

Mohammad Rasjidi in the Dynamics of Relations between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia 1967–1989

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Abstract. From 1967-1989, various essential events involved the interaction between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia. These events reflect the tension and mistrust between the two religions. Numerous leaders from both religions took part in the struggle. One of the significant Islamic leaders who enlivened the stage was Rasjidi. This paper elaborates on Mohammad Rasjidi's views on the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia from 1967-1989. This idea is a historical study. The primary sources for this study are Rasjidi's book, articles and news reports in the media. This study finds that for Rasjidi, the leading causes of distrust between the two religions were *the abuse of deacons* and the Christian misunderstanding of Islam. Rasjidi was a strong critic of Christianisation. This concept is inseparable from his background as a reformist Muslim and his *religion-intellectual* journey.

Keywords: Mohammad Rasjidi, Islam and Christian relations, Christianisation

1 Introduction

Mohammad Rasjidi was an important figure in Indonesian history. He was a freedom fighter, bureaucrat and scholar. As a freedom fighter, Rasjidi was a member of the delegation of the Indonesian diplomatic mission to the Middle East. This delegation aimed to seek recognition of Indonesia's independence (1947). As a bureaucrat, Rasjidi was the first Indonesian Minister of Religion (1946). He was also an Indonesian ambassador to several countries (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan). As a scholar, Rasjidi was an associate professor at McGill University, a professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Indonesia, and a lecturer in philosophy of religion at IAIN (state Islamic institute) Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. Rasjidi was also known for his critical writings, especially on Islamic discourse.

Among all, his reputation as a Muslim scholar stands out. Rasjidi has produced many written works in the form of books, papers, and articles in the mass media. What makes Rasjidi interesting are his critical and polemical writings. For example, his critical writings were addressed to Harun Nasution (former rector of IAIN Jakarta) and Nurcholish Madjid (a prominent Indonesian Muslim intellectual). Rasjidi considered the thoughts of Harun Nasution and Nurcholish Madjid very dangerous for Islam because they contained destructive Western influences. Because of this, Rasjidi was labelled as a *fundamentalist*, in addition to his reputation as a *guardian of the faith of the ummah*.

Rasjidi is a distinctive personality. He was a Muslim scholar raised in an *abangan* (adherent of Javanese mysticism or *kejawen*, which is labelled heretical by most Muslims in Indonesia) surrounding and then attended Islamic and Western schools for his education. Both of them influenced Rasjidi. The extensive knowledge of Western history and philosophy and the

strength of critical thinking are indications of Western influence. Rasjidi did not, however, reject the traditional understanding of Islam. Rasjidi, on the other hand, used his influence to condemn the West and uphold his Islamic values.

There are few studies about Mohammad Rasjidi. Early information about the life of Mohammad Rasjidi can be found in a book entitled *70 Tahun Prof. Dr H.M. Rasjidi* (70 Years of Prof. Dr H.M. Rasjidi) (1985) [1] edited by Endang Basri Ananda. In the book, we can find a biography of Mohammad Rasjidi, written by Soebagijo, although only until the 1980s. The book also presents impressions and testimonies about Rasjidi, both from those of the same school of thought, such as E.Z. Zainal Muttaqien and Djarnawi Hadikusuma, as well as from the opposite in thought, such as Djohan Effendy and Nurcholish Madjid, and also from Christian figures, Prof. Dr Ihromi. This book gives beneficial information to this study as the first basic knowledge.

One of the first studies on Mohammad Rasjidi was by Prof. Dr Azyumardi Azra. He wrote a historical research article entitled "Guarding The Faith of Ummah: Religio-Intellectual Journey of Mohammad Rasjidi" (1994) [2]. This article tells us about Rasjidi's religious-intellectual journey from childhood until he became a prominent reformist Muslim. This research uses Azra's historical approach to social history. Azra also wrote a book chapter entitled "H.M. Rasjidi B.A.: Pembentukan Kementerian Agama di Masa Revolusi" (H.M. Rasjidi B.A.: The Establishment of the Ministry of Religion in the Revolutionary Period) (1998) [3], which explains the role of Rasjidi when he served as the first Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.

