

Tending the Spirit's Shrine: Kanekes and Pajajaran in West Java

Gardiens du sanctuaire de l'Esprit du royaume : les Urang Kanekes et l'Etat de Pajajaran à Java Ouest

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/moussons/2199>

DOI: 10.4000/moussons.2199

ISSN: 2262-8363

Publisher

Presses Universitaires de Provence

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 December 2005

Number of pages: 3-26

ISBN: 2-7449-0625-5

ISSN: 1620-3224

Electronic reference

Robert Wessing and Bart Barendregt, « Tending the Spirit's Shrine: Kanekes and Pajajaran in West Java », *Moussons* [Online], 8 | 2005, Online since 15 October 2013, connection on 02 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/moussons/2199> ; DOI : 10.4000/moussons.2199



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Tending the Spirit's Shrine: Kanekes and Pajajaran in West Java

Robert WESSING* and Bart BARENDREGT**

Although, or perhaps precisely because field research among the Urang Kanekes, the people of Kanekes¹ of South Banten in West Java (Indonesia), is next to impossible, especially in their sacred inner hamlets, they have over the years been the subject of much speculation and, where possible, analysis. Indeed, as early as 1882, Veth (1875-84, III: 129) observed that 'the subject is generally known [and] everything known or guessed about them is repeated *ad nauseam*.' Incomplete and often contradictory information about Kanekes have frustrated analysts, causing, e.g., Van Tricht (1932: 176) to write that he was convinced that we would never gain full knowledge about the origin and nature of these people, although Van Hoëvell (1845: 339) thought it of the utmost importance to unravel the mystery of the survival of this non-Islamic group amidst the overwhelmingly Muslim Sundanese, the major ethnic group of West Java.²

This article is an attempt to shed some light on this mystery of their endurance. To do so, we focus not just on Kanekes, but also on their place in West Java and on their relationship with the old West Javanese royal court(s). We will consider the various stories told of their origins, their own statements about what they are doing, and

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some aspects of Javanese courts that have recently been more clearly brought to light. In other words, we are placing the old information in the new context presented by studies on spirits and courts in South and Southeast Asia (Chambert-Loir & Reid 2002, Tannenbaum & Kammerer 2003, Schnepel 1995, Falk 1973), believing that, in the process, we can shed some new light on the problem posed by Van Hoëvell.

The questions that we will address concern the relationship between the Urang Kanekes and the old court(s) of West Java, including their position in Banten and the conflicting claims that they were either refugees from the onslaught of Islam or some kind of court functionaries. Relevant to these points are their claim to be preserving the center of the world, the place where the earth came into being, and the ritual duties that they perform in order to carry out this task. We will further look at some claims about the nature of their community that have appeared in the literature over the years, such as the idea that these are *mandala* communities, and the prophecy that the ruler of their old kingdom will one day return.

KANEKES

To begin with, however, a brief sketch of the Urang Kanekes is in order. Much has already been written about their culture and social organization (Jacobs & Meijer 1891, Van Tricht 1929: 132, Geise 1952), as well as, of course, the more recent works mentioned above. In 1998, when the most recent data were collected, the administrative village of Kanekes consisted of about 8,000 persons, distributed over sixty hamlets. During Garna's 1983 fieldwork, the hamlets Cisaban, Gajeboh, and Kadu Ketuk had, respectively, 623, 360, and 403 inhabitants (Garna 1988: 59), while Cibeo was the largest of the 'inner' hamlets with 256 inhabitants.³ The village of Kanekes is divided into two primary parts, inhabited by what outsiders usually call the inner and outer 'Baduy' – the Baduy Dalam and the Baduy Luar. The glosses 'inner' and 'outer' hamlets, however, rest on a misunderstanding (the word should be *dalem*, see below), and the Urang Kanekes themselves call the 'inner' hamlets *tangtu* ('firm,' 'established,' 'ancestral,' 'founding'; Eringa 1984: 748, Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 11). A third category is called *dangka*. These are Kanekes communities that lie outside the sacred territory, with a mixed population of Kanekes and other Banten peoples. In the 'inner' hamlets, ancestral customs are strictly enforced. In the 'outer' ones (*panamping* and *dangka*), the observation of these traditions is more relaxed and people there are freer in the use of non-traditional clothing, market products, and cash money (see Bakels & Boevink 1988, Persoon 1994).⁴ Yet, as we have pointed out (Wessing & Barendregt 2003), points of view on the Kanekes change over time, which obscures the question that we wish to address here, namely, their original purpose and the reasons for their endurance.

Originally, the Urang Kanekes did not differ significantly either from the other people living in Banten⁵ or from the Sundanese of West Java, of whom they are a sub-group; the latter, indeed, point to the Urang Kanekes as an example of pure Sundanese culture (Wessing 1977). Practices reminiscent of those of Kanekes, reflecting ancient Sundanese religious beliefs (Agama Sunda Wiwitan), are found

throughout the area. These include previously common sacred terraces,⁶ reminders of which persist throughout West Java (see Wessing 1999). The Urang Kanekes are remarkable now because, since the advent of Islam in West Java and through the colonial and post-colonial eras, they are said to have continued to follow the faith and practices of their ancestors, rejecting not only Islam but also, according to some (Von Ende 1892: 100, 101; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 4), the preceding Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as most modern developments.

While reluctant to allow outsiders into their territory, the Urang Kanekes have not been isolated from the surrounding peoples, and evidence of Islamic and Christian influences have long been found among them (Van Hoëvell 1845: 392, 395; Kruseman 1888: 1; Wessing & Barendregt 2003), especially where such influences do not interfere with the tasks they see themselves performing. It is in the 'inner' hamlets that the greatest restrictions apply and where, through what Valeri (2000) calls misoneistic taboos, ancestral customs are maintained to the highest degree. It is, therefore, not so much a matter of a hamlet's distance from the center or the sacred focus that defines the 'inner' vs. 'outer' distinction, than the degree to which the taboos are observed.

DUTIES

The reason for the stricter observance of their traditions in the center, according to the Urang Kanekes, is that they perform a number of sacred tasks. These include supporting the ruler and the nobility and, by implication, maintaining the prosperity of the realm (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 27). Most commonly emphasized, however, is their care for a religious shrine (Arca Domas) and, especially in these ecologically aware times, their devotion to maintaining the sacred Kendeng forest, the Leuweung Cawane. Great care is indeed taken of the forest itself, their leader (*pu'un*) haranguing those who disobey these rules (Djoewisno 1987: 36). Their care goes beyond this, however, to forbidding the leveling of the ground when building houses, ploughing, and generally altering the soil: "that which is long may not be shortened, that which is short may not be lengthened, a mountain may not be made higher, a spring may not be deepened."⁷ This maintenance of nature is carried out together and in cooperation with the spirit forces in the world, including the ancestors (Wessing 1999). The ritual focus of these duties is a sacred place where they believe that the world first came into being, access to which is restricted (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 3, 4, 8). This has led to the exclusion from the *tangtu* hamlets of outsiders and those who, by their behavior, violate the purity of the center. Such seclusion may once have been common in religious communities, deep in the forest or at the sources of rivers (Bakels 1989).⁸



The lower terraces of Arca Domas. In the foreground runs the river Ciujung
(source: Koolhoven 1932: 66).

