

Article

Meditation on the Body in Chapter 7 of Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra

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Abstract: Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra is an Indian Buddhist sutra dating to the first half of the first millennium. Chapter 7 of the sutra consists of a very long meditation on the body, unusual in Buddhist literature for its anatomical, especially osteological, detail. The meditation also includes extensive descriptions of many internal worms as well as the internal winds that destroy the worms at the moment of death. The sutra has several elements not found in other Buddhist texts. For example, the Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra meditation on the body includes extensive descriptions of things in the external world (e.g., rivers, mountains, flowers) and designates them as the “external body”. Most strikingly, the meditation on the body found in Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra differs from the general scholarly perception of Buddhist meditations on the body in that it does not emphasize impurity or generate repulsion. Instead, the sutra guides the meditator through a dispassionate and “scientific” observation of the body and the world.

Keywords: Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra; meditation on the body; meditation on the impure; impurity; internal worms; internal winds; Buddhism; Indian medicine

1. Introduction

The Buddhist meditation on the body is found in many texts and in several different contexts. The most comprehensive context is the category of *kāyānupaśyanā* (*xun shen guan* 循身觀) or *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna* (*shen nianchu* 身念處), one of the four *smṛtyupasthānas* (bases of mindfulness, *nian chu* 念處). *Kāyasmṛtyupasthāna* includes meditations on the corpse in various stages of decomposition (*aśubhabhāvanā*, *bujing guan* 不淨觀), on body parts (*kāyagatāsmṛti*, *shen nian* 身念), and on breathing (*ānāpānasmṛti*, *nian anban* 念安般). Among other practices related to the body are meditations on the elements of which the body is composed (*dhātuprabheda*, *guan jie* 觀界), on death (*maranānusmṛti*, *sinian* 死念) and on the impurity of food (*āhāre pratikūlasaṃjñā*, *shi bujing xiang* 食不淨想). The relationship among these meditations is complicated. For example, although *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna* generally includes *aśubhabhāvanā*, there is some debate about whether *aśubhabhāvanā* is really *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*, or just a preliminary practice leading to *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna*. This disagreement is found in a discussion of the relative values of *aśubhabhāvanā* and *ānāpānasmṛti*. In some texts, for example, *Śrāvākabhūmi*, meditation on body parts is considered to be internal *aśubhabhāvanā*, and meditation on the corpse is external *aśubhabhāvanā* (Kritzer 2017, pp. 37–39). A very unusual meditation on the body is found in Chapter 7 of *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*.

Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra is an important and little studied text, probably completed by the beginning of the fifth century (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, p. 43). Stuart suggests that it originated in “the northwest of the Indian subcontinent” and associates it with what he calls “(Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda” (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 16, 49). The sutra, in the Chinese translation, consists of seven chapters: good and bad actions (*shi shanye dao pin* 十善業道品), the human realm (*shengsi pin* 生死品), hells (*diyu pin* 地獄品), hungry ghosts (*egui pin* 餓鬼品), animals (*chusheng pin* 畜生品), gods (*guantian pin* 觀天品),

and meditation on the body (*shen nianchu pin* 身念處品). However, as Stuart points out, only the Chinese translation includes regular chapter divisions and titles (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, p. 468 n. 28). Much of the text is presented as the observations of a meditating monk, a *yogācāra*, giving vast quantities of cosmological and doctrinal detail. (In this sutra, *yogācāra* is used in the meaning of “meditative practitioner” (see Silk 2000, especially pp. 303–4), not “member of the Yogācāra school”). A partial Sanskrit manuscript of the first six of seven chapters is extant. There is a complete sixth-century Chinese translation, *Zheng fa nian chu jing* 正法念處經 (T721), by Gautama Prajñāruci (Qutan boreliuzhi 瞿曇般若流支). A Tibetan translation, *Dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzhag pa* (Tohoku 287), is attributed to Tshul khriims rgyal mtshan (twelfth century); however, there is a possibility that only Chapter 7 and the last part of Chapter 6 were actually his work (Van der Kuijp 2009, pp. 7–11). There is also a modern Japanese translation in the *Kokuyakuissaiikyō* series (*kyōju bu* 8–11). The sutra is very long, 417 pages in the Taishō edition of the Chinese translation.

The Sanskrit text of Chapter 2 has been edited and translated, together with a critical edition of the Tibetan translation, by Stuart (2015a). Chapter 1 is being edited by Vesna Wallace and Chapter 3 by Mitsuyo Demoto. I am in the process of editing and translating the Tibetan translation of Chapter 7. The pioneering study, in French, was published in 1949 by Lin Li-kouang. Several scholars, including Stuart (2015b, 2017a, 2017b), Demoto (2009), Scherrer-Schaub (2009), and Moretti (2017), have recently written articles concerning the sutra.

Chapter 7 is extant in Chinese and Tibetan but not Sanskrit. It is the only chapter with a separate title but only in the Tibetan: *Lus dran pa nye bar gzhag par zhes bya ba'i chos kyi nam grangs*. Stuart translated this back into Sanskrit as **Kāyasmṛtyupasthānaṃ nāma dharmaparyāya* and more recently refers to it as a separate work, **Kāyasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (Stuart 2017b, p. 193 n. 4). Stuart and Lin agree that Chapter 7 is actually a distinct text, but they disagree regarding its relationship to the other six chapters. Lin, pointing to its “role tautologique” and the order in which it presents the five birth destinies, thinks that it does not fit well with the structural framework of the other chapters and suggests that it may be a later addition (Lin 1949, p. 108). Stuart, on the other hand, believes that the difference in the order of the birth destinies does not present a problem (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, p. 50 n. 45), and he sees a close relationship between what he considers two distinct texts: “many aspects of this text’s language and doctrine echo those of the first six chapters of the *Saddhṣu*, and the two texts are almost certainly the product of the same community of scholar-practitioners” (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, p. 106). He does not, however, speculate on how Chapter 7 was incorporated into the larger text. In this article, I refer to “Chapter 7” for convenience, although, as Stuart suggests, a good case can be made for calling it *Kāyasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*. A portion of the chapter has been translated into French by Lévi (1918, pp. 16–57).

The Chinese and Tibetan translations of Chapter 7 correspond in their general outlines, but there are many differences in detail. The Tibetan translation seems to be somewhat longer than the Chinese, although this may be due in large part to the relative wordiness of the Tibetan compared to the Chinese. Some lists of items are not exactly the same, and some names of worms (Tibetan *srin*, Chinese *chong* 蟲 or 虫) and winds (Tibetan *rlung*, Chinese *feng* 風) are completely different. Most strikingly, the Tibetan translation of Chapter 7 includes the word *theg pa chen po* (Mahāyāna) twenty-four times. The word also appears twenty-nine times in the later portion of Chapter 6 but nowhere else. The Chinese translation does not mention Mahāyāna at all. Although the inclusion of Mahāyāna in the Tibetan may have a different explanation, other inconsistencies may suggest that the two translations of Chapter 7 are based on different recensions of the no longer extant original Sanskrit. (Stuart has confirmed that the Sanskrit manuscript and the Chinese and Tibetan translations of Chapter 2, at least, are “witnesses to a single recension” (Stuart 2015a, p. 42). However, given the likelihood that Chapter 7 is a separate text, the possibility of more than one recension remains. I have examined the differences between the two translations of Chapter 7 in an unpublished paper presented at the 15th seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (Kritzer 2019).

