



Rajah on Ngikis Ceremony in Karangkamulyan Site Ciamis

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Abstract. Indonesia is a country with plurality especially in terms of customs and culture. One of the customs and traditions that is always done is to perform rituals or traditional ceremonies aiming for safety and gratitude to the Creator, including the ancestors. It also happened among Sundanese community in Ciamis, every year before fasting month, they perform *Ngikis* ceremony at the Karangkamulyan Site in order to clean (purify) themselves, because of facing the Holy Month of Ramadan. A series of ritual processions are performed, but what is interesting is the use of *Rajah* used by *Kuncen* as the leader of *Ngikis* ceremony. *Rajah* is a letter (image, destiny, or sign) which is used as a prayer to repel a disaster. *Rajah* in Sundanese literature is also included in category of prayers or spells which has magical meaning. The problem on this research is to describe meaning and function and how is the connection between *Rajah* and *Ngikis* ceremony's visitor. The purpose of this research is to reveal the form, meaning, and function of *Rajah* in *Ngikis* ceremony. This study uses the theory of hermeneutics, which interpreting texts and other signs such as myths, including mantras in *Rajah*. The methodology used is observation and in-depth interviews with *Kuncen*, traditional figures, and ceremony visitors. The results of this study are *Rajah* in form of Sundanese *Buhun* (old Sundanese language) about moral teachings and social crules which must be obeyed by Sundanese people, the meaning of *Rajah* which is related to gratitude and asking for safety to the Creator, and the function of *Rajah* on remembering the importance of the past as a "pillar" (milestone) or "stump" for the present generation.

Keywords: Karangkamulyan Site, *Rajah*, *Ngikis* Ceremony.

1 Introduction

Traditional ceremonies are ceremonial activities related to the belief traditions of a society related to various kinds of events in society. This traditional ceremony usually aims to ask for safety, respect, and as a thanksgiving to the ancestors and the Creator. Likewise, the Ngikis Ceremony at the Karangkamulyan Site is a tradition carried out from generation to generation by Ciamis community, aiming to clean or purify themselves, because of facing the Holy Month of Ramadan and respect for the Creator and the ancestors of King Galuh. A series of ritual processions are carried out, starting

from preparation to carrying out the ceremony, but what is interesting in this ceremony is the use of Rajah spoken by the Kuncen as the leader in Ngikis ceremony.

Each region has traditions and beliefs that are usually born from ancestors or previous ancestors and are generally carried out with rituals. It also happens on Ciamis people, one of their traditions and beliefs is the Rajah tradition at Ngikis ceremony at the Karangkamulyan Site. Rajah is a letter (image, destiny, sign) that is used as a prayer to ward off evil, besides that Rajah in Sundanese literature is included in the category of prayer spells or incantations which have magical meaning. Rajah in traditional ceremonies consists of Bubuka (opening) which contains a prayer and summons the spirits of Sundanese ancestors and Rajah Pamunah (closing) which contains expressions of gratitude. In Sundanese society, Raja was known before Islam entered. Before the arrival of Islam, apart from embracing their own belief and religion (Sundanese Wiwitan), the Sundanese people also had various prayers of praise, including literary arts. A literary expert named from Tasikmalaya once said that the art of pantun is a very old type of speech literature and has been known since the past civilized. It is not surprising that in every performance, a rhyme interpreter always begins with the reading of a Rajah, a kind of incantation to ask for the blessing and safety of the ancestors. Similarly, the tattoo performed during the Ngikis ceremony, is a mantra to ask for salvation and gratitude to the Creator and the ancestors. As a Sundanese, the Karangkamulyan Ciamis people have their own perspective in believing in Rajah, which is to be used as a medium in solving various difficulties in their lives. This perspective is based on the beliefs that are believed, regardless of the religion of Islam.

Even though adhering to Islam, Sundanese people still believe in mystical traditions, including the mantra in Rajah. This has become a culture that is inherent in Indonesian society, not only in traditional society, but also in modern society. Mystical science can be interpreted as a form of religion based on belief in God with the aim of achieving unity with Him [7]. However, opinions differ on mystical knowledge. Frazer mentioned that mysticism had nothing to do with religion. But mysticism is an orientation towards spirits or gods that includes all natural or metaphysical arrangements [14]. Mystical knowledge is usually used by people to solve various problems of life. In practice mystical therapy does not use sensory or logical processes and does not go through a ratio or scientific process, but with beliefs or things that are supernatural which are commonly called riyadah [1].

