

## INTERVIEW WITH RESMIJE CANA

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Duration: 128 minutes

Present:

1. Resmije Cana (Speaker)
2. Erëmirë Krasniqi (Interviewer)
3. Jeta Rexha (Interviewer)
4. Rina Krasniqi (Camera)

*Transcription notation symbols of non-verbal communication:*

*() - emotional communication*

*{ } - the speaker explains something using gestures*

*Other transcription conventions:*

*[] - addition to the text to facilitate comprehension*

*Footnotes are editorial additions to provide information on localities, names, or expressions.*

## Part One

**Jeta Rexha:** Mrs. Resmije, can you introduce yourself please? And tell us something about your early childhood, and then continue with your memories: what was your childhood like, what was your family like, the *rreth*<sup>1</sup> you grew up in, school, everything you remember from that period.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. Thank you for caring. You are welcomed, how can I help? My name is Resmije Bokshi Cana. I come from a patriotic family, like any other Albanian family, grew up in specific circumstances. I am... do you want the year?

**Jeta Rexha:** Aha, yeah.

**Resmije Cana:** I was born in the year 1943 in Gjakova, where I finished primary school and later secondary school at the gymnasium Hajdar Dushi in Gjakova. In my family, besides my father and mother, we were eight children, no less (laughs). And, it is understandable, it was difficult for our parents. Then, each of us tried in their own way to help, to contribute, to save as much as we knew and could. During that time, most of my fellow citizens, I believe the entire Albanianhood, worked in farming, animals, some cows, some goats, and we were entertained with those. They bought wheat. We had, we had... my family was wealthy and we had good conditions. We didn't suffer when it came to food. Because back then at least, I will tell you later, you had to give... there was some kind of what they called *otkup*, hang on...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** A tax?

**Resmije Cana:** A form of tax, yes, a commitment, an obligation towards the state, you had to give out your wealth. We used to have cows, two buffalos, plus the wheat they made themselves. My father... had land. And so when he collected the harvest in the field, he brought it home. Around spring, or autumn, you were supposed to pay that tax I am talking about. And sometimes the products he harvested were not enough. You had to go and buy it, in order to fulfill [the obligation] to them. We used to have a barn, I don't know how many thousand kilograms of wheat fit in it, because we had a lot of land. And corn was in that special basket for it not to get moulded, [made] with birch, in the corner, on the side of the yard.

Furthermore, the neighbourhood there had many poor people. They brought [aid] similar to the aid they bring nowadays, see, the history repeats itself, the aid they brought was powder milk, powder milk in tin boxes. And they distributed it to the families, those that were poorer. And

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<sup>1</sup>*Rreth* (circle) is the social circle, includes not only the family but also the people with whom an individual is in contact. The opinion of the *rreth* is crucial in defining one's reputation.

some sort of fat, some sort of oil {frowns in a sign of dislike} whereas the whole neighborhood stank, the whole street. Yet, it was welcomed by them.

We used to have fat, animal fat. But it required a great effort to produce these food items. And people from the neighborhood came to ask for the cheese made by us, we were feeding [them] with cheese full of fat. They came to ask for that... how do they call it now, the thing? Whey. It is sold now, it is sold in these, in shops. They came and asked for it to spread it on bread, plain bread. Misery.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This was after the Second World War, right after?

**Resmije Cana:** Right after the war.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did the entire family work in this family economy?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, everyone, all of us. My mother in her own way by baking, cooking, making yogurt, making milk, extracting the butter out of milk. Back then there wasn't... later on came those electrical mixers, like the ones today. Back then you had to do it by hand. You had to spend two to three hours until it was made, in order to extract the fat. Then we would sell it, and people came and asked for it, "Can I have one..." of those like the ones we buy today, they were made of clay, like the ones by *gërçarqitë* [potter]. They came and brought those, "Can I have one of these?" they called them *vorba*, something like the yogurt in plastic that we buy now.

One had to get by in the most primitive way. Some didn't have means, didn't have land. Had to go and buy them [goods]. It came out as more expensive if you bought them. And what I wanted, because for those things... it is nonsense, unreachable you can call it. For you, and for us. One got started, took the wheat to the mill for grinding, they brought it home. You needed to have a horse, two horses. They had bicycles too. They had a small donkey. They went around with that donkey, to run errands faster. And they took the wheat, they ground it as I said, I've been repeating it three times. My mother milled it. She made us children do it. You had to put a leg... I still have it, it associates me with stepping and milling. It was a special dish, and she placed the sieve to sieve it, to separate the wheat... those, husks from the wheat. And she took it and placed it in plastic bags, wherever she could find them back then. She filled up those nylon sacks. They opened a hole if I can call it so, like half the size of this one {points at the space} and together with my father they buried it, they buried the flour there, in that hole.

And the *kapijgjik*, *prallaza* we call it, that we used to have, my mother used to say, I remember those very vaguely. They placed tablecloths, some clothing, some bed sheets, they put them in the *kapijgjik*. We had the *kapijgjik* to separate us from our neighbours. We put them, because someone would see us. And while we were asleep, the whole process was done by two of them. They filled those sacks, they buried them there in the ground. Then they put nylons over again, and threw earth on top.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** That's how they preserved it, right?

**Resmije Cana:** That's how they preserved it. They preserved it, because they came over, they asked for more. They entered, said, "They searched for it with shoes." Because they said .... and then said, "What I did, I took the *arpagjik* [onion seed] when we planted it," the seed to plant onions, "I put them aside, then I placed it [earth] over them, and I hid the tracks, to make it look as if there is nothing here." That's it, they fought for survival. Then they kept a cow, they slaughtered a calf for winter. Chicken also.

That's how life was, very, very bad. Regardless, on the part of the state there were disagreements, misuse. At the time we, the entire neighbourhood was coming, I remember,

came to listen to the radio, it broadcast the news. They came to listen, they came in, "What are they saying, what is happening, what is going to happen?" "Can we come in?" "You had," she said, "to be careful because they came..." now for example, they saw you being more skilled, my father was very skilled. He bought seven acres of land, however, with lots of effort. My mother weaved, with cotton... some sort of *fyshtëza*. Two of us, the oldest sisters, climbed on the *miner*. We didn't have sofas. There were some wooden ones. And we climbed over and did that, we fixed it for her. Then we had to make... there were [some] *lemje*... they twisted it like this, that *lemje* was twisted, turned around, got bigger, like this, with threads. Poverty to the max (laughs).

And my father in order not to spend money, he earned considerably, hired workers. We had the shepherd who took our livestock to pasture. In order not to spend the money, until it... my mother weaved, and she made shirts for us, short ones like this, and diapers, for babies that came after. I have two twin sisters. They are now 65 years old. And for them, when she was about to give birth, she only had one cradle. When she went to give birth, she said, "I didn't know that I would get two." She took the cradle from my grandmother, put the other one in, and she made diapers with that cotton.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How about primary school, what was the school system at the time?

**Resmije Cana:** Initially the school system was until fourth grade, it was called elementary school. Then during that time it came into power... back then, when you registered in the first grade, actually the fifth grade now, back then it was called gymnasium, the gymnasium. Four years of elementary to learn writing, then, the highest grade, the gymnasium, high school. However, in the meantime the same gymnasium underwent changes and became an eight year school, at the time when I was attending it. And besides, I had an older sister who was two years older than I. My father did not let her go to school, because the *rreth* was primitive: a daughter going to school, a disgrace, shameful. And he kept her at home, he let me go, because people said to him, "How can you stop her?" Now, it was our turn once we grew up, they had sons too. But then even the boys lost interest, because it took a long procedure to complete school, and to come to... for example, to gain something. You had to get by as much as you could, to be fed.

So she remained [home].. She got engaged when she was 19. They came and asked for her hand, they saw she was older, more grown up, she got engaged and went to her husband's. Her daughter is now 53 years old. She is two years older than I am. My sister's daughter is 53 years old, but she got married young and so she had her children earlier. Like this.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Were the women covered at the time?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, at the time they were covered. I remember when I was a child, they summoned them back then, how to say... sometimes later the Socialist League was established. Someone more, more active, more communist, called in these women, whoever had someone [covered], to come out. They were covered, and they had some sort of... like these ones, that you see now {touches her face}, the same. Now these... I have seen that they are wearing them now too, a curtain in front [of the eyes], some sort of lace. They put some sort of lace in front [of the eyes], and the remainder all the way down to the tip of the feet, like these ones now. I remember my mother, they came out. Yes, and they were young girls who were engaged, and now it seemed to them as if the sky fell down on them. They dragged the wives, because they didn't want to go out. I remember it as if it was today. How to go out? Let's do it with a sheet {shakes her head}. Oo, what a level! God's grief!

And the ones [women] now, I would appeal until when... but one can say that the East brought these [customs], and primitivisms. They held onto doors (laughs). I have seen it myself. There was this girl in the neighbourhood, engaged, "I don't want," she said, "to go out." It seemed to her that the sky fell down, "I don't want to go out." They went back inside and they went in to take them by force (laughs). And then, not to go out completely shameless, they went out with umbrellas. They made them put scarves on their heads. Then they went out with umbrellas {pretends to hold an umbrella}, in those days they went out like that. And when they started going out, then it became rarer and rarer, until they were used to it. They went out with umbrellas, or they would put on some scarf, and then started to put on some lace, like the ones with lace today. They made them wear coats, or some sort of costume they had. It was... I see them using those even now, soft and plush fabric, something like a costume, similar to fur coats we used to wear some time ago. The same, they used to wear them for going for a walk and have fun, with friends, at some wedding. They went to the *çarshia* with them, those who dared go for a walk, because they were afraid, ashamed. And then they put them on, they wrapped themselves with those and accomplished that mission. They took them out three-four times, to take away the shyness. Oh God! Oh God! {covers the face with her hands}.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** And who made them do it, who organized it?

