

EXODUS Project

Interview of Sarra Patskin

September 14, 2016

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Sarra Patskin.mp3

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Bernard Danzig: Can you hear me?

Sarra Patskin: Yes.

Bernard Danzig: Ok. What is your name, please?

Sarra Patskin: My name Sarra Patskin.

Bernard Danzig: And where were you born?

Sarra Patskin: I was born in Ukraine, the city of **Kharkov**.

Bernard Danzig: And you're date of birth?

Sarra Patskin: I was born on the 19th of March, 1929.

Bernard Danzig: And what did your parents do, Ms. Patskin?

Sarra Patskin: You know, I was born in a large family.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: My father was a watch master, a watch master and my mother was a housekeeper.

Bernard Danzig: So your father worked on watches and clocks and the like?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, Yes.

Bernard Danzig: Aha, aha. And how many brothers and sisters?

Sarra Patskin: And I had two brothers, no sisters.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: So three children.

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Bernard Danzig: And one of your brothers lives here at Plough Towers?

Sarra Patskin: Yes. I am so happy...

Bernard Danzig: Very good.

Sarra Patskin: ...to have him here.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: Even close to my door...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, next door.

Sarra Patskin: ...on the same floor...

Bernard Danzig: Yes, yes.

Sarra Patskin: ...and close to me and he helps me in many, many ways. Now I have problems to go some, for, for buying something and he helps me.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: He buys me everything.

Bernard Danzig: Where did you go to school in Russia? Tell me something about your early school.

Sarra Patskin: You know, I was born in **Kharkov**.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: And not far away from our house there was a school. The name Number One, the name of leader, the leader of our country. It was a, a good school.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: I studied good.

Bernard Danzig: I'll bet you were a good student.

Sarra Patskin: Yes.

Bernard Danzig: Yes, yes.

Sarra Patskin: You know, I don't know if there are such habit in America...

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

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Sarra Patskin: But when people study on top marks... I received every year, I received it was, a habit but I, I, try to go find it but I don't remember where it is, somewhere.

Bernard Danzig: But you received high marks?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, I have some but _____. So such certificate that I was the best student of this grade.

Bernard Danzig: Wow, very good.

Sarra Patskin: In the first, second, third, and fourth, before the war I graded it from the four, fourth grade.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: And then in 1941, the war began... and I could not study anymore because in our school there was a hospital.

Bernard Danzig: Oh really?

Sarra Patskin: For wounded people.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: And... then the fascist came nearer and nearer and very fast and we knew that they were, were cruel to all people and to especially to Jews, so we decided we needed to run away.

Bernard Danzig: And where did you go?

Sarra Patskin: It was not so easy. A lot of people wanted to leave their places and... with great difficulty we got it.

Bernard Danzig: Where did you go?

Sarra Patskin: So, we got to Middle Asia you know, such country Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan...

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: ...so we came there and we were sent to a small village.

Bernard Danzig: How old were you when you did that?

Sarra Patskin: I was 12 years old, 12 years.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: And I could not study anymore, live here...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

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Sarra Patskin: ...because... I don't know why. I was sent to the field, it was a cotton field to work there.

Bernard Danzig: Cotton field?

Sarra Patskin: Cotton field, yeah.

Bernard Danzig: And you worked in the cotton field?

Sarra Patskin: I work.

Bernard Danzig: Did you pick cotton?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, yes, yes. And we lived very, very poor. We, we didn't have enough food to eat.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: And my brother was so young. He was 3 years old and he didn't understand the situation. He said, "I want to eat. Give me eat. Give me drink."

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm. Well, how, did you feel any antisemitism where you were?

Sarra Patskin: You know, there we didn't feel it. The people were not so satisfied that we came there because... for example, our host... he had two buildings. In one he lived with his mother. And another, he gave to us.

Bernard Danzig: So you rented the building from her, rented where you lived from this person?

Sarra Patskin: Yes.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: We were there. They were not so... bad to us but they are not so glad to give up their...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...and my brother, my older brother, he passed away unfortunately... not long ago. And he, he worked on the field and I. My mother was with your friend, my brother...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...at home and he tried to feed us. It was not so...

