

EI-375
EFTHIMIA DISHNICA STEFFON
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INTERVIEW DATE: AUGUST 10, 1993
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INTERVIEWER: JANET LEVINE
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ALBANIA, 1920
AGE 17

SHIP:
PORT:
RESIDENCES:
? ALBANIA: NIKOLCË [ph]
? US: WORCESTER, MA

HISTORIAN'S NOTE: Other ladies are present and comment from time to time. Single voices are identified as VOICE.

LEVINE: Okay. This is Janet Levine for the National Park Service. It's August 10th, 1993. I'm here in Worcester, Massachusetts at the Illyrian [sic] Gardens housing. And I'm speaking with Efthimia Dish, Dishnica Steffon [ph]...

STEFFON: Yeah.

LEVINE: ...who came from Albania in 1920...

STEFFON: '20, yeah.

LEVINE: ...when she was seventeen years old.

STEFFON: Yeah.

LEVINE: And I want to say that I'm happy to get to talk with you. I'm looking forward to hearing your story. Why don't you tell me from the beginning. You were born in 1920. I mean 1902, January 20th.

STEFFON: Yeah. Well...

LEVINE: Where were you born?

STEFFON: I went in a Greek schools.

VOICE: You were born in Nikolce [PH], Albania.

STEFFON: Nikolce [PH], Albania. And the Greeks don't let me speak Albania. It's supposed to, to talk Greek outside. In the house, I can talk Albania. Can speak the Albania language to my parent because they don't need, don't know Greek. And I, I went in a school, seven or eight grade. And the war started, I think. And the school close because of revolution. Fighting off the Greeks. It started to 1912. I was small. To world war. To all war, every war. The French go there. The German go there, come there. They threw bombs. And after that, have to leave the houses, go in the mountains. To hide. The people, to all people stayed home, and (unintelligible), and go make place in cellar for protection to the bombs. And I do that, you know, off and on when the bombs, German and French come there.

LEVINE: Did you have to hide, do you remember?

STEFFON: We have, we have to go in the mountains, the young people, (unintelligible) go in the mountains. My country culture Albania, surrounded that mountains around there, I have to go there. And after that (unintelligible), it's all right after, safer. And underground try to make, to keep the language Albania language. Taught to speak underground, to keep them, because the Greeks didn't want to allow it, you know, to talk Albania. And you know when I grow out, you know? My sister, she sent me, my brother in law sister going to come here. And they sent me to come up here. (unintelligible) mall. He want take all the family up here, my father and mother. They have good business there and they don't want to come. I had the one sister there left. And I make my mind to come up here. I come up here.

LEVINE: What did your father have for a business?

STEFFON: We have mill.

VOICE: Like my father...

STEFFON: Mill. Mill.

VOICE: ...together.

STEFFON: Yeah. I have this -- father, two brothers, their mill. Och. I got (unintelligible)

LEVINE: You want to stop...

STEFFON: (unintelligible) - I have to --

LEVINE: Okay, we'll stop for a minute here. (break in tape) Okay we'll res...

STEFFON: And somebody left, my family pick me up in mill there.

LEVINE: Yeah, it's okay. The mike's there.

STEFFON: Yeah. And when I come up here, I find out, I find out America no so pleasant before, you know. No that, that way I found America. Because no, you don't need any much things that time. No cars. Even, only buggies, horses. Everybody work with horses. And beat you against those. You don't even have any electric in the houses. You have the gas, gas lamp, lamp. And I thought you going to be better. America bigger, no? I get used to, I no like it to tell the truth the first time when I come, landed here. I no like it, no, to live in. After that I get used to it, you know. And I...

LEVINE: Did you come right to Worcester?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: Did you come right to Worcester?

STEFFON: Yeah, right to Worcester. My sister live in Worcester. But when my sister come, she come 1912. In those days, don't have any furniture, don't have any rugs on the floor. My sister told me we live two family together, because don't have any, much money. They don't have the money, too much money to pay. Just like my husband, he came 1914. 1914, he don't make much money. Making, make five, six dollars a week. He want, he want bring his family. He can't bring 'em because he don't have a-- don't make much money. He can't find a room, he go and live with relatives. He lives with relatives for a while, and moved to more money, moved Natick for job. After, after Natick, moved to Worcester. (unintelligible) you know, just getting there. I bring his sister. Make some money, sends his sister here. He bring his sister. And nineteen when I got marry. [not understood] have a match. (she laughs)

LEVINE: You got married in, in Albania?

