

Further Remarks on the *yogācāra bhikṣu*

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The term *yogācāra* is one which occurs with some regularity in Buddhist texts. It appears as a designation of a monk (rarely, of a nun) or other practitioner, and appears to refer to a specialization or particular interest in meditation or other practices of mental cultivation. In a recent paper (Silk Forthcoming) I set myself the task of exploring the precise meaning of the term, if indeed it has a precise meaning, primarily in the literature of early Buddhism, and in Mahāyāna scriptures. I concluded that the term, in point of fact, lacks a precise meaning, and that it seems to refer generally to one we might designate a “practitioner,” one who takes part in Buddhist practice, understood to refer primarily but not exclusively to meditative cultivation. Chinese translations most usually render the term with an expression we might morph into “zazen-bhikṣu,” indicating a monk who practices seated meditation, but they just as frequently translate it with terms indicating simply “practitioner.” The term often occurs together with *yogin*, with which it seems to be virtually synonymous. There is no evidence so far which could lead us to suggest sectarian limits on the use of the term, which can be quoted from literature of at least the Mahāsāṃghika and Sarvāstivāda (and perhaps Sautrāntika) sects and schools. Likewise, the term is not restricted to one particular genre of literature, appearing in Vinaya, Abhidharma, and Mahāyāna sūtra and śāstra texts.

Despite these conclusions, there remain several observations and some materials which could not be taken into account in my earlier study. Here I would like to present those materials, in the first place as a supplement to my earlier paper, but also for their intrinsic interest. I will deal here with four topics: 1) The Pāli term *yogāvacara*, 2) The term *yogācārabhūmi*, 3) Notes on Chinese translations, and 4) The troublesome term 離拒.

1. The Pāli term *yogāvacara*

In late Pāli, and apparently only in late Pāli, we find a term which appears to be functionally equivalent or parallel to the Sanskrit *yogācāra*, namely *yogāvacara*.¹ However, despite the apparent similarity, there does not seem to be any direct phonological relation between them.² The form *yogāvacara* makes fine sense in Pāli, in which it should have the meaning “one whose sphere, whose resort, is yoga,” whatever *yoga* might mean here.³ Nevertheless, the similar usages of the two terms suggest that an examination of

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¹ Miyamoto 1932: 774 already noticed the terms *yogāvacara* and *yogācāra* together, and speculated about their relation, but not, I think, successfully. On the Pāli miswriting of *yogācariya* for *yoggācariya*, see Silk Forthcoming, note 60.

² In a letter of 8 January, 1997, Prof. Oskar von Hinüber kindly informs that there is no way of connecting *yogācāra* and *yogāvacara* phonetically.

³ See CPD s.v. *acara*, and the comments of Rhys Davids quoted below.

the Pāli term *yogāvacara* might shed light on the meaning of the Sanskrit *yogācāra*.

Perhaps the most important occurrences of the term in Pāli, and certainly the most numerous, are found in the *Milindapañha*. As an example,⁴ when Milinda asks about the characteristic marks (*lakkhana*) of concentrated mental application (*manasikāra*), Nāgasena answers with an analogy to a reaper of barley, saying that as the reaper of barley grabs the sheaves and cuts them off with a sickle, “just so the *yogāvacara* grasps the mind with concentrated mental application and cuts off the defilements with wisdom.” In another passage, the *yogāvacara*’s preparation in restraint (*sīla*, the basis of all good *dhammas*) and the cultivation of the five faculties (*indriya*) is compared to the necessary preparation of earth prior to planting, building, and so on.⁵ The *yogāvacara* removes defilements from thought through faith (*saddhā*) as people remove mud and so on from water with a “water-cleansing gem,”⁶ he defeats an army of defilements with arrows of the five faculties,⁷ and cures the disease of defilements as a physician with the medicines of the five faculties.⁸ In order to attain any of a host of different levels of attainment, the *yogāvacara* performs yoga (*yogaṃ karoti*).⁹

Other passages further illustrate the term’s use:¹⁰ “Just so, great king, a *yogin*, *yogāvacara*, spreading out his hide sitting mat any place at all, whether it be on a grass covering, on a leaf covering, on a wooden bed, or on the bare ground, should lie down anywhere at all, but should not rest there long.” And:¹¹ “Just so, great king, a *yogin*, *yogāvacara*, controlling and disciplining his mind, day and night constantly and continuously with attention and correct concentrated mental application must control his mind.”

The final portions of the *Milindapañha* are devoted almost entirely to the *yogāvacara*, who is indeed there the ideal monk, plain and simple. The passages emphasize mental discipline, solitude and correct behavior – generic Buddhist monastic ideals. Moreover, in virtually all of the numerous passages,¹² *yogāvacara* is juxtaposed with *yogin*, obviously in apposition. This usage finds its exact parallel in many Sanskrit occurrences of the term *yogācāra*. The *yogāvacara* is also called a *brahmacārin*,¹³ to be interpreted simply

⁴ Trenckner 1880: 32.28-33.8. The crucial sentence reads: *evam eva kho mahārāja yogāvacaro manasikārena mānasam gahetvā paññāya kilese chindati*.

⁵ Trenckner 1880: 33.20-34.15. The crucial expression is *yogāvacaro sīlam nissāya sīle patiṭṭhāya pañc’ indriyāni bhāveti*.

⁶ Trenckner 1880: 35.3-25. See *Atthasālinī* (Müller 1897) 119.14-15, in note 30 below.

⁷ Trenckner 1880: 44.12.

⁸ Trenckner 1880: 43.25-26.

⁹ Trenckner 1880: 35.26-30, 36.9-13. At 38.2-4 the *yogāvacara* removes unhelpful (*ahita*) dhammas and adopts helpful ones. At 39.18 he is compared to a man who brings light into a room, dispelling the darkness of ignorance.

¹⁰ Trenckner 1880: 366.1-4: *evam eva kho mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena tiṇasanthāre pi paññasanthāre pi kaṭṭhamañcake pi chamāya pi yattha katthaci cammakhaṇḍam pattharivā yattha katthaci sayitabbam na sayanabahulena bhavitabbam*. I follow CPD s.v. in rendering *kaṭṭhamañcaka* as “wooden bed,” rather than Horner’s (1964: 231) “bed of sticks.”

¹¹ Trenckner 1880: 378.24-26: *evam eva kho mahārāja yoginā yogāvacarena cittam niyāmayamānena rattindivam satatam samitam appamattena yoniso manasikārena cittam niyāmetabbam*.

¹² I counted 187 instances of the term between Trenckner 1880: 366-419.

as “practitioner.” That he is not, however, to be understood only as a specialist devoted exclusively to meditation is clear from numerous references to his attendance at the begging rounds, as well as the following:¹⁴ “while the *yogin*, the *yogāvacara*, is making his robes, or doing construction, or performing all kinds of his practices and duties, or teaching or asking for instruction, he should not forsake correct mental reflection.” The *yogāvacara* here is clearly expected to participate in the normal life of the monastery, not absenting himself due to any full-time devotion to meditation. It is thus probable that at least for the authors of the *Milindapañha*, *yogāvacara* is a rather generic term which might be applied generally to a Buddhist monk. This impression is reinforced by the renderings of the text’s Chinese translators.