In recent years, several publications have been on Mohammad Rasjidi, albeit they still need to be improved in quantity. Some examples are written by Abdus Syukur (2015) [4], Saadiyah Ratnasari (2016) [5], and Zaki Azzani. Abdus Syukur wrote an article about the polemic of Mohammad Rasjidi and Harun Nasution on Philosophy and Theology. Then, Saadiyah Ratnasari studied H.M. Rasjidi's Philosophy of Islamic Education. The last is Zaki Azzani. He is quite productive. In the last three years, he published three articles, namely "H. M. Rasjidi (1915-2001) on Morality and Its Relevance To Contemporary Discourse" (2019) [6], "Islam dan Modernisme di Indonesia: Kontribusi Pemikiran Mohamad Rasjidi (1915-2001)" (Islam and Modernism in Indonesia: Contributions of Mohamad Rasjidi's Thought (1915-2001)) [2]" and lastly "H.M. Rasjidi's View on the Modern Western Civilization" (2021) [7].

As a prominent modernist Muslim intellectual, Mohammad Rasjidi's thoughts are always interesting to discuss, especially in Islamic discourse. However, one theme that could be more interesting and rarely written specifically is Rasjidi's views on the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia. This theme is distinctive from Rasjidi. This study is intended to fill in this gap from a historical perspective.

2 Method and Materials

This paper is a historical study that discusses Mohammad Rasjidi's views on the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia from 1967 to 1989. The sources regarding Rasjidi's views come from Rasjidi's writings in books, papers and articles from mass media. Secondary sources are presented to support primary sources. The years 1967 to 1989 are chosen considering that during that period, there was tension between Muslim and Christian groups, and the New Order government was close to Christians.

Using Azyumardi Azra's term, Rasjidi can be placed as a "text" of social history that describes not only the religious, social and political environment but can also be reinterpreted and even become the object of criticism. Rasjidi's "social text" has thus contributed to the

discourse on the dynamics of Islam and the Indonesian state and the relation between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia. As a "social text", Rasjidi must be understood as an actor who thought based on his experiences and capacities that influenced his understanding of reality. Everything was articulated in national events involving interactions between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia [8].

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 The Background of Mohammad Rasjidi's Thought

Mohammad Rasjidi was born, on May 20, 1915, in Kotagede, Yogyakarta. His family came from *abangan* Islam, who adhered to *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism) [8] as adherents of *kejawen*; Rasjidi and his family were involved in *kejawen* customs, which were considered incompatible with Islam. They also did not obey the teachings of Islam. In one of his writings, Rasjidi recounted that he often leaves the five daily prayers [9].

Over time, the *kejawen* little Rasjidi soon transformed into a devout reformist Muslim. This cannot be separated from his father's concern for Islamic education for Rasjidi and his brothers. When Rasjidi was 6-7 years old, every morning, a teacher (Ahmad Ilhar) came to his house to teach him and his siblings to read Al-Quran [10]. This situation also needs to be separated from the Muhammadiyah organization, which at that time was growing. This organization had played a role in eliminating the *kejawen* tradition among the younger generation of Kotagede. Rasjidi was one of the younger generations of Kotagede [11].

Rasjidi then enrolled in Muhammadiyah schools. He studied at the Muhammadiyah Kotagede School (elementary school), then the *Kweekschool Muhammadiyah* (Teachers' school) Ngabean. Muhammadiyah schools were established as a response to the penetration of Christian missions. At that time, Christian mission organizations had many modern schools. This contrasts the state of Islamic schools, which were considered backward. Muhammadiyah tried to compete with Christian mission organizations by establishing modern schools combining religious and secular knowledge [7].

Rasjidi then studied with Sheikh Ahmad Surkati at *Al-Irsyad* school in Surabaya. Rasjidi was interested in the modernist Muslim figure after seeing the report in the newspaper that Ahmad Soerkati moved from Jakarta to Surabaya. Ahmad Soerkati was a Muslim Reformist from Sudan who later studied in the *Hijaz* (now Saudi Arabia) and then came to Indonesia as a teacher at *Jami'at al Khair*. Because of differences in understanding of the position of *sayyid*, he left *Jami'at al Khair* and founded the *Al-Irsyad* school, which was more egalitarian. This equality of position is characteristic of reformist Muslim thinkers such as Rasyid Rida [12].

