Al-Attas's Concept of Reality: Empirical and Non-Empirical

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Abstract *: The concept of 'reality' is one of the most debatable discourse by philosophers, especially between Western and Islamic philosophers. One of Muslim philosophers' criticism which addressed to Western philosophy is their tendency to restrict the only meaning of reality to empirical beings. That makes metaphysical beings like truth (haqīqah), reason ('aql), revelation (wahy), also God to be reduced merely as 'concept' (grand narrative). Therefore, this paper would like to examine the Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' thought on 'reality'. This study focuses on the classification of reality and the relationship between physical and metaphysical reality. This philosophical study was carried out with a descriptive and critical-analysis method among al-Attas' works. This study conclude that reality is not restricted to merely rational-empirical beings; but further to the metaphysical reality that affirms the existence of God and its relationship with nature and humans are also examined in it. This study concludes that reality; both physical and metaphysical are actually classified as objects of knowledge, which*

imply to the perception of human judgment on the 'truth value' of a being.

Keywords : *Al-Attas, Reality, Empirical, Non-Empirical.*

Abstrak : *Konsep tentang 'realitas' merupakan salah satu tema yang sering diperdebatkan oleh para filosof, khususnya antara filosof Barat dan Islam. Salah satu kritik filosof muslim yang diarahkan pada filsafat Barat adalah kecenderungan mereka membatasi makna realitas pada hal-hal yang empiris saja. Hal tersebut menjadikan hal-hal metafisik seperti kebenaran (haqīqah), rasio ('aql), wahyu, hingga Tuhan hanya sebatas 'konsep' (grand narrative) semata. Makalah ini bertujuan menganalisa konsep Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas tentang realitas. Kajian ini difokuskan pada klasifikasi realitas dan hubungan antara realitas fisik dan metafisik. Kajian filosofis ini dilakukan dengan metode deskriptif dan analisis-kritis atas karya-karya al-Attas. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa realitas tidak terbatas pada segala wujud yang bersifat rasional-empiris semata; melainkan lebih jauh pada realitas metafisik yang mengafirmasi adanya Tuhan serta hubungannya dengan alam dan manusia turut dikaji di dalamnya. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa realitas; baik fisik maupun metafisik sejatinya tergolong sebagai obyek ilmu, yang berimplikasi pada persepsi penilaian manusia atas 'nilai kebenaran' suatu yang wujud.*

Kata Kunci : *Al-Attas, Realitas, Empiris, Non Empiris*

A. Introduction

The study of reality has received much attention lately. The debate, usually about the meaning of 'reality' itself. For example, thoughts about reality that are based on secular and liberal[1] worldviews often debate and doubt God as a 'metaphysical'[2] reality that can be 'known'. We can read such things from Auguste Comte's postivistic thinking about the three stages of

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[1] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Worldview Islam Dan Kapitalisme Barat', *TSAQAFAH* 9, no. 1 (2013): 15; 'An Evaluation of Violence from Islam's Perspective', *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 2015.

[2] Rotraud Wielandt and Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future', *Die Welt Des Islams* 27, no. 1/3 (1987): 133; Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 'Islamization of Contemporary Knowledge: A Brief Comparison Between al-Attas and Fazlur Rahman', *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 2, no. 1 (1997): 1–19.

human development;[3] or also the 'death of God' version of Nietzsche.[4] According to Peter Ramus, 'modern' means more; superiority and development, the opposite is 'primitive'.[5] That is, the Western view affirms God, but only at the level of metaphysical ideas that are 'fuzzy' and speculative; also unscientific.[6] Thus, Western epistemology views that the object of science is limited to physical reality. As a result, authority and intuition are reduced to mere sensory experience.[7] Then all things that are not sensed are considered as 'nothing'. Finally, science is considered as 'neutral' from value, or value-free.[8]

In fact, the study of contemporary philosophy of science shows that scientific activities are 'born' through research programs based on metaphysical basic assumptions; namely based on ideology even though theology.[9] So, of course the things that follow behind the assumption; both the methodology, the framework and the research program, of course, can have a metaphysical style that projects the worldview of a civilization about the so-called 'reality' itself. In addition, the concept of 'science' cannot be reduced to rational-empirical matters alone; because such actions include secularization; i.e. severing the relationship between God as the 'true source

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[3] Auguste Comte, *Introduction to Positive Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988).

[4] Mohammad Muslih and Haryanto, 'Konsep Tuhan Nietzsche Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Pemikiran Liberal', *KALIMAH* 16, no. 2 (2018).

[5] Ferid Muhic, 'Postmodern Theory and Its Two Major Self-Deceptions', *Al-Shajarah; Journal of ISTAC* 5, no. 1 (2000): 5; Alain Finkielkraut, *The Defeat of The Mind, Translated by Judith Friedlander* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 18.

[6] Rene Guenon, 'A Material Civilization', in *The Betrayal of Tradition; Essays on the Spiritual Crisis of Modernity*, ed. John Herlihy (world Wisdom inc, 2005); John Herlihy, ed., *The Essential Rene Guenon; Metaphysics, Tradition, and the Crisis of Modernity* (Indiana: World Wisdom Inc and Shopia Perennnis, 2009), 28–29.

[7] Hans Daiber, 'The Way from God's Wisdom to Science in Islam: Modern Discussions and Historical Background', in *Islamic Science and the Contemporary World: Islamic Science in Contemporary Educations*, ed. Baharudin Ahmad (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC-IIUM, 2008), 8.

[8] Martin Carrier, 'Values and Objectivity in Science: Value-Ladenness, Pluralism and the Epistemic Attitude', *Science and Education*, 2013.

[9] Mohammad Muslih, 'Metodologi Ilmu: Dari Teori Hingga Teologi', *KALAM,* Vol. 7, no. 2 (2013): 293; Mohammad Muslih, 'Rekonstruksi Metodologi Pengembangan Sains Berbasis Agama', *KALAM,* Vol. 11, no. 2 (2017): 267.

of knowledge' and humans as the 'recipient of knowledge' as well as the subjects of knowledge that are 'able to know' due to the power of God.[10]

Scientific discussion of reality according to Richard Rorty, written by Y.P. Kalumbang focuses more on the empirical aspects of reality itself. Whereas the non-empirical is only referred to as 'idea'; that is, it does not materialize in the perceived empirical reality. Although, these ideas are still being discussed; while looking for empirical evidence about it.[11] This has been done by Monima Chadha, Nick Trakakis, also Whitley Kaufman; which was then concluded by Ankur Barua that the non-empirical reality always experiences endless debate.[12] Of course, the conversation has not been able to bring together the 'meaning' and the classification of reality itself; whereas, Islam wants us to believe in metaphysical things like God, angels, and others; which is certainly not rooted deep in the traditions of Western epistemology, especially modern science.

