



The Ideology of Spiritual Practices in Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (PSSCM)

Malay martial arts is often associated with the practice that contains elements of superstitions. This can be seen when religious authorities such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia or popularly known as (JAKIM) and Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS) published guideline books for martial arts associations in Malaysia according to Islam. Therefore, there is a martial arts association in Malaysia, namely Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (PSSCM) have a clear vision of upholding the original Malay Silat, especially Malaysian martial arts, and clean from all superstitions which are not align with the Islamic faith. Therefore, the approach of this study is to identify the ideology of spiritual practices found in PSSCM that are free from superstitions and capable of educating morals and noble practices. This study uses a qualitative methodology based on content analysis and this study will analyze documents related to the ideology of spiritual practice in PSSCM. The study found that PSSCM has an ideology of spiritual practices that are aimed at educating the spiritual and the virtuous. This practice also does not conflict with the Islamic Shari'a. Therefore, PSSCM is not merely educating people to take care of themselves but also signaling them with good moral characters.

Keywords: Spirituality; Martial Arts; Islamic Shari'a; Tawaşşul; Barzanji

Seni bela diri Melayu iaitu silat sering dikaitkan dengan amalan yang mengandungi unsur tahayul dan khurafat. Hal ini dapat dilihat apabila pihak berkuasa agama seperti Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) dan Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor (JAIS) telah menerbitkan buku garis panduan bagi persatuan-persatuan silat di Malaysia menurut agama Islam. Justeru itu, terdapat sebuah persatuan seni silat di Malaysia iaitu Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (PSSCM) mempunyai visi yang jelas iaitu mendaulatkan Seni Silat Melayu asli, khususnya Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia dan membersihkan segala tahyul dan khurafat yang tidak sesuai dengan iktikad Islam. Oleh yang demikian, pendekatan kajian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti ideologi amalan kerohanian yang terdapat dalam PSSCM yang bebas daripada tahayul dan khurafat dan juga mampu mendidik akhlak dan amalan yang mulia. Kajian ini menggunakan metodologi kualitatif yang berlandaskan kepada reka bentuk kajian iaitu analisis kandungan. Oleh itu, kajian ini akan menganalisis dokumen yang berkaitan dengan ideologi amalan kerohanian dalam PSSCM. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa PSSCM mempunyai ideologi amalan kerohanian yang bertujuan mendidik jiwa dan akhlak mulia serta amalan ini tidak bercanggah dengan landasan Syariah Islam. Maka, PSSCM bukan hanya melahirkan insan yang mampu menjaga diri bahkan melahirkan insan yang mempunyai peribadi yang berakhlak mulia.

Kata Kunci: Spiritualitas; Seni Bela Diri; Syariat Islam; Tawasul; Barzanji

Author:

Nur Enanee Ezani,¹
Nozira Salleh^{2*}

Affiliation:

^{1,2}Research Centre of
Theology and Philosophy,
Faculty of Islamic Studies,
The National University
of Malaysia

Corresponding author:

*nozira.salleh@gmail.com

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Introduction

The Malays are known for the artistry of Malay Muslims. It can be seen from the interpretation of art by the Malays as a result of human invention and has a value statement. Among the arts featured in the interpretation of the Malays are calligraphy, architecture, textiles, martial arts, and others.¹ Martial art is one of the familiar art among the Malay community. The variety of martial arts in Malaysia that being prosecuted until now such as *Gayong Malaysia*, *Cekak Malaysia*, *Gayung Fatani*, *Cekak Harimau*, and *Sendeng*.

Every martial art has been established with its background and most of these martial arts are founded by Malays. Then, the syllabus of teaching and learning is often associated with an Islamic background. Because the relevance in teaching and learning of martial arts has to do with Islam, there are a few martial arts that have the elements of superstition in its practice. This can be proven by the compilation of the book 'Islamic Guidelines in Martial Arts' by the religious authorities such as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM)² and Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS),³ which is a reference to the associations of martial arts in Malaysia to prevent from engaging in practices contrary to Islamic beliefs and laws.

Malay martial arts also have the ideology of spiritual practices for its members. Spiritual practice is a practice that dominates one's inner being. This practice is often associated with good practices that are aimed at achieving a good personality in the world and hereafter.⁴

This practice is essential to proper education and one of them is moral education.

