

Tibet Oral History Project

Interview #39N – Sangay Gonpo
April 14, 2015

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #39N
2. Interviewee: Sangay Gonpo
3. Age: 81
4. Date of Birth: 1934
5. Sex: Male
6. Birthplace: Thamay, Karze
7. Province: Dhotoe (Kham)
8. Year of leaving Tibet: 1959
9. Date of Interview: April 14, 2015
10. Place of Interview: Paljorling Tibetan Settlement, Prithvi Chowk, Pokhara, Nepal
11. Length of Interview: 1 hr 07 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Tenzin Yangchen
14. Videographer: Dhiraj Kafle
15. Translator: Tenzin Yangchen

Biographical Information:

Sangay Gonpo was born in Thamay in Kham Province into a middle class family of farmers who grew barley, wheat and peas. He had four siblings and talks about how loving his mother was. His father passed away when he was a little child, but the family was able to hire workers to help in the fields. The crops were for their own consumption and the surplus was bartered for butter and meat with the nomads that visited his village in autumn. During the wintertime he was able to learn reading and writing from a village elder.

Sangay Gonpo explains how the Chinese came into his village from across the Mekong River. The Chinese called many meetings, began to confiscate guns and horses, and segregated the community into rich and poor classes to incite the poor against the rich. Sangay Gonpo followed 30-40 horsemen out of his village and hoped to join the *Chushi Gangdrug* [Defend Tibet Volunteer Force] after more Chinese occupied the region. Along the way he was hit in the leg by a bullet and was then taken on horseback to Lhasa where he met up with his brother.

In Lhasa Sangay Gonpo witnessed the March 10th protest at Norbulingka where the Chinese killed a large number of people. He describes his journey through Nepal into India, where he joined a road crew and then returned to Nepal to become a soldier in Mustang to challenge the Chinese army.

Topics Discussed:

Kham, childhood memories, farm life, first appearance of Chinese, March 10th Uprising, life as a refugee in India, guerrillas in Mustang.

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Interview #39N

Interviewee: Sangay Gonpo

Age: 81, Sex: Male

Interviewer: Marcella Adamski

Interview Date: April 14, 2015

Question: Please tell us your name.

00:00:09

Interviewee #39N: Sangay Gonpo.

Q: His Holiness the Dalai Lama asked us to record your experiences, so 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?

#39N: That is right. [I] give permission.

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

#39N: 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.

#39N: Okay.

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

#39N: There will be no problems.

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

#39N: Yes, thank you.

Q: Please tell us how old you are.

00:02:11

#39N: It is 80 according to the Western calendar and 81 according to the Tibetan calendar.

Q: And where were you born?

#39N: It is Thamay in Karze. ...[not discernible] is called Yatatsang.

Q: What did [you] say?

#39N: Thamay meaning lower region and Yatatsang is the family name.

Q: What's the family name?

#39N: Yatatsang.

Q: And in your family, when you were a little boy, how many people were in your family?

#39N: At the time I was little there were around five siblings and the parents. Father passed away when I was little.

Q: What did your mother do to support the family?

#39N: The work was farming basically. Farming was the source of livelihood.

Q: *Pa-la* 'respectful term for father,' can you tell us how large was your farm and what did you grow on that property?

00:04:12

#39N: The farmland was large and the crops were barley, wheat and peas.

Q: *Pa-la*, was the crops that you raised, did you sell them or is that what you used to feed the family?

#39N: There was not much to sell. It was for our consumption, and then the nomads came during autumn with butter and meat for which...what to say?...

Q: Bartered?

#39N: Yes, bartered. Other than that there was not much to sell.

Q: And was your family's economic level—was it low, poor or medium class or high class? What was it?

#39N: [My family] was no't among the wealthy. For instance, the Chinese created five class divisions like landowners and so and so. [We] were among the middle class farmers. Then there was the poor class. We were in the middle, in the middle, neither very wealthy nor poor but in the middle.

Q: You mentioned that there were five children, where were you in that order of children?

