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BRIDGING CENTURIES: THE RELEVANCE OF AL-MAWARDI'S 100 THOUGHTS IN ADDRESSING TODAY'S GLOBAL CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the multifaceted implications of the philosophy and thoughts of Al-Mawardi, a seminal figure in Islamic jurisprudence and political theory, for contemporary global issues and development. Al-Mawardi's extensive work in the 11th century laid down foundational principles of governance, ethics, and social welfare within an Islamic framework, offering insights into justice, leadership, and the role of the state. The paper, entitled "100 Implications of Philosophy and Thoughts of Al-Mawardi for the Current World and Development," does not literally enumerate one hundred implications but employs '100' symbolically to represent the vast, multidisciplinary impact of Al-Mawardi's ideas across various fields including political governance, international relations, social justice, economic policies, environmental stewardship, education, and digital ethics among others.

In an era marked by rapid globalization, digital transformation, and complex socio-political challenges, Al-Mawardi's principles on ethical

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governance, adaptability of Islamic law, and community welfare provide crucial insights for contemporary discourse. This paper examines how Al-Mawardi's thought can inform current debates on democratic values, human rights, global cooperation, and the sustainability of development efforts. It delves into the relevance of his work in promoting religious pluralism, enhancing international diplomacy, and addressing the ethical challenges posed by technological advancements.

Furthermore, this analysis extends to exploring Al-Mawardi's contributions to understanding the dynamics of globalization, the importance of education in the knowledge economy, and strategies for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in today's interconnected world. By drawing parallels between Al-Mawardi's philosophical underpinnings and modern developmental goals, the paper aims to highlight the enduring relevance of his thought in guiding ethical governance, fostering social cohesion, and promoting a just and equitable global society.

Through a comprehensive review of Al-Mawardi's legacy, this paper contributes to the ongoing scholarly engagement with Islamic political thought, emphasizing its potential to address contemporary issues and support sustainable development across cultures and civilizations. The multidisciplinary implications of Al-Mawardi's philosophy underscore the timeless value of integrating ethical principles with practical governance to navigate the complexities of the 21st century.

KEYWORDS: Islamic Political Thought, Ethical Governance, Globalization and Development, Religious Pluralism, Al-Mawardi's Legacy

INTRODUCTION

Ali ibn Muhammad ibn Habib Al-Mawardi, known as Al-Mawardi, is a towering figure in Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and political philosophy, with his life spanning the 10th and 11th centuries. Born in Basra, Iraq, in 972 CE and passing in 1058 CE, Al-Mawardi's scholarly work has significantly influenced Islamic political thought and governance practices. His seminal work, "Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya" (The Ordinances of Government), stands out

for its detailed exploration of the principles of political leadership and governance from an Islamic perspective (Crone, 2004).

Al-Mawardi's approach to political science was groundbreaking for its integration of religious principles with practical governance, bridging divine commandments with worldly administration. His discussions in "Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya" touch on the calibration of power, justice, and the moral obligations of rulers, offering a comprehensive framework for Islamic governance (Lambton, 1981). This work has not only enriched Islamic political philosophy but also provided practical guidelines for governance within an Islamic state.

Legacy and Influence of Al-Mawardi

The legacy of Al-Mawardi's works, particularly "Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya," is profound, laying foundational principles that have been fundamental in the development of Islamic political thought. His meticulous articulation of governance, emphasizing the balance between authority and accountability, justice, consultation (shura), and the welfare of the people, has influenced generations of Muslim scholars and political leaders (Hallaq, 2009).

His influence extends beyond theoretical discourse, impacting the actual governance structures of various Islamic states throughout history. Al-Mawardi's ideas on the caliphate system, the rights and duties of rulers and subjects, and the importance of legal and moral governance have been seminal in shaping Islamic political practices. His work remains a critical reference in contemporary debates on political theory, governance, and the role of Islam in statecraft within the Islamic tradition (Black, 2001).

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's contributions to political philosophy have underscored the importance of integrating ethical leadership and governance principles with Islamic jurisprudence. His enduring legacy is evident in the continued relevance of his work in discussions surrounding Islamic governance and political thought. His emphasis on justice, ethical governance, and public welfare also remains essential in contemporary explorations of the state's role and leadership within Islamic political theory.

Purpose of the Paper

While numerous scholars have explored Al-Mawardi's seminal contributions to Islamic political thought, this paper aims to re-evaluate his intellectual legacy within the context of contemporary global affairs. Specifically, it seeks to identify and analyze a selected number of key areas where Al-Mawardi's principles on state and governance resonate with and inform current political, social, and legal challenges. Through a methodical approach that combines historical analysis with contemporary case studies, this paper endeavors to bridge medieval Islamic political philosophy with modern global issues, offering fresh insights into Al-Mawardi's enduring relevance. This research not only highlights the applicability of Al-Mawardi's thought to today's geopolitical landscape but also contributes to the broader academic dialogue on the intersection between Islamic scholarship and contemporary global governance.

His Political Philosophy

"Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya" (The Ordinances of Government), written by Al-Mawardi, stands as a cornerstone in Islamic political philosophy, offering a comprehensive framework for governance within an Islamic state. This book examines deeply the mechanics of political leadership, delineating the roles and responsibilities of the caliph and other rulers, while firmly rooting these duties within the context of Islamic law (Sharia). It is pioneering in its systematic approach to the concept of governance according to Sharia, emphasizing that the legitimacy of any political authority stems from its adherence to Islamic legal and ethical standards (Hallaq, 1997).

Central to Al-Mawardi's political philosophy is the importance of justice and the rule of law. He posits that the welfare of the state and its people hinges on the ruler's commitment to justice, as defined by Islamic principles. According to Al-Mawardi, a just ruler is one who governs with equity, consults with his subjects on matters of state, and seeks the counsel of qualified advisors to ensure that his rulings are in accordance with Sharia (Lambton, 1981). This emphasis on justice not only underscores the moral and ethical obligations of the ruler but also highlights the integral role of Sharia as the foundation of governance and legal authority in an Islamic state.

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi elaborates on the concept of the caliphate, viewing it as the epitome of political authority in Islam. He outlines the qualifications, selection process, and responsibilities of the caliph, arguing that the caliphate serves as both a spiritual and temporal authority, entrusted with upholding Islamic law and ensuring the welfare of the Muslim community (Ummah). The caliph, in Al-Mawardi's view, is not merely a political leader but a guardian of the faith, whose primary duty is to implement Sharia and guide the community in accordance with Islamic principles (Crone & Hinds, 1986).

Al-Mawardi's contributions to Islamic political thought are profound, offering a nuanced exploration of governance, leadership, and legal authority within an Islamic framework. His work not only provides a detailed account of the ideal characteristics and duties of rulers but also establishes the caliphate as the central institution of political authority in Islam. By grounding political leadership in the principles of justice, consultation, and adherence to Sharia, Al-Mawardi's "Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya" continues to be a vital reference for scholars and practitioners of Islamic governance and political philosophy.

Sharia-Based Government and Rule of Law

Al-Mawardi's assertion that Islamic governance must be anchored in Sharia and guided by justice and equity highlights the foundational role of Islamic law in political leadership (Hallaq, 2009). His emphasis on rulership bound by moral and ethical considerations underlines the intrinsic connection between governance and religious principles in Islamic political philosophy. Additionally, Al-Mawardi's advocacy for a caliphate governed by a just, knowledgeable, and pious leader underscores the integral role of the caliph as both a political and religious leader in an Islamic state (Lambton, 1981). His detailed exploration of the caliphate's nature serves as a blueprint for Islamic governance, balancing authority with accountability.

Moreover, Al-Mawardi recognized the importance of Shura, or consultation, advocating for it as a vital aspect of decision-making in governance. This consultative process, involving knowledgeable community members, emphasizes collective decision-making and consensus-building

(Crone & Hinds, 1986). Furthermore, the organization and discipline of the military are critical for state security and social order in Al-Mawardi's framework. His insights into military organization highlight the need for a strong defense mechanism that aligns with the broader principles of justice and fairness (Kennedy, 2004).

In conclusion, Al-Mawardi's political philosophy continues to shape discussions on Islamic governance, democracy, and the compatibility of Islam with modern governance structures. His work informs contemporary debates on the nature of authority, crisis management, and the ethical dimensions of leadership within Islamic and global contexts (Black, 2001).

Finance and Economy in Al-Mawardi's Thought

Al-Mawardi's discussions on taxation and public finance are pivotal in understanding the economic foundations of an Islamic state. He advocated for a taxation system grounded in Islamic principles, ensuring that taxes do not impose an unfair burden on the populace. His approach to public finance emphasized the responsible management of state resources to guarantee economic stability and the prosperity of its citizens (Kahf, 1997). Al-Mawardi's insights into taxation aimed at establishing a fair and equitable system that supports the welfare of both the individuals and the state, underscoring the importance of zakat (charitable giving) and other permissible sources of revenue in fostering a sustainable economic model (Kuran, 2011). Moreover, Al-Mawardi's principles on taxation and public finance extend into broader discussions on Islamic finance and economic justice. His thoughts contribute significantly to the development of financial systems that adhere to Islamic economic principles, focusing on fairness, ethical conduct, and the equitable distribution of wealth. Scholars examine how Al-Mawardi's economic philosophy can guide contemporary efforts in crafting economic models that prioritize social justice within an Islamic framework (El-Gamal, 2006).

Additionally, the relevance of Al-Mawardi's economic principles is also evident in contemporary discussions on social impact investing within Islamic finance. His ideas resonate with modern efforts to integrate ethical

considerations into financial decision-making, promoting investment practices that align with Islamic values and contribute to social welfare. This reflects an ongoing exploration into how Islamic economic principles can inform ethical investment strategies that foster positive social and environmental impacts (Hayat, 2013).

Furthermore, while environmental stewardship may not be a central theme in Al-Mawardi's works, the ethical underpinnings of his financial and economic principles can be extended to address contemporary issues such as sustainability. His emphasis on justice and equity provides a moral framework that can guide Islamic approaches to environmental conservation and responsible resource management, aligning with current global efforts towards environmental sustainability (Kamali, 1997).

Ethics and Morality in Islamic Governance

Al-Mawardi's vision for governance was holistic, emphasizing not just political stability but also the economic prosperity, social justice, and well-being of citizens. His comprehensive approach to governance underlined the role of the state in mitigating societal inequalities and ensuring equitable distribution of resources (Hallaq, 2009).

Furthermore, the ethical conduct of rulers was paramount in Al-Mawardi's framework for effective governance. He posited that leaders must embody moral integrity and adhere to Islamic values, influencing the moral fabric of the entire society (Crone & Hinds, 1986).

Contemporary Applications of Al-Mawardi's Principles

In the context of modern environmental challenges, Al-Mawardi's principles on ethics and justice provide a foundation for Islamic perspectives on environmental stewardship and sustainability. His ethical framework supports contemporary discussions on climate change and the responsibility of communities and rulers in preserving the environment (Kamali, 1997). Additionally, Al-Mawardi's discussions on taxation and public finance contribute to current debates on Islamic finance and economic justice. His

principles on equitable wealth distribution and ethical economic practices resonate with modern efforts to develop financial systems grounded in Islamic economic values (El-Gamal, 2006). Moreover, the extension of Al-Mawardi's ethical principles to the digital and technological realms addresses the ethical implications of social media, online behavior, and the development and use of emerging technologies. This includes considerations of digital privacy, AI ethics, and the integration of Islamic values in the governance of technological advancements (Hayat, 2013). Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's emphasis on public welfare has implications for healthcare governance and ethics. His principles can guide the development of healthcare policies and practices that ensure access to quality care and address ethical challenges in medical research and biotechnology (Sachedina, 2009).

Social Welfare, Democratic Values, and Justice in Al-Mawardi's Thought

Central to Al-Mawardi's political philosophy is the concept of justice, emphasizing that governance should be conducted in accordance with Islamic jurisprudence to establish a just and stable state. This idea of aligning governance with Sharia principles underscores the essential role of the rule of law in creating a fair society (Hallaq, 2009). Additionally, Al-Mawardi articulated a vision of governance where the ruler's primary responsibility is to the public welfare, aiming for the economic prosperity, social justice, and overall quality of life improvement for citizens. His governance model extends to ensuring that benefits reach all population segments, thereby laying the groundwork for discussions on state roles in societal inequalities (Kamali, 1997).

Moreover, Al-Mawardi's principles have been scrutinized for their compatibility with universal human rights standards, contributing to the broader dialogue on Islamic governance's accommodation of individual liberties and human dignity (Crone & Hinds, 1986). While Al-Mawardi's original texts do not explicitly address gender issues, contemporary scholars have explored the application of his governance principles to enhance gender inclusivity and women's rights within an Islamic framework, reflecting the

evolving discourse on gender equality in Islamic political thought (Ahmed, 1992).

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's emphasis on public welfare underpins discussions on humanitarianism, addressing poverty, healthcare, education, and other social welfare aspects. Additionally, his principles are applied to engage youth in political participation, emphasizing the evolving dynamics of political engagement in contemporary Muslim-majority societies (Sachedina, 2009). In the digital era, Al-Mawardi's ethical governance principles inform discussions on cybersecurity, digital rights, and responsible technology use, highlighting the relevance of Islamic political thought in addressing modern challenges (Bunt, 2003).

In addition, Al-Mawardi's justice principles are applied to urban planning and disaster preparedness, guiding policies for equitable resource access and resilient city development, showcasing the holistic approach to governance that includes environmental and urban welfare (Afsaruddin, 2005). Lastly, his economic principles contribute to sustainable development discussions, aligning Islamic economic values with global initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on ethical economic practices, poverty alleviation, and environmental sustainability (Wilson, 2006). This comprehensive approach demonstrates how Al-Mawardi's teachings continue to provide valuable insights for modern governance across various sectors.

Education, Civilization, and Cultural Heritage in Al-Mawardi's Thought

Al-Mawardi's contributions, while seminal, have been met with both acclaim and critique over the centuries. Scholars have delved into the historical and cultural contexts of his work to assess its relevance and applicability to modern Islamic governance, sparking discussions on the need for adaptability in contemporary governance structures (Hallaq, 2009). Building on this foundation, Al-Mawardi recognized the pivotal role of education in governance, a principle that resonates with contemporary emphasis on the knowledge economy and innovation. His acknowledgment of intellectual

development aligns with modern efforts to integrate education with technological progress, underpinning the importance of fostering an educated populace for societal advancement (Crone & Hinds, 1986).

Furthermore, in the era of digital transformation, Al-Mawardi's principles offer a foundation for navigating governance challenges and opportunities presented by technology. Discussions extend to digital citizenship education, emphasizing the cultivation of responsible and informed participants in the digital realm, reflective of Islamic ethical principles (Bunt, 2009). Additionally, Al-Mawardi's work contributes to contemporary dialogues on cultural diplomacy and the preservation of Islamic cultural heritage. His ideas inspire efforts to protect and showcase the cultural richness of the Islamic world, facilitating cultural exchange and mutual respect among diverse communities (Kamali, 1997). Moreover, Al-Mawardi's emphasis on justice and welfare offers insights into addressing contemporary issues of global migration and social cohesion. His principles guide ethical migration policies and the integration of migrants, fostering social harmony in increasingly diverse societies (Sachedina, 2009). Overall, Al-Mawardi's multifaceted contributions continue to provide valuable perspectives for addressing modern governance challenges across various sectors.

Pluralism and Adaptability in Al-Mawardi's Political Thought

Al-Mawardi's discussions on the rights of non-Muslims within an Islamic state underscore the importance of religious pluralism and coexistence. He advocated for the peaceful practice of religion by non-Muslims, setting a precedent for dialogues on religious tolerance and the integration of diverse religious communities within Islamic governance structures (Saeed, 2006). Additionally, Al-Mawardi recognized the necessity of flexibility in Islamic governance, acknowledging that the application of principles might need adaptation to suit the unique circumstances of each state. This notion of adaptability has fueled debates on the compatibility of Islamic governance with various political systems and forms of government, contributing to modern discussions on governance models within Muslim-majority societies (Hallaq, 2009).

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's work extends to the importance of dialogue and engagement between Islamic states and the broader international community. His principles on diplomacy and interaction with other societies have informed contemporary understandings of international relations, emphasizing the role of Islamic ethics in diplomatic practices (Khan, 2011). Moreover, the principles articulated by Al-Mawardi have implications for community-based development and public welfare. His emphasis on the welfare of the public guides initiatives that empower local communities, addressing grassroots concerns and ensuring equitable resource distribution, resonating with current approaches to inclusive governance (Ahmed, 2004).

Additionally, Al-Mawardi's ideas find relevance in the fields of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. His ethical approach to resolving disputes and promoting reconciliation offers insights into fostering dialogue and understanding both within and between communities, highlighting the continuing relevance of Islamic political thought in peace and conflict studies (Johnson, 2007). Overall, Al-Mawardi's contributions provide a multifaceted framework that continues to influence modern governance, international relations, and social cohesion within and beyond Muslim-majority societies.

Global Cooperation and International Relations in Al-Mawardi's Thought

Al-Mawardi's insights into the interactions between Islamic states and non-Muslim societies provide foundational guidelines for diplomacy, trade, and treaties. His principles emphasize the importance of respectful and mutually beneficial relations, underlining the role of Islamic ethics in international engagements (Lapidus, 2002). This aspect of his work is increasingly relevant in today's interconnected global landscape, informing contemporary discussions on the role of Islamic principles in shaping diplomatic relations and international policy. Moreover, in the context of modern globalization, Al-Mawardi's ideas are revisited for insights into navigating the complexities of economic relations, cultural exchanges, and international cooperation. His acknowledgment of diverse political systems and the adaptability of Islamic

governance principles suggests ways to address global challenges while fostering cooperation among nations (Esposito, 2010).

Additionally, Al-Mawardi's contributions extend to global governance and the development of a just and inclusive international order. Scholars explore how his ethical framework can inform contemporary international relations, conflict resolution, and the establishment of equitable international frameworks, emphasizing the integration of Islamic ethical perspectives (Khadduri, 1987). Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's discussions on governance and ethical leadership lay the groundwork for principles guiding international relations. His emphasis on justice, ethical conduct, and mutual respect among nations provides a basis for global cooperation, especially in addressing transnational issues like climate change, pandemics, and migration (Vikør, 2005). Overall, Al-Mawardi's multifaceted contributions continue to offer valuable perspectives for shaping diplomatic and international strategies in a rapidly changing world.

Modern Relevance and Contemporary Applications

Al-Mawardi's work continues to resonate in contemporary Islamic societies, offering insights into governance, justice, and statecraft. His emphasis on ethical leadership and public welfare provides a timeless framework for addressing modern challenges, inspiring governance systems that are both rooted in Islamic principles and adaptable to contemporary contexts (Hallaq, 2009). Moreover, ongoing scholarly engagement with Al-Mawardi's works contributes to the dynamic discourse on Islamic governance in the face of present-day challenges. Researchers delve into the nuances of his political philosophy, examining its application across various contexts and contributing to the evolving understanding of Islamic political thought (Black, 2001).

Additionally, Al-Mawardi's principles on justice and public welfare are increasingly relevant to discussions on social contracts and citizenship within Islamic governance. His ideas encourage a participatory approach to governance, emphasizing the responsibilities of rulers and citizens in promoting social harmony and community development (An-Na'im, 2008).

This engagement not only highlights the enduring relevance of Al-Mawardi's thought but also underscores its potential to inform and enhance contemporary governance models and ethical frameworks.

CRITICISM ON MAWARDI

Al-Mawardi's contributions to Islamic political thought have been seminal, yet his works are not without criticism. Scholars have pointed out several areas where his ideas may be considered limited or problematic in the context of contemporary governance and ethical standards.

Gender Issues

Another significant area of critique is Al-Mawardi's lack of explicit focus on gender equality. While his work laid the foundation for many aspects of Islamic governance, it does not address the role and rights of women within the political and social spheres adequately. This omission has been highlighted by scholars such as Leila Ahmed, who argue that the patriarchal context of Al-Mawardi's era influenced his perspectives, limiting their applicability to modern discussions on gender inclusivity and women's rights within Islamic frameworks (Ahmed, 1992).

Compatibility with Human Rights

Al-Mawardi's principles have also been scrutinized for their compatibility with universal human rights standards. Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds note that while his ideas on justice and governance are rooted in Islamic ethical principles, they often fall short when measured against contemporary human rights norms. This critique points to a broader issue within classical Islamic political thought, which sometimes struggles to reconcile traditional religious values with modern secular human rights frameworks (Crone & Hinds, 1986).

Pluralism and Religious Tolerance

While Al-Mawardi advocated for the peaceful coexistence of non-Muslims within an Islamic state, critics argue that his vision of religious tolerance is still somewhat limited. Abdullah Saeed points out that Al-Mawardi's framework places non-Muslims in a subordinate position, requiring them to

adhere to specific regulations and pay the *jizya* (tax for non-Muslims), which can be seen as discriminatory by modern standards of religious equality and freedom (Saeed, 2006).

Rigidity and Adaptability

One of the primary criticisms of Al-Mawardi's political philosophy is its perceived rigidity. Although he acknowledges the necessity for flexibility within Islamic governance, critics argue that his framework remains heavily rooted in classical Islamic jurisprudence, which can be challenging to adapt to modern, pluralistic societies. Wael B. Hallaq contends that while Al-Mawardi's work was progressive for its time, it lacks the necessary flexibility to fully address the complexities of contemporary governance systems (Hallaq, 2009).

In addition to the characteristics of EL described in early Islam, Al-Māwardī added a new characteristic: focusing on community education and also related to the need for education of the elite: the Sultan, ministers and clerks, basing this education largely on the Qur'an, the Sunna and their interpretation. His rationale distinguished between education for present life and education for the afterlife, a perception that resembles that of EL in Catholic schools (Revel 2012). He argued that all knowledge and philosophy was legitimate because it enabled people to reach happiness, and that it should combine the study of core values with the acquisition of applicable tools. Yet he stressed the importance of religious knowledge above all other knowledge. He emphasised the need for sensitivity to learners' diversity, the importance of developing learners' motivation, gradual imparting of knowledge, freedom of thought and critical teaching and avoidance of blind imitation. His main criticism was 'not to exaggerate respect for the intelligent.' His vision for society embraced education to construct the ideal man emphasising the importance of education in forming opinions and seeing the intellect as the basis for education. A learned society would value knowledge and learning, embrace its wise men and not oppose their opinions (Al-Māwardī 1978, pp. 41–42)(Arar & Haj-Yehia, 2018)

Limitations And Challenges In Applying Al-Mawardi's Theories To Modern Political Contexts.

He laid intellectual foundations for the revival of the Abbasid Caliphate which is very likely to become even more widespread in the future. Most of these theories survive as theoretical discourse, because these theories have never been tested in reality. In many ways, especially in the context of modern democracy and politics, it is quite difficult to apply Al-Mawardi's concepts and thoughts as a whole. However, of course there will be some weaknesses or deficiencies that must be solved together, and the best solution is sought for the future. (Bayu Karunia Putra^{1*}, Azizatul Farhaini¹, Dinatul Aini¹, Siti Nurjannah¹, Noviana¹, Iza Martha Padila¹, Nanik Azizah¹, 2023)

Moreover, the application of Al-Mawardi's theories today is further complicated by several criticisms of the work traditionally attributed to him. Firstly, there are significant doubts about the true authorship of the *Naṣīḥat al-Mulūk*. Dr. Fu'ad 'Abd al-Mun'im Ahmad notably rejects Al-Mawardi's authorship, proposing instead that the work may have been written by Abu Zayd Ahmad b. Sahl al-Balkhi. This argument is thoroughly discussed in the introduction to Ahmad's edition and further elaborated upon in a separate publication. Secondly, there is substantial internal evidence indicating that the book may have originated during the Samanid period, with potential later additions or modifications. This evidence challenges the traditional attribution to Al-Mawardi. Lastly, the analysis of the manuscript itself adds to the skepticism. The surviving copy of the NM does not identify the author, patron, or intended recipient. The traditional attribution to Al-Mawardi appears to be more of a generic designation rather than the actual author's chosen name for the work. These points collectively raise critical questions about the true origins and authorship of the work, adding another layer of complexity to the challenge of adapting his theories to modern contexts (Marlow, 2007).

These issues of authorship and historical context are compounded by further criticisms of Al-Mawardi's theories, which highlight inherent limitations and challenges in applying them to modern political settings. Wafaa Wahba criticizes al-Māwardī for compromising by reducing the number of candidates to a single individual, which opens up the risk of

hereditary selection and authoritarian rule. Hamilton Gibb further critiques al-Māwardī for failing to provide a clear method for the legitimate deposition of a leader, arguing that al-Māwardī adheres to Sunni political principles but lacks an authoritative view or precedents for deposing a leader. This failure creates a dilemma characteristic of Sunni political thought at that time. Al-Māwardī only mentions the possibility of a leader's disqualification if he fails to implement justice or is physically unfit, which leaves a gap in the practical application of his theories. Although historical accounts of public complaint systems and petitions to contest the actions of Seljuk kings exist, suggesting that some mechanisms were in practice, al-Māwardī's work did not fully develop or theorize these methods. Additionally, al-Māwardī favors the Sunni political principle of tolerating oppressive rulers to avoid causing fitna (chaos), quoting a Prophetic narration that advises obedience to rulers, even if they are sinful, as long as their commands are not against Allah's commands. This principle further solidifies the authoritarian inclination criticized in his work. Gibb argues that the failure to develop robust methods for the deposition of leaders is not unique to al-Māwardī but is a broader issue in Sunni political thought up to his time, indicating a general reluctance or inability within Sunni jurisprudence to effectively challenge political authority (Whyte, 2019).

Furthermore, another significant aspect of the criticism surrounding Al-Mawardi's work lies in his approach towards apostasy and the *istitdba*. The first two authors to argue in favour of the renouncement of *istitdba* in certain cases of apostasy were the Shafi'i jurist al-Mawardi (d. 450/1058) and his Hanbali contemporary Abu Ya'la b. al-Farra' (d. 458/1066), both writing in the middle of the fifth/eleventh century. It seems to be the case that the two more tolerant schools of law, the Hanafis and the Shafi'is, were increasingly influenced by attempts within the Hanbali school in Baghdad to use the judgement against apostates as a means to persecute heterodoxy. A second influence must be considered from the Maliki tradition which never accepted the necessary application of the *istitdba*. Both al-Mawardi and Abu Ya'la were influential figures at the court and the chancellery of the caliph al-Qa'im, al-Qadir's successor in Baghdad, and their views reflect the legal thinking at court. This change in legal reasoning was probably influenced by the

successful second and third wave of the Ismaili da'wa in Iraq and Iran. Al-Ghazali's writings go far beyond these two authors and he may be regarded as the ultimate stage in this development towards the application of the law on apostates against state enemies.(Griffel, 2001)

Autocratic Tendencies

“An important scholar ‘Jasser Auda’ writes: 'Al-Mawardi legitimized the Abbasid tribal and monarchic system, which he found most excellent at his time, through his book al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya.... Al-Mawardi ‘interpreted’ the scripts to imply ‘protecting people with noble lineage’ [such as Abbasids] from having a governor over them unless he comes from more noble roots, ‘legitimizing a caliph who is appointed by another of his own’, ‘giving people money from the trust according to their tribal lineages’, and giving the caliph the right to ‘have a monopoly over decision making’ (al-istibdad bi al-amr).”(Bhat, 2023)

“Al-Mawardi often considered dialectical views in his writings, whose example can be seen in his writing about caliph (Muslim ruler), in which he discusses the need of a caliph according to reason, while also consider the viewpoint according to Islamic rule (Shariah) (Borrut, 2006). Despite this, most of his writings are heavily influenced by Shariah (divine law) which focuses on implementing the law under the guidance of Islamic law. Furthermore, he described the criteria for selecting a caliph which described the characteristics of a desirable caliph while also nudging on the side of one of the dynasties that happened to be a part of the power struggle at that time (Madelung, 1997). In addition to this, his written text may explore diverse ideas but supported the claims which supported Muslim ruler, and in some accounts, it can be observed that the claims he established seem to remove accountability from caliphs while removing legal checks from them by merely adapting to the archaic notion of absolute monarchy which supported the caliph at all cost and even to the point of neglecting shariah (divine law).”(Abbasi, 2021)

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi’s emphasis on the centralization of power in the hands of a just and pious ruler has been criticized for its potential to

justify autocratic governance. Scholars like Bernard Lewis argue that while Al-Mawardi aimed to ensure justice and stability, his framework does not provide sufficient checks and balances against the abuse of power. This aspect of his thought can be seen as problematic in promoting democratic governance models, which require robust mechanisms for accountability and the separation of powers (Lewis, 1988).

In conclusion, while Al-Mawardi's works are foundational in Islamic political thought, they are not without their limitations. His emphasis on classical jurisprudence, insufficient attention to gender equality, and challenges in aligning with modern human rights standards highlight areas where his philosophy may fall short in addressing contemporary governance issues. These criticisms underscore the need for ongoing reinterpretation and adaptation of Islamic political principles to meet the demands of modern, pluralistic societies.

CONCLUSION

Al-Mawardi's enduring legacy offers valuable insights into governance, international relations, and ethical leadership, providing a rich source of inspiration and guidance for navigating contemporary global challenges. His work continues to inspire scholars and practitioners, fostering a dialogue on governance, ethics, and justice that is both rooted in Islamic tradition and responsive to modern realities.

Al-Mawardi's contributions to Islamic political thought and jurisprudence remain profoundly influential in shaping the discourse on ethical governance and societal welfare within the Islamic tradition and beyond. His nuanced exploration of governance principles, the responsibilities of leadership, and the importance of justice and public welfare provide a timeless framework that resonates with contemporary efforts to address complex global issues. Through his emphasis on adaptability, moral integrity, and the collective good, Al-Mawardi's ideas offer a foundational basis for developing governance models that are ethical, sustainable, and inclusive.

In today's interconnected world, where the challenges of governance, social inequality, and international cooperation are ever-present, Al-Mawardi's

philosophical insights into the balance between authority and accountability, the ethical dimensions of leadership, and the importance of dialogue and mutual respect among diverse communities serve as a beacon for constructive engagement and policy-making. His work not only enriches the ongoing scholarly examination of Islamic political theory but also provides practical considerations for contemporary governance, emphasizing the relevance of Islamic ethical principles in addressing the dilemmas of modernity.

Furthermore, Al-Mawardi's perspective on international relations and the conduct of diplomacy underscores the potential for Islamic political thought to contribute to a more harmonious global order. His recognition of the value of cultural exchange and mutual understanding between civilizations highlights the importance of fostering international cooperation and dialogue in an era marked by global challenges that require collective action.

As we move forward, the enduring legacy of Al-Mawardi reminds us of the importance of grounding governance and leadership in ethical principles and the pursuit of justice. His work continues to inspire a critical reflection on how Islamic tradition can inform responses to contemporary issues, encouraging a dynamic interplay between historical wisdom and modern governance needs. In sum, Al-Mawardi's contributions stand as a testament to the enduring relevance of Islamic political thought in navigating the complexities of the contemporary world, offering valuable lessons on the synthesis of tradition and modernity in the pursuit of a just and equitable society.

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