

Religion–State Relations in Al-Mawardi’s Perspective: An Analysis of the Concept of Imamah in Al-Ahkam al-Sulthaniyyah

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Abstract

The relationship between religion and the state has long been a central issue in political and legal discourse. In the Indonesian context, Pancasila serves as the foundational ideology that accommodates religious values within the framework of the state, fostering a dynamic interaction between religion and governance. Islam, as a comprehensive religion, provides guidance not only in matters of worship but also in social, political, and legal dimensions. The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, offers universal values that contribute to the well-being of both Muslims and humanity at large. This study aims to examine the role of the state in relation to religion from the perspective of Al-Mawardi. This research employs a library research method by analyzing primary and secondary sources related to Al-Mawardi's political thought. The findings reveal that, according to Al-Mawardi, religion plays a fundamental role in ensuring the stability and prosperity of the state. The state is obligated to uphold and prioritize religious values as a guiding framework for governance. In his seminal work *Al-Ahkam al-Sulthaniyyah*, Al-Mawardi emphasizes that the concept of *imamah* (leadership) functions as an instrument to fulfill the prophetic mission, which includes preserving religion (*hifz al-din*) and managing worldly affairs (*siyasah al-dunya*). Thus, the relationship between religion and the state is inherently integrative, where both are interdependent in achieving social order and justice.

Keywords: *Religion–State Relations, Islamic Political Thought, Al-Mawardi, Imamah*

Abstrak

Relasi antara agama dan negara merupakan isu fundamental dalam diskursus politik Islam yang terus relevan dalam konteks kontemporer. Dalam sistem ketatanegaraan Indonesia, Pancasila menjadi dasar yang mengakomodasi nilai-nilai agama dalam kehidupan berbangsa dan bernegara. Islam sebagai agama yang komprehensif tidak hanya mengatur aspek ibadah, tetapi juga mencakup dimensi sosial, politik, dan hukum. Oleh karena itu, pemikiran politik Islam klasik, khususnya dari Al-Mawardi, menjadi penting untuk dikaji guna memahami konstruksi relasi agama dan negara secara normatif dan konseptual. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep relasi agama dan negara dalam perspektif Al-Mawardi, dengan fokus pada gagasan *imamah* dalam karya monumentalnya *Al-Ahkam al-Sulthaniyyah*. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research), melalui analisis terhadap sumber-sumber primer dan sekunder yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa menurut Al-Mawardi, agama dan negara memiliki hubungan yang bersifat integratif dan saling melengkapi. Negara berfungsi sebagai instrumen untuk menjaga agama (*hifz al-din*) dan mengatur urusan

dunia (*siyasah al-dunya*) secara adil dan berlandaskan nilai-nilai syariat. Konsep *imamah* diposisikan sebagai kelanjutan dari misi kenabian dalam menjaga stabilitas sosial, menegakkan hukum, serta mewujudkan kemaslahatan umat. Dengan demikian, pemikiran Al-Mawardi menegaskan bahwa relasi agama dan negara tidak bersifat dikotomis, melainkan merupakan satu kesatuan yang saling mendukung dalam menciptakan tatanan masyarakat yang adil, stabil, dan berkeadaban.

Kata Kunci: *Relasi Agama dan Negara, Al-Mawardi, Imamah, Politik Islam*

INTRODUCTION

Islam has its own philosophy of life and ideology, just as Christianity does, and just as a fascist or communist has its own philosophy of life and ideology. This is because religion is universally seen via every legal correlation that takes place in a nation. What is a Muslim's ideology? If one wishes, a Muslim's ideology can be described in great depth. The relationship between religion and the state in Indonesia has been clarified in a number of articles, including Article 28E, which states that everyone is free to embrace their religion and worship as they see fit, Article 29 paragraph (1), which states that the State is based on the One Godhead, and Article 29 paragraph (2), which states that the State guarantees each citizen's freedom to embrace their respective religion and to worship as they see fit.

In general, Pancasila has been present in the relationship between religion and the state and always brings comfort to the nation and state. This is because the first precept, which reads "The One Godhead," makes this clear. The 1945 Constitution's Article 29 and its interpretation provide the government the authority to control religious life in Indonesia. To prevent religious abuse and/or blasphemy, the government enacted Law No. 1/PNPS/1965 in accordance with Article 29 (2) of the 1945 Constitution. Law No. 5 of 1969, which addresses presidential declarations that become laws, subsequently affirmed this. The acknowledgment of multiple religions in Indonesia is one way the government gets involved in religious matters.

There is always a place in different circles to always find the right formula and respond to all needs, including among Muslim scholars who are constantly called to this problem because it seems like there is never enough to say about the relationship between religion and the state.¹ Because of its socio-historical, socio-cultural, and theological elements, Islam just explains the fundamental ideas that serve as a foundation for the state rather than providing an explicit explanation of the relationship between religion and the state. Dawlah, the concept of a caliphate, and *hukumah* are just a few of the concepts that have historically been connected to and related with the idea of a state. Upon closer examination, these three terms are discovered to be *zanniyah* verses. This gives rise to a wide range of perspectives regarding the interplay

¹ Moh. Dahlan, Hubungan Agama Dan Negara Di Indonesia, *ANALISIS : Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 1 (2014): 2, <https://ejournal.radenintan.ac.id/index.php/analisis/article/view/635>.

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between the state and religion.² Al Mawardi is one of the academics who brought attention to this issue. The political views of Al Mawardi, a scholar of fiqh, particularly fiqh siyasah, are widely regarded as pertinent to the regulation of constitutional life. In essence, religion is given a crucial place in Indonesia by the constitution. Although Indonesia is not a theocratic nation, it is also not a secular one that distances itself from religion. One nation that incorporates religion into its structure is Indonesia,³ this is demonstrated by the fact that the One Godhead's sound is stated expressly in the first precept of Pancasila. Naturally, this indicates that Indonesia does not demonstrate the presence of religion in its national and official life.

The relationship between religion and the state has been the subject of several studies, but the author believes that much more may be learned about this subject. The paradigm of the interaction between religion and the state is one of the issues that consistently come up.⁴ Islam offers a model for how religion and the state should interact. Some academics also look into how religion and the state interacted during the Reform Era as part of political modernization. The state's relationship with religion (from an Islamic perspective).⁵

Al Mawardi's views on the idea of the Islamic State have also been the subject of a research. The study of religious relations and the state perspective of some academics connected to the Indonesian state, however, are still the subject of relatively few research. Naturally, this is evident in everything that is pertinent to the circumstances in Indonesia, particularly when viewed through the lens of Al Mawardi's political ideas regarding constitutional politics. Unquestionably fascinating, this study provides insightful information that could improve the quality of life in the state. This study fills in the gaps by looking at religion and the state from Al Mawardi's point of view.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library research approach to examine the relationship between religion and the state from Al-Mawardi’s perspective. The primary data sources consist of classical Islamic texts, particularly *Al-Ahkam al-Sulthaniyyah* by Al-Mawardi, which serves as the main reference for analyzing the concept of *imamah*. Secondary sources include scholarly books, journal articles, and previous studies related to Islamic political thought, religion–state relations, and governance in Islam.

² Rijal Mummaziq Zionis, Relasi Agama Dan Negara Persepektif KH.Wahid Hasyim, *AL DAULAH*, 5, no. 2 (2015): 334, <https://jurnalfsh.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/aldaulah/article/view/88>.

³ Rijal Mummaziq Zionis, *Relasi*, 335.

⁴ Zulkifli, Paradigma Hubungan Agama Dan Negara, *JURIS* 13, no. 2 (2014): 175, <https://ejournal.uinmybatusangkar.ac.id/ojs/index.php/Juris/article/view/1142>.

⁵ Edi Gunawan, Relasi Agama Dan Negara (Perspektif Pemikiran Islam), *AL HIKMAH*, 13, no. 2 (2014): 32, https://journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/al_hikmah/article/view/409.

The data collection technique involves systematic documentation, where relevant texts and literature are identified, selected, and categorized based on the research focus. The study applies a descriptive-analytical method to interpret the data. The descriptive approach is used to explain Al-Mawardi's ideas comprehensively, while the analytical approach is employed to critically examine the conceptual framework of religion–state relations within his political thought.

Furthermore, this research utilizes a normative-philosophical approach to understand the underlying principles of Islamic governance as proposed by Al-Mawardi. The analysis process includes data reduction, classification, interpretation, and drawing conclusions to generate a coherent understanding of the integrative relationship between religion and the state.

This methodological framework is expected to provide a systematic and in-depth analysis of Al-Mawardi's political theory, particularly in highlighting the role of the state in preserving religion (*biḥẓ al-dīn*) and managing worldly affairs (*sīyasah al-dunya*) in order to achieve social order and public welfare.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Islam and The State

Islam is a faith that works for both the world and the afterlife. It offers political and legal concepts in addition to advice on faith and worship. People come to see the advantages of the Qur'an for both Muslims and people in general. There aren't many legal verses pertaining to state or government and community life. Only about 3.5 percent of all Qur'anic verses are the verses in dispute. We know that just roughly twenty-five verses deal with the government. Certainly, hardly all human behaviors are covered in full by the few legal texts. In the meantime, because human life is dynamic, human activities are always changing.

As a result, leaders need to set rules to govern people's varied and changing lives. This was likewise required at the time of Muhammad (saw), who had not yet received the Qur'anic verses when he first arrived in Medina. Both Muslim and Western scholars acknowledged the prophet Muhammad S.A.W. as a religious and state leader in the evolution of Islamic civilization. The Medina Charter, also known as the Medina Constitution, was established by the Prophet Muhammad when he established the state of Medina. The written laws of several religions and ethnicities, which include the fundamentals of religious freedom, intergroup interactions, the need to preserve life, and other things, constitute the Medina Constitution (this word is used in this article).

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According to academics, the Medina constitution is the world's first written text that establishes the fundamentals of a constitution. Islamic nations continue to embrace diversity of opinion as a concept. Naturally, this is unavoidable as the concept was developed in reaction to the evolution of Muslim politics in the face of political shifts following the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate in Turkey. This notion was also directly impacted by the emergence of nation-states, which had previously arisen in Europe as the opposite of the monarchical order. The topic of Islamic nations is still up for debate, and certain nations that identify as Islamic have drawn criticism from Muslim academics themselves.⁶

The three fundamental aspects of a nation are its people, its geography, and its government-collectively referred to as constitutive elements. These three components must be backed up by additional components, such as the presence of a constitution, international recognition, or declarative components.

- a. In the context of a nation's existence, its people are a collection of individuals who share a common sense of equality and live together in a particular area. A nation without citizens is unthinkable. This is due to the fact that citizens, or individuals, are an essential component of the state.
- b. A nation cannot exist if its borders are unclear. Generally speaking, a nation's territory consists of its air, seas, rivers, and oceans. Within the context of a contemporary state, each of these territorial limits is governed by international treaties and laws.
- c. Leading state organizations to accomplish the shared objective of constructing a state is the responsibility of the government, which is a state apparatus. To achieve the objectives of its various citizens, the government, through its apparatus and state apparatus, enacts laws, maintains peace, enforces order and security, and does other things. To achieve these shared goals, states and governments exist in various forms. A nation's name typically refers to the form of government it has, such as a democratic nation with a presidential or parliamentary system.

The state's recognition of other nations completes these three components. The only purpose of international recognition is to justify a state's existence. This is not absolute because it is merely declarative rather than constituent. There are two methods to identify a nation: The first is de facto recognition, which admits the state's existence. A political society is recognized when it satisfies the three primary requirements of a state: territory, people, and sovereign

⁶ A Sahidah, Islam Dan Demokrasi Di Malaysia: Hubungan Agama Dan Negara Yang Unik, *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies*, 10, no. 2 (2011): 216, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol10.iss2.art2>.

government. Second, de jure recognition is the acceptance of a nation's legitimacy based on legal reasons as stipulated by the law. A nation that receives de jure recognition is granted both its rights and its responsibilities as a member of the international community.⁷

Al-Bagdādī is among those who believe that the establishment of a state is important. He contends that the goal of government enforcement is to enforce laws and regulations, punish lawbreakers, control the military, administer taxes, and oversee marriage institutions in order to create an ideal for the formation and enforcement of Islamic law in social life, which is a component of religious teachings. Similar to al-Bagdādī, Imam al-Gazālī maintained that government agencies serve as a means of putting Islamic principles into practice for the good of the populace and to maintain public order in matters of faith and the wider world. For the sake of historical continuity, the state serves as an institution for ummah unity.⁸

Ibn Taymiyah says that one aspect of the duty is the creation of a state. He asserts that the Prophet's mission as Allah SWT's messenger was to establish a timeless and universal social order, not merely to offer guidance on al-Dīn and some guidelines for behavior. He maintained that the establishment of a state is the highest religious duty, *min a'ḥam al-Wājibāt fi al-Dīn*, even in his work *al-Siyāsah al-Syar'iyah*. He argues that the purpose of government is to serve Allah SWT, not to chase material possessions and positions. The foundation of a state, according to Ibn Taymiyah, is the belief that no human individual can fully satisfy his desires and well-being on his own unless he banded together to realize cooperation, make up for each other's deficiencies, and benefit others. Consequently, this simplifies every facet of life. In order to foster social harmony, the state is required to control the flow of citizens' interests.⁹

Brief Biography of Al Mawardi

Abu al Hasan Ali bin Muhammad bin Habib al Mawardi al Bashri is the full name of al Mawardi. He is regarded as a leading figure in the Shafi'i madhhab and was born in Bashrah in 364 AH. He also lived during the decline of the Abbasid dynasty and held a high position during its rule. Al Mawardi is a Sunni scholar who specializes in the study of fiqh, particularly fiqh siyasah. His ideas are highly significant and have a significant impact on Islamic politics. He offers numerous explanations of constitutional politics theories in his well-known book al-

⁷ A Ubaedillah and dkk, *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan (Civic Education) Demokrasi, Hak Asasi Manusia Dan Masyarakat Madani*, Edisi III (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2008), 86.

⁸ Abu Hāmid Muhammad Ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Aḥmad at-Tūsī Al-Gazālī, *Allqīṣād Fī Al-I'tiqod* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, t.t.), 147.

⁹ Al-Gazālī, *Allqīṣād Fī Al-I'tiqod*. 127.

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Ahkam as-Sulthaniyah. These theories continue to be relevant and subrogative today, and some Muslims utilize them to control a range of political and constitutional issues.¹⁰

The political climate was extremely unstable during al-Mawardi's lifetime. Because of social and political issues, as well as people's economic circumstances, the social structure of society was becoming less stable even when things were steady. The circumstances he experienced were frequently compared to those al-Farabi encountered. Despite being in nearly identical circumstances, these two individuals are responding to these socio-political circumstances in different ways. Even if it fails culturally and is rejected by many in the community, al-Farabi's philosophical qualities enable him to come up with a concept and even address societal problems that lead to flawless science.

However, al-Mawardi is more concerned with maintaining the existing quo while developing new and appropriate political and ideological movements in reaction to various events. He states, for instance, that a caliph must be descended from Arabs, more especially from the Quraish tribe, *halam*, which is also a factor in the selection process. In this manner, it is more flexible and can lessen political unrest.

Al-Mawardi was a renowned scholar who produced a large number of reconstructive works rather than serving as the primary source in the field. From a variety of fields, including literary language, interpretation, *fiqh*, and constitutionalism, al-Mawardi’s works is renowned for being deeply religious. For example, his book *Adab al-Duniya wa al-Din* (Manners of Worldly and Religious Life) is well-known among Indonesians. *Nashihat al-Muluk*, *Siyasatu al-Wazarati wa Siya satu al-Malikial-Nadzari wa Ta'jilu al-Dzafari fi Akhlaqi al-Maliki wa Siyasati al-Maliki*, and *al-Ahkamu al Sulthaniyah* were among his other constitutional politics writings. They all discussed the state and leadership, the qualifications and guidelines for selecting a leader, the responsibilities of a leader, and other topics.

Al-Mawardi wrote a number of publications, but his most well-known is *Al-Ahkam as Sulthaniyah*, sometimes called his epic work, which is the most concise explanation of Islamic politics, particularly from Sunni circles. Additionally, this book is the first work in Islamic history to be written about political science, constitutionality, and state administration in depth.¹¹ More of his ideas are found in the book *Al-Ahkam*, sometimes called *Sulthaniyah*, from which this article also draws excerpts.

¹⁰ Syafruddin Syam, *Pemikiran Politik Islam Imam Al Mawardi Dan Relevandinya Di Indonesia*, *JURNAL Ilmiah AL-HADI*, 2, no. 2 (2017): 485, . <https://jurnal.pancabudi.ac.id/index.php/alhadi/article/view/156>

¹¹ Syafruddin Syam, *Pemikiran*, 485.

Analysis/Discussion

Religious and State Relations Al Mawardi's Perspective

Al-Mawardi stressed in the opening line of the book *Al-Ahkam as-Sulthaniyah* that the imamah, or state leadership, is a tool to carry out the prophetic mandate in order to uphold Islam and rule the world.¹² Al Mawardi included religious components in his theory, but he also contended that humans are social creatures in all their dimensions, as Plato, Aristotle, and Ibn Abi Rabi's statements have stated. "Humans are social creatures that depend on other people. Without the assistance of others, humans are unable to achieve their basic necessities. Humans are encouraged to depend on one another, support one another, and work together by individual diversity. In other words, the desire of all people to meet their common needs led to the creation of the state.

Based on the principles and values found in religion, Al Mawardi continued, the function of religion in the state as a control adds value and even serves as a guideline in controlling the state's operations.¹³ Al Mawardi further underlined that it is *fardhu kifayah* for the state to be established on the basis of *ijma' ulama*. His viewpoint is grounded in the historical facts of *al-Khulafa' al-Rashidin* and the succeeding caliphs. The principle "*ma la yatimmu al wajib illa bihi, fahuwa wajib*" also applies here: "an obligation is not perfect except through tools or means; then the tool, or *Sara*, is also obligatory." This implies that while the state provides the instruments and means of benefits, benefit creation and maintenance are required. Therefore, the creation of a state is required. Both religion and the state are crucial sources of legitimacy for political reality in al-Mawardi's theories and conceptions.¹⁴

According to Al Mawardi, the state needs to fulfill six requirements in order to be enforced, including;

1. As a conviction in moral power, people embrace and live out their religion. Religion can provide guidance for human impulses and desires. Religion is regarded as the most significant and necessary component for the welfare and stability of the nation since it is a supervisor (control) that is innate in human conscience and self.
2. A charismatic and powerful leader sets an example for others. As a result, the ruler may bring disparate goals together to build the nation toward lofty ideals, defend the populace, their money, and their honor, and enable the state to exercise the religion that is practiced there on a daily basis.

¹² Zulkifli, *Paradigma Hubungan Agama*, 177.

¹³ Al Mawardi, *Al Ahkam Al Sulthaniyah Wa Al Wilayah Ad Diniyah* (Kairo: tp, 1973), 5-7.

¹⁴ Al Mawardi, *Al Ahkam*, 5-7.

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3. People will be able to form strong bonds with one another if we have fair and comprehensive justice; there will be respect and deference to the leader. In the end, justice can protect the position of ruler by fostering unity, fostering love and allegiance for the nation, and fostering its prosperity.
4. fair security. For everyone to enjoy a secure and peaceful life, life security is a must; even in that case, citizens can carry out their duties and rights as members of the state. A nation's achieved justice, which surely encompasses all facets of people's life, can undoubtedly lead to the realization of this security.
5. Both sufficient and sustainable soil fertility are required. Naturally, the sustainability of the community's livelihood is also influenced by efforts to protect the land and the environment; the people's food and financial needs will be satisfied by the land. The state can create and preserve soil fertility in this way.
6. hopeful optimism. The present generation is linked to the next generation. Every generation is complementary to the others; the previous generation will serve as an example for the present generation. In order to foster growth and development, it is necessary to prepare the relay between generations and work to instill hope among them. It goes without saying that a generation that is unprepared and gloomy will be crushed by time.¹⁵

One could argue that by implementing these six components, the state should be able to create a nation that genuinely aspires to all of the systems al-Mawardi suggested in order to practice religious teachings, preserve unity, and support one another. This includes constantly constructing public facilities, various infrastructures, education, culture, health, and so forth, so that all facets of society-regardless of religion or ethnicity-feel equally treated and treated fairly. This will guarantee the nation's stability and resilience as a large organizational system. Al Mawardi identifies religion as the primary component; in other words, religion plays a part in the establishment of the state and serves as a guide and control mechanism for governing its operations based on its ethical and moral principles, making religion the primary factor contributing to the state's stability and well-being. Al-Mawardi's method, which views the relationship between religion and the state more as a symbiotic one, is the most practical of the three perspectives. He believes that since religion and the state have ideals that go beyond necessity, they must be reconciled. According to Al Mawardi, a compromise between religion

¹⁵ Al-Mawardi, *Adab Al-Dunya Wa Al-Din, Dalam Sinyuti Pnlungan, Fiqih Siyasah: Ajaran, Sejarah Dan Pemikiran* Edisi I, Cet. ke 4, (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 1999), 227.

and the state is necessary for the state to execute and realize religious rules in people's lives. In the meantime, the state uses the existence of a religion with high moral standards as an excuse to create moral laws and even political propriety guidelines.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

Islam is a faith that works for both the world and the afterlife. It offers political and legal concepts in addition to advice on faith and worship. People come to see the advantages of the Qur'an for both Muslims and people in general. The obligation includes the state. Al-Mawardī identifies religion as the primary component; in other words, religion plays a part in the establishment of the state and serves as a guide and control mechanism for governing its affairs based on its ethical and moral principles, making religion the primary factor contributing to the state's stability and well-being. Al Mawardi stressed in the opening of the book *Al Ahkam As Sulthaniyah* that the imamah, or state leadership, is a tool to carry out the prophetic mission in order to uphold Islam and rule the world.

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¹⁶ Rasdha Diana, Al Mawardi Dan Konsep Kenegaraan Dalam Islam," *Jurnal TSAQAFAH*, 2017, 165–167.

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