

## GAYA SENI RELIEF YEH PULU DI KABUPATEN GIANYAR, BALI

### *The Art Style of Yeh Pulu Relief in Gianyar Regency, Bali*

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**Abstract.** *The relationship between Indonesia and India manifested in various cultural forms that still survive today, one of which is in form of relief. Yeh Pulu is an archaeological site located in Banjar Batulumbang, Bedulu Village, Blahbatuh District, Gianyar Regency, Bali. To date, the relief in Yeh Pulu has not been studied intensely. The objective of this research is to reveal the characteristics of reliefs in Yeh Pulu Site. Data collection was carried out through direct observations in the field and also photographs. A comparative study was used for the analysis, by comparing Yeh Pulu Relief with the reliefs from temples in Java. The results showed that the Yeh Pulu Relief has nine scenes depicting various activities of past lives. One of the scenes depicted the story of Kresnayana, which perhaps was the inspiration for the reliefs. Yeh Pulu relief was developed around 14 – 15 AD or during late Majapahit era.*

**Keywords:** *Yeh Pulu relief, art style, Late Majapahit style*

**Abstrak.** Hubungan Indonesia dengan India melahirkan berbagai wujud budaya yang masih bertahan hingga sekarang, salah satunya relief. Relief merupakan salah satu wujud kebudayaan masa lalu yang menarik untuk diteliti. Selama ini, kajian terhadap Relief Yeh Pulu belum dilakukan secara mendalam. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan mengungkap ciri dan karakter seni relief yang terpahat di Situs Yeh Pulu. Situs Yeh Pulu terletak di Banjar Batulumbang, Desa Bedulu, Kecamatan Blahbatuh, Kabupaten Gianyar. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui pengamatan secara langsung di lapangan dan, melalui foto-foto. Kemudian, hasil pengamatan dan foto-foto tersebut dideskripsikan. Analisis dilakukan dengan studi komparasi, yaitu membandingkan Relief Yeh Pulu dengan relief candi yang berada di Jawa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Relief Yeh Pulu memiliki sembilan adegan yang menggambarkan berbagai aktivitas kehidupan masa lalu. Salah satu acuan sumber cerita dari relief tersebut kemungkinan berasal dari kisah *Kresnayana*. Relief Yeh Pulu masuk dalam kategori gaya Akhir Majapahit yang berkembang pada abad XIV-XV Masehi.

**Kata kunci:** relief Yeh Pulu, gaya seni, gaya akhir Majapahit

## 1. Background

The cultural history of Indonesia consists of several stage of cultural development the prehistoric period, followed by the proto-history and finally the historical age. The development of Indonesian culture during the historical age cannot be separated from influences of other countries. One of the countries that has had considerable influence on Indonesian culture is India.

The Culture of Indonesia during the classical (Hindu-Buddhist) era showed rapid progress, equal to the cultures of other countries in Southeast Asia, For example, the concept of "dewaraja" which is also known in Cambodia, Champa, East Java, and Bali is the culture of the Southeast Asian community which is a continuation of the amalgamation of primus inter pares with Hindu-Buddhist culture that came from India. The three countries in the mainland of Southeast Asia also received influences from Indian culture and they were able to develop a civilization that was of more or less quality to the classical civilization in Indonesia (Munandar 2019: 10).

Indonesia entered the classical period (Hindu-Buddhism) around the V centuries AD and ended in the XV centuries AD. In that period of time, there have been many forms of culture that still survive today, including temple buildings, inscriptions, hermitage caves, *patirthan* (the places of holy water), statues of gods, and so on. One form of culture discussed in this study is relief. It is not uncommon for the temple building to be decorated with decorative reliefs.

In general, relief can be classified into two types, namely a) decorative reliefs that do not contain stories, but still have religious symbolic meaning, and b) narrative reliefs, namely depictions of scenes of human or animal figures and their environment that refer to the sources of that particular story. For an example, sources used as references for relief sculptures include *Ramayana*, *Kresnayana*,

*Arjunawiwaha*, *Sri Tanjung*, and *Kisah Panji* (Munandar 2004: 56-57; 2019: 134-135). Meanwhile, decorative reliefs that visualize the concepts or the constructs include leaf tendrils, lotus flowers, kalpataru trees, *hiranyagarbha* motives, and animals disguised in the form of carvings.