**Resmije Cana:** Sorry?

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who organized it?

**Resmije Cana:** It was organized by the Socialist League, as they called it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The activists, right?

**Resmije Cana:** The activists, yes. And yes, besides this I wanted to tell you earlier, these communists were also, something like the spies today. You had to be careful. We turned on the radio as I said, they came to listen to the radio. "Free Albania," "Voice of America" in Washington, at the time, was broadcasting. They came over to listen to it, people went silent.

We could see now, I had a paternal uncle's son who was in the third grade of the gymnasium, this gymnasium that made him more skilled, more emancipated. He was a good student, the only son in the family. He was exactly my paternal uncle's son. And he came to our place to listen to the radio. The time came for him to sign up for the military [service]... oh God! And there were families, people, who were predisposed to take your man: brother, maternal uncle's son, paternal uncle's son. They followed them, like the ones today as they call them, "a spy," sort of Kadri Veseli.

In Gjakova there were... {knocks on the table} there are families known to everyone that have ruined young men's lives. They came and took them, "C'mon, do you want to get to Albania?" For example, he saw scholars, who were preoccupied [with the question of the national cause]. They went to become soldiers, my husband has the list of soldiers who got killed in this... since I am drawing a parallel, perhaps I am digressing, the soldiers killed in the Serbian-Slavic Army, the Yugoslav one. And they maltreated them, killed them, with the pretext that they supposedly committed suicide. In fact it was they who killed them.

And so my uncle's son, I know, his father came by every evening to listen to "Free Albania." I don't know where its headquarters was, I don't know where it was. And sometimes later they told him... they were active, because I am going around that vicious circle again, they told him, "Do you want to get across Albania?" Because now he had received the conscription papers, the call to become a soldier. They took them to perform army drills for a month, to do drills. And now, he already received it [official call] and had to go to be a soldier. They went around him,

these sold-out souls. My husband in his writings used this word, “sold-out soul” too. They ruined you. “C’mon,” they said, “do you want to get across Albania?”

There were specific people, who had shops near the border, because Gjakova is very near the border. And they came over and took them, as if to get them across the border. But they did it with bad intentions. They dug out a hole, and they made a deal with the police, that when they arrived with a carriage - back then we didn’t have vehicles, either with a horse, or with two horse, they rode you and themselves on a horse -, however, they sent signals to them that once they reached the border, they knew when they approached. They either raised something white, or set the time when he should be there. And they turned up and waited for them. When they approached the border, they came out. This one supposedly... dug out that hole, covered it with something, and this guy, the escort, pretended that he fell in the hole. The other remained. That one was shot dead.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This was the kind of framing they did at the time?

**Resmije Cana:** That’s how they framed it. Even to this day, my husband also often... the sister of my husband knew someone like that who was their kin, and used to say, “You should excommunicate him.” He ruined people, ruined young people, and now they have made it possible for them to open shops near the border. Ponoshec, perhaps you’ve heard about it. Ponoshec is very close to the border with Albania.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This was during the period when they wanted to cleanse all potential enemies of Yugoslavia, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** After the war, they wanted to identify who is with whom.

**Resmije Cana:** Because our idol was - even to this day we idealize Albania, because they are Albanians, we are Albanians -, Enver, with his caprice. Moreover, my husband expressed an opinion, he said, “Whatever it might have been, he [Enver Hoxha] protected it [Albania] from other enemies. The people suffered a lot, but Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece were ready to...Albania wouldn’t have existed as a state.” As it was...

## Part Two

After finishing eight years of school, I registered in high school, which at the time was the only door to continue further, the general gymnasium Hajdar Dushi in Gjakova, the science-language branch. Back then it was four years. Then in the meantime the *Normale* opened, after a year or two. The *Normale* was here in Pristina too. However, the best was in Gjakova, because during the Italian occupation they brought teachers from Albania to Gjakova, hence the language is a bit more specific.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This prepared you for what kind of profession, this type of education?

**Resmije Cana:** This education, to continue as... back then, finishing high school was the same as finishing the university. There were professors, who had taught me at the high school in Gjakova, and then they came over here. There were Besim Bokshi, an academic, Enver Gjerqeku, Musli Mulliqi. Musli Mulliqi taught me figurative art in primary school. Then Ekrem Murtezai, philosophy, Latin. The cadres were very bright, today even a PhD graduate doesn’t have equal qualifications. They had studied in Belgrade. After I finished high school, I worked in a school in the suburbs of Gjakova. In the meantime, we met; we got engaged with my husband, Zekeria Cana, professor of history.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** When did you go to Pristina, which year?

**Resmije Cana:** I married in '67. I got married in 1967, actually in '66. No, I got married in '67, in '68 my son was born, the oldest one, Ares' father in law. And during my married life I had three sons. They are family guys as well, they are educated.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How was life in Pristina, at the time?

**Resmije Cana:** Almost the same. This part here, Aktash, was in so much mud. When I went out, the heels they bought for me to wear, I didn't wear them here. There was no water, there was no sewage, there was no water plant, no sewage. When out, as soon as they put their feet on the ground, children tripped over. Like this. Then my husband got dismissed from teaching, just before our engagement. I heard that he was dismissed from teaching while I was in high school. Because my husband used to be friends with the husband of the oldest sister whom I've mentioned, and they, his family, had suggested [the engagement], and it happened, they agreed, through the family, yes, although we had only met two three times altogether.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How did you decide to move to Pristina?

**Resmije Cana:** He moved here earlier, because they had dismissed him from teaching. He got employed at the *Normale*, initially he taught there. Then from the *Normale* moved to the school... what is the one at... on the way to... *18 Nandor*, or *19 Nandor*, that school?

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The Technical School?

**Resmije Cana:** The Technical School, that is where they accepted him. Because he was a bit "unsuitable," because he did not have access, adequate political preparations for the time.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** He was not suitable?

**Resmije Cana:** Unsuitable for the state. For the authorities.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Were there charges against him?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, there were. He had charges. During his studies in Belgrade, he established the association *Përprojekja*. It exists even to this day. And for three-four days in a row they came to get those who established the association *Përprojekja*. And then they suspended him from the university. Then, later he passed, but he stayed there, in Belgrade. It was Agim Gjakova, Ali Aliu and my husband who established the association *Përprojekja*, a student organization, similar to the Students Union now. It went on.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** ... the city, Pristina in the '60s?

**Resmije Cana:** When I arrived, I didn't find [running] water here. In this family there was no [running] water. The house was being built. They dismissed him even from the school *18 Nandor*, *18* or *19*, I don't know how it is called now.

**Jeta Rexha:** The Technical School.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, the Technical School. But back then it was called *18*... Technical High School *18 Nandor* or *19 Nandor*, I don't know on which occasion. And they dismissed him. Then they placed him to work at the Provincial Archives, as a historian. Meanwhile they removed him even from the Archives, and Brioni happened. Brioni marks a very good period for Albanians. Ranković was in power at the time. Ranković slayed Albanian people. He had many spies, hence he didn't suffer much [in getting information]. In fact you had to be more cautious with an Albanian than with a Serb.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** But why do you say that Brioni was a good period for Albanians if Ranković was in power?

**Resmije Cana:** He was removed.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Ah, he fell.

**Resmije Cana:** Ranković fell, then Brioni. There was a meeting held in Brioni, Brioni at the seaside. A Party meeting was held somewhere in Belgrade and my husband was rehabilitated, and many others who were [considered unsuitable], who have schools named after them. At the time, I am not sure how much you know, when this guy Kelmend Rizvanolli died.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who was he?

**Resmije Cana:** He was the nephew of Kadri Kusari. There is a school in Gjakova [named after him]. During the same time my husband was dismissed. Moreover his life had gone to waste. He didn't even marry, didn't even have a family of his own. He was sacked from teaching. He studied together with my husband in Belgrade. They took him to prison, and he went down the rollercoaster.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** When did you start working?

**Resmije Cana:** Afterwards as I said, he was rehabilitated. They accepted him. The Albanological Institute was established. Initially the Institute...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Which year?

**Resmije Cana:** In '68. In that year, '67-68, because initially the Albanological Institute was established. The first one to be established was the Albanological Institute. Zekeria Rexha used to be there. Then they deported him to Albania, because he was unsuitable for the Yugoslav regime. And they closed down that Institute. In '67-68, it was established for the second time. That is when he [Zekeria] applied and was accepted, because he didn't have the right to teach at the university, because he was stained, with a white spot (laughs).

And during her entire life my mother-in-law kept saying, "*Kuku*, see!" Anyhow, he won that. And then he was dedicated, he worked there, he registered for his third degree in Belgrade. He finished his third degree in Belgrade. He then commuted for the exams. It was the Ministry of Culture that allocated a fund to cover living expenses in Belgrade, and travelling back and forth for the exams.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** As some sort of a residency, yes?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. Then they offered him a salary, however, when he came back the salary was not enough, because those were small salaries. Anyway, also life was, we didn't have good living conditions, neither did we have demands, you did as much as you could. He came back, it is downstairs, his typewriter. He typed all night, translated, published. We have all the papers he published. Then he compiled all of them, he made them into a book. To support yourself you had to... when I came here there was no [running] water in the house. I used to carry it with buckets from the neighbours. I did not work for two years, when two and half years passed by, he applied for the Institute of Textbooks. The Institute of Textbooks, back then, it was the Institute of Textbooks that published the books, ours. He was the editor of books, and also published his own. He then wrote a book in cooperation with Branko Horvat, later on. There is a book...

