

Secularism and Contemporary Muslim Politics: Repositioning Religion in a Democratic State

¹ Maulida Fitria, Muhammad Ashfiyani

¹ Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia

² Sekolah Pascasarjana UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia

Email Korespondensi : maulidafitria2003@mail.ugm.ac.id

Abstract

This research aims to analyze the dynamics of the relationship between secularism and contemporary Muslim politics and explain the process of religious repositioning in democratic countries. For decades, secularism was often understood as a separation between religion and state that was seen as a prerequisite for modernity and democracy. However, global political developments show that religion is not marginalized from the public sphere, but rather continues to play an important role in political and democratic life in various Muslim countries. This study uses a qualitative method with a library research approach and descriptive-comparative analysis. Data were obtained from books, journal articles, official documents, and various scientific publications that discuss secularism, democracy, and contemporary Islamic politics. The research analysis uses the theory of Multiple Secularities from Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Marian Burchardt, the theory of Public Religion from José Casanova, the theory of Twin Tolerances from Alfred Stepan, and the perspective of Governmentality from Michel Foucault. The results of the study show that Muslim countries are not moving towards a uniform model of secularism, but rather develop various forms of religious and state relations that are influenced by their respective historical, political, and cultural contexts. Religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state nor completely separated from public life, but is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that contributes to the strengthening of democracy. This research offers the concept of Democratic Religious Repositioning, which is a condition when religion and the state build a negotiable and accommodating relationship so as to allow religious values and democratic principles to develop in a complementary manner in a pluralistic society. These findings show that the future of contemporary Muslim politics does not lie in the dichotomy between the secular state and the religious state, but rather in the ability to build democratic, inclusive, and contextual governance of religious-state relations.

Keywords : *Secularism, Islamic Politics, Democracy, Post-Secular Society, Contemporary Muslim Politics.*

Introduction

The relationship between religion and the state is one of the most important issues in contemporary political studies, especially in countries with Muslim majority populations. For decades, secularism has often been understood as the principle of separating religion from state and political affairs. This perspective departs from the historical experience of Europe which places secularization as a consequence of the modernization, rationalization, and differentiation of social institutions. In the classical paradigm, modernization is expected to reduce the role of religion in the public space and encourage religion to become the private affairs of individuals (Abdillah, 2019). However, global political developments show that this assumption is not fully proven. Religion remains present and plays an important role in political life in various countries, including in the Muslim world.

The revival of religion in the public sphere since the late 20th century challenged the classical theory of secularization that predicted the declining influence of religion in modern life. Various political phenomena, such as the rise of Islamic movements, the increasing role of religious organizations in the democratization process, as well as the emergence of religion-based parties in various countries, show that modernity does not always lead to full secularization. José Casanova called this phenomenon the

deprivatization of religion, which is a condition when religion re-enters the public sphere and is involved in various social and political processes. Thus, modernization does not eliminate religion, but changes its form and pattern of involvement in public life (Casanova, 1994).

In the context of the Muslim world, the debate over secularism has become more complex because the relationship between religion and politics has historically had a different character from the Western experience. Islam is not only understood as a belief system, but also as a source of social ethics, law, and political identity. Therefore, the idea of a total separation between religion and state is often seen as not entirely in line with the historical and political cultural experience of Muslim societies (Rachman, 2010). The debate on the position of religion in the modern state then gave birth to various models of religion-state relations, ranging from strict secularism, accommodative secularism, to state models that provide large space for religion in public life.

Contemporary political developments show that Muslim countries are not moving towards a uniform model of secularism. In contrast, the relationship between religion and the state develops in diverse forms according to the historical and political context of each country. Turkey, for example, developed a model of state secularism (*assertive secularism*) that

placed religion under state control. Indonesia developed a more accommodating model of religious-state relations by recognizing the role of religion in public life without making a particular religion the basis of the state. Meanwhile, Malaysia adopted a model that placed Islam as the official state religion, but still maintained a democratic system and a multicultural society. This condition shows that secularism cannot be understood as a single concept, but as a phenomenon that has many variations (*multiple secularities*).