STEFFON: Marry here.

LEVINE: Oh, you got...

STEFFON: I met -- I met here, in 1920 I got marry. Though I don't have much money. I stay with my sister law for-- when I have baby after that. (she laughs)

LEVINE: How did you meet your husband?

STEFFON: Well this friend of my family and my broth--, my brother law and sister. They used to come, go there all the time. He was friend, yeah. And we met. We got marry. We don't make big reception those days. Make in the houses reception. No go honeymoon. We don't have the money. And a child after that, you know. Find an apartment. And my husband tried to get two jobs, you know, because no so high to top the rent that time. For some people very high, the rent, you know. We can make living, you know, on pay. And we, we stay in couple of houses. In 1932 President Roosevelt elected president. President Roosevelt, he make the things better for everybody. He open the jobs. He give the social security to people because people working before don't have any, anything

to get one out of job, don't get any money those days. President Roosevelt, he do wonderful things for everybody. And...

LEVINE: Do you remember when President Roosevelt was...

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: Do you remember when President Roosevelt was campaigning to become president?

STEFFON: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. It was Hoover before. It was Hoover, every, everybody loses the houses. Loses the house, lose the money in the bank. Yeah, lose the money in the bank. Everybody lose thousands, don't have any money left. It started again little by little, you know. It's hard. It's hard on those days. After that it got better by the President Roosevelt, you know. And getting better, better after that, you know. My husband get better jobs. He bought a, he bought a car. (unintelligible) (she laughs) And then he bought, bought a house. 1932 after he bought a house, (unintelligible) that time it's people losing houses. He find an good buy, you know, he bought the house. He pay, pay mortgage, of course. I have four children, but. And I'm, now I have ten grandchildren, and five grandchild-- grand grandchildren. My husband die when I, twenty years ago, 197', '73. I've been a widow twenty years now.

LEVINE: What do you feel very proud of having done in your life?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: What makes you feel proud of what you've done? What do you feel proud of?

STEFFON: Well, those days, you know, I feel like going b-- with those days to come, I feel back, to go back in Albania, you know, those, when I come here, you know. Because I miss my -- my family, and my family don't want to come up here, you know. I have my sis, my sister have nine children. And little by little I get used to it, because we stay close, close to Albania, close together. We have church. Back in 1916 or '17 they build church. And before we used to have halls, all, all make the church, because they can afford it to, to build a church. When I get married we have a grand church. 1920 we have the church. Albanian church. First church. Albanian church. And after that my, my husband, he wants to go in Albania before, you know. He been in so many organization against Communist, afraid to go in Albania. Maybe do something or keep him there. He don't go. I don't go either in Albania. Same difference, I don't go back, you know. That's my story.

LEVINE: How about your husband's name?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: What was your husband's name?

STEFFON: Gregory.

LEVINE: Gregory.

STEFFON: Gregor.

LEVINE: And your children's names?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: What are your children's names?

STEFFON: I have boy, George, Robert, George, Ells [PH], and Billy's Loretta, my daughter. Billy, you know Billy? My son-in-law. He's my son-in-law.

VOICE: Loretta.

STEFFON: Yeah, Loretta. Yeah. Baptize now, also (unintelligible). All in church.

LEVINE: What customs did you keep from Albania? What kinds of things did you keep, keep up in this country?

STEFFON: Well, keep, keep, making some cookies, make big pies, Albania pies.

LEVINE: What kind, what's in them? What kind of pies?

