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As a multi disciplined Martial Artist when you get the opportunity to watch an Art (and I will use the term Art in its fullest sense) you get a sense of envy. Like all martial arts, and I do mean all, and they have to be grouped in the same pool, be they: Karate, Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, Muay Thai, Kick boxing, Ninjitsu and the list goes on. Not many left in this modern era can actually say that they have the level of mysticism of Harimau Silat, like the great explorers who discovered the far East and came back with tales of new lands and new ways of thinking. Martial Arts have to be considered the finest example of man's struggle and his adaptable mentality and physicality that is reflected in his relevant landscape, culture and common enemy.

Harimau Silat's, or its correct title Minangkabau Harimau Silek's, origins are in the wetlands and low marsh land areas of Indonesia. Information about this very rare art is now starting to gain a level of notoriety due to its leading lights in this case the tribal leaders of the art.



The exposure of unbelievable levels and the speed at which the moving image can be uploaded

and broadcast makes mysticism in anything a somewhat outdated concept. Yet despite this I found myself intrigued and almost hypnotised by the very movements and patterns of destruction left behind by the Harimau Silat practitioner or Persilat. To describe it as a pattern of destruction is probably the most reasonable explanation of this art. Much like a tornado is not practical and can be sometimes erratic, yet its movement is simple taking the path not around the target nor up or under BUT THROUGH.

When you find your Art and believe me after nearly 20 years I am still not sure, Silat offers you something very very different from the mainstream fighting systems that I and the average Joe would be more familiar with. As a Kempo Ju-Jitsu practitioner watching a Persilat Attack... yes, you read right Attack, the victim in this case, who is actually the perceived attacker, is swept off in a sudden rush of what can be perceived to me as impractical movements, (impractical to me as they go against mainstream convention) the attacker/victim is spat out in a mangled mess either at the feet of the Persilat or underneath him while the Persilat awaits the next encounter.

Watching and understanding the methodology surrounding this style of Silat you are told from the off that this is not a game or a sport. In many martial arts you meet on seldom occasions true warriors who live and breath the art form they have chosen and apply their heart soul and body to the perfection, composition and preservation of the art. These warriors are few a far between and so many arts suffer with teachers who prefer to accelerate their students to "Black Belt" status and do little to actually ensure the students attain a high level of skill and proficiency in the forms and patterns of the art itself.



Harimau Silat teachers from my experience as an observer are of the warrior breed, very proficient and led by a common goal to carry the message of this Minangkabau Harimau Silat style.

Getting into this art is where things get very different. Selection is by invitation only and many

students are discarded along the way, the majority I might add by their own choice. The art is steeped in self motivation and the student's desire to succeed and the want to devour the riches that this art offers to those willing to walk the path. The norm with regards to conventional training differs from what I am normally accustomed to and often sessions can result in minor injury, not uncommon in any martial art but so often these injuries are from the rigors of the style's body endurance conditioning, something only a handful of arts can claim is a common side effect of their fighting system.

Weapons within Minangkabau Harimau Silat at times are not seen as anything other than a means to an end and are used with deadly proficiency. The art's focus on war and the need to be ready at any moment gives any devoted Persilat a dangerous air that translates when any training session is conducted.

My path with this intriguing art will continue and I can only watch and learn as momentum grows along with our consciousness of this art.



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