



**CHETANA**  
International Journal of Education (CIJE)

Peer Reviewed/Refereed Journal  
ISSN : 2455-8279 (E)/2231-3613 (P)

**Impact Factor**  
**SJIF 2026-8.584**



**Prof. A.P. Sharma**  
Founder Editor, CIJE  
(25.12.1932 - 09.01.2019)

**European Women's Writing and Construction of India:  
A Select Study of writings of Emma Roberts and Marry Carpenter**

**Preetam Lamba**

Assistant Professor (VSY)

Pt.Deendayal Upadhyaya Shekhawati University

Katrathal, Sikar, Rajasthan

E-mail: preetamlamba065@gmail.com, Mobile: 9416821487

.....  
First draft received: 07.01.2026, Reviewed: 19.01.2026

Final proof received: 21.01.2026, Accepted: 25.01.2026

**Abstract**

*The paper will discuss the European women writers Emma Roberts and Mary Carpenter and how they portrayed India in their novels and writings. Placing their works in the context of the overall discourse on colonialism and gendered travelwriting, the study addresses the way these authors approached Indian society, culture, religion, and social reform. The main writer Emma Roberts who mostly writes about her travels and literary sketches represents India in a prism of colonial aesthetics, domestic ideology and orientalist fantasy. Comparatively, the works of Mary Carpenter, and in this case, her works regarding education and social reform, were characterized by an active involvement of philanthropy and reformist activity. She also did social activities with in the Indian society, especially in the context of the issue of female education and reform of the prisons in India.*

*The paper believes that although both authors functioned in the ideological framework of British imperialism, they each did so through the reactions of their genders that enabled them to approach and make meaning of the Indian life specifically the status of women in unique ways. Their stories helped to build the India as the place of moral, social, and civilizational otherness, but also show instances of empathy, negotiation, and cross-cultural contact. This paper presents an analysis of the selected texts by Roberts and Carpenter where the writing of European women is implicated in the production of colonial knowledge and the cultural imagination of the nineteenth-century India.*

**Keywords:** Colonial Discourse, Gender and Empire, orientalism, travel writings etc.

**Introduction**

Colonial India: It is the region of Indian subcontinent that fell under the possession of the European powers in the age of discovery. The European forces are exercised through conquest, trade particularly species. When English East India company made their colonies in india,many European women came here to see India After mid eighteenth century. White women played diversity in roles. Some of them came with their husbands,they were called memshabis. This term is mostly used in negative sense. Some came here independently and engaged themselves in teaching, social and missionary works. Some women also gained confidence to move around the country as avid and energetic travellers like Emma Roberts and fanny pranks.The introduction of the British Raj saw the infiltration of Christianity and Christian missionaries in India. India was an attraction of many women either as wives of missionaries or as driven by their religious and moral issues to travel to India. Christianity was often used as a colonial instrument opposing the Indian religious customs and practices. It also motivated most

British women to not only give out educational opportunities to Indian women, but also to fight the cause of Indian nationalism.

Simultaneously, the ideologies of the Indian women that drew many women to India inspired the spirituality of numerous British women such as Sister Nivedita and Annie Besant.British colonialism could often be posed as a form of discovery of new territories to expand the scientific, geographical, and cultural knowledge. To many women writers this was a chance to capture an exclusive power. The texts of English-speaking women in the British Raj took a very diverse stance in relation to the colonial occupation in India. Certain British women published about their perceived role in the British Empire, as wives and mothers, as protectors of the British home and the continuation of colonialist policies. There were British women writers who wrote about politics and their books as well as articles served as a channel to advance their agendas which included education of women as well as Indian nationalism. Others have written about their tours around India, how beautiful and diverse it was. Even Indian women who

were living under the Raj wrote about their land, repeating the cultural and religious stories and even justifying the British Empire, though the Empire was a constant reminder that they would never be real British. It is these authors who are trapping the tensions of race, gender as well as colonialism that defined womanhood during the years of the British Raj. All of them created a imagery of India according to their ideology. Creating the imagery of India based on the perception of the colonial women. During the colonial time the image of India that was in the minds of the European women, was usually complicated by the cross-contribution of cultural biases, colonial attitudes and personal experiences. Being the representatives of this female group who explored the new territories of the Indian subcontinent, their writings and descriptions provided insights into the image building that reflected fascination but also condescension at times.

