanding, the self is never separate absolutely from neighbors or other individuals, especially the poor. The self is formed by a sense of solicitude for poor neighbors to act reasonably for them. Here comes what is called "ethical intention," which, according to Ricoeur, means "aiming at the 'good life' with and

²³ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 15.

²⁴ See also Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 44-52.

²⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Freedom and Nature*, 221. Paul Ricoeur, *Fallible Man: Philosophy of The Will*, trans. by Charles Kelbley (Chicago, Illinois: Henry Regnery Company, tt.), 4, 40. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 44.

²⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 3, trans. by Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (Chicago dan London: The University of Chicago Press, 1988), 209-210.

²⁷ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 158. Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, II, 118-119. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 44.

²⁸ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 310. Paul Ricoeur, "The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy," in *The Foundation and Application of Moral Philosophy*, ed. by Hendrik J. Opdebeeck (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2000), 11-15.

²⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 18. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 44-45.

for others, in just institutions.”³⁰ Like Emmanuel Levinas, Ricoeur also said that ethical intentions are “calls us to responsibility”³¹ to the lives of others. This intention can undermine the arrogance of life practiced by *homo oeconomicus*, who is only eager to pursue profit and mercilessly impoverishes other humans.

An ethical intention for poor people has three components.³² *First* is aiming at the ‘Good Life.’³³ Here, the hermeneutical work analyzes whether specific actions and decisions are for a just life. *Second* is solicitude or the desire to live together and for the sake of others who are poor.³⁴ Here, Ricoeur emphasizes that others always mediate the interpretation of the self. The self is raised in dialogue with other people. The self exists because of the solicitude of the poor’ lives and the call to uphold justice for them. *The third* is mediation through just institutions.³⁵ What’s he meant by ‘institutions’ is “the structure of *living together* as this belongs to a historical community.”³⁶ in the sense of a balanced equation that ensures cohesion between individuals, interpersonal, and society working according to that ethical purpose³⁷ in the sense of a balanced equation that ensures cohesion between individuals, interpersonal, and society working according to that ethical purpose.

The liberation of the poor targets two components at once.³⁸ First is the upper structure, namely, political, moral consciousness through criticism of oneself whose thoughts, motivations, and inner atmosphere are egological-solipsistic. Second is the lower structure, namely in economic practices. Suppose the upper structure is related to the emancipation of mentality and ways of thinking. Then the lower

³⁰ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 172.

³¹ Paul Ricoeur, “Responsibility and Fragility: An Ethical Reflection,” *Religious Traditions: A Journal in the Study of Religion* (July 25, 1994): 1-5 (4).

³² Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 171-202. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 45-46.

³³ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 171-180. Ricoeur, “The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy,” 11-14.

³⁴ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 180-194. The second component also said by Ricoeur: “Freedom in the second person.” See Paul Ricoeur, “The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy,” 14-15.

³⁵ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 194-202. Paul Ricoeur, “The Problem of the Foundation of Moral Philosophy,” 15-18.

³⁶ Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 194.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

³⁸ Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 46.

structure is related to the institutions' emancipation supporting justice. Without the emancipation of institutions such as the state, which must protect its citizens from exploitation and oppression, then self-emancipation is almost impossible to succeed fully. For Ricoeur, the subject's emancipation requires the support of institutions such as the state. We realized the ethical intention of living justly with others in just institutions.

In several publications, Ricoeur asserts that the emancipation paradigm is the paradigm of the Kingdom of God.³⁹ It is the paradigm of liberating the subject from the illusion of the selfish, dominative subject, and acts unfairly. In line with that, living a faithful life participating in the Kingdom of God's movement can be called a mystical and political movement. The essence of Christian mystical experience is an experience greeted by the mystery of God's salvation. The experience makes people have the same solicitude with God in His loving salvation plan for the world today.

