

Sayyida Salme / Emily Ruete: Knowledge Flows in an Age of Steam, Print, and Empire

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the writings of Sayyida Salme bint Sa'id ibn Sultan (1844-1924), the Zanzibari-Omani princess who married a German merchant and converted to Christianity. While she spent the rest of her life as Emily Ruete, existentially she lived "between two worlds." I argue she successfully navigated her core identities as an Islamic(ate) woman despite adopting and adapting to European customs. Her successful *Memoirs of An Arabian Princess*, originally published in German as *Memoiren einer arabischen Prinzessin* in 1886, and her *Letters Home (Briefe nach der Heimat)*, published in 1993, demonstrate her ongoing significance to scholars of gender, travel, globalization, and culture. I seek to expand her legacy by going beyond the constraining narrative that she failed to achieve her initial goal of monetary remuneration. I will instead focus on moments of hybridity, wisdom, resilience, and growth to show how she made progress in her second goal: to rectify distorted views of "the South."

Keywords: Globalization; German-African trade; Zanzibar; Muslim female travelogue; 19th century

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes the writings of Sayyida Salme bint Sa'id ibn Sultan (1844-1924), the Zanzibari-Omani princess who married a German merchant and converted to Christianity. While she spent the rest of her life as Emily Ruete, existentially she lived "between two worlds" as indicated by her public and private writings.¹

My guiding research questions are: did Sayyida Salme/Emily Ruete's multiple identities (i.e., Islamic[ate], woman, convert, etc.) influence flows of knowledge between Zanzibar and Germany? If so, how? Specifically, how did she use globalizing infrastructures of communication and travel to pursue her goals? In this paper, I argue that Salme/Emily successfully navigated her Islamic(ate) identities despite adopting and adapting to European customs, institutions, and languages. To answer these questions, I focus on two of her written works: her successful *Memoirs of An Arabian Princess*, originally published in German in

1 Sayyida Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993). Title Page.

1886, and her *Letters Home*, first published in 1993 in English, but originally written in German.² These questions are relevant for an article in a global studies journal because her life, writings, and legacy, demonstrate her ongoing significance to scholars of gender, travel, globalization, and culture.³ While a casual reader could easily deduce upon encountering her life-story and writings that she failed to achieve her lifelong goal of monetary remuneration from her family, I seek to expand upon her legacy. Instead, I will focus on moments of hybridity, wisdom, and resilience to show how she made progress in her second goal which evolved out of her own interactions with “Northerners”: to rectify distorted views of “the South.”⁴

DEFINITIONS

Before beginning my analysis, I provide definitions of several relevant terms. The first and most important is “flow,” which Ritzer defines as “movement of people, things, information, and places due, in part, to the increasing porosity of global barriers.”⁵ Salme/Emily successfully transmitted knowledge of her homeland, its customs and its practices by writing in Europe, in a European language, and for a European audience. Thus, places are not necessarily rooted in specific spaces but are capable of mobility through communication, transportation, and technology. I also use the term “network,” in which I imply links and connectivities between actors and various mediums of connection.⁶ Salme/Emily used networks of nobility, family and government officials in her quest to receive her siblings’ inheritance. I use the phrase “flow of knowledge” to refer to two phenomena: the actual physical path of movement (described in her *Memoirs*)—and a text that reflects such movement (her *Letters*).

The term “globalization” has contested definitions. I use this word to imply dynamism, globality, a set of processes, and “shifting forms of human contact.”⁷ Global Studies scholars question “what,” “how,” and “when” globalization is, and what forms it takes. In examining Muslims’ responses to globalization in the nineteenth century, or “Age of Steam and Print,” through their travelogues, Gelvin and Green (2014) question if globalization is culturally specific or uniform; and whether it is contingent or teleological.⁸ By focusing on steam and print, they examine the interplay between “hard” (infrastructural) and “soft” (cultural) forms of globalization on both macro and micro levels during this epoch.⁹ Indeed, macro processes of globalization are intertwined and manifested in Salme/Emily’s life. She lived through several revolutions of “hard” and “soft” globalization—including the rise of colonialism, the birth and ascent of Germany as a world

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid., 2.

4 T. Khair, et. al, eds., *Other Routes: 1500 Years of African and Asian Travel Writing* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006)

5 George Ritzer, *Globalization: The Essentials* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 7

6 Barrie Axford, “Connectivity,” in *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization, First Edition*, ed. George Ritzer (Hoboken: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2012), 1.

7 Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). 10.

8 J.L. Gelvin and Nile Green (eds.), “Introduction” in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 2.

9 Ibid.

power, the spread of transportation and communication technologies, and the intellectual movement of Orientalism(s).

In defining “Orientalism(s),” according to Said, the depiction of the “East” is romanticized, exoticized, and/or trivialized to control knowledge about it.¹⁰ He theorized that this relationship between knowledge and power enabled Europeans to carry out and justify colonialism. To understand the historical context in which Salme/Emily was writing, it will suffice to say that *German* Orientalisms differ from French and English forms because Germany did not have a country until 1871, nor a colonial policy until 1884.¹¹ Thus, German writers wavered between either identifying themselves with the rest of Europe or allying themselves with the East.¹² Salme/Emily’s writings frequently bring up her frustration with Germans’ lack of knowledge about “the Orient.” Her *Memoirs* seek to fill in these gaps by systematically addressing misconstrued facets of life in the “South.”

While defining “knowledge” is beyond the scope of this paper, I wish to differentiate it from “truth,” and to imply that Salme/Emily’s writings reflect a subjective, lived experience. As the editor of her 1993 collected works puts it, her writings are “human documents.”¹³ An indicator thereof is her inconsistency of the terms she uses. For the sake of simplicity, I will use the terms “North” and “South” when referring to the directions of her flows of knowledge, but when I quote her I will use her choice of words as much as possible.

INPUTS TO IDENTITY

It should be noted that Salme/Emily had multiple identities, shaped by historical processes and mechanisms, long before she left Zanzibar. Through these factors she was sensitive to, and familiar with, thinking about the intersections of her identities; this awareness contributed to the formulations of her writings. Politically, Salme/Emily was a Princess of Zanzibar and Oman. While she had comparatively little political power, it is still important to understand Zanzibar’s political history and its long relationship to colonization and cultural exchange. Zanzibar is an island located off the coast of modern-day Tanzania in East Africa.¹⁴ The island has a history going back millennia of exchanges between African and Arabian settlers, as evidenced by the development of the Swahili language (a Bantu tongue with significant borrowings from Arabic). The Portuguese controlled Zanzibar from 1498 to 1698, when they were displaced by the Imam of Oman, Saif bin Sultan of the Yarubi dynasty. The Umanis eventually controlled other swaths of the East African coast from their capital, Muscat, 2,000 miles away. In 1741, the BuSaidi dynasty, of which Salme/Emily was a member, displaced the Yarubis. Her father made Zanzibar his residence in 1837. His death in 1856 brought upon a succession dispute between his sons Barghash and Majid. Salme/Emily initially supported Barghash, but then reconciled with Majid when he won. This choice would have repercussions throughout her life.

10 Ibid.

11 Todd Kontje, *German Orientalisms* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004), 2.

12 Ibid., 3.

13 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 7.

14 Norman Bennett, *History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*, (London: University Printing House, 1978), 2.

It is imperative to understand the economic relations of Zanzibar at the time, to situate Salme/Emily's personal background in the context of economic globalization. During this epoch, Zanzibar had well-connected and growing trading relationships with Europe, India, the United States, and Africa.¹⁵ According to a U.S. navigation report, in 1895 Zanzibar possessed three steamers and one sailing vessel exceeding 100 tons.¹⁶ Additionally, Zanzibar was a top producer of cloves, a spice highly valued by Europeans, as well as ivory and coconut palms.¹⁷ Zanzibar also traded slaves, which was abolished by the British protectorate in 1897.¹⁸

Outcomes of these interactions are observable in Salme/Emily's daily life in Zanzibar. She grew up bilingual in Swahili and Arabic, and as a result of her father's concubines was also exposed to Persian, Turkish, Circassian, Bubian, and Abyssinian.¹⁹ She grew up in the harem surrounded by slaves and eunuchs, observing Islamic holy festivals and customs. Due to her rank she wore the Zanzibari version of the Omani *burqa*, which covered the face from forehead to mouth leaving two eyeholes.²⁰ We know from her *Memoirs* that she learned how to read along with her other siblings, but she also secretly taught herself how to write. This was highly unusual at the time, especially for a woman, because in the "Orient" most people even when literate relied on verbal messages carried between slaves.²¹ All of these aspects—the Muslim upbringing, her linguistic skills, and her literacy—contributed to her already-diverse identity, giving her the background and the tools by which to later articulate her thoughts.

