Cultural Study of Sugriwa Subali Relief as Identity of Kiskendo Cave in Kulon Progo

Abstract—Sugriwa Subali relief is a dead form from story of the existence of Kiskendo cave that is full of cultures and histories. Lack of understanding about culture and history consisted in Sugriwa Subali story relief is caused by the society who still considers Kiskendo cave as a secret place. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to describe the meaning, history and cultural values contained in the Sugriwa Subali relief story as the identity of the Kiskendo cave. This research uses qualitative research with historical research strategy and approach. The method and approach are used in order to know and understand both of history and art aspects contained in Sugriwa Subali story that is related to cultural values. This research was conducted in Kiskendo cave that is in Kulon Progo. The result of this research is a description of cultural study and cultural value is consisted on several values which include the value of truth, aesthetic, goodness, and religious contained in Sugriwa Subali story relief. Sugriwa Subali story relief concepts can provide big contribution to cultural study. The cultural study is described according to the data acquired from interview results and books related to cultures that exist in the Sugriwa Subali story. The problem studied in this research is still an initial surface which can be continued in a further research.

Keywords—cultural study, Sugriwa Subali relief, Kiskendo cave in kulon progo

I. INTRODUCTION

Kulon Progo is an area located in Special Region of Yogyakarta province that has a lot of tourism potential even though the societies have yet to know them all. Geographical location of Kulon Progo that has beaches and mountains apparently gives high potential to develop the tourism sector. Therefore, it has a positive effect for the economy of society, especially societies in Kulon Progo. Geographically, Kulon Progo lies between 7°38′42″-7°59′3″ of south latitude and 110°13′3″-110°16′26″ of east longitude. Kulon Progo region is 58,627.5 km² wide. The height of Kulon Progo is from 0 to 1000 meters above the sea level [1].

Various caves can be found in Kulon Progo, especially in the mountains area. Kiskendo cave is one of the caves located in Kulon Progo. Kiskendo cave does not only offer beauty of the surrounding nature that is still beautiful and natural but Kiskendo cave also has a relief that visualizes history of the cave which come from a folktale (legend) sourced from Epos Ramayana and there is also area for camping. There are other natural or artificial caves around the Kiskendo cave in Kulon Progo and proves of the natural cave uses in prehistory which causes problems about the reasons of selecting a place to create a cave that is not making use of available natural caves and instead of making artificial caves.

Architecture of Kiskendo cave is an interesting thing to study because the cave is different compared to the caves around it. Besides the cave, there is also a relief placed horizontally in front of the cave. There is also spacious yard around the cave and relief that is usually used for an art stage that displays the story of the relief. Regarding to the problem, the next problem is the reason why legend story of Sugriwa Subali is created as the Kiskendo cave relief. Other than that, as a cultural heritage site and tourism object, the society in general have yet to know background of Kiskendo cave which has the same name as a cave in Trayu village, Kendal.

The same strategy is done by government by inserting the values of local wisdom such as tolerance, team work into education as 18 nation’s characters are taken from local wisdom that still exist and applied into everyday life of society. The local wisdom exist in society are not values created instantly instead of being passed down from generation to other generation in a form of behaviour or in a form of folktale or fairy tale. Kiskendo cave is well-known by tourist because of its history and prove of story realized in a form of relief.

Folktale has various themes in which some of them are related to role models in life, virtuous values, and other good ideas, but they are hard to understand because they are realized in philosophical form. For that reason, this cultural study explains about the basic principles of the story in order to know several reasons for a folktale realized in a form of relief placed in the right and left side of Kiskendo cave entrance.

Sugriwa Subali relief is a dead form of folktale located in Kiskendo cave. The relief is placed in the right and left side of Kiskende cave entrance. It is created as a form of Sugriwa Subali story. The relief which tells about the legend of Kiskendo kingdom contains cultural values that can be applied in human lives. Up to the present time, society in general has yet to know about the existence of Kiskendo cave. The local society still consider Kiskendo cave as a secret place. It is related to its background of myth and legend, and the fact that the places inside the cave often used by people to meditate.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to describe the meaning, history and cultural values contained in the Sugriwa Subali relief story as the identity of the Kiskendo cave. The existence of this Sugriwa Subali relief can also
become the identity of Kiskendo cave as a tourism destination which has a lot of cultures and histories.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II presents literature review. Section III describes proposed research method. Section IV presents the obtained results and following by discussion. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term relief in Indonesia is adopted from English or the word “relieve” in Italy, in Bahasa Indonesia it means elevation, which its position is higher than the background, because the elevations are placed on a surface [2].

