



Courtly Indian Women in Late Imperial India

Angma Dey Jhala

Jhala examines the political worldview of courtly and royal women in India during the late colonial and post-Independence period. It is a history of the Zenana, which served as the ‘women’s courts’ or ‘female quarters of the palace’, where women lived behind *pardah* (literally translating as the ‘veil’ or ‘curtain’) in seclusion. During the colonial period, Zenana women were significant players in matters of state succession, marriage alliance and the question of colonial law versus indigenous practice. In post-independent India, several former Zenana women entered electoral politics and occupied local and national seats of influence.

The book crosses the divide between the public world of governance and politics and the private sphere of marriage, sexuality and female domesticity in the courtly household. It is a topic largely unexplored by current scholars of South Asia and gender studies.

Readership

South Asia Studies, Gender Studies, Empire Studies and Post-Colonial Studies

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