Education cannot be separated from moral values. This can be seen from the Arabic word *ta'dīb* which means education derived from the basic word *addaba* which means to teach manners or virtues.⁵ The word *akhlāq* also comes from the Arabic word *khuluqun* which means temperament, habit, custom, or *khalqun* which means creation. Therefore, moral is the attitude, custom or behaviour system that have been created. Virtues in Islam are divided into two categories: virtuous and despicable. A virtuous morality should be applied in daily routine and a despicable morality should be avoided.⁶

The importance of moral education has been recognized by society throughout history since the Ancient Greek.⁷ A moral education is necessary for childrens who faced with serious moral issues in this modern age.⁸ Therefore, religion is a fundamental factor in the formation of human virtues. This is because, without religious affiliation, a moral education would not be sustainable and only temporary which is leading to moral failure.⁹

The Islamic approach to moral education emphasizes the naming of faith or spirituality. The faith is the core of Islam and the importance of faith in Islam can be seen in the texts of the Qur'an and the Hadith which are often associated with the formation of morals by faith. Morals hold a very high position in Islam and this can be seen from the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad:

⁵ Asmawati Suhid. "Pengajaran Adab & Akhlak Islam dalam Membangunkan Modal Insan." *MALIM: Jurnal Pengajian Umum Asia Tenggara* 8 (2007): 169. <http://www.ukm.my/jmalim>

⁶ Syaepul Manan. "Pembinaan Akhlak Mulia melalui Keteladanan dan Pembiasaan." *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam – Ta'lim* 15, no. 1 (2017): 52.

⁷ Asmawati, "Pengajaran Adab & Akhlak Islam dalam Membangunkan Modal Insan", 169.

⁸ Syaepul, "Pembinaan Akhlak Mulia melalui Keteladanan dan Pembiasaan", 53.

⁹ Asmawati, "Pengajaran Adab & Akhlak Islam dalam Membangunkan Modal Insan", 170.

¹ Nik Hassan Suhaimi Nik Abdul Rahman et al. *Alam Melayu: Satu Pengenalan* (Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2011).

² Anon, *Garis Panduan Silat dan Seni Mempertahankan Diri Menurut Islam* (Malaysia: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), 2016).

³ Anon, *Garis Panduan Silat Menurut Islam*, (Malaysia: Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor (JAIS), 2006).

⁴ Awang Nazarudin et al. "Amalan Kerohanian Membentuk Disiplin Pelajar." *Simposium Pendidikan diPeribadikan: Perspektif Risalah An-Nur*, (25 Januari 2017): 28.





"The most perfect believers of their faith are the most virtuous his morality."¹⁰

Therefore, one of the major roles in moral education is the teacher because children are raised through early learning in school. So, the construction and moral education are from their teachers.¹¹ Because of that, the personality of the teachers is very important for teaching and educating the children in moral education.

Thus, this study will address one of the martial arts associations in Malaysia, *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* (PSSCM) in terms of its ideology spiritual practices which are capable of educating noble morals and the practices which do not contain superstitions.

This study uses the qualitative methods based on content analysis and this study will analyze documents related to the ideology of spiritual practice in PSSCM. Document analysis is an important and systematic process to display the results of the study in a way that is easy to understand. Inductive and deductive approaches were used to analyze the information for this study.¹²

The inductive approach is from general to specific. In the inductive approach, there are no hypotheses that can be used in the early stages of the study until the study is completed. Inductive research involves an in-depth process of the study situation and examining the formation of explanations to form conclusions when the study is completed.¹³

Therefore, the inductive process in this study occurs with the collection of all documents related to *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak*

Malaysia (PSSCM) from books, journals, articles and also through the website. Thus, from this inductive process, the researcher takes all the information found and classifies it in an orderly manner according to the details of the ideology of the spiritual elements in PSSCM.

On the other hand, deductive means a view from the specific to the general. Deductive studies are used to test specific relationships that already have a theory.¹⁴ The deductive process is analyzing the ideology of spiritual practices in PSSCM which are in-line with the Islamic faith.

PSSCM: Its History and Identity

Silat Cekak is from the State of Kedah Darul Aman which was practiced by the senior commanders of Kedah Government during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Tajuddin II (1854-1879). There was a senior commander of Kedah government named Commander Ismail who had killed one of the Batak named Tuah (not Hang Tuah) in Kerian, Perak (Kerian was under the government of Kedah). Commander Ismail handed down the martial arts to Commander Tok Rashid from Kedah. When Commander Tok Rashid's hometown was attacked by an outbreak of the year, he and his wife left the village and moved to Kerian more than 100 years ago. Due to the advanced age of Commander Tok Rashid, he passed this Silat Cekak to Yahya Said from Batu Kurau, Taiping.¹⁵

Thus, Commander Tok Rashid left this will to the 20-year-old Yahya Said: "If any of my grandchildren in Kedah want to learn this silat, you must return it." Yahya Said fulfilled this will as 'a trustee' for 40 years until the arrival of Hanafi bin Ahmad from Kedah and met Yahya Said.¹⁶

¹⁰ Abū 'Īsā Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā as-Sulamī aḍ-Ḍarīr al-Būghī at-Tirmidhī. Book of *al-Rida'*, *Jami' at-Tirmidhī*, chapter *Mā Jā'a fi Haq al-Mar'ah 'alā Zawjihā*. Dār al-Salām li al-Nashri wa al-Tauzi'. 200 – 279H.

¹¹ Syaepul Manan. "Pembinaan Akhlak Mulia melalui Keteladanan dan Pembiasaan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam – Ta'lim* 15, no. 1 (2017): 50.

