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Bird Divination in Old Tibetan Texts*

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Introduction

P.t. 1045,¹ an Old Tibetan (OT) bird divination text, was first presented by J. Bacot as early as 1913, furnished with its transliteration and annotated translation. Although he regarded it as a divination table of presages announced by a flash of lightning, Bacot's pioneering study was so invaluable and drew such significant information that the studies that followed mostly depended on his transliteration and translation. In the next year, B. Laufer discovered that P.t. 1045 actually pertains to the divination of sounds of the crow or raven, and consequently, he revised the introductory section of Bacot's translation, referring to the relation with *Kākajiriti*, a bird divination text recorded in the Tibetan *Tanjur*.² Further contributions, such as those made by C. Morgan in 1987 and Chen Nan in 2007, were mainly focused on comparing P.t. 1045 with the bird divination texts found among Chinese Dunhuang manuscripts. Thus, OT bird divination texts have only been represented by P.t. 1045, clarifying several important partial problems, while other texts have so far been pretermitted.

In this paper, I will trace the philological genesis of Tibetan bird divination and explain how the cultural legacy of these bird divination practices has been inherited by modern Tibetan folk culture. First, I will conduct a general survey of all the OT bird divination texts and investigate their contents. Then, I will discuss the Chinese bird divination texts and *Kākajiriti*.

By examining the original manuscripts, in addition to the information from digital images and catalogues, I have hitherto identified six OT bird divination texts among the volumes from Dunhuang Cave No. 17, as shown in the following list.

* I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Tsuguhito Takeuchi and Prof. Yoshiro Imaeda for their comments and suggestions.

¹ "P.t." is an abbreviation for Pelliot tibétain, which refers to the Pelliot Tibetan collection preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. In addition, I use "P.c." for the Pelliot Chinois collection.

² In Peking edition: No. 5831, *thun mong ba lugs kyi bstan bcos, go*, 202b7–204b6, and Narthang edition: *go*, 221a1–222b7.

List 1: List of the Tibetan bird divination texts

Pressmark	Size (in cm)	Contents			Verso (/Recto)
		Introduction	Table of Omens	Second Section	
ITJ 746 ³	31 × 83	○	○	×	Two Tibetan syllables
ITJ 747	29.5 × 104	○	○	○	A letter in Tibetan
P.t. 1045	32 × 88	○	○	×	×
P.t. 1048	30 × 6.5	unknown	○	unknown	×
P.t. 1049	27 × 65	○	○	×	1) 27 lines of Tibetan description concerning ritual with mantra 2) 8 lines of Tibetan divination text
P.c. 3896_verso	26 × 62	×	○	×	Chinese divination text

As is shown in List 1, OT bird divination texts are composed of three constituents: an introductory section, a table of omens, and a second section. By consulting the table of omens, we can categorize the various omens according to the time of the day and the direction from which we hear the sounds of the crow. In the table, the nine directions are arranged in a vertical line second from the top, and the 10 divisions of daytime are indicated in the leftmost horizontal line. Consequently, by finding the intersecting column, we can obtain omens such as “one can acquire a horse.” Above the vertical line, objects that should be offered to prevent the threatening disaster are presented in case one draws inauspicious omens.

While ITJ 747 and P.t. 1045 are complete texts, ITJ 746 and P.t. 1049 lack several syllables and contents because of paper damages. P.t. 1048, which has never been listed in previous studies, is simply a small fragment showing two horizontal lines of a table of omens. Subsequent to two kinds of Chinese descriptions,⁴ P.c. 3896 records an OT table of omens on its *verso* without the leftmost side and center part.

³ ITJ is an abbreviation for IOL Tib J (= India Office Library Tibetan [Group] J), which are now preserved in the British Library.

⁴ The first description relates to prayers for harvest; the second description represents the list of objects and commodities for a ritual.

1.1. Transliteration and translation of ITJ 747

After exemplifying the transliteration and translation of ITJ 747, I will demonstrate each of the three constituents of OT bird divination texts. In addition to representing the original line numbers in brackets, I inserted new numbers on each of the leftmost lines of the transliteration and translation of the introductory section and the second section. The transliteration of the table of omens is supplemented with new numbers in each of the nine directions and the 10 divisions of daytime, so that in my translation, “III-2” corresponds to the “dawn, east” bracket in the table.

On the basis of the Wylie Roman transliteration system, I used the following additional *signes critiques* as defined in Takeuchi 1995.⁵

Text

I	reversed <i>gi-gu</i>
M	<i>anusvāra</i>
^a	ꣳ
\$	a sentence and page initial sign ꣳ

Translation

[abc]	supplements by the translator
(abc)	translator’s note
(lit.)	literal translation of the corresponding passage in the text

⁵ See Takeuchi 1995: 137–38.

[Introductory section]

Transliteration

- 1 (1) \$ // pho rog ni myi'i mgon //
- 2 drang srong ni lha'i bka' //
- 3 byang 'brog ni 'brong sha rkyan⁶ //
- 4 yul (2) gi ni dbus mthil du //
- 5 lha btsun ni bda' skad skyel //
- 6 phyogs brgyad ni lding dang dgu' //
- 7 ^ang (3) tong ni thabs gsum gsungs //
- 8 gtor ma ni bya la gtor //
- 9 tsho tsho ni yongs su gnyis //
- 10 lha'i ni (4) phyag du 'bul //
- 11 grags dgur ni lhas myi blta' //
- 12 bzang ngan ni ltas su gsung //
- 13 drang srong (5) ni lha 'dzin la //
- 14 lha ston ni gnyen ba'i bya' //
- 15 mu sman ni gnyen gyis gsungs //
- 16 drang zhin⁷ (6) ni brtan por ston //
- 17 pho rog ni dgu gi bya⁸ //
- 18 'dab drug ni gshog drug pa' //
- 19 lha yul ni mtho ru phyin //
- 20 (7) dmyig rno ni snyan gsang bas //
- 21 lha'i ni man ngag ston //
- 22 myi rtog ni gcig ma mchis //
- 23 yid ches (8) ni sems rton cig //
- 24 phyogs brgyad ni lding dang dgu //
- 25 lhong lhong ni bang por ston //
- 26 thag thag (9) ni 'bring du ston //
- 27 krag krag ni rings par ston //

⁶ 'brong sha rkyan: I adopted 'brong sha'i rkyan as is found in P.t. 1045.