In 1931 Rasjidi studied in Egypt. First, he studied at *Qisim 'Aam* until he got an expert diploma. After that, he continued his study at *Darul Ulum* preparatory school. Here Rasjidi received private lessons from Sayyid Qutb, who later became a prominent person in the *Ikhwan Al Muslimun* (Muslim Brotherhood), so he went straight to the third grade. After graduating from *Darul Ulum* preparatory school, Rasjidi finally entered *Darul Ulum* University [8].

Rasjidi was dissatisfied with *Darul Ulum* because he only studied Arabic and the religious knowledge that Rasjidi had previously studied. Driven by childhood memories of the disintegrating activities of the *Sarekat Islam* and *Muhammadiyah's* desire to change society's traditional way of thinking, Rasjidi decided to study Philosophy and Religion at the Faculty of Literature, Cairo University and graduated there in 1937. Rasjidi was the first Indonesian to graduate from Cairo University's Department of Philosophy [13].

At Cairo University, Rasjidi met with a teacher from Islamic reformist circles, Sheikh Mustafa Abdul Raziq (1885-1947), a direct student of the world's leading Muslim reformers,

Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905). Alexandre Koyre was a French historian of scientific thought, born in Russia [7], while Alexandre Koyre was a French historian of science, philosophy and ideas [14].

After graduating from Cairo University, Rasjidi returned to Indonesia (1938). After that, he involved himself in various activities, such as *Partai Islam Indonesia* (Islamic Party of Indonesia), *Alliance Francaise* (French Association) and *Islam Studie Club*, which were regular scientific meetings. Rasjidi also taught at the *Pesantren Islam Luhur* (Luhur Islamic Boarding School) in Solo, but only briefly due to the unfavourable situation after the Japanese occupation [7].

Rasjidi's ideological position was already visible when he joined *Islam Studie Club*. *Islam Studie Club* was established to offer academic studies to refute the criticisms made by secular nationalists who educated in western schools against Islam in the 1930s. *Islam Studie Club* was founded by one of the owners of *Muhammadiyah*, K.H. Mas Mansur. *Islam Studie Club* was the seed of *Partai Islam Indonesia* [15].

During the Revolution, Rasjidi was the state minister of religious affairs (Minister of state without portfolio) in Sjahrir's cabinet (November 14 1945). Two months later, Rasjidi was appointed the first Minister of Religion [7]. In a short period (January 3, 1946, to October 2, 1946), Rasjidi attempted to reconcile the newly established Ministry of Religion. The Ministry of Religion initially encountered rejection, especially from Christians concerned that this signalled the start of efforts to reinstate the Jakarta Charter. Rasjidi was challenged to explain that the Ministry of Religion was meant for Muslims and included parts of other religions [7].

While working at the ministry of foreign affairs, Rasjidi enrolled at Sorbonne University. Rasjidi worked hard to collect materials for his dissertation [16]. On March 23, 1956, Mohammad Rasjidi successfully defended his dissertation entitled *I 'Evolution de l'Islam en Indonésie ou Consideration Critique two Livre Tjentini* with Cum Laude degree. Rasjidi was the first Indonesian to complete his doctorate at Sorbonne University [16]. Abbas explained that Wilfred Cantwell Smith (Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies McGill University) and Rasjidi were equally dissatisfied [16]. Smith emphasized the *fusionist* scientific discipline at McGill, while Rasjidi opposed the method [7].

Fusionism is an academic framework that sees knowledge acquisition as a result of combining objective Western methods with religious adherents' commitment to faith. Wilfred Cantwell Smith introduced this method to overcome the dualism of knowledge between the *apologetic* tradition of religious adherents and the objective tradition of the West. Mohammad Rasjidi, who had a view of the eternal teachings of Islam, did not fit into McGill's revisionist historiographical culture [17].

3.2 Mohammad Rasjidi's View on the Relationship Between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia

Mohammad Rasjidi's view on the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia cannot be separated from the national situation. Mohammad Rasjidi was born during a tension between Muslims and Christians because of the penetration of Christians with their developed mission institutions. The Christian community had many modern schools and hospitals. This was in contrast to the state of Islamic schools, which were considered backward. For this reason, some argue that this was the reason the Dutch colonial government preferred to cooperate with Christian schools in carrying out ethical politics, compared to Islamic schools, which were considered backward and did not meet the requirements [18]. However, for Muslims, this was seen as the colonial government's support for Christianisation.

