



# The Turkish Embassy Letters

By Mary Wortley Montagu

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In 1716, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's husband Edward Montagu was appointed British ambassador to the Sublime Porte of the Ottoman Empire. Montagu accompanied her husband to Turkey and wrote an extraordinary series of letters that recorded her experiences as a traveller and her impressions of Ottoman culture and society.

This Broadview edition includes a broad selection of related historical documents on Turkey, women in the Arab world, Islam, and "Oriental" tales written in Europe.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“What a treat to see this indispensable and versatile text again available, lovingly edited by Teresa Heffernan and Daniel O’Quinn. They have followed the first edition, 1763 (illicitly published after a secret all-night copying session), while correcting their text from Montagu’s own manuscript. Her idiosyncratic, open-minded, proto-feminist responses to Islamic civilization are more fascinating today than ever, and the context that the editors supply for them is simply the best yet.” ? **Isobel Grundy, University of Alberta**

“Montagu’s famous Letter-book has at last received the attention it has long deserved as an important piece of eighteenth-century travel literature. The lively introduction constructs the historical and literary context of the work, while an impressive set of appendices illustrates not just her world, but also that of her interlocutors and her contemporaries.” ? **Virginia H. Aksan, McMaster University**

“In their superb Introduction to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s *The Turkish Embassy Letters*, Teresa Heffernan and Daniel O’Quinn write that “much like her letters, it is only more recently that her strategic and intelligent engagement with Ottoman culture is being mined.” Their edition is a timely and compelling reminder of the reasons why we should pay attention to the writing of this remarkable woman. They have produced what will no doubt be the definitive teaching edition for years to come.” ? **Suvir Kaul, University of Pennsylvania**

“Teresa Heffernan and Daniel O’Quinn’s remarkable edition of *The Turkish Embassy Letters* illuminates the intercultural dimensions of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s account of her travels through the Ottoman Empire. Heffernan and O’Quinn’s critical introduction offers a nuanced account of the text’s production and circulation and of the various discourses?about the East, about women, about Islam?that shaped its reception. Judiciously annotated, the volume offers an impressive range of well-selected contextual materials, embracing contemporary reviews, polemics from the small-pox engrafting controversy, selections from travel writings on the Ottoman empire, British accounts of Islam, contemporary portraits of Eastern women and the harem, and Oriental tales. This is sure to become the go-to edition for scholars and teachers interested in women’s writing, the history of cross-cultural contact, and the shifting thresholds dividing?and conjoining?Occident and Orient in the eighteenth century.” ? **Lynn Festa, Rutgers University**

#### From the Back Cover

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#### About the Author

**Teresa Heffernan** is Associate Professor of English at St. Mary’s University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

**Daniel O'Quinn** is Professor of English and Theatre Studies at the University of Guelph.

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