

# **Tibet Oral History Project**

**Interview #61D – Ama Adhe  
May 14, 2012**

The Tibet Oral History Project serves as a repository for the memories, testimonies and opinions of elderly Tibetan refugees. The oral history process records the words spoken by interviewees in response to questions from an interviewer. The interviewees' statements should not be considered verified or complete accounts of events and the Tibet Oral History Project expressly disclaims any liability for the inaccuracy of any information provided by the interviewees. The interviewees' statements do not necessarily represent the views of the Tibet Oral History Project or any of its officers, contractors or volunteers.

This translation and transcript is provided for individual research purposes only. For all other uses, including publication, reproduction and quotation beyond fair use, permission must be obtained in writing from: Tibet Oral History Project, P.O. Box 6464, Moraga, CA 94570-6464, United States.

Copyright © 2014 Tibet Oral History Project.



# TIBET ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

www.TibetOralHistory.org

## INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #61D
2. Interviewee: Ama Adhe
3. Age: 84
4. Date of Birth: 1928
5. Sex: Female
6. Birthplace: Nyarong
7. Province: Dhotoe (Kham)
8. Year of leaving Tibet: 1987
9. Date of Interview: May 14, 2012
10. Place of Interview: Hotel Tibet, Mcleod Ganj, Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, India
11. Length of Interview: 2 hr 03 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Tenzin Yangchen
14. Videographer: Pema Tashi
15. Translator: Tenzin Yangchen

### **Biographical Information:**

Ama Adhe was born in Nyarong in Kham Province to a middle class family. She was a devout Buddhist from a very young age, practicing as her parents taught her. She describes her feeling of terror upon seeing the Chinese for the first time and recounts how they tried to lure children with silver coins and their pretense to help Tibetans.

Ama Adhe and her husband planned an escape to Lhasa, but her husband was poisoned by the Chinese before they could leave. Ama Adhe then inspired other women to help the Tibetan men who fought against the Chinese by supplying food and provisions to them. When the rebellion was crushed some of the women and many men and monks were arrested. Some of the stronger ones like Ama Adhe were taken away to a prison in Changshita, China. Only four out of the 300 women in that prison survived the ordeal of starvation there.

Ama Adhe is one of the Tibetans who served the longest prison terms, which was 27 years and ended only when Deng Xiaoping pardoned the political prisoners. During her incarceration she suffered torture and forced labor. The Chinese tried to instill in her that the Buddhist dharma and the Dalai Lama were bad, but she continued to pray daily. She believes her deep faith in the Dalai Lama and the Goddess Tara saved her from imminent death. She repeatedly emphasizes her wish to tell reveal to the world the suffering of prisoners who died under Chinese oppression.

### **Topics Discussed:**

Kham, first appearance of Chinese, destruction of monasteries, resistance, imprisonment, forced labor, brutality/torture.

# TIBET ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

www.TibetOralHistory.org

## Interview #61D

**Interviewee: Ama Adhe**

**Age: 84, Sex: Female**

**Interviewer: Marcella Adamski**

**Interview Date: May 14, 2012**

Question: Please tell us your name.

00.00.20

**Interviewee #61D: When I was young, I used to be called Adhe. Now that I am old, I am called Ama ‘Mother’ Adhe.**

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?

**#61D: [Nods] I want to say thank you. I am an 84-year old woman and am very happy that I can speak like this before my death. This is because there is so much suffering in Tibet and on behalf of those that have died—all my colleagues were killed by the Chinese—I feel extremely happy that I am able to speak to you about all my suffering in prison for 27 years. I have waited with joy since last night.**

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

00:02:48

**#61D: [Nods]**

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

**#61D: [Nods]**

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

**#61D: Yes?**

Q: If there is a question you do not want to answer, you can say that you do not wish to answer.

00:03:18

**#61D: Okay. [Joins palms]**

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

**#61D: There will be no problem. I have travelled around the world to 10 countries and conversed directly with Chinese. I am happy and there is nothing the Chinese can do to me. There is so much suffering in Tibet. You need not have any doubt and showing this [interview] to the Chinese is what I want.**

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

**#61D: [To the interpreter] The Chinese have rendered this ear [touches right ear] useless; only this one works [touches left ear]. Please speak loudly.**

Q: *Ama-la* ‘respectful term for mother,’ can we use your real name for this project or do you wish to use a pseudonym?

00:05:02

**#61M: I do not want anything false. I only want the truth and will tell you [the story] as it is. You need have no doubt. I like that.**

Q: *Ama-la*, let us begin by talking about your early days. Can you tell us where were you born and who was in your family? Where were you born and which people were in your family?

**#61D: The place where I was born is Nyarong. The place is Nyarong in Kham. A person from my village is in the United States and he is Gyari Rinpoche [Lodi Gyari]. We are from the same place.**

Q: What was your father's work in Tibet and your mother's work?

00:06:29

**#61D: My father was called Dorjee Rabten and mother was Sonam Dolma. We were not very rich and nor were we leaders or aristocrats. [We] were also not people that suffered or faced problems. Ours was a family among happy and problem-free nomads and farmers.**

Q: Can you please describe some of your memories of your childhood as a little girl growing up in Tibet?

**#61D: When I was little, what our Tibet was like was that we Tibetans were subjects of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and we were Buddhists. We only practiced the dharma and enjoyed freedom. There were no Chinese and Tibetans had rights. Each one was happy and practiced the dharma. Our region was a beautiful place with forest-covered mountains teeming with wild animals. There were also grass-covered mountains where the nomads lived. There was no Chinese ruling us. We Tibetans lived happily with every freedom. That was how we lived and I describe it.**

Q: ...Religious practices that you remember doing as a child?

00:09:00

**#61D:** Since a little child, [I] was a Buddhist. Our parents drilled it into our ears how happy one can be if one practiced the dharma and the bad effects of not practicing it and about His Holiness the Dalai Lama. So, since I was little I used to chant the *Dolma* ‘Goddess Tara’ prayers, circumambulate the temple and practice the dharma. When not practicing, there were dancing and horse racing. I was a very naughty person, like a boy. My mother used to remark, “You are a girl and not a boy.” I used to race horses and dance as well as practice the dharma. At that time we were truly happy with freedom and no Chinese. My life was extremely happy as well as my parents. All Tibetans used to live that way.

Q: And when did that life begin to change, *Ama-la*?

