JURNAL ILMIAH AL MU'ASHIRAH: *p-ISSN: 1693-7562*
Media Kajian Al-Qur'an dan Al-Hadits Multi Perspektif *e-ISSN: 2599-2619*
Vol. 23, No. 2, July-December 2026

Semantic Shifts of the Term '*Amin*': From Islamic Theology and Qur'anic Exegesis to Electoral Political Discourse

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Abstract

This study examines the term *'Amin'* in the Qur'an and its relevance to the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, focusing on the politicization of religious symbols in the public sphere. Traditionally interpreted as an affirmation of prayer in Islamic worship, *'Amin'* underwent a semantic shift from a spiritual expression to a political acronym for a specific candidate pair. Employing a qualitative approach through critical discourse analysis, this research explores the theological meaning and symbolic transformation of the term. Data were collected from classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegeses, hadiths, campaign documentations, and digital social media narratives. The findings reveal that political usage reduces the sacred meaning of *'Amin'* to mere rhetoric, creating ambiguity between religious devotion and political support. Consequently, this phenomenon fosters social polarization, segmentation, and exclusion among the Muslim community. By integrating symbolic political theory with *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, this study highlights the necessity of critical awareness regarding religious symbols in politics to prevent the desacralization of Islamic texts for pragmatic power gains.

Keywords: *'Amin'*, Politicization of Religion, 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, Critical Discourse Analysis, *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah*.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji istilah 'Amin' dalam Al-Qur'an dan relevansinya dengan Pemilihan Presiden Indonesia 2024, dengan fokus pada politisasi simbol-simbol agama di ruang publik. Secara tradisional dimaknai sebagai pengukuhan doa dalam ibadah umat Islam, kata 'Amin' mengalami pergeseran semantis dari sebuah ekspresi spiritual menjadi akronim politik untuk pasangan calon tertentu. Dengan menerapkan pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis wacana kritis, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi makna teologis dan transformasi simbolis dari istilah tersebut. Data dikumpulkan dari tafsir Al-Qur'an klasik dan kontemporer, hadis, dokumentasi kampanye, serta narasi digital di media sosial. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan secara politik mereduksi makna sakral 'Amin' menjadi sekadar retorika, sehingga menciptakan ambiguitas antara pengabdian keagamaan dan dukungan politik. Akibatnya, fenomena ini memicu polarisasi, segmentasi, dan eksklusi sosial di tengah masyarakat Muslim. Dengan mengintegrasikan teori politik simbolik dan maqāṣid al-sharī'ah, penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya kesadaran kritis terhadap penggunaan simbol agama dalam politik guna mencegah desakralisasi teks-teks Islam demi keuntungan kekuasaan yang pragmatis.

Kata Kunci: *Amin, Politisasi Agama, Pilpres Indonesia 2024, Analisis Wacana Kritis, Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah.*

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

A. Introduction

The politicization of religious texts, including the Qur'an, is not a new phenomenon. In the modern context, the strategic invocation of Qur'anic verses frequently features in political campaigns and public narratives. A compelling case in point is the term *Amin*, which carries deep spiritual significance as an affirmation of prayer, yet has been repurposed to reinforce political identity during campaigns.[1] In the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, this phenomenon resurfaced, sparking intense debates regarding the ethics, authenticity, and political ramifications of mobilizing sacred language for electoral gains.

The 2024 presidential and Vice-Presidential elections in Indonesia are once again an arena full of identity politics contestation, where religious symbols, especially Islam, are often used in political rhetoric. In various campaigns and public statements, it is not uncommon for political actors frequently to insert verses from the Qur'an or religious terms as a form of moral and spiritual legitimacy for certain political positions.[2] One of the interesting phenomena that has emerged in public discourse ahead of the 2024 Presidential Election is the use of the term *Amin* which is not only used in the context of worship, but also has expanded its meaning in political conversations, even embedded as an acronym for the names of certain candidate pairs.

enotatively, the word *Amin* in Islamic tradition serves as an affirmation of prayer, entreating God to grant a supplication. In classical exegesis (*tafsir*), while the majority of scholars agree that *Amin* is not an integral verse of Surah al-Fātiḥah, it nevertheless occupies a central role in Islamic ritual worship. Although the term does not explicitly appear in the Qur'anic text, its usage is deeply rooted in Judeo-Christian scripture—including the Torah and the Gospels—as an expression of faith and hope.[3] Within classical and contemporary interpretive literature, discussions surrounding *Amin* primarily focus on its theological virtues and its jurisprudential status during congregational prayers.[4]

Contemporary phenomena show that the term *Amin* has undergone politicization, which is a shift in meaning from a spiritual function to a symbolic function in politics.[5] This phenomenon can be studied through the sociolinguistic approach of the Qur'an as well as the theory of the politicization of religion, which focuses on how religious symbols are used to construct a narrative of power. In the context of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election the 2024 Presidential Election, the term *Amin* was used as a form of support for certain candidate pairs, raising critical questions about the boundary between religious expression and political strategy.

Based on this description, there are several important categories that need to be studied further: (1) the meaning of the term *Amin* in the Qur'an and commentary literature,

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[1] A Kasinska-Metryka, "Political Activity of Women in the Shackles of Religion: How the Politicization of Religion and the Sacralization of Politics Determine the Role of Women in Polish Society," in *Women in Eastern European Post-Socialist Countries: Social, Scientific, and Political Lives* (Institute of International Relations and Public Policy, Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce, Poland: Taylor and Francis, 2024), 107–17, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003468752-10.

[2] F Lukman, 'Vernacularism and the Embers of Conservatism: The Production and Politicization of Qur'an Translations', in *Qur'an Translation in Indonesia: Scriptural Politics in a Multilingual State* (Taylor and Francis, 2023), pp. 77–96, doi:10.4324/9781003395287-7.

[3] W M Sembiring, H Kusmanto, and H Ridho, 'The Politicization of Religion and Polarization of Hate in the 2018 North Sumatra Regional Head Election Indonesia', *Pharos Journal of Theology*, 104.3 (2023), doi:10.46222/pharosjot.104.328.

[4] I Martín Lupiáñez, 'Islamic institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Spain. Different ways of politicization of religion', *Revista de Estudios Politicos*, 2022.196 (2022), pp. 227–51, doi:10.18042/cepc/rep.196.08.

[5] R Efendi, J Mirdad, and S E Yaacob, 'Siyāsah Shar'iyyah and the Politicization of Religion in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election', *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah*, 22.2 (2022), pp. 357–84, doi:10.15408/ajis.v22i2.28165.

(2) the process of politicization of religious symbols in the context of Indonesian democracy, and (3) the relevance and impact of the use of these symbols on the political consciousness of the Muslim community. These three categories are intertwined and represent the socio-religious reality of contemporary Indonesian society.

The phenomenon of politicization of the term *Amin* in the 2024 Presidential Election in Indonesia is not a stand-alone event, but rather part of a broader global trend of increasing religious instrumentality in electoral politics. In many countries, from the United States with its use of conservative Christian rhetoric in presidential campaigns, to India with Hindu symbolism in the BJP's nationalist politics, religion has become a strategic tool in shaping identity, mass mobilization, and the legitimacy of power.[6] Similarly in the Middle East, political groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey show how religious narratives can be engineered to support certain political agendas. In this context, the use of the term *Amin* by the candidate pair in Indonesia reflects the local form of the global practice: religion is not only a source of value, but also commodified into a campaign symbol.[7] This phenomenon indicates that contemporary democracy in various parts of the world is experiencing a tension between sacred spirituality and profane politics. Therefore, it is important to situate Indonesia within the global landscape place Indonesia in a global landscape of religious politicization—as an example of how sacred symbols can be moved rhetorically and visually in populist political currents, which often sacrifice theological depth for electoral effectiveness.[8]

Problem Formulation this research departs from the fundamental question of how the term *Amin* is understood in the context of the Qur'an. In the Islamic tradition, this word has a special place in the rituals of prayer and worship, but further study is needed to understand its meaning textually and contextually in the Qur'an.[9] Furthermore, this study also aims to explore how the term *Amin* is used in the political context, especially in the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. The use of religious terms in the political arena is an interesting and important phenomenon to study, given its potential impact on public perception and electoral dynamics. Finally, this study will evaluate the impact of the politicization of the term *Amin* on the social and political stability of Muslims. The use of religious symbols and terms in political campaigns is often polarizing, so it is important to assess the extent to which it contributes to unity or division among the people.[10]

The purpose of this study is to explore the meaning and position of the term *Amin* in the study of the Qur'an and tafsir, as well as analyze how the term is used in political discourse ahead of the 2024 elections. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to understanding the dynamics of interaction between religion and politics, as well as provide enlightenment on efforts to maintain the sanctity of religious symbols from practical political exploitation. The purpose of this study is to analyze the meaning of the term *Amin* as stated in the text of the Qur'an, with a linguistic approach and thematic interpretation. In addition, this study also seeks to examine how the term is used in contemporary political narratives, especially in the context of the 2024 election in Indonesia. This study also aims to assess the impact of the politicization of Qur'anic verses on the unity of Muslims and national political

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[6] D Shankland, 'Islam and Politics in Turkey: The 2007 Presidential Elections and Beyond', *International Affairs*, 83.2 (2007), pp. 357–71, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2007.00623.x.

