

## GRACE ELLISON: AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN A TURKISH HAREM\*

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### Abstract

Though to varying degrees prominent and successful in her day, today, Grace Ellison, is largely unknown to Western readers and she is not too familiar to readers in Turkey and little is known about the details of her life. The idea/possibility of English journalist/writer Grace Ellison's being French journalist Madame Léra (Marie Léra, who wrote under the name of Marc Hélys) is the main argument of this article. In addition to this, this study concentrates on Grace Ellison and one of her neglected historical records called, "An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem (1915)" to explore the literary forgery in which she is involved.

*Keywords:* Grace Ellison, Madame Léra, Pierre Loti, An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem, Zeynep Hanoum, Melek Hanoum, Harem Literature.

## GRACE ELLISON: TÜRK HAREMİNDE BİR İNGİLİZ KADINI

### Öz

Yaşadığı dönemin önde gelen ve başarılı yazarı olan Grace Ellison günümüzde ekseriyetle Batılı okurlar tarafından bilinmemekte ve Türk okurunca tanınmamakta, hayatının detayları hakkında çok az şey bilinmektedir. Bu makalede öne sürülen görüş İngiliz gazeteci/yazar Grace Ellison'nun ve Fransız gazeteci Madame Léra'nın (Marc Hélys adı altında yazan Marie Léra) aynı kişiler olduğu veya olabileceğidir. Buna ek olarak bu çalışmada, Grace Ellison ve onun ihmal edilmiş tarihi belgelerinden biri olan "Türk Haremindedir Bir İngiliz Kadını" isimli eseri incelenerek, Ellison'nun da bir parçası olduğu edebi sahtecilik üzerinde durulmaktadır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Grace Ellison, Madame Léra, Pierre Loti, Türk Haremindedir bir İngiliz Kadını, Zeynep Hanım, Melek Hanım, Harem Edebiyatı.

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## Introduction

The idea/possibility of English journalist Grace Ellison's being the French journalist/writer Madame Léra is the main argument of this article. This idea/possibility is also debated by certain scholars/writers and this study will explore their studies in order to provide a basis for this argument.

In his famous novel *Disenchanted* (*Les Désenchantées*)<sup>1</sup> (1906) Pierre Loti narrates the story of a successful French novelist's liaison with three Turkish women, who never reveal their faces to the writer and are dissatisfied with their lives.<sup>2</sup> Their names are Djénane, Melek, and Zeyneb. *Disenchanted* starts with a disclaimer stating that none of Loti's characters were real and that they never existed. But there is considerable evidence that they did exist and Loti gave these names to his heroines in order to protect their identity from the repressive regime of Abdul Hamid II.

*"Of the three girls who fed Loti the story, two were granddaughters of le Comte de Chateaufort, a Frenchman who had settled in Turkey, turned Muslim, and taken the name of Reşat Bey. The girl's father, who was the son of Reşat and a Circassian woman, held a high government post."*<sup>3</sup>

Loti's attempt to disguise the identity of his protagonists was soon uncovered. Before the publication of *Disenchanted*, fearing the imperial axe, the two Turkish sisters Melek and Zeyneb flee to Europe from their harem with the hope of finding 'freedom' in the West.<sup>4</sup> "What prompted their escape to Europe was the sister's engagement"<sup>5</sup> with a lady. This third woman is known to be a French journalist and translator who was visiting Turkey when Loti arrived in Constantinople. Her name was Madame Léra.

*"Djenane, the heroine of the story and the leader of the three girls, was, in reality, a French woman journalist masquerading as a Turk, a Marie Léra who wrote*

1 *Les Désenchantées* was published in 1906 and the novel was translated into English the same year as *Disenchanted*.

2 For a detailed analysis of Pierre Loti's *Disenchanted* and his relationship with the three ladies see; Alain Quella-Villegier, *Harem'den Kaçanlar: İstanbul'da Bir Devlet Meselesi ve Feminizm* (1906), Trans. Aysel Bora, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul, 2014; Füsün Çoban Döşkaya, "The Grand Supercherie: Alev Lytle Croutier's *The Third Woman*", Uluslararası VII. Dil, Yazın, Deyişbilim Sempozyumu Bildiri Kitabı, Cilt II, Selçuk Üniversitesi Basımevi, Konya, 2007, pp.535-542.