**#61D:** When we lived happily and the Tibetans enjoyed freedom, suddenly the Chinese arrived. It was only then that I [first saw] Chinese in Tibet. Many Chinese arrived and the way the Chinese lied to us was, “Mao Zedong has sent help to you. We will provide you with help.” There was a silver [coin] like this [makes a circle with thumb and first finger] called *dhayen*. They gifted many of those. Little children were overjoyed, “The Chinese are very good. [They] are giving us nice presents.” Then the aged parents said, “This is not good. Unless observed carefully, they [the Chinese] are no good.”

Q: *Ama-la*, what is the first memory you have with your own eyes when you saw the Chinese?

00:12:28

**#61D:** Yes, I remember. The Chinese first arrived suddenly. [I] was terrified and hid behind my parents like this [moves to one side] peeping at what the Chinese were doing. That is how much [I] feared the Chinese. I can still remember that now, as earlier there were never any Chinese and it was terrifying when they arrived. They lied to us saying how much they liked the Tibetans and how much they liked the Dalai Lama. We thought it was true when they showed their liking to us and presented *dhayen*. My father remarked, “No, they are no good. We do not know what they will do to us later. They are telling a lot of lies.” That came true.

Q: Were the Chinese, when you first saw them, were they wearing uniforms or were they many of them or a few? What was that like?

**#61D:** [I] could not understand a word of their language.

Q: Yes?

**#61D:** [I] could not follow even a word, not a word of their language. [They] spoke in the Chinese language. We did not [speak] like that. My father said, “They are no good.” After they had lived there for a few years, the Chinese said, “You people have made a wrong calculation. The Dalai Lama is not good. The dharma that the Dalai Lama, the *rinpoche* ‘reincarnate lamas’ and the *geshe* ‘monks with degree in Buddhist philosophy’ practice is wrong. Practicing religion is banned. There is no religion in the world. You cannot practice the dharma and must oppose the Dalai Lama.”

**Then all of us who were born as Tibetans opposed the Chinese. The [people] of Kham and Amdo opposed them. We did not accept their condemning the Dalai Lama. That was the reason why all Tibetans fled.**

Q: *Ama-la*, when you were a young girl, a little girl what did you understand by the dharma? What did that mean? What is the dharma?

00:16:22

**#61D: When I was little, my parents told me that practicing the Buddha dharma would bring me happiness. [I] used to circumambulate the temple and behold the many idols. I had strong belief in the dharma. I was taught the Tara prayers as a little child though I did not know to read. [I] used to recite the Tara prayers. I practiced the dharma by circumambulating and looking at the statues of deities in the temples. I loved the dharma as a little child.**

Q: Can you remember any of the Tara prayers that you used to recite?

**#61D: I used to chant the Tara prayers since I was little and even now I have not stopped chanting the Tara prayers. [I] chant it. I absolutely believe that it was Goddess Tara that saved me. I have faith in His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Goddess Tara.**

Q: Are the Tara prayers very long or are they short?

00:18:25

**#61D: The Tara prayer is long. You [to the interpreter] will know the Tara prayer. There is a short Tara prayer...While in prison one is not allowed to chant. So I used to chant a short one.**

Q: Do [you] chant the long Tara prayer or the short one?

**#61D: The short one. Now I chant both. Earlier while in prison in the presence of the Chinese one is not allowed to chant.**

Q: Did [you] chant the short Tara prayer then?

00:18:57

**#61D: At that time I used to chant it here in my heart [touches chest]. One could not move the lips while in prison.**

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Would it be possible for her to say that short Dolma prayer for us?

**#61D: *Potala lhayi nechog ney  
Thamyi jangkhu lay tung shing  
Wopakmay ki ula gyen  
Dhuesum sangyay tinlay ma  
Dolma khor kyi sheg su sol  
Lha dhang lhamin choepen gyi***

*Shap kyi pemo lathu dhe  
Phongpa kunla donzoe ma  
Dolme yumla chak tsel lo*

**That is the short one.**

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Can you translate? Difficult?

So after the Chinese came, what year was that? Do you remember when you first saw them come to your region?

00:20:10

**#61D: We Tibetans are stupid and do not know how to count. Actually it was '59 when Lhasa was lost. [Prior to] the defeat of Tibet, it was in '56, '57 and '58 when [people of] Ba, Lithang, Dege and beyond the Drichu 'Yangtse River' of Golok and Serta revolted. Those that survived were able to escape to India, the others were killed there and the rest were apprehended and sent to prison. It was in '56, '57 and '58 that we of Ba, Lithang, Dege and those beyond the Drichu of Golok and Serta united to revolt against the Chinese. We Tibetans are small in number.**

**They [the Chinese] claimed the Tibetans were bad; now what does it look like? Then every one of us revolted. I would like to speak about what I saw with my eyes and what I myself did. That came about when everybody united and lay in wait [for the Chinese]. All of us women got together and carried food to the men who lay in wait in the mountains.**

**I saw this with my eyes and I speak what I saw with my eyes. A Chinese plane in the sky dropped bombs and killed people, which I saw with my eyes. All the snow-covered mountaintops turned red with blood. Corpses lay scattered. The Chinese killed like that. The Tibetans are small in number. And then a small number was able to flee to India and those that could not were killed and the rest of us were taken to jail. Take me for instance; I did this kind of endeavor against the Chinese where all women stood in unity.**

Q: *Ama-la*, were you married at this time when this happened?

00:24:12

**#61D: [I] was married when I went to prison.**

Q: I want to continue with prison, but first can we go back to how old were you when you got married and who did you marry?

**#61D: You mean the marriage?**

Q: Yes.

**#61D: The one I married was a boy from a good family called Sandotsang. You know Dr. Tseten here? [He is employed] in a hospital in Delhi. [The boy] was from their [family] line. [I] married a son of the Sandotsang. I had a son and a daughter.**



**And then when we revolted, the Chinese became aware and poisoned my husband. We planned to escape to Lhasa but during a party, the food was poisoned. [We] did not know it and [he] died instantly.**

Q: Your children's father?

00:25:22

**#61D: Yes, the children's father. I had only two children. Leaving the children at home, I joined the women in the revolt.**

Q: Can you tell us what happened that your husband's food was poisoned and by whom and why would that happen to him?

**#61D: [I] do not know. It was mixed with the food and [I] do not know who the Chinese had bribed. We planned to go to Lhasa and have no knowledge who it was.**

Q: And why were you going to go to Lhasa with your husband and two children?

00:26:56

**#61D: The Chinese were inflicting misery and the Sandotsang had many relatives in Lhasa. [We] thought we would flee to Lhasa but the Chinese came to know of it.**

Q: After your husband was poisoned, what was your reaction to that happening and what did you do next?