My main purpose in this article is to provide an overview of Chapter 7. Neither of the authors of the two monographs on the sutra has done so. The Japanese translation in the *Kokuyakuissaiikyō* series is sparsely annotated and does not provide any subheadings to guide the reader through the text. The meditation on the body presented in this sutra is extremely long, 38 Taishō pages and 118 leaves in the Derge Kanjur, and even a very abbreviated outline runs several pages. The broadest divisions are: an introduction (*Dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzhaḡ pa*, D sha 109b7–117b1;¹ *Zheng fa nian chu jing*, T721.379a9–381c11);² the internal body, including beings in the five *gatis*, worms and body parts, and internal winds (D sha 117b1–172a5; T721.381c11–398c21); and the external world, including external causation, the four continents, rivers, and mountains (D sha 172a5–227b7; T721.398c22–417c18). Since very little has been written about Chapter 7, my paper consists largely of representative passages from these sections, based on the Tibetan unless I note otherwise.

In addition, there are two points that I mention throughout my discussion. In Buddhist meditations on the body, the goal is to eliminate attachment to the world. In many texts, meditations on the corpse and meditations on the body stress the repulsive aspects of the body in order to induce disgust. *Visuddhimagga* includes a well-known version of the meditation that is full of disgusting and grotesque descriptions of the human body and is sometimes considered a representative version of the meditation. However, the meditation in *Visuddhimagga*, a text distant from *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* chronologically and geographically and in terms of school affiliation, is not the only example of a meditation that emphasizes the repulsive. *Chanfa yaojie*, a meditation manual (*chanjing*) translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva, is closer to *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* in time, place, and school. The descriptions of the body in *Chanfa yaojie* (T616) and the closely related *Chanyao jing* (T609) rival *Visuddhimagga* in their disgusting imagery and derogatory language. *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, on the other hand, seems to appeal more to the intellect than to the gut. It provides a vast amount of what was considered objective data about the body (e.g., that internal winds maintain the body, govern its movement, and destroy internal worms just before death), interspersed with reminders that the body is not to be valued, for the usual Buddhist reasons. The tone is dispassionate. It is not impossible that there are other meditations on the body that are more similar to *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* than to *Visuddhimagga* and *Chanfa yaojie*, but I have not found them. A comprehensive survey of other descriptions of meditations on the body from northwest India before the year 400 is necessary to determine whether *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* is truly atypical in this respect.

The other unusual feature of this chapter is the attention paid to the external world. The meaning of the phrase “external body” (*phyi rol gyi lus*) in descriptions of meditation on the external body seems to vary from text to text. *Vibhāṣā* says it refers to matter (*rūpa*) belonging to the body of another and to *rūpa* that does not belong to the category of beings (Apidamo da piposha lun, T1545.940b2–4). Sometimes, it is defined as only the body of another being. For example, *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭīkā* states that “external” means belonging to the serial continuity (*saṃtāna*), i.e., the personal existence, of other beings (*phyi rol gyi ni sems can gzhan gyi rgyud du gtogs pa'i lus so*) (*Blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa rgya cher 'grel pa*, [D ci 234a2]). Other texts, for example, *Śrāvākabhūmi*, say that “external” indicates only matter that does not belong to the category of beings (*yadā bahirdhā asattvaṣaṃkhyātaṃ rūpam ālambanīkaroti evaṃ bahirdhā kāye kāyānudarśī viharati*) (*Śrāvākabhūmi Study Group 2007*, vol. 2, 188.12–13). This is the meaning in *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, where “external body” refers to the entire external world.

¹ In this paper, “D sha” refers to the Derge edition of the Tibetan translation of *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*; for the sake of economy and readability, all citations to *Dam pa'i chos dran pa nye bar gzhaḡ pa dran pa nye bar gzhaḡ pa* will hereafter omit the Tibetan title of the sutra and begin “D sha.”

² In this paper, “T721” refers to the Taishō edition of the Chinese translation of *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*; for the sake of economy and readability, all citations to *Zheng fa nian chu jing* will hereafter omit the Chinese title of the sutra and begin “T721.”

As far as I know, the portion of Chapter 7 devoted to meditation on the external body is the only discussion of this meditation in detail, let alone at such prodigious length.

In his remarks on Chapter 7, Stuart states that “many of the cosmological materials found in the other chapters of the text are revisited” (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 49–50). Furthermore, there are other passages on meditation on the body elsewhere in the sutra. At least three can be found in Chapter 2 (references are to Stuart’s edition and translation, as well as to the Chinese and Tibetan texts): in a section on the six elements (*dhātus*) (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 326–37; T721.12c8–13b16; D ya 110b2–112b5), in a section on the material bases of cognition (*āyatana*s) (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 442–53; T721.20b6–21a14; D ya 130a3–132a5), and in a section on knowledge of action and results (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 502–5; T721.24c2–29; D ya 141a2–b4), where a meditation on the impure is described. However, although they are important, the details of the relationship between Chapter 7 and the other six chapters are beyond the scope of this article. I hope to explore them in the future.

2. Results Contents of *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, Chapter 7

2.1. Introduction

The chapter begins with a frame story (*nidāna*), which narrates the occasion on which the Buddha preached the sutra and in which the Buddha announces the title of the sermon: *Kāyasmṛtyupasthāna* (D sha 110a2; T721.379a11). As Daniel Stuart notes, this is the only chapter of the sutra that has its own title and *nidāna* (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, p. 49). The Buddha first explains the results of contemplating the body: avoidance of Māra, elimination of defilements (*kleśas*), understanding of the true nature of the body, reaching nirvana, and not being overcome by incorrect thinking. At this point, he defines the body: it is not only the internal eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind; the external visual objects, tastes, smells, objects of touch, and sounds, as well as mental *dharma*s, are also the body (D sha 110a3–7; T721.379a15–21).

