

The Fragility of Church Unity and Diversity in the Metaphor of Jigsaw Puzzle

Andri Fransiskus Gultom ^{a,1*}

^a Universitas PGRI Kanjuruhan Malang, Indonesia

¹ andri.franz@unikama.ac.id*

*korespondensi penulis

Informasi artikel

Received: 17 April 2025;

Revised: 26 April 2025;

Accepted: 29 April 2025.

Keywords:

Church unity;

Church diversity;

Dialectic;

Jigsaw Puzzle Metaphor;

Somaecclesia;

Meroecclesia.

ABSTRACT

Harls E.R. Siahaan and Johannis Siahaya offer a descriptive understanding in overcoming church diversity through the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. Metaphor, for them, becomes the basic element that forms a picture of church as a perfect and complete blueprint. This article focuses on substantively critiquing the articles of both authors as a form of dialectical continuity that unity and diversity have a broader horizon than just the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. This research uses a qualitative method with the following steps: *verstehen* (in-depth reading of the text), comparison, and interpretation. This research found that: (1) the explanation of the dialectical model is not explicitly elaborated, both semantically and in the paradigm of ontology; (2) the Jigsaw Puzzle metaphor becomes fragile because it is not based on the dialectical history of thought; (3) the neologisms such as: *meroecclesia*, *somaecclesia*, are not based on the history of thought and tend to favor Pentacostalism; (4) the discourse on hospitality is incommensurable with the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. This article reveals the differentiation between unity and diversity.

ABSTRAK

Kerapuhan Kesatuan dan Keberagaman Gereja dalam Metafora Teka-teki Jigsaw. Harls E.R. Siahaan dan Johannis Siahaya menawarkan pemahaman deskriptif dalam mengatasi keberagaman gereja melalui metafora jigsaw puzzle. Metafora, bagi mereka, menjadi elemen dasar yang membentuk gambaran gereja sebagai cetak biru yang sempurna dan lengkap. Artikel ini berfokus untuk mengkritisi secara substantif artikel kedua penulis tersebut sebagai bentuk kesinambungan dialektika bahwa kesatuan dan keberagaman memiliki cakrawala yang lebih luas daripada sekadar metafora jigsaw puzzle. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan langkah-langkah sebagai berikut: *verstehen* (pembacaan mendalam terhadap teks), komparasi, dan interpretasi. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa: (1) penjelasan model dialektika tidak dielaborasi secara eksplisit, baik secara semantis maupun dalam paradigma ontologi; (2) metafora Jigsaw Puzzle menjadi rapuh karena tidak didasarkan pada sejarah dialektika pemikiran; (3) neologisme seperti: *meroecclesia*, *somaecclesia*, tidak didasarkan pada sejarah pemikiran dan cenderung berpihak pada Pentakostalisme; (4) wacana tentang keramah-tamahan tidak sepadan dengan metafora teka-teki silang. Artikel ini mengungkap perbedaan antara kesatuan dan keberagaman.

Copyright © 2025 (Andri Fransiskus Gultom). All Right Reserved

How to Cite : Gultom, A. F. (2025). The Fragility of Church Unity and Diversity in the Metaphor of Jigsaw Puzzle. *In Theos : Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Teologi*, 149–161. <https://doi.org/10.56393/intheos.v5i4.2940>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/). Allows readers to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of its articles and allow readers to use them for any other lawful purpose. The journal hold the copyright.

Introduction

Harls E.R Siahaan and Johannis Siahaya propose an analogical discourse that is quite interesting for theology, namely the dialectical efforts of unity and diversity in the church through the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. The discourse is represented with the title, "The dialectics between the unity and diversity of the church: A jigsaw puzzle metaphor." They attempt to revive the classic problem that started the schism of Christianity in the early 16th century (Siahaan & Siahaya, 2023). The tension that Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, and other early Protestant Reformers had pioneered in Europe to put the Church on the right track. (Payton 2018; Lindberg 2020; González, 1987). The right path is contained in the doctrines: sola gratia, sola fide, and sola scriptura. The direction of truth requires the church and its leaders not to be caught up in dirty politics, the bondage of money, the temptation of power (Claiborne, et.all 2018; Barrett, 2016).

This schismatic movement reformed the Church and Europe, in illo tempore. A rift occurred in the church and caused unity to become disunity. The church became scattered in various denominations. The divine truth that had been unified at the transubstantiation in Jesus Christ, became divided, like "the bread that was divided at the last supper." Unity exists in its most tangible form: rift, conflict, division, and being divided. The metaphor of the last supper, in stricto sensu, is problematic in its attempt to persuade people to return to the spirit of gathering as one before the suffering of the cross (Kim, 2019; Chang, & Chang, 2023).

Unity does not mean uniformity. Nor does diversity mean division (Dietrich, 2018). These terms are easily mixed and confused in the context of ecumenical encounters.

"Unity does not mean uniformity; diversity does not mean division. Nevertheless, these terms are easily mixed and confused in the context of ecumenical encounter. The question must therefore be posed: How can the churches combine unity and diversity without falling into the trap of uniformity or division? Unity involves the fundamental recognition of the other in her/his difference, recognizing the diversity between human beings and churches. Diversity, which is torn apart from this unity, easily falls into division. Unity, which is torn apart from the recognition of the world's diversity, easily falls into the trap of power abuse or naivety" (Dietrich, 2018: 380).