Rajah at Ngikis ceremony at the Karangkamulyan Ciamis site is highly believed by the community to convey respect and gratitude to the Creator and ancestors. The problems raised in this study are what are the forms, meanings, and functions of prayers or mantras in Rajah and how people view the Rajah. Thus, the purpose of this study is to reveal the form, meaning, function of the Rajah at the Ngikis ceremony and the public's view of the Rajah.

2 Methodology

This study uses the hermeneutic method, namely interpreting or interpreting myths or traditions, including the invocation of the mantra Rajah. This method has the same way of working with interpretation, understanding, and interpretation of texts that are scientific, objective, and based on the humanities. The mantra in this diagram is in the form of language as discourse or text which contains meaning, mandate or message, and the value of knowledge to fulfill human needs spiritually. The data analysis was carried out by analytical descriptive which is based on the overall description to produce conclusions. Collecting data by observation, in-depth interviews with the Kuncen who leads the Ngikis ceremony (Rajah), traditional leaders, and participants in the Ngikis ceremony.

3 Research Results

3.1 Ngikis Ceremony Procession

The people of Karangkamulyan prepare for Ngikis ceremony long before the ceremony. This is done, because it is associated with the costs required for the implementation of the ceremony is not small. Therefore, at the initial stage of preparation is to collect funds or fees by voluntary contributions. In addition, the funds collected are not only from residents, but also donations from several related agencies.

Before the ceremony begins, the residents of Karangkamulyan make some equipment that must be prepared, including a tumpeng, which is a tool made of bamboo decorated with colored paper and some decorations from various types of vegetables. Tampah or nyiru is used for tumpeng and offerings. The jug serves as a place for water taken from several springs that are considered sacred. Lodong, this tool is made of whole bamboo with a size of approximately one meter, one of the top is perforated, so that it can be filled with water. Lodong is used as a place of water. Fence, this tool is made of bamboo halves cut to a length of approximately 1 meter and a width of 5 centimeters. The cut bamboos are arranged neatly and put together using nails, which are then installed as fences and this is the essence of the Ngikis Traditional Ceremony, namely making a fence for the Pancalikan stone site or the King's Throne.

Broadly speaking, the parties involved in the implementation of the Ngikis ceremony are the Kuncen, village leaders, and the Karangkamulyan community. The purpose of the Ngikis Ceremony is to clean or purify oneself, this is a symbol so that the heart and nature become clean in accordance with the rules of norms and religion. In addition, this ceremony is also a place for gathering, and caring for the ancestral heritage by replacing the bamboo fence at the Pancalikan Karangkamulyan site. The traditional Ngikis ceremony is held a few days before the Holy Month of Ramadan. Other than Monday and Thursday, it is considered not good for holding the Ngikis ceremony. The time is around 08:00 AM until the time of Dzuhur arrives. The location where the Ngikis ceremony is held is at the Karangkamulyan Site, precisely at the Pancalikan Site. Pancalikan Site is a throne where the king sits and a symbol of wor-

ship, measuring 3 x 3 meters, and 60 centimeters high, decorated with simple carvings. The location of the Pancalikan stone is approximately 50 meters from the entrance gate of the Karangkamulyan Site. The offerings in the ceremony include Kupa, Rujak, cigarettes, bitter and sweet coffee, betel leaf, gambier, water, seven kinds of flowers, plantains, tumpeng, and fruits. These offerings as *caos dahar* (foods) of the ancestors which have its own meaning.

3.2 Ceremony Rituals

The procession of the Ngikis ceremony began with welcoming the community leaders who were present, accompanied by dances and cultural events. Furthermore, the group walked hand in hand, followed by the community to the Pancalikan Site in a procession carrying traditional food (*tumpeng*). The next event is *Bubuka* (opening), then proceed to the main event which is held at the Pancalikan Site.

