



حبر أبيض
WHITE INK



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The Jewish women of the Haremlik

The slave market in Istanbul was distinguished by selling males and females, and they were treated like animals. Every Wednesday, a public auction was held in which the sale process takes place near the royal palace in a market called captives Market (Esir Pazan). This market was a trade center for the sale of captives, the same location that was a market for the same purpose in the times of the Byzantines.

The market is run by the prince, and by the word "prince" here, we mean the tax collector. His task was to collect taxes from sellers and buyers alike, and then return those benefits to the Sublime Porte.

Human Trafficking:

On the other hand, those large numbers of girls who have special qualities are brought to the Haremlik. Work is done to raise them with a special education worthy of their presence in the royal palace. Among the most dangerous things going on inside the harem - The Haremlik - are those girls who are entrusted with the task of education. Many of those who wrote in this context wrote about religious education and teaching languages such as Arabic, Turkish and Persian. If the matter is specific to the Sultan's harem, what is the reason for teaching the maidservants the Arabic language? Their interactions within the Haremlik or their dealings with the sultan, if he chooses them, they do not need Arabic. It does not make sense that their education should be in this strange way.

On the other hand, many historians neglect writing about the presence of Jewish women as a female component of the system, and how dangerous or useful is their presence? And what punishment awaits them if the wrath of the sultan is issued against them or from the mother of the sultan who is the supreme official within the Haremlik, and after her come the sultan's female relatives such as wives, sisters and others?

By order of the sultan, Jewish women were allowed to enter the Haremlik to teach women a job or to teach them to make medicine. The Jewish women used to present gifts to the guards of the gates of the Haremlik - the white aghas - to win their affection in order to facilitate their movement in and out away from the eyes of monitoring and tracking, and then to pass and take out the things they wanted. Therefore, all of the Jewish women who served there became rich because of the goods that they promoted inside the Haremlik, which was bought at a cheap price, and presented to the women of the Haremlik as being precious and rare.

In return, the precious jewels were taken in hidden and secret ways to sell and profit from them. These are free businesses that they practice while they are in the Sultan's harem system, but when the secret of one of them is revealed that she has become a rich or fraudulent, she is reported after tracking her. If a dispute arises between one of them and the concubines of the Sultan, the most severe types of torment will be inflicted on her with extreme cruelty, including severe beatings from those who are entrusted with her monitoring. If they do not confess their guilt, they are sent to the Old Sarayi, naked, and they remain for the period that is acceptable to the Kikhia Qadan, who is the governess, and usually they are the old maidservants. The punishment is intensified if they take from her what she is hiding in her possession, and then they put her in a bag to drown her at night, to declare obedience and not to return to the betrayal.

Here there is an important question about the strange behavior of not killing them and getting rid of them, even though the punishment for killing was one of the easiest types of punishment for the Ottomans. Was it because they were Jews and it is indispensable to deal with them, and there were those who fulfill their interests outside the Haremlik?

The Ottoman relations with the Jews have a special character and there is no need to mention them here.

If one of the tasks of Jewish women is to teach the maidservants how to make the useful medicine, why was this medical information not clearly written? Who was bringing into the Haremlik the kinds of deadly medicines and poisons that were used to get rid of the brothers and sons of the sultans, or the pashas and others? History is full of such events, and the source may be other parties, such as the maidservants who learned to make medicines. These questions have answers between the pages of history.

If the Jewish women have a role in education, what are the expected results? What is the level of qualitative education for girls as maidservants, when they are brought from various regions as captives and slaves under compelling circumstances with different religions and a thought that is specific to each of them separately? They were practicing rituals to subject them to the orders of the Sultan and the complex system of the Haremlik in its mechanisms, and the mystery that surrounds it. What is the reason for the complexity of these systems and their behaviors that violate the right of humanity?

To answer some of the previous questions, we mention the words of Maurice Levy, a member of the Endowment Associations Council and the representative of the endowment institutions for religious minorities in the Turkish Republic: "Jews brought with them many professions to the Ottoman Empire. They played an important role in the fields of diplomacy and medicine. They greatly benefited from their presence in the Ottoman Empire, just as the state benefited from their presence".

He says: "We have an old rule based on strict compliance with the rules and laws of the country in which we live. There was no uprising or revolution in the history of the Jewish community against the Ottoman Empire. The Jewish community is a minority with a history of more than 3,000 years. This situation earned them gentleness and diplomacy in dealing with others".

Thus, the vision becomes clear in a part of the Ottoman and Turkish relations with the Jews.