¹² Ahmad Munawar Ismail and Mohd Nor Shahizan Ali, *Mengenal Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif dalam Penyelidikan Pengajian Islam*. Bangi: Penerbit FPI, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 2016.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 45

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 45

¹⁵ Wan Mohd Dhayudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," Universiti Utara Malaysia, 22 Julai 2007.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 27





Because of Hanafi's deep interest in this martial arts, he has been able to inherit the nation's heritage from Yahya Said. On 5 Ramadan 1385 Hijrah, equivalent to December 28, 1965, located at Shafie Darus' house, Batu 4 $\frac{3}{4}$, Jalan Gunung Alor Setar, Kedah Silat Cekak was reborn through the Sri Kedah Cultural Arts Association (Perkumpulan Seni Sari Budaya Sri Kedah) established in February 1964. Later, Silat Cekak was introduced and developed through the Malaysian Chekak Kedah Art Society (Seni Silat Chekak Kedah Malaysia). On August 19, 1971, Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (PSSCM) was registered and founded by Hanafi bin Ahmad.¹⁷

In 1975, Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia saw the new emblem, which was founded by the Principal and the President of PSSCM, Hanafi bin Haji Ahmad. On August 13, 1986, Hanafi passed away after leading the PSSCM and expanding this silat nationwide for 21 years. The role of the Principal and the President of the PSSCM was resumed by Ishak bin Itam on September 21, 1986. The first-degree ceremony was held by him at Universiti Pertanian Malaysia on October 13, 1986.¹⁸

He continued to lead the PSSCM until he handed over the Silat Cekak to Datuk Haji Maideen bin Kadir Shah on June 3, 2009.¹⁹ Datuk Haji Maideen bin Kadir Shah is the Principal and the President of the PSSCM from June 3, 2009 to the present day.

PSSCM has expanded throughout Malaysia peninsular with a total of branches in 12 states. In addition, PSSCM has also been well received in IPTA and IPTS such as UIAM, UUM, USM, UiTM, UPM, UKM, UM, UTM, UPSI, IKBN, POLITEKNIK and technical colleges such as UniKL and Polytechnic as well as in MRSM and other schools in Malaysia.²⁰

For an organization, the naming of an association is very important to symbolize that association. Then, for Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia, the nomination factor was by Hanafi because the word 'cekak' has to do with the Malay proverb, especially in Kedah, named as 'makan cekak' which means the ability and responsibility. Thus, Seni Silat Cekak is the art of martial arts that is responsible for maintaining one's safety.²¹

Secondly, the word 'cekak' in Minangkabau is referred to as 'cakak' which means to fight. The purpose of Silat Cekak is not to fight but to defend oneself. Apart from that, Silat Cekak is also known as 'silat tempur'. Therefore, it is not suitable to be shown in public or at a wedding. Thirdly, the word 'secekak' meant a handful that taught its members that the more united an association, the stronger the association would be. If the association is not united, then the association would collapse. In addition, a handful of solidarity also means that members of Silat Cekak must unite among members and the community. Lastly, 'cekak' also means stance. Martial arts are not for pride but for the sake of self, race, and religion.²²

Thus, each meaning of the word 'cekak' provides education so that its members become responsible human beings, non-quarrelsome, agree in unity, and humble. Each of these meanings can directly educate Silat Cekak's members about the internal aspects of civilization and promote good morals.

In addition, this Silat Cekak developed with various aims and objectives. The first is to revive, introduce, and empower a nation's heritage that is a forgotten hereditary cultural art. The second is to foster a love for the heritage of the Malays. The third is to instill a sense of responsibility to take care of yourself without being dependent on others. Next is to give meaning to the purpose and purpose of self-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 25-31.

¹⁹ Anon. "Konvokesyen Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia 2011 Zon Timur," (19 November 2011): 36 – 37.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 24

²¹ Halimah Haji Ahmad. "Hanafi Haji Ahmad dan Seni Silat Cekak," *Tesis*, Sarjanamuda, Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1977/1978.

²² *Ibid.*, 49.





defense, as well as the purpose of life. In addition, eradicate and oppose superstitions that do not conform to the Islamic faith. Furthermore, cultivating the spirit of Islam as a stand against all situations, times of war, hardship, facing lovers or enemies. Finally, it allows us to distinguish between right and wrong, between the world and the hereafter, between the legal and the invalid.²³

Based on the aims and objectives of Silat Cekak, the mission of PSSCM is to lead and to form the members of PSSCM in particular and Malays generally to believe in faith and unite to defend the religion, race, and nation. Meanwhile, the vision of PSSCM is to uphold the original Malay martial art, especially Silat Cekak Malaysia, and clean up all the superstition which is not in accordance with the Islamic faith. Therefore, based on the mission and the vision of PSSCM stated above, it is clear that PSSCM is founded on the basis of religion and faith.²⁴

According to Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka,²⁵ symbols mean symbols that indicate or identify things such as flags, badges and others, symbols and gestures. Thus, to introduce Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia, Hanafi created the official emblem of PSSCM as follow:



Graph 1. Emblem of PSSCM²⁶

²³ Halimah Haji Ahmad. "Hanafi Haji Ahmad dan Seni Silat Cekak." *Tesis*, Sarjanamuda, Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1977/ 1978.

²⁴ Anon. "Konvokesyen Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia 2011 Zon Timur," (19 November 2011): 20.

²⁵ Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. Edisi 4. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. 2005.

²⁶ "Lambang Rasmi," *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia*, 2019, accessed June 1, 2021, <https://www.silatcekak.org.my/lambang-rasmi/>.

This emblem was created in 1976 by Hanafi and has been used officially until now. Each component or element of this emblem carries its meaning:²⁷

Symbol	Meaning
21 Stars	the 21 lesson of Silat Cekak of self-defense.
Paddy Rice	The more content, the more submissive
Machete	The native Malays' weapon
Kris	The sovereignty of the Malay
Letter <i>Ahmad Muhammad</i>	Spiritual and physical cares.

Table I. Symbolic elements and their meanings²⁸

In addition, the colour of each component in the emblem of PSSCM also has its meaning:

Color	Meaning
Yellow	The sovereignty of the Malay race.
Red	The will of self-defense
Blue and Black	Spiritual and physical cares.
White	Purity and cleanliness.
Green	Islamic values

Table II. The colour of symbol elements and its meanings²⁹

The Ideology of Spiritual Practices in PSSCM

Each component symbolized in the PSSCM emblem gives a picture of Silat Cekak itself. The emblem describes spiritual and social values for the people, the race of Malays, the religion of Islam and the Malaysian country. The ideology Spiritual practices found in PSSCM are:³⁰

²⁷ Wan Mohd Dhayudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," Universiti Utara Malaysia, 22 Julai 2007.

²⁸ "Lambang Rasmi," *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia*, 2019, accessed June 1, 2021, <https://www.silatcekak.org.my/lambang-rasmi/>.

²⁹ "Lambang Rasmi," *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia*, 2019,

³⁰ Khaharuddin Abdul Rahman. "Adab dan Adat dalam Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia dalam Konteks agama Islam," *Konvensyen PSSCM IPT Peringkat Kebangsaan*, 26 Februari 2012: 3-15.





A. *Bai'ah* (Graduate Ceremony)

The graduation ceremony is a tradition in *Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* (PSSCM), it is an official ceremony between students and the President of PSSCM (the teacher). Before a student learns the syllabus of *Silat Cekak*, they must first ask permission and blessing from the teacher so that the knowledge they will gain has the blessing and pleasure of Allah. PSSCM emphasizes the manners of each member of *Silat Cekak* to their teacher. The words of the Prophet:

“Indeed, the superiority of the pious over the devotees is like the moon on a full moon above all the stars. And indeed the scholars are the heirs of the Prophet. Although the Prophets did not inherit dinars or dirhams, they inherited knowledge. Whoever takes the inheritance, then he has taken a large share.³¹”

The hadith states that a teacher is a noble and high-ranking human being. Being a teacher is a noble job because it carries out the job of the Prophets and Apostles. Thus, PSSCM emphasizes manners with teachers in learning. Therefore, the process of *bai'ah* in *Silat Cekak* is educating the members about the blessings of teachers in the process of acquiring knowledge is very important.

At the ceremony, the president of PSSCM will explain the benefits of *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* and the students will also renew the *shahādah* in front of the president. This is the official symbol of the *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* students' pronunciation of two *shahādah* sentences that we as Muslims once called Islam as our parents, that makes us Muslims.³¹ Apart from that, this *bai'ah* process also shapes the personality of *Silat Cekak* members to adhere to the promise of not violating the taboos of the PSSCM that have been agreed through an agreement by each *Silat Cekak* member to the teacher of PSSCM.³²

According to Ibn Khaldun, *bai'ah* means an agreement on obedience, such as giving a faithful promise to his leader that he is willing to accept all the responsibilities entrusted to him.³³ This *bai'ah* process began during the time of Rasulullah, namely the First *Bai'ah* of *‘Aqabah* in the 11th prophetic year, the second *Bai'ah* of *‘Aqabah* in the 13th prophetic year, the *Bai'ah Ridwan* in the 6th year of Hijrah and also the *bai'ah* during the opening of Makkah in the 8th year of the Hijrah.³⁴ Thus, these four *bai'ahs* are a process of the Muslims' agreement of allegiance to Rasulullah as their leader. Thus, Allah said in Qur'an 48: 10:

“Indeed, those who pledge allegiance to you, (O Muḥammad)-they are actually pledging allegiance to Allah. The hand¹ of Allah is over their hands.² So he who breaks his word only breaks it to the detriment of himself. And he who fulfills that which he has promised Allah - He will give him a great reward.”

