

Twitter Thread by Christian Sahner

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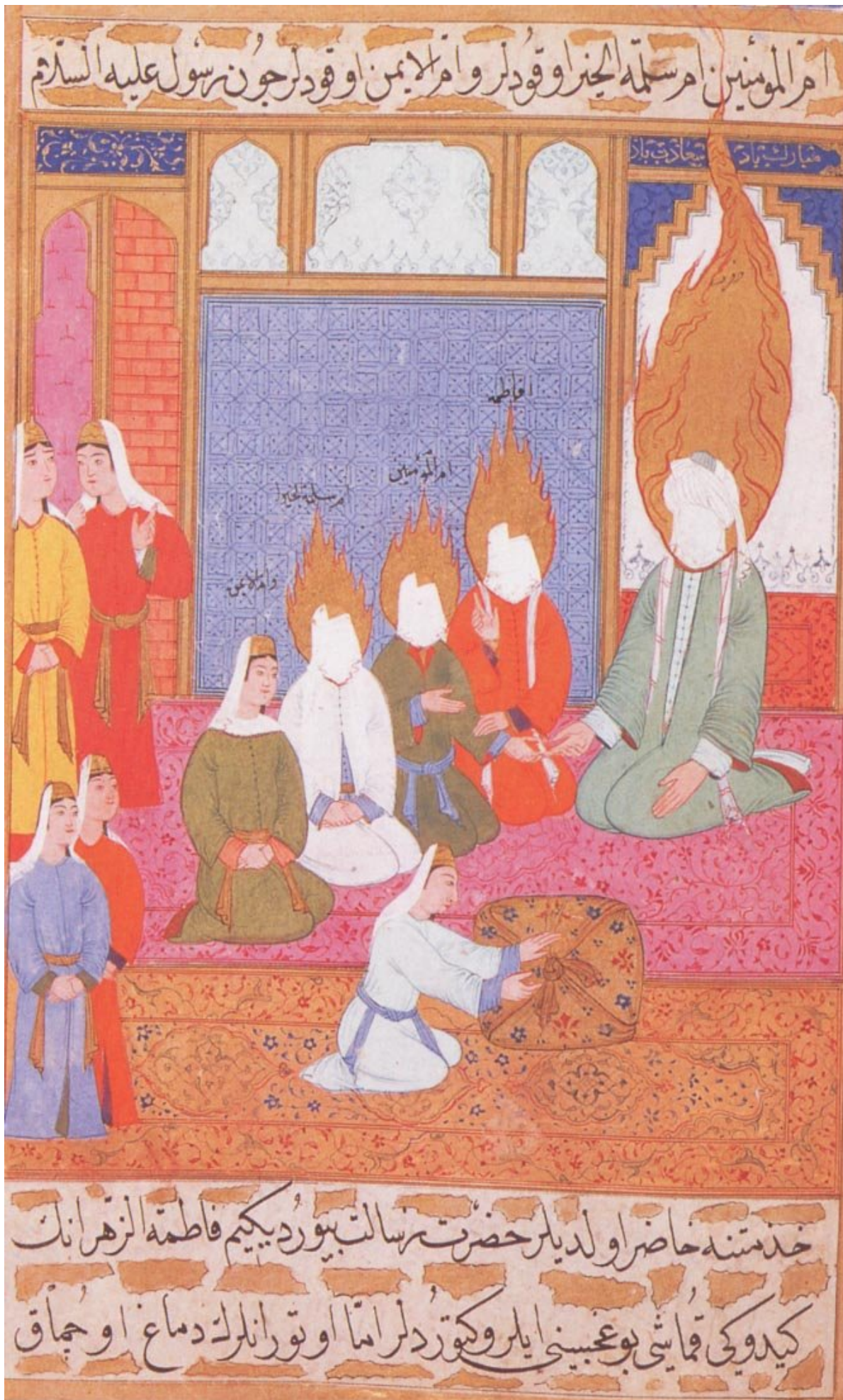
@ccsahner



1/ Who were the earliest women converts to Islam and what was their experience of conversion?

**In our new sourcebook, Sean Anthony (@shahanSean) and Keren Abbou HersHKovitz profile several women who were alive at the Prophet's time
#ConversionToIslam**

<https://t.co/00XpFCjXtP>



2/ In the first entry, @shahanSean translates and comments on the conversion of the Prophet's first wife Khadija as portrayed in one of the earliest and most famous biographies, the Kitāb al-Maghāzī of Ibn Isḥāq (d. 767)

3/ According to tradition, Khadija was a widow and wealthy merchant of Mecca, who married Muhammad after initially hiring him as her agent. She was reportedly the first person to believe in his prophethood, underlining the centrality of women in the Prophet's life

4/ Ibn Isma'il tells us that when Muhammad first received the revelation from Gabriel, he came to Khadija frightened and confused. She reassured him, "God would never allow anything but good to befall you, for I know you are a man who only speaks the truth..."

5/ "Rejoice and remain steadfast! By Him whose hand Khadija's soul resides, I hope that you will be the prophet of his people (umma)!"

Khadija then consulted with her cousin Waraqa, a Christian, who verified that Muhammad's experience was true.

6/ He said to her, "Holy! Holy! By Him in whose hand my soul resides, if you have told me the truth, Khadija, then he is a prophet! Let him be steadfast!"

7/ Abbou Hershovitz then profiles women converts in the great biographical dictionary of Ibn Sa'd (d. 845), the *al-Mabqat*. One is the Prophet's paternal aunt Arwa. Interestingly, only one of his paternal uncles became Muslim (*Islamza*), whereas several of his aunts did

8/ Arwa's brother was the Prophet's uncle and fierce opponent Abi Lahab. She tried to convince him to convert as well, saying, "Take the side [of Muhammad]... If he is victorious, you will have the choice of either joining him or keeping your religion..."

9/ "If he fails, you will have an excuse as he [is a relative]."

In other words, for Arwa, conversion was about building strategic social ties; family loyalty was everything.

10/ Stay tuned for more highlights from our sourcebook in the coming days and weeks!

The Editors (Nimrod Hurvitz, Christian Sahner, Uriel Simonsohn [@culXI8fYioHzt8O](#), and Luke Yarbrough) [@ucpress](#)