One of the figures who give severe criticism on the epistemology of modern science is Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. He is an expert who mastered various disciplines such as theology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, and Malay literature. Moreover, he is a prolific writer and authoritative that has contributed much to the education of Islam and Malay civilization. He is a founder of ISTAC (Institute for the Islamic Thought and Civilization) one of his major concerns is epistemology and its problems which are mostly influenced by Western; philosophy of science, science, and ideology that comes from Western culture and civilization. al-Attas said; that Western civilization produces 'the intellectual confusion'.[13] Intellectual confusion emerges as a result of the changes and prohibition of keywords usage projecting worldview derived from revelation. As a consequence, this intellectual confusion destructs morality, as well as culture, which is symptoms of the decline of religious knowledge, as well as faith and values.[14]

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[10] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Knowledge and Knowing in Islam: A Comparative Study between Nursi and al-Attas', *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah*, 2018; Zaprulkhan Zaprulkhan, 'Membangun Relasi Agama dan Ilmu', *KALAM*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2013).

[11] Yuventia Prisca Kalumbang, 'Kritik Pragmatisme Richard Rorty Terhadap Epistemologi Barat Modern', *Jurnal Filsafat*, 2018.

[12] Ankur Barua, 'The Reality and the Verifiability of Reincarnation', *Religions*, 2017.

[13] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 1995, 5, https://ibnughony.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/prolegomena-to-the-metaphysics-of-islam-syed-muhammad-naquib-al-attas.pdf.

[14] *Ibid.,* 15.

In other words, the most fundamental issues nowadays in epistemology is the western interpretation of reality, which excludes the aspect of metaphysic call reality where God is the most important aspect.

Then this particular issue, the most fundamental difference between Islam and modern philosophy and science revolves around an understanding of reality and truth. Due to the different understandings of reality, so understanding of truth becomes different.[15] The definition has a very big influence in understanding the science and also the value of epistemology. Finally, it also impacts fundamental differences in the understanding of human nature. With a simpler expression, interpretation of reality will determine the human worldview, if this understanding is wrong, so the worldview is generated will be wrong too.[16]

Therefore, a themed study of Islamic philosophy with a critical analysis of the meaning of 'reality' certainly needs to be elaborated, especially considering that modern science and scientific activities (especially if we agree with science with theological features) require a solid basis and basic assumptions in seeing and understanding the meaning of reality itself. To find al-Attas' formulation of reality, descriptive methods and critical analysis will be carried out on al-Attas' works that specifically discuss metaphysics; contained in it a discussion of reality. This background is what brings the focus of this study to explore the meaning of reality, both physical and metaphysical, as well as the classification and relationship between reality; along with the perspective of contemporary philosophers who connect physical and metaphysical realities in the study of Islamic philosophy. Discussion of reality; especially in the view of al-Attas considered capable of 'bridging' the confusion of connecting religion and modern science, at least it can be endeavored to be offered as a nowaday framework for Islamic thinking.

B. Interpretation and Meaning of Reality as *Haq* and *Haqīqah*

The term 'reality' in Islamic intellectual tradition understood as serveral terms: literally, its mean 'being' (*wujūd*); when it related with

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[15] Ismail al-Alam, 'Karir dan Karya-karya al-Attas', *Islamia: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Peradaban Islam*, Metafisika, Epistemologi, Bahasa, Pendidikan, Sejarah Alam Melayu, XI, no. 2 (2017): 7–15; Albar Hasibuan Adetary, 'Ta'dib Sebagai Konsep Pendidikan: Telaah Atas Pemikiran Naquib Al-Attas', *At-Turas*, 2016.

[16] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 125.

'truth', it means *al-ḥaq* and *al-ḥaqīqah.* Al-Tahanawi in the "*Kasyāf Isṭilāḥāt al-Funūn wa al-'Ulūm*" mentions that *al-ḥaq* has a fairly broad field of meaning, besides being interpreted as truth, reality, certainty, honesty, *al-ḥaq* can also be interpreted as a provision that occurs continuously, firmly, steadily, and connotes to eternity.[17] Agreeing with al-Tahanawi, Khalil Ibn Ahmad in "*Mu'jām al-'Ain*" means *ḥaq* as opposed to falsehood. Therefore, vanity actions are often called sneaking out of reality in general. Because in reality, humans want goodness. Whereas *al-ḥaqīqah* has the meaning as everything that shows the truth about something and its obligation, "*mā yusīru ilaihi ḥaq al-amri wa wujūbuhu*".[18] 'Abdurrazzaq al-Husaini in *Tāj al-'Urs* describes *al-ḥaq* as one of the names of Allah SWT, while *al-ḥaqīqah* is interpreted as the effort of the human mind to understand the meaning of "*tabādīr al-dhihni ilā fahmi al-ma'nā*".[19]

Furthermore, Ibn Mandzur in *lisān al-'Arab* interpreted *al-ḥaq* as mentioned before, but for him, *al-ḥaqiqah* is about what brings to truth and obligation with it.[20] Whereas in another explanation al-Jurjani means *al-ḥaq* with something fixed, it is not justified to be denied or rejected; because of its fixed and unchanging nature, "*al-tsābit al-ladẓī lā yasūghu inkāruhu*", while the *ḥaqīqah* means what it is, "*mā bihi syaī' huwa huwa*".[21]

Therefore, terminologically, al-ḥaq according to al-Jurjani means assessment of something, and in accordance with reality. Besides this meaning, al-Jurjani also interpreted al-ḥaq into several meanings: *First* as opposed to the word from *bāṭil. Secondly* as one of the important names of the names of Allah SWT. The *three* accuracies of the word "*sidq al-ḥadīth*". *Fourth*, belief after doubt "*al-yaqīn ba'da al-syak.*" *Fifth*, the provision "*tsābit*". *The sixth* is the compatibility of reality "*wāqi*" with the belief

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[17] Muhammad bin Aliy bin al-Qadhi Muhammad Hamid bin Muhammad Shabir al-Faruqiy al-Hanafiy Al-Tahanawiy, *Mausu'atu Kasyaf Ishtilahat al-Funun Wa al-'Ulum Tahqiq Rafiq al-'Ajam Wa Aliy Dahruj* (Beirut: Maktabah Lubnan Nasyirun Publisher, 1996): 682.

