

The Aul Myth in the Digital Era: Cultural-Based Conservation Narratives through the Adaptation of *Manusia dan Gunung* Book and *Aksatriya* Documentary Film

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ABSTRACT

*This study examines the transformation of the Aul myth—a part of the oral tradition of the Sundanese people—into two modern media: the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the documentary film *Aksatriya*. The main objective is to explore how these media represent ecological values through transmedia strategies and culturally rooted narratives. This qualitative-descriptive research employs narrative analysis, close reading for the book, close viewing for the film, and documentation of oral traditions. The findings indicate that the book offers a reflective and symbolic narrative that fosters ecological awareness through literary depth. In contrast, the documentary film conveys the collective voice of the community by presenting testimonies, natural landscapes, and audiovisual aesthetics to reconstruct the meaning of Aul as a guardian of nature. Both mediums not only preserve local cultural heritage but also reinterpret myth to meet the challenges of contemporary environmental crises. The study concludes that transmedia-based adaptation strategies can serve as inclusive and effective conservation narratives. These findings contribute to the development of culturally embedded ecological education and policies grounded in local wisdom.*

Keywords: *Aul myth, transmedia adaptation, cultural conservation, ecological folklore, environmental storytelling, local wisdom, documentary narrative*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas transformasi mitos Aul—bagian dari tradisi lisan masyarakat Sunda—ke dalam dua medium modern: buku *Manusia dan Gunung* dan film dokumenter *Aksatriya*. Tujuan utama kajian ini adalah mengidentifikasi bagaimana kedua medium tersebut merepresentasikan nilai-nilai ekologis melalui pendekatan transmedia dan strategi naratif yang kontekstual. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif-deskriptif dengan teknik analisis naratif, close reading untuk teks buku, close viewing untuk film, serta dokumentasi tradisi lisan masyarakat. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa buku menyajikan narasi reflektif dan simbolik yang memperkuat kesadaran ekologis melalui kedalaman bahasa dan kontemplasi. Sementara itu, film dokumenter menghadirkan kekuatan dokumentasi visual dan suara masyarakat sebagai bentuk artikulasi kolektif terhadap mitos dan lingkungan. Kedua medium tidak hanya mempertahankan warisan budaya lokal, tetapi juga memperluas makna mitos dalam konteks perubahan zaman. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa strategi adaptasi berbasis transmedia mampu membangun narasi konservasi yang lebih inklusif dan efektif. Temuan ini

relevan untuk pengembangan pendidikan ekologi berbasis budaya serta kebijakan pelestarian berbasis kearifan lokal.

Kata kunci: mitos Aul, narasi konservasi berbasis budaya, transmedia folklor, konservasi, Wayang Windu, Aksatriya, budaya lokal.

INTRODUCTION

In various cultures, myths have served as symbolic modes of communication that represent the relationship between humans, nature, and supernatural forces. Within Sundanese society, one of the enduring myths is the Aul—a wolf-headed human figure—believed as safeguard to the ecological balance of Lake Aul. This myth is not merely part of collective belief but also reflects an ecological awareness transmitted across generations through oral tradition. According to (James Danandjaja, 2002), folklore functions as a medium of education and social control within society, including in the context of environmental preservation. Furthermore, (Dwimarwati et al., 2023) propose that oral tradition acts a framework for embodying knowledge that can be inherited to the community in ways of thinking, behaving, and acting in accordance with the knowledge and truth they uphold (Dwimarwati et al., 2023).

The transformation of communication media in the digital era has also altered the way of how myths and local narratives are transmitted to the public. It embedded within the collective subconscious through systems of inheritance (Sukatman et al., 2024). Traditional narratives that once thrived as folktales have now migrated into various digital media formats, such as popular books, documentary videos, and online platforms. This indicates

that myths are no longer confined to oral community spaces but have become part of broader media discourse. (Marie-Laure Ryan, 2016) refers to this phenomenon as transmedia storytelling, the practice of conveying stories across multiple media channels to enrich the audience's narrative experience. (Yulianeta et al., 2020) further demonstrate that folklore presented digitally through interactive web platforms can strengthen cultural understanding and foster learning interest by employing relevant media in modern life.