The reliefs discussed in this paper are *Yeh Pulu* Relief which is located in Gianyar Regency, Bali Province. The relief has a certain art style which is very likely influenced by the place where the relief is carved. In addition, the factor of time also affects the development of the art style. Each era has different characteristics and characteristics of art (Munandar 2018: 19-21).

Based on the description above, we formulated the research questions as to How are the art style of *Yeh Pulu* Relief in Gianyar Regency, Bali? It is hoped that the results of this study contribute to the reconstruction of the history of Balinese art and specifically reveal the *Yeh Pulu* Relief art style. As revealed by Kempers (1991: 127-131), *Yeh Pulu* Relief has a unique carving shape and is different from the reliefs in Java and Bali. In this case, Kempers has not stated explicitly regarding the *Yeh Pulu* Relief style, in fact he gives the impression that he had difficulty in determining the time for the construction of the *Yeh Pulu* Relief. For this reason, objective of research is to define *Yeh Pulu* Relief into a certain style, so that it can further explain the arts and culture of the local community (the maker of Relief *Yeh Pulu*).

## 2. Method

The primary data were collected through direct observation in the field by observing the reliefs carved on the *Yeh Pulu* Site. Meanwhile, the secondary data were collected through articles, reports, and books related to this study.

The research method used in this study is descriptive-comparative one. The purpose of descriptive research is to provide an overview of archaeological facts and symptoms associated

with the space, time, and form frame (Susetyo 2020: 109). The comparative study was carried out by comparing relief in *Yeh Pulu* Site and the ones found in Java. Research of reliefs in Java has resulted in various concepts and theories, so as to assist the completion of this research (Munandar 2011). The reliefs that are used as a comparative study are the reliefs carved on the buildings of the temples in East Java, especially those built during the Majapahit Period (XIII-XV centuries AD).

### 3. Result and Discussion

*Yeh Pulu* Relief or often referred to as *Yeh Pulu* Site is located in Banjar Batulumbang, Bedulu Village, Blahbatuh District, Gianyar Regency (see figure 1). It is located at an altitude of 175 meters above sea level. Astronomically, it is at the coordinates 115°23'32" East Longitude and 8°12'11" South Latitude. The area of this site is 400 m<sup>2</sup> or 10 x 40 meters. It is in the middle of community rice fields between the Petanu River and Kali Jurang (Srijaya 1996: 71-72). The word *Yeh Pulu* comes from the Balinese language *yeh* means water and *pulu* means barrel. It seems that the naming was inspired by the discovery of a spring found on the site's courtyard where the top was covered with a small jar-shaped container.

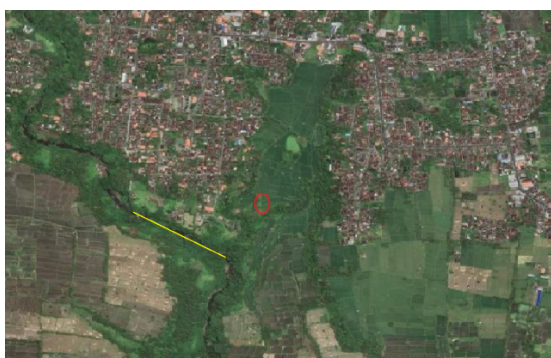


Figure 1. Research location of Yeh Pulu Site on red circle (Source: www.maps.google.com 2021)

*Yeh Pulu* Site was first discovered in 1925 by *Punggawa* Ubud. Shortly after, *Nieuwendkamp* reported it in the

*Oudheidkundig Dienst* official report (Kempers 1991: 127). It was reported that the ancient *Yeh Pulu* Site was damaged due to the exposure to rice fields from above. Archaeological remains found in *Yeh Pulu* Site are story reliefs, niches, and springs. Reliefs and alcoves are carved on the same cliff from north to south. This niche has a length of 9 meters, a room depth of 2 meters, and a booth height of 2 meters. In the middle, there is one pillar as a support, but part of the roof has collapsed. Based on the results of existing studies that the niche is used for meditation (see figure 2) (Wahyuni 2015: 105-106).

