

## The Relevance of Zainudin MZ's Political Preaching Thoughts to Urban Community Development

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### Abstract

In practice, Islamic preaching in this era is more often displayed and preached only on the narrow aspects of spirituality and morality. Meanwhile, aspects of culture, social, economy, let alone politics are rarely mentioned. The involvement of preachers in politics is still considered taboo. In such conditions, Zainudin MZ emerged to break the taboo. With a brave attitude, the kyai not only preached politically verbally but also directly entered into the practice of democratic politics that was full of deceit. By using a qualitative descriptive method that uses research data in the form of books, journals, and videos related to Zainudin MZ's political thoughts and movements, several findings were produced: first, the relationship between preaching and politics for Zainudin MZ is an integralistic relationship that is reflected in his preaching material on the ethics of political preaching and criticisms of government policies. Second, Zainudin MZ's political activities are based on a strong spirit of Islamism. It was proven when mass organizations and political parties were prohibited from using Islamic principles with the implementation of the sole principle of Pancasila, Zainudin immediately left the world of practical politics and focused on preaching. For him, there was no point in being in a party if the principle was not Islamic. When the sole principle was revoked, he returned to being active in politics and even became the general chairman of the Islamic party. Third, Zainudin's involvement in practical politics found a new phenomenon that preaching politics is difficult to realize in the realm of democratic politics. Therefore, after feeling that his preaching idealism could not be implemented practically, Zainudin MZ chose to withdraw from politics and called his involvement in past politics the era of ignorance. Fourth, the substance of Zainudin MZ's preaching is very relevant for urban society, especially in maintaining Muslim identity and in facing various social, cultural and political challenges.

### Keywords:

Politics, Islamism, urban

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## Introduction

Da'wah is an activity to convey Islamic values to society as *madh'u*. Its role is very strategic in building spiritual, social and political awareness of society. Moreover, in the midst of the dynamics of complex urban society, da'wah is required to play a role in responding to social issues that are developing in society. In other words, ulama or da'i for urban society are like the lights of the people whose contributions and existence are eagerly awaited by the people throughout time. (Asmani, n.d.)

As a form of a great sense of responsibility towards the people, ulama or da'wah must be able to intelligently target the problems of the people. And the most important problems of the people for society actually lie at the pinnacle of power, both people and systems. So important is the leadership position filled by ulama that a ulama named Fudhail bin Iyadh once said: if we have a prayer that is answered, then of course we pray for the leader.

Moreover, in the Islamic concept, leaders play an important role in upholding Islamic laws such as *hudhud*, upholding jihad and justice, helping the oppressed, regulating the social and economic life of the people and so on, which cannot be upheld except with power. The responsibility of political leaders that is so great cannot possibly be carried out optimally by stupid and wicked people (Al-Hambali, 2018).

On that basis, political da'wah, both society and rulers as objects of da'wah are very important in building political awareness of the people. Unfortunately, such a concept is inversely proportional to the current secular system where clerics are not a substantial consideration in leadership. Even though secular politicians need clerics who are shown by visiting Islamic boarding schools, Islamic mass organizations and community centers, they are limited to being a vote-raiser for the people in the election. Furthermore, clerics do not have a role that should be taken into account. However, the role of clerics in leadership remains important and is needed according to their abilities.

Clerics are needed to control the policies of the rulers and prevent potential rulers who are suspected of causing harm to the people. Oddly enough, there are a number of views that actually try to undermine the political struggle of the ulama through this extra-parliamentary path with various negative stigmas on them. This phenomenon was once read by a prominent Muslim figure, M. Natsir in his statement: Islam of worship, let alone. Islam of economy, supervised. Islam of politics, finished off.

In the midst of the strong current of the exclusion of Islam and politics, a figure of a preacher emerged with the title of 'preacher of millions of people' who struggled to integrate preaching and politics. The preacher is known to the public by the name of KH Zainudin MZ. In various occasions of his preaching, he not only preached Islam as a spiritual and moral religion, but also related to social, cultural and political issues. This approach cannot be separated from the preacher's belief that Islam is a comprehensive religion, covering all aspects of life.

For Zainudin, preaching must be a renewal movement that touches on the root of the problems of people's lives, including political issues that are considered taboo by some scholars. In fact, scholars of the people in the past have likened religion and politics to twin brothers who act as guardians of religion and the world.

Based on this background, the figure of the Betawi cleric, namely KH Zainudin MZ, is interesting to study. Because, during his life he was known as a cleric who had a role and political thoughts that were often conveyed in every moment of his preaching. It can be said that Zainudin is one of the Betawi ulama whose political role is so prominent during his preaching career.

The novelty value in this study lies in the focus of Zainudin MZ's contribution which integrates preaching and politics on the stage of preaching and politics, especially in urban society. The novelty value is seen in:

First, Zainudin MZ's integralistic approach in combining preaching with active participation in the world of politics. This theme is rarely raised in academic research, besides there are not many Islamic figures who are able to integrate preaching and politics.

Second, in the historical-political context, this study highlights changes in the dynamics of Indonesian politics, such as the implementation of the sole principle of Pancasila and its impact on the role of ulama in politics. All of that makes this study relevant in understanding the relationship between religion and politics, both with a theoretical approach, the experience of preachers, including Zainudin MZ.

## **Methods**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a qualitative descriptive method. This approach was chosen because this study focuses on an in-depth exploration of the political thoughts of KH Zainudin MZ's da'wah which are non-numerical and emphasize more on the interpretation of meaning. The data sources used in this study include books, journals and videos of Zainudin MZ's lectures that are relevant to the theme of da'wah politics.

According to Akbar, et al., video is a recorded document that contains a number of information needed by researchers. In addition to video recordings, recorded documents include films, microfilms, photos, videos, sound recordings and others (Iskandar et al., 2023). Another definition states that video recordings are a collection of events that can be seen, heard and felt that reveal real events from qualitative research subjects. (S. H. Wahid et al., 2023) Real events in the context of this study mean Zainudin MZ's da'wah videos that are spread across various media platforms.

Practically, in the current era of digital technology, videos as a source of data are easy to obtain. Likewise, Zainudin MZ's preaching can be efficiently accessed on various platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, and so on. In addition, the documentation method, both in the form of videos and written notes, is very helpful in increasing the credibility of qualitative research. (Sugiono, 2014)

Data collection using documentation study techniques, namely by collecting and analyzing written documents such as transcripts of lectures, books and related articles. In addition, an analysis was carried out on the audio-video lectures of KH Zainudin MZ which were documented in digital media to identify his political ideas.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Biography Of Zaenudin MZ Preaching***

The biography of Zainudin MZ is a necessity to study from childhood to adulthood. Because the thoughts and movements of a figure cannot be separated from their sociological background, education and political situation.

Zainudin MZ is a da'i of pure Betawi blood with the full name Zainudin Hamidi. Born in Jakarta on March 2, 1952. Even though his Betawi accent is very thick in preaching, he is also known to be fluent in imitating the accents of other tribes in Indonesia, such as Javanese, Sundanese and Medan. In the context of preaching psychology, this is very helpful in bringing da'i closer to madh'u from these areas.

From a family aspect, Zainudin was born from a father named Turmudzi and a mother named Zaindabun. When he got married, his father was 13 years old. This shows that early marriage is not always negative, as is the view of modern society today (Zainuddin MZ, 1997). The proof is, from early marriage a great da'i figure was born who was quite influential in the Indonesian public.

As a child, Zainudin was called Udin, a common nickname for other children in the archipelago. According to various sources, the nickname MZ attached to his name was taken from his father's name, Turmudzi, who died when Zainudin was 3 years old. (Juhara, 2005)

The orphan status attached to little Zainudin, on the one hand, caused sadness as is commonly experienced by everyone. On the other hand, the sad condition did not make Zainudin pessimistic in preparing for the future. On the contrary, it actually provided a stronger driving force to achieve a better future.

In the midst of sadness because his father had left him, from childhood to adolescence Zainudin was still able to study formally at MTs/MA Daarul Ma'arif Jakarta. At this institution, he used the moment of speech practice (muhadoroh) to hone his oratory talent which was already evident from his 'stubbornness' as a child. In various sources it is mentioned that when guests came to his parents' house, Zainudin often climbed the table and gave speeches in front of his grandfather's guests (Https://id.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zainuddin\_MZ, n.d.) Furthermore, he actively filled religious studies in the community which helped shape his rhetorical preaching skills.

When analyzed, Zainudin's oratory skills are not 'finished goods' that just come out of nowhere but through a long coaching process. At least, Zainudin's impressive preaching skills are the result of two meetings, namely: talent and self-sharpening.

In addition to formal education, Zainudin also participated in training activities and studied the speech styles of several figures such as KH Syukron Ma'mun, Subchan ZE, Ahmad Sjaichu, Buya Hamka, KH. Idham Chalid and Bung Karno. All the figures studied helped strengthen his own style and characteristics in giving speeches (Moeflich, 2017).

When he grew up, Zainudin married Chalilah. Precisely on February 4, 1972. When the wedding took place, Zainudin was still a student and was in the second semester of IAIN Jakarta. According to his confession, the initial test of marriage came in waves because his salary as a Madrasah teacher had to be divided to pay for college and support his wife. The economic situation forced him to move around, sometimes at his in-laws' house, sometimes at his grandfather's house until he finally settled down when his first child, Muhammad Fikri Haikal, was born. (Zainuddin MZ, 2016).

A new chapter in Zainudin MZ's life began in the mid-1970s, when his name began to be known by the public with his speeches that were widely liked by the public. He was known not only as a preacher but also as a fluent orator. The combination of mastery of material, eloquence, rhetoric and fresh humor made him able to enchant millions of people from various backgrounds, from high-ranking officials, military leaders, artists, academics, students, farmers, thugs, prostitutes and people on the outskirts. (D. Wahid & Makruf, 2017)

Not long after his preaching became better known, the public dubbed KH Zainudin MZ as the preacher of millions of people. This nickname was given because Zainudin's preaching was often attended by large crowds. In fact, even though he died in 2011, the lectures and thoughts of this preacher who was close to Rhoma Irama are still found on various media platforms, both conventional and social media.

This situation shows the love of Indonesian Muslims for this preacher from Kebayoran, South Jakarta. Indirectly, the political materials delivered by the preacher are actually quite accepted by the public. This is contrary to the assumption of some people who say that politics is the cause of division. On the contrary, politics when presented in a beautiful package and honest substance, not a mask, then political materials will be easily accepted by the people. Zainudin's figure became even more famous when his preaching was heard en masse through state radio and commercial radio in the 1980s-1990s. This condition made Zainudin's preaching increasingly popular and reached various levels of society through modern media. (Rakhmani, 2021) According to Masykuri, Zainudin and Qashim Nurseha are a series of popular preachers whose preaching is heard by all social groups, the general public and higher education. (Abdillah, 2015) A fact that cannot be ignored is that the media has long had a very significant role as a very effective means of preaching.

### **Zainudin MZ's Political Thoughts**

The political journey of the preacher who is known for his preaching rhetoric began in 1977. The first party that became the basis of his struggle was the United Development Party which was the only party based on the Islamic masses.

Personally, Zainudin's political career cannot be separated from the career of his teachers, namely KH Idham Chalid. In fact, Zainudin's admiration for his teacher was not only in terms of his political career but also in his speech style. Moreover, apart from being known as a politician, KH Idham is also widely known as a kyai figure who likes to give speeches and is a great speaker.

Apart from Zainunudin, another figure who has studied with KH Idham is Syukron Ma'mun. (Nurjaman, 2022)

Zainudin's involvement in politics cannot be separated from his curiosity about why Islamic parties always lose in political contests. He once expressed this when interviewed by a national newspaper to explain his reasons for returning to politics during the reformation and choosing the PPP, a party that he had raised in the New Order era. (<https://www.republika.id/posts/32709/>, n.d.). The fact that Islamic parties always lose, especially in the national political arena, is not just a figment of the imagination. Because, various data states that Islamic parties tend to lose support from the community from time to time.

