
THE POLITICAL IDEOLOGY OF ISLAM AS EXPOUNDED BY IMAM AL-MAWARDI AND ITS PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the political ideology of Imam al-Mawardi as presented in "Al-Ahkam as- Sulthaniyyah" and its relevance to contemporary politics in Indonesia. The aim of the research is to understand how al-Mawardi's proposed political principles can be applied in the context of modern leadership. Utilizing text analysis through historical and anthropological approaches, the study evaluates the political movement initiated by al-Mawardi. The findings indicate that every leader must meet six essential criteria according to al-Mawardi: embracing and integrating religion as a moral force, possessing charismatic leadership qualities, ensuring fair treatment for all individuals, guaranteeing equal protection for everyone, promoting sustainable land productivity, and providing people with hope for their survival. These six characteristics are considered highly relevant for effective leadership in Indonesia, demonstrating that al-Mawardi's principles can offer valuable guidance for modern leaders.

KEYWORDS *Islamic political theory, Caliphate system, Political philosophy in Islam*



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INTRODUCTION

Historically, the Islamic world has been a prolific source of influential leaders and intellectuals whose names and works continue to be relevant and cited when addressing many situations and challenges faced by Muslims. The intellectual wealth of Islam during the Abbasid Caliphate era left a profound impact on history through developments in scientific knowledge and theological philosophy (Yunus, 2020). Al-Mawardi is a notable philosopher and thinker who played a crucial role in establishing

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the principles of Islamic political science and contributed to the advancement of the Abbasid dynasty. Imam Al-Mawardi is a renowned authority in fiqh, specifically specializing in political fiqh, and is widely regarded as one of the most impactful personalities in Islamic political ideology. The book *al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyah*, authored by Da'lam, is renowned for its extensive collection of political theories that continue to be pertinent and employed by certain Islamic groups in the governance of diverse political and state-related matters (Rahmawati, 2018).

Al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyyah is highly esteemed and commonly considered to be the most precise exposition of Islamic political theory, specifically within the Sunni community (Widyatama, 2014). This book holds the distinction of being the inaugural treatise created in the realm of political science and provides an intricate examination of state administration within the context of Islamic history. Nevertheless, the book is seldom subjected to a comprehensive analysis that delves into its purpose, the references employed during its creation, and its impact on current and future generations. These features are frequently disregarded and insufficiently emphasized (Azhar, 1996). This article will examine various aspects of Al-Mawardi, including his biography, the social and political atmosphere of his day, and most importantly, the political theories and administrative systems he developed. The intention of this writing is to provide a clear depiction and explanation of Al-Mawardi's political thoughts.

Multiple studies (Diana, 2018; Ahyar, 2018; Diana et al., 2018; Sholehuddin, 2014; Amin, 2016; Sahidin, 2021) elucidate that the political ideology of Imam Al-Mawardi emphasizes the significance of the institutional approach in effective state governance. According to these studies, each state institution plays a vital role in fulfilling specific functions within a well-organized framework. The state and religion are inseparable, as religion serves as a reflection of the ethical and moral values upheld by governmental officials. Religious principles are manifested in the state, specifically in the implementation of justice, security, welfare, the preservation of life, and charismatic leadership.

This paper differs from other scholars in that it examines and reflects on Imam al-Mawardi's political beliefs, as well as analyzes how his political conceptions are used to investigate Indonesia's political approach. Is there a link between Imam al-Mawardi's political principles and those adopted in Indonesia? As a result, it is critical to examine this body of literature using a variety of techniques, including both historical and political views, in order to make compelling arguments and serve as an indicator within the governance system.

RESEARCH METHOD

This composition is the outcome of a comprehensive examination of literature, specifically utilizing primary data sources in the form of books authored by Imam al-Mawardi. In order to enhance the data analysis, this research also cites various notable papers that explore Imam al-Mawardi's political thinking. The analysis is carried out via a historical methodology, applied to examine and assess the political idea conflicts put out by al-Mawardi (Pulungan, 1999).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Imam Al-Mawardi's Biography

The complete name of Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Muhamrnad bin Habib al Mawaridi al-Bashri is Abu al-Hasan Ali, the descendant of Muhamrnad and Habib, belonging to the al-Mawarii al-Bashri lineage. His lifespan was from 364 H/975 to 450 H/1058 M. Al-Mawardi was born in Basrah in the year 364 H. La is very knowledgeable in the fields of fiqh, hadith, and political theory. He gained recognition as a notable representative of the Shafi'i school of thought throughout the 10th century. He held influential positions within the Abbasid Dynasty and witnessed its decline throughout his lifetime (Effendy, 2000).