Today the earth is inhabited by more than 7.53 billion people. Every night 219,000 new stomachs need food.⁴⁰ The famine war was fueled throughout life. However, hunger is increasingly difficult to get rid of from the face of the earth. Every night 1 of 8, the earth's population goes to sleep while hungry. The hungry population of the world is more than 815 million. One in three children in developing countries suffered from malnutrition. Also, 25,000 people per day die from malnutrition and food-borne diseases, and 18,000 are children under five. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to reduce poverty by 50 percent in 2015 failed. The target is continued through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end all forms of poverty anywhere in 2030. However, again whether the 2030 target will be achieved if the practice of domination, a global corporation, is still a deadly ghost? For Indonesia, with a population of 268 million, sustainable food availability is crucial. At present, Indonesia's agricultural burden is getting heavier. Agriculture is ultimately synonymous with despondency and poverty,

³⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative and Imagination*, trans. by David Pellauer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 44. John C. Simon, "Hermeneutik Paul Ricoeur dan Tugas Emansipasi" (D.Th., diss., Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana, Yogyakarta, 2016), 323. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 46.

⁴⁰ Abhishek Chaudhary, David Gustafson & Alexander Mathys, "Multi-indicator sustainability assessment of global food systems," *Nature Communication* (2018): 1-13, accessed October 10, 2020, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-018-03308-7>.

which is done by the elderly and is not attractive to the millennial generation. Lack of access to healthy food worsens nutrition and increases stunting. Stunting or short body is a condition of chronic malnutrition since in the womb, which results in disruption of the baby's normal growth. Stunting toddlers grow not only short but also cognitive deficits.⁴¹ Ironically, in 2017, based on the Food Sustainability Index developed by *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, Indonesia was named the world's second-largest food waster. One person throws up to 300 kilograms of food every year.⁴² Quoting from *Weste4Change*, nearly 13 million tons of food in Indonesia wasted every year. Otherwise, it can feed around 28 million people.

How Ricoeur gave us a clue about a way out? He discussed a dialogue between the social sciences and critical hermeneutics to produce narrative discourse. The truth brings serious implications for the retelling and reinterpretation of history. He said, "For history is not only the story (*Histoire*) of triumphant kings and heroes, of the powerful; it is also the story of the powerless and dispossessed. The history of the vanquished dead crying out for justice demands to be told."⁴³ For Ricoeur, the narrative contains political implications for something transformative because a critical interpretation of history can provide alternative historical explanations of events, that is, to uncover the liberation side of a narrative. Liberation often reveals narratives that hide reality and produce false consciousness as well as various forms of oppression. Through the retelling of history, poor and oppressed people have the opportunity to be empowered and free. Here an interpretation is never separate from interests. The interest in question is to serve justice.

Second, hermeneutics in the context of ecological damage

Although Ricoeur does not explicitly comment on the issue of place here, he is critical of the erasure of our meaningful connections

⁴¹ Chaudhary, Gustafson, & Mathys, "Multi-indicator sustainability," 1-13. ADH, "Perbaikan Gizi Dimulai dari Rumah Tangga," 10 Oktober 2017, <https://dinas pangan.sumbarpov.go.id/details/news/487>.

⁴² Chaudhary, Gustafson, & Mathys, "Multi-indicator sustainability," 1-13. "Jangan Buang-buang Makananmu....," *Kompas*, 17 Maret 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/gaya-hidup/2019/03/17/jangan-buang-buang-makananmu/>.

⁴³ Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory*, 60.

with particular local places and the specific culture they embody. “Earthiness” matters—care for a place is meaning-giving and philosophically significant. Imagining ourselves away from this earth, whether virtually or philosophically, harbors dangers.⁴⁴ Much ecological thinking talks about the planet as our home and seeks to compel protective action by articulating our rootedness in the physical environment. Yet, even understanding the ecological connectedness or interdependence of all living species does not necessarily mean that people care about the environment or feel compelled to alter their destructive lifestyles.

Ricoeur notes that theology can be transformed into an ideology partly due to the influence of modernity’s mindset, which produces “forgetfulness” to *hierophany*,⁴⁵ namely the appearance of the Holy One, or forgetfulness to the signs of the Holy One. This is due to the desire to satisfy human needs by exploiting nature and processing it technically.

Ricoeur’s hermeneutics is laden with interests. A life that is just to nature supported by the interest for emancipation as a duty to be fair to nature, which he calls “planetary solidarity,”⁴⁶ which is fairness to nature, which is inseparable from justice for the poor and women.

