

Egyptian Arabic transcript:

الرجل: المعاد العربي بقى زي... المعاد عرف. أو قعدة زي ما بقولوا عنها الفلاحين، قعدة عائلية أو قعدة عرب.
المرأة: يعني آيه؟
الرجل: داه اسمه معاد عرف. معاد عرف بيتعمل بفض المشاكل، المنازعات. جماعة زعلانين مع بعض، فيه ضرب، فيه قتل، فيه نزاع على أرض، فيه أي حاجة. أول ما تحصل مشكلة يجيبوا عقلاء من العرب والكبار من كل مكان، البلد الفلانية منها فلان، والبلد الفلانية منها فلان، ويجيبوهم. ويحكولهم أصحاب المشكلة، كل واحد يحكي قصيته، يتعرض زي مجلس ويحكم فيها واحد أو اثنين، حكام يكونوا عقلاء ويكونوا عدول. فيحكمو بأنهم إني عليه الحق يدفع إذا كان فلوس أو أتخذ عليه ورق مثلا بعدم التعدي. وتفض المشكلة على كده. الحكومة يعني...
المرأة: ... أصحاب المشكلة...
الرجل: إلا إذا هم أصروا على موقفهم يروحوا رافيعن دعوة وقضية، يشتكوا للحكومة، يرفعوا قضية أمام المحاكم والقضاء، بياخذ وقت. لكن إني بيحكم فيها العرب... المنازعات بتتفض بمعاد العرف.
المرأة: قرار وكلمة تبقى...
الرجل: قرار ملزم بأوراق يتأخذ عليهم أوراق عشان محدش ...
المرأة: يعني كلمة ... على إني خلاص يعني...
الرجل: ميقدرش يقول لأ. هو عارف نفسه غلطان، هو عرفان نفسه غلطان. ويسكت.

English translation:

Man: An *Orf*¹ sitting for Arabs is like

Naglaa: What is it, exactly?

Man: An *Orf* sitting is a tradition, or a meeting as featured by peasants, a meeting, a family meeting, or an Arab meeting.

Naglaa: What does it mean?

Man: This is called a “*Orf* sitting” tradition.

Naglaa: Ummm.

Naglaa: Where did it come from?

Man: An *Orf* sitting tradition was practiced to solve problems, fights and conflicts. People are upset with each other: there is beating, there is killing, there is a conflict over land, there is something. When a problem happens, they bring the wise Arab senior men from all over the place -- this person from this place and that person from that place. And the parties involved in the problem tell them [their stories]; each one tells his problem. It's presented in a so-called council. One or two men would judge the issue; they must be

¹ An informal community sitting that features senior tribe's members to discuss an issue or solve a conflict.

wise, and they must be fair. They judge between them, and the one who made a mistake pays for it, whether it is money or a written commitment, for example, not to harm; and the problem is over. But the government

Naglaa: they are the people with the problem?

Man: Unless they what? Insist on their situation, and sue, and press charges. They complain to the government and press charges before the courts and the law. This takes time. But what Arabs judge with is the ... fights are being solved by the traditional *Orf* sitting.

Naglaa: ... the decision or the word is ...?

Man: The decision is binding with papers. Papers are signed, so that no one would

Naglaa: You mean a word, that it is over [solved] -- would the person listen to it?

Man: Of course, there is no such thing as saying "no." He knows he made a mistake, he knows he's wrong, and he will not say a word. He has been judged.

Naglaa: With the word, I mean?

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