STEFFON: Spinach pie, carrot, cottage cheese, eggs you make a meal, you make a lot of these. Chicken pies. You make, you know, lamb, use a lot of lamb there. Or cabbage. Eggplant. Celery now, and leeks. Makes moussaka, stuffed peppers. A lot, make good things there. Is, (unintelligible), I know you put sauerkraut, and make big cabbage and put in sauerkraut down there. He make my pite [PH], because when I come here I don't have, don't find the vegetables here in the stores wintertime. Yeah, I don't know, don't have any, you know, for a long time. And don't have any foods for the kids. And don't have any foods for the kids. When I grow my children, I used to bring the doctors there, I have, you know, once, once a month. And the doctors told me, "What do you feed the children?" You don't have any small jars those you have now. Or I eat myself, I dip a little bread, you know, I cut a meat little bit, and I feed them all those things, and I give them some cereal, you know. You make that. You make them cereal just like macaroni. You make them a pite, too. You make the dough, open, make macaroni here in America, too. But you can make in it Albania, too. Make them baklava, make them gurabie here. All kinds sweet stuff. You're doing, I've been doing that years and years and years, you know. I do, I keep it up. I keep it up. You never, you eat baklava? Yeah. And then I make gurabie. You made pepparnik [PH], open to, fill one by one, spread with the chicken, chicken part. And bake em. (unintelligible) Different kind, no? You put in those sach [ph] (unintelligible). You heat the sach before, and put in the top, underneath a fire, because don't have electricity there in those days. You don't have (unintelligible), but you have a (unintelligible), thinking I make them like (unintelligible). And they

use them -- don't have any stoves those, those days. They use (unintelligible). When they have the church here [not understood] they meet--. They have to have stove and they go round the stove, heats the church -- get communion. They keep them there because you can't afford it, you know, the heat, put heat. Even the houses don't have any heat those days, here, too. They don't have any. You see those days different, and now very different. Now press a button, everything you got in the house. Yeah.

LEVINE: Did you ever work outside of the house?

STEFFON: No, I never work. I have four children, I never, in those days, no, nobody works. I never work.

LEVINE: Why do you think the Albanian community sticks so close together?

STEFFON: Yeah, you keep them, you got, a big organization before (unintelligible). They have a church in Boston. My husband used to be their, (voices off-mike) he work in the church. And when he died he, he (unintelligible) from some saint. I think cathedral, cathedral church, I think Saint, Saint George.

VOICE: St. George's Cathedral.

STEFFON: They give me those. Yeah. He been there I know so many, I [not understood] diocese? Diocese.

VOICE: A diocese.

STEFFON: My husband used to be in this diocese, going to meeting all the time in diocese church. Organization. Every so many churches (unintelligible), it was very hectic there. It was so many time Roosevelt elected, you know. My husband elected president of church. (she laughs) Not church, our church. He'd been working for the church, the day he died, you know, he work. He work in the church. He work, he work. Yeah, everybody worked at the church. All my family now members at the Albania church. My grandchildren go that church. And I don't know -- Albania stay together, close, close. And Bishop Nawley [PH] used to come to house, visit. Any time have mass, big mass of bishop. Bishop S. Nawley. Maybe you hear him. You hear about Bishop S. S. Nawley?

VOICE: ...Bishop A.S. Nawley?

LEVINE: I don't know.

STEFFON: No. Yeah.

VOICE: He was very famous person.

STEFFON: You have in St. Mary's church big, big picture of him. He sacrificed, that guy. He said, let the -- Greek language that translated so many Albania books. A lot of Albania (unintelligible) he find Albania pledge. And a lot of big shot in those days work hard to keep Albania

alive. And somebody find a -- they find Albania pledge. And then they give him credit for that and the work, you know, for the organization. Even this morning, orthodox work together. Work together, together. Yeah. And the Albania newspaper Vatra [PH]. One big America, you know. I don't know now, whether or not, I don't, I don't know, I don't take in the paper. And my husband was member there. That's why I don't go in Albania. It's Communist Party is there. Yeah. (voice off-mike) Yeah, it was, Vatra, yeah, Vatra is big, big organization.

And Father Nawley, our bishop, he went in Albania, he was (unintelligible) minister for a while there. Then after the Greeks, you know. Make them to go away, you know, from Albania. He left Albania. They have King Zog [PH], in Albania, king. He's there for a while, and now changing. Changing, changing, you know. He go away, you know. He die now. They let also for those Albanians working underground to keep Albania language, you know. Even the Greeks there, they keep the Albania language underground, at school. And Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy is teaching Albania school. The English, English. They long time going, they dead now. And Mr. Pitcolonia [PH] is young student, he come here, in our church he open a school, keep the language, you know, for a while. They keep him.

