

Symbolic and Philosophical Meanings of Religion and Politics in Hamzanwadi's *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru*: A Semiotic Perspective

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Abstract: This study aims to uncover the symbolic and philosophical meanings of religion and politics in Hamzanwadi's *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru*. This research employs qualitative methods with a semiotic approach in analysing the poem's verses containing religious and political symbolism. Data collection involved close reading, interpretation, and in-depth understanding of the verses, while semiotic analysis was applied to identify and examine the symbols and their philosophical meanings. Several steps in data validation include reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results reveal that Hamzanwadi employs religious and political symbols in his poem to convey moral and social messages. Religious symbols—such as faith, piety, and the concept of the Almighty God—highlight the importance of loyalty and commitment to religious values in political life. Political symbols—such as seats and positions—represent political ambitions that can threaten religious teachings' integrity and true purpose. The philosophy embedded in these symbols emphasises the significance of loyalty, integrity, and honesty in politics and warns against using religion for personal or political gain. This research offers key insights into three main points: 1) faith and piety serve as a solid moral foundation for ethics in political life; 2) political ambition and power have the potential to corrupt religious values and undermine integrity; and 3) integrity and adherence to religious teachings are essential for promoting clean and responsible governance. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the interaction between religion and politics in Hamzanwadi's work and offer broader reflections on ethical leadership.

Keywords: Symbolism; Politics, Religion; Poetry; Hamzanwadi; Semiotics.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap makna simbolis dan filosofis agama dan politik dalam puisi *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru* karya Hamzanwadi. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif dan pendekatan semiotika, penelitian ini menganalisis bait-bait puisi yang mengandung simbolisme agama dan politik. Pengumpulan data melibatkan pembacaan, interpretasi, dan pemahaman mendalam terhadap syair-syair tersebut, sementara analisis semiotik diterapkan untuk mengidentifikasi dan memeriksa simbol-simbol dan makna filosofisnya. Validasi data dilakukan melalui reduksi, penyajian, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Hamzanwadi menggunakan simbol-simbol agama dan politik dalam puisinya untuk menyampaikan pesan-pesan moral dan sosial. Simbol-simbol agama—seperti iman, ketakwaan, dan konsep Tuhan Yang Maha Esa—menyoroti pentingnya kesetiaan dan komitmen terhadap nilai-nilai agama dalam kehidupan politik. Simbol-simbol politik—seperti kursi dan jabatan—mewakili ambisi politik yang dapat mengancam integritas dan tujuan sebenarnya dari ajaran agama. Filosofi yang tertanam dalam simbol-simbol ini menekankan pentingnya kesetiaan, integritas, dan kejujuran dalam politik dan memperingatkan terhadap penyalahgunaan agama untuk keuntungan pribadi atau politik. Penelitian ini menawarkan wawasan kunci ke dalam tiga poin utama: 1) iman dan ketakwaan

menjadi landasan moral yang kuat bagi etika dalam kehidupan politik; 2) ambisi politik dan kekuasaan berpotensi merusak nilai-nilai agama dan melemahkan integritas; dan 3) integritas dan ketaatan pada ajaran agama sangat penting untuk mendorong tata kelola pemerintahan yang bersih dan bertanggung jawab. Temuan-temuan ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih dalam tentang interaksi antara agama dan politik dalam karya Hamzanwadi dan menawarkan refleksi yang lebih luas tentang kepemimpinan yang beretika

Kata kunci: *Simbolis; Politik; Agama; Syair; Hamzanwadi; Semiotik.*

1. Introduction

Hamzanwadi, a revered cleric and national hero from Lombok, Indonesia, remains charismatic in the Sasak community, particularly in West Nusa Tenggara (Fattah, 2018). During political instability, especially post-independence and the early New Order, government policies were seen as authoritarian and against the people's interests, particularly in religion and politics. Hamzanwadi became a prominent critic of these policies, advocating for the Sasak religious community in Lombok. His spiritual and intellectual leadership earned him widespread respect and recognition. One of his most significant works, *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru* (WRMPB) (Nahdi et al., 2018), addresses religious matters and critiques unjust political practices. Hamzanwadi used his poetry to reflect on the sociopolitical realities of his time, blending religious teachings with sharp political commentary. He showcased the inseparable nature of religion and politics in shaping people's lives (Amry & Ansori, 2019).

In WRMPB, Hamzanwadi employed religious symbols to convey moral and spiritual messages. For example, in verse, "*Sasak island is tiny, but the mountain is huge if people are good at studying, they must bow down a thousand times*," Hamzanwadi uses religious symbols to convey moral and spiritual messages. The once-small island of Sasak symbolises a simple and limited life, emphasising humility. The Great Mountain depicts the power of faith and taqwa, showing the significant influence of spirituality. Clever people study representing individuals who understand and practice religious teachings, while "prostrating a thousand times" symbolises total submission to God, reflecting obedience and humility. However, what is more significant is the use of political elements in this work. Hamzanwadi wisely slipped into socio-political criticisms relevant to the context of the society of his time. It shows Hamzanwadi's view that religion and socio-politics cannot be separated; rather, it understands that religion and politics are intertwined in shaping people's lives (Husnah, 2019). Hamzanwadi also founded institutions like Nahdlatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiyah (NWDI) madrasah, Nahdlatul Banat Diniyyah Islamiyyah (NBDI) madrasah, and the Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) organisation, showing his concern for the well-being of the Sasak community. He integrated spiritual teachings with reflections on the political landscape, urging readers to consider both aspects of life (Hamdi, 2018).

This study highlights the urgency of interpreting the symbolic and philosophical meanings embedded in Hamzanwadi's work through a semiotic approach. By employing semiotic analysis, this research delves into the hidden messages conveyed in his poems. Semiotic analysis is a highly relevant tool for uncovering and understanding the layers of meaning that may not be immediately apparent in the text. It allows readers to gain deeper insight into Hamzanwadi's thoughts and perspectives and how he communicates religious and political messages through his work.