In the Complete Dictionary of Bahasa Indonesia [3], it is explained that relief means sculpture that displays different shapes and pictures of flat surfaces to arise. Relief in Bahasa Indonesia is like the word elevation, which means its position is higher than its background. Relief always has background, because the elevation is placed on a surface. Basically, relief is a two-dimensional art. This kind of elevated painting can be created by using sculpting technique, or by embedding the material with certain tools [4].

Relief is an art often created on a rock as its medium. This form of sculpture is often seen in temples, monument, and ancient historical sites. Relief can be independent sculpture or parts of other panels which create story or lesson. Relief as two-dimensional sculpture is often created on medium of rock in a form of temple, pillar, or monument [5].

Relief can also be called as sculpture. Sculpture is an art which has two or three dimensions. Relief cannot be enjoyed from every side instead of only from the front side. According to Fowler and Fowler [6] “Relief is method molding or carving or stamping in which stand out from plane or curved surface with projections proportioned and more or less”.

Based on the description, it can be confirmed that relief is a two- and three-dimensional art which can be seen from only one side and is a projection of taste from a situation visualized on a flat surface by applying the rules of art in its creation. It can then be concluded that relief or sculpture always has background and its position is higher than the background. Relief is also a part of sculpture and the result of sculpting does not always follow or depend on the shape of the chisel. Viewed in terms of function, relief is a pure art because it can stand on its own and does not embed on a thing. Other than enjoyed for its aesthetic, relief generally contains a story. According to International Union of Speleology, cave is a natural form underground that is big enough to be explored by human. As for other research that studies about cave and its environment is called speleology, while special study about living organism within the cave is called Biopelagic [7].

Cave is one of the special characteristics below karts surface from the east, central to the west of the island, so the biggest use of the karts area is as protected and cultivation area. Protected area has environmental sustainability which includes natural and artificial resources, and cultural value and nation’s history. According to Koentjaraningrat [8] culture is based on Sanskrit word “buddhayah” that is a plural form of “buddi” which means mind or sense. Therefore, Koentjaraningrat defines culture as “mindfulness” in the form of creation and intention, while culture is a result of the creation, intention and feeling. According to Koentjaraningrat [8], culture is a whole system of ideas, actions and work results of human in society life which belong to human by learning. Maunati [9] explains that markers of cultural identity can come from an idea believed in certain religion, language, and cultural customs. However, it can be overlapped by different groups of ethnicities.

Barker [10], says that identity is more of discursive construction, product of discourse, or regulated ways of speaking about the world. It is discursive construction because someone and/or a group of people can be known and introduce their personality through talks and writing that. Personal identity as teachers, officials, traders, doctors, and others that can be observed and their writing. By other words, identity is created and not found, created from representations especially language.

According to Mardiatmadja [11], value refers to the attitude of people towards something good. Values can be related to each other in forming a system and are coherent between one another and influencing human life. Therefore, values mean something metaphysical, even though it is related to concrete reality. Values cannot be seen in physical form, because value is a price of something that has to be looked for in a process of human responding to the attitude of others. Existing values contained in something, therefore education helps someone to realize by searching deep values and understand the relation of one another and the roles and utility for life.

There is relation between value and kindness according to Mardiatmadja [11], value is related to kindness within the core of something. Therefore, value is positive relation level between something and a certain person, which are practical, social, aesthetic, cultural, and religious values. According to Brown [12], value is deeply related to moral, moral codes, and determines a person’s thought of what should be done. Individuals or organizations that realize the value of honesty, integrity, and openness will act honestly, openly, and with integrity, because they are the right things to do.

