

Selatin Bogujevci interview with Naomi Hamill with Jehona Bogujevci (his daughter) giving a simultaneous translation and comments (1:06:23)

16th November 2014

(0.0)

(SB replying and JB translating)

JB: He's just saying before he came here, or we came here, just had a happy normal family life

He was married with five kids. He used to work in Obilić. That's where the electricity (the power and electricity) is made. And his wife - my mum - used to work in hospital as a nurse in Podujeva.

The kids were all in school: four of us, apart from Genc, his youngest son.

(01:19) Before the war started, a lot of people were sent out of work - their jobs - including his brother, Safet. He used to work with my dad. They closed all of the schools. And the students, the high school students and the university students, had to study in private houses. And the youngest, the primary school kids, they went to school but they separated the schools so there were schools for Kosovans and the other schools for the Serbs.

When they separated the schools, they actually brought a lot of kids from Serbia to study at the schools in Podujeva.

And the people that actually worked at the Municipality of Podujeva, most of them were Serbian.

He had to - after these changes - he had to travel forty kilometers one way and before that there used to be a bus that would take them right to their work.

Sometimes he used to work at night. They had to do night shifts and he couldn't travel back to Podujeva because there was no transport.

(03:20) There were many problems. Sometimes, they used to stop them and take all the passengers off the bus. And the life wasn't normal any more, like it used to.

When the war actually started, there were problems with the Serbian and the Kosovans, the KLA, [Kosovo Liberation Army] and they used to sometimes fight with each other. And sometimes there was a fight between them and sometimes my dad had to take us to Prishtina for a week just to keep us away from that - to his uncle in Prishtina.

He's saying that it wasn't a normal life: he didn't have enough food; we always had to think that we needed some; we have to have something extra so that, if anything would happen, we would have it there.

The jobs: the pay, it was really low... his wages.

And then when it would calm down, he would just bring the kids to Podujeva.

It wasn't normal because you couldn't really work. You couldn't really do the daily things that you would do. It wasn't secure really.

He's saying from 1990 the situation changed completely but it started to get worse from 1997. But all of it started from 1990. In 1990, that's when my dad

had to leave his job and they shut a lot of schools as well. And all his life changed completely.

In 1989, just thinking of the right word...

NH: It's ok.

JB: They used to provide gases. They did put all these gases, in '89, in schools. They did that. Is it acid? What is it called when they tried to...? I'm just thinking of the right word.

NH: Is it a gas attack or suffocation?

JB: It's like gas attack. Yeah.

(SB replying and JB translating)

And when they did that... that's actually when they shut down the schools. He's saying that even though from 1981 there were loads of protests and everything really started from there, the students and... In '89, that's when the gases, put the gases in the schools.¹

And in 1990 the war started in Croatia as well and then in Bosnia and then gradually they came to Kosova.

They just went in the schools and did the gas, they... not many people died. None of them died but they were really ill after that.

They don't know because no one actually expected that so they don't really know who did that. I think that's when they realised that it's... it's here.

¹ Chronology including poisoning reference <http://www.refworld.org/docid/469f38f51e.html>

(08:20) He's saying we didn't have many Serbian neighbours. He's saying in and around our area, there was just one family. And whereas in his work there were a few, or most of them were Serbian, but he's saying that it wasn't all bad, because we had to work. We had to work together.

He's saying that... he's talking about his neighbour; one of his neighbours was Serbian. He's saying it was ok. She was fine with us... we had a good relationship. Then from 1990, the relationship started to change and the neighbour - she was actually a woman. She used to work with my granddad, who was a doctor, and my mum as well, so she knew us quite well.

(10:00) And in most of the jobs, the bosses - how can I say - they were all Serbian in every institution. What they did, also, they used to hire young people - most of them didn't even know how to do their job - but as long as they were Serbian that's what mattered. Whereas we, my dad, had twenty years experience. He couldn't really do much. He had to listen to what they had to say. So everything really changed.

In March 1999, that's when the NATO bombing started.²

So on 24th March, that's when the bombing started. That's when he couldn't go to work anymore.

It was too dangerous for my dad 'cause there were so many soldiers everywhere.

