

A relational model of identity, symbolism, and representation in Soekarno-Era Monuments within the urban architecture of Jakarta

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article history:</i> Received September 12, 2025 Received in revised form Jan. 02, 2026 Accepted February 02, 2026 Available online March 01, 2026</p> <p><i>Keywords:</i> Identity Jakarta city architecture Relation Representation Symbol</p> <p>*Corresponding author: Yohanes Basuki Dwisusanto Department of Architecture, Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Katolik Parahyangan, Indonesia Email: jbase@unpar.ac.id ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2686-5048</p>	<p><i>Identity, symbolism, and representation constitute central themes in architectural and urban theory; nevertheless, their relational integration within the context of city architecture is frequently addressed in a fragmented and partial manner. This study seeks to develop a relational framework that connects identity, symbol, and representation through a focused analysis of Jakarta's urban architecture during the Soekarno era. Five monuments are selected as case studies based on Toto's (2014) classification, which characterizes monuments from the Old Order period as visual manifestations of Soekarno's nationalist ideology. The research adopts a qualitative approach, employing a combination of literature review and visual analysis. The data are obtained from scholarly publications, visual documentation of the selected monuments, and historical records concerning their planning and construction. From a methodological perspective, the analysis investigates the architectural representations embodied in the monuments, interprets the symbolic meanings they convey, and identifies the identity narratives communicated through their forms and spatial expressions. The findings indicate that urban identity serves as the foundational basis for the production of symbols, which are subsequently materialized as representations of nationalism within Jakarta's urban architectural landscape. This relational process is conceptualized as the Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) framework. The study contributes to the development of a conceptual framework for understanding the ways in which city identity is constructed, articulated, and communicated through architectural symbols and representational forms.</i></p>

Introduction

City identity has long occupied a central position within architectural theory, particularly in relation to how cities construct, express, and communicate collective meanings through spatial organization and formal articulation (Cheshmehzangi 2020; Kusliansjah 2022). As an abstract and dynamic phenomenon, city identity cannot be apprehended

directly; instead, it depends on mediating mechanisms through which it is articulated, interpreted, and collectively understood (Syahrir and Pramono 2021; Irfandian and Wilianto 2019). Within architectural discourse, these mediating mechanisms are commonly framed as symbols and representations embedded in the built environment, which serve to translate abstract meanings into tangible spatial forms (Hall et al.



2003; Sari, Indrosaptono, and Hilmy 2023; Achsani et al. 2022; Komyshev et al. 2025).

Previous research has extensively addressed city identity, architectural symbolism, and representation as significant theoretical concerns, yet these have largely been examined as separate and relatively autonomous domains. Studies on city identity tend to emphasize aspects such as urban character, collective memory, and historical continuity (Bell and De-Shalit 2011), whereas investigations into architectural symbolism often focus on monuments as visual markers or ideological signifiers within the urban landscape (Bakker and Saentaweesoek 2011). Meanwhile, architectural representation is frequently analyzed through visual, aesthetic, or narrative lenses, often without being explicitly situated within the broader process of city identity formation and communication (McEwan 2024). As a consequence, existing scholarship rarely elucidates how city identity, symbol, and representation operate collectively as a structured and interdependent system within city architecture.

This conceptual separation reveals a critical gap in architectural studies. Although symbols and representations are commonly invoked in discussions of city identity, they are generally treated as illustrative or descriptive elements rather than as integral components of a coherent relational framework. Consequently, the process through which city identity is conceived, translated into symbolic form, and subsequently materialized as architectural representation remains insufficiently theorized within existing literature.

Jakarta offers a particularly relevant context in which to address this theoretical gap. As the capital of Indonesia following independence, Jakarta was deliberately positioned by Soekarno as the symbolic core of the nation-building project. Monumental developments undertaken during the Guided Democracy (*Demokrasi Terpimpin*) period were conceived not merely as architectural objects, but as representational instruments through which national ideals, political aspirations, and urban identity were articulated within the spatial fabric of the city (Arifin 2014) further categorizes these Old Order-era monuments as visual representations of Soekarno's nationalism, highlighting their ideological and symbolic significance within Jakarta's urban context.

