



FITRAT'S VIEWS ON GENDER EQUALITY

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Annotation

This article focuses on the education of a new generation, which preserves the continuity of the nation and ensures the development of national values. A. Fitrat's views on gender issues and the important role of women in society are also revealed.

Keywords: Jadid, woman, family, gender, generation, spirituality, education, upbringing, mother, hadith, nation, national value.

Abdurauf Fitrat (sometimes spelled **Abdulrauf Fitrat** or **Abdurrauf Fitrat**, Uzbek: Abdurauf Fitrat / Абдурауф Фитрат; 1886 – 4 October 1938) was an Uzbek author, journalist and politician in Central Asia under Russian and Soviet rule. Fitrat made major contributions to modern Uzbek literature with both lyric and prose in Persian, Turki, and late Chagatai. Beside his work as a politician and scholar in many fields, Fitrat also authored poetic and dramatic literary texts. Fitrat initially composed poems in the Persian language, but switched to a puristic Turkic tongue by 1917. Fitrat was responsible for the change to Uzbek as Bukhara's national language in 1921, before returning to writing texts in Tajik later during the 1920s. In the late 1920s, Fitrat took part in the efforts for Latinization of Uzbek and Tajik. Fitrat was influenced by his studies in Istanbul during the early 1910s, where he came into contact with Islamic reformism. After returning to Central Asia, he turned into an influential ideological leader of the local jadid movement. In opposition to and in exile from the Bukharan emir he sided with the communists. After the end of the emirate, Fitrat accepted several posts in the government of the Bukharan People's Soviet Republic, before he was forced to spend a year in Russia. Later, he taught at several colleges and universities in the then Uzbek SSR. During Stalin's Great Purge, Fitrat was arrested and prosecuted for counter-revolutionary and nationalist activities, and finally executed in 1938. After his death, his work was banned for decades. Fitrat was rehabilitated in 1956, yet critical evaluation of his work has changed several times since. While there are Tajik critics that call the likes of Fitrat "traitors", other writers have given him the title of a martyr (*shahid*), particularly in independent Uzbekistan.

Stay in Istanbul and Jadid leader[edit]

Around 1909, jadid actors in Bukhara and Istanbul (Constantinople) built an organizational infrastructure in order to enable Bukharan students and teachers to





study in the capital of the Ottoman empire. According to reports, Fitrat himself was involved in these activities. Thanks to a grant given by the secret "society for the education of the children" (*Tarbiyayi atfol*) which was financed by merchants Fitrat himself was able to go to Istanbul. He arrived there in spring of 1910 shortly after the very first group. "Sometimes", says Sarfraz Khan from the University of Peshawar, Fitrat's departure to Turkey is described as an effort to flee from the persecution by the authorities after a conflict between Shia and Sunni Muslims in Bukhara in January 1910. Other authors date Fitrat's leaving to the year 1909. During Fitrat's stay, in the Second Constitutional Era, Istanbul was governed by the Young Turks. These historical circumstances influenced Fitrat, the activities and the general social surroundings of the Bukharan students in Istanbul heavily. What Fitrat did after his arrival in Istanbul is not known exactly. According to Abdurashidov's analysis, Fitrat was integrated in the Bukharan diasporic community (he often gets mentioned as one of the founders of the benevolent society *Buxoro ta'mimi maorif*), he worked as a vendor at a bazaar, as a street cleaner, and as an assistant cook. Apart from that, he prepared for the entry exams at a madrasah, which he – according to Abdirashidov – probably passed mid-1913. This allowed him to become one of the first students of the Vaizin madrasah, which was founded in December 1912 and which used the "new method". Here he did not only receive lessons in Islamic science, but also in Oriental literature. Other authors state that Fitrat spent the years between 1909 and 1913 studying at the *Darülmualimin*, a training institute for teachers, or at the University of Istanbul.^[24] During his stay Fitrat became acquainted with further Middle Eastern reform movements, got into contact with the Pan-Turanist movement and with emigrants from the Tsardom of Russia, and turned into the leader of the jadids in Istanbul. He wrote several works in which he – always in Persian language – demanded reforms in the social and cultural life of Central Asia and a will to progress. His first texts were published in the Islamist newspapers *Hikmet*, published by Şehbenderzâde Filibeli Ahmed Hilmi, and *Sirat-ı Müstakim*, furthermore in *Behbudiys Oyina* and the Turkist *Türk Yurdu*.^[14] In his texts Fitrat pushed for the unity of all Muslims and portrayed Istanbul with the Ottoman sultan as the center of the Muslim world. Two of the three books Fitrat published during his stay in Istanbul, the "Debate between a Teacher from Bukhara and a European" (*Munozara*, 1911) and the "Tales of an Indian Traveller" (*Bayonoti sayyohi hindi*), achieved great popularity in Central Asia^[14] *Munozara* was translated into Turkestan Turkish by Haji Muin from Samarkand in 1911. It was published in the Tsarist newspaper *Turkiston viloyatining gazetisi* and later as a book. While the Persian version did not, a Turkish version circulated in Bukhara as well. The latter version was





expanded by a foreword by Behbudiy. Behbudiy also translated *Bayonoti sayyohi hindi* into Russian, and he convinced Fitrat to expand *Munozara* by a plea to learn Russian. The outbreak of the First World War rendered Fitrat's completion of his studies in Istanbul impossible and forced him, like many other Bukharan students, to return to Transoxania prematurely. We all know that the spirituality of a person is formed, first of all, on the basis of the upbringing of father and mother in the family environment. What kind of social and moral environment prevails in the family today, tomorrow the child raised in this family will directly become the successor of this environment. The strength of the mind and thinking of the young generation is that it keeps in its memory the knowledge it received from the people around it during its youth. The higher the culture of relationships and interaction in the family, the child growing up in that environment will be similar to it. Along with the father, mother's education takes an important place in this process. Abdurauf Fitrat, who enriches the ideas of Jadidism with his significant work, in his work "Family" discusses such issues as the environment in the family, the education of children, in connection with the fate of the whole nation. The thinker said, "The happiness and honor of every nation depends on its internal discipline and harmony. Peace and harmony rest on the discipline of the families of this nation. In fact, the family is a sacred place that preserves the continuity of every people and nation, brings forth a new generation to the world, and educates them spiritually and physically. Creating a healthy environment in the family, in turn, places equal responsibility on both father and mother. After all, to the extent that the concepts of selflessness, honesty, and kindness are developed in the parents, to the extent that they are put into practice, the child will follow their example and become a child worthy of them, and will try to protect and protect the homeland. As evidence of our opinion, I will quote the following thoughts of the philosopher Montesquieu: "The best means of instilling love for the country in children is the love of the fathers."

Abdurauf Fitrat, who thought about the human being, has the same attitude about the value, place, and activity of women in society. The following comments of Fitrat speaking from Farangi language are noteworthy: "... "Acquiring knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim man and woman", according to the ruling of the verse "..., it is obligatory to have good deeds. ... Our first education comes from our mothers, if they themselves were not educated, we will always have bad morals from their bad upbringing. For this reason, the sages consider our universe to be beyond the scope of humanity. It is the misfortune of the country, the unhappiness of the times that women deprive it of the honor of education and training. In the chapter entitled "About how husband and wife should live" in Fitrat, men and women, husband and





wife, are equal in the eyes of God, and their superiority does not depend on which gender they represent, but on the extent to which they have mastered religious and worldly knowledge, what moral qualities and positive qualities they have. It is determined by the fact that they have characteristics.

Because Fitrat knows that he does not simply give advice to some cruel and ignorant husbands, he gives an example from the verses of the Qur'an: "Just as the husband has the right to his wife, the wife has the same right to her husband." if he gave the right, he also gave it to women." It is not a secret that a century ago, one had to have great spiritual courage to express the idea that men and women have equal rights and that they are equal in the eyes of God. Addressing men, Fitrat teaches, "Be kind to women." So, through this pamphlet, Fitrat teaches readers not only about family relationships, but also about the science of humanity.

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