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MUSLIM RESPONSES TO CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN INDONESIA

A thesis

submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

by

Ismatu Ropi

Institute of Islamic Studies

McGill University Montreal

Canada

ABSTRACT

Author : Ismatu Ropi
Title : Muslim Responses to Christianity in Modern Indonesia
Department : Institute of Islamic Studies
Degree : Master of Arts (M.A.)

As Indonesian Muslim depictions of Christianity have varied over time, this study is an attempt to provide a brief survey of the Muslim attitudes towards Christianity in modern Indonesia. It will set the stage by first investigating the Muslim depiction of Christianity as found in the seventeenth century works of Nuruddin al-Rānīrī. It will go on to survey some aspects of Dutch colonial policy concerning Indonesian Islam and will cover Muslim responses to and perceptions of Christian doctrine in the Old Order and New Order periods. Some polemical writings from the two communities produced by such writers as Hendrik Kraemer, F.L. Bakker, A. Hassan, A. Haanie and Hasbullah Bakry will be examined in detail.

This thesis will inquire into the connection between Indonesian Muslims' treatment of Christians, ranging from polemic and suspicion to dialogue and accommodation, and political events which occurred and religio-political policies adopted particularly in the New Order under Soeharto. Furthermore, this thesis will also discuss the works of Mukti Ali and Nurcholish Madjid who in recent years have called for the more objective and positive dialogue leading to practical cooperation between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia.

RÉSUMÉ

Auteur : Ismatu Ropi
Titre : Les réponses musulmanes face au christianisme en Indonésie Moderne
Département : Institut des Études Islamiques
Diplôme : Maîtrise ès Arts (M.A.)

Alors que les descriptions musulmanes du christianisme ont varié selon les époques, l'objectif de cette étude est de fournir une bref survol des attitudes musulmanes envers le christianisme en Indonésie moderne. La toile de fond de cette recherche, au départ, sera consacré aux descriptions musulmanes du christianisme pendant le dix-septième siècle, notamment à travers les oeuvres de Nuruddin al-Rānīrī. Il sera aussi question de certains aspects des politiques coloniales néerlandaises à l'égard de l'Islam indonésien, de même que des perceptions et des réactions musulmanes face à la doctrine chrétienne durant les époques de l'Ordre Ancien et de l'Ordre Nouveau. Quelques écrits polémiques issus des deux communautés religieuses, en outre ceux rédigés par Hendrik Kraemer, F.L. Bakker, A. Hassan, A. Haanie et Hasbullah Bakry, seront examinés beaucoup plus en détail.

Ce mémoire explorera les liens existant entre le traitement des musulmans indonésiens envers les chrétiens, depuis la polémique et la suspicion jusqu'au au dialogue et à l'accomodation, avec les évènements politiques passés, ainsi que les politiques religieuses adoptées par l'Ordre Nouveau de Soeharto. De plus, cette recherche analysera les oeuvres de Mukti Ali ainsi que celles de Nurcholish Madjid qui, depuis quelques années, ont plaidé pour un dialogue plus objectif et positif pouvant mener à une coopération pratique entre Musulmans et Chrétiens d'Indoenésie.

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I owe considerable debts to my colleagues Pipip Ahmad Rifai Hasan, Shalahudin Kafrawi, Ahmad Nur Fuad, Andi Muhammad Ali Amiruddin, Asep Saefuddin Jahar and Alan Guenther for valuable intellectual exchanges and true friendship; to the staff of the Islamic Studies Library, in particular, Salwa Ferahian and Wayne St. Thomas, and to the

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I would like to record my special gratitude to my parents, my parents-in-law and my extended family in Tomang, West Jakarta, and Rangkasbitung, West Java, who have always supported my academic ambitions. This record cannot begin to describe my wholehearted gratitude to them.

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NOTES

All references in this thesis will be fully quoted the first time used in the footnote, followed by the page number. For example, Karel A. Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopy, 1993), 12. Later references will use a shortened form of the work, followed by the page number such as, Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 25.

Reference to works in languages other than English will also follow the above pattern. For example, a reference in *bahasa Indonesia* will follow this form: A. Hasjmy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Alma'arif, 1989), 50. The translation of the title for Indonesian works will be supplied in bibliography.

The Arabic transliteration in this thesis will follow the system used by the Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University. The table of transliteration is as follows:

b	= ب	dh	= ذ	ṭ	= ط	l	= ل
t	= ت	r	= ر	ẓ	= ظ	m	= م
th	= ث	z	= ز	'	= ع	n	= ن
j	= ج	s	= س	gh	= غ	h	= ه
ḥ	= ح	sh	= ش	f	= ف	w	= و
kh	= خ	ṣ	= ص	q	= ق	y	= ي
d	= د	ḍ	= ض	k	= ك	'	= ء

Short : a = ـَ ; i = ـِ ; u = ـُ
Long : ā = ا ; ī = ي ; ū = و
Dipthong : ay = اي ; aw = او

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INTRODUCTION

The relation between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia is a subject that has been little discussed by scholars. For about the past four centuries at least, the encounter between the two religious communities seems in some sense to have had a dynamic of its own which has been almost completely negative. The relation between the two Abrahamic religions, undoubtedly, has been predominantly one of long-lasting discord, and is more complex than just a contention between two communities or two systems of belief. Historically, this hostile atmosphere has stemmed from various motives: political, derived from centuries of colonization which inevitably shaped the attitudes of Muslims towards their Christian overlords; economic, born of commercial competition; and theological legitimization where questions of legitimacy were debated. For the latter, both religions consider their respective messages from God as being relevant for all people everywhere. Both are committed to proselytizing as a fundamental religious duty, and this kind of proselytization (*da'wah* in Islam and *mission* in Christianity) has long been a source of conflict between the two religions.

Although some scholars have given a considerable attention to the development of Islam in the archipelago, only a few studies on the topic of the Muslim depiction of Christianity in Indonesia have appeared. These studies, however, do not focus exclusively on the response by Indonesian Muslims to Christian doctrine or to the existence of the Christian community in the archipelago. One of the few works that has touched briefly

on this topic is Suminto's *Colonial Policy Towards Political Islam* which describes the *Kantoor*'s status, policy and duties in maintaining religious matters in Indonesia.[1] He deals in general with colonial policies toward Islam, among them the policy of "religious neutrality" institutionalized in the principle *of "rust en orde"* (peace and order). His research into the discrimination in terms of the financial support given to the Muslim and Christian communities led him, not surprisingly, to the conclusion that there was a strong link between the colonial government and Christianity.[2]

Steenbrink's *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam* also provides a detailed history of Dutch colonialism in the archipelago.[3] He portrays particularly the major patterns of Dutch perception of Indonesian Muslims. However, since this book mainly attempted to portray the Dutch perception of Islam in Indonesia and only peripherally how early Indonesian Muslims perceived Christian Europeans, Steenbrink pays little attention to the works of Indonesian Muslims dealing with Christian communities, especially in modern times.

Shihab has made a considerable contribution to the topic in "The Muhammadiyah Movement and its Controversy with Christian Mission", a dissertation submitted to

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[1]Aqib Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda: Het Kantoor voor Inlandsche zaken* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985).

[2]Suminto, *Politik Islam*, 15-37.

[3]Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rosopy, 1993).

Temple University.[4] Shihab's main idea is to elucidate the underlying factors that prompted the emergence of the Muhammadiyah as one of the most influential reformist movements in modern Indonesia. One of the major factors behind its emergence, according to Shihab, was the deep penetration of the Christian mission into the country. Nevertheless, as this work deals with the Muhammadiyah's response to Christianity, it naturally doesn't consider positions or works dealing with depictions of Christians presented by such religious organizations as the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), the Majelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia (Masjumi) or the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), or even of such individual Muslim scholars as O. Hashem and Sidi Gazalba.

In view of the paucity of studies on the Indonesian Muslim response to Christianity, this thesis attempts to survey the main concepts of some prominent Indonesian Muslim leaders regarding Christianity in modern times. Basing itself on the original Indonesian sources and focusing on the dynamic relations between Islam and Christianity in Indonesian, this thesis will examine Muslim attitudes towards Christians within the context of that particular historical period.

The aim of this study is to determine what those causes and circumstances were which led to the stereotypical perception of Christianity by Indonesian Muslims. This time period was selected since it represents a certain era in which, despite working together to develop the country in socio-cultural, economic and political spheres,

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[4]Alwi Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement and its Controversy with Christian Mission," (Ph.D dissertation, Temple University, 1995).

Indonesian Muslims and Christians also intensified their respective missionary activities. This activity inevitably resulted in confrontations and conflicts in the name of religion.

Chapter one provides a background to the topic by briefly describing current theories on the coming of Islam and Christianity to the archipelago. Next, it will turn its attention to the early contacts and encounters of these communities and will include a brief example of an early Muslim depiction of Christianity as found in the works of the most prominent Indonesian Muslim figure of the sixteenth century, Nuruddin al-Rānīrī.

In chapter two, this thesis will survey some of the colonial policies affecting religious life in Indonesia, especially that of Islam. It will also cover how Muslims responded to the policies and how they came to perceive missionary activities in Indonesia as the effective arm of colonialism. Furthermore, it will provide some examples of Muslim responses to Christianity in the period of the Old Order under Soekarno. This will include some controversial exchanges between Hendrik Kraemer and A. Haanie; or between F.L. Bakker and Hasbullah Bakry. It will also examine the writings of Muhammad Natsir, Ahmad Hasan and O. Hashem dealing with Christian doctrines which are regarded by some as representing the new patterns of religious refutation in Indonesia.

The nature of the interaction between these two communities from 1966 to the 1990's may be seen as ranging from theological hatred and violent resistance to mutual respect, as evidenced under Soeharto's New Order. This will be the focus of chapter three. For the above reason, the area of exploration in this study will be limited to the examination of the events and publications, which were related to the chosen theme in

1966-1990's. In this part, the writings of Joesoef Sou'yb, Sidi Gazalba, Djarnawi Hadikusuma and Muhammad Rasjidi will be examined extensively. This chapter also tries to see how Indonesian Muslims' treatment of Christians was transformed from polemic and suspicion to dialogue and accommodation, thanks largely to political developments and the religio-political policies adopted particularly by the New Order of Soeharto. Government decrees establishing regulations for religious missions helped change the atmosphere from hatred and hostility to dialogue and mutual respect between these two communities. Another factor was the writings of Mukti Ali and Nurcholish Madjid who called for a more "objective" and "positive" discussion and for practical cooperation and dialogue between Muslims and Christians, for they believed that in spite of a long history of suspicion, hostility and mutual contempt in the modern era of Indonesia, there was nevertheless much potential for harmony and mutual respect. These too will be examined in the last part of chapter three.

Finally, this thesis will conclude with some recommendations for improved relations between the two communities in the future. Hopefully, some clear answers will emerge to questions dealing with the relations between Islam and Christianity in modern Indonesia.

CHAPTER I

MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS IN THE EARLY INDONESIA

A. Theories on the Coming of Islam and Christianity to the Archipelago

Indonesia,[1] with its approximately seventeen thousand islands and four hundred or so ethnic and linguistic groups, is undoubtedly one of the most pluralist societies in the world.[2] Before the coming of Islam and Christianity to the archipelago, Hinduism, Buddhism and various *agama suku murba* (local animistic religions) were the dominant belief systems, having established themselves centuries earlier. Indeed, Indonesia has always been receptive to foreign ideas and hospitable to foreign civilizations. It is, therefore, not surprising that in the case of Islam's arrival in the country it did not supplant the existing religions by military conquest, but by *pénétration pacifique* (peaceful penetration) mostly by traders who also doubled as missionaries.[3]

Scholars dealing with the history of the coming of Islam to the archipelago suggest different and various theories as to how this came about; indeed, the sources are of little

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[1]The word "Indonesia" in this chapter does not mean the political entity we find today as the "Republik Indonesia", since this word was firstly introduced in about the beginning of twentieth century. Before that time, the word "Nusantara" ("archipelago") was more commonly used to indicate the entity that consisted of Java, Madura, Sumatera, the Malay peninsula, some parts of Borneo (Kalimantan) and Celebes (Sulawesi). In this chapter, the word "archipelago" is used interchangeable with the word Indonesia. It is simply a geographical representation not political one.

[2]Nurcholish Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experiences," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (April-June 1994): 57.

[3]Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism," 59.

help in arriving at a definite answer.[4] Despite the fact that some believe that Indonesian Islam was brought directly from China, Egypt or Persia, nevertheless, the majority of scholars theorize an Indian origin, either Gujarat, Coromandel or Bengal, or an Arabic one.

Some notable scholars who support the Gujarat theory are Brian Harrison,[5] J.P Moquette,[6] P.E. De Josselin De Jong,[7] G.W.J. Drewes[8] and Husein Djajadiningrat.[9] In addition to Harrison, who believed that the process of Islamization on the east coast of Sumatra and the north coast of Java was the work of Gujarati merchants engaged in overseas trade between India and Southeast Asia, and that India, particularly Gujarat, had been a cultural inspiration and commercial prestige for the people in Southeast Asia,[10] Moquette pointed that the gravestones of Malikus Saleh (Malik al-Ṣaliḥ) dated

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[4]Anthony H. Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections and New Directions," *Indonesia* 19 (1975): 39.

[5]Brian Harrison, *South-East Asia: A Short History* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1972).

[6]J.P. Moquette, "De Grafsteenen te Passen Grisse," *Tijdshrift voon Indische Taal,- Land- en Volkenkunde vitgegeven door het koniklijken Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen* LIV (1912) as quoted by Amran Kasimin, *Religion and Social Change Among the Indigenous People of the Malay Peninsula* (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 1991), 146-148.

[7]P.E. De Josselin De Jong, *Agama-Agama di Gugusan Pulau-Pulau Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965).

[8]G.W.J. Drewes, "New Light on the Coming of Islam to Indonesia?" *Bijdragen tot de Taal,- Land- en Volkenkunde* CXXIV, no. 4 (1968): 433-459.

[9]P.A. Husein Djajadiningrat, "Islam in Indonesia," in *Islam the Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims*, ed. Kenneth W. Morgan (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987), 375-402.

[10]Harrison, *South-East Asia: A Short History*, 43; 51.

1297 in Pasai, North Sumatra, and another in Gresik, East Java, as being the same type as those found in Cambay, Gujarat.[11] Thus the possibility that these gravestones might have been brought from Cambay and that Malikus Saleh himself might have been a Gujarati, leads scholars to suggest that Gujarat holds the key to a better understanding of the coming of Islam to the archipelago.[12]

However, armed with a battery of facts and arguments, Marrison tried to prove that the Muslim gravestones in the archipelago were not imported from Gujarat. He was also led to doubt the theory of Gujarati origin by the historical reality that Gujarat was not itself Islamized until 1297.[13] Marrison also pointed out that as early as 1281, Islam was already well known in Sumatra, since that same year a mission to China was sent from Sumatra which included two Muslims ministers from eastern Sumatra, Sulayman and Shamsuddin.[14] His suggestion is that Islam was brought from Coromandel, and this theory was later argued by Arnold who saw that certain aspects of theology, Islamic law

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[11]Kasimin, *Religion and Social Change*, 147.

[12]De Jong, *Agama-Agama*, 44; Kasimin, *Religion and Social Change*, 147. Drewes, "New Light on the Coming of Islam," 459. Compare to Djajadiningrat, "Islam in Indonesia," 375-376.

[13]G.E. Marrison, "The Coming of Islam to the East Indies," *Journal of the Malay Branch Royal Asiatic Society* XXIV, pt. 1 (1951): 28-37. See also S. Q. Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia* (Singapore: Malaysian Sociological Research Institute, 1963), 33.

[14]M.A. Rauf, *A Brief History of Islam with Special Reference to Malaya* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1964), 77. Kasimin, *Religion and Social Change*, 147-148.

(of the *Shafi'ī madhhab*) and mysticism displayed by Muslims in the archipelago were similar to those prevailing on the Coromandel and Malabar coasts.[15]

However, after extensive research in Dutch and other archives into Chinese sources and local stories, S.Q. (Sayyid Qudratullah) Fatimi declared previous explanation to be untenable, and suggested instead that Islam was brought to the archipelago from Bengal. He pointed out that there were many Bengal words had been adopted into the Malay language such as *ta-kur* from *thakkur*, *patih* from *fatih* and *sumatra* from *samudra-kula*.[16]

Another prominent theory is that of Arab origin, as was first proposed by Niemann[17] and then extended by Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas.[18] Al-Attas rejected all the theories mentioned above because, according to him, they were based on an interpretation of certain "external facts" such as trading activities, economics and politics, and on the spread of Islam in the archipelago.[19] He adduced that religious literature in the archipelago made no references to Indian scholars nor to any books written by them. He also noted that Muslim preachers involved in disseminating Islamic values must have

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[15]T.W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Asraf, 1965), 364. See also Kasimin, *Religion and Social Change*, 147-148.

[16]Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 12-16.

[17]Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, 367

[18]Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Islam dalam Sejarah Kebudayaan Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur: Universitas Kebangsaan Malaysia, 1972).

[19]al-Attas, *Islam dalam Sejarah Kebudayaan Melayu*, 32-36.

been Arabs judging from their names and titles.[20] He pointed out that the two most prominent figures, Sharif Sheik Ismail and Sultan Muhammad, who successfully converted the people of Pasai to Islam were Arabs descended from Abu Bakr, the first Islamic caliph.[21] And this theory, although featuring a different argument, is also held by some Indonesian Muslim scholars such as A. Hasjmy.[22] The latter came to the conclusion that Islam was introduced into the archipelago for the first time in the first century of the hijrah directly from the central Arab lands, brought by the immigrants of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib's descendents and companions who had rebelled against the caliph al-Ma'mūn ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd.[23]

Whatever the origin or time period advanced to account for the coming of Islam to the archipelago, it cannot be separated from the maritime history of the Indian ocean, where quite a number of Muslim were involved in trade and commerce. It is possible that Muslims had been present in the archipelago since the earliest centuries of Islam and had become stable through intermarriage with indigenous women. This process of consolidation, however, must have been a slow one until finally Muslims became politically dominant in some parts of the archipelago in the thirteenth century.[24]

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[20]al-Attas, *Islam dalam Sejarah Kebudayaan Melayu*, 34.

[21]al-Attas, *Islam dalam Sejarah Kebudayaan Melayu*, 45-48.

[22]A. Hasjmy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam di Indonesia* (Bandung: Alma'arif-1989), 143.

[23]Hasjmy, *Sejarah Masuk dan Berkembangnya Islam*, 150-158.

[24]Anthony H. Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia," in *The Religious Tradition of Asia*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa (London: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1989), 168-169.

The influence of trade, however, cannot have been the sole factor in popular conversion to Islam in the archipelago. Fatimi and Johns, for example, believe that *sufi* wanderers played a very significant role in this process of Islamization.[25] Therefore, whatever the disputes over its origins, there is one point scholars can agree upon, which is that Islam was introduced either by traders or the *sufis*, or on many occasions by Muslim traders who were also members of Sufi orders.

As it is difficult to set a precise date for the introduction of Islam into the archipelago, there have been also several speculations as to when and who first brought Christianity to Indonesia. Some scholars believe that the coming of Christianity may be categorized into three phases.

The first phase, as the earliest Christian presence in the archipelago, is the Nestorian Eastern Church that established episcopal jurisdiction in Sibolga, North Sumatra in the second half of the seventh century.[26] Those Nestorians were probably from Ceylon, India, because, around the fifth century there was a church of Persian Christians with a Presbyter appointed from Persia.[27] Colless noted that there were fifteen Nestorian bishops who came to the region together with "a very large number of

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[25]Fatimi, *Islam Comes to Malaysia*, 72-76; Johns, "Islam in Southeast Asia," 39-41.

[26]John Roxborough, "Context and Continuity: Regional Patterns in the History of Southeast Asian Christianity," *The Asia Journal of Theology* 9, no. 1 (1995): 33. See also O.W. Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce: A Study of the Origin of Srivijaya* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1967), 5-10.

[27]Alwi Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement and its Controversy with Christian Mission," (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1995), 28.

Christians."[28] This early Christian community, however, did not grow significantly and accordingly after this period, the history of Christianity, as Kruger put it, remained in obscurity for a long time in the archipelago.[29]

The second phase of Christian arrival concerns the Roman Catholicism in the sixteenth century introduced by Portuguese and Spaniards as following the discovery of the trading route to Asia via South Africa. Like Muslims, the Portuguese and Spaniards were not interested in trade alone. From its motto "first pepper, then souls", it is obvious that trading and mission were unseparated coin. Hence, not only were the priests and chaplains who accompanied trading expeditions fulfilling religious needs of traders and administrators, missionary works among indigenous people was also afforded.[30] Thus two important economic centers in Southeast Asia, Malacca and Moluccas (Maluku) were points of struggle for trade and mission. As soon as Goa in Maluku was conquered in 1510, the Portuguese also took over control of Malacca in 1511, and expanded their influence to the surrounding areas. The rise of Portuguese power in that region was followed with the emergence of Catholic churches mostly belonged to the Society of Jesus. The most prominent missionary was Francis Xavier (1500-1552) who was well

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[28]B.E. Colless, "The Traders of the Pearl: The Mercantile and Missionary Activities of Persian and Armenian Christians in South-East Asia [III. The Malay Archipelago]," *Abr-Nahrain* XI (1971): 4-7

[29]Theodor Muller Kruger, *Sejarah Geredja di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Penerbit Kristen, 1959), 7-21.

