

Levantine Arabic transcript:

هديل: "it is normal to find" بنات عم متزوجين ابن عمهم. " in other words, cousins marrying each other. It is lawful in Islam even though nowadays it is hard to find. That does not mean it does not happen, it happens, بس هون "find. cultures it's considered like marrying your brother or sister. حتى أحيانا " a lot of cousins marry their cousins if they can't find a suitor for themselves. Also, marriage is... let us say you are a female and " وشو كمان؟ "you are not married yet أنتي بتعتبري أنو لازم " you still have to live with your parents, your family. Here in the United States when you reach a certain age they have " هناك "like 18, you move out of your parents' house to feel secure about your environment and they and they will let you live by yourself. وشو كمان؟

هبه: موافقة الأهل.

هديل: آه.. "for instance here when someone gets married" عادي إنو حدا يتزوج لخالو بدون موافقة أهلوا. هناك, لازم الأم أو الأب أو حد " responsible for the bride or the groom take responsibility and say yes or no...and they can object to it even. "And let us say for instance a suitor إجا بدو يخطب وحده.. إذا هي مش موافقه عادي مش راح يكون في زواج.. بس لازم يكون في جاهه, والجاهه " what he does is like" "بكون في عقد زواج لما يكون العقد مكتوب وبكونوا كاتبين الكتاب " they are officially married but only until the wedding day, the wedding night until they have a celebration that they are considered married."

English translation:

Hadeel: It normal to find paternal female cousins married to their paternal male cousins. In other words, cousins marrying each other... It's lawful in Islam, even though nowadays it's hard to find. It doesn't mean it doesn't happen. It happens. But, here in western cultures it is considered like marrying your brother or sister. But there it's normal. Even sometimes a lot of cousins marry their cousins if they can't find a suitor for themselves. What else? Also, marriage is... let us say you are a female and you are not married yet. You consider that you still have to live with your parents, your family. Here in the United States when you reach a certain age such as 18 you move out of your parents' house. Over there it isn't like that. There, they have to feel secure about your environment and they will let you live by yourself. What else?

Heba: Parents' approval.

Hadeel: Parents' approval, yes. For instance, when someone gets married usually it's okay to get married without getting the parents' approval. There, the father or the mother or someone responsible for the bride and groom takes responsibility and says yes or no. They can object to it even. And, for instance, let us say a suitor comes and asks for the hand of someone; if she doesn't accept that's okay and the marriage will not happen. But there has to be *Jahaa*¹ and the *Jahaa* is ... what he does is there is a marriage contract. When the contract is written, and there is the ceremony of the writing of the marriage contract, they are officially married, but not until the wedding day, the wedding night, until they have a celebration that they are considered married.

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 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.

© 2003-2010 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated

¹ *Jahaa*: the group of people from the groom's / the bride's side of the family that have to be present during the writing of the marriage contract ceremony.