In the context of revitalizing local culture through digital media, (Asra et al., 2024) emphasize the importance of documenting folktales as a means of strengthening multicultural literacy and cultural identity within society. The repackaging of local narratives into video storytelling formats (such as TikTok) is considered effective in reaching digital-native generations. This strategy is relevant to the adaptation of the Aul myth into a documentary film and a book, as discussed in this article, which aims to expand the function of local narratives as a medium for culturally based conservation storytelling and the cultivation of ecological awareness in contemporary society.

A concrete example of the transformation of the Aul myth narrative can be found in *Manusia dan Gunung*, a book by (Pecep DW, 2019) that explores the ecological conflict

of Lake Aul within the framework of local spirituality. This book was later adapted into the documentary film *Aksatriya*, which presents a visual and symbolic journey of Aul as a manifestation of contemporary environmental crises. The myth and the process of demythologization in these works reveal a strong relevance between ecology and the existence of myth. This indicates a close connection between demythologization and shifts in societal attitudes toward the environment. This condition parallels (Murwonugroho et al., 2021) study on the demythologization of the pocong figure as a medium of socialization (Murwonugroho et al., 2021). Therefore, adaptations which employ myths hold strategic value, as found in certain forms of film that create new spaces for broader interpretation (Acep Iwan Saidi, 2015).

This adaptation demonstrates a strategic effort to employ folklore as a tool for culture-based conservation narratives that remain relevant in contemporary contexts. Such an approach aligns with Foley's (1995) perspective, as cited in (Mark C. Amodio, 2020), which underscores the significance of performance and media context in understanding the dynamics of oral traditions.

Several previous studies have examined the relationship between folklore and environmental preservation, among others by (Robert Sibarani, 2012), who emphasized that local wisdom embedded in oral traditions holds great potential in fostering ecological awareness within society. However, such studies remain limited to traditional modes of expression and have not yet explored how

digital transformation reshapes the meaning and strategies of ecological messaging. Furthermore, research on transmedia storytelling in the context of Indonesian local culture, particularly environmental myths, is still very scarce.

The transformation of the Aul myth narrative from oral tradition to a book, and subsequently to a documentary film, reflects the dynamics of cultural communication in the digital era. Initially, the Aul myth thrived orally within agrarian Sundanese communities, passed down across generations, particularly around Lake Aul. However, as communication technologies advanced and awareness of cultural preservation grew, the story was adapted into written form through the book *Manusia dan Gunung*. This transition enabled the Aul narrative to reach a broader audience beyond the local community and become part of the public discourse on the ecological identity of the Sundanese people. The shift from orality to literacy corresponds to what (J Ong, 1982) describes as "the transition from an oral to a literate culture," which affects not only the mode of transmission but also the way knowledge is produced and understood.

Furthermore, when the Aul narrative was adapted into the documentary film *Aksatriya*, a process of expanding meaning and visual aesthetics occurred, strengthening the ecological message of the myth. As an audiovisual medium, documentary film offers a stronger emotional and symbolic dimension while also creating new spaces for participation through digital distribution. This aligns with (A Teew, 1988) view that the medium is never neutral but actively shapes

the meaning and perception of its content. Thus, the transition from oral tradition to book and finally to documentary film is not merely a matter of form, but a communicative strategy to maintain the relevance of folklore amid environmental crises and cultural change.

Previous studies have explored various approaches to delivering environmental messages through digital media, but has not yet specifically addressed local myths such as the Aul as strategies for culture-based conservation narratives. (Yuni Dharta et al., 2021) analyzed the documentary *Diam dan Dengarkan*, which raised environmental awareness through visual symbolism and indirect narration, without linking it to local myths. (Nurul Fajar et al., 2022) applied John Fiske's semiotic approach to the film *Semesta*, which presented figures from diverse regions with cultural and religious backgrounds, but the focus was more on environmental awareness than mythological narratives. Furthermore, (Rizal et al., 2022) examined two folktales from Central Kalimantan—"Legenda Batu Bagaung" and "Dohong dan Tingang"—using an ecocritical approach. Their study showed that these folktales serve as reminders to protect nature, but their influence on local community behavior tends to be limited. This research did not explore narrative adaptation into digital media. Another study, *Folktales as a Means of Local Wisdom Literacy: An Ecological Literature Approach* (Suryanto et al., 2024), investigated the educational value of local wisdom in folktales from Karanganyar Regency as a tool for environmental literacy among elementary students. Although it emphasized the importance of introducing