(11:00) Then from 28th March we had to, obviously, leave the house. And then, obviously, the massacre happened. They killed most of his family.³

² <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/F62789D9FCC56FB3C1256C1700303E3B-thekosovoreport.htm>

So whilst all the bombing and everything was going on, he was near the villages around. They couldn't stay in Podujeva because it was too dangerous and, obviously, all they... they had to leave their houses and when they did that, he had to separate from his family 'cause some of them, like my dad and my uncle, had to go somewhere else and the rest of his family stayed at home. And they were hoping that they would meet somewhere, like other people did. But it didn't happen.

Well, he had to stay. It was... mainly he was based around there. For twenty days, he didn't know anything about his family, where they were or were they killed.

(12:40) And after twenty days, he found out that his kids were in hospital in Prishtina.

And what he did was, his kids, well **Saranda**⁴ and I, we knew this guy and this guy was ... used to go in my school and so his dad was hospital and we knew that he was going to go to Koliq and hopefully he would meet someone from our family. What we did... we just asked him - well we wrote a letter - so we said to him, "If you see anyone, like my dad or my uncle, can you just give that to him?" and that way...

And my dad met him, and that's when he told him that the kids were in hospital.

NH: Oh, gosh.

³ *'Podujevo 1999- Beyond Reasonable Doubt'* (English and Serbian): Humanitarian Law Centre, Belgrade, Documents Series

⁴ Saranda Bogujevci recording included in this archive

(13:10) So they killed his family in the garden, my dad's family: his brother's wife, two sons; and also my dad's friend's family: all his kids, his mum and dad, his wife; and also my dad ['s] auntie and her sister-in-law died as well. They were all killed in neighbour's garden. ⁵

(14:00) Straight away, when they found out that we were in hospital, my uncle and my uncle Safet and his friend Enver [Duriqi], they decided to go to Prishtina. Even though it was really dangerous. But they had to do it.

And that's why my dad is saying that he had to separate in the first place because they thought it might be more dangerous if they find men in the house.

And then, because they didn't actually know exactly what happened to us, because, obviously, they thought they knew that we were in hospital but they didn't know about the other members of the family, and they... they, my uncle and Enver, my dad's friend, when they came to hospital in Prishtina, that's when we actually told them what had happened.

(14:30) So in hospital, it was Saranda, myself [Jehona], **Fatos**⁶ and Genc and his youngest daughter, Liria. They (obviously we told them) they took her to Belgrade. So she was sent after two weeks to Belgrade.

And also Enver, as you know, is the guy who lost all his family. And that's when he found out that all his family was dead, basically 'cause his mum and dad, his wife and four of his kids died. His youngest son was two years old. So... yeah... and his oldest was twelve.

⁵ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/jul/10/warcrimes.balkans>

⁶ Fatos Bogujevci recording included in this archive

He's saying they killed my [his] mother, his wife and his daughter, fourteen, she was fourteen years old. And his brother, my uncle's wife and two sons.

(16:30) Then after two days Safet and Enver came back to Koliq and that's when they told my dad, as well, everything that happened.

And after two days, they also had to leave the village. They killed a lot of people over there so they had to walk. So he was lucky to manage to escape: they did. And then they decided to go to Prishtina.

(17:00) On 19th April 1999, that's when they decided to go to Prishtina.

When they decided to go from Koliq to Prishtina, when the police found out that they were from Podujeva they just said, "No, you just have to go back to Podujeva; you can't stay in Prishtina," because they didn't want anyone from Podujeva to stay in Prishtina. They said, "No, you just need to go back."

When they arrived in Podujeva, they didn't let them go to the houses. And they said to them, "You can't stay here. Just go wherever you want. You're not allowed to stay here."

And then they went to another village which is near to Podujeva, Shajkovic it's called, the other one. Most of the houses there were burnt so they couldn't really stay anywhere.

And then he decided to try and go back to Podujeva and there were a few houses saved that they were allowed to stay.

(18:50) And that's where he met the Serbian neighbour, the one that he was talking about before.

And he's saying that there were many policemen, the army... there were a mixture, everywhere. And they, actually, were staying in our houses: like my house, my auntie's house, all the houses around us. That's where they were based.

And then the neighbour asked my dad, "Where is your Shefkate?" Shefkate was my mum [Selatin's wife]. So he asked her, "Do you know where she is?" 'cause they obviously used to work together. He's saying, "I'm sure you know better." My dad said to her, "I'm sure you know better where my wife is than I do. I only know that my kids are in hospital. I don't know what actually happened to the rest of my family." So...

