

Tibet Oral History Project

Interview #85 – Chonphel
June 27, 2007

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TIBET ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #85
2. Interviewee: Chonpel
3. Age: 82
4. Date of Birth: 1925
5. Sex: Male
6. Birthplace: Shondang
7. Province: Utsang
8. Year of leaving Tibet: 1967-68
9. Date of Interview: June 27, 2007
10. Place of Interview: Home for the Aged and Disabled,
Lugsung Samdupling Settlement,
Bylakuppe, Mysore District, Karnataka, India
11. Length of Interview: 1 hr 4 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Tenzin Yangchen
14. Videographer: Jeffery Lodas
15. Transcriber: Tenzin Yangchen



Biographical Information:

Born in Gyangtse to a family of *telpa* ‘tax payers,’ Chonpel’s father was a *genpo* ‘village leader.’ His family was *shung-wok*, meaning they were tenants on government-owned land. Chonpel explains the various categories of tenants in Tibet depending on who owned the land: the monasteries, the government or private property owners. He also describes the *ma-tel* ‘butter tax,’ *sha-tel* ‘meat tax’ and wool tax, and how the taxes were paid to the correct authorities.

Chonpel was the first person from his village to be arrested by the Chinese under false accusations. Relating his miserable prison days, he describes the difficult labor of plowing fields and constructing buildings, while given very little food. Prisoners resorted to eating rats from the fields and leather. He suffered in this way for seven years.

After releasing Chonpel from prison, the Chinese sent him back to his village, where he was subjected to *thamzin* ‘struggle sessions’ because he had been a *genpo*. He worked as a laborer and married again because his first wife remarried while he was in prison. A year later he and his second wife fled to India.

Topics Discussed:

Taxes, imprisonment, forced labor, Chinese oppression, *thamzin*, escape experiences, life as a refugee in India.

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Interviewee: Chonphel

Age: 82, Sex: Male

Interviewer: Marcella Adamski

Interview Date: June 27, 2007

Question: Please tell us your name.

Interviewee #85: My name is Chonphel.

Q: Do you give your permission for the Tibet Oral History Project to use this interview?

#85: Yes.

Q: Thank you.

#85: [Smiles]

Q: Today I would like to talk a little bit about your childhood, your life in Tibet and then if it's okay with you, I would like to talk a little bit about prison experience.

#85: Okay. When I was small I lived with my parents. I was sent to school for a year when I was about 7 or 8 years old.

Q: Where were you born?

#85: I was born in Gyangtse in the district of Gyangtse.

Q: What was the name of the village?

#85: That was Gyangtse.

Q: Earlier you mentioned Shondang.

#85: Shondang was where I lived and the school was at Gyangtse.

Q: What did your parents do for a living?

#85: They served the government and worked as farmers and nomads.

Q: What did they do for the government?

#85: They paid tax to the Tibetan government.

Q: Where you grew up, was it in a village or in the countryside?

#85: The farmland was located in front of a river with mountains on two sides. Our house was right there.

Q: Was it just one house or were there many houses?

#85: There were about seven houses whose residents were *telpa* ‘taxpayers.’ In the olden days there were *telpa* and *morang*.

Q: What are *morang*?

#85: *Morang* were the poor. People who did not own houses or land were called *morang*.

Q: How many *morang* were there?

#85: There were perhaps seven or eight *morang*.

Q: Was the place very beautiful?

#85: It was a beautiful place, but taxes were stringent. We had to pay taxes to the government. Except for taxes like *sha-tel* ‘meat tax’, *ma-tel* ‘butter tax’ and other taxes, the *samadok* ‘people engaged in farming as well as dairying’ region was beautiful.

Q: [Taxes] to the Tibetan government?

#85: Yes, taxes had to be paid to the Tibetan government. We were tenants of government owned lands. The tenants came under either *La-wok* ‘tenants of monasteries’, *gerpey-wok* ‘tenants of private families’ or *shung-wok* ‘tenants of the government.’ We were *shung-wok* ‘those who lived on government land.’

Q: Your land belonged to the government?

#85: Yes, we were government land tenants.

Q: Do you have any idea like what percentage of your income you had to pay in taxes?

#85: We did not pay the grains produced from our land. A person called *tserchok* came from Gyantse to collect the land lease in the form of *ma-tel*. My family farmed the largest area of land and we paid 25 measures of butter tax. The butter tax was for [using] the land.

