

REPRESENTATION OF MINANGKABAU CULTURAL VALUES IN MINANGKABAU TIGER SILAT ON INSTAGRAM: SEMIOTIC STUDY OF CHARLES SANDERS PEIRCE

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Submitted: May, 14. 2025 Review: June, 17. 2025 Accepted: June, 30. 2025 Published: June, 30. 2025 Keywords: Minangkabau, Tiger Silat, Instagram, Semiotic, Charles Sanders Peirce	<i>This study aims to analyze how Minangkabau cultural values are represented through the Minangkabau Tiger Silat account on Instagram. Using a qualitative approach and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, this research investigates how signs in the form of icons, indexes, and symbols are used to depict cultural meanings. The data were collected through observation, documentation, and interviews with silat practitioners. The results show that Instagram visuals can successfully present philosophical values such as religiosity, reverence for ancestors, harmony with nature, and resilience. This study contributes to the growing field of cultural communication in digital media and suggests future studies to explore audience engagement in cultural preservation efforts online.</i>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau culture is one of Indonesia's most vibrant and well-preserved traditional heritages, rooted deeply in customs, philosophy, and artistic expression. It is known for its unique matrilineal kinship system, its reverence for ancestral wisdom, and its commitment to living in harmony with nature. One of the most iconic forms of cultural expression in Minangkabau is *Silat Harimau*—a traditional martial art inspired by the movements and spirit of the tiger. Silat Harimau is more than a combat technique; it is a performance of identity, spirituality, and social values.

As digital transformation permeates all aspects of life, traditional cultures are now finding new life on social media platforms. Instagram, a highly visual and interactive medium, has emerged as a powerful tool for cultural communities to share their heritage beyond geographical boundaries. For the Minangkabau community, Instagram offers an opportunity to represent Silat Harimau in a digital space where younger generations are more engaged. The fusion of traditional practices with modern media forms creates a dynamic field of cultural representation, worthy of scholarly attention.

However, representing culture on Instagram is not a neutral act. The medium itself shapes how culture is portrayed and perceived. Filters, hashtags, visual aesthetics, and algorithms influence what aspects of Silat Harimau are highlighted, which symbols are amplified, and how meaning is constructed. These digital representations can both preserve and distort cultural meanings. The challenge lies in maintaining authenticity while making cultural content accessible and appealing to a global audience.

Despite increasing interest in digital cultural communication, there remains a gap in research on how specific cultural practices are reinterpreted in social media contexts—especially through a semiotic lens. Most studies focus on mainstream narratives or institutional efforts in cultural preservation, leaving grassroots digital practices relatively unexplored.

This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing how Minangkabau cultural values are represented through the Instagram account of Silat Harimau Minangkabau. Using the semiotic theory of Charles Sanders Peirce—who classifies signs into icons, indexes, and symbols—this research decodes the visual and textual elements used in Instagram posts to uncover the cultural meanings embedded within. By understanding how these signs operate in a digital context, we gain insights into the dynamic interaction between tradition and technology, and how identity is negotiated in the virtual world.

Ultimately, this study seeks to answer: How are Minangkabau cultural values encoded and represented through Instagram? And how do these representations contribute to the preservation or transformation of traditional identity in the digital age?

2. METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative study using semiotic analysis. The descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to describe and understand the meaning of Minangkabau cultural representation on social media, particularly in content related to *Silat Harimau Minang*. A qualitative approach is used to analyze the phenomenon in depth, while the semiotic method helps interpret the cultural signs and symbols that appear in the related social media content.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study reveals that the representation of Minangkabau cultural values in *Silat Harimau Minangkabau*, as portrayed through the Instagram account @silatharimau_minangkabau, can be effectively analyzed using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. Through the interpretation of signs (signifier and signified) found in the visual content and captions, it was discovered that Minangkabau culture is strongly represented through visual symbols such as traditional attire, distinctive martial art movements, and culturally rich settings.

The most prominent denotative signifiers are the tiger-like martial art movements, combined with traditional black clothing, *tanjak* (traditional headgear), and other distinctive Minangkabau ornaments. Meanwhile, the connotative meanings or myths constructed from these sign combinations reflect cultural values such as bravery, agility, reverence for ancestors, and the fighting spirit of the Minangkabau people.

The cultural values identified in these visual representations include:

- Customs and Traditions – represented through the use of traditional costumes and locations tied to Minangkabau heritage.
- Religiosity – reflected in religious narratives embedded within the captions.
- The Philosophy of *Alam Takambang Jadi Guru* – conveyed through narrative and visuals of martial movements imitating nature (tiger as a symbol of nature).
- Unity and Communal Spirit – depicted through group practices, mutual cooperation, and collective participation in cultural events.

Moreover, the use of Instagram as a visual communication medium significantly enhances the digital dissemination of these cultural values to a wider audience, especially among the younger

generation. This platform plays a crucial role in both preserving and actualizing local culture in a modern and globalized context.

Table 1 Trianggulasi.

Source Triangulation	- Data were collected from various sources, including videos, articles, social media comments, and interviews with Silat Harimau Minang practitioners as well as Minangkabau cultural experts. - Comparing data from these different sources helps ensure that the information analysed is consistent and valid.
Methodological Triangulation	- This study employed a combination of methods including social media observation, interviews, and semiotic analysis. - Observation was used to identify how Silat Harimau Minang is represented on social media. - Interviews were conducted to gain direct insights from cultural practitioners and social media audiences. - Semiotic analysis was applied to interpret cultural signs embedded in digital content
Theoretical Triangulation	- This research refers to Peirce's semiotic theory and cultural communication theory to understand how cultural meanings are constructed and perceived on social media. - A social communication theory approach was also used to analyse the impact of digitalization on Minangkabau culture.

3. CONCLUSIONS

This study explored how Minangkabau cultural values are represented through the Instagram content of *Silat Harimau Minangkabau*, using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework. The analysis revealed that Instagram functions not only as a medium for documentation, but also as a digital space for cultural negotiation and identity construction.

Cultural values such as religiosity, reverence for ancestors, harmony with nature, and personal resilience are expressed through signs in the form of icons, indexes, and symbols. These representations are carefully crafted to resonate with digital audiences while preserving the authenticity of Minangkabau traditions.

However, the findings also highlight a critical tension: while digital platforms offer new opportunities for cultural preservation, they also expose traditional practices to reinterpretation, aesthetic commodification, and shifting audience expectations. The role of the audience as active interpreters means that meaning is never fixed—it evolves with context and engagement.

This study suggests that cultural practitioners must approach digital representation with both creativity and critical awareness. Future research may expand this investigation by analyzing how

audiences interact with cultural posts, and how feedback loops influence the way traditions are continuously reshaped in digital environments.

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