

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an introduction to this research by presenting the background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background

The symbol is a conventional sign used in writing or printing related to a particular field in order to represent operations, quantities, elements, relations, or qualities (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). A symbol is a sign used as a conventional representation of an object, function, or process (Akter, 2016 p, 3-4). He further stated that symbols can also be words, sounds, gestures, nonverbal communication, or visual images.

The study of signs and symbols are the focus of semiotics, which is a field of study that can be used to convey the meaning of architectural design. By focusing more on substance and meaning rather than style and technique, architecture can provide a fresh perspective as a nonverbal language that tries to communicate certain meanings (Ramzy, 2013 in Hasan 2022 p. 4).

In this study, the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., represents sacred architecture within a Western secular and political context. The Capitol serves as the nation's legislative center and is an icon of the United States' democratic system of government. Built in the late 18th century, the Capitol Building was designed neoclassical style, adopting elements of ancient Greek and Roman architecture such as Corinthian columns, monumental porticoes, and a majestic dome. This stylistic choice is not merely aesthetic but also carries ideological significance, linking the foundations of modern American democracy to the values of classical civilization that emphasize rationality, justice, and the republic.

The Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. was chosen as a comparative object because it is a monumental symbol of power and national identity of the United States, embodied through neoclassical architecture. Although this building has been widely studied from a historical and political perspective, a semiotic approach to its symbolic meaning has rarely been explored in a cross-cultural

comparative context. Its elements serve not only aesthetic purposes but also symbolize the values of democracy, rationality, and social order that underlie Western ideology.

Beyond its political function, the Capitol Building also has a strong symbolic dimension. The Rotunda, located directly beneath the main dome, is adorned with historical paintings such as “The Apotheosis of Washington”, depicting George Washington as a God, as well as murals depicting important milestones in the history of American independence. This reflects how the nation's historical narrative and ideology are presented through visual and artistic expression in architecture. Both the Capitol Building and the Songkok Recca Mosque are structurally standing in distinct cultural settings and functions, yet both convey powerful symbolic meaning through their architectural elements. The Songkok Recca Mosque reflects the synergy between Buginese culture and Islamic values, articulated through local forms and ornamentation. Meanwhile, the Capitol Building represents the symbolism of the state, legislative power, and the ideals of American democracy through its monumental classical form and structured visual narrative. Both demonstrate that architecture is not merely a physical structure, but a medium capable of conveying a society's identity, ideology, and collective meaning.

Compared to another symbolic meaning about architecture, this study also highlights that the Songkok Recca Mosque in Bone Regency serves as a compelling example of rich architecture in symbolic meaning. Built in 2017 and inaugurated by Andi Fahsar Padjalangi on April 1, 2022, the Mosque's unique feature lies in its dome, which resembles the Songkok Recca, a traditional Buginese headdress once worn by nobles and traditional leaders. The Songkok Recca itself has been recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Indonesia by the Ministry of Education and Culture since October 18, 2018. The use of the Songkok Recca model as the Mosque's dome not only demonstrates pride in local culture but also signifies efforts to preserve Buginese identity within the framework of Islamic teachings.

This Mosque serves not only as a place of worship but also as an Islamic and cultural symbol for the Bone people. The dominant gold color of the Mosque's interior symbolizes glory, majesty, and divine blessings. The Mosque's walls are adorned with calligraphy of the Asmaul Husna, which serves not only as a

decorative element but also as a spiritual and educational reminder for the congregation. In addition, the doors of the Mosque are carved with typical Jepara motifs that are rich in aesthetic and philosophical values, while the prayer mat-patterned floor serves as a marker for prayer positions, maintains order, and at the same time enriches the visual dimension of the worship space.

The Songkok Recca Mosque has a distinct architectural design compared to other mosques. Architecture is the art and technique of designing and building, distinguished from construction skills (Britannica, 2024 p. 2). The Songkok Recca Mosque has wall ornaments that adopt the Middle Eastern architectural style with gold colors. The use of gold in the Songkok Recca Mosque is intended to show the majesty and glory of Islam, as well as respect for the congregation. This is also intended to remind the congregation to be grateful for the blessings received from God.

The Songkok Recca Mosque was built to demonstrate that the Songkok Recca belongs to the Bone Regency. The mosque's essence is integrated with a cultural turnover that is thick with Buginese Bone characteristics, namely the head covering as a symbol of the Buginese Bone civilization, namely the Songkok Recca. It is a symbol of cultural stratification and a throne in the Bone Kingdom government. Therefore, the initiative arose from the former regent of Bone, Andi Fahsar Padjalangi, as the initiator of the construction of this mosque. The main concept of the construction of this mosque is to prioritize the blend of Islamic culture and Eastern Arab culture by providing elements of Buginese Bone culture, especially in terms of the dome. This initiative is a place of worship given to Bone Regency as a symbol of religion and culture.