Building upon this historical and political setting, Soekarno-era monuments in Jakarta reveal a consistent relational pattern in which city identity functions as the conceptual foundation, symbols operate as mediating structures, and architectural representation serves as the primary means of communication. This research examines how city identity is articulated through symbols and representations in Jakarta's architecture, and how such articulation constructs a relational framework in which identity, symbol, and architectural representation are produced and conveyed through monumental architecture.

By adopting this relational perspective, the study distinguishes itself from earlier research that has predominantly focused on descriptive symbolism or historical interpretation. Rather than treating symbols and representations as isolated or illustrative elements, this study contributes a conceptual model that integrates city identity, symbol, and representation into a single analytical framework, thereby offering a more systematic understanding of how architectural monuments function as instruments of identity construction within the architectural landscape of Jakarta.

The originality of this study lies in both its analytical approach and its theoretical formulation. Unlike previous studies that examine city identity, symbols, or representation as separate analytical categories, this research proposes an explicit relational framework that systematically connects city identity, symbol, and representation within a unified conceptual model. Methodologically, the study introduces a structured analytical sequence, from representation to symbol and identity, to reveal an inverse conceptual process in which identity operates as the foundational driver of symbolic formation and architectural representation. This integrative relational model has not been explicitly articulated in prior studies examining Jakarta's Soekarno-era monuments.

Methods

This study adopts a qualitative research design aimed at developing a relational conceptual framework that connects city identity, symbol, and architectural representation. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate, as the research emphasizes the interpretation of

meanings, symbolic messages, and representational intentions embedded in architectural monuments rather than the measurement of quantitative variables.

Five monuments originating from the Soekarno era in Jakarta were selected as the primary case studies for this research. The selection of these monuments is grounded in [Arifin \(2014\)](#) classification, which identifies monuments from the Old Order period as visual and spatial representations of Soekarno's nationalist ideology. This classification provides a robust theoretical and historical foundation for delimiting the scope of the study to monuments that function explicitly as symbolic and representational instruments within Jakarta's architectural and urban formation. Consequently, the selected monuments are not examined as isolated architectural objects; rather, they are understood as deliberate and intentional components of a broader representational strategy aimed at constructing and communicating city identity.

Data were collected through qualitative research methods drawing upon three principal sources. The first source consists of academic literature, including scholarly publications related to city identity, architectural symbolism, representation, and Soekarno-era architecture. These materials were systematically reviewed to establish the theoretical grounding of the study, inform the analytical framework, and support the interpretation of symbolic and representational meanings embedded within the monuments. The second source comprises visual documentation, including photographs, architectural drawings, and archival images of the selected monuments. This visual material was employed to analyze architectural form, spatial configuration, orientation, scale, and visual articulation as key elements of architectural representation. The third source includes historical documents, encompassing archival records, official state documents, and historical writings related to the planning, construction processes, and ideological foundations of the monuments. These historical sources were examined to contextualize the symbolic intentions and political significance of the monuments during the Soekarno era. The triangulation of these three data sources was undertaken to ensure analytical coherence and to enhance the interpretative validity and reliability of the research findings.

The data analysis was conducted through a qualitative interpretative process structured into three analytical stages aligned with the proposed Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) framework. The first analytical stage focused on examining each monument as an architectural representation. In this stage, visual and spatial characteristics, including form, composition, scale, orientation, and urban placement, were analyzed to determine how the monuments operate as representational elements within the urban fabric of Jakarta. The second stage involved interpreting the architectural elements identified in the previous stage to uncover their symbolic meanings. This interpretative process was guided by theoretical perspectives on symbolism and was reinforced by historical documentation that elucidates the ideological narratives associated with each monument. The final analytical stage focused on identifying the city identity messages conveyed through the symbolic and representational dimensions of the monuments. By relating symbolic meanings to their historical and political contexts, the study interprets the ways in which Soekarno articulated nationalism and city identity through monumental architecture.

Although the analytical process is initiated by examining monuments as forms of architectural representation, the conceptual interpretation unfolds in the opposite direction, revealing city identity as the fundamental substratum that shapes symbolic formation and representational articulation. This reversed analytical logic constitutes the conceptual foundation of the Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) relational framework proposed in this study.

