



CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS OF NON-MALAY SILAT PRACTITIONERS IN MALAY SILAT MALAYSIA

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Abstract: This article examines the Malay martial arts, Silat which consists of many types and varieties in different states and is also famous in Indonesia. However instead of having only Malay practitioners, there are also non-Malay practitioners learning these martial arts. Malay customs and cultures exist within this art of self-defense such as lime bathing ritual and recitation of verses from Quran. Thus, this study seeks to describe how Non-Malay practitioners acculturate themselves in Malay Silat, how they identify themselves, and what Silat habitus develops as time passed by from four Silat organizations in Kuching and Samarahan. This study also aims to investigate the significance of traditional Malay beliefs in today's Silat practice. It is hoped that this research can provide an enhanced understanding of Silat institution for the non-Malays and may combat the prejudice of how the non-Malays are accepted in a Malay martial arts institution where the non-Malays are minorities and provide discussions on Malay cultures and customs in Silat.

Keywords: Silat, Malay Martial Arts, Malay Cultures, Habitus, Acculturation, Cultural Adaptations

I. INTRODUCTION

Silat is a self-defense or martial arts that is well known in Malaysia and Indonesia; especially. Besides as a way to defend one's self it is also performed in ceremonies such as during official events, Malay weddings that are accompanied by musical instruments such as flute and drums. It symbolizes Malay identity as in Taekwondo for Korea and Karate for Japan. Wahab (1989) defines "Pencak Silat" as a form of self-defense knowledge that include specific methods of protecting oneself from physical injury when attacked with or without weapons. Soh (1991) states that Silat is a self-defense knowledge exclusively owned by Malay which does not only focus on elements of defending but elements of arts and Malay customs. Bakeri and Jais (2002) comment Silat as a unique manifestation of graceful movements of Silat exponent either as an art in the form of "Silat seni" or as tools of self-defense in form of Silat tempur. Karmuda (as cited in Ismail 2009) reported that the art of Silat is created in a process of evolution compatible to that of human experience that always interact with the natural environment that are full with enemies. There are many types of Silat in Malaysia based on different teachings, style, ideology and the Masters; such as Silat Cekak Hanafi, Silat Hailam Laut, Silat Helang Putih, Paris Dendam to mention a few.

Silat has no definite or specific history about its origin. Shamsuddin (2005), states that it is believed that Silat originated from ancient Malaysian and Indonesian civilization. Since there are many types of Silat there is no founder of this type of self-defence. It existed as far back as 7th century A.D. It was not until the 14th century Empire such as Malacca, Majapahit and Srivijaya that Silat was refined and become specialized martial arts of the Sultans and their "Panglima" and "Pendekar" (warriors). At that time, places such as Bali, Java, Malay Peninsula and Borneo were under the influence of these 14th century empires. When these empires are weak, Silat started to spread slowly throughout Southeast Asia. However, Ismail (2009,) states that it is believed to originate from Champa, where the Malays originally hail from and the historians also agree the existence of Malay kingdom in Champa. Furthermore, the findings of "keris" that approximately 2000 years old in Vietnam increase the likelihood that the art of Silat originates from Champa. Besides that, Silat Minangkabau in Sumatera has influence of Silat Champa. In fact in today's modern Silat in Peninsular Malaysia, the Silat which has Silat Champa elements is the Silat Gayong Fatini.

Kortomi (2011) developed different theories in Silat and its origin and cosmology. First, it is due to the spread of Old Malay culture, language and indigenous religion from time of Sumatra's Buddhist-Hindu kingdom of Swirijaya. Next theory which is even older states that Silat establishment is due to associations of Southeast Sumatrans' ancient indigenous religious beliefs, based on idea that not only

people but trees, animal, mountains, stars, and other natural phenomena are interconnected with the reality and contains the consciousness. It is believed that live, and deceased humans feel the pleasure and pain and it is important to maintain relations with the spirits and ancestors. This is the act of animism devotees. According to Haviland, Prins, Walrath and McBride (2008), the term animism was first coined by Sir Edward Tylor. It is a belief in which the devotees see themselves as part of nature in which the nature is animated by personalized spirit beings separable from bodies. Osman (as cited in Shamsuddin 2008), stated that during Hinduism and Buddhism influences in the Malay kingdom, it seems that animistic influences still linger in the mind of the Malays.