Next, 26 body parts and fluids are listed in the Tibetan (D sha 110a7–b1). The Chinese lists somewhat more than 30, depending on whether certain pairs of Chinese characters represent one item or two separate items (T721.379a22–25). Different texts list different numbers of body parts, and the body parts mentioned and the order in which they are listed vary from text to text. For example, *Visuddhimagga* refers to 32 (Ñāṇamoli [1956] 1975, p. 260; *Visuddhimagga* 1950, p. 198), while *Chanfa yaojie* mention 36 (T616.286c1–4; Greene points out that the list in *Chanyao jing* is identical (Greene 2006, p. 177)). In *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, there is no description of the individual parts and no characterization of them as being disgusting. Instead, the eyes, as representative of the sense organs, are analyzed. They are described as “lumps of the four Great Elements (*mahābhūtas*)”, and the practitioner is instructed to understand the physical sensations in the eyes in terms of these elements, for example: “As for this material cause of the experience of hardness when something a little hard is in these internal eyes of mine, which are lumps of flesh, it is the earth element of my internal eyes, which are lumps of flesh” (D sha 110b2–4; T721.379a26–29). This procedure, applied to the other organs as well, is said to eliminate craving and the desire for pleasure (D sha 110b6–7; T721.379b5–7). A deconstruction of the sense organs perhaps related to this is found in the section on the material bases of cognition in Chapter 2, mentioned above.

The practitioner is then said to recognize that the body is illusory, empty, suffering, impermanent, and subject to change and destruction (D sha 111a1–3; T721.379b8–12). Furthermore, he realizes that karma is the body’s refuge and protector, leading to good or bad rebirths (D sha 111a3–4; T721.379b13–17). This statement reflects the sutra’s emphasis on karma in meditation, which Stuart identifies as one of its most prominent features (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 59–61 and elsewhere). Finally, the practitioner finds nothing substantial, essential, stable, or clean in the body and, as a result, becomes free from both craving in terms of desire for pleasure and craving related to the elements (D sha 111a4–5; T721.379b17–18).

This introduction sets the tone for the remainder of the chapter. Unlike texts like *Visuddhimagga*, which focuses from the outset on the repulsiveness of the body, the sutra dispassionately presents an extraordinary amount of “scientific” information, interspersed with reminders of the benefits of correctly understanding both the internal body and the external world.

2.2. Investigating the Internal Body by Means of Internal Dharmas

2.2.1. Sense Organs in the Birth Destinies (Gatis): Humans

Immediately after the introduction, the text describes how the sense organs operate in the various continents. Below, I summarize the passage about vision in humans.

After the practitioner analyzes the eye, as described in the introduction, he turns his attention to the process of sight. As in almost every paragraph of the chapter, he is said to use his wisdom obtained by listening (i.e., to the speech of an authoritative person) or his heavenly eye to see things as they really are. He notes that humans in Jambudvīpa require the conditions of the eye, namely, the visual object, light, space, and mental attention. By contrast, people in Uttarakuru, who dwell in the air, can see visual objects that are obscured by mountains, just as fish can see visual objects in water. The Chinese translation explicitly states that Uttarakuru people do not need unobstructed space through which to view things. Although the text does not mention karma here, it is clearly what determines birth in Uttarakuru, a superior continent according to Indian religions, including Buddhism, where people are much taller and live much longer than people like us in Jambudvīpa (D *sha* 111a5–b2; T721.379b19–26).

This information does not elicit disgust and is not obviously conducive to disillusionment. However, like typical *abhidharma* explanations, it presents perception as the result of conditions, among which a perceiving self is not included. Perhaps, by repeated realizations of the same sort, the practitioner escapes attachment, not through revulsion but through knowledge.

2.2.2. Suffering in All Gatis

After the other organs are analyzed and the differences and similarities among people in the four continents are summarized (D *sha* 111b2–114a5; T721.379b27–380c2), the realms of gods, hell beings, *pretas*, and animals are described (D *sha* 114a5–117a2; T721.380c3–381c3). In the case of the three undesirable realms, the focus turns from the sense organs to the unpleasant conditions of these birth destinations. These, however, are not described as dirty or impure, although according to the Chinese translation, *pretas* hate their food, lack food, or eat unclean things, and become food for each other (T721.381b19–20). (The Tibetan does not mention hateful or unclean food.) Finally, the description ends with a sermon on the suffering in all *gatis* (D *sha* 117a3–b1; T721.381c3–11).

After he has observed animals as they really are, the practitioner realizes that, in all three undesirable realms (according to the Tibetan) or all five realms (according to the Chinese), everything desirable and pleasant, without exception, changes and vanishes. Among the three undesirable realms (Tibetan) or all five (Chinese), there is not even a little bit that is desirable or pleasant (D *sha* 117a3–5; T721.381c3–6).

Samsara is not to be desired. It is unpleasant, unfavorable, seductive, and subject to disintegration. As a result, all beings suffer extraordinarily. Monks should quickly liberate themselves from things that are useless, seductive, subject to disintegration, impermanent, suffering, darkness-making, and insignificant (D *sha* 117a5–7; T721.381c6–11).

The sutra says, “Thus, Brahmans, householders, and monks of the town of Nālati, the practitioner, having observed his own internal body and the external body as they really are, dwells in contemplation on the body with respect to the body” (D *sha* 117a7–b1; not in Chinese).

Again, the emphasis is on an intellectual understanding of impermanence and suffering, not a visceral horror at disgusting details.

2.2.3. Introduction to the Internal Meditation

Next follows a detailed description of various body parts and the worms that inhabit them (for a brief discussion of worms in *Garbhāvākraṅtisūtra* and the classical Indian medical literature, see (Kritzer 2014b, pp. 183–88). A detailed discussion of worms in *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, including a survey of worms in other Indian Buddhist texts, will appear in Kritzer (forthcoming). The section begins with its own introduction, again mentioning the Brahmans, etc., of the town of Nālati. The Brahmans, householders, and monks of the town of Nālati are told that if the practitioner is established in the contemplation on the body with regard to his own internal body, he observes as they really are the filthy parts, in his own internal body as well as in anybody else’s internal body. Having investigated them analytically, he contemplates the body repeatedly from the head to the feet (D *sha* 117b1–3; T721.381c11–14).

This is one of the rather few places in the chapter where the expression “filth/filthy” or “impure” (here, *mi gtsang ba, bujing* 不淨) is used as an adjective rather than as a noun for excrement or other outflows.

2.2.4. Body Parts and Worms

The section on body parts and worms is organized in a peculiar way. First, four lumps of brain are said to be contained in the four bones of the skull. Ten types of worms in the skull, the brains, the hair, the ears, etc., are briefly described. In most cases, they eat the body part where they live, and, when they get angry, they harm their host (D *sha* 117b3–118a4; T721.381c14–382a1).

Next, the text seems to backtrack. The practitioner observes the number of bones in the head, including the four skull bones previously mentioned. The bones are listed in descending order from the skull to the throat. Then, again in descending order, the number of lumps of flesh are enumerated (D *sha* 118a4–b1; T721.382a2–11). Finally, there is a list of ten types of worms in the throat. Each of these worms is described in more detail than the worms mentioned at the beginning of the section. For example:

The practitioner asks himself: “In what parts of this body do my worms perform what actions that make me sick or healthy?” (D *sha* 118b3; T721.382a12–13). (Because the Tibetan is particularly hard to understand here, the following is a rough summary based on both translations.) The practitioner is said to observe the following with his wisdom obtained by listening or with his heavenly eye: Worms that eat spit live in the throat. When ground into powder by the teeth, they fall into the stomach below and are covered by filth like vomit and are mixed with snot. The worms eat the snot, mixed with the filth that covers the worms. The worms become numerous, and if the person eats food that is oily, sweet, too heavy, too sour, or too cool, the worms become very fat and make the person cough up phlegm because they rise into the throat (D *sha* 118b3–6; T721.382a12–19).

There are several interesting points here. Like most of the descriptions in this section, this description refers to the possibility that the worms have beneficial effects for the person. (Another example is that a saliva-producing worm is said to prevent food from being regurgitated and to cause nutritive liquid to flow properly (D *sha* 119a1; T721.382a22–24).) In the case of spit-eating worms, nothing beneficial is mentioned specifically, but it may be implied that, by consuming spit, the worms perform a useful function.

Some of the details in the description of spit-eating worms may seem somewhat disgusting, but the language is matter-of-fact, not pejorative. The word here that I translate as “filth,” *ljan ljin*, does not describe either the throat or the worms; rather, it is used as a general term for things like vomit. The Chinese simply mentions vomit, with nothing corresponding to *ljan ljin*. This description contrasts strikingly with a description of worms in the stomach from *Visuddhimagga*. The translation is Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli’s; I have underlined the phrases that evoke disgust:

“(The stomach is where) the assortment of food, drink, etc., falls after being pounded up by the tongue and stuck together with spittle and the appearance of weavers’ paste and dogs’ vomit, then to get soused in the bile and phlegm and wind that have collected there, where it ferments with the

energy of the stomach-fire's heat, seethes with the families of worms, frothing and bubbling on the top, till it turns into utterly stinking, nauseating muck, even to hear about which takes away any appetite for food, drink, etc., let alone to see it with the eye of understanding" (Nāṇamoli [1956] 1975, p. 278; *Visuddhimagga* 1950, p. 214).

The imaginative similes of weaver's paste, a kind of starch used by weavers to stiffen cloth, dog vomit, and the straightforwardly pejorative "utterly stinking, nauseating" indeed help take away the reader's appetite. (I am not suggesting that *Visuddhimagga* is typical in its description of the worms' behavior. Most Buddhist accounts of worms include little more than their names and the part of the body that they infest.)

2.2.5. Benefits of Meditating on Worms, Part 1

After the description of worms in the throat, the sutra specifies the good results of meditating on worms: freedom from desire for flavors on the tongue, the destruction of attachment to flavors in this life and future ones, freedom from desire for the sea of flavors, and release from attachment to eating. Not coming and going in the houses of donors and patrons, the practitioners do not act as servants. Their wealth and necessities are not very great. They are content with meals of just barley and lentil soup. They do not hate others for their gain and honor. They do not enjoy gathering in groups. They are not conceited due to pride in their temples or monasteries, their bodies, their appearance, their clothing, their begging bowl, their robes, or the care they give to the monks who follow them. They are not conceited about "entering the village". They are not conceited when they look at their relatives. Being on their own, without desire, unsullied, and having overcome sins, they are established in the place of an ascetic. They are established on the edge of nirvana, not in the presence of Māra. (For a discussion of the term "edge of nirvana," see Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, 192). Having meditated on the worms that live in the body, they become free from desire for flavors. Due to that freedom from desire, they are not governed by food (D *sha* 120b6–122b1; T721.383a23–b8).

It is not clear why this section is located where it is, following the sections on worms in the skull and the throat. After this, there are sections on body parts and fluids in the trunk (D *sha* 122b1–124a1; T721.383b9–384a3) and worms in the spleen and liver, flesh, bile, bones, feces, and marrow (D *sha* 124a1–137a4; T721.384a–388a22). A shorter section on the benefits of meditation follows the section on bones (D *sha* 132b5–7; T721.386c19–21), and a general explanation of the benefits of meditation on the body follows the section on marrow (D *sha* 137a4–b2; T721.388a22–b2). One might have expected mention of benefits after each of the above sections or only after the section on marrow.

2.2.6. Body Parts and Fluids in the Trunk

After the first passage on the benefits of meditating on worms, the numbers of bones, joints, and lumps of flesh are given. There seems to be some difference between the Tibetan and the Chinese translations; the Tibetan is particularly unclear, so I rely on the Chinese. As far as I can understand the passage, the back has forty-five bones (fifty-four, according to the Tibetan). The chest has fourteen. There are twelve bones on either side of the body and the same number of joints. From the neck to the buttocks, there are twelve lumps of flesh on either side (D *sha* 122b1–4; T721.383b9–14).

Then, the number of tendons, the weight of fat in the body, and the quantities of water, excrement and phlegm, bile and urine, heat, semen, strength (Chinese: fat, marrow and semen), and wind are calculated. The number of channels is also calculated, and their bases, or origins, are identified (D *sha* 122b4–124a1; T721.383b15–384a3).

The tone of these sections is again neutral and scientific-sounding. For example, the practitioner thinks:

"My water, by the measure of my own handfuls is ten handfuls. The doors by which it becomes mud (Chinese "comes out") are the pores of body hair. That which is known as sweat emerges through my trunk, that which is known as pus from my wounds. When suffering occurs, tears emerge from my eyes" (D *sha* 123a1–3; T721.383b25–27).

The quantities of water, phlegm, bile, feces, and urine agree with the *Śarīrasthāna* section of *Carakasamhitā*, the classical Indian medical text, which, however, gives a separate measurement for sweat and does not mention pus ((*Carakasamhitā* 1981, pp. 459–60 (4.7.15))).

2.2.7. Benefits of Meditating on Worms, Part 2

The text resumes with descriptions of worms, which, as mentioned above, are interrupted by another statement of the benefits of meditating on worms, specifically, worms in the bones:

“Having contemplated as they really are the families of worms that move among the bones, that (practitioner) observes the body as it really is by meditating on the body consisting of bones. His eye is free from darkness; he has surpassed (the state of being) an ordinary person; he is free from affliction and doubt; he is free from suffering; he is completely pure (*rnam par dag pa, qingjing* 清淨, **visuddha*). Since he is delivered from the path of the heretics, a person who has special knowledge of the body as it really is will approach the edge of nirvana” (D *sha* 132b5–7; T721.386c19–21).

This short passage is notable for its claim that meditating on the body makes the practitioner pure. The passage may be related to the impurity meditation in Chapter 2, which is defined as one of the three meditations pertaining to “the sphere of meditation” (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, 501). Again, *Visuddhimagga* provides a contrast. At the end of the section on *kāyagatāsati*, it quotes from *Majjhima Nikāya*, saying that the monk conquers boredom and delight and fear and dread. “He is one who bears cold and heat, who endures arisen bodily feelings that are menacing to life” (Ñānamoli [1956] 1975, p. 285; *Visuddhimagga* 1950, pp. 219–20). No mention is made of purity. In fact, the word *visuddha* appears nowhere in the section, while *suci*, another word meaning “pure”, appears once, in the compound *sucibhāvaṃ*, but only to describe pleasant things that cannot be found in the body.

The state of purity in the sutra is a mental state based on meditation on the impure body and external world. Obviously, the external world does not change, but the practitioner’s susceptibility to it changes. In this case, *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* may be closer to *Chanfa yaojie* than to *Visuddhimagga*. At the end of *Chanfa yaojie*, several verses are spoken by Maudgalyāyana after he has attained arhatship. In the last two, he declares:

“All desires are poison, I have already extinguished them.
I am already far from the five desires, Māra’s net already sundered.
My mind is like empty space, totally unattached to anything.
Even if heavenly beauties were to come, they would be unable to stain my mind.”
(T616.287a18–21; Greene 2006, p. 183)

Success in the meditation is expressed as purity of mind. In *Visuddhimagga*, it is marked by the production of a feeling of revulsion: the monk repeats *paṭikūlā, paṭikūlā* (“repulsive, repulsive”) as he gradually achieves the first *jhāna* (Ñānamoli [1956] 1975, p. 284; *Visuddhimagga* 1950, p. 219). The practitioner in *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* does nothing of the sort.

2.2.8. The Recognition of the Impermanence, Etc., of the Body as a Result of Contemplation

After describing two more groups of ten worms each, the sutra extols the virtues of *kāyasmṛtyupasthāna* in general. The Brahmans and householders and monastic practitioners of Nālati village observe that the body contains nothing subtle, or coarse, or that can be apprehended as belonging to the class of the subtle body (Tibetan: *phra bar gyur pa’i yang lus kyi rigs su gtogs pa dmigs par ’gyur ba’am*; not in Chinese), or permanent or reliable or stable or unchangeably pleasurable, or born with a self, or empowered by a creator. The practitioner who is established in correct contemplation on the body with respect to his own internal body will not dwell near Māra but will approach the edge of nirvana. He is not bound by the craving that is simultaneous with desire for pleasure and will not be harmed by the afflictions of rebirth (D *sha* 137a4–b2; T721.388a23–b2).

Again, rather than emphasizing the disgustingness of the body, the sutra, appealing to the practitioner's intellect, stresses the essential emptiness and impermanence of the body.

2.2.9. Introduction to Winds

The next section of the chapter concerns internal winds. They are grouped for the most part according to the parts of the body in which, as is described later in the chapter, the winds destroy worms at the time of a person's death. Ishikawa Mie has examined this section in detail, including the connection between these winds and winds in classical Indian medical literature (Ishikawa 2002).

In an introduction to the section, which is found only in the Tibetan, the practitioner is described as investigating his body "in another way". He asks himself, "How can the winds perform all the activities of maintaining my body, functioning, making it move, making it stay still, making it contract, and making it stretch out, and (how does my body) die due to the power of the wind?" (D *sha* 137b2–4).

Like the descriptions of the individual worms, the descriptions of the winds contain much more information about the bad than about the good. Here, too, nevertheless, the tone is neutral, with none of the adjectives generally used to arouse disgust. One example follows.

In the Tibetan translation, the second wind in the first set of winds, which kill worms in the head, is the Based Near the Feet wind. (In the Chinese, the corresponding wind, Bottom of the Feet, is third on the list.) The practitioner observes that, if the wind stays in his feet, he will get pustules due to an itching disease. If he walks on the road, the sound of a cobbler will arise. If his feet harden, and he continues to walk, his bones will make noise. If the wind goes into his eye nerve, he will experience hot and cold simultaneously. Because his eyes close, his sight is impeded (D *sha* 138a1–138a5; T721.388b20–25).

Winds are also mentioned in the section on the six elements in Chapter 2. In the definition of the internal wind element, eighty winds are said to move in the body, and another eighty winds are said to be accompanied by worms (Stuart 2015a, vol. 1, pp. 332–33; T721.13a19–21; D *ya* 112a3). There, the winds are not all named, and winds are accompanied by worms, unlike in Chapter 7, where they are instrumental in killing worms (see below).

2.2.10. Introduction to Worms and Winds Section

After all the winds have been described, we find yet another summary of the benefits of meditation, specifically the meditation on the winds. Immediately after this, there is an introduction to the section that describes how different worms are destroyed by different winds at the time of death. The practitioner is said to meditate in another way, by investigating the disintegration, diminution, extinction, and destruction of the body at the time of death. He observes that the worms are destroyed by the winds, after which the person dies, with harsh and unbearable sensations (D *sha* 165b6–166a3; T721.396c18–24).

As in the earlier section on worms, the worms are grouped in tens according to the body parts in which they live: head, throat, blood, flesh, bile, bones, feces, and bone marrow. Each worm is said to be destroyed by a specific wind.

Chapter 3 of the sutra, which explains the causes for rebirth in the hells and the suffering experienced there, contains another passage on worms and winds (D *ya* 249a5–250b4; T721.75a16–c8). An explanation of the signs of death appearing to inhabitants of Avīci hell mentions eighty worms, which are destroyed by eighty winds. This passage is extant in Sanskrit, although an edition is not publicly available. Many of the worms in this passage correspond with those in Chapter 7, and the Sanskrit names, based on a provisional edition provided by Mitsuyo Demoto, can be found in (Kritzer forthcoming).

2.2.11. How the Body Is Affected When Worms in the Feces Are Destroyed by Winds, and the Pain Suffered at Death

After the enumeration of worms in the feces and the winds that destroy them, there is an explanation of what actually happens at death. The winds and the worms have dried up the feces. Then, the person's body dries up and becomes agitated, dilapidated, and rotten. On the brink of death, other people and we ourselves experience these and other terrible things (D *sha* 168b1–3; T721.397c18–22).

2.2.12. Seven Contemplations

At the end of the contemplation on worms and winds, the sutra summarizes the meditation up to this point:

“Furthermore, the practitioner, established in contemplation on the body with respect to his internal body, does not consider (the body) to be permanent. He does not consider it to be pure. He does not consider it as a self. One of the previous worms is destroyed by a wind that harms the kidney. At death, these worms are destroyed by winds. The monk, being established in contemplation on the body with respect to his internal body in just that way, will destroy completely the remaining darkness that has continued from beginningless time. He will be forever undefiled and unlike all others” (D *sha* 169a1–4; T721.398a5–9).

Then “seven” contemplations are mentioned, although the Tibetan lists six contemplations: on death, the Buddha, the Dharma, the Saṃgha, gods, and impermanence. The Chinese includes a contemplation on monastic discipline (*śīla*) in addition to these six (D *sha* 169a4–5; T721.398a9–12). Similar but not identical lists of from three to ten contemplations are found in a wide range of *nikāya/āgamas*, as well as in the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature (Lamotte 1970, vol. 3, pp. 1329–30). In the Tibetan, but not the Chinese, the contemplation on death is declared to be the highest.

