

Tibet Oral History Project

Interview #21U – Phurbu Bhuti
April 1, 2017

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #21U
2. Interviewee: Phurbu Bhuti
3. Age: 88
4. Date of Birth: 1929
5. Sex: Female
6. Birthplace: Khangmar
7. Province: Utsang
8. Year of leaving Tibet: 1959
9. Date of Interview: April 1, 2017
10. Place of Interview: Gepheling Old People's Home, Rajpur, Uttarakhand, India
11. Length of Interview: 1 hr 32 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Tenzin Yangchen
14. Videographer: Tenzin Choenyi
15. Translator: Tenzin Yangchen

Biographical Information:

Phurbu Bhuti was born in Khangmar in Utsang Province to a large family of seven children. They were farmers and as the eldest child, she had many chores and responsibilities. She describes her daily routine and the family's three-room home. She had to collect water each day from a nearby river in wooden vessels. Her family was allotted land from a large estate and tenants like her family sowed the lands and collected manure as a tax in the form of service.

Phurbu Bhuti notes the absence of modern medical care and hospitals in Tibet. She describes in vivid detail the rituals performed at the time of one's death and the system of sky burial where bodies are fed to vultures. She was taught to chant prayers by her father and each night the entire family would say their prayers before dinner. She believes that boys were treated a little bit better than girls and had more independence.

When the Chinese first arrived, Phurbu Bhuti felt they were helpful. The situation changed rapidly after the Chinese began dividing the community into categories based on economic status and distributing property of the wealthy to the beggars. She witnessed the *thamzing* 'struggle sessions' of wealthy men. After being warned that middle class families like hers might be next, her family fled in the night leaving behind three of her siblings.

Topics Discussed:

Utsang, childhood memories, farm life, customs/traditions, first appearance of Chinese, *thamzing*.

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Interview #21U

Interviewee: Phurbu Bhuti

Age: 88, Sex: Female

Interviewer: Marcella Adamski

Interview Date: April 1, 2017

Question: Please tell us your name.

00:00:14

Interviewee #21U: Yes?

Q: What is your name?

#21U: The name is Phurbu Bhuti.

Q: His Holiness the Dalai Lama asked us to record your experiences, so that we can share your memories with many generations of Tibetans, the Chinese and the rest of the world. Your memories will help us to document the true history, culture and beliefs of the Tibetan people. Do you give your permission for the Tibet Oral History Project to use this interview?

#21U: [Nods]

Q: Do you give us permission to use it?

#21U: [Nods]

Q: Thank you for offering to share your story with us.

#21U: [Joins palms]

Q: During this interview if you wish to take a break or stop at any time, please let me know.

Q: If you need to stop, [we] can.

#21U: [Nods]

Q: If you do not wish to answer a question or talk about something, let me know.

#21U: [Nods]

Q: If this interview was shown in Tibet or China, would this be a problem for you?

Q: This interview being conducted today will be shown everywhere. In case it's seen in Tibet or China, would it be a problem for you?

#21U: What problem will there be? There will be no problem.

Q: We're honored to record your story and appreciate your participation in this project.

#21U: Okay.

Q: *Ama-la* 'respectful term for mother,' can you tell us how old you are?

00:03:19

#21U: I am 88 years old.

Q: Where were you born?

#21U: Father's name?

Q: No. What is the name of the place of your birth?

#21U: The name of the place is Khangmar.

Q: Khangmar. What province was that in?

#21U: Yes?

Q: What province does Khangmar come under among the three provinces of Tibet?

Q: Is it under Utsang, Kham or Amdo, *ama-la*?

#21U: It is in Utsang.

Q: How many people were in your family, *ama-la*?

#21U: There were six or seven members in the family.

Q: What did your family members do for a living?

#21U: We engaged in farming.

Q: How many children were in the family?

#21U: Including me there were seven children in the family.

Q: Where was your order in the list of children?