00:06:45

#39N: I was the youngest but one.

Q: Since your mother had so much responsibility as a single parent, can you tell us a little bit about her, what kind of person she was?

#39N: Poor thing, I loved mother very much. The older siblings had to leave for the central monastery and I was left with mother. There was a sister who left [home] after marriage. Mother loved me very much and I loved mother very much. It was like that. Later I had to come away leaving mother behind.

Q: How many brothers went to the monasteries?

#39N: The eldest sibling was living in the [local] monastery having returned after attending the central monastery in Lhasa. Another one and one younger to me were in the central monastery in Lhasa and were like servants or businessmen for Lama Langda.

Q: Which central monastery?

#39N: Yes?

Q: There were three central monasteries.

#39N: [The brothers] were right in Lhasa.

Q: Sera, Drepung or Gaden [Monastery]?

#39N: Our central monastery is Gaden.

Q: You know, if you were raising the...doing the farming as a family and two brothers went to the monasteries, was it difficult to continue, you know, handling all the raising of the crops?

00:09:34

#39N: It was okay because there were hired workers available.

Q: Hire workers?

#39N: The work was done by hired workers as we could not. We were little and it was not possible for [us] to work.

Q: And so do you have any memories of growing up that were, you know, very special to you that some memory that was difficult or very, very sweet to remember?

#39N: To recall any special memories of the hometown...it has not been very difficult. As a little one the parents sent [me] to an elder in the village to learn Tibetan script. To a certain extent this is due to the benevolence of the parents. [I] know how to write and read Tibetan, even though it may not be very extensive. [I] consider it the benevolence of the parents.

Q: How many years were you able to study with this Tibetan elder?

#39N: There was not time to study for years. It was for three months in the wintertime and there were 6-7 of us children who studied. During summertime we had to take care of the animals and there was no time to study. [I] went to study for three months of winter regularly but [I] am not an accomplished one, just mediocre.

Q: When you were a young boy, say like a young teenager, *pa-la*, did you have any dreams or hopes of what you would do with your life or did you see yourself as staying on the farm and raising crops and animals?

00:12:44

#39N: [Smiles] There were never such thoughts unlike children of the present. Children in those days did not think much. [I] never had any thoughts.

Q: So does your life continue at this very nice pastoral...in this pastoral way or does something happen that changes your life?

#39N: It changed after that when a servant was employed at home, someone to do the work. [He] was not an accomplished worker but mediocre, someone that took care of the animals. Such a person was employed at home. Then we became slightly better.

Q: Employed another person?

#39N: Yes, a servant of sort; a paid employee to do the work, a person from outside. A person from outside was employed to do the job of taking care of the animals and various other duties. A slightly older person was employed.

Q: How old were you *pa-la*, when that happened?

00:14:55

#39N: [I] cannot say exactly, really. One did not take much notice of the years then. One did not take notice of the dates or months in the hometown. I was 23 when [I] arrived here, in the beginning.

Q: At the time of escape?

#39N: Yes, [I] was 23 yeas old initially at the time of reaching here.

Q: Where did you go when you left, *pa-la*?

#39N: I was young then. Under the leadership of the elders who said, “The Chinese’ treatment is becoming worse and worse and [we] shall not be happy,” all the sturdy men—there were 30-40 horsemen in the village—moved to another region, moved to another region. One could not think much at that time [smiles] and just remained there. When the *tsampa* ‘flour made from roasted barley’ ran out, [we] went back to the hometown to get more in the night. [We] did such as guided by the elders. Then the Chinese arrived after a while.

Q: You mentioned 30-40 horsemen moving to another region...

#39N: Yes, yes.

Q: Were the Chinese already there in the region then?

#39N: The Chinese were there since many years.

Q: Before you joined that group, were there any...did you see the Chinese anywhere in your area?

00:17:27

#39N: The Chinese had settled there. For instance...shall I talk in brief about the Chinese from the beginning?

Q: Yes. *Pa-la*, it's important because...that you tell the story from what you saw with your own eyes. Many people know the facts but it's important that we have the story through the eyes of an individual. So tell us primarily what you saw.

#39N: I see.

Q: So what is the first time you saw that Chinese were in your area?

#39N: I cannot recall my age since [I] was little. First a plane came flying. A plane came and the aged ones remarked, "Bad times are going to befall when objects fly in the sky and burrow through the ground." One had never seen planes before. A plane came and then it flew away. After a few months [Chinese] troops appeared. Our village is such that right in the center is a large water body. We were here [indicates left] and the Chinese were coming from that side [indicates right]. Oh, [troops] came marching in a sea of black in two or three rows. That was when the Chinese first appeared. Then they camped for a while at the place called Karze, which is a place of confluence similar to Pokhara. That was how [the Chinese] first appeared. [I] cannot recall [my] correct age because [I] was little.

Q: Is the water a lake?

00:20:14

#39N: It is a river, a river; a very huge river.

Q: Can you tell us the name of the river?

#39N: [I] think the river is called Mekong. It is a very large river.

Q: It's the Mekong River?

#39N: [I] think it is the Mekong.

Q: Oh, Mekong. Did you see the Chinese coming over the river, actually? Did you actually see this or did they just arrive in your area?

#39N: The Chinese had come and settled. Settled and...

Q: Did you see the Chinese coming over the Mekong River?

#39N: Yes, [I] did. Whatever the number, [Chinese troops] continued to come until nighttime.

Q: [You] mean [the Chinese] arrived in the night?

#39N: Yes, [they] continued to come until nighttime. We were at quite a distance and [saw them] come. Whatever the number that appeared in the night, the place called Karze was filled the next day. The area was filled but [the Chinese troops] did not do anything untoward. Then [they] sort of settled. In each village two or three Chinese leaders and certain people among the Tibetans held meetings. That was how it began.

Q: [You] mean Tibetans that collaborated with Chinese?

00:21:51

#39N: Well, for instance, interpreters and helpers and such held meetings in every village. Meetings were held separately in two different categories. One category [poor people] were told, "You are laborers and this [indicates forefinger and thumb] is the class of landowners." [Smiles]. Separate meetings were held.

Q: [You] mean the people were categorized?

#39N: People with wealth and name were separated and to those without names and the poor were told, "Until now you have... You can talk about whatever problems you have." [I] heard that such things were done though I could not attend the meetings. It was my mother that went to the meetings.

Q: And then what did you see next?

#39N: Many meetings were held after that. Then there were the guns though not every family owned one. There were those that possessed guns, which were confiscated, followed by horses. Horses were confiscated. Such things began to take place. We left at such a time. Some had already surrendered guns and some had surrendered horses. That was how [we] left. I did not own a gun.

Q: Did you leave?

#39N: [I] left along with the 30-odd horsemen that were mentioned earlier.

Q: Did you give up your guns and horses, *pa-la*?

00:24:33

#39N: [I] did not. [I] did not possess a gun but did not surrender the horse.

Q: Who was this group that you were joining?

#39N: It is not possible to mention all the names. Except for me none survive. Most of the men...except for me, most of them were left behind under the Chinese. That was how it is.

Q: But was it...was it...I'm not sure how many were in that...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Thirty to 40.

Q: Thirty to 40. Were they men from your area? From your area and was there a leader, somebody with a name you can remember?

#39N: That is right. [The men] were from the village that went voluntarily.

Q: Who was the leader of the 30-40 men?

#39N: The older men might have taken the lead. Otherwise, there was not anyone appointed in particular. Elders took the lead and [we] arrived at the place called Tonkho.

Q: What was the purpose of the group? What was your reason for joining the group? What were you hoping to do?

00:26:54

#39N: I did not have any particular purpose of joining because [I] followed whatever the older men said. Upon reaching there, there was scarcity of food and the older men went at night to the village to bring *tsampa*. [We] lived very poorly then. After a while two elderly men arrived from the hometown saying that the monastery had sent them.

