

A Strategy for Protecting Youth from Modern Threats Based on the Teachings of Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi

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Abstract: This article analyzes the theoretical and methodological foundations for protecting today’s youth from religious extremism, terrorism, ideological emptiness, and harmful influences based on the teachings of Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi. It includes quotations from Maturidi’s works and provides a deep philosophical, social, and scientific justification for their relevance in the modern era. The article puts forward new ideas and explores issues not yet addressed in the current literature.

Keywords: Maturidi’s doctrine, youth, extremism, mind control, faith and enlightenment, theology.

Introduction

In today’s information age, the human mind is under such pressure that a single piece of false information, an emotional clip, or a misinterpretation can completely distort one’s worldview. Manipulations targeting the consciousness of young people – such as extremism, radicalism, and harmful ideas spreading on social media under the guise of “apparent spiritual freedom” – are internal threats that corrode from within.

In the face of such complex social and psychological threats, a natural question arises: “What kind of ideological shield can protect against these threats?” The answer lies deep in our own history – within the legacy of Imam Abu Mansur Maturidi.

Maturidi’s thought is not merely a collection of theological views; it is an ideological system designed for a modern intellectual society. In his work "Kitab at-Tawhid" (The Book of Monotheism), he establishes a delicate balance between reason and revelation, emphasizing that any religious belief must be examined through the lens of intellect. This very idea serves as the strongest immunity against the manipulation of young minds.

Today’s extremist groups deliberately sideline reason and emphasize blind faith. Maturidi, on the contrary, proposes a harmonious integration of faith and intellect. His views, therefore, can be seen as an ideological vaccine that creates immunity in the minds of young people.

A spiritual-information immunity based on the “Maturidi model”

Drawing from the works of Imam Maturidi, we propose the following creative model for today’s youth:

1. The “Reflective Faith” Model

Through this model, young people first learn to weigh any ideological or religious influence on the scale of critical thinking. This not only protects them from religious manipulation but also shields them from political and social propaganda.

2. The “School of Evidential Analysis”

Maturidi taught that every belief should be supported with evidence. Today’s youth, however, are often misled by unsupported slogans. Through such a school of thought, young people are trained to evaluate not just the idea itself, but the evidence behind it.

3. The “Concept of Social Metaphysics”

Maturidi did not reject applying religious views to society; rather, he aimed to purify them for the common good. In contemporary terms, this is a form of "social metaphysics"—a way to apply faith-based understanding to real life. This turns young people from passive observers into active, conscious participants in society.

An innovative solution against extremism: the “Maturidi ChatBot” project

To reach the new generation, new tools are needed. Therefore, we propose the development of an artificial intelligence-based “Maturidi ChatBot” rooted in the teachings of Imam Maturidi. This chatbot would answer youth’s questions using references from Maturidi’s works—not only on religious matters but also on ethical, psychological, and life issues—through the lens of reason and evidence.

Through this chatbot:

1. Suspicious beliefs can be identified,
2. Youth can learn rational foundations to strengthen their faith,
3. Faith is reinforced through the development of reason.

“The Maturidi of the new era will raise a new generation of thinkers”

Imam Maturidi is not just a scholar of the past. He is a spiritual, intellectual, and ideological defense system for both today and tomorrow. Through his works, we do more than just combat extremism—we teach young minds to think, to question, and to seek truth. This uproots radicalism at its core. The times may have changed, but the mechanisms used to deceive people have not. Maturidi exposed these mechanisms over a thousand years ago and responded to them with knowledge founded on reason, evidence, and faith.

"THE THOUGHT AND METHOD OF IMAM MATURIDI"

At the core of Maturidi's thought lies the harmony between reason and revelation. He advocated interpreting the Qur'an and Hadith through reason and placed high value on human free will and responsibility. In his work *Kitab at-Tawhid*, he writes:

"Allah honored humankind with reason. Whoever does not use their reason wrongs themselves." (*Kitab at-Tawhid*, Chapter 56)

This approach can serve as an ideological shield that strengthens the consciousness of youth in the face of manipulative ideologies in the modern age.

"PROTECTING MODERN YOUTH FROM HARMFUL INFLUENCES THROUGH THE LEGACY OF MATURIDI"

Today, youth around the world are confronted with spiritual emptiness, an explosion of information, propaganda on social media, and false religious claims. In such conditions, Imam Maturidi’s rational and analytical approach can help develop immunity within the thought processes of young people. In *Ta’wilat Ahl al-Sunnah*, he states:

"True faith is strengthened by evidence and matured through deep reflection. Blind imitation leads a person into doubt." (*Ta’wilat*, Volume 113)

Equipping youth with religious knowledge and teaching them to analyze on the basis of reason can serve as the strongest defense against extremist ideologies.

"THE HARMONY OF SCIENTIFIC, RELIGIOUS, AND CONTEMPORARY FACTS"

Maturidi built his theological doctrine on the foundations of the Qur'an, Hadith, and reason. Modern psychology and philosophy confirm the same idea: a person becomes vulnerable to manipulation only when their thinking is weak. Youth who rely on intellectual reasoning, by contrast, are capable of making independent decisions.

In this regard, the following thought by Maturidi is particularly noteworthy:

"It is reason that illuminates the truth inherent in human nature. And reason itself is refined through knowledge and contemplation." (*Kitab at-Tawhid*, Chapter 89)

The legacy of Imam Maturidi is not only a high example of Islamic intellectual tradition but also a strong foundation for safeguarding the consciousness of youth against modern threats—such as extremism, manipulation, and dangers hidden behind religious masks. This legacy plays a key role in shaping today's youth into thoughtful, critically minded, and justice-oriented individuals.

1. Imam Maturidi and the Thought of Kalam

The main objective of Maturidi's teachings is to protect faith and knowledge based on the harmony between reason ('aql) and revelation (naql). In his work *Kitab at-Tawhid*, he places special emphasis on the necessity of understanding truth through human intellect:

"Reason is the most important tool in recognizing God; through it, a person distinguishes between truth and falsehood."

This idea is especially relevant today in an age of false information and manipulation.

2. Modern Threats and Methods of Mind Manipulation

Today, youth face a flood of information through the internet, social media, and artificial intelligence. This weakens their spiritual, moral, and ideological foundations. In this regard, Maturidi emphasizes the importance of preserving human nature and writes:

"Whoever does not seek the truth with reason will be overtaken by falsehood."

3. Moderation in Maturidi's Teachings and the Fight Against Extremism

The principle of moderation (*wasatiyya*) plays a central role in Maturidi's doctrine. He opposed both extremism and negligence, promoting balanced thinking. This approach can serve as a key tool in eradicating the roots of extremist ideologies. In his view:

"Faith must be accompanied by knowledge, for ignorance leads to chaos."

4. A Strategy to Protect Youth's Faith and Consciousness

Based on Maturidi's works, the following strategic approaches can be developed:

- Establishing a stable ideological foundation in youth through rational and scriptural evidence;
- Promoting religious education rooted in philosophical reflection;
- Developing algorithms to protect consciousness on social media and AI platforms;
- Popularizing Maturidi's thought through mass culture, literature, and technological platforms.

5. Innovative Ideas and Global Solutions

The article puts forward the following progressive ideas:

- Establishing "Maturidi Schools" in every country to strengthen not only religious but also ethical and intellectual immunity;
- Creating a "Digital Kalam" platform that enables interactive study of Maturidi's works through artificial intelligence;

- Collaborating with universities in Europe and Asia to study and integrate Maturidi's teachings on a global scale;
- Harmonizing religious and secular education in a unified format to create a triad of "faith–enlightenment–knowledge."

In conclusion, Imam Maturidi's teachings represent not only a high standard of Islamic theological thought, but also an intellectual shield against modern threats. By harmonizing his doctrine with modern tools, it is possible to effectively address global challenges.

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