ARCA DOMAS

The sacred center where creation took place is variously called Arca Domas or Sasaka Pusaka Buana⁹ (Van Tricht 1932: 180; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 24), a terraced hill on the upper course of the Ciujung River, to the south of the hamlets (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 24; Van Tricht 1932: 180). Descriptions of this place by authors who claim to have been there vary (see Blume 1845; Koolhoven 1932; Koorders 1896; Van Hoëvell 1845), and only a very brief synopsis will be given below. Given the sacredness of the place and the restricted access, Von Ende's (1892: 99) observation that it is uncertain whether any European researcher has been to Arca Domas should be taken seriously.¹⁰

Arca Domas, furthermore, is not the only shrine venerated and maintained by the Urang Kanekes (see Koolhoven 1932: 65-66). Danasasmita and Djatisunda also mention Sasaka Domas, located on the upper courses of the river Ciparahiyang, deep inside the forbidden forest. According to Kanekes mythology, this is where Batara Cikal (or Batara Tunggal)¹¹ first descended to earth. Batara Tunggal is the principal deity of the Urang Kanekes and is said to be ancestral to them. The place is also known as Mandala Parahiyang (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 25), the *mandala* of the ancestors or spirits (Eringa 1984: 295; Koolhoven 1932: 68; compare Van der Meulen 1977: 106).¹² Near it is said to be the place where the spirits of the deceased gather to be reunited with their apical ancestor, Batara Tunggal (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 25).¹³



Geological map of the territory of Kanekes and the surrounding area, South Banten (source: Koolhoven 1932: 65).

Thus, the Urang Kanekes venerate two shrines: the Sasaka Pusaka Buawana (Arca Domas), which is connected with the creation of the earth, and Sasaka Domas, which is closely related to the ancestors of the Urang Kanekes. In the literature, these two shrines often merge, leading to the impression that the focus at Arca Domas is on the veneration of the ancestors of the Urang Kanekes. The two groves, however, fit in with practices elsewhere in West Java, where a settlement often lies between two sacred groves: one dedicated to the ancestors and another reserved for the hamlet's tutelary spirit(s) (Wessing 2001). Like the Urang Kanekes, elsewhere in Sunda, e.g., in Dukuh (Sucipto 1989) and in Naga, access to the ancestors' grove is often restricted to descendants, while the spirits' grove is kept rather a secret (Wessing 1999; 2003b).¹⁴

It might be objected that graves often attract a wider public than just the local community. This is indeed true of tombs of *wali* (saints) like Sunan Gunung Jati and the like (Chambert-Loir 2002), but not generally of the graves of the founders of local communities. In Naga in 1971, before it became a tourist attraction, access was flat out refused, while in Dukuh in 1998 one had to go through several days of special preparation and meditation. On the other hand, in 1970, in order to do fieldwork in Gajah (now Gajah Mekar), Wessing had to be introduced to the founder, e.g., by being made a member of the community. This latter grave later gained some fame, causing its sphere of influence to enlarge and attracting pilgrims from a somewhat wider area (see Wessing 2001: 41). The attraction to pilgrims, then, is proportional to the perceived power of the grave, making the closure of the Urang Kanekes' sacred places even more intriguing.

The Urang Kanekes still follow the rules and restrictions laid down by these ancestors, albeit no longer as stringently as they reputedly did in the past. While Batara Tunggal is venerated as their apical ancestor, their relationship with nature spirits is equally important, in which the Urang Kanekes do not differ from other Sundanese villages or, indeed, from Java generally (Wessing 2001, Garna 1988). As Van Hoëvell (1845: 395) noted, these spirits are venerated more often, or receive greater veneration than Batara Tunggal.¹⁵ We will return to this relationship later but, in brief, the stability of the community is thought to depend on the good will of the spirits, which in turn results from the interaction between the people, the ancestors, and the spirits. This is the reason for the continued observation of ancestral commands, which include the agreements with the spirit world (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 28). With this very brief sketch in mind, we can now turn to the question of the origin of these people as a community; in other words, how and why did they come to live in isolation in this place.

HISTORY

According to the Urang Kanekes themselves, they have lived in their present area ever since their ancestors first came to earth, theirs being the place where the earth was created (Adimihardja 2000: 49). Outsiders have various theories about their origin. The first is that these people are descendants of the original population of Banten who sought refuge from the onslaught of Islam after the fall of Pajajaran

(Pennings 1902: 371; Koolhoven 1932: 64). They may have been indigenous to South Banten or have come from the north, Pennings continues, the latter being reflected in some of their tales. These refugees first settled along the river Cibaduy, from which they then got their name (Blume 1845: 9). Kruseman (1888: 1) and Geise (1952) think that they are indigenous to Banten, though Kruseman holds out the possibility that they retreated further into the forest after 1579 C.E.

The second theory, which does not necessarily exclude the first one, is that they are descendants of refugees from the court of the West Javanese kingdom of Pajajaran when it fell to Muslim forces from Banten in 1579 C.E. (Blume 1845: 5; Pleyte 1909: 500). The ruler of this kingdom, Prabu Siliwangi, and his courtiers refused to become Muslim and mysteriously disappeared, the ruler becoming a tiger (Wessing 1993).¹⁶ Others maintain that nobles of Pajajaran were even buried at Arca Domas (Pleyte 1909: 500), Von Ende (1889: 8) and Pleyte (1916: 537) even citing folklore mentioning that Prabu Siliwangi turned to stone there. Yet, as we have seen, the Urang Kanekes deny that this place is a graveyard. Van Hoëvell (1845: 401), on the other hand, believes that it is possible that Arca Domas is a memorial to deceased nobles of Pajajaran, put up by the Urang Kanekes, thinking it unlikely that the rulers of Pajajaran would have chosen such an inaccessible place for their memorials. Furthermore, he argues, if the memorials were established by the court, they should show greater refinement than they do, the stones at Arca Domas indeed being described as somewhat crude (see Rouffaer 1919: 244; Veth 1875-84, II: 146).

The Urang Kanekes generally deny being descendants of Pajajaran, but admit to descent from Sunda (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 87-91). A Kanekes leader, in fact, claims that there was a magical spell with which to keep Pajajaran at a distance, which could be a play on words because Pajajaran can also mean 'malevolent spirit' (Garna 1988: 33-34). This denial of Pajajaran and admittance to Sunda deserves a closer look because, as Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 87) note, this distinction may be a subterfuge, there really being no difference between the two.

To summarize, some thought the Urang Kanekes to be refugees from Pajajaran after its fall to Islam, while others maintained that they were native to Banten. As we will show by placing these ideas in the context of more literature, these two theories are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

KINGDOMS

According to Ekadjati (1984: 81-87), the kingdom of Sunda was founded in 669 C.E. at Pakuan (near present-day Bogor) and combined the preceding realms of Galuh and Kuningan, its territory including all of West Java.¹⁷ Its capital moved several times, especially between Galuh (near Ciamis) and Pakuan, finally ending up in the latter until its fall in 1579. The two kingdoms then are the same, and we must ask why the people of Kanekes make the distinction.

However, the Urang Kanekes also claim a close relationship with Banten, which has been described as either a vassal of Pajajaran (Koolhoven 1932: 64) or just part of this state (Rosidi *et al.* 2000: 100).¹⁸ Banten is important because it is the location of two

kingdoms prior to Sunda: the perhaps mythological Salakanagara (130 C.E.- 5th century C.E.) (Rosidi *et al.* 2000: 566), and its successor Tarumanagara, which controlled the area from the 5th century C.E. until it was in turn succeeded by the kingdom of Sunda. The rulers of these states bore Indic names, showing the possible presence of India-influenced kingdoms in West Java since the 2nd century C.E. The importance of this fact will become apparent in the next section. In the meantime, as all this has faded into history, the Sundanese people of West Java remember the kingdom of Sunda as Pajajaran, called, as was so often the case, after its capital of Pakuan Pajajaran. In popular memory, this kingdom has come to encompass them all, becoming a *topos* of the greatness of Sunda in bygone days, a ‘site of memory’ (*lieu de mémoire*) in Nora’s (1989) terms.¹⁹

At this time, Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 88, 91) continue to support the ‘refugees from Pajajaran’ idea, proposing an elaborate theory that this connection has been kept secret to protect the refugees. The Urang Kanekes’ confusion between Sunda and Pajajaran, they posit, came about because they have forgotten the historical facts (1986: 91). While this is wonderfully romantic, it seems somewhat far fetched, because what would be the point of hiding the truth after ca. 425 years?

Another possibility is that the refugee theory reflects another truth, namely, that Sunda or Pajajaran, or even the states before them, had sent representatives upriver into the hill country to establish outposts there, opening the area for control, collection, and trade. This was done, for instance, along the Cibanten River (Adimihardja 2000: 54). Such upland ‘gatekeeper’ communities were commonly founded by junior members of ruling families who lacked obvious possibilities for advancement in the capital (Wisseman Christie 1995: 270-271).²⁰ Adimihardja (2000: 54), basing himself on the Kanekes’ statement that ‘the mountain may not be destroyed, the valley may not be damaged,’²¹ then proposes that the Urang Kanekes protect the environment and the forest from over-utilization and keep the rivers open for traffic. While this idea is attractive, we must point out that there are significant differences between upriver trading communities and the sacred community of Kanekes, where even the use of money was traditionally forbidden and the emphasis was on preventing culture change, even though this community, indeed, had as one of its tasks the preservation of the forest and the sources of water.

Yet, there were upland communities that had close connections with the courts. Thus Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 91) write that the kingdom of Sunda was ‘born’ at Sasaka Parahiyang, and the Urang Kanekes claim that the territory of their village was given to them “in safe-keeping” by the ruler of Banten, some time in the mythological past. In return, they were to guarantee the welfare of Banten through their prayers and rituals (Bakels 1989). Berthe (1965: 218) thinks this last rather unlikely, given the alleged animosity between this Muslim ruler and these obdurate unbelievers. Guillot (2002: 153), on the other hand, reports that the conqueror of Pajajaran, Sultan Maulana Hasanudin, told the equally unconverted hermits on Mount Pulasari²² that they “must stay here otherwise [they would] ... cause the ruin of Java.”²³ “It is obvious,” Guillot concludes, “that this Mount Pulasari was an important sacred site in the kingdom of Banten” – a sacred site on which the welfare of Java

depended. With Java, we assume, Sultan Hasanudin may have meant both the physical island and the realm.²⁴ As far as the realm is concerned, we must ask what the relationship could have been between these hermits' activities and the welfare of the state. In order to do this, we must first take a brief look at the nature of the state.

THE SACRED GROVE

A state in the South and Southeast Asian context, in addition to being a set of political relationships, also involves a set of cosmological ones upon which these political relationships are predicated. The rulers of such kingdoms are generally characterized as presenting themselves as incarnations or representations of Hindu deities (*deva raja*), most commonly Siva and Vishnu.²⁵ What is less often realized is that there is another set of beliefs, namely, that of the court's relationship with earth or nature spirits.²⁶ This involved a capacity that made it possible for these rulers to assume their powers and, indeed, to become Indic rulers, namely, their shamanistic abilities (Wessing 1993: 5-6; 2003a: 204-206). This shamanistic capacity, which is crucial to the ruler's legitimacy, is expressed in his relationship with the forest and his ability to enter into a relationship with (or subdue) a local forest or nature spirit, which will then act as the guarantor of the prosperity and even the continuance of his kingdom.²⁷ These spirits are the real owners of the soil and especially the land on which the ruler has built his palace, and their consent and cooperation is essential in founding a state to begin with (see Falk 1973, Schnepel 1995). Without these, such efforts were bound to fail. A new kingdom was, in effect, 'carved out of the wild spaces' (Falk 1973: 2), after which a shrine was erected, representative of the home of the spirit that owned the soil and had cooperated with the ruler. This shrine was located in a grove, 'evoking the forest and [the spirit's] ... rock seat, the mountains' (Falk 1973: 3-4). This grove and the rock seat, as discussed in Wessing (2003a: 223), were the source of the ruler's kingship, and it was here that the rituals required by the association of the king and the spirit were performed. As long as these continued, the realm was thought to be secure. A local shrine, convenient to the palace, was generally located liminally, on the border between the ruler's palace and the wilds from which the kingdom had been carved,²⁸ but this shrine often represented the grove and the rock seat much further away (Schnepel 1995: 148, 154; Wessing 2003a). With this, we can begin to understand the statement that 'the kingdom of Sunda was born at Sasaka Parahiyang' (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 91): this was the sacred grove of Sunda's spirit-guarantor. It similarly clarifies the nature of the site on Mt. Pulasari mentioned earlier.

Especially an extensive kingdom would probably have had more than one such grove, even if one served as the primary focus (see Falk 1973: 4; Schnepel 1995: 149-150). The state, as Lehman (2003: 17, 22) points out for mainland Southeast Asia, will tend to encroach on local authority but is limited in this effort by the fact that, at least traditionally, the local community is firmly engaged with its own local spirits, whose permission to found a local community was as necessary as that to found a kingdom. So long as the state recognizes the legitimacy of this local cult, it depends at least partly

on its local observance, and can only try to co-opt the cult's position within the state. This has in the past been done through the incorporation of local spirits in a state cult, by the replacement of such spirits by new, state-sponsored ones (Lehman 2003: 26-29), or by a combination of these.

Groves or remnants of them are found throughout Java and Sunda,²⁹ and references to them are prominent in Sundanese mythology (Sunarto & Sukanda-Tessier 1983: 40; Guillot 2002: 153). To summarize their features, they often consist of a wooded area or a forested hill, often far removed from the kingdom's capital. On the top or slopes of this hill is a sacred area or shrine containing the stone seat³⁰ belonging to the spirit. This seat, as was pointed out by Wessing (2003a), is the source throne of the kingdom from which other thrones and the ruler's authority derive.

THE URANG KANEKES' SHRINE

This picture corresponds closely to Koorders' (1896) depiction of Arca Domas. He describes this sacred area as a hill with thirteen terraces, deep within the Leuweung Cawane. On the topmost terrace lie or stand one or two large stone(s), according to Blume (1845: 34) placed on top of a pile of smaller ones. This is the place where the spirits of the deceased go to be reunited with Batara Tunggal, the apical ancestor (Van Tricht 1929: 134).³¹ Van Hoëvell (1845: 400) calls this a grave stone but, in view of the denial that this place is a graveyard, it is more likely that this stone is the place to which Batara Tunggal descends – e.g., his seat – especially given that the Urang Kanekes say that this and some other stones are “signs” that a number of spirits are accustomed to spend time here (Pleyte 1909: 501).³² Among these spirits are the ancestors of the leaders of Kanekes. On the lowest terrace, the spirits of the deceased gather before ascending upward to the topmost terrace.

As we saw above, the welfare of the realm was thought to depend on the ruler's performing the required rituals for the state's tutelary spirit. This, as we saw, also is the task of the Urang Kanekes and one of the reasons why they maintain their shrine(s). During this ritual, special attention is paid to the growth of moss on the stones on the terraces, which are indeed described by Koolhoven (1932: 67) as covered with this plant, which the Urang Kanekes consider sacred. On some stones, he continues, one could clearly see that some moss had been removed. The Urang Kanekes say that this moss, along with a water source, is an indication of the prospects for rain and, thus, for the welfare of this agricultural community in the coming year (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 86). Interestingly, scrapings of this moss are among the tribute (*seba*) brought annually to the Regent (*Bupati*) in Serang, the person who represents the state authorities for them (see Pleyte 1909: 494). This indicates a wider concern than just the welfare of the Kanekes' own community: rather, the successor state to Pajajaran, the Dutch East Indies in Pleyte's time, and now Indonesia, is the object of concern here.³³

Finally, we must consider the location of the Kanekes' shrine(s). These lie, as we have seen, quite far removed from either of the capitals of Sunda that were mentioned earlier: Galuh and Pajajaran. This, however, was not unusual, as a shrine

near the palace often represented one much further away in the original home of the state's tutelary spirit. While we can say nothing with certainty about local shrines at Galuh or Pakuan, Veth (1875-84, II: 147) and Rouffaer (1919: 244) mention an interesting hill also called Arca Domas.³⁴ This hill is located southeast of Bogor, at the foot of Mt. Pangrango, in a (then) beautiful grove. According to a local legend, the statues on this hill are the petrified bodies of Prabu Siliwangi and his followers, who were turned to stone as punishment for declining to accept the Muslim faith (Rouffaer 1919: 244; Veth 1875-84, II: 147).³⁵

In terms of its construction, location, and the concerns expressed by the Kanekes, then, their shrine conforms to the model of a shrine of state described earlier. The Kanekes can thus be seen as the representatives of the ruler, tending for him the shrine of state on which, as we saw earlier, the welfare of the realm and, indeed, the continuance of the king's rule depend. This turns us back to the question of the connection between the Kanekes and Pajajaran, in its most general sense of a West Javanese kingdom. Earlier we pointed out that the gloss 'inner Baduy' for the name Baduy Dalam was an error. Rather, the label *dalem* or *daleum*, especially in Old Sundanese, refers to a residence or palace (*padaleman*), primarily of a regent, but also of a king (Van Hoëvell 1845: 365; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986:12). Thus the designation of the *tangtu* people as *jelma* or *kaum dalem* indicates that these were people from the court (Van Tricht 1932: 178; Van Hoëvell 1845: 365). Indeed, the *tangtu* are also known as *urang rawayan* ('people with descent,' e.g., nobles; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 12),³⁶ which accounts for Pleyte's (1909: 495) observation of the use of ordinary (*kasar*) Sundanese language between them and the Regent in Serang during the *seba* in 1905: the two parties interacted as equals.³⁷

If our interpretation of Arca Domas is correct, these people of the court were seeing to the ruler's obligations toward the spirit of the state, the spirit upon which the state depended. Their position as agents of the court also becomes clear from the way the Urang Kanekes describe their duties. Aside from caring for the two shrines, performing the proper rituals there, and caring for the surrounding forest and rivers, their duties include taking care of and supporting the nobles, while never opposing the ruler and the nobility (Van Tricht 1929: 135; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 8). This care includes taking care of sacred heirlooms located both at the shrines and in the Kanekes hamlets themselves (Pennings 1902: 382). Within such heirlooms lie considerable powers that benefit the coherence of the state, and a proper ruler must hold on to them to remain king (Schnepel 1995: 154). Their loss therefore is disastrous and presages troubled times. Thus, when the cup used to measure the predictive water at the shrine (see above) went missing in 1975 and a stone *kujang* (sacred dagger) disappeared in 1989, the people of Kanekes began to expect disasters (WY & Heddy Susanto 1990: 63, 88). That *kujang*, they said, protects all the nations, peoples, and religions in the world.

CREATION

At this point, we should briefly look at the idea expressed by the Urang Kanekes that the creation of the world took place at Arca Domas, and ask ourselves what

might be meant with creation here. Although, more than four centuries after the demise of the court, the idea of creation may have come to be taken literally, in the context of an Indic state it may have had quite a different meaning. Under Indian notions of statehood, the realm, ruled by an incarnation or representation of a deity, ideally was a galactic polity, to use Tambiah's term (1977), encompassing the whole world, although in practice, of course, a ruler's power might wax and wane, causing the effective borders to shift. Within this theory of statehood, founding a new state was a cosmic event bringing into being new alignments: indeed, it could be considered the creation of the world anew. Since, as we have seen, a state could only be founded in cooperation with a forest or nature spirit that would agree to act as its protector and guarantor, the place where such an agreement came into being, e.g., the spirit's shrine, therewith also became the place where the world was 'created,' while this place itself would be the most sacred place in the kingdom (see Wessing 2003a). It is not to be wondered, then, that such a place would be tended by people of the palace, making the 'people from Pajajaran' of legend a kind of courtiers, perhaps supervised by an intermediary official living in a *dalem*, making them the *urang dalem* that they are still called.

SERVANTS OF THE SPIRITS

At least as early as Van Tricht (1932: 177),³⁸ the idea has been proffered that Kanekes might be a *mandala* community, an idea that has most recently been brought back into focus by Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 3), Bakels and Boevink (1988), and Bakels (1989). There seem to be three sources for this idea, namely, 1) references to Kanekes as a *mandala* by people from the outer hamlets, 2) a distinction between *tapa di negara* and *tapa di mandala* found in an ancient manuscript, and 3) Pigeaud's work on the Tantu Pangelaran and his later work on Java in the 14th century.

While the first source is intriguing, we will leave it for the time being, given the possibility that information from the outer hamlets may have been 'polluted' by contact with outsiders, including visiting anthropologists.³⁹ The second source, however, becomes interesting only when one accepts the information from the first. This is done, for instance, by Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 3, 11), who jump from the mention of *mandala* by *panamping* ('outer') informants to the idea of a sacred, closed territory, and then continue to link this with a depiction of Sundanese life in an ancient manuscript, concluding that the people of Kanekes still follow old Sundanese ways. Their uniqueness, they conclude, lies in the fact that for generations their life has consisted of *tapa di mandala*,⁴⁰ a phrase from the old manuscript. Note, however, that this conclusion is based on their interpretation of this old manuscript and not directly on statements by the Urang Kanekes, especially not by people from the *tangtu* hamlets.

Pigeaud's work, the other source for this idea, defines *mandala* as religious communities that were especially concerned with agriculture,⁴¹ in which obedience to the ruler played a major part (Van Tricht 1932: 177). Van Tricht concludes from this that the Kanekes may well have been a *mandala* community that was driven south by

the advance of Islam. This idea is picked up again by Bakels and Boevink (1988) and later elaborated by Bakels (1989). These describe *mandala* communities as sacred circles typified by their sober, ascetic lifestyle and their strong religious character. *Mandala* at the sources of rivers were especially important in water management (see Berthe 1965: 218).

Yet, the idea of a *mandala* as a sacred circle is more common in discussions of meditation and yogic practices. The geo-political use of the term implied rather a territorial division (Dowson 1972: 197). Stutley and Stutley (1984: 178) define it as 'a circle separating a particular area from its surroundings, which when consecrated becomes purified for ritual and liturgical purposes. The circle also gives protection from malevolent forces.' In other words, the *mandala* includes a buffer zone against the 'wild areas,' that serves to protect a consecrated area, which, given Indic notions of statehood, could include a kingdom.⁴² That this was the more common meaning of *mandala* communities is clear from the recent literature, in which the *mandala* is likened to a circle of kings, with one central ruler claiming divine authority over semi-autonomous, or even autonomous chiefs in the further reaches of his realm (Wolters 1982: 16).

The Javanese chronicle *Nāgara-Kertāgama* also distinguishes between a core region and partially controlled dependencies, although by this time *mandala* also came to refer to centrally administered outlying areas (Kulke 1991: 10, 20).⁴³ Pigeaud (1960-63, IV: 248), who terms *mandala* to be sacred, tabooed ring communities, *supposes* them to be the central sanctuaries of a certain group, though this is not clear from the text that he analyses.⁴⁴ However this may be, the *mandala* communities in Majapahit certainly had a Saivite character and were led by a *wiku* (religious functionary, holy man, sage; Zoetmulder 1982, II: 2274), none of which is easily recognized in what is known about the people of Kanekes. The agricultural preoccupation of these *mandala* communities could not have been typical of them only, nor was their Indic religious character, mixed with indigenous Javanese beliefs (Guillot 2002: 152). In all probability, such *mandala* communities existed independent of the Urang Kanekes, which, indeed, are said to have rejected Indic beliefs before they declined to accept Islam (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 5; Koolhoven 1932: 64; compare Pigeaud 1960-63, IV: 244), although traces of Hindu belief are found there, of course.⁴⁵ Indeed, in the 16th century, De Barros noted the presence of a great many 'temples' in Banten, while as late as the 19th century there was a comment on the presence of hermits there (Brumund 1868: 73).

Significantly, a list in the *Nāgara-Kertāgama* (Pigeaud 1960-63, III: 91) mentions another kind of community together with the *mandala* ones. These are the *deshas mēdang hulun hyang*, the sacred origin places, lands of the Spirits' servants (Van der Meulen 1977: 106; Pigeaud 1960-63, III: 91). These communities had been free of taxes since ancient times. Pigeaud comments (1960-63, IV: 243) that 'as no clear description of a *hulun hyang* is available, by way of guess the name Divinity's servant is taken to refer to the worship of Spirits.' Thus, we have communities of servants of the spirits mentioned quite distinctly from the Hindu *mandala* ones, which Pigeaud thinks may have been 'more cultured, being guardians of ancient religious lore,

whereas the *hulun hyang* people were simple worshippers of local Spirits,' although, the two seem to have had a common base in native Javanese belief (Pigeaud 1960-63, IV: 485). Especially since, as Pigeaud notes, nearly nothing is known about the common people's affairs in 14th-century Java (1960-63, IV: 467), why would such *hulun hyang* communities be mentioned at all and, moreover, ahead of the allegedly more sophisticated *mandala* ones? Some light may come from their name, *hulun hyang*. As Kulke (1991: 8, 11) notes, the title *huluntuhān* (slaves and lords) was most likely borne by officials at the court of Srivijaya, officials also found serving the chiefs of outlying *mandala*. Elsewhere, Kulke translates the term as 'officers and servants of the court' (Wisseman Christie 1995: 267, note 2). Replacing *tuhan* with *hyang*, the title *hulun hyang* then translates as 'officers and servants of the spirits,' which, we would suggest, were palace officials dealing with the spirits.⁴⁶ The phrase *hulun hyang*, furthermore, need not have referred to 'simple worshippers,' but could have been an honored title, much as the rulers of Ceylon and Orissa bore the prized title of Hereditary Sweeper to [the God] Jagannath (Falk 1973: 9).

We propose, therefore, that rather than a *mandala* community, the Urang Kanekes are perhaps better identified as a Sundanese example of one of these *hulun hyang* communities, which involved special service to the spirit lords of the land. Their shrines were also known as *kabuyutan*, although this is a more general term that covers both ancestral and nature spirit shrines. These were sacred places where the true Sundanese religion was practiced (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 4, 87), which of course included the veneration of both ancestors and spirits. *Kabuyutan* were places that a king must control if he were to be a ruler (e.g., the spirit shrine), and if such a place were to fall into enemy hands, the ruler would be considered lower than the skin of a civet cat found in the trash (Lubis 2000: 137). Latterly, the two have been confused, and *kabuyutan* have been called *mandala* (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 87; Lubis 2000: 137), which is perhaps not surprising, given the similarity between them. However, we must ask why, if they were only a simple *mandala* community, the Urang Kanekes have continued their practices for more than four centuries after the coming of Islam. As Servants of the Spirits, their tasks would have been more fundamental to the welfare of the state than the worship of now superceded Hindu deities and thus more likely to be continued after the cosmological change involved in the religious change since, as we saw earlier, this task was seen as essential by the Muslim rulers as well (Guillot 2002: 153).

THE RETURN OF THE KING

The key to their continuance is a belief that, some day, the king of Pakuan will return and that the state will be resurrected and restored to its former glory. This is based on the belief that Prabu Siliwangi and his nobles disappeared (*tilem*) rather than being killed. Pajajaran therefore still exists and thus the king's orders remain in force because he is still alive, if only through the aristocracy that claims direct descent from him (Williams 2001: 24; Lubis 2000: 19ff) and thus continues to participate in his essence and that of his immortal ancestors (Wessing 1993: 4, note 31; Pleyte 1905b: 51).⁴⁷ As the Urang Kanekes say, 'the rulers never die out, the

knighthood never ceases to exist' (Pleyte 1909: 504; Van Tricht 1929: 135), while according to the *tembang Sunda*: 'Please, let me go home, take me home to Pajajaran,' and elsewhere:

Faithfully, Siliwangi is still waiting
 Pajajaran enters our minds
 When we are together with many people
 Galuh Pakuan calls us... (Van Zanten 1989: 195, 208).

And thus, the king will return and, by taking up his reign, bring back the glorious-days of old.⁴⁸

In the meantime the Urang Kanekes guard the welfare of 'Pajajaran' and the position of the absent king. To maintain the perfection of the fundamental cosmological relationships that are the kingdom, now expressed especially in the sacred shrines, access to these is restricted. After all, these shrines embody or concentrate the sacred powers of the state into strictly defined spaces. Restricting access to them removes these powers from the gaze of those who would diminish and could endanger them (Smith 1992: 109-111). It seems, however, that this restriction is not applied across the board. While Van Hoëvell (1845: 344) writes that the Urang Kanekes were loath to admit administrative hierarchs and notables, among whom they of course also count Europeans, this was not the case during the visit of Dr. Blume, Koorders, and later, reputedly, President Sukarno. Van Tricht (n.d.: 6) even speaks of the complaisance of the Urang Kanekes 100 years earlier in taking Europeans to their sacred places. Blume, however, committed the sacrilege of removing some of the sacred moss from the stones at Arca Domas, to see what lay underneath (Blume 1845: 32). It is unclear what happened during Koorders' visit (if he actually came to Arca Domas), but after this the *tangtu* area was closed to European visitors;⁴⁹ it may have been a perceived threat posed by the Europeans' culture (Van Tricht n.d.: 6), especially after Blume's sacrilege.

CONCLUSION: CUSTODIANS OF THE PAST

Awaiting Prabu Siliwangi's return, relations with the guardian spirit of the state had to be maintained. To keep things the way they were, and to maintain the boundary between what was Pajajaran and what is not, most developments of the past four centuries have been rejected. Following Valeri's ideas (2000: 360), if images of the Urang Kanekes were to be brought into the outside world, they and the Urang Kanekes themselves would become part of this outside, foreign, Islamic, non-Pajajaran world, making it impossible to maintain Pajajaran, which would lead to its ultimate, cosmic collapse. Pajajaran exists because of the imposition of misoneistic⁵⁰ taboos: 'one must eat [and use] what belongs to one's origin in that it was one's property from the beginning, and must refuse ... what does not have the same status' (Valeri 2000: 293, 301, 331). And thus, schooling, writing, money,⁵¹ cameras, tape recorders, and the like, as well as, especially, wet-rice and associated practices, are forbidden (*buyut*), as rice in Pajajaran was a dry-field crop, and wet rice was introduced by the Muslim invader (Kruseman 1888: 2; Kartodirdjo

1966: 35).⁵² ‘When difference is just a comma in a similarity,’ Valeri (2000: 368) observes, ‘then one must stick to that comma.’

We see, then, that the ideas about the Urang Kanekes’ as indigenous to Banten and as agents of the court are not mutually exclusive. Rather, as we have discussed, they may well originally have been Banten folk in the service of the court, accounting for their presentation of themselves as *urang daleum*. Since their task was to maintain relations with the tutelary spirit of state, something that continued into Muslim and modern times (Moniaga, personal communication),⁵³ the *status quo ante* had to be preserved in order not to upset the balance that the ruler had maintained.

This is not to say that change has been totally avoided during all this time, as the Urang Kanekes are as subject as anyone to both outside pressures and the lure of the outside world (Persoon 1994: 340-344, 361; Wessing & Barendregt 2003). But what change there has been has been contained and, as yet, the Urang Kanekes remain what Van Tricht (1929: 132) called ‘the hereditary treasurers of the old religion, the old sanctuary and perhaps the old morals too,’ because for the kingdom to persist, the center must be kept pure (Wessing 2003a: 215, note 36) and the ritual must continue.

The world, Niles (1999) observes, is shaped by stories, and it is through participating in them that people become integrated into their society. The tale told by the lives and practices of the Urang Kanekes is one of the past containing a hope for the future. They are the custodians of the past, who remind the people of the present of its values, now often neglected in the rush of modern life. As long as this tale continues to be told, Pajajaran lives, and the return of Prabu Siliwangi can still be dreamt of.

Notes

The authors would like to thank *Moussons*’ anonymous peer reviewers for their insightful and constructive comments and Dr. Anita Mooijman for translating these into English.

- 1 In the literature more commonly known as the Baduy, a name they themselves reject, preferring to name themselves after the hamlet or settlement where they live (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 1), here the village of Kanekes, under which all their various hamlets fall. Other names are used as well (cf. Barendregt & Wessing in press).
- 2 This is not to say that nothing has been published about them recently. See Berthe (1965), Bakels & Boevink (1988), Garna (1988), Persoon (1994), and Barendregt & Wessing (in press).
- 3 As can be seen in Garna’s sources, however, these figures can vary considerably due to the disappearance of hamlets and the movement of people in and out of Kanekes.
- 4 For the difference between hamlet and village, see Barendregt and Wessing (in press). It should also be realized that there are and have been differences between the administrative definition of Kanekes as a village and the point of view of the people themselves. In the time of the Lebak Regency, the Urang Kanekes seem to have been incorporated under the jurisdiction of different *desa* (see Jacobs & Meijer 1891: 46-49) that fell within particular *kalurahan* (administrative unit) (Jacobs & Meijer 1891: 140, note 2) or *taneuh* (area; Dutch: *landschap*). Such *taneuh* are often seen as integrally connected with particular *adat*, which then have to be followed by all who live within the *taneuh*’s boundaries (Van Tricht n.d.: 58; Wessing 2001). More recently, these *taneuh* are being successfully claimed to be *tanah ulayat* (communal lands) (Moniaga n.d.: 16-18).

- 5 This became abundantly clear during our respective field research in south Banten; Barendregt in the Pandeglang district and Kanekes, and Wessing in Dukuh, Guradog, and among the Kasepuhan of Mt. Halimun. See also Moniaga (n.d.) and Sucipto (1989).
- 6 See Bakels 1989; Blume 1845; Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986; Von Ende 1892; Garna 1988; Van Hoëvell 1845; Pennings 1902; Pleyte 1905a, 1909; Van Tricht 1929, 1932, n.d.
- 7 "*Panjang ulah dipotong, pondok ulah disambung, gunung ulah diurug, sumur ulah dikedug.*" This text varies. See Garna 1988: ii.
- 8 The religious focus of these communities seems to have been almost fully on the spirit forces that they were trying to deal with. Under pressure of Islam, such communities have largely disappeared and only occasional remnants of them are now found.
- 9 Arca Domas: 800 statues, in which, as Veth (1875-84, II: 147) writes, the 800 should be taken to mean 'many.' Sasaka Pusaka Buana: venerated heritage (*sasaka* and *pusaka*) world (*buana*), i.e., the venerated [place of the] heritage of the world (Eringa 1984: 112, 608, 676).
- 10 See also Pennings (1902: 378). Koolhoven's (1932) description of his trek there, however, does have a ring of truth, especially since he does not seem to have been accompanied by Kanekes guides.
- 11 Kanekes leaders claim direct descent from this deified ancestor (Danasasmita & Djatisunda 1986: 25).
- 12 Rather than demons, like Veth (1875-84, III: 127, note 2) thought.
- 13 Contrary to the claims of early Dutch authors (Blume 1845; Koorders 1896; Pleyte 1909), the Urang Kanekes deny that Arca Domas is a graveyard. The spirits of the deceased go to the *lemah bodas* (Veth 1875-84, III: 130; Van Hoëvell 1845: 399), just below Arca Domas, and burial there is not spoken of.
- 14 We wonder, however, whether the information that Arca Domas is the creation (= spirits') shrine and Sasaka Domas the ancestral one can be correct. As we have seen, outsiders have been allowed to visit Arca Domas in the past, but there are no reports of anyone visiting Sasaka Domas, nor are the Urang Kanekes' activities there reported on. Furthermore, the ancestral Batara Tunggal, rather than a tutelary spirit, is said to have his seat at Arca Domas, which is again congruent with Sundanese practice generally. It could be, therefore, that Danasasmita and Djatisunda's information is reversed, and that Sasaka Domas, rather than Arca Domas, is the shrine commemorating creation. This, however, is pure speculation.
- 15 Van Hoëvell writes that "*deze worden eigenlijk meer vereerd dan*" Batara Tunggal, which can be read as either 'venerated more often than' or as 'receive greater veneration than' Batara Tunggal.
- 16 A Sundanese informant said that Prabu Siliwangi *tilem*, which literally means 'to submerge' (Eringa 1984: 778). He further glossed this, however, with the Indonesian *menghilang* ('disappeared'), *mayatnya tidak ada* ('there was no corpse').
- 17 See the map in Rosidi *et al.* (2000: 621). Rouffaer (1919: 243), summarizing the literature of the time, has the kingdom of Pajajaran existing for ca. 100 years from 1433 C.E. Not much has appeared recently about Pajajaran other than a volume by Sunarto and Sukanda-Tessier (1983). A volume based on a 1985 congress, *Seminar Sejarah dan Tradisi tentang Prabu Siliwangi*, has as yet failed to appear.
- 18 Although this idea should be treated with caution (see Chambert-Loir 2000).
- 19 The *tembang Sunda*, an aristocratic musical genre in West Java, may also be seen as such. In these songs, Pajajaran is the home of Sundaneness, the place where Prabu Siliwangi went to when he disappeared and where Sundanese nobles, many of whom claim to be descendants of Prabu Siliwangi (see Prasadja 1974: 167-169), will also go to after death (Williams 2001: 197; Van Zanten 1989: 70, 195, 208; compare Van Hoëvell 1845: 358, 410). The historical truth of their traditions is less important here than the truths about Sunda and Sundaneness that they build upon their tales (see Wessing & Barendregt 2003).
- 20 This same pattern is also found elsewhere in Southeast Asia (see Jønsson 1998: 8). Such upriver communities could also provide (temporary) refuge to defeated kings, which may have given rise to the idea of nobles of Pajajaran seeking refuge in Kanekes.
- 21 "*Gunung teu meunang dilebur, lebak teu meunang dirusak.*"

- 22 Mt. Pulasari is located in Banten in the regency of Pandeglang. On its slopes, various archaeological remains are found and, according to local legend, various men of religion meditated here (Rosidi *et al.* 2000: 526). See plate in Guillot, Ambary, & Dumarçay (1990: 18). Hageman (1867: 209) refers to Galuh and the western tip of Sunda, Ujung Kulon, as vassals of Pajajaran, while the Urang Kanekes mention Galuh in their sagas (Jacobs & Meijer 1891: 150). Hageman (1867: 223) has Pajajaran at the time of the introduction of Islam divided among three rulers, one of whom had his seat near Mt. Pulasari.
- 23 Similarly, Danasasmita and Djatisunda (1986: 87) report that Kanekes was a spiritual protector of Pajajaran. Kanekes and Pajajaran formed a pair, each protecting the other.
- 24 During fieldwork in Banten, Barendregt often heard of a group of refugees from Pajajaran (the name Siliwangi was mentioned) that had fled and hidden in the forest at Java's western tip, Ujung Kulon, at a place now popularly known as Sangiang Sira. This location is but one in a chain of sacred places that is projected onto the Javanese landscape. Both the people of Banten and the Urang Kanekes have an anthropomorphic view of Java, the latter recognizing Ujung Kulon as a sacred place. While Sangiang Sira is perceived to be the island's head, Sangiang Tikorok, near the old city of Bandung (Dayeuh Kolot), is seen as its throat, and a place called Sangiang Dampak, near Banyuwangi in East Java, is said to be a foot. There is no precedence among these places, because, according to the Urang Kanekes, they are equally old, a body being born all at once.
- 25 Pajajaran was indeed a Vaisnava kingdom (Ekadjadi 1984: 82). The idea of an incarnation seems to have been less common than used to be thought, the idea now being that the king acts as a conduit for divine powers (Miyazaki 1988: 148).
- 26 These beliefs may be Indian derived or part of a common heritage with India (cf. Mus 1975).
- 27 He has to be a *yogiśwara* to do so (Van der Meulen 1977: 102, note 59). Such persons are said to bring order into a place of previous chaos although, as Schefold (1989) points out, the forest and its resident spirits have an order of their own. Such a spirit and its order, which may be chaos from the point of view of a ruler to whom anything other than the order he brings must by definition be disorder, can be converted into the basis of the kingdom by converting it to *dharma*, 'the principle of justice and order that must empower every viable community' (Falk 1973: 15).
- 28 See Kulke 1991: 5, 9, 12.
- 29 See Pleyte 1905a, 1905b; Kulke 1991: 17; Van der Meulen 1977: 98, 99, note 45, 106.
- 30 The crude stones at Arca Domas mentioned earlier.
- 31 Here Arca Domas is obviously confused with Sasaka Domas.
- 32 *Te verwijlen*, 'to tarry.' Pleyte (1909: 502) considers this statement oracular and indicative that the Urang Kanekes have forgotten their ancestral religion, but in many places in Indonesia statues often serve as seats for spirits or gods. The objects serve as points of communication between the people and the spirits (see also Mus 1975: 14). Bakels (1989: 361) writes that a similar shrine at Kosala is locally considered to be the last resting place of Batara Tunggal, who did not die, but rather *ngahiang* ('disappeared'). The idea that ancestors or powerful persons live on both in this world and elsewhere and that it is possible to contact them is widespread in Indonesia.
- 33 Although, at first glance, these substitutions for Sunda seem surprising, it must be remembered that the Urang Kanekes preserve the *state*, the very existence of which is proof of its cosmic legitimacy. While they may hope for the return of old times (see below), the immediate necessity is the preservation of the social order as embodied in the (current) successor to Sunda or Pajajaran. Compare here the fact that Nyai Roro Kidul, the goddess of the Southern Ocean, continues to support whoever sits on the throne of Mataram – or rules the archipelago (*Terbit* 1988).
- 34 Pleyte (1916: 556) also writes of a *sasaka domas* as being the exquisite reception hall of Pajajaran. Whether this had anything to do with the ancestors of the rulers is unclear.
- 35 Veth casts some doubt on the authenticity of this 'shrine,' however, saying that until the beginning of the 19th century the place had been unknown and that the statues had only been gathered together during the

- laying-out of a coffee plantation. On the other hand, a royal shrine need not have been generally known, even among the local populations, and the statues could well have become scattered between 1579 C.E. and the beginning of the 19th century.
- 36 *Urang rawayan* is also glossed as 'people from the other side' (Garna 1988: 41; Barendregt & Wessing in press).
- 37 *Kasar* is the level of politeness used to inferiors or between equals or familiars (see Wessing 1974).
- 38 Based on a personal comment to him by K. Hidding.
- 39 Bakels (1989) also mentions that the *panamping* use the term *mandala* to refer to either their shrine or their community as a whole.
- 40 *Tapa di mandala* includes the duties of those who live in *mandala* or *kebuyutan* communities, e.g., centers of religious activity. *Tapa di negara* describes the life of ordinary citizens (Rosidi *et al.* 2000: 648).
- 41 See also Wisseman Christie's discussion of *sima* (1986: 71-72).
- 42 Symbolic borders around the capital served a similar purpose (see Paranavitana 1970).
- 43 This relationship between the center and the periphery was inherently unstable, which may have been a reason for sending princes upriver (Wolters 1982: 17), although this was no guarantee of stability (Kulke 1986: 7).
- 44 Elsewhere, too, he speculates that the people of a *mandala* as a rule "lived in remote districts in the wooded hills of the interior of the country, engaged in agriculture" (Pigeaud 1960-63, IV: 486).
- 45 It is, of course, true that the Kanekes' beliefs show signs of Indian and Islamic influence, but this is not the point. The important thing is that their focus is on the local tutelary spirits of state, rather than on Indic gods like Siva. In any case, Indian beliefs rest on spirit cults much like those in Southeast Asia, and Siva began his career as a local nature spirit (see Mus 1975: 28-31).
- 46 For mainland Southeast Asian parallels, see Lehman (2003: 23).
- 47 The same is said about the last ruler of Majapahit in East Java who, according to the prophecies of Joyoboyo, will return to Java 500 years after his disappearance (*moksa*, here *tilem*).
- 48 There is a precedent to this belief in the recognition of the legendary Udayana in a 10th-century Javanese prince of Cambodian origin (Bosch 1961: 106). If the living can resemble a past hero, can we not expect a future king to be a reincarnation of a previous, glorious one? Indeed, Barendregt's Kanekes informants expressed great awe for Indonesia's founding father, Sukarno. A photograph of his daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri, was commonly referred to as 'Bung Karno,' reflecting her participation in Sukarno's power.
- 49 Koolhoven's visit to Arca Domas was done secretly, of course, but he, at least, took pains not to disturb anything there (Koolhoven 1932: 65).
- 50 Fear or intolerance of change. Such taboos explicitly mean to isolate 'those who are in closest contact with tradition and thus have the greatest responsibility for it' (Valeri 2000: 199, 293), which would certainly characterize the Urang Kanekes in the *tangtu* hamlets.
- 51 But see Adimihardja (2000: 49). This, however, pertains to the *panamping* hamlets.
- 52 Rice, furthermore, was primarily a ritual commodity and its production was small scale, as part of the corvée services (the *mandala*?) owed to the ruler (Holtzappel 2003: 79). Its conversion from a ritual food to a mass consumption item after the introduction of Islam would thus have been a degradation of the previous cosmology's ritual substance and, thus, a degradation of their beliefs. Similarly, one wonders if the taboo on literacy might not be in reaction to Islam's reliance on the Book (see Valeri 2000: 150).
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Abstract: This article proposes that the people of Kanekes, also known as Baduy, in Banten (West Java), viewing themselves as guardians of the shrine of state, the source of the ruler's power and authority, due to their historical relation with the ancient Sundanese court of Pajajaran, have attempted to maintain the ritual purity of their territory. Various older theories are discussed and compared with newer studies on founders' cults and Javanese and Indian courts. The Kanekes belief that their duties include the maintenance of the world – here, the kingdom of Pajajaran – has lead them to maintain a high degree of cultural purity, while their original culture may not have been all that different from that of the peoples around them. Believing that, someday, the old ruler will return and the state will arise anew, they continue to practice the old customs that assured a balance between the state and the forces of nature upon which this state depended.

***Gardiens du sanctuaire de l'Esprit du royaume :
les Urang Kanekes et l'Etat de Pajajaran à Java Ouest***

Résumé : Les gens de Kanekes, connus également sous le nom de Baduy, à Banten (Java Ouest), de par leur association historique avec l'ancien royaume soundanais de Pajajaran, se considèrent comme les gardiens du sanctuaire de cet Etat, qui confère au roi son pouvoir et son autorité. Cet article suggère que, de ce fait, ils se sont efforcés de préserver la pureté rituelle de leur territoire. Il examine diverses théories anciennes à ce sujet et les confronte à des études récentes sur les cultes de fondateurs et sur les cours javanaises et indiennes. Cette croyance des Kanekes qu'il est de leur devoir de défendre le monde – ici, le royaume de Pajajaran – les a conduits à conserver un niveau élevé de pureté culturelle, alors même que leur culture d'origine pouvait être assez similaire à celle de leurs voisins. Dans la conviction que l'ancien roi reviendra un jour et qu'alors l'Etat renaîtra de ses cendres, ils persistent à pratiquer l'ancienne coutume qui garantit l'équilibre entre l'Etat et les forces de la Nature dont l'Etat dépendait.

Key-words: Baduy, Kanekes, Arca Domas, spirit cults, West Java, Sunda, Pajajaran, relations between state and forest, neophobia.

Mots-clés : Baduy, Kanekes, Arca Domas, cultes des esprits, Java Ouest, Sunda, Pajajaran, relations entre Etat et forêt, néophobie.