According to Sirozi, there are at least five things that caused the defeat of Islamic parties, especially in the 1999 to 2024 elections. First, the campaigns of Islamic parties tend to be normative verbalists wrapped in religious messages. whereas what society needs is a concrete solution to get out of the prolonged crisis. On the other hand, non-religious parties use issues that are directly related to the needs of society. Second, the low credibility of party figures in the eyes of the people. In fact, an expression says Credibility is a precondition for getting your message heard. The damage to the credibility of Islamic party figures occurred because of their involvement in corruption cases, forming coalitions with secular parties and so on. Even though Islam teaches unity, in reality it is very difficult for Islamic figures to be united because they are pursuing their respective ambitions.

Third, the low level of education of the people. As reported by various media, education in Indonesia, which is predominantly Muslim, is still very low. This condition seems to be maintained so that higher education is considered by the Ministry of Education as a tertiary need. In fact, education helps someone to be able to use their conscience, mental, moral and physical abilities well, think rationally and act independently in making rational decisions and choices, including choices in the political field.

Fourth, the role of the media which is less biased towards Islamic parties or does not understand the political mission of Islamic parties. Fifth, some people are confused about choosing, let alone choosing one of 20 whose differences are not clear. (Sirozi, 2004).

According to researchers, the defeat of Islamic parties was caused by one factor alone, namely the inconsistency of Islamic parties towards Islam. Facts show that corruption and political pragmatism are not only carried out by nationalist-secular parties but also parties that claim to be Islamic parties. In fact, it seems that Islamic parties only use the name of Islam to gain support, not the basis and orientation of the struggle.

There are estimates that are considered excessive from Islamic parties with a majority Muslim population. In fact, empirically, since the first election was held in 1955, which was called the most democratic, it actually still lost. (Basyaib, 1999) The defeat continues to this day, the reform era. This phenomenon is important for the elite of Islamic parties to realize that the majority is not a guarantee for the victory of Islamic parties.

High social status due to his lectures that are liked by many people encouraged Zainudin to contribute to a more real level, namely politics. Such thinking cannot actually be used as an argument because it seems like da'wah activities are not real. In fact, da'wah in all its forms, whether oral, written or bil hal, are all real activities that have real impacts. (Abadi & Al Azhim, 2005)

There is a hadith of the Prophet that shows how successfully showing the path of guidance to one person is much better than valuable wealth, whether carried out bil lisan, bil qalam or bil hal. The words of the Prophet:

'By Allah, even one person who is given guidance (by Allah) through your intercession, then in truth it is better than a red camel. (HR Bukhari-Muslim).

Aunul Ma'bud explained the parable of the red camel as told by the Prophet. According to him, the red camel is the noblest treasure according to them (the companions) and the Arabs at that time. From here it appears that da'wah must use contextual communication by considering the sociological and psychological aspects of society as madh'u. Of course, such a parable is very suitable for the conditions of Arab society at that time who were proud of the red camel. So the Prophet compared the virtue of da'wah as much better than the vehicle that was proud of.



Indeed, there is da'wah whose impact can be measured but some cannot. However, in general da'wah is not instant because it not only invites but also fosters madh'u to ensure that their obedience to Islam is realized perfectly and continuously. Regarding this direct and indirect influence, the scholars outline the difference between da'wah ammah and da'wah fardhiah. Da'wah ammah is in the form of tabligh with the media of words, deeds or examples. Because of the congregational da'wah that involves many people, it is impossible for a da'i to accompany and assess the effectiveness of his da'wah. While fardhiah da'wah, after delivering, the da'i can accompany the madh'u and accompany seriously the influence of the da'wah that he conveys, both regarding faith, worship and morals. (Mahmud, 1995)

It cannot be denied that political power is more real in making changes and policies than just verbal words. Therefore it is said that a handful of power is more valuable than a basket of words.