The *Yeh Pulu* Relief is carved on a cliff about 25 meters in length, average height of around 2 meters, and 50 centimeters in depth. The relief can be categorized as a story relief which can be divided into nine scenes. The nine scenes of *Yeh Pulu* Relief are briefly described as follows.



Figure 2. Yeh Pulu Site (Source: Author 2020)

#### Scene I

This scene is located at the northernmost of all scenes and can be considered as the opening of all scenes (see figure 3). It begins with a tree-like image with tendrils on the sides. According to Astawa (2000: 73) the image is *kayonan* (a kind of tree) as found in shadow puppets. To the south of the *kayonan* relief there is a niche in where a male character is depicted. This figure is depicted in a naturalist manner with a standing attitude. The look on his face could not be identified because it was

worn out. The right hand is raised upwards, while the left hand dangles downward with the palm touching the left thigh. The jewelry used is in the form of *kunḍala* (earrings), but the shape is no longer visible. The cloth, which is worn above the knee, is folded in the middle and secured using a plain, unadorned *udarabandha* (a type of belt).

## Scene II

This scene shows two standing figures and each of them is depicted in a niche (see figure 3). The character located in the north is certainly male, while the southern one is female. The male character is carrying pole (*pikulan*) with two vessels at a stick (bamboo). The left hand holds the wood (bamboo) used to carry the two vessels, while the right hand holds the cloth. The two vessels seemed to be tied in such a way so as not to fall. Most likely, the contents of the vessels are *tuak* (a traditional Balinese drink produced from palm, coconut, or palm trees (Adnyana 2018: 26). The only jewelry used is the *kunḍala* (earrings) in the shape of a crescent moon, while the cloth worn reaches above the knee. The cloth is worn in a folded manner and using plain, unadorned *udarabandha* (a type of belt). The female character is depicted with great clothes and jewelry, in contrast to the depiction of other characters. It is likely that the character is someone of higher status and position. The head is decorated with a crown which has partially collapsed, so it cannot be ascertained its true shape. On the right and left, to be precise above the ears, there are flower decorations in



**Figure 3.** Scene I, II, and III  
(Source: Author 2020)

bloom. Both ears wear *kunḍala* (earrings) that extend to the chest. Both hands pressed to the body. The ornaments worn are in the form of a plain *keyura* (arm bracelet) and an unadorned *kaṅkana* (bracelet). The clothes worn on the body cover both breasts and extend above the navel. Meanwhile, the cloth used to cover the long legs is above the ankles.

## Scene III

This scene shows a woman standing in the door (see figure 3). The scene identified as female because she had large breasts. The door depicts a solid and strong impression with a pyramid-shaped roof. On the right and left of the door, there are two decorative sections. The outermost section is decorated with oval dots arranged vertically. The internal ornaments are in the form of broad leaf tendrils with inward and outward curves. The door is half open. The female character stands right in the doorway showing half of her body with her head almost all visible.

## Scene IV

This scene depicts four successive figures from the north to the south, namely a sitting figure, a standing male character, a kneeling female figure, and a standing woman (see figure 4). The figure sitting cross-legged is depicted facing sideways towards the standing



**Figure 4.** Scene IV  
(Source: Author 2020)

male figure. The elbows are resting on the thighs with the palms of the hands supporting the head. The head is wearing a *sorban* (head cover) with a shirt that seems loose. When viewed from the head cover (*sorban*), it can be identified that this character is a sage or a hermit. The tool carried on the male character's left shoulder is identified by Astawa (2000: 74) as a hoe. His left hand holds a hoe and his right hand seems to be giving something to the kneeling female character. This character wears a cloth that reaches above the knee and wears an *udarabandha* (belt). In the central part of the fabric is depicted a round shape, possibly a pocket. Next, the female character is kneeling facing north (the male character). The hand is placed on the knee and the right hand is placed in front of the stomach with the palm looking up as if receiving something from the hand of a male character. The head wears a cloth in a folded manner with both ears wearing a *kunḍala* (earrings). From the stomach upwards nothing is worn, so that both breasts are clearly visible. He wore cloth from the stomach down to the feet. Under the seat of this female character, there are three monkeys playing with each other. The standing female character is depicted with a bare chest. The length of the cloth is as long as the ankles. It appears that the remaining cloth on the stomach is left just like that. The right hand is bent upwards and the left hand is dangling downward against the body. She is wearing a head cover with the *kunḍala* (earrings) on both ears.

#### Scene V

This scene shows a male character manifested in a creepy form (see figure 5). His face was fierce, his eyes bulged with frowns, and his teeth were huge. This character sits on a square plinth in a *sukhasana* manner, which is to fold the left leg up so that the knee is against the chest, while the right leg is folded and placed horizontally. The right hand holds a stick resting on the shoulder. The tip of the

stick is round with a hole in the middle (like a bowl). The left hand is placed on the leg. The head wears a folded cloth, the ears wear a *kunḍala* (earrings), and a *hara* (necklace) has a triangular-shaped leaf tendril.



Figure 5. Scene V  
(Source: Author 2020)

#### Scene VI

The first character inscribed in this scene is a man riding a horse (see figure 6). His left hand holds a horse rope, while the right hand holds a weapon (a type of knife). This figure is depicted with long curly hair that is left unbound, bare chest, and the length of the cloth that he wears is as long as the thigh. After that, two men are depicted fighting an animal. One of the male characters appears to be throwing a spear at the animal with their legs apart (right leg bent and left leg is straightened). His right hand holds



Figure 6. Scene VI  
(Source: Author 2020)

the spear, while the left hand takes a straight forward position. Her hair is long, uses cloth to the thighs, and uses *udarabandha* (belt). The other character is depicted in a sitting manner. His left hand was bitten by the animal and his right hand is about to swing something at the animal. Both legs push the animal. Animals that may be prey can be identified as tigers (Astawa 2000: 74; Adnyana 2018: 26). Apart from this scene, there is a depiction of a fight between a frog and a snake. Above this image there is a person who is giving a smoking jug to a woman in front of him.

### Scene VII

The scene depicts the scene of two male characters carrying their prey (see figure 7). The two animals with their legs hung (tied) on a wooden stick. They are carved in the same style, namely the left shoulders bear the wood, the left hands hold the wood, and the right hands of the male character in front touches the animal behind him. The two figures are both shirtless, wearing a cloth up to their thighs, and wearing an *udarabandha* (belt). This type of animal can be identified as a pig (Astawa 2000: 74; Adnyana 2018: 27).



Figure 7. Scene VII  
(Source: Author 2020)

### Scene VIII

On this scene, it was carved that there are female and male characters riding horses (see figure 8). The female character is depicted to bend over with hands holding a ponytail, bare chest so that her breasts are exposed, the

cloth worn below the knee, and the ears are decorated with *kunḍala* (earrings). The male character is depicted with his left hand holding bridle, his right hand holding a weapon, naked chest, and a cloth worn above the knee. His hair is curly flowing just as it is with the head turned back.



Figure 8. Scene VIII  
(Source: Author 2020)

### Scene IX

This scene can be said to be the ending of all series of reliefs. There is only a Ganesha character carved in a niche (see figure 9). Ganesha is depicted with open eyes, fat belly, and no crown. He sits on a rectangular mat and has a *stella* (backrest). He is sitting in a *wirasana* manner. The face shape is depicted as a rectangle with a trunk sticking out to the left and ending above the left hand. The right hand is placed on the thigh of the right leg but the palm is damaged. Only a plain *kaṅkana* (bracelete) without any decoration is worn.

Activities of all scenes can be explained, it begins with the form of *gunungan* or *kayonan* (mountain) with a male character raising one of his hands. The male character is carrying two pots containing *tuak* (a traditional Balinese drink produced from palm, coconut, or palm trees), in front of this character stands a female character in a large outfit. A woman in the house seemed to be looking outside the

house. The next scene shows a person seated in a *sorban* (head cover) on his head who can be identified as a sage or hermit. The male character stands holding a hoe with his right hand giving something to the seated female character. The female character is standing with her back to the character carrying a stick.

