

Tibet Oral History Project

Interview #24C – T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche
November 14, 2014

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #24C
2. Interviewee: T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche
3. Age: 80
4. Date of Birth: 1933
5. Sex: Male
6. Birthplace: Thinkar
7. Province: Dhotoe (Kham)
8. Year of leaving Tibet: 1953
9. Date of Interview: November 14, 2014
10. Place of Interview: Private home, Seattle, Washington, USA
11. Length of Interview: 1 hr 12 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Tenzin Sherab
14. Videographer: Tony Sondag
15. Translator: Tenzin Yangchen

Biographical Information:

Tenpe Gyaltzen Dhongthog Rinpoche was born in Thinkar Village in Kham Province and was the eldest of five siblings. His was a farming family that earned their livelihood cultivating barley, wheat and peas in their fields. He joined the Dhongthog Rigdrol Phuntsog Ling Monastery at the age of 7 when he was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous Dhongthog Rinpoche. At age 13, T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche joined the Ngor Institute where he took his monk's vows and received teachings from lamas. He was first taught reading and writing, then learned many Buddhist scriptures.

T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche went on a pilgrimage to India to visit the sacred Buddhist sites like Bodh Gaya, Nalanda, and Varanasi. However, on his return journey he did not travel beyond Lhasa after he was informed that the Communist Chinese had arrived in his hometown and were mistreating the Tibetan people. He soon decided to return to India.

T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche talks about his education in India where he learned English and Hindi. He then compiled the first Tibetan-English dictionary. He relates the various translation works he carried out and books he has written including his autobiography. He worked for the Tibet House, Delhi and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala.

Topics Discussed:

Kham, monastic life, pilgrimage, education, life as a refugee in India.

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Interview #24C

Interviewee: T. G. Dhongthog Rinpoche

Age: 80, Sex: Male

Interviewer: Marcella Adamski

Interview Date: November 14, 2014

Question: Please tell us your name.

00:00:11

Interviewee #24C: The name is Tenpe Gyaltzen Dhongthog.

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?

#24C: Yes.

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

#24C: Okay.

Q: During this interview if you wish to take a break or stop at any time, please let me know. If you do not wish to answer a question or talk about something, let me know.

#24C: Okay.

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

#24C: What?

Q: If the video of this interview is seen by people in Tibet or China, would this be a problem for you?

00:02:24

#24C: What is it about China and Tibet?

Q: If they see it, would this be a problem for you?

#24C: What?

Q: Would it cause you harm?

#24C: Would it cause harm?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Were [I] to go now?

Q: No. You are being video graphed for this interview. After everything's complete and should people living in Tibet or China see this, would it be a problem for you?

#24C: It will not be.

Q: Rinpoche, can you please tell us where you were born?

#24C: What?

Q: In which part of Tibet were [you] born?

#24C: [I] was born in Kham.

Q: What village in Kham and what was the nearest monastery?

00:03:26

#24C: The place in Kham where I was born is called Thinkar. [I] was born in the village of Thinkar.

Q: Which is the nearest monastery?

#24C: Monastery?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Khanur Monastery is the nearest from my village. Khanur Monastery is the nearest.

Q: What was the province?

#24C: What?

Q: What was the province?

#24C: What?

Q: Under which province does it come?

#24C: The province in Kham...the province is Kham.

Q: Which province in Kham?

#24C: Province?

Q: Which province?

#24C: Should one say the province is China?

Q: What was the name of the province when [you] were in Tibet?

#24C: The province was Kham before the appearance of the Communist Chinese.

Q: Is it Kham?

#24C: Yes.

Q: Rinpoche, what year were you born?

00:04:34

#24C: The year was 1993.

Q: It isn't. In which year were you born?

#24C: The year I was born?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Yes, it's 1993.

Q: 1933? How old are you now, Rinpoche?

#24C: Presently?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Presently am 82 years old.

Q: Eighty-two. You're 82 and what calendar, Tibetan calendar year were you born in?

#24C: In the year of the water bird.