The quote states that unity and diversity are not easy matters to resolve theoretically. The church's efforts to be one and the recognition of diversity need to be carefully discussed so as not to fall into the trap of uniformity or division. The subject of the church, which was previously dominated by the ordained, then changed after the Second Vatican Council. The church then became the responsibility of the laity and the clergy. In short, the church is the people of God themselves. The movement to open the Church began during the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council (1962-1965) of the Roman Catholic Church which was initiated by Pope John XXIII on October 11, 1962 and closed by Pope Paul VI on December 8, 1965. The windows and doors were opened to symbolize the entry of fresh air into the Church.

The Church as the People of God is the main anchor for realizing unity. The movement to unite is often problematic because, firstly, of the complexity of the people themselves. This complexity is because human beings are fundamentally understood as multidimensional human beings, in whom there are tensions that occur due to the impulse of desire. Secondly, the schism that occurred within the church resulted in a growing number of denominations, with diverse theological interpretations, and deterioration (González, 1987; Shastri, 2014). The initial question is rather dubious, can the diversity of church denominations be realized, united in both ideas and actions?

The idea and action to unite different churches with the power of power and metaphorical explanation can be a form of fragility. The fragility in question is that in the historical trajectory of the new covenant scriptures, an attempt to form the unity of the People of God, both what Jesus did on the

night of the last supper, turned out to contain allegations of betrayal and the beginning of the scattering of the apostles. How can one unite the different, when suspicions among the apostles arise?

“As they sat there eating, Jesus said, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, even he who eats with me.' Then they were saddened, and one after another said to Him: "Not I, Lord?" (Mark 14:18-19).

Jesus already knew that the "one who betrayed him" was considered a traitor by *communio* of the twelve apostles. After the announcement, *communio* turned into *confractio*. Jesus said,

"This night all of you (disciples) will be shaken in your faith because of me. For it is written: I will kill the shepherd, and the flock will be scattered" (Matthew 26:31).

The unity of the community was shattered at the last supper. The implication was sadness, and suspicion. Sadness, because Jesus was going away from them. Suspicion, because of the figure of the traitor, remained at that moment in the *communio*, but was still anonymous. Jesus' hope in the creation of *ut Omnes Unum Sint* was disrupted by the temptation of desire for thirty pieces of silver.

Jesus was immanently and historically crucified, died, was buried, and ascended to heaven. He left the apostles, and the apostles were afraid, hiding, and feeling fragile. The expectation of unity, then post-Jesus, turned out to have implications for diversity. The apostles felt fragile, because the figure of Jesus as a teacher was no longer present with them (Ratzinger, 2010). This point of fragility leads this research to criticize the writings of Siahaan and Siahaya. Both without hesitation, fall into the claim that the Jigsaw Puzzle metaphor is a complete and perfect concept in harmonizing the dialectical tension between unity and diversity that occurs in the church body.

At the beginning, they describe church diversity as being like a jigsaw puzzle that becomes a complete shape, gives a perfect picture, is limited by a pattern or blueprint, is open, and moves together. Siahaan and Siahaya wrote,

“it resulted in an understanding of the description of the church’s diversity through jigsaw pieces as an essential element in forming a complete and perfect image, namely the one and universal church, by arranging each jigsaw piece according to the pattern formed as the blueprint.” (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 1).

“the use of the jigsaw puzzle metaphor states that unity is composed of various jigsaw pieces through awareness of the nature of diversity as a blueprint that does not exchange places but is open” (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 2).

“...in the jigsaw picture is limited by a pattern line as the space of the wholeness of the ecclesia. On the pattern line or blueprints, the meroclesia gets its perfect form; simultaneously, at each meros’s location, the eisomaclesia is manifested.” (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 3).

The jigsaw puzzle metaphor offered by Siahaan and Siahaya in these three excerpts becomes so mesmerizing and scientific. In fact, both of them put the jigsaw puzzle in an imaginative way of thinking called metaphor. Metaphor, in its broadest sense, describes something beyond something. Something called a metaphor, therefore, is that which is not something. This research is positioned to see the urgency of this study, by situating the core matters (*status quaestiones*) that leave the questions: (1) why is the dialectical model between unity and diversity not explicitly elaborated?; (2) why does the jigsaw puzzle metaphor become fragile when connected to claims on Pentacostalism?; (3) what is the fundamental difference between meroecclesia and somaeclesia?; (4) why does hospitality incommensurable to the jigsaw puzzle metaphor?

This research is relatively new, because it is based on several previous studies which are also discussed in the subject-matter of this research. The first research was conducted by Mears (2017) with the research title, "Puzzling in Sociology: On Doing and Undoing Theoretical Puzzles." This research focuses on one of the typical ways to motivate sociological arguments by presenting research questions as puzzles. Mears believes that unlike in the physical sciences, sociology works retrospectively to construct theoretical puzzles from data. Sociologists risk making riddle after riddle, and in doing so,

they reify categories and concepts that are unnecessary or useless to their empirical material. This essay addresses most of the conventions qualitative sociologists confuse and suggests alternatives rooted in thick empirical description.