In the 1960s, Indonesia experienced an economic crisis. The Indonesian people, who were mostly Muslims, experienced difficulties in life. Meanwhile, the Christian institutions were in better condition, in general. They enjoy the privilege of good quality Christian schools and the service of the social institutions established by the church. In the midst of this inequality, certain missionary groups spread Christianity to Muslim communities aggressively. They propagated the religion that was considered unethical by taking advantage of the economic difficulties suffered by the Muslim community through conditional financial and facilities aid.

Another factor complicating the matter was that many detainees who were former members of the outlawed Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) and their families converted to Christianity in droves. For some writers, this conversion was natural, considering that during the 1965 riots, many members of the PKI were massacred by Muslims, so when the government issued a regulation that obliges every Indonesian citizen to embrace one of five recognized religions, this ex-PKI group was more interested in converting to Christianity [19]. Meanwhile, several Islamic figures claimed that the Christians had Christianized the ex-PKI in an unhealthy way [19].

On November 30, 1967, the government held an Inter-religious Consultation through the Ministry of Religion to ease tensions. Leaders from various religions attended the meeting. Among them was Mohammad Rasjidi. Rasjidi was present as one of the representatives of the Islamic group [38]. During the meeting, Mohammad Rasjidi gave a speech entitled "Efforts to Christianize Indonesia and the World, Modernization Issues, Tolerance and Human Rights" [20].

The speech on November 30 was the first time Rasjidi appeared at an interfaith meeting, expressing his views on the relationship between Muslims and Christianity in Indonesia. Rasjidi not only once attended an interfaith meeting. On 23 – 28 October 1968, he participated in a seminar in Tokyo organized by a West German foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). The seminar took the theme of *Ethical and social demands of world religions for a modern society*. At the conference, Rasjidi presented a paper entitled "The Ethical and Social Demands of Islam for a Modern Society, with Special Consideration for the Moslem of Indonesia" [20].

Then on June 26-30, 1976, Rasjidi attended the Conference *on Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah* in Chambesy, Geneva. The World Council of Churches organized the conference with the Islamic Foundation in Leicester, London [21]. The conference invited several speakers from Muslim and Christian leaders. The Christian Mission and Islamic Da'wah Conference in Chambesy was significant for Rasjidi because it issued 10 Statement of Conference points, which Rasjidi always used in his arguments against Christianisation [22].

These three meetings provide valuable information regarding Rasjidi's views on the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia. Rasjidi talked about the destructive relationship between the two religions. According to Rasjidi, this situation arose due to two things. First, the abuses of Diakonia (social service by the church) and the aggressive Christian mission. Second, the Christian and Western misunderstandings of Islam.

3.2.1. The Abuses of Diakonia and the Aggressive Christian mission

Rasjidi explained that there was tension between Indonesia's Muslim and Christian communities at that time. The tension was caused by an aggressive Christian mission to increase the number of followers among Muslims. In the three meetings, Rasjidi discussed how aggressively Christian missionaries came to the homes of Muslim families openly to explain the Bible. Rasjidi was among those they visited, even though Rasjidi was the Indonesian Minister of Religion during the Syahrir Cabinet. Rasjidi also explained how aggressively Christian

missionaries built a church in the middle of a Muslim settlement carried out dishonourably. Then Christian youth were sent to Christianize Muslim youth [22].

Rasjidi also outlined how Christian missionaries abused Diakonia (social service) to propagate Christianity by taking advantage of the financial difficulties of Muslims. These actions include providing economic assistance to Muslim families requiring their children to be educated in Christian schools, a foster parents program to Christianize Muslim children, and the Christianisation of the families of the PKI prisoners with the inducement of economic assistance for their families [23].

Rasjidi then revealed a covert Christian strategy to carry out his mission among transmigrant populations in Lampung, Pasaman, Kendari, Central Sulawesi and South Kalimantan. Rasjidi said that missionaries did covert Christianisation there by smuggling Christian transmigrants, constructing hospitals and schools in underdeveloped areas, and then demanding to build churches. With access to numerous facilities, missionaries also carry out covert missions by offering support and facilities to remote tribes on the Mentawai, Nias, and Sumbawa islands. After that, they asked these people to be registered as Christians, and the area was later declared a Christian area [22]. At the conference in Tokyo (1968), Rasjidi judged that the tension between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia could hinder the development that President Soeharto had launched through the "Repelita" (five-year development plan). Rasjidi assessed that Christianisation activities in Indonesia caused tension, worries and instability [22].