[18] Al-Khalil Ibn Ahmad Abu 'Abdurrahman, *Mu'jām al-'Ain Tahqiq Mahdi al-Makhzumi* (Dar al-Maktabah al-Hilal, n.d.): 6.

[19] Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn 'Abd Razaq Al-Khusaini, *Tāj al-'Ursmin Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (Dar al-Hidayah, n.d.): 166.

[20] Muhammad bin Mukrim bin Ali Jamal al-Din Ibn Mandzur, *Lisan Al-'Arab*, ed. Daar Shadir Publisher, 3rd ed. (Beirut, n.d.): 52.

[21] 'Ali Ibn Muhammad 'Ali al-Zain al-Sharif Al-Jurjani, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt Tahqiq Jama'ah Min al-'Ulama'"* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutb al-'Ilmiyyah Bairut, 1983): 89.

"*i'tiqād*," like the word *ṣidq* which means conformity with belief and reality. It is clear that the word ḥaqīqah means: something is used that is placed in accordance with its proper position "*mā uqīru fī al-Istiʿmāl ʿalā aṣli wadʾihi.*" So here, indirectly *ḥaqīqah* has a corresponding meaning to justice; that is to put something in its place, consistent, not excessive, and not negligent.[22]

The philosophers such Ibn Sina call 'reality' as 'being'; and al-Kindi who called *haqq* as 'the truth'.[23] That is, there has been an awareness of Muslim philosophers that something that manifests also has a 'truth value'. The two terms are also one of the Attributes of Allah; namely *Wujūd* and *al-Haqq*, which we also understand as 'Absolute Reality' or 'Necessary Being'. Of course, Absolute Reality or Necessary Being are the First Cause for the non-absolute or contingen beings.[24] God, too, has interacted with humans by "sealing" the first covenant (*mīthāq*), which is when the human soul is in a pre-physical state. At the same time, humans already 'know' and know God as *Rabb* (through the spiritual faculty of 'soul').[25]

Identical to that, according to the *Ikhwan al-Safa*, reality itself is said to have influence in constructing science. For him, a correct understanding of reality will give birth to words and actions that are in accordance with knowledge.[26] This means when knowledge of reality is not intact and is partial, then what is related to opinion and action will be incomplete and incomprehensive. Here, reality seems to be the basis of the "worldview" perspective to subsequently produce knowledge.

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[22] Ibid.,: 52.

[23] Amos Bertolacci, 'From Al-Kindi to al-Farabi: Avicenna's Progressive Knowledge of Aristotle's Metaphysics According to His Autobiography', *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 2001, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0957423901001114.

[24] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Ibn Sina' s Concept of Wajib al-Wujud', *TSAQAFAH* 7, no. 2 (2011): 375; Syamsuddin Arif, 'Causality in Islamic Philosophy: The Arguments of Ibn Sina', *Islam & Science* 7, no. 1 (2009): 51.

[25] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'Islam: The Concept of Religion and the Foundation of Ethics and Morality', in *Prolegomena to The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995), 46; Syed Muhammad Al Naquib Al attas, 'The Intuition of Existence', in *Prolegomena to The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995): 194.

[26] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 'The Meaning and Role of "Philosophy" in Islam', *Studia Islamica*, 1973.

Reality, as mentioned in the introduction, has a fairly fundamental position in the building of human worldview. In "Prolegomena," al-Attas said that this view of reality also underlies the difference between Islamic science and modern Western science which is very oriented towards empirical reality. The difference in the understanding of reality has a very big influence in understanding science and also the process of values and epistemology. Here it means that al-Attas believes that the worldview has a role in interpreting the meaning of truth and reality, also in determining whether something is said to be true or real.[27]

C. Al-Attas Thought on Reality

Etymologically and terminologically, al-Attas interprets reality (and truth) by uniting it into a unique term; namely *Ḥaqq*. *Ḥaqq* for al-Attas is a fact that has an important meaning in bringing people to understand the truth; which does not only apply as the nature of a statement, belief, even judgment, but it also applies as a characteristic of the nature of reality. Here, al-Attas calls the opposite of the word *Ḥaqq* with 'not reality' or falsehood *baṭhil*. Therefore, *Ḥaqq* cannot be equated with sidq, because even though the opposite word is *kidzb*: dishonesty and falsehood, sidq only refers to the truth which relates to a statement or an utterance. Whereas Ḥaqq has more dimensions than that; not only refers to mere statements but also actions, feelings, beliefs, judgments, including all events in existence.[28]

Furthermore, even Ḥaqq can also be interpreted as conformity with the terms of wisdom, justice, truth, reality, and can also mean moral decency. And moreover, *Ḥaqq* according to al-Attas, if those referred to are events, it is not only related to the conditions that have passed; past, but also refers to future conditions.[29] *Ḥaqq* which is related to the one to come is called;

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[27] Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science', in *Prolegomena to The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995): 113.

[28] *Ibid.*, 126; Syed Muhammad al-Naquib al-Attas, 'On Quiddity and Essence', in *Prolegomena to The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995): 217–18.

[29] Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science', 48; Wan Mohd Shukri, 'The Religion of Islam Course Lectures Prof Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, 1998).

verification, realization, and actualization. In short, it is a state of existence in covering everything. Here, al-Attas wants to say that the dimensions of *Ḥaqq* are reality and truth and both of them are related to the state of existence. Therefore, one of the names of God is *al-Ḥaqq*; which is described as absolute existence, where God is reality, and not merely a concept, existence.[30]

> "*Ḥaqq* means a suitableness to the requirements of wisdom, justice, rightness, truth, reality, propriety. It is a state, quality or prophecy of being wise, just, right, true, real, proper; it is state of being necessary, unavoidable, obligatory, due; it is state of existence and encompasses everything… The things and the events in existence which *ḥaqq* designates pertain not only to their present condition, but also to their past as well as future condition. With regards to future condition *ḥaqq* verification, realization, actualization. Indeed, that the meaning of *ḥaqq* is understood to encompass both reality and truth pertaining to the state of existence is due to the fact that it is one of the names of God describing Him as the absolute existence which is the reality and not concept of existence.[31]

Apart from that, *Ḥaqq* in the sense of reality itself refers to the term *al-ḥaqīqah*. Even though both of them are closely related, there are actually differences. *Ḥaqq* refers to conditions, systems, also ontological orders that can be known through intuitive knowledge. Whereas *al-ḥaqīqah* itself refers to the ontological structure; to the nature of being or 'self' from something. Even so, both *ḥaqq* and *al-ḥaqīqah* for al-Attas are the cause of something being present as it is.[32] In other words, both have important values in determining the existence of something, regardless of the differences between the two.

