

Tenaga Dalam



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The Voice of the Indonesian
Pencak Silat Governing Board - USA Branch

I must apologize that the newsletter is late this month. We were putting the final touches on the second edition of Pendekar Sanders's book Volume I - The Principles of Destruction. An index and a bibliography have been added and the photographs have been integrated into the text. There are also a few new photographs and graphs. The book is at the bindery and should be ready as you read the newsletter.

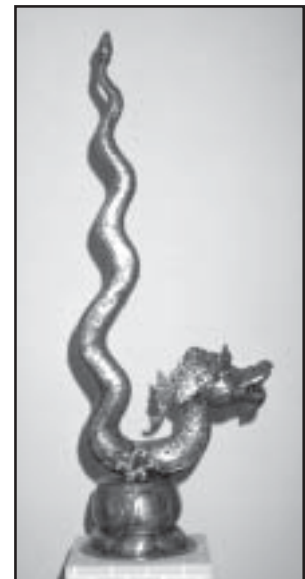


Pendekar Sanders has also finished a new video on an advanced weapon of our system called the *Cabang*. In this 45 min. video Pendekar Sanders

shows various cabang, numerous drills that can be performed with the cabang, various grips, hand positions and body postures. Pendekar Sanders also illustrates how to apply the various animal mannerisms to the cabang, how to apply the cabang against other weapons, how to use two cabangs and finally how to use the cabang and the pedang together. Cost is \$40.00. You can also write to Raja Naga to inquire about the cost of getting your Cabang hand forged in Bali.

A word from Pendekar Sanders:

In keeping with my desire to release traditional internal knowledge to all of my students Raja Naga will release in the year 2000 a group of rare Indonesian books which will contain more traditional information on the magick of the keris than has ever been released in English. Thanks to the contacts that Guru Baharu Chris Martin and myself have in various parts of Indonesia approximately 900 plus pages are currently being translated. This information will be offered to our students worldwide when they are available.



ILMU

by Guru Besar Jeff Davidson

“To various degrees all silek [silat] styles include the use of magic, called kebatinan.”

-Kirstin Puaka PhD, from the article Silek, The Martial Arts of the Menangkabau in West Sumatra, Journal of Asian Martial Arts, Vol. 6 Number 1.

“That Silat stuff is all black magic, animal sacrifice and devil worship...those people are all going to Hell!”

- Karate teacher whose school was located down the street from Guru Besar Davidson’s school. (This individual is currently under indictment for credit card fraud.)

Introduction

This essay is not intended to be an in-depth exposition on the many aspects of Indonesian spiritual practices. Nor is this an apologia to religious fundamentalists of any color. Neither will it try to “prove” the validity of traditional Indonesian spirituality for those who are not willing accept the Truth of these disciplines. Instead, I will present to the reader some basic ideas that will hopefully give you the necessary intellectual foundation to evaluate and study the spiritual dimensions of an Art such as *Pencak Silat*.

First of all, what is *Ilmu*? I define *Ilmu* as “*The*

Esoteric, Metaphysical aspect of any area of Human Knowledge.” In other words, in any artistic discipline or endeavor, there is a revealed (physical) aspect, and there is a concealed (metaphysical) aspect. The metaphysical aspect is actually the very core of the discipline itself, the “inner mystery,” you might say. So, there is a metaphysical aspect of Musicianship (for is music not one of the most spiritual disciplines there is?) There is an esoteric, spiritual aspect of Architecture (which the Chinese call “fung shui”) a spiritual aspect of the Culinary Arts, Medicine, Physics, Farming, and so on. The material aspect is only the “outer shell.” The inner, spiritual aspect is the Heart of the matter. Let’s take music as an example. I’m sure all of you have heard a lot of mediocre musicians. Notice that they all sound the same, no matter what style of music they are playing? They just sound, well...mediocre. Now, some of you may have had the experience of listening to a real virtuoso. Someone whose playing actually touched your soul or your emotions on a very deep level - someone whose expression and depth while playing had an almost “otherworldly” and magical quality. For me, it is the music of John Coltrane. This type of musician is clearly in touch with the *Ilmu* (spiritual aspect) of Music.

Martial Arts are certainly no exception. In ancient times, the *Ilmu* of Martial Arts was the province of only the most accomplished warriors. Stories of the “supernatural” feats of the old masters of Pencak Silat, Karate, Kung-Fu, Aikido, and Ninjutsu endure to this day. Sadly, however, the Martial Arts that are practiced in the West have

forsaken their true spiritual essence, in favor of purely physical elements of training.

Now, apply my example of mediocrity in music to the Martial Arts. There are many mediocre martial artists in every discipline - and regardless of the style, they all look the same. Then occasionally, you might see an old master whose power and ability clearly come from a source beyond the physical realm. Such a Master has elevated his practice of the Martial Arts to a truly esoteric level, far beyond the rank-and-file martial arts hobbyist. On a purely physical level, *Pencak Silat* is mere kicks and punches. The true “Spirit” of the Art, the quality that distinguishes it from all other martial mediocrity, is *Ilmu*. I say this because the majority of the *Pencak Silat* practitioners in the United States look like any third-rate kickboxer that I have ever seen. There is no way you can say that you practice AUTHENTIC *Pencak Silat* if you do not incorporate the study of *Ilmu* into your training. Furthermore, anyone who claims to teach Indonesian *Pencak Silat* and does not teach *Ilmu*, has at most only learned 10% of the Art himself.

The Importance of Ilmu in Pencak Silat

Of all of the fighting disciplines the world over that are practiced today as “martial arts,” the Indonesian art of *Pencak Silat* is the only one that I can say with absolute certainty is based on METAPHYSICAL rather than PHYSICAL principles. For clarification, I’m sure the reader will agree that most European and East Asian

martial arts are based on the “Three ‘S’ Principle:” Size, Strength, and Speed. What it boils down to is that when bone and muscle meet bone and muscle, the boxer, wrestler, judoka, karateka who weighs 250 pounds will crush an opponent weighing 110 pounds. This is why in the ring and on the tournament floor, opponents are selected according to size and weight, not skill! What would happen if Sugar Ray Leonard fought George Foreman? Who is the better boxer (in terms of technique?) Who is bigger and stronger? Which do you think would be the more important factor?