local wisdom from an early age, it did not address narrative adaptation into digital or popular media formats. Finally, research by (Marie-Laure Ryan, 2016) on transmedia narratives and Cox (2010) on culture-based conservation narratives offered significant contributions, yet it is more focused on Western discourse.

At the local level, interdisciplinary approaches that integrate oral literature, digital media, and culture-based conservation narratives have not been widely incorporated into academic studies. Yet, within the context of an increasingly alarming ecological crisis, such an approach is becoming ever more urgent for building alternative narratives that are both grounded and culturally meaningful.

The research gap lies in the absence of studies that specifically analyze culture-based conservation strategies through the adaptation of the Aul myth from oral tradition into modern digital media. Neither the book *Manusia dan Gunung* nor the documentary film *Aksatriya* has been examined as transmedia articulations of a myth containing ecological conservation messages. This study is important to demonstrate how folklore is not merely preserved but also reconstructed to address contemporary challenges.

Based on these issues, this article poses the central research question: how has the Aul myth narrative been transformed through the media of books and documentary films as a strategy for contemporary culture-based conservation storytelling? This question aims to further explore the processes of adaptation, meaning reinforcement, and the potential of folklore narratives in fostering ecological

awareness through modern media.

Employing a transmedia storytelling approach and ecological folklore studies, this research seeks to understand the communication strategies employed by the book's author and the documentary filmmakers in reviving the Aul myth as a symbol of nature's guardian. It also examines how media are utilized to shape emotional engagement and collective awareness toward environmental issues.

The objective of this article is to analyze the transformation of the Aul narrative as a form of culture-based conservation storytelling in the digital era, focusing on two primary media: books and documentary films. The findings of this study are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of modern folklore studies and a practical contribution to strategies for culture-based conservation narratives grounded in local wisdom.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach with narrative and transmedia performative analysis to examine the transformation of the Aul myth from oral tradition into modern media such as books and documentary films in conveying environmental messages. This approach was chosen because it aligns with the research objective of exploring the meanings and communication strategies embedded in various narrative forms about Aul, both textual and visual.

According to (Moleong, 2000), a

qualitative approach is used to understand social phenomena holistically and in depth within their natural context. In this regard, the Aul myth is viewed as a cultural product that undergoes a transformation of medium and communicative function in contemporary society. This study also applies (John W. Creswell, 2007) case study method, which considers case studies as a qualitative research approach used to deeply explore real-life phenomena. The research object—the Aul myth as represented in the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the film *Aksatriya*—possess important and unique value as they can represent a wider phenomenon: the ecological cultural shift of the Sundanese.

The primary data sources in this study consist of: (1) the book *Manusia dan Gunung* (2019) by Pepep DW as a literary adaptation of traditional folklore narratives; and (2) the documentary film *Aksatriya: The Forgotten Beast* (2024) as an audiovisual adaptation of the same myth. Additional data include interviews and/or written documentation from the creators (if available), as well as secondary literature addressing the Aul myth, Lake Aul, and Sundanese environmental folklore.

Data analysis was carried out using narrative analysis and John Miles Foley's performance-centered analysis (Mark C. Amodio, 2020), which views narrative as something dynamic, evolving through the interaction between text, context, and medium. This analysis was employed to uncover the shifting meanings of the Aul myth, the ecological values it contains, and the ways in which culture-based conservation narratives are constructed within literary and

audiovisual media.