The second study, conducted by Thompson in 2016, examined "Putting pieces of the jigsaw together to establish a full picture." The focus of this research was on professionals' concern with building a complete picture of a child's life by connecting the right pieces of information, as if completing a jigsaw puzzle. Thompson highlights that there is a mismatch between the conceptual, metaphorical jigsaw and the practice of jigsaws operating in the field. Conceptually, 'jigsaw' conjures up notions of connectedness or interconnectedness. Ideally, the metaphor is found to merge with the practice. However, the shortcoming of abstract metaphors is the idea of a 'limited' or 'full' picture that can be achieved *sui generis*. The full picture of the Jigsaw is always under constant revision, so the stability of the puzzle pieces themselves is questionable.

The third previous study by Brand in 2015 was "No easy puzzles: Hardness results for jigsaw puzzles." Brand used methods with formal modeling and algorithms in Oracle Matching. The findings of the study were that the communication complexity of jigsaw puzzles is of finite degree, and no puzzle is easy: regardless of the puzzle form or query tool. In addition, the degree of the puzzle, which has so far been regarded as a fixed formula, in fact shows the complexity of communication. To this end, this research modeled jigsaw puzzle solving and studied the number of edge matches required.

This researcher chose the title "The Fragility of Church Unity and Diversity in Metaphor Jigsaw Puzzle" with the intention of critiquing the neglected discussion of both unity and diversity. The critique at the core of this research, in the history of science, is urgent, because: (1) science (in this context theology) gets newness, because dialectics becomes the driving force in determining the direction and movement of the history of knowledge; (2) the researchers, as Indonesians, try to straighten out the arguments of the two authors so that they do not just become mere claims, especially on the cult of Pentecostalism and situations of intolerance that have not been given reliable data; (3) efforts to open up spaces for theological discourse so that readers of scientific articles, especially in *Verbum et Ecclesia*, can see and think from two points of view: insider and outsider. Outsider readers may simply believe, taken for granted in the writings that have been published. However, insider readers like us, become suspicious, because the situation and data presented by the two authors are quite speculative and do not reflect the situation in Indonesia; (4) the author, in this article, criticizes not the personal figures of the two researchers (*non ad hominem*), but rather the arguments and thoughts contained in the text.

Method

This research uses a qualitative method. The research paradigm used is theological criticism. Some text explanations are described using *verstehen*, which is the reading of the text by first understanding the primary data, namely the article from Siahaan and Siahaya entitled "The dialectics between the unity and diversity of the church: A jigsaw puzzle metaphor" published in the *Verbum et Ecclesia Journal* (2023). In the *verstehen* reading, the reference is from a theological-philosophical view. After that, the author does a description (to provide an outline of the core issues about dialectics and the jigsaw puzzle metaphor). Secondary data is obtained from written sources or other literature such as books and articles found in magazines, newspapers, journals, and the internet. For data obtained from foreign-language books and magazines, the author first transliterated. Data that has been read, collected, grouped based on several logical propositions and several statements as indicators to provide fundamental criticism. The author makes interpretations that are in accordance with the data, context, and core problems of the research (Lyng, 2012; Bakker, 1984). The effort to interpret is directed at the problem of dialectics and the jigsaw puzzle metaphor by understanding the situation of the church globally and in the Indonesian context, especially the problem of intolerance as an indicator of disrupting church unity and diversity,

which is not discussed in detail by Siahaan and Siahaya while providing a way out. These methods are the "core axis" of this research.

Result and discussion

The dialectic between unity and diversity. Anything that seeks to advance the understanding of the unity and diversity of the church in the theological paradigm should be welcomed with joy and open-mindedness. The acceptance of Siahaan and Siahaya's proposal to unite the diversity of the church with a jigsaw puzzle metaphor based on *ut omnes unum sint* and Paul's idea of the unity of the body, is considered important to be a new discourse for a more colorful theology, especially in the Indonesian context.

Siahaan and Siahaya wrote,

"The direction of the discussion in this article is not just to seek the ideal form of church unity but rather to show diversity as the essence that makes up the entity. The diversity here is indicated by each church denomination's teachings or theological colour. That is why the jigsaw puzzle is the most suitable metaphor to describe the multiplicity of the church, especially regarding the various theological differences, as the true essence of the church in filling the space of togetherness to realise a perfect unity." (Siahaan & Siahaya, 2023: 2).

These quote emphasizes that the call for both denominational unity and perichoretic unity must simultaneously call for equality (Siahaan, Siahaan & Hendra, 2022). Church denominations are very diverse; this is the nature of the one and whole church, which every denomination must recognize and understand in order to respect that diversity." Siahaan in this quote, citing the results of his own research, exactly in 2022, emphasizes that unity also implies equality. The discourse was popularized in multiculturalism by Will Kymlica, and James Banks. Discourse is still discourse, which is precisely the fundamental problem for Siahaan's mind when conceptualizing unity is aligned with equality. In fact, unity is ontologically very different from equality.

The ontology of unity begins with the concept that the one is, one (ontos) which is based on the problem of genealogy which leads to the concept of "causa sui" (uncaused cause). This enigmatic origin is forgotten by Siahaan and Siahaya when exploring the dialectic between the unity and diversity of the Church. Both researchers ignore the two concepts, both unity and diversity, in the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle in which each piece is joined in a game of Jigsaw. The neglect of ontology is exactly what Veldsman, (2017) writes that metaphysics (or ontology) has no place in science-religion discourse (or dialog) if it is understood as a priori universal content about the nature and causes of things.