Ngikis ceremony procession is led by a *Kuncen* who sits cross-legged solemnly leading the ritual of reading or praying in the Sundanese *Buhun* (old Sundanese language) language. After reading the first *Rajah Pamunah*, *Kuncen* continues by reading the second *Rajah*. The next step is the unification of *cai sanusantara* (one-nation water) which had been taken from several springs in Tatar Galuh and outside Ciamis. The water that has been put into the jug is then used for ablution or just washing the face. This procession is carried out with the aim of cleaning or purifying oneself so that holiness is always carried by the whole community from life to the end. This procession begins with the sowing of flowers on the Pancalikan Site, the stone that will be fenced (*Dikikis*). This flower sowing was initiated by traditional leaders, then followed by the community by reading a prayer first. After the flower sowing is complete, then *Ngikis* is carried out, which is to fence the Pancalikan Stone Site. After the *Ngikis* procession is complete, then it is carried out, *Rajah* and *Pasatuan* by the *Kuncen* who reads the ancestral genealogy of the Galuh Kingdom. *Pasatuan* in *Ngikis* Traditional Ceremony is an apology and permission to God and the Galuh ancestors.



Fig. 1. “Fencing” procession in Pancalikan Site.

The final activity of the *Ngikis* ceremony is the process of taking over the *gunungan*, which is the most awaited by the residents. *Gunungan* contains a variety of vegetables and fruits that are contested by the community, first given a prayer by the *Kuncen* and

after being given a signal, the residents take over the blessings. Ngikis Ceremony was closed with the presentation of various traditional arts entertainments from Ciamis Regency.



Fig. 2. Kuncen is leading the prayer and reading *Rajah* at Pancalikan Site (the king's throne), while the participants of the ceremony sit down to pray [2].

3.3 *Ngikis* Ceremony Background

Ngikis comes from the Sundanese word, namely “kikis, pager tina awi dijieunna dia-lus-alus; scraped off in my pager; scrape, mager ku awi”, replacing with new good bamboo fence [4]. Literally Ngikis means fencing and or replacing the fence at Pan-calikan Site which is performed routinely once a year before the holy month of Ram-adan. This fence is a symbol which is interpreted as a means to fence off and clean ourselves from bad behavior and bad desires, so that when we enter the holy month of Ramadan we are clean and free from bad influences.

Ngikis ceremony was not only held in Karangkamulyan, but also at Astana Gede Kawali, Panjalu, Kertabumi, Bojong Lopang as there are relics in the form of the tombs of the kings of Galuh at that place. The history of the Ngikis ceremony can be traced from the genealogy of the kings who ruled in the Sunda Kingdom of Galuh Karangkamulyan, where there is similarity between the word Ngikis and the title of the fourth generation Galuh king, namely Prabu Kencanawangi (718-720) who holds the title “Sang Lumahing Kikis”.

Prabu Kencanawangi is one of the two heirs to the throne who became king in the southern part of the Sunda Kingdom. Based on this, the Ngikis ceremony began when the Galuh Karangkamulyan Kingdom was ruled by Prabu Kencanawangi who had the title "Sang Lumahing Kikis" as a form of appreciation for the security and honor of the country. In other words, "Kikis" means protecting the country from undermining and threats from outside the kingdom. As a basis for why the scraping ceremony is still being performed. This is based on the awareness of culture and history contained in the manuscript of the Galunggung Mandate (Kropak 632) originating from Ka-buyutan Ciburuy as moral teachings and social rules that must be obeyed by the Sun-danese. In the text of the script, there are lines of sentences that state the importance of the past as a "pile" or foothold for the next generation, so naturally the current gen-

eration must respect the values inherited from previous generations. The following texts from script are:

Hana nguni hana mangke, tan hana nguni, tan hana mangke aya ma beuheula aya
tu ayeuna, hanteu ma beuheula hanteu tu ayeuna,
hana tunggak hana watang, tan hana tunggak tan hana watang,
hana ma tunggulna aya tu catangna,

Which means,

There was then there is now,
If there wasn't then there wouldn't be now,
Because there is a past there is a present
There is no past there will be no present,
There are pillars of course there are rods,
If there are no pillars there will be no rods,
If there is a stump, of course there is a pillar.

From the quote above, it implies to us that past events are the basis for the future, either individually or in groups, including the values that have been instilled by previous generations. Based on this, the Ngikis ceremony which is part of the tradition of the Sundanese culture must be protected and maintained.

