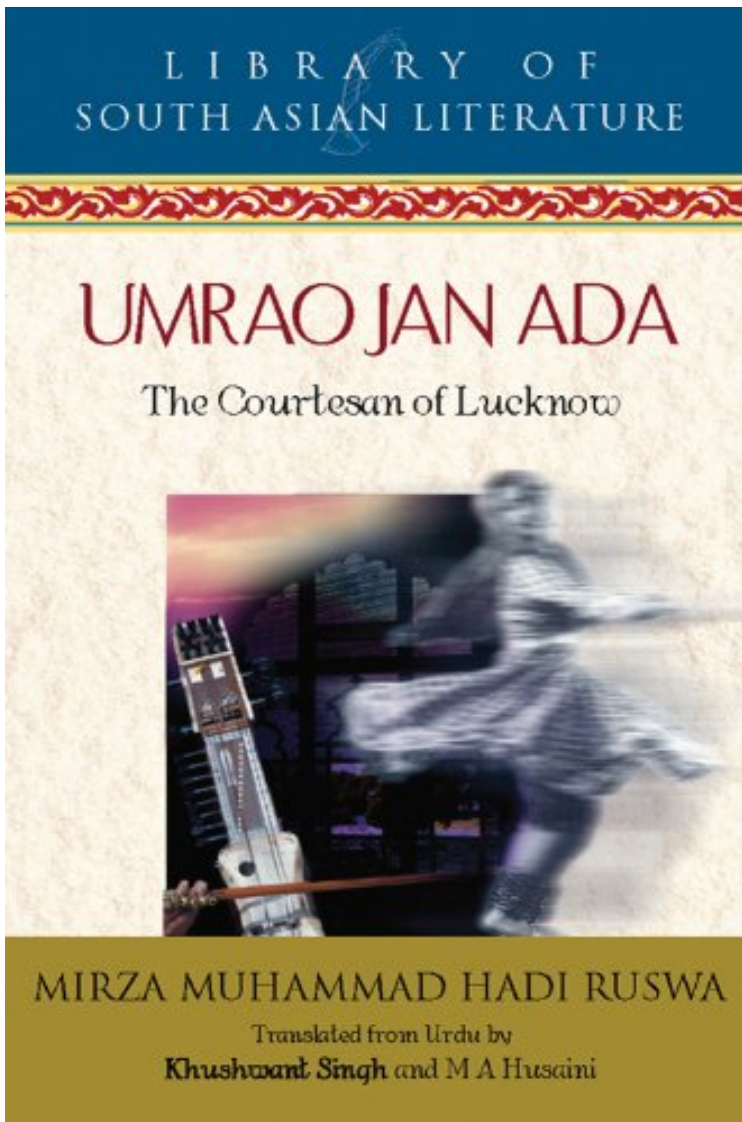


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Umrao Jan Ada: The Courtesan of Lucknow



*Par Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurUmrao Jan Ada is perhaps one of the most enigmatic and forgotten female figures in South Asian Literature. The question of her existence, her beauty, her scholarly abilities and her poetic gift remains a mystery even today. The book is an account of Umrao's life as a Lucknawi courtesan, a nautch-girl, delivered in the first person by Umrao herself and documented by a close friend.First published more than 100 years ago, the novel recreates the gracious ambience of old Lucknow and takes the reader on a fascinating journey through the palaces of wealthy nawabs, the hideouts of colourful vagabonds and the luxurious abodes of the city's courtesans. But more than evoking the ambience of a culture and decadence that was not merely aristocratic but inimitable, it is the complex characterisation of Umrao, and the life she lived as a courtesan, which makes the book memorable and significant.'An excellent story-teller... Ruswa is

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Ruswa is one of the best Urdu prose writers of all times.' - Khushwant Singh
Biographie de l'auteur
Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa (October 1931) was an Urdu poet and writer of fiction, plays, and treatises (mainly on religion, philosophy, and astronomy). He remained on the Nizam of Awadh's advisory board on language matters for years. He was well-versed in Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Hebrew, English, Latin, and Greek. His famed Urdu novel, *Umrao Jan Ada*, published in 1905, is considered by many as the first Urdu novel. It is based on the life of a renowned Lucknow courtesan and poet of the same name and later became the basis for *Umrao Jan Ada* (1972), a Pakistani film, and two Indian films, *Umrao Jaan* (1981) and *Umrao Jaan* (2006). The novel was also the basis of a Pakistani television serial, *Umrao Jan Ada*, which aired in 2003. Accurate details of the life of Mirza Muhammad Hadi Ruswa are unavailable and there are material contradictions between the accounts given by his contemporaries. Ruswa himself mentions that his ancestors arrived in India from Persia and that his great-grandfather was an adjutant in the army of the Nawab of Awadh. The street on which the Ruswa family home was situated is known as *Ajitun Ki Gali* (Adjutant's Lane). He had not much to say of his grandfather and father, except that they were both keenly interested in arithmetic and astronomy.