**#61D: I knew that what has happened to the father of my children was happening to all Tibetans. They [the Chinese] alleged that the Dalai Lama was bad and that there was only one thing that would befall the Dalai Lama. So, we women opposed them [the Chinese] by undertaking the task. Except for delivering food [to the men], women did not kill people.**

Q: Tell us about that group of women. Were they your peers and whose idea was it to take food to the men in the mountains and who led that group?

00:28:52

**#61D: I did it by telling [the women], "Let us do like this and that. They [the Chinese] are no good. There is only one thing that can really befall the Dalai Lama. We cannot practice the dharma. The *rinpoche* and *geshe* are treated so badly. It is all the same whether we die or live." The women were thus inspired.**

Q: *Ama-la* led, right?

**#61D: [Nods]**

Q: Among the women in your community, in your village, what kind of woman were you considered to be compared to other women?

00:29:50

**#61D: I was not the only woman in the group. There were many like me. We held meetings and discussions. There were many women who were enthusiastic like this [raises right hand in a fist]. All of us joined in the discussion. For all those in the rebellion, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was precious and the dharma was precious from deep within them.**

***Rinpoche* and *geshe* were told that practicing the dharma was a mistake. The holy statues of deities and scriptures were destroyed. Monasteries were demolished. We were angry from deep within, as we are Buddhists. We women did not kill people but took food to them [the men in the mountains] hoping to be able to cause some amount of damage to the Chinese. That was what we did. Women did not carry guns and kill.**

Q: *Ama-la*, could you please describe a little bit how the monasteries were destroyed. We didn't hear that part of your... what you saw, like how did they destroy the monasteries? What did you see them do and what was the result of that? I want to hear what you personally saw.

**#61D: [Nods vigorously] For instance, we have huge statues like this [raises right hand above head level]; there were huge statues of different deities in our region. They brought axes used to cut wood and severed here [gestures to neck] and severed here [gestures to shoulder] and threw the holy statues down here [gestures to ground]. We Tibetans adorn the necks of the deities with many ornaments like this [touches rosary hanging on neck]. Those were broken and given to the beggars or retained by them [the Chinese].**

The holy statues were broken down, filled in trucks and carted away to China. I saw with my own eyes [points to eyes]. Trucks filled with golden hands, heads and other parts [of the holy statues] were taken to China. [I] do not know what they intended to do with them. The monasteries were emptied. We have our texts like the *Kangyur* 'collection of 108 volumes of Sutra teachings of the Buddha' and *Tengyur* 'collection of 225 volumes of commentaries on the teachings of the Buddha.' [The Chinese] have such evil hearts that the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur* that form the basis for every Tibetan in the world—the *Kangyur* and *Tengyur* scriptures were brought [out of the temple], burned, thrown in the river and destroyed. [The Chinese] destroyed the Buddha dharma and promoted Chinese Communism. When they did this, would one not get angry?

Q: I could understand why you would be angry.

**#61D: [Nods]**

Q: And also when you say the monasteries were empty, where had the monks gone?

00:34:50

**#61D: [Joins palms and invokes Guru Padmasambava] Then our monks, no, they were not just monks but *geshe* and *rinpoche* were jailed with us. After we had lost our territory on the mountains and our men were killed... For instance, there was a huge hall where tens of thousands of people could gather. Everybody was told to assemble there to watch.**

In the arena was my colleague...the women colleagues were [also] there. My colleague was my older sister's husband who was called Pema Gyaltzen. He was the advisor of the rebellion. We were taken there and the public was ordered to watch, "Look at them. Who is the winner? Look at them. They should be opposed. Bring the Dalai Lama immediately. Bring anyone from abroad, Americans or whoever. If not [the prisoners] will be massacred today." Both of us were derided thus. Both of us had signs hung here [points to chest] reaching from here to here [gestures just below shoulders to waist] with something written. I do not know what bad things they had written on mine, but my brother-in-law's had letters in red indicating that he was to be executed that day.

Q: By the Chinese?

**#61D: Yes, my brother-in-law.**

Q: By the Chinese?

**#61D: Yes, by the Chinese. We were made to kneel there. We knelt and glanced around but were scoffed, "Bring the Dalai Lama. Bring the Dalai Lama." How could we bring [him]? "Bring whomever from America" but we could not. We were like this [bends head] and then glanced up to see if they brought out anyone we knew from the prison, but would get hit on the head because one was not allowed to raise one's head. We could bring no one.**

00:36:46

**Their [the Chinese] leaders sang and danced. We were led side by side and [they] fired two gunshots at my brother-in-law here [points to back of head on right side]. [He] was killed there and I was splattered with blood and brain here [gestures to left side]. I was told, "Look, who is the winner?" It was announced to the public, "If one becomes the enemy of Communist China, have a look at them. If one opposes Communist China, just look at them."**

**There were 300 women. I am speaking the truth, 300 women from Ba, Lithang, Dege and from beyond the Drichu, Golok and Serta. There were 300 women who were taken to China. I was taken to China.**

Q: What were the people's reactions to be put in that big hall and then to be marked as targets and taken away? How did people react to that?

**#61D: Much later when I was released from prison, they said that they had sat shedding tears, transfixed. When the two of us were ordered, "Bring the Dalai Lama, bring the Dalai Lama" they had sat stoically but helplessly shedding tears.**

**My brother-in-law was killed there. The *rinpoche* and *geshe* were put in huge vehicles the Chinese use to transport things. They were handcuffed. The *geshe* and lamas—the men were handcuffed in pairs. They were handcuffed and put in the vehicle. Armed guards stood near the door of the vehicle, one here and the other there. A big gun the Chinese shoot with, which goes *pa, pa, pa* was placed there. The top of the vehicle was covered with**

a cloth. [Joins palms and invokes Guru Rinpoche] The *rinpoche* and *geshe* were subjected to such suffering. Then we were taken on a full day's journey.

The *geshe* was old. [He] and the *rinpoche* were thirsty and lost control over their bladder. I swear the *rinpoche*'s clothes turned dark [with urine] as [they] were handcuffed for the entire day's journey. What suffering! When the *geshe*, lama and all of us were taken to prison in China, the men and women were lodged in separate quarters. The *geshe* and lama were in another part. They were imprisoned there separately. Those of us who could endure the journey were taken to China. The *geshe*, the *rinpoche* and everyone else died there.

