

Tenaga Dalam

Volume 1 - May 1999

The Voice of the Indonesian
Pencak Silat Governing Board - USA Branch



Welcome to the first issue of *Tenaga Dalam*. *Tenaga Dalam* is a quarterly newsletter and will bring you information on Pencak Silat Pukulan Cimande Pusaka. In upcoming issues you will find articles on training tips, weapons, animal mannerisms, jurus, history, *tenaga dalam*, Indonesian vocabulary, seminar information, interesting web sites, and answers to reader questions.

You are probably wondering about the graphics at the top of the page and why the newsletter is titled *Tenaga Dalam*. In the Indonesian language *tenaga* means: energy, capacity, strength and power and *dalam* means: in, inside, into; deep, profound. Taking the words together we get internal energy or profound power. *Tenaga Dalam* permeates all parts of this art and should be an integral part of your training.

The bird graphic on the upper left is a Garuda. The Garuda is part of the Hindu tradition and represents our link to Embah Untung Suropati, who was born in Bali, and is the root of our magickal tradition. You will often see the Garuda carved on Balinese *keris wrangka* (kris sheath) and sometimes actually forged into the *keris* itself. Quoting Eva Rudy Jansen in her book, *The Book of Hindu*

Imagery, The Gods and their Symbols: “The demigod, Garuda, who is part man and part eagle, is best known as the creature which carries Vishnu. He is the king of the birds, a symbol of the wind and the sun, and equally fast. The unimaginable speed with which he travels from one world to another effortlessly, means that he is also a symbol of the esoteric wisdom of the Vedas. The power of the magical words of these writings can give man symbolic wings with which he too can move from one world to the next with the speed of light or of Garuda.” Hopefully your training in this art will allow you too to sprout wings.

The script graphic on the upper right is the Arabic word for Allah. In Indonesia you will find a culture which is a mixture of animal religions, shamanism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. I chose to put this graphic on the newsletter because the *tenaga dalam jurus* use some of the names or attributes of Allah as mantra. For example, the mantra for *tenaga dalam juru* one is “Al-Maani” - The Preventer.

No one is asking you to convert to any of these religions but I believe that it is important for you to understand the context of your art.

Balance in Your Training

by Guru Baharu Chris Martin

Pukulan Cimande Pusaka is a very big art in that there is a lot to be learned and there is no way that you can practice all of it or even a large part of it every day. So how should you train? In my opinion we can break the art into four pieces – mechanics, partner dynamics, real combat and internal aspects.

Mechanics - By mechanics I mean do you have your foot, your hand and your body in all of the right places and do you understand how they should be coordinated together. During this phase you should listen and watch in class for subtle movements and positions that your instructor makes. If you only have the books or the videos then look for every detail. Play the video in slow motion many times and watch where everything goes. Next head out to your garage or wherever you train and practice slowly in front of the mirror. Ask yourself if you look like the video or not? The answer for a while will be no, but keep tuning and fixing until you look good. Also do the techniques both slowly and at full speed. During this phase repetition is the key, but not mindless repetition. Don't treat your training like reps on the weight machine, i.e. today I will do 2 reps of the jurus followed by 3 reps of lanka pedang. Yes, this will help your body remember the pattern and it does build endurance but it does nothing for remembering or visualizing what the technique was to be used for. You know your training is becoming mindless if you suddenly

stop the technique in the middle and you can't remember what to do next.

Partner Dynamics - In this phase try the technique slowly with a partner. In your initial attempts the technique will seem "dirty". Your partners arms and legs will seem to keep getting in the way and it all seems so messy. This is place you are learning to detect motion in your partner, learning about angles and you are learning that constant minor adjustments must be made. If the technique does not work like you think that it should then you need to ask if it is a question of mechanics, something you missed before, or is the problem in the dynamics. During this phase don't kid yourself into believing that now you are super warrior and ready to take on the jungle. You made the technique work when both you and your partner knew exactly what was supposed to happen and your partner punched or kicked in the correct manner.

Real Combat - In this phase you need to begin slowly with your partner. This time you must maneuver yourself into the proper positions and adjust to the randomness of your partner. Care must be made to prevent injuries. This is not a contest to see who is the winner or loser. Gradually pick up the speed and eventually when you feel ready wear some protective gear and go at near full pace. Some techniques can't be done at combat pace because they would cause serious injury, but do your best approximation. In this phase also evaluate your success or failure and ask is it due to mechanics, dynamics, fear or maybe

you don't have enough endurance or strength.

Internal Aspects - In this phase you want to integrate whatever animal spirit goes with that technique. Are you integrating the tenaga dalam with what you are trying to do? Have you been doing your tenaga dalam breathing exercises? Watch videos about the real animals, go to the zoo and see the real animals and attempt animal possession.