In the year [1970], on March 1, I was in the third month of pregnancy, now with the second [son], with Longar. And it started now, the doors opened for Albanians, for the Albanian

intellectuals, the doors opened. Everyone was able to work, to write, nobody was stopping you. And I was pregnant with the second one. The Law and Economic Faculty merged. At least it was a joint department, it was like the department of Belgrade, the Faculty... *Ekonomski Fakultet, Pravno Ekonomski Fakultet u Beogradu* [Economics Faculty, Law-Economics Faculty in Belgrade]. And the professors came over, it was all Serbs here, from Belgrade. But gradually, in the '70, it detached, because brighter days came, the University of Pristina detached from the University of Belgrade.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did you start working on 1 March?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes on March 1, 1970 I got admitted to work. On March 1, I started to go to work. I was accepted at the workplace.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** At the Faculty of Economics?

**Resmije Cana:** At the Law-Economics Faculty. Later we separated: Law on its own, Economics on its own. Back then Srdja Popović was the dean for both faculties.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Where did you work there?

**Resmije Cana:** In the administration, I got admitted to the archives. Because it was then that Law detached from the Economics department. And it was one archive here, one archive there, and I used the opportunity. Friends, because there were many left, who remained... my husband's friends. He was the dean for teaching, a member, the chair of the commission, Professor Fuat Rizvanolli, and Srdja Popović were together with him in Belgrade. Even Srdja had told him, "I hope you don't have children." They looked at you, to make sure that they do not to accept you, if you're pregnant. But at the beginning, I wasn't showing at the time. I had it, I got in. Then I was working for four hours. When the baby was born in November, I had already started to work four hours. Because back then you were entitled, you worked four hours for six months, and then you had to continue full time. My mother-in-law was at home with us, she was happy that I had a job, there was another hand, and she told me, "I will look after the boy." Then the second one came, it was two. Then I hired a nanny, because she couldn't manage, and on.

He finished his Master's degree in Belgrade. Ymer Jaka, his wife and I went to the graduation exam. When we went to the graduation – I am obliged to tell you only this one – there was this Radmila Stijanović, she was a professor, a PhD and two members of the Commission. She says, "*To nije tako, nije tako profesor Cana, družo Cana, kolega Cana,*" [It's not like that, it's not like that professor Cana, comrade Cana, colleague Cana] this and that, and...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** In what context was this? This was for the graduation exam, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, at the graduation exam, yes. Because he has passed the exams there, then that's where the graduation was done. Because it was under the University of Belgrade. Even so, he has it as *Univerzitet u Beogradu* [University of Belgrade], as he received it. Then he stood up and said, "*Nije tačno*" [That is not correct]. She came up with a version that suited the members of the Commission.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Historically [speaking] right [version]?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. He said, "*Nije to tačno. Tako je kako ja sam pisao*" [That's not correct. It is as I have written it] as I have... do you understand Serbian?

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Yes.

**Resmije Cana:** "It is as I have written it there." And he stood up and punched the table {punches the table}. When we went out for a break, the commission was now evaluating the paper, I tell him, "Zeqë, why did you have to speak up, and tell them 'Nije to tačno' [It's not correct]?" He said...I said, "Are you aware that they will not approve it, you will not finish it? They will not give you.."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** You won't graduate.

**Resmije Cana:** "You won't graduate." He said, "Dare they." At the time! I told him, "How on earth?" "Why," he said, "It's my right." He said, "Have a look at what is written on page X, on page X, this line, that chapter." Then we, "*Jedna pauza*" [A break]. We went out. And as I said, when we went out, I said, "Why did you say that, my boy?" "Why," he said, "I am talking based on documents. I didn't make this up in my head." When we entered, standing, they said, "*Čestitamo ti* [Congratulations]. You have graduated with the highest grade." He passed the diploma exam, he had all the grades listed in the same document that he received. He made all that fuss. Like that. He finished it, then...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Which year?

**Resmije Cana:** In the year '68. Not in '68, no, later. Did I already have my youngest son? Yes, I reckon, both of them. Later, because it took some time to work on the Master's thesis, this much {opens her arms}. Then the PhD here. We keep them over there, the diplomas. It required work, research. He would go to Cetinje, the location of archive resources in Belgrade, to collect them. Then, to Kotor, to a church in Montenegro. It is in that church that there is a priest, not Don Lush Gjergji, but he was there. He went, slept there, in the church, the church of Tuz, I remember now. Even I slept there twice, both of us did. And then he was not permitted to go to Shkodra, they didn't communicate with... when the League of Prizren happened they invited him. He went by bus, the first time those intellectuals went to Tirana.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** A commemorative event for the League of Prizren you mean?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, the anniversary of the League of Prizren.

### Part Three

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Tell us how was the University in its early beginning, while you were working there. Because that is the beginning, when you started work.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes. In '64 it was from... because they went to study in '64, or in '61, the University was opened, yes, the *Univerzitet u Beogradu* [University of Belgrade] branch of Pristina. And professors lectured in Serbian. And then, when we separated, when it detached from the University of Belgrade, it wasn't long after I was accepted. As I said there were two archives, two dean offices, some deans went there, some here. The library, all the books were in Serbian. The entire graduation exam of my husband was in Serbian. And they came from Belgrade for research. The students who did their Master's there came over. He had two colleagues, they gathered materials here in Kosovo. They went to the field to see historical monuments, to see... like they do today, visiting from Albania and we going there. They came over, students, especially from the department of history, geography too.

Then later on the department of Medicine was opened. There were no computers yet, they arrived later. They were typing, keeping the minutes. They had typists, hired them. You had to do the exam submission by hand, register them by hand in the registry book. All the graduations

were recorded Then the work I was doing, I did register, for example, a request to the dean office for exam submission, for school year registration, you had to register them in the books. Then you collected them at the end of the calendar year, they were collected, a book was made so if tomorrow you were interested in finding out about scholarships, about loans, it was provided later on. Companies, factories, started to provide loans.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** To students, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, to students. Then students who had a higher average grade were given university scholarships. All these professors now, used to be students with a university scholarship. They had a high average grade. They learned, they studied. Now, today it is not merit-based anymore, but today a high school student doesn't know these things. Now I arrived later, I monitored these years, on March 1, 1970 I was admitted, with... when we got out, they expelled us from here in the '90s. I don't know, when I turned 65, that time one year after my husband died, I retired. I mean, today even the professors and students turned out to be irresponsible. If you don't show the door to someone, for example did your mother, father teach you how to walk? Mother taught you how to walk, taught you how to eat. The professor, the teacher is the one who deserves the merit.

I remember in high school, when I was in primary [school], the professor of Albanian language taught us how to write a letter, how to write a request, how to write a postcard to send to someone. When students came here, I gave them a paper, they didn't know where to get a sheet of paper, they lacked basic conditions. I gave them a paper, I told them, "Write a request." Now imagine, after, you can say even after 20 years, 15, yes, even after 20 years, it happened recently, I even mention it often when I meet with friends, "Go ahead and write a request." He started the request on a A-4 paper, started from the top, "What do I write [in the request]?" This is a weakness of the language teacher. He didn't give him the foundations, how should he know how to write a request. They taught us to start at the bottom, to start off, you firstly address the institution, then the content, then the date, then the address: name and number of index, what are you asking for. He started it here, I told him, "You, is this all you have to write?" (laughs) "But I don't know." "How come *more*, you were not taught by the teacher?" Now, how can you blame him, am I right? "They did not teach us."

So that's how it was going on, *pa kry*. He said, "If I don't know how to..." And I lost respect for him, "if I don't know to how to write, I can speak" (laughs). And now they know how to speak. That's how it came to, that kind of period. Because the interest is dropping down, failing in teaching, in showing you the door, "This is how it is, this is done this way."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Can you tell us about the '90s, how were you expelled from work? How did all that happen, how did it come to the expulsion of everyone from the institutions?

**Resmije Cana:** (Sighs).

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** You had an episode of...you were telling us earlier.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, I was telling you. At the time, in the '90s, there were protests, the students rose up in groups, in protests. Then we took out the streets too, we abandoned the work place. They didn't like the deans. You had to be careful because the state held the brakes, and surveilled us. Then according to... they selected them according to the personality, for example they started to expel them in groups. First they expelled some from patriotic families that were suspected for it. Because Albanians did the work [of spying], the Albanian people paved the way. Even up to this day it is we who make things worse. If they found all those whose fathers were in prisons, they expelled them. Or the brother, they would expel... they expelled many

students. I remember well, that they expelled them from university, because they were “unsuitable.”

My husband was expelled from school, he was expelled from the economics school as “unsuitable.” And they submitted the decisions to us. Also, they knew he was an activist. I was among the first group to get the decision, when they expelled me from work, from there. C’mon. But when in groups, it didn’t feel so. Then my mistake, I am not an authority to blame Hajrullah Gorani, but the mistake, the greatest flaw he had, was that he was going public and telling people to leave their jobs. In that case he impoverished Kosovo for a long period. Because it was supposed to... they [Serbs] could hardly wait for us to leave, to abandon work.

Yes, they held a protest, a strike, on September 1, or October 1. And they hardly waited to find a pretext, and brought the decisions to expel us from work, as *nepodoban*, as unsuitable. You had to pass the bilingual exam, because Serbs, when the students came, you had to speak in Serbian with them even when we attended the Council meetings, for only one Serb who was there, all the professors had to speak in Serbian.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How did they issue these decisions, they were sent to your house, or you went to pick them up, or how?