In this interest, there is a critical motivation for social change. According to Ricoeur, “what motivates a critique if not interest, an interest in emancipation, *an* interest in liberation.”⁴⁷ Liberation or emancipation is the main interest of public hermeneutics. The rampant of life interests and practices. Liberation or emancipation anti-wholeness of creation.

Ricoeur also echoed the contextual preferences of God loudly. This attempts to see the inherent connection between theology (the divine picture) and ecological problems. In the context of contextual thinking, Ricoeur points to the various types of Divine names. He said, “The naming God [...] is not simple but multiple. It is not a single tone, but

⁴⁴ Christina M. Gschwandtner, “Space and Narrative: Ricoeur and a Hermeneutic Reading of Place,” in *Place, Space and Hermeneutics*, ed. by Bruce B. Janz (Switzerland: Springer, 2017), 169-181 (180).

⁴⁵ Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 288. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 47.

⁴⁶ Ricoeur, “Responsibility and Fragility,” 2. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 47.

⁴⁷ Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations*, 151-152. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 47.

polyphonic. The original expressions of faith are complex forms of discourse as diverse as narrative, prophecies, laws, proverbs, prayers, hymns, liturgical formulas, and wisdom writings.”⁴⁸ All the names of the Divine as abundant expressions of faith, for Ricoeur, are *long detours* to clarify liberation narratives, which become his hermeneutical mission,⁴⁹ namely renewing self-awareness of others, nature and others.

Indonesia itself is abundant in fantasy theology,⁵⁰ namely models of Divine images such as Jesus as Mangutana (*landowner*) in Sumba's context,⁵¹ Jesus as Karema (*guardian*) in the Minahasa's context ⁵² and “land as the body of God” in the Papua's context.⁵³ All of that present's symbolic mediation with local nuances to renew self-awareness while freeing action. There are several examples of operative theology (Freud's influence: unconscious theology) that can be functionally considered to overcome ecological damage. According to Ricoeur's thought, panentheism, an awareness of God who lives in nature, is a logical consequence of the openness of naming God close to public concerns.⁵⁴ Through this long route of naming God, we are made constantly alert (by a hermeneutics of suspicion) to the illusion of exploitative subjects.

Data released by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) stated that 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 were the hottest four years ever recorded.⁵⁵ In Indonesia, the current increase in temperature is even

⁴⁸ Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*, 224. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 47, f.n. 101.

⁴⁹ Ricoeur, *Figuring the Sacred*, 225. William C. Placher, “Paul Ricoeur and Postliberal Theology: A Conflict of Interpretations”, *Modern Theology* 4, no. 1, (October 1987): 35-52 (44).

⁵⁰ Ricoeur said that fantasy is a part that must be considered in understanding new self without needing references, besides, self-understanding can be achieved through meeting with reality as a reference. See Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, II, 320.

⁵¹ Suh Sung Min, *Injil dan Penyembahan Nenek Moyang: Suatu Studi Perbandingan Antropologis-Misiologis tentang Penyembahan Nenek Moyang di Indonesia (Minahasa, Sumba dan Batak) dan di Korea* (Yogyakarta: Media Pressindo, 2001), 200-208 (207).

⁵² Agustien Kapahang-Kaunang, “Berteologi Kontekstual dari Perspektif Feminis,” in *Perempuan Indonesia: Berteologi Feminis dalam Konteks*, ed. by Asnath N. Natar (Yogyakarta: Pusat Studi Feminis UKDW dan WCC ETE, 2004), 19-40.

⁵³ Karel Phil. Erari, *Tanah Kita, Hidup Kita: Hubungan Manusia dan Tanah di Irian Jaya sebagai Persoalan Teologis* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1999), 233-239.

⁵⁴ Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 49.