Through this systematically structured qualitative approach, the research not only investigates individual monuments but also develops a relational analytical model that integrates city identity, symbol, and representation into a cohesive interpretative structure. This methodological strategy enables a comprehensive understanding of how architectural monuments operate as instruments for the construction and communication of city identity within Jakarta's architectural and urban landscape.

To operationalize the proposed Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) framework, this study formulates a research operational framework that translates conceptual variables into concrete analytical procedures. [Table 1](#)

presents the relationship between research objectives, data sources, units of analysis, and analytical stages, serving as a methodological guide for conducting the qualitative analysis in a systematic and consistent manner.

Table 1. Research operational frameworks

Variable /aspect	Operational definition	Indicator
Representation (R)	Analysis of the ways in which symbols are materialized and communicated through architectural form and spatial configuration	Monument form, scale, orientation, urban position, and visual prominence within the city
Symbol (S)	Interpretation of symbolic meanings embedded in architectural elements of the monuments	Architectural forms and symbolic elements identified through visual analysis
Identity (I)	Identification of ideological and identity messages conveyed by Soekarno through monuments based on historical and political context	Narratives of nationalism, ideological values, and political intentions derived from historical documents and academic literature
Analyze Monuments based on R-S-I and Relational Pattern I-S-R	Examination of the relational sequence linking identity, symbol, and representation in the analytical process	Analytical connections between identity messages, symbolic meanings, and architectural representations

Results and discussion

This Discussion section is reorganized to explicitly correspond with the research objectives and analytical framework outlined in the abstract and methodology. In line with the qualitative triangulation strategy adopted in this study, the discussion integrates three interrelated sources of data: (1) historical data related to Jakarta’s urban development and Soekarno’s nation-building agenda; (2) theoretical data derived from literature on identity, symbol, and representation; and (3) visual documentation of monuments as architectural representations. Rather than serving merely as descriptive background, Jakarta’s

historical narrative is treated as contextual–analytical data that elucidates the formation of urban and national identity, which is subsequently translated into architectural symbols and representational forms.

The proclamation of Indonesia’s independence in 1945 marked Jakarta’s transformation into the capital city and the symbolic core of the newly established nation. In the immediate post-independence period, Indonesia faced the critical challenge of constructing a national identity capable of unifying an extraordinarily diverse population. Soekarno addressed this challenge through the concept of nation-building, which aimed to shape the mentality and character of the nation as a politically sovereign, economically independent, and culturally dignified entity (Ardhiati 2005).

Nation-building is a normative concept whose specific form is contingent upon historical and political contexts. Following World War II, many post-colonial states adopted revolutionary nation-building strategies, one of which involved the deliberate construction of capital cities as symbolic representations of national ideals (Onyishi Anthony and Eme 2014). Within this framework, Jakarta was developed not merely as an administrative center but as a representational city embodying Indonesia’s aspirations as a newly independent nation.

Soekarno conceptualized nation-building through two interrelated dimensions: mental development, which emphasized education, political economy, and culture; and physical development, which was realized through monumental architecture designed to cultivate national pride and achieve international recognition (Churiah and Lukito 2023). Jakarta, envisioned as the revolutionary heart of the nation, became the principal stage for this representational strategy (Arifin 2014).

The term “identity” is derived from the Latin word *idem*, meaning “the same.” Identity encompasses two fundamental concepts: the concept of self, or being, and the concept of process, or becoming (Yohannes Firzal 2018). Identity is inherently abstract and dynamic, linking selfhood, society, culture, and environment in a continuous process of formation (Cheshmehzangi 2020). Etymologically rooted in the Latin *idem*, identity embodies both a condition of existence and an ongoing process of transformation, indicating that it is never entirely

fixed but is continuously shaped by social and spatial contexts (Yang, Zhao, and Liu 2021).

In urban architecture, identity cannot be perceived directly; it requires mediating mechanisms, such as symbols and representations, to become legible within the built environment (Hall et al. 2003). City identity emerges through the interaction between content, including values, ideology, and collective memory, and context, encompassing physical form, spatial structure, and social practice. In Jakarta, the identity constructed during the Soekarno era was strongly ideological, foregrounding nationalism, anti-colonial struggle, heroism, and optimism toward the future (Arifin 2014).

