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FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS DIPONEGORO



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CULTURE ACROSS PERSPECTIVES III (CAP-III)
**CULTURAL ENGINEERING
IN POSTMODERN ERA**

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Unintended Consequences of Pragmatic Language Engineering

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Keynote Address, Conference on ‘Cultural Engineering in Postmodern Era’, English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro, Semarang, Indonesia, Sept 21 2016.

Given the historical and geopolitical context at the time of its political independence in 1965, Singapore declared itself a constitutional ‘multiracial’ nation, in spite of an overwhelming ethnic Chinese population. The constitution guarantees the equality of the three visible racial groups, *Huaren* (ethnic-Chinese) Indians and Malays and a residual category of Others (CMIO). Group equality supersedes the liberal rights of individuals in certain national issues. However, English is selected as the official language for public service and commerce and in 1974, made the primary medium of instruction for all levels of formal education, with ethnic languages being taught as ‘second’ language. All students must take their ‘mother tongue’ as a second language in their pre-tertiary education; respectively, Mandarin for *Huaren*, Bahasa Melayu (Malay Language) for Malays and Tamil for Indians; other Indian language can be accepted as mother tongue if the language community could provide their own education. The consequence of this seemingly bilingual education for all three racial groups is very consequential inequality in outcome. This presentation will offer the Singaporean experience as an occasion for the rethinking of the idea of ‘cultural engineering’.

Singapore like most postcolonial nations had a multiracial population at the time of its political independence in 1965. However this was not the primary reason why it declared itself a constitutional multiracial nation. There were particular historical and geopolitical

CULTURAL ENGINEERING OF PENCAK SILAT: MARTIAL ARTS TRADITIONAL VS MODERN

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Abstract

Local knowledge is wisdom and noble values resided in richness of the local culture which generated into traditions, and such tradition includes the martial arts. Pencak silat is a media of humanism education in traditional java society . Goal of exercise is not only for promote physical power and technical skill, but also more important is for character building and personality building. His research used hermeneutic reflection method including description, comparison and critical reflection to find out comprehensive understanding. The result is meaning of culture pencak silat in essence is to look for real truth that is life view and wise of human being in relation to cultural, social, moral and religious values that Indonesian people respect. The character values include noble quality, loyalty, great heart, wise, tolerance, courteousness, honesty, obedience, and never give up. A silat actor is demanded to the virtuous, the brave, select the attitude, simple and peace of the world. High value of pencak silat contains educational material to form human being having good character.

Keywords: pencak silat, traditional, modern, character building, local wisdom

Background of the Study

Pencak silat as culture of Indonesian nation has existed since centuries ago. Human being want always develop and defend their life. They face natural challenge and various wild animals by consider motion of various animals. Then, human being imitates way to fight by imitating way animals fight, as source of pencak silat motion. For example, pencak silat motion imitates motion of monkey, snake, tiger and other animal. Various pencak silat schools adopt its name by animal type, place name or island name. In more advance era, the martial art develops more completely and is called as pencak silat. Pencak silat as Indonesian authentic martial art is promoted and led by masters who establish *perguruan*, a pencak silat training house. Master as a house-leader is someone whose religiousness is reflected in his speech, attitude, behavior, wisdoms, knowledge, visions, and actions. Pencak Silat martial art is a cultural form to defend oneself from any threats coming from his inner self or any outer dangers. Inner threats can be in a form of vulnerability toward earthly temptation. Pencak silat is not only considered as a skill which can protect one-self from all sorts of physical dangers but also contains teachings which can give spiritual strength as a part of self-endurance. The natures of pencak silat Indonesian heritage have been developed throughout generations so that it comes to its present form. Those developments are intended to bring goodness and benefits for the society in terms of physical and spiritual values. These values contain educational matters which are essential to shape well-mannered people.

Pencak silat has habit and unwritten provisions. Each martial art skill has philosophy that should be understood and applied by one studying the martial art. The more one masters a martial art skill, the higher obligation in understanding and applying its philosophy. It is caused by two matters. (1) Martial art skill education has objective of shaping human being with highly good character that can do self control and apply good action giving positive benefit for self and society development. (2) Martial art skill will be danger if it is owned and

mastered by irresponsibility persons. In Indonesia, there are many pencak silat schools that have many sameness and similarity in philosophical aspect. This research cultural engineering in pencak silat for character building local wisdom.