Thus, the words of Allah above are clear about the command to obey the leader is obligatory. Therefore, PSSCM is an association led by the President of PSSCM. So, the president is the leader of the other *Silat Cekak* members. Thus, the *bai'ah* performed in *Silat Cekak* follows the Sunnah of the Prophet which is to make an agreement between the PSSCM President and *Silat Cekak* members so that *Silat Cekak* members adhere to the taboos of *Silat Cekak* itself. Therefore, this *bai'ah* educates the members of *Silat Cekak* spiritually to obey their leaders and also stick to their promises. Therefore, the *Silat Cekak* graduation ceremony is an ideology of spiritual practice that follows the Islamic Shari'ah as found in the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

³¹ Abū Daud, *Sunan Abū Daud*. Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām li al-Nashri wa al-Tauzi'. 275H.

³² Faqir Muhammad, interviewed by author, Selangor, Malaysia, May 9, 2020.

³³ Al-Allamah Abdurrahman bin Muhammad bin Khaldun, *Mukaddimah*. Trans. Masturi Ilham et al. Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kautsar, 2011.

³⁴ Muhammad Husni Ismail. “Bai'at Menurut Para Mufassir”. *Tesis Sarjana*, Falkutas Ushuluddin IAIN Ar-Raniry, Banda Aceh, 2018.





B. The Taboos of PSSCM

The taboos in *Silat Cekak* are a condition for a member to receive the learning process of *Silat Cekak*. These taboos must be pronounced in front of the Teacher during the first-graduation ceremony. The purpose of this taboo is to educate members to be useful human beings and benefit the religion, race, and country in line with the vision and mission of PSSCM.³⁵

There are five taboos in *Silat Cekak* which are, first, should not disobey our teacher, then we should not disobey our mother, we also should not disobey our father, to not fight among members and lastly, we cannot insult any kinds of authentic Malay martial arts.³⁶ Based on these five taboos, there are two main groups:³⁷

a) Instructions for remembering sacrifices.

Instructions for remembering sacrifices are embodied in three things in the taboos of PSSCM, which are should not disobey the teacher, should not disobey our mother and should not disobey our father.

Teachers are a source of knowledge and guidance in human life. It is because human life naturally requires a teacher as a guide in life.³⁸ In Islam, the most common and the main teacher that gives us life and knowledge was Prophet Muhammad. Thus, obedience to our teacher means obedience to the Prophet Muhammad and likewise, when we rebel against the teacher it means we rebel against the Prophet Muhammad. In addition, Hanafi emphasized the importance of blessing from the

teachers in *Silat Cekak's* poem composed by himself:³⁹

*Taat ke guru membawa berkat,
Sedikit belajar banyak yang dapat,
Jika menderhaka menjadi mudarat,
Semua ilmu tiada yang lekat*

Obedience to the teacher brings blessings,
A little we learn a lot we get,
If disobeying becomes harmful,
All knowledge will not be attached

Based on the poem above, a teacher is a person who is blessed in life as the teacher develops and educates to be the best human beings in the world and hereafter. If you disobey the teacher, then you will lose their blessing. Imam al-Ghazali also stated about the importance of the teachers in his book *Ihya' 'Ulūmiddīn* that:⁴⁰

The rights of a teacher are greater than the rights of parents. Parents are the reason for the birth of the child and can live in this world. While the teacher is the reason the child obtains eternal life. If there is no teacher, then what the child gets from his parents, can lead to continuous destruction. The teacher is the one who gives the use of eternal life hereafter. That is, teachers who teach the knowledge of the hereafter or worldly knowledge, but with the purpose of the hereafter, not the world.

Furthermore, for the second and third items in the taboo of PSSCM, should not disobey our mother and should not disobey our father is a claim and required. The roles of a mother and a father are immense and invaluable in this life. Mother is a person who has conceived and saved lives to give birth to children. After giving birth, the mother is the person who has been taken care of her child until the child becomes an adult. Meanwhile, the father is the person to whom the human was born. The role of the

³⁵ Wan Mohd Dhaiyudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," Universiti Utara Malaysia, 22 Julai 2007.

³⁶ Halimah Haji Ahmad. "Hanafi Haji Ahmad dan Seni Silat Cekak," *Tesis*, Sarjanamuda, Jabatan Sejarah, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1977/1978.

³⁷ Abdul Majid Ismail & Khaharuddin Abdul Rahman. "Pendidikan Akhlak Menerusi Pantang Larang dalam Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia". *Regional Conference on Local Knowledge*, (12 & 13 Oktober 2014): 1-19.

³⁸ Wan Mohd Dhaiyudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," 51.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁰ Al-Ghazālī, Abu Hamid Muhamed bin Muhammad. "Terjemahan *Ihya' Ulumuddīn*: Jiwa Agama Jilid 1," Indonesia: Perc Menara Kudus. 1980.





father is also very important in human life because the sacrifice of the father in the pursuit of sustenance and living will not be able to repay the children.⁴¹ Allah said in Qur'an 4: 36:

"Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveller, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful."

This verse above explained that Allah commands mankind to worship Him and not to associate with other than Him and to do good to both parents. Hanafi also emphasized the obedience to parents:⁴²

*Dua ibu bapa tak boleh derhaka,
Besar jasanya kepada kita,
Kalau menderhaka bahaya menimpa,
Di akhirat kita masuk neraka.*

Two parents should not be disobeyed,
Their sacrifice was great to us,
If disobeying the danger will befall,
In the hereafter, we will go to hell

The concept of remembering the sacrifices to the 'most generous' individual in this life is the core of achieving the ideal moral education as required in Islam. A teacher is a person who is passionate about guiding the spirit (*rūh*) and the human body in the world and the hereafter. Meanwhile, the parents have sacrificed so much that their children will not be able to repay it.

b) Instructions for community living

The instructions for community living can be summarized in the fourth and the fifth of the taboo of PSSCM which are not fighting among

members and not insulting any kinds of authentic Malay martial arts.

There is a statement issued by JAKIM⁴³ and JAIS⁴⁴ stated that this taboo is not allowed to be taboo in martial arts:

"A taboo should not include things that are required in Islam as not to leave prayer, do not fighting among members and others."

This argument is irrelevant because to create harmony in society, education through small efforts as emphasized in an organization is necessary to start with. Allah said:

The believers are brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy Qur'an 49: 10.

According to the verse above, it is clear that God commands people to be at peace and to do good to one another. Non-quarrelling among fellow members leads to unity and solidarity among members.⁴⁵ Unity and solidarity should not only focus on the members but also need to be spread among others.⁴⁶ This taboo was also emphasized by Hanafi in his poem:⁴⁷

*Lahirnya Cekak kerana kesedaran,
Bukan bermusuhan sebagai tujuan,
Untuk mendaulatkan seni kebangsaan,
Mensesuaikan dengan makna kemerdekaan.*

Cekak was born due to consciousness,
Not to hostile as a goal,
To uphold the national art,
To adapt the meaning of independence.

⁴³ Anon, *Garis Panduan Silat dan Seni Mempertahankan Diri Menurut Islam* (Malaysia: Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), 2016.

⁴⁴ Anon, *Garis Panduan Silat Menurut Islam*, (Malaysia: Jabatan Agama Islam Selangor (JAIS), 2006.

⁴⁵ Wan Mohd Dhayudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," Universiti Utara Malaysia, 22 Julai 2007.

⁴⁶ Egi Tanadi Taufik and Dzalfa Farida Humaira, "Membumikan Pesan Damai Al-Qur'an (As-Salām) sebagai Media Komunikasi Bangsa," *An-Nida: Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 12, no. 2 (2020): 95.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 6.

⁴¹ Abdul Majid Ismail & Khaharuddin Abdul Rahman. "Pendidikan Akhlak Menerusi Pantang Larang dalam Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia". *Regional Conference on Local Knowledge*, (12 & 13 Oktober 2014): 12-14.

⁴² Wan Mohd Dhayudeen Wan Mohar. "Modul Teori Ujian Sijil Rendah PSSCM Universiti Utara Malaysia," Universiti Utara Malaysia, 22 Julai 2007.





Based on the poem above, *Silat Cekak* was created based on knowledge and the goal was to eliminate abusive attitudes such as envy and betrayal of others. This is because social life is not about hostility, but rather for harmony in the community's life.⁴⁸

The last taboo of PSSCM that should not insults all kinds of authentic Malay martial arts is meant to educate *Silat Cekak*'s members to take care of our words by saying good words only. Because with a bad word, it can cause a breakup in human relationships and conflict among humans. Allah mention in Qur'an 49: 11:

"O you who believed! Let not a people ridicule (another) people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdoers."

In conclusion, the five taboos of *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* do not violate Islamic Shari'ah. Each of them is required to be practiced. The taboos in *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* educate *Silat Cekak* members to be human beings who are obedient to their teachers, mothers, and fathers and love peace by maintaining human relationships.

C. White cloth

It is a custom in *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* that every student is required to sleep for three days on a white cloth after the first-graduation ceremony. The symbolism by using the white cloth as night sheets for three days is as a symbol of purity of the student's intention to study *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* after taken an oath to obey the taboos of PSSCM described above. Before bedtime, the students are required

to clean up with ablution for cleansing physical and spiritual body as suggested by the Sunna.⁴⁹

On the other hand, the second white cloth was awarded by the teacher after the students had completed studying and training the syllabus in *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia*. That white cloth was used by the students as a washcloth while bathing for 40 days, accompanied by *Tawaşşul* prayer. After completed 40 days, the cloth should be well-maintained by the students.⁵⁰