To a great number of colonial women India was a very interesting and exotic world, where colors, textile and spices were used to feed their senses. The fertile scenery full of various flora and fauna was commonly represented as a paradise to be visited. Colonial women also often idealized the luxury of Indian palaces, the elaborate architecture of temples and the charm of traditional clothing in their works, creating a blanket of fascination that dominated the Orientalist desires of the 19th century.

Nonetheless, this idealized image was in parallel with a Eurocentric vision that tended to view Indian society in exotic and other ways. As a woman in the colonial society, the colonial women were at times caught in a trap of stereotypes and falsehoods present during those times. The caste system, religious life, and social order of India were seen frequently through the prism of the western values and misrepresentations that strengthened the colonial hierarchies. All of them wrote on certain shared issues of Indian society but their view was varied in order to witness these issues that rely on their ideology such as the Missionary work in India was initiated in the early-nineteenth century. The British Parliament had created an Anglican bishopric of Calcutta in 1813 and had officially licensed missionaries to enter the East India Company territories.<sup>6</sup> By 1851 the number of licensed Protestant missionaries in the subcontinent was about 339. Because of the perceived threat of an unsanitary climate and the unpredictable natives, the mission business was a male project. At mid-century, though, male missionaries found themselves becoming aware of the fact that their efforts to spread the Gospel were being undermined because they could do nothing to attract Indian women. Women colleagues were necessary especially since they could venture pass the veil and access the zenana of Muslim and high-caste houses. British women initially came in as wives to the mission field, after they came here independently. These missionary ladies mostly wrote about the bad condition of India. They criticised sati system, pardha pratha, Bal-Vivah and killing of female infanticide and many other rituals of India. They talked about harsh condition of women in society. They start schools and hospitals in India in order to promote christianity. They showed christianity was superior than other religions. On the other hand some female travellers were orientalist and they depict glory of India in their writings like Emma Roberts. Western women often found the Orient to be a place of freedom, releasing them from the social constraints of their own societies;

similarly, their writings have sometimes depicted the East as a location of social, moral, and intellectual emptiness, filled with a people in need of their emancipated examples. However, some female authors saw an opportunity not only to explain social practices in the East, but also to critique English and American gender practices; indeed, Western women writers frequently compared the West's denial of women's economic and political rights unfavorably with the privileges of Ottoman womanhood. Moreover, unlike men who merely fantasized about veiled women, female writers often claimed an authoritative view that deflated sexualized Orientalist depictions of the harem and produced a counter-discourse about Eastern women<sup>1</sup>. These women depicted beauty of Indian cities and palaces in their writings. They agreed with the view that India had a glorious past in ancient time. Writing of these women were different from men writers in some cases. Male writers urged on political and economic life of India whereas women writers wrote about social and personal life of Indian society. Women writers wrote about their encounters with Indian people. Male writers have no access to go to zennana quarters but women writers went there and wrote about this untouched topic of Indian history. This article talks about two European writers named Emma Roberts and Mary Carpenter. Emma Roberts was an English writer and poet known for her memories about India. She was an Orientalist historian and works in Asiatic society of Bengal. In her book 'Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan', she wrote about beauty of Indian palaces, cities and many other aspects. She present India as a glorifying country. She said that Delhi is the city which every traveler want to visit in her life. Mary Carpenter was a social reformer and came in India for promoting female education. Earlier she works for the prison conditions of people. She writes that India is backward in female education due to lack of female teachers here in her book 'SIX MONTHS IN INDIA'. She was majorly Utilitarian and wants to reforms for improvement female education in Indian society.

The objective of this paper is to see India through colonial women's perspective what they observe here and writes about. Research methodology is qualitative and descriptive analytical method during the research for this paper which is based on some primary and secondary sources. For collecting Data record keeping method is used. Importance of this paper is to highlight the writings of selected female European writers was remained largely absent from any major historical discourses on India during colonial period.