These changes also show that contemporary Muslim politics is undergoing a process of religious repositioning in a democratic country. Religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state as some classical Islamist movements have championed, but it is also not completely separated from the public sphere as the classical secularization theory assumes. Instead, religion is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that can contribute to the strengthening of democracy, the development of civil society, and the formation of collective identity. In this context, the relationship between religion and democracy is no longer understood as an antagonistic relationship, but as a process of negotiation and adaptation that continues to develop (Munandar, 2025).

In various Muslim countries, religious organizations and Islamic actors continue to play an important role in the process of democratization, political education, public policy advocacy, and social welfare

development. This phenomenon shows that religion remains a relevant social and political force in the modern era. In fact, various studies show that democracy can develop side by side with the existence of religion in the public sphere as long as there are arrangements that allow the state and religious institutions to respect each other's limits of authority. Thus, modernity and democracy are not always synonymous with religious marginalization, but can open up space for the emergence of new forms of relations between religion and the state (Fachruddin, 2006).

Nevertheless, the study of secularism and contemporary Muslim politics is still dominated by a dichotomous approach that opposes the secular state and the religious state. This approach often fails to explain the various forms of religion-state relations that are developing in the Muslim world today. In fact, the experience of various countries shows that religion can remain present in the public space without having to threaten democracy and pluralism. Therefore, a perspective is needed that is able to explain how religion is repositioned in democratic countries and how Muslim countries negotiate the relationship between secularism, democracy, and religious identity.

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the development of contemporary Muslim secularism and politics and explain the process of religious repositioning in a democratic state. This research offers the concept of Democratic Religious Repositioning, which is a condition when religion is no longer

positioned as the formal basis of the state or completely separated from political life, but is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that contributes to the strengthening of democracy and state life in contemporary Muslim society.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach and comparative analysis. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to deeply understand the dynamics of the relationship between secularism and contemporary Muslim politics and explain how religion is repositioned in democratic states in various Muslim countries (Hamzah, 2020). Meanwhile, the literature study approach is used because the research focuses on conceptual and interpretive analysis of various theories and research on secularism, democracy, religion, and Islamic politics.

The source of research data consists of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from books, journal articles, and scientific papers that discuss the theory of secularism, *multiple secularities*, *public religion*, *twin tolerances*, and religion-state relations in the Muslim world. The secondary data was obtained from reports of international institutions, policy documents, state constitutions, publications of research institutions, and various research results related to the development of Islamic politics and democracy in Muslim countries.

The data collection technique is carried out through documentation studies and systematic literature review by identifying, classifying, and selecting various literature sources that are relevant to the focus of the research. The literature used includes research on secularism, Islamic politics, democracy, religious and state relations, and the development of contemporary Muslim politics in various countries. The selection of literature is based on the relevance of the theme, the quality of the publication, and its contribution to the development of the research analysis framework.

Analisis data dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis melalui empat tahapan. Pertama, reduksi data, yaitu menyeleksi berbagai data dan informasi yang relevan dengan fokus penelitian. Kedua, kategorisasi data, yakni mengelompokkan data ke dalam beberapa tema, seperti konsep sekularisme, model hubungan agama dan negara, posisi agama dalam demokrasi, dan transformasi politik Muslim kontemporer. Ketiga, analisis komparatif, yaitu membandingkan berbagai model hubungan agama dan negara di negara-negara Muslim untuk menemukan pola dan karakteristik perkembangan sekularisme kontemporer. Keempat, interpretasi data, yaitu menafsirkan temuan penelitian dengan menggunakan teori *Multiple Secularities* dari Monika Wohlrab-Sahr dan Marian Burchardt, teori *Public Religion* dari José Casanova, teori *Twin Tolerations* dari Alfred Stepan, serta perspektif *Governmentality* dari Michel Foucault.

To improve the validity of the data, this study uses source triangulation, which is comparing information obtained from various books, scientific articles, research reports, and official documents. This technique is used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the transformation of religious and state relations in contemporary Muslim politics as well as to minimize interpretive biases towards the phenomenon being studied.

As a literature-based research, this study has limitations because it does not involve the collection of field data directly through interviews or observations. Therefore, the findings of this study are more directed to build a conceptual and analytical framework regarding the repositioning of religion in democratic countries and provide a theoretical basis for empirical research on the relationship between religion, secularism, and democracy in the Muslim world in the future.