RELATIONS BETWEEN GERMANY, HAMBURG & ZANZIBAR

I will specifically address these international relations, as they created the conditions that enabled Salme/Emily to meet her husband Heinrich. A few months before she was born in 1844, the first German in Zanzibar, a missionary named Johann Ludwig Krapf, arrived on the island.²² Within the year, the first German merchant ship arrived.²³ From 1864-1865 Zanzibar's trade with the city of Hamburg compared with other *countries* accounted for 34.5% of its total trade, its largest portion.²⁴ As the German Empire was not yet unified, the separate states conducted their own foreign policies and treaties. In 1859, Sultan Majid and the German cities of Hamburg, Bremen and Lübeck signed a treaty on Trade, Friendship and Navigation.²⁵ These economic transactions and cultural exchanges occurring just before and

15 Jeremy Prestholdt, "From Zanzibar to Beirut," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, ed. James L. Gelvin et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 208.

16 United States of America, "Annual Report," 234.

17 Bennett, *History of the Arab State of Zanzibar*, 24.

18 Laura Fair, "Dressing Up: Clothing, Class, and Gender in Post Abolitionist Zanzibar," *The Journal of African History* 39.1 (1998), 65.

19 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 175.

20 Fair, "Dressing Up," 63-64.

21 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 167.

22 Heinz Schneppen, *Zanzibar and the Germans* (Dar Es Salaam: National Museum of Tanzania, 1998), 1.

23 Heinz Schneppen, *Between Zanzibar and Germany, Between Islam and Christianity* (Dar Es Salaam: National Museums of Tanzania, 1999).

24 Ibid.

25 Schneppen, *Zanzibar and the Germans*, 1.

during Salme/Emily's early life indicate movement towards expanding communication and trade routes that were becoming truly global in nature. As a member of the royal family living at the site of these exchanges, this exposure would have undoubtedly affected Salme/Emily's view of the world as a global(izing) place, and of her family's role in shaping it.

Rudolf Heinrich Ruete arrived in Zanzibar in 1855 as an agent for the trading firm Hansing & Co. Heinrich and Salme/Emily were neighbors during part of his stay in Zanzibar, as she was living in a town apart from certain relatives after the fallout of the Barghash-Majid succession dispute. They were seen taking walks together conversing in Swahili, their common language. In 1866 Sultan Majid found out that Salme/Emily was pregnant with Heinrich's child. He decided to send her on a pilgrimage, but she knew her life was in peril as she had heard of other women in her condition who had never returned from such a trip. She spent several months preparing to flee under the pretext of going on the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca). With the help of the HMS *Highflyer*'s Captain Pasley, she escaped to Aden (Yemen) on August 24, 1866. Sultan Majid eventually allowed Salme/Emily to take the profits from her property, and for Heinrich to conclude his affairs in Zanzibar. Heinrich and Salme/Emily married on May 30, 1867. On that same day, she was baptized a Protestant Christian and given the name Emily, and the couple departed for Hamburg.

Unfortunately, their marriage did not last long—Heinrich passed away after a tram injury in August 1870. Salme/Emily appealed to her brother for an allowance and to return home; we do not know if he received her letter as he passed away in October. Agents for Heinrich's estate speculated and embezzled the majority of his fortune and his money dwindled through poor investments; Salme/Emily was forced to pawn jewelry and move five times over the next ten years to survive.²⁶ She also gave lessons in Arabic and Swahili—significant because it was the first time she, a royal Princess, had “to earn money by the sweat of [her] brow.”²⁷ First a royal Princess, then a royal exile, she became a widow with three small children in a strange land, a declining fortune, and an inability to speak German.

In addition, Salme/Emily experienced social isolation due to a lack of a support network of Muslims in Germany. Although Muslims have been coming to Germany since the eighteenth century, there were comparatively very small numbers until the 1960s and 1970s due to waves of political refugees and labor migration.²⁸ During the period of a rising German Empire, the lens of Orientalism colored German perception of Salme/Emily. For example, the German magazine *Daheim* in 1871 described “the African-European love story” in highly romanticized terms, describing her joy at “[being] rid of the laws of the harem and...walking around freely in European dress in the beautiful cities of the white man, where women...enjoy the same rights as men.”²⁹ In 1885, the *Illustrierte Zeitung* equated her religious conversion with social advancement.³⁰ Salme/Emily discusses these perceptions in her *Letters Home*, which offers a greater insight into her depression and isolation.

26 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 474.

27 *Ibid.*, 498.

28 Ceylan, “The Many Sides of Muslim Integration,” *German-American Issues* 13 (2010), 47-53.

29 Schneppen, *Zanzibar and the Germans*, 5.

30 *Ibid.*, 16.

KNOWLEDGE FLOWS

Although an obscure figure in history today, Salme/Emily's writings directly facilitated flows of knowledge from "North" to "South" and vice versa. The confluence of her multiple identities—widow, convert, exile, financially and socially vulnerable, etc.—formed by the inputs to her Zanzibari identity I discussed earlier—shaped the flows of knowledge she created.

From "North" to "South"?: *Letters Home*

The *Briefe nach der Heimat* ("Letters Home"), first published in English in 1993, fill in important gaps to her *Memoirs*, which I will describe later. Although Schnepfen (1998, 1999) nor E. Van Donzel (1993) are not sure if the "Lady friend" whom Salme/Emily wrote to actually existed, I nevertheless consider the *Letters* a flow of knowledge, since according to Euben (2006) they detail Salme/Emily's "culture shock and commentary, depression, and financial woes" from 1867 to the mid-1880s.³¹

What cannot be denied about the *Letters* is their emotional and critical tone. While she began writing the *Memoirs* in 1875, the *Letters* are written in the moments of her depression and isolation. She wrestles with her conversion, culture shock and homesickness in a manner unaddressed in her public writings: "there was, externally, the Christian name, whereas internally I was as good a Muslim woman as you yourself are... beware of changing your religion without true conviction."³² Her depression is also evident—when her children are in school and she is alone all day, she takes bromide as a sedative.³³ Her husband's death causes a crisis in her new faith to the extent that she "cursed Him" and "temporarily turned away from the all-mighty Creator"; her brother Majid's death only months later sinks her spirits even further.³⁴

The privacy of her *Letters* allows her to explicitly critique certain European values that clash with her own. Her tone is frank, dramatic, and unsparing when she describes rituals of bourgeois society, the alcohol-induced gaiety, the intermingling of the sexes, and the amount of *décolletage* that European gowns exposed. She points out the problems with the European notion of "progress" in general: the "careerist pressure" to be productive within society or be judged, that the nation resembles an establishment, and that one is subjected to the law and watched closely, despite living in what Europeans term "freedom."³⁵ Of significance is the high value she places on religion—she critiques the Christian church service because the worshippers pray with icons and do not prostrate themselves, and that the church solicits money.³⁶ We can only guess that her condemnations arose from her upbringing as a Muslim woman in the royal court's harem.

Importantly, the *Letters* provide specific examples of German Orientalist perceptions and reactions towards her. She complains of the general mistrust Germans have toward "non-

31 Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 159.

32 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 411-412.

33 *Ibid.*, 507.

34 *Ibid.*, 451.

35 *Ibid.*, 506.

36 *Ibid.*, 432.

full-blooded Germans.”³⁷ She “continuously [feels] observed” and attributes that to “the Germans in the interior of the country [having] no more notion of Zanzibar than you even now have of Siberia and its eternal snowfields.”³⁸ She complains that most Germans assume her appearance will parallel those of stereotypical physiognomic descriptions of Chinese (having small feet) or Africans (having “the hair and complexion of a negress”).³⁹ However, her assessment of “Northern” culture is not entirely negative. She values their systematic bookkeeping methods and eventually finds a confidant and mother figure in Baroness von Tettau, whom she calls “the first true Christian woman whom I had been looking for.”⁴⁰ Over time, she feels less helpless as she learns German, learns how to calculate household expenses, and makes positive contacts. The perceptions and clashes of identity she encountered, as described in the *Letters*, directly influence how she transmitted knowledge of Zanzibar in her *Memoirs*.

From “South” to “North”: *Memoirs of an Arabian Princess*

If European readers were expecting or hoping for lurid and scandalous tales of harem life, they would be sorely disappointed in *Memoiren einer arabischen Prinzessin*. Published in German in 1886 and translated into English two years later, the book begins with chapters on her early life, pauses with several chapters on general life in “the Orient” by offering her specific life experiences “as comparative knowledge,” and resumes with her biography at Chapter 26.⁴¹ While she sought to profit from the book’s release given her constant financial insecurities, she also had personal incentives. Although she claims to write only for the sake of her children, she references “the European reader” and takes pains to rectify distorted views of “the Orient” whenever possible.⁴² Therefore her goal of educating these readers is an outcome of her travel to “the North” and the interactions—and ignorance—she experienced firsthand.

While she critiques both the “North” and “South” in her *Memoirs*, on the whole she still defends her homeland. In a chapter dedicated to “Woman’s Position in the Orient,” she gives examples of strong-willed Muslim women in her life, argues peoples’ characters rather than religion makes marriages unhappy, and asserts that everything a wife does for her husband is “voluntary.”⁴³ Although she acknowledges its flaws, she defends her homeland practice of polygamy. She addresses this topic by drawing a parallel to Mormonism—a move that also exposes the hypocrisy of her detractors—because it is practiced in the “West.” She argues that most Arab marriages are monogamous, but opines that polygamy is preferable because the relations between spouses are in the open.⁴⁴ She also defends slavery in a chapter of its own. While she despises the slave trade, she argues that slaves in the “South” are in a better position because they are often set free and have better working conditions.⁴⁵ She

37 Ibid., 470.

38 Ibid., 471.

39 Ibid., 422.

40 Ibid., 477.

41 Euben, “Journeys to the Other Shore,” 157.

42 Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 244.

43 Ibid., 268-279.

44 Ibid., 269.

45 Ibid., 327-333.

acknowledges this chapter is controversial and that people may object to her bias, so at the end of the chapter she “[adduces] some momentous evidence of full-blooded Europeans” who defend slavery.⁴⁶ In doing so, she attempts to distance herself from the controversy while giving off the appearance of neutrality.

In addition to clarifying and defending specific social relations, her *Memoirs* are sprinkled with statements addressing general (mis)conceptions of the character of “Orientals.” She argues that while “Orientals” appear “lazy” and “unimaginative,” in reality the warmer climate enables them to work less because they have a lesser struggle for existence.⁴⁷ At the same time, however, she makes the occasional sweeping statement. For example, she refers to “the innate lust for power of Oriental princes and the passions of the Oriental in general.”⁴⁸ Later she remarks, “By nature the Oriental is very candid and quite unable to dissimulate in certain situations.”⁴⁹ These statements indicate that her narrative is not free of stereotypes and generalizations.

While on the whole she defends her homeland, her *Memoirs* also contain a critique of her home society and praise for Europe. Once she had escaped to Aden from Zanzibar, she calls the harem “tyrant etiquette.”⁵⁰ She also frequently complains of the “quackery” of Muslim doctors.⁵¹ Throughout her *Memoirs*, she consistently praises the German ingenuity, friendliness, industriousness, and education. These positive observations demonstrate her liminal and multifaceted identity as a result of her travels.

QUEST FOR INHERITANCE

Salme/Emily produced other writings that relate to her decades-long quest to receive the inheritance of her deceased half-siblings in Zanzibar. Sultans Majid, Barghash and later Khalifa maintained that she forfeited her inheritance due to converting, so she legally ceased to exist. Over the years she strategically used multiple identities—among others, as a Princess of Zanzibar and Oman, a convert to Christianity seeking assistance in solidarity with other Christians, and a widow—in pursuit of this goal. She constructed networks through letter writing with other royals and government officials ranging from local consuls and nobility, to Prince Otto von Bismarck and Crown Princess Victoria.

Unfortunately, the German and British government used her as a political pawn. In 1875 she attempted to contact Sultan Barghash when he was in London, but Sir Bartle Frere manipulated her into not approaching him with the deal that the English government would take care of her children’s education.⁵² She sadly agreed, but later realized that they likely wanted to forestall Bismarck from interfering and that they had tricked her.⁵³ Ten years later she visited Zanzibar on a German warship, because Bismarck thought her half-German son

46 Ibid., 331-333.

47 Ibid., 189.

48 Ibid., 267.

49 Ibid., 368.

50 Ibid., 357.

51 Ibid., 319-326.

52 Ibid., 376.

53 Ibid.

Rudolph might be of use in supporting German interests against Sultan Barghash as a last resort. Although he promised he would intercede on her behalf if she returned to Germany, once Germany settled their claims to mainland Africa he dropped her case. Disappointed by Germany and England's non-efforts, she quit Europe altogether and moved to Beirut.

OUTPUTS

The outcomes and significance of her writings and life are immediately apparent in the influence upon her children's lives. One daughter married a German major-general, the other a German colonial officer to the Marshall Islands. Her son Rudolph served in the German military and eventually led the *Deutsche Orientbank* in Cairo. Later he married a Jewish woman and spent decades seeking to reconcile Jewish and Arab interests in Palestine. In 1922, he wrote to the British protectorate asking for financial assistance for his mother. They awarded her an annual pension of 100 pounds under the condition that this award not be interpreted as recognizing her claims. One year later, she passed away in Jena and was buried in Heinrich's grave in Hamburg. Along with her urn was a bag of sand she brought from Zanzibar. Obituary notices appeared in German and English newspapers, as well as the Cairo newspaper *al-Muqattam*. Today, her surviving descendants live in Germany, Holland, Brazil, and Zanzibar—further evidence of her global legacy.⁵⁴

There are also many contemporary scholastic and pop culture outcomes to her legacy. In her home country, a room at the Bait al-Ajab palace, an entire museum⁵⁵, and a traveling exhibit in Oman are dedicated in her honor.⁵⁶ A Sayyida Salme Foundation is registered in the UK; however, the foundation appears to be no longer operative.⁵⁷ In Germany, Hamburg City Hall put on an exhibit about her during "Zanzibar Week 2009,"⁵⁸ and several German authors have recently written novels about her based upon her *Memoirs*.⁵⁹ She has even inspired a music compilation entitled "Sounds of Zanzibar," released by a German label.⁶⁰ The fact that her legacy has spanned a breadth of countries and mediums testifies to the compelling nature of her life and writings.

⁵⁴ "Princess Salme: Behind the Veil," <https://www.soas.ac.uk/gallery/salme/>

⁵⁵ Ali Ahmed al-Riyami, "Sayyida Salme Museum," *Omani Daily Observer*, accessed July 4, 2015, <http://omanobserver.com/sayyida-salme-museum/>.

⁵⁶ "Princess Salme: Behind the Veil."

⁵⁷ "Sayyida Salme Foundation: Company Profile Information." accessed July 3, 2015, <http://www.zoominfo.com/c/Sayyida-Salme-Foundation/343966342>.

⁵⁸ "From Zanzibar to Berlin and Beyond." accessed December 13, 2014, <http://staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/en/research/fachgebiete/germanistik/emily-ruete/modern-engagements-with-the-life-and-work-of-emily-ruete/>.

⁵⁹ Göttsche, *Remembering Africa* (Rochester: Camden House, 2013).

⁶⁰ Shand, "Music reviews," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (January 2, 2015), <http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/music/music-reviews-mary-j-blige-trifonov-justin-townes-earle-memoirs-of-an-arabian-princess-20141230-12f1i4.html>

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Remembered today as the “first published woman writer in 19th century Germany,”⁶¹ with her *Memoirs* referred to as “the first known biography of an Arab woman,”⁶² Salme/Emily’s identities as shaped by the contingencies of her era demonstrably influenced flows of knowledge between Zanzibar and Germany. Her multiple identities and interactions led to hybridized understandings of her homeland and new country; thus, it would go too far to label her an “Orientalist” but on the other hand one cannot argue her Islamic(ate) identity remained completely unchanged as a result of her move to Germany. Throughout her writings, she promoted tolerance and cross-cultural understanding: “other countries, other customs.”⁶³ The “billiard-ball” metaphor, coined by Doreen Massey and expanded upon by Todd Kontje, neatly encapsulates Salme/Emily’s identity and writings.⁶⁴ Massey challenges the analogy that despite repeated collisions across the surface of a “global pool table”, the balls “never change their basic identities as solids or stripes, cue ball or eight ball.”⁶⁵ Instead, as Kontje puts it, the balls’ collisions cause “mixing and matching in unpredictable and never-ceasing ways.”⁶⁶ Like billiard balls, Salme/Emily’s writings about Zanzibar and Germany ricochet throughout space and time, influencing flows of knowledge and cultural understandings to this day.

⁶¹ Al-Riyami, “Sayyida Salme Museum.”

⁶² Al-Rawi, “Portrayal of the East vs. the West,” 15.

⁶³ Sayyida, Salme (Emily Ruete) and E. Van Donzel, *Between Two Worlds*, 183.

⁶⁴ Kontje, “Germany’s Local Orientalisms,” 55-77.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

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