This research utilises a semiotic approach to analyse his poetry's symbolic and philosophical meanings, enabling readers to uncover the deeper layers of meaning in the literary text (Piliang, 2004; Ragland-Sullivan, 2019). According to Roland Barthes, poetry is a complex system of signs composed of symbols, icons, and indices representing realities beyond the text (Barthes et al., 2017; Ponzio, 2018). In poetry, symbols and philosophical themes are literal representations of objects or concepts and serve as signs pointing to profound dimensions of human experience (Burke, 2023). For instance, symbols of nature in poetry may reflect philosophical ideas about the universe's beauty, serenity, or majesty,

highlighting humanity's connection with nature or the search for the meaning of life. Readers can interpret these symbols through a semiotic lens within the context of culture, history, and values, thereby gaining a deeper understanding of literary works' symbolic and philosophical dimensions (Endraswara, 2022; Petrilli, 2016).

In the semiotic approach, symbolism refers to symbols that transcend their literal meanings and take on additional significance within cultural, historical, and value-based contexts (Pambudi, 2023). This analytical method, introduced by De Saussure (2008), focuses on signs and symbols to reveal deeper meanings. It uses concepts like the signifier and the signified to explain the relationship between a sign's physical form and the concept it represents in a literary text. Roland Barthes (Huppatz, 2011) expanded on this by introducing connotative or symbolic meanings that carry ideological messages. Eco (2010) emphasised that the meaning of literature is dynamic and contingent upon the reader's context, helping readers interpret literary texts in various cultural and historical settings.

Symbols in literature, such as images, words, or motifs, often imply broader meanings than what appears on the surface. In literary texts, symbols frequently describe abstract concepts like love, freedom, or wisdom, which cannot be easily articulated directly (Babelyuk et al., 2021). Semiotic analysis enables readers to identify and interpret these symbols concerning the explored theme or narrative (Altherr Flores, 2021; Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994). Moreover, the semiotic approach helps uncover the philosophical concepts embedded in the text, revealing how the author conveys deep philosophical reflections through symbolism (Hasniar et al., 2024).

Symbolism and philosophy are closely intertwined in literary works, with symbols used to convey profound philosophical ideas. Symbolism involves using symbols beyond the literal meaning, reflecting the context of culture, history, and values (Todorov, 1986). These symbols can be objects, colours, or metaphors representing abstract ideas such as love or freedom. The semiotic approach is essential in interpreting these symbols in depth (Jewitt & Oyama, 2013). This approach identifies symbols and uncovers how they communicate the philosophical concepts underlying the text. By employing a semiotic approach, readers can explore how symbols reflect and develop philosophical ideas related to life, truth, and existence, demonstrating how literary texts serve as vessels for philosophical reflection.

Poetry is an ancient literary form that uses structured, rhythmic language to express the author's feelings, ideas, and experiences (Weststeijn, 2023). It conveys intense emotions and ideas with aesthetic language, offering depth and meaning (Sandler, 2017). Symbols and philosophy play a crucial role in poetry, serving as tools to express deeper meanings beyond literal words (Tucan, 2018). Symbols represent ideas or concepts greater than their surface meaning, while philosophy reflects the poet's worldview, thoughts, and values (Svensson, 2019). Poets often use symbols to mirror philosophical perspectives on life, existence, or social conditions, inviting readers to explore layered interpretations. Metaphors and other imagery in poetry often express philosophical ideas about truth, justice, or wisdom (Johnson, 2011). A semiotic approach enables readers to uncover deeper layers of meaning in the text, going beyond the literal words (Basker, 2018; Setiawan & Andayani, 2019). By analysing symbols, metaphors, and motifs in their cultural, historical, and value-based contexts, readers gain a richer understanding of the poem's messages and how they connect to broader human experiences. This approach provides valuable insight into poetry's symbolic and philosophical meanings (Firmansyah & Fatonah, 2019).

Research on Hamzanwadi's WRMPB has drawn academic attention due to its relevance to modern life. Fatoni et al. (2022) found that the religious messages in the poem provide moral and spiritual guidance for readers facing life challenges. Nahdi et al. (2020) highlighted how Hamzanwadi blends traditional wisdom, love, and spirituality with contemporary language and style, integrating classical values into modern social and cultural contexts. Atsani et al. (2023) explored WRMPB through Ibn Miskawaih's moral philosophy, revealing that the poem integrates ethical principles like self-control, justice, and wisdom with local Islamic practices, adapting them to meet the needs of Muslim communities in Indonesia. Sapiin et al. (2020) used Marco De Marinis' semiotic performance theory to

examine the poem's symbolic functions. This semiotics theory demonstrates how the verses convey moral and religious values through their performative and cultural contexts.

This study offers a new perspective by deeply merging semiotic theory with philosophical analysis, addressing gaps in previous research. In comparison, earlier studies by Fatoni et al. (2022) and Nahdi et al. (2020) examined moral and spiritual aspects, most focused on single theoretical dimensions like ethics or performance. This research combines symbolism and philosophy, comprehensively understanding how Hamzanwadi's symbols reflect complex religious, philosophical, and political values. This study uses a qualitative semiotic approach to analyse WRMPB's symbolic and philosophical meanings about its cultural and political context. By integrating semiotic analysis with philosophical theory, the research sheds new light on the interaction between literature, religion, and politics in Indonesia, particularly in Lombok. It enriches academic discourse by demonstrating how literature can critique and communicate moral and political values relevant to contemporary society.

2. Interpretation of Religious Symbolism in Hamzanwadi's Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru Works

Hamzanwadi's *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru* is a literary work with religious meaning. Through religious symbols, Hamzanwadi illustrates the importance of faith, piety, and obedience to God in daily life, as in the following stanza.

Indonesia	English
Hidupkan iman hidupkan takwa	Turn on the faith turn on the piety
Agar hiduplah semua jiwa	That all souls may live
Cinta teguh pada agama	Unwavering love for religion
Cinta kokoh pada Negara (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Sturdy love for the country

The semiotic approach to analysing this stanza reveals various symbols that represent the concepts of religion and patriotism. In the stanza "*Live faith, live piety*", "*faith*" and "*piety*" are symbols of spiritual virtue in Islam. "*Iman*", or faith, symbolises a firm belief in Allah and His teachings, while "*takwa*", or piety, symbolises awareness and vigilance in carrying out Allah's commands and avoiding His prohibitions. In this context, the word '*turn on*' symbolises nurturing, strengthening, and making these two elements an active and tangible part of everyday life. The symbol "*so live all souls*" shows that each individual feels a meaningful and whole life by reviving faith and piety. "It is not just physical existence, but also spiritual and moral life. A "*living*" soul symbolises the enlightened human condition, full of inner peace and well-being derived from believing in and obeying God.

In the "A firm love for religion" section, "love" symbolises deep feelings and strong commitment. "*Steadfast love*" denotes love that is firm, unwavering by trials or temptations. This love is directed towards "*religion*", symbolising the entirety of the teachings, values, and principles held by the people. This symbol shows that one must be strongly dedicated to religion to achieve a meaningful and blessed life. Finally, "*Solid Love for Country*" shows the importance of loyalty and love for the homeland. "*state*" is a symbol of a political and social entity that provides identity and protection to individuals. "*sturdy*" means love that is loyal and full of responsibility. This symbol shows that religion and nationalism are not contradictory but complementary in shaping an individual's identity and responsibility.

Philosophically, this stanza teaches the importance of reviving faith and piety as the main foundation of human life. "*Live faith, live piety*" contains the philosophy that deep faith and spiritual awareness are the foundation of a meaningful life. Faith provides direction and purpose, while taqwa keeps individuals on the right path by constantly monitoring their actions and intentions. This philosophy emphasises that these two aspects must continually be renewed and maintained so that human life is physically functional, morally, and spiritually. The stanza "*So live all souls*" carries the philosophical meaning that real life is when one's soul lives in inner peace and well-being. This philosophy emphasises that a meaningful life is measured in material or physical terms and spiritual and moral qualities (Barker, 2022). A living soul feels at peace, has a purpose, and feels connected to the Almighty. It shows that humans achieve a higher and more meaningful life by living faith and piety.

The phrase *a firm love for religion* contains the philosophy that a strong dedication and commitment to religious teachings is essential to living a righteous and blessed life. Love for religion is a form of devotion that requires a person to continuously strive to understand, practice, and maintain religious values in every aspect of life. This philosophy emphasises that religious practices can become hollow and lose meaning without strong love and commitment. *Solid Love of Country* emphasises that loyalty and dedication to the country are integral to an individual's identity and responsibility. It reflects the view that love of country and religion can go hand in hand, reinforcing and not contradicting each other. This philosophy teaches that an individual should actively advance and defend his country, just as he does in practising his religion. It shows that balancing spirituality and social responsibility is vital to a harmonious and productive life (Mak et al., 2020).

Hamzanwadi is also known for his spiritual and intellectual contributions, often reflected in his work. As illustrated in this stanza:

Indonesia	English
Wajib kompak membela agama	Must be united in defence of religion
Agama Allah Yang Maha Esa	Religion of the One True God
Yang paling mulia yang paling takwa	The most noble, the most pious
Yang paling tegak membela agama (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	The most upright defender of religion (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

The above stanza helps the reader understand deep and rich symbolism in a religious context. *"Must be united in defence of religion"* symbolises unity and togetherness. The word *"obligatory"* symbolises an imperative or non-negotiable order, showing the importance of this task. *"Compact"* symbolises unity and solidarity, illustrating that defending religion must be done together, with close agreement and cooperation. *A defending religion* symbolises efforts to maintain and protect religious teachings from all forms of threat and deviation. *"The religion of God Almighty"* emphasises that the religion in question is based on the One God. *"Allah Almighty"* symbolises the monotheistic belief that is the primary basis of Islam. It emphasises belief in one God who rules and oversees the entire universe. This symbol depicts the power and absoluteness of God in religious teachings. *"The most noble, the most pious"* symbolises the qualities and traits expected of a believer. *"Noble"* symbolises the highest honour and virtue, while *"taqwa"* symbolises piety and complete obedience to Allah. This symbol shows that the degree of glory and devotion is the principal measure for assessing a person in a religious context. Every individual committed to defending religion should strive for this quality. *"The most upright defender of religion"* symbolises firmness and decisiveness in defending beliefs. *"Steadfast"* symbolises justice, courage, and unwavering in the face of challenges. It illustrates an uncompromising attitude toward maintaining the integrity and purity of religious teachings, showing that defending religion is a task that requires courage and unwavering commitment.

This philosophical stanza deeply explains the importance of unity and commitment in defending religion. It teaches that defending religion is not an individual task but a collective responsibility that requires cooperation and unity of the heart. This philosophy emphasises that success in defending and protecting religious teachings depends on the cohesiveness and solidarity of people. It reflects that the unity of the Ummah is crucial in dealing with various challenges and threats to religion. *"The Religion of God Almighty"* affirms the philosophy of monotheism, which is the primary basis of Islam. This philosophy explains that belief in the One God is the foundation of all religious actions and beliefs. This recognition of the oneness of God provides a solid moral and spiritual foundation for every individual and community to carry out religious duties. It shows that all efforts to defend religion must be rooted in a sincere belief in God Almighty.

"The most noble are the most pious" carries the philosophy that glory and devotion are the highest goals in religious life. This philosophy emphasises that attaining degrees of glory and devotion is about ritualistic or formal observance and profound moral and spiritual transformation. It teaches that the quality of individuals as defenders of religion is measured by their nobility and devotion to Allah. This philosophy encourages individuals to improve and strive for high nobility and devotion. *"The Most*

Upright Defender of Religion" contains the philosophy of firmness and courage in defending religious teachings. This philosophy explains that, in defending religion, one must have a firm attitude and not be easily swayed by challenges or temptations. It emphasises the importance of having solid principles and courage to uphold the truth, even in difficult situations. The philosophy of this stanza confirms that the defence of religion requires firm commitment and tremendous determination.

Hamzanwadi consistently emphasises that religion is not just about performing rituals, such as fasting and praying, but also involves deeper aspects, such as belief, shari'ah, and hukumah (law).

Indonesia	English
Agama bukan sekedar ibadah	Religion is not just worship
Puasa sembahyang di atas sejadah	Fasting praying on a prayer mat
Tapi agama mencakup akidah	But religion includes creed
Mencakup syari'ah mencakup hukumah (hukum) (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Covering shari'ah includes hukumah (law) (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

From a semiotic perspective, this poem contains many symbols representing different aspects of religion. "*ibadah*" and "*sejadah*" represent outward acts of religious practice. "*Worship*" refers to the various forms of worship and devotion performed by individuals to manifest their beliefs. At the same time "*sejadah*" symbolically represents the shrine or medium in which such worship is performed. The fasting and prayer in this poem are also symbolic. Fasting is not just an act of refraining from eating and drinking but also symbolises self-restraint, discipline, and spiritual awareness. *Prayer* is a symbol of communication and a direct connection with the Almighty, reflecting the obedience and submission of a servant to his lord. These two symbols indicate that the outward aspects of religion are a means of attaining higher spiritual realisation.

"*Religion includes creed*" shows that religion is not only limited to ritual practices but also includes the fundamental beliefs or theological foundations that underlie all these practices. The creed symbolises the belief structure that shapes the worldview of a believer. It is the heart of one's religious identity, governing how individuals understand their existence and relationship with the universe and the Creator. Furthermore, *Syari'ah* symbolises the laws and rules of life drawn from religious teachings. *Syari'ah* symbolises moral and ethical guidelines that cover all aspects of a Muslim's life, from ways of worship to social and economic interactions. It is a symbolic representation of the order and discipline expected in society based on religious teachings. *Hukumah* (law) symbolises authority and leadership idealised in religion. It encompasses administrative and political aspects to uphold justice and social welfare per religious principles. *Hukumah*, in Norris & Inglehart's view (2021), symbolises the practical application of religious teachings in the social and political order, making religion a private matter and a collective responsibility.

The philosophical meaning of this poem invites readers to understand religion as a holistic system that covers various dimensions of human life. When the poem says, "*Religion is not just worship*", it emphasises that religion is not just about rituals and formal activities. The philosophy behind this statement is that religion is a way of life and a worldview that affects every aspect of individual and community existence. "*Fasting prayers on a prayer mat*" describes a concrete religious practice, but its philosophical meaning is far more profound. Fasting and praying are physical and spiritual exercises to strengthen men's relationships with God. It reflects the philosophy that outward actions should be aligned with inner intentions and a deep spiritual understanding. When the poet says, "*Religion includes creed*", the philosophical meaning is that religion is built on a solid foundation of belief. Beliefs are the basic principles providing direction and purpose for adherents (Van Leeuwen, 2018). It shows that religion is not just a ritual but a belief system that gives meaning and purpose to life.

"*Encompassing shari'ah encompassing hukumah*" emphasises that religion includes the rule of law and social governance. *Syari'ah* is a set of laws and moral guidelines that aim to create justice and prosperity. In Hamzanwadi's view, *Syari'ah* is a way of life that covers all aspects of life, from worship to *muamalah* (social and economic relations), with the primary goal of achieving prosperity and justice in harmony with the teachings of Islam. The philosophy behind this is that religion provides comprehensive

guidance for a harmonious and just life, individually and collectively. In this context, *Hukumah* and governance illustrate that religion also has political and social dimensions. The concept of *hukumah*, in Hamzanwadi's view, can be understood as a profound view of governance and just government based on Islamic principles. The ideal *hukumah* should be based on Shari'ah, where the laws applied are aimed at maintaining social order and bringing people closer to the values of Justice, Humanity, and piety to Allah Almighty. It means that religion deals with personal or spiritual matters and influences people's lives (Ulrichová, 2015). The philosophy here is that religion aims to create a just and prosperous society, with religious values applied to all aspects of life, including governance.

Hamzanwadi emphasised the importance of maintaining Islamic religious values as the foundation of life. In the stanza below, Hamzanwadi encourages us to maintain faith, Islam, and *Ihsan* jointly—the pillars of religion. Hamzanwadi believes that keeping these three together is critical to achieving a harmonious and meaningful life.

Indonesia	English
Iman Islam <i>Ihsan</i> bertiga	Faith Islam <i>Ihsan</i> threes
Harus dibela bersama-sama	Must be defended together
Selama roh dikandung rangka	As long as the spirit is conceived in the skeleton
Karena ialah rukun agama (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Because it is a pillar of religion (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

We can understand this stanza by exploring the symbols it contains. "*Faith Islam Ihsan threes*" is a symbol that refers to three fundamental aspects of Islam. "*Faith*" symbolises a deep belief or trust in Allah, the Prophet Muhammad, and the teachings of Islam. "*Islam*" is symbolic of the outward practices that comprise the pillars of Islam, such as prayer, fasting, zakat, and hajj. Meanwhile, "*Ihsan*" symbolises perfection in worship; a person worships Allah as if he sees Him, and if he cannot, rest assured that Allah is always watching him. Combining these three elements symbolises the totality of a Muslim's life, which is balanced between beliefs, actions, and sincere intentions. The three are inseparable and complement each other to form an ideal religious whole.

"*Should be defended together*" symbolises unity and cooperation in protecting these three pillars. This symbol emphasises that faith, Islam, and *ihsan* are not individual tasks but the collective responsibility of the Ummah. Through this symbol, the poet emphasises the importance of solidarity and shared commitment in fighting for and defending religious teachings. "*As long as the spirit is conceived in the skeleton*" is a symbol that depicts man's existence while living in the world. It implies that, as long as man is alive (as long as the spirit is still in the body), he must continue to guard and defend the three pillars. This symbol also emphasises the close connection between worldly life and religious duties. Finally, "*Because these are the pillars of religion*" emphasises that faith, Islam, and *ihsan* are the main pillars on which the entire religion is built. Faith is the foundation of belief, Islam manifests that belief in concrete actions, and *Ihsan* is an attempt to achieve perfection in worship and doing good (Gülen, 2016; Khan, 2019). It indicates that the religious structure would be fragile without the three.

Philosophically, this stanza contains a deep meaning about the importance of the three main pillars of Islam: faith, Islam, and *ihsan*. These three aspects reflect beliefs, actions, and intentions, teaching balance and perfection in religious life. As the foundation of belief, faith emphasises the importance of solid belief in God and his teachings. The philosophy behind faith is that without a firm belief, actions and intentions will have no proper direction or meaning. Faith provides the moral and spiritual foundations necessary to live a meaningful life. Islam, which covers the practical aspects of religious teaching, emphasises the importance of implementing beliefs in daily actions. The philosophy emphasises that religion is based on beliefs and how these beliefs are realised through acts of charity and worship. It reflects that faith should be expressed through meaningful and beneficial actions. *Ihsan*, which teaches perfection and sincerity in worship, stresses that worship should be performed with complete awareness of God's presence (Kadhim et al., 2017). The philosophy behind *Ihsan* is that every action, formal worship or social interaction, should be performed with sincere intentions and deep spiritual awareness. *Ihsan* teaches the importance of quality and intention for every action.

The verse that states "*must be defended together*" and philosophy is the importance of community and togetherness in living and defending religious teachings. It emphasises that these three pillars must be fought collectively, showing that religion is not just an individual affair but also a social responsibility. It reflects the teaching that Muslims should support each other and work together to maintain and promote faith, religious practices, and sincerity in worship. "*As long as the spirit is conceived in order*" contains the philosophy that religious duty is lifelong. It teaches that, as long as man is alive, he is responsible for maintaining and improving his faith, religious practices, and the quality of his life. It indicates the continuity and permanence of religious duties in Muslims' lives.

3. Symbolic and Philosophical Political Meanings in Hamzanwadi's Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru.

In the stanza below, Hamzanwadi emphasises the importance of morality and responsibility in politics, highlighting the gap between leaders who are supposed to serve the people and the political reality that is sometimes more self-serving.

Indonesia	English
Banyaklah orang idenya piring	There are a lot of people with plate ideas
Siang dan malam berputar keliling	Day and night revolve around
Hanya membela kursi dan piring	Defending only chairs and plates
Tidak membela pemberi piring (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Not defending the plate giver (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

Using a semiotic approach can reveal the symbolic meanings of these stanzas that reflect the political realities faced by society. "*Plate Idea People*" contains symbolism depicting politicians or officials more concerned with personal or material gains than public interests or the community's welfare. The symbol "*plate*" here represents the power, wealth, or position that politicians want or aim for. They are likened to people who have only simple and superficial ideas, thinking only about how to gain and maintain power or personal gain. "*Day and night revolve around*" a symbol of the hard work or effort put in by politicians to achieve their goal, which is to maintain or acquire a political position or power. This symbol shows that politicians make every means and effort to gain political favour or advantage, even if it means they have to work endlessly or engage in unethical political practices.

"*Defending only chairs and plates*" contains symbolism showing that politicians' main goal is to maintain their political power or position and secure material benefits. They are portrayed as people who are only concerned with the continuation of their position or power, as well as with obtaining personal benefits or advantages from their political position, without regard for the welfare or needs of the community. "*Not defending the plate giver*" symbolises betrayal or disloyalty to the people or voters who provide support or mandate to politicians. This symbol shows that politicians often forget or ignore their responsibilities as representatives of the people or servants of the community and instead prefer to prioritise personal interests or certain small groups.

From a philosophical point of view, this stanza reflects the corrupt and immoral state of politics, where personal or group interests often take precedence over the public interest or welfare of the community. Hamzanwadi, as the author, can be understood as a critical observer of the political realities of society of his time. He uses these stanzas to criticise the corrupt and irresponsible behaviour of politicians, who are only concerned with their own power and personal gain. The philosophy in this stanza emphasises the importance of morality and ethics in politics. Politicians should be responsible for their actions and decisions and prioritise the interests of society over personal or group interests. They should be loyal and responsible public servants, not just seeking power or personal gain.

This stanza also teaches that active participation and supervision from the public are essential in maintaining integrity and morality in politics. People should be critical of the behaviour of politicians and vote for those who genuinely care and are ready to serve the community well. They should choose leaders with high integrity and morality who are committed to fighting the public interest. As such, this stanza reminds us of the importance of striving for clean and moral politics, where the people's interests come first, and leaders are held accountable for their actions and decisions. Hamzanwadi, as

an author, conveys a strong message about the importance of morality in politics and the need for a critical and active society to maintain the integrity of the political system.

The stanza below implies political meanings related to loyalty, devotion, and respect for the Nahdlatul Wathan organisation. This stanza's message emphasises loyalty and obedience to the organisation; in the political context, it can be interpreted as an effort to maintain stability and political power.

Indonesia	English
Janganlah nanda lupa daratan	Let us not forget the land
Karena mendapat kursi jabatan	For getting a seat of office
Kursi ananda diberikan Tuhan	Your God-given seat
Lantaran jasa Nahdlatul Wathan (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Because of the services of Nahdlatul Wathan (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

This poem, created by Hamzanwadi, a figure and leader of the Nahdlatul Wathan (NW) organisation, contains political symbolism relevant to the current political conditions in the NTB. "*Let us not forget the land*" symbolises the importance of NW obituaries and cadres not forgetting the roots and true purpose of the movement. "*Mainland*" here can be interpreted as the values, principles, and goals of Nahdlatul Wathan as a religious and political organisation. This symbol reminds NW members to stay true to the vision and mission of the organisation and maintain their political integrity during political pressure and vested interests. "*Because of a seat of office*" symbolises the temptation of power and political position. It refers to the political ambitions of NW members whom the lure of a seat in a government structure or organisation may tempt. The seat of office symbolises the power and influence that NW members can have if they succeed in achieving political positions. This symbol highlights the risk that NW members can get caught up in personal ambitions and lose sight of the organisation's true mission and values.

"*Your God-given seat*" in a political context indicates that the position or office is not only the result of personal effort but is a divine mandate that must be carried out with responsibility, honesty and integrity. For Abituren and Nahdlatul Wathan cadres, this phrase emphasises that political office should be viewed as a form of devotion to God and society, adhering to high ethics and accountability. It reinforces the symbolic meaning of the position as a mandate that must be accounted for following moral and spiritual values. This symbol emphasises the importance of trust in and awareness of God's provisions in undergoing political and organisational journeys. It also reflects the belief that God recognises and rewards integrity and honesty. God's predestination concerns the moral and ethical guidelines to be followed, while Divine predestination encompasses the predetermined outcomes of a person's life journey (Babar, 2022). "*Because of the service of Nahdlatul Wathan*" symbolises the appreciation and recognition of the organisation's contribution to society and the nation. It emphasises that political seats or positions obtained by NW members should result from their dedication and service to the organisation and society. It highlights the importance of maintaining integrity and leadership qualities that stem from the organisation's values rather than mere personal ambitions or political interests.

Philosophically, this stanza reflects the political dilemma that Nahdlatul Wathan members face amid political competition and external pressure. "*Do not let Nanda forget the land*" suggests that NW members should remain loyal to the values and goals of the organisation despite the temptations of power and personal ambition. This philosophy emphasises the importance of integrity and loyalty in navigating political journeys. "*For getting a seat of office*" contains a philosophy about the dangers of political ambition that can undermine an organisation's integrity and true purpose. It highlights the dangers of greed and egoism that can influence political decisions and actions. It teaches that political position is not the ultimate goal but should be based on moral values and societal commitment (Khundrakpam & Sarmah, 2024).

"*Your God-given seat*" brings the philosophy of destiny and divine justice to political affairs. This philosophy teaches that everything, including political positions, results from God's decree, not human

effort. It reminds NW members to surrender to God's will and go through the political journey with complete trust and awareness of his justice. "*Because of the service of Nahdlatul Wathan*" reflects a philosophy of rewarding and recognising genuine and reasonable contributions. This philosophy emphasises the importance of maintaining integrity and dedication to the organisation as the foundation of solid and responsible leadership. It teaches that a political position should not be the ultimate goal but should be based on dedication and sincere service to the community and nation.

In the stanza below Hamzanwadi criticises the political practices of some people who joined the NW. Hamzanwadi highlighted their main motive: to get a seat as the primary goal and defeat the actual goal.

Indonesia	English
Banyaklah orang memasuki NW	Many people enter the NW
Tujuan pokonya kursi pegawai	Many people enter the NW
Tidak berfikir hidupnya NW	Many people enter the NW
Iman takwanya berpagi-sore (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	The faith of his piety in the morning (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

This stanza, created by Hamzanwadi, reflects deep political symbolism and is relevant to the current political conditions in the NW organisation, especially in the context of efforts to gain political support from NW organisations in regional head elections. "*Many people enter the NW*" symbolises an increase in the number of members or sympathisers joining the NW, which could be related to political motives to gain the organisation's support in political contests. "*The main purpose of employee seats*" is to symbolise the political ambitions of individuals who use membership in the NW as a tool to gain power or political office. This symbol highlights the possibility of political infiltration within the organisation, where people join the NW not solely for religious or social purposes but also for personal political gain.

"*Not thinking about his life NW*" symbolises a lack of awareness and commitment to the mission and actual values of the NW. This symbol shows that some members or sympathisers do not pay attention to the organisation's contribution or impact on society and the nation but instead focus on personal or political interests. It reflects the potential use of NW to achieve individual political goals without regard to organisational integrity or tangible contributions to society. '*The faith of his piety in the morning*' symbolises religious practice often used as legitimisation or imagery in politics. This symbol highlights the possibility that some NW members or sympathisers use religious rhetoric, such as faith and piety, to gain the community's political support or legitimacy. It suggests that in a political context, religious symbols are exploited or manipulated to achieve specific political goals without regard to the actual moral values contained in religious practices (Dittmer, 2019).

The philosophical stanza reflects the political dilemma faced by organisations such as the NW, especially in the face of political pressure and vested interests that undermine the integrity and purpose of the organisation. "*Many people enter the NW*" It teaches that the number of members is not a measure of organisational success if it is not followed by loyalty and commitment to the mission and values of the organisation. This philosophy emphasises the importance of members' integrity and quality in maintaining the organisation's integrity. "*The main purpose of employee seats*" is to bring a philosophy about the dangers of political ambition that can undermine the integrity and purpose of the organisation. This philosophy highlights that political office or power is not the ultimate goal that religious or social organisations should pursue but should be based on sincere dedication and service to the community and nation.

"*Not Thinking About His Life NW*" contains a philosophy about the lack of awareness and commitment to the organisation's mission due to the dominance of political motives or personal interests. This philosophy teaches that every action or decision should be based on organisational values and positive contributions to society, not merely to achieve individual political goals. "*Iman taqwa early in the afternoon*" reflects a philosophy about using religious symbols in politics to gain support or legitimacy. This philosophy highlights the importance of maintaining integrity and honesty in political practice and avoiding using religion as a tool for personal or political gain. The emphasis on political symbolism in this stanza reminds NW members and administrators to stick to the

organisation's moral values and true mission and avoid falling into the trap of political ambition that can damage the integrity and reputation of the organisation.