Methods

The method of this study used factual historical approach method. The device elements methodically through the stages: description, critical analysis, and interpretation to reveal the meaning contained cultural engineering in pencak silat. Then synthesis, to find a unity of complete statement on the original meaning behind the culture of pencak silat, which aims for safety. Finally, critical reflection was conducted to give interpretation on pencak silat teaching in newly manner for character building local wisdom of pencak silat in comprehensive manner.

Findings and Discussion

Culture of Traditional Pencak Silat

Mix of martial art with magical aspect can affect view of conservative school group over pencak silat as sport. In general they did not acknowledge this aspect and consider pencak silat as martial art. They did not follow competition activity with reason that techniques they have are too dangerous for competition because each steps and attach used inner power that may lead to death. In this matter, conservative school hold principle that its ancestor defines that pencak silat is only used for defense of necessity. Notosoejitno (1997), explain characteristic of traditional school as follow, (1) The leader position is inherited from generation to generation, which mean the founder will teach his student to inherit the school,

(2) Admission of candidate student is limited through selection and thig probation,. (3) Education, teaching and practice method is monologue and conservative. Student should follow what is taught by the teacher and the motions did not change, (4) Provision, rule and code of ethic of the school are simple and unwritten. Usually code of ethic is recited together by student when they will start practice, (5) Violation against school discipline is given with sanction of termination as member, (6) School did not know attribute or administration and written documents related to organization, education, teaching and practice, (7) The school did not take feed or contribution from member, (8) School activity is funded by school leader. The school teaches life philosophy and body health and also teaches motion beauty by including art of pencak silat in traditional theater such as *ludruk*, *lenong* and *ketoprak*. In addition, the school is happy to perform art capability in public by doing martial art performance in open area in folk parties.

Characteristic of modern pencak silat

The openness is required to develop pencak silat as modern sport science by composing competition system. Pencak silat competition is not contrary to pencak silat philosophy. After the game is over, pencak silat players shake hand as friendship mark with other school. These schools deny view that a pencak silat player did not indicate their capability and focus attention to wining in competition area. In order for winning the game, they are pragmatist and selective that select from various sources. Motion and technique that is considered most effective to defeat opponent in competition area is adopted and taught in the school. Conversely, motion and technique that cannot result in score are left or they are taught for conservation as culture heritage. Rational liberal pencak silat school did not deny foreign cultural element and explore knowledge from other martial art when it may be useful

for example taking techniques from Karate, Judo, Kuntao and other foreign martial are by use it to increase performance (Surohadiprodjo, 1982).

Liberal rational pencak silat school play role to introduce principle of study and modern sport practice to pencak silat universe. Memorization of motion is eliminated definitively by selecting new practice method to increase motion quality and technique. Practice was done massively; student is encouraged to develop some special technique that suit to body structure shape and their capability as special technique. Teacher explain in detail and deep benefit and objective of each movement to their student. Student can understand and develop by giving freedom to work and having opinion to other pencak silat player and release pencak silat from past binding to meet era demand and allow transition of pencak silat from martial art science to sport. Notosoejitno (1997), explain characteristic of modern pencak silat as follow (1) Leader and administrator of school are based on election among school cadre that is considered capable of being leader, (2) School is open and free in receiving student candidate, (3) School do not use probation period but is substituted with education and practice era as beginning period, (4) Education, teaching and practice method is dialogical and analytical. Student is given with chance to ask and has right to ask or state opinion on any thin taught, (5) School discipline is enforced through awareness and traditional argument, (6) Passing examination is not only related to physical capability and mental capability but also capability of proposing report of pencak silat theory as result of their research, (7) Provision, rule and code of ethic is formulated systemically and written, (8) School has attribute, administration and written documents related to organization, education, teaching and training, (9) School collect fee and contribution from its member as fund source to finance its activity, (10) Trainer got compensation although there are trainer willing not to receive and the fund is given back to school,(10) It has written administration such as student registration and school documentation. Some example of rational liberal school is Bangau

Putih, Satria Nusantara, and Perisai Sakti Mataram in Yogyakarta. According to growing demand of society that is increasingly educated, smart, rational and critical, traditional and transitional pencak silat school will develop and change to be modern pencak silat school with relatively professional management and education.

