



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## Pratityasamutpada: Causality Vs. Freedom In Buddhism

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### Abstract

‘Causality’ and ‘freedom’ are central to discussions in Philosophy of action. Causality and freedom have been addressed from ontological as well as ethical perspectives. Ontologically, causality refers to the dynamics of changes signifying the way there is continual success of cause and effect. Needless to say that cause and effect are relative terms. That which is a cause in relation to the effect can be seen as the effect in relation to its antecedent which is the cause. The relationship between cause and effect is one of necessity such that given the cause effect can be predicted in advance and given the effect the cause can be inferred retrospectively.

Causal necessity leaves no room for human freedom, Therefore moral judgments cannot be passed on the causal process in the state of nature. ‘Freedom’ on the other hand is a moral concept. Freedom of will makes sense only in human domain, because human beings are endowed with autonomy of will. Given the circumstances, different individuals are free to act differently. Causality and freedom do not go hand in hand. State of nature is understood and explained in terms of causal laws whereas it is the freedom of will which defines the distinctiveness of human action. The distinction between action and event is fundamental. Event is causally determined whereas action is determined by free will. In other words an event is caused whereas action is willed. Morality makes sense only in the domain of human actions, because human agents have autonomy of will. The ‘will’ can be used and abused as well on account of which the moral judgments are rendered meaningful. The dissertation is an exercise to undertake analysis of the notion of ‘causality’ and ‘freedom’ in Buddhist Philosophy.

**Key Word:** Causality, Freedom, Determinism, Samsara, Nirvana, Law of karma, suffering.

## **Introduction:**

State of nature is marked by succession of events. A particular cause gives rise to particular effect. Cause and effect are relative terms.. An 'effect' becomes a 'cause' in relation to the 'effect' which follows. The succession is invariable in nature in n so far as the same cause produced the same effect. That raises the question of the potency of causal factors to produce the effect. The 'invariable relationship' points to the necessary relation between 'cause' and 'effect' which means that the cause has the inherent potency to give rise to a particular effect. The causal succession is not only invariable but necessary that makes room for 'determinism'. State of nature is characterized by causal laws which are deterministic in nature. Human beings don't have any liberty to determine the way the cause and effect are related. But when we look at human actions they stand distinct from the causal events. Actions are all that human beings do on account of 'freedom of will'. In the same situations different individuals act differently. 'Freedom' is the capacity by which a human agent chooses a particular actions rather than another. 'Freedom of will' constitutes the foundation of ethics because the capacity to choose makes one bound to the moral obligation. There is basic difference between the scientific and philosophical perspective. The scientists seek to understand the causal phenomena from empirical perspectives whereas a philosopher examines the conceptual issues relating to relationship between cause and effect. What is cause? What is effect? How to understand the relationship between the two? Given the causal scenario it can be said that effect is somehow present the cause before it produced or it is a new beginning. On this Indian thinkers are divided into two distinct groups namely- *Satkaryavadian and Asatkaryavadain*. Notion of causality is bound up with a notion of determinism. If 'causality' reigns supreme then there is hardly any room for 'freedom'.

The issues pertaining to causality are addressed by the Philosopher in the West too. The fundamental question consists in determining whether and to what extent, 'causality' can be extended to human actions? Those who take causality to be absolute contend that causal law is absolute and 'human actions' are also caused. In this respect 'action' remains indistinguishable from 'event'. 'Causality' and 'freedom' don't go together. The advocates of 'strong determinism' argue that 'actions' are caused by human will and the so called 'will' is also caused by factors peculiar to the person. The state of mind, circumstances, the values one subscribes to, determine how one would act in a particular way. From this perspective 'freewill' is a misnomer .because the so called 'act of willing' in deciding to choose to do something is also caused by factors beyond human control. Advocates of 'Determinism' argue that as the effect is determined by a set of antecedent conditions which being there, the 'effect' follows, the same is also true of the 'act of free will' because there are factors which determine how one would exercise one's freewill. If this is assumed than all human actions remain subject to 'determinism' and 'human freedom' will be rendered meaningless. It has its bearing in the domain of human affairs because all moral judgments involving the notions of 'right' and 'Wrong', 'punishment' and 'reward' turn out to be meaningless, because person is not free to act the way one chooses to act. 'Libertarians' hold that human will as well as

the consequence of action fall outside the domain of causality. On the other hand the advocates of hard determinism hold that everything including human actions is subject to laws of strict determinism.