Q: When you say taxes to the government, was it to the monastery or to the Tibetan government?

#85: It was to the Tibetan government. We paid it to the monastery and they forwarded the *sha-tel* to the government. Sheep were slaughtered and the meat was paid as taxes. Nomads paid different taxes, *ma-tel*, *sha-tel*, wool tax, etc.

Q: Where did the taxes go, to the monastery or the government?

#85: The taxes were collected by the monastery. The meat tax was delivered to the government.

Q: What about the butter tax?

#85: That was delivered to the *tserchok*.

Q: Where is *Tserchok*?

#85: *Tserchok* means the 16 monasteries of Gyangtse.

Q: How about the wool tax?

#85: That also went to the government. There were many other smaller taxes.

Q: How many people were in your family?

#85: We used to be four sons and a father in the family. Then one son was given away in marriage; from the three sons, two passed away. I had to take all the responsibilities as two of my brothers passed away and one had left the house and I was the sole son left. At the age of 22, I shouldered the responsibilities.

Q: You were responsible for your mother and father and any other people?

#85: I had to pay the taxes and look after the livelihood of the family and servants.

Q: How did you like having all that responsibility?

#85: Whether one liked it or not, one had to serve the district office and the *tserchok*. In Tibet the local leader was called *genpo*. I was one among the three *genpo*. Each village had one *genpo*. After I took the responsibility, I married and had three children.

Q: How old were you?

#85: I think I was 18, 19 or 20 when I married.

Q: Was that an arranged marriage or did you choose your wife?

#85: It was arranged by my parents. We had six children and three of them are living, two daughters and a son. They live in Tibet.

Q: The living children live in Tibet?

#85: Yes, they do.

Q: Where in Tibet?

#85: They live in Shondang. They were living in Shondang, but I do not know where they are now.

Q: What have you heard about their condition in Tibet?

#85: Yes, I did recently. I had a letter from them. My present wife was a nun earlier and at her monastery [in Tibet] there was a monk who used to write to us. I think he must have passed away because we have not heard from him for a long time. Last year one boy from here visited Tibet and he brought us a letter. The letter was written last year, but I received it only this year.

Q: So tell me about your life in Tibet? You married; you had three children, were things peaceful in your life?

#85: At that time we lived [peacefully] paying our taxes and observing the law of the land. Then on the 25th day of the fourth Tibetan lunar month in 1959, Chinese cavalry arrived and captured me. Except for rumors that a few traders were arrested in Gyangtse, no one was captured at that time. I was the first to be captured.

Q: Why?

#85: After Lhasa was defeated, the Chinese arrived following the rebels as they called the Khampas [people from Kham] and captured me. My older brother, the one married elsewhere had left to join the Defend Tibet Volunteer Force [*Chushi Gangdrug*], but he didn't. However, I was accused of instigating him to join the Force and that was why they arrested me.

Q: And did you [instigate him to join the Force]?

#85: I didn't tell him to join. He was given away in marriage and lived separately. He came home to meet our mother and then he left with them [the guerillas], so they [the Chinese] accused me of sending him and I was arrested.

Q: Before the Chinese arrested you, was there any evidence of the Chinese in your area before that?

#85: The Chinese had come [to Tibet] a long time back, but I was captured after the revolution in 1959. They came in the 1940's.

Q: But were they near you?

#85: They were not near us. The Chinese had arrived in Lhasa and Gyangtse then. However, the Chinese hadn't come to my village, as it was an isolated region. Then 22 cavalymen arrived and surrounded the village. They had come in pursuit of the Khampas. They came to catch the Khampas who were escaping. I was arrested then and put in prison.

Q: Twenty-two Chinese cavalry?

#85: Yes, they were Chinese soldiers.

Q: Twenty-two people or...

#85: They were 22 horsemen. They were in pursuit of the Khampas who were escaping from Lhasa.

Q: What did you feel at that time?

#85: What did I feel? I was the only one who was captured and I felt very sad. In Tibet we have the custom of helping each other. There were three *genpo* and the others came to my assistance as is the Tibetan custom. However, they [the Chinese] were not moved by their pleas. I was taken to Samada and imprisoned in the hay barn of a family called Taksu for half a month. The Chinese made me clean their horses and water them for half a month. Then one day at around 4 o'clock I was taken to Gyangtse on a vehicle, which was transporting wood from Domo.

