

# The Concept of Form in The Therianthropic Embodiment of Garuda Sculpture and Relief in Sukuh Temple

Ranang A. Sugihartono<sup>1\*</sup>, Dharsono<sup>2</sup>, and Guntur<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Graduate Program, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Surakarta, Indonesia

**Abstract.** Garuda's statues and reliefs at Sukuh Temple have different embodiment from others in Indonesia, because their therianthropic shape. The therianthropic embodiment is interesting to be studied about its conception, with the formulation of the problem; how is the art concept in the therianthropic embodiment of the Garuda statue and relief in Sukuh Temple. The study showed that Garuda's sculptures and reliefs reflected the story of Garudeya from *Adiparwa* Book. The Garuda whose supernatural powers exceed the gods, its light is like sunlight, and the king of birds is depicted in the form of sculptures and reliefs of half-human animals, or human-loaded animals (therianthropic). The therianthropic embodiment contains the concept of *Gagah*, *Perkasa*, *Utama*, and *Sakti* (GPUS), namely 1) *Gagah* (dashing), reflects a high, sturdy, perfect, and charismatic physique; 2) *Perkasa* (tough), reflects extraordinary physical strength and able to conquer all challenges; 3) *Utama* (primary), reflects the importance of the figure, the main character, the super figure, and has a heroic spirit, although it is a bird; and 4) *Sakti* (supernatural power), reflects extraordinary and incomparable powers among all the characters. This GPUS concept is interesting to be used as a reference in the character design for animated films.

**Keywords:** Garuda, therianthropic, concept, Sukuh

## 1 Introduction

The temples of late Indonesian-Hindu culture era has statues or reliefs in the form of Garuda such as Prambanan Temple (Klaten), Tetek Belahan Temple (Pasuruan), Rimbi Temple (Jombang), Kedaton Temple (Probolinggo), Sukuh Temple (Karanganyar), Minakjinggo Temple (Mojokerto), and Kesiman Tengah Temple (Mojokerto). The majority of those temples have Garuda in the form of reliefs, very rarely in the form of statues, only at Sukuh Temple and Minakjinggo Temple that have a statue of Garuda. Sukuh Temple is the temple that has the most statue of Garuda and its shape is quite monumental.

Those Hindu temples are estimated to have been built around 1437 AD or 1359 Saka, which is based on *Sengkalan Memet* (a year mark in the form of images) a three relief 1) *gapura bhuta mangan wong* (the giant gate eating human) on the side of the north gate, 2)

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\* Corresponding author: [ranang.as@gmail.com](mailto:ranang.as@gmail.com)

*gapura butha anahut buntut* (the giant gate bites the snake's tail) on the side of the south gate, and 3) *wiwara wiyasa anahut jalu* (female genitals face male genitals) in the form of male and female genital relief on the floor of the gate door [1]. This year was a period of receding Majapahit kingdom and its cultural hegemony, and therefore the diminishing influence of Hindu culture, so that prehistoric cultural elements re-emerged.

Sukuh Temple has several stories carved in the form of statues and reliefs, namely the story of *Garudeya*, *Sudamala*, and *Bhima*. Those three stories are related to release the sin or the curse. The story of Garudeya tells of the redemption of the curse of Goddess Winata by her son (Garuda), the story of *Sudamala* tells of the release of Goddess Durga from the curse and returned to Dewi Uma, and according to Stutterheim two reliefs tell of the birth of Bhima, that the two lower reliefs showing hermits depict episodes from the '*Bhima Bungkus*' that tell the story of Bhima's birth from a cauldron [2].

Sukuh Temple has a main temple with a sliced pyramid shape, which almost has similar shape with the "*punden berundak*" (stepped pyramid) of the megalithic era. There is an altar at the front of the temple, and the direction of the building is oriented towards the mountain. The altar stone reminded to the megalithic era that links with the worship of ancestral spirits. Other features in Hindu temples are that there is a big '*lingga*' or large phallus at the top of the temple which is the symbol of Lord Shiva. The large phallus of Sukuh Temple is stored in the National Museum today. In addition, according to Kossak and Watts, there are also vehicles of the god Vishnu, reliefs or statues of Garuda, human-birds and ancient sun the symbols of power / strength [3].