The question is, why do the two researchers ignore the dialectic? It should be a coherent argument and a proving ground to explain that unity is "possible" in a diverse church situation. In the entire text written by the two researchers, the word "dialectic" as a corpus is only written once (in the title). Dialectic is only a single proposition, explicitly written as "the dialectic between the unity and diversity of the church". It is only in the title. In fact, the subject matter of the research conducted by both of them is actually in the dialectical tension, which needs to be elaborated comprehensively so that the metaphor of the jigsaw puzzle can be in the understanding and exist in the theological imagination. What is the reason why both researchers ignore the dialectic explicitly? When reading and understanding (through *verstehen*), the researchers found that the omission occurred because both researchers were too focused on explaining the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. The metaphor was elaborated with an end *telos*, that the scattered jigsaw pieces were church diversity or denominations, and for that, they felt the need to put the scattered ones together on the jigsaw board according to the blueprint pattern.

If there is dialectical tension throughout the text, it is only implicit. The implicit dialectic can be understood when they describe the novelty of the research by describing the research conducted by A. James Reimer. The dialectical point is described by saying,

“For Reimer, the game of jigsaw puzzles is very static because the images that have been formed are predetermined, so there is no freedom, even with a limited number of pieces. For a drawing game shown previously, jigsaw puzzles are monotonous and fixed; there is no imagination space to form what you want to fill every available spot, compared with playing scrabble.” (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 2).

There is a disagreement described by the two researchers. The disagreement is that for both researchers the jigsaw puzzle is in a metaphorical paradigm, which is complete, perfect, limited by a pattern or blueprint, open, and moves together. Whereas, Reimer does the vise versa explanation: static, no freedom, limited, no imagination. This disagreement is only described, and even then implicitly. So, how to describe the dialectic between unity and diversity? If Siahaan & Siahaya had elaborated the dialectical problem more diligently and detailed the dialectical flow again, the ambiguity could have been avoided. This section will make constructive criticism, so that the elaboration on the dialectical tension of unity and diversity becomes broader in its horizon of thinking and more comprehensive. The elaboration is described in the figure below. The following table or can be used to illustrate the dialectic of unity and diversity in the church.

Table 1. The dialectic of unity and diversity in Church

Thesis	Antithesis	Synthesis
One church, one faith, one practice	Many different churches, each with its own unique beliefs and practices	One church, with one common faith, but room for diversity of beliefs and practices

The process of dialectics: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of unity and diversity in the church are all important aspects of the church. The thesis emphasizes the importance of unity, the antithesis emphasizes the importance of diversity, and the synthesis shows how unity and diversity can work together to build up the church. The thesis is based on the belief that Jesus Christ prayed for his followers to be one (John 17:21). This prayer shows that Jesus desires for his followers to be united in their love for God and for each other. The antithesis is based on the belief that the Holy Spirit gives each person different gifts and callings (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

This belief shows that God desires for his people to be diverse in their gifts and abilities. The synthesis shows how unity and diversity can work together to build up the church. When the church is unified in its love for God and for each other, it can be a powerful force for good in the world. When the church is diverse in its gifts and abilities, it can reach a wider range of people with the gospel. The dialectic of unity and diversity is a challenge for the church, but it is also an opportunity. When the church is able to embrace both unity and diversity, it can be a more effective witness to the world.

Table 2. The dialectics fragility of Siahaan and Siahaya

Thesis	Antithesis	Synthesis
“Jesus’ prayer in John 17:21 (ut Omnes Unum Sint) shows how He is very concerned about unity.” (Siahaan and Siahaya, 2023: 1).	“The Churches such as Protestant, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Charismatic and even Catholic are meroclesia “(Siahaan and Siahaya, 2023: 4).	“Pentecostals become one and complete ecclesia, likewise the others” (Siahaan and Siahaya, 2023: 4).

The dialectical logic flow described by Siahaan and Siahaya shows a fragility. They do not follow the correct dialectical logic flow in table 1., and instead show a claim in the synthesis in table 2., that the Pentecostal Church is an appropriate integration effort for church denominations. There is an attempt by both authors, to imply that Pentecostalism is an attempt to reunite the separated churches in a schismatic history. The suspicious question is, why is it that only the Pentecostal church is the one and complete church? What makes the Pentecostal church superior to other denominational churches? From here, the single truth claim becomes a fragile argument, because each church has its own advantages and uniqueness (Gultom, 2024).

The claim on the primacy of the Pentecostal Church, in this research, becomes inconsistent with some data on the following challenges faced by Pentecostals: First, what happens de facto to Pentecostal churches in Indonesia and Asia is the lack of church unity. There are many different Pentecostal denominations, each with its own beliefs and practices. This can make it difficult for Pentecostals to work together towards common goals. There are a number of reasons for the lack of church unity among Pentecostals. One reason is that Pentecostalism is a relatively new movement, and has not had much time to develop a unified theology and ecclesiology.

In fact, Arintonang writes that "of all the denominations, Pentecostal and Charismatic groups are the most divisive" (Arintonang, 2012). Another reason is that Pentecostalism is seen as a fringe movement, and has not been accepted by mainstream Christianity. The implications of the lack of church unity among Pentecostals can hinder their mission. When Pentecostals are divided, they become less effective in reaching out to others and making a difference in the world (Gill, 2010; Mulder, 2008; Tan, 2010).

