

# A Strategy for Maintaining Silat as Identity of the Heterogenous Multicultur Minangkabau Community

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**ABSTRACT :** This innovative research, aims to : (1) Provide explanations of various terms that appear in the Minangkabau community about the term martial arts, martial arts, and martial arts knowledge. (2) To contribute to understanding the nature of silat Minangkabau, and maintaining cultural values embodied her hegemonic globalization cannot be separated from the influence of high technology. (3) to analyze the philosophy of martial arts with a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the original Minangkabau silat. (4) To reveal the superhighway impact on the existence of martial arts as a symbol / symbols "martial" ethnic Minangkabau having a specific identity. (5) To seek answers about the reason why silat Minangkabau has lost favor with the people of today. Research was conducted in an effort to find the right concepts and strategies for the development of silat Minangkabau not independent of the specificity and uniqueness as a reflection of cultural values of the society. The research method deploys qualitative research techniques through interviews, surveys, direct data collection, clarification, a review of data in the literature, and the collection of primary and secondary data. The results of the research suggests the errors in associating the word 'martial' with the word 'martial arts'. To maintain silat as integral to Minangkabau society requires a range of strategies.

**Keywords:** Silat Minangkabau, Philosophy, Identity and Development Strategy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Minangkabau tribe is an ethnic group that lives on the island of Sumatra, precisely in West Sumatra Province. The characteristic of the Minangkabau tribe is that the language used is Minang. Minang language is similar to Indonesian or Malay. Apart from language, there are other characteristics that differentiate the Minang tribe from other tribes in the archipelago. The characteristics of the Minangkabau tribe, apart from language, can also be known by their *ramah gonjong*, *talempong* music, *randai*, *silat* and culinary delights. The traditional philosophy, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah, is a philosophy of life held in Minangkabau society, which makes Islamic teachings the only foundation and/or guideline for behavioral patterns in life. The combination of custom and

religion that underlies the spirit of life should be used as the basis for a good life, both within the traditional community itself and with people from other communities. This is how the Minangkabau people respond to the way they see the ethical value system, legal norms and sources of social expectations that influence the ideal behavior of individuals and society and see the nature of change that is born from different depths, between custom and Islam. The ability and wisdom of the Minangkabau people in reading and interpreting every movement of change, between custom and the Islamic religion, two different things can finally unite and can support each other to form a Minangkabau cultural building through the *Basandi Sarak Adat, Sarak Basandi Kitabullah*. Cultural meanings are also conveyed in oral traditions and cultural expressions, especially through *silat* and the values it contains. For the Minangkabau people, *silat* is synonymous with men. Minangkabau men were said to have three attributes, namely: practical intelligence; ability at reciting the Koran (Quran), capacity for studying (*silat* martial arts) and adapt at doing business. After the *Marapalam* Oath in *Bukik Puncak Pato Lintau Tanahdatar*, traditional and religious communities officially recognized *Adat Basandi Syarak-syarak Basandi Kitabullah*.

Understanding the essence of *silat* cannot be regarded as an art or culture, because *silat* literally is something that does not need to be displayed with dexterity and needs no audience. *Silat* usually appear suddenly and abruptly with their opponent without planned, thus meaning literally martial arts can only be interpreted as knowledge possessed by a person's defense against itself, but for the science it needs to be developed of course *silat* will have restrictions in teaching it. Starting from the union view on the word 'strategy' (intended by the researchers is the effort). Contrary to common designation as martial arts, there have been errors of meaning. An idea of how a community effort to maintain its *silat* as the martial arts community property Minangkabau in the view of the researcher's unbeaten start to the proliferation of the emergence of martial arts that do not belong to the Minangkabau society, as an identifier distinctive culture that is caused by the presence of heterogeneity multicultural such as taekwondo, karate, kung fu etc. This is considered important before *silat* is completely lost as a tradition in Minangkabau society.