So that was the conversation and she didn't actually react to anything.

And then, obviously, it was starting to get darker, because my dad was with his auntie and his cousins they asked her, "Is it okay if we stay with you?" They asked the neighbour.

(SB corrects JB in Albanian)

Oh, sorry, they asked the soldiers, "Is it okay if we stay with the Serbian neighbour?"

And the soldiers said to them, "It all depends what she says; it's not up to us." And she goes, "No, I'm really ill I need to leave so you can't really, so you can't stay with me."

(21:20) And the soldiers said to them, "I don't think you'll be safe around here, you should better go with everyone else. I wouldn't advise you to stay here."

And then they, obviously, had to go back to the village.

Just wanted to, obviously, say that you can see how, our neighbour, how helpful she was. 'Cause she knew exactly what happened: all they, everyone around knew exactly what happened.

He's saying that most of the people in Podujeva knew about our family 'cause they were one of the first people there who worked in hospital. 'Cause obviously my granddad was a doctor, and my dad's uncle was a dentist, and mum was a nurse as well. So they were one of the first Kosovan doctors in Podujevë.

And she couldn't just say, "Yes, you can just stay one night with us," because obviously she knew that the next day they were going to leave, they can't really stay there.

And after, she he decided to stay a week in Podujeva and they decided to leave to go to Prishtina. And his brother, Safet, decided to stay in other villages in Podujeva because he wanted... obviously they had decided that it's better if one of them stays in Podujeva so that if they found out something about the other members. Then my dad, the reason he wanted to go to Prishtina, was because of us so he could look after us and do whatever he could do really.

'Cause at the time, obviously they knew a bit of what had happened but they weren't sure 100% exactly what happened to the others.

NH: How did he get to Prishtina, what transport?

(SB replying and JB translating)

(23:40) JB: There was a bus that used to go from Podujeva to Nish.

And that bus actually, it was from Prishtina to Nish, but it used to stop in Podujeva.

'Cause - just saying - the day before, they tried to get on that bus and they couldn't. They weren't allowed to. And they tried again the next day and they came... He doesn't want to go into detail exactly how they got on the bus. 'Cause the bus was packed with people, so there were a lot of people trying to get on the bus, a lot of, obviously, Kosovan (ethnic Albanian) people, trying to get on the bus. So he said to them, "Seven of you," including my dad, my dad's auntie and his cousins, "you're allowed to go on the bus." And the other people, well he said to them, "Wait here and another bus, definitely another bus is going to come and you can get on that," and all the other people on the bus were Serbian apart from the seven including my dad.

So when he arrived in Prishtina, it was about seven o'clock at night, when he watched the news. [the next bus was bombed by NATO believing it was part of a military convoy] Actually the bus that my dad was going to get on, well the guy who said, "Wait for the other bus, you can all get on that." So only four people survived from that bus, and I think two kids, and they were taken to the same ward as us in Prishtina hospital. And when my dad came to visit us he met the other people that survived. And all the other people died. This happened in Lluzhan. Where the bridge is. That's when...

He's just saying, he doesn't, they probably knew something about this 'cause they wouldn't even take the Kosovan passengers on the bus.

NH: Oh, you think the Serbians knew... ?

JB: The Serbians probably knew that something was going to happen, 'cause they wouldn't really take these people to Prishtina or anything like that - my dad is saying - they probably knew that something was going to happen.

(27:00) So on the 2nd May, that's when he met us for the first time... so he just decided to go to hospital and all the... Prishtina was full of soldiers.

So he just decided even though it was very dangerous... there were so many: they were killing people. But he just decided to go. And he knew what hospital, what ward we were on. So he just decided to go.

And then when he went into the room he saw myself and Saranda.

(28:00) And the... One of the doctors, came in saying to my dad, "How do you know them? Why are you here?" And my dad said to him, "They're my kids!" And he was trying to ask my dad, "Do you know what happened?" And my dad is saying they probably knew exactly what happened but they just wanted to, you know...

And there was some spaghetti on the plate next to Saranda. And I think she had an operation on that day and she was still unconscious. So I think she's tried to eat and, obviously, the plate fell on the floor. And the food was on the floor and I couldn't move at all. And all the covers were dirty: all black and dirty.