[7] J D Y Peel, 'The Politicisation of Religion in Nigeria: Three Studies', *Africa*, 66.4 (1996), pp. 607–11, doi:10.2307/1160939.

[8] J Klausen, 'The Re-Politicization of Religion in Europe: The Next Ten Years', *Perspectives on Politics*, 3.3 (2005), pp. 554–57, doi:10.1017/S1537592705280349.

[9] K A Tobin, 'Whose Civil Society?: The Politicization of Religion in Transitional Cuba', *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 3.8 (2004), pp. 76–89.

[10] A Hérisson, 'The politicisation of religion at the time of the Roman question in western France (1860-1870)', *Melanges de la Casa de Velazquez*, no. 1–52 (2022), pp. 115–34, doi:10.4000/mcv.16110.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

stability. Thus, the results of this research are expected to provide academic contributions as well as critical insights into the phenomenon of the use of religious symbols in modern politics.

A review of the latest research (State of the Art) on the politicization of religion, especially the politicization of Qur'anic verses, has developed significantly in the last decade, along with the increasing involvement of religion in the political arena in various Muslim countries, including Indonesia. Studies such as those conducted by Madjid (2008), Alatas (2015), and Hasyim (2019) highlight how religious symbols, including verses of the Qur'an, are often used as a tool for political legitimacy and mass mobilization in electoral contests. This phenomenon shows that religion is not only present in the private sphere, but also plays a strategic role in the public sphere and power.[11]

In particular, the study of terms in the Qur'an that have been reactualized in contemporary political discourse is still relatively limited. Although some studies have discussed the politicization of terms such as caliph, jihad, and the best ummah, not many have explicitly examined the term *Amin* in the Qur'an or in modern political practice.[12] In fact, in the context of the 2024 Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections, the term *Amin* has expanded its meaning from an expression of prayer to a political symbol full of ideological meaning and group identity.

This research tries to fill this gap by dialogizing linguistic analysis and interpretation of the term *Amin* in the Qur'an with the reality of its use in the 2024 political contest in Indonesia. With an interdisciplinary approach that combines Qur'anic studies, identity politics, and discourse analysis, this research offers a new contribution to the understanding of how sacred texts are reinterpreted in political space, as well as their impact on the social cohesion of Muslims and national political stability.

This study employs a qualitative-critical approach with an interpretive study design based on critical discourse analysis (CDA), developed by Norman Fairclough.[13] This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to not only analyze the text linguistically, but also to relate their meaning but also relate the meaning of the text to the socio-political context that surrounds it.[14] Thus, this study not only understands the theological meaning of the term *Amin* in a religious context, but also explores how the meaning has shifted when used in contemporary political campaigns, especially in the 2024 presidential election.[15] The first step in this study is the collection of primary and secondary data. Primary datab were collected through documentation of campaign materials, social media content, and public statements from political figures and scholars who used the term *Amin* in their narratives. In addition, participatory observation of the dynamics of the use of this term in online media during the campaign period was carried out to enrich the context of the use of the symbol. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through a literature review of classical and

[11] S Haris, 'Politicization of Religion and the Failure of Islamic Parties in the 1999 General Election', in *Elections in Indonesia: The New Order and Beyond* (Taylor and Francis, 2021), pp. 61–76, doi:10.4324/9781315028446-4.

[12] J L Pastor, 'Changes in the Politicisation of Religion in Scandinavian Parliamentary Debates 1988-2019', *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 33.2 (2020), pp. 87–100, doi:10.18261/ISSN.1890-7008-2020-02-02.

[13] Hajrah Harun, Anisa Maulidiah Alam, and Jufri Jufri, "Critical Discourse Analysis in the 2022 Presidential Speech: Norman Fairclough Model," *Journal of Onoma: Education, Language, and Literature* 10, no. 1 (2024), https://doi.org/10.30605/onoma.v10i1.3163.

[14] M Shaikjee, S Mpendukana, and C Stroud, 'Qualitative Methods', in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Linguistic Landscapes* (Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2024), pp. 19–33.

[15] Lela Nurlatifah and Agus Hamdani, "The Meeting of Anies Baswedan and Gibran Rakabuming in the Study of Discourse Analysis of Norman Fairclough," *Syntax Literate; Indonesian Scientific Journal* 8, no. 4 (2023), https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-literate.v8i4.11655.

contemporary tafsir books such as Tafsir al-Ṭabarī, Tafsir al-Rāzī, Tafsir al-Manār, Tafsir al-Munīr, as well as the works of modern Muslim thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman and Muhammad Abduh.

The second step is a textual and semiotic analysis of the term *Amin*. This analysis includes the study of etymology, its appearance in sacred texts (the Qur'an, Hadith), and its symbolic meaning in the Islamic religious tradition. In this stage, the researcher maps mapped the meaning of the origin of *Amin* linguistically—both in the Arabic root and in its intertextuality with Hebrew and Aramaic which are common semitic roots. Then an in-depth reading conducted is carried out on how the mufassir understand the position and function of the term in the context of Islamic rituals. The third stage is critical discourse analysis, in which researchers trace how the term *Amin* is used in the political context as an acronym for presidential and vice-presidential candidates Anies Baswedan and Muhaimin Iskandar. The analysis was carried out by looking at the language structure in campaign slogans, social media narratives, and public reactions. Visual data such as public perception graphs, the distribution of the use of religious symbols by candidates, and infographics about the appearance of the term *Amin* in the book of tafsir and hadith are used to strengthen interpretation. This analysis focuses on the practice of symbolic representation, rhetorical strategies, and efforts to frame meaning (framing) in shaping public opinion. The fourth step is the social and political contextualization of the findings. The researcher relates the phenomenon of politicization of *Amin* to the discourse of identity politics and religious mobilization that often appears in Indonesia's post-reform electoral democracy. The theoretical frameworks used include Murray Edelman's Symbolic Politics and José Casanova's Public Religion to look at how religious symbols are moved into the space of power and contestation.[16] The fifth step is critical interpretation, in which the data obtained is processed to produce a synthesis between the theological and political meanings of the term *Amin*. At this stage, the researcher also considers the ethical and theological aspects of the use of religious terms in the political space. The maqāṣid al-syarī'ah approach is used as a normative instrument to assess whether the use of the term *Amin* in politics fulfills the principle of benefit (maslahah) or actually causes madharat in the form of polarization and misuse of sacred symbols.[17] The final stage is the preparation of conclusions and recommendations, which not only convey the findings of the research, but also offer an ethics of the use of religious symbols in politics. The researcher suggests that there should be normative restrictions and public education so that religious symbols such as *Amin* remain within their sacred territory and are not used as a tool of power legitimization.[18]

B. Result and Discussion

The word *Amin* is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an, but a phrase that has a similar meaning is found in several verses. Distributionally, the word amīn appears about fourteen times in the Qur'an and is spread across eight letters. The use of this word does not appear in the context of prayer or worship rituals, but rather as a depiction of moral character, leadership qualities, and spiritual legitimacy. The relatively consistent number of occurrences and the harmonious context indicate that amīn has a very stable semantic function in the Qur'anic text, namely as a symbol of integrity and trust. The word *Amin* is written 14 times in

[16] T Pepinsky, 'Islam and Indonesia's 2019 Presidential Election', *Asia Policy*, 14.4 (2019), pp. 54–62, doi:10.1353/asp.2019.0049.

[17] F Hadžić, 'THE POLITICIZATION OF RELIGION AND THE SACRALIZED BALKAN NATIONS REGARDING BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA', *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*, 40.7 (2020), pp. 106–31.

[18] N H Susanto, 'Politicization of Religion and the Future of Democracy in Indonesia in Populism Theory', *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, 18.54 (2019), pp. 139–58.

 DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

the Qur'an in eight different letters, namely QS Al Araf verse 68, Yusuf verse 54, a naml verse 39, al qasas verse 26, QS Asy Shu'ara verse 107, 125, 143, 162, 178, 193, QS Dukhan verse 18, verse 51, Qs At-Takwir verse 21, and QS At Tien verse 3. One of them is "آمِّينَ" (aammiina) which appears in QS. Al-Ma'idah: 2, which means "those who visit Baitullah". In addition, the meaning and pronunciation of *Amin* are also often used after reciting surah Al-Fatihah in prayer, as explained in several books of tafsir.

The use of *Amin* in the Qur'an: QS. Al-Ma'idah (5): 2: The phrase "آمِّينَ" (aammiina) is used to refer to people who visit Baitullah, where this word is interpreted as "those who intend (to go to *Baitullah)"*. The word *amīn* (أمين) in the Qur'an comes from the root ʾ-m-n (أ م ن) which includes the meaning of security, trust, tranquility, and steadfastness. The various derivations of these words—such as *amān* (security), *amānah* (trust), *mu'min* (believers), and *īmān* (faith)—show the breadth of their semantic field. In the form of amīn, this word serves to describe a person who is trustworthy and trustworthy. This richness of meaning makes amīn one of the important moral attributes in the ethical construction of the Qur'an.

One of the dominant uses of the word *Amin* is in a series of verses in Surah Ash-Shu'arā', when the Prophets introduced themselves to their people with the phrase "*Innī lakum rasūlun Amin*." The repeated use of this phrase demonstrates the importance of integrity as an apostolic foundation.[19] The Prophets were positioned not only as recipients of revelation, but as persons who had moral credibility, so that the delivery of divine treatises was accepted based on the nature of the trust.[20] In this context, *Amin* becomes a reinforcer of prophetic legitimacy. In addition to being used for the Messenger, the word *Amin* is also used in political and social contexts, such as in Surah Yūsuf verse 54 when the King of Egypt referred to the Prophet Joseph as an *Amin* figure, that is, one who is trusted and worthy of holding high positions. The use of this word in figures other than the Prophet shows that the value of trust is a universal principle in leadership and governance. Thus, *Amin* becomes a moral category that can be applied in a socio-political context, not merely a religious character.

The word *Amin* also appears in the context of holy places and revelations, such as the phrase baladin *Amin* in Surah At-Tīn and the description of revelation as qawlin *Amin* in Surah At-Takwīr. This meaning extends the function of *Amin* from mere human nature to an attribute to sacred space and divine message. In this image, *Amin* represents the ontological security that comes from God, as well as reflecting the preservation of revelation and the sanctity of God's chosen place.[21] It is very important to distinguish between the word *amīn* (أمين) found in the Qur'an and the word *"āmīn"* (آمين) pronounced after reading Al-Fātiḥah. The second phrase does not appear in the Qur'an and is not part of the verse, but is a tradition of prayer in the religious practice of Muslims. This distinction often leads to confusion, especially when the term *Amin* is recontextualized into public discourse. Linguistically and theologically, they have different functions and uses.

From a socio-religious perspective, the meaning of *Amin* as a trait of trustworthiness has very broad implications, especially when it is associated with leadership and political

[19] al-Tabari, 'Tafsir Jami' Al- Bayan' (Darul Tarbiyah wa Turats), p. 303.
[20] Wahbah al-Zuhayli, 'Tafsir Al-Munir: Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj' (Gema Insani, 2016), p. 404.
[21] Adilla Fadila Nasrulloh and others, 'Democracy In Al-Qur'an Perspective: Analysis Of Tafsir Maudhu'i Al-Qurthubi and Quraisy Shihab on Verse Ali-Imran 159', *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 2.3 (2024), pp. 427–36, doi:https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v2i3.50.

discourse. Because it contains universal moral values, the word is easily reinterpreted in various contexts, including in contemporary political communication. However, it should be recognized that the use of religious symbols, including the word *Amin*, has the potential to cause a clash of meanings between the sacred values taught by the Qur'an and political instrumentalization in the modern public sphere. Thus, understanding the original meaning of *Amin* in the Qur'an is important to avoid reducing its meaning and maintaining the purity of the moral message contained in it.[22]

Linguistic and interpretive studies show that *Amin* does not appear explicitly as a diction in the Qur'an, but he has a strong theological position in the prayer and ritual traditions of Muslims. The term is related to the common Semitic roots in Hebrew (ameen) and Aramaic, which contain the meanings of steadfastness, righteousness, and the worship of prayer. Classical commentary literature such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Rāzī, as well as modern commentaries such as al-Manār and al-Munīr explain that *Amin* functions as *tawkīd al-du'ā*—an affirmer of prayer and a symbol of a servant's humility before God.[23] The majority of scholars view Amin as sunnah in prayer, although it is not part of the verse al-Fātiḥah. Therefore, Amin is understood as a sacred diction that is tied to the space of worship and spirituality.

The discussion of the word *amīn* (أمين) in the Qur'an cannot be separated from the breadth of meaning constructed by classical and contemporary mufassirs. This word, which basically means "trusted, trustworthy, trustworthy", has received great attention because it is often attached to prophets, important figures, angels, as well as revelations and holy places. Classical mufassirs such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, and al-Rāzī articulate the meaning of *Amin* through philological and historical approaches, while contemporary mufassirs such as Rashīd Ridā, Muḥammad ʿAbduh, Fazlur Rahman, and M. Quraish Shihāb read it within the framework of social ethics and public leadership. This entire reading shows that *Amin* is not just an adjective, but an ethical concept with a theological and social dimension.[24]

Al-Ṭabarī, as the earliest representative of the tradition of tafsir, interpreted *amīn* by accumulating various narrations from the companions and tabi'in.[25] For him, this word was an affirmation of the credibility of the apostles when they called upon their people with the phrase "*innī lakum rasūlun amīn*". He emphasized that the mandate is prophetic evidence that binds the faith of the people, so they have no reason to reject the treatise. The reading of al-Ṭabarī is rooted in the belief that the character of the apostle is a guarantee of the truth of revelation; Therefore, *Amin* is the bridge between the source of revelation and its receiver. The character of trust is the foundation of apostolic legitimacy. The Qurṭubī expands the meaning of *Amin* by attributing it to the principles of law and social ethics. As a mufassir who pays great attention to the practical dimension of sharia, he emphasized that the nature of *Amin* is not only inherent in the Prophet, but is the basis for all forms of leadership in Islam. When the prophets introduced themselves as *Amin*, according to the Qurṭubī, they were at the same time setting moral standards for anyone who bore the public trust. Thus, *Amin* is not merely a linguistic attribute, but a legal and social norm that binds a common life.

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[22] Miftahul Ihyaiddin Hasibuan, 'Strategi Rasulullah Dalam Menyatukan Kaum Dengan Pendekatan Moderat Dalam Islam', *El-Sunan: Journal of Hadith and Religious Studies*, 1.2 (2023), pp. 113–22, doi:10.22373/el-sunan.v1i2.4108.

[23] M Klar, 'Between History and Tafsir: Notes on Al-Tabari's Methodological Strategies', *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 18.2 (2016), pp. 89–129, doi:10.3366/jqs.2016.0240.

[24] R Adilla Fadila Nasrulloh, R Rafi Ahmad Fansury, and Asep Abdul Muhyi, 'Democracy In Al-Qur ' an Perspective : Analysis Of Tafsir Maudhu ' i Al-Qurthubi & Quraisy Shihab On Verse Ali- Imran 159', *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 2.3 (2024), pp. 427–36, doi:10.69526/bir.v2i3.50.

[25] C Gürman, 'Reading al-Tabari's Fiqh Work Named Latīf al-Qawl Through the Tafsīr of Jāmi' al-Bayān', *Hitit Theology Journal*, 23.1 (2024), pp. 393–410, doi:10.14395/hid.1436786.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

Meanwhile, al-Rāzī—with its philosophical and rational tendencies—analyzes the word *Amin* in a broader epistemic and semantic context. He emphasizes the relationship between security (*amān*), faith (*īmān*), and belief (*amānah*), all of which are rooted in the same structure of meaning. For al-Rāzī, when revelation is described as "*qawlin amīn*" or angels disifati as "*rasūl karīm amīn*", the meaning indicates that revelation has unquestionable authority. Thus, *Amin* is not only a moral trait, but also an indicator of the validity and purity of divine knowledge. In the modern tradition of tafsir, Rashīd Ridā through Tafsir al-Manār connects the concept of *Amin* with the need for social and political reform of Muslims.[26] According to him, the value of trust is a principle of public ethics that must be the basis for government, administration, and social relations. This reading places *Amin* in the context of the modern century, when the crisis of corruption and weak leadership are the main challenges facing Muslim society. Thus, the word *Amin* is read not only as a past trait of the Prophets, but as a moral ideal that must be revived in public life.