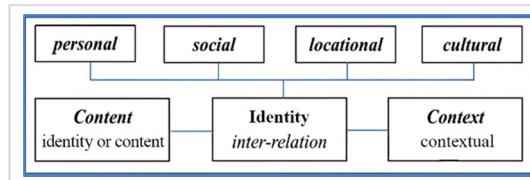


Figure 1. Identity and its relation with dimensions

City identity develops through collective perception over time, forming what Bell and De-Shalit (2011) describe as a city's character and ethos. Character refers to the physical and visual distinctiveness of the city, such as landmarks and architectural forms, while ethos reflects the dominant social and political values that shape urban life. The interaction between these two dimensions produces a distinctive city identity that differentiates one city from another (Bell and De-Shalit 2011).

The identity of a city is communicated through systems of signs embedded within its architecture, including material, visual, and rhetorical sign systems (Jones and Svejenova 2017). These systems enable architecture to function as a medium through which identity is constructed, interpreted, and contested. In Jakarta, monumental architecture played a pivotal role in this process, serving as a visual anchor for national identity and collective memory (Kusno 2021).

Symbols function as mediating mechanisms that translate abstract notions of identity into tangible and perceivable forms. Within the context of urban architecture, symbols are frequently employed to articulate political ideologies, cultural values, and historical narratives through the built environment (Stanek

2011). Monuments operate as symbolic condensations, encapsulating complex layers of meaning within simplified, legible, and recognizable architectural forms (Praczyk 2020). Architectural symbols are not intrinsically static; rather, their meanings are subject to transformation over time as a result of changing social interpretations and historical conditions (Maulidan and Hakim 2024).

Representation constitutes the phase in which identity and symbols are materialized through architectural form and urban space. In architectural discourse, representation extends beyond mere visual appearance to encompass aspects such as scale, orientation, spatial dominance, and strategic urban placement (Hussain 2017). Through representational processes, architecture communicates meaning and constructs narratives that influence and shape collective understandings of the city (McEwan 2024).

According to Lefebvre (1991), representational space is produced through social and political forces and frequently reflects dominant ideological interests. In the case of Jakarta, monumental architecture functioned as a controlled representational medium through which state ideology was spatially embedded and articulated within the urban fabric (Stanek 2011).

Soekarno recognized that, as a newly independent nation, Indonesia required international recognition and global attention. To achieve this objective, he initiated monumental lighthouse projects intended to position Jakarta as the political center of the New Emerging Forces (NEFO). As part of this vision, Jakarta hosted a series of international-scale events, including the Asia–Africa Conference (1955), the Asian Games (1962), and Ganefo (1963) (Dwithama and Sutrisno 2022).

The primary objective of the lighthouse projects was to demonstrate to the international community that Indonesia was a great nation, equal in stature to other major nations of the world. In a speech delivered in 1962, Soekarno stated: “Build Jakarta as beautifully and spectacularly as possible, so that the city, which has been the center of the Indonesian nation's hardships, will become an inspiration and a lighthouse for all humanity who are struggling and rise as a new power. If Egypt can construct Cairo, Italy can with Rome, France with Paris, and Brazil with Brasília, then Indonesia must also

be proud to present Jakarta as the gateway to the country” (Lukito 2016).

The various monumental buildings developed under the lighthouse project in Jakarta during the Guided Democracy era function as visual representations of Soekarno’s ambition to construct the national identity and character of the Indonesian nation (Arifin 2014). The transformation of Jakarta during Soekarno’s leadership symbolizes the construction of a new nation through the synthesis of Western (Dutch) and Eastern (Javanese) traditions (Martinez and Masron 2020).

Monuments and architectural structures in Jakarta operate as architectural symbols and representations of political, social, and national identity narratives, whose meanings continue to evolve across different historical periods (Bell and De-Shalit 2011). Jakarta, as the capital city, was perceived by Soekarno as the focal point of the nation’s struggle for independence. Accordingly, he selected symbols that embodied values such as bravery, heroism, and related national virtues (Arifin 2014).

Referring to this relational pattern and to Jakarta’s identity as both the capital city and a symbol of the nation’s struggle, the monuments examined in this study can be analyzed through the perspectives of urban semiotics and interpretative paradigms. The monuments from the Soekarno era are analyzed using table 1, the research operational framework.