The primary problem underlying the selection of the Songkok Recca Mosque as a research object is the limited scientific study of its architectural symbolic meaning, despite the building's unique form and strong philosophy compared to mosques in general. In the context of architectural modernization, traditional values are often marginalized by the influence of contemporary design. Therefore, this research is crucial in demonstrating how Buginese cultural values can be revived through religious architectural symbolism. This mosque serves not only as a place of worship but also as a representation of the local identity and pride of the Bone people, expressing the harmonious relationship between culture and religion.

By comparing these two buildings, this research attempts to discover the symbolic meaning of architecture from two different cultural and ideological contexts—religious-traditional (East) and secular-democratic (West). Through the semiotic theories of Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand De Saussure, this analysis is expected to reveal how architectural signs function as communication systems that reflect the identities, values, and worldviews of their respective societies.

Based on the background that has been described, this study examines the architectural symbolism of two different architectures but significant buildings: the Songkok Recca Mosque in Bone Regency and the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The Songkok Recca Mosque represents local Islamic identity through cultural expressions rooted in the Buginese heritage, while the Capitol Building reflects the values of democracy and national unity through neoclassical architectural elements that refer to the Greco-Roman tradition. Although located in different historical, cultural, and functional contexts, both buildings contain rich layers of symbolic meaning within their architectural features. However, people often only pay attention to their physical uniqueness, such as the songkok-shaped dome of the Mosque or the Corinthian columns and majestic dome of the Capitol Building, without understanding the deeper symbolic meaning contained within. Therefore, this study uses a semiotic approach to explore and interpret the symbolic meaning behind the architectural forms and describe Peirce's theoretical perspective on both buildings.

1.2 Problem Statement

Based on the background of the study above, this study was designed to answer two main questions as follows:

1. What linguistic and cultural symbolic meanings are represented in the architecture of the Capitol building and the Songkok Recca Mosque?
2. How is Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory applied to compare the architectural elements of the Capitol building and the Songkok Recca Mosque?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem statement above, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explain linguistic and cultural symbolic meanings represented in the architecture of the Capitol building and the Songkok Recca Mosque.
2. To describe the ways Peirce's theory is used to compare the architectural elements of the Capitol building and the Songkok Recca Mosque.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study holds both theoretical and practical significance. It aims to contribute to the academic discourse on architectural semiotics and provide insights into the interpretation of symbolic meaning in religious and civic architecture. The significance of the study can be outlined as follows:

1. Theoretically, this research contributes to the academic discourse in architectural semiotics by offering a comparative analysis between two culturally and ideologically distinct architectural structures: the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C United States, and the Songkok Recca Mosque in Indonesia. By applying Charles Sanders Peirce's and Ferdinand De Saussure's semiotic theory, the study expands the application of semiotic analysis within architectural research, particularly in contexts where architecture functions as a vehicle of symbolic, cultural, and ideological expression. The findings are expected to enrich interdisciplinary scholarship across architecture, cultural studies, political symbolism, and semiotics, particularly in understanding how built environments convey identity and belief systems.
2. Practically, this study may serve as a reference for architects, cultural heritage professionals, and researchers in understanding how architectural elements operate as signs that communicate cultural identities, religious beliefs, and political ideologies. It offers valuable insights for preserving symbolic meaning in both sacred and civic architecture, especially in multicultural societies where the interpretation of symbols can vary widely. Furthermore, the research may benefit educators and students in the fields of architecture, design, cultural studies, and semiotics by illustrating the relationship between form, meaning, and cultural narrative in architectural design.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Previous Studies

Some brief outlines of previous studies in semiotics analysis are relevant to this current research, such as Aslinda, C., & Pithaloka D., (2020) under the title “Representation of Malay Symbols: A Semiotic Analysis on Songket Monument and Keris Monument in Pekanbaru.” This study aims to examine the representation of Malay symbols embedded in the Songket and Keris monuments located in Pekanbaru, through the lens of denotative and connotative meaning. The research adopts Roland Barthes’ theory of mythology as its semiotic framework. Data were collected through non-participant observation and in-depth interviews with an expert in Malay culture. The analysis applies Barthes’ two-level system of signification to interpret the meanings within each monument. The study yields two main findings. The first concerns the Keris Monument, which is analyzed through four specific components. The second focuses on the Songket Monument, where nine elements are identified as representing Malay cultural symbols. The results reveal that neither monument fully encapsulates the essence of Malay culture. While the Songket Monument reflects various cultural values—such as personality traits, behavior, social norms, moral guidance, and character-building in line with Malay traditions—the Keris Monument symbolizes Malay honor. However, insights from a Riau cultural expert, Al Azhar, highlight a misinterpretation in the monument’s design, particularly the downward positioning of the keris, which traditionally conveys a message of surrender and is considered inappropriate.