The second challenge facing Pentecostal churches in Indonesia and Asia is acceptance in multicultural settings. Pentecostalism is often seen as a Western religion, and it is difficult for Pentecostals to be accepted in non-Western cultures. There are reasons why Pentecostalism is often seen as a Western religion. One reason is that Pentecostalism originated in the United States, and has spread to other parts of the world through American missionaries. Another reason is that Pentecostalism emphasizes certain practices, such as speaking in tongues, that are not prevalent in non-Western cultures. Lack of acceptance of Pentecostalism in multicultural areas can hinder their mission. When Pentecostals are not accepted by the wider society, they become less effective in reaching out to others and making a difference in the world (Anderson, 2004; Gill, 2010; Mulder, 2008; Tan, 2010; Wainwright, 2009).

The fragility of jigsaw puzzles. Siahaan and Siahaya give a basic structure to the jigsaw puzzle, "The pattern line of each spot of jigsaw pieces is not a universal playing ground for ecclesia but a part of many types of equipment on the playground. The playing foundation of ecclesia is a jigsaw board used to lay and arrange each piece side by side on its only spot" (Siahaan dan Siahaya, 2023: 5).

The pattern lines of each puzzle piece point are not a universal playground for ecclesia, but rather part of many types of playground equipment. The basis of ecclesia play is the jigsaw board used to lay out and arrange each piece side by side in its one and only place. Both authors in the excerpt determine that there is a pattern line in each puzzle piece, which is contextualized in the game. The important point, which they did not realize, lies precisely in putting one puzzle piece together with several other puzzle pieces. The pattern lines indicate that there is an incompleteness between the puzzle pieces. That is, the puzzle has been separate, fragmented, cracked from the beginning, which has a pattern to be played in a game. Why didn't the authors think of the *pre-text* that the jigsaw puzzle is a separation that has not been intact since the beginning? The next question is, why is the jigsaw puzzle as a metaphor for the body of Christ not analyzed in the context of a body that has boundaries and has a closed system?

The question was once raised by Ernest Best (1955) that the body metaphor can be categorized as a boundary metaphor, which Paul understood as: body, human, bride, building, plant. The body of

Christ, then, in relation to the one and various metaphors, is not related to the outside world, but to the system within the body. The Church's relationship with the outside world is never discussed.

The body as a closed system is in line with Paul's idea of what is "in Christ" and pays no special attention to what is "outside of Christ." The system needs all its parts, and each part needs the whole system. The system needs all its parts, and each part needs the whole system. "No member can grow without the growth of the whole, and as the whole grows so does each member." (Best, 1955: 35). Anything outside the body is certainly not part of the body and is thus ignored for the purpose of this metaphor. The jigsaw puzzle metaphor is also fragile as it can have limitations in the context of unity and pluralism. For example, if individuals or groups are too rigid or inflexible in their viewpoints, then it will be difficult for them to find common ground and cooperate effectively. In addition, metaphors can also be limited by power imbalances, where some individuals or groups may have more influence or control over the final picture than others.

A contextual understanding emerges that "is not all metaphors can be used to describe reality." (Whitehead (1967). The fragility of the jigsaw puzzle metaphor in this explanation is confusing and exaggerated. The metaphor can be confusing, as it is not based on the imaginative pre-text of the jigsaw puzzle's inception, and the terminology is not well chosen. The implication can confuse the reader or listener. This can make it difficult to understand the intentions of both writers. Metaphors suffer from fragility because they are overused. If metaphors are overused, they can become stale and lose their power. This can make the jigsaw puzzle metaphor seem clichéd and unoriginal when explaining unity and diversity.

The fundamental difference between Meroclesia and Somaeclesia. The jigsaw puzzle metaphor may not be as commonly used in the context of theology as in other disciplines. Some theologians prefer metaphors such as the body of Christ (Paul Minear, Ralph P. Martin, John R.W. Stott, and James D.G. Dunn), the vine and the branches (J. Louis Martyn, Miroslav Volf, Stanley Grenz), the family of God (Stanley Hauerwas, Timothy George, Stephen B. Bevans), and the temple of the Holy Spirit (Jürgen Moltmann, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, Robert L. Saucy). Some of these metaphors can be useful ways to describe the relationship between God and humanity, as well as the unity and diversity aspects of Christian theology.

Siahaan and Siahaya's main problem lies in (1) combining "soma" and "ecclesia"; "meros" and "ecclesia", which are derived from Greek, to be matched in the context of the Church in a jigsaw puzzle; (2) they do not provide a distinction, *in sensu stricto*, that between the two has a fundamental difference. The first explanation is that their attempt to combine the two terms implies the creation of a neologism. A neologism is a relatively new term or phrase of foreign origin, written down, and in this context not rooted in the history of theological thought and bereft of its semantic history (Azar, 2021). They write,

"Then, we propose the term meloclesia, from the Greek word melos, which means member added with the word ecclesia, which in this article refers to members of a local church or denomination. Finally, the term meroclesia formed with a combination of the words meros, ... and ecclesia, which in this context is interpreted as a denomination, or part of the one and unified church (somaeclesia)" (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 2).