A. The National Monument or Monas

Construction of the National Monument began in 1959 and it was inaugurated by Soekarno on August 17, 1961, coinciding with the celebration of Indonesia’s 16th Independence Day. Monas was conceived as a symbol of national pride, intended to commemorate and preserve the struggle of the Indonesian people during the independence revolution, while also inspiring patriotism among both present and future generations (Susilo and Suryaningsih 2015).

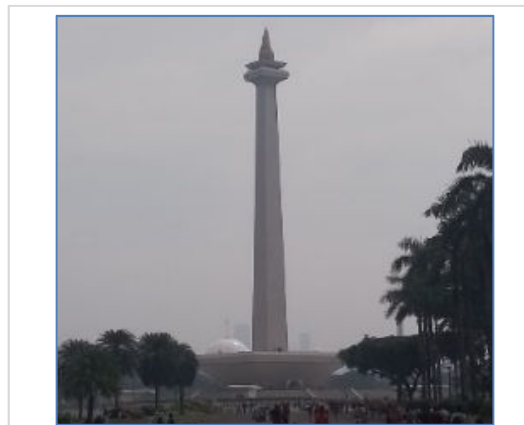


Figure 2. National Monument at Lapangan Merdeka

Table 2. National Monument (Monas)

Representation	Symbol	Identity
An obelisk with a lotus-shaped base and a flame at the top, designed in a realist style	Lingga–Yoni, symbols of fertility in ancient Javanese Hinduism, and Indonesia’s Independence Day	The Indonesian Revolution and the unity of the Indonesian people

As a towering obelisk rising from a rectangular, upward-oriented base at the center of Medan Merdeka, Monas embodies the symbols of Lingga and Yoni, which represent fertility in Hindu tradition. Monas symbolizes the Indonesian Revolution, as well as the collective personality and aspirations of the Indonesian people. In addition, Monas functions as the reference point for Jakarta’s spatial development as outlined in the 1965 city master plan (Ardhiati 2005).

B. The Selamat Datang Monument

Located at the central node of the Hotel Indonesia area, the Selamat Datang Monument features statues of a young Indonesian man and woman with outstretched arms holding flowers. This composition symbolizes the openness, hospitality, and kindness of the Indonesian people.



Figure 3. The Selamat Datang Monument at HI

Initiated by Soekarno, the Selamat Datang Monument was created as a representational gesture to welcome international guests attending the 1962 Asian Games in Jakarta. Positioned in front of the Hotel Indonesia Roundabout (HI) along Thamrin Street, the monument was strategically placed to greet foreign dignitaries arriving from Kemayoran Airport.

Table 3. Selamat Datang Monument

Representation	Symbol	Identity
A young man and woman holding a bouquet of flowers, rendered in a realist style	Indonesian man and woman with open arms symbolizing welcome	The Indonesian people, represented by a man and a woman, characterized by spirit and vitality, symbolizing youthfulness, friendliness, and optimism

C. The Pahlawan (Heroes) Monument

Located at Tugu Tani Field and inaugurated in 1963, the Pahlawan Monument was a gift from the Soviet Union to Soekarno's government. The conceptual inspiration for the statue is said to derive from a West Javanese story about a mother sending her son to war for Indonesia's independence. Although sculptors from the Soviet Union executed the monument, [Ardhiati \(2005\)](#) emphasizes that all monumental projects, including those in Jakarta, were realized with Soekarno's direct approval.

The Pahlawan Monument serves not only as an iconic landmark of Jakarta but also as a representation of the Indonesian people's collective effort and solidarity in defending their homeland ([Legge 1972](#)). The monument was designed to honor the nation's heroes, symbolized

by the figure of a young farmer holding a rifle, accompanied by a mother presenting rice as provision for his journey.



Figure 4. Pahlawan Monument at Tugu Tani field

Table 4. Pahlawan Monument

Representation	Symbol	Identity
A young farmer holding a rifle and a woman holding a rice basket, realism style	The unity of Indonesian men and women in the struggle to protect Indonesia's independence	Nationalism and Marhaenism: The Indonesian people as the foundation of independence

D. The Dirgantara Monument

The Dirgantara Monument, also referred to as the Pancoran Statue due to its location at the Pancoran node at the intersection of Gatot Subroto and M.T. Haryono Streets, stands in front of the former Indonesian Air Force headquarters and near Halim Perdanakusuma Airport. Initiated by Soekarno in 1964, the monument was built to commemorate and honor the contributions of Indonesia's aviation heroes.