⁵⁵ AIK/ISW, “Bumi Memanas, Cuaca Ekstrem Meningkat,” *Kompas*, 12 Februari 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/utama/2019/02/12/bumi-memanas-cuaca-ekstrem-meningkat/>.

higher than the global average. The Indonesian Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency's study of temperature trends in Jakarta. From 1866 to 2012 showed an increase in temperature reaching 1.6 degrees Celsius.⁵⁶ Before 1966, the average temperature in Jakarta was 0.6 degrees Celsius cooler than global temperatures. However, after that, Jakarta and Indonesia's temperature, in general, tends to be hotter than the global average. This is partly due to the rapid reduction of vegetation and urban growth. Entering the beginning of 2019, WMO also noted extreme weather patterns. In Indonesia, extreme weather has also increased, marked by an increase in the frequency and scale of hydro-meteorological disasters. The impact of increasing temperatures and climate change has occurred in the food sector due to droughts or floods, impacting biodiversity, pest problems, and so on.

The National Disaster Management Agency noted that 95 percent of Indonesia's disasters are ecological disasters, such as floods, landslides, and forest fires. Meanwhile, Indonesia is the country with the highest number of fatalities due to natural disasters throughout 2018. Out of 10,373 fatalities worldwide, 4,535 of them are from Indonesia, the United Nations Agency for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) said in Geneva, Switzerland, January 24, 2019.⁵⁷ Actually the high vulnerability of disasters in Indonesia designates weak mitigation and disaster risk reduction efforts.

How does critical hermeneutics work in this context? In contrast to Marx, who did not consider the power of religion, Ricoeur saw religion as a liberating force that aroused moral and ethical awareness for humanity to protect the environment.⁵⁸ It is important to note that one of the National Ulema Conference results and the 2019 Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) Conference, February 27-March 1, was a decision regarding plastic waste.⁵⁹ Indonesia itself is ranked second among countries producing

⁵⁶ AIK/ISW, "Bumi Memanas, Cuaca Ekstrem Meningkat."

⁵⁷ AIK/DIM/REN/FRN, "Kemampuan Mengelola Risiko Bencana Masih Rendah," *Kompas*, 26 Januari 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/utama/2019/01/26/kemampuan-mengelola-risiko-bencana-masih-rendah/>.

⁵⁸ Gschwandtner, "Space and Narrative," 180.

⁵⁹ Brigitta Isworo Laksmi, "Seruan Moral Melestarikan Lingkungan," *Kompas*, 14 Maret 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/utama/2019/03/14/seruan-moral-melestarikan-lingkungan/>. REK, "Persaudaraan kebangsaan Perkuat kedaulatan Rakyat," *Kompas*, 27

plastic waste that has claimed many victims. Plastic waste that ends at sea can be impacts animal deaths mortality and poisoned living things on land through the food chain. It was thrown into the sea, but it landed back on our food plate carried by fish.

In line with NU's concern regarding plastic waste, the Catholic Church has carried out ecological repentance by practicing environmentally friendly materials.⁶⁰ From an ecclesiological point of view, *Laudato Si'* (Praise be to You My Lord), the encyclical issued by Pope Francis in 2015, is an invitation to the people to carry out ecological repentance.⁶¹ His predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, got the titled "Green Pope" after publishing the *Caritas in Veritate*. All of that invites us to care for the earth. A disaster that marks fragility is a blessing to build solidarity. We need to foster continuously planetary solidarity, said Ricoeur.

Third, hermeneutics in the context of injustice

Economic globalization has caused many adverse effects. According to Ricoeur, "the expansion of global capitalism results in 'anonymity,' 'dehumanization,' 'barbaric forms of urbanism,' and 'to totalitarian peril.'"⁶² His opinion is a picture of the ideological issues behind the expansion of global capitalism. An ideological battle between those who are strong thanks to having capital, power, and opportunity. With those who are helpless and marginalized.

In his other work, Ricoeur sharpens his point by saying, "I conclude that in the *capitalistic era*, the major ideology is no longer a religious ideology but precisely a market ideology."⁶³ This dominance of the capitalistic ideology marginalizes those who lose in unfair ways to suffer more and are marginalized.

February 2019, <https://kompas.id/baca/polhuk/2019/02/27/persaudaraan-kebangsaan-perkuat-kedaulatan-rakyat/>.