3.2.2. Christian and Western Misunderstanding of Islam

According to Rasjidi, Christians and the West, they had misunderstood Islam. Christian misunderstanding of Islam expressed their view that everything in Islam is sacred, so they are not involved in world affairs. At the same time, Christians consider themselves secularised so that people are involved in worldly life. Christian groups think that those who are developed are secularising quickly, while Islamic countries are still slow in secularising. According to Rasjidi, this perception was incorrect because Muslims have their ethos. Muslims reach the world within the framework of Islam, and secularisation contradicts and undermines the framework of Islam' According to Rasjidi, this misunderstanding had caused Christian groups to always prevent Muslims from implementing Islamic law for their adherents and to impose secular laws. Rasjidi believed that secular law is not modern but a form of neo-colonialism [21].

Rasjidi said that Professor Wilfred had succinctly summarised this misunderstanding in the book *The Faith of Other Men*. In the book, Smith explains that Western society has a "dualism of allegiance", Greek and Jerusalem allegiance. A Greek allegiance is a secular form of the West in the social, economic and political fields. In contrast, Jerusalem's allegiance is a religious loyalty practised individually through rituals. Accth, t believes two allegiances have never been entirely fused [21]. These two elements differ in their view of religious issues in the East.

The Western Secular element views Eastern religions are not important, while the Western religious element views dichotomously that Christianity is a *safe religion*, while religions outside of Christianity are *damned*. According to Smith, this view must be eliminated because Eastern society differs from the West. The West can think secularly on the one hand and practice religion as a private ritual on the other, while Eastern society cannot. Eastern people think, feel and act on religious considerations. For this reason, the religious matters of the Eastern people should not be disturbed. Smith also views that Eastern religions such as Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism must be maintained to stem communist ideology [23].

According to Rasjidi, this view cannot be separated from the "arrogance of cultural superiority," that is, the arrogance of Western countries, which considers what is different from

them as inferior, including in viewing religious issues. For Western society, Rasjidi explained, if you want to be seen as advanced, you must follow the Western way of life. This way of life is included in religion. Christianity was therefore perceived as an advancement over other religions.

"Arrogance of cultural superiority" also led to the emergence of the terms *modernism*, *tolerance* and *human rights*. According to Rasjidi, Christians used these three terms to Christianize Indonesian Muslims. According to Rasjidi, these three terms have very ambiguous meanings. The word *modernism* has a vague meaning, but it suggests the superiority of the West over non-Western societies. The word *tolerance* emerged to prevent Christians from fighting each other. It emerged due to disagreements among Christians that culminated in the reform of the church, causing religious wars among Christians until the *treaty of Westphalia* in 1648.

Regarding the word *Human Rights*, Rasjidi stahighlighted the term the right to change religions from Islam to Christianity. Rasjidi called it part of the Christianisation campaign. Whereas according to Rasjidi, *human rights* emerged because of the absolute power of the church [23].

3.3 Rasjidi's Response to Other Issues

This section will briefly discuss Rasjidi's response to several issues that developed up to 1989. These discussions included the Marriage Bill (1973), the Plan to Organize the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Jakarta (1970), the inclusion of the Aliran Kepercayaan in the Mainlines of State Policies (GBHN) (1978), and the Religious Courts Bill (1989). In this section, we will only go so far into the details of events. We will focus on Rasjidi's essential views on these cases.

From August to September 1973, there was a debate on the marriage bill proposed by the government. The bill was considered contrary to Islamic teachings. An example was a statement that Marriage is declared valid not determined by religious law but by the Marriage Registration Office. Another highlighted statement was about the permissibility of interfaith marriages [24].

Rasjidi linked the bill with the case of interfaith marriages at the Solo palace in mid-June 1973. At that time, Sri Sunan's daughter, Bra Kus Supiah, who was Muslim, was forced to marry Christian Sylvanus, who was the governor of Central Kalimantan. Additionally, the two were very different ages (Kus Supiah is 22 years old, and Sylvanus is 46). Rasjidi asserted that Kus Supiah was a victim of a Christianisation strategy. The tragedy (Rasjidi called it a tragedy) at the Solo palace served as "a prologue" to the Marriage Bill that was presented to the People's Representative Council (DPR) [25].

According to Rasjidi, "religion" was cleverly inserted in paragraph 2 of Article 10 of the Marriage Bill, which explains that "differences in nationality, ethnicity, country of origin, religion and descent do not become a barrier to marriage". According to Rasjidi, ordinary people will not realize the word "religion" in it. According to Rasjidi, the bill was in line with the thinking of secular groups who views religion as a personal matter, so there is no need to deal with marriage matters. In fact, according to Rasjidi, in the second lung of the 20th century, humans returned to religion [25].

In 1978, Suharto's loyalists attempted to include the Aliran Kepercayaan (Javanese mysticism adopted by *abangan* Muslims) in the Mainlines of State Policies (GBHN). At that time, the United Development Party (PPP), a representative of the Islamic group, walked out in the 1978 People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). The PPP was worried that the government's accommodation of the Aliran Kepercayaan (Javanese mysticism) could develop into recognition as a religion [15].

On April 14, 1978, Suara Karya daily newspaper published a report on an interview with A.M.W. Pranarka, a Catholic figure and Head of the CSIS Social and Cultural Department (Center for Strategic and International Studies). The report was entitled, “Secara Kulturil Nasionalisme Adalah Dalil Dasar” (Culturally, Nationalism is the Basic Proposition). In his report, A.M.W. Pranarka explained the idea of Indonesian nationalism. According to Pranarka, nationalism in Indonesia has been inseparable from the development of Indonesian history and culture since the early history of the country. Pranarka said there was a problem between nationalism and religions, especially between Islam and nationalism. This statement refers to several Islamic figures both within and outside the PPP [25].

The writings of A.M.W. Pranarka got the attention of Mohammad Rasjidi. Rasjidi suspected that A.M.W. Pranarka spoke as a nationalist from the outside, but he was a missionary from within. Rasjidi gave this statement because Pranarka wanted to include the Aliran Kepercayaan in the GBHN. According to Rasjidi, the Aliran Kepercayaan are Muslims from the time Islam was introduced until now (at that time). So, there was no need to include it in the GBHN. Rasjidi said that including the Aliran Kepercayaan in the GBHN was to reduce the number of adherents of Islam. If those who are *abangan* (adherent to the Aliran Kepercayaan) are included in the new religion, then Muslims will lose millions of followers [25].

In 1983 President Soeharto approved the drafting of the Religious Court Bill. The bill draft was completed, and in December 1988, it was proposed to the DPR [25]. The Religious Court Bill received a negative response from Christians. The response, for example, came from the Catholic figure Franz Magnis Suseno. He believed that the court is the application of absolute state authority to its people. If religious law is applied in court, then the state's legal authority is taken over by the state because it is subject to norms outside itself. The reason, according to Suseno, is that only religious authorities, not the state, have the authority to issue religious laws.

The implementation of specific religious laws by the state, according to Suseno, will create double loyalty from the people. Worse still will make the state only a sub-administration of the religion concerned. Suseno further argued that the issue of the Religious Court Bill is not as simple as between Muslims and non-Muslims but with the nation as a whole. Suseno also said the state's accommodating extremist and fundamentalist groups would keep their demand high. If given the finger, they would ask for a hand [19].

Rasjidi responded to Magnis Suseno's argument. According to him, Suseno's ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE BILL INDICATED THAT HE WAS SECULAR, ATHEIST, AND ALLERGIC TO RELIGION, WHILE, IN FACT, MAGNUS Suseno was a Jesuit. Rasjidi suspected that behind it was a missionary goal, especially from a Jesuit [25].

3.4. Understanding Rasjidi's Thoughts

The previous discussion shows that, for Rasjidi, the Christian group contributed to the tension between the two religions from the 1960s until the 1980s. The cause was mainly the abuses of Diakonia. Apart from the abuses of Diakonia, Rasjidi also criticized the ways of openly Christianisation by visiting Muslim's houses to explain the Bible and some actions considered unpraiseworthy.

