

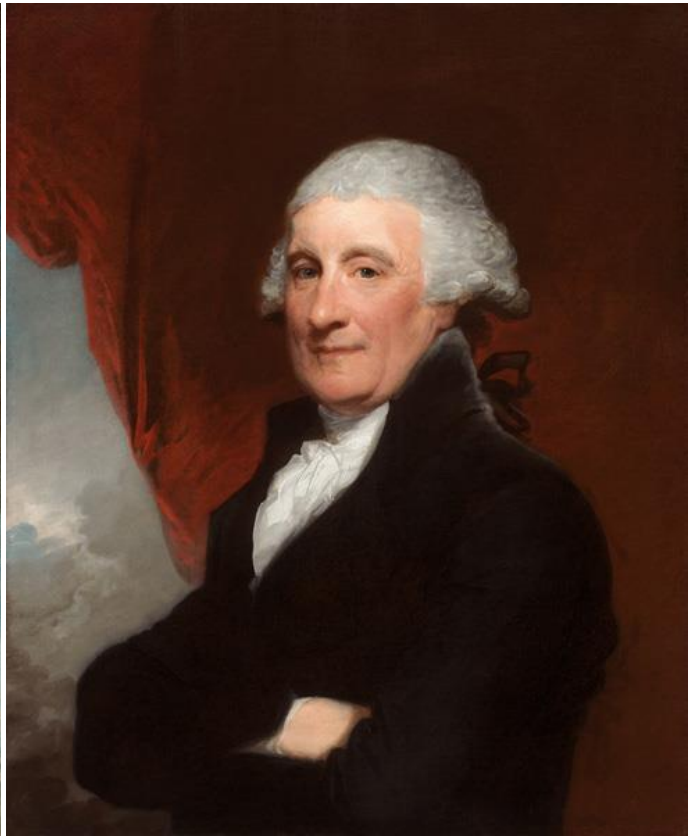


12th Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture gathering with guest speakers Valerie Kennedy, Patrick Hart, Dora Petherbridge - 22 July 2021, 6pm (UK time)

### Editing & Interpreting the Liston Papers: Explorations in the Turkish Embassy Archives

In April 1812 Henrietta Liston boarded the *Argo* to sail to Constantinople with her husband Robert, the esteemed Scottish diplomat. At almost 70, Robert had been appointed to serve a second term as British Ambassador to the Sublime Porte. This talk will explore the Liston Papers archive at the National Library of Scotland, which documents in rich detail Henrietta and Robert's eight-year residency in Turkey through their personal correspondence, official dispatches, financial papers, and travel journals. The contents of the archive, in Arabic, French, Greek, Italian, Ottoman Turkish and several other tongues, include a diplomat's cipher; a plan of the Turkish and Persian frontiers; Henrietta's meteorological diary; a recipe for making Turkish ink; fascinating embassy expenses accounts, and Ottoman travelling firmans. Focusing on our recent multi-media publication of Henrietta Liston's Turkish travel journals, we will explore some of the challenges and issues with which the archive presented us as Liston's twenty-first century editors. These included questions of authorship, intended audiences (both Liston's and our own), Liston's processes of drafting and revision and the resulting textual variants, and the consequences and implications of cross-platform publishing. We will then go on to examine in detail one of the most dramatic episodes recounted in the Liston Papers. The execution of two Dragomans of the Sublime Porte, Demetrious and Panagios Mourousi, is described in Robert Liston's dispatch to Lord Castlereagh of December 1812, in Henrietta's journal entry for 30 October 1812, and in her letter to her nephew, Dick Ramage, of 6 March 1813. An examination of these accounts provides fascinating insight into the Listons' distinctive perspectives, not only on the executions, but also on their probable causes, their significance, and the public and private reactions they provoked.

Booking essential: <https://interpreting-the-liston-papers-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>



Henrietta Marchant Liston by Gilbert Stuart Courtesy National Gallery of Art Washington | Robert Liston by Gilbert Stuart



**Valerie Kennedy** teaches at Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey. Among her publications are *Edward Said: A Critical Introduction* (Polity Press, 2000), since translated into Chinese, Korean, and Arabic, and *Liminal Dickens: Rites of Passage in his Work* (co-edited with Katerina Kitsi-Mitakou). She is one of the co-editors of *Henrietta Liston's Travels: The Turkish Journals 1812-1820* (Edinburgh UP, 2020), and the author of "Orientalism in the Victorian Era" in the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature*, and she has published on literary works from authors like Maria Edgeworth to Mohsin Hamid. Current projects include editing a collection of essays entitled *Egypt: Discourses of Travel, Exploration, and European Power from 1750 to 1956*, and a monograph on British travellers to the Ottoman Empire, 1716 to 1850.



**Patrick Hart** is editor of the *Journal of the Northern Renaissance* and teaches English Literature at Bilkent University, Ankara. He coordinated 'Approaching Constantinople,' the joint project between the National Library of Scotland and Bilkent University which resulted in the multi-platform publication of Henrietta Liston's Turkish writings, and co-edited [\*Henrietta Liston's Travels: The Turkish Journals, 1812-1820\*](#) (Edinburgh UP, 2020). He has published recently on baroque poetics, theatre under lockdown, and teaching Shakespeare in Turkey, and is currently working on a short book on Anglophone travel writing about Turkey.



**Dora Petherbridge** is Curator of International Collections at the National Library of Scotland. She co-edited *Henrietta Liston's Travels: The Turkish Journals, 1812-1820*.

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