

# FROM DOCTRINE TO RATIONALITY: HARUN NASUTION'S THOUGHT ON AN OBJECTIVE APPROACH IN THE STUDY OF ISLAMIC THEOLOGY

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## Abstract

This article examines the development of Islamic theological schools and the influence of political factors in their formation, with a specific focus on Harun Nasution's critique of conservative theological education in Indonesia. The research demonstrates that the diversity of Islamic theological currents such as Khawarij, Murji'ah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, Maturidiyyah, Qadariyyah, and Jabariyyah emerged as responses to the political and intellectual dynamics throughout Islamic history. Despite their diversity, these schools remained within the broader framework of Islam, with Ash'ariyyah and Maturidiyyah, later known as Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, proving to be the most enduring to date. Through a philosophical and objective approach, Harun Nasution critically addresses the prevailing tendency in Indonesian theological education to exclusively focus on the Ash'ariyyah school in a doctrinal manner, which consequently leads to distortions in understanding. He proposes a more comprehensive pedagogical method that encompasses the history, core concepts, and inter-school debates, including the contentious issue of reason and revelation that sparked intense discussions among Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, and Maturidiyyah. This study concludes that a broad and objective understanding of various Islamic theological schools is crucial to prevent narrow fanaticism and to enable individuals to choose a theological perspective that aligns with their intellectual and spiritual inclinations.

**Keywords:** Islamic Theology, Theological Schools, Harun Nasution, Reason and Revelation, Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah

## 1. Introductions

In Greek, theology is formed from two words: "theos" which refers to God, and "logos" which means knowledge, discourse, or word. Thus, literally, theology is the science or discourse about God.<sup>1</sup> According to Ahmad Hanafi, terminologically, theology is defined as the science that examines the essence of God from various perspectives, as well as discussing His relation or connection with the universe.<sup>2</sup> Religious theology is often defined as the "intellectual expression of religion." Therefore, the term "theology" is typically followed by the name of a specific faith, such as Christian Theology, Jewish Theology, and likewise, Islamic Theology.<sup>3</sup>

In Islam, theology is also referred to as 'ilm al-tawhid. The term tawhid signifies oneness or unity, and in the perspective of Islam as a monotheistic religion, this oneness is considered the most crucial attribute among all divine characteristics.<sup>4</sup> Another term for Islamic theology is 'ilm al-kalam'. The word 'kalam' can refer to the Word of God (the Qur'an) or to human speech, as Islamic theologians are named *mutakallimin* (masters of debate who are skilled in using words).<sup>5</sup> In essence, the emergence of Ilm al-Kalam was an endeavor to preserve the purity of Islamic teachings from the attacks of other religions, particularly Judaism and Christianity.<sup>6</sup> Because according to

<sup>1</sup> Muh. Subhan Ashari, "Teologi Islam Persepektif Harun Nasution," *AN NUR: Jurnal Studi Islam* 12, no. 1 (2020): 73–96, <https://doi.org/10.37252/an-nur.v12i1.82>.

<sup>2</sup> Muhaemin Latif, "Membincang Ulang Teologi Islam Klasik dalam Dunia Kontemporer," *Aqidah* 7, no. 1 (2019): 16.

<sup>3</sup> Febri Hijroh Mukhlis, *Model Penelitian Kalam; Teologi Islam (Ilmu Kalam) Ahmad Hanafi*, t.t., 12.

<sup>4</sup> Harun Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*, 5 ed. (UI Press, 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

<sup>6</sup> Muh. Subhan Ashari, "Teologi Islam Persepektif Harun Nasution."

Alexander Treiger, the emergence of *Kalam* (Islamic scholastic theology) in general was actually influenced by Muslim Christian interactions in Syria.<sup>7</sup>

In the study of theology in Indonesia, Harun Nasution observed that, during the 1970s, the prevailing model of theological instruction remained conservative. This approach primarily focused on teaching the attributes of prophets, the necessary attributes of God (*sifat wajib Allah*), and similar topics. Such instruction heavily relied on classical, doctrinal texts like *Aqidatul Awam*.<sup>8</sup> During that era in Indonesia, the average reference texts used in the study of Islamic theology exclusively focused on a single school, namely the Ash'ariyyah. This narrow focus inevitably led to distortions and a limited perspective in understanding the broader concepts of Islamic theology. Consequently, it was indeed observed that students came to perceive the Ash'ariyyah understanding as the sole correct theological doctrine within Islam.<sup>9</sup>

This is the problem that Nasution identified as a stagnant and non-objective approach to teaching. Students would merely memorize theological concepts without genuine depth of understanding. Consequently, Nasution proposed an idea to explain the concepts of Islamic Theology philosophically and objectively, utilizing a scientific methodology. Harun Nasution ultimately provided an analysis of how Islamic Theology evolved through various perspectives, employing systematic and objective methodologies.