Silek (aka *Silat* or *Silat* Minangkabau in Indonesian) is a traditional martial art typical of the Minangkabau ethnic group that originates from the West Sumatra region in Indonesia. Silek basically uses defense and attack techniques both using weapons and without weapons. *Silat* Harimau or the Minang people call it *Silek Inyak*, widely known as *Silek Harimau*, is a martial art and culture typical of West Sumatra, namely the Minangkabau region, which has been passed down from generation to generation from mamak to dusanak and must be protected and proud of. In general, *Silek Minang* has quite a number of schools, such as *Silek Tuo* (Old *Silat*), *Silek Sitaralak* (*Silat Sitaralak*), *Silek Lintau* (*Silat Lintau*), *Silek Luncua* (*Silat Luncur*), *Silek Kumango* (*Silat Kumango*), *Silek Harimau* (*Silat Harimau*), *Silek Pauah* (*Silat Pauh*), *Silek Gulo-Gulo Tareh* (*Silat Gulo-Gulo Tareh*). Some of the *silek* schools that still exist today are *silek sword abai*, *Silek Pangian*, *Silek Taralak*, *Silek Colau*, *Silek Katiani*, *Silek Luncu*, *Silek KotoAnau*, *Silek Kumango*, *Silek Tuo Lubuk Gadang* which is also known as *Silek Step Ampek*, *Silek Paninjauan* or *Junjung Betel*, *Silek Harimau*. The information about the origin of Minangkabau *silek* comes only from *tambo*, namely the oral history of Minangkabau ancestral heritage which is often regarded as an imaginary story or a myth. In addition, Minangkabau *Silek* is considered mystical and magical knowledge because it is related to the *Tarekat* (Ediwar, et al, 2023).

*Silat* is also studied by *nagari* children in Minangkabau to defend the *nagari* from enemy attacks, for example robbers and the like. Minang boys study at the surau since he was little. Usually they are trained by Koran teachers, who have mastered the science of *silek*. *Silek* practice is usually done after studying the Koran at night. The word *pencak silat* comes from two words, namely *mancak* and *silek*. *Mancak* is the flower of the *silek* movement. *Mamancak* means demonstrating bunga *silat* movements, in the form of *silat* dance movements that are exhibited at traditional events or other ceremonial events. The movements for *mancak* are cultivated to be as beautiful and good as possible for the purpose of performance. The word *silek* is a combat art movement that is used to defend oneself from enemy attacks, so that movements are made as little as possible, fast,

precise, with the aim of paralyzing the opponent. *Para Tuo silek say jiko mamancak in galanggang, if basilek in muko musuah* (if you do martial arts dances in the arena, whereas if you do *silat* it is to face the enemy). For this reason, it is rare for *tuo silek* (professors) to show off their skills in public and how they can paralyze the enemy. The research results of Ediwar et al., in several studies on *silek* reveal the strategic position of *silek* in Minangkabau society. Main explains how *silek* underlies the development of performing arts in Minangkabau, especially dance. In the In particular, Utama traces the origins of Minangkabau dance which has its roots in the *silek* or *pencak* dance. This article also explains how *silek* later became a reference for three Minangkabau dance figures, namely Hoerijah Adam, Gusmiati Suid, and Sofyani (Ediwar, et al, 2023).

In an article on *Silat* by Afifah Asriati, Ahmad Kosasih and Desfiarni in the Journal Harmonia, vol 19 no 1 published in 2019 with the title "*Silat* as the Source and Identity of the Minangkabau Ethnic Dance." This journal discusses the concept of creating Minangkabau ethnic dance movements which takes the source of ideas from the Minangkabau philosophical values contained in the *Silek* movement. Through her research, Afifah Asriati took six samples of popular Minangkabau dance creations. The results of this research concluded that the basic movements of Minang dance are based on *Silat* movements

Another article devoted to *silat* by Susas Rita Loravianti entitled *Silat* Foundations in the Creation of the Minang Dance "Balega di Tanah Minang (Retation Around Land of Conquest), published in the International Knowledge Shara Platform Journal (2019). She discusses 'Balega di Tanah Manang,' which means "Circulation Around the Land of Conquest" in the Minang language of West Sumatra. It is a dance work created through the combined use of *pancak* movements (based on the Minangkabau martial art form *pencak silat*) and new dance movements and techniques apart from *pancak*. This phenomenon in Minangkabau dance is possible because *pancak*, which is usually performed humorously by men both in local and regional spaces, is the basic principle of the dance.

Wahyono, with the article title, "Performance art strategy for Tourism Segmentation: (*Silat* movement of Minangkabau ethnic Group) in The Event of Tourism Performance Improvement." in the Journal of Islamic Marketing vol 11 issue 3, October 2019. analyzes performing arts strategies, especially *silat* movements as the identity of traditional Minangkabau dance movements as a tourism marketing medium, especially in the West Sumatra Province. The results of his research show that the Minangkabau ethnic dance movements based on customs and religion include movements originating from the *Silat* movement. The movements in Minangkabau dance include *silat* movements such as attacking and parrying, rolling, saw-horse posture, as well as distinctive foot and hand movements. This is the source of the original movement and originates from the cultural movement that was born from the warriors. Minangkabau dancers are male; women were initially not allowed to dance because the movements were not suitable for them. The stylization of movements suitable for a woman emerged later on. Based on culture and religion, the concept of appropriate movement for a woman is not to make pelvic swinging movements, erotic movements (with the feet, hands and head) or other movements, such as rolling, fighting and parrying. When male and female dancers perform together, they are not allowed to touch each other.

