

Women and Customary Rituals in The Neres Tradition

Maulia Pratiwi¹, Naniek Afrilla Framanik², Ail Muldi³

¹²³Program Studi Magister Ilmu Komunikasi Pascasarjana Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: Maullprtw11@gmail.com, naniek.afrilla@untirta.ac.id, ail.muldi@untirta.ac.id

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to describe and analyze the Neres tradition as part of a series of Seren Taun ceremonies in Kasepuhan Citorek, an Indigenous community of Banten Kidul located in the Mount Halimun Salak National Park (TNGHS). This tradition serves as a ritual of self-purification before the implementation of Seren Taun as well as believed to be able to resist reinforcements, prevent pagebluk, and maintain the fertility of agricultural products. The research uses qualitative approach with post-positivistic paradigm and ethnographic method of communication. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and triangulation. The results showed that the Neres tradition has more meaning than just the practice of physical hygiene, but is full of symbols that reflect the values of prosperity, chastity and attachment to ancestors. In-depth analysis shows that cleaned household appliances - such as hihid, seeng, Dipper, pangarih, dulang, Basom, and boboko—are not only seen as utilitarian objects, but also symbols of well-being and the continuity of domestic life. This cleansing procession affirms the role of women as Guardians of domestic harmony as well as liaisons between Indigenous values that are passed down through generations. In addition, the use of natural elements such as palias grass, ash from upstream rice, and mulang water strengthens the spiritual dimension that unites humans with the surrounding nature. Thus, the Neres tradition can be understood as a communication ritual that contains symbolic messages, affirms the central role of women in the preservation of culture, and represents the collective identity of the Kasepuhan Citorek community that persists in the midst of changing times.

Keywords: Kasepuhan Citorek, Traditional Rituals, Seren Taun, Neres, Ethnography Communication.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia consists of various regions that have diverse cultures and traditions. This cultural diversity is a valuable treasure that plays an important role in the development of the nation's culture. Traditional ceremonies are one of the most prominent characteristics of cultural expression and serve as a manifestation of its existence. They not only function as cultural practices but also reflect the awareness of cultural identity, often wrapped in sacred values rooted in customs, religion, or belief. For instance, the Sekaten ceremony in Yogyakarta reflects the blend of Javanese tradition and Islamic teachings, while the Ngaben cremation ceremony in Bali demonstrates the deep connection between ritual, Hindu religious beliefs, and social structure. Similarly, the Seren Taun harvest festival in West Java, particularly among the Sundanese people, highlights gratitude to the Creator for agricultural abundance while preserving ties with ancestral heritage. Traditional ceremonies therefore cannot be separated from historical elements because, at their core, they are collective behaviors that show awareness of the past while simultaneously preserving the legacy of past civilizations. These examples illustrate that traditional ceremonies in Indonesia are more than symbolic rituals—they represent the living connection between history, religion, and cultural identity that continues to shape the nation's identity today.

Through the ceremony we can also trace the origin of both places, figures, objects, natural events, among others. ritual ceremonies have the function of increasing social solidarity, eliminating attention to individual interests, and strengthening religious life. In Lebak regency of Banten province there is a

local tradition called Neres Adat Citorek. This tradition is part of a series of Seren Taun ceremonies held as a form of gratitude after the harvest is complete. One series of Seren Taun ceremony is Neres activity, which is a ritual bathing together in the women's River which aims to eliminate various kinds of diseases such as the spread of epidemics, hunger, and avoid planting rice or trees whose results are not optimal. As a hereditary tradition, Neres is also a way to increase solidarity among fellow citizens in preserving traditions from the effects of modernization. Preservation of this tradition is a necessity for all walks of life, including by women. Based on the observations of researchers, women living in Citorek have differences in social functions and roles that are not too prominent. In addition to bathing, in the Neres tradition, the women brought utensils of daily use for cleaning. They come from a village in Kasepuhan Ciusul.

In the Neres tradition, not all women can participate. There are certain conditions that must be met, such as not having menstruation and already having a husband. This shows that this tradition is loaded with social and religious rules that regulate the role of women in it. Interestingly, Neres used natural elements in the bathing procession, for example, shampoo derived from rice stalks or burnt straw. Based on the results of interviews with Sukmadi, it is known that Neres is divided into two types, namely Neres Cai conducted in the river (walungan or parakan) and Neres Darat conducted in the yard. However, which is still maintained in Kasepuhan Ciusul today is Neres Cai, because it is believed to be more in accordance with ancestral traditions. The utensils used in this ritual also have a deep symbolic meaning. For example, palias that serve as a base, basins or tobas filled with Cai mulang water and live stingrays, as well as offerings in the form of yellow rice, dodol, and other typical foods. All of these paraphernalia are not only practical in nature, but also reflect cultural symbols that are passed down from generation to generation. The Neres procession is seen as an effort to cleanse oneself, both outwardly and mentally, as well as a form of respect for nature and the creator. When viewed from a cultural perspective, Neres can be explained through the framework of Hofstede (1994), which states that culture is manifested in symbols, heroism, ritual activities, and values. In this context, Neres was a ritual activity that, although it seemed simple, still held a very important social function. This Ritual is not only a customary routine, but also a medium of cultural communication. Edward T. Hall even emphasizes that " culture is communication and communication is culture," so traditions like Neres can be understood as symbolic communication practices. Through this procession, actors and communities interact verbally and nonverbally, conveying latent messages that are full of meaning although sometimes ambiguous.

Thus, the Neres tradition serves not only as an indigenous ritual, but also as an intangible cultural heritage that reinforces the identity of the local people. Its existence reflects Indonesia's diverse cultural wealth, as well as showing how people build and maintain values inherited by ancestors. Neres is part of the ten objects of cultural promotion, especially in the category of Customs and rites, so its preservation is important to strengthen the identity of the nation. Research on Neres is expected to introduce local wisdom Citorek to the wider community, as well as a valuable source of historical and cultural learning for future generations.

Method

This study uses quantitative methods through ethnographic Communication Research. Bodgan and Taylor define quantitative methodology as a research process that produces descriptions of data based on specific or spoken words of people and observable risks. This education is more directed towards the end and the individual is holistic (utu). So in this case it is not possible to identify individuals or organizations into variables or hypotheses, but it is necessary to consider them as a necessity. While in the book Communication Research from Rachmat (2006) explained that quantitative methodology aims to explain the phenomenon in depth through the collection of data in depth. In this methodology there is no mention of the size of the population or sampling based on the population or its very limited sample. In this case, if the data collected is already known and can explain the phenomenon under study, there is no need for further sampling. In this study more is done on the perspective of data quality rather than a lot (quantity) of data. (Kriyantono, 2016). In communication Ethnography research: types and methods by Kiki Zakiah explains that communication ethnography is a process of studying communication patterns as a cultural community. In macro, this study is part of ethnography. Ethnography of mobile communication on objects of language and social interaction in the structure of communication quantitative research. Research is traditionally conducted in psychology, sociology, linguistics, and anthropology. Ethnographic communication is focused on cultural codes and rituals. Take ethnographic research because by using this research researchers can understand how a group of people to think, live and behave. Ethnographic studies also require research to enter and

become part of the lives of research subjects, so as to better understand and develop a group of people who carry out their life activities.

With this approach, research was conducted to understand, understand, understand and understand in depth The Meaning of the Ritual tradition of Neres in Kasepuhan Ciusul Kampung Citorek kidul. Data Collection Techniques Data collection techniques are the most strategic step in research, because the main purpose of research is to obtain data. Research Data will not get the data obtained (Sugiono, 2018). Collection techniques used in this study are observation, interview, documentation and triangulation. This technique is used so that researchers can analyze the data in accordance with the purpose of research

II. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description Of Research Subjects

Geographical Conditions

Kasepuhan Citorek is a group of sub-ethnic Sundanese Indigenous people who live around Mount Halimun Salak National Park (TNGHS), which borders Bogor Regency, West Java Province, and Sobang District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province. Administratively, Kasepuhan Citorek is located in Cibeber District, Lebak Regency, Banten Province, more precisely around the sacred buildings of Lebak Cibeber, Lebak Regency. Kasepuhan Citorek is one of the Indigenous peoples who are members of the South Banten Customary Unit (SABAKI), where SABAKI is a community of Indigenous people who in their daily lives carry out traditional socio-cultural behavior that refers to Sundanese characteristics in the 18th century (et al., n.d.).

The community lives in several districts in Lebak Regency, with the largest number of kasepuhan located in Cibeber District, among them Kasepuhan Citorek. In addition, there are other kasepuhan, namely Kasepuhan Cibadak, Kasepuhan Cisungsang, Kasepuhan Cicitu, Kasepuhan Citarub, and Kasepuhan Ciharang. Meanwhile, Kasepuhan Cirompong and Kasepuhan Pasir Eurih are located in Sobang District, and Kasepuhan Karang is located in Muncang District. Another kasepuhan is Kasepuhan Ciptagelar, which is divided into the parent Kasepuhan (known as *Kasepuhan Besar*) and smaller kasepuhan or *kaolotan* scattered in various regions. From Kasepuhan Ciptagelar itself emerged two other kasepuhan, namely Kasepuhan Ciptamulya and Kasepuhan Sinaresmi (Wazin, Ayatullah Humaini, 2016). The term kasepuhan itself refers to the old customs that are still maintained in the daily life of the people. However, among the Indigenous people of Banten Kidul, some villages are traditional and others semi-traditional, so while some still recognize local Indigenous leadership in managing daily life, others place less emphasis on it. Kasepuhan Citorek plays an important role in Lebak Regency, particularly after experiencing several expansions that divided the area into five villages: East Citorek, Central Citorek, West Citorek, South Citorek, and Sabrang Citorek. Among these, East Citorek is the most important because it is the place of the kasepuhan *kaolot* (pupuhu). Every major event, such as the *Seren Taun* celebration and other communal activities, is organized in East Citorek. The area of East Citorek Village covers about 1,712.4 hectares, consisting of 24.8 hectares of rice fields, 129 hectares of plantations, 1,326.25 hectares of forestry, 0.25 hectares of office areas, and 0.32 hectares of cemetery. Citorek Village is bordered to the north by Sukamaju Village, Sobang District, to the east by Bogor Regency, West Java Province, to the west by Central Citorek, and to the south by Sabrang Citorek. The area of East Citorek Village is recorded as 3,100 km² (Reny Sawitri and Endro Subiandono, 2010).

The Kasepuhan Citorek area is considered a formal traditional institution. There are three institutions that serve as references for the life of the Indigenous people of Citorek, namely the state (*jaro/lurah*), religion (*penghulu*), and the ancestral customary leaders (*karuhun kasepuhan/kaolotan*). Obedience to Indigenous leaders is undeniable. In accordance with the needs of the Indigenous community, adat Kasepuhan Citorek has important moments that serve as the basis for the formation of its institutional structure. These moments shaped specific positions or roles in accordance with their functions within the customary institutions of Kasepuhan Citorek (DLHK, 2017).

Demographic Conditions

As the village community in general, the indigenous people of Kasepuhan Citorek have a very large population, with the number of people in the village of East Citorek is as many as 3,033 people and 1,011 families (heads of families). Citorek tengah has 5,682 inhabitants and 1,894 households. Citorek kidul 2960 inhabitants with a total of 728 families (head of family). West Citorek 2185 inhabitants with 987 households (head of family). Citorek sabrang 1779 inhabitants with 593 families so the total population of Citorek village is 15,639 inhabitants with 5213 families (head of family). Of all of them the majority are indigenous, but there are also some supporters/migrants, they are more because of work and marriage that causes them to live in the village. On the other hand, there are also Citorek residents

who live outside of the Citorek village but there are not many of them, that's because of work and marriage reasons, but they still feel related to the customs so that when the seren taun ceremony they try to visit their native village (Website, 2024).

Geographically Citorek is a village that is located far from the crowd, but the village is slowly improving, with so many people Citorek recognize that this village is now better and developed because of the village government system that runs well, and the many educational systems, economy, and others that already exist in the place.

Then the description of the state of the population including residents Kasepuhan citorek include :

1. The development of Indigenous Peoples

Basically, society is always changing, there is no society that does not change, even in the smallest level of society (which consists of many individuals) will always change (Nanang Martono, n.d.). these changes will lead to the development of the community.

Development is often seen as a remedy to problems that arise in society, especially in developing countries. The beginning of the implementation of the development approach when the theory of growth was put forward by orthodox economic groups. This theory explains that development as economic growth is ultimately assumed to improve the standard of living (Fredian Tonny Nasdian, 2014).

In the 90's Citorek society is a society that is still underdeveloped, with a very bad infrastructure such as lighting systems that still use oil, transportation facilities that do not allow to be traversed by vehicles and sometimes even two-wheeled vehicles can not get through the place this is certainly very influential on many factors including the limited education system, slow economic growth rate. Every citizen who wants to travel to an area they have to travel there on foot and also with a long duration of one day. In conditions like this actually they do not stand still, a lot of effort they have done through the delivery of aspirations to officials who come to Citorek. But the answer is " he " delivered by officials always ended nil, even so Citorek people do not give up baegitu just like that, at one time kasepuhan called Citorek figures to discuss solutions to get out of backwardness, one of the conclusions of the conversation is that living in a country there must be a counterweight not only plays a role in internal customs but also must have a role in government.

Finally in 1999 was the beginning of changes in the Citorek community where there are some people who continue their education to college, including Unpad Bandung student wardi, who is now a lecturer there and has a wife there and aman Bogor IPB students both young men are figures in Citorek changes. These two young men along with the community who came as many as 2 trucks to the Lebak regency government building to meet the Regent of Yas" a they asked the Regent for road infrastructures to be repaired immediately, not long after that, in 2000 the demands of the Citorek community were met after the road was built significant changes began.

2. Education of the indigenous people of kasepuhan Citorek

Education is an integral part of life. This kind of understanding may seem forced, but if it tries to demand the flow and process of human life, then it cannot be denied that education has colored the long path of human life from beginning to end, education becomes a true bodyguard and becomes a basic human need.

According to the Indonesian dictionary, education is the process of changing attitudes and behavior of a person or group of people in an effort to mature humans through teaching and training efforts, the process of doing, how to educate.¹² therefore, education is one of the important assets for the independence of society. Likewise Citorek community welcomed intansi Education located in the region Citorek, the development from year to year education in the village Citorek growing and growing, this development began after the legalization of SMAN 2 cibeber previously distant class (from SMAN 1 Cibeber) in 2011 in Citorek.

Seen from the level of public education, the majority of Citorek community education is the elementary school level, but with the rapid development of the Times slowly many Indigenous people kasepuhan citorek continue their education to college both public and private universities.