The next research is Raza & Sehgal (2022) who studied about “Semiotics In The Architecture Of Shia Religious Building” and discusses the connotations of architectural elements in Shia religious building. The purpose of this research is to fill a vacuum in our understanding of the symbolic meanings and aesthetics of abstract vision in Islamic architecture, as well as to connect it to the spiritual component in every place and time. The discrepancy is due to difficulty in understanding the Shia Islamic artistic plane and visual tools. The study’s technique includes employing semiotics as a modern analytical tool to examine the spiritual aspect of Islamic architecture. The scholars use analytical and implicit readings to analyze the symbolic significance of different Islamic architectural features. The researchers intend to utilize semiotics to examine the spiritual

content of Islamic architecture and understand the symbolic meanings of diverse features. The study emphasizes the importance of symbolic connotations in Shia religious architecture. Furthermore, it emphasizes the need to understand the spiritual side of Shia Islamic architecture and its symbolic meanings.

Another research was conducted by Fauziyanti (2022) studied about "The Identity of the Hybridity of the Chinese Muslim Mosque in Sempusari, Jember (Charles Sanders Peirce Semiotic Analysis)" This study aims to describe the architectural meaning of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Sempusari Jember. To get the desired results, this research uses qualitative research with a descriptive approach, based on observation, interview, and documentation techniques. Meanwhile, to find out the existing cultural values, the writer uses the theory of cultural semiotics by Sanders Peirce. The findings obtained from this study are a study of the meaning of cultural semiotic in the Cheng Hoo Mosque architecture in Sempusari Jember including (a) the colors used. (b) An octagonal shape is located in the middle of the Cheng Hoo Mosque. (c) The tower consists of 5 flats. (d) the meaning of the lantern. (e) The shape on the walls of the Mosque on the part of the imam and Rostrum. (f) Flower motif. (g) the writing on the door of the Mosque in Roman kanji style.

Furthermore, Widodo & Artiningrum (2022) conducted the research "The semiotics study of Al-Ahdhar Mosque architecture using the trichotomy of Charles Sanders Peirce" This study aims to determine the meaning and message expressed by the architectural form of the Al-Ahdhar Mosque based on Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics, which consists of three aspects, namely Representation, Object, and Interpretancy with the concept of trichotomy. This research was conducted using a descriptive qualitative method to find out more about the observed phenomena. The meaning and message of the case study are conveyed in the form of signs and symbols through architectural elements. Data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation were translated using Charles Sanders Peirce's Trichotomy semiotics. The design of the Al-Ahdhar Mosque in a modern style shows that the architectural forms and elements carry certain meanings. The results of the study also show that Charles Sanders Peirce's Trichotomy semiotic theory can be used to express meaning through signs. This shows that signs on building elements have meaning, and the relationship between meaning, signs, and symbols comes from the correlation between signs and signs, which is called the semiosis process.

The most recent study by Gunawan & Heru (2025), titled “Analysis of the Symbolism of Architectural Memorabilia on the Pattern of the Outer Space Arrangement of the Museum Building”, examines the symbolic meanings embedded in architectural memorabilia within the spatial arrangement surrounding a museum site. The research seeks to explore how such symbolism affects both users and the broader community. The methodology employed includes field surveys, interviews with relevant stakeholders, and a review of qualitative literature. Architectural symbolism is understood as a representation of architectural elements designed to convey particular images, values, or meanings to those engaging with the building. Moreover, symbolism often carries associations with past events, shaping narratives and memories. In many commercial structures, the sequential arrangement of outdoor spaces leading to the main building enhances user experience. The findings highlight that architectural memorabilia often embody cultural, historical, and religious significance, which contributes to shaping identity, emotional responses, and perceptions among individuals and groups. These symbolic elements can evoke emotions such as admiration, pride, or serenity, and play a role in fostering emotional connections between users and the building’s outer space.