Now let us consider *Pencak Silat*. Have you ever seen a martial art that “moves” like authentic *Silat*? - for those of you who have actually seen authentic *Pencak Silat*, and not some watered down derivation. Look at the movements of Pendekar William Sanders, Pendekar Suryadi Jafri, or Pendekar Richard DeBordes, or Grand Tuhon Leo T. Gaje Jr. Notice the animalistic grace and fluidity. Notice the unpredictability of the footwork and rapidly shifting body positions. Observe the sudden and terrible explosiveness of the strikes, which land and disappear like a flash of lightning. Without exception, all of the people who have ever observed a class in my training hall, or have been present at a demonstration given by my students have said the same thing: “I have never seen anything like this in my life!”

There is a difference!

In 1995 I conducted a Pukulan Cimande Pusaka seminar at a martial arts school in the Midwest.

Most of the fifty or so students in attendance had studied with a local teacher of what they called the “Serak” style. Their teacher was the representative of the so-called “Pendekar Agung” of this “Serak” system in that area. These students had been taught absolutely nothing in terms of the Spiritual aspect of the martial arts. It also seemed that most of their “silat” was actually San Soo kung-fu. As I began my usual introductory speech on Cimande, I felt a general sense of hostility from a certain portion of the students. So I decided to scrap my lecture, and get down to the “nitty gritty” of the techniques. By the time we took our first break, most of the students were coming up to me saying things like: “We’ve never done anything like this before!” “This is more fluid and devastating than anything I’ve ever seen...” “I don’t think there’s anything on earth that could fight against this system.” The students were so overwhelmed by what I was teaching, that even after 3 hours of hard, continuous training, they refused to even break for lunch! To this day, when ever I am need of some encouragement, my students and I watch the video of that seminar that was recorded that day. It reminded me of how I felt during my first years of training with my teacher. By the way, this video will soon be available to the public through my website.

I however, was a bit fatigued at this point, so I convinced the seminar participants to allow me 20 minutes to finish a sandwich and a Diet Coke. While I ate, I opened the floor to questions. The question on everyone’s mind was: “Why is this system that you are teaching so radically different from what we have been taught - if both systems

are indeed authentic *Pencak Silat*?” I tend to follow the Socratic method when I teach, so I answered the question with another question: “What is so different about what I am showing you?” The first excited response came from one of the formerly hostile participants. He rose to his feet and declared “This just feels more...SPIRITUAL!” I was struck by his answer. At that point in the seminar, I had not even touched upon the spiritual aspects of my Art. Obviously, even these neophytes could discern that my expression of *Pencak Silat* was vastly different from what they had previously been exposed to. And not only that, this individual had discovered the crucial element - Spirituality. I was newly inspired by their enthusiasm, and I agreed to return for a second day, devoted entirely to *Ilmu* - for free. In ten years of teaching, I still consider this event to be one of the most personally rewarding of my career. Some of the seminar participants eventually became my students. Some have even “found their way” to Pendekar William Sanders, and are loyal supporters of classical Cimande to this day.

So just what are these metaphysical principles that are the basis for the physical movements and tactics of *Pencak Silat*? How do they relate to the study of Silat in the “modern world?” What will you the student gain from incorporating the spiritual aspects of martial arts into your practice? These questions will be addressed in the article that follows. Hopefully, by the time you finish this piece, you will realize the vital role that *Ilmu* plays in the practice of *Pencak Silat*. You will understand that *Ilmu* is not “black magic,”

witchcraft, devil-worship, or any other malevolent activity that ignorant people have labeled it in order to debase it. If you feel ready to face these issues, read on.

The Fundamentalist Perspective

For years the entire Western academic community was at loss to explain the spiritual beliefs and practices of indigenous cultures in a way that was even remotely connected to their reality. For example, we have the accounts of the European colonial missionaries that refer to indigenous people as “Heathen Savages that Worship Devils and Practice Black Magic.” Under the pretense of saving the souls of these “heathens,” their land, resources, and their women are raped; they are told that the ways of their ancestors are demonic - so they will eventually learn to hate and fear their own native culture; and they are made to feel ashamed of all of their traditions which do not jibe with a Western mentality. In the end, if the missionaries are successful, the colonial powers calling the shots back home are provided with a new cache of natural resources, slave labor, and a new market for the various commodities of Western culture. Whew, sorry if I got a bit heated there! If you detect some bitterness in my tone - then you are right!

Sad, but True...

I recently read an account of how a particular Dutch-Indonesian Silat teacher, upon conversion to a certain Western religion “destroyed all of his

kris talismans” and everything else that reminded him of the “dark powers associated with *Pencak Silat*.” What this glowing testimonial fails to mention is that following his conversion, the individual suffered a nervous breakdown, went nearly blind, developed Alzheimer’s disease, and recently lost his oldest son to AIDS. This is indeed tragic, and my heart goes out to his family.

I shared the account with my friend and teacher, Guru Ras Empuh, a native of Banten, West Java, who made the following observations:

“What happened to him is what typically happens to those who abandon and disregard the Powers of their Ancestral Traditions. Even in my own village, there were some that were tricked by the missionaries into destroying their sacred Pusaka. Their Ancestors became very displeased with this, and eventually their families suffered shame and degradation, and were forced to leave Indonesia and seek refuge in America.

It was the missionaries’ “tampering” with our religion that eventually led to the enslavement of many of my people, just as they did in Africa, and are doing everywhere in the ‘Third World’ where they can spread their poison. I’ll tell you, all of the Christian ministers in my village run to the dukuns [shamans] whenever they have a problem, even though they preach against them in public. When you are in trouble, you go Home!”

Carl G. Jung was one of the first Western academics in my opinion, to make a serious study of the spiritual practices of indigenous people as they relate to the psyche of an individual in that culture. Of course, this had very little impact on the indigenous people themselves. Jung's real accomplishment in this respect was to give other Westerners a terminology and an intelligent, informed frame of reference to discuss indigenous spirituality. The great Joseph Campbell and Idries Shah among others followed him. For all of you serious Christians reading this: I challenge you read the corpus of works by the late Christian theologian Paul Tillich, and then compare his ideas to Pat Robertson's or Jerry Fallwell's. Then you tell me who is speaking from a place of respect and understanding - and who is an "ignorant heathen" needing to be "saved".

