

This is an old revived and updated article by my weapons teacher Maha Guru Jak Othman. In this piece Guru Jak introduces the martial arts community to his ancient family lineage Javanese fighting system known as *Harimau Bernatai Silat* (Chained Tiger Silat).

He also notes the various pencak silat styles and their respected teachers being practiced today around the world. This background information into pencak silat is insightful and should be considered by all *pesilats* (silat players).

Sharing knowledge is key to becoming a better prepared fighter and instructor.

—Pendekar Scott McQuaid



The Lightning Fast, Bone Crushing Malay Art of War

By Guru Jak Othman

Silat is often misunderstood as the Indonesian Martial Art. May be this is because most styles of Silat that reached the foreign shores are from Indonesia. We have the old styles like Harimau Minangkabau from Sumatra, Cimande from Java. American base Silat body or styles like Serak from the De Thouars family and Mande Muda by the late Guru Herman Suwanda who had

taken elements from more than 20 Indonesian Silat styles into his system. We have Maplindo Silat by Guru Dan Inosanto combining Madjapahit, Indonesia and Philippines Silat styles into his system. The styles mentioned above are among the famous ones outside the countries of origin for Silat.

Looking at the countries of origin for Silat in South East Asia, Indonesia has more than 400 styles of Silat registered with the National Silat Federation (Ikatan Pencak Silat Indonesia) ,more than 250 styles likewise in Malaysia (Persekutuan Silat Kebangsaan Malaysia), 20 styles in Brunei (Persekutuan Silat Brunei) and 25 styles in Singapore (Persekutuan Silat Singapura). There are also Silat governing body in Mindanao, Philippines and Patani, Southern Thailand which can also be categorized as countries of origin. The four National Silat Federation from the countries of origin formed the International Silat Federation (Persekutuan Silat Antarabangsa) or Persilat for short. Now Silat bodies from more than 25 countries around the world are affiliated to PERSILAT. Silat is not only Indonesian, but also belongs to the Malays in South East Asia. As a matter of fact, Silat is the art of war of the ancient Malay empires.

The first Malay empire was Kedah which was situated north on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula (West Malaysia). The downfall of this first great Malay empire saw the rise of the Sri Vijaya in Sumatra . Next was the Madjapahit empire in Java. After Madjapahit was Malacca (Melaka) which was also situated on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. Madjapahit and Malacca empires were so strong that the ancient nations of Burma , Vietnam ,Cambodia, Philippines and southern Thailand were under them. Being the main centre of trade for the old India and China route has made the ancient Malay empires the melting pots of Asian cultures. We have Indian , Chinese , Persians, Okinawa, Japanese and all South East Asian traders coming to the main cities of our ancient empires to trade their goods. Being popular and rich also made the Malay empires constant targets to foreign forces attacks . Malacca fought the Portuguese, Dutch and English for more than 150 years. The Indonesian faced the Dutch until the day of independence. The Southern Philippines fought the Spaniards and Americans in some great wars. These foreign forces were well equipped with sophisticated weapons and vehicles of war. Despite of all these advantages, they had their biggest nightmares when they faced the pendekar (Malay warriors). The pendekar fought the invaders using the ancient Malay art of war called SILAT !





<http://www.jainboxing.com/Silat.htm>