3 Fanny Davis, *The Ottoman Lady: A Social History from 1718 to 1918*, Greenwood Publishing Group, New York, 1986, p. 79.; More information about the story of Casimir de Chateaufort, the grandfather of Zeynep and Melek. can be found in Turkish-American writer Alev Lytle Croutier's exotic historical novel entitled *The Palace of Tears* (2000). To win the heart of a beautiful harem girl with one blue eye and one yellow eye, Casimir de Chateaufort abandons his family, fortune, language, religion and country, journeys across sea and desert and becomes a Moslem and a Turk.

4 For more information on the how they escaped to Europe see Melek Hanoum, "How I escaped from the Harem and How I Became a Dressmaker," *Strand Magazine* February 1926, pp. 129-30.

5 Kader Konuk, 'Ethnomasquerade in Ottoman-European Encounters: Reenacting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu', *Criticism*, 46.3 (2004). p. 401.

under the name of Marc Hélylys.”<sup>6</sup>

Shortly after Pierre Loti’s death, in 1923, by using the pseudonym Marc Hélylys, she published *Le Secret des ‘Désenchantées’* (The Secret of the ‘Disenchanted’) with a subtitle “The other point of view of a novel, revealed by the one who was Djenan.”

In the book, Hélylys or the Djénan of Loti’s novel accounted how Pierre Loti had become the subject of a *superchérie* (deception). She stated in the book that out of respect for Loti, she had chosen to wait until Loti’s death in 1923 to reveal that he had been duped by the two Turkish sisters.<sup>7</sup> Marc Hélylys or Madame Léra recounted the real story of Loti’s novel by displaying her own letters and the way Loti copied them. She explained how she had impersonated a Turkish woman along with the two sisters by wearing a veil. She was the Djenane of Loti’s novel.

*“Djenane is not dead. Djenane was not Turkish. Djénane was a French woman, a traditionalist, who had always been attracted by Turkey, our secular friend. She was a French woman who loved and pitied Turkish women, and who wanted to do them good.”*<sup>8</sup>

### 1. Grace Ellison or Madame Léra?

In 2006 Turkish-American writer Alev Lytle Croutier published her historical novel *The Third Woman*<sup>9</sup> and continued dealing with the event between Pierre Loti and the three women. She relied on letters and diaries, to recount the backstory of the event and exposed a literary forgery which challenged the authorship of Loti’s *Disenchanted*.<sup>10</sup>

At the very last page of her novel *The Third Woman*, Croutier surprised her readers with a possibility. In the very last section Croutier’s book, named “Masméjean’s Journal” Pierre Loti’s helper Masméjean recounts the following;

*“A friend from the Turkish Consulate invited me last night to a lecture at the Sorbonne. In the audience, a woman caught my attention who looked extremely familiar. It took a minute or two to place her in the far recesses of my ailing mind. Except for the fact that she was matronly and quite a bit older, her resemblance to Madame Léra was uncanny. How could I ever mistake Leila’s eyes?*

*“Who is that woman?” I asked my companion.*

6 Davis, *The Ottoman Lady*, p. 79.

7 Çoban Döşkaya, *ibid*, p. 537.

8 Preface, Marc Hélylys, *Le Secret Des ‘Désenchantées’* 2d ed. Perrin, Paris, 1923, p.25; English translation is taken from the 42nd footnote of Kader Konuk, “Ethnomasquerade in Ottoman-European Encounters: Reenacting Lady Mary Wortley Montagu”, *Criticism*, 46.3 (2004): p.413.

9 In that book Alev Croutier takes reality and turns it into a novel. In the novel the three women characters try to show the World the difficulties of a segregated harem life.

10 Loti never realized that he was a subject of a “literary hoax”, as the three women convinced him to become their mouthpiece and to write a book about the suppression of woman.

"She's British--a journalist. She has written a couple of important books about women in our country."

"Are you positive she is British and not French?"

"Absolutely positive."

"What's her name?"

"Grace Ellison. She was friends with the infamous Disenchanted. You remember the incident with Loti about twenty years ago?"