From here it can be seen that Zainudin's intention with the words political da'wah is more real because it produces more real policies for the community as madh'u. In this regard, it is interesting to note the theory of Ibn Khaldun quoted by Mastori that all sharia matters such as prayer, issuing fatwas, trials, jihad and considerations are all under the supreme leadership (imamah al kubra). (Mastori, n.d.) Thus, it is clear that politics is a more real effort to guarantee the existence of Islamic laws in real terms.

In addition, Zainudin's view above shows that the desire to be involved in politics is a conscious effort to contribute to society. Bringing the idea of preaching through political channels is certainly very contrary to the secular ideology that is commonly followed by politicians in Indonesia. For example, in 2017, the President of Indonesia asked all parties to separate religion from politics. According to him, the separation was to avoid friction between people. The separation must be carried out properly so that the people know which is religion and which is politics (<https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2017/03/24/19084521>).

This statement indicates two things: first, indirectly accusing religion as the cause of division. Second, the president wants to implement secularism, an idea that has been declared heretical by the MUI in 2005.

The role of preaching in the political world carried out by KH Zainudin MZ shows that ideologically, this Betawi cleric is not a secular thinker. Even Zainudin's entry and exit from the PPP, an Islamic party that existed since the New Order era, was more for reasons of Islamic law than personal tendencies. As mentioned earlier, Chalilah's husband had resigned from politics when the New Order regime implemented the sole principle of Pancasila in 1984 (INDONESIA, 2004).

This attitude is different from his teacher, Idham Cholid, who chose to stay in the PPP. According to Zainudin, the reason his teacher stayed as a political party administrator was based on the philosophy that a party is like selling uduk rice. When it is prohibited, then sell porridge first, the important thing is to be able to sell. When one day it is permitted, then sell uduk rice again. However, Idham Khalid's attitude was not immediately followed by Zainudin who preferred the path of cultural politics among the people. For him, there was no point in being in a party if its principles were not Islam. As evidenced by the fact that when the reformation rolled, Zainudin finally 'returned home' and returned to the world of politics. However, for pragmatic reasons, Zainudin resigned from the PPP due to the postponement of the implementation of the PPP congress from 2002 to 2003. Together with Badjeber, he then founded the PPP Reformasi which later changed to the Partai Bintang Reformasi. (Pour, 2004)

### **Political Ethics Thoughts of KH Zainudin MZ**

Islam highly prioritizes ethics in various dimensions of life, including in the field of politics. As a preacher and political practitioner in the democratic system in Indonesia, Zainudin's thoughts are inseparable from ethical values or political morals, although it is not easy to apply Islamic political ethics in a secular political culture.

In relation to the relationship between ulama and umara', Zainudin has a principle: the worst ulama are those who approach umara' and the best umara' are those who approach ulama.

(<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/TgxwBUEbsyo>, n.d.). As a preacher, this principle comes from the main sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and hadith.

The argument for this principle comes from the hadith of the Prophet which means, truly Allah loves the ruler who comes to the ulama and hates the ulama who comes to the ruler. Because the ulama when they come to the ruler will be happy in the world, but if the ruler approaches the ulama then he will be happy in the afterlife. (HR Ad Dailami). In another narration from Abu Hurairah it is mentioned that: if you see a pious person mixing with the ruler, then know that he is a thief.

Zainudin explained that the umara who are close to the ruler then nothing is expected except prayers and various goodness. It is impossible because of worldly projects or interests. On the other hand, scholars who approach, follow and suck up to the umara' then there must be something desired from the world. (<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/TgxwBUEbsyo>, n.d.).

In general, the mutualistic relationship between scholars and umara' like this has been going on for a long time. However, this is not absolute. Although it rarely happens, it is possible for scholars to approach the umara' not for worldly interests but to carry out amar ma'ruf nahi munkar, namely preaching to the umara'.