In conclusion keep your training fun. If due to family or work you just can't get with a partner very often at least try to get together once a week. Balance the other days with work on mechanics, tenaga dalam, endurance or strength. There is a lot to be learned and it should keep you busy a lifetime.

The Rencong

by Guru Baharu Chris Martin

The *rencong* (Dutch spelling was *rentjong*) originated with the Aceh (Dutch spelling was *Atjeh*) people in Northern Sumatra. According to Donn Draeger in his book, The Weapons and Fighting Arts of Indonesian, on p.151, "The Atjeh revere the blade. Their special weapon is the *rentjong*. Its peculiar shape seems to fit well with the air of magic and mystery connected to it. Each blade has distinct marking, usually Arabic characters which tell of mystic powers. The *rentjong* is employed according to its length, which varies from five to twenty inches. The *rentjong* is worn sheathed at the left-hand side of the bearer. It is usually drawn with the left foot forward so that by a quick short step forward with the right foot, the thrust of the knife receives and added impetus. The blade is

withdrawn from its sheath cutting edge toward the enemy. It is the whipped to the right by a snap of the hand which brings the palm upward; the elbow is held fairly close to the body."

The *rencong* is one of the weapons that is studied in Pukulan Cimande Pusaka. Powerful snaps cuts can be employed when the weapon is held in the hand as well as toe point thrusts when the weapon is held in between the big toe and the next toe.

Pendekar Sanders can be seen using the *rencong* at the end of the Panther Series tape seven and on the Traditional Indonesian Weapons tape three from Raja Naga. The *rencong* shown below has an ivory handle and ivory sheath. The blade length is 8.5 inches.



Explanation of Cimande Logo

by Guru Besar Jeff Davidson

As a westerner with a background in quantum mechanics, I have always sought to reconcile the metaphysical principles of Pukulan Cimande Pusaka with the teachings of some of the modern physicists that I have studied. Please understand that I do not look to western science to validate the teachings of the mystics and magicians of Indonesia. However, since the majority of the people that I teach and lecture are coming from a “scientific” perspective, I have found that the study of physics gives me a “vocabulary” if you will, in which to discuss mysticism - while not alienating my audience.

The logo of Pukulan Cimande Pusaka is known in Indonesia as the *Circle of Creation*. The explanation of the symbolism is as follows.

Dragon - Triangle - Inner Circle

The central image represents the atomic structure of the Universe. The three legs of the Triangle stand for the proton (positive/male/giving), the electron (negative/female/receiving), and the neutron (principle of balance/reconciliation) contained within the inner Circle. Thus, the Triangle can be likened to the nucleus of an atom, with the inner Circle being the valance shell. As we know, the sub-atomic components of the atom are the building blocks of everything in the

Universe. The Raja Naga (King Dragon) symbolizes the power to transform potential energy into matter. This process occurs not only in combat (see Pukulan Cimande Pusaka Vol. 1- Principles of Destruction) but also when any goal is realized. Look around you; all that you see - buildings, cars, houses, streets, etc. - began as someone’s idea. These ideas were brought into material form following the same process by which a blow to an opponent is successfully landed. Here is something else to ponder. All of you should be familiar with the equation $E=MC^2$. But how many of you fully understand this principle? What the formula states is that ENERGY HAS MASS. In other words, your thoughts and intentions are made of the same “stuff” as the paper that you are holding, and the chair that you are sitting on. After all, if you broke any object on earth down to its smallest component, you would find - electrons. What is an electron? Is an electron a tiny piece of solid matter? No, an electron is a sub-atomic electromagnetic field. So this world is not - as the eminent philosopher Madonna states - a material world. The more energy you focus toward a particular goal, the sooner it will manifest on the material plane. Western scientists are very proud of themselves for “discovering” this principle; but it has been known to the Pendekars of Indonesia for hundreds of years! Since we are all literally surrounded by this energy, Silat magick is largely based on manipulating the sub-atomic world in order to produce a desired effect in the material plane.

In Silat mystical philosophy, electromagnetic energy is given gender. Any technique which has the quality of imparting, or is overtly aggressive is considered Male/Positive. Any technique which receives (such as a parry), is fluid and/or deceptive is Female/Negative. Just as a light bulb contains a positive pole, a negative pole, and a filament in order to produce light, so must the Pesilat act as the filament between the male and female energies in order to achieve balance in Pencak Silat and in life.

The animals surrounding the outer circle represent the First Law of Thermodynamics, which states that matter is never destroyed, but transformed.

Monkey

Water element - Birth of Matter (as all things are born from Water). Martial aspect: agility, off-timing, cunning, deception, imitates other animals. Generally, emotional energy.

Tiger

Earth element - Life of Matter. Martial aspect: ferociousness, low or prone fighting postures, clawing and tearing, killer instinct. Generally, “grounding” and “centering” energy.

Serpent

Fire Element - “Death” of Matter. Martial aspect: Stinging strikes, crushing, coiling the body, mesmerizing the opponent. Generally, will-power.

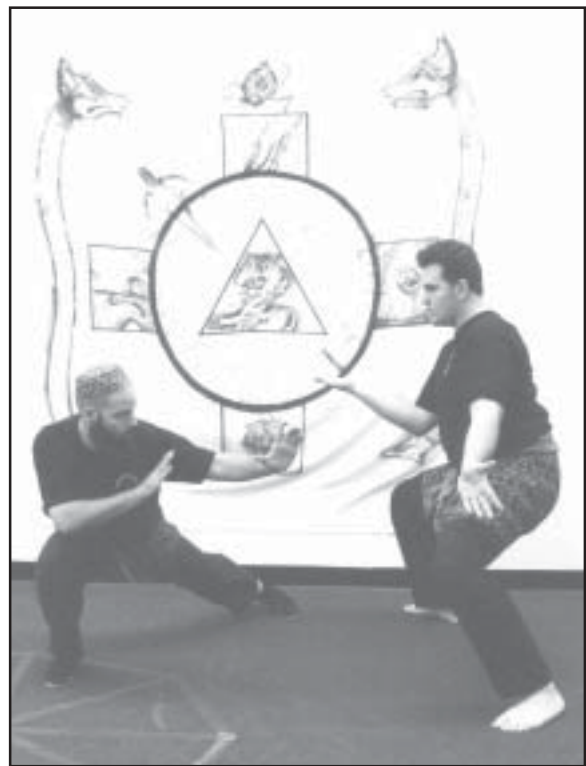
Crane

Air element - Transformation (Rebirth) of Matter. Martial aspect: Explosive parries, nerve strikes, whipping kicks and punches. Generally, intellectual energy.

King Dragon

The Great Void (The Unknown). Mastery and use of all animal styles fluidly. Generally, the root energies of all elements (Akasha).

Now that you the student have the theoretical knowledge of the Circle of Creation, please refer to Pendekar Sanders excellent tapes and books to learn the combative physical application of these principles.



Guru Besar Jeff Davidson (left)
and Guru Ted Walls (right)

Myths and Realities of Pukulan Cimande Pusaka

with Pendekar William Sanders



Pendekar Sanders, what made you pick an unusual art like Pencak Silat?

I was looking for a fluid, powerful fighting art, and I liked the movement of some of the Kung Fu that I saw, but I could not find anything that I really liked. I went to see an Indonesian Martial Arts demonstration by Guru John Malterer and his students. I liked what I saw, and so I began my training in 1972 in Wheeling, West Virginia. Guru John Malterer was a long time student of Guru Willy Wetzel.

What can you tell us about Guru Willy J.C. Wetzel?

I was told that Guru Willy John Christopher Wetzel was born on January 23, 1921 in Loemadjang (Dutch spelling), Java, Indonesia of Dutch and Indonesian parents. Guru Wetzel trained in West Java and in

WWII he was in the Royal Dutch Indonesian Army. In 1949 he moved to Holland and in 1956 he immigrated to Vanport, Pennsylvania. Guru Wetzel had 2 sons, Roy and Jim. Around 1960 he opened a school to the general public in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania and several of his students were John Malterer, Barbara Niggel and Bill Dobich. He died on March 17, 1975 in Beaver Falls.

Did you ever meet Guru Wetzel?

No, I never met Guru Wetzel, but I saw videos of him and I did considerable research on him through his students and friends. Of all of the Dutch-Indo teachers that I have seen in America, I never saw any of them who could move and fight like he could. His art was much more fluid and complete.

How did you get information on Pencak Silat in the late 70's?

Like all students we were constantly searching for information on our art and very little information was available. We did find a few articles and Donn Draeger's book, The Weapons and Fighting Arts of Indonesia was our main source.

Is Pukulan Cimande Pusaka the synthesis of a Chinese style and Pencak Silat Cimande?

