

ON WIRMAN'S ALLEGATION OF FALLACIES OF HARUN NASUTION THEOLOGICAL LOGIC

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Abstract: Theology has been employing logic in order to justify faith with reasons not to mention bridging a gap between some different theological schools of thoughts. This article aims to examine Wirman's claim of fallacies against Nasution's theological thought. Thus, I will investigate two questions: (1) What sort of fallacies does Wirman charge against Nasution? (2) If there is no specification, then would it be fallacies at any rate? To address these questions, I strive to capture Wirman's main premise for identifying those fallacies, exploring Avicenna's *daruri*, and discussing thirteen Aristotelian fallacies. On the one hand, the conclusion of this investigation might topple Wirman's accusation, and on the other hand it might look like a consolation for Nasution. Having said that, both Wirman and Nasution do reason only in the realm of Aristotelian logic instead of Avicenna's account of necessity.

Keywords: Aristotle, Avicenna, fallacies, logic, Nasution, Wirman.

Introduction

In his article entitled "The Fallacies of Harun Nasution's Thought of Theology," Eka Putra Wirman exposes the fallacies made by Harun Nasution from within the latter's book entitled *Muhammad Abduh dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah*.¹ The title of Wirman's article should have provoked anyone who study Nasution's books thoroughly. It charges Nasution of having committed some fallacies. Scholars should meddle and make some adequate responses whose center of gravity is Wirman's criticism viz., fallacies. Western philosophies and the Islamic

¹ This book is a summary of Nasution's PhD thesis entitled *The Place of Reason in Abduh's Theology: Its Impact on his Theological System and Views* (McGill University, 1969).

philosophy share the same feature in the area of logic, given that the Aristotelian logic is central to Islamic philosophy. Thereby, evaluating Wirman's charge is appealing to logicians.

Wirman's argument in favor of Nasution's fallacies are based upon three reasons viz., the data inaccuracy, the inconsistent ideas, and the subjective ideology of Nasution's concept.² Indeed, there is a sort of mismatch between the way Nasution discuss Abduh and the latter's argument in his own book entitled *Ha shiyah*.³ As a consequence, this article will investigate two following questions, a) what sort of fallacies do Wirman charge against Nasution?; 2) if there is no specification, then would it be fallacies at any rate?

To address these two questions, I strive to capture Wirman's main premise especially the ones which might give a clue to the types of fallacies he meant. My focus is logic here because Wirman charges Nasution as committing fallacies. Thus, I will discuss fallacies with an emphasize on Aristotle's account, given that he establishes the foundation of logic as a tool for reasoning in Western philosophy.

Wirman's Premise

One way to conduct a logical examination is to paraphrase some main premise⁴ of the author whose writing I analyze on this occasion. This is essential not only for showing how one captures and comprehends a text without implying any distortion; but also, to reveal some weak premise in an inference. In other words, I am not making a theological examination on this occasion, and a discussion of Abduh's primary texts is out of question. Wirman's argument proceeds as following: (1) Nasution's inconsistency and inaccuracy imply subjectivity on his academic work. He indeed twirls the content of *Hāshiyah* as it is obvious in Nasution's book entitled *Muhammad Abduh*

² Eka Putra Wirman, "The Fallacies of Harun Nasution's Thought of Theology," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 7, 2 (2013): pp. 246–67.

³ Ibid., p. 248.

⁴ This idea of main premise might be subjective. However, it is necessary for stimulating an academic investigation and a discussion. To an extent, one could consider this searching for the main premise as a sort of 'data reduction' in the qualitative research methodology. Here, a researcher finds some keywords out of the verbatim transcript of some in-depth interviews. By the word 'reduction,' it means that a researcher simplifies the primary data that he or she delves during the research. On this occasion, I treat Wirman's article as a sort of verbatim transcript in a data reduction process.

*dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah*⁵; (2) Disappointed by the Ahlusunnah or Ash'arian model of theology in Abduh's book entitled *Risalah Taubid*, thus Nasution discredits the book as "a low-level reference book." Consequently, one could have said that Nasution's *Muhammad Abduh dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah* is suitable only for students in high school simply because the book is an excerpt of his PhD thesis in which case the foundation is *Risalah Taubid*⁶; (3) Attributes are the extension of an individual existence, and it may refer to possessions, clothes and vehicle although it could not always serve as the physical existence of a person. For instance, the expression 'there is no one in the house except Zayd' could connote to his own attributes or the person himself especially in Arabic setting⁷; (4) Moreover, Nasution interprets 'there is no one in the house except Zayd' as though it is a negation on a particular individual instead of a negation of everyone. Consequently, it implies a false impression as if Abduh had shared a view with Mu'tazila on the sameness between *ṣifat* and *dhat*. In fact, Abduh thinks that the divine *ṣifat* is the negation of negation because it is non-material and thus it should also be different from the non-material⁸; (5) Logic could not comprehend the way al-Ash'ari refuses both the distinction between *ṣifat* (attributes) and *dhat*; and also, their sameness because he, according to Abduh, has a broader vision that is elusive to words. On this occasion, logic applies only to worldly matters. However, Abduh acknowledges that *ṣifat* has a logical quality among others.⁹

Given that Islamic theology connects with the Arabic system of reasoning, it is inevitable for the present discussion to have a look upon the Arabic logic. According to Chatti, the Arabic logic is bivalent in its nature.¹⁰ It means that there are only two values viz., true or false; and there is no third value such as a paradox of true and false or some

⁵ Ibid., pp. 264-265.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 261, 263-264.

