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Brookes: On the Sultan's Service: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's Memoir of the Ottoman's Palace, 1909-1912

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the historical context permits readers to approach each chapter independently.

This volume contains useful charts and statistics, but the endnotes are relatively sparse, and there is no bibliography. Most data are extracted from public sources, including the World Fact Book and World Development Report. Notable exceptions include data from the Ibn Khaldoun Center in Saad Eddin Ibrahim's chapter, "The Changing Face of Egypt's Islamic Activism", and interviews documenting Egyptian perceptions of U.S. regional intentions and policy assumptions.

Egypt at the Crossroads provides an overview of Egypt's domestic and regional stability and relations with the U.S. This volume focuses on domestic issues such as bureaucracy, unemployment, and extremism as well as regional issues such as arms control, relations with Israel, and cultural leadership. In terms of the U.S.-Egyptian partnership, this volume calls for common goals and joint strategies. Overall, this book offers a comprehensive overview of Egypt's domestic, regional, and international issues at a critical historical juncture, focusing on ongoing issues and underlying factors in the pursuit of domestic and regional stability.

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On the Sultan's Service: Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's Memoir of the Ottoman Palace, 1909–1912. By Douglas Scott Brookes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019. Pp. 255, with bibliography and index. \$33.60 (Paperback). ISBN: 9780253045515

Douglas Scott Brookes' translation and edition of Halid Ziya Uşaklıgil's memoirs aims to familiarize the reader with the daily life in the Ottoman chancery. Halid Ziya was the first secretary there for three years, 1909–1912, so his memoirs present a particular point of view, complicated further by his ties to the Committee of Union and

Progress (CUP). He also happens to be one of the most brilliant novelists in Ottoman literature.

In a note on the translation, Brookes states that he picked out the parts directly related to the chancery from the rather voluminous memoir *Saray ve Ötesi* (The Palace and Beyond) and reshuffled them by theme¹²¹. Although he notes the appearance of the original text as “from 1940 to 1942,”¹²² he cites a 2003 edition of the memoir in the bibliography,¹²³ thus possibly filtering Halid Ziya’s style and content one more time. The book begins with a foreword by a member of the Osmanoğlu family¹²⁴ and continues with an informative introduction by Brookes, focusing first on the Dolmabahçe Palace and then the historical actors therein. Additional maps, a timeline of Ottoman history, as well as a family tree help the reader set the scene. As for the content, the first two chapters sketch Halid Ziya’s entrance to the palace, his acquaintance with Sultan Mehmed Reşad, and his first assignment of renovating palaces. The third chapter delineates the much-famed procession of selamlık, a public appearance of the Sultan, while the fourth is about the palace staff, including eunuchs. Chapter five includes Halid Ziya’s impressions of various imperial family members, including the heirs to the throne, who the reader sees again in the next chapter on royal marriage and succession strategies. Enver and Hafız Hakkı, both already renowned in CUP and military circles, make an appearance as sons-in-law of the Sultan. In chapter seven, the reader catches a glimpse of state mechanizations leading up to the executions of instigators of the counterrevolution in 1909 and the affective toll this decision took on Halid Ziya as a human being. The next chapter is about Halid Ziya’s tour of the Yıldız Palace (residence of the then-dethroned Abdülhamid II), and Topkapı Palace (an earlier residence for various sultans). Chapter nine incorporates more historical actors coming to the court, among which Ahmed Rıza stands out as a prominent politician with an edgy wit. The reader also becomes more acquainted with foreign royalty, such as King Ferdinand I of Bulgaria coming to meet with the Sultan. After an

¹²¹ Brookes, xx.

¹²² Brookes, xviii. He does not give any more information on this publication, but probably means the volumes appearing from Hilmi Kitabevi in Istanbul.

¹²³ Brookes, 251.

¹²⁴ For the reader who is new to Ottoman history: the Grand National Assembly of Turkey abolished the Ottoman monarchy in 1922; the use of the title “HIH Prince” on page 11 is, at best, nostalgic.

interlude about Ramadan and court life during religious holidays, including the presents sent to Hijaz, chapter twelve moves on to the Balkans tour of the Sultan, essentially undertaken for appeasing the reform demands there. During this tour, the reader learns, Halid Ziya visited Abdülhamid II on an assignment from the reigning Sultan. The next chapter describes tumultuous times, mainly the Tripolitania crisis and a change of grand viziers. The theme of crisis continues into the next chapter but takes up a personal hue with Halid Ziya's lengthy explanation of how he became a Senator. Chapter fifteen highlights Halid Ziya's resignation from the senator position and Ahmed Muhtar Paşa's ascent to the grand vizierate. The last chapter comprises Halid Ziya's even-handed analysis of the reigning Sultan's character and his times as his secretary. The book concludes with an epilogue on the last meeting between Halid Ziya and Sultan Mehmed Reşad. Two glossaries, a brief bibliography, and an index make up the addenda. Brookes' translation is an excellent contribution to the rising interest in late Ottoman memoirs. Another example within that corpus would be Selim Deringil's "The Ottoman Twilight in the Arab Lands."¹²⁵

The book would be a welcome addition for all libraries, especially those with a Near East focus. The references, combined with the glossaries for names, terms, and places along with the introduction, do the heavy lifting in adding a bit of historical context and clarifying the meaning of certain words. Due to the book being a translation, the bibliography is brief and not accessible to the general audience.¹²⁶ However, the index is extensive and helpful. The translation tone is generally coherent, although Brookes takes some liberties in adding undue emphasis to some points Halid Ziya glosses over and simplifies Halid Ziya's flowery prose. The transcription is consistent throughout the book, following Modern Turkish spelling. The book also includes illustrations from contemporary journals, which would help the reader visualize the Sultan and other personages or events.

This edition is an interesting entry point for the reader curious to know more about the courtly life under Sultan Mehmed Reşad; as such, it accomplishes its aim. For Halid Ziya, this is but three years in

¹²⁵ Selim Deringil, *The Ottoman Twilight in the Arab Lands: Turkish Memoirs and Testimonies of the Great War*. (Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2018).

¹²⁶ Brookes, xviii, addresses newcomers to Ottoman history in a question, but it is not explicit whether they are his sole target audience.

his multi-faceted career. The selection has only rare glimpses into the mind of the great novelist, a man of his time. A suggestion for further inquiry, perhaps for translation, would be *Kırk Yıl* (Forty Years), his autobiography encompassing his childhood, education, and endeavors in the literary world, which is full of information about the urban daily life in the late Ottoman Empire.

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Bread and Freedom: Egypt's Revolutionary Situation. By Mona El-Ghobashy. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021. Pp. 392. \$25 (paperback) ISBN: 9781503628151.

Egypt's Tahrir Uprising of 2011, which toppled down a seemingly stable dictatorship, has received tremendous popular, intellectual, and academic attention. Mona El-Ghobashy's *Bread and Freedom* offers a new account of the revolution and aims to "show how the unexpected uprising opened up several possibilities for how Egypt would be governed" (p. 28). Moving beyond conventional analyses that try to uncover "what went wrong," El-Ghobashy reexamines the uprising as a "concrete political phenomenon" by utilizing the Leninist concept of a "revolutionary situation," where "rulers and ruled cannot go on as before but a new political order is by no means assured" (p. 30). This concept focuses on the political struggle that intervened between the initial breakdown of the old regime and the consolidation of a new one. Instead of causal origins, the author traces trajectories and asks: "how did an unlikely contest for state power emerge in a durable authoritarian state, terminating with the victory of a counterrevolutionary coalition" (p. 35). El-Ghobashy takes interactions as the unit of analysis and relies on documentary by-products of Egypt's revolutionary situation such as official fact-finding reports, court rulings, legislation, constitutional assembly deliberations, election returns, campaign manifestoes, slogans and couplets, tweets and Facebook posts, leaflets, Human Rights organizations' reports, autopsy reports, personal narratives, petitions, commemorations, prison letters, photos, and videos. The author argues that the concept of the revolutionary situation illuminates more of the many interlinked events and controversies of Egypt's upheaval