

Levantine Arabic transcript:

زينه: أسمك شو؟
أماني: أماني حسون. هذا الخان عمروا ستميت سنه، بنوا الأتراك، عملوا، كان حصن للاتراك، بعدين العثمانيين أجوا وطلبوا من الحاكم انو يصير خان للصابون، لتجارة الصابون، بما أنو كانت مزدهرة كثير بطرابلس، كان في أربع مية صنف صابون..
زينه: أربع مية صنف؟
أماني: هلا هني أكثر لانو نحنا طورناهن وزدناهن وانتبهنا عليهن كمان كثير.
زينه: كم صنف فيه هلا؟
أماني: هلا في شي سبعميه بس المعروفين أربع ميه.. مع الزيوت والكريمز. هلا هون كما يعني كلياتو ال products كلياتا. natural 100 percent والعيلة هيدي business family كلياتها، كل العيلة بتشتغل هوني. شو بدي خبيرك أسا..
زينه: كم محل عندكن ببيروت؟
أماني: نحنا ببيروت بال ABC أشرفية بمقاييل هوتيل بريستول، وكمان بصيدا، وبشارع نديم الجسر هون، وهاميرغ، المانيا، السعودية، بقطر، بدبي، ...
زينه: بفرنسا؟
أماني: بفرنسا حد الشتو فيرساي بكل البرافارماسي بفرنسا، هلا رح نصير بكل اوروبا، بكل الفارمسي بأوروبا، يعني كل الصيدليات باوروبا. لانو هايدي اشيا فيها يعني لل psoriasis، fungus، eczema، acne يعني للأشياء العلاجات اللي مش موجودة، يعني مش موجودة Natural هي موجودة كيميائيا بس منا عم بتفيد قد ما هالبضاعة عم بتفيد.
زينه: يعني هاي بتفيد، بحسو الناس أنو..
أماني: بحسوا الناس لانها active كلياتها 100%.
زينه: وانت قديش صرلك عم بتشتغلي هوني؟
أماني: انا هوني صرلي بنزل معاهن على الشغل سنتين.
زينه: سنتين.. وكيف عم بتحيي الشغل؟
أماني: أكيد.. أنا درست accountant وبعدين رجعت. عملت accounting وصت انزل معاهن هوني على طول، أول شي صرت اساعدهن شوي، بعدين هلا بس مستلمة الماركنتج هون.
زينه: وانت درستي بأي جامعة؟
أماني: أنا ما درست بجامعة، لأنو أن بس دغري عملت high school وفتت على office مشان خلص بسرعة وبعدين لانو الشغل كبر كثير و صار بدو مساعدة يعني نحنا
زينه: طلبو منك؟
أماني: ايه مشان نطلع الفرق
زينه: وتعلمتي انكليزي بالمدرسة؟
أماني: ايه
أماني: اكيد، لانو كنت ب david carm و هي American school
زينه: هوني بطرابلس؟
أماني: لا انا من هون
زينه: يعني بالشمال بس من طرابلس انتي
أماني: ايوا ، نحنا عيلتنا مش طرابلسية طرابلسية، عيلتنا من المغرب، الوزان
زينه: من المغرب
زينه: ليش انتي حسون؟ قلتي و لا
أماني: ايه حسون، هي حسون، من المغرب، وزان اجو لهون، و بعدين في جامع سيدي عبد الواحد سمو على اسم الجد الكبير اللي اجا لهون، هني كانوا ست اخوات للهدا للجد عبد الواحد حسون. هلا هني سمو حسون لأنو صوتوا

كان كثير حلو لما يادن، لما كان يادن صوتو كان كثير حلو بعدين لما بربر اعا منع الادان هوي ادن و ما انو، و ما رضي انو يعني لغى الادان بمنطقة طرابلس اللي هي مدينة العلم و العلماء و هي مدينة اسلامية بعدين رجع صار يادن، بعدين بربر اعا طلب انو يجيبو كلو آل حسون لعندون انو يعني يعدمون لانو كان كثير شرير، و بعدين كلياتن كل الناس تفرقو على مطرح و صار في كثير اديان هلا؟ يعني في طرابلس سني و في اورثودوكس في عندك بصيدا بالجنوب

زينة: ايه فيه، كثير اديان بلبنان

اماني: هلا هني صار بكلو الاديان، حتى يعني اجا لعنا يهود كمان من بيت حسون

زينة: اه، ايه

اماني: يعني كل الاديان

زينة: كل الاديان، كل المنطقة

اماني: حتى صارو بكل العالم موجودين هني هلا بكل العالم

زينة: يعني عيلة كثير كبيرة

اماني: في واحد منون بيشتغل بالكونقرس الامريكي يعني الون شي 300 سنة باميركا بعدون هنيك، هلا هوي لانو

اخترع يعني عمل برنامج كثير سري للحكومي، مشان هيك ما بخلو يجي على لبنان ممنوع يجي على لبنان

زينة: بس هوي اصلو لبناني؟

اماني: ايه

زينة: من هالعيلة؟

اماني: من هالعيلة، ايه حلو يعني انتي بتقربي شي الوف الاشخاص بالعالم

زينة: ايو، حلو، يعني انتي بتقربي شو الوف الاشخاص بالعالم

اماني: ايه عيلتنا كثير كبيرة عيلتنا بس بالشمال هون شي 7000 8000 شخص في منون بالطنية كمان هيك شي شي 3000 شخص.

زينة: يعني لما بتلتقو الاحد على الغدا

اماني: ما منلتقي، قليل، لانو كمان نحنا يعني بيبي ما بيحب الاختلاط كثير.