⁷ Ibid., p. 258.

⁸ Ibid..

⁹ Ibid., pp. 251, 254.

¹⁰ Saloua Chatti, *Arabic Logic from Al-Fārābī to Averroes: A Study of the Early Arabic Categorical, Modal, and Hypothetical Syllogistics*. Studies in Universal Logic (Cham, Switzerland: Birkhäuser, 2019), p. 24.

true contradictions called *dialetheia*.¹¹ In this context, Wirman's weakest premise is the fifth one because it allows the existence of third value in addition to true and false. Had Arabic native speakers held trivalency, they could have understood well the al-Ash'ari's refusal of both the difference and sameness of *sifat* and *dhāt*. However, this is not the case as Wirman claims that "logic could not comprehend..." in his fifth premise. He takes it for granted that logic only deals with bivalency. In fact, logic works not only in the domain of bivalency but also trivalency such as the Ezumezu logic in African philosophy.¹²

Another reason for saying that the fifth premise is the weakest one is the claim that "logic applies only to worldly matters" which contradicts Avicenna's account of logic. Avicenna believes that:

"Thus, whatever is not known but desired to be known, can be known through what is known before. But it is not the case that whatever is known can be a ground for knowing what is unknown. Because for everything that is unknown there is a proper class of known things that can be used for knowing the unknown...There is a method by which one can discover the unknown from what is known. It is the science of logic. Through it one may know how to obtain the unknown from the known. This science is also concerned with the different kinds of valid, invalid, and near valid inferences."¹³

¹¹ Graham Priest explains that "In his *Logic*, Hegel agreed with Kant that the antinomies, the arguments that end in contradiction, proceed by perfectly legitimate reasoning. And since a sound argument must have a true conclusion, there must be contradictions which are true. Hegel's contention that our concepts are contradictory, that there are true contradictions...Awkward as neologisms are, it will therefore be convenient to have a word for it. I will use 'dialetheia.' So, to avoid any confusion, let me say, right at the start, that a *dialetheia* is any true statement of the form: α and it is not the case that α ." See Graham Priest, *In Contradiction: A Study of the Transconsistent*. Second edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), pp. 3-4.

¹² *Ezumezu* is just one out of three systems of logic in Africa. These three logical systems are not bivalent in their nature as opposed to the Aristotelian logic. In other words, there are three values, to wit, true, false and the mixture of true and false. For a further discussion on Ezumezu, please see Jonathan O. Chimakonam, *Ezumezu: A System of Logic for African Philosophy and Studies* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2019), pp. 94-96.

¹³ Avicenna. "Avicenna's Treatise on Logic: Part One of Danesh-Name Alai (A Concise Philosophical Encyclopaedia and Autobiography)," edited and translated by Farhang Zabeeh, *Avicenna's Treatise on Logic* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), p. 14.

One could utilize this account for justifying the existence of God through logic on the ground of the idea of “not known but desired to be known” may refer to the divinity, while the idea of known may mean humans. Moreover, the way Avicenna calls it as “the science of logic” indicates his perception that logic is more like an academic discipline instead of a mere tool for thinking and reasoning. Therefore, Muslim philosophers should treat logic more like an academic discipline instead of a mere tool for reasoning and thinking. If humans can know God through the divine *dhat* and *şifat*, then *dhat* and *şifat* should not be the negation of negation as Wirman’s fourth premise above shows. Otherwise, humans do not have a chance to recognize such divine *şifat* that is both non-material and to be different from such non-material. For example, the Epicurean problem of evil provides a challenge against the existence of polytheistic gods by confronting some divine *dhat* and *şifat* instead of the divine essence.

Different words like *dhat* and *şifat* should contain different denotative and connotative meanings though they might share some constitutive elements. In contrast to Wirman, Nasution might wish to defense the bivalent nature of Arabic logic by taking *şifat* and *dhat* as the same thing for the sake of avoiding a contradiction. This kind of effort is not well known to those who are not familiar with the discourse of modern logic or to those who merely consider logic as no more than a tool for thinking and reasoning. Nasution seems to apply the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction to his academic investigation, and he might buy William of Soissons’ principle of *ex contradictione quodlibet* which says that from contradictions, anything follows (including some bad things). At this very point, they who learn the Aristotelian logic only are likely to confuse between the principle of non-contradiction and the principle of *ex contradictione quodlibet* though both principles came from two different persons. Had Nasution comprehended the modern logic well, he would have not considered *şifat* and *dhat* as one or the same just as to avoid the contradiction implied by a refusal against both the similarity and dissimilarity between *şifat* and *dhat*. In contrast to the Aristotelian one, the modern logic does not imply the contradiction of similarity and dissimilarity between *şifat* and *dhat* insofar as it is a token of *dialetheia* or a true contradiction.