Rasjidi could not tolerate these ways. In the interfaith meetings he attended, Rasjidi explicitly reported the actions of missionaries, which he thought were unethical. The atmosphere in the conference attended by interfaith representatives should be calm and relaxed. However, for Rasjidi, what was important was openness and willingness to feel what Muslims experience when facing Christianisation. This arose from Rasjidi's concern about the critical situation between the two religions.

The question then arises, is the report provided by Rasjidi true? In this true, but not always. We are aware that there are numerous sects within the Christian faith. Some of them are aggressive, and some are moderate. This aggressive group creates problems that disrupt harmonious relations between the two religions. The provocative behaviour of the aggressive sect, according to Bolland, is often considered typical for "the Christians" in general [25]. Rasjidi made no specific reference to any one sect. Perhaps that was because he had not investigated that deeply then, or it was left entirely to the Christian group to be examined. Rasjidi's concern was to guard the faith of the Muslims.

Unfortunately, in the following period after Rasjidi revealed the case, even today, many Muslims consider that Christians, in general, always try to convert Muslims in unethical ways until the expression of Christianisation with the help of "indomie" appears. The dark history of the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia from the past is still carried over to this day. We still find suspicion among Muslims of the Christian groups, so we often hear about conflicts regarding the building of Christian houses of worship.

Rasjidi was not the only one with such an approach. Some Islamic figures, especially reformists, were tough on the Christianisation effort. We can see examples such as Natsir and HAMKA. They were active critics of Christianisation. This is different, for instance, with some Indonesian Muslims, often called neo-modernists. Some of them are Abdul Mukti Ali and Nurcholish Madjid. They engaged in inter-religious dialogue, and their approach was more lenient. While Rasjidi, Natsir and HAMKA are often called ideological Muslims, the latter are non-ideological Muslims.

This ideological bond can be seen in the view of the position of Islam and the state. Rasjidi supported the application of Islamic law, as was Mohammad Natsir. Rasjidi's ideological position as an Islamist has been seen since he joined *Islam Studie Club* and *Partai Islam Indonesia*, as mentioned before. When Christians later allied with secular nationalists to apply secular laws against Islamic law, the Christians were seen as enemies.

Therefore, Rasjidi's critique of Christianisation was also brought up in national political issues. We have seen, in the issues of the Marriage Bill (1973), the inclusion of the Aliran Kepercayaan in the GBHN (1978) and the Religious Courts Bill (1989), Rasjidi always associated them with Christianisation. This also happened in other issues, such as the Plan to Organize the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Jakarta (in the 1970s), the Decrees on Religious Propagation and Foreign Aid to Religious Institutions (1978), and the education bill (1988).

4 Conclusion

In the dynamics of Relations between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia from 1967–1989, Rasjidi can be placed as a strong critic of the unethical Christianisation by Christians. In addition, Rasjidi also revealed Christian misunderstandings of Islam. According to Rasjidi, this misunderstanding has led to the unjust treatment of Christians towards Muslims, especially in the application of Islamic law. Rasjidi's great concern for Christianisation is inseparable from his background. Little Rasjidi was familiar with Muhamamdiyah. Then, when he grew up, Rasjidi was active in the Indonesian Islamic Da'wah Council (DDII). Both organizations were active institutions in the fight against Christianisation. Rasjidi's childhood experience as an adherent of kejawen in Kotagede Yogyakarta also influenced Rasjidi's perspective on the thought that the Aliran Kepercayaan remained Islam. Rasjidi opposed the arguments of several Christians, calling the Kejawen as non-Islam. It is undeniable that Rasjidi is a sharp critic of Christianisation. This cannot be separated from his position as a reformist Muslim figure who

guards the purity of the faith against deviations, especially from apostasy. In my opinion, Mohammad Rasjidi also believes Muslims are subject to injustice, so he feels the need to speak out for justice.

Finally, Rasjidi is a social text that describes the past bad relationship between Islam and Christianity in Indonesia. From Rasjidi's social texts, Muslims and Christians can learn to understand each other to avoid unnecessary conflicts. Muslims must realize that many and not all Christian groups intend to carry out aggressive and unethical Christianisation. Meanwhile, Christians should unite and be firm in separating aggressive groups from them.

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