John Malterer taught us, as he had been told, that the art was a synthesis of Chinese Kuntao from Oei Kim Boen and Indonesian Pencak Silat Cimande from Mas

Djut Bang Solimon. Please note Oei Kim Boen is not a Chinese name and Mas Djut Bang Solimon is probably not a complete name. They supposedly called their art Pukulan Cimandie, (Dutch spelling Poekoelan Tjimindie). Later when I spoke to many people, including Guru Wetzel's sons, I was told the story was a fairy tale. Roy Wetzel's exact words to me were, "You did not believe that fairy tale did you?" I also visited Mr. Vanderlee, a man who had spent years with Guru Wetzel both in Indonesia and in a Japanese prison camp. Guru Wetzel had offered to teach Mr. Vanderlee his art and I was told this man had achieved a very high proficiency before he became sick. He laughed at me when I asked about the Chinese portion. He said, "No way! Willy only learned and taught pure Pencak Silat." I can only guess the rest. I believe this story served as a marketing strategy to attract students to take a look at what he had. Chinese Kung Fu was very popular during this time and virtually no one had any idea what Pencak Silat was. This is based on interviews that I conducted with people in America who had visited with Guru Wetzel. To further illustrate the point Oei Kim Boen did not live in the same time period as Mas Djut by many dates that I have seen. Furthermore the Indonesians do not get along well with the Chinese. Pendekar Jafri and I did extensive investigations in West Java. We concluded there was no record of these two men collaborating on an art. Let there be no mistake Guru Wetzel's art was 100 percent deadly Silat. His art was a superior combat

system, and if you saw it you wanted it. There was no other Pencak Silat teacher that I witnessed that had the fascinatingly deadly manner of movement that Guru Wetzel brought to America. Most of what I saw looked stiff and robotic in comparison. It was not until I visited the jungles of Java that I saw his movement in the best of the Cimande fighters. Guru Wetzel did say this was a "high caste" Cimande system and this seemed to be verified. I am not saying there might not have been others as good. Willem Reeders was active around this period and I heard nothing but great things about him, but unfortunately I never saw him or a video of him in action. Before anyone gets riled up over me not believing the story of the history, I can only say that it could never be verified and was not supported by those I mentioned. These discrepancies led me to Indonesia in the first place. Still I am very thankful for what Guru Malterer taught me of his art, as it remained the standard in my mind of what I wanted to flesh out.

Can you explain the various spellings of Cimande?

I use the original spelling Cimande, which is one word and not two as I have seen printed in error. I was told to add the word Pusaka to the end of the art to signify it as an heirloom, which is old and valuable and to be passed on from father to son. Barbara Niggel teaches in Cape Cod, in Orleans, Massachusetts and her art is named Poekoelan Tjimindie Tulen. John Malterer teaches in

Ohio and his art is called Poekoelan Chuan-Fa Tjimindie.

What can you tell us about the origins of Cimande?

Pendekar Suryadi Jafri and I researched the roots of Cimande when I was in West Java. The information that we found matches the information in the book by Haji Suhari Supari, who is head of Pencak-Silat Panca Sakiti and is their oldest teacher. Embah Kahir was the founder of Cimande and he lived around 1780 in a village called Cogreg, which is near Bogor, West Java. He named his style “Cimande” because he lived near a river called the Cimande River. Embah Kahir was married in Cianjur, lived in Kamurang and had five sons named Endut, Ocod, Otoy, Komar and Oyot. Embah Kahir died in Tarikuwt Cimande around 1825 and his grave is in Sereal Bogor. He had many students in places like Bogor, Banten, Jakarta and Bandung in West Java. Several of Embah Kahir’s students were Mr. Sera, Mr. Bidong, Mailin, Mr. Abo and Pendekar Age, who lived in Tarikolot Cimande. These men along with Embah Kahir’s sons spread Cimande to Bandung and various areas of West Java. Through many Pendekars other variations of Cimande developed. According to the Pencak Silat Association of Jakarta there are approximately 100 different Cimande systems. My particular version is called Pukulan Cimande Pusaka. The variations of Cimande differ, but the principles, the feeling and the flow of Cimande remain the same. If you were to look

on a map of West Java the roots of Cimande would be found in the triangular region formed by Bogor on the west, Mt. Gede-Pangrango National Park on the south and Cianjur on the east.

Where do Mas Djut and Mr. Atma fit into this historical picture?

Mas Djut was a high level Cimande practitioner who lived from 1840 to 1930 and trained with one of Embah Kahir’s descendants since Embah Kahir died in 1825. Mr. Atma or “Pak” Atma, as he is referred to, was also a high level Cimande practitioner who was born around 1900. Donn Draeger in 1972 makes reference to him in his book, p 42 and I quote, “Atma is currently a Tjiliwung tea plantation worker whose sixty odd years fail to lessen his amazing and graceful skill.”

I believe I read somewhere that Mas Djut was a member of the Badui people in West Java. Is this possible?