[30]Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 34.

known as "the apostle to the Indonesians."[31] In Ternate, a region in Maluku, the first public mass had been held in 1522 and a remarkable growth of church membership was also evident in Malacca, as it became a diocesan center in 1558.[32]

This tremendous growth of church membership did not long last, however. A sharp decline began to appear after diminution of Portuguese political power in the region. This political decline was mainly caused by strong opposition and revolt against the Portuguese by several Muslim Sultans, aimed at expelling the Portuguese from the region. A case in point is the Ternate revolt, which by 1575, had forced the Portuguese to leave.[33] As the Portuguese administration had withdrawn from that region, the work of missionaries also dissipated. Haire's account of the decline of church membership, particularly in eastern region of Indonesia, is worth quoting.

> First, evangelism was widespread but superficial. Second, evangelism was entirely related to political motivations. Therefore in the periods of relatively good relations between the Sultans and the Portuguese (1520s and 1540s-1550s) evangelism advanced; when however there was strong opposition from the North Moluccan local power-centre (1535s and after 1570) then there was rapid falling away from the faith. Third, the murder of Sultan Hairun and the consequent backlash against Portuguese perfidy destroyed any trust in the missionaries. Fourth, Islam... was increasingly the standards of national self-expression. In these circumstances it was not surprising that Christianity should die out once Portuguese influence began to disappear.[34]

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[31]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 29.

[32]Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 34.

[33]See Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 29 and Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 34.

[34]J. Haire, *The Character and Theological Struggle of the Church in Halmahera Indonesia* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1981), 103-107. Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 34-36.

The third phase of the introduction of Christian faith is those by the Dutch traders and the subsequent collapse of Portuguese in almost all regions in the archipelago. When the Dutch, particularly through the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC), gained economic control, Protestantism began to be established in the region and took over some Portuguese Catholic congregations and commissioned pastors to serve churches.[35]

Under the VOC's support, between 1622-1633 a new seminary is Leiden was initiated. This seminary trained twelve ministers for service whose primary responsibility were the spiritual care of the Dutch in the archipelago, and the conversion of the natives.[36] And also, although the VOC officially promulgated "neutrality" in religious matter for fear of negative economic repercussions, after some delay it finally permitted the translations of the Gospel of Matthew in 1629 and the whole Bible in 1733.[37] From that time, the Christian faith, particularly Protestantism, began to consolidate its missionary works in some cities of Java.

B. Early Contacts and Encounters

Encounters between Muslims and Christians in the archipelago began roughly in the early sixteenth century, only to increase enormously in the seventeenth century when

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[35]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 30-31.

[36]Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 450.

[37]Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 36.

the Dutch began to consolidate their territorial gains in the region.[38] Rooted, according to Schumann, in the nature of European Protestant theology and in the Catholic maxim "*extra ecclesia nulla salus*" (there is no salvation outside the church), the hostile attitude of the Christian foreigners towards Indonesian Muslim contributed to a great extent in creating an atmosphere of suspicion, hostility and mutual contempt between these two religions.[39]

Karel Steenbrink, however, saw the relationship differently. He detected four major patterns in early Christian perceptions of Muslims in the archipelago.[40] In the first pattern Muslim were regarded as *respected heretics*, a view mainly held by the Dutch traders who visited Muslim ports. This pattern, according to Steenbrink, was characterized by a mixture of two conflicting feelings between curiosity and lack of respect, between selective admiration for and a wish to maintain distance from Muslims.[41]

The second pattern considered Muslims as *detestable heretics* and was developed particularly among Dutch travelers and missionaries who were strongly influenced by the

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[38]Tarmizi Taher, *Muslim-Christian Encounter: Past, Present and Future With Special Reference to Indonesia*, paper of public lecture presented at McGill University, Montreal, 21 October 1997, 3.

[39]Olaf Schumann, "Christian-Muslim Encounter in Indonesia," in *Christian-Muslim Encounters*, eds. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Z. Haddad (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1988), 285-287.

[40]Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596-1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopy, 1993).

[41]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 25-42.

development of Christian theology in the Netherlands.[42] It was colored by religious biases assessing Islam as a heretical religion, superstitious and even, in Voetius' notion (d. 1676), as a religion of evil having no moral system. It was for Christians of this persuasion "a complete denial of the true God and the covenant of the gospel, a denial of the theological doctrine of redemption and the doctrine of morality."[43]

The third pattern viewed Muslim as the *natural enemy* of Christians, an attitude built upon Dutch political and economic ambitions in the archipelago. In this regard, Muslims were identified as people who could not be trusted, even as uncivilized fanatics, while Islam was feared as a potential catalyst for change and a threat to the very existence of the Dutch in the region.[44]

The fourth pattern was to view Muslims as *members of a backward religion*. This emerged about the time that Dutch colonial rule had been firmly established. The Dutch saw their role in the archipelago as assisting Muslims to better themselves, regarding themselves as "teachers" and "guardians" of an uncultured indigenous people.[45]

By contrast, the stereotypical perception held by Indonesian Muslims of Christianity varied depending on the receptivity of particular areas. Indeed, this perception ranged from respect to accommodation and finally to violent resistance. Historically speaking, however, there is no clear record of specific theological responses to

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[42]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 43-59.

[43]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 50.

[44]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 60-75.

[45]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 76-97.

the initial arrival of Christians who came and made contact with the indigenous people. At first the perception was entirely pragmatic in origin and almost not at all affected by a particular theological viewpoint. Any initial good will on the part of Indonesian Muslims began to evaporate, however, when Muslim traders found themselves competing with the Dutch in the area of trade. This proved to be economically disadvantageous to Muslims and led to the bankruptcy of a number of indigenous traders. Thus the presence of the Dutch in the archipelago was still seen by many inhabitants as a cultural nuisance in which the Dutch were labeled as greedy competitors, were the subject of ribald mockery, and were called "*untrustworthy allies*". Still, the response was directed at to the Dutch attitude not their religion.

Quoting one of Minangkabau leader's notion, Wolters in his *Early Indonesian Commercial* gave an interesting account on Indonesian Muslim's cynical attitude towards the Dutch at this time indicating their greedy behavior in the term of economy, that if "you give one inch [of the earth], they [the Dutch] would take an ell (*lalu panjaik, lalu kulindan*)."[46] Also, there is the case of Sultan Agueng Tirtayasa, the sultan of Banten who strongly opposed Dutch presence on Java, who, according to Hoesein Djajadiningrat in his *Sejarah Banten* (Banten Annals), considered the presence of the Dutch as a "cultural poison" for his own territory which had to immediately be eliminated before it proved fatal.[47]

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[46]Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commercial*, 21.

[47]As quoted by Taufik Abdullah, "History, Political Images and Cultural Encounter: The Dutch in the Indonesia Archipelago," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 3 (1994): 9-12.

At the time the Dutch embarked on political colonialization of the archipelago in the late sixteenth century, the perception of the Dutch also shifted dramatically. It was also a period during which the established Islamic states in the archipelago, notably Aceh, Johor, Patani, Banten, Demak-Pajang-Mataram, and Ternate tried to extend their authority, both political and religious, to the rural hinterlands of their territories.[48] This extension demarcated the boundaries of the house of Islam (*dār al-Islām*) and the house of war (*dār al-ḥarb*).[49] As a result, the response shifted from Dutch attitudes in trade to the Dutch religion, and accordingly, as far as Muslim-Christian encounters were concerned, the emphasis shifted to theological polemics and refutation in which the tenets of Christianity became the subject of tendentious analysis.[50]

Supporting themselves with Qur'ānic references, Muslims of this period faulted Christians for proclaiming false doctrines with special reference to Jesus as the Son of God, and centered their polemics especially on the corruption of the Holy Scriptures, and the belief that the Bible had been altered by Christians from its original version. An

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[48]Anthony Reid, "Islamization and Christianization in Southeast Asia: The Critical Phase, 1550-1650", in *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Anthony Reid (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993): 157-158.

[49]Anthony Reid, "Seventeenth Century Turkish Influence in Western Indonesia," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 10, no. 3 (1969): 395-414.

[50]In this sense, although not only the Dutch but also Portuguese and Spaniards who introduce Christianity into the archipelago, Christianity was always identical with the Dutch due to the centuries of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia. Islam, on the contrary, was used as a cultural and political identity against the Dutch. Therefore, by the Muslims, the enmity against the Dutch shifted into enmity against Christianity as religion of the Dutch (*agama wong Londo*). It seems that the response to the Dutch in the same token is also the response to Christianity.

example of this attitude can be gleaned in the work of Nuruddin al-Rānīrī (d. 1658)[51] on the nature of the Christian Holy Scriptures. The work, however, is admittedly extreme and in fact, controversial in comparison with the mainstream of Muslim scholarly thought. As is well known, most prominent Muslims scholars in the medieval period of Islam held an "intermediate position" in accepting the reliability of the Holy Scriptures. Ibn Taymiyyah, for instance, in his *al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ li-man Baddala Dīn al-Masīḥ* (the Right Answer to those who Changed the Religion of Christ) believed that although the Holy Scriptures were historically proven to have been falsified, many of their teachings are in their original form and have religious value.[52] In accordance with this idea, al-Ghazālī also stated that except for its interpretations, there is nothing wrong in the text of the Bible. A similar viewpoint was found in Ibn Ḥazm's *al-Fiṣal fī al-Milal wa al-Ahwā' wa al-Niḥl* (Friction in Religions, Sects and Creeds) although he made some objection to what he regarded as chronological and geographical inaccuracies of the Bible, theological

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[51]Al-Rānīrī was born in Rānir (India) and the exact date of his birth is unknown. He came to Aceh after the death of Sultan Iskandar Muda (d. 1636). He wrote a number of books on the rules of Islamic ritual of which one, *Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm* (The Straight Path) is still being printed to the present day. His book on comparative religion, *al-Tibyān fī Ma'rifat al-Adyān* (Exposition in Understanding Religions) is considered a standard work on religious studies on the model of Shahrastānī's *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal* (Religions and Sects). For more information on his teachings. See, Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, *Rānīrī and the Wujūdiyyah of 17th Century Acheh* (Singapore: MBRAS, 1966).

[52]See, Thomas A. Michel, *A Muslim Theologian's Response to Christianity* (New York: Caravan Books, 1984).

impossibilities such as the anthropomorphic God and the preposterous behavior of the prophets.[53]

In contrast, al-Rānīrī maintained that the holy scriptures of Christians, as well as those of Buddhists and Hindus, had no religious value at all as a result of falsification and forgery. Therefore, in his *Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm* (The Straight Path), when discussing the issue of using pages from Bible for toilet paper, al-Rānīri stated that the paper from those scriptures could be freely used for cleansing oneself, unless the name of God was written on them.[54] As he explained:

> It is not permissible to use something for purification which under the terms of Islamic law (*shar'*) is forbidden such as bonds and uncleaned animal skins, [but] it is allowed to use for cleansing [oneself] the Old and New Testament as well as the other scriptures such as the *Sri Rama* and *Inderaputra* and others which have been changed from their original states, except if the name of God is written on them.[55]

Al-Rānīrī's effort to describe the existence of Christianity in the archipelago is a prototypical model of early Indonesian Muslim thought concerning a religion different from their own. Having followed the Qur'ān in limiting his criticism to certain Christian doctrines and having relied heavily on sources from medieval Islamic thought, al-Rānīrī had, not surprisingly, a very restricted perspective on the reliability of Christian doctrines.

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[53]Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, "Appendix A," *Studies in al-Ghazzali* (Jerusalem, The Magnes Press: The Hebrew University Press, 1975), 458-478; and her *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 30-34.

[54]Karel A. Steenbrink, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit in the Writings of Nur al-Din al-Rānīrī," *Islam and Christian Muslim Relations* 1, no. 2 (1990): 194. See his other writing, "The Study of Comparative Religion by Indonesian Muslims: A Survey," *Numen* XXXVII, Fasc. 2 (1990-1991): 141-167.

[55]Karel A. Steenbrink, *Kitab Suci atau Kertas Toilet? Nuruddin ar-Rānīrī dan Agama Kristen* (Yogyakarta: IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Press, 1988), 89.

Furthermore, he also reflected the dominant model in the entire Islamic world with regard to the historical description of Christianity and his method, to some extent, followed the pattern found in works by Muslim thinkers of an earlier age and forms part of a continuing response and reaction based on a literal interpretation of Qurānic verses. A case in point, is his depiction of the doctrine of the deification of Jesus in his *al-Tibyān fī Ma'rifat al-Adyān* (Exposition in Understanding Religions) which he believed was formally promulgated by "the so-called converted Jew, Saint Paul."

According to al-Rānīrī, Christianity had departed from its original doctrines from its earliest history and was already divided into three groups: the Malikites who were the followers of Mālik, the Jacobites, adherents of Mār Ya'qub; and the Nestorians, the followers of Nasṭūr. Concerning the devinity of Jesus, al-Rānīrī believed that Paul himself taught each of these three important figures, and to al-Rānīrī, it was due to their presence that differences of opinion and sects began to appear in Christianity. Steenbrink put al-Rānīrī's account on the relationship between Paul and these three leading Christian figures as follow:

> He [Paul] attracted a large number of disciples and from among them selected three to be his intimates. One day he took one of these, Mālik, apart and asked him, "Mālik, do you know who Jesus is?" "Surely," Mālik said, "Jesus is God's prophet, his envoy and his spirit." The Jewish divine (Paul) answered, "That is wrong! Did you ever see a prophet who could resurrect the dead? Or who could make birds from clay? Jesus is the Son of God, who descended from heaven. He performed several miracles and then he returned to heaven. But be cautious and do not tell anything of this to anyone else." More or less the same, but with a number of differences in formulations, was said to Mār Ya'qūb and Nasṭūr and this was the origin of the three Christian sects of Malikites, Jacobites and Nestorians.[56]

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[56]Steenbrink, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," 199.

However, in spite of his total rejection of the holy scriptures and the deification of Jesus, al-Rānīrī followed a viewpoint promulgated by the majority of Muslim thinkers, for he believed that Jesus would nevertheless play an important role in the period leading up to the Day of Judgment. He quoted the story dealing with Jesus' role together with the Mahdī in fighting against the Dajjāl (Anti-Christ) in the days preceding the Day of Judgment. And at that time, according to al-Rānīrī:

> After the [morning] prayer Jesus goes to the town hall and asks the Mahdī to attend. They speak together and then Jesus commands the Mahdī to open the gates of the town. Al-Dajjāl sees Jesus and immediately fades away "as tin melts on the fire." The 70,000 members of al-Dajjāl's army also vanish. This begins a period of 40 years of peace and happiness during which Jesus, the Son of Mary rules the earth in justice. He kills all pigs and destroys the golden and silver idols. He avenges the troubles of the destitute and brings prosperity to mankind.[57]

Elsewhere, he also exhibited his great veneration of Jesus and considered him to have been a special prophet of Islam. Basing himself on verses from the Qur'ān, he ascribed four special attributes to Jesus, namely: light (*nūr*) through which he performed some miracles, spirit (*rūḥ*), God's word (*kalimah minhu*) and messiah (*al-masīḥ*).[58]

Al-Rānīrī's usage of the traditional sources from within the Islamic repertoire is quite logical given that his effort was intended to answer the needs of the Islamic community, and that his books were used and read by a Muslim public. Al-Rānīrī's

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[57]Edward Djamaris, "Nuruddin ar-Rānīrī, Khabar Akhirat dalam Hal Kiamat," in *Bahasa, Sastra, Budaya*, ed. Sulastin Sutrisno (Yogyakarta: n.p. 1985), 131-146. See, Steenbrink, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," 201.

[58]Steenbrink, *Kitab Suci atau Kertas Toilet*, 8-9 and Steenbrink, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," 195. See, Nuruddin al-Rānīrī, *Asrār al-Insān fī Ma'rifat al-Rūḥ wa al-Raḥmān*, ed. Turdjimah (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas, 1960).

discussion of Christianity should to be seen in the context of a persistent reaction against intrusive colonialism in the archipelago; one which was undoubtedly colored by religious fervor and symbols. Thus, his depiction of Christianity was a combination of ideas of the mainstream of Muslim scholarly thought in the middle ages, the literal interpretation of the Qur'ān and the experience of daily contacts and encounters between the two communities in the archipelago.

Later, in about the seventeenth century, after many areas of the archipelago had been subjugated by the Dutch, and Muslim society felt itself victimized by the loss of its political and economic power, the themes of the polemics started to shift. If in the earlier phase of contacts, Christians had been depicted as "*corrupters of the Holy Scriptures*", in this phase they were perceived as "*infidels*". Therefore, the dispute over Christianity changed, to borrow Haddad's notion, from issues of "doctrinal truth and suppression to declaration of infidel, and the need for eradication through submission, conversion or war."[59]

An example of this can be found in a local history known as the *Syair Perang Mengkasar* (poem of the Maccasar war). In this poem, the Dutch are often described by such epithets as *syaitan* (the satan), *la'nat Allah* (God's curse upon), *iblis* (the demon), *murtad* (the apostate), or *kuffar* (the infidels) and the war against the *kafirs* naturally sacralized as a holy war between good and evil.

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[59]Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, "Islamist Depictions of Christianity in the Twentieth Century: The Pluralism Debate and the Depiction of the Other," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 7, no.1 (1996): 78-79.

There are numerous cases in this period where the choice of religious conversion or death was offered to the captured Dutch people and Dutch soldiers. A case in point is Frederick de Houtman, one of the leaders of the first Dutch expedition to the archipelago, who was captured in Aceh. After some months of captivity, he was told that the Sultan would grant him a high position in the royal court if he would embrace Islam, but that if he refused it, he would be punished severely.[60] As de Houtman repeatedly refused the conversion, the efforts at religious persuasion shifted into a debate on Christian doctrine, particularly on the Trinity, on the comparison between Jesus and Muhammad, and also on circumcision.[61] Similar situations arose in Java and West Sumatra. As Abdullah stated, Sultan Agung of Mataram, who opposed the VOC establishment at Batavia, showed a lenient attitude toward captured "infidel" soldiers in trying to persuade them to convert Islam.[62] Teungku Chik di Tiro and several Padri leaders also showed a similar attitude in that they were prepared to listen to or make peace agreements with the colonizers, so long as the Dutch embraced Islam. They firmly believed that all of the cultural barriers between them could be dissolved if the Christians would only convert to their own faith.[63]

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[60]Reid, "Islamization and Christianization in Southeast Asia," 173.

[61]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 12-17.

[62]Abdullah, "History, Political Images and Cultural Encounter," 10.

[63]Abdullah, "History, Political Images and Cultural Encounter," 11.

It is important to note that the above actions had no theological justification since there is nothing in the *shari'ah* (Islamic jurisprudence) that encourages such acts against Christians. However, in terms of political consolidation the label of "infidel" applied to Christians was to some extent a means by which Muslims built their own self-image and formed an ideology of opposition that in turn stimulated numerous "holy wars" against the Dutch.[64]

This religio-political ideology in the beginning might have sufficed for the needs of their imaginary victory. Muslims built a symbolic system through which they tried to console themselves, to cope with their fate and to solve the discrepancy between the dream of Islamic victory and the empirical fact of being a subjugated people.[65] It soon, however, proved to be far from adequate. In Java for example, after the entire area had been brought under VOC control, the use of the term 'infidels' was increasingly avoided. The emphasis rejecting their presence in the region was then transformed into an explicit acceptance. Local stories began to express an acceptance of Christian Dutch and to regard their presence in Indonesia and their control over local populations as appropriately the fate of Muslims. Some Javanese went so far as to fully recognize the Dutch as partners and as occupying an important position in the newly-created symbolic world. Some were even included in the legitimate royal Javanese genealogy. *Serat Surya Raja*, for instance, gave an account that describes Yogyakarta as being the center of a

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[64]Reid, "Islamization and Christianization in Southeast Asia," 174-176.

[65]Abdullah, "History, Political Images and Cultural Encounter," 12.

unified Java, in a cordial relationship with an Islamized Dutch East Indies company. In many mythologies, such as *Serat Baron Sakendar*, they were always described as the rulers who embraced Islam.[66]

To sum up, it can be said that the early Indonesian discussion of Christianity reflected the dominant model in the entire Islamic world. To some extent, their depiction of Christianity followed the pattern found in works by Muslim thinkers of the middle age and formed part of a continuing response and reaction based on a literal interpretation of Qur'ānic verses. However, in the late seventeenth century, it also formed part of the persistent reaction against intrusive colonialism in the archipelago, colored by religious interpretation and religious symbols. Thus, it is not out of place to point out that the depiction of Christianity in early Indonesian period was a combination between the literal interpretation of the Qur'ān and the experience of daily contacts and encounters between the two communities. In this sense, having followed the Qur'ān in limiting their criticism to certain Christian doctrines and having relied heavily on sources from medieval Islamic thought, early Indonesian Muslim had a very restricted perspective on the reliability of Christian doctrines. However, this use of the traditional sources from within the Islamic community can clearly be understood. As these efforts were intended to answer the needs of the Islamic community, the works were written for the Muslim public. This vision in its very essence suggests a certain standard differentiating between those who are inside and those outside of Islamic "salvation". In such setting, one can assume that early

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[66]Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 130-131.

Indonesian Muslims' motive in describing the doctrine of Christianity was no more than to reinforce their own religious public beliefs and to consolidate internal political strength rather than to assure the non-Muslim audiences of the authenticity and perfection of Islam or to make them really embrace it.

