VU VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM

VU Research Portal

Theology of the Public Sphere

Un, Antonius Steven

2020

document version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link to publication in VU Research Portal

citation for published version (APA)
Un, A. S. (2020). *Theology of the Public Sphere: An Interpretation of the Philosophy of Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas from the Perspective of the Theology of Abraham Kuyper with Implications for Public Theology and the Indonesian Context*. [PhD-Thesis - Research and graduation internal, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam].

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

E-mail address:
vuresearchportal.ub@vu.nl

Download date: 24. Mar. 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents iii
List of Abbreviations vi
Acknowledgements vii

Chapter 1: Introduction 1
1.1 The issue addressed 1
1.2 Research questions 3
1.3 Methodology 4
1.4 The overview of the dissertation 5

PART I: CONTEXT OF THEOLOGY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE
Chapter 2: Public Theology and the Public Sphere 8
2.1 Introduction 8
2.2 Brief definition of public theology 8
2.3 The necessity of public sphere 9
2.4 The problem of translation 12
2.5 The pressure and temptation to compromise 14
2.6 Public theology and civil society 18
2.7 Public theology and the discursive model of the public sphere 20

Chapter 3: Public Theology and the Indonesia's Public Sphere 24
3.1 Introduction 24
3.2 *Pancasila* and Deliberative Democracy 24
3.3 Indonesia's contemporary public sphere 29
3.3.1 The public sphere in the period of Reformation 29
3.3.2 The topographical public sphere 30
3.3.3 Radio, newspaper/magazine, and television 31
3.3.4 Internet and social media 34
3.3.5 The need of a theology of the public sphere 35
3.4 The public sphere and Indonesia's civil society 36
3.5 The Protestant public theology in Indonesia's public sphere 41
3.5.1 The general overview of the Protestant voices 42
3.5.1.1 The Protestant theologians' quotations 42
3.5.1.2 Protestant institution 44
3.5.1.3 Protestant politician 45
3.5.2 The Protestant theologians' articles 47
3.5.3 The need of other theoretical schemes 52

PART II: PHILOSOPHY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE
Chapter 4: The philosophy of the public sphere according to Hannah Arendt 56
4.1 Introduction 56
4.2 The public sphere as space of appearance and the common world 57
4.3 The public sphere as space for self-disclosure 58
4.4 The public sphere as space for freedom 62
4.5 The public sphere as space for actualizing power 66
4.6 The public sphere as locus for politics 69
4.7 The dramatic and discursive setting of the public sphere 72
4.8 The antipolitical/antipublic characters of Christianity 75
4.9 The crises of the public sphere 80
4.9.1 The rise of the social 80

4.9.2 Totalitarianism and the loss of spontaneity ……82
4.9.3 World alienation …….. 85
4.10 Conclusion …….. 86

Chapter 5: The philosophy of the public sphere according to Jürgen Habermas 88
5.1 Introduction …….. 88
5.2 The bourgeois public sphere …….. 88
5.3 The political public sphere …….. 93
5.4 The public sphere and civil society …….. 96
5.5 The public sphere, communicative action, and the lifeworld …….. 100
5.5.1 Communicative action and validity claims …….. 100
5.5.2 The lifeworld …… 111
5.6 The public sphere, deliberative democracy, and the principle of …… 115
5.6.1 Deliberative democracy …… 115
5.6.2 The principle of popular sovereignty ……117
5.7 Religion in the public sphere …… 119
5.8 The crises of the public sphere …….. 125
5.8.1 Representative publicness …….. 125
5.8.2 Refeudalization of society …….. 126
5.8.3 The colonization of the lifeworld …….. 129
5.9 Conclusion …… 130

Chapter 6: The dialogue between Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas ……. 132
6.1 Introduction …….. 132
6.2 The private sphere …… 132
6.3 Civil society …… 134
6.4 The common world and the lifeworld …… 138
6.5 Political action and communicative action …….. 142
6.6 The concept of power …… 146
6.7 The dramatic and discursive setting of the public sphere ……151
6.8 Going beyond Arendt and Habermas …… 155

PART III: THEOLOGY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE
Chapter 7: The principle of sphere sovereignty and the building blocks …… 157
7.1 Introduction …… 157
7.2 The principle of sphere sovereignty according to Abraham Kuyper……157
7.2.1 The historical background …… 158
7.2.1.1 The liberals …… 158
7.2.1.2 The French revolution ……161
7.2.1.3 The German state sovereignty ……166
7.2.1.4 The heritage of the Calvinists …….. 168
7.2.2 The systematic elucidation …….. 176
7.2.2.1 Christ as the sovereign King …… 176
7.2.2.2 The principle of structural pluralism …… 180
7.2.2.3 The principle of confessional pluralism ……..…182
7.2.2.4 The state as sphere of spheres ……186
7.3 The building blocks of the theology of the public sphere ……. 189

Chapter 8: Theological interpretations and reflections of the public sphere…….. 193
8.1 Introduction …… 193
8.2 The private sphere …… 193
8.3 Civil society …… 196

8.3.1 Civil society and the crises of the public sphere ……197
8.3.2 Civil society and the image of God ……199
8.3.3 Civil society and common grace ……206
8.3.4 Civil society and the principle of structural pluralism …… 211
8.3.5 Civil society and public theology …….. 213
8.4 The revitalization of the public sphere …….. 214
8.5 The lifeworld, the common world, and social spheres ……218
8.6 Political action and communicative action ……..222
8.7 The concept of power and the political role of conscience……. 227
8.8 Structural pluralism, the public sphere, and deliberative democracy …….. 234
8.9 The plurality of the participants ……. 238
8.10 Religion in the public sphere ……. 241
8.11 Conclusion ……. 244

Chapter 9: The implication of theology of the public sphere into the Indonesian 247
9.1 Introduction ……. 247
9.2 The empowerment of the family to face the conjugal terrorism …… 247
9.3 The empowerment of the public role of religion to face…… 250
9.3.1 The violation of religion freedom …….. 250
9.3.2 The quasi-plural public sphere ……...252
9.4 The empowerment of civil society and the public sphere to face media…… 256

Chapter 10: Summary and conclusion …….. 260

Summary ……..265

Bibliography ……..271