

PRESERVING THE HAJAT SASIH TRADITION IN THE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE OF NAGA TASIKMALAYA

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Abstract

The Hajat Sasih tradition in Kampung Adat Naga, Tasikmalaya, is a series of annual ceremonies that reflect the harmony between Islamic teachings, Sundanese local wisdom, and ancestral cosmology. This study aims to describe the form, meaning, and socio-spiritual values of six rituals Muharaman, Rajaban, Ruwah, Nisfu Sya'ban, Idul Fitri, and Idul Adha while also examining customary prohibitions (pamali) as cultural preservation mechanisms. Using a qualitative ethnographic approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with caretakers, traditional leaders, and residents, supported by documentation of sacred spaces, the forbidden forest, and ritual practices. The findings indicate that Hajat Sasih carries both spiritual and social functions: expressing gratitude, seeking protection, and strengthening communal cohesion. Customary prohibitions, such as avoiding stretching one's legs toward the qibla, maintaining the leuweung larangan, and prohibiting photography of Bumi Ageng, serve to protect the sanctity of space and uphold adat values. These practices demonstrate how the community preserves cultural identity amid modern changes through rituals, taboo systems, and inherited knowledge. This research contributes to cultural anthropology and indigenous heritage studies, enriching discussions on the integration of religious and customary traditions in contemporary Sundanese society.

Keywords: Hajat Sasih, Traditional Village of Naga, Local Wisdom of Sunda

Abstract

Tradisi Hajat Sasih di Kampung Adat Naga, Tasikmalaya, merupakan rangkaian upacara tahunan yang mencerminkan keharmonisan antara ajaran Islam, kearifan lokal Sunda, dan kosmologi leluhur. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan bentuk, makna, serta nilai-nilai sosial-spiritual dari enam ritual, yaitu Muharaman, Rajaban, Ruwah, Nisfu Sya'ban, Idul Fitri, dan Idul Adha, sekaligus mengkaji larangan adat (pamali) sebagai mekanisme pelestarian budaya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan etnografi kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan kuncen, tokoh adat, dan masyarakat, serta didukung oleh dokumentasi ruang-ruang sakral, hutan larangan, dan praktik ritual. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Hajat Sasih memiliki fungsi spiritual dan sosial, yaitu sebagai bentuk ungkapan syukur, permohonan perlindungan, serta penguatan kohesi sosial masyarakat. Larangan adat, seperti tidak meluruskan kaki ke arah kiblat, menjaga kelestarian leuweung larangan, serta larangan memotret Bumi Ageng, berfungsi untuk melindungi kesakralan ruang dan mempertahankan nilai-nilai adat. Praktik-praktik ini menunjukkan bagaimana masyarakat mempertahankan identitas budaya di tengah perubahan modern melalui ritual, sistem tabu, dan pengetahuan yang diwariskan secara turun-temurun.

Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian antropologi budaya dan studi warisan budaya lokal, serta memperkaya diskusi mengenai integrasi antara tradisi keagamaan dan adat dalam masyarakat Sunda kontemporer.

Keywords: Hajat Sasih, Hajat Sasih, Kampung Adat Naga, Kearifan Lokal Sunda

INTRODUCTION

The Naga Traditional Village in Tasikmalaya is one of the Sundanese traditional communities that still maintains its ancestral belief system, social structure, and traditional rituals. The existence of these traditions shows how indigenous peoples continue to preserve cultural values amid modernization and technological penetration. One of the main traditions that is still preserved is *Hajat Sasih*, a series of annual traditional ceremonies related to the Islamic religious calendar and the Sundanese cosmological knowledge system. This tradition is not merely a ceremonial activity, but part of a communal identity that shapes the way the community understands the world, their ancestors, and their spiritual relationship with nature (Astuti & Kosasih, 2020).

In the context of Sundanese indigenous communities, rituals such as *Hajat Sasih* serve as instruments for maintaining balance between humans, nature, and God. These rituals demonstrate how local culture interacts with Islamic teachings, forming a unique and syncretic religious configuration (Misno & Prawiro, 2018). As explained in various anthropological studies, communal ritual mechanisms play an important role in maintaining social solidarity and strengthening collective values, especially in societies with strong customary structures (Mubayanah & Amin, 2024). Through *Hajat Sasih*, the people of Kampung Naga not only fulfill their spiritual obligations, but also preserve their cultural continuity as a form of respect for their ancestors.