According to Brown [13], Culture “…refers to a set of common values, attitudes, beliefs and norms, some of which are explicit and some of which are not”. From this opinion, it can be understood that culture refers to a group of values, attitudes, believes, and norms, which some of them are explicit and implicit. Lynch [14] adds that “culture is a system of life-ways, ways of behaving, ways of thinking, ways of believing, and ways of relating to others”. For that reason, it is not wrong to say that culture determines how people act or behave. One of the elements that create culture is values. Cultural value is concepts regarding to what the society considers valuable, precious, and important in life so it can be useful as a guideline that gives direction and orientation to the life of people in society.
III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative research with historical research strategy and approach. The method and approach were used to know and understand history and art aspects contained in Sugriwa Subali story relief that is related to cultural values. This research was conducted by collecting data, analyzing the data acquired, conducting discussion and then concluding the result of study. This research was conducted in Kiskendo cave that is in Girimulyo, Kulon Progo. The meaning and cultural study contained in Sugriwa Subali relief will be described. The Conceptual framework in this research is presented in Figure 1 as follow:

Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Philosophy and History of Sugriwa Subali relief as the identity of Kiskendo cave.

Kiskendo cave is in Jatimulyo village, Girimulyo, Kulon Progo. Kiskendo cave is a natural cave in Menoreh mountain which is located 1200 meters above the sea level and has relatively cool temperature. Kiskendo cave has been established as a geo-heritage area based on the Head of Geology decision number 1157.K/73/BGL/2014 on October 2014 about the establishment of preserved geological area in Special Region of Yogyakarta [1].

Interesting historical story of Kiskendo cave makes it to be one of the special tourism destinations that are popular to tourist. According to Suisno [15] as the manager of Kiskendo cave, Kiskendo cave is found in 1820 and is opened as a religious tourism destination in 1964. In 1974 to 1975, the place is started to be looked at by government tourism office of DIY. With the realization of relief that tells about the story of Sugriwa Subali also attracts people to visit the cave. There are also two wayang (puppet) characters that are placed within the entrance of Kiskendo cave, in which both of the characters are the main characters in the story sculptured into relief in the left and right side of Kiskendo cave entrance.

There are several versions about the existence of this cave. According to a story, this cave is found by a hermit named Ki Gondorio in 1820. This hermit is also the first caretaker of the cave. According to this story, that one night he dreamt that he entered a cave that is like a kingdom. In his dream, he received a guide to name 15 rooms inside the cave. After waking up from his dream, Ki Gondorio follows every guide he received in his dream (Source: Interview of Mr. Slamet, caretaker of Kiskendo cave).

Even though the story, the society that lives around Kiskendo cave has many versions of stories. There are people who say that this cave emerges from the world of Wayang. This version tells that one time, Kiskendo cave was kingdom lead by a king named Mahesa Sura. There are also people who say that this cave is a duplicate of a cave located in India. In Kiskendo cave, people can look at the storyline about Wayang story (Epos Ramayana) sculpted in two reliefs placed in front of the cave entrance.

Kiskendo cave is a complex of tourism objects that consists of several places known to be related with the legend of Kiskendo kingdom. There are 9 rooms in the cave, they are:

- Pertapaan Spranji, which functions as the center of farming activity in the Kiskendo cave Kingdom era.
- Pertapaan Tledek, which is a place used to meditate in order to be successful in art.
- Pertapaan Kasuman, which is a place used to meditate in order to acquire higher level in society.
- Pertapaan Padasan, which is the water source in the glory moment of Kiskendo cave kingdom.
- Pertapaan Santi Tani, which is a place used to meditate in order to get abundant harvest. Once, this place is used as homes of farmers who live near the cave.
- Pertapaan Seterbang, which is a cave that is still part of Kiskendo cave. It is said that this place is connected to the southern sea.
- Pertapaan Samelang, which is a hole that can penetrate upwards. According to the myth, this hole located in the middle of the cave is the place where Subali comes out of the cave because the cave entrance is closed by Sugriwa.
- Pertapaan Sekandang, which is the center of Kiskendo cave kingdom. This is the place where Subali fights Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura.
- Lumbung Kampek, which is a place to store valuable goods from Kiskendo cave kingdom.