The stanza below Hamzanwadi illustrates the complexity of the relationship between politics and moral values in his thinking and the challenges he faced in trying to defend the interests of people or society.

Indonesia	English
Sekali berlidah madu	Once honey-tongued
Berhati pahit bagai empedu	Heart bitter as gall
Berpolitik: "membela bambu"	Get political: "defending the bamboo"
Tujuannya umat jangan bersatu (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	The goal is for the people not to unite (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

When viewed through a semiotic lens, this stanza contains symbols that describe the world of politics and the behaviour of politicians. "*Lots of honey tongues*" symbolises politicians who use sweet words to influence others. The tongue of honey describes alluring rhetoric, sweet promises, and words that are pleasing to the ear but are often deceptive and misleading. Next, "*heart bitter as a gall*" symbolises the reality that contrasts with the sweet saying. A bitter heart-like bile symbolises intentions and ulterior motives that are not good or harmful. It suggests that behind sweet words lies hatred, dishonesty or ill will. Bile is a bitter bodily fluid, which, in this context, becomes a metaphor for moral and ethical decay hidden behind an attractive facade.

"*Political: 'defending bamboo'*" in the NW political context, the phrase "*defending bamboo*" has a significant symbolic meaning. Bamboo here symbolises strength, resilience, adaptability, and the roots of the organisation's traditions and values. In the political history of the NW, bambu describes an attempt to defend the values and principles of the organisation in the face of the challenges of the Times. This phrase emphasises the responsibility of the abituren and NW cadres to maintain their political integrity and identity, as well as to adapt to changing political and social conditions. "*Defending bamboo*" reflects a commitment to protecting and strengthening the existence of NW communities, showing how cultural symbols such as bamboo play a role in guiding and directing political strategies in historical and social contexts. "*the goal is for the people not to unite*" symbolises destructive and divisive intentions. It shows that behind the political actions taken, there is a hidden intention to divide society, creating divisions and conflicts. They aim to avoid unity, which could threaten their power or interests. It describes a political strategy to maintain power by dividing opposition forces from the general public.

Philosophically, this stanza presents a profound critique of dishonest and manipulative political practices. Its philosophy invites us to understand that politics is often used as a tool for personal or group interests, not for general welfare. It is relevant to the current political conditions in various parts of the world, where politicians are often more concerned with their personal or party agendas than the people's interests. "*Honey-tongued*" philosophically describes the duality between words and actions. It teaches that not everything that appears sweet on the surface reflects positive intentions. Political rhetoric is used to cover dishonest intentions, teaching us to be more critical and not easily mesmerised by sweet promises without actual evidence. In the current political context, we can see how political campaigns are full of big promises that are not always followed by concrete actions after the election. Politicians use rhetoric to arouse people's emotions and hopes, but their policies do not always match these promises when in power.

"*Heart bitter as gall*" contains a philosophy about the hidden reality behind the facade. It teaches that politicians' true intentions and motives differ from what they say. This philosophy invites us to be more cautious and not readily believe in outward appearances or sweet words but rather look at actual actions and their impact on society. This phenomenon is seen today in many political scandals where seemingly clean and committed politicians are involved in corruption and other unethical practices. It shows the importance of transparency and accountability in politics: people must constantly watch and criticise the actions of their leaders. "*Get political: 'Defending the bamboo'*" philosophically shows that politics is used to maintain power and narrow interests. It teaches about the dangers of identity politics

and interest politics at the expense of the public interest. *Bamboo*, while seemingly solid and flexible, teaches us how symbols of power can be misused for dishonesty. Identity politics, in which politicians exploit ethnic, religious, or group identities to gain support, is rife in contemporary politics. It divides society and diverts attention from substantive issues that should be the focus of public policy.

In the following stanza, Hamzanwadi criticises political practices driven by specific personal or group interests that may deviate from the moral and ethical principles that should be the foundation of politics.

Indonesia	English
Politik satu ditambah satu	Politics one plus one
Ditambah satu sama dengan satu	Plus one equals one
Dilancarkan oleh golongan tertentu	Launched by certain groups
Membela nafsu membela hantu (Hamzanwadi, 1981)	Defending lust defends ghosts (Hamzanwadi, 1981)

This stanza depicts the manipulative and dishonest dynamics of politics using rich symbols. Hamzanwadi, as a poet, uses symbolism to criticise corrupt and deceptive political practices. "*Politik one plus one plus one equals one*" symbolises unreasonable and irrational political calculations or logic. In this context, this symbol illustrates how politics often use faulty or manipulative logic to achieve specific goals. Numbers and facts in politics can be twisted to serve the interests of certain groups, obscure truth, and confuse the public. Hamzanwadi uses the word "*certain groups*" as a symbol to represent an elite group or political power that has a hidden agenda. These groups often have control over the political process and use their power to manipulate outcomes in favour of their personal or group interests. This symbol reflects the injustice and imbalance in the distribution of political power, where a few people have a disproportionate influence over policies and decisions that affect society.

"*Initiated by certain groups*" describes the action initiated by the group. The word "*launch*" here symbolises an active and organised effort to achieve their political goals. It shows that the elite group has deliberate intention and a carefully planned strategy to control the political situation. Hamzanwadi wanted to emphasise that power is not acquired by chance but through manipulation and careful planning. The phrase "*defending lust defending ghosts*" sharply criticises political practices among abitur and NW cadres. In NW politics, "*lust*" refers to the drive or personal ambition that dominates political action, such as the desire for power, influence, or material gain. It describes some members or cadres focused on their gain rather than the collective interests or values of the NW organisation. The "*Ghost*" in this phrase was chosen as a symbol because it represents something unreal, illusory, or fantasy—something that seems important or valuable but is empty or unaccountable. In the NW context, the "*ghost*" symbol portrays political promises, aspirations, or goals heralded as unrealisable illusions. It could include unrealistic promises, unclear goals, or programs that lack a solid foundation. The selection of the "*ghost*" as a symbol underscores several political phenomena in the NW driven by insubstantial agendas or misleading vested interests. This phenomenon is relevant to the political situation in the NW, where some cadres are caught up in pursuing personal ambitions or political support of a temporary nature that ultimately does not provide tangible benefits to the people and organisations of the NW. Using this symbol, Hamzanwadi highlights a deep-seated political problem: personal ambitions and unrealistic political promises can distract from society's more substantive and valuable goals.

This philosophical stanza contains deep criticism of dishonest and manipulative political practices. Through this poem, Hamzanwadi wants to reveal the harsh reality that truth and logic are often sacrificed to achieve specific political goals. "*Politics one plus one plus one equals one*" teaches that truth and logic are often sacrificed to achieve specific political goals. The philosophy behind this is that when improperly used, politics can be a tool to deceive and manipulate society. It illustrates how truth can be bent and twisted to serve the interests of certain groups. "*Specific group*" contains the philosophy that in every political system, there is an elite group with more power and control than the general public. The philosophy behind this critiques injustice and the power imbalance in politics. It emphasises that

power tends to be concentrated in a few who then use it to advance their agendas, often at the expense of the broader interests of society.

"*Launching by certain groups*" suggests that political power does not just happen by chance but is often the result of carefully planned and strategic actions by elite groups. It emphasises the importance of awareness of hidden agendas and manipulative strategies in politics as well as the need for vigilance from the public. Hamzanwadi reminds us that politics is about policy, who controls it, and how that power is used. "*Defending Lust defends ghosts*" contains a philosophy about the motivations behind political action. The philosophy behind this is that unbridled personal ambitions and the pursuit of illusions or unrealistic goals drive many political actions. It shows how politics can become an arena for fulfilling personal desires and that many political promises and goals are illusions that deceive the public (Laver, 1997).

4. The Relationships between Religion and Politics: A Cultural Symbolic Analysis

This research reveals how Hamzanwadi uses deep symbolism to illustrate the complex relationship between religion and politics within cultural and social contexts. Through a semiotic approach, he employs religious and political symbols to critique corrupt political practices and highlight the tension between religious, moral values and political realities. His poems emphasise that politics lacking moral and religious foundations can erode the integrity of individuals and society. Hamzanwadi stresses the importance of integrity, honesty, and morality in politics, teaching that political power and ambition must align with religious teachings to achieve ethical and responsible governance.

This study shares similarities with previous research exploring critical themes in Hamzanwadi's works, such as moral values, religion, and wisdom. Like Fatoni et al. (2022) and Nahdi et al. (2020), this research highlights Hamzanwadi's poetry as a source of moral and spiritual guidance while adapting traditional messages to modern contexts. Additionally, Atsani et al. (2023) and Sapiin et al. (2020) also focus on symbolism analysis to uncover meaning in their works. However, this study differs significantly by focusing on the relationship between religion and politics and critiquing corrupt political practices. In contrast, other studies emphasise moral messages, classical Islamic ethics, and performative dimensions in *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru* (WRMPB).

The implications of this study underscore the importance of understanding symbolism and philosophy in Hamzanwadi's works to assess how religion and politics interact and influence social and moral practices. This research encourages a deeper appreciation of literature as a tool for social reflection and critique by uncovering how he uses symbols to criticise corrupt political behaviour. It also highlights the need to integrate moral values and religious principles into political practices to foster a more ethical and just society. Additionally, the study emphasises the necessity of developing critical awareness of unethical political dynamics and maintaining integrity in leadership within both religious and political spheres.

This research is significant because it shows how the symbolism in Hamzanwadi's Literature portrays the intricate relationship between religion and politics while condemning corrupt and manipulative practices. Through a semiotic lens, the study enhances our understanding of moral and spiritual values within a socio-cultural context and underscores the importance of integrity and ethics in political life. It enriches literary scholarship by using literature as a means for social reflection and encourages discussions about the role of religious values in building ethics in political systems.

Several actions are recommended to deepen the understanding of symbolism, religion, and politics in Hamzanwadi's *Wasiat Renungan Masa Pengalaman Baru*. First, an in-depth analysis of the text using semiotic methods is suggested to be conducted to interpret the symbols. Second, study the cultural and social background in which the work was written. Third, incorporate interdisciplinary perspectives to achieve a holistic analysis. Fourth, compare Hamzanwadi's work with other literary pieces that explore similar themes. Finally, discussions and seminars should be organised to examine the research findings and their implications for contemporary political and ethical practices.

5. Conclusions

This analysis successfully identifies the religious and political symbols in Hamzanwadi's work and uncovers profound philosophical messages through a semiotic approach. The text's symbolism highlights the intricate relationship between religion and politics and conveys deeper meanings beyond literal interpretation. This study enhances the reader's understanding of religious and political values interwoven in literary works. Key contributions of this study include: 1) Emphasising that faith and piety act as essential moral compasses in politics, suggesting that political systems rooted in religious principles tend to exhibit greater integrity and ethics. 2) Highlighting the dangers of political ambition and power, which can erode individual integrity and distort religious teachings, as depicted by the political symbols in Hamzanwadi's work, illustrating the temptations of power and their potential to overshadow moral values. 3) Affirming that integrity and adherence to religious precepts are crucial for ethical and responsible political leadership, calling for leaders to integrate religious values into every political decision.

However, the study has some limitations, including a need for more exploration into how symbolism could be applied in the modern political context and the potential for varied interpretations of the text. Despite these limitations, this research offers valuable insights into the relationship between religion and politics in a literary framework while reinforcing the importance of moral principles for fostering ethics in political conduct.

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