Beside that, in Sukuh Temple, the Garuda statue and relief embodiment appear to be different from other temples, where aspects of the influence of prehistoric elements reappear, to make it interesting to be studied. The appearance of these elements is related to the strength of the therianthropic shape on Garuda's statues and reliefs when it is compared to the Garuda reliefs at the Prambanan Temple from the Hindu culture period in the Central Java. The stronger of the therianthropic shape is seen in the dominant human form on the statues and reliefs of Garuda rather than the shape of the animal (bird), where the two Garuda statues in Sukuh Temple seem to stand tall like human. As the result of previous studies, that the sculpture from the East Java period seemed more expressive in visualizing the mighty and the dashing of the Garuda figure in a statue than a statue from the previous period (Central Java) [4]. Garuda's sculptures and reliefs in Sukuh Temple include the therianthropic form, combining the shape of bird and human.

The therianthropic shape on Garuda's sculptures and reliefs has the potential to serve as a reference for the development of Indonesian-style animated characters. Currently in the world of Indonesian animated films, the character of the therianthropic animation has not become a concern at all. The animated film characters are still limited to pure human forms and animal shapes. The world of animated films, both Japanese and American, has shown many Therianthropic characters, while in Indonesia there has not been a prominent therianthropic character in animated films. Indonesian animators are not interested yet in developing therianthropic animations, and the potential reference for the therianthropic forms has not been extracted from traditional art. For this reason, this research needs to be carried out in order to obtain reference to the concept of therianthropic forms for the development of animation, which is based on studies on the embodiment of Garuda.

The statue and relief of Garuda on the temples from the Indonesian-Hindu culture period of East Java, are interesting to study the concept of art, especially the Garuda figure from the story of *Garudeya* in the *Adiparwa* book when carved into statues and reliefs, the shape of a half-human bird. For that reason, the problem can be formulated, how is the art concept in the embodiment of the therianthropic Garuda statue and relief in Sukuh Temple. The concept of its art is examined or studied through the appearance of Garuda statues and reliefs on Sukuh temple by basing on the book.

## 2 Literature Review

The discussion of this study was carried out based on relevant scientific references including a book entitled "Art in Indonesia: Continuities and Change" by Claire Holt. This book discusses the Indonesian-Hindu cultural temples in Java which have reliefs and Anthropomorphic sculptures such as Prambanan Temple and Sukuh Temple. The discussion of reliefs and sculptures in this book is the starting point for discussing the form of the therianthropic of Garudeya's sculptures and reliefs.

In the Oxford online dictionary, Therianthropic means (especially of deity) combining the form of an animal with that of a man [5]. *Teriantropik* (Therianthropic) stands for Terio-Anthropomorphic or Therio-Anthropomorphic. The word Therianthropic comes from the Greek, around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the word "therion" means "wild animal" and "anthropos" means "human being". According Benson C Saili that the worshipping a god presented in a form combining animal and human elements are called Therio-Anthropomorphic [6].

The book entitled "Iconography Hindu", by Ratnaesih Maulana, discusses Hindu iconometry, *talamana*, or *silphasastra* which describes the proportion of humans in several types, Hindu mythology, and Hindu gods and goddesses and their vehicles. This book is used to be able to understand the iconometry of temple sculptures and reliefs from the period of Indonesian-Hindu culture, especially Garuda's sculptures and reliefs.

The book entitled "*Kitab Adiparwa*", translated by Siman Widyatmanta. This book discusses the story of Garudeya in Kawi-Indonesian language. This book is to strengthen understanding of the story related to Garuda, as explained in the book that Winata and Kadru had a bet on the horse *Uccaihṛawā*, which causes the Winata to become the servant of the Kadru, and finally freed by the Garuda (his son) with *amrta* as a condition. It is also told about the causes of snakes have branched tongues and the Garuda is a vehicle of Batara Wisnu [7]. The understanding of Garuda's sculptures and reliefs is very necessary to refer to the text in the book. The combination of observation of artifacts with literature studies on the book can improve the process and results of this study.