B. Folktales sculptured in a form of relief

As it has been put forwarded, that not every folktales known in the present time is visualized in relief sculpting that decorates certain temple or places. Apparently, there are several literatures works that often visualized in a form of relief in several temples; there are also some that are only visualized in a certain place, in the walls of Kiskendo cave that is in Kulon Progo for example.

The interesting matter is that there are temples’ reliefs that may contain a certain story, but the story references are remained unknown until the present time. Looking at the problem, it is possible that there are other folktales literatures that have yet to know or found now. Therefore, researchers of relief which are generally known as archaeologists are...
having difficulties to identify what story is referred by the relief.

The relief near the entrance of Kiskendo cave entrance is a dead prove of legend from legend story. The relief explains about the legend of Sugriwa Subali in Wayang. The relief in Kiskendo cave is used to visualize the story of Sugriwa and Subali. It had been created since 1982 and designed by Lecturer of ASRI named Probowo SI who also conducted art group chaired by Sudiatmoko for 6 months. The taboo in making a relief is that one of the workers should not talk while making the relief. The relief is created by making use of white and black stone in the cave which are then mixed with cement to form the relief. In making the relief, there are requirements that have to be done by the relief maker at that time. The relief in which presents in Figure 2 is made with 60 meters in length and 4 meters in height located in the right and left side of the cave entrance.

![Fig. 2. Picture of Sugriwa Subali Relief](image)

It is said that Kiskendo cave used to be a kingdom ruled by brothers named Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura. They were the leaders of various beasts in the area. Both of them had tall and big body. They had human body but animal heads. The brothers had extraordinary power. It was said that if one of them died, he could live again after being stepped over by his brother.

One night, Mahesa Sura dreamed about being side by side with Goddess Tara, daughter of the Bharta Indra from heaven. The next day, Mahesa Sura intended to realize the dream, he asked his brother, Mahesa to propose Goddess Tara. Lembu Sura was shocked after hearing his brother’s request. He tried to prevent his brother intention to marry and make Goddess Tara his wife. But the effort was useless because Mahesa Sura still insisted to propose. Hearing his brother strong will, Lembu Sura had to go to heaven to propose Goddess Tara. It was right what Lembu Sura said. As soon as he arrived in heaven, his brother proposal was directly rejected by the gods. Lembu Sura eventually came back to earth with nothing.

Mahesa Sura was really mad when he heard the bad news. He could not accept the rejection. At that time, Mahesa Sura took his brother to attack the heaven. As soon as they arrived in heaven, they rampaged. None of the gods could stop the brothers’ barbaric actions due to their extraordinary strength. After destroying the whole heaven, Mahesa Sura took Goddess Tara to earth. While the gods were discussion to find a way to quell Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura and bring back Goddess Tara to heaven.

Finally, they agreed to use divinity magic called Aji Pancasona. According to them, it was the only way to stop Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura, but that tremendous magic could only be used by someone who had noble heart, holy, and capable of controlling his lust, so this power could not be used at will. After discussing, the gods agreed to give the Aji Pancasona to a hermit named Subali. He was the son of Resi Gotama who meditated in Suryapringga. Subali had been meditating for years in that place by shutting down his whole body and focusing this whole soul to the creator (God) for forgiveness for everything he had done. In his meditation, Subali suddenly woke up because the arrival of Bathara Guru and Bathara Narada followed by the gods.

Bathara Guru woke him up and granted his wish with a condition that he had to quell the anger lied in Mahesa Sura’s body. Without any hesitation, Subali took the offer and asked how to defeat Mahesa Sura who was known to be so powerful. Bathara Guru then gave Aji Pancasona to help him fought Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura. As they arrived in the entrance of Kiskendo cave, Subali immediately went inside Kiskendo cave. Not long after, he came back with Goddess Tara who was taken away from the hands of Mahesa Sura.