⁶⁰ Laksmi, "Seruan Moral Melestarikan Lingkungan," 13.

⁶¹ Pope Francis, "Laudato Si: Encyclical Letter on Care for Our Common Home," 6 April 2020, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

⁶² Paul Ricoeur, *Political and Social Essays*, ed. by David Stewart and Joseph Bien (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1974), 292. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 49, f.n. 107.

⁶³ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 230. Simon, "Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur," 49.

Capitalistic ideology is a closed value system that is marketed consciously through clashes of ideologies. As a result, the public space is full of milling with the globalization of ideological markets and creating fierce and deadly *market fundamentalism*.

Market fundamentalism is an economic mechanism built by greed intended for unlimited growth, the creation of wealth and profits as much as possible obtained in the shortest possible time, the maximum use and enjoyment of material goods.⁶⁴ When dealing with theology, that has become an ideology. Market fundamentalism is in line with *religious fundamentalism*. Here, ideology is not only a communication distortion or false consciousness, but it is also a way to integrate and identify individuals and groups at the level of *action*.⁶⁵ According to the action, individuals and groups are identified, either oppressive or liberating.

The market globalization appearing behind the “market ideology” discourse justifies the logic of profit-seeking *homo oeconomicus* to enlarge capital.⁶⁶ The capitalist system that relies on market mechanisms causes not only the social gap but also injustice in which vulnerable groups are thrown up to the periphery. In this framework, we can examine the rise of radicalism and terrorism as phenomena of lopsided and dominative behavior of economic and political actors. In the Indonesian context, *the Setara Institute* confirms Ricoeur’s analysis above that, “The development of terrorism in the country [...] is motivated by *economic injustice and political injustice*.”⁶⁷ But from September 11, 2001, to the present, terror appears as a paradox.⁶⁸ It is no longer resistance to the flow of imperialistic globalization, but as an assertion of identity politics. Thus the latest terror in New Zealand whose actions is based on white

⁶⁴ Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 49-50.

⁶⁵ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 258. Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 140-168 (165). Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 50.

⁶⁶ Ricoeur, *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, 230. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 50.

⁶⁷ Ismail Hasani dan Bonar Tigor Naipospos (Ed.), *Wajah Para ‘Pembela’ Islam: Radikalisme Agama dan Implikasinya Terhadap Jaminan Kebebasan Beragama/Berkeyakinan di Jabodetabek dan Jawa Barat* (Jakarta: Tim Setara Institute dan Pustaka Masyarakat Setara, 2010), 88. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 51, f.n. 112.

⁶⁸ Omid Safi, “Terrorism and World Crisis: Reflection on Teaching Islam Through and After September 11th: Between Islamic Studies and a Progressive Muslim Agenda,” *The Journal of the Faculty of Religious Studies* 30, (2002): 211-236.

supremacy politics that anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim.⁶⁹ Now also comes the new landscape of global terrorism: terrorism turns out not only to exclusively refer to radical Islam but also the white supremacy movement, which is no less radical.

What is the way out? Ricoeur offers the “global solidarity”⁷⁰ praxis, namely alternative praxis for an economy based on justice, caring, participatory, and sustainable, namely an economy of solidarity and anti-greed based on a framework: honesty, social justice, shared responsibility, and ecological sustainability. This global solidarity is a public space solution offered by Ricoeur to face the challenges of economic and political injustices that increase the tension of radicalism-terrorism. *The Human Brotherhood Document* in Abu Dhabi on February 4, 2019,⁷¹ and Pope Francis’s solidarity work visit to Morocco on March 30, 2019⁷² needs to be translated into grassroots experience, also a solution for the earth to be fuller of mercy for everyone. Multicultural justice⁷³ is crucial for pluralistic Indonesian society. The pluralistic society consists of various cultural groups that have different cultural values and practices whose existence must be accommodated and protected in society.

In the Indonesian context, *the Church Unity Documents* 2014-2019 and 2019-2024, the Communion of Churches in Indonesia, the Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (CCI/PGI),⁷⁴ translating the concerns of the churches to the roots of radicalism, namely political-economic injustice and globalization of greed. Alternative movement through the document

⁶⁹ Darmansjah Djumala, “Paradoks Teror Selandia Baru,” *Kompas*, 29 Maret 2019, 7.

⁷⁰ Ricoeur, “Responsibility and Fragility,” 2. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 51.

⁷¹ Gumilar Rusliwa Somantri, “Persaudaraan Umat Manusia,” *Kompas*, 4 April 2019, 7.

⁷² Somantri, “Persaudaraan Umat Manusia,” 7.

⁷³ Widodo Dwi Putro, “Akses terhadap Keadilan,” *Kompas*, 20 September 2018, 7.

⁷⁴ Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia, *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia 2019-2024*, draf/usulan (Jakarta: Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia, 2019), 124-127. Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia, *Dokumen Keesaan Gereja Persekutuan Gereja-Gereja di Indonesia (DKG-PGI) 2014-2019* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 74-75. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 51.

of AGAPE (*Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth*)⁷⁵ disseminates a global economic system that is run based on the principle of love-oriented to God, man, and the universe, in which the dominant ethos is not mere profit-seeking, but love and sharing solidarity. Here, economic development prioritizes justice, peace, and mutual joy, from all for all.

Efforts to overcome context challenges in the form of poverty, ecological damage, and injustice require the support of a spirituality. Where society does not only operate mechanically but lives a lifestyle that is satisfied with what it gets and enjoys. A lifestyle that is not exaggerated, greedy, and unfair. This is a public spirituality whose source is the life of God. Public spirituality is also called the *kenosis spirituality*, which is in line with what Ricoeur says about “self-consciousness” as the culmination of hermeneutics, and the *double kenosis* towards the self and the other⁷⁶ to become a new and different self, namely the self that is and acts fairly to others.

Our Biblical and theological reflections and understanding of human security lead us to envision security based on the concept of *shalom*, a vision of justice, peace, security, and reconciliation. The meaning of *shalom* is interpreted in multiple ways in Biblical and theological terms. *Shalom* is a situation representing the well-being of the individual, of communities, and the cosmos. Genesis 1:31 says, “God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good!” From the beginning, God designed human life to live in peace with other creatures. It is a common duty to strive for the integrity of creation in order of justice and peace. Here all humanity is called to live a divine life full of peace through relationships with others and nature.

Conclusion

Paul Ricoeur has mentioned that ontological shared value. He stated that hermeneutics, as a principle interpreting reality, carried the

⁷⁵ Justice, Peace and Creation Team, *Alternative Globalization Addressing People and Earth (AGAPE): A Background Document* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2006), 8. Simon, “Misi Emansipatoris Menurut Paul Ricoeur,” 51-52.

⁷⁶ Paul Ricoeur, “The Status of *Vorstellung* in Hegel’s Philosophy of Religion,” in *Meaning, Truth, and God*, ed. by Leroy S. Rouner (Notre Dame & London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), 70-87 (77-78).

interests of God's Kingdom. The kingdom of God is a "concrete ontology" in the form of unchanging beliefs about love, justice, and compassion. In the kingdom, there is no eternal logic between master-servants, oppressors-oppressed, and rich-poor. In God's government, poor, small and oppressed people, and women get special attention. Jesus' mission is the singular concern of the Kingdom of God, namely for the sake of justice, prosperity, a brotherhood of all people, and the integrity of creation.

Relevant public hermeneutics is announcing God's Kingdom in real-life situations, namely the configuration of an unequal society. Public hermeneutics begins with self-awareness, namely the openness of the subject to social facts found in the poor, small, oppressed women, and including this nature as mediation for self-renewal. Interlocutory actions form public hermeneutics. That is relational, communicative, and dialogical and the mediating role of creative and imaginative interpretations. That work in experiences that are lived out and manifested through the praxis of action.

The public hermeneutics is connected with the basic ethics of emancipation, namely "love and justice." Ricoeur composes a basis for public spirituality in which love is not separate from the act of justice. In Ricoeur's view, public spirituality is a unity between the boon of the divine life calling and the "global solidarity," namely a sense of solidarity, unity with one another, victims, the environment, and the whole universe.

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