And that Father Affinitheldos [PH], he donate a monastery to church. He, he buy a monastery to make the picnics, you know, keep the Albanians together. He donate, he donate, and he make a lot of donation to the priests, too. Yeah. They keep the, the school, Albania language, is that. They have some nice man, you know, trust, everybody trust him, trust him. Five (unintelligible) Albania languages, you know. (unintelligible) because the Greeks didn't want Albania to be Albania. Since some places near Yugoslavia, he grab one piece of Albania. A lot a Albanians is there. He grab it and they took em, and it belong to Yugoslavia. Tried five year to take him back, they never take back.

That's why the Greeks keep him for a while to Albania. And try to grab Gjirokaster [ph], Albania name, town. Try to take. Even now they're trying to take Gjirokaster. Gjirokaster. Underground, some -- some good mans in Albania, you know. They kill, they fight for Albanian flag, Albania communities, Albania, yeah. Well, it was Greeks don't let us speak Alban-- speak Albanian out, outside. Only in the house, you speak -- if my family don't know - Greek, you know. They don't talk the - . I go in school, I'm going school in Albania, Greek school. After, open school. I come America, you know. After, opened. Albania school after that, you know.

LEVINE: When you came to America...

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: ...what did you bring with you from Albania? What did you take to the new country?

STEFFON: I don't take anything.

LEVINE: Nothing? Just clothing? You didn't take any valuable...

STEFFON: No, no.

LEVINE: ...objects?

STEFFON: No, no. I don't take anything. Because now after they try to, to keep Albanian in our life, you know, and (unintelligible), too, because you have a lot of Greek books. And now I speak Greek because I went in Greek school. I write Greek, but I forget. I don't use me a--. I use them for a while because I have Greek lady close my house, and I talk with her Greek, you know. I keep around. Part of that you keep our language, Albanian, because my sister got marry into a husband, and don't speak Greek. They speak only Albanian. He was in America, going back in Albania.

Yeah, they don't, I survived in Greek before, you know. I learn it myself (unintelligible) my husband teach me to write Albania. And from now I want to write Albania, you know, to whoever is there. Don't use because my brother-in-law don't speak Greek. And my sisters wrote me because my sister's speaking Greek, too. And don't write no more the Greek, write in Albania. And my husband help me to write Albania, you know, a little bit. You know, it's the Greek language, America (unintelligible), most Albania wars, I write same thing, I write in Greek, some people don't understand me, you know, because I put nicks in Albania letters, and Greek, I mean American letters, same thing. (unintelligible) pronounce different. Yeah.

LEVINE: Do you remember the voyage? Do you remember the voyage...

STEFFON: Borias? [PH]

LEVINE: The voyage, when you came on the ship?

STEFFON: Yeah. It were time - the ship. The ship start to go back, when it go forward now America, it's bad winter that time -- March -- very windy. It was just like piece of mountain, snow come (unintelligible) ocean, and come against the boat, and push him backward. That's why you take so long to come up here. They take, because they take only, they stay two, all right, two weeks, but whole March, and that April 27, you go backwards. You don't come in America. We go backwards, the boat (voice off-mike), to, to, big snow storm, snow? Just like mountain. It push back, back to, they don't, they don't try to push him back (unintelligible) America. You got to leave him the boat go to where the wind blow it.

LEVINE: How long did it take you to come?

STEFFON: Figure out. Twelfth March, two weeks to March we stay there in Greece. Twenty-seven April and two weeks, almost six, seven weeks in the boat. Yeah.

LEVINE: Long time.

STEFFON: Because go back, backwards, backwards. Yeah. To wind blow backwards, you don't go forwards, you don't go. (unintelligible)

LEVINE: Do you remember when the ship came into the New York Harbor? Do you remember when the ship came into the New York Harbor?

STEFFON: Yeah. (voice off-mike) I remember but not much there. Well my family come there and pick her up, and group Albanians go, come -- Albania (unintelligible). They having a boat, about twenty or twenty-five people, Albanians, you know, come together. Came together, yeah, came together. We stay together.

LEVINE: Do you, do you remember Ellis Island at all?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: Do you remember what Ellis Island was like? (voice off-mike)

STEFFON: No, I don't think that. Well, right away from the boat everybody pick us up, you know, I remember. I remember the Statue of Liberty. When I saw that Liberty, "Oh, if I'm in America now, America." (voice off-mike) Yeah, I saw Liberty. Everybody yelling, "America, America," yeah. A lot of Albania from America go pick us a wife there. In Albania, come up, bring a wife, wives. (unintelligible) But I was so sick in boat -- ...