Moreover, three samples in which Wirman identifies towards the way Nasution argue in favor of Mu'tazilah are more challenging. In Wirman's own words:

"First, Defining[sic!] theology the Mu'tazilan way and debasing as well as negating other models of theology systematically, he put himself not as an academic of theology but as an ideologist of Mu'tazilah....Second, To[sic!] support his argument for Mu'tazilah, Nasution used the named of Muhammad Abduh as the icon to personify the most rational of Mu'tazilah (the better version of Mu'tazilah or the more Mu'tazilah than Mu'tazilah itself...Third, Nasution tried to discredit and relegate the philosophical value of *Risalah Tauhid* (A Treatise on Tawhid), another work by Muhammad Abduh on theology."¹⁴

The first point leaves an impression as though an academic in theology should be neutral from ideology, and it entails that academia should not be value-laden. However, theology itself value-laden and ideological because it is indeed a study of God along with religious beliefs. Belief indeed has never been neutral from ideologies because it takes for granted the truth and existence of a subject. Therefore, we could not expect an academic in theology to be non-ideological. Objectivity in academia is due to the ruling paradigm in an academic discipline.

Furthermore, the second point demonstrates as though Nasution misleads Muslims by claiming Abduh was the stellar example of Mu'tazilah scholar. Wirman refuses this claim by making a statement that "At least for the past 30 years he managed to make the charm work, but a new critical-analytical study proves that the book *Hāshiyah* which he claimed as purely Mu'tazilan shows so factually and accurately that Muhammad Abduh is basically Ash'arian."¹⁵ Unfortunately, the reference is Wirman's own research report in 2011 entitled "The Testimony of Hasyiah on the Theology of Muhammad Abduh" at the Puslit IAIN Imam Bonjol, Padang. In other words, Wirman himself might slip into self-reference, and one could doubt the objectivity of his claim.

¹⁴ Wirman, "The Fallacies of Harun Nasution's Thought of Theology, pp. 246–67. Emphasizes originally come out from the original text.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 263.

The third point is full of prejudices and accusations, and it disregards Nasution's complete comment on the book that "Muhammad Abduh himself explains in the introduction of *Risalah Al-Tawhid* that he in this book avoids conflicts of opinion that happened between theological schools of thoughts in the past. He does not seem wanting to mess up with the mind of students in senior high schools by those disagreements."¹⁶ In other words, the way Wirman make paraphrase over Nasution's introduction is regrettably incomplete.

Moreover, Nasution himself proportionally writes, "do such similar system and theological views make Muhammad Abduh as a Mu'tazilah? The answer is it depends on what the qualifications of Mu'tazilah."¹⁷ Nasution furthermore argues the following: (1) if a Mu'tazilah buys the idea of free will (*qadariyah*), then Abduh was a Mu'tazilah; (2) if a Mu'tazilah denies the Divine Attributes for the sake of maintaining the Islamic monotheism, then Abduh was also a Mu'tazilah; 3) if a Mu'tazilah believes in monotheism, the Divine Justice, the fulfillment of God's promises and threats, and the middle position in between two positions; then Abduh was a Mu'tazilah.¹⁸

Among these three qualifications, Nasution acknowledges that only the third one is an internal qualification of Mu'tazilah as it is established by al-Khayyat.¹⁹ In other words, Nasution argues convincingly that Abduh was a Mu'tazila, and he sets the foundation of what constitutes a person as a Mu'tazila. In contrast to Nasution, Wirman does not establish a different qualification concerning what a Mu'tazilah is. Instead, Wirman accuses Nasution with some fallacies but the types themselves are obscure as I will discuss later. Wirman also ignores the political aspect of Nasution's theological thought about which Muzani expresses in the following sentences:

"Nasution's preference for Islam as ethical values rather than as a way of life, and for an elitist strategy rather than populist one, accommodates the real politics of the Indonesian New Order. It is the policy of the government not to implement formal or literal Islam in Indonesia; it accepts Islam as a form of ethical values. Nasution's preference is not Islamic law (*fiqh*), but the theology,

¹⁶ Harun Nasution, *Muhammad Abduh Dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah*, first edition (Jakarta: Penerbit Universitas Indonesia), 1987, p. 5.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 95.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 95-96.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 96.

philosophy and history of Islam...Nasution himself is a part of the state apparatus and it can therefore be expected that he should openly support the New Order idea of development or modernization...Yet it is wrong to say that Nasution is ideologically or intellectually coopted by the regime, since his concern with modern rational culture has been internalized from when he was young and living in Sumatra.”²⁰

In other words, Islamic ethical values refer to philosophy, theology and history of Islam but the Islamic jurisprudence does not belong to the same category because it is populist as well as dealing with a way of life. If we do agree that Islam is not merely a matter of religion and theology, then one should not ignore the political aspect of a theological account especially when politics is helpful to recognize some errors in reasoning whether it is fallacious, political humor or indeed cynicism against others. In the case of Nasution's theological thought, it is much better to conduct a logical examination based upon Avicenna's logic as I will discuss in the following section.