Q: What happened when they put you in the barn?

#85: There was nothing to do when I was put in there. Tibetans nearby gave me some food. I was sent to Gyangtse from there and at a place called Janyel where there was a [Chinese] office.

Q: Could you see your wife and children?

#85: No. They were left behind [in the village] when I was sent to Gyangtse.

Q: Did they say the reason they arrested you was because they thought you encouraged your brother to be a guerrilla?

#85: They said that. And they also accused me of stealing electrical cables on my donkey when I'd gone to Phari. They said that I had taken those cables out of spite. Those were mere accusations without any base. Then they took me to Gyangtse and I found some traders imprisoned at Dakhang.

Q: Did you take those electrical cables?

#85: No, I did not take the electrical cables. That was just an allegation in order to arrest me.

Q: And somebody saw you doing that?

#85: No, that was just an excuse to arrest me. They alleged that I had cut the electrical cables and sent my brother to the reactionary force and arrested me.

Q: What do you think is the real reason why they arrested you?

#85: What can I think when it is the case of the powerful meeting the powerless? They [the Chinese] took me away to Gyangtse and imprisoned me with other prisoners of Gyangtse at Dakhang.

Q: Do you think they arrested you because you had a powerful position in the community?

#85: No, it was not because I was a *genpo*. There were three *genpo*. The Chinese arrested me with the excuse that I had sent my brother to join the reactionaries. They might have received such information from some Tibetans.

Q: That was a lie. What do you think was the real reason for arresting you?

#85: Yes, that was a lie. There was no reason; they captured me all of a sudden.

Q: What did you feel when they arrested you?

#85: I had not done anything wrong and I felt that it must be my karma.

Q: Were you scared?

#85: There was no fear because I was numb.

Q: You were in shock.

#85: I was in shock and I felt no fear. Then when I was taken to Gyangtse and imprisoned at Dakhang, there were the traders [in the prison].

Q: When you were arrested, whom did you leave behind? Your wife and how old were your children?

#85: My wife and children were left behind. One child was older and the others were very small. After I was taken away to prison, one of the children developed an eye problem and died. Three of my children died and three are surviving.

Q: Did they die while you were in prison?

#85: Yes, I was in prison then.

Q: Do you know what caused their deaths?

#85: When I came back [from the prison] they were dead and then I escaped [from the village]. There was a letter saying that they had received treatment.

Q: Did the children die while you were in the Chinese prison?

#85: One was a miscarriage and another died. He died from eye problems. By the time I came home, he was dead.

Q: When was that?

#85: That was in 1959 when I was in prison.

Q: Can you tell us about what happened to you in prison?

#85: Near Gyangtse there was empty land called Chanjay Thang. We were made to dig the ground and make it cultivable. Previously it was an empty land; we had many vast lands in Tibet, land, which was not farmed. The prisoners were made to cultivate the area.

Q: Was it near Gyangtse?

#85: It was called Dakue and close to Gyangtse.

Q: Can you tell me about the conditions in the prison and when you went out to work? What kind of food and sleep? What was it like?

#85: While in prison there was no food and that was the punishment for all the people. They [the Chinese] didn't feed us. The men became weak. We were made to dig the ground. The men were made to plow the land.

Q: How can you work without food?

#85: Whether you were able to or not able to, you had to keep going. What else can you do? When the powerless meet the powerful, what is there to do? Men were made to plow the land. Six men formed a team; while four pulled the plow, one held the plow and one sowed the seeds.

Q: If you were given no food, how did you live?

#85: They fed us one *gyama* [measurement similar to kilograms] a day. The food was a small tin-full per day. Do we eat that in the morning, noon or night? At night we were given some *thukpa* ‘gruel’ and nothing else. There was no meat at all. Normally, we were used to eating meat and other things. Now we ate the same food day in and day out.

Q: What was the food that they gave you?

#85: It was a measure of *tsampa* ‘flour made from roasted barley’ and some *thukpa* at night. That was it.

Q: When did they give you the *tsampa*?

#85: The *tsampa* was given once in three days. Here [in India] you have a tin of this size [gestures]; we received about a tin-full, so that [small quantity] had to suffice for the morning, noon and night. The *thukpa* alone was not filling. People became malnourished. A day or two, or a month or two of such condition might be bearable, but this was year after year.

Q: What was the condition of your body under those conditions?