3.4 *Rajah* in *Ngikis* Ceremony Stages

Ngikis ceremony is led by a Kuncen. Kuncen begins the ceremony by sitting cross-legged facing the Pancalikan Site accompanied by reading the *Rajah*. *Rajah* in the Encyclopedia of Sunda, Nature, Humans, and Culture, including Cirebon and Betawi Culture, is: a kind of *jangjawokan* which means asking for a safety permit at the start and after completion of a ritual activity. For example, the rhyme interpreter before and after telling the rhyme story says *Rajah*, which asking for permission to be safe either while or after telling *pantun*. In *Pantun*, the names of Allah and the Messenger of Allah are always mentioned, as well as the names of kings in chronicle stories, such as Lurah Cirebon Girang, Sang Patih Purwagalih, Sang Nagaraja and Sang Nagagini, Dalem Geusan Ulun, Ratu Galuh, Kean Santang, and others [10].

Rajah in Sundanese Dictionary [4] is defined as a prayer or incantation that is sung, before starting the rhyme to be safe, both the rhyme interpreter and the organizer. This *Rajah* is to ask permission from the Gods of Rumuhun before reciting the rhyme. While the *Pamunah* is a *Rajah* to refuse reinforcements to prevent disaster. In KBBI, *Rajah* is a letter (a picture or a sign,) which is used as a talisman (to ward off disease or disaster). *Rajah* is also included in the category or variant of spell. Meanwhile, *mantra*, in Sundanese literature, means a type of poetry whose contents are like incantations or words with magical meanings; the content may contain inducements, curses, or challenges directed at the opponent; strings of words that have no clear meaning, are usually spoken by a shaman [3]. As the opinion of Yus Rusyana [13] the function of the *Rajah* is intended if you want to enter a haunted forest, open fields,

make new villages, want to live in a place, want to work on buildings, conquer stealth, ward off evil deeds, meruwat, floods or rains occur, prayers for the sick, ward off bad dreams. This Rajah is intended to get peace away from various kinds of evil influences.

Related to this research, Rajah in question is included in the category or variant of the mantra. Whereas mantra, in Sundanese literature, means a type of poetry whose contents are like incantations or words that have magical meaning. The composition of the story begins with Rajah Pamuka or Bubuka (opening), the story describes the state of the kingdom and story characters or adventures ending with Rajah Pamunah or Rajah Closing [5].

In connection with *Ngikis* ceremony, the *Rajah Bubukan* (opening) read by the *Kuncen*, is as follows:

Pun

Sampun

Ka luhur ka Sang Rumuhun

Ka guru putra Hiang Bayu

Ka handap ka Sang Batara

Ka Batara Nagaraja

Ka Batari Nagasugih

Punika Rajah Pamunah

Paragi munah sagala

Munah lemah munah imah

Munah kayu katut watu

Munah raja reujeung benda.

Pun.....paralun... sampurasun

Ka anu nunggul di kalanggengan

Anu langgeng dina nunggal

Anu ngawasa hirup jeung hurip

Nu ngawasa euweuh jeung aya.

Which means,

Asking forgiveness and forgiveness to the Creator in the heavens and on earth for all his impudence, may all things be made easy for human life, because the Creator who maintains the eternity of life and death from being to nothing.

After the *Rajah* and *Pasatuan* are delivered by *Kuncen*, then some women give the *Sasajen* (offerings) to be stored in a place to be fenced (*Dikikis*). Before the offerings are stored, the *Kuncen* first recites several mantras and continues by reciting the *Rajah*, as follows:

Sampurasun.....

Pun sampun ka Gusti Nu Maha Suci

Nu ngusikeun nu malikeun

Nu murbeng sadaya alam

Pangeran raga jeung sukma

Neda pangaping pangjaring

Diraksa tina gogoda

Anu jirim anu jisim

Mugia masing waluya
 Nu dipamrih masing bukti
 Nu diseja mangka nyata
 Pikeun obor sarerea
 Ya Allah Robul Daroya.

Which means,

Ask forgiveness from God Almighty, who allows creatures to move, rule over all nature, the Lord of spirits and souls, ask for protection and guidance to those who do not exist and those who still exist, may it give you selfless happiness, which is asked to be real for the light of all people, Allah, the Almighty and Merciful.

After the offerings are stored, then the *Kuncen* reads the story of the Galuh ancestral lineage, by first reading back the *Rajah* and *Pasaduan*, as follows:

Pun paralun

Ka sakur nu diluhur

Anu nunggal

Kanu nyangking kawening

Nu ngagem wewenang

Nu nunggal kawasa

Pun

Taba pun

Ka sakabeh nu dihandap

Kasakabeh anu kumelip anu arusik

Nu ngawaruga dina wujud sewang-sewangan

Kasakabeh

Nu garedag nu lumampah

Nu hirup jadi pangeusi

Nyaricingan jagat ieu

Nyaricingan alam ieu

Kasakabeh

Nu kadeuleu teu kaambeu

Nu kaambeu tapi teu aya

Nu araya tapi euweuh

Nu areuweuh tapi jaronghok

Nu narindak tapi teu nampak

Nu nyoara teu ngarupa

Which means,

Ask forgiveness from God, the One, Who has holiness, who has power, the One Who is One. Please forgive all, who are alive, who are in their respective forms. To all who live, who fill or inhabit this world. To all those who are seen but not smelled, those who are smelled but are not there, who are there but are not there, who are not there but meet, those who are there but are not seen, who are voiced but not seen, who are voiced but have no form.

After *Rajah* and *Pasaduan* were read, they mentioned all the ancestors of Galuh and Sunda: Resi Guru Manik Maya, Raja Putra Suraliman Sakti, Rahiyang Jalu Kadiawan, Rahiyang Galuh Kadiawati, Rahiyang Wreti Kandayun, Rahiyang Rawung

Langit, Rahiyang Sempak Waja, Oil Bath, Rahiyang Seuweu Karma, King Continuesbawa or Rahiyang Sunda Sembawa, Rahiyang Sanjaya, Rakean Darmasiksa Patanjala, King Permadikusumah Ajar Sukaresi, Ciung Wanara, Rahiyang Banga, Aria Bimaraksa or Ki Balangantrang, King Wangi Lingga Buana Wisesa, King Wastu Kencana, King Susu Dewa Niskala, King Niskala, Prabu Siliwangi, Sri Paduka Maharaja Pakuan Pajajaran, Prabu Dimuntur, Wiraperbangsa, Singaperbangsa, and Apun Pagar Gunung (Singaperbangsa)

Finished mentioning the ancestors and kings of Sunda Galuh, then the ceremony ends with a *Rajah Pamunah* (closing), as follows:

Neda ampun nya paralun

Neda jembar pangampura

Nyusud catur nu kapungkur

Mapay laratan nu baheula

Nya ayeuna pisan seja mintonkeun pangabakti

Pakeun tanjeur di buana

Pakeun Sunda nu sawawa

Run turun jati rahayu

Bral datang banjaran bagja cag.....

Which means,

Please forgive, apologize and be generous, because the previous story, going back to the past, now shows dedication, to uphold in the world, for Sundanese who are mature, may be saved and reassured, bring happiness forever.

After reading the *Rajah Pamunah* (closing) and mentioning the names of the ancestors of the Sunda Galuh kings, the ceremony is continued with the reading of *Tahlil* by the religious leader, Ustadz or Kyai.

Forms, Meanings, Functions and Views from Karangkamulyan Community

In the view of the Karangkamulyan community, belief in *Rajah* is part of a culture that is believed to bring good luck and avoid various kinds of calamities. *Rajah* is very closely related to magical elements, some of its usage practices show a relationship with beliefs that contain supernatural powers. The form of the *Rajah* in *Ngikis* ceremony is in the form of a mantra prayer in the Sundanese *Buhun* language and means an apology and grateful to the Creator and the ancestors of the Sundanese Galuh kings. The people of Karangkamulyan believe in and use *Rajah* to solve the problems of life they face. Literally, *Rajah* language is difficult to translate word by word, because it is in Sundanese *Buhun* (old Sundanese language) which is now almost extinct. Therefore, it is translated based on the meaning of the *Rajah Bubuka* and *Pamunah* in *Ngikis* ceremony. *Rajah Bubuka* is a *Rajah* which is said as the opening of the *Ngikis* ceremony containing a prayer of apology and forgiveness to the Creator and the ancestors of the Galuh kings so that they are given smoothness in the activities of human life, in this case the procession of the *Ngikis* ceremony. While *Rajah Pamunah* is a *Rajah* that is said after the *Ngikis* ceremony is finished, which contains an expression of gratitude to the Creator and the ancestors of the Galuh kings.