Let me remind you as you read this - if you were to go back into the Middle Ages and attempt to explain things like airplanes, submarines, the space shuttle, subatomic physics, and microwave ovens to the general populace of Europe, you would be labeled a heretic, and subsequently tortured and burned at the stake as an example for all who might likewise oppose the teachings of "The Church." This has been the fate of many great mystics of all religions throughout history. Unfortunately, in our "enlightened" society of today, the mentality of the general populace has not evolved much since the Dark Ages, and our first instinct is to vilify and destroy anyone or any thing that challenges our view of Reality. The time has come to wake up, my friends.

I will now say for the record that I do not hold a grudge against any particular religion. So, dear reader, if your religion (and the way you practice it) is truly based on love and respect for your fellow man, then I support you no matter what doctrine you follow. If, however, your religion teaches you to demonize, persecute, or attempt to convert anyone who doesn't follow your dogma, then you had better stop and evaluate the motivations of your clergy, and consider the consequences of your actions.

What is the Real Point of Religion Anyway?

All legitimate religions are based on the same principle. For that matter, all legitimate martial arts are based on the same principle. That principle is the development of GOOD CHARACTER. I mean, is there anything more important in your religion than the development of good character? Does it matter how much faith in God you have, or how much scripture you can quote, or how much you tithe to the church if you cannot even act respectfully toward other people? Have you ever known someone who seemed to know the "Good Book" backwards and forwards, yet was at the same time violent, rude and abusive to others around him? Or someone who was civil only to those of the same religious persuasion? In my opinion, our society would be a lot better off if we stopped arguing over who's scripture was "right" and paid more attention to our own character. Good character is the fundamental and still most important aspect of any true religion. Good character is likewise the key to all legitimate martial arts. There was a group of

martial artists in Germany 50 years ago, that I will use as an example. They were called the Gestapo. As you know, the Gestapo was the paramilitary wing of the SS. They practiced all of the physical aspects of the martial arts as we know them, but was their spiritual discipline based on respect and tolerance of others? The only thing that separated the Shaolin monks from the Nazis was their spiritual foundation. The martial philosophy of the Shaolin monks was based on Buddhist reverence for all living things. Their “code of conduct” as it were, allowed for the use of violence only in defense of life - when there was no other option. The Gestapo, on the other hand believed that their “superior” ideology gave them sanction to commit genocide against those that were different from them.

So you see, it is the issue of good character that separates true martial arts from mere forms of violence. It does not matter how well you can kick, punch, throw, stab, disarm, or do kata if your character is lacking. I personally evaluate martial artists on the same basis as I evaluate a person’s level of spiritual development: by the “content of their Character.” I personally consider *Pencak Silat* to be on a higher level technically than most of the martial arts we see today. However, a lot of silat players that I have met in this country have some of the lowest levels of character development that I have ever encountered in human beings - period. I would sooner refer a student to a teacher of Aikido who possessed good character than to the majority of the people I have met who claim to teach *Pencak Silat*.

Let me leave you with this thought. During my travels in Southeast Asia, I was fed, clothed, sheltered and provided for by the indigenous people of the villages and compounds where I found myself. These people had never met me, did not speak my language, and had absolutely no familial/cultural ties to me. They expected nothing in return, and yet they treated me like I was a close relative in terms of their concern for my well-being. They were not Christians, or followers of any Western religion, for that matter. Now what if we took one of those “unsaved savages” from the jungle and put him smack in the middle of New York City? How well would he fare relying on the kindness and generosity of the “civilized” community there? An “advanced” culture is not evaluated by its technology, but by the moral cohesiveness of its citizens. This type of attitude is based on each individual’s practice of genuine reverence for all life (in other words: Good Character) - not on everyone subscribing in “knee-jerk” fashion to a particular religious dogma.

Beyond the Five Senses

I regularly lecture at several Michigan Universities on the subject of Indonesian culture and Indonesian spiritual practices. Years ago, I came to the realization that most of the students, and even faculty, who were my audience, simply did not have the vocabulary, or even the most basic frame of reference to understand the concepts which I was attempting to convey to them. Essentially, I could not give a serious lecture on a subject as vast and subtle (not to mention

beautiful) as Indonesian mysticism to an audience that had only vague notions about the concept of mysticism in the first place.

To resolve this dilemma in lecturing to Americans, I decided to use Western scientific terms in my explanation of Indonesian mysticism. My academic background is in Physics - which I studied concurrently with *Pencak Silat*. I could easily make associations between the concepts of both disciplines - using the terminology of one to explain the other. Indeed, present-day quantum mechanics is attempting to deal with the same subjects that shamans and mystics have talked about for centuries i.e. time travel, levitation, reincarnation, “astral projection,” inter-dimensional travel, extra-terrestrials, and so forth. But, whereas the physicist is concerned with finding the mathematical formulae that would explain such phenomena, the shaman/mystic does not care about “how” it is possible - he just does it. In other words, the former indulges in speculation, the latter in application. First of all, let’s deal with the subject of what is “real.” As Westerners we are taught that there is only one objective reality, and that our tools for understanding and experiencing this reality are our five senses. Anything that cannot be experienced through the five senses, while you are fully awake is not “real” and is the result of delusions or mental illness on your part. Indeed, our so-called Scientific Method is based on the theory of “If you can’t see, hear, smell, or touch it - then it does not exist.” Well, Quantum Theory essentially put an end to the Scientific Method. May it rest in peace.

If you only acknowledge one state of consciousness as being “real,” and whatever you cannot grasp through your five senses does not “exist” to you, then you are confined to a realm that contains roughly only 10% of Reality. You cannot see the movements of the electrons circulating in a solid piece of matter. You cannot feel the atoms in a cubic foot of air as you wave your hand through them. Although you can see the branches of a tall tree, the roots remain hidden from sight. Just as you can only see the physical shell of a man - and not his inner essence - most of things in your universe remain hidden to the five senses.