#85: My body became weak. And moreover we were forced to work and cultivate the lands. Men had to pull the plow. I was made to [hold the] plow. Before that they [the Chinese] told us to provide the names of those [prisoners] who had experience in farming. I gave my name saying that I knew farming. Ten plows were made.

Q: Was that a better choice than other possibilities in prison?

#85: How could it be better when men had to pull the plows? Normally it’s the animals that pulled the plow. Men were made to do that. Sixty men were divided into 10 teams of plowmen.

Q: When you were inside the prison, were you in a cell? How many people were there?

#85: It [the prison] was a tent when I was there. Later a prison building was constructed at Dokoe. We were then sent to Longdang where we cultivated lands [again].

Q: How many people in each tent?

#85: There were about eight to 10 people in a tent.

Q: What was the weather condition?

#85: It was springtime, around the third and fourth Tibetan lunar months. Seeds were sown in the third month. First, the fields were watered and then a tractor was used. After that we sowed the seeds and when [the plow] connected with certain solid parts [in the earth], men fell down. People were totally exhausted. We just couldn't help it.

Q: What happened if you fainted or got very sick and couldn't work? What happened to the people?

#85: That was your fate. If you said you were sick, there was a Tibetan and a Chinese whom you consulted. That was it. It was your fate if you died. There was nothing to do.

Q: Did you ever receive a trial or a reason for your arrest and imprisonment?

#85: No, nobody asked me anything. They put me in the jail and caused me misery, but didn't ask me anything. What was there to ask when there was no reason?

Q: Were you ever given a prison sentence? How many years you would be in prison?

#85: No, they didn't give me a sentence. Many men were sent to Samye and Kongpo and given sentences of eight to 15 years. I was sent to Khaka from Gyangtse.

Q: So you had no idea how long you would be in prison?

#85: No, I did not know. How would I know? Someone who was given a sentence of five, six, seven or 15 years knew that he would be released once the sentence was over. They [the Chinese] told us two different things, "If you work hard and are good, you will be released early. However, if you indulge in negative things, you will be given extra work." So we were unsure [what would happen].

Q: What kind of feelings did that leave you with to not know how long you would be in prison and having to do all this work? What did it make you feel?

#85: I thought I would die in that place. I never ever thought that I would go back home and see my children.

Q: What gave you courage to go on with each day?

#85: I thought I would never leave the prison. I thought I would die there.

Q: Did you have anyone that you could share your feelings with?

#85: Then after we had sown the fields of Longdang, they [the Chinese] said, "The name of the plowman should be written and put up at the field. There will be a competition in autumn." Then I was sent to Khaka. Again at Khaka we made a *longdang*, an agricultural field.

Q: Was it very hard work?

#85: Oh my, it was extremely hard work.

Q: Were there any people from that you knew in prison?

#85: There were people I knew. They [the Chinese] said that if we did not plow well, our names would be written down and that there'd be a competition later. Four people pulled the plow and they'd fall down unable to pull it. Some fell on that side and some on this side. Oh, the hardships we have endured!

Q: Did many people die from the exertion?

#85: Many people died at *longdang*. Many of those sent to Samye also died. At Samye we had to dig the ground with hoes and when rats scurried out, we grabbed and ate them alive. If we found a dead horse, it was skinned, but there was no time to skin or cook them; we just ate them raw. [To the interpreter] You do not know this, as you are young, but in Tibet we used to have bags made of leather called *tado* and ropes of leather known as *shatha*. All those were eaten; there were none left! The prisoners in Tibet suffered terrible hardships.

We were sent to Khaka where we constructed a building with 44 rooms. They were meant for the prisoners, residence for the Chinese officials and the soldiers. The prisoners carried the stones and mud and built it.

Q: What city was this in?

#85: We built houses when we worked at Longdang.

Q: Where were the 44 rooms built?

#85: That was built at Khaka Thangmay. There [at Khaka Thangmay] was empty land, which the Chinese forced us to convert into agricultural land and grow vegetables. We built houses and dug two wells. Unlike here [in India] we didn't have to dig too deep as water was more easily available [in Tibet]. After completing all the tasks, I was sent back to Dokoe in Gyantse. I was taught [indoctrinated] for one week and then told that I would be sent back home. However, I was sent to Shang.

Q: You didn't go home?

