

INTERVIEW WITH ENVER BAKI

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Duration: 64 minutes

Present:

1. Enver Baki (Speaker)
2. Ebru Süleyman (Interviewer)
3. Donjeta Berisha (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

Enver Baki: I am Enver Baki, one of Kosovo's, in particular Pristina's intellectuals, in general I feel like my life has started with culture and will end with it.

Ebru Süleyman: Can you please tell us your oldest memories that you remember?

Enver Baki: Of course, of course I will tell them as well. My father, Sadik born in 1898 in Pristina, my mother [who is] 15 years younger than my father, a young woman belonging to a *Şeyh's*¹ family, got married to my father. My father's family is generally one of Pristina's wealthier families. According to what he has told me, during the Ottoman era this family had around nine fields, seven vineyards, three houses. Which means that, based on what my father said, it was a large family, the Baki family. All very well but again according to him, during the Ottoman era the Baki family attempted to emigrate to Turkey twice. First one was in 1921 and in 1939 after that, they intended to emigrate to Turkey, because of this, they sold all their assets and property one by one and ended up in poverty. The second time they encountered a similar situation; the brothers were not able to reach an agreement and couldn't emigrate to Turkey so they stayed in Pristina. However, they could not buy back their sold assets so they eventually ended up in poverty like I just said. My father, in the year 1947, meaning right after the war in Kosovo, was accounted as one of the first retirees. Whereas I'm a man born in 1943. Before me, my father and my mother had Kevser, Fikriye, Fitnat and my youngest sister İgbal. Among them, I grew up and lived as the only male in the family.

According to what my mother says, they were not from one of the wealthiest families but they were doing well as well, being from the family of *Şeyhs*. As the story of my mother goes, the *tekke*,² which is beside the Pristina high school, is her *tekke*. In fact, two sisters, together with their cousin [paternal uncle's daughter] were caring for the *tekke* at the time. Unfortunately, since there was no male descent to continue to take care for it, they had to transfer the *tekke* to the *vakf*.³ Such that, according

¹ *Şeyh*: Etymologically the first use of this word (as Sheik) corresponded to tribal leaders of the pre-Islamic Arabs. In Balkans among the Turkish community the word *Şeyh* means the leader of the *Shia*, *Sufi* or *Bektashi* religious order.

² *Tekke*: Or colloquially *teçe*, is where the activities of the *Shia*, *Sufi* or *Bektashi* religious orders are carried out. Often the shrine of the Sheik of the religious order is called *teçe* as well.

³ *Vakf*: Also known as *Vakıf*, is an institution introduced by the Ottoman Empire which was responsible for keeping the records of the Muslim community of the empire and which generally included a Madrasah within its structure as well. Now this institution is transformed to the Islamic Union [*Bashkësia Islame*].

to my mother, my aunt Zürafa, mother Meryem together with their cousin Miss İsmet, took care of the *tekke* for a long time, well keeping it, thus there were also many visitors to it.

On the other hand, talking about the memories, I would like to say many things about Pristina. Unfortunately, those characteristics, Pristina's characteristics are absent these days. From what I can remember from my childhood, instead of today's taxis, Pristina had phaetons in the town. Apart from them, the neighbors were creating friendships and close relationships in a very nice way, through *kapicik*.⁴ As you know, all of the old families in Pristina had gardens in addition to their houses, very rich gardens in which they would [collect] fruits and vegetables from the trees they had planted. So, on all four sides, the garden that has four sides had a *kapicik* on every side of it for sure. Those have a particular symbolic [value] for me. They were an ingredient that strengthened the friendships, according to me. They were the gateway for the lovers, according to me, because many people, thanks to *kapicik*, neighboring men and women met, fell in love and got married. I think that these characteristics are absent nowadays. Moreover, people, neighbors in apartment buildings with, six, seven, ten floors do not even know each other, unfortunately. I think that it means the old friendships, close relationships are now overshadowed.