3. Kasepuhan citorek customary livelihood system

Located around Mount Halimun Salak National Park (TNGHS) which is a mountainous ecosystem that has a wealth of high natural resources, making the indigenous people of kasepuhan Banten kidul rely on the agricultural sector. Kasepuhan Indigenous people realize that in nature Management, the community must focus on balance. This means that what is taken, must be directly proportional to what is given to nature. The agricultural system in kasepuhan Indigenous people is divided into two, namely dry land farming system or huma and wetland farming or paddy fields, in addition to both there are also fields or plantations planted with various kinds of wood trees and fruits and various other foods. Plus, this area is included in the management of the area developed by indigenous peoples, it is what makes the people there see themselves as farmers. In addition to farmers there are also people who make a living as traders and gold miners, there are also those who do not make a living in the internal kasepuhan but they go also outside the kasepuhan itself such as selling hoods and others.

Farmers in Citorek are traditional farmers, traditional farmers are very different from business farmers such as an indigenous farmer farming according to customary rules, for example, when harvesting everything must be harvested, not taking into account profits and losses, while business farmers do the opposite, they must take into account the same profits and losses from their farming.

The land they cultivate is located around the village, the processing of rice fields in Citorek village is different from the processing of rice fields in general villages, in one year only one harvest, the processing time they need is six months. The next six months, their leisure time, usually filled with gold mining activities. Trade and others. Agricultural traditions in Citorek until now there has been no change in the Harvest carried out for one year after the harvest is stored in leuit for food supplies, Citorek people forbid to sell rice and even sell rice even though this is in anticipation of famine next year when crop failure, Rice may be sold when there is a residue from the previous harvest. Thus, the people of Citorek never go hungry, even though they harvest once a year but the results they get are more than enough, their motto in farming is "little kudu mahi, loba kudu nyesa"

A Short History Of Cytokines

Kasepuhan Citorek is one of the kasepuhan kasawan Gunung Halimun Salak National Park area (TNGHS) Kasepuhan Citorek including Kaskar South Banten Indigenous people who at the same time pursue traditional socio-cultural behavioral patterns that mimic the karakreristik of sunda in the 18th century, their ancestors who formed the Kasepuhan community were the rulers of the Kaskar Kingdom of Padjajaran yang retreat to the southern region because their kingdom was successfully occupied by the Sultanate of Banten. In the 16th century the Citorek kasepuhan center was initially settled in Guradog village, Bitung waterfall village, Kecamatan borrowing Bogor regency. The nursing center then moved in 1946 to the Citorek region because of the orders of the ancients.

The residents of kasepuhan located in South Banten (South Banten) are from grandchildren (descendants) living around Kecamatan Bayah, Cibeber, and Cipanas. The camps are located around the villages of Mekarsari, Simagalih, Sukamulya, Geglasi, hegarmanah, Tavern Banten, Cihambali, Cikadu, and Citorek. The people of Kasepuhan eat themselves the citizens of 'unity' (unity of Customs) in their way of life are still strong in the course of their ancestral tattoos, that is the indigenous people of kasepuhan who still hold firm and are bound strongly by the values and rules of traditional hereditary customs.

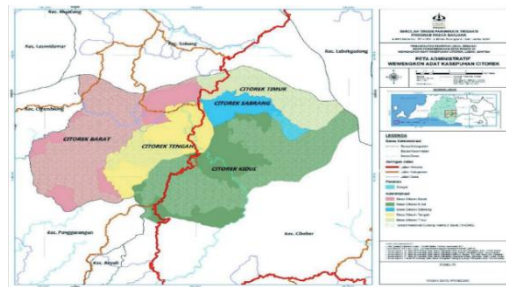
The socio-cultural behavior patterns of the Kasepuhan Citorek community still reflect the characteristics of Sundanese culture from earlier centuries. Their way of life emphasizes simplicity, mutual cooperation, and strong adherence to ancestral traditions. Although they live within the wider society, they preserve a distinctive cultural identity that differentiates them from other Indigenous groups such as the Baduy. The open and adaptive attitudes of the Kasepuhan elders also highlight their ability to maintain tradition while interacting with the outside world.

Historically, the origins of the Kasepuhan community have a strong connection with the last Sundanese Kingdom in West Java, which was based in Bogor. When the Sunda Kingdom fell after being attacked by the Banten army in 1579, many members of the kingdom fled to various regions, including Mount Halimun, the slopes of Mount Cibodas, and Mount Palasari, extending to Jasinga and Bayah. Oral traditions among the elders of Kasepuhan indicate that these migrations eventually became the roots of Indigenous settlements in South Banten, including Citorek. Stories about King Siliwangi and his loyal followers are still preserved in local narratives and are considered part of the cultural memory of the community. The genealogical lineage of the Kasepuhan South Banten, according to Indigenous elders,

comes from two main sources: the *Pancer Mandiri* (independent lineage) and the *Pancer Pangawinan* (marital lineage). The *Pancer Mandiri* is believed to be descendants of the Cirebon royal troops who settled in the Bayah region, while the *Pancer Pangawinan* came from intermarriages with other local groups. In particular, the Indigenous people of Kasepuhan Citorek trace their ancestry to Guradog, Jasinga, where in 1846 they began migrating to Citorek in search of fertile agricultural land on the southern slopes of Mount Kendeng. The settlement moved several times—from Guradog to Jamang River, Gurandong, and finally to Citorek—before establishing a permanent community.

The name *Citorek* itself has symbolic meaning. It comes from the combination of two syllables: *ci* (water) and *torek* (not heard). Literally, *Citorek* means “silent water” or “water that flows back upstream.” This etymology reflects the community’s close relationship with nature and their respect for natural symbols in cultural narratives. The traditional institutional structure of Kasepuhan Citorek is hierarchical and hereditary. The highest position is the Customary Chief, known as *Oyok*. Supporting positions include interpreters, letter bearers, customary aides, and guardians of various community affairs. These roles are not chosen by the people but inherited through family lineage, usually passed on to sons. An exception is the role of *Paraji* (traditional midwife), which is carried out by women. Each position is held for life, and when the officeholder passes away, it is continued by the next generation in the same family line. This institutional structure demonstrates the importance of kinship, inheritance, and continuity in maintaining the socio-cultural order of Kasepuhan Citorek.

The ruler of the customs called “Oyok “was the descendant of the former” Oyok“, while for” Pangulu “was from the former” Pangulu”. This also applies to other devices in the structure of the institution. Customs leaders have certain responsibilities and obligations. One of the responsibilities is to maintain and maintain the customs traditions of the Customary Law Society in a fluctuating manner. In addition “ “Oyok “also obtains privileges, becomes a leader in a variety of customary events and rituals, communicates with the Ancients, and deals with customary fields commonly referred to as”certain”. ” Oyok “also spots the “big house” custom house, located in the Citorek Health Center.



Sumber: Prabowo et al. (2023)

Figure 1 Map Of The Location Of The Citorek Wilderness Area.