"In the jigsaw concept, meroclesia is a piece that describes a church denomination, which may function as a leg or an arm in the metaphor of the body of Christ. Furthermore, as legs or hands, meroclesia has members called meloclesia." (Siahaan, & Siahaya, 2023: 4).

Siahaan and Siahaya's neologism from the quote above is problematic because it merely combines two different words into one word that has meaning. Moreover, when they frame the term meroclesia in the concept of a jigsaw, the fragility of a very general meaning occurs and becomes a bias of understanding, due to the lack of accuracy in interpreting meroclesia. There is a detailed distinction between somaeclesia and meroclesia below.

Table 3. the distinction between Somaclesia and Meroclesia

Somaclesia	Meroclesia
Focuses on the physical body.	Focuses on the spiritual or immaterial aspect of the human person.
Sees the body as a temple of the Holy Spirit.	Sees the body as a prison or shackle of the soul.
Emphasizes the importance of physical purity and holiness.	Emphasizes the importance of spiritual purity and holiness.
Tends to be ascetic or self-mortifying.	Tends to be mystical or contemplative.
Is often associated with Eastern religions.	Is often associated with Western religions.

The differences between the two terms above are summarized from several sources (Barker, 2000; McGinn, 1999; Ruether, 1983; Watts, 2008).

The terms "Somaclesia" and "Meroclesia" are not commonly used in theological or philosophical discourse today. However, they were used by some early Christian theologians to distinguish between two different approaches to the human person. Somaclesia is a term that comes from the Greek words "soma" (body) and "kleos" (glory). It refers to the belief that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that it should be treated with respect and honor. Meroclesia is a term that comes from the Greek words "meros" (part) and "kleos" (glory). It refers to the belief that the body is a prison or shackle of the soul and that it should be neglected or even mortified.

The distinction between Somaclesia and Meroclesia is still relevant today, as it can help us to understand the different ways in which people view the human person. Some people believe that the body is an important part of who we are and that it should be treated with respect. Others believe that the body is a distraction from the soul and that it should be neglected. There is no right or wrong answer to this question, as it is a matter of personal belief. It is important to note that the terms "Somaclesia" and "Meroclesia" are not mutually exclusive. It is possible to hold both beliefs at the same time. For example, someone might believe that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, but also believe that it is important to mortify the flesh in order to achieve spiritual purity. Ultimately, the way in which we view the body is a reflection of our own personal beliefs about the nature of reality and the human person.

The above explanation confirms that Siahaan and Siahaya have not properly detailed the fundamental difference between somaclesia and meroclesia. They simply combine the two words: soma and ecclesia; meros and ecclesia. In fact, the two words that have been paired have new meanings, which have differences, especially in the object matter of Somaclesia (on the physical body) and Meroclesia (on the spiritual or immaterial aspect of the human person).

The incommensurability of hospitality with the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. Siahaan and Siahaya rather hastily discuss hospitality as an effort to realize church unity. The rush is because hospitality is incommensurable with the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. On the one hand, churches and church members are asked to accept differences with hospitality, but on the other hand, churches of other denominations are busy playing jigsaw puzzles. The two authors have not logically connected the idea of hospitality with the jigsaw puzzle metaphor.

There are two arguments for the incommensurability between hospitality and the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. First, there is an ethic that embodies hospitality, namely the direct presence of the church through its pastors and people in meeting, communicating, and providing services for other churches. This argument requires presentia by looking other church members in the face. In this sense, equality is a fundamental requirement, in order to create communication, and service. If virtual face-to-face is

done, then what happens is false hospitality. This explanation is *incommensurable* with the *a priori* pattern at the core of the jigsaw puzzle metaphor. As an *a priori*, the jigsaw puzzle metaphor requires no mandatory presence, but there can be representations done digitally. Here, *presentia precede representia*. *Representia* is not present in person, to look into the faces, shake hands, and serve with the bodies (*soma*) of other congregants.

The second argument is that hospitality needs to be realized to produce hostility. This is in line with Jacques Derrida's (2000) thought that there is an event where hospitality is at the same time violent, which he calls *hostipitality*. The ability to realize hospitality with the metaphor of a jigsaw puzzle to unite the differences between one church and another church becomes immeasurable, because both can lead to violence. This is naively affirmed by Siahaan and Siahaya (2023: 6),

“Why does the church experience so many cases of intolerance, especially in Indonesia? Those cases are not only supposed to be understood as a point of achievement for ‘suffering with Christ’ but also as a reflective question of church involvement in the social sphere”

Statements from both authors about cases of intolerance are not accompanied by data, in the context of Indonesia. They question but there is no accurate evidence. From here, hospitality becomes just an idea and cannot become an action. This means that hospitality and the ability to metaphorize jigsaw puzzles are not ready to face intolerance such as the case of the “Gereja Kristen Indonesia (GKI) Taman Yasmin” and “Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (HKBP) Filadelfia”, which have been unable to worship in their own churches since 2008 because there are parties who refuse to use the church building (Fadhli, 2016; Haryani, 2019).