⁷ zhin: This must be a clerical error for zhing as is rightly given in parallel passages in ITJ 746, P.t. 1045, and P.t. 1049.

⁸ dgu gi bya: I adopted dgung gi bya in ITJ 746, P.t. 1045, and P.t. 1049.

28 krog krog ni grog yod smra //
29 ^i'u ^i'u ni bar ston yin //

Translation

1 The crow is the protector of men,
2 [and] the [speech] of the holy hermit [who perceives the sounds of the crow]
is the speech of the gods.
3 [From] the northern pasture-lands, the source of wild yak flesh,
4 to the middle of the country,
5 the venerable gods deliver the sound-speech [of the crow].
6 [At] the nine [directions], the eight directions with the addition of the zenith
point,
7 [the crow] preaches three means of emitting the sounds.
8 [By] scattering the offering for the bird,
9 feeding the bird must be performed for all [the birds].
10 [By doing so, the offering] will be transmitted to the gods.
11 As well as listening to the sounds [of the crow in] the nine [directions], the
gods,
12 [perceive several] signs [extracted from their sounds] that [hereby]
announce [one's] fortune.
13 [The role to] grasp [the volition of] the gods is [performed by] the holy
hermit,
14 [and the role to] indicate [the volition of] the gods is [performed by] the bird,
the companion [of the holy hermit].
15 *Mu sman's* announcement of [one's fortune] through the companion, [the
crow]
16 is sincerely indicated with trustworthiness.
17 The crow, the bird of heaven,
18 [and] those furnished with six plumages [that is] six wings
19 arrive at the [high] peaks of the land of the gods.
20 [Since] they have penetrating eyes and perceptive ears,
21 [the crow can] reveal the admonition of the gods.
22 There is nothing not to be inquired [of the crow],
23 [you should] believe in [the crows] and put [your] trust in [them].

- 24 The nine [directions], [that is] the eight directions with the addition of the zenith point.
- 25 [The sound] *lhong lhong* foretells a lucky omen.
- 26 [The sound] *thag thag* foretells an omen of intermediate luck.
- 27 [The sound] *krag krag* foretells that [everything occurs] quickly.
- 28 [The sound] *krog krok* informs that [your] comrade will come.
- 29 [The sound] *^i'u ^i'u* foretells [that there is] a hindrance.⁹

[Table of omens]

*Transliteration*¹⁰

Translation

- I-1 As for the methods of offering.
- I-2 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the east, [you should] offer milk.
- I-3 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the southeast, [you should] offer white mustard.
- I-4 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the south, [you should] offer water.
- I-5 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the southwest, [you should] offer white mustard.
- I-6 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the west, [you should] offer flesh.
- I-7 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the northwest, [you should] offer flowers.
- I-8 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the north, [you should] offer incense.¹¹

⁹ *^i'u ^i'u ni bar ston yin*: In contrast to Bacot's rendering of "Iou iou est signe d'intermédiaire" (Bacot 1903: 449), Laufer translated it as "the sound, *iu, iu* is an augury of a future event (as indicated in the table)," since most of the omens in the following table end with the phrase *bar ston*. Therefore, he must have thought that it represents the omens in the table (Laufer 1904: 388 and 404). I considered another rendering proposed by Yamaguchi, in which *bar* is considered as an abbreviation for *bar chad* "hindrance, impediment" (Yamaguchi 1987: 177).

¹⁰ See List3 on the last page of this article.

- I-9 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold in the northeast, [you should] offer rice.
- I-10 If an inauspicious sound (=omen) is foretold at the zenith, [you should] offer millet.
- II-1
- II-2 East
- II-3 Southeast
- II-4 South
- II-5 Southwest
- II-6 West
- II-7 Northwest
- II-8 North
- II-9 Northeast
- II-10 Zenith
- III-1 [At the time of] dawn.¹²
- III-2 It is foretold that holy gods will appear.
- III-3 It is foretold that [you] should set out for a long journey.
- III-4 It is foretold that [you] will be conducted [to go somewhere].
- III-5 It is foretold that a thief will appear.
- III-6 It is foretold that [if you] go out, there will be no profit.
- III-7 It is foretold that a conflict before the court will arise.
- III-8 It is foretold that a profit will be brought.
- III-9 It is foretold that [you] will slay a yak.
- III-10 It is foretold that an enemy will budge.

¹¹ *gu kul* (*gu gul*): For this term, the following definitions are given: “A costly incense, one kind of which is white, another black” (*Jäschke*: 69); “It is used in medicine and its smell drives away evil spirits” (*Das*: 219). Laufer described it as “a gum resin obtained from a tree and utilized as incense,” with indicating that the term *gugula* itself was derived from the Sanskrit word (Laufer 1914: 5–6).

¹² *nam ka phan phun*: We can find this phrase in P.t. 986, the Tibetan version of *Shangshu* 尚書 as *dpyid sla 'bring po tshes bzhi ste / shing po byi ba'i nam ka phan phun* for the original Chinese description “*shi jiazi meishuang*, 時甲子昧爽” to which Coblin explains that “‘*Nam-ka phan-phun*’ corresponds to ‘twilight or dawn’ in the Chinese version. The usual meaning of *phan-phun* is ‘disagreement’. Here it seems to refer to the time when it is neither really light nor really dark” (Coblin 1991: 319). We can also encounter the synonym phrase *dgung ka phan phun* in several OT texts, in which *phan phun* is sometimes written as *phang phung*.

