



Moral Philosophy of *Selimbur Caye* Oral Tradition and Its Relevance to Character Education in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT:

This article aims to identify moral philosophy contained in *Selimbur Caye* oral tradition and analyze the relevance of the moral philosophy to character education in Indonesia. This research used qualitative descriptive method. Object of this study is *Selimbur Caye* oral tradition. The data was collected using in-depth interview, participatory observation, and documentation. They were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model of qualitative data analysis. Based on the analytical result, there are two main categories of moral philosophy contained in *Selimbur Caye* oral tradition; respect and responsibility. Later, in this study, the two main philosophies are derived into several foundation/supportive moral values such as sportsmanship, tolerance, democracy, discipline, honesty, fairness, wisdom, loyalty, professionalism, trustworthiness, social care, co-operation, social solidarity, and friendship. Another result found is that those philosophies are strongly relevant to the character education values developed by Indonesian ministry of education and culture: 1) fairness; 2) tolerance; 3) democracy; 4) friendly/communicative; 5) love peace; 6) social care, and 7) responsibility.

Keywords: Moral Philosophy, *Selimbur Caye*, Oral Tradition, Character Education

ABSTRAK:

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi ajaran moral dalam tradisi Lisan *Selimbur Caye* dan menganalisis relevansinya dengan pendidikan karakter di Indonesia. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Objek penelitian ialah berupa tradisi lisan *Selimbur Caye*. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipasi dan dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan dengan teknik analisis data kualitatif model Milles & Huberman. Berdasarkan hasil analisis, diperoleh hasil bahwa terdapat dua kategori ajaran moral dalam tradisi lisan *Selimbur Caye*, yakni rasa hormat dan tanggung jawab. Kemudian, dalam penelitian ini kedua ajaran moral tersebut dirutunkan menjadi beberapa nilai modal yang mendukung, yakni seperti sportivitas, toleransi, demokrasi, disiplin, kejujuran, keadilan, kebijaksanaan, loyalitas, profesionalisme, amanah, peduli social, kerjasama, solidaritas social dan persahabatan. Hasil lain yang ditemukan ialah bahwa ajaran moral tersebut sangat relevan dengan nilai-nilai pendidikan karakter yang dikembangkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia: 1) keadilan, 2) toleransi; 3) demokrasi; 3) ramah/komunikatif; 4) cinta damai; 5) peduli social; dan 6) tanggung jawab.

Kata kunci: Ajaran Moral, *Selimbur Caye*, Tradisi Lisan, Pendidikan Karakter.

A. INTRODUCTION

The urgency of character education implementation in schools is an issue having been commonly discussed in educational world, whether in developed countries such as America or in developing countries such as Indonesia. The increase of such concern is not without a reason as it is motivated by indications showing that amoralties are blooming in our society, especially among the youth. According to Lickona (1996) there are, today, ten problematic trend circulated among the youth which force the urgency of the implementation of character education in schools; 1) rising youth violence; 2) increasing dishonesty; 3) greater disrespect for parents, teachers, and other legitimate authority figures; 4) increasing peer cruelty; 5) a rise in bigotry and hate crime; 6) the deterioration of language; 7) a decline in the work ethic; 8) increasing self-centeredness, accompanied by declining personal and civic responsibility; 9) a surge of self-destructive; and 10) growing ethical literacy (Syaputra & Selvianti, 2021).

Those problematic trends are issues emerged in many countries including Indonesia. Ironically, those social toxics contaminate, mainly, the students ranging from primary level to the higher educational level. They are often involved in illegal conducts such as theft, murder, rape, drugs abuse, etc. Thus, Indonesian government, especially the ministry of education and culture, consider character education as something crucial to be embraced, they see it as the most appropriate solution to address the problem (Kemdikbud, 2010).

Basically, character education can be defined as an effort consciously done to promote students' good characters (Hoge 2002:104; Berkowitz & Hoppe 2009:231). As it is said, it aims to create virtuous individuals (students), virtuous schools, and

virtuous society (Lickona, 1999:78). Furthermore, Lickona (2015:82) states that ones can be considered as virtuous if they know the good, want the good, and do good deeds.

However, to take a note, the selection of virtues, strategies, sources to be taken in character education is very contextual. In Indonesia, particularly, the virtues wanted to be implemented (written in the document of national curriculum) are mostly derived from four main sources; religion, cultures, Pancasila (national principles), and national education goals (Kemdikbud, 2010, Hasan, 2011).

Specifically, related to cultures as a source of virtues in character education, there are many forms of them which can be taken into consideration as Indonesia is a multicultural country. One of which is folklore (Danandjaja, 2007; Syaputra & Dewi, 2020). As what stated by Danandjaja (2007:2) folklore is a part of collective culture that spread and inherited, among communities, traditionally in various version of channels (written or spoken). In the relation to the character education, referring to Danandjaja (2015:81), it is clearly a valid source. The idea is strengthened by Sibarani (2013:17) stating that folklore is a cultural heritage consisting of life tenets, there are many moral values/philosophy can be taught to the young generation (students).

Accordingly, this article will discuss an example of Indonesian folklores named *Selimbur Caye*, oral tradition of Pasemah ethnic in Bengkulu Province Indonesia, which is manifested in the form of traditional expressions and figure of speech; and have a position as life guidance for its community (Syaputra, Sariyatun & Sunardi, 2017). The discussion, later, will focus on two issues; 1) the description of moral philosophies contained in *Selimbur Caye*; and 2) the

extent to which they are related to the character education design in Indonesian national curriculum.

B. METHOD

This study is categorized as a descriptive qualitative research, a research method used to investigate wide range of information towards the subjects/objects being studied in a particular period of time (Mukhtar 2013:10). The object of this research is *Selimbur Caye* text which is spread in Pasemah communities in Bengkulu. Meanwhile, the subjects are the local people of Pasemah community, especially customary leaders.

The data were collected, mainly, using in depth-interview (Patton 2006:1; Sutopo 2006:68) as *Selimbur Caye* expressions are mostly inherited via spoken channel. The informants were selected based on several criteria which fit to the substance, character,

and the objectives of this study. In addition, this study also used documentation for the sake of validity. The documents analyzed are relevance documents such as official notes of customary parley and unofficial customary documents kept, individually, by the local people. Being collected, the data were analyzed using Milles and Huberman's interactive model (Milles & Huberman, 2014:16).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Content and Meaning of Selimbur Caye Oral Tradition

There are twelve traditional expressions, in total, contained in *Selimbur Caye*. They are categorized into two groups of categorization (six suggestions and six abstentions). Table 1 shows the detail of contents and meaning of each expression in *Selimbur Caye*

Table 1. Content and Meaning of *Selimbur Caye* Oral Tradition

No	Six Suggestions	Six Abstentions
1.	Seanak Bujang Seanak Gadis <i>One's child is everyone's child</i>	Jangan Nube Ulu Mandian <i>Don't attempt something that can harm others.</i>
2.	Ndepat Mbalik, Ngutang Mbayar, Semare Beghagih. <i>Give back the thing you found, pay the debt you owed, share the public property equally.</i>	Jangan Nutuh Dahan peninggihan <i>Don't bother other's privacy right.</i>
3.	Sepincang Sepejalan <i>Many hands make ligh work.</i>	Jangan Maraska Batu Keluagh <i>Save someone face from the public.</i>
4.	Seganti Setungguan <i>A friend in need is a friend indeed.</i>	Jangan Nyeghuti Jalan kayak <i>Don't abuse sanctity of the custom.</i>
5.	Janji Nunggu Kate Betaruh <i>A person should be a man of his word.</i>	Jangan Ngunggun Pelidian <i>Don't flee from responsibility.</i>
6.	Seghepat Seghendi <i>Sportive in making agreement.</i>	Jangan Menghebe Pelaluan <i>Don't destroy what belongs to public.</i>

Source: Adapted from Syaputra (2017).

2. Moral Philosophy of Selimbur Caye Oral Tradition

In general, morality/ moral philosophy is defined as a point of view regarding the good and the bad; and also related to what

should/should not be done. In another idea, it is consider as a set of belief current in society about character of conduct and what people should try to be or try to do (Darmadi 2012:30). Furthermore, Bartens

(1993:7) argues that morality can be seen as a same moral ethics first—which values and norms—set the tone for a person or a group in regulating behavior. Meanwhile, Lickona (2015:61) categorized it as a part of values—substances of life/social demands. Lickona (2015:62) divided moral values into two main categories, i.e, universal values and non-universal values. Universal values are common moral values should be owned by people; meanwhile, non-universal values are valid for certain people only. Hence, it can be concluded that morality is a set of values considered as a benchmark of good and bad (in terms of behavior). Practically, morality can be manifested in written laws/rules or unwritten rules such as customs and other form of common consensus. In the context of Pasemah communities in Bengkulu, *Selimbur Caye* is seen as a manifestation of those moral values, specifically regarding universal values.