The existence of animism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam in Silat shows that Silat has been around long time ago. Third theory by Kortomi is that pencak Silat is indirectly related to the armed combat used in petty wars, and magic charms and songs are expressed for the spirits. Based in Malay literature and oral traditions (hikayat), the people of Sumatra always involved with local fights and wars over the past millennium and a half. They fight for land, over external threats, royal prestige, aristocratic rivalry in love, and the family inheritance or known as "pusaka". All Malay boys are expected to learn the art of self-defense, spiritual, the physical exercises and sparring techniques, and cosmological associations attributed to the art and the living.

Wahab (as cited in Ismail, 2009) stated that the training system of art of Silat in the Malay villages follow the "bangsal" or hut system. It does not implement monthly fee to the students. The students will give to the master upon completing the training, a white cloth around one metre, one lime fruit, and a payment of RM 3.25. The construction of hut or shack is done by the villagers that mostly consist of the ex-students of the Silat institution. Usually ex-students of the respective institution will assist the Silat Master to teach the new students. This "bangsal" system is a form of charity-like and not commercialized. The Silat Master does not obtain profits from it and teaching Silat for the respective masters are just as a sincere act and the feel of responsibility towards the community. The concept of Silat art, long ago as a means to protect the fate of religion and race, due to these martial arts is not taught to foreigners. The Silat masters will only teach the the Malay and Muslims; not foreigners and also the non-Muslims. However, today Silat has gone international and is being competed in sports competition, as a part of physical exercises besides as a means of self-defense.

Soh (1991) explains that there are a total of 269 types of Pencak Silat in Malaysia. From the beginning of 1970s, Silat has started to spread to other countries such as Spain, Turkey, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Austria, France, Austria and England. In Holland, most of the Silat is taught by the Indonesians that become permanent residents. The type of Silat exists in Holland hails from Java Island and Sumatera. The internationalization of Silat starts with the establishment of Federation of International Silat (PERSILAT) on 11th March of 1980 in Jakarta Indonesia. Maryono (2003), reported that PERSILAT form the federations with other Silat nations of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam. In 1994, the membership has spread to 21 nations including in continents of Europe, Asia-Pacific, Americas and the Caribbean. This paves way to international events of the Pencak Silat. The first international Pencak Silat championship was held in 1982, held at Senayan stadium in Jakarta.

Silat that originates from the west Malaysia is grouped under the national association called the Persatuan Silat Kebangsaan (PESAKA). One of the famous Silat under this group is "Silat Gayong" which is widely taught in public universities and schools throughout Malaysia and the only Silat from West Malaysia that is included in this research as it is taught in Sarawak public institutions. In Sarawak, however, the types of Silat are grouped under the "Rumpun Silat Sarawak" with over 113 over different type of Silats in which some of them are active and some are not, and are scattered over different districts. Jais and Bakeri (2002), mention that there are about 33 styles in Kuching district alone. "Rumpun Silat Sarawak" is the main body representing the whole Silat association of Sarawak

1.1 Problem Statement

This research concerns non-Malay Silat practitioners in acculturation in Malay Silat practice. How do they develop the identities of being non-Malay and practicing Silat which is part of Malay culture and identity? It is a matter of assimilating in the Malay culture or result in cultural pluralism, or conflicts in the adaptation in defining their identity as Malay Silat still confines the traditional Malay and Islamic beliefs in the practice such as reciting verses of Quran before and after finished training as well as the ritual of "mandi limau" or lime bathing ritual. Daud and Ismail (1985) explained that bathing lime water that usually occurs in traditional Malay ritual is not of Islamic practice. Haviland, Pins and Walrath (2011) stated that in acculturation individuals or groups of members have intercultural contact with those of different cultures and might bring about conflicts. Berry (2005), states that in acculturation, there would

be the result of cultural pluralism in which it supports the original identity and cultural diversity. Silat is not only as a means of self-defense, but more than just a self-defense. For instance, as a means of discipline and focus, or the spiritual or sacred meanings that lies in the practice. The belief in the practice does not merely exist in one's thoughts but being channeled alive through routine practice; day in and out.

1.2 Aim of Study

To investigate the acculturation of non-Malay Silat practitioners towards Malay Silat practice.

1.3 Objectives of Study

- ✓ To determine the adaptations of Malay Silat practice by the non-Malay practitioners in terms of acculturation.
- ✓ To determine how the non-Malay practitioners identify themselves with the Malay beliefs and identity in Silat.

1.4 Research Questions

- ✓ What are the adaptations of Malay Silat practice by Non-Malay practitioners?
- ✓ How do the non-Malay practitioners identify themselves with the Malay Beliefs and identity in Silat?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Culture and Adaptations

According to Tischler (2014), culture has been part of human evolution since the time of our ancestors where some 15 million years ago, when our ancestors first began to live on ground. Humans are extraordinarily flexible and adaptive. Humans adjust to environment and culture producing, culture transmitting, and culture dependent. Tischler (Haviland, Prins and Walrath (2011) stated that adaptation refers to a gradual process by which organisms adjust to conditions of locality in which they live. Adaptations do not only confine to the adaptations of biologically and environment but on complex ideas, technology and activities that allow survival. In order to survive, one need know how to balance immediate self-interest of its individual members with the needs and demands of society collectively. It is also a matter of how individuals or society have culture contact or acculturation. In terms of cultural contact it could be a fusion of two cultures losing their separate identity and form a single culture such as the melting pot ideology or lost its dominance and maintains the identity as a subculture in the form of caste, class or ethnic group. In acculturation individuals or groups of members have intercultural contact with those of different cultures and might bring about conflicts. Thus, negotiations should take place that should help in adaptation process.

Hallowell (1967) explained acculturation as massive culture change that occurs in a society when it experiences first hand contact with a more powerful society. Acculturation is also defined as contact between people of different modes of life. Cultural changes of adaptation that takes place are readjustments in habits, goals, attitudes and motivations of individuals. In the case of Ojibwa Indian, there are differences with those who live in original life and those who assimilated in Western Culture. The Indians who live near the whites and continuously have contact with the whites are more acculturated. They are more extrovert than inland kinsmen who are less open and quite reluctant to be in contact with strangers. There are contradictions of personality due to different levels of cultural contact. According to Wagner (1976), on studies about acculturation in intermarriage, tradition-oriented women tend to socialize with other Indians. In contrast, the most acculturated ones did not have contact with the Indians of other groups other than their immediate kins. Intermarriage not only depicts on dominant culture being transmitted to minority but also on the basis of dominant culture to the minority. Hyun (2006) stated that acquiring bicultural status or identity leads to optimal psychological health.

According to Hyun, (2006) in their study suggested that biculturalism is ideal and involved difficulty in making decisions. Ethnic minorities have to develop a sense of who they are while navigating between two opposite cultural values. Hyun stated that children of immigrants acculturated more quickly than their parents. From her study, one of respondents of Korean-American descent assimilated quickly with her peers in school and did not feel discriminated at all. There is a process of selective acculturation in which acquiring new cultural traits while retaining ethnic identification, by sustaining Korean pride while

growing up in America.

Berry (2005) introduced the concept of psychological acculturation in which refers to change in an individual who is a participant in a culture contact situation, and influenced by external culture and change of culture in which individuals is a member. In acculturation, there would be the result of cultural pluralism in which it supports the original identity and cultural diversity. But there are societies who implement policy and eliminate diversity by forcing assimilation. It may improve or may not improve the fit between individuals and environments.

2.2 Martial Arts , Cultures and Customs

Donohue (1990) ,explains that Japanese Martial Arts are not merely based on defence, but the mixture of physical training, mental discipline, spirituality and to develop one's character. "Do", as what these systems are called may translated as "path" or "way" and contains Buddhist teaching of enlightenment. It also includes the indigenous Japanese beliefs of Shinto,Taoist, Confucian and Buddhist concepts. There are also the patterns of organization of hierarchy based on beginner's class and advanced grades. It is the results of warrior and political elements in Japanese history which is shaped by the traditional society. Docherty (1997), states that Tai Chi Chuan, a martial arts from China is also related to Taoisme. There are 2 components in Taiosme which are philosophy and religion. The philosophy emphasizes on the importance of Tao (way) of harmony between humanity and natural world. Next in terms of religion, it is a combination of the philosophical ideas with folk religion as well as Buddhist practices. The chanting of mantras was common. Besides Taoisme, the elements of Buddhism are also present. Buddhism is about isolating one's self.

In the study of Wing Chun Kung Fu by Jennings, Brown & Sparkes (2010), there are concerns about the meanings the participants connected with the others to continue the notions of Wing Chun Kung Fu, as a religion. There are the presences of Buddhist, Confucian and Taoist symbols. For the pasts Wing Chun as contrasts with the present, Wing Chun today Wing is deemed as secular religion through the lineage that connects Sifu's body to past generations of Wing Chun masters. One of the participants take Wing Chun as his garage shrine. It is a place for doing deep meditations, and a dummy for intense training regime. The religious metaphor is in the belief from secular physical practice. The practitioner dedicated to Wing Chun a great deal as for him, it is critical how it becomes sacralised with spiritual and religion sentiment. Being repeated day in and day out in what is stated by Wacquant (as cited in Jennings, Brown and Spakes, 2010) as monastic devotion. The notions of sacred has shown a sensual solidarity that act as a process of sacred binding, due to where people kept warm together against the modernity. This is how the practitioners integrate themselves in everyday lives. It becomes the habitus for the practitioners, being one with their body.

Tan (2014), in his research in Aikido martial arts states that Aikido is not simply a martial arts but learning the aspects of Japanese culture and knowledge. Human being is not merely passive objects with mind, but as a channel for embodied knowledge. The process of being an Aikidoka, include where the construction of Japanese's in one's identity. Particularly there is one of those of different ethnicity. In the research, the respondents acquired the benefits of Japanese construction of Aikido's symbolic cultural capital. Some of them also take it as a means to boost one's self confidence, being more disciplined and a means to improve one's health. It is the reinvention and reiteration of one's self. This can be shown through the use of dress, language, narrative and most importantly the continued corporation of building disciplines and perspectives.

Silat is a martial arts commonly known as belonging to the Malays. The meanings are different depending on understanding and philosophy of the type of Silat teachings, Generally, according to Rahman (2018), it can be defined as a martial arts that emphasized on speed of attack and self defence. However, Draeger (as cited in Rahman, 2018) defines Silat as leisure individual training in terms of physical or real combat with enemies while Ku Ahmad (as cited in Rahman, 2018) relates Silat with fine arts and aesthetic values of its movement. Silat is created in the cultural environment and view of the Malay life.

Kortomi (2011) stated that, in her study of Mamak clan, a proto-Malay clan that practices animism ,this clan emphasizes indigenous belief in nature. However the Minangkabau Sufis in Minangkabau master adapted pencak Silat to their new beliefs; Islamic Sufism while retain certain parts of old religion. Minangkabau masters while teaching Silat emphasizes on Sufism educational where the mantra chants addressed Prophet Muhammad and other Muslim prophets. This shows the adaptation that Minangkabau masters obtain unlike Mamak clan which still practice animism and take the utmost importance of ancestors worship. Usually, a Muslim would reject spiritual knowledge that oppose Islamic teaching as

black magic. The inner or spiritual knowledge that involves direct help from Allah is considered as white magic. Acknowledgements and classifications of this spiritual beliefs exist in Silat institution in Malaysia as well as other neighbouring countries like Indonesia, Brunei and Thailand.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The framework for this research is based on Pierre Bourdieu habitus. It refers to socially ingrained habits, skills and dispositions. How do people perceive the social world around them and react to it. Costa and Murphy (2015), reported that habitus allows researcher to explain why social agents occurs and reconstruct social world. It is more than just collective experiences; it justifies individuals' perspectives, values, actions and social positions. In cultural adaptations or acculturation, the kind of habitus developed and ingrained in individuals is investigated. Bourdieu (1977), stated that the structures of a particular type of environment produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, the structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively regulated without in any way being the product of obedience to rules. It is often described as theory of social action and identity construction. Our body serves the ground of self of formation of culture behavior and identity. They are specific embodied schemes of dispositions acquired through diligent and long term practice. Habitus describes the body, mind and society complex resulting from socializing practices in a range of combat and martial arts. It is a state of mind and a bodily state of being. At individual level, a person's biology, gives him or her unique habitus. The person is also shaped by collectivity of group to which he or she belongs. There are varying degrees of habitus. The process of acculturation is made possible by highly embodied dimension of Silat practice, which requires one to develop the necessary dispositions and strategies for construction of Silat habitus.

III. METHODOLOGY

The method that will be used is qualitative method using ethnographic technique. Haviland, Prins, and Walrath (2011) stated that ethnography is a detailed description of fieldwork. This involves combination of social participation and personal observation of community being studied as well as interactions and discussions. This method is also referred as participant observations. Punch (2014), reported that ethnography comes from the word "ethno" meaning people or folk as well as "graphy" meaning describing something. Generally it is a study to describe someone 'culture. According to Denzin, and Lincoln, qualitative research is multi method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter meaning that qualitative researchers study things in natural settings and making sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of what meanings people bring to them (as cited by Punch, 2014, p.117).

In this research, 7 non Malay Silat practitioners are interviewed from Silat inside UNIMAS (Universiti Malaysia Sarawak) and outside UNIMAS. Their ages range from 15 to 42 year old. The ethnicity are of Iban and Murut. All are students except for one respondent, Peter is a Silat trainer. If he does not teach Silat, he is a clerk in a private company. All of the respondents are Christians. Besides in-depth interview, the Silat practices and ritual will also be observed. The respondents come from four different Silat organizations that are Silat Sendeng Tujuh. There is Silat Hailam Laut, Silat Betawi and Silat Gayong name to a few. However the differences in the practice and ritual will not be emphasized; only the similarities in how the Silat represents Malay identity and the meanings it has to the non-Malay practitioners

IV. FINDINGS

In Silat Gayong, there are two non-Malays who participate which are of Iban and Murut ethnicity. Both of the respondents are Christians, and 22 years old. They are Effy and Nicole, hail from Sarawak and Sabah respectively. They have joined Silat Gayong for 2 years since the first semester in UNIMAS in 2015. In Silat Gayong, the women practitioners wear "Batik Sarong" over their pants and, like other martial arts different belt colors for different stages. The uniforms are black. There is one coach or known as "gurulatih" to monitor and train them. The beginners are also trained by the seniors and divided into different groups. Effy was practicing Silat moves and demonstrate to the juniors, in a matter of fact, naturally and swiftly as if it has been ingrained inside of her during the routine practice.

Both Effy and Nicole; before they join Malay Silat they already had the experiences with family members who embraced and convert to Islam through marriage. For them, they are very familiar with

Malay cultures and Islam beliefs and not something that they had not experienced in the family especially during festive seasons. They understand that Muslims have to separate the plates and cutlery when served food. Sometimes in taking care and ensure they consume Halal food, the family even let the Muslims relatives to cook for them during Christmas. Thus, in joining Silat, with majority are Malays, it is not a new experience and they easily could mingle well with them.

Effy; "It is not something new, in fact we are welcomed as part of the family. The sisterhood and brotherhood relationship is pretty much emphasized."

Nicole: "There are no discriminations, although we are Christians, we share mutual siblings relationship here. No one is a stranger to the other".

There is the presence of being one whole family relationship in this organization. They really feel they are part of the Silat organization. This is in terms of relationship with the members. In terms of the Malay Islamic beliefs, before every Silat practice there will be the ritual called "buka gelanggang" and in ending the training, there is the ritual called "tutup gelanggang". For the Muslims they have to recite verses of Quran such as "Al-Fatihah" or "Al-Ikhlash". They will form a circle and sit down, and recite the verses from Al-Quran. For Effy and Nicole, being Christians they are allowed to pray and recite verse according to their religion and beliefs. They respect fellow Muslim friends in performing their prayers and they also respect both Effy and Nicole, the only non-Malays Silat practitioners. There is also the ritual of lime bathing for practitioners, as part of the Malay beliefs in Silat. In which Effy and Nicole is no exception in experiencing it as becoming part of the Silat family.

In acquiring a Malay identity both of them, feels, temporarily, being the Malay. Wearing the Silat attire, tengkolok, they feel themselves being Malay. The appearance of "Malayness" and the identity construction based on what they believe and practice, the habitus. Effy feels the same, being an Iban and practicing Malay Silat, she feels she does not become more of the Malay than Iban. It is just that she feels she reaffirms the Malay belief, the understanding she acquired from family. Meaning she understands more of Malay beliefs and Islamic beliefs. Nicole however stated that she sees Silat, in herself as a means not only of self-defense, but also as a means to discipline herself more, and have faith in God. On top of that, Nicole believe in Silat, the religion Islam itself that is portrayed in the Silat gayong. They are taught to not be arrogant once acquiring ability to fight and defense, as the essence of Silat is to each one's practitioners to be down-to-earth or humble. To acquire punching and kicking is easy, but the main idea is to have strong spirits, confidence and rationality when "berSilat".

The essence of being humble and having faith in God does not only present in Silat Gayong but also Silat Sendeng Tujuh, Silat Hailam Laut and Silat Betawi. All the Silat in this research has the ritual of "buka gelanggang" and "tutup gelanggang" with some verses from Al-Quran to be recited. Another respondent is Firdaus, an Iban Islam, the practitioner of Silat Sendeng Tujuh hails from Tambirat, Asajaya. He is 48 years old, Iban ethnicity and become a Muslim after married to a Malay Muslim woman in Tambirat.

Even before he got married, he has no problems with Islam as she has many Malay friends, mingle with them and can speak Sarawakian Malay fluently. During this interview, there is not a slight of Iban accents could be heard. He is interested with Islam even before he got married. Soon after married he, joins Silat as a means to reaffirm his beliefs in Islam through Silat practice. Besides that Silat for him, is a means to discipline himself and increase the focus and concentration, not only as spiritual means. Thus the embodied dispositions of habitus acquired are daily practices and hardwork besides the cultural meaning lies in his social group. When asked whether he has become more of Malay, Firdaus feels, in his daily life he has assimilated, really well with all the Malay cultures and Silat has reaffirms his beliefs more. However, deep inside he still wanted to be recognized as "Iban" and still is Iban by blood.

Another three respondents from Silat Hailam Laut does not really see Silat as spiritual means. The other three respondents are Ryan, 22, Ashlee, 15, and Peter, 42. All of them are Christians and of Iban ethnicity. Peter is the assistant trainer for the organization. Ashlee and Ryan are both students. Peter and Ashlee do not have any family members who are Muslims unlike Ryan. They do not have that personal bonding in terms of family or relatives with the Muslims. They only have experiences in friendship bond. However Peter and Ashlee decide to join because of their interests in Silat. However, Ryan, who have mingled with Muslim relatives before admitted a feeling of nervous the first time he joined Silat as he is one of the very few Iban minorities who join the martial arts organization which are dominated by Malays. At the end, however, he feels the strong siblingship bonds started to build with other Malay Silat members. The trainers, the Silat Master and his wife, are like his own parents. They support each other and love each other despite different ethnicity and background.

The three of them, like the Silat gayong, are allowed to pray according to their religion during “tutup gelanggang” or “buka gelanggang”. In this Silat organization, the sibling-like bonds are really emphasized as well as the aspect of loyalty towards the Silat organization. They are treated as part of the family. For these three, the habitus they acquired are not only family relationship being successful, being skillful and winning in tournaments. This is shown in various achievements they achieve. Silat for them is acquiring prestige and success. For 15-year-old Ashlee however, Silat really helps in defending herself against villains or bullies. Although she is still young, she feels stronger than her peers and built up her self-confidence, but at the same time being humble Peter feels that Silat is a good platform for young generations to learn to discipline themselves, and as a means of self defence. Last respondent, of Silat Betawi, Raymond, 16, Christian and of Iban ethnicity, also takes Silat as a practice of being stronger, more skillful and avoid from bullies in school as there are a lot of cases nowadays and are encouraged by the family. Although none of the family members are Muslims, he has no problem to join with the Silat family, and like other Silat, during gelanggang ritual he is allowed to pray according to his religion and is respected by all the members.

To describe the Malay customs involved in the Silat more, only Silat Gayong are willing to describe more on the “kebatinan” or spirituality of the Silat . Others are deemed as confidential and only for the practitioners or the “peSilat” themselves that the secrets will be revealed. In Silat Gayong, besides the lime-bathing ritual and the recitation of verses from the Quran before and after the Silat, the peSilat mention on the second and final stage of tests in order to upgrade to a higher rank in Silat organization, thus changing the belt colour. . The first stage only involves the bathing of lime-ritual while the second stage is touching boiling coconut oil with bare hands and the final stage is even more challenging: throwing a spear to the peSilat hidden behind the waterfall which has a cave. This will be elaborated more later.

In the second stage, in order to pass the test and upgrade to a higher Silat level, practitioners have to pass a test that is to touch a slightly boiling coconut oil with bare hands. How is that possible? Effy, have yet to go through the stage but she has heard the ritual from the seniors. First, for the Muslim practitioners they have to repeatedly read verses of Quran from Surah Al-Ikhlash and Al-Fatihah plenty of times unstop and can also be continued by reciting in their mind until they are called upon the boiling of coconut oil. In order for this to be a success, they have to be very disciplined in following every rules instructed and have to be hundred percent confident and brave to face the ordeals. As a result all of them did not feel hot or experienced any burnt hands when they touched the oil. Surprisingly they only feel warm. No injuries or burnt skin. But the questions arise for the non-Muslims. How can they pass the test without reading the Quranic verses? For the non-Muslims, they would have to pray according to their own religion but most importantly all the Muslim practitioners will recite the verses of Quran for them and pray throughout the process. As a result, with perseverance and strong faith, they too passed the tests. The Muslims help the non-Muslims brother or sisters (siblingship among the members) to go through the heavy obstacle. The final stage is elaborated briefly. The practitioners will be bathed with lime and flowers, recite verses from Quran and one by one the practitioners have to meditate behind the waterfall. Spears will be thrown at them and they have to capture it. In order to succeed, the most important factor is not to be arrogant, and the need to be humble . This is how the Silat organizations, wanted to show the beauty of Islam, that emphasize on trust in Allah and to be humble as well as to have faith in one’s religion and God, in order to overcome obstacles.

V. DISCUSSION

All of the Silat society, focused on family or brother hood relationships among the members. Be it the members are Muslims or not, they do not feel discriminated. Thus this collective binding can be deemed as sacred. Durkheim (as cited in Dillon, 2014) stated that sacred includes all things the community holds sacred or collective coming of together of people with similar beliefs and rituals. The solidarity of each Silat organization has brought about the sacred meanings to the members as they have the same beliefs, and skills to be learnt from one generation to another generation. There is also the aspect of loyalty in one’s Silat organization that draws the members together through thick or thin. The practitioners feel themselves as part of a family. To see Silat as a sacralised habitus in a family form actually gives it a process of “sacred binding” where the solidarities are sensual. It seems that in Silat organizations the collective solidarity through embodied practice can unite and bind the practitioners into a sense of family relationship. In relations to habitus process this is used to describe wellbeing and mind in socializing practices.

To acquire Silat identity from non-Malay is ambiguous from one person to another. The members seek to redefine and reconstruct their identity. To become one, it should not merely exist as a thought but has to be performed and believed by the body. In this case not only the techniques, but the overall aspects such as attitudes and beliefs are taken as something that important in this context. It is not only defined by one's self but is shaped by the organizations in which the members belong to. For instance in Silat Gayong, from any of the obstacles and tests that need the recitation of verses of Quran, the Malay practitioners help the non-Muslims especially in difficult test such as touching the coconut oil with bare hands. It gives good impression to the non-Muslim practitioners like Nicole which stated that she believes in Islam religion and appreciate that she is not excluded from any rituals or tests despite being a Christian. She feels as if she is a Malay when she is with them but outside Silat such as with her family, she is still her old self but acquired new and positive perspective for the Malays and Islam respectively. She feels she is there and she enjoys being in Silat organization.

To the practitioners, there are boundaries of reality and imagination and highlight the need and actively recognize one's entry to into the cultural space. To recite prayers before "buka" or "tutup gelanggang" has become the vital practice to the requirement of becoming the Silat members. It enables one to become body of cultures where aspects of Malay cultural practices are newly acculturated or further heightened through per formative practices of martial arts. There are different identity construction and acculturation by individuals. For instance, Nicole, who understand and believe in Malay beliefs, and a sense of Malayness. But there are those who take it as a medium for self-discipline and become stronger, besides being accepted as part of the family. The degree of Malayness is different from each of members. However, in each of Silat organizations, they did not force the non-Malay practitioners to actually adhere to Islamic beliefs, nor being a Malay. They can choose what they want to be inside the "gelanggang" and become what they choose to be outside of Silat. However, what they become outside the Silat practice are pretty much influenced by the customs, the disciplines learnt in their Silat practice. ,combating the prejudice, being more disciplined, strong, and understanding the Malay customs more.

VI. CONCLUSION

The cultural boundaries in what may be constructed as Malay or non-Malay appears rest greatly on embodied practices among members of Silat community. As contradict in being based entirely on either race or color of one's body. We should not see them in terms of their races or religion, but just different beings with different Silat identity. The body is the physical, a medium for the construction of identity. The culture has to be understood, embodied through practice. The culture or identity cannot exist without the body's own feeling and senses . Culture is tied to one's habitus; a gradual practice of both culture and history of not only one's own but on other surrounding him or her. Bordieu's habitus helps researcher to understand internal behaviours, perceptions, beliefs that individual carry them and translate it into social groups in which they interact. To know what is Malay, or Non-Malay has to be first, practiced, tasted and felt. It should not be an illusion.

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