Q: Sad story, horrible story. *Ama-la*, what prison were you taken to in China?

00:43:38

#61D: Then when we were taken to prison, then when we were taken to China, the Chinese call it Changshita. The name of the place is called Changshita. We Tibetans call it Gothok Gyalpo. [We] were taken to this place. It was an isolated region with no villages. It was an isolated region with a tall mountain here and a tall mountain there. [We] were kept there. All the political prisoners were grouped there; the women and the men lodged separately. The 300 of us women were put in a house. We were placed in huge rooms. [Joins palms and invokes Guru Padmasambava] We were not given food.

[To the interpreter] Do you know corn? Corn gruel was cooked and half a glass—like that one there—was given for breakfast, lunch and dinner. [The Chinese] lied and pretended to give us food [but] it was just a watery gruel of corn. After you drank it and wiped the inside of the cup, there was nothing left. After a year under such circumstances, some died. As you looked on, someone fell like this [sits back and leans towards left of chair] and did like this [opens and closes mouth]. They moved their lips saying, “Please give me some food. Please give me water.” Some who could, would call out to the Dalai Lama but only half of them managed to. “My child, such things are happening to me.” Some called out to their parents saying, “Such things are happening to me.”

00:45:21

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is present here [in Dharamsala] and I practice the dharma. I swear that all the footwear were torn apart and eaten like this [gnaws]—the leather part of shoes. Eating the leather parts of shoes helped a lot. After the shoes were eaten, you were barefoot. One could not eat the clothes. [Joins palms and invokes Guru Padmasambava] And then one became thin. I thought this was death and prayed to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Goddess Tara, “Such things are happening. Now [I am] dying.” While [I] prayed like that, [I] was slapped here and here [gestures slap on both cheeks], “Are you still practicing dharma? You think you will not die?” However badly [treated], I went back to this position [joins palms and closes eyes], “There is God. Whatever they [the Chinese] speak are all lies. There is God.”

The reason I did not die but survived—His Holiness knows this; I related this to His Holiness the Dalai Lama that it was the Goddess Tara and His Holiness that saved my life. To put it in a gist, during those three years, from among the 300 women... Behind the

**[prison] house were pigs reared for their meat. Three old women, incapable of running away were given the task of feeding the pigs. They ate the food meant for the pigs and survived. Goddess Tara saved me. The 300 women died there. [I] did not see the men as the men were lodged separately. We women were housed separately.**

Q: Did most of the women die?

00:47:15

**#61D: From among the 300, only four of us, I and the three who fed the pigs survived. Everyone else died. [The prisoners] went barefoot after eating the shoes.**

Q: And you were one of these women?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, I and three women.

Q: What kind of food was that that you ate?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Corn powder.

Q: How long would be that suffering when you were in that prison?

[Interpreter interprets question as]: Were you three years in that prison?

**#61D: [I] was in there for 27 years.**

Q: [The prison] where there were 300 women...

00:50:15

**#61D: Three years in there. Everyone died in those three years. I chanted the Tara prayers. Even now I can see those who fell dying like this [opens and closes mouth]. All of my companions died. Nothing to this extent would have happened to anybody in the world, killing people by starving them. Some could not die and wished to commit suicide, but there were no tools to do it. We Tibetans have suffered so much.**

**When I went around the world, nobody in the world had heard about the starvation. Such miserable treatment was meted out to the Tibetans. When I speak about this, even now I can see [those dying] in front of my eyes. I can recall [them]. [Cries]**

[Interviewer to interpreter]: She is honoring their memory telling their story because they could not tell.

**#61D: I was telling you about those three years. One day four of us women—the three women who took care of the pigs and I—were taken outside. The *geshe* and lamas had passed away. There were quite a number of people, but we had no knowledge about their existence. They were brought there.**

00:52:52

**Would you not be angry? The Chinese were laughing and the officers walked here and there [telling] us, “Mean and bad people, rebels who counter the revolution. Twelve thousand people [prisoners] have died.” Now there were hardly any left. “All the mean and bad people are dead.” There were just a few of us left and we were taken to Tibet.**

**Their [the Chinese] plan was—this is important—to kill all the Tibetan political prisoners, educate the young children and convert them into Chinese. Wipe out the Tibetan race. Then the Chinese could lead with no Tibetan people. The little ones would not know and the adults would be dead. They were overjoyed.**

**Then when I learned I could go back to my village, [joins palms and invokes His Holiness the Dalai Lama]. Along the way was a narrow area nearby a stream. All my companions who had died were dumped there. Poor things! Their skeletons with skin...the skin was black as though covered in black cloth. All the corpses were black. The heads were big and the bodies thin. Then I started to cry, “You have suffered so much. I am being taken to Tibet. I will go to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I will relate all your sufferings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.” I was crying and could not even see the path through my tears. I looked back at them and said, “You died suffering so much. I have survived and am going back. I will make myself able to tell [your suffering to] His Holiness the Dalai Lama.”**

**I have already conveyed it to His Holiness. Whenever there is a teaching at the *Tsuglakhang* ‘Main Temple’ [in Dharamsala, India], I pray that all His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s teachings should benefit them [dead prisoners]. Poor things! [Cries] From the first day of Losar ‘Tibetan New Year’ to the 15<sup>th</sup>, I make fire offerings of various kinds of food for them who died of starvation. I feel satiated but you [dead prisoners] have suffered so much. [Cries] Really we Tibetans have suffered so much; everything destroyed.**

**[The Chinese] thought the young ones will not know but now those young ones have grown up in Tibet. They immolate themselves. Those who know they are Tibetans are rising. They [the Chinese] cannot do anything. We have truth on our side and speak the truth. [Cries]**

Q: *Ama-la*, you are fulfilling that story one more time; fulfilling that promise one more time.

00:59:08

**#61D: Today I wish to thank you that I am able to speak about the suffering of many Tibetans before I die. I feel so [happy] but I cannot control my tears. Sorry. [Thank you] for helping us. The Tibetans have accumulated bad karma. In those days there were no newspaper reporters and television news. [Everything] lay in Chinese hands.**

**I am speaking to you, as I have given my word to the dead. I communicated to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and he advised, “As long as you are able, speak on behalf of the dead.” [I] am following His Holiness’ advice. I have sworn to the dead and I am able to achieve it. Thank you very much. Please broadcast [this interview] to the world. Please broadcast where the Chinese can see it. I speak the truth. Whatever I speak is the truth and this old mother has no education. The Chinese tell lies and they are highly educated. Their lies**

**cannot hold. This stupid old mother speaks the truth about the Tibetans and every Chinese must hear it. Please broadcast it and [I] thank you.**

Q: What happens next?

[Interviewee is requested to remove her glasses]

Q: We need to say...Yes, actually we are hoping to translate these stories into Chinese and make them available to all the next generation of Chinese so they understand what really happened.

**#61D: [Joins palms] Thank you. Even if I die I shall be satisfied that I had the chance to relate the story about my colleagues. I have been around the world telling my story. I have been to 10 countries of the world and all the people have supported me. While I live here, millions have sent me letters saying that I speak the truth and that they support me. While they [prisoners] are dead, I have survived and His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said that I am their representative. That is right and if I get the chance to speak before my death, I wish to thank you very much.**

Q: *Ama-la*, at that time when you were suffering so much, what were your thoughts and your feelings about the Chinese?

01:03:53

**#61D: I was angry with the Chinese. Even when I saw a Chinese...I was 27 years in [prison] and whatever the Chinese said to me...in Chinese language they said, "*Phanka nyi lodhi*" which in Tibetan means "stone head," someone who cannot comprehend when spoken to, similar to water being poured over a stone. How can one comprehend when whatever they spoke were lies! We have the truth. I did not comprehend and felt anger towards the Chinese.**

**When I arrived in India and saw His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness said to me, "Do not be angry with the Chinese. The Chinese people need happiness. The Tibetans need freedom. Communism is bad but do not be angry with the Chinese people because they have to obey the orders of the Communist [Government]. There would be no pleasure if every Chinese died. Democracy must come about. Tibetans need independence."**

**Initially I thought, "We have suffered such misery and His Holiness the Dalai Lama is advising me like this!" Then I received many teachings at the *Tsuglakhang* and saw His Holiness many times and I thought to myself...**

01:05:25

**His Holiness had asked, "Should we seek complete independence or the Middle Way?" and I did not like it. We are an independent nation, so why should we seek the Middle Way? Then His Holiness explained, "Following the Middle Way will also give happiness to the Chinese people. We are an independent nation but making a compromise. Adopting the Middle Way will also give happiness to the Chinese people. There will be peace and no war in the world. No Tibetan and Chinese will die. Seeking the Middle Way is a compromise on our part but there will be no death." I thought and thought over it, "His Holiness is right.**

**When the Chinese arrived they killed so many people. And there will be more deaths [should the Middle Way not be adopted].”**

01:06:22

**I am old and physically not capable. I supported the Tibetan Youth Congress, the Tibetan Women’s Association and other organizations believing in complete independence. At the White House in the United States, speaking on the video I raised my hand like this shouting, “Complete independence [for Tibet].”**

**No, no, now I will abide by His Holiness’ advice. Seeking the Middle Way will give happiness to the Tibetans and Chinese people. Chinese people are good. We were together in prison. [They] did not like Communism. For 27 years in prison, the Chinese people and Tibetan people lived side by side. Communism is bad. What His Holiness says is right. Chinese people must embrace democracy and there will be peace in the world and Tibetans will have freedom. Before I die, I pray that His Holiness will live in the Potala Palace and Tibet be free. I should not die [before that happens]. Thank you. I have said too much.**

Q: What would you like the Chinese people to understand about Tibet? The people themselves of China—what message would you like to give them?

01:10:09

**#61D: What I would tell them is...I cannot meet them but [if I could] I would tell them, “Honestly it is better for you to embrace democracy. Communism takes away wealth and kills people. There is no peace and the people suffer. People need happiness and freedom. All the people of the world have freedom and democracy except the Chinese people. We Tibetans have been subjected to and live in such misery. If there is democracy, the Chinese people and everyone will have happiness.**

**The Dalai Lama says that the Chinese people must have happiness and that the Chinese people should adopt democracy. [He] means good but Communist Chinese [officials] mislead you saying, ‘The Dalai Lama has said Chinese people cannot live on Tibetan soil.’” [The Communist officials] have made such announcements, “It is the words of the Dalai Lama. Chinese cannot live [in Tibet]. All the Chinese must go back [to China].” His Holiness did not say such things [but] “Chinese people should have happiness. Tibetans should have happiness.”**

**There is no one like His Holiness in the world. What awards the world is offering [him]! The world knows [his virtues] but the Chinese people are prevented from hearing of it. [Communist officials] lie. When [people of the] three provinces of Tibet revolted in Lhasa, they made a video and a Chinese who came to Dharamsala told me that it says, “Look, the Dalai Lama has instigated that all Chinese be killed. Chinese cannot live on Tibetan soil. It is the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama is splitting [the nation].” The Chinese people were told this. The Chinese people were very sad, wondering about the kind of person the Dalai Lama was. The Dalai Lama is not like that. [He says], “The Chinese people need happiness.” Though Tibet is an independent nation, [he] is seeking the Middle Way keeping in mind the Chinese people and peace in the world. But they [the Chinese officials] prevent this from being heard.**



01:12:17

**If I meet a Chinese, I wish to speak like this, “You should not be misled. The Dalai Lama is good. Ask the world whether this is true or not. You are being misled by Communist Chinese. You will find happiness if you adopt democracy. If Communism has the authority, you will be killed, your wealth confiscated and people killed. There will never be happiness. You should adopt democracy.” Should a Chinese be here now, I would be happy to speak like this.**

**After an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, [people] come to me here in Dharamsala. I speak such to the Chinese. I have many photographs in my home. I speak like this to the Chinese and they [reply], “Yes, of course. We have faith in the Dalai Lama, but it is the Communist [officials] who tells us that the Dalai Lama is bad. We have faith. It is the Communist [officials] and not us.” There are many Buddhists among the Chinese people. I would speak like this. Please let this be heard by all the Chinese people. Thank you.**

**[To the interpreter] If you let this be heard by all the Chinese people, that is dharma practice for you. You will find happiness in this life as well as the next and you will be following the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Should it benefit those Tibetans who suffered, you do not have to practice dharma like we do, circumambulating and chanting the *mani* ‘the mantra of Avalokiteshvara.’ If you do this work, that is the dharma. Please say thank you to her [interviewer].**

Q: How do you think the dharma would help Chinese people? The teachings of the Buddha, how would it help the Chinese people?

