

Abstract

This thesis examines the discourse of indigenous religions and religious freedom in order to identify the potential engagement of both, since the latter is currently exclusive of the former. Although the current conceptualization of religious freedom is problematic, it is constructively taken here as indispensable, but unfinished, in the human rights framework so that it can be critically reexamined (Wiener & Bielefeldt, 2020). Among the purpose of examining religious freedom is to include the excluded like the indigenous peoples who deserves the religious freedom protection because what they have is not less religious than what is assumed by the world religion paradigm (Maarif, 2019). In arguing so, in the first part this thesis takes a closer look on the development of the indigenous religious freedom discourse as represented in the American context. It is chosen because the indigenous religious freedom discourse in that context is, judging from the available literature, is most developed compared to other regions. In America, there has been creative indigenous engagement towards religious freedom discourse, yet with many limitations. In the next part, it is Indonesian context that is taken as potentially contribute to the discourse because while having similar difficulties, the development of indigenous recognition in the country provides more tangible processes. This is apparent in the current legal and discursive advancement of the indigenous recognition that potentially disrupts the exclusive conception of religion and the profanization of the indigenous. Lastly, the final part will highlight the main challenges in making the conception of religious freedom more inclusive. The author will then propose some conceptual framework, such as engaged religion-making and ecologically-engaged religious freedom, with which religious freedom can engage the pluralities and complexities of human beings including the indigenous.

Key words: religious freedom, indigenous religion, engagement