

Oral History Kosovo

INTERVIEW EXTRACT

[The in-depth oral history interview with the narrator was conducted on May 16, 2021 in Pristina. Due to the narrator's request for anonymity, we have concealed the identity.]

Interviewer: Can you tell me a little more about your childhood, what kind of childhood did you have?

Narrator: I was born in Batllava, my family lives there. Well, I do not have my parents, but my family, my brothers and everyone else. We had a good childhood, it was good. With what they had, the parents as well as the children, it was good. We didn't live in very hard conditions because you know what it was like then, but it was okay. For example, you finished your classes, went home, did housework which our mother assigned us, but she didn't make us work too hard like other mothers did. Not like some mother who just gave all the work to their children, "You have to do this. But if you want, if you don't..." But we were interested and our conscience didn't allow us to stay and look at our mother or someone else working. We did chores whenever they assigned us chores. We did chores, and we came home on schedule. We were never late, everything was okay.

Interviewer: What kind of work did you do?

Narrator: Housework, but I also worked the land, for example, you might have done some gardening, you went outside and did something. You know, you helped your parents, as for going out, we didn't see the city much, because we rarely went out. No, no, because back then people talked, also the village was different from the city. And for example, the lake was nearby, we didn't see it much. "No, you can't, they will say she went to the lake, she's not good, she's not polite." (laughs) Do you understand? There were some primitive things.

Interviewer: Can you swim?

Narrator: Yes, yes, because the river was near, in the river. But we didn't go to the lake much because, "They will talk about you and we're religious, if people see you," for example, "at the lake." And we

held back ourselves and did what we were told to. Because we know how it was back then, but it was all right, all right.

Interviewer: What did your father do?

Narrator: My father was a farmer, [he worked] with land, the garden, all of these. He achieved his goal and provided us with food and everything, all-natural, everything. And it wasn't bad.

Interviewer: What about your mother?

Narrator: My mother, housework, and gardening too, like everyone else.

Interviewer: Which of your parents were you closer to?

Narrator: I was closer to my mother.

Interviewer: Why?

Narrator: Well, I don't know, us women we are more sensitive and understand some things better, some more sensitive things. I had a very upright mother, she educated us, she always taught us how to do good, not bad. And we got their education and did what they advised us to do. Not, for example, nowadays, some don't like those, even though we were right. When we were told something, that's what we did, there weren't any, for example, doubts about why to do that. We tried to stick to that and that's it. But even though my parents are dead now, I'm thankful to them. I pray that God blessed them with heaven, "You have taught us such good lessons, morals..." Because I stuck to them until now and I will stick to them until the day I die, I will never give up goodness.

Interviewer: Tell me, do you have siblings?

Narrator: Yes, I have siblings, I have four brothers, two sisters.

Interviewer: Which one were you closest to?

Narrator: I was closest to my younger sister, she is 18 months younger than me and we were like twins. Whoever saw us never guessed we were not twins.

Interviewer: Are you still that close?

Narrator: Well, she got married, she lived in England for twelve years. But because of the children, they didn't want to leave them there, they came back and live in the Prugovc village. We're still in

contact, of course, not like before because we each have our own obligations. But, we still have that love, that... we can't do without each other.

Interviewer: Tell me, what kind of child were you?

Narrator: A very respectful child, very polite, very educated. In school, I only finished elementary school because I had to travel, even though I was very fired-up to continue my education but I couldn't because I had to travel, the bus line was very poor. So I couldn't, but today school is a dream. I could have done it because I was a very active child and kind of everywhere. I took part in school plays, as a singer, I was the best at reciting. And this is where I am today, I couldn't reach my potential, I mean, to reach my goal, it's hard, it isn't easy. But I like women who are educated, independent, I really like it and I feel very good, very content when I see them.