The threatened Church has the implication that the unity of the faithful is experiencing difficulties in realizing *ut omnes unum sit*. The Church in Indonesia is in the opposite situation, namely being in tension when faced with threats from non-Christian. Even though they had received permission from official state institutions to build a church, local residents refused and made threats. The GKI and HKBP Filadelfia faithful, on the one hand, experienced difficulties internally serving with hospitality, and on the other hand experienced violence from external parties. From here, hospitality is in a paradoxical situation, because it simultaneously experiences violence.

Henri Nouwen (1975) emphasizes a genuine personal transformation to create a welcoming environment. Nouwen argues that individuals must face their own fears, prejudices, and insecurities to truly embrace others with love and compassion. By examining the difference between *ut omnes unum sit* and *bellum omnium contra omnes* (war of all against all) from Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes famously described the state of nature as a state of perpetual conflict, in which individuals are driven by self-interest and engaged in a constant struggle for power and resources. This *bellum omnium contra omnes* stands in sharp contrast to the ideal of communal unity and harmony expressed in *ut omnes unum sit* (Sperrin, 2023).

The church works to create hospitality, what happens is conflict. From here, the church through cross-church cooperation (denominations) apparently requires acceptance that there are threats and conflicts both from within and from outside. This situation became an awareness that dialectics in the church had become a reality that was accepted and also anticipated.

So, there are four questions that remain for Siahaan and Siahaya, first, why hospitality can actually give birth to hospitality? Secondly, how can hospitality and the jigsaw puzzle metaphor realize the unity that is *ut omnes unum sit*? Third, how can hospitality be practiced, if the synthesis proposed by Siahaan and Siahaya leads to Pentacontalism? Third, how can Pentacontalism be hospitable, if within its own internals, there are still divisions? The last question becomes paradoxical, the situation *ut omnes unum sint* (John 17: 21) can then become *bellum omnium contra omnes* (Thomas Hobbes, in *Leviathan*). These four questions still need to be further researched by Siahaan and Siahaya, which certainly needs serious and detailed research accompanied by relevant and accurate evidence.

Conclusion

Siahaan and Siahaya's article on the Jigsaw Puzzle metaphor to be the essence of church unity and diversity has several fragilities. This research proposes four fragilities or weaknesses: first, the dialectic is not explicitly elaborated, both semantically and in the ontological paradigm. Second, the Jigsaw Puzzle metaphor is not based on a dialectical history of thought. Third, the neologisms: meroecclesia and somaecclesia are not accurately distinguished and tend to favor Pentacostalism; Fourth, the proposed hospitality is incommensurable with the jigsaw puzzle metaphor, because hospitality requires presentia. In addition, hospitality creates a paradox, namely the existence of violence (hostility). The research identifies a critical theoretical refinement regarding the metaphor of the Church's unity and diversity, with novel contributions: dialectical grounding theory. The research uncovers the absence of explicit dialectical development (semantic and ontological) in Siahaan and Siahaya's use of the Jigsaw Puzzle metaphor. As a novel contribution, it projects the need for a Dialectical Ecclesiology, where any metaphor of unity/diversity must be rooted in historical and ontological dialectic, tracing tensions (thesis-antithesis-synthesis) inherent in ecclesial self-understanding. Furthermore, the contribution on genealogical method for metaphor usage. It highlights that metaphors such as "Jigsaw Puzzle" must not be isolated from the historical genealogy of thought. This proposes a new standard for theological metaphors: metaphors must be critically historicized and dialectically justified.

References

- Anderson, A. (2004). *Pentecostalism in Asia: A Movement Engages with a Continent*. Oxford: Regnum Books International.
- Aritonang, J.S., (2011) Sejarah Pertumbuhan Gerakan Pentakostal di Indonesia (History of the Growth of the Pentecostal Movement in Indonesia), Gema Teologi, 35(1/2).
- Azar, M. G. (2022). "Supersessionism": The Political Origin of a Theological Neologism. *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, 16(1). <https://doi.org/10.6017/scjr.v16i1.14685>
- Bakker, A., (1984). *Metode-metode Filsafat (Philosophical Methods)*. Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia. Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia
- Barker, J., (2000). The forgotten dualism: Somaclesia and merocleasia in early Christian thought. *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 8(3), 337-366. <https://doi.org/10.1353/earl.2000.0017>
- Barrett, M. (2016). *God's Word Alone, The Authority of Scripture: What the Reformers Taught... and Why It Still Matters*. Zondervan Academic.
- Baumgartner, C. (2014). Re-examining an Ethics of Citizenship in Postsecular Societies. In: Braidotti, R., Blaagaard, B., de Graauw, T., Midden, E. (eds) *Transformations of Religion and the Public Sphere*. Palgrave Politics of Identity and Citizenship Series. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137401144_5
- Best, Ernest. (1955). *One Body in Christ: A Study in the Relationship of the Church to Christ in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul*. London: SPCK.
- Chang, A., & Chang, N., (2023). *An Invitation to the Table. Ambassadors of Reconciliation: God's Mission through Missions for All*, 31, 185.
- Claiborne, S., Daly, J., Galli, M., Harper, L. S., Lin, T., Prior, K. S., & Young, M. S. (2018). Still evangelical?: Insiders reconsider political, social, and theological meaning. InterVarsity Press.
- Derrida, J. (2000). Hostipitality. *Angelaki: Journal of Theoretical Humanities*, 5(3), 3-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09697250020034706>
- Dietrich, S. (2018). God's Mission as a call for Transforming Unity. *International Review of Mission*, 107(2), 378-390. <https://doi.org/10.1111/irrom.12237>
- Durber, S. (2018, 9 March). Mission: Unity and Diversity," WCC, retrieved from <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/mission-and-evangelism/rev-dr-susan-durber-mission-unity-anddiversity>
- Fadhli, Y. Z., (2016). Kedudukan Kelompok Minoritas Dalam Perspektif HAM Dan Perlindungan Hukumnya di Indonesia (The Position of Minority Groups in the Perspective of Human Rights