Based on the display of contents and meaning of *Selimbur Caye* in table 1, it can be seen that, in general, the moral values/principles contained in it are categorized into two main groups of values; respect and responsibility.

a. Respect

According to Lickona (2013:62), respect means showing appreciation towards someone or something. Furthermore, it is explained that there are three main kinds of respects; self-respects, respect to others, and respect to all form of life as well as the environment supporting the life itself (Lickona 2013:62). Particularly for moral values contained in *Selimbur Caye*, they, consistently, focus on respect to others—the demand to treat others as one having self-concept and rights that is/are equal one another.

In *Selimbur Caye*, moral values related to respect to other people are derived into several sub-values of respects. *First*, respect to the difference of opinion/ideology. Such idea is contained in expression "*Seghepat Seghendi*"—a principle which guides people to conduct appropriately in an agreement/consensus. Accordingly, people should response based on this principle in such issue, i.e. do not impose our own ideas to other people; and appreciate as well as accept sincerely the agreement taken though it is not what we want. This kind of principle also needs other supporting values to be realized, such as sportsmanship, tolerance, democratic, and discipline.

Second, respect to the livelihood of people. In *Selimbur Caye*, this kind of respect is creflected in the expression "*Jangan Nube Ulu Mandian*" and "*Jangan Mnghebe Pelaluan*". The first expression means one must not conduct any attempt that can harm others. The real application of this value is like do not do corruption, collusion, and nepotism—especially for those who have power in society. Meanwhile, the second expression means people are forbidden from illegal conducts that can disserve the society or destroy the public property. The supporting principles of this kind of respect are honesty, fairness, and wisdom.

Third, respect to the figure of authority. Respecting the figures of authority (leaders) is an important aspect in a society life as they are people who are collectively chosen to manage the society. Without whom, our society will sink in a chaotic situation. In *Selimbur Caye*, such value is represented by the expression "*Jangan Nutuh Dahan Peninggighan*"—a prohibition forbidding

people from devastating self-pride by doing negative conducts such as rebellion, coup d'état. The supporting principles needed to realize such kind of respect are sportsmanship, discipline, democracy, and loyalty.

Fourth, respect to customs. In *selimbur caye*, this kind of respect is reflected in the expression "*Jangan Nyeghuti Jalan Kayik*"—an abstention prohibiting people from doing incest. Not specifically for that kind of conduct, the expression, in a broader meaning, also forbid people from doing any attempt that can destroy family/society pride and law.

Fifth, respect to others' personal rights. Such value is reflected in the expression "*Jangan Nutuh Dahan Peninggighan*", "*Jangan Maraska Batu Keluagh*", and "*Ndepat Mbalik Ngutang Mbayar Serame Beghagih*". The first expression means people must not snatch others' possession, meanwhile, the second and the third expression mean ones are forbidden from spreading others' disgrace; and must be honest and fair.

b. Responsibility

Second main moral value contained in *Selimbur Caye* is about responsibility. According to Lickona (2013:63), responsibility is an extension of respect emphasizing on issues regarding our obligations as a member of society. Similar to respect, responsibility have several dimensions (self-responsibility, responsibility as member of a society, and responsibility as citizen in a country, etc).

In the context of this study, there are three categories of responsibility being highlighted. *First*, responsibility related to obligation/duty. In social life, an individual cannot be separated from duty/obligation, consequently, they are

demanding to be responsible for their own duties/obligations. In *selimbur caye*, this kind of value is represented by the expression "*Jangan Ngunggung Pelidian*" which means ones should not run away from their responsibility and "*Ngutang Mbayar*" which means that people must pay the debt they own. The supporting principles needed to realize such kind of responsibility are professionalism honesty, and discipline.

Second, responsibility related to promise/words. This kind of value is reflected in the expression "*Janji Nunggu Kate Betaruh*". It means that if we promise something to someone, we have obligation to fulfill what we have said. Literally, this expression means a promise is a debt that must be paid one day.

Third, social responsibility. It is a kind of responsibility of individuals regarding their role as a member of society. Social responsibility is very crucial in a social life as it is one of foundation of social harmony. There are many sub-categories of social responsibility value contained in *Selimbur Caye*, such as collective responsibility in educating young generation, responsibility in maintaining public property, and responsibility in co-operation/in helping each other.

For example, the expression *Seanak Bujang Seanak Gadis*, literally, means your child is my child and my child is your child. Through this principle, people are, collectively, imposed to be responsible for education, moral teaching, and safety of the youth. Next, the expression "*Jangan Menghebe Pelaluan*" means ones is responsible for the maintenance of public property.