In addition, to examine the transformation of folklore from oral tradition into books and film, this study also refers to Henry Jenkins' theory of transmedia storytelling (Marie-Laure Ryan, 2016), which emphasizes that a narrative can evolve across multiple media platforms, with each medium contributing unique layers of meaning. From this perspective, the researcher is able to map both the continuities and differences in ecological communication strategies within each medium representing the Aul myth.

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation, textual observation (close reading and close viewing), and literature review of supporting works on folklore, ecology, Sundanese culture, and media. Data validity was maintained by applying source and method triangulation, as recommended by (Norman K. Denzin, 2018), to ensure the accuracy and richness of interpretations derived from the data.

With this methodology, the study is expected to reveal the significant role of folklore transformation in adaptively conveying environmental messages through media relevant to today's generations, while also demonstrating the relevance of the Aul myth as a cultural communication strategy in addressing local ecological crises.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Strategy of Adapting the Aul Myth through Books and Films

This study found that the Aul myth, which initially existed as part of the oral

tradition of the Sundanese community around Lake Aul, was successfully elaborated into the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the documentary film *Aksatriya* through effective communication strategies employing audiovisual media, making it more accessible and understandable to the public. (Pepek DW, 2019) book adapts the Aul myth into a written narrative that is not only documentary in nature but also reflective.

Through a close reading approach, the researcher found that the book contains various spiritual and ecological elements deeply rooted in Sundanese traditions. One significant passage appears on page 45:

"Aul emerged from the mountain mist when humans damaged the water source."

This sentence does not merely describes the appearance of the mythological figure but also implies an ecological metaphor—that human violations against nature evoke a spiritual "response" from the guardian of the universe. Aul is positioned as a symbol of moral and natural control over environmental destruction. The narrative in this book also reinforces reverence for mountains and lakes as sacred entities. The mountain is not merely a setting, but a silent character that embodies history, spirituality, and ecological balance. Pepek DW's writing style is reflective and contemplative, inviting readers not only to understand the story but also to contemplate its relevance to today's environmental crises.

Meanwhile, the documentary film *Aksatriya* adopts a more direct visual approach, utilizing cinematic techniques to

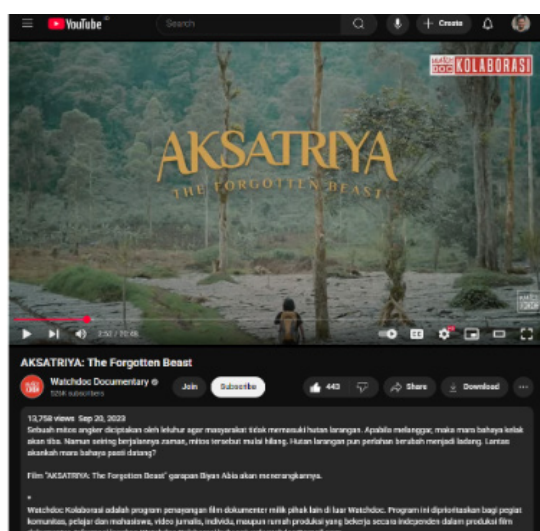


Figure 1. Screenshot from the documentary film *Aksatriya* on the YouTube channel WatchDoc. Recorded with over 13,000 views, indicating the effectiveness of knowledge dissemination.

portray the Aul myth in a contemporary format. The film not only presents the mythological narrative but also provides space for visual representation of the Lake Aul environment, which is safeguarded by the myth.

The performance-centered analysis proposed by Foley (1995) in Mark C. Amodio (2020) reveals how the film's visual elements—such as the symbolism of the mountain and the wolf-headed figure of Aul—function as metaphors for environmental preservation. Furthermore, the documentary techniques used in the film effectively deliver strong ecological messages, illustrating how modern society still relies on ancient stories to maintain natural balance.

Visual Adaptation: Symbolism in *Aksatriya*

The documentary film *Aksatriya: The Forgotten Beast* adapts the Aul myth not by explicitly depicting the mythological figure or through visual dramatization, but by

excavating the collective memory of the Lake Aul community as the primary source of its narrative. This approach positions the film as both a medium of documentation and a socio-cultural interpretation of a myth living within the community.

