

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: When did you get married, how old were you?

Narrator: I was married in '97.

Interviewer: How old were you?

Narrator: I was 24 years old.

Interviewer: How did you decide to get married?

Narrator: How did I decide, I was indecisive, even though we were known as women who were polite, from a good family. I was very indecisive, because I thought your soulmate, the person you spend the rest of your life with, is very important right. This was the most important thing in a person's life. I always hoped I'd find someone like me, maybe not like me, but approximately, a man who... But it's not bad, most importantly moral over everything else.

Interviewer: Did someone introduce you to him, or did you meet him yourself?

Narrator: He is my best friend's cousin, and it wasn't that I liked him all that much, I mean I kind of liked him, but his behavior made me go out with him and meet him... according to what she said.

Interviewer: Was it hard to change places?

Narrator: A little because I liked the city more, maybe because we struggled with some work, we were more engaged, for example, to collect grass, and this, and that, you know? And I said that... I was a very neat person, and I wanted to find chores to do inside the house, not outside, you know? And we had to do everything, and then go outside the house. And I said that it is important that he is a good person, for it to be a good marriage, to find someone like that. But I liked the city a bit more, because I knew there wasn't as much work, shortly, yes.

Interviewer: Tell me, how did you come from your family into a new family?

Narrator: It was very, very hard for me.

Interviewer: Elaborate on it a little bit.

Narrator: Honestly it was very hard for me, because we were respectful. I had to wake up early in the morning, serve coffee to all family members.

Interviewer: How many were there?

Narrator: We were seven. And I had to, for example...

Interviewer: Who was there, tell me who you lived with?

Narrator: We lived, only one of my brothers-in-law didn't live with us back then, because all my husband's family members, they all lived there.

Interviewer: Your father-in-law, your mother-in-law?

Narrator: My father-in-law wasn't there, he had died before I got there, my mother-in-law, my brothers-in-law, their children, my sister-in-law. She got married after me, I got married on May 18, my sister-in-law got married after New Year's Eve. So, we all were a whole family there. God forbid speaking, I never spoke, no matter what you saw, or if someone said something to you, you'd be, I heard - I didn't hear, I saw - I didn't see. This was how I was because my mother educated me and said, "No matter what someone might be like, you just have to say good things and treat them with respect. And don't talk." Not only were things like that at that time, but my conscience didn't let me do some things, to each their own, and I am who I am. I grew up in that family, I have the education I got from my family and I can't.

Interviewer: Was it hard for you?

Narrator: It was hard. Now, for example, my daughter tells me about some things, now that she grew up and understands my life more or less. She says, “Mom, how could you? I myself can’t do it. I know you never spoke up. Regardless of the fact that someone might have said something hurtful to you, or they harassed you, you never spoke up, I can’t. You are my mother, I know what kind of a mother I have, but I myself can’t do that.” For example, yes.

Interviewer: Do you regret being like that?

Narrator: No, I never regret goodness. Anyway, to each their own, we have God.