Anyone who consults the research of the Badui people by Sir Thomas Raffles in History of Java (1830) or Nina Epton’s Magic and Mystics of Java (1974) will see that Mas Djut could not have been an active member of the “white” Badui or “blue” Badui. The Badui do not practice any kind of martial art and when Nina Epton interviewed a member of the Badui on their moral code they replied, “It is forbidden to us to hurt other people by way of mouth, eyes, hands, feelings.” Mas Djut could have been born a Badui and then decided to

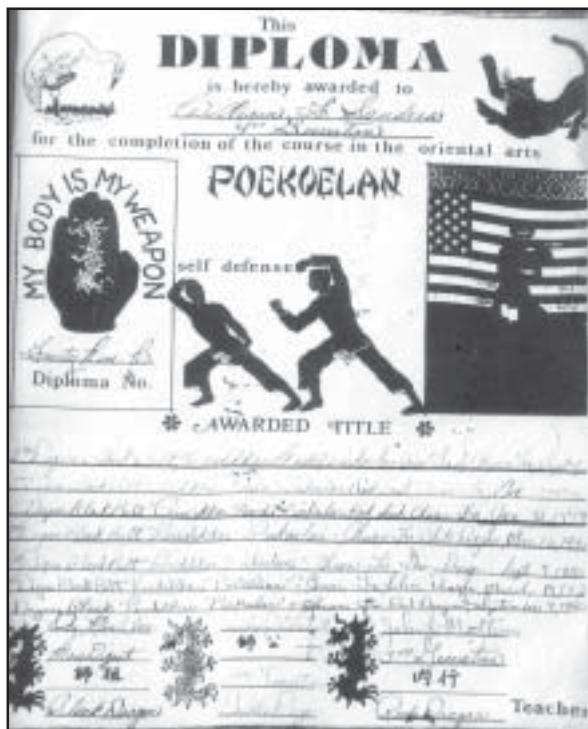
leave, but his Pencak Silat abilities had to have been learned from one of the descendants of Embah Kahir.

Do we know from whom Guru Wetzel learned his art?

There are a few people who would like to take credit for Willy Wetzel's training. After speaking with people who knew him the best, I have to say that he learned his art from an Indonesian teacher in his native village in Java and often trained in secret at midnight.

How long did you train with John Malterer and what was the highest rank that you received?

I trained with John Malterer from late 1972 until 1983 when I was awarded the title of 7th Degree Red Dragon.



When did you begin to seek out other Cimande instructors so that you could enhance your training?

I was searching for knowledge on this art from anyone who claimed to have some affiliation with Cimande. In 1980 I heard Pendekar Suryadi Jafri was in New York City as the then official Indonesian representative to America in Pencak Silat. We became friends and we trained for several weeks in New York and then several weeks at my house. This kind of training went on for a long time. Through this training I learned certain portions of the art had been omitted from my previous training, i.e. jurus, lankas, weapon training and internal aspects. In 1983, I trained with Pendekar Paul De Thouars since he said he was in possession of the original Cimande jurus (upper body movements), lankas (longer movements adding footwork) and the fighting ways of Bapak Sera, who had been a well known student of Embah Kahir. I also trained in 1987 with Art Remrev from Indonesia on his knowledge of Cimande and Bapak Sera. Eventually I amassed a picture of Cimande supplied by various people. These were not different arts but different interpretations of the same art.

When did you decide to go to West Java to further your training?

In 1983, Pendekar Jafri, who I had the most respect for, advised me to go directly to the source in Indonesia. He said that he would take me to various masters and villages so that

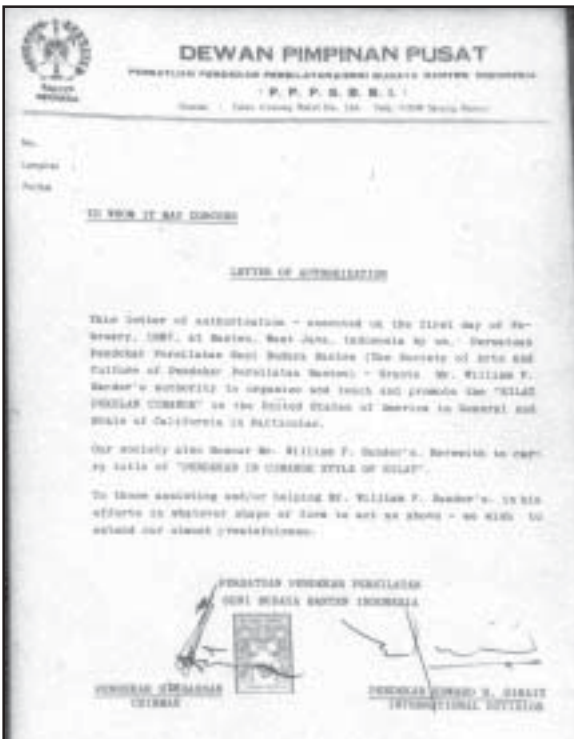
they could sort out what I did and did not know. On my first trip I was introduced to Pendekar Sirait of Persatuan Pendekar Persilatan Seni Budaya Banten Indonesia (The Society of Arts and Culture of Pendekar Persilatan Banten). This was the group of the “kolot” (old style) Pencak Silat of Indonesia. Pendekar Jafri considered them to be the most prestigious group of the old combat arts in Java. The IPSI which is the national government run branch of Pencak Silat had become more involved with Pencak Silat for sport, i.e. structuring it for National competitions. The old Pendekars of the PPPSBBI kept more to the combat mentality, the old animal styles and the internal development with the Ilmu. So began a restructuring process. They recognized the type of movement which I had been taught and instructed me in a way so as to compliment what I knew. These were seasoned practitioners who had the same fluid powerful movements I had originally been drawn to. They showed me what to modify, what to add and what to keep. I was also sent to Pendekar Sartono, my spiritual teacher and now great friend, who taught me the internal portions of the art. Without a question I believe the internal portions are the most important for all aspects of your life and the art. I continued my yearly trips to West Java from 1983 to 1987. Pendekar Sartono awarded me the magickal inheritance of the system in 1985. In 1987, in Banten West Java I was awarded the title of “Pendekar of Cimande” by the PPPSBBI. I was tested and not even told whether I had passed until after I returned

