Al-Ulum

Analysis of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' Concept of Justice Against the Truth Crisis in the Post-Truth Era

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Abstract

This research aims to answer how Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's concept of justice can offer solutions to the crisis of truth in the post-truth era. The post-truth phenomenon is characterized by the dominance of hoaxes, misinformation, and manipulation of public emotions, which reflects the loss of intellectual discipline in treating knowledge. Epistemological defects occur when truth is treated on an equal footing with opinions and conjectures, thus giving birth to epistemic injustice. This study uses a qualitative approach through a literature review of al-Attas' works. The analysis shows that the essence of justice according to al-Attas puts everything in its place and can be applied in the realm of knowledge through manners and the placement of knowledge. This perspective shows that efforts to counter hoaxes, misinformation, and information manipulation are not enough with technical verification alone, but require a reconstruction of epistemic consciousness rooted in the Islamic worldview.

Keywords: Concept of Justice, Post-truth, al-Attas, Epistemologi

Analisis Konsep Keadilan Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas Terhadap Krisis Kebenaran di Era *Post-truth*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab bagaimana konsep keadilan Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas dapat menawarkan solusi bagi krisis kebenaran di era post-truth. Fenomena post-truth ditandai dengan dominasi hoaks, misinformasi, dan manipulasi emosi publik, yang mencerminkan hilangnya disiplin intelektual dalam memperlakukan pengetahuan. Kecacatan epistemologis terjadi ketika kebenaran diperlakukan setara dengan opini dan dugaan, sehingga melahirkan ketidakadilan epistemik. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui tinjauan pustaka karya-karya al-Attas. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa esensi keadilan menurut al-Attas menempatkan segala sesuatu pada tempatnya dapat diterapkan dalam ranah pengetahuan melalui adab dan penempatan pengetahuan. Perspektif ini menunjukkan bahwa upaya penanggulangan hoaks, misinformasi, dan manipulasi informasi tidak cukup hanya dengan verifikasi teknis, tetapi membutuhkan rekonstruksi kesadaran epistemik yang berakar pada pandangan dunia Islam.

Kata kunci: Keadilan, Post-truth, al-Attas, Epistemologi

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A.   Introduction

Man is never separated from the search for truth. Philosophers and scientists in obtaining truth are inseparable from the methodology of knowledge, commonly called epistemology. Epistemology has its roots in the Greek episteme and logos. Episteme means knowledge and logos is interpreted as a systematic representation of knowledge [1]. In this sense, epistemology determines the truth and character of the knowledge produced whether it is acceptable or rejected through a methodical approach.

In addition to epistemology as one of the ways to determine the truth and the character of the knowledge produced, the search for truth in the postmodern era today raises many new problems in human life. This is because the development of modern science and technology has brought destruction to humans, reflected through conflicts in various places that result in humans living in suffering[2]. On the other hand, according to Fata, industrialization comes with a new phenomenon in the form of community fragmentation, community chaos and the growth of bureaucracy and technical awareness so that it has an impact on religion is no longer attractive, unreasonable and only suitable for pre-modern society[3].

The problem of truth in this postmodern era then arises with the term post-truth. The condition when reason that underlies the truth and the effort to research facts as the basis for standardizing objectivity is underestimated, as if reason has no interest in the formation of public opinions, thoughts and behaviors[4].

Post-truth in Indonesia is increasingly massive as the Indonesian government seeks to encourage digital transformation in the aspect of digital infrastructure, especially on equal internet access and internet speed, which is the main aspect in development. The massive use of technology and social media in

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[1] Sherly Aulia, "Teori Pengetahuan dan Kebenaran dalam Epistemologi," *Jurnal Filsafat Indonesia* 5, no. 3 (Oktober 2022): 242–49, https://doi.org/10.23887/jfi.v5i3.40710.

[2] Johan Setiawan dan Ajat Sudrajat, "PEMIKIRAN POSTMODERNISME DAN PANDANGANNYA TERHADAP ILMU PENGETAHUAN," *Jurnal Filsafat* 28, no. 1 (Februari 2018): 25, https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.33296.

[3] Ahmad Khoirul Fata dan Siti Mahmudah Noorhayati, "SEKULARISME DAN TANTANGAN PEMIKIRAN ISLAM KONTEMPORER," *Madania: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 20, no. 2 (2016): 215–28, https://doi.org/10.29300/madania.v20i2.180.