Avicenna's *Ḍarūrī*

To determine the truth or false value of a proposition is to pay attention to its essence. Essence contains the indispensable quality or the intrinsic nature of an entity. By investigating the essence of an object or a subject, one could determine the value of a proposition as to whether it is true or false. Avicenna determines the qualification of a true proposition as follows:

“According to Avicenna, some propositions are true only when one adds the condition ‘as long as the essence exists’; others are true only when the temporal conditions ‘at some times’ or ‘at some times but not permanently (= continuously)’ are added or when the condition ‘as long as it is S’ is added, for instance, when one says ‘A moving thing is changing as long as it exists’; this is false, while the sentence ‘A moving thing changes as long as it moves,’ i.e., the same sentence with the condition ‘as long as it is S,’ is true.”²¹

²⁰ Saiful Muzani, “Mu'tazilah Theology and the Modernization of the Indonesian Muslim Community: Intellectual Portrait of Harun Nasution,” *Studia Islamika* 1, 1 (1994): pp. 91–131, p. 123, and p. 129–130.

²¹ Avicenna in Chatti, *Arabic Logic from Al-Fārabi to Averroes*, p. 45.

These requirements of truthfulness imply a few things. First, the Aristotelian principle of identity (such as A is A, and it cannot be non-A) is true if the intrinsic nature of A does exist. Second, the principle of identity is contingent to its own indispensable quality. Third, the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction for which strengthening the principle of identity does not apply to everything because the truthfulness of a proposition depends on the existence of its own essence.

The proposition that “a moving thing is changing as long as it exists” is false because it appears as if existence determines essence. On the contrary, essence determines existence because the former has a wider scope of meaning (viz., the indispensable quality of an entity) compared to the latter (viz., the state of living). Therefore, one could argue that existence is *ipso facto* a part of essence. Indeed, essence determines the value of a proposition, and it requires a proposition to reveal the essence. This view could assist us to identify the second weakest premise viz., Wirman’s third premise concerning attributes and individual existence. On this occasion, he misses Avicenna’s account for which attributes are the extension of an individual insofar as this individual exists. Once the individual deceases, his or her attributes would be gone or bequeath to his or her descendants or others. Chatti however, discovers that the Avicenna’s proposition concerning *ḍarūrī* (the condition of “as long as it exists”), is only to be found in his *Maṭīq al-Mashriqiyīn*.²² However, Chatti’s claim is not totally accurate given that Avicenna also discusses it in another book such as *al-Najāt: al-Maṭīq (Deliverance: Logic)*. In this book, Avicenna describes that there are three types of premises viz., *muṭlaqa* (absolute), *ḍarūriyya* (necessary) and *mumkina* (possible).²³ Moreover, he also establishes six divisions of necessity predication as follows:

Manners	Qualifications	Examples
First	“the predication is eternal”	‘God is living’
Second	“[type of Necessity is that in which the predication exists] for as long as the substance of the	‘Every man is by necessity an animal’

²² Ibid.

²³ Avicenna, *Avicenna’s Deliverance: Logic*, edited by Michael Cook, Everett Rowson, and Robert Wisnovsky, translated by Asad Q. Ahmed, second impression (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, Studies in Islamic Philosophy, 2014), p. 32.

	subject exists, i.e. does not pass away”	
Third	“it [has the following condition:] ‘as long as the substance of the subject is described by a description that is posited along with [this substance]’ and not ‘for as long as the substance of the subject exists””	‘By Necessity, every white [thing] has a color that dilates sight’
Fourth	“it [has the following condition:] ‘as long as the predication exists.’ It has no Necessity without this condition”	‘By Necessity, Zayd is walking, for as long as he is walking’
Fifth	“well the Necessity obtains for a certain specific inevitable [span of] time”	‘By Necessity, the moon eclipses’
Sixth	“[that in which the predication is] by Necessity for some unspecified [span of] time”	‘By Necessity, every man breathes’

Source: Avicenna. *Avicenna's Deliverance: Logic*. Edited by Michael Cook, Everett Rowson, and Robert Wisnovsky. Translated by Asad Q. Ahmed. Second impression. Studies in Islamic Philosophy. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 29-30.