In addition, a review of previous research was also carried out, thesis entitled "*Latar Belakang Penggambaran Teriantropik pada Arca dan Relief di Jawa*", Endang Prasanti. Her study focused on the background aspects of therianthropic depiction, while in this research focused on concept discovery of therianthropic form, especially Garuda statues and reliefs at Sukuh Temple. Therefore, it appears that this study does have a different focus and positioning.

## 3 Method

This research uses qualitative descriptive research. This study focuses on the conception of the forms contained in the embodiment of Garuda statues and reliefs at Sukuh Temple. Data collection method using observation technique and literature study. Observations were made on Garuda's sculpture and relief artifacts, while the literature study focused on the book or "*kakawin*" which contained the story of Garudeya, where the Garuda character was told, namely the *Adiparwa* book.

Data analysis is the process of reducing large amounts of collected data to make sense of them [8]. In analyzing garuda statues and reliefs, researchers used the Interactive Analysis model. According to Miles and Huberman, data analysis contains three linked subprocesses: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification [9]. An in-depth reading of the sources of literature and visual analysis of Garuda's sculptures and reliefs with this analysis model was used to find the therianthropic concept in it.

## 4 Discussion

Overall there are two Garuda statues and three Garuda basreliefs. The two statues are in a standing position like humans, while the other three are in the pose in action. In this discussion the analysis is carried out to almost all the sculptures and reliefs in Sukuh Temple. In the Garuda statues and reliefs at Sukuh Temple, four philosophical concepts are found in them, namely the concept of Dashing, Tough, Primary, and Supernatural (*Gagah, Perkasa, Utama*, and *Sakti*). Each can be described as follows.

### 4.1 Concept of “Gagah” (Dashing) on the Garuda Statue

The shape of the relief and the statue of Garuda in Candi Sukuh are similar to the human body, its body shape stands tall. This is different from the Garuda reliefs from the Tetek Belahan Temple, Minakjinggo Temple, and Kidal Temple. Even Kinney said that the shape of the statue was more like a winged human than the shape of a Garuda bird, that the figure nearer the main monument is anthropomorphic and may be a winged man rather than a Garuda [2]. Kinney mentioned clearly that the Garuda statue shape is anthropomorphic, a human attribution imposed on bird.

The same thing, also said by Kossak and Watts, according to them, Garuda is an ancient celestial creature, part-human part-bird [3]. The realization of a combination of bird and human, and it is also related to the symbolization and its existence as a mythological creature.



**Fig. 1.** Garuda statue, gripping elephant and turtle, Garuda statue inscribed, and Garuda as the vehicle of Lord Vishnu (Photo: Ranang, 2018)

On the statue of Garuda (see Figure 1) can be found in the yard of the Sukuh Temple complex. This statue is a single statue, not along with other objects, it looks like it focuses on highlighting its body shape and pose, supported accessories/attributes are also very minimal, while the wing shape is quite realistic like the shape of a real bird's wings with an expanding position. Characteristics of birds appear on the arms and wings, spurs (*jalu*, Javanese), and claws, while human characteristics appear on the body (widely chest and abdomen), thighs and legs, and especially the pose of standing tall like a human. Overall, the Garuda statue is almost without any accessories on its hand, body and foot, except for its genital covers, different from Garuda statues and reliefs in other temples.

On the statue above the decorative cover of his genitals is quite odd because of its appearance like that, while in some of the statues in Sukuh Temple is manifested without a pubic cover, even *lingga* (the phallus) is shown vulgarly. Other body accessories do not exist, whether they are necklaces, bracelets, or *uncal*, so they are really minimal accessories, so it is very different from Garuda reliefs from other temples.

A standing upright Garuda pose that had a dashing impression was supported by a wide wing pose that expanded like a beam of light. This is relevant to what is told in the Book of

Adiparwa, that the rays of Garuda are like sunlight, as it is said that ‘your rays are like sunlight’[7]. Besides, it is also described that, ‘The light is like a ray of fire, fills the sky, shines to all directions because of it’[7]. The flip of its stretching wings just like a beam of light, supported with its arms spread diagonally up to the right and left side.

From the analysis of the shape, proportions, attributes, and poses of the Garuda statue above, it shows that the Garuda bird figure is manifested in human body and legs with a sturdy standing position that contains the concept or meaning of *Gagah* (Stout), in which its manifestation is to show the Garuda's dashing as told in the Book of *Adiparwa*.

#### 4.2 Concept of “*Perkasa*” (Tough) on Garuda Relief

The scenery that is somewhat different from the Garuda shape in the Sukuh Temple complex, is the Garuda relief carved on the side of the upright stone. On this relief, Garuda wears a hermit headdress (accessories) and with the wings lifted (flapping) upwards, while his legs catch elephant and turtle with his claws. The embodiment of this relief is also similar to the relief beside it, it's just the context is different, where this relief of Garuda along with the dragon beside it. The shape of the Garuda relief with the elephant and the turtle is very dramatic which illustrates the Garuda scene carrying elephants and turtles flying, even according to Kinney, ‘this is a dramatic version of the scene depicted at Candi Kedaton’[2].

Visually the relief of the Garuda appears to have a context, in which it stands with wings flapping, while its legs grip the elephants and turtles. Elephants as embodiments of Supratika and turtles as the embodiment of Wibhawasu in Book of *Adiparwa*, are told that the two brothers (Wibhawasu and Supratika) were fighting and cursing each other for inheritance. Then both of them were grabbed by Garuda on the orders of Kaçyapa (Garuda's father), to eat them because they always made noise. Both were brought flying by Garuda and then eaten at Mount Gandhamadana, as stated in Book of *Adiparwa*, It arrived at the lake on the slopes of Mount Himawan, met with a fighting elephant and tortoise. Then it grabbed both of them with its claws and then flew into space [7].

From the shape of the headdress on the Garuda relief, it is possible that the two Garuda statues in the Sukuh complex (now headless) also have almost the same head shape. As Kinney said that most of the larger depictions of Garuda at this site show him with the headdress of Hermit or Holy Man. Rishs, holy men belonging to an ascetic cult, often resided at mountain sites [2]. Headdress ornaments like the attributes of hermit who lives on a mountain peak.

The Garuda relief above (see Figure 1) can be visually analyzed pieces of images according to body parts. It shows that human attribution to the shape of birds is very dominant, not only through body shape, legs, hands, and poses, but also through human body accessories, such as necklaces, shoulder blades (*kelat bahu*), *stagena*, and *uncal* so that they are like humans dressed, even wearing the head cover like a hermit. The human attribution to the figure of the Garuda bird shows that its visualization is very therianthropic, in contrast to the realization of other objects (elephants and turtles) that are in the context of the same scene. Elephants and turtles are visualized purely in animal forms, there is no human form at all.

The pose of Garuda that stands upright like a human and is clutching (gripping) elephant and turtle shows that Garuda has an extraordinary power. Elephant and turtle were taken to fly to Gandhamadana mountain to be eaten. This extraordinary power as illustrated in the Book of *Adiparwa* was that as high as 3 *jodjana* turtle and around circle of its body 10 *jodjana*, while elephant high was 6 *jodjana* and 12 *jodjana* in its long [7]. From that size, we can imagine how big the size of the elephant and turtle are, and how strong the figure of Garuda is. Besides that, it is also told that swiftly and carefully the Garuda

grabbed the branch of wood, while the elephant and the turtle were on his right and left legs [7].

From the embodiment of the relief above, a visual concept can be formulated, namely the concept or the meaning of *Perkasa* (Tough), in which the appearance, shape and pose of a figure reflect an extraordinary strength. Physical strength that is capable of lifting heavy and large objects, it means that it was an extra ordinary. This is in line with the explanation of Kossak and Watts that in Sukuh Temple there is a vehicle of the god Vishnu, a relief or statue of Garuda, human-bird and ancient sun as the symbol of power / strength [3].

#### **4.3 Concept of Primary (*Utama*) on the Garuda Statue**

In general, Garuda reliefs were carved on the temple wall panels, such like in Prambanan, Kidal, Kesiman Tengah, Arimbi and Kedaton temple. However, it is different from the Garuda statue and relief in the Sukuh Temple in the temple courtyard, which shows how important the existence is. With the placement of statues and reliefs, it seems that Garudeya's story occupies an important position compared to the two other stories carved in Sukuh Temple.

In the courtyard of the third terrace stretches wide, exceeding the width of the first terrace courtyard. To the right way to the main building stands upright therianthropic form of two statues of Garuda from the story of Garudeya, the extraordinary strength of Garuda whose rays are like the sun's light implied on the two statues. The Garuda vehicle of Vishnu, the god of the place carrier of world. As if visitors feel protected, feel safe, and also admire to their might and supernatural powers that exceed the gods. Its strength is manifested in the form of birds but with human attribution, such body shape, hands, feet, clothing accessories, and poses which commonly called as Therianthropic.

Furthermore, on the left side there are three Garuda reliefs in the soubasement temple, which tells about the Garuda clutching elephant and turtle. Secondly, the relief of Garuda that was flapping its wings beside of the upright stone and the other side were carved by three dragons guarding the sacred water of *Amrta*, and then in the form of a Garuda relief bearing (*menyuhun*) of Lord Vishnu. The next journey to the main building of the temple, as if there was a spiritual dialogue between visitors with one to another statues and reliefs, although they are not presented in the form of sequential panels.

The second statues of Garuda that stand up above (see Figure 1), illustrates the impression that is different from the others. The sculpture is rough enough and the pose tends to be static, more megalithic and mystical, furthermore there are the inscriptions written in front and behind it. The embodiment of the statue appears to be the most therianthropic compared to the others in the Sukuh Temple complex, because only the wings are in the form of birds, and even the wings are not too stretching up, while other parts of the body are human, whereas the statue is a bird character named Garuda. Almost all parts of the statue are human contributions, from body, hips, thighs, legs, fingers, arms and hands, and body ornaments (decorations). The pose in standing is the same as a human pose. The existence and importance of the Garuda statue is also reflected in the inscriptions on the front and back of it.

The existence of two Garuda statues that stand, and supported by three Garuda reliefs placed in the courtyard towards the building of temples, represents the importance of the Garuda statues and reliefs in the Sukuh complex. In the book of *Adiparwa*, it is also described how important the Garuda bird figure is. Garuda is the predominant bird (the most perfect), as well as the hermit (*resi*), the great priest, and the god, the master of all that floats, and the rays are like sunlight, as stated in the Book of *Adiparwa* : 'Hjang Garuda, you are a receipt (hermit), you are a great priest, you are a Lord, you are *pathageçwara*, the master off all that flies, *twan prabhu*, you are the king, *tapanapratyam*, the light just like

the sun. Such is the situation, *tat trānam khagānuttama*. Protect us, because you are the main bird'[7]. It is clear that Garuda is an important figure in the Garudeya story. Moreover, the expression (praise) in the quote above is said by the gods, one of which is Sang Hyang Agni (God of Fire). From the analysis of the embodiment of the Garuda statue that is formal, static and mystical, and verified from the Garudeya story above, it can be interpreted as the Concept of Primary (*Utama*), in which the figure of Garuda is the main figure in the story of Garudeya.

#### 4.3 Concept of Supernatural Power (*Sakti*) on Garuda Relief

The figure of Garuda who has extraordinary powers is told a lot in the Book of *Adiparwa*, both successfully destroying *Amrta*'s guardian dragon, and defeating the gods. When Garuda succeeded in defeating and taking *Amrta*, Lord Vishnu said to Garuda that it can just ask him, but Garuda answered with an answer indicating that Garuda was more powerful than Lord Vishnu : "You should not bless me, Batara Vishnu, because my power is superior than your power. That is because of Amrta you would not become old and die. But me: *Ajaraç coma racca syam. Anāādhi*,, would not be old and die. *Amrtena winā'py aham*, even though I don't drink amrta, this is my situation, ask (others) from me, I would give it to you!" [7]. It appears that even God Vishnu was still unable to defeat the supernatural power of Garuda, even Lord Wisnu was asked to beg for something. Likewise, towards Lord Indra, Garuda awarded its wings to erase shame for the defeated by Garuda, as Garuda said to Lord Indra that "It is very sorry for your weapon, hyang Indra, could not drop even one of my feathers. This is my wing as my gift to you, so that it will not make you ashamed." [7]. It means that Garuda is more powerful than Lord Indra.

Garuda's supernatural power is depicted by the depiction of Garuda in which is different from other forms of Garuda statues and reliefs at the Sukuh complex. The story of the success of Garuda, its top is described as being a vehicle of Lord Vishnu (see Figure 4). In the relief, Garuda is depicted in a therianthropic with the form of a human head, because the other sculptures and reliefs are still in the shape of bird-head. This shows that Garuda is portrayed as more therianthropic, besides it is supported by human characteristics that appear in wearing *stagen* and *uncal*, hips and thighs. The shape of the animal appears only in the legs (claws), wings and tail. It became one of the distinguishing features of other sculptures and reliefs in the Sukuh Temple complex.

The head of the Garuda in the form of a human head, showed that Garuda had risen to a higher level than before, not only had it defeated the dragon and the gods, and took Amrta, but had also been able to free his mother and become a vehicle of Lord Wisnu. In their book, Kossak and Watts, writes he is the vehicle of Vishnu [3].

As for the previous story in the reliefs, Garuda gripped elephant and turtle, the shape of Garuda's head was depicted in the shape of a bird with a resi / hermit head cover. The release of his mother became the anticlimax of the Garudeya story with the following important quotes, "...and the Garuda returns to heaven; I heard it was very sacred, after redeeming (freeding/releasing) his mother "[7]. The word "sacred" in the book, confirms the extraordinary (supernatural power) that Garuda has. The embodiment of Garuda, with the shape of a head like a human, is a transformation of the basic form, because the head is an important part of the creature that becomes its identity, a heaven's creature. This transformation strengthens the therianthropic level of Garuda relief, also the transformation of body shape, thighs, and body accessories. According to Dharsono Sony Kartika, as in puppetry (*wayang*), the depiction of humans with animal heads to describe the combination of characters between animals and human, depicts demigods / half human-half God [10].

Some of the words in the Book of *Adiparwa* include: 1) "my power is superior than your power"; 2) "could not drop even one of my feather"; and 3) the "very sacred" are in line with the meaning of *Sakti* (Supernatural power) contained in the Garuda relief.

## 5 Conclusion

The discussion above shows that Garuda's statues and reliefs reflect the heroic story of Garuda in the story of Garudeya. The figure of Garuda whose supernatural powers exceed the gods, the light is like the sun, and the king of all birds is depicted with statues and reliefs of animal half human, or animal with human attribution.

From the discussion above, it can be concluded the meaning or concept of "*Gagah, Perkasa, Utama, and Sakti* (GPUS)" on Garuda statues and reliefs in Sukuh Temple: 1) *Gagah* (G) / Dashing, the embodiment (visualization) of a character that reflects high, sturdy, perfect and charismatic physically; 2) *Perkasa* (P) / Tough, the embodiment of a character that reflects extraordinary physical strength and is able to defeat (overcome) all severe challenges ; 3) *Utama* (U) / Primary, the embodiment of a character that reflects how the importance of the Garuda figure in the story, the main character, the super figure, and has a heroic spirit, even though it is the bird ; 4) *Sakti* (S) / Supernatural, characterization that reflects extraordinary (supernatural power) and incomparable power among all of the characters in the story.

The concept GPUS is very typical of Garuda statues and reliefs at Sukuh, although the story originates from India, but in its manifestation (visualization) it is very typical of Indonesia which originates from local geniuses, especially megalithic elements analysis and indigenous Indonesian beliefs. The GPUS concept can be used as a reference in the creation of characters (character designs) in animated films, especially my next research.

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