M. Quraish Shihāb's views refine contemporary approaches by inviting readers to understand *Amin* in the context of everyday religious experience. He emphasized that the use of *Amin* in the Qur'an cannot be separated from the demands of integrity, honesty, and commitment to the value of goodness. Shihāb sees that this word contains a very strong social message, especially in the context of modern leadership.[27] For Shihāb, *Amin* is a principle that connects spirituality with social life, so a leader is not enough to be considered religious, but must be proven trustworthy and trustworthy. If classical interpretation focuses on lexical meaning and prophetic legitimacy, then contemporary interpretation broadens the horizon of *Amin* meaning into a social critique of leadership, public accountability, and moral integrity in political life. A comparison of these two currents of interpretation shows that the word *Amin* has great semantic flexibility, which allows its application to go beyond the boundaries of the text towards social reality.[28] When the word later entered modern political discourse—for example as a campaign symbol—there was a tension between the sacred theological meaning and the instrumental political meaning. This is where the relevance of interdisciplinary analysis between theology, interpretation, and politics becomes very important.

Changes in the Meaning of *Amin* in the Political Discourse of the 2024 Presidential Election

The results of the critical discourse analysis indicate that the term *Amin* underwent a significant transformation of meaning when it entered the arena of political contestation during the 2024 Indonesian presidential election. Originally embedded in Islamic devotional practice as a liturgical expression uttered in prayer, *Amin* was recontextualized as an acronym referring to the candidate pair Anies Baswedan–Muhaimin Iskandar.[29] This shift illustrates how a term with sacred and spiritual resonance can be appropriated into political discourse and made to function within the logic of electoral competition. In this context, *Amin* no longer operates exclusively as a religious utterance, but also as a politically strategic signifier whose meaning is shaped by the communicative demands of campaigns, branding, and public persuasion.

[26] Muhammad Rasyid Ridha, *Tafsîr Al-Manâr* (Al-Hai'ah al-Mishriyah al-'Âmmah li al-Kutub, 1990).

[27] M Djidin and S Syamsuddin, 'INDONESIAN INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'AN ON KHILĀFAH : The Case of Quraish Shihab and Yudian Wahyudi on Qur'an 2: 30-38', *Al-Jami'ah*, 57.1 (2019), pp. 143–66, doi:10.14421/ajis.2019.57143-166.

[28] Badarurrakhman Bani, *KONSEP TOLERANSI BERAGAMA MENURUT QURAISH SHIHAB (Studi Ayat-Ayat Toleransi Dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah)*, 2019.

[29] Abd. Wahid and others, 'UTILIZING ZUHD HADITHS FOR UPPER-CLASS CRIME PREVENTION', *Jurnal Ilmiah Islam Futura*, 23.2 (2023), p. 263, doi:10.22373/jiif.v23i2.17353.

This transformation reflects a broader discursive process in which language is detached from its original domain and reinserted into a new field of power and meaning. In its conventional Islamic usage, *Amin* signifies a form of spiritual affirmation, expressing hope, sincerity, and supplication before God. However, once adopted into the political sphere, the term acquires a second life as a symbol of political identity.[30] It becomes associated not with worship, but with slogans, campaign imagery, social media circulation, and candidate branding. This shift does not necessarily erase its original religious significance; rather, it overlays the sacred meaning with a new political function. As a result, *Amin* becomes a discursive hybrid—simultaneously carrying theological memory and political utility.

One of the most important implications of this shift is the emergence of ambiguity of meaning. On the one hand, as a religious expression, *Amin* continues to evoke prayer, piety, and the believer's relationship with the Divine. Its long-standing place in Muslim devotional life means that the term still resonates with spiritual intimacy and ritual familiarity. On the other hand, as a political symbol, *Amin* serves as a marker of electoral affiliation and campaign support. In this role, it no longer functions merely as an act of devotion, but as a sign that identifies a political camp and communicates support for a specific candidate pair. This duality creates a semantic overlap in which the sacred and the political coexist within the same expression, making its public meaning increasingly unstable and contested.

The rhetorical power of *Amin* lies precisely in this ambiguity. Because the term retains its sacred resonance while also functioning as a political label, it becomes highly effective as a tool of persuasion and mobilization. Its religious familiarity allows political actors to invoke emotional depth and communal belonging without needing to state ideological claims explicitly. In campaign slogans, digital messaging, and social media narratives, *Amin* can therefore operate as a multi-layered signifier—one that simultaneously communicates support, moral resonance, and symbolic legitimacy. This makes it especially potent in a society where religious language carries high cultural authority and affective appeal. Thus, the political use of *Amin* demonstrates how rhetorical effectiveness often depends on the strategic exploitation of semantic overlap between sacred vocabulary and political messaging.[31]

Taken together, these findings confirm that the use of *Amin* in the 2024 presidential election represents more than a creative acronym or campaign convenience. Rather, it reflects a deeper process of meaning transformation in which a sacred Islamic term is repositioned as an instrument of political communication and identity formation. This transformation is significant because it reveals how electoral politics can reshape the public life of religious language by assigning it new functions, new audiences, and new ideological stakes. Consequently, the case of *Amin* illustrates not only a linguistic shift, but also a broader reconfiguration of the relationship between religion, symbolism, and political discourse in contemporary Indonesia. Accordingly, the political recontextualization of *Amin* reveals a discursive shift in which sacred language becomes simultaneously devotional, rhetorical, and electorally functional in the contemporary public sphere.

Symbolic Representation and Rhetorical Strategies in Campaigns

Analysis of the language structure of the campaign slogan shows that *Amin*'s diction attachment is used to create emotional resonance and collective identity. Campaign data

[30] Al Faiz Muhammad Rabbany Tarman, Arifah Cahyo Andini Suparmun, and Isral Naska, 'PROGRESSIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'AN IN TAFSIR AT-TANWIR: MUHAMMADIYAH'S COLLECTIVE IDENTITY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES', *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies*, 3.2 (2024), doi:10.23917/qist.v3i2.3717.

[31] Mazlan Ibrahim, 'The Usage of Interpretation Methodology of Ambiguous Verses in the Ancestors's Exegesis', *Islamiyyat*, 47.1 (2025), pp. 245–57, doi:10.17576/islamiyyat-2025-4701-20.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

shows that the term is positioned as political branding, not just a neutral linguistic element. This use is particularly evident in social media narratives and political figures' speeches, where Amin becomes a framing tool to build religious associations in particular political support.[32] The analysis of campaign discourse in this study indicates that the attachment of the diction *Amin* was not employed as a merely neutral or incidental linguistic choice, but rather as a deliberate rhetorical strategy designed to generate emotional resonance and strengthen collective identity. In political communication, word selection is rarely innocent; rather, it often functions as a symbolic resource that condenses meanings, values, and ideological associations into a single memorable sign. In the case of *Amin* its resonance derives from its pre-existing religious familiarity within Muslim communities, allowing it to operate as a persuasive linguistic device that immediately evokes affective recognition.[33] As such, the term works not simply at the level of semantics, but at the level of symbolic representation, where language is strategically used to align political messaging with shared religious consciousness.

From a rhetorical perspective, the campaign use of *Amin* demonstrates how political slogans are constructed not only to inform but also to move audiences emotionally and symbolically. The linguistic power of the term lies in its ability to connect political support with a sense of devotional affirmation and communal belonging. This makes it especially effective in electoral communication, where success often depends not only on policy clarity but also on emotional identification and symbolic simplicity.[34] In this context, *Amin* becomes a rhetorical bridge between the sacred and the political, enabling campaign actors to frame support in a manner that appears culturally intimate and morally resonant. The strategic value of such a slogan lies precisely in its capacity to compress a broad political message into a form that is memorable, repeatable, and emotionally charged.