Result and Discussion

The Concept of Secularism in Contemporary Muslim Politics

Secularism is one of the most debated political concepts in the study of the relationship between religion and the state. Classically, secularism is understood as the principle of separation between religious institutions and state institutions, in which religion is placed in a private space and has no formal authority in the political process and administration of the state. The concept developed from the historical experience of Europe marked by the long

conflict between church and state and the process of modernization that encouraged differentiation between religious institutions and political institutions.

The classical theory of secularization put forward by Peter Berger and Bryan Wilson assumes that modernization, industrialization, and rationalization will lead to a decline in the influence of religion in public life. In this perspective, religion is predicted to lose its relevance in modern society and gradually shift to the private affairs of individuals. Therefore, secularism is often seen as a logical consequence of modernity and democracy (Berger, 1967; Wilson, 1982).

However, global political developments show that this assumption is not fully proven. The rise of religion in the public sphere in the late 20th and early 21st centuries shows that modernization does not always lead to secularization. Various religious movements, faith-based political parties, and religious organizations continue to play an important role in political life in various countries, including in the Muslim world.

In José Casanova's perspective, this phenomenon is referred to as the deprivatization of religion, which is a condition when religion is again present in the public sphere and involved in various social and political processes. According to Casanova, modernity does not eliminate religion, but changes the form and pattern of its involvement. Religion no longer dominates the state as it did in pre-modern times, but it is also not completely

eliminated from public life (Casanova, 1994).

This phenomenon shows that the relationship between secularism and religion cannot be understood through a simple dichotomy between a secular state and a religious state. Instead, the relationship develops in various forms that are influenced by the historical, cultural, and political context of each country.

In the context of the Muslim world, the debate on secularism becomes more complex because Islam has historically not recognized a firm separation of religion and politics as the European experience. Islam is understood not only as a belief system, but also as a source of social ethics, law, and political identity. Therefore, the idea of a total separation between religion and state is often seen as incompletely incompatible with the historical experience of Muslim societies.

Talal Asad argues that secularism is not a universal and neutral concept, but rather a historical construct born of a particular Western experience. According to him, secularism does not only separate religion and state, but also shapes the way society understands religion, public space, and political authority. Thus, the application of secularism in Muslim countries cannot be understood as a process of imitation of the Western model, but rather as a process of negotiation between modernity, religion, and local contexts (Asad, 2023).

This view is in line with the theory of Multiple Secularities put forward by

Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Marian Burchardt (2012). According to this theory, secularism did not develop in one universal form, but it had different variations according to the historical and cultural experiences of each country. Therefore, there is no single model of the relationship between religion and the state that can be considered a single standard for the entire society.

In the context of contemporary Muslim politics, secularism is no longer understood as an attempt to eliminate religion from the public sphere, but as a mechanism to regulate the relationship between the state and religion within the framework of democracy. Religion remains an important role in social and political life, but its existence is negotiated through the principles of democracy, pluralism, and citizenship.

This transformation shows that contemporary Muslim politics is undergoing a fundamental change in understanding the position of religion in the state. Religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state as some classical Islamist movements have championed, but it is also not completely separated from public life. On the contrary, religion is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that can contribute to strengthening democracy and state life.

Thus, secularism in contemporary Muslim politics cannot be understood as a process of secularization that removes religion from the public sphere, but rather

as a process of negotiation and adaptation that continues to evolve between religion, the state, and democracy. This phenomenon shows that modernity and democracy are not always synonymous with the marginalization of religion, but can open up space for the emergence of new forms of relations between religion and state in the Muslim world.

Perdebatan Sekularisme dan Politik Islam

The relationship between secularism and Islamic politics is one of the most complex debates in contemporary political studies (Mursal, 2022). For decades, secularism has often been positioned as the antithesis of Islamic politics. In this perspective, democracy and modernity are seen as able to develop only through a firm separation between religion and state. On the contrary, Islamic politics is often perceived as a threat to democracy because it is considered to be an attempt to make religion the basis for political legitimacy and state law. This dichotomous view is heavily influenced by European historical experience which places secularization as a prerequisite for the development of the modern state and liberal democracy.