Q: Water bird, okay. Can you tell us what did your parents do for a livelihood in Tibet?

#24C: Farmers, [they] worked in the fields.

Q: What kind of things did your family grow?

#24C: [They] grew barley, wheat and peas in the fields.

Q: How many children were in your parents' family?

00:06:23

#24C: We were around five children including me.

Q: Can you tell us what are some of your memories as a child growing up in your village?

#24C: When I was little [I] joined the monastery at the age of 7, the Dhongthog Monastery.

Q: Oh, I see and was that because your parents wanted you to go or was that your wish?

#24C: [I] was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous Dhongthog Tulku of Dhongthog Monastery. The father of the present Sakya Trizen recognized [me] as the reincarnation of Dhongthog Tulku.

Q: Can you please tell us something about Dhongthog Rinpoche? Who was he?

#24C: What?

Q: Please say something about Dhongthog Rinpoche.

#24C: About Dhongthog Rinpoche?

Q: Yes.

00:08:58

#24C: I went to Dasar at the age of 13. The Dasar is Ngor. It is close to Shigatse.

[Interpreter interprets as: At age 13 I went to Zongsar Institute for further studies.]

#24C: It is to Dasar. [I] went at the age of 13.

Q: What's Dasar?

#24C: Dasar means Ngor.

Q: Yes, isn't Ngor the Zongsar Institute?

#24C: It isn't Zongsar Institute.

Q: Then?

#24C: At age 13 [I] went to Ngor and received teachings from lamas and took the vows.

Q: It's at Ngor Monastery that [you] became a monk?

#24C: Yes.

Q: Rinpoche-*la* , before you left for the monastery when you were 7, right? Seven? The first time, do you have any memories of your family home? What, like what were some memories you might have being a little child before you went to the monastery?

00:10:29

#24C: [I] do not have anything particular to talk about the family before the age of 7.

Q: You said five children in the family?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes.

Q: Rinpoche-*la*, where were you in the order? Were you the youngest, the oldest, what order?

#24C: I am the oldest.

Q: You were the oldest son. When you went to the monastery for the first time at 7, please say the name of that monastery again.

#24C: It is called Dhongthog Rigdrol Phuntsog Ling.

Q: About how many monks lived at that monastery?

#24C: There might have been around 150 monks in the monastery then.

Q: Rinpoche, did you have someone who was your teacher or your guide at the monastery, a relative or a friend of the family?

#24C: My teacher was called Tsultim Sangpo. Tsultim Sangpo.

He was the one that taught reading. Then there was a teacher called Tsenam who taught me to write.

Q: Were they very...What kind of a student were you, Rinpoche?

#24C: What?

Q: What kind of a student were you when you first joined the monastery?

00:13:05

#24C: When [I] joined the monastery?

Q: Yes.

#24C: The teacher was Tsultim Sangpo when [I] joined the monastery.

Q: When you joined the monastery as a little one, what kind of a student were you?

#24C: Student?

Q: Yes. What were you like?

#24C: I was the student, right?

Q: Yes. What kind of a student were you?

#24C: I joined the monastery at the age of 8.

Q: Did you mother and father come to see you in the monastery or did you go home for a visit?

#24C: Father and mother came to see me at the monastery.

Q: Do you have any memories of your mother you can tell us about like what kind of a person was she?

#24C: About what of mother?

Q: Please talk about what kind of a person was your mother.

#24C: Mother came as a *nama* 'bride/daughter-in-law' from Dongthoe.

Q: Can you tell us something about your father?

#24C: Father's name was Lobsang Dorjee.

Q: Anything about your father?

00:15:09

#24C: Nothing in particular about father.

Q: The village where you came from, can you...was it a very large village or small; were there many families there?

#24C: It was a small village.

Q: Around how many families were there?

#24C: There might have been 10-11 families.

Q: And the monastery was it considered a special monastery in the area or did it just serve the local community?

#24C: To whom?

Q: What's the size of Dhongthog Monastery?