The first capital of preaching to the umara, as also done by Zainudin MZ, with his fresh criticisms, is courage (al jurah) and without fear of the owner of power on earth because of the backing of the ruler of the universe, namely Allah SWT. As He says:

الَّذِينَ يُبَلِّغُونَ رِسَالَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَهُ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا

(namely) those who convey the messages of Allah, they fear Him and they do not fear anyone (anyone) except Allah. And Allah is sufficient as the Maker of Calculation. (QS Al Ahzab: 39).

Courage is the mentality of a da'wah warrior that must be cultivated by every da'i. Avoiding amar ma'ruf nahi munkar because of fear of humans and their power is unacceptable. It is narrated that on the Day of Resurrection Allah will ask the scholars and the believers in general, what prevented you from telling the truth to the oppressive officials? Some of them answered with the reason: we are afraid of them. Or some answered we are afraid of them, we are ashamed and feel uncomfortable. Then Allah said: 'I am the one you should fear. It is mentioned in the hadith: 'do not humiliate yourselves (namely) you see a matter of Allah that must be conveyed, but you do not convey it. (HR Ibn Majah). (Riyadh & Riyadh, 2007) \ n \ n This hadith firmly shows how courage is the main capital of da'wah, especially to rulers whose rejection of da'wah is often accompanied by injustice. It is not allowed because it only thinks about other people's feelings and then ignores Allah's right, namely in conveying the truth of Islam. In this context, Zainudin MZ's courage is seen in providing criticism and input to the authorities who always decorate the theme of his speech related to social and political criticism.

His courage was formed through a learning process with his teacher, KH Syukron Makmun. At that time, the kyai who was also the leader of the Darur Rahman Islamic boarding school was known as a brave preacher, especially in criticizing the New Order. Because of his courage, Syuron Makmun was often the target of mysterious gunfire. Overall, Zainudin MZ's preaching character was formed through four role models that he integrated, namely Bung Karno in terms of oratory style, KH Idham Kholid in terms of Islamic values in preaching, Hamka in terms of language arts, and Syukron Makmun in terms of his courage in criticizing anything. (<https://news.detik.com/opini/d-1677105>, n.d.)

Islam understands the psychological burden of preachers in their preaching efforts to the authorities. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah gave motivation and encouragement in the form of great rewards for those who are willing to carry out this mission. The Messenger of Allah said: the most important jihad is to say the right words in front of an oppressive ruler. (HR Abu Daud).

There is an opinion that says the great reward of preaching to the ruler is due to the level of difficulty. The Prophet's words: the best deeds are the most difficult and difficult and your reward depends on the level of your effort. When explaining this hadith, Imam Izz bin Abdussalam commented: the reward is essentially due to the different levels of sincerity and not depending on the difference in the level of effort. As for the hadith above, it can be explained that the greater the level of difficulty, it shows that he is sincere in doing it because of Allah. (As-Sulmi, n.d.)

Even though Zainudin MZ has been around in the world of politics in a democracy, from the New Order era to the reform era, it seems that he feels that the course of democratic politics is not as beautiful as he previously imagined. Politics which is claimed to be the path of struggle for the people but in fact cannot be separated from the tug of war of the interests of party elites who are far from thinking about the people. If in the 1980s Zainudin withdrew from politics due to macro reasons, namely the implementation of the sole principle of Pancasila which contradicted the ideology of the preacher, then in the 2000s, he withdrew for more micro reasons, namely political practices that were not in line with Islamic moral values.

Therefore, on various occasions, Zainudin referred to his past political experience as the era of ignorance that he had gone through. If previously he wanted to make a more real contribution in politics, but after jumping directly into practical politics, he said that politics was not the world of kyai. Because the expertise of kyai is not in the field of politics. (Nu Online, n.d.)

Zainudin MZ's statement can be called the political despair of the preacher because of the difficulty of applying Islamic idealism in the realm of secular democratic politics. In other words, the realm of secular democratic politics is not prepared for clerics in realizing the idealism of da'wah politics. Therefore, the morals and laws of da'wah politics will only be discourse without adequate application.

