

The Verses on an Auspicious Night, Explained by Mahākaccāna – A Study and Translation of the Chinese Version

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Abstract:

The present paper offers a study and an annotated translation of the Madhyama-āgama parallel to the Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta. The first part of the article examines two differences found between the Pāli and the Chinese versions, differences that appear to be due to the influence of notions held by the reciters on the transmission of the discourse. This is followed by a translation of the Madhyama-āgama version. The final part of the article evaluates the significance of the verses on an auspicious night, which form the main theme of the Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta and its Chinese counterpart

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Introduction

Most of the discourses collected in the four Pāli *Nikāyas* have counterparts in the *Āgamas* preserved in Chinese translation. Such parallel versions, being end products of oral transmission by different Buddhist schools and eventually resulting in texts preserved in quite different languages, often agree in many respects. At the same time, parallel versions also exhibit a number of variations and thus show the degree to which oral transmission affected the discourse material that we now have at our disposal.

These two aspects, the general agreement and the occurrence of variations, reflect the dynamics that underlies the oral transmission of the early discourses, which was under the influence of two determining factors. One of these two factors

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is the considerable emphasis placed on correct and accurate transmission of what was perceived to be the authentic word of the Buddha. In this respect, the early Buddhist oral tradition differs decisively from the free improvisation that characterizes oral tradition of a more narrative type.

The other determining factor is that those responsible for transmitting the textual legacy of early Buddhism had not necessarily undergone training in memorizing skills from their early youth onwards, as was the case for Vedic reciters.¹ This makes it nearly unavoidable for errors in transmission to occur.

The *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* is a good example of the degree to which parallel versions concur in most aspects of their presentation, yet at the same time exhibit some differences. The Pāli version, which occurs as the one-hundred-thirty-third discourse in the *Majjhima-nikāya*,² reports that a *deva* visits a monk and finds out that the latter does not know the verses on an auspicious night. The *deva* then tells the monk that he should learn these verses from the Buddha. The monk follows this suggestion and, having learned the verses from the Buddha, approaches Mahākaccāna for a more detailed explanation of their significance.

The same pattern of events recurs in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*.³ This *Madhyama-āgama* parallel is part of a discourse collection translated by the Kashmiri Gautama Saṅghadeva during the period 397-398 AD, based on a written original read out by Saṅgharakṣa, another Kashmiri monk. The Chinese monk Dao-ci (道慈) acted as the scribe, assisted by Li-bao (李寶) and Kang-hua (康化).⁴ The original used for translation appears to have been in a Prākṛit and with high probability stems from a Sarvāstivāda reciter tradition.⁵ In addition to the *Madhyama-āgama* version, another two partial parallels to the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* are known. One of these is another Chinese translation, while the other parallel has been preserved in Tibetan.⁶

Two Significant Differences

Out of the variations found between the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart, two instances are of particular significance and thus deserve a more detailed examination. One of these two instances occurs in Mahākaccāna's explanation of the verses spoken by the Buddha in the *Madhyama-āgama* version. According to the *Madhyama-āgama* account, when describing the need to avoid

attachment to past experiences, Mahākaccāna qualifies the sense organs as "really" existing.⁷ This qualification, which has no counterpart in the Pāli version, could be related to the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, which with considerable probability is the Sarvāstivāda tradition. The *Mahāvibhāṣā* uses precisely the same expression in its treatment of the Sarvāstivāda tenet that the past and the future really exist, a position that met with opposition by other Buddhist schools.⁸ Thus in the present instance it seems as if a belief held by the Sarvāstivādins may have caused a change in the formulation of a canonical passage.

What is particularly noteworthy about the present case is that the qualification of the sense organs as "really" existing is not used in regard to present and future times. Hence, though the use of this qualification appears to express the influence of Sarvāstivāda thought, this influence seems to have been of a somewhat accidental type, since it is not applied consistently. If the application of this qualification were the outcome of conscious editing, one would expect the same qualification to have been similarly applied to sense organs in future and present times.⁹

This is significant, since it indicates that even in the case of probable influence of the school affiliation on the text, such influence may not be the outcome of deliberate change. In the present case, it seems as if part of a Sarvāstivāda analysis of sense experience, which would have made some statement to the effect that the sense organs "really" exist, became part of the discourse during the process of transmission. Because of the accidental nature of this intrusion of exegetical material into the discourse, apparently only the treatment of the past was affected, and the treatment of present and future experiences remained in a more original form.

An example of later influence appears to also occur in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, with which we come to the second of the two instances announced above. This instance occurs in relation to the question asked by the *deva* who came to visit Samiddhi. According to the Pāli account, the *deva* first asks Samiddhi if he knows the "summary and the analysis" on an auspicious night. When Samiddhi admits that he does not know them, the *deva* asks if he knows the "verses" on an auspicious night, which Samiddhi also does not know.¹⁰ The corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* version reports only a single query, which concerns the verses.¹¹

The presentation in the Pāli discourse is to some extent puzzling, since the "verses" would correspond to the "summary". This can be seen in the later part of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*, where, after the Bud-

dha has spoken the verses without further explaining their meaning, the monks wonder who would be able to explain the meaning of this "summary".¹² This clearly identifies the verses as the summary. In fact, apart from the verses it would be difficult to find anything else that could be reckoned as a summary.

Not only the reference to a "summary", but also the mentioning of an "analysis" does not fit subsequent events too well. This comes to light in the section that describes the exchange between Samiddhi and the Buddha. After reporting what had taken place earlier, Samiddhi formulates his request for a teaching by repeating the question the *deva* had asked him, that is, by inquiring about a "summary" and its "analysis".¹³ Though the Buddha agrees to this, after having taught the verses he retires to his dwelling without delivering any analysis or explanation of the verses.¹⁴ This is rather puzzling, since once the Buddha has agreed to Samiddhi's request, one might wonder why he should suddenly change his mind and withdraw without delivering the analysis he has just indicated that he is willing to give. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version, the *deva* and Samiddhi had only been discussing the verses, so that when Samiddhi comes to see the Buddha he only asks to be taught the verses. In view of this, in the *Madhyama-āgama* it is quite natural for the Buddha to teach only the verses.

Thus it seems as if the inquiry after a "summary" and an "analysis" in the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* does not fit its context too well, and the flow of events in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is more natural.