Building upon the aforementioned discussion, this article endeavors to analyze how Harun Nasution elucidated and systematically presented the development of Islamic Theology in an objective manner. Nasution deemed it essential to provide Indonesian Muslims with an in-depth introduction to Islamic theological aspects, encompassing its history, core concepts, various theological schools, and the ensuing debates among them. The ultimate aim is to cultivate a comprehensive and objective understanding of these theological currents.

## 2. Methods

This article is a literature review paper, thus the analytical method employed in its writing is descriptive qualitative. The data sources for this article are the works of Harun Nasution, and several journal articles relevant to the theme of this paper. The acquired data are then analyzed and presented in the form of a descriptive narrative, delving deeply into the studied theme.

## 3. Discussion

### 3.1. The History and Schools of Theology in Islam

As the Islamic civilization advanced and the best generations of Muslims concluded around the third century Hijri, diverse understandings and interpretations of the Qur'an began to emerge. Indirectly, the assassination of Caliph Uthman ibn 'Affan marked the beginning of internal divisions within the Muslim community, profoundly influencing their theological perspectives.<sup>10</sup> Ali, who was widely considered the strongest candidate for the fourth caliphate, faced opposition from other parties who also aspired to the position, most notably Talhah and Zubair (from Mecca), who received support from 'Aishah. However, Ali successfully suppressed this challenge through a conflict known as the Battle of Jamal (mid-7th century). Talhah and Zubair were killed, and 'Aishah was sent back to Mecca.<sup>11</sup>

The second challenge emerged from Mu'awiyah, leading to the war known as the Battle of Siffin.<sup>12</sup> The war concluded peacefully due to the cunning of Muawiyah's right-hand man, 'Amr Ibn al-'As, who raised the Qur'an. Ali was forced to accept the offer and agree to arbitration. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari represented 'Ali's side, and 'Amr represented Muawiyah's. However, through 'Amr's deception, Ali's side was disadvantaged, and Muawiyah subsequently became caliph. On the other hand, 'Ali's acceptance of the arbitration was not approved by some of his soldiers. They believed that such matters could not be judged by human arbitration, but rather by

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<sup>7</sup> Alexander Treiger, *Origins of Kalam*, ed. oleh Sabine Schmidtke, vol. 1 (Oxford University Press, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199696703.013.001>.

<sup>8</sup> Sahilun A Nasir, *Pemikiran Kalam (Teologi Islam) Sejarah, Ajaran, dan Perkembangannya*, 2 ed. (PT Rajagrafindo Persada, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> Ermagusti Ermagusti, "NALAR TEOLOGI ISLAM DI ERA GLOBALISASI," *Turast: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengabdian* 9, no. 2 (2021): 2, <https://doi.org/10.15548/turast.v9i2.3597>.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmad Syamsul Muarif dan Mohammad Yunus, "Tinjauan Teologi Islam Di Dunia: 'Isu Dan Prospek' Frederick Mathewson Denny," *Islamika : Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 19, no. 02 (2019): 02, <https://doi.org/10.32939/islamika.v19i02.462>.

<sup>11</sup> Muhammad Sabli, "Aliran Aliran Teologi dalam Islam," *Nur el-Islam* 2, no. 1 (2015): 9.

<sup>12</sup> P The Battle of Siffin occurred in 657 CE (37 AH) between Ali ibn Abi Talib, the 4th Caliph of the Rashidun Caliphate and a Shi'ite Imam, and Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, who was the governor of Syria and a cousin of the 3rd Caliph.