When it comes to the phaetons, the ones who did the... who served as taxi in Pristina, were not much in number, five or six of them would certainly be in the open space in front of the theater, in front of the current theater, would be rowed next to each other, waiting for customers. Other than phaetons, folks would also travel with spring carts as well. Where were these trips taken to, generally to Germe, which was four or five kilometers away from Pristina, to Toukbahçe recreation areas which was two and a half kilometers away and during *bayram*⁵ very often they would go to the shrine, to the Shrine of Sultan Murat. So many families, the wealthier ones getting the phaetons or the spring carts would go to these places; two or three families would get together to go to Germe, Toukbahçe or Sultan Murad's Shrine, taking their lunch with them or having dinner at those places all together. Therefore, I just wanted to mention some of the typical features that I could remember, I don't know if that was satisfactory to you or not...

Ebru Süleyman: Uncle Enver, you said, told me a bit about the city, how the phaetons were located in the space in front of the theater today, the city has changed a lot since then looks like? In the old city, this way, towards the mosques... which places have changed?

Enver Baki: Talking about the city, from what I can remember, Pristina had in general 14 mosques. Other than this, in front of the Çarşi Mosque was a wide neighborhood. That neighborhood had a place called the craftsman neighborhood. Quilt makers, tailors, barbers there had their own shops, serving to the people. But also, at the center of that square was a water *şadırvan* [fountain], one of the most beautiful ones in Pristina, because there weren't many, only two-three, but the one in the middle of that square was the most valuable one, with cold water streaming from it at all times. When it comes to the schools...

⁴ *Kapicik*: Literally means small door in Turkish. These small gates existed between the houses built next to each other, which ensured intimacy, and closeness. The word is also used to refer to easily reached places.

⁵ *Bayram*: is an Islamic religious festival.

Ebru Süleyman: When you were young, where would you go with your friends in the city, where were you hanging out?

Enver Baki: The Pristina youth in general, of course Pristina had only one theater and one cinema. Other than this cinema and theater, there were Taukbahçe and Germi recreational areas that I just told you about. There people would gather, sing songs, play games and perform dances.

Ebru Süleyman: What about in winter?

Enver Baki: The Pristina folk, in winters would generally be in their homes, spending winter nights playing the cup game, *tura* game. Us kids, I will tell about my life a little, my father knew more than a hundred tales, my mother knew that much or more songs and folk songs, similarly my sisters would sing *mani* [folk poems] and tell us riddles all the time, my older sisters, when we would go to sleep, our father would gather all of us, five siblings, four brothers, four sisters and one brother together and my father would tell us a tale, my mother would get a salver and sing a folk song, because of course we did not have a darbuka and tambourine at home, so it was like this. One of my sisters would keep the tempo with spoons [wooden spoons], the musical tempo. In a sense, in general the winter nights would look like that, on the other hand the tales that my father told us, my mother's songs and the poems and riddles that my sisters very often told to each other, I think all of these are the pearls of folk literature. Influenced by these pearls, I fell in love with Turkish folkloric literature and started writing poems in elementary school.

I should also tell, put it on the record that the year 1951 was a momentous and even a historic year for the Turkish people in Kosovo because in 1951, the Turkish people living in Kosovo gained recognition both in the eyes of our party and in the eyes of public. Meaning that, 1951, on March 20 1951 based on the Kosovo Province Committee's decision, Turkish people living in Kosovo gained their rights, so in that year, in the following years... because as you know in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, other than the madrasah there were no other schools or elementary schools that taught in Turkish language but after the year 1951, in the cities and villages that Turkish people live, elementary schools and associations formed. So, it revitalized the Turkish people living in Kosovo.

Ebru Süleyman: Which year did you start school?

Enver Baki: In 1951 as I told you.

Ebru Süleyman: So, you registered to the school in 1951.

Enver Baki: The schools opened in 1951, in nineteen... same year in Pristina, Prizren, Peja, Mitrovica, Gjilan and Mamusa, as we said there were two villages first of them Mamusa and second one Doberçan, there are the first schools that were opened in our mother tongue Turkish. In those years, the schools were packed with students. The school directors were not even able to find enough chairs for students that's how many pupils we had but...

Ebru Süleyman: So, the same year that the schools opened in Turkish language, you started going to the first class?

Enver Baki: That year I started first class, no in fact... pre-school, I went to pre-school in Albanian because there was no school in Turkish, however, in 1951 I transferred from Albanian to Turkish class. There a new life started for me.

Ebru Süleyman: You remember your class, your teachers...

Enver Baki: We didn't have that many teachers, as a matter of fact some teachers taught two, three classes but in time with increased interest for teachers and education, our children, our youth started graduating from high pedagogical schools and even language courses. Thanks to Süreyya Yusuf, the teacher training initiated in Skopje. That is where our teachers were trained but in the first years, the teachers were selected from among the existing intellectuals. After they completed these trainings starting from Pristina to Doberçan, the teachers were assigned in an organized way to every school in these places. The trainings did not only bring up Turkish language teachers but also mathematics, physics and even teachers for music classes.

This way, for a short time a cadre of teachers was trained but not only education, surely the cornerstone of a community is education but other than that, formation of the associations, revitalization of a folk's culture and sustaining it is also one of the most important things I think. Because our associations, in time, were not only significant to revitalizing our songs, folkloric songs, dances and traditions but also important for developing literary works as well. Because as we know the associations had literature sections that worked constantly along the folklore, choir group, the dance branch and the literature branch, when they were formed, in the first associations they created a wave of revitalization and people would sustain their traditions even at later times these associations would publish magazines as well. However, in the year 1969, with a decision of the [Kosovo] Socialist Union, the Socialist Union of that time, a newspaper in Turkish language agreed to start operating in Pristina. On the first of May, 1969 newspaper *Tan*⁶ came into existence.

Ebru Süleyman: Well, Uncle Enver, I would like to ask something. In schools, at these associations, in their literature branches and later on in these magazines and newspaper *Tan*, is the written language more similar to Turkey's language or are people writing in our Turkish as well sometimes, or is it predominantly Turkey's Turkish?

Enver Baki: Look, in my opinion, Turkey's language, Kosovo's language, Macedonia's language, Azerbaijan's language do not exist but there are dialects that exist. Every public has a dialect of its own but in this sense of course the language in Turkey is our fundamental language used in Turkish speaking territories but the dialects used around the world have also been recognized. Thus, in the

⁶ *Tan*: Literally means Dawn, is the first newspaper in Turkish language in Kosovo that started its publishing life in May 1, 1969 and closed down in 1992.

beginning all of us tried to use the literary language of the Turkey, it was a conscious stance but as you know, there are two other languages suffocating the Turkish language: Persian and Arabic. In 1928...in the year '23, when Atatürk came to power in Turkey, the Turkish Language Society was formed. According to this society, the Turkish language that was used in Turkey and other places was to be cleaned up from foreign words. Thus, there was an effort to leave aside the Persian and Arabic words and use original Turkish words. Especially [Nurullah] Ataç had reached significant success in this sense for screening the foreign words and revitalizing our language. Of course, there is still an undeniable influence of Arabic and Persian that exists to this day and many words that do not have an equivalent in [original] Turkish still are used in these languages.

Ebru Süleyman: Where did our Turkish, or the dialect we use here continue to exist then, in folklore, tales?

Enver Baki: The dialects are generally created through the communities themselves regardless of their education levels, the dialects are formulated on their own and mostly with the influences from other surrounding languages. For instance, there is even Pristina dialect, Prizren dialect, Mitrovica dialect, looking at them you can see the differences but in essence, and that is Turkish. For example, Mitrovica folk says, “*Cürdünmi?*” [Did you see?]. Pristina folk says, “*Coldunuzmi, cıttınızmi?*” [Did you arrive, did you go?]. These differences derive from characteristics of different dialects.

Now, regarding the societies or the associations, it should be said that they had a significant role in the cultural development of the Turkish community in Kosovo because in addition to the folkloric dance branch the participants of the music groups have taken part in large-scale events even in Turkey, representing their own culture. Kinds of Aluş Nuş, [Başkim] Çabrat, Sevim Baki and many others are important contributors to our associations. As an additional branch the literature sections were also very important in these associations not only because they taught the youth Turkish, but also because they have engrafted the children with habits of writing and reading poems. It should also be said that in Peja, which by the way there is no association in Peja today because of the emigration issue as you know that went on from '51 to '56 which did not only include Turkish people but also Albanians and Bosnians who emigrated massively to Turkey from Kosovo.