In a Buddhist framework one comes across unique reconciliation of 'freedom' and 'determinism'. It takes determinism as absolute in so far as given the causal potency the effect follows and cause effect relationship can never be altered. But human agent has freedom to prevent the antecedent and prevent the effect. In case of the *Bhavachakra* the preceding spoke of the wheel brings about the succeeding spoke of the wheel. Human beings have the capacity to overcome the causal series which makes one bound to the cycle of birth and rebirth. Since 'ignorance' (*avidya*) is the cause of the cycle of life by overcoming ignorance one can escape to a point when one is no more subject to the karmic cycle. They are not contented with pointing out the possibility of escape from the karmic cycle but state that the state of liberation is continuous with life and come out with the details in elaborating upon the eight fold path the cultivation of which enable one to overcome 'ignorance'. If one continues to remain subject to the cycle of birth and death it simply means that one doesn't have sufficient motivation to cultivate the path. One by cultivating inner potentiality one can attain the highest state. Buddha's life itself was a testimony to the fact that one can be in the midst of action without being subjected to the bondage of action.

'Determinism' doesn't nullify the role of freedom. Rather freedom becomes significant against the backdrop of 'determinism'. The ultimate moral choice for the agent consist in either falling into the karmic determinism whereby one state leads to another or understand the nature of the causal chain with Buddha terms as '*dhamma*' and keep oneself free from the chain of karmic determinism. Thus, Buddhism underline the role of freedom and self-effort on account of which one can charter one's way to the ultimate state termed as 'Nirvana' whereof one is no more under the sway of ignorance and the consequent suffering across lives.

**Causality and Freedom:** In the state of nature, we come across succession of events. The changes in respect of success of events are not random but uniform. The invariable relationship between the events which comes as an antecedent and the consequent is invariable. In other words the relationship between cause and effect is necessary. There is nothing as cause and effect as such. Causality is a conceptual device by which one relates the antecedents with consequents. 'Causality' has both metaphysical and logical dimension. Any event that comes into being, owes its explanation to the antecedents. In this respect, effect is logically explained in terms of the cause. Given the effect, the cause must have been there and given the cause, the effect has to be there. So, the relationship is not only invariable but necessary. Given the cause the effect can be predicted a priori and the given the effect, the cause can be predicted in retrospective.

Ontologically, 'cause' as a state of reality, is followed by 'effect'. There is something ontologically essential to the cause which produced effect. It explains the fact that for a given cause there cannot be plurality of effects. Rather, given the nature of the cause only a particular effect comes into being. So, the cause and effect is not a one-many relationship but one-one relationship. If death is the event it could be caused by so many causes, like disease, sickness, snakebite, accident, suicide. On this account one cannot say that for one effect there are pluralities of causes. The thesis of plurality of causes is ruled out because if one looks into the exact nature of the cause one finds that a particular cause gives as a particular effect. In other words, death by suicide is different from death by snakebite and death on account of old age. The nature of the effect will vary depending the nature of cause. That's shows the underlying relationship between cause and effect.

In western Philosophy Aristotle undertakes elaborate discussion on notion of Causality. For Aristotle, there are four types of causes, namely- (a) Material Cause (b) Efficient Cause (c) Formal Cause (d) Final Cause. When the effect comes into being it originates because of the material cause. Material cause refers to the substance out of which the effect comes into existence. For example if golden ornament is made out of a lump of gold. Material cause is a necessary but it stands needs of an efficient cause on person i.e., goldsmith who exerts energy to bring about changes in the material substance i.e. gold to make an ornament of particular form or design. There is another aspect of the causal phenomena, namely formal cause. Efficient cause comes into operation only by bringing about formal changes on the natural base. So, formal cause is also integral part of the notion of causality. Now besides these three causes Aristotle also strict of final cause that means in case of clay and the pot. The clay is the material cause and pot is the efficient causes which exerts energy to bring about the effect from the cause by bringing about formal changes on the clay but the formal changes are not random, but the formal changes are brought on the clay which finds its culmination or finality in the form a 'completed pot'. In Indian Philosophy the discussion shifts of focus in the discussion. Philosophers in India, by and large, address the question pertaining to relation between cause and effect. What is the precise relation 'cause' and 'effect'? Philosophers are divided in their opinions in so far as some Philosophers maintain that effect must be somehow real in the cause before it is produced and on the other hand the Realists maintain that cause and effect are two different entities and effect comes into existence only when the cause ceases to be there.