**Resmije Cana:** They brought it to our offices, to each and every one of us. They gave them to the superintendent. He brought them to me, I enlisted them, I registered them. They brought them to everyone, registered, and the superintendent went out and handed them to us. I can also bring you the file I received for retirement. What to do then, what can you do, she was the secretary at the dean’s cabinet...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who?

**Resmije Cana:** Safete, she took us to her family, to her brothers’ house, over there where the blacksmiths are, at Hani i Dilit they call it, up there.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** That is where the whole staff moved?

**Resmije Cana:** The entire staff, with the professors. But not all of us got kicked out, they didn’t expel all of us. Few remained. However, they remained kind of “with two asses,” if I can say in popular expression, with two versions. Because the one who remained, he remained suspected to our view. Nevertheless, later on we understood, they were doing favors to us. Because they would bring paper, they would bring ink, the tapes for typing machines, documents. They came, enrolled for the exam, we kept the evidence. When it was reaching the end, he could not get the diploma certificate. Then, with them we... they saved us. However, in the beginning, they looked at them with reservations, because they remained as collaborators, that’s how they labelled them. Like this, you go through all kind of things!

And then they took the files from here, from the university, they found a way when Serbs were not around, hid it in their body and brought it to us here. In case one of them found another job, they could hardly wait. Then they were coming with indexes from the villages, in halls, in garages. They scattered, they rented them. At least we didn’t suffer, these other employees had a hard time, because we asked for money too. They had to come all the way from a village, by bus, with an index. It often happened that they made them swallow the index, the police. They used to search them at the checkpoints.

Then when they arrived, you had to take off your shoes downstairs. It was hard for them, the family that took us in, [Safete] was our colleague. They worked hard, they made car machines, those boys and their father. However, they were patriots. They supported us, they paid for

electricity, they paid for the phone line. We started to become big. The money that students paid was collected, we rented garages and turned them into halls. In their house, that family's [house], it happened for example that, let's say I am now here asleep, there were few students who had to take an exam, they entered, people in there had to wake up. They had four rooms, they had to wake up, to make room because students were coming in. That is how much they sacrificed.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What was the name of the family?

**Resmije Cana:** Zhushi family. Like I told you that day, Nazmi Zhushi. These girls were helping us then, and they hid the documents in the house upstairs. And the police came and kicked us out too.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** They chased you away, right?

**Resmije Cana:** They saw them coming to the neighbourhood. They informed us that the police is coming. They caught them with exam papers, with documents, whatever they had. It was there, it is that street that leads to Llap, to the railway. From their house we took the shortcut, and we climbed up that hill, we escaped *pa kry*. And they didn't even enter, because they found them repairing cars. Then they fined them, the landlords. They sacrificed, I can say just like those who took the gun. He sacrificed more than those who took the gun and went to the frontline. Because they came to search. They arranged it, they opened the path where students could enter. They waited for us. They brought us, boiled potatoes, brought us... Fruits from there, coffee, tea, they didn't let us pay for anything.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** For how many years did this go on?

**Resmije Cana:** Eight years. After eight years when the agreement was made, the premises were abandoned, the university was opened, the schools opened.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What was happening meanwhile in your house?

**Resmije Cana:** Here, then as I was saying, they brought the decision for me and all my friends, some remained. Here in my house, my husband was running up and down. And when we returned, I don't know how he survived. And I tell you, thanks to God, he was the one who initially worked, because on my part, no matter how much I would contribute, I wouldn't be able, being a woman. For a woman it was a different story at the time. Because they are leading now, but again they are not in the light they should be. Because they are hesitating, and nobody is acknowledging them. The women's world is given very little consideration. Who was the one that came, Kristina ..., she was the secretary of human rights for Europe. She came here, she was here. Afterwards, my husband established the Council of Human Rights.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** In the year?

**Resmije Cana:** Well, I don't know the year. I have it there.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** 1990? Was that also in the beginning of the '90s?

**Resmije Cana:** No, later, later on. Until we sobered- up, we figured out what the Serb regime wanted. The poisoning was in the '90s. Actually yes, perhaps in the '90s.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What happened during the poisoning?

**Resmije Cana:** The poisoning happened in Podujevo. They poisoned high school students, and all of a sudden euphoria with cars started. Whoever could, whoever was a student, whoever had a bit of national sentiment, became active. They had poured a substance which made the

students have seizures during classes. They vomited, had dizziness, became somehow hysterical. At least [Zekeria] recorded this. So, they carried them with cars from there. They even said that, "They are faking it, they are acting." The Serbs have invented this [denial].

Being a scientific associate, my spouse had used it as an admission office for a patriotic cause.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The Institute?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, the Albanological Institute. And that's where it started. The first ones to come were the political prisoners, the students. Among them, they came and informed my husband and professor Anton Çetta. And professor Anton Çetta was also working in the Albanological Institute. Among the first activists there were Myrvete Dreshaj and Have Shala.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** They came to ask for help from the professors?

**Resmije Cana:** They came to consult, to give an opinion, because naturally, through reading they got an idea, since when people are suffering... because they started the looting, the beatings, the arrests.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The Serbs.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, the Serbs, the state imprisoning the innocent, beating them. And at that moment they brought a decision that when the people are under pressure from the state, they connect more. They took the position that when it comes to blood feuds... in one day, I don't know about the date. It was the beginning of reconciliations. But they gathered, they worked around preparations for a year, how to prepare about the reconciliation of the blood feuds. Then, they went, they chose Anton Çetta because he was a professor of language and he collected songs, poems from people.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Researcher of folklore.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, folklore. And he went to *oda*, he told stories, he was a narrator. And then they, and these students, were taken along in order to connect, to go to *oda*. Because the girls, men didn't accept them. And they went together, they mediated with the families. They had... they got into conflict for water, for land. But in between the lines, there was a different pretext, because those blood feuds perhaps happened for land, perhaps for a stream, however there was another background to it: because women have a temper, like the young ones, for example she went, it is not banal, it is very normal, and had an affair with their sister's husband, or with their paternal uncle's son. Well now, this was found out in the village. Either the brother, or the father found out, and went and shot the son-in-law, or the neighbour. And the neighbour, because they usually were, they were married, but also with a neighbour [affair]. So, they killed that person.

There were many cases, because between them, that day when the reconciliation took place, and they went to *oda*, as I was telling you, to meet in *oda*, to go to a certain man, to a certain family. Some wanted to reconcile, some didn't, because the secret would come out. And that is insulting, yes, for... for example, nobody wanted to say, or even myself today, I am an old lady and I don't want to, I cannot afford that luxury myself, "She is having an affair with someone else while being married." But, naivety does that.

And so, like this, they went from house to house. They went and begged the council of elders in the village. They called them in for a meeting, to prepare the terrain, because to appear in... 50 thousand people were present on the day when the reconciliation of blood feuds took place at... at Verrat e Llukës. And each time he came back, they came to ask for him. They came over, plenty of times, with cars from Peja, from Raushiq, from Deçan, from Skivjan. They came to

meet up, “What do we do?” They gathered, discussed, analyzed how to find the most appropriate way. And they took a stand that these women, girls, students, should go among women, families, to tell them that, “Let’s start, we want to start, do you see that the population is being wiped off, look at what the Serbs are doing to us, exactly when we have to bond, look what they are doing to us, yet we are in blood feuds.” They were in blood feuds with, let’s say the neighbour, with the sister’s husband, with the uncle’s son. They knew internally how things are. And they convinced the women. Women then... on one side women went to women, men were invited in houses with *oda* in villages. And men went, there were plenty of activists who joined.

And they decided. They compiled the list, those girls worked on it. There was one of them Ajshe Qorraj, she is a lawyer now. She was there too. There were plenty. The dean of the Medical faculty, of the Teacher’s school, Ethem Çeku. He came here so many times. And Sali Cacaj. They were... all the time people came over, all kinds of people. They came with a camera, this guy Sali Cacaj, with a camera. Then Gani Ibërdemaj. I can’t recall all of them now. And they decided to gather. They notified him, he [Zekeria] stayed for around two weeks in Deçan, there in Strelc, in Deçan.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** With students?

**Resmije Cana:** Not with students, but with people, with activists, with villagers, to organize the reconciliation. And they have asked permission from the authorities, you had to. That day it happened on ... it was on... Bajram Day, it went really well.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Which place?

**Resmije Cana:** There, at Verrat e Llukës. When they came by, they asked for him, “Is the professor here?” I told them, “No.” I don’t know, now why should I lie, I am not sure if it was Verrat e Llukës. But that one does not happen, doesn’t get repeated ever. As long as people live on Earth, that event cannot be repeated as it was. They dressed up, previously I have mentioned the early scientists, writers and patriots, Sylejman Vokshi, Idriz Seferi, the ones who gathered. And they gathered in the same way as that day when Ismail Qemali gathered. They were dressed with these...people in the village got organized to dress up in national wears, with horses, with feet where they would put [decorations], because we have seen them prior. With the clothing, with Albanian *fez*, with flags. In other words, “Like you’ve died alive” that is how emotional it was.

They paraded through, what was once Drin, a river, and they rode on horses with *duçtë*, the mane they put on a horse for decoration. All kinds of flowers on the head, all kind of decorative items, however all national ones. And they paraded in front of the public. That day I went out, I went there, because I never attended before that. When I came back [home], I thought the burglars broke in. They had messed it up. They came in, they had placed an eavesdropper above [inc.]

