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THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN IRAQ DURING THE MAMLUK RULE

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This article discusses the situation of women in Iraq during the Mamluk rule (1749-1831) and their role in Pashaliq's life both in the economic and cultural-educational spheres. Certainly, the social life of Iraqi women differed depending on where they lived - in cities, in rural areas, or in deserts, and to what social level they belonged. In rural areas, women, along with men, were actively involved in all kinds of agricultural activities. These were mainly wheat harvesting and cleaning, production of dairy products, care of domestic animals, harvesting and processing of agricultural crops, such as grinding wheat, and maintenance and operation of water mills. In rural areas, women were also actively involved in animal husbandry, taking care of cattle and poultry. At the same time, they performed quite heavy and labor-intensive work, which was expressed by drawing water from wells and rivers and using it for amelioration purposes. Such hard work often evoked compassion and sometimes outcry of foreign travelers towards the plight of rural women in Iraq.

The activities of the semi-nomadic and nomadic tribes living in the deserts were strictly defined and distributed within the family. Here, too, women harvested ground grain, drew water, baked bread, and prepared food. The situation of women was especially difficult when men left their tribal places for various reasons, whether it was endless military operations or economic activities, which meant trading the meager harvests obtained in nearby cities or small settlements. At that time, the entire burden of responsibility was shifted to women, and in addition to the above-mentioned activities and raising children, they also had to engage in hunting and fishing.

As for the cities, women of the lower and somewhere middle classes were mainly engaged in weaving and sewing. The main activity of the housewives of the mentioned period was precisely weaving, a tradition that was passed down from generation to generation. It should be noted that the population of the city of Mosul, whose economy was mainly based on the weaving industry, believed that a woman ignorant of sewing and weaving could not properly manage the duties of a housewife, and ignorance of this activity was considered a shame. During the late period of Mamluk rule in Iraq, when small textile workshops were held in the Pashaliq, women actively worked at the newly opened looms. It is known that in such workshops, men were engaged in making woolen yarn, while women performed all other technical work.

As for the high, aristocratic class of women in Iraqi society, it is clear that they did not need to participate in the above-mentioned economic activity; they led a life typical of the aristocratic society. They were also involved in cultural and educational life, built mosques, schools, and libraries at their own expense, and were quite actively involved in the political life of the Pashaliq of Baghdad.