زينة: اها

اماني: هلا هني كمان في منون يعني اكيد اي عيلة بصير في مشاكل عرفتي كيف بقى مشان بيقولو بعيد عن الشر و

غنيلو، ايه مظبوط ايه منبعد عنو و منغنيلو. لا هني كثير حنونين على بعض و هيك بس يعني الا ما فيكي تجتمعي

كثير بهالعيلة، لانون كتار كثير، كثير، كثير يعني ما في حدا بيجمع الاحد لانو كلياتن عندون شغل يعني نحنا هون

الاحد ما منعطل، و بالاعياذ ما منعطل بضل شغال هون لانو هذا مركز سياحي. كلياتن يعني كل واحد بشغلو كل

العالم بشغلها، كل السنة و لا يوم.

زينة: بتشتغلي كثير

اماني: ابوه

زينة: الله يعطيك العافية

اماني: الله يعافيك

زينة: مرسي

اماني: افوار ، تشرفنا بمعرفتك

زينة: تشرفنا

English translation:

“Working at a soap factory” [See note on cut below]

Zeina: What’s your name?

Amani: Amani Hassoun. This caravansary¹ is 600 years old. The Turks built it. It was a Turkish fortress. Then the Ottomans came and asked the governor to make it a soap caravansary for the soap trade because There were 400 kinds of soap.

Zeina: 400 kinds?

Amani: Now there are more, because we developed them, added to them, and took care of them.

Zeina: How many kinds are there now?

Amani: Now there are about 700. But the ones that are known are 400. With the oils and the creams. Here all of the products are 100% natural. This is a family business. The whole family works here. What should I tell you...?

Zeina: How many stores do you have in Beirut?

Amani: In Beirut at the ABC Ashrafia, before the Bristol Hotel...and also in Saida, in Saida and on Nadeem al-Jisr Street here; in Hamburg, Germany; Saudi Arabia; Qatar, Dubai

Zeina: In France?

Amani: In France next to the Versailles Palace and in all of the pharmacies in Paris. And soon we will be in all of the pharmacies in Europe. Because these things for acne, eczema, fungus, psoriasis The medicinal elements that are not available ... that aren't available naturally. They're available chemically, but they aren't as beneficial as these products.

Zeina: So these help, people feel that

Amani: People feel it because it's all active. 100%.

Zeina: How long have you worked here?

Amani: I've been coming down with them [joining them] to work for two years.

Zeina: Two years. And how do you like the work?

Amani: Of course.

Zeina: You like it.

¹ An inn built along a trade route.

Amani: I studied accounting, and then I came back. So I studied accounting and started coming down with them immediately. First I helped them a little, and now I'm doing marketing here.

Zeina: At what university did you study?

Amani: I didn't study in a university, but as soon as I finished high school I went into an office to finish quickly ... and because the work expanded a lot, and they started to need help

[Arabic stops at this point]

Zeina: And did you learn English in high school?

Amani: Yes.

Zeina: Of course.

Amani: Because I was at David Karam, an American school.

Zeina: Here in Tripoli?

Amani: In Koura.

Zeina: So you're from Koura.

Amani: No, I'm from here.

Zeina: So, in the north. But you're from Tripoli.

Amani: Yes. Our family isn't originally from Tripoli. Our family is Moroccan. Ouzzan.

Zeina: From Morocco?

Amani: Yes.

Zeina: Didn't you say you were Hassoun?

Amani: Yes, Hassoun. Hassoun from Morocco. Ouzzan. They came here and then There's the Sidi Abd el Wahid mosque that they named after my great grandfather who came here. There were six brothers of Abd el Wahid Hassoun. They called him Hassoun because his voice was really nice when he made the call to prayer. When he made the call to prayer, his voice was really nice. And when Barbar Agha banned the call to prayer he still made it. He didn't comply. The call to prayer was banned in the city of Tripoli, which is the city of science and scientists and a Muslim city. So he came back

and made the call to prayer, and Barbar Agha commanded that they bring the entire Hassoun family to him so he could punish them because he was very evil. And then all of the people spread out and there were a lot of religions. Today in Tripoli there are Sunni Muslims and Orthodox Christians. In Saideh, in the south

Zeina: Yes, there are many religions in Lebanon.

Amani: So now they are of all religions. We even have Jews. From the Hassoun family. All of the religions.

Zeina: All religions, all regions.

Amani: They've even spread all over the world. They are all over the world.

Zeina: So it's a very big family.

Amani: One of them works in the American Congress. They've been in America for about 300 years. They're still there. Because he came up with a very secret program for the government, they don't let him come to Lebanon.

Zeina: But he's originally Lebanese?

Amani: Yes.

Zeina: From this family.

Amani: From this family.

Zeina: That's great. You're related to thousands of people all over.

Amani: Our family is very big. Actually, just in the north here it is seven or eight thousand people. Also, in Dinieh about 3000 people. Very big.

Zeina: So when you meet on Sunday for lunch

Amani: We don't get together -- very seldom ... because my father doesn't like mixing a lot. Of course there's also ... in any family there is

Zeina: There are troubles, stories.

Amani: And I ... you know? You know how they say "Stay away from the bad but sing to it"²? I stay away from it but sing to it. They're very loving with each other and all that, but you can't really get together a lot in this family. Because they are very, very many. You can't get together on Sunday. Everyone has work. For example, here we

² Don't go looking for trouble.

work on Sunday. We don't close. We don't close for holidays. We stay open, because this is a tourist center. All of them ... all of them work.

Zeina: And all year, too.

Amani: The whole world works. We are open the whole year. Not a single day

Zeina: All of the breaks.

Amani: All of them. We don't close at all.

Zeina: You work a lot.

Amani: That's right.

Zeina: Thank you very much.

Amani: You're welcome.

Zeina: Merci [Thank you].

Amani: A vous.³ It was a pleasure to meet you.

Zeina: It was a pleasure.

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.

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³ And to you. This exchange is in French.