Furthermore, *ḥaqīqah* itself; as the cause of something that exists as it has two core aspects: first, it is being existent of that thing. The second is

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[30] Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science'…,: 126.

[31] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 16–18; Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *Filsafat Dan Praktik Pendidikan Islam Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas (Penerjemah: Hamid Fahmy, M. Arifin Ismail, Dan Iskandar Amel)*, 1st ed. (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 2003), 178.

[32] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains* (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1995): 55.

being distinct; a trait that distinguishes something from others. It is interesting to know, according to al-Attas, although being existent is something that all those who "exist" must-have in various levels of existence. even existence is also a constituent material of reality itself. However, the truth that makes something into itself is not its existence, but rather the difference from the others. Or it can be said that something that distinguishes it from the others is what makes something itself:

> "Thus one of the twofold aspect of that by which a thing is what it is, is being existent of thing. The other aspect of that by which a thing is what it is, is its being district from any other. Being existent is common to all existents in the various level of existence, and although existence is the stuff of reality, it is, strictly speaking, not the commonness that makes a thing to be 'what' it is; it is rather the being district from any other that makes a thing to be what it is, for it is only by virtue of distinction that realities have come into existence. Therefore, the fundamental nature of reality is difference".[33]

Therefore, something as it is—that is, its essence—is different from itself. And something different is the real meaning. On the other hand, the existence of *ḥaqīqah* cannot necessarily be interpreted as pointing to something that actually exists or designates an outward world only. But it also refers to the category of existence which continuously opens or reveals itself gradually, becoming things that are visible and can be seen by the human eye. Therefore the reality order cannot be narrowed down to the phenomenal world; nor can it be limited to the empirical world in the sense region of sensory experience.[34] That means the reality itself has variety, it is not fixed on a rigid standard form. For this reason, al-Attas refers to the concept of 'Islamic worldview' as *'ru'yatul Islam lil wujud'* or 'Islamic vision of reality and truth'; which, the term 'being' is considered to have the equivalent of 'reality and truth' at the same time; which affirms Haqq as the equivalent meaning.

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[33] Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science'…, 131–32.

[34] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'Tinjauan Ringkas Peri Ilmu Dan Pandangan Alam' (2007), 15–16; Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science', 132; 'Ilmu Pengetahuan Dari John Locke ke Al-Attas', *Jurnal Pencerahan*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2015).

This view of al-Attas can be called based on his concern for secularization that afflicts modern humans today.[35] Where secularization has distorted many things, one of which is to distort the meaning of reality to encompass the physical an sich, without involving metaphysics[36] in controlling human logic, from the Soul to God.[37] Even at a certain point, reality is considered to be nothing more than mere fantasy and delusion.[38] Exactly as Immanuel Kant believes, that even though knowledge is possible, a non-empirical reality for him; especially 'thing in themselves' is something that is impossible for humans to achieve because it does not rely on sensory work. Kant argues that in metaphysics there are no synthetic-apriori statements like those found in mathematics, physics, and sciences based on empirical facts.[39]

Metaphysics is finally called by Kant as a transcendental illusion, and metaphysical statements actually do not have epistemological values, "metaphysical assertions are without epistemological value." So indirectly, epistemology and methodology of the use of revelation and religion as sources of "true Knowledge" become something that outside of 'knowledge' area; but classified as transcendental area, out of human cognition. Therefore, Kant emphasized that the metaphysics consist of scientific and speculative part.[40]

With the presence of a world that is already so westernized, Al-Attas himself, in his framework, presents a different non-empirical reality;

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[35] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1973): 15–20.

[36] M.A Rahman Marhaban, *Min Falsafah Yunāniyah Ilā Al-Falsafah al-Islāmiyah* (Beirut: Manshurat Uwaydah, 1975), 187; Abu Ali al-Husain Ibn Abdullah Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Sina, *Al-Sifā' al-Ilāhiyyāt Tahqiq Qanwatiy Wa Said Zayid* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Azhariyah, 1960), 122; Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Ibn Taymiyyah's Critique of Aristotelian Metaphysics', *Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 11, no. 1 (2010): 167–190.

[37] Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization* (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1998): 34.

[38] Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 'Epistemologi Islam Dan Tantangan Pemikiran Umat', *ISLAMIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Peradaban Islam* 5, no. 2 (2005): 53.

[39] Justus Harnack, *Kant's Theory of Knowledge, Translated by M. Holmes Harts* (London: Macmillan, 1968): 142, 145.

[40] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Transcendental Unity of Apperception in Kant's Theory of Knowledge', *TSAQAFAH* 10, no. 1 (2014): 47.

that non-empirical reality acts as the underlying dimension of science. Here the view of immaterial reality is the basis of the reality of physical material. That reality should be understood as a building concept that is explained and interpreted and then used to understand and explain the reality of the universe and human life.[41] Even in some of his books, such as; *Islam and the Philosophy of Science, Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam, Islam and the Secularism* and so on., al-Attas speaks reality in a complex, multilevel and dynamic manner. He moves the whole dynamic of material physical nature to the peak of the reality order, namely The Real "*al-Ḥaq*", unlike most people who often stop at the sensory only; which is visible to the eye.[42]

1. Classification of Reality: Empirical and Non-Empirical, Physical and Metaphysical Reality.

As mentioned in the earlier explanation, the discourse relating to reality—one of which—will not be separated from two things that are quite a principle; empirical and non-empirical. Usually, if the worldview referred to is Western (science in Western worldview), there will be a clear pattern that reality is seen as limited to something empirical: visible to the senses, and measured by reason alone; hence the consequence is that God has no place in the working mechanism of the universe.[43] Because God is not a reference, science occupies a central position in human belief, and God becomes something that is not important to believe. On the other hand, science in the Western world is defined so simply: it is believed to be merely a work movement or at least understood only as a cause and effect that occurs naturally.

> "contemporary science has involved and developed out of a philosophy that science its earliest periods affirmed the coming into being of things out of each other. Everything existent is progression, a development or evolution of what lies in latency in eternal matter. The world seen from this perspective is an

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[41] Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, 'Worldview Sebagai Asas Epistemologi Islam', *ISLAMIA: Jurnal Pemikiran & Peradaban Islam* 5 (2005).

