

KHADIJAH'S IMAGE IN 19th CENTURY ORIENTALISM

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Abstract

Khadijah, Prophet Muhammad's first wife, has remained a victim in Latin and vernacular literature in the West until the 18th century. According to texts in Latin and some vernacular languages written and impacted more by the Church mindset, Muhammad is a manipulator man who used Khadijah to gain wealth and power through marriage. However, this image has changed decisively as a result to the new historical approach of the French Historical Scholar School followed at the beginning of the 19th century. The present study investigates the image of Khadijah in French texts based on the image studies analysis. Particularly, forty-nine French texts published in the 19th century were studied and analyzed. The texts include books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, journals of literature and science. The results show that the image of Khadijah has changed drastically. Khadijah, the rich widow made a major contribution to the founding of the new creed mentality of Islam. Khadijah is no longer the persecuted victim of Muhammad; but an intelligent, wise, supporter and loving wife. Moreover, another analysis of these texts shows that since the 18th century, the characters of Muhammad and Khadijah were used in French fantasia that imitates the Arabian Nights.

[Istri pertama Nabi Muhammad, Khadijah, masih diceritakan sebagai obyek penderita dalam literatur bahasa Latin dan Eropa hingga abad 18. Berdasarkan teks-teks latin dan yang dipengaruhi oleh mindset gereja, Muhammad merupakan orang yang memanfaatkan perkawinannya dengan Khadijah untuk meraih kemakmuran dan pengaruh politik. Namun

gambaran itu perlahan memudar seiring dengan berkembangnya pendekatan sejarah baru para sejarawan Prancis dan diikuti oleh sarjana lainnya hingga awal abad 19. Pada tulisan ini akan mengkaji gambaran Khadijah dalam teks-teks berbahasa Prancis. Setidaknya ada 49 tulisan yang akan dibahas dan dianalisis termasuk diantaranya, buku, kamus, ensiklopedia, artikel jurnal sastra dan sains. Kesimpulannya menunjukkan bahwa gambaran tentang Khadijah berubah drastis, dia sebagai janda kaya telah memberikan kontribusi besar dalam meletakkan mentalitas baru umat Islam. Khadijah bukanlah obyek penderita, tapi seorang yang pandai, bijak, pendukung utama dan istri yang mencintai suaminya, Muhammad. Selain itu, karakter Muhammad dan Khadijah hingga abad 18 digunakan sebagai fantasi yang disejajarkan dengan kisah Seribu Satu Malam.]

Keywords: Khadijah, Muhammad's biography, Middle Ages, Islamism,

A. Introduction

Radical changes were made to the views of orientalism about the biography of Prophet Muhammad and the main characters who accompanied him at the beginning of Islam. Early reviews of Muhammad's biography have focused on his character and his wife's, who accompanied him from the beginning of the new religion. According to these resources, Khadijah had a secondary role in the new faith. This widespread belief continued until the end of the 18th century, when orientalist studies took a completely different path in the way it approaches the biography of Prophet Muhammad. At the end of the 18th century, the so-called Academic Orientalism that was influenced by the historical method has reinvestigated the biography of Prophet Muhammad using Quran and new resources such as Sunnah and the texts of Islamic historians. This intellectual revolutionary approach was influenced by institutional academic orientalism, the spread of colonization, the economic advances, the technological revolution, national disputes, as well as the commercial and cultural competition among the super powers of Europe. Consequently, the historical and literary texts were the turning point of Islamic studies that later focused on the wives of Prophet Muhammad. These glorified women contributed to the establishment and spread of Islam.

The interest in Europe in Khadijah started around the Middle Ages, short after their interest in Muhammad. The way these studies viewed Prophet Muhammad suggests that most of literary resources written in Latin had a stereotype of the masculine characters in his life. These texts had very rare appearance of Khadijah and the Prophet's wives, sometimes through a text or even an iconography. One of the oldest manuscripts that were interested in Khadijah is *Istoria de Mabomet* (ca. 850) that was inclusive to the Christian people of Iberia. Khadijah appeared many times as part of Muhammad's life who was married to a widow (Constable 48). Zaiynab was also mentioned in this manuscript as one of the wives of the Prophet who was earlier married to his adopted son Zayd. Most probably, this manuscript was written by a Spanish author who lived under the role of Muslims, as he came across details of the Prophet's life which may indicate that he was a contemporary or familiar with Al-Andalus literary production, though there is evidence that there were changes made either in support of the claims made about the Prophet or a misunderstanding of then narration made by the Christian authors.

Regardless of the exceptional details, medieval assumptions that were made about the Prophet and the Muslim figures of his time relate him with the Antichrist prophecies, and conclude that his faith is schismatic of Christianity.¹ As the Medieval Period was predominated by the Church and the European religious mentality, liturgical genres of literature have flourished, and the life of the "fake" Prophet Muhammad was a fertile material for educating Western societies. His marriage story of the widow Khadijah turned into a theme in many of them. Vincent de Beauvais (1264-1184/1194) in *Miroir Historial* depicts Muhammad as a wealthy merchant who seduces the charming widow princess, Cadigan, who was often attracted by talented merchants.² Du Pont and Lepage³ suggest that in *Le Roman de Mabomet*, the poem of Alexandre du Pont written in 1258, Khadijah appears in customs very similar to 12th or 13th

¹ See Ahlam Sbaihah, "Stereotypes Associated with Prototypes of the Prophet of Islam's Name till the 19th Century", *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages and Literature*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2015), pp. 21–37.

² Cited by Henri de Castries, *L'Islam: impressions et études* (Paris: Armand Colin et Cie, 1896), p. 284.

