



by guest writer **Brendan Lanza**

“Kahir lived in a village of Cogreg, Bogor. He became a feared pendekar around the year 1760 which was when he first introduced to his students the maempo Cimande moves. ... In Batavia he was able to get acquainted with other *silat pendekar(s)* from Minangkabau and Cina - masters in the world of silat, and he traded experiences with them. His meeting with other silat pendekar gave him an idea to broaden his horizon by accepting other cultures into his own.”

--Quoted from Gema Pencak Silat Vol 3 no. 1:18-19

Today it is very hard to find the martial way of life. Many people claim to follow it and charge you high prices to learn how, or you may go to the movies and watch warriors clash it out to the death on the weekend. Those who put themselves in real fight situations can see the fake hollywood moves and can immediately spot the overcharging paper tigers out there. For the most part the average person doesn't think about it too deeply, there are a few, however who do. I have rarely met such people, though I had always considered myself one of them. I don't mean it in an arrogant way, just that there are few people who constantly think about fighting on a daily basis, though I happen to do so. I have met a teacher who made me redefine this template. My story begins when I was five.

I tried a number of arts while growing up, starting with karate. I then went on to wrestle, do Kendo, jujutsu, Boxing, Kung Fu, Muay Thai and finally Silat. I had done all of this by the age of fifteen. I moved to Holland at that time and had my first taste of Silat. There was a thriving Indonesian community at that time and I fell in love with the culture. I started practicing it at the age of 16, and continued applying the concepts even after moving from the country upon going

to university. I had really only been exposed to a number of very painful principles which could be used on an opponent to essentially cripple him. Silat, I found, to be the most deadly and fascinating of all the martial arts that I had practised. I knew nothing of tribes and styles, only that I really wanted to study Cimande, which I did.



I finally did start to learn Cimande as of the end of 2008. It is a beautiful, effective, and deadly art. In Cimande there is a great deal of very effective arm work, in fact you harden your arms in the training by giving and taking blows to them constantly. As a result, you can quickly take out an opponent using fist, forearm, and elbow with great speed. I devoted myself to the practice daily. This year upon moving to Malaysia I started teaching it to the kids at a school where I work. I still continue to learn and practice until this day. However I met a teacher here, merely by coincidence, who changed my perspective on reality fighting. That teacher is Scott McQuaid. He practices and teaches the Art of Minangkabau Harimau from the Hanafi Lineage, heir of this ancient Sumatran system. After much thought and investigation into my mindset by merely observing me, he decided to take me on as a student. I now learn the art and have found it to be fascinatingly deadly. The ideology is that of the warrior, that of the tiger. Every training session they mean business, instilled in every class, and none do more so than Guru Scott McQuaid. There is little room for spirituality, unless your spirituality is about eliminating enemies in the quickest possible way. The movement and technique emulates the predator that the art was based upon.

Upon comparing it with Cimande there are a number of variances. Cimande traditionally comes from Abah Kahir who had developed both the monkey (Pamonyet) and the Tiger (Pak Macan) into forms of combat. A legend tells that he had had numerous matches with Minangkabau warriors and that they had taught him some of their Harimau moves which influenced his Pakmacan (See opening quote). After training in both styles I can clearly say that they do have a lot in common and a lot that's different.

Cimande, being Sundanese, has more arm movements, even on the ground. Silek Harimau is almost all legs and elbows. Besides this they share a number of *kudas* and groundwork principles. The tiger positions are different and the strategies are different, yet there are some moves which are identical, yet are used completely differently. They would both have a sliding kick on the ground, for example, with the same leg and speed, but the body would do it in a different kind of position or kick. They are both low to the ground, and the kicks are generally the same, though the method of movement and application are totally different. To the untrained eye they also look more different than I'm letting on, but only on the surface; it's all the trimmings that create that effect. They are different, but still similar. This is what I've experienced it to be.

To me both systems are sound, and in the words of Scott McQuaid, "It all works. But, it's how you apply the art, how real you make it that makes what you do effective. Don't go through the motions, just get the job done." I couldn't agree more with this philosophy, and it has been applied to my every day life.

Learning under Guru Scott has been a real eye opener for me. He has shown me new ways to make my class experience even more real than what I was used to, which was pretty real. Becoming a member of Black Triangle Silat tribe is not only a privilege, it is a responsibility. The is responsibility to maintain the standard of the warriors who came before you and do every movement with the intent that it is your last, or the last thing that your opponents sees. There was talk once of being attacked with a knife and botching a defense and, assuming you were stabbed, to take the knife into your body so that it couldn't be used against your family.