CHAPTER II

MUSLIM RESPONSES TO CHRISTIANITY IN THE PERIODS OF COLONIAL, POST-COLONIAL AND THE OLD ORDER INDONESIA

A. The Ethical Policy, Evangelization and Muslim Responses in 1860-1945

The demise of the Cultural Policy (*cultuurstelsel*) in the mid-nineteenth century inevitably changed the narrative history of Indonesia. Initially, this policy was designed as voluntary participation which set aside agrarian land for the plantation farming of certain crops. The villages were divided in four groups; one to grow the crop, one to reap it, one to transport to the factory for processing and the last to provide labor for the factory. Payment was made for all labor and the work of European officers in this economical chain was to ensure that cultivation was on time and suitable.[1]

However, after the Netherlands experienced serious economic difficulties after 1830, the application of the Cultural Policy was significantly changed. It no longer rested on a voluntary basis but introduced "compulsory cultivation" in which local produce was sold to the colonial government at fixed low prices by way of monopoly.[2] In this manner, Java was gradually transformed into a state-owned plantation in which certain cash crops

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[1]J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 117-118.

[2]Furnivall, *Netherlands India*, 118-119.

were cultivated through forced labor.[3] It was obvious that for the Dutch colonial administration, this policy generated immense profits, allowing it to pay all its debts and to balance the budget. A surplus was sent to the Netherlands itself and used for public expenditure, thereby subsidizing the Dutch taxpayer. However, for the indigenous population, except those who close to the colonial agents, the *cultuurstelsel* soon came to mean exploitation and impoverishment.

Due to internal problems and strong pressure from liberals in the Netherlands, by the early 1860s the authorities had inaugurated a new policy, known as the Liberal Policy, which gave private enterprises new opportunity to enter and to do business in Indonesia, particularly in the Outer Islands. This encouraged Europeans to come to Indonesia in large numbers to pursue economic gain. Not only did the Europeans bring with them an enthusiasm for trade but they also brought their way of life, including their religious belief and practices. Especially to provide education for their children and to meet their own religious needs the number of churches and schools increased dramatically.

The implementation of the Liberal Policy in its turn also encouraged European liberals and humanists in their call for improvements to the economic and educational life of the indigenous peoples, as seen in the case of Douwes Dekker, also known as Multatuli, the author of *Max Havelaar*. This policy inevitably had an impact in double sense, practical and humanitarian. The former represented an interest in economic aspects while the latter, inspired by liberal humanitarian ideas, showed a lively interest in welfare

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[3]M.C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), 114-119.

of the people. The liberals accepted economic venture as natural, but believed as well that as far as possible the indigenous people should be protected from oppression by the Europeans engaged in enterprise and the native chieftains acting as agents of the planters.[4]

The widespread dissatisfaction expressed with the plight of the local population by these liberals gained momentum with the inauguration of the Ethical Policy. Theoretically, this new policy was aimed at the betterment of the lives of the indigenous population through both economic and social reform. On the economic side it aimed at promoting development with a view to providing financial assistance for the extension of health, education and agricultural services to the population.[5] On the social side, it was intended that the welfare of the villages would be improved, and that democratic self-government would be promoted, consistent with the liberal tradition. It also introduced the liberal doctrine of equal law for all people from which some Ethical leaders advocated a unified system of administration, with Europeans and natives all in one combined service administering uniform law.[6]

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[4]J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 223-224.

[5]Robert van Neil, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1960), 32; 36-38. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice*, 227.

[6]Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice*, 228.

Although the Ethical Policy was designed to promote emancipation and equality, it, unfortunately, was unable to fulfill its stated objectives.[7] Education remained the privilege of a particular indigenous elite, while the number of illiterates among the general population remained static. This policy also proved fragile in withstanding unprecedented religio-political developments in the Netherlands. At the time the policy was officially promulgated, there was a sudden shift in the Netherlands from the established church *(hervormde kerk)* which had shown general tolerance, over to the breakaway church *(gereformeerde kerk)* which was radical, less tolerant and more orthodox.[8] This shift, in its turn, greatly influenced the application of certain colonial policies, including that of the Ethical Policy, because breakaway church members became politically dominant in the Dutch parliament. The result was that in case of Indies policy, the promulgation of the Ethical Policy was to some extent reshaped and colored by Christian interests, particularly that of the breakaway church.

The breakaway church gained increased political power by winning a majority position in the parliamentary election of 1901. This enabled them to put Abraham Kuyper into the prime ministership and Alexander Idenburg into the governor general's office. Some have seen this as a main factor in the increased support given to missionary works in Indonesia at the time. It was manifested in generous subsidies to Christian institutions. And accordingly, Idenburg once stated that "as a Christian nation the

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[7]Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice*, 225.

[8]E.G. Singgih, "Contextualisation and Inter-Religious Relationship in Java: Past and Present," *The Asia Journal of Theology* 11, no. 2 (October 1997): 250-252.

Netherlands have a duty to improve the condition of the native Christians in the archipelago, to give Christian missionary activity more aid, and to inform the entire administration that the Netherlands have moral obligations to fulfill as regards the population of those regions."[9] Given this milieu of strong pressure for the breakaway church, therefore, one can understand why many of the churches were sponsored either by the central government in Holland or by the representatives of the colonial government, which incidentally granted ministers a cash bonus for every convert.[10]

Although preaching the Gospel was initially meant to serve the religious needs of the European residents, missionary activists from the breakaway church began a more active campaign to convert the indigenous people to Christianity. They hoped to precede Islam into regions where Islam and Christianity had not yet penetrated. Consequently, they created Christian buffer zones in Tengger (East Java) and the Batak area (North Sumatra) against the Muslim zones in East Java and Aceh, respectively.[11] By the tactics of consolidating their hold on remote areas, missionaries had a great success in converting the animists there to the religion of Christ.

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[9]Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1945* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 165; Alwi Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 52.

[10]See Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), 290-191; 224. Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement*, 162-166.

[11]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 41-44. More extensive information on missionaries activities in the Batak land is found in Kipp's anthropological field research. See Rita Smith Kipp, *The Early Years of a Dutch Colonial Mission: The Karo Field* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1990), 25-26.

Traditionally, however, when the missionaries tried to "introduce" Christianity people in predominantly Muslim areas, the endeavor has always been arduous and slow. Efforts to convert the Muslim community, particularly in Java, were met with fierce political resistance engendered by theological as well as cultural reasons.[12] This resistance acquired an anti-foreign hue and was portrayed as an indigenous effort to preserve the native cultural identity from the onslaught of foreign influences. As Kraemer pointed out, public opinion still considered converts to Christianity to be converts to the service of Dutch culture and interests. This, according to him, was reinforced by the origin of the evangelists in the archipelago who were all European.[13] Moreover, Neill echoed this observation, noting how a conversion to Christianity was always seen as equivalent to the loss of one's cultural identity. Consequently, some Javanese were never baptized in order to preserve their true Javanese character.[14]

To that point the Dutch government had officially advocated "neutrality" in its religious policies. The government clearly maintained that some areas were closed to missionary works, or at least restricted. Experiences had proven that missions to Muslim areas often caused tensions that were bad for trade.[15] The breakaway church's challenge

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[12]An extensive historical description of missionaries activities in Java can be found in Th. Sumartana's book, *Mission at the Crossroads: Indigenous Churches, European Missionaries, Islamic Association and Socio-Religious Change in Java 1812-1936* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1993).

[13]Hendrik Kraemer, "Sending di Hindia Belanda," in *Politik Etis dan Revolusi Kemerdekaan*, eds. H. Boudet and I.J. Brugmans (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1987), 335.

[14]Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 192.

[15]Singgih, "Contextualisation and Inter-Religious Relationship in Java," 254.

to this policy is worth mentioning. Knowing that missionaries could not freely work in Muslim areas, they often maintained that Java in particular was not a Muslim area but a center of *kejawen* (a mixture belief of animism, Buddhism-Hinduism and local customs). Therefore, because *kejawen* was not included in the policy, the government should allow them to work in Java. To forbid such activities, they argued, would be to intentionally abuse religious freedom.[16]

The government's subsequent acquiescence, therefore, at least in Muslim eyes, showed a clear bias in favor of Christian interests. A case in point was the amount of subsidy given to the Christian missionary and to Muslim activities, respectively. Moenawar Chalil, a prominent member of the Muhammadiyah movement, listed the fee differences in amount given to religious communities as follows: in 1936 the subsidies given to Protestants amounted to f. 686,100, to Catholics f. 286,500, and to Muslims only f. 7,500. In the following years, subsidies to Protestants and Catholics abruptly increased to f. 844,000 and f. 335, 700, respectively, and remained at f. 7,600 for Muslims.[17] He maintained that this was clear government preference for Christianity.

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[16]Singgih, "Contextualisation and Inter-Religious Relationship in Java", 254.

[17]Moenawar Chalil, "Pemandangan Sepintas Laloe," *Sinar Baroe*, (July 1943), n.p., as quoted by A. Mukti Ali ['Abdu-l Mu'ṭi 'Alī], "The Muhammadiyah Movement: A Bibliographical Introduction," (M.A. thesis McGill University, 1957), 56; 80-81. Sidjabat did not agree with Chalil because, according to him, the large sums of money the Christians received were collected by churches abroad and not from the Dutch government. On the contrary, Neill admitted that since "in most cases the village teacher served also as a catechist, the rapid expansion of the work of the church was to be a large extent made possible by government money". See Bonar Sidjabat, *Religious Tolerance and the Christian Faith: A Study Concerning the Concept of Divine Omnipotence in the Indonesian Constitution in the Light of Islam and Christianity* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1965), 61-62; compare to Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, 322-396.

In addition, the way in which civil servants were recruited and the different salaries paid to Europeans and Indonesians for the same profession further raised the ire of the Muslim community. Of one thousand prospective employees accepted not a single Muslim was among them. Moreover, the salary that of a European clergyman was ten times higher that that of a Muslim *penghulu* (judge).[18]

For the Muslim community, the conditions became even more difficult as decrees were issued one after another. This can be seen with the decree requiring Muslim teachers to obtain a special government teaching license and to submit the names of all their students, as well as their curriculum. Although this decree, known as the *guru ordinantie* (the teaching licence) was designed to improve the quality of Islamic education as defined by the European system, for some Muslims this was tool for the colonial government to curtail the movement of teachers, to hamper the progress of Islam and to control the activities of Muslim teachers, many of whom had been educated in the Middle East and had long been suspected of coming under the influence of reformists ideas from Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries.[19]

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[18]Aqib Suminto, *Politik Islam Hindia Belanda* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985), 26-28.

[19]Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia*, 165-175; Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 53; Suminto, *Politik Islam*, 35. The best analytical description of the ideas which motivated the Islamic reformation is to be found in Azra's work. See Azyumardi Azra, "The Transmission of Islamic Reformism to Indonesia: Networks of Middle Eastern and Malay-Indonesian 'Ulama' in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1992). According to a government report issued in 1911, after performing the pilgrimage most of the *hajis* returned to their daily work with no special attention to that of the reformation ideas. This report was seemingly designed to counter Hurgronje's advice to the colonial government to control the *hajis*' activities in the archipelago. See G.F. Pipjer, "Politik Islam Pemerintah Belanda," in *Politik Etis dan Revolusi Kemerdekaan*, 240-241.

In Muslim's eyes, the evidence clearly showed a close relationship between the colonial government and the church. Accordingly, the intimate relationship between missionaries, and official Dutch representatives, led to the former becoming an effective arm of colonialism;[20] and of the unequivocal Dutch proclamation that government officials in the East Netherlands Indies [Indonesia] were representatives of a "Christian nation".[21] Both missionaries and the colonial government gained reciprocal benefits from this religio-political cooperation. The colonial powers, as Shihab put it, saw the colony as an arena for financial profit while the missionaries saw it as a place bestowed upon them by God in their campaign to enlarge the domains of Christendom.[22]

Although the extreme interpretation that puts missionaries into the effective arms of colonialism may hold some truth, a closer and more careful examination into the issue is still needed to unfold what really happened in Indonesian history. Muslim views regarding the Christian presence in Indonesia cannot after all be dealt with complete isolation from the common pattern in other parts of the Muslim world. This period marked the time after which Muslims believed that missionaries were part of the colonial system. Indeed, relations between missionaries and colonial government were cordial since they came from same civilization and same religion. It seems, however, that this relationship was not as strong as Muslims thought, and it was not solely based on religious

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[20]William Montgomery Watt, *Muslim-Christian Encounters* (London: Routledge, 1991), 104-105.

[21]van Neil, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite*, 83-84.

[22]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 45-46.

zeal. There might be other reasons, either economic or political that enhanced or mitigated their relationship. Indonesian Muslim perception of them as the agents of colonialism may not have been in fact strictly accurate because since 1920's there were many Christians who actively advocated nationalist sentiment within the Indonesian community. It is worth mentioning that there were also many foreign missionaries, Dutch and Germany primarily, operated in different eras and regions who worked for humanitarian motives to improve the betterment of indigenous people and, interestingly, their attitudes were mostly different with that of the colonialists.

It is important also to note that if some Muslims questioned the neutrality of the colonial government in matters of religion because it had a negative effects on Islam, by the same token some Christians regarded themselves as victims of the same policy, for it restricted their religious activities by declaring some regions to be off-limits to missionary work.[23] One may find that these two fundamentally different viewpoints result from two different interpretations. It depends heavily on who observes it and what side the observer might take.

The relations between Muslim and Christian communities in Indonesia were strained severely and the main cause of that were the harsh and critical statements made by Christians against the Prophet and the Qur'ān and the Muslim community in Indonesia. Examples of these include the works of Hendrik Kraemer and J.J. Ten Berge.

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[23]von Wendelin Wawer, *Muslime und Christien in der Republik Indonesia* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974), 323.

Kraemer especially portrayed Islam as a religion lacking respect for other forms of spiritual life, particularly Christianity, and as lacking a spiritual dimension. It follows, therefore, that reformation in Islam does not at all imply "a deepening of its spiritual life but, political and social reform."[24] Hence, Islam, Kraemer believed, was a "medieval and radically religious form of that national-socialism with which we are familiar in Europe at present in its pseudo-religious form."[25] Insofar as missionary efforts were concerned, his paradoxical expressions of disdain and admiration for Islam are noteworthy:

> Islam is a mission problem: there is no religion for which mission has worked itself to the bone with less result and on which it has scratched its fingers till they were bloody and torn than Islam... The riddle of Islam is that, though as religion it is shallow and poor in regard to content. It surpasses all religions of the world in the power of which it holds those who profess it.[26]

He then depicted non-Christian opposition to Christian prosetylization as follows:

> Everywhere –Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, etc– there is manifest in the Eastern world today, along with the general national realisation a movement towards the heightening of religious consciousness embodying itself in movements for reform, reorganisation, propaganda, consolidation and concerted opposition to Christian mission.[27]

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[24]Carl F. Hallencreutz, *Kraemer Towards Tambaram*, 161. See also Mikha Joedhiswara, "Hendrik Kraemer and Inter-religious Relations in Indonesia," *Asia Journal of Theology* 9, no. 1 (1995): 92.

[25]The reference is, of course, to the appearance of fascist regimes in Italy, Spain and Germany. Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1938), 353. See B.J. Boland and I. Farjon, *Islam in Indonesia: A Bibliographical Survey 1600-1942 with Post-1945 Addenda* (Dordrecht The Netherlands: Foris Publication Holland, 1983), 46.

[26]Kraemer, *The Christian Message*, 220; Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 41.

[27]Kraemer, *The Christian Message*, 46.

This hostile attitude towards Islam is also manifest in Kramer's *The Religion of Islam* published in 1928, a book designed as an instructional manual for Christian teachers and claimed to enhance Christian knowledge of Islam.[28] The work was criticized by Muslims because it claimed that Muhammad did not have a clear claim to major religious status but really had only instituted a small religious sect.[29] Muslims also disliked its conclusion on Muhammad's human weakness[30] and its contention that it was his change in sentiment toward the Jews that persuaded Muhammad to alter the direction of prayers from Jerusalem to Mecca, not God's command.[31] Not surprisingly, Muslims reacted with considerable anger at the publication of this book. Some demonstrations were held in many big cities like Jakarta and Bandung in 1929 and some rebuttals offered by urban Muslims and Muhammadiyah leaders who had mostly been educated in modern schools and familiar with western literature appeared in some Islamic journals and magazines.[32]

Nevertheless, for Indonesian Muslims at that time, no other subjects are treated as fully as these two fundamental issues: the relation between state and Islam and the *gharanic* (satanic verses) affair, both of which are accordingly seen as an insult and

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[28]Hendrik Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 1st ed. (Bandung: N.V. u/h A.C. Nix & Co, 1928; 3d ed. reprint, Jakarta: Badan Penerbit Kristen, 1952).

[29]Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 41.

[30]Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 43.

[31]Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 31.

[32]Muhammad Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia* (Bandung: CV Bulan Sabit & CV Peladjar, 1969), 37-39. See also Sumartana, *Mission at the Crossroads*, 329-330.

humiliation to Islam. A skillful response was made by A.D. Haanie, a prominent Muhammadiyah leader, who in 1929 published a book entitled *Islam Against Kraemer*.[33]

In his book, Kraemer held that the unification of religion and politics in Islam was an ordinary phenomenon for all ancient religions, which regarded religion as their basic way of life. However, the development of modern politics, according to him, demanded that the two should be separated; and for the state to operate on a secular basis. To achieve a modern life style, Kraemer seemed to suggest, Muslims should, therefore, discard the traditional unity between Islam and politics.[34]

Hannie's response to Kraemer's position is sharp and to the point. Islam, he replied, is a union of the political and religious; and what might be called Islamic politics it would be conceptually unsound to equate it with theocracy in Christian tradition. Islam, he explained, does not carry religion into the temporal realm but carries religious law into political life and determines the structural form of the state. There is no evidence to suggest that Islam demands the reign of a caliph. To Hannie, an Islamic state could be ruled either by a caliph or a president as long as it safeguarded religion, respected all other religious adherents and oversaw the implementation of the religious law. Hence, being mutually interdependent, religion and politics are strongly inclined to compliment another. He stated:

> The power of the state, in this light, may not be called religious power, but rather reliance on religion; the government does not have the power to intrude in private

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[33]A.D. Haanie, *Islam Menentang Kraemer* (Yogyakarta: Penyiaran Islam, 1929).

[34]Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 48; Sumartana, *Mission at the Crossroads*, 329; 348.

> religious affairs, rather it stands on the foundation of religion, nothing more. Thus people can understand that while Islam combines the power of religion and the law, it does not combine the power of religion and the state. Instead the government stands above religion; there is no religious power in Islam.[35]

Haanie then concluded that Kraemer's challenge to Indonesian Muslims to separate their religion from their political life heralded nothing less than to defeat for Muslim civilization, an attempt to weaken the Islamic community after which Christian could defeat Muslim with ease.[36]

The second matter that Haanie took issue with is Kraemer's analysis of the "satanic verses". According to Kraemer, Muhammad, under considerable pressure from Meccan leaders to compromise with the religious system of the time, once acknowledged three Meccan idols: Allat, Uzza and Manat, as standing next to Allah. This statement was the so-called "satanic verses" which appear repeatedly in history even unto the current era, usually brought forward by detractors of Muhammad. However, if the Meccan leaders were at all happy with the statement, the followers of Muhammad were more unhappy about this compromise and much debate ensued over the issue. Obviously Muhammad himself had difficulty with the statement, and not long after uttering it, recanted it stating that acceptance of those "three idols was not God revelation but evil thought from satan."[37]

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[35]Haanie, *Islam Menentang Kraemer*, 85.

[36]Haanie, *Islam Menentang Kraemer*, 82; see Sumartana, *Mission at the Crossroads*, 329.

[37]Kraemer, *Agama Islam*, 26.

Haanie's response seems too simple, however. To him, Kraemer's purpose in raising the issue was to shed doubt on the authority and honor of the Prophet. Haanie's rebuttal denied that the story circulated in Muslim circles and attributed it to the *zindiks* who aimed to mock the Prophet. Haanie hypothesized that the pagans had knelt in prayer with the Prophet, not because the latter had acknowledged their gods, but because he had read a chapter of the Qur'ān. It was, Haanie argued, the virtue of the Prophet that made them bow in worship and not because the Prophet had named and bowed to the three idols of Mecca. And it was unthinkable, to Haanie, that God who had protected the Prophet from sins could abandon him to Satan's temptations.[38]

Another case in point which triggered Muslim hostility towards Christianity has come to be known as the Ten Berge affair, after a Jesuit priest named J. J. Ten Berge who published two articles in the journal *Studiën* which appeared in 1931. These articles dealt specifically with the Qur'ānic verses speaking about the prophecy of Christ. After quoting the Qur'ānic verses (5: 75), Ten Berge said:

> One can see that according to Muhammad, Christians conceive of a father and a mother and a son in a sexual sense. How would it have been possible for him, the anthropomorphist, the ignorant Arab, the gross sensualist who was in the habit of sleeping with women, to conceive of a different and more elevated conception of Fatherhood.[39]

In response, more demonstrations were held by the Persatuan Islam (PERSIS), the Muhammadiyah and the Partai Sarekat Islam in some cities such as Bandung and

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[38]Haanie, *Islam Menentang Kraemer*, 82; and Sumartana, *Mission at the Crossroads*, 331.

[39]As cited by Karel Steenbrink in *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam* (Amsterdam: Rodopy B.V., 1993), 118-119.

Surabaya in 1931 and a number of articles were written, particularly in the periodical *Pembela Islam*.[40] Among of those who responded to Ten Berge was Muhammad Natsir, a prominent member of the Persatuan Islam in Bandung, who was later to become a Prime Minister of Indonesia and the chairman of the Masjumi political party.