This is followed by descriptions of death resulting from imbalance or disturbance of each of the four *mahābhūtas*. These passages use similes to explain what happens to the body in each case. For example, when the earth elements are out of balance, the wind element hardens the earth elements and compacts them. Due to this, all the major and minor parts of the body, because they are shaken and pressed down, become rotten. They suppress and squeeze each other. The body is compared to a lump of new butter that is placed between two mountains. If a strong wind strikes the mountains, they squeeze the lump of butter (D *sha* 169a7–b4; T721.398a16–21).

As a result of this imbalance, the body is destroyed and suffers greatly. The person is no longer able to contemplate the Buddha, the Dharma, or the Saṃgha. Due to the force of his mind-monkey, he cannot escape from samsara (D *sha* 169b4–7; T721.398a21–26). Similes are likewise made in the case of the other three *mahābhūtas*.

2.3. Investigating the Internal Body by Means of External Dharmas

2.3.1. Development in the Body and in the Natural World

At this point, slightly more than halfway through Chapter 7, the focus switches from the body itself to the external world. The remainder of the chapter starts with the statement that the practitioner examines his own body by means of external *dharmas*. He begins by examining seeds and the development of sprouts from seeds, stalks from sprouts, leaves from stalks, flowers from leaves, and fruit from flowers (D *sha* 171b6–172a1; T721.398c10–13).

Next, he applies this model of development to his body. First, his consciousness in the form of a seed, together with karma and *kleśa*, falls into the procreative fluids. From these fluids arises the *kalala*, from the *kalala* the *arbuda*, then *ghana*, then *peśī*. (*Kalala*, etc., are terms used to describe the earliest stages of the embryo as it gradually solidifies. The terms are not used consistently: for example, in some texts, the fourth stage is called *ghana*, and the third stage is called *peśī*.) Five bulges arise from the *peśī*, namely, the two bulges of the arms, the two of the legs, and the bulge of the head. The five sense

organs are said to appear from the bulges. After that, he develops in order through the various stages in the womb, birth, etc., up until old age and death (D *sha* 172a1–4; T721.398c14–18).

The practitioner then compares the development of plants and people. Just as the seeds become green plants, which then grow pale and fade and finally cease to exist, the practitioner first becomes a child, then an adult, then an old person, and finally dies (D *sha* 172a4–5; T721.398c19–21).

Again, the practitioner contemplates how, in the external world, seeds arise and develop from the earth into medicinal herbs and forests. He observes that all internal and external *dharmas*, except for the three unconditioned *dharmas*, cessation through analytical meditation, (*pratisaṃkhyānirodha*), cessation without analytical meditation (*apratisaṃkhyānirodha*), and space (*ākāśa*), arise through mutual causes and conditions (D *sha* 172a5–b1; T721.398c22–26). The way that causation proceeds is explained by the *pratītyasamutpāda* formula: the karmic forces (*saṃskāras*) arise due to ignorance (*avidyā*), etc. Similarly, if the monk destroys *avidyā*, the *saṃskāras* will be destroyed, etc. All external and internal *dharmas* are caused and destroyed in the same manner (D *sha* 172b1–7; T721.398c26–399a6). The passage goes on to show the connection between internal and external *dharmas*. If monks have plenty of dwellings, medicine, and necessities, they will delight in good *dharmas*, but if they do not, they will not delight in good *dharmas* at all (D *sha* 173a5–7; T721.399a13–16). The passage concludes that there is no creator, only mutual causation. There is nothing permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, and not causally produced (D *sha* 173a7–b2; T721.399a16–17).

2.3.2. The Four Nourishments and How External Factors Affect the Internal

The chapter continues, pursuing the same theme. In Kāmadhātu, the seeds of the nourishments cause external nourishment, and the external nourishment increases abiding happily in internal *dhyāna* (D *sha* 173b2–5; T721.399a17–23). If the body thrives due to external *dharmas*, namely, an increase in dwelling, medicine, and possessions, the person will delight in internal good *dharmas*. Similarly, if he is not harmed by insects or by cold, heat, rain, etc., and if he is exposed to pleasant sounds and smells, he will take joy in internal *dharmas*. If cold and heat and rain do not attack him, he will take joy in internal *dharmas* (D *sha* 173b5–174a4; T721.399a23–b3). The final statement in this section is difficult to understand in both the Tibetan and the Chinese. However, I think it means that the realization that the five internal sense organs (*indriyas*) become the five internal bases of cognition (*āyatana*s) when they are in contact with and affected by the external *āyatana*s is what is called “being established in contemplation on the body with respect to the external body” (D *sha* 174a4–6; T721.399b3–4).

There is a surprising difference between the Chinese and Tibetan versions of the final sentence of this passage. According to the Chinese, the Buddha’s disciples (*xiansheng dizi* 賢聖弟子, which probably translates *śrāvaka*) know the body as it is (D *sha* 174a5–6; T721.399b4). The Tibetan, however, says that the sons of good family who abide completely in Mahāyāna, as well as the *āryaśrāvakas*, recognize the body as it really is. As I have mentioned above, this difference may be evidence that the Chinese and the Tibetan translations were based on separate recensions of the sutra. Alternatively, the Tibetan translator may have altered the text intentionally, perhaps to justify his own claim in the colophon that the sutra was a Mahāyāna sutra (D *sha* 227b7, 229a7).

2.3.3. The Six Vijñānas and How They Perceive External Dharmas

Continuing on the theme of the relationship between the external and the internal, the sutra explains how the six consciousnesses (*vijñānas*) perceive *dharmas*. If external *dharmas* are not obstructed, internal *dharmas* naturally delight in them. The external objects and internal *dharmas* come under each other’s influence and are associated with one another (D *sha* 174a6–b2; T721.399b5–9). A simile is given: the internal *dharma* under the influence of the external object is like the shadow that moves in accordance with a bird flying in the sky. If the whole body thrives, the mind will not be harmed. Therefore, everything arises depending on everything else through the force of conditions. Knowing this, the practitioner recognizes that there is not even one *dharma* that is (not) impermanent, (not) unstable, (not) inconstant, or not subject to change (D *sha* 174b2–5; T721.399b9–13). (The Tibetan text

reads “not even one *dharma* that is impermanent, unstable, inconstant, or not subject to change”. This is clearly a problem in the text. The Chinese reads “not . . . one *dharma* that is permanent, unchanging, or indestructible”.)

In this passage, too, there is a striking difference between the two translations. This time, it is the Chinese text that surprises us, saying that consciousness is the cause of all *dharmas* (*xin wei yiqie fa zhi yinyuan* 心一切法之因, T721.399b11). While this might appear to be a statement of mind-only (*cittamātra*), Yamabe Nobuyoshi, pointing to the context, thinks that it more likely refers to the mutual dependence of body and mind. He also suggests that it is a later addition to the Chinese translation (Yamabe Nobuyoshi, 2019, e-mail message to author, April 30).