Dependent origination or *Pratityasamutpada* holds that neither are the events of our life pre-determined nor do they take place at random. It asserts that every event in our life has in fact no independent existence. In Indian Philosophy the Philosophical discussions on nature of 'causality' revolve around the relationship between cause on the one hand and effect on the other. Philosophers are divided into three schools depending on the way they conceive of the relationship between effect and cause, namely-*Satkaryavada*, *Asatkaryavada* and *Vivartavada*. Notion of Causality gets altogether unique treatment in Buddhist framework. Causality in Buddhism is tempered by the metaphysical doctrine namely, *Khanavangavada* or *momentariness*. According to this, a thing is not identical to consecutive moments. Buddhists deny the thesis of *Satkaryavada* in so far as they don't subscribe to thesis of pre-

existence of the cause prior to its production. Theory of causation finds its explicit enunciation in the second Noble truth, '*Pratityasamutpada*' which holds that in a series of changing states, the point of existence that comes before is a responsible for that which succeeds, Effect doesn't arise out of cause rather effect arises out of destruction of the cause. They elucidate this by the notion of '*arthakriyakarithya*' (causal efficiency.) If a thing exists for a moment, its existence is enough to give rise to subsequent moment. There is no underlying potency or identity between what's comes before of the effect and the effect. Because nothing exists for a moment and everything is transitory.

Hume's interpretation of causality approximate Buddhist notion of causality in so far as Hume denies the existence of the causal essence. But there is marked difference between the two in so far as Buddhist admits absolute determinism in respect of causal uniformity whereas for Hume causal necessity is a myth. According to Hume the invariable relationship between cause and effect is contingent. It is also different from *Vivartavada* which doesn't accord ontological status to the phenomenal diversity of the world. According to Buddhism the world is momentary, it is real. But ontologically, *Advaitins* give secondary status to the world saying that the world of diversity is only apparently real. In other words, for the one, one who has attained right knowledge for him the names and forms don't have an ontological status because behind the names and forms there is the supreme consciousness, i.e., Brahman. The worlds of diversities are nothing but varied names and forms of the one fundamental substance. Just as the gold remaining the same, different ornaments made of gold appear to be different, Brahman being the primordial or the fundamental substance, names (*nama*) and forms (*rupa*) are nothing but different expressions of it.

Those who are ignorant mistake the names and forms to be real as they are oblivious of the essential underlying substance, i.e. Brahman. But for Buddhists reality is an open book which is subject to the inexorable law of causality because cause being there effect appears i.e., this being that appears. This is not only metaphysical true but also empirical true. The thesis of *bhavacakra* explains how *Pratityasamutpada* does apply to the cycle of birth and death which human beings are subject to, known as the bondage and the consequent suffering that human beings undergo because of the ignorance. So the real genesis of bondage lies in ignorance. Karmic law is objective, inexorable and eternal. Though there is strict determinism in respect of the operation of the law human beings have the potentiality to intervene in the process in preventing the cause and thereby, prevent the effect. This points to the dignity of human existence when man has the autonomy of will to change the course of nature and find a way to the ultimate goal, termed as Nirvana where in one is no more subject to the cycle of birth and death; therefore bondage and suffering.

**Nirvana: Freedom beyond causality:** The state of 'highest good' has been conceived differently in different systems of Indian Philosophy. Nirvana is considered to be state of *Summum Bonum* (highest good) in Buddhist Philosophy. Encounter with four distinct sights were enough to bring about turning point in the life of Buddha which made him renounce the pleasures of the palace in favor of a enunciate, in quest of the highest truth. Perception of suffering was enough to convince Buddha that suffering is a universal phenomenon and that suffering is inherently bound up with the nature of human thinking and existence, Buddha underlined the fact that there is no room for privileged access in respect of the attainment of the highest state. Every individual has the potency and the birth right to achieve it. He discounts the role of super natural agency which is invoked in many orthodox systems. Every individual has the inherent ability to overcomes the state of ignorance and attain the highest state through self-effort.. But to walk out the path reading to Nirvana calls for preparation on the part of seeker in form of self-effort. Attainment of Nirvana pre-supposes not only the readiness of the seeker but also the involvement of the complete being of the individual in order to achieve it. The fact of bondage and suffering cannot simply be wished away. Thus Nirvana constitutes the central concern of Buddhist ethics and the metaphysics and ethics.