Kasepuhan Citorek is located in Cibeber District, Lebak regency, Banten province. The topography is in a hilly area with an area of approximately 7,416 hectares. Kasepuhan Citorek Traditional Area consists of 22 RW and 94 RT with an area of 163.87 km² as shown in Table 1. The number of inhabitants in Kasepuhan Citorek is 12,783 inhabitants out of 4,434 heads of families (KK), with a relatively low population density, of 0.87 inhabitants/ha (BPS, 2022). This is inseparable from the position of the customary territory of Kasepuhan Citorek which is an enclave of Mount Halimun Salak National Park (TNGHS) with an area of 9,991 hectares or about 63.07% of the total area of Kasepuhan. One of the customary Kasepuhan in Lebak regency that has been recognized through Lebak regency regional Regulation Number 8 of 2015 concerning the recognition, protection and empowerment of Customary Law communities is Kasepuhan Citorek.

Administratively, Kasepuhan Citorek is located in Cibeber District, consisting of 5 villages, namely Citorek Timur, Citorek Tengah, Citorek Sabrang, Citorek Barat, and Citorek Kidul (Nugroho et al., 2020) as seen in Figure 1 (Prabowo et al, 2023). The community is obedient and obedient to the rules that have been passed down from generation to generation since Kasepuhan Citorek was first formed. Local people are very open to the outside world, but this openness does not reduce the existence of local wisdom, where Indigenous people are very obedient to customary rules even though the rules are not written (Prabowo et al., 2023).

The history of the name of the village Citorek that there are ancient times, there is someone being ngalasan hoe ‘take rattan’ in the middle of the forest. He worked until the afternoon so he could not go home and had to stay overnight at the place. He soon made a simple hut to sleep comfortably.

When night falls, he desperately needs water and goes to great lengths to get it. All night he searched for water in various places, but did not manage to find a single drop of water. The next day, he was shocked to see that there was water next to his hut in the morning. Last night, he did not hear the sound of water. Because the events did not hear anything or that lighter, the area was named Citorek. Until now, Citorek is used as the name of the river, village, and includes kasepuhan, namely Kasepuhan Citorek

Utilization of Natural Resources is done wisely so that the ecological order is relatively well maintained. There are two major rivers flowing in the indigenous territory of Citorek, namely the Citorek River and the Cimadur River. In both rivers, there appear to be at least three utilization spaces. The first room, which is at the most upstream, serves as a source of clean water, which is used for various purposes, such as bathing and for drinking water. The second room is downstream from the first room, which is used for washing various household items, such as clothes and kitchen utensils. The third room is located downstream of the second room, serves as a dirty room used to defecate or function as a toilet. The dirty room is also used as a place to store karangkeng, a wooden box where goldfish and tilapia are kept. Karangkeng planted in the river measuring 1.5 x 2 m or 2 x 3 meters. Its upper part pokes up to the surface of the water with a height of about 20 cm to 30 cm. Quite a lot of karangkeng placed docked to the left and right banks of the river. Placement karangkeng like that also makes it easy for residents Citorek who will throw the wish, namely by squatting on the edge of the cage.

Human waste is indirectly a fish feed, in addition to Bran and food waste of citizens. Karangkeng will be drained of its contents or dissected in the post-harvest period to be transferred to rice fields. Not only the river is used as a source of water in Kasepuhan Citorek, springs are also included in it. There are hundreds of springs in the Citorek area. Around it grow various types of large trees, tall, and ri ndang. Customary rules prohibit anyone from cutting down trees around the springs. The ban is able to maintain and protect the presence of springs from drying out. Such an abundant water supply is also very possible, because wilyah Citorek whose area reaches 7,416 hectares is still green with trees. Forests are an important part of the entire kasepuhan customary area.

Around the forest that Kasepuhan Citorek Indigenous people settled.

The marriage consisted of a man and a woman. the men were taken to a village called Chichester. The bride's parents were given a gift. The woman was taken to the hospital and given a blanket. She was called Sister. today, art and music are one of the most important things in life. Then they were told: (1) if they are afraid, someone will deliver them, (2) if they want, someone will give them, (3) when it is dark, someone will make peace, (4) when it rains, someone will Cry, (5) when it is cold, someone will cry, (6) If you have faith and stay with your parents. Especially for women, given the additional advice, is that when there is no security, do not be afraid to run to the men, if the men are not controlled/ not allowed to defend there will be advocates. (Mulyadi)

The offspring of pangawinan, consisting of a man and and a woman. Male descendants were brought to the cikaret area (now the cisungsang area, Cicarucub, and others), which was then called dulur lalake 'brother'. The descendants of pangawinan men were given incense. The women were taken to Citorek and given panglay provisions. Henceforth, she was called dulur Wade 'sister'. Until now, frankincense and panglay are very important and inseparable objects from each other in their lives, especially in religious activities. Furthermore, the two men were given a proverb / testament that reads:

1. If you are afraid, someone will come to you (if you are afraid, someone will come to you)
2. If you want to give, give (if you want to give)
3. When it's dark, there's light
4. When it rains, it's raining, it's raining, it's raining, it's raining, it's raining, it's raining, it's raining
5. When it's cold, it's hot (when it's cold, it's cold)
6. Faith and obedience to parents.

Especially for women, given additional advice, namely when there is no security, do not stop running to your brother, if you do not stop / do not stop there will be someone who advocates 'if the unsafe atmosphere is not resolved, ask for help to brothers; if brothers are not able to help, surely there will be someone to help. It is said that the advice was proven at the time of the Kawisan war or the fight for an area in Citorek. Because the brothers could not help, finally came to the aid of King Siliwangi with 40 soldiers. The war took place while riding nyiru 'tampah' in the middle of the ocean. Until now people believe, Kasepuhan Citorek there because of the help of King Siliwangi. Currently, the Indigenous people of Kasepuhan Citorek number about 17,000 people. It does not include incu putu' descendants ' of the Citorek community spread in a number of other villages, such as Guradog Village, Cibarani, Gunung Batu, Sampay, Guradog, Lebak Larang, and Cirompang. They are all bound by the traditional social life system that is guaranteed in the customary institution of Kasepuhan Citorek. Such an order of social life is

maintained today, without necessarily leaving aside the formal system of government that prevails nationally.

The structure of Kasepuhan Citorek customary institutions is occupied by the ranks of old-fashioned rows, namely all those who uphold the rules of kasepuhan. The old-fashioned line consists of oyok, Jaro adat, jalan, bengkong, penghulu, saksi, paraji, and overtime elders. All customary offices are hereditary, and fall to sons, except for the Office of paraji. The term of office is valid until he dies, only then is replaced by the next descendant. An oyok is a descendant of the previous oyok; a penghulu is a descendant of the previous penghulu; as well as other customary positions. The head of the traditional institution structure Kasepuhan Citorek is oyok. As the head of adat, there are obligations that must be carried out with full responsibility, and there are privileges that will be received. He has an obligation to maintain and maintain the continuity of the customs of the Kasepuhan Citorek community, which his ancestors inherited. As for the rights that he will receive as oyok, including being a leader in various activities and Traditional Affairs, communicating with ancestors, working on certain rice fields or traditional rice fields, and living in imah gede, the name for the traditional chairman's house or oyok, which is located in Guradog Village, East Citorek Village, which is also the center of Kasepuhan Citorek.

In carrying out his duties, he was assisted by the traditional apparatus consisting of Jaro adat, the assistant or representative of oyok who dealt with local customs issues; jalan, the oyok assistant who acted as a public relations or interpreter; witnesses, namely elders and community members who had in-depth knowledge of kasepuhan customs. There are 7 main witnesses, and each main witness is reinforced by three supporters; penghulu, the oyok maid who deals with marital problems as well as death; bengkong, the oyok maid who deals with circumcision problems; paraji, the oyok maid who takes care of pregnancy and childbirth problems; and kokolot overtime, the oyok representative outside the oyok residence. Kasepuhan Citorek Indigenous people occupy a settlement area in a relatively flat curved 'basin' surrounded by mountains. The settlement is flanked by two major rivers, the Citorek River and the Cimadur River. The Shape of their settlements in the form of overtime 'Township'. Recorded there are dozens of villages in the region Kasepuhan Citorek.