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Tapping device ?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, eavesdropper. And...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How many people were there [at Verrat e Llukës]?

**Resmije Cana:** Over 50 thousand people came that day. It is not being remembered... neither did the army expect it, nor the police. When it... as soon as it started, a tank arrived in front of the public. So, it gave a sign that, “We are here.” I do have the photograph, I cannot find it, I wanted to show you, when out of the blue, he [Zekeria] took off his jacket in a moment, jumped

in front and said, "Shoot!" The barrel of the tank moved from one side to another, at times towards the public, at times towards the people who were sitting on the stage, at times towards us, at times towards the street. I thought, "He is done," but he had the permit for the rally, he had announced to the authorities that there would be nothing nationalistic that day, just a massive gathering.

The meeting was held there, people came up and talked and spoke about who they are forgiving [blood feuds] for, how it's forgiven. Songs, poems, it was a very special program. Around there, at the entrance of Deçan, the police appeared. Whoever approached there back then was beaten and turned back.

**Erëmirë Cana:** What happened to your husband?

**Resmije Cana:** Afterwards my husband, and Anton, and Anton's wife... we prepared to return when they took him. Nothing, it was over that day. They let him go, it was done.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What happened with the tank, then?

**Resmije Cana:** With the tank nothing. Just to show him, because there in that crowd he... the conditions were not ripe yet, they had not yet gathered the force to go and kill a man. Because he [Zekeria] went, asked the police commander, the commander of the Deçani police, for permit to be at the reconciliation. Just a meeting, a program. And they approved it. And no, they didn't do anything. But when it became dark, they came and told us, "*Kuku*, they killed them," those who wanted to come, they beat the people. And they sent them back, didn't allow them to come.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Do you remember how many blood feuds reconciliations were there?

**Resmije Cana:** One thousand and four hundred.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** That very day?

**Resmije Cana:** It happened that day. When we started to go back, the police turned up. We were in our vehicle, my husband was driving. It was Anton, and me and Anton's wife on the back. They stopped us. They... (laughs) drove us with a vehicle to Pristina, they held the two of them in Deçan, for an informative talk. That was the routine back then. They stopped them and kept them till twelve midnight. Then, sometimes later they... there were plenty of activists, plenty of activists. Two or three of them were waiting. They took them, when they released them they brought them here. It was around twelve o'clock midnight. They released them without anything. That was it, just to disorient the population slightly. Like this.

#### Part Four

When it finished at Verrat e Llukës, it then started in the whole of Kosovo, the reconciliation was happening in villages. One of those took place in Pristina too, in the Zenel Hajdini school, a magnificent gathering was held. Furthermore, there is the Field of Reconciliation, somewhere near the *medrese*, at the school, at the *medrese*, at Hani i Dilit. It was there in the *medrese*. Because they invited us, they served coffee and so on, anyway, it's not important.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** And how many cases got addressed? How many blood feuds, I mean?

**Resmije Cana:** Well the blood feuds, I don't know. There were many cases, in all of them. Each... they started to work on a project then: they decided that each part of the town should have a place assigned for gathering, so that people would not move around. You had to go far,

so to be near instead, to that neighborhood, in that region. The villages of that region gathered in the Zenel Hajdini school. Then there was one in Malisheva, in Has. There was one in Zym, it was in Zym. Besides those here, and in the outskirts, as I said they mostly organized, if there were more of them, they gathered in one big place to use the opportunity due to the distance.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did they still use the Albanological Institute as a meeting point?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, they continuously met there. When they couldn't find him there, they came here. They waited for him, they went around wherever they could. He had many associates. Then, where was it? Well, I have forgotten where those reconciliations took place, in Has... in Gjonaj. They had given him some sort of a national outfit. I burnt it, it was burnt.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Was he in the field all the time, your husband?

**Resmije Cana:** All the time. He was never home. Then they started off in Albania, they started to do reconciliation. And the reconciliation there, at *Malsi* [Highland] of Gjakova.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Is this '91, or later?

**Resmije Cana:** Later, later there.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Which years?

**Resmije Cana:** Then he was in Sweden, in Norway, in Germany, in Switzerland.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** And in America.

**Resmije Cana:** In America too. He was in America twice or three times. He was for some time...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** They reconciled the expats there?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, the expats. And our expats helped a great deal. And wherever they are, they were very active in Switzerland. They provided a lot of help for the population. They contributed, they paid membership, also when they remained without salaries. The Diaspora contributed a lot, they provided. They had centres for gathering. And he had an invitation, he was in America three times I think.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who invited him? Because I know it was the expats, but do you have anyone, a name?

**Resmije Cana:** No name, but... there is, it was Tom Lantos who came here. Then he was invited by the association *Vatra*. He was in Croatia a few times. Then, when the poisoning happened... At this point I don't know when the poisoning happened, do you see, I cannot come to senses. As I said, now we have to go back again, he took... anyhow, I am telling you this for, eh! to have it. The samples had to be sent to Zagreb, they sent them.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Of that substance?

**Resmije Cana:** Of the narcotic substance they used. And my son went, this one Lirak, with a friend of his. It was a huge crisis, difficult times. In case they caught them, they would catch them here, or abroad. They went all the way to Zagreb, and delivered it. He was in Shirokë...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Your husband documented the entire poisoning, right? This was the reason your son went there.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, he had documented it. And this guy Zekë Sinanaj spoke about, he prepared a reportage. And that night it went on air, I don't know what was the show... *Kontakt*, or I am not sure. And he went live and spoke from the hospital.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** It means he documented all of this, and there are other documents which can be found in RTK [Radio Television of Kosovo]?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Alright.

**Resmije Cana:** RTK has them.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What were the findings from that substance?

**Resmije Cana:** The findings concluded that it's a substance made for...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Was it poisonous?

**Resmije Cana:** Poisonous, yes it was poisonous. But they, the Serbs, were saying, "No, this is nothing. They *izigravaju* [are acting out], Albanians are acting." Then they sent it in written form, they had it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Serbs?

**Resmije Cana:** They picked it up, yes, they asked for it in writing and then send it back. They sent it abroad, it was then sent from Zagreb somewhere abroad, in order to verify whether it is acting, is it... yes poisoning. All in vain, whom to talk to?

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Where did those documents end up? Did your husband do any... did he build a case against?

**Jeta Rexha:** Did he research further that...?

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did he submit a lawsuit in front of the court?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes, they submitted it. They sued them, yes. And, how was it, some kind of court where they sent it? Switzerland, or I don't know where. As I say, it is a bit foggy, because they [details] were forgotten.

The gathering he had with expats, he sent the photographs. He has the photos downstairs. I am not sure if I have shown them to you? I have seen two or three of them somewhere around, twitching with legs and hands from... from the poison. Now I don't know how it was spread. There was no time, you know, the situation was so erratic. On the other hand, they brought them in cars, you could see...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Emergency car?

**Resmije Cana:** With ambulance cars... not only with ambulance cars, but also random people were running, civilians, to carry them.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Is this some initial work of the KMLDNJ your husband did?

**Resmije Cana:** This was part of it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Is this the beginning of the Council?

**Resmije Cana:** No, the Council has been working even before that.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What were you trying to say? Is all of this part of the Council's work?

**Resmije Cana:** Even those who got beaten turned up. He came here and photographed them. They would go to the Institute, they didn't find him at the Institute, so they came here. Then, he kept all the notes. See, I forgot to bring you the book made by the Council. It was established for human rights.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Was your family persecuted due to this activity?

**Resmije Cana:** No, interestingly no. They did not maltreat him much either. On one occasion only: once, they summoned him when they were... when Tom Lantos was here, when the television closed down, he appeared on television. Then when the university was closed down, he appeared in front of the Faculty of Philosophy. They chased the students, they escaped. The population here too. He took the streets...a doctor... he, he was covered in blood. It was Veton, all of them stood in front of the police when the television closed down.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did mister Zekeria go?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did he hold a speech?

**Resmije Cana:** He held a speech. Here in front of the Faculty of Philosophy.

My husband was protected by the State Department of America. And they...then these parties. There was a Jabllanica headquarter, here. Ramush was in charge there. Then, when the soldiers were getting killed, there was someone called Besim Drecaj, a policeman, they had killed him. He went over. He wouldn't miss any funeral, didn't miss any place. They brought someone here who was thrown from... for example let's say from that place, there was a wall nearby. He happened to be there, the said person behind the wall. They shot, gunned him, all threads of stones got in his eyes, and he was removing them. His hands were covered in blood, he removed them from the eyes with nails. They brought him here in a blanket, in that room over there.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This was in '97, or '98?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, '97-98. Then they brought him... who was that boy, Jetullah Desku. In *Zëri i Rinisë* he printed in one of the pages, it was published, how they stitched his body after the autopsy. And they were saying, "No, he has committed suicide," while they were beating him, maltreating him. Then he ordered activists to open it. They brought it here from *Nova Gorica*. That guy was a soldier, and they brought him, they went to pick him up. And his family members brought him over, "Here at the entrance of Pristina," they said, "we are here." They came, and brought him here upstairs. They carried him in [house]. I don't know how we survived, I am telling you.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Which years was this? During wartime...

**Resmije Cana:** No, before the war. Before the war.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Not ours, but I mean war in Bosnia, in Croatia, when they went... when they forced the Albanians to go and fight there. Then they brought them back in body bags, or which one?

**Resmije Cana:** No, this was during the military service. Because at the meetings he had said, "Don't answer calls for the army. Don't go!" Then they left, they escaped, whoever, wherever they could. And then, when they brought these [bodies], "No," they said, they issued them that

piece of paper, "he was mentally ill, committed suicide." They said, "It's not possible. The coffins should be opened." And they brought one, this guy Jetullah Desku. About four people brought the coffin here, hermetically closed, they started to with that... what is that, with...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Welding machine, right?