Nirvana is not only the highest metaphysical state but also the highest ethical state attainable through self-striving. *Nirvana* occupies the seminal place among the four noble truths. The first noble truth underlines the reality of bondage. Nirvana refers to the state characterized by the absence of bondage and suffering. The second noble truth in a sense facilitates the knowledge of truth leading to *Nirvana*. The second and third noble truth are integral to each other. If phenomenal bondage can be understood by the causal dynamics then it holds out the hope that it can be removed. In a sense, *Nirvana* becomes the existential terminus of cultivation of knowledge of the truth. The fourth noble truth is nothing but the practical ways by which one can tread the path of righteousness leading to *Nirvana*. If the first noble truth is affirmation of a universal truth underlining the reality of bondage and suffering, the second and third noble truth constitute theoretical elaboration of the ways to truth whereas fourth noble truth is an existential praxis which holds out the goal that it can be attained here and now. .

Nirvana ethically refers to state of highest good. Metaphysically it refers to state on attaining which one escape the cycle of birth and death. So Buddhist say that for this need to have an seller preparation which constitute the ethical root to the ultimate metaphysical core and while seeking the path Buddha was a empathic that the door of liberation Nirvana is open to one and all irrespective the distinction the caste, creed and creed, birth because they have nothing to do with inner core inner aspiration of man in respect of which everyman is a potential seeker and everyone is potentially capable of the attaining of ultimate state of emancipation or Nirvana. Buddha underlines three folds ways to attain it, namely- *Buddham saranam gacchami, Dhamma saranam gacchami & Sangham saranam gacchami*.

*Nirvana* is not negation of any cognition whatsoever as it is achieved by through a cognitive process. The state of *Nirvana* is also characterized by cognition, unlike other empirical cognitions which involve relativity. When one is established in *Nirvana* one has the cognition of things in their native stance. There is intimate relationship between Knowledge and *Nirvana*. One who has attained the state of *Nirvana* is one who has the right understanding of reality. This is a state which is opposed to mere speculation having no grounding in the reality. The bliss of *Nirvana* cannot be equated with normal experience (Vedanta). The cognition in the state of *Nirvana* is more holistic, intuitive and undifferentiated.

No human being can be without a desire. *Nirvana*, by definition, means a state which free from desires which create egoism and attachment. It doesn't mean complete absence of motivation or passivity because the *Aahant* is motivated by 'understanding of truths, friendship, and compassion. Rather remains in active state of minds where he would like to help others to salvage themselves from the state of bondage and suffering. On attaining *Nirvana*, there is cessation of rebirth, referring to end of repetition of cycle of birth and death. Following this there is end of suffering because suffering is defined in terms of birth, death, old age, grief, sorrow, lamentation, despair. So on attaining *Nirvana*, there is a break in the chain of the cycle because one link of the cycle is causally linked with another.

But Buddhist point to a metaphysical state where there is awareness as such. The secret of attaining the state is to work diligently such that there is no flow of consciousness. When 'consciousness' has a flow it has to be directed to an object and so, it has to have intentionality as one of its characteristics but when consciousness become self-reflective then there is no desire, There is no projection behind consciousness because of which one takes birth,

In Buddhist framework it is presumed that one who claims that one has the knowledge of truth and doesn't follow the path of truth, implies that he has only knowledge in the form of information but not wisdom. Right concentration helps in bringing about transition from 'knowledge' to 'wisdom'. Our every existence in the world get us exposed to external stimuli. As is the nature of object in the form of a stimulus, so is the effect on the mind or the psycho-physical organism. One has to have restraint so that one doesn't helplessly to the spell of pleasure and pain in the world. *Nirvana* is not caused by external motivation but the internal call to move from ignorance to knowledge truth fall in to the spell of ignorance. It means the if one is bondage it is one's own making because one, otherwise has the potency to overcome the elemental ignorance and charter one's path to *Nirvana*.

