



The Implementation of Willem Iskandar's Thought in the Historical Learning

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Abstract

The presented research elucidates the values of Willem Iskandar's books, *Si Bulus Bulus Si Rumbuk Rumbuk*, and those functions in commemorating the student's memory about the character education, religiosity, and nationalism. Descriptive qualitative was employed as research approach. The data were collected through literature reviews and content analysis of *Si Bulus Bulus Si Rumbuk Rumbuk*. The analysis focuses on the description of values inside of the Willem Iskandar's poetry and contextual aspect that underlying it. The result of research portrays that the Willem Iskandar's poetry contains the norms that construct the behavioral pattern of Mandailing society. The proses have a function in shaping the character and evolving the movements against the Dutch colonialism. In the educational dimension, the values inside of Willem Iskandar's poetry become important to be studied in line with the problem of global capitalism that stimulates identity turmoil in any aspect of human life.

Keywords: Poetry; Willem Iskandar; Mandailing

Introduction

According to John Barell (1992), thinking is the process to seek a meaning as well as an effort to reach a reasonable decision and explanation of any specific circumstances. In his definition, thinking is an action to gain a new understanding, which is mediated by collaboration process between the existing knowledge and the new knowledge. The collaborated process in the thinking is not merely employed the mind, but also activating the whole faculties of human. Thus, the process of thinking can be described such as a complex mental cognitive process that strides from what is already known to the unknown knowledge.

In literal society, such as Indonesia, text such as poetry is the manifestation of the thinking process. Poetry is commonly defined as an old poem consists of four lines stanzas ended by same vocal sound. People who recite poetry or make poems are called as poets. Poetry, as in this sense, is a bound form, so it has its own rules. In wider interpretation, poetry has implicit and explicit meanings. In the practice, poetry can be used as a way to evolve the spirit and a sense of nationalism. However, entering the millennial era, the poetry is lost its function; even it is already to be forgotten.

People is no longer have desire to read poetry or poem, and at the same sense, ignoring his heart to know the meaning and values contained in it. In the past time, poetry nurtured the spirit and the sense of nationalism. However, in the present time, it is sensed only as the texts contained in the books. It is because the negative influences of globalization. Globalization is changing the indigenous culture into a modern one that is, in many cases, subdued the collectivism and local wisdom of indigenous society. As the result, it triggers people to become individual, in which people tends to feel comfort by the facilitation of advanced technology and no longer need other people in their activities.

Students in any level of education drive the progress of nation. The role of students is very important to maintenance of the nation's independence. In this ever-growing and evolving situation of globalized world, the society demands an active role of students in guarding all aspects of national development. Another decisive dimension is education. Education takes important role in imparting the cultural values from the ancestors and realizing the idea of nation enlightenment. Education could be defined as a conscious and systematic effort, undertaken by people who are responsible to teach earners to have a character according to the aims of education. Education is also perceived as directions that given by the adult to the children, both in physical and spiritually, to be useful for themselves and society (Purwanto., 2002). In another sense, education is the maturation of children for the development of their potency, talents, and skills.

Learning history in the senior high school level has strategic role to build the character of learner. The intended character formation is that the learners will become devoted citizens to God Almighty, be nationalism, and love the homeland. The learning history based on the curriculum 2013 had been set and functioned to shaping the character of Indonesian people in order to have a sense of nationality and love of the country. History is a one of subjects that is closely related to the development of nationalism, the spirit of nationalism, the love of the homeland, democratic attitude, and patriotism.

In the learning history, there are very distinctive values. According to Kochar (2008: 64), the values contained in the history can be categorized into scientific value, informative value, ethical value, cultural value, political value, nationalism value, international value, and working value. By studying history, learners can understand the events in the local, regional, national and international levels. Besides that, learning history is aimed to evolve the students' awareness in the diversity of their life experiences in any circumstances and the different perspectives on the past to understand the present, and to build knowledge and understanding to face the future (Isjoni., 2007: 72).

