| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Understanding The Meaning of *Garuda* in Bali in The Perspective Thought of Postmodernism

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| **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this article is to understand the meaning of *garuda* in Bali Island, Indonesia from the perspective of postmodernism. So far, *garuda* in Balinese art and culture has rarely paid attention to the meaning behind the meaning of the use of *garuda* motifs in all aspects of contemporary Balinese society. *Garuda* in all aspects of life in Bali is highly respected and contains certain meanings. The meanings contained in the symbolization of *garuda* have various interpretations, depending on the subject of society that interprets this *garuda*. This is related to the culture of the use of bird symbols. From the description above, the method used to answer several problems in understanding the meaning of *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of postmodernism is with the library method and field survey to see directly about the motifs of *garuda* forms. library method by applying understandings from postmodern thinking to understand the meaning of *garuda* in Bali. For that, it is still necessary to observe more deeply so that the meaning behind the meaning of *garuda* can be understood more deeply. Based on the description above, it turns out that understanding the meaning of *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of postmodernist figures is very interesting. This interest is because each postmodernist thought contains a specific understanding to be able to analyse more deeply the meaning behind the meaning of *garuda* in Bali.

| **KEYWORDS**

Understanding, meaning, *garuda*, perspective, postmodernism

1. Introduction

Understanding the meaning of *garuda* in Bali Island, Indonesia from the perspective of postmodernism is very interesting to discuss. So far, *garuda* in Balinese art and culture has rarely paid attention to the meaning behind the use of *garuda* motifs in all aspects of contemporary Balinese society. *Garuda* in all aspects of life in Bali is highly respected and contains certain meanings. The meanings contained in the symbolization of *garuda* have various interpretations, depending on the subject of society that interprets this *garuda*. This is related to the culture of the use of bird symbols.

Birds in contemporary Balinese culture are highly respected. Certain types of birds for Balinese people are often used as complementary means of rituals. These types of birds include *perkutut* (*Geopelia striata*), *Cendrawasih* (*Paradisaea raggiana*), various types of chickens, especially *sudamala* (frizzle chicken), Birds that are classified as eagles are considered as symbols of the *garuda* bird. The *garuda* bird is not found in real life, because what is often called the *garuda* bird is a bird in mythology as a creature depicted as the ruler of the upper world. However, the bird in Balinese culture is highly respected, because it is a type of bird that has meaning and value in people's lives. In Balinese art and culture, the *garuda* is used in all aspects of socio-cultural life, especially in works of art. In addition, in the religious aspect, the *garuda* is visualized as a winged animal that rules the upper world, used for symbols on religious facilities in Bali Island, Indonesia (Barker, 2004; Kutharatna, 2006; Piliang, 2003).

In Balinese society, there is a special day to honor animals including birds called tumpek kandang. The manifestation of the bird visualization as a symbol of the god of the upper world (manifestation of the symbol of the vehicle of the God Vishnu) in Balinese art and culture is related to the implementation of religious ceremonies, social culture of society, social status, art including works of fine art and performing arts. In addition, in mystical culture and traditional medicine (*usada*) *garuda* is also a symbol of certain symbols. There is a term *nadi garuda emas*/high level of mystic followers. *Garuda* in Balinese culture from the perspective of works of art as objects of cultural products has a certain form, function, and meaning. However, from another, deeper side in the field of cultural studies, of course there is a mystery of meaning behind the meaning of this *garuda*. This is what attracts the author to understand more deeply about the meaning of *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of postmodernist thought (Agger,2005; Capra, 2002).

2. A Small Narrative about *Garuda* in Bali in The Perspective of Jean-Francois Lyotard's Postmodernist Thought

A short narrative about the *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of Jean-Francois Lyotard's postmodernist thought is very interesting to know. Lyotard's thoughts will help in the analysis of the *garuda* from the realm of postmodernist thought. Since the 1980s Lyotard has been known as a prominent non-Marxist postmodern thinker. Although he was part of the Marxist group, his group always rejected criticism and rejected dogmatic interpretations of Marx's thoughts as done by Stalinism, Trotskyism and Maoism. In 1971 Lyotard successfully obtained a doctorate in literature with a dissertation entitled Discourse, figure which discussed the problem of language by comparing the approaches of structuralism and phenomenology. In this way Lyotard hopes to go beyond the structuralism school and position himself as one of the leading French poststructuralism and postmodernism figures. Lyotard's realm of thought will be used as an analytical knife in dissecting the *garuda* to understand the meaning behind the meaning of the *garuda* in contemporary culture in Bali (Lyotard, 2003; Ritzer, 2005).