[42] Irfan Habibie Martanegara, 'Implication of Al-Attas's Islamic Philosophy of Science', *International Journal of Islamic Education Ta'dibuna* 1, no. 1 (2017): 39–46.

[43] Alain Touraine, *Critique of Modernity* (Backwell: Oxford UK, 1995): 9–10.

independent eternal universe; a self-subsistent system involving according to its own laws."[44]

In al-Attas' view, this kind of belief can be categorized as a reductive attitude towards reality. Because a load of reality becomes limited only to nature. Even at some point, it becomes the only basic scientific assumption; that scientific truth is one that can be proven empirically and measurably. Outside of that domain, if it is not believed to be a scientific truth, the validity of the truth is at least doubtful. Here, the non-empirical world loses its place properly. When examined carefully, al-Attas' argument seems to be aimed at the ideas that later became a trend in the Western world: secularism, materialism, naturalism, and positivism. The first understanding indicates a universe that is free of divine elements. Another well-known name for this understanding is the desacralization of the universe: nature is seen only as rational and assertive naturalistic concepts, and empty of spiritual meanings as well as symbolic interpretations.[45]

Meanwhile, more or less the same thing was seen in materialism. For materialism, the matter becomes the only reality which at the end of it believes that all things that are not material are mere illusions. This kind of view is bearing complicated consequences because then God as an absolute reality will be seen as an artificial which is made by a human being. The role of revelation as a source of truth also becomes questionable and even denied.[46] On the other hand, positivism is not much different. This notion pioneered by Auguste Comte believes secularism and materialism as the basis of science. For Comte, science must be based on four main patterns; First, it must be objective, in the sense that the theory of the universe must be free from all values "value free". Second, science for him is mere "phenomenalism"; then the conversation only revolves around the universe that can be observed by the human senses, because the universe is considered a collection of phenomena after phenomena. Third, the spirit of

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[44] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains* (Bandung: Penerbit Mizan, 1995), 27; Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science', 114.

[45] Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains*, 1995, 28; Ach Maimun Syamsuddin, *Integrasi Multidimensi Agama Dan Sains: Analisis Sains Islam al-Attas Dan Mehdi Golshani* (Jogjakarta: IRCiSoD, 2012); Zarkasyi, 'Knowledge and Knowing in Islam: A Comparative Study between Nursi and al-Attas'.

[46] Al-Attas, 'Islam: The Concept of Religion and the Foundation of Ethics and Morality', 29; Nur Hasan, 'Kritik Islamic Worldview Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Terhadap Western Worldview', *Maraji': Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 1, no. 1 (2014): 115–145.

"reductionalism". While the last pattern, known as "naturalism": the universe is considered only as objects that move mechanically, no less, no more.[47]

For al-Attas, if such understandings are examined carefully, it will only make humans unable to understand nature as a sign (*āyat*) which shows the only Real Reality, namely God. No less dangerous, it will also show a wrong path so that humans, in the end, cannot find al-ḥaq as the main goal in the search for knowledge. In fact, for al-Attas, the material world is an extension of the immaterial reality. The reality of nature is something that he calls spatio-temporal system, a mere reality that is temporary, as he explained as follows:

> "the world of nature is described in plain naturalistic and rational terms divested of spiritual significance, or of symbolic interpretation, reducing its origin and reality to mere natural forces. Secular science that now holds sway over the understanding of reality is preoccupied only with the objects and events in the spatio-temporal system. Its journey of discovery to the Truth about the objects and events and relationships between them, since these are made to the point to themselves as the sole of reality, and not to any other Reality beyond them that both excludes as well as includes them, is prevented from reaching its ultimate end and purpose, being forever enmeshed in the maze of things, events, relationships and concepts of them."[48]

It is called temporary because the life of empirical reality does not last long. Their existence can be destroyed in a certain period of time. Such a situation is called by al-Attas with the term "fanā." Nevertheless, the diversity of empirical reality as a particular being is also something real; not just imagination or mere delusion, it's just that its nature is impermanent. Of course, this will be far different from the character of Absolute Reality which has the eternal nature of qadīm: Al-Attas terms it with "really continuous continuity" and baqā' namely "discontinuous continuity".[49] That is, absolute

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[47] Comte, *Introduction to Positive Philosophy*, 1–2; Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains*, 1995…,: 28.

[48] Wielandt and Al-Attas, 'Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future'.

[49] Daud, *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization…*: 41.

reality does not only have an eternal character by not knowing death but also means an entity that continues to live by not knowing the base. Here, the categorization of reality seems increasingly clear; that reality in meaning should be divided into empirical and non-empirical ones. The first has characteristics seen and measured by the senses; this characteristic manifests in objects that are around humans because it does not want eternity; it can be broken at any time. While the second, the character is not seen and measured by the senses, but it is eternal; can never be destroyed at any time.

Furthermore, if examined carefully at a glance al-Attas' argument is in harmony with the atomic theory of the mutakallimun such as Ash'arite; Imam al-Ghazali also al-Baqillani. Ash'arite, for example, divides atomic characters into three distinctive characters, one of which is; that atoms are temporary. In certain circumstances, atoms can manifest through existence, on other occasions atoms can disappear and disappear without a trace. Imam al-Ghazali calls it by the term *"lā yataṣawwaru al-baqā"*.[50] Al-Baqillani is more specific, that the accident does not require immortality, it rests on the bodies and atoms that will disappear in a certain time process[51]. Therefore, in another book al-Baqillani mentions al-jawhar and al-'ard as proof of the existence of God and the novelty of nature. Because from there the sign of the novelty of the substance and accident was clear. And something new must have been done. This is where God has a role. Because He wants the novelty of substance and accident, He is qadīm, eternal. It is impossible for an entity that can create, also wants to renew, can be destroyed.[52]

Therefore for al-Attas, in fact, the reality of a particular being always exists because of God's continuous dynamic and God's activity that constantly creates something similar to that being every time it is destroyed

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[50] Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Al-Iqtisād Fi al-I'tiqād Tahqiq Insaf Ramadhan* (Beirut: Maktabah Kutaibah, 2003): 40; Badawi Thibanah, *Iḥya' Ulūm al-Dīn Lī al-Imām al-Ghazāli* (Beirut: Daar al-Fikr, n.d.): 106–7; Binyamin Abrahamov, *Ilmu Kalam; Tradisionalisme Dan Rasionalisme Dalam Teologi Islam Translated by: Nuruddin Hidayat* (Jakarta: PT Serambi Ilmu Sementara, 2002): 75–76.

[51] Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn Tayyib al-Baqillani, *Kitāb al-Tamhīd* (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Syarqiyyah., 1957): 17–18.

[52] Al-Baqillani, *Kitāb Tamhīd al-Awā'il Wa Talkhīl al-Dalāil Tahqiq 'Imad al-Din Ahmad Haydar* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 1987): 43–48.

(constant activity of re-creating).[53]   Identical to that, al-Ghazali in *Tahāfut* calls God as the creator of nature "*ikhrāj al-syaī' min al-ʿadām ilā al-wujūd bi iḥdātsihī*".[54] Al-Attas' argument, can be said to be identical with Ibn Sina' statement, that the Existence of God exists in an actual manner (*al-wujūd bi al-fiʾli*), while the existence other than Himself is in a position of mere potential (*al-wujūd bi al-quwwah*), therefore he needs a cause from others to exist actually.[55] So the logic cannot be reversed into non-empirical reality requires empirical, but it should be 'without non-empirical reality—in this case God—empirical reality will mean nothing'.

This conclusion is then seen further in relation to al-Attas' explanation regarding the meaning of *al-dīn*. For him the meaning of *al-dīn*, if its field is drawn can be interpreted as a "*dainun*" or indebtedness.[56] In his presentation, al-Attas said that human beings, in essence, have been indebted (self) existence and also power to God.[57] It is because God has made a man out of nothing into existence "*dāʾin about the feeling of being indebted to God for giving us existence and maintaining us in existence (because every instant He is recreating and if He stops doing it nothing will exist)*".[58] This means, the nature of the concerns in the term *al-dīn*, can be understood as the indebtedness of existence;[59] or in other ways, it defines as

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[53] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *A Commentary on The Ḥujjāt Al-Shiddīq of Nur al-Dīn al-Raniri* (Kuala Lumpur: Kementerian Kebudayaan, 1986), 223; Daud, *The Educational Philosophy and Practice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas: An Exposition of the Original Concept of Islamization*, 41.

[54] Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Ghazali, *Tahāfut Al-Falāsifah*, ed. Michael E. Marmura (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 139.

[55] Abu Ali al-Husain Ibn Abdullah Ibn al-Hasan Ibn Ali Ibn Sina, *Kitāb Al-Najāh Fī al-Ḥikmah al-Mantiqiyyah Wa al-Ilahiyyah*, ed. Majid Fakhri (Beirut: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1982): 250, 252, 262, 265.

[56] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Sekularisme*, Trans. Khalif Muammar (Bandung: Institut Pemikiran Islam dan Pembangunan Insan (PIMPIN), 2011), 63–66; Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Islam Faham Agama Dan Asas Akhlak* (Kuala Lumpur: Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (ABIM), 1977): 3–11.

[57] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (Kuala Lumpur: Universiti of Malaya Press, 1970): 67.

[58] Shukri, 'The Religion of Islam Course Lectures Prof Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas'…, 85.

[59] Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy From Its Origin to The Present-Philosophy in The Land of Prophecy* (Pakistan: Suhail Academy, Chowk Urdu Bazar, 2007): 66.

the indebtedness of reality. That without the existence of God as a non-empirical Absolute Reality, it is impossible for humans to represent empirical reality to exist. In another book, al-Attas explains that metaphysical and physical-material aspects are inseparable. Because both of them are interrelated domains as fellow beings. The empirical world is manifested as the world of *ẓāhir*, while the metaphysical is seen as a *bāṭin* world, which in its essence is a dimension derived from Absolute Existence "*Wujūd Muṭlaq*".[60] Al-Attas writes in his book as follows:

> "menurut bibit ma'na punca perkataan *al-din*—yang difahami umum sebagai pemberi erti 'agama' dalam pengertian Islam sebagaimana terdapat dalam Kitab Suci al-Qur'anul Karim— maka perkataan itu menganduk ma'na antara lain, 'keadaan berhutang', dan 'mena'lukkan diri menurut perintah', dan 'menjadikan diri lebih bersifat keinsanan' bertentang dengan sifat kebinatangannya—yaitu menjadikan manusia lebih berperikemanusiaan. Apabila disabitkan bibit-bibit ma'na ini kepada faham agama dalam Islam maka agama *al-din* membayangkan keadaan insan yang insaf bahawa dirinya dalam 'keadaan berhutang'. Apa yang dimaksudkan dengan ini? — kepada siapakah dia berhutang, dan apakah yang dihutangkannya? Dia senantiasa berhutang diri, budi, dan daya kepada Allah, Subhanahu wa Ta'ala, yang menjadikannya daripada tiada kepada ada".[61]

This argument is reinforced by ayat al-Qur'an surah al-mu'minun: 12-14. Therefore, the dependence and relations between empirical reality and non-empirical reality are a necessity, which is important to realize. Here again, there are quite fundamental differences in understanding reality, from the perspective of the Islamic worldview with other worldviews.[62] Even at a certain point, this fundamental difference also determines the style of the

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[60] Syed Muhammad Al Naquib Al attas, 'The Degrees of Existence', in *Prolegomena to The Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1995): 267–70.

[61] Al-Attas, *Risalah Untuk Kaum Muslimin…,*: 27.

[62] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Ages 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 173–74.

philosophy of science; how science is viewed and what balance sheet is used to measure something as scientific.[63]

2. The Relation between Physical Reality and Metaphysical Reality

The relation between God as the absolute non-empirical reality and nature is reinforced by al-Attas' explanation in a lecture. He mentions that nature has the root word from alam, which in terms of origin comes from *'alima* which terminologically comes from *'ilm*. *'Ilm* means science which is a product of God's knowledge, and one of the names of God is *al-Ālim*.[64] Franz Rosenthal adds, that *'ilm* has semantic meaning with *'alāmah* or signs.[65] So ontologically, there is a strong relation here between; world-nature-God and also knowledge. Furthermore, this connection can also be seen from how the word 'create' is translated to *'khalaqa'* which has a strong relationship with God as *'khāliq'* and its creation as *'makhlūq'*.[66] This connection of meaning implies a sign that is quite clear, that in Islam empirical and non-empirical reality is not to be separated. Therefore, seeing it dichotomically is one other form of injustice in seeing reality in its true sense.

