

ADDRESS

ON THE

EDUCATION

AND LITERATURE

OF THE

WOMEN OF TURKEY

DELIVERED BEFORE THE WORLD'S
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BY

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EDUCATION AND LITERATURE

OF THE

WOMEN OF TURKEY.

By **Esmeralda Cervantes.**

Harpist to their Majesties Queen Isabella II of Spain; King Don Carlos of Portugal; King George and Queen Olga of Greece; Kammer Virtuosin to His Highness the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha; Ex-Harpist to Emperor Don Pedro and King Don Luis. Honorary President of the Societies: Oriental Hospital Buenos Ayres; Choral of Buenos Ayres, Montevideo, Havana and Barcelona, Orpheon Normal Estudiantina Espanola Fomento de las Artes of Madrid. Beneficiencia of Santa Clara; La Trocha of Cienfuegos. Honorary Member of the Musical Societies: Choral and La Torre of Barcelona; La Lira from Buenos Ayres and Montevideo; Recreo Espanol from Havana; Philharmonic from Santiago de Cuba Las Palmas and Laguna: Santa Cecelia from Cadiz and Tenerife; Liceo from Vera Cruz: Union from Jalapa; Concert Society from Terragona; Royal Society of Melomanes Gand. Member of Benevolent Societies—Red Cross, Barcelona; French Hospital, Madrid; Los Desamparados, Valencia; Milk Wide, Berlin; Caridad, Mexico; Caridad Beneficiencia, Misericordia of Buenos Ayres; Beneficiencia Rosario, Santa Fe; Blind Hospital, Athens and Lima. Scientific Societies—Academica, Lisbon; Geographic, Madrid; Vor Bildunschule, Gotha. Prof. at the Conservatory, Barcelona. Delegate from the Choral Societies and Fomento de los Artes from Madrid to the World's Columbian Exposition. Member of the Board of Lady Jurors for the Exposition.



ADDRESS

LADIES:—When I was but a little child I visited for the first time this beautiful country, which celebrates now the fourth Centennial of its discovery.

On revisiting it this time I greet especially the ladies who have contributed to the success of the Exposition—the members of the Board of Ladies and their worthy President.

I was in Constantinople when the “El Fomento de las Artes” of Madrid and the Choral Societies “Euterpe” of Barcelona appointed me to represent them at your wonderful Exposition. I accepted the honor with delight and I was preparing for my voyage here when I received a confidential letter from a friend of mine, a member of the Board of Ladies, requesting me to get for them some information on Woman’s Education in the Orient. I immediately began to search for authentic documents about this, but in vain; there are no statistics in Turkey. I applied to his Excellency Zuhdi Pasha, Minister of Public Instruction, who could not furnish me with the information I wanted. Nevertheless I was not discouraged, but went on in my investigations, and I am happy to say that my perseverance has not proved unsuccessful.

Information about European, Greek, Armenian and Israelite schools in Constantinople being more easy to get, I have applied to the managers of those different institutions, and they gave me all the information I asked for.

For various authors who have written about Turkey, on account of the scarcity of precise information, gave a very inexact description of Public Instruction in the Ottoman Empire. But it is when these authors speak about woman’s influence in society and her instruction and development that they commit the greatest blunders.

The nations of the West have been taught to consider Oriental women as abject slaves, as bodies with no soul, as prisoners inclosed within the four walls of the Harem, spend-

ing their whole life plunged in deep ignorance, and in hopeless sloth. Perhaps there have been instances when such a life has been imposed on a few women, but taking this up as a general fact and admitting as a rule such an extreme ignorance of the Oriental woman, is marching against Truth. I am honored with the friendship of many Turkish ladies, and I can safely testify that their instruction and development are not in the least inferior to the education of our own intelligent ladies.

Their duties commonly comprise the observance of certain customs which practice has converted in laws; for instance, the custom of ladies not going out of doors unless their faces are closely veiled, and if rich, escorted by servants, or their children, or their lady friends, or even their slaves.

Several European authors have founded the erroneous idea they had about female education in the Orient, on totally wrong interpretations of the Koran, which, they pretend, condemns woman to remain in ignorance. Nothing is more false. On the contrary that sacred book urges most explicitly the propagation of instruction among men as well as among women, in an equal degree and without any distinction whatever. Instead of accusing the Orientals with such false facts it is far better to encourage them in their progress and give them lessons for the future by showing their faults in the past; it is better to consider them as brothers.

