ZOHRA
BY
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.

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CHAPTER 3

ZOHRA

3. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the novel Zohra written by Zeenuth Futehally. The novel portrays Zohra, an upper-class Muslim woman, whose emotional growth and development mirrors the development of the Indian national consciousness. The novel valuable is the rich portrayal of lifestyle of Zeenuth Futehally's native Hyderabad and also her compassionate understanding of the fact how women are restricted by their ideas and wishes of parents and husband.

3.1 ZEENUTH FUTEHALLY

Zeenuth Futehally is born on 1903 in princely state of Hyderabad, Deccan, and daughter of Hashim Yar Jung Moizuddin who has received the tile Nawab for his extensive work in plague by Nizam of Hyderabad in late nineteenth century. Zeenuth was raised in culture of wealth, constraint, privilege and courtesy. She has studied Urdu, English, art and literature in Mehbubia Girls’ School, but this education was curtailed by her early marriage. She moved to Bombay with her husband, Abu Futehally. She lived most of her in Bombay with her three children. She also traveled to Japan and Philippines with her husband on business trips, where she was highly encouraged by the women’s gatherings for her lecture. Then she has started writing Zohra, her one only novel.

3.2 ZOHRA – A BRIEF VIEW

Zeenuth Futehally's Zohra is among the primary books to be distributed and written in English by an Indian Muslim woman. Yet Futehally and her work stay unheard even among
researchers of Indian English writing. There exists up till now no academic article or book chapter that examines this novel in its own right. In 2004, another version of Zohra was distributed by Oxford University Press that included material initially cut from the primary edition. The book was first distributed in 1951, by Hind Kitab, Bombay. This is another release arranged by the daughter of Zeenuth Futehally, who let us know that she has just evacuated repeated information and adjusted evident linguistic and spelling mistakes.

One is promptly enticed to conjecture on the writer's outlook when she would have kept in touch with this novel. This novel is set in the recent royal condition of Hyderabad, which has been then recently consolidated into the Indian Union. Circumstances during which that integration occurred were turbulent and savage. It was likewise not long after Partition and this likely that at any rate a few individuals from the creator's family would have selected to move to Pakistan. What was going on in the psyches of those Muslims who stayed back in India after the Partition? Is it safe to say that they were continually being called upon to clarify their decision and transparently pronounce their patriotism for India? Through their political activities and their compositions did them, stretch the shared traits, the ties that have bounded Muslims and Hindus together?

3.3 ZOHRA

Zohra is a self-willed and talented girl hailing in a middle-class family. But, she is put up in situation that to succumb to an arranged marriage in opposition to her personal interests. Zohra has turned into a victim of culture having its roots in man-made rules and misinterpreted words of Quran. Zeenuth explains the tension an inner conflicts experienced by a girl when she has to respond to the customs of religion, traditions and words of her elders. Thus Zohra feels: *The change from one phase of life to another was so abrupt that to her it was like going to sleep in one world and waking up in another* (Zohra, 1)
Old Hyderabad, before Independence

Source: pinterest.com
Bashir, her spouse, is the absolute opposite of all that she treasures - he is clinical, down to earth and profoundly goal-oriented. Yet she values his commitment given to her and when the kids were born, she felt that her life is finished. Be that as it may, then along come Hamid, the more youthful sibling who is enthusiastic, optimistic, impacted by Gandhian strategies and vanguard in his way of life. Zohra and Hamid are attracted towards each other and the force of their enthusiasm is depicted with a lot of affectability. It is not only an otherworldly union - the physical yearning is additionally spelt out, however never offered into. For the remaining, the end is unsurprising yet the activity is dependably in the hands of Hamid. Decisions made by him were submitted by Zohra. She is a tender revolt whose life must end in catastrophe.

3.4 THE DUAL CONCERNS OF ZOHRA

Zohra opens with a denouncing shout from Unnie the old worker, who discovers sixteen-year-old Zohra flying high on a swing in the securely encased space of her high-walled garden: Ai-hai! . . . What can we do with these girls of today? (ibid.pg. 1) This opening presents the energetic vitality of Zohra, swinging heedlessly, eyes aglow and hair disheveled, her lithe body moving rhythmically with the swing, (ibid.pg. 1) suggesting both her transgressed longing for real delight and in addition higher scholarly and enthusiastic goals than her circumstances will permit. It additionally displays Unnie, reveled family retainer and Zohra's mom's aged wet-medical caretaker, as the female upholder of social customs and sex and class standards, an agent of the strengths that will actually and allegorically take Zohra back to the ground. What's more, regardless of her tender flippancy, Zohra obeys Unnie, for she is no open agitator or flouter of tradition. Unnie's opening non-serious inquiry, however, can likewise be perused as a genuine quandary postured by this
novel: by what means will an advanced, free India treat its young female subjects and to what degree will they be permitted for education and office in their lives?