In reply to Ten Berge, Natsir wrote an article *Islam, Catholicism and the Colonial Government*, which expressed his contempt for Ten Berge's treatment of the prophet Muhammad and called on other Muslims to defend their religion against slander. Written in a concise popular style, it provides general information on the issue, trying to convey to Muslims the dangers of evangelization, which he termed "the strange way of propagation" employed by missionaries. In Natsir's view, the articles represented a crude conspiracy and a systematic assault on Islam.[41] In this article, Natsir also called on the government to review its policy if it wished to promote religious harmony. Specifically, he criticized the double standard whereby Muslims were being punished for hate literature while Christian polemists, like Ten Berge, were protected from a formal trial. Official "neutrality", he charged, was an excuse for government inaction when Islam was the object of slander. He denounced the government's inconsistency in enacting the policy by comparing it to what would happen in Netherlands law. According to Natsir, in the Netherlands, a religious slander of this type would be subject to legal sanction.[42]

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[40]Steenbrink in *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam*, 118-119.

[41]Muhammad Natsir, "Islam, Katholiek, Pemerintah," *Pembela Islam* 33 (1931): 2-7. See Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen*, 37-43.

[42]Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia*, 41.

Apart from his rebuttal of Ten Berge, Natsir wrote other articles between 1930 and 1940 that appeared in some magazines and journals dealing with Christianity. These were intended to defend Islam not only from the Christian missionary's offensive but also the critical comments of secular-nationalists and followers of Javanese mysticism.[43] His articles entitled *Qur'an en Evangelie* and also his *Moehammad als Profeet* for instance, appeared in response to the work of Protestant Domingus Christoffel who write article on Islam and the biography of the Prophet which Muslims regarded it as an insult to Islam and slander against the Prophet.[44]

Natsir counterattacked with charges that Christians have themselves distorted their own teachings and brought their religion into disrepute. This was the theme in his article entitled the *Holy Spirit*.[45] He explained that what he called modifications and alterations in the Bible had produced contradictions and inconsistencies among verses of the Bible. For example, in dealing with Jesus' crucifixion, Natsir compared John 19: 17 stating that Jesus was bearing his cross himself with Mark 15:21 citing that someone else was bearing Jesus' cross. In the same manner he analyzed the resurrection of Jesus in Luke 24:4 stating that there were two men standing at the tomb dressed in shining

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[43]According to Ihza, Natsir felt a strong religious responsibility to draw Islamic teachings directly from original sources since too many depreciative works on Islam had been launched by his fellow Indonesians and he felt that they were critical of the interpretation of Islam in common life rather than the actual teachings themselves. See Yusril Ihza, "Combining Activism and Intellectualism: The Biography of Muhammad Natsir," *Studia Islamika* 2, no. 1 (1995): 132.

[44]Natsir, *Moehammad als Profeet*, reprinted by Persatuan Islam (Bandung: Penerbit Persatuan Islam, 1930). See Ihza, "Combining Activism," 133.

[45]See Natsir, "Ruh Suci," *Pembela Islam* 13 (1930): 5-10. Reprinted in *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia*, 18-23.

garments and Matthew 27: 56 saying that there were three people at that place.[46] Such differences in text raised the question in Natsir's mind whether other parts of the message were also not reliable.

Following Ten Berge's essay, in late April of 1931, Oei Bee Thay wrote an article in the periodical *Hoakien* characterizing Muhammad as latent murderer, insane and a robber.[47] In 1937 Muhammad's character was further attacked in the periodical *Bangun* by Siti Sumandari and Soeroto. The writers attributed Islamic views on polygamy and marriage to the prophet's wanton sexual desires and jealous.[48] Here, of course, the matter was compounded since the writers were not the Dutch missionaries but local Chinese converts to Christianity. Apparently, however, Muslims saw little distinction. Among noteworthy responses made to the second article was Ahmad Hassan's, a prominent modernist Muslim who belonged to the Persatuan Islam.[49]

Hassan's book, *The Divinity of Jesus according to the Bible*[50], was written at the behest of the MIAI (Majelis A'la Islam Indonesia, or Indonesian Muslim Supreme

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[46]Natsir, *Islam dan Kristen di Indonesia*, 21-23.

[47]As cited by Howard M. Federspiel in *Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, 1970), 107-108.

[48]Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 108.

[49]The *Persatuan Islam* was a modernist organization established in 1923 in Bandung West Java. Among of its most prominent leaders was Ahmad Hassan, a Singaporean in origin who was born in 1887, and was a former journalist in the *Utusan Melayu* newspaper in Singapore. For an account of his life and his modern *ijtihād*, see Tamar Djaya, *Riwayat Hidup A. Hassan* (Jakarta: Mutiara, 1980) and Akh. Minhaji, "Ahmad Hassan and Islamic Legal Reform in Indonesia, 1887-1958" (Ph.D dissertation, McGill University, 1997).

[50]Ahmad Hassan, *Ketoehanan Jesoes Menoeroet Bijbel* (Bandung: Persatuan Islam, 1940).

Council), and presented what Federspiel has called "scholarly and logical arguments" with easily understandable terms in refuting the divinity of Jesus.[51] In doing so, he based his entire logical and lexical argument on the Bible, without ever referring to the verses of the Qur'ān. Hassan's objective was to draw a simple comparison between Jesus and Muhammad. However, his own biases became apparent in the conclusion. Hassan claimed that Christians had, throughout the centuries, misunderstood the position of their own doctrine on the mission of Jesus. To him, Jesus, like other prophets in the Semitic tradition would not have been abandoned to crucifixion by his God for saving humankind from the sin, nor would there have ever be a personified God in a purely monotheist tradition. If he truly was His son, he asks, "does God not know any other way to save humankind except by the sacrifice of flesh and blood?" "Would it not have been easier for Him [God] to forgive humankind without shedding the blood of His son?"[52]

There is, of course, nothing very little new in his arguments as they only follow a blue-print borrowed from age-old Muslim polemics against Christianity. Thus, his belief that "we [Muslims] do not believe in Jesus as God, nor as part of the divine, nor as the son of God, nor as a form combining God and man"[53] was an old proclamation. However, some of his arguments were original, not in the usual Muslim line of attack, such as the

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[51]Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 108.

[52]Hassan, *Ketoehanan Jesoes*, 34-35. See Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 110.

[53]Hassan, *Ketoehanan Jesoes*, 5. Federspiel, *Persatuan Islam*, 109.

claim that the notion of "the son of God" which is attributed to Jesus was, according to Hassan, a title of respect not exclusively referred to Jesus. This argument, which is also found in his *Jesus and his Religion: an Answer to the Book of Jesus in the Qur'an*,[54] has been adopted and elaborated by O. Hashem, whose book will also be discussed at some length in the forthcoming sections.

Both Christian charges and Muslim countercharges deserve comment, but this thesis is interested in the Muslim response, so some comments will be made about the Muslim writings in particular. The questions which arise from Haanie's rebuttal, and that of other Muslims, are numerous. Why was Haanie so offended by the idea of separating Islam from politics? Why did Haanie concentrate on the *gharanic* affair (satanic verses) to the exclusion of other issues which appeared in Kraemer's book? Why did Natsir and Hassan respond so vehemently to dispersions on Muhammad character? The answers are not simple. For one, the Indonesian debate over state ideology has always disputed the manner and extent of the role Islam should play in the makeup of the state. In light of the ideological demand most Muslim activists, Kraemer's challenge to the idea of political Islam was a challenge to their very ethos. In this "religio-political" struggle, Kraemer's call for secularism was a blow to Islam's integrity as a social order.

In fact, Kraemer's early works, as well as those of medieval western orientalists, are prototypical of the attitudes that have characterized ideological confrontation with Islam

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[54]Hassan, *Iesa dan Agamanja: Djawaban Terhadap Buku 'Isa didalam Alquran'* (Bangil: Persatuan Islam, 1958). This book was a response to that of an adventist Rifai Boerhanoe'ddin, *Isa didalam Alquran* (Bandung: Indonesia Publishing House, 1956).

in a period of political change.[55] Islam is depicted in such works as a religion of evil or at least as inimical to Christian values, and the Qur'ān described as a man-made production. The common pattern of denunciation depicts Muhammad as a selfish liar possessed of several evil characteristics.[56] In this framework, the second issue to concern Haanie, i.e., the satanic verses, and Natsir's rebuttal of Ten Berge's comments regarding Muhammad, may be explained differently. For the Muslim community, an attack directed at the prophet Muhammad is deeply injurious. It is not only intolerable but it also requires an immediate response. Islamic teachings clearly recognize Muhammad as the model *par excellence* whose life *(sīrah)*, sayings *(ḥadīth)* and practices *(sunnah)* stand as the ultimate paradigm for them to follow.

Hence, Haanie and Natsir's responses were understandably driven by the urge to protect the honor of the prophet Muhammad against disparagement by non-Muslims. As well, considering the longstanding theological differences between Islam and Christianity, their rebuttal should be contextualized in terms of the protection of "monotheistic" Islam against its purposeful misdirection toward "polytheistic" ways. If the implications of the *gharanic* affair are accepted, the theological consequence of the infallibility *('ismah)* of Muhammad, a strongly-held belief among Muslims, is brought into question, and it well implies that Muhammad was tempted to set up a polytheistic religion that associated

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[55]Carl F. Hallencreutz, *Kraemer Towards Tambaram* (Uppsala: Almquist and Wiksells, 1966), 160.

[56]An excellent analysis of the common Western view of Islam is found in Norman Daniel's, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960; reprint, Oxford: One World, 1997).

certain idols alongside Allah.[57] Thus, with respect to Haanie and Natsir, the issue is not one of apologetics, but rather, whether they have responded according to the established academic and intellectual dictates of their own religious beliefs.

B. Muslim-Christian Encounters in the Old Order Era, 1945-1965

The political orientation of modern Indonesia after the independence day of 1945 can be seen as bifurcated. On one side were the so-called secular nationalists comprising some prominent Christians and nominal Muslims promoting the *Pancasila* as state ideology.[58] On the other were Muslim nationalists who urged the establishment of a so-called Islamic state in Indonesia. Thus, the question of whether a secular or Islamic state should come into being, defined and widened the rift between these two groups. However, a considerable effort to reconcile the two led the latter group to agree to omit seven words ("*dengan kewajiban menjalankan syariat Islam bagi pemeluk-pemeluknya*" or ("with the obligation of adherents of Islam to practice [Islamic] law") from the draft of

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[57]For more information on the issue see W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 101-109. See also Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1996), 108-133.

[58]Significantly, a number of devout Muslims belonged to this first group, for they believed that Islam is a religion for basic human personal beliefs and not an ideological system. See, Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (Leiden: Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal, -Land- en Volkenkunde, 1982), 8. Like Boland, Noer believed that the idea of the separation of religion and state held by these "religious" politicians resulted from the educational system introduced by the Dutch, which produced secularly-oriented intellectuals. See Deliar Noer, "Islam as a Political Force in Indonesia," *Mizan* 1, no. 4 (1984): 35-36.

the proposed constitution.[59] In spite of the compromise, some Christian politicians, like Latuharhary, apparently dissociated themselves from the deal. This dissenting group held that not only was the issue of "the seven words" important, but that the draft of the constitution itself, which mentioned Islam specially, had to be rephrased.[60] The debate went on for another two months until another compromise was reached. The delegates finally agreed that, in the interest of unity, the constitution should exclude any mention of Islam. Thus, articles referring to Islam as the official religion of the state or stating that the president should be a Muslim were deleted. Although Muslims were the majority, the new nation of Indonesian was not to have an Islamic constitution, but rather one which accepted common spiritual values expressed in the *Pancasila* with its first principle expressing a belief in One God.[61]

Not only did the *Pancasila* debate create division among Indonesians, but so did the proposal by Achmad Subardjo to establish a Ministry of Religious Affairs at the meeting of the Committee for the Preparation of Indonesia's Independence on August 19,

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[59]An extensive study of this gentleman's agreement, which was later was given the title of "Jakarta Charter" is that of Ashari. See [Endang] Saifuddin Ashari, "The Jakarta Charter of June 1945: A History of the Gentleman's Agreement between the Islamic and the Secular Nationalists in Modern Indonesia," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1976).

[60]Azyumardi Azra, "The Long Struggle of Islam's Largest Nation," *Mizan* 1, no. 1 (January 1984): 74-75.

[61]Azra, "The Long Struggle," 75. See also Nurcholish Madjid, "Islam in Indonesia: Challenges and Opportunities," *Mizan* 1, no. 3 (1984): 74-75. The same article was first published in *Islam in the Contemporary World*, ed. Cyriac K. Pullapilly (Indiana: Cross Roads Books, 1980).

1945.[62] Although the proposal was rejected at the meeting, strong pressure mostly, from traditional *'ulama'*, had persuaded the government to found such a ministry on January 3, 1946, in accordance with a proposal to the central Komite Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Committee) on November 11, 1945.[63] Its existence, however, was viewed with mixed feelings by Christian politicians as well as by some Muslims. The latter, mostly urban Muslim politicians, on the one hand, believed that the establishment of the ministry was no more than an attempt by the government to win the full support from Islamic groups, which had been disappointed that the stipulation concerning the Islamic *shari'ah* had been dropped from the Jakarta Charter, and that the ideal of a state based on Islam was no longer possible.[64] For Christian leaders, on the other hand, this institution was seen as a way for Muslims to recall their dream of Islamic state in Indonesia. It was viewed as a means for Muslims, as constituting the largest religious group, to promote Islam as the state's sole religion, which accordingly would threaten the freedom of religion and religious tolerance. It was therefore seen as important for the government to establish the boundaries between state authority and religion.[65] Latuharhary, for instance, declared that the ministry would only create "uneasy feelings" and "disunity" among the people. To him, if the minister were a Christian, the Muslims

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[62]Deliar Noer, *Administration of Islam in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, 1978), 11.

[63]Noer, *Administration of Islam*, 8-9.

[64]Noer, *Administration of Islam*, 12-13.

[65]Wawer, *Muslime und Christien*, 144-145.

would naturally be dissatisfied. Conversely, if the minister were a Muslim, the Christian community would be unhappy.[66] Moreover, Christians already felt that their needs were served by a similar institution, e.g., the Indonesian Council of Protestant Churches and the Indonesian Supreme Council of Catholic Churches, which were financially sound and well organized,[67] while others believed that the establishment of the ministry would indeed contradict the noble idea of *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa* (God's Divine Omnipotence), as is stated in the first principle of the *Pancasila*. Sidjabat, speaking at a later time put the issue in the following term:

> Closer examination shows that the contradiction is in the application of Divine Omnipotence. As the establishment of the Ministry of Religious Affairs is an attempt to apply this principle of Divine Omnipotence, a valid question may be raised, namely, whether the establishment of the Ministry of Religious Affairs basically is not a deviation from the general concept of Deity as contained in the Constitution of the Indonesian Republic. Knowing that the proportional majority of the population having a religious affiliation will exert a prevailing influence in the most areas of the national life, is it not contradictory for freedom among the inhabitants of the country, to create any scheme in the government that will endanger the application of the principle of Divine Omnipotence? Any administrative organ which gives room in the society for the prevailing influence of one single social group will ultimately be a tool that helps foster a social pressure upon other groups in the society. Therefore, if the government itself helps to create an atmosphere of this kind through a government scheme, this way of working - that is, the way of applying the principle of Divine Omnipotence in the society through a government organ - will eventually be a definite scheme to contradict the religious tolerance that government wants to preserve as the main pillar of the state... These facts lead us to an observation that the establishment of the Ministry of Religious Affairs conditions the majority of the people on

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[66]Muhammad Yamin, *Naskah Persiapan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945*, vol. 1 (Jakarta: Jajasa Prapantja, 1959), 457 as is quoted by Noer, *Administration of Islam*, 11.

[67]Noer, *Administration of Islam*, 14.

> Indonesia to a way of life in which Islam is considered to be the religion of the state, even if it is not specifically mentioned in the Constitution.[68]

As far as practical Muslim-Christian relations are concerned, political development brought the two communities to espouse a common cause, i.e., the struggle for independence. Despite the Muslim activists' dream of an Islamic state and indigenous Christian concerns about their place in a new Indonesia, both Muslim and Christian communities joined the diplomatic and military struggle for Indonesian independence. Muslim-Christian antagonisms were transformed into a feeling of unity due to the urgency of the task and the fact that both groups saw their cause as a struggle for the country and for religion.[69] It seems the right time for Indonesian Christians to show that they were not part of Dutch colonialism, and many Christian wanted to fight on the side of the independence movement not so much for protecting the interest of Christians in the country but rather to serve as symbol of Christian participation and responsibility in the national struggle.[70] At this juncture, therefore, the relations between the two communities turned in a more cordial direction.

However, as soon as the situation was more stable, religious polemics and debates, which had been muted to that point, were re-ignited. This time, however, the principal Muslim protagonists were mostly urban-based Muslims educated in modern schools and

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[68]Sidjabat, *Religious Tolerance*, 60.

[69]Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945* (The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1958), 176.

[70]Victor Tanja, "Islamic Resurgence in Indonesia and Christian Response," *The Asia Journal of Theology* 2, no. 2 (1991): 364-365.

familiar with Dutch, Germany and English literature. These urban-educated Muslims were, ironically, indirect products of the Ethical Policy that improved educational opportunities for some Indonesians. Consequently, those who gained access to this system and stayed with the system through higher education emerged as a modern Indonesia elite. Among them were a number of devout Muslims such as Muhammad Natsir and Agus Salim.

Insofar as Muslim-Christian relations were concerned, their education allowed this new group of scholars to familiarize themselves with the course of Christian theology over the previous century. Despite the strong spirit of evangelization that had characterized Christianity, religious doctrine had also become a subject of much analysis and criticism. During the nineteenth century, Biblical criticism and emphasis on rational analysis of religion, influenced by the spirit of the Enlightenment, had been pursued in European universities and churches.[71] Christian scholars and theologians in the West at the time had begun examining the stories of miracles and historical events in the Bible, and investigating all the historical evidence provided by the Holy Scriptures concerning the trinity, the divinity of Jesus Christ, his crucifixion and the resurrection in the light of rational scientific thought. As a result, many Christian doctrines were labeled as obsolete, dubious or even superstitious by many thinkers in this scientific school of thought. Consequently, a number of Christian authors were willing to admit to the imperfections of

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[71]Christine Schirrmacher, "Muslim Apologetics and The Agra Debates of 1854: A Nineteenth Century Turning Point," *The Bulletin of the Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies* 13, no. 1 (1) (January-June 1994): 78-79.

some of their religious teachings. Some rejected the Christian faith in their reaction and some others came to view its dogma in a skeptical light. Davidson outlined the results of the Biblical Criticism as follows:

> The story of Adam and Eve, upon which most people believe the Christian doctrine of original sin to depend, could no longer be regarded as historical. The early chapters of Genesis, which were generally taken to be an authentic account of the origin of the human race, and of civilization, and of the activities of some outstanding personalities early in the history of the Jewish people, were dissolved into a medley of legends, folk-myths, primitive sagas and remnants of early cults comparable to similar material observable in other cultures.... It became impossible to believe in the miracles recorded in the Old Testament. The prophets were transformed from being mysterious predictors of the life of Jesus Christ and the early Church into political commentators upon the events of their own day.... The theology of the epistles of the New Testament, and especially those of Paul, was rigorously scrutinized and the question was raised sharply as to whether the great classical dogmas of the Church –the doctrine of the Trinity, of the Incarnation and of the Atonement– could honestly be based upon the witness of the New Testament... In short, the whole question of the authority of the Bible was raised anew and forced upon the attention of thinking people in the most radical fashion.[72]

Not surprisingly, some Muslims took advantage of this critical trend, and voiced their own doubts in support. They affirmed that Islam was the true interpretation of God's message and that Christianity had been corrupted over the course of time. Consequently, from that time on, Muslims no longer bothered to defend Islam simply by evaluating Christian doctrine in the traditional way, as had been the practice of earlier scholars like al-Ghazālī or Ibn Ḥazm, but took advantage of the recent developments in Biblical criticism which had introduced a more open and historical approach to the study of Christianity. A glaring example of this trend is to be found in the writings of a prominent

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[72]Robert Davidson and Leaney, *Biblical Criticism*, ed. R.P.C. Hanson (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), 11-12.

Indian apologist, Raḥmat Allah al-Hindī al-Kairānāwī (d. 1891) in his *Izhār al-Ḥaqq* (Approval for the Truth).[73] Similar strategies were later adopted by the Egyptians Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1905) and Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966).[74]

Indeed, the influence of erudite Muslim writers, from all parts of the Muslim world, can be discerned in the arguments of fellow Indonesian Muslims concerning the presence of Christianity in the archipelago. Therefore, for Indonesians, the possibly of easy access to such works, written either by Muslim scholars or Christian theologians, represented a new tool with which to combat missionary activity. The new attitude towards the use of Biblical criticism is well represented in the works of Hasbullah Bakry and O. Hashem. One of Bakry's works, *Jesus Christ in the Qur'an Muhammad in the Bible*,[75] first published in 1959, was a rebuttal to F.L. Bakker, a prominent native-Dutch scholar, who wrote *Lord Jesus in the Religion of Islam*, which appeared in 1957.[76]

Bakker's work, according to Muslim circles, was intended to convince Indonesian readers of the influence of Christian doctrines upon Muhammad when Islam came into being in the seventh century. It asserted that Muhammad's imagination had led him to

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[73]Raḥmat Allah al-Hindī al-Kairanawi, *Izhār al-Ḥaqq*, ed. Aḥmad Hijazī al-Saqqa (Al-Qāhira: Dār al-Turāth, 1977).