Allah alone. It was at this point that Ali was deemed to have committed a grave sin. Those who disagreed with 'Ali's stance became known in Islamic history as al-Khawarij, meaning 'those who went out' or 'separated themselves' (from Ali's ranks).<sup>13</sup>

The Khawarij went to a village in the city of Kufa, in Iraq, and they chose Abdullah Ibn Abi Wahb al-Raasyidi to be their imam as a replacement for Ali.<sup>14</sup> Based on the principle that anyone who does not apply Allah's law is considered an infidel (in the sense of an apostate), and an apostate must be killed, they decided to assassinate the four leaders who conducted the arbitration. Consequently, the determination of a person's apostasy was no longer a political matter but entered into a theological context. Although in the Qur'an the word kafir (infidel) is the antithesis of mu'min (believer), the Khawarij argued that some individuals within the Muslim community had indeed adopted the status of kafir.<sup>15</sup>

In its development, the Khawarij fractured into several factions, and their conception of *kafir* (infidel) evolved accordingly. Firstly, the "Muhakkimah" faction asserted that Muslims who committed grave sins (such as *shirk* (polytheism), adultery, sorcery, murder, usury, etc.) had become *kafir*. Secondly, the "Azariqah" transformed the term *kafir* into *musyrik* (polytheist), thereby legitimizing the killing of anyone who did not adhere to the Azariqah's doctrine. Thirdly, the "Najdah" faction did not consider other Muslim groups as *musyrik*, though they believed that persistent engagement in certain understandings could lead one to become *musyrik*. Fourthly, the "Surfiah" faction divided grave sins into two categories: those pertaining to adultery and those related to fasting. Finally, the "Ibadiyah" represented the most moderate faction, viewing those outside their doctrine as *kafir* who nevertheless still affirmed the oneness of God.<sup>16</sup> The Khawarij sect has largely disappeared due to its radical doctrines, with the exception of the Ibadiyya. Paradoxically, the Khawarij's intense focus on the issue of major sins significantly influenced the subsequent development of theological discourse within Islam.

Next, the Murji'ah emerged as a reaction against the Khawarij. They put forth a distinct doctrine, fundamentally opposing the Khawarij's views. They asserted that a Muslim who commits a grave sin does not automatically become an infidel; rather, the judgment concerning such a sin rests solely with God on the Day of Reckoning. If their grave sins are forgiven, they will enter Paradise; otherwise, they will enter Hell commensurate with the sins committed during their worldly life. The name Murji'ah is derived from *'arja'a*, meaning 'to postpone' or 'to give hope.' Consequently, they were named Murji'ah because their teachings indeed deferred the judgment of grave sins committed by Muslims to God on the Day of Judgment, thereby offering hope for perpetrators of major sins to receive divine forgiveness and ultimately enter Paradise.<sup>17</sup>

The Murji'ah faction was divided into several sub-groups, including Al-Jahmiyyah, Al-Salihiyyah, Al-Yunisiyyah, and Al-Khassaniyyah. Broadly, they can be categorized into two main branches: the moderate and the extremist. The moderates maintained that a Muslim who still acknowledges the oneness of God and the prophethood of Muhammad remains a believer. In contrast, the extremist faction asserted that one's actions have no bearing on entry into paradise or hell.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, a figure named Wasil Ibn 'Ata' emerged in the history of Islamic theology, born in Medina in 700 CE, who later moved to Basra and passed away at the age of 49. He attended the study sessions given by Hasan Al-Basri at the Basra Mosque, where discussions also touched upon the major sins caused by the aforementioned Khawarij. On one occasion, Wasil expressed his disagreement with the doctrines put forth by both the Khawarij and the Murji'ah.<sup>19</sup> According to their conviction, a Muslim who commits a major sin is neither an infidel (*kafir*) nor a true believer (*mu'min*), but rather occupies an intermediate position between the two. If such a person repents before death, they will enter paradise; however, if they fail to repent, they will eternally reside in hell. With this distinct perspective, Wasil subsequently founded another theological school within Islam known as the Mu'tazilah.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

<sup>14</sup> Suansar Khatib, "METODE IJTIHAD IBRAHIM HOSEN," *Mizani* 25, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>15</sup> Harun Nasution, *Islam: ditinjau dari berbagai aspeknya*, II (UI Press, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Nasution, *Islam: ditinjau dari berbagai aspeknya*.