White is a symbol of cleanliness and purity, so the students of *Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia* are emphasized to maintain their physical and spiritual purity as much as the white cloth. The teacher encouraged every student to take care of the physical cleanliness such as body, clothing, properties, and everything as well as spiritual cleanliness. Rasulullah was also very fond of white clothes. As Prophet said:

*Put on your white clothes. For indeed the white garment is your best garment, and shroud with it the dead among you.*⁵¹

The hadith explains that white clothing is Sunnah clothing because Rasul commanded his people to wear white clothing. In addition, Imam Nawawi also explained in his book *Riyāḍus Ṣālihīn* that white clothes are a Sunnah because they look cleaner and brighter.⁵² Imam Ghazali stated that Rasulullah's favorite color was white.⁵³ In addition, the hadith of the Prophet also instructed his people to use white cloth as a shroud for people who have died. So, this white colour is the main colour for a

⁴⁹ Khaharuddin Abdul Rahman. "Adab dan Adat dalam Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia dalam Konteks agama Islam." *Konvensyen PSSCM IPT Peringkat Kebangsaan*, 26 Februari 2012: 7-8.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁵¹ Abū Daud, *Sunan Abū Daud*. *Riyāḍ: Dār al-Salām li al-Nashri wa al-Tauzi*. 275H.

⁵² Al-Nawawī, Abū Zakariyyā Yaḥyā ibn Sharaf. *Sharhu Riyāḍ al-Ṣālihīn*. Trans. Ibrahim Ma'rouf. Mesir: Dar al-Manarah, 2003.

⁵³ Al-Ghazālī, Abu Hamid Muhamed bin Muhammad. "Terjemahan *Iḥyā' Ulumuddīn*: Jiwa Agama Jilid 1," Indonesia: Perc Menara Kudus. 1980.

⁴⁸ *Ibid* 53-54.





Muslim because the use of this white cloth is as ihram cloth when performing Hajj and Umrah and it is also the colour of the shroud for Muslims who have died. Thus, the use of white cloth in *Silat Cekak* indirectly educates the members of *Silat Cekak* to always remember the dead and worshipping Allah earnestly in daily life.

The philosophy of white cloth accepted by *Silat Cekak* members does not violate Islamic *Shari'ah*, it educates *Silat Cekak* members spiritually to practice the Sunnah of Rasulullah by wearing white clothes. The use of this white cloth also educates the members of *Silat Cekak* to remember the dead and strive to worship Allah earnestly.

D. The practice of *Tawaşşul* prayer

Tawaşşul means approaching and conveying something to Allah s.w.t through something.⁵⁴ The Islamic scholars have outlined two types of *tawaşşul* in Islam. First, the prescribed *tawaşşul* by the main sources in the Qur'an and Hadith. Second, *tawaşşul* that is not prescribed, which leads to the polytheism of Allah.⁵⁵

The prescribed *tawaşşul* has clear pieces of evidence from the Qur'an or the Sunnah or both and the scholars also do not dispute its truth. Among the *tawaşşul* prescribed is the first, *tawaşşul* to Allah by believing in the Prophet Muhammad and obeying him. Second, *tawaşşul* to Allah through His names and His attributes. Third, *tawaşşul* to Allah through the prayers and intercession of Rasulullah. Next, *tawaşşul* to Allah through pious deeds and finally *tawaşşul* to Allah through prayers from pious people.⁵⁶ Among the verses that explain *tawaşşul*:

"They prayed to Allah, 'Our Lord! We believe in Your revelations and follow the messenger, so

count us among those who bear witness" (Qur'an 3:53)

"Allah has the Most Beautiful Names. So call upon Him by them, and keep away from those who abuse His Names. They will be punished for what they used to do" (Qur'an 7:180)

According to the Qur'an 3: 53, this verse explains about *Tawaşşul* to Allah by believing in Prophet Muhammad and obeying him. While, Qur'an 7: 180 explains about *Tawaşşul* to Allah His names and His Attributes. Based on the verses of Allah, the practice of *Tawaşşul* is a practice that prescribed in Islam.

While, for the practice of *Tawaşşul* that is not prescribed by the scholars is every practice that can bring shirk to Allah. For example, *Tawaşşul* with worship on the graves of pious people, *Tawaşşul* by using the medium of idols, trees, jinn, animals or asking other beings to forget Allah.⁵⁷ This type of *Tawaşşul* is shirked to Allah because this *Tawaşşul* does not prioritize Allah as the Creator who owns everything. Thus, *Tawaşşul* by using the mediation of beings for which there is no evidence from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the consensus of scholars is a type of *Tawaşşul* that is not prescribed and this behaviour has associated Allah with something else.

PSSCM also practices *Tawaşşul*. The practice of *Tawaşşul* in PSSCM is given to *Silat Cekak* members who have completed the syllabus of *Silat Cekak*. Thus, among the reasons and significance of this practice given to *Silat Cekak* members who have graduated is so that *Silat Cekak* members do not depend on martial arts knowledge because martial arts knowledge is only a tool to learn self defense and safety is a gift from Allah.⁵⁸

Excerpts of *Tawaşşul* prayers practiced in *Silat Cekak* are taken from the Qur'an and the

⁵⁴ M. Nashiruddin Al-Albani & Ali Nafi' Al-Ulyani. *"Tawassul dan Tabarruk,"* Jakarta: Pustaka al-Kautsar, 1998.

⁵⁵ Udah Mohsin. "Tawassul: antara yang disyariatkan dan yang dipertikaikan". *Jurnal Islamiyyat*. 1998. 35.

⁵⁶ Ibid. 36

⁵⁷ Nozira Salleh, "Kedudukan *Tawassul* dalam Islam". *Jurnal Al-Hikmah*. no. 5 (2013) 33-48.

⁵⁸ Ghazali Ab Rahman, interviewed by author, Selangor, Malaysia, August 8, 2020.





hadith of the Prophet. Among the excerpts of *Tawaşşul* prayers practiced by *Silat Cekak* members are to pray to Allah to be given security as Allah has given to prophet of *Ulul ‘Azmi*.⁵⁹ Among the verses in the Qur’an that are used as verses for the practice of *Tawaşşul* in PSSCM are Qur’an 36: 58, Qur’an 37: 79-80, 109-110 & 120-121, Qur’an 39: 73 and Qur’an 97: 5.

Therefore, the practice of *Tawaşşul* in PSSCM is a practice which shows that human must be depending on and have faith in Allah. This is because everything that happened was by the permission of God. Therefore, it is clear that the knowledge of martial arts is merely a tool or effort for self-defence and everything that happens is with the permission of Allah.

E. The Worship Guide Book

The compilation of the *Barzanji* Book as well as the Worship Guide Book was prepared and published by the Board of Education and Discipline, Persatuan Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia (PSSCM). The PSSCM’s Worship Guide Books were organized in three volumes, the first volume is on *tauhid* and *tasawwuf*, the second volume is on *fiqh* and the third volume is on the order of *istighfar*, *selawat* and prayer. All three volumes of this book can be used by all Muslims whether they are the member of *Seni Silat Cekak* or non-members as the book is a guide for a Muslim to worship to Allah.⁶⁰

According to the fourth edition of the *Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*,⁶¹ *barzanji* is a literary work in the form of rhythmic prose. It is also Jaafar al-Barzanji’s poems about the life of Prophet Muhammad. *Barzanji* is often read rhythmically. The purpose of the *barzanji* is to get to know and appreciate the life history of

Prophet Muhammad and nourish our love for him because love for the Prophet means love for Allah. These practices are highly demanded in Islam. Praising Prophet Muhammad is an order from Allah through His word:

“Indeed, Allah showers His blessings upon the Prophet, and His angels pray for him. O, believers! Invoke Allah’s blessings upon him, and salute him with worthy greetings of peace.” (Qur’an 33:56)

Based on the words of Allah, it is clear that His command to mankind to praise the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, there are various methods devised by the scholars and lovers of Rasulullah to praise him. Among them is what was done by Sheikh Jaa’far by narrating the life of the Prophet Muhammad in the form of a poem embodied in his book *Barzanji*. PSSCM has compiled *barzanji* to educate its members to love the Prophet and to be able to recite *barzanji* in spiritual programs such as the commemoration of the Birth of the Prophet.

Thus, the ideology of the practice of *selawat*, *barzanji*, and *marhaban* practiced in PSSCM is an initiative to cultivate *Silat Cekak* members to know and love the Prophet. The practice of praising the Prophet is demanded in Islam because it is an order from Allah and there are many benefits through *selawat* to the Prophet.

Conclusion

There are ideologies on spiritual practices in PSSCM as follow; *First*, *bai’ah* process of attending formal ceremonies between students and teachers; *Second*, the five taboos of PSSCM that educate its members to be religious, ethical, and caring for others; *Third*, the white cloth as a symbol of cleanliness and purity; *Fourth*, the practice of *tawaşşul* educates the obedience to Allah as the only God; *Last*, the use of *Barzanji* and *Marhaban* aside from their own worship manual book. PSSCM also has an ideology that are aimed at educating the spiritual and the virtuous as a servant of Allah. All practices in PSSCM does not conflict the Islamic Shari’a because it educates people good morals and the

⁵⁹ Khaharuddin Abdul Rahman. “Adab dan Adat dalam Seni Silat Cekak Malaysia dalam Konteks agama Islam,” *Konvensyen PSSCM IPT Peringkat Kebangsaan*, 26 Februari 2012: 3-15.

⁶⁰ Anon. *Bidayatul Muhatadeen: Permulaan Bagi Orang-Orang yang Mendapat Petunjuk*. Selangor: Firdaus Press Sdn. Bhd, 2017.

⁶¹ *Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*. Edisi 4. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. 2005.





will of self-defense. These practices build one's personality to be polite and virtuous.

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