Cultural Engineering Pencak Silat

Pencak silat developed integratedly in people life that is part of traditional custom of ethnic group in Indonesia. In some regions, pencak silat still play important role in custom ceremonies and its continuation is kept by society figure. Although there are various pencak silat schools in Indonesia, in essence they have common characteristics. Pencak silat contain four inter-related elements: sports, art, martial art and spiritual. (1) Sport pencak silat means each physical activity lied by spirit against own self, other and natural element. When pencak silat is combated, it should be done gallantly. (2) Pencak silat as art means that it functions as entertainment and performance media in which each attitude and motion is shaped and regulated to reach art beauty. (3) Pencak silat as martial art has meaning as effort to self defense from attack or danger. (4) Pencak silat as spirituality means that mental spiritual value is obtained from regular exercises. A fighter (*pesilat*) is not only taught to know his physic and to develop his capability of increasing skill, but also understanding living nature. Element of pencak silat motion in each school has different emphasize depending on situation and condition of environment in which the pencak silat grow and develop. In addition, there is proposal and effort to enter pencak silat art into official curriculum of official school and higher education institution with following reason: (1) Pencak silat is part of national culture that should be conserved, (2) Pencak silat is special martial art of Indonesia that is heritage of ancestor, (3) Pencak silat can give physical and mental spiritual power required for national

resistance, (4) Pencak silat can shape steady and stable personality, (5) Pencak silat can give contribution as media for guiding and developing youth and heighten cultural value.

Good Character Building Pesilat

Pencak silat teaching has some benefit that is obtained from its exercise as form of good character education. Bashori (1996), explain the benefits such as (1) Discipline attitude. Almost all pencak silat schools emphasize discipline. It is applied in on-time exercise. Participant coming late will get punishment. The other is willingness to keep school oath. There is sanction for people violating the rule. Discipline is prepared through various orders that are expected to shape disciplinary life style. (2) Self confidence attitude. Martial art skill give great contribution for safety feeling, which in turn can grow positive and optimistic attitude. It is a feeling of capability to deal with hamper and still being strong in facing threat. According to many researches, self confidence attitude is one of ways toward living success. (3) High motivation. Individual having high motivation can undergo hard pencak silat exercises for years. Motivation is a kind of thought related to how do something well. People with high motivation can be known with energetic attitude.(4) Helping to create concentration. With exercise fighter can focus on certain target, when the opponent is only one or divide it when there is many opponents. Such concentration exercise is useful for daily life such as in campus, office or in other places. (5) Self control. In silat world, there is philosophy of rice concept meaning the more content, the deeper bowing. It means individual with high silat skill will have self control capability. Essence of self control is capability to hold desire fulfillment when the desire is against ethic norm or there is higher goal. (6) Tolerance to pain. With hard exercise, physical impact make fighter have familiar experience with pain. Bruise, sprained, out of joint, and so on are daily exercise for silat doer. Capability

to resist pain make fighter has good psychophysical endurance. (7) Creating creative power. One of differences between pencak silat and other martial art types is broad opportunity for movement and its variety development. The condition make fighter has productive though to find out various more beautiful and effective alternative motion. Good fighter is creative person having capability to play with idea, concept, symbol, words, number and especially seeing unusual correlation between the ideas. In this more complex era, creativity is important.

Wisdom Pesilat in Persaudaraan Setia Hati Terate

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 means 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.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Culture of pencak silat has been developed hereditary so achieving its present form. Pencak silat contains martial art, sport, art and mental spiritual element. Higher value of pencak silat will be useful for good character education. Essence of pencak silat is looking for true truth that play role in implanting good character values in position as God crater, personal, social and universe. Pencak silat education contain good character director to shape attitude with high moral of honest, responsible, independent, brave, and humble nature. Attitude pesilat setia hati terate is the virtuous, the brave and not afraid to die, select the yield attitude, simple and *memayu hayuning bawana* (maintain safety and peace of the world). Pencak silat with the background Javanese culture that embodies his teachings by symbolic in the form of symbol, openings, the motion of jutsu. 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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