The same pattern recurs in the case of the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. In the Pāli version of this discourse, the Buddha himself announces a teaching that involves a summary and an analysis, but then withdraws to his dwelling after giving only the summary.¹⁵ In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the Buddha does not make any such announcement, so that here the Buddha's departure after teaching only a summary does not create any inconsistency.¹⁶

Another relevant case is the *Lomasakaṅgiyabhaddekaratta-sutta*, which also reports how a *deva* asks a monk about the summary and analysis of an auspicious night, followed by asking him about the verses.¹⁷ As here, too, the verses correspond to the summary, this double inquiry creates the same redundancy as in the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*. In this case, again, the *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart and another Chinese parallel only have a single inquiry.¹⁸ On considering these three instances, one might wonder what could have caused these recurrent references to a

summary and its analysis, which do not fit the remainder of these discourses.

Explicit references to a summary and an analysis occur also in the introductory section to another two discourses in this particular chapter of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.¹⁹ Other discourses in this chapter announce a summary, which they then follow with an analysis, while still other discourses adopt the pattern of a summary and its analysis without explicit announcement.²⁰ Thus the basic pattern, where a "summary" statement is followed by a more detailed explanation, an "analysis", appears to be a uniting theme of this particular chapter in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the "chapter on analysis", *Vibhaṅgavagga*.²¹

This characteristic pattern would have given a strong sense of cohesion and connectedness to this group of discourses during oral transmission. This can be seen in the circumstance that altogether nine counterparts to the discourses found in the *Vibhaṅga-vagga* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* are located in the corresponding chapter on analysis in the *Madhyama-āgama*.²² This is a remarkable correspondence, as the two collections have only four chapters in common. Of these four chapters, two chapters have each four discourses in common and one chapter has only two discourses in common with its counterpart.²³ Thus for the *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on "analyses" and the *Madhyama-āgama* chapter on "analyses" to share altogether nine discourses is remarkable, suggesting that the pattern where a summary is followed by an analysis did indeed form a strong bond that kept this group of discourses together in the two reciter traditions.

Thus the reciters must have been well aware of the pattern responsible for the formation of this chapter. Since the references to a summary and an analysis are absent from the respective *Madhyama-āgama* parallels, and in several cases these references do not fit their context, resulting in redundancies and inconsistencies, the most plausible explanation would be that they came to be part of the Pāli discourses during oral transmission. That is, during the oral transmission of the discourses now collected in the *Majjhima-nikāya* a remark, which originally may have been just a mnemonic aid to help the reciters be aware of the characteristic shared by this group of discourses, might have become part of the discourses themselves.

In the case of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*, this reference to a summary and an analysis creates both a redundancy (mentioning a "summary" and again the "verses") and an inconsistency (the Buddha withdraws without teaching the analysis he had agreed to deliver). Thus the

case of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* could be another example of how a notion held by the reciters influenced the wording of a discourse during the course of oral transmission.

The two cases discussed above – the redundant query after a summary and an exposition in the Pāli version and the qualification of past sense organs as truly existing in the Chinese version – thus seem to testify to the same phenomenon, namely to the influence exercised by views and ideas held by the reciters on the way they transmitted the discourse. In both cases, these influences result in creating inconsistencies within the discourses themselves, either by having the Buddha not give an analysis he had earlier agreed to give, or by qualifying only the sense organs of the past as truly existing, without applying the same to present and future sense organs. In both cases, if these influences had been the outcome of conscious editing, one would expect the editors to have executed their task with more care and consistency, either by avoiding having the Buddha announce an analysis he then does not give, or by applying the qualification "really" consistently. Thus both cases are probably best understood as results of a more accidental type of change, as would be only natural for material transmitted by oral means.²⁴ After these introductory remarks, we are now ready to turn to the discourse itself.

Translation²⁵

Discourse on a *Deva* at the Hot Spring Grove²⁶

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling in Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place.²⁷ Venerable Samiddhi was at that time also dwelling in Rājagaha, staying at the Hot Spring Grove.

When the night was over, towards dawn, venerable Samiddhi left his dwelling and approached the hot springs, took off his robes and, [having left] them on the bank, entered the hot springs to take a bath. Having taken a bath he came out, wiped his body [dry] and put on his robes.²⁸

At that time there was a *deva* of excellent bodily shape, with a majestic appearance. When the night was over, towards dawn, [this *deva*] approached venerable Samiddhi, bowed down with its head [touching the ground] to pay respect and,²⁹ having stepped back, stood at one side. The brilliance of the excellent splendour of that *deva*'s appearance illuminated the hot springs and their banks. [After] having stepped back and stood at one side, the *deva* respectfully said to venerable Samiddhi:

2. "Monk, do you remember the verses³⁰ on an auspicious night?"³¹

Venerable Samiddhi replied to the *deva*: "I do not remember the verses on an auspicious night." He [then] asked the *deva*: "Do you remember the verses on an auspicious night?"

The *deva* replied: "I also do not remember the verses on an auspicious night."

Venerable Samiddhi asked the *deva* again: "Who remembers the verses on an auspicious night?"³²

The *deva* answered: "The Blessed One is dwelling here in Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place. He remembers the verses on an auspicious night. Monk, you could personally approach the Blessed One and from him [learn how] to remember and recite the verses on an auspicious night. Why is that? [Because] the verses on an auspicious night pertain to the teachings, they pertain to what is beneficial, being the root of the holy life, they [lead to] progress in knowledge, progress in realization, and progress towards *Nibbāna*.³³ [As] a son of a good family who, out of faith, has left the household life to become homeless and practise the path, [you] should [learn how] to remember and recite the verses on an auspicious night."

After speaking like this, the *deva* paid respects with its head at the feet of venerable Samiddhi and, having circumambulated him three times, vanished from that place.³⁴

3. Not long after the *deva* had disappeared, venerable Samiddhi approached the Buddha, bowed down with his head [touching the ground] to pay respect and, having stepped back, sat at one side and respectfully said: "Blessed One, today, when the night was over ... (repeat the account of the meeting between Samiddhi and the *deva*, as given above)."³⁵

The Blessed One asked: "Samiddhi, do you know that *deva*'s name and where he comes from?"³⁶

Venerable Samiddhi replied: "Blessed One, I do not know that *deva*'s name and I also do not know where he comes from."

The Blessed One said: "Samiddhi, that *deva* is called Main Hall;³⁷ he is a general of the troops in the heaven of the Thirty-three."

