



Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar

By Emily Ruete

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Return to an era when Zanzibar was ruled by sultans, and enter a vanished world of harems, slave trading, and court intrigues. In this insider's story, a sultan's daughter who fled her gilded cage offers a compelling look at nineteenth-century Arabic and African royal life. After years of exile in Europe, the former princess wrote this fascinating memoir as a legacy for her children and a warm reminiscence of her island home.

Born Salamah bint Said, Princess of Zanzibar, in 1844, author Emily Ruete grew up in a harem with scores of siblings. The royal family maintained its fabulous wealth and luxury with a robust traffic in ivory, spices, and human bondage. Ruete ventures beyond the palace, into the city and plantations where European traders, missionaries, and colonists exercised a growing influence. After her dramatic elopement with a German trader, Ruete attained the perspective to form a comparison of the lives of women in Muslim society with those of their European contemporaries. Originally published in 1886, this remarkable autobiography will captivate readers interested in Zanzibar and Eastern Africa as well as students of Arabic, Islam, and women's studies.

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Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar By Emily Ruete Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Ruete could be the subject of a thrilling romance. As Romero (*Life Histories of African Women*) explains, she was born in 1840 as Salme, princess of Oman and Zanzibar, and grew up privy to the machinations of her father's harem and of her scores of siblings. Following her father the sultan's death in 1856, Salme participated in one brother's unsuccessful coup to wrest the throne from another. Despite strictures confining Islamic women, she trysted with a German who is thought to have impregnated her, fled to Germany where she converted to Christianity, changed her name, married her lover, bore three children and was soon widowed. Ruete relates few of these escapades; instead she provides a disingenuous account of harmonious life at the palace. Despite the profusion of concubines, Ruete claims that Arabs predominantly practice monogamy; her father is a beneficent king--although Romero states that he attained power by murdering a cousin. The disparity between introduction and text, the latter translated from the German, generates a peculiarly successful tension, enhanced by carefully recorded details of court life. Illustrations not seen by PW .

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Review

Set against a backdrop of political intrigue in the great age of European colonialism, *Memoirs Of An Arabian Princess From Zanzibar* is an engrossing memoir offering a vivid portrait of 19th century Arab and African life. Life not only in the palace, but in the city and plantations as well. Emily Ruete (born in 1840 as Salme, Princess of Zanzibar and Oman, fled to Germany in 1856, changed her name, married her Germany lover, bore three children, and then widowed) provides a comparison between a woman's life in Moslem society and the conditions within the 19th century European bourgeoisie. -- *Midwest Book Review*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: German

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bruce Jones:

This book untitled *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar* to be one of several books this best seller in this year, that is because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy this book in the book shop or you can order it by means of online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, as you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason to you to past this e-book from your list.

Deborah Anderson:

Often the book *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess from Zanzibar* has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was authored by the very famous author. McDougal makes some research just before write this book. This book very easy to read you can get

the point easily after reading this article book.

Donald Chapin:

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Paul Jones:

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