#24C: Among the four Sakya monasteries of Nyadak, Dhongthog, Khanang and...[not discernible], Dhongthog Monastery is the second largest.

Q: Did the monastery benefit those living around it?

#24C: What?

Q: Did it benefit well?

#24C: Yes, it did.

[Dhongthog] must be the second largest monastery.

Q: Rinpoche, please tell us how has that monastery helped the local people?

00:17:41

#24C: For those living around it, Dhongthog Monastery has taught the little children that joined it as monks.

Q: Rinpoche, why did parents want their sons to become monks?

#24C: For instance, if a family has three or four children, one child brings a *nama* and remains home while the others...if there are four children the other three become monks.

Q: Why did [they] become monks?

#24C: What?

Q: Why did [they] become monks?

#24C: [They] become monks to learn prayers and such in the monastery.

[Interpreter concludes above statement as: ...become monks for spiritual reasons.]

Q: What were the spiritual reasons?

#24C: The main reason for becoming monks was to become well versed in the scriptures.

Q: Are there other reasons?

#24C: There are no other reasons.

Q: Because you were considered the 5th reincarnation of Jampal Rigpai Raldri, were you given any special treatment in the monastery?

[Interpreter interprets: In Dhongthog Monastery you were the 5th reincarnation of Dhongthog Rinpoche, right?]

#24C: Yes.

Q: The 5th *tulku* 'reincarnation,' right?

#24C: Yes, the 5th.

Q: After you were appointed as the 5th reincarnation of Dhongthog Rinpoche, were there any special preparations made for you?

#24C: What special?

Q: Did they have any special preparations when you were being appointed?

00:21:29

#24C: I am the 5th, right?

Q: Yes. Was there a special ceremony then?

#24C: A teacher was appointed to teach me.

Q: In the monastery you were in it was the Sakya tradition, is that correct?

#24C: What?

Q: Was it a Sakya monastery?

#24C: Yes, Sakya.

Q: Were there other traditions around there like the Gelugpa or was it mostly a Sakya area in Kham?

#24C: Yes, there were many Gelugpa, also Nyingma. There was one Bonpo monastery.

Q: Can you please tell us what are the various schools of Tibetan Buddhism for people who may not know that? You know the Gelugpa...can you please tell us the names of the different schools?

#24C: There are five different sects Sakya, Gelug, Nyingma, Kagyu and Bonpo.

Q: Since you were a part of the Sakya tradition, can you please describe what were some of the important teachings or specialty of the tradition in the Sakya tradition? What was Sakya important for? What was it famous for?

00:23:43

#24C: The followers of Sakya go to Sakya Gong, Ngor and Nalanda [Monasteries] to study.

Q: What were the Sakya teachers noted for? What were they recognized for in their teachings to the people?

#24C: While in the monastery [the teachers] mostly taught prayer recitation and then scriptures are taught at Dzongsar Sheta; scriptures pertaining to debates is taught.

Q: Rinpoche, were there any teachings you learned as a young man, a young student that were very meaningful or very special to you that you have never forgotten?

#24C: About studying the scriptures?

Q: Yes. You have been to Dzongsar Sheta and studied many scriptures; what do you remember the most?

#24C: There is the Shungchen Chusum, which is the 13 different fundamental root texts that [I] studied. Then [I] learned *dhagyik* ‘spelling,’ *sumthak* ‘grammar’ and *nyengag* ‘poetry.’

[Interpreter interprets as: What I remember is the Shungchen Chusum and *dhagyik*, *sumthak*, *nyengag*. I remember those.]

Q: What were those? Are they prayers?

Interpreter interprets: What’s the Shungchen Chusum? What’s it in English?

00:26:54

#24C: The Shungchen Chusum consists of Chonjuk ‘Bodhicharya Avatara,’ [Shantideva’s exposition on the conduct of a bodhisattva], Dhulwa ‘Vinaya, ethical codes’, Uma ‘Madhyamaka, the Middle way philosophy,’ Tsema ‘Pramana, logic and epistemology, commentary or elucidation,’ Pharchin ‘Prajnaparamita, perfection of wisdom’ and such.