In other words, in the discourse of metaphysic of Islam—still according to al-Attas—the material physical reality is part of the overall reality, therefore the truth is recognized. The physical world that appears in a variety of phenomena is something real. But for him, even though the empirical reality is real, it only functions as an intermediary; ayat signs to go to God, whose reality belongs to non empirical reality "*if the Qur'an consists of verses referred to as āyāt or signs, the entirety of phenomenal creation is also the book of signs, the purpose of which is to point to God. For al-Attas the word of nature is another form of Devine Revelation analogous to the*

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[63] Mohammad Muslih, 'Toward Theology of Science: Philosophical Reflection On The Development Of Religion-Based Science', *KALAM,* Vol. 13, no. 1 (2019): 1–24; Muslih, 'Metodologi Ilmu: Dari Teori Hingga Teologi'.

[64] Shukri, 'The Religion of Islam Course Lectures Prof Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas'…,: 76.

[65] Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge and Triumphant; the Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam* (Leiden-Boston: E. J. Brill, 2007): 9, 17.

[66] Shukri, 'The Religion of Islam Course Lectures Prof Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas'…, 76.

Qur'ān itself.[67] Empirical reality is only a sign, nothing more. This is why al-Attas also mentions that empirical reality is fanā'. It is fanā' because his existence does not stand alone, but he stands to show the existence of another entity. This can also be interpreted, that hierarchically, empirical reality is the lowest reality, because its characteristics are unable to exist independently.

From here it seems quite clear that al-Attas tries to occupy philosophy and Sufism, not vis a vis, but instead made them one understanding. On the one hand, al-Attas does not believe that *waḥdāt wujūd* is a denial of another reality other than the reality of God—as some Sufis believe, and this is very philosophical. But on the other hand, he acknowledges *waḥdāt wujūd* as a "*transcendence unity of existence*" where the only existence that really exists is the existence of God, and this argument is very mystical (*Sufis*).[68] That is, it recognizes the manifestation of empirical reality, but its existence exists at the lowest level. Existence in the world of phenomena are realities that cannot stand independently, which existentially depend very much on the existence of Absolute Reality. That is why the Absolute Reality is a single real being, called the truth; *al-Ḥaq*.

So when someone considers something as if it has its own reality and stands independently, it means indirectly that reality does not understand it as a sign or symbol.[69] According to al-Attas if reality is understood independently; both essential and existential—as if it were something that ended and sustained itself —and so this matter had actually deviated from the truth. Even more than that, for al-Attas the validity of search of science model needs to be questioned. In line with that, Said Nursi also mentions that all reality, beyond Absolute Reality, cannot designate

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[67] Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, 'The Metaphysical Worldview', in *A Companion to the Worldview of Islam; Course Materials for Wise Summer School 2015* (Kuala Lumpur: CASIS-UTM, 2015), 23; Al attas, 'The Intuition of Existence'…, 138.

[68] Abu Abdillah Muhammad Ibn Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Arabi, *Fuṣūṣ Al-Ḥikam Tahqiq Abu al-'Ala 'Afif* (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Arabī, 1946), 103–4; Abdallah Ansari, *Tabaqāt Al-Ṣūfiyyah* (Tehran: Intisyarat-i Furughi, n.d.): 137.

[69] Wielandt and Al-Attas, 'Islam, Secularism and the Philosophy of the Future'; Syed Muhammad Al Naquib Al attas, *The Positive Aspects of Tasawwuf: Preliminary Thoughts on an Islamic Philosophy of Science*, 1981: 7; Wan Suhaimi Wan Abdullah, 'Beberapa Wajah Dan Faham Dasar Tasawuf Menurut Al-Attas Berdasarkan Karyanya, The Positive Aspects of Tasawwuf', in *Adab Dan Peradaban; Karya Pengi'tirafan Untuk Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*, ed. Wan Suhaimi Wan Abdullah (Kuala Lumpur: MPH Publishing, 2012): 225.

itself (*self-referential meaning*) "ma'na ism", but it always relates to others (*other-referential meaning*) "ma'na harf".[70]

Thus, as believed by al-Attas, the existence of the visible world; as phenomena that are seen physically and materially, they are actually particular forms of determination "ta'ayyunāt" and self-manifestation "tajalliyāt" from Absolute Reality. Therefore, the physical world can be recognized as something real, it is not enough to see reality as it is. But that reality must be linked and related to its metaphysical source. As stated by al-Attas as follows:

> "it certain knowledge of this reality and truth gained by means of such an experience that made it possible for them not to deny existence to the world together with all its parts and regard them all as sheer illusion, but to affirm instead both the Existence of God Who, as the Absolute Reality underlying all creation is appropriately called the Truth (*al-Ḥaq*), and the existence of the creatures, not as independent, separate, self-subsisting entities, but as so many particularized forms of determinations (*ta'ayyunāt*) and self-manifestations (*tajalliyāt*) of the Truth in the context of The Unity of Existence (*Wahdāt al-Wujūd*). The separate things in creation are on the one hand real when considered in relation ti their metaphysical source; and on the other hand not real when they are considered in themselves."[71]

The view of al-Attas which is tawhidik towards the reality of the existence, makes the existence becomes not solely concerning the physical realm that involves humans in history, social, politics, as well as culture. But more broadly than that, it covers the hereafter—or a metaphysical world. Even more so, for al-Attas the aspect of the world must be connected very deeply to the aspects of the hereafter, and the aspect of the hereafter has the final significance as well, without negating aspects of the world. Easily, the

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[70] Sukran Vahide, 'The Book of the Universe: Its Place and Development in Badiuzzaman's Thought', in *A Contemporary Approach to Understanding the Qur'an: The Example of Risale-i Nur* (Istanbul: International Symposium Sozler, 1998): 471; Bediuzzaman Said-i Nursi, *Mesnevi Nuriye* (Istanbul: Sahdamar, 2013), 46; Zaprulkhan, 'Philosophy of God in The Perspective of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi', *KALAM,* Vol. 12, no. 1 (2018): 1 – 20.

[71] Al attas, *The Positive Aspects of Tasawwuf: Preliminary Thoughts on an Islamic Philosophy of Science,*: 9–10.