In shaping the character of the learner, the learning history is required to make learners as close as possible to the community. It is because the history teach along with the values contained therein that is taken from a historical event that occurred in the community. Thus, the historical subjects can also be used as a tool to maintaining the identity and character of the nation. In order to reach these goals, the learning history based on local values can serve as an alternative approach. In the context of learning history, local history has two functions as a tool to raise the nation awareness and on other hands is to prevent the student's ignorance of their living values around them. In this framework, the learning history should be started from the historical facts that closely relate to the social environment of the students, then later on others historical facts that in the national level (Wasino., 2005: 1). Thus, in the historical learning, the student should be introduced to the local history values.

One of the local values is a local character from Mandailing, North Sumatera, Indonesia named Willem Iskandar. In the authors' perspectives, the kind of historical learning, which implements the values of Willem Iskandar thought, is very appropriate to be used as a medium to

strengthen the value and character of the student. The history teacher should be able to incorporate Willem Iskandar's ideas into the process of learning in the classroom. The historical learning, which implements the Willem Iskandar's thought, will be success if the history teacher could understand Willem Iskandar's thought. The historical teachers, who lack understanding of the values contained in Willem Iskandar's thought, then tend to lack understanding of local leaders. This is in accordance with Widja's (1989) opinion that history is subject that has a goal as moral education and lead to the development of the student's character in accordance with the values, morals and character of Pancasila (Widja., 1989: 23). The teacher, in this case, has an important role in the learning process to introduce the regional leaders who are equally influential in compare with the nation leader, which one of them is Willem Iskandar.

Willem Iskandar is the national education figure, long before Ki Hadjar Dewantara founded Taman Siswa. In 1862, Willem Iskandar established an institution to educate teachers who prospectively could walk aside of the people. Willem Iskandar also known as an artist, writer, and public figure. He was the first scholar from Mandailing who able to go to Netherland in 1857. Willem Iskandar was unpretentious figure even, genetically, he could be categorized as the member of royal family. Willem Iskandar is a poets and writer who has published many books. Among them is the book entitled *Si Bulus-bulus Si Rumbuk-rumbuk*, which consist of poetry that containing values such as the values of education, morals, humanity and others values that improve the character of students.

In order to introduce the figure of Willem Iskandar, teachers take important role. Teachers should be able to utilize the narration of local leaders in internalizing values to learners. In order to create an effective learning, one effort that can be done by the teacher is inserting the learning material that contains value, thus, that values can be actualized by learners. This is because the materials of learning history are full of values. The value would be implanted in the learner's schemata through the subject matter of history in which learner can deeply analyze and actualize the value within. In the preliminary stage of learning process, teacher should be able to provide the design of learning in order to produce a new breakthrough in the value internalization through poetry, which Willem Iskandar has written in his book.

This research elucidates the values of Willem Iskandar's thought by focusing analysis on the poetry of *Si Bulus-bulus Si Rumbuk-rumbuk*. Descriptive qualitative was employed as research approach. The data were collected through literature reviews and content analysis of *Si Bulus Bulus Si Rumbuk Rumbuk*. The analysis focuses on the description of values inside of the Willem Iskandar's poetry and contextual aspect that underlying it.

Biography of Willem Iskandar

The word biography, etymologically, comes from Latin language, "bio" and "grafi", which are means the writing (Sinaga., 2014: 5). Generally, biography is represented in the form of biographical books of a figure that was written by someone else. The writer, as the holder of the copy right, has responsibility to any risks for his book. Through biographical works, the people could understand how the actors affect the history, the *zeitgeist* that becomes the background of historical events, and the socio-political environment.

