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# تحلیل سیستمی ساختار قدرت در نظام سیاسی امام علی(ع) بر اساس نهج‌البلاغه و الگوی دیوید ایستون

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## چکیده

**هدف:** این پژوهش با هدف واکاوی سیستمیِ ساختار قدرت سیاسی در الگوی حکمرانی امام علی(ع) بر اساس تعالیم نهج‌البلاغه و با استفاده از چارچوب نظری «سیستم‌های سیاسی» دیوید ایستون انجام شده است.

**روش پژوهش:** این مطالعه با به کارگیری روش تحلیل سیستمی و تطبیق الگوی نهاده-بازداده دیوید ایستون، به دسته‌بندی و تحلیل ساختارها و کارکردهای قدرت در نهج‌البلاغه می‌پردازد.

**یافته‌ها:** یافته‌های تحقیق نشان می‌دهد که نظام سیاسی علوی دارای ویژگی‌های برجسته‌ای همچون محوریت رهبری الهی، شایسته‌سالاری سخت‌گیرانه در انتصابات، پاسخگویی نهادینه‌شده در برابر مردم، تصمیم‌گیری بر پایه عدالت و انعطاف‌پذیری ساختاری در برابر بازخوردهای اجتماعی است. این نظام به عنوان یک موجودیت سیاسی پویا و دارای توانایی خودتنظیمی و اصلاح درونی در برابر بحران‌های اجتماعی عمل می‌کرد.

**نتیجه‌گیری:** انطباق ساختار حکومت امام علی(ع) با الگوی سیستمی دیوید ایستون نشان می‌دهد که حکمرانی علوی مدلی منسجم، پویا و عدالت‌محور از سازماندهی سیاسی است که می‌تواند به عنوان الگویی کارآمد برای نظریه‌پردازی در حوزه علوم سیاسی و حکمرانی اسلامی معاصر مورد استفاده قرار گیرد.

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# A Systemic Analysis of the Power Structure in the Political System of Imam ʻAlī (a.s.) Based on Nahj al-Balāghah and David Easton's Model

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aims to examine the systemic structure of political power in the governance model of Imam ʻAlī (a.s.) using David Easton's political systems framework, analyzing its structural and functional components as reflected in *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

**Methodology:** The research employs a systemic analytical approach, utilizing David Easton's input-output system model to systematically categorize and analyze the political discourses, administrative policies, and governance principles contained in *Nahj al-Balāghah*.

**Findings:** The findings demonstrate that the political system of Imam ʻAlī (a.s.) is defined by divine-centric leadership, strict meritocracy, institutionalized public accountability, justice-driven decision-making, and structural responsiveness to societal demands (inputs/feedback). Under the Imam's ethical-epistemological guidance, the Alid state functioned as a dynamic, self-regulatory political entity capable of structural adaptation and systemic reform amidst social turbulence.

**Conclusion:** Applying Easton's systemic framework reveals that Alid statecraft represents a highly coherent, dynamic, and justice-oriented model of political organization, offering a robust paradigm for modern Islamic political theory and state administration.

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## 1. Introduction

In Islamic political thought, the political system transcends the boundaries of a purely juridical or procedural apparatus; rather, it embodies profound axiological, rational, and ethico-normative dimensions that emerge and evolve in dynamic interplay with empirical social realities. Within this paradigm, **Nahj al-Balāghah** (The Peak of Eloquence)—a seminal compendium of early Islamic and Shiʿi political philosophy—stands as an unrivaled repository of political, managerial, and ethical maxims uniquely suited for analyzing the structure of power in an Islamic polity.

During his caliphate, Imam ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him) manifested not merely as a spiritual luminary, but as the architect of an institutionalized, justice-centered political order. Diverging sharply from prevailing historic regimes grounded predominantly in dynastic succession, hereditary oligarchies, or tribal factionalism, the Alid governance model was firmly anchored in meritocracy, procedural transparency, social equity, and institutionalized accountability.

A critical contemplation of the Imam's discourses, official epistles, and sermons in Nahj al-Balāghah demonstrates that politics in his conception possessed an intrinsic systemic logic and institutional cohesion, rather than consisting of isolated moral preachings or ad hoc personal fiats. This study deploys systems theory—principally the analytical framework formulated by political scientist David Easton—to examine the political architecture of Imam ʿAlī's governance, aiming to articulate an academically rigorous and formalizable model delineating how political power was generated, distributed, regulated, and exercised under Alid rule.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

The central problem addressed in this investigation is the conspicuous absence of a structured, functional analysis of Imam ʿAlī's political system utilizing contemporary analytical paradigms in political science. While Nahj al-Balāghah, as an authentic primary document of the Imam's political thought and praxis, contains hundreds of administrative, judicial, fiscal, military, and moral precepts, the majority of existing scholarly studies have treated this seminal source either descriptively or as mere homiletic exhortations, rather than interrogating it as a formalized conceptual architecture for theorizing about the distribution of power in an Islamic state (Muṭahharī, 1999: 61; Dilshād Tihrānī, 2005: 98).

Conversely, systems theory—solidified in political science and sociology through the foundational works of David Easton (1965) and Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968)—furnishes a robust apparatus for holistic structural analysis by delineating inputs, conversion processes, outputs, and feedback loops. Applying this framework to the Alid polity elucidates not only the structural nodes of governance, but also the dialectical dynamics between the state, the broader citizenry, aristocratic elites, political dissidents, and external environmental constraints.

From this analytical vantage point, comprehending the role of Imam ʿAlī is essential not merely as an individual ruler, but as the supreme regulatory axis (**al-miḥwar al-tawzīʿī**) through whom policy formulation, administrative accountability, executive appointments, the preservation of justice, and structural self-correction are mediated. Crucially, this inquiry investigates: How did Imam ʿAlī process and manage systemic societal feedback (such as popular protests, aristocratic sedition, and the militarized insurrection of the Khawārij)? What institutional mechanisms did he devise to safeguard structural integrity, foster systemic legitimacy, and resolve internal existential crises?

Hence, this paper addresses the fundamental research question:

Upon what structural components is the power architecture of Imam ʿAlī's political system founded, and how can it be modeled within a political systems framework that remains organized, ethical, and efficacious from societal inputs through to recursive feedback loops?

### *1.2. Literature Review*

The study of the power structure in Islamic political thought, and specifically in the governance of Imam ʿAlī (a.s.), has engaged scholars from diverse perspectives. Nevertheless, prior inquiries have largely been constrained either to descriptive-historical narrations or have suffered from a lack of theoretical cohesion and explicit analytical modeling. Relevant scholarship may be classified into two principal streams:

#### 1.2.1. Traditional and Historical Studies

Numerous commentaries have been authored on *Nahj al-Balāghah*, foremost among them Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd's monumental twentieth-volume commentary (*Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah*), widely recognized for its encyclopedic breadth encompassing Islamic literature, historiography, theology, and political chronicle (Fikrat, 1995: 641). Other significant

exegetical contributions include Mīrzā Ḥabīballāh Hāshimī Khūʾī's Minhāj al-Barāʿah, Muḥammad Taqī Shūshtarī's Bahj al-Ṣabāghah fī Sharḥ Nahj al-Balāghah, and Grand Ayatollah Nāṣir Makārim Shīrāzī's Payām-i Imām-i Amīr al-Muʾminīn.

Another genre examines Alid traditions thematically, such as Ismāʿīl Manṣūrī's Ḥukmrānī-yi ʿAlawī: Unsūj-i Niẓām-i Siyāsī dar Islām (Alid Governance: The Political System Model in Islam), and Shahīd Murtaḍā Muṭahharī's foundational monograph Sayrī dar Nahj al-Balāghah (A Journey Through Nahj al-Balāghah), which provides a thematic overview of the Imam's political life. While historically rich and methodologically indispensable, these studies maintain predominantly narrative, rhetorical, or text-critical orientations, lacking engagement with contemporary political theory and comparative structural modeling.

### 1.2.2. Studies in Political Jurisprudence (Fiqh Siyāsī) and Islamic Philosophy

Landmark treatises such as Ayatollah Muḥammad Ḥusayn Nāʾīnī's Tanbīh al-Ummah wa-Tanzīh al-Millah, as well as the political writings of Shahīd Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr and Ayatollah Rūḥullāh Khomeinī, have articulated macro-theories regarding political legitimacy, the duties of the Islamic jurist, and the nexus between divine sovereignty and human governance. These texts concentrate predominantly on theological and constitutional questions of divine legitimacy (mashrūʿiyyat-i ilāhī), the jurisdictional boundaries of the sovereign, and the ontological role of religion in societal leadership. However, they allocate restricted focus to the functional and systemic architecture through which political power operates as an interactive equilibrium.

## *1.3. Research Methodology*

This investigation employs a qualitative research design rooted in textual content analysis (taḥlīl-i muḥtavā-yi matnī) synthesized with political systems analysis (rawish-i taḥlīl-i sīstimī). The primary evidentiary dataset is derived directly from authoritative Islamic primary texts, most notably the sermons, letters, and aphorisms of Nahj al-Balāghah, corroborated against foundational hadith compendia (such as al-Kulaynī's al-Kāfī, al-Sadūq's Kamāl al-Dīn, and al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī's Wasāʾil al-Shīʿah ), classical chronicles (such as al-Dīnawarī and al-Minqarī), and authoritative exegetical works.

The analytical workflow proceeds through three distinct stages:

1. Conceptual Extraction: Mining the corpus for primary institutional, administrative, and constitutional assertions.

2. Structural Categorization: Grouping extracted propositions into constitutive institutional domains (supreme leadership, executive governance, judiciary, chancery, military forces)

3. Systemic Mapping: Correlating these empirical and theological structures with the theoretical postulates of general systems theory—specifically tracing how environmental demands and supports (inputs) are converted through the Imam's normative and procedural apparatus (conversion process) into policies and legal decrees (outputs), and subsequently recalibrated through public reaction, institutional evaluation, and crisis mediation (feedback loop).

### 1.4. Research Findings

Based on the textual content analysis of **Nahj al-Balāghah** juxtaposed with the Easton systems framework, the findings of this research materialize along four core analytical axes:

#### 1.4.1. The Imam as the Central Axis of Power in the Alid Political System

In his governance model, Imam ʿAlī exercised not merely temporal political leadership, but simultaneously discharged epistemological, ethical, juridical, and spiritual guidance. In Sermon 3 (al-Shiqshiqiyyah) and Letter 53 (the celebrated governance charter addressed to Mālik al-Ashtar), he identifies his primary mandate as the establishment of justice, the preservation of rights, and the structural rectification of the apparatus of power (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53). The textual evidence establishes that the Imam occupied not an isolated apex of power, but the regulatory center of power dynamics—directly overseeing executive appointments and dismissals, the adjudication of public petitions, arbitrating complex disputes, and guiding the civic consciousness.

While some critical voices might raise interrogations regarding the chain of transmission (sanad) or semantic implication (dalālah) of Letter 53, such reservations are resolved by three decisive evidentiary pillars:

1. The substantive content and structural maxims of the letter are widely corroborated across concurrent canonical hadith collections;

2. The profound philosophical and administrative depth of this document demonstrably exceeds the capacity of an ordinary human intellect;

3. Its ethical precepts correspond seamlessly with the documented historical praxis (**sīrah**) of Imam ʿAlī's governance. Hence, certitude is attained that this treatise—or its definitive conceptual core—emanates from the Infallible (al-Maʿṣūm).

In Imāmī theological doctrine, the Imam is divinely designated (manṣūb min qibal Allāh). The Messenger of Allah (ṣ) explicitly affirmed regarding the appointment of ʿAlī (a.s.): "And He commanded me to raise up ʿAlī as a signpost for the people, to appoint him as an Imam among them, and to designate him as my successor, even as the prophets before me appointed their successors" (al-Majlisī, 1403 AH, 28: 96–97). Similarly, al-Shaykh al-Ṣadūq records in al-Amālī from the Prophet (ṣ): "The Day of Ghadīr Khumm is the most supreme festival of my community; it is the day wherein God, Exalted be His Mention, commanded me to designate my brother ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him) as the guiding banner for my community" (al-Ṣadūq, 1376 Sh: 125).

### 1.4.2. Administrative Delegation and the Distribution of Executive Authority

Within the Alid political structure, operational executive power was decentralistically distributed across a codified network of governors (ʿummāl), magistrates (quḍāt), fiscal administrators and scribes (kuttāb), and frontier military officers (jund). The findings show that Imam ʿAlī predicated the appointment of administrators strictly upon objective meritocracy (shāyistah-sālārī) and inviolable trustworthiness (amānat-dārī), establishing rigorous qualifications for bureaucratic selection (Letter 53).

The insistence upon moral integrity and intellectual acumen in administrative functionaries was a cardinal principle across the prophetic and Imāmī tradition, particularly pronounced in the exacting qualifications established for judges (al-Ḥurr al-ʿĀmilī, 1414 AH, 27: 11–15). Scribes were required to maintain supreme confidentiality, fiscal precision, and unyielding honesty, while the armed forces were disciplined to embody the highest ethical standards as guardians of the polity's territorial and ideological borders (Letter 53). These findings confirm that the Alid power structure was not autocratic or monolithically centralized, but rather **regulation-centric (tanẓīm-miḥwar): the Imam delegated day-to-day administrative authority to institutional bodies while preserving overarching supervisory, evaluative, and ethical direction.

### 1.4.3. Accountability and Systemic Feedback Mechanisms

The Alid system possessed institutionalized systemic responsiveness. The findings demonstrate that Imam ʿAlī adopted a bifurcated methodology in engaging political opposition:

1. Engagement with the Leaders of Sedition and Deception: Those political actors who knowingly, deliberately, and opportunistically orchestrated rebellion. With this vanguard, the Imam engaged initially through didactic admonition and rational dispute, and when violence was unleashed, through decisive, legitimate state defense.

2. Engagement with the General Rank-and-File: The broad populace who were misled, uninformed, or exploited by elite factions. Toward this secondary cohort, the Imam's policy differed fundamentally: his paramount strategic objective across his three defensive wars (Jamal, Ṣiffīn, and Nahrawān) was to sever the common body from corrupt instigators. To this end, he expended tremendous energy in public education, political transparency, and demystifying elite conspiracies, as evidenced by his impassioned addresses preceding military engagements (al-Minqarī, 1404 AH: 203).

This historical praxis proves that the Alid regime, in stark contrast to authoritarian or coercive models, was deeply conversational and structurally open to societal feedback, while demonstrating unyielding resolve against insurrectionary threats seeking to dismantle the constitutional order.

#### 1.4.4. Systemic Functioning of the Alid Governance Model

Viewed through the Easton analytical paradigm, the findings demonstrate that the governance of Imam ʿAlī operated as a balanced, self-regulating cybernetic cycle. A vital theoretical deduction is that the Alid power architecture was not merely responsive, but intrinsically dynamic: it retained the capacity for structural adaptation and internal reform in the face of tectonic socio-political mutations, without abandoning its foundational moral tenets (Fīraḥī, 2012).

## 2. Conceptual Clarification

To ensure theoretical precision, four primary conceptual pillars must be defined:

### *2.1. Political System (Niẓām-i Siyāsī)*

A political system denotes an integrated complex of institutions, values, processes, and structured relationships that collectively organize and execute macro-level decision-making regarding the allocation of power and societal governance (Heywood, 2013: 43). In Islamic political ontology, a political system transcends procedural administration and legalistic mechanics; it is imbued with an inherent divine and axiological imperative. It seeks not merely political stability and instrumental efficiency, but the realization of transcendental legitimacy, divine justice (qisṭ wa ʿadl), ethical illumination, and the spiritual integrity of leadership (Subḥānī, 2006: 21).

### *2.2. Power Structure (Sākhtār-i Qudrat)*

The power structure refers to the institutional arrangement, procedural configuration, and systemic pathways through which political authority is generated, distributed, checked, and exercised. While secular political systems typically differentiate power across executive, legislative, and judicial branches alongside electoral or bureaucratic institutions, the Alid power structure is organized around the focal leadership of the divinely guided Imam (Imāmah), operationalized via a coordinated network of righteous administrators, consultative assemblies, an independent judiciary, and administrative agencies (Muṭahharī, 1999: 112).

In Letter 53, Imam ʿAlī articulates a meticulous division of public functions and hierarchical spheres of authority—encompassing adjudication (qaḍāʾ), provincial governance (ʿamal), military defense (jund), and public administration and finance (kitābah)—evidencing a highly sophisticated, deliberate administrative architecture. Structurally defined, the power structure constitutes the totality of systemic nodes that hold and deploy legitimate authority within a unified governing whole.

### *2.3. Systemic Approach (Rūykard-i Sīstimī)*

The systemic approach originates from General System Theory, initially formulated by biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968). It conceptualizes a social organization or political society as an organic, interdependent whole comprised of inputs, internal conversion processes, outputs, and feedback mechanisms. Within political science, systemic analysis operates as an indispensable diagnostic tool for decoding stability, dynamic equilibrium, institutional efficacy, and structural accountability within power configurations (Easton, 1965: 27). Applying this perspective to the Alid state enables scholars to examine Imam ʿAlī's regime not solely through moral aphorisms, but through concrete institutional apparatuses and the relational dynamics governing sovereign authority (Fīraḥī, 2012).

### *2.4. The Imam and the Office of Imāmah (Imām wa Imāmat)*

In Shiʿi political theology, the Imam is not merely an executive sovereign or political head of state, but the supreme spiritual mentor, doctrinal authority, and divinely appointed guardian (walī) of the community. The station of Imāmah represents an indissoluble synthesis of spiritual illumination, sociopolitical governance, and guardianship over divine revelation and the ummah (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1994, 1: 31). In Nahj al-Balāghah,

Imam ʿAlī describes himself as a leader commissioned with the implementation of absolute justice, the defense of human rights, and the ethical mentorship of the ruling cadre (Sermon 34).

## 3. Theoretical Framework

### *3.1. Systems Theory in Political Science*

Systems theory stands among the most comprehensive analytical frameworks in modern social and political science. Originating in the bio-physical sciences through Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968: 38), it was swiftly adapted to political phenomena to explain how political orders maintain equilibrium, withstand environmental stress, and process social complexities.

Analyzing the relationship between the secular systems paradigm and Imāmī monotheistic principles (mabānī-yi tawḥīdī-imāmī) necessitates an ontological and epistemological comparison. At first glance, both frameworks affirm holism (kull-nigarī) and repudiate reductionism in analyzing complex phenomena: both maintain that the properties of an organic system emerge from the dialectical interactions of its parts, rather than representing a mere arithmetic aggregation of disconnected components.

However, a fundamental epistemological divergence exists at the foundational level:

- In secular systems theory, order, self-organization, and equilibrium are explained through stochastic adaptation, natural evolution, and environmental feedback. The system is a descriptive-functional mechanism designed primarily for survival, optimization, and structural homeostasis within an empirical environment.

- In monotheistic Imāmī thought, systemic organization in the cosmos and society is the profound manifestation of "unity in diversity" (waḥdat dar kathrat). Universal order is not an accidental or evolutionary byproduct of material complexity, but the direct consequence of Divine Wisdom (al-Ḥikmah al-Ilāhiyyah) and purposeful teleology. In this model, every component of creation, while enjoying relative operational autonomy, navigates purposefully toward an absolute ontological perfection: its Creator. Thus, while in a secular system the whole emerges mechanically from its parts, in the monotheistic paradigm, the parts are phenomenal reflections of a supreme, transcendent, and unified Whole.

Consequently, while systems theory provides rigorous analytical tools for deciphering structural mechanics, Imāmī monotheism infuses this architecture with metaphysical meaning, moral teleology, and normative identity. The monotheistic paradigm constitutes an elevated, transcendent iteration of systems theory—wherein systemic order is not merely an administrative equilibrium, but a reflection of divine order linking the material realm (ʿālam al-māddah) to the celestial hierarchy (malakūt).

Within this systemic lens, every political order operates as a dynamic whole analyzed through five essential components (Easton, 1965: 43):

- Inputs (wurūdī-hā): Demands (muṭālabāt), public expectations, cultural values, material resources, and environmental stress. In an Islamic system, inputs are also uniquely rooted in religious obligation (taklīf);
- Conversion Process (farāyand-i pardāzish): Institutional decision-making organs, deliberative bodies, legal frameworks, and regulatory mechanisms;
-Outputs (khurūjī-hā): Official decrees, judicial rulings, public policies, distributive services, and state actions;
- Feedback (bāzkhūrd): Societal reactions, public compliance, dissent, petitioning, reform demands, or resistance;
- Environment (muḥīṭ): The enveloping social, cultural, economic, demographic, and geopolitical reality.

### *3.2. David Easton and the Political Systems Model*

David Easton was among the vanguard political scientists who applied systemic modeling to the analysis of political life. In Easton's formulation, a political system is an integrated matrix of human interactions through which binding values are authoritatively allocated for a society (Easton, 1965: 21). The system sustains itself by converting environmental demands and supports into authoritative decisions and public policies.

Crucially, the capacity to assimilate societal feedback and execute structural adaptations is the paramount determinant of systemic survival; a persistent disjunction between inputs and outputs invariably induces systemic decay and collapse. Notably, in an Islamic polity, systemic accountability also serves to enlighten and guide public conscience (tanwīr-i afkār-i ʿumūmī), as the ruler is primarily charged with implementing divine ordinances and remains ultimately accountable before Almighty God.

### 3.3. Correlation between Systems Theory and the Political Thought of Imam ʻAlī

The political model of Imam ʿAlī in Nahj al-Balāghah displays clear systemic coherence:

- Inputs: The popular yearning for socioeconomic justice, security, reform of the treasury (bayt al-māl), and demands for bureaucratic accountability following the crisis of ʿUthmān's caliphate;
- Conversion / Processing: The Imam's deliberative decision-making, consultation with principled advisors (such as Mālik al-Ashtar and Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr), and coordination with judicial and executive organs;
- Outputs: Rectification of fiscal inequalities, retrieval of expropriated state assets, impartial enforcement of the law, and equitable distribution of state revenues;
- Feedback: Public petitions, regional grievances, the opposition of entrenched aristocrats, and the Imam's direct pedagogical rebuttals articulated in public sermons and official correspondences;
- Environment: The socio-political conditions of Kufa, tribal polarization, the traumatic aftermath of the Third Caliph's assassination, and the geopolitical hostilities of the Umayyad faction in the Levant (al-Dīnawarī, 1994: 140–213).

As political scientist Dāwūd Fīraḥī (2012: 55) demonstrates, the governance mechanisms of Imam ʿAlī exhibit profound conceptual alignment with systems analysis. A systemic reading not only unlocks a nuanced understanding of Alid statecraft, but establishes a robust bridge for contemporary Islamic political theorization.

## 4. Power Structure in Islamic Political Thought

In Islamic political philosophy, power is conceived not merely as an instrument for social control or utilitarian coercion, but fundamentally as a "Divine Trust" (Amānat-i Ilāhī) and an ethical vehicle for actualizing human justice and moral beatitude (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1994, 1: 28). This conceptualization grounds political power firmly within the matrices of spirituality, ontological duty, and ethical responsibility, transcending realpolitik concepts of domination.

### *4.1. Power in Relation to Divine Guardianship (Wilāyat-i Ilāhī)*

Based upon the monotheistic worldview of Islam, Almighty God is the sole sovereign source of legitimate authority:

Allah is the Guardian of those who believe; He brings them out from darkness into light" (Qurʾān, al-Baqarah 2:257).

Consequently, temporal power holds legitimacy only insofar as it aligns with the divine will and proceeds along the path of prophetic mission (Subḥānī, 2006: 41).

This principle is underscored in Imam ʿAlī's testamentary counsel to Kumayl ibn Ziyād:

"...O Kumayl! Have you considered: if no prophet were manifested and there lived upon the earth a pious, God-fearing believer—would his summoning people to God be erroneous or correct? Nay, by God! It would be an error until God, the Exalted and Majestic, appoints him for that task and renders him worthy of it... O Kumayl, religion belongs to God, the Exalted; hence He accepts the stewardship of it from none save a messenger, a prophet, or a designated legatee (waṣī). O Kumayl, it is prophethood, divine message, and Imāmah; and beyond that there are none but usurpers, aggressors, the misguided, and transgressors."* (al-Ṭabarī, 1402 AH: 51; al-Majlisī, 1403 AH, 74: 276).

In the Islamic order, the ruler is commissioned by God to establish equity (iqāmat al-qisṭ) and shepherd the community. For this reason, wilāyah in Islam is never personal ownership or dominion, but a sacred covenant for the realization of the public interest (maṣāliḥ al-ʿāmmah) (Nāʾīnī, 2007: 94).

### *4.2. Salient Characteristics of the Islamic Power Structure*

Islamic political thought employs distinctive dichotomous typologies to characterize governance, demarcating legitimate governance from tyranny:

- Guides of illumination vs. guides of misdirection (aʾimmat al-hudā wa-l-ḍalāl);
- Leaders of justice vs. rulers of oppression (wulāt al-ʿadl wa-l-jawr);
- Rulers of truth vs. sovereigns of falsehood (aʾimmat al-ḥaqq wa-l-bāṭil).

Political authority is not legitimized purely through popular election or coercive conquest; it must be authenticated through divine, moral, and revealed criteria (Muṭahharī, 1999: 61). In classical traditions, the ultimate source of legitimacy resides exclusively with God. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd ibn Abī al-Aʿlā al-Azdī narrates:

"I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a.s.) say: 'Indeed, God, Exalted and Majestic, has mandated upon His creation five primary duties: He granted dispensations and exemptions regarding four of them (prayer, fasting, zakāt, and hajj), but He granted no dispensation whatsoever regarding the fifth: namely, Wilāyah'" (al-Majlisī, 1403 AH, 2: 22).

Within Shiʿi political philosophy, theories of legitimacy have been formulated along two dominant paradigms:

1. Divine Designation (al-Naṣb al-Ilāhī): Rooted in divine appointment, where legitimacy derives exclusively from God;

2. Dual Divine-Popular Theory: Where legitimacy (mashrūʿiyyat) is divine, while empirical actualization and political efficacy (maqbūliyyat) require popular consent and allegiance (bayʿah).

Ayatollah Khomeinī expounded this principle: rational intellect dictates that sovereignty belongs intrinsically and exclusively to Almighty God, who is the absolute sovereign of the cosmos. God entrusted this mandate to the Prophet (ṣ), and the Prophet, by divine decree, conferred it upon the Commander of the Faithful ʿAlī (a.s.) and the Infallible Imams following him (Khomeinī, al-Makāsib al-Muḥarramah, 2: 159–160; Kashf al-Asrār: 181–182).

Unlike secular models, Islam integrates temporal administration with spiritual stewardship. Both the Prophet and Imam ʿAlī simultaneously exercised spiritual authority and sociopolitical rule (Jaʿfariyān, 2010: 237). Furthermore, as Imam ʿAlī declared in Sermon 40, the establishment of governance is an existential social necessity:

"The people inevitably require a ruler—whether righteous or wicked—under whose leadership the believer may labor, the disbeliever may enjoy his share, and God will bring everything to its appointed end" (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 40; Ibn Khaldūn, 2004, 1: 55–56).

### *4.3. The Imam as the Central Pivot of Power*

In Shiʿi theology, the Imam is inextricably bonded to the attribute of Infallibility (ʿiṣmah) (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 1994, 2: 94). Imam ʿAlī ibn Mūsā al-Riḍā (a.s.) articulated this sublime reality in a celebrated discourse narrated by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muslim:

"O ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz! During the Farewell Pilgrimage, at the twilight of his life, God revealed to the Prophet: 'This day I have perfected for you your religion, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion' (Qurʾān 5:3). The matter of Imāmah is the culmination and perfection of religion... And the Prophet established ʿAlī as a banner and an Imam... The Imam is the trustee of God among His creation, His proof over His servants, and His deputy in His lands... purified from all sins, exempt from all defects... an omniscient scholar who knows no ignorance, a shepherd who never falters, the fount of sanctity, purity, devotion,

asceticism, knowledge, and worship... He is infallible (maʿṣūm), divinely supported, guided, and fortified, protected from every error, stumble, and lapse..." (al-Kulaynī, 1407 AH, 1: 199).

Critical chains of transmission (Dirāyat al-Ḥadīth and Rijāl Analysis):

In evaluating the evidentiary chain of this tradition in al-Kāfī, two figures warrant examination:

1. Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn al-ʿAlāʾ al-Ādharbāyjānī: Celebrated as an esteemed, upright legal deputy (wakīl mamdūḥ) untainted by doctrinal deviation (al-Ṭūsī, 1411 AH: 308; al-Ardabīlī, 1403 AH, 2: 19).

2. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muslim: A distinguished companion transmitting from Imam al-Riḍā (al-Khūʾī, 1992, 11: 39).

Although recorded in al-Kāfī as marfūʿ (interrupted at its initial link), the chain is fully authenticated via the complete Sanad transmitted by Shaykh al-Ṣadūq in Kamāl al-Dīn:

"Muḥammad ibn Mūsā ibn al-Mutawakkil narrated to us, from Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī, from Abū Muḥammad al-Qāsim ibn al-ʿAlāʾ, from al-Qāsim ibn Muslim, from his brother ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Muslim" (al-Ṣadūq, 1975, 2: 675). Given the documented trustworthiness (wathāqah) of Kulaynī and Ibn al-Mutawakkil (al-Najāshī, 1986: 377), and the praiseworthy standing of al-Qāsim ibn Muslim among the companions of Imam al-Ṣādiq (al-Khūʾī, 1992, 15: 62), this tradition attains the elevated grade of Ḥasan (Good/Reliable).

In Sermon 173, Imam ʿAlī explicitly defines the criteria of political leadership:

"O people! The person most entitled to this office (the Caliphate and leadership) is the one who is most competent in its administration and most knowledgeable of the ordinances of Allah concerning it." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 173).

Here, the Imam establishes two indispensable functional criteria: profound knowledge (ʿilm) and executive competence (quwwah/ʿamal). Some modern commentators have debated the attribution of Sermon 173, arguing that the Imam emphasized pragmatic competency and divine knowledge rather than citing explicit divine textual appointment (al-naṣṣ al-ilāhī) or the covenant of Ghadīr. Commentators resolve this objection decisively: the Imam was articulating the essential attributes required of any legitimate sovereign, rather than debating the theological mechanism of accession; moreover, had the Imam explicitly argued textual designation in that fraught public assembly, opportunistic opponents would have weaponized denial (Makārim Shīrāzī, 2007, 6: 504–505). In terms of textual sources (maṣādir), the concluding

section of Sermon 173 was preserved prior to al-Sharīf al-Raḍī in Ibn Shuʿbah al-Ḥarrānī's Tuḥaf al-ʿUqūl, in Abū Jaʿfar al-Iskāfī's (d. 240 AH) Naqḍ al-ʿUthmāniyyah (al-Ḥusaynī al-Khaṭīb, 1405 AH, 2: 413), and in Nāsikh al-Tawārīkh (al-Mūsawī & ʿAssāf, 1426 AH, 4: 368).

Furthermore, public participation and societal allegiance (bayʿah) are crucial for the operational manifestation of governance:

"Had not that assembly been present, and had not the proof been established by the presence of supporters... I would have cast the bridle of the caliphate upon its own camel's back" (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 3).

The public also retains the inviolable right to critique and counsel the leader:

"Do not hold back from speaking the truth or offering counsel in justice" (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 216).

### *4.4. The Position of the Imam within the Power Structure*

Within the framework of systems analysis (drawing upon David Easton's theoretical model), any political power structure devoid of an integrated "central regulatory core" inevitably suffers from functional fragmentation and decision-making decay. In the political system of Islam and the statecraft of Imam ʻAlī (peace be upon him), the Imam does not function merely as a conventional bureaucrat or a titular sovereign; rather, he serves as the strategic nexus of societal processing and authoritative allocation, bridging divine legitimacy with historical empirical realities.

An interrogation of the structural evidence in Nahj al-Balāghah reveals that this central status is actualized across four interconnected, mutually reinforcing dimensions:

The Political Dimension (Supreme Sovereignty, Provincial Stewardship, and Meritocratic Governance): At the political apex, the Imam serves as supreme commander of the armed forces, macro-policymaker for the provinces, and ultimate appointing authority over administrative agents. This dimension is formalized in Letter 53 (The Charter to Mālik al-Ashtar), establishing rigorous vetting procedures, objective examinations, and the absolute prohibition of dynastic favoritism. In systems terminology, the Imam delegates regional executive administration while maintaining centralized constitutional oversight to prevent oligarchic fragmentation and authoritarian abuse.

The Religious and Epistemological Dimension (Hermeneutical Authority, Doctrinal Defense, and Normative Guidance): Unlike secular polities that decouple spiritual mentorship from temporal power, the Alid model

synthesizes political rule with epistemological infallibility. Grounded in Sermon 120 of Nahj al-Balāghah, the Imam operates as the authoritative interpreter of the Qurʾān, the living guardian of prophetic tradition, and the resolver of doctrinal ambiguities. Systemically, this dimension functions as an "axiological input filter," ensuring that incoming societal demands and proposed policies strictly conform to transcendent divine law.

The Judicial Dimension (Supreme Adjudication, Constitutional Arbitration, and Judicial Oversight): Justice is the ultimate teleological justification of Alid governance. The Imam acts as the supreme court of last resort and the direct supervisor of the judiciary's incorruptibility. Chronicled in his severe Epistle to Shurayḥ the Judge and the judicial benchmarks in Letter 53, the Imam institutionalized relentless accountability over magistrates to guarantee that adjudication remains untouched by bribery, material ambition, or aristocratic pressure.

The Ethical Dimension (Exemplary Asceticism, Anti-Corruption, and Servant Leadership): The resilience of the Alid system is rooted in moral leadership. As demonstrated in Sermon 209, Imam ʻAlī mandated that righteous rulers must align their personal standard of living with the most impoverished strata of society to mitigate class alienation. Systemically, this ethical posture operates as a vital stabilization mechanism, eliminating elite ostentation and cementing popular trust (maqbūliyyat) across the body politic.

### *4.5 - 4.7. Institutional Apparatus and Contingent Structural Components*

#### *4.5. The Imam's Role in Regulating the Power Network*

The Alid political structure remains stable only through the enduring presence of this central, ethically anchored, and cognitively supreme entity: the Imam. The recruitment, ongoing evaluation, and dismissal of governors, the appointment of magistrates, the audit of the central treasury (bayt al-māl), and the strategic containment of rebellions were executed under the Imam's direct guidance (Fīraḥī, 2012: 79).

In his charter to Mālik al-Ashtar, the Imam delineates the operational protocols for provincial administration:

"Then look into the affairs of your administrative officers (ʿummāl). Appoint them after testing and examination, and do not assign them office out of personal favoritism or dynastic preference..." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53).

This injunction demonstrates that the Imam was responsible for the rational, objective calibration of power nodes rather than mere superficial command.

### *4.6. Distinguishing the Imam from Other Organs of Power*

In contemporary political systems, state authority is bifurcated across three distinct branches (legislative, executive, and judicial). In the Alid order, however, the Infallible Imam embodies a comprehensive synthesis of these functions grounded in transcendent piety, infallibility, and divine accountability. This functional concentration was structured not to establish autocratic monopoly, but to avert administrative factionalism, moral corruption, systemic paralysis, and institutional collapse (Subḥānī, 2006: 65).

### *4.7. Contingent Structural Elements of the Alid System*

While anchored around the Imam, the Alid polity was composed of specialized, operational institutions. These units were contingent and dynamic, organized to function under ethical oversight (Muṭahharī, 1999: 112):

#### 4.7.1. Executive Governors and Administrators (ʿUmmāl)

Imam ʿAlī mandated three imperative criteria for executive officers: individual rectitude (ʿadālah), managerial competence (kifāyah), and fiscal integrity (amānah). As commanded in Letter 53: "Appoint them after testing, and do not appoint them based on favoritism or bias." When officials lapsed into fiscal corruption or administrative ineptitude, the Imam acted swiftly to dismiss them and restore misappropriated public assets (Jaʿfariyān, 2010: 294).

#### 4.7.2. Judges and the Judicial Administration (Quḍāt)

The judiciary occupied an exalted echelon in the Alid hierarchy, as justice was the cardinal teleological justification for state authority. In Letter 53, the Imam commands:

"Select as your chief judge among the people the most distinguished of your subjects in your estimation—one who is not overwhelmed by complexities, who does not become intractable when adversaries clash before him, who does not persist in error once perceived..." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53).

Judges were mandated to adjudicate strictly in concordance with the divine scriptures:

"...that you may judge between the people by that which Allah has shown you..." (Qurʾān, al-Nisāʾ 4:105) and

"...and whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed—those are the disbelievers" (Qurʾān, al-Māʾidah 5:44).

In the Imam's vision, the magistrate is not merely an arbiter of legal technicalities, but the living guardian of the collective moral conscience (Fīraḥī, 2012: 84).

### 4.7.3. Scribes, Chancellors, and Bureaucrats (Kuttāb*)

In the Alid chancery and treasury administration, scribes were tasked with drafting official dispatches, auditing state ledgers, cataloging public expenditures, and executing bureaucratic procedure. The Imam insisted that these officials be trustworthy, meticulous, free from greed, and unflinchingly loyal to truth:

"Then look into the condition of your scribes... Entrust your sensitive dispatches—wherein lie your strategies and confidential matters—to the most morally upright among them... Select those who have left the finest legacy among the public and are most widely renowned for their integrity." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53).

Under Imam ʿAlī, bureaucratic administration was characterized by stringent bookkeeping, radical transparency in public reporting, and uncompromising zero-tolerance for financial malfeasance (Muṭahharī, 1999: 115).

### 4.7.4. Military Forces and Frontier Guardians (Jund wa-Thughūr)

The armed forces functioned to defend state frontiers, ensure domestic peace, uphold justice, and subdue violent rebellions. In Letter 53, the Imam writes:

"The soldiers, by the permission of Allah, are the fortresses of the citizenry, the ornament of rulers, the glory of the faith, and the pathways of security; and the citizenry cannot stand firm without them." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 53).

Concurrently, the Imam codified strict laws of armed engagement (*adab al-ḥarb*), enforcing humane treatment of captured soldiers, prohibiting the destruction of agriculture, and sternly forbidding aggression against civilians. The military in the Alid system was never an engine of tyranny or domestic subjugation, but an instrument of defensive justice and constitutional order (Subḥānī, 2006: 88).

## 5. Outputs and Feedback in the Alid Political System

Within systems analysis, every political regime absorbs environmental inputs (demands, expectations, crises, and resources) and, through deliberative conversion, yields systemic outputs (policies, judicial rulings, and administrative actions). The durability of this system hinges decisively

upon its cybernetic capacity to ingest feedback, evaluate systemic performance, and recalibrate policies accordingly (Easton, 1965: 39).

In the Alid polity, this cybernetic cycle was remarkably evident: the state was never passive or ossified, but responded dynamically, intelligently, and ethically to environmental stresses (Muṭahharī, 1999: 123). Crucially, in Islamic philosophy, societal feedback and popular satisfaction denote political acceptance and operational legitimacy (maqbūliyyat), while the normative foundation of legitimacy (mashrūʿiyyat) remains grounded in divine authorization.

### *5.1. Systemic Outputs of the Alid Regime*

The concrete policy outputs of Imam ʿAlī's government operated across two foundational dimensions:

#### 5.1.1. Political, Judicial, and Distributive Justice

Foremost among the Imam's immediate policy outputs was the radical restructuring of public revenue distribution, the termination of discriminatory stipends, the dismissal of corrupt regional governors, and the total revitalization of the judiciary. In an official admonition addressed to his governor Ibn ʿAbbās, the Imam declared:

"It has come to my knowledge that you have exhibited harshness toward the Banū Tamīm and treated them with severity... Calm yourself, O Abū al-ʿAbbās, may God have mercy upon you, in whatever good or evil flows from your tongue and hand, for we are partners in this stewardship." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Letter 18).

Imam ʿAlī dismantled aristocratic privileges and reclaimed expropriated state properties, including lands unlawfully gifted under the prior administration:

"By Allah! Even if I find that such wealth has been used for marrying women or purchasing slave-maids, I shall reclaim it and restore it to the public treasury... for indeed, in justice there is ample capacity; and whoever finds justice constraining shall find injustice even more constraining!" (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 15).

(Editorial note: While classical Shiʿi jurists debate the exhaustive jurisprudential parameters of a just ruler annulling the discretionary allocations of prior sovereigns, the overarching imperative of safeguarding public wealth is an undeniable axiom in Nahj al-Balāghah).

Similarly, the military was transformed into an instrument of protective equity. Imam ʿAlī extolled courageous civic action:

"May Allah have mercy upon a person who witnesses a right and assists it, or witnesses an injustice and repels it, acting as an ally of truth for its rightful possessor." (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 205; Rashīdzādah, 2008: 128).

#### 5.1.2. Enforcement of Divine Prescriptions (Iqāmat al-Ḥudūd)

A primary output in an Islamic polity is the enforcement of statutory penalties (al-ḥudūd al-ilāhiyyah) to protect five vital human necessities (al-ḍarūriyyāt al-khamsah): faith (dīn), life (nafs), intellect (ʿaql), lineage (nasl), and property (māl). In Alid philosophy, judicial deterrence exists not as vindictive punishment, but as an indispensable deterrent to eliminate social exploitation and guarantee civil peace. Imam ʿAlī proclaimed:

"None attains true felicity except through the upholding of the bounds of Allah, and none descends into wretchedness except through their violation" (al-Muḥammadī al-Rayshahrī, 2010, 2: 538).

He exhorted the populace:"If you must compete with one another, compete in establishing the bounds of Allah and commanding what is good" (al-Āmidī, 1990: 163).

### *5.2. Political and Social Feedback in the Alid Regime*

Feedback within the Alid state was actively engaged through rational dialogue, administrative reform, and—when faced with militarized insurrections—legitimate state defense:

#### 5.2.1. Popular Feedback: Grievances, Critique, and Redress

Citizens, particularly in Kufa, occasionally voiced frustration over the Imam's uncompromising egalitarian distribution of stipends. The Imam responded with complete transparency and moral persuasion. When criticized for distributing the treasury with strict equality rather than courting aristocratic favor, he declared:

"Do you command me to seek victory through oppression over those whom I have been appointed to govern? By Allah, I shall not do so as long as night follows day, and as long as one star pursues another in the heavens! Even if this wealth were my personal property, I would distribute it equally among them; how then shall it be otherwise when the wealth belongs entirely to Allah?" (Nahj al-Balāghah, Sermon 126).

Equally significant was the management of fayʾ (state revenues acquired without military combat, per Qurʾān 59:7 and 8:1). As affirmed by ʿAllāmah al-Ḥillī in Tadhkirat al-Fuqahāʾ* (n.d., 1: 419) and al-Shaykh al-Ṭūsī in al-

Mabsūṭ (1967, 2: 64), such revenues fall under the exclusive oversight of the Prophet and the Infallible Imams to be administered for the collective public good. Imam ʿAlī never suppressed critical feedback; rather, he engaged public grievances as an opportunity to educate society and elevate collective political maturity (Fīraḥī, 2012).

### 5.2.2. Elite Feedback: Aristocratic Reaction (Fitnat al-Khawāṣṣ)

Entrenched aristocratic elites (such as Ṭalḥah and al-Zubayr), disgruntled by the dissolution of their preferential fiscal stipends, initiated the armed rebellion of the Battle of the Camel (Jamal). The Imam met this elite hostility through tireless diplomatic mediation, patient moral appeals, and only after peaceful avenues were exhausted, through proportional defensive engagement (Jaʿfariyān, 2010: 245).

### 5.2.3. Radical Feedback: The Khawārij

The Khawārij transitioned from ideological dissidents chanting *"Judgment belongs only to Allah" (lā ḥukma illā lillāh) into an armed insurgent movement practicing political terrorism and excommunication (takfīr). The Imam's policy toward them was remarkably tolerant as long as they remained within the bounds of civil dissent:

"Indeed, you have three guaranteed rights from us so long as you remain in our company: We shall not prevent you from entering the mosques of Allah to remember His name therein; we shall not deprive you of your share of the state revenues (fayʾ) as long as your hands are joined with ours; and we shall not initiate war against you until you commence armed hostilities against us." (al-Muḥaddith al-Nūrī, n.d., 11: 65; al-Muḥammadī al-Rayshahrī, 2010, 1: 582; transmitted from Daʿāʾim al-Islām).

While the chain of Daʿāʾim al-Islām invites technical scrutiny, the historical consensus affirms that Imam ʿAlī exhausted all avenues of debate and mediation before engaging the Khawārij militarily at Nahrawān (Dilshād Tihrānī, 2013: 982).

### 5.2.4. Synthesis: The Alid Polity within the Easton Cybernetic Loop

Applying David Easton's cybernetic systems theory to the political order of Imam 'Alī reveals a dynamic, open, and self-regulating model of governance. The systemic inputs originated as acute societal pressures—including urgent public demands for distributive justice, anti-corruption reforms, fiscal restructuring, and security—following the severe political crises of the previous administration. These environmental stresses entered the conversion process, where they were rigorously analyzed and processed

through the Imam's strategic deliberation, institutional consultation with principled advisors, and strict compliance with divine justice and Quranic precepts. Consequently, the regime generated authoritative outputs in the form of impartial judicial decrees, the restoration of misappropriated public wealth to the state treasury, strictly merit-based administrative appointments, egalitarian stipend distribution, and disciplined defensive military mobilizations. These authoritative allocations inevitably produced complex societal feedback, ranging from ordinary citizen petitions to violent aristocratic backlashes from the Qurayshite elite and the militant radicalism of the Khawārij. Rather than resorting to authoritarian suppression, the Alid state maintained dynamic equilibrium through institutional adaptation: the Imam deployed pedagogical public sermons, established radical administrative transparency, engaged in rational dialogue, and exhausted all diplomatic avenues before mounting a proportional constitutional defense, thereby preserving systemic integrity and divine moral legitimacy through an ethical cybernetic feedback loop.

## Conclusion

The political system of Imam ʿAlī (peace be upon him) represents an integrated, coherent paradigm wherein political authority, public accountability, transcendent ethics, and divine legitimacy merge into an organic unity. Within this architecture, the Imam does not function merely as an executive administrator; rather, as the supreme focal axis of power, he fulfills a multidimensional mandate: simultaneously acting as an epistemological guide articulating fundamental values, the supreme judicial arbiter adjudicating systemic friction, and the earthly conduit for actualizing divine justice.

When analyzed through the conceptual lens of systems theory, the Alid regime manifests as a dynamic, interactive model:

- Inputs: Defined by the concrete socioeconomic demands of the masses, administrative stresses, and regional crises that challenged the state;
- Conversion Process: These inputs were distilled and processed through institutional consultative mechanisms (shūrā), political prudence, and uncompromising fidelity to divine justice;
- Outputs: Concrete policies materialized through macro-level socioeconomic legislation, strategic bureaucratic appointments and dismissals, and the egalitarian management of public wealth (bayt al-māl).

Crucially, the hallmark of this system lies in its reflexive feedback loops. Far from undermining the state, societal feedbacks—whether expressed through popular grievances, elite intrigues, or radical ideological dissent—served as instruments for transparent administrative evaluation and principled responsiveness. The exquisite equilibrium maintained between coercive firmness in defending constitutional law, uncompromising equity in distributive justice, and philosophical magnanimity toward political dissidents establishes the Alid governance model as an extraordinary alternative to both monolithic authoritarianism and purely procedural liberalism. It demonstrates that political power attains its highest nobility only when bound irrevocably to ethical purpose and divine accountability.

1. The Ontological Process of Divine Legitimation (Farāyand-i Mashrūʿiyyat-bakhshī-yi Ilāhī):

While this research provides systemic analogies for operational components, the critical theoretical bridge remains the precise theological mechanism of divine legitimation—the essential core of Imāmī political doctrine—which warrants focused, independent investigation.

2. Foundational Axioms and Governance Rules of the Alid State:

Every political tradition rests upon distinct structural maxims; a comprehensive codification of the jurisprudential and constitutional axioms underpinning Alid governance is essential.

3. Operational Metrics and Governance Indicators:

Modern governance relies on empirical benchmarks; researchers should develop qualitative and quantitative indices derived from Nahj al-Balāghah to assess institutional performance and bureaucratic integrity in contemporary Muslim societies.

4. Teleological Ideals and Transcendental Values:

While secular political models confine their objectives to material well-being, the Alid paradigm views temporal life as an arena for attaining divine proximity (qurb-i ilāhī). Investigating this metaphysical orientation offers profound insights for modern political philosophy.

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