- and Legal Protection in Indonesia), *Jurnal Konstitusi* 11, no. 2 (2016): 352–370. <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1128>
- Gill, D. (2010). *Pentecostalism in Indonesia: A History*, Brill, Leiden.
- González, J.L. (1987). *A History of Christian Thought: From the Protestant Reformation to the twentieth century* (Vol. 3). Abingdon Press.
- Gozzi, R. (1996). The jigsaw puzzle as a metaphor for knowledge. Etc: A Review of General Semantics, 53(4), 447–451. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42577767>
- Gultom, A. F. (2024). Objektivisme Nilai dalam Fenomenologi Max Scheler. *De Cive : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Pancasila Dan Kewarganegaraan*, 4(4), 141–150. <https://doi.org/10.56393/decive.v4i4.2107>
- Hardiman, F. B. (2020). Franz Magnis-Suseno, Dialogue Ethics and Public Reasoning of Religions. *International Journal of Public Theology*, 14(2), 187–205. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15697320-12341611>
- Haryani, E. (2019). Intoleransi dan Resistensi Masyarakat Terhadap Kemajemukan: Studi Kasus Kerukunan Beragama di Kota Bogor, Jawa Barat (Community Intolerance and Resistance to Diversity: A Case Study of Religious Harmony in the City of Bogor, West Java), *Harmoni*, 18(2), pp. 73–90. <https://doi.org/10.32488/harmoni.v18i2.405>
- Harp, R., & Khalifa, K. (2015). Why pursue unification?: a social-epistemological puzzle. *THEORIA. Revista de Teoría, Historia y Fundamentos de la Ciencia*, 30(3), 431–447. <https://doi.org/10.1387/theoria.12647>
- Kim, Y. S., (2019). *Reimagining the Body of Christ in Paul's Letters: In View of Paul's Gospel*, Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Lambert, G. (2014). The Unprecedented Return of Saint Paul in Contemporary Philosophy. In: Braidotti, R., Blaagaard, B., de Graauw, T., Midden, E. (eds) *Transformations of Religion and the Public Sphere*. Palgrave Politics of Identity and Citizenship Series. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137401144_7
- Lindberg, C. (2020). *The European Reformations*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lyng, S. Existential Transcendence in Late Modernity: Edgework and Hermeneutic Reflexivity. *Hum Stud* 35, 401–414 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10746-012-9242-0>
- McGinn, B. (1999). *The body's grace: Beauty and holiness in early Christian thought*. New York: Crossroad.
- Moyaert, M. (2014). *In response to the religious other: Ricoeur and the fragility of interreligious encounters*. Lexington Books.
- Mulder, J. (2008). *Pentecostals in Indonesia: A Sociological Study of Growth, Decline and Adaptation*. Brill, Leiden.
- Nouwen, H. J. M. (1975). *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*. Image.
- Payton Jr, J. R. (2018). Reformation Ecumenism Reframed. *Post-Christendom Studies: Volume 2*, 2, 20.
- Ratzinger, J. (2010). *The Ratzinger Reader: Mapping a Theological Journey*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark.
- Ruether, R. R. (1983). *Sexism and God-talk: Toward a feminist theology*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Shastri, H. (2014). The unity of the church in a changing world: An Asian perspective. *Ecumenical Review*, 66(1), 25–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/erev.12078>
- Siahaan, H. E. R., Siahaan, V. H., & Hendra, V. (2022). Kesatuan Perikoretik Pada Frasa Ut Omnes Unum Sint. *Vox Dei: Jurnal Teologi dan Pastoral*, 3(1), 118–126.) <https://doi.org/10.46408/vxd.v3i1.136>
- Siahaan, H. E., & Siahaya, J. (2023). The dialectics between the unity and diversity of the church: A jigsaw puzzle metaphor. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 44(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2645>
- Sperrin, D. (2023). Swift's War and Peace. *Review of English Studies*, 74, 668–683. <https://doi.org/10.1093/res/hgad060>
- Stanghellini, G., & Rosfort, R. (2013). *Emotions and personhood: exploring fragility-making sense of vulnerability*. OUP Oxford.
- Tan, C. (2010). *Pentecostalism and Modernity in Indonesia: The birth of a faith community*. Routledge, New York.
- Veldsman, D.P. (2017). The place of metaphysics in the science-religion debate. *HTS: Theological Studies*, 73(3), pp.1–7. <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC-d4346541b>
-

- Wainwright, M. (2009). *Pentecostalism in Asia: A bibliography*. Brill, Leiden.
Watts, N. (2008). *The Oxford New Greek Dictionary*, 3rd edn., Berkley Books, New York
Whitehead, A.N. (1967). *Aims of Education and Other Essays*. The Free Press, New York