

Spiritual and Physical Aspect in Cultural Sport “Pencak Silat Harimau Putih” Based on Pesantren Literature

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Abstract

Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) Literature is a collection of literary works of books (religious literature), oral literary works, and written literature created and developed in the environment of Pesantren. Pesantren literature is in the form of oral and written traditions containing moral, fiqh, tauhid, tasawuf, theology, and syi'ir works, nasyid and others. Among the literary works of pesantren containing esoteric aspects of Islam, as written by Abdullah in the Khazanah Sastra While the oral literary works that still exist in the tradition of pesantren is wirid, hizb, pilgrimage, istighotsah, blantenan, Pencak Silat Asmaul Husna, Pencak Silat Harimau Putih (Indonesian Martial Arts), and others. Oral Traditions are sometimes read and performed in religious rituals, such as birth ceremonies, circumcisions, and other celebrations. The aims of the paper are to investigate the combination of spiritual and physical aspect in traditional sport using literature methode and field survey. The oral tradition of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih in Kaliwungu Kendal is a hereditary heritage from Prabu Siliwangi. As a vehicle of tarekat tradition, this martial art can be used as a means of communication between man and his God, and among fellow human beings. In practice, Pencak Silat Harimau Putih accompanied by footsteps and hand movements. This in addition to functioning as a sport and entertainment, also serves as a means of worship and endeavor to defend themselves in society to survive and maintain, preserve the existence to face the challenges of the times.

Keywords: *spiritual, physical, Pencak Silat (Indonesian Marital Arts), Esoteric, pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) literature*

1. Introduction

Pesantren Literature Tradition is a collection of literary works of books (religious literature) oral literary works, and literary writing born and developed in the environment of pesantren, either involving the dogmatic-ritual teachings or rational-spiritual teachings. Among the literary characteristics of pesantren are (1) pesantren literature is usually presented in Arabic language and written in Arabic characters, (2) sometimes in new Javanese language with Arabic-pegon writing, (3) born and developed more or less in the early the 20th century, 19th century, and developed rapidly around the 19th century until the 20th century, (4) pesantren literature is an oral tradition and writing tradition, which contains moral teachings, fiqh, tauhid, tasawwuf, theology, and syi'ir works, nasyid and others, (5) usually pesantren literature is read in scientific halaqah, certain ritual ceremonies and sometimes conducted as performing-art, and (6) pesantren literature is also slightly influenced by Middle Eastern literature, Arabic or Parsi literature (see, Basuki, 1989; Abdullah, 1996; Thohir, 1997).

One of the aspects of pesantren literature is religious literature containing prayers. Prayers that are often recited in pesantren environment are literary works belonging to the category of wirid, hizb, and wifik. The prayers are usually a prayer of ma'tsurat, the prayers taught by the Prophet SAW through various authentic hadiths. This type of literary is rarely studied work in an academic environment. This is because this pesantren literature is considered part of the secret of "shamanism" in traditional kyai and pesantren environment in general.

Among the literary works of pesantren in the form of literary works are the texts of Manakib Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani, Al-Barzanji, Nadlaman, Nashar, Qasidah Burdah, Shi'ir, Wifik, and Rajah. While the oral literary works that still exist in the tradition of pesantren is wirid, hizb, pilgrimage, istighotsah, blantenan, Pencak Silat Asmaul Husna, Pencak Silat Harimau Putih, and others. Such literary texts are sometimes read in religious rituals, such as birth ceremonies, circumcisions, and other celebrations. In these ritual events the literary texts are often read in performances accompanied by tambourine music as performing-art.

The oral tradition of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih can be used as a means of communication between man and his God, and among fellow human beings. The essence of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih is the reading of wirid tahlil, La ilaha ilallah as a toyyibah utterance denying the gods, except Allah SWT. In practice, Pencak Silat Harimau Putih reads the tahlil utterance for the purpose of getting close to Allah SWT. In Pencak Silat Harimau Putih the troupe read the tahlil with footsteps and hand gestures. This also serves as physical exercises and entertainment, and a means of worship and endeavor to defend oneself in society to survive, maintain, and preserve the existence of *Pencak Silat* in facing the challenges of the times.

Pencak Silat Harimau Putih is a part of the traditions and pesantren oral literature that still survive in Kaliwungu community, Kendal regency. From the results of the initial research only few written sources are found inspiring the oral text in Pencak Silat, and the source is derived from the text of Wirid and Hizb. The wirid can be read in a book entitled *Meretas Ziarah*, Kaliwungu Sawalan Profile (Muhammad Abdullah, 2004; then strengthened by the results of his research, presented in his book entitled *Dekonstruksi Sastra Pesantren* (Muhammad Abdullah, Fasindo Undip, 2006).

2. Method

This research uses two methodological approaches, namely (1) textual method and, (2) field method. The textual method is used to analyze aspects of the text from pencak silat putih tigers, especially spell text that the players read. The textual method is also used by the philological method which is relevant to reading the spells. Among the steps of the philological methodology are as follows: (a) Text inventory; (b) Text description; (c) Text editing; (d) Text translation.

While the field method is used to find data about the ritual system and the recruitment of new participants. In addition, field surveys are used to obtain accurate information about the esoteric aspects of the white tiger martial arts martial arts.

2. Result and Discussion

2.1. Pencak Silat Harimau Putih

"Pencak Silat Harimau Putih" in Krajan Kulon Kaliwungu Kendal Village was initially led by Master Sheikh Istihar, a teacher whose daily job is a trader. But then the martial art of *Harimau Putih* was continued by his son *Ustadz* Tommy Istihar. Under his leadership, Pencak Silat Harimau Putih is growing rapidly. He is persistent and courageous enough to campaign *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* to various circles. *Ustadz* Tommy, a santri whose concern for preserving this martial is worthy of respect. Although the number of his students is growing, he is not arrogant. Instead, his activities to continue the oral tradition of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih have never subsided. The tactical practice of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih is placed in pre-physical and during the physical training. Both of these activities must attend to the specific conditions given by the teacher.

The requirements and procedures to attend the practice of *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* till becoming an official student are as follows: (1) In the beginning the prospective student is given a

specific wirid reading that must be read after the *maktubah* prayer time. *Wirid* to be read is the reading of *tahlil La Ilaha Ilallah Muhammadur Rasulullah*. (2) The prospective student is instructed to fast for one week. On the last day of fasting, the candidate must read the *tahlil* sentence as many as possible. The student should not go to sleep, without reading *dzikir* and *tahlil La ilaha illallah*. (3) On the next day, the prospective student is invited by teachers to be trained in physical movements while reading *lafaz tahlil* etc. (4) Then, the teacher teaches the martial art movement of *Harimau Putih* in twelve forms, and the student should follow all the forms of the movements. (5) In the last stage of the twelve movement forms, the teacher conveys a particular esoteric aspect, especially the inner (esoteric) aspect that must be perceived by each of the students. (6) At the end of the exercise, the teacher then puts a test of strength on his student by being struck from the close range. At that moment the efficacy of *wirid* reading and practice so far could be seen. In fact it turns out that the teacher sometimes cannot beat down his students who are practicing the *wirid*. (7) Next the student is told to have self-practice at home routinely every three time in a week.

Some esoteric aspects taught to the students are as follows: (a) Bearing *howo nepsu*; (b) *Ojo rumongso biso, tapi bisoho rumangso*; (c) Uniting with the inner strength of *Asmaul Husna*; (d) Being praised *ora bungah, dicacat ora susah*; (f) Better *dhisikke eling lan asih maring Allah*; and (e) The essence is *ojo lali, ojo dumeh, ojo ngoyo, asal lan mulihe manungso amung maring Gusti Allah*.

The complete reading in Pencak Silat is the reading of *tahlil Lailaha Illallah* and the reading of the *Asmaul Husna*, among others, the *lafadz Ya Hayyu, ya 'Aliyyu, Ya Maliyyu, Ya Wafiyu, Ya Waqiyu, Ya Qawiyu, Ya Ghaniyyu, Ya Waliyyu, Ya Baqi..* In practice, the *santri* who follow the practice of *asmaul husn* training is how to step forward and beat forward while reading *lafaz of tahlil* and *asmaul husna*. After the completion of the training, the students are usually given advice on how to practice and train the martial art.

One of the written sources used as the oral tradition reference of *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* and *Asmaul Husna* is the Book of *Syawariq al-Anwar Min Ad'iyatissadati Al-Ahyar* by *Al-Faqir As-Sayyid Muhammad bin 'Uluwi Al-Maliki Al-Hasani*. To get it someone must be certified from a *kyai*. Another source is the Book of *Manba 'Usul Al-Hikmah Lil Buni* by *Imam Abul Abbas Ahmad bin Ali Al-Buni*. This book explains the meaning and function of the *mukhata'ah* letters (cut out letters). It is also mentioned that *asmaul a'dzam* (the names of God the Al-mighty) usually using the *Suryani* language, sometimes uses Arabic language that is useful for *wifik* such as *asmaul a'dzam 'Ya Hu', 'Yayuhin' 'Namuhin', 'asaliya', Naja'aliyan 'and' Sasalat'*.

Wirid is the recitation of *zikir*, the prayers of the deeds that are accustomed to be read regularly every day, morning and evening in a certain time, usually after the *salat* with the guidance of the teacher, for the purpose of approaching themselves to Allah SWT or certain other purposes. The word *wirid* (plural: *awrad*) also means “*salat-salat sunah*” (in addition to the obligatory prayers) performed by pious mukmin. The *Hizb* is a manuscript containing prayers of *ma'tsurat* and *mustajab* prayers are read by a certain time, usually dealing with great danger or to destroy an enemy read with a certain *kaifiyah* (way).

In the tradition of *santri* *wirid* practice is divided into two kinds, namely (1) *amm wirid* reading, namely *zikir jahri* or *zikir* read with an exoteric formula or in the form of physical deed according to some specific size. For example reading *istighfar* several hundred times; (2) the *khass* recitation of *wirid*, the *sirr*, done vaguely without voice.

The *Hizb* manuscripts are divided into several types: (1) *Hizb Nashar* by Imam Abu Hasan Asy-Syazali (2) *Hizb Nawawi*, (3) *Hizb Bari*, (4) *Hizb Bahri*, (5) *Hizb Bukhari*, (6) *Hizb Ghazali*, (7) *hizb Durul A'la* by Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, (8) *Hizb Zajr* by Imam Tijani, (9) *Hizb Nashar* by Imam Abdullah bin' Alawi Al-Haddad, and (10) *Hizb Ikhfa* by Imam Abu Hasan Asy- Syazali. These *hizb* names are usually taken from the name of the first author of the *hizb*. One of the *hizb's* manuscripts is the Book of *Syawariqul Anwar Min Ad'iyati As-Sadati Al-Ahyar* by Sayyid Muhammad bin Alawi Al-Maliki Al-Hasani. The reading of *wirid* and *hizb* manuscripts becomes a tradition of *pesantren* which almost always colors the activity of *santri* and *kyai* in the daily life of *pesantren*.

2.2. Pencak Silat as Coastal Culture

Pencak Silat Harimau Putih in practice combines oral text with body movement simultaneously and artificially body language. With the guidance of a martial art teacher, the *santri* are taught the reciting of *Asma'ul Husna* and *Lafadz tahlil Lai ilaha illallah*, and so on, while moving ten stances. If *wirid* practice and physical practice have been sufficiently steady in a person, then a *santri* will have inner power and immunity to defend himself from enemy attacks. The experience shows that with this "tiger's claw" stance, a *santri* can fool an enemy with amazing "powers". It can be reviewed again in the historical story of Islamic warriors in the country through *tarekat* order and the *santri* from *pesantren* in the history of the struggle of Indonesian Muslims. In the face of the power of the Dutch hegemonic weapon, with *dhikr La La ilaha illallah* the fighters ravage the opponent's defense. This is one of the representations of the cultural ethos of *santri* synthesizing the principle of Islamic eminency with the principle of Islamic transcendentalism.

Coastal culture is not *pesantren*, but many cultural values and ethos of coastal culture are born with the setting and influence of *pesantren* culture. One concrete example of coastal cultural ethos born from the culture of *pesantren* is in the economic field of trade culture. In the tradition of *pesantren* the area of earning living much in demand by Muslims is trade. This becomes the conscious choice of the *santri*. The spirit of the *santri* taking the choice of livelihood as a trader is based on the hadith of the Prophet SAW stating that among the most recommended works, safe and blessed by God, ninety per cent is in the field of commerce. Therefore, the majority of the Islamic community of coastal Java are traders. Even in some coastal areas the ethos of the trade culture looks very prominent.

In the coastal tradition, the *santri* are daily occupied with trade matters (market), so in order to provide a value of spiritual balance, they in the evening fill their time with various spiritual activities. Some attend to *istighotsah* activities, special recitation, *yasinan*, *tarekat* with *wirid*, and some others attend to spiritual and physical exercises of *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih*. *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* is not only followed by the youth, but also by the older generation who still have the spirit of high life.

Another form of cultural influence of *pesantren* in the realm of coastal culture is its representation in the actualization and internalization of religious life (read: Islam). Representation of the strong religious appreciation is evident in the large number of pilgrims in the coastal areas compared to the interior areas, *Nagarigung* and *Mancanagari*. In addition to the field of economy, its practice in the internalization of Islamic society seems quite strong in the field of literature, art, politics, and entrepreneurship.

In the field of literature and art, we can see the strong influence of *pesantren* tradition, such as art of tambourine, *blantenan*, *pencak silat*, praise, *syi'iran*, *ziarah*, *syawalan*, and others. In the political field it can be seen from graphs and political maps that reflect the nuances of Islam in its programs and political movements. For example, the one directly visible is the rise of Islamic parties developing in coastal areas.

4. Conclusion

As a representation of oral tradition, *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* is actually a coastal cultural ethos that leads to devotions to God transmitted by hereditary texts. The problem is now that the oral tradition in *pesantren* community such as the *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* is faced by big challenges due to the flow of globalization. Therefore, the tradition of martial art is gradually threatened to extinction. Nevertheless, some members of the community still want to preserve it.

To face the possibility of extinction due to the socio-cultural changes of modern society, it is better that various parties related to the preservation of oral traditions hold good documentation, make stronging cadre efforts among the younger generation. Cooperation between oral traders with the government and religious institutions, *pesantren*, and society I think is needed for the preservation of cultural tradition of this *pesantren*.

The oral tradition of *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* in Kaliwungu Kendal is the hereditary heritage

of Prabu Siliwangi. As a vehicle of *tarekat* tradition, this martial art can be used as a means of communication between man and his God (*taqorruba ilallah*), and between fellow human beings. The essence of Pencak Silat Harimau Putih is the reading of *thoyyibah* sentence *La ilaha ilallah*, namely the greeting of faith and the recognition that all existence on earth is only one, *illallah, hanaya Allah SWT*. In practice, *Pencak Silat Tiger Putih* not only reads *La ilaha Illallah*, but also accompanied by footsteps and hand movements. In addition to functioning as a sport and entertainment, *Pencak Silat Harimau Putih* also serves as a means of worship and endeavor to defend themselves in society to survive, maintain, and preserve its existence to face the challenges of the times.

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