Meanwhile, Subali went back to the cave to finish the fight with two rulers of Kiskendo cave. Before he went inside the cave, he told his brother to take care of Goddess Tara. Subali said if there was red blood flowing outside the Kiskendo cave, it meant that Subali won the fight, but if it was white blood that flowed out the cave, it meant that Subali loses. If both of the accident happened, then Sugriwa had to shut the cave entrance with a huge stone. By the time Subali went back inside the cave, a fierce fight against Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura happened. Even with his small body, Subali could compensate the fight of his two enemies who had bigger bodies. With his small body, Subali could attack and attack them back. With Pancasona, he managed to destroy Lembu Sura. But how shocked he was when he saw Lembu Sura came back to life after being stepped over by Mahesa Sura. So as when he destroyed Mahesa Sura, he came back to life after being stepped over by Lembu Sura.

Subali was really wondered and confused when he saw the power of his enemies. After thinking hard, he finally destroyed them both at the same time. That way, they couldn’t step over each other again. Subali then turned himself to be as big as his enemies. At the right time, he managed to grab both of his enemies’ horns and slammed them together. No doubt, both of those creatures’ head were smashed so that blood mixed with brains was flowing out the cave. When Sugriwa saw the red blood mixed with white blood, he though if his brother had died along with one of his enemies. He quickly shut the cave entrance with a huge rock and immediately left the place and brought Goddess Tara back to heaven.

As soon as he arrived, they were welcomed by the gods with joys. The gods were happy that Goddess Tara could make it back to heaven safely. But they were sad because Subali died in the fight. Sugriwa was awarded Goddess Tara as his wife. Actually, Sugriwa was hesitated to accept the
gift because the one who deserve it was Subali, his brother. But because his brother had died, he then willingly accepted the gift. Not long after that, the wedding party of Sugriwa and Goddess Tara was held. Meanwhile, Subali who had just defeated Mahesa Sura and Lembu Sura was shocked when he saw that the cave entrance was shut with a huge stone. He felt betrayed by his brother; he suddenly got mad to his brother, Sugriwa.

With his power, he kicked the huge stone that blocked the cave entrance into pieces. After that, he immediately looked for Sugriwa to heaven. As soon as he arrived in heaven, he saw Sugriwa standing side to side in a chair with Goddess Tara. Knew what happened, Subali was mad to his brother. When Sugriwa was about to tell the truth, Subali beat him. Sugriwa tried to defend himself because he was innocent. Eventually, a fierce fight between the brothers happened. The fight was not going to end if it was not because their father, Resi Gotama, who broke up the fight. After hearing Sugriwa’s explanation about why the fight happened, Resi Gotama was mad to Subali for making his family ashamed and claiming to have white blood. According to Resi Gotama, there was no human in the world that had white blood. For his arrogance, Subali was cursed by his own father, that he would die by a knight of Bathara Wisnu named Prabu Rama Wijaya.

According to the story, before he breathed his last breath, Subali had time to say thank you to Rama for setting free the anger in him. Meanwhile, Sugriwa had his father blessing to still marry Goddess Tara. After getting married, Sugriwa built a kingdom named Pancawati in Kiskendo cave. (Source: Interview of Mr. Suisno [15], Chief of Kiskendo cave manager)

C. Interpretation of relief meaning that refers to Sugriwa Subali folk tale

Folk tale sculptured in a form of relief should not be viewed as “freezing” of a story, or only considered as building decoration. The story sculptured surely has various meanings and intentions to be sculptured.

Literature experts have searched that the content of folk tale is consisted in various educational and religious messages. It is just that those kinds of messages have been combined into a set of stories. The next thing is interpretation. In this case, the readers who are capable of interpreting so they can view the folk tale just as a myth and untrustworthy.