[4] Ulya Ulya, "Post-Truth, Hoax, dan Religiusitas di Media Sosial," *FIKRAH* 6, no. 2 (Desember 2018): 283, https://doi.org/10.21043/fikrah.v6i2.4070.

developing countries such as Indonesia is also feared to cause misinformation so as to cause new problems, for example mentioned by Puji Rianto[5],his research, the occurrence of political polarization during the 2019 election seems to be clearly identified through media choices and media messages consumed such as on *Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, and Twitter.*.

Research on truth in the post-truth era has also been discussed in various studies, such as in Vittorio Buvacci's research[6], Stephan Lewandowsky and friends.[7] and Thom Nichols in *The Death Of Expertise: the Campaign Against Maped Knowledge and Why It Matters,[8]* Highlighting the truth brought by science is under threat. Truth in the post-truth era has brought an attack on science and science, which occurs because of a society formed by a lack of information, e.g. information, conspiracy theories to paranoid, and emotions that are formed as a complement to 'kill' the validity of science.

The phenomenon highlighted by Thom Nichols also occurred in Indonesia, namely when Kominfo handled 12,547 hoax cases over five years from 2018 to December 2023. Among them, 2,357 were hoax cases in the health category dominated by the spread of Covid-19, as well as about medicines and health products[9]. Meanwhile, in Marz Wera's research[10], The post-truth phenomenon occurs by bringing three symptoms, namely, hoaxes, social emotions, and religious populism. The research conducted by Franz Magnis Suseno,[11] Examining how philosophy has become a post-truth challenge that occurs in Indonesia, he

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[5] Puji Rianto, "LITERASI DIGITAL DAN ETIKA MEDIA SOSIAL DI ERA POST-TRUTH," *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 8, no. 2 (Desember 2019): 24–35, https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.8.2.24-35.

[6] Vittorio Bufacchi, "Truth, Lies and Tweets: A Consensus Theory of Post-Truth," *Philosophy & Social Criticism* 47, no. 3 (Maret 2021): 347–61, https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453719896382.

[7] Stephan Lewandowsky dkk., "A Blind Expert Test of Contrarian Claims about Climate Data," *Global Environmental Change* 39 (Juli 2016): 91–97, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2016.04.013.

[8] Tom Nichols, *Matinya Kepakaran* (Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2022).

[9] Grahanusa Mediatama, "Kominfo Tangani 12.547 Isu Hoaks Hingga Akhir Tahun 2023," kontan.co.id, 3 Januari 2024, https://nasional.kontan.co.id/news/kominfo-tangani-12547-isu-hoaks-hingga-akhir-tahun-2023.

[10] Marz Wera Mofferz, "Meretas Makna Post-Truth: Analisis Kontekstual Hoaks, Emosi Sosial dan Populisme Agama," *Societas Dei: Jurnal Agama dan Masyarakat* 7, no. 1 (April 2020): 3, https://doi.org/10.33550/sd.v7i1.141.

[11] Franz Magnis-Suseno, "Philosophy, A Challenge To Post-Truth, Also in Indonesia," *Jurnal Filsafat* 30, no. 1 (Februari 2020): 1, https://doi.org/10.22146/jf.53671.

emphasized two things, namely philosophy has the task of dismantling the untruths that hide behind the truth, and the importance of the critical philosophical tradition for Indonesia. What was conveyed by Franz Magnis Suseno is also in line with the previous opinion by Vittorio Buvacci, namely philosophy as a tool to critically dismantle false truths.

Islam has a concept to recognize false truths in the dissemination of information, namely the term tabayyun which can be defined as an effort to prioritize clarification, the essence of news and examine the ins and outs[12].In this procedure, the source of information must be clear, and supported by multiple sources. In addition, the person who receives the information must be able to be fair. In this case, it contains the understanding that there is a need for tabayyun and in bringing information must be truly saheeh. Mohd Zaidi bin Ismail in Aqal in Islam: An Epistemological Survey [13] mentioning that there are three channels of knowledge, or there are three paths that we will take in achieving a truth, namely, the five senses that are prosperous, the true news, and reason. The three go hand in hand and cannot be alone as a consequence of Tawheed.