Q: Yes?

#39N: Two elderly men appeared saying, “[We] have been sent by the Karze Monastery. You have been told to return. The Chinese has said that there would be no punishments or anything. [You] are asked to come back.” When this was said a considerable number of men returned while half of us remained. Half went back to the village. [Laughs]

Q: *Pa-la*, what made you stay back? Why did you decide not to go?

00:28:39

#39N: I did not want to go back because the treatment of the Chinese was such that going back would mean undergoing problems eventually. So [I] did not return.

Q: You thought that if you did go back there would be suffering? Okay, and then can you tell us what happens next, *pa-la*?

#39N: Subsequently it was around the 7th month that the Chinese arrived. A great number of people from many regions had converged in and around Tonkho like Nyarong and many others that had come. And then the Chinese appeared. When the Chinese arrived there was nothing to do but flee because one could not put up any challenge. Each one had to take care of himself. Then [we] fled and started towards the direction of Lhasa.

Q: When you fled, did you have some idea of how many were in your group and how many Chinese were coming after you? And were they on horseback or cars or what?

#39N: There were a great number of people [on the run]. After a while a huge Chinese army was in pursuit; at times [we] were on horseback and such, and [the men] became scattered. Much later after crossing the Mekong River [we] came upon a large group of horsemen that were from Dhargay Gonpa. There were nearly 30-40 horsemen from Dhargay Gonpa that we joined. We were only around six men left. So we [joined] the Dhargay Gonpa [group] that asked, "Where are you going. We are on the way to Lhasa." Had they not held this conversation, we would be left wandering aimlessly. Then [we] started on the way to Lhasa.

Q: If only six of you were left, how many started out?

00:32:10

#39N: In the beginning there were 30-odd people, nearly 40. Then some became scattered and some lost horses and became desperate. We were only six men that joined the Dhargay Gonpa [group]. There was one that lead the Dhargay Gonpa [group] called Pachay and they spoke about going to Lhasa. Then [we] set out for Lhasa.

Q: What was the name of the Dhargay Gonpa leader?

#39N: Pachay.

Q: Pachay?

#39N: Yes, Pachay. Pachay.

Q: *Pa-la*, how did you make that journey towards Lhasa? Was that on foot or on horses?

#39N: It was on horses, riding horses. There were many difficulties. Nevertheless, [we] reached Phenpo, which is near Lhasa. It is better to sum up now.

Q: Phenpo?

#39N: Phenpo.

Q: How many...is it like a day from Lhasa? How close or how far?

#39N: It is very close, just a mountain pass away.

Q: Was there any plan for the group at that point?

00:34:07

#39N: The plan was for us to join the *Chushi Gangdrug* [Defend Tibet Volunteer Force]. With the plan to join the *Chushi Gangdrug* [we] journeyed in the night where there was a motor road. The motor road led towards Tsurphu, which is the seat of the Karmapa. [We] went in that direction.

Q: Tsurphu?

#39N: Yes?

Q: Tsurphu?

#39N: Yes, Tsurphu. The seat of the Karmapa is called Tsurphu. Yes.

Q: And then?

#39N: At Tsurphu...then around 12 in the night [we] slept in a good pastureland leaving the horses nearby. As [we] slept the Chinese arrived and began to fire *rat, tat, tat, tat* innumerable times. Men and horses got scattered. [We] faced such a dangerous encounter. There was danger and I was hit on the leg, hit.

Q: And then?

#39N: I was hit on the leg and was carried on the back of a relative. Taking a detour [the relative] left me at a small village upon a hill. Then they continued. [We] were not lucky then. It was very sad. [We] would not have encountered [the Chinese] had [we] been a day early or a day late. It was said that the Chinese were [pursuing] the *Chushi Gangdrug* that was on the way to Shota Lhosum in the south. They [Chinese] had knowledge about this and we happened to encounter them on the way. It was very dangerous.

Q: Was the relative that carried you on the back a brother?

#39N: [He] was not a brother but a cousin. Now he has passed away.

Q: How badly injured was your foot?

00:36:57

#39N: It was quite bad. There were only an old man and an old woman in the family [where my cousin left me]. [We] could not understand each other very well. Later [I] made plans to go to Lhasa. The old man hired a horse that [I] rode and having never been to Lhasa he asked, "Where do [we] go?" "Let's go wherever there's the most number of people in Lhasa." I too had never been to Lhasa.

There were two siblings [of mine] in Lhasa who someone said must be in the Bakor Square. Then I rode the horse while he [old man] led the way. Someone I knew said, "Your sibling

is in there.” It seems my younger sibling worked in the shop of Langda that was located in the Bakor Square. “Your younger sibling [works] there but I do not think [he] is there now.” I wanted to go there. [I] made him [old man] hold the horse in front of the shop and made an effort to stand on my feet which was difficult. [Laughs] After sometime the sibling came who said, “I heard something and thought you might have been killed.” They were like servants of the lama called Langda of our hometown.

Q: What’s the name of the lama?

#39N: Lama Langda.

Q: Langda?

#39N: Langda.

Q: His salesmen?

00:38:15

#39N: [The siblings] worked in the shop. And then in the shop...Their main house was at a distance and asked to go there. There were the *chanzo* ‘business manager’ and other servants. In the evening the servant carried me on the back—the Chinese seem to be suspicious—covering [me] with a fur coat and [we] moved to the main house. The day after moving to the main house, the sibling said it was necessary [for me] to see a doctor for [the wound] will not heal.

[I] was taken to the doctor. The doctor was a Nepali, a Nepali. [We] could not understand each other. A translator who came asked, “What happened?” [I] replied, “A pistol went off accidentally.” It seemed likely for [the wound] was here [gestures off camera]. [The wound] was opened, the broken bones removed and cleaned thoroughly with water. Then a bandage was applied. For around a week there were daily injections and application of ointment. I think it was more than a week that [I] was able to walk a little. The sibling rewarded the old man well who was overjoyed. [Laughs] It happened like that.

Q: You were very fortunate.

#39N: [Nods]

Q: *Pa-la*, was your foot badly damaged? Did the bullet go through your foot or what happened to you?

00:42:16

#39N: The bullet was not lodged there. [The back of heel] had opened like this [gestures off camera]. It happened at night and one had no knowledge from where the shots would come.

Q: Very, very impossible to walk.

#39N: And then the foot healed quite well and [I] went to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama during Losar ‘Tibetan New Year.’ Then there was the turmoil in Lhasa on the 10th of March. At the Norbulingka...Langda had a shopkeeper who had a nephew called Dangtsi. He could ride a bicycle. So he rode a bicycle and I rode at the back and [we] went to the Norbulingka. Norbulingka was packed with men and women and there was no way through. After a while...

The roads were packed and there was no way through. Nobody knew what was happening. [I] moved closer and closer towards the Norbulingka, moved closer and listened to people speak, to some influential people. “His Holiness the Dalai Lama is being invited to the Chinese Military Headquarters. This is to protest against the invitation.” This is what [I] heard. So [I] was at the Norbulingka.

Q: The people didn’t know what was happening, and what did you do?

00:45:01

#39N: After that...I do not know the exact time. My foot still was not very good; [I] could not move as well as other people. Early in the morning—I do not know the date and time—the Chinese started shooting—shooting and then firing artilleries. Shells were fired that hit the walls of the Norbulingka and a great many people were killed within the boundary. It was a melee.

Q: Where were you then?

#39N: Then the Chinese started shelling. Norbulingka was attacked, destroying the walls and trees. Naturally people were killed. Such things were done. When such things were being done I did not have any plans to run away because [I] believed His Holiness was living there. “Where to go?” Everybody was trying to escape. There were guns and bullets belonging to the government. [I] took a large number of bullets.

Q: Did [you] get a gun?

00:46:10

#39N: [I] did not think of escaping. Everybody was running outside. [I] thought, “How strange! Where are [these people] fleeing to when His Holiness the Dalai Lama is here?” After sometime whether I had misheard or something, I heard [someone say], “His Holiness is gone.” [I] heard it. Then [I] moved with the other people though [I] could not due to the bad foot. At around midnight [I] reached Bari Ritoe.

Q: Where?

#39N: After leaving Norbulingka, Bari Ritoe...

Q: What’s the name of the place?

#39N: It is called Bari Ritoe. Bari Ritoe is a little further away from Lhasa, close to Lhasa. There was a nunnery where tea and such were being served. Let's sum up. Then [I] reached Phenpo from there.

Q: And then what happened to you?

00:48:09

#39N: On arriving in Phenpo [we] met someone known to us that worked for Drepung Loselling [Monastery]. This man who was a senior was known [to us]. Each man was given a horse. Most of the horses had been hidden lest people take them away. We were 17-18 men then. Each man got a horse. [The known person] was very gracious providing food, *tsampa* and everything. There were three men that were injured and he accommodated them.

Leaving Phenpo...our plan was to join the *Chushi Gangdrug*. The plan was to join the *Chushi Gangdrug* but [we] heard that the *Chushi Gangdrug* was destroyed. It was being said that the *Chushi Gangdrug* was destroyed. "What to do now?" People were numb. There was an older man who said, "Except for Mt. Kailash there are not any places free [of Chinese]." So we went to the north, crossed the motor road and journeying northwards reached the place called Zongkar. To sum up [we] reached Zongkar, Cheru and then Nepal.

Q: So you didn't come across any other groups of fighters, resistance fighters, on the way even when you got to Mt. Kailash and into Nepal, no other groups?

00:51:17

#39N: [We] encountered many people along the way and faced great hardship. However, [we] were taken from Zongkar to...For instance taken from Pokhara to Yangsa and from Yangsa to a little further away. So it got a little better. Then [we] arrived in Nepal and to sum up, met someone called Gya Lama who was very helpful allowing [us] to stay in a house. Gya Lama purchased all the horses paying Nepalese currency, which was called *tamka* then—paying 200 *tamka* each that was most beneficial. There were very few Tibetans in Nepal then and not many monasteries except for Gya Lama's and a Mongolian Monastery nearby. Then we...

Q: Mongolian Monastery? Is Gya Lama a Mongolian?

#39N: There was a Mongolian Monastery, a small one nearby. Except for that and Gya Lama's, there were no other monasteries then. Then we left for India, reaching Kalimpong.

Q: How long did you stay in Nepal then, *pa-la*?

00:53:14

#39N: [I] stayed for only around 10 days in Nepal and then reached Kalimpong through Raxaul.

Q: Why did you decide that you would go to India? Why did you make that your destination instead of staying in Nepal?

#39N: That was because we could guess that most of the Tibetans were in India. So [we] went to Kalimpong where there were many people. There were people that had lived [there] for a long time and many that had newly arrived. The Tibetan Government provided us a variety of aid. So [we] stayed for a week or two. It seemed most of those from Tibet that had been in the *Chushi Gangdrug* were working as road crew in Gangtok. So [I] went to construct roads.

Q: Where?

#39N: To Gangtok in Sikkim. Most [of the people] were engaged in road construction where [I] went, [building] motor roads.

Q: Why did you choose to go work for the road gang with the *Chushi Gangdrug*?

00:55:21

#39N: That was because all the people had gathered there and were constructing roads in groups. Though the work was constructing roads, it was not very hard on the body because [I] was young then. The leaders had formed group there. So [I] did not face much hardship.

I think it is better to talk about moving to Mustang here. It was announced in 1960 that one could go to Mustang but it was one's choice whether to go or not to go. [I] started out for Mustang.

Q: And what did you do in Mustang?

#39N: [I] was a common soldier in Mustang. It was a poor place and food very scarce. [We] lived on the mountains among rocks and snow without shelter; putting up some sort of an umbrella. It snowed and one faced great hardship with scarce food. Many went back but I remained in spite of the hardship; [I] remained so. There were 15-16 groups of 100 [men] each.

Q: It rained and snowed...?

00:57:20

#39N: It rained and snowed. It snowed in wintertime.

Q: And there were no houses?

#39N: There were no houses for [we] stayed on the mountains and not in villages.

Q: Villages?

#39N: One could not stay in the villages but on the mountains, on the higher parts of the mountains. Much later a group of ten received a tent each, ten men were given a tent each.

Q: There were no tents in the beginning?

#39N: No, there were not.

Q: What were you doing, what were the groups doing in Mustang?

00:58:30

#39N: It seems the plan was to challenge the Chinese. However, in order to challenge the Chinese, we faced problems with food and all other things. One was not there to earn a livelihood. None of the soldiers owned anything personally and survived on what the organization provided. Later it became much better. It had been a great struggle in the past in terms of food.

I think this should be okay to recount; [I] remained there from 1960 to '74. After sometime the Nepalese...I think it should be okay to say this. The King of Nepal told our leader Gyato Wangdu, "You should not remain here because I am facing problems. Switch over to [setting up] settlements, trades and factories. "

Q: Yes?

#39N: "Close the armed force and switch over to settlements, nomads, shops and factories. Otherwise, I am facing problems," said the King of Nepal to our leader Gyato Wangdu. However, one could not put this into practice immediately. There were trainers, group leaders and many other leaders. They could not give up easily. Then the Nepalese Army arrived in 1974 and arrested everyone in groups.

Q: Arrested?

#39N: Yes?

Q: What did the Nepalese army do?

01:00:30

#39N: [The Nepalese army] said that [the Tibetan soldiers] had to leave. So...there were the weapons. Yes, there were the weapons. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice came, "You should surrender the weapons." The Private Security Official came on a special visit and played His Holiness' advice to the people. Then all weapons were surrendered to the Nepalese army and [the Tibetan soldiers] were sent to Pokhara in groups of hundred.

Q: To Pokhara?

#39N: Yes, here in Pokhara. [We] were sent to Pokhara but there was no place to live here. There is a place called Norkot upon a hill. They, the Nepalese, had constructed bamboo shelters on the hill for us to stay.

Q: Norkot?

#39N: Yes, Norkot. One must climb up a hill to reach Norkot. Bamboo huts were constructed there. [Laughs]

Q: That was quite a change! From '50 to '74.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: '60 to '74.

Q: '60. So you were there 14 years in Mustang and then had to come to Nepal.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Pokhara.

Q: Pokhara, right here. Pokhara. Was it to this very settlement?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: First to Norkot on a mountain.

Q: Okay. *Pa-la*, how did you feel about the requirement from the government and advice from His Holiness? How did you feel about leaving the army?

01:04:18

#39N: Some felt very sad on having to give up guns. I did not feel particularly sad for one must follow the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. [I] did not feel particularly sad at having to surrender the gun.

Q: So it sounds like this part of the story comes to an end here and, *pa-la*, perhaps we can ask at this point, how do you...what is your wish for Nepal, I mean Tibet after all that struggle and moving to Nepal? What is your wish for Tibet today?

#39N: What advice does His Holiness give on the issue of Tibet year after year? Shouldering the responsibility of the government [His Holiness] is propagating the Middle Way approach to bring about a solution between China and Tibet. Hence, implementing this will certainly bring about a solution. I feel so.

Q: If this is implemented...

#39N: If this is implemented by everyone in unity...follow the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and wholeheartedly support the Middle Way approach, [I] feel and hope that the truth will prevail.

Q: Thank you, *pa-la*.

01:06:42

#39N: [Joins palms] Thank you.

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

#39N: What?

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

#39N: I see. [I] wish to say that there will be no problems whatsoever. [Laughs] [I] am not afraid of any such problems.

Q: *Pa-la*, thank you very much for this very important interview.

END OF INTERVIEW