[74]Muḥammad 'Abduh, "Al-Islām wa al-Naṣrāniyya" in *Al-A'māl al-Kāmila li al-Imām Muḥammad 'Abduh*, ed. Muḥammad 'Imārā (Beirut, n.p., 1972). See also, Sayyid Quṭb, *Fī Ẓilāl al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Ma'had al-Buḥūth al-Islāmī, 1980).

[75]Hasbullah Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an Muhammad dalam Bible* (Solo: Siti Syamsiah, 1959). An English translation was recently printed in Malaysia: *Jesus Christ in the Qur'an Muhammad in Bible* (Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed & Co., 1990).

[76]F.L. Bakker, *Tuhan Yesus dalam Agama Islam* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1957).

believe that he was a messenger to Arabs, as Moses had been for the Jews and Jesus had been for all humankind.[77] This publication opened wide the gates of academic polemic between Indonesian Muslims and Christians in the post colonial era and provoked Bakry, who was a former lecturer on comparative religions at the Sekolah Pendidikan Hakim Islam Negeri (National Islamic Judicial School) of Jogjakarta, to respond.[78]

Like Haanie before him, Bakry's response was typical of a new intellectual genre in Muslim-Christian polemics. His reply to Bakker is a good example of the new methods of refuting Christian doctrine on the basis of biblical criticism and critical literature. To modern Muslim apologists like Bakry, the counterattack was necessary to refute charges made by Christian writers. As well, it was meant to draw the attention of Muslim families who were about to adopt the Christian faith and remind them the "errors" of Christianity. Bakry's was especially concerned to provide an effective tool for Muslim parents in giving advise to their children who stayed far away from their parents. Finally, it was also meant to appeal to Christians and to encourage them to adopt Islam.[79] In some respects, this publication did much to restore Muslim self-confidence after it had been eroded by long years of missionary activism. As Boland puts it, Bakry was in a state of "uneasiness about

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[77]Bakker, *Tuhan Yesus*, 4; 15; 17.

[78]Bakry was born in Palembang, South Sumatra, on the 25th of July 1926 into an educated religious family. He received a classical education in his father's *pesantren* and then went to the Islamic law department at the State Center for Higher Education in Islamic studies *(Perguruan Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri [PTAIN])* in Jogjakarta. During the Japanese Occupation, Bakry became very active in PETA (Perwira Gyugun) which led him to his becoming a military official in post independence era. He was later to occupy the position of councilor for Pusroh POLRI (the Center for the Spiritual Care of the Indonesian Police).

[79]Hasbullah Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 167-168.

the fact that hundreds, nay thousands, of young Muslims [had] gone over to Christianity since leadership of Churches and Missions was transferred from foreigners to Indonesian [Christian] hands."[80]

Bakry covered a wide range of topics and displayed a certain measure of acquaintance with the text of the Bible itself. Indeed, in his book, he not only challenged Bakker's notions regarding Muhammad, but also tackled fundamental elements of Christian dogma. Two main subjects appear to be at play in his work: the Trinity with its connection to the divinity of Jesus; and the possible reference to Muhammad in the Holy Scripture.[81] A few other subjects are discussed, albeit in brief, like the deviations of Christian theologians and ritual performance. Nevertheless, no other subject is treated as fully as these two fundamental questions.

Bakry's way of understanding Christianity is characterized by a close scrutiny of Christian beliefs, in which he did not separate Biblical interpretation from his own intellectual reading of the Qur'ānic verses on Christianity.[82] His approach, like that of many Muslim scholars, was to accept Biblical text when it agreed with the Qur'ān, but reject it when discrepancies appeared between the two, preferring the Qur'ān instead.[83]

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[80]Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia*, 228-229.

[81]Hasbullah Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 73-83; 111-127.

[82]See also his other book *Al-Qur'an Sebagai Korektor Terhadap Taurat dan Injil* (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1966), 4-17.

[83]For more details see Andrew Rippin, "Interpreting the Bible through the Qur'ān," in *Approaches to the Qur'ān*, eds. G.R. Hawting and Abdul-Kader A. Shareef (London: Routledge, 1993), 249-151. Another example may be found in David Thomas' article, "The Bible in Early Muslim Anti-Christian Polemic," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 7, no.1 (1996): 29-38.

Thus, using the Qur'ānic vision of the Bible, Bakry argued that the concept of the Trinity did not originate in the teaching of Jesus and that he himself was only an ordinary human being sent by God to the Israelites. Therefore, with the Trinity dismissed as a logical contradiction due to its multiple divine entities and its ambiguity, the divinity of Jesus was declared to be a deviation from the strict monotheistic teachings to which Muslims adhere.[84] Besides the logical contradictions inherent in this doctrine, he further argued, the Trinity and the divinity of Jesus had been proven to be ahistorical and even unknown in the early stages of Christianity. Bakry asserted that it was an innovation introduced by Paul, a convert from Judaism. Thus, because the concept was not introduced by Jesus himself, he maintained, it might have been challenged by those devout Christians who tried to adhere to "authentic" Christian teachings, and who believed that Jesus taught that no one is to be invoked besides the Heavenly Father.[85]

Moreover, in assessing the reliability of the Biblical descriptions of the last prophet, Bakry maintained a position which set him apart from the early Muslim scholars who believed that Muhammad's description had been excluded from the scriptures.[86] His position was somewhat two-sided. It delivered, on the one hand, a strong accusation against the Christians for concealing, distorting and falsifying the Scriptures. On the other

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[84]Hasbullah Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 35-40.

[85]See Hasbullah Bakry, *Pandangan Islam Tentang Kristen di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Firdaus, 1984), 35.

[86]Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds*, 19-49. See also David Thomas, *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), chapter 2 passim.

hand, he held that certain Biblical verses were authentic, especially those deemed to herald the coming of Muhammad and the rise of Islam. Those verses, not surprisingly, according to Bakry, are truthful and accurate divine revelations.[87]

This tendency to use Biblical material may be seen in his citations of several Biblical verses, which were quoted in an almost literal fashion. For instance, he relied on Deuteronomy 18: 17-22, Isaiah 42:1 and 4, Jeremiah 31: 31-32, Daniel 2: 38-45, Malachi 3: 1-2 from the Old Testament as well as Matthew 3: 1-3 and 4: 17, and Mark 1: 14-15 from the New Testament and utilized them as his major discussion points on the prophecy of Muhammad.[88] This, however, was no more than a continuation of the medieval polemic that had started centuries before him. Moreover, it is quite obvious that the biblical verses chosen were not quoted for their narrative or historical significance, but for the purpose of convincing Muslims especially in emphasizing the notion that Islam is the last religion and that Muhammad was the last messenger sent by God. His attention to the texts supposedly referring to Muhammad, therefore, was designed to reinforce Muslim convictions rather than ascertain historical veracity.

While Bakry's method of interpretation was hardly regarded as novel, his extensive quotations from the Bible and his straightforward analysis of its verses, was seen as an interesting and new development in the history of polemical inter-faith writings. A

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[87]This attitude is apparent in his analysis of the Qur'ānic verses dealing with Mary and Jesus Christ (Chapter 1) and the verification of the New Testament by the Qur'ān (Chapter 2). See Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 1-33.

[88]Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 98-114 and 117-144.

brief example of Bakry's originality in the genre concerned with the refutation of Christianity in Indonesia, is found in his "Islamic interpretation" of Deuteronomy 18: 17 (*"prophet from among their brethren"*):

> This explains that the prophesied Prophet would rise from among the brothers of the Israelites but does not belong to the Israelites themselves. One of the brothers of Israel was Ismail (the founder of the Arabs), because Ismail was the elder brother of Isaac the father of Israel (Jacob). And the Prophet Muhammad clearly belonged to the Ismailites (sons of Ismail).[89]

Furthermore, in explaining Biblical references on the coming of Muhammad, Bakry laid particular emphasis on those "promising texts" which he deemed authentic. His interpretation of John 14: 16 (*"He will give you another counselor to be with you for ever"*) is, then, worth quoting:

> It means that the counselor will be the last prophet, and no other counselor will appear after his coming, and can bring a new law. And the religious laws of that counselor will be valid until Doomsday. That prophet will be the last prophet *(khatam al-nabiyyīn)* whose laws will regulate the needs of mankind until eternity.[90]

In this framework, Bakry's response to Bakker's work is of considerable value to our understanding of the Muslim-Christians polemic in the later period. He built a "negative" illustration of Christianity to affirm the "positive" one of Islam as the true religion. With regard to Bakker's notion that at the beginning of the mission it came to Muhammad's imagination that he had been sent as an apostle to the Arabs, like Moses to the Israelites and Jesus to the Christians, Bakry's argument is worth quoting:

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[89]Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 99.

[90]Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 154-156.

> Our answer runs [as follows]: in his own words, Dr. Bakker is already not *objective*. The people of Arabia truly exist, so do the people of Israel, but *where* do the people of Christianity [come from]? When we speak about the *Moslem people* or the *Christian people*, then we mean by that the people who *adhere to the Moslem faith* or those who *adhere the Christian faith*. About the prophet Muhammad being sent to the people of Arabia, we ask: Where is the verse, one verse, in the Qur'ān, which can be used as an argument for it? None! The prophet Muhammad was, according to the Qur'ān, sent to all mankind as the Last Prophet, as was prophesied by prophets and apostles previously sent to their own peoples in particular.[91]

In rebuttal to the accusation that Muhammad knew nothing of the scriptural formulation of the Trinity and misrepresented Christians as worshippers of God, Jesus and Mary, Bakry said:

> It is true that the prophet Muhammad did not know the Trinity according to scriptural formulation, just as Jesus himself did not know the Trinity according to scripture. So also the prophet Abraham, for whom the Trinity was merely a speculative formulation of Athanasius himself. If God has the attributes of the Trinity, why did the prophets of the Old Testament not mention it? Had the God, the One God of the Old Testament changed Himself into the God of the Trinity in the New Testament? Impossible. Moreover Jesus himself did not preach about the Trinity in the New Testament.[92]

Moreover, in refuting the divine nature of Jesus, Bakry did not restrict his defense to the mere devaluation of the Christian dogma by simply praising Islam. Rather, he made use the quotation taken from 'Ata ur-Rahim's *Jesus: Prophet of Islam*[93] confirming the story of Michael Servetius (d. 1553) who had lost his faith in the Trinity, and called

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[91]Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 94.

[92]Bakry, *Isa dalam Qur'an*, 95.

[93]See M. 'Ata ur-Rahim, *Jesus: The Prophet of Islam* (New York: Tahrike Tarsil Qur'an, n.d.).

the believers in Trinity trinitarians and atheists.[94] He also mentioned the letter of testimony from Adam Nueser (d. 1570), a former preacher in Heidelberg Germany, who embraced Islam and sought protection under Sultan Salim II of Turkey (1566-1574). Similarly, he quoted a passage from Priestley's *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* which identified five principles of Christian corruption.[95] Furthermore, quoting modern Christian theologians of unitarianism, Bakry argued that the doctrine concerning the divinity of Jesus Christ taught by apostles Paul, John and the councils of Nicaea (325A.D.) and Chalcedon (451 A.D.) was not that which Jesus taught but that which the Christian conscience conceived concerning Jesus Christ.[96]

Another book worth examining from the wealth of polemical literature is O. Hashem's *Monotheism: A Scientific Explanation.*[97] Hashem too focused on the divinity of Jesus to the exclusion of other important subjects such as the "fabrication" of the Bible,[98] or the "influence" of Hindu and Buddhist tenets on Christianity.[99] He began his work by expressing admiration for the development of science and for a rational approach to religion and the consequent appraisal in the light of scientific discoveries. Religion, he

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[94]Bakry, *Pandangan Islam*, 31-33.

[95]Joseph Priestley, *History of Corruptions of Christianity* (London: British [and] Foreign Unitarian Association, 1871). See Bakry, *Pandangan Islam*, 37-39.

[96]Bakry, *Pandangan Islam*, 40-41.

[97]O. Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan: Sebuah Pembahasan Ilmiah* (Surabaya: JAPI, 1962).

[98]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 56-60.

[99]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 18-28.

believed, should be parallel with the sciences and vise versa. One would be guilty of an intellectual fallacy if, Hashem reasoned, one takes what religion says and avoids what science discovers. The same is true when the opposite occurs. Quoting Sheen's *God and Intelligence in Modern Philosophy*, Hashem went further in asserting that a denial of the intellect is a denial of the infinitely perfect God, and a denial of the infinitely perfect God a denial of the intellect. The two problems are accordingly inseparable.[100] Hence, he believed that science could prove what is contradictory to the senses and would disprove the fallacy of "polytheism".

On the basis of this, Hashem began examining the doctrine of the Trinity and concluded it to be a hopelessly obscure doctrine and contrary to reason. It was not, he said, quoting Crane Brinton's *The Shaping of Modern Mind* (sic!),[101] a respectably arithmetical system, since it accepted that three could be three and at the same time one.[102] To Hashem, it is not a tenable mathematical proposition to suggest that three can also equal one.

Hashem's analysis of the doctrine of the Trinity reiterated the common Muslim view that Jesus was not the son of God and that an abundant number of biblical verses maintained that divinity was not an attribute of Jesus. He mentioned Luke 3: 38 which

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[100]Fulton J. Sheen, *God and Intelligence in Modern Philosophy* (London: Longmans, 1930). See Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 4-5.

[101]The original title of Crane Brinton's book was *The Shaping of Modern Thought* (New York: Spectrum Book, 1963).

[102]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 29-30.

names the son of Enoch, the son of Seth, and the son of Adam as a son of God; Hebrew 7: 3 which considers Melchizedek, king of Salem, without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life but made like the Son of God; Jeremiah 31: 9, which names Ephraim as God's firstborn; John 1: 12 which proclaims all believers as children of God; and Exodus 4: 22 naming Israel as God's firstborn son.[103] For Hashem, these biblical verses posed serious problem for the consistency of the sonship of Jesus as a dogma.

Logically speaking, Hashem could not reconcile himself to the divinity of Jesus. He doubted the claim that, since Jesus had no human father, Jesus must be the son of God, stating that God would never have had occasion to initiate biological contact with human beings. Furthermore, since Jesus had mortal attributes such as asking God for help (Matthew 27: 46), and felt sadness (Matthew 26:38), cried (John 11:35), felt fear (Luke 22: 24) and hunger (Matthew 21: 18), these proved that Jesus could not have been divine. As such, according to Hashem, to consider Jesus both man and God at the same time is to adhere to a logical paradox and an anomaly.[104]

Hashem's disavowal of the doctrinal integrity of the divinity of Jesus is rooted in Islamic rational and strict monotheistic doctrine, however. The biblical verses he quoted were meant to convince his audience that Christian doctrines were themselves not strongly enough rooted in Christian scripture. As Bakry had done, Hashem did not limit

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[103]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 32-33.

[104]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 33.

his strategy to simple devaluation of Christian doctrine and praise of Islamic tenets, but invited his audience to consider the newly discovered Dead Scrolls as authentic and scientific evidence of the original Christian doctrine. He simply agreed with Potter in *The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed* who once reported that:

> One thing is emerging from the study of the Scrolls - namely, that the believers, teachings, and practices of Jesus himself, although not identical in all aspects with those of the Essene school that he [Jesus] probably attended during the silent years, were apparently closer to those of the Essenes than to those of the bishops of the ecumenical council which determined the Nicene Creed of orthodox Christianity. Jesus called himself Son of Man; they called him the son of God, the second Person of the Trinity, Very God of Very God. It is most doubtful if the Essenes or Jesus himself would have agreed with that [doctrine].[105]

Hashem tried to convince his readers of the authenticity of the Scrolls even though their reliability was still in question. Agreeing with Potter, he claimed that the discoveries would result in major corrections to the Old Testament and that other important doctrines were also due to be changed radically and eventually eliminated, including the doctrine of the Holy Spirit of the Trinity.[106] Accordingly, argued Hashem, the doctrine of the Trinity was an invention of the early Christians since no valid scriptural evidence can be found to support it. The one verse which does, however, is I John 5: 7, which, he hypothesized, was inserted at a later date by early Christians to support the existence of the dogma.[107]

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[105]Charles Francis Potter, *The Lost Years of Jesus Revealed* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1958). See Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 76-77.

[106]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 78.

[107]Hashem, *Keesaan Tuhan*, 79.

To conclude, the Muslim Christian polemics in Indonesia were greatly influenced by similar discussions in other parts of the Muslim world. Indeed, the influence of erudite Muslim writers, from all parts of the Muslim world, can clearly be discerned in the writings of Indonesian Muslims. Written for a Muslim audience and at a particular point in time, the works described above sought to prevent loss of faith among Indonesian Muslims. They represent a particular response to Christian proselytization in their respective eras to which their reaction should be understood in the context of the complex relationship existing between the two communities over the centuries. Their response should also be seen as an attempt at asserting equality and attitude that "we are as good as you" and that "our religion is as important as yours", a response that was prompted by world political condition that gave the West (i.e. Christian) a "superior" position through colonialism and imperialism. There was also substantial response made by Muslims to Christian writers, whose works were very critical of the prophet's life and the origin of the Qur'ān itself; the works that were regarded by the Muslim community as an insult to Islam. Although Muslim responses probably were not convincing to Christians, Muslims, at least, felt better about having responded and convinced themselves that appropriate answer had been given to those attacking works.

CHAPTER III

MUSLIM RESPONSES TO CHRISTIANITY IN NEW ORDER INDONESIA

A. Islam and Christianity in the Beginning of the New Order Era

There is sufficient evidence that the markedly hostile relations between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia date back to their earliest contacts and reached their peak at around the time that the New Order government came to power in Indonesia. In the early 1960s, there was a pamphlet that circulated among Muslims warning them about a scheme to Christianize Java within twenty-five years and Indonesia in fifty.[1]

The journal *Suara Muhammadijah* included excerpts from this "blueprint", which was claimed to be a paper delivered to a conference held by the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches held in Malang East Java. The alleged blueprint described how missionaries should achieve their goal. Some of the measures listed were to increase the number of Christian schools; to accept only Christian students for secondary and high schools; to open seminaries in the Muslim cities; to encourage Christian males to marry Muslim females; to ask devout Christian females to marry non-practicing Muslim males; to invite the children from nominal Muslim families to attend Christian schools; to build Christian clinics, hospitals and orphanages; to supply copies of the Arabic version of the

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[1]Umar Hasyim, *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan dalam Islam Sebagai Dasar Menuju Dialog dan Kerukunan Antar Agama* (Surabaya: PT. Bina Ilmu, 1977), 270.

Bible for those familiar with the Arabic language; to provide money and important positions for Muslim politicians; to build churches close to mosques in order to challenge the Muhammadiyah and Persis; and to suspend any regulation appealing Christian students to attend state schools.[2]

Although the authenticity of this pamphlet is questionable,[3] some Muslims responded with clear hostility. A notable Islamic journal, *Panji Masjarakat*, launched a detailed report on the pamphlet, while cynically lamenting it as an inept effort by *saudara sebangsa* (own brothers from same nation), with full support from foreign evangelists intent on continuing colonialism under the banner of religion.[4] Some Islamic organizations released some publications on this issue aimed at increasing awareness among Muslims concerning the threat of Christian missionary activities in Java.[5]

The pamphlet had undoubtedly far-reaching effects throughout the Muslim countries. In 1978, at the congress of the *Rabiṭah 'Alām al-Islāmī* in Pakistan, the general secretary of the organization, wrote a letter to Buya Hamka, a prominent Indonesian Muslim scholar who was the first chairman of the Majelis Ulama Indonesia ("MUI", or

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[2]*Suara Muhammadijah* 25, no. 35 (1963): 5; von Wendelin Wawer, *Muslime und Christen in der Republik Indonesia* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1974), 218-219; Bisjron A. Wardy, *Memahami Kegiatan Nasrani* (Jogjakata: Muhammadijah, 1964); and Umar Hasyim, *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan*, 270-273.

[3]In general Christian leaders questioned the authenticity of this pamphlet and regarded its assertions as far-fetched. See Wawer, *Muslime und Christen*, 235.

[4]*Panji Masjarakat* 17, no. 1 (1967): 4; Wawer, *Muslime und Christen*, 234-235.

[5]Hasyim, *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan*, 272.

Indonesian 'Ulamā' Council) questioning the authenticity of the pamphlet and inviting him to give a clear explanation.[6]

The conflict that flared up between Muslims and Christians was fueled by the growing social, economic and political chaos. By late 1965, there was an attempted coup, best known as the *Gerakan 30 September* ("G30S" or Movement of September 30th). In that coup, six top-ranking generals of the Indonesian army's central high command were brutally murdered.[7] An anti-communist faction of the army, together with Muslim youth groups, then successfully crushed the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* ("PKI" or Indonesian Communist Party), which they accused of having been the main actor in the coup, and in turn they forced the first President of Indonesia, Sukarno, who had long been suspected for sympathizing with communism, to hands authority over to General Soeharto. He then took advantage of this limited conferment of authority to dissolve the PKI and its affiliated organizations, and to ban it altogether from the country.[8]

After this incident in 1965, the army-backed government and Muslim circles formed an alliance to eradicate communist influences in every aspect of Indonesian life.

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[6]Hasyim, *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan*, 272-273.

[7]There are many versions of who the real actors of this attempted coup were. The public in Indonesia saw the PKI as the main actors, while some saw it as an internal conflict within Indonesian army. See Harold Crouch, *The Army and Politics in Indonesia*, (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1978); Benedict R. Anderson and Ruth McVey, *Preliminary Analysis of the October 1965 Coup in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971); Caldwell and Utrecht, *Indonesia: An Alternative History* (Sidney: Alternative Publishing Cooperative Limited, 1979); and Brian May, *The Indonesia Tragedy* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

[8]Hamish McDonald. *Soeharto's Indonesia* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980), 66-67.

In this anti-communist atmosphere, religion was the important identity for everyone, since religion distinguished "good Indonesians" from the PKI and to be non-religious at that moment was to run the risk of being penalized for death or imprisonment.[9] Consequently, many ex-members of the communist party and others believed to be communist sympathizers sought to save themselves and their families by joining any religion but Islam; and they readily found a shelter in the Christian churches.[10] Their choice of Christianity seemed logical, since for they knew that Muslims and the army were working together in hunting down communist party members. Therefore, as Geertz adduced, among the leftists in general, there was then "a fairly deep anti-Muslim reaction, which had been strengthened by the fact that Muslim youth groups had been so active, whether autonomously or as agents of the army, in the killing."[11] By the same token, for some *abangans* (nominal Muslim) who had supported communism, or at least were religiously neutral, and the animists who had no official religion, going over to Christianity seemed more appealing than returning to or professing Islam.[12]

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[9]Clifford Geertz, "Religious Change and Social Order in Soeharto's Indonesia," *Asia* 27 (Autumn 1972): 68-69.

[10]Some tried to join Islam as many Chinese became Muslim at this point in time. However, the number was very minimal. See Martin Goldsmith, *Islam and Christian Witness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), 144-145. Compare to Avery T. William Jr., *Indonesia Revival: Why Two Million Came to Christ* (California: William Carey Library, 1978), 102-104.

[11]Clifford Geertz, "Religious Change and Social Order in Soeharto's Indonesia," 68. The estimate of communist members and their supporters killed varied greatly ranging from 160,000 to 500,000 depending on which sources were cited. See Brian May, *The Indonesia Tragedy*, 120.

[12]John Roxborough, "Context and Continuity: Regional Patterns in the History of Southeast Asian Christianity," *Asian Journal of Theology* 9, no. 1 (1995): 41. See also Wawer, *Muslime*, 221-222.

The rise of Soeharto under the New Order was endorsed by Muslim political leaders, whose parties had been banned by Sukarno. Their hope was that the President Soeharto would share power with them and restore their religiously-based parties. However, Soeharto was reluctant to make another alliance with Muslim circles. Two things at least are certain. The first is that the army that had backed him had predominantly Christian generals and, as Mody pointed out, *abangans* (nominal Muslims) belonged to the Javanese cultural tradition who regarded the *santris* (devout Muslims) as hostile to their syncretic cultural tradition. The second is that Soeharto called for political stability to address the high inflation, heavy foreign debt and a collapsed economy left by Sukarno regime.[13]

Thus, Soeharto believed that some Muslim leaders played a significant role in creating turmoil under the previous regime, as in the cases of the Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia ("PRRI", or Indonesian Revolutionary Government), from 1958 to 1961;[14] Kartosoewirjo's Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia ("DI/TII", or Islamic State/Indonesian Islamic Army) during the 1950s and the 1960s,[15] and what was known as the half-rebellion of Kahar Muzakkar's Permesta in South Sulawesi.[16] This led

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[13]Nawaz B. Mody, *Indonesia under Soeharto* (New York: Apt Books, 1987), 151-153.

[14]B.J. Boland, *The Struggle of Islam in Modern Indonesia* (Leiden: Koninklijk Instituut Voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, 1982), 99-105.

[15]An extensive study is well done by Karl D. Jackson, *Tradition Authority, Islam and Rebellion: A Study of Indonesia Political Behavior* (California: University of California Press, 1980). See also Boland, *The Struggle of Islam*, 54-62.

[16]See Barbara S. Harvey, *Permesta: A Half Rebellion* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1977).

him to suspect that if he restored their parties, these religious parties would someday again acquire enough sympathizers to again challenge the government with similar tactics.

Soeharto therefore decided against reinstatement of Masjumi, the leading Muslim party of the 1950's that had been banned by Sukarno in 1960. This was logical, given his fear that the return of Masjumi and influential Muslim political figures to the political arena would create ideological disputes and ultimately civil strife. He knew that this party had strong, uncompromising, grass root support among urban Muslims.[17] Although he later permitted the initiation of the Partai Muslimin Indonesia ("Parmusi" or Indonesian Muslim Party), for some Muslim politicians, it was no more than a government-oriented party that voiced government interests.[18]

In spite of reviving mass political participation, Soeharto, not surprisingly, concentrated on economic development for Indonesia. Henceforth, he insisted that the Pancasila be accepted as the sole ideology and brought pragmatism, depoliticization, and economic development into the new vocabulary of Indonesian life.[19] To achieve its goals,

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[17]Alan A. Samson, "Army and Islam in Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 4, no. 4 (Winter 1971-1972): 545-547.

[18]On Parmusi see K.E. Ward, *The Foundation of Partai Muslimin Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1970).

[19]Harold Crouch, "The Trend to Authoritarianism: The Post-1945 Period," in *The Development of Indonesian Society From the Coming of Islam to the Present Day*, ed. Harry Aveling (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980): 166-204.

his government held that it needed the absolute loyalty and support of the society and promoted Pancasila as a "civil religion" for Indonesians.[20]

Because of this choice of a value system other than Islam, heated relations occurred between the Muslim leaders and the New Order government. Concerned with building a society able to withstand a renewed communist assault as it had experienced in 1965, the Soeharto government implemented a religio-political policy that encouraged all Indonesians, including ex-members of the moribund communist party, to adhere to one of the five state-recognized religions, namely Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It was, as William Liddle put it, the beginning of the era in which Soeharto promoted personal piety but opposed the politicization of religion, a policy which resembled, to some extent, Snouck Hurgronje's proposal to the colonial government for limiting Islamic activities.[21]

The decision to repudiate the rehabilitation of Masjumi in its turn allowed the government to control the return of Muslim leaders into the political arena. However, the policy encouraging personal piety became a matter of religious conflict among religious activists in Indonesia particularly between Muslims and Christians. Inasmuch as the relations between the two communities are concerned, Muslims had to deal directly with

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[20]For a detailed and comprehensive analysis see Susan Seldon Purdy, "Legitimization of Power and Authority in a Pluralistic State: Pancasila and Civil Religion in Indonesia" (Ph.D. dissertation Columbia University, 1985). See also Eka Darmaputera, *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988).

[21]R. William Liddle, "The Islamic Turn in Indonesia: A Political Explanation," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no. 3 (August 1996): 621-622.

more sophisticated method adopted by missionaries whose activities the government's policy encouraged, even to the extent that it seemed to many Muslims that there was a plan to Christianize Indonesia.

The position of the churches in the political upheaval after the abortive coup of the PKI is clear. Although some Christians acknowledged that it was their religious duty to see that "the Gospel be preached to all men" (Matthew 28:19), what they had done was not strictly theological. They acted in accordance with noble humanitarianism to save human beings from unjust Muslim persecution or execution without trial.[22] Since this resulted in the tremendous growth in church membership, some missionaries argued that mass conversion should be seen as a logical consequence of the government policy to encourage every single citizen to adhere to or to tolerate changing their beliefs whatever and whenever they wanted.[23] On the contrary, Muslims viewed the protection offered by the churches to ex-communists and *abangans* on the condition they changed their belief, as equivalent to "fishing in troubled water" thereby taking took advantage of political turmoil at the expense of Islam.[24]

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[22]R.A.F. Paul Webb, "The View from Australia: Christian and Muslim in Contemporary Indonesia," *Asia Journal of Theology* 2, no. 2 (1988): 396-397.

[23]As Roxborough noted, the membership of churches after the political chaos grew tremendously by more than 2.5 million new adherents in five years. Within forty years, the statistical portion of Christian population increased from 2.8 percent to 7.4 percent. Roxborough, "Context and Continuity," 41.

[24]Alwi Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement and its Controversy with Christian Mission" (Ph.D. dissertation Temple University, 1995), 306-307. Compare to Webb, "The View from Australia," 397. Bambang Pranowo found in his recent research on the ex-communist home-base in the surrounding Merapi-Merbabu villages that the conversions to Christianity and Hinduism were not always permanent, for many of them returned into their previous religious

Consequently, a stream of apologetic and polemical works from both communities began to appear. These works supported the theological legitimacy of the actions of their respective communities. The Muslim response, in the form of books, pamphlets and articles, varied considerably. It ranged from direct answers to the missionaries' arguments in justification of Christian doctrine, to uncovering their proselytizing methods. Since their goal was to make theological defense, not surprisingly, many of these works depended heavily on sources which were unrecognizable and unacceptable to Christian circles.[25] For instance, many made use of the Gospel of Barnabas, which they claimed to be a more authentic record of Jesus' life and teachings than that offered by the four canonical Gospels.[26] The translation of this gospel had a great impact on the Indonesian public and was intended "to cease fanaticism in searching [religious] truth; to assure the authenticity of Islam; and to cast-off the notion that all religions are true and same; and the differences among religions are only in their practices."[27]

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orientation, especially Islam. Most were uncomfortable with the way of Christians conducted their "religious performance", such as singing. Bambang Pranowo, "Islam and Party Politics in Rural Java," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 2, (1994): 3-19.

[25]Boland, *The Struggle of Islam*, 228-229.

[26]This Gospel originated as an Italian manuscript discovered in Amsterdam in the eighteenth century. It was translated into Arabic earlier in this century, probably, by the Indian Raḥmat Allāh al-Kairanāwī (d. 1891), or by the Egyptian Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935). Kate Zebiri, *Muslims and Christians Face to Face* (London: OneWorld, 1997). 45-46. See also Christine Schirrmacher, "Muslim Apologetics and The Agra Debates of 1854: A Nineteenth Century Turning Point," *The Bulletin of The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies* 13, no. 1 (1) (January-June 1994), 79; and Jean-Marie Gaudeul, *Encounters and Clashes: Islam and Christianity in History*, vol. I (Rome: Pontificio Instituto di Studi Arabi e Islamici, 1990), 207-208.

[27]*Indjil Barnabas* (Bandung-Surabaya: Pelita-JAPI, 1970). See K.H. Anwar Musaddad, *Kedudukan Indjil Barnabas Menurut Islam* (Bandung: Pelita, 1970).

Thus, to fulfill their primary apologetic function, many of these popular books were unfortunately ineffective and questionable. Some were too emotional in tone, some cited no sources, and some made use of "third-hand" sources, while others depended exclusively on the works of fellow Muslims paying no particular attention to works on the same issues by Christian writers. However, many works were written in a more readable style, such as those of Joesoef Sou'yb, Djarnawi Hadikusuma, Sidi Gazalba and Muhammad Rasjidi. Except for Rasjidi's, most concentrated on depicting the life of Jesus, the origin of the Trinity, the codification and abrogation of the Holy Scriptures and the foretelling of Muhammad in the Bible.

Basing himself on the Dead Sea Scrolls and the works by modern thinkers like Ernest Renan, Joesoef Sou'yb wrote his *On the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Most Important Discoveries in the Twentieth Century*. It provided a comprehensive construction of the early life and the teachings of Jesus.[28] His position regarding Jesus is worth mentioning. He quoted, on the one hand, excerpts from Powell Davies' *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls* which suggested that Jesus had never actually existed,[29] an odd statement that was not only rejected by Christians for obvious reasons but also by Muslims since the Qur'an confirms the life and teachings of Jesus. On the other hand, Sou'yb stated that Jesus was only a "Teacher of Righteousness" who paved the way for the coming of the "Messenger

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[28]Joesoef Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls: Penemuan Terbesar Dalam Adab Ke-XX* (Medan: Penerbit Intisari, 1967).

[29]A. Powell Davies, The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scroll (New York: New American Library, 1956). See Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 18.

of God", who would bring a new order in the world.[30] He held that Jesus joined the Essenes, an ascetic group sworn to celibacy, and became one of its leaders.[31] The Essenes, Sou'yb adduced, never considered him to be a messenger or even Divine being, but rather an ordinary person.[32] According to Sou'yb, during his life, Jesus had limited influence; his twelve followers attracted a following of only five thousand.[33]

Sou'yb then divided Christians into two categories: the *early Christians* who received the religious teachings of Jesus directly and who were not familiar with philosophical thinking; and the *gentile Christians* whom Sou'yb called the followers of Jesus living in Judea and Galilea. In the latter group were part of a sophisticated community marked by good education and high development of philosophical concepts.[34] The latter, Sou'yb said, were responsible for the changes in Christian doctrine, since foreign elements infiltrated Christianity when it was practiced in this region and resulted in the formation of numerous Christians sects.[35]

However, some discrepancies appeared in Sou'yb's treatment of Christian sects and teachings. He seemed to confuse sects *(aliran)* such as Arianism or Athanasianism

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[30]It is clear, as Sou'yb argued, that the Messenger of God mentioned is the Prophet of Muhammad. Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 7.

[31]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 20-23; 30-34.

[32]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 8; 24.

[33]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 24.

[34]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 15-16.

[35]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 16.

with teachings *(paham)* like celibacy and infallibility. According to Sou'yb, historically, the number of Christian sects and teachings were seventeen.[36] It is interesting that Sou'yb believed that as a teaching, celibacy was part of the Petrine theory of Pope Celestine I (422-432 AC). This theory, Sou'yb argued, made Bishop of Rome not a mere bishop among other bishops *(episcopus inter episcopos)* but a chairman of all bishops *(episcopos episcoporum)*. As a result, the Bishop of Rome had an organic right of control over other Christian bishops, and eventually this view was generally accepted in the Western Church; and was finally legalized by the Vatican Council, but only in December 8, 1869.[37]

Discussing Christian doctrine, Sou'yb preferred to make use of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls as his basic point of departure, rather than the four canonical Gospels. He came to the conclusion that although the Scrolls also mentioned baptism, the eucharist and celibacy, the Scrolls were silent on the divinity of Jesus, his incarnation, his crucifixion and his resurrection.[38] In Sou'yb's mind, not surprisingly, the Scrolls were more authentic than the canonical Gospels, since they were not corrupted by the (Gentile) Christians.[39]

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[36]According to its historical chronology, those sects and teachings, were Arianism, Athanasianism, Adoptionism, Apollinarianism, Donatism, Decetism, Eutychianism, Gnosticism, Novatianism, Nestorianism, Sabellianism, Iconism, Iconoclasm, Monotheletism, Simonism, Celibacy and Infallibility. See Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 58-68.

[37]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 68-69.

[38]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 6; 24.

[39]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 15.

To the Bible itself, Sou'yb gave considerable attention. Before 325 AD, he argued, there were many sects and teachings that resulted in the production of numerous Gospels. The Nicaean Council (325 AD) finally chose four among them and declared the rest to be unauthorized. Anyone discovered circulating them was to be punished, and perhaps ex-communicated if the usage contradicted church policy. These four Gospels, according to Sou'yb, were modified in accordance with the *credo* of the Council.[40] As Sou'yb did not deal with the Christian doctrines of divine guidance given the early church councils, so naturally he concluded that any "change" can only be wrong. This parallels the usual Muslim approach.

Continuing on the last theme of Sou'yb, Hadikusuma's work *On the Old and New Testaments* made a detailed description of the origin of the Bible.[41] He began by praising Christians as a religious community who believed in God and received the Holy Book, and went on to discuss the origin of the Old Testament and the New Testament. He maintained that no one knew who compiled the Old Testament, and when it was codified. In the year of 515 BC, however, a Jewish council examined and verified all the biblical manuscripts; and then in the year of 300 BC, seventy linguists began to translate forty-eight manuscripts into Greek, which were known as the "*Septuagint*" (the seventy). The process of translation, he added, took place in Alexandria a period of over two

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[40]Sou'yb, *Sekitar Dead Sea Scrolls*, 47.

[41]Djarnawi Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama dan Perjandjian Baru* (Jogjakarta: Penerbit Persatuan, n.d.).

hundred years, and the complete translation appeared for the first time in the year of 100 BC.[42]

Hadikusuma stated that all the books of The Old Testament were written directly by the prophets through revelation from God.[43] He gave references to the writers of all the books in the Old Testament. For instance, the book of Genesis was written by Adam, Noah and his descendants, Ishmael, Isaac, and Jacob, respectively. Moses then condensed all these into one book called Genesis, and wrote Exodus, Numbers, and others.[44] To Hadikusuma, some contradictions appeared in the Old Testament simply because many different people were involved with recording them.[45]

On the codification of the New Testament, Hadikusuma claimed that it originally contained twenty-seven books, but that only twenty-one were authorized by church councils.[46] The remainder were excluded because of their inauthenticity, or because the material which was not considered a genuine part of revelation, contradicted the divinity of Jesus, or contradicted the church doctrine.[47] Nevertheless, Hadikusuma stated that the New Testament was more important than the Old Testament for Christians. If God in

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[42]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 6.

[43]It seems unclear whether this statement is his own or based on his source since the bibliography is absent from his book. In the text, he only mentioned one book: *New Heaven and a New Earth* (New York: International Bible Student Association, n.d.).

[44]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 11-12.

[45]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 16-28.

[46]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 48.

[47]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 29.

the Old Testament sent his prophets to all human beings, he argued, in the New Testament God himself came down to the earth for human salvation. Therefore, according to Hadikusuma, the New Testament should rather be called "the book of history" since it covered the story of God from His birth to His resurrection.[48]

Hadikusuma's description on the history of Bible, such as in the process of its compilation, was characterized by generalization and reduction, however. He, like that of many apologists, saw that many hands involved in bringing the Bible into existence, and believed, therefore, many of "non-revelatory" materials were included in the Bible.

The other works worth examining are Gazalba's *Dialogues Between Christian Propagandist and Logic*,[49] *Dialogues Between Christian Adventist and Islam*,[50] and *The Answers to Christian Critiques of Islam*.[51] Approaching the issues in conversational style and often using the statements of the writer he refuted, Gazalba covered many important aspects of both Christianity and Islam. The first two books are responses to Adventists[52]

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[48]Hadikusuma, *Di Sekitar Perjandjian Lama*, 29.

[49]Sidi Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Propagandis Kristen dan Logika* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1971).

[50]Sidi Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent dan Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1972).

[51]Sidi Gazalba, *Djawaban Atas Kritik Kristen Terhadap Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang 1971).

[52]Adventism, or the Seventh day Adventism, is one of the most vigorous Christian denominations founded in 1782 by William Miller. This denomination, initiated to anticipate the imminent Second Coming of Christ, gives a very special interpretation to the apocalyptic visions found in some books of the Bible, notably Revelation. See William Sims Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movement* (London: Routledge, 1997), 89-119. Adventism has been introduced in Indonesia since 1920's and the main center of its activities is in Bandung, West Java.

on the nature of Islam, its teachings and the Qur'an. The last book answers some crucial statements made by Verkuyl in *On Christian's Faith Interpretation to Muslims*.[53]

Gazalba's *Dialogues Between a Christian Propagandist and Logic* consisted of fifteen conversations between him (sometimes with his wife in attendance) and Christian preachers from the Church of the Adventists, the Salvation Army and Jehovah's Witnesses who visited his home. In this book, he subtly revealed and showed his objection to the methods which missionaries used to convert people to Christianity; some went door-to-door, visiting Muslim houses and pretending to be sellers of books on medicine or of Christian books on Darwinian theory, and preaching salvation through Christianity.[54]

Some fruitful discussions were held on topics ranging from the origin of the Bible, the Trinity, and the Omnipotence of God to life after death. The following is quoted from his hypothetical discussion with a Christian on the bodily resurrection after death, particularly that of the sinner:

> Adventist (A): Those who commit sin will die forever. Death is the reward for sinners and only through Jesus Christ can someone be resurrected and come to the Kingdom of God.
> Gazalba (G): Then, there are many wrongdoers who will not come to hell and many right-doers who will not come to heaven.
> (A): Actually there is no heaven and hell. What exists is either eternal death or eternal life in the Kingdom of God.
> (G): So, what we commonly call heaven is living in the Kingdom of God?

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[53]Verkuyl, "Tentang Interpretasi Iman Kristen Kepada Orang-Orang Muslim," *Bulletin Lembaga Penjelidikan Pekabaran Indjil*, jubilee number (n.d.).

[54]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Propagandis Kristen*, 33; 38-47; 50-51.

(A): It may be so. And this [salvation] will only be achieved if we believe in Jesus Christ.
(G): So, one who commits sins but believes in Jesus Christ could come to the Kingdom of God?
(A): According to the Bible, yes.
(G): How about one who does not believe in Jesus Christ?
(A): He will die forever and will never live again.
(G): It seems that your religion does not teach ethics nor does it seek right doing and forbid wrong doing.... It is lucky for the sinner because he will not be punished for his wrongdoing.
(A): But, he would die forever, would never be resurrected and would never alive again.
(G): That's what a sinner really wishes. After committing many sins in the world which give him some benefit and satisfaction, he would be glad not to be punished for his sins.[55]

Moreover, like many Muslim apologists, Gazalba was interested in examining the Gospels on everything from its codification to its reliability. He analyzed the history of the four canonical Gospels, and many times expressed his objection to them because he judged that they were human-made.[56] He mentioned that initially the Gospel of Matthew was written in the Arabic language, but that no one knew who translated it into Greek or when it was done.[57] He strongly doubted that Mark himself wrote the Gospel of Mark and surmised it that was probably written by Peter, Mark's teacher. Furthermore, Luke was a private doctor and student of Paul who wrote Gospel named after him.[58] On the last Gospel, Gazalba provided more ample information. John, he said, wrote his Gospel in

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[55]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Propagandis Kristen*, 68-69.

[56]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent*, 14.

[57]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent*, 40.

[58]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent*, 41; *Dialog Antara Propagandis Kristen*, 60.

96 AD in response to a request by some Christian monks who complained to him that many Christians regarded Jesus only as the Messenger of God and not as His Son. The monks begged him to write a gospel justifying how Jesus was truly God, and so he wrote his Gospel supposedly through revelation.[59]

Concerning the abrogation of the Bible,[60] Gazalba's argument is rather interesting. While he believed that abrogation over time occurred intentionally, he also maintained that it was the immediate result of translation, since many words had no equivalents in other languages.[61] Using foreign words with different connotations, he argued, caused the Bible to be abrogated.[62]

Gazalba also argued that there were seven Biblical doctrines which caused Muslims to regard the Bible as inauthentic. Those seven doctrines were the Trinity, the doctrine of original sin, the crucifixion of Jesus to save humanity, Christian rejection of Torah teachings, the spreading of Christianity to non-Israelites, the unnecessity of circumcision and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.[63]

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[59]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent*, 41.

[60]In Muslim polemical literature, "abrogation" refers to the idea that earlier religions such as Judaism and Christianity were abrogated by God after the coming of Islam. In the case of the Bible, in spite of some of Biblical verses were revealed, many Muslims believe that some verses of the Old and New Testaments were concealed and deleted as well as distorted and rewritten in order to support the church doctrines. See Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Intertwined Worlds: Medieval Islam and Bible Criticism* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 20-21; 35-40.

[61]Gazalba, *Djawaban Atas Kritik*, 44.

[62]Gazalba, *Dialog Antara Kristen Advent*, 37. See also his *Djawaban Atas Kritik*, 44-46.

[63]Gazalba, *Djawaban Atas Kritik*, 20-21.

An equally important scholar who wrote influential books and articles on the fragile relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia is Muhammad Rasjidi. He was the first Indonesian Ambassador to Egypt and the first Minister for Religious Affairs who later graduated from Sorbonne University (Paris) and had taught at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University (Montreal).[64] In his spirited defense of "the faith of *ummah*", he paid little attention to actual Christian doctrine, but rather concentrated on discovering the sophisticated methods adopted by missionaries in bringing new converts to their fold.

Rasjidi stated that his intention is not only to open the eyes of Muslims to what was really happening, but also at uncovering how missionaries accordingly tore Indonesia apart.[65] He voiced his concern to remind all Indonesians that the development strategy initiated by the government would never be successful as long as religious conflicts remained unsolved.[66] Religious conflict, he argued, would only pave the way to a return to godless communism and would drive the two communities into mutual hostility and theological opposition.

> It is my considered opinion that in the last round this will only pave for the anti-God and secularist forces to cast their spell over a people who are still attached to a universal religious tradition. If this happens then let me say frankly, neither it

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[64]His biography is found in a special book commemorating his seventieth birthday. See, Endang Basri Ananda, ed., *70 Tahun Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi*, (Jakarta: Harian Umum Pelita, 1985).

[65]Mohammad Rasjidi, "Christian Mission in the Muslim World: The Role of Christian Missions The Indonesian Experience," *International Review of Mission* 65 (1976), 430.

[66]See Azyumardi Azra, "Guarding the Faith of the Ummah: The Religio-Intellectual Journey of Mohammad Rasjidi," *Studia Islamika* 1, No. 2 (1994): 108; Rosihan Anwar, "Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi Pengungkap Gamblang," in *70 Tahun Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi*, 161.

> would only Muslims, but also Christians would suffer. There would be no victors nor losers amongst us; Muslims and Christians alike might turn out to be losers and our common enemies gain at our cost."[67]

Rasjidi believed that freedom of religion is one of the basic rights of human beings.[68] At the same time, he also believed that between Islam and Christianity, there were some potential catalysts for change and cooperation, since both are revealed religions which trace their origins to Abraham. Therefore, religious tolerance between the two communities should form the basic foundations of both religious doctrines. Islam, he explained, does not approve of hostility towards other religions; it proclaims religious freedom and forbids religious coercion. In his lifetime, the Prophet was very kind to his neighbors of other faiths. He even married a Jewish woman, Safiyah, and a Christian slave, Mary, who was given by an Egyptian ruler. When he heard that the Christian Abyssinian Emperor had died, he prayed for him in recognition the help he had rendered to Muslims during the early days of Islam.[69]

Rasjidi held that the spirit of tolerance was also intrinsic to Christian doctrine as found in the Documents of Vatican II, a revolutionary document for its time that saw other religions with esteem and full recognition.[70] He quoted extensively from the

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[67]Rasjidi, "Christian Mission in the Muslim World," 434-435.

[68]On his views concerning religious freedom, see his *Kebebasan Beragama* (Jakarta: Fajar Shadiq, 1979).

[69]Mohammad Rasjidi, "Unity and Diversity in Islam," in *Islam: The Straight Path*, ed. Kenneth W. Morgan (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1958): 427.

[70]Mohammad Rasjidi, *Dari Rasjidi dan Maududi Kepada Paus Paulus II* (Surabaya: Penerbit Documenta, 1971).

Documents stating that "the Church strictly forbids forcing people to convert by unworthy techniques. By the same token she [the Church] also strongly insists on a person's right to be deterred from the faith by unjust vexation on the part of others."[71] According to Rasjidi, the Church had alerted missionaries that "in spreading religious faith and introducing religious practices, everyone ought at all times to refrain from any manner of action which might seem to carry a hint of coercion or of a kind of persuasion that would be dishonorable or unworthy, especially when dealing with poor or uneducated people."[72]

Rasjidi agreed that respect and recognition for coexistence between the Muslim and Christian communities had been justified by the Documents of Vatican II, which stated that "upon the Moslems too, the Church looks with esteem. They adore one God living and enduring, merciful and all-powerful, maker of heaven and earth and speaker to men. They strive to submit whole-heartedly even to His inscrutable decree, just as did Abraham with whom the Islamic faith is pleased to associate itself".[73]

On this basis, Rasjidi argued that the aggressiveness, ignorance and antipathy of missionaries with respect to Muslim objections to their ongoing evangelization in the Muslim community contradicted not only the noble spirit of the Documents, but also the

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[71]Rasjidi, *Dari Rasjidi*, 20. See also Walter M. Abbot S.J., ed., *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: Guild Press, 1966), 600.

[72]Rasjidi, *Dari Rasjidi*, 21 and Abbot, *The Documents*, 682.

[73]Rasjidi, *Kebebasan Beragama*, 17-18. See also Rasjidi, *Dari Rasjidi*, 18 and Abbot, *The Documents*, 682.

basic human right to adhere to one's own religion.[74] He regretted that the sacred mission of Christianity to spread love in Indonesia had been carried out in a spirit of superiority and sectarianism. For that reason, in his presentation on religious tolerance at an inter-religious seminar held in Tokyo in 28 October 1968, Rasjidi first quoted the long ethical code for proselytizing proposed by Daniel J. Fleming, professor at the Union Theological Seminary of New York. The code stated that missionaries should pay serious attention to the mission target and that conversion should not be undertaken in an uncivilized manner, such as by denigrating the personalities and beliefs of other people.[75]

Thus, he discussed the nature of missionary efforts in Indonesia which exploited the people's poverty by distributing rice, clothing, money and medication among the poor and unemployed on the condition that they allow their children to be educated in Christian and missionary schools.[76] He also asserted that Christians built churches and schools in areas where no Christians lived. In many cases, they eagerly paid two or three times above from the real price of land or just bought this land by using people who had no connection with the church but later sold it to the latter.[77]

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[74]Rasjidi, "Christian Mission in the Muslim World," 435.

[75]Daniel J. Fleming, "A Code of Ethics," in *Relations Among Religions Today* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1963). See Anwar, "Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi Pengungkap Gamblang Hubungan Antar Agama di Indonesia," 157-164.

[76]Muhammad Rasjidi, *Mengapa Aku Tetap Memeluk Agama Islam* (Jakarta: Hudaya, 1968), 15; "Christian Mission in the Muslim World," 429-430. Compare to Azra, "Guarding the Faith of the Ummah," 106-109.

[77]Rasjidi, *Mengapa Aku Tetap*, 15.

In the same spirit, he objected to the system of so-called "foster parents", whereby students at lower-level schools were encouraged to change their religious belief. He also regretted how Christian youths tried to convert Muslim youths through covert sex or presenting generous gifts and then asking them to come to the church.[78] Another case in point, he outlined, was that uneducated and poor migrants were being targeted and forced to go to the churches to get vegetable and rice seeds, foodstuffs, and water pumps on the condition that they would shift their faith into the religion of Christ.[79] According to Rasjidi, to achieve their goals, missionaries did not hesitate to make temporary alliances with vested interest groups, including colonialists. In Rasjidi's mind, there is no doubt that missionaries worked in Indonesia within a colonial framework was not religious, but economic and political.[80] Therefore, mission was always identical to colonialism.[81]

Rasjidi concluded that what came to be called the "white man's burden" maxim which saw neo-colonialism as a *mission sacrée* to enlighten uncivilized cultures was not

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[78]Rasjidi, "Christian Mission in the Muslim World," 430.

[79]Rasjidi, "Christian Mission in the Muslim World," 431. Like Rasjidi, Noer shows that there were, in migrant areas, some Christians who pretended to be Muslims. These established contact with a nearby church and then sent the petitions to the local government to establish their own churches. See, Deliar Noer, "Contemporary Political Dimensions of Islam," in *Islam in South-East Asia*, ed. M.B. Hooker (Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1983), 198.

[80]Mohammad Rasjidi, *Sikap Umat Islam Terhadap Ekspansi Kristen* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1975), 16.

[81]Mohammad Rasjidi, *Sidang Raya Dewan Gereja Sedunia di Jakarta 1975 Merupakan Tantangan Terhadap Dunia Islam* (Jakarta: Dewan Da'wah Islamiyah Indonesia, 1974), 11-14.

very religious in spirit.[82] One of its main goals, Rasjidi argued, was to Westernize the Muslim world and to create the conditions whereby Muslims could accept a Western mentality and reject the fundamental tenets of Islam or at least to raise doubts about Islamic principles.[83]

Since these efforts jeopardized Muslim belief, he criticized the Indonesian government's leniency towards evangelization throughout the country.[84] Rasjidi also exhorted his audience to be more thoughtful in discerning the slogan of "modernization" or "being a modern man" which some prominent missionaries and Christian leaders touted in order to attract Muslims. He saw that:

> Modernization is used as a plea for Christianizing Muslim people; so also the fundamental human rights.... In rehabilitating our country and modernizing it we encounter an obstacle in the mentality of the Christian missionaries who do not respect the faith of the people in the present pluralistic society.[85]

Rasjidi, however, believed that modernization was essential for the betterment of Indonesian life. What he rejected and strongly criticized was how some missionaries labeled themselves as modern and their religion as modern, while perceiving Muslims as a primitive people with a backward religion.

> The missionaries then said: "Oh we really came to Indonesia in order to modernize the Indonesian people who are lagging behind in education and various other spheres of life."... In fact it is not only in Indonesia that Islam is compatible

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[82]Rasjidi, *Sidang Raya Dewan Gereja*, 11.

[83]Rasjidi, *Sikap Umat Islam*, 17.

[84]Anwar, "Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi Pengungkap Gamblang," 161.

[85]Wawer, *Muslime und Christien*, 265.

> with modernism; everywhere else it is not only not incompatible with, but in itself contains the principles of modernism... Among the term they [Christian missionaries] propagated were modernism and toleration... Just now we heard that word [modernism] mentioned by Dr. Tambunan as a Christian mission. This gives impression that which is un-Christian [sic] is not modern... Christian represented progress, implying that what is non-Christian is unprogressive... But Christians use the word 'modern' mainly as a means of enticing people to discard Islamic qualities. When we are about to enter the month of fasting, there are people who say that fasting impedes progress and the efficiency of labor, let us be 'modern' and forget fasting.[86]

Moreover, to Rasjidi, the missionary claim of bringing Indonesia into the modern life in accordance with Western values was in fact misleading. This is because many Westerners today no longer consider their way of life as absolute. He agreed with Wilfred Cantwell Smith who once said in *The Faith of Other Men*[87] that if everything should be in accord with the Western pattern, it would not work but would be resented.[88]

Rasjidi's candidness in criticizing the missionary efforts in Indonesia, however, could not be separated from his religious and intellectual milieu. Although he had received his doctoral degree from a Western university, with its "liberal" view of religion, the intellectual discourse in Cairo had influenced Rasjidi more than that of either Paris or Montreal. In this, he resembled Sayyid Quṭb, a well-known Egyptian who also obtained a Western education but then went on to be a leading opponent of Western tradition and

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[86]Mohammad Rasjidi, "Usaha Mengkristenkan Indonesia dan Dunia," *Suara Muhammadiyah* 1-2 (January 1968): 3-4, as quoted by Azra, "Guarding the Faith of the Ummah," 111.

[87]Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Faith of Other Men* (New York: New American Library, 1963).

[88]Mohammad Rasjidi, "Modernisme dan Toleransi," in *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan*, 401-411. See also his *Kebebasan Beragama*, 21-23.

culture. Rasjidi has been called "fundamentalist" by some young Indonesian Muslims modernists. Interestingly, he welcomed this label and regarded it as a title of honor.[89]

As the polemics and counter-polemics raged the conflict between the two religions, a new pattern of hostility became manifest, namely physical confrontation. This was clearly seen in July 1967 in Meulaboh, Aceh. At that incident, triggered by the building of a church in the heart of a Muslim community where no Christians lived, young Muslims destroyed the Christian religious facilities.[90] In the House of Representatives, the "pseudo religious" conflict took on a wider political scope when the Christian deputy, Simorangkir, asked the government to investigate Meulaboh incident. Simorangkir's request was followed by another request, this time by Muslim deputy, Lukman Harun's.[91] The latter asked the government to take decisive measures to control the activities of foreign missionaries and to regulate foreign aid to Indonesian churches.[92]

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[89]Azra, "Guarding the Faith of the Ummah," 109. However concerning Rasjidi's critiques of missionaries, some moderate Christians like Ihromi who wrote a *festschrift* for his book, admitted that he, like Rasjidi, disagreed with the way that missionaries tried to attract Indonesians to come to Christianity. To him, "it is disgraceful to Christianize people by way of rice, medication, schooling and employment". See, Ihromi, "Hubungan Antaragama," in *70 Tahun Prof. Dr. H.M. Rasjidi*, 167-171. Azra, "Guarding the Faith of the Ummah," 109.

[90]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 312. See, Lukman Harun, *Endeavors to Create Religious Harmony Among Believers of Different Religions in Indonesia*, paper presented as part of the Indonesia-Australia Conference "Understanding Neighboring Faith," at Monash University, Melbourne, Australia, 2-5 February 1992.

[91]A complete transcription of Lukman Harun's interpellation with its detailed explanation can be found in Umar Hasyim, *Toleransi dan Kemerdekaan*, 298-311.

[92]It took ten years before finally the government e.g. the Minister of Religious Affairs considered the Muslim demands preventing religious mission to be delivered only to its adherents or to those who had not embraced one of the five official religions by the issuance of Government Decree No. 70/1978. By the same year, another decree No. 77/1978 was also issued stipulating that all foreign aid should be channeled through the government. These two decrees, however,

Only three months after the "war of words" between Simorangkir and Harun in the House of Representatives, another incident occured in Makassar on 1 October 1967. In that incident, several churches and Christian schools were burnt. Muslims sources claimed this to be a retaliation for a Protestant religious teacher's mocking of the Prophet Muhammad. The incident had far-reaching effects. In Central Java, Jakarta and some other cities similar incidents occurred. Inflammatory pamphlets from both communities were widely distributed; and numerous strongly-worded commentaries by Muslims and Christians flooded the pages of newspapers and magazines.[93]

Religious confrontation between Muslims and Christians, which many regarded as a real threat to Indonesian unity, led the government to initiate measures to ease strained relations, calling on religious leaders from the five official religions to an inter-religious conference held in November 1968. Although the conference agreed to form a religious forum called *Wadah Musyawarah Antar-Agama* (forum on inter-religious consultation) to foster future cooperation and understanding, the draft resolution stating that missionaries of any religion should to be confined only of its own religious adherents or to those who had not yet embraced one of the five official religions could not find consensus. The

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were poorly implemented because some Christians expressed disagreement. See *Tinjauan Mengenai Keputusan Menteri Agama No. 70 dan 77 Tahun 1978 dalam Rangka Penyelenggaraan Kebebasan Beragama dan Pemeliharaan Kerukunan Nasional* (Jakarta: Sekretariat Umum Dewan Gereja Indonesia dan Sekretariat Majelis Agung Waligereja Indonesia, 1978).

[93]Natsir, for example, commented that those aggressive "actions" by some "zealous" young Muslims attacking missionaries or even burning of churches should be understood as "reactions" against the missions, which did not respect the religious sensitivity of Muslims. Muhammad Natsir, *Mencari Modus Vivendi Umat Beragama* (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1980), 8. Some tendentious and injurious comments emanated also from Christian circles. See Wawer, *Muslime und Christen*, 221-225.

Christian members protested against this finding, stating that it violated freedom of religion.[94] Significantly, long before the government proposal on religious mission was advanced, some Christian leaders had already expressed their basic concern voicing opposition to the substance of this recommendation. Notohamidjojo summarized that viewpoint:

> If the state forbids religious groups from disseminating their faith to the younger generation, the state has violated the freedom of religion. Every single religion has its mission impetus. Every single religion has its own motive to deliver "good news" to the people who do not yet know of it. If one prevents the application of this religious right, he actually tries to kill the freedom of religion that has been preserved.[95]

Another incident that triggered tensions between Muslims and Christians was the 1973 marriage bill proposal. Although it did not explicitly serve Christian interests, there was wording which seemed to Muslims to express Christian values or to serve question interests.[96] Article 10, subsection 2, was a case in point. It stated that the "difference in nationality, ethnicity, country of origin, place of origin, religion, faith and ancestry should not constitute an impediment to marriage". To the Muslim side, differences in religion and faith could be an impediment in any marriage, since standard Muslim thought, based on *sūrat al-Baqarah* (2): 221 prohibits a Muslim girl from marrying any man except a co-

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[94]Noer, "Contemporary Political Dimensions," 197. Husein Umar, "Intoleransi Kaum Nasrani Terhadap Ummat Islam," in *Fakta dan Data: Usaha-usaha Kristenisasi di Indonesia*, ed. Lukman Hakiem (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1991), 31-33.

[95]O. Notohamidjojo, *Iman Kristen dan Politik* (Jakarta: Badan Penerbit Kristen, 1952), 75, as quoted by Wawer, *Muslime und Christen*, 248.

[96]See Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 317.

religionist. Heated disagreement about this and other points ensued between Muslims, who demanded modifications, and Christians, who supported the bill, flooding newspapers and magazines.[97] Finally, due to strong criticism from Muslim organizations, the government agreed to make some revisions by omitting the crucial article, and in 1974, the new bill was passed with the endorsement of the President himself and the support from the army faction in the House of Representatives.[98]

B. The Establishment of Religious Tolerance in Modern Indonesia

Although the first government-initiated religious conference failed to reach a substantial compromise, it nevertheless succeeded in stimulating a series of meetings among religious leaders which has lasted to this day. Its impact was evidently felt by an increasing number of Indonesians who were more inclined to show mutual respect, understanding, and tolerance for people of other faiths. One person who tirelessly worked in this noble effort was A. Mukti Ali.[99]

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[97]See for example Mohammad Rasjidi's book on the issue, *Kasus R.U.U. Perkawinan Dalam Hubungan Islam dan Kristen* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1974). The argument from Christian side, "Pokok-Pokok Pemikiran BPH-DGI dan MAWI: Negara Perlu Berikan Ruang untuk Kawin Sah Menurut Hukum Negara," *Sinar Harapan*, 19 December 1973.

[98]Shihab, "The Muhammadiyah Movement," 319-320.

[99]Ali was the former Minister of Religious Affairs (1971-1978) who earned degrees from University of Karachi Pakistan and the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University.

Ali hoped to transform religious values into an active force for socio-economic development rather than for so-called political interests.[100] As he was clearly interested in the science of comparative religion, he believed that, historically, Muslims have always maintained a positive attitudes towards other religious traditions like Christianity, Judaism and primitive religions.[101] Ali implied that any hostility expressed by Muslims toward other religious traditions resulted form a lack of appreciation of the legacy of Islam itself.[102] From this perspective, he advocated a continuing religious dialogue, in particular between Islam and Christianity; he maintained that beyond the sense of common humanity and collaboration, there is a desire on all sides to honor and to obey God in the service of one's fellow men and in pursuit of justice and peace.[103]

When he was in Cabinet minister (1972-1978), Ali's interpretation of public policy had the religious policies of the Ministry of Religious Affairs aimed at creating religious communities involved in social and cultural development of the nation, while at the same time remaining committed to their respective religious duties.[104] His ministry also sought to transform religion into a private area of life, but in the same time it oversaw

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[100]Karel Steenbrink, "Indonesia Politics and A Muslim Theology of Religion 1965-1990," *Islam Christian Muslim Relations* 4, no. 2 (December 1993): 233-234.

[101]Mukti Ali, *Ilmu Perbandingan Agama* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Al-Falah, 1965), 15-38.

[102]Mukti Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Departemen Agama Republik Indonesia, 1973), 30-31.

[103]Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 31.