The explanation written by Fata is that in the face of modern Western science, Tawheed must be an epistemic parameter. Every element of science, including methods, concepts, assumptions, and symbols, along with its empirical-rational dimensions and values and ethical consequences, needs to be studied based on Tawheed. This study covers the historicity and construction of theories, assumptions about the universe, rationality of scientific procedures, classification and limitations of disciplines, interrelationships between branches of science, and their relationship to society. [14] Through such epistemic and ethical audits, modern science can be integrated without sacrificing the integrity of scientific faith and ethics.

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[12] Faisal Syarifudin, "Urgensi tabayyun dan kualitas informasi dalam membangun komunikasi," *Al-Kuttab : Jurnal Kajian Perpustakaan, informasi dan kearsipan* 1, no. 2 (Desember 2019): 29–39, https://doi.org/10.24952/ktb.v1i2.1994.

[13] Mohd Zaida Bin Ismail, *Aqal Dalam Islam: Satu Tinjauan Epistemologi* (Kuala Lumpur: Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia, 2016).

[14] "(PDF) MEMBANGUN SAINS BERBASIS IMAN," diakses 8 September 2025, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324909309_MEMBANGUN_SAINS_BERBASIS_IMAN.

Post-truth in the digital era shows how truth is no longer seen as an objective foundation, but is often obscured by the torrent of information that is full of hoaxes, misinformation, and emotional manipulation. This problem is not solely related to the development of communication technology, but more fundamentally concerns an epistemological crisis: humans have misinterpreted knowledge and failed to place everything in its proper proportions. In other words, the problem of truth in the post-truth era is rooted in the problem of epistemic justice. Justice is one of the basic concepts in philosophy, ethics and religion. In the Islamic tradition, justice (al-'adl) is often associated with balance, order, and putting everything in its place. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, a prominent Muslim scholar, whose expertise spans the fields of theology, literature, philosophy, metaphysics, and history. As well as his experience leading the departments and faculties of the University of Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia made him appointed by the Malaysian government as the founding director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)[15].

The studies conducted by al-Attas have contributed to understanding the concept of justice from an Islamic perspective. A lot of research related to al-Attas has been carried out, including: The Concept of Justice According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. The research was written by Muhammad Farhan Firas from UIN Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau. The focus of this research is on the study of al-Attas's thought in building his concept of justice. The Concept of Virtue Ethics in the Thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas and the Challenges of Postmodernism. Article written by Dinar Dewi Kania. This research emphasizes the focus on ethics and morals initiated by al-Attas to highlight the challenges of postmodernism[16]. The Concept of Ad-Din According to Naquib Al-Attas, the article written by Fauzan emphasizes the focus of his discussion on Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas's thoughts on Islamic thought, especially regarding the meaning of the term din and

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[15] Azmul Fahimi Kamaruzaman, Aidil Farina Omar, dan Roziah Sidik, "Al-Attas' Philosophy of History on the Arrival and Proliferation of Islam in the Malay World," *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 10, no. 1 (Desember 2016): 1–7, https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.10.2016.001.

[16] Dinar Dewi Kania, "Konsep Virtue Ethics dalam Pemikiran Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas dan Tantangan Postmodernisme," *Tasfiyah* 1, no. 2 (Agustus 2017): 157, https://doi.org/10.21111/tasfiyah.v1i2.1850.

its implications for the lives of Muslims. The Idea of Islamization of Science: Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals. This article was written by Muhibudin, this article emphasizes its focus on the comparison of the concept of Islamization of al-Attas science with the concept of Islamization of Indonesian Muslim intellectual knowledge[17].

Based on previous relevant studies on al-Attas' thought, no one has examined in depth how al-Attas's concept of justice can be applied to the crisis of truth in the post-truth era. This perspective opens up space to reinterpret the phenomenon of post-truth as a consequence of the loss of adab, while offering a solution through the return of adab and the placement of knowledge within the framework of Islamic views of life

B.   Research Methods

The research uses a qualitative approach. The author takes his study materials from various sources, both from those written by the character himself, and from sources written by others about the character that the author researches. The purpose of this research is to find out how the concept of justice according to al-Attas can be applied in the crisis of truth in the post-truth era. In this case, the author traces and examines the concept of justice of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas in his works such as, Islam and Secularism, and Treatise for Muslims. After studying and tracking the works of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, the author will further describe the findings, analysis, and conclusions.

C.   Results and Discussion

a.   Era *Post-truth*

Post-Truth comes from English which linguistically means after or after the truth. The post-truth era when reason that underlies truth and efforts to examine facts as the basis for standardizing objectivity are underestimated, as if reason has no interest in shaping public opinions, thoughts and behaviors[18]. In the sense that the public is more interested in news that provokes public emotions and sensationality, such as making a

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[17] Muhibuddin Muhibuddin, "Gagasan Islamisasi Ilmu Pengetahuan: Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas Dan Intelektual Muslim Indonesia," *At-Tafkir* 15, no. 2 (Oktober 2022): 184–201, https://doi.org/10.32505/at.v15i2.4672.

[18] Ulya, "Post-Truth, Hoax, dan Religiusitas di Media Sosial."

sense of joy, causing sadness, disappointment, anger, and so on everything that invites emotions and sensations.

According to McIntyre in Mofferz, in post-truth humans there is a tendency that makes them easily trapped in cognitive bias, so the knowledge they have tends to be biased. This condition shows that humans do not always behave rationally. In addition, humans are often overshadowed by unpleasant truths, so they easily fall into non-objective prejudices and tend to look for justifications that make them feel comfortable[19]. This illustrates that the emotionality and sensationality manifested in the public has become an inherent characteristic of the post-truth era. This condition results in the intellect tending to be marginalized in the management of information and more inclined to prioritize emotions and feelings.

The term post-truth quotes Sri Utami Wulansari and Firdaus W Suhaeb, first coined by American-Serbian playwright Steve Tesich in a 1992 article in The Nations magazine about the Gulf War and Iran.[20] Tesich expressed his concern over the behavior of politicians and the government. The term was later popularized in 2004 by American author Ralph Keyes' book, The Post-Truth Era, about "dishonesty and deception in modern life". Since then, the post-truth debate has become a hot topic of discussion among observers and political thinkers. It's no surprise that the Oxford Dictionary (OD) named "post-truth" the best word of 2016. According to OD, the post-truth era is associated with a condition where there are no objective facts and public opinion is more influenced than personal emotions and beliefs.[21]

Henrik Enroth menyatakan bahwa Istilah ini mengacu pada sesuatu yang terlampau berlebihan dan sekedar sensasi. Menurutnya, "post-truth" adalah fenomena permukaan, sebuah gejala, bukan penyakit. Secara empiris, era ini menyentuh beberapa tantangan paling besar dan meresahkan yang

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[19] Mofferz, "Meretas Makna Post-Truth."

[20] Sri Wulansari, Firdaus W Suhaeb, dan Firdaus W Suhaeb, "Fenomena Post-Truth Sebagai Alat Gerakan Sosial Politik Pada Pemilihan Presiden 2019 (Studi Perubahan Sosial)," *Equilibrium: Jurnal Pendidikan* 11, no. 3 (September 2023): 304–11, https://doi.org/10.26618/equilibrium.v11i3.11090.

[21] Wulansari, Suhaeb, dan Suhaeb.

kita hadapi saat ini, khususnya penolakan terhadap perubahan iklim, populisme, dan bangkitnya otoritarianisme.[22].

Post-truth can be understood as a form of resistance to established knowledge. This is in line with Tom Nichols' concern that humans have a natural tendency to more readily accept evidence that supports pre-existing beliefs. In addition, humans are also influenced by personal experiences, prejudices, fears, and even phobias, which make them reluctant to accept advice from experts[23]. Sismondo berpendapat bahwa perhatian besar terhadap berita palsu—disertai berbagai upaya untuk membedakan antara yang nyata dan yang palsu—menunjukkan adanya kekhawatiran bahwa kita sedang memasuki era pasca-kebenaran. Ia juga menekankan bahwa Twitter berpotensi menjadi bagian dari proses pembubaran fakta.[24].

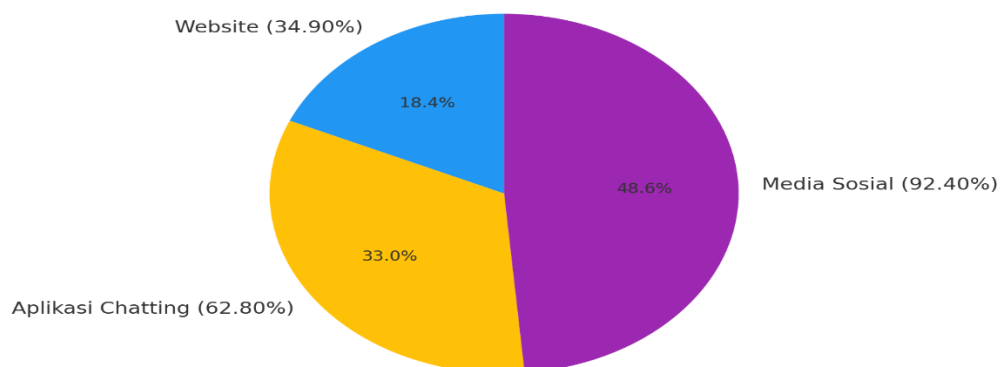The results of Mastel's research in Trina Nur Fathurrohmah can be seen in the diagram below;

Figure 1. Most used channels for the spread of hoaxes in 2022

The diagram shows that in 2022 the channels that most often spread fake news were websites (34.90%), the chat applications WhatsApp, Line,

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[22] Henrik Enroth, "Crisis of Authority: The Truth of Post-Truth," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 36, no. 2 (Juni 2023): 179–95, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10767-021-09415-6.

[23] Nichols, *Matinya Kepakaran*.

[24] Sergio Sismondo, "Post-Truth?," *Social Studies of Science* 47, no. 1 (Februari 2017): 3–6, https://doi.org/10.1177/0306312717692076.

and Telegram (62.80%) as well as social media Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Path (92.40%)[25]. Based on the data mentioned above, it can be said that false truths are widely circulated on social media. It will be a big problem if it is not taken seriously so that it has an impact on science that is oriented towards reason and objectivity.

Truth in this post-truth era is a battle between truth and falsehood. This situation makes it difficult to find and find information that is true and which is false, and that is only looking for sensationality. The post-truth phenomenon in Indonesia can be seen in the 2019 presidential election when Jokowi and Prabowo Subianto were presidential candidates. Jokowi was accused of being related to the PKI, but this was denied by him that his parents and relatives were Muslims [26].

At the same time, Prabowo was accused of supporting the caliphate and banning tahlilan, but Prabowo denied that his mother was of Christian background and that he was raised in a Christian environment. In the post-truth era, information is often manipulated for political gain, especially in an attempt to weaken opponents through the spread of fake news tailored to public preferences[27] In the context of this election, unverified allegations can spark chaos, at least divide society. Al-Attas explained that this situation arose from widespread injustice and misplacement of knowledge due to the loss of manners (*loss of adab*).[28] This situation is ultimately reflected in a society that elects leaders with similar characteristics: injustice and misunderstandings about knowledge.

Through a political perspective, Steve Fuller looks at the definition of post-truth from a different perspective. He argues that the term is demeaning

[25] Trina Nur Faturohmah dan Tamara Adriani Salim, "Perilaku Masyarakat Terhadap Penyebaran Hoax Selama Pandemi Covid-19 Melalui Media di Indonesia: Tinjauan Literatur Sistematis," *Tik Ilmeu : Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan dan Informasi* 6, no. 1 (Juni 2022): 121, https://doi.org/10.29240/tik.v6i1.3432.

[26] Wulansari, Suhaeb, dan Suhaeb, "Fenomena Post-Truth Sebagai Alat Gerakan Sosial Politik Pada Pemilihan Presiden 2019 (Studi Perubahan Sosial)."

[27] Wulansari, Suhaeb, dan Suhaeb.

[28] Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme*, Cetakan ketiga bahasa Melayu, trans. oleh Khalif Muammar (Kuala Lumpur: RZS-CASIS : HAKIM, 2021).

because the use of the word "emotion" in post-truth is just jargon used to disguise the real goal, which is to gain an advantage in political and social competition[29]. This practice reflects how knowledge and power are treated as instruments of dominance in public discourse.