Among the poststructuralist figures, Lyotard is the most serious in presenting arguments regarding the grand narrative. On the other hand, Lyotard also rejects the definition of society as an organic unity (Durkheim), a functional unity (Parson), and by itself a unity composed of contradictory forces (Marx). The grand narrative referred to in this article is that the *garuda* is a symbol of the ideology of the Indonesian nation. However, behind the grand narrative about the *garuda*, there are small narratives of the *garuda* that are related to all aspects of the socio-cultural life of society regarding the use of the *garuda* symbols in culture. This is what is interesting to reveal.

The term "Post" is often combined with other words such as post-empiricism, post-industrial society; post-structuralist, post-religious, post-metaphysical, post-colonial and others. The prefix 'post' in postmodern, is an elaboration of modern beliefs, as an effort to break ties with (modern) tradition by bringing up completely new ways of life and thought (Lyotard, 1992 in Yusuf, 2004). Furthermore, according to Lyotard, it is a way to forget and repress the past. So it is a kind of psychoanalytic procedure of anamnesis or analysis that allows patients: "to elaborate on current problems by freely associating details through various past situations that allow them to reveal hidden meanings in their lives and behavior." (Lyotard, 1993 in Yusuf, 2004; Ritzer, 2005).

Postmodernism according to Lyotard is a condition of the loss of credibility of metanarratives and the development of attention to the development of new knowledge that immediately destroys the metanarrative. If modernism emphasizes unity, namely the unity of logic (homology), the unity and universality of human values (universal humanism), by ignoring the diversity of situations, conditions and cultures of mankind, then postmodern thinkers, such as Lyotard, Noam Chomsky, Jameson and Hebermas, actually reject rationalism and universal humanism, because these views are considered totalitarian and ignore cultural differences and diversity. It is further explained that for postmodernists, the idea of rationality and humanism is a historical construction, a socio-cultural construction and not something that is natural (nature) and universal. Therefore, it cannot be standardized without considering socio-historical conditions and local culture. Diversity of thought, according to Lyotard, can only be achieved by rejecting unity and grand narratives, by achieving radical desensus (disagreement). The above thoughts if associated with the writing about *garuda* will give rise to a diversity of thoughts about *garuda*, where there are terms nadi *garuda* mas, usada *garuda*, *garuda* is symbolized as liberation, cleansing, and warding off disaster. In addition, in buildings it is used as a complementary element that indicates the social status of the community, and many can still be found in people's lives

Among postmodern thinkers, Francois Lyotard has an important position, because he provides a philosophical basis for the postmodern movement. Lyotard further expressed his rejection of the modern view by putting forward the concept of mini-narratives as an alternative to grand narratives, and put forward the concept of difference and language games as an alternative to unity (Yusuf, 2004). Lyotard's thoughts and observations have important implications for the understanding of science. Pre-modern and modern science, according to Lyotard, has a form of unity based on grand narratives. Furthermore, Grand-narratives become a framework for explaining various research problems on a micro and remote scale. Grand-narratives (meta-narratives) are theories or world constructions that cover everything/problems, and establish the criteria for the truth and objectivity of science. Consequently, other narratives, narratives that are outside the grand narrative, are considered non-scientific narratives.

Lyotard rejects the enlightenment view or the positivist paradigm, especially about the unity of sciences (unified sciences), objectivity by rejecting meta-narratives and allowing other narratives to develop or events to speak for them with their own criteria/rules. Modern science developed as a fulfillment of the desire to get out of pre-scientific explanations such as beliefs, myths and stories used by primitive societies to explain natural phenomena. In the view of postmodernists including Lyotard, science is apparently unable to eliminate myths from the realm of science. Including in this case the myth of the *garuda* symbol of freedom and also sacred symbols.