00:05:27

#21U: I am the eldest.

Q: What kind of responsibilities did the oldest daughter have in a family?

#21U: The duties assigned were working in the fields and cooking.

Q: Were you given more responsibilities than the other children?

#21U: Since I was the eldest of the children [I] had to do more duties.

Q: Can you tell us some of the kinds of duties that you had to do?

00:07:15

#21U: The outside duty was farming like irrigating the fields and whatever work was there in the fields. Once one came home, there was cooking and feeding the children and the parents. That was the duty.

Q: What time did you have to get up to start your day when you were a young girl in the family?

#21U: One had to get up around 4 o'clock in the morning. One got up around 4 o'clock in the morning. Our family owned four or five cows that had to be given food and grass. Then the dung must be cleared.

Q: And then what did you do next?

00:09:28

#21U: Then after completing the household chores, after completing the household chores, one must go outdoors to irrigate the fields and graze the cows and do such.

Q: Would that activity take you all day long or did you come home like around lunchtime?

#21U: [I] ate at home and fed the children and others. Then once again [I] had to go to work in the field. Except for sleeping at night, [I] worked in the fields and grazed the cows and there was not much time to rest at home.

Q: Was all this activity...were you a happy child or did it feel like it was too much, too much of a burden?

00:11:53

#21U: It was your country and as for work, it was not just me, but everyone had to do this kind of work. So it was not like I was unhappy.

Q: How many houses were in your village, *ama-la*?

#21U: There were almost countless numbers of families. There were a great many. It was extremely large.

Q: Was there a monastery or *gonpa* nearby?

#21U: It was not located nearby but in Tibet... there was a monastery similar to a distance between Rajpur and Dehradun [India].

Q: Where did the family get the water supply for tea and cooking?

00:13:59

#21U: Water?

Q: Yes, the water for tea and cooking.

#21U: We had to go to fetch water at around a distance of half an hour from our hometown. There was a large river. There was a large river and one had to go to fetch water.

Q: What did you carry the water in? Did you take animals with you to help or carry it on your back?

#21U: There was a thing called *zom* that was made of wood and carried on the back. [Water] was carried in it.

Q: How many times... Would you go yourself or would other children go with you?

#21U: Since we were many members, at least 5-6 *zom* of water must be fetched. At times it was fetched in the morning and at times in the evening. There were no taps and such like we have in India. Water had to be fetched from the flowing river.

Q: What was the quality of water in the river? Was it clear or sandy? What was it like?

00:16:49

#21U: The water?

Q: Yes.

#21U: The water...there was no house or such. It came from a great distance and [I] have no knowledge about the source of the huge river. The water of this river was used to irrigate the fields in our region and for cooking. For irrigating the fields, barrages were built across the river using rocks. Then canals were made for the water to flow into the fields.

Q: What was the name of the river?

#21U: We used to call this river Tsangpo or some such thing.

Q: You mentioned that you were the oldest of seven children. Did your mother give birth to children while you were still living at home? Did you see her have more children, have babies?

#21U: Yes?

Q: Your mother gave birth to children and since you were the oldest, did you see the younger ones being born?

00:19:01

#21U: The younger ones being born...since I was the eldest among seven children [I] saw all the babies being born.

Q: Did your mother have any help or were you the only person helping her?

#21U: There was not anyone to help. Father had to go to do farming and such. Since I was the eldest one in the house, I was the one that gave food to mother and did such things. Except for me there was not any other helper. The other children were small and went to play and were of no help.

Q: Did the women in the village want to have as many children as they could or did they ever try to practice any birth control?

#21U: No, there was never any birth control in Tibet. Every child was allowed to be born and there was never any birth control.

Q: I didn't ask how large was your house. You had seven children and two parents. Can you describe the house that your family lived in?

