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ANALYSIS OF THE SYMBOLIC ATTRIBUTES AND TIFO OF LA GRANDE INDONESIA IN THE INDONESIA NATIONAL TEAM VS BAHRAIN MATCH AT GELORA BUNG KARNI STADIUM IN 2025

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Abstract

This study explores the role of qualitative methods and semiotic analysis in examining the symbolic attributes and tifos created by La Grande Indonesia (LGI) during the Indonesia vs. Bahrain football match on March 25, 2025, at Stadion Gelora Bung Karno, focusing on conveying messages of national identity, supporter solidarity, and patriotism. Employing Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, the research analyzes primary data from direct observations, photographic documentation, and Instagram content from official LGI and illustrator accounts, supplemented by secondary data from academic literature and media archives. Key visual elements, including the Garuda symbol, red-white colors, and banners such as "Garuda Fly Alone, Bulbuls Flock Together" and "Jaya Raya Indonesia," were decoded across denotative, connotative, and mythic levels. The findings reveal that the Garuda symbolizes national strength and independence, while collective displays of flags and tifos foster a sense of solidarity among supporters. The "Jaya Raya Indonesia" banner, tied to a 1-0 victory, reinforces a mythic narrative of national pride and love for the homeland. Triangulation of data sources ensured validity, confirming that these symbols and attributes serve as powerful communicative tools beyond aesthetics, embedding cultural values in the sporting context. The study concludes that semiotic analysis effectively uncovers the deep meanings embedded in tifos and banners, highlighting their role in mobilizing nationalistic sentiments and collective identity among Indonesian supporters. This approach underscores the significance of qualitative methods in exploring sociocultural dimensions of sports, offering insights into how visual symbols shape and reflect national consciousness in competitive settings.

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INTRODUCTION

Football is one of the most popular sports in the world, deeply integrated into social and cultural environments. According to (Sugden and Tomlinson, 1998), football fosters mutual understanding across cultures through its universal appeal.

Data from FIFA (2023) indicates that the 2022 World Cup final broadcast between Argentina and France was watched by nearly 1.5 billion viewers worldwide, making football one of the most-watched sporting events in history. With such extraordinary fan enthusiasm, football has evolved into a social phenomenon.

Initially, football was enjoyed as simple entertainment and a competitive sport. Goldblatt states that in the 19th century, football was played as a local pastime driven by community enthusiasm in England (Goldblatt, 2007). However, over time, this sport has developed into a social phenomenon that creates a new culture among fans, expressing emotions, collective identity, and cultural engagement (Aulia, 2024).

Supporters play a central role in the ecosystem of modern football. In Indonesia, supporter groups such as La Grande Indonesia (LGI), based in the northern stands of Gelora Bung Karno Main Stadium, are known for their creativity in supporting the national team. LGI channels positive energy that boosts the morale of the players.

During the match between the Indonesian National Team and Bahrain in March 2025 at the Gelora Bung Karno Main Stadium, LGI displayed a giant Garuda-themed tifo with

the message "Show Your Dignity." The tifo was not merely a visual decoration but a collective artistic expression that combined visual art elements such as color, text, imagery, and composition, designed to create an emotional impact. This support contributed to Indonesia's positive 1-0 victory over Bahrain through a solitary goal by Ole Romeny, with LGI's role aligning with the concept of supporters as the "12th player" (Giulianotti, 1999).

According to (Miles, 1997), art is not confined to galleries but also exists in public spaces as an expression of culture and social interaction. (Cartiere and Willis, 2008) add that public art in open spaces expands the role of art in fostering social dialogue and community engagement. In this context, the stadium becomes a public space where collective-based contemporary art flourishes, while also strengthening national identity. Athian asserts that visual art exhibitions in public spaces enable collective expressions that integrate aesthetics and cultural meaning, creating visual experiences that reinforce communal solidarity, such as supporter tifos (Athian, 2022).

This study will employ Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, where symbols, attributes, and tifos can be analyzed as a system of signs conveying social, cultural, and political meanings through denotation, connotation, and myth (Barthes, 1977). According to (Chandler, 2017), semiotics enables an understanding of how visual symbols shape narratives of identity within society. This research demonstrates that art is not only present in traditional media but also in collective practices such as supporter tifos.