Public responses to such information tend to be influenced by emotions, so provocative messages are easier to disseminate than rational and factual information. This condition is in line with the findings of Dzaki Wijaya and Rianto Rahadi, who show that emotions and mood play an important role in individual decision-making. Emotional states not only affect behavior but also determine how a person receives, reacts, and remembers information[30].

Through a political lens, Han also explained that neoliberalism is what gave birth to this emotional boom. Where neoliberalism uses emotions as a resource in order to create productivity and highest achievements. Another consequence is that consumer capitalism also takes advantage of this moment by creating more emotions to create more desires and needs[31].

The definition that has been elaborated above illustrates that post-truth is understood as a condition in which falsehood is positioned or disguised as truth, while the process of managing information is driven more by emotions than rational considerations. In the context of the digital age, this situation is further complicated by the openness of virtual spaces, which allow individuals to produce and disseminate information without adequate verification mechanisms.

b. **The Concept of Justice in the Thought of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas**

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is a Malaysian contemporary Muslim historian and philosopher. al-Attas was born on September 5, 1931

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[29] Steve Fuller, *Post-Truth: Knowledge as a Power Game*, Key Issues in Modern Sociology (London New York: Anthem press, 2018).

[30] Fahd Dzaki Wijaya, "ANALISIS EMOSI DAN SUASANA HATI AKIBAT ANCAMAN PANDEMI COVID-19 PADA PENGAMBILAN KEPUTUSAN MANAJER," *Jurnal Manajemen dan Profesional* 1, no. 01 (Januari 2021): 23–34, https://doi.org/10.32815/jpro.v1i01.299.

[31] Byung Chul Han, *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and Technologies of Power*, Cetakan pertama, trans. oleh Pratomo Dwi (Sumenep: Literatus Pustaka, 2025). p.63

in Bogor, West Java. Ngee Hieng in Johor was the place where Al-Attas went to primary school at the age of five. Then he continued his education at the Al-Urwat al-Wuthqa madrasah in Sukabumi, West Java. At the age of fifteen al-Attas went to Malaysia to continue his education at the Bukit Zahra school[32]. His expertise is in the fields of theology, literature, philosophy, metaphysics, and history. As well as his experience leading the departments and faculties of the University of Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia made him appointed by the Malaysian government as the founding director of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)[33].

Al-Attas's view of justice can be seen from his view that science and technology spread in today's society were born from the West's mistake in looking at science. Europe began the development of science in the Middle Ages, which has given Western culture hope that only science and philosophy can lead them to bring the beliefs they seek. So that in terms of humanity and society they use the approach of rationalism and empiricism[34].

The use of rational and empirical methods in humanities and society will cause humans to be unfair because they are only limited to what can be observed, even though humans also have spiritual properties that cannot be found through the approach of rationalism and empiricism. They forget that science is only a tool for human use and cannot be used as a value of life[35].

Technology and social media are experiencing very rapid development. So that it often causes humans to forget that technology is only a means and tool to facilitate our needs. The irony is that with the rapid development of technology and social media, this has resulted in human confusion in looking at the truth, including the spread of a lot of false

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[32] Aris Widodo, "Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' Semantic Reading of Islam as Din," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 47, no. 1 (Juni 2009): 135–63, https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2009.471.135-163.

[33] Kamaruzaman, Omar, dan Sidik, "Al-Attas' Philosophy of History on the Arrival and Proliferation of Islam in the Malay World."

[34] Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas, *Risalah untuk kaum muslimin* (Kuala Lumpur: IBFIM, 2014). p.23-24

[35] Al-Attas. p.42

information and news that only benefits one party and brings down the other[36] .

The concept of justice initiated by al-Attas is different from the concept of justice that is often understood in general and that exists in Western culture. It can be seen that when al-Attas criticizes the Western concept of justice, according to him, justice in the West only attaches importance to materialistic values, only judging from the value of its usefulness, so that in the West when a person is not of productive age he is confused about their own identity and will be busy looking for the meaning of life.[37] In another example, al-Attas also mentions Aristotle's view of someone who commits suicide. Aristotle did not see it as a tyranny between the slave and his God, but rather that a person had done wrong to his society and his country. Because of his actions, he has relieved his duties and responsibilities towards society and the State.[38]

According to him, this happens because his view of life is based on secular foundations and adheres to materialistic values so that it has an impact on the meaning, value and quality of life of each country only seen and measured from its position as a state, its position, its usefulness, its labor, and its income in relations and the state.

Al-Attas writes in Islam and Secularism If society is based on secularism and materialism, then the meaning, value, and quality of life are determined by position, position, usefulness, labor, and income in relation to the state[39] .

Justice in al-Attas's view cannot be achieved through a secular and materialist view of life. These aspects actually show injustice to oneself because they only judge from a physical aspect and ignore the spiritual aspect. What is happening in the West today is an impact of Rene Descartes' thinking on modern epistemology which emphasizes the importance of

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[36] Al-Attas. p.33
[37] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme*.p.123
[38] Al-Attas, *Risalah untuk kaum muslimin*. p.37
[39] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme*. p.123

doubt, rationality and the scientific method in achieving valid knowledge[40]. In addition, the West has marginalized aspects related to religion, God, or metaphysics in religion[41] In response to this, al-Attas argues that the scientific revolution initiated by Rene Descartes opened the gates of atheism, agnosticism, utilitarianism, dialectical materialism, evolutionism and historicism[42] .

Al-Attas argues that it is impossible for a person to act justly if it is based only on the physical aspect, because that would result in injustice to the universe and to humans which includes the spiritual dimension[43]. Whereas a person has been bound by a covenant with his God which if he carries out the commandments and shuns them will form an order or justice (cosmos), and on the other hand, if he violates it, it will form an irregularity or tyranny (chaos). [44]

Justice in Islam according to al-Attas is not a concept that refers to the state of relations between two people or the relationship between two parties, such as between one person and another or between society and the state; or between the government and the people or between the king and his citizens. For al-Attas, justice means a state of harmonious relationship in which everything is in its right and proper place[45].Furthermore and profoundly, according to al-Attas, justice is a harmonious and rightly balanced relationship between man and himself (the covenant between the servant and the creator) as the primary, fair to others, society and the state. al-Attas argues in Islam and Secularism: Human beings can in essence be unjust to themselves, because justice and injustice begin and end in

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[40] Athaya Nurma Salsabila dkk., "Analisa Pemikiran Rene Descartes Mengenai Rasionalisme dan Sinergitasnya Terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Muta'allimin* 1, no. 1 (November 2023): 43–52, https://doi.org/10.25299/jpim.2023.vol1(1).14636.

[41] Fata dan Noorhayati, "SEKULARISME DAN TANTANGAN PEMIKIRAN ISLAM KONTEMPORER."

[42] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme.* p.38

[43] Al-Attas. p.59

[44] Al-Attas, *Risalah untuk kaum muslimin*. p.36

[45] Al-Attas.39

themselves. The Qur'an affirms repeatedly that when man does wrong, he is wronging himself, and injustice is a condition that man does to himself.[46]

c. **Building Epistemic Justice in the Post-truth Era**

The truth in the age of the death of expertise is often obscured by the practice of distortion and manipulation of information. This phenomenon can be seen from the rampant slander, disinformation, and provocation, which causes divisions in various levels of society. On the other hand, the Western paradigm used in developing science and technology has epistemological flaws that lead to the gates of destruction. They forget that science is only a tool for human use and cannot be used as a tool for life[47].

This value of life can only be built if the application of science in Islamic society and culture is guided by sharia. The Shari'ah establishes a hierarchy of values in human actions and the use of objects, which are divided into five categories: (1) obligatory, i.e. rewarding if done and sinful if abandoned; (2) mandub, which is rewarded if done and innocent if abandoned; (3) haram, i.e. sinful if committed and rewarding if abandoned; (4) makruh, i.e. rewarding if left and sinless if it is done; and (5) mubah, which is not rewarding if it is done and also sinless if it is abandoned[48].

The root of the epistemological problem in this post-truth era, al-Attas emphasizes that the root of this problem lies in the loss of adab, that is, the loss of intellectual and moral discipline that causes disharmony between the physical and the spiritual. When reason no longer functions as it should, man fails to put everything in its place, including in the processing of knowledge. Therefore, the main urgency is a fair epistemological reconstruction, not just the search for new technical methods, but the enforcement of an ethical orientation in the processing of knowledge[49]. In addition, the development of science and technology produced by positivism

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[46] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme.*p.59
[47] Al-Attas, *Risalah untuk kaum muslimin*. p.44
[48] Syamsuddin Arif dkk., ed., *Islamic science: paradigma, fakta dan agenda*, Edisi Kedua (Jakarta: Institute for the Study of Islamic Thought and Civilizations, 2025). p.44
[49] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme*. p.xi

is the main marker of modernity that we are currently experiencing. As Muslims, we should also oversee, supervise and criticize the progress whether it has a good impact or not.[50] As for Han, the characteristic of modern politics is human independence in a transcendent order[51].

The post-truth era demands epistemic justice in understanding and rearranging reality. In this context, al-Attas provides an alternative paradigm. Justice is not just a social relation, but involves epistemological awareness: the ability to put knowledge in its place according to its hierarchy and function. This demands a clear distinction between truth and falsehood, fact and conjecture, and spiritual and material benefits. Al-Attas emphasized that man must treat knowledge fairly, that is, knowing the limits of its usefulness, the order of its priorities, and the point at which it must stop[52]. Thus, epistemic justice is a condition for the birth of a balance between self and society, as well as a bulwark against the chaos of truth as it occurs in the post-truth phenomenon.

On the urgency that must be upheld in upholding epistemic justice, al-Attas emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between valid knowledge and mere man-made conjectures, opinions, or doubts[53]. This difference determines whether information can lead to truth or lead to knowledge chaos. Therefore, upholding epistemic justice means restoring intellectual discipline so that knowledge is not treated on an equal footing with speculation and manipulation of information. Post-truth itself has represented a profound epistemic crisis. al-Attas argues that the realization of justice in a society and a country that brings happiness and prosperity can start from putting knowledge in its place. He said Human beings are required to act fairly with knowledge by placing it proportionally, namely understanding the limits of its usefulness, not exceeding or reducing it,

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[50] Ugi Suharto, *Nafi, Isbat, Dan Kalam: Bunga Rampai Postulat Pemikiran Islam*, Cetakan I, Ramadhan (Bandung: PIMPIN Dan BENTALA, 2022). P.132

[51] Han, *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and Technologies of Power*.

[52] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme*. p.105

[53] Al-Attas, *Risalah untuk kaum muslimin*. p.50-51

realizing the hierarchy of its priorities for life, knowing the limit point of its achievement, and being able to distinguish between essential knowledge and science that is conjectural or theoretical[54].

The notion of justice conveyed by al-Attas in the above article can essentially be implemented into practical steps in dealing with the flow of information in the post-truth era. First, a critical attitude is needed to distinguish truth and falsehood through the process of tabayyun, which is verifying the source and content of information before receiving or disseminating it. Second, people need to view facts differently from just opinions or conjectures, so that the truth is not reduced to widespread rumors. Third, information must be weighed not only in terms of its material benefits, but also in terms of the moral and spiritual value it contains. Thus, the information disseminated can encourage goodness, not increase public unrest.

Third, al-Attas emphasizes that epistemic justice requires an understanding of the limits of knowledge usefulness and the order of its priorities. Knowledge should be used within its scope and not pushed beyond its proper limits. In practice, this means prioritizing knowledge that serves as a guideline for life and moral formation over technical knowledge. Fourth, epistemic justice also teaches the awareness to refrain from spreading information that is doubtful or uncertain of its truth. This attitude is a form of ethics towards science as well as a manifestation of the epistemic responsibility of a Muslim in maintaining a balance between himself, God and society

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that the crisis of truth in the post-truth era is rooted in epistemic injustice, which is manifested in fundamental human errors in treating and placing knowledge. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's concept of justice, particularly through the notion of manners and the placement of knowledge, offers

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[54] Al-Attas, *Islām dan sekularisme.* p.105

an alternative framework for understanding and addressing these issues. By placing knowledge according to its hierarchy, distinguishing truth from falsehood, and unifying spiritual and material aspects within the framework of monotheism, epistemic justice can become the foundation of media ethics in the post-truth era. This perspective shows that efforts to counter hoaxes, misinformation, and information manipulation are not enough with technical verification alone, but require a reconstruction of epistemic consciousness rooted in the Islamic worldview.

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