00:21:50

#21U: We were not a rich family nor so very poor that [we] did not have anything to eat. [We] were sort of poor but worked hard. The house had three rooms. One was for the family members to live in and cook. One room was a store to keep *tsampa* 'flour made from roasted barley'—in Tibet [the staple food] was *tsampa*—and the valuables and other things. The other room was for the cows. [We] had three rooms.

Q: What kind of valuables did the family have that they wanted to store?

#21U: [We] did not have different kinds of valuables like the ones available in India. There were agricultural implements like spades and hoes. Then there was *tsampa* and change of clothing. [The room] was used to store such things.

Q: How did you get tools for the kitchen and for farming? Were they made by the family or did you buy them? How did you have all those tools necessary?

00:24:50

#21U: The tools or the things...during our time in Tibet there was no aluminum cookware but only clay pots. However, these clay pots were not from our region. Sellers came from other regions from who [we] bought them. As for the metal implements, there were certain people that made these. So [the tools] were purchased from them. Such things must be done.

Q: You know, we were talking about your mother giving birth to six other children. Did all of the children survive that were born? Did they grow into adulthood?

#21U: [I] did not hear.

Q: Your mother had seven children and you are one. Did the other six children survive?

00:27:01

#21U: Before a little child grew up, it was the parents' duty to take care. Then at the age of 8, 9 or 10, [the children] would go help with farming. There was a private estate in our region of which [I] spoke earlier [during the pre-interview]. [We] had to serve the leader at the estate. In Tibet we had to spread fertilizer in the fields. So the estate owned sheep for the manure. There was an enclosure for the sheep where they produced droppings and this must be covered with earth. Once covered with earth, it turned into manure.

Therefore, when a child reached the age of 8-10, there was a basket that he carried on the back and went to spread earth. Once a child reached the age of 8 or 9, there were such duties to perform and also helping with the farming. That was how it was. Little children in Tibet...here children are given education. Due to the benevolence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Buddha, children receive an education. Back in Tibet there was never any education. It was just working in the fields and no [education].

Q: *Ama-la*, please tell me more about the estate. I didn't understand the circumstances. Was that a wealthy family in the community? Were they Tibetans? Did they employ the children or was that a service that you had to give for your land?

00:30:48

#21U: The private estate in our region...There was one top leader, and a manager was deputed for 5-6 years in turns to look after the private estate. [The private estate] was managed by one family for 4-5 years and then by another family and so on in rotation.

Q: Where did they...?

#21U: We were given lands to earn a living for the service tax rendered. The land was for us to earn a living and when serving the private estate, you must [feed] yourself because there was no one to provide food and such on the private estate.

Q: So the children had to work on the estate, and then when they mixed the sheep dung and the earth together, was it used in your farm or in the farm of the estate?

00:33:12

#21U: You used what was yours. That [which the children worked at] was to be used in the lands of the private estate and had nothing to do with us.

Q: So the manor, they owned the farm that you worked on? Is that correct?

#21U: The land was owned by the private estate and was given [to us] so that we could work on it and make a living.

Q: You had been given lands?

#21U: Yes.

Q: You had been given lands?

#21U: Yes.

Q: In exchange for helping them with fertilizer, to make fertilizer you were allowed to work the land. Could you keep all the food that you raised on the land for your own family?

#21U: Yes.

Q: You can keep it. Were all the families in your village, did they work for these wealthy manor owners or were you only one of several families?

00:35:24

#21U: In Tibet each family had their respective leaders. The whole region did not have the same leader. So we were seven families that worked for this private estate. The seven families were supposed to be tenants of the private estate. The rest of the families had their respective leaders. We did not have the same [leader].

Q: Where did these leaders that came, these leaders that came every five or six years, where did they come from? It sounds like they were rotating managers.

#21U: [I] do not know about it. The most powerful one must be in Lhasa. Some came from Tsang Tashi Lhunpo and Shigatse and different places. Since these places were far away, I do not know much besides the names. Except the nearby places, we did not get to travel to other regions like it is done in India. One just engrossed oneself in work. It seems Lhasa is at a distance of seven days journey from our region. However, being immersed in work I have not seen Lhasa. [Smiles] One spent all the time working and making a living.

Q: Did the estate that you worked for...did it have a name? What was the formal name?

00:38:53

#21U: The name of the private estate?

Q: Yes.

#21U: The name of the private estate is Tashi Gang or some such thing.

Q: Okay. Tashi Gang.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Did I ask, “Can you keep all the food you raised”? Did I ask that?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Crop? Yes.

Q: *Ama-la*, when people got sick, just ordinary... what were some of the ordinary everyday sicknesses that people had in your village?

#21U: Yes?

Q: What kind of sicknesses did people get? You know, sicknesses at times...?

#21U: Sleep?

Q: No, being sick, sickness.

#21U: I see. In times of sickness there were Tibetan doctors—Tibetan doctors. One could avail medicines from them. Otherwise, there was no one to give injections and such like in India. Medicines could be availed only if you were from a rich family that could afford it. Or else, whether one fell sick or died or whatever happened, you endured it for there were no hospitals or any such thing like India. It was left to the gods whether one was cured or died. The water in the region was good and the food nutritious—whatever one ate or drank—therefore, one did not fall sick like in India.

Q: Do you think Tibetans have more illnesses since they have moved to India than they had in Tibet?

00:42:25

#21U: In India some suffer from fever and many other kinds of illnesses. There are many illnesses that have to be treated through injections and intravenous fluids. There are many ways of treatment. There was never anything like these in Tibet.

Q: *Ama-la*, when people did not survive their illnesses in Tibet, how did they take care of the bodies? What kind of funeral ceremonies did they have?

#21U: Yes?

Q: If a person did not survive an illness and passed away, how was the body taken care of in Tibet?

#21U: In Tibet we kept the body at home for three days—kept at home and conducted rituals. After three days...there was a cemetery atop a hill—atop a hill. The body was taken there. However, not everybody can carry the body. There were special people that

carried bodies. Not everybody can touch or carry [bodies]. After three days...there was the *punchok* that chanted *mani* ‘mantra of Avalokiteshvara.’ There were seven or eight families, a maximum of 10 that formed a *punchok* during the three days.

Q: *Punchok*?

00:45:22

#21U: Yes, it is called *punchok* who chanted *mani* through the night and day until the body is taken away. The family provided food and tea and *chang* ‘home-brewed beer.’ The people chanted *mani* throughout the three days and nights. After three days [the body] was taken to the cemetery. The people responsible carried it to the cemetery.

There were flat rocks at the cemetery, flat rocks on which the flesh was minced. After the flesh was minced, it was fed to the vultures, all the parts except the head, which was left until the end. The head was left. There were the bones and the bones were crushed using rocks. After that the head was cut open, and there was the brain within the head. The brain was removed and mixed with the bones and then fed to the vultures. There was not a trace of blood or anything left, and everything was clean. Finally dough was made using *tsampa* and with this the surface was wiped clean, and this too was fed to the vultures. Everything was sparkling clean. Such must be done.

Q: *Ama-la*, do people go to that flat rock every year and do they watch this ceremony of the dismembering of the body or is it only the special people that are doing it?

#21U: Yes?

Q: You said that the body is taken to the flat rock on the hill. Did people go to watch it?

00:50:29

#21U: The body was laid on a pronged piece of wood and taken away. As for transporting the body, except for those special people that carried away bodies, the ordinary people did not do so. When it reached the cemetery...You know, there are those that perform the ritual of *chod* ‘spiritual practice based on Prajnaparamita’ at the cemetery. If the body is to be taken away the next day, [the *chod* practitioner] started to perform *chod* at the cemetery the day earlier. That was said to be the dead person’s helper.