Shamanism: The Foundation of Indonesian Pencak Silat

Notice I said Indonesian *Pencak Silat*. I make this notation because various Dutch-Indonesians have been very vocal in the past about “Dutch-Indonesian *Pencak Silat*” being recognized as a distinctly different entity from indigenous Indonesian *Pencak Silat*. So, in deference to these proud Dutch-Indonesian practitioners, I tell you that what I am about to say here applies only to the traditional, ancient Indonesian expression of the Art.

The earliest forms of *Pencak Silat* were nothing other than classical shamanism. The jungle-dwelling Indonesians lived in close harmony with their surroundings. Whereas our present culture seeks to subjugate and control the environment, indigenous cultures seek to peacefully co-exist with the elements of nature. As anyone who has

spent long periods of time isolated in nature can attest, you reach a point where your consciousness becomes attuned to the consciousness of the things in your environment - i.e. trees, plants, animals, the wind - to the point where you can communicate with these entities on a very subtle (indeed psychic) level. Those of you who have “been there” know exactly what I’m talking about. Those of you who have never spent time alone in places like the rainforest, should turn your computers off and get out more often.

To put it in somewhat scientific terms: everything in the universe consists of ENERGY. You, the trees, a tiger, and a keris are made up of subatomic particles that vibrate at very different frequencies. Quantum mechanics has shown that ENERGY HAS CONSCIOUSNESS. I sometimes substitute the word CONSCIOUSNESS for the word SPIRIT when I talk to Westerners. So if you think that trees and animals don’t have spirits, that’s one thing. But only the most ignorant materialist will argue that trees and animals do not possess their own unique forms of consciousness?

As an example, in my extensive collection of edged weapons are several ancient Indonesian keris that were given to me by my teachers. Each keris has its own “personality.” Each keris has a different energy, a different “vibration” if you will. These weapons were not purchased through the mail, or bought from a dealer at a flea market. They were handed down to me by knowledgeable elders who respected their power - and took them very seriously. My teachers’

families had cared for the blades in the traditional way for centuries before they were placed in my hands, and so the energy of the blades is very much alive. Perhaps you, the reader has a particular weapon that resonates with your consciousness (spirit.) At my school, we have an interesting test for senior students: the student places one of his personal blades on a table among several of the same types of blades. Blindfolded, the student must pass his hand over the blades (without touching any of them) and must be able to select his blade from the group based solely on feeling the energy of his weapon.

No doubt many of you have heard various legends regarding the powers of the keris, and wish to experience the power of this unique weapon for yourself. Well, simply buying a keris from a dealer and hanging it on the wall will not produce any results. There is a very specific way that the energy of this weapon is invoked. You must be trained in these methods. Any legitimate Guru will be able to instruct you.

Make no mistake; we do not “worship” the keris, as some incredibly ignorant people have suggested. The keris, to a practitioner of authentic *Pencak Silat*, is regarded in the same way that a Native American warrior regards a “power object” or “medicine bundle.” The keris is an entity with an energy-intelligence all its own, a consciousness (spirit) which can interface with human consciousness for our benefit.

Returning to our example of a tree, the consciousness (spirit) of a tree is different from

the consciousness (spirit) of a human being. So if you expect a tree to “speak” to you as if it were a human being, then you are completely on the wrong track. However, if you were to go into the woods and find a large tree, then sit down in front of it and clear your mind, you will see that after a while, your consciousness (spirit) will make a connection with the consciousness (spirit) of that tree, and a dialogue of sorts will be possible. Now, don’t just sit there and think about it - go try it! Don’t expect it to happen after 20 minutes, though. Be prepared to sit in front of the tree for several hours if necessary. And if you call me crazy for sitting in front of a tree for 2 hours, I’ll bet that every night you sit in front of a television set for much longer than that. At least sitting in front of a tree does not adversely affect your mind!

It’s really not that different from the rapport that some of you have developed with your favorite pet. You can accomplish that same rapport with any creature (or object) in nature. It is simply a matter of tuning your consciousness to a different “frequency” if you will. Look at it this way: the dukuns (shamans) in Indonesia know the function and medicinal uses of an absolutely astonishing number of plants and herbs found in the jungle. How in the hell do you think they learned this? From a botany textbook? From the Internet? No. When you can communicate with the consciousness (spirit) of a plant, the plant itself will “tell” you in its own way what it can be used for. When your priority is to understand nature, rather than to control nature, such things are possible.

Now, when an indigenous shaman achieves such a deep level of rapport with the plant or animal, a state of mind that the yogis call *Samhadi* can occur. This refers to a complete identification on the part of the shaman, with the plant or animal. We in the West would say that the shaman was “possessed” by the spirit of the animal. Thus, the shaman would move, fight, and otherwise physically emulate the particular animal. In other words, the consciousness (Spirit) of the human being has fully and completely attuned to the consciousness (spirit) of the animal. Can you understand that this ability is a vital survival skill to someone living in the jungle? Do you see how valuable this skill would be in a self-defense situation?

I am not talking about doing “animal forms” that seek to mimic the physical characteristics of an animal. I am talking about a shift in consciousness where the fighter assumes the physical prowess and pure instinct of a beast. As one of my Indonesian teachers told me: “You cannot fight like a tiger until you have BECOME a tiger!” I assure you, an opponent facing me in serious combat would not be fighting “Jeff Davidson,” but rather an enraged monkey, tiger, bird of prey, or reptile. Being able to do this is as vital for your survival in a fight on the streets of the USA as it is in the jungles of Indonesia. Have you noticed that in a crisis situation, you are able to do and perceive things that you cannot under “ordinary” circumstances? Some fighters have been hit, stabbed, shot and even mutilated in combat and were not even aware of it until they returned to a normal state of mind. Some are capable of feats

that under normal conditions would be impossible (ever hear about the 100 lb. mother who lifts a car in order to rescue her child after an accident?) These are just basic illustrations of how a shift in consciousness can alter your reality, and are shamanic experiences in the broad sense. So, to boil it all down lets look at Shamanism again.

Shamanism (*Traditional Definition*) - the act of direct internal communication with the Spirits of plants, animals, and any object in nature up to and including complete identification (possession) for the purpose of gaining knowledge or physical skill.

Shamanism (*Modern Definition*) - the act of voluntarily shifting human consciousness (which includes producing various neurotransmitters/endorphins in the brain) to produce an enhanced state of perception and ability - or to connect with the consciousness of a non-human entity.

Someone reading this who has had actual personal experience in shamanism among any indigenous culture will find these definitions completely irrelevant and unnecessary. For someone reading this who has not been blessed to have this type of experience, you may find that these definitions are helpful in conceptualizing some of the principles discussed here.

To end this section I would like to relate a personal experience that occurred recently. In May of 1999 I was in Caracas, Venezuela conducting a week-long workshop on *Pencak Silat*. After the first day of training, I went hiking

into Venezuela's lush jungle with my host, Francisco - who himself is a full-blooded Caribe Indian. When we made camp later that night, he confided (with dignified pride) that his people too, had practiced the martial arts for centuries. His own personal style was specifically based on the Jaguar. I respectfully asked him to demonstrate some techniques. He stood up, and within minutes had achieved a very deep state of trance. Before my eyes, he "became" the Jaguar. The animalistic skill and grace of his movements was on par with any of the Harimau fighters I have seen in Southeast Asia. The sheer energy that he radiated from his body literally made the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. At an appropriate time, I called forth my own "animal" - which "played" with the Jaguar as the sounds of the jungle faded from my mind. My host's *Pencak Silat* was on a very high level indeed.

Nearly all of the "major" religions have mystical sects, which practice the attainment of mystical states of consciousness as part of their spiritual discipline: the Hasidic Jews, the Bektashi and other Shiite Islamic Sufi Orders, as well as certain Christian groups (particularly in the Deep South) all utilize shamanic trance-states to access the higher Spiritual Realms.

Entities and Things That Go "Bump" in the Night

Many Westerners divide the inhabitants of the spiritual world into two categories: "Good Spirits" and "Evil Spirits." All of the good fortune that one encounters is attributed to the help of the Good

Spirits, and whenever something goes awry, it is the fault of the Evil Spirits. Well, I submit to you that blaming your personal failures and lack of development on the work of demons is a rather convenient way of shirking responsibility - and is a poor way of dealing with reality. In other words, it's not a wicked demon that caused you to get drunk and have an accident - it's your own lack of character!

To carry this "Dark Ages" philosophy further, both teams of spirits have their own Captain. "God" heads up the good guys, and "Satan" controls the nasty ones. Let me give you my thoughts on this. Either there is a Supreme Being - or there isn't. I do not believe in two opposing forces in the Universe, endlessly sending forth their soldiers in the ongoing battle for our souls. Instead, I believe (as my teachers believed) that there is only one Creator (called by different names in different places) which is the source for all that exists in our world (and other worlds, for that matter.) There is nothing that exists which acts against the Will of the Creator. Furthermore, every being, every act, every event serves the purpose of the Creator in some way. Sometimes things are created; sometimes things are destroyed. Neither is "good" and neither is "evil." If you believe that something can exist outside of/ in opposition to the Will of the Creator, then you are in fact a polytheist - as are most people who claim to be monotheists.

In my experience, the entities of the spiritual world generally have the same disposition as the four natural elements. For example, if you build a

fire to warm yourself, then you will get some positive benefit from the fire. Does this mean that the "spirit" (consciousness) of fire is "good?" Likewise, if you stick your arm in the fire, and receive third degree burns, the fire is not "evil," you just made a bonehead move. Are tornadoes and floods "evil" because they destroy houses? Of course not. So the elements are absolutely neutral, and your relationship with them can be either positive or negative. The various forms of consciousness (or Spirits, if you prefer that term) that dwell in unseen dimensions are the same way. I personally have never in 30 years encountered an "evil" spirit or a demon.

But if They're Real, Why Can't I See Them?

You should first consider why you are able to see anything at all. Remember, anything that can be seen with the human eye is merely a reflection. If an object does not reflect light, you cannot see it. Physics confirms that everything in the universe radiates an electro-magnetic field of energy. This energy field is called the "Aura" by some in the West, and is called "The Body of Light" in *Pencak Silat*. Those beings whose electromagnetic fields expand by projecting energy out from their source generate a field of radiation that includes the visible spectrum of light. These types of entities can be seen with the naked eye.

Some beings do not project, but contract their electromagnetic force fields and thus draw light out of the visible spectrum. In other words, you won't be able to see them. However, just

because you cannot perceive them with your naked eye, you certainly cannot say that they don't exist. It might be necessary for you to shift your consciousness, and go beyond the five senses, as we discussed earlier, in order to communicate with them. The dream state (when you are asleep) is often a more viable state of consciousness. If you develop the ability (as many have) of accessing this state while awake, then you will be ahead of the game. In Nature, energy patterns generally form a sphere. Everything from the smallest atom to the largest star contains forces of expansion and contraction in a spherical form. This is why the Aura is often seen as a "luminous egg" in many esoteric traditions.

What Kinds of Entities Are Out There...And What Can They Do for Me?

In the first category we have what many shamans have called "Elemental Spirits." This refers to the consciousness (spirit) of the natural elements: fire, water, earth, and air. If you have ever felt passionate, aggressive, or strong-willed (even stubborn) then you have connected with the consciousness (spirit) of Fire. If you have ever felt fluid, graceful, or sensitive then you have connected the consciousness (spirit) of Water. If you have ever felt "grounded," stable, or "rooted," then you have experienced the consciousness (spirit) of earth. And so on. Keep in mind that these are very general examples of how "elemental consciousness" can be experienced by human beings.

How many of you have spent hours gazing into a roaring fire in the hearth? Or have gone to the Ocean to meditate? Or have a favorite mountain that you go to in order to be alone with your thoughts? The very act of meditating on these elements can be instructional in itself. For example, watching a tree sway in the wind can teach you much about the air element in fighting. Observing a blazing fire can help you develop the "killer instinct" necessary in Martial Arts training. Watching the flow of a stream can help you develop fluidity in your movements. These are all ways in which humans can learn directly from the consciousness (spirits) of the elements of nature.

In general, Elemental consciousness can be broken down as follows:

- Water - Emotions, receptive energy
- Earth - Physical body, being rooted
- Fire - Aggression, will-power
- Air - Intuition, deception, strategy

In addition to Elemental energies, there is also the consciousness (spirit) of plants, stones, and animals to consider. The way a Silat practitioner works with the consciousness (spirit) of an animal is akin to the Native American concept of the Totem Animal. A student may select a certain animal to which he has an affinity, and then specialize in the *Ilmu* of that particular animal. In my Art of Pukulan Cimande Pusaka, animals are often used as symbols of the natural elements. The manyet (monkey) for water; the macan (tiger) for earth; the ulor sendok (cobra) for fire; the blakok (crane) for air. Each element relates to a

specific area of study in *Pencak Silat*. Since a student must not be lacking in any particular element, all of the elements (animals) are studied. The completion of this process occurs when the student can invoke the highest of all of the elements (animals) - the King Dragon. Students who attain this level (and there are several at my school) are awarded with a special sash.

In the next category we have what my Indonesian teachers call *Hantu Pusaka*, or “Ancestor Spirits.” Most religions seem to agree that consciousness (spirit) survives the experience of physical death. They disagree on what happens next. Going beyond the Western ideas of “Heaven for ‘Good’ people - Hell for ‘evil’ people” we can safely say that the consciousness (spirit) of someone whose physical body has ceased to function exists in a different dimension than our own. They can no longer be perceived by the physical senses (there are exceptions) but they still exist among us, albeit in another form. In other words, the material body dies, the energy of consciousness (spirit) never dies. Even after the physical body decomposes, what happens to the electro-magnetic field of energy (Body of Light?) Does it disappear? No. Nothing disappears really - it only disappears from our third dimension. The Body of Light (aura) continues to exist even after your material shell vanishes. Your consciousness (spirit) can still be felt, intuited, and contacted by those in the material realm.

We may not be able to interact with the *Hantu Pusaka* on a purely physical level, but we certainly can on a psychic level. Many Americans

have reported instances where a deceased loved one has appeared to them in a dream, or in a waking vision, usually to offer some sort of encouragement or guidance in a difficult situation. Well, you should realize that indigenous peoples do that every day and think nothing of it! The more you practice shifting your consciousness beyond the realm of the five senses, the more it will happen to you.

One of my students, a very serious Talmudic scholar, rises each night at midnight in order to study the teachings of the Jewish Kabbalah. Doing this, he says, draws the Spirits of departed Kabbalists to illuminate his studies. This is actually a centuries old Kabbalistic tradition. Keep in mind that some Ancestor spirits will be of more benefit to you than others, just like living human beings. For example, it might not be productive to “keep company” with the consciousness of an alcoholic, abusive personality (human or spirit!)

My first *dukun*, who long ago became an Ancestor, still comes to me in dreams and visions to guide me and refine my understanding of his teachings. His other students regularly have similar experiences. It seems that even after he shed his material shell, my teacher continues to guide the development of the Art through his students.

I would like to relate something that this teacher imparted to me years ago, before his passing. He said “My son, you must have a foot in both worlds at all times. You must be able to see into the realm of the Spirits in the same way that you see into the realm of men. Never neglect the

Hantu Pusaka - always follow their guidance. In times of danger they will deliver you from harm.” This is a very sublime concept. I have met several shamans and traditional people whose consciousness was so highly developed, that they could communicate and interact with these non-corporeal entities as easily as you can communicate and interact with other third dimensional beings.

The final category of entities that we will examine in this article, will be called “Extra-Dimensional.” I believe (as did Carl Jung) that most of the visitors that we think come from “outer space” actually come from “inner space” i.e. the fourth and fifth dimension. In fact, physicists now postulate that there are up to 26 dimensions. It appears that some of these beings have benevolent intentions, and others have not-so-benevolent intentions. Personally, I don’t spend a lot of time worrying about it either way. I am reminded of how the founder of Aikido, M. Uyeshiba would spend long periods of time alone in the wilderness to train with the “tengu” that would appear to teach him. It seems that people who live close to nature have more contact with these entities than we folks that dwell in urban areas. In this section I have given you the bare minimum regarding non-human forms of consciousness (spirits) and how humans can relate to them. I leave it to the reader to build upon what I have said here with his or her own experiences.

The Dangers of Studying Ilmu

I try to stay away from sounding “spooky” and mysterious when I discuss mysticism. I have been

blessed with the opportunity to travel all over the world to study metaphysics with various teachers. I have indeed had some very “spooky” experiences. In fact, I will say that I have personally seen mystics in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and the Caribbean interact with the unseen world to a sometimes terrifying degree. These people are capable of things on a material and psychic level that you cannot even begin to imagine. However, I do not share these experiences with the general public in forums such as this.

Mysticism tends to attract the same people who are attracted to the Martial Arts: ego-driven people of weak character who are in search of Power to control others. Many are more interested in developing spooky supernatural abilities than in facing the real problems in their lives. Being able to “walk through walls” will not help you if you are so messed up psychologically that you cannot hold a steady job, or maintain a healthy relationship. Developing telekinesis will not help feed your family, if they are hungry. Instead of putting a curse on your boss, maybe you should just develop better work habits. Let me remind you that true Power comes from cultivating Good Character.

When traditional shamans do things that we in the West consider to be “supernatural” it is never to impress each other, or to show off. Their powers and abilities have a direct relationship to their very SURVIVAL. As long as you can open a bottle of Tylenol when you are sick, you may never have the NEED to “talk” to the plants in order to learn

their healing capabilities. As long as you can go to the supermarket any time you wish and buy prepackaged food, you may never develop the psychic faculties of an indigenous hunter who must go out into the dangerous jungle in search of sustenance. The more you rely on technology, the less of your own personal power you need to develop. As we in the West “advance” technologically, we allow our own latent abilities to become dormant. Rather sad, isn’t it?

On another level, some people have had the most basic paranormal experience, and come away thinking that they were the “Messiah.” Another serious danger at this stage is that a person may mistake his own psychotic delusions for actual spiritual experiences. For example, there is actually an individual who gave himself the title of “Pendekar Agung” (a completely bogus title) and claims to teach a system of *Pencak Silat* that was taught to him by God! When the line between “divine revelation” and paranoid schizophrenia becomes blurred, it is time to re-evaluate your development.

One last word of caution. Remember the words of my *dukun* as quoted above: “You must have a foot in both worlds.” Someone of weak character can easily see “The Other Side” as being far more desirable than our own material realm. While you still live in the material world however, you must be an active participant! Sitting in your room all day doing “rituals” or going into trances will do nothing to advance your spiritual development. It is easy to be a Holy Man when you live on top of a mountain. Your practice of *Ilmu* should be just

like your practice of *Pencak Silat*: practice it diligently, incorporate it into your daily life, do not become obsessive, and have faith that it will serve you well when you need it. So, the best way to learn mysticism is not through some pop-culture “New Age” paperback, or from the Internet - but from a responsible teacher who will constantly “check” your motivation, and guide you away from the many traps into which your ego may lead you.

More Ilmu

by Guru Baharu Chris Martin

When Guru Besar Jeff Davidson mailed me his article he asked me what did I think of it. In three short words my answer would be a loud yell, **He Is Correct!**

Now you might be asking yourself why am I qualified to give this answer. For several reasons - I have been a spiritual seeker on the path for many years, my Bachelors degree is in Religious Studies and I have PhD in Mathematics with numerous papers on Physics topics.

Everything is energy and in a constant flux of one form or another. Many yoga texts speak of the different energy centers in our body and their vibrations. The Greeks spoke of the music of the spheres, Tibetan Buddhists chant, “*Om, Mani, Padme, Hum*”, followers of Islam chant the names of Allah and the Catholic Mass was in Latin. Why? Was it just a phase that humanity went through or was there timeless wisdom

hidden there? The sounds, or energy/pressure vibrations resonate in your body and help to align your spirit or essence. Tibetan yogis sit naked in the snow and translate thought into heat, which melts the snow around them.

The American Indians, the people of Bali in particular and the people of Indonesia and many so called “primitive” tribes lived and do live in harmony with the world. In their lives there are no accidents because all life and all things are sacred. I grew up a Catholic and my family’s version of sacred was our one-hour service on Sunday morning. We never spoke about what was said but only who was wearing what and did you see that hairstyle. No I am not knocking Catholics but only sharing my view. I currently live in a neighborhood that has a high percentage of orthodox Jewish families and every Saturday I watch them walk to the temple because they cannot drive cars on Saturday. They walk in their suits and dresses, rain or shine in the middle of the summer or the winter. Those of you that have been to Texas imagine wearing a suit in the summer. I also see young black Muslim men handing out fliers at the street corner in suits and bow ties and many Muslims fast for a whole month (no food during daylight hours). You are probably wondering what is my point. My point is this - many of us have gotten soft, we changed from Latin to English because it was too hard, we got rid of fasting on Fridays during Lent because it was too hard, we got rid of kneeling because that was too hard. No I am not picking on the Christian religions since many faiths have reform movements, which are making religion more

convenient and not so hard. I am here to tell you that the path of *Ilmu* that Pendekar Sanders and Guru Besar Jeff Davidson have laid out, while true, is not any easy path. If you want easy go down to your local strip mall and buy your belt from the Avon School of martial arts.

You must foster a sense that all life, all occurrences are sacred. As Pendekar Sanders mentioned in our last newsletter your training is not limited to the time you spend in the training hall. It must permeate to all phases of your life. The person who cuts you off on the freeway is your training partner. The rude person in the mall is also your training partner. If you cannot stay cool and level headed during these times how do you ever plan to stay level headed during the adrenaline rush of a fight. A good training exercise is to have a friend of yours come up to you and slap you in the face. My wife is always willing to accommodate me. Does rage well up into your chest? In a real fight you are going to get hit and yes it will hurt, but you must remain calm and determined to live.

When you practice the physical part of the art two things are readily apparent. First any physical problems that you have, i.e. lack of strength, lack of flexibility, lack of coordination all become magnified. You must spend time to iron out those weaknesses. Second you must practice your physical skills at least 6 to 7 times a week unless your body really needs a day off. This level of commitment is needed if you ever plan to progress.

The practice of *Ilmu* is the same except now the flaws that become quickly apparent are in your character and in your mind. *Ilmu* will strip off the onion layers of your character and you will be left naked in front of the mirror. Do you have the courage to look? *Ilmu* just like the physical part of the art must be practiced on a regular basis. The *tenaga dalam* exercises that we do open the energy centers of your body. Repeated practice keeps them open and not enough practice closes them back up. I will share with you things, which have helped me.

1. Surround yourself with sacred objects - pictures, cards, statues or art. I have included some photos of Indonesian items that I have collected as well some plastic animals that I got at the toy store. No, I do not worship these items but they help set the mood. Also light some incense - sandalwood, myrrh or benzoin.

2. Train with music. The sounds of the gamelan will permeate your body and your soul. Arabic music of the sacred names of Allah will also do the same.

3. Eat healthy and live healthy. The practice of *Ilmu* requires a very high level of awareness and your senses must be crystal clear, that is give up smoking and give up alcohol. You must be 100% mindful of the minutest details. I know you are saying what does this guy know he is just a “puritan nerd.” In my younger days I did my share of “toilet bowel hugging” and I never found the divine there and I also did my share of smoking and yes I did inhale. The only god I found

smoking was the ice cream god or the chip god when I got the munchies.

4. Except the fact that the path of *Ilmu* is hard with many pitfalls and potholes in the road. You have spent a whole lifetime dulling your senses and suppressing your natural power. Do not expect a weeks worth of practice to clear it all up. There are days in which you will have great inspirations and then there are days or weeks when nothing comes to you. You will feel like the biggest idiot and you will get depressed. *Ilmu* training though is just like the physical there are plateaus. The higher powers or guides will send you information when you need it and not always when you request it.

5. Get outside and get back in touch with the natural world. Rent videos on the animals in our art or go to the zoo and see them first hand. Find a quiet time in your day and imagine you are in the jungle and invite one of these animals to talk to you. No again this is not easy. As Guru Besar Davidson says go meditate next to a tree. I wish the tree could talk, I wish the tiger at the zoo could talk and I wish God could just pop into the truck next to me. It sure would end all this confusion and me guessing if I am on the right path. Your inspirations will come from whispers in the wind and make no mistake they are always talking. It is us who have turned off our ears.

6. My sons asked me one day, “Where is God?” I replied go look in the mirror. They then asked, “Where is the Devil?” I replied go look in the mirror. You hold in your hand a choice - the easy

path is just that - easy. The other path is hard and it leads you through the pits of hell. Are you one of the few who is willing to take that path? Don't think the great horned beast will stand in your way, it is much more subtle than that. It will be the little things.



MANTRA - AGAINST THE MAGIC POWER OF THE KERIS

The following is an insert from a the book by Martin Kerner, The Keris in the Magic World-View, pages 59-61, Kirchdorf, Switzerland, 1999

Where there is magic, there is also counter-magic. So a mantra, an incantation, can protect against the magic power of a Keris.

Javanese Version

Ingsun kawulaning Allah, kang matek saka suryakumara, bukiyadi angambah jagad walikan, langgeng tan kenaning owah, huyayu, huyayu, huyayu, salalahu ngalaihi wasalam, dating suci ing sahudaya, ratuning sadatulah. Ingsun lanang sejati, kang tan pasah sakehing tumumpang, ampang ngalumpruk kadi tibaning kapuk, yahu jabardas, bar tan tedhas ing keris suleman lan sakehing gagaman kabeh.

Lakune: Mantra diwaca ana ing paperangan lan yen ana babaya pa kewuh. Ora mangan uyah 40 dina, banjur mutih 3 dino 3 bengi lan patigeni sadina sawengi, wiwite dina Kemis Wage

English Version

I, son of Allah, brought into being by the son of the Sun, who was given the power to tread with his foot on the world upside-down, eternal and still I greet the divinity; the essence of purity is in everything, king of the essence of Allah. I am the true man who will not be defeated by anything,

everything directed against me is of no effect, as if some cotton flakes were dropped on me, yes, cancelled, disappeared, fulfilled without being hit by the Keris Suleman or by any other weapon.

Lakune: The mantra is to be read in war or in any other dangerous situation. Don't eat salt for forty days, then *Mutih* for three days and three nights and *Patigeni* for one day and one night, starting on a Thursday *wage*.

Mutih - to eat only white food (rice and water).

Patigeni - eating, no drinking, no sleeping and to stay closed in a dark room during night and day.

Keris Books In General

You can find the following keris books at:

Ethnographic Art Books/ De Verre Volken
www.ethnographicartbooks.com

Duuren, D. van. : THE KRIS - AN EARTHLY APPROACH TO A COSMIC SYMBOL. ; 95 pp.; circa 60 illus., bibl.. Translated from the Dutch. Wijk en Aalburg, 1998. Cloth. NLG65.

Jensen, Karsten Sejr. : THE INDONESIAN KRIS, A SYMBOL CHARGED WEAPON/ DEN INDONESISKE KRIS, ET SYBOLLADET V+BEN. ; 256 pp.; 142 illus., 50 in colour, bibl.. Danish royal collection/ Collection Dresden Text in Danish but with full English summaries. The photographs are

accompanied by texts in English. Copenhagen, 1998. NLG145.

Kerner, Martin. : THE KERIS, IN THE MAGIC WORLD-VIEW. ; 140 pp.; b/w and colour illus., bibl.. Kirchdorf, 1999. English translation of 'The Keris im Magischen Weltbild' published in 1995. NLG45.

Kerner, Martin. ORIGIN OF EARLY KERISES. 150 pp.; 50 b/w illus., bibl.. Kirchdorf, 1998. NLG 75

Kerner, Martin THE KERIS KI SUDAMALA. 141 pp.; 30 b/w and colour illus., bibl.. Kirchdorf, 1999. NLG 75

Marval, Gaspard de. : LE MONDE DU KRIS. Indonésie-Malaisie-Philippines. ; 51 pp.; 61 b/w and colour illus., bibl.. Morges, 1997. Exhibition catalogue Morges on the Kris. . NLG40.

Tammens, G.J. : DE KRIS - Magic relic of old Indonesia. Volume 1. ; 301 pp.; 175 b/w and colour photographs, bibl.. Text in Dutch and English. Eelderwolde, 1991. NLG145.

Tammens, G.J. : DE KRIS - Magic relic of old Indonesia. Volume 2. ; 275 pp.; 345 b/w and colour ill., bibl.. Text in Dutch and English. Eelderwolde, 1993. NLG145.

Tammens, G.J. : DE KRIS - Magic relic of old Indonesia. Volume 3. ; 289 pp.; 350 colour and b/w illus., glossary of terms, bibl.. Text in English and Dutch. Volume 3 is mainly on Kris hafts.

Eelderwolde, 1994. NLG145.

Tammens, G.J.F.I. : DE KRIS IN ZIJN
PARANORMALE WERELD. ; c. 150
unnumbered pages, 20 illus. of Kris, 4 in colour,
map. 20 short stories on the Kris in Dutch.
Eelderwolde, 1998. NLG55.

Tammens, G.J.F.J. (ed.). : DE
KRISSENWERELD VAN DR. I.J.
GRONEMAN. ; 192 pp.; 36 b/w illus. of the
Kris. Eelderwolde, 1999. This is not an original
work but a compilation of articles published in
Dutch and German in several magazines by Dr.
Groneman. NLG65.

To convert from NLG to \$US\$ divide by 2

The following articles can be found at most large
universities on microfiche.


Gardner, G.B. Keris and other Malay Weapons,
1936, p138.

Hill, A.H., The Keris and other Malay Weapons,
Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic
Society, Vol 29, 1956 pt 4, 7-98

Wooley, G.C., The Malay Keris: Its Origin and
Development, Journal of the Malayan Branch
Royal Asiatic Society, Vol 20, 1947, 60-103



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Final Comments

If you have comments, student questions, a possible article that you would like to submit or an article that you would like to see written please send them to:

Chris Martin
20000 Kingwood Drive
Kingwood, Texas, USA 77339

Chris.Martin@nhmccd.edu

www.cimande.com