

WOMEN AND POWER IN EARLY ISLAMIC HISTORY: JAWARI OF THE ABBASID COURT (786-861 AD)**Haukil Hannan*, Akhmad Najibul Khairi Syaie**

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Abstract

The significant presence of jawari owned by the caliphs of Islam became a phenomenon during the early period (170 AH/ 786 AD-247 AH/861 AD) of Abbasid rule. This article aims to examine why the early Abbasid rulers (786-861 AD) "kept" many jawari in their palaces and whether they had relations with all of them. Through a historical and sociological approach, the findings of this study indicate that the large number of jawari owned by the Abbasid caliphs during the early period was closely related to the advancements (economic, social, and political) achieved by the Abbasids at that time; the acceptance of slavery in Islam, territorial expansion (futuhat), the growth of economic trade sectors, the flourishing of entertainment in society, and the influence of Ctesiphon. Furthermore, the ownership of a large number of jawari did not necessarily indicate strong sexual desires of the caliphs; rather, it primarily served as a symbol of power, as evidenced by the fact that only individuals with significant authority typically possessed numerous jawari. This was also supported by a strong tradition of rewarding enslaved individuals as gifts, and the fact that not all Jariyah were intimate with their masters

Keywords: Abbasid rule; Caliph; Jawari; Pride.

INTRODUCTION

The discussion about jawari (the plural form of the Arabic word jariyah, literally means 'women slaves') in the history of the Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258 AD) is very interesting. *Jawari's* life is another story of the Abbasid times, a "golden age" of Islamic civilization (Armando, 2005; Karim, 2018). The history of *Jawari*, or enslaved women, has often escaped the historiography of the golden age.

So far, the history of the Abbasid Dynasty has always contained romantic narratives of the glory of Islam, such as conquests that managed to penetrate geographical boundaries or the construction of the *Bayt al-Hikmah* library, which succeeded in encouraging the transformation of science on a large scale. Meanwhile, the portion of history for "common people" (Abdullah, 1999; Azra, 1999), such as jawari, is barely raised. In fact, during the Abbasid times, the existence of *jawari* became phenomenal. Almost every free person had a *jariyah*. Rich people, state officials, and caliphs even have an unbelievable amount of *jawari*.

Etymologically, the term *jawari* means 'a girl or young girl.' Meanwhile, *jawari* terminologically are enslaved women, whether young or grown-up (Sadiq, 1988). As an enslaved person, she is fully responsible for her master's rights, including having intercourse with her master without being married first. *Jawari*, who had intercourse with her master and gave birth to her master's child, then had the status of *umm al-walad*, 'a mother of son' (Sadiq, 1988). The status implies that she cannot be sold or inherited, and his independence is guaranteed automatically after the master dies (Al-Dimyati, n.d.). In the history of the Prophets, the term *jawari* is known, such as Hajar, who gave birth to Isma'il, the son of the Prophet Ibrahim; Mariyah al-Qibtiyyah from Egypt, who was gifted to the Prophet Muhammad and gave birth to Ibrahim b. Muhammad. In English literature, *jawari* has been translated as, or juxtaposed with, "concubine," referring to the king's unofficial wife in certain cultural traditions, such as in Europe, East Asia, and Southeast Asia.

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Article History | Submitted: 28 Agustus, 2023 | Revised: 04 Juni, 2024 | Accepted: 20 Juni, 2024 | Publish: 02 Juli 2024

HOW TO CITE (APA 6th Edition):

Hannan, Haukil., Syaie, Akhmad Najibul Khairi. (2024). Women and Power in Early Islamic History: Jawari of the Abbasid Court (786-861 AD). *Juspi: Jurnal Sejarah Peradaban Islam*. 8(1), page.21-30

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.30829/juspi.v8i1.17206>

However, *jawari*, first recognized in Arab-Islamic culture, has many differences with the ‘concubine,’ especially when associated with Islamic law. Islamic tradition does not recognize the ‘concubine,’ and Islamic law has nothing to do with it.