The *Milindapañha* has two, closely related although partial, versions in Chinese. These translations are interesting for us for their unusual renderings of *yogāvacara*. The term is variously understood as “wise man,” “follower of the way,” “seeker of the way” and, perhaps most interestingly, often simply as “disciple of the Buddha.”¹⁵ There is no indication that the translators (if the term in fact appeared in the text[s] from which they worked) understood *yogāvacara* to be a concept in any way calling for special attention as a technical term, a fact which appears to agree with the lack of special emphasis given the term in other sources.

I am not certain, then, whether the observations of T. W. Rhys Davids with regard to the *Milindapañha* are entirely justified. He wrote:¹⁶

Yogāvacaro; one of the technical terms in constant use by our author, but not found in the Pāli Piṭakas.... Literally it is ‘he whose sphere, whose constant resort is Yoga.’ Now yoga is ‘diligence, devotion, mental concentration;’ and there is nothing to show that our author is using the word as an epithet of Arhantship. It seems to me, therefore, that the whole compound merely means one of those ‘religious,’ in the technical sense, who were also religious in the higher, more usual sense. It would thus be analogous to the phrase *saṃgāmāvacāro*, ‘at home in war,’ used of a war elephant in the *Saṃgāmāvacāra Jātaka*

¹³ Trenckner 1880: 373.7, 10; 380.19, 24, where we find *sabrahmacārin*, indicating that the *yogāvacara* is also one of them.

¹⁴ Trenckner 1880: 367.25-28. *yoginā yogāvacarena cīvarakammaṃ karontena pi navakammaṃ karontena pi vattapaṭivattam karontena pi uddisantena pi uddisāpentena pi yoniso manasikāro na vijahitabbo*. Compare Horner 1964: 234, but see CPD s.v. *uddisati* 4a and *uddisāpeti* 1.

¹⁵ Corresponding to Trenckner 1880: 32.28-33.8 we have T. 1670 (A) (XXXII) 697a22, in which the equivalent is 點慧之人 [“wise man”], while T. 1670 (B) (XXXII) 707b19 has 智慧之人. See Demiéville 1925: 104. The exact sense of the term is not so clear at Trenckner 1880: 43.10, where the *yogāvacara* is said to extinguish the defilements of the five senses as people put out a fire. Here the Chinese translation T. 1670 (B) (XXXII) 709b12 has 道人 [literally “path-person”]. (The whole passage is missing in T. 1670 [A].) At Trenckner 1880: 34.13, Chinese has (A) 697c11, (B) 708a20 佛弟子, “disciple of the Buddha.” Again at Trenckner 1880: 35.3-25, we find Chinese (A) 697b6, (B) 707c3, and again at Trenckner 1880: 35.26-30, 36.9-13, Chinese (A) 697b9-10, (B) 707c6, “佛諸弟子, “disciples of the Buddha.” At Trenckner 1880: 44.12, Chinese has (B) 709b26 智人, “wise person.” At Trenckner 1880: 43.25-26, Chinese has (B) 709b21 求道人 “one who seeks the Way.” Demiéville 1925: 119, note 2, remarks that the translation 道人 corroborates Rhys Davids’s interpretation of *yogāvacara* as an ascetic (see below), as opposed to one opinion of La Vallée Poussin, that he is a wonder-worker, but the case is perhaps not so simple.

¹⁶ Rhys Davids 1890: i.68, note 1.

He later added the following:¹⁷ “[The author of the *Milinda*] means the Buddhist Bhikshu belonging to that class among the Bhikshus (by no means the majority) who had devoted themselves to a life of systematic effort according to the Buddhist scheme of self-training.” Rhys Davids seems to be suggesting here that *yogāvacara* refers to a full-time vocation or career rather than being used as a general term, or as a designation of a role a monk might be playing at some point in time. It is my impression, however, that the *yogāvacara* is no more “devoted ... to a life of systematic effort” than any Buddhist monk is, ideally, expected to be. The relation between this ideal and reality is, of course, a different question altogether.

The only (albeit late and not particularly interesting) canonical usage in Pāli seems to occur in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*.¹⁸ But the term does appear in other post-canonical Pāli literature,¹⁹ frequently in quite interesting passages. The *Jātaka* (which, with the exception of the verses, is of course almost entirely post-canonical) relates that “a gentle son resident in Śrāvasti, hearing the teacher’s preaching of the Dharma, committed himself to the community of the [three] jewels²⁰ and renounced the world. Being one who practices, a *yogāvacara*, one who has not interrupted his exercise, one day going to Śrāvasti for alms he saw a woman, adorned and dressed up, and on account of her beauty relaxed [his control over] his senses and looked at her.”²¹ In *Jātaka* 96, “a *yogāvacara* having correct insight (or: a *yogāvacara* engaged in *vipassanā*?) cultivating mindfulness of the body is like someone carrying in his hand a vessel full to the brim with oil.”²² The

¹⁷ Rhys Davids 1894: ii.279, note 2.

¹⁸ Taylor 1907: ii.26.36-27.9: *yogāvacaro pañc’ indriyāni nekkhamme patiṭṭhāpeti, yogāvacarassa pañc’ indriyāni nekkhamme patiṭṭhāpeti; yogāvacaro pañc’ indriyāni abyāpāde patiṭṭhāpeti, yogāvacarassa pañc’ indriyāni abyāpāde patiṭṭhāpeti; yogāvacaro pañc’ indriyāni ālokasaññāya patiṭṭhāpeti, yogāvacarassa pañc’ indriyāni ālokasaññāya patiṭṭhāpeti; yogāvacaro pañc’ indriyāni avikkhepe patiṭṭhāpeti, yogāvacarassa pañc’ indriyāni avikkhepe patiṭṭhāpeti; ...pe... yogāvacaro pañc’ indriyāni arahattamagge patiṭṭhāpeti, yogāvacarassa pañc’ indriyāni arahattamagge patiṭṭhāpeti*. Translation in Ñāṇamoli 1982: 230.

¹⁹ We may just note that in his Sanskrit and subsequent English translations of the **Satyasiddhiśāstra*, Sastri has used the term *yogāvacara*. (The Sanskrit is in Sastri 1975: 484.13, and the English in Sastri 1978: 457.) However, in the Chinese text from which Sastri worked we have only 行者 (T. 1646 [XXXII] 360a20). It is virtually impossible to conclusively suggest what this might represent, but even *yogācāra* is in any case not necessarily likely, and *yogāvacara* almost certainly impossible if the text was originally written in Sanskrit.

²⁰ Following Gregory Schopen’s kind suggestion, I understand *ratanasāsana* as a compound with a truncated initial member, a *pūrvapadalopa*. Madhav Deshpande kindly pointed me toward Patañjali’s brief discussion of the term (Kielhorn 1985: 6.24-25), where among the examples given is *bhāmā* for *satyabhāmā*. Harunaga Isaacson informs me that an explicit example occurs in Ratnākaraśānti’s commentary *Guṇavatī* on the *Mahāmāyātāntra* (Samdhong Rinpoche and Vrajavallabha Dwivedi (eds): *Mahāmāyātāntram with Guṇavatī by Ratnākaraśānti* [sic]. Rare Buddhist Text Series 10 [Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1992]: 3.9-10): *ataś ca sākalyena vajraḍākinīparamaguhyam nāmedam tantram, pūrvapadalopāt tu paramaguhyam nāma, satyabhāmā bhāmeti yathā*. As Deshpande and Ashok Aklujkar point out, however, it is also possible that *ratanasāsana* is a case of inversion for *sāsanaratana*, in which case the compound should be understood to mean something like ‘the best of teachings.’ For this see Patañjali ad P. II.1.72.

