

## Story Attributes of the Kreo Cave Cultural Festival in Social Media-Based Tourism Communication

Mukaromah

Universitas Dian Nuswantoro, Semarang, Indonesia

e-mail: [mukaromah@dsn.dinus.ac.id](mailto:mukaromah@dsn.dinus.ac.id) (corresponding author)

---

### Article Info

#### Article history:

##### Submitted

November 4, 2025

##### Revised

December 18, 2025

##### Accepted

December 22, 2025

---

### Abstract

*Stories serve as intangible assets that have value in branding tourism communications. Goa Kreo, a cave tourism destination in Semarang, is believed to possess the power of the cave's resident monkeys. The Goa Kreo Legend Masterpiece Cultural Festival and Sesaji Rewanda are cultural festivals held by local residents and are an annual event, featuring a form of tourism communication posted on media. From a tourism promotion perspective, stories play a crucial role as a form of advertising. Stories are useful for persuasive purposes and attract attention. This study aims to examine story attribution elements in media posts related to Goa Kreo posted on social media. The descriptive qualitative method used primary data from YouTube and Instagram posts owned by the government, as the area's manager, and interviews. The research findings reveal story attributes that display structural concepts such as theme, plot, setting, point of view, and a complete narrative message. These attributes symbolically construct the residents' gratitude to the Goa Kreo monkeys, who contributed to the process of sourcing teak wood for the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak.*

**Keywords:** *Story Attributes, Goa Kreo, Tourism Communication*

---

### Abstrak

Cerita sebagai modal tak benda yang memiliki nilai membantu branding pada komunikasi wisata. Goa Kreo adalah destinasi wisata goa yang ada di Semarang, memiliki kekuatan pada monyet monyet pada penghuni Goa tersebut. Festival Budaya Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo dan Sesaji Rewanda, merupakan festival budaya yang diadakan warga dan menjadi salah satu agenda tahunan sebagai bentuk komunikasi Pariwisata yang diunggah di media. Dalam perspektif promosi wisata, cerita memainkan peran penting sebagai bentuk periklanan Cerita berguna untuk membujuk guna menarik perhatian. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengamati elemen atribusi cerita pada unggahan media terkait Goa Kreo yang diunggah di media Sosial. Metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan data primer unggahan konten youtube dan instagram yang dimiliki pemerintah sebagai pengelola kawasan dan wawancara. Temuan penelitian adalah atribut cerita yang menampilkan konsep struktural cerita seperti tema, alur/plot cerita, setting/latar kejadian, sudut pandang dan

---

---

amanat cerita secara lengkap yang mengkonstruksikan secara simbolik rasa terimakasih warga kepada monyet monyet penghuni Goa Kreo yang memiliki kontribusi pada proses pencarian kayu jati untuk pembangunan Masjid Agung Demak.

**Kata Kunci:** Atribut Cerita, Goa Kreo, Komunikasi Pariwisata

---

## INTRODUCTION

Stories play a crucial role in tourism communication practices. This is particularly true when linked to destination promotion through media content. Stories are intangible assets that aid branding in promotional efforts in tourism communication (Duarte & Soeiro, 2025). Stories are central to human perception of a tourist destination and create memorable experiences. In this context, a tourist destination is more than just its management and infrastructure; through stories or folklore, a destination can be seen as a place that offers values and moral messages derived from various past experiences that may have occurred at that destination. Communication expert Walter Fisher (1984) defines stories (narratives) as symbolic acts in the form of words and/or actions that have sequence and meaning for those who experience, create, or interpret them. Narratives encompass every aspect of life related to human character, motives, and actions. (W. R. Fisher, 1984)

For tourism activists, the function of stories behind a tourist destination is a way to promote and encourage tourism among potential visitors, validating experiences consumed through media (Segota, 2018). Stories have a unique ability to capture and focus attention, not just as entertainment, but as they can shape thoughts, perceptions, reactions, and behaviour (Harrison Monarth, 2014). Stories are also part of the communication practice of storytelling in tourism. Storytelling refers to the practice of narrative itself and is an art that goes beyond mere argumentative presentation. Through stories, stories convey aesthetic value/beauty, build emotions, feelings, and values (Woodside et al., 2008).

In tourism communication, storytelling can be practiced by various parties, such as tour guides, local residents of tourist destinations, and media content creators who communicate their stories to the public, as well as tourists who share their experiences through their media. Media content creators typically have diverse motives, including self-actualization, economic goals, and providing information about the destination.

From a tourism promotion perspective, storytelling plays a crucial role as an advertising tool for a tourist destination. When managed well, stories can foster brand identification, customer engagement, build emotional value, and influence consumer perceptions of a product or brand, all while influencing consumer purchasing behavior (Kılıç & Yolbulan Okan, 2021). Based on these considerations, creating and presenting purposeful stories is crucial as a means of promoting tourism destinations.