(28:50) So he stayed for about ten minutes and, obviously, we told my dad that my other two brothers were on the second floor and when he went to the second floor Genc, his youngest son, was on the corridor. And he had... his hair was really long and just one sock on his foot. And he didn't actually recognise him at first when he saw him.

And then he shouted, "Fatos, daddy's here!" And then that's when he realised that obviously it's him, and his legs went really weak.

NH: Your dad's?

JB: Yeah, dad's, yeah.

So he stayed there for just five minutes. And then, on his way back, it was really dangerous.

He used to stay with his uncle in Prishtina - just so we're clear - 'cause they, in Prishtina, they were still... his uncle was still in his house. They didn't have to leave their house straight away. There's a place in Prishtina called Kodra e Trimave [Vranjefc]. That's where my dad stayed.

So basically, the hospital was on the other side of Prishtina, so he had to go through all, like this town and then... to get there.

So there were some parts of Prishtina, it wasn't that bad. But at the centre, where the theatre is, that's where it was worse.

NH: Right.

JB: So he had, obviously had to go through all of that to go to the hospital.

And he's talking about myself [Jehona] when he used to visit us. I used to start crying saying to him, "Don't come and visit us because it's dangerous and we might lose you as well."

He just wants to obviously point out the situation was really bad. It wasn't safe at all. And you always had obviously take risk, risk his life sometimes.

(32:11) He's just saying he was just trying, because he wanted to come and visit us every single day but there were some days where he went and he came to the hospital but he wasn't allowed to go in. So he was sent back. 'Cause he could only, sometimes, he could only see Fatos and Genc because they could walk and go outside the hospital. Whereas with me and Saranda, he wasn't allowed to go in the ward because we couldn't, obviously, I couldn't walk, and Saranda was badly injured. So he's saying it was very, very dangerous.

(33:00) He's just talking about this time he was going back to his uncle's house, where he had two bread, like two pieces [loaves] of bread, and was trying to take back to the house and one of the policemen stopped him. And he was, actually, it was when he was going to shot, to shot him 'cause he was actually just walking and he was in one of the, you know, you know, the places inside. And then the policeman came out and he said to him, "Come inside, I want to talk to you."

And he said to him, "Where are you taking this bread? Why are you taking it, are you gonna take this bread for KLA⁷?" And so he said to him, "It's only two pieces of bread [loaves], I'm not gonna... This is for myself." So then he said, "Ok, show me, have you got an ID?" And then he said, and when he saw on his ID he's from Podujeva, he said, "Oh, I've been looking for you."

And he said, "Take out everything you have in your pockets." And he had a hundred marks.

And he said to him, "Put that money back in your pocket 'cause you're saying that all we're doing is taking your stuff." Basically, he was trying to say, "That's all we're doing. We're not actually doing this. You're just saying that."

⁷ The Kosovo Liberation Army

But the thing that saved my dad is, because he had this, it's like an ID that he used from his job, and he asked him, "Where do you work?" and also my dad told him, "Obiliç". And he said to him, "Why are you not in work?" Saying that he couldn't, obviously, because of the war... and his family's in Podujeva, and he couldn't go to Podujeva, so he decided to stay in Prishtina. And he told him about his kids, that they are in hospital. And he couldn't really say to them exactly what happened to his kids. So he said to him that NATO actually did that to - 'cause obviously he had to say - to fight for his life.

And the doctors in hospital gave these two letters to my uncle where it talks about the medical situation that we were in. And also, on the letter, it said that your kids might die; they might survive. And he told him. And what he did, he just... how can I say? Like... just screwed up the letters. And just threw them. And he, obviously, just... you know... when you use offensive language.

And he said to him, "Go away. Get away from here 'cause if I see you one more time I'm going to kill you."

And this is just one of the stories.

(36:55) He just wants to say how dangerous it was because he obviously had to go through all of this to visit his kids in hospital.

(37:03) And then when the NATO [Liberated], so he after obviously he visited his kids, and NATO, it was the 12th June that's when obviously the NATO came [Liberated Kosovo]. So that day he came to visit us in hospital and that was the first time that Saranda and I actually left the hospital and were outside, and Genc and Fatos. So we were in the hospital garden. These, there were...

so we were in the outside of the hospital and these army - they were from the NATO army - walked past us. Is it NATO army?

So they came back, obviously, they had walked past us. And so they had this translator with them and they actually stopped and asked us, "What happened to you?" and, "Can they actually help you?" the translator said to us. So my dad said, "Yes, obviously, you can help us." So we spoke to them: told them exactly what happened to us. So he said, "Is it ok if you decide to come with us because we have our own hospital?" where they were based. So my dad agreed. Said, "Yes," obviously! (JB laughs)

So they took us to where they were based.

So when they took us there they did all the check-ups and everything.

(39:00) So my dad asked them after they did all the check-ups, he said to them, "What do I do now? Is it better to take them to Prishtina hospital or...?" 'Cause he wasn't sure what to do with us. And they said to him, "It's better if you bring them back here because the situation is still not very good if you take them to hospital."

They said to him, "It's better if you take them to your house," and my dad explained about the situation, about the house: that it's not like it used to be, so he can't really take them there.

So he said, "Just find a place, somewhere else. And if you need our help, just let us know, or if you need to bring your kids here we can always provide you the transport."

(40:30) And then after that... my dad... then after that, it was all seen to with this psychologist, she was called Lynne Jones? Lynne Jones. And the way he

met with her was through a journalist. And then she used to come and visit us every week.

(41:51) He used to take us to where they were based, the NATO. And then, obviously, after the war, my auntie from London came and my uncle. So we were surrounded with our family. So they used to look after us as well. And then after three weeks, the NATO medics and medical soldiers, whatever they're called, and they moved actually to Lipjan - it's where the prison in Lipjan is - so they were completely moved there.

(42:40) So about two weeks they lost contact, because he wasn't sure where they were. And then through someone he managed to find their contact [details] and then, obviously, he managed to go there and that's where he met Dr Vassallo, **David Vassallo**⁸. [Consultant General Surgeon, Royal Army Medical Corps] Obviously, since that moment, he looked after Saranda and Jehona.

And he actually went back to Prishtina hospital and he was trying to get them to help us to go somewhere else outside of Kosova. But they couldn't really do anything.

And after a while, obviously, he found out that Dr Vassallo was trying to do his best to help us. And he found out that he wrote an article here [UK] in one of the newspapers. And he was obviously trying to get people to help us: the doctors all over the world to actually help us.

(43:30) So after a month, they actually brought us here in Manchester⁹.

⁸ Col David Vassallo recording included in this archive

⁹ See MaK timeline and report in this archive: In a global humanitarian response to the conflict, the British government evacuates dispossessed Kosovars to Manchester, Leeds and Scotland. 4,346 of the most vulnerable men, women and children are selected from refugee camps. 2,400 arrive in the North West. *"People had few belongings, what they brought with them instead was bewilderment and dignity, grief and dispossession."* ('My Name Came up' Refugee Council, 2000)

So it was my dad... this other guy called **Besim Kadriu**¹⁰, he was shot on his face: his nose and his face. And this other woman: she was with her son as well - and her husband was shot as well, but he came before her... he used to live in Leeds. So it was basically my dad, our uncle Safet, all... Saranda, Fatos and everyone else... apart from Liria.

(44:20) What they did... They were saying to my dad at first that only one of, either my dad or my uncle, can come to England with the kids. Not all of us could come here. And he was saying to them, "How can I leave my kids? I can't really just stay here!" And he was saying, "My other daughter, Liria, she's in Belgrade so I can't leave her either."

It's going to get to... I was just saying to him... it's better... 'Cause he was, what my dad... what he was trying to do was ask the people in Belgrade to send Liria back. And they were saying to him, "No, we can't do that. You need to come here and get her."

So Liria was sent to Belgrade during the war.

She was badly injured in her throat so they decided to send her to Belgrade obviously as they felt... So she was on her own in hospital in Belgrade. There was only this guy from Peja. There was just her [Liria was aged 8 years] and the other guy and I think he was fourteen years old.

(46:00) So there was this man. So there was this man from Kosova. He used to live in Belgrade. He went to Belgrade before the war. So through him... so how we got in touch with the man was through... Because my uncle lives in Germany so they knew his son, his nephew, they knew his nephew, and

¹⁰ Besim Kadriu and Valbona Peci Kadriu recordings included in this archive

obviously he told him about his uncle that lives in Belgrade. So they kindly asked him if he could go and look after them in hospital. So most of the time he looked after Liria. He used to go and visit her every day.

But during the... wasn't really in touch with... he couldn't really talk to her at all. So after the war ended, through the Red Cross, he could speak to her over the phone. So the man, after the war ended so - he was called Haxhi Shasha, it's important to mention his name - he came to actually visit my dad after the war ended and told him about Liria. And he was saying to my dad that sometimes he couldn't visit her because they used to say to him, "If you want to look after her, why don't you just take her to your house?" Liria was badly injured in her throat so she couldn't eat. So she was fed through a tube in her stomach.

And he is saying that, sometimes, he couldn't really go and visit her as they would just say, "You just take it [her]," and obviously he couldn't really look after her so sometimes he wouldn't go and see her just because of that.

And he's saying, "That's why I decided in the end to just come to England because I didn't... I couldn't really do *anything* in Kosova."

(49:00) So when they first arrived here in Manchester, they were picked up in Manchester airport and they took them to Meadow Court¹¹ where... So Safet [Selatin's brother] that night, decided to stay with Fatos and Genc in Meadow Court. And my dad decided to - 'cause me and Saranda were taken straight to hospital - and my dad decided to come with us to Manchester Hospital, well, Withington Hospital it's called.

And in Meadow Court where we were based, I think, there were about five or six families from Kosova.

¹¹ Empty sheltered accommodation for the elderly had been prepared in Hale Barns, Trafford. See Cllr David Acton, leader Trafford MBC 97-14, recording in this archive

(51:20) Because I think it used to be an old people's house. And he's just saying, I think, the Methodist Church in Timperley, the priest [**Rev Bruce Thompson**] - because he was always in touch with us - I think he was one of the people that actually decided to, obviously... can I say... to actually decide to have that place for all the refugees.

¹²Just saying they had... there was a place where all the children could play. So basically we had everything.

He's saying that we went there in September and most of the families actually went from March, around March / June.

We were the last family to actually go there. Most of them went around that time. And we were looked after very well there.

We had our own taxis that used to take us to hospitals. They used to actually take our kids to school. We had food. We our own phone which we could use all day, a free phone. We had our own translators as well, that were there all the time.

So every weekend, also, they used to take us out to trips like Chester Zoo; we did different activities every weekend.

We used to do, like, go to the Methodist Church as well and play games. And he's just saying, also just saying, that the community, the Muslim community, also there were a few people that used to come over and they'd help us as well.

Should he talk more?

¹² Rev Bruce Thompson recording included in this archive

And so he's saying in hospital, they were looked after really well.

And after two months Liria was... came here with Safet's wife Afërdita. [Safet and Afërdita later married]

(52:50) So Liria first had to go to Podujeva - stay there for a month - with the Red Cross... actually took Liria from Belgrade to Podujeva. And then after that, she came here. So after two months she came here. Straight away, when she came here, we took to her hospital. And they took out the tube from her stomach. And they replaced it with this... and she was only nine and she weighed ten kilos. She was really thin.

And she had an operation here on her throat. After, two or three months, she was getting already better.

She was in a different hospital to us. Saranda and I were in Withington Hospital and Liria was taken to a different hospital, Pendlebury [Children's] Hospital. And sometimes he couldn't really visit us.

Yes, he had to... because at the beginning he had to be with us all day, all the time really: especially with Liria. And then, at home, he had Fatos and Genc and they had to go to school then so...

And he just said, that after a year, they decided that everyone could have their own house and that's when all the family were separated.

They were talking that they were going to find another place, where all the families could stay together. But obviously that didn't happen.

So all of the families went to their own: their own house.

I'm just saying to my dad, because... 'cause when we first came to England, what they said to my dad, that after the children are better you're going to have to go back.

So they refused our asylum. Yeah, they refused. They were saying, you know, "You need to go back."

(56:00) He's just saying we met **Pam**¹³ first in Meadow Court. He says that Pam used to work in the mines [land mines], are they called MAG? They used to deal with the mines so that's when they had the meeting at Meadow Court and that's when he met her. Yeah, so...

