

Khastegari: Deciding to Marry

Persian transcript:

محسن: بیشتر از چند جلسه هم دختر و پسر همدیگر رو نمی دیدند، که مثلاً تصمیم به ازدواج بگیرند. این جور نبود که مثلاً سه ماه با هم باشند و برند بیرون ...

ناهید: نه خیلی مدتهای کوتاه، تا دو هفته، بعضی موقع ها سه هفته، و خیلی موقع ها ...

محسن: می تونستند، مثلاً من می رم خواستگاری به عنوان یه پسر، بعد می گم من از این دختر خوشم می آد، می گذاشتند من سه ماه مثلاً با این دختر تنها بریم بیرون؟ بگردیم؟

ناهید: خیلی... خیلی خانواده ها تنها گذاشتن را نمی گذاشتن، ولی می گفتن می تونید بیاید توی خونه. می گذاشتن که خصوصی توی یه اتاقی با هم صحبت کنند، یا اگر بیرون می رفتن مثلاً آ برادرش هم باشه. [اما] تنها نه.

محسن: برادر دختر؟

ناهید: برادر دختر باشه؛ یکی رو باهاشون می فرستادن، ولی خب شروع هم شده بود، خانواده هایی که اجازه می دادن تنها هم مثلاً با هم بیرون برن.

محسن: ولی خیلی نادر.

ناهید: خیلی ... من می دونم که خانواده ی من تنها گذاشتن بیرون رفتن را، می گفتن اگر کسی شما رو با هم ببینه و ندونه که شما جریانتون چیه آبروریزی هستش. این رو درست نمی دیدند.

English translation:

Mohsen: The girl and boy would not see each other for more than a few meetings in order to decide to get married [or not]. It was not like let's say they were together and went out for three months...

Nahid: No, very short periods of time, up to two weeks, or sometimes three weeks, and most of the time...

Mohsen: Could they? For example, I would go to *khastegari*¹, as a boy then I would say, "I like this girl." Would they let me go out with the girl for three months? To hang out?

Nahid: Many...many families wouldn't allow "being alone [together]," but would say, "You can come to our house." [And families] would let them talk with each other in a private room. Or if they were going outside, for example, her brother should be [present], not [leaving her] alone.

Mohsen: The girl's brother?

Nahid: It should be the girl's brother. They [family] would send someone with them. But it had begun [to become popular] that some families were letting them [couples] go out alone.

¹ A formal marriage proposal

Mohsen: But very rarely.

Nahid: Very... I know that my family wouldn't allow [us] to go out alone. They were saying, "If someone who doesn't know the story sees you, it would be a disgrace."² They did not consider this a correct action.

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² "آبروریزی" lit., "spilling of face's water," meaning "disgrace." The word for honor and respect in Farsi is آبرو. If you imagine the word آب as the source of life and رو as one's appearance, you can see how آبرو becomes the word for honor. In this interview, Nahid says being seen in public with an unrelated man could lead to losing her honor or being disgraced. The common idiom for losing honor is آبروریزی.