home. This gave me confidence that what I passed on to my students had been approved from the source, the mother country. It is like a Doctor passing the Medical exam. At least his patients can see he received the correct training. You get a diploma from high school, a degree from college, a driving license if you pass your driving test or if you open a business you must get a business license. These are proof of your accomplishment and it gives you the right to do something or claim something. I can't believe the gullibility of some martial artists who claim you should look down on certifications. In most cases I think its because they themselves or their teacher had none. Of course the bottom line is look at the art. It should have both the quality and the documentation. In 1997, I returned to see my teacher Pendekar Sartono in Java and visited Bali. I worked out with Masters of Cimande trance fighters and Bahkti Negara in Bali. All of them recognized my Silat Cimande at once. Many said they had seen a few people from America and were dismayed at their expression of Pencak Silat. They were very pleased to see their art was really alive in America. That recognition meant a lot to me and I knew I had done the right thing by seeking knowledge from Indonesia all those years ago.

How were you tested in Banten?

The official test lasted a week, but each time I visited West Java I felt like they were testing me. The test was to see how I moved, how I performed various techniques,

how I fought and how I handled weapons. I was also sent into the jungle to meditate and when I returned I told them what I had seen.



In some Chinese and Japanese systems I have heard students must pay large sums of money for high rank or inheritance, was this the case in Indonesia?

No, not at all. I was never asked to make any kind of donation.

You were elected chairman of the Pencak Silat Governing Board in America. Can you tell me the purpose of the Governing Board?

The Indonesian government was frustrated with the misinformation that was being distributed in America. Their representative in America invited a group of

Pencak Silat teachers to Chicago to discuss the problem. The solution was to set up a central location where instructors could register their art and their credentials. If a student wanted to know if a certain Silat style was being taught in their area and the background of their instructor there would be a repository for that information. To date not many instructors have registered and I think this is because they have misunderstood the purpose of the board. I am the chairman, but all of the founders are from Indonesia and the purpose of the board is not to make judgements or rules about what an instructor can and cannot do. The board is certainly not going to review or rate instructors. The purpose is to promote Silat in America and to help prospective students make an informed decision.

Student Questions

with Pendekar William Sanders

In the Panther videos and in some of the Raja Naga videos you mention that the follow ups are elements, what does this mean?

Elements in this context refer to variable options that follow a specific technique. For example if I am showing a L-Retreat which is constant the kick which follows might be a front snap kick, toe point kick or a side kick. These are the elements that change.

I am just starting out in this art and should I learn all of the jurus first and their applications before I try to learn the animals?

I believe dividing up the jurus with each animal is the best. Jurus 1 through 5 with snake, jurus 6 through 10 with monkey, jurus 11 through 15 with crane and jurus 16 through 18 with tiger. The animal mannersims help add life to the jurus so they do not end up robotic movements.

When I start learning the animal mannerisms should I focus on only one animal at a time or should I learn a little of each animal?

I learned one at a time. I believe for most people this is much better. Get proficient with one, then move on. When you arrive at the last one and finish it you will progress to the Raja Naga much easier.

How much of my training should be placed on the physical side, the magical side and real fighting?

None of these can be separated from each other in all authentic Pencak Silat. For example when you perform Juru one you do the physical movements, hence the physical side. Juru one is male and electrical and you are performing the destructive aspects of energy damage to the internal organs. Some of the hand moves coorespond to our energy drainage mudras, hence the internal side. If you practise the juru in an aggressive mode you are practising a powerful fighting

application. Therefore in everything that we do there is a balance of all three aspects. The longer that you are in the art the more you will lean to the magickal side.

Language and Culture

by Guru Baharu Chris Martin

You might wonder what does language and culture have to do with martial arts, maybe nothing and just maybe everything. Does speaking Indonesian and wearing a sarong make you a better fighter? No it does not but the art that you practice was not created in a vacuum and to fully appreciate the art and to understand some of the more subtle points you need to understand the language and culture. The following passage is from the [Sierra Club Travel Guide – Adventures in Indonesia](#). A map of Indonesia is provided at the end of the newsletter.

“North of Australia, east of India, and southwest of Singapore is settled the fragmented archipelago we know today as Indonesia. Scattered through the Pacific and Indian oceans in a distance as wide as the United States, more than 17,000 islands are threaded together by channels and straits, the entire archipelago stretching a distance of more than 17,000 kilometers, three time zones, and two monsoon seasons. Such range in area has created a common theme of diversity throughout the islands: landscapes that range from rainforest to glacial peaks, more than 500 endemic species of flora and

fauna, and cultures whose backgrounds encompass Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and animist traditions. Yet, beneath the vastly varied geographic and cultural scenes, there is an undercurrent of pride in this uniqueness, the binding strength of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*—Indonesia’s national motto of “Unity in Diversity.”

At the core of Indonesia’s diversity are three basic forces of nature: water, wind, and fire. Indeed, water is Indonesia’s dominant element, for although there are thousands of small islands in the archipelago, three quarters of Indonesia’s area is comprised of her network of channels, straits, and seas. Even the earliest explorers referred to Indonesia as *Tanah Air*, or “Land-Water.” It is a fitting description, which is today represented by the nation’s bi-colored flag, the top band of red representing the earth above a stripe of white for the archipelago’s many seas.

As a country, Indonesia lies between the Pacific and Indian oceans, below mainland Asia, and with nothing but Antarctica to the south. Once a part of the Asian and Australian mainland, many bits of the archipelago split away from the areas we know today as Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines, with the oldest of these islands dating back to the end of the Miocene era some 15 million years ago. Great geological changes occurred throughout the next 12 million years, with many of the islands at times even connected during the last Ice Age 35,000 to 10,000 years ago when the seas were lower and mountain peaks frozen over with snow. Remnants of this era are still seen

today in central Irian Jaya, where snow-covered Puncak (point) Jaya towers over the island of New Guinea, its 5029-meter height crowning it the highest glacial peak in the Southern Hemisphere.

Within the wide archipelago, Indonesia’s boundaries include six main geographical regions that comprise more than two-thirds of her land. Little wonder that so few areas add up to so much territory: Irian Jaya is the western half of New Guinea, the world’s second-largest island, while Kalimantan is the lower section of the third-largest, Borneo. However, Indonesia shares both these territories. Irian Jaya (formerly Irian Barat, or West Irian) divides the island of New Guinea equally with the country of Papua New Guinea to the east, while the upper third of Borneo above Kalimantan belongs to Malaysia’s states of Sabah and Sarawak, along with the small Sultanate of Brunei.

Sliding up parallel to mainland Malaysia, Sumatra is the world’s sixth-largest island and one of the least explored, its boundaries including the remote Mentawai Islands to the west as well as the developed eastern isles of Batam and Bintan near Singapore. Just 60 kilometers south of Sumatra and about one-fifth the size, Java has the dubious distinction of being the world’s most populated island, with more than 13 million people residing in Jakarta alone. Just next to Java, one of Indonesia’s smallest and most culturally significant islands is the Hindu droplet of Bali, unique within a country where more than 93 percent of the people are

followers of Islam. East of Bali is scattered the smaller Nusa Tenggara (southeast islands) archipelago, which includes Lombok, Sumbawa, Komodo, Flores, Sumba, and Timor. Above them, Sulawesi's orchid shape bridges the gap between Borneo and Maluku (the Moluccas) to the east, the latter region being the legendary site of spice trade that embraces hundreds of small volcanic islands.

Tested by the erosive forces of wind, waves, and earth movements. The Indonesian archipelago fragmented further over the centuries into the geographical areas we see on the current map of Asia. As pieces of the Asian and Australian mainland's broke free and floated through the seas, they carried with them many plant and animal species that today are endemic—found nowhere else in the world but in one particular place or island—such as the rare black orchid of Kalimantan, the Bali starling, or Sumatra's seldom-seen “short-eared” rabbit. Other arks of land crashed into one another, resulting in larger, strangely shaped islands like Sulawesi, whose four spidery arms are believed to be various bits of both Australia and Asia.”