Al-Mawardi commenced his educational journey in Basrah. During that period, Basrah held a prominent position as a hub for education and scientific advancements within the Islamic region. Nevertheless, Al-Mawardi remained dissatisfied with the knowledge he had obtained, prompting him to pursue further studies at Al Za'farani University in Baghdad. Subsequently, Al-Mawardi undertook a voyage to other places, but ultimately selected the city of Baghdad as Al-Mawardi abode and instructed there for several years. During his time in this city, Al-Mawardi dedicated himself to authoring numerous publications spanning various disciplines (Ichtiar Baru van Hoeve, 1997).

Despite getting schooling at the university, Al-Mawardi is dissatisfied with his level of understanding. Subsequently, he engages in the study of several fields of knowledge under the guidance of prominent professors in Baghdad, with a particular focus on Islamic sciences (Rasyid Ridho, 2005). His professors included al-Hasan ibn Ali al-Hambali, Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn al-Fadhl al-Baghdadi, and Abu Hamid al-Isfirayini. Al-Mawardi was greatly influenced by the aforementioned teacher, and he extensively studied the Shafi'i school of thought through regular lectures conducted at the prestigious Masjid Abduliah ibn al-Mubarak in Baghdad. Al-Mawardi followed Sunni theology due to the fact that his instructors were primarily

affiliated with the Sunni faction. Consequently, his cognitive approach inclined towards Sunni doctrines (Taimiyah, 1403). Al-Mawardi received instruction in Islamic jurisprudence from distinguished scholars in Basrah, namely Syekh ashShaimiri and Syekh Abu Hamid, who were esteemed authorities in the field of Islamic law. From an early age, he has harbored a profound fascination for learning fiqh, namely in the context of political fiqh, which pertains to Islamic government and the state (Sjadzali, 1991). During the Abbasid era, he achieved great recognition as a qadi (judge) in adulthood, serving under the reign of al-Qadir (from 381 H/991 M to 423 H/1031 M). Upon returning to Baghdad, Al-Mawardi's career thrived as he rose to the position of Chief Judge (Qadi al-Qudat) and acted as a religious and governmental consultant to the monarch or caliph regarding Islamic law and governance (Azra, 1996).

He was appointed ambassador and sent diplomatic missions to neighboring countries during the rule of Caliph al-Qadir. As other Baghdad rulers achieved independence from the Saljuk and Buwaihi empires, the caliph al-Qadir's power began to wane; he played a crucial role in preserving and defending this influence (Yatim, 2000). The political ideas presented in al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyyah, widely recognized as the seminal work on Islamic political philosophy, brought al-Mawardi widespread renown. A number of languages, including English and French, have versions of this book (Ichtar Baru van Hoeve, 1997).

In addition to al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyyah, the author has written several other publications on Islamic politics, including Qawanin al-Wizarah (Regulations of the Ministry), Siyasa al-Mulk (Strategies of Royal Leadership), Adab ad-Dunya wa ad-Din (Etiquette of Worldly and Religious Life), Kitab al-Hawi (The Collected Works), and al-Igna' (Sincerity). This study will exclusively focus on presenting al-Mawardi's political beliefs as portrayed in his book "al-Ahkam as- Sulthantyyah". This text will not discuss the accessibility or limitations of finding other political texts by al-Mawardi (IJ Rosentha, 1962).

Social and Political Conditions of Imam Al-Mawardi

Al-Mawardi lived during a period of social and political instability in the Abbasid Dynasty. As previously established, the Abbasid caliphs were clearly feeble and impotent. The individual's authority is primarily symbolic, with actual power resting with the Bani Buwaihi and the Turkish people. The rise to prominence of al-Mutawakkil marked the beginning of a decline in Bani Anbas politics. Al-Mutawakkil was a weak caliph. Under his reign, the Turks quickly and efficiently took control. Following the death of al-Mutawaikkil, they chose and installed a new caliph.

According to Al-Māwardī (1973), the Bani Abbas still have the title of caliph, despite losing their power.

Under Mawardi's rule, which extended from the late tenth until the middle of the eleventh century, the Islamic world's political position was no better than al-Farabi's. In fact, it was noticeably more negative. The caliph's influence began to wane, prompting devolution of power to his Turkish and Persian subordinates. It is becoming clear that the vast Islamic empire cannot be effectively administered by a single king any longer. During that time, the caliph in Baghdad held a ceremonial role with symbolic power, while real power and administration were concentrated in the hands of prominent officials and commanders of Turkish or Persian descent, as well as regional rulers (Al-Māwardī, 1973).