Bernard Danzig: What did your father do?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, he worked for information. My father worked at the military aviation plant so he was kept on the territory of this plant.

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Bernard Danzig: He was kept what?

Sarra Patskin: He, he, he didn't, he couldn't go with us.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, he had to stay there and work.

Sarra Patskin: He was not allowed. He stayed in **Kharkov**. But before...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, he couldn't move with you when you... Oh...

Sarra Patskin: Yes, yes. Because it was a military plant and, but, fortunately before the fascist came to **Kharkov** he left with his plant...

Bernard Danzig: Oh...

Sarra Patskin: ...he left to ____ there was such... city, the name of this city now is ____ and formerly it, when we came there, it was **Molotov**, by the name of there, one of the leaders of our...

Bernard Danzig: Well, how far... when your father and the plant moved, how, how close was he to where you were living?

Sarra Patskin: Oh, it was a good question. You know, a lot of people were apart of each other and the government understood that people would be... look for their relative and there was such city ____.

Interviewer2: Ok, say something.

Bernard Danzig: There we go. Ok, all right, now.

Interviewer2: Ok, that's working. {laugh}

Bernard Danzig: Now, so your father... came...

Sarra Patskin: So there was such ____ and we were, lived in Uzbekistan. _____. It's a small village. So... when we came there somebody told us that there was such a place where we can send our address if somebody wants to see, to...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, to find you?

Sarra Patskin: To find us. He can find our address and that was how...

Bernard Danzig: Aha... And so you were all back together again?

Sarra Patskin: One day, one day we got a telegram, "I'm alive and I want to see you."

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: And he was so, so excited that he forgot to undersign. {laugh} But we understood...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, who it was... Yeah, Mm-hmm.

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Sarra Patskin: ...it was him and so we received a letter and details and he began the work to invite us to go to **Molotov** to live with him.

Bernard Danzig: And how long were ya'll separated? Do you remember?

Sarra Patskin: Oh, maybe a year.

Bernard Danzig: Really?

Sarra Patskin: Yes. It was not so easy to arrange everything...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: But finally we were headed to join...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...each other, but it was very good thing...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...but the life was very, very difficult, very difficult.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, I understand. Wow.

Sarra Patskin: We didn't have enough food. We didn't have enough... to put on.

Bernard Danzig: Clothes, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: We were very, very poor, poor.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, wow.

Sarra Patskin: But I wanted to study very much and I continued my tradition to do my best and I graduated school with excellent _____, excellent marks.

Bernard Danzig: Aha. Did you go to college at all?

Sarra Patskin: Yes. In Russia it was named institute.

Bernard Danzig: Institute. Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: Institute. Institute of Foreign Languages. I liked foreign languages.

Bernard Danzig: And that's where you learned English?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, and I, I graduated from school with good marks and so... I, all my examines were...

Bernard Danzig: Good grades.

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Sarra Patskin: ...best and I entered this institute the first course, _____ course, the first course. I started good. I liked to, to study English. The second foreign English, language, was German.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: Yes, so I started to go... at school, I started German... but at the institute I began to study English and, at that time, the war finished.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: Yes, and we decided to return back to Ukraine, to our city. It was not so easy to do, but we decided it absolutely and we came to **Kharkov**. Unfortunately, our house was occupied by other people so we didn't, we could not find where to live. Our relative in **Kharkov** allowed us to live for some time but it was not the decision of the whole and the family, we rented some house...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...and I continued to study at Kharkov University and graduated on the _____ course I married and... we went to, and he graduated from his physical institute. So we went to the place of his work. It was in... in Russia.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: But soon...

Bernard Danzig: What did he do, Ms. Patskin? Your husband?

Sarra Patskin: He was engineer, engineer, yes.

Bernard Danzig: And what kind of work...

Sarra Patskin: _____ engineer cause he was...

Bernard Danzig: What kind of work did he do?

Sarra Patskin: Oh, he, he was a very...

Bernard Danzig: What did he work on? What kind of things?