Language

Indonesian is the official language of the Republic of Indonesia, a country of approximately 180 million people. It is spoken by the vast majority of Indonesians, even though it is the native language of only seven percent of the population. There are hundreds of other important languages spoken across the more than 13,600 islands in the Indonesian

archipelago, including Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, and Balinese, but Indonesian is the language of education, business, government, and the mass media.

Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language), as it is called in Indonesia, is a major language of the Malayo-Polynesian language family, and is closely related to Javanese and Tagalog (one of the major languages of the Philippines) and more distantly to Maori, and Hawaiian. Indonesian is based on Malay, the region's lingua franca for several centuries and the official language of Malaysia and Brunei. The differences between the two dialects are small, much like the differences between British and American English, and speakers of one find little trouble communicating with speakers of the other.

The influences of several other languages can still be found in Indonesian today. Words have been borrowed from Arabic since the coming of Islam to the archipelago in the 13th century, and from Dutch as a result of their colonial dominance of Indonesia from the 15th century until the close of World War II. Since Indonesia's independence in 1950, English has also been a rich source of words for modern Indonesian.

In the next newsletter we will begin to focus on specific islands beginning with Sumatra and we will begin to look at pronunciation and vocabulary from our art.

Indonesian Weapons and Artifacts

Pendekar William Sanders on Primitive Destinations International

“I have purchased various Indonesian weapons and artifacts from Ken Ratihn and so have many of my students. I recommend Primitive Destinations International without hesitation.”

Ken Ratihn from Primitive Destinations International



In 1990 I had the opportunity to go with an expedition team to look for suitable rafting rivers in Indonesia. The next 6 years living in Indonesia I helped pioneer rafting. Over the years I trained Indonesians to become rafting guides, searched for rivers, did expeditions and led several major first descent rafting exploratories. I found Indonesia diverse, rich in culture, and I fell in love with Indonesia

and it's people. Being an avid collector, on my rafting adventures and expeditions I started to acquire Indonesian ethnic art and traditional weapons.

During my stay in Indonesia I met Sugih, my wife for 7 years now. She is from a very traditional Javanese family originally from Malang, East Java. Sugih's great, great, grandfather was a Guru in Pencak Silat. Her late grandfather was a very spiritual person and was extremely knowledgeable about shamanism. Her father Bapak Sukarlan inherited the family knowledge, and is a well respected elder in the area where he now lives in Banyuwangi, East Java. Bapak Sukarlan grew up familiar with traditional Javanese weapons and is especially knowledgeable about the keris. Today at the age of 65 he still fasts, meditates and sleeps with a keris in order to feel the mythological energy, coming from the keris. I learned everything there is to know about respecting and taking care of the keris from my father in-law. Most of my keris collection has been acquired through him and some of them are available for sale together with other Indonesian ethnic art collected through my travels.

Together my wife and I started Primitive Destinations International, still doing adventures and collecting. In the past we have done many ethnographic art and gallery shows. Now we have our own home gallery and sell on the internet. My wife and I are honored to know Pendekar Sanders as a good friend and he has purchased many Indonesian weapons from my collection.

Salam, Sejahtera.

Ken Ratihn
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Music, Videos and Books

Music - CD

Sundanese, Degung-Mojang Priangan, Music of West Java, Volume I.

Sundanese, Degung-Sabilulungan, Music of West Java, Volume II.

Sumatra, Musiques Des Batak

Videos

Crossing the Sulu Seas, 45 min., \$25.00, VHS, Kris Cutlery, 510-758-9912. This video includes footage of a keris being forged.

Bali a Window on Paradise, 53 min. \$20.99, Amazon.com. This is a very good video on Bali. You might rent it from your local tape store.

Ring of Fire - An Indonesian Odyssey, four volume set, \$20.99 each, Amazon.com. These videos were produced by documentarians Lorne and Lawrence Blair.

Books

Ring of Fire : An Indonesian Odyssey, Lawrence Blair, Lorne Blair, \$19.96, ISBN: 0892814306, Amazon.com

Books

The Weapons and Fighting Arts of Indonesia, Donn F. Draeger, Charles E. Tuttle Company 1972, ISBN : 0-8048-1716-2, Amazon.com

Pendekar Sanders Seminars

May 15-16 Dublin, Ireland,
Guru Liam McDonald

June 5-6 Farmington Hills, Michigan,
Guru Besar Jeff Davidson,
248-426-9717

Final Comments

This is the conclusion of our first issue. I hope you that you have found the newsletter informative and an enhancement to your training. In future issues we will investigate all facets of your training, as well as the culture and the language of Indonesia.

If you have comments, student questions, a possible article that you would like to submit or an article that you would like to see written please send them to:

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