Despite the growing influence of non-Arab officials and commanders, there has been no evident attempt on their behalf to supplant the Arab caliphate with a Turkish or Persian caliphate. Nevertheless, several organizations have begun to express a desire for the role to be occupied by a non-Arab individual who does not belong to the Quraysh tribe. The demand, as anticipated, provokes responses from various groups, notably the Arab community, who desire to uphold the stipulation of Qurayshi lineage for the role of head of state, along with the prerequisites of Arab nationality and Islamic faith for serving as a vizier or advisor to the caliph in shaping policies. Mawardi is a notable individual from this particular group (Yatim, 2000).

Upon analyzing the preface of al-Mawardi's book *al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyyah*, it becomes apparent that the author composed the work in response to the request of a prominent figure. The individual who made the request was most probably the reigning Abbasid caliph during that period. The objective could be to reinstate genuine authority to the Sunni caliphate, particularly the authority of the Abbasid dynasty. Al-Mawardi's inability to accept the coexistence of two reigning heads of government simultaneously in the Islamic world is unsurprising. The motif of rejection serves as an implicit opposition to the reign of the Fathimiyah dynasty, which held power in Egypt at that period. According to Al-Māwardī (1973), I consider it to be a perilous political entity that poses a threat to the authority of the Abbasid dynasty in Baghdad.

Al-Mawardi's political philosophy was grounded on the prevailing political circumstances of his era. He pragmatically analyzed these facts and put forth practical recommendations for enhancing or rectifying the situation, including advocating for the preservation of the existing state of affairs. He stressed the need of maintaining the caliph's Arab lineage from the Quraysh clan, the necessity for the *tafwidh* minister (the caliph's primary policy-making assistant) to be of Arab heritage, and the need to specify the qualifications for the head of state and key assistant roles. The primary

objective is to reinstate genuine authority to the Abbasid caliphate (Khan, n.d.).

Islamic Political Thought of Imam Al-Mawardi

During al-Mawardi's lifetime, the political climate in the Islamic world was much more disorganized than during al-Farabi's period. In contrast to Farabi, Mawardi takes a different tack. In response to the political climate of his day, Farabi formulated an all-encompassing political philosophy that, as a fallen human, could never hope to realize. Mawardi, interestingly enough, thinks differently. He formulates his political theory by analyzing empirical evidence and thereafter proposes practical recommendations for enhancement or establishment, including the preservation of the current state of affairs (Sjadzali, 1991). He stressed the need of the caliph being of Arab lineage from the Quraysh tribe, as well as the requirement for other aides to the caliph.

Mawardi's endeavors to maintain the Quraysh ethnicity might be contextually understood as suggesting that the entitlement to leadership is not solely based on the Quraysh ethnicity, but rather on their competence and power. Highlighting the importance of Quraysh lineage is not a core doctrine of Islam as established by the Prophet. Consequently, hadiths that give special significance to the Quraysh should be regarded as provisional teachings (Ash-Shiddieqy, 1969).

Imam Mawardi's extensive knowledge and strong moral character have earned him a reputation as a highly respected and influential figure, both among the general population and inside the government. Consequently, he was nominated on several occasions as a royal judge in Baghdad during the rule of the Abbasids (Sjadzali, 1991). Al-Mwardi's career thrived upon his return to Baghdad during the reign of al-Qadir (381 H / 991 M - 423 1031 M). He assumed the role of the chief judge (qadi al-qudat), serving as the monarch or caliph's advisor on subjects pertaining to religion (Islamic law) and government (Al-Māwardī, 1973).

Furthermore, he engages in teaching, so fostering the guidance and development of countless distinguished researchers (Assyaukanie, 2009; Basya, 2011). Two of them are Abu al- Ainain Kadir and Abu Bakar al-Khattib. One of his committed intellectual pursuits, aside from teaching, is writing. He left behind a substantial collection of valuable literature in diverse subjects, including *usul fiqh*, *fiqh*, *hadith*, *tafsir*, and *fiqh siyasah*. This work is exceptional in the subject of political jurisprudence and remains a valuable resource for studying political science and government from an Islamic legal standpoint (Azra, 2012).

Here we are talking about *al-Ahkam al-Sulthaniyyah*. It is possible to look at this book as the "universal constitution" of the country because it covers every aspect of governance, from the function of the caliphate to the requirements for central and

regional leadership roles (Assyaukanie, 2009; Basya, 2016). Al-Mawardi laid forth the fundamentals of governance in his political framework, which he drafted and put into action. These included the duties of the caliph and his staff as well as the connection between the government and its subjects (Hamid, 2011).

