

## ABULHASAN AL-MAWARDI'S DOCTRINE OF STATEHOOD

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This scientific article examines the outcomes of the efforts of progressive Jadid ancestors and the assertions of their teachings aimed at the development of spirituality, based on plans for building a great state. Special attention is given to the scholarly legacy of Abulhasan al-Mawardi, which occupied a central place in their intellectual focus. The article attempts to briefly present and analyze al-Mawardi's major works related to this legacy, including *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wa al-Walayat al-Diniyya*, *A'lam al-Nubuwwa*, and *Adab al-Dunya wa al-Din*.

**Keywords**

Progressive Jadids, Abulhasan al-Mawardi, Amir Temur, sultanate, governance, hierarchy, *Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, *A'lam al-Nubuwwa*, *Adab al-Dunya wa al-Din*.

During the Jadid period, the bibliographic index *Asamiy Kutubi Jadidiyya*, which recorded the publication indicators of works emphasized and published by the Jadids, listed well-known books that have reached us as examples from previous stages of historical development. In particular, within the sections devoted to jurisprudential, political, and literary sources, the works of Abulhasan al-Mawardi (364–450 AH / 964–1058 AD) are mentioned, including *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya wa al-Walayat al-Diniyya*, *A'lam al-Nubuwwa*, and *Adab al-Dunya wa al-Din*.

We consider it necessary to address this topic separately. The reason is clear: the beginning of the twentieth century, marking the dawn of a new century, was a period characterized by intense contradictions, resistance movements, and profound transformations. It was precisely during this time that progressive Jadids began preparing spiritually for reforms, a process that may be regarded as the initial phase of what is today described as the Third Renaissance.

For the reforms of this century, the works and globally significant scholarly heritage of outstanding representatives of the Muslim world were deliberately selected. Among such eminent figures, the intellectual legacy of Abulhasan al-Mawardi did not escape the attention of the reformist Jadids. This fact represents not only a valuable achievement but also a significant indicator of their methodological depth.

A brief look at world history reveals that in every millennium, foundations are laid for the subsequent one. History also testifies that similar processes recur at different historical stages. Accordingly, it would not be an exaggeration to state that progressive Jadids, relying on the scientific heritage of their wise, eminent, and illustrious ancestors, envisioned a strategic framework and conceptual map for the governance of a new Turkestan state and asserted the idea of building a great sultanate.

They served not only as a bridge for future generations but also made practical efforts to revive the statehood of their great ancestors and to lay the cornerstone for new renaissances.

During this period—marked by a turbulent social environment, struggles for independence, reform movements, and development strategies—it is evident that education and upbringing were defined as the primary driving forces. In pursuing this objective, particular emphasis was placed on the lives, activities, and scholarly heritage of great ancestors, including Imam al-Bukhari, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi, Abu Nasr al-Farabi, Abulhasan al-Mawardi, Abu Ali Ibn Sina, Abu Rayhan al-Biruni, Mahmud al-Zamakhshari, Amir Temur, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, Fazlullah ibn Ruzbihan, Samandar Termezi, Ahmad Donish, Ahmad Zaki Validi, and others.



Among these figures, particular attention should be paid to Abulhasan al-Mawardi's work *al-Ahkām al-Sultāniyya wa al-Wilāyat al-Dīniyya*. This treatise, consisting of twenty chapters, addresses social, political, economic, moral-educational, and military aspects of governance. It outlines administrative systems such as legislative, executive, and judicial authorities, defines the scope of officials' responsibilities, and clarifies the political and legal status of the populace.

Special emphasis is placed on electoral mechanisms, including elections and selection processes, categories of supporters, opponents, and neutral parties, as well as the composition of candidates and the specific qualities required of them.

The work systematically presents its foundational sources and principles, including customary law, the Holy Qur'an, Prophetic traditions (*hadith*), the Sunnah, consensus (*ijma'*), analogy (*qiyas*), independent reasoning (*istinbat*), and public interest (*istislah*), reflecting both classical and innovative methodological approaches.

To date, this work has been translated into numerous languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Urdu, Malay, Uzbek, Flemish, French, and English, and has been widely disseminated through print.

Historical evidence shows that since its authorship, manuscript reproduction developed progressively over successive centuries. For example, between the tenth and nineteenth centuries, the work was copied approximately ten times. In particular, four manuscript copies were identified in the medieval lands of our region: two Arabic copies prepared at the request of the renowned scholar Sabuni al-Bukhari; two Arabic copies preserved in the library of the great ruler Amir Timur; and one Persian copy produced in Iran around 1750. It has also been established that sultans commissioned special copies to strengthen their rule.

From 1843 onward, translation efforts expanded into Western Europe. Between 1855 and 1915–1925, French translations appeared, followed by Flemish and English editions beginning in 1920, with numerous publications released between 1920, 1985, and 1999.

Between 1880 and 1900, and in subsequent years and centuries, the work was published extensively in Arabic-speaking countries. In Egypt alone, it was printed approximately thirty times, and between 1915–1925, 1999, and 2000–2025, it was published around fifty times.

From 1915 onward, publication in Urdu began in Pakistan and India. Subsequently, the work was repeatedly reprinted in various languages and regions in 1945, 1975, and 2000. In East Asia, particularly in Malaysia and Indonesia, Malay translations have been actively developed since 2000. Today, these regions occupy a prominent position in the global spiritual, cultural, and scholarly landscape, as confirmed by historical observation.

Based on the results of content analysis of the extensive publication history and numerous translations of this work over the centuries, it can be reasonably concluded that for thousands of years it has never fallen outside the attention and recognition of the broad intellectual public across continents such as Asia, Africa, Europe, and Western Europe.

Returning to the above argument, among the works of **Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī**, particular attention should be paid to:

– *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya*.

The work that has rightfully brought al-Māwardī widespread fame and recognition in many parts of the world today is *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya*. Due to its diverse and distinctive features, this book is considered the result of a comprehensive study devoted to the subject of public and societal laws.

It serves as a fundamental source for anyone conducting research on the system and hierarchy of governance in the Islamic state. The work offers extensive discussions on the concepts of *imamate* and *caliphate*, which embody the doctrinal foundations of Islamic political authority. It also provides systematic instruction on public administration and state governance, including the offices of vizierate (government administration) and provincial governorship.



Furthermore, the book presents well-developed doctrines on judicial administration, the leadership of Friday and the two 'Id prayers, the management of public and private property, the institutionalization of chancelleries and ministerial offices, and the strict establishment of legal order and regulations.

It is noteworthy that the first printed edition of this highly significant work was published in 1853 in Bonn, in present-day Germany, by the German orientalist **Max Enger**. The Arabic text was later printed in Cairo at the *al-Waṭan* Press in 1880. Following this, another edition appeared in France in 1895, accompanied by a French translation. The work was subsequently reprinted many times in Egypt in successive editions.

The most recent critical edition was published in 1989 in Kuwait, based on the scholarly investigation and annotations of Dr. Aḥmad Mubārak al-Baghdādī, a professor at Kuwait University. In the concluding part of this edition, the editor proposes a scholarly comparison between al-Māwardī's work and a book bearing the same title by al-Farrā', highlighting their similarities and differences and inviting further academic debate.

It is widely acknowledged that *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya* has been translated at various times, in different historical periods and geographical contexts, into numerous Eastern and Western languages. In this regard, it is important to note that the first Turkish translation was completed in 1976 by Dr. Ali Şafak and published by Badr Publishing House.

In addition to Imām al-Māwardī's *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya*, it is impossible not to mention the book of the same title by Qāḍī Abū Ya'la Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-Farrā' (330–458/990–1065). These two works share a substantial degree of thematic and doctrinal similarity. The primary distinction between them lies in the juridical affiliations of their authors: Imām al-Māwardī belonged to the Shāfi'ī school, whereas Abū Ya'la was affiliated with the Ḥanbalī school, both within the Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jamā'a tradition.

The remarkable closeness between the two works has even raised questions regarding original authorship, prompting scholarly debates about which work was written first and whether one author transmitted from the other.

In this context, Dr. Fu'ād 'Abd al-Mun'im, who prepared a critical edition of al-Māwardī's *At-Tuḥfa al-Mulūkiyya fī Ādāb al-Siyāsiyya*, argues—based on the ministerial critiques and analytical remarks of Abū al-Ma'ālī al-Juwaynī (d. 478 AH), a contemporary of both authors, as well as stylistic and rhetorical considerations—that al-Māwardī is indeed the original author of *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya*, and that the work should be attributed to him.

It should also be emphasized that within the millennium-long tradition of Islamic political thought and governance, no other work comparable in scope and influence to al-Māwardī's masterpiece has been produced to this day.

At present, a translation of Imām al-Māwardī's *Al-Aḥkām al-Sulṭāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya* into the Uzbek language has been prepared, and publication efforts are currently underway.

#### – *A'lām al-Nubuwwa.*

This work is widely recognized as one of al-Māwardī's most renowned contributions to the discipline of *kalām* (Islamic theology). As indicated by its title, it focuses on debates and discussions concerning prophethood. The book presents rational proofs for the existence and oneness of God, discusses the nature of divine obligation (*taḳlīf*), and devotes particular attention to clarifying the concept of prophethood, which is among the most significant themes of *kalām*. It also provides extensive treatment of the attributes and miracles of the prophets, with special emphasis on the great miracles of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

This work was first published in Egypt in 1319 AH and was subsequently reprinted numerous times, gaining wide circulation throughout the Islamic world.



– *Adab al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn*.

Alongside *Al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyya wa al-Wilāyāt al-Dīniyya*, one of al-Māwardī's most acclaimed works is *Adab al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn*. Aimed at elevating human morality and spirituality to the highest levels, this book avoids excessive reliance on abstract moral–philosophical theories and instead presents a coherent and pure ethical doctrine, articulating concepts essential for tranquility and human felicity.

Comprising five sections, the work begins by emphasizing the superiority and excellence of intellect over all other faculties and by drawing a comparison between intellect and the human self (*nafs*).

The second section addresses the virtues of seeking knowledge, the sources of knowledge, and the relationships between learners and teachers.

The third section focuses on the foundations of obedience to Almighty God, obligatory acts of worship, avoidance of prohibited matters, and reflections on the deceptive and transient nature of worldly life.

The fourth section explains the purpose of human creation, the objectives and responsibilities of human existence, methods of disciplining the self, kinship relations, observation of the surrounding environment, and the human relationship with material existence.

The fifth and final section concludes the book with discussions on noble character, the concept of the perfect human being, factors that corrupt morality, sincerity, truthfulness, envy, speech and silence, patience, the importance of consultation and counsel, keeping secrets, helping others, and various ethical norms.

The work also devotes considerable attention to the individual's self-awareness and social relations and is richly adorned with Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions, wise sayings, and poetry, which enhance its intellectual and moral depth.

The book has been published in various forms up to the present day; its most recent edition was issued in Cairo in 1955 with critical editing and commentaries by Mustafa al-Saqqā. In Turkey, several printed editions have appeared over time in the form of Turkish translations.

It should also be noted that this work has been published in Uzbekistan as well. Translated by Abdullah Ismail Makhdoom under the title "*Adab al-Dunyā wa al-Dīn*" (*The Etiquette of the World and Religion*), with the translator also serving as the author of the foreword, it has been published in Tashkent by **HILOL-NASHR** publishing house in 2017, 2020, and 2021. These editions were issued in a total print run of 20,000 copies, comprising 456 pages, and were prepared and published on the basis of Conclusion No. 5074 dated September 16, 2019, of the Committee on Religious Affairs under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In summary, it can be stated that over the centuries the scholarly legacy of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī has been consistently and diligently studied—and continues to be studied—by scholars, intellectuals, statesmen, politicians, jurists, writers, and theologians. It has also been demonstrated that his teachings served as practical guidance for the great sultans of the medieval period. Moreover, it has been established that these ideas have been integrated and transformed within the systems of governance of today's developed foreign states.

In the future, it is expected that the study and practical application of the teachings of such a great scholar will intensify under the conditions of the New Uzbekistan. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the time has come to conduct broader and more comprehensive research on his legacy.

In particular, there is a clear need to incorporate the globally significant scholarly heritage of this outstanding thinker into the education and upbringing of the younger generation by integrating it into the systems of higher education and public education.





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