However, political developments in the Muslim world show that the relationship between Islam and democracy is much more complex than simply the conflict between religion and secularism. The experience of various Muslim countries shows that religion continues to play an important role in the public sphere and political life without having to hinder

the democratization process. In fact, in some cases, religious organizations and actors have played an important role in encouraging democratic transition, strengthening civil society, and protecting citizens' rights (Esposito & Voll, 1996).

According to Alfred Stepan, democracy does not require a complete separation between religion and state. What is needed is twin tolerances, which are conditions when the state gives freedom to religious communities to carry out their religious activities, while religious groups accept the legitimacy of democratic institutions and do not impose religious domination over the state. In this perspective, religion and democracy do not have to be in an antagonistic relationship, but can adapt to each other and build cooperative relationships (Stepan, 2000).

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be understood as a negotiation process influenced by the social, political, and cultural context of each country.

The debate gave birth to various models of relations between Islam and countries in the Muslim world. Some countries, such as Turkey in the time of Kemalism, adopted a stricter model of secularism by placing religion under state control. Instead, countries like Indonesia are developing a more accommodating model, in which the state recognizes the importance of religion in public life without making a particular religion the basis of the state. Meanwhile, Malaysia places Islam as the official religion of the country, but still maintains a democratic system and a multicultural society.

These variations show that secularism and Islamic politics are not in a mutually negated relationship. On the contrary, both continue to undergo a negotiation and adaptation process in accordance with the needs of society and the development of democracy. In the context of contemporary Muslim politics, religion is no longer positioned as the sole basis of the state nor is it completely separated from the public sphere. On the contrary, religion is increasingly understood as a source of public ethics, social capital, and moral legitimacy that can contribute to strengthening democracy.

In Jürgen Habermas's perspective, modern society has entered the phase of a post-secular society, which is a condition in which religion remains an important part of the public sphere even though the

process of modernization and secularization is ongoing. According to Habermas, a democratic state does not need to eliminate religion from the public sphere, but must create a dialogue mechanism that allows religious values and democratic principles to interact constructively with each other (B. Menoh, 2015).

This phenomenon suggests that contemporary Muslim politics is moving towards a new form of relationship between religion and state. The debate no longer focuses on the choice between a secular state or a religious state, but rather on how to manage the existence of religion in a democratic and inclusive public space. Thus, secularism in the context of the Muslim world is no longer understood as a project of religious marginalization, but rather as an effort to build a governance of religious-state relations that is able to guarantee religious freedom, pluralism, and democracy.

Based on this analysis, it can be understood that secularism and Islamic politics are not two concepts that are inherently contradictory to each other. In fact, the two can develop side by side through a process of negotiation and adaptation that allows religion to continue to have a role in public life without threatening the principles of democracy and citizenship. Therefore, the main challenge of contemporary Muslim politics is not to choose between religion or secularism, but to find a model of relationship that is able to integrate religious values with democratic principles

in an increasingly plural and complex society.

Repositioning Religion in a Democratic State

The development of global politics in the 21st century shows that religion has not regressed as predicted by classical secularization theory. On the contrary, religion remains one of the social and political forces that has a great influence on public life. This phenomenon can be seen from the increasing role of religious organizations in the democratization process, public policy advocacy, social welfare development, and the formation of political identities in various countries. This condition shows that the relationship between religion and the state is undergoing a transformation towards a new form that is more complex and dynamic (Blanton, 2025).

In the context of contemporary Muslim politics, these changes are marked by the repositioning of religion in democratic countries. Religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state as some classical Islamist movements have championed, but it is also not completely separated from public life as assumed by the strict model of secularism. Instead, religion is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that can contribute to the strengthening of democracy and the development of civil society.

This phenomenon shows that democracy and religion are not in a mutually negating relationship. The

experience of various countries shows that democracy can develop side by side with the existence of religion in the public sphere as long as there is a mechanism that allows states and religious communities to respect each other's limits of authority. In Alfred Stepan's perspective, these conditions are referred to as twin tolerances, which are reciprocal relationships when the state gives freedom to religious communities to participate in the public space, while religious groups accept the legitimacy of democratic institutions and do not seek to dominate the state (Stepan, 2000).

The concept of *twin tolerances* provides a new perspective in understanding the relationship between religion and democracy in Muslim countries. Throughout this time, the debate on democracy in the Muslim world has often been mired in the dichotomy between a secular state and a religious state. In fact, empirical experience shows that many Muslim countries are developing more flexible and accommodating forms of religious-state relations. In this context, religion still has an important role in public life without eliminating the principles of democracy and pluralism.

According to José Casanova, this development shows the process of deprivatization of religion, which is the return of religion to the public sphere after previously predicted to experience privatization due to modernization. Religion is no longer limited to individual spiritual affairs and rituals, but is involved in a wide range of public issues, such as

human rights, social justice, education, the environment, and state policies. Thus, religion is one of the important actors in the contemporary democratic process.

In Muslim society, the repositioning of religion in a democratic country can be seen from the increasing role of religious organizations in various social and political activities. Islamic organizations not only function as da'wah institutions, but also become important actors in education, health services, economic empowerment, public policy advocacy, and civil society development. The existence of these organizations shows that religion has the capacity to contribute to the strengthening of democracy through the formation of social *capital* and civic participation (Mujani, 2003).

In Indonesia, for example, organizations such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah play an important role in the process of democratization and strengthening civil society. Both organizations show that religion can be the source of the values of democracy, tolerance, and pluralism. Religion is not positioned as an exclusive political ideology, but as a source of public ethics that encourages the creation of a democratic life (Aris & Susanti, 2024).

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In the perspective of Jürgen Habermas (2008), modern society has entered the phase of a post-secular society, which is a condition where religion remains relevant in the public sphere even though the

process of modernization and rationalization is ongoing. In a post-secular society, a democratic state cannot ignore the role of religion in public life. Instead, the state must create a space for dialogue that allows religious values and democratic principles to interact constructively.

This view shows that the repositioning of religion in a democratic state does not mean restoring the dominance of religion over the state or eliminating religion from the public sphere. The repositioning of religion actually shows an effort to find a new form of relationship between religion and the state that is more balanced, where religion can contribute to public life without threatening pluralism and democracy.

Based on this analysis, this study argues that contemporary Muslim politics is undergoing a transformation towards a more flexible and accommodating model of religious-state relations. Religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state or marginalized from the public sphere, but is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital in a democratic system. This process of repositioning shows that the future of religion-state relations in the Muslim world is not determined by the choice between secularism or the religious state, but by the ability to build relations that are democratic, inclusive, and respectful of the diversity of societies.

Democratic Religious Repositioning as a New Paradigm of Contemporary Muslim Politics

The results of this study show that the relationship between religion and the state in the contemporary Muslim world is undergoing a fundamental transformation. The classic debate that places secularism and religion as two opposing entities is increasingly losing its relevance in explaining political dynamics in Muslim countries. Empirical experience in various countries shows that religion does not disappear from the public sphere as predicted by classical secularization theory, but instead undergoes a process of transformation and repositioning in the democratic political system.

This phenomenon gives birth to what in this study is called Democratic Religious Repositioning, which is a condition when religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state or completely separated from political life, but is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that contributes to the strengthening of democracy. This paradigm shows that religion and democracy are not two concepts that eliminate each other, but two elements that can develop in a complementary way in modern political life.

Theoretically, this concept is a critique of the two dominant approaches in the study of the relationship between religion and the state. First, the criticism of classical secularization theories that assume that modernization will cause religion to lose its influence in the public sphere. The experience of various Muslim countries shows that modernization does not

eliminate religion, but changes the form and pattern of its involvement in politics. Religion remains a source of collective identity, moral legitimacy, and social mobilization that has a profound influence on the political process.

Second, this concept also criticizes the classical Islamist paradigm which views the state as the main instrument for realizing Islamic values through the formalization of the sharia and the establishment of an Islamic state. Contemporary political developments show that the project of Islamism faces various limitations, both in the context of democracy, pluralism, and the management of multicultural societies. As a result, many Islamic actors and organizations have begun to shift their political orientation from symbolic struggles to more substantive agendas, such as social justice, welfare, governance, and the protection of citizens' rights.

In the perspective of José Casanova (1994), this phenomenon shows that religion is undergoing a process of deprivatization, that is, the return of religion to the public space in a new form. However, the religion that returns to the public sphere is not a religion that seeks to control the state as in pre-modern times, but a religion that participates in the democratic space through civil society mechanisms, political parties, social organizations, and various other forms of public participation.