Lots of people - and obviously Pam - they wrote letters. And also the newspapers: the Messenger (the local newspaper also did a few articles for it); our psychologist as well. So a lot of people supported us, you know.

He's saying he'll always have his hometown, Podujeva, but England and Manchester supported us a lot so I don't think anyone else would have done the same. He's just saying that they were really supportive of us.

He's just saying that, obviously, there are different refugees all over the world and, obviously, we came for a different reason here. So we came for medical treatment basically.

Just saying that we wouldn't have had this support in Kosova.

He's saying here in Manchester, it wasn't just the people that we knew that actually were great because also our neighbours, all the whole community around Altrincham, Timperley, round Manchester, they were great to us.

¹³ Pam Dawes recording included in this archive

(58:30) He's very happy that obviously his kids are better now, medically better, even though it was difficult for him, at the beginning. Then, after a year, he also got married, which was very good for him and the whole family as well.

And the kids were getting better. They were getting, obviously, the right education. They were growing up.

So now they are better and they have finished their studies. And...

(SB laughs) He's just taking about the time when he went to see his psychologist. And he would always talk about his kids when he used to see his psychologist. And his psychologist said to my dad, "Stop talking about your kids. You're here about yourself so talk about yourself!"

He's just saying he's going to talk about his health saying, "I feel better. I feel better now." So he's doing well now. And obviously they treated him well.

It wasn't easy; it wasn't... obviously his life changed completely because he used to have a job, have his family, and all of a sudden without ... he had to change completely. His life had to change completely.

He is very happy. Happy now, so... yeah.

(01:01:07)He's just saying that there are more things. What Pam and MaK¹⁴ has done as well. 'Cause as a family, they actually helped us as a family. So through, obviously MaK, and our family, we manage to do a lot for Kosova as well. Which is great!

At the beginning what they did was also just, you know, deal with the kids. Not just leave them to... you know the usual thing is to take them out and just do the usual fun things with the kids.

¹⁴ <http://www.makonline.org>

See also Paul Guest, Naomi Hamill and Pam Dawes recordings in this archive.

So through that, obviously, the idea came to do the park¹⁵ in Kosova. So then we decided to, obviously, have the park in - 'cause we were talking about to do a park in Kosova - and, after we had a conversation, we thought, "Why not do a park in Podujeva?"

So we met a few people with Pam in Kosova, and here. And then it happened! (laughs).

And Pam also helped us a lot with the trial where we had to go to Belgrade¹⁶. Obviously she came with us to support us which was really important for us as a family.

He's just saying, obviously we have now a great relationship with Manchester and Podujeva and this is all through MaK.

'Cause, it's great 'cause what they did, obviously, people from Manchester went there and they gave the opportunity for them to come here as well. So there is a connection now which is really important.

He's just saying, obviously, again of all the connection which is great now. We have a connection between Podujeva and Manchester.

(1:03:43) He is saying that I try and go back whenever I can and he feels good to go back.

He says it is really good, he feels proud to say that, "Oh, I live in Manchester," because they always talk about the good things there that MaK and

¹⁵ <http://makonline.org/home/peace-park/>
<https://www.edenproject.com/sites/default/files/documents/eden-project-peace-park-kosovo.pdf>

¹⁶ See also Paresh Patel, investigative journalist, recording in this archive

Manchester are doing for Podujeva. And he feels very proud to say, "Yes, I'm from, I'm from there!" He feels proud (laughs).

He's saying that things have changed a lot.

Even the... everything, even the people have changed. Everyone now deals with their own problems, their own family. Some of his friends are not even, in life, really friends.

He is saying he feels good when he goes back, when he's there. But things aren't completely great because there are families there that are still struggling. And he feels bad because you can't really help them - can't do much. So it's that side as well that is still...

And he's saying that maybe the young generation will tell you more about how they feel when they go back and when they're here.

(01:05:38) He's going to talk about the story of the **Bruce**¹⁷, the priest from the Methodist Church. And he [SB] said to him, "Thank you for helping us."

He said, "Don't thank me, but thank God for actually giving" how can I say, "for sending you to us so we can help you".

And he actually wants to say,

"Thank you to England, to Great Britain, for actually helping me, for everything."

¹⁷ Rev Bruce Thompson recording included in this archive