In the study of biography, five elements that are perceived determine the historical process are Gods, destiny, ideas, great figures, and socio-political conditions. From those elements, that is to be true that the element of great figures and their ideas have become the exponent of any progress of civilization (Harahap., 2014: 4). Kuntowijoyo (2003: 203-204) stated that biographical work, even in

the micro level, is the part of the bigger historical mosaic. The biographical works, at least, contains four elements: the personality of actors, the social drive that hold the actors, the zeitgeist, and the luck and opportunities.

Willem Iskandar is one of the local figures from Mandailing society who has a significant contribution in the national level. Before Ki Hadjar Dewantara established Taman Siswa, Willem Iskandar had already built an institution in 1862 to train the teachers based on the demand of the people. He is known as an artist and public figure in Tana Bato society in Mandailing Regency. He is also the first scholar of Mandailing who had an opportunity to go to aboard in Netherland in 1857.

Willem Iskandar is the artist as well as the pioneer of education in Mandailing regency in North Sumatera. Willem Iskandar is also the native that successfully proved his competency to lead the educational institution in Indonesia. Willem Iskandar wrote a book, *Si Bulus-bulus Si Rumbuk-rumbuk* that contain the history of teacher education in Indonesia. Besides that, Willem Iskandar is also known as the poets and the pioneer of educational movement in Indonesia, specifically for Mandailing Natal society (Iskandar., 1987: 1).

The word pioneer can be defined as precursor, which has a mean the person who has a start new movement or revolution. This person, absolutely, has some special capabilities such as encouragement, intelligence, creativity, and persistence. Those capabilities were mostly acquired by education in which the person was teach formally in the classroom. The bellow description will explain the struggle of Willem Iskandar in educational development of Mandailing.

The Establishment of Tana Bato School

In 1861, after graduated from the school and held teacher certificate, Willem Iskandar back to his home in Tana Bato. Willem Iskandar already had a plan to build an educational institution. Willem Iskandar then asked permission to the Governor General of Dutch East Indies, Baron Sloet van den Beele (Vlekke., 2008: 508). The Willem Iskandar's plan attracted the Governor General who then gives his support by instructing the Governor of West Sumatra, Van Den Bosch, to provide a convenience for Willem Iskandar (Harahap., 1998: 71).

Some parties from the Dutch Government, Dutch officers in the Indies, and from local officers, the West Coast Governor of Sumatra, Resident of Tapanuli, Assistant Resident of Mandailing, and the villager officers supported Willem Iskandar plan. The *Besluit* dated 5 March 1862 legitimized the support, which allowed Willem Iskandar to establish the school for teachers or *Kweekschool* in Tano Bato namely *Kweekschool Voor Inlandsche Onderwijers*. The school building is made by peripheral wall, roofed with palm leaves, and the room consists of four classes. One of them is Willem Iskandar's office room and the other is used for the classroom. Willem Iskandar teaches his student not only in the classroom, but also regularly in presents public lecture on the schoolyard attended by the locals. Willem Iskandar even teaches these renewal ideas from houses community leaders (Harahap., 1998: 129).

Willem Iskandar's struggle to build the school was very heavy in the beginning because few people feel disposed to send their children to his school. The difficulties were overcome with his patience and persistence to socialize the renewal idea to the society continuously. In this way, the scarcity of the disciples overlapped it. The school of Tano Bato had emerged as the most prominent teacher education and training center in the entire Dutch East Indies. By looking at the excellent quality of education at *Kweekschool* Tano Bato, Van der Chijs, who was the Inspector of Native Education, assigned the *Kweekschool* Tano Bato as a role model for the school teachers in the Dutch

East Indies. Willem Iskandar was not only a teacher but also an author and translator, thus, this multiple competency made him a very important educational figure. Willem Iskandar was able to translate the Dutch works into a Malay and Mandailing languages, indeed few number of translator in that time.