01:16:35

**#61D: At present Buddhism flourishes in China. We would not know it but His Holiness the Dalai Lama says that religion [Buddhism] first flourished in China. From there, it spread to the Tibetans. At present the population of Buddhists is growing in China, where they are following dharma. It is certain that change is happening among the Chinese people. It is a reality. All the Chinese people love the dharma.**

**When I was jailed with Chinese people... I speak the truth and cannot lie like the Chinese. If I do not speak the truth on this video, I will be going against the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. A Chinese told me—the Chinese prisoner who was called Tsanzingo told me, “Ama...” No, at that time I was not called Ama. “Adhe, initially I was with Mao Zedong.” You know Mao Zedong? “[He is] a brigand. Mao Zedong is a bandit. It is the Nationalist Chinese that were good while Mao Zedong has become a bandit. The large country invades the smaller countries, impounds all assets and properties, kills its entire people and drafts the general public into the liberation army.”**

01:18:06

**“Then it gradually infiltrated and invaded a country here and a country there along the way, occupying all the smaller countries, taking away the wealth, drafting people into the army and killing the influential. I speak the truth that communism is a bandit. Adhe,**

**communism is not good. It is a bandit. Finally I am also imprisoned.” He said he was speaking the truth and that like bandits they killed [people] like the Tibetans.**

**All [people in the occupied] countries are being killed and [their] wealth impounded. Wealth is confiscated and people drafted in the army. Then the bandits become strong and it has come to such a situation. He swore to me that it was the truth. He said he was jailed. The one who told me this was Tsanzingo and if I could meet him in China anytime, I would tell him so.**

**I say such things to the Chinese. Yes, they reply that the Chinese people are good but communism...[Chinese people also suffered] like the Tibetans, wealth confiscated, people drafted in the army, religious statues and scriptures destroyed. I would like to say this much.**

**[To the interpreter] I pray that you are successful. I feel satisfied that I could relate [this story] today. I am fulfilled even if I die.**

Q: We left off your personal story when you mentioned that over 12,000 prisoners had died in that prison where you were. Can you tell us what happened to you after you were...you left that prison; you were transferred?

01:21:25

**#61D: From among the huge population of prisoners, [they] segregated the political prisoners. A guard stood here [points to right], here [points behind], here [points to left]; guards stood in the four directions. Then we were forced to work. When the need to answer nature’s call arose, we had no freedom and waited for permission, keeping our hands like this [keeps hands straight and close to body].**

**[The political prisoners] were made to labor like this, locked up in the evening and guards posted at the door. [We] were forced to say, “Communism is good. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is bad.” Who can accept this? When we refused to speak, that was the time we were thrashed. That is how the political prisoners suffered and suffered like hell with incessant chidings and beatings.**

01:22:15

**I swear [the Chinese] inserted needles here...pushed the needle like this [piercing motion] and emerged here [shows tip of left middle finger being pierced]; slapped here [shows right cheek] and [my] ear became useless. Then both the hands were like this [puts hands behind back] and they were strung up with a rope and a fire lit here [indicates below the suspended victim]. The fire was made to smoke and then chili; you know chili which people eat? A fistful of chili was thrown over it. The smoke made one go *phew, phew, phew* and then became breathless, lost control over the bladder and died. Then the rope was taken down. Not just me, they dealt such punishments to women who did not obey them.**

Q: Did this happen in the prison where you were for three years?

01:23:01

**#61D: That was the time [we] were not given food. [The torture happened] in the prison where I was interned for 27 years.**

Q: You were released after three years, *Ama-la* ...

**#61D: After three years, the dead were left there and we came to Tibetan territory.**

Q: In a prison here?

**#51D: Yes, there were many prisoners when we came to Tibetan territory and the political prisoners were segregated. And [the Chinese] dealt such tortures to those political prisoners that did not kowtow, that did not accept their statements.**

Q: And these are all sufferings that you also personally endured?

01:24:44

**#61D: Yes.**

Q: What gave you strength to endure these sufferings?

**#61D: I suffered such miseries and then I arrived in India. I described all my sufferings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for one whole hour. His Holiness placed a big tape like this [points off camera] and recorded whatever I spoke. Later it was publicized.**

**It gave me the first fulfillment after I could tell everything to His Holiness, right? And then all our sufferings in prison are put in that book *The Voice that Remembers*. When I die, that book will remain, right? That is [number] two. Then I traveled to foreign countries of the world. I confronted Chinese in Germany where the Chinese also spoke and they accepted that it was Mao Zedong and not [they] who were involved. Then I visited Denmark, Holland, France, the United States, Canada, England and Japan. I spoke about the agonies that [I] suffered to all these countries. Then I felt, even if I die, this book cannot die; I have already spoken about everything [to the world]; I have related everything to His Holiness and now if I die, I am fulfilled.**

01:26:29

**And then I began to eat well. I felt my body should not become weak. [I] eat whatever food is available; [I] eat bread and more bread and wash it down with water. [I] must become healthy, as before I die, I must hear the news that His Holiness the Dalai Lama is in the Potala Palace and that there is happiness in Tibet. And then of course, I can die. I should not die until then, which is why I eat a lot and wash it down with water. [I] eat a lot and remain happy, wear clean clothes and [I] have no illness whatsoever. I am inspired because [I] have been able to accomplish all these. Thank , and today, having been able to relate everything to you gives me another joy.**

Q: We feel the same satisfaction of appreciation.

Q: You were in prison 27 years; *Ama-la* and when you came to Tibet, how many years were you in prison in China and how many in Tibet? Do you remember?

**#61D: I was taken to prison in '58. I was a year in [a prison in] Dhartsedo and from there [to the prison] called Changshita by the Chinese and as Gothok Gyalpo by Tibetans for three years where all my colleagues died. And back in Dhartsedo for another three years and then to the place called Minyak Rangakha in Tibetan territory and jailed for around 27 years.**

01:29:53

**Then one day Deng Xiaoping announced that all political prisoners were free; political prisoners are freed. Until then and throughout our prison days, unlike others we were the ones with the "hat" [figurative label for rebels] called *silipheng* [touches top of head]. "There will no longer be 'hats,' you can go." That was the statement of Deng Xiaoping.**

**We were overjoyed and started to speak, "Deng Xiaoping is very helpful. Deng Xiaoping is sending [us back to our] village." The officers of Communist China did not like it. When we exclaimed, "...[not discernible]. Deng Xiaoping is so helpful. Due to Deng Xiaoping's magnanimity, we can go back to the village," they sat with glum faces. We exclaimed that it was thanks to Deng Xiaoping that we can go back to the village.**

Q: So the 27 years, that is a lot to describe, but can you tell us what some of your circumstances were like for those last segments of years in prison?

**#61D: Whatever you feel, please ask me as I am alive now and happy to explain.**

**While in prison, [we] were forced to labor for two hours during daytime, guarded by soldiers on four sides. [We] did not have the freedom even to answer nature's call. Then we would be taken indoors for the lectures. The Chinese leaders sat here [indicates right side] and we sat there [indicates ground level on left]. For two hours [they] derided, "The Dalai Lama is bad. The United States of America is bad. Foreign [countries] are bad." Over there [points high up on right side]..., you know tigers of the jungle?**

Q: Tiger?

01:32:50

**#61D: Tiger. A tiger was drawn on a large paper. [The Chinese leaders] remarked, "It looks fierce but if thrown in water, the tiger dissolves. So, likewise there will be no results [for you in rebelling]. The Dalai Lama will not come. The United States is useless. The foreign [countries] are useless. You have to seek forgiveness from Communist China by saying, 'Forgive [me]. It was wrong to rebel against you. Forgive [me]. Now I will truly be fond of Communist China. I will be good.' That is the right path for you. If you think you will succeed by rebelling against us, you are dreaming." [They] droned such statements for two hours, after which we went to sleep and then got up in the morning.**

**There were older men and women, though I was young at that time. We had to *yi, ar* like this [moves hands in military fashion] and learn military exercises. The old men and**

women were forced to walk around the building and then [we] ate food. [They] made us sing, “Mao Zedong is the red sun,” but we did not want to sing it. Who would, right? We pretended to sing, “Ah...U...” “You sing it alone,” [they said], but how could we when we did not know the song?

01:34:12

**There is a Chinese song that describes Mao Zedong as the sun. We pretended to sing it, “Ah...U...” The Chinese used to sing it. We pretended to but did not know how to sing it. I could not sing it and [they] called me “stone head,” for having a head like a stone. If water is poured over stone, it does not seep in. “However much we tell you, it does not enter [your head]. You have a head of stone.” I had the *silipheng*, the “hat.” Oh, it was terrible, like hell. I just did not die.**

**It was truly His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Goddess Tara who saved me. I was destined from my previous birth to speak like this and to the world. It was my destiny that I did not die. Even at this time I say to myself, “I should not die until His Holiness lives in the Potala Palace. I did not die when I suffered so greatly. I should not die now.” I feel proud now.**

Q: Did you ever think of taking your own life because you were so exhausted from the suffering?

**#61D: During that time, I did think that I would die because everybody in the prison died. Just as I told you earlier, I prayed to Goddess Tara and prayed to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and survived. I felt that if I did not die then, I would not die now. At that time, I thought I would certainly die; there was no food and all the co-prisoners died. I thought I would also die and when I do, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Goddess Tara would help me but I survived.**

Q: Did you think of committing suicide?

01:38:31

**#61D: I thought I would certainly die during that period but in order to commit suicide...For instance, [we] did not have the waist bands; no strings, not even boot laces. All these were taken away in the prison. There were no strings to tie the neck. There were no knives. There was no way to kill [yourself]. There were many prisoners who wished to die, “I want to take my life rather than endure this suffering” but there were no means to take your life.**

Q: Before the Chinese invaded Tibet, was suicide ever a common practice among the Tibetans?

**#61D: [I had] never heard of it.**

Q: Have you heard about the young Tibetans who have been immolating themselves and what do you think about that?

01:40:21

**#61D: You mean now in Tibet?**

Q: Yes.

**#61D:** I feel so much when [I] hear about it on the radio that young monks have immolated themselves; nuns and monks have immolated themselves. By touching a hot pot, we feel the heat and to immolate their bodies is due to utter desperation. Revolting against the Chinese would mean going against the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. “Do not revolt against the Chinese,” he said.

Now [they] commit suicide by setting their bodies on fire, nothing worse than this has ever happened in the world. [They] did it out of desperation. I chant prayers and make offerings at the Tsuglakhang... I look at their photographs and pray. I feel distressed because I have also undergone such sufferings and now it is happening to them. I make offerings at the Tsuglakhang on behalf of the dead and pray that they will benefit from it. Those that immolated themselves, really in the world...I swear, immolation takes place here and immolation takes place there, such terrible things are occurring in Tibet.

01:41:53

You know Tsenyi? Tsenyi Monastery? There is a big school at Tsenyi Monastery, an American school. A teacher from there came to interview me. I pleaded, “Please, before I die, can you take me with you? I am unable to immolate but I will fast in front of the United Nations and die.” He said, “Ama, I will take you.” I was overjoyed, but the others said, “No, you are too old and your body will not endure it.” If I could die there, would it not help those people? Everybody knows me. So great is the distress I feel when they die. Then the teacher from Tsenyi said, “Ama, you do not have to go. At present there are three people, monks who are on hunger strike at the United Nations. Their plan is set, so you are not needed right now. You should stay relaxed.”

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Did she answer [the question] “Was there suicide in Tibet?”

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes. She had never heard of it.

Q: Ama, when you got out of prison, did you have a sentence and you knew how long or were you just thinking you would always be in prison?

**#61D:** Sentences were 10, 15, 20 years or a life sentence in those days. First they [the Chinese] said, “You will stay for 15 years.” However, I was...[not discernible] and they called me “stone-head.” After I refused to take note of what they said, I would have had to live out my life in prison but for the announcement from Deng Xiaoping.

Q: *Ama-la*, what made you be considered stone-headed?

01:45:40

**#61D:** They [the Chinese] talked a lot, but I did not take note of anything that they said. I did not like to listen to their lies. [They] did not speak the truth; it was all lies. Even if I were to die, I would not say any of those things against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. “It is useless talking to you. It does not enter your ears. [Your] head is like a stone.” In Chinese

*phanka nyi lodhi* means “huge boulders by the river,” that nothing can affect. The Chinese called me *phanka nyi lodhi*. [They] spitefully commanded, “Come here, *phanka nyi lodhi*” and gave me that nickname. It would be “stone-head” in the Tibetan language. They said such things.

Oh, all knowing Guru Padmasambhava, the sufferings that I have undergone in my lifetime! [To the interpreter] You have interpreted well today and [I] pray that you have success [in life].

Q: What meaning...for somebody who doesn't know, how would you explain who is His Holiness? Why is His Holiness so important?

**#61D: I will say that His Holiness is like this. I have been speaking to many foreigners and just after this interview around 30 American students are coming to the Reception Center. I will be talking to them about how His Holiness seeks peace for the people and how His Holiness says that good things should happen to the Chinese. The Tibetan Youth Congress and other organizations ...[not discernible] as the Tibetan Youth Congress seek complete independence. They get angry and that is true. So what I tell you now, I will go there and speak to the others. They feel overjoyed. When [I] speak the truth, they shed tears for the women [who suffered]. I told them many stories about women and they feel miserable.**

Q: You mean those people from the United States?

01:48:35

**#61D: Yes. Yesterday 30 students arrived. The 30 are from universities. All 30 shed tears. It is so good [of them] to feel for the suffering of the refugees when they have freedom and should be happy. To those who are unaware, I will explain the wondrous words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and what His Holiness is like. It is genuine that His Holiness wishes for happiness in the whole world.**

**I am not lying. I speak only the truth. I have taken many vows from His Holiness and presently I am wearing clothes like these [touches shirt], but I can even don *zensham* ‘robes of monks and nuns’ as I have taken the vows. I should not tell lies, should not steal, and should not drink liquor. I would be going against the word of His Holiness if I did those.**

**His Holiness told me, “Speak the truth and you will succeed.” I speak the truth, which is why all the foreigners like it. Otherwise, I am stupid. I do not know to read and write. I just speak the truth. They arrive saying, “[We] must ask Ama Adhe to tell stories.” They understand the truth.**

Q: We're going to conclude our interview, but I'm going to ask just a few more questions about Buddhism and the next generation.

**#61D: To the young people?**

Q: Yes, about young people.

**#61D: [Nods]**

Q: But first I forgot to ask what year and how old were you when you were released from prison?

01:51:20

**#61D: I was 27 years old when I went to prison.**

Q: And when you were released?

**#61D: When released...I was in [prison] for 28 years.**

Q: *Ama-la*, were you about 55 years old?

**#61D: [Nods]**

Q: What was your feeling when you were released?

**#61D: [Speaks before question is interpreted] I do not have education. We Tibetans are like that. When was I born? What was the date? I do not know. We Tibetans do not know the calculation. [Laughs]**

Q: [To interpreter] Can she remember what her feelings were about being released?

01:52:28

**#61D: Deng Xiaoping announced that [we] could go home from prison and [I] arrived home. My daughter had been a few months, less than a year old when I left her to go to prison. The daughter had grown as big as you [to the interpreter]. She was 27 years old. I looked at her like this [looks upwards]. "This is your daughter" but of course, how would I recognize her? Could it be? [My] daughter was told, "This is your mother." We could not believe each other. She had grown that big!**

**And when I returned to the region...I speak the truth, there was no monastery. Our region used to have many forests; woods on the mountains. There used to be plenty of forests in our region. Forest covers stretched from the regions of Bako to Ganze. The Chinese had denuded these forests and taken them away to China. The mountains stood bare with the forest cover gone. There were no monasteries. Could it be? The region was unrecognizable. It was totally barren.**

**My daughter and I...I had nephews and many relatives. They said, "You have starved and suffered so much. You should eat well. We will work and give you enough food to satiate you. You need not go to work." But I had promised the dead. I must go to India. I endeavored and arrived here. When I first arrived [in the village after release from prison], such changes had occurred in Tibet.**

Q: And *Ama-la*, what about your son? Had he survived?



01:55:13

**#61D:** [My] son was 4 years old when I went to prison. [My] son clung to me and cried, “Mother is being taken by the Chinese.” The Chinese kicked him like this [kicks with force] and [my] son was thrown away. I could hear him calling out from behind, “Mother, Mother.” Since then I never saw him, as [my] son had died. When I came back, [he] was not there.

Q: The next generation of Tibetans, what practices do you think would be important; what Buddhist practices do you think would be important for them to continue to have in practice? What practices, what beliefs and teachings?

**#61D:** Many people from [my] region came to attend the *Kalachakra* ‘Religious Initiation’ recently and they told me, “Little children playfully [say], ‘The Dalai Lama has arrived!’ That is a very good omen.” Children said, “The Dalai Lama has arrived! Long live the Dalai Lama!” They mentioned about children uttering such words. It is those who are young, within their 20s like 17, 18, who are immolating themselves. It is for certain that they think, “We are Tibetans and Buddhists within. I am a Tibetan. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is forced to live in an alien land. His Holiness is...[not discernible].” For them His Holiness the Dalai Lama is life. They have no freedom to practice religion in the monasteries. All those that died were monks. They are practitioners of the dharma and understand it. They are young ones, in their 20s, 17 or 18. Just take a look at their photographs at the Tsuglakhang. It is the young ones that are immolating themselves and dying. It is so important.

01:57:40

The Chinese have taken 12,000 influential Tibetans to China and after killing these political prisoners believed the young ones were under their control. That is not so. The little ones grew up. The fact is that the young ones are those who protest and immolate themselves. It is not the old ones. Anyway, however attempted, there is no way the Tibetan culture can be lost. Buddhism cannot be lost under any circumstances. Monasteries were demolished but they are being rebuilt. The dharma is flourishing, though the Chinese are preventing it. Therefore, I have a lot of faith in the young people. I always pray for them.

Q: *Ama-la*, I think... We are very grateful for your story. Thank you for sharing it with us.

**#61D:** [Nods and joins palms]

Q: We could ask many more questions and the only question I will ask is, [to interpreter] is there something that she hasn’t said or told us yet that she wanted to include?

**#61D:** Yes?

Q: [Have you] left out anything that [you] wanted to say?

02:00:40

**#61D:** I have told you the gist [of my story]. The rest is in the book. I have told you the worst part and the hope that lies in my heart from you is this. Except for the Chinese, the

**world did not know anything [about the happenings in Tibet] during that period. I am old now, age 84. I am speaking on behalf of those that died. Whatever I have said is the truth, the truth with not an iota of alteration. The first [hope] is that you will publicize this to the world. The second [hope] is to publicize it to the Chinese. If you can do that, you enjoy a happy life now and you will enjoy a happy life in the next. We Tibetans have undergone such sufferings and those that help us are practicing the dharma. Thank you.**

**His Holiness the Dalai Lama has aged but how much he travels! He is doing it for Tibet and the dharma. His Holiness does not say, “I have aged” and [sits back in a chair to relax]. He still travels. You are following His Holiness’ advice. It is exactly the same as practicing Buddha dharma. His Holiness says, “Whether it is Christianity or Buddhism, religion is the same.” I pray that you have all success. My wish is for this [interview] to be broadcast to all and then I shall be satisfied should I die. You are very good.**

END OF INTERVIEW