[104]Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 42-43.

the mobilization of religious activities and instructions, and introduced the policy of religious dialogue.[105]

According to Ali, there are five possible ways to attain religious harmony: *syncretism*, *reconception*, *synthesis*, *conviction* and *agreement in disagreement*. The first, syncretism implied that all religions are equal. Ali rejected this path because God created religion in response to specific social contexts, and therefore the differences among religion are natural. The second, reconception, implied a new form of religion resulting from the encounter of two religions. This also as unacceptable because it renders religion a man-made, not a revealed phenomenon. The third, synthesis, implied taking some elements from existing religions and forming a new one. Ali again rejected this because, according to him, every religion has its own background and purpose. The fourth, conviction, entailed convincing the other to change his belief; this change might be thought to produce harmony. Ali, however, disagreed with this approach because in a plural society, people should recognize the plurality of thought, life, history, motivation and action. The last, agreement in disagreement, was, according to Ali, the most plausible one, that would stimulate religious dialogue, religious amity and mutual recognition.[106]

For the last, Ali characterized religious dialogue as an encounter among people and groups with different religions or ideologies in order to come to a common

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[105]Boland, *The Struggle of Islam*, 172.

[106]Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 118-125.

understanding on certain issues, to agree or to disagree with appreciation and, therefore, to work with others to discover the secret of the meaning of life.[107] He took religious dialogue to be:

> A process in which individual and group learn to wipe out fear and distrust of each other and develop new relations based on mutual trust. A dialogue is a dynamic contact between life and life - not only between one rational view against the other - which is directed towards building the world anew together.[108]

To Ali, religious dialogue would be fruitful if guided by three important principles: *frank witness* for the worth of one's own religion, *mutual respect* for differences and *religious freedom*.[109] Ali believed that if the above elements were seriously considered, dialogue could be pursued in any given political, socio-economic and cultural context. Hence, he repudiated the notion that inter-religious dialogue would be more productive if undertaken in a secular condition.[110]

Ali, however, admitted that throughout history the main obstacle to religious dialogue has been rooted in mistrust, misgivings, and misunderstanding. He further added that this condition in religious history was also framed politically and economically in the belief that a universal message of religion could be preached to the entire world.

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[107]Mukti Ali, *Memahami Beberapa Aspek Ajaran Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1989), 56-58; *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 145; Ali Munhanif, "Islam and the Struggle for Religious Pluralism in Indonesia: A Political Reading of the Religious Thought of Mukti Ali," *Studia Islamika* 3, no. 1 (1996): 108-109.

[108]Mukti Ali, "Dialogue Between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia," in *Dialogue Antar Agama*, ed. Mukti Ali (Yogyakarta: Yayasan Nida, 1971), 37.

[109]Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 32-33.

[110]Ali, *Agama dan Pembangunan*, 35.

Addressing himself to both Muslim and Christian audiences, Ali hoped that each side would forget past contentions and undertake their new cooperation.

> As far as the Muslims are concerned, their hands are always stretched to their Christian brethren. What they want is freedom and peace. Muslims believe that this is a time of cooperation and national development... This is not the Middle Ages when the spirit of Crusades was dominant. Let us try to work together fruitfully and creatively for the benefit of mankind, whether Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or otherwise.[111]

There is little doubt that Ali helped foster a new outlook on religious harmony in Indonesia. Some, however, saw his efforts as contributing to a kind of depoliticization of religion, which served the government's interest in focusing attention on personal piety. Since the country's economic development was given first priority, this goal would be achievable only if supported by a peaceful socio-political environment. It was evident that, in this context, religious ideology was seen as a "threatening power, which may disturb the process of national development."[112] Therefore, all types of religious dispute, especially the expression of hatred towards other religious, ethnic and social groups, had to end in order for Indonesia to achieve national prosperity and realize the dream of becoming an advanced industrial society.[113]

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[111]Mukti Ali, *Inter-Religious Dialogue in Indonesia and its Problem*, paper presented as part of World Conference on Religion and Peace, Tokyo, 1970.

[112]Ali Moertopo, *Strategi Pembangunan Nasional* (Jakarta: CSIS, 1980), 68 as quoted by Munhanif, "Islam and the Struggle for Religious Pluralism," 108-109.

[113]Victor Tanja, "Islamic Resurgence in Indonesia and Christian Response," *The Asia Journal of Theology* 5, no. 2 (1991): 359-361.

The above definition, not surprisingly, advocated the forms and modes which all religions should observe in order to promote political stability. It is clear that religious dialogue, in its initial stage, was more likely to be more in the interest of the government than of the religions themselves. In some circles, therefore, Ali's project for religious dialogue appeared to mask deep state interests, and was superficial in nature. Some said it lacked permanent philosophical underpinning; was short of spirituality and ethics, and that his *Wadah Musyawarah Antar-Agama* (inter-religious forum) had no clear task and real program. Designed for discussion and consultation among the elites of religious communities, this forum had little impact on the grassroots. Munhanif was right to point out that Ali's policy on religious dialogue was notable, but depended heavily on the political will and good intentions of the communities, and less on the internal structure of the epistemology of religious doctrine itself.[114]

Furthermore, the heavy-handed application of this project on religious dialogue and tolerance faced a new threat when the orientation of key government leaders changed. The government, which in the 1970s and 1980s was relatively more accommodative to Christian interests, suddenly stretched its benevolent hand to Muslims in the 1990s. The reversal caused much the same frustration and envy on the part of Christians that Muslims felt back in the 1970s and 1980s. In this context, due to immaturity and dependency of religion on political inclinations, as Muslims ahead of

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[114]Munhanif, "Islam and the Struggle for Religious Pluralism," 108-109.

them, Christians saw closeness to the government by their religious adversaries as unnatural and unfair.[115]

On the surface, this relationship among religions seemed excellent. Many politicians in the country proudly declared that religious tolerance in Indonesia served as a model *par excellence* for the world, for they believed that religious matters had been well handled. Unfortunately, they failed to understand the real conditions. Madjid's opinion on this anomaly in Indonesian society is worth quoting:

> Too often we hear among us and some foreigners that our country is the most tolerant country in the world. But from the religious riots [happened recently], such as in the division within the *Huria Kristen Batak Protestants* ("HKBP" or Batak Protestant Church) or between one religion and another, it is evident that our country is the worst country in the earth in this regard. In the Middle Eastern countries, which Westerners often label the source of fundamentalism and terrorism, conflicts over religion are apparently rare. There are, of course, some conflict such as in southern Egypt (Assiut), Palestine and Lebanon, but those are not caused by religious matters but socio-political dissatisfaction [with the government] or [in the case of Palestine] by Israeli injustice.[116]

According to Madjid, re-examining the real foundations of religious tolerance in a more comprehensive way, which includes mutual trust and confidence, is necessary. This implies keeping no secret for *rahasia umum* (common knowledge resembling prohibited taboos), which is never talked about publicly. To Madjid, *rahasia umum* such

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[115]Bambang Sudibyo, *Economical, Political and Cultural Impacts of Colonial Period on Muslim-Christian Relations*, paper presented as part of "International Conference on Muslim-Christian Relations: Past, Present and Future Dialogue and Cooperation," Department of Religious Affairs of Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta, 7-9 August 1997, 4-5.

[116]Nurcholish Madjid, "Kerukunan Umat Beragama: Sebuah Tinjauan Normatif Islam," in *Kerukunan Beragama dari Perspektif Negara, HAM dan Agama-Agama* (Jakarta: Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 1996), 43-45.

as the concept of the Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antar-Golongan (SARA or Ethnic, Religion, Race and Sect), through a form of manipulation and demagogy, could easily be stirred into a destructive energy that can flare up when it encounters socio-economical disappointment.[117]

Hence, the re-examination of the roots of religious tolerance, according to Madjid, would be fertile if seen from two perspectives. The first is the religious and the second is the socio-historical context. The former, he argued, was not too difficult since every religion had its doctrine that supported religious co-existence. The problem was merely the public acceptance, particularly by those who had a stereotypical perception of the other, crystallized after long-standing social injustice, or who were simply obscurantist or lacked reading or knowledge. Thus, the role of the Islamic leader and preacher became important in disseminating the idea of religious co-existence. If some preachers taught that Islam is a tolerant religion, this statement should be translated into action.[118]

Madjid was among those who actively promoted the need for a deeper understanding of religious tolerance in Indonesia. He maintained that the plurality of religions is a feature of human communities, a kind of Law of God or *sunnat Allāh* and therefore it is the problem of Muslims to adapt themselves in bringing universal and normative Islam into a dialogue with temporal and spatial realities.[119]

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[117]Madjid, "Kerukunan Umat Beragama," 45.

[118]Madjid, "Kerukunan Umat Beragama," 47.

[119]Nurcholish Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism: Indonesian Experience," *Studia Islamika* 1, no. 1 (April-June 1994): 67.

He also stated that religious tolerance is one of the elements of Islamic teaching. He took the Prophet Muhammad as the example maintaining that he was a messenger like other messengers preceding him, who were the founders of earlier religions. Hence, the Prophet Muhammad brought religious teaching that was identical to that of other messengers and that all of them proclaimed one and the same faith.[120]

In developong a new understanding of other religious traditions, Madjid began by reevaluating the word *ahl al-kitāb* (the people of the book) in the Qur'ān. He believed that this word should be extended so that it refers not solely to Jews and Christians. He quoted extensively a prominent Sumatra leader, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ḥakīm (d. unknown) and the Egyptian scholar, Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935) mentioning not only the four religious groups, Jews, Christians, Sabians and Magians, as is stated in *sūrat al-Hajj* (22): 17,[121] but also Hindus, Buddhists and Confucians as constituting the *ahl al-kitāb* (the people of Books).[122] Quoting Ḥakīm and Riḍā, Madjid included Hindus, Buddhists and Confucians into the meaning of *ahl al-kitāb* today on the basis that when Qur'ān was revealed, these three faiths were unknown to Arabs who had not yet traveled to India, Japan and China. In order to avoid *ighrāb* (odd expression), he agreed with Ḥakīm and

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[120]Madjid, "Kerukunan Umat Beragama," 47.

[121]More discussion of the existence of *ahl al-Kitāb* in the Qur'ān, see Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Qur'ānic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[122]See 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Ḥakīm, al-Mu'īn al-Mubīn, vol. 5 (Bukit Tinggi: Nusantara, 1955), 45-46 and 48; Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Ḥakīm al-Musammā bi Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol. 6 (Cairo: al-Hay'ah al-'Āmmah li-al-Kitāb, 1972), 156.

Riḍā that the Qur'ān does not mention these religious faiths which the Arabs, at that time, did not yet know.[123]

Madjid also viewed the coexistence of these other religious traditions with the Muslims affectionately and sympathetically. He pointed out that in *sūrat Āl 'Imrān* (3): 110, the Qur'ān considers "the people of the book" as the best community that has ever been brought forth for the good of humankind, for they "enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and who believe in God." Based on *sūrat al-Mā'idah* (5):48, Madjid also believed that to every faith God appointed a different divine law and "an open road" (a way of life). He saw that one of the most important themes in Islamic doctrine is the historical continuation of an inner connection between the various forms and phases of divine revelation.[124]

With respect to another Qur'ānic verse, *sūrat al-Baqarah* (2):62, Madjid assumed that the people of the book would have their reward from God as long as they hold to "the idea of salvation", which is made conditional upon three elements: belief in God, belief in the Day of Judgement and righteous action in life. He emphasized further that the sincere people of the book (the Jews and the Christians) may be regarded as righteous in the Qur'ānic sense on the condition that they believe in God's transcendental oneness

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[123]Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism," 74-75.

[124]Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism," 73

and uniqueness, fully conscious of their responsibility toward Him and living in accordance with these tenets.[125]

Hence, to Madjid, it is a fundamental principle of Islam that every religion which has belief in God as its focal point must be accorded full respect, however much one may disagree with its particular tenets. According to him, Muslims are under an obligation to honor and protect any house of worship dedicated to God, whether it is a mosque or a church. Any attempt to prevent the followers of another faith from worshipping God according to their own lights is, in Madjid's mind, condemned by the Qur'ān as a sacrilege. A striking illustration of this principle is found in the Prophet's treatment of the deputation from the Christians of Najrān in the year 10 A.H. They were given free access to the Prophet's mosque and, with his full consent, celebrated their religious rites there, although their adoration of Jesus as "the son of God" and of Mary as "the mother of God" was fundamentally at variance with Islamic beliefs.[126]

Later, Madjid also expected that Muslims and Christians would be able to find the strength to conceive and to maintain truly spirituality, religious patterns of thought and feeling, which alone could withstand the onslaught of materialism. He concluded that it is a moral duty of the Muslims to bring the intellectual premises of Islam closer to the understanding of the Christians, and of Christians to approach the problems of the

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[125]Madjid, "Islamic Roots of Modern Pluralism," 64-65.

[126]More information about the Prophet's attitude toward the Christian Najrān, see Muḥammad Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, ed. Iḥsan 'Abbās, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1380-88/1960-68), 1, n. 84.

Islamic world in the same spirit of justice and fair-play that they would demand for their own concerns. Madjid believed that as soon as these requirements were fulfilled, both Christians and Muslims would fully realize that the ethical outlook which the two great religions hold in common would be of greater importance than the differences apparent in their doctrines.[127]

To sum up, it can be said that religious tolerance in Indonesia has slowly become more apparent and more substantial but gained with tough effort and even with bleeding. It took a long time to create the conditions under which Muslims and Christians could talk heart to heart in order to develop the country materially and spiritually. Moreover, the process is not finished and the gains are not yet permanent.

Although apologetic works from both communities continue to be published in today's Indonesia,[128] the major trend of the younger generation from the two communities, who were not involved in physical or intellectual confrontations in previous eras, tend to be more active in promoting religious harmony. This can be seen from the institution of the DIAN (Dialog Antar-Iman or Inter-faith dialogue) in Jogjakarta, by some prominent religious leaders like Djohan Effendi and Th. Sumartana, that aimed for the betterment of religious life in Indonesia. Some believe that the differences in religious

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[127]Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam: Doktrin dan Peradaban*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Wakaf Paramadina, 1992), 177-196.

[128]See for examples the works of Muslim apologists like M. Hashem, *Darah dan Penebusan Dosa* (Surabaya: YAPI, 1990); Abujamin Roham, *Agama Wahyu dan Kepercayaan Budaya* (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1991); and *Dapatkah Islam-Kristen Hidup Berdampingan* (Jakarta: Media Dakwah, 1992). The same type of writing appears on the Christian side, Rivai Burhanuddin, *Sejarah Alkitab dan Alqur'an* (Depok: Penerbit Persahabatan, 1980).

doctrines are less important than the similarities, for they believed that they are the *imago dei* or *khalifah* (vicegenent) of God in this earth.[129]

This process, of course, has not been completed, as some "religious" incidents and riots have occurred. But these do not mean that their efforts have failed. A careful look would find that the incidents were caused not by religious sentiments but almost all by socio-political and economic problems. In this sense, those incidents resulted from political oppression and economic domination, which led to anti-Chinese and anti-Christians outbursts. Therefore, to eliminate this destructive mass energy, the legalization and politicization of any religious doctrine should be revisited, to use Tanja's words, "in order that the community could possibly live as neighbors in God's one world enriching and sharing each other, and promoting a better quality of life."[130]

In that way, Muslim and Christian relation could become an essential element in building harmonious Indonesian society that benefits not only for both communities but the whole Indonesian people as well.

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[129]See for example Imam Ahmad, ed. *Agama dan Tantangan Zaman* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1985); Th. Sumartana, *Dialog Agama: Kritik dan Identitas* (Yogyakarta: Interfidei, 1994); Komaruddin Hidayat and Muhamad Wahyuni Nafis, *Agama dalam Perspektif Perenial* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1996).

[130]Tanja, "Islamic Resurgence in Indonesia," 365.

CONCLUSION

This thesis provides a brief survey on modern Indonesian Muslim attitudes towards Christianity within a specific socio-political context, a context which affected the way they perceived the presence of the Christian community in Indonesia. It is undoubtedly true that the model of interaction between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia owes much to the long history of mutual distrust and hostility between the two religions, as both competed for influence in the economic and political spheres as well as in attempts to gain new converts to their folds. Instead of recognizing the potential for positive interaction between the two communities based on mutual benefit and mutual acceptance, it is the negative model of interaction that has been more influential throughout the history of their relationship.

Major Perceptions of Christianity in Early Indonesia

Indonesian Muslims, from the beginning of their contacts with Christians, had developed some major patterns of response over the centuries, ranging from mutual respect and accommodation to violent resistance. Mostly, they perceived Christians as untrustworthy allies, as corrupters of the Scripture, and as infidels. This clear, but harsh attitude toward Christians rested primarily on a Muslim defensive posture in the face of a conquering foreign power wielding religion as one of its weapons in its drive for colonial hegemony. Given this situation, Muslim depiction of Christians and Christian doctrine in

that period are very simple in nature. They merely followed the patterns established by Muslim thinkers from earlier ages, such as al-Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyyah, who based themselves on a literal interpretation of Qur'ānic verses and the Prophetic traditions. It is clear, therefore, that Muslims at that time had a very restricted perspective and understanding of Christian doctrine itself. They were not interested in theological truth or even rapprochement with Christians; they wanted God's aid to deliver them from the economic and political calamities that held Muslims at the hand of foreigners who happened to be Christians.

The Use of the Biblical Verses and Dead Sea Scrolls

In modern times, Indonesian Muslims have developed more sophisticated tools to defend their religion from challenges by Christians. For example, polemic against Christian doctrine, instead of referring solely to what Qurā'nic verses and Hadīth traditions said about the subject, some Muslim writers are basing part of their argument on logical and lexical meaning of the Bible. Some others tried to "Islamize" verses of the Bible, quoting and interpreting them in accordance with Islamic belief. Others followed the critical trends in the recent study of the Bible and of the Dead Sea Scrolls which introduced a more open and historical approach to Christian doctrine. Still, in all these attempts, the effort affirmed Islam as the true interpretation of God's message and insisted that Christianity had corrupted the true message of God. These writers were not speaking to Christians but to fellow Muslims warning them not to abandon their own religion

because Christian doctrines were "falsified". They sought to "correct" the understanding of Christianity with standard Muslim teachings about Christianity after the message had been eroded by long years of missionary activism.

Evangelization and Colonialism

The most important theme of modern Indonesian Muslim polemic centers on the themes of evangelization and colonialism that are regarded as interrelated. Some Muslim writers held that there was a strong and mutual relationship between Dutch colonialism and missionary activities, and this relation had led the transformation of the latter into an effective arm of colonialism. It was also believed that both colonial authority and missionaries gained reciprocal benefits from this cooperation. Missionaries saw Indonesia as a place bestowed by God upon the Dutch to enlarge the domain of Christendom while the colonial representatives saw it as the arena of economic profits which would gain by an infusion of Christian values, which supported the Dutch imperial system. Accordingly, many Muslims were suspicious of missionary efforts in Indonesia and considered them to be a part of an overall plan to demolish Islam.

Indeed there were some connections between missionaries and the colonial government since Christianity came to Indonesia together with a Western colonial power. Indeed both came from same civilization, but it seems that this relation between colonial power and Christian missionaries was not totalistic. So if some Muslims charged that the proclaimed policy of neutrality in religious life hampered Islamic movements, Christians

regarded themselves as the victims as well, for it restricted missionary activity to limited areas of the archipelago. Moreover, Indonesian Muslims' perception of Christians as the agents of colonialism proved not all true because during the revolution for Indonesia independence there were many Christians who were active in promoting the feeling of nationalism. It is obvious too that since independence Christians have shown high participation in the government, the army and other national institutions that show a thorough commitment to national identity. Christian contact with the West is probably as the same level of contact and identification as that of the Muslims with the Middle East, a point of identification but hardly a factor for public action.

Islamic State and Christianization

Since Indonesian independence, two important issues have determined the relations between the two communities: the Islamic State and Christianization, and these issues have kept a rift between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia. It is unarguable that the idea of Islamic state is very attractive for some Indonesian Muslims, and obviously, many Indonesian Christians felt threatened by the idea of creation of Islamic state in Indonesia. There was a long debate about the Jakarta Chapter in 1945, Muslim political aspirations in the Constitutional Assembly and some revolts against the government where rebels wanted to implement strict Islamic rules in Indonesia that had repercussions in community relations. However, a rapprochement has been achieved through Pancasila, which has produced commonly accepted norms of civic life that encourages

toleration of religious difference among the recognized community. While the Pancasila acts as a well-regarded cultural norm, mutual suspicion is common in some quarters. As Christians fear "Islamic fundamentalism" in Indonesia, Muslims also fear that missionaries still continue to carry on its religious mission aimed at other.

The Future of Religious Dialogue

It seems that although the Pancasila has become the *modus vivendi* which holds together a diversity of people and religions, many conflicts connected with religious motives still arise. Some Indonesian Muslims, therefore, see that religions in Indonesia have not yet achieved their potential for creating good dialogue and real cooperation between the two religious communities in particular. This, according to them, may be caused by past theological and political encounters existing for centuries. The best Indonesians, both Muslims and Christians can do is to forget their contentious past and move towards a new, more honest relationship.

Therefore, religious dialogue in Indonesia should promote the need for a true spirit of religious tolerance, should maintain a truly spiritual life for human beings. It is a moral duty for Muslims to bring the intellectual premises of Islam closer to the understanding of the Christians, and for Christians to approach the problems of Muslim in the same spirit of justice and fairness that they approach and demand for their own concerns. As this thesis has shown, there are now some movements in that direction and continued growth of such a relationship will need the strong support of the leaders and

intellectuals so that apology and polemic will no longer define the relationship, but that efforts at good will and understanding are promoted in their stead.

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