Marketing communications through story uploads can be conducted using social media, web-based services that allow users to build their own web pages within an interconnected system and provide the ability to search and access information from other users connected to them through this system. Social media can be a promotional tool to increase brand awareness, ensuring that tourist destinations remain top of mind

---

for those interested in traveling. Therefore, effective tourism promotion through social media is essential (Ratu Nadira Elfandari & Imam Nuraryo, 2023).

This study focuses on the storytelling elements that appear on the YouTube and Instagram social media accounts of the Goa Kreo tourist destination, which are operationally under the auspices of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office. YouTube and Instagram offer strong audio and visual elements in presenting tourist destinations as part of a communication tool for building destination brands. Both media platforms offer visual communication that is easily understood by readers, thus fostering emotional engagement and attachment among followers when viewing stories about the destination. In destination marketing, storytelling also plays a crucial role in recipients' retention of content and intention to revisit (J.-H. Kim & Youn, 2016).

Kreo Cave is a natural tourist destination consisting of a cave located in Talun Kacang Hamlet, Kandri Village, in the Gunung Pati area of Semarang City. It is inhabited by a troop of long-tailed macaques and is surrounded by the Jatibarang Reservoir. The area is relatively easy to access, close to downtown Semarang. It is approximately 12.6 km from the city center. From the Tugu Muda area in Semarang, it only takes 25 minutes to reach Kreo Cave.

Previous research on the Kreo Cave tourist destination has not explored the element of storytelling as a promotional aspect in tourism communications. The most frequently observed issues include the welfare of the community around Kreo Cave after the area was designated a tourist destination with the addition of a dam (Marsela, 2023) and the influence of facilities and services on visitor satisfaction at Kreo Cave (Septianing & Farida, 2021). Research exploring stories based on previous observations is limited to a review of myths in the Wanara Parisuka dance performance during the Sesaji Rewanda event at Kreo Cave, Semarang (Ekowati, 2019).

In communication studies, there are story attributes related to the characteristics of stories, which essentially contain descriptive elements, referring to the extent to which the ideas conveyed in the story are structured and presented and the subjective process of interpreting the story's message. Another attribute concerns the way the story is presented, which is able to evoke the audience's emotional side. Emotionality is an important attribute related to storytelling quality. The emotional aspect of storytelling takes the form of affective words and aspirational utterances that can help the audience support and spread the story (Zhang & Ramayah, 2024).

Tourism communication is communication carried out in the practice of tourism-related activities. Tourism-related elements include attractions, amenities, infrastructure, accessibility, and supporting elements. In research related to stories about tourist destinations, the attractiveness element is related to the destination's history. Tourism communication can be applied at the interpersonal, organizational, mass, and persuasive levels of communication related to tourism (Bungin, 2017). Tourism communication is carried out to preserve cultural heritage, local wisdom, and environmental sustainability, thereby increasing foreign exchange earnings and infrastructure development (Aditia et al., 2024). Tourism communication plays a crucial role in identity promotion activities. Tourism communication is related to social networks, norms, and trust. Promotion of tourist areas requires informal and relaxed media dialogue and discussions about the

meaning of traditional rituals that are still maintained today. According to Stephen W. Littlejohn and Karen A. Foss's *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*, stories are narratives told by people about personal or collective experiences, events, and memories, shared orally, through written words, or through other means of communication. Storytelling is the practice of sharing narratives with oneself and others. From a theoretical perspective, storytelling is often described as something individuals use to create meaning in their own lives. Stories are widely known empirical data that are generally shared across generations within a community, conveyed through various media, or in forms of communication that display narrative structures. Narrative structures explore the nature and key elements of stories, exploring the ways in which stories can be used as tools to investigate the various processes that produce meaning, express identity, and construct reality (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009).

In the practice of Destination Storytelling, various story elements are integrated and combined. Storytelling, as a compound word, implies the integration of two dimensions: story and storytelling, specifically referring to the content and the method of its delivery (S. H. Kim et al., 2020). This concept stems from narrative storytelling in text form: content and discourse (Zhang & Ramayah, 2024). The former refers to what the story conveys, while the latter refers to how the story is told. The content of the story indicates the type of story used as destination marketing material, while the "storytelling" part is characterized by the narrative modality, distribution channel, and characters. As a form of content, the story contains story-forming elements, namely the structural attributes that shape the story. These attributes are referred to in several references as intrinsic elements of a story, such as theme, plot, characterization, setting, narrative angle, and message.

Based on the above, this paper aims to analyze the narrative of Goa Kreo on social media as a tool to fill the gap in existing research, emphasizing the symbolic power of the story attributes that are used to enhance the destination's image.

Based on this, the research question to be answered is: How are story attribution elements applied in posts related to the Goa Kreo destination on the YouTube account @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102 and the Instagram account @disbudparkotasemarang?