On another occasion, Zainudin MZ reminded politicians about the importance of having monotheism in running the wheels of power. In his preaching he said:

'So far we have faith in words but secular in deeds. In the mosque there is Allah, in the office there is no Allah then corruption is rampant. In the mosque there is Allah but in the market there is no Allah then the scales are rigged. Therefore, we need smart people but we need the right people more. If smart but not right then what happens is the emergence of officials who are not trustworthy. Asked to take care of rice but instead hoard rice, told to take care of the forest, everyone becomes forest people. Pirates of the sea. Asked to take care of the law but instead make the law like a knife, sharp downwards but blunt upwards.

From the content of the sermon above, it can be understood that the term secular has long been known by preachers, namely an understanding of the separation of religion from life. even secular thinking has been declared heretical by the MUI in 2005 because its existence endangers Islamic faith. As described by American theologian Harvey Cox, secularism contains three values: first, the emptying of worldly life from spirituality and religion. Second, the emptying of the political world from religious and spiritual values (desacralization of politics). Third, the denunciation of truth derived from holy books (deconsecration of value). Unfortunately, Cox sees secularism as a historical inevitability and is considered a movement that frees humans from dogma that shackles human freedom. Politically, secularism as a creed and policy implementation has actually been going on since European colonizers entered the archipelago which then continued during the old order, new order and reformation. In a certain period of time, radical secularism is not only dangerous for the destruction of a civilization based on religion but has the potential to destroy religion itself. Therefore, Zainudin MZ's rejection of secular ideas and practices that lead to existing political practices can be said to be an effort to save humans theologically from this dangerous creed. Of course, this is very relevant for Muslims everywhere, both in cities and villages.

The negative impacts of secularism are seen in various dimensions of life, both social, economic and political. The rampant corruption that occurs in Indonesia cannot be separated from the secular ideology that plagues public officials. In fact, there are various religious figures such as kyai or leaders of Islamic boarding schools who are caught in corruption cases.



### **The Relevance of Zainudin MZ's Political Preaching Thoughts to Urban Society**

Judging from their place of residence, society is divided into two, namely people who live in cities and people who live in villages. City communities are often termed urban communities. This term emphasizes more on the characteristics of life and the characteristics of urban communities that are different from rural communities (Jamaludin, 2015).

Urban communities are social groups that live in urban areas with the characteristics of modern life, complex social structures, and fast life dynamics. They usually have wide access to modern facilities, such as education, technology, economy, and public services, and live lives that tend to be heterogeneous and individualistic. This condition, psychologically, urban communities require a rhetorical and intellectual approach to preaching.

The needs of urban communities for da'wah have specific and complex characteristics that reflect the dynamics of modern life that is fast-paced, individualistic and full of challenges. Urban communities, amidst various dynamics and hustle and bustle, often experience psychological pressure, social alienation and loss of spiritual direction. Thus, in this context, society often experiences psychological pressure. Islamic da'wah has an important role as a medium for raising awareness and strengthening Islamic values that are relevant to modern life. Thus, the presence of da'i who understand the psychology of urban communities is important to provide direction and guidance in dealing with various problems faced by urban communities. However, methods and ushul of da'wah are needed that are in line with the psychological situation and social strata of urban communities.

With the unique character of urban communities and the dynamics faced, Zainudin MZ's da'wah generally plays a significant role in conveying political da'wah to urban communities. Moreover, the problems of society are greatly influenced by the political policies of the rulers. A German poet once said:

It is truly stupid to be someone who does not care about politics. he is stupid because his indifference gives room for fraudsters, corruptors and oppressors to run rampant. (Muharram et al., 2024).

This means that politics greatly determines the fate of the people. Meanwhile, politics can be seen from two perspectives: the ruler and the system. Because, the ruler does not issue policies but within the framework and paradigm of the system being run.