<sup>17</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

<sup>18</sup> Nasution, *Islam: ditinjau dari berbagai aspeknya*.

<sup>19</sup> Muhammad Habib Adi Putra dan Ahmad Syafi'i Mufadzilah Riyadi, "Teologi Dan Mistisisme Pada Masa Dinasti Abbasiyah," *Realita: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Kebudayaan Islam* 20, no. 1 (2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.30762/realita.v20i1.105>.

<sup>20</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*, 40.

During that era, Muslims extensively interacted with beliefs and ideas from other religions, as well as with Greek philosophy. As a result of these contacts, the concepts of *Qadariyyah* (free will and free act) and *Jabariyyah* (fatalism) entered Islam. *Qadariyyah* was pioneered by Ma'bad Al-Juhani and Ghailan Al-Dimashqi in the 8th century CE. According to their understanding, humans are the agents who bring about their actions through their own will and capacity. In the *Qadariyyah* view, humanity possesses both freedom of will and freedom of action.<sup>21</sup>

The Jabariyyah doctrine, championed by Al-Ja'd Ibn Dirham (8th century CE) and Jahm Ibn Safwan (d. 132 AH), posits that human actions are created by God within individuals. According to this school, humans possess no will or power to actualize their deeds, being likened to puppets utterly dependent on a puppeteer for movement. This perspective contrasts sharply with the exaltation of reason that emerged within Islamic thought following its engagement with Greek philosophy.<sup>22</sup>

Returning to the Mu'tazilah, as mentioned above, the leaders of this school introduced the doctrine of the "position between two positions" (al-manzilah bayn al-manzilatayn). The Mu'tazilah maintained that human reason is sufficiently potent to ascertain the existence of God and to comprehend the obligation of gratitude towards Him. During that era, the Mu'tazilite doctrine was officially adopted as the state ideology under the Abbasid Caliphate.<sup>23</sup> However, the Mu'tazilah school no longer exists today. They faced severe opposition from other Muslims after attempting, in the ninth century, to forcefully impose their doctrines upon the Muslim community of that era. The rationalist thought of the Mu'tazilah, coupled with their use of coercion, ultimately led to the emergence of other theological schools within Islam. These subsequent schools arose specifically to challenge the rational and liberal characteristics of the Mu'tazilah movement.<sup>24</sup>

The first significant challenge to Mu'tazilite thought emerged in Baghdad from Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (873-935 CE). As an opponent of the Mu'tazilah, Al-Ash'ari posited that God inherently possesses attributes. Human actions, according to him, are not autonomously actualized by humans but are rather created by God. Humanity is not a creator, as there is no creator apart from God. Nevertheless, in the actualization of their actions, humans have a part, albeit an ineffective one. This ineffective part was termed *al-kasb* (acquisition). The concepts put forth by Al-Ash'ari subsequently crystallized into a theological school known as Al-Ash'ariyyah. Among the prominent figures of Al-Ash'ariyyah were Abu Bakar Al-Baqillani (d. 1013 CE), Imam Al-Haramayn Al-Juwayni (419-478 AH / 1028-1085 CE), and Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 CE).<sup>25</sup>

The second challenge to the Mu'tazilah emerged from Abu Mansur Al-Maturidi (d. 944 CE) in Samarqand. It is evident that Al-Maturidi, unlike Al-Ash'ari, did not introduce a doctrine entirely opposed to the Mu'tazilah's views. Consequently, Al-Maturidi's theological school occupied an intermediary position between the Ash'ariyyah and the Mu'tazilah. Prominent figures of the Maturidiyyah school include Abu Al-Yusr Al-Bazdawi (421-493 AH) and Najm Al-Din Al-Nasafi (460-537 AH).<sup>26</sup> Unlike other theological schools, the Ash'ariyyah and Maturidiyyah schools have endured and are generally adhered to by Muslims today. These two schools are collectively known as Ahl al-Sunnah wal Jama'ah (or simply Ahl al-Sunnah).

### 3.2. The Debate on Reason and Revelation in Islamic Theology

The debates discussed and elaborated in this section revolve around how the aforementioned theological doctrines perceive and define various concepts. These include, among others, the superiority of reason versus revelation, the question of free will versus predestination, the absolute power and will of God, divine justice, and so forth.<sup>27</sup> Harun Nasution's outlined debate model exhibits a similar pattern to the arguments constructed by the respective theological schools. To further clarify the nature of these debates, a comparative analysis focusing on the debate between reason and revelation is presented below as an illustrative example.