I could not concentrate during the lecture, my mind too occupied with the puzzle. There had to be a code to all this. In the *Grand Revue*, Mary Lera had signed her name as Héliia, la Grande Dame, Héliia. Héliard. Hélyys. Ellison (the letter "h" is silent in French). One picks up where the other one left off. Marc Hélyys disappears, goes into oblivion, and in comes Grace Ellison. She meets the sisters in Fontainebleau, becomes their new confidante, even collaborating on a book with Zennour, called *A Turkish Woman's Impressions of Europe*. How odd. Was this yet another impersonation? Was Marie Lera's real profession was being an impersonator? That could explain why no one had been able to know her whereabouts after she left her husband. She had become another persona.

The possibilities were rich. I was briefly tempted to investigate her many faces. But it was tiring to even think about it. I had done enough sleuthing on the case of the *Disenchanted* and came to believe there was no end to it; it would be like diving into an infinite sea of mirrors to open the case again"<sup>11</sup>

At the end of Croutier's novel, it is made speculative that the third woman helping Zeynep and Melek Hanoums, could very well be the British feminist, journalist and writer, Grace Ellison.

A chart is provided below showing the names of the characters in these three books<sup>12</sup>

Real Names	Louis Marie Julien Viaud	Hortense Marie Helliard	Hadidjé Zennour	Nouryé Neyr-el Nisa
Pen Names	Pierre Loti	Marc Hélyys	Zeyneb Hanoum	Melek Hanoum
In <i>Disenchanted</i>	André L'héry	Djenan	Zeyneb	Melek
In <i>Le secret des 'Désenchantées'</i>	Pierre Loti	Marie Lera or Leila	Zennour or Zeyneb	Nuria or Melek
In <i>The Third Woman</i>	Pierre Loti	Leyla or Djenane	Zeyneb or Zennour	Neyr or Nourye

11 Alev Lytle Croutier, *The Third Woman*, Manuscript, 2006b, p. 269. The Turkish version of the book is as follows: Alev Aksoy Croutier, *Üçüncü Kadın*, trans. Leyla Özcengiz, Remzi Kitabevi, İstanbul, 2006a.

12 The chart is taken from Çoban Döşkaya, *The Grand Superchérie*, p.537.

The possibility of Madame Léra's being Grace Ellison was suggested also before by Yeshim Ternar in 1994 as such:

"...Ellison suspiciously resembles Hély's: it could easily be the anglicized version of the French name! Both Ellison and Hély's were freelance journalists on their own, and seem to have approached life in Istanbul in the same adventurous spirit. Ellison, educated in France and fluent in French, could easily have dreamt up this trick."<sup>13</sup>

However, we have as counter-evidence, facing the title page of *Le Secret des 'Désenchantées'* (Perrin, 1930 edition) a photograph of Marc Hély's (Maria Léra as Leyla (Djenan) next to Zeyneb and Neyr (Melek) wearing an almost transparent yashmak (veil) which barely conceals her lips and nose but leaves her eyes exposed. When compared with photos of an unveiled Grace Ellison found in the various texts she has authored, we are led to believe that although these two women journalists-one French and the other English, with suspiciously similar sounding last names-were both fluent in each other's language and both interested in Turkey and Turkish women, they were, in fact, two different women."<sup>14</sup>

Being an editor of both Zeyneb (1913) and Melek Hanoum's books (1913) (1926), Grace Ellison, argued that she met the two sisters in Europe when they escaped from a harem. Later she contradicted herself in her book entitled *Turkey To-Day* (1928) when she elaborated again on the story of *Disenchanted*. In that book, she claimed to have 'met the two sisters when she visited them at home in Istanbul during her first visit to the city as a 'schoolgirl tourist' in 1905'.<sup>15</sup>

In *Turkey To-day* under the subtitle "A First Attempt at Freedom: The True Story of *Les Désenchantées*" Ellison reports the following;

"It was the wrong way to strike for freedom, yet something was accomplished nevertheless. They intended 'the whole civilized world to know their suffering' (sic) and the whole civilized world did. So we can sum up the fate of Zeyneb and Melek-the heroines of Pierre Loti's *Désenchantées*.

*It was in 1905 we met, and two more fascinating and interesting women it would have been hard to find. They were the daughters of the late Noury Bey, one of Abdul Hamid's Ministers and the granddaughters of the Marquis de Chateauf, who became a Turk and a Moslem...*

*My friends's house was the first Turkish house I visited and they lived in what could be termed uncomfortable luxury, that is with every luxury and little comfort."*<sup>16</sup>

Reina Lewis in her book *Rethinking Orientalism* also calls attention to the fact that Ellison "never actually mentions Hély's, though as someone fluent in

13 Yeshim Ternar, *The Book and the Veil: Escape from an Istanbul Harem*, Vehicule Press, Montreal, 1994, p. 113.

14 Ibid., p. 115.

15 Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*, I. B. Tauris, London, 2004, p. 21.

16 Grace Ellison, *Turkey To-Day*, Hutchinson, London, 1928, p. 112.

French and often resident in France she must have known of Hély's claims and publications".<sup>17</sup>

Sarah G. Moment Atis in her book review of Reina Lewis' *Rethinking Orientalism* argues that the "question of authenticity" in the case of Zeynep and Melek Hanoum needs to be resolved and discusses the possibility of Grace Ellison's being "the master puppeteer" behind Loti's *Les Désenchantées* and Zeyneb Hanoum's *A Turkish Woman's European Impressions*.

*"British journalist Grace Ellison, who was fluent in French and well versed in French culture, having worked for six years as a journalist in France, presented Zeyneb Hanoum and Melek Hanoum as the heroines of Pierre Loti's novel Les Désenchantées and as 'mainly responsible for the information contained in the book' (A Turkish Woman's European Impressions 1913: xiii)...all who possess an adequate knowledge of the clichés of Orientalist representations should pause to remark upon the consistency of their deployment throughout Les Désenchantées, A Turkish Woman's European Impressions and An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem. In all three works, we encounter the same subset of Orientalist fictions..."*

*For instance, Grace Ellison indeed may have the acquaintance of two Turkish women, political exiles in France, corresponded with them, and taken their photographs. Their names or pseudonyms even may have been Zeyneb and Melek. However, their transformation from political exile to harem escapee and the Orientalist imagery that drips from their pens might easily have been the work of Ellison simply reworking their letters and adding new ones of her own creation as needed. This is a possibility that needs researching. Similarly, it would be well to consider the very real possibility that Marie Léra and her masculine pseudonym, Marc Hély, are both pseudonyms actually used by Grace Ellison, who would then stand as the master puppeteer behind both Pierre Loti's *Les Désenchantées* and Zeyneb Hanoum's *A Turkish Woman's Impressions of Europe*."*<sup>18</sup>

Sarah's assessment deserves critical attention but there are also writers who interpret the relationship of Grace Ellison with the sisters as a feminist deed. For instance, Asako Nakoi, interprets Grace Ellison's help to Zeynep and Melek in getting their books published in Europe as "a story of successful friendship" and says the following;

*"The first step to be taken was to help her friends have their voice heard in the west, and this is possibly why she introduced Zeynep and Melek Hanoum to the English publishing industry. Zeyneb's memoirs, A Turkish Woman's European Impressions (Hanoum 1913), and Melek's novel, Abdul Hamid's Daughter (1913, co-authored by Ellison), were published before Ellison's first book appeared".*<sup>19</sup>

17 Lewis, *Rethinking Orientalism*, p. 50.

18 Sarah G. Moment Atis, "Book Review: Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem", *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, vol.1, No. 3, 2005, p. 119.

19 Asako, Nakai, "Shakespeare's Sisters in Istanbul: Grace Ellison and the Politics of Feminist

## 2. Grace Ellison

Turkey has been outside the scope of postcolonial studies, and in addition to that, until very recently, Ottoman women have been outside the scope of Turkish historical studies. It is a fact that the history of women's activism in the late Ottoman period and the struggle of women (with the exception of the nationalist heroine Halide Edib) had not found a place in the Turkish nationalist history. It is only recently that scholarships had turned to the study of the late Ottoman period because of political and linguistic reasons. The adoption of the Latin script in 1928 in Turkey "kept the following generations completely detached from their past".<sup>20</sup> Also in the writings of the Nationalist history, pre-republican past has been "depreciated" and Ottoman women have been "pictured as helpless slaves to sultanic and religious despotism".<sup>21</sup>

Two centuries after Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, whose *The Turkish Embassy Letters* (1763) "provided the first female-penned account of the inside of the harem"<sup>22</sup> Grace Ellison found a lot of things to admire and envy in Ottoman harems. She is known for her sympathetic writings about Turkey. She is a journalist who wrote extensively on the Turkish women. She contributed to the development of dialogues between Turkish and British women at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by staying in Ottoman harems. She "was not just an enthusiastic traveler and journalist: she was also a feminist and a campaigner".<sup>23</sup> As a suffragette, she demanded independence for women. Ellison appeared as a woman who did not lose faith in the Turkish people in the darkest hours of history. She has watched Turkey in critical days and from the days of Sultan Abdul Hamid up to the end of the 1920s and chronicled Turkey's failures and achievements. She "first fell in love with Istanbul in 1905".<sup>24</sup> Later on her fourth travel to Turkey, she interviewed Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia and then published a fuller account in book form as *An Englishwoman in Angora* (1923). On each trip, she was concerned to explore the status of women and to challenge Western misapprehensions. As a result of her fifth visit to Turkey her book entitled *Turkey To-day* (1928) appeared.

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Friendship", *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 51:1, 2015, p.25. DOI:10.1080/17449855.2014.983698 ; A translation of Melek Hanoum's and Grace Ellison's book on *Abdul Hamit's Daughter* appeared in Turkish in 1938 as *Abdülhamidin kızı: Hakiki roman*, trans. Irfan Konur Gürgen by Hilmi Press, Istanbul. Zeyneb Hanoum's letters to Grace Ellison were published in Turkish in 2001 as *Özgürlük Peşinde bir Osmanlı Kadını*, ed. Ellison, trans. Nuray Fincanoğlu Bükre Press, Istanbul.

- 20 Zehra F Arat, "Introduction: Politics of Representation and Identity", *Deconstructing Images of 'The Turkish Woman'*. Ed. Zehra F. Arat. Palgrave Press, New York, 1999, p. 10.
- 21 Elizabeth B. Frierson, "Unimagined Communities: Woman and Education in the Late-Ottoman Empire" *Critical Matrix*, 9.2 (1995): p. 57.
- 22 Lewis, *ibid*, p. 13.
- 23 *Ibid*, p. 45.
- 24 Ellison, *Turkey To-day*, p. 108.

Grace Ellison had spent the years from 1905 to 1912 in Turkey and established close contact with several Turkish women living in harems. Zeyneb and Melek Hanoums were her informants, and they corresponded and collaborated with Ellison. Little is known about the details of her life and in her books *An Englishwoman in Angora* and *Turkey To-day* “confusingly she changed details and chronologies”.<sup>25</sup> She differed from the suffragettes of her time as she made cross-cultural comparisons and challenged Orientalist stereotypes by establishing close contacts with several Turkish women living in the harems. By the time Ellison published *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, she was alone in a field defined by men, and she used her gender as an advantage to enter harems. She studied “Turkish life which few English women and no English men have been privileged to study at first hand and ... she made good use of her opportunity”.<sup>26</sup>

Grace Ellison wrote about the aspirations of economically secure Turkish women. Her entrée into the cultural and political agency of Moslem women changed Orientalist stereotypes. When she first made the acquaintance of Turkish women she discovered that they were “idle” and “unhappy”. “Women were slaves, whose only hope was to find a good master...they were suffering from revolt they dared not express, longing for something they could not describe and between them and their mothers was a gulf that could not be bridged”.<sup>27</sup> “They knew enough of European civilization not to accept their destiny, as their mothers had done because it was their written ‘fate’ ”.<sup>28</sup>

### 3. “*An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*”

Grace Ellison’s first single-authored book, *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem* is published in the early months of the First World War in 1915. In her preface to the book Ellison made it clear that her book had generated from her reports for the British newspaper the *Daily Telegraph*. In the book, she reported on motherhood, employment, polygamy, slavery, harem life, modernization, veil and prominent Turkish women writers. In other words, she made use of all the themes typical of harem literature, which emerged during the nineteenth century as a subgenre of the broader field of travel writing. She narrated her stay with her friend Fatima (a pseudonym used to protect the Ottoman woman’s identity) and had an access to a space that was closed to Western men.

As a supporter of both national and female emancipation, she presented *An Englishwoman in Turkish Harem* as an “Englishwoman’s impressions of

25 Lewis, *ibid*, p. 44.

26 Edward G. Browne, “Introduction. An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem”, *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, (1915) By Grace Ellison. Gorgias Press, New Jersey, 2007, p. xiii.

27 Ellison, *Turkey To-Day*, p. 111.

28 Ellison, *Turkey- To-Day*, p.111.



Turkish harem life, written during a very happy and interesting visit amongst Turkish friends".<sup>29</sup> By giving an Englishwoman's impressions of Turkish harem life, she aimed to "correct the errors, prejudice, and hatred which have become almost part of the British national 'attitude' towards Turkey".<sup>30</sup>

As Teresa Heffernan and Reina Lewis argue in the new introduction to the reprint, the book "starts out with a title full of evocative terms"<sup>31</sup> like 'Englishwoman' and 'Turkish harem.' She "effectively manag[ed] to smuggle so many keywords into her title".<sup>32</sup> "To Europeans, particularly to men, the harem, and its veiled women had not only a charm of mystery, with a supposed Arabian Nights setting, but the attraction of forbidden".<sup>33</sup> Ellison aimed to challenge Western stereotypes about the nature of Turkish female life. She knew that in the West the misunderstood word harem was very strong in the understanding of Turkish women in the West. She also knew very well Western readers' interests in those years. As the co-writer of "two other volumes of harem literature, Ellison understood the sales value of even a chapter on the harem".<sup>34</sup>

*An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem* "simultaneously invokes and contests Orientalist fantasies about segregated life". Concerned about her credibility, Grace Ellison provides photos of people and places she narrates, supports her arguments by citing from known public figures, and reports details from the feminist meetings of the period. The book "from beginning to the end is full of impressions, interpretations and experiences of Ottoman Turkey as well as comparisons of manners and customs of Orient and Occident".<sup>35</sup>

"Unlike many Western women travel writers at this time Ellison was unapologetically feminist and saw the dialogue between Western and Middle Eastern women".<sup>36</sup> In *An Englishwoman* Grace Ellison asks Halide Edib, a prominent nationalist and an acknowledged leader of the Turkish feminist movement, how 'English women could help the Turkish women in their advancement. Edib's answer is as follows: "Ask them to delete forever that misunderstood word 'harem,' and speak of us in our Turkish 'homes.' Ask them to try and dispel the nasty atmosphere which a wrong meaning of that word

29 Grace, Ellison (1915) *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*, Cultures in Dialogue Series, Gorgias Press, New Jersey, 2007, p. vii.

30 Ibid., vii.; Browne, *ibid.*, p. xii.

31 Teresa Heffernan and Reina Lewis. "Introduction to the Reprint: Feminist Dialogues Across Cultures: An English Woman in a Turkish Harem and the Turkish Harem in an English Woman", *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem*. (1915) By Grace Ellison. Gorgias Press, New Jersey, 2007, p. ix.

32 Lewis, *Rethinking*, p. 21.

33 Ellison, *Turkey To-Day*, p. 109.

34 Reina Lewis and Nancy Micklewright, eds. *Gender, Modernity and Liberty: Middle Eastern and Western Women's Writing: A Critical Sourcebook*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2006, p. 164.

35 Elmas Şahin, "Women Travel Writings: A Comparative Journey", *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 3, 2015. pp.59-60.

36 Lewis, *Rethinking*, p. 45.

has cast over our lives. Tell them what our existence really is".<sup>37</sup> In these lines, Halide Edib makes clear that the image of the Ottoman state, not only the image of the Turkish woman was in danger.

### Conclusion

Grace Ellison, demanded independence for women and felt that it was her duty to report the truth about the Turkish women to the Western world. She differed from the suffragettes of her time by challenging Orientalist stereotypes and establishing close contacts with wealthy Turkish women living in the harems. She presented her book *An Englishwoman in a Turkish Harem* as an Englishwoman's impressions of Turkish harem life and "title[d] her book with reference to the gender and nation specificities of her view".<sup>38</sup> She shed light on the domestic life in elite homes at the turn of the century in Istanbul as tried to get rid of the borders of female society that are built to protect them from the intrusion of the other world. But as it is apparent from the above-given examples and discussions, while aiming to reveal the true state of Turkish women's lives in her works, Ellison, herself was in a literary forgery, like Pierre Loti and kept certain things to herself alone. The intriguing relationship between these people was enhanced and made easy through cross-dressing, veiling or use of literary pseudonyms. They had names, real names, pen names and different fictional character names in different texts.

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37 Ellison, *An English Woman*, p. 17.

38 Lewis, "On Veiling, Vision and Voyage", *Interventions*, 1:4, 1999, p.502.

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