



Zohra (Oxford India Collection)

Zeenuth Futehally

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Zohra (Oxford India Collection) Zeenuth Futehally

Zohra, written by Zeenuth Futehally, is perhaps the first novel in English by an Indian woman. Set in early-twentieth century Hyderabad, this is the story of an upper-class Muslim woman, Zohra, whose emotional growth and development mirrors the development of the Indian national consciousness.

Zohra is forced to marry against her wishes at the age of eighteen at the cost of her creative inclinations. What follows is her increasing distance from her husband who does not share her creative interests and her friendship and love for her brother-in-law Hamid, who is very much the face of modern India. Zohra subjugates her desire for Hamid in the face of her sense of inviolable duty, and finally escapes the social conventions that bind her, but only through the ultimate tragedy - death.

What makes this novel valuable is the rich depiction of the way of life of Zeenuth Futehally's native Hyderabad, as well as her compassionate understanding of how women were restricted by the wishes of their parents and husbands. First published in 1951, the current volume has been edited by Rummana Futehally Denby and also includes an Introduction by her. *Zohra* will be of interest to general readers of fiction and those interested in Indian writing in English, gender issues, and the social history of modern India.

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