From the beginning, Futehally sets up this strain between Zohra's yearnings and a social connection that both encourages and hoses them. From the principal section, Zohra is displayed as remarkable person. Not at all like her old sister, is who having bashful anticipation towards arranged marriage, but brilliant, talented and imaginative Zohra reveals in her adoration for verse, craftsmanship, and dialects. Funny and free minded, she teases Unnie, who yearns for the days of yore of stricter purdah when young women of respectable families were more isolates, and did not in any case enter garden past the zenana yard, not to mention an English school: How fearfully dull life would be if daughters did exactly what their mothers had done before them, just like the recurring decimal forever and ever without change (ibid.pg. 2). Zohra therefore likewise alludes energetically to her education in math and English, which is lamented by her mom and Unnie. What is this studying for? replies Unnie in bafflement. What do you want to do with foreign books? Learning is so hard—like trying to chew steel nuggets (ibid.pg.2). Zohra's mom stresses that Zohra will get to be disconnected and not able to settle down to domestic life (ibid.pg. 3-4) and marriage, yet her dad, while tolerating that Hyderabadi girls of the aristocracy had never followed professional careers, takes pleasure in Zohra's lovely intelligence, empowering her gift for languages (ibid.pg. 11). English is essential these days, he tells his wife, the gateway to modern thought, even as Persian seems to be the sweetest language in the world (ibid.pg. 14).

Zohra is in this way both empowered and handicapped inside this bicultural instructive environment. Her parents’ house is a focal point of Indian Muslim graceful social conventions that Zohra takes an interest in from a separation. When her dad has a mushaera, an Urdu verse presentation delighted in by forty to fifty male visitors, Zohra and her female
Independence Current going on in Hyderabad

Source: news.bbc.co.uk

Mahatma Gandhi in Hyderabad

Source: photogallery.indiatimes.com
relatives can attend just from behind purdah, situated in a dull curtained adjoining room from where they can see however not be seen. As she watches a good looking youthful artist present his *ghazals melodious couplets with reverential intensity* . . . *(and) sensational motions* (ibid.pg. 20), Zohra is terminated with an extreme threefold longing: for him and his romantic persona (he is self-named ‘*Majnoon*’ (ibid.pg. 38), the lover poet); for an event to discuss her own verse; and for profound group or association with others like him who may share her affection for verse and musicality. Futehally in this way uncovered the inconsistencies of a blue-blooded milieu of extravagance, opportunity, and pleased social legacy that encourages Zohra and her desires while it increases her feeling of hardship. She likewise daringly recommends the enlivening of restricted female sexual yearning inside the bounds of this arrangement of purdah or gendered disengagement, which gives Zohra and her female high school cousins the flexibility to look on the attractive body of a male outsider while staying disguised and unexposed to his look. Later, on the precarious edge of arranged marriage, Zohra recalls longingly that *disturbing feeling* evoked in her by Majnoon as a prohibited other option to her endorsed future (ibid.pg. 35).

Right on time in the novel, Futehally likewise connects these smothered goals to Zohra's defiant longing to partake in Mahatma Gandhi's message of ahimsa or movement of non-violence:

*She understood the need for the youth of India to fight alongside [Gandhi]. . . . Was he not bringing emancipation to the women of India, even causing a number of Muslim women to shed purdah in the zeal to work for the national cause? But reality in Hyderabad was very different. Politics was not a topic easily discussed in this house, and she knew she must rid herself of patriotic desires* (ibid.pg. 35).
Indeed, even in her confined girlhood, much sooner than she meets Hamid, Zohra communicates an eminent political and patriot cognizance, attracted to Gandhi's guarantee of sexual orientation and national change, which she sees not just as a getaway from purdah or arranged marriage, yet as an approach to change the states of her presence and to take part in the opportunity battle as a future subject of autonomous India. She sees herself in this manner not as a recipient of a free Princely State or a Muslim separate from Hindu India, however as a wannabe for the flexibility and balance she envisions in a bound together law based India, an patriotic supporter of multi-local Indian pioneers like Gandhi and the revolutionary poet (ibid.pg. 35) Tagore, who has quite recently surrendered his British Knighthood to dissent the 1919 British massacre of unarmed regular people in Amritsar. She in this manner comprehends the political work of Tagore's school Shantiniketan, center of the revival of national culture (ibid.pg. 35), as indispensable to the patriot cause, as a spot where she could build up her specialty and verse in that reason for social self-production and incorporate along these lines her instructive, scholarly, and political cravings. From the earliest starting point, then, Futehally builds up this double strain: the concealment of ability and potential like Zohra's inside a gender system that values women accurately for their socially developed asexuality and absence of agency Daughters are dumb creatures placed in our hands as sacred trusts, (ibid.pg. 14) comments Zohra's mom wisely; and the likelihood of political and social change through a unified secular patriot development in which Hindus and Muslims would cooperate. To rise up out of purdah, and to work for Gandhi, is accordingly for young Zohra a twofold desire: to act as an anti-colonial patriot, and to make a present day country where women take an interest similarly as residents and specialists focused on the formation of a national society and character.
The account of Zohra can be seen as written into four generally parallel areas. Part one (chapters 1–6) concentrates on Zohra's girlhood in her parents' home, the milieu of liberality and limitation inside the zenana, and Zohra's hesitant passive consent to customary marriage. Part two (chapters 7–12) movements to her change in accordance with marriage in the distinctive milieu of her husband Bashir's joint-family home, her halfway rising up out of purdah, and the introduction of two youngsters. Section Three (chapters 13–20) presents new dramatization with her brother-in-law Hamid's arrival from England, and their developing fascination and connection to each other, and Part Four (chapters 21–26) carries the peak with Hamid's revelation of his affections for Zohra, evoking her admission of hers for him, and the test for the heroes and in addition the writer of determining this issue. While the novel is worried all through both with a critique of purdah society (and the unending harm it does especially to women) and with patriot governmental issues (and the likelihood of Hyderabadi Muslim interest), the previous is more conspicuous in Parts One and Two, and the last in Parts Three and Four. In the accompanying two areas, I look at each thusly.

3.5 THE HYDERABADI LIFESTYLE

Zeenuth Futehally composes that she was quick to record the Hyderabadi lifestyle, which was quick vanishing. The Nawabs of the novel are encouraged by their spouses to wed again without male heirs. We have point by point depictions of Zohra's clothing and her wedding ceremony:

*The bridal dress had to be fashioned in such a way that no scissors would be used on the fabric, scissors being considered a symbol of strife.* Safiya, the sister of the spouse, *took two strings of tiny black beads from the round silver tray held up to her... and fastened them round the bride's neck. This was a Hindu custom adopted by the Muslims and was believed to ward off the evil eye.* (ibid.pg. 36)
State Cavalry Heading a Langer Procession Through the Streets of Hyderabad

Source: youtube.com

The Nawab of Junagadh Bahadur Khan III, 1885 photograph with state Officials and family

Source: en.wikipedia.org
Despite the fact that somewhat women's activist, this novel does not contain the indignation and insubordination that let go the creative writers of other Muslim women scholars of this period, for example, Atia Hosain, Rasheed Jahan and Ismat Chughtai, however a portion of the worries are common.

3.6 ZOHRA'S NATIONALIST POLITICS

Some portion of Zohra and Hamid's fascination in each other depends on their common disenchantment with the belief systems of their familial society and their dedication to dynamic and anticolonial political standards. As though to underscore Zohra's proceeding with freedom of psyche after her marriage to Bashir and before she meets Hamid, Futehally clarifies Zohra's continuous enthusiasm for the improvements in British India and her dedication to Gandhian patriotism. In 1926, when Zohra leaves Hyderabad interestingly to go to Bombay with Bashir and his sister Safiya to welcome Hamid on his arrival from England, she underpins the Swadeshi development by purchasing khaddar (hand-spun cotton) rather than British silk mill made saris. The significance of this dedication to the patriot cause is shown by Futehally's detailed authentic clarifications, for example,

"Zohra was sorry that her sister-in-law should express contempt for khaddar. It had come to signify the fight for freedom since Mahatma Gandhi’s advocacy of the use of hand-spun cloth, as a double-edged weapon—political and economic. Bombay was the cradle of this new life. Khaddar-clad women and white Gandhi-capped men, symbols of a newly aroused nationalism, were to be seen everywhere" (ibid.pg. 119).

In spite of the fact that opposed by her husband and in-laws, Zohra's legislative issues are shared by Hamid. Truth be told, the two first associate accurately when Safiya disparages
Hamid and Zohra together as Gandhian disciples and a glance of understanding passé(s) between them (ibid.pg. 125). From this initially meeting, Zohra gets to be observer to solid differences amongst Hamid and Bashir, to Bashir's verging on tenacious twists and decreases of Hamid's position and Hamid's nuanced responses. At the point when Hamid discusses the urgent need in India of revolutionizing society with radical changes, he implies expanding the way of life, making it a cleaner and healthier place to live as in Europe, and getting rid of foreign rule (ibid.pg. 124). In any case, Bashir censures Hamid's implied socialist leanings, throwing his term revolution as anarchy and bloodshed, proposing rather the Islamic social order without class refinements as the best a perfect uncovered by Hamid as negated by social practice (ibid.pg. 124).

Meenakshi Mukherjee rejects the Gandhian idealism of Zohra (Twice Born, 55), yet I would contend that the novel and Hamid specifically, upholds less a Gandhian than a Nehruvian type of patriotism. Most Indian English books of the 1930th and 1940th upheld Mahatma Gandhi's double motivation of hostile to colonialism and internal national reform (Gandhi, 170). In any case, as Leela Gandhi appears, they additionally looked for an uneasy synthesis to the rift between Gandhi and Nehru that rose in the mid-1930s between the previous' (ibid.pg. 335) particular vision of an arrival to non-modern ruralism and the last's dedication to modernity and a communist and socialist comprehension of the connections between world capitalism and imperialism (ibid.pg. 171). Zohra absolutely fits this example. While Zohra starts with Gandhian beliefs, as does Hamid, both additionally support firmly a communist, common perfect of country, based upon technological advancement and the cancelation of the primitive order.

Declining to emulate his granddad's example as a leisured and kind medieval landowner, or in his dad's as an administration official, Hamid breaks positions and opens a
bookshop as an instructive undertaking with a perspective toward the change of Hyderabadi society. Attracted diversely to dynamic parts of Western thought, Hamid is no promoter of an arrival to ruralism. He clarifies, *People should know of the great modern experiments taking place elsewhere in the world to change the decadent system of the ancient feudal order and value human dignity more* (Zohra, 137). Opposing Bashir's irate marks, Hamid demands discreetly all alone vision: *I cannot subscribe to any of the prevalent ‘isms’,* he attests (ibid.pg. 138). Insightful of his own disagreements, however *emotionally* (ibid.pg. 139) appended to the old world appeal and magnificence of his *cultural heritage* (ibid.pg. 139) he demands the requirement for *greater equality* (ibid.pg. 139). He begins to wear khaddar and accumulates around him a *Progressive Group* (ibid.pg. 145) of similarly invested youthful Hyderabadi artists, activists, women's activists, men and women, Hindus, Muslims and Parsis, whom he invites similarly into this atmosphere of scholarly and political ferment as they gain from each other to work by and large toward social change. *One day they hoped to change the world* (ibid.pg. 147). Zohra is invigorated by these discussions as she listens and learns. She therefore rejects Bashir's notices (*“I am not a child any longer,”* she says *“firmly”* (ibid.pg. 147)), and mediates with keenness and bravery when Bashir rebukes Hamid.

As though to discredit the supposition that all Muslims thought alike or wished to isolate from India, Futehally underscores both Zohra and Hamid's eclecticism and responsibility to a common and hybrid comprehension of Indian’s. Stirred to her old self with Hamid, Zohra as often as possible quotes her most loved verse from an assortment of Indian phonetic, local, and religious conventions: (Hindu Brahmin) Tagore writing in Bengali, (Brahmin) Sarojini Naidu (from Hyderabad) in English, (Muslim) Ghalib in Urdu. So also, Hamid draws upon an authentic comprehension of Hyderabadi society as a fruitful blend of various social customs. In a critical scene, Zohra and Hamid joined by his sister and her
husband take a touring trek to the near Ellora and Ajanta caves to see noteworthy art: Buddhist frescoes and Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain figures, drawn together by their mutual advantages, interestingly with the others' shallow tourism. Hamid and Zohra look transfixed at a staggering painting of the Buddha denying his husband and tyke, having picked divine love and humility over natural force and sexual longing (ibid. pg. 170). Reminiscent of Forster's acclaimed cavern scene in A Passage To India, this minute both insinuates and re-examines that late pilgrim (anti)colonial content, where, rather than discovering nothing aside from their very own projection (sexual or colonizing) longings, Hamid and Zohra experience an epiphany started by the social legacy that they perceive as their own. In this hollow, aroused by an antiquated painting that conveys to each a mystery acknowledgment of his or her actual affections for the other taking into account their common scholarly interests and comprehension of character, the two interface over their shared acknowledgment of an Indian legacy that expressly comes to back to pre-Islamic history and that empowers them to explain their expectations for India's freedom from expansionism.

For Hamid, the work of art at first moves a critique of British dominion. He cites Edwin Arnold, whom he sees as an uncommon English writer (not at all like imperialistic Kipling) who comprehends the Buddha's soul of administering for persecuted and revoked the greatness and bloody wheels of frontier force (ibid. pg. 172). Loving both the Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi, Zohra thinks about whether Gandhi could be a reincarnation of the Buddha sent to cure India’s ills once more (ibid. pg. 172). In assertion, they certify their comprehension and approval of social blending and their desires for India's future. To Zohra's inquiry why recent Indian art has not created gems like the Ajanta paintings, Hamid refers to the devastating impacts of imperialism, differentiating the British who forced their way of life on those they regarded second rate with the Mughals who made India their home, wedding
Rajputs, so that *their culture mingled with ours in a fresh stream* (ibid.pg. 172). (Eminently, despite the fact that he is Muslim, Hamid utilizes the pronoun there to elude Muslim Mughals and *ours* to elude Hindu Rajputs) Zohra concurs in a startling explanation that expects Salman Rushdie’s renowned revilement of the *confining myth of authenticity* for an *ethic of historically validated eclecticism*, and perceives the valuable *impurity* of Indian societies that have constantly blended and consumed novelty (ibid.pg. 52):

*We Muslims possess the proud heritage of three different cultures—Indian, Arabic, and Persian—flowing through our veins in one tumultuous stream. Hyderabad, at least, has tried to retain parts of all these and to add the new western, as the most vital stream in present-day life. We shall yet achieve that unity of East and West—that much desired synthesis* (ibid.pg. 173).

*Zohra* here turns into the voice of a Hyderabadi Muslim responsibility to India that would consolidate the qualities of various social conventions in a future society that would profit by amalgamation and not detachment. Later, Hamid echoes this dedication as he written a novel expressly intended to *rouse Muslim nationalism* [for a united India] *against communalism* [division into Indian and Pakistan] (ibid.pg. 189).

Such perspectives, in any case, are unequivocally stood out in the novel from those of Bashir, who progressively mirrors the talk of a separatist Islamic communalism. In their vociferous last open deliberation in the novel, Hamid lambasts his sibling’s reasoning: *Why do we have to talk of the Muslim genius and the Hindu genius? After all, the majority of us come from the same stock. We are mostly converts, and have the same background of thought* (ibid.pg. 202). This staggering indication of a common Hindu-Muslim heredity is a capable and still-overlooked recorded point, blocked from the talks sent by both Muslim and Hindu fundamentalists. At the point when Bashir helps Hamid to remember the *inhumanity* of the
Hindu standing framework, Hamid answers that misuse exist in practices inside both religious developments, specifically in the Indian Muslim people group's similarly *inhuman* emphasis on purdah and their refusal of rights to women as far as anyone knows ensured by Islam (ibid.pg. 203). Hamid's vision of a free current India is of one that guarantees balance and popularity based rights to women and additionally men, to Hindus and in addition Muslims:

> Religion is now being exploited only for power politics. . . . To me, Hindus and Muslims are one, possessing a common heritage, belonging to a common Motherland, fighting common battles. . . . We are intermingled, living side by side, he announces (ibid.pg. 204).

Like *Bimala* in Tagore's popular novel Home and the World (1916), Zohra watches, learns and inevitably takes sides between the two men she loves. But dissimilar to Bimala, Zohra proclaims her steadfastness to a man not her husband, a man whose political perspectives the novel uncovers to be illuminated and not misinformed. She daringly decries her husband's shut mindedness: *It is people like you who make one wish one were a Hindu* (ibid.pg. 205).

The novel structure is naturally dialogic and hetero glossy in light of the fact that it fuses various talks and voices that disturb the territory of a single authorial perspective. Through the radical differences between a couple and two siblings in the same family, Futehally performs the fundamental clashes existing in the 1930 among Indian Muslims, not bound together at all by a typical belief system. She stresses the heterogeneity of Muslim reactions to the advancements in British India, the contentions among Indian Muslims with respect to separatism, and the dedication of some mainstream Muslims to Indian patriotism. Through these civil arguments inside the novel, she in this way formally upsets the likelihood
of a solitary story of Muslim separatism, demanding that numerous Indian Muslims, specifically those partnered to a dynamic sexual orientation belief system, considered themselves to be true blue Indian subjects, prepared to relinquish themselves, as Hamid does, for India's flexibility from British imperialism and for a brought together Indian country. In spite of the fact that Zohra passes on in 1935, we realize that the future will bring Partition and see how individuals from the same Muslim family will pick inverse sides. The novel, however, obviously approves Hamid's beliefs by standing out them from Bashir's, speaking to them as partial and chauvinistic. In the year 1950, this turns into a route for Futehally to likewise contend for having a place for Indian Muslims in cutting edge India.

3.7 ZOHRA IN THE THROES OF TRANSITION

The Indian Muslim custom is a compound of different social strands – the Persian, Arabic, Mughal and even the Hindu go into its making. To this social complex another impact was included subsequent to the last 50% of the nineteenth century – the Western impact. The transaction of the East and the West, with their contradictory qualities, unsettled the insides of numerous a Muslim home. Caught in the throes of move, the Muslim women gradually and reluctantly floated towards the acknowledgment of subject hood.

Zeenuth Futehally's depiction of the Muslim women has more prominent many-sided quality. She captures the longings and dissatisfactions of Zohra, a delicate young woman who grows up behind the purdah in a blue-blooded Muslim group of Hyderabad in the early years of the twentieth century. The dynamic thoughts from the West and the freeing goals of patriotism have contaminated the manner of thinking of this timid yet discerning young woman whose withstanding feeling of steadfastness and commitment to the family and senior citizens covers her desire to revolt.
The Nawab, Zohra's dad, encapsulates the consideration of the primitive gentry. A few impecunious poets get his altruistic support. He instills in Zohra an enthusiastic enthusiasm for Persian and Urdu verse and a profound adoration for the otherworldliness of Sufi holy people; he even longs for her growing up into a researcher of Persian writing. He is additionally responsive of the tides of innovation introduced by Western instruction. He gives his little girl English training as per the soul of the time. He considers English instruction the gateway to modern thought. All educated men want their wives to speak it like memsahebs, gitter-pitter (ibid.pg. 14). Nawab's husband does not share his dynamic thoughts. She objects to advanced education for young women and is harsh of her husband's liberality of Zohra: But some day she will have to marry and why sow discontent in her heart? She may never then willingly settle down to domesticity. Allah forbids, but she has not to pass any Doctorate, has she? (ibid.pg. 13) Her perspectives on female training are not the same as those of Unnie, the wet-medical caretaker:

“What is this new realizing for? (..) What would you like to do with firangi books? Learning resembles chewing iron grams. Were your grandma (…) alive, she could never have permitted you to dive into such books. Isn't our own particular adapting enough for you? What's more, concerning your high spirits, she would have made you take a seat with a plate of blended rice and dal and separate the grains. That was the means by which young women were restrained in our days. NawabSaheb (…) has spoilt you as though you were a child” (ibid.pg. 2-3).

In Zohra women are the uncompromising authorities of purdah rules. The woman's physical space is entirely limited to the four dividers of the zenana. Notwithstanding walking around the external greenery enclosure, however high-walled, welcomes the senior citizens'
disapproval. Women go out once in a while. When they do, they go in shut autos and carriages and board and land at the zenana entryway. Women' pieces of clothing are not given to the tailor but rather are sewed at home. Zohra is escorted to class. At home she takes her lessons in Arabic from a young fellow; the educator and the understudy sit isolated by a drape.

Futehally merits tribute for her realistic and delicate depiction of zenana life. The delights and distresses of the detached women and their every-day exercises, concerns and distractions – the transactions for the marriage of the little girls, the celebrations connected with marriage and labor, the ceremonies, traditions and superstitious convictions – are personally depicted. The desire for a child is so extreme among the women that Zohra's mom makes a liberal hearted supplication to her husband to get a second marriage: *Let me arrange such a marriage, Nawab Saheb, a wife who will be a younger sister to me. Your son will then be my son too* (ibid.pg. 15).

Polygamous connections were entirely basic among the Nawabs. The Quran sanctions polygamy: *If you fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or, three, or four* (4.3). In any case, it likewise puts a rider to such authorization by making it restrictive upon the men doing equity among the spouses: *but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them) then only one* (4.3). The Quran additionally keeps up that equivalent treatment of the considerable number of spouses is humanly incomprehensible: *Ye are never able to do justice between wives even if it is your ardent desire* (4.129). Through the depiction of the conjugal existence of Zohra's father in-law, Futehally contends against the act of polygamy. The poor man thinks that it’s hard to hold the scales equally between his two spouses:
It appeared to him a superhuman undertaking (...) he was torn between opponent loyalties. His first spouse despite everything he cherished, whilst his second's temper he dreaded; yet with the last was the obligation of youngsters. Which of them would it be a good idea for him to pick? (...) (ibid.pg. 125)

As the pressure turned out to be increasingly intense, he resigned to an existence of complete self-denial.

Futehally pardons the contentious and tyrannical methods for Zohra's relative just like the upshot of the dissatisfaction of a glad woman, who at a youthful age was hitched to a moderately aged man for the express motivation behind bearing his youngsters while the primary spouse kept on being principal in his affections. Within that stern exterior, what hopes lay buried, what passions lay smouldering, marvels Zohra (ibid.pg. 142).

The traditions that control the life of the zenana women are complex. Zohra's mom and relative adhere to the unbending recognition of the traditions, a large portion of which have no point of reference in Islam. Zohra's relative demands her biting paan, for; it is not customary for brides to have pale lips (ibid.pg. 75). Another woman of the hour must always look decorative (ibid.pg. 81). Married women ought to wear glass bangles and ought not to dress themselves in white. Exposed wrists imply widowhood and white, being the customary shading for the widow, has an unfavorable affiliation. The conviction that unmarried young women and dowagers ought not to enhance themselves underscores the patriarchal idea that the woman is exclusively an object of male look. Another woman of the hour is not expected to make any gesture of welcome to her husband in the presence of the elders (ibid.pg. 81). Truth be told, any showcase of fondness between the spouse and the wife before the older parents is viewed as disgusting and improper. Such traditions, traditions and taboos hamper a
sound fellowship between the life partners. The spouse looks upon her husband in respectful
amazement and keeps up a shy separation from him.

The frivolous jealousies and competitions in the realm of the maidservants, their gab,
adoration for tattle and bootlicking of and commitment to their special women are connected
with a cherishing delicacy. Unnie's age and status as the special woman's medical caretaker
give on her a position of noticeable quality, much the same as the one appreciated by
Hakiman Bua in Attia Hosain's novel. Zohra treats Unnie with civility and worship. Aware of
her idea, Unnie manages over the youthful house keepers; much to the latter's annoyance or
disturbance. Gulab, who peeps into the men's quarters and keeps her companions delighted
with amusing impersonations of Unnie's strut and imperious way, is a fascinating illustrative
of the carefree youthful house keepers, who loathe the confinements on their opportunity and
break them on the guileful.

The restricting spaces are physical as well as ideological. Purdah is an effective
philosophy through the workings of which the social development of sexual orientation
happens. Purdah concretizes the female code of unobtrusiveness in custom bound Muslim
societies. In Zohra's family, marriage is viewed as the most important thing in the world of a
Muslim young woman's life. Still young women are prohibited from examining the subject
with the senior citizens or even among themselves. Convention held such talks to be
immodest (ibid. pg. 30). Zohra, however anxious, is excessively humiliated, making it
impossible to get some information about her married life. Her parents look for her assent for
her marriage, not specifically, but rather through her cousin, Rashedah. Unobtrusiveness is a
quite vaunted excellence in a woman. At the point when approached her assent for the
marriage, a woman of the hour ought not to show unseemly eagerness by replying with
immodest haste (ibid. pg. 55). Zohra's hands are marginally wounded when bangles are put on
them; nonetheless, she stifles all cries of agony within the sight of her susral. Attia Hosain in her novel, *The Sunlight on a Broken Column*, likewise records the case of a woman of the hour who does not blend notwithstanding when a centipede covers itself in her foot. Hosain's hero finds such conduct over the top. Futehally, by complexity, glorifies her champion's devoted recognition of the code of unobtrusiveness, stifling her disdain. She makes different characters acclaim Zohra's unobtrusiveness. Unnie, the wet medical caretaker, reflects: *Modesty is the greatest ornament of youth, and our Chhoti Begum was the image of modesty* (ibid.pg. 299).

Purdah works not simply in relations amongst men and women; it additionally connotes deferential relations among the women themselves. Zohra sits at an aware separation from her relative and does not express her desires, interests or decisions in the last are nearness. The life of a recently wedded young woman is trimmed in by incalculable limitations forced for the sake of unobtrusiveness. She needs to sit at home *like a show-window model*, enhanced in pretentious garments and sparkling adornments, for gushing guests to look at (ibid.pg. 83). Zohra's relative is surprised when her English-taught child needs to take Zohra out to meet his companions: *This is the good that has come out of your English education [...] Ai-hai, young people have no sense of modesty left. Whoever heard of a couple, married hardly a week, going about together, visiting people!* (ibid.pg. 81-82).

Zohra's training and her sensibility set her apart from the other women of her family. She strikes a difference to her vain, liberal sister, Mehrunnissa, who appreciates being the object of deference. She romanticizes relational unions of free decision and looks upon the arrangement of masterminded marriage as a tribute to individual freedom. The creator talks about Zohra as being mixed with an insubordinate soul, which she says, recognizes her from the other English taught Hyderabadi young women who express no complaint to a marriage
masterminded by their parents. Raced into a marriage without wanting to, Zohra toys with the possibility of disobedience. She even plans to flee. In any case, she soon surrenders the arrangement and leaves herself to the possibility of marriage: *I must make this marriage successful. There is no retreat; Allah forbids that I should bring shame upon my parents and upon myself by returning to my maika, disapproved. I would rather die than bring such shame upon the family* (ibid.pg. 52). Familial commitments supersede Zohra's own inclinations. Aside from a couple of resentful upheavals against the primitive society's abridgement of individual flexibility, particularly in the decision of a marriage accomplice, Zohra scarcely strikes the pursuer as an agitator.

Zohra embodies the conventional Indian ideals of obligation, dutifulness and concession to the older parents. *I think one does owe one's parents a great deal* (ibid.pg. 84). To amusingness her relative she wears rich garments and bites paan. *She had no say even in the selection of wearing apparel yet, and the mother-in-law often chose the wrong combination of colors which hurt Zohra's aesthetic sense. But she wore the clothes without a murmur* (ibid.pg. 79). She yearns for the freedom of her home, far from the smothering air of convention at her husband's; however she halts from condemning her in-laws and prevents Unnie from doing as such: *Different households have different ways* (ibid.pg. 80). With her loyal commitment she bit by bit wins her relative adoration and endorsement. It is Zohra's perspective that Futehally embraces. Bashir, Zohra's husband, who laughs at custom, hates the creator's sensitivity.

Marriage develops the limits of Zohra's reality to a specific degree. Her Western instructed spouse brings her out of the purdah; *From a life of seclusion I have been thrust into a world utterly new and bewildering to me* (ibid.pg. 107). Zohra gets a chance to blend with men outside her quick hover of family relationship. Having driven an existence of
confinement she has little understanding into the way of men. She can't resist being
influenced by Siraj's young appeal, a sharp differentiation to her husband's reality. It is a
sentiment honesty that keeps her from releasing the relationship too far. In spite of his
discussion of progressivism Bashir is paternalistic in his treatment of Zohra. With his
investigative twisted of brain, Bashir neglects to welcome Zohra's graceful and tasteful
sensibility and her delicate nature. He looks downward on supernatural quality and
otherworldly existence while Zohra finds in them a longing for a nobler life. The dissimilarity
in their disposition turns out to be increasingly glaring with the death of years. But you
frighten me sometimes [...]. I feel that were it possible, you would place even a lovely sunset
on the dissecting table and not feel it a desecration! (ibid. pg. 94) She tries to discover
satisfaction in parenthood. The illuminated and vote based air of Zohra's parental home is
tragically absent in her marital family. Zohra misses her literary discussions with her dad and
the mushaeras the Nawab as often as possible held in his home. Knowing her husband's
disdain for artists and verse Zohra is embarrassed to put down the verses that structure
themselves in her creative idea.

The novel makes a supplication against the establishment of arranged marriage, which
is the standard in purdah social orders. Purdah and the thought of humility make it simpler for
guardians to choose suitable grooms (ibid. pg. 27) for their little girls without heeding the
equal emotional (ibid. pg. 30) direction of youth. Zohra remarks incidentally on the
complementarily of the two organizations: The purdah system is a great savior [...]. This
mode of marriage can hold good only in a zenana society, where there are no standards of
comparison. Difficulties would arise if the girls started moving about in mixed circles
(ibid. pg. 239).
Zohra's aversion of organized relational unions springs from her ideas of sentimental affection got from the nostalgic books and love verses she is encouraged on and the Western instruction she gets. She stays consistent with Bashir out of a feeling of wifely obligation. Her affection for Bashir, however quiet and enduring, leaves the profundity of her inclination unstirred. However, there is a similarity of bliss, which is smashed when she becomes acquainted with Hamid, her brother by marriage. The two have numerous basic tastes and interests – an unmixed profound respect for Gandhiji and his standards, an interest for hand spun garments, adoration for craftsmanship and verse, abhorrence for material joys, confidence in supernatural quality and deep sense of being and pride in India's social legacy. She finds in Hamid the exemplification of everything she could ever want and beliefs. She doesn't feel remorseful about her affection for Hamid, for, her origination of adoration is optimistic, a kind of otherworldly fellowship, untainted by physical yearning. Adoration is more a quality of the mind; it is the stirring of one’s imagination; it is the fulfilment of one’s spiritual self (ibid.pg. 249).

The outlandish possibility of an existence with Hamid dives Zohra into a chasm of depression and thwarted expectation. While Hamid achieves self-delight through his energetic inclusion in Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience Movement, Zohra flounders in self-centeredness. Hamid at least had done something, achieved something, while she [...] But she was only a woman (ibid.pg. 269). With her significant appreciation for Gandhiji she might want to be a part of the Movement, yet she set out not inhale a word to her husband. Her endeavors to haul herself out of the swamp of gloom wind up worthless. Her brush with the European society and its libertine ways and her (shallow) acknowledgment of the European way of life – she sheds her restraints, smokes, drinks champagne, dresses herself up vaingloriously, hits the dance floor with men and blends unreservedly with them – just serve
to add to her bafflement and extend her appreciation for custom. She apologizes for her conduct: *The things she had done [...] were perhaps suitable for those who were brought up to them, but she could not fit into that pattern, and remain carefree* (ibid. pg. 285). She tries to dedicate her life to the service of poor people. In the endeavor to save a disease stricken family she gets the sickness. *Her protracted death-scene is the culmination of sentimentality in a novel shaped by a decadent literary convention that the beloved is unattainable* (Twice Born, 56). In spite of the creator's cases in actuality, Zohra seems more sentimental than insubordinate.

Zohra's character does not enlist development or change. She continues as before sentimental optimist all through her life not at all like Attia Hosain's Laila who develops and develops because of the diverse impacts she is presented to. Marriage meddles with Zohra's studies and her lone windows to the world outside are the books, which she peruses eagerly. The Muslim society of Hyderabad is displayed as being moderate to change. The nobility lives in its very own universe unperturbed by the social developments. Hamid's mom censures him for getting keyed up about Gandhiji's Satyagraha: *What have we in Hyderabad got to do with it?* (Zohra, 220) Hamid himself dithers for much sooner than he decides on joining the Movement: *I had been thinking about what my duty was, whether even though I am a Hyderabad, I should not go and join the Satyagraha Movement* (ibid. pg. 259).

Purdah is more unbendingly authorized in Hyderabad than in a city like Bombay. From the vignettes of Muslim life in Bombay that Futehally outlines, we discover that Muslim women appreciate more noteworthy flexibility of development there. In the silver screens of Bombay there are no zenana segments isolating women. Women shop all alone without male escort. In Hyderabad the life of a privileged Muslim woman is shackled from multiple points of view. Zohra has almost no choices to fill the void in her life. She can't take
up a vocation, for; in Hyderabad proficient professions are prohibited to women of blue-blooded families. Her concept of social work does not agree with that of her eager spouse, who looks upon it as a way to win honor and glory. *Even if she did something, it had to be trumpeted about, though discreetly, to gain applause. She bore his name* (ibid.pg. 286). As her husband scales statures in his profession, Zohra feels increasingly exhausted, desolate, discouraged and denied. What implants fire into her soul is her confidence in the perfect of sentimental affection, for which she is notwithstanding eager to neglect her family. Hamid who realizes that *love will not be satisfied with mere poetic imaginings* beseeches Zohra to keep up appearances and stay with Bashir as opposed to dive her family into anguish and devastation (ibid.pg. 263). With the disappointment of her sentimental perfect there is nothing else to hold her on to life. The last pages of the novel are defaced by inordinate nostalgia.

Futehally romanticizes the character of Zohra. Every one of the characters in the novel talks about her in sparkling terms. Hamid discovers her blemishes: *There is something in her so fresh and naïve. Her manner and gestures are exquisite, and she moves gracefully. There is really nothing discordant about her. Even her voice is soft* (ibid.pg. 156). Zohra does not talk a word to Safiya about her husband Yusuf's wantonness and noiselessly endures Yusuf's implications and Safiya's thorns. Safiya's misconception, her unfeeling treatment of Zohra and her last atonement serve to praise Zohra's excellencies. Safiya is regret stricken and begs Hamid: *I misjudged her [...] Bhaijan, ask her to forgive me [...] Otherwise my soul would suffer eternal damnation. She is a saint. Yes, now I know she is a saint [...]* (ibid.pg. 303). As Meenakshi Mukherjee sees: *There is no irony in the treatment of Zohra.* The writer anticipates that the pursuer will have complete compassion with her (Twice Born, 56).
The agents of liberated womanhood in the novel – Safiya and Jehan Ara Begum are adversely depicted. Safiya's husband brings her out of the purdah. She plays tennis and rides steeds. However, she seems regrettable in her push to experience her dashing spouse's benchmarks of stunning quality. She is fashionable, frivolous and extravagant. Jehan Ara Begum hails from a family that disposed of the purdah long back. Enticing and coy, she looks upon parenthood as a weight and ignores her obligations as a mother: *One has also to consider one's figure* (Zohra, 95). Clearly the creator looks downward on these women.

Futehally's depiction of the medieval nobility of Hyderabad is idyllic and valid. The pride and propriety, enthusiasm and verse in the realm of the Nawabs are portrayed alongside its shackling customariness. The luxurious exposition adorned with plentiful suggestions to Urdu and Persian verse is in congruity with the abundance of the way of life depicted.

### 3.8 DEBATE ON NON-VIOLENCE

In this novel, one can see an open deliberation between Hamid, brother-in-law by marriage of Zohra and Bashir, her spouse, about brutal and peaceful strategies for battle. Hamid keeps up: *Non-violence is not only best suited to our conditions but it is also the most civilized way. It is without doubt the highest form of courage, to suffer and not to hit back... Only the land of the Buddha could have produced the Mahatma...* (ibid.pg. 154)

Bashir, then again, affirms: *We fight in the open battlefield... This method is certainly not suited to the Muslim genius* (ibid.pg. 253). The open deliberation proceeds with Hamid addressing terms like Hindu genius and Muslim genius, when *the majority of us are from the same stock.* (ibid.pg. 253)

Notice that this whole trade is between the men throughout the life of Zohra. She is a quiet witness and however she is more in concurrence with Hamid rather than with her
husband Bashir, she offers no perceptions of her own. And this lets us know a considerable measure about the novel. The focal character is depicted as delicate, yearning for learning and energetically partial to Persian verse. She values her school instruction extraordinarily and holds on with it in spite of the restriction of the women nearby her. Unnie, her house keeper, grumbles to Zohra's mom: *Owi, Begum Sahiba, how can you allow Chhotibibi to go on with her studies? Look how thin she has become* (ibid.pg. 81), and the Begum Sahiba, thus, criticizes her husband: *How often must I repeat that learned girls never settle down happily to domestic life* (ibid.pg. 82)

Zohra understands that she can just indulge her desires as far as possible, the lines are solidly sketched and no transgressions are allowed. She is to be hitched to a man which her parents have decided for her, despite the fact that she is not yet rationally arranged for such an adjustment in her life. However, then, as she has told Hamid: *A Hyderabadi girl would no more think of questioning her parents right to arrange her marriage than she would of questioning God's right to dispense truth and death.* (ibid.pg. 259)

### 3.9 CONCLUSION

The life of the Muslim woman behind the purdah turns into an adventure of hardship and enduring, whether it is in Delhi or Hyderabad. As we advance through the books, we witness a continuous opening up of the Muslim women' reality. The possibility of insubordination does not strike them. As respects the primitive nobility of Hyderabad, depicted in Zohra, the male individuals are responsive of the dynamic socio-political changes; the women energetically watch their private universes. Still, the advantages of dynamic changes bit by bit permeate to the young women and they ache for the widening of their physical and mental spaces.
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