

International Collaboration Saves the Memories of Tibet's Elders

Friday, 30 March 2012 23:10 The Tibet Post International



Dharamshala: - March 30, 2012 - The Tibet Oral History Project and Memoro-The Bank of Memories are working together to share the unique culture and history of Tibet with the world.

The Tibet Oral History Project documents the extraordinary lives of exiled Tibetan elders-the last generation to live in a free, unoccupied Tibet-and preserves memories of their homeland for future generations. The Project has already videotaped the eyewitness accounts of 120 elderly Tibetan refugees and this May, their oral history team of Tibetans and Americans will meet in Dharamshala, India, home of the Tibetan government in exile, to videotape 50 more oral histories with the oldest surviving Tibetan elders.

When the Dalai Lama was forced to flee Tibet in 1959, an estimated 80,000 Tibetans followed their spiritual leader into exile in India where most now live. The Tibet Oral History Project (TOHP) (www.TibetOralHistory.org) documents the refugees' early peaceful life in Tibet and the devastating impact of the Chinese invasion and occupation on their families, livelihood, social structure and religious practices. Now at the ages of 70, 80 or 90, these refugees are the last generation who can describe the rich and ancient traditions of Tibet as an independent country.

Now these important stories will reach an even wider audience with the help of Memoro-The Bank of Memories (www.memoro.org), also a non-profit organization, dedicated to collecting the experiences and life stories of people born before 1950. The Memoro website enables the public to upload short audio or video clips of elders' life stories and provides free distribution of this collection on an international scale.

Not only will memories and life stories be preserved, but more importantly they are being shared on a medium, the Internet, that is able to reach young people. Memoro aims to be a bridge between generations, in which they ask to the younger technology savvy generations to become "Memory Hunters", active listeners and sharers of memories from the elderly. This project enables the elders to return to the role of "wisdom holders", which they held just few decades ago.

Memoro is also a place where people or organizations already collecting oral histories of elders can easily publish and share all or part of their work and invite visitors to their own website or physical exposition, such as the collaboration now established with the Tibet Oral History Project.

Memoro recently archived of TOHP's 22 short videos from the Tibetan elders' eyewitness accounts with many more to be added in the future. The special section of Memoro devoted to Tibet will be translated into seven languages for Memoro websites hosted on each continent. TOHP is also making video footage and English transcripts of the oral history interviews available through their own website, the United State Library of Congress and several universities and archives.

Memoro invites everyone to help preserve the wisdom culture of Tibet. Anyone living near a community of Tibetan refugees can easily record a Tibetan elder's story with an iPhone, iPad or Android App and upload the stories directly to Memoro's website. Visit Memoro's Tibetan section for more information: <http://www.memoro.org/us-en/tibet/>.

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At the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibet Oral History Project was initiated in 2003 by Marcella Adamski, Ph.D to record the early life experiences of Tibetan elders, who were forced to flee their homeland in 1959 following the Chinese invasion and subsequent occupation. The Tibet Oral History Project is a non-profit organization committed to making the elders' oral history interviews accessible via the Internet in order to share with the world the culture and history of Tibet.

About Memoro-The Bank of Memories:

Memoro-The Bank of Memories is a non-profit organization, dedicated to collecting the experiences and life stories of people born before 1950. Established in Turin, Italy, in August 2007, the first website was launched in June 2008 and now the project is active in 14 countries on four continents. Videos on the Memoro website have been viewed more than eight million times since the website launched in 2008.



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