Based on the background provided, the objectives of this study are 1.) To analyze the denotative and connotative meanings contained in the visual elements of the tifo and banners created by La Grande Indonesia during the Indonesia vs. Bahrain national team match in 2025. 2.) To analyze the symbolic attributes of the national team within the system of signs in conveying messages of identity, solidarity, and patriotism.

Semiotics is the study of signs and how they generate meaning in communication. Roland Barthes, in *Mythologies* (1972) and *Image, Music, Text* (1977), developed a semiotic approach that analyzes signs through denotative (literal) and connotative (symbolic) meanings.

Myth is a second-order sign system that transforms the initial meaning into an ideological message. Myth is part of Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which extends analysis to encompass ideological and cultural meanings.

Through Roland Barthes' theory of denotation and connotation, the author will discuss the analysis of symbols, while the theory of myth will be used to analyze the impact of tifos on identity, solidarity, and patriotism.

Symbols are visual, verbal, or material elements that represent specific meanings within a culture. In football, symbols such as flags, club or national emblems, colors, and supporter tifos serve as communication tools that strengthen collective identity (Hognestad, 2012). The Garuda symbol, as Indonesia's

national emblem, holds profound meaning in the context of nationalism.

Attributes are a form of appreciation by supporters for their team. Pride in their team is expressed through various attributes, ranging from jerseys, scarves, flags, banners, stickers, to tifos (Giulianotti, 1999). These attributes serve as visual elements that carry symbolic and emotional meanings. They often incorporate the team's colors, emblems, or specific messages to express identity and spirit. In the context of the Indonesian National Team, supporter attributes feature red-and-white colors, the Garuda symbol, and messages such as "Jaya Raya Indonesia" to affirm nationalism.

A tifo is a choreographed visual performance involving a large flag with a specific themed design displayed by football supporters in the stadium stands. Tifo performances are accompanied by attributes such as scarves, flags, colored paper, and even flares or smoke bombs, aimed at creating a vibrant atmosphere, providing strong support, and intimidating the opposing team (Chowdhury, 2025).

Supporters play a crucial role as the "12th player," a group that provides emotional support and creates a pressured atmosphere for the opposing team through chants, attributes, and tifos (Hughson, 2000). In Indonesia, supporters like La Grande Indonesia are known for their fanaticism in supporting the Indonesian National Team. This support not only motivates the players but also strengthens national identity through symbols such as red-and-white attributes, Garuda tifos, and patriotic chants.

A football match is a competitive sport governed by the *Laws of the Game*, involving two teams of 11 players each, aiming to score goals into the opponent's net using a ball. The match consists of two 45-minute halves, with additional time if necessary.

The match between the Indonesian National Team and Bahrain was a competitive fixture following FIFA regulations, held at the Gelora Bung Karno Main Stadium, with high tension in the context of World Cup and other Asian tournament qualifications. Historically, Bahrain has a slight advantage from their last six encounters, but Indonesia showed improvement in the match on March 25, 2025, securing a 1-0 victory. This demonstrates that, in addition to the coach's strategy and the players' quality, supporter contributions also play a significant role in determining the outcome.

Previous research supporting this study includes Dina Aulia's work published in the *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* Volume 3, Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, in 2025, titled "*The Spirit of Indonesian National Team Supporters: A Manifestation of Nationalism in the Football Arena and Its Impact on the International Stage*." This research aimed to analyze the influence of Indonesian supporters' enthusiasm on the international stage. The findings indicate that the supporters' spirit not only motivates athletes to excel but also helps introduce Indonesian culture to the world.

Additionally, there is research by Azzam Ahmad Jibar, a student at Universitas Nasional, in his 2024 thesis titled "*Fostering Nationalism Through Fanaticism for the National Football*

Club (A Study of the La Grande Indonesia Supporter Group)." This study aimed to strengthen nationalism among Indonesian national team supporters, focusing on La Grande Indonesia, which leverages love for the national team to ignite nationalistic spirit among diverse supporters. The results revealed three main strategies for fostering nationalism through fanaticism: first, through social media (match information, ticket booking, watch parties, appreciation, and merchandise promotion); second, through fanatical support (chants, tifos, corteos, and attributes); and third, through external activities such as player welcomes, watch parties, and sports activities..