- IV-1 [At the time of] daybreak.
- IV-2 It is foretold that a man (/woman) will perish.
- IV-3 It is foretold that a man (/woman) will speak.
- IV-4 It is foretold that [you] will gain a horse.
- IV-5 It is foretold that [you] will slay (/hunt) the game.
- IV-6 It is foretold that a minister will appear.
- IV-7 It is foretold that a messenger will arrive.
- IV-8 It is foretold that your prompt arrival will be suitable.
- IV-9 It is foretold that an epistle (/a message tablet)¹³ will be delivered.
- IV-10 It is foretold that [you] will be fully engaged.¹⁴

- V-1 [At the time of] sunrise.
- V-2 It is foretold that a sudden [happening] will occur.
- V-3 It is foretold that an order from a king will be given.
- V-4 It is foretold that a letter from a minister will arrive.
- V-5 The [source of] the warrior vitality¹⁵ and blessedness will arise.
- V-6 It is foretold that a wild beast will appear.
- V-7 It is foretold that a sublime¹⁶ happiness will arise.
- V-8 It is foretold that a thief will appear.
- V-9 It is foretold that a thug will appear.
- V-10 It is foretold that a tidings concerning a man will be delivered.

¹³ *phrin byang*: This word refers to a “message tablet” (*TLTD* III: 157).

¹⁴ *brel ba*: I adopted the meaning “to be employed, busy, engaged” (*Jäschke*: 382) since the corresponding omen in Chinese bird divination tables recorded in P.c. 3479 and P.c. 3988, which I will demonstrate below, represents “*jimang shi* 急忙事,” which can be rendered as “[you will have] something to do in a hurry.”

¹⁵ *dgra bla*: Differing from Bacot’s rendition of “rival” as *dgra zla* and Thomas’s “superior enemy” (Thomas 1957: 129), I interpreted it as the “[source of] the warrior vitality,” which is faithful to the original meaning of *bla*. The examples of *dgra bla* among OT dice divination texts imply that *dgra bla* is a kind of god or deity. For instance, *dgra bla* is enumerated together with deities such as *sman* and *lha yul sa* (*sman dang lha yul sa dang dgra bla ’ches pa zhig yod gyis mchod cig*, P.t. 1051, l.30). This sentence clearly reveals that *dgra bla* is an object to be worshipped. Nevertheless, to prove Stein’s argument to identify *dgra bla* with *dgra lha*, further evidence is needed (Stein 1972: 227).

¹⁶ *phags par*: Although Bacot translated it as “favori” (Bacot 1913: 451) and Stein as “qui aime à être élevé” (in an oral communication with Morgan, see Morgan 1987: 68), I adopted the description ‘*phags par*, as stated in P.t. 1045, which means “sublime, exalted, raised above” (*Jäschke*: 355).

- VI-1 [At the time of] the first half of morning.
- VI-2 It is foretold that [your] desire will be perfect (/your demand will be satisfied).
- VI-3 It is foretold that an enemy will budge.
- VI-4 It is foretold that *Gnyen lha skyes po* will be harmed.¹⁷
- VI-5 It is foretold that the wind will blow.
- VI-6 It is foretold that [you will have] snow and rain.
- VI-7 It is foretold that a fear (/dread) will arise.
- VI-8 It is foretold that a terrible quarrel¹⁸ will arise.
- VI-9 It is foretold that a sick person will expire.
- VI-10 It is foretold that a Brahman [who was] from the past will appear.¹⁹

- VII-1 [At the time of] the second half of morning.
- VII-2 It is foretold that it will rain.
- VII-3 It is foretold that [you] will slay (/hunt) the game.
- VII-4 It is foretold that a quarrel occasioned by a woman will arise.
- VII-5 It is foretold that a relative will appear.
- VII-6 It is foretold that a grief will arise among the surroundings of the king.²⁰
- VII-7 It is foretold that a tempest will arise.
- VII-8 It is foretold that an evil fire will break out.
- VII-9 It is foretold that [you] should beware of²¹ a man (/woman).
- VII-10 It is foretold that [a man] will appear who bows at your feet.

- VIII-1 [At the time of] noon.
- VIII-2 It is foretold that your wealth will suffer a loss.
- VIII-3 It is foretold that a tidings will not be delivered to anyone.
- VIII-4 It is foretold that [you] will [have] a rainstorm.

¹⁷ *tshe ba*: I adopted the description *'tshe ba* as stated in P.t. 1045. Bacot interpreted *gnyen lha skyes po* as “dieu protecteur” (Bacot 1913: 451).

¹⁸ *thab mo*: Read *'thab mo* as “quarrel.”

¹⁹ Bacot interpreted this omen as “Indique qu’un brahmane sans précédent arrive” (Bacot 1913: 451), and Stein rendered “Un brahman qui n’existe pas arrive(?)” (Morgan 1987: 67).

²⁰ *rgyal po 'khor na*: According to P.t. 1045’s omen *rgyal po 'i 'khor nas 'tshe ba zhis 'ong bar ston* “Indique qu’une nuisance viendra de la cour du roi” (Bacot 1913: 451), I translated it by supplementing the genitive *i* between *rgyal po* and *'khor*.

²¹ *myi bags*: I interpreted *myi bags* as equal to *myi la bag* in P.t. 1045. *bag byed pa*, which also appears in the omen XI-4 and XI-6 in ITJ 747, refers to “to fear, to dread, a person” (*Jäschke*: 364) and “care” (*TLTD* III: 158).

- VIII-5 It is foretold that a thief [will come] and a snowstorm will arise.
- VIII-6 It is foretold that a happiness occasioned by a woman will arise.
- VIII-7 It is foretold that a noble relative will appear.
- VIII-8 It is foretold that a tiding will be delivered to everyone.
- VIII-9 It is foretold that a *Bud myed dkar mo*²² will appear.
- VIII-10 It is foretold that a cursed tiding will be delivered.

- IX-1 [At the time of] the first half of afternoon.
- IX-2 It is foretold that a king will fear (/dread).
- IX-3 It is foretold that [you] will hear a tiding of [someone's] death.
- IX-4 It is foretold that [something that] you are afraid of will happen.
- IX-5 It is foretold that [you] will have a heavy snowfall.
- IX-6 It is foretold that [someone] will appear bearing food.
- IX-7 It is foretold that [you] will encounter a great comrade.
- IX-8 It is foretold that [you] yourself will unconsciously do [something].²³
- IX-9 It is foretold that [you] yourself will rejoice in your enemy's death.
- IX-10 It is foretold that [you] will gain a platter of food and drinks.