Only one year after the establishment of Tano Bato *Kweekschool*, in September 1863, the Governor General of West Coast of Sumatra, Van den Bosch, came from Padang to inspect Willem Iskandar's school. The Governor of West Coast of Sumatra reported his visit to the Governor-General in his letter dated 13 September 1863. He expressed his admiration for Willem Iskander's expertise. In his impression to Willem Iskandar, he wrote "*zeer ontwikkeld, hoogst ijverig*", which means very ingenious, educated, and diligent and diligent person. After his visitation, in 11 September 1863, Governor Van den Bosch proposed a plan to the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies in Batavia to establish *Kweekschool* on the West Coast of Sumatra, or unite the Tano Bato with Bukit Tinggi *Kweekschool*. He also proposed Willem Iskander as head of this school.

The idea of Governor Van den Bosche was discussed by the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies, the department officials van *Eeredienst en Nijverheid*, and *Raad van Indie*. The decision of the Dutch East Indies government existed on the *Raad van Indie*, whose position was the same as the Supreme Advisory Council. Then, *Raad van Indie* finally decided not to unify those schools. The above explanation is deliberately alluded in this research, because although the proposal of Van den Bosch was rejected, but we can reflect from other perspective that the Van den Bosch's proposal was a recognition for the good reputation of Willem Iskandar, especially in the eyes of high-ranking Dutch East Indies officers.

Another good impression was stated by J.A. van der Chijs. In 1866, four years after Willem Iskandar founded Tanah Bato *Kweekschool*, J.A. van der Chijs, the Inspector of Native Education, had come from Batavia to Tano Bato. During his visiting to Tano Bato *Kweekschool*, Van der Chijs witnessed the learning process in this teacher school. He admired the cleverness of Willem Iskandar to teach the concepts of science in the Mandailing and Malay languages, and at the same moment, he also admired Dutch language skills of Willem Iskander. Van der Chijs' observed that Willem Iskandar teaches the basics of physics in Mandailing language by his own method, using local props best known by his students. Van der Chijs wrote in his annual report on native education about his admiration for the three abilities of Willem Iskander's students in math, Malay language, and Dutch language. Van der Chijs watched them able to made an essays correspondence in both languages. The knowledge and skills that were teaches in Willem Iskander School are:

1. Reading and writing in Latin, Malay, and Mandailing script
2. Translating the Malay texts into Mandailing languages and vice versa
3. Translating orally Dutch into Malay
4. Counting heads with practical examples
5. Calculating based on A.L Boeser's book
6. Earth science of five continents including geography, social, economy, land, language and the population of the archipelago based on Dr. De Hollander's book
7. Mathematics, physics, geometry theory, and the politic of Dutch government

Willem Iskandar tried so hard to make his students become smart. In just a few years after he taught and educated the teachers, his efforts have shown tangible results. Some of his students appeared as teachers or authors because of some knowledge and skills that they got in the school.

Willem Iskandar as Translator and Author

As the authors mentioned before, Willem Iskandar was not only a teacher but also an author and translator. This made him a very important educational figure because he was able to translate the Dutch works into the local languages of Mandailing as well as Malay. His first translation book is *Si Hendrik Na Denggan Roa*, the original work of N. Ansljij Nz title *De Brave Hendrik*. The book is the children most popular book in the Netherlands at that time. The translation of the book to Mandailing language first appeared in Padang in 1865. Another book is the work of J.R.P.F. Gongrijp entitled *Bagej-Bagej Cjerita Dikaloewarkan ... By Parentah ...: Maatschappij: Tot Nut van't Algemeen In Oost Indie Batawijah* 1859 that translated into *Na Marragam News*, which was first published at Batavia in 1868, and *Basaon Book*, child translation in Mandailing language from W.C. Thurn's works.

In 1873, two books of Willem Iskander's translation into Mandailing appeared in Batavia. The first book is *Taringot di Ragam-ragam Ni Parbinotoan Dohot Sinaloan Ni Alak Eropa*, which contains a description of European technological development. In particular, the book *Taringot di Ragam-ragam Ni Parbinotoan Dohot Sinaloan Ni Alak Eropa* greatly influenced the horizons of thinking for the natives students, especially in the Mandailing at that time.

Some of the interesting descriptions of this book are about the newspaper publishing, book writing, and library management. The description of newspaper publishing include how to find news, news benefits, print, and distribute the newspapers to the readers. The books also give a tip to write a book such as how to doing literature search in libraries, field research, and data testing found in the field. The management of small libraries as a means of education outside of the school is also described in this book. The book also exposes European technology on railways, drinking water, gasoline, and the timber industry. In addition, there are descriptions of astronomy about the events of the solar system and the most interesting is the role of the bank in promoting people's welfare, for example about the benefits of saving money in the bank.

The second book is about the law, which was transcribed from Dutch to Mandailing. The book entitled *Reglement tot regeling van het rghtwezen in het gouvernement Sumatra's Westkust* that was translated became the *Surat Oturan ni Porkaro tu Uhuman in Bagasan ni Gubernemen ni Topi Pastima ni Sumatra*. In the 1874, another book, which was translated into Mandailing language and script, was a book entitled *Iste en de Hoofdstuk van het Reglement op de Regterlijke en het beleid der Justite* that became *Ponggol he Dohot ni Surat Oturan tu Pangoturan Saro Uhum Dohot Parenta ni Uhuman di Tano Indi Nederlan*.

Willem Iskandar's ability to writing comes from his experiences from formal and informal education, as well as his extensive reading ability as well. His high intellectuality, sensitivity to everything that moves in nature, and desire to embraces knowledge causes him to grow and develop continuously. Willem Iskandar such lives in two worlds, the underdeveloped world of Dutch East Indies and the intellectual world of Europe. He was thrown into a very distant future. He is not frustrated, but instead he feels grateful to be in the underdevelopment society to rise their diligently. He worked through his school and supporters. In 1868, Willem Iskandar sat on the translation commission and he invited his students to take part in the various writing projects. In the later periods, his students wrote many translated work in various genre of books.

As an author, he had produced a work entitled *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. This book contains a poems consisting of 12 stanzas. The stanzas contain the meaning of religion, self-awareness, and nationalism. *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* book reached Batavia in 1870. The central government issued a *besluit* or decree, number 27 dated 23 February 1871 on the publication of this book. In 1872, the collected of prose and poetry was published in Batavia by *Landsdrukkerij* or State Printing. This book then was reprinted in Batavia in 1903, 1906, and 1915. After the independence era, the book was republished by several publishers, among others are the Printing Saksama in Jakarta (1954) on the recommendation of the Department of Culture and Education, Campusiana Press in Jakarta, Indonesian Poetry in Jakarta, Casso in Medan, Pustaka Timur, and Bookstore Islamiyah in Padang Sidempuan.

From the authors' perspectives, the book of *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk* is really need to be mentioned because the name Willem Iskander in Mandailing is very identical with the name of the book. When we speak of Willem Iskander the Mandailing people must be reminded of the Work of *Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk*. Another reason is, of course, this book was very influential for the development of education and community in Mandailing.

Williem Iskandar Thought

Thought is a concluded activity or deed that involves symbolic symbolization use and manipulation that cannot be noticed with rough eyes. According to Greene (2975: 456) in Sulliven et al. (1996: 43), the words used all day are included in the wide range of thought activities. For example, the thought involves fantasy to complicate or react with someone feelings or others to make decisions.

The concept of thought means the principle of thinking. The human brain responses the stimuli directly. After that, the brain will exchange stimuli into concepts, make interpretations, and retort based on the experiences that already storage in the human memory. It means thought is a process of fostering knowledge and understanding, involving mental and human activities that seek to solve problems or conflicts in various thinking skills. Thought itself is divided into 7 types: the associative, guided, critical, inductive, deductive, and creative. The activity of thinking employs cognitive communication, response, remembrance, and language. In sum, thinking can only be meant through language. Through the theory of relativity, Whorf (1956: 52) in Sullivan et al. (1996: 125) stated that the language is concerned in determining thought.

Thought has a concept of principle and it is divided into certain branches. The principles of thought are continuing, connecting, movement, and so on according to the issues and questions. Inside of the problem and question, there are rules of principle, which state about preceding, knowing destinations, and vague words. In sum, thinking is an attempt by the human brain to seek and achieve the most natural decisions. Thought also refers to the process of fostering knowledge and understanding, which involves mental activity in the human brain. Thought is also an activity that is done almost every time. Thought is divided into several types, which covers critical thinking, creative thinking, logical thinking, positive thinking and negative thinking. Azizi Yahaya (2005: 209) defines critical thinking as reflective thinking that is thinking deeply and making serious consideration in any case. Obviously, these individuals can think, calmly, and indecisively in making judgments and they will think of all the ugliness and goodness that will be accepted if it makes a decision.

Willem Iskandar's Poetry

As an educator, Willem Iskandar aimed his students to continue the spirit of nationalism and his struggle for the world of education. For that reasons, Willem Iskandar wrote his thoughts in in form of poetry in Mandailing language, to be distributed to the students in each class in order to interpret the meaning contained in each poem that he writes. There are four mentioned stanzas of Willem Iskandar's poetry:

1. Father's Advices to His Child Who Going to School

The stanzas of Willem Iskandar's poetry bellow told the father who advised his son to study at school:

“Duhai anak tunasku! Berangkatlah nak untuk berguru kesekolah, Janganlah kamu bermalasan, Yang rajinlah nak menuntut ilmu, Makan dan pakaian, Akan kucari sekuat tenaga, Aku tidak akan kikir, Memberikannya padamu Apa bila aku pergi menjala (mejaring ikan), Kudapatkan dua ekor ikan, Akan kujual satu, Untuk bekal hidupmu, Kalau ada uang dari penjualan kopi, Yang kudapatkan dengan ibumu, Sebagian akan kusimpan, Dan sebagiannya untuk dirimu. Begitulah anak ku sayang, Harapanku besar kamu berilmu, Jika esok aku sudah tua, Aku ingin kelak nanti kamu menjadi tumpuan hidupku....”

The above stanzas could be translated:

“My dear boy! Go to school, do not be lazy, be diligent in studying. Foods and clothes, Will I seek hard, I will not stingy, Give it to you. If I go fishing, I get two fish, Will I sold one, for the provision of your life. If there is money from the sale of coffee, which I get with your mother, I will save some, and partly for you. That's my child dear, my hope is big you are knowledgeable. If tomorrow I am old, I want later you become the pedestal of my life”

Those stanzas reflect that the parents are the most responsible person in guarding the future of the child. Father is not only advising their children, but he should be able to be responsible to fulfill the basic needs of the child, such as the need for the food and clothing to support the child's education in school. To fulfill his responsibilities, as a parent who supports her child in school, father must be good in dividing their income; even he only works as a farmer. The parents struggle to fulfill their responsibilities. It is because the parent wants their child to be a successful person. Therefore, when the age is old, the child can become the foundation of his life.

2. Feeling Sad if You Do not Know About Something

The stanzas bellows are reflecting the Willem Iskandar's advice about the importance of asking to give clarity and knowledge:

“Sedih jika tidak tahu oleh sebab itu jangan malu bertanya kepada orang yang mengetahui agar kita tidak malu di hadapan orang besar. Kadang-kadang dia seorang yang dihormati orang, tetapi karena tidak mengetahui cara melakukannya, akhirnya ditertawakan orang.

