

Chattha Sangayana CD

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The Vipassana Research Institute (VRI) was established in 1985 under the guidance of S. N. Goenka. Its main objects are 1. to research the sources of the Vipassana meditation technique in Pali literature and 2. to make the entire Pali literature available to the scholarly community the world over in an easily accessible form.

Vipassana Research Institute is a voluntary organisation that receives no government funds. It runs entirely on the donations.

VRI Pali Publication Project:

The VRI's research work focuses on two main areas: translation and publication of the Pali texts, and research into the application of Vipassana in daily life. Twenty five centuries ago Pali was the lingua franca of northern India, the dialect in which the Buddha taught. Just as Sanskrit is the canonical language of Hinduism and Latin the canonical language of Catholicism, Pali is the classical language in which the teachings of the Buddha have been preserved. The Pali sources are the Tipitaka (the Pali canon); the commentaries and sub-commentaries.

Myanmar (Burma) and other southeastern asian countries maintained a tradition of preserving the words of the Buddha in their original form. Unfortunately, the Pali texts and the practice of Vipassana were lost in India. VRI undertook the task of publishing the entire Pali canon and allied commentarial literature. This work supplemented the efforts of Nalanda Mahavihara. VRI has taken the Chattha Sangayana version in Burmese script as the authentic, authoritative version. Pali scholars from India and other countries, including many learned bhikkhus and research scholars in Burma, assisted in this work. The work product has provided an authentic version of the Tipitaka and allied literature in Devanagiri script in printed book form.

The entire Pali Tipitaka along with commentarial literature was typed twice by two different typists and compared for discrepancy. Then it was proofread twice by scholars in India and Myanmar. Only after that the work on markup began.

This digitally encoded text is published on a CD-ROM. Having the information contained within the Pali Tipitaka in this form of storage greatly facilitates the study and research into

the words of the Buddha by computer search programs. Digital encoding of this information and its use with such search engines open up vast possibilities for research scholars. Information retrieval software will enable the assembly of comprehensive indices of relevant words and terms.

The CD-ROM produced by VRI also contains custom developed computer software that allows the reader to access the texts in seven different scripts.

Chattha Sangayana CD-ROM (CSCD) Version 1.0 was launched by the Vipassana Research Institute in July 1997 in Myanmar. Subsequently an improved version 1.1 was launched in October 1997 at the EBTI meeting at Otani university, Japan.

Chattha Sangayana CD-ROM (CSCD) Version 2.0

On the request of many users, the development of the CSCD continued in order to make it more useful. The version 2.0 was launched in Thailand in July 1998. Some of the features of the CSCD version 2.0 are as follows:

1. Besides the main Tipitaka volumes, it contains the most comprehensive collection of the commentarial literature and other Pali texts. It has a total of 183 volumes, extending to 59150 pages. One can easily open any volume, view any chapter, paragraph or page.

2. The text can be viewed in the following seven scripts at the click of a button.

i. Devanagari

ii. Roman

iii. Myanmar

iv. Thai

v. Sinhalese

vi. Cambodian (Khmer)

vii. Mongolian

3. An easy linking facility has been provided to see the corresponding passages in the main Pali text, commentaries and subcommentaries. This feature allows reader to go to the precise places in the commentaries.

4. References to various editions: The page numbers are simultaneously displayed for the following printed editions (for the texts published in those editions): i. Devanagari text published by the Vipassana Research Institute. ii. Roman edition published by Pali Text

Society. iii. Myanmar edition published after Chattha Sangayana in Myanmar. iv. Thai edition published in Thailand.

5. A Pali-Hindi dictionary that gives the meaning of Pali words is provided for Indian users. Similarly a Pali-English dictionary is provided for the convenience of English speaking readers.

6. Search for words and phrases is faster and easier. Contextual search is also available allowing the user to find if the words searched occur near one another. One can print or save the occurrences that are found on search. One can also view the context in which the searched word or phrase occurs by viewing upto ten words before and after the searched phrase. This can also be printed or saved to a file. One can also do a wildcard search. Search can be done in all the seven scripts. For all the scripts keyboard help is provided to allow users to type in their choice of scripts.

7. One can save upto 10 pages of any text at a time to a file so that the text can be used in other documents published by scholars.

8. Variants have been given for all the Canonical texts and can be viewed using a shortcut key.

9. One can view the text in a small or a large font.

10. In a text the user can go to any paragraph or any page number of various editions using the Go To feature.

11. Extensive Markup: VRI scholars have helped in marking up the text. The sutta titles, subheadings and verses are all marked and appear on screen in different format. The text has been punctuated using modern criticus apparatus so that it makes a lucid reading. To ensure reasonable consistency among the editors working on the texts: 1. the texts checked by one scholar was cross-checked by another scholar and 2. A VRI style manual for the Tipitaka was developed and used.

12. This priceless CD is given free of cost. The cost is met with donations from grateful people around the world. Those who want to participate in this Dhammadana can send their donations to the following:

Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust Green House Green Street Mumbai 400 023 India Fax:
(+91-22) 266 4607 Email: <spgoenka@giasbm01.vsnl.net.in>

Version 3 of the CSCD to be released in May 1999 will have the following additional features:

1. Installation will be easier with the help of Install Wizard.
2. A faster search Engine.
3. Copy and paste facility. It will be possible to select a portion of the text from the screen by dragging the mouse, and copying it to the clipboard. The text can then be pasted to any document in a word processor.
4. An entire book could be saved in a text file in any of the seven scripts supported by the CSCD and then opened in a word processor.
5. A 32-bit version CSCD.EXE will be available for installing on computers supporting 32-bit, so the software will work much faster.
6. Some of the operating errors encountered in the software are being debugged and rectified.
7. Opinions are invited from the EBTI members who have been using the CSCD versions 1.1 and 2.0 about the difficulties encountered by them, besides those listed above which are being attended to.
8. The next version will run on the Chinese windows.
9. A Pali-Chinese dictionary will be incorporated in future versions (ver 4).
10. Some more scripts will be added as per the demand from scholars.
11. Many more texts will be added almost all of which have never been published outside of Myanmar or Sri Lanka.
12. Some unpublished palm-leaf manuscripts and Asokan edicts will be added.

Conclusion:

Vipassana Research Institute is committed to bring to light the ENTIRE PALI LITERATURE from all over the world and make it freely available to both scholarly community and to the followers of the Buddha's teaching in a form that is suitable and convenient for both groups in a single source: on a CD now and on a DVD in future.

Scholars are requested to visit www.vri.dhamma.org to check the update and to get the order forms for a free copy of the CSCD.