

# Reconstruction on the Epistemology of Moral and Character Education in Pencak Silat

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Abstract: Human's essence lies on their intelligence. Epistemology comes into existence as a logical consequence because the human mind constantly seeks to make philosophical reflection. The martial arts or Pencak silat as the indigenous heritage of Indonesians, in addition to teaching excellent moral character it also encourages the practitioners to always uphold the religious and Pancasila values. In reconstructing the epistemology of moral and character education in the society members of martial arts organization whose vision of the future should be aimed at three things. First, an increase in their ability to cope with the problems of contemporary life through adhering to the guidelines of religious and Pancasila values. Second, having sensitivity to absorb the latest developments so that moral education and character are responsive in upholding to the source of religious teachings and Pancasila. Third, the internalization of religious and Pancasila values to the members in the face of modern advancement. This study uses hermeneutic reflection method which engages descriptive, comparative, and critical reflection analysis to find a comprehensive understanding. The result is that the philosophy of martial arts essentially seeks to find the real truth that the views and wisdom of human life associated with cultural, social, moral, and religious values characterizing the Indonesian culture. Martial arts philosophy realizes the fighters as the God's and individual and social being creatures. A fighter is required to have an attitude of *taqwa* 'piety', *tanggap* 'responsive', *tanggung* 'resilient', *tanggon* and *trengginas*. The noble values of the martial arts reflect educational material to create man of noble characters.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Pencak silat in essence is effort of Indonesian nation that is developed from generation to generation till reaching current shape. The development effort is intended for goodness and benefit of society life, in form of spiritual and bodily values. The values are inseparable part of Indonesian culture. They contain educational material for shaping human being having excellent moral. Pencak Silat has four integrated aspects: mental-spiritual, martial art, art and sport. High values of pencak silat are contained in the four aspects as integrated unity. Pencak silat may be visualized as series of effective, beautiful patterned movement variations that accord to body mechanism as manifestation of moral highness, which can be used for self-defense and entertainment and to secure body freshness and agility. Pencak silat is substance and means for spiritual and bodily education to form agile human

that can understand and apply high societal moral values.

Related to name pencak silat there are some equalizing definition of pencak and silat and others distinguish them. Some pencak silat figures distinguished meaning of pencak and silat and their various explanations. Mohamad Djoemali, a founder of IPSI explained pencak as attack-defense dance rhythmic movement with some rules and is usually performed for public performance. Meanwhile, silat is essence of pencak for defending fight. The Indonesian Encyclopedia defines pencak silat as Indonesian martial art officially announced in November 1973 at seminar on original sport of pencak silat in Tugu West Java. Pencak is attack movement in form of dance and rhythm with rule and is able to present. Silat is essence of pencak to defend and cannot be performed. Pencak silat is martial art adjusted with necessity in dealing challenge in form of nature, animal or human being.

Its motions often imitate animal movement (flying tiger, biting snake, and monkey) and others.

Being included into a type of fighting method which traditionally developed and becomes a pride for the people of Southeast Asia, Pencak Silat comes into existence as a local product of martial arts combining other combating arts of various forms and modifications (Alexander et al, 1972). In Indonesia, there are officially about 820 schools of Pencak Silat (Wilson, 2015; Ediyono, 2005). In its early time, *silat* was initially a means of corroborating interactions between local communities' relationship with the kingdom and enhancing the capabilities of the state to prevent foreign interference and occupation. Later in the Dutch colonial era, martial arts would not thrive because of the prohibition of practicing the local martial arts by the colonial government, while in the Japanese colonial period; martial arts were on its progressed. This occurred because in the Japanese colonial era, people were given their freedom to train and practice the martial arts. Even by the Japanese government, there were often held games which gathered some masters of *silat* against the Japanese warriors (Ediyono, 2005).

The epistemology of Java embodied in a term called *ngelmu* 'science' which refers to a form of mystical or spiritual, nor that it is intellectual but more likely intuitive intelligence. To discover how *ngelmu* obtained, one must be able to seep into his deepest heart, he or she should undergo three-dimensional processes; ranging from the coarsest part of her body, smooth and then to the subtlest, sublime and glorious (Hadiwijono, 1967). Additionally, the Javanese knowledge is conceptually perceivable through performing ritual. By the symbolic ritual it was perceived as a means to seek for the truth. To confirm Ricoeur's view (1976) on symbol, 'different symbols are rooted in the human experience'.

Based on the acculturation of Javanese culture, Islam teaching inspired the principle of Javanese mystical journey which summarized in four levels. The Javanese spiritual journey described by Hadiwijono (1967) departs from the outward condition, starting from the most rugged parts of the body towards the most delicate things, this belief accordingly has been much influenced by mystical Islam (Sufism). In Islam, the lowest level in acquiring knowledge is the *shari'a* of life guided by religious law. The second is the *tarekat* 'congregation' that is the degree to which a person is aware at the time of undergoing the deepest meaning of life by performing rituals and obeying the

religious law. The third level is *hakekat* 'essential', it is a growing level of awareness and understanding which can only be done as individual perceiving their role life entirely to serve the Creator. The last level called *makrifat* which is the degree that the individual and his soul merges with the soul of the universe, despite of remaining the nature of human needs (eating, drinking, sleeping, etc.), at this level one regards himself as the representative of God on earth. The fundamental aspect of Islamic mystical teachings which most phenomenal and adopted by the Javanese culture is on a concept of *manunggaling kawula Gusti* inspired by the Islamic understanding of *wahdatul wujud* a claim of human beings can be united with his Lord. This is the highest level of knowledge in Islamic mysticism (Prabowo, 2003).

## 2 METHODS

This study is under the paradigm of Hermeneutical method of analysis is used in this study. Hermeneutics aims to dispel the mysteries contained in a better use of the symbols of the martial arts movement and ritual practice in Pencak silat by way of unmasking the forces which are unknown and hidden from these symbols (Ricoeur, 2003). Interpretation includes the concept of work to decipher the hidden (a recollection of meaning) through decomposition is clear, and it opens up various levels of meaning that is implied in the literal meaning, in this case Pencak silat martial arts movements occupy function as a text.

## 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human beings have a way of self-defense in accordance with situation and condition of natural surroundings. People living near the forest have a distinctive martial to deal with beast. Moreover, they also create martial arts by imitate the movement of animals in natural surroundings, such as imitating a monkey, tigers, snakes, and birds. People who live in the mountains of the usual standing, moving, and walk with the position of the leg to keep from being easily fall during moving on uneven ground. They usually create martial arts which has the characteristics firm trestle and immobile. Hand movements more agile, manifold, and potent usefulness. The residents who live in marshy areas, flatland, and grassland are usually walking fast or

running, so that the movements of the legs become mercurial. They create a lot of martial arts that utilize the foot as tool of self-defense. As well as plants, such as coconuts with thick leather hard shell to protect against squirrels, durian given the thorns on the skin (Sudirohadiprodjo, 1982).

Pencak silat school is education institution for people learning pencak silat. Learning is study intensively, in which its process is followed, advised and monitored directly by teacher so development of persons learning it can be known clearly particularly on self-control aspect. The teacher will not continue the education, teaching and training to one having less moral for pencak silat skill. There are three groups of pencak silat school in Indonesia and Malaya society area based on characteristic of the school as described below. This group does not know official organization, monthly fee, or uniform because its shape is informal. Conservative pencak silat school is not spread broadly and their student was concentrated around the teacher's house. Practice was done in hidden area or in close room and should not be watched by non-member. In this way, the teacher has intention to protect motion or technique they have to not being stolen by other school. They hold tradition, are very close and hide his knowledge that is convinced being obtained by master through revelation.

### 3.1 Epistemology in Pencak Silat

Philosophers in this case the philosophy of science argues that the science of knowledge can be passed by the source of known sources of existence, such as "empirical, rational, intuitive, and revelation, for the latter is the science of God descended to the beloved of His choice that is the Prophets (Suriasumantri, 2013). In Islamic philosophy, there are also known three modalities in epistemology, such as "*hudhuri* science" and "*hushuli* science", besides it is impossible that the first is a direct corresponding epistemology as the science is manifest or present, i.e. the unity of the subject-object. The second is the science of acquisition from outside the external self, the relation of subject-object that is indirect then requires an intermediary, impressed is dualistic (Gharawiyen et al., 2012).

The metaphysical and mystical dimensions of the acquisition process are integral. As explained earlier, that the "Doctrine" referred to in this martial arts are the teaching of "*Tawheed* Sciences". Thus it appears that the epistemology of this martial arts departs from a device of mystical-metaphysical-rational knowledge that is propounded in the body of

Religion. The device is honed through continuous practice-*mahyadhoh*- and practices that have become the process of martial art, such as the practice of soul purification, the avoidance of the forbidden things in the doctrine, and the prayers that contain certain *wirid* and *dhikr*, such practices are owned by several martial arts colleges that maintain the purity of the teachings.

According to various sources of information on Java Island, Southeast Asian martial system or *Pencak Silat* has been mainly conserved because of the significant role played by martial arts fighting groups against the Dutch colonies for the Indonesian independence during the World War II. Some secrets of martial arts are manifested in pursuing of the inner power or *kanuragan* (mystical energy). Interestingly, the origin of martial arts can be traced from the stream of Islam called *Sufism* 'mysticism'. Although the connection between martial arts and any stream of mystical belief transmitted through the oral tradition, *silat* martial system originated in the religious traditions which aim at forming powerful mystical generation to oppose the Dutch colonial force. According to many people, 'the Dutchmen successfully expelled from Indonesia because of the magical force of *silat* martial arts (Green, 2001). Based on various historical sources, by way of mastering the martial arts inner power '*kanuragan*' one could deflect enemy bullets gun fire.

### 3.2 Spiritual in Pencak Silat

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### 3.3 Ritual *Slametan* in Pencak Silat

The ritual tradition of the martial arts endorsement realized in the form of *selametan*, is a prerequisite for students to become *warga* 'citizens' of organization. It contains the intention that the martial arts practitioners maintain their salvation and receive merci and blessing of the Almighty God so that it enables them getting away from danger. The endorsement tradition in martial arts school performed in the month of *sura*. The word *sura* in the Javanese understanding means brave due to sacred. This month is deemed to be a holy month, the right moment to cleaning and introspecting. Each martial arts school respectively represents its local culture. In this study the martial arts tradition of ritual is focused on the study of martial arts one of the renowned martial arts schools in Java Island, Setia Hati Terate Brotherhood (PSHT). This school was found in the island of Java, thus the event of endorsement tradition applies customs and cultures of Java. The endorsement events are directed to be sacred, this is done to implant a belief or influence so that the prospective warriors can undergo the process orderly, quiet, calm and tranquil. Thus, the senior warriors more easily convey all the material overnight.

*Selametan* or salvation tradition in the martial arts culture views human beings to poses three layers of consciousness. *Selametan* through ritual behavior is believed to be a means to achieve triple consciousness that can lead to the perfection of the soul (Muryanto in Ediyono, 2005). The third levels describe as follows:

- Level of the material consciousness, at this stage, representation on the characteristics of human beings only glorifies material things, property or a thought of money, social status and degree. Humans in such a new typical consciousness reach to the material level, the prevailing law tends to create a sense which is the more possessions someone own, the more he/she feels increasingly excited and turned into happiness. Conversely, the lesser someone possess, the more increasingly they be despondent and suffering. Literally, his soul will be easily swayed by the ebb and flow of the waves of life, thereby; the soul will easily turn to be restless and uneasy. The outward strength according to the view of *pencak silat* martial arts is as it is developed to generate *kanuragan* 'inner power';
- Level of the intellectual consciousness, humans rely on common sense ability to

master a science. The Malay word *pandai* refers to people who are proficient in a wide range of expertise, especially poses supernatural power. Specifically, the word *pendekar* to denote master of martial arts was originated from the word *pandai akar* this term particularly to define skillful persons at silat or martial arts. Having an awareness of the human intellect enables a person to search for equilibrium and harmony of life that is not easily swayed by circumstances. Using common sense is only able to understand the things that are reality, while the things that are unseen, such as the entities of God, angels and devils are understandable in nature. Therefore, people need to get into the highest level of consciousness. Inner strength and power in martial arts generate *kawashitan*;

- Level of the spiritual consciousness, at this phase man could no longer rely on his rationality or common sense. They begin to try interacting with the ability of the liver or heart. Humans are therefore characterized by increasingly wise and prudent between thought and action; always maintain a relationship with the Almighty God. In Muslim cosmology, man consists of two parts in the definition of the Arabic language, which is part of a physical nature or the exoteric realm (*zahir*) and the esoteric (spiritual or inner). More simply, the exoteric aspect refers to the outward physical body, while the esoteric refers to the inner parts of human body including intelligence and spirit (soul) that can be originates at the heart. The heart or most Javanese people understood *ati* associated the human's heart or liver which enables him or her to observe *rasa* (sense) (compare de Grave, 2001). In this state of consciousness, martial arts practitioners develop a sense of (inner feeling), enabled him to hone specialized sensing to sensitivity going through the inner vision. In this case the spiritual forging in the martial arts generates *kasampurnaan* (perfection).

