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Interview by Chan, Grace Siu Wai

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Translation of Transcription

Tape starts

(My name is Grace. The interviewee is Anita. The time now is 10:45 p.m., today's date is 9th March 2000)

The interview starts

(Grace = interviewer, Anita = interviewee)

(The interviewee was informed in advance that it is an interview about her childhood.)

Grace: Let's start our interview now. I know that you live in a fishing family when you are a child, could you please tell me something about your life in childhood ?

Anita: My life in childhood? I was very poor at that time!

Grace: How poor was it ?

Anita: So poor that we could just earn the breakfast but dinner or the dinner but breakfast.

Grace: hm ... You have said that you lived in a fishing family, which means you lived in a boat Those time?

Anita: Yup

Grace: What kind of job did you responsible for then?

Anita: I was responsible for taking care for my younger siblings.

Grace: Any other works except that?

Anita: Preparing meals for the whole family ... my parents were poor.

Grace: How many siblings are there in your family then?

Anita: I have eight siblings including me.

Grace: You lived in quite a big family!

Anita: Yeah ...I am the third one among my siblings, I have two elder brothers, one sister and six younger brothers (one of them died from sickness, so Anita just said there were eight in total before.)

Grace: As the third sibling in your family, that means when you were just a little gal, your younger siblings must be more or less younger than you, how did you take care for them?

Anita: Feeding them and looked after them. I ... my mom didn't have time to take care for them, so I just took these work, and thus I didn't need to do the work.

Grace: What do u mean by the second "work"?

Anita: It's the fishing work.

Grace: I see... When didn't you take care for your younger siblings?

Anita: When they were ten something.

Grace: Was the work after you didn't need to take care for them a hard one?

Anita: I didn't know what is a hard job. I just did what I should do.

Grace: You didn't even feel you are poor?

Anita: It's the environment that I should face and that's it.

Grace: You've mentioned that you have a younger sister, did you feel there is any differences between you and your younger sister?

Anita: She's luckier than I am, at lease she had chance to study but I hadn't.

Grace: How many years she is younger than you are?

Anita: She's five years younger than me ... no... She is now forty something ... (thinking) ... She's ten years younger than me! (a little bit surprised)

Grace: It's really a big age difference.

Anita: She's the fifth, and me the third.

Grace: That means there were two elder siblings borned before you?

Anita: Yup, two brothers.

Grace: And a younger brother between you and you younger sister, right?

Anita: Yup

Grace: I wonder whether you the two elder brothers had chances to study?

Anita: The eldest hadn't, but the second had. The other siblings had, except the eldest brother and me.

Grace: How did you feel when u were watching them went to schools everyday?

Anita: Feeling ... I felt I was not as lucky as they were.

Grace: You like studying very much actually?

Anita: Sure.

Grace: What advantages of studying do u think of?

Anita: At least one can reading and writing and knows more things.

Grace: Was there any things that you were better when compared to them or any things you wanted to
Learn that time?

Anita: I wanted to learn from clothes-making schools, but I couldn't. I didn't have chanced to do it.

Grace: "You didn't have chanced" means...

Anita: Our (economic) environment didn't allow me to do so.

Grace: I see, you need to help your family, so u couldn't do it.

Anita: Yup, the little skill of making clothes now I have was learned by myself, it is some old skill
actually.

Grace: But one don't know that kind of skill without learning it before, there should have had somebody
taught you at first!

Anita: No, I didn't, I just learned it by making paper patterns according to the finished clothes, then I just
tried how different parts of the paper patterns of a clothe should be combined as a clothe.

Grace: Did you make clothes for yourself?

Anita: Yes

Grace: Did you dare to wear it? (Laughing)

Anita: Sure! I even made for others!

Grace: Really? You must make beautiful clothes then!

Anita: It's fairly good. I had made for my friends for no returns.

Grace: Your friends? Where did u acquaintance your friends?

Anita: Their parents were of the same occupation of ours, we were fishermen.

Grace: Do u contact with them now?

Anita: No

Grace: Why? You are friends.

Anita: As we didn't have telephones those time. We had no contact with each other since we got married.

When they married and moved to ... like say ... Macau, Hong Kong or Aberdeen, we didn't see each other frequently. We didn't have telephones so we have no contact now. It's different from today, that we have telephones. You know where the others are by calling them.

Grace: Was your friendship with them good?

Anita: Yup, we got along with each our as if we were friends.

Grace: I see... There must be no computers that time, people now have computers and electric games.

What's the difference between the children of today and of that time?

Anita: Today's children are luckier, at least their parents buy for them what they want. I think it is the small group who's parents couldn't buy them things,

Grace: Your parents couldn't buy toys for you when you were little, right? Did you blame them this?

Anita: No, they tried their best to **work**, that's our economic situation not good.

Grace: How about the children of the other boats?

Anita: Some of them had.

Grace: You admired them?

Anita: It's hard to say ... I saw my parents worked very hard ... I remember there was once a crab bit my eldest brother. He cried. But he still had to continue to work after crying. That's why I never blame my parents and my mom even worked very hard.

Grace: You felt satisfied already once the whole family could eat fully?

Anita: Yup ... I remember there was another once my Dad was sick and thus in hospital, my eldest brother could just go outside working. Mom sent us to my Aunt since she had to take care for Dad. My eighth brother needed to drink milk at that time, it's lucky that my Aunt gave me milk powder so that I could make milk for him. She gave us food that left from her meals. My father's

health became better later that my mom didn't need to take care for him so frequently. So we just returned to our own boat and continued our living then.

Grace: Is there any events impressive for you?

Anita: There was once the eldest brother was taking the fish founding from the boat to the land to sell it, but carelessly, he dropped all back into the sea. He then jumped into the sea and wanted to catch them back. My Aunt saw that and suggested him stop catching, but he felt too pity to stop. Then, my aunt suggested him again and he stopped this time. He could just catch some of the founding finally.

Grace: Did you cry for him when you are seeing the event?

Anita: No, I didn't, there's nothing to do with the event even I cried, I could just give him a hand.

Grace: It's really pity

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Grace: In short, do u think your childhood a happy one?

Anita: hm ... There was nothing described as happy or unhappy that time I think.