The blend of tradition and Islam in the religious practices of the Sundanese community in Kampung Naga has also attracted the attention of many researchers. The traditions of Muharaman, Rajaban, Ruwah, Nisfu Sya'ban, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha have their own ritual characteristics and are rich in symbolism that combines Islamic teachings with local wisdom. Research related to indigenous peoples shows that annual rituals such as this become spaces for cultural reproduction, places where ancestral knowledge is passed down through social practices and symbolic communication

(Iskandar et al., 2018). In this context, *Hajat Sasih* serves as a means of preserving cultural identity while strengthening the spiritual values of the community.

In addition to rituals, Kampung Adat Naga is also known for its system of customary prohibitions or *pamali*, which serve to maintain the sanctity of space and community behavior. Prohibitions such as not stretching one's legs toward the qibla, entering *leuweung larangan* (forbidden forests), and photographing *Bumi Ageng*, are not only ethical rules, but cultural mechanisms that protect customary spiritual and ecological values. *Pamali* is a form of local wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation to preserve environmental sustainability and social harmony (Rohaeni & Listiani, 2013). This is consistent with findings from Sundanese cultural research, which states that *pamali* functions as an ecological, moral, and religious norm in indigenous communities (Andriyani & Hidayat, 2024).

Thus, research on *Hajat Sasih* in Kampung Adat Naga is important to understand how traditional rituals, beliefs, and taboos shape the cultural resilience of the Sundanese indigenous community. This study also contributes to the literature on ritual anthropology and cultural preservation, especially in indigenous communities that still maintain traditional practices amid the tide of modernization. This research seeks to describe the forms of *Hajat Sasih*, its symbolic meanings, and its socio-spiritual functions in the life of the Naga Village community.

METHOD

This study uses an ethnographic qualitative approach to understand the cultural meaning, ritual structure, and local wisdom values in the implementation of the *Hajat Sasih* in Kampung Adat Naga. Data were collected through in depth interviews with three key informant groups traditional leaders, caretakers, and residents all of which were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. In addition, documentation was carried out in the form of photographs of activities, field notes, and observations of relevant traditional spaces, while still complying with traditional prohibitions such as restrictions on taking pictures in *Bumi Ageng* and the *leuweung larangan* area. Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model developed by Miles et al., (2014) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Reduction was carried out through the selection and coding of interview data based on themes such as the meaning of *hajat*

sasih, *pamali* rules, ritual symbolism, and social function. The reduced data was then presented in an organized thematic narrative to identify patterns and relationships between themes, and further verified through triangulation of sources between traditional leaders, key informants, and residents. The entire process was conducted in accordance with research ethics and respect for the customary rules of Kampung Naga (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the *Hajat Sasih* tradition in Kampung Adat Naga is a series of annual rituals related to the lunar cycle in the Islamic calendar and has been passed down from generation to generation by ancestors. Based on interviews with the traditional leader, the caretaker, and residents, it was found that the main *hajatan* include Muharaman, Rajaban, Ruwah, Nisfu Sya'ban, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. Each has different social and spiritual functions, but all are oriented towards expressing gratitude, praying for safety, and honoring ancestors. These findings are in line with Sundanese cultural studies which show that indigenous communities in the Priangan region combine Islamic traditions with elements of local beliefs in their collective rituals (Iskandar, 2017).

Muharaman

The Muharaman ritual in Kampung Naga is the opening of a series of *sasih* celebrations. Based on interviews with the caretaker, Muharaman is carried out through communal prayers, purification of the village area, and the distribution of food to residents. This ritual is understood as an effort to enter the new year with good intentions, pray for safety, and cleanse oneself of the sins of the previous year. According to the traditional leader, Muharaman is also a moment of social consolidation, as all residents are required to participate. This context reflects the character of Sundanese tradition, which places the month of Muharam as a sacred time to reestablish the relationship between humans and God Almighty (Zayadi, 2023). Functionally, this ritual strengthens social solidarity while also serving as a forum for the regeneration of values, as young people are involved in the preparation of the event.

Rajaban

The Rajaban ritual is held to commemorate the Isra Mikraj of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. According to residents, Rajaban is carried out with recitations of prayers, tahlil, and *ngalap berkah*. The participation of the entire family makes Rajaban a moment to strengthen the Islamic identity of the indigenous community. However, local elements such as the serving of traditional foods (Dinihayati & Priangani, 2023) and the arrangement of the ritual space show a blend of Islamic values and Sundanese culture, a form of syncretism that is also found in Sundanese cultural research in the Priangan region (Zayadi, 2023). Thus, Rajaban is not only a religious celebration but also a means of preserving cultural identity that has adapted harmoniously with Islam (Fuadi et al., 2024); (Aziz et al., 2023).