Thus, religion in the democratic era no longer functions as a source of absolute political authority, but rather as a moral

force that provides an ethical orientation for public life. This change shows a transformation from the religious state to the religious public sphere, where religion still has an important role, but does not dominate state institutions.

In the context of the Muslim world, this phenomenon can be observed through various contemporary political developments. In Indonesia, Islamic organizations play an important role in education, social services, community empowerment, and the strengthening of democracy. In Malaysia, Islam remains an important part of national and political identity, but its political practices are increasingly moving towards pragmatism and governance. In Tunisia, Ennahda's transformation shows an effort to integrate Islamic identity with democracy and the principle of a civil state. Even in Turkey, despite the tendencies of populism and conservatism, religion continues to operate within the framework of electoral democracy and modern political legitimacy (Mikail et al., 2023).

These developments show that the relationship between religion and the state can no longer be understood through the dichotomous model between a secular state and a religious state. Instead, various hybrid models have emerged that show that religion and democracy can interact dynamically and adapt to each other.

In the perspective of Multiple Secularities of Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Marian Burchardt, this phenomenon shows that secularism develops in diverse forms

according to the historical and cultural context of each country (Wohlrab-Sahr & Burchardt, 2012). There is no single model of religion and state relations that can be universally applied. Muslim countries developed different forms of secularism and religious management, but they all showed the same tendency, which was to make room for religion in public life without eliminating democratic principles.

This analysis leads to the argument that democracy in the Muslim world is moving towards a post-secular model of democracy, which is a political system that recognizes the importance of religion in the public sphere while maintaining the principles of democracy, pluralism, and citizenship. In this model, religion is not positioned as a threat to democracy, but as one of the sources of social capital and public ethics that can strengthen democratic life.

However, the process of repositioning religion in a democratic country also faces various challenges. First, the rise of religious populism in various countries shows that religion is still vulnerable to being used as an instrument of political mobilization and power legitimization. When religion is politicized for electoral gain, it has the potential to reinforce social polarization and threaten democratic cohesion.

Second, the strengthening of identity politics shows that religion is still a source of political exclusion that can give rise to social segregation and weaken the principle of equal citizenship. Under

certain conditions, religious identity can be used to define who is considered part of a political community and who is positioned as an outside group.

Third, another challenge arises from the rise of religious conservatism which in some cases encourages demands for the formalization of religion in the state. This phenomenon shows that the process of religious repositioning is not a linear process and always moves towards moderation, but is an arena of ongoing contestation between various actors and political interests.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study suggest that the main tendency of contemporary Muslim politics is not towards full secularization or the revival of the religious state, but towards a more flexible form of relationship between religion and the state. Religion is maintained as a source of moral legitimacy and collective identity, but its existence is governed through democratic mechanisms and constitutional principles.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research shows that the relationship between secularism and contemporary Muslim politics undergoes a significant transformation. Modernization and democratization did not cause religion to lose its relevance in the public sphere as assumed by classical secularization theory. In contrast, religion remains an important social and political force in various Muslim countries, albeit in different forms and roles. The findings of the study show that Muslim countries are not moving towards a

uniform model of secularism, but are developing various patterns of relations between religion and state that are influenced by their respective historical, cultural, and political contexts. In this context, religion is no longer positioned as the formal basis of the state nor completely separated from public life, but is repositioned as a source of public ethics, moral legitimacy, and social capital that contributes to the strengthening of democracy. Based on these findings, this study offers the concept of Democratic Religious Repositioning, which is a paradigm that explains that the relationship between religion and the state in the Muslim world develops through a process of negotiation, accommodation, and adaptation that allows religion and democracy to reinforce each other in a plural and inclusive public space.

This study recommends that Muslim countries develop a more inclusive and democratic model of religion-state relations by placing religion as a source of public ethics without making it an instrument of political domination or removing it from the public sphere. Strengthening dialogue between the state, religious organizations, and civil society needs to be encouraged to create democratic governance that respects pluralism, religious freedom, and civic rights. In addition, further research is recommended to conduct empirical and comparative studies on the practice of religious and state relations in various Muslim countries, especially related to the role of religious organizations, faith-based

political parties, and the Muslim youth in shaping the model of post-secular democracy in the contemporary era.

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