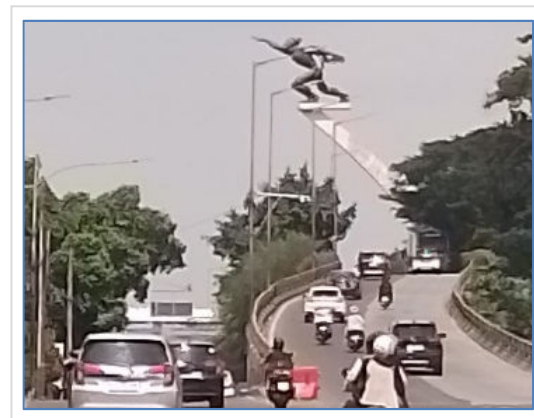


Figure 5. Dirgantara monument at Pancoran (1984)

The monument embodies the philosophy of ascending into the skies, representing bravery, honesty, and dedication to service. The figure is poised for flight, symbolizing Indonesia's courage and aspirations for its future.

Table 5. Dirgantara Monument

Representation	Symbol	Identity
A brave figure standing atop a stilt, poised to jump and fly, realism style	Commemoration of Indonesia's aviation heroes	Courage and aspirations for Indonesia's future in aerospace development

E. West Irian Liberation Monument

Lapangan Banteng, where the West Irian Liberation Monument is located, was initially named Lapangan Paviljoen (1632), later becoming Waterlooplein to commemorate the Dutch victory in the Battle of Waterloo, symbolized by a lion statue, which was destroyed during the Japanese occupation. Soekarno later renamed it Lapangan Banteng, symbolizing the bull's strength in overthrowing colonialism (Apriliansi and Dewi 2017).

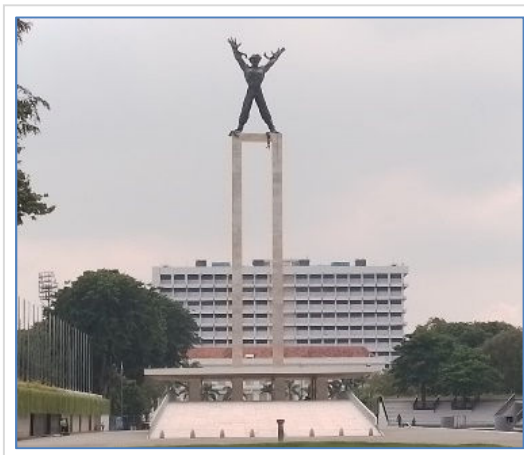


Figure 6. West irian liberation monuments

The West Irian Liberation Monument was commissioned by Soekarno to honor the fighters of the Three People's Command and the people of West Irian who chose to join the Unitary State of Indonesia. Inaugurated on August 17, 1963, the monument depicts a young man with outstretched arms breaking chains binding his hands and feet, a powerful representation of Indonesia's liberation from Dutch colonial rule and assertion of independence.

Table 6. West Irian Liberation Monument

Representation	Symbol	Identity
A man breaking the chains that bind his hands and feet, realism style	Freedom from colonization, expressed through bravery and the spirit of nationalism	Indonesia's anti-colonialism, freedom, and independence as a collective effort

Soekarno deliberately selected the realist style for Jakarta's five principal monuments, intending that the Indonesian populace could immediately grasp the meaning of the monuments upon viewing them (Arifin 2014). Unlike abstract styles, which require deeper interpretation, realism offers clarity, accessibility, and the ability to be systematically analyzed.

Application of the Identity-Symbol-Representation (I-S-R) framework, as illustrated in figure 7, reveals a coherent relational logic across Soekarno-era monuments. Jakarta's identity as the capital of a newly independent nation (I) served as the conceptual foundation. This identity expressed themes such as heroism, liberation, hospitality, and technological progress, which were communicated through symbolic gestures (S) and subsequently materialized in monumental architectural representations (R).

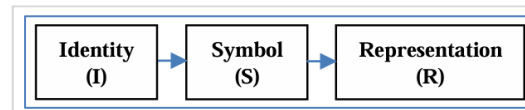


Figure 7. The relational pattern of identity towards symbols and representation in Jakarta's architecture

The National Monument (Monas), according to Toto (2014) and Yuke (2005), is the central monument in Jakarta, surrounded by other major monuments. It embodies national struggle and continuity through symbolic references to fertility and revolution (Susilo and Suryaningsih 2015).

The Selamat Datang Monument represents hospitality and international openness, reflecting Jakarta's role as a global gateway during the Asian Games era (Arifin 2014). Likewise, the Pahlawan Monument, Dirgantara Monument, and West Irian Liberation Monument convey narratives of sacrifice, aspiration, and anti-colonial liberation, reinforcing nationalism through architectural representation (Lukito 2016).

The analysis indicates that identity precedes symbol, and symbol, in turn, precedes

representation, even though the analytical process initially begins with the observation of physical form. This inverse interpretative logic establishes identity as the foundational driver that informs both symbolic selection and architectural expression. Accordingly, the Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) framework integrates concepts that are often treated separately in urban architectural theory, addressing a theoretical gap identified in earlier research (Nas 2011).

Table 7. Aspects found in the pattern of relations between identity to symbols and representation in the monuments of the city of Jakarta

Aspect	Identity - Symbol - Representation
Main Focus	The city's identity is first translated into appropriate visual symbols, which are then manifested in the architectural representation of Jakarta.
Design approach	Guided by urban semiotics and iconography, forms are rendered in Realism Style, simple and legible to facilitate immediate comprehension.
Dynamics of change	Symbols established earlier provide a stronger conceptual foundation, influencing the manner in which urban architecture evolves as representation.

This discussion confirms that the monuments of Jakarta’s Soekarno era should not be viewed as isolated architectural objects but as integral components of a coherent representational strategy grounded in identity. Through symbols as mediating devices, abstract ideological values were translated into tangible architectural forms. By combining theoretical perspectives, historical context, and object-based analysis, the I–S–R framework demonstrates how city identity is systematically constructed and communicated through architecture, directly addressing concerns about analytical clarity and theoretical application.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that Soekarno’s vision for Jakarta’s identity is deeply embedded in the city’s symbolic and representational architecture. Employing an urban semiotics approach, the research maps how identity as an abstract and dynamic construct is interpreted symbolically through physical elements and materialized in monuments as architectural representations. The

semiotic method allows for the reading of symbols as visual signs (signifiers) and the interpretation of their deeper meanings (signified) within Jakarta’s socio-political context.

This study demonstrates that Soekarno’s vision for Jakarta’s identity is deeply embedded in the city’s symbolic and representational architecture. Employing an urban semiotics approach, the research maps how identity, as an abstract and dynamic construct, is interpreted symbolically through physical elements and materialized in monuments as architectural representations. The semiotic method allows for the reading of symbols as visual signs (signifiers) and the interpretation of their deeper meanings (signified) within Jakarta’s socio-political context.

These symbolic themes are subsequently materialized as architectural elements within the city through monuments that emphasize monumental scale, strategic urban positioning, and clear figurative expression. Monuments such as the National Monument, Selamat Datang Monument, Pahlawan Monument, Dirgantara Monument, and West Irian Liberation Monument collectively serve as representational instruments that communicate and reinforce national identity within Jakarta’s public space.

From these observations, the study identifies a consistent Identity–Symbol–Representation (I–S–R) relational pattern in which identity functions as the conceptual origin, symbols operate as mediating media, and architectural representation constitutes the final communicative form. While the analytical process begins with physical architectural objects, interpretation confirms that identity is the primary determinant shaping symbolic selection and representational strategy.

The relational framework linking identity, symbols, and representations in Jakarta’s architecture is structured, intentional, and ideologically driven. The identity produced through this framework reflects a unified national identity, articulated through monumental symbols embedded within the urban fabric of the city.

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Author(s) contribution

- Raden Mohamad Wisnu Ibadi** contributed to the research concepts preparation, methodologies, investigations, data analysis, visualization, articles drafting and revisions.
- Yohanes Basuki Dwisusanto** contribute to the research concepts preparation and literature reviews, data analysis, of article drafts preparation and validation.
- Yohannes Karyadi Kusliansjah** contribute to methodology, supervision, and validation.

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