

Chattel Women – Arabia, 630 AD

by A. Human Being (April 2016)

January 25, 630 AD: The hills of Autas, east of Mecca, Arabia

An army of bandits isn't typically comprised of overly sensitive men.

But once upon a time . . . two weeks after his conquest of Mecca . . . Muhammad had set out to hammer against the confederation of hill tribes that had banded together in defense against the intolerant army that had subjugated their city neighbors in Medina and now Mecca.

Under cover, in the valley of Hunain, the confederation had surprised Muhammad's army in an overwhelming arrow attack. However, the jihadist army regrouped, re-strategized the terrain, and came down on the hill tribes at Autas where they achieved far better success. Most of the hill people fled, but the jihadists appropriated far more than they had expected in prisoners, camels, weapons, and other spoils of conquest.

After they distributed the captured women amongst themselves, Muhammad's soldiers found themselves – under the furious and scornful gaze of their conquered male prisoners – emotionally pained by a deep moral crisis. They were afflicted by the thought of the consequences of their actions from the possibility of a moral universe.

The *problem* was the moral issue of raping captive women after their husbands had been captured.

Abubakar Shekau – *a man whose name would be forgotten by history* – came to Muhammad with the issue, "Oh apostle, peace be upon you," he began, "Some of the brothers feel uncomfortable about raping the chattel women in front of their captive husbands."

This is a queer problem, Muhammad thought. "Are the brothers so sensitive about forcing sex on crying and screaming women who have utterly lost their minds in the grief of their captivity?"

"No, apostle, but there is a matter of honor to consider."

"Then are the brothers so sensitive about taking women as chattel and raping them?"

"Of course not, apostle. The brothers are uncomfortable about *their* honor. They want assurances that the children from their captive wives and slaves are their own."

Muhammad sighed. "Let me tell you a story:

"One of our brothers, new to Medina, had married a polytheist of the Ansar tribe. He had sex with her in the way that he preferred, but she would complain, saying, 'Enter me from the front or otherwise keep away from me.' So he came to me asking what he should do. After he finished complaining to me about his woman – *Amazing!* – Allah's answer came to me: 'Your woman is a field for you to plow, so approach your field in any way you like.'"

Muhammad threw a handful of cashews into his mouth.

"So, any hole is permissible?"

Muhammad threw up his hands. "Look, tell the men that if a woman refuses her body to her new husband, then angels will curse her till dawn."

"I think the men want to hear something more specific to their situation," Abubakar Shekau – *forgotten by history* – replied.

"Yeah, I know what they want. Wait, wait," the prophet said as he pressed a hand to the side of his head and looked up at the sky, "A message comes to me: 'All married women are forbidden to you except those you make your slaves!' Are these women not your captives?"

"Yes, they are."

"Then do with their bodies as you please. How much more specific do I have to be? You can wait for their next menstruation to make sure that all the previous husband's junk is out of them and that their children are yours, if that makes you feel better. That's your call." He laughed. "Or tell the men that they can sell the women for horses or arms after they finish with them, pregnant or

otherwise.” Muhammad tossed another handful of cashews into his mouth. “Remember to tell them that this comes from Allah,” he said.

“All of it?”

“No, no, just the bit about married women being forbidden, except those taken captive.”

“I’ll relate it as such,” Abubakar Shekau said.

“Do you think the men will be good with that?”

“I think so.”

“And no more problems?”

“No more problems, apostle.”

“Great.”

“Allah is clever,” Abubakar Shekau said.

“You don’t know the half of it,” Muhammad responded.

The above short story is a chapter from the forthcoming novel *War Verses: A Jihadist Fairytale* by A. Human Being.

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