These six manners of necessity predication are indispensable for exposing the level of truth of a proposition. It is also apparent that only the first manner whose example does not literally put the word ‘necessity’ in its own composition of examples. It might encourage us to think that only the eternal predication does have the quality of absolute or *mutlaqa* while, in contrast, the rest five manners reflect the quality of Necessary or *daruriyya*. However, this is not the case because Avicenna himself writes, “We say that the Necessity predication occurs in six manners and that each of these has [some] share in perpetuity (*dawām*).”²⁴ This notion of perpetuity implies further questions such as: how could the superhuman controlling power like God could share the feature or quality of perpetuity with His own creatures (as it is available in the examples of each Necessity predication)? Suppose that the

²⁴ Ibid., p. 29.

theory of emanation could potentially shed some light on this occasion. Then, one may pose a further question such as: what are some differences and similarities between the divine and transcendent perpetuity on the one hand; and the non-divine and immanent perpetuity on the other hand? These two questions require a different investigation, but it might be enough to say that insofar as God grants a permission, then creatures have some shares of perpetuity. In other words, the first manner is an inevitable part of the necessity predication even though its example does not literally contain the noun 'necessity.' The composition 'God is living' makes an impression as though God is bound by time due to the present continuous tense of such example. On the contrary, time does not bind God as the Holy Qur'an might suggest in Chapter al-'Aşr.

Moreover, the second manner is unique due to its composition. Its example shows that the necessity predication is located in the middle of a sentence as opposed to the examples of the third, fourth, fifth and sixth manners whose predication is situated at the beginning of each sentence. The qualification of the second manner gives a clue for this query. Given that the existence of the substance of the subject determines the existence of predication; it is inevitable for putting the subject first prior to the predication within the composition of the example. However, Avicenna claims that there is a similarity between the first and second manners. In his own words:

"The first and this second [types of necessities] are the two used and intended when it is said, 'a necessary affirmation or negation' and, in a certain fashion, a single meaning is common to both. [And this meaning is] 'necessity, as long as the substance of the subject exists, either perpetually, if the substance exists perpetually, or for some time, if the substance may pass away.'"²⁵

In other words, both first and second manners may share the same meaning of either perpetual necessity on immortal subjects; or temporary necessity on mortal subjects. Last but not least, both manners could also reflect affirmative and negative Necessary.

In contrast to the second manner, the qualification of the third manner has a direct opposition in terms of its qualification. The third manner urges that a description that is postulated along with a substance; does depict the substance of a subject. 'A color that dilates

²⁵ Avicenna. *Avicenna's Deliverance*, p. 29.

sight' is a postulated description while the subject is 'every white [thing].' Without such description, the subject would have shown no substance, or the substance might not be representative with respect to the subject. According to Avicenna, "this Necessity persists not for as long as the substance exists, but [for as long as it is] described by whiteness."²⁶ Given that whiteness does not ever change its description, the necessity does exist forever. However, the nuance of perpetuity would not be existing forever if whiteness or other subjects change its description in the future.

The example of the fourth manner seems repetitive because it puts the word 'walking' twice in the composition. On this occasion, Avicenna merely explains that "For it is not possible for him not to be walking while he walks."²⁷ On the one hand, it emphasizes consistency as much as leaving no chance for the possibility of paradoxes, a true contradiction or *dialetheia* in the modern logic. On the other hand, although Avicenna belongs to the chamber of peripatetic philosophy, he still needs to explain further towards what sort of subjects and predicates should fall into the fourth manner of the necessity predication? Why is it highly necessary to put an emphasize like 'for as long as he is walking'? Does this composition of 'by necessity, Zayd is sleeping, for as long as he is sleeping'; belong to the fourth manner though he might also be a sleep-talker as well as a sleep-walker? My point is that sleeping could involve other activities such as walking and talking to some people but Avicenna's qualification of the fourth manner of Necessity predication; does obstruct other possible activities during sleeping for the sake of non-contradiction.

Both fifth and six manners of necessity predication are relatively in opposition to one another. On the one hand, the fifth manner requires an exact, specific time. On the other hand, the sixth manner does not always need it. However, two provided examples could refer to a specific time with respect to its temporal duration of human life as it is a token of the biological activity and perhaps the social phenomenon; or the moon eclipse as it is an individual instance of the natural phenomenon. If time is relative to space, then distinguishing the fifth and the six manners on the ground of whether its time is specific and exact or not; seems to be meaningless. Just as much as differentiating

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 30.

both manners based on whether its subject is part of natural phenomenon or the social ones. Having said that, both given examples do not mention the time span though the qualification of the fifth manner requires it. Thereby, mentioning the time span in both fifth and sixth manners are not a must.

On the matter of divine attributes, *ḍarūrī* might not apply given that all Muslim philosophers agree upon the eternal existence of God. I must emphasize that this notion of “eternal” is a token of opposition against the idea of “as long as”. Unfortunately, Wirman’s third premise does not distinguish between human attributes and divine attributes, and both accounts ignore Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī*. Had Wirman addressed Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī*, he could have had a greater chance to expose Nasution’s potential fallacies, if any. Consider this following example:

Wirman’s third premise : attributes are the extension of an individual existence

Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī* : as long as it exists

Therefore : attributes are the extension of an individual existence as long as it extends

The conclusion specifies the essence of individual existence by inserting Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī*. It also means that attributes could be free from an individual existence once it stops to extending. This point is coherent with the fact that a deceased person could bequeath his or her personal wealth to others. To insert Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī* is to acknowledge the dependency of existence to essence. Here, Nasution’s potential fallacy is located at his linguistic expression which ignores Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī* by which I will discuss in the next section. Muslims scholars should be aware of this metaphysical reflection especially when they conduct an investigation on logic. Otherwise, Muslim scholars lengthen the colonization of Aristotelian logic, but they should develop an independent system of logic just as what Avicenna has set the foundation.

However, Avicenna’s *ḍarūrī* is also problematic for some reasons. First, although Avicenna believes in the principle of non-contradiction, his account of *ḍarūrī* provides a space for the existence of some true contradictions. For instance, the proposition of “Qusthan is a teacher”

is true in Avicenna's *darūrī* if the composition is "Qusthan is a lecturer as long as he is alive". In contrast, the proposition is false without the conditional situation of "as long as he is alive". In fact, my future descendants would consider the proposition of "Qusthan was a lecturer" as a true proposition without Avicenna's *darūrī*. Therefore, Avicenna's *darūrī* is consistent with *dialetheia*.

Second, if Avicenna's logic only deals with the propositional logic, and the linguistic authority is embedded on the native speakers of any language; then Avicenna's *darūrī* does submit to each generation who speaks Arabic, and they who develop logic or *mantiq*. Just as *darūrī* puts some limits as to the whether the truth value of a proposition is absolute, necessary or merely possible. Thereby, determining the level of truth is important but it is not always be the case, given that logic in our time has been developing into symbols and numbers. On this occasion, Avicenna's *darūrī* might not work in the modern logic of symbols and numbers.

Aristotelian Fallacies

There are a lot of types of fallacies nowadays in which Wirman could have claimed in his criticism against Nasution. Yet, I wish to focus on Aristotle's ideas of fallacies as it is available in his *Sophistical Refutations*. Sophistical refutations mean "what appear to be refutations but are really fallacies instead."²⁸ In other words, one could misuse fallacies in such a way in order to develop a refutation that may look sophisticated. In *Sophistical Refutations*, Aristotle divides fallacies based upon their dependence and independence towards languages as follows:

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
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²⁸ Aristotle. "Sophistical Refutations," Jonathan Barnes (ed), W. A. Pickard-Cambridge (trans), *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation* One volume digital edition 2:619–97. Bollingen Series, LXXI. Princeton (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), §164a20, p. 619.

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
1	Homonymy ²⁹ “a deduction showing that this is the number of ways in which we might fail to mean the same thing by the same names or accounts”	‘Those who know grasp things; for it is those who know their letters who grasp what is dictated to them.’	Accident based fallacy “one that which depends upon accident...occur whenever any attribute is claimed to belong in a like manner to a thing and to its accident”	‘if Coriscus is different from a man, he is different from himself’
2	Ambiguity “has a double meaning”	‘I wish that you the enemy may capture.’	Qualification related Fallacy “the use of an expression without qualification or not without qualification but with some qualification of respect, or place, or time, or relation...occur whenever an expression used in a particular sense is	‘Suppose an Indian to be black all over, but white in respect of his teeth; then he is both white and not white’

²⁹ Aristotle believes that both ambiguity and homonymy share a similar set of varieties. He argues that “There are three varieties of these homonymies and ambiguities: one when either the account or the name properly signifies more than one thing, e.g., mole and bank; one when by custom we use them so; thirdly when words that have a simple sense taken alone have more than one meaning in combination, e.g., ‘knowing letters.’” Unfortunately, Aristotle does not give an example for the second variety. See Aristotle, “Sophistical Refutations, p. 624.

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
			taken as though it were used without qualification”	
3	Combination based Fallacy	‘A man can walk while sitting, and can write while not writing’	Ignorance based Fallacy	‘the same thing is both double and not double—for two is double of one, but not double of three’
	“For the meaning is not the same if one divides the words and if one combines them”		“that which depends upon ignorance of what refutation is...because something is left out in their definition...to confute it from the propositions granted, necessarily, without including in the reckoning the original point to be proved, in the same respect and relation and manner and time in which it was asserted”	
4	Division related Fallacy	‘the propositions that 5 is 2 and 3, and even	Consequence based Fallacy	‘since after rain the ground is wet, we

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
5	Accent based Fallacy “For the same phrase would not be thought always to have the same meaning when divided and when combined” “An argument depending upon accent is not easy to construct in unwritten discussion; in written discussions and in poetry it is easier...Instances such as these, then, turn upon the accentuation”	and odd, and that the greater is equal’ ‘In the passage about Agamemnon’s dream, they say that Zeus did not himself say ‘We grant him the fulfilment[<i>sidi</i>] of his prayer’, but that he bade the dream grant it’	consequence...arises because people suppose that the relation of consequence is convertible” Assumption based Fallacy “that which depends upon assuming the point at issue...they appear to refute because men lack the power to keep their eyes at once upon what is the same and what is different”	suppose that if the ground is wet, it has been raining;’ ‘Melissus’ argument that the universe is infinite, assumes that the universe has not come to be’
6	Form of Expression related Fallacy	‘a masculine thing by a feminine termination, or a feminine thing by a masculine’	Cause related Fallacy “stating as cause what is not the cause... occurs	‘the soul and life are not the same; for if coming-to-be is contrary to perishing, then a particular

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
	“what is really different is expressed in the same form...when a quality is expressed by a termination proper to quantity or vice versa, or what is active by a passive word, or a state by an active word”		whenever what is not a cause is inserted in the argument, as though the refutation depended upon it. This kind of thing happens in deductions <i>ad impossibile</i> ; for in these we are bound to demolish one of the premisses”	form of perishing will have a particular form of coming-to-be as its contrary: now death is a particular form of perishing and is contrary to life; life, therefore, is a coming-to-be, and to live is to come-to-be’
7	-	-	Question based Fallacy “the making of more than one question into one...occur whenever the plurality is undetected and a single answer is returned as if to a single question...But in some cases it is less easy, and then people treat the question as one, and either confess their defeat by	‘Does the earth consist of sea, or the sky?’

No	Linguistic Fallacies	Examples	Non-linguistic Fallacies	Examples
			failing to answer the question, or are exposed to an apparent refutation”	

Source: This table is an excerpt from Aristotle. “Sophistical Refutations.” In *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, edited by Jonathan Barnes, translated by W. A. Pickard-Cambridge, One volume digital edition., 2:619–97. Bollingen Series, LXXI. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984, §165^b25-168^a1, pp. 622-630.

In short, Aristotle describes that there are six linguistic fallacies and seven non-linguistic fallacies. Thus, I strive to argue that none of this has complied to Wirman’s accusation against Nasution. Given that Wirman’s article entitled “The Fallacies of Harun Nasution’s Thought of Theology,” Wirman himself should have mentioned at least two types of fallacies. Unfortunately, Wirman has failed to identify any specific type of fallacies.

Wirman’s first premise deals with the potentials of Nasution’s inaccuracy and inconsistency. If this is the case, then to which fallacies that Nasution might fall into? Both inconsistency and inaccuracy might have something to do with the form of expression related fallacy insofar as Wirman could have shown that Nasution had confused either similarities or differences between Muhammad Abduh’s and Mu’tazilah’s thoughts.

His second premise concerns with the issue of Nasution had disdained Abduh’s *Risalah Taubid*. Wirman also does not address any Aristotelian fallacy to argue in favor of his own second premise, and the Aristotelian fallacies themselves do not address any clue concerning lack of respect. Yet Wirman might suggest a specific type through his claim that, “This makes it clear that Nasution contradicted his own ideas by making *Risalah Taubid* as his main reference on important philosophical-theological subjects instead of *Hashiyah*.”³⁰ Even if Wirman’s claim is valid, he still needs to prove that Nasution’s contradiction is wrong. Validity does not always lead to truth. Otherwise, such contradiction could be a true one or a *dialetheia*.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 261.

Moreover, Wirman's third premise could potentially address the assumption-based fallacy due to the connotation of attributes and individual existence. However, Wirman himself does not specifically argue in favor of this fallacy. Had he claimed the assumption-based fallacy, one could have refuted it by demonstrating a correct assumption instead of a wrong one. Perhaps, Wirman wishes to downplay the possibility of any counter-criticism against his accusation by not mentioning a specific type of fallacy. On the contrary, Nasution's claim is accountable especially when he exposes the foundations for arguing in favor of Abduh was a Mu'tazilah either on the ground of external or internal standards and measurements.³¹ Both studies of logic and theology need this kind of accountability for the sake of check and balance. Thereby, claiming an academic as committing fallacies without stipulating its type; is equal to accusing a criminal as performing crimes but no specific illegal act.

