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Conquest of Spain by Muslims - 711 A.D

1 Count Julian's invitation:

Count Julian was one of the nobles of the day.

Florenda was the daughter of Count Julian. As when the custom went, the children of the nobles were brought up in royal court. Thus,

Florenda live in the Roderick's court. The Roderick dishonoured Florenda then to avenge from him, Florenda's father (Count Julian) invited Musa to invade Spain & overthrow king Roderick.

2 Musa, sent Tariq, the Berber Commander:

To probe into the conditions prevailing there.

Tariq was accompanied with 400 men. He reported to Musa, the Governor of Qayrawan, that the condition was favourable

3 **Tarīq bin Ziyād (April-711 A.D)**

Tarīq marched with his 7000 men towards Spain. They crossed narrow sea straits, Strait of Gibraltar in four boats provided by Count Julian. They landed at Jabl-e-Tarīq, which is now called Gibraltar.

4 **Algeciras:**

Tarīq captured Algeciras without any difficulty & made it the Base camp for his men.

5) **Roderick, the King:**

Roderick was a usurper. He ascended to throne after unseating his predecessor Witiza (King). At the time of invasion of Muslim forces, he was engaged in campaign against Basque rebels in north of Spain. Upon hearing the news of invasion he marched with his 40,000 troops towards Tarīq.

6) Battle of Barbate:

Booth 1000ps came face to face on the banks of Barbate river (Guadalquivir). The army of Roderick was four times larger than that of Tariq. Tariq burnt the boats in the sea as to obviate idea or attempt of fleeing in anyone's mind. The companions of Roderick also included followers of former king Witiza. They deserted king Roderick and joined count Julian. The battle lasted for a week. Roderick was defeated and drowned.

7) Tariq advances despite Musa's call of return:

Musa, the Governor asked Tariq to return and warned him of advancing further. Tariq, however, didn't comply and went ahead by dividing his men into many factions

to spread them in all parts of Spain

Conquest of Cordova:

Cordova was an important city of Spain, situated along the river Guadalquivir. Mughalith al-Rumi, Commander of one detachment of Tariq's army, marched towards Cordova and conquered it.

Conquest of Elvira, Malaga:

Qais bin Qasid, the commander of another detachment of Tariq's army, marched towards Elvira and occupied it. He also captured Malaga city.

Jews: Welcome Muslim Rulers:

Jews were sick of Roderick's oppression. They welcomed Muslim rulers and regarded them as liberators. The Muslim rulers emancipated Jews and granted them religious freedom.

11 Conquest of Toledo - 711 A.D:

Tariq marched towards Toledo, the capital city and captured it without any resistance. He also took hold of treasures of Gothic rulers which included Golden table.

12 Conquest of Medina, Sidonia, Seville, Carmona by Musa himself in 712 A.D:

Musa bin Narayk himself advanced to retake western cities of Spain. He wanted to share the laurels and victory of conquering Spain with Tariq. He conquered Medina, Sidonia, Seville and Carmona.

13 Siege of Merida:

Roderick's queen Agele Ababs called her Agele, was in Merida city. Merida was a strongly defended city of Spain. Musa warned Saracens Governor of Merida to surrender

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or pay Jizya, but he refused. Musa sieged the city for six months & eventually captured it.

14) Theodoric's Treaty with Abdul Aziz:

Abdul Aziz, the son of Musa, marched towards eastern Spain.

Theodoric, the count of eastern Spain, disguised himself as an agent and came to offer peace terms with Muslims. Muslims negotiated the terms and treaty of peace was accepted mutually.

15) Musa Meets Tariq - 713 A.D.:

Musa met Tariq at Talavera, west of Toledo in 713 A.D. He scolded and imprisoned Tariq. Mughalith warned Musa to treat him with respect. The Berbers also persuaded Musa to release Tariq. Count Julian convinced Musa that it was he who persuaded

Tariq for invasion. Musan finally released Tariq.

16 Conquest of Northern Spain:

Musa and Tariq jointly marched towards northern Spain. They captured Barcelona, Leon and Saragossa. Muslim rule established in Spain.

17. Social revolution in Spain:

- 1) Muslim rule in Spain brought an end to oppressive regime of Roderick.
- 2) Slaves were enfranchised by Muslim rulers.
- 3) The confiscated land was divided among the masses.
- 4) The power of privileged classes were diluted.
- 5) Religious freedom was extended to everyone.
- 6) Economic security was everyone's rights.
- 7) Christian embraced Islam in large number which revolutionized their lives.

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8) Most of Gothic nobels also accepted Islam.

9) The lives of servile classes were ameliorated.

Conclusion:

The victories of Mura and Tariq were spectacular. They were brave, competent & valiant generals. Later, Walid bin Abdul Malik recalled both of them.

"An switnes of execution and completeness of success, the expedition into Spain holds a unique place in medieval military annals". (P.K. Hitti)