The long-standing debate concerning the supremacy of reason (*akal*) over revelation (*wahyu*) has persisted within Islam for an extended period. This contention has permeated various fields of knowledge, including *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), *hadith*, *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and certainly *kalam* (Islamic scholastic theology) itself, marked by the emergence of *ahl al-ra'y* (proponents of reason) and *ahl al-hadith* (proponents of tradition). Harun Nasution asserts that the debate between reason and revelation within *kalam* fundamentally revolves around two

<sup>21</sup> Nasution, *Islam: ditinjau dari berbagai aspeknya*, 32.

<sup>22</sup> Nasution, *Islam: ditinjau dari berbagai aspeknya*.

<sup>23</sup> Akilah Mahmud, "Jejak Pemikiran Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Rusyd dalam Perkembangan Teologi Islam," *Sulesana* 13 (2019): 16.

<sup>24</sup> Mahmud, "Jejak Pemikiran Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Rusyd dalam Perkembangan Teologi Islam."

<sup>25</sup> Mahmud, "Jejak Pemikiran Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Rusyd dalam Perkembangan Teologi Islam."

<sup>26</sup> Mahmud, "Jejak Pemikiran Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Rusyd dalam Perkembangan Teologi Islam."

<sup>27</sup> Fendi Utomo, "Teologi Islam: Otentisitas dan Argumentasi Alexander Treiger dalam Melihat 'Ilmu Kalam,'" *Aqlania: Jurnal Filsafat dan Teologi Islam* 14, no. 1 (2023).

core questions: how does humanity come to know God, and how does one discern good from evil? Is reason inherently capable of addressing both these aspects, or does it necessitate the assistance of revelation?<sup>28</sup>

From these initial issues, two further problems emerged, each arising from the first two, thus expanding the core problems of classical *kalam* to four. Firstly, if reason is capable of knowing God, is it then obligatory for humans to express gratitude to God even without or prior to divine revelation? Secondly, if reason can discern good and evil actions, is it then obligatory for humans to perform good deeds even in the absence of revelation? These questions concerning the obligation to be grateful to God and the obligation to do good represent the two additional problems that arose from the preceding two issues.<sup>29</sup> Harun Nasution elaborated on the debate between reason and revelation, categorizing it into three major schools: Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, and Maturidiyyah. However, the Maturidiyyah school itself further divided into two distinct factions, namely Maturidiyyah of Samarkand and Maturidiyyah of Bukhara.

For the Mu'tazilah, all knowledge can be attained through reason, including the knowledge of God's existence. Therefore, humanity is obligated to be grateful to God for creating them and the entire universe. Even in the absence of revelation, the Mu'tazilah maintained that humans still have a duty to express gratitude to God, and whoever fails to do so will be punished by God in hell. Expressing gratitude to God in this context implies acts such as worship, showing thankfulness, and so forth.<sup>30</sup>

Regarding the means by which humans discern good and evil, the Mu'tazilah school of thought posits a similar view. According to them, human beings are capable of recognizing good and bad actions through reason alone. Consequently, humans possess the obligation to perform good deeds and abstain from evil ones, irrespective of the presence of divine revelation.<sup>31</sup> And whoever acts contrarily, that is, commits evil and neglects good, will be punished by God.

The question arises, is revelation still necessary for the Mu'tazilah if all matters can be apprehended by reason? If so, what is the function of revelation? In this regard, the Mu'tazilah contend that revelation remains indispensable. While reason indeed allows for the apprehension of all things, including the existence of God, the distinction between good and evil actions, and so forth, it cannot ascertain the precise details. Reason is capable of recognizing God's presence in the universe, yet it lacks the capacity for a detailed understanding of God, including divine attributes. Furthermore, reason is insufficient to prescribe the specific modalities of expressing gratitude to God, such as the rituals of *salat* (prayer), *zakat* (charity), *sawm* (fasting), and *hajj* (pilgrimage).<sup>32</sup> The Mu'tazilah, while strongly emphasizing the role of reason, maintained that divine revelation remained indispensable. They argued that human intellect could only grasp general principles of truth and morality, but it was insufficient for comprehending specific, detailed matters that required divine guidance.