Through close viewing techniques, it was found that the strength of the film lies in its representation of community voices, natural landscapes, and interviews with local figures. The narrative is gradually constructed through the testimonies of residents who share their memories, beliefs, and experiences related to Aul.

Their voices and expressions serve as symbols of cultural memory and the ecological values embedded within the myth.

Instead of visually depicting the figure of Aul, the film relies on visualizations of Lake Aul's landscapes, the surrounding forests, and the lives of indigenous communities to frame its ecological message. The transitions between images of environmental degradation and the community's oral narratives create a powerful reflective effect. This demonstrates that documentary film can serve as a mediating medium between oral tradition and contemporary ecological awareness.

By not depicting the mythological figure literally, *Aksatriya* emphasizes that the power of myth does not always lie in visual representation, but rather in how communities believe in, transmit, and embody the values embedded within it.

Medium Comparison: Book and Film in Conveying the Aul Myth

This section discusses how the two media—the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the documentary film *Aksatriya*—represent different approaches in conveying the ecological values of the Aul myth. Their differences lie not merely in their form but also in their mechanisms for fostering cultural and environmental awareness.

The book *Manusia dan Gunung* presents a written narrative rich in reflection and symbolism. Through detailed descriptions, poetic characters, and a meditative writing style, the book offers a slow yet profound reading experience. Readers are invited to explore the layers of meaning behind the Aul myth as a guardian of nature, particularly through the imagery of mist, water, and mountain tranquility. The book serves as a contemplative medium that guides readers to interpret the human–nature relationship in spiritual and cultural terms. It is especially effective for audiences who appreciate exploring ideas and values through text.

On the other hand, the documentary film *Aksatriya* employs a visual and documentary approach. Although it does not directly depict the figure of Aul, the film successfully conveys the presence of the myth through community testimonies, natural landscapes, and cinematic narration. The visualization of mist, forest sounds, and portrayals of community life around Lake Aul create a powerful affective experience for viewers. The film is more communicative for wider audiences, particularly the digital generation who are more connected to audio-visual media.

This comparison shows that the book and the film each have their own strengths. The book emphasizes depth of meaning and the internalization of values, whereas the film foregrounds visual power and rapid emotional impact. In the context of strategies for cultural preservation and environmental awareness, the two should not be opposed but rather positioned as complementary approaches.

This is where the relevance of a transmedia approach emerges—namely, extending the reach of the message through channels aligned with the preferences and characteristics of diverse audiences.

The Aul myth adaptation into these two media demonstrates that local folklore can be transformed into new spaces of expression which not only preserve its essence but also broaden its meanings in contemporary contexts.

Implications: A Media-Based Folklore Revitalization Model for Conservation

This study is also relevant to the discussion of Law No. 5 of 2017 on the Advancement of Culture, which regulates efforts to preserve and develop Indonesian culture, including oral traditions and local myths. This law emphasizes the importance of cultural advancement as one of the elements to strengthen national identity and maintain the sustainability of existing cultural values. In the context of this research, cultural advancement refers to the adaptation and transformation of the Aul myth, which is part of the local Sundanese culture, so that it remains relevant amid modernity and can be accepted by the younger generation as well as the wider

community.

One of the main points of the Law on the Advancement of Culture is the enhancement of access to culture, which can be implemented through various media platforms, including books, films, or other digital media. This is highly relevant to the findings of this study. The Aul myth, which was originally known only through the oral traditions of the community, can now be accessed more widely through mass and digital media, such as the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the documentary film *Aksatriya*. Thus, through this regulation, the preservation of local culture adapted into modern media provides an opportunity for the community to better know, understand, and maintain the Aul myth in a more contemporary form.

Furthermore, the strategy of adapting the Aul myth in media aligns with efforts to advance culture through media as regulated in the Law on the Advancement of Culture. The law states that culture should be promoted by utilizing various technologies and communication media to introduce Indonesian culture, including narratives rich in moral values and teachings contained in folklore and myths. The film and book used in this study serve as means to convey the values embedded in the Aul myth to the wider community, thereby supporting the advancement of local culture that holds significant ecological and social values.

Cultural advancement based on oral traditions, such as the Aul myth, also supports the principles in the law, which emphasize the importance of preserving cultural identity. By utilizing more modern media,

this myth can remain alive and relevant—not only as a cultural heritage limited to the older generation but also as a tool to educate younger generations about cultural values that are crucial for the sustainability of their environment.

Overall, this study not only provides insights into the transformation of the Aul myth through media but also supports the implementation of the Law on the Advancement of Culture in preserving and promoting local culture as part of broader environmental conservation efforts. Through the adaptation of the myth in books and films, the community is given greater access to cultural heritage that holds significant ecological conservation values. The integration of culture into environmental education will also strengthen government policies in linking cultural preservation with the protection of nature.

From the analysis, this study found that there is significant potential to use media-based folklore revitalization models in environmental conservation efforts. The Aul myth, which was originally part of the oral tradition, is now adapted into more modern media to convey environmental messages to a wider public. This process demonstrates that living folklore within the community can be adapted into various forms of media to maintain its relevance and effectiveness in a modern context. Local culture-based conservation like this can enhance public understanding of the importance of protecting nature—not only through scientific approaches but also through cultural approaches that are more easily accepted by diverse audiences.

Tabel 1. Tranformasi Bentuk dari Seni Tarawangsa ke Bentuk Visual

Seni Tarawangsa	Transformasi Visual (lukisan)	Makna
Objek: Penari perempuan	Ikon: Penari perempuan- Gestur Penari Ekspresi Bentuk Impresif- ekpresif	Simbolik: mediator pada Nyi Pohaci
Ekpresi Penari: mimik dingin Gerak intuitif	Sapuan warna lembut dinamis Impresif-ekpresif	representamen rhyme: komunikasi transenden, khusus. berhadapan dengan sosok yang dihormati.
Suasana: Malam sakral- mistis	Penumpukan warna dominan monokromatik: Hijau gelap- biru Sapuan kwas : Impresif-ekpresif	dicisign: suasana malam Simbolik: Sakral- transenden, kontemplatif, misteri,
Properti: Selendang penari	Ikon selendang Bentuk impresif	Relasi ekspresi simbolik sebagai sayap, awan, atau suasana berada dunia atas (lelembut)

This model also illustrates how the adaptation of myths through media can have a broader impact, increasing active community participation in conservation activities and strengthening social solidarity in preserving cultural and natural heritage. As explained by (Marie-Laure Ryan, 2016), transmedia storytelling allows a narrative to evolve and transform across various media platforms, which in this context serves to enhance the dissemination of environmental conservation messages.

Policy Recommendations: Integration of Cultural Products into Environmental Education

Based on the findings of this study, several policy recommendations can be

proposed to optimize the role of cultural products in environmental education. First, integrating local folklore into the education curriculum can be an important step in teaching environmental conservation values from an early age. Local myths such as Aul can be incorporated into Indonesian language and literature courses, as well as environmental education, to introduce students to local culture that is directly related to nature preservation.

Second, empowering local communities to develop local stories related to environmental conservation and making them part of a broader communication strategy. The government and educational institutions can support the development of training programs to adapt local folklore into modern media

forms, such as films, podcasts, and other digital platforms. This will help strengthen ecological and local cultural messages in order to maintain environmental sustainability.

Third, collaboration between the cultural and environmental sectors in designing policies that involve the community in nature preservation by utilizing cultural products as effective educational tools. This can be achieved by establishing programs that highlight ecological values in oral traditions and other cultural works, as well as using modern media to widely disseminate conservation messages.

DISCUSSION

The transformation of the Aul myth narrative from oral form into print and audiovisual media demonstrates a significant shift in the delivery of cultural and ecological messages. In the book *Manusia dan Gunung*, the Aul myth narrative is presented not only as folklore but also as a means to convey moral and spiritual messages regarding the relationship between humans and nature. The descriptive and reflective storytelling style in this book creates a contemplative space for readers to understand that environmental crises are not only ecological issues but also cultural and spiritual concerns. The Aul narrative is recontextualized as a warning about the imbalance in the human-nature relationship, which can provoke the anger of the mountain guardian spirit (Aul), serving as a metaphor for ecological disasters.