Then venerable Samiddhi respectfully said: "Blessed One, now is the right time, Well-gone One, now is the right time for the Blessed One to teach the verses on an auspicious night to the monks.³⁸ Having heard them from the Blessed One, the monks will remember them well."

4. The Blessed One said: "Samiddhi, listen, listen, pay proper attention to what I shall teach to you."

Venerable Samiddhi respectfully said: "Yes, indeed." Then, [when] all the monks [were ready] to listen and receive the instructions, the Buddha proclaimed [these verses]:³⁹

5. "Be careful not to think about the past,
and do not long for the future.
Matters of the past have already ceased,
the future has not yet come."⁴⁰

As for phenomena in the present moment,
one should contemplate
with mindfulness [their] lack of stability.
The wise awaken in this way.⁴¹

If one undertakes [such] practice of noble ones,
who [would] be worried about death?
I shall disengage from [all] that [which is related to death],
[so that this] great suffering and misery comes to an end."⁴²

Practise diligently like this,
day and night without negligence!
Therefore, the verses on an auspicious night
should regularly be taught."⁴³

6. Having spoken like this, the Buddha got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation.

7. The monks thereon had the following reflection: "Venerable friends, please know that the Blessed One has given this instruction in brief and, without explaining its details, has gotten up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely] 'Be careful not to think about the past ... (repeat as above)'"⁴⁴

They further had the following reflection: "Venerable friends, who would be able explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief?" They further had the following reflection: "Venerable Mahākaccāna is always praised by the Blessed One and by [his] wise companions in the holy life. Venerable Mahākaccāna would be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief. Venerable friends, let us together approach venerable Mahākaccāna and request him to explain its meaning. If venerable Mahākaccāna explains it, we shall remember it well."⁴⁵

8. Thereon the monks approached venerable Mahākaccāna, exchanged greetings, stepped back to sit at one side, and respectfully said: "Venerable Mahākaccāna, please know that the Blessed One has given this instruction in brief and, without explaining its details, has gotten up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely]: 'Be careful not to think about the past ...'.⁴⁶ We only wish that venerable Mahākaccāna would give [us] a detailed explanation, out of compassion."⁴⁷

9. Venerable Mahākaccāna said: "Venerable friends, listen to a simile spoken by me. On hearing a simile wise ones will understand its meaning. Venerable friends, just as if there were a man who wants to search for heartwood. In order to search for heartwood, [he] enters the forest, holding an axe.⁴⁸ He sees a great tree possessed of roots, branches, joints, twigs, leaves, flowers and heartwood. That man does not take hold of the roots, branches, joints, and heartwood, but only takes hold of the twigs and leaves."⁴⁹

Venerable friends, what you said is just like that. [Though] the Blessed One is present [you] leave [him] and come to ask me about this meaning. Why is that? Venerable friends, please know that the Blessed One is the eye, is knowledge, is meaning, is the *Dhamma*, is the master of the *Dhamma*, is the general of the *Dhamma*, he teaches the true meaning, the revelation of all meanings is because of the Blessed One.⁵⁰ Venerable friends, you should have approached the Blessed One to ask about this meaning: 'Blessed One, how is this? What is its meaning?' As the Blessed One explains it, [you], venerable friends, could have well remembered it accordingly."

10. Then the monks respectfully said: "Yes, indeed, Venerable Mahākaccāna, the Blessed One is the eye, is knowledge, is meaning, is the *Dhamma*, is the master of the *Dhamma*, is the general of the *Dhamma*, he teaches the true meaning, the revelation of all meanings is because of the Blessed One. We should have approached the Blessed One to ask about this meaning: 'Blessed One, how is this? What is its meaning?' As the Blessed One would have explained it, we should have remembered it well. Yet, venerable Mahākaccāna is always praised by the Blessed One and by [his] wise companions in the holy life. Venerable Mahākaccāna will be able explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief. We only wish that venerable Mahākaccāna would give [us] a detailed explanation, out of compassion."⁵¹

11. Venerable Mahākaccāna said to the monks: "Venerable friends, listen together to what I say."

12-13.⁵² Venerable friends, how does a monk think about the past? Venerable friends, with the really existing eye a monk came to know agreeable forms,⁵³ which the mind [now] remembers, forms that are yearned for, that are connected with desire, that the mind delights in, that [become] a basis for holding on [to forms], a basis that is from the past. His consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment in regard to the past. Because of consciousness having desires and being defiled with attachment, he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he [keeps on] thinking about the past.⁵⁴ It is the same for the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body ... and the mind.⁵⁵

14. Venerable friends, how does a monk not think about the past? ... (repeat as above with appropriate changes).⁵⁶

15. Venerable friends, how does a monk long for the future? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms, and eye-consciousness of the future, and a monk wishes to obtain what has not yet been obtained, [or] his mind longs for [more of] what has already been obtained, [then] because of having longing in his mind he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he longs for the future.⁵⁷ It is the same for the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body ... and the mind.⁵⁸

16. Venerable friends, how does a monk not long for the future? ... (repeat as above with appropriate changes).⁵⁹

17. Venerable friends, how does a monk cling to phenomena in the present moment? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms, and eye-consciousness of the present, and a monk's consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment for the present, [then] because consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment, he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he clings to phenomena in the present moment.⁶⁰ It is the same for the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body ... and the mind.⁶¹

18. Venerable friends, how does a monk not cling to phenomena in the present moment? ... (repeat as above with appropriate changes)⁶².

19. Venerable friends, regarding this instruction in brief given by the Blessed One who, without explaining its details, got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely]: 'Be careful not to think about the past ...'.⁶³

This brief instruction given by the Blessed One without explaining its details, I would explain in detail in this way, employing these phrases and words. Venerable friends, you can approach the Buddha and set out

[my explanation] in full [to him].⁶⁴ As the Blessed One explains its meaning, [you], venerable friends, can remember it accordingly."

20. Then, having heard venerable Mahākaccāna's explanation, the monks remembered well [how] to recite it, rose from their seats, circumambulated venerable Mahākaccāna three times, and left.⁶⁵ Approaching the Buddha they bowed down with their heads to pay respect, stepped back, sat at one side and respectfully said: "Blessed One, the instruction just given by the Blessed One in brief without drawing out the meaning in detail, after which [the Blessed One] got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, the venerable Mahākaccāna has explained in detail employing these phrases and words."

21. Having heard it, the Blessed One expressed his praise: "Well done, well done. My disciple is endowed with the eye, with knowledge, with meaning, with *Dhamma*.⁶⁶ Why is that? [Because] in regard to this instruction given by the teacher to the disciples in short, without explaining its details, that disciple has explained it in detail employing these phrases and words. You should remember it accordingly like this, [just] as the monk Mahākaccāna has explained it. Why is that?⁶⁷ With the help of this explanation [you] will [be able] to properly contemplate its meaning like this."

The Buddha spoke like this. Those monks heard what the Buddha said, delighted in it and put it into practice.

Significance of the Verses:

The central element of the above discourse is the set of verses spoken by the Buddha, which revolves around the theme of how to properly spend an "auspicious night". The allusion to an auspicious night could well be a popular phrase taken over and infused with a deeper meaning,⁶⁸ something the discourses often depict the Buddha as doing.⁶⁹ Though the basic idea of an auspicious night would stem from ancient Indian conceptions of particular nights that are considered spiritually auspicious, the last verse in both versions makes it clear that the recommendations given are not meant for a single night only, as such practice should be undertaken "day and night".⁷⁰ In fact, references to a night in ancient Indian usage need not exclude the daytime, as "night" can function as an umbrella term for both day and night.⁷¹ Thus the central message of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel would be that by letting go of past memories, by being free from yearning for the

future, and by dwelling without attachment in the present moment, any time becomes a truly "auspicious" time.

As Mahākaccāna clarifies in the two versions of the present discourse, the problem faced when trying to put this instruction into practice is that the mind may succumb to longing and desires in relation to any of the senses and in regard to any of the three time periods. In regard to the past, this may take place by reviving memories of what happened in former times. These could be beautiful things one has seen, pleasant music or words heard, fragrant scents that one has smelled, delicious flavours one has tasted, delightful physical touches, or even pleasant mental experiences that took place without being directly stimulated by some sensory input. Reviving such memories one "follows after" the past.⁷² Yet, what is past is gone and has ceased completely, thus spending the present moment immersed in memories of the past is to waste the potential of the here and now.⁷³

The same applies to any future experience, in that the tendency of the untrained mind is to spend much time in daydreaming and fantasizing about experiences yet to come. Underlying such daydreams is a longing for pleasant experiences by way of any of the six senses, a wish to have things exactly the way one would like them to be. Yet, such wishful thinking is unrealistic, based on egocentric desires, and again simply a waste of time since it neglects taking advantage of whatever the present moment has to offer.

As any attempt at formal meditation practice will easily show, to avoid revival of past memories and fantasies about the future is not an easy task and requires sustained effort at repeatedly returning to the only moment where we can really live: the precious present moment. Though to remain in the present moment is already a demanding task, the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel indicate that to spend a truly "auspicious night" requires more than that: the present moment's experience should be productive of insight. According to the Chinese version, one should contemplate the lack of stability of what takes place in the present, thereby becoming aware of the impermanent nature of all experience. The Pāli version speaks of remaining unshakably established in contemplating arisen phenomena with insight.⁷⁴ According to the commentary, this intends contemplation of impermanence, together with the other insight contemplations that build on awareness of impermanence.⁷⁵

Hence awareness of impermanence seems to be the key to the verses on an auspicious night, in that one who maintains clear understanding of the

changing nature of phenomena will remain established in the present moment free from attachment and thereby avoid either dwelling on the past or longing for the future.

The same theme recurs in other discourses related to this particular set of verses. In the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* is one out of four discourses that take the verses on an auspicious night as their common theme. The first of these discourses is the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*,⁷⁶ which follows the verses with an explanation given by the Buddha himself. In this explanation, the Buddha points out that delight in memories of past experiences related to the five aggregates of clinging is to dwell on the past; wishing for some particular future manifestation of the five aggregates of clinging is to yearn for the future; and mistaking any of the five aggregates of clinging as a self means that one is not properly contemplating the present moment. In the *Ānandakaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*,⁷⁷ Ānanda delivers precisely the same explanation on the verses, an explanation the Buddha then approvingly repeats. Finally, in the *Lomasakaṅḍiyabhaddekaratta-sutta* a monk approaches the Buddha for an explanation of the verses.⁷⁸ In reply, the Buddha gives the same explanation as in the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*. That is, the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*, the *Ānandakaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and the *Lomasakaṅḍiyabhaddekaratta-sutta* provide the same explanation of the verses on an auspicious night, based on the five aggregates of clinging.

This is perhaps not surprising, since the five aggregates of clinging are a particularly prominent object of insight contemplation in the discourses. Such contemplation forms part of the instructions given in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, according to which mindfulness should be directed to the impermanent nature of each aggregate.⁷⁹ Instructions on this way of meditating are, according to a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya*, comparable to a lion's roar.⁸⁰ Just as all the other animals will be full of fear when the lion sallies forth from his lair and roars his lion's roar, so too the gods in their heavenly abodes become full of fear on hearing these instructions by the Buddha, since they are made to realize that even their celestial existence is impermanent.

To become fully aware of the changing nature of all aspects of personal existence, by contemplating according to the instructions given in this lion's roar, thoroughly undermines all desires and ignorance and thereby erodes all conceited notions of a substantial "I".⁸¹ It may well be for this reason that awareness of the impermanent nature of the five aggregates stands out in the discourses as a particularly prominent cause for gaining liberation.⁸² Thus to spend a truly auspicious night could indeed

well be undertaken by directing awareness to the arising and passing away of the five aggregates, thereby remaining with detachment in the present moment, without dwelling on fond memories from the past or engaging in fantasies about the future.

Whereas the Buddha and Ānanda relate the verses on an auspicious night to the five aggregates, Mahākaccāna offers an explanation that is based on the six senses. The Buddha's endorsement of Mahākaccāna's exposition clarifies that this different presentation is but a complementary perspective on the same topic. That is, to view experience from the perspective of the five aggregates or to view it from the perspective of the six senses are complementary approaches to the development of insight. Both are analyses of subjective existence, the one focussing on the constituents of subjective personality, while the other takes up the different facets of subjective experience. In both cases, the main point remains the same, in that by leaving behind past and future, and by remaining with awareness of impermanence in the present moment, the path to liberation unfolds.