The last is responsibility in co-operation/in helping other people—especially comrade in arm. Such value is reflected in the expressions "*Sepincang*

Sepejlanan" and "*Seganti Setungguan*" in general, the two expressions suggest people to help each other—one's success is everyone's success; one's failure is everyone's failure. By doing so, any obstacles encountered will be easily solved. To realize such kind of responsibility several supporting moral principles need to be owned—social care, and social solidarity

3. The Relevance to Character Education in Indonesia

Character education referred in this study is one designed by Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture. In the grand design, it is explained that character education is an inseparable part of the national education goals. The virtues/ moral values internalized in Indonesian character education are derived from four main sources; religion, cultures, Pancasila (national principles), and national education goals (Indonesian law of education). there are 18 characters/ virtues identified in the curriculum; 1) religious; 2) fairness; 3) tolerance; 4) discipline; 5) hard work; 6) creativity; 7) independent; 8) democratic; 9) curiosity; 10) the national spirit; 11) patriotism; 12) appreciating achievements; 13) friendly/ communicative; 14) love peace; 15) likes to read; 16) environmental care; 17) social care; and 18) responsibility, (Center for Curriculum and of Books 2010:10).

Regarding the relevance of virtues/moral philosophy contained in *Selimbur Caye* and the characters identified in Indonesia Curriculum, it can be seen that there are correlations/similarity. In detail, there are seven character which have similarity to ones identified in curriculum; 1) fairness; 2) tolerance; 3) discipline; 4) democratic; 5) friendly; 6) social care; and 7) responsibility.

First, 'honesty' in the Indonesian character education design is defined as efforts of a person to be a trustworthy one—

in words, actions, or duties. Such type of value is reflected in the expression "*Jangan Menghebe Pelaluan*", "*Jangan Nube Ulu Mandian*" (respecting other people and public ownership which lead to the action of maintaining and keeping others from being hurt/harmed), and "*Ngutang Mbayar*" (honestly hold our commitment to be responsible for our obligation).

Second, the sub-values contained in *Selimbur Caye* is tolerance, an attitude of appreciating differences; religion, ethnicity, ideology, and opinion. The value is reflected through the expression "*Seghepat Seghendi*"—an suggestion asking people to hold agreement/discussion when facing issue/problems. The *Third* value is discipline. The ministry of education and culture of Indonesia defines this type of value as an attitude showing obedient to the regulations. In *Selimbur Caye*, the value reflected in the expression *Seghepat Seghendi* (respecting consensus/common agreement), "*Jangan Nyeghuti Jalan Kayik*" (respecting customs), and "*Janji Nunggu Kate Betaruh*" (guidance to be professional in duty/works).

Fourth, democratic value, it is a way of thinking and acting by considering the equality of people's obligations and rights. In *Selimbur Caye*, this value is represented in the expression "*Seghepat Seghendi*" (sincere in accepted common agreement). Furthermore, democratic value is also coherent to principle of respecting the livelihood of people and others' personal rights. The *Fifth* is friendly—an attitude showing kindness and pleasure when interacting to other people in our community and social circle. In *Selimbur Caye*, this value/principle is coherent with other principle such as social responsibility, social care, social solidarity, etc.

The *Sixth* is social care. Similarly, this value is also coherent with moral philosophy contained in *Selimbur Caye*, such as "*Seanak*

Bujang Seanak Gadis (suggestion to collectively educate the youth) and "Sepincang Sepejalanan", and "Seganti Setungguan"—care for comrades in arms in every situation. The *last* is responsibility. As what has been elucidated before, it is clearly seen that responsibility is one of core dimensions contained in *Selimbur Caye*—responsible for duty/obligation, educating young generation, keeping public property and other social responsibility.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, several conclusions can be drawn. *First*, in general, there are two main categories of moral philosophy contained in *Selimbur Caye*—respect and responsibility. In addition, from which, several sub-values are derived—sportsmanship, tolerance, democratic, discipline, honesty, fairness, wisdom, loyalty, and friendliness. *Second*, in its relevance to the Indonesian character education moral philosophies contained in *selimbur caye* are coherent with seven values identified in the curriculum document—fairness, tolerance, discipline, democratic, friendliness, social care, and responsibility.

Hence, in accordance with what has been discussed in this article, it is recommended for teachers, or other researchers to consider *selimbur caye* as a source of values which can be utilized, especially in shaping and internalizing virtues for the sake of the success of character education in Indonesia.

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