

A LOOK AT THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND LEGAL ACTIVITIES OF ABULHASAN AL-MAWARDI

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Keywords

Sultan, sultanate, caliph, ruler, dynasty, legal rulings (*ahkam*), sect, law, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Sharia, doctrine, etc.

Abstract

This scientific article, titled “*A Look at the Social, Political and Legal Activities of Abulhasan al-Mawardi, a Scholar of the Abbasid Period of the 10th–11th Centuries*,” briefly outlines the Abbasid period of the Arab Caliphate, which was increasingly descending into crisis.

The socio-political environment during the lifetime of Abulhasan al-Mawardi (964–1058) was extremely precarious. His life and scholarly activity coincided with the Abbasid period of the tenth and eleventh centuries, when Baghdad [1. Hasan Ibrahim. p. 365] was one of the major centers of learning and culture in the Islamic world. During the Abbasid state (r. 132/750–656/1258), a total of thirty-seven individuals ascended the caliphal throne. The territory of this state extended from Yettisuv in the East to the Atlantic Ocean in the West, from the North Caucasus in the north to the northern regions of Africa in the south.

In the period in which Abulhasan al-Mawardi lived, socio-political processes intensified and fragmentation emerged within the Abbasid Caliphate [2. Vasiliev A. A. 1902. p. 230]. The empire split into several independent or semi-independent states, including the Abbasids in Iraq (r. 8th–13th centuries) [3. Semenova L. A. 1990. p. 328], states in North Africa (r. 8th–12th centuries) [4. Julien Ch. A. 1967. p. 138], the Umayyads in al-Andalus (8th–11th centuries) [5. Altamira-i-Crevea R. 1957], states in Khorasan and Transoxiana (9th–11th centuries), the Syrian state (10th–12th centuries), the Buyids (10th–11th centuries), and the Seljuks (11th–12th centuries) [6. Semenova L. A. 1990. p. 280]. Contradictions also arose in the external relations of the caliphate, which ultimately contributed to the decline of the Abbasid state [7. Khatami S. M. 2003. pp. 192–203].

According to G. E. von Grunebaum, “The Abbasids fragmented into independent or semi-independent states under the name *Muluk al-Tawa'if*. This period marked a new stage in the history of statehood among the peoples of the Near and Middle East” [8. von Grunebaum G. E. 1981. p. 180].

Abulhasan al-Mawardi's views on the theory of state and law were closely connected to the conditions of the disintegration of the caliphal system. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, Abbasid governance experienced severe internal contradictions. During this period, political authority was largely exercised by sultans and their deputies [9. Ahmet Ugur. pp. 15–25].

By the tenth and eleventh centuries, the socio-political administration of the Abbasids had come under the control of the Buyid Shi'ite military amirs al-umara, who dominated the caliphate for one hundred and thirteen years (r. 334–447/932–1055). During this time, Abbasid caliphs fell under the political influence of the amirs they themselves had appointed. As the supremacy of the Buyids over the caliphs increased, the caliphate weakened progressively.

Political instability negatively affected socio-economic life. The increase in taxes levied on agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry, and crafts—especially on *iqta'* lands allocated to officials—led to popular uprisings in various regions [10. al-Mas'udi, *Muruj al-Dhahab*, vol. 3, p. 335].

Abulhasan al-Mawardi lived during the reigns of the caliphs al-Muti' (r. 334–363/946–974), al-Ta'i' (r. 363–381/974–991), al-Qadir Billah (r. 381–422/991–1031), and al-Qa'im bi-Amr Allah (r. 422/1031–1075) [11. Muhammad Khwand Shah Balkhi. 1370 AH, *Shah Azar*, p. 85]. During the reigns of 'Abd al-Karim ibn al-Muti' and al-Ta'i', almost no significant changes occurred in the socio-political and economic life of the caliphate, as state administration remained in the hands of the Buyid amirs. After ruling for seventeen years and nine months, al-Ta'i' was deposed, and Qadir Ahmad ibn Ishaq ibn al-Muqtadir, known as al-Qadir Billah, was appointed caliph. This caliph devoted particular attention to spiritual and educational affairs [12. 'Abd al-Rafi' Haqiqat. Tehran, 1969].

Although al-Qadir Billah was an enlightened, open-hearted, and generous individual, he lacked sufficient competence in matters of governance. Nevertheless, during his reign, a number of initiatives beneficial to the country's development were implemented. In 437/1017, al-Qadir Billah authored *al-Risala al-Qadiriyya*, also known as *I'tiqad al-Qadiriyya*, in opposition to the Mu'tazilite doctrine that had separated from *Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a* [13. Kazan, 1914. Salah Kamal]. Through this treatise, he dealt a serious blow to the Mu'tazilite, Shi'ite, and Imami movements [14. Rashid al-Din. Moscow, 1946]. However, despite these efforts, this initiative did not bring about significant changes in the socio-political life of the caliphate.