Lastly, a study by Uden Kusuma Wijaya, Gumilar Rusliwa Somantri, Muhammad Syaroni Rofii, and Muhammad Saiful Arifin, published in the *International Journal of Social Sciences and Human Research* Volume 6, Universitas Indonesia, in 2023, titled "Identity, Nationalism, and the Impact on National Resilience: A Case Analysis of the Role of Football Supporters in Indonesia," aimed to examine how the involvement of football supporters in Indonesia shapes national identity and supports national resilience. The findings highlight the complex dynamics within football supporter communities and their contributions to the formation and strengthening of Indonesia's national resilience.

RESEARCH AND METHODS

The research method serves as the foundation and determinant of the success in achieving the research objectives. According to (Rositama and Furaida, 2022), the method plays

a crucial role in determining whether the research objectives can be achieved. In this study, a qualitative method is employed. The data used for analysis includes comprehensive primary and secondary data.

This research utilizes Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory to analyze the symbolic attributes of supporters, specifically the Garuda tifo displayed by La Grande Indonesia (LGI) during the Indonesia vs. Bahrain national team match at Gelora Bung Karno Stadium in 2025. This approach was chosen for its ability to unpack the denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings of visual elements such as color, form, symbols, and composition (Barthes, 1977; Chandler, 2017).

Primary data was obtained through observations during the match, focusing on the tifo, supporter attributes, and interactions. Observations were supplemented with photo and video documentation to accurately capture the visual elements. Due to the author’s limitations, additional data was collected through internet searches on the official Instagram accounts of the supporters (@lagrandeindonesia), the illustrator (@sultan_design), and the photographer (@pramudyakevin), covering posts related to tifo design, from preparation to the match itself. Secondary data was sourced from academic literature and match reports. The analysis was conducted by identifying key elements such as the Garuda symbol and the message “Show Your Dignity,” which were then interpreted based on Barthes’ three layers of meaning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Denotation and Connotation in Tifo and Banner.

Based on Roland Barthes’ semiotic theory (1977), the visual elements of the tifo and attributes such as banners are analyzed through denotative (literal description) and connotative (cultural/emotional meaning) layers to uncover the embedded messages. Primary data from field observations, photo/video documentation, and Instagram posts (@lagrandeindonesia, @sultan_design, @pramudyakevin), along with secondary data from academic literature, are used to support the analysis. The following are the findings based on the main visual elements



Figure 1. Tifo *La Grande Indonesia*
SHOW YOUR DIGNITY
Mixed media (50m x 25m)
(Source: Author’s documentation, 2025)

Table 1. Denotation and Connotation
Abalysis of Tifo “Show Your Dignity”

No	Visual	Denotation	Connotation
1	Garuda bird	Giant Golden Garuda	Identity
2	Claws and beak	Sharp claws and beak	Courage
3	Armor	Golden batik	Majesty

		armor	
4	Shield	Red shield 45	Defense
5	Mountain	Jaya Wijaya peak	Ambition
6	Cloud	Blue clouds envelop	Harmony
7	Mount	Blue full moon	Hope
8	Text	Show Your Dignity	Support

In terms of denotation and connotation, the “Show Your Dignity” tifo created by La Grande Indonesia demonstrates that the Garuda depicted in the tifo is a symbol of identity, strength, and pride for the Indonesian nation. The mighty Garuda represents the spirit of struggle and unwavering determination. The golden color across the Garuda’s body reflects the grandeur and nobility of the Indonesian nation. Each layer of armor on the wings and chest, adorned with golden batik motifs from Sabang to Merauke, emphasizes that the Indonesian National Team is a symbol of unity and solidarity for all Indonesian people. The red batik shield inscribed with the number 45 serves as a reminder that we are one nation and one struggle in pursuit of glory



Figure 2. Tifo and Garuda Pancasila logo
(Source: Sultan Design and Goggle, 2025)

Puncak Jaya Wijaya, the highest mountain peak in Indonesia, represents the ambition of

the Indonesian National Team to achieve great success, such as qualifying for the World Cup and becoming champions on the international stage.



Figure 3. Tifo and Puncak Jaya Wijaya
(Source: Sultan Design and Goggle, 2025)

Clouds symbolize harmony and hope for the Indonesian National Team. The blue moon signifies a rare but not impossible historic moment, such as qualifying for the World Cup. It suggests that the Indonesian National Team must create its own “Blue Moon” through skill, fighting spirit, hard work, and unwavering determination to one day achieve the World Cup.



Figure 4. Tifo and FIFA World Cup
(Source: Sultan Design and Goggle, 2025)

The message “Show Your Dignity” is a call to uphold the dignity and pride of the Indonesian nation. The Garuda not only soars high but also defends its throne of honor when facing its opponents. The Garuda does not merely fly; it strikes. It does not just flap its wings; it pursues

the peak. Bahrain, face our pride! (La Grande Indonesia, 2025).



Figure 5. Tifo
(Source: La Grande Indonesia, 2025)

The analysis above demonstrates that the “Show Your Dignity” tifo by La Grande Indonesia is not merely a decoration but a work of visual art that communicates national identity and supporter solidarity. Athian states that visual art in a public context serves as an exhibition medium that combines aesthetic elements with cultural values, enabling spectators to engage in a powerful collective narrative, such as the tifo (Athian, 2022). In this case, visual elements like the golden Garuda and batik motifs on the tifo reflect Indonesia’s cultural richness, while the textual message reinforces patriotic spirit. This combination creates a profound visual experience, aligning with the Indonesian National Team’s 1-0 victory over Bahrain, which strengthens the narrative of national pride.



Figure 6. Banner *La Grande Indonesia*

GARUDA FLY ALONE, BULBULS FLOCK
TOGETHER
Mixed media (5m x 25m)
(Source: La Grande Indonesia, 2025)

Table 2. Denotation and Connotation
Analysis of Banner

No	Visual	Denotation	Connotation
1	Banner	Garuda Fly Alone, Bulbuls Flock Together	Support and Satire
2	Bird image at banner	Bulbuls bird wearing a red and yellow jersey	Satire

In terms of denotation and connotation, the symbolic attribute in the form of a banner inscribed with “Garuda Fly Alone” by La Grande Indonesia conveys a message of solidarity and support for the Indonesian National Team, which fights and perseveres with its own strength against its opponent, Bahrain, symbolized by the Bulbul bird..



Figure 7. Banner and Tifo
(Source: La Grande Indonesia, 2025)

Meanwhile, the text “Bulbuls Flock Together” serves as a taunt directed at Bahrain, which had the upper hand in previous encounters due to perceived cheating. This taunt is emphasized by the visual of two Bulbul birds depicted wearing Bahrain’s red jersey and a referee’s yellow jersey, suggesting their

collaboration in the previous match when Bahrain was the host.



Figure 8. Banner and Photo
(Source: La Grande Indonesia and Goggle. 2025)

The analysis above demonstrates that the attribute in the form of a banner inscribed with “Garuda Fly Alone, Bulbuls Flock Together” by La Grande Indonesia is not only a symbol of solidarity and support for the Indonesian National Team but also carries a satirical and propagandistic meaning. Though seemingly simple, it is impactful in undermining the morale of the Bahrain players.



Figure 9. Banner *La Grande Indonesia*
JAYA RAYA INDONESIA
Mixed media (5m x 15m)
(Source: Kevin Pramudya Utama, 2025)

Table 3. Denotation and Connotation Analysis of Banner			
No	Visual	Denotation	Connotation
1	Banner	Jaya Raya Indonesia	Support
2	Red and white	Red banner and white text	Spirit of Optimism

In terms of denotation and connotation, the symbolic attribute in the form of a banner inscribed with “JAYA RAYA INDONESIA” by La Grande Indonesia carries an ideological meaning related to the greatness and identity of the Indonesian nation. This message of support embodies an optimistic spirit to achieve the glory of the Indonesian nation.



Figure 10. Banner and Photo
(Source: La Grande Indonesia and Goggle, 2025)

The analysis above demonstrates that the attribute in the form of a banner inscribed with “Jaya Raya Indonesia” by La Grande Indonesia conveys an optimistic message of support for the Indonesian National Team to achieve victory. A victory would bring glory to the Indonesian nation on the global stage, where success in a football match is seen as a reflection of the nation’s strength. The red-and-white colors on the banner, along with the flags waved by supporters, reinforce Indonesia’s national identity, symbolizing independence in the context of triumph over its opponent, Bahrain.

Analysis of the Sign System in Tifo and Banner Symbols

In understanding the values of signs, Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is used to analyze how symbols in the tifo and attributes such as banners form a sign system that conveys messages of national identity, solidarity, and patriotism. This sign system is analyzed through the layer of myth, which refers to the ideological meaning that extends denotation and connotation into a widely accepted cultural narrative.

Referring to **Figure 1**, the "Show Your Dignity" tifo constructs a mythical narrative of national pride and resilience. The Garuda, as a national emblem, transcends its denotative role to embody the myth of national pride, symbolizing Indonesia as a united and proud nation. Its gigantic size elevates this into a myth of a great nation, while its sharp claws and beak signify an unyielding fighting spirit. The golden batik armor and the red shield with the number "45" evoke the myth of cultural sanctity and steadfast determination, referencing Indonesia's struggle for independence. Puncak Jaya Wijaya represents the myth of achievement, aspiring to global success such as World Cup qualification. The clouds and blue moon create a myth of purity and historical significance, framing the match as a pivotal moment. The text "Show Your Dignity" transforms into a myth of national honor, urging the national team to uphold Indonesia's dignity. This aligns with Barthes' concept of myth, where signs become vehicles for ideological narratives, here reinforcing the spirit of nationalism and collective identity.

Referring to **Figure 6**, the banner "Garuda Fly Alone, Bulbuls Flock Together" creates a mythical narrative of solidarity and

subtle propaganda. The phrase mythologizes Indonesia's resilience as a source of pride, in contrast to the perception that Bahrain relies on unfair tactics, symbolized by bulbuls in red and yellow jerseys. This imagery constructs a myth of propaganda, subtly undermining Bahrain's integrity while rallying Indonesian supporters around a sense of moral superiority. The banner's message reinforces collective identity among supporters, aligning with Barthes' theory of myth as a sign system that embeds ideological messages, here fostering solidarity and national pride.

Referring to **Figure 9**, the banner "Jaya Raya Indonesia" constructs a myth of national glory and optimism. The phrase "Jaya Raya Indonesia" transcends its denotative meaning to embody an ideological narrative of victory and Indonesia's greatness, linking the team's success to national strength. The red-and-white colors, as national symbols, reinforce the myth of optimism, inspiring hope and confidence in Indonesia's potential on the global stage. The banner's mythical narrative aligns with Barthes' framework, where signs create broader ideological meanings, here mobilizing supporters to view victory as a reflection of national resilience and pride.

CONCLUSION

The semiotic analysis of the tifo and banners by La Grande Indonesia (LGI) during the Indonesia vs. Bahrain match on March 25, 2025, at Gelora Bung Karno Stadium demonstrates that supporter visual art serves as a powerful communication tool for conveying national identity, solidarity, and patriotism.

Based on Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, visual elements such as the Garuda symbol, red-and-white colors, and messages like "Show Your Dignity," "Garuda Fly Alone Bulbuls Flock Together" and "Jaya Raya Indonesia" carry denotative and connotative meanings that strengthen collective identity. At the mythical level, these symbols construct narratives of national pride, resilience, and glory.

These findings are evidenced by the Indonesian National Team's 1-0 victory, reflecting the emotional and ideological impact of these symbols. This study affirms the effectiveness of qualitative methods and semiotic analysis in uncovering sociocultural meanings in sports, providing insights into the role of visual symbols in fostering nationalism. The results can serve as a foundation for further research on supporter cultural expressions at a global level or as a guide for supporter communities to strengthen national identity through public art.

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