

Re-introduction to Silat as Indonesian Original Martial Arts

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Pencak silat is an old form of martial arts of Indonesia. *Silat (Silek) Harimau Minangkabau* is a typical form coming from West Sumatera. The *Silek Harimau* which is a beautiful martial art was initially learned for war purposes or for a king's guards.

Despite the beautiful movements of the *Silek* arts, its attacking forms can be lethal. It aims to paralyse or kill the opponents very quickly. Those who just saw the martial arts for the first time will see it as sadistic. But, with the introduction of new and modern forms, the allegations are vanished.

"That is why the UGM Student Creativity Unit group has made a research into this local culture form, which is *Pencak Silat Harimau Minangkabau in the Perspective of Nusantara Philosophy to Build the Nation's Character*," said Muhammad Zidny Kafa, UGM Philosophy student, on Friday (17/6).

Zidny explained the entrance of external forms of martial arts have affected the *pencak silat* movement. Parents tend to direct their children to learn these forms from outside Indonesia, which are considered to be better.

"Martial arts like Kung Fu, Taekwondo, Muang Tai, Yongmodo, etc, (are seen as better), while *silat*

is seen as of a lesser class. Even there are assumptions that there are rituals in silat that are said as absurd, outdated, and so on," he said.

For Zidny, this condition is strange, because many foreigners, such as from France, Australia, and Malaysia even come to Indonesia to study Silek Harimau. At events overseas, Silat Harimau exhibitions are always welcomed warmly by the international audience.

Zidny hoped the Indonesian society would be willing to re-study Pencak Silat as an Indonesian original form of martial arts.

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