This basic requirement, aptly described in the verses on an auspicious night and treated from complementary perspectives by the Buddha and Mahākaccāna, finds a succinct expression in a verse in the *Dhammapada*, a verse that has been preserved similarly in a range of parallel versions:

Let go of the past, let go of the future,
Let go of the present, transcending becoming.

*Muñca pure muñca pacchato
majjhe muñca bhavassa pāragu.*⁸³

ABBREVIATIONS⁸⁴

D	Derge edition
Dhp	Dhammapada
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
Khv	<i>Kathāvatthu</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Q	Peking edition
SĀ	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	partial <i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
SHT	Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
SN ²	<i>Sagāthavagga</i> of the <i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i> , new PTS edition (1998)
T	Taishō

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¹ Von Hinüber 1989: 67-68 points out that while Brahmins were trained from their childhood onwards in memorizing, training as a reciter in the early Buddhist tradition would only begin after ordination, which usually took place at a later age; cf. also Frauwallner 1956: 172-173 and Gombrich 1990: 6-7.

² MN 133 at MN III 192-199.

³ MĀ 165 at T I 696b-698c. The introductory narration of the meeting between Samiddhi and a *deva* recurs as the prologue to another discourse of different content, SN 1:20 at SN I 8,16 (or SN² 20 at SN² I 18,10), cf. also *Jātaka* tale no. 167 at Jā II 57. This meeting led to a different discussion, as the visiting *deva* tried to tempt Samiddhi with sensual pleasures. The parallels to SN 1:20, SĀ 1078 at T II 281c4 and SĀ² 17 at T II 379a24, do not give the name of the monk.

⁴ T I 809b26: 請闍賓沙門僧伽羅叉令誦胡本, 請僧伽提和轉胡為晉, 豫州沙門道慈筆受, 吳國李寶, 康化共書 (a 聖 variant reading gives the name of the last as 唐化)

⁵ On the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama* see Bapat 1969: 5; Enomoto 1986: 20 and von Hinüber 1982: 250. On its school affiliation see Enomoto 1984; Lü 1963: 242; Mayeda 1985: 98; Minh Chau 1991: 27; Waldschmidt 1980: 136 and Yin-shun 1983: 703.

⁶ The partial Chinese parallel is T 1362 at T XXI 881c-882c, which has the title "discourse spoken by the Buddha on [the topic of] a good night", 佛說善夜經, a discourse that according to the Taishō edition was translated during the 7th century by Yi Jing (義淨). The partial Tibetan parallel was probably translated during the early 9th century, a translation attributed to Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Ye shes sde. This translation occurs three times in the Derge edition as no. 313 at D *mdo sde sa* 161b-163b, no. 617 at D *rgyud 'bum ba* 56a-58b and no. 974 at D *gzungs 'dus waṃ* 90a-92a; and twice in the Peking edition as no. 979 at Q *mdo shu* 171a-173b and no. 599 at Q *rgyud ya* 96b-98b. The occurrence of three versions of this translation in the Derge edition and two versions in the Peking edition appears to be due to some uncertainty about the category to which this text should be assigned, with the result that it was finally placed into two or even into three categories, namely *sūtra*, *tantra*, and *dhāraṇī*, cf. also Skilling 1997: 81-83. The Chinese and Tibetan versions parallel only the first part of MN 133 and MĀ 165, as they do not have Mahākaccāna's commentary on the verses.

⁷ MĀ 165 at T I 697c20: 實有, while in the case of future and present experience MĀ 165 at T I 698a15+21 only employs 有, without 實.

⁸ T 1545 at T XXVII 393a24: 實有過去未來; cf. also the discussion in the *Vijñānakāya*, T 1539 at T XXVI 534c18, with a résumé in Bareau 1955a: 137; and the survey in Cox 1995: 136-137, with further references in her notes. The Theravādin critique of this position can be found in Khv 116 under the heading *sab-bamatthīkathā*.

⁹ This treatment of only the past as really existing would not only differ from the position taken in the Sarvāstivāda school(s), but also from that taken in the Kāśyapīya tradition, which apparently affirmed a partial existence of the path (in as

much as the past is still to bear fruit) and a partial existence of the future (in as much as some future events are already now determined), cf. Bareau 1955b: 202 and Khv 151-155.

¹⁰ MN 133 at MN III 192,10: "do you remember the summary and analysis on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattassa uddesaṇ ca vibhaṅgaṇ ca?*; followed at MN III 192,16 by: "do you remember the verses on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattiyo gāthā?*

¹¹ MĀ 165 at T I 696c7. The same is also the case for the other Chinese translation and the Tibetan version, though these speak of the "discourse" on an auspicious night, instead of the "verses", cf. T 1362 at T XXI 881c10: "have you heard the discourse on the wholesome night?", 聞善夜經不?; and Q *mdo shu* 171b1: "monk, do you know the discourse on an auspicious night?", *dge slong khyod kyis mtshan mo bzang po'i mdo sde shes sam?* A brief discussion of this inconsistency in MN 133 has already appeared in Anālayo 2005: 101.

¹² MN 133 at MN III 193,24: "Friends, the Blessed One, having given this summary in brief to us ... has retired to his dwelling ... who would explain the meaning of this summary given in brief?", *idaṃ kho no, āvuso, Bhagavā saṃkhittena uddesaṃ uddisitvā ... vihāraṃ pavittḥo ... ko nu kho imassa Bhagavatā saṃkhittena uddesassa uddittḥassa ... atthaṃ vibhajjeyya?*

¹³ MN 133 at MN III 193,5: "it would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One were to teach me the summary and the analysis on an auspicious night", *sādhume, bhante, Bhagavā bhaddekarattassa uddesaṇ ca vibhaṅgaṇ ca desetū.*

¹⁴ MN 133 at MN III 193,8: "then, monk, listen and pay careful attention, I will speak", *tena hi, bhikkhu, suṇāhi sādhukaṃ manasikarohi, bhāsissāmi*, a standard pericope for indicating the impending delivery of the teaching that has been requested.

¹⁵ MN 138 at MN III 223,5: "I will teach you a summary and an analysis, monks, listen and attend well, I am about to speak", *uddesavibhaṅgaṃ vo, bhikkhave, desissāmi, taṃ suṇātha sādhukaṃ manasikarotha bhāsissāmi*. Bodhi in *Ñāṇamoli* 2005: 1349 note 1249 comments that "it is strange that the Buddha, having announced that he will teach a summary and an exposition, should recite only the summary and leave without giving the exposition".