- X-1 [At the time of] the second half of afternoon.
- X-2 It is foretold that a fear (/dread) will arise.
- X-3 It is foretold that a sick person will be cured.
- X-4 It is foretold that [you] should set out for a long journey.
- X-5 A man (/woman) will appear from the eastern direction.
- X-6 It is foretold that a man will appear bringing his wife (/a woman) with him.
- X-7 It is foretold that [you] will gain food.
- X-8 It is foretold that [you] will sublimely²⁴ rejoice.
- X-9 Something that causes everybody to rejoice will occur.
- X-10 [You will gain] food and drinks that cause everybody to rejoice.²⁵

²² *bud myed dkar mo*: As *dkar mo* means the goddess Durga (*Jäschke*: 9), *bud myed dkar mo* might represent a name of a kind of goddess.

²³ *bdag ma tshor bar byed par ston*: P.t. 1045 has a slightly different omen such as *bdag la ma tshor ba byed pa 'ong bar ston* "Indique l'arrivée de quelqu'un qui fera quelque chose sans que vous vous en aperceviez" (Bacot 1913: 451), "On viendra faire quelque chose dont je ne m'apercevrai pas" (Morgan 1987: 68).

²⁴ *spags par*: I adopted the corresponding description '*phags par* in P.t. 1045, see fn. 16.

- XI-1 [At the time of] sunset.
- XI-2 It is foretold that [the demons] *'dre* and *gdon* will appear.
- XI-3 It is foretold that wealth and a friend will be brought.
- XI-4 It is foretold that [by] taking great precautions,²⁶ [you should] beware of water.
- XI-5 It is foretold that a man (/woman) who seeks a house will appear.²⁷
- XI-6 It is foretold that [your] brother and son will appear.²⁸
- XI-7 It is foretold that a joyful tiding will be delivered.²⁹
- XI-8 It is foretold that a tiding will be delivered.
- XI-9 It is foretold that [you] will encounter [your] brother.
- XI-10 It is foretold that [you] will hear [something] joyful.
-
- XII-1 [At the time of] dusk.
- XII-2 It is foretold that [your] brother, sister, and son-in-law will appear.
- XII-3 It is foretold that a man (/woman) will appear from the eastern direction.
- XII-4 It is foretold that [you should] take precautions [against] the border [of] a field.³⁰
- XII-5 It is foretold that a man (/woman) will appear from the southern direction.
- XII-6 It is foretold that a man who appoints a minister to [you] yourself will appear from the northern direction.³¹
- XII-7 It is foretold that [you] yourself will obtain a tiger.
- XII-8 It is foretold that [you] will have a rainfall.
- XII-9 It is foretold that a punishment will [be inflicted on you] afterward.
- XII-10 It is foretold that [you] yourself will obtain a tiger.

²⁵ I supplemented *zhig 'ong bar ston* after *zan cheng* as is written in ITJ 746 and P.t. 1049. P.t. 1045 has a slightly different description *thams cad dga' ba'i zan chang ston mo 'thung bar ston* “Indique qu'on va manger et boire un festin où tout le monde se réjouira” (Bacot 1913: 451).

²⁶ *dmyig ma chung la*: I interpreted this phrase as *ye dmyig ma chung la* by consulting the omen XI-5 *ye dmyig cher bya dgos par ston* in ITJ 746, P.t. 1045, and P.t. 1049. The omens from XI-4 to XI-10 in ITJ 747 are completely dissimilar from those in the other texts, while XI-4 in ITJ 747 rather resembles XI-6 in the other texts.

²⁷ *khyim tshol zhig 'ong bar ston*: This omen resembles XI-7 in the other texts.

²⁸ *phu nu pho dang bu tsha zhig 'ong bar ston*: This omen resembles XI-8 in the other texts.

²⁹ *dga' ba'i gtam 'ong bar ston*: This omen resembles XI-9 in the other texts.

³⁰ I rendered this omen with several supplements such as *'tsham [khi] zhing [la ye] dmyig [bya dgos] par ston*, which is dissimilar from those in the other texts.

³¹ The omens from XII-6 to XII-8 and XII-10 in ITJ 747 are completely dissimilar from those in the other texts.

[Second section]

Transliteration

- 1 (1) \$ // // lam ring por song na //
2 // pho rog mdun nas 'ongs te //
3 // rgyab du zer zhing song la //
4 (2) slar log na bzang ngo //
5 // chom rkun dgra dang myi phrad //
6 // byang nas 'ongs te zer zhing song na // //
7 (3) la mar mgyogs par song na //
8 // ci bsams pa 'grub //
9 // zan chang dang phrad par 'gyur ro // //
10 (4) mdun nas lan cig bdag la bskor nas song na //
11 // bdag gar 'gro na yang // //
12 // la mar song (5) na dga' ba 'ong //
13 // bya pho rog 'o byed na //
14 // bdag so la lan gsum brtsams te //
15 'kra shis (6) lan gsum brjod na bzang ngo //
16 // bya shing ngam shing rtsa 'am //
17 thang la 'dug cing gcig la gcig thab (7) pa mthong na //
18 // bdag la dgra yod de //
19 // sha gnyer na thub par 'ong ngo //
20 // bya sa la 'dum ma (8) 'dus te thab pa mthong na //
21 // rgyal khams ched por 'khrug pa 'ong bar 'gyur ro //// // //

Translation

- 1 When [you] set out for a long journey,
2 [if] a crow appears from the front [of you, and]
3 leaves by emitting a sound behind [you],
4 [then] comes back, [it indicates] auspiciousness.
5 [It foretells an omen that you] will encounter neither a thief nor an enemy
[during your journey].
6 If [a crow] appears from the north and leaves by emitting a sound, [or]

- 7 swiftly leaves upward,³²
8 whatever you may wish, it will be granted.
9 You will gain (lit. meet with) food and drinks.
10 [If a crow appears] from the front [of you, and] leaves after circling around
[you] one time,
11 wherever [you] yourself may go,
12 if [a crow] leaves upward, rejoicing will occur [to you].
13 If [you see] crows are billing,
14 [you] yourself, shut your mouth (lit. teeth)³³ three times, [and]
15 utter a blessing three times; [it indicates] auspiciousness.
16-17 If you see crows gathering on a tree, a root, or a plain and pecking (lit.
battling) each other,
18 [you] yourself have an enemy, [but]
19 if you procure some flesh, you will suppress [your enemy].
20 If you see crows gathering (lit. calling a council) on the ground and pecking
(lit. battling) each other,
21 disorder will arise in the great realm.