Prior to 2001, the Citorek Indigenous people lived in stilt houses made of wood, roofed with kiray 'shingle' leaves that ran from East to West, and the doors of the houses faced north and South. That is their traditional home, with all the customary rules that bind it so that it looks uniform and orderly. One of the traditional houses is imah gede, the name for the house where the traditional chairman of Kasepuhan Citorek lives. The area of the house is about 15 x 10 meters, and is located in Guradog Village, East Citorek Village. Apart from being the residence of the head of adat, imah gede is also a place to carry out various adat activities.

Now, not a few traditional houses in Kasepuhan Citorek have been turned into semi-permanent and permanent homes. The change came after a devastating fire destroyed half of their settlement in 2001. For security reasons, residents are allowed to build permanent houses, without being bound by the provisions of the position of the roof and door of the house, as in traditional houses. Some of their houses, both stilts and permanent houses, are not equipped with bathrooms. They still use the Citorek and Cimadur Rivers to meet the needs of drinking water, bathing, washing, and defecating.

The changes widened even further, when electricity came to the region in 2004. Various electrically powered household appliances fill their homes, both stilt houses and permanent houses. Refrigerators, televisions, rice heaters, are not taboo for them, including for oyok. All of them blend in with traditional household appliances, such as the hawu 'stove'.

In addition to traditional houses, in Citorek there are also a number of other traditional buildings. There is a traditional leuit 'granary' made of wood and woven bamboo, and roofed with shingles or zinc. Leuit area of about 2 x 2.5 meters; saung lisung 'place to pound rice'; chicken coop; karangkeng 'wooden box where to keep fish in the river'; and lantayan 'place to dry rice'. If the rice harvest season arrives, rows of lantayan look beautiful fill the empty lands around their roads, homes, or rice fields. Rice harvesting is part of the stages of agricultural activity, which is lived as their livelihood. Most of the people of Citorek depend their lives to become farmers. They plant rice in paddy fields and in 'dry land' huma once a year, with a planting period of 6 months. The type of rice grown is the ageung, such as kewal, leneng, pare bandung, kui, and layung. After the harvest, the rice is stored in a granary called leuit, as a very valuable family wealth. Each family had at least one leuit, and at most four leuit.

The Indigenous people of Citorek still maintain the traditional farming methods inherited from their ancestors. They received a mandate from their ancestors to always maintain and maintain rice properly according to prevailing customs, because rice is the embodiment of Dewi Sri. Therefore, the continuity of all agricultural activities is loaded with traditional rituals. The traditional rituals that accompany agricultural activities are an integral part of the religious life of the Kasepuhan Citorek Indigenous people. There are two important aspects that color their religion, namely religion and belief

in their ancestral heritage. Their religion is Islam. In addition, they are very respectful of ancestors and holy spirits that have important meaning in their lives, such as Dewi Sri. Such reverence for supernatural entities, expressed in their customs, as appears in the custom of preserving the tombs of the ancestors. One of the sacred tombs is the sacred tomb of grandmother Mardali. According to customary rules, each stage of farming activities must be started by oyok, and then followed by its citizens. Not a single citizen of the community dared to go ahead of him. On the contrary, they will obey and follow such farming traditions. Including in this case, the descendants of the Citorek people who spread in other villages but still adhere to the tradition of farming in Kasepuhan Citorek. The uniqueness appears in every stage of agricultural activity in Kasepuhan Citorek, namely holding one type of local art. Goong, that's the name of the typical art of Kasepuhan Citorek, which serves as a repellent reinforcements. The art was held to repel various supernatural forces that would interfere with the smooth running of an activity, especially farming activities. Goong art is played by six men. They alternately play four instruments, consisting of gong, caning, koromong, and kendang. Everyday, the art equipment is stored in imah gede. That's where goong's art is called. For example, ahead of the mipit 'reaping the first rice', goong played all night, since Isha until Azdan dawn arrived. For the people, it was also a sign of the start of an activity from oyok, their traditional chief. Almost every stage of farming activities always begins with a ceremony, which is carried out by a simple oyok, then followed by the community personally. They must also comply with the restrictions in force during the processing of agricultural land, among which it is forbidden to work on Sundays and Fridays. After the rice is harvested, they cannot immediately consume it before the nganyaran ceremony, which is Thanksgiving for consuming new rice. As the closing of the series of agricultural activities, a festive seren taun ceremony was held. The ceremony was held to express gratitude to the ancestors and God for the agricultural products obtained during the year.

The series of events, the first day began with a discussion held at the traditional house, namely the gathering of Incu Putu (descendants) of Kasepuhan Citorek, consisting of kasepuhan figures from 5 villages of the Citorek region, east Citorek Village, West Citorek, Central Citorek, South Citorek, and Sabrang Citorek. According to him, apart from the customary area of Citorek also present representatives of several kasepuhan, such as from Kasepuhan Cirompang, Kasepuhan Sampay, Lebak larang, Cibarani and others. When saresehan took place Indigenous people listen to the advice of kasepuhan. After the evening saresehan event held a variety of traditional arts entertainment of Indigenous people, by displaying the art of Angklung, Dogdog lojor, and Jaipongan.

The second day is a core event that is carrying out the grave pilgrimage, followed by traditional devices and elements of village government. The meaning of seren taun or Serah year, is a form of conveying gratitude to Allah SWT, we have received the gift of agricultural harvest in one year, and ask for success and blessings for the next year, the second meaning as a gathering place, children and grandchildren of Indigenous people. Wherever the incu putu residents are at the time of seren taun is obliged to go home," (Bais) The traditional ceremonies held by the Kasepuhan Citorek Indigenous people are not only related to agricultural activities. They also hold ceremonies related to the human life cycle. The series includes seven monthly ceremonies, lowering, diangir, swinging, circumcision, offering, seserahan, marriage ceremony, nincak kukuk, sungkeman, salametan, visiting the bride, and ceremonies commemorating someone's death on the third, seventh, fortieth, and hundredth day. In addition to the various ceremonies mentioned earlier, they also carry out ceremonies or traditions related to the religion they profess, namely Islam. They follow their religion and their beliefs. In addition, they also developed traditions that can strengthen their faith such as commemorating the birth of the Prophet, Isra Mi'raz and routine recitation of fathers and also women. In addition, some of the customs/traditions of Citorek village that they still carry out in an effort to preserve their culture.

Neres Tradition

The Neres tradition is one of a series of rituals from Seren Taun activities carried out to cleanse themselves before performing the seren taun tradition. This was confirmed by Suhaya in an interview with researchers. "The environment is clean, the people must also be clean", (Suhaya) Related to this seren taun activity, kasepuhan people generally interpret it as a symbol of their gratitude for the crops obtained. Therefore, seren taun baru activities can be carried out during the harvest season. Seren Taun ceremony in kasepuhan Ciusul Kampong Citorek Kidul held for one week and is divided into three event formats, namely pantun reading, ngereremokeun (enliven), and Puji/tahlilan gifts.

1. Poem reading. Pantun reading is the opening stage of the entire series of the first day of seren taun in Kasepuhan Ciusul. This poem contains the story of the life of the Kasepuhan Indigenous people.

2. Relaxing). It is a stage that serves to enliven the entire series of seren taun both traditional and modern for approximately 5 days. In addition, at this stage there are also traders who sell various things such as clothing, food, snacks/handicrafts around the kasepuhan complex. This stage also includes the peak of the seren taun event, beginning with a planting ritual that is visualized in the yard of the head of adat's House. This visualization consists of spreading seeds, nyacar, ngaseuk, salamet ngaseuk, mitembeyan, made, save pare dina lantayan, save pare dina leuit accompanied by the sound of rengkong and horn dogdog lojor and angklung. In addition, there is also kawih kawistri, the reading that accompanies the entry of all harvested rice into leuit, which is read by way of wawacan. The second phase ended with a meeting at the akan (traditional Hall) between traditional leaders, the people/community and the government.
3. The gift of praise. This stage is usually held on the seventh day and is the last day in the seren taun series. This event is an expression of gratitude to Allah SWT for the abundance of inner-born rizki, namely the results of the Earth, especially rice. At the event, which was attended by religious leaders and all Indigenous People Ciusul Citorek Kidul Village, discussed all issues about the harvest.

In addition, Trdisi Neres is also carried out in order to eliminate adverse diseases, such as the spread of epidemics, famine, any planting of rice or trees whose results are not good. Neres activities conducted in kasepuhan citorek every year because it is part of a series of Seren Taun. The Neres tradition is a ritual performed to eliminate adverse diseases, such as the spread of epidemics, famine, any planting of rice or trees whose results are not good. This Ritual is performed not every year but according to the events experienced. This tradition is part of a series of Seren Taun ceremonies held as a form of gratitude after the harvest is over and this has been a tradition for hundreds of years. If you trace its history, the tradition of bathing neres has been carried out since hundreds of years ago along and in line with the activities of seren taun, because neres is part of the seren taun tradition. Although part of the seren taun series, but not always dialkukan in each year, because neeres bathing activities depend on certain conditions based on the assessment kasepuhan. (Mulyadi)

This is one of the systems built on the trust of the community itself in this case Kasepuhan customary stakeholders. Neres performed based on the instructions (uga) that came to the figure of kasepuhan. Neres is sometimes carried out based on the conditions and circumstances of the community that is considered to be an outbreak of disease that spreads out of control, so in addition to based on UGA (occult guidance), Neres can also be done when there are natural and social symptoms, namely when an outbreak of disease that spreads out of control, this is one form of a harmonious relationship between traditional leaders and the natural state of the environment. The Neres tradition is part of a series of Seren Taun ceremonies held as a form of gratitude after the harvest is over and this has been a tradition for hundreds of years. If you trace its history, the tradition of bathing Neres has been carried out since hundreds of years ago along and in line with the activities of seren taun, because Neres is part of the seren taun tradition. Although part of the seren taun series, it is not always carried out every year, because Neres bathing activities depend on certain conditions based on kasepuhan assessments. Like :

1. When there is a UGA (guidance) to customary stakeholders.
2. An outbreak of disease that spreads uncontrollably
3. The presence of pests that cause crop failure that occurs repeatedly. In this context, it is as if the plants are attacked by pests, not merely pests, but rather the hearts and souls of people who have been dirty, causing havoc.
4. The occurrence of many disasters that befell Indigenous Peoples (incu putu). Such as social events that disturb the peace of society or cause excessive fear.

In addition to bathing, in the tradition of Neres, the women also bring pekakas commonly used daily to be cleaned. Pekakas commonly brought is a staple in the kitchen pekakas that only women are part. This tool is also washed and cleaned, because it is considered an important element in life



Figure 2 Implementation Of Water Repair Tradition 2024

Women as symbols of prosperity such as *hihid*, *seeng*, *gayung*, *pangeringah*, *dulang*, basins, baskets. In addition there are other tools or extra tools for bathing *Neres* such as *palias* grass and Rice heads that will be burned and the charcoal will be used as shampoo during bathing. In addition to bathing, in the tradition of *Neres*, women also carry equipment that is commonly used throughout the day for cleaning. In *Neres* tradition, not all women can follow, there are certain requirements that must be met, among them not in menstruation. The *Neres* tradition also uses natural elements for bathing, e.g., shampoo using rice sticks or burnt straw. (Glory "We're going to get a little bumpy on the floor, and we're going to get a little bumpy on the floor." In the *Neres* tradition, not all women can participate, there are certain conditions that must be met, including not being in the menstrual period and those who are already married. The *Neres* tradition also uses natural elements for bathing, namely shampoo using rice stalks or straw that is burned besides that there is also *palias* grass, upstream rice, *Cai mulang* (water taken from twisting water/*mulang*), *paray* fish / wader that is still alive (*Rasbora argyrotaenia*), offerings (yellow rice, *dodol*, diamonds, *pasung* etc.) this tradition is carried out in the *Cimadur* River.

"People carry rice stored in *kasepuhan* house, we quickly take kitchen utensils such as *hihid*, *seeng*, *Dipper*, tray, *pangarih* *ETA* *kacai* *Cimadur*. When we were in the shower, we used to wash our hair and wash our clothes, and when we were in the shower, our mother gave us some water and brought it home to us." (Suhaya) *Koentjaraningrat* (1984: 190) in the journal *innocent K. Seku* said that ritual ceremony is a system of activities or a series of actions laid out by custom or law in force in society related to various kinds of events that usually occur in the community concerned. Ritual ceremonies have rules and procedures that have been determined by the community or group of creators of the ritual, so that each ritual has differences, both in execution. Ritual ceremonies (and worship) have the function of increasing community social solidarity, eliminating attention to individual interests, and strengthening religious life. While the *Neres* tradition as a culture of the people, *Tylor* (in *innocent K. Seku*) says that culture is a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, science, law, Customs, and other abilities and habits acquired by humans as members of society.

Based on the researcher's interview with *Mulyadi* that in the tradition of *Neres* based on oral sources that is, *Kasepuhan citorek* speech has been done since centuries. *Neres* tradition can not be traced when exactly it began to be carried out by the *kasepuhan* community, but it is certain that *Neres* is one of the traditions that are hereditary in the *kasepuhan* community. Possibly, the *Neres* tradition comes from the ancestors of the *kasepuhan* people who have been separated for centuries.

According to the story said, *kasepuhan citorek* derived from *Demang Haur Tangtu* descendants. He is from *guradog*. He is one of the *Special Forces Bareusan Pangawinan* he has a friend who is a teacher *Alas Lumintang Kendungan*, and *Puun bamboo Panuh*. He and his friend were assigned by *King Siliwangi* to save *hanjuang bodas* from the attack of *Banten troops* (1579). On the way to *dayeuh*, *Demang Haur Tangtu* and his two friends as leaders of *Bareusan Pangawinan* agreed to separate and take their own way of life, but still maintain a relationship with each other. *Demang Haur Tangtu* eventually settled in *Guradog* district until the end of his life. *Cemetery Demang Haur Tangtu* now known as the *Tomb Dalem Tangtu Awileat*. In this village of *Guradog*, *Demang Haur Tangtu* has descendants, namely residents who now live in the area *Citorek* and known as *kasepuhan*. It is from this source that the origin of the *Chitose* is derived. At one time, one of the descendants of *Demang Haur Tangtu* opened a settlement land in *Citorek* which was carried out in accordance with *uga* to pass on traditions from generation to generation, especially traditions and agricultural *paranti ropes*. (*Mulyadi*) The culture inherited by these ancestors must be continued and developed by the next generation. The traditional Ritual of *Neres* is one of the cultures inherited by the ancestors. As for the meaning of the traditional ritual in which the traditional ritual is performed by the community as a gratitude to the Almighty Creator. So here is taken the understanding is a traditional ritual performed as our gratitude, and must continue to be passed down and down.

Traditional Ritual Process Of Neres

In the daily life of Indigenous people in *Banten Kidul* generally depend on the land or farming (agricultural products). This is inseparable from the history of those who from the beginning have indeed constructed themselves as farmers and environmental conservationists.

That is why they have great respect for the land where rice grows, the source of human food in general. In addition, they are very respectful of water because without groundwater or planting they will not be fertile and run smoothly, there will definitely be crop failure and so on. The symbolic form of their reverence for land and water, among others, is expressed through the rituals of Seren Taun and Neres. This Ritual is performed once a year, shown to honor and worship the Goddess of rice. For them rice is the embodiment of adi-human power that symbolizes fertility. Therefore, rice must be honored and treated as well as possible as the treatment of honorable daughters and have supernatural powers, both in the process of planting seeds, plant maintenance, harvesting stalks and storage in barns. For them, rice is the embodiment of superhuman strength that symbolizes fertility. Therefore, rice should be honored and treated as well as possible as the treatment of the honorable princess and has supernatural powers, both in the process of planting seeds, plant maintenance, harvesting stalks, barn preparation and before the rice is cooked into rice.

According to research conducted by researchers with Mulyadi that the Neres tradition is carried out by the kasepuhan citorek community for several reasons, for example because of disease outbreaks, natural changes that are considered dangerous, such as long droughts, famine, or other things that are considered dangerous for the sustainability of life.:

Babadamian (Deliberation)

Deliberations were held including nsur pupuhu kasepuhan and juragan negara (village head of government) to determine the right time to implement the Neres. Where kasepuhan residents prepare when neres activities take place, the people who will provide their crops are collected in traditional houses before the seren taun event takes place. The values contained in it are deliberations containing values that teach about democracy, unity, and peaceful problem solving by promoting dialogue, compromise, and mutual respect. Deliberation is one of the important traditions in Indonesian culture, especially in the context of joint decision-making. Symbolic value in deliberation reflects the principles underlying the way communities interact, solve problems, and reach agreements collectively. Some of the symbolic values contained in the deliberations include:

1. Togetherness: deliberation symbolizes the spirit of togetherness, where each individual is involved in the decision-making process. This shows that the decisions taken are the result of a common contribution and not solely the property of a specific individual. Togetherness in deliberations confirms the importance of cooperation and solidarity in people's lives.
2. Justice: in deliberation, everyone is given the same opportunity to express their opinion. This symbolic value of Justice shows that every vote is valued and that the decision taken is the fairest decision for all parties involved.
3. Musyawarah untuk mufakat: one of the main principles in musyawarah is to reach consensus or mutual agreement. It symbolized the importance of harmony and harmony in society. The deliberation process is not just about talking, but also listening and finding solutions that are acceptable to all parties.
4. Humility and respect: deliberation contains a symbolic value about humility, where each participant values each other's opinions and ideas. It also reflects respect for differences and diversity of opinions, with the aim of reaching the best possible agreement.
5. Unity: deliberations also depict symbols of unity. Although there are differences of opinion and views among the participants, the deliberations teach that these differences can be resolved through dialogue and agreement for common goals. It symbolizes the power that arises when society unites.
6. Joint decision: the result of the deliberation reflects that the decision taken is a joint decision that is not dominated by one party. The decision is more towards a policy that is collective and prioritizes common interests, not just personal interests or certain groups. Local wisdom: Musyawarah also reflects the value of local wisdom, which shows that decision-making in Indonesian culture does not only prioritize decisions based on power or authority, but rather on ways that have been inherited by ancestors who prioritize deliberation as a wise way out. Preparation of steamed tools in this case there are betel, apu, gamir, frankincense, dodol, yellow rice that is dispensed in cege to carry out the opening of the Neres tradition . It is only done by the kasepuhan. So before preparing the offering, the steamed utensils must be cleaned in order to be glorified and treated as well as possible like the treatment of a respectable princess, because rice is the embodiment of superhuman strength that symbolizes fertility. Both in the process of planting seeds, plant maintenance, harvesting stalks, preparing the barn and before the rice is cooked into rice.

7. Preparation of Neres bathing tools in the form of kored (farming tools), aseupan, upstream rice (morning straw), palias grass (*pogonatherum crinitum*). Process in the tradition of his bath is:
 - 1) by taking parai (small fish) which is inserted into jolang and then splashed with palias grass, the act of taking parai (small fish) and spraying it with palias grass in the Neres bathing ritual has symbolic meanings that include cleansing, fertility, harmony with nature, protection, and self-renewal. This Ritual teaches respect for nature, the importance of balance between man and the environment, as well as the desire to obtain blessings and protection in the course of life.
 - 2) after that the mothers clean the back using kored, the symbolic meaning of cleaning the back using kored first, for physical and spiritual cleansing, with the use of kored as a tool to cleanse the body symbolizes the cleansing process that is not only physical but also spiritual. It reflects the intention to eliminate negative energies, sins, or things that hinder inner peace. Cleansing the body with kored can be viewed as an attempt to restart life with a clean heart and mind. Second, the release of load or stress, the process of rubbing the body with kored can also be seen as a symbol of mental and emotional release of burden. Often, bathing with kored is done to refresh the body and mind, relieve fatigue, or even release stress after an activity.
 - 3) ngabakar pare / hulu padi then filtered water is used to make shampoo, in some traditions or traditional ceremonies in Indonesia, especially those related to agriculture or agrarian community life, the use of ngabakar pare (burning rice or upstream rice) and filtered water to make shampoo has a deep symbolism, both in cultural and spiritual contexts. Here are some symbolic meanings of the process:
 - a. Symbol of gratitude and respect for Nature
Ngabakar pare, or burning rice, is often done as a form of gratitude to God Almighty and nature for the harvest that has been obtained. Rice in many cultures in Indonesia is considered a symbol of prosperity and life. By burning rice, people express gratitude and respect for the blessings given by nature and the land on which they grow their crops.
 - b. cleansing and purification
The water used to wash or make shampoo after being filtered from burning rice has a symbolic meaning in terms of cleansing, both physically and spiritually. The process of filtering and using such water for bathing or washing hair can be considered as a way to cleanse oneself, not only of physical impurities but also of negative energies or unwanted things. Water that has gone through the process is considered to have the power to cleanse the soul and body, give freshness, and bring positive energy.
 - c. Maintenance of Health and beauty
In many traditions, the use of natural ingredients for body care, such as filtered water from burning rice, is considered to have health and beauty benefits. Shampoo or hair care ingredients from the water is believed to nourish the hair, making the hair more healthy, clean, and shiny. It is symbolic of the human relationship with nature, where nature provides natural ingredients that are beneficial for physical well-being.
 - d. symbol of sustainability and balance
By using agricultural products that are directly related to the life cycle and agriculture, such as rice, in the ritual, the community also demonstrates a harmonious reciprocal relationship with nature. This process contains symbolic values about sustainability and balance between man and nature. This reminds that human life cannot be separated from the surrounding nature, and there must be respect and wise use of what is given by nature.
 - e. empowerment and preservation of traditions
Using rice and water from combustion for body care purposes or shampoo also reflects the preservation of ancestral traditions and customs that teach people to make maximum use of Natural Resources. It is a symbol of the strength of tradition and local wisdom that is maintained and passed down from generation to generation, while teaching the values of sustainability and respect for cultural heritage.
 - f. transformation and renewal

The burning of rice and the use of its water for bathing or shampoo also symbolize a process of transformation and renewal. The fire that burns rice can be considered as a symbol of change or transition from one form to another, such as the process of plant growth which is then harvested and utilized. The use of filtered water to cleanse the body symbolizes awakening, freshness and renewal in life. Overall, the symbolism of burning bitter melon and the use of its water for shampoo carries a deep meaning regarding the relationship between man, nature, and spirituality. It also shows how society makes use of natural resources with gratitude and harmony.

- g. cleaning tools while hair is clamped/tied
overall tying or pinning the hair in the custom of bathing *neres* contains a deep symbolic meaning, related to self-purification, simplicity, harmony and respect for tradition. This action not only has to do with physical appearance, but also reflects the individual's readiness to receive spiritual renewal and live life with a higher consciousness. After that, women who follow the tradition of *neres* are given prayer water from Mrs. *kasepuhan* to take home to drink at home, after the *Neres* bathing activity is finished, all mothers go home together behind Mrs. *kasepuhan*.
- h. to wash together
contains a deep symbolic meaning of togetherness, self-purification, harmony, and connection with nature and ancestors. This Ritual teaches the values of solidarity, gratitude, and readiness to start a new life with a higher consciousness. As part of a traditional ceremony, bathing together is not only a physical activity, but also loaded with spiritual and social meanings that strengthen relationships between individuals and strengthen a common identity within the community.

Traditional Ritual Values Of Neres

The values contained in this *Neres* tradition are in cultural communication both intrabudgetary and intercultural. In the perspective of intrabudic communication, *Neres* is a traditional communication medium that serves to transform Indigenous values from one generation to the next for the preservation of their cultural identity, as well as mutually reinforcing that identity among members of the *kasepuhan* community. While in the intercultural perspective *Neres* is a form of love and compassion for nature are interrelated to maintain the cultural identity of *Seren Taun* to other parties in order to be recognized and existence.

In the traditional rituals performed in the sub-discussion above, there are values contained therein, among others :

1. Perfecting and improving each other, where they are the women in *Citerek Kidul* listen to the direction of parents or older, through this *Neres* bathing activity there is a sense of perfecting and improving themselves from negative or dirty things that will result in liver disease, as well as diseases of nature.
2. Forming a healthy character means maintaining good physical and spiritual health, *bageur* means having a person who bases his behavior on the rules of values and ethics that apply, and *Singer* (introspective) means being aware of himself, how to behave towards himself and others.
3. Awareness about the importance of health, because they all carry out this *Neres* bath with the aim of avoiding epidemics, famine etc
4. Establish a harmonious relationship between man and nature (*habluminalam*).
If we're going to do this, we're going to have to do it in a way that not only is the environment clean, but the environment is also clean. So the relationship between us and nature must be synchronous."(*Mulyadi*)
5. Preserving the wealth of ancestral traditions.
Culture can not be separated from the results *porduk* people who live in the neighborhood itself. In another sense they create a culture that has a strong belief value for the community so that they can enjoy their lives with the culture. The culture will be extinct if humans in its territory do not support each other and vice versa. In order to create a strong cultural strength, there must be a successor generation, namely children and grandchildren, youth of the community in their own region. This definition of culture can also be asserted that the creation or realization of a culture is the result of interaction between humans and all the contents of this universe. Humans who have been equipped

by God with reason and mind make them caliphs on Earth and given the ability mentioned by Supartono in Rafael Raga Maran, (1995) as human power.

In the village of Citorek Lebak Banten, there is a culture that is still preserved by the people, namely the tradition of Neres Cai before the seren taun ceremony takes place. Stages of the tradition of Neres Cai in the traditional village of Citorek first the women bring rice stored at home kasepuhan / Imah Gede, after which the mothers take pekakas commonly used daily from their homes to be cleaned. Pekakas commonly brought is a staple in the kitchen pekakas that only women are part. This tool is also washed and cleaned, because it is considered an important element in women's lives as a symbol of prosperity such as hihid, seeng, Dipper, pangarih, dulang, Basin, basket. In addition there are also other tools or additional tools for bathing Neres such as grass palias and upstream rice that will be burned and the charcoal will be used as shampoo when bathing.

"People with rice stored at home kasepuhan, we quickly take kitchen utensils such as hihid, seeng, Dipper, tray, pangarih eta K acai Cimadur. What we do when we are in the shower is to burn the water and use the shampoo, then put it on the hairpin and clean the kitchen utensils that were brought, then the mother of the elderly gave us water and brought it home and brought it back to us when we were all sick."(Suhaya)

Nganjang or babawaan (after the tradition of Neres Cai) must bring or hand over the rest of the crops to the kasepuhan called ngajiwa and usually in place of the traditional head. The result of the land is usually anything they have for example: rice, bananas, livestock etc. Accompanied by a large Goong and Ngengkongg. Ngengkongg is the process of bringing the harvest done by Indigenous people in tandem from rice fields tangtumenju granary. this activity is intended to maintain cohesion and togetherness among Indigenous Peoples. Then Entertainment/raramean, entertainment performed at night before the celebration of seren taun, usually entertainment mask, koromong, Angklung, dangdutan and others.

III. CONCLUSION

. Based on the research and discussion described in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the Neres tradition in Kasepuhan Citorek is a cultural ritual that is carried out only by women, with specific conditions such as not being in menstruation and already being married. This finding confirms that Neres is not merely a bathing activity but a ritual that positions women as central actors in preserving cultural continuity.

In practice, Neres uses natural elements such as rice stalks or burnt straw as shampoo, palias grass, upstream rice, and *Cai mulang* or water from a rotating source. The use of these natural materials is not just functional but symbolic, reflecting the community's respect for nature as a source of life and purification. The offerings of yellow rice, dodol, diamonds, pasung, and the use of live paray fish also carry symbolic messages about fertility, prosperity, and social harmony. Thus, the tradition cannot be understood only at the level of ritual mechanics but must also be read as a communication system rich with cultural meaning.

Beyond the ritual itself, Neres teaches values of mutual refinement and inner purification. The tradition shapes character through honesty, health awareness, harmony with nature, and social solidarity. Communicative actions—both verbal, such as prayers, and nonverbal, such as the distribution of prayer water—illustrate how cultural communication is realized in ritual contexts. These symbols serve as a medium for transmitting moral and spiritual values across generations.

From this perspective, the research does not only describe the stages of the ritual but also analyzes the symbolic meanings and communicative aspects embedded in it. This is in line with the research objective to understand women's role in ritual communication within the Neres tradition. Neres is therefore not only an expression of cultural identity but also a form of ritual communication that maintains unity, harmony, and cultural resilience in the midst of external influences.

Based on these findings, it is recommended for further studies to explore the symbolic dimension of ritual communication more deeply using theoretical frameworks such as Dell Hymes' SPEAKING model. Such studies will enrich the academic understanding of cultural communication and strengthen efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of Banten, which remains under-researched yet has high value for the identity and life of local communities.

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