Thus, for the Mu'tazilah, revelation primarily served as a confirmation rather than a source of new information. In contrast, the Ash'ariyyah held a divergent view, attributing a much broader function to revelation. Consequently, revelation held a paramount position within Ash'ariyyah thought, as they believed that human intellect could merely ascertain the existence of God. Beyond this, virtually all other knowledge necessitated revelation. Reason, they argued, was incapable of discerning the obligation to be grateful to God, nor could it distinguish between good and evil, let alone comprehend the duty to perform good deeds and abandon evil. Hence, God dispatched His messengers to instruct humanity through divine revelation.<sup>33</sup>

Furthermore, the views of the Maturidiyyah school diverged into two factions: the Samarqand and Bukhara groups. According to the Samarqand group, human beings can know God through reason, and therefore, humans are obligated to express gratitude to God.<sup>34</sup> The Samarkand school similarly posited that reason is capable of discerning good and evil; however, they contended that reason cannot obligate humans to act righteously. Consequently, this faction demonstrates a closer affinity with the Mu'tazilah, despite their divergence on the issue of moral obligation being solely derived from reason.

The Bukhara school, conversely, posits that human reason can ascertain the existence of God and discern between good and evil actions. However, reason alone cannot establish the obligation to express gratitude to God or the imperative to perform good deeds. While intellect can indeed distinguish between right and wrong, the ultimate determination of the obligation to do good and the prohibition against evil rests with divine revelation.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

<sup>29</sup> Muh. Subhan Ashari, "Teologi Islam Persepektif Harun Nasution."

<sup>30</sup> Muh. Subhan Ashari, "Teologi Islam Persepektif Harun Nasution."

<sup>31</sup> Moh Muhtador, "Ahmadiyah dalam Lingkar Teologi Islam (Analisis Sosial atas Sejarah Munculnya Ahmadiyah)," *Aqlam: Journal of Islam and Plurality* 3, no. 1 (2018), <https://doi.org/10.30984/ajip.v3i1.630>.

<sup>32</sup> Joni Harnedi dan Fachrur Rizha, "TEOLOGI DAN MEDIA SOSIAL," *At-Tanzir: Jurnal Ilmiah Prodi Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, 1 Januari 2021, 194, <https://doi.org/10.47498/tanzir.v11i2.432>.

<sup>33</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

<sup>34</sup> Maria De Cillis, *Free Will and Predestination in Islamic Thought*, 1 ed. (Routledge, 2014).

<sup>35</sup> Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran Aliran Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan*.

Nasution subsequently elucidated precisely this pattern of debate and analysis in this section. Consequently, when engaging with other cases, the analytical framework employed maintains a similar model to that utilized in the exposition of reason and revelation.

Harun Nasution's presence significantly invigorated the discourse of Islamic theology in Indonesia. He can be regarded as a reformist figure who bridged the transition from classical theological discussions to a more modern theological approach. Whereas classical theological discourse, from its very inception, typically involved defending a specific sect, the theology championed by Harun Nasution endeavored to explain the various existing schools within Islamic theology as objectively as possible.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of Islamic theological schools, profoundly shaped by political dynamics, has created a diverse landscape of thought, as exemplified by the Khawarij, Murji'ah, Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, Maturidiyyah, Qadariyyah, and Jabariyyah. While these schools operated within the Islamic framework, the Ash'ariyyah and Maturidiyyah traditions, later recognized as Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, have demonstrated remarkable longevity. Harun Nasution's critical philosophical and objective approach highlights a significant pedagogical challenge in Indonesia, where theological education often narrowly focuses on the doctrinal aspects of the Ash'ariyyah school, leading to incomplete understanding. His proposed method advocates for a holistic learning experience that integrates historical context, foundational concepts, and nuanced debates among various schools, particularly concerning the intricate relationship between reason and revelation that was central to Mu'tazilah, Ash'ariyyah, and Maturidiyyah discourse. Ultimately, a comprehensive and objective grasp of these diverse theological perspectives is indispensable for fostering intellectual openness, mitigating rigid dogmatism, and empowering individuals to align their beliefs with their unique intellectual and spiritual convictions.

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