³ Alexandre du Pont and Yvan G. Lepage, *Le roman de Mabomet* (Louvain: Peeters, 1996).

century France. A similar Europeanized image of Khadijah is made in Johannes de la Colonna's (1298-1344?) *Mare Historiarum*. The manuscript has a drawing of a Khadijah's marriage to the Prophet, with Muhammad and the marriage authorizer putting on Islamic customs. This is an anachronism that was part of medieval mentality. In the manuscript of De la Colonna, the image of Khadijah's marriage to Muhammad is associated in the same frame with another drawing to Muhammad as he calls for Islam. Probably, it is an intentional representation to relate the marriage to the establishment of the new doctrine. The same Europeanized image of Khadijah reappeared in Guillaume Rouillé's (1518?-1589) manuscript *Promptuarii Iconum Insigniorum*, where Khadijah had the features of statues and paintings of women from ancient Europe.

In a study of medieval iconography of the Prophet, González-Muñoz⁴ asserts that Latin manuscripts were concerned with the Prophet as he seduces and gets married to the widow Khadijah. It also highlights the epilepsy that the Prophet had during his marriage. González-Muñoz cites other iconographies included in the 14th century manuscript of Jean de Mandeville and the 15th century manuscript *Mirouer historiale abregie*. They show Muhammad with some unknown women both in this life and in paradise, which is a clear indication to Muhammad's lustful desires. Dante, who cited women in the *Divine Comedy*, did not doom a single Muslim woman into his Inferno, though he had the same anti-Muhammadist view of Islam and the same ridicule the Latin texts had of Muhammad's relationship with women.

The Julián del Castillo book⁵ shows signs of a temporary Spanish interest to reintroduce the role of Khadijah as in *Istoria de Mahomet*. This attempt is probably an overlooked reconstruction of Khadijah's image that would take place in England, France and Germany during the 18th and 19th century. As the author comments on the power of Hercules at the time when Muhammad started his new religion in Arabian Peninsula, Del Castillo comes across Khadijah as the maker of her evil husband's

⁴ Luis Fernando González Muñoz, "Consideraciones Sobre las Representaciones Gráficas del Profeta Muḥammad en Manuscritos Cristianos Occidentales: Siglos XII-XVI", *De Medio Aevo*, vol. 7, no. 1 (2018), pp. 47–68.

⁵ Julián del Castillo, *Historia de los Reyes Godos que Vinieron de la Scythia de Europa Contra el Imperio Romano: y a España: con sucession dellos, hasta los católicos reyes don Fernando y Doña Isabel* (Madrid: Por Luis Sanchez, 1624), p. 98.

massive wealth, which made him the powerful of Arabian Peninsula and the adjacent areas that Heraclius could not set free. The book has a section entitled “Relacion de las Cosas de Mahoma”, which tells the biography of the Prophet in a way that confuses the European traditions of the Prophet's life with some Islamic traditions. One common claim is that Muhammad was a slave to a merchant called Abdomanoples, who had no offspring. Upon his death, Abdomanople's slave inherited all his fortune. Another claim is that Khadijah is the one who inherited the fortune and has got married to the slave Muhammad upon an advice by her relatives and a monk called Sergio the Nestorian, short before she reached fifty years old. With his eloquence and magic, Muhammad managed to control the will of his wife, who, despite his suffering from fainting and epilepsy he persuaded her that it is not a health condition, but happened upon the reception of revelation, because he is the Prophet of the Nation. Just like the other women, Khadijah believed his story and loved him both as a husband and a divine Prophet. She eventually died and left him a fortune he used to promote himself as a saint.⁶ A similar narration was found in Enrique Flórez⁷, in which Cadiga is compared to Eve who was first seduced by a snake, which is compared here to Muhammad. The image of Muhammad, as a slave to Khadijah, is not new, but is rooted in medieval literary works, particularly the 13th century manuscript *Le Roman de Mahomet*.

In 1704 and 1717, Antoine Galland published the first French translation of the *Arabian Nights*. The text was the second most popular oriental piece of literature after the Qur'an in West. Unlike the Qur'an, the *Arabian Nights* was highly admired by the West who attempted to imitate it and find names for the characters they created, and found their inspiration in the Islamic names. Anyone who reads the translation of Galland learns about Muhammad from the translation itself. The name was mentioned many times; even the first hero in the translation was called Schemseddin Mohammed. Galland used footnotes to indicate that

⁶ *Historia Pontifical y Catolica: en la qual se contienen las vidas, y hechos notables de todos los sumos pontifices Romanos* (Madrid: Sanz, 1678), p. 180.

⁷ Enrique Flórez, *Clave Historial con que se abre la puerta a la historia eclesiastica, y politica, chronología de los papas, y emperadores, reyes de España, Italia, y Francia, con los origenes de todas las monarquías: Concilios, hereges, santos, escritores y sucesos memorables de cada siglo* (Madrid: Antonio de Sanch, 1770), p. 133.

Mahomet in the Arabian Nights is the same Mohammed, the Prophet.⁸ The translation never came across the wives of the Prophet nor used their names for the characters in the narration.

Later; however, literary works in Europe have succeeded in using the name of the Prophet and his wife Khadijah in fantasy. One such a literary work is written by the Irish writer Frances Sheridan in 1767. Sheridan learned about the biography of the Prophet from the references circulated by the time. She called Khadijah the wealthy lady and made her a princess in one of her novels entitled *The History of Nourjahad*.⁹ In this novel, Prince Nourjahad wishes to turn his garden to an Islamic paradise in which his wives play the role of the Paradise Islamic Houris. Since Nourjahad imitates Mahomet, one of his mistresses had to be Cadiga; Mahomet's favorite wife.

A continuous use of this duality is evident in the 19th century European literature. Literary manifestation of this period has created an additional image of the "wise" Khadijah. This was the image given by Washington Irving in a group of tales entitled *Tales of the Alhambra*¹⁰ he wrote during his visit to Grenada in 1832. In one tale entitled "Legend of the Three Beautiful Princesses", the writer joints legend with images and historical events of his time. The tale tells about an Andalusian King called Mohamed who falls in love with the daughter of a Spanish leader captivated by Moorish in one of the wars they had with the Christians. The princess's female companions play a major role in the events, and when she embraces Islam, the king calls her Kadiga. Being wise and secretive, the king puts her in charge of his three princesses' daughters. It is worth to mention in this context that Khadijah had three sons and four daughters. Does the number of sons and daughters suggest that Irving was influenced by Khadijah's biography?

⁸ Antoine Galland (tran.), *Les milles et une nuits, Tome premier* (1704), p. 304, http://www.crdp-strasbourg.fr/je_lis_libre/livres/Anonyme_LesMilleEtUneNuits1.pdf, accessed 13 Jun 2020.

⁹ Frances Chamberlaine Sheridan, *The History of Nourjahad*, (London: printed for C. Cooke, 1798).

¹⁰ Washington Irving, *The Alhambra*, ed. by Andrew B. Myers and William T. Lenehan (Boston: Twayne, 1983).

The first folio Latin translation of the Prophet's biography was made by Jean Gangier in 1723. Gangier translated the Arabic historian Abulfeda's *Chronicles*. The Latin translation made by Gagneir was a response to the attempt made by the Italian orientalist Louis Maraccini who misused Abulfeda's document about the life of the Prophet¹¹. Gagneir investigation of the life of Muhammad has become the source of so many orientalist studies in the 18th century in and outside France. However, Henri de Boulainvilliers¹² was the first orientalist to represent the true image of Muhammad in his book *Histoire des Arabes avec la Vie de Mahomet*. The author had a perspective on Khadijah or Gadija, though he told a little about her. He describes how Muhammad was a source of attraction to the Meccan wealthy widow that they got married and had a happy life. Boulainvilliers explains how Muhammad was a devout husband and never got another wife in a society where polygamy was very common. Khadijah, the wealthy women, supported him financially and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Muhammad, however, lost his sons and wife by the will of God, as the Islamic commentator's postulate. Boulainvilliers adds that some Christian authors were satisfied reproaching Khadijah. They believe that she encouraged and supported her impostor husband founding the new religion. Sometimes, they would refer to her to the snake that encouraged Eve to seduce Adam, although in Islamic sources, Khadijah has not promoted the new religion. The role Khadijah played was a proselyte who influenced those who live with her and work in her service. Khadijah, the generous wife, died and left her husband heavy-hearted.¹³

In Italy, a brief but authentic telling of the biography of the Prophet was documented in the 18th century references. In 1763, Giuseppe Agostino Orsi, tells the story of the Prophet's marriage to Khadijah. Muhammad was introduced to Cadica or Cadiga through trade when he was twenty-five years old. They got married and she was

¹¹ Ziad Elmarsafy, *The Enlightenment Qur'an: The Politics of Translation and the Construction of Islam* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009), p. 39.

¹² Henri de Boulainvilliers (tran.), *Histoire des arabes, avec la vie de Mahomed* (Paris: Hachette Livre-Bnf, 2022); Henri de Boulainvilliers (tran.), *The Life of Mohamamad: Or The Life of Mahomet* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing's Rare Reprints, 2004).

¹³ Henri de Boulainvilliers (tran.), *The Life of Mahomet. Translated from the French Original* (London: T. Longman, C. Hitch and L. Hawes, 1752), pp. 166–7, 196–7, 255–6.

the first person to believe in his message. This new message, according to Orsi, was inspired by the Jews, Christians, and people of other faiths Muhammad met in his trade voyages.¹⁴

Muslim women in general and the wives of the Prophet in particular have not been investigated till the end of the 19th century when Edward William Lane published in 1836 *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* to show how the Muslim women were influenced by the wives of the Prophet. The book explains how Muslims tend to name their daughters after the Prophet's wives, daughters and other women who were close to him. These names include Khadeegeh, 'A`isheh, A`in`ineh, Fát`meh, Zeyneb.¹⁵ The Prophet's wives and daughters remained reviewed as part of the Prophet's biography. The first main interest in Khadijah as a Muslim woman was in 1916 when an "annuaire" issued by Ecole des Hautes Etudes of Paris mentioned that the researcher Chapīra started to edit an Arabic manuscript that would have a French translation of the title *Histoire de Khadidja et de Son Marriage avec Mahomet*.¹⁶

In 1912, the daughters of the Prophet have become the topic of Henri Lammens's book *Fatima et les Filles de Mahomet*. Since the entire Prophet's daughters were born to Ḥadīġa, she came to play a major role in the book and was a subject to be analyzed and criticized. Lammens raised questions about how Sunnah would allow the Prophet to get married to a lady so old that; had they not got married, could be his grandmother.¹⁷ The book stereotypes Khadijah, in a footnote, according to Aisha, the third wife of Muhammad, as an old Qurashi woman with red lips. He suggests that, according to Islamic resources, the Prophet has not inherited Khadijah's wealth because God has promised him the

¹⁴ Giuseppe Agostino Orsi, *Della Istoria Ecclesiastica Descritta da fr. Giuseppe Agostino Orsi dell'ordine de' Predicatori maestro del sac. palazzo apostolico accademico della Crusca tomo primo [-ventesimo primo]* (Roma: nella stamperia di Pallade appresso Niccolò, e Marco Pagliarini, 1763), pp. 255–6.

¹⁵ Edward William Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London, New York: J. M. Dent & co.; E. P. Dutton & co., 1908), p. 43.

¹⁶ Charles Bémont, *École Pratique des Hautes-Études: Section des Sciences Historiques et Philologiques: Annuaire 1912-1913: Calendrier; documents; rapports* (Paris: Impr. nationale, 1912), p. 59.

¹⁷ Henri Lammens, *Fātima et les Filles de Mahomet: Notes Critiques pour l'étude de la Sira* (Roma: Sumptibus Pontificii Instituti Biblici, 1912), p. 12.

power of a Prophet. Then the author raised one more time the issue of what happened to Khadijah's wealth, the woman who was the dream of the greedy merchants.¹⁸ This book though criticized subjective, has raised many questions that will lead researchers to further study of classical Islamic resources and topics that have never been investigated by Western specialists of Islam.

A recent source Lammens referred to is Aisha's Musnad of Sunnah though he was skeptic about some of its content.¹⁹ Lammens confirms that the medieval Medina School based on Aisha's Musand because she was defended in Quranic verses.²⁰ Aisha was the second woman, after his daughter Fatima, that was a hot topic of debate by orientalists. A whole book by Abbot entitled *Aisha, the Beloved of Mohammed* was devoted to her in 1942. Abbot referred to Lammens and other orientalists in this work. In the same year, she published another study about women in the Islamic era entitled *Women and the State in the Early Islam*. The author has referred to modern and classical Islamic resources that reviewed women in the early era of Islam. According to Abbott, Aisha is the Prophet's favorite women known to the non-Islamic world. She was called "The First Lady of Islam".²¹

The *musnad* of Aisha has probably gained a great interest because she was a narrator of more than two thousand hadiths, a great number of them documented in the most popular books of Hadith: Muslim and Al-Bukhari. Aisha was as important to 20th century Europe as Ibn Ishaq, Al-Tabari, Abulfeda, and Al-Bukhari, significant to the 19th century orientalists. Oriental studies of the 19th century had an academic, systematic and historical approach to the study of the Prophet's women. The historical analysis of the image of Khadijah in establishing the Islamic State paved the way to study other roles of Prophet's wives in documenting the Islamic heritage and establishing the Islamic mentality of the post-prophetic era.

The present study analyzes the development of the image of

¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 19.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 136.

²¹ Nabia Abbott, *Aishah: The Beloved of Mohammed* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. ix.

Khadijah in the works of orientalists in the 19th century France. This Great Power is a model of an orientalist institution that experienced a transitory academic-political period. It has an educational policy based on modern methodologies and criteria relevant on the French revolution. The analysis is based on forty-nine documents indexed by Gallica, the French digital library, and documents available online via Google books and other books archives. These documents are the source of French literature that was published in the 19th century with themes that tackled Khadijah. In the present study, the investigated documents were indexed in a separate repertoire that had a chronological order. The other references were indexed separately. This same order of the repertoire was followed in analyzing the image of Khadijah according to the theories of image analysis.

B. The Publisher Institution in France

The changes that the French Revolution made, have caused social and intellectual changes that remained constant since the Bourbon Restoration in 1814. Some social changes have contributed to the success of the printing industry for a number of reasons. Colonial wars have caused the loss of military prestige in favor of the industrial professions. Times of peace have revived the passion of reading, writing and research. Some major figures advocated the publication of books of science and literature motivated by the revolution and the wars of the French Empire. The book exhibition of 1851 held in London is a major evidence of the superiority of publication industry in France, Austria and Germany.²²

Although voting on press liberties took place in 1881, scientific and literary periodicals seemed to enjoy much earlier liberties since they did not tackle the political and legal issues that were dominate topics of the French Revolution periodicals. These concerns; however, were not explicitly discussed in the periodicals, encyclopedias and dictionaries analyzed in this study. According to Haynes²³ other factors collaborated in outlining the market of the literary production:

²² Paul-François Dupont, *Histoire De L'imprimerie*, vol. 1 (Paris: Chez tous les librairies, 1854), pp. 318, 375.

²³ Christine Haynes, *Lost Illusions: The Politics of Publishing in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010), p. 4.

Between the late eighteenth and late nineteenth centuries, the literary marketplace was certainly shaped by the growth of the reading public, a rise in consumption, the development of new sources and forms of credit, the mechanization of papermaking and printing, the invention of stereo typography and lithography, the spread of the railroad, and the institution of mass education.

The new imperial empire of France has created a strong industry and contributed to the salient rise of the bourgeoisie. It had a major role in advanced technology and transportation. Trade became prosperous and France gained a global reputation of science literature and art. Studies in French language that aims at spreading the language became popular. Research in language, literature, history and geography aimed at serving the Catholic Church.²⁴

The third part of the century closed with the Third Empire protecting public liberties. The establishment of the Empire in 1871 coincided with the *Belle Epoque* stage which refers to the era that marked the end of Franco Russian war in 1871, which is the last war the West went through and lasted till the beginning of the First World War in 1914. During this period, economy has prospered, peace movement has flourished, the colonial movement ascended and the modern world witnessed advances in technology, science, culture and arts.

One of the Major academic contributions made by France in the 19th century was writing history. A number of books were written to explain and transmit history. These books document the history of France and that of other nations. History in these books was combined with politics, education and research. It correlates with humanities, social hierarchy, political opinions, religious creeds and all literary genres.²⁵ Historical books were given a great importance and criticism, as they were part of Belles Letters.

Learning in 1800 was made compulsory. Women got involved in learning too, and schools increased and developed. Exams of students

²⁴ Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization* (Oxford; New York: Berg Publishers, 2002), pp. 84–5.

²⁵ Gustave Vapereau, *Dictionnaire Universel des Litteratures* (Paris: Hachette, 1877), pp. 1014–6.

were supervised by academics.²⁶ Julien²⁷ demonstrates that the need for standardized texts for pupils increased. The industry of pedagogy, teaching tools and book production has flourished. The school of history was meant to spread history and transmit it, and procedures were taken to support students' historical knowledge. Historical documents were created. Sources, footnotes, and translations were rewritten. In our study, it was remarkable that an introduction about the orientalist author was made in the preface of books. For this reason, all texts that were revised in this study approved introducing the orientalist, his memberships, and his academic background on the cover page of the book. On the other hand, the methods texts contain simple and interesting story telling methods were followed in teaching history. Even the language of teaching was simple and there was consistency in spelling the names of Arabs.

The biography of the Prophet and his wives was part of the pedagogy of this period. We assumed it was motivated by the commitment of policy makers in France to draw public stereotypes that justifies occupying Islamic countries such as Algeria (1830-1962), and mandating others such as Tunisia (1881-1956) and Syria and Lebanon (1920-1946).

In the field of the periodicals publishing, the Ancien Régime of 17th century France had started periodicals dealing three main topics: *La Gazette*, covers politics; *Mercure de France*, covers research; *Journal des Sçavans*, covers literature. *Mercure de France* stopped issuing in 1825, unlike *Journal des Sçavans* that was stopped but reissued in 1816. Its studies about Muhammad were powerful in terms of content and contributed to the journal's reputation in the field of orientalism. The journal conducted researches on Sunnah, the image of Khadijah and the origins of Islam. Researchers who conducted such studies include J. Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire, Ernest Bersot and Ernest Renan. Since the French revolution, this journal was sponsored by the Institute of France. The editing members of the journal *Journal des Sçavans* are the same members of the Institute. The Institute was founded in 1795 and aimed at merging the

²⁶ Michel Leroy, "La Littérature Française dans les Instructions Officielles au XIXe Siècle", *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. 102, no. 3 (2002), p. 372.

²⁷ Dimitri Julien, "Écrire l'Histoire au Début du XIXe Siècle: Quelques Pistes de Recherche", *Écritures Historiques* (19 Jan 2015), <https://ecriturehist.hypotheses.org/126>, accessed 7 Jun 2020.

many academies of France that were founded in the 17th century, and they were given new names. Article 298 of the Constitution de l'an III explains its mission: "*Il y a pour toute la République un Institut national chargé de recueillir les découvertes, de perfectionner les arts et les sciences.*"

Beside literary journals, the number of scholarly journals increased and was published regularly under the supervision of societies and institutions of humanities. In our study, the century most researched topics included classical studies, mythology, religious studies, archeology, philology, Egyptian studies and oriental studies. France was the pioneer of oriental studies and competed with Europe's Great Powers, England and Germany. However, the orientalist of England and Germany were a main source of Islamic investigation to French orientalist in the 19th century.

On the other hand, the French revolution did not succeed in overthrowing Christianity. Statistics of (1855) indicate that France remained basically Catholic. Of the 36 million French people, 35 million reported Catholic, 775.000 Protestants, 74.000 Jews and 3000 freethinkers.²⁸ Re-empowering of Christianity may be attributed to the return of the wealthy nobles and property owners who supported the church for attempting to revive the Ancien Régime.²⁹ At the end of the Third Republic (1870-1940), the upper class was dominated by monks who descend to noble families.³⁰ Although the church has lost its properties, and monasteries vanished, abbes monks continued to produce Christian literature and the church had its own periodicals and researchers such as Ernest Renan.

The 19th century's studies of Muhammad's life and Khadijah were published in three main periodicals: *Journal*, *Revue*, and *Bulletin*.³¹

²⁸ Statistique Générale de la France, *Territoire et Population 1841-1846-1851*, vol. 2 (Paris: Ministère de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Travaux publics, 1855), p. xxv.

²⁹ Robert Gildea, *Children of the Revolution: The French, 1799-1914* (London: Allen Lane, 2008), p. 120.

³⁰ Philippe Rigoulot, "Protestants and the French Nation under the Third Republic: Between Recognition and Assimilation", *National Identities*, vol. 11, no. 1 (2009), p. 49.

³¹ Émile Littré, *Dictionnaire Langue Française* (Paris: Librairie de L. Hachette et Cie Paris, 1873). In this book defines the three periodicals as following: *Journal*: ouvrage périodique qui fait connaître les nouvelles politiques, scientifiques et littéraires,

Encyclopedias and specialized dictionaries that cover humanities have also discussed the life of Mohammad. The industry of Encyclopedias has flourished in France. Similar to Diderot's Encyclopedia, new encyclopedias that appear only once in twenty years have emerged and discussed different topics. These encyclopedias were meant to systematically analyze the "order and interrelations of human knowledge".³² The titles of dictionaries under investigation may indicate that publishers were interested in producing dictionaries more often than Encyclopedias. In point of fact, they are encyclopedic dictionaries.

Dictionaries and encyclopedias in this study developed to have wide-ranging topics, debated in depth and structured in an accessible, systematic method. In the same volume, many discuss the topics of biographies, history, geography, mythology, arts, industry, agriculture, and trade. Such a comprehensive scope of topics would increase the sales and encourage readers to read a wide range of topics available in the same issue.

The 19th century publication has become a distinct occupation. Most west publishers bought publishing copyrights from an open market. Advanced printing technology has contributed to low-price printed materials that have raised competition among publishers. They encouraged authors to write, and worked hard to promote their production in every way possible. Under these circumstances and instruments the image of Khadijah was circulated in a wide-range.

C. Khadijah in Historical Approach

The 19th century literature did not provide a separate account of Khadijah. Rather, she was discussed within the context of Muhammad's biography and the origins of Islam. In general, Prophet's life and his first wife were stereotyped differently in history, evangelism, colonialization, folk narratives, and fantasia. The themes and genres frequently dealt with are: Islamic history, the biography of Muhammad, the history of

les ouvrages nouveaux, etc.; Revue: Titre de certains écrits périodiques. Les revues paraissent à des intervalles plus ou moins éloignés; Bulletin: article placé ordinairement en tête des journaux politiques où l'on résume les nouvelles reçues dans la journée.

³² Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments* (New York: Knopf, 2005), p. 150.

Arabs, travels literature, and some other works that do not fit a particular literary genre.

Before, and even during the 19th century, English and Spanish resources continued to use the Latin spelling of Khadijah's name; "Cadija(n)" or similar variants, along with the variant "Khadija". The French literature of the first quarter of the century has started with a disagreement about the spelling of Khadijah's name. A mutual spelling of the name, Khadidja; however, would be used later.

Unlike the common spellings of the name in Latin texts, *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* provides two spellings never showed up: Chadighah and Chadighé. This is the first text listed about Muhammad. It discusses the biography of Muhammad and his marriage to Khadijah. It followed the Latin model and stereotypes. It quotes the Latin and ancient stories about Khadijah, in addition to the ones provided by some Islamic resources such as Ibn Calican's,³³ a non-specialist resource in Prophet's biography. It is because of that Muhammad was stereotyped as a husband who deceived his wife when he told her that his frequent faints and hallucinations are a result of seeing Gabriel, the Archangel. Khadijah, having believed her husband's hallucinations, started to spread the news of her husband the Prophet. The dictionary also tells of how Muhammad black-magicked his wife to seduce her short after her husband, Abdimonephi, the wealthiest merchant among "Ismaelists" died. This term, "Ismaelists", is a medieval term designed for Mohammedans that would be replaced by "Arabs", "Muslims", "Qurashies", and "Meccans" in this century. The stereotype of Muhammad has continued because it was a mere re-publishing of the text written by Pierre Bayle (1706), short before Jean Gagnier, published his review study of Abulfeda's *Chronicles* in 1723 and 1732.

In fact, Abulfeda's manuscript included a reduced amount of information about Khadijah than other resources or researches of European non-French sources referred by the orientalist of this century. The manuscript has information about Khadijah's ancestors, and her kinship to Muhammad who she met in his trade travels to Syria. Khadijah was a widow from the nobles of Mecca. She admired Muhammad's honesty and got married to him. She was astonished when her servant,

³³ Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, vol. 2, ed. by Jaques George de Chauffepié (Paris: Desoer, 1820), p. 58.

Maysarah, told her that he saw two angels shadowing Muhammad when he accompanied him in a trade travel. On wedding day, Khadijah was given a dowry of twenty sheep. Muhammad was twenty-five years old when he got married to Khadijah, while Khadijah was forty years old. He never got a second wife when she was alive. When Muhammad saw Gabriel in the “Cave of Hira”, he went home shivering of fear. Upon seeing this, Khadijah swore to him that he is going to be the “Prophet of the Nation”. She told her cousin Waraqa bin Nawfal about that, who confirmed that this is a sign of Prophecy mentioned in Moses’ divine book. Khadijah was the first one to believe in Muhammad, and lived with him ten years after he received the first revelation. Khadijah was one of four perfect women: Asia, Pharaoh’s wife, Virgin Mary and Fatima. She died three years before his migration to Medina.

Abulfeda suggests that Khadijah was called “aym”. According to *Dictionary Lisan al-Arab*, the oldest monolingual dictionary of Arabic, “aym” means a woman who has no husband. It could be a woman who is single, a widow or divorced. Orientalists, however, insist to call her a widow so that the description matches with the old Latin narratives.

Abulfeda’s manuscript remained the main source of the Prophet’s biography to French orientalism till the 50s of the 19th Century. In 1863, *Journal des Savant* published a paper of the Prophet’s life³⁴ written by Gustav Weil (1808-1889), a German orientalist; Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893), an Austrian orientalist; and William Muir (1819-1905), a Scottish orientalist. Having a good command of Arabic, these orientalist researched Arabic sources that were never referred to previously.

Sprenger provided more details about Khadijah. His main source of information was Muslim historians including Al-Tabari, Ibn Ishaq, Al-Bukhari, Al-Nasa’i, Al-Ibyari, Al-Hakim, and Shia scholars. The fact that he referred to Shia scholars explains the posterior interest of French orientalist in Khadijah’s relation to Shia Muslims. She is Fatima’s mother, the ancestor of Shia Muslims. A theme stated in *Dictionnaire Universel Historique*.³⁵ Similar to Renan’s posterior postulations, it seems

³⁴ Gustav Weil, Aloys Sprenger, and William Muir, “La Vie de Mahomet”, *Journal des Savants*, vol. Juillet (1863), pp. 401–17.

³⁵ François Marie Bertrand (ed.), *Dictionnaire Universel, Historique Et Comparatif de Toutes les Religions du Monde*, vol. 3 (Paris: Hachette Livre - BNF, 2013).

that Sprenger suggests that Islam has started in a ceremony when four men explained their creed to Muhammad. One of them is Waraqa bin Nawfal.³⁶ He confirms that, similar to Muhammad, Khadijah embraced a faith she read about in the Scriptures.³⁷ She died when she was sixty-five years old and was buried in Al-Hajun.³⁸

Muir wrote the first book about Muhammad in 1861, and his works gained a reputation.³⁹ Muir has referred to Islamic authors including Ibn Ishaq, Al-Zuhri, Ibn Hisham, Al-Waqidi, Al-Tabari, Al-Biruni, and the German orientalist, Sprenger. Muir has rarely referred to Khadijah in his book. Unlike the French orientalists, he never discussed the role she played in spreading Islam.

The account of Muhammad's life provided by *Journal des Savants* remained the guide of later French orientalism during the century. Its historical perspective glorifies the non-French orientalist who relied on new Islamic sources:

*Le progrès général des sciences historiques, dont notre siècle si justement fier, nous a rendu très-difficile; mais il faudrait l'être outre mesure pour ne pas se montrer satisfait de livres aussi savants et aussi bien composés que ceux de MM. G. Weil, Caussin de Perceval, William Muir et A. Sprenger. Tous ces ouvrages ont été puisés directement aux sources originales; ils attestent tous une érudition profonde, une méthode irréprochable et une critique éclairée.*⁴⁰

Although Khadijah was discussed within the context of the Prophet's life, different texts provided identical details about her. More specific details, however, were controversial because of differences in perspective. Orientalists commonly believe that Muhammad got married to Khadijah, the Meccan, or Qurashi, wealthy merchant, who he worked for as an attendant. Khadijah was attracted to him because of his wit and physical appearance that she asked him for marriage. Most references ignored the kinship between Muhammad and Khadijah. Other texts confirm that Khadijah was used to call Muhammad a cousin or relative.

³⁶ Weil, Sprenger, and Muir, "La Vie de Mahomet", p. 39

³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 100.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 196.

³⁹ Avril A. Powell, *Scottish Orientalists and India: The Muir Brothers, Religion, Education and Empire* (Woodbridge, UK ; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2010), p. 168.

⁴⁰ Weil, Sprenger, and Muir, "La Vie de Mahomet", p. 206.

A controversial issue was the details of how Muhammad proposed to Khadijah, and the details of the wedding ceremony. The number of Muhammad's sons was also disputable though all resources confirmed that he had three daughters. Few references suggest that Fatima was the closest to him, and she was the mother of the Ashraf, nobles of Shia. Muhammad got married to Khadijah despite of the great age difference between them. There was much dispute about the age of Muhammad when he got married. Despite of that, most of references confirm that he was between twenty and twenty-five years old. Khadijah, on the other hand, was in her forties. Most references claim that Waraqa was Khadijah's cousin, whereas some few others suggest that he was her nephew.

Most of French writers were interested in the history of Prophet Muhammad were Islamologists rather than Arabists. Barthélemy, for instance, was generally interested in philosophy and its relation to history of theology worldwide. He wrote only one book about the life of Muhammad in 1865 in which he cited Muir and Sprenger. Two editions of this book were published in one year due to people's growing interest in it. The account he gave about Khadijah was positive.

On another front the Arabists of France at this stage were interested in publishing methods of learning Arabic as foreign language and worked as translators in Algeria, North Africa and Levant. None of these Arabists provided a presentation of Khadijah, except for Kasimirski, who translated *Le Koran*⁴¹ and referred to the Prophet's marriage to Khadijah.

The 19th century orientalist view of Khadijah insists about the role she played in changing the image of Muhammad. He is not a skilled merchant anymore, but a Prophet and a reformer. She supported him financially and morally and provided an environment of spiritual meditation paving the way to the new faith. She knew he was trustworthy in trade, and believed in him as the "Nation's Prophet". She believed his story of the revelation he had in the cave and believed his dreams, referred by some orientalist as hallucinations. She was his first proselyte and disciple. After her death, Muhammad lost someone who provided a moral support for him. Upon the death of his uncle, Muhammad lost

⁴¹ M. Kazimirski, *Le Koran: Traduction Nouvelle Faite sur le Texte Arabe* (Paris: Charpentier, 1865).

the tribal support. The result was his migration to Medina seeking for the support of its people.

In the course of the elite's struggles to revive the Ancien Régime protected by the Catholic Church, Ernest Renan published a paper in *Revue de Deux Mondes*,⁴² about a decade before the article of *Journal des Savants*. He attempted to prove the Jewish-Christian roots of Islam. Later studies of the church seem to follow this approach. In his exhaustive study, Renan showed little interest in Muhammad's life. Instead, he was interested in the impact of Christianity and Judaism on Islam. He published a prolonged paper in which he discussed the three men who inspired Muhammad to start the new faith based on divine religions known in Mecca: Waraqa, Othman bin Khuwailed and Obaydallah bin Jahsh. In this research, Renan talked in brief about Khadijah in a positive manner. He described a spiritual aura that surrounded her. She was the one who witnessed the beginning of Islam and supported Muhammad who was weak at that time. She was a source of comfort for him when his tribe accused him of quackery. That's why Muhammad never got a second wife when she was alive and cherished the memories of her after her decease.

It is supposed that religious liberties that followed the French Revolution have inspired Renan and other researchers to present a narration of the origins of Islam that denies the medieval claims of the Jewish roots of Muhammad. Medieval texts claimed that Muhammad was the son of a Jewish woman. More orientalist attempts to prove the Jewish and Christian origins of Muhammad's faith through Waraqa have continued through the century. The same texts suggest that the one who was the main source of inspiration for Muhammad to start a new religion was a monk called The Nestorian, or Sergio. The role of Khadijah was to enhance such an influence by approving that he is the "Prophet of the Nation". She used Waraqa's claims of the Scriptures prophecy to prove that. Orientalists never questioned the faith of Khadijah herself which is implied in the relationship she had with her cousin Waraqa. Researchers in *Journal des Savants*,⁴³ however, believed that Khadijah is monotheist

⁴² Ernest Renan, "Mahomet Et Les Origines De L'islamisme", *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1829-1971), vol. 12, no. 6 (1851), pp. 1063–101.

⁴³ Weil, Sprenger, and Muir, "La Vie de Mahomet", p. 512.

influenced by the environment she lived in.

D. Khadijah in late-century production

Extensive researches that discussed Muhammad and Khadijah have decreased since the 70s. Though little was said about Khadijah, orientalist's view of Khadijah gave respect and showed appreciation of a widow who got married to a man who is too young to her and of a lower social and economic class. In these studies, Khadijah was the source of support for her husband. She stood by him when his people mocked him. They had a happy life together and he never got married to another woman during her life. Even when she deceased, he cherished her. In some other texts, Khadijah was generous and beautiful. She was the first proselyte and disciple. These details about Khadijah are more identical to Abulfeda's. A similar image of Khadijah was also present in the play *Mahomet* written by Henri de Bornier in 1888 and was performed on Comédie-Française.

This period has also witnessed works produced under colonization in Algeria and protectorate in Tunisia. Khadijah was highly investigated because she was a historical model and an idol for other Arab women who were intellectually and socially influenced by her. In consequence, more anthropological studies and travel literature were conducted by those who served in Algeria and Tunisia. It was run out also by those who had the chance to visit the Arabian Peninsula, the land of Islam, though non-Muslims were not permitted to visit it. In these studies, a narrative mode of folk narratives about Khadija or Khadijah was followed. These narratives led to historical mistakes either about the Prophet or Khadijah. They gave institutional academic orientalism guidelines to spot intellectual differences between a folk narrative and a historical Islamic source.

The pre-19th century texts were influenced by the Arabian Nights. In these texts, the names of Muhammad and Khadijah were used as the names of the principal characters. They also used limited incidents taken from the life of the Prophet. In the studied stage the biography of Muhammad with Khadija remained impacted by the Arabian Nights in a more Islamic scope. Similarities between them and the life of the Prophet appear when Muhammad, in one of the scenes, teaches Khadijah how to perform abolition near the magical fountain. In another scene, Khadijah

equips Muhammad with a white groom and a black turban before he goes out.⁴⁴ Another scene depicts Muhammad upon receiving the revaluation, however, told in a narrative style that has fantasia.⁴⁵

Wide-ranging investigations about Muhammad grew once again in the 90s and tackled different issues. Research of this period approached Muhammad differently, though sometimes in a positive manner. Alphonse Castaing, in *Bibliothèque Universelle*,⁴⁶ confirmed that Islam would have never come to light, was it not for Khadijah who was strong, educated, and had a good understanding of her husband who had a chronic psychological disorder. Castaing suggests that by getting married to her, Muhammad become the most popular man in history. He assumes that a woman would give a man her wealth and freedom, had she fallen in love with him. In the case of Khadijah, she accepted to get married to Muhammad though he conspired against her and exploited her. Khadijah accepted this marriage because she is too old and her beauty has faded away. Further texts continued shaping related stereotypes, *Dictionnaire des noms propres*,⁴⁷ *Études sur les réformes algériennes*,⁴⁸ and *Impressions de deux voyages*.⁴⁹ show that by getting married to her, Muhammad has gained wealth and a high position among the other merchants who allied with him.

Pedagogical methods of the 70s, 80s and 90s had some reference to the biography of the Prophet. Muhammad was discussed as part of medieval history that introduces the main figures of the era, or as a part of the global history. Pedagogies discussed the general features of the Prophet-Khadijah relationship. They described the Prophet's marriage

⁴⁴ Pacifique-Henry Delaporte, *Vie de Mahomet-D'après le Coran et les historiens arabes* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1874), p. 146.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴⁶ *Bibliothèque Universelle, Revue Suisse*, vol. 58 (Geneva; Lausanne: Bureau de la Bibliothèque Universelle, 1887), p. 38.

⁴⁷ Dupiney de Vorepierre and Jean-Francois-Marie Bertet, *Dictionnaire des noms propres, ou Encyclopédie illustrée de biographie, de géographie, d'histoire et de mythologie* (Paris: Bureau de la Publication & Michel Lévy Libraire, 1876), p. 719.

⁴⁸ Germain Sabatier, *Études Sur Les Réformes Algériennes* (Oran: Imprimerie Typographique et Lithographique Paul Perrier, 1891), p. 26.

⁴⁹ G. Landais, *Impressions de Deux Voyages En Tunisie, 1889-1893 Suivies d'Une Étude Générale Sur La Régence: Et Sur Les Bienfaits Du Protectorat* (Paris: George Carré et C. Naud, 1897), p. 96.

to Khadijah who was attracted to his good traits that she asked him for marriage. She was the first one to believe in his religion which was influenced by Christianity and Judaism. Such selective stereotyping of the Prophet's life happened at the beginning of a 19th century when women started to have a role in teaching.

At the beginning of the century, French society had an inferior view of women who were looked at as daughters, wives and “faibles intellectuelle”. Society had a phobia of the “bas-bleus”. France started to have a different attitude about women over the century.⁵⁰ Women fought to change the roles and stereotypes attached to them especially with the advent of the Third Republic. Powerful feminism started in the 80s.⁵¹ The century has also witnessed bourgeoisie empowered by the industrial revolution: *le mode de vie de la bourgeoisie est triomphant et s'impose comme modèle à approcher, diffusé par nombre de manuels, très subdivisé par de subtiles hiérarchies, très contrôlé par le confesseur et le corset*. It is highly possible that the policy makers of education have come to realize the role of bourgeoisie women in strengthening political movements. Khadijah was the historical model chosen to inspire the educational system to give women a role in building the economic future of the country.

The century has closed with these altered views made about Khadijah. It was a beginning of new era of studies of the Prophet's wives, though on a narrow-scale. It is worth to mention that the French translation movement of Islamic sources grew considerably since the *Belle Epoque*. Translation started actively once again during the French mandate of Lebanon and Syria in 1920. Nevertheless, the translated texts had nothing to do with the biography of the Prophet or Khadijah. In fact, Khadijah was barely mentioned in these translations.⁵²

⁵⁰ Annie Rouquier, Gérald Attali, and Michelle Zancarini-Fournel, *Histoire Des Femmes/Femmes Dans L'histoire*, http://blog.ac-versailles.fr/lelu/public/Femmes/documents_pour_une_hist_des_femmes.pdf, accessed 28 May 2020.

⁵¹ See Karen Offen, *Debating the Woman Question in the French Third Republic, 1870–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁵² See Ahlam Sbaihat, “Imágenes Occidentales del Oriente Medio a Través de las Traducciones de Textos Arabes al Francés en la época del Protectorado”, PhD. Dissertation (Madrid: Universidad de la Complutense, 2002).

E. Concluding Remarks

Khadijah, Muhammad's first wife, was mentioned within the context of the Prophet's biography in the 19th century. The image of Khadijah has changed depending on the resources in which orientalists referred to. In the anterior production to the century, Latin and some vernacular texts demonstrate that Khadijah is a wealthy widow who was seduced by Muhammad who black-magicked her to gain wealth and power. Others shaped her within fantastic stereotypes inspired by the Arabian nights. However, according to the 19th century historical French orientalism, Khadijah will turn into a wise, strong and wealth woman, married Muhammad although much younger than her, smart, handsome and a skilled merchant. She supported him finically and morally. She presented a so affectionate and loving attitude. Her religious background was influenced by her cousin Waraqa who predicted the advent of the waited Prophet, believed to be Muhammad. The Institutional orientalism of this century was controversial about some details of her life. The images altered by the last quarter of the century.

Further texts show diverse retaining of the role of Khadija. She was represented in a fantastic role influenced by the Arabian Nights. In the travel literature, she was examined as the feminine model of the women in the countries under the French colonization or protectorate. She was taken in the pedagogy of history to teach the world history and the European medieval figures powerful in modeling the medieval thought. On a different note, it gave a specific interest in Muhammad's marriage to the wealthy woman who was the archetype that would inspire French women to play their industrial revolutionary role in society. It seems that the bourgeoisie image of Khadijah has become the model of the economic role women are expected to play in the French economy.

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