

# The Acquisition of “Surriyyas” Concubines

## A Major Feature in Islamic Imperialism

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11 March 2022

Dr. Ahmed Saad Zayed is an active Egyptian scholar who operates a reformist website, “*The Salon of Arab Humanists*” with the goal of realizing a friendly and peaceful coexistence among religious and ethnic groups worldwide.

On 4 August 2021, he posted a narrative about the Islamic Invasion of Persia. To continue with my article, an introductory note is necessary.

The Islamic State was born in 622 A.D. when Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam moved to Medina. When he passed away in June 632, he left no instructions about a leader for the nascent Islamic *Umma* (community.) *Abu Bakr*, his father-in-law, assumed the post of a Caliph (Successor.)

Right away, the new Caliph had to deal with several Arabian tribes that refused to accept his leadership; so, he launched *Huroob al-Radda* (wars of secession) forcing them back into the *Umma*. That act gave rise to the Islamic law **that once a person or a group embraces Islam, there was no way to renounce it!**

Following Abu Bakr’s passing in 634, he was succeeded by *Umar Ibn Al-Khattab*.<sup>i</sup> He presided over the rapid expansion of Islam beyond the Arabian Peninsula. *Umar* promulgated a document known as *The Pact of Umar* that laid down the rules for Jews and Christians living under Islam. They were considered as *Dhimmis*, i.e., “protected” by their new Muslim overlords. They had to pay the yearly *Jizya Tax*, and observe strict rules of behavior in their dress, and during their worship services.<sup>ii</sup>

When the Islamic forces conquered Persia during Umar’s Caliphate, they “took many Persians as slaves, basically young boys, and girls. Young girls were forced to become concubines and young boys were forced to become Boy Toys. Strong and bigger boys had become slave labor for Muslim. Persian women were sent by tens of thousands to Arabian Peninsula, the largest slave shipment at one time was 40,000 Persians shipped to Arabia.”<sup>iii</sup> The taking of young women as slaves after the conquests of their lands became part and parcel of Islamic Imperialism and jurisprudence, as we learn from the following note.

تُجمع المذاهب الإسلامية، من دون استثناء، على تعريف السبيّ على الشكل التالي: السبي هم نساء وصبيان الكفار إذا ظفر المسلمون بهم أحياء. فهم يُستعبدون بعد قتل رجالهم أو أسرهم، ويُعاملون معاملة الغنم والأموال، كأن يُعرضوا للبيع أو للمبادلة.

“Various Islamic schools of jurisprudence have agreed on the rules dealing with prisoners of war: women and sons of Unbelievers (**Kuffar**) who had survived battles are considered as property that might be sold or exchanged.<sup>iv</sup>”

Following the conquest of Persia, Caliph Umar returned to Medina accompanied by a large number of prisoners of war, primarily young women to serve as Surriyyas or concubines. Before too long, he was assassinated in 644 A.D, by a Persian prisoner, **Abu Lu'lu'a Firuz**,<sup>v</sup> while delivering the **Khutba** (Sermon) at the Mosque in Medina.

The tradition of securing concubines, or sex-slaves was practiced in North Africa among the Amazigh, and in Spain. The following excerpts of an Interview conducted by **Hamed Abdel-Samad** with the Moroccan scholar **Ahmad 'Aseed**, about the consequences of the Arab/Islamic “**Conquest of Al-Andalus**”

“The conquest was a decision made by the Arabs (Umayyads) under the leadership of **Musa Ibn-Nusair** who used **Tariq Ibn-Ziyad** to lead the invasion. The Arabs were afraid of the twelve- kilometer strait that separated North Africa from Spain. Thus, they used the **Amazigh** men for the invasion. In fact, the **Amazigh** were remarkably familiar with the southern part of the peninsula, and had been frequently there, not as conquerors but as settlers. There was a state of co-existence between the Amazigh and the Byzantines prior to the Arab conquest of North Africa. **The purpose for the invasion of Spain was to obtain booty and Gothic slave women for the Umayyads in Syria.**”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90FpXab3WHg>

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<sup>i</sup> **Umar I**, in full **Umar ibn al-Khattab**, (born c. 586, [Mecca](#), Arabia 634— 3, 644, [Medina](#), Arabia), the second [Muslim caliph](#) under whom [Arab](#) armies conquered [Mesopotamia](#) and [Syria](#) and began the conquest of [Iran](#) and [Egypt](#). <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Umar-I>

<sup>ii</sup> Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. **Qur'an 9:29**

<sup>iii</sup> [Iran Politics Club: History of Slavery in Iran Started with Islam! - Ahreeman X](#)

<sup>iv</sup> [سبأيا الحرب في الإسلام - Google Search](#)

<sup>v</sup> <https://hamletram.blogspot.com/2020/09/the-assassination-of-caliph-umar.html>