1.2. Contents of the OT bird divination texts

In this section, I will summarize each of the three content sections comprising the OT bird divination texts.

[Introductory section]

The introductory section is composed of 29 rigorously formularized verses. Accordingly, we encounter consistent descriptions in all of the manuscripts, excluding P.c. 3896.³⁴ This verse seems to have been so popular that it even appears among the exercising of writings, such as is found on the verso of P.t. 351.³⁵ The introductory section is considered to have the following two functions: (1) authorizing bird

³² *la mar*: I interpreted it as equal to *bla mar*, where *ma* should be a suffix.

³³ *so la lan gsum brtsams te*: In the light of its context, I considered this sentence as equal to *so lan gsum btsum na*, in which *btsum pa* (*'dzum pa*) means “to close, to shut, to close one’s mouth” (*Jäschke*: 466).

³⁴ Regarding the reason P.c. 3896 lacks an introductory section, I will discuss the matter below.

³⁵ Verso of P.t. 351 has three lines of Tibetan descriptions. Five verses, each composed of seven syllables, are written on the first two lines, and on the third line, we can recognize the first two verses of the introductory section of the bird divination text.

divination by admiring the crow as a messenger who delivers the admonitions of venerable gods; (2) supplying independent or supplemental omens by giving the prognostics based on the tone of the crow as shown in the last five verses.

[Table of omens]

For analyzing the contents recorded in the table of omens across the six OT bird divination texts, I will focus on the names of the nine directions and 10 divisions of daytime. Apart from P.t. 1048 and P.c. 3896, whose fragmentariness deprives them of the greater part of their descriptions, the other four texts share the names of the ten divisions of daytime as follows.

<i>nam ka phan phun</i>	(dawn)
<i>nam nangs</i>	(daybreak)
<i>nyi ma shar</i>	(sunrise)
<i>snga dro dang po</i>	(the first half of morning)
<i>snga dro tha ma</i>	(the second half of morning)
<i>nyi ma gung</i>	(noon)
<i>phyi dro dang po</i>	(the first half of afternoon)
<i>phyi dro tha ma</i>	(the second half of afternoon)
<i>nyi ma nub</i>	(sunset)
<i>nam sros</i>	(dusk)

nam ka phan phun, representing the first division of daytime, “dawn,” is not nominated in dictionaries; however, this denomination, as noted above, was diffused among the OT lexicon with its synonym *dgung ka phan phun*.³⁶ Similarly, all texts bear common names for the nine directions except P.c. 3896, which solely adopts *tshang pa*’ instead of *nam ka lding* to indicate the ninth direction or zenith.³⁷

With respect to the objects for offerings that are shown in the topmost vertical line, they are in total accord across the texts, apart from three objects in P.c. 3896.³⁸

³⁶ See fn. 12.

³⁷ In *Kākajiriti*, a bird divination text recorded in the Tibetan *Tanjur*, we find a similar direction *tshang pa*’i *gnas su*, which Laufer noted as “The place of Brahma,” i.e., “zenith” (Laufer 1914: p. 10 fn. 2).

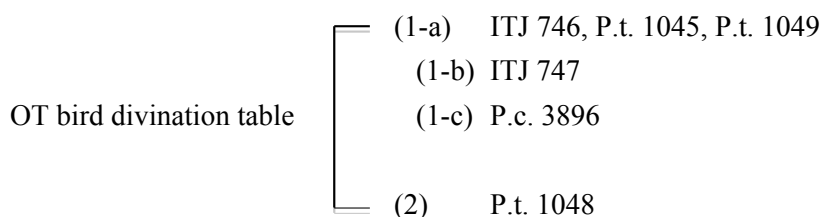
³⁸ (I-4): *chur ba dang ‘o mas gtor* ([If an inauspicious omen is foretold in the south] you should [recover] by offering curd and milk.)

(I-6): *yungs kar gis gtor* ([If an inauspicious omen is foretold in the west] you should [recover] by offering white mustard.)

(I-7): *chan ‘dan dang men tog gis gtord* ([If an inauspicious omen is foretold in the north-west] you should [recover] by offering porridge and flowers.)

In addition that, two of them, curd and porridge, never appear in the other texts, P.c.3896 has two brackets corresponding to northeast and zenith, remain lacuna.³⁹ If we adopt Laufer’s theory that *yungs kar* “white mustard” and *gugul* “incense” must be the objects introduced from India,⁴⁰ the offering of these objects might support the inference that the practice of bird divination was indigenous to India. However, it still does not reveal the philological genesis of the Tibetan bird divination texts.

Since three texts, ITJ 746, P.t. 1045 and P.t. 1049, have completely identical prognostics along with several orthographical distinctions, they can be considered to be of the same genealogy. On the other hand, approximately 15% of the omens in ITJ 747 and P.c. 3896 and most of the omens in P.t. 1048 are explicitly different from the others. Hence, we have hitherto two groups of the OT bird divination table, one of which has two variants.



[Second section]

In the second section of ITJ 747, six prognostics are recorded based on the behaviors of the crow. As is clearly noted in the initial sentence *lam ring por song na* “if [you] set out for a long journey,” it is a concise compilation of prognostics brought by the crow during a journey, and which functions as supplemental omens to the table. Significantly, such prognostics are often found in the Indian prognostic books. For example, among Laufer’s translation for *Kākaḥjiriti*, we can find 18 similar prognostics beginning with the sentence “We shall now discuss the import of the crow’s tones when one is travelling.”⁴¹ In addition, Chapter XCV of *Bṛihat Samhitā*, a summarized book for the Indian art of divination written around the middle of the sixth century, discusses the prognostics for *Cries of Crows*, six of which are related

³⁹ P.t. 1048 lacks the lines for the description of objects used for offerings.

⁴⁰ See fn. 11.

⁴¹ ‘gro ba’i dus su bya rog gi skad kyi mtshan nyid brjod par bya ste (203b-8, in Peking edition).

to omens while traveling.⁴² These correspondences probably support the possibility that the practice of Tibetan bird divination originated in India.

1.3. Genesis of the OT bird divination texts

As for the genesis of the OT bird divination text, Laufer rightfully noted “(P.t. 1045 is) by no means a translation from Sanskrit, but an adaptation based on some Sanskrit work or works of the type of *K(ākajirīti)*” because P.t. 1045 and *Kākajirīti* have several principal similarities as well as far-reaching dissimilarities.⁴³ For example, P.t. 1045 and *Kākajirīti* have similar methods of drawing omens based on a combination of orientation and time division, on which one hears the sounds of the crow, as well as including descriptions of omens during a journey. Nevertheless, there are still distinct differences between them. In *Kākajirīti*, a day is divided into five divisions, and only a single object for offering—flesh of a frog—is presented. Moreover, to my knowledge, there is no Sanskrit bird divination text that is arranged in a tabular format. A suggestive circumstance was established by previous studies which revealed that various kinds of formulae were defined during the Old Tibetan Empire period corresponding to their genres of contents, such as letters or contracts.⁴⁴ From this, it seems reasonable to think that the convenient tabular format of crow’s omens also originated in Tibet. Note that each prognostic presumably ascribed its origin to Tibetan folk culture as is revealed by several omens in the table, which are apparently indigenous to Tibet, such as “slay a yak,” “have heavy snowfalls” and “demons (*’dre* and *gdon*) will appear.” Subsequently, jumbled omens concerning the sounds of the crow, which had been well diffused in the Old Tibetan folklore, were first classified according to the orientations and time divisions seen in examples from Indian sources, and then tabulated. Thereupon, this table was compiled into a manuscript along with the 29 verses authorizing this method of divination, sometimes with supplementary omens for a journey.

⁴² See Ramakrishna Bhat 1987: 829–43 and Yano and Sugita 1995: 129–37. The chapter related to the *Cries of Crows* is classified as Chapter 94 in Yano and Sugita.

⁴³ According to my classification, *Kākajirīti* comprises seven constituents: (1) introduction, (2) 43 omens based on the orientation and division of time of when one hears the sounds of the crow, (3) 18 omens based on the behaviors of the crow during journeys, (4) five omens based on the appearance of the crow’s nest, (5) five omens based on the tone of the crow, (6) an object of offering in case one encounters an inauspicious omen and (7) a colophon.

⁴⁴ As for the OT formulae of letters and contracts, see Takeuchi 1990, 1995 and 2013.

2.1. Chinese bird divination texts

Among the Chinese Dunhuang manuscripts, four texts concerning bird divination exist, two of which, i.e., P.c. 3479 and P.c. 3988, record the table of omens announced by the sounds of the crow.⁴⁵ Since their tables are not only completely identical with each other but also coincide considerably with the OT table of omens, several scholars have attempted to tackle the comparative study of these Chinese and Tibetan texts. For instance, Morgan exemplified the antiquity of Chinese crow divination and the Chinese terms for the 10 divisions of time in the table, and consequently indicated that the OT table of omens was derived from the Chinese table.⁴⁶ Chen, who modified Wang and Chen's Chinese translation for P.t. 1045⁴⁷ by consulting the omens in P.c. 3479 and P.c. 3988, reinforced Morgan's theory and concluded that the Tibetan table of omens was possibly translated from the Chinese table. Nevertheless, even if they could sufficiently prove that the terms and practices of bird divination had been well-rooted in China, it still does not directly disclose the correlation between the Tibetan and Chinese table of omens. Moreover, they failed to substantiate the origin of a Chinese time denomination, 東方暑 *dongfangshu*, which is given to the first time division.

I approached the problem from another angle. My analysis of other sections of P.c. 3479 and P.c. 3988 led me to suggest that the Chinese table of omens is an adaptation, presumptively a translation, of Tibetan texts. To demonstrate my assumption, let us begin by understanding the contents of P.c. 3988.⁴⁸ This manuscript comprises seven sections: (1) the table of omens announced by the sound of the crow, (2) incantations for countering inauspiciousness based on the twelve zodiac orientations in which the fox emits a sound, (3) omens based on the twelve zodiac dates on which the crow emits a sound, (4) omens based on the orientations from which the crow flies and emits a sound, (5) omens based on the twelve zodiac time divisions in which the crow emits a sound, (6) omens based on the twelve

⁴⁵ The other two are P.c. 3888 and Dx. 6133, the latter of which belongs to the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg. For more information, see Kalinowski (ed.) 2003: 445–47 and Huang 2001: 163–65

We can access the digital images of these Pelliot manuscripts through websites such as IDP (<http://idp.bl.uk>) and the photo of Dx.6133 appears in *On the trail of texts along the Silk Road シルクロード文字を辿って*, a catalogue of the special exhibition held in Kyoto in 2009.

⁴⁶ Morgan 1987: 60–66.

⁴⁷ Wang and Chen 1988: 96–102.

⁴⁸ The texts of P.c. 3988 are presented in Morgan 1987: 69–76 with French translations and Chen 2007: 359–61. However, my transliteration and classification of P.c. 3988 is based on my own reading.

zodiac orientations in which the crow emits a sound and (7) a brief explanation of the method of bird divination. These descriptions reminded me of a series of Chinese divination texts titled 百恠圖 *Baiguaitu*, namely P.c. 3106 and Haneda 44 (H. 44).⁴⁹ *Baiguaitu* records the omens announced by several strange phenomena and animal behaviors categorized by the twelve zodiac (十二支) dates or the dates of the ten celestial stems (十干), along with instructions for the appropriate incantations and talismans for countering inauspicious omens. It is noteworthy that *Baiguaitu* and P.c. 3988 share certain similarities in their constituents. In the List 2 shown below, I present a part of descriptions of the abovementioned section (2) in P.c. 3988, comparing them with those of H. 44.