¹⁶ In MĀ 164 at T I 694b16, the Buddha instead announces that he will give a teaching that is good in the beginning, middle and end, etc.

¹⁷ MN 134 at MN III 199,27: "do you remember the summary and analysis on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattassa uddesaṇ ca vibhaṅgaṇ ca?*, followed at MN III 200,5 by: "do you remember the verses on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattiyo gāthā?*

¹⁸ Both versions inquire after the verses together with their meaning, MĀ 166 at T I 698c14: 偈及其義 and T 77 at T I 886b7: 偈及解義.

¹⁹ MN 131 at MN III 187,17 and MN 132 at MN III 190,1, where, however, the reference to a summary and an analysis does not create any redundancy or inconsistency.

²⁰ MN 137 at MN III 216,8; MN 139 at MN III 230,20 and MN 140 at MN III 239,15 explicitly identify their introductory statement as a summary, which they then follow by a more detailed analysis. MN 135 at MN III 203,10; MN 136 at MN III 209,2 and MN 141 at MN III 248,4 proceed from a succinct statement to its analysis, without, however, announcing this explicitly.

²¹ The only exception to this appears to be MN 142, which does not follow this pattern. Rhys Davids 1902: 475 is of the opinion that MN 142 "seems to belong, in its subject-matter, to the Vinaya" and was "probably interpolated" in the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

²² This is the 13th chapter in the *Madhyama-āgama*, the 根本分別品, which contains the counterparts to MN 132, MN 133, MN 134, MN 135, MN 136, MN 137, MN 138, MN 139, and MN 140, though in a different sequence.

²³ The 4th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on pairs (*Mahāyamaka-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 15th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter on pairs (雙品), which contains parallels to MN 31, MN 32, MN 39 and MN 40. The 9th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on kings (*Rāja-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 6th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter related to kings (王相應品), which contains parallels to MN 81 and MN 83. The 10th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇa-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 12th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter on Brahmins (梵志品), which contains parallels to MN 91, MN 93, MN 96 and MN 99.

²⁴ Nattier 2003: 52 explains that "to assume a 'creative individual author' as the driving force behind interpolations in Buddhist scripture is to import a model that is foreign to most of the literary processes that have shaped the production of Indian religious texts".

²⁵ In order to facilitate comparison between the two versions, in my translation of MĀ 165 I adopt the paragraph numbering used in Ñāṇamoli 2005: 1044-1049 for the Pāli discourse. For the same reason, I employ Pāli terminology throughout, without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama*.

²⁶ 溫泉林天, thus differing from the Pāli version's title *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*.

²⁷ According to MN 133 at MN III 192,2, the Buddha was also staying in the *ta-podārāma*.

²⁸ In MN 133 at MN III 192,5, Samiddhi just stands and lets his limbs dry by themselves, *aṭṭhāsi gattāni pubbāpayamāno*.

²⁹ MN 133 does not report that the *deva* paid respect by bowing down.

³⁰ In MN 133 at MN III 192,11, the *deva* instead inquires after the "summary and analysis" of these verses, *uddesaṅ ca vibhaṅgaṅ ca*, and after Samiddhi has explained that he does not know them, the *deva* asks after the verses themselves.

³¹ MĀ 165 at T I 696c7: 跋地羅帝, yielding the early middle Chinese pronunciation *bat di^h la te^h* (following Pulleyblank 1991: 27, 76 and 203). Sanskrit fragment versions of this expression can be found in SHT III 816 V3 in Waldschmidt 1971: 32, which reads: *bhadragarātrīya* (cf. also R2), and in fragment 3 b3 in Minayeff 1983: 243, which reads: *bhadrakarātrīyah*. The Tibetan version

Q *mdo shu* 171a7 (used throughout this study as a representative of the altogether five extant versions) speaks of an "auspicious night", *mtshan mo bzang po*, corresponding to *bhadrakarātrī*. MN 133 at MN III 192,11 reads *bhaddeka-ratta*. Bodhi in Nāṇamoli 2005: 1342 note 1210 explains that "ratta and ratti could be taken to represent respectively either Skt *rātra* and *rātri* (= night) or Skt *rakta* and *rakti* (= attachment)". The Sanskrit and Tibetan versions support the first alternative.

³² This inquiry and the *deva* directing Samiddhi to the Buddha are not found in MN 133.

³³ In MN 133 at MN III 192,25, the *deva* only indicates that these verses are beneficial and fundamental for the holy life, *atthasaṃhita* and *ādibrahmacariyaka*. The next sentence in MĀ 165 (on the son of a good family) is without a counterpart in MN 133.

³⁴ In MN 133 at MN III 192,27, the *deva* simply vanishes, without paying respect or performing circumambulations.

³⁵ MĀ 165 repeats the full account of the meeting between Samiddhi and the *deva*.

³⁶ This inquiry and the subsequent revelation of the *deva*'s name is not found in MN 133.

³⁷ At this point, MĀ 165 at T I 697a11 switches from the earlier 天, **deva*, to 天子, **devaputta*. Childers 1993: 115 s.v. *devaputto* explains that "*devaputto* ... means simply a male deva", so that this change of terminology may be of no further significance.

³⁸ In MN 133 at MN III 193,6, Samiddhi instead requests the Buddha to teach the summary and analysis on an auspicious night.

³⁹ MN 133 does not explicitly refer to other monks at this point, though their presence is evident from the continuity of the discourse.

⁴⁰ Parallels to this verse can also be found in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, T 1579 at T XXX 387c28, cf. also Enomoto 1989: 35 and Wayman 1989: 209; further parallels are listed in Skilling 1997: 82.

⁴¹ The second part of this verse in MN 133 at MN III 193,15 instead reads: "immovable and unshakeable, having known it let him [continue to] cultivate [in this way]", *asaṃhīraṃ asaṃkappaṃ, taṃ vidvāmanubrūhaye*. The corresponding part in T 1362 at T XXI 882a5 reads: "erroneous ideas in the mind are difficult to dispel, [hence] the wise should contemplate properly", 妄想心難遣, 智人應善觀. The Tibetan version at Q *mdo shu* 172a8 reads: "without being led astray by conceptual thought, one [should] completely and thoroughly understand [phenomena]", *rnam par rtog pas mi 'phrogs par, de dag thams cad khong du chud*.

⁴² MN 133 at MN III 193,16 reads: "right now diligence should be done, who knows if death will come tomorrow, there is no bargaining with Death and his great armies", *ajj' eva kiccā ātappaṃ, ko jaññā maraṇaṃ suve, na hi no saṅgaramaṃ tena, mahāsenena maccunā*. T 1362 at T XXI 882a6 reads: "it is fitting to quickly make an effort, who knows what will happen tomorrow, because that

King of Death [and his] assembly, are closely following you", 宜可速勤修。焉知至明日，由彼死王眾，與汝鎮相隨。The Tibetan parallel at Q *mdo shu* 172a8 reads: "I may die tomorrow - who knows? [Therefore], already today I should be diligent, [since] the King of Death and [his] great army are not my friends", *sang tsam shi yang su shes kyis, de ring nyid du brtun te byas, 'chi bdag sde chen de dang ni, bdag tu bshes pa ma yin no*.

⁴³ The second part of this verse in MN 133 at MN III 193,19 instead reads: "to him, indeed, the night is auspicious, so the peaceful sage has explained", *taṃ ve bhaddekaratto 'ti, santo ācikkhate muni*. The corresponding part in T 1362 at T XXI 882a8 reads: "for this reason I, the sage, have now expounded the discourse on an auspicious night", 是故我牟尼，善夜經今說。The relevant part of this verse in Q *mdo shu* 172b2 reads: "for this reason the discourse on an auspicious night has always been taught by the sage", *de phyir mtshan mo bzang po yi, mdo sde thub pas rtag tu gsungs*.

⁴⁴ MĀ 165 gives the verses in full.

⁴⁵ In MN 133, the monks do not explicitly indicate their intention to remember Mahākaccāna's explanation.

⁴⁶ MĀ 165 repeats the verses and the reflection of the monks.

⁴⁷ In MN 133 at MN III 194,29, the request by the monks does not refer to compassion.

⁴⁸ MN 133 does not mention the axe.

⁴⁹ MĀ 165 at T I 697c4 employs the character 觸 to describe the action of this man. The usual meaning of 觸 is "to touch", though Hirakawa 1997: 1069 indicates that the same character can also render *upahanyamāna* and *parāmr̥ṣṭa*, which would better fit the present context. MN 133 at MN III 195,1 speaks of thinking that heartwood should be sought among branches and leaves, *sākhapalāse sāraṃ pariyesitabbaṃ maññeyya*.

⁵⁰ MN 133 at MN III 195,5 reads: "the Blessed one knows [what is to be] known, the Blessed One sees [what is to be] seen, he has become vision, he has become knowledge, he has become the *Dhamma*, he has become Brahmā, he is the speaker, expounder, and elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the *Dhamma*, the *Tathāgata*", *Bhagavā jānaṃ jānāti passaṃ passati cakkhuhūto nāṇabhūto dhammabhūto brahmabhūto vattā pavattā atthassa ninnetā amatassa dātā dhammassāmī tathāgato*.

⁵¹ In MN 133 at MN III 195,19, the monks express their hope that giving an explanation will not inconvenience him, *agarukarivā*. According to MĀ 165 at T I 697c17, they appeal to his compassion, 為慈愍故。

⁵² Under paragraph 12 in Ñāṇamoli's translation, corresponding to MN 133 at MN III 195,27 in the PTS edition, *Mahākaccāna* repeats the verses spoken by the Buddha. In MĀ 165, this repetition comes only at the end of *Mahākaccāna's* explanation at T I 698b8, where it is also found in MN 133 at MN III 198,9.

⁵³ MĀ 165 at T I 697c20: 比丘實有眼知色可喜。Notably, in relation to future and present, MĀ 165 does not qualify the sense organs as "really" existing.

⁵⁴ MN 133 at MN III 195,32 reads: "such was my eye in the past, such were forms', [thinking like this] consciousness is bound by desire and lust. Due to consciousness being bound by desire and lust, he delights in [the past visual experience]. Delighting in that, he follows after the past", *iti me cakkhuṃ ahoṣi atītaṃ addhānaṃ iti rūpā 'ti tattha chandarāgapaṭibaddhaṃ hoti viññāṇaṃ, chandarāgapaṭibaddhattā viññāṇassa tad abhinandati, tad abhinandato atītaṃ anvāgameti.*

⁵⁵ MĀ 165 abbreviates ear, nose, tongue and body, but again gives a full treatment of the mind.

⁵⁶ MĀ 165 treats the opposite case in full, following the pattern of its treatment of thinking about the past.

⁵⁷ MN 133 at MN III 196,25 reads: "may my eye be such in the future, may forms be such', [thinking like this] the mind is inclined towards getting of what has not been gotten. Because of the mind being inclined, he delights in [the future visual experience]. Delighting in that, he hopes for the future", *iti me cakkhuṃ siyā anāgataṃ addhānaṃ iti rūpā 'ti appaṭiladdhassa paṭilābhāya cittaṃ paṇidahati, cetaso paṇidhānapaccayā tad abhinandati, tad abhinandato anāgataṃ paṭikankhati.*

⁵⁸ MĀ 165 abbreviates ear, nose, tongue and body, but again gives a full treatment of the mind.

⁵⁹ MĀ 165 treats the opposite case in full, following the pattern of its treatment of longing for the future.

⁶⁰ MN 133 at MN III 197,15 reads: "the eye and forms, friends, are both presently arisen. [If] consciousness is bound by desire and lust in regard to what is presently arisen, [then], due to consciousness being bound by desire and lust, he delights in [the present visual experience]. Delighting in that, he is overwhelmed by presently arisen phenomena", *yañ c' āvuso cakkhuṃ ye cā rūpā ubhayaṃ etaṃ paccuppannaṃ, tasmिṃ yeva paccuppanne chandarāgapaṭibaddhaṃ hoti viññāṇaṃ, chandarāgapaṭibaddhattā viññāṇassa tad abhinandati, tad abhinandato paccuppannesu dhammesu saṃhīrati.*

⁶¹ MĀ 165 abbreviates ear, nose, tongue and body, but again gives a full treatment of the mind.

⁶² MĀ 165 treats the opposite case in full, following the pattern of its treatment of clinging in the present moment.

⁶³ MĀ 165 gives the verses in full.

⁶⁴ MN 133 does not report that Mahākaccāna explicitly told the monks to repeat his explanation in front of the Buddha, though the same is implicit in his invitation that they should ask the Buddha about the meaning of the verses, MN III 198,14: *etaṃ atthaṃ paṭipuccheyyātha.*

⁶⁵ MN 133 does not record that the monks remembered Mahākaccāna's exposition well, nor that they circumambulated him.

⁶⁶ The Buddha's praise of Mahākaccāna in MN 133 at MN III 199,11 reads: "monks, Mahākaccāna is wise, monks, Mahākaccāna has great wisdom", *paṇḍīto, bhikkhave, Mahākaccāno, mahāpañño, bhikkhave, Mahākaccāno.*

⁶⁷ This question and the following sentence are not found in MN 133.

⁶⁸ Cf. Ñānamoli 2005: 1343 note 1210. Ñāṇaponika 1977: 346 note 966 relates the expression *bhaddekaratta* to the Brahminical custom of spending a religious observance night by fasting, staying awake, and meditating.

⁶⁹ Rhys Davids 1921: 132 illustrates this mode of teaching with the imagery of "pouring new wine into the old bottles". Hershock 2005: 4 speaks of "openly accommodating ... existing political, social and religious authorities" and then focussing "on how they might be skilfully *redirected*", expressive of a "general strategy of accepting, but then pointedly revising the meaning" of contemporary conceptions.

⁷⁰ MN 133 at MN III 193,18: *ahorattaṃ*, and MĀ 165 at T I 697a24: 晝夜. Ñāṇananda 1984: 3 comments that "the *Bhaddekaratta-suttas* do not appear to envisage withdrawal from thoughts of the past, future and present for so little as one night. On the contrary, the verses ... say that the person to be called *bhaddekaratta* is he who abides ardently and unweariedly day and night, that is, surely for some consecutive time lasting longer than 'one night'".

⁷¹ According to Thanissaro 2002: 346, the reference to a night in the expression *bhaddekaratta* "should be interpreted in light of the custom – common in cultures that follow the lunar calendar – of calling a 24-hour period of day-and-night a 'night'"; cf. also Winternitz 1908: 361 note 1, who explains that Indians reckon time in "nights", instead of "days".

⁷² MN 133 at MN III 193,11 enjoins that one "should not follow after the past", *atītaṃ nānvāgameyya*, with the commentary Ps IV 239 explaining that *anvāgameti* intends *anugacchati*, "to go after" (by way of craving and views).

⁷³ Ñāṇananda 1984: 27 clarifies, however, that "it is not so much the mere recollection of the past that is the bondage ... it is the tendency to retrace, revive, re-live and relish the past that has to be eliminated", that is, the problem is not memory as such, but attachment and delight in regard to what is remembered.

⁷⁴ MN 133 at MN III 193,13: *tattha tattha vipassati, asaṃhīraṃ asaṃkappaṃ*.

⁷⁵ Ps V 1: *aniccānupassanādīhi sattahi anupassanāhi ... vipassati*.

⁷⁶ MN 131 at MN III 187-189. This discourse appears to have no Chinese counterpart. However, Sanskrit fragment SHT III 816 in Waldschmidt 1971: 32 could be a partial parallel to MN 131, as SHT III 816 V1-2 records that the Buddha was at Jeta's Grove by Sāvattihī and addressed the monks on his own when delivering the verses, which is similar to the introductory narration in MN 131 at MN III 187,13.

⁷⁷ MN 132 at MN III 189-191, which has a parallel in MĀ 167 at T I 699c-700b.

⁷⁸ MN 134 at MN III 199-202, which has two Chinese parallels, MĀ 166 at T I 698c-699c and T 77 at T I 886a-887a.

⁷⁹ MN 10 at MN I 61,3: *iti rūpaṃ, iti rūpassa samudayo, iti rūpassa atthagamo; iti vedanā ... iti saññā ... iti saṅkhārā ... iti viññāṇaṃ, iti viññāṇassa samudayo, iti viññāṇassa atthagamo*.

⁸⁰ SN 22:78 at SN III 84,22.

⁸¹ SN 22:102 at SN III 157,3: *iti rūpaṃ ... iti viññāṇassa atthagamo 'ti. evaṃ bhāvitā ... aniccasaññā ... sabbam kāmarāgaṃ pariyādiyati ... sabbam aviijaṃ pariyādiyati, sabbam asmimānaṃ samūhanati*. The parallel SĀ 270 at T II

70c28 similarly indicates that awareness of the impermanent nature of the five aggregates will remove all desires, conceit and ignorance, 觀察色無常, 受, 想, 行, 識無常, 如是思惟, 斷一切欲愛 ... 慢, 無明.

⁸² Gethin 1992: 56 comments that "the practice of watching rise and fall with regard to the five aggregates of grasping seems to be particularly associated with the gaining of the insight that leads directly to the destruction of the *āsavas*, directly to awakening".

⁸³ Dhp 348; with parallels in verse 161 in Brough 2001: 144, *muju pura muju pachadu, majadu muju bhavasa parako*; verse 150 in Cone 1989: 142, *muñca pure muñca pacchato, majjhe muñca bhavassa pārāgū*; verse 29.57 in Bernhard 1965: 391, *muñca purato muñca paścato, madhye muñca bhavasya pārāgaḥ*; verse 29.60 in Zongtse 1990: 326: "let go of past and future, let go of [what is] in between, transcend existence, *sngon bral phyi ma dang bral zhing, dbus bral srid pa'i pha rol phyin*; T 210 at T IV 569b12: "avoid [what is] before and be free of [what is] behind, let go of the middle, cross over [all] that", 釋前 解後, 脫中度彼 (following the indication in Hirakawa 1997: 1177 that 釋 can also render *pari + √hr*); T 212 at T 752c23: " let go of [what is] before, let go of [what is] behind, let go of [what is] between, transcend existence", 捨前捨後, 捨間越有; and T 213 at T IV 794a13: " let go of [what is] before and let go of [what is] behind, let go of [what is] between, transcend existence", 捨前及捨後, 捨間越於有.

⁸⁴ In the case of Pāli and Chinese sources, quotations are according to the PTS and Taishō editions by giving first the discourse by number and then its location by volume, page and line; in the case of Tibetan sources, quotations are to the location in the Derge and Peking editions.