

## Middle Eastern Weddings

### Original Script:

“Bade benit mish beyes tima ela ema”- a very common saying said among Arabs especially when men are looking for the perfect bride to marry. The saying literally translates to: I want a girl only her mom kissed her lips.” If you haven’t got the point, I don’t blame you! He wants a girl that is *untouched*.

El-3ers el-3arabe osa ktir kbireh 3adatan. 3ashen el-sha3eb el-3arabe bi7eb ktir yer2os!

What you just heard is called, “Awiha or Zalghuta”. It’s best described in English as; “*Ululation*”. It is a form of a long wavering, high vocal pitch sound representing happiness and joy. And usually women do it in weddings and sometimes in funerals as well, to honor someone and express strong emotions. Don’t freak out next time you hear!

El-3eres bibalesh bakir ta2riban 3ala se3ah 6 dohor w byokhlas mit2ekher ta2riban 3ala se3ah 3 sobo7.

*El-zaffe aw the wedding entrance*, 3adatan bitkon 7azineh. Bitfot el-3aros ma3 baya aw ma3 khay-yah 3ala mosi2ah ktir bati2ah bus ba3den kilon bibalsho yere2so w yghano w yjonoh. If you don't have an Arab friend, I recommend you find yourself one!

3adatan el-ra2sa ta2lidiyeh heye *Dabke*. *Dabke* ra2sah folkloriyeh. El-ma3azim byemesko eden ba3ed w byer2oso sawa b circle. *Dabke* mawjodeh b ktir bled mitel; Yonen, Turkiyeh, Armenia w akid b ktir bilden El-3arabiyeh.

I’m sure you’ve seen videos of people holding their hands and dancing in a wedding in a circle, that is a *Dabke*.

Iza el-3aros w el-3aris miltezmin diniyan ya3ne religiously conservative, 3adatan bikon el-3eres minfosel or separated. Banet la7al w shabeb la7al. W akid ra7 tishrab Coke b kebeyet el-nbid. Bus iza la2, ya3ne akid akid el-3eres fashion show. Le2an haydeh forsah ktir mhemeh la shabeb w el-banet yit3arafo 3ala ba3ed. Ana bsameh el-3eres el-3arabe “*Brides’ Market*”.

Ba3ed el-3eres el-kbar bifilo 3ala el-beit 3ashen beyet3abo w el-shabeb w el-sabayah ma3 el-3aros w el-3aris, biro7o 3adatan 3ala sheri3 *Biel*. *Biel* shere3 b Beirut 7ad el *AUB- jem3ah Lebneiyeh El-Amercaniyeh*. Sheri3 tawil w fiho mata3am. Sheri3 el-*Biel* sheri3 ma3rof 3ashen fi mata3am ktir mitel 3asir, w sandwichet, w mana2esh. Ktir normal enak tshuf 3aros b fostana el-abyad 3am teshtri sandwich min sheri3.

I asked my student John to share his personal experience with the Middle Eastern wedding he attended couple of summers ago in Egypt. And I’m telling you that was something else!

Ta2riban min sintein, n3zamet 3ala 3res Armane b Masr. El-3aris b3refo ta2riban kil hayete. Ahle keno as7ab ma3 ahlo, w sete w jede as7ab ma3 seto w jedo kamen. Sa2afe Armaniyeh hayk. Kil 3ayleh bya3refo ba3d min zamen.

Wala mar-ra t3rafet 3ala el-3roos min abel, ma3 eno ken 3inde 3ayleh min Masr. 3ala fikra, ana Armane bas 3ayesh b America. Heyeh Armaniyeh Masriyeh min *el-Cahera*.

Ana sefaret 3ala el-3res ma3 kaza rfee2 yaleh kamen by3refo el-3aris w el-3ros, w hayasna. Yemkin hayda el-3res a7la 3res ana ra7et 3leh. El-3eres ken arba3 eyem. Balash ma3 marasim b kniseh Armaniyeh, b *Cahera*, ba3den se2na set se3at 3ala montaja3 7ad al ba7r *Al-Abyad Al-Motawasit*.

Wow driving seven hours to get to this resort next to the Mediterranean! That must be definitely worth it.

B el-montaja3, awal layleh Ni7na kena honik, t3shayna 3asha fakhem 7ad el-ba7er. Tene yom, ken el-reception, 3ala el-erja7 ken fi arba3 miyet ashkhas, kamen ken fi mashaheer Masriyeh. El- akil ken atyab shi, w el-ta2es ken bi3a2ed kamen. Ra2asna la sete aw saba3 se3at 3ala musi2'a 3rabiyyeh, Armaniyeh, w Amerikeniyyeh. Al musi2'a dalet kil el-lel.

Dancing for six, seven hours, eating delicious food, and celebrities in the wedding! That is definitely the nicest wedding! A7la 3eres!

Ba3den b el-lel, el-shabeb w sabayah ra7o a3la ahweh w sherebo shisha. Tene yom, ken fi brunch 7ad el-ba7er la el-ma3zeem.

El-dares yale t3lamto b hayete, ino iza shi mar-ra n3zamet 3ala 3eres b el-share2 el-awsat, lezim tro7!

Of course, you are doing to end up smoking shisha that is a Middle Eastern signature!

### Translation:

“Bade benit mish beyes Tima ela ema”- a very common saying said among Arabs especially when men are looking for the perfect bride to marry. The saying literally translates to: I want a girl only her mom kissed her lips.” If you haven’t got the point, I don’t blame you! He wants a girl that is untouched.

Wedding is a big thing usually. Because Arab people love to dance a lot!

What you just heard is called, “Awiha or Zalghuta”. It’s best described in English as; “Ululation”. It is a form of a long wavering, high vocal pitch sound representing happiness and joy. And usually women do it in weddings and sometimes in funerals as well, to honor someone and express strong emotions. Don’t freak out next time you hear!

The wedding starts early around six after noon and finishes late around 3 in the morning.

The wedding entrance is usually sad. The bride enters with her father or brother on a very slow music but then everyone starts to dance, sing, and go crazy. If you don't have an Arab friend, I recommend you find yourself one!

Usually the cultural dance is *Dabke*. *Dabke* is a folkloric dance. The guests hold each other’s hands and dance in a circle. *Dabke* exists in a lot of countries like; Greece, Turkey, Armenia and of course in a lot of other countries.

I’m sure you’ve seen videos of people holding their hands and dancing in a wedding in a circle, that is a *Dabke*.

If the bride and groom are religiously conservative, usually the wedding is separated. Girls alone and boys alone. And of course, you will drink Coke in a wine glass. But if not, then definitely the wedding is a fashion show! Because this is a very important chance for guys and girls to meet each other. I call Arab weddings; “*Brides’ Market*”.

After the wedding, the old people go back home because they are tired and the girls and guys with the bride and groom, usually go to *Biel* street. *Biel* is a street in *Beirut* next to *AUB- American University of Beirut*. It’s a long street and has a lot of restaurants. *Biel* street is a known street because it has a lot of restaurants like; juice, sandwiches, and *Mana2esh*. It’s very normal to see a bride in her white wedding dress buying a sandwich from the street.

I asked my student John to share his personal experience with the Middle Eastern wedding he attended couple of summers ago in Egypt. And I’m telling you that was something else!

About 2 years ago I was invited to an Armenian wedding in Egypt. I've known the groom almost all my life. My parents were friends with his parents, and our grandparents were friends as well. Armenian culture is like that, every family knows each other for generations.

I had never met the bride before even though I use to have family from Egypt. By the way I'm Armenian living in America. She is Egyptian- Armenian from Cairo.

I went to the wedding with few friends that also knew the bride and the groom, and we had so much fun. This was possibly the best wedding I've ever been to. The wedding was 4 days long. It started with the wedding ceremony at an Armenian church in Cairo, then we all drove 6 hours to a beach resort by the Mediterranean Sea.

Wow driving seven hours to get to this resort next to the Mediterranean! That must be definitely worth it.

At the resort, the first night we were there, we had a fancy dinner at the beachfront. The following day we had the wedding reception which apparently had 400 people, including Egyptian celebrities. The food was the most delicious and the weather was amazing as well. We danced for 6 or 7 hours to Arabic, Armenian, and American music. The music and dancing didn't stop all night.

Dancing for six, seven hours, eating delicious food, and celebrities in the wedding! That is definitely the nicest wedding! A7la 3eres!

Then the girls and guys went to a coffee shop to smoke shisha. The next day we had brunch for the guests next to the beach.

Of course, you are doing to end up smoking shisha that is a Middle Eastern signature!