The Origins of the Growth of the State

Similar to Plato, Aristotle, and Ibn Abi Rabi', Al-Mawardi contends that humans are inherently social creatures. However, he goes a step further by integrating religious components into his theoretical framework (Effendy, 2009). He perceives humans as beings that rely more heavily on support from others in comparison to other creatures. He asserts that human limitations in meeting all their wants independently, along with variations in individual traits (such as talents, inclinations, and capabilities), compel humans to come together, assist one another, and participate in collaboration. The creation of a state can be attributed to the human community's aspiration to meet their collective wants, and their intelligence guides them in supporting each other and establishing connections (IJ Rosentha, 1962).

By adhering to a foundational ethical framework, it is anticipated that the government will exert utmost endeavor to uphold the cohesion of its citizens and foster reciprocal support among them. Additionally, the state should ensure that every individual is provided with the necessary resources for a high standard of living, thereby enabling the entire population to resemble a robust and resilient structure. Simultaneously assuming obligations and obtaining privileges without any differentiation between leaders and citizens, the powerful and the vulnerable, and allies and adversaries (Lewis, 2002).

The Importance of Islamic Political Ideology by Imam Al-Mawardi in Indonesia

Azyumardi Azra (Azra, 1996) states that Al-Mawardi offers a perfect representation of the caliphate. Nevertheless, it is asserted that these intellectuals did not formulate an all-encompassing political structure or a collection of overarching principles for governing, but instead offered an exemplary ethical framework for rulers and their authority. Greek philosophy posits that experts are vital in analyzing a nation's development because, as social beings, we rely on one another to meet our most fundamental needs. (Pulungan, 1999).

Furthermore, the cognitive processes of specialists are also shaped by Islamic beliefs, including Al-Mawardi's perspective that the creation of a state is not entirely dependent on the formation of a new generation of individuals within a community. Nevertheless, it also functions as a prompt to humanity that they were fashioned as

feeble beings and so rely on one another (Taimiyah, 1403).

Indonesia is a Southeast Asian country that is bordered by the Indian and Pacific oceans and is located between the Asian and Australian continents. Indonesia stands alone among archipelagic nations with 10,508 unique islands (Hadad, 1996). With an estimated 237,641,326 inhabitants as of the 2010 Census, Indonesia ranks above all but three countries in terms of population. Also, in 2009, the Ministry of Religious Affairs claimed that there were 217,346,140 Muslims living in Indonesia, making it the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world (Crone dan Hinds, 2003).

Despite the fact that the majority of the Indonesian people adheres to Islam, it is important to note that Indonesia is not officially recognized as an Islamic state. This country operates under a presidential republic style of government, which is founded on Pancasila and utilizes democracy as its political governance structure. Thus, the people exercise power by electing representatives to govern on their behalf. The people choose the president, representatives to the regional councils, and the People's Representative Council (IJ Rosentha, 1962).

Every five years, during a regular general election, citizens choose a president and vice president. Candidates nominated by political parties or coalitions are always chosen by the voters in presidential and vice presidential elections. No candidate for president or vice president may be elected without receiving at least 50% of the popular vote, as stated in Article 6A of the Constitution of 1945. Not only that, but over half of Indonesia's provinces need to have at least 20% of the vote combined. To be officially sworn in as President or Vice President, a candidate must fulfill all of these requirements (Nasution et.al., 2019; Rahimah, 2019; Djalal, 2020).

Two presidential and vice presidential elections—the 2004 and 2009 general elections—involved direct voting. The direct election system, authorized by Law No. 22 of 2007, is used to pick regional chiefs and deputies. Various organizations have recognized Indonesia's successful implementation of direct elections (Asari, 2019). Priyo Budi Santoso, the Deputy Speaker of the Indonesian Parliament, believes that Indonesia's democracy outperforms that of the US. The US Ambassador to Indonesia voiced a similar viewpoint, demonstrating that democracy in Indonesia has improved. Hillary Clinton publicly commended the administration, claiming that Indonesia exemplifies the peaceful coexistence and prosperity of Islam, democracy, modernism, and women's rights inside a single nation. Din Syamsuddin says that Indonesia's achievement in fostering democracy serves as a model for many Middle Eastern countries currently experiencing instability, including Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya (Assyaukanie, 2009; Basya, 2011).

Given our status as Muslims and as a nation with the highest number of Muslims

globally, it is justifiable for us to approach all aspects of our society through an Islamic lens. Let us reconsider the idea of a presidential election in terms of its alignment with Islamic principles and its departure from the practices of Prophet Muhammad and the Caliphs (Effendy, 2009).