Q: How long did you stay at your first monastery? How many years?

#24C: At Dhongthog Monastery?

Q: Yes, Dhongthog Monastery. If the first monastery was Dhongthog Monastery, for how many years were you there?

#24C: [I] might have been at Dhongthog Monastery for around 20 years.

Q: Dhongthog, that wasn’t the first monastery that you went to, was it?

#24C: Prior to Dhongthog Monastery?

Q: Yes.

#24C: [I] did not.

Q: That was the first one?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: That was the first one. I spent 20 years.

Q: Twenty years there. What kind of a student were you at the monastery, Rinpoche? Did you find it hard to study? Did you enjoy it? Was it difficult? Can you tell us?

#24C: When [I] first joined the Dhongthog Monastery?

Q: Yes.

00:28:46

#24C: I learned reading, writing and prayers that were chanted during prayer assemblies.

Q: Did you enjoy at the monastery?

#24C: What?

Q: Were [you] happy at the monastery? Was it very difficult?

#24C: [I] did not face any difficulties.

Q: During the time at the monastery what were conditions like in that part of Tibet? Was there any presence of the Chinese or was it very unoccupied?

#24C: Who?

Q: When you first joined the Dhongthog Monastery was there Chinese present in Kham then?

#24C: The Kuomintang Chinese were there in Kham.

Q: What was the condition like around the monastery?

#24C: The conditions were good for the Chinese had not caused any harm.

Q: The Nationalist Chinese were present. What was the relationship of the people in the surrounding area around the monastery because the Chinese said the monasteries took advantage of the people, abused the people? What was your experience? How did the people feel about the monasteries and the monks? Can you tell please?

#24C: What?

Q: There were a few Chinese around when you first joined the Dhongthog Monastery. Did they raise any criticism? Did the Chinese criticize the monks and lamas of Dhongthog Monastery of their work?

#24C: Did the Chinese criticize?

Q: Criticism.

#24C: [The Chinese] did not cause any harm.

Q: No. Did they raise any criticism?

#24C: What?

Q: Did [the Chinese] complain?

#24C: [They] did not.

Q: They didn't complain but the local people, did they have a good relationship with the monastery or did they resent the monastery if they had to pay taxes or give supplies to the monastery? How did the local people feel about supporting the monastery?

00:33:04

#24C: To the monastery?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Did [the local people] criticize the monastery?

Q: There are many villages around the Dhongthog Monastery...

#24C: Yes, there are villages.

Q: Did they have to pay taxes to the monastery?

#24C: Pay what?

Q: Tax.

#24C: What?

Q: Tax. Did [the local people] have to pay any tax?

#24C: Tax?

Q: Yes, tax.

#24: [They] did not have to pay taxes.

Q: Did they give a bad name to the monastery?

#24C: [They] did not.

Q: You were there 20 years. Did your role change in the monastery? How...did you become a teacher or a head of the monastery? What happened in your own progression as a...your role in the monastery?

#24C: [I] gained experience.

Q: What experience?

#24C: [I] learned to read and write well. [I] gained experience in these.

[Interpreter interprets as: My experience at Dhongthog Monastery was I became more and more educated and more learned about Tibetan literature and Buddhist principles and so on.]

Q: Rinpoche, who were your teachers because this was a rather remote monastery? So what teachers did you study with that could teach you about Tibetan literature and Buddha dharma? Who...did they come to the monastery or did they live there?

[Interpreter interprets as: Who was your teacher when you first joined Dhongthog Monastery?]

00:35:22

#24C: [My] teacher was one who was called Tsultim Sangpo. He was the one that taught memorization. The one that taught writing was called Tsenam.

Q: Did you ever hold any positions or...positions of authority in the monastery?

#24C: Special what?

Q: Authority? Position? Did you have any special authority?

#24C: Authority?

Q: Yes.

#24C: The authority was looking after the monastery.

Q: Were you the head of the monastery, the head lama, Rinpoche?

#24C: Yes.

Q: Was the head of the monastery. Why did you leave the monastery and what year was that?

#24C: [I] was left [at the monastery] as the reincarnation of my predecessor lama.

Q: No. Why did you leave Dhongthog Monastery after living there for around 20 years?

#24C: In order to go on a pilgrimage.

Q: Which year was that?

00:37:12

#24C: [I] cannot remember the year of the pilgrimage. I was around 17 or 18 when [I] went on pilgrimage to India.

Q: So you'd been in the monastery for about 10 years because you joined the monastery at 7.

#24C: Yes. That must be it. Then...that must be it.

Q: Can you tell us something about where you went on your pilgrimage to India?

#24C: [I] went to Bodh Gaya, Varanasi and all the eight great pilgrim sites of India.

Q: Did [you] go to Kushinagar?

#24C: What?

Q: Kushinagar?

#24C: Kushinagar?

Q: Yes.

#24C: Yes, went there too.

Q: What was it like to leave such a remote part...?

#24C: Nalanda. Kushinagar, Nalanda. Bodh Gaya.

Q: What was it like to leave such a remote part of the world in Tibet and to go to India? What were some of your memories or experiences?

00:39:30

#24C: [I] went on the pilgrimage and then studied the Indian language and English.

Q: How long did the pilgrimage last, Rinpoche?

#24C: What?

Q: How long was the pilgrimage in India?

#24C: Which pilgrimage?

Q: You left Dhongthog Monastery to go on a pilgrimage to India...

#24C: That is right.

Q: How long was the pilgrimage? How many months?

#24C: How many months?

Q: You went to various places in India to see the holy sites...

#24C: Right.

Q: How long did it take?

#24C: What?

Q: How long was the trip?

#24C: [Silent]

Q: The pilgrimage, the pilgrim sites?

#24C: ...[not discernible]

Q: You left Dhongthog Monastery to go to various places in India on pilgrimage...

#24C: That is right.

Q: How long was the pilgrimage?

#24C: It might have taken about a month.

Q: And then after that one month, did you return to your monastery?

#24C: After the pilgrimage in India I returned to Lhasa but could not go to my monastery in Kham.

Q: Why not?

00:41:31

#24C: The reason was that the Communist Chinese had arrived then.

[Interpreter interprets as: At that time I was informed that the Red Chinese had already occupied that portion of Tibet.]

Q: Which portion was that?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Kham area.

Q: Kham area. And so where did you stay in Lhasa, Rinpoche?

#24C: Where [I] stayed in Lhasa?

Q: Yes.

#24C: [I] stayed in the city of Lhasa.

Q: With whom?

#24C: There were people from [my] hometown that [I] knew.

Q: I see. Did you join a monastery then, Rinpoche in Lhasa or just live as a layperson?

#24C: [I] did not live in a monastery in Lhasa. [I] stayed in the city.

Q: Then how long did you remain in Lhasa before you...you know, did you stay there for many years? What happened?

#24C: [I] might have stayed around a month in Lhasa.

Q: And then where did you go?

#24C: Then [I] did not return to [my] hometown because the Communist Chinese had arrived. Then [I] left again for India.

Q: Okay. So when you...I just want to make sure to get some idea of this. You said you were 20 years at your monastery and you joined at age 7. So then that would have been 27 that you left...you know that you would have left Kham at age 27 after 20 years and then you went to Lhasa. I thought...is that correct? I thought we had down that you left at age 17, you said after 10 years you went to Lhasa. So you're actually 27. Could we get some understanding of that, please?

00:45:03

#24C: Twenty-seven? This must be it.

Q: You cannot be 17 but 27 when you left Dhongthog Monastery to go to India on pilgrimage because you told me that you were 20 years in Dhongthog Monastery. If [you] were there for 20 years wouldn't [you] be 27 when leaving Dhongthog Monastery?

#24C: Yes, it must be around that age.

Q: That would make more sense, 20 years at his monastery.

Rinpoche, what were the Red soldiers doing to your monastery? Did you hear any news about why you shouldn't go back? What were they doing?

#24C: One of my relatives arrived from hometown that said, “The Red Chinese are not treating well. It is better not to go back to hometown.” [He] brought such news.

Q: I see. So then you returned after Lhasa, you returned to India and continued to study or learn? What happened when you returned to India?

#24C: After reaching India [I] studied English and Tibetan and such. [I] did not work, studied English and Indian language.

Q: Did you live alone or in a monastery when you were educating yourself?

00:48:02

#24C: [I] did not live in a monastery but in a town.

Q: How did you get this education? Where did you go to study English and Hindi?

#24C: An Indian man taught at that time.

Q: What kind of work did you accomplish with your study of English and your knowledge of Tibetan? Did you write any books?

#24C: What writing did [I] accomplish?

Q: Yes. What did you accomplish to write while you were in India?

#24C: [Silent]

Q: Didn't [you] write a dictionary?

#24C: Right, [I] wrote a dictionary.

Q: What else?

#24C: The other books [I] wrote are in the list [points off camera]. There is the list of all the books and compositions I wrote.

[Interpreter interprets as: While in India I wrote and published the very first English-Tibetan dictionary. Also I did composition and editor work for the Tibet House.]

Q: Tibet House in New Delhi. So Rinpoche, you put your brain and your skills to good use.

#24C: Yes, [I] did.

Q: Did wonderful.

[Discontinuity in interview]

00:50:24

Q: Rinpoche, how did it happen that you wrote the first English to Tibetan dictionary which helped so many school children and obviously staff members and institutes? How did that happen that you wrote this dictionary?

#24C: What?

Q: How did the first idea occur of writing the dictionary?

#24C: There were no dictionaries. Therefore, [I] thought it would be beneficial.

Q: How did you do that? How did you...did you have help or did you have a sponsor or funding? How did you do that?

#24C: The dictionary was published by the Finance Department of the Tibetan Government. It was published from the Finance Department of the Tibetan Government in Dharamsala.

Q: How long did it take, Rinpoche?

#24C: [Speaks before translation] I brought out the first publication in Delhi. Then the Finance Department of the Tibetan Government bought many copies, which was how I could meet the expenses.

Q: How...can you say something about the dictionary? How big was it? What did it cover? How many...can you describe it a little bit?

#24C: What?

Q: What was the size of the Tibetan-English dictionary that you wrote?

#24C: Size?

Q: Yes.

00:53:17

#24C: Perhaps there were around 300 pages.

Q: Was it a big success?

#24C: What?

Q: Success?

#24C: Yes, it was a big success.

Q: Really? Congratulations!

#24C: [Nods]

Q: Could we find a copy of that dictionary somewhere?

#24C: It is at the Tibetan Government's library in Dharamsala.

Q: Good. Okay. We understand that's a good library to get a copy of your dictionary, the first one ever published of Tibetan to English. That would be very interesting to look at. I understand that you worked as the main editor at Tibet House in New Delhi for many years. Can you tell us what kind of editing did you do? What kind of material or books or articles were needing editing?

#24C: About what?

Q: You worked for the Tibetan Government's library...

#24C: In Dharamsala...no, in Delhi.

Q: What kind of books did you edit?

00:55:19

#24C: Tibetans printed *pecha* 'scriptures' that were given to American libraries. I had the responsibility of receiving money and selling the books.

Q: *Peton* books? I'm sorry. What kind of books? *Paton*?

[Interpreter interprets as: You worked for many years at the library in Delhi. What was your main duty at the library?]

#24C: The main duty at the library was this...what to say...?

Q: Was it editing?

#24C: It was composing scriptures and delivering the published Tibetan scripture books to the American libraries and receiving payment, then remitting it to the Tibetan Government's library. These were the duties.

Q: And these were copies of books written by whom?

#24C: There were Tibetans that printed scriptures and these scripture books were delivered to the American libraries. [I] received the payment from which a small profit was remitted to the Tibetan Government's library and the rest of the money to the Tibetans that worked on the publication of the scriptures.

Q: Wonderful! I understand, Rinpoche that you're the author of several books including the *History of the Sakyapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, *The Cleansing Water Drops*, *The Earth Shaking Thunder of True Word*, *The History of Tibet* and *New Light English-Tibetan Dictionary*.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Do you want to read that to him and inquire if he's the author of those?

#24C: Yes, right.

Q: You wrote all those books. Are they available in English?

01:00:03

#24C: A small book was published in English.

Q: Which one?

#24C: The dictionary, the English grammar and a small book. These three were translated into English.

Q: Were they written in English, Rinpoche or were they written in Tibetan?

#24C: [Speaks before question is translated] The Tibetan-English Grammar, English-Tibetan Dictionary and a small book are both in English and Tibetan. Three books are available both in English and Tibetan.

Q: I also understand that Rinpoche, that you worked as a translator and editor on the Tibetan version of Sogyal Rinpoche's *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*.

#24C: Yes, I edited the Tibetan translation. It has not been published yet.

Q: I don't know, but we can find that out if it has been. So Rinpoche, we are seeing you had very excellent training and you've put it to good use. So to summarize, before leaving Tibet, first of all you were the head teacher of Dhongthog Rigdrol Phuntsog Ling Monastery in Karze?

#24C: [Speaks before translation] [I] have also written my autobiography.

Q: What is the name of this book?

01:03:19

#24C: The name of the book is Sugmay Ngagkyi Rolmo.

Q: And is this book in English or Tibetan?

#24C: It is written in Tibetan.

Q: It's in Tibetan. Do you think you will translate it into English?

#24C: No, [I] do not.

Q: Not thinking about it yet. Why did you want to write a book about yourself?

#24C: The reason for writing it is that it may benefit the Tibetans.

Q: That would be excellent. We would like to find a copy of that book and hope maybe someday it'll be translated into English although now many Tibetans can read it. And His Holiness asked many people to write...that he asked many people to write their life story.

#24C: Yes.

Q: Rinpoche, I see that you also...you worked during those 13 years before you moved to the United States in 1979 and during 13 years in India you worked for the Tibetan Government in exile and you worked at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala and at Tibet House in New Delhi.

#24C: Yes.

Q: What do you think of the idea that this project, the Tibet Oral History Project is trying to record the stories of the oldest people who were born in Tibet and put them in the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives?

01:06:49

#24C: It is good.

Q: Why do you think it is a good idea?

#24C: The reason being that through this broadcast everybody will come to understand better. That is it.

[Interpreter interprets as: I believe it is a good idea because through this way more people will come to know the truth.]

Q: The truth about what?

#24C: What?

Q: You said that this Project is good. What is the reason for it being good?

#24C: The reason is everybody will come to know well through what is written.

Q: This is not about your book. The Project records the interviews of different people and puts them in various libraries. Why do [you] think this work is good?

#24C: Everybody will come to know well and that is good.

Q: What will be known?

#24C: Everybody will come to know what all I have done. That is good.

Q: Rinpoche, what do you think is the most important or some of the most important things that the world can learn from Tibetan Buddhism that would be helpful to the world? What do you think?

01:09:22

#24C: More and more people in the world are becoming aware of Tibetan Buddhism. So if they practice the dharma well [they] will benefit both in this life and the next.

Q: Maybe just one last question. How do you think learning Buddhism helps people? What do you think is so crucial or important about learning the Buddha dharma?

#24C: The greatest benefit is that after understanding the dharma those that were not Buddhists become Buddhists.

Q: Thank you, Rinpoche. We are again very honored to record your story and appreciate your participation in this project.

#24C: Okay.

Q: I would like to ask you one more time if this interview was shown in Tibet or China, would this be a problem for you?

#24C: There will be no problem.

Q: Can we use your real name for this project?

#24C: Yes.

Q: Thank you.

#24C: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW