

ETHNOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL VALUES IN THE *KON ANIN* LEGEND OF TUAPAKAS, SOUTH CENTRAL TIMOR

Windra Deswita Bessie¹, Rudolof J. Isu², Yenssy M. Fanggidae³

^{1*,2,3} English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education,
University of Persatuan Guru 1945 NTT, Kupang, Indonesia

¹windrabessie@gmail.com, ²rudi.isu73@gmail.com, ³mervilem.yenssy79@gmail.com

Corresponding author : windrabessie@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to identify and describe the cultural values contained in the *Kon Anin* legend and to explain the role of these values in the social life of the Tuapakas community, Kualin Sub-District, South Central Timor Regency. The *Kon Anin* legend is an oral tradition that is still preserved and is believed to contain cultural teachings and local wisdom that influence the community's social life. This research uses a descriptive qualitative method. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews with traditional elders and community leaders, participant observation, and documentation. The results show that the *Kon Anin* legend contains four important cultural values: (1) belief in ancestral traditions, (2) togetherness, (3) respect for traditional leaders, and (4) local wisdom. These values are practiced in the *Kon Anin* ritual as a response to strong wind disturbances believed to be an imbalance of nature. This ritual functions as a medium for cultural preservation, identity reinforcement, education for the younger generation, and maintaining the balance of human-nature relationships.

Keywords: *cultural values, legend, Kon Anin, Tuapakas community*

INTRODUCTION

Legends are an essential component of oral literature that convey cultural wisdom, traditional norms, and collective identity across generations (Danandjaja, 2016). For many traditional communities, legends do not merely serve as sources of entertainment; they function as educational tools, moral guidelines, and repositories of historical consciousness. This applies strongly to the Tuapakas community in South Central Timor, where the *Kon Anin* legend holds a prominent position in shaping community values, behaviors, and worldview. The legend is regarded as part of the cultural heritage that connects present generations to their ancestors (Boimau et al., 2025).

The *Kon Anin* legend is deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of the Tuapakas community. It is perceived not only as a story but as a symbolic representation of ancestral authority, social harmony, and the interconnectedness between humans and nature (Isu & Ingunau, 2020). Through this legend, the community learns essential values such as respect for elders, cooperation, responsibility, and moral integrity. These values continue to influence the way people interact, resolve conflicts, and participate in communal activities.

Modernization, however, presents challenges to the preservation of oral traditions. The increasing influence of digital culture, formal education, and shifting lifestyles has contributed to a decline in traditional storytelling practices. Younger generations tend to show less interest in ancestral stories, leading to the potential loss of important cultural knowledge (Isu et al., 2023). Without systematic documentation and academic research, legends such as *Kon Anin* may gradually fade from cultural memory, resulting in weakened cultural identity.

Although several scholars have explored folklore and oral traditions in Timor, studies focusing specifically on the *Kon Anin* legend are notably limited. Most available research

examines other local legends or general folkloric functions without addressing the cultural values embedded in this particular narrative (Lette et al., 2025; Sabuna et al., 2025). Therefore, this research seeks to fill an academic gap by exploring the cultural values found in the *Kon Anin* legend and analyzing how these values are practiced in the daily life of the Tuapakas community. Based on the background described above, the research problems are formulated as follows: (1) What cultural values are contained in the *Kon Anin* legend of the Tuapakas community? (2) How are these values practiced and manifested in the daily social life of the Tuapakas community?

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design (Moleong, 2017). The subjects of this research are traditional elders, community leaders, and residents of Tuapakas Village, Kualin Sub-District, South Central Timor Regency. The object of this research is the *Kon Anin* legend and ritual. The research instruments include interview guidelines, audio recording devices, and field notes. Primary data sources are oral narrations of the legend, interview results with informants, and observations of ritual practices. Secondary data sources are books, journal articles, and documents related to Tuapakas traditions. Data collection techniques used in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis followed the Miles & Huberman (2014) model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on data analysis, the *Kon Anin* ritual (closing the wind hole) is still preserved by the Tuapakas community as an integral part of ancestral customs. This ritual is performed when persistent strong winds occur for approximately seven days, disrupting the community's routine activities. Informant (a traditional elder) stated: "When sustained periods of strong winds occur, the *Kon Anin* ritual is typically performed to bring about their cessation. This practice has been observed since the era of our forebears."

The procedure of the *Kon Anin* ritual begins with the preparation of specific traditional elements: a chick that has undergone one night of incubation, young gewang leaves, and wind leaves (*Anin Fu No*). Representatives of the *K'bau* clan, together with senior traditional leaders, proceed to the site known as the wind hole (*Kon Anin*). Young gewang leaves are inserted into the hole, followed by a live chick. Afterward, the hole is covered with wind leaves, symbolizing the closing of the source of the wind. The utterance spoken is:

"Kaul nam Neo nam Neo hai pah tuaf Kai mes Anin la mes nam Ne"

Meaning: "Should we indeed be the proprietors of this territory, the wind shall promptly abate."

Table of Cultural Values in the *Kon Anin* Legend and Ritual

Cultural Value	Manifestation in Legend and Ritual
Belief in ancestral traditions	The community consistently performs the ritual whenever natural disturbances occur, following ancestral teachings
Togetherness	Collective implementation of the ritual involving various community parties

Respect for traditional leaders	Recognition of the <i>K'bau</i> clan's authority in leading the ritual
Local wisdom	Knowledge of the relationship between humans and nature built through long interaction

Source: Field data (interviews with Tuapakas traditional elders, 2026)

DISCUSSION

The *Kon Anin* ritual has three main roles within the Tuapakas community. First, the spiritual role: the ritual functions as a conduit for interaction between individuals and the divine. Through the recitation of sacred utterances and the offering of a chick, the community seeks blessings, protection, and restoration of harmony from the ancestral spirits and the Creator. This spiritual dimension reinforces the belief that natural phenomena are not random but are interconnected with moral and supernatural forces. Second, the social role: the ritual brings community members together and strengthens unity, cooperation, and togetherness. The involvement of multiple clans, especially the *K'bau* clan as the ritual leader, demonstrates how the *Kon Anin* ceremony reaffirms social hierarchies and collective responsibility. Villagers set aside individual interests to participate in a communal cause, thereby reinforcing solidarity and mutual assistance. Third, the ecological role: the ritual serves as the community's response to natural imbalances. Rather than viewing strong winds solely as a meteorological event, the Tuapakas people interpret them as a sign of disrupted equilibrium between humans and nature. The ritual thus embodies an indigenous form of environmental management, where symbolic actions are believed to restore balance and prevent ecological harm.

The meaning of the *Kon Anin* ritual is remarkably rich and profound. Symbolically, the use of gewang leaves and wind leaves reflects the close relationship between the Tuapakas community and nature. Gewang leaves, known for their durability and flexibility, represent resilience and the ability to withstand external pressures. Wind leaves, on the other hand, are believed to possess the power to calm strong winds, symbolizing humanity's capacity to negotiate with natural forces. Nature is not merely seen as a physical environment but as something alive that continuously interacts with the everyday experiences of human beings. The act of closing the wind hole symbolizes the effort to control, manage, and restore the balance of nature. This symbolic closure is not an act of domination but rather a respectful negotiation, acknowledging that humans are part of a larger cosmic order that requires constant care and attention.

The value of belief in ancestral traditions is reflected in the community's consistency in performing this ritual whenever natural disturbances occur. Even though some community members have adopted modern religious practices, they still participate in the *Kon Anin* ritual as a form of cultural respect rather than a contradiction to their faith. This shows that ancestral beliefs can coexist with contemporary worldviews, creating a syncretic cultural system. The value of togetherness is evident through the collective implementation of the ritual involving various parties. Men, women, elders, and youth each have distinct roles: elders lead the prayers, men prepare the ritual materials, women assist in offerings, and youth observe and learn. This distribution of roles ensures that every segment of society contributes to and benefits from the ritual. The value of respect for traditional leaders is manifested through the recognition of the *K'bau* clan's authority in leading the ritual. The *K'bau* clan is believed to be the original custodians of the land, and their leadership is never questioned. This respect extends beyond the ritual context into everyday decision-making, conflict resolution, and land management. The value of local wisdom is reflected in the knowledge of the relationship between humans and nature that has been built through a long process of interaction. For example, the choice of a chick that has undergone one night of incubation is not arbitrary; it symbolizes new life and hope, implying that the ritual aims not only to stop the wind but also to renew the community's

relationship with nature. Such detailed knowledge has been accumulated over generations through observation, trial, and spiritual guidance, making it a valuable form of indigenous science.

The *Kon Anin* ritual also functions as a medium for cultural preservation, a representation of cultural identity, and an educational medium for the younger generation. Through direct involvement, the younger generation learns the meanings and values behind every ritual practice. Unlike formal schooling, which often separates knowledge from practice, the *Kon Anin* ritual embeds learning in a lived experience. Young people see how their parents and elders perform each step, hear the sacred utterances, and participate in preparing the offerings. This experiential learning ensures that cultural knowledge is transmitted not as abstract information but as embodied practice. Furthermore, the ritual serves as a public declaration of Tuapakas identity. In an era where outside influences threaten to erase local distinctiveness, performing the *Kon Anin* ritual affirms that the Tuapakas community remains rooted in its ancestral heritage. The ritual also strengthens intergenerational bonds, as elders feel valued as knowledge holders, and youth develop a sense of pride and belonging. This ensures that the cultural heritage remains alive, relevant, and meaningful in contemporary life. Without such rituals, the legend of *Kon Anin* would risk becoming a mere story, losing its power to shape behavior and worldview.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the *Kon Anin* legend contains significant cultural values closely connected to the social life of the Tuapakas community. These values include belief in ancestral traditions, togetherness, respect for traditional leaders, and local wisdom. These values are not only reflected in the narrative of the legend but are also practiced concretely in the *Kon Anin* ritual as a response to strong wind disturbances. This ritual functions as a medium for cultural preservation, identity reinforcement, education for the younger generation, and maintaining the balance of the relationship between humans and nature. Thus, both research problems have been comprehensively answered.

SUGGESTIONS

For the Tuapakas Village community, it is recommended to continue preserving the oral tradition and the *Kon Anin* ritual and to teach its meanings and values to the younger generation. For the government and cultural institutions, it is recommended to support the documentation of oral traditions in written, audio, or digital formats, as well as to organize cultural programs. For future researchers, it is suggested to conduct deeper studies on other local legends in Timor using diverse perspectives such as linguistics, anthropology, or cultural studies.

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