The belief in *Rajah* in Karangkamulyan community is only limited to a medium or a means of asking the Creator (God Almighty) with the aim of asking for His help for various difficulties situations. This *Rajah* is an ancestral tradition which ultimately

leads to faith and devotion to the Creator as well as respect for the ancestors of the Galuh kings who are considered the forerunners of the Karangkamulyan community. The basic belief of the Sundanese in general is to believe that everything in the world is a living entity, humans are always closely adrift in the cosmos of the universe, both invisible and visible. This view is oriented to a belief that the universe has a ruler, whether it be ancestral spirits (ancestors), divine power or other forces. All of that is a picture of the mind of the Sundanese people, if we carry out your life in harmony with the rules of God and your ancestors, we will get safety and peace [6]. This harmony is manifested in the implementation of *Rajah* in Ngikis traditional ceremony.

For Sundanese people, the prayer spells in the *Rajah* are considered important to the ancestors (the figures and kings of Sunda Galuh) such as Prabu Wangi Lingga Buana Wisesa, Prabu Wastu Kencana, Prabu Dewa Niskala, Prabu Susuk Tunggal, Prabu Siliwangi, and Sri Paduka Maharaja Pakuan Pajajaran, this shows that this ancestor has magical powers that are considered as intermediaries to the Divine. The king is considered as an intermediary between divine life and the real world, because during the Javanese Hindu era, a king played an important role because he had absolute power [12]. The king is considered an incarnation of a god who reaches the level of the divine, even after he dies his image is united with the god in the form of a statue in the temple. This view causes the people to participate in the charism of the king, the safety of the welfare of the country and the people is considered to come from respect for the king. In the next period, the king was no longer a symbol of absolute power but was equated with *Kalipatulah* (God's representative) who occupied an important position as a liaison between divine life and the real world. In *Wayang's* world, the king is considered a god in the form of a human or a king incarnate from a god who occupies the throne of the universe [8]. It can be seen in a chart as follows:

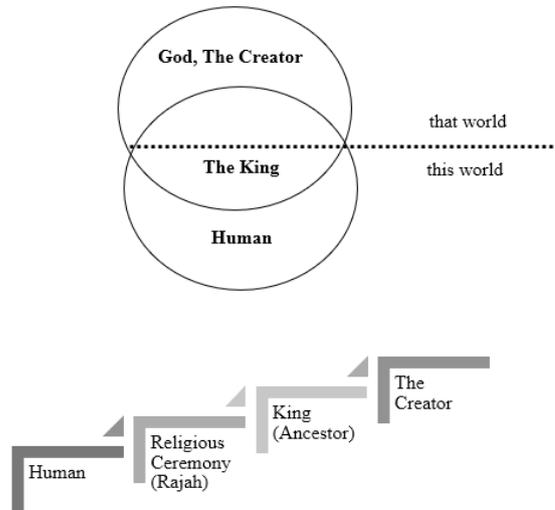


Fig. 3. Rajah's position and hierarch

4 Conclusion

Rajah in the view of the people of Karangkamulyan, is hypothesized as a prayer that is classified as a variant of the mantra. The remnants of the past which at that time had not been touched by the entry of Islam, if interpreted narrowly, belonged to the influence of animism and dynamism. The mantra prayer at the Rajah is one of the activities at Ngikis ceremony, in addition to other activities such as offerings, making new bamboo fences at the Pancalikan site, taking over tumpeng, processions, and dance arts. Rajah in Sundanese culture is a ritual that must be performed before and after performing traditional ceremonies in Tatar Sunda, Rajah Bubuka (opening) and Rajah Pamunah (closing) aimed to Creator and the ancestors of the Galuh king.

Rajah is considered to have magical powers, which according to Rosidi [9, 11] is referred to as imaginary power, which is centered on thoughts related to supernatural beings who are considered to have power and authority in certain places, such as Sang Rumuhun, son of Hiang Bayu, Sang Batara Nagaraja, Sang Batari Nagasugih, Nyi Pohaci and others. At the level of belief in a certain way, the power and authority of supernatural beings can be used by humans for certain purposes according to their needs. Rajah has magical powers that illuminate humans, there is even a kind of inner command that must submit and accept the presence of that power. Kuncen who speaks Rajah has stronger position than the people present at the ceremony. It is not easy to understand the Rajah language because it uses Sundanese Buhun (old Sundanese language) so it is difficult to interpret it word by word, because in it there is a sense language that can be understood based on meaning. The function of the Rajah is as a pillar for the present generation who must remember past traditions that are rich in noble values.

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