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Evading Reality

The Devices of 'Abdalrauf Fitrat. Modern Central Asian Reformist

Evading Reality treats the great ideological/political struggle embroiling literate Central Asia during the early 20th century. One of the region's leading cultural intellectuals, Abdalrauf Fitrat (1886-1938), in his Bukharan and Turkistan homeland, for over two decades fought against the restrictive notions of arch-conservative Muslim hierarchies as well as the rigid dogmatism of communists. This study translates and analyzes three (one in two versions) of Mr. Fitrat's key writings composed in the second stage of this war of ideas. The early 1920s, already a period of state thought control, obliged him to evade the ostracism of authorities by speaking out both deceptively and disarmingly at one time. In the end, his writings succeeded in arming his spiritual descendants in the battle against Marxist ideology. His literary devices confused opponents, delighted adherents and provide a rich legacy for today's Tajik and Uzbek societies.

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Kundenservice Fachmedien Otto Schmidt

Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@fachmedien.de | 0800 000-1637 (Inland)

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