The *chod* is performed and when the body was left the next day—here we drape the body with *khata* ‘ceremonial scarves’—*khata* were draped over the body in Tibet. Then there was the *umze* ‘chant leader’ of the *mani* group; the *umze* held one end of the *khata* and accompanied the body. Those people that chanted *mani* also accompanied it. When [the group] was quite a long way up the hill, the lama that performed *chod* came down, performing the *chod* ritual as he came down. The lama held the end of the *khata*. The lama held on to it until the cemetery. After reaching there the body was laid on the flat rock and whatever ritual was to be conducted was done. Then the body was cut up and fed to the vultures. It was complicated. [Laughs]

Q: Yes, *ama-la*?

00:52:57

#21U: Compared to India, it was complicated. It is simple in India, while in Tibet it was very complicated.

Q: *Ama-la*, did everybody have a funeral like that one?

00:54:35

#21U: If it was a very, very poor family...it is possible that there are some that did not have anything and if such was the case, there was the border between our hometown and the next town and [the body] was laid in the river at this border. Otherwise, every family followed the same ritual.

Q: *Ama-la*, did you see...did you yourself ever witness any of this burial ceremony of the...?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...water?

[Interviewer to interpreter]: No, not the water, the regular ceremony.

#21U: [I] have witnessed it because being the eldest child I had to visit every family of the village where someone died. One went to visit the family and served them either tea or *chang*. Being the responsible one in the family I had to go everywhere and witnessed it.

Q: What about your own parents? Did they die before you left Tibet?

00:57:17

#21U: My mother passed away in Tibet before I left for India. However, Father was able to come to India.

Q: *Ama-la*, did people tend to live very long in Tibet? To what age was kind of an average age when people died?

#21U: [I] did not understand.

Q: How early did people pass away? In general, how long did people live?

Q: How long did people live in your hometown? Around what age did people pass away?

#21U: Around what age did people pass away?

Q: Yes, how long did people live?

#21U: The ages were of various kinds. There are some that live until the age of 80 or 90. There are some that pass away at 10 or 15. There are some that pass away at 40 or 50. There are different kinds. The oldest live to the age of 90 and younger ones pass away at 15, 16, 25, 40 or 50. There are different kinds.

Q: Did you have any...In your house you mentioned three rooms. Did you have any prayer room at all or an altar in your house where the family prayed?

00:59:51

#21U: There was an altar where offerings of water and butter lamps were made. There was an altar.

Q: Did the family gather there everyday or special occasions?

#21U: Yes?

Q: Did the family gather together in the shrine room?

#21U: In the night?

Q: Yes.

#21U: During the day you did whatever work you were capable of while the little children played. Everyone gathered in the night to sleep.

Q: *Ama-la*, did you receive any teachings in the Buddha dharma as a child or how did you learn to do all these prayers? What did you understand about the Buddha?

#21U: Yes?

Q: How did you learn to do the chanting that you know?

Q: Who taught you these?

#21U: What?

Q: Where did you learn the chanting when you were little?

01:01:51

#21U: About being taught the chanting...it can be understood that *mani* need not be taught. As for the Dolma 'Praises to the 21 Taras' and others, my father, it seems used to be a monk before he left [the monastery]. So Father was the one that taught. There were seven children in the family and when the sun went down, all the children were told to gather together at home and sit on mats. There were no beds and chairs like there are here. One had to sit on mats spread on the floor. The children were told to gather at home and chant the Dolma and other prayers at dinnertime. After all these were done, dinner was served. It was said that Father used to be a monk. He taught—taught all of us children.

Q: Tell me more about the living quarters that you were in. The whole family lived on the second...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...in one room.

Q: ...in one room. There were three rooms. So were there mats for all the children, and any other furniture?

01:04:26

#21U: There were not many other things but an altar to make offerings. Then there was the [stock of] *tsampa*. We cultivated once a year and harvested grains. So there was a stock of grains. Then there was *tsampa*. Then more well-off families had stocks of meat and butter and other things, and storage for these.

Q: How many boys were in the family, your family, and how many girls?