Limitation is that Writing of only two European women is selected for work. Their writing hardly talks about political and economic life of India, they are only focused on social and cultural aspects. Pay more attention to elite class women. Eurocentric approach is find in their writings.

#### Historical literature review

Memsahibs Abroad by Indira Ghose: This book contains writings of European women travelers in nineteenth century in India. They were anxious to see real India. This book helps me to know about the different women authors and their suitable ideologies. This book contains

---

<sup>1</sup> *Orientalism, And the Female Traveler: Writings from Inside the haram, Carolyn goffman, Indiana University press, 2013.*

writings of Emma roberts,Fanny prank and many others.it helps to understand what colonial women write about india of that time.limitation of this book is that it only talk about women writers,so to make comparison between male colonial writers and women writers,I have to rely upon other sources.

Memsahibs writings by Indrani Sen : This contains writings of various European women writers who came in India in nineteenth century in India.this book talks about European women's perceptions about Indian women.it helps to understand colonial women's thinking about colonised women.major limitation of this book is that it only talks about Indian women.

Women and literary narrative in colonial India by Shukla Chatterjee:

This book is a commentary on the textual practices employed by the nineteenth century Bengali women to look at the colonizer society.this book brings out the 'other side' of the colonial history which is mostly Eurocentric. It contains writings of literate Bengali women like krishnabhabini (wife of Devender Nath Tagore) and many others. But this book only focused on Bengali women.

The Christian missionaries: The evolution of female education in western India by Gauri Shrivastava: This article talks about Christian missionaries who came in western India and their role in evolution of female education. It helps to find out their intentions of promoting female education. But this article is limited to Christian missionaries.

Memsahibs and motherhood in 19th century India by Nupur chaudhary: This article has dealt with the relationship between the colonialism and domestic world of British society in India. This article shows the social lives of mamsahib like pregnancy, nursing, child rearing etc. They all are less talk aspects of modern history.

Fearful Bodies into Disciplined Subjects: Pleasure, Romance, and the Family Drama of Colonial Reform in Mary Carpenter's Six Months in India by Antoinette Burton: This article talks about the journey of Mary Carpenter in India. It highlights about the social reforms which she made here and her contribution in female education.

#### **Emma Robberts(27 March 1791-17 September 1840)**

She is a British traveler and poet .She writes about glory of India because she is an orientalist .She visits many cities here and what her eyes observe about India she describe in her writings .She wrote two books about India which are (Scenes and characteristics of Hindostan) and (Views in India ,China, and on the shores of red sea). She wrote about many Indian cities like Calcutta, Delhi, Agra and Benaras and festivals like Diwali. She described her traveling experience by Dak and travelling with a lady .She talked about perception of Indian people about white people and portrayed dyhi system presented that time.

She described Calcutta as a city of palaces which is situated on the bank of river Hoogly .She is a member of Asiatic society of Bengal that's why she spend a long time in Calcutta . She portrayed beauty of this city as " The approach to the City of Palaces from the river is exceedingly fine; the Hooghly' at all periods of the year presents a broad surface of sparkling water, and as it winds through a richly wooded country, clothed with

eternal verdure, and interspersed with stately buildings, the stranger feels that banishment may be endured amid scenes of so much picturesque beauty, attended by so much luxurious accomaniments.<sup>2</sup>" According to her city have broad roads. She describes about house pattern of city and said houses are entirely connected with each other by long terraces and have flat roofs. Material of these houses is Puchka, brick coated with cement .She compare these styles of houses with England and said middle class people of England also follow the same house structure. She counts mud huts as worst part of city. These huts are mats, thatch, and bamboos. Few of these houses are in good condition.

She said that Delhi is the one of places in India which every traveler wants to explore .This city has importance because it was capital of Mughal empire .City has religious diversity like we find Hindu architecture, monuments of Muslim power, and modern buildings of Christian art. It is the modern capital of the Moslem kings which is called by natives Shahjenabad. City stands in the centre of a shady plain, surrounded on every side with the ruins of old Delhi. The villas which were belonging to Europeans attached to the residency. Cantonments (military camps) of the city were later erected for three regiments of sepoys. She complimented beauty of Shalimar garden and remarked: The famous gardens of Shalimer, the avenues of cypress, the spray-fountains, the rose bowers, the sweet hue of the black cedars. She added that Shah jahan was the most tasteful king of the world and he invested one thousand nine hundred and fifty rupees on Shalimar garden. The walls had been so high before that only the loftiest towers were discernible. She discusses peacock throne, Yamuna river and domes in the city. She said these, puts the beauty of city. She asserts, that Delhi is the most suitable place to her oriental glamour. Another traveller called Mr Moore has complimented city and said:

Oh! were there an Elysium on the earth,

It is this, it is this!

She told me that city of Agra is a good place worth a pilgrimage even to the remote corners of the globe. However, very few travelers who had spent many years in Hindustan were tempted to visit it. Here were civil and military regiments. She says that Agra is a city which has all the oriental splendour which imagination has envisaged in the laudatory words of the eastern story-telling. According to her, Smelfungus tribe is extremely Indian. She discusses climate of city and mentioned that it is very hot. In her Taj mahal is a fairy place, she indicated that the Taaje Mahal is normally referred to as the most appealing structure and in regards to its nature as a mausoleum, she has not found its equivalent in the world. It is an establishment in the middle of the wilderness and is composed of red stone and inlaid with white marble and crowned with domes. Flights of steps ascend to it; there is a great circular hall in the middle of this, and a gallery running round it, all in the prettiest style of Oriental architecture .She said there was a beautiful garden in this place.

She drew parallels between Benaras and Europe and stated that it was a Venice of India.Benares is a sacred place and the centre of Hindu superstition. She told me that city is not a wonderful place with its antiquities, with its sacredness into which has been poured the

<sup>2</sup> Indira ghose, *memshabis abroad*, Oxford up, 1998, pp(30\_31).

dogmatic religion of the Brahma hypocritical, but with its form, with its great wealth, with its huge population. It is situated on the bank of Ganges, on the left bank. The river is nearly thirty feet lower than the houses and reached by many. Praised beauty of Shalimar garden and said "The celebrated gardens of Shalimer. After the conquest of the city by Aurangzeb, Muslim architecture reared its light there. Some mosque was built upon the ruins of Hindu temples.

She said Diwali is most celebrated festival in India. She saw this festival in Banaras and said "The Diwali is celebrated there with the greatest splendour, and its magnificence is heightened by the situation of the city on the bank of the river, and the singular outlines of the buildings."<sup>3</sup> This festival is celebrated in evening. Small chiraugs, fed with oils which produce a brilliant white light are placed. The chiraugs are placed as closely together as possible on every edge of every building. Palace, temples, and towers seemed formed of stars. The city appears like the creation of the fire-king, the view from the water affording the most superb and romantic spectacle imaginable—a scene of fairy splendour, far too brilliant for description (Indira Ghose, *Memsahibs Abroad*, Oxford up, 1998, 70-72).

She tells of a march which she observed in India in her visit to an army camp and tells also of their lunch. At day-break, on the morning when the march was to commence, the bustle and the disorder of departure start and the groups of any type and kind are seen scattered across the plain. Hackery (small carts, pulled by bullocks) are loaded with chests and other heavy articles, and where there are ladies, a conveyance of the kind is hired by them: other bullocks have trunks, specially designed instruments of this kind of carriage, stowed upon their backs; the tents are the burden of camels; and light or delicate things are either put on the heads of men or over their shoulders: nothing that will not be jostled is entrusted to the care of four-footed creatures. The head-servant or khansamah is a dignified man who seldom walks on foot, but will be found in the equestrians (relation to horses).

Other servants like Sepoys who have not any rank marched on foot. Wives of officers also enjoyed the march and sometimes they participated in horse riding.

The dinner in camp is usually as well supplied with the products of the larder, as the repast served up in a settled establishment. Several very excellent dishes have been invented, which are peculiarly adapted to the cooking apparatus suited to a jungle.

She shared her travelling by Dak and count its importance. She counts the three modes of travelling in India which are by dak (post), by marching, and by water pinnace. The cold season is the only period when March can be performed without any trouble. According to the dak journey suits best her rainy season. But where entire country to be under water it should be avoided to travel by dak. In dak journey everybody has to apply the postmaster in order that he/she can travel to various places. His own palanquin, his own banghies (boxes), ropes and bamboos were assigned to the traveler. The path of the dak is very easy. The baggage is packed in square boxes made of tin, two people are employed to carry the baggage. Biscuits, a tumbler, a bottle of wine and a serai of water in a wet cloth in palanquin to be

used daily. Eight men are present to bear palanquin, who takes each other in shifts. These men are Hindoo and of lowest castes. When the way is passed these men said Ram-Ram and the traveler gave them eight anna. She said that dak path is frightening at times, due to robbers. But travelling by dak is the only quick way of travelling in India at the moment. She mentioned that travelling by dak in European nations is slow as compared to India.

She wrote of her trip to a second lady and Rainey season. She writes of her one of journey here where after long periods spent in jungles which are very tiresome she gets invitation to spend the season in a big station. Another lady too accompany with her in this journey. They also attempt to cross the country during rains. They brought in a dozen camels, and overloaded them with a couple of tents. They must ensure that the loads of camels are as light as possible. They have small mats and setting stones with them. Their expedition have comprised a khansamah, who directed the entire expedition, three khidmuighars, a sirdar-bearer, the tailor, and the washerman, the water-carrier, the cook and mussaulchees, twelve bearers to each palanquin, and claishees (tentpitchers), banghie-bearers and coolies beyond calculation. Two of the female waitresses were riding a hack with a Persian cat. What appeared to her most exasperating with them in journey. She said that a good part of the country was flooded up at the time, due to this journey being slow. Throughout the entire course of this tour, they were greatly impressed with the idea of appreciation and goodwill to the natives of India. They accorded them massive respect and attachment. She replied that they are part of highly civilized country and they are well mannered. Their journey is easy as the people make.

She discussed the response of the English to nautch (dance performance) was a combination of both fascination and disgust. Roberts mentioned nautch girls and told that the parties that occur in daily routine are generally composed of seven individuals where two were dancing girls.

She talked about English response to nautch (dance performance) was a mixture of fascination and revulsion. Roberts talked about nautch girls and said that the parties, which appear in regular routine, usually consist of seven people in which three were dancing girls. She described their appearance and said "These ladies present very picturesque figurative. Their attire consists of a pair of gray coloured silk trousers edged and embroidered with silver, so long as only to afford occasional glimpses of the rich anklets, strung with small bells, which encircle the legs. Their toes were covered with rings, and a broad flat silver chain was passed across the foot (paya). The corset or vest, was of usual dimensions, but was almost hidden by an immense veil, which cross the basom several times"<sup>4</sup>. She said that the nautch girls of India were singers as well as dancers. They were the source of entertainment at that time. According to her their dancing style was strange and less interesting. But they had craze in native people. She gave an example of a dance party and said "it is said that on some occasions, the native spectators have been so much enraptured with the accomplishments displayed by a celebrated dancer, as to tear clothes in extacy and make the air resound with cries of wah!wah!". She said that the novelty presented by the fresh band of dancers was

<sup>3</sup> Indira Ghose, *Memsahibs Abroad*, Oxford University Press, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Sen, Indrani. *Memsahibs Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008.

decided by their dress or ornaments, the performances were usually same. European eyes and ears were unable to distinguish between any superiority of the voice or the grace of the movements. She mentioned celebrated dancer, Nickee, of Calcutta which was said to be the 'prima Donna' of the east. she said that many of the nautch girls were extremely rich. They were highly paid for their performances. The celebrated Calcutta heroine charged 1000 rupees nightly, wherever she was engaged. she said that in comparison to European ladies the dancing of the nautch girls was dull and decorous.

She talked about dyhi system prevalent in India at that time in which dyhi took care of new born baby because that time nursing homes were not available. She said that as mothers were unable to nurse their own children, they had to depend upon a native woman, called dhyi for the care of their children. European found difficulty to appoint them because they expensive and troublesome appendages to a family. they demanded high wages for their work. This is the only method in which natives could so readily impose on Europeans because it was a matter of their children. According to her this dhyi system has a bad impact on European society because children mostly stayed with Ayahs whole day and as a result a few can speak a word of English. They started speaking Hindustani. She said that Hindustani vocabulary was peculiarly rich in terms of abuse. Native women were found usually abusing. With such examples before their eyes, the European babies were also start abusing. Their parents were unaware of it because they could not understand the terms their children were speaking.<sup>5</sup>

She expressed that how Indians perceive them. She revealed that they (Europeans) were conscious of a profound sense of being rejected by the people they ruled these were on the ground of caste, social customs and habits of female dress and attire. She said that Europeans know that from the perspective of caste, they existed outside the caste system and were looked upon by both Hindus and Muslims, as untouchables. Moreover, certain modes of female dress and conduct which were very common in their society were considered 'obscene' by Indians such as drinking, wearing low cut evening gowns and ballroom dancing in public with men were not related to them. Indian women who belonged to healthy upper class and zamindar households, both Hindu and Muslim, looked down on middle class memshabis as their inferior. She described how Indians looked at white women's social conduct. She gave an example of a Persian language newspaper in Delhi which talked about social customs and food habits of Europeans. The newspaper described a social gathering of both men and women and wrote "both men and women, eat unclean flesh of pig, then drink liberally and finally dance in their licentious manner, pulling about each other's wives".<sup>6</sup>

#### **Mary Carpenter : (3 April 1807 – 14 June 1877)**

She was an English educational and social reformer. The daughter of a Unitarian minister, she founded a ragged school and reformatories, bringing previously unavailable educational opportunities to poor children and young offenders in Bristol. Carpenter was active in

the anti-slavery movement; she also visited India, visiting schools and prisons and working to improve female education, establish reformatory schools and improve prison conditions. In later years she visited Europe and America, carrying on her campaigns of penal and educational reform. She was highly inspired by Raja Rammohan Roy whom she both loved and admired. It was he who drew her attention towards the socio-religious problems, which resulted in the regeneration of India. She also wrote a book on him titled 'last days of Raja Rammohan Roy'.<sup>7</sup> She wrote a book on juvenile delinquency named 'Juvenile Delinquents, Their Condition and Treatment' in 1853. She wrote a two-volume account of her first visit to India, *Six Months in India* (1868), which combined an account of her travels with a set of observations on Indian society, culture and education and detailed recommendations for improving female education.

She described her first landing on Indian subcontinent. she said that everything was strange and wonderful on her first landing on a new continent. she described beauty of India and wrote "The beautiful Oriental palms, especially the graceful coconut trees, were most striking, and at once reminded me that I was in India. Everywhere, the appearance of the men, women, and children was sufficiently novel and curious."<sup>8</sup> She found dressing sense of India was very different. Men covered only their lower parts. Both men and women wake up early in morning. Women did their household works like drawing water, washing clothes. It was very strange for her to see that greater part of women's body were uncovered. Weaker sex was oppressed by the stronger. In India the voices and manners of the lower classes of women appeared to her more harsh and coarse than those of the men. She felt assured, however, that this did not arise from their nature being inferior, but from the condition in which they were placed.

She described her journey of Elephanta "A pleasant voyage, varied with the changing views of the mountains on the retiring coast, and the islands near, brought us to the low flat shore of Elephanta, from which rises the gigantic mass of rock, reminding us somewhat of the huge beast whose name it bears. The low part of the island, down to the shore, is covered with bushy trees of the mangrove kind, which are believed to cause an unhealthy exhalation. A very long flight of wellanade steps up the face of the rock was constructed by some devout Hindoo lady, for the convenience of the pilgrims to the sacred shrine, and is a great help to excursionists. On arriving at the top, we see a large rock covered with small trees and brushwood, and a wide entrance to the sculptured recesses of the temple underneath its brow, which is supported by massive pillars."<sup>9</sup> according to her it was a wonderful place. All the figures have some painful significance, nothing was to be found anywhere calculated to elevate or purify the mind. Modern railings were added for the support not to increase beauty. Here very sacred ceremonies were performed, but the temple appears to be now deserted by pilgrims or devotees. On the left it was pleasant to get a

<sup>7</sup> Ganachari, Aravind. *Mary Carpenter and the Reform Movement in Western India, Indian History Congress, 1995*

<sup>8</sup> Indira Ghose, *Memshabis Abroad, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp(60-62)*.

<sup>9</sup> Indira Ghose, *Memshabis Abroad, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp(64-67)*.

<sup>5</sup> Sen, Indrani. *Memshabis Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008*.

<sup>6</sup> Sen, Indrani. *Memshabis Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008*.

glimpse of heaven's light, and see some of the exterior of the rock. Leading to a gloomy chapel hollowed out of it was a flight of steps, on each side of which was the sculptured figure of a lion. These noble beasts were of a somewhat distorted form, for the Hindoos in their sculpture and carving never appear to copy nature, yet they were more agreeable objects than some which I had seen in this place.

Religious, regional, class and caste identities played an important role in colonial perception about India. She said that here some religion, caste and classes were preferred over others. She wrote about Parsee women. She said that their dress pattern was same like European women. She admired them for their good looks, dignity; high educational standards. School of Parsee girls were distinct from Hindoos and established by native people. She visited one Parsee school and said that it was excellent one.<sup>10</sup>

She wrote about condition of female education in India at that time. By the end of nineteenth century the position of Indian women in society had declined and girls from respectable families were denied literacy. The various arguments used to justify female education were that reading and writing was the work for courtesans. They said that a girl would become immoral and write letters to their lovers, if they get education. A myth prevalent that a married woman would become widow if she tried to get education. She talked about Zennana teaching. Private teachers were hired in Calcutta for female education. These teachers went to homes of ladies and did their work there.<sup>11</sup> There was a great demand of these type of teachers in Calcutta at that time. Mostly women teachers were hired for this work. For young married women this was the only means by which education can be given. But native people did not pay any attention to these works. She said that in England a large amount of income was given by government for female education. In India difficulty of fund was a main problem. She visited Surat, Ahmadabad, Calcutta and Bombay. Having surveyed educational scene in India, she soon realised that the movement to promote female education in Bombay differed from that in the other Presidency capitals, in the sense that it was largely originated by inhabitants themselves. In Bombay natives were very supportive in female education. Mary Carpenter was also impressed by the new Alexandra Girls' School was conducted, in which not only Parsees and a few Hindu girls received liberal English education but even employed lady teachers.<sup>12</sup> This was the first girls' school, which owed its existence to the philanthropic efforts of Manickjee Cursetji (1808-1887), a judge of the Small Causes Court and the first Indian to be enrolled as the member of the Bombay Branch of Royal Asiatic Society. Gopal Hari Deshmukh praised her work in female education and wrote "Your visit to India particularly for the furtherance of native female education, your travel to several Presidencies for the purpose of learning the causes which keep it back, and determining some remedies for its advancement, and your free intercourse with us, happily evince an

uncommon interest in the welfare of the natives of this country - namely such interest as has scarcely been hitherto taken by any European gentleman or lady... We therefore feel in no small degree obliged for the self-sacrifice which your aims and labour involve, and beg publicly to convey to you this expression of gratitude....". She stayed for six months in India and did remarkable work in the field of female education.

### Analysis

Emma Roberts, a British traveller who came into colonial India during the 19th century. She left behind a compelling body of work that provides a nuanced and often critical perspective on the socio-cultural landscape of the time. Her observations, documented in her travel writings, offer valuable insights into the complexities of colonial India. Roberts' most notable work is "East India Voyager," a collection of letters and narratives recounting her experiences during her travels in the early 19th century. One of the striking aspects of her writings is her keen eye for detail and her ability to vividly describe the diverse cultures and landscapes she encountered. Through her lens, readers gain a window into the tapestry of colonial India, from bustling bazaars to serene landscapes. She beautifully portrayed Indian cities, festivals and whatever she saw here. However, it's essential to approach Roberts' works with a critical lens. As a British traveller in colonial India, her perspective is inherently influenced by her own cultural background and the prevailing colonial ideologies of her time. While she provides valuable observations, her writings should be read alongside other sources to gain a more holistic understanding of the complex dynamics at whatever she saw here. She compared it with Europe and presents that European society is superior than Indian society. She did not write about female education and social reforms prevalent that time in India. She was an orientalist and works in Asiatic Society of Bengal, she less talk about political life of India.

Mary Carpenter (1807-1877) was a prominent English educational and social reformer whose works had a lasting impact on the education and welfare of children in the 19th century. Her contributions were diverse, encompassing areas such as juvenile delinquency, education, and social reform. Her influential book, "Juvenile Delinquents, Their Condition and Treatment" (1853), delves into the root causes of juvenile delinquency and proposes practical measures for prevention and rehabilitation. Carpenter argued that addressing the socio-economic factors contributing to delinquency, along with providing education and vocational training, was essential for breaking the cycle of crime among young offenders. She was a strong advocate for the education of girls and established schools that focused on providing practical skills to girls from lower-income families. One notable limitation of Mary Carpenter's work lies in her reliance on moral and religious education as a central component of her reform efforts. She talks about social reforms but silent on poverty caused by oppressive policy of Britishers.

### Conclusion

This article is based on two European women writers named Emma Roberts and Mary Carpenter. In which other side of colonial history is trying to present. Mostly colonial Indian history is written by male writers but this article creates imagery of India according to colonial women writers. They highlight social, political, cultural and religious life of colonial India based on their

<sup>10</sup> Sen, Indrani. *Memsahibs Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008, pp(18-20).

<sup>11</sup> Sen, Indrani. *Memsahibs Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008,

<sup>12</sup> Ganachari, Aravind. *Mary Carpenter and the Reform Movement in Western India*, Indian History Congress, 1995.

ideology. They observe Indian society deeply and depict it in their writings. Emma Roberts is a traveller, writes about beauty of Indian cities, palaces and festivals. Whereas Mary Carpenter is an educational and social reformer. Her focus was mostly on educational and social reforms.

Goffman Carolyn, *Orientalism, And the Female Traveller: Writings from Inside the haram*, Indiana University press, 2013, pp(3-6).

### **Bibliography**

Ghose, Indira. *Memsahibs Abroad, Writing by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India*, Oxford University Press, 1998.

Chatterjee, Sukla. *Women and Literary Narratives in Colonial India, Her Myriad Gaze on the 'Other'*, London and New York, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2019.

Sen, Indrani. *Memsahibs' Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008.

Chaudhuri, Nupur. *Memsahibs and Motherhood in Nineteenth Century Colonial India*, Indiana University Press, 1988.

Burton, Antoinette. *Fearful Bodies into Disciplined Subjects: Pleasure, Romance, and the Family Drama of Colonial Reform in Mary Carpenter's Six Months in India*, The University of Chicago Press, jstor, 1995

Srivastva, Gouri. *The Christian Missionaries: The Evolution of Female Education in Western India, 1857-1921*, Indian History Congress, jstor, 1991.

Ganachari, Aravind. *Mary Carpenter and the Reform Movement in Western India*, Indian History Congress,

Cody Jarman and Mariah Wahl, *New Frontiers Writers and the British Raj*/ University of Texas libraries, 2018

*British missionaries in India 1917-1950*, Andrea Pass, Oxford University press, 2011

*Orientalism, And the Female Traveler: Writings from inside the haram*, Carolyn Goffman, Indiana University press, 2013.

### **References**

Ghose, Indira. *Memsahibs Abroad, Writing by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India*, Oxford University Press, 1998, pp(20-235).

Sen, Indrani. *Memsahibs' Writings, Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, Orient Longman Private Limited, 2008, pp(12-222).

Burton, Antoinette. *Fearful Bodies into Disciplined Subjects: Pleasure, Romance, and the Family Drama of Colonial Reform in Mary Carpenter's Six Months in India*, The University of Chicago Press, jstor, 1995, pp(4-15).

Srivastva, Gouri. *The Christian Missionaries: The Evolution of Female Education in Western India, 1857-1921*, Indian History Congress, jstor, 1991, pp(2-6).

Ganachari, Aravind. *Mary Carpenter and the Reform Movement in Western India*, Indian History Congress, pp(3-10).

Jarman Cody and Wahl Mariah, *New Frontiers Writers and the British Raj*/ University of Texas libraries, 2018, pp(2-6).

Pass Andrea, *British missionaries in India 1917-1950*, Andrea Pass, Oxford University press, 2011, pp(1-3).