In Islamic law, the head of state is called the caliph, imam, or imaratul mu'minin. Despite certain differences in role and responsibilities, both the *khaiifah* and the president are respected leaders and heads of state who are entrusted with the responsibility of leading their country and its citizens. In light of this, this essay compares and contrasts the main factors that the majority of experts use to select a caliph (Al-Mawardi, 2006).

According to Islamic governance, it is incumbent for all members of society to engage in the process of selecting a caliph as their leader by electing their representatives (Rasyid Ridho, 2005). The persons that represent the community are commonly known as *Ahlul Hal wal Aqd*. The composition of these committees consists of individuals from various sectors of society who must hold specific qualifications (Al-Māwardī, 1973). The essential requirements include impartiality, a deep comprehension of the potential caliphs, and their ability and sagacity in decision-making to determine the most suitable candidate to govern the society.

The members of *Ahlul Hal wal Aqd* engage in a meticulous deliberation process before selecting a caliph. The representatives are required to conduct a comprehensive investigation and acquaint themselves with every candidate for the role of caliph. Afterwards, they must carefully evaluate and select the best suitable leader, considering the specific requirements of the country at that particular moment (Ayoob, 2008). During periods of conflict, it is commonly considered important to have a leader who exhibits fortitude and bravery, even if they may have deficiencies in other aspects (Taimiyah, 1403). Similarly, when choosing representatives, members of *Ahlul Hal wal Aqd* must select individuals who have the capacity to provide support and improve the elected caliph, so establishing a government that is well-organized and balanced. If there are many applicants who have identical characteristics and are deemed suitable, a vote or decision based on majority consensus is carried out (Taimiyah, 1403).

A caliph is chosen by the people who have been chosen by society as a whole according to Islamic governance. Those who are well-versed in a caliph's qualities—both positive and negative—are the ones who choose him. Teamwork and the needs of the country during his term will determine the selecting procedure. An further perk of being a caliph is having a representative who works well with you (Asari, 2019).

In Indonesia, the process of choosing presidential and vice-presidential

candidates involves the formation of a political party coalition, followed by a public vote. An inquiry arises regarding the criteria utilized by the public to choose, evaluate, and prioritize candidates for voting in elections, as well as if their understanding of presidential and vice-presidential candidates is sufficient only during the campaign season (Machmudi, Yon. (2013). Furthermore, Indonesia's population is widely dispersed across vast areas and includes a variety of religions, nations, races, and social groups. Most voters tend to emphasize their immediate demands without considering or being conscious of the broader national necessities. This inference is acceptable. Therefore, it can be stated that the president of Indonesia is elected through a direct voting process by a population that is regularly inspired to acquaint themselves with the candidates (al-Mawardi, 2006: 12)

In a coalition of political parties, the process for selecting candidates for president and vice president is decided. The majority of the time, political parties choose presidential candidates based on personal strengths, rather than the actual needs of the country. In order to boost the party's or coalition's prospects of winning the general election, vice presidential candidates are usually chosen using specific criteria that aim to strategically appeal to public opinion (Assyaukanie, 2009; Basya, 2016).

You may say that the Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential election process is incomplete because neither the general public nor the political parties that support them are fully involved. The public does not choose them because to the general lack of acquaintance that most people have with the presidential and vice-presidential candidates selected by political parties. Similarly, they are not selected by the endorsing factions because the majority of them prioritize the interests of specific groups and individuals alone (Crone dan Hinds, 2003).

CONCLUSION

Imam Al-Mawardi's political ideology, as detailed in his seminal work *Al-Ahkam as- Sulthaniyyah*, presents a framework for governance deeply rooted in Islamic principles. His six essential criteria for leadership—embracing religion as a moral force, possessing charismatic leadership qualities, ensuring fairness and equal protection, encouraging sustainable productivity, and providing hope—are highly relevant in the context of modern Indonesian politics. These principles align well with the core values enshrined in Indonesia's state philosophy, Pancasila, which emphasizes belief in one supreme God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy, and social justice. Al-Mawardi's emphasis on ethical governance and the integration of religious values into the political framework offers a robust foundation for fostering political stability and social harmony in Indonesia. Moreover, his advocacy for a

leadership model that is both moral and practical provides a timeless template that Indonesian leaders can emulate to address contemporary political challenges. In conclusion, the practical implementation of Al-Mawardi's political ideology in Indonesia can enhance the efficacy of its governance by reinforcing ethical leadership, promoting social justice, and ensuring sustainable development, thereby fulfilling the aspirations of its diverse Muslim population and contributing to the overall progress of the nation.

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