#21U: In our family were five boys and two girls. One of the girls was the youngest of all the children. When we came to India [she] was carried on the back. After reaching here, after reaching India, there was an American hospital in Mussoorie and everything was done, but [she] could not be saved and passed away. Then there was a boy elder to her...so from the seven children, five of us managed to come here. Now only two of us siblings survive and the rest passed away in India. There is nothing that can be done.

Q: In Tibet, were the boys treated any differently than the girls?

01:07:37

#21U: In Tibet, the boys...I had to bear the responsibility to the best of my ability. Nevertheless, the boys having being born as male, the parents treated them a little more valuable and the girls a little less dearly. It was like that.

Q: Did any of the boys become monks in your family?

#21U: One boy is a monk at the local monastery.

Q: Why were the boys considered more valuable?

#21U: Yes?

Q: Why did the parents consider boys more valuable?

#21U: Boys?

Q: Yes, why were boys considered more valuable?

01:09:05

#21U: Boys did their own work, did whatever the work it was when younger and when they became adults, the boys selected their partners and left to lead a life of their own without much care for the parents. A girl stayed home, like me who helped Father when Mother passed away. I had to stay home. Otherwise, the others at around the ages of 8, 9 or 10 did their respective work and then left. [Boys] did not cause suffering to the family.

Q: What happens to the girls?

#21U: Yes?

Q: The boys meet somebody and leave without causing problems to the parents. What about the girls?

#21U: The girl stayed home and served at the private estate, worked on the family farm and cooked for the parents. Such were the responsibilities. There were only two daughters. From the two daughters, the younger one did what she could around the house and I bore the responsibility and did household chores and served at the private estate and such.

Q: When you worked at the private estate, did you have to deal with the dung and the earth and make that fertilizer or did you have other jobs?

01:12:05

#21U: There was not any other work assigned at the private estate. Duties within the private estate were not assigned except making fertilizer because the private estate owned lands and needed [fertilizer] for the fields. After the fields were sown, after the fields were sown—5-6 plots depending upon the number of people...There were separate leaders for the men and women.

We were tenants of the private estate and therefore, were responsible for spreading fertilizing and sowing. Those responsible for sowing did their job and after that the fields were divided into plots. Five or six plots of lands were created and divided among us seven families. Then you worked on it like it was your own for the whole summer. After that it was time for the harvest. After the harvest, [we] delivered it to the yard and separated the hay from the grain and then winnowed. There was not much work during the winter. The tenants must do all these duties. In Tibet...

Q: *Ama-la*, can you please tell us when the Chinese came to your village, what happened?

01:15:07

#21U: When the Chinese appeared, all the Chinese were very gentle and helped fetch water for the home and helped do other jobs. When [the Chinese] initially appeared, [they] were incredibly gentle and good. [Laughs]

Q: And then what happened?

#21U: After that, there were those families that were better-off. Poor things, they [the Chinese] took out their possessions and gave to those that did not have anything. There used to be beggars in Tibet; there were those that begged and slept in the forests. These were accommodated inside the house. [The wealthy were told,] “You have enjoyed until now. All people are the same and they did not have the chance to enjoy.” As for clothes, in Tibet there were clothes made of fur, brocade *chupa* ‘traditional dresses’ and other kinds, all of which were given to the beggars.

They were accommodated in the house and the owner of the house was moved to the cowshed or donkey shed. The father, the father of the family, the father was arrested, “You have enjoyed until now. From this day, they [the beggars] will enjoy.” The father was subjected to *thamzing* ‘struggle sessions.’ Oh, [the father] was beaten and beaten and beaten. The servants were forced to beat [their employer]. [The servants] were forced to do the beating. [I] witnessed such an incident.

Q: Was your family considered among the poor that could be given some of these goods?

01:19:14

#21U: They [the Chinese] created three categories: rich farmers, middle class farmers and the poor. We were categorized as middle class farmers. Before I left, all the rich families had been subjected to *thamzing* and when it was the turn of the middle class farmers, we had some friends—some friends among the poor who said, “Now the turn has come for the middle class farmers to be subjected to suffering. It is better to leave now if possible.” I have witnessed the Chinese subject other people to suffering, but I did not have to endure any suffering. And then [we] fled.

Q: So *ama-la*, did the whole family leave at the same time, your father, mother, everybody?

#21U: Yes?

Q: You fled from the Chinese, from the hometown, fled from Tibet. Was your whole family together then?

01:22:07

#21U: Three people were left behind in Tibet: a sister and two brothers—the monk and another one. Whether [they] are alive or dead presently, [they] were left behind then. Everybody did not make it. There was work to be done...one was a monk and naturally lived in the monastery. The other two were at work in different places. Since we heard that it was the turn of the middle class farmers, [we] fled all of a sudden. Whether there were things in the house or whether there were the cows or whatever was there was left behind and [we] fled.

Q: Who did you come with?

#21U: Yes?

Q: Who was with you during the flight?

#21U: I cannot hear.

Q: You fled to India from Tibet. Who were together with you then? Who was with you?

#21U: During our flight in the night there were 40 people that were from our hometown. They are all in the settlement in Mysore [India] these days. The majority is in the settlement in Mysore. There were 40 people.

Q: *Ama-la*, you fled in 1959. So you were about 30 years old. How did it feel to leave your homeland after spending the first 30 years of your life there?

#21U: Yes?

Q: How did it feel when you fled?

01:25:23

#21U: At that time it was said that [we] had to flee to India. [I] did not feel bad and of course, why would one feel good about it? You had to leave your country, so how would it be good? I was 30 years old when [I] left Tibet and cannot remember feeling either good or bad.

Q: *Ama-la*, why did you want to tell your story today to this project?

#21U: Yes?

Q: *Ama-la*, why did you want to tell us your story?

Q: You told us your story. You told us your story today. Why did you want to do so, *ama-la*?

#21U: [I] did not understand.

Q: You told us your story today. You told us your story. Why did you want to do so, *ama-la*?

#21U: I see. That is because if this can be broadcast all over the world, the people of the world are not animals but human. Actually [they] should feel sympathy and out of love and compassion, if [they] cannot help [us], perhaps [they] will not cause harm. This is what [I] think.

Q: Thank you. *Ama-la*, what is your wish for Tibet? What is your wish or your prayer?

01:28:07

#21U: Hope?

Q: Yes.

#21U: The hope...One keeps hearing that the world is extending help, but whatever it is, I have spent [my] life from the age of 30 until now in India. There is nothing left to do in Tibet. However, [I] pray. "May [I] get to die where [I] was born. May the All-Knowing [His Holiness the Dalai Lama] return to Tibet. If the All-Knowing can return, we can too." That is what [I] pray for.

The main thing is that there should be no obstacles in the life of the All-Knowing. As for us, after coming to India, [I] worked as a coolie when younger. [I] was happy and did not face any problems with food and clothing. Now in this old age, thanks to the government and

the benevolence of the All-Knowing, I am in this Home for the Aged. There is no fear of hunger, thirst, cold or anything.

However, [I] am not happy hoping to be able to return to Tibet. [I] believe everybody is helping but there is nothing to show for it. [I] wish there is some strong support forthcoming. That would be good, but [I] do not know...perhaps they [the Chinese] cannot be challenged or something. There is nothing to do. Now the time to die has come. Yet [I] wish [I] could take the last breath in Tibet. [I] pray like this. Now I am 88 years old and there is no objective.

Q: We hope you have your wish, *ama-la*. Thank you for sharing your very important story with us.

#21U: Okay. [Joins palms] You are making great effort and if this can be broadcast to the world, even if no one comes to help...there is hope.

Q: Beautiful. Thank you.

#21U: [Joins palms]

END OF INTERVIEW