A Comparison of the Representation of Marginalised Voices in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Women's Travel Writing of the Ottoman Empire

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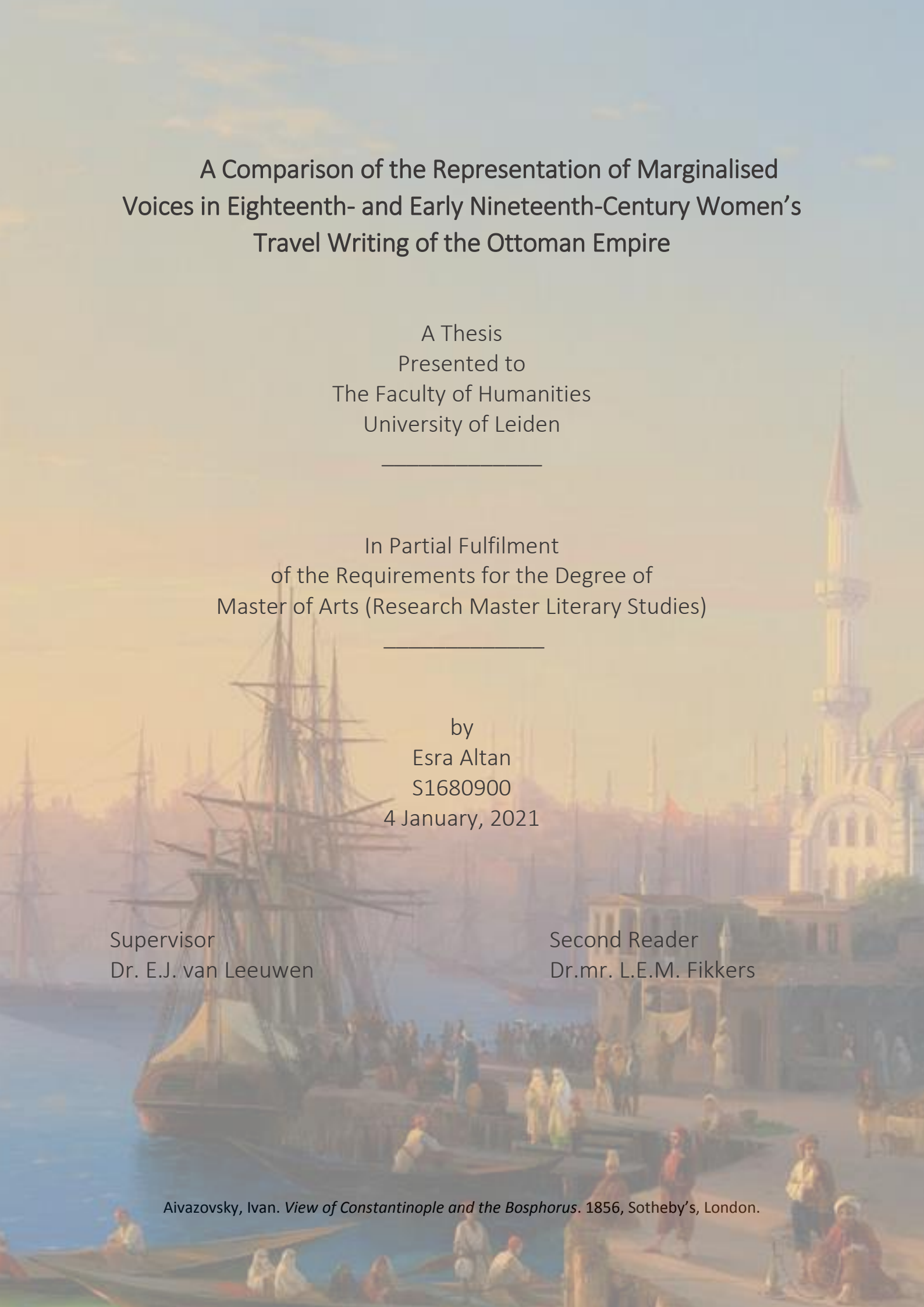

Aivazovsky, Ivan. *View of Constantinople and the Bosphorus*. 1856, Sotheby's, London.

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Introduction

The eighteenth and early nineteenth century witnessed a rise in travel and travel literature. The Ottoman Empire experienced an insurgence of Western travellers, among which belonged the British. This also included British women who travelled to explore and experience the Ottoman region for themselves. Exploration, curiosity, and a drive to expand the British Empire were one of the main motivations behind travelling outside of Britain in general. While travelogues by male travellers have been given considerable scholarly attention, it is also relevant to investigate women travellers and their roles in representing the Ottoman Empire in their writings. In contrast to their male counterparts, British women wrote from a marginalised position, which can offer new insights on the parameters of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century travel literature. Undoubtedly, perspectives on Ottoman culture and people by female authors will provide an alternative understanding of the dominant male, imperial perspective within literature on Ottoman culture and its people.

I explore women author's perspectives towards the Ottomans by looking into how marginalised voices are represented within the canon of British travel literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by taking Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Julia Pardoe's works as case studies. In fact, many scholars have marginalised British women author's voices in their research into life and travel writing of these periods. This research sheds more light on women author's perspectives by investigating the travel writings of Montagu and Pardoe as a comparative analysis which uses the dominant narrative and context of travel history as the context for these examinations. Thus, this thesis highlights how different these two women writers presented the Ottoman Empire, its culture, and people.

By doing so, it also becomes clear to what extent Montagu and Pardoe take an empirical, ethnographic perspective in their travel writing, in accordance with the norm for travel literature at the time, which I further elaborate on in the next chapter of this thesis. It will also become clear what that means for Montagu and Pardoe as "imperial woman travellers." By critically exploring their output through a gendered and oriental lens, this research project reveals that Pardoe an Montagu express

solidarity towards the Ottomans because of their womanhood and equally subordinate social position from the perspective of the British patriarchy. As such, this research presents that both woman authors illustrate attitudes of gender identity dissent and a criticality towards British orientalist discourse, while at the same time adapting to their prescribed "feminine" roles. These female perspectives function as a more objective and neutral perspective towards the East as opposed to the male ideological perspective within travel literature.

In this sense, this thesis follows in the footsteps of Edward Said's prominent work *Orientalism*. Indeed, it is needless to say that "It is appropriate that the contemporary wave of scholarly interest in travel writing should follow in the wake of Edward Said's pathbreaking *Orientalism* (1978) and the interest in the discourses of colonialism which it stirred up, especially in literary studies" (Leask 16). In this research, the travel writings will be investigated by implementing a comparative approach to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's writings and Julia Pardoe's writing at the time of their travel to the Ottoman Empire. In addition to this, the corpus will be examined based on close readings. These are highly significant case studies to engage with from the perspective of absent and silenced voices, as shown in Edward Said's *Orientalism*. At the same time, Montagu and Pardoe are imperial travellers, with a complex position. This paradox will be touched upon extensively throughout this thesis.

The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises of the following components. First, there will be an introduction and contextual chapters in which terms such as travel, travel writing, and the origins thereof are contextualised and defined through a critical discussion of key theories concerning orientalism and the representation of Eastern cultures in Western literature. This means that the emergence of travel in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to the Orient will be addressed in light of Britain's diplomatic ties and history with the Ottoman Empire in particular. In addition to this, these chapters will also discuss the role of the imperial writer in the light of gender and class. The following chapters comprise of an

in-depth overview of the socio-historical background of the Ottoman Empire and its relations to the West, specifically, to Britain and a chapter outlining the origins of the genre of travel literature. The chapters following these contextual chapters, then, will explore and investigate Montagu and Pardoe's works thoroughly and investigate their differences in terms of colonial ideology and gender identity. Finally, these chapters will be followed by a comparative chapter which reveals Montagu and Pardoe's attitudes to dominant ideological contexts of gender hegemony and imperialism in their travel accounts.

Chapter one and two outline the main concepts and ideas that are relevant in gaining a proper understanding of travel literature and travel narratives in the period spanning the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Britain. These chapters will illustrate the main events of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in relation to travel writing, such as The Grand Tour which is in its core an ideological interpellation for British upper-class men into an expanding British Empire.

These chapters are necessary for a proper understanding of women's lives and their writings in relation to traveling. This will essentially provide some support for the aim of this thesis which is to position and understand Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's and Julia Pardoe's travel writing about the Ottoman Empire as case studies within the broader framework of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British travel writing.

Chapter 1: Travel Writing as a Genre

Travel and writing have always been intrinsically linked with one another (Hulme and Youngs 2). An example of this are the biblical and classical traditions, which "are both rich in examples of travel writing, literal and symbolic" (Hulme and Youngs 2). For a long time, writing had been a means to retell the great voyages of the past and of a country's greatest men in their attempts to discover what was outside of their own nation. This often caused a rivalry between European nation-states and "meant that publication of travel accounts was often a semi-official business in which the beginnings of imperial histories were constructed" (Hulme and Youngs 3). As such, Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs claim that "distinguishing fact from fiction was important for at least some sixteenth-century readers, even if the proves was made much more difficult by the topos of the claim to empirical truthfulness so crucial to travel stories of all kinds, both factual and fictional" (Hulme and Youngs 4). Through publications of travel accounts, travellers and writers always had been in a position of power in which they produce knowledge about the "other."

Jonathan Culler's work, "Framing the Sign," resonates in David Seed's work upon linking travel writing to semiotics: "The tourist is interested in everything as a sign of itself, an instance of a typical cultural practice" (Seed 4). In other words, Culler's theory assists to identify "a persistent impulse towards generalization that shows itself in reference to the national 'character' which are bandied about by travellers, and also a habit of seeing projected on to the sights of a country with perverse disregard for its specific cultural practices" (Seed 5). Culler's idea of generalised signs is translated in Seed's terms to a consistent generalisation of cultural practices and habits of other countries that represent a complete story in the eyes of the traveller. It is noteworthy to mention here that the verb "seeing" is extremely important. In fact, travel accounts are often about what has been caught on by the traveller's perception. While empiricism and the scientific point of view was held as a standard for travel accounts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the reality was that signs were picked

up on subjectively by travellers and then associated with a generalisation of cultural practices. As such, the traveller would be complicit in reiterating cultural imperialism.

The second important notion to consider here is *whose* perception it is that is being focalised onto paper in travel accounts. In connection to this, "orientalism" is inevitably a crucial term. In fact, "*Orientalism* was the first work of contemporary criticism to take travel writing as a major part of its corpus, seeing it as a body of work which offered particular insight into the operation of colonial discourses" (Hulme and Youngs 8). Travel writings are inherently focalised through a specific observing subject, rendering these narratives as ideological.

There has been much ambiguity with regard to the genre of travel literature. Indeed, it was not always clear among different disciplines whether it functioned as fiction or non-fiction. Hulme and Young write:

> Prose fiction in its modern forms built its house on this disputed territory, trafficking in travel and its tales. Early modern European novels are full of traveller-protagonists such as Jack of Newberry, Lazarillo de Tormes, Don Quixote, and Robinson Crusoe; and many of their authors – pre-eminent among them Daniel Defoe – were skilled at exploiting the uncertain boundary between travel writing and the fiction which copied its form. Travel writing and the novel, especially in its first-person form, have often shared a focus on the centrality of the self, a concern with empirical detail, and a movement through time and place which is simply sequential. (6)

Because travel writing as a genre is not strictly demarcated, travel accounts can serve more than one purpose, such as retelling journeys. In addition, it is also noteworthy to mention the problematic relation scholars from different disciplines have had with regard to travel writing. According to Alisdair Pettinger, who wrote the introduction to *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*: "[travel writing] seems too dependent on an empirical rendition of contingent events […] for entry into the literary canon, yet too overtly rhetorical for disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, geography or history" (1). Thus, the genre of travel literature is both flexible, but also restrictive.

Travel Writing, Women, and Gender

According to Seed, "[…] travel texts follow a number of discursive strategies that vary according to gender" (1). In this sense, it is relevant to investigate how these discursive strategies can be linked to sensory perception and (cultural) identity formation. It is a fact that women were much less able to travel as they did not fit the conditions of The Grand Tour, nor were they in official diplomatic positions. Brian Dolan explains that "men's travel accounts are preoccupied with conquest, connoisseurship and domestication of the wild, women's narratives record more diverse experiences concerned with individual growth, independence and health" (11). However, in rare cases women were able to travel as partners to the diplomatic envoy, for example, giving them more access to the masculine public realm. As such, only a few women were privileged enough to travel compared to men, let alone write travel narratives that included public concerns.

As Dolan's research has shown, some women did travel quite extensively, and some wrote penetrating accounts of their journeys. Therefore, when a woman is able to travel outside of the country and immerses herself in travel journals as a result, it is relevant to move away from essentialist claims with regard to gender. This means that the diversity of women travellers need to be stressed more, rather than marked as a homogenous group because of their gender. According to Elizabeth Fay, "Although men included such observations along with analysis, women writers were seen as peculiarly suited to a more intimate engagement with cultural practices, as they were often constrained by propriety and custom from political, military, or trade analysis" (74). In other words, readings of female travel narratives should focus on the extent to which the travel writer is aware of the ethical concerns of their presence in the Orient. Within this framework, this thesis considers the intersectional position of woman travel writing as lying outside the oppressor-oppressed binary. Because women were not interpellated by the Grand Tour ideology, they were able to hold alternative and even dissident perspectives in their writing and thinking.

Travel, Writing, and Romanticism

One should consider to what extent these symbols of British pride were present within literature. For the sake of this thesis, it is important to turn to literary modes such as Romanticism in particular. It is noteworthy to consider what it is exactly that the traveller represents in the context of British colonial expansion. In order to do this, this chapter first considers the involvement of Romanticism in relation to travelling. In particular aesthetic categories such as the Sublime, the Picturesque and the beautiful will figure as a pretext for understanding Montagu and Pardoe's travel accounts.