The next activity shows a male character riding a horse followed by two male figures hunting a tiger. On the next relief, it is shown that the hunted animal is a pig, which is carried by two male figures. You can see a female character holding a ponytail that is ridden by a male character with curly hair. The entire scene ends with one of the god figures, namely, Ganesha. Furthermore, according to Adnyana, Remawa, dan Diana Sari (2018: 251) there are at least two places in the setting depicted in the *Yeh Pulu* Relief, namely in the yard of the house and outside the house (outdoors). Activities that show the background of the place on the yard are scenes I to scene V, while the places that show the background of those places are scenes VI to IX. Astawa (2000: 75) mentioned something different, that the setting of the various activities was in the forest where a house had been built.



Figure 9. Scene IX  
(Source: Author 2020)

### Carving Method, Dating, and Narratives

In general, the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs were made using the chisel technique on the rock media of the breccia type of the river bank walls. This sculpture is often referred to as rock cut. The characters shown are the embodiment of adults and their sizes are very proportional to real life. Therefore, it can be said that the characteristic of *Yeh Pulu* Relief is real-naturalistic. The relief work is also not very smooth and complicated. The scenes look simple without the grand decorations like the reliefs of the temples in the Central Java and East Java. Sculpting trails, especially on a slightly deep surface (side surface) indicate that the type of chisels used were that of with wide spurs. The reasons for using the wide-sized chisels could be that the rock character in the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs contain various grains of sand and rock. Such a character makes it impossible to produce a solid and smooth relief surface, because the rock content does not contain the same solidity (Adnyana 2018: 24-25).

Up to the present time, research on reliefs in Bali has not been done by many previous experts, so there has been no determination of a particular style that developed in Ancient Bali. Therefore, this study compares the reliefs of *Yeh Pulu* with the reliefs of the temples found in Java which have been revealed by many experts. Munandar (2004: 55; 2011: 7) has conducted a study on the reliefs of temples in Java. He concluded that the reliefs of the Ancient Javanese Period could be broadly divided into two styles, namely (a) Early Classical Relief Style (VIII - X centuries AD) for example the reliefs found in temples in the Central Java region (story reliefs in the Borobudur and Prambanan temples), and (b) the Late Classical Relief Style (XI - XV centuries AD), examples are the story reliefs carved in the temples during the Singhasari and Majapahit era.

The characteristics of the Early Classical Relief Style are a) the reliefs are carved in a

high shape, the thickness of the carving is  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the thickness of the media (stone blocks), b) the human and animal figures are facing the observer (enface) and naturally depicted, c) The story is carved completely from the beginning to the end and there is a space left blank on the scenes, and d) the reference of the story comes from Indian literature which usually present the epic themes. Meanwhile, the Late Classical Relief Style has the following characteristics, a) low relief carving with the thickness of the relief only  $\frac{1}{4}$  from the media (stone/brick), b) the depiction of human, animal, and plant figures is symbolic. Often it looks disproportionate, stiff, even very similar to *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet) and directed to the side (enprofile), c) the relief story is fragmentary, incomplete, and only certain episodes of a complete story. There is a tendency for filling all empty fields, so that the scene fields are filled with various decorations, and d) mostly references are taken from Old Javanese literature, in addition to some adaptations from Indian literary works and the themes are generally romantic stories (Munandar 2004: 55).

According to some relief experts, *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs were most likely built in the XIV-XV centuries AD, when Bali was under the influence of Majapahit (Kempers 1991: 131; Astawa 2000: 73; Susanti et al. 2013: 135). The reasons for this is the carvings and tendrils that adorn it. Based on these, for the time being the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs are included in the Late Classical Relief Style that developed in the XI-XV centuries AD. However, the problem is that the depiction of *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs do not fully fall into the category of Late Classical Relief Style relief characteristics. Instead, they look similar to the reliefs in the Early Classic Relief Style as shown in the temples of Central Java. The characters are again sculpted in the form of high reliefs, naturalists, and the references of the are Indian literature.

Kempers (1991: 128-129) argues that the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs may take the story of

*Krishnayana*, although not all relief scenes can be read and included clearly in Krishna's story. Young Krishna, as a shepherd's boy, has offended the God Indra, who threatens to destroy Krishna and his friends with floods of rain and a thunderstorm. To protect his playmates, Krishna uproots mount Gowardhana to use as an umbrella. This demonstration of miraculous power, indicated by Krishna's standing with one hand raised, is occasionally used as a *leitmotiv* for Krishna's presence (Kempers 1991: 28).

The character identified as Krishna is the character in scene I. This character stands with a raised right hand in a sign of victory. It is said that young Krishna as a shepherd boy had insulted Lord Indra. Lord Indra threatened to destroy Krishna and his playmates with floods, rain and thunder. To save his friend, Krishna lifted *Gowardhana* Mountain to be used as an umbrella. This display of supernatural powers is shown by Krishna by raising his right hand as a symbol of Krishna's presence. To identify that the first character is Krishna, it can be proven by the presence of a cross-section of the right hand that is raised across the body to the left leg. The transverse line indicates the lower edge of *Gowardhana* Mountain (<https://cagarbudaya.kemdikbud.go.id> 2020).

The interesting thing is the direction towards the character is depicted in two positions, namely enface (facing forward observer) and en-profile (facing sideways). The figures with the enface position can be seen in scenes I, II, III, IV, V, VIII, and IX, while those in the en-profile position can be seen in scenes VI and VIII. However, all the characters are depicted as naturalist and flattened because of their deep carvings from the rock face.

### **Cultural Context of *Yeh Pulu* relief**

The depiction or characteristics of the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs as described above seem to be found in archaeological remains that were mostly built in mountainous areas in East



Java. For example, the *punden* terraces in Penanggungan and Lawu Mountains. Most of the *punden* terraces were built around the XIV-XV centuries AD, but the reliefs depicted have a simple shape (Purwanto 2017). To provide a detailed explanation regarding this matter, Munandar (1989: 284) specifically proposes the division of the Classical Relief styles that developed around the X-XV centuries AD into four forms (styles) as follows.

1. Transitional style (X-XI centuries AD), namely reliefs carved in the *Jalatunda* Ancient Baths. The characters in the Mahabharata story that are carved look naturalist like the reliefs on the temples in Central Java. However, in the depiction, the shoulders of the characters are slightly square. The broad and square shoulders remind us of the form of shadow puppets, so it can be concluded that *Jalatunda* has begun the development of flat reliefs such as wayang. On the other hand, the entire scene is filled with various forms of decoration so that it is full. Therefore, in the reliefs of the *Jalatunda* Bath, there has been a shift in the naturalist, agile, and dynamic form of the reliefs in Central Java towards a flat shape like a puppet equipped with various major decorations.

2. *Gaya Wayang* (XIV centuries AD), the shapes of the characters are flat and always face to the side. This puppet style is also based on the story of the play as shown in the reliefs of the Ramayana story at *Candi Induk Panataran* and the reliefs of the *Arjunawiwaha* story at *Candi Surawana* (Suleiman 1981: 31).

3. *Kakawin* style (XIV centuries AD), the shapes of the characters are the same as the puppet style. What makes them different is that the reliefs of this style are based on *kakawin*, speech, and story reading. This can be seen in the reliefs of the *Panataran* terrace, *Tigawangi* Temple, and *Kedaton* Temple.

4. The style of the end of the Majapahit period (XIV-XV centuries AD), this style, as previously described, is often found in the *punden* terraces on Penanggungan and Lawu

Mountains. These relief styles tend to be simple and naturalist.