As my friend Fatima Alie Hunam, says in her charming book, "The Mussulman Woman:" "In order to know the Turkish character it is necessary to understand the language and traditions of the country, and to be familiar with the people both in their natural and family character."

Permit me then to express my regrets that your committee did not consider expedient to comply with the request of your most honorable Minister, and ask of you to appoint a representative of your Society in Turkey, as you have done in other countries.

I will try first of all to point out as well as I can the most important, though unknown, influence that Oriental Women exert on the march of progress, thanks to the gracious patronage of His Imperial Majesty, Sultan Abdul-Hamid Khan II, the benefactor of the country that God gave him to rule over. It is indeed since his accession to the throne that female education has taken up again the course that was interrupted for too long a time. By his strong will that surmounts all obstacles, by his wide and developed mind, by his inexhaustible generosity, the Mussulman woman's education has realized during the last fifteen years, a progress that is indeed marvelous. It was only needed to give a little help to the development of her mental faculties, in order to enable the Oriental woman to make herself worthy in so short a time for a place in this universal Congress either in person or by representation. As I have already said the Mahometan religion is not an obstacle to woman's development.

The Koran which contains the basis of all liberal institutions and social duties, mutual assistance, equality before the law, respect towards the family, etc., says:

“Woman's education must be equal to man's” (Chapter 22nd. Verse 33 to 35.)

“By God's demands, I make no distinction between man and woman. The same rewards and the same punishments for both sexes.” He recommends compulsory education both for man and for woman. “It is man's duty as well as woman's.” (Chapter 6. Verse 34 to 35.)

In the Hadiss, the Prophet urges as much work and instruction as possible. He gives suggestions of what woman's education should be.

From the very beginning of Mahometan society's constitution well developed and intellectual women are mentioned.

Before Mohometan's time, the pagan Arabs had the custom to kill their girls in times of poverty. The Prophet abolished this barbarous custom in his Koran (Chap. 6, Verse 152).

(Chap. LXVI, Verse II, Note 2d of Kazimirski's French Translation of the Koran.) Mahomet used to say that there are but four perfect women, namely: Asia, wife of Pharaoh; Mary, mother of Jesus; Khadidjia, first wife of Mahomet, and Fatima, his daughter. By this saying he immortalized his wife's and his daughter's names.

The list of famous women produced by Musselman society is very long.

Aiche, daughter of Abou-Bekir and Mahomet's wife, was a poetess. One day she heard Joseph's story, narrated after the Arabian tradition. Zelika, wife of Putiphar, irritated with the great Egyptian ladies for their scoffing at her love to a mere slave, invited them to dinner and ordered it to be served by Joseph himself. On the beautiful slave's appearance, the guests were taken with such a wonder and admiration at his beauty that, not knowing what they did, they cut their fingers with the knives they were peeling their fruit with. All at once Aiche, getting inspired, extemporized the following verses:

“If these women who had scoffed at Zelika had cut their fingers on seeing Joseph, Oh Mahomet, these same women on seeing thee, would have been so impressed that they would have cut their hearts in admiring thy brow. If the Egyptians had seen thy face's charm they would have paid little for buying Joseph.”

Aiche's poems constitute a remarkable feature in ancient Arabic literature.

Esma, Aiche's sister, was one of the most eminent women of “the Happy Days” (the Prophet's time).

Fatima, daughter of Mahomet, famous for her eloquence, has also written many poems. She was celebrated for her strong memory.

Nefisse, teacher of the celebrated Imans-Chafie, was nicknamed “the Doctor,” on account of her different literary works. She is buried in a mosque in Egypt which bears her name.

Sekine, daughter of Huseim and granddaughter of the poet Emirulkais, has left a great name through her writings and her bravery.

Rubabb, sister of Sekine and daughter of Hassan, was immortalized with her sister, by a verse of Hussein, so expressed:

“Oh, for thy life, Sekine, I have loved no place where thou or Rubabb are not. I will spend all my fortune for you both, with nobody daring to upbraid me for it, for you are truly worthy of it.”

Husnie, lady of Isman Joafer Sadik's harem, took part in thirty literary and scientific competitions, which were held in presence of the Kaliph Haaron-al-Rachid and the two celebrated sages Nizam and Kadi Jussuf. She gained the prizes in philosophy of law, ethics, etc. She has left numerous writings among which a book entitled “Book of Husnie.”

Zelkele et Himieri of the tribe of Homieri was the authoress of many poems. Her sister became famous through her warlike adventures.

Rubeai Adeive, of the tribe of Adevi, renowned for her eloquence has written remarkable treatises on Religious Morals. The book “Tez-Keretul-Evli” (Voages of Chesh-Attor) gives details about them.

Tadjul Devle, daughter of Abdul-el-Devle, is known for her comments on philosophy and ethics. She was a poetess at the same time. Here is an example of her poetry: “I bow before this ideal that comes to greet me. In its smile I see the sun's rays reflected. Oh, what rapture. Surely all that the great sorcerers Harute and Marute know in their art of guessing, they have seen it in their eyes.”

Princess Kermani, surnamed by the Persians “the illustrious poetess,” has been immortalized by verses which the famous Poet Cheik Saadi dedicated to her.

Among the women of the last century who have been immortalized by their talents Leila and Fitmet must be mentioned in the very first rank. Their writings will serve as models of literature to learned Orientals. Here are a few

fragments of their works: "Thy fair portrait has appeared before my soul as a star in the heavens. That grand ideal has introduced itself in my little heart. This heart so small has sufficed to contain that portrait, that vast wonder of a greatness equal—equal to what? Perhaps to a planet full of fire.

"It is not only the lines of that marvelous beauty that Providence has so carefully drawn on thy visage, a picture of fascinating harmony. It is not only those angelic features, it is the remembrance of those lovely walks in contemplation of beautiful green nature.

"Is not all that much surprising for a little heart?"

"The image of that stately figure is always engraved in the lover's eyes. What a wonderful art it is—that makes a grand forest tree hold a place in so little a heart with all its majestic height. Would it not be thought as a crystal bottle?"

"Oh, I am plunged in rapture—and I meditate."

On passing one day through the Bazar where the candles were being made, Leila saw among the workman a youth of wondrous beauty. She admired and came every day to see him. A poet of the times, having known the cause taught the youth a few verses which he should recite to Leila at her next visit.

"Go, look not on me with such interest. My cheeks, though not devoid of certain lustre, are so pale that the poets have compared them to the wax I am working on. Go, stare not, on me so near, for thou might burn thyself in the flame."

Leila answered him with an admirable presence of mind:

"Thou wilt soon receive a perfumed letter, and then thou shalt be obliged to look for me by the light of the candles."

Again here are two verses full of wit:

"I have undone thy curls with my hands; I have combed them; what shall I do? I was looking for chains for my dreamy soul."

Ifet Hanoum was a celebrated poetess. A few verses of hers read thus : "In sleep I was seeking rest ; I had no other hope but of thee in my dreams."

Hachemie was a poetess with a remarkably fine voice. and she was introduced into the palace of Kaliph Ali-Ben-Hicham (see book again, Vol. VII.).

Djemile, poetess, artist and musician was received into Beni Selim's palace. The celebrated poet, Abdul Rahman, called her "the gem of the fair sex" (see again Vol VII.).

Abidetul Tamburie, who was called chief by the famous musician, Abu-Hachiche, was as beautiful as she was a good musician.

FAMOUS CONTEMPORARY WOMEN.

Among the contemporary women I must mention in the first place:

Alier Hanoum, who wrote various works, among which "The Mussulman Women" is a classic book full of details on the customs and habits of oriental women. She also has translated George Ohnet's "Volonte," a novel on customs, and many treatises published in the papers.

Makboule Hanoum is a philosophic author. Her works are published daily in the Turkish journal, *Terdjuman Hakikat*. She has besides written a pamphlet, "Vedat."

Leila Hanoum, daughter of the late Ismail Pasha, is well known by her articles and her poetry which have been published in the Turkish papers. It is indeed to be regretted that her works have never been published in one volume.

Gulnar Hanoum is a remarkable philosophic writer.

Muhrul Nessa Hanoum is still very young and of great promise. She has been known and much admired through the journals which have published her works.

Zafer Hanoum, wife of Hilmi Effendi, is familiar with the French, Turkish, Greek, Arabic and Persian languages. She has written four books, one of which is a novel.

Kamer Hanoum has written a book on Mohammedan religious precepts.

Emine Semie Hanoum is the author of an arithmetic, which she has written for the benefit of the pauper asylum. I might still mention many other Turkish lady authors, but the too narrow limits of this study allow me to go no further.

TURKISH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS IN CONSTANTINOPLE, 1893.

There are in Constantinople three Turkish schools for girls, two of which were founded ten years ago by his excellency, Subhi Pasha, then minister of finance. Since their foundation these schools have much prospered under the able management of Misses Calavassi and Hanley. The first school has 100 boarders, the second 114 day scholars, and the third, at Scutari, in Asia, directed by Muzen Hanoum, daughter of Hakdi Pasha, has 150 scholars. The girls are under the paternal charge and generosity of his imperial majesty, who provides for their food and clothing, marries them and gives them a small dowry.

The studies are: Turkish language, history and geography of the Ottoman empire, arithmetic, drawing and piano. As for the needle work, they are taught oriental and European systems of it and they produce very fine embroideries and Turkish carpets.

We have been charmed to see the order and discipline that prevail in these schools, much to the praise of Misses Hanley and Calavassi.

The normal school, under the direction of Refica Hanoum, has been established twenty-two years, and it contains 190 day scholars, ten professors and ten teachers. Drawing and piano are taught there. After four years' study in Turkish a diploma is given to the graduates, who by its means can become teachers in Turkish houses or in provincial girl schools. This is also a free school. A perfect order reigns inside. The director of this normal school is a very distinguished and educated lady. She knows French, German, English, Greek, Turkish and Armenian. She can play on the piano and make very artistic drawings.

It is to be regretted for the children of these schools that they are no more encouraged in their studies by means of prizes as they were two years ago.

Following is a list of schools :

	No. of Schools.	Day Scholars.	Board- ers.	Teach- ers.
Normal School in Stamboul, director, Refica Hanoum,	1	190		20
Professional School, direc- tor, Miss Calavassi,	1		100	18
Professional School Stamboul, director, Miss Hanley,	1	130		9
Professional School Scutari, director, Muzen Hanoum,	1	120		9
Higher Primary Schools (ruschdies),	14	958		56
Primary Schools,	65	4385		130
Private and Primary Teaching,	14	762	220	36
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	97	6545	320	178

GREEK SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

The Greek schools for girls, Zappion, Pallas and Yioakimion, assimilated to the University of Athens, are supported by the students' tuitions and by the generosity of rich Greeks. The studies taught are the foreign languages, geography, mathematics, history, art, vocal and instrumental music, drawing and painting.

The diplomas of these schools are accepted by the Universities of Greece, France, Switzerland and Germany.

From these schools graduate the teachers who direct the Greek schools in Turkey.

These schools, besides the second and third rank are under the supervision of the Greek Patriarch for girls.

Following is a list of schools:

	No. of Schools.	Classes.	Students.	Teachers.
“Zappion” School,	1	8	328	27
Pallas School,	1	9	147	27
“Yoakimion” School,	1	7	172	12
Common Schools,	3	21	1306	30
High Schools,	11	32	869	23
Mixed Schools,	17	58	575	34
Middle Schools,	13	61	1240	52
Primary Schools,	8	22	596	14
	55	218	5233	199

FRENCH SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CONSTANTINOPLE, 1893.

The “Pensionnat de Notre Dame de Sion” is the first school for girls in Constantinople for the instruction and good bearing of the students. There are special professors belonging to this institution for the sciences, mathematics, physics, the foreign languages and the arts. There are two schools of this order one in Pera and the other in Kadikeny.

The “Saint Vincent de Paul” sisters, as well as the “Saint Joseph” and the “Augustines” sisters teach to the middle and low classes the manual labors, washing, ironing, embroidery, flowering, planting and all that is necessary in housekeeping. All these convents give a free asylum to poor children and a lunch is served them at noon.

The students of Mesdames Deveaux and Schaffner’s institution receive an instruction similar to that of Notre Dame de Sion. The government materially helps all the asylums.

Following is a list of schools:

	Classes.	Students.	Teachers.
Pensionnat de N. D. de Sion in Pancaldi, established 1865,	12	284	30
de Kadikeny, established 1865,	12	150	30
St. Vincent de Paul Sisters.	8	300	20
Augustines Sisters,	9	250	22
St. Joseph Sisters,	6	280	18
Mmes. Deveaux and Schaffner’s Institution,	11	250	16
	58	1514	136

ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

There are two English Schools for girls under the British Embassy's protection, one in Pera, founded by Lady Baidett Couls; this institution's lot of ground was donated by His Majesty the Sultan. The boarder students are not many on account of want of space in the building.

The other institution governed by Miss Grabaur is under the direction of a committee who appoint the director.

The students of both of these schools are prepared for the examination for which the college of teachers in London gives certificates.

GERMAN SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CONSTANTINOPLE, 1893.

These schools are supported partly through the student's tuition and partly by the government.

	Schools.	Students.	Classes.	Teachers.
High School,	1	150	16	14
Mixed and Kindergarten,	1	200	6	9
	—	—	—	—
	2	250	22	23

The United States Missionary Society established at Scutari, in Asia, an excellent school for girls where the girls receive a secondary education. The studies taught are foreign languages, vocal and instrumental music, drawing and painting.

The Austrian, Italian, Persian, Bulgarian and Russian Schools are supported by their respective governments.

ARMENIAN SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN CONSTAOTINOPLE, 1893.

The Armenian Schools are supported by three committees, the Armenian Catholic and the Armenian Gregorian and the Armenian Protestant, and by private donation.

	Classes.	Students.	Teachers.
Community Schools,	24	400	72
Secondary Schools,	7	150	21
Free Schools (Asylum),	33	1,030	60
High Schools,	2	170	60
Secondary Schools,	1	130	77
	—	—	—
	67	1,880	250

ALLIANCE ISRAELITE UNIVERSELLE SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN
CONSTANTINOPLE.

The Israelite Schools for girls are supported by the Alliance Isrealite, which besides the books and stationery and other such materials for classes, furnishes with clothing the poor students.

Most of the students of the Alliance Israelite Schools are educated free of charge.

The programme of studies in the schools of Constantinople comprises French, Hebrew, German (for those who speak this language), Universal History and Geography, Arithmetic, Natural History, Physics, Chemistry, Drawing, Singing, Sewing, Embroidery and Ironing.

The Alliance Israelite Schools have no other aim than to propogate education among the poorer classes and exercise them in manual work.

	Pay Students.	Teachers.	Free Students.
Balat founded, 1882,	27	8	298
Daghaman, founded, 1880,	30	4	92
Galata, founded, 1879,	60	8	230
Haskeuy, founded 1875	36	10	267
Ortakeuy, founded 1881,	44	6	60
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	201	36	967

Besides these there are other lower private schools.

During Sultan Mahmoud's reign the first music band was organized under the supervision of Maestro Donizetti, brother of the great and celebrated composer.

Under Sultan Abdul Medjid's reign this band's direction was given in 1844 to Maestro Guatelli Pasha.

Sultan Abdul Aziz charged him to organize and manage an orchestra of Circassian Ladies in the Imperial Harem. I have been told that when his Majesty invited some distinguished personages, he had this band composed of eighty young ladies play different airs, all hidden behind a screen. Her Majesty, Empress Eugenie, was much astonished with their music.

His Majesty, Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan II, suppressed this feminine orchestra, substituting it by the Imperial band which is rather mediocre, notwithstanding the eminent musicians who are members of it. The money spent for this music corps is indeed fabulous. With the same expenses a Conservatory might be instituted and regulated like those of Europe and an Orchestra formed, that might be envied by all the nations in the world.

As musicians I could name many ladies who are exceptions in the study of music, but I will only give the names of some of my pupils on the harp, who are very talented and of some that are noticed for their skillful play on the piano and Oriental instruments. The princess Emina Hanoum, daughter of His Highness, Ismael Pasha, Ex-Khedive from Egypt; the princess Sahra, daughter of His Highness, Halim Pasha; Leila Hanoum, daughter of His Excellence, Hamdy Bey, the eminent archeologist; Seigner Hanoum, daughter of His Excellence, Ferid Bey; Lucy Woods, daughter of His Excellence, Wood Pasha. All of them play with the characteristic poetry of the Orient.

On the piano are distinguished their Highnesses, the Sultan's sisters and daughters of His Imperial Majesty; the princess Nimet, daughter of His Highness, Ismael Pasha; the princesses, daughters of Halim Pasha; the daughters of the prince Hosman Pasha, (Miserly); the daughters of Gelal Pasha; Mustafa Bey, and Galit Bey, and Rebeca Hanoum, daughter of Sarah Hanoum.

I will not dwell any longer on this subject about Oriental women who have already shown great intelligence. I will only remark here that the Oriental women possess a deep, natural, poetic instinct, as I have been able to see myself in my careful investigation during the preparation of this modest work. I feel certain that by developing the Oriental woman's mind she will teach her children to love to study the science and the arts, for you know well, Ladies, that the majority of

eminent men have had their mothers as guides and counsellors.

I have tried to present to you the educational out-look for the women of the Orient, and now I ask the cultured lovely women of this great Congress to join with me in an expression of thanks to His gracious Majesty, the Sultan Abdul Hamud Kahn, II, of Turkey, for his efforts for the advancement of the women of the beautiful Olne Bosphoros.

BRENTANO'S
CHICAGO