Ruwah

Ruwah or ngaruwat is a ritual performed before Ramadan. Residents explain that Ruqah serves to “send prayers” to their ancestors. This ritual includes cleaning graves, offering symbolic offerings, and praying together. Ruwah reflects the cosmological view of the Kampung Naga community about the connection between the human world and their ancestors. This finding is in line with the concept of continuity of ancestors in Sundanese culture, which states that the spirits of ancestors continue to have a moral and spiritual connection with their descendants (Rahmawati et al., 2023). Ruwah also serves as a form of values education, as children are taught the importance of respecting karuhun as guardians of the village's balance.

Nisfu Sya'ban

The Nisfu Sya'ban ritual is performed with a focus on prayers for safety and purification ahead of the holy month. Residents emphasize that this ritual also strengthens social solidarity as entire families gather and participate.

Eid al-Fitr

The Eid al-Fitr celebrations in Kampung Naga showcase the distinctive blend of Islamic values and Sundanese customs. Residents perform the Eid prayer together, followed by the tradition of visiting neighbors' homes, sharing food, and participating in communal activities at the traditional hall. Interviews with residents reveal that Eid al-Fitr is an important moment to reinforce the values of *silih asah*, *silih asih*, *silih asuh*, ethical concepts in Sundanese culture that emphasize empathy and mutual care. This

tradition reinforces the role of Eid al-Fitr as a means of restoring relationships and regenerating family values.

Eid al-Adha

The Eid al-Adha ritual is marked by the slaughter of sacrificial animals and the distribution of meat to all residents. However, there is a local custom, namely the distribution of meat to traditional elders before it is distributed to others. According to the traditional leader, this is done as a form of respect for the guardians of traditional customs. This finding shows the integration between Islamic law and the traditional social structure, where sacrifice is not only a form of worship, but also part of a redistribution system that strengthens equitable welfare and communal solidarity. Similar research in indigenous communities in Indonesia found that sacrifice serves as a mechanism for strengthening social cohesion and a sense of togetherness (Wahid, 2022); (Fatmawati & Dewantara, 2022).

Pamali and Sacred Space

In addition to ritual structures, the study found that taboos are an integral part of preserving traditions. One of the taboos emphasized is the prohibition against stretching one's legs toward the *kiblat*, which is considered disrespectful toward symbols of holiness. Another taboo relates to sacred spaces, such as the prohibition against photographing *Bumi Ageng*, a place considered to be the spiritual center of the village. These rules are not only social norms, but also mechanisms for maintaining the sanctity of cultural symbols (Khosihan et al., 2024). As explained by Suarsa et al., (2021) *pamali* functions as a form of social control in traditional societies.

Field findings also confirm the importance of *leuweung larangan* as an ecological space that must not be disturbed. Residents believe that this area is a gift from their ancestors and supports the ecological balance of the village. This practice reflects the concept of indigenous-based conservation, which according to Febriansyah et al., (2024) has proven effective in maintaining environmental sustainability in Sundanese indigenous communities. Thus, *hajjat sasih* not only serves as a religious and cultural ritual, but also as an ecological system that supports nature conservation.

Overall, the results of the study show that the implementation of *hajjat sasih* is a combination of Islamic spirituality, respect for ancestors, and Sundanese local wisdom. Through rituals, taboos, and the management of sacred spaces, the people of Kampung

Adat Naga have succeeded in preserving their cultural identity while maintaining harmony with nature and each other. This finding is consistent with cultural anthropological findings that emphasize that traditional rituals serve as mechanisms for transmitting values (Akhmar et al., 2023), strengthening solidarity (Mentel, 2022), and preserving ecology (Food, 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that the *Hajat Sasih* series in Kampung Adat Naga is not merely a religious ritual agenda, but a cultural framework that supports the continuity of traditional identity, maintains social harmony, and preserves the sacred relationship between humans, ancestors, and nature. Each ritual, from Muharaman, Rajaban, Ruwahan, Nisfu Sya'ban, Eid al-Fitr, to Eid al-Adha, demonstrates complementary social and spiritual functions, thereby maintaining community cohesion and guiding religious practices that are adaptive yet deeply rooted in Sundanese local wisdom.

Findings show that the values passed down through *Hajat Sasih* not only serve as moral guidelines, but also as a collective mechanism that maintains social structures, spatial ethics, and relationships with nature, particularly through the pamali system and the existence of protected forests. This tradition has proven to be a key instrument in maintaining cultural continuity amid rapid social change.

Thus, *Hajat Sasih* serves as a medium for the transmission of values, the formation of communal identity, and the preservation of cultural ecology, while demonstrating that the integration of Islamic teachings with local customs can shape religious practices that are harmonious, inclusive, and sustainable for the community of Kampung Adat Naga.

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