²¹ Fausbøll 1877: i.302,29-303,4: *eko kira sāvatthivāsikulaputto satthu dhammadesanam sutvā ratanasāsane uram datvā pabbajitvā paṭipannako yogāvacaro avissatṭhakammaṭṭhāno hutvā ekadivasam sāvatthiyam piṇḍāya caramāno ekaṃ alamkatapaṭiyattam itthim disvā subhavasena indriyāni bhinditvā olokesi*.

sense, which is the point of this whole Jātaka, is that one must direct all one's attention to the task, since one is being followed by swordsmen who threaten to cut off one's head should even a drop of the oil spill.

In the somewhat later works of Buddhaghosa and other commentators we also find the term. *Yogāvacara* appears several times in the *Visuddhimagga*. Once a hunter wants to catch a monkey in the forest: the mind is like the monkey (an old image), and the *yogāvacara* like the hunter. It is important to note that in the next expression, *yogāvacara* is replaced by *yogin*, with which it is perhaps considered to be fully equivalent.²³ In another passage virtually the same structure is found, with the *yogāvacara* compared to the alms beggar; here too *yogāvacara* is treated as equivalent to *yogin*.²⁴ In a further passage we find an equivalent terminology we encounter also in the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* and *Śrāvakabhūmi, ādikammiko yogāvacaro*.²⁵ The passage reads:²⁶

It is not possible for a beginner *yogāvacara* to accomplish transformation by supernormal power unless he has previously completed his development by controlling his mind in these fourteen ways [through the *kaṣiṇa* meditations].

One set of passages from the *Visuddhimagga* seems to use *yogāvacara* in the sense merely of “spiritual seeker,” without any specific and necessary reference to meditative cultivation.²⁷ The commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, the *Atthasālinī*,²⁸ also refers to the term *ādikammiko yogāvacara*, “beginner *yogāvacara*.” Another passage has “gentle sons [who are] *yogāvacaras*,” *yogāvacarakulaputtā*, compared to *paccantavāsino amaccā*, “frontier-dwelling ministers,” who defeat bandits (which are twelve kinds of bad mental states, *akusalacittāni*).²⁹ We also find:³⁰ “With pure mind the gentle son who is a *yogāvacaro*

²² Fausbøll 1877: i.394,36: *telapattahatthapuriso viya kāyagatāsatibhāvako vipassakayogāvacaro*. A bit later in the same story (i.400,10-11), in the context of controlling one's own mind, the expression *paṇḍito yogāvacaro* is used (but the sentence as a whole is not quite clear to me.)

²³ *Visuddhimagga* (Warren and Kosambi 1950) VIII.69. The image of the mind like a monkey is canonical. See for example SN ii.95,5-9. The identical passage is found in the *Sammohavinodanī* (Dhammaratana 1961: 231.15 = PTS p. 228; translated in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 287). In fact, this whole section is identical in the two texts. See also the next note. Note also the same monkey image at Dhammaratana 1961: 262.12 = PTS p. 259; translated in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 320, but without the subsequent mention of *yogin*.

²⁴ *Visuddhimagga* (Warren and Kosambi 1950) VIII.71. Again the identical passage is found in the *Sammohavinodanī* (Dhammaratana 1961: 232.6 = PTS p. 229; translated in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 287).

²⁵ For references to the Sanskrit, see Silk Forthcoming, notes 87 and 128.

²⁶ *Visuddhimagga* (Warren and Kosambi 1950) XII.8. *imehi pana cuddasahi ākārehi cittaṃ aparidamēvā pubbe abhāvītabhāvāno ādikammiko yogāvacaro iddhivikubbanam sampādessatī ti n'etaṃ thānam vijjati*. The translation is that of Ñāṇamoli 1956: 411, somewhat modified.

²⁷ *Visuddhimagga* (Warren and Kosambi 1950) XXI.103-108. Other passages which employ the term include XX.123 and XXIII.46.

²⁸ *Atthasālinī* (Müller 1897) 187.15.

²⁹ *Atthasālinī* (Müller 1897) 246.3. In the *Sammohavinodanī* (Dhammaratana 1961: 116.20 = PTS p. 115; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 137) through Right View “by destroying the darkness of ignorance and slaying the robbers which are the defilements, the *yogāvacara* reaches nibbāna in safety.” In this paragraph too the text appears to use *yogin* and *yogāvacara* synonymously.

³⁰ *Atthasālinī* (Müller 1897) 119.14-16: *pasannena cittena yogāvacaro kulaputto dānaṃ deti silaṃ samādiyati uposathakammaṃ karoti bhāvanam ārabhati*. Cp. *Milindapañha* (Trenckner 1880: 35.3-25), in

gives a gift, undertakes the [five layman's?] precepts, carries out the observances of the layman on the day of the fortnightly meeting, and engages in [mental] cultivation.” Here it is fairly clear that the *yogāvacara* is imagined to be someone other than a fully ordained monk. In the *Paramatthajotikā* commentary to the *Khuddakapāṭha*, *yogāvacara* refers to one who mentally contemplates various mental objects.³¹ In other texts such as the *Sammohavinodanī* explicit mention is made of the standard objects of meditation, the *kammaṭṭhāna*.³² The same text also contains several explicit references to meditative cultivation.³³ In this regard, in Buddhaghosa's Vinaya commentary *Samantapāsādikā* we find the following:³⁴

Again, in a wilderness devoid of villages it is easy for a *yogāvacara* having mastered the *kammaṭṭhānas* and produced the fourth *jhāna* of *ānāpana* meditation, taking that very [state] as his base, and having understood the *saṅkhāras*, to attain the highest fruit, arhat-hood. Therefore the Blessed One discussing dwellings similar to that talked about dwelling in the wilderness and so on.

Here the Chinese translation has rendered *yogāvacara* with 禪比丘,³⁵ “*dhyāna monk.” There is, then, some evidence that the Chinese translators here understood *yogāvacara* as other translators have *yogācāra*, namely as signifying a meditator (see section 3, below).

I have found the term *yogāvacarabhikkhu* (or, with a Cambodian variant, *yogāvacaro bhikkhu*) only once in Pāli, in the *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*.³⁶ There glossing *sammāsam-*

note 6 above. See also 120.27-30: *yathā hi jīṇṇagharakaṃ āgantukena thūṇūpatthambhena tiṭṭhati evam eva yogāvacaro viriyūpatthambhena upatthambhito hutvā sabbakusaladhammehi na hāyati na parihāyati*. “As an old, broken-down house stands with the support of temporary props, just so the *yogāvacara* being propped up with the prop of energy (*virīya*) does not decay or waste away with regard to all good qualities.”

³¹ *Paramatthajotikā* I (Smith 1915): 74.14-75.2.

³² See Dhammaratana 1961: 118.1 = PTS p. 116; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 138.

³³ See Dhammaratana 1961: 223.10-11 = PTS p. 220; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 278, which says: *yogāvacarassa yogānubhāvo yogasamatthā ca ...* See too Dhammaratana 1961: 119.9 = PTS p. 118; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 141, Dhammaratana 1961: 237.21 = PTS p. 234; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 293, and Dhammaratana 1961: 263.22-264.12 = PTS p. 261-62; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1987: 322

³⁴ Takakusu and Nagai 1927: ii.406,11-16: *agāmake pana araṇṇe sukaraṃ yogāvacarena idaṃ kammaṭṭhānaṃ pariggahetvā ānāpaṇacatutthajjhānaṃ nibbattetvā tad eva ca pādakaṃ katvā saṅkhāre sammasitvā aggaphalaṃ arahattaṃ sampāpunituṃ tasmāssa anurūpaṃ senāsanāṃ dassento bhagavā araṇṇagato vā ti-ādīm āha*. The corresponding Chinese text is T. 1462 (XXIV) 745c12-15: 若禪比丘取此定已。阿那波那第四禪定作已。而取爲地。復觀苦空無我。觀已。得阿羅漢果。是故佛爲諸禪人現阿蘭若住處。Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 295-6 translate: “When a *yogāvacara* monk has taken up this meditation and when he has attained the Fourth trance in *Ānāpana*, then he takes it as his basic ground. Further, he contemplates suffering, emptiness and non-self, and having contemplated them he attains the fruit of Arhatship. Therefore, the Buddha has directed meditators to the wilderness-dwelling state.”

³⁵ At 747c18 we find 坐禪比丘 used in a context of the meditative practice of counting the breath. Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 305 render the Chinese with *yogāvacara*, but actually there is no equivalent in the corresponding Pāli text (Takakusu and Nagai 1927: ii.419,19-20).

³⁶ Norman 1911: iii.214,3-5 (ad *Dhammapada* XIV.5 = 186-87): *sammāsambuddhasāvako ti sammāsambuddhena desitassa dhammassa savaṇena* [with v.l.] *jāto yogāvacarabhikkhu*. See the translation in Carter and Palihawadana 1987: 247.

In the same commentary (Norman 1909: ii.12,20, ad *Dhammapada* 60 = V.1; trans. in Carter and Palihawadana 1987: 146), the *yogāvacara* is one who is well aware of the passing of time at night, along

buddhasāvako of *Dhammapada* 187 the commentary says: “A [true] disciple of the Completely Awakened One’ means a *yogāvacara* monk born out of hearing the Teaching taught by the Completely Awakened One.” The term *pubbayogāvacara* appears in the *Sammohavinodanī*, and the English translator at least has understood it to mean “one who was formerly a meditator.”³⁷ The same text also contains a striking metaphor for the *yogāvacara*’s course of practice:³⁸

Just as the builder of cities who wants to mark out the city first cleans up the site of the city, and after that later on he marks out the city by dividing it up into the divisions of streets, crossroads, squares, etc., so indeed the *yogāvacara* at the beginning cleans up virtuous conduct; after that, later on he realises tranquility, insight, path, fruition and nibbāna.

The above appear to be the main references to the term in traditional Pāli, so far as I have been able to discover them.³⁹ There is one further source we should mention, however.

In modern Khmer Buddhism, in which it is of frequent occurrence, the term *yogāvacara* appears to have a sense rather different from that of the same word in classical Pāli sources. This subject has been studied by François Bizot who, after briefly mentioning the classical sense, says:⁴⁰

But in the texts of the peninsula [of Southeast Asia], the frequency of its use confers upon it a unique sense. Esoterically, it designates the ‘spirit’ of the mendicant, that is *Cittakumārā* and *Cittakumārī* who personify the ‘spirit’ (*citta*) and the ‘mental factors’ (*cetasika*) in quest of the crystal globe ... [ellipses in original]. In fact, the *yogāvacara* represents a ‘psychic construction’ transmigrating between two existences: the present, mortal and already worn out, if not exhausted (the rite of passage solicits the death of the candidate), and the future, hoped to be immortal.

with one who preaches the Dhamma, one who listens to it, and those afflicted with various forms of pain. The point is that none of them sleeps at night, and thus they do not let the hours merely slip away.

³⁷ *Sammohavinodanī*, Dhammaratana 1961: 39126-392.1, and 392.23 = PTS p. 389-90; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1991: 129-130. The first passage reads: *pubbayogo nāma pubbayogāvacaratā atītabhave haraṇapaccāharaṇanayena pariggahitakammaṭṭhānatā pubbayogāvacarassa hi paṭisambhidā visadā honti*. The translator has rendered: “‘Previous work’ is formerly practised meditation, having laid hold of the meditation subject in a past existence by the method of ‘carrying it forth and carrying it back’; for the Discriminations become manifest in one who was formerly a meditator.”

³⁸ Dhammaratana 1961: 334.19-22 = PTS p. 331; trans. in Ñāṇamoli 1991: 54: *yathā hi nagaravaḍḍhakī nagaram māpetukāmo paṭhamam nagaraṭṭhānam sodheti tato aparabhāge vithicatukkasiṅghāṭakādi-paricchedena vibhajitvā nagaram māpeti / evameva yogāvacaro ādito va sīlam visodheti tato aparabhāge samathavipassanāmagghalanibbānāni sacchikaroti /*

³⁹ There are of course others. In the commentary to the *Katthāvatthu* we find *yogāvacara* twice. Once he is contrasted with the foolish ordinary person (*bālaputhujano*), and in the other reference his entrance into the supramundane path is mentioned. The first reference is Jayawickrama 1979: 34.7-9 (1.23): *vedanam vediyamānapanhe vedanam vediyamāno pariggahitavedano yogāvacaro va pajānāti bālaputhujano no pajānāti*. The second is 130.18-20 (109): *tattha yesam lokuttaramaggakkhaṇe yogāvacaro idam dukkhan ti vācam bhāsati*. Translated in Law 1940: 40, 161. See also *Sumaṅgalavilāsini* (Stede 1932) iii.769,24. In addition, I have not been able to check *Paramatthajotikā* II (*Suttanipāta* cy) 20,2, 374,24, and 47,9-10 (this reading apparently *pubbayogāvacarasutta!*).

⁴⁰ Bizot 1992: 31-32.

Further on Bizot offers a concise definition, which begins:⁴¹ “‘adept of yoga,’ that is every monk or layperson who practices the psychic exercises....” It seems that the well known so-called “Yogāvacara’s Manual,” which apparently dates to the 18th century, belongs to this tradition as well. Since these works are to be contextualized within modern Theravāda doctrine and practice, I forego further consideration of them here.⁴²

The absence of the term *yogāvacara* from almost all canonical Pāli literature is interesting, while its occurrence in the *Milindapañha* might suggest some connection of the term with the Northwest of India. At present, however, it would be hasty to draw any firm conclusions from our evidence, other than to repeat that the use of the term *yogāvacara* seems to correspond extremely closely to that of Sanskrit *yogācāra*, so closely that it would be surprising if there were not a historical connection between them. What this connection might be, however, remains a mystery.

2. The term *yogācārabhūmi*

There is no question that the compound *yogācārabhūmi* is an important technical term in later Buddhism; yet it appears not only in the śāstric literature, from which context it is well-known as the title of one of the central texts of the Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda,⁴³ but also in Mahāyāna sūtras. Unfortunately, at least in the sūtra context, its meaning is far from clear. Despite the importance of the *Yogācārabhūmi* treatise, the term *yogācārabhūmi* itself has not been much discussed by scholars.⁴⁴ Here I would like to concentrate on the problem of how to understand *yogācārabhūmi* in the sūtras. In my earlier study (Silk Forthcoming), I determined that *yogācāra* is most likely to be understood in Buddhist usage as a *bahuvrīhi* compound, “one who has yoga as his practice.” There are two related questions to be considered concerning the term *yogācārabhūmi*. The first concerns the grammatical analysis of the compound, and the second its meaning.

⁴¹ Bizot 1992: 318.

⁴² Bizot has published several works concerned with this “tantric” or “esoteric” *yogāvacara*, and Ms. Kate Crosby is at present preparing an Oxford doctoral thesis on a related topic. On the “Yogāvacara’s Manual,” see the edition of Rhys Davids 1896, and the translation by Woodward 1916; on the connection of this text to Southeast Asian traditions, see Bizot 1976: 22-23.

⁴³ When the *Yogācārabhūmi* begins (Bhattacharya 1957: 3.2) [*yogācārabhūmiḥ katamā / sā sa*] *ptadaśa bhūmayo draṣṭavyā /*, the text seems to have a rather different sense of the term in mind than that we encounter in the sūtras, I think.

⁴⁴ See Demiéville 1954: 342-43, and the notes, and Ui 1958: 24-35. The first few folia of the **Yogācārabhūmivākyā* Tōh. 4043 (Derge Tanjur, *sems tsam*, 'i, 69a ff.) are the only place I have found the term explicitly discussed in Indian Buddhist literature, though the explanations are not entirely clear to me. I have, however, profited from the valuable sūtra quotations it contains. Compare its Chinese rendering T. 1580 (XXX) 883 ff., which differs somewhat from the Tibetan version both in terms of order and contents, although the two obviously represent the same text. See Mukai 1979: 42, and 61, n. 10. (The text is attributed in Chinese sources to Jinaputra. Xuanzang’s *Datang Xiyuji* 大唐西域記 [T. 2087 (LI) 937c10-12; Ji et al. 1985: 934], and the translation of T. 1580, also by Xuanzang, both mention this attribution. See also Mochizuki 1932-36: 1414a. The Tibetan tradition is silent on the authorship of the text.) I would hope that a specialist in Yogācāra literature would discuss this text for us.

Recently the interpretation “the stage of the practice of yoga” was offered in a rendering from the *Samādhirājasūtra* of a passage which is not entirely clear.⁴⁵ The same term appears at least one other time in the same sūtra, in the following expression:⁴⁶ “What is the *yogācārabhūmi*? It is the cultivation of the dharmas of the thirty-seven elements of awakening.” While this is also not entirely clear, certainly it does not point, for instance, to any characteristically Mahāyāna content to the term, which is interesting. Moreover, if we understand the question to mean “what is the stage during which one practices yoga?”, then the answer seems to be that essentially all practices comprising the thirty-seven *bodhyaṅga* are included in *yogācāra*. If this is correct, then the understanding of *yogācāra* as a *tatpuruṣa* meaning “meditation, the practice of yoga” is, in this context at least, probably too narrow.

The *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* is again also something short of clear when it mentions in a long list of items which constitute the Sacrifice of the Giving of the Teaching (**dharma-dānayañña*) “the *yogācārabhūmi* effected by the practice (**yoga*) of liberating all beings from the defilements.”⁴⁷ In the *Akṣayamatīrdeśa*, in a discussion of wisdom (**prajñā*) it is stated that “wisdom is the practice of all those dwelling in the *yogācārabhūmi*.” The commentary explains:⁴⁸

As for the expression “wisdom is the practice of all those dwelling in the *yogācārabhūmi*,” cultivating the concentration (**samādhi*) of [the contemplation on] the disgusting, friendliness, or dependent arising, and emptiness, the signless, and

⁴⁵ Gómez and Silk 1989: 58, translating Matsunami 1975: 222.3 = Dutt 1939-59: II.1: 20.12; in Chinese T. 639 (XV) 550b21. According to Murakami 1967 s.v., *yogācārabhūmi* is rendered in Chinese with 方便地, a term which one would at first sight suppose to represent **upāyabhūmi*, although such a term seems to be nowhere attested. However, as Seishi Karashima has pointed out to me, 方便 is used to represent *yoga* in the sense of means or method in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (Ui 1961: 519; Wogihara 1936: 325.5 = T. 1579 [XXX] 554c2), and perhaps this is the idea the translator had in mind.

⁴⁶ Dutt 1939-59: II.3: 640.17-18: *tatra katamā yogācārabhūmir yad idaṃ saptatrimśatām bodhipakṣikāṇām dharmāṇām bhāvanā* /. Here too *yogācārabhūmi* is apparently rendered in Chinese by 方便地 (T. 639 [XV] 618b21-22). This sūtra passage is quoted in the **Yogācārabhūmivākyā* Tōh. 4043 (Derge Tanjur, *sems tsam*, 'i, 69b3-4): 'Phags pa zla ba sgron ma'i ting nge 'dzin las kyang rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa gang zhe na / byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun sgom pa'i sa'o zhes 'byung ngo //. The Chinese at T. 1580 (XXX) 884a22-23 has not **yogācārabhūmi* but only 瑜伽.

⁴⁷ VKN III §72 (Tibetan text in Ōshika 41.4-6): *sems can thams cad nyon mongs pa las rnam par grol ba'i rnal 'byor gyis mngon par bsgrubs pa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa*. Lamotte 1962: 214 renders: “la terre de la pratique du yoga (*yogācārabhūmi*) résultant des efforts tendant à libérer tous les êtres de leurs passions (*sarvasattvakleśapramocanaprayoga*).” Nagao 1974: 67 has: あらゆる人々を煩惱から解脱させる行により、現にヨーガ行の階位が成立していることです。The Chinese translations read: T. 474 (XIV) 525a25-26: 爲一切勞不斷賢者行地; T. 475 (XIV) 543c24: 解脱衆生縛起修行地; T. 476 (XIV) 567a13-15: 以正息除一切有情煩惱行相引發善修瑜伽師地。

⁴⁸ The sūtra passage is found in Tibetan in Braarvig 1993: I.83,8-9: *shes rab ni rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa la gnas pa thams cad kyi sbyor ba'o*. The commentary is quoted in Braarvig 1993: II.337, note 3: *shes rab ni rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa la gnas pa thams cad kyi sbyor ba'o zhes bya ba la / mi gtsang ba'am / byams pa'am / rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba'am / stong pa nyid dang / mtshan ma med pa dang / smon pa med pa'i ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa ni rnal 'byor spyod pa'o / ting nge 'dzin de dag bsgom pa'i rgyu'am / gzhi la rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa zhes bya ste / shes rab de rnal 'byor spyod pa'i lam yin pas sbyor ba'o // de yang ji ltar na lam zhe na / mnyan pa'i shes rab dang / bsam pa'i shes rab la ma brten par gang yang bsgom par mi nus so //*. Braarvig in his translation 1993: II.337 rendered *sbyor ba* with *yoga*, but I think **prayoga* is better; probably the meaning does not change.

wishlessness is “the practice of yoga (**yogācāra*).” The cause or basis of cultivating those concentrations is called “the stage (?) of the practice of yoga,” and the [previously mentioned] wisdom is the practice (**prayoga*; leading up to this cultivation) because it is the path of the practice of yoga. What sort of path? It is not possible to cultivate anything without relying on wisdom gained from hearing and wisdom gained from thinking.

Here, as I understand it, the commentary has interpreted *yogācārabhūmi* as *yogasya ācāra* > *yogācārasya bhūmi*: “the stage (?) of the practice of yoga.” Unfortunately I do not know of any really clear occurrence of the term in a sūtra context (as opposed to this commentarial interpretation) which might confirm this understanding. Again, here, we note that even in the Mahāyānist commentary there is no mention of doctrines other than those we might call pan-Buddhist; there is no specifically Mahāyāna element introduced into the discussion.⁴⁹ Finally, in the *Sāgaramati-sūtra* we find an expression which seems to mean “intent stage of the practice of yoga” (or: “stage of the intent practice of yoga?”),⁵⁰ in the *Ratnarāśisūtra* we find a reference to one in “the stage of the practice of yoga,”⁵¹ and the twenty-eighth text of the *Mahāratnakūṭa* collection, the *Vīradattagrhapatipariṣcchā*, proclaims one of its alternate titles to be **bodhisattvayogācārabhūmi*.⁵² But in these three cases the meaning of *yogācārabhūmi* is not entirely clear.

Given all of this, I would suggest that the term *yogācārabhūmi* is probably to be understood as “the stage (?) of the practice of yoga,” a *tatpuruṣa*, rather than as a *tatpuruṣa* combination of the *bahuvrīhi* *yogācāra* with *bhūmi*, “the stage (?) of a *yogācāra*,” as Nishi for instance has taken it.⁵³ But especially the sense of *bhūmi* in the compound remains very uncertain, the rendering “stage” being a placeholder as much as an interpretation. In general we may say that the true meaning and reference of the term *yogācārabhūmi* in sūtra literature are still to be determined. What we can say, and what seems most interesting here, is that, first, the term seems to be relatively rare, at least in contrast to the frequent usage of the term *yogācāra*, and second, that there is little if any emphasis on a specifically Mahāyānist meaning. Finally, and related to this second point, it is interesting that we can see no clear connection between the sūtra uses of the term *yogācārabhūmi* and the Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda school. This might be an interesting

⁴⁹ The commentary as a whole, according to Braarvig 1993: II.lxxxv, is “ascribed to Vasubandhu, but [is] possibly by Sthiramati ... [and] was composed ... from a Yogācāra viewpoint.”

⁵⁰ Derge Kanjur 152, *mdo sde, pha*, 60a7: *yang dag par rab tu brtson pa'i rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa'o* // Should we imagine something like **saṃyak prayuktā yogācārabhūmiḥ*? The Chinese versions do not help us much: T. 400 (XIII) 499b13 復有一法。如理正修瑜伽行地。In T. 397 (XIII) 61a11-12 we have: 復有一法。修善行已即住初地。I do not know if this is the same passage which is being quoted by the **Yogācārabhūmivyākhyā* Tōh. 4043 (Derge Tanjur, *sems tsam*, 'i, 69b3) as follows: *'Phags pa blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo las kyang / yang dag par zhugs pa ni rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa zhes 'byung ngo* // The Chinese at T. 1580 (XXX) 884a25-26 has not **yogācārabhūmi* but again only 瑜伽。

⁵¹ The Tibetan text is edited in Silk 1994: 439-440, with the Sanskrit quoted in Bendall 1897-1902: 55.13-18. See Silk Forthcoming note 55.

⁵² The Tibetan (Peking *zi*, 211b4; sTog *ca*, 349a3; Derge 72, *ca*, 204a5) has *byang chub sems dpa'i* [sTog *dpa'*] *rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa bstan* [sTog *bsnyan*; Peking *stan*] *pa*. Chinese versions have (T. 310 [XI] 543a17-18) 菩薩瑜伽師地, and (T. 331 [XII] 70b27) 菩薩瑜伽師地法門。

⁵³ Nishi 1974: 370-71 rendered 瑜伽行者の地。

problem for specialists in Yogācāra Buddhism to consider.

3. Notes on Chinese Translations

As is well-known, attempting to rely on texts which exist only in Chinese raises serious problems for Indic terminological studies, due in part to the difficulty of identifying with certainty the original Indic term being rendered. In some cases in which we have both an Indic text and a Chinese translation it is possible, of course, to speculate, based on closely parallel constructions for example, that a certain Chinese word is in fact intended to render a given Indic term. Without such a means of checking correspondences, however, it is difficult if not impossible to be even fairly confident what Indic term a given Chinese term is intended to render, especially in the context of the generally unsystematic sūtra or vinaya literature. (The case might be, but is not necessarily, different in the context of systematic śāstras.)

As I have detailed earlier (Silk Forthcoming), there are several Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya texts for which we have both an extant Indic language text and a Chinese translation. These texts most usually render *yogācāra bhikṣu* into Chinese with 坐禪比丘, sometimes with 坐禪人. However, it would of course be mere circularity to adduce Chinese usages of 坐禪比丘 unsupported by Indic parallels to argue anything at all about the technical term *yogācāra bhikṣu*. Nevertheless, given the parallelism of many passages, it may be of some small interest to point out several places in Chinese translations of Vinaya texts in which the term 坐禪比丘 appears, keeping in mind that we cannot be sure that these necessarily refer to the *yogācāra bhikṣu* at all.

The Sarvāstivāda Vinaya contains a story of two visiting monks, one of whom is called a 坐禪人 (T. 1435 [XXIII] 79a23, in Pāṭayantikā 18.). The corresponding rule in another, apparently also Sarvāstivāda, text refers to a (坐)禪比丘 (T. 1464 [XXIV] 880a20-22), who is injured by Upananda 跋難陀釋子, one of the “group of six monks,” while the Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya (T. 1425 [XXII] 344c3-26) has the elder monk meditating 上座坐禪 and the younger reciting sūtras 下座誦經. The same story is found in several other Vinayas without the relevant technical terms.⁵⁴ In another place in the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya the meaning of 坐禪比丘 seems to be clear, since it is stated that a monk went atop a hill and practiced seated meditation 坐禪 (T. 1435 [XXIII] 436c4-6). This monk is referred to in the next sentence as 坐禪比丘. In another episode, a 坐禪比丘 goes to sleep. Attempting to wake him up by striking him with the meditation staff (法杖), the 行禪比丘 kills him. The latter is evidently a monk working in a supervisory capacity (T. 1435 [XXIII] 437a27-28). Very similar episodes of a meditating monk 坐禪比丘 going to sleep and being killed instead of woken up, with the same technical terms, are also found (T. 1435 [XXIII] 437b1-2, 5), but in these following episodes it is a question not of **yogācāra (?) bhikṣus* but of **āraṇyaka bhikṣus* and **paiṇḍapātika bhikṣus*. I think it is likely that a parallel but differential categorization is being assumed here of monks

⁵⁴ Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya *Vinayavibhaṅga*, T. 1442 (XXIII) 788b27-789a25, Mahīśāsaka Vinaya T. 1421 (XXII) 44b17-c6, Dharmaguptaka Vinaya T. 1428 (XXII) 646a25-b26, and the Pāli Vinaya, Oldenberg 1882: vi.45,34ff. I thank Seishi Karashima for these references.

who are engaged in meditative practice, arrayed alongside of those who devote themselves to forest or wilderness dwelling, and those who are involved in alms begging practice. In another place, the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya suggests that we might understand 坐禪比丘 to be monks who are engaged in meditation at that moment, as opposed to those who are, so to speak, meditators by vocation (T. 1435 [XXIII] 467c3-5). The rule relates that the six monks drove out 坐禪比丘. The Buddha responds by stating his stipulation with the words 坐禪時, “at the time one is engaged in meditation.” It is possible that we should understand this to imply that the term 坐禪比丘 refers to “monks who are engaged in meditation,” rather than “meditation monks” as a vocational designation, although it is of course also possible that the emphasis is merely to be put on the occasion, namely, “when meditation monks are actually engaged in meditation”

There are numerous references in the various Vinayas to those who, by some action or another, disturb monks engaged in meditation or meditation monks. In the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, a group of nuns builds a stūpa in the monastic compound, and with their laughing and so on disturb the meditating/meditation monks 諸坐禪比丘. One of the latter, *Kapila, denoted as a 長老, is said to “always delight in seated meditation 常樂坐禪,” and being so annoyed by the nuns, he destroys the stūpa built by them. Parallels to this story, which indicate that the group of nuns is to be understood as equivalent to the famous “gang of six,” are found in the Pāli Vinaya and the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, but without the relevant technical terms.⁵⁵ The same infamous group of six nuns annoy meditating/meditation nuns 諸坐禪比丘尼 in a further episode (T. 1428 [XXII] 929c5), while the six monks annoy meditators 諸坐禪者 in another (T. 1428 [XXII] 847b18). In another story, parrots make a loud noise and annoy the meditating/meditation monks 諸坐禪比丘 (the Buddha rules that one should make a loud noise to drive the parrots away; T. 1428 [XXII] 955a4-5), and in yet another, birds (type not specified) nest in the monastery and cry out at night, disturbing the meditating/meditation monks 諸坐禪比丘 (T. 1428 [XXII] 978a21).

While almost all references to *yogācāras* in Buddhist texts are positive, some stories concerning meditators are not unambiguous. The Dharmaguptaka Vinaya contains a story in which householders come to the monastery and their singing, dancing and general noise-making disturb the meditating/meditation nuns 諸坐禪比丘尼 (T. 1428 [XXII] 739b18). If I understand correctly, however, it is these same nuns who are pained by this and commit the offence which occasions the rule (against defecating and urinating in water). The meditating/meditation nuns here, then, are not necessarily portrayed in a positive light. In the parallel rule in the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, the nuns are referred to with the words 諸比丘尼坐禪行道 (T. 1421 [XXII] 94a14). These nuns seem to be equivalent to the six nuns in other versions.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Dharmaguptaka Vinaya T. 1428 (XXII) 766c3-10. The parallels are: Pāli Vinaya iv.308,9ff, *Bhikkhūnīvibhāṅga*, *pācittiya* 52 and Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya: Derge Kanjur, 'dul ba, da, 172b2-5. I owe both of the latter references to Schopen 1989: 91, note 19, and 1994: 71.

⁵⁶ For other versions see the references in Schmithausen 1991, note 176.

Such references are not limited, of course, to the vinaya literature, and just by way of example we may refer to the 一切法高王經. In this text the inside of the palace of the Nāga king of Anavatapta is a dwelling place for meditating monks 坐禪比丘. The next sentence then states that monks with supernatural powers, possessed of power, 神通比丘有威德者 also dwell there.⁵⁷ In other translations of the same sūtra the two references are rendered in one compound as 坐禪神通之人 (T. 822 [XVII] 848b8-9), or as 神通禪定者 (T. 824 [XVII] 862b7). It is not absolutely clear how the latter two expressions should be understood, or whether this reference even has anything to do with *yogācāras*.⁵⁸

What these passages show depends very much on whether the identification of 坐禪比丘 with *yogācāra bhikṣu* is accepted. But it is quite clear that there is no unique correspondence between these terms, and therefore it would be entirely fallacious to argue that since 坐禪比丘 designates a meditating/meditation monk, this must be the sense of *yogācāra bhikṣu* too. On the other hand, since we have been able on other grounds to establish the general meaning of *yogācāra bhikṣu* (see Silk Forthcoming, *passim*), these Chinese passages might, with due care, be considered to be part of the same thought complex, whether the exact technical terms in question are the same or not.

4. The Troublesome term 離扼

As I have pointed out, most of the various well-attested Chinese renderings of *yogācāra* clearly indicate that the term refers to meditation, or more generically to “practice.” The most common rendering is 坐禪比丘, which occurs along with another transcription-cum-translation, 瑜伽師. But the Chinese translation of the *Ratnarāsisūtra* and the corresponding sections of the Chinese translation of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* – and uniquely these sources, as far as I know – present us with something completely different. They consistently render *yogācāra*, and sometimes simply *yoga*, with 離扼, that is, literally, “free from the *yogas*.”⁵⁹ In order to try to understand this we first must recall that in Buddhist doctrinal systematics the word *yoga* has a meaning different from the obvious one of “practice.” The *yogas*, “yokes,” in this system are equivalent to the *oghas* or “floods,” *kāma*, *bhava*, *dṛṣṭi* and *avidyā*.⁶⁰ In fact this equivalence is at least as old as the Pāli Nikāyas and the Chinese *Dīrghāgama*. We find in both the *Dīghanikāya/Dīrghāgama* and the *Saṃyuttanikāya* identical expressions of this equivalence.⁶¹ The equivalence is

⁵⁷ T. 823 (XVII) 854c21-22. For the second term, see Nakamura 1981: 34a.

⁵⁸ But see Silk Forthcoming, note 99, in which the similar 神通比丘 in the *Akṣobhyatathāgatavyūha* T. 313 [XI] 754c24 corresponds to Tibetan [Peking 760 (6), *dzi*, 21b6] *rnal 'byor spyod pa'i dge slong rdzu 'phrul dang ldan pa*.

⁵⁹ The only reference I have found to this problem is the brief remarks of Ui 1958: 32. However, I find it impossible to agree with his suggestion that 離扼比丘 means an Arhat, one free from the *yogas*.

⁶⁰ See Oda 1917: 1750b, 800a, and La Vallée Poussin 1923-31: v.75.

⁶¹ *Dīghanikāya* (Carpenter 1911) iii.230,11-14, and *Saṃyuttanikāya* (Feer 1898) v.59,4-15. The *Dīghanikāya* expression is found again in the *Abhidhammathasāṅghaha* VII.4-5, and the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* (Bapat and Vadekar 1940): 1151, 1484-5. Chinese parallels to the *Dīghanikāya* passages are found in the *Dīrghāgama* T. 1 (I) 51a21-24, 53b16-19.

also implicitly recognized in Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Dīghanikāya*, the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*,⁶² and both terms are equally called synonyms (*adhivacana*) of *āsava* in the *Visuddhimagga*.⁶³ The two *yogas* of interest to us here, then, are generally *yoga* as practice, and *yoga* as yoke.⁶⁴ I do not know in what sort of relative distribution the two terms occur, but I have the impression that in the latter meaning the term *yoga* is very much the rarer. In this sense the standard Chinese rendering of *yoga* is 扼 (or 軛, or again 軛).

However, it is hard to understand how translators who were in the least familiar with Buddhist thought could have produced the rendering 離扼 for *yoga* or *yogācāra*.⁶⁵ That the Song dynasty translators of the *Śikṣāsamuccaya* came up with the same rendering as that found in the *Ratnarāsi* may safely be explained on the assumption that they consulted the earlier rendering of the sūtra itself while rendering the anthology, even though taken as a whole their translations of quotations from the sūtra do not show much attention to that earlier rendering. But why would one choose such a rendering in the first place? I have not so far encountered any explanation of *yogācāra* which introduces the notion of the *yogas* as “yokes” – although in one place the Chinese rendering of the *Ratnarāsi* itself does have **yogācāra bhikṣu* as “monks who are capable of freeing [themselves] from the four *yogas*,” 比丘能離四扼.⁶⁶ This might indicate just such an association between the two senses of *yoga*.

An intriguing, although problematic, suggestion has been made by Nobuyoshi Yamabe.⁶⁷ Yamabe suggested that the problem of the relation of *yogācāra* and *yogāvacara* and the problem of the rendering of *yoga* or *yogācāra* by 離扼 might in fact be connected.

⁶² Stede 1932: 1023. After explaining the entry *ogha*, Buddhaghosa writes with regard to the *yogas*: *te oghā vīya veditabbā*, “they should be understood as were the *oghas*.”

⁶³ Warren and Kosambi 1950: 587 (XXII.56).

⁶⁴ Schlingloff 1964: 29, note 1, seems to associate or even confuse the two when he says “The concept *yoga* appears in Buddhism first in its profane, and thereby for the sacred path negative, meaning,” giving then references to the sense of *yoga* as equivalent to *ogha* (which equivalence, however, he does not mention).

Despite some superficial phonological similarity, *yoga* and *ogha* are not historically related terms, although it is possible that some punning association between them struck some ancient authors.

⁶⁵ It is also difficult to say whether anyone would have understood this rendering. The lexicographer of Buddhist terminology Huilin 慧琳, in his discussion of the term, gives no indication that he recognizes it. See 一切經音義 T. 2128 (LIV) 400b3-4: 離阨。鸚革反。考聲云。限礙也。隘也。從阜。𠂔字從戶。從乙。今俗從厂。從已。作厄。誤也。錯已久矣。經文多從木。或從手。作扼。字書。把頭也。非此義。 Seishi Karashima translates this as follows: “離阨: (As to 阨, its pronunciation is) 鸚 (Middle Chinese ?eng) + 革 (gɛk) 反 (?ɛ- + -ɛk = ?ɛk). *Kaosheng* says (the meaning of 阨) is ‘hindrance, obstruction.’ (The form of 阨) has the radical 阜 (= 阨). The character 𠂔 consists of the radicals 戶 and 乙. (Instead of 𠂔) these days it is written vulgarly as 厄, from the radicals 厂 and 已, but this is wrong. The mistake was made already long ago. It is written in many texts as (軛), which had the radical 木, or as 扼 which has the radical 手. According to dictionaries, (these latter characters mean) ‘a yoke,’ which does not fit here.” In fact, of course, “yoke” is a perfect rendering of *yoga* in this context, and this strongly suggests that Huilin had no idea what the word was supposed to mean.

⁶⁶ T. 310 (44) (XI) 643b4. For a critical edition, see Silk 1994: 594.

⁶⁷ The following is based on personal correspondence during 1993-94 with Yamabe, who has freely shared his thoughts and references with me.

Namely, he offered the possibility that 離扼 might represent some understanding of **yogāpacara* (**yoga* + *apacara*) < *yogāvacara*. However, aside from the serious and perhaps fatal phonological problems, there also exists not even one known instance of *yogāvacara* in a context other than late Pāli. It never occurs, for example, in the presently available Central Asian or Kashmiri texts, in which, given the Northwestern origins of the *Milindapañha*, we might expect to find it.⁶⁸ On the other hand, all of this assumes that the *Ratnarāsi* was available to its Chinese translators in some sort of Sanskrit orthography. However, I have been able to show that certain errors in the Chinese translation of the *Ratnarāsi* presuppose Middle Indic phonological forms.⁶⁹ Specifically, I have argued that a confusion between *vadya* and *vajra* can only be explained by assuming that the original from which the Chinese translators worked had **vajja*. There is also evidence in the text for the reduction of intervocalic *-k-* to *-y-*, and the absence of marked vowel length. If one were to assume a Middle Indic starting point, for which Prof. von Hinüber suggests something like **yokayara*, it is possible that some solution to the problem might be found.

From a different point of view entirely, another speculative idea has been suggested to me by Prof. Gadjin Nagao, this pointing toward a doctrinal rather than a philological solution to the problem. Both *yoga* and *ogha* are listed as synonyms of *kleśa* (numbers 6 and 7 out of 24) in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*.⁷⁰ The relevant passage is translated by Xuanzang as follows: 障礙離繫是軛義.⁷¹ Nagao renders this: “[*Kleśa*] is an obstruction (for people to attain) *visamyoga* (*phala* = *nirvāṇa*); this is the meaning of *yoga*.” He then suggests that 離軛 as a rendering of *yogācāra* might be understood to mean “an activity of Buddhist practice to eliminate *kleśa*.” Other doctrinally motivated interpretations are also conceivable.

If the Chinese translation is based not on a traditional explanation but on a misunderstanding, based either on a Middle Indic variant form of the word or simply on the translators’ carelessness, it would suggest a surprising lack of familiarity on the part of those Chinese translators with the term *yogācāra* and the concept behind it, an ignorance which then forced them to come up with some sort of ad hoc solution. Given the frequency with which the term *yogācāra* appears throughout Buddhist literature and the generally quite good quality of the *Ratnarāsi* translation, we may wonder whether this explanation is a good one. On the other hand, the doctrinal explanation suggested by Prof. Nagao stands at present without any supporting evidence. The discovery of further evidence, such as traditional etymologies for the terms *yogācāra* or *yogāvacara*, might lead toward an ultimate solution to the problem.

⁶⁸ But *yogācāra* likewise seems to be entirely absent from the Northwestern Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, according to the kind information of Gregory Schopen.

⁶⁹ For the following see Silk 1994: 684-88.

⁷⁰ See Rahula 1980: 75.

⁷¹ T. 1605 (XXXI) 677b17-18 = T. 1606 (XXXI) 724c1-2.

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Corrections:

note 3: acara → avacara.

note 61: *Abhidhammathasaṅgha* → *Abhidhammatthasaṅgha*.

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