## 2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is presumed that the emergence of martial arts originated not from the Minangkabau culture, possibly from other countries such as China and America. Thus Minangkabau in this situation is inclusive of a variety of 'art' 'culture's (heterogeneity multicultural) which lead to its political identity (identity politics). Future research hopefully will help identify the problem regarding (1) the cause of the waning *silat* as belonging to the Minangkabau society, and (2) what efforts can be done by carriers / supporters to promote *silat* Minangkabau.

### 1. *Silat* in Minangkabau Cultural Understanding

'*Silat* can be understood as a form of self-defense which also promotes the values, norms and rules of its practitioners. In every region in Minangkabau the word 'martial' has its own connotations. Previous young boys acquired understanding of the tradition when after puberty they move from the traditional house to the mosque. Evening activities included the boys studying martial arts. (Nursyirwan, 2011: 93). In contemporary life these practices have been abandoned due to the fear of parents that their children outside the home will experience negative influences, such as drugs, and because these places called *surau* no longer function in that way.

In heterogeneous multicultural societies resistances can occur due to a conflict of interests, called resistance region or territory. Desmond Morris says that 'region' is a community space that needs to be maintained. There are three kinds of area community groups that need to be considered, namely that of the tribe, the family, and the personal (Morris, 1977: 126). The mixing of inter-ethnic and cultural defense (multicultural heterogeneity) according to the Minangkabau culture can be juxtaposed with the traditional philosophy *balaku salingkuang* village, (custom prevailing in the circle of the country). Morris said determination of the truth of the area is to understand the geographical limits of power (Morris, 126). Habits that affect the system running within any community to mutually maintain their property in accordance with the area and each area.

'Identity' referred to in this research connotes the 'symbol' in a culture that has always maintained that does not fade in the face of globalization. *Silat* is a symbol that is linked to the identity of traditional performing arts situation and could be described as an expression or manifestation (implementation) the idea of art as a specific genre of traditional arts (Umberto Eco, 1976: 191). In our view, in the various statements written by researchers in research reports, theses or other writings, the issue of *silat* need more attention. Linking *silat* with art is not easy, because martial arts do not need spectators, while art relies on the audience. Others incidentally say *silat* can be associated with art because *silat* has its own context, because the dance is the main medium of motion.

### 1). Philosophy *Silat*

Philosophy as defined by the Minangkabau society, need to be exposed for their presumption flow type name or *silat* Minangkabau by the Minang or outside the Minang. The term 'martial arts' by Minang designation only parried tiger, martial fowl, Lalok buayo *silat*, *silat* tuo, *surau silat*, *silat* lake, *luncua silat*, *silat* pakiah myopic, and so forth. Minangkabau was unwilling and never called *silat* a martial art. Perhaps this is pluralistic, and the life of Minangkabau society is rich and diverse. Zulkifli said that diversity is enriching, and uniformity it is impoverishment (Zulkifli, 2010: 103-106).

*Silat* can be viewed from an aesthetic standpoint. Emri, lays *silat* or *silat Gunuang tuo* is parried a commonality with martial *sitaralak* of Pariaman who do not have a caliph as well parried by Islam. Emri says martial arts or martial *tuo Gunuang* spawned a variety of art forms, especially as dances. *Silat* dance was originally indeed contain properties parried, then turned into the martial arts, and has become a dance. *Gunuang silat* research has spawned *Mancak* dance, dance *Sewah*, *piriang* dance, *piriang suluah* and *randai Salapan* (Emri, 2016: 1-6).

O'ong in his writings says *silat* etymology is not always accepted by experts in the field. On the island of Madura, Bawen island, and some areas in East Java, most people understand the word 'martial' of two different contexts. 'Arts' is a beautiful form of motion to avoid, along with elements of comedy. For that, as presented O'ong, it is undeniable that the 'philosophy' (philosophy) for the Minangkabau *silat* is an effort to find and establish truth. *Bersilat* is a path to achieve and uphold the right things (O'ong Maryono, 1998: 202:306).

### 2). Understanding of *Silat*

In relation to the naming changes that lead to the game presented differently, and may not be uniform theory of the behavior of the area (territorial behavior) delivered by Desmond Morris, probably would be able to answer why it is impossible uniform naming the martial arts. To tackle the diversity of naming the martial arts, it seems necessary first of all to adopt the pragmatic approach of I Made Bandem (2005: 2), using recording commonly for documentation purposes, cataloging and inventory of map-making art, where the data collected can be both primary data and secondary data. Research work suggests that the *silat* is more synonymous with the 'martial', but when it is used as something to be developed, *silat* can be said to be 'martial arts', whereas when 'martial'

exhibited the martial arts cannot be taken literally, but it leads to 'martial' or 'the art of *galombang* dance, using' flowers *silat* '.