List 2: Comparative table of the contents of P.c. 3988 and H. 44

Contents	P.c. 3988 ll.1–3	H. 44 ll.35–37
Title	占狐鳴坐地	占狐鳴恠第廿九
Details of the inauspiciousness	鳴卯地 不出三十日東家長子死	卯日鳴 北家有死亡官事婦女口舌 南家有死亡不出七日 西家男子死不出三十日
Appropriate precautions	錢十斤玄五尺杵頭卯地吉	用桃木長七寸六枚狗肉二斤 努箭一枚竈中着埋於酉地吉 又作不免刑向之吉

Both texts begin with the title “divining from the sounds of the fox (占狐鳴)”.⁵⁰ The subsequent sentence in P.c. 3988, “[If the fox] emits a sound in the hare direction (鳴卯地)” reveals that the following omens are categorized by the twelve zodiac orientations, whereas in H. 44, the twelve zodiac dates are in question, “[If the fox] emits a sound on the hare date (卯日鳴)”. After enumerating the inauspicious omens such as “[you] should not go out for thirty days, [because] the eldest son will expire in the eastern house (不出三十日東家長子死)” in P.c. 3988 and “[since] a man in the western house will expire, [you should] not go out for

⁴⁹ See Iwamoto 2011. Haneda 44 belongs to the Tonkō Hikyū 敦煌秘笈 collection, which mainly consists of the Dunhuang manuscripts collected by Prof. Tōru Haneda. They are now preserved in Kyōu Syooku 杏雨書屋 of the Takeda Science Foundation. As for the detailed story of its derivation, see Rong 1997, Ochiai 2004, Takata 2004 and Iwamoto 2010.

⁵⁰ The character 狐 (solely) in P.c. 3988 must be a clerical error for 狐 (fox), as is shown in H. 44 l.35. Even though no reference to the bird or the crow appears, this part has been attributed to the divination of the crow’s cry (Morgan 1987: 61, Chen 2007: 360).

thirty days (西家男子死不出三十日)” in H. 44, appropriate precautions against inauspiciousness are presented. Thus, P.c. 3988 and *Baiguaitu* obviously share their constituents and writing formulae. Significantly, we can also find resemblances between the constituents of the other sections of P.c. 3988 and *Baiguaitu*. Therefore, P.c. 3988 may be defined as the similar to *Baiguaitu*.

If that is the case, was the table of omens in P.c. 3988 also derived from *Baiguaitu*? Unfortunately, no table format can be found in *Baiguaitu*, and it is of great significance that several descriptions in the table of P.c. 3988 deviate from *Baiguaitu*. First, P.c. 3988 includes both auspicious and inauspicious omens, while *Baiguaitu* records the latter exclusively to instruct in the methods to prevent inauspiciousness. Second, the omens in the table adopt isolated terms from *Baiguaitu*. For example, 東方暑 *dongfangshu*, corresponding to the first time division of “dawn” in the table is not found in both the other sections of P.c. 3988 and *Baiguaitu* and, what is more, in any other Chinese texts. On the contrary, 人定 *rending* and 夜半 *yeban* are not used in the table but are used in *Baiguaitu* and in section (5) of P.c. 3988 for the late-night time period. Third, typical inauspicious outcomes in *Baiguaitu*, such as “dispute (口舌)” and “suffering a sickness (病患)” are never mentioned in the table of P.c. 3988, while the other sections of P.c. 3988 include them. Hence, the two divination manuals, i.e., the table of omens and *Baiguaitu*, are considered to hinge upon inconsistent purposes and constituents.

2.2. Genesis of the Chinese bird divination table

When we compare the omens of P.c. 3988 with those in the Tibetan table of omens, we find a great deal of correspondence. Accordingly, they are certainly considered to be relevant. It is noteworthy that in the Tibetan tables, we can find commonplace omens of the Tibetan divination texts, such as “[you] will slay (/hunt) the game (*ri dags zhig sod*)”, “a sick person will be cured (*nad pa sos*)”, and “[you] will set out for a long journey (*lam ring por 'gro*)”, as well as elements that are indigenous to Tibet, such as “yak (*g.yag*)”, “heavy snowfall (*kha ba ched po*)”, and “snowstorm (*bu yug*)”. Therefore, these omens must have been well-rooted in Tibet. On the other hand, as mentioned above, the Chinese table rarely has omens specific to *Baiguaitu* and even to other Chinese divination texts, whereas it is inserted in a manuscript akin to *Baiguaitu*. Therefore, I assume that the Chinese table of omens announced by the sounds of the crow can be attributed to the Tibetan table.

A further important point is that the Chinese table of omens lacks instructions on the offering of objects. In other words, although P.c. 3988 was modeled after *Baiguaitu*, it excluded the preventions against inauspiciousness from its table of omens. Considering that *Baiguaitu* was redacted for the purpose of preparing talismans and performing rituals in order to prevail against inauspiciousness, I suppose that the discrepant method of prevention was intentionally renounced from the table. To put it briefly, the Chinese table of omens was written based on the Tibetan table, and inserted into a divination manuscript modeled after *Baiguaitu* due to their affinity for drawing various omens out of animal behaviors and sounds, while excluding discrepant objects of offering against *Baiguaitu*. Likewise, the reason why P.c. 3896, a Tibetan table of omens written in a Chinese manuscript relating to divination and rituals, lacks an introductory section and leaves two brackets for objects of offering lacuna might be because only the table of omens was needed.

3. Conclusion

As recorded in Sanskrit, Chinese, and other historical sources, divination associated with the sounds and behaviors of the crow has long been practiced throughout the world. In Tibet, the accumulated knowledge of this archaic religious practice, which probably originated in India, was compiled into a convenient table format and developed into bird divination manuscripts with the addition of the formularized verse. These were then incorporated into Chinese divination manuscripts that were modeled after *Baiguaitu*, excluding the verse and the inconsistent methods of preventing inauspiciousness.

Turning our attention to the modern folk culture of Tibet, crow augury and its manuals are still an influence. For instance, we can find such mentions in an essay written by Lama Chime Radha Rinpoche⁵¹ or in a compilation of miscellaneous Tibetan beliefs and superstitions by Norbu Chophel.⁵² However, I would like to emphasize that all of these modern manuals have consistently borrowed from

⁵¹ Loewe & Blacker 1981: 21–24.

⁵² Norbu Chophel 1983: 65–71. Furthermore, an identical bird divination text is found among the divination manuals titled *klong rdol bla ma rin po che'i gsung 'bum las phyung ba'i ltas sna tshogs brtag thabs bzhugs so* or *klong rdol bla ma rin po che'i gsung 'bum las phyung ba rmi lam dang 'chi ltas 'ja' tshon sgra byung ba'i ltas la brtag pa byed tshul skyes pa dang bud med kyi mi dpyad brtag pa bya rog skad ba bya tshul nram par gsal ba'i me long bcas bzhugs so*.

Kākajiriti,⁵³ instead of from the convenient table of omens in the Dunhuang manuscripts. In other words, due to the outward Buddhist garb in which it is clothed, the practice of bird divination has been able to survive in modern folk culture.

Abbreviation

Das

Das, C., *A Tibetan-English dictionary*. Calcutta. 1902; repr. 1972; 1977, compact edition, Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co.

Jäschke

Jäschke, H. A., *A Tibetan-English dictionary*. London. 1881.

TLTD III

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⁵³ Laufer dated *Kākajiriti* to the ninth century and considered it to be a contemporary of P.t. 1045 because it bears the name of Dānaśīla as the translator (Laufer 1914: 19–20, 30). However, I am inclined to support Yamaguchi's theory that this Dānaśīla should be dated to the 11th century since *Kākajiriti* reveals its place of translation as *yul dbus kyi yar glung thang po che'i gtsug lag khang*. According to Yamaguchi's theory, Dānaśīla in the ninth century usually did not indicate the translating place, and [*Sol nag*] *thang po che* was an important temple during the *phyi dar* period (Yamaguchi 1985: p. 540 and Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 309, 320). If we adopt Ochi's assertion that there is no equivocal evidence of the existence of Dānaśīla in the 11th century, the translator of *Kākajiriti* is dated as in the 13th century (Ochi 1994: 27). As a result, it is safe to say that the Dunhuang Tibetan bird divination texts should predate the Tibetan *Kākajiriti*.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	gtor ma'i cho ga la //	shar phyogs na ngan zer na 'o ma gtor //	shar lho na ngan zer na yungs kar gtor //	lho na ngan zer na chu gtor //	lho nub na ngan zer na yungs kar gtor //	nub na ngan zer na sha gtor //	mub bayng na ngan zer na men tog gtor //	byang na ngan zer na gu kul gtor //	byang shar na ngan zer na 'bras gtor //	nam ka kding zhing ngan zer na khre gtor //
II	\$ //	shar /	lho shar /	lho /	lho nub /	nub /	mub byang /	byang /	byang shar /	nam ka kding /
III	nam ka phan phun	lha bisun 'ong bar ston //	lam ring por 'gro dgos par ston /	spy'an 'dren 'ong bar ston /	rkun po zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	song yang don myed par ston /	zhal lee rgoi ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	don yod par ston /	gyag sod par ston /	dgra' zhi'g gy'o bar ston /
IV	nam nangs	myi' zhi'g shi bar ston /	myi' zhi'g smra bar ston /	rta zhi'g myed par ston /	ri dags zhi'g sod par ston /	zhang lon 'ong bar ston /	pho ny'a zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	la gor 'ong na rung bar ston /	phrin byang zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	brul ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /
V	nyi ma shar	rings pa zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	rgyal po'i bka' 'ong bar ston /	zhang lon gi mehid 'ong bar ston /	dgra' bla dang dpal 'ong bar ston /	gan zan zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	'phags par dga' ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	rkun po zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	myi' rgoi cig 'ong bar ston /	pho phyogs gi gam 'ong bar ston /
VI	snga dro dang po /	'dod pa phun gsum tshogs par ston /	dgra' zhi'g gy'o bar ston /	gnyen lha skyes po la tshie ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	rlung zhi'g dang bar ston /	kha char 'ong bar ston /	'jigs pa zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	thab mo ched po zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	nad pa 'chi bar ston /	sngon ma byung ba'i bram ze zhi'g 'ong bar ston /
VII	snga dro tha ma	char pa bab par ston /	ri dags zhi'g sod par ston /	bud myed gi phyir thab mo zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	gnyen zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	rgyal po 'khor na 'tsher ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	yul ngan zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	mye ngan zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	myi' bags byed dgos par ston /	rgang pa la phyag byed pa zhi'g 'ong bar ston /
VIII	nyi ma gung /	bdag gi nor la gyod ka 'ong bar ston /	su la yang gam myi bya bar ston /	rlung dang char pa 'ong bar ston /	rkun po dang bu yug 'ong bar ston /	bud myed ky'i phyir bde ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	bsun ba'i gnyen 'ong bar ston /	skye bo kun la gam zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	bud myed dkar mo zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	myi' dga' ba'i gam zhi'g 'ong bar ston /
IX	phyi dro dang po /	rgyal po 'jigs par ston /	shi ba'i gam thos par ston /	sngangs pa zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	kha bu ched po 'bab par ston /	gyar grigs zhi'g khyer te 'ong bar ston /	grog ched po dang 'phrad par ston /	bdag ma tshor bar byed par ston /	bdag gi dgra' shi ste bdag dga' bar ston /	br'a' bca'i sder myed par ston /
X	phyi dro tha ma /	'jigs pa zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	nad pa sos par ston /	lam ring por 'gro dgos par ston /	shar phyogs nas myi' zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	myi' zhi'g bud myed khrid te 'ong bar ston /	za ba myed par ston /	[spags] par dga' bar ston /	thams cad dga' ba zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	thams cad dga' ba'i zan chang
XI	nyi ma nub /	dre gdon 'ong bar ston /	nor dang grog 'ong bar ston /	dmyig ma chung la chu la bag bya bar ston /	khyim tshol zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	phu nu pho dang bu tsha zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	dga' ba'i gam 'ong bar ston /	gam zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	phu nu dang phrad bar ston /	dga' ba thos par ston /
XII	nam sros /	bu string dmag pa 'ong bar ston /	shar phyogs nas myi' zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	'tsham zhi'g dmyigs par ston /	lho phyogs nas myi' zhi'g 'ong bar ston /	bdag la zhang lon sko ba 'ong /	bdag stag thob par ston /	char pa 'ong bar ston /	phyis chad pa 'ong bar ston /	bdag stag thob par ston /

List 3: Transliteration of Table of omens in ITJ 747