#85: They said they would send me home, but that was just a pretense. Instead I was sent to Shang Yema prison. There once again I lived in a tent and worked in the fields and constructed houses. Once the fields were ready and the houses built, I was sent to the Kakang prison in Shigatse.

Q: What is the Kakang?

#85: In the olden days in Tibet, the Kakang was grain storage for the government. Prisoners were jailed there [later]. I was in the [Kakang] prison for three months. There were many other prisoners.

Q: What were the conditions in Shigatse?

#85: There was hardly any *tsampa* there. We had no work and no *tsampa*.

Q: What did you do all day?

#85: They didn't make us do any work. We just lay down the whole day. We did our ablutions in the morning and night and then slept the whole day. There was no work and we were locked up.

Q: Tell me what were the religious practices that you could do?

#85: I did not know to read prayers at that time. I did not feel like praying. I only thought that I would die. I had no enthusiasm to say my prayers.

Q: In your heart?

#85: No, not at all. I only had the thought of death and never that I would return home. [Gets emotional]

Q: You were very sad and very depressed.

#85: Yes, that is right. At times I thought, "Let me die."

Q: It was horrible.

#85: Certainly.

Q: Do you think of those times very often today?

#85: These are very happy days. I worked very hard after I came here [Bylakuppe]. I had nothing with me. All my properties [in Tibet] were confiscated. After I was released from prison, I was made to herd the yaks of the people. I escaped from the place where I was herding yaks.

Q: Who send you to graze yaks?

#85: The people. The yaks I owned earlier were distributed to the people. I was made to tend those yaks. The servant's [regular yak herder] wife was delivering a child, so I was sent to graze them and I fled from there. I wouldn't have been able to escape from my home otherwise.

Q: So you were in prison for how many years together?

#85: I was in [prison] for seven years.

Q: Were you ever tortured during that time?

#85: I was subjected to *thamzin* ‘struggle sessions’ for a while. It wasn't very bad. I was subjected to *thamzin* for one day. I was the first to be captured and taken away [from my village]. At that time none of the people were arrested. I was the first one. They brought me back in 1960.

Q: Where to?

#85: I was brought to my village from the prison in Gyangtse to undergo *thamzin*.

Q: How did they execute the *thamzin*?

#85: I wasn't subjected to *thamzin* for a long time. It was for about half a day. Earlier I was responsible for collecting taxes and they accused me of that.

Q: Did they beat you?

#85: They beat me quite a lot. They pulled my ears. At that time I used to have long hair. They cut off my hair and made me bald. When there was no hair to pull, they pulled my ears.

Q: When did they cut your hair?

#85: The Chinese cut my hair and threw it away. In the olden days we used to keep long hair. They cut off the whole thing and threw it away.

Q: Is that how they tortured you by pulling your hair and your ears?

#85: They also slapped me on my face. Then they took me back to Gyangtse.

Q: Would they do this publicly in front of the people?

#85: Yes, they did it publicly in front of all the people.

Q: Did you know people in the audience?

#85: Those were people from my village! I knew everyone of them!

Q: Did the people from the village participate in hurting you?

#85: I don't know because they [the villagers] did not say anything in front of me. I do not think they would say anything adverse about me. However, the poor people [of the village] said that I had collected taxes. The other families would never say anything like that.

Q: Did anyone try to help you?

#85: Initially, when I was first arrested, they [the other *genpo*] came to help me, but the Chinese, unlike Tibetans, could not be moved, so they went back to their homes. I was then sent to Gyangtse.

Q: When you were in prison, was there anybody that you could draw courage from that inspired you to keep trying to survive?

#85: At that time I hoped that I would see His Holiness the Dalai Lama and nothing else. I never thought that I would see my children. Then when I arrived back home, I found that my wife had already met someone and had a child [from him] during my stay in the prison. [Laughs] My present wife was a nun earlier. Her relative was my sister's husband. He said, "She can no longer be a nun and your wife has already found someone else, so you should get together and flee." Then we escaped.

Q: So your first wife when she saw that you were alive, what did she do?

#85: She didn't bother to say anything as she had a new husband, so I made up my mind and didn't say anything to her.

Q: How did you find your second wife?

#85: The present wife was a nun of the Jang Monastery. She could not be a nun and was imprisoned by the Chinese. Her relative who was my sister's husband told me, "She cannot be a nun and your wife has found a new husband. You should both escape together." And that's what we did.

Q: Did she leave the convent to marry you?

#85: The monastery was ruined. The assets and the monastery were completely destroyed. There was nothing.

Q: What year was that you married her? You were in prison from 1959 to 1966.

#85: I returned home from the prison, but my wife had found a new husband, so then we [self and present wife] met. After we met, we escaped.

Q: You went back home in 1966 after being released from prison. Did you meet her the same year?

#85: Yes, that was the same year.

Q: How did you get out of prison? How did that happen?

#85: I was awarded leniency and released from the prison in Shigatse. They said, "You have accepted that you opposed the government. You did your work well. Your offense has been cleared and you can go home."

Q: What did they mean by "you accepted all your faults"?

#85: Then after a year of my returning home, I escaped.

Q: Did the Chinese say that you had opposed their government?

#85: They said that I had opposed them by taking away electrical cables and sending my brother to join the Defend Tibet Volunteer Force.

Q: Did you acknowledge those faults even though you knew they were not true?

#85: The Chinese knew those were not true. People knew our family, the Shondang Sowo. We had a large house and the family name was popular. We were one of the richest in the village.

Q: So that's why the Chinese let you go?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: No. He feels that he was arrested because of those [false crimes].

Q: But they let you go because you acknowledged your faults?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: That's right.

[Tape change]

Q: You said that one bride was brought home for the four brothers?

#85: Yes, earlier a bride came home for my brothers, but she left. They couldn't get along and she left. Later my brothers passed away. I was the youngest son and then I married.

Q: That was before the nun?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, before the nun.

Q: Just to end your story when you got out and married the nun, where did you go then?

#85: We had nowhere to stay and so we made our escape. After my release from prison, it was hardly a year that I lived in the village.

Q: Where did you live during the year?

#85: I spent that year in the house. I had a donkey, a cow and an ox. I transported manure and wood on my donkey and ox each and everyday without a day's rest.

Q: Were you in good health or poor health that time?

#85: I was healthy. I could do any work then. When my older brothers were home and I was small, they used to send me to tend the donkeys. In Tibet we owned donkeys. One had to take responsibilities for tending the donkeys and sheep. If a family had many sons and if the family was united [lived together after marriage], some of the sons looked after the sheep and yaks, some tended the donkeys and some cultivated the lands. If each did their work, the family lived happily. However, if they fought, then the family got destroyed.

Q: When you decided to escape from Tibet, did you go with a group or just you and your wife?

#85: It was just the two of us. My wife was pregnant then. During our escape journey, for about half a month we had no warm food or drink, so my wife miscarried. Humans are really tough because she did not die. Compared to the present times, she should have died in those conditions. Later, when we got to Dharamsala, we had another child. We brought that child with us down here [to Bylakuppe]. My relative asked me to come to Bylakuppe from where I was working for the Tibetan Children's Village [in Dharamsala]. The late Ama Gaden-la and Gen Tenzin-la told me, "You seem to be from a good family. You must stay here." But my relative asked me to come here and I was provided with agricultural land, so I stayed back. Otherwise, I was an official working in Dharamsala.

Q: Did your wife have more children?

#85: We had one child in Dharamsala and came here [to Bylakuppe] with him. He could just about call out *apa* 'father' when he died of fever here.

Q: It was very hard.

#85: The child died here due to the change in climate. When I came home after work at the Tibetan Children's Village, the child would call out *apa*. Since we do not have children, we are living here at the Home for the Aged. We were told that childless couples could join the Home for the Aged and so we are here.

Q: When you got to Dharamsala, did you see His Holiness?

#85: Yes, I did. I saw His Holiness many times in Dharamsala. When we arrived at Gangtok, we were asked where we wanted to go. I asked them to send us wherever His Holiness the Dalai Lama was, so we were sent to Dharamsala.

Q: What was the first time you saw His Holiness? What was that like?

#85: I was so happy that I shed tears.

Q: You waited a long time.

#85: A long time back, His Holiness visited Domo [in Tibet]. I saw His Holiness when he returned [from Domo] through Gyantse. At that time I prayed that I should see His Holiness again and that has been realized.

Q: Is there anything else that you would like to tell us that we may have forgotten to ask you about?

#85: I do not have anything more to say. I am very grateful to you for doing these interviews as advised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I do not have anything else to say. You are doing all this for the cause of Tibet's independence and I request you to please continue to do so.

Q: Thank you very much.

#85: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW