

Preservation and Accessibility of the Multimedia Resources of the Central University of Tibetan Studies

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The Central University of Tibetan Studies (CUTS) is an Indian deemed university which was founded more than 40 years ago to promote high educational standards for Tibetan refugees in India. Shantarakshita Library, a structure subdivision of the CUTS, possesses large collection of digital multimedia resources on different aspects of Tibetan history and culture, modern politics and social life. It is possible to divide the whole multimedia content into several main categories:

- lectures and sermons of HH Dalai Lama XIV and other prominent Tibetan Buddhist teachers;
- public speeches of Samdong Rinpoche - the Prime Minister of Tibetan government in exile, and other materials concerning governmental and parliamentary activities;
- news releases of Tibetan information agencies;
- art performances;
- scholastic disputes and discussions, other educational resources;
- academic presentations and discussions on different aspects of Buddhist and Tibetan studies;
- historical chronicles and anthropological materials.

The multimedia collection of the CUTS is very valuable source for advanced Tibetan and Himalayan studies, and it's important to preserve it and make accessible for academic community and public use.

Originally content was stored on optical disks and distributed only within the CUTS's campus for students and professors. Its catalog was presented just as plain list of stored items in order of their delivery. No subject description or other metadata structure were available. The collection was a subject of physical degradation and loss.

In December, 2009 the Institute of Mongolian, Buddhist and Tibetan Studies in Ulan Ude, Russia (IMBTS) initiated a joint project with the CUTS. As a result of this project, more than 450 titles of audio and visual content have been copied, and the total volume of data is about 2 Terabytes. These data are available in Ulan-Ude for Russian and international academic community. Tibetan multimedia collection is intensively processed now in order to create its advanced metadata description and electronic catalog. Also multimedia content is being converted according to requirements of the web-oriented visual data distribution. The results of the project will be available on the IMBTS's web-portal <http://imbtarchive.ru>.