The term postmodern for Lyotard is a total break with modern culture and not just a correction of various modern thoughts and cultures as stated by Hebermas and Giddens. Lyotard's ideas are specifically focused on the problem of the position of scientific knowledge in an era called the information/high-tech age which according to Lyotard demands fundamental changes. Furthermore, postmodernism is defined as disbelief in various forms of meta-narratives, disbelief in claims of objective-universal scientific truth based on the awareness of limitations and inability to see reality as a whole as it is, and the fact that scientists always see reality from a certain perspective and paradigm (Yusuf, 2004; Sim, 2003).

If there is a diversity of perspectives/paradigms, then there will be a diversity of rules of the game or criteria of truth (language games) of scientific narratives. It is further explained that scientific pluralism develops skepticism or relativism towards the truth of science. In this case, Lyotard emphasizes the importance of the rhetorical aspect of language by eliminating the aspect of domination and mutual conquest between language players by proposing a more radical and democratic post-Marxist "micropolitics" strategy. In this context, rationality is not uniform (homogeneous) but heterogeneous, truth and rationality are not absolute and universal, but are conventional, local, and temporary (Yusuf, 2004).

Based on the description above, the small narrative about the *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of Jean-Francois Lyotard's postmodernist thought is interesting to know more deeply. This is because from Lyotard's thoughts, many hidden meanings can be revealed behind the meaning of the previous truth with the emergence of various interpretations of the *garuda* in the arts and culture of the people of Bali. With Jean-Francois Lyotard's postmodernist thought, what is related to the marginalized small narratives about the *garuda* can be revealed according to the reality that exists in people's lives.

3. Understanding The Relativism of Meaning Behind The Meaning of *Garuda* in Bali From The Perspective of Jacques Derrida's Postmodernist Thought

Type the text here Understanding the relativism of meaning behind the meaning of the *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of Jacques Derrida's postmodernist thought. In this paper, by borrowing Derrida's thoughts on the relativism of meaning behind the meaning of the *garuda* in Bali, it can be deconstructed and understood more deeply. Derrida enters into postmodern thought through his deconstruction of modernity in terms of language (linguistics) and literature. Deconstruction does not hold the existence of objective (True) meaning that appears in the work. The focus is not on the search for objective meaning, but on the search for new meaning through freedom of interpretation. Poststructuralism does not believe in the existence of monolithic meaning. So, the focus is not on the work and the author, but on the interpreter, the connoisseur of the work. The focus is also not on the signified but on the signifier. Therefore, the term epistemology is not used, instead it is the term "Pleasure" which is pleasure related to desire and Jouissance (peak pleasure) (Yusuf, 2004; Norris, 2003).

By borrowing Derrida's thoughts, this leads to the search for a new meaning of *garuda* in the life of Balinese art and culture. So far, the meaning of *garuda* has been related to the function of religious ceremonies, complementing building decorations in Bali, both sacred buildings and modern buildings, and related to the function of art and economy. By referring to Derrida's thoughts, a new understanding of the previous meanings will emerge. As in the context of the sentence G-A-R-U-D-A (G = something that is gallant (Gagah), A = something that gives rise to great (Agung) in every ceremony in Bali, R = Reality (Realitas) in society, many use of *garuda* symbols and are always placed on top, U = Main (Utama) in every depiction and symbolism, D = The basis (Dasar) of the Indonesian state, A = Elegant (Anggun) in every depiction in society, which when combined becomes *GARUDA*).

Derrida's deconstruction is actually related to the problem of metaphysics. This presence, which deconstructs the metaphysics of the presence of binary opposition, opposition between speech and writing, and rejection of the single truth (logos) supported by structuralisms (Yusuf, 2004; Norris, 2003). In the binary opposition, the *garuda* is always opposed to the dragon (naga). The *garuda* symbolizes the upper world and the dragon symbolizes the lower world. This opposition is common and often encountered. However, of course there is something else behind the binary opposition about the *garuda*.

Derrida's basic assumption is that there is no single meaning or single metaphor in a text (Yusuf, 2004: 115). In postmodernist thinking, all that exists is a "Text" that contains meaning. In giving meaning to the *garuda*, there is no single meaning. The *garuda* in this writing is a text that can contain various different interpretations depending on the angle from which the *garuda* is

understood. This is because in the socio-cultural life of the Balinese people, the *garuda* is applied or used in all aspects of life which of course have different meanings. Derrida provides openness to the interpretation of the text, because for him all interpretations of the text have the same opportunity to occupy a central position because the text balances meaning and interpretation (Yusuf, 2004).