Zainudin is not only popular in urban communities but also in villages throughout Indonesia (Ahmad, 2018). However, he is a figure who is able to integrate preaching and politics that are in accordance with the needs of urban communities. In this context, urban communities need a comprehensive Islamic preaching approach that includes spiritual, social and political aspects. This principle is in line with the teachings of Islam which are comprehensive where all of its teachings cover the relationship between humans and Allah, the relationship between humans and humans and the relationship between humans and nature (Inayah, 2020).

Urban or city communities whose populations are growing rapidly face the challenges of identity crises, materialism and social inequality (Hani et al., 2024). Therefore, it requires preaching that not only touches on the ubudiyah aspect but also solutions to the problems of life they face. This is important to note considering that even though Islam is a perfect religion, in practice it is only preached on the spiritual and moral aspects.

The Islamic idealism brought by Zainudin MZ in his preaching has not yet been formed in the existing political system and ethics, but conceptually, Zainudin has succeeded in channeling the needs of urban communities with his preaching that prioritizes harmony between religious values and national life. His rhetorical skills and language intelligence are able to convey moral and political values clearly so that they are easily accepted by urban communities. This is proven by making Zainudin MZ a central figure who is able to bridge Islamic teachings with the reality of dynamic urban community life.

In dealing with the individualistic character of urban communities, Zainudin in his preaching emphasizes the importance of social relations built on Islam. According to him, social sensitivity must be fostered through practice, not just seminars. In this context, fasting becomes a

medium for fostering social sensitivity, namely by feeling hunger as felt by people who are hungry. Quoting the Qudsi hadith: Allah loves rich people who are generous but loves poor people who are generous more. (KH Zainudin MZ, 2022)

Urban communities are often faced with economic and social problems such as poverty, economic inequality and moral degradation. In this context, Zainudin emphasizes his preaching messages in shaping the mentality of the rich and poor in the city to remain obedient (KH ZAINUDDIN MZ, 2022). Meanwhile, the preaching material for those who carry the mandate of leadership, Zainudin emphasizes the ethics of leadership and criticism of government policies that do not side with the people. This kind of material is important in providing political education for urban communities to be more critical of government policies.

A critical attitude towards power is considered by some preachers as a rebellion that is not in accordance with Islamic principles. In fact, being critical of power has two bases: first, the basis of the constitution in force in Indonesia which allows its citizens to freely express their opinions according to articles 28 and 33 concerning human rights. Second, the basis of the Qur'an and Sunnah, as Allah says: indeed Allah commands you to convey the mandate to those who are entitled to receive it.

Likewise, it is stated in the hadith of the Prophet SAW: whoever sees evil, he should change it with his hand. If he is unable to do so with his tongue. If unable then with his heart. (Yulinda, n.d.)

Urban society faces the challenges of secularism and modernism. Secularism has even become a source of immorality. This ideology began to enter the Islamic world during the era of western imperialism in the Islamic world. The western world has a significant influence that causes some Muslims to imitate what the west thinks, including the spread of secularism (Dalmeri et al., 2022).

In this context, Zainudin provides an illustration of how a Muslim can maintain his Islamic identity and faith by carrying out Allah's commands and avoiding His prohibitions. According to him, the most expensive diamond and the most precious pearl are none other than faith (KH Zainuddin MZ, 2021).

## Conclusion

Zainudin MZ is a complex preacher with all the steps he has gone through. The combination of good understanding and unique rhetorical skills made his preaching accepted by the community until his death. Another advantage of this Betawi cleric is his ability and courage in responding to various social, economic, and political problems using a preaching perspective.

At the beginning of his preaching, Zainudin had the view that politics has a very important position as evidenced by his involvement in practical politics. However, in its development, the democratic politics that took place in Indonesia were not as ideal as he had imagined until he finally chose to leave the world of practical politics and return to preaching politics among the people.

For urban communities, Zainudin's preaching provides its own color. With the ability of rhetorical speeches combined with the ability to analyze religious arguments and socio-political contexts, urban communities, in particular, are able to survive with their Islamic identity amidst the currents of materialism, modernism and secularism.

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