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# Secularism and Moral Education: A Study of Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas' Thoughts on the Concept of Moral Education

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**Abstract** This article aims to understand the concept of moral education in facing the impact of secularism, namely the loss of manners, according to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. This study is meaningful in answering the problem: What is Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's educational concept in facing secularism? This problem is discussed through a literature review whose data is obtained from various works of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas which relate to Secularism and the concept of moral education. All research data was analyzed using the content analysis method. This study shows that according to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas secularism is an ideology that separates worldly life from ukhrawi life, resulting in the destruction of aqeedah which results in the loss of manners. While education is one way to improve morals. According to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, moral education is not only centered on understanding, but also on practice and habituation in everyday life.

**Keywords:** *Moral Education, Secularism, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*

**Abstrak** Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui konsep pendidikan akhlak dalam menghadapi dampak sekularisme yakni hilangnya adab menurut Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. Studi ini dimaksudkan untuk menjawab permasalahan: Bagaimana Konsep pendidikan Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas dalam menghadapi sekularisme? Permasalahan tersebut dibahas melalui studi kepustakaan yang datanya diperoleh dari berbagai karya Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas yang berhubungan dengan Sekularisme dan konsep pendidikan akhlak. Semua data penelitian dianalisis menggunakan metode *content analysis*. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahwa menurut Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas sekularisme adalah suatu paham yang memisahkan antara kehidupan duniawi dan kehidupan ukhrawi, sehingga berakibat pada rusaknya aqidah yang berdampak pada hilangnya adab. Sedangkan Pendidikan merupakan salah satu cara untuk memperbaiki akhlak. Menurut Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas pendidikan akhlak tidak hanya berpusat pada pemahaman saja, melainkan pada praktik dan pembiasaan dalam kehidupan sehari-hari.

**Kata Kunci:** *Pendidikan Akhlak, Sekularisme, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*

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## Introduction

In Islam, moral education is the most important factor in fostering a people and building a nation (Asmaran, 1994). In addition, the education desired by Islam is education that is built on the concept of Islam, so that it is able to form humans who are intellectually superior, rich in deeds, and graceful in morals and policies. However, due to global developments, world civilization demands that humans follow the development of the current of modernization, where changes occur in all aspects of life, both in terms of politics, economy, social, intellectual and culture (Suseno, 2001). Moreover, the entry of secularism in Indonesia, where this open-ended understanding (Maksun, 2009) intensifies the separation of worldly life from religion.

An assumption that is almost considered true by modern society today where secularism and modernity are two things that cannot be separated, in the sense that a society is called modern if the society is secular; keeping religion only in personal life and not brought into the social realm (Syarief, 2015). As a result, the educational goals summarized in the national education system number 20 years 2003 was just a mere formulation. There are many cases that conflict with norms that do not reflect noble morals, which are the result of secularism. A small example of a brawl among students. Allah has explained in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Qashas, verse 77, as follow:

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ  
الْمُفْسِدِينَ ٧٧

Meaning: “*And seek in what Allah has bestowed upon you (the reward of) the home of the Hereafter, but do not forget your portion in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not cause corruption on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters.*” (QS. Al-Qashash: 77).

It is clear from the word of Allah that in seeking pleasure in the world, it should go hand in hand with seeking happiness in the afterlife, instead of there being a separation between the two, as in the concept of secularism, namely by doing good to fellow human beings, by behaving and having good morals in socializing with fellow human beings, as Allah does good to humans. Ideally, students should be role models or examples for society, but this is not applied in students, on the contrary, students violate these values. This shows that there is an imbalance in the world of education.

To overcome this problem, Islamic education needs to reconstruct its educational concept and system in accordance with Islamic morals and values. Thus, this article will try to understand and explore information about one of the concepts of moral education from an educational figure, namely Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. One of the fundamental, integral concepts of moral education that is considered capable of building civilization and can be used as a framework or foundation for education in the perspective of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is *ta'dib*.

*Ta'dib* is an effort to prepare students to be responsible for building a quality civilization now and in the future (Muhaimin, 2006). Al-Attas assumes that the problems that occur today are the impact or result of a very fundamental problem, namely the damage to manners. The main cause of this problem stems from the confusion and erroneous scientific perception of leaders at all levels of society. Both in the religious, educational, political, bureaucratic and economic sectors.

This confusion and erroneous scientific perception are partly caused by the interference of foreign views of life, especially the West which is based on the values of dualism, secularism, humanism and sophism (Daud, 2003). From this description it also shows that the damage to manners will result in moral values, manners, ethics and religious values being lost from individual and social life. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas is a prominent Muslim thinker and reformer in the Islamic world, his concern is very strong for the decline of Muslims, his ideas and conceptual thoughts are implemented into international educational institutions (Daud, 2003). Based on the description above, according to the author, there needs to be an in-depth study of the thoughts of a contemporary educational figure, namely Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. This study is expected to enrich the scientific treasury in the study of Islamic education in shaping the nation's morals.

## **Methods**

The method used in this study is a qualitative research method. Qualitative research methods are studies that intend to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects, perceptions, motivations, actions and others holistically by descriptive means in the form of words and language in a specific natural context and by utilizing natural methods (Tohirin, 2012). The type of research that researchers use in this study is a library research approach, in this approach researchers focus more on collecting data from various relevant sources (such as books, journals, printed and online newspaper articles and the internet) related to the title in order to answer the concept of Moral education in facing secularism according to Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. The author explores the works or writings of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas and sources related to the framework of thinking that builds the ideas put forward by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas about the concept of moral education and secularism. After the data is obtained, the author will analyze the data using a content analysis approach to understand the core meaning contained in the thoughts of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Biography of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas**

Syed Muhammad Naquib ibn Ali bin Abdullah ibn Muhsin al-Attas (Soleh, 2003) born on September 5, 1931 in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia. His family tree can be traced back thousands of years through the sayyid lineage in the Ba'Alawi family in Hadramaut with a lineage that goes back to Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Among his ancestors, there were those who became guardians or scholars, one of them was Syed Muhammas al-Aydarus (from his mother's side), teacher and spiritual guide of Syed Abu Hafs Umar ba Syaiban from Hadramaut, who delivered Nur ad-Din ar-Raniri, one of them. prominent Islamic scholars in the Malay world, to the Rafi'iyah order. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' mother was Syarifah Raquan al-Aydarus, originally from Bogor, West Java and was a descendant of Sundanese nobility in Sukapura (Daud, 2003). Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas was the second of three siblings, the eldest was Syed Hussein, a sociologist and former Chancellor of the University of Malaya, while the youngest was Syed Zaid, a chemical engineer and former lecturer at the MARA Institute of Technology (Daud, 2003). He received the title Sayyed, which in Islamic tradition means that the person who receives

this title is a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Rasyidin & Nizar, 2005). From the above description, it can be seen that al-Attas' family background shows that al-Attas did not come from an ordinary socio-cultural group, but from the nobility, within him not only flowed blue blood, but also a noble and holy religious spirit and emotion. Family background also had a big influence on al-Attas' early education. From a family in Bogor, he received an education in Islamic disciplines, while from a family in Johor, he received an education that was very useful for him in developing the basics of Malay language, literature and culture.

## **Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas' Thoughts on**

### **1. The Nature of Secularism**

Secularism is the name of an ideology whose function is very similar to religion (Maksun, 2009). As a result, humans who adhere to secularism try to enjoy life and progress so far as if without intervention from God and assume that God is no longer necessary. According to al-Attas, secular or saeculum is a condition that occurs in the present, namely where in the process of secularization there is a process of human liberation from religion, which means the release of the world from religious and pseudo-religious understandings. Secularization not only encompasses aspects of social and political life, but cultural aspects also encompass secularization, because the process of secularization shows the loss of religion or religiousness from symbols of cultural integration (Al-Attas, 1981). According to him, secularism shows an ideology, where the ideology is like a secularization process. Namely freeing the world from religious views. While Islam has its own absolute vision of God, the universe, reality and man, Islam also has its own worldview and vision of the hereafter which has a final meaning for man. Therefore, Islam rejects any application to itself, secular concepts, secularization or secularism.

Likewise, Islamic secularism cannot be part of Islam, therefore the integral components of the historical and cultural influence of the West related to the secular dimensions do not need to be a monopoly of culture and civilization, because the history and culture that play an important role in the impact of Islamic history and culture should be interpreted from an Islamic perspective as integral components in the dimensions of Islamization. It is undeniable that the progress of the West in civilization has left Islam a little behind, but the ideology held by Islam with its vision contained in the Qur'an and Al-Sunnah should remain a guideline for life. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas in his book 'Islam and Secularism' openly said that Islam rejects the entire concept of secularism, this is because all the concepts contained in secularism do not belong to Islam in any way, these concepts belong to and are only natural in the context of Western Christian intellectual history, both experience and religious awareness.

### **2. Ethics and Morality**

Ethics and morality are one of the overall concepts of din initiated by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas. The term din, which is usually interpreted as religion, has many basic meanings. Even though they appear to be opposites to each other, conceptually they are still interconnected, so that the final meaning contained in them all appears as a clear unity and whole. Al-Attas then

explained again that what is called the Islamic religion, namely that which contains relevant possibilities that are related to the concept of *din*. Debt and obedience are two of the four main meanings of the term *din*. According to al-Attas, humans are the substance of debt itself. Because in reality humans are born in the world with nothing, even themselves are considered debtors. So they must pay it back with themselves, so humans must return themselves to Him, who owns it absolutely. Returning a debt means surrendering oneself in service to Allah, namely by being ethical and civilized to Allah, oneself, and fellow living beings. Obedience refers to conscious and willing obedience, because if it is not accompanied by awareness and will, it means it is not true obedience. According to al-Attas, true obedience is a continuous act that is experienced in the entire ethical scope of a person, not only that which resides in the recesses of the heart without manifestation in the form of actions, but is carried out in obedience to the law of Allah. The word of Allah SWT:

وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا ۚ ١٢٥

Meaning: “Who is better in religion than one who submits himself to Allah, while he is a *mubsin* (one who does good) and follows the religion of Ibrahim the *hanif*? Allah has made Ibrahim (His) beloved.” (QS. An-Nisa: 125)

The word ‘*Aslama*’ (surrender) is a word that shows a sense of obedience, namely surrendering all of oneself to obey the creator.

### 1. Loss of *Adab*

Secularism has negative impacts, one of which is the loss of *adab*. According to al-Attas, the loss of *adab* or the absence of *adab* will result in injustice, stupidity and even natural madness. Injustice is putting something in the wrong place, stupidity is doing something wrong to get something and natural madness is fighting based on the wrong goals and intentions.

Quoted from Wan Daud (2009), al-Attas explains the negative impact of this absence of *adab* that the authentic definition is destroyed and instead, inherits a vague slogan in the form of a concept. The inability to define, identify, and raise problems, then provide the right solution, the emergence of pseudoproblems, the reduction of problems to political, socio-economic, and legal factors has become a reality. It is not surprising that a situation like this can foster the growth of various forms of extremism whose main capital is stupidity.

From this problem, the concept of education as the cultivation of manners as understood and explained by al-Attas, where education seeks to produce Muslims who are properly educated, have a clear identity, are honest, moderate, brave and just in carrying out obligations in various realities and problems according to the order of priorities that are understood, is expected to be able to create good and civilized humans.

### Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas’ Thoughts on Moral Education

Nowadays, educators often ignore moral education in the teaching and learning process, these educators only focus on the subject matter they teach. Most of them (teachers/educators) understand moral education as education given to a certain phase and only certain teachers usually deliver moral education to students, or in terms of implementation methods we often hear that

moral education is given to teachers who teach moral subjects only. According to al-Attas, education is the sowing and planting of manners in a person. While in education there is something called the teaching and learning process, this means that the teaching and learning process should contain elements of sowing or planting morals in students or pupils. In his book 'The Concept of Islamic Education' al-Attas said that "morals or manners are expressions of justice as reflected by wisdom. So it can be concluded that moral education is the sowing or planting of manners in students in the form of wisdom. The format of educational thought offered by Al-Attas is to create a good human being, namely a universal human being (*Al-Insan Kamil*) (Kurniawan & Mahrus, 2011). From here it is clear that Al-Attas emphasizes that education must make students have good morals or manners in every action. In line with this, Wan Daud explains that in the Qur'an it has been explained that the ideal example for a civilized person is the Prophet Muhammad SAW who is called a perfect human being or a universal human being by most Muslim scholars. The concept offered by Al Attas is ta'dib or civilized human being with the target of education being human beings (Nata, 1997). Al-Attas argues that an educated person is a good person. What is meant by good here is manners in a comprehensive sense, which includes a person's spiritual and material life, which tries to instill the quality of goodness that he receives. Ta'dib is rooted in the word '*addaba*' (Ali & Muhdlor, 1997) which means to decorate, order, propriety, humanity, and literature. The concept of ta'dib in moral education is expected in education not only to focus on teaching and the results of its knowledge, but also on its application in everyday life, so that civilized humans are formed.

Al-Attas also explained that teaching and the process of learning skills, no matter how scientific, cannot be interpreted as education if knowledge is not instilled in it, with the aim of seeking knowledge, which is contained in the concept of ta'dib. The concept of ta'dib itself emphasizes more on improving morals or human life values. In agreement with Al-Attas, Harun Nasution explains in his book that someone who has adab will be able to prevent himself from making mistakes in judgment, because humans have intelligence, cleverness, or intelligence. Intelligence is the ability of humans to know and see problems and solve them successfully, with intelligence, people are able to give something correctly and precisely, they will be able to discipline themselves to think first about all their actions. In short, adab is full of moral considerations, a person will try their best to implement and obey all existing provisions, regulations, and rules (Nasution, 1986).

Thus, a person will automatically be able to place himself in the right position in any situation and condition, so that the condition of justice is reflected. This kind of human being is predicted as a just human being, namely a human being who practices manners in himself, so as to realize or produce a good human being. Justice is also a reflection of wisdom, namely knowledge given by God, so that the recipient is able to make correct judgments. From this description, it can be seen that Al-Attas emphasizes more on the aspect of manners. The intention is that the knowledge obtained and practiced properly so that it is not misused according to the free will of the owner of the knowledge. Thus, moral education according to Al-Attas is a process of instilling manners into humans which refers to the method and system of gradual instillation, and to humans who receive the process and content of the education. From the definition explained by Al-Attas, there are three elements in it, namely process, content and recipient.

## Discussion

### *Secularism and Its Influence on Morals*

Departing from the history of al-Attas' education who continued his education in the West, namely in England and Canada from 1952-1965, in his education process of course al-Attas met with western intellectual figures and western culture which is a secular country, making al-Attas interested in studying secularism more deeply. However, because al-Attas comes from a family background of scholars, even from his mother's side if traced through the sayyid genealogy can reach Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and with the provision of religious knowledge that he learned while at Madrasah al-Urwatu al-Wutsqa, Sukabumi, so in studying secularism al-Attas uses Islamic views, which in the end result al-Attas rejects the concept of secularism as a whole, because it is not in accordance with the Islamic principles contained in the Qur'an.

Broadly speaking, it can be seen that the background of secularism comes from two things, namely freedom of thought and the desire to progress without any religious limitations. According to al-Attas, secular or saeculum is a condition that occurs in the present, which in its concept shows an ideology, namely the liberation of humans from religion, which means the release of the world from religious and pseudo-religious understandings. Agreeing with al-Attas, Holyoake also argues as quoted by Budhy Munawar Rachman that "Secularism is an ethical system founded on the principle of natural morality and independent of revealed religion or supernaturalism" (Rachman, 2010) which means secularism is an ethical system based on the principle of natural morality and independent of revealed religion and supernaturalism. Thus, secularism is an understanding that consciously concentrates or focuses its attention solely on worldly problems, and isolates or sets aside the role or revelation and God from various aspects of its life. Al-Attas emphasized that Islam has its own absolute vision of God, the universe, reality and humans, Islam also has its own world view and vision of the hereafter which has a final meaning for humans, which is so completely summarized in the Qur'an.

While secularism only thinks about the worldly without thinking about the afterlife, because the principle of secularism is the liberation of humans first from religion and then from metaphysics that regulate their reason and language (Munawir, 1986). In thinking and the desire to become an advanced human being, of course Islam also has limitations, limitations in thinking for example, Islam limits human thinking activities to thinking only about creatures. Likewise with the desire to become advanced, Islam strongly recommends becoming an advanced human being, but still within the corridors of Islam. Namely by obeying and submitting oneself in service to Allah, humbling oneself before Him, and devoting oneself sincerely and consciously to Allah, in order to fulfill His commands and avoid His prohibitions. In line with this, in the Qur'an, Surah Adz-Zariyat verse 56 it is also explained:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ ٥٦

Meaning: "I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me." (Qs. Az-Zariyat: 56)

This shows that Allah created humans only to worship Him, by carrying out His commands and also avoiding His prohibitions. So, it can be concluded that the essence of a human life is

solely to worship and obey Allah, as a reward for the gifts of Allah given during his life, in this case by worshiping according to the provisions that Allah has stated in His book. However, the emergence of the term secularism which is in the form of an ideology, consciously or unconsciously causes confusion and errors in the way humans think, thus having an impact on the damage to faith and the loss of manners in humans. It is undeniable that belief always goes hand in hand with morals, if someone's belief is correct then someone's morals are also correct, good and straight. Likewise, if someone's creed is wrong, then their morals will also follow. Because *aqidah* is the basis of moral education. The basis of moral education is correct beliefs towards nature and life (Rahmat, 2007). So both are related to each other. Essentially according to al-Attas, the absence of *adab* will trigger the emergence of all forms of Sufism, injustice caused by the absence of *adab* will certainly damage the moral and educational order of a society (Daud, 2009). This means that the loss of *adab* will give rise to moral damage (ethics or morals). ) in humans, while morality itself includes nine aspects that must be fulfilled, namely:

- 1) Personal morality, namely the fulfillment of obligations to oneself.
- 2) Family morality, namely the fulfillment of one's obligations to the family, both physically and spiritually.
- 3) Neighborly morals, namely the fulfillment of one's demands towards one's neighbors.
- 4) Social morals, the Qur'an teaches that mankind was created by Allah from a descendant of Adam and Eve, then made into tribes and tribes so that they could get to know each other.
- 5) Economic morality, in fulfilling material life needs, humans are given moral guidelines from various aspects, for example in the economic aspect, namely earning a living in a halal way.
- 6) Political ethics, the Qur'an teaches that rulers should always show an attitude of love and gentleness to their people.
- 7) Professional ethics, moral guidelines aimed at those holding certain positions or jobs in order to serve the interests of society, for example doctors, teachers, civil servants, lawyers, judges and so on. In general, profession holders are required to carry out and execute their duties as well as possible.
- 8) Morals towards the environment, namely morals in utilizing natural potential to serve the interests of human life.
- 9) Morals towards Allah, namely the fulfillment of a human's obligations towards his Lord. As quoted from QS. Adz-Dzariyat verse 56, that the duty of humans in terms of morals towards Allah is to serve Him (Basyir, 1993).

So it is not only centered on morals towards fellow human beings, but the nine aspects of morals will be affected by the loss of manners caused by secularism. For example, in the aspect of economic morals, when a person tends to be secular, in terms of seeking a living or sustenance he no longer sees the provisions of Allah, as a result he will justify any means to obtain sustenance. Likewise with personal, family, neighbor, social, political, professional, environmental morals and even morals towards Allah are also affected. Because a person who thinks secularly will be ethical



without referring to the Qur'an as a source of human morals, because in principle this secular ideology leads humans to separate worldly life and the hereafter, separating life from religious views, so that humans will justify any means to get a more advanced worldly life.

What's more, in this era of globalization, which demands humans to be more advanced than before, be it in terms of economy, education, or technology. This shows that when *aqidah* has been damaged, humans will tend to have incorrect ethics. There is no secular ideology that is in accordance with Islamic creed, until al-Attas emphasized that Islam rejects the entire concept of secularism. Imam Munawir also said that "Islam totally rejects any application of itself, secular concepts, secularization, or secularism, because all of that does not belong to Islam and is contrary to it in all things". Likewise, Endang Saifuddin in his book emphasized that Islam is only in line with secularism in terms of paying attention to worldly problems. However, Islam in principle rejects secularism, because basically secularism only focuses its attention on worldly problems, and has consciously turned its back on religion or revelation and God from within everyday life and life (Saifuddin, 1986).

### *The Concept of Moral Education*

Starting from the problem of the loss of manners caused by secularism, al-Attas presents an educational concept that seeks to produce Muslims who are properly educated, have a clear identity, are honest, moderate, brave and fair in carrying out obligations in various realities and problems according to the order of priorities that are understood, it is hoped that through education, quality, ethical and noble human beings can be formed.

#### 1. The Nature of Moral Education

Unlike other educational figures, such as Hasan al-Banna and Al-Maududi who use the term 'at-tarbiyah' in their educational concepts (Susanto, 2009), al-Attas uses the word *ta'dib* in his educational concept, which according to al-Attas education is the process of instilling manners, so that through education good humans or individuals can be created. This means that in every educational process, what is called manners or noble character must be embedded. Without instilling manners, it cannot be said to be education. The same thing was also expressed by Hasan Langgulung who started from the etymology of *tarbiyah*, according to him, education consists of four elements, namely first, maintaining and nurturing the child's nature approaching adulthood; second, developing various potentials and readiness; third, directing all of these natures and potentials towards goodness and perfection that are worthy again; and fourth, the gradual implementation process (Junaidi, 2010). Al-Attas also emphasized that the term *tarbiyah* is not the right term and not the right term, to mean education in the Islamic sense, because the term used must bring the right idea about education and everything involved in the education process, while *tarbiyah* which is meant by education essentially reflects the western concept of education. The concept of *ta'dib* offered by Al-Attas emphasizes more on education instilling manners, meaning realizing a good human being, namely a universal human (*Al-Insan Kamil*), the universal human meant by al-Attas is the Prophet Muhammad SAW. In his book Moh. Slamet Untung John Alden Williams also wrote in his book entitled *Islam* that:

“The Prophet is not only the founder and legislator of the community: he is the model for Muslims. It is accepted as axiomatic that every act he made after the beginning of the Revelation was preserved by God from error; it had not been so, then the Revelation itself would be cast into doubt, a thing God could never have permitted. Therefore, Muhammad’s slightest act was rightly guided, and of moral value, for traditional Muslims, everything the prophet did is a part of his sunna: his treatment of children. The way he broke his fast, how he cleaned his teeth and his beard, are all worthy of study and emulation.” (The Prophet was not only the founder and legislator of society: he was a model for Muslims. Axiomatically, all actions performed after the beginning of revelation are protected from error by God; otherwise the revelation itself would be doubtful, something that God never doubts. Therefore, no matter how trivial Muhammad’s actions are, they are always under (God’s) guidance and have moral value.

For traditional Muslims, everything Muhammad did is part of his sunnah: his treatment of children, the way he broke his fast, how he cleaned his teeth, and trimmed his beard, all have the value of lessons and competitions of good deeds). Unlike Ibn Khaldun who in his concept of education emphasizes the learning process carried out by teachers, the concept of ta’dib in al-Attas’ moral education does not only focus on teaching and the results of knowledge, but also on application in daily life, in moral education about honesty for example, success in education is not from students understanding and being able to explain what honesty is but being able to apply this honest attitude in daily life as a whole. So that the results of education goals can be achieved perfectly.

### 1. The Purpose of Moral Education

Speaking about the purpose of moral education, Athiyah al-Abrasyi argues that the purpose of Islamic education is the purpose that has been set and carried out by the Prophet Muhammad during his life, namely the formation of high morals. Because moral education is the soul of Islamic education without ignoring the physical, intellectual, and practical knowledge (Arifin, 1995). The same is true for the purpose of Indonesian national education which is summarized in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the purpose of National Education, Article 3, namely:

The purpose of national education is to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens.

Al-Attas also in his concept stated the same thing, but prioritized the final result in an education is to produce good humans, and not a society as in Western civilization or good citizens who in this perspective are civilized or wise individuals who know and acknowledge all the rules of reality including God’s position in that reality. As a result, they will always act according to the rules themselves.

In line with al-Attas, Ahmad D. Marimba stated that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is the formation of a Muslim personality. A Muslim personality is a personality that has Islamic religious values and is responsible according to Islamic values (Marimba, 1989). Likewise, Hasan Langgulung quoted by A. Susanto stated that the goal to be achieved in education is essentially a

manifestation of ideal values formed in the human person, fostering humans to become pious servants of Allah with all aspects of life, actions, thoughts and feelings.

From here it can be concluded that the purpose of moral education is in the results of education, once again as al-Attas emphasized, namely education makes humans better, because the most important thing in the education process is the end result of the education, especially with moral education, the most important thing is that students or learners are able to apply the theory or material of morals in everyday life, not just knowing about the theory or material.

## 2. Method of Moral Education

In the education process, of course, it cannot be separated from the so-called educational method, there are many methods in moral education, for example the exemplary method (*uswah al-hasanah*), the method of training or habituation, educating through *mauidzah* (advice), educating through discipline, and educating through *targhib wa tahdzib* (Syahidin, 1999). However, the educational method in educating morals conveyed by al-Attas includes only two things, namely:

### a) Metaphor and story method

Al-Attas' metaphor and story method can be seen in every explanation of a concept in his works. He tells it in sequence with light metaphors. So that it makes it easier for readers to understand it. Likewise, the learning process through the metaphor and story method will help students or learners to understand a material. In the Qur'an it is also explained that the Messenger of Allah conveyed commands through the story method.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا اٰدَمُ اِنَّمَا يٰۤاتَيْنٰكَ رُسُلًا مِّنْكَ يَفْصُوْنَ عَلَيْكَ اَيْتِيْ لَا فَمَنْ اَتٰهُ وَاصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُوْنَ ۝ ٣٥

Meaning: "O children of Adam, if there come to you messengers from among yourselves, reciting to you My signs, whoever is pious and reforms, no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve." (QS. Al-A'raf: 35)

There are three advantages of the story method, namely: 1) The language style is clear, detailed and simple, so it is easy to understand. 2) Some phrases or sentences are repeated to focus more on the purpose of the story. 3) Psychological nuances and have a lively and interesting imagination (Untung, 2007).

### b) Tawhid method

This Tawhid method is one of the characteristics of al-Attas' educational concept, according to al-Attas through this method can solve the problem of dichotomy between theory and practice. The reason is that in this method Al-Attas emphasizes that there is no dichotomy between what is considered theory and practice. So when someone already knows the theory, for example the theory of honesty, then he is educated by his teacher to practice it in everyday life. So that in socializing a person still adheres to Islamic monotheism. So educators or teachers in this method do not only provide an understanding of something but also train and foster and accustom students so that the material or theory of moral education is applied in everyday life.

## 1. Educators and Students

In education, there are educators and students. According to Al-Ghazali, as quoted by Bukhari Umar, it is explained that the main task of educators in Islamic education is to perfect, cleanse, purify, and guide the human heart to get closer (taqarrub) to Allah SWT (Umar, 2010). Students are people who seek knowledge, muta'allim means people who learn, while students mean people who want or want to know. Hasan al-Bana pays great attention to educators, because educators are one of the determining factors in the success of the education process. Likewise with al-Attas, he mentions several criteria for becoming an educator or teacher:

- a) Teachers must be humble, respectful and sincere.
- b) Teachers must have the ability to interpret and explain.
- c) Teachers must pour out affection for students.
- d) Teachers must provide examples of good behavior to students or learners.
- e) Teachers must show joy when students or learners succeed in learning (give appreciation).
- f) Teachers must reprimand when students or pupils make mistakes.

Not only educators or teachers, al-Attas also determines several things that must be done by students:

- a) Students must respect teachers or educators,
- b) students must trust teachers,
- c) students must be patient with the teacher's shortcomings, and put them in a reasonable perspective,
- d) Students should not give various views to their teachers,
- e) Students should master the material as well as mastery in practice, and
- f) Students must understand correctly the content and messages conveyed by a teacher.

Teachers are the same as parents or leaders, they must correct the spiritual, intellectual, attitudinal, and behavioral weaknesses of students under their guidance, and successful students are students who are able to satisfy teachers or make their teachers proud. When students do something wrong, the teacher is obliged to reprimand them like a father reprimanding his child, likewise with students who are reprimanded, they must respect and obey the teacher like they obey their parents.

## Conclusion

Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas said that secularism is nothing more than an ideology whose principle is the separation between the worldly and the hereafter, thus resulting in the destruction of faith which results in the loss of manners. On that basis, al-Attas then expressed the concept of education whose main goal is to form better human beings. Because it is through education that human morals or ethics can be formed. According to al-Attas, in moral education, the most

important thing is the end result, namely that students are able to practice and familiarize themselves with moral education material in their daily lives. So a teacher is not only tasked with explaining the material, but is also able to educate people to practice and get used to the material taught in everyday life, so that morals become commonplace and become the basis of their true faith, thus minimizing the impact of secularism, namely the loss of manners in humans.

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