Meanwhile, the documentary film *Aksatriya* employs a visual and performative approach in representing the Aul myth.

Through cinematic depictions of the Lake Aul landscape, interviews with local communities, and narrative dramatization, the film not only conveys the content of the story but also evokes an emotional experience for viewers regarding the importance of environmental preservation. This documentary style combines traditional aesthetics with modern cinematography to bridge local values with a broader audience. This supports the ideas of (Brunvand, 1978) and Foley (1995) as cited in (Mark C. Amodio, 2020)), that folklore can survive and adapt creatively amidst media and social changes without losing its symbolic essence.

The adaptation of the Aul myth into books and films also demonstrates the process of folklore revitalization, as explained by (James Danandjaja, 2002), who stated that folklore is not static but constantly undergoes adaptation to social and technological contexts. In this context, local culture is not only preserved but also recontextualized through new media as a culture-based conservation narrative tool. (Robert Sibarani, 2012) emphasizes the importance of local wisdom in environmental preservation strategies, and this study shows that cultural products such as books and films can effectively serve as mediums for transferring these values.

This discussion is also relevant to the mandate of Law No. 5 of 2017 on the Advancement of Culture, particularly regarding the protection, development, and utilization of culture. The Aul narrative, revived through modern media, represents a tangible form of cultural advancement that promotes public access to oral tradition products. Books and films, as contemporary

cultural artifacts, reflect the implementation of this law, especially in using oral traditions as a means of education and promoting environmental values in the digital era. This demonstrates that cultural preservation is not only the responsibility of cultural institutions but also of creators and academics. The findings of this study lead to the formulation of a Media-Based Folklore Revitalization Model.

This model emphasizes three main elements: (1) localizing traditional values into media forms familiar to the digital generation, (2) collaboration between cultural communities and media creators, and (3) crafting narratives that incorporate ecological, spiritual, and aesthetic dimensions. By this approach, myths are not only remembered but also used as strategic communication tools to foster attitudes changes toward environment.

The implications of this model are highly significant in supporting culture-based environmental education, especially within the context of the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of contextual and local wisdom-based learning. Books and films featuring the Aul myth can serve as alternative learning resources that integrate cultural literacy, ecological literacy, and media literacy. Thus, folklore preservation is not only symbolic but also functional and applicable within formal and non-formal education systems.

This study recommends that cultural and environmental policies be developed in an integrated manner. Local governments, educational institutions, and cultural communities can incorporate local cultural

products—whether in the form of books, films, or performances—into environmental education programs and conservation campaigns. Such integration aligns with the broader vision of the Law on the Advancement of Culture and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and Goal 13 (climate action), which recognize culture as an essential component of sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms that the Aul myth, as part of the Sundanese oral folklore, holds great potential to be revitalized through modern media as a narrative strategy for conveying conservation messages. The transformation of the Aul myth into the book *Manusia dan Gunung* and the documentary film *Aksatriya* demonstrates that media not only serve as tools for cultural preservation but also as platforms for fostering contextual ecological awareness.

The book functions as a reflective space, presenting rich symbolism and narratives that allow readers to contemplate the human-nature relationship more deeply. Meanwhile, the documentary strengthens emotional engagement through depictions of landscapes, community testimonies, and vibrant natural settings. Both highlight the importance of a transmedia approach in expanding the reach and impact of cultural and environmental messages.

Comparing the two media shows that folklore preservation strategies are not merely about maintaining the original narrative form

but about how its values can be adapted and communicated relevantly in the digital era. In this context, the Aul myth is not just a traditional story but a cultural device that can be reactivated to address contemporary ecological challenges.

Therefore, this study concludes that an integrative approach combining local culture, media technology, and environmental issues should continue to be developed. This strategy not only strengthens the position of folklore in modern society but also contributes meaningfully to ecological education and the preservation of cultural values rooted in local wisdom.

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