CHAPTER IV

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Since time immemorial the Orient has always been a subject of fascination for the Western poets and authors. Oriental words- i.e. of Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and many other Indian languages, have been employed by the Western poets of different periods. As a result, certain words of Oriental origin have entered Western vocabulary.

The tradition of using Oriental diction was not an exception in the case of British Romantic Women Poets. It is no wonder that women poets contributed a lot in the Romantic Period. The British romantic women poets, especially Emma Roberts, Anna Maria Jones, and Felicia Dorothea Hemans used some Oriental diction in an attempt to faithfully depict the Oriental way of life. Although Hemans’s dream of personally visiting India was never materialized, she wrote some beautiful poems on India which contain much Oriental diction. Roberts and Jones were truthful to their experiences in the Orient. These women poets employed Oriental diction of their own choice.

This chapter attempts to draw a compendium of Oriental diction used by Roberts, Jones and Hemans. In this chapter I have tried to highlight the origin of each Oriental word. The use and functional value of the diction, as referred to by these women poets, have also been examined in terms of their accuracy and importance, if any, on the effect of the poem. The Oriental words have been arranged alphabetically in this chapter. After each word the first figure within brackets denotes the name of
the poem followed by the number of lines in which the word appears. The following abbreviations have been used for the poems of Roberts: SD = “A Scene in the Dooab”, B = “The Bramin”, TM = “The Taaje Mahal”, DH = “The Dying Hindoo”, NW = “The North-Wester”, RO = “The Rajah’s Obsequies”, NG = “Night on the Ganges”, MG = “The Moosulman’s Grave”, NJK = “Nour Juffeir Khan”, A = “Address, Spoken at the Opening of the Cawnpore Theatre” and S = “Spain”. The abbreviations of Jones’s poems are: ODC = “Ode inscribed to Della Crusca”, OF = “Ode to Fancy” and AI = “Adieu to India”. For Hemans’s poems the following abbreviations are used: IC = “The Indian City” and TSN = “The Traveller at the Source of the Nile”.

Afghaun (NJK, 246)

Originally referring to a native of Afghanistan, a country located on a landlocked plateau between Iran, Pakistan, China, and many countries in Central Asia, Roberts’s use of the Persian word Afghaun instead of popularly known as Afghan refers to the nomadic people of the above named country. She truly depicts the living standard and the quarrelsome nature of the people of Afghanistan in the following lines:

Bringing a fierce marauding crew

Of Afghaun and Mahratta hordes

A reckless brand, who only knew

The crimson laws of their own swords.

(Nour Juffeir Khan, 245-248)
Agra (TM, 56)

Popularly acclaimed by the Indian and foreign tourists as the site of Taj Mahal, built during the early part of the 17th century in the reign of Mughal emperor Shah Jehan (1592-1666), etymologically the Indian word, Agra refers to a city in northern India, which is situated on the bank of Yamuna River. Taj Mahal is considered as the most photographed monument in the world. Roberts’s allusion to Agra has a contemporary touch, for she had captured the pleasing sight of Taj Mahal with her undivided attention and represented this city in an appropriate manner:

A hundred years have winged their flight

O’er princely Agra’s lofty towers,

A hundred years of sunshine bright

Have reveled through its summer bowers –

(The Taaje Mahal, 55-58)

Amber (OF, 6)

Known as anbar (Simpson 383) in Arabic, this word signifies a kind of perfume that is extensively used by the Orientals. Jones displays her familiarity with this aromatic substance, reflective of the Oriental taste.

Arab/Araby (S, 10, 26) (IC, 166) (TSN, 41)

Commonly known as Arab (Hornby 65), the term, Araby refers to the land of Arabia that is encircled on the north by Jordan and Iraq, on the east by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, on the south by the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden,
and on the west by the Red Sea. In the writings of many English writers *Araby* appears as a fictional or romanticized term. With reference to the Arab, Roberts seems to assimilate the substantial Arab viewpoint in terms of the Saracenic culture. Hemans perhaps includes the allusion of “the dark chief of Araby” to display her interest in Eastern mysticism. Almost the same kind of mysticism of the Orient reappears in her depiction of the traveler who

Rose up a fearful vision, fraught

With all that lay between;

The Arab’s lance, the desert’s gloom,

The whirling sands, the red simoom!

(The Traveller at the Source of the Nile, 39-42)

**Bangles/Chowries** (RO, 102, 126)

Known as *Kangan* or *Chudi* in India, the word, *Bangles*, deriving from the Hindi word, *bangri*, refers to a type of glass bracelet, worn mainly by the Indian Hindu women. Either gold or glass bangles or both in combination enhance the beauty of the Indian women who wear them after their marriage, signifying their marital status. Roberts says:

With silver handled *Chowries* wrought

With the rich plume of some rare bird,

(The Rajah’s Obsequies, 102-103)
The above lines describe the cultural tradition of Indian women. Moreover, bangles worn by Rajah’s wives fascinated Roberts, bringing to her mind India’s fabulous ornamental wealth.

*Banyan* (IC, 7, 154)

Popularly considered a sacred tree in Hinduism, the word, banyan (Hornby 108) refers to a South Asian tree with structures that grow down from the branches to the ground and then grow into new roots and trunks. This is also the national tree of India. Hemans gives a description of “the pillared vaults of the banyan” that symbolize India’s unity.

*Baubool* (TM, 77) (MG, 56)

Known as *Babul* in Persian, the word *Baubool* refers to a type of acacia tree which, generally growing wild all over India, produces gum. In India the bark of this tree is used for tanning. Roberts’s metaphoric use of this tree helps her concentrate on the Oriental opulence thus:

The glittering baubool drops its gold

(The Taaje Mahal, 77)

*Baylas* (TM, 78)

Known as *Bel* or *Beli* in Bengali, the Indian word *Baylas* alludes to a type of jasmine flower. This flower is popularly associated with Bengali culture for its strong scent. Indian women use a garland from these flowers in their hair as adornment. The flower of this shrub is also used in worship in Hindu religious rites. Roberts’s description of sweet smell producing *Baylas* is as follows:
And baylas perfumed buds unfold

Their crests of snow, o'er the pink bed

With the broad lotus thickly spread.

(The Taaje Mahal, 78-80)

Benares (RO, 35, 127)

Known to the Mughal and British rulers as Banaras and literally a place where the nectar of life is available, Roberts’s use of the word Benares refers to a city that is located on the northern bank of the Ganges River. In Hinduism it is considered the land of Lord Shiva. It is a Hindu pilgrimage town where Guatama Buddha delivered his first speech. Roberts very aptly marks the availability of domes and sacred trees all over Benares:

Oh bright, Benares! are thy domes,

And beautiful thy sacred groves,

(The Rajah’s Obsequies, 35-36)

In the above lines she also highlights the peaceful surroundings and spiritual ambience of Benares. In addition, she talks of the famous webs of this city which surpass Persia’s rarest, finest loom. Her account follows:

Benares’ far-famed webs have vied

With Persia’s rarest, finest loom;

(The Rajah’s Obsequies, 127-128)
Brama/Brahma (SD, 34) (ODC, 45) (AI, 20) (IC, 80)

The Sanskrit word Brama, referring to Brahma (Brewer 171), the Hindu god according to Hindu mythology, conveys the concept of ultimate cosmic principle. Brahma is said to form a trinity with Vishnu, the Sustainer and Shiva, the Destroyer. In an accurate manner Roberts portrays the Hindu rituals conducted in the name of Brama. Jones’s reference to ‘Brahma’s holy Doctrine’ and ‘virt’ous Principles’ underscores her acute understanding of the religious life in the British India. Hemans also draws on the same concept of Brahma in the Oriental context.

Bramin/Brahmin (B, 8, 21, 57, 63, 68) (NW, 33) (RO, 46, 96, 285) (IC, 26, 60, 141, 147)

Known as Brahman (Hornby 176) in the Orient, this Hindi word signifies a Hindu priest who belongs to the highest caste of Hinduism. This person, highly revered in Hinduism, imparts the knowledge of the Veda and Hindu Scriptures. With minute observation Roberts shows how the Bramin leads a life of pious abstinence and how he holds a superior position in the caste system and how he is exalted in the community. Hemans aptly points out the religious prospects of Hinduism through the portrayal of this Brahmin figure.

Bulbul (B, 47) (NW, 56) (NG, 13)

The Persian word Bulbul stands for nightingale. In Persian poetry this songbird is frequently mentioned by the Persian poets. “Bulbul is generally associated in the Orient with love and melodious song” (Kidwai 87). This Oriental bird may have been noted by Roberts. Her familiarity with this bird comes out thus:
The bulbul breathes to him its sweetest strain

(The Bramin, 47)

Is vocal with the Bulbul’s sweetest tale

(The North-Wester, 56)

*Cashmerian* (TM, 9)

The word *Cashmerian* is related to Kashmir, the Himalayan region in northern India. ‘Cashmerian rose’ exudes a very aromatic odour that fascinates the travelers. Roberts reinforces the beauty of Taj Mahal by making an allusion to ‘Cashmerian rose’, which is equally beautiful:

Oh! Thou wert far more beautiful than those

Fair forms of genii by poets sung,

More blooming than thine own Cashmerian rose,

O’er thy soft cheek a crimson tint was flung,

(The Taaje Mahal, 7-10)

*Chabouta* (DH, 18)

This is a Hindi word referring to a small platform made of well-tempered clay. Being familiar with the Oriental culture Roberts speaks of the Indian terrace-like *chabouta* on the shore of the Ganges river.
Champa (MG, 52)

The Hindi word Champa signifies the name of a cream-yellow colored flower that blooms with a sight of exquisite beauty. Indian women place the buds of this odorous flower in their hair that releases its sweet fragrance. This flower is held sacred in Hindu religion. Perfume is also made from this delicate flower. Roberts’s specific reference to this beautiful flower helps the reader appreciate Indian culture.

Chobedar (RO, 80)

Known as Chobdar in Persian, Roberts’s use of the word, Chobedar refers to a man of lower rank in Indian offices who stands at the gate with a stick for security. In India this traditionally attired servant is also employed to welcome guests in ceremonies. Roberts’s mention of the lower-ranked Chobedar is quite apt in the sense. She draws the image of Chobedar in her poem, “The Rajah’s Obsequies”.

Chumayla (RO, 192)

Named Chameli in India, the word Chumayla denotes a type of flower with sweet fragrance. Because of its snow-white color and beautifully round shape, this flower is likened to a pearl in appearance and beauty. Roberts is to be credited for employing this odorous Oriental flower.

Chuprassies (RO, 83)

In Hindi the term, Chuprassies mean the servants who wear a badge inscribed with the name of the office to which they are attached. This title was first given to those servants who were employed in Bengal Presidency in the British India.
Roberts’s reference to Chuprassies gives a clear picture about the Rajah’s court where these attendants performed their service with full responsibility.

*Cittara* (RO, 140) (NJK, 40)

Derived from the Persian *Setar* and known as *Sitar* in India, the word *Cittara* signifies a musical instrument that is used in Indian classical music. Roberts shows her interest in this stringed instrument, for she was carried away by its melodious tone.

*Crescent* (TM, 61)

The word *Crescent* denotes “an emblem representing the half-moon with the horns turned upward” (Bridgwater 478). Roberts’s reference to the term *Crescent* conveys a religious overtone. The visibility of the new moon in the sky is noted by the Muslims for the lunar Islamic calendar. It is also used in many Muslim countries as an emblem in their national flags.

*Dal* (RO, 42)

*Dal* is a Hindi word. This term refers to a saucy dish in Indian cuisine that is prepared from lentils, beans and peas. It is served as a side-dish and Indian people eat this with rice and *roti* (wheat-based flat bread). Roberts portrays how the Rajah used to feel satisfied at the time of his taking *Dal* with ‘the silvery rice’.

*Dhole* (RO, 139) (A, 8)

Literally meaning drum, the Hindi word *Dhole* signifies a musical instrument that is used in the sub-continental classical music. It is also played by the Hindus for
ritual purposes. Roberts describes how this *dhole* is beaten by the musicians at the Cawnpore theatre and ‘native crowds’ feel delighted with its sound.

*Fakeer* (MG, 35)

Derived from the Arabic word, *Faqir* and theologically meaning a saint who imparts the knowledge of Islam, the word *Fakeer* literally denotes a beggar who lives on alms and seeks spiritual help from God. In India a *Fakeer* may be any religious mendicant. Roberts appropriately describes this weary *Fakeer* who looks for a home where he could live peacefully and recite the religious books.

*Ganges* (SD, 39) (B, 4) (DH, 15) (NW, 40) (RO, 22, 78, 142, 194) (NG, 5) (A, 6)

Known as *Ganga* in Hindi, *Ganges* refers to the most important and sacred river of India which is considered to be the daughter of the mountain god, Himavan or Himalaya by the Hindus, who constitute the vast majority of India’s population. With reference to *Ganges* Roberts presents the rituals of Hindus in an appropriate manner. In addition, through this allusion Roberts displays her interest in the Indian landscape.

*Gazelle* (SD, 55)

Derived from the Arabic word ‘ghazal’ (Kidwai 93), *Gazelle* stands for “a small delicately formed antelope, of which the typical species is a native of northern Africa; other varieties are found in various parts of Africa and Asia. The gazelle is especially noted for the grace of its eyes.” (Simpson 411). Roberts employs this familiar, beautiful, and lovely Oriental animal image for describing the maiden’s eyes. This poetic image is highly common in Persian literature.
*Genii (TM, 8) (IC, 10)*

Originally known as ‘*Jinn*’ in Arabic (Kidwai 94), *Genii* in the Islamic belief system stands for good or evil invisible beings, created out of fire. The Arabs and Persians have shown a keen interest in writing tales about *Jinns*, contrasting their lives with those of human beings. Roberts shows her fascination in an equal degree for both *genii* and the Taj Mahal.

*Ghaut (DH, 12) (NW, 39) (RO, 12) (MG, 88)*

Known as ghat (Hornby 651), the Hindi word *Ghaut* denotes steps leading down to a river or lake. Hindu devotees take their holy bath there in order to be cleansed of sins. Through her minute observation Roberts depicts this culturally famed *Ghaut* with its glittering steps.

*Ghurrah (DH, 19) (MG, 24)*

The Hindi word *Ghurrah* signifies a spherical shaped water-jar, made of clay or brass. In traditional Oriental culture it is used for storing water in houses. Roberts’s reference to ‘graceful ghurrah’ is remarkable in its correct sense.

*Ghurrees (RO, 61)*

Roberts’s reference to the Hindi word *Ghurrees* stands for modern-day watch that displays time. She points out this exquisite piece used by the Indian people in her day:

The *ghurrees* chime the evening hour,

O’er the red west the sun-beans glances,
And from each arch-way, gate, and tower,

In countless groups a crowd advances.

(The Rajah’s Obsequies, 61-64)

_Hindoo/Hindu_ (RO, 44) (MG, 67) (AI, 22)

Literally referring to the follower of Hinduism, the word _Hindoo_ denotes a geographic name defining religious identity of a person of the Indian origin. _Hindoo_ follows the Indian identity, race, culture, custom and ideology in diverse ways. Roberts shows how the _Hindoo_ pilgrim performs his religious duty with full responsibility. She notes the liberal and sacrificial attitude of Hindus. On the other hand, Jones talks of ‘Hindoo’s meek untainted Mind’ and thus makes an insightful comment about the vulnerable, superstitious Indian caught in the clutches of the Hindu clergy in the British India. In her poem Hemans describes the life-style of the ‘graceful Hindu maid’.

_Hindoostan/Hindostan_ (TM, 28) (RO, 88, 277) (MG, 83)

The term _Hindoostan_ is derived from the Persian word _Hindustan_ that primarily means the “country of the Hindus” (Brewer 608). In a more secular context, it refers to the entire Indian subcontinent, with its cultural diversity. Roberts gives a vivid and spirited description about India’s beautiful landscape and opulent wealth.

_Howdah_ (NJK, 103)

Known as ‘howdah’, this Hindi word denotes “a seat for riding on the back of an elephant or a camel, often for more than one person” (Hornby 758). Roberts’s use of this word signifies an ornate carriage made of wooden frame and placed on the
back of an elephant. The elephant driver ties it on the elephant’s back by means of long leather straps and chains. In the days of the Mughal era the European travelers used to sit on this beautifully arranged carriage and traveled within India for business and pleasure. Roberts mentions how the European merchants used this carriage for carrying Oriental gold. Hence, Roberts not only gives a vivid account of the Oriental way of life, but she touches upon the luxurious Oriental life.

_Jessamine_ (MG, 52)

Popularly called _Yasmin_ in Persian, the Hindi word _Jessamine_ refers to a delicate flower that is found in the tropical and temperate regions of the world. The Indian women traditionally wear the garlands of this sweet fragrant flower in their hair to enhance their beauty. The extracted odor from this flower is used in perfumes and incense. It is also used in floral decoration for marriages and other cultural functions in Hindu religion. In view of its Oriental features this flower recaptures Roberts’s reflective mind.

_Jheel_ (SD, 6)

The word, _Jheel_, standing for a lake, is Hindi in its origin. This word denotes a large area of water surrounded by land. Roberts draws attention to the Indian landscape. By the picturesque use of the _jheel_ she displays her fascination for nature, associated with calmness, solidarity, and tranquility.

_Jumna_ (TM, 71) (NJK, 68, 177, 203, 342)

Literally meaning ‘twins’ in Hindu mythology, the word _Jumna_ refers to the former name of the Yamuna River which originates from the Yamunotri glacier and merges with the _Ganges_ at Allahabad. It is a “sacred river of the Hindus, supposed by
them to have the efficacy of removing sin” (Brewer 1317). On the bank of this river the historic monument named as Taj Mahal was built at the command of Mughal emperor, Shah Jehan for his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Its confluence with the Ganges is regarded as a sacred place in Hindu religion, for the pious Hindus take holy bath with its water in order to be free from sins. With her reference to ‘Jumna’s Chrystal tide’ Roberts draws a faithful picture of India.

**Jungle (NJK, 101, 161) (A, 1) (IC, 227)**

Derived from the Hindi word ‘jangal’, the term jungle refers to a wasteland. In a general sense, it denotes an area covered with dense vegetation. Roberts may have come across this Oriental jungle where various kinds of wild animals namely, hyena, wolf, bear, jackals, and deer dwell. Hemans’s description of the jungle is quite apt in Oriental context.

**Kaaries (NJK, 180)**

Referred as curry in English, the term Kaaries means a saucy dish made of stir-fried onion, garlic, ginger and tomatoes, and seasoned with meat, poultry, vegetables or fish in Indian cuisine. Roberts speaks of Karries with a keen interest.

**Lotas (MG, 22)**

Originally known as Lota in Urdu and Hindi, Roberts’s use of the word Lotas denotes a vessel made of brass, copper or plastic. Indian people carry water in this small pot for washing and ablution. Roberts identifies this traditional water vessel with her sharp vision.
**Mahratta (NJK, 246)**

Roberts’s use of the term *Mahratta* may be derived from the *Prakit* word *Marhatta* found in Jain Maharashtri literature, meaning the people of Maratha dynasty who lived in Bombay (present-day Mumbai) and enjoyed reputation as soldiers in the medieval period. They became more popular for their ability as warriors and their whole-hearted devotion to Hinduism. Roberts rightly identifies these Indian aboriginal *Mahratta* in view of their historical importance in literature.

**Meer Jah Asiph (NJK, 253, 275, 318)**

This was the title given by Muhammad Shah (1702-1784) to Nizam-ul-Mulk Asif Jah I (1671-1748), the founder of the Asif Jahi dynasty of Hyderabad. Roberts shows her admiration for this outstanding personality who remained neutral in the fight between the British and the Mughal.

**Mhut (B, 18) (MG, 75)**

*Mhut* is derived from the Hindi word *Mahut*, which in the Oriental context stands for an elephant driver. Roberts recreates the traditional culture of the Indians who used to take on journey on elephant, driven by the Mhut.

**Minaret (B, 48) (TM, 67) (RO, 15) (A, 14) (S, 16)**

The Oriental word *Minaret* is derived from the Arabic term *manarah*, literally meaning a ‘light house’ (Kidwai 105). “It is a lofty, often slender, tower or turret attached to a Muslim mosque, surrounded by a furnished with one more balconies, attached to the mosques” (Stein 143). The *minarets* are the upwardly pointed structures that symbolize the towering pride of Islam. From the top of the *minarets* the
Muezzin (the caller) makes the call for praying at appointed hours. With her allusion to Minarets Roberts displays her knowledge of the Oriental religio-cultural tradition. *Moor* (S, 19, 28)

This word, Moor refers to “a member of a race of Muslim people living in Africa who entered and took control of part of Spain in the 8th century” (Hornby 991). With an acute sense Roberts notes the name of Moor while stating the diverse cultures and traditions of Spain.

Moslem/Moosaulmaun/Muslim (SD, 18, 30) (B, 57) (TM, 60) (MG, 4, 67) (S, 12) (IC, 27, 81, 146, 219)

The term is derived from the Arabic word, ‘Muslim’ (Kidwai 106). The word, originating from the term ‘aslama’, means a believer in Islam. Roberts portrays the then declining Muslim fame, power, and glory in a very sensitive way. With reference to Muslims, Hemans points to the conflict between the Hindus and Muslims in the then Indian society.

Mosque (SD, 13) (TM, 67) (NW, 33) (NG, 8) (MG, 34, 70, 75, 88) (A, 14)

Known as Masjid in Arabic, the word, ‘Mosque’ signifies an Islamic religious institution where the pious Muslims assemble for religio-cultural and communal activities. Roberts gives the reference to the dilapidated mosque in order to point out the waning Muslim rule during the last days of Mughal era. Yet her remark about the mosque underscores its majesty and glory.
Muslin (B, 33) (RO, 123)

The Persian word, ‘Muslin’, referring to Mosul, a city in modern-day Iraq, stands for a light, thin cotton fabric produced in that town. This cotton fabric “is almost transparent, used, especially in the past, for making clothes and curtains” (Hornby 1006). In the context of traditional culture of the Orient, Roberts shows her admiration for lightweight and inexpensive muslin, and she appreciates its peculiar beauty and comeliness.

Mussaul (RO, 287)

Derived from the Arabic term, al-mawsil, Roberts’s use of the word, Mussaul stands for Mosul – a city in northern Iraq. This city was on the west bank of Tigris River. Muslin – a light cotton fabric is named after this city. The ‘Mussaul’s enkindling brand’ rightly captures Roberts’s imagination and gives an authentic color of the Orient in her poem.

Nazim (NW, 25)

The Arabic word Nazim, literally meaning a governor of a province, is used for a highly knowledgeable person who is authorized to pronounce the interpretation of certain duties and laws prescribed in the code of conduct of religious books. The standard Arabic expression was used under the British rule in India in Roberts’s day, and referred to a governor who obtains this position. Roberts’s mention of the Oriental title is reflective of her acquaintance with and admiration for the Oriental culture.
Niem (NW, 23)

Known as Neem both in Hindi and Urdu, it signifies an evergreen tree with small bright green leaves and tiny white flowers found across India. Roberts’s expression of ‘The waving niem’ shows her interest in exoticism.

Nuzzum (MG, 36)

Often used by the Persian poets, the term Nuzzum may be equated with the lyrical verse in the West. Roberts appreciates the sweetness of this Oriental poetical genre.

Nyl Ghau (NJK, 98)

Nilgai in Hindi is derived from the Sanskrit Nila-gauh that refers to a wild animal resembling a cow. This ox-like animal is mainly found in grassy-forest areas of India. In India it is considered as a sacred animal in Hindu religion. Roberts implicitly describes how this attractive Oriental animal lives in the grasslands and is brutally killed by the hunter.

Omrah (NJK, 86, 168, 240)

Derived from the Arabic Umra, it denotes the pilgrimage to Makkah, the town in Saudi Arabia where God’s word was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). With extreme love and devotion, the pious Muslims visit Makkah for performing Umra. Roberts’s statement about Omrah refers to the Islamic ritual performed by the Muslims in her day.
**Ornee (RO, 125)**

In Hindi the word *Ornee* signifies a piece of thin cloth worn by the Indian women to cover their head and face. This light fabric displays a sense of reticence that the Indian women possess. Roberts marks this Oriental dress item by her sharp vision.

**Paan (NJK, 175)**

The Hindi word *Paan* means the betel leaf taken usually after meals in the Orient. As a sign of hospitality it is offered to guests and visitors at different socio-cultural functions and festivals. Roberts employs this word in order to display her familiarity with the Oriental culture.

**Peepul (NW, 22) (NG, 26) (MG, 3)**

The Hindi term *Pipal*, literally meaning enlightenment and peace, refers to a deciduous tree with light green foliage that grows throughout India. Hindus worship this tree for its importance in their religion. It has also some medicinal value. Roberts’s reference to ‘the dark peepul’s glossy foliage’ confirms her detailed knowledge about the Orient.

**Peri (RO, 191)**

The Persian word *Peri* stands for supernatural beings ranked between angels and evil spirits. In speaking of a beautiful *Peri* bird, Roberts seems to have in mind the image of this angel-like creature often invoked by the Oriental poets.
Persia (RO, 128)

This is the former name of present-day Iran, located on the north-eastern shore of the Persian Gulf. Roberts’s reference to ‘finest loom’ alludes to Persia that features as a romanticized place by many Western poets.

Pillaus (NJK, 179)

Derived from the Persian word Pilaw, Roberts’s use of the term Pillaus stands for a dish made of rice, meat or vegetables and flavored with variety of spices. Roberts states how the Indian people serve this dish to their guests.

Prayer (B, 11, 56) (TM, 32) (MG, 19) (IC, 26)

Prayer in the Oriental culture signifies a religious and ritualistic practice that the followers of Islam offer five times a day, facing the Kaba in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, for expressing praise, thanksgiving, confession, or a request for help or somebody’s well-being to God. Along with Muslim prayer, Roberts talks also about Hindu prayer offered by the Brahman in the graceful, beautified and decorated temple:

Passing the silent hours in lonely prayer

(The Bramin, 11)

Hemans too describes how ‘the Brahmin bowed in prayer’.

Rajah (RO, 95, 111) (IC, 226)

This Hindi word is commonly used throughout India as a title given to the nobleman or prince of Hindu tribe. Roberts depicts the Indian Rajah and his
traditions, culture and customs. Hemans’s reference to the ‘Rajah’s throne’ refers to the superior position hold by the Rajah in the British India.

Schirauz (NJK, 285)

The Persian word Schirauz refers to the birth place of Shams al-Din Hafez Shirazi (1320-1390) – the greatest lyric poet of Persian literature. His contribution to the Persian ghazal (a literary form in Persian) is akin to lyric of English poets. Roberts correctly appreciates ‘precious vintage of Schirauz’ in context of the Orient.

Scindia (NJK, 241)

The Hindi word Scindia may refer to Ranoji Scindia – a Maratha general of the Gwalior state. N.G. Rathod points out that “Ranoji Scindia, the competent and gallant lieutenant, under the command of the Peshwas, played a singular role in the expansion of the Maratha Empire, in the first half of the eighteenth century”(1). In short, under the leadership of Peshwa Bajirao he established the Scindia court in magnificence and gave an impetus to cultural renaissance in Maratha history. Roberts rightly uses the image of ‘Scindia’s court’ in this sense.

Serai (MG, 77)

Saraay in Persian typifies an inn, a place where the travelers stay during journey. The presence of the ‘wide serai within the city’s gate’ implies Roberts’s real impression of the Orient.

Shah Jehan (TM, 26)

Literally meaning the king of the world, it was the title of the 5th great Mughal emperor of India, Shah Jehan (1592-1666). That Roberts possessed a detailed
knowledge of the legends associated with this great historical figure is borne out by her extensive note. She refers to Shah Jehan who had ruled the Mughal Empire from 1628 to 1658 and built the magnificent Taj Mahal at Agra in Uttar Pradesh (India) as a memorial for his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

**Shaster** (B, 38)

Known as Shastra in Sanskrit, it means writings on Hinduism, especially those on religious matters. Roberts seems to have a genuine interest in Shaster, giving the readers a clear concept of Hindu scriptures.

**Shawl** (NJK, 139)

Derived from the Persian Shal, it alludes to a traditional garment loosely worn by Persian women over the shoulders, and sometimes also over the head. Roberts makes an apt observation of ‘crimson shawl’ which was common in the 19th century.

**Sherbet** (NJK, 182)

The Persian word Sherbet stands for a sweetened drink, generally the juice of fruits with sugar. Roberts describes the custom of the Turkish drink that was widely used by the Indians in her day.

**Syah** (RO, 124)

The term Syah signifies a loose designed robe which the women wear at night in the Orient. Roberts observes how one of ‘Rajah’s wives’ ties this night-dress at her waist. Likewise, Roberts shows her familiarity with this garment as an item exclusive to the Orient.
Tambour (IC, 145)

The word tambour refers to a musical drum, and is of Hindi origin. It is used throughout India for producing sweet music at various socio-cultural ceremonies. Hemans appreciates the charming sound of this musical instrument.

Tulwar (RO, 82)

The Hindi word Tulwar refers to a curved sword used in the Mughal India as a weapon. Roberts draws her attention to this Oriental designed sword that the 'Chobedar band' hold in the Rajah’s court.

Vedas (B, 10)

The Sanskrit word Vedas, literally meaning ‘knowledge’, refers to its four parts i.e. the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur Veda, and the Atharva Veda, which constitute the Scriptures of the Hindu religion and are recited in the sacramental rites of Hinduism. Roberts discusses the divine powers revealed in the Vedic hymns with a keen interest, and comments on how the Hindus have assimilated the teachings of Veda.

Verandah (RO, 74) (NJK, 291)

This Indian word, an adaptation of the Portuguese Varanda, stands for a roofed open platform attached to the exterior of a house. Roberts points out that the colourful clothes and flowers are thrown over the Verandah of the Rajah’s court. She also gives an account of ‘flaming torch’ and ‘crystal lamp’ which shine the light over the Verandah in the evening.
The word *Zenana* is derived from the Persian term *Zan*, meaning a woman. This word signifies the quarters in Muslim households reserved for women and girls. Roberts represents the image of *Zenana* in an accurate manner. Moreover, by referring to the *Zenana*, Roberts appreciates the Muslim socio-cultural tradition, and the dignity and status of women in Muslim society.

**Zumeendars (NJK, 174)**

 Derived from the Persian *Zamindar*, it signifies land-holders in the then feudal India. During the Mughal Empire the Muslim rulers employed the term for a person charged with the management of lands of a specified district. These *Zumeendars* conducted themselves in local governance. Roberts rightly draws a picture of how the Zumeendars celebrate their festivals and share their cultural tradition with their guests by offering some Oriental spices:

> The ample feast, whose dainty fare
> Invited by their bounteous lord,
> The Zumeendars and vassals share –
> Rose water, paan and spices prest
> Profusely on each welcomed guest.

*(Nour Juffeir Khan, 172-176)*

To sum up, this chapter has drawn the compendium of Oriental diction employed by Roberts, Jones and Hemans in their poems and examined the accuracy of each word in Oriental context.
Works Cited