..... Dalam cerita dikisahkan seorang raja yang pergi mengunjungi rumah seorang Asisten Residen Belanda. Sewaktu dia bertamu, di rumah itu sedang ada beberapa orang kulit putih yang sedang berbincang-bincang dengan Asisten Residen. Seperti kebiasaan orang Belanda

untuk menyambut tamunya, tamunya dihidangkan segelas teh panas sementara sang raja belum pernah mendapatkan suguhan seperti itu, sehingga dia pun bingung memikirkan bagaimana caranya meminum teh panas tersebut. Dalam keadaan bingung dan malu untuk bertanya, maka teh itu cepat-cepat dia minum. Melihat teh panas secepat itu minum, lalu sang pelayan pun mengisi kembali gelasannya karena si pelayan mengira sang raja sangat kehausan. Sang raja yang melihat betapa cepatnya sang pelayan mengisi kembali gelasannya, segera juga dia meminum suguhan ke dua tersebut, karena mengira memang begitulah aturan meminumnya. Kejadian itu berlangsung terus sampai tujuh gelas teh panas habis diteguk sang raja, dan akhirnya sang raja mohon ampun agar jangan lagi dia dihukum dengan meminum teh panas. Suguhan teh panas untuk tamu adalah tradisi orang Belanda.....”

The above stanzas could be translated:

“Sad if you do not know therefore do not be shy to ask the people who know that we are not ashamed in the presence of a great man. Sometimes he is a respected person, but because he does not know how to do it, people laugh at him.

The story told that a king who went to visit the home of a Dutch Assistant Resident. When he was visiting in the home, there were some white people talking to the Resident Assistant. As the Dutch custom to welcome his guests, his guests were served a glass of hot tea, while the king had never had such a treat, so he was puzzled over how to drink the hot tea. In a state of confusion and embarrassment to asking, the tea was quickly drunk. Seeing the hot tea as fast as it was drinking, then the waiter refilled his glass because the waiter thought the king was thirsty. The king who saw how quickly the ministry refilled his glass, immediately he drank the second treat, because it was thought that's the rule of drinking it. The incident continued until seven glass of hot tea was drained by the king, and finally the king begs forgiveness so that no more he was punished by drinking hot tea. Hot tea treats for guests is a Dutch tradition”

The conclusion of the story is the Willem Iskandar's invitation to his readers to not to be ashamed to ask if they do not clearly know about something. Knowledge and skills can be found everywhere not just in school.

3. School is a House, Have Benches and Tables, There We Sit to Study

Willem Iskandar reflected the school as houses for the child. The Willem Iskandar's reflection can be seen on the stanzas below:

“Segenap anak yang baik budi, Hatinya senang di rumah itu, Sebab dia sudah tahu, Di situ kita mendapatkan ilmu. Siapa yang mencintai, Rumah sekolah itu, Dia yang lebih terhormat, Dari pada sutan pencaci itu. Siapa yang bersekolah, Dia akan mendapat ilmu, Dia bisa baca berhitung, dan pasti pandai bertutur kata. Siapa yang tidak bersekolah, Dialah orang yang bodoh, yang hanya tahu negerinya saja, Ibarat katak dalam tempurung.....”

The above stanzas can be translated:

“All the good children, his heart will happy in that house. Because he already knows, there we get the knowledge. Who loves, that schoolhouse. They are honorable, than the jailer. Who goes to school, he will get the knowledge. He can reading, counting, and must be good at word-telling. Who is not going to school, He is a fool, who only knows his country, Like a frog in a shell”

The stanzas remind the diligent children to go to school to become smart, polite and courteous. For a person who does not have a desire to go to school he is a fool, one who will only know about his own region. In his poems entitled “The School”, Willem Iskandar invites everyone to go to school and love science to be smart, polite and knowledgeable. The educational prose by Willem Iskander had pioneered education in Mandailing, because until today, the prose above has become a cultural meaning for Mandailing parents. The parents are willing to sell their inheritance for the sake of sending their children to go to school or university. Besides the educational theme, the Willem Iskandar’ prose also contains a sense of nationalism that will be used by the independence fighters, as a spirit of struggle in Mandailing.