### 3.4 Character in Pencak Silat

Notosoejitno (1996) explained that a fighter should have good character that is god-fearing, being upright to *taqwa*, responsive, strong, *tanggon* and *tregginas*.

- *Taqwa*. Silat fighters are demanded to have strong believe in God by obeying his order

and avoid the prohibitions. In that sense, anyone of the PS practitioners should have good character, continuously improve quality and always hope to be a good citizen that upholds principles 'to be beneficial to others'. As *warga* 'citizens', *pendekar* 'fighters' should obey principle of loyal, sincere, independent and consequent to norm and regulation, manners, and being supportive to the society. Any fighter needs to participate actively in effort to develop and create social welfare based on togetherness, solidarity, social responsibility and responsibility to God;

- *Tanggap*. Silat fighters are demanded to be sensitive, care, anticipative, proactive, and well-prepared against any change and development. In that sense, any fighter should be aware and increase his/her quality and overall tendency;
- *Tanggung*. Silat fighters should be preserving and having willingness to develop his/her own capability in facing and ready to challenge turbulences. He/she needs to be able to deal with obstacle, disturbance, and threat to reach noble goal based on true fighter's principles;
- *Tanggon*. Silat fighters should have willingness to establish justice, honesty, truth, being firm, consistent and consequent. Fighters need to be able to maintain principles, having self-respect and good personality, deep consideration both in thinking and behaving, having a high discipline, awareness and always stay resistant against temptation of ins and outs of him/herself;
- *Trengginas*. Silat fighters are demanded to have energetic, active, creative, invocative attitude, thinking to the future and hard working. He/she should pursue advance useful for themselves and society and can pass challenge based on willingness to be responsible over the development in the society.

Through the self-culture of pencak silat, humans expected to have five characteristics of good human beings in order to obtain salvation in life. Salvation is obtained by a loyal citizen attitude five hearts terate. Harsono (2003), describes five characteristics are (1) The virtuous, that a virtuous know right and wrong as well as piety to God. Someone that has possess noble manners also reflected the attitude of being willing to sacrifice the interests of the people and always try to give precedence to the interests of the community, nation, and State rather than private

interest or group, (2) The brave and not afraid to die, that is the courage which is based on the truth will bear a force. The attitude of *adigang*, *adigung*, *adiguna* showcasing the strength and pride for a less noble purposes will be crushed by the truth and justice. Humans PSHT must the underlying struggle of her life armor spirit, must dare to face the challenges of life with a vengeance and trying to ward off the challenge with full spirit, (3) Select the yield attitude, that is the attitude of dare to yield likely to be closer to humble, not arrogant, and understand the existence of others. Human prosecuted wherever possible be wise and can sort out carefully, where that principle and which are not the principle then always try to put a human on human proportions, (4) Simple, it means that being and acting with a value of earthy, natural, not contrived and not force myself (*ngangsa*). The character of this obligatory employee owned PSHT in order to attain inner happiness, (5) *memayu hayuning bawana* (maintain safety and peace of the world), I mean that human should always bring peace and benefit for the environment. Human should always emit the rays of love; bring calmness, serenity and well-being for the people around him. On a deeper level again, the attitude of understanding the existence of others this will foster awareness of the environment and understand the universe. In fact, this awareness will bring someone toward tranquil life.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS

Pencak silat has four elements the unity, it is mental spiritual, self-defense, arts, and sports. Culture of pencak silat has been developed hereditary so achieving its present form. The study concluded that the understanding of the martial arts is very spacious and has a clear function; such is the martial arts as a vehicle for sport, media for self-defense, as the realization of the view of spirituality, as performances or art, and as a means to defend the nation. The epistemology in the Javanese philosophy is about a spiritual and intuitive quest called *ngelmu* 'science'. It refers to knowledge embodiment either mystical or spiritual, nor intellectual, and is more likely an intuitive intelligence. Pencak silat is a self-reflecting attitude to the Javanese knowledge embodiment for it teaches the inner power (*kanuragan*) achievable through running specific rituals such as performing meditation, fasting and giving up offerings (*sesajen*). The process takes place from physical to spiritual forging. The *laku*

ritual (of giving offerings, performing fasting and meditation) are among the physical forges which stand hand by hand with the spiritual phase *rasa*. The spiritual forging in pencak silat mainly practiced to produce *kanuragan* 'inner strength/power' which can emit *kawaskitaan* to spiritually achieve the degree of *kasampurnan* 'perfection'. Self-defense of pencak silat as a form training ourselves by motion of body and a breath can make human of Javanese was aware of the limitation faced nature and Allah.

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