Man: As for embroidery and clothing … it is known that sometimes in international forums, Israel and the Israelis, I don’t want to say the Israelis -- I recognize them as Israel, but I’m speaking of Jews and the occupation. They use the Canaanites’ embroidery, and this is something known; if I say it [and] people heard me, they will say this something well-known. Okay, something known -- but you look into the idea, search for it correctly, and see what the reason is … see what you can do. They use our tradition. There is simplicity in the subject, embossing embroidery; any old lady can make it, and a girl can make it, work it. Do they make it in a way that will preserve it or not? Here, there is a third thing that is very dangerous. The older generations, which are now declining -- we shall say, may God have mercy upon them -- I mean these [old people], how much material do they have, how much oral memory do they have? A very dangerous issue. I mean, for some time I have been asking myself what time I was born. No one knows of
this subject other than my mother. I forgot to ask her. I will not be able to ask her now. -- Something peculiar to me, not to my people, my tradition, my culture, and such details. So, how much chance is there to preserve the inherited culture, be it oral or written or … or … or … Okay, there are tendencies among many institutions to make something of proverbs or stories, or to make statistics on the subject of embroidery and its history. We can count how many stitches there are in the Palestinian embroidery. Okay, we found something, but, practically, there are institutions, and they have much to say, but we are not making use [of them]. Okay, institutions supported a project. After that we stopped, because the financial support stopped. Because there is no chance to go and see villages, reach remote villages, to ask them about tradition, because the money is not sufficient. That is it: the subject is over. I do not want to undermine the subject. I do not accuse anyone; it is not that I count on someone to support me so that I can work. I mean how much capacity do I have, how much can I take -- one or two hours in a day, four hours in the week -- let it not be a more than a day. I devote them [the hours] to an issue, if I’m actually concerned with tradition. To choose a subject in which I’m interested and which is close to me. I can ask about it, come and go; there is no problem … it may remain for my son. I mean the history of my father; he lived the village of al-Sakyeh in Yafa, Palestine. I mean, when I imagine the shape of the house and the shape of the apple and the shape of the land … I mean, sometimes he [the father]$$^{1}$$ says to me, “father, the radish is different from before.” It is a radish. He used to describe to me its shape; I would be surprised -- I mean where are you coming from? And I did not see al-Sakyeh, our village, but implicit in his talking … I was able to draw a picture, other than which I can see nothing, although the picture that I have in my imagination may be completely contrary to or different from the reality that might be in our village itself. But I’m asking, seeing, and knowing. Alone. Passion for my village and for my country, to me alone, because it can sometimes be positive narcissism or also negative narcissism. I want to know … I want to see everything, but also [see] how much can I communicate the picture to my son … it would be a very beautiful thing.

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**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture

$$^{1}$$ In Palestinian Arabic, the person speaking may refer to himself at the beginning of a statement to someone else. Thus, the father begins his statement to his son with “father.”
with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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