In semiotic view of Charles Sanders Pierce relief, story sculptured can be considered as a sign that has referent. The relation between sign and referent will emerge certain interpretation as well. In this case, folk tale of Sugriwa Subali that exists in Kiskendo cave is full of meanings. Therefore, the folk tale can be visualized into a relief sculptured in cave’s walls. According to interview results of Hadi Slamet who the caretaker of Kiskendo cave is, the meanings in Kiskendo cave is proves of the Sugriwa Subali legend, which is the symbol of human life. Story of Ramayana is an ancient Wayang story from ancient Mataram. Then the name Sugriwa Subali into Kiskendo cave is a place to test body and mind, it can be analogized that Sugriwa is the body and Subali is the mind. Kiskendo cave has 9 places, similar to human who has 9 personalities. Human’s journey has two paths, to the right which is the goodness and to the left which is identical to bad things. Along the way into the cave, there are a lot of beautiful stalagmites and there are a lot of turns and hole in this left side of the cave. Young people who enter this cave must have good intentions. The relief is Meaningful for society because of the Sugriwa Subali legend story. With the existence of this relief created and presented in Kiskendo cave as learning for the grandchildren about local wisdom from their own region. Visualization of Wayang exist is the visualization of human’s everyday lives.

D. Characteristic

From the 1820, people have yet to know religion, people live and born is confusion. If it is adjusted with legend story, the characteristic of Sugriwa Subali cave is Hindu-Buddhism. Then there is a civilization named offering in a form of “tumpeng”. With the current era development, Kiskendo cave does not believes in Hindu-Buddhism anymore, since 1873 it had developed with the emergence of Nadatul Ulama (NU). For example, “Semelah” and “Kanduillah” are formed from local society near the Kiskendo cave. It refers to a current religion. It refers to Islam, NU. (source: Interview of Mr. Suisno, chief of Kiskendo cave manager).

E. Cultural value of Sugriwa Subali Relief

Cultural values contained in Sugriwa Subali relief are the value of truth, aesthetic, goodness, and religious.

a) Truth Value: Truth value is a value considered correct and can be related with senses and knowledge of human. For society near Kiskendo cave, story of Sugriwa Subali is story from first source. The relief is sculpted according to the story about Sugriwa Subali.

b) Aesthetic Value: Aesthetic value contained in Sugriwa Subali relief is in form of relief placed in the right and left side of Kiskendo cave entrance as prove or existence of the story.

c) Goodness value: For society near Kiskendo cave that story within the relief has meaning that can be applied in human lives. With the existence of Sugriwa and Subali in the relief will become advice so that people won’t be arrogant in their life.

d) Religious value: Religious value is the value of deity, highest and absolute spirituality, religious value is based on believe. Religious value that exists in Sugriwa Subali relief comes from society near Kiskendo cave who still consider the cave is secret. It is related to the myths or story that creates it or places exist inside the cave that is often used for meditation. The taboo are such as not allowed to litter inside the cave, not allowed to curse or damage the cave, and not allowed to do things that are out of courtesy.
V. CONCLUSION

Kiskendo cave is in Jatimulto village, Girimulyo, Kulon Progo. Kiskendo cave is a natural cave in Menoreh mountain located 1200 meters above the sea levels with relatively cool temperature. Other than being preserved geological area, Kiskendo also has a legend that is related to the world of Wayang. Legend developed in Kiskendo cave is visualized into relief placed in the cave entrance, which is about Sugriwa and Subali.

The relief in the Kiskendo cave entrance is a dead prove of Sugriwa Subali story. The relief tells about the legend of Sugriwa and Subali in Wayang. The relief in Kiskendo cave is used to visualize the story of Sugwira and Subali. Interesting story inside Kiskendo cave makes the cave to be one of the special tourisms that is popular to a lot of tourists. According to Suisno [15], the caretaker of Kiskendo cave, the cave was found in 1820 and then opened as tourism destination in 1964 as religious tourism object. Since 1820, people have yet to know about religion, alive people are confused when they are born, if it is adjusted with the legend story, characteristic of Sugriwa Subali cave is Hindu-Buddhism.

The meaning contained in Kiskendo cave as prove for the existence of Sugriwa Suball i legend is the symbol of human life. Cultural value contained in Sugriwa Subali relief is consisted on several values which include the value of truth, aesthetic, goodness, and religious. Educational value that can be taken is by knowing the life journey of Sugriwa Subali that someone should not be arrogant (proud of themselves and looking that other people are lower compared to them) just like Subali who claimed to have white blood.

REFERENCES