The previous studies have discussed by (Aslinda & Pithaloka 2020), (Raza & Sehgal 2022), and (Gunawan & Heru 2025), these three studies did discuss the symbolic meaning but supported by Roland Barthes' theory, where this study discussed the representation of symbols in the context of connotation and denotation, as well as analytical symbolism that relies on architectural memorabilia in spatial patterns outside the building site. Meanwhile, studies reviewed by (Fauziyanti, 2022) and (Widodo & Artiningrum 2022) also used Peirce's theory, but Fauziyanti produced research based on all parts of the second trichotomy: Icon, index, and symbol. Meanwhile, Widodo & Artiningrum focused on Representamen, Object, and Interpretant.

Meanwhile, this research is supported by Peirce's and Saussure's theories to explain the symbolic meaning the elements of architecture in Capitol Building and Songkok Recca Mosque. Peirce's theories also used to compare two objects in different geographical contexts, especially on the similarities and differences. This research not only aims to reveal the symbolic meaning of architectural elements in two buildings that are geographically, historically, and culturally different, but also highlights how local Buginese Islamic architecture and American political

architecture can be understood through the process of semiosis. This research provides an original contribution in expanding the horizon of architectural semiotic studies through a cross-cultural and cross-functional approach, namely between places of worship and centers of government.

2.2 Theory of Semiotics

Semiotics is one of the techniques to understanding literature that has arisen since literary specialists concentrated on the link between signs and symbols. Semiotics not involves the study not only of what we refer to as signs in everyday speech, but of anything which stand for something else (Chandler 2007, p. 2)

Semiotics is a discipline of linguistics that studies how signs and symbols convey meaning in language. Language analysis may be used to several situations, such as conversation, literature, advertising, and politics. Semiotics can explore the connection between language and culture, as well as how cultural, historical, and social factors impact language and meaning (Lubis et al., 2019 in Yasa 2023, p. 292).

We learn from the study of semiotics that these codes and indicators are often transparent, which helps to conceal the process of deciphering them. We must understand that even the most realistic indicators are not what they seem to be since we live in a society where signs are becoming more and more visible. Through increasing clarity on the codes used to understand signals, we may carry out the crucial semiotic task of denaturalizing signs. This is not meant to imply that all depictions of reality are equal; on the contrary. Signs have ideological purposes when it comes to defining reality. It is possible to identify whose realities are concealed and whose are privileged by dissecting and challenging the realities of signals. Such research entails examining how certain social groupings create and preserve reality. Refusing to pursue the study of signs means ceding researchery over the meaning-filled world we live in with others.

(Eser Ö. Y., & Atabeyoğlu, Ö, 2024, p. 4) Semiology is different from other disciplines in that it has its own methodology and technical foundation. Furthermore, semiotics is a strategy that may be used to analyze an event, scenario, phenomena, or notion from any field. Semiotics is a science that deals with signs, but it is also a method that all areas of science may use.

Although the origins of sign studies may be traced back to the "Middle Ages" (Nöth, 1995, p. 11 in Kurami 2017, p. 171), the works of "Peirce and Saussure as

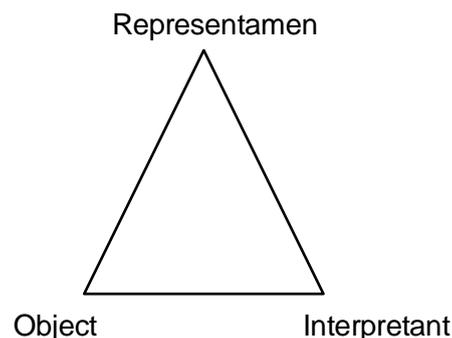
pioneers of modern semiotics" (Nöth, 1995, p. 63 Kurami 2017, p. 171) after the first half of the twentieth century gave sign studies their technical sophistication. Because of these advancements, semiotics has grown more scientific since the description of signals and their relationships with each other can now be reliably studied. The diverse and innovative analytical techniques and instruments that have been transferred to other fields have improved semiotics as an interdisciplinary approach.

The following is the semiotic theory according to Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand De Saussure.

1. Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory

Then, an expert of semiotics namely Charles Sanders Peirce explain that Semiotics is a literary discipline that comes from the Greek word Semeion, which means sign. If viewed from a terminological perspective, semiotics is defined as a science that studies a wide range of objects, and events throughout culture as signs. According to Peirce, semiotics is the same as logic, which implies that people only think in terms of signs, which are the primary methods of communication.

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) was an American pragmatic philosopher and logician who began formulating his model of semiotics, and a taxonomy of signs around the 1860s with a triadic model consisting of representamen, object, and interpretant.



Signs consist of three classifications, namely Firstness (representamen), Secondness (object), Thirdness (interpretant). The following is an explanation regarding the Peirce triadic:

- a. Representamen

Representamen is a term Peirce used to refer to "perceivable objects" that can function as signs. Representamen is also the physical form of a sign that can be perceived by the five senses, such as images and symbols.

b. Object

An object is what is represented by a sign, which can be an object, concept or idea. Objects can exist in the real world or only in the human mind. However, objects are always the source of representamen and can influence the interpretation of those representamen.

c. Interpretant

Interpretant is a concept or meaning that appears in a person's mind as a result of the relationship between the representamen and the object. Peirce also defines interpretant as a sign: "a sign refers to someone, namely in the mind of that person an equivalent sign or perhaps a more advanced sign is created. The sign that is created is called the interpretant of the first sign.

Peirce developed a broad typology of signs that began with a triadic classification of representamen, object, and interpretant into three trichotomies as follows:

a. First trichotomy

From a representamen perspective, Peirce further divides signs into qualisign (firstness), sinsign (secondness), and legisign (thirdness).

- i. A qualisign is a sign that can be identified based on its inherent properties. For example, white means pure or clean.
- ii. A sinsign is a sign based on its appearance in reality. For example, laughter means happiness.
- iii. A legisign is a sign that is a sign based on a generally accepted rule, a convention, or a code. For example, a red light means stop.

b. Second trichotomy

This trichotomy produces signs based on the relationship between the representamen and the object. These three trichotomies are icon (firstness), index (secondness), and symbol (thirdness).

- i. An icon is a sign that resembles the object it refers to. For example, a picture of a tree is an icon of the object tree because it resembles a tree. Icons can be found in various forms, such as maps, diagrams, and emoticons. An icon is a sign that resembles the object it represents and relies on similarity as a form of representation.

- ii. An index is a sign that is causally connected to the object it refers to. For example, smoke is an index of fire because smoke is produced by fire. An index is a sign that points to something else through a causal relationship.
- iii. A symbol is a sign based on agreement or convention. For example, the word "house" is a symbol for the concept of a dwelling because we have agreed to use that word to represent that concept. Symbols rely on convention as a form of representation. We understand signs as representing something else because of convention, agreement, or rule.

c. Third trichotomy

According to the nature of the interpretant, signs can be classified into rheme, dicent, and argument.

- i. Rheme is a sign that can be interpreted in different ways. For example, if a person's eyes are red, they could be sleepy, have sore eyes, irritation, or have just woken up, or even be drunk.
- ii. A dicent is a sign that corresponds to the facts and reality. For example, if there are many children on a village road, a "caution, many children" traffic sign is installed. Another example is if a road is prone to accidents, a "caution, accident-prone" sign is installed.
- iii. An argument is a sign that contains a reason for something. For example, a sign prohibiting smoking at gas stations is because gas stations are flammable.

The concept of Peirce's theory based on the elements of the Songkok Recca Mosque. Sentence: "Pintu Mesjid dengan ukiran Jepara" (The Mosque's door with Jepara carvings.)

a. Representamen

The door with Jepara carvings is a physical form that can be seen and felt.

b. Object

The door decorated with Jepara carvings is a symbol of Jepara's who's famous traditional art. So, the object here is the cultural wealth of Jepara which is appreciated as a beautiful and valuable work of art. The door of this Mosque also contains spiritual meaning. The intricate carvings can be interpreted as a symbol of the beauty of God's creation. The door also symbolizes purity and a holy place of worship.

c. Interpretant

When someone sees a Mosque door decorated with Jepara carvings, they can be amazed by the beauty and intricate details of the carvings. They can think, "This door is so beautiful and the details are amazing," and makes them feel amazed by the traditional Indonesian carving art. Therefore, they see it as a stunning work of art and full of aesthetic value.

2. Ferdinand De Saussure's Theory

The study of semiotics examines how signals function in social interactions. We may infer from the aforementioned explanation that the semiotic is an expression that is associated with signs as a component of human existence. Signs were generally divided into three categories by Ferdinand de Saussure. In semiotics, three of them are recognized as objects. The three categories are : a) langue and parole, b) syntagmatic and paradigmatic, c) signifier and signified.

a. Langue and Parole

Langue is an object independent of the sign material that forms it. It is understood as language in its pure social form, as well as a self-contained system. Thus, language can be defined as a social institution that is autonomous and independent of its sign-forming elements.

Parole, on the other hand, is living language, namely language as it appears in its use. Parole is the actual use of language as an individual action. It is composed of identical and continuously repeated signs. From this description, it can be concluded that parole is individual language present in the form of concrete actions, consisting of repeated signs. Thus, langue and parole revolve around each other, where each element of language that is used continuously will manifest as parole in the individual's actions.

b. Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic

Syntagmatic is a collection of signs arranged logically and sequentially. Syntagmatic relationships are often referred to as linear relationships, namely the linkages that exist between one word and another, or between one grammatical unit and another in an utterance. Thus, it can be concluded that syntagmatics is a series of words, each of which has a meaning, and when combined, it produces a broader meaning because it consists of a series of verbal signs in a temporal dimension.

Conversely, paradigmatic is the relationship between signs that replace each other. This relationship is a system in absentia that connects one sign with another, based on both similarities and differences, before it appears in speech. Paradigmatics encompasses the possible relationships between words in the speaker's memory, as part of the internal language storehouse. Thus, paradigmatic can be understood as words that are similar or nearly the same, but have different meanings. From this description, it can be concluded that language has two main relationships: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. Syntagmatic relationships are linear, while paradigmatic relationships are oppositional.

c. Signifier and Signified

A signifier is a sound or meaningful core. It is the material aspect of a sign, sensory in nature, in the form of a sound image or acoustic image related to a concept (the signified). The substance of a signifier is always material, whether in the form of sound, image, or other form. Thus, the signifier can be understood as the material aspect of a sign that can be perceived by the senses, depending on the speaker's arbitrary choice.

The signified is a mental image, thought, or concept. It is the mental aspect of a sign, namely, a mental representation of what it refers to. Therefore, the signified can be understood as the meaning or mental representation of the intended signs. From this description, it can be concluded that the signifier and the signified are two integrated and interdependent elements. Although they are distinct, they are inseparable. Without the signifier, there is no signified, and vice versa. Thus, the combination of the two forms the sign.

d. Synchronic and Diachronic

Synchronic studies examine language at a specific point in time, without considering how it developed in the past. This approach is more relevant in understanding how a language is used in society during a specific period.

Diachronic linguistics is an approach in linguistics that examines language change over time. This approach allows us to understand how language develops, why words change meaning, or how grammatical structures modify over time.

2.3 Theory of Symbolic Meaning

Talking about meaning and symbols, the two terms cannot be separated from one another. The unity of meaning and symbols can produce a form that contains intent. It can be concluded that between meaning and symbol are elements that are different and complementary (Heniwati, et al., 2022 p. 25). In this case, symbolic actions are intended to simplify something that has meaning. Something that has meaning is a symbol and the meaning is what is stated by the symbol which must be sought through interpretation or communication of it (Herawati, 2017 p.145).

Symbolic meaning can relate to language, art forms, marital customs, and more, claims Spradley (1997, p. 125 in Tahir, 2020 p. 111). The main function of these symbols is to make communication easier. Human communication is not only with each other but also with creatures outside themselves, which are supernatural to maintain balance in their natural life. When humans communicate with each other, it is always expressed in words, as a form of symbolic action. However, if humans communicate with other creatures, the act of communication is symbolic. Thus, these symbols cannot be separated from religion, because religion is a system of symbols by which humans communicate with nature in the world. In other words, through ceremonies, humans can express ideas through symbolic actions.

For humans, symbols have a very significant meaning. (Martinet 2010 in Waani 2012 p. 40) claims that two ideas led to the creation of the word symbol. In various aspects of life, symbols can be found and used for various purposes, both in art, religion, language, and culture. This symbolic understanding has an important role in understanding and interpreting various phenomena around us. Symbolic can be interpreted as a communication system that uses symbols or signs to convey more complex messages or meanings. Symbols can be images, words, gestures, or objects that have a special meaning behind their appearance.

Theories of symbolic meaning in architecture refer to various theoretical approaches and views that try to explain how buildings can carry meaning beyond just their physical function.

2.4 The Capitol Building



Figure 1. The Capitol Building

<https://allhandsis.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/bigstock-United-States-Capitol-Building-37045213.jpg>

The United States Capitol has been an iconic symbol of American democracy for more than two centuries. Situated atop Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., it embodies hope and progress for the American people. Its majestic dome, stunning architecture, and historic significance make it one of the most recognizable landmarks in the world.

The Capitol represents the heart of American politics. Here, the nation's lawmakers gather to draft and pass legislation, debate issues, and represent the American people. Its halls are filled with the voices of elected officials from all walks of life, who work tirelessly to preserve and protect democratic ideals. From the majestic Rotunda to the imposing Senate and House chambers, the United States Capitol is a testament to the strength and resilience of American democracy.

The Capitol is also a symbol of the nation's long and complex history. From its early days as a fledgling democracy to its modern status as a global superpower, the United States Capitol has witnessed it all. It has been home to some of the nation's most significant moments, including the ratification of the Constitution, the abolition of nullification, and the passage of civil rights legislation. The building also continues to serve as a platform for progress and change, as lawmakers work together to create a better future for all Americans, regardless of race, gender, religion, or socioeconomic status.

The U.S. Capitol serves as a national symbol and is a vital part of American history and culture. Its symbolism and meaning extend far beyond its physical

structure and continue to inspire hope, courage, and democracy across the country. The Capitol symbolizes the importance of a free and fair democracy, the power of negotiation and compromise, and most importantly, celebrating and realizing the American dream.

The architecture of the U.S. Capitol is as important as the building itself. Its design is influenced by ancient Greek and Roman architecture and features iconic elements that make it unique. The U.S. Capitol represents the heart of American politics, embodying democracy, Freedom, and justice. Its architecture and design are essential aspects of American history and culture, making it a vital symbol of American identity

2.5 The Songkok Recca Mosque



Figure 2. The Songkok Recca Mosque
(Personal Document)

The Songkok Recca Mosque in Bone Regency, South Sulawesi, is unique compared to other mosques. Its dome is shaped like the Songkok Recca, a head covering symbolizing Buginese identity and nobility. Furthermore, several Buginese symbols are incorporated into the architectural design, blending local and Islamic concepts. The mosque is located on Jalan Jend Ahmad Yani, Jeppe'e Village, West Tanete Riattang District. First built in 2017, the mosque was inaugurated by Andi Fahsar Padjalangi on April 1, 2022.

The reason for the mosque's construction was that the land for the mosque was originally a regional asset. The former Bone Regent initiated the project because the road conditions made it too far for the mosque. Therefore, it was

strategically important to utilize the regional asset to build another icon connected to the religious traditions of the Bone community (Malik).

Unlike most mosques, its dome is unique because it is shaped like a Songkok Recca, a Buginese songkok that has been recognized as a cultural heritage. The use of the Songkok Recca model at the Songkok Recca Mosque has a philosophical meaning. This songkok, rather than a regular head covering, served as an identity for the clerics and nobility of the Bone kingdom. Moreover, in the past, the songkok wasn't just worn by ordinary people. It was said that when worn, the wearer's charisma would radiate. However, these days, anyone can wear this songkok as a cultural product. At the government's initiative, agreed upon by traditional leaders and religious scholars in Bone, who stated that Bone has its own identity, thus the use of a distinctive dome. To symbolize that Bone is a fanatical Muslim community, the Songkok Recca Mosque was built (Andi Yushand).

The essence of the mosque is a combination of a strong cultural heritage, with the Buginese Bone characteristic of headgear, a symbol of civilization in the Buginese Bone community, the Songkok Recca. Because it symbolizes cultural stratification and the throne within the Bone kingdom, this was the initiative of the former regent of Bone, who initiated the construction of this mosque. The main concept of this mosque was to prioritize Islamic culture. Eastern Arab culture was incorporated into the Buginese Bone culture, especially in the dome. The mosque was designed as a place of worship, serving as a religious and cultural symbol.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

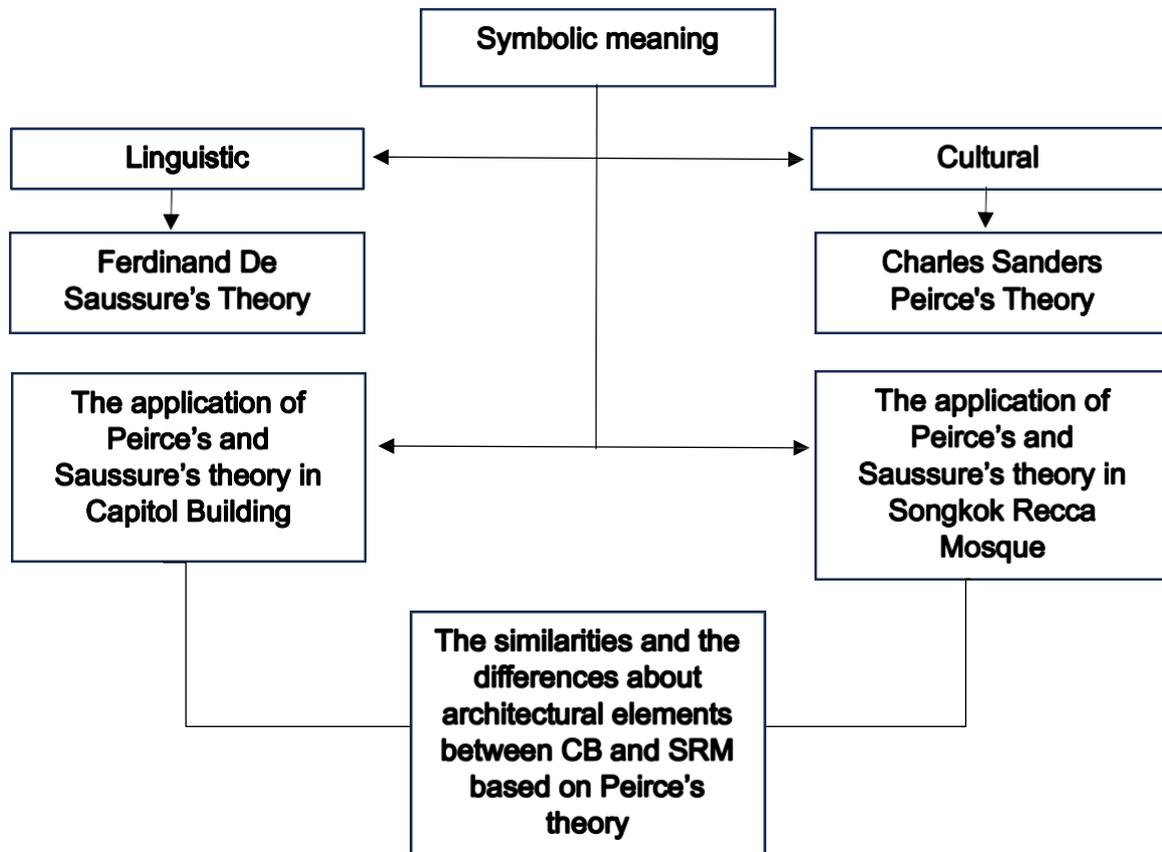


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

This research's conceptual framework was developed to clarify the line of thought in analyzing the symbolic meaning of the architecture of the Capitol Building and the Songkok Recca Mosque using Peirce's and Saussure's semiotic theories. The symbolic meaning of the architectural elements of both buildings is analyzed using both approaches. Peirce's theory is also used to interpret meaning through the triadic relationship between representamen, object, and interpretant, while simultaneously comparing the symbolic similarities and differences between the Capitol Building and the Songkok Recca Mosque. By combining these two theories, this research not only identifies symbolic meaning structurally and interpretively but also allows for a more in-depth comparative analysis of the symbolic representations of the two buildings. Thus, this conceptual framework confirms that the Capitol Building and the Songkok Recca Mosque, despite originating from different cultural contexts, both use architecture as a medium for representing the values, ideologies, and beliefs of their communities.

2.7 Operational Definition

To ensure precision in interpreting the variables of this study, the following operational definitions are provided in accordance with the research focus:

a. Semiotics

Semiotics is operationally defined as a systematic study of signs that examines how meaning is generated and conveyed through various forms and representations. In the context of this research, it is applied as an analytical approach to explore the architectural elements of the Capitol Building and the Songkok Recca Mosque, interpreting them as signs that embody cultural, political, and religious values.

b. Symbolic Meaning

Symbolic meaning in this research is operationally defined as the interpretation derived from the semiotic analysis of architectural elements. It refers to how forms, structures, and ornaments in architecture embody cultural, religious, and ideological values that communicate identity and collective consciousness. Symbolic meaning becomes the central outcome of analyzing both case studies in order to reveal the values encoded within their architectural designs.

c. Capitol Building

The Capitol Building is operationally defined in this study as the legislative building of the United States, located in Washington, D.C., which symbolizes American democracy and national identity. Within the research framework, it serves as a case study for secondary data analysis, where its architectural design and elements are examined as signs that reflect political ideals, authority, and unity through semiotic interpretation.

d. Songkok Recca Mosque

The Songkok Recca Mosque is operationally defined as a traditional Buginese mosque situated in Bone, South Sulawesi, Indonesia, representing both Islamic religious function and local cultural identity. In this research, it serves as the primary field study object, where its architectural forms, motifs, and spatial organization are analyzed semiotically to uncover the symbolic meanings that reflect the integration of Buginese tradition and Islamic values.