2.3.4. Lifespans in Jambudvīpa in the First Two Periods of the Era

The remainder of the chapter is about existence in the various continents and eras. The first passage of this section explains the differences in lifespan in Jambudvīpa. At the beginning of the era, the Ābhāsvara gods fall down to Jambudvīpa and they eat dirt, which tastes like the nectar of the Thirty-three heavens. Because the people at the beginning of the era have wholesome minds, the dirt has a good color, a good smell, and a good appearance, and it is good to touch. People without flaws thrive due to the power of the food, and as a result, they live for 84,000 years. Since they have only three maladies—hunger, thirst, and longing—they all thrive and are healthy (D *sha* 174b6–175a1; T721.399b16–20).

Then, in the second period, the flavor of the dirt becomes bad, and the people likewise have unwholesome minds. Additionally, they have all the maladies, namely, hunger, thirst (in addition, the Chinese includes desire), premature death, and fever. This shows that it is due to the external foods that those people of Jambudvīpa at the beginning of the era thrive and are healthy (D *sha* 175a1–3; T721.399b20–23).

2.3.5. Other Topics in This Section

The sutra describes the further decline in the quality of life in the third and fourth periods of the era, including the vanishing of earthcakes; various illnesses; imbalances of wind, bile, and phlegm; the decline in the taste of food such as millet, barley, root vegetables, and fish; and premature death (D *sha* 175a3-b1; T721.399b24–c5). Additionally, the lifespan and body size decrease as the era continues (D *sha* 175b1–7; T721.399c6–20). All of this is due to the mutual conditioning between the internal and external.

The text then returns to the subject of the decline in the taste of food at the end of the era. Sixty types of rice, of which many are named, are said to decline in flavor. Similarly, six types of barley and two types of “small barley” (*nas chung ba*), and all the fragrant flowers are mentioned. In the Tibetan, but not the Chinese, sesame seeds, some pulses, and several other types of foods also worsen (D *sha* 176a1–b5; T721.399c21–400a22). As a result, the skin, internal heat, bones, and marrow of people in Jambudvīpa similarly worsen (D *sha* 176b5–6; T721.400a22–24). The practitioner observes that, because external and internal things all are under the sway of mutual dependence, the *saṃskāras* all are destroyed. He recognizes the true nature of external things: they are not permanent, blissful, pure, or having a self, and there is no creator. They are not without a cause and not accidental. They are not created by one, two, three, four, five, or six creators. They are not (created according to) the six (kinds of) causality of the heretical teachers who teach the wrong path. Thus, the practitioner is established in contemplation on the body with respect to the body in terms of the external world (D *sha* 176b6–177a2; T721.400a24–28).

2.3.6. The Places That the Various Beings Inhabit

Approximately the final third of the chapter contains descriptions of the four continents (Jambudvīpa, Uttarakuru, Godanīya, and Pūrvavideha) and includes the names and dimensions of mountains, rivers, lakes, seas, flowers, and birds. (The description of Jambudvīpa (D *sha* 177a6–192b6;

T721.400b6–405c21) has been translated into French (Lévi 1918, pp. 16–57.) In the very long section on the four continents, there are some particularly interesting passages that interrupt the long lists of names and measurements.

In the middle of the section on Uttarakuru, there is an explanation of the lesson that the practitioner should learn from the meditation. Having observed a very high mountain in terms of the maturation of karma, he knows that the beings living there are the result of karma. They share in their own karma. They are rooted in their own karma. Due to their own good (deeds), they are born on that mountain. When those deeds are exhausted, they will fall, and, due to their bad deeds, they will go to hell and the *preta* realm and the animal realm. Due to their good deeds, they will be born among gods or men (D *sha* 205a5–7; T721.410a15–18). Whoever lives near the high mountain should be called “Enjoying Happiness”. They always enjoy what they desire, but they are (also) always dissatisfied with what they desire (D *sha* 205a7–b1; T721.410a18–19). Thus, the verse says, “Like the kindling in the fire and the water in the ocean, those with greed are always dissatisfied with what they desire. Therefore, their desire is never allayed” (D *sha* 205b1; T721.410a20–22). In this respect, that practitioner sees with his eyes that are free from rheum that these beings take delight in that about which they really should weep. They do not know that all *samskr̥ta* things are suffering (D *sha* 205b1–2; T721.410a23–24). There follows a recitation of the faults of worldly things, which are all: subject to destruction, without essence and without light, ultimately lacking in pleasure, and inauspicious and perturbed. The lives, youth, health, and endowments of beings are all without happiness and are impure, impermanent, without self, and without essence, and they are like a mass of bubbles. Those who are living will all ultimately die; their possessions will ultimately be ruined. Those states of hell, pretas, animals, and people are inevitable. It is like the sun, which rises and will necessarily set. In the same way, those who are born surely must die. Similarly, when earth is soft and young, it has trees and forests and woods and meadows. When that earth becomes old, the trees, forests, woods, ponds, and lotuses also become old. Just as things that are young in the spring become old in the fall, youths will grow old in the end (D *sha* 205b5–206a1; T721.410a25–b3).

More similes follow, all to the effect that things deteriorate over time. Finally, the sutra says that these people, having been totally ruined by craving, completely fail to understand their own deterioration. If they carefully examine those features, peculiarly including sages (*rig pa 'dzin pa*, *xian ren* 仙人), of the natural world, they will view the external body as it really is (D *sha* 206a4–7; T721.410b10–12).

2.3.7. Garbhāvākṛānti and Suffering

Another interesting passage in the section on Uttarakuru is a description of conception and gestation.

The practitioner, having observed the maturation of karma, asks himself how these beings fail to see the exhaustion of their good karma. Is it their lack of experience? As for what the suffering of birth is like, at first, the seed of consciousness is born in the womb from the father’s semen and the mother’s blood. Then, a karmic wind circles the womb, and the mixture becomes the *kalala*. Since the new being was not a murderer (in a previous life), the consciousness does not die in the womb (D *sha* 212b6–213a2; T721.412c15–20). In another week, it becomes a *ghana*. Due to its karma and afflictions, the consciousness dwells there for another week in a state of confusion regarding its condition. In a week, it becomes a *peśī*. Piss and shit also are below the mother’s belly, and the shaking of the mother’s body whatever she does and whatever she eats torments him as if he were being hit with a stick for beating molasses (D *sha* 213a2–4; T721.412c20–23). The *peśī* is pulled by another karmic wind and becomes fat. Then, five bulges appear: of the two legs, of the two arms, and of the head. Another wind circles, and the fetus spreads in the mother’s belly. Then, the hole for the umbilical cord appears. That hole appears from inside the mother’s kidney. Whatever the mother eats—cold, hot, delicious, or not delicious—enters the fetus through that hole. Whatever the food, it gives the fetus sustenance. Therefore, the fetus experiences the great suffering produced by the womb (D *sha* 213a4–7;

T721.412c23–28). Thus, if the fetus does not die in the womb, having finished living in a state of piss and blood for ten months, it emerges from its mother's womb, all its parts squeezed like sugarcane from inside the corner of the aperture (a simile not in the Chinese) (D *sha* 213a7–b1; T721.412c28–413a1).

After birth, due to contact with wind and heat, the infant experiences the utmost suffering. Once he is born, when the mother lets him go, he will be able to go wherever he wants to. He sucks his own thumb. Milk comes from it, and that will sustain him. Just at that time, he becomes a child. Further, he reaches manhood. When they are struck by the wind of time, beings enjoy their share of their karma, they are the womb of their karma, they are established in their karma, and, whether it is good or bad, they inherit whatever karma that they have done (?). However, those people do not experience directly their karma and its maturation. Alas, these beings who move without restraint are very miserable. For that reason, birth is the root of the tree of the highest suffering (D *sha* 213b1–4; T721.413a1–7). Once there is birth, then heat, cold, hunger, thirst, weariness, weakness, association with the disagreeable, separation from the agreeable, old age, and death arise. In samsara, birth is the foremost suffering. This samsara is mounted upon anxiety regarding possessions and loss (?). This samsara is impermanent, suffering, empty, and without self (D *sha* 213b5–6; T721.413a7–10). Just as mountains, forests, craggy forests (?), woods, rivers, trees, birds, flowers, fruit, peaks, cliffs, and jewels disappear, why do these people of Uttarakuru not understand that, at the end of time and freedom from sorrow, everything passes away. This continent of Uttarakuru also becomes empty. When all these people die, they will depart to the world of Gods, after which they will be born in hell or among the *pretas* or animals, depending on their karma (D *sha* 213b6–214a2; T721.413a10–13). Thus, that practitioner, if he observes the maturation of the results of karma, will produce compassion even toward White Light people (people with good karma who live in very fortunate circumstances). He sees that the nature of samsara is bad (D *sha* 214a2–3; T721.413a13–15).

2.3.8. Chapter 7 and Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra

Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra is centered around a detailed week-by-week account of the thirty-eight weeks of gestation ((Kritzer 2014a, pp. 51–73 (translation), pp. 252–94 (Tibetan text))). It also describes conception, birth, and the suffering undergone after birth. In his study of *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, Lin Li-kouang refers to a list of worm names in *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra*. He suggests that the lists of worms in the two sutras represent two variants of an otherwise unknown medical tradition ((Lin 1949, pp. 110–11, n. 3); see (Kritzer 2014b) for a discussion of the relationship between *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra* and the classical Indian medical literature concerning worms (pp. 183–86)). In fact, there are also other similarities between *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* and *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra*.

Both texts include large numbers of wind names, although in *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra*, only about twenty are given. In its account of gestation, the winds, which in the first few weeks are described as arising from karma, are instrumental in fetal development. In *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, as we have just seen, karmic winds play the same role, although they are not given names.

The description of the early stages of the embryo are generally similar in the two texts. In both sutras, the discomfort of the fetus is mentioned, particularly its living near the intestines and the pain caused by the mother's movement and the food that she eats. Like *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*, *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra* enumerates channels and bones but in the fetus, not in the newly born person.

The pain at the time of birth and the suffering after birth are described in *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra* but at greater length. In *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra*, 80,000 types of worms are mentioned, but only 78 are named ((Kritzer 2014a, pp. 75–80 (translation), pp. 298–305 (Tibetan text))). This is approximately the same as in *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*. The stages of life appear in both sutras but in more detail in *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra* ((Kritzer 2014a, pp. 82–83 (translation), pp. 309–10 (Tibetan text))). Finally, in a passage explaining how one can become detached from the world, *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra* stresses the importance of contemplation on the body ((Kritzer 2014a, pp. 100–2 (translation), pp. 368–71 (Tibetan text))).

The striking difference between the two texts is that *Garbhāvākṛāntisūtra*, from beginning to end, emphasizes the disgusting nature of the body in a way that *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* does not.

2.3.9. One Should Not Be Attached to Even the Pleasant Features of the World Due to Duḥkhasatya

Now I return to *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*. After a description of pleasant natural features, such as the beautiful mountains of Uttarakuru, the sutra states that one should not be attached to such things. The practitioner, having understood the maturation of karma and *dharmas*, asks himself, “Why don’t these beings see the suffering that arises from mutual separation?” He answers that the attractive and pleasant things all change, pass away, disperse, are lacking, and transform. One goes to the next life according to one’s karma. Due to good karma, one is born among gods and men, due to bad karma, in hell and among the *pretas* and animals (D *sha* 214b5–215a1; T721.413b5–8). Those who have lovely bodies, since they live without restraint, are not satisfied with desired sounds, objects of touch, flavors, visual objects, and smells, and because they are under the sway of craving, swept away by the stream of craving, burned by the fire of desire, and sinking into the darkness of ignorance, they do not know that they are worn out and decayed. Because young people become old, old age is very frightening. They are afraid of being threatened by separation from their own people, friends, and relatives, and, burning the tree of life, the fire of death will certainly burn without any remainder the forest of all beings. Those people still do not see this (D *sha* 215a1–4; T721.413b8–13).

2.3.10. The Unsatisfactoriness of the Natural World and Rebirth

After an explanation of the continent Godanīya, the sutra again and at somewhat greater length explains why the natural world and rebirth are unsatisfactory. The practitioner, who understands the maturation of karma, sees that all of the natural features that have been described in great detail are subject to birth and death and that we will be separated from everything pleasant (D *sha* 221b6–222a7; T721.415c12–26). Everything is the result of karma.

2.3.11. Refutation of Heretical Misunderstanding of the Relationship between Karma and People’s Lives and the Practitioner’s Correct Understanding

Finally, after a description of Pūrvavideha and a discussion of the different kinds of birth in Pūrvavideha resulting from different classes of karma, the sutra mentions heretical teachers’ mistaken understanding of causation in terms of astrology. The sutra insists that the stars and planets are the results of karma and do not have their own efficacy. If the practitioner contemplates natural features such as the heavens and mountains in this way, he sees the external body as it really is (D *sha* 225b6–226a1; T721.417a17–19).

3. Conclusions

We have seen that the meditation on the body in *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* contains very large amounts of medical information and information about the natural world. It uses this information to counter attachment to the body and the external world. Unlike some other versions of meditation on the body, the sutra focuses equally on the body and the external world, which it includes in its definition of “body”. Unlike some other versions of the meditation, instead of evoking feelings of disgust, it appeals to the intellect to accomplish its purpose.

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