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Oral history interview with Yenta Osherovna Kolodenker and Lev Shaevich Kolodenko.

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Summary:

Oral history interview with Yenta (Lena) Usherovna Kolodenko (nee Tolkovets) and Lev Shaevich Kolodenko. Parts 1, 2 and 3

Yenta (Lena) and Lev speak about city legends of duke Potocki (Pototskyy in Ukrainian) and construction of synagogues in Tulchyn; about the former inhabitants of Tulchyn; about Budgos, Koptsenive gos and Shilgos – local street names before the war; about German Nazi invasion of Tulchyn during the WWII; how they destroyed synagogues in the city; Lev remembers his seven years in the Soviet army after they evacuated with the family to Orenburg, how he liberated Warsaw, but did not receive his medal because of the anti-Semitic leadership in the Soviet army; they speak about only 24 Jewish families left to live in Tulchyn during the occupation and 15,000 Jews were sent to the camps; about Pechory camp where many Jews perished; Lev and Yenta (Lena) speak about their poor childhood and about famine in Ukraine in 1933; how Romanian soldiers and Ukrainian collaborators were ruling Tulchyn during the Nazi occupation; they remember how all directors of factories were Jewish in Tulchyn before the WWII; how some Ukrainians would speak Yiddish; spoke about Krants, director of the shoe factory, who was disclosed by a man in Tulchyn and killed by the Nazis; Lev says that his father was in the Soviet army and was killed in 1942; Yenta's father stayed in Tulchyn as he worked at a bakery; Lev and Yenta speak how they met in 1950 thanks to their mothers who were friends and introduced them to each other; that mixed marriages were not welcome, especially in case of a Jewish woman and a non-Jewish man; about their wedding which was Jewish and Soviet, about their traditional engagement; that the wedding is not postponed in Jewish tradition even if someone dies; they say how they got to Israel for the first time because their former neighbour's wife died there; and that their eldest son works in Canada; Yenta (Lena) and Lev Kolodenko speak about their marriage ceremony; Jewish funerals; Yenta remembers how her grandmother died in 1939 and how the funeral looked like; about the tradition to give names to children after dead relatives; how some childless Jewish people would pay poorer families to give their kid the names of childless Jews; Yenta (Lena) and Lev speak about Jewish funerals; commemoration ceremonies and visits to cemeteries among Jews and Ukrainians in Tulchyn; Yenta speaks about her son having a health issue with his eye when he was young and how she went to Chisinau to cure him and was praying to God a lot, then the son recovered and doctors explained that only by the prayers.

Summary: Parts 4 and 5

A man is telling a joke about a Jew who wanted to get married and was killed 5 minutes before that and the God apologised to him saying he did not recognize Izya.

Yenta (Lena) Usherovna Kolodenko (Tolkovets) and Lev Shaevich Kolodenko speak about traditions and superstition in their area; then about Judaism and Old Testament; Lev discusses his mom's hairdresser Ayzek who was predicting that the Messiah will come and their couple would go to Israel; about people who are against the state of Israel; how the hairdresser died 15 years before and his wife was from Tomashpil; about a Shilgos – street where synagogue was situated in Tulchyn; about duke Potocki (Pototskyy) who built many nice buildings in Tulchyn; that Tulchyn was liberated

in 1944 from the Nazis; about a home spirit and that in Jewish traditions they usually would live in the bodies of wild pigeons.