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## Political Thoughts of Al-Mawardi

### Introduction:

Al-Mawardi is the one of the great muslim political philosophers. Observing the challenges to the khilafat rule of Baghdad, he gave his own political philosophy. He wrote books in which he instructed the ruler to save its rule. Furthermore, he gave features and qualifications of state and its ruler. The political thoughts of Al-Mawardi are still relevant to some extent in the modern world.

### Al-Mawardi: Background.

During the time of Al-Mawardi, there was political chaos in Baghdad. Multiple nations were posing threat to the khilafat. These were Seljuks, Fatmids and Buyids. Khilafat was too weak and fearful of these forces. Meanwhile, Al-Mawardi founded his political philosophy on basis of these political conditions.



# Al-Mawardi's Theory of Imamate.

Al-Mawardi came up with his own political thought in the shape of 'Theory of Imamate'. He gave this theory in his book 'Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya'. The basic features of the theory were:

## Devolution of Power: Wizarate

Mawardi considered the concentration of power in Khalifa as the main problem. He suggested to devolve the powers of Khalifa to protect his Khalifat. According to him, Khalifa should be assisted by a person known as 'Wazir'. He called his devolution as 'Wizarate'. Hence, protection of Khalifat lies in the devolution of power.

## Qualifications of a Khalifa.

In his political philosophy Mawardi re-defined the eligibility criteria for a Khalifa. He said there should be particular features in a person to be a Khalifa. Those features were:





He must be physically fit. His sense of perception should be strong and fit.

He must be wise enough and pertains sufficient knowledge to rule the state.

He must be able to prevail the justice.

He must be brave to face challenges.

He must belong to Qurayshite family.

Thus, according to Mawardi, there were certain qualities of Khalifa.

### Selection of Imam:

Besides, the qualities of Mawardi also described the selection process of an Imam. He gave two ways to choose a person as an Imam.

i) Election: A person may be appointed as an Imam through election. He could be elected by a



Electoral College.

ii) Selection: A person may be nominated by outgoing Imam.

In short, Al-Mawardi described methods to appoint Imam.

Functions of Imam:

Al-Mawardi assigned certain functions to Imam. These were,

- i) Protection of Islamic faith from adulteration.
- ii) Enforcement of laws according to the Islamic Shari'ah.
- iii) Defence of state from external threats.
- iv) Ensurance of justice, equality and liberty.
- v) Running the state affairs by appointing advisors called 'Wizarate'.
- vi) Control and use of Bait-ul-Mal.





## Removal of 'Khalifa':

In the political thought of Al-Mawardi, there is a provision for the removal of Khalifa. He may be removed on the basis of two factors:

i) Incapacitation: when he loses his physical organs or senses.

ii) Immorality: when Khalifa indulges into immoral practices like drinking and gambling.

## Relevance in the modern times:

The features of the theory of Imamite could be relevant in the modern politics. Furthermore, there is a seat of Imam in the Iranian political system. In addition, decentralisation of powers are part of modern political systems.

## Conclusion:

Al-Mawardi gave his political philosophy of Imamite. He gave basis of a political system. Application of those features is observed in the 21st century.





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# Aristotle's Classification of Governments

## Introduction:

Aristotle gave his political philosophy with the classification of governments. He based his ideology into various forms of governments. These forms run in a cyclic structure. They would replace each other at certain stages. This classification of governments is relevant in the modern political affairs. Various countries have any of these form of government. In addition, countries have also experienced the downfall of governments and emerging of new forms at their place.

## Classification of Government.

Aristotle classified the forms of government on basis of rulers and their outcomes. The scheme of forms is discussed below:





### Monarchy:

It is government by a single ruler. There is a concentration of powers into one hand.

Hierarchy is the main source to relieve power. Monarchy runs along blood relationships.

According to Aristotle, it is a good form of government having one ruler.

### Tyranny:

It is the opposite form of monarchy. In this government an absolute ruler exploits his power. There is civil chaos in his state. Public emerges and revolt against his rule. There is violation of human rights and civil rights. This rule ultimately leads to civil war.

### Aristocracy:

A government by few people is called aristocracy. These people have sufficient capacity and knowledge to rule over a



State. These are filtered out through various stages. Thus, the government is in hands of philosophers. It is the good form of government. These expert philosophers work efficiently for the betterment of their state.

### Oligarchy:

It is in contrast to aristocracy. It is worse form of government by few people. Few elite captures the power and exploits for their personal gain. It is also possible when a family holds a state power for a longer period of time.

### Polity:

According to Aristotle, it is a form of government by many people. It is the good form of government. People vote for the government. The elected ones show responsibility to their duty. Thus, polity is a government with a true representation of masses.





## Democracy:

It is a form of government by many people. Aristotle considered it best form of government. The reason behind it was a Greek's democratic system. Greek people put anyone educated or illiterate as their ruler.

The forms of government may be summarised as below:

No: of rulers	The govern- ment	The perver- ted govern- ment.
One	Monarchy	Tyranny
A few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
Many	Polity	Democracy

## Cyclic nature of govern- ments:

According to Aristotle, one form of government replaces the other. When monarchy fails to achieve its objective it turns into Tyranny. This is same for other governments Any government may convert into its perverted form.



Monarchy  $\implies$  Tyranny

Aristocracy  $\implies$  oligarchy

Polity  $\implies$  Democracy

## Relevance in the modern politics.

Aristotle's Scheme of government is relevant in the recent times. Monarchy exists in few countries like Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, history has witnessed the monarchies turning into tyranny. The downfall of the Mughal Empire set such a example. However, Aristocracy is prevailing in the United Kingdom, Spain and Denmark. Thus, the political philosophy is relevant in the modern times.





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# Challenges to Liberal Democracies.

## Introduction:

Liberal democracies are facing various challenges and issues. These include political instability, lack of infra-structure, socio-economic problems and lack of women participation. These problems are posing direct threat to democracy. The issues result in civil unrest and subsequently paves way for dictatorships. Addressing such issues, democratic values and norms could be saved in current times.

## Liberal Democracies: Issues and Challenges.

Liberal democracies around the world are under grave challenges threatening democratic setups.

Political instability is one of the major issue in liberal democracies.





However, these states successfully suppress the political opponents. Like China is facing unrest in Shepe and Taiwan of Hong Kong.

Another challenge is socio-economic problems. As for Russia is grappling with sanctions by the west due to Ukraine war. Recently, it is also reported that the United States of America is facing balance of payment crises. These are severe challenges being faced by the liberal democracies.

In addition, lack of sufficient women participation is also a challenging issue. Nevertheless, liberal democracies have taken positive steps towards women political empowerment. Most of the states are headed by male leaders. Hence, gender gap still exists in modern democracies.





## An Existential threat to Democracy:

The issues and challenges being faced by liberal democracies are an existential threat to democracy. These are problematic to political expression and freedom of speech.

Civil unrest is resulted from these challenges. It is due to exploitation of civil rights. The public view is ignored in policy-making and decision-making processes.

Moreover, due to these issues people may be able to topple down the regimes. As it is observed in under-developing states. Sudan, Libya, Lebanon and other middle-eastern nations are experiencing change in regime. Thus, any challenge arises in liberal democracies is a potential threat to democratic setups.