The rulers of the Abbasid dynasty were famous for having a very large number of *jawari*, especially in the early period, namely 786-861 AD. When Islamic civilization peaked in those years (Nakosteen, 1996), *jawari* was also very busy in court circles. The Abbasid caliphs who ruled in those years were Harun al-Rashid (ruled from 786 AD, al-Amin (809 AD), al-Makmun (813 AD), al-Muktasim (833 AD), al-Wathiq Billah (842 AD), and al-Mutawakkil Alallah (847 AD). Ibn Kathir recorded that the number of *jawari* owned by al-Rashid reached thousands. Meanwhile, al-Rashid himself was the son of al-Mahdi from one of his *jawari* named Khayzuran (Ibn Kathir, 1994). Furthermore, al-Mutawakkil Alallah, besides abundant wealth, also owned 4000 *jawari*, all of whom he slept with (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.). According to Fouda, this fact is the highest record of *jawari* ownership ever in history (Fouda, 2008).

This article wants to find answers as to why the early Abbasid rulers (786-861 AD) “kept” many *jawari* in their palaces and whether they slept with all their *jawari*. Those two issues are crucial to discuss for at least two reasons. Firstly, delving into the factual accounts of the Abbasid caliphs’ penchant for collecting women will offer an alternative perspective on early Islamic history, which has often been sanctified, referred to as the “golden ages,” and sanitized from aspects now deemed taboo, such as the penchant for collecting women. Secondly, determining whether all these women were actually slept with or not is equally important. The answer to the latter issue will clarify whether the possession of women indicates the moral decay of the caliphs or merely a source of pride in their time.

So far, only a few researchers have focused their studies on the phenomenon of *jariyah* in the Abbasid caliph’s palace. Among these few, Nabia Abbot stands out for her excellent work titled *Two Queens of Baghdad*. In this work, Abbot explores the roles of two highly influential queens in the success of Caliph Harun al-Rashid, namely Khayzuran (the mother) and Zubaydah (the wife) (Abbott, 1946). Similarly, Fatima Mernissi, in her book *The Forgotten Queens of Islam*, writes about several queens who led revolutions from within the caliph’s harem. Mernissi includes the name of Khayzuran, the mother of Harun al-Rashid, among the list of forgotten Islamic queens (Mernissi, 1993). Another equally significant work is *Kebenaran yang Hilang: Sisi Kelam Praktik Politik dan Kekuasaan dalam Sejarah Kaum Muslim* by Farag Fouda. This latter work views the *Jariyah* phenomenon as a dark side of the Islamic caliphate (Fouda, 2008).

Nevertheless, despite the extensive discussion of the *jariyah* phenomenon in these three works, none of them specifically focus on addressing the question of why or in what context the caliphs collected women in such unreasonable numbers. The oversight in discussing the *jariyah* phenomenon in the history of the Islamic caliphate can be understood in two ways. Firstly, existing historiography remains conventional, where historical works only focus on discussing important figures and events. *Jawari* are simply regarded as ‘common people’ deemed unimportant. Secondly, from a liberal perspective, the ownership of *jawari* by the caliphs is deliberately ignored because it could tarnish the glorified image of the caliphs (Fouda, 2008; Hannan, 2024).

This study aims to present the history of the Islamic caliphate, particularly the Abbasid Dynasty, in its entirety. The discussion of the *jariyah* phenomenon is certainly not an attempt to expose the “blemishes” of the caliphs. Rather, it is to obtain a comprehensive picture of the Abbasid Dynasty. This study argues that, in the context of the Abbasid Dynasty, the ownership of a large number of *jariyah* is an inevitable occurrence. There are many circumstances that underlie this phenomenon, so it cannot simply be used as evidence to discredit the lifestyle of the caliphs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses historical research methods, which include four steps, namely heuristics, verification, interpretation, and historiography. This study collects authoritative primary sources in the form of Arabic-language books by classical historians who lived at the same time or were

close to the era in which a historical event occurred. In addition, at this stage, this study is also supported by relevant secondary sources that strengthen the primary ones. Verification is done to ensure the credibility of primary sources, which ones can be referenced and which ones cannot. In verifying sources, this study applies source triangulation to obtain data accuracy. Interpretation is based on the author's perspective after reading selected sources or data. The final step, historiography, necessitates systematically compiling data through accountable writing.

To gain a more complete understanding, researchers also provide a lot of space for sociological approaches. Methodologically, the sociological approach to history aims to understand the subjective meaning of social behavior, not merely investigate its objective meaning. From this, it appears that the sociological approach directs historical researchers to the search for meaning intended by individual actions regarding collective events so that theoretical knowledge will lead historians to discover the motives of an action or the factors of an event (Abdurrahman, 2011; Supardan, 2009; Supriatna, n.d.).

This study focuses on discussing the phenomenon of *jariyah* in the Abbasid caliphate, primarily during the early period often referred to as the "golden ages of Islam." To achieve a comprehensive understanding, this study views the *jariyah* phenomenon based on the spirit of its time and does not measure it against perspectives developed in contemporary eras.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Jawari in Early Islamic History

Slavery is a natural phenomenon to be found in the history of nations. In Islamic teachings in the classical context, slavery is a natural and permissible thing, even though, at one point, freeing enslaved people was highly recommended and seen as a noble act. Slavery was part of the ignorant culture which could not be immediately eradicated after the arrival of Islam. So, even though freeing enslaved people is an act that is recommended in Islam, the practice of slavery continues to take place and is even more crowded during the recent Islamic dynasties.

In classical Islamic history, almost all men had *jawari*. Among them was Ali bin Abi Thalib, a companion of the Prophet known as an ascetic (rejecting worldly luxuries). It was explained that Ali left four wives and 19 *jawari* when he died (Ibn Kathir, 1994). The number of *jawari* grew in the Islamic empires to tens during the early days of the establishment of the Umayyad Dynasty, reaching hundreds during the time of Yazid bin Abdul Malik (690-724) (Fouda, 2008), one of the caliphs in the last half of the reign of the Umayyad Dynasty, and reaching thousands during the Abbasid Dynasty. Al-Mutawakkil had 4000 *jawari* and slept with them all during his leadership (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.).

The existence of *jawari* cannot be separated from efforts to expand territory so that the composition of *jawari* owned by a person can vary according to the conquered nation where the *jawari* are obtained, so there are Roman *jawari*, Persian *jawari*, Ethiopian, Kurdish, Armenian, Barbarian, Sudanese, Indian (Mernissi, 1994). The price of a *jariyah* increases according to its education and knowledge, especially in terms of art or music. So, during the early Abbasid Dynasty, especially the al-Mahdi era, the education of the *jawari* became an institution that could bring enormous benefits to those involved in it. A famous music teacher at that time was Ibrahim al-Mausili, an Arabic music teacher who was also very close to the caliph's family (Mernissi, 1994).

In addition to efforts to conquer and trade slaves, the tradition of gifting slaves also contributed to the bustling *jawari* phenomenon (Hitti, 2010). The gifts of enslaved people mainly occurred in the ruling circles, as the possession of large *jawari* was also usually indicated by those in power. Thus, the phenomenon of *jawari*, which, according to the current context, is not beautiful to look at, was once a fact that was truly natural and necessary in the history of the power structures of past nations, in this case, the history of Islamic dynasties.

The Abbasid Caliphs and Their *Jawari*

Several caliphs of the first period of the Abbasid Dynasty (which became the object of this research) who had *jariyah* were caliphs Harun al-Rashid, al-Makmun, al-Muktasim Billah, and al-Mutawakkil Alallah. In contrast, the caliphs al-Amin and al-Wathiq preferred to maintain *ghilman* than *jawari* (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.). Especially the caliphs al-Rashid and al-Mutawakkil, both of whom were caliphs with thousands of *jawari*. The two caliphs later also became representative figures in large numbers in describing *jawari* ownership during the early Abbasid Dynasty period, which will be examined further below.

Caliph Harun, who later had the title “al-Rashid,” was Abu Jakfar bin Muhammad al-Mahdi bin Abdullah Al-Mansur bin Muhammad Ali bin Abdullah bin Abbas (Al-Baghdadi, 2011; Al-Suyuthi, n.d.; Sou’yb, 1977). Al-Rashid ruled for 23 years. His reign marked the beginning of the golden era of the Abbasid Dynasty and even the history of Islamic civilization in general. Regarding this matter, the Encyclopedia of Americana writes: “Harun’s reputation was for a long time inflated and idealized in both East and West, perhaps largely because of his legendary role as a figure in some of the tales in The Arabian Nights. The caliphate reached its peak power, wealth, and culture in his time” (Sou’yb, 1977).

That said, during his glorious reign, al-Rashid was heavily influenced by the women around him, especially his mother, Khayzuran, and his beloved wife, Zubaidah. Besides Zubaidah, al-Rashid had three other legitimate wives (al-nisa’ al-maha’ir), namely Umm Muhammad bint Salih al-Miskin, Abbasah bint Sulayman bin Abi Jakfar, Azizah bint Ghitrif, and al-Uthmaniyah bint Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Amr bin Uthman bin Affan (Al-Tabari, 1988).

Apart from these four legitimate wives, it is reported that al-Rashid also had *jawari* (*ummahat al-awlad*) which reached thousands, and some said 2000 *jawari* (Ibn Kathir, 1994; Mernissi, 1994). Among al-Rashid’s *ummahat al-awlad* and the descendants he produced were Marajil, a Persian *jariyah*, who became al-Makmun’s mother; Qasif, mother of al-Qasim al-Muktaman; Maridah, Turkish *jariyah*, mother of al-Muktasim (Ghareeb, 2004); Rikm, mother of Salih; Irabah, mother of Abu Isa Muhammad and Umm Hasan; Shadrah, mother of Abu Yakqub Muhammad; Khubth, mother of al-Abbas Muhammad; Rawah, mother of Abu Sulaiman Muhammad; Duwaj, mother of Abu Ali Muhammad; Kitman, mother of Abu Ahmad Muhammad; Halub, Arwa’s mother; Ghusas and well-known Musaffa, mother of Fatimah; Sukkar, mother of Umm Abiha; Rahiq, mother of Umm Salamah; Shajar, mother of Khadijah; Hali, mother of Umm Jakfar; Aniq, mother of Umm Ali; Samandal, mother of Umm al-Ghaliyah; Zinah, mother of Raytah (al-Tabari, 1988; Ibn Kathir, 1994).

Among the *jawari* owned by al-Rashid who were famous and prominent are Dhat al-Khal and Tawaddud. Although neither of them bore children for al-Rashid (as *ummahat al-awlad*), they were greatly cherished by him. Such was al-Rashid’s affection for them that he sacrificed much to bring them back, even going to great lengths to make them happy. Dhat al-Khal (the owner of beauty) was a nickname for a female slave named Keneth. She captivated poets and singers. However, al-Rashid managed to bring Keneth back to his palace for the price of seventy thousand dinars. At one point, al-Rashid gifted Keneth to one of his confidants. Granting Keneth’s request, al-Rashid appointed her husband as the governor of Faris for seven years (al-Asfahani, 1992).

Meanwhile, Tawaddud, a remarkably beautiful and multitalented *jariyah*, was purchased by al-Rashid for a staggering price of 100,000 dinars, after she successfully passed tests before experts in medicine, philosophy, law, theology, astronomy, music, and mathematics. Such was the significance of Tawaddud’s presence in al-Rashid’s life that she is recounted in The Arabian Nights (Arabic: *Alf Laylah wa Laylah*), specifically on nights 437-462 (Hitti, 2010).

Another early Abbasid caliph, often mentioned by some historical literature in *jawari* affairs, is the Caliph al-Muktasim Billah (833-842 AD). The eighth Abbasid caliph was named Abu Ishaq Muhammad bin Harun al-Rashid, who had the title al-Muktasim Billah. Al-Muktasim was born in

the month of Shakkban in 178 AH from a Turkish *jariyah* named Maridah. Al-Muktasim was a fighter for Muktaizilism in his court. He served as caliph to replace his brother, Al-Makmun. One of the historical events closely related to this caliph was the transfer of the national capital from Baghdad to a new city called Samarra, which was inaugurated and occupied in 221 AH/836 AD. The name Samarra was then replaced with Sarra Man Ra'a, which means 'joyful to those who see it' (Al-Baghdadi, 2011).

Some of the well-known *jawari* or *ummahat al-awlad* names owned by al-Muktasim are Syujak, a Persian *jariyah*, mother of Caliph al-Mutawakkil; Qaratis, Roman *jariyah*, mother of Caliph al-Wathiq Billah; and Mukhariq, Slavic *jariyah* (Shaqlabiyah) (Anonymous, 2013), mother of Abu al-Abbas Ahmad bin al-Muktasim.

Al-Muktasim's son, Caliph Abu Fadl Jakfar, whose title is al-Mutawakkil Alallah (Al-Baghdadi, 2011), was the next caliph who was famous for his very large number of *jawari*, some say up to 4000 *jawari* (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.; Fouada, 2008; Kassis, 1997; Mernissi, 1994). At one time, as a form of respect, one of his generals, Ubaydillah bin Tahir, gave al-Mutawakkil a gift of 400 *jawari*: 200 Roman *jawari* and 200 Abyssenian *jawari*. Of the 400 *jawari*, there was a *jariyah* whom al-Mutawakkil loved most, named Mahbubah. She was a singer, poet, and good at playing the harp (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.). The story of al-Mutawakkil and Mahbubah is recorded in the story of The Arabian Nights.

Besides Mahbubah, one of al-Mutawakkil's *jawari* mentioned in historical sources is Hubshiyah, a Roman *jariyah*, mother of al-Muntasir Billah (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.); Shajar (Al-Qaddumi, 1996); Fityan, mother of al-Muktamid; Umm Ishaq, Roman *jariyah*; Qabihah, Slavic *jariyah*, mother of al-Muktaz and Umm Abdullah (Al-Qaddumi, 1996; Al-Suyuthi, n.d.).

Loot, Commodity, and Gifts

Many assumptions and judgments are held by various parties regarding the large number of *jawari* owned by the caliphs of the Islamic dynasty, all of which have a negative impression. Some consider *jariyah* to be the root cause of the decline of Islamic civilization, which had reached its golden peak, and some consider *jariyah* a disgrace that does not deserve to be attached to the Islamic caliph who is considered *zil Allah fi al-ard*, 'shadow of Allah on earth' (Hitti, 2010). The title "God's shadow on the face of the earth" is the caliph's weapon in strengthening his hegemony. At a certain point, the title is considered to have come from several pieces of hadith that have been polished in such a way for political purposes. Therefore, these hadiths are considered weak (Al-Manawy, n.d.).

A phenomenon in every chapter of human history cannot be separated from the context of space and time when these historical events occur. Judging the ownership of *jawari* as something despicable is a hasty judgment. The ownership of *jawari* cannot be separated from the context of space and time that prevails in the historical events surrounding it. If examined further, there were several factors behind the rise of *jawari* during the Abbasid Dynasty or situations that made *jawari* a necessary thing to happen. Some of the factors in question include:

First, religious legitimacy of the practice of slavery. In many verses, the Qur'an does allow men to have intercourse with their slaves, not other people's slaves. This is included in the translation of the following verses of the Qur'an: "And those who guard their private parts, except for their wives or the slaves they own; then verily they are not reprehensible in this regard" (al-Mukminun [23]: 5-6), and in al-Nisak (4): 3,

If you fear you might fail to give orphan women their due rights if you were to marry them, then marry other women of your choice—two, three, or four. But if you are afraid you will fail to maintain justice, then content yourselves with one or those bondwomen in your possession. This way you are less likely to commit injustice.

Then in al-Nisak (4): 24 follows,

Also forbidden are married women—except female captives in your possession. This is Allah’s commandment to you. Lawful to you are all beyond these—as long as you seek them with your wealth in a legal marriage, not in fornication. Give those you have consummated a marriage with their due dowries. It is permissible to be mutually gracious regarding the set dowry. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

Second, the expansion of the territory (*futuh*). The conquest of the areas around the Arabian peninsula began aggressively and extensively since the second caliph, Umar bin al-Khattab (634-644 AD). At this time, several important areas outside the Hijaz region were conquered by Islamic forces, such as Iraq, Persia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.

Despite having inherited a vast territory from the Umayyad Dynasty, the early Abbasid Dynasty continued to make significant land acquisitions. The Islamic forces achieved enormous success in the process of conquest, and as a result, thousands of people became war hostages and were made slaves, both men and women. Following Islamic law, the number of booty enslaved people was distributed according to the provisions in force. This division is explained in *al-Anfal* (8): 41,

Know that whatever spoils you take, one-fifth is for Allah and the Messenger, his close relatives, orphans, the poor, and needy travelers, if you truly believe in Allah and what We revealed to Our servant on that decisive day when the two armies met at Badr. And Allah is Most Capable of everything.

It is impossible to know how many slaves the Islamic forces acquired in each conquest. As a comparison, Leila Ahmed mentions some interesting numbers in conquest during the time of Caliph Umar. During the conquest of Iraq and Persia during Umar’s time, around 120,000 people were held hostage. They made slaves, some of whom were women who were concubines to the nobility of the Sasanian empire in Persian lands (Abdalla, n.d.).

Third, the advancement of trade. Based on the historical experience of the Arabs, trade is a profession that is loved by Arabs (Hitti, 2010). The Quraysh of the Prophet Muhammad’s family, even Prophet Muhammad himself, was a trader. During the time of the Abbasid Dynasty, which was led by caliphs who had Arab lineage (regardless of whether they were mulatto or not) and had a good sense of trade, progress in trade became very understandable.

In addition to expanding the territory of conquest, which necessitated the arrival of slaves spoiled by war in large numbers, the slave trade system, which had long been in effect in the life of Arab society, found its momentum and therefore contributed to making the *jawari* phenomenon very fertile (Fouda, 2008). Buying and selling slaves (in this case, *jawari*) allows everyone to choose all kinds of *jawari* they want. State officials who abounded in wealth, especially the caliphs, bought and sold many *jawari*.

Fourth, the proximity of Baghdad’s geographical position, the Abbasid Dynasty’s center of power (Karim, 2023), and Ctesiphon, the ancient Persian capital famous for its tradition of concubinage (similar to *jawari* in Islam). The city is located east of the Tigris River in Mesopotamia (now Iraq), about 35 km south of Baghdad. Meanwhile, Ctesiphon was the capital of the ancient Persian empire, namely the Ashkanian Dynasty and its successors (Sassanian Dynasty), which peaked around the 6th century AD. In that century, Ctesiphon was thought to have been the largest city in the world (“Ctesiphon,” 2014).

As you know, the Abbasid Dynasty, which has an important ethnic-pluralistic style, has become a fertile ground for developing cultures other than Arabs, especially Persian culture as an older and higher culture (Sirry, 2011). Since its inception, the Abbasid Dynasty has shown its dependence on the Persians (Nurhakim, 2004). In many cases, the Arabs were forced to admit that the Persian civilization was more advanced than theirs.

Fifth, the advancement of the entertainment world involved the proliferation of music, singing, dancing, and liquor (*khamr*), which became an integral part of the ‘very modern’ society. During the Abbasid early period, the caliphate’s capital was flooded with nightclubs and cafes.

(Fouda, 2008). Singing, dancing, poetry, and playing music have become very promising professions, and their existence is recognized, especially during the time of Caliph Harun al-Rashid (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.). Such conditions have implications, and one of the most important is the rise of jawari education (plural form of the word jariyah: young girls; slaves) who are prepared to become singers, dancers, poets, and musicians so that they can be worthy to become entertainers or entertainers, even sold fairly expensively (Al-Asfahani, 1992; Fouda, 2008).

Sixth, there is no awareness of human rights. Human rights are basic rights that humans have since they were born. Human rights can be formulated as inherent in a person's nature as a human being; without these rights, it would be impossible for us to live. Humans have this right solely because they are human, not because they are given by society or the state (Rosada, 2003). So, human rights do not depend on recognizing other human beings, communities, or countries. Humans obtain human rights from their Creator that cannot be ignored.

From several factors that caused jawari ownership to continue and even become more crowded during the Abbasid Dynasty, we can draw a common thread regarding channels conducive to jawari. The channels in question are very clear, namely the spoils of war in the expansion of the territory, the slave trading channel, and the tradition of giving jawari as a gift.

Symbol of Power

At first glance, jawari may be a marker for heightened sexual desire; having a jariyah means having an overflowing sexual desire, and the existence of a wife has no power to contain it. However, this fleeting view or thought cannot be immediately used as a role model without criticizing it because, in reality, as history has shown, jawari ownership is not always related to strong sexual desire, especially if the ownership of the jariyah intersects with someone's power.

Based on historical experience, jawari is usually only owned by people who have power, be it economic, social, or political power. In the history of pre-Islamic Arab society, where jawari ownership was a very natural and necessary thing, jawari were only owned by those who were rich or who had a high social status within their tribe. It is difficult for middle and lower-class people to have jariyah because they do not have the power, at least the power, to buy enslaved women. Even in the period after the arrival of Islam, including the period of al-Khulafa al-Rashidun, which was later followed by the Islamic empire, this fact was still the case.

The first period of the Abbasid Dynasty made progress in almost all fields of life, including science or education, economics, politics, arts, military, and so on, all of which have often been alluded to in previous discussions. So, based on the general principles of power that have been alluded to, it is clear that the power of the caliph of the Abbasid Dynasty was very large and had channels, especially economic, military, ideological, and traditional. Specifically for this last channel, the practice of jariyah ownership carried out by caliphs is included in it; jariyah ownership is a hereditary behavior of society (Arabic and Persian) with its long historical experience, and because of this, it has become a well-known tradition in people's lives.

The reality of tradition in a society is always unique and cannot only be faced with subjective-normative assessments; a thorough understanding of the entire context surrounding this tradition is a necessary thing to do. Considering that the practice of jawari ownership is included in the tradition, which is one of the channels of power of the Abbasid Dynasty, then stating that the large number of jawari owned by the caliphs of the Abbasid Dynasty is a phenomenon of power is more reasonable than the view that associates this with strong sexual desire.

Furthermore, there were several important facts during the first period of the Abbasid Dynasty, which showed that having many jawari was more a phenomenon of power than the strong sexual desire of the caliph. The first fact is that most people with power (in its various forms) usually have many jariyah. Historically, many jawari were owned only by people with power, especially economic and political power. Jariyah is sold at a price that is not cheap, especially if the jawari have special skills that can attract the hearts of prospective masters. Although jariyah was often awarded, it also occurred only in the circles of wealthy people or government officials. This first

fact shows how power has no small contribution to jawari ownership; rich people or rulers have jawari has become a trend nowadays. In fact, during the early period of the Abbasid Dynasty, channeling sexual desires could be easier and cheaper than having to buy lots of jawari because, at that time, the world of entertainment had progressed and brought consequences, such as the number of comfort women and the growing practice of prostitution (Fouda, 2008).

The second fact is that there is a tradition of giving jawari as gifts. As mentioned in previous discussions, the tradition of awarding jawari occurs either as a form of respect between state officials or as a tribute from neighboring countries that are bound by an agreement (Al-Athir, 1988). Ubaidillah bin Tahir, Governor of Khurasan, awarded 400 jawari (200 Abyssinian jawari and 200 Roman jawari) to the newly ascended caliph al-Mutawakkil Alallah. From this respect, the more powerful a person is, the more opportunities he has to get more awards; therefore, there are more and more opportunities to get a higher number of jawari. At this point, possessing many jawari has nothing to do with high sexual desire.

The third fact is that not all jawari slept with their masters. Zubaidah, al-Rashid's wife, once presented her husband with ten jawari, one of whom later became al-Makmun's mother, and another became al-Muktasim's mother. Giving ten jawari aims so that al-Rashid is not interested in other women or singers (Al-Asfahani, 1992). Zubaydah's action of only giving al-Rashid ten jawari is, of course, too little, considering that al-Rashid, as has been explained, had thousands of jawari in his palace; al-Rashid should not be limited to only ten jawari. Therefore, the most likely conclusion to be drawn concerning Zubaidah's actions is that not all jawari owned by the caliph were made bed companions. Only a few jawari were able to attract their master's heart. Jawari were purchased not only to sleep with or satisfy sexual desires but also to sing, dance, write poetry, play music, and other things. That is why the price of a jawari is determined by how good their quality is, especially in art (dancing, singing, poetry, and playing music), not how beautiful their body is to satisfy overwhelming sexual desires. The practice of jawari ownership during the early period of the Abbasid Dynasty cannot be equated with slavery during the jahiliyyah or pre-Islamic period, which may have bought enslaved women only for the sake of kitchens, wells, and mattresses.

More clearly, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, one of the caliphs of the Umayyad Dynasty, stated that anyone who wants to seek a jariyah for the sole purpose of serving sexual desires should choose a barbarian woman; the Persian jawari for procreation; Roman jawari to partner with (Al-Suyuthi, n.d.). This statement also indicates that the caliph has separate "specifications" in viewing his jawari; not all become servants of sexual desire.

Apart from that, if one adheres to the statement that the caliph has many jawari because of his strong sexual desire, then there is a big question that will be very difficult to answer, namely whether or not the caliph can sleep with his jawari, who number in the thousands. Even though this is less reasonable, the historian al-Masudi, as often quoted by later historians, states that the 4000 jawari owned by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mutawakkil Alallah were all slept with during his reign. However, the researchers did not find clear indications of al-Masudi's statement, including the quoting who only quoted without including indications that could make it more reasonable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the context and several factors mentioned in the results and discussion section above, it becomes clear that the rapid proliferation of jawari during the early Islamic period, particularly during the reign of the Abbasid Dynasty, was an inevitable occurrence. These Jariyah served as symbols of power in their time. The more jawari someone possessed, the greater their power and influence, and vice versa. Al-Rashid, who owned thousands of jawari, correlated with his firm and extensive authority. Additionally, the presence of jawari is not necessarily linked to the uncontrolled sexual desires of the caliphs. Evidence suggests that not all jawari, numbering in the thousands, were slept with entirely by a caliph. Although one source (al-Mas'udi) mentions that Caliph al-Mutawakkil slept with all his 4,000 jawari, this requires further clarification and research.

Thus, the phenomenon of jawari in the Abbasid caliph's palace should be viewed in the context of its time. This phenomenon is not a shameful secret to be carefully concealed. Instead, it is another fact about the immense and influential power of the Abbasid Dynasty, in addition to the advancement of knowledge and the cosmopolitan life of society. However, this study leaves other research gaps that need to be filled by future studies, such as why the caliphs of the Islamic dynasties, especially the Abbasid Dynasty, preferred to have offspring with their jawari rather than their legitimate wives, and why most of the offspring of these Jariyah ascended to the throne. If calculated, the percentage of caliphs descended from jawari dominates the succession of power in the Abbasid Dynasty compared to the descendants of legitimate wives.

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