

PART 4: APPENDICES

THE STEMMA OF THE *PHUR PA BCU GNYIS* [PCN]

In editing the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, there was particular concern regarding the placement of the highly corrupt version from the Kathmandu NGB manuscript: was Kathmandu really on a separate branch to gTing skyes and Rig 'dzin? Should we accept its abundant and often major single errors as stemmatic evidence?¹ Or was this all just one-off chaos? And were its sporadic correct readings against gTing skyes and Rig 'dzin's shared errors mere coincidence and casual conjectural correction—or something more? Because the manuscript was so corrupt, the signal-to-noise ratio was very poor. Happily, our new data completely vindicates our original choice. Our recent collation of Nubri shows it shares a significant proportion of Kathmandu's major errors in opposition to all other editions, including gTing skyes and Rig 'dzin, confirming Kathmandu as belonging to a branch separate from the gTing skyes and Rig 'dzin.

Mayer's 1996 edition of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis* requires a readjustment after our collating of a number of chapters of the Nubri ms NGB for the first time (we have not yet collated sGang steng-b's *Phur pa bcu gnyis* beyond a small fragment, and we regret to say that with such a long text, it might be some time before we find the time to do so to the necessary degree of accuracy that renders stemmatic analysis viable). The neatest way to summarise the data is through looking at the stemma – but take note that this is a summarised discussion of a pragmatic stemma, not a historical one; and that we do not yet have any concrete evidence of horizontal transmission, so we can only proceed as though there is none. As elsewhere in this book, the sigla used are: D = sDe dge; G = sGang steng-b; K = Kathmandu; M = mTshams brag; N = Nubri; R = Rig 'dzin (formerly W for Waddell); T = gTing skyes.

In the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, a striking feature is the uniqueness of D. In hundreds of instances D has distinctive readings against all the other editions. In most cases, D's variants are grammatically and orthographically superior. D also avoids most of the considerable loss of text through eyeskip that is so characteristic of all the other editions. Some of D's unique readings are major, others are minor. We have obvious evidence of recensional activity in D, through marginal notes not found elsewhere that explicitly report editorial activity. Also, D's Sanskrit renderings are uniformly regularised to 18th century norms, where all other editions share Sanskrit readings that resemble the older Kanjur editions in not marking long Sanskrit vowels and other archaisms. In addition, D has a few unique errors, usually but not always quite trivial. Of course, we have external evidence that D is the product of major editorial activity and of conflation: but the direct internal evidence for this is not interpretable by us now. Since, as far as we know, none of D's *ma phyi* or exemplars are extant, we have no certain way of knowing which of its readings against TRNK and M might be inherited—i.e., where D might have followed correct exemplars against the errors of the other surviving editions, or which are recensional, i.e., where D's editors have emended the tradition themselves. Even those explicitly recensional interventions recorded in its marginal notes might conceivably derive from its no longer extant *ma phyi*, rather than from the sDe dge editorial team. It is even logically possible (if rather improbable) that its corrected Sanskrit came from some of its exemplars. Nor can we know which readings might derive from which of D's several exemplars.

If the NGB parallels the Kanjur's evolutionary pattern, mTshams brag and sGang steng-b might represent an old tradition because their doxography is quite messy: all other editions are better ordered. But there might be other reasons for this Bhutanese edition's doxographical untidiness, we should not jump to conclusions of antiquity on this evidence alone. Stematically in the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, M shares a great many errors with TRNK against D, although TRNK also share a number of errors against DM's correct readings. Overall, M is closer to the TRNK family than to D. This could suggest TRNK are descended

¹ Major single errors in a manuscript can only prove conclusively that no other extant version descended from it, but when there are many errors, the likelihood of it being further removed from the common ancestor increases.

directly from M—but this does not seem to be the case, since M has unique errors all of its own, including very major omissions of indispensable text, that are not omitted in either TRNK or D. So it looks like TRNK and M shared a common ancestor at some point, but that TRNK are not direct descendants of M.

As explained above, we have not yet collated sGang steng-b's version of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, but if, after collation, it turns out to show the same kind of extremely close relation to mTshams brag as evidenced in the *Myang 'das* and the *rDo rje khros pa*, we will have adequate evidence to change the stemma: a further hyparchetype will need to be introduced as the common ancestor of the mTshams brag and sGang steng-b versions of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*. According to some external sources, such a common ancestor did exist – in the form of a South Tibetan (lHo brag lHa lung – a Padma Gling pa centre) common exemplar of the four Bhutanese NGB copies held at Shar phyogs sGra med rtse, mTshams brag and (two at) sGang steng. We discuss this at greater length below.

As for the relationships between TRNK: here, as mentioned above, we can improve the initial stemma. While it was correct that TR and K belonged to different branches of the tradition, the collation of N now reveals the relation of those branches to each other more clearly. In collating N, we found that it shares significant major errors with K that no other edition has: for example, in Chapter 3, only N and K conflate two lines to produce a single nonsensical and unmetrical line.² There are also other shared errors. For this reason, N's shared errors with K also now show that K (or NK) cannot derive from an hyparchetype c that was also the ancestor of the parent of T and R, as the initial stemma hypothesised (see Fig. 1). At the time, we expressed great concern that the disastrously corrupt K's sporadic agreements with DM in correct minor readings against TR's shared errors might be purely coincidental; all these readings were decidedly trivial, and since K was such an extraordinary mess throughout, it would be rash, we argued at length, to see any stemmatic patterns in it at all. Yet this was all we had for the positioning of K's branch on the stemma, so we used it very provisionally, hedged in by caveats. With a significant proportion of N now collated into the picture as well, it is clear the caveats were well founded: there is a strong probability that K's sporadic agreements with DM against many of TR's trivial errors were coincidental. At least, N mostly does not share them—yet some of N's really major errors are carried by K as well. Current stemmatic theory reinforces the view that one should not use trivial errors as a basis without due caution: it is sounder to rely on really major shared errors that cannot be attributed to coincidence, casual conjectural correction by a scribe, or regional style—and in some ways fortunately, NGB texts are quite often rich in such major errors. The conflation of two lines to produce a single nonsensical unmetrical line in Ch 3 of the NK versions of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis* is just such an example. Neither coincidence nor conjecture are at all likely independently to provide such an agreement in error, and the probability of any two texts coincidentally sharing several such major errors becomes extremely remote.

However we have found no occasions where TR have major errors not shared also by NK,³ although, the converse does happen, since NK share major errors not found in TR. Hence in the new stemma (Fig. 2), we will show TR as deriving from an hyparchetype c which is also an ancestor of the text d from which NK derive. Thus TR and K (now joined by N), exchange positions from the old stemma. As anticipated, the collation of N has thus enabled a much better view of the whole picture.

We should add, K cannot be a parent of N because K has a huge mass of errors, sometimes extremely major, not shared by N (or any other text for that matter). Nor is N likely to be the parent of K, since N has significant errors and some omissions not shared by K (or any other text).⁴ There is, of course, a remote possibility of horizontal transmission into K that enabled it to avoid these errors of N, but it is most improbable that a copy as slapdash as K was produced with enough care to select correct readings from a

² /dngos grub thams cad 'byung ba'i gnas/ /bde gshegs ngo mtshar khyod la 'dus/ > /dngos grub thams cad ngo mtshar khyod la 'dud/

³ There are minor errors which *might* suggest that TR share an ancestor not shared with NK, yet at this stage, we do not feel that these carry enough weight to justify a firm conclusion. This might change once we have been able to collate the entire text of N and to assess the likelihood of TR's shared errors indicating anything more than chance agreements.

⁴ For example, N omits three lines that K and all other versions include.

second source. T and R also have some major unique errors all of their own, which ostensibly rule out parental relations either way—but since their major unique errors are few, the exclusion of such a relationship is very much less certain.

We have not yet identified clear instances of horizontal transmission among TRNK and MG and with so few witnesses available for each area of the tradition, any that might exist will be hard to identify. In fact, we have no direct evidence so far for horizontal transmission anywhere – although we know from historical sources that it must have happened on many occasions. Obviously, the search for concrete evidence of horizontal transmission is a key concern. But even if it is found, there is a reasonable chance it might not change the basic structure of this pragmatic stemma, although some broken lines would have to be added to the diagram to represent the horizontal transmission. Of course, we could also add an arbitrary number of broken lines issuing out of and into empty space, to show the unknown number of lost witnesses that must have existed, but that would be a bit messy and achieve no purpose. I hope that people looking at this pragmatic stemma recall we are not showing an historical diagram, much less the many lost editions. We are only showing the apparent relationships between our available extant witnesses according to their textual variants: groupings rather than proven relationships.

Fig 1: Old stemma of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, without the Nubri version

D = sDe dge xylograph NGB, Volume Pa (176r-251v)
 M = mTshams brag ms NGB, Volume Dza (393r-507r)
 T = gTing skyes ms NGB, Volume Dza (1r-100r)
 R = Rig 'dzin Tshé dbang nor bu ms NGB, Volume Dza (1r-91r)
 N = Nubri ms NGB, Volume Ma (55r-156r)
 K = Kathmandu ms NGB, Volume Ma (37r-129v)

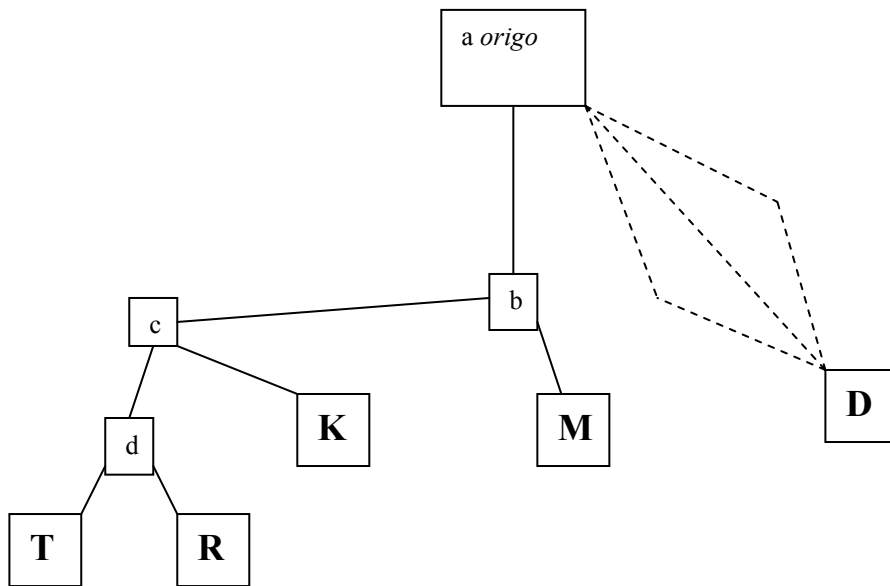


Fig 2: New stemma of the *Phur pa bcu gnyis*, including the Nubri version