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existence includes material and non-material entities, both rational and suprarational at the same time.[72] Therefore, al-Attas disagrees with the mention of reality as 'kawn' when translating the term 'Islamic worldview' with 'naẓrat al-islām lī al-kawn'. Because the word 'kawn' is identical to philosophical speculation that is formulated only to those that can be observed by mere experience. So for him, the right term in translating Islamic worldview is "wujūd"; ru'yatul Islām, lī al-wujūd, where empirical reality and non-empirical reality are the basis for the term.[73]

By quoting Hamzah Fansuri's opinion, al-Attas stated that the term "ada" is used to denote metaphysical concepts such as 'being' (jadi), becoming (menjadi), making (menjadikan)—generally translated into Arabic into kāna—and conveying the concepts of maujūd; both in the sense of being the manifestation of the external world of ẓāhir and also in the internal world bāṭin. Besides, it also means the essence of dhāt, quiddity māhiyyah, self huwiyyah, which is finally used to convey the abstract concept of "being qua being" (wujūd).[74] Here the spectrum of reality seems to be expanding.

On that basis, al-Attas divides the structure of society into; awām, ḥawās and ḥawāsul ḥawās. The first is aimed at people who identify reality only to what it appears to be. The second and third are aimed at a more comprehensive society in seeing reality. So, the fact of something or the fact of the actual phenomenon is not what the laymen think. But the essence of the real phenomenon as understood by the noble community, especially ḥawās al-ḥawās. If laymen view the reality only as much as it exists, the ḥawās and ḥawās al-ḥawās look at the reality of the phenomenon as a process of

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[72] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 1–2; Nabila Huringiin and Halimah Nisrina Azfathir, 'The Concept of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas on De-Westernization and Its Relevancy toward Islamization of Knowledge', *KALIMAH*, 2018.

[73] Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'The Worldview of Islam: An Outline', in *Islam and The Challenge of Modernity: Historical and Contemporary Contexts*, ed. Sharifah Shifa Al-Attas (Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC, 1994): 25; Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, 'Islam and the Challenge of Modernity: Divergence of Worldviews', in *Technology and Cultural Values: On the Edge of the Third Millennium*, ed. Roger Hershock, Peter D., Stepaniants, Marietta, T. Ames, I (Honolulu, 2003); Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam*, 1.

[74] Al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, 163–69; Syamsuddin Arif, 'Preserving the Semantic Structure of Islamic Key Terms and Concepts: Izutsu, Al-Attas, and Al-Raghib Al-Isfahani', *Islam & Science*, 2007.

abstraction; a first separation process (*al-farq al-awwal*) and (*al-farq al-tsānī*) or also called separation after unification (*al-farq ba'da al-jam*).[75]

Laymen see reality only as a collection of various shapes, sizes, colors, and all of which stand independently; an object that stands alone because of its own essence.[76] In this level, the world of phenomena is portrayed in various ways, and cognitive processes occur within the framework of separate subject-objects. Here, the perception of ordinary people does separation (*al-farq*) which is also called the first separation (*al-farq al-awwal*). Keep in mind, the separation here can be understood as having dual meanings; *first*, separation of God from nature; *second*, 'separation' in awareness and experience of everything that exists in the phenomenal world. Then for al-Attas, this experience at the 'first separation' level made it possible for a person, depends on his intellectual development; both his religion and spirituality, to transcend previous knowledge and then return to his experience of *farq awwal*. A person's experience of the world of phenomena after he returns to *al-farq al-awwal* will be a condition of going to the next stage; *al-farq al-tsāni*. So simply put, for those who have reached and attained *al-farq al-tsāni*, even though the diversity of the world before him has not changed (the same), but the world is no longer the same as its previous understanding.[77] And after he can surpass *al-farq al-awwal*, he sees the present world with unequal understanding.

This formulation of reality eventually became the main basis of al-Attas in interpreting ḥaqq to two things at once: namely reality and truth. Something that is real simply cannot automatically be true, and vice versa "…*Even though a sentence may be true if it designates the fact, the mere existence of the fact does not necessarily make the fact into a truth…*".[78] The real thing is only "confirming with reality or the real situation", not a description of the real truth.[79] Here, the real refers to the order of ontological existence. It encompasses the being; which exists. Easily, it

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[75] Al attas, 'The Intuition of Existence': 177–79.

[76] Tri Arwani Maulidah, 'Reinterpretasi Relasi Tuhan Dan Manusia Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas', *Islamika Inside: Jurnal Keislaman Dan Humaniora* 4, no. 1 (2018): 74–95.

[77] Al attas, 'The Intuition of Existence':178–80.

[78] Al attas, 'Islam and The Philosophy of Science', 130; Al-Attas, *Islam Dan Filsafat Sains*, 1995, 54.

[79] Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, 'The Concept of Education Islam', in *The Keynote Address Delivered at the First World Conference on Muslim Education*, 1980: 20.

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refers to the reality of existence and modus and its aspects that are understood as events and processes. Whereas the right refers to the order of logical existence. He refers to an assessment that corresponds to outward reality; which appears to be 'something' from these events and processes. It should be noted, this conformity involves a work of correspondence as well as coherence between actions; i.e. intellectual valuation with perceived external reality. From that, the worldview of Islam for al-Attas becomes meaningful: The Islamic vision of reality and truth, where it is a metaphysical view of the empirical and non-empirical world that includes life as a whole.[80]

D. Conclusion

To be a conclusion that is still very open to next elaboration; al-Attas asserted that reality; both physical and metaphysical are actually classified as objects of knowledge which have implications for the perception of human judgment on the 'value of truth' of a being. Thus, al-Attas wants to say that the 'truth value' is also the nature of 'reality'. This is based on its understanding and division of empirical and non-empirical realities as well as the physical and metaphysical and fundamental characteristics. Uniquely, al-Attas - following the earlier Sufis and Muslim philosophers - referred to God as the Absolute Reality, which also had a Complete Name and Attitude; one of which is 'al-Haqq'.

In harmony with the 'value of truth' associated with reality, that all realities need to be addressed in accordance with wisdom and justice; that is, the guiding condition of being in the right and right place. Correspondence and coherence work in capturing the true nature of truth, it must fulfill the conditions of conformity with justice. Because wisdom or wisdom (i.e. justice), is knowledge that is given by God directly, which makes humans able to know something precisely. The idea of a proper place/right place embraces the necessity of everything in the order of creation to be in its proper position; namely keeping their respective places and spaces; namely God as the Absolute Reality, and besides Him as a temporary reality, also in terms of priorities and post-priority. For example, the practical implications are also practical, if we judge humans to be only physical / physical; without the slightest involvement of the spiritual aspect. This view is like seeing humans only as animals that are different from other

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[80] Al-Attas, *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam…*: 1–2.

animals. No more. Here humans are understood to be, what is called by al-Attas injustice (*zulm al-nafs*); humans are not put in their right places; as a temporary reality, but one day it will meet with responsibility for its actions. [.]

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