This research contributes to communication studies, particularly those related to the power of storytelling in communicating storytelling about tourism destinations.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach, analyzing the content of stories about Goa Kreo. This analysis examined the structural attributes of the stories in the YouTube account @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102 and the Instagram account @disbudparkotasemarang, published between 2022 and 2023. This period coincided with the redevelopment of tourism following the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic. Within this period, only posts about Goa Kreo related to the Goa Kreo legend and Sesaji Rewanda, a cultural festival of the Goa Kreo community, were analyzed.

The posts collected from the two social media accounts constituted the primary data for this study. They were then analyzed and grouped based on elements related to story

---

attribution, such as theme, plot, setting, and characterization (Sangidu, 2018). Supporting data was also supplemented by conducting face-to-face interviews in 2023 with the content creators of the uploads, namely two technical staff members managing uploads on YouTube and Instagram, specifically the tourism marketing department of the Semarang City government.

Validation was conducted using source triangulation through literature studies of relevant sources related to the presentation of the stories, cultural history books, and reconfirmation with interviews with informants relevant to the research objectives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### RESULT

The natural landscape of Goa Kreo is located in Kandri village, Gunung Pati district, Semarang City, Central Java. This area is lush with trees and the Jatibarang Reservoir surrounding the cave. Goa Kreo is also home to long-tailed macaques, which hang around and are quite tame when interacting with visitors. This destination is officially managed by the Semarang City Tourism Office. An annual cultural festival called Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo and Sesaji Rewanda is held at Goa Kreo. This cultural festival tells the history of Goa Kreo, the long-tailed macaques inhabiting the cave, and the interactions between the local community.

To promote the tourist destination, the Semarang city government undertakes various efforts, including holding regular events at the destination to attract visitors, such as entertainment stages, activity bazaars, exhibitions, and publicity through various media outlets, including print, electronic, and digital platforms such as Instagram and YouTube, before and during the event. Based on observations of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office's Instagram content, the administrators upload at least two pieces of content daily, either in stories, reels, or feed posts. This is because Instagram has a large following and is relatively accessible and popular among young people.

According to a research informant, a content creator for the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office's Instagram, they regularly create promotional content related to events related to tourism destinations in Semarang. They post at least two posts daily, one in the afternoon and one in the evening.

According to the informant, Instagram is preferred over other social media platforms in terms of upload frequency. Content creation and upload time are relatively short and easily viewed by readers, as it takes only a few minutes, compared to social media platforms like YouTube and websites, which typically require longer videos and text posts.

Since the number of uploaded content is relatively large, content management is carried out through the creation of a monthly content plan, which is reviewed and approved by management. As for the results of interviews with other research informants, the tourism marketing management section stated that there are types of content related to tourist destinations, tourism events, activities, and the performance track record of Semarang city tourism office employees/staff that should be published in their capacity as a form of communication regarding performance to the public.

Content uploaded about Goa Kreo on the YouTube account

@dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102

The frequency of YouTube content is different from that of Instagram. Instagram allows for daily uploads of shorter duration and allows for easier topic or theme changes. This is because YouTube videos are relatively longer. As a media account representing government institutions, the content of the @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102 account must align with the institution it represents, specifically content related to culture and tourism. Regarding human resources, YouTube also requires experts with knowledge of cinematography, audiovisual editing, and graphics. YouTube also requires more equipment, including cameras and audio, and requires more power. This differs from Instagram or TikTok, where content creation requires only a mobile phone, requires a video length of only 1 minute, and can be done by 1-2 people. This was confirmed by an informant with the initials Adb, a content creator for another Semarang city government agency, who stated that YouTube uploads are not as intense as those on Instagram. YouTube content typically relates to events such as music, wayang performances, live streams, competitions, and annual documentation, which often require a dedicated team, sometimes even experts, to handle them.

The upload from the YouTube account @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102 about the story of Goa Kreo is included in the content for the Sesaji Rewanda event, which features the "Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo" performance, which tells the story of Goa Kreo's origins.

The YouTube video, titled "Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo," features the legend of Goa Kreo. This story appears at the 6:46 minute mark of the video's total duration of over 1 hour, 2 minutes, and 37 seconds. The first few minutes do not yet feature the legend of Goa Kreo, but instead feature remarks from relevant officials. Only at the 6:45 minute mark do subtitles appear about the actors, director, and performers behind the virtual dance performance.

The narrative begins with a visualization of a three-dimensional forest stage depicting the end of the Majapahit Empire, once renowned for its temples and grandeur. At the end of this period, the kingdom descended into chaos, with people suffering, taxes piling up everywhere, and a crisis of confidence gripping the people, leading to the eventual collapse of the Majapahit Empire. The story then unfolds in Central Java in the Saka era of 1401, a long time after the fall of the Majapahit Empire. The narrator narrates the appearance of Raden Mas Sahid, one of the Walisongo (Wali Songo) famous for his role during the Demak Kingdom. He is portrayed by a tall, slender figure dressed in traditional Javanese attire, a blangkon (headscarf) and a black beskap (headscarf). The performance, uploaded to the YouTube channel of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office, tells of Raden Patah becoming the first Sultan of Demak Bintoro in the 15th century, the first Islamic kingdom on the island of Java, in the 1481 AD. He is said to have been the son of King Brawijaya V. His title is Alam Akbar Al Fattah. Sultan Raden Patah reportedly wanted to build a large place of worship as part of his Islamic mission, the Great Mosque of Demak Bintoro. A meeting of the Wali (guardians) was held. A debate ensued about starting the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak Bintoro. It is said that several teak pillars were needed as the starting point for the construction of the Demak mosque. It was decided that Sunan Kalijaga would be the envoy to find the

---



teak pillars. The performance then featured scenes of the chanting of the prayer "O Prophet Salam Alaika, O Messenger Salam Alika" sung by male singers, followed by the prayer and dance set in the Demak kingdom. Then the visualization changes at minute 28:18 which tells the long journey of Sunan Kalijaga in search of teak wood. Until Sunan Kalijaga arrived at a village in Tirang district. It is visualized that Tirang is a beautiful district with a harmonious village atmosphere by showing 4 female dancers and 4 male dancers carrying dunak (baskets) who perform dance movements happily while carrying caping (farmer's hats) and sarongs who appear to be hugging each other in a happy atmosphere.

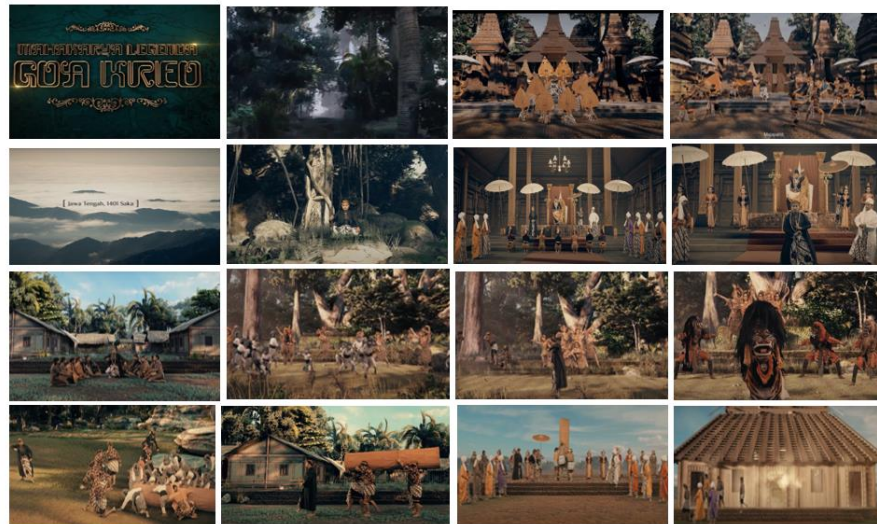
During his journey to find teak wood, Sunan Kalijaga approached the local people and the common people in the areas he visited, while teaching them Islamic teachings. The teachings were related to how to get closer to the Divine. Then, at the 33rd minute of the video uploaded to YouTube, the background changes to a visualization of the figure of Raden Mas Sahid or Sunan Kalijaga walking in a forest with trees filled with small monkeys jumping, running, and hanging happily. The monkeys were white, black, red, and yellow. And in the forest, Sunan Kalijaga found a teak tree that met the wood requirements he was looking for to build the Demak Bintoro mosque. And then began cutting the teak tree. After the teak tree was successfully felled and was about to be taken to the Demak Bintoro kingdom, the tree suddenly disappeared from sight. Sunan Kalijaga was anxious and then drew closer to the Divine as to why this could happen. After praying, the missing teak tree was seen tucked between the cave and the river. Thanks to the help of a troop of monkeys near the cave, the teak tree was finally lifted from its grip and transported to Demak to become a pillar for the construction of the Demak Bintoro Grand Mosque.

The video then shows the stage backdrop shifting to a backdrop depicting the vast land where the Grand Mosque will be built, where the teak wood is being laid. Sunan Kalijaga successfully brought the teak wood needed for the construction of the Demak Grand Mosque. Raden Patah and the Walisongo (Wali Songo) began the construction of the mosque, a place of worship for Muslims in Java, assisted by the local community, who worked together to build the Demak mosque.

As an expression of gratitude to the Creator and to the monkeys inhabiting Kreo (minute 50:20), the backdrop shifts to a forest and rural setting, showcasing the people of the Kreo region. Every year, the residents hold a cultural procession to express their gratitude to the nine Walisongo for building the Demak Bintoro Grand Mosque, leading to the creation of the Bedaya Nawa Songo dance. Furthermore, as a form of gratitude from the Kreo people and their gratitude to the monkeys there, who had helped Sunan Kalijaga in taking the teak tree, they offered fruit to the monkeys in the Sesaji Rewanda activity.

The following is a screenshot of the uploaded of the Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo on the Youtube account @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102 which tells the story of the Goa Kreo legend.

---



**Figure 1.** Cultural Festival Upload "Mahakarya Legenda of Goa Kreo "  
(Source: YouTube @dinaskekulturandanpariwisa9102)

Goa Kreo Story Posts on the Instagram account @disbudparkotasamarang.

Uploads regarding the Goa Kreo destination in 2024 on the @disbudparkotasamarang Instagram reel were made four times: on October 10, 2024, during the quarantine period for the Semarang Denok Kenangan model selection in May 2024, then in April 2024, information about the pre-performance of the Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo and Sesaji Rewanda, and posts during the Sesaji Rewanda and Goa Kreo Mahakarya dance performance on April 19-24, 2024.

The following are posts about Goa Kreo on the @disbudparkotasamarang Instagram account.



**Figure 2.** Related Posts: The Makarya Legenda of Goa Kreo Cultural Festival  
(Source: Instagram @disbudparkotasamarang)





**Figure 3.** Related Posts for the Sesaji Rewanda Cultural Festival  
Source: Instagram @disbudparkotasemarang



**Figure 4.** Goa Kreo Tourist Destination Post, Semarang  
Source: Instagram @disbudparkotasemarang

Analysis of story attribution of YouTube and Instagram media content regarding the upload of the Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo Cultural Festival and Sesaji Rewanda.

Story attribution concerns the elements that make up a story. Story attribution concerns intrinsic elements presented in the story, such as the synopsis, theme, plot, setting, character traits, narrative angle, and moral message. In some writings, story attribution is also referred to as structural elements. These structural elements are important because they contain a series of events related to the story's course (Aliyani, 2018). The function of story attribution is to address the overall message the storyteller wishes to convey to the reader or audience.

The following is an analysis of story attribution in social media posts about the Legend of Goa Kreo in Semarang:

#### **Synopsis of the Story @dinaskebudayaandanpariwisa9102**

The synopsis is a summary of the story, providing an outline of the story presented. The origins of Goa Kreo, based on the audiovisual performance "The Mahakarya Legenda of Goa Kreo" uploaded on the YouTube account of the Semarang Culture and Tourism Office, begin when Kanjeng Sunan Kalijaga was searching for a suitable tree to serve as a pillar or pillar for the Demak Bintoro Mosque. During his journey, Sunan Kalijaga found a teak tree suitable for the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak. After the teak tree

was cut down, it moved from its original position. Finally, Sunan Kalijaga prayed and found the teak tree in a narrow cave, wedged between rocks. With the help of monkeys in the Goa Kreo area, the teak tree was retrieved and brought to Demak to be used as a pillar for the Great Mosque of Demak Bintoro.

### **Story Synopsis on Instagram @disbudparkotasemarang**

A video reel on Instagram announced the upcoming Mahakarya Legenda Of Goa Kreo and Sesaji Rewanda Festival, an annual cultural festival dedicated to the Goa Kreo destination, on April 19-20, 2024, during the month of Shawwal 2024. The 49-second video, which has been viewed 41,000 times, features footage from the previous year's Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo performance and the Sesaji Rewanda festival in the Goa Kreo area, featuring a Gunungan (mountain offering) filled with fruit for the monkeys of the Kreo region, carried by the local community and hundreds of dancers.

The reel was uploaded on April 20, 2024, precisely on the 1st of Shawwal, after the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, and the annual Sesaji Rewanda cultural festival. In 2024, the reel was viewed 8,670 times. This cultural festival was held in Kandri village, in the Goa Kreo area, and featured two activities: the "Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo" performance and the "Sesaji Rewanda" offerings. The 36-second video, viewed by thousands of viewers, narrated the story of four monkeys who assisted Sunan Kalijaga in his search for teak wood for the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak.

The interwoven narrative between the videos is that the "Mahakarya Goa Kreo" cultural festival and "Sesaji Rewanda" present the story of Sunan Kalijaga's journey in search of teak wood for the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak, aided by the monkeys of Goa Kreo. During the search, as a token of gratitude to the monkeys in the area, Sesaji Rewanda is performed, a form of food offering in the form of a mountain of fruit and secondary crops to feed the monkeys in the Goa area.

There is a difference in the frequency of uploads between YouTube and the Instagram account of the Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office. The Semarang City Culture and Tourism Office's YouTube account posts tourism content less frequently than Instagram, which posts at least two times a day. This is unfortunate because YouTube offers the advantage of longer upload times, with a single video lasting up to 15 minutes or even up to 12 hours (Nurhadi; Salamah; Yuniar: 2020).

An Instagram post from October 2024, related to tourist destination information, explained that regular people can also participate in monkey feeding tours through affordable visits, even though it's not during the annual Mahakarya Goa Kreo and Sesaji Rewanda cultural festivals.

### **Theme**

The theme of the story is the basis of the story, the problem that dominates a work in the story. (Lafamane, 2020) explains that theme is the main idea in the story that the story maker wants to convey.

The theme in the story of the Kreo Cave tourist destination via Instagram media @disbudparkotasemarang and Youtube @dinaskekulturandanpariwisa9102 belonging to the Semarang city government department in the cultural festival, presents a story theme

---

about the legendary story of the existence of the Kreo Cave destination with the inhabitants of small monkeys who helped in the process of searching for teak wood carried out by Sunan Kalijaga during the construction process of the Great Mosque of Demak in the 15th century around 1481 AD in the Tirang area ( the former name of the city of Semarang).

The differences in content uploaded on Instagram media that were observed were in the form of content related to festival activities, social conditions directly in the community at the destination location, while the content on the YouTube account that was observed was in the form of performances, such as ketoprak or wayang orang performances.

### Plot

A plot is a series of events arranged logically and chronologically, interconnected, and caused or experienced by the characters (Aminudin, 1995). States that a plot is generally a series of events formed by stages of events, thus weaving a narrative presented by the characters in the story. This means that an event occurs because of a cause, and then that event is connected to other events. A plot has several structures. The plot structure is the stages of events that occur in a story that are interconnected (Goffar et al., 2022)

The plot structure that appears in the content of the Masterpiece Legend of Goa Kreo and Sesaji Rewanda is: A forward plot that tells the chronology from the beginning of the story, the emergence of the narrator's background, the conflict, and the final resolution of the conflict.

In the content flow about the Mahakarya Legenda of Goa Kreo on YouTube and Instagram, the initial stage tells the story of the Demak Bintoro kingdom as the first Islamic kingdom on the island of Java. As an Islamic kingdom, a large mosque was required as a place of worship.

The opening section chronicles the history of the Demak Kingdom as the first Islamic kingdom on the island of Jawa. The Demak Kingdome led by Raden Patah, the first king after the collapse of the Majapahit Empire. As an Islamic kingdom, the Demak Kingdom needed a mosque as a place of worship and also as a center for religious learning and propagation conducted by the Wali Songo (Nine Saints). Sunan Kalijaga, one of the Nine Saints of the Demak Kingdom, was mandated to find teak wood for the "soko," or supporting pillars, of the Demak Mosque.

The middle section of the narrative structure, which depicts the early stages of the conflict, is exemplified by the plot of the Mahakarya Legenda of Goa Kreo, which chronicles Sunan Kalijaga's journey in search of teak wood from Demak Bintoro, exploring the wilderness and villages while spreading Islam, until he discovered a forest in the Tirang area (the origin of the city of Semarang) containing the desired teak trees.

The next stage of conflict is shown in the story, which reads: "However, the process was not as easy as imagined, as there were many disturbances from supernatural beings who wanted to thwart the search for the teak wood. Therefore, when the teak wood was cut, it was lost due to interference from evil spirits and giants. After praying and meditating in the Kreo area, the wood was revealed, wedged between a cave and a river.

Using the help of the monkeys in the forest, the teak wood was successfully retrieved."

The final section of the content, about the Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo Cultural Festival, depicts the process of the recovered teak wood being brought to the Demak kingdom to be used as a pillar for the construction of the Demak Mosque.

This stage of the plot demonstrates the value of prayer to God (a religious element). When facing difficulties, things will be made easier, as God's help will come through the hands of those He wills (in this case, the nine monkeys) in Goa Kreo.

### **Setting**

Setting is information that provides clues related to the environmental atmosphere (setting, time, atmosphere, and space) that occurs in the story. The setting, as found in the content of the "Mahakarya Legenda of Goa Kreo," shows that:

The setting is set in the Demak Bintoro Kingdom, a village, a forest, and Goa Kreo in The Tirang region (the former name for the city of Semarang). Time setting: 15th century, 1481 AD.

### **Characterization**

The main character in the story of the Goa Kreo Legend is Sunan Kalijaga, one of the nine saints (Wali Songo), who are renowned for their role in spreading Islam on the island of Java. Other supporting characters in the Goa Kreo Legend include eight other saints, including Raden Patah, the king of Demak Bintoro, who is depicted as the one who tasked Sunan Kalijaga with finding teakwood for the construction of the Demak Bintoro Mosque.

Monkeys are also important characters in the story of the Goa Kreo tourist destination in Semarang, assisting in the discovery of teakwood, and a group of evil giants, known as jinn, who play a role in removing the felled teakwood from the Tirang forest.

### **Point of View**

The point of view in narrative attribution can be either first-person or third-person. First-person perspective, when using the pronoun "I," or the author/main character, indicates their involvement in the writing. Third-person perspective, on the other hand, uses pronouns such as "He/She" which excludes the author or creator of the story from being a character.

In the story about Goa Kreo Semarang, both media outlets observed use a third-person perspective, presenting the main characters as Sunan Kalijaga and the monkeys who assist him in the teak wood search. Third-person perspective is used in this content because it tells a story related to a legend or past that is presented in the present. The advantage of third-person perspective is the flexibility to switch between characters, allowing the narrator to show the thoughts and feelings of various characters, and providing a broader and more detailed view of the setting, characters, and events. This perspective can also build suspense by revealing information unknown to the characters, creating a deeper narrative.

---

### **The Story's Message**

The story's message relates to the moral message conveyed in the presentation of the message or story. The message conveyed in the Goa Kreo cultural festival is that success is due to the contributions of those who have helped in the process. In this context, the contributions of Sunan Kalijaga, the community, and even animals (the monkeys in Goa Kreo). This gratitude is expressed through an annual event called Sesaji Rewanda held in the Goa Kreo area. Sesaji Rewanda comes from the word "sesajen" (offering) and "rewanda" (monkey). The Sesaji Rewanda tradition is a ritual offering to the monkey ancestors that has developed in the community around Goa Kreo, Gunung Pati, Semarang. This gift involves giving the monkeys a mountain of fruit, vegetables, and basic necessities as a token of gratitude to the Rewanda, or monkeys, in Goa Kreo.

### **DISCUSSION**

One of the strengths of tourism lies in the stories behind a destination's origins. Building narratives in the tourism sector is an important commodity with economic value (Storynomics) because it can be utilized in the tourism industry. Storynomics is a tourism approach that prioritizes narrative, creative content, living culture, and harnesses the power of culture as a destination's strength (Bob, 2025).

Uploading messages in the form of stories can stimulate interest in depicting exotic imaginations related to tourism destination marketing, considering this is related to human memory, which is based on the stories we receive.

This is because human memory is fundamentally story-based, as stated by (W. Fisher, 1987), who stated that humans are essentially homo narrans (storytellers). Through stories, an index is created (a summary construct that aids navigation, like a touchpoint that can evoke memories). The touchpoints of a story as a navigational tool for one's memory can be seen in the storyline, characterization, messages, and lessons conveyed, which can build a stronger awareness of something and foster a stronger emotional connection in the minds of readers. Content uploaded to the Instagram account @disbudparkotasemarang and the YouTube account @dinaskebudayaanpariwisata9102, related to the cultural festival "Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo Cave and the Sesaji Rewanda" depicts a navigational process communicated by the local community, captured by the local government, as the destination manager, as a form of gratitude to the Kreo Cave and its resident monkeys. This symbolism is conveyed through the process of bringing four offerings in the form of mountains: a rice mountain (Sego Kethek), a secondary crop mountain (Palawija), a fruit mountain (Gunung Ketupat), and a rice mountain (Gunung Ketupat). The procession involves carrying the four offerings around the village and finally delivering the mountains to the Kreo Cave to be given to the cave's resident monkeys.

Coverage of the Sesaji Rewanda tradition through videos featuring images and sound on social media is a form of tourism communication to build the Kreo Cave brand as a tourist destination. Figures 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3, related to content uploads, display the aesthetic side of the story, visual images in the form of visual communication.

The theoretical implications of this study in the field of narrative paradigms are that these social media posts by the Semarang City Government represent a narrative

---



presentation, contributing to the application of the Narrative Paradigm concept, where the city government represents the local community as storytellers. However, in this context, the storyteller is not an individual, as stated in Fisher's first concept, that every individual is a storyteller because humans are essentially homo narrans. In its development, storytellers have not only manifested as individuals but have also expanded into institutionalized groups. The annual cultural ritual of the Goa Kreo Legend and Sesaji Rewanda, uploaded to social media and performances held in the Goa Kreo area, demonstrates the emotional side of the destination through "story performances" delivered to the audience. Stories, within the context and informational purpose, are narratives aimed at building the imagination of the reader.

Social media can influence the perspective of its readers through the posts they display. This aligns with Tversky's opinion in Aditia (2024; 158), which states that Instagram can function to integrate visual content as a catalyst, building narrative construction, emotional engagement, and attitude formation, positioning Instagram as a powerful instrument for influencing public perspectives and encouraging collective action toward sustainable development goals (Tversky, 2013).

This paper has limitations related to the two social media platforms (Instagram and YouTube) being managed by government institutions that formally have official responsibility for managing destinations for broader purposes. Future research could further highlight how the public/audience conveys their experiences/views about their visits to these destinations, and specifically the audience's perspective in presenting their experiences of witnessing the Sesaji Rewanda cultural festival directly in the community and uploading them to their personal social media accounts.

## CONCLUSION

The narrative attributes in the Mahakarya Legenda Goa Kreo cultural festival, and Sesaji Rewanda, apply structural concepts to the story, presenting theme, plot, setting, point of view, and moral message. These concepts symbolically build the gratitude of the Goa Kreo residents to the monkeys that inhabit the area during the search for teak wood for the construction of the Great Mosque of Demak.