Ebru Süleyman: Do you remember that? Did you see people banding together, leaving?

Enver Baki: I have a photograph; I will show it to you... Pristina... This is the photograph, in Pristina train station, thousands of people would come together to say goodbye to their loved ones and relatives leaving to Turkey. It was not even only for one day in a week, it lasted very long, where every day our people would fill the train wagons and immigrate to Turkey. From a perspective, I can say that in a sense this made us poorer. If we had more people in the community we would have more doctors, engineers, caretakers, teachers and intellectuals being brought up in here. Unfortunately, the immigration issue caused these potentially high numbers to be lower and lower.

Ebru Süleyman: Uncle Enver, do you remember what was the main reason that people were leaving? For example, you know also the people who stayed here, why did they stay?

Enver Baki: Now, in some of the families the siblings would not even be of the same opinion about leaving. I know people like that where one of the brothers wanted to emigrate to Turkey and the other one did not want to go because leaving relatives, being alone is a painful thing. Some people, according to what I have heard from the elderly, went to Turkey because of religious reasons, because they were very religious. However, just as in every place in Balkans there are thousands of mosques that were left from the Ottoman era where we could have easily sustained our religion, particularly if we had larger numbers maybe there would even be more mosques but emigration caused mass movements and changes as well. Now let's move on to our life in here because, the people who emigrated are in Turkey, which is a homeland to me. The Muslims, Turks have emigrated to Turkey in their most difficult times and Turkey has always opened its door so in a way the emigration waves after the '12, in the years '22, '28, '34 and '56 in all these years there were mass migration not only from Kosovo but Turkish people leaving all the Balkans.

Ebru Süleyman: And after these were over, let's say after '56 and '60s, '70s, when the Yugoslav regime was established in here, what kind of a life did you have?

Enver Baki: But people who stayed here, thanks to the societies formed by these associations, our schools and mosques were able to display their presence in here and they have worked hard to solidify their existence here. I have never seen or heard of anyone dying of hunger neither from those who emigrated or who stayed here in these seventy years of life of mine.

Ebru Süleyman: Yes, but I'm asking how was the life here for you, how did the work life and the social life change?

Enver Baki: Well now, every country and territory have their own characteristics. I'm of the opinion that man is just like grass, if there is water and sun then there are satisfactory conditions for him to live. The man is like that, sometimes you drink milk and sometimes you don't because you are constrained by whatever exists in your surroundings. Now, we are lucky to have schools, associations, and mosques particularly for those ones that are religious. Sure, we are all Muslims and we respect the religion, go to the mosques regularly. These days not only elderly people but also young people are visiting mosques as well.

I would just like to talk about *Tan* newspaper for a while. As you know, for the Turkish people in Kosovo there were no magazines or newspapers until the year 1969. Only in 1969, based on the decision made by the Kosovo Socialist Union, newspaper *Tan* was established and its first issue is dated May 1, 1969. Naturally, this enterprise initially had only ten to fifteen employees however, later on this number increased to 40, which included journalists, photo-reporters, drivers and editors. Our paper got regularly published from '69 to '92. In the first three months, it was issued every 15 days but later when it was equipped with the necessary cadre, it was being published weekly. Moreover, the Turkish community, in order to enrich its cultural life and acting according to its needs started publishing *Çevren* magazine in 1974 as well.

Part Two

Ebru Süleyman: In those years, '60s, '70s what were you doing?

Enver Baki: In 1963, actually in '53, when I was just an elementary school pupil, the Turkish children in Pristina other than the school, which was Meto Bayraktar Elementary School, they had extra-curricular activities as well. For example, the Pristina children's theater, which was located in the area in front of the radio today, that was the center for the kids. At the children's theater, we would produce two to three dramas a year. Our valuable close friend who was an artist at the Kosovo National Theater, Mazhar Kadriu's direction was putting the dramas onto the stage. Our children would generally spend time there and enjoy it.

Other than the Pioneer's Center, the children's theater there also had movie nights for kids. I have an incredible image on my mind, of the Sundays how the children's theater would be completely filled with kids. Because there would be a kids play either in Turkish, in Albanian or in Serbian. In this way, in a very organized way, not only kids I would not want to do injustice to the parents, because moms and dads were the ones taking the children by their hands and going to the children's plays together.

Besides, the Pioneers Center was open almost every day for the kids, so the educators would work with them and the parents would go there together with their kids. As a matter of fact, there was a Russian group teacher, Ivan, who had organized an ambassadors organization at the Pioneers Center. Meaning that every country, every European country had a representative there. For example, there would be five representatives from the Meto Bayraktar Elementary School, seven or eight from former Vuk Karadžić, nowadays known as Elena Gjika, another five-six from other schools would be elected to represent the European countries in the center. Would there be a more valuable thing than this? It was a great way for the kids to learn about their own country as well as other European countries through this mock organization. In addition to these, the kids would also have sightseeing tours, museum visits and such which always gave a different kind of joy to the kids.

Other than these, as I have previously told folks would spend time in Germia, Taukbahçe and Pristina park. It would be full of people and you could hear their singing from everywhere. Particularly the Turkish community would spend their leisure time there.

Ebru Süleyman: At those moments, would you be together with the other communities as well?

Enver Baki: Most of the time whoever wanted to join, would join. Let us not forget that at those times both Serbs and Albanians spoke Turkish very well. All three communities used to cohere in harmony and had friendships.

Ebru Süleyman: So people spoke each other's languages?

Enver Baki: Yes everyone did. Because, as far as I know Pristina has a population around sixteen-thousand in the year 1946. Think about it. Don't consider today, where it is now close to

six-hundred-thousand these days according to the statistics. But, in 1946, there were only fifteen to sixteen thousand and what is more all of them know each other, many of them have become relatives and Pristina folk has been transformed into a unity. I think the emigration as well, it casted a shadow to these closeness and friendships. I do not know what else.

Ebru Süleyman: What year was it that you started your first job? Where did you start working?

Enver Baki: When I graduated from high school I started working at Radio Pristina as a journalist in 1962, because let's say I was kind of a poet during the school times. Because, just like every other kid, I had started to scribble some things in the elementary school. I had poems, stories. Dear departed, uncle Süreyya, Süreyya Yusuf, was working at the Radio Pristina at the time. He would always invite us from Meto Bayraktar, me Nimetullah Hafız'ı and Nüsret Dişo as poets to the children's edition. Other than that, our poems were published in Skopje's *Sevinç* magazine. Not only poems but other things like stories as well. Of course, the children's sections of the *Birlik* newspaper would also publish my poems at the time.

After these, when the Turkish writers creating literature in Kosovo started publishing in *Tan*, after Pristina had its own newspaper and magazines, the writers would send their work less and less to Skopje for them to be published. Because after a while Pristina had *Tan*, *Çevren* and *Kuş* magazines. Subsequently, in 1974 *Tan* would publish book series. The works that were being published were writings, stories and poems created by Turkish people in Kosovo. Within the framework of this book series, around 250 books have been published within 15 years. These were generally books of the Kosovo's Turkish writers. Among them books written by Hasan Mercan, Nusret Dişo, Necati Zekeriya from Skopje, Şükrü Ramo's books have been published here and many books have been translated. For instance books written by Desanka Maksimović, Branko Ćopić and many other Yugoslav writers even Albanian writers that created their work in Kosovo like, Hasan Kërveshi... no that... Kërveshi's, Hasan Mekuli's books were translated and published in Turkish. In a sense, *Tan* could be considered the cultural center of the Turkish people of Kosovo at the time. This place was a hub for not only intellectuals but Kosovo's many famous politicians also visited our compilation team constantly. Since it was very well received, the Turkish groups of writers and poets from Turkey visiting Struga would almost always visit *Tan* as well and visit our compilation. So during this time...

Ebru Süleyman: Did you always know that you would want to work for the radio and for *Tan*, or that you would be a writer? Did you always have this desire of being a writer?

Enver Baki: As I have said in the very beginning, the songs my mother would sing, my father's tales, my sister's poems and riddles have filled me up with love for the folkloric literature. This way, when you have been grafted once, your heart would not rest without writing, writing poems, writing stories... In fact, Süreyya Yusuf, my professor had once said, "Enver, I like your poems but I would love to see you writing stories". By saying this in a polite way, he warmed me towards writing stories and that way I am now mostly known as Enver Baki story writers and children's story writer rather than poet among the Kosovo Turkish writers community. However, I continued writing in both branches. To this day, I have 15 books published. Some of them are children's stories, some are children's

poems, some of them are intended for adult audience in the form of poems and stories. I think, if there were sufficient financial possibilities I would have published even more since I have three more handwritten books. First one is *Priştine Yaşlıları* [Pristina's Elderly], second one is *Sevişen Kuzenler* [Beloved Cousins] and third one is *Priştine Masalları* [Pristina Fairytales].

In my literary work, having published 15 books, I gained a certain amount of fame as Enver Baki and thus I was also given many awards. For example, with my book *Mutlu Baba* [A Happy Father], published within the framework of *Tan* book series, with another book *Beş Kardeşler* [Five Siblings], I have been given awards. Moreover, in 1967, Kosovo Turkish Writers Society granted me an award as well.

Ebru Süleyman: Is this society still active?

Enver Baki: Sorry?

Ebru Süleyman: Is this society still functioning?

Enver Baki: Yes. In 1964, Prizren's Doğruyol association gave me the Süleyman Brina service award. Other than that, the Ministry of Culture and Department of Culture in Pristina gave me appreciation awards that made me very happy. There were many other associations that I had collaborated with which presented me with certificates of appreciation and invited me to various ceremonies. I think I am not a person who will ever see my literary creations sufficient so I always continue writing even at this age. Last year, teachers and students at Elena Gjika Elementary School, organized a literature hour where they invited me to present and promote my two new books *İki Yürek* [Two hearts] ve *O da Çocuktur* [He/She Is a Kid Too] and where the Turkish ambassador to Kosovo was present as well, together with the director of Yunus Emre institute and many of my friends and people who appreciate our literature were present there. I have always said that even though I am 74 years old, with God's will, I would want to publish 74 books.

[Interview was paused with the speaker's request]

For example in Vucitrn, in Mitrovica and in Pristina when the associations were formed, even when Stevan Mokranjac was established in around 1958, it operated not in one but in three languages. After that, when our folks started to emigrate the number of the kids decreased significantly. Even in schools, around associations, this number was down and in fact, Yeni Hayat could not function for some years. However, in 1969 Yeni Hayat changed its name to Gerçek and invigorated itself. Therefore, Remzi Süleyman, is the establisher and first director of the Yeni Hayat which is a historical fact that cannot be disputed. After him, brother Şerafedin, Şerafedin Süleyman joined the cadre as his assistant to run the Yeni Hayat society. Alongside the brother Remzi and Şerafedin, this place gathered other names such as Raşit Beytula, Necmetin Goriça, brother Süreyya, Enver Baki, Muhamet Ustaibo, Şakir Maksut and many other young friends started being active under this association which was then called Gerçek.

I am talking about this but there were other associations as well like Dođru Yol in Prizren, like Birlik in Mitrovica, like Rađit Deda in Vucitrn, all of these worked in three main branches at all times. In that sense, all the communities would connect through these associations. If a concert or a program were organized, we would invite two singers and vocalists from Albanians, one from Serbians and in that way the programmes were quite enriched with diversity. Later on, we would also organize literature hours together with writers from the other communities as well. Enver Gjerqeku, Rifat Kukaj, Vehbi Kikaj and Qamil Batalli comes to mind, who were almost always present at the literature hours that were organized. This way, we would create programmes and get together.

When it comes to our people, during enjoyment of our leisure times as I've mentioned in Germi and Taukbahçe, a good number of our Albanian friends would join us in those feasts as well. Because we did not have any large differences, the town was already very small. What is a sixteen thousand population today? It could very well be just a street, not even a neighborhood in cities like Istanbul or Izmir or another big city like that. In other words, we were close to each other. Nevertheless, there were times when even brothers in a family fight, some cold winds blew among communities as well from time to time, I should also add, because of some nationalists. I can say this much about our folks and our children.

When it comes to *Tan*, after it was established in 1969, our first director was Süleyman Brina from Prizren and I was had the duty of deputy director back then. For a long time I ran the *Çevren* magazine as the corresponding author. I also contributed a lot to publishing the *Kuş* magazine through *Tan*. As a secretary of these magazines, I would gather our Albanian, Serbian and Turkish writers to organize literature hours together. As I have told through the book series, books written by Pero Stefanović, Muhamed Kërveshi, Esat Mekuli, Darinka Jevrić and many other writers from Kosovo.

Ebru Süleyman: You had mentioned the Radio and the orchestra there...

Enver Baki: Yes, I apologize for missing it both from you and from the viewers. I would like to say that there is also something to add to the series of events that started in 1951 when the schools became functional, the associations were being formed and Radio Pristina had broadcast in Turkish and it is the establishment of Radio Pristina's Orchestra of the Turkish Classical Music which contributed a lot to the cultural development of the Turkish people in Kosovo. There were two main orchestras in Pristina, before the year '51, who in addition to playing at the previously mentioned feasts in Germi and Taukbahçe would also play at our weddings, other organizations and friend gatherings where they would add the color of music. One of them was led by Salih Traşoba, uncle Salih, and second one by Şerif Nani, both of them were artists. Salih Hovarda, was a worker at the Zadruga [Cooperative] but was playing the oud masterfully and thus he had his own three to four people orchestra.

On the other hand, Şerif Recep Şeyh, who is my maternal uncle and who was a barber, would always have a darbuka or a tambourine in his shop and house. He also had a three to four people music group. These two groups, in the first years of the Radio Pristina, in 1951, would play live since there was no technology to record them and they would enrich our broadcasts with music.

Afterwards, Şerafedin Süleyman, who was the responsible person for Turkish broadcasting at Radio Prishtina in 1952, had heard appraisal and very good words from Rasim Salih and brought him from Mitrovica to Pristina and thus the Turkish Classical Music Orchestra was formed in Radio Prishtina. As I remember Şerafedin Süleyman was also a speaker on the radio and around '51 as the director of the redaction he invited Rasim Salih here, he accepted and a new orchestra was formed. It is thanks to that orchestra and to brother Rasim, not only in Pristina but in many places in Kosovo exceptional musicians were brought up. Thus, our folks not only had the orchestra but a Turkish section in Radio Pristina as well.

Previously you asked me a question, regarding the cohesion and the aftermath of the socialist war. As you know, back then, one of the major aims of the Yugoslav Communist Union was to ensure the rights of all communities regardless of them being a minority or not. In this context, the Turkish people of Kosovo gained their rights for using their language and gained their cultural rights at equal levels with other communities. I should probably not say a minority community because even though Turks are a minority in Kosovo, in Europe and around the world there are more than 250 million Turks and I think therefore we should not consider ourselves as a minority.

Thank you.

Ebru Süleyman: You are welcome. If you'd like we can continue the conversation some more?

Enver Baki: I wouldn't know what else to say.

Ebru Süleyman: We could perhaps talk about nowadays; get a little closer to our current times?

Enver Baki: Regarding the current days, I do not know what to say. The associations are working, the radio is working, there is nothing much to say. However, we could close the interview with a sentence. Shall we do that?

Ebru Süleyman: As you wish then, let's close it with a sentence.

Enver Baki: Some people are working, working and creating things. I do not know what else to say. We cannot complain but the wound still bleeds (smiles) {pointing towards his heart}

Ebru Süleyman: All right, whatever you would like to add, please feel free.

Enver Baki: I should say this. Among many people living in Kosovo, Turkish people are sustaining their presence and activities through their institutions, associations, education and schools. Similar to other communities, Turkish community has its shortcomings as well but instead of talking about shortcomings, I would prefer to say that I am satisfied with our current state as well.

Ebru Süleyman: Thank you.