Wirman's fourth premise is the most potential criticism against Nasution in terms of fallacies. Yet, Wirman does not charge Nasution with the accident-based fallacy because Nasution does not think that Abduh establish a distinction between the divine *ṣifat* and *dhat*. Consequently, there is no chance for accusing the accident-based fallacy because Nasution has never been establishing a hypothetical syllogism such as 'if *ṣifat* is different from *dhat*, then God is different from Himself.' This line of argument could have given Wirman a chance for accusing Nasution with the accident-based fallacy. Wirman does not prove it from within Nasution's texts, nevertheless. On the contrary, Nasution's discussion on Abduh seems to imply that 'if God distinguishes between His own *dhat* and His own *ṣifat*, then God is different from Himself.' This is one good reason of why Abduh, Mu'tazilah and Nasution do not think that there is a difference between *dhat* and *ṣifat*. This conjecture is coherent with Nasution statement that, "In *Risalah* he mentions God's *ṣifat*. Whether those *ṣifat* are part of *dhat* or something else than *dhat*; he explains that this thing is located beyond human ability to comprehend it. However, he is prone to a view that *ṣifat* is part of the divine *dhat* though he does not explicitly say so."³² In other words, Abduh does not make a clear

³¹ Nasution, *Muhammad Abduh Dan Teologi Rasional Mu'tazilah*, pp. 95-96.

³² Ibid., p. 71.

division between the divine *dbat* and *şifat*, and this point indeed invalidates Wirman's fourth premise.

Instead of proving Nasution's potential fallacies, Wirman's fifth premise rather falls into the ignorance-based fallacy. Wirman fallaciously argues in favor of the limit of logic in terms of its scope while ignoring the distinction between the Aristotelian logic and its modern counterpart. Moreover, Wirman does not discuss Aristotle or other Peripatetic philosophers such as Avicenna, Averroes nor al-Farabi; while accusing Nasution with fallacies. Thus, Wirman hastily claims that logic cannot understand the contradiction between the sameness and the difference of the divine *dbat* and *şifat* under the banner of Ash'arian model of theology. Instead, Wirman has broken the Aristotelian principle of non-contradiction as well as committing the ignorance-based fallacy. If the contradiction were true, then Wirman should have justified it based upon the modern logic of *dialetheia*; rather than putting the Ash'arian theology beyond the domain of logic.

Accusing Nasution with fallacies could be much more complicated rather than posing a critical question such as 'does the divine *dbat* consist of different set of qualities such as the ninety-nine *şifat*?' However, this rhetorical question would lead one to the question-based fallacy especially when the answer is in a single line of hypothetical syllogism such as: if it does, then *dbat* and *şifat* are one and the same. In contrast, if it does not, then *dbat* and *şifat* are two different ideas or concepts in Islamic theology. Having said that, one who poses such critical question should address the underlying principle in order to justify the question itself. Otherwise, the question is no more than an example of the question-based fallacy.

Two fallacies should have been available in Wirman's article, provided that its title expresses the plural noun of "fallacies". If and only if there is none of which Wirman's charge of fallacies against Nasution belong into one out of those thirteen fallacies, then there might be a potential mistake in the sense of what Wirman meant by fallacies is solecism,³³ as indicated by Wirman's fourth premise. Or it might also be a refutation,³⁴ as embedded in his first premise. Technically speaking, Wirman's article does not discuss the Aristotelian

³³ It is a grammatical mistake in writing.

³⁴ It is in the sense of merely proving the falsity of a statement.

logic nor its fallacies, and his reference puts nothing on Aristotle's books concerning logic. Wirman unjustly accuses fallacies against Nasution but he unfortunately ignores the discourse of logic and fallacies itself.

Conclusion

Wirman does not specify the type of fallacy he puts forward against Nasution. The charge of fallacies with no specification is like claiming an individual to be morally wrong but no further explanation concerning the type of his or her moral hazard. Moreover, Wirman sets his accusation in the plural noun of "fallacies" as though there are several kinds of fallacies Nasution might have fallen into. Having discussed Wirman's main premise against Nasution along with some Aristotelian fallacies, I thus acquire two answers for my research questions.

First, there is no single type of fallacies, especially the thirteen Aristotelian fallacies, that might be coherent with Wirman's main premise. I find that premise number three, four and five are highly necessary to guide us to arrive at Nasution's mistakes though they are not adequate to be called as fallacies. Second, to support my finding, I have examined each of Wirman's premise whether they might conform to the Aristotelian thirteen fallacies. However, these fallacious examples are not available in Wirman's article, and it tells us that what he claims as a set of fallacies against Nasution is no more than pseudo-fallacies. Having said that, Muslim scholars should pay attention not only to Aristotelian logic and fallacies but also to Avicenna's accounts of *daririjya* in order to comprehend Abduh and Mu'tazila in a much better way instead of being captivated by the traditional logic that is bivalent in its nature.

To those who are well trained in philosophy especially logic, accusing fallacies to others is the least thing that one might want to do in debates or discussions. Perhaps, the claim on fallacies is less often to appear in philosophy compared to the claim of establishing a perfect syllogism or demonstration. Claims of fallacies do not characterize both ancient and contemporary discussions on philosophy except when it involves those who are not well trained in logic. People in philosophy are aware that any charge of fallacy must entail an obligation to specify the type. In contrast, those whose academic background are neither philosophy nor logic are likely to abandon this

sort of courtesy. It is not good to unjustly accuse someone of committing fallacies but those fallacies have no types. This what seems to happen with Wirman's accusation against Nasution. []

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