

TITLE OF VIDEO: Salvador González and Magaly González (daughter)

DATE OF VIDEO: Summer 2018

TRANSLATED BY: Sofía Kearns

DATE OF TRANSCRIPTION: June 2019

[00:03] Salvador González:	I was born in Medellín.
Sofía Kearns:	Did you involved in the textile industry there in Medellín?
SG:	In Bello.
SK	How did you do so?
SG:	Well, what could I say. I arrived there to Bello and I was old enough to work and then I started working, but I got there to ask for work until I settled in Fabricato. And after Fabricato I went to Pantex, another factory.
[00:30] SK	What work did you do in Fabricato specifically?
SG:	In Fabricato I was, what could I say, I was the weavers' manager, because I directed the weavers, I ordered the weavers, in short, and then I went to Pantex, and in Pantex I worked as an ordinary weaver for a long time, more than ten years, I think.
SK:	And, what year were you born Don Salvador?
SG:	Nineteen hundred...
[00:60] Magaly González:	Twenty nine
SK:	How did you get here and get involved with textiles in Greenville?
[01:30]	Due to a man named Mr. Yates. That man arrived in Colombia and at that time I was in Barranquilla.
SK:	Hmmm
SG:	I was working in Barranquilla in a factory called Celta. He was there asking about the weavers and, and he chose two, José Arroyabe and me. José Arroyabe did not want to come because the wife did not let him come. Myself, I did come. He stayed there. I was learning mechanics there. And he was already a mechanic, and, and José Arroyabe was also a mechanic. The Arroyabes were given the position of mechanics. What else?

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[02:00] MG:	In any case, that man was the one who hired them in Fabricato. But when you ...
SK:	Don Salvador, and then in what year did you get to Greenville?
SG:	I do not remember. I know that it is been about forty-five, or more years since I came here. And I got to work at Mr. Yates' factory.
SK:	And you came directly from Colombia to Greenville?
SG:	I did not.
MG:	It was in nineteen seventy-one.
[02:30] SK:	And what work did you do here in textiles? Did you do the same work you did in Colombia?
SG:	Yes, I was a mechanic, but I did not work as a mechanic. As chief mechanic.
SK:	And how was the work, was it difficult?
SG:	It is machinery and one would disassemble a machine and reassemble it. But I was a mechanic and a weaver. And I knew the two trades.
[03:00] SG:	And as a mechanic I graduated in Celta, Barranquilla. And then I I came here (the US) with Mr. Yates.
MG:	How many companions came with you? There were ten. Do you remember the names?
SG:	Alcides Vélez, that was one, ah, I do not remember.
SK:	Mr. Yates brought ten people?
MG:	Ten workers came, Mr Yates gave them an offer to come here to the US. to work in a textile factory
[03:30]	They were hired by a company whose head office was in Rhode ... what's the name?

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SK:	Rhode Island? So was it where he first came?
MG:	He arrived in Rhode Island. And he worked there for three years and then there was the opportunity to work in Greenville, which at that time was the world capital of textiles and several
[04:00]	colleagues and I ¹ came to work in the Brandon textile company
SG:	Mill
SK:	Brandon Mill
MG:	You worked at that mill?
SG:	[He nods]
MG:	And do you remember your colleagues who came with you to work in Greenville?
SG:	Listen, Nemesio
MG:	Hey, Nemesio
SG:	This, Darío “el putas”
MG:	When you arrived here in Greenville, were there very few Hispanic people working in textiles?
[04:30]	
SG	Like two or three, the other one was Gustavo, Gustavo ... I do not remember how it was
MG:	There were around ten people recruited by the ...
SG:	Company
MG:	For the JP
SK:	JP Stevens

¹ Magaly speaks in the first person as if she were him/his voice.

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MG:	And they came directly from Colombia, and some already had their families here with them. Did Don Bernardo come too? Don Bernardo ...
SG:	Oh yeah!
MG:	He already died, right?
SG:	He already died.
MG:	Don Bernardo, what was it? What was his last name?
[05:00] SG	I do not remember.
MG:	Elkin Berrío?
SG:	Elkin Berrío also died.
MG:	Right, but was he also working in textiles?
SG:	Yes.
MG:	The Tabares family also came, Mr. Tabares was from Bello
	Horacio
SG:	Horacio Tabares. Manuel Arboleda, do you remember?
MG:	Manuel Arboleda ...
SG:	Nemesio, the Bustamantes. Remember the Bustamantes?
MG:	Yes
SG: [05:30] MG	The Pineda. The Pinedas were also there. Alfonso Posada
SG:	I remember them as well.
MG:	Fernando Bolívar
SG:	Yes.

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MG:	Okay. Etc. Many more. At that time they spent most of their time working. You used to tell us that you spent the majority of you time working. 16 hours a day. As there was not, they did not have as much
SK:	Control...
MG:	No, no, no, not control but as
SG:	We had nothing to do out there, so we kept working.
[06:00] MG:	They didn't have much in the way of entertainmet. Then they worked a lot.
SG:	Because when we arrived here there were very few workers and then, the longer one worked, the more he earned. And then we took advantage of this.
MG:	Tell him what you told us that another man from another company, would tell you to go to his company and he would pay you more. But you could not do that because you already had a contract.
[06:30] SG:	I do not remember.
SK:	Then maybe there was competition between ...
MG:	Ah! He was told that they paid more if he went there. But since he had a contract, what he did was when he was done for the day he would go to his company and worked for him for a few hours.
SG:	With Mr. Yates. [inaudible]
MG:	Many brought their families quickly, others did not. Then as those who did not have family here,
[07:00] MG:	the only free day they had was on Sunday, and they would meet to have fun together playing cards, cooking our typical dishes, right? Did you play together? They would drink some and make a call to our family in Colombia, which by the way was quite expensive and for ten minutes we paid a hundred dollars.

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[07:30] MG:	For lack of language ... You guys did not know how to speak English? Or were you able to speak a little?
SG:	I did not speak anyt.
MG:	[laughter]
SG:	I have never spoken English.
MG:	You speak a little. For lack of language we did not go to restaurants or discos, or to very public places because we did not know how to communicate or even ask for a good plate of food, having the money to pay for it but not being able to..., then they met with each other. And our country's produce for cooking were sold to us by a Cuban family who came every month on a bus and bought bananas and yucca, right? Do you remember that?
[08:00] SG:	[He nods, agrees]
MG:	Time went by and I had the chance to work in other companies such as ...
SK:	Woodside? Beatty?
MG:	Did you work at the Woodside? Or the Beatty Plant?
SG:	Woodside and Beatty Plant
MG	Did you also work there as a weaver? And with whom did you work there?
[08:30] SG:	Oh, I do not remember.
MG:	At the age of three I brought my son Hector to live with me, who also settled down quickly and formed his family here and who worked for some time in textiles but then devoted himself to welding and worked for more than thirty five years in that profession and now is enjoying his retirement from the ...

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[09:00] SK:	How did work in textiles compare between Barranquilla and here in the US? Was it better, was it worse?
SG:	It was harder here.
SK:	Why?
SG:	Because, I do not know. Here they make you work harder, they made you disassemble the machines and one was not trained to disassemble them, to change [inaudible]
[09:30] SG:	and neither was one taught to change [inaudible]. One scarcely fixed the machine when a stick was damaged and burst, an arm was broken, or a belt, but not to change parts, no. And then that's what was different.
SK:	And here you also worked more hours?
[10:00] SG:	Yes too. I liked to work hard.
SK:	Ah ...
SG:	I worked hard everywhere.
SK:	So, you brought a son and then the whole family. How did you do that?
SG:	Yes. First I brought Héctor and then everyone came. Between Hector and I we broguht everyone.
SK:	And how many came?
[10:25] SG:	Ah?
SK:	How many, dis other children came?
MG:	How many children did you have?
SG:	Six children
MG:	How many boys?

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SG:	Tree boys.
MG:	How many girls?
SG:	Three girls.
SK:	Tell me a little about those early years, what you remember, ah,
[11:00]	what life was like with the children, how was it to settle here, was it difficult? For example,
SG:	Honestly no. No, here what I was dealing with the most was
[11:30]	work. You worked very hard, had working relationships in some companies and in others, you preferred one company and others did others, for example when I came here with Nemesio and Darío López, “el putas”, as we called him, they went to work in another factory, JP Stevens. I did not work at JP Stevens, I worked at Brandon and he worked at JP Stevens. But that was already their preference and everyone did what they wanted.
[12:00]	
SK:	And did any of your children work in textiles, too?
SG:	Hector, I think he worked in textiles
SK:	But then he changed his profession? And the daughters?
MG:	Manuel, Manuel also worked as a textile worker
SG:	Who?
MG:	Manuel and Gloria
SG:	Gloria too.
[12:30]	
SG:	I even had to teach them to work in textiles. Teach them. But now ...
MG:	They say that Manuel was a very good weaver
SG:	Oh?
MG:	They say that Manuel was a very good weaver

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SG:	Yes. And his dad was too
SK:	[laugh] Sure.
MG:	The teacher
SK:	The teacher.
SK: [13:00]	How did the children have fun? Because you tell me that you only had Sundays off, right? That you worked all the time and that on Sundays it was the only day you rested, saw friends ... And your children who came to work in textiles or who arrived later. How did they have fun, what did they do?
SG:	I do not know what to say. Because it is very difficult to know what each of your children is doing.
[13:30] SK:	When you were working in textiles here, how were relationships with the other workers who were not Hispanic?
SG:	No, I do not know what to say because I did not relate to them. Then I do not have anything to say.
SK [14:00]	So there was not a supervisor who supervised all the Hispanics and non-Hispanics?
SG:	Yes, there was [inaudible]. But I do not even remember what his name was.
SK:	Oh, so basically both groups were separated.
SG:	No. No one separated us.
SK:	no?
SG:	We were all partners and we all worked in the same factory.
SK:	So how did you guys communicate with those who did not speak Spanish?
SG:	Using gestures.
SK:	Ah!

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[14:30] SG:	Here you do for example, when you don't know how to speak and do not understand others, you use gestures and thus you understand others.
SK:	And the relations between those who did not speak Spanish and you guys, were they cordial? Were they good? or how were they?
[15'00] SG:	Yes, they were normal, normal because we did not offend any of them, nor did they offend us.
SK:	In textiles, ah, was there a particular machine that you knew better?
SG:	I knew all of them.
SK	Yes?
SG:	In textiles, everyone knew all of them but not one in particular, no.
[15:30] SK:	Ah, and when you arrived here, were the machines here more modern than those in Colombia, or less modern?
SG:	There were less modern machines and there were more modern.
SK:	Ah! Both
MG:	There was everything.
SG:	There were both [inaudible]. Some more and others less. Because in Colombia there were also very modern machines that came from here. And here there were good ones and bad ones.
[16:00] SK:	But you had to disassemble those machines, right?
SG:	Yes
SK:	And did you ever have any problem?

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SG:	I did not
SK:	good!
SG:	I have not had any problems at work here (in the US)
SK:	Then I imagine that since you knew both the old machines and the new machines, eh, your work would be very appreciated. right?
SG: [16:30]	I do not know [laughter]
SG:	I do not know because [inaudible]
MG:	Yes, he was very appreciated, I think, because he told us of other companies calling him to work. But he could not. This guy would offer him more pay. Well, he was very appreciated because other managers in other factories invited him to work with them. Right? You told us that he said he would pay you more money if you worked with him.
[17:00] SG:	I would go to work where they would pay me more.
SK:	Oh yeah?
SG:	Of course, I was very interested in making money. Because the way it works is that if one is working here for twenty pesos and they pay you thirty over there, you go over there.
SK:	And do you remember in which textile company you worked the longest?
[17:30] SG:	I do not remember either. I know that, it seems to me that at Brandon Mill I worked the longest.
SK:	And, did you live near the Brandon Mill?
SG:	Yes.
SK:	So you walked every day?
SG:	Yes, three blocks away.

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SK:	If I may ask you this question about your memories of that time working in the textile companies, are they good, or so and so?
[18:00] SG:	No, well, so and so.
MG:	No, they're good, they're good because it was your ... You came to do what you knew how to do and you liked it because you enjoyed being a weaver. Think and you know that truly they are good memories. I also think that you are grateful in this country for all the opportunities it gave you and because in this country you were able to set up a second home.
[18:30] MG:	Because your wife came, your children, all your children established themselves here and now they have their own children, and their children are fine, thank God.