The Tibetan Typefaces



SAMPLES FOR THE TIBETAN FONTS DESIGNED BY LOTSAWA TONY DUFF

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Tibetan Computer Company

The Tibetan Computer Company was started in 1986. It produced and sold the first Tibetan word-processing software for the PC. Since then, the products and fonts of the Tibetan Computer Company have been continually

developed and improved. In the 1990's they became the defacto standard for Tibetan word-processing, especially in Asia.

Our Products

We specialize in electronic products of the very highest quality for Tibetan language studies. In particular, our dictionaries and electronic texts are very famous for their accuracy and ease of use. Here are a few of our offerings:

- The Illuminator Tibetan-English Dictionary in TibetD format. Comes with TibetD Reader software. A dictionary from Lotsawa Tony Duff.
- The New Electronic Edition of Sarat Chandra Das's classic Tibetan-English Dictionary in TibetD format. Comes with TibetD Reader software.
- The Mahavyutpatti Sanskrit-Tibetan-English Glossary in TibetD format. Comes with TibetD Reader software.
- Geshe Chodrak's Tibetan-Tibetan Dictionary in TibetD format. Comes with TibetD Reader software. Prepared by Lotsawa Tony Duff.

Other Native Tibetan works and translations in electronic format.

In addition we have Word Processors for the PC and Macintosh:

• **TibetDoc**. A Windows word-processor specially made for Tibetan but with support for many different languages. TibetDoc has the best and easiest-to-use pecha publishing system available. The program is the de-facto standard in Asia for Tibetan publishing. Comes standard with Tibetan Machine typeface; other typefaces optional.

For information on **dictionaries, reference works and Tibetan Buddhist texts** see the Padma Karpo Translation Committee web site at

http://www.tibet.dk/pktc

and the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project site at http://www.tibet.dk/dkhp.

Better Quality Fonts

All of our programs come with the Tibetan Machine typeface. We have four, better quality typefaces that can be purchased to enhance any of our products:

- Tibetan Calligraphic typeface to go with any TCC programs. A high quality typeface especially suitable for Tibetan publishing. If you are going to publish any Tibetan text you should at least purchase this font. The Dzongkha Calligraphic typeface is the same design but modified to be Bhutanese in style.
- **Tibetan Chogyal** typeface to with any of the above programs. This is a very high quality typeface for those who want the very best in Tibetan publishing. It is a modification of our legendary Tibetan Chogyal

typeface to match the classic, hand-written style of Tibet.

• **Tibetan Chogyal** is our most famous typeface. It is a beautiful design, easy to read, and has been used for most of the major preservation efforts in Asia in recent times. Because of this, it has become legendary amongst learned Tibetans.

For samples and descriptions of the fonts, see the section in this documentation on page 5. Alternatively, view or print the pdf file that comes with the program called "TCC Tibetan Typefaces Samples.pdf". Alternatively, see our web site at http://www.tibet.dk/tcc.

Authorized Distributors

All of our software, fonts, dictionaries, and texts can be purchased through us or our authorized distributors. If you purchase through us, you can purchase by immediate, electronic download as well as on CD. See the distributors page on our web site:

http://www.tibet.dk/tcc.

The Tibetan Typefaces

The fonts available from Tibetan Computer Company are regarded at this time as the best in the world. They are regarded as the most authentic and, on top of that, as very beautiful. This chapter gives an introduction to all of the fonts that have been made to go with our software. All of the fonts were designed and created by Lotsawa Tony Duff, a well-known Tibetan Buddhist scholar and practitioner. Lotsawa Tony has lived with Tibetans for many years now and studied Tibetan calligraphy extensively.

- All of our Windows software comes standard with Tibetan Machine typeface. Other typefaces are optionally available by purchase.
- There is a special version of Tibetan Machine called Tibetan Machine Web. It works on all platforms.

TibetanMachine is the most versatile of all of the typefaces, which is why we licenced it for free use and why we include it standard with every software package.

However, **Tibetan Calligraphic** is much more suitable when it comes to making pecha and **Tibetan Classic** and **Tibetan Chogyal** are the best Tibetan fonts available in the world for making pecha. Therefore, if you are going to make pecha, we strongly recommend that you purchase one of these fonts. If you are wanting to make Bhutanese texts, you should use the Bhutanese equivalent of Tibetan Calligraphic called Dzongkha Calligraphic.

1. TIBETAN MACHINE AND TIBETAN MACHINE WEB TYPEFACES

The first typeface that Mr. Duff created in the mid-1980's was the Tibetan Machine typeface. It was modeled on a Tibetan typeface that was developed in India early in the 20th. century. The typeface was created by Presbyterian missionaries living in Calcutta who wanted to convert Tibetan Buddhists to Christianity. Thus, the typeface is usually referred to the "Calcutta" typeface but is sometimes known as the "Presbyterian" typeface. The typeface was cast in metal and became used throughout India for several decades as the standard font for reproducing Tibetan books in India.

The Calcutta typeface is easy to read and was popular amongst Tibetans for a long time which is why a computer

typeface was designed after it. However, the original design was not very elegant, so the computer design was improved markedly over the original. Since its first introduction in 1987, Tibetan Machine has been improved upon considerably. After several major revisions it has been made very elegant whilst still retaining the feel of the original design. Because the computer typeface was derived from a typeface intended for mechanical reproduction and because it was built especially for use with mechanical printers, the typeface was named "Machine".

Tibetan Machine has quite short descenders and so is particularly useful for applications such as newspaper publishing, making tables, and making short pecha where a small line height is required. The typeface also has a rounded quality which makes it very legible, even at very small point sizes. For this reason it is especially suitable for printing the sheets of dharaṇi and mantras which need to be rolled up and put into statues, stūpas, and so on. The typeface has a very formal feel to it and so is useful for all sorts of true publication applications such as book publishing, and so on.

Many people have requested a "slanted" version of Tibetan typefaces, like the "Italics" of European typefaces. Such a design goes completely against the design principles of uchan lettering so we do not provide it. However, it is possible, by italicizing Tibetan text with the word-processor to obtain that effect. A slanted form should *not* be used for pecha-making or other traditional purposes.

This typeface was used to produce the Tibetan Machine Web typeface. Tibetan Machine Web has exactly the same appearance as Tibetan Machine because no changes were made to the characters in the typeface. However, the characters in the Tibetan Machine typeface were moved into different positions and spread out amongst more fonts to make Tibetan Machine Web with the result that Tibetan Machine Web works on both PC and Macintosh platforms.

Moreover, the Tibetan Machine Web typeface can be used successfully for web publishing and also for e-mail where the Tibetan Machine typeface cannot.

2. TIBETAN CALLIGRAPHIC

Following the introduction of Tibetan Machine typeface,

work was started on a new typeface that would be very authentic and most suitable for publishing Tibetan texts. The new typeface was called Tibetan Calligraphic and was designed with a noticeable difference between the thicks and thins of the strokes in the letters. The first designs were somewhat ugly and the inter-letter spacing was not good. However, the font went through several revisions and a major renovation in early 1997 which made the typeface exceptionally attractive. The new design with all of its features has been repeatedly praised by Tibetans as very authentic and highly desirable for use in publishing native texts. It is without doubt the premier font in the package and certainly the most suitable font in this software for publishing pecha.

The font in general has a formal look and, with longer descenders than Tibetan Machine typeface, is very suited to making pecha and other documents where a "native" look is required. The design is very readable and particularly suited to pecha-making. However, it does not reproduce well at very small sizes. For example, when very small letters are required for making dharaṇi for stuffing stūpas and statues (8-10 points) Tibetan Machine is more legible.

The Tibetan newspaper called "Nyenchen Thanglha" published in Kathmandu, Nepal is made using this typeface.

3. DZONGKHA CALLIGRAPHIC

In 1997, the Dzongkha Development Commission of the Royal Government of Bhutan licensed a special version of the Tibetan! program for use throughout the Kingdom of Bhutan. At that time, they requested that the a Dzongkhastyle font be made to go with the new package. In order to fulfill their requirements, the Tibetan Calligraphic font was modified to make a new font called Dzongkha Calligraphic. The Dzongkha Calligraphic font has the same qualities as mentioned above under the Tibetan Calligraphic font but the numerals, letters ¬, ъ, their derivatives, the numerals, and the various signs have all been changed to the Dzongkha look.

4. TIBETAN CHOGYAL CLASSIC

Authentic Tibetan calligraphy gives u-chan letters a sculpted

look which is not usually reproduced these days; in modern writing style, letters are written with the serifs in an oblique slab rather than having the earlier sculpted look. The fonts mentioned above all follow the more modern style so another font, called Tibetan Classic, was made from the Tibetan Calligraphic design but with the older style of serif. A great deal of effort was put into developing the font to be as close to original Tibetan script as possible and with very high quality. The font is a beautifully designed and cor rectly proportioned representation of the older calligraphic lettering style Tibet and is truly representative of the older style of calligraphy made with a bamboo pen. The typeface has delicately curved descenders and certain other design features which follow exactly the most elegant way of traditional writing. It is one of the best typefaces available in the world for publishing pecha and other formal materials.

This typeface is actually a variation on our very best typeface, Tibetan Chogyal and is sometimes called Tibetan Chogyal Classic.

5. TIBETAN CHOGYAL

Tibetan Chogyal was originally developed by Lotsawa Tony for two very large Tibetan text projects. The first was his own preservation project, the Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project that ran for ten years in Kathmandu and refurbished 102 volumes of Drukpa Kagyu Literature. The second was the publication of Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's collected works in over 20 volumes.

The typeface was developed simply to be as good as possible. It follows the authentic designs of Tibetan calligraphy though does not try to slavishly follow old styles. Instead, it also takes account of the requirements of digitized scripts. The result is exceptionally beautiful, easy-to-read, and at the same time completely authentic. Tibetans learned and otherwise have praised the script and it is demanded for use in every major publishing project in Asia these days.

The typeface uses the more modern approach to serifs, in which the fine curves of classic calligraphy are lost in favour of a cleaner, block style. This more modern style is favoured by most these days.

Tibetan Font Samples using Lord Gampopa's Oral Instructions on Mahamudra courtesy Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project

Tibetan Machine Typeface 26 point

Tibetan Font Samples using Lord Gampopa's Oral Instructions on Mahamudra courtesy Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project

Tibetan Calligraphic Typeface 26 point

Dzongkha Calligraphic Typeface 26 point

Tibetan Font Samples using Lord Gampopa's Oral Instructions on Mahamudra courtesy Drukpa Kagyu Heritage Project

Tibetan Chogyal Classic Typeface 26 point

कूर्यः से लुची यहे ब्यात्तर प्रविद्या वर्ष्ण वर्षण वर्णण वर्णण वर्षण वर्षण वर्षण वर्षण वर्षण वर्षण वर

Tibetan Chogyal Typeface 26 point

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