**Resmije Cana:** With those welding machines, and they have welded it here, they opened it. He has the photography even, it is downstairs. The head like this {lowers the head on the left}, they opened it. He said, "It is... never accept it without opening it." And then he had given the order that when the families receive a call, they tell them, "We will bring it to your place, we will bring it to your town."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** At home, it happened at your place?

**Resmije Cana:** This particular one, one of those happened at our house. And afterwards when they announced that a soldier died... there was a period when they killed soldiers, and [Zekeria] said, "Don't accept them! When they that tell you 'We want to bring it over,' tell them 'You don't need to bring it. We will come and wait for it, you don't need to.'" Because they requested to take part in the funeral. In other words, "I will beat you, but won't let you cry."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Do you remember which year was this?

**Resmije Cana:** No, it should be there, but where to find it now. If only I could freeze [my memories], to have them frozen [inc.]. And I did tell him... this one I remember because it was brought here, he said, "Open the coffins and don't allow them to attend, 'We want to come and see.'" Moreover, this Jetullah, this Desku, his name was Cen Desku. There is a book for...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Mister Cana has documented all of these cases, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, he documented all of them. He organized an exhibition in America. And many other associates. He documented it all, he opened an exhibition in America.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This is in '97? Which year would this be?

**Resmije Cana:** In the year, *tëërrt*.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** OK.

**Resmije Cana:** The time erased it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Is it before the war?

**Resmije Cana:** Before the war. Yes, yes, before the war. Even before the war he was in America, when invited by the association *Vatra*.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** So how were the reconciliations in the Diaspora? How did the reconciliations in the Diaspora happen? Do you have any information? How were they organized?

**Resmije Cana:** Like that, they gathered in... they had these, they had offices where they hang out, where they stay, where they go to meet up with expats, that was where they held them [meetings].

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** And, did they happen, did they get into blood feuds over there, or were those transferred from Kosovo?

**Resmije Cana:** No, they were transferred from here, they went there with blood feuds among each other. When it happened finally, they were inspired, they were influenced by them,

because they wanted to remove that heavy burden, that malice. Because they stayed there, but they went over there and killed them, abroad. Like that [case] from Albania, currently one was killed in a blood feud. And then they, all of them in a way contributed to gather, to find a moment to reconcile, because they were relieved. He would go out, *hasmi* would go after him, would watch him. Because now they felt humiliated. And it made them feel ashamed, and then went to kill them, as if it was real. That was a subtext. As if they really killed a person for a piece of land, or a stream, or whatever the hell. And it was left to a field border and a stream. And they appeared, "I forgive the blood of my only brother," "I forgive the blood of a son," the brother of many sisters, they appeared in these, with a microphone, at the place of gathering. It happened in Rahovec. I went here at Verrat e Llukës and in Gjonaj. There were reconciliations in Gjilan too.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** In the name of what did they forgive the blood feud? How was it?

**Resmije Cana:** In the name of youth, and the Albanian nation. In the name of the Kosovar Albanian youth, of sisters, mothers. Sometimes they would say in the name of the Council. In the name of these men who were committed, we forgive the blood of the son, of the brother, of the child. I am recollecting those, but I don't have memory, time has erased it. Because it was disturbing, very emotional. They appeared with those moustaches, with those outfit, in white, "We forgive the blood of our only son," of the brother, of the uncle and...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did mothers also come up, and?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes mothers and, sisters and, mothers. I remember two or three sisters, "I forgive the blood of the only brother," "I forgive the blood of the son in your name and the name of the Kosovar youth, of Albanian sisters." It was so emotional, but we haven't imagined, we didn't imagine, to stand up to say, "We will not do this anymore." Are they stealing from you, are they lying to you, are they cheating, why have they done this? But it was useless, they did not allow it. Just when it got better, the war started, when all of us had to escape, as if we were sisters and brothers. That show was brief.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How was it for you during the war? What did you do during the war?

**Resmije Cana:** We stayed here, at home. The young one [son] was in Vienna. He wanted to come back. He was out, my husband, he went there to the border, where the refugees were getting across. He would go out in the streets, the police would come, "Why, why are you out? Why are you sending people back?"

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How? Did he go out and stop people who were [in the street]?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, he would go out and tell them, "Don't leave!" (laughs). Two-three days ago this neighbour of mine reminded me, [how Zekeria stopped people] told them, "Where are you going?" I know [you are going] at the border. Even my son used to say, "Mom, what is wrong with dad?" This is what he did {opens her arms}, "Go back, go back, go back to your houses. Our country is not there, go back to your place. Why are you ruining the youth, and children and?" They were with babies, with elderly, they dragged them along. Such a heavy image, "Why do you want to abandon your own home?" They had people dying on the road. They carried their mothers in a wheelchair. They came here, they went to the train station with a wheelchair.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did they throw you out of the house?

**Resmije Cana:** No, no, we didn't move out. We didn't.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Nobody came over either?

**Resmije Cana:** No, they didn't. They didn't come. The neighbours, some moved out, some didn't. The police was running up and down around here. But eventually they ran out of fuel, they ran out of fuel while passing here, climbing up, because their apartments were up the Sunny Hill, all of the police [officials]. They expelled those from Sunny Hill, they expelled all of them. Whereas here, where it was mixed, they didn't come, they wouldn't enter where you had Albanians and Serbs, because they were afraid of what they might find... because they ran out of fuel. Afterwards, they came running up the hill, when a dog saw them passing by, it barked "Ham," (laughs) the policeman was frightened, pulled the gun, and killed the dog. Because it didn't have... and so on.

I can recall some of the scenes a little bit, a little bit, but time has erased them, and even better, you can only go mad, don't remember them. Although, forgetfulness does its thing. Time, stress, the whole life. Have I told you before? Being afraid of the police, being afraid of this one, afraid of that one, it does erase it. Forgetfulness, eh...

Two policemen came afterwards. My husband was sitting over there. He didn't sit still, the whole time he went around to the houses. He was sheltered by whoever knew him. He wasn't home for two weeks in a row. They came over, like that, from their homes, chasing people out.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Was your husband in the Army list?

**Resmije Cana:** No, no, no. I am telling you that he was... I told him, "Don't go." And here, in Jabllanica as I said, on the way to Gjakova, it was Ramush's headquarter, and he went, because we Albanians...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** This was before the war, or how?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. We Albanians, we are like livestock, for example I can see myself as if it was today (laughs), without a compass, without a *busullë* [compass]. There was Ramush's wing, there was Tahir Zemaj's wing. When my husband died, they came and said, someone, "Do you want to bury him with honor like Azem... Tahir Zemaj?" Tahir Zemaj was another wing, that is the reason they fought with each other, were in conflict with each other, they had formed their own networks.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Within the army, the KLA?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, within the army. Tahir Zemaj. Then it was this guy Krasniqi, Ahmet Krasniqi. He went from here to the funeral of Ahmet Krasniqi. When he got there, they were sent for manoeuvres, now I rewind the tape back but I am not accurate with dates. They sent a group to learn how to exercise, somewhere in Fushë Krujë, or in a village I don't know, these soldiers, whoever wanted to go to the KLA. They collected name, they compiled lists, and they gathered, they went there. They had sent, he had sent blankets, medications, ointments, detergents for washing, because he told me, "They have caught lice" in a hotel, some school. They had sent these soldiers of ours abroad, in Albania. And they stayed there, now as much as they knew, they could, considering what it costs to whom.

When I go back in time, I know that nothing came out of it, neither did they take care of them, it was only a misfortune for the young people. Because one person took 90 percent for himself, the rest supposedly was sent to those soldiers. He said, "We are going to take care of them, to send them food, to send them clothing, detergents, they got the scabs, my wife." And now when I compare it with today, I know that they almost left them naked. They have taken those goods, they sent them to their house.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What happened at that funeral? Does something specific happen? At the funeral of Ahmet Krasniqi, where mister Zekeria went?

**Resmije Cana:** No, the funeral was held in Tirana, because he was a colonel, with colonel rank. Our people killed him, it has not been revealed yet. They killed this guy Xhemajl...

## Part Five

He was going to meetings, when they had meetings, he said, "This is not the time to greet with a fist. Now, we don't need to turn towards the East, towards Russia, towards China," and Enver's [Hoxha] people greeted with a fist, "we need to turn towards the West, towards culture, towards civilization." It seems to me that I can still see him speaking. And now, it didn't suit some of them and so the Comba's army started to move, and he says... and now some of them didn't like it, because they were Marxist-Leninist, you had those inside the KLA. You have them in the Parliament, you have them installed even up to this day. And wherever he goes, I don't know if you happen to hear about the Havolli family, Baholli, Baholli. He went with a car, with our car, my husband was driving. So someone came, like me saying [to you], "Where are you going today? Here's the chauffeur, and the vehicle is full of gasoline to go wherever you want," because they immediately recognized him, as soon as he walked out they recognized him. And on this occasion, he was going with this guy's vehicle, Baholli's. The Baholli family are the ones that repair cars, sell cars. Here... is their [store], where they sell...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** At the market place in Pristina?

**Resmije Cana:** Their store near the market. They are a rich family, but also a family of patriots. And one of the sons came over, and said to him, "Professor, here take my car. Go wherever you need during the day, and the driver." Anyway, he took it. On the road, they stopped him there, at that headquarter I told you about earlier on. They stop him, and they appear wearing masks. He says, "What happened?" "Get out!" and they take him to the headquarter. He says, "Why, speak up *bre man*? Speak in Albanian, why are you speaking in Serbian?" He said, "They spoke some Serbian..." He said, "I told them: I know Serbian because I went to school in Serbian. Speak in Albanian, remove that mask. Why are you hiding? Are you a man? Are you a fighter? Remove the mask so I can see who I am dealing with." He said, "They started, *gë gë gë*, and then took me to the headquarter." Ramush's people. And there was a superintendent who was going around. He came here every day.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** A spy?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, certainly a spy. And them... I don't know if I told you, at the place where Walker went, where they killed them, in Reçak. And they take him inside. They take his car. Turning back, he says, "I have no one to speak to," and starts to go out. On his way out, they run after him, "Turn back! Turn back!" It happens... now there is everything, a guy from Gjakova happens to be there, his house at the outskirts of Gjakova, and he opens the door [of the car], and gets him inside. He says, "Quick professor, get in." He says, "They almost caught me." He told me, then he told this to the husband of my sister in Gjakova. His eyes were rolling, because they wanted to grab him and take him in and kill him. Accidentally he slipped off their hands, and he escaped.

That person took him in his car and drove to Gjakova. He said, "Almost." Huh, they told him, "Get going, drive, because we will do worse to you, than what we had planned for him." That person was so frightened, he started to, even said, "I dragged the professor's feet to escape from them," and they took that vehicle from him, as I said the one that was given by the Baholli guy.

And then, when he came back, he told me, they called me, because he went wherever it was needed, and they told that his car was taken. Two days after he was back, I told him, “*Kuku*, shame, what has that poor man to do with this? For God’s sake, why take his car.” And he came over, “Lady,” he said, “I apologize, I don’t want to see you in tears,” he said, “I have given it to him as I had no, I...” excuse my language, I am talking banalities, “as myself had no strength to go out, that car is as valuable as a strand of hair to me. I gave it to him because he could go around. I turned out a coward. Don’t even question that, don’t even discuss it. I have voluntarily given it to him.” I was telling him, “Why take yours?”

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** To the Bahollis?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, Baholli it is. It is... Baholli. It is the family of Adem Baholli, and he is... he sells nice cars. Wait, I can’t remember his name. I will recall it in the meantime, just like with Nazmi Zhushi that I remembered. Anyway, it’s Adem Baholli’s family.

Next, it’s worth mentioning... and Reçak as we said, they even went there. Afterwards a spy came, that I call a spy in a full meaning of a word. Back then it was in fashion to wear white socks, he was wearing a leather jacket, and “Professor,” he says, “Come on because I want to take you, wherever you need to go? I, or here...” [inc.]

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who was he, do you know his name?

**Resmije Cana:** No, I don’t know his name. But he had to go because the night before he was nearby Reçak, around Gjilan. “Dogs have eaten,” he says, “a man, wife. They killed him, he was left dead, nobody saw him. Who dared to go out? The dogs were leashed - and his face was all in blood up to here - drinking the victim’s blood.” Meanwhile this one who was, he went, all of them worked, he was the *Niva* of the Albanological Institute, the driver of the Albanological Institute went with them. He came and took him, and who knows what connections he had, he came over and took them. He at the back, he in the front with the Institute’s driver. He was going in front, he gave a sign that he is pulling over, and there it was, something fell off – perhaps I did tell you, as far as I know – a truck with bananas, it was snowing.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Do you know the year?

**Resmije Cana:** No, no. It was when Reçak happened.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Okay, it means that year .

**Resmije Cana:** That year, yes.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** That happened in ‘98.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. Yes, everything was on fire, everywhere. And when they approach there...

**Jeta Rexha:** I think it was ‘99.

**Resmije Cana:** ‘98-99.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Okay.

**Resmije Cana:** And when they approach there, there is a truck turned over. It was turned over on its own, by the one who brought it for trade. They with this *Niva*, with the Institute’s driver were driving behind, going to that place to take photographs. And they were at Reçak’s place, and he said... when the police turned up. It makes you think, unless you’re a fool, that he came to take them, he took him to frame the scene. And they pulled him out of this, of the *Niva*, and to the driver, “Park here,” and they parked it nearby. The wind was blowing, snowing, the wind

blowing, he says, "Take it, take it, pick up these." He says, "No, I didn't come, I don't want to pick up these, I didn't come to..." "Pick them up!" "I am going elsewhere." "No, pick them up, pick them up. Fetch them in the car." He said, "No, I don't want to take them." The Institute's driver told us that they even pointed a gun to his face, "Pick them up ..." he said. "He pointed that [gun], grabbed him by the shoulders, they dragged him over to the box of bananas."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The Institute was active up till then, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes, it was active. Soon after they did expel them from the Institute as well.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** But, now I don't understand this, if this is the time of Reçak, then this is?

**Resmije Cana:** Reçak was among the first ones that happened, when the massacres have started, where they slaughtered in these.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** But was the Institute functional at that time, with a vehicle and everything?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Okay.

**Resmije Cana:** And then he picked it up [the box], and they photographed it. Then information tools, the journalists and alike, "He is some sort of a bandit because he went to steal bananas." That's how that anecdote came up "Cana Banana", I don't know if you came across it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** In '99, right?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. Moreover, the second one [son] was saying, "*Kuku mom bre.*" They were writing, just like for this president of ours (laughs) that they have... they were writing, drawing with pens, with markers, they did it in Peja..

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Something like slogans?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, slogans, "Cana Banana." And they broadcasted it, they broadcasted it on television. He hasn't even returned yet. When he entered he says, "Oh wife, I have stolen some bananas today." However our people so short sighted, they did not perceive that... that force has no boundaries. We can now easily say, "Why did he take it?" but at that moment, sweet soul, he did not calculate it, but let's say, it wouldn't cost anything to the other guy to pull the trigger and goodbye. The whole of Kosovo, and also television broadcasted it.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The Serbian one, or which one?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes the Kosovar one, because they had applied force, Erëmira. In all of them: television, the Institute of textbooks, *Rilindja*, in all of them measures were applied.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** I know. I wasn't aware that there was a television going on at the time, that's why.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes as part of Serbia.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Yes, perhaps it was for a few hours.

**Resmije Cana:** Eh, it went on air a few hours.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Yes, yes, Radio Prishtina.

**Resmije Cana:** And so on.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** With whom did the Council communicate, during the time your husband collected documents? Do you know, to complete the cases in order to show what happened.

**Resmije Cana:** He had his associates.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Where did he send them? Did he send them to another centre for human rights?

**Resmije Cana:** They either came here, took them [notes], came and went. They were taking notes, taking photos, at times when he wasn't present for example. He had his associates, they were from Peja, from Gjakova, from Deçan, from Prizren. There was one even, that I remember, Radoniqi, Mustafë Radoniqi in Peja. Then, Mulla Xhevat from Malisheva. He came by every day. Then this guy Cen Desku, with some of his cousins, came over too. They visited every day. Then there was the wife of Cen, they assisted birth deliveries, namely in private homes. She was giving injections. She went to the headquarter, so that you can consider her, consider her as a soldier.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How did you get through all of that...?

**Resmije Cana:** The war, we stayed here in the house. We moved from neighbor to neighbor. The oldest son went to his in-laws' house, with a small child. The third one was in Austria. He [Zekeria] wouldn't stop, going around. At the same time, I have to thank Adem Havolli. He drove him, wherever he needed to. He died now, a month ago.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Your husband?

**Resmije Cana:** My husband.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** He was driving him?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, he drove him, he took him around wherever he needed to. He buried the Jashari family. He went all around the river, and arrived only the next day. And he talked to the policemen, he told them, "If you don't come till day X..." nobody, all of them ran away: activists, non-activists. I don't know, it seems like a supernatural power, if I can call it so, because they were armed, they were armed to the teeth. And when they went, they stopped him at the Ammunition Factory, they pulled him out of the car, and told him, "Turn around!" like that {faces the wall with her hands up}.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** To strip search.

**Resmije Cana:** To strip search. He really didn't have anything on him, they asked him, "Gde ćeš?" [Where are you heading?] "Kod jednog prijatelja." [Visiting a friend.] "Why, šta ćeš u ova doba? [Why, what are you doing at this hour?] "Hajt, znaš da ćemo da te ubijemo?" [Do you know we will kill you?] He says, "Aii, postaću heroj ako me ubijete" [Well, I'll become a hero if you do]. He says, "U, majku ti tvoju Albansku" [F\*\*\* Your Albanian mother] (laughs). They released him. When he arrived there, the police was beating, chasing people. Now, this can be called guerrilla war. It was like that in fact. But all of them mischief. The entire history starts with one person. Even these leaders, these soldiers now, all of this came because they fought with each other, in case the other one comes out as more capable.

And when he arrived there, he says, the police commander, somewhere from Drenica, at the Ammunition Factory, he says, "If you don't bury him until..." he gave him a deadline, "until this hour, we will bury him." He says, "They came with *bagera* [bulldozers], with bulldozers."

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** How did he organize that funeral? I mean, many people got killed, probably it did require a lot of support, where did he get it?

**Resmije Cana:** Where did he get it? From Bajram Curri (laughs). Also from a *hoxha* from Drenica there, from the mosque. He [the *hoxha*] even said when he received this acknowledgement, said, "I was there that day when he buried the Jashari family." Afterwards my oldest son did initiate it, they held this gathering, he said, "Not only you who have been there, but also I, his son," he said, "Because he wanted to take it over all by himself." Then they started to come out one by one, because they felt a bit freer, men gathered. He sent them over, he sent people over, mobilized them. When he came by...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did he use the KLMDNJ resources? Human [resources] I mean.