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE

TWO

STEFFON: I was light, you know and I saw girl, you know, die there from the ocean, too. The ocean, she die, sick, so sick. Everybody lay there and, sick, the boat, you know, make so, so has the boat, the push and push and push, and make, I get so sick. That's why I no want go if anybody say, you know, even pay me to go on boat, you know. I never go back, not any. (voice off-mike) I never go back.

LEVINE: Do you remember your first few days or weeks in America? Do you remember things that you saw that were different?

STEFFON: Well, let's see, different, yeah, Liberty there, you know. I saw that. I don't remember much, you know, because surrounded by all people. Everybody glad to go home now. The land. You know, so sick on the boat. Yeah.

LEVINE: Would you want to say anything about being an immigrant when you first came here, and you didn't know the language, how you felt?

STEFFON: Well, well, I have the family, you know. My sister fortunately come here. Her mother-in-law. My father, he bring her because her husband, he was here 1912, you know, it's a long time ago. I was young girl. And he, he bring to the Greece, you know, put in the boat, because my sister have a little boy and a mother-in-law. And the husband was here. He bring him, you know, to put in the boat, because was those days, don't leave them -- the ladies -- go alone, you know.

Yeah. And the little boy, my sister boy went in Albania, you know. He wants to go so bad, so bad, and went, you know, but he die after that. He wants to go back, you know. But he got sick. He got sick, you know. (Albanian) (voice off-mike) I have the family (after. I have the -- my sister-in-law stay together, you know, in the house. I have the, I have baby, you know, I do.

LEVINE: Is there anything else that you can think of that, that you would say about, about your life, or when you think back over your lifetime, what were the happiest times that you remember?

STEFFON: Well, I thought that America going to be better. I thought myself, because, you know, they're better. But the people didn't live that time better and I leave my Alban, of course, because Albania. Because they don't need that much those days, don't make money, you know. It was the meal ten cents, the bread ten cents, making five, six hundred, five, six dollars a week. What are you going to pay first, you know. You don't pay, not that much. Everybody struggle. A lot of young boys come here, stay together, seven, eight men in a room, in an apartment. (unintelligible) (voice off-mike) Stayed because they can afford it.

Then want send some help to Albania, too, because war after war, war after war, you know, there, the Balkans, a lot of wars. A lot of wars. Even Mussolini, his, his compari got father to his King Zog when he got marry. After time is back, and fight Albania, too, against Mussolini, against the king after that, you know. He's a compari to Albania. The compari. And though he make it to be friendly, so friendly before, after that he change. He try to grab something. I don't know. I don't remember that. He try to take some part, Greeks want some part, Yugoslavia want some part. Italian, you know, in between Alba-- Yugoslavians. It's nearby, you know. And Italian, too, same thing. Yugoslavia, same thing. Grab. Grab. Grab. Grab. They want grab land here, land there.

LEVINE: Did Albania have their own army?

STEFFON: Huh?

LEVINE: Did Albania have their own army?

STEFFON: (voice off-mike) Yes, they have a, they have carrion [ph]. Because my grandson, he went in Albania six weeks ago. He come last Friday. They send him some help Albania (unintelligible) the people, they look and send, because (unintelligible) because it was communist for fifty years, Albania now, before. And communist lose, win democrats (unintelligible) (voice off-mike) Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. You make a - me -- I make a hot sauce, make (unintelligible), every year. No, every two years, make.

VOICE: Every two years.

LEVINE: Uh-huh.

STEFFON: And we making pies, make sheesh kabob, make moussaka, make even lamb with the green beans this year. They love it, American people, like, like all these things.

LEVINE: Yeah.

STEFFON: I keep her up. And my grandson went now in Albania. He comes, stay six weeks there. Visit my relatives, my house, because I, when my father and mother left I left the house. My, my cousin there, because I don't go back there. I don't want it. And he want to see when I was born. And my grandson went there (unintelligible) much time, because have to work. They go them and send them there - with the food - - hospital things, but then orphanage, a lot of things. And they bring a lot of, lot of the children bring lot of things, see, (unintelligible) bring benches that the government pay and send them there. Just like Natick have church, Salisbury have church, Worcester have church, Boston have church, Cleveland have church, New York have church, (unintelligible) have church. (voice off-mike)

All, all, all get together and send a lot of things to Albania. A lot, alot, a lot of stuff. I sent a lot of my things. I give it her, she pick it up because I don't dare to. And the mother calls, and then a lot of calls now. For some, I mean some Albanians left because it was the other party, communist party let, going to Greece. And the Greece, Greek priest, or somebody, some Greeks, they went in Albania. And to democrat party, Albania party - accept him because he make propaganda to keep, to take our chil, to take our country again. And the Greeks got mad. They got, I got my paper there. I send paper. They send them back, two thousand people, back in Albania now. I don't know when we going to find a job now. We're going to lose the job. I don't know. Yeah. (voice off-mike) Yeah, I got the Albania paper (unintelligible). Vatra is big, big paper, sent all over the, all over the (unintelligible), all over the countries because every place you go you meet some Albania. They spread Albania all over, you know. Yeah, they spread.

LEVINE: Okay, is there anything else that you can think of that you would like to say about coming to this country or...

STEFFON: Well, now this country is beautiful. Now is getting, is America now. Yeah, it's beautiful. (voice off-mike) Yeah. You can't complain by America now. Can't complain America. I become, I become citizen. My husband was citizen.

LEVINE: Was that a very happy day for you?

STEFFON: Yeah. (voice off-mike) Well, we don't like the communist, you know, to grab Albania, not communist party. They got it. They got it. They staying now fifty years. Even the, the people there don't like the communists, you know. They got to accept it. The world change. The government changes, you know. It's communist in Russia, everybody try to be communist. The Italy communist party, now Yugoslavia, (unintelligible). (voice off-mike) Yeah, having trouble now. And now open the church in Albania. All orthodox church is open again. Because

my grandson went there, he baptize a little baby, too. (unintelligible) He stay five weeks, he stay in Albania. Yeah, he loved the country, because beautiful country. (unintelligible) somebody don't, don't put money, you know, to open business, you know, then that's the trouble.

The communist, you know, I, you have a house, four, five rooms, and my father and my mother die, and my sister living there, and communist party took the house, live in one room, two rooms, one bedroom, one room, extra room, and put them, somebody who pay rent, you know. Because don't have much room, not much room. And people don't like that, you know, took, took the house that my father and her father have (unintelligible) factory factory there, too. They had to -- make meals, factory, make the flour. We eat that one and make flour, and we have a mill too small (unintelligible). And when I live (unintelligible) there, when she went there, the communist party (unintelligible) her up. And gave our mill, our mill factory. They don't give you anything to family.

That's why you losing money. Those people don't have the money. No. The communist taking over. Some people suffer there. Every, I remember a big river there going. And they had a big, big, well, I mean pool, just like big, big pool. One that Jesus baptized, you know. (unintelligible) couple of boys that they get [not understood] to cross the water. And they make big, big (unintelligible) cross. They give him prize, first prize. (voice off-mike) The boys go, and, and (unintelligible) everybody go there (unintelligible).

Everybody sell everything, you know. People go there because Orthodox. But the communist, you know, they ruin those things. But now they're back. Churches, too. They opened the churches. Yeah, opened. And they have a couple of priests, too. For the Greece, the Greece try to make priests. Our priests, some priests go from New York and Boston there, and make, try to make priests there now. Yeah, they try. They try so hard, you know, to keep Albania alive. Everybody try. There are some people are proud to be Albanian, and they keep her up, keep her up, keep her up. Some people going to Greek church. They born in Albania, but going to Greek church. And they put them in the paper when they die. Born in Albania, but going Greek church.

LEVINE: Why do you think they do that?

STEFFON: Well, they do that because pro-Greeks. (voice off-mike) They all want power. That's why Greeks want to take Gjirokaster, because pro-Greeks there, some. Try time, try to take so many times the Albania. So many times try the Greeks. Albania got, produce a lot of things, lot of things produce. (unintelligible) (voice off-mike) They have to work, making, yeah. Some people in the, the villages, have villages, and keep cow there, keep chicken. They're doing, they doing all right, you know. Chicken, vegetables make, you know. Oulski [PH] they make. Gregory send, bring me some oulski from Renova [PH]. (voice off-mike) Yeah. I, have some just like the strawberries like that, but white. And make oulski. What's the berry, oulski [PH]? Oulski. Very, very, very good, oulski. They make them sour there. They make, they bring me, I, I don't bring, keep, keep, my grandson bring me there. They don't keep them so many. They keep them. Yeah.

VOICE: He meet everybody?

STEFFON: Huh?

VOICE: He meet everybody, said?

STEFFON: He meet everybody because no have no time. Stay only one night in Korce. He meet outside. Everybody said come in the house. Don't have any no time, time. They working. He stay in the village in Renova [PH] in my father's house, you know. He want to stay there. (voice off-mike) No, he only stay one day. One day visit, you know, (unintelligible), yeah. And one, he going Tirane, is soldier I think, on my husband's cousin. He notice something, Gregory, my, he called my husband name Gregory, my grandson named Steffon. They went there. And he saw the name there and they went there, and wait three hours in the hotel to meeting my grandson. He says so nice how (unintelligible) in the army. Yeah. He has been to village Renova. Yeah. He meet so many nice people (unintelligible). They, he like it, he enjoy, He enjoy. Everybody when he go there, have to meet everybody, everybody start crying because no, no time to visit the houses. I start cry, too, you know. I start cry. Well.

LEVINE: When you, when you're here, and you're sitting as, at this time in your life, what do you think about when you think of the past? What comes to your mind.

STEFFON: From Paris -- from Paris the clothes go fast to Korce in Albania. From Paris the style. The culture Albania - they have to -- the style from Paris. Yeah. That, that big, the culture, big city, big city, big city. After come Tirana, that's capital. But the communist now ruin the capital, you know, because they lost. They ruin Tiranea --. They ruin. (voice off-mike) Yeah, yeah.

LEVINE: It used to be like the Paris of, of...

VOICE: Modern, yeah.

LEVINE: ...of Albania, but then it, the communists came and it changed.

STEFFON: Yeah. It changed, changed. Changed so many times, changed.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, we've talked for just...

STEFFON: Was, same, same time to Albania being under Turkey so many times, been under Turkish. They ruin the Turkish. But the soldiers, the Turkish people, my father say -- very honest. They pay money, you know. Because my, my father have mill, have a lot of flour. They make, they donate bread, come from the Turkish. They building, you know, the bread, they sell them there. The soldiers paid, (unintelligible) money to, to, you know. That's why my father don't come. Doing all right there before. They stay there. They don't want to come, don't want to come, don't come. And my sister got married there. They don't come.

LEVINE: Okay. Well, I think maybe we'll stop here. I want to thank you very much...

STEFFON: Welcome, yeah.

LEVINE: ...for all your reminiscences, and all what you remember about Albania...

STEFFON: Yeah.

LEVINE: ...and your experience.

STEFFON: Yeah, they have Albania organization for young people, for young people. They had the last week for (unintelligible) the Serbian, Sunday making to Washington. And expecting to be there about six, seven hundred people, you know, in Washington. (voice off-mike) The organiza -- the young people, huh? (voice off-mike) Yeah? Nice. Well, Michael don't go there. (unintelligible) to work, you know, send him Canada, that's why. My grandson used to go every year, every year. Big organization. Albania national organization. They give you scholarship to Albania people, too. (voice off-mike) Been about fifty, I think fifty years celebrating, I think, the organization.

LEVINE: Okay, well, I want to thank you very much. I've been speaking with Efthimia...

STEFFON: That's all I remember. I don't know. (she laughs)

LEVINE: ...Efthimia Dishnica Steffon. (voice off-mike) And you came in 1920...

STEFFON: Twenty.

LEVINE: ...when you were seventeen years old.

STEFFON: Old, yeah.

LEVINE: And I want to thank you very much.

STEFFON: Yeah, welcome.

LEVINE: This tape will now be in Ellis Island in the museum, in the Oral History Library.

STEFFON: Yeah, okay.

LEVINE: So your voice will be preserved there.

STEFFON: (Albanian)

LEVINE: Thank you very much.

STEFFON: You want drink? Cold drink? (voice off-mike) Drink? You can get a drink.

LEVINE: Okay, this is Janet Levine signing off.
EI-375/STEFFON