Uploading video content to social media is a form of visual communication that can contribute to building the imagination and emotional content of the story, thus creating a specific impression for the reader. The presentation of uploaded content through media by the local government embodies the concept of the narrative paradigm in the study of storytelling, which conveys that every human being is homo narrans. However, the storyteller is not only an individual but can also represent a group or institution.

## REFERENCES

- Aditia, R., Adhrianti, L., & Al-Nahari, Y. H. (2024). Psychological Review of Visual Communication on the Instagram Platform: Analysis of Support for SDGs-5 Empowerment for Gender Equality. *MEDIASI Jurnal Kajian Dan Terapan Media, Bahasa, Komunikasi*, 5(2), 158–176. <https://doi.org/10.46961/mediasi.v5i2.1235>
- Aminudin. (1995). *Literary Works Appreciation*. Sinar Baru Algesindo.
-

- 
- Bob. (2025, February 19). *Storynomics Tourism: Strategi Inovatif dalam Mempromosikan Pariwisata Indonesia*. Badan Otorita Borobudur. <https://bob.kemenparekraf.go.id/371968-storynomics-tourism-strategi-inovatif-dalam-mempromosikan-pariwisata-indonesia/>
- Bungin, B. (2017). *Komunikasi Pariwisata: Pemasaran dan Brand Destination*. Prenada Media.
- DUARTE, A., & SOEIRO, R. (2025). DESTINATIONS, EXPERIENCES, AND PLACES: THE ROLE OF STORYTELLING IN TOURISM ADVERTISING. *JANUS NET E-Journal of International Relation*, 15(no2, TD 2). <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.DT0125.5>
- Ekowati, Y. S. (2019). MITOS DALAM PERTUNJUKAN TARI WANARA PARISUKA DALAM RITUAL SESAJI REWANDA DI GOA KREO SEMARANG. *Imaji*, 17(1), 1–12.
- Fisher, W. (1987). *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value and Action*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Fisher, W. R. (1984). Narration as human communication paradigm: The case of public Moral Argument. *Communications Monographs*, 51(1), 1–22.
- Goffar, A., Wuyantoro, A., & Ricahyono, S. (2022). Analysis of Plot Structure in the Short Story “Above the Prayer Rug of Love” by Habiburrahman El Shirazy. *Jurnal Wewarah: Jurnal Pendidikan Multidisiperak*, 1(1), 36–41.
- Harrison Monarth. (2014, March). *Subscribe Sign In Latest Magazine Topics Podcasts Store Reading Lists Data & Visuals Case Selections HBR Executive Business communication The Irresistible Power of Storytelling as a Strategic Business Tool*. Harvard Business Review.
- Kim, J.-H., & Youn, H. (2016). How to design and deliver stories about tourism destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(6).
- Kim, S. H., Song, M. K., & Shim, C. (2020). Storytelling by medical tourism agents and its on trust and behavioral intention. *Journal Of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37(6), 679–694.
- Kılıç, F., & Yolbulan Okan, E. (2021). Storytelling and narrative tools in award-winning advertisements in Turkey: an interdisciplinary approach. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 27(8), 881–896. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2020.1780466>
- Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2009). *Encyclopedia of communication theory*. SAGE Publications.
- Marsela, A. S. A. (2023). Dampak Pengembangan Objek Wisata Goa Kreo Bagi Kesejahteraan Masyarakat di Kelurahan Kandri, Kecamatan Gunungpati, Kota Semarang. *Solidarity: Journal Of Education, Society and Culture*, 12(2).
- Ratu Nadira Elfandari, & Imam Nuraryo. (2023). Pemanfaatan Instagram sebagai Media Promosi Wisata Banten. *IKOMIK: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi Dan Informasi*, 3(2), 17–24. <https://doi.org/10.33830/ikomik.v3i2.5757>
- Segota. (2018). . (G)A(i)ming at the throne: Social media and the use of visitor-generated content in destination marketing. In *The Routledge handbook of popular culture and tourism* (pp. 427–438).
-

- Septianing, A. D., & Farida, N. (2021). Pengaruh Fasilitas Wisata Dan Kualitas Pelayanan Terhadap Niat Berkunjung Kembali Melalui Kepuasan Pengunjung (Studi Obyek Wisata Goa Kreo Kota Semarang). *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi Bisnis*, 10(1), 781–792. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jiab.2021.29796>
- Tversky, B. (2013). Visualizing Thought. In W. Huang (Ed.), *Handbook of Human Centric Visualization* (1st ed., Vol. 1, pp. 3–40).
- Woodside, A. G., Sood, S., & Miller, K. E. (2008). When consumers and brands talk: Storytelling theory and research in psychology and marketing. *Psychology & Marketing*, 25(2), 97–145. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20203>
- Zhang, X., & Ramayah, T. (2024). Solving the mystery of storytelling in destination marketing: A systematic review. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 59, 222–237. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2024.04.013>
-