### **Karmic determinism and nirvana:**

Change is a universal phenomenon. The uniformities discovered in the state of nature are termed as causal uniformities. Causal uniformities go hand in hand with 'determinism' in so far as given a cause, the effect follows necessarily and given an effect, the cause can be inferred retrospectively. The uniformities are not only real in the state of nature but are true of human actions. The uniformities in respect of human actions is termed as 'karmic determinism'. As cause and effect are necessarily related the action and consequence are also necessary related. So corresponding to 'causal determinism' in the state of nature, there is 'karmic

determinism' in the field of human action. As given the antecedents, consequences follow in the state of nature, given an action, the consequences fallow in the domain of moral order. Morality makes sense in human domain. Action (*karma*) has three important component namely, Agent (*karta*), action (*karma*), and the consequence (*karmaphala*). Ethical merit of an action doesn't depend on 'action' or what follows as the consequence but the 'intention' of the agent. It means that the human agent has freedom to choose one course of action or another. Morality presupposes 'freedom of will' and 'choice'. 'Morality' makes no sense in case of non-human because they don't have choice and their behavior is determined by circumstances or antecedents.

In Buddhism, 'karma' is related to suffering and by implication, to the idea of nirvana or the cessation of suffering through individual liberation. *Karma*, therefore, offers a comprehensive account of worldly existence. In this sense, karma is objective and does not discriminate between the rich and the poor, beautiful and the ugly, healthy and the sick. Karma provides the basic link between the past and present, present and future. As one thought and lived in the past, so is the present. In this sense, the present is determined by the action in the past. Man can determine the future. In other words, man becomes the architect of his destiny. According to Buddha the dominant *samskaras* of the past determine the present and the present determines the future. Karma obviously doesn't leave any room for fatalism on account of the fact that man is free. Man has the capacity to follow the right or wrong. Freedom lies in the choice of the action on the part of agent but not in determining the consequences of action. Action and consequences are necessarily related just as cause and effect in the state of nature.

There are different causal paradigms advocated in different frameworks. *Satkaryavadians* and *Asatkaryavadadasns*. So thus the effect is synthesis, the *Pratityasamutpada* effect is a synthesis of *Satkaryavada* and *Asatkaryavada*. *Pratityasamutpada* refers to is spontaneous causal sequence which is determined by the nature of reality. Everything that we come across is a link in the causal series. It states that existence is not only momentary but is conditional in so far as the succeeding moments does follow from the nature of the preceding moments. *Karma* is both an active and passive principle. It is a passive principle in so far as there is no room for personal intervention. The cause and effect relationship is absolute and necessary. The karmic law operates irrespective of our desire. It is an active principle because individual has the choice to take to one course one course action rather than another. So, the individual remains as the key factor in determining the karmic chain. Buddhism doesn't leave room for any transcendental law giver because karma is explained as self-regulated system. It is driven by impersonal law. There is no room for any transcendental agent who determines the karmic result. The effect of good action, virtue of its nature, gives rise to appropriate consequence. The consequences of good and evil deeds do not neutralize each other. Rather for good deeds one undergoes the agreeable consequences and for 'evil' one has to undergo the unpleasant consequence. Karmic chain is determined by the very nature of action rather than by any extra human agency. There is no necessity to postulate a law giver or an impersonal principle *adrsta* as admitted in the *Vaisesika* School.

Karmic determinism is lucidly explained in form of twelve links of the wheel namely – 1. Ignorance (*avidya*) 2 Impression (*samskara*) 3, Consciousness (*vijnana*) 4. Mind-body organism (*nama-rupa*) 5. Six sense organs of knowledge (*sadayatana*) 6. Sense contact (*sparsa*) 7. Sense experience (*vedana*) 8. Craving (*trnsna*) 9. Attraction to the objects (*upadana*) 10. Will to be born (*bhava*) 11. Rebirth (*jati*). 12. Old age, death etc. (*jaramarana*). Twelve links of the dependence origination indicate how the cycle of birth and death is endless, until one attains perfect knowledge which takes one beyond the life-cycle. *Karma* can be likened to a seed. As a seed ripens into a fruit ready to be taken as food, one has to undergo the experience depending on the nature of action, already performed. It means that the karmic law is governed by an impersonal process without there being a determiner who is beyond the process. As we enter into process we are subject to the laws of the process. Human life is precious because it provides opportunity by which one can determine one's future. Buddhism explains karmic determinism without any reference or appeal to God or super-natural entity. According to the Buddhist karma is an impersonal law, at par with the natural laws, on account of which one is reborn according to one's past actions (*karma*).

As a corollary of Buddