

Woman and Work in Egypt

Egyptian Arabic transcript:

المرأة: اتكلم عن المرأة... في كثير بقولوا إن البنت أو المرأة عامة معندهاش إن هي تشتغل أو يبقى ليها حياتها يعني، بس شايفه إن مفروض إن البنت يبقى يكون بتعرف تتعامل مع العالم الخارجي عامة والشغل، في السوبرماركت، في أي حتى يعني عامة. لكن في ناس دلوقتي بقول إن الرجل هو إلي يخرج يجيب الحاجات، هو إلي يجيب مصروف البيت عامة. فكثير بيقلوا إن البنت مش زي الولد.
الرجل: طيب إنتي رأيك آيه؟
المرأة: لأ أنا رأيي إن المفروض إن البنت ليها حقوق زيها زي الولد، مش في كل حاجة، بس على الأقل إن هي تشتغل، تاخذ شهادات كثير، مش تيجي عند حد معين وتقول stop يعني.
الرجل: يعني تاكل تعمل آيه وممكن...
المرأة: البنت دلوقتي مهندسة تقدر توقف بورشة تقدر توقف في وسط بنايين يعني وكده، دكتوراه بتعرف تعمل كل حاجة، زيها زي الدكتور، كمبيوتر، إين كان، تفتح مشروع هي نفسها يعني، حتى تقدر...
الرجل: في حاجات البنت متقدرش تعملها؟
المرأة: أكيد في بس يعني، يعني ممكن هي متعرفش إن هي تبني مثلا. مش عارفة مكن يكون في آيه تاني يعني.
الرجل: إنتي عايزة عملي آيه؟
المرأة: لأ أنا عايزة أكمل. أنا دلوقتي بشتغل وأنا بدرس، باخد خبرة وبستفيد أكثر كثير من دراستي من وشغل.
الرجل: بتشتغلي آيه؟
المرأة: بشتغل في آيه؟ يعني في مكتب بعمل، بينطلب مني أي حاجة، كتابة أوراق، presentation، إين كان ممكن أعمله على الكمبيوتر.
الرجل: ميسوطة بالشغل؟
المرأة: جدا. يعني عملي حياة.

English translation:

Woman: I will talk about women ... ah ... many say that a woman has no opportunity to work and participate in life, I mean. But I think that ... ah ... a woman knows how to deal with the outside world generally at work, at a supermarket, in any place I mean. But there are people who say that a man is in charge of expenses in a home, in general. So many people say that a woman is not like a man.¹

Man behind camera: And what is your opinion?

Woman: No, I think that a woman must have the same rights as a man -- not in everything, but at least to work and earn a degree. She won't come to a certain limit and say, here I'll stop,² I mean.

Man behind camera: You mean a woman can progress

Woman: I see a woman today as an engineer able to work in a workshop, to stand in ... ah ... among builders, I mean, a physician who is capable of doing everything, I mean, just like a male physician ... ah ... a computer, anything. She can start a project on her own, I mean, she can.

¹ She means in terms of earning high incomes. Women generate less money than men.

² She means that a society stops women from getting an education, or pursuing higher education, by using discriminative measures. The woman doesn't choose to stop.

Man behind camera: And are there things that a woman cannot accomplish?

Woman: There are.

Man behind camera: Egyptian, in Egyptian society for instance?

Woman: Of course there are; however, I mean ... I don't know

Man behind camera: Like what?

Woman: [Laughing] Like the fact that she doesn't know how to build, for example. I don't know what else.

Man behind camera: And what do you want to do?

Woman: No, I want to continue [studying]. Now I work and study at the same time. I gain a lot of experience from my study and work.

Man behind camera: What do you work on?

Woman: ... ah ... what I work on... I mean in an office. I work ... I do whatever paperwork [is] required. I use a computer.

Man behind camera: Are you happy at work?

Woman: So much. I mean, my work is my life.

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 with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. 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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