Sarra Patskin: You know, it was a famous Russian, Ukrainian/Russian...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...plant, military.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, a military plant. Aha.

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Sarra Patskin: Yeah military... and I told, tell you about it. It was very important because when we decided to immigrate...

Bernard Danzig: To America?

Sarra Patskin: ...to America. It was a very, a very... difficult point that he was working for...

Bernard Danzig: That they would let him go?

Sarra Patskin: There was a time when all working at such plants will not be, were not allowed to immigrate.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Interviewer2: When was this?

Bernard Danzig: Let's back up a bit though, Ok? All right, how many children did you have?

Sarra Patskin: Only one... {laugh}

Bernard Danzig: One, Ok.

Sarra Patskin: Only one, my daughter. You know, when I graduated from the institute, I began to work... at... night school.

Bernard Danzig: You worked at night school?

Sarra Patskin: Yes...

Bernard Danzig: What did you teach?

Sarra Patskin: All... English, German, and Russian.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: It was a night school, all working people. During the war, a lot of them didn't have possibility to study and now they worked. They had families and... we were working to... them to study, to study, to have... a variety of...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm. To, to help people learn languages and all? Is that what you mean?

Sarra Patskin: Not only languages, everything. Mathematics...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, oh.

Sarra Patskin: It was school.

Bernard Danzig: A rounded kind of education, so...

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Sarra Patskin: It was school and along with other subjects there was foreign languages taught, taught.

Bernard Danzig: Foreign languages. Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...foreign languages.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah. Wow.

Sarra Patskin: And I began to talk... I graduated from institute in 1952, my daughter was born in 1952, and I began to work at school. And all my working life I worked at... night school. It was, it was {laugh} all my life I, I... connected with military...

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: ...things. Our school was at _____ military plant.

Bernard Danzig: Uh-huh. Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: And I worked there for 20 years. Then, our school, regulate... all people didn't... need to, to study anymore so the classes were less, less, less...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...and the school was closed...

Bernard Danzig: Closed, uh-huh.

Sarra Patskin: Closed, and I began to, to work in another night school, you know.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: You were surprised that I have only one daughter because it was two shifts school.

Bernard Danzig: I'm sorry, it was what?

Sarra Patskin: Two shifts, excuse me, I'm not... shifts.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, shifts. Ok, yeah, right.

Sarra Patskin: Two shifts at school. So I went in the morning to school and all day long I was at school and only late at night I return back to home.

Bernard Danzig: Home. Wow.

Sarra Patskin: So... {laugh}...

Bernard Danzig: You put in some long...

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Sarra Patskin: My poor daughter left alone. It's my luck that she was very, she could any, everything. I put the key on her neck, not to lose it... {laugh}

Bernard Danzig: Lose it.

Sarra Patskin: She came from school. She studied good. {laugh} And my... husband had a lot of missions. He was not at home.

Bernard Danzig: He traveled a lot with his work? Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: Traveled... and even if he was at home, he came late from his job...

Bernard Danzig: From his work...

Sarra Patskin: So she was always alone.

Bernard Danzig: Aha. Yes.

Sarra Patskin: My luck was I lived with my neighbor. My apartment had two rooms in one. We lived with my husband and daughter. In another, a pretty woman with her daughter.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, really?

Sarra Patskin: Yes, and she was very, very good...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...And she helped me with my daughter and we lived very, very friendly.

Bernard Danzig: Let, let me ask you... did you feel any antisemitism there?

Sarra Patskin: Yes.

Bernard Danzig: You still did?

Sarra Patskin: Still. You know...

Interviewer: How, how did you feel it? How did it...

Sarra Patskin: I can give you some, uh...

Bernard Danzig: Examples...

Sarra Patskin: ...examples. First of all, when I was young... I looked like Mongolian, like an Uzbek, Uzbek, **Kazak**, looked purely {laugh} Jewish but when I was walking along the street the boys ran after me and called _____. You did hear such word. It was a rough name of a Jewish _____. I was sad that in Poland _____ is the name of a Jew, but in Russia it was a very...

Bernard Danzig: It wasn't a nice name?

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Sarra Patskin: No, bad, bad word, bad word...

Bernard Danzig: Bad name, right, right.

Sarra Patskin: And we were so upset when we were named such names.

Bernard Danzig: So they would holler at you on the streets?

Sarra Patskin: I could not understand. Many people were surprised... so I'm not Jew, I'm an Uzbek or **Kazak** or even Mongolian... and they understood that I am a Jew.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: It was such antisemitism.

Bernard Danzig: How about your daughter? Did she feel it?

Sarra Patskin: She felt it too. Of course, she felt it too.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: There were at school even such boys and girls that didn't like Jews.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: This was a policy of the government and this was in... in all life.

Bernard Danzig: Was there a synagogue near where you lived?

Sarra Patskin: No, we didn't see. You know, the synagogues that was near our house in **Kharkov** was used like a... ____.

Bernard Danzig: It wasn't used as a synagogue.

Sarra Patskin: ...any, any purpose... only not synagogue.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, I understand.

Sarra Patskin: Then the policies have changed and the synagogue was emptied and began to work as a synagogue and it, this was at first time that I came to synagogue and saw everything with my eyes...

Bernard Danzig: Where was the first time?

Sarra Patskin: At synagogue?

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: In **Kharkov**.

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

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Sarra Patskin: In **Kharkov**. The policy regularly of the government began to change.

Bernard Danzig: Aha. So they allowed services to go on...

Sarra Patskin: Yeah. I was so surprised at first... the women, it was...

Bernard Danzig: Orthodox?

Sarra Patskin: Such synagogue that women were separate...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...and men separate.

Bernard Danzig: Separate.

Sarra Patskin: And even wear clothes...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: I was not used to such... things and it was surprising for me...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: But this was how {laugh} I enjoyed... the religion at first.

Bernard Danzig: Let's, let's talk about when did you and your family decide that maybe you should leave Russia?

Sarra Patskin: All began with, with my children, my daughter married... in 1972 and... her first son was born in 1972, **Alex**. This is a picture of my family here, he is there, to left. And the... they were especially not satisfied with the government, with the policy, with the antisemitism, and he... and they decided to immigrate. They began to go to the place where permission was given and... they could not receive it. It was difficult. But, finally, finally, they, they leave... there was a very good man there and he said you are lucky and you receive. Then, went first to Austria. Then, to Italy, and then they were lucky that some relative, our relative, lived already in Memphis.

Bernard Danzig: Oh, really?

Sarra Patskin: Yes. It was my nephew, nephew, and his father, his... the father of his wife, **Vexler**... maybe you remember...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, sure.

Sarra Patskin: And they invited them.

Bernard Danzig: Aha. They sponsored them to come?

Sarra Patskin: Yeah, they sponsored they, uh... due to them, my daughter with her family came. This is before they left.

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Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: This is my daughter, her husband, her first son, and the second was born in 1983. And in 1989, they got their permission to leave... to, for United States because they were invited...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...and sponsored.

Bernard Danzig: So, so, you, did you and...

Sarra Patskin: And, and we le-, left in **Kharkov**. My husband was afraid he will not be able to...

Bernard Danzig: To work?

Sarra Patskin: ...that he had permission to leave it. But, fortunately, we, he got it. He was in surprised. How could it? _____ and then we began all this. They invited us and we...

Bernard Danzig: Who is they?

Sarra Patskin: My daughter... was...

Bernard Danzig: Aha. When they were here in the States. Ok.

Sarra Patskin: My daughter invited us and we have this permission and we, they lived in Memphis already. And the Jewish community sent and the Jewish Federation, they helped in this. And we...

Bernard Danzig: Let me ask you one other question.

Sarra Patskin: Yes.

Bernard Danzig: When was the worst part of antisemitism for you in Russia? How, how...

Sarra Patskin: It seems to me it was, the worst was when we decided to immigrate.

Bernard Danzig: Really?

Sarra Patskin: Yes... bec-, in spite the policies of the government have changed, I told you about synagogue, about the policy to Jews, and my husband got the permission... we were even surprised that he got it, but it's during the, about the people they were such, you know, one time before we left... we were told by one, uh, militia near, not police, our organization was called, not police but... militia, militia.

Bernard Danzig: Militia.

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Sarra Patskin: Militia. Yeah. And the one was a good friend of my neighbor and she came one day and told, "You know, in some days there will be ____."

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: You know, ____.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, sure. What year was this? Do you remember?

Sarra Patskin: What?

Bernard Danzig: What year?

Sarra Patskin: 1989.

Bernard Danzig: 1989?

Sarra Patskin: Um, yes. My daughter already left.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: And we were so upset and so afraid, what to do? Where to go? And she even told you, you need to go somewhere not... to, to stay alive. That, that was antisemitism.

Bernard Danzig: Oh my. So what did you do?

Sarra Patskin: You know, fortunately, something was taken somewhere and there was no...

Bernard Danzig: No program.

Sarra Patskin: They were, no. But we were damaged, you know. Our door, somebody ____ our neighbors... later, we were told one person showed that boys, younger people, were gathered on, on the staircase and told, "Go." This time we will go to ____ and they came to our, to our door and painted it with paint. In the morning, we got up and saw, oh my God. The door was all painted. How to wash it?

Bernard Danzig: Did they write anything on the door?

Sarra Patskin: No, they only painted. Of course, we went to militia and told them. They came. They didn't do anything, of course.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: They told what can we do and so on, but... and we all day long with my daughter were... no...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, this was before your daughter left, huh?

Sarra Patskin: My daughter was there because she helped me to wash, and it was very difficult.

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Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: Then, other doors of people who were going to leave, you know?

Bernard Danzig: Well, yes, yes.

Sarra Patskin: This was the reason all Jews...

Bernard Danzig: How do you think, how do you think those people that did your door know you were leaving?

Sarra Patskin: Maybe people speaking with one another.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: They see that we try to sell something...

Bernard Danzig: Aha.

Sarra Patskin: ...to get money. Because at that moment, it was very bad policy. They gave only \$400.

Bernard Danzig: That you could take with you?

Sarra Patskin: Yes. Only \$400.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, when you left the country?

Sarra Patskin: Yeah.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: And we were lucky the policies have changed but when my daughter left... they had even... pay for the, uh, diploma they got for, when they graduated from the institute.

Bernard Danzig: In order to take the diploma with you, you had to pay?

Sarra Patskin: Yeah, yeah.

Bernard Danzig: Did, did you experience anything else besides the door being painted?

Sarra Patskin: The, uh, mood of the people. You know, once I was in a line to buy some vegetables... and when my... when I came to buy it, uh, I was not satisfied because I saw the ___ wanted to... not to be right {laugh}... so I told ___ and one from the line told me, "Go to Israel. You worked and deceived us and go away."

Bernard Danzig: Oh my.

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Sarra Patskin: I was so surprised. How can it be? I told you I was a teacher. What could I... do? I, I was on very small...

Bernard Danzig: Salary... payment, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: Salary, yes, and I, I don't want to, to... I decided already at that time to, to leave but I didn't tell so I will go and bring you militia...

Interviewer: Oh.

Sarra Patskin: I tell...

Bernard Danzig: Oh, oh. Aha.

Sarra Patskin: I told her. But when I, I couldn't find anybody and when I came back, she was already gone.

Bernard Danzig: Gone. Oh, yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: But I felt, everywhere I felt this antisemitism.

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm. Wow.

Sarra Patskin: But, you know, I was surprised when we came to the organizations that gave us permission to leave, it was American and he... when I told him about everything of that... how antisemitism was around. He told, "Hmmm. Do you know in America there is no antisemitism? There is too." {laugh} And he was not so friendly to us when we left and he said, "Come at 6 o'clock and we'll tell if you are eligible to go."

Bernard Danzig: 6 o'clock in the morning or at night?

Sarra Patskin: Night, at night. We went with my husband so upset we decided it's all... we could, we will not be able to leave, and when we came at 6 o'clock and knew that we were allowed it was {laugh} such great...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: ...such _____.

Bernard Danzig: So, when you, uh, where did you come when you came to the United States? Where did you first come?

Sarra Patskin: On our way, at first to New York. We came to New York and it was not a very easy story. When we came to New York, um, our plane... I don't know what reason it was, but it was late. And when we came to Nashville, it seems to be to Nashville, maybe I'm wrong. They decided your plane already left. What to do?

Bernard Danzig: Wait, where, where were you when they said your plane already left?

Sarra Patskin: Nashville.

Bernard Danzig: In Nashville. Where were you going? Were you coming to Memphis?

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Sarra Patskin: To Memphis. Yes. My daughter lived...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, I understand.

Sarra Patskin: ...in Memphis and she invited us to Memphis and I asked permission for, at front desk and they gave me permission to call my daughter. "Oh, mom, we were going to, to meet you, a lot of people, with flowers." And unfortunately we were late. They gave us place at the Inn...

Bernard Danzig: In Nashville?

Sarra Patskin: In Nashville.

Bernard Danzig: To stay.

Sarra Patskin: We were, we spent the night and then in the morning there was a plane and we came...

Bernard Danzig: Oh.

Sarra Patskin: On Monday it was not on... Sunday... But on Monday we came and we met with our family.

Bernard Danzig: Aha. Let me ask you... was it, what was it that surprised you when, when you came here to Memphis? What, what was it that you were expecting that it wasn't like that?

Sarra Patskin: At first, they mentioned of not only my children other people there... **Vexler's** family and the, from Jewish community, um... who worked there.

Bernard Danzig: **Iris Hartovy?** No.

Sarra Patskin: Very nice...

Bernard Danzig: **Bob Silver?**

Sarra Patskin: The lady...

Bernard Danzig: Oh... **Marcus, Henry Marcus?**

Sarra Patskin: Yes. She came and made us so... it was a very, very, very pleasant. Then, when we came to our apartment...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: We were so surprised. Everything was... all furniture and when we opened the, the...

Bernard Danzig: The refrigerator?

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Sarra Patskin: The refrigerator... everything was prepared for us... It was such surprise, it was like... Then, you know what is there to say in some days when we came, we went to grocery, especially to... mall, such mall... How can it be? How can they sell everything they can so lots, so... In Russia, in Ukraine, it was always a problem to buy something. Here {snap, snap} _____ large sausage, large line, bread...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: Line, everything in line and... for those and those and those and those... at when they, when we left all _____ everything was empty. Nothing.

Bernard Danzig: Nothing on the shelves?

Sarra Patskin: Nothing on the shelf, to, to, to, to sell. And here.. Oh my {laugh}

Bernard Danzig: Yeah. What, what was the most difficult thing about moving to Memphis?

Sarra Patskin: Everything, you know, my situation was worsened because my husband was very ill.

Bernard Danzig: Oh.

Sarra Patskin: He was very ill and before, uh, even before leaving he spent some months at hospital. Then, he became some better and we could, uh...

Bernard Danzig: Then you could leave?

Sarra Patskin: ...could leave.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah.

Sarra Patskin: This was so everything, all arrangements, all papers, everything I had to do it. Previously, he did it. I worked at home. I bought everything. I cleaned everything. I bought... {laugh} I was busy overhead, but at that time I had to do it myself, everything. I began to... it was difficult for me...

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: It was difficult to go to see him to hospital and to...

Bernard Danzig: Oh... and do all that.

Sarra Patskin: ...sign all papers. And it was, it was, everything was with great difficulty, not easy, not easy. Even, uh, even simple things were difficult to, to do.

Bernard Danzig: Now that you've been in Memphis and lived here... looking back was that a good decision to make? To leave...

Sarra Patskin: Yes. Sure. Even then, and now... I'm, at first, I'm, I was... I left my mother and I was born there. I was studied there and worked there. I had friends there

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and I remembered that it was my motherland, though it was a cruel motherland, but still it was my motherland.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: And my parents died there. Their graves there. I left everything, you know?

Bernard Danzig: Yeah, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: But now... as I see what is going on there, I am so glad that this decision was taken and I am here. Especially, I'm so glad to live here at Plough Towers. You know, I thought maybe everywhere is in such a way, but no... I had a friend in Philadelphia and she lived in a house like this...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: And when I told _____ about how we are taken, you are taking care our office... when you were our director. When **Rena** was our lead, the office is so, uh, care, careful... every question, every problem... we were, oh, I need to go, I need to go, and we get all this support and help... even, you know, I was surprised last year, I felt bad and I called for emergency and when the ambulance came, I felt so bad, I didn't want to bother it was 2 o'clock at the, at night and didn't want my brother, my daughter... and only in the morning I'll just thought oh, how I left my apartment. I didn't take anything. Oh, how it will be, and then my brother told me he came... "Sister, don't be, don't be upset. Don't be afraid. Everything was done. The manager came and locked the door and everything was done." So, I am so thankful for everything they are doing for us and all the, uh, meetings or all... everything was a, is a very good place...

Bernard Danzig: Mm-hmm.

Sarra Patskin: ...to be.

Bernard Danzig: Well, I have to tell you... we are better for having known you.

Sarra Patskin: Thank you.

Bernard Danzig: So thank you very much for your story...

Sarra Patskin: Well, I'm so sorry, maybe I told... {laugh}

Bernard Danzig: Oh, no. It was an interesting story. Any other questions?

Interviewer2: Um, just one. When you left **Kharkov** and you went to the village where you were picking cotton... how did you choose to go to that village? Did you know somebody there? Did some of your friends go with you? Or you and your mother just went there?

Sarra Patskin: Which... do you...

Bernard Danzig: When you left **Kharkov**...

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Sarra Patskin: When the war began?

Bernard Danzig: Yes, yeah.

Sarra Patskin: Uh-huh.

Bernard Danzig: Yeah. How, why did you go there?

Sarra Patskin: No, it, I didn't want to in details but... we had a very best story. When we came to our train and... went in the wagon...

Bernard Danzig: No, but wait... but even before, why did you make the decision to go to that place?

Sarra Patskin: No, no, no... you don't know... I, I'll tell you.

Bernard Danzig: Ok, Ok.

Sarra Patskin: We were in the wagon and the train began to move and then we were told, you know, your wagon is not in order and we'll not be able to go. What to do? And somebody told on the other... railway, there is another train that will... just leave. And, uh, we all went with all our things and when we came there, they, we were not allowed to, to come in. Then, a military man came and told, "How can you do it? It's all women with children. They need to go to leave **Kharkov**. Let them come in." Yes, that was our... and that, that train was going to... it was **Volga, Volga**, you know, ____ this region and... then, this train went to Uzbekistan... so we went with them and when we came they decided, oh, you will go there, you will go there...

Bernard Danzig: Oh my.

Sarra Patskin: ...you will go there. And just, we sat on the horse with the carriage and, uh, they brought us to that place.

Bernard Danzig: Oh my, what a story.

Sarra Patskin: Oh, well, there... and when we were leave, we needed some documents to tell about this, all this story. We sent a letter but they said, answered, we don't have anything. Everything was disappeared somewhere. But **repressed** had documents that we left in **Kharkov**, my father and with children and so this was the proof that we, we're, felt told to, like...

Bernard Danzig: Well, thank you for the story. Is there anything you would like to say that maybe I haven't asked you... did we cover all... or is there anything you would like to say?

Sarra Patskin: Only that I'm very glad to be here. I, I like this country. I like this place to live and I am glad that my children are here and they, they're happy to be here.

Bernard Danzig: Well, Ms. Patskin, thank you very much. We certainly...

Sarra Patskin: Thank you.

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Interviewer: ...appreciate this...

Sarra Patskin: Thank you for your interest...

Bernard Danzig: ...and you've been very gracious. Ok, I'm going to turn this off. Do you think I hit that?

Interviewer2: I think you do.

EXODUS/pti:fl