If you look at the details of the four styles mentioned above, it can be concluded that the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs are included in style of the end of the Majapahit period that developed in the XIV-XV centuries AD. Furthermore, this style was very likely produced by people outside the palace. According to (Sedyawati 2001: 27) the arts in the past recognized the terms center and periphery or it could also be called inside the palace (*keraton*) and outside the palace. These were also applied to all arts, including literary works, inscriptions, statues, sacred buildings and reliefs. For example, literary works from the court are *kakawin Arjunawiwaha* and *Bharatayuddha*. Meanwhile, literary works from outside the palace are *Tantu Panggelaran*, *Korawasrama* and *Serat Manikmaya*. The separation of authority between the center (the palace environment) and the periphery (the outer environment of the palace) can be seen by observing the differences in the products in the form of remains that have reached us, among others: 1) where the inscription and the manuscript were made, 2) What their characteristics are, 3) What motivated the creation, 4) How the dynamic interaction between the centers in relation to the development of literary works.

Based on the results of the study, there are inscriptions made outside the royal center, hereinafter referred to as inscriptions with special characters. This is due to differences in terms of content, characters, and language with inscriptions in general. Inscriptions with special characters mostly only mention something brief, be it the name of a god, a certain place or event. Meanwhile, the inscriptions produced by the *citralekha* in the palace environment tended to follow the existing rules, namely complete from the opening exclamation, *sambadha*, curses, to the closing. Examples of inscriptions that come from outside the palace are the *Damalung*, *Widodaren*, *Pasrujambe*, *Gerba*,

*Cetho*, *Sukuh*, and *Planggatan* inscription groups. These inscriptions developed around the XIV-XV centuries AD (Wibisono 2006: 3-12; Nugraha 2012; Rahayu 2016; Purwanto 2017).

The same thing seems to have happened in the relief carving, there were sculptors (*taksaka*) who came from within the court and from outside the palace. Palace artists carried out the orders of the rulers to carve a series of reliefs in accordance with the taste of the palace which tended to be sparkling. But there were also carvers from among the common people who lived in villages and were closely connected with centers of religious education (*mandalas*). A similar expression was conveyed by Ardika and Beratha (1998) that in ancient Bali, there were craftsmen inside the palace and outside the palace. Munandar (1989: 285) further explains that the reliefs produced by palace sculptors tend to have forms with large carvings, the figures are depicted as fully clothed with jewelry, other decorations on the scenes appear complicated and full. Meanwhile, carvers who came from villages or *mandalas* prefer simple shapes and the figures are depicted in ordinary everyday clothes. The reliefs seem uncomplicated and not cramped in a scene.

Looking at the description above, it can be assumed that the *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs are the work of sculptors outside the palace. The group of carvers were very likely the sages and hermits who lived far from the crowd. The existence of sages and hermits at *Yeh Pulu* Site is based on a relief depiction of a character wearing a sorban (head cover). This is a special identity for ascetics. According to Gustaman (in Adwina 2016: 20-21), the figure a *sorban* (head cover) is identified as a male hermit who generally lived in a hermitage. The *sorban* was made of braided rope wrapped around and over the hair. The body is described as fat with a distended or slender belly, no mustache or beard, and shirtless (wearing only a long cloth up to the

ankles). Characters can appear as the main character or accompanying characters of the main character. It seems that this description is in harmony with the character in *sorban*, a hermit in scene IV who seems to be the accompanist of the main character. This can be seen from his posture in a sitting position. Meanwhile, the seated female character is receiving something from a male character, identified by Astawa (2000: 75) as a female hermit.

The identification of the existence of sages and ascetic groups is also shown by the existence of a hermitage cave which was most likely used for asceticism. The hermitage cave created at the *Yeh Pulu* Site has only two chambers, so it is unlikely that a large group of sages and hermits lived there. Quoting the results of research by Munandar and Yulianto (1995/1996: 18-19), architectural ascetic caves can be divided into types, namely as follows.

1. Natural caves without further work. This type of cave is a natural product, so naturally, there is a cavity in the rock wall which is suitable to be occupied as a hermitage location.
2. Natural caves with architectural works. There has been a gap or space in the hill wall which was formed naturally, but later refined into a hermitage cave with the addition of a brick / stone structure.
3. Artificial caves are entirely architectural works that were deliberately made by punching holes in the rock evidence so that they are suitable for being a hermitage location.

Based on the previous description, the hermitage cave at *Yeh Pulu* Site is an artificial cave entirely of architectural works. The cave was probably not only used as a place for meditation, but was used for other activities such as religious ceremonies for the sages and hermits at that time. The artificial caves are often used as a place for ceremonies by religious people, like the ones in Gunung Kawi Temple. Based on the results of the study by Prawirajaya R, Purwanto, and Titasari (2020:

101-120) the caves in Gunung Kawi Temple are used for various religious activities, both for writing literature, ceremonies, and meditating. In fact, sacred buildings that are inhabited or used as activities of the sages have been found in the East and Central of Java. Holy buildings for sages and ascetics are called *karsyan*. The word "*karsyan*" comes from the Old Javanese language *ka + rsi + an*, when the *i* vowel attach to *ana* vowel, the *i* becomes *y*. In several other sources it can also be referred to as *katyagan*, *kawikuan*, *kabuyutan*, and others (Purwanto and Titasari 2020: 16). Furthermore, based on the results of Soepomo's research, as quoted by Munandar (1990: 341) and Santiko (2005: 131-135), the *karsyan* building has two forms, namely *karsyan* in the form of *patapan* (a place for meditation) and *karsyan* in the form of *mandala kadewaguruan* (a place for education). The two forms of *karsyan* actually have almost the same building forms, but there are several components that distinguish them.

*Karsyan* in the form of a *patapan* is a holy place used by someone who deliberately isolates himself from the world to meditate for a certain period of time to get what he wants. Of course, this form of *karsyan* did not need to build houses/lodges in large numbers for the sages and hermits, because the occupants were far less than the *karsyan* in the form of a *mandala* (Munandar 1990: 340). This *karsyan* environment contains a *prasishtasabha*, which is a collection of small stone statues that are considered sacred and placed in an open space (*batur* or *punden* without a roof) (Munandar 2014: 201-201).

The second form of *Karsyan* is the jurisdiction of the *mandala* (place). It can be said to be a divine *mandala*, because the place is considered holy and led by a sage called *dewaguru*. *Mandala Kadewaguruan* is a housing complex built by sages and hermits in a place away from the crowd. It is clear that there are quite a lot of dwellings built in this *karsyan*, to form hamlets. It is quite possible

that the sages and ascetics who lived in this place were also in large numbers. The rules regarding the construction of a residence in the *mandala kadewaguruan* are described in the *Arjunawijaya* and *Sutasoma* books. Furthermore, an element that can be used as a marker of this type of *karsyan* is the presence of a *lingga pranala* or *lingga yoni* (Munandar 1990: 340). In the *Mandala kadewaguruan*, apart from being a place of meditation, this place is also used as a place of education. So it can be said that in the *mandala kadewaguruan* there is a teaching-learning process between the teacher and the student (*sisya*). Another thing with *karsyan* is in the form of a holy place that is devoted to a place of meditation.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that *Yeh Pulu* Site has nine relief scenes depicting various scenes or activities of past life. *Yeh Pulu* Relief is included in the style of the end of the Majapahit period that developed in the XIV-XV centuries AD. The existence of these reliefs was inseparable from the supporting community (sculptors) at that time who probably came from the sages and hermits. Furthermore, that the position of *Yeh Pulu* Site in the past was a religious sacred building belonging to sages and hermits, *karsyan*.

Based on the characteristics of *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs previously described, it can be concluded that *Yeh Pulu* Reliefs have the same shape as the reliefs of temples in the Late Majapahit Period. Generally, these temples were built on the slopes of the mountains which had their own art forms, which were not bound by the regulations in the palace environment. With the relief of the Krishna figure in the *Yeh Pulu* reliefs, it can be assumed that the sages and hermits at that time also paid homage to him. This is not surprising because Krishna is the Vishnu himself. Therefore, it can also be stated that paying homage to Krishna on the *Yeh Pulu* site is aimed at gaining intelligence.

It is not an exaggeration because Krishna was one of the figures who was very instrumental in the victory of the Pandavas in the Bharatayudha war. Krishna is very adept at planning tactics in a battle.

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Scene IV