Based on Derrida's thoughts above, it provides openness for the interpretation of the *garuda* as a text, which of course gives rise to various different meanings depending on where the *garuda* is applied in Balinese culture. Thus, the meaning behind the meaning of the *garuda* from the perspective of Balinese culture can be revealed. Through Derrida's postmodernist thoughts, many hidden meanings about the *garuda* in Balinese culture will be revealed. Furthermore, it will be able to provide a deep understanding of the *garuda* related to the arts and culture of the community.

4. Michel Foucault's Postmodernist Thoughts on Seeing The Other Side of *Garuda* In Bali

Michel Foucault's postmodernist thinking in seeing the other side of the *garuda* in Bali is very interesting to solve. In this article, the other side that is meant is the phenomenon of desti *garuda* mas (the transformation of human form into *garuda* mas, which is used as a term in high-level magic). The problem in this article is that in this sophisticated life, there is still an understanding of the mystical science of transformation into *garuda*. In addition, traditional medicine uses certain parts of the *garuda* bird as medicine to eliminate disease or the influence of supernatural powers. This is what must be discussed in this article related to Foucault's postmodern thinking. Foucault is called a marginal thinker (a marginal man in his intellectual development). The word marginal is more appropriately interpreted as a thinker who pays attention to problems that are ignored, marginalized especially by supporters of the positivist paradigm (Yusuf, 2004). The term nadi *garuda* emas is a form of traditional knowledge that people rarely master, this is because it is a level of mystical knowledge that is already high for a small part of Balinese society who truly understand it. Intellectual developments have revolutionary meanings and impacts on various disciplines, for literary criticism, where history not only provides a background for the study of manuscripts, but also constructs important parts of textual meaning, conversely, manuscripts or depictions have been considered fundamental to creating history and culture (Yusuf, 2004).

Michel Foucault bukan hanya menolak paradigma positivisme akan tetapi menolak berbagai teori sosial alternatif yang berbau humanisme seperti pendekatan Husserlian, Weberian, dan Habermasian. Foulcault menyebut metodenya dengan genealogi, sebagai bentuk penelusuran historis tentang bagaimana terbentuknya/terkonstruksinya berbagai macam pengetahuan, obyek-obyek pengetahuan dan wacana ilmiah (Yusuf, 2004). Jika meminjam pemikiran Foulcault tetang genealogi untuk melihat *garuda*, maka akan dapat ditelusuri secara historis bagaimana bentuk-bentuk *garuda* dalam seni budaya Bali pada perkembangan sebelumnya. Hal ini yang menjadi daya tarik lebih mendalam jika akan memahami *garuda* lebih mendalam dalam sisi kebudayaan masyarakat hindu di Bali.

Foucault uses three concepts that are closely related to each other, namely: positivity, historical a priori, and archives. The positivity of a discourse or science is what marks the unity of discourse in a certain period, so that it can distinguish whether two writers or experts are talking about the same thing or whether they are talking about two different things. Positivism is the 'scope of communication' between writers or scientists. Positivism, thus, is not as broad as science that has a long historical development. Positivism is broader than a group or school of thought that has the same paradigm and views. Positivity is made possible by the 'historical a priori', namely all the conditions or rules that determine discourse. These conditions and rules do not arise from outside, but determine discourse from within, determining the manifestation of the discourse itself. And archives are a system of statements produced by various positivities according to their respective historical a priori. By Foucault, archives are also intended as a system of formation and transformation of statements (Yusuf, 2004).

Further explained power is the ability to influence, regulate the thoughts or will and behavior of others. The manifestation of that power is orders, rules, and laws. The ruler is the creator and enforcer of law and the regulator of order in the community (Yusuf, 2004: 172). *Garuda* is often used as a symbol of power. Every depiction of *garuda* in the form of symbols is always associated with power. In the life of the arts and culture of Indonesian society including Bali, the symbolism of *garuda* as a symbol of the bird of the ruler of the upper world is always associated with power, the social status of society. This is if we observe in military symbols, the use of the *garuda* symbol from the lowest level as a soldier to the highest, namely general, has a placement of *garuda* that depends on the level of rank related to social status and power. Based on the description above, there are still many things related to *garuda* when viewed from Foucault's postmodernist thinking to understand another side of *garuda* in Bali.

5. Understanding Behind The Uniqueness Of *Garuda* in Bali in Richard Rorty's Postmodernist Thought

Understanding behind the uniqueness of the *Garuda* in Bali in Richard Rorty's postmodernist thought in this article is very interesting to discuss. The author borrows Rorty's postmodernist thought to understand the uniqueness of the *Garuda* in Bali.

Rorty strongly believes in the importance of using logic and language analysis in the world of science. This belief stems from his understanding of the right way to submit various answers to various important/fundamental questions in the field of philosophy (Yusuf, 2004).

Rorty is a neo-pragmatic thinker who prefers the pragmatism theory of truth by emphasizing the role of individuals in acquiring knowledge, especially when associated with the context of diversity of action. (yusuf, 2004).

Rorty's thinking prefers the theory of truth pragmatism over other theories, by emphasizing the role of individuals in gaining knowledge, especially when associated with the context of diversity of actions (Yusuf, 2004). Rorty's epistemology focus specifically talks about the relationship between consciousness and body (mind-body), about claims of scientific truth, as well as claims of art, morals and religion. This is if you want to understand behind the uniqueness of the *garuda* in Bali, then the relationship between moral consciousness and religion about the *garuda*. *Garuda* can be viewed morally from the existence of mythology that develops in society and the relationship in religion.

Rorty is influenced by postmodernist views that emphasize local, ethnocentric and contextual aspects in determining truth claims. This view is seen from his concept of language, where language is not something that is universal. Language, according to Rorty, is influenced by a specific socio-cultural context, along with its own values, worldviews and beliefs and ideals (Yusuf, 2004:209). Rorty offers a search for new forms/models by developing sensitivity to various forms of life and art as an alternative to the search for objective truth from analytical philosophy (Yusuf, 2004).

Rorty argues that facts are realities related to culture. This means that it is very dependent on the socio-cultural and historical context (Yusuf, 2004). Based on the above view, the facts about the *Garuda*, its existence in society are applied and related to all aspects of people's lives. People consciously and unconsciously have used the *Garuda* symbols which behind their uniqueness are related to the religion and social status of the people who use the *Garuda* symbols. Of course, in this case, the uniqueness of the *Garuda* symbol contains a certain meaning that is indirectly related to the social status of the community.

Since the 1960s, philosophers of science such as Kuhn, Polanyi, Feyerabend, Heidegger, Gadamer, have always reminded that pure consciousness that is not influenced by socio-cultural factors, not influenced by paradigms or theories used in observing objects/reality, is unacceptable. Thus, there are no truly pure facts, no brute facts in the scientific world that are not loaded/influenced by paradigms/theories or perspectives (Yusuf, 2004).

Based on Richard Rorty's postmodernist thinking to understand behind the uniqueness of the *garuda* in Bali becomes something very interesting to discuss. Rorty's postmodernist thinking believes in the importance of using logic and language analysis in the world of science. Thus the uniqueness of the *garuda* can be understood more deeply as can be presented in Fig. 1.
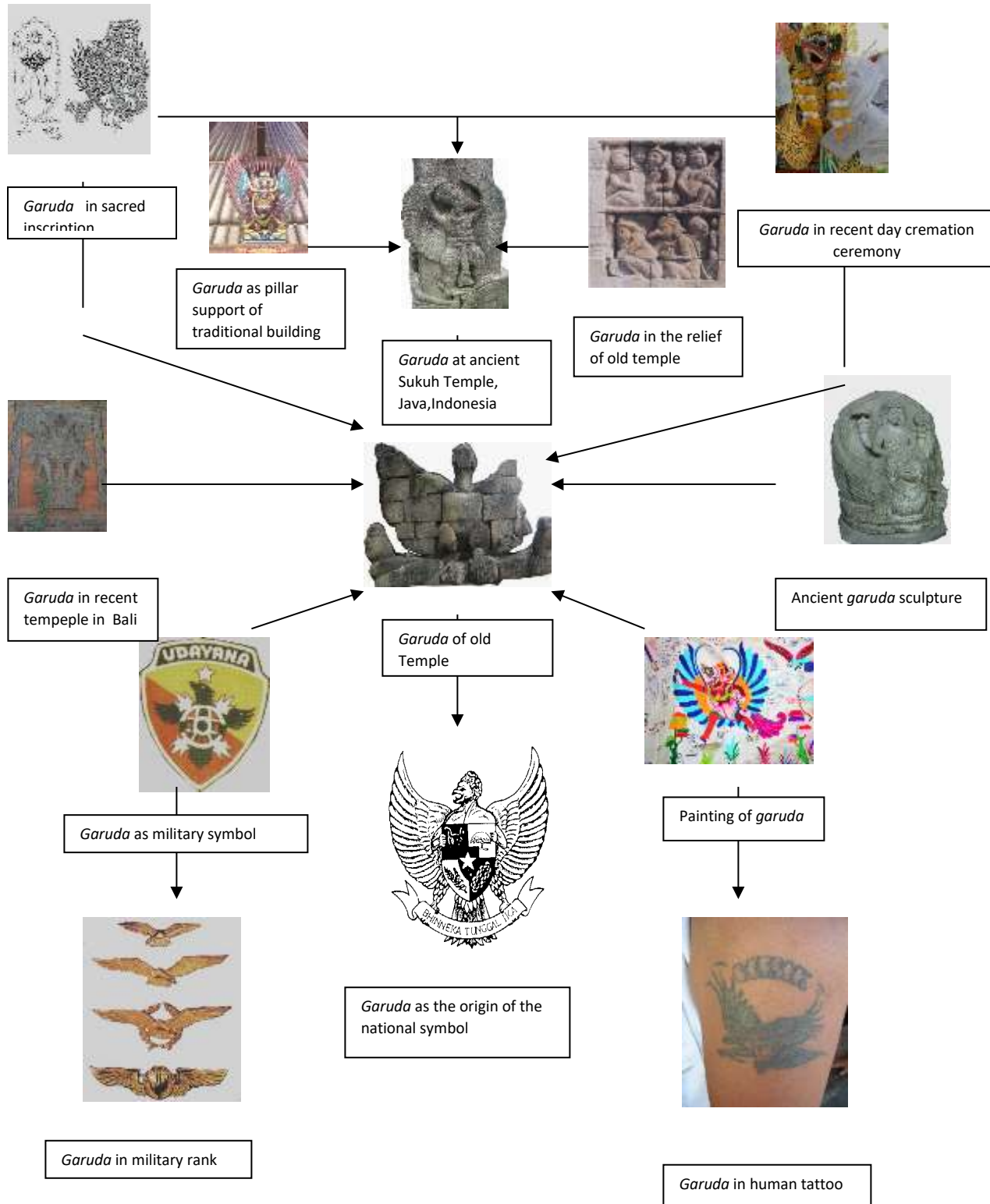
Figure 1. Appearance of *garuda* in contemporary culture of Bali. The arrow indicate its similarity in form and style

6. Conclusion

Based on the description above, it turns out that understanding the meaning of *garuda* in Bali from the perspective of postmodernist figures is very interesting. This interest is because each postmodernist thought contains a specific understanding to be able to analyze more deeply the meaning behind the meaning of *garuda* on the island of Bali, Indonesia.

The term postmodern for Lyotard is a total break with modern culture and not just a correction of various modern thoughts and cultures as stated by Hebermas and Giddens. Lyotard's ideas are specifically focused on the problem of the position of scientific knowledge in an era called the information/high-tech age which according to Lyotard demands fundamental changes. Based on Derrida's thoughts on deconstruction, it is an analytical method developed by dismantling the structure of language codes, especially the structure of opposition pairs in such a way as to create a game of signs that is endless and without final meaning. In other words, deconstructing means separating, releasing, in order to find and expose the assumptions of a text. Specifically, deconstruction involves the specific disarming of hierarchical binary oppositions that function to guarantee truth by setting aside and devaluing the inferior part of the binary opposition.

If there is a diversity of perspectives/paradigms, then there will be a diversity of rules of the game or criteria of truth (language games) of scientific narratives. It is further explained that scientific pluralism develops skepticism or relativism towards the truth of science. In this case, Lyotard emphasizes the importance of the rhetorical aspect of language by eliminating the aspect of domination and mutual conquest between language players by proposing a more radical and democratic post-Marxist "micropolitics" strategy. In this context, rationality is not uniform (homogeneous) but heterogeneous, truth and rationality are not absolute and universal, but are conventional, local, and temporary about the meaning behind the meaning of the *garuda* related to the culture of the people in Bali Island in Indonesia.

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