Deirdre Colman writes: "From the mid eighteenth century onwards in Britain there was a resurgence of interests in romance and 'ancient chivalry', and a reformulation of earlier claims concerning the intersection of romance with the discovery of new worlds" (164). The intellectual movement in the arts and in literature that is called Romanticism was much preoccupied with a sense of self-consciousness and exploration through the outer world. Similarly, Romantics generally relied on their imagination for inspiration, having "great confidence in the ability of the human imagination to create connections between the inner mind and the outer world of nature" (Fay 43). This interest in the outer world may therefore correlate to the fact that cultures outside of Europe started to become a topic of interest for the Romantics as well. According to Peter Kitson, "the treatment of other cultures became a central issue in British Romanticism and in the new variety of British imperialism after 16 February 1788" (15). While many author of the British Romantic movement were not necessarily in favour of British imperialism, some complied with equally imperial attitudes: "Guilt about British imperialism did not necessarily entail opposition to all forms of colonialism: like other opponents of the slave-trade Coleridge came to favour colonial expansion. Burke himself argued for more principled, colonial government whilst opposing the trade" (Kitson 17). Even within the movement of Romanticism, there were opposing attitudes towards British imperialism.

Fulford et al. write that the Romantics were complicit to "cultural imperialism" (4). "Wordsworth's own writing anticipates the development of this form of cultural imperialism" and

“Coleridge also voiced similar views when, in later life, he commented that ‘Colonisation is not only a manifest expedient – but an imperative duty on Great Britain’” (Fulford, et.al. 4). Cultural imperialism means that some Romantics were complicit to “universalising the experience of the ‘I’” for the English (4). By contrast, the Romantics were able to voice some of their concerns and anxieties with regard to (cultural) imperialism as well as their support. In this sense, it is relevant to note that the relation between literature and political events are incited by each other. Literary depictions of the Orient can be produced by colonialism, for example, and real life events can be altered through literary representations to serve a political purpose. This politicisation could function as a tool to further spread anxiety in the form of propaganda. Either way, Romanticism, and its key aesthetic features of the sublime and picturesque, figure as a context for ideological influence on travel accounts, as the section “Aesthetics, Style, and the Picturesque” in chapter four will reveal in more detail.

Chapter 2: The Historical and Ideological Context

Before turning to the analysis of Montagu's and Pardoe's travel narratives it is significant to outline the overall context in which women travelled abroad during the period in question. Two historical-ideological concepts are crucial to this contextualisation: the traditional Grand Tour, which introduced many wealthy young men to the experience of continental travel, and of course the broader imperial context in which such travels took place.

The Grand Tour

The traditional Grand Tour comprised of four years of travelling, during which the (predominantly male) traveller not only saw the sights, so to speak, but was also educated about the world, and Britain's significant place within it, at the many places visited during the tour. According to Buzard, "The Grand Tour was, from start to finish, an ideological exercise. Its leading purpose was to round out the education of young men of the ruling classes by exposing them to the treasured artefacts and ennobling society of the Continent" (38). Indeed, these pursuits were ideological by nature. The education and impressions that the young men received concerning the nature of foreign cultures, but also the might and right of the British Empire, enabled the ruling classes to underscore their powerful position within British and international society. In other words, the Grand Tour was generally regarded as an experience that allowed the masculine elite access to international knowledge and international institutions of power. In addition to this, the Grand Tour provided a young British man with opportunities "to cultivate his historical consciousness and artistic tastes" (Buzard 40). These objects of art would then confirm "his self-worth" (Buzard 40). In this manner, the young man would be prepared for a future position within society. The Grand Tour determined specific attitudes among the attending upper-class men towards Eastern cultures and societies, which then informed political decisions and produced knowledge among the British in the form of cultural imperialism.

While "the standard view was still that women were not expected to stray from their homes" (7), Brian Dolan explains that some Georgian women defied this gender stereotype and, given the

opportunity, embarked on travels "because they saw home as somehow inadequate" (9). For these women "travel writing […] presented a rare opportunity […] to articulate views on the world around them and their responses to it" (5). Women's writing, while "partly personal, biographical and intimate," could also be "political, descriptive, forthright and polemical" (Dolan 5). As the chapters below will show, Montagu and Pardoe did indeed engage in a complex and at time critical manner with the foreign worlds they encountered, as well as the literary traditions within which they wrote their narratives and expressed themselves as women travellers.

Historical Britain: Imperialism and Colonialism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century

The eighteenth and nineteenth century were periods best characterised by the terms "colonialism" and "imperialism" in the context of British history as a whole. Of course, colonialism was not specific to these centuries, but had established Britain's hegemony geographically and internationally. In the nineteenth century, the culmination of the effects of Britain's political, commercial, and economical power was cemented deeply throughout the world (Marshall 25). The British Empire had been successful in creating travel routes to Africa, Latin America, North America, and Asia, establishing its political and economic prominence thoroughly.

In gaining political and geographical power, Britain had to maintain its nationalistic identity by holding diplomatic ties with its surroundings. This probed the "Eastern Question" which were issues concerning Britain's position in the Orient that was taken on by then Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli. Britain's "othering" was not exceptional and had given rise to much discrimination. In all, this period was also called "the age of improvement." P.J. Marshall described the attitudes towards Britain's goals for further colonial expansion in the turn towards the early nineteenth-century:

> In the opinion of most of its citizens, if Britain lost its empire it would lose much of its status as a great power: it would be materially impoverished and militarily weakened. But the British

> people would also have lost much of their capacity to leave their mark on the world and would be diminished in their own eyes. (29)

This prefigures British attitudes towards colonialism and imperialism. Overall, colonial expansion was condoned for the sake of Britain's status "as a great power." It was likely that British citizens and writers, too, were aligned with this kind of cultural indoctrination.

The British Empire experienced difficulties, such as the loss of its American colonies in 1783. Despite of the loss of the American colonies, there were the successes of colonial expansion. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century there was an overall sense of agreement among Britain's citizens that the empire was an integral constituent of how the British experienced their identity. According to Marshall, "empire was a vehicle by which a self-confident people exported their values and culture throughout the world" (29). This desire to spread Britishness across the globe was an act of national pride. British pride was displayed through an unwavering economy that depended on the income from its colonies and a substantial military force which included vast naval forces. British pride depends on the imagination of power and military and political victory. To maintain this status quo of being a global superpower, the image of Britain's overseas successes need to be continuously secured.

One of these efforts that helped procure Britain's symbolic presence overseas could have been (media) propaganda. This could allegedly have helped feed the fantasy of Britain's imperial power to its people. In this regard, Marshall asserts that attempts to fill up Britain's image were often also symbolic:

> The conquest and settlement of new territory had in fact been only part of a much wider pattern of expansion. British trade had spread across the world. The planting of Christianity in non-Christian areas had largely been the results of efforts by British missionaries. British institutions and ways of doing things – from team games to representative government – were imitated far beyond the empire of rule. The eventual adoption of the Greenwich meridian as the universal meridian of longitude and of a universal system of time zones based on the Greenwich meridian were symbols of the ascendancy of Britain's influence. The naval officer,

> the Indian sepoy soldier, the emigrant, the merchant, the missionary, and the traveller: all had acted as agents in what had been very diverse processes of expansion. (24)

While he mentions that one of the "symbols of the ascendancy of Britain's influence" was the traveller, Marshall does not address how writing or literature might play a role in conveying this imperial influence. Undoubtedly, writers and travellers constitute and replicate a sense of cultural imperialism. While the British had trade agreements with the Ottoman Empire and there was no mission of colonial expansion, travellers and writers to the Ottoman Empire inevitably brought their imperialist views. This thesis reveals the imperialist views of two British woman writers and travellers who viewed Ottoman culture and society from the margins, as opposed to the rest of the male dominated travellers and authors. This was partly because of the fact that women did not naturally share the same national identity as men. British men could revel in their pride for colonial expansion and imperialism, because they were directly involved with trade, imperialism, and commerce.

Chapter 3: Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*

This chapter examines Montagu's attitude towards Ottoman life and culture as a Western subject and investigates to what extent she is aware, or perhaps even subverts, orientalist fantasies of Ottoman culture and people. In order to examine this thoroughly, this chapter takes into account Montagu's authorial involvement as a British subject. In this chapter, Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* are read to analyse and explain her contribution to Orientalist discourse about the Ottoman Empire, as well as critically evaluating her position and gender identity within the social order. Montagu was able to contribute to the corpus of eighteenth-century travel literature by embracing the hybridity of travel literature and her dissident gender identity.

General Context

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was born in 1689 in London. She only adapted the title of "lady" after her father gained possession of the title Earl of Kingston. On her own account, Montagu managed to teach herself Latin and modern languages such as French and Italian (Tieken 127). These used to be languages that were mainly preserved to be taught for men. Montagu had other skills as well; among others she had an immense interest in writing. In fact, in addition to writing letters, Montagu has written poetry too. She considered Alexander Pope as one of her upper-class friends. In addition, Montagu has a broad correspondence with upper-class people due to her social circle in Great Britain. Lady Mary Pierrepont married Edward Wortley Montagu, who was a lawyer and became a diplomat to the Ottoman Empire. After their marriage ended, Montagu travelled to Italy and stayed there until her death: "She kept in touch with affairs at home, socially as well as politically, through her correspondence with Lady Bute, who in turn kept her mother well supplied with the latest publications in the field of literature, and through young noblemen who would visit her while making the Grand Tour of Europe" (Tieken 129). Before being published, her letters were already circulating among her coterie.

Montagu's life-writing was composed during her travels throughout Europe. She also travelled further to the east through Italy. Diplomatic and aristocratic travels to the Orient were to become extremely popular in the nineteenth century. However, it still had not reached this pinnacle during Montagu's life time. In fact, it was still considered an activity for men primarily and the elite classes. While men, such as the poet Lord Byron and the aristocrat Sir Robert Sutton, had already travelled the Ottoman Empire, few women had done so. In his study of women travellers, Brian Dolan has little to say about Montagu's oriental travels, even though she belonged to this select group of women and travelled to the Ottoman Empire in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Montagu became particularly well-known posthumously after the publication of her *Turkish Embassy Letters* in 1763 (Halsband 155), which will be the central object of analysis below.

Reina Lewis writes that "descriptions of women, their clothes, their bodies and their beauty were a structural feature of Orientalist discourse and often operated in Western women's writing as a way to classify the Oriental domestic about which they were held to have a particular knowledge" (9). In this regard, it is relevant to consider the trope of the (female) gaze in Montagu's *The Turkish Embassy Letters* and her treatment of Ottoman domestic customs. On the same note, as women travellers generally had less access to means of travel and publishing, being a writer was considered an unlikely occupation for women at the time of Montagu's writing. Nevertheless, it would become more popular during the nineteenth century. Indeed, "It was also, more significantly, not straightforward for a woman to circulate or publish her own writings in the early modern era; to do so was a bold, much criticised and frequently isolated action" (Wilcox 2). Gender roles in the eighteenth century were perceived to be fixed, with strict conventions dictating the gendered standard for many women of this period. These conventions include limited freedom of personal expression, no rights to hold an occupation, limited access to education, and overall an exclusively domestic standard of living (Wilcox 2). The day of a British woman predominantly existed of household labours and childcare.

Montagu dissents from these extremely traditional duties of an ordinary eighteenth-century homemaker. She was an explorer and her writings are evident of her curiosity of different cultures and

societies. Montagu would have written in line with the Orientalism of the female gaze to fall under the structural features of Orientalist discourse. Yet, she also instrumentalised these seemingly structural features to provide her personal views and ideas. More of these structural features, or "tropes," included for example, rigid Westernised views, the Orientalist (male) gaze, and the declaration to be empirical and neutral.

For women, if they were in a position to write, expected conventions of travel literature in the eighteenth century are depictions of domestic spaces, beauty, and fashion. This was a common stereotype linked to the travel accounts of female travellers. According to these literary conventions, women's travelogues were domesticized, much like their positions in Britain were domesticized. In addition to this, it was expected that travellers wrote with a sense of empiricism and neutrality, much like scientific observations. Overall, travel writings establish a sense of the writer's selfhood and illustrate how he or she perceives others.

This chapter takes into consideration that Montagu might not have been exempt from Western orientalist notions that were directed at the Ottoman Empire by male travellers and writers in the eighteenth century. At the same time, Montagu's writing poses an interesting intellectual position that female selfhood is established in her writing that conflicts with these tropes and stereotypes.

Historical Context of Travel Narratives: Colonialism and the Ottoman Empire (1700-1800)

Until the 1770s, there existed only two travel narratives by British women, among which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's (Turner 48). This section will provide an overview of common stereotypes, tropes, and literary tools that were present in popular travel writing by men in the period 1700-1800. This will give insight into what the literary readership of this period was used to reading. It also sheds light on what many British readers would think about the "other" empire in the context of colonialism.

The eighteenth century was a period of commercial monopoly and massive colonial expansion for the British Empire. This position enabled the status of the British Empire of "Britannia into a mother," or "mother country" (Lew 269). One could speak of British despotism as a result of this hierarchical and racist relationship between Britain and her colonies. As the British Empire continued to persevere in commerce, expansion, and trade, there was an enemy closer at home at the western front of what is now Europe. An ambiguous relationship it was. Britain maintained ambiguous attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire that consisted of orientalist fantasies and hostility as they felt confronted by them at the same time (Melman 106). Billie Melman writes: "the Ottoman challenge was not merely military. As Albert Hourani has pointed out, Westerners deemed the Muslim East so pernicious precisely because it presented an alternative culture dangerously close to home" (106). As such, during the eighteenth century, the British population must have concurringly felt at least sentiments of uneasiness and must have considered the Ottomans as a disturbance to not only their empire, but also to their faith as Christians. In Melman's words:

> It [the Middle East] was the birthplace of Christianity and the two other revealed religions – Judaism and Islam – accorded by Westerners with the powers of pernicious apostasies. And it particularly threatened Christian Europe because Islam, which in the eight century emerged as the area's dominant religion, evolved as the basis of a succession of organised and military state systems. (105)

This hostile attitude towards the Ottomans in terms of religion becomes evident in, for example, Romantic writing. Lew writes:

> Western reluctance to accept the name 'Istanbul' accompanied and was symptomatic of Western refusal to accept the legitimacy of the Ottoman dynasty and empire. […] fantasies of overthrowing Ottoman rule recurred with great frequency, and can be dated back to the reception in Western Europe of the news of the fall of Constantinople. (264)

With the defeat of the Byzantine Empire (330-1453), the east to the west was generally no longer considered to be "Christian" or "white" because, with the capture of Constantinople, it was under rule

of Muslim Turks. Indeed, Baktir writes that "[…] it is apparent that the distant oriental observer of the letters was a literary device that developed in a certain historical and cultural context and relied on extensive knowledge about oriental countries." In addition to this, Baktir asserts that "eighteenth-century writers in England and France made use of this literary device to re-evaluate Europe and the Oriental world with a more critical and inquisitive spirit than ever before" (143). Empirical observations and scientific writing had gained enormous popularity in the eighteenth century. As mentioned earlier, one of the traditions in travel writing during this century was the lens of natural science which was imposed by travellers in their journey accounts.

According to Baktir, another trope in the travel writing of the eighteenth century is the traveller's preliminary unwillingness for negotiation: "[…] the travel writing in England before the eighteenth century was written from a less peaceful perspective. Such travel accounts emphasised the fact that the Ottomans were the enemy of European civilization. Thus, they reflected a conflict between Europe and the Ottomans rather than negotiation" (144). Montagu reshaped this standard of conflict because her letters allow room for negotiation. She is in a position to discuss Ottoman habits and culture. These discussions take place in letters to her readership. While certainly not all of these letters are pushing the boundaries of pre-set colonialist ideologies, there are letters that at least challenge older, rusty British perspectives. In this way, they are inventive and open a future space in which Ottoman civilization came to be regarded with more sympathy.

Ethnography and the Diversity of Travel Literature

Parallel to the development of these ambiguous attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire during the eighteenth century, the study of ethnography gained in popularity (Rubiés 242). Ethnography is the study of peoples and their cultures and costumes. It influenced travel literature of the eighteenth century. Ethnographic observation could oftentimes be one of the motives of the travel writer. Much literature of the eighteenth century, therefore, included general ethnographic descriptions:

> The description of peoples in their variety was one of the most valued parts of the narratives of travel that proliferated after the Renaissance, both for the entertainment value of the depiction of curious behaviour, and for the philosophical issues which this evidence for variety raised about the existence, or not, of universal human traits. (Rubiés 243)

According to Paul Rubiés, ethnographic descriptions of other peoples and cultures existed by reason of comparing these peoples and cultures. It is highly probable and noteworthy that in this comparison, British culture and society, at least for the British travellers, was the standard on which the comparisons came to existence. British travellers to the east were already exposed to portrayals of other cultures and peoples which influenced them beforehand. Rubiés writes:

> The European ethnographic impulse was the product of a unique combination of colonial expansion and intellectual transformation. Although the emergence of an academic discourse based on comparison, classification, and historical lineage called ethnology is a nineteenth-century phenomenon, in reality both ethnography and ethnology existed within the humanistic disciplines of early modern Europe in the primary forms of travel writing, cosmography, and history […] (243).

An author, but also his or her readership, could establish what it was that deviated from the Western cultural standard of that period and regard these cultural deviations as potentially transgressive. Indeed, this seems to be what was often occurring within travelogues about the orient. Unfortunately, some of these texts gained much "textual authority,"cajoling the eighteenth century British readers into thinking of these texts as factual due to its "direct participant observation" (Melman 112). In other words, it seems that the line between fiction and reality, fantasy and realism was blurred within these travel writings. As a result of this, it was quite easy for a reader to assume essentialist assertations in these texts, but also for a writer to generate them in the first place.

Travelogues and Orientalist texts were abundant and gaining more popularity during the eighteenth century. A few examples of these texts are George Shelvocke's *A Voyage Round the World by Way of the Great South Sea* (1723) and Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey Through France*

and Italy (1768). A few other, more widely known examples, are Ann Radcliffe's *A Journey Made in the Summer of 1794* (1795) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796). "Travellers' reports responded to and engaged with an expanding corpus of Orientalists texts, as much as they were renditions of impressions acquired on the spot" (Melman 111). Much like impressions from Orientalist texts, writers could adopt themes and topics from previous travel accounts. This way, new observations of the traveller build on older observations by other travellers, intermingling as it were, at least depending on how critical the writer is. These features of intertextuality are topical and thematic of nature. Intertextuality regarding domestic themes becomes especially interesting in the analysis of a later text in this thesis, in which traces of Montagu's approach and topics are foregrounded in Pardoe's travel accounts. These instances cannot be regarded as coincidental as literary conventions already attribute certain topics to the writing of women.

Travel writing is broad and diverse and does not elude to one kind of text. Ethnography, as mentioned before, is one aspect on which travel literature takes away from. In addition to this, eighteenth-century literature was also marked by the philosophical shift concerned with thinking about the self and the mind, with notions such as selfhood and identity being explored in intellectual circles but also within travel literature (Lipski 22). This may be due to the fact that travel literature as a genre takes away from life writing, or autobiography, in a general sense. "This shift from soul to mind" meant that one's identity is unfixed and unstable (Lipski 22). Thus, the construction of selfhood was liable to change. Literary representations of these changing constructions of identity are complex and not always straightforward. Women writers, too, were exploring this new way of writing, although not many had the opportunity to do so while travelling abroad. Although travel writing plays into the already set traditions of former travel authors and texts that have gained popularity and authority, they are on itself and by itself *personal* accounts. Jacob Lipski writes: "Literature, naturally, reflected both the destabilisation of socio-cultural categories and the complex nature of personal identity. The genre that was inherently related to these issues was the novel" (24). According to Lipski, the novel was characteristic for its "preoccupation with individual experience" (24). Indeed, this individual

experience that is so characteristic for the novel came to be extremely characteristic within travel accounts too.

Reversely, it is not only the psychological novel that allows for the chronicling of individual experiences. As travel is indeed an individual experience and simultaneously a journey for identity, it functions as a personal journey for identity construction. The author's observations and impressions of his or her geographical and cultural environment constitute the narrative. Travel started to be explored in a more general and popular context in the eighteenth century, also within popular literature. Works such as Daniel Defoe's fictional travelogue *The Life, Adventures and Piracies of the Famous Captain Singleton* (1720) are a popular testimony of this. Young Bob Singleton is shaped into a strong-willed, resourceful and above all successful and proud British citizen, a master of land and sea, through his hair-raising adventures in Africa and among pirates.

On another note, travel accounts took the shape of a journal which has a strong chronological, almost diary-like, function throughout. Chronology is prominent and the accounts, or letters, are often outlined with dates and locations. According to Rubiés:

> In effect the genre of travel writing moved from the primary account of the traveller (a journey, a synthetic relation, or another document) written for a variety of practical purposes, to the more elaborate versions of the historian or cosmographer, dealing, respectively, with an account of particular events organised chronologically, or with the description of the world organised geographically. (245)

The formatting of the travelogue as a put-together textual object had much to do with Daniel Defoe's *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-1727). Zoë Kingsley writes:

> By the latter half of the eighteenth century the impulse to order the experiences of travel regularly becomes pronounced in the formatting of the text, and once again we see travel writing assimilating patterns that are drawn from British cartographic traditions of topographic representation, namely, in this instance, the itinerant structures that originated in the early modern road-book.

Interestingly, while Montagu was familiar with the earlier mentioned conventions within travel literature, she personalised her letters in sometimes unconventional manners. Montagu's letters read much like an epistolary novel and even ascend the genre of travel literature to the epistolary and life writing. First, her letters have a strong quality of individuality and personal expression. Montagu's letters do not traditionally adhere to the neutrality and empiricism that was presupposed in eighteenth-century travelogues. While Montagu declares to write her letters in accordance with "natural truths,"it is her personal truth that she is declaring instead. Second, she achieves this in her writing through expressing dissidence towards the ideologically prescribed female gender role through her thinking and actions.

Travel and Gender

To provide an insight of the context, both literary and historical, in which woman writers such as Montagu were writing, the following passage should be considered. It gives the context of life writing of women and explains that in the seventeenth century there was an overall lack of life writing and autobiographical writing:

> But between this and the early seventeenth century there is no coherent body of autobiographical writings by women: there are no known prose narratives of the self, although there are some existent diaries and journals of aristocratic women from the late sixteenth century. It is hard to assess precisely the extent to which this indicates an absence of what we might call an autobiographical impulse in the sixteenth century, although it is generally accepted that the appearance of a significant number of published self-writings occurs in the seventeenth century, rather than earlier. (Graham 210)

In this sense, the genre of autobiographical writing, or life writing, is what preceded the upcoming genre of travel literature. To women, travel's accessibility was linked to family wealth and thus not open to many for exploration. Likewise, it was not common that most women in this period were erudite and trained in a field of knowledge for that matter. Due to the "progressive exclusion of

women from intellectual pursuits and proper education, reinforced by their socialisation into a life of frivolity,"there was a certain subjection of women to the rank of men within British society (O'Brien 16). Sara Mills writes that within the British social order women were instrumental as symbols of Oriental ideology, rather than being instrumental for their writing:

> Although women feature largely in the colonial enterprise as potent objects of purity and symbols of home, their writing is not taken seriously in the same way that male Orientalist writing is. Patrick Williams shows that the representation of British women's sexuality is seen as an essential component in the construction of Britishness, and, particularly, male Britishness within the colonial context, females play an important part as signifiers, but not as producers of signification. (59)

What women could potentially publish was, for example, spiritual confessions. Nevertheless, notions of selfhood and individuality, and with that, the act of writing one's self is still in the phase of exploration: "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries concepts of both genre and selfhood are more clearly unstable than they may appear to be in later centuries [….] The boundaries between fiction and autobiography, always uncertain, were thus especially unfixed in the early modern period" (Graham 212). In line with Graham's arguments, it is then arbitrary to think of autobiographical writing of consisting out of pre-existing guidelines and rules.

Style and Self-Reflexivity

Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763) start with her departure from Dorset, England. As she and her husband set out for their diplomatic mission to Istanbul, they travel through Europe first. This text became one of the most popular accounts on the Ottoman Empire. Her letters are exclusively addressed to her close circle of friends and family, who are all high-ranking aristocrats. In addition, *Turkish Embassy Letters* were only published posthumously. These letters are, among others, written from the Netherlands, multiple cities in Germany, Vienna, and what is now Eastern Europe but used to be under Ottoman rule. The Montagu pair travelled into the Ottoman Empire through Austria-

Hungary, where a treaty was signed due to the battle of Petrovaradin where the Ottoman's lost their border. The reason for their journey in the first place was diplomatic of nature. According to Heffernan et al., Montagu was the first English woman to write about the Ottoman Empire: "Arriving in a 'new world' in 1717 during an era when the geopolitical contours of the globe were being radically reorganised, she studied Ottoman language and poetry, gave birth to her daughter, had her son inoculated against smallpox and befriended Muslim women on her visits to harems and Turkish baths" (11).

A selection of Montagu's letters are analysed to investigate her contribution to Orientalist discourse about the Ottoman Empire. This selection was made based on the letters that show a sense of awareness of the tropes and traditions of eighteenth-century travel literature. This will shed light on how Montagu's writing, as a case study, fits into or out of the binarism between Occident and Orient relations that so often was the case in the standardised eighteenth-century travel accounts. This will be further accomplished by critically investigating to what extent Montagu's writing about the Ottoman Empire takes away from relativism or essentialism. In addition, the impact of her gender identity in context of the eighteenth-century social order will be taken into account. It will become apparent, therefore, that in critically studying this selection of letters, the following categories are fashioned: gender identity and dissent, engagement with orientalist discourse, class, and self-reflexivity.

At the beginning of Montagu's travels her correspondence varies a great deal in accordance with the receiver of the reciprocal letters. For example, in her letter to her friend Lady Bristol, she writes:

> I imagine I see Your Ladyship stare at this article, of which you very much doubt the veracity, but upon my word, I have not yet made use of the privilege of a traveller, and my whole account is writ with the same plain sincerity of heart with which I assure you that I am, dear Madam, Your Ladyship's etc. (Montagu 53)

The passage above is exemplary of Montagu's readership. Despite Montagu's own social rank, she seems to be aware of the privilege of travelling. In addition, while writing among women and being a

published author for women was certainly uncommon, epistolary writing was a rather prevalent activity among young women who were taught to write letters by their families from a young age. This was by nature a private activity in which women leaned towards writing more candid descriptions and judgements than would be expected in public writings. Leonie Hannan explains this "socio-cultural significance of letter-writing":

> When tracing the history of female engagement with intellectual life, these examples of early training in the art of letter-writing are instructive. They point to a centrality of letter-writing as a social and didactic tool in this period, but they also shed light on the many young women who were encouraged to read, think and write in sophisticated ways, often by their own mothers. (105)

This suggests that epistolary writing, for Montagu too, is part of her childhood education. As such, she must have been aware of the kind of stylistic and strategic aspects of life writing. Indeed, Hannan writes that "children were taught appropriate forms of address that reflected the relative status of the correspondents" (105). This does not however mean that these conventions were always applied without thought. Instead, "unconventional forms of address or styles of writing were readily adopted" when the writer of the letter was on friendly and familiar foot with the receiver (Hannan 108). It is interesting that in this letter Montagu ends her address on the note of an assurance to write plainly and with a "sincerity of heart." In accordance with her education of these conventions, Montagu seems to be aware of the wishes and demands the receiver upholds in this case, which is factual truth.

This is a significant promise and begs the question in which (literary) context to position her letters. According to Halsband, "[Montagu] drew her observations from the surroundings, from her past life, so rich in activity, and from the constant reading with which she "sweetened her solitude" (161). This suggests that the she was no stranger to the literary conventions and was in the habit of shaping her writing based on her observations, as if to mimic natural truths as close as possible. Indeed, this causes that her letter writing does not fit into one single literary category. Her writing seems to intersect fiction and reality, while also being in the midst of various genres such as

autobiographical writing and travel writing. This becomes evident as the letters follow conventions and are at the same time clearly unconventional.

Her promise to write with plain sincerity is soon overlooked in her letter to the Princess of Wales, Caroline of Anspach:

> I have now, Madam, past a journey that has not been undertaken by any Christian since the time of the Greek emperors, and I shall not regret all the fatigues I have suffered in it, if it gives me an opportunity of amusing Your Royal Highness by an account of places utterly unknown amongst us; the Emperor's ambassadors, and those few English that have come hither, always going on the Danube to Nicopolis. (98)

The transition to a hyperbolic statement of Montagu's journey is noteworthy here. While in her earlier letters she had suggested a plain style of writing, the letter seems to be replete with hyperboles such as in the passage above. These hyperboles hint at an underlying fictionality that is shrouded in her letters. As she claims to be the only "Christian since the time of the Greek emperors" to visit the Orient, she simultaneously seems to say that no "Christian living soul" has been there after the time of the Greek emperors. In fact, many men before Montagu's visit had already travelled to the Ottoman imperial courts. This can be read as narrator unreliability. According to Zoë Kinsley, demands from the publishing industry and the readership of travel accounts were strong on the market and could therefore have influenced the content of the letters:

> Whilst travellers are often acutely aware of these demands being made upon them by the literary marketplace, they are frequently as mindful of the intense subjectivity of the activity in which they are engaged. Perhaps inevitably considering the collaborative format in which their works are often marketed to the public, travel writers and cartographers are judged by the same standards of accuracy and rigour. (23)

In addition to this, in her letter to the Princess of Wales, Montagu sketches the Ottoman Empire as significantly, and by definition, "Other" in location, so much that no person has been there in an extremely long period of time. While Montagu might not be aware of how her rhetoric undermines the

legitimacy and existence of the Ottoman areas on its own right, the passage, on a subtle note, hints towards the systematic dichotomy of east-to-west relations. In this sense, the passage is also suggestive of an underlying essentialism of British orientalist discourse.

Montagu continues her letter to the Princess of Wales as follows: "This theme would carry me very far, and I am sensible I have already tired out Your Royal Highness's patience, but my letter is in your hands, and you may make it as short as you please, by throwing it into the fire when you are weary of reading it" (98). Montagu's statement that the receiver can throw away or burn the letter if through is peculiar for two reasons. First of all, it functions as a, presumably unintentional, literary device. This is not done so in every letter she had written throughout her journey through Europe. In fact, this was a device that was used dependent on the receiving party. This does not go unnoticed by Halsband either: "Compared to her unequivocally actual letters, these Embassy ones may seem exhibitionistic and self-conscious; but how well she succeeded in her purpose: to amuse and instruct her correspondents – and ultimate readers!" (163). Thus, it exhibits a self-consciousness that, in this case, seems to be bordering self-censoring at least for the sake of pleasing the recipient.

Secondly, the passage suggest a lack of authorial agency by providing the receiver the instrumentality to destroy the letter in order to alter it shorter as she wishes. However, it is only at the surface that Montagu seems to be lacking this agency. By writing that the recipient can destroy the letter if she pleases it, Montagu makes an attempt to pacify the contents of her letter in order to satisfy the reader even if the content fails to do so. It is noteworthy to understand why Montagu writes this so that her persona and style in her letters can be explained more thoroughly. First, this is the strategic design of the letter as its contents foretell the poor treatment of the Christian minorities living in Serbia and Bulgaria. This was considered too offensive or controversial for those at home in Britain. Montagu writes:

> Four days in journey from hence we arrived at Philippopolis (Turkish: Filibe, now: Plovdiv) after having passed the ridges between the mountains of Haemus and Rhodophe (Turkish: Rodoplar), which are always covered with snow. This town is situated on a rising ground near

> the River Hebrus, and is almost wholly inhabited by Greeks. Here are still some ancient Christian churches. They have a bishop; and several of the richest Greeks live here, but they are forced to conceal their wealth with great care […]" (100)

Montagu is aware of her position in providing information within this letter. She crafts her letters extremely diligently and her observations could easily be regarded as fact. In doing so, Montagu's "self" in her letter are unfixed. The frequent personal pronouns are alternated with lengthy observations, hinting at self-reflexivity. Within this unfixed self, Montagu both gives into the demands of the conventional readership at home, while also making critical observations that result from her strong perspective. As mentioned before, it was frowned upon for women travel writers to write about political events and they were expected to write about beauty and their often domestic environment. Commenting on the social positions of minorities within the Ottoman Empire would not be deemed as "feminine discourse." Montagu is constructing a personal narrative in her letters which include her concerns and her critical observations and, by doing this, she uncovers what only seems to be a lack of agency and authority as was expected from female authors.

Strikingly, Montagu continuously uses the Greek place names here and throughout her letters to refer to the then Ottoman place names. The Greek names were regarded with familiarity and much more closeness in the Western world. It is likely that she refrained from using the Ottoman place names in order to play into the apprehension of her Western readership, once again suggesting awareness of the literary conventions she was grappling with, while at the same time marking her letters with her private views.

Montagu's self-reflexivity is at times quite visibly linked to a literary consciousness. This can be framed in context of eighteenth-century literary developments and traditions as this was a time that was rapidly moving towards the first English novels. Robert L. Caserio describes this period: "The eighteenth-century novel had other crucial formal agendas as well, of course, other fish to fry, from satire to fantasy to self-reflexivity. It takes both the individual and the factual not as given but as problematic" (4). For example, with the appearance of Samuel Richardson's epistolary novel *Clarissa*

(1748), concepts such as agency and authority came to be discussed in literary circles. In fact, the following passage indicates an awareness of conventions: "I am running on upon my own affairs, that is to say, I am going to write very dully, as most people do when they write of themselves. I will make haste to change the disagreeable subject, by telling you that I am now got into the region of beauty" (79). This letter was sent to Lady Rich. The passage indicates that the self is indeed a problematic notion; one that Montagu was struggling with too. As demonstrated earlier, the passage indicates that Montagu was indeed aware of eighteenth-century notions with regard to the conventions of travel writing. Mary Louis Pratt writes:

> The authority of science was invested most directly in specialized descriptive texts, like the countless botanical treaties organized around the various nomenclatures and taxonomies. Journalism and narrative travel accounts, however, were essential mediators between the scientific network and a larger European public. They were central agents in legitimating scientific authority and its global project alongside Europe's other ways of knowing the world, and being in it. (29)

Thus, by announcing that she is going to write "very dully,"Montagu states her willingness to conform to the rules of "scientific" observations as closely as she can. Moreover, it is evident from the following phrase "as most people do when they write of themselves" that Montagu is indeed aware of these traditions and innovations as much that she makes her attempts to adhere to the direct observation of experiences known. This is not an irregularity in her letters, but a reappearing trait as is visible from her letter to Lady Rich upon arriving in Belgrade: "I am afraid you'll doubt the truth of this account, which I own is very different from our common notions in England, but it is not less truth for all that" (148). It becomes apparent that Montagu's attempt to remain dedicated to natural facts and observations is experienced as a challenging task on itself since she fears the receiver's willingness to rely on her accounts. At the same time, Montagu, more than once, departs from this tradition. Montagu's position as a writer in the Ottoman Empire is thus more intricate. The intricacy lies in the author's dispute between how to articulate her truth and how to establish her own identity in doing so.

Montagu's letters are exemplary of a movement within eighteenth-century literature in which "selfhood" was precarious and not linear. The analysis of the *Turkish Embassy Letters* above shows an intricate attempt of a woman author who is in the midst of a struggle to explore her identity and her "self" in non-Western surroundings. In this manner, her impressions and observations of the Orient function as a means to discover the self. This is evident through her self-reflexivity throughout her letters.

Orientalism, Discourse, and Dissident Gender Identity

Turkish Embassy Letters is replete with observations of cultural practices, gender roles, and Ottoman society. First, a letter Montagu wrote to her sister Lady Mar will be closely examined:

> But they were hardly seen near the fair Fatima (for that is her name) so much her beauty effaced everything. I have seen all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany, and must own that I never saw anything so gloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice of near hers. (133)

This passage is written on account of her visitation to the wife of the Grand Vizier Haci Halil Pasha, Fatima, in Adrianople (Turkish: Edirne). Montagu is first and foremost taken by Fatima's beauty. This is also her first observation. This is a peculiar observation in that it would not be unlikely were it written by a man. Indeed, while art and literature are rife with voyeuristic tendencies and the male gaze objectifying women, Montagu's gaze does not seem to be motivated by phallocentric tendencies. According to Sara Mills, "similar problems beset women's travel accounts in the way in which they try to insert themselves into a set of discursive constraints which are largely masculinist" (70). In this regard, Montagu's female appropriated male gaze upon observing Fatima assumes the same pre-set orientalist conditions that are present in male colonial discourse. This male colonial discourse feminises the east in the same manner it objectifies women in travel accounts for the sake of discerning these women. In this line of thinking, feminisation of the orient seems to become

synonymous with inferiority and degradation. The reason why Montagu focuses on Fatima's beauty throughout this letter to Lady Mar is a result of the orientalist tradition of the male gaze.

Mills writes that British women's roles are limited within the ideology of colonialism:

> Colonialism is certainly portrayed as a male preserve where females have a very secondary supporting role. Most studies which consider women and imperialism consist of descriptions of 'native' and British women as the objects of male gaze or male protection within colonial texts. (58)

While Montagu acknowledges orientalist fantasies, she does not challenge them undeviatingly. Needless to say, she does so to maintain a sense of uniformity with regard to this kind of orientalist discourse. This uniformity ensures that Montagu, too, is responsible for maintaining an imperialist ideology which she contributes to British colonial discourse.

The uniformity to orientalist conventions that can be found in Montagu's letters is supplemented by a more balanced view on Ottoman Turks and their culture and religion. While her contribution to imperialist ideology is partly determined by the dictates of literary convention, her openness and tolerance towards the Ottomans is equally noteworthy. She had the privilege to access Ottoman women's private and domestic spheres, such as the Ottoman harems. Contrary to many of the travellers before her, she was one of the few who could pay Ottoman women of the "haremlik" a visit or enter in the private households of these women and their families. Montagu's mindfulness of conventions and what her gender identity dictates according to the social standards of the patriarchy result in identification with Ottomans. Cultural imperialism and British imperial hegemony find the Ottomans placed as a subordinated class of people in relation to the British. At the same time, women rank as subordinate as a result of hegemonic masculinity and inferior roles that women were expected to hold in British society. Identification with Ottoman Turks is manifested as follows, in her letter to Lady Mar:

> They have naturally the most beautiful complexions in the world and generally large black eyes. I can assure you with great truth, that the Court of England (though I believe it the fairest

> in Christendom) cannot show so many beauties as are under our protection here. They generally shape their eye-brows, and the Greeks and Turks have the custom of putting round their eyes on the inside a black tincture that, at a distance, or by candlelight, adds very much to the blackness of them. I fancy many of our ladies would be overjoyed to know this secret, but 'tis too visible by day. (114)

Montagu also makes some observations about their moral behaviour:

> As to their morality or good conduct, I can say, like Harlequin, that 'tis just as 'tis with you, and the Turkish ladies don't commit one sin the less for not being Christian. Now I am a little acquainted with their ways, I cannot forbear admiring either the exemplary discretion or extreme stupidity of all the writers that have given accounts of them. (114)

The discursive strategy of similarity Montagu employs here is worthy of closer examination, because it is evident of her identification with Ottomans. Normally, in line with the textual strategies of conventional eighteenth-century travel writing, a woman writer is expected to write as a "well-behaved self" (Mills 72). On the basis of a comparison to British women, Montagu is opting for similarities between them and Ottoman women. This is completely in conflict with traditional orientalist views.

In a later letter she writes: "I don't speak of the lowest sort, or as there is a great deal of ignorance, here is very little virtue amongst them, and false witnesses are much cheaper than in Christendom, those wretches not being punished (even when they are publicly detected) with the rigour they ought to be" (174). This passage makes clear the underlying assumptions of Montagu, in particular to Ottoman women of lower ranks and in doing so "obeying the norms of British society" in which class was definitive of one's identity (Mills 72). While Montagu finds identification with Ottomans, it is clear she only refers to the highest of society.

In a letter to the Countess of Bristol, Montagu provides a detailed account upon her view on Turkish women:

> ‘Tis also very pleasant to observe how tenderly he and all his brethren voyage-writers lament on the miserable confinement of the Turkish ladies, who are (perhaps) freer than any ladies in the universe, and are the only women in the world that lead a life on uninterrupted pleasure, exempt from cares, their whole time being spent in visiting, bathing, or the agreeable amusement of spending money and inventing new fashions. A husband would be thought mad that exacted any degree of economy from his wife, whose expenses are no way limited but by her own fancy. ‘Tis his business to get money and hers to spend it, and his noble prerogative extends itself to the very meanest of the sex. Here is a fellow that carries embroidered handkerchiefs upon his back to sell, as miserable a figure as you may suppose such a mean dealer, yet I’ll assure you his wife scorns to wear anything less than cloth of gold, has her ermine furs, and a very handsome set of jewels for her head. They go abroad when and where they please. ‘Tis true they have no places but the bagnios, and there can only be seen by their own sex; however that is a diversion they take great pleasure in (171).

Here, Montagu limits the freedom these upper-class Turkish women enjoy to the very access they have to material goods only. Although, she does make a case for their freedoms as well: “I was very well pleased with having seen this ceremony, and you may believe me that the Turkish ladies have at least as much wit and civility, nay liberty, as ladies among us” (173). In the passage directed to the Countess of Bristol, Montagu writes that Turkish women “are (perhaps) freer than any ladies in the universe.”Montagu’s use of a comparative adjective is interesting here, but not unexpected: she is relating all her observations to the standards of Britain. Her comparison is based on the mobility that the Turkish women obtain: “their whole time being spent in visiting, bathing, or the agreeable amusement of spending money and inventing new fashions.” It is noteworthy to mention her use of “perhaps” within parentheticals here, softening her statement and making it more tentative for her British readership.

Montagu continues her account of Ottoman women by including a comment about a dealer in handkerchiefs she sees on the street in Constantinople. This is followed by her assumption about his

wife: "[…] I'll assure you his wife scorns to wear anything less than cloth of gold, has her ermine furs, and a very handsome set of jewels for her head" (171). Observations such as these adhere to the conventions of travel literature for women: "[…] there are frequent remarks in travel texts about the importance of the feminine discourse of clothes, wearing correct clothes, gloves, skirts of a decent length, not riding side-saddle and so on" (Mills 72). To this extent, it is apparent that Montagu coheres to these traditions, at least partially. At the same time, she revises these traditions by strategically adding on to them her non-conforming opinions and observations which might have been regarded as idiosyncratic for this reason.

Another point of attention is how Montagu negotiates the Occident – Orient relationship she is part of. The following passage in her letter to the Countess of Bristol illustrates her awareness towards her presence as a British subject:

> I went with her the other day all round the town in an open gilt chariot, with our joint train of attendants, preceded by our guards, who might have summoned the people to see what they had never seen, nor ever would see again, two young Christian ambassadresses never yet having been in this country at the same time, nor I believe ever will again. Your Ladyship may easily imagine that we drew a vast crowd of spectators, but all silent in death (111).

Montagu is carried around Adrianople in a chariot. She is in the company of the French ambassadress. Together, they are driven and accompanied by attendants, guards, and janissaries, who are the elite infantry of the Ottoman Empire. This is a highly superfluous tableau. Montagu's presence has a performative quality: she performs the role of the ambassadress which in turn evokes an air of domination and occupation through the text. Then, her lines promptly evolve in a strange release of indulgence; a revelling in something the people "had never seen, nor ever would see again." This spectacle is followed by a conclusion to the reader: "Your Ladyship may easily imagine that we drew a vast crowd of spectators, but all silent in death." Whether their silence is in fact fear or gloating is not mentioned in the letter. This passage serves as a reminder to Montagu herself and her readership of the reason of her presence among the Ottomans and subtly exposes the essentialism in her own

thought processes. Although she can make intercultural connections much easier than men could do before her, she remains in essence a British subject.

Lisa Lowe writes that "[…] the literary theme of travel serves to express the eighteenth-century colonial preoccupation with land and empire, but also travel as a representation of territorial ambition became a predominant discursive means for managing a national culture's concern with internal social differences and change" (31). Indeed, Montagu's letters indicate throughout that she is aware of herself as representative of her British western background. Lowe writes that "[…] orientalism is a discourse through which European institutions – literary, political, and economic – are able to generate a consistent notion of the Occident while constituting and subordinating its oriental Other" (34). In this sense, Montagu's writing can be regarded as "discursively productive" as her embassy letters fall out of the margins of colonial discourse due to her gender, while it also affirms the politicisation of her writing and herself for the purpose of stabilising Occident notions about the Ottomans.

Montagu's main contribution is to the genre of travel writing and particularly as a precursor to women travellers who would follow in her footsteps. This is because she demonstrates in *Turkish Embassy Letters* that although, as a woman writer, she was not able to get rid of sexist conventions, she was however able to address them and reveal these features at the hand of her personal ideas.

Chapter 4: Julia Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan*

This chapter examines Julia Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan and the Domestic Manners of the Turks* (1837), which she wrote upon travelling to the Ottoman Empire. During her travels around the Ottoman Empire she, above all, visited families and people of the higher classes of Ottoman society. While she initially intended to visit Egypt and all of Greece too, she passed most of her time in the city of Istanbul in the company of her father. Because she was a woman, Pardoe had access to the Ottoman harem ("haremlik"). She was also allowed to enter women's private households and domestic environment. In addition, she was able to witness private (religious) ceremonies of Muslim, Christian, and Jewish women in Istanbul. Generally in travels to the near-east, women travellers have had the advantageous position to access non-public spaces because of their gender. This chapter critically investigates representations of the male appropriated female gaze, while revealing the British imperial ideology residing in Pardoe's work in the context of her gender and self-reflexivity. This chapter consists of close readings of passages from volume one and two of *The City of the Sultan* and, with it, provides information with regard to the paradox that resides in Pardoe's work of being affirmative of literary conventions and colonial ideology, and yet challenging conventions by expressing dissidence towards the ideologically prescribed female gender role. Thus, there will be a focus in examining dissident gender identity. As such, this chapter seeks to position Julia Pardoe's work within the context of colonialism, feminism, and self-reflexivity.

Julia Pardoe was born into a middle-class family in Beverley, Yorkshire. She was daughter to an army officer. A prolific author of poetry, novels, essays, and translations, Pardoe's multiplicity in writing is outstanding. On another note, she was somewhat of an historian too, producing works such as *The Life of Marie de Medicis, Queen and Regent of France* (1852) and *The Court and Reign of Francis the First, King of France* (1849). Her interest in history and her fervour for fiction on occasion intermingled and resulted in works such as *The Hungarian Castle* (1842) and *The Romance of the Harem* (1839).

General Context

In the preface to *The City of the Sultan*, Pardoe announces to the reader that she endeavours to herald factual and "unbiased" information about the domestic life of the Ottomans:

> To this conviction must consequently be attributed the fact that the whole period of my sojourn in the East was passed in Constantinople, and a part of Asia Minor. But my personal disappointment will be overpaid, should it be conceded that I have not failed in the attempt of affording to my readers a more just and complete insight into Turkish domestic life, than they have hitherto been enabled to obtain. (x)

This announcement presupposes the view that "they," previous travellers, have indeed written less just and less complete accounts than her examination has accomplished. Much false information indeed made its way back to Great Britain through the popular work of previous travellers such as Montagu and T. S, A Roberts at times with regard to the degeneracy of Ottomans. Domestic scenes in Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters*, such as dinners within the harem and beauty rituals of drawing eyebrows, are mimicked in Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan*. This means that Pardoe, too, to an extent must have adapted falsely informative accounts.

Nevertheless, Pardoe has a critical and relatively hands-on approach to examining Ottoman culture and traditions during her visits. She is aware of her position in which she can provide "unbiased" information regarding Ottoman people's manner of living and she uses this through her attempts by actively participating in the domestic social lives of Ottoman women and, to a lesser extent, that of men. This means that she approaches people personally and enters into dialogues with them. She probes questions and shows much effort to engage in Ottoman habits and costumes. As such, her observations construct a newfound perspective compared to the travellers before her and this is specifically due to her being a woman. While Montagu's accounts focus around her aristocratic class, Pardoe's accounts entirely lack allusions to class. This lack of references to class suggests a lack to the significance of class in Pardoe's work.

The City of the Sultan is divided into chapters and reads rather like a novel. Indeed, its chapters do not indicate an exact location or time from the outset that reminds the reader to follow on its real life accounts. Instead, this information is gradually provided throughout the chapters. By not indicating this information from the outset, the travelogue may read as a continuum of stories, and not as a work of autobiographical writing. In addition, it includes a preface, which similarly prefigures the structure of a novel. This preface outlines Pardoe's intentions with respect to her readers, and is one of the only occasions in which she directly addresses her readers throughout her work, as mentioned earlier. At the same time, her work creates the impression that the reader is involved in reading personal accounts of someone's life. Thus, by combining novel-like features such as the Picturesque and personal life accounts, Pardoe's work is hybrid of nature. The friction between fiction and autobiography is further explored in this chapter.

Aesthetics, Style, and the Picturesque

On the 30th of December in 1835 Julia Pardoe travelled to Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, with her father as companion. Upon arriving in Istanbul and laying eyes on the very first sight of the city of Istanbul Pardoe is astonished and observes as follows: "It was on the 30th of December, 1835, that we anchored in the Golden Horn my long-indulged hopes were at length realised, and the Queen of Cities, was before me, throned on her peopled hills, with the silver Bosphorus, garlanded with the palaces, flowing at her feet!" (1). The scenery is romanticised. This can be put in context of Romantic sensibility that was prevalent up to 1835. Romantic sensibility includes intimate sentiments induced through aesthetic categories such as "taste, delicacy, and refinement" (Bohls 101). Elizabeth Bohls writes that "women writers like Ann Radcliff, Helen Maria Williams, and Mary Wollstonecraft, aiming to make the language of aesthetics their own, found support in the differently gendered but intersecting discourse of sensibility" (101). The sight of "the Queen of Cities" evokes in Pardoe a reaction of sensibility which makes her work partly read like fiction.

Another context to consider in light of Pardoe's romanticised passages of the Ottoman Empire is the framework of popular orientalist tales that were written by the Romantic poet Lord Byron in the early nineteenth century (Warren 3). According to Andrew Warren, the mindset of the Young Romantics was to figuratively escape to the Orient to unravel the self and the imagination. In Warren's words:

> I argue that any historical answer must be firmly grounded in the Young Romantics' philosophical, political, and poetic commitments. The Orient – self-critically understood by the Young Romantics as a historically determined phantasmatic projection of the West's own fears and desires – provides a setting in which to explore and critique the epistemological, existential, and above all political limits of their own solipsistic imaginations. It is simultaneously an escape from and return to the self, a vicious circle. (3)

Byron's *Lara, A Tale* (1814), for example, lays bare the despotism of the European Orientalist, while it also contains Orientalism itself (Warren 3). This ambiguity of Byron's self-exploring work resonates in Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan*. Pardoe's work combines Romantic sensibility and aesthetic categories with an autobiographical impulse. By nature, her work's hybridity allows for self-exploration and criticism of orientalism.

On another note, there are also direct references to the Picturesque. Copley et al. describes the concept of the Picturesque as an so-called "elusive object" and discloses that the Picturesque has mainly been considered in terms of being a "a compromise category" (177):

> Indeed, the Picturesque has often been considered as a safe middle ground happily mediating the dangerous Burkean opposites of the Sublime and the Beautiful. It has been thought of as offering a particularly English aesthetic of landscape and even as playing a formative role in the construction of a particular kind of Englishness. (177)

Pardoe's first impressions of the city of Istanbul reiterates with the aesthetic category which is the Picturesque because of its aestheticized landscape descriptions such as the following: "[…] and the Queen of Cities, was before me, throned on her peopled hills, with the silver Bosphorus, garlanded

with the palaces, flowing at her feet!" Pardoe's style of writing here reflects the Radcliffian mode of writing which is replete with picturesque scenery. Radcliffe's scenic descriptions such as the following resonate within Pardoe's work:

> Fiery beams now marked the clouds, and the east glowed with increasing radiance, till the sun rose at once above the waves, and illuminating them with a flood of splendour, diffused gaiety and gladness around. The bold concave of the heavens, uniting with the vast expanse of the ocean, formed, a coup d'oeil, striking and sublime magnificence of the scenery inspired Julia with delight; and her heart dilating with high enthusiasm, she forgot the sorrows which had oppressed her. (Radcliffe 242)

Like Radcliffe, Pardoe's work includes landscape descriptions which are aestheticized.

Furthermore, here and throughout the text, Pardoe focuses on how her observations align in terms of aestheticization. People, buildings, and streets are viewed through Pardoe's highly aestheticized gaze. As mentioned before, through these stylistic features of her writing, she steps in the Radcliffian tradition of picturesque landscaping. For example, upon describing the streets of Istanbul, Pardoe makes use of picturesque descriptions:

> Thus far, I could compare the port of Constantinople to nothing less delightful than poetry into action. The novel character of the scenery – the ever-shifting, picturesque, and graceful groups – the constant flitting past of the fairy-like caïques – the strange tongues – the dark, wild eyes – all conspired to rivet me to the deck, despite the bitterness of the weather. (8)

The use of the concept of the Picturesque is suggestive of the traditions within the literary field of the early nineteenth century, as well as of the late eighteenth century. Pardoe must have been aware of these literary traditions when she wrote and published *The City of the Sultan* in 1837. Officially, this year marks the onset of Queen Victoria's reign and, with that, the onset of the Victorian era. Although Pardoe's work is formally "Victorian,"it is greatly influenced by the eighteenth-century concept of the Picturesque, which lends its roots from Romanticism. The concept of the Picturesque is linked to the sublime and the beautiful: it assumes a focus on the human senses on details of landscape and scenery.

The passage above suggests that Pardoe was aware of these conventions. Her work is a great example of how it does not cohere to one exact genre, but lends its character from elements from different genres, such as fiction and autobiographical writing.

Pardoe's style of writing is defined by the Picturesque on several occasions:

> And when you at length descend the three hundred and thirty steps of the dizzy Tower of the Seraskier, inscribe upon your tables the faints record of an hour, during which, if you have sensibility or imagination, a love of the beautiful, or an appreciation of the sublime, you must have lived through an age of feeling and of fancy; with the busy breathing city at your feet – the sweet, still valley beside you – and the wide sea, the unfathomable, the mysterious sea, bounding your vision. (266)

This passage is taken from chapter fourteen from the first volume of Pardoe's work. There is a strong degree of consistency when it comes to picturesque descriptions, and allusions to the Picturesque in *The City of the Sultan* – as is the case in this passage. Pardoe describes the city of Istanbul on one of her many strolls through its streets. She speaks of imagination and uses concepts such as the "beautiful,""the sublime,"and the Picturesque which are literary and intellectual concepts that are linked to landscapes and the pastoral to "frame a meditation on gender, knowledge, and power" (Bohls 2). Here, the passage invokes the senses of the reader as if he or she is on the streets with the speaker. Pardoe achieves a certain animated and lively engagement with her readers throughout her work's passages. In fact, she achieves this by engaging the reader's senses to imagine the same as Pardoe is observing.

The use of the Picturesque within both volumes of Pardoe's travel accounts illustrates a devotion to fiction. More importantly, the Picturesque and the Sublime are present in Pardoe's style of writing and rhetoric to convey her female perspective on the ideological exclusion of women regarding the language of aesthetics in early nineteenth-century literature (Bohls 18). These perspectives come to overshadow the authenticity and the objectivity that was considered to be inherent to travel literature in the nineteenth century. Pardoe's aesthetic perspective, which

overshadows an expected authenticity by its readership, is dominant. Copley et al. write: “The gaze through which, in other contexts, the Picturesque aesthetics exerts its uncertain control over landscape and property” (120). This implies that Pardoe was indeed experimenting with literary forms and concepts in order to convey her reality through her perspective.

Later, she observes the mosque that was formerly a church: the Aya Sofya:

> And this was St. Sophia! To me it seemed like a creation of enchantment – the light – the ringing voices – the mysterious extent, which baffled the earnestness of my gaze – the ten thousand turbaned Moslems, all kneeling with their faces turned towards Mecca, and at intervals laying their foreheads to the earth – the bright and various colours of the dresses – and the rich and glowing tints of the carpets that veiled the marble floor – all conspired to form a scene of such unearthly magnificence, that I felt as though there could be no reality in what I looked on, but that, at some sudden signal, the towering columns would fail to support the vault of light above them, and all would become void. I had forgotten every thing in the mere exercise of vision; - the danger of detection – the flight of time – almost my own identity – when my companion uttered the single word “gel – come.” (C22, 379)

It is significant to recognise this passage in terms of Pardoe’s use of aesthetic categories such as the Picturesque, and her use of the sublime. In addition, what this passage also illuminates is the fact that Pardoe’s writing is rife with contradictions.

One of these contradictions are at place when it comes to the use of exaggeration and hyperbole. Hyperbole is a literary device which, in the end, does not necessarily make a work more empirical, and with that, does not lend a travel account authenticity. Pardoe writes: “Until you have wandered through the whole of their mazes, your involuntary impression is one of wonder at the hyperboles which have been lavished on them by travellers, and the uncalled-for ecstasies of tour writers” (36). It seems that she is lashing out to former travellers and authors and then is herself guilty of the use of excessive hyperboles. She does so on more than one account throughout her work: “A modern French traveller, whose amusing work has, in one moderate volume, contrived to treat of a

dozen countries and localities; and to detail, respecting each, such a mass of fallacies as assuredly were never before collected together […]" (120). It is likely that she is referring to the French traveller and writer Jean Dumont here, who wrote *Voyages en France, en Italie, en Allemagne, a Malte, et en Turquie* (1699) upon his travels. Dumont's writing include highly eroticised and orientalised accounts of the Ottoman harems and baths. His perceptions affirm the male Oriental gaze. By referring to Dumont's so-called fallacies, Pardoe renounces these efforts and deems them misleading and erroneous. Strikingly, this puts her, and her work, in the position of being able to judge on the basis of his falsehoods: she purposefully creates a new literary dynamic in which what is "true" and "false" is polarised. By doing so, Pardoe stressed the need to demarcate this binary, so that authenticity of representation is guaranteed in her work.

Alan Sinfield writes that "in most states that we know of, the civilized and the barbaric are not very different from each other; that is why maintaining the distinction is such a constant ideological task" (35). Sinfield adds that these ideological power structures are not unbreakable and asserts that there are faultlines in dominant ideologies (40). Faultlines occur when a dominant ideology is represented through an individualistic perspective that lays bare the constructedness of the ideology (41). In the passage on page 42, Pardoe highlights a faultline in the dominant gender ideology which she is able to do because of her marginalised position compared to that of Dumont.

In the following passage she writes, upon observing the Aya Sofya: "I had beheld it at a moment when no Christian eye had ever heretofore looked on it; and when detection would have involved instant destruction." (381) Thus, Pardoe is manufacturing a fallacy and a hyperbole at the same time. It is a fact that many Christians were residing in Istanbul at the period of Pardoe's visit. So it is extremely unlikely that she was the only Christian who had the chance to enter, and view the building that previously used to be a cathedral. What is more, Pardoe later writes that upon entering and viewing the mosque she was accompanied by a group of European travellers:

> Being aware of all this, the appearance of females in the mosque of St. Sophia did not produce the same effect upon me as upon many of the party. Those who were lately from Europe could

> scarcely believe their eyes; and when, in reply to the remark of a person who stood near me, expressing his astonishment at such an apparition, I explained to him that the presence of females in the different mosques was of constant and hourly occurrence, he looked so exceedingly annoyed at the sweeping away of his ancient prejudices, that I verily believe he thought the deficiency of the whole female Empire of Turkey must be transferred to my own little person, and that I, at least, could have no soul. (387)

Here, Pardoe contradicts herself within the same chapter, perhaps even at the cost of the authenticity of her writing. The content of the latter passage is also noteworthy to consider. Pardoe feels inclined to correct the biased beliefs of the male Western traveller who lays his eyes onto the Turkish women at prayer. In doing so, this passage also illustrates that Pardoe is not willing to maintain former prejudices. In doing so, she moves away from the passive role that has been linked to the female traveller. According to Sally Ulmer, "White women travellers were given authority by natives because of their race and were also restricted by their gender as writings by British women travellers were regarded differently, associated with the 'passive femininity of travel'" (7). This meant that woman traveller's predominantly focused on domestic cultural habits. In addition, there is also a focus on beauty and fashion among women travellers in general.

The following passage illustrates the inconsistency with which Pardoe presents her attitude about travellers who have written about the beauty of Ottoman women:

> A vast deal of very romantic and affecting sentiment has been from time to time committed to paper, on the subject of the Turkish females drowned in the Bosphorus; and some tale writers have even gone so far as to describe, in the character if witnesses, the extreme beauty and the heart-rendering tears of the victims. […] but it is unfortunate that in this case, as in many others, the imagination far outruns the fact. (183)

Pardoe claims that the "imagination" of former writers on the topic of beautifying the subjects they were describing is misplaced. This is indeed ironic. It was Pardoe herself who wrote about her inseparability from her running imagination: "With a morbidity of imagination to which I am

unhappily subject, I followed up at length one fantastic and gloomy image" (110). This contradiction is not necessarily peculiar since accounts of woman traveller could vary extremely with regard to their views on Ottoman society. In addition to this, she contradicts her statement above one more time upon describing one of the women she is visiting at their home: "I fear that much of it may be condemned as hyperbole, or at best as exaggeration. I only wish that they who are sceptical could look for an instant upon Saïryn Hanoum – they would confess that I have done her less than justice" (105). The contradictions in *The City of the Sultan* are testimony to a work that is challenging the boundaries of autobiographical writing and fiction. Pardoe's writing is inherently unsteady and unfixed when it comes to genre definitions. It does not serve the conventions of a particular genre per se. Instead, *The City of the Sultan* is hybrid in nature; each chapter is rife with imagination and hyperboles, but also with Pardoe's characteristic catch phrase "I ought not to have omitted to mention that" (28). The latter reminds one that anything can indeed be omitted according to the wishes of the author. In this sense, Pardoe's work intentionally mingles conventions and creates new conventions, such as the hybridity of the genre of travel writing. This has so far become evident based on the many contradictions that shine through both volumes and its analysis of Pardoe's self-awareness towards confronting genre boundaries. *The City of the Sultan* reworks a multitude of genres and, by doing so, assembles its own rules and conventions. Her aestheticized rhetoric of the Picturesque and the Sublime reveal a layer in her work that hints at the dominant gender ideology and power production as constructed. Pardoe's marginalised position as a woman travel writer allows her to adopt this rhetoric critically and with that, she dissent from male written travel literature.

Self-Reflexivity

Pardoe is not able to accomplish this hybridity in her writing through aestheticization and the Picturesque unintentionally. Her writing illuminates the author's sense of self-reflexivity and self-awareness. The following passage is exemplary and indicative of her attitude:

> But I can scarcely forgive myself for thus accounting in so matter-of-fact a manner for the beautiful illusions that wrought so powerfully on my own fancy. I detest the spirit which reduces everything to plain reason, and pleases itself by tracing effects to causes, where the only result of the research must be the utter annihilation of all romance, and the extinction of all wonder. The flowers that blossom by the wayside of life are less beautiful when we have torn them leaf by leaf asunder, to analyse their properties, and to determine their classes, than when we first inhale their perfume, and delight in their lovely tints, heedless of all save the enjoyment which they impart. The man of science may decry, and the philosopher may condemn, such a mode of reasoning; but really, in these days of utilitarianism, when all things are reduced to rule, and laid bare by wisdom, it is desirable to reserve a niche or two unprofaned by "the schoolmaster," where fancy may plume herself unchidden, despite never-ending analysis of a theorising world! (10)

This passage is striking for the author's predisposition concerning matter-of-fact discourse that it brings forth. In it, she challenges the status-quo of "reducing everything to plain reason." It is with intend that she does not align herself with these images of "reason" and instead opts for a more sentimental "romantic" approach in her writing. In explaining her style of writing, it becomes evident that Pardoe's perspective on writing is more intuitive and perceptive of nature. Indeed, this explains the often contradicting statements and observations Pardoe writes. In addition, this passage reveals Pardoe's expression towards the matter of class indirectly. Her attitude against defining and analysing "properties" and "classes" suggests that class, to her, is a secondary issue and not something that needs to be foregrounded. On the basis of this implicit insinuation, Pardoe may not be as realistic and aware of the reality of the importance of class in the early nineteenth century.

Barbara Cain writes that autobiographical writing has the function and effect to pave the way to a more free form of self-expression for women writers in particular. She writes: "Autobiographical writing allows previously illiterate and disenfranchised groups, including women and the poor, to construct particular identities for themselves and to challenge existing stereotypes and ideas of social

hierarchy and significance" (67). Indeed, what Pardoe's work is doing through its intuitiveness and its perceptive nature is becoming essentially autobiographical. Within this frame of ego writing, Pardoe has the mobility to express her literary voice and her identity at the same time.

The often contradicting observations and statements are documentations of the heterodox literary constituents of her work as it does not adhere to one genre alone. Whether travel literature is essentially life writing or fiction, or both, is slightly reductive and it is certainly more complicated than that. Kinsley has argued that travel literature should be considered in terms of "a collective term" rather than a genre:

> This view is echoed by Jan Borm, who, having surveyed the attempts at definition undertaken by his predecessors, concludes that travel writing 'is not a genre, but a collective term for a variety of texts both predominantly fictional and non-fictional whose main theme is travel'. He suggests that an element of self-narration is common to all, but that there is a fundamental difference between travel texts and (auto) biographical writings: 'while all travellers' accounts are autobiographical to a degree, there is no necessity for travellers to provide a retrospective overview of their life in the manner of the biographer. (69)

One can see evidence of these non-fictional and fictional elements in *The City of The Sultan*. This work is fundamentally an amalgam in that it combines fictional concepts such as the Picturesque, but is at the same time expressing much self-awareness and constructing an identity. Kinsley explains:

> The travel narrative is not the story of a life, it is the representation of a brief chapter in an individual's history that is framed and defined by the physical and conceptual movement away from, and then return to, 'home'. It might, therefore, be argued that the tradition of life writing to which the travel narrative bears most resemblance is the memoir which, 'unlike traditional autobiography, is often specifically occasional, concentrating on a small but significant amount of time. (69)

Pardoe then is able to construct a particular selfhood through writing which is fuelled by her internal desire for non-conformity. While there are occasions in which the chapters certainly read like fiction, the work is partly an ego-document. Depkat explains how ego-documents can uphold subjectivity:

> The idea of ego-document challenges the basic distinction between administrative records and historical documents as supposedly objective sourced, on the one hand, and all forms of first-person narratives and self-referential writing as supposedly subjective sources, on the other hand, which, for their very subjectivity, seem to mar the historians' access to the past as it actually was. (263)

This reflexivity ties in with the fact that Pardoe is challenging the boundaries of autobiographical writing in terms of gender. This also show that the genre was textually unfixed and unstable, and that there was a grey area to be filled up. Kinsley writes:

> In some travel accounts dislocation from the familiar environment of home – and the personal, familial and societal expectations for female behaviour metaphorically embodied within that domestic space – can enable women to explore the self through the observation and description of place. (69)

According to Sara Mills, "By the nineteenth century, Batten notes that travel writing either tends towards the 'factual' guide book or the 'literary text' (84). What Pardoe has achieved in *The City of the Sultan then* is an amalgam of both of these early nineteenth-century trends.

Prejudices, Colonial Ideology, and Dissident Gender Identity

It is evident that Pardoe's work is not merely affirmative of the prejudices concerning Turks which is rife among British colonial discourse of the nineteenth century. Pardoe's apparent prejudices and, at times, biased observations are more complex. Because she is a woman, Pardoe has a double position within the context of British imperial ideology. Indeed, she is quite self-aware of her own thinking in her writing as a woman writer. As such, she writes herself as a unique female subject and

individual. Thus, her writing is testimony to her identity construction under the constraints of the dominant Occident-Orient binary. As a British female subject, Pardoe's attempts to rework the colonial discourse of the nineteenth century is exceptional. The production of knowledge in her work is evidence of a changing paradigm of the aforementioned binary, and gender is undoubtedly a considerable factor in this. As a woman writer, Pardoe is in search of herself and reformulates her identity as a woman as she travels through the Ottoman Empire.

While the boundaries of genres are challenged in this work, Pardoe seems to be struggling with the doctrine of cultural hierarchy and supremacy. In a traditional sense, her work does not correspond to the colonial discourse produced in the nineteenth century, and is therefore far more progressive than her peers. Nevertheless, Pardoe's work, too, is subject to the colonial ideology in which Occidental subjects are constructed and colonial discourse and knowledge is produced. Sara Mills writes:

> Women's writing is frequently read as if it were autobiographical, as a 'confession' […]. This strategy has two effects: firstly, the downgrading of the value of the texts (if the text is simply an overflow of emotions, then it is not an artistic production); and secondly, the text is read as only relating to the individual concerned and not related to the colonial context. (109)

It is therefore necessary to examine and consider Pardoe's work within this colonial context. In addition to this, as Pardoe is a woman writer it is highly relevant to consider how the notion of gender has moulded her work to what it is.

As this chapter has previously illustrated, Pardoe is manifestly aware of her position as a female travel writer. In addition, she is also aware of the connotations that have been attached to the Ottoman Empire as a place to visit for a British citizen. There is a detectable difference between the first and the second volume of *The City of the Sultan* in terms of Pardoe's attitude towards the Orient. In the first volume, Pardoe seems rather radical and unbending in her observation of the Turkish population in relation to the Greek population within Istanbul:

> The Turk is the more stately, the more haughty, and the more self-centred, of the inhabitants of the East; but in all that relates to social tactics he is very far inferior to the keen, shrewd, calculating, intriguing, Greek. The Moslem will fix his eye upon a distant and important object, and work steadily onwards until he has attained it; but, meanwhile, the active Greek will have clutched a score of minor advantages, which probably, in the aggregate, are of more than equal weight. It is the collision of mind and matter – the elephant and the fox. Intellectual crafts has been the safety buoy of the Greeks; has they been differently constituted, they would long ere this have been swept from the face of the earth, or have become mere 'hewers of wood and drawers of water.' As it is, there is so strong a principle of moral life in this portion of the Greek nation, that, were they only more united among themselves, and less prey to intestine jealousies and heart burnings, it is probable that in these times, when Turkey lies stretched like a worsted giant at the mercy of the European powers, the heel of the Greeks might be shod with an iron, heavy enough to press her down beyond all means of resuscitation; in possession, as they are, of the confidence of those in power. Animal force has subjugated, but not subdued them; their physical power had departed, but their moral energy remains unimpaired; and it is doubtful whether human means will ever crush it. (85).

It is in her comparison of Turks to Greeks that she is so evidently racist. Strikingly, her claims are steeped with falsehoods and there is no rational, or factual argument at the centre to support her claims. This following passage illustrates with much distaste the result of her "keen observations" of the Greek civilisation in Istanbul compared to the Turks. In doing so, she also makes a clear distinction between what is Turkey and what is the "European" Greek civilisation, although both are at that time "Ottoman." Another thing that becomes visible is the fact that Pardoe links the term "Turk" to the term "Moslem" and here and throughout intertwines these terms as signifying the same. While Pardoe's attitude towards non-Christian peoples seems intolerant in these passages, they are more ambiguous than that since she comes to recognise the legitimacy of other religions as alternatives in other passages. This is likely to be due to her position as a British woman in the Ottoman Empire.

While Pardoe is considered subordinate in her native country, she is considered to be a legitimate British subject in the Ottoman Empire.

Another example of Pardoe's biased observations, this time respecting ethnicity, follows within the same chapter of the first volume:

> No circumstance impressed me more strongly during this very agreeable visit, than the rapid strides which the Constantinopolitan Greeks are making towards civilisation. The Turks have a thousand old and cherished superstitions that tend to clog the chariot wheels of social progression, and which it will require time to rend away; the Armenians, who consider their Moslem maters as the *ne plus ultra* of human perfection, are yet further removed from improvement than the Turks; while the Greeks, lively and quick-minded, seize, as it were by intuition, minute shades of character as well as striking points of manners. Locomotive, physically as well as mentally, they indulge their erratic tastes and propensities by travel; they compare, estimate, and adopt; they pride themselves in their progress; they stand forth, scorning all half measures, as declared converts to European customs; and they fashion their minds as well as their persons, after their admitted models. (84).

What becomes evident is that Pardoe has linked the progression and superiority of a particular ethnic group of people to their adjustment and inherent belonging to "European customs," traditions, and religion. This is problematic for two reasons. First of all, this line of theorising by Pardoe suggests that she is, at least to a certain extent, prone to colonial ideology, which polarises classes of people in terms of superiority and inferiority. Second, this discourse is affirmative of previous, if not more, degrading and prejudiced travel discourses written about the Orient and its peoples, such as Dumont's *Voyages en France, en Italie, en Allemagne, a Malte, et en Turquie*. However, Pardoe sometimes, quite unexpectedly, contradicts Orientalist statements such as the former, by creating a negation and subversion of already extensively adopted perspectives on the Ottomans:

> These are strong traits, beautiful developments, of human nature; and, if such be indeed the social attributes of 'barbarism,' then may civilized Europe, amid her pride of science and her

> superiority of knowledge, confess that herein at least she is mated by the less highly-gifted Musselmauns. (98)

As mentioned earlier, the contradiction and confusion here is located in the observation of Ottoman Turks having "beautiful developments of human nature," while at the same time being "less highly-gifted Musselmauns."

In the second volume of her accounts, it becomes evident that Pardoe is setting the false prejudices with regard to Turks straight, as she has done many times before. She does this by referring to former writers, for example, who affirmed prejudices and through their writings disseminated them at home. Another instance in which she is rectifying her previous judgements:

> The more I see of the Turks, the more I am led to regret their melancholy political position. Enabled, by the introductions which I had secured, to look more closely into their actual condition from the commencement of my sojourn among them, than falls to the lot of most travellers, I have been compelled from day to day to admit the justice of their indignation against those European powers, which, after deluding them with promises that they have failed to fulfil, and pledges that they have falsified, have reduced them to anchor their hopes, and to fasten their trust, upon a government whose interests can be served only by the ruin of the Ottoman Empire, and the subjugation of its liberties. Take them for all in all, there probably exist no people upon earth more worthy of national prosperity than the great mass of the Turkish population; nor better qualified, alike by nature and by social feeling, to earn it for themselves. (199)

Nevertheless, Pardoe recognises the fact that the traits that are put upon the Turks are falsely constructed and derive from a conservative nineteenth-century Anglo-Christian perspective that subjugates minorities and other religions. This ideology is critically at the centre of Pardoe's work. Sara Mills writes:

> Whilst posing themselves [travel writers] as objective, they were, in fact, describing people and events from a particular position in which had been constructed mainly by colonial

> discourses and hence from the demands of colonial power. Most travel writing presents a clear notion of the difference between the British as a race, of whom the narrator is representative, and the nation which inhabits the country which is being described. As Said has shown, this 'Othering' process is essential for Europe to regard European behaviour as the norm and hence to assert itself as a superior race. (88)

In considering this colonial context in *The City of the Sultan*, it becomes evident Pardoe perpetuates British colonial ideology, while attempting to dissent from this ideology to the extent she finds possible within the contexts of travel literature. In line with Sinfield's theory concerning the ever-present faultlines within dominant ideologies, this passage reveals Pardoe's attitude of dissent in which she discloses the construction of British colonial ideology. Indeed, as mentioned by Sara Mills, colonial discourse and ideology go hand in hand with the thinking that one civilisation is superior to others.

This imperialist western ideology was scrutinised by Edward Said in his work *Orientalism.* While Edward Said's work *Orientalism* has been of importance to the understanding of the Occident's othering of the East, it has failed to touch upon Western ideas and prejudices towards non-Arab continents of the world. In addition, Said's *Orientalism* disregards the relevance of the notion of gender in Occident relations and perspectives to the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, signs of self-reflexivity within travel literature are important signifiers and prompt one to think about an author's construction of selfhood and identity. In Pardoe's case, her self-reflexivity causes her to at least partially dissent from British colonial ideology and discourse through her awareness. In the following passage, Pardoe shows awareness towards her prejudices and admits to the system of oriental bias that is at place due to the canon of travel literature already written on the Orient, and in particular, on the Ottoman Empire:

> The European mind has become imbued with ideas of Oriental mysteriousness, mysticism, and magnificence, and it has been so long accustomed to pillow its faith on the marvels and

> metaphors of tourists, that it is to be doubted whether it will willingly cast off its old associations, and suffer itself to be undeceived. (89)

Due to the autobiographical nature of travel writing, Pardoe's self-awareness can be considered in terms of identity construction. Zoë Kinsley asserts that while it can be assumed that women travel writers used their travels for "reconceptualization of [their] personal identity,"this does not always lead to a "successful narration of the self" (68). Her work does reveal, however, that occasions of self-awareness hint at repressed desires. The dubiousness of her statements concerning the position of the Turks and the widespread contradictory observations could therefore be read as a testimony for the fact that she was indeed struggling with her identity construction and that her selfhood was being challenged by Orientalist and colonial ideologies that she had made her own. This confrontation and the struggle that comes with it is visible within the chapters.

The following statement is at the same time quite evident of Pardoe's self-reflexivity:

> Hence arise most of those errors relative to the feelings and affairs of the East, that have so long misled the public mind in Europe; and, woman as I am, I cannot but deplore a fact which I may be deficient in power to remedy. The repercussion of public opinion must be wrought by a skilful and a powerful hand, They are no lady-fingers which can grasp a pen potent enough to overthrow the impressions and prejudices that have covered reams of paper, and spread scores of misconceptions. But, nevertheless, like the mouse in the fable, I may myself succeed in breaking away a few of the meshes that imprison the lion; and, as I was peculiarly situated during my residence in the East, and enjoyed advantages and opportunities denied to the generality of travellers […] (88)

It is for the first time Pardoe explicitly refers to her gender in this passage. As mentioned earlier, there is a perpetual awareness of the self in Pardoe's work. In this case, Pardoe is, almost reluctantly, expressing the facts of what it means to be a woman in the early nineteenth century. She implies that the traditional Victorian gender dichotomy is dictating women's roles as passive and inferior. She mentions her deficiency in power with regard to her being a woman.

Gender identity in the nineteenth century assumed women as partaking in domestic roles. The arbitrary and dogmatic ideal of the "Angel in the House,"coined by Coventry Patmore in 1854, is named after the poem *The Angel in the House* that gave the name to this gender ideal. The phrase implies that there is an ideal submissive and domestic woman, and it was a construct interwoven with the cultural identity of Victorian women. As an author, she is aware of the social constructions on what she is able to write due to her gender. Namely, Pardoe's gender allows one to put this colonial ideology and her Orientalism in a new light. What is relevant here is what makes Pardoe different in the context of the traditional roles of women in the nineteenth century. This is her critique of the dominant ideology of the gender hierarchy. Pardoe takes a stance in her work that her gender identity has more depth than a culturally imposed identity. Her work hints that gender identities are ideologically constructed, although there is no explicit alignment here. Intervals of self-awareness, such as in the passage above, strongly hint at supressed desires of the author. These supressed desires cannot be fully expressed because of the constant conflict between "the subjective frontier in which the encounter is between a potentially authentic self and that constructed within the context of cultural expectation" (Siegel 19). Occasions of self-awareness that manifest the author's supressed desires are attempts to consolidate the incongruous self. This work also reveals that Pardoe is negotiating new dissident cultural identities as a woman.

Pardoe also recognises that there is an immense advantage to her being a woman as compared to male travellers and writers: her access and admittance to the domestic spheres of Ottoman women which allows her to explore their private customs and traditions. Sara Mills writes that female travellers challenged male Orientalism through their position of access, but at the same time were "part of the colonial project": These women writers are undoubtedly part of the colonial project, and yet colonialism is more notable by its absence in many of the accounts; the addressing of large-scale issues, such as the role of the journey in relation to colonial expansion or description of potential colonial sites, is notably absent. Instead, their accounts demand a recognition of the importance of interaction with members of other nations, not as representatives of the race, as in male-authored accounts, but as individuals. This alternative, more personalised form of writing by women, this

"going native" by women, constitutes both a challenge to male Orientalism and a different form of knowledge about other countries. (Mills 99)

In reading *The City of the Sultan*, one can affirm the absence of political references or passages. In contrast to this, there are references to falsehoods constructed by imperial ideology. But, most of all, Pardoe's work concerns itself with the domestic lives of Ottoman women from all kinds of ethnicities, suggesting a cross-cultural bond between women. Indeed, there are many occasions in which Pardoe is observing women's customs, traditions, beauty routines, fashion, relationships, and women's domestic lives. These observations distinguish her work from most of the male written travel accounts on the Ottoman Empire. This is in line with the so-called "feminised discourse" of the nineteenth century. Sara Mills writes:

> The discourses of femininity designated certain areas of experience as 'feminine' and often attempted to elide this with 'female'. In western culture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, certain character traits were designated as feminine and classified as 'natural' for women. Denied the outlet of waged work, middle-class women were encouraged to care for others and consider the maintenance of relationships and interests in other people important, since these traits defined them as 'feminine' women. This is also interesting when one considers that the type of writing which women were encouraged to do was mainly concerned with this emotional sphere (autobiography, letters, the novel). (96)

This meant that feminine discourse entailed, among others, a focus on relationships in a domestic sphere, clothing, fashion and customs, and a concern with Christianity and morality. Much in accordance with the discourse of femininity that was prevalent in nineteenth-century travel literature, Pardoe's observations of Ottoman women in the harem and its baths are Oriental and subject to the female appropriated male gaze. Take, for example, the following passage from the harem: "The appearance of the outer hall was most singular; the raised gallery was tenanted, throughout its whole extent, with Turkish and Greek women, eating, sleeping, and gossiping, or busied in the arrangement of their toilette" (55). There are observations like the above in almost every chapter of both volumes.

Another example of feminised discourse can be found in the following passage: "Previously to her confinement, she has plucked out the whole of her eyebrows, and had replaced them by two stripes of black dye, raised about an inch higher upon the forehead. This is a common habit with the Turkish women on great occasions" (99). Indeed, Pardoe carefully observes the details of Ottoman women's appearances on several accounts, and then compares them to each other. Descriptions such as the above abound in *The City of the Sultan*.

In the early nineteenth century, the overall belief was that genres such as autobiography, letter-writing, and diary keeping, were forms of writing that corresponded well to the discourse of femininity (Mills 103). Another trend that was appearing at the same time was that women were getting even more involved in the British imperial process. This influenced feminist thinking of the period, resulting in what Irene Kamberidou calls "a set of imperial feminist ideologies" (385). It is inevitable that this "imperial project" which constituted "a pervasive economic, political and cultural formation" did not govern Julia Pardoe's thinking and writing.

Nevertheless, Pardoe, at first, seems to have quite a benevolent view of the women in the Ottoman Empire. However, it later becomes apparent that this benevolence is selective, primarily focused on the Christian population of the Empire who have already adapted to European customs:

> Nor must I pass over without remark the progress of education among these amiable women; two-thirds of the younger ones speak French, many of them even fluently – several were conversant with English, and still more with Italian; while a knowledge of the ancient Greek is the basis of their education, and is consequently almost general. A taste for music is also rapidly obtaining; and time and greater facilities are alone wanting to lend the polish of high-breeding and high education to the Greek ladies: the material is there – they already possess intellect, quickness of perception, and a strong desire for instruction; and, even eminently superior as they already are to the Turkish and Armenian females, they are so conscious of their deficiencies both of education and opportunity, that, were these once secured to them,

> they would probably be inferior to no women in the world as regards mental acquirements. (C4, 75).

While the Ottoman Empire was in no way under rule of the British Empire, there exists a kind of implicit attitude within Pardoe's work that there is a colonial enterprise at hand. Durba Ghosh explains this: "In creating a gendered language for explaining Greece's 'imprisonment' under Ottoman rule, travel narratives created an imagined colonialism for British writers, one that did not amount to territorial, but symbolic, conquest" (749). For Pardoe, this indeed seems to be the case. This view on the "more civilised" Greek women among the Ottomans goes hand in hand with a rather demeaning view on Turkish women:

> The almost total absence of education among Turkish women, and the consequently limited range of their ideas, is another cause of that quiet, careless, indolent happiness that they enjoy; their sensibilities have never been awakened, and their feelings and habits are comparatively unexacting: they have no factitious wants, growing out of excessive mental refinement; and they do not, therefore, torment themselves with the myriad anxieties, and doubts, and chimeras, which would darken and depress the spirit of more highly-gifted females. Give her shawls, and diamonds, a spacious mansion in Stamboul, and a sunny palace on the Bosphorus, and a Turkish wife is the very type of happiness; amused with trifles, careless of al save the passing hour; a woman in person, but a child at heart. (C6 103).

Upon lengthily observing the women of the Ottoman Empire, Pardoe, much like an ethnographer who constructs beguiling information, has fashioned a sequential order of Ottoman women, depending on their religion and nationality. On Pardoe's sequence, Ottoman Greek women seem to "score" the highest on being more highly-gifted. Then, come the Ottoman Turkish women, followed by the Armenian women. She visits Jewish women too, but does not go to the same extent as to fit them in her constructed sequence of "intelligence and brightness." Pardoe's imperial ideology is at the foreground here.

Upon looking at Pardoe's claims with regard to the "almost total absence of education" among

Turkish women, one quickly realises the unreliability of this claim based on multiple reasons. None of the above is based on actual facts, but rather on individual meetings and observations. Secondly, the claim of who had access to education among women is more complex than Pardoe claims. This was among others also the case in Britain; men of the aristocracy were most likely to receive an education. If lucky, this was the same case for aristocratic women. Many British women in the nineteenth century still remained uneducated and illiterate in this period.

The Ottoman government did not provide official formal education for women and girls, but this was to change towards the end of the nineteenth century due to nationwide educational reforms (Açıkgöz 783). However, many women relied on individual, sometimes even marginalised institutions, such as local churches for education. While education was not the norm for all women in the Ottoman Empire, there were undoubtedly aristocratic Turkish women within the harem who received an education in for example arts, literature, poetry, geography, and history. Pardoe herself provides an example of this when she encloses a ballad written by one of the Turkish women she is visiting in the harem: "I subjoin the little ballad of Perousse Hanoum, which I have rendered almost literally into English verse. I could have wished that it had been somewhat more Oriental in its character, but its quaintness is at least sufficiently characteristic" (319). This enclosed ballad, which Pardoe finds lacking in "Oriental" nature, illustrates that the rather blunt assumption of the universal lack of education of Turkish women is an inaccurate judgement on Pardoe's behalf.

Another example illustrating this inaccuracy of lack of intelligence and education among Turkish females is the works of Fatma Aliye Topuz (1862-1936). Topuz was an intellectual and a writer who was mostly concerned with women's rights. The themes of her novels often involve individualism and freedom when it comes to the heroines in her narratives. She was a self-educated translator and was, among others, also fluent in Arabic and French. Topuz makes a case for the fact that being intelligent and educated was uncommon among women, yet potentially achievable for Turkish women of the higher echelon of society. This begs the question as to why Pardoe assumes in her writing this inferiority in education of Turkish women and categorised all sorts of women in certain boxes according to her knowledge and observations.

One might argue, therefore, that her line of thinking is undoubtedly caused by an internalised colonial ideology. By way of this, Pardoe herself becomes a part of producing Western Orientalism. While one can see she is at the same time making statements that very much illustrate the opposite of this type of colonial ideology. Nevertheless, Pardoe is taking on subjects that were formerly unfamiliar terrains to many male travel writers. According to Reina Lewis, this led to a broadening of perspectives and a moving away of "voyeuristic sexual sphere":

> For men, the harem woman trapped in a cruel polygamous sexual prison was a titillating but pitiful emblem of the aberrant sexuality and despotic power that characterised all that was wrong with the non-Christian Orient. But for women, as Billie Melman has demonstrated, the harem could be conceptualised in relation to their changing concerns with their own domestic and social arrangements. Rather than operating only as a voyeuristic sexual sphere, the harem began to appear in the manners and customs model that privileged female access and prioritised the intersubjective observation of the gendered participant. (13)

In this sense, Westers Orientalism is subverted and challenged in *The City of the Sultan*. In accordance with the discourse of femininity, Pardoe dedicates a certain amount of her observations to the customs of dress, beauty, and fashion of Ottoman women. An example of this is when Pardoe gets tours into the Imperial Palaces: "But the most striking feature of the costume in the Imperial Palaces is the head-dress. Nothing can be imagined more hideous!" (305). In addition, on several occasions she then compares the differences in dress and fashion among the multi-ethnic Ottoman women of the aristocracy. As mentioned before, in doing so, Pardoe seems aware of expectations set on Oriental beauty standards. Her observations both accord with the discourse of femininity and with the Orientalist male gaze in observing women's dress and beauty.

In Pardoe's work the relationship to gender is problematic and complex. Her feminist views keenly support some Ottoman women, while excluding others. It can be said, therefore, that gender in Pardoe's work is inextricably linked to nationality, suggesting that some groups of women cannot escape their inferior inborn qualities.

Pardoe constructs the female appropriated male gaze to subtly employ her underlying imperial ideology and Western Orientalist views. The continuum of contradictions with regard to topics such as gender and the inferiority of the Ottoman Turks give insights to the conflicted mind of the author. There are opposing forces at work here: on the one hand, *The City of the Sultan* adheres to the status-quo of travel writing in its Orientalist views, and on the other hand, it is subverting these views to gain a moral high ground. The contradictions are evident throughout her work in terms of gender, race, orientalism, and colonial ideology. Nevertheless, Pardoe's adaptation to Ottoman culture, fashion, traditions, and language illustrates a willingness to subvert preconceptions about the Ottomans in a refreshing manner. In the process of taking a non-conform stance, Pardoe has dealt with issues of individuality and selfhood, resulting in her careful crafting of her authorial and personal identity.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I investigated how both Montagu's *Turkish Embassy Letters* and Pardoe's *The City of the Sultan* deal with the standards of travel literature as a genre in the eighteenth century and nineteenth century respectively. This critical investigation has included examinations of both case studies in terms of how both women authors deal with their gender identity in relation to the standards of travel literature which is predominantly male. Within this framework, there is space to examine dissent in terms of gender identity and in relation to colonial discourse and ideology. In both cases, it is assumed that a pre-existing self-awareness and self-reflexivity already resides in the author herself which illuminates through in their language. I have examined the occasions in which their selfhoods were evidently constructed due to this self-reflexivity of being a woman writer.

There are some obvious similarities between both works. The most important one is the fact that both women writers have access to private domestic spheres because they are women. In this sense, Pardoe and Montagu command a non-marginalised position within the Ottoman Empire, although they are marginalised as women in their native land. Furthermore, both woman authors were quite aware of the literary traditions and the literary context of the period they were writing in. At the same time, they were also aware of the limitations of being a woman author. This awareness resonates in both *Turkish Embassy Letters* and *The City of The Sultan*.

While Montagu engages with her readers directly by addressing the letters to each of them, Pardoe's work does not assume this directness. Nevertheless, Pardoe's work manages to engage with its readers by vivid landscape descriptions and the Picturesque which awake the reader's imagination, and therefore, has a strong fictional quality.

However, both works are hybrid of nature. Pardoe and Montagu explore this hybridity of the genre of travel literature for the sake of personal expression. In doing so, Montagu appears towards her readership as a more strategic and political writer. She distributes the information she gathered based on each receiver. Each letter reveals a premeditation of authorial intentions. By contrast, Pardoe's

accounts are not directed at a specific readership, except for on one occasion. Whereas this may lend Montagu's work with more authenticity and scientific naturalness, her extensive use of hyperboles indicate that she diverts from the standard of empiricism. Pardoe very much relies on fictional concepts such as the Picturesque and other aesthetic categories such as the Sublime. From the onset of her travel narrative she conveys that she is not interested in being empirical and rational. In this sense, both authors' tap into the "femininity of discourse" which was expected from women writers, but at the same time Pardoe and Montagu are grappling with this gendered style of writing. These contradictions are exhibited in a form of struggle and dissent in their attitudes and writing.

Whereas Montagu's claims are to a great extent not essentialist of nature, there are without doubt some claims and observations that are essentialist and imperialist. Montagu's letters indicated an alliance and representativeness to being a British imperialist subject. By contrast, Pardoe does not express a direct alliance as being a British subject. In her work, Pardoe diverts positioning herself in direct relation to her country's imperialist mission. Nevertheless, both works substitute essentialism with regard to colonial discourse and ideology. Thus, they maintain this ideology because of this continuance of the systematic dichotomy of east-to-west relations, while at the same time they reveal to have a dissident perspective in relation to imperialist hegemony and gender roles. Pardoe highlights positive characteristics of the Ottomans and their culture and thus reveal that they are as much human as the British are, whereas Montagu explicitly enjoys how she is treated with a sense of superiority and high esteem because of her British upper-class identity. Because of their personalised perspectives due to being a woman, both authors identify the faultlines that are at the heart of British imperial ideology by accusing former travel writers of perpetuating the stigma that Ottomans were inferior and by negotiating a more humanised view of the Ottomans.

The work of both women writers reveal that they identify their gender identity as being a disadvantage. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, gender roles were divided into a binary of inferior and superior. Both woman authors have, to an extent, been able to avoid gender oppression in their native land by travelling to the Orient, where they signify Britishness and imperial enterprise.

Their writing are testimony and evidence of the fact that their gender opens more doors in a foreign empire, rather than in their own native land. The difference lays in the fact that in their homeland their gender constitutes an identity that is considered inferior as a binary to masculinity. By contrast, their presence in the Ottoman Empire constitutes that of Britishness, and with that, both women come to be signifiers of this ideological identity linked to the British. In either context, they have become signifiers: the one is a gendered sign and the other is a colonial sign. Therefore, despite of their difference to the Ottoman people both women find solidarity within the Ottoman Empire, society, and its culture.

However, both chapters of this research illustrate that female gender identity was not as rigidly configured for Montagu and Pardoe as the ideologically prescribed dominant gender roles suggest. Pardoe is not critical of the link between class and gender and Montagu makes mention of this many times. Montagu is aware of the privileged position she has been able to gain as being an aristocratic woman. Both women are driven by their personal pursuits to the extent that they express this in their writing and observations. Their gender identity dissents from these traditional domestic gender roles prevalent in eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Britain. In other ways, their gender identity fluctuates and does hold up with the conventional gender roles through "the femininity of discourse." This "female" way of writing is evident in both works. In addition, both works adopt the lens of the female appropriated male gaze upon observing Ottoman women and their rituals in order to adhere to the standards of travel writing by men.

Nevertheless, there is a strong sense of gender identity dissent in both works. This dissent arises from their awareness of their position as women writers, which both Pardoe and Montagu acknowledge in their work. They identity with being a women and how this brings about a complexity in their writing. Both argue in the line of exclusion of their gender in travel literature and their limited means to express ideas that were conventionally attributed to male travellers. In terms of gender identity, both women authors hold a similar stance. Their work reveals self-reflexivity towards their womanhood and their selfhood. While Pardoe an Montagu do not necessarily make explicit that they

are aware of gender's constructedness, they recognise that gender identities are formative in the way which travellers develop a specific way of looking at the Ottoman Empire. Both texts are evident of an intricate struggle with regard to articulating the self as a woman. Thus, they are signifiers of woman authors' struggle with articulating selfhood under the gender paradigms of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This thesis has critically revealed how Montagu and Pardoe, through their work, take a stance as woman writers that dissents from conventions of the dominant gender dichotomy, imperialist ideology, and that of male travel literature. Their works are testimony to the identity construction of women writers under the constraints of the dominant Occident-Orient binary and the hegemonic norms of gender roles within the paradigms of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Because of their womanhood, Pardoe and Montagu have held a marginalised position within British society and within literary circles. Nevertheless, their works mark a contesting spirit, rather than a yielding one.

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