4. Mandailing

As the local figure, the Willem Iskandar’s stanzas contains his love to Mandailing as his homeland. It can be seen on the above stanzas:

“O Mandailing Raya! Tanah tumpah darahku, Yang diapit guung yang tinggi, O pemilik sawah yang luas! Jika kau tabur sebakul benih, Kau peroleh enam puluh bakul kembali, Kaulah yang selalu menjual padi Tanahmu sungguh subur, Tetapi kamu masih saja lengah, Meskipun kau mudah menumbuhkan tanaman, Orang tak datang berdagang padamu. Apakah gerangan! Penyebabnya? Katakanlah ku mendengarkan! Biar jelas apa yang terjadi! Ada orang luar, Yang berdiam di panyabungan, Cepat dia keluar, Karena perutnya sudah buncit! Bukan itu saja, Penyebab dagangan tidak laku, tapi masih ada, Tor pangaloat tidak dapat dilalui pedati.”

The above stanzas could be translated:

“O Mandailing Raya! My homeland, where it lies on the flanks of a high mountain. O the owner of a vast rice field! If you sow a bunch of seeds, you get sixty baskets back. You are the one who always sells the rice, your land is fertile. But you are still careless. Although you are easy to grow plants, people do not come to trade with you. What is going on! What is the cause? Say it, I'm listening! Let's make it clear, what's going on! There is an outsider, who dwells in the contestation, Hurry let him out, because his stomach is already bloated! Not only that, cause merchandise is not sold, but still there, *Tor pangaloat* cannot be passed by horse train.”

The conclusion from above stanzas is why the farmers are still poor when their land is fertile. The cause is none other than the outsider or the invaders in Mandailing. If the peasants want to get ahead then the colonizers have to get out of there. The lack of transportation also causes the farmers' trade not to run smoothly.

The Essence of Willem Iskandar’s Thoughts

The essences of Willem Iskander’s thoughts contained in Si Bulus-Bulus Si Rumbuk-Rumbuk are as follows:

1. Encourage the spirit of learning and respecting education
2. Guiding the young generation guidance
3. Saving and working hard for future happiness

4. Love of the homeland and spirit of nationality
5. Believing in God Almighty
6. Awareness of God's love for humankind
7. Attitude to be grateful the grace to God
8. Understanding the negative consequences of the likes of being praised and flattered
9. Knowing the negative consequences of the character that cannot keep secrets
10. Cultivating the realistic and thankful thinking for what already exists
11. Understanding the negative impact of the ever-nostalgic attitude to the triumph of the past collapse but without trying to achieve a better future
12. An awareness of the presence of foreigners who only degrade the wealth of our homeland for their own benefit
13. Familiarity and loyalty of friends in the brothers
14. Knowing the bad consequences that must be accepted by people who do evil to innocent people
15. The superiority of science that can overcome the superstitions and excellence of a creativity pioneer
16. The nature of a knight
17. Understanding the negative impact of lack of experience and knowledge
18. Courage to face death and so forth.

Conclusion

Based on above description, the authors conclude that the formation of character is not only formed from religious aspects but also it can be derived from exemplary values of the local figure. In more detail, the exemplary values can be taken from the writing of local figure that reflects the ideas, such as in the Willem Iskandar's book, *Si Bulus-bulus Si Rumbuk-rumbuk*. The result of research had showed that *Si Bulus-bulus Si Rumbuk-rumbuk* contain the character values that can be internalized in the learning history process. The authors believe that those values can be actualized in the students' daily life, particularly for entrancing the learning awareness, the parents' roles, the will to create a better life, eager to seek knowledge, have a good spirit of nationalism and divinity. Thus, in the further research, the exemplary values of Willem Iskandar should be promoted in form of learning instruments and materials so it would be more accessible for the learners and teachers.

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