Subject factual about martial arts, Jean Jaques Nattiez says the nature of a work of art rests at its origin, arrangement, and how it is perceived as artwork. The analysis of art, and even approaches to the interpretation of art requires a theory devoted to practical results, methodology rooted in a holistic vision. of the music (Jean-Jacques Nattiez, 1990: ix-x). Research work following the tenets of Nattiez shows a tripartite concept which social sciences researchers must understand: the concept of art itself, the concept of his work. art, the status of the display object, and the symbolism of the art object under study.

Citing I Made Bandem, in some communities it can be seen that the different *silat* with martial arts, are perceived in Minangkabau society as Minang tradition. In contemporary Minangkabau society there is a perception that martial art is based on the aesthetics *artes liberales*, as 'sensitivity art' in a high position. Meanwhile, in *kagunan* not only sensitivity, but also the skills gained an important place in the process of artistic creation. The word art (art) comes from the verb - Latin ar which means stringing together, combining or composing. There is a tendency to think that the art is believed to be of individual expression (Interview I Made Bandem, 2005). Researchers say *silat* is believed to be the heart of a work of art that is useful for life. If art was inspired by the vision of personal (individual), and work is a technique that embodies art, then martial arts and its meaning can be inseparable, or complementary.

*Silek* training is enacted in pairs between two fighters. In *silek* practice, the *tuo silek* is a mentor who guides his *anak sasian* to practice walking. Sometimes, the *tuo silek* positions himself as a sparring opponent who provokes students to bring out their abilities to the fullest. In the exercise, the two fighters will compete with each other to lock the opponent's attack and bring down the opponent. Training is usually done in an open area. Often the exercise is done at night with poor lighting, thus training good insight and intuition (ediwar, et al, 2023).

### 3. INDENTATIONS AND EQUATIONS

1. Writing of research results Indra Utama berjudul Tari Minangkabau dari Pancak ke Permanen ke Tari Persembahan tahun 2017 wrote about the creation of a new Minangkabau dance. The use of elements of pencak movements taken from permanent movements. Pancak (*pencak*) is a martial arts skill of the Minangkabau people which developed in various regions (*nagari*).

2. Mardotillah's writing is entitled *Silat: Cultural Identity, Education, Martial Arts, Health Maintenance* in 2016. *Silat*, one of the forms of Indonesian cultural martial arts identity, is about education that develops in society. In the modern world, *silat* is not only a martial arts tool but has been developed into an effort to maintain health through exercise. *Silat* also functions as a means of physical and spiritual education through a formal tiered education process through regulations made by each *silat* school. Physical and spiritual education instilled through *silat* forms a tough, strong and virtuous national character and develops into an identity character. nations. The demands of the modern world, the role of *silat* is developing, apart from protecting oneself, it is also becoming a means of maintaining health through sports so that physical and spiritual balance is one way to increase society's productivity.



#### 4. FIGURES



Figure 1: Research on the creation of *Silat* Minangkabau  
Photo: Nursyirwan, September 2017



Figure 2: Research on the creation of *Silat* Minangkabau  
Photo: Nursyirwan, September, 2017



Figure 3: *Silat* Attractions  
Photo Nursyirwan, 2023



Figure 4: Atraksi *Silat*  
Photo. Nursyirwan, 2023



Figure 5: *Silat* Attractions  
Photo Nursyirwan, 2023



Figure 6: *Silat* Attractions  
Photo. Nursyirwan, 2023



No.1:

'Bujua' of Movement  
Documentation

By: Indah Permata S. 07.2017



No.2.

'Ula Lalok' of Movement  
Documentation

By: Indah Permata S. 07.2017

Figur 7: artial arts movements  
Photo: Nursyirwan, September, 2017

## 5. CONCLUSION

In the observational study investigators about the existence of *silat* cultural identification Minangkabau society can bring a sense of community owners desire leading the concept of martial arts 'tradition'. The existence of *silat* can be seen as a 'martial art' that exists everywhere in the contemporary era, only the ownership of a particular community as part of their tradition that is contextual, while in the community, especially not ethnic Minangkabau made 'martial art *silat* 'as part of the original tradition of the Minangkabau people. The existence of 'martial arts' in the globalization era faces many challenges with a variety of communities and cultures (heterogeneous multicultures). There is a danger of eliminating the philosophical value of *silat* as it the case with karate, taekwondo, kung fu, etc. Further research can contribute to both deeper undersandnig and developmental strategies.

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