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes certainly. They knew him, he had become like the horse of five houses. All the police knew him, "*Pusti, pusti onaj ludi, onaj Cana, lud!*" [Leave it, leave it, it's the crazy Cana, the crazy]. And he calls him, they get ready, and says, "We will bury them in two hours," with as I told you, with bulldozers, with tanks, with bulldozers as I said, and there is nothing more. They ran away with their wives, with everything. Then at some point they opened the door, two-three days later. "It was abandoned," he says, "the village, nothing moved, not even a fly." They performed a formality, he sent a word, now I say it again, there was this person from Gjakova, he brought them, he called people in Gjakova. He was very pragmatic. He sent words to Gjakova, there is this family, that brought 70 coffins for the funeral. And they placed all of them in the coffins. And all of them got started, they levelled the place, they did it, now they opened the door for condolences. He said, "You should give us few more days. They are not dogs," he said, "Because later on the policemen had vanished, there were none, only someone that hanged around sort of, and only for that," because they had finished their work, they had killed all those people, and kill some more? Mevlyde Saraqi, it's her.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** What, her family has...?

**Resmije Cana:** No, she came from Gjakova as an activist, I remember, with those 70 coffins. A family made them, they brought them here to Drenica. And that is... from here on I don't know how to explain, that is a great sacrifice having the courage, and thinking where to go, how to go about, and they brought those [coffins]. They came with a truck, that family is from Gjakova. They involved many people and so they managed to bury them humanely.

**Erëmirë Cana:** And did they performed the autopsy, didn't they?

**Resmije Cana:** What autopsy *more*, for God's sake!

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Nothing at all?

**Resmije Cana:** At all! Like dogs, only that they allowed, [Zekeria] has said, "*Ljudski da se sahrane*" [To get buried humanely]. "It is a fundamental human need to get buried humanely. They are not dogs, they are not animals." And then they said, they did now allow it, because they said not to make it a bigger deal. They came, he was ... how was the one who died, Holbrooke has been here at that time, Richard Holbrooke. Then they talked. Then she... who was that one, for human rights, that came... Madeleine Albright.

We stayed over, we went here, to the neighbours. My husband had stayed... on his way back when Bajram Kelmendi got buried, he went, worked, was engaged around the burial. After two days they had taken them to the outskirts of Pristina, that's where they found his two boys and them. Then he went there. He was hiding in houses. He happened to be at Bajram's funeral, he found a shelter in a house there at the Bahollis. He stayed three-four nights there. From there he has come over here again, he entered at some house. Then this Havolli guy came in.

When I went out, we went to buy bread, only the Serb women went out in the streets, our [women] nowhere at all. And I in sweatpants, in a sweatshirt, my son had a red one, we went in the streets with that one. The weather started to get warm, spring started to come. They ran to the shops to buy cigarettes, they sold them quickly, running. All type of life, all type. And then he came to the Havolli's, he stayed with them for three weeks.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Did you know where he was?

**Resmije Cana:** No, I didn't. But then, one afternoon, I see him coming home. And having spies offering work for free, they told them [the police] that he was back. But he didn't enter the house, he went out from this wall there {points towards the left side of the house}. In the evening, he went out and sat in an armchair, they threw out broken cars, that's where he went, he slept there for two nights. Then the Havollis sent a message, that, "He was at our place last evening," and my son found out, "Mom dad is there." Then he came here, "I would be causing you trouble." Fifty people gathered over there. Now, people were also afraid. We had a cousin of ours, when he left Bajram Kelmendi's place, he told him, "Can I come over, at least tonight?" "Not really," he told him, "I'm sorry." He was afraid for himself, he didn't accept him. Then he came here, said, "Instead of going and causing trouble to people, and they look at me with fear, I am coming here."

When he came back, they did find out, the police then went out to search. They expelled, they expelled them to flee, to get out. So they were taking the youth. They had taken three boys from here. They went and collected young people with a minivan. They held them for two-three weeks in prison, then they released them. My son was, the young one was in Austria. The oldest one went to his in-laws. The second one remained here. We stayed at the neighbors', then we moved in the opposite [direction]. People moved to houses, where there are cigarettes, where there is flour. They took some of it here, at Lumi's [bakery], they had brought flour to use, had brought sugar and flour. Then gasoline, it was here, of this woman, Myrvete Paqarada's family. She is deputy dean of the Medical Faculty. She was here with her husband, and her mother, and brothers. And her brother went out, he went to houses, stole their gasoline, and then was giving it to the police. They didn't come around our place. This kind of *shallitromesh*.

Then they had broken into a warehouse, as it was kind of a garage. They had it on rent, above us. And the garage was broken into. We in the middle of the war, they drinking ice tea, drinking coca-cola (laughs). They brought detergents, as he had brought them, he was getting rent for that, they broke into. These boys went out, and took it from them, and brought some to everyone, he said, "This one for you, this one for your son, for..." (laughs). Oh God, oh God! Five hundred years [of this]!

And they went around to see who is in the houses. They took them as I said from the yard, "What do I do? *Kuku*." When they arrived, they entered here, my second son, I went to Gjakova to arrange [papers] as if he was a soldier, and to postpone the military or, because they were sending conscription papers for soldiers, because he hadn't served it, the oldest one did do the military. When they came, they came in here, the police, they walked from house to house. "Whose car is this?" their minivan [neighbors], "Take it! Is there anyone here?" "No." My husband was there, in those cars I told you. My son was indoors. And they came in and were saying, "Everyone goes to their homes." Dare not to! He came home, my son, from them [the in-laws], because they were staying there, he came home.

When the police came, "*Šta ćeš ti ovde?*" [What are you doing here?]. He says, "*Ništa*" [Nothing]. "Have you been... where is your house?" He says, "This is my house." Though I had declared him a citizen of Gjakova. Those nights, when the police was going around and catching them, I went, I took the bus and went to Gjakova. I found a connection, he gave me a

certificate as if, he arranged that he is a citizen of Gjakova. Over there all fired up, “*Šta ćeš ti ovde? Šta si tamo hteo, da prevrneš kalašnikove?*” [What are you doing here? What did you want there, to shoot some kalaschnikows?] “*Ne bre, ja sam ja sam sa babom ostao tamo*” [No bre, I was staying there with my grandmother]. They came in and took him, that night, I mentioned, one of the evenings, every night you were to expect surprises from them. They took him there, to Novi Domi. He came over with the policemen, they held him three nights. His hair was this long. His eyes were pale, red eyes, with those [bags] under his eyes from sleeplessness. He said, “As I was sitting there ‘*Reci!*’ [Tell!] they would hit the table, all of a sudden ‘bam.’ I wanted to die from lack of sleep, then with the table.” When it became eight o’clock, we woke up, when they turned up with seven policemen. He was walking in front. He had become...

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** The son, or the husband?

**Resmije Cana:** The husband. They were, they were running up and down, to these neighbors, the son, one remained, me too. He had become yellow, all night without a wink. “*Hajde, reci, reci!*” [C’mon, tell, tell!]. He says, “They only said that.” When they entered here, “*Jao, pa vi imate više tehnike nego mi ovde dole što imamo.*” [Wow, you have more technology than we down there.] All that camera, all those tape players, they took five suitcases. They were saying, “*Iredentističko*” [Irredentist]. They took the papers, they filled up those suitcases. One minute here, the other, they were gone. I also had the faculty stamp, and they took it from there. I often said, “I am going, Zeqë, I will have a look.” They released him, they left him stay here. They took the bags, where the neighbors left them. Oh, mother! We were frightened about what they are going to do to him now. They were looking through binoculars, “What is going on with them.” They didn’t take off their shoes. And without hesitation I say, “*Izvinite, morate da se izujete*” [Excuse me, but you need to take off your shoes.] He said, “*Bog zna šta imate vi unutra.*” [God knows what you have inside]. If any of you shoots us, and this, and [he says], “*Imamo naredjenje, ne može da se izlazi...ulazi, da se izuje kad se ulazi*” [We have a warning, we should not take off our shoes when we enter]. So they didn’t take them off. They walked in and took those bags. They were seven of them. At that time my son had bought a computer. Lirak used to go and get fuel in Tetova, and then went to sell it in Gjakova. [Life was like in] the cartoons.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** When did you go back to work after the war finished? Have you returned to work immediately, or how was it?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes, yes immediately. We were here, they started calling us in. We went back.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Who called you in?

**Resmije Cana:** The same secretary called us in. Back then an Albanian became a dean, earlier I mean. We brought him from there, we worked from home. We started to go there at first, then in a solemn way they moved in all faculties, they went.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** To the premises, right?

**Resmije Cana:** To the premises, yes. In a more solemn way. But the entire Pristina rose up running to reach faculties, the workplaces, theirs. Whereas I don’t know the date.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Until when did you work at the Faculty of Economics, Economics-Law?

**Resmije Cana:** No, Economics. In the ‘70s there was Economics-Law, then it became the Economics only. I at Economics, the others at Law. But we shared the same building.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Until when were you there?

**Resmije Cana:** In the Faculty? Until I retired.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** 2009?

**Resmije Cana:** Yes. 2009, yes. Like this.

**Erëmirë Krasniqi:** Do you have anything to add?

**Resmije Cana:** I have plenty to add, but I haven't told you anything (laughs). I have plenty to add, but without dates, without those, without a compass. I apologize, I was a bit all over the place, but this is my capacity. And taking into account age, and forgetfulness, and other things came by, new ones.