The campaign data further suggest that *Amin* was positioned as a form of political branding, rather than a simple lexical or acronymic convenience. Political branding refers to the process by which political actors cultivate a recognizable symbolic identity through carefully managed language, imagery, and narrative association. In this regard, *Amin* functions as a brand marker that allows a political campaign to present itself not only as electorally viable, but also as culturally and religiously meaningful.[35] The branding power of the term lies in its dual readability: it can be received simultaneously as a campaign label and as a familiar religious utterance. This dual function enhances the campaign's visibility and mnemonic power, while also enabling supporters to reproduce the term easily across public and digital spaces. Consequently, *Amin* should be understood as a semiotic instrument of campaign identity formation, not merely as a slogan.

This symbolic use is particularly visible in social media narratives and the speeches of political figures, where *Amin* repeatedly appears as a framing device for constructing specific political meanings. In digital political communication, repetition is crucial: hashtags, captions, slogans, short videos, and speech fragments work together to circulate and normalize a preferred interpretation of political identity. Through this process, *Amin* becomes embedded in a larger narrative architecture that links political support to religious symbolism,

[32] Entman, Robert M**.** "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm." *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4 (1993): 51–58.

[33] A Demir, 'Traces of Ahl al-Bayt in Shahristānī's Tafsir, Mafātīh al-Asrār', *Hitit Theology Journal*, 22.1 (2023), pp. 392–422, doi:10.14395/hid.1243817.

[34] Lilleker, Darren G. *Political Communication and Cognition*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

[35] Muhammad Aamir Ali, Nazish Aamir, and Ahmed Ali Jamil, 'Prophetic Change Management and Strategic Failure: A Qur'anic Framework from Surah Ash-Shu "Arā"', *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 4.1 (2026), pp. 1–24, doi:https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v4i1.411.

moral legitimacy, and group solidarity.[36] Political speeches reinforce this framing by using the term in emotionally charged contexts, often invoking unity, hope, or moral aspiration while subtly anchoring those sentiments to a specific electoral agenda. In this sense, *Amin* does not merely name a campaign; it helps define how that campaign should be felt, interpreted, and publicly recognized.[37]

Taken together, these findings confirm that the use of *Amin* in campaign discourse represents a sophisticated interplay between symbolic representation and rhetorical strategy. Its political effectiveness lies in its capacity to create emotional closeness, simplify political identity, and establish a religiously inflected frame of support that resonates deeply with parts of the electorate.[38] However, this same symbolic strength also raises critical questions about the ethical and democratic implications of using sacredly resonant language as a campaign tool. Once political communication relies heavily on emotionally charged religious associations, the line between legitimate persuasion and symbolic instrumentalization becomes increasingly blurred. Therefore, the campaign use of *Amin* should be understood not only as an example of effective branding, but also as a revealing case of how language can be mobilized to fuse identity, belief, and political loyalty within contemporary democratic competition. Accordingly, the campaign deployment of *Amin* demonstrates how symbolic language can be transformed into a powerful rhetorical technology for constructing emotional allegiance and religiously coded political identity.

Social Impact: The Polarization and Ambiguity of Religious Identity

The field findings of this study indicate that the expansion of the meaning of *Amin* has generated significant social consequences beyond the level of language or campaign communication. Once a term rooted in religious devotion is transformed into a political identifier, it no longer functions solely as a sacred utterance, but also as a social marker that shapes group perception and collective alignment. In this sense, the politicization of *Amin* affects how individuals understand belonging, legitimacy, and symbolic loyalty within the Muslim community. The social significance of the term thus lies not only in what it means linguistically, but in how it reorganizes public interaction and communal sensibilities.[39] What emerges is a situation in which a religious expression begins to operate simultaneously as a theological sign and a political boundary-marker.

One of the most visible effects of this process is the polarization within the Muslim community. The use of religious diction as a political identity tends to produce a symbolic distinction between those who embrace the slogan and those who reject or distance themselves from it. As a result, political preference may be interpreted not merely as a democratic choice, but as an indicator of one's religious or communal positioning. This contributes to a pattern of "us versus them" that intensifies internal differentiation among

[36] Mariam Elbanna and others, 'A Bibliometric Analysis of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Through the Lens of Maqasid Shariah Tafsir', *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies*, 4.1 (2025), pp. 1–22, doi:https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v4i1.7360.

[37] R. Nurdin and M. Ridwansyah, 'Aceh, Qanun and National Law: Study on Legal Development Orientation. Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam.', *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Dan Hukum Islam*, 4.1 (2020).

[38] J Beno, A.P Silen, and M Yanti, 'Nilai Demokrasi Dalam Tafsir Al-Jabiri Dan M. Quraish Shihab', *Braz Dent J.*, 33.1 (2022).

[39] Rizky Widian, Putu Agung Nara Indra Prima Satya, and Sylvia Yazid, 'Religion in Indonesia's Elections: An Implementation of a Populist Strategy?', *Politics and Religion*, 16.2 (2023), pp. 351–73, doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048321000195.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

Muslims themselves.[40] Studies on religion and elections in Indonesia have shown that religious identity can be mobilized as a powerful political resource, often reinforcing in-group solidarity while simultaneously heightening social division and antagonistic political categorization.

A second effect is the segmentation of political support based on religious symbols. In this process, support is no longer formed primarily through programmatic debate, policy evaluation, or rational persuasion, but through symbolic recognition and affective attachment. The term *Amin* becomes a shorthand through which individuals signal alignment with a particular political camp while also invoking a broader religious sensibility. Such symbolic segmentation narrows the democratic space by making political affiliation increasingly dependent on identity-coded expressions. Comparative research on religion in the public sphere suggests that when religious iconography and sacred language are heavily politicized, they can produce exclusionary narratives that privilege one moral-political community over others, thereby weakening pluralistic engagement.[41]

A third implication concerns the potential of social exclusion for groups who disagree with the politicization of sacred symbols. Individuals or communities who object to the political use of *Amin* may be perceived as lacking religious sensitivity, collective loyalty, or even communal solidarity, despite the fact that their objection may be grounded precisely in a desire to preserve the sanctity of religious language.[42] This creates a subtle but important social tension: disagreement over political symbolism can become misread as religious deviation or social disloyalty. In contexts where sacred values are emotionally powerful, disagreement is often harder to negotiate because sacred symbols tend to be treated as morally non-negotiable rather than politically contestable. This helps explain why the politicization of sacred terminology can generate not only rhetorical controversy, but also deeper patterns of symbolic marginalization and social pressure.

Taken together, these findings confirm that the politicization of *Amin* contributes to the reduction of a sacred term into a political rhetorical device, thereby producing an unresolved tension between sacred meaning and profane practice in the public sphere. In classical sociological terms, this reflects a blurring of the boundary between what is held as spiritually elevated and what is subjected to strategic, worldly competition.[43] Once *Amin* is repeatedly deployed as part of political branding, its liturgical and devotional force risks being overshadowed by its electoral function. Consequently, the public use of the term no longer remains theologically innocent, because it carries the possibility of symbolic desacralization and social fragmentation at the same time. The social impact of this transformation therefore lies not only in political mobilization, but also in the creation of ambiguity over whether *Amin* should be heard as a prayer, a slogan, or a partisan identity marker. Accordingly, the transformation of *Amin* into a political symbol reveals how sacred language, once absorbed into electoral competition, can become a source of polarization, symbolic exclusion, and ambiguity in the public sphere.

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[40] André Bächtiger and others, 'Religious Reasons in the Public Sphere: An Empirical Study of Religious Actors' Argumentative Patterns in Swiss Direct Democratic Campaigns', *European Political Science Review*, 5.1 (2013), pp. 105–31, doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773912000057.

[41] Abd Wahid, 'Corak Implementasi Hermeunetik Yusuf Al-Qaradhawiy Dalam Pemahaman Hadist', *ICAIOS VII ARICIS II*, 2018 <https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=bjx4s7QAAAAJ&cstart=100&pagesize=100&citation_for_view=bjx4s7QAAAAJ:_Re3VWB3Y0AC>.

[42] Lene Pedersen, 'Religious Pluralism in Indonesia', *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 17.5 (2016), pp. 387–98, doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2016.1218534.

[43] Bello Ali and Salihu Lawal, 'Mapping the Intersections: History, Religion, Culture, Governance and Economics in Taraba North Senatorial Zone, Nigeria', *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 2.4 (2024), pp. 525–56, doi:https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v2i4.55.

The Politicization of *Amin* in Light of *Maqāṣid Al-Sharīʿah*, Islamic Theology, and Democratic Ethics

The findings of this study reveal that the use of *Amin* in the context of political contestation cannot be understood merely as a linguistic variation or campaign strategy, but rather as a complex socio-religious phenomenon that involves the transformation of meaning, the mobilization of symbolic identity, and the reconfiguration of the relationship between religion and politics in the public sphere. As a term rooted in Islamic devotional tradition, *Amin* carries theological, ethical, and communal significance that extends far beyond its surface function as a slogan or acronym. Its politicization therefore invites a broader critical reflection that must be approached not only through discourse analysis, but also through the normative lens of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah, the theological status of sacred language in Islam, and the ethical implications of religious symbolism in democratic life. In this regard, the discussion situates the findings within wider debates on symbolic politics, identity formation, public religion, and democratic ethics in contemporary Indonesia.[44]

From the perspective of Islamic theology, *Amin* represents a high spiritual commitment: it is a liturgical response to prayer. When *Amin* was moved into the political space and attached as an acronym for the candidate, there was a process of desacralization—sacred symbols were pulled from the domain of worship to the domain of political propaganda.[45] In the theory of public religion (Casanova), the transfer of religious symbols to the political realm is a common symptom of modern democratic society. However, in the context of traditionally sacred symbols, this process has the potential to create ethical tensions.

The findings of this study are highly relevant to the Islamic theological tradition, particularly because the term *Amin* occupies a significant spiritual position within Muslim devotional life. In Islamic practice, āmīn is not an ordinary lexical expression; rather, it functions as a liturgical response to supplication, especially in prayer and collective worship. It carries meanings of affirmation, hope, and spiritual consent before God. In this sense, *Amin* belongs to a semantic and theological field that is deeply associated with sacred speech, piety, and the believer's ethical relationship with the Divine. Therefore, when such a term is transferred into political discourse, the issue is not merely linguistic or rhetorical, but also theological, because what is being relocated is not simply a word, but a symbol with religious gravity and devotional resonance. The theological significance of *Amin* helps explain why its political use evokes strong responses among Muslim audiences and why its reinterpretation cannot be treated as a value-neutral communicative act.

From this perspective, the attachment of *Amin* as an acronym or campaign signifier for a political candidate represents a process that may be described as desacralization. In this process, a term that conventionally belongs to the domain of worship and prayer is drawn into the domain of political messaging, propaganda, and electoral contestation. The theological concern here is not simply that religion appears in politics, but that a sacred expression may lose part of its spiritual orientation when it is recontextualized for partisan utility.[46] Once *Amin* becomes a campaign marker, its religious meaning is no longer encountered primarily as a prayerful utterance directed toward God, but as a public sign aimed at producing

[44] Mark Juergensmeyer, 'Religious Nationalism in a Global World', *Religions*, 10.2 (2019), p. 97, doi:10.3390/rel10020097.

[45] Van Der Tol, Marietta, and Philip Gorski. "Rethinking the Sacred in Religion and Nationalism." Religion, State & Society 50, no. 5 (2022): 492–494.

[46] Samantha May and others, 'The Religious as Political and the Political as Religious: Globalisation, Post-Secularism and the Shifting Boundaries of the Sacred', *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 15.3 (2014), pp. 331–46, doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2014.948526.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

identification, visibility, and political support. This shift illustrates how sacred language can be re-signified under modern political conditions, creating tension between its devotional origin and its strategic deployment in mass politics.

At the same time, this phenomenon can also be read through the lens of José Casanova's theory of public religion, which argues that religion in modern democratic societies has not simply disappeared into the private sphere, but has instead undergone a process of deprivatization—that is, a return to public visibility and political relevance. In Casanova's framework, the presence of religion in public life is not necessarily abnormal; rather, it is one of the defining characteristics of modernity in many societies. Religious actors, symbols, and discourses often re-enter public debate as sources of identity, moral legitimacy, and collective mobilization.[47] Seen from this angle, the transfer of *Amin* into the political sphere can be understood as part of a broader modern pattern in which religious language crosses the boundary between devotion and democratic contestation. Thus, the case of *Amin* is not an isolated anomaly, but a local expression of a wider global dynamic concerning the public role of religion.

However, although the movement of religion into the public sphere may be sociologically understandable, the use of traditionally sacred symbols in political competition raises serious ethical tensions. The problem lies in the fact that not all religious symbols are equally transferable without consequence. Some symbols, because of their ritual or theological status, carry forms of sanctity that become vulnerable to distortion when subjected to electoral branding and partisan contestation. In the case of *Amin*, the political appropriation of a liturgical expression risks producing ambiguity in the public imagination: what was once heard as an invocation of faith may come to be interpreted as a sign of factional allegiance. This can generate discomfort among believers who perceive that the symbolic integrity of religion is being diluted, instrumentalized, or subordinated to worldly interests. Accordingly, the theological problem is not only about misuse, but also about the symbolic reordering of what should remain ethically elevated above ordinary political rivalry.[48]

Therefore, the relevance of these findings to Islamic theology lies in showing that the politicization of *Amin* is not merely a case of campaign creativity, but a deeper issue concerning the boundaries between the sacred and the political. Theologically, *Amin* is a marker of devotion; politically, it has been transformed into a sign of affiliation and mobilization. This dual movement creates a zone of tension in which religion remains publicly visible but potentially loses part of its transcendence through strategic use. Consequently, this study suggests that the use of sacred Islamic symbols in democratic politics should be approached with greater ethical sensitivity and theological caution. If not critically examined, such practices may gradually normalize the conversion of liturgical language into political capital, thereby weakening both the sanctity of religion and the moral quality of democratic discourse. Accordingly, the political appropriation of *Amin* reveals how a liturgical expression may be transformed into electoral capital, raising fundamental theological and ethical questions about the protection of sacred language in democratic life.

Politicization of Symbols and Identity Politics

Using Murray Edelman's Symbolic Politics framework, *Amin* became a "condensed symbol"—a term capable of evoking strong emotional associations, that were then mobilized

[47] Krzysztof Stępniak, 'Communicating the Sacred in Religious Advertising in Light of the Mediatization of Religion Theory and Research on Digital Religion', *Church, Communication and Culture*, 8.2 (2023), pp. 285–307, doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/23753234.2023.2244537.

[48] Husni Mubarrak and Badrul Munir, 'Mafhum Al Naskh Min Mandhur Al Fiqh Al Maqashidiy: Dirasat Wa Niqasy', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu Ashirah*, 20.1 (2023), p. 93, doi:10.22373/jim.v20i1.16501.

for political purpose. In the context of post-reform Indonesia, Islamic identity has often served as an instrument of electoral mobilization.[49] The study's findings reinforce this trend: *Amin* is not only a jargon, but a marker of group identity that creates a dividing line between supporters and non-supporters. Within the framework of symbolic politics proposed by Murray Edelman, political language should not be understood merely as a neutral vehicle of information, but as a strategic medium for shaping perceptions, emotions, and collective loyalties. Edelman argues that political symbols often operate more powerfully than policy arguments because they condense complex meanings into emotionally charged signs that are easily recognized and mobilized by the public. In this perspective, the term *Amin* can be interpreted as what Edelman calls a "condensed symbol"—a symbolic expression capable of invoking religious familiarity, moral resonance, and political attachment simultaneously. Its effectiveness lies not in its descriptive precision, but in its emotional and associative power within the public imagination.

As a condensed symbol, *Amin* functions far beyond the level of ordinary campaign rhetoric. The term carries a dense network of meanings that are already deeply embedded in Muslim religious life, including affirmation, prayer, sincerity, and collective spiritual response. When inserted into the electoral arena, these meanings do not disappear; rather, they are strategically recontextualized to support political identification and affective allegiance. In this sense, the power of *Amin* lies precisely in its ability to merge the symbolic authority of religion with the communicative logic of democratic competition. The result is a form of political branding in which voters are not only addressed as rational citizens, but also interpellated as moral and religious subjects whose emotional attachments can be politically activated.[50]

This phenomenon becomes especially significant in the context of post-Reformasi Indonesia, where Islamic identity has frequently functioned as an instrument of electoral mobilization. Since the democratic opening after 1998, religious identity has increasingly entered public political contestation—not only through formal party platforms, but also through symbolic narratives, religious endorsements, slogans, and identity-based campaigning. In such a setting, religious symbolism often provides a shortcut to legitimacy because it resonates with widely shared moral sentiments and communal belonging.[51] The case of *Amin* reinforces this broader trend by showing how a seemingly simple term can be transformed into a politically effective signifier within a competitive democratic landscape. It demonstrates that identity politics in Indonesia is not always expressed through explicit ideological declarations, but often through subtle symbolic coding that feels culturally familiar and religiously legitimate.

The findings of this study further indicate that *Amin* operates not merely as political jargon, but as a marker of group identity. Its circulation in political discourse helps establish symbolic boundaries between those who are perceived as insiders and those who are positioned as outsiders. In this way, the term contributes to the formation of a political "we" and "they," where support is not only interpreted as electoral preference, but may also become associated with emotional, moral, or even religious affinity. Such symbolic boundary-making is one of the central features of identity politics, because it transforms political competition into a contest over belonging and legitimacy. Consequently, *Amin* does

[49] Edelman, Murray. Constructing the Political Spectacle. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988.

[50] Sapta Wahyu Nugroho, 'RESEPSI KAJIAN SURAT AL-KAHFI DI DUSUN KUWARISAN, KEBUMEN (STUDI LIVING QUR'AN)', *Living Islam: Journal of Islamic Discourses*, 5.1 (2022), doi:10.14421/lijid.v5i1.2659.

[51] Bourchier, David. "Two Decades of Ideological Contestation in Indonesia: From Democratic Cosmopolitanism to Religious Nationalism." Journal of Contemporary Asia 49, no. 5 (2019): 713–733.

 DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

not simply communicate support for a candidate or coalition; it also participates in the social construction of political community and exclusion.

From a broader analytical perspective, this finding suggests that the politicization of *Amin* reflects the convergence of symbolic politics and identity politics in contemporary Indonesian democracy. The term becomes politically effective precisely because it condenses meaning, activates collective emotion, and offers a simplified marker of affiliation in a complex electoral environment. However, this symbolic efficiency also carries risks, as it may deepen social polarization, reduce political reasoning to symbolic loyalty, and normalize the use of religious identity as a dividing mechanism in democratic life. Therefore, Edelman's framework helps clarify that the political significance of *Amin* lies not simply in what it literally means, but in what it symbolically does—namely, mobilizing emotion, producing identity, and structuring political division in the public sphere. Accordingly, the case of *Amin* demonstrates how symbolic politics can transform a sacred linguistic expression into an instrument of identity consolidation and democratic polarization.

Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough): Language as a Social Practice

In the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) developed by Norman Fairclough, language is not understood simply as a neutral means of communication, but as a social practice that is closely related to power, ideology, and the formation of social reality. Fairclough emphasizes that a discourse always operates simultaneously on three levels at once, namely text, discursive practice, and social practice. With this framework, the term *Amin* in the political context can not only be read as a word or an ordinary name, but as a form of discourse that is produced, circulated, and interpreted within the relationship between religion, politics, and society.[52] This approach helps to show that the change in the meaning of a religious term in the political arena is not a spontaneous process, but rather the result of a planned discursive construction.

In the first dimension, namely text, the findings of the study show that the word *Amin* has shifted its form and meaning when used as a campaign slogan and political narrative.[53] Linguistically, the term that was originally synonymous with religious expression—that is, prayer, spiritual approval, or reinforcement of supplication to God—has become a political sign loaded with electoral messages. In this context, *Amin* is no longer read solely as a religious expression, but also as a symbol of political identity, group support, and ideological affiliation. This change shows that word choice in politics is very strategic, as one simple term can contain layers of religious, emotional, and political meaning at the same time.[54] Thus, at the textual level, language becomes the first arena where ideology works subtly but effectively.

In the second dimension, namely discursive practice, the use of the term *Amin* is increasingly strengthened through the process of production, distribution, and consumption of discourse, especially on social media. In the digital space, political slogans are not only conveyed by formal political actors, but also reproduced by sympathizers, influencers, online media, and ordinary users through uploads, comments, memes, hashtags, and short videos. This repetitive circulation process has made the term *Amin* gain high visibility and become part of the daily public consciousness. Social media, in this case, serves as a meaning-reinforcing machine that accelerates the politicization of religious symbols, because terms that originally have spiritual nuances are then framed constantly as a tool to mobilize political

[52] Fairclough, *Norman. Language and Power*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2015.

[53] Fahmi Andaluzi and others, 'Boycott in Hadith Perspective: History and Implementation', *El-Sunan: Journal of Hadith and Religious Studies*, 2.2 (2024), doi:https://doi.org/10.22373/el-sunan.v2i2.5801.

[54] Fairclough, Norman. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge, 2003.

support.[55] As a result, people not only accept political messages, but are also accustomed to seeing religion and political choices as two things that are intertwined.

In the third dimension, namely social practice, the transformation of the meaning of *Amin* has broader implications for the way of thinking and social relations between citizens, especially in the majority Muslim community. When the term religion enters the arena of political contestation, its meaning does not stop at symbolic communication, but also shapes the way society identifies "friends" and "opponents", "those who are of the same faith" and "those who have different choices". In these conditions, political language can strengthen internal group solidarity, but at the same time it has the potential to cause social polarization. This is where it can be seen that political discourse based on religious symbols is not neutral, as it can influence public perceptions of the legitimacy of power, political morality, and even social piety.[56] In other words, the transformation of the term *Amin* shows that language in politics not only reflects social conditions, but also actively shapes the structure of social relations in society.[57]

Based on these three dimensions, it can be concluded that the use of the term *Amin* in political discourse is a clear example of how political discourse not only represents reality, but also creates a new reality regarding religious and political relations. Through changes at the textual level, reinforcement through discursive practices, and its impact on social practice, the term has moved from a spiritual space to an ideological and electoral space. In Fairclough's framework, this phenomenon shows that language has the power to construct collective consciousness, direct public perception, and even reframe the boundaries of religious meaning in political life. Therefore, the analysis of the term *Amin* is not enough to be done semantically alone, but needs to be read as part of the dynamics of power and ideology in contemporary society.

Considerations of *Maqāṣid al-Syarī'ah*

From the perspective of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, the use of religious language and symbols in the public sphere should ideally serve the higher objectives of Islamic law, particularly *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (the protection of religion) and *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (the protection of human life and social harmony). In this framework, religion is not merely preserved in its formal expression, but also safeguarded in its ethical function as a source of unity, justice, and collective well-being. Therefore, any use of religious terminology in political discourse should be assessed not only by its rhetorical effectiveness, but also by whether it contributes to social peace, moral clarity, and the common good.[58] Contemporary maqāṣid thought also emphasizes that Islamic law should be read in terms of development, dignity, justice, and public benefit (*maṣlaḥah*) rather than merely symbolic preservation.

However, the findings of this study indicate that the politicization of *Amin* tends to produce consequences that are more closely aligned with *mafsadah* (harm) than with *maṣlaḥah* (benefit). Although the term may initially appear as a harmless or even culturally resonant political expression, its discursive function in the electoral context reveals a more problematic trajectory. Once a sacred or religiously resonant term is transformed into a political signifier, its meaning shifts from devotional affirmation to ideological alignment. In

[55] Fairclough, Norman. *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2010

[56] Lisa M. (ed.) Given, 'Critical Discourse Analysis', in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (SAGE Publications, Inc., 2008), doi:https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n80.

[57] Aqil Mujtaba and Abu Bakar, 'ELABORATION OF TASLIYAH VERSES: A HERMENEUTIC STUDY ON 'HĀSHIYAH AS-SĀWI 'ALĀ TAFSĪR AL-JALĀLAIN', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah*, 21.1 (2024), p. 80, doi:10.22373/jim.v21i1.22380.

[58] Auda, Jasser. *Maqasid al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*. London: IIIT, 2007.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

maqāṣid terms, such a shift becomes problematic when the symbolic use of religion no longer protects faith and society, but instead instrumentalizes religion for short-term political gain.[59] This is especially significant because *maqāṣid*-based evaluation prioritizes the actual social outcomes of an act, not merely its surface intention or linguistic form.

One of the most visible harms is the fragmentation of the Muslim community. When a religiously loaded term is appropriated as a political slogan, it can subtly divide Muslims into symbolic camps of loyalty and opposition.[60] In such a setting, political preference is no longer perceived as a normal democratic difference, but may be interpreted as a marker of religious proximity or distance. This creates a discursive environment in which political contestation becomes moralized and sacralized.[61] From the *maqāṣid* perspective, this condition is difficult to justify because religion is meant to function as a source of cohesion, not as a tool for deepening communal fractures. Rather than preserving ḥifẓ al-dīn in its integrative sense, the politicization of *Amin* risks weakening the social fabric of the ummah by embedding political rivalry within religious identity itself.

A second major harm lies in the emergence of truth-claims by certain groups, where political support becomes intertwined with assumptions of religious legitimacy. In this situation, supporters of a particular political camp may come to be perceived—explicitly or implicitly—as representing the "more authentic" or "more Islamic" position. This not only narrows the ethical universality of religion, but also blurs the distinction between religiosity and power interests. Such a development is normatively troubling because *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* seeks to protect religion from distortion, manipulation, and domination by worldly interests.[62] When sacred vocabulary becomes absorbed into political branding, religion is no longer functioning primarily as moral guidance; instead, it risks being reduced to an instrument of mobilization and symbolic legitimacy.

Therefore, from a normative *maqāṣid* perspective, the political use of *Amin* may be considered contrary to the broader objective of public good (*al-maṣlaḥah al-ʿāmmah*). This does not mean that religion must be entirely excluded from public or political life, but rather that its presence must remain ethically disciplined and socially constructive.[63] If a religious symbol contributes more to polarization, exclusivism, and symbolic domination than to justice, harmony, and civic responsibility, then its political deployment becomes difficult to defend within the maqāṣid framework. In this sense, the issue is not simply whether *Amin* can be used politically, but whether such use fulfills the higher ethical purposes of Islam. Based on the findings of this study, the answer tends toward the conclusion that its politicization undermines, rather than advances, the goals of religion in the public sphere.

Implications for Indonesian Democracy

[59] Duderija, Adis (ed.*). Maqasid al-Shari'a and Contemporary Reformist Muslim Thought: An Examination*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

[60] Dwi Dasa Suryantoro, 'Transformation of Islamic Law in Responding to the Challenges of Modernity by Integrating Classical Fiqh and Contemporary Fiqh', *Al-Rasīkh: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, XX.XX (2025), pp. 1–14, doi:10.38073/rasikh.2747.

[61] Fabio Merone and Rory McCarthy, 'Explaining the Distinction between Religious and Political Activism in Islamism: Evidence from the Tunisian Case', *Politics and Religion*, 17.2 (2024), pp. 296–314, doi:10.1017/S1755048324000087.

[62] Mariya Ali, 'Child Sexual Abuse: Can the Doctrines of Al-Maqasid Al-Shariah and Maslahah Assist in Challenging the Honour Ideology?', *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 18.4–5 (2014), pp. 508–26, doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2014.911478.

[63] Colin Scott, 'Supporting the Right to Wear Religious Symbols: The Importance of Perceived Commitment to the Nation', *Politics and Religion*, 16.1 (2023), pp. 90–109, doi:https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755048322000141.

The politicization of *Amin* reflects a broader tendency within contemporary Indonesian democracy, namely the growing reliance on political branding through religious symbols. In democratic competition, political actors increasingly seek symbolic resources that are emotionally powerful, culturally resonant, and socially recognizable. Religious language and imagery often fulfill these functions because they carry moral authority and collective familiarity. However, the use of such symbols in electoral politics should not be understood merely as a neutral communication strategy.[64] Rather, it signals a deeper transformation in the way democratic legitimacy is constructed—where symbolic religiosity may become more politically effective than substantive policy debate, institutional accountability, or rational public deliberation. In this sense, the case of *Amin* illustrates how democratic practices can gradually shift from issue-based contestation toward identity-based symbolic mobilization.

This development poses a serious challenge to pluralism, diversity, and social cohesion, especially in a religiously diverse society such as Indonesia. When sacred symbols are repeatedly inserted into political competition, electoral discourse becomes increasingly charged with moral binaries and communal sensitivities. Political disagreement, which should ideally remain within the realm of democratic contestation, can instead be reinterpreted through the language of religious loyalty, piety, or authenticity. Such conditions may intensify symbolic boundaries between citizens and weaken the democratic ethos of coexistence amid difference. As a result, political discourse no longer simply organizes preferences and interests, but also shapes how social groups perceive legitimacy, belonging, and moral worth within the nation.

One important consequence of this process is that public space may become increasingly saturated with antagonism. In a healthy democracy, public space should function as an arena for reasoned debate, negotiation, and civic participation. Yet when religious symbols are strategically mobilized in campaigns, public communication can become more emotionally polarized and less dialogical.[65] Citizens may begin to engage political issues not through critical reflection, but through affective attachment to symbols that appear sacred or morally superior.[66] This creates fertile ground for suspicion, exclusion, and rhetorical hostility, especially in digital spaces where symbolic content spreads rapidly and often without contextual nuance. Consequently, the politicization of religion risks transfor public discourse into a more confrontational and less deliberative field.

A further implication is the gradual reduction of religion into an electoral instrument, rather than a moral-ethical framework that enriches public life. When religious symbols are used primarily to attract votes, consolidate constituencies, or establish symbolic superiority, religion may lose part of its transcendental and ethical function in society. At the same time, the quality of democratic deliberation can decline because public attention is diverted from substantive issues—such as justice, welfare, governance, education, and social policy—toward symbolic contestation and identity performance. In this context, democratic participation becomes vulnerable to simplification, where emotionally charged symbols overshadow complex policy questions. The danger is not merely that religion enters politics,

[64] Mietzner, Marcus. Money, *Power, and Ideology*: *Political Parties in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia.* Singapore: NUS Press, 2013.

[65] Hamdiah Latif, 'Egalitarianism in the Qur'an: Dialectics of Concept and Reality', *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu Ashirah*, 20.1 (2023), p. 85, doi:10.22373/jim.v20i1.14643.

[66] Hadiz, Vedi R. *Islamic Populism in Indonesia and the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

DOI: 10.22373/jim.v23i2.32743

but that politics reduces religion to a strategic brand and, in doing so, weakens the epistemic quality of democracy itself.[67]

For that reason, this study underscores the ethical urgency of critically regulating and reflecting upon the use of religious symbols in political communication. More importantly, it points to the need for strengthening both political literacy and religious literacy within society. Political literacy is essential so that citizens can distinguish between substantive democratic engagement and symbolic manipulation, while religious literacy is equally necessary to ensure that sacred concepts are understood in their theological and ethical depth rather than consumed as partisan slogans. Without these two forms of literacy, democratic society remains vulnerable to the instrumentalization of faith and the erosion of social trust. Therefore, the findings of this study are not only relevant to electoral discourse, but also to the broader future of democracy, interreligious coexistence, and civic maturity in contemporary Indonesia. This study ultimately argues that the politicization of religious symbols in democratic contestation is not merely a communicative phenomenon, but an ethical and civic challenge that threatens the integrity of both religion and democracy.

C. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the term 'Amin' possesses a profound theological foundation within the Islamic tradition as an affirmation of prayer and a symbol of human humility before God. Although it does not appear explicitly in the text of the Qur'an, both classical and contemporary interpretive literature position 'Amin' as an essential component of Islamic devotional practices, particularly in ritual prayers (*ṣalāh* and supplication). However, within the dynamics of the 2024 Indonesian Presidential Election, 'Amin' underwent a significant semantic transformation. The term no longer served solely as a spiritual expression, but shifted into a political symbol when repurposed as an acronym for a specific candidate pair. This shift illustrates how sacred symbols can be recontextualized within political discourse to achieve legitimacy and mass mobilization.

Critical discourse analysis reveals that the political utilization of 'Amin' generated ambiguity between genuine religious devotion and political endorsement. This ambiguity contributed to heightened polarization, identity segmentation, and social exclusion within the Muslim community, reflecting a broader trend of religious politicization in Indonesian democracy. Evaluated through the lens of *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, the politicization of 'Amin' tends to yield *maḍarrat* (harm), as it drags a sacred expression into the profane domain while threatening social cohesion. Therefore, this study underscores the necessity of ethical responsibility in deploying religious symbols within the public sphere. Sacred expressions must be safeguarded against political commodification to preserve the sanctity of Islamic texts and ensure they remain moral-spiritual compasses rather than instruments of power. Ultimately, these findings highlight the urgent need for enhanced religious and political literacy, enabling society to distinguish between authentic expressions of faith and symbolic manipulation for electoral gain. Protecting a healthy, ethical public sphere remains a vital collective responsibility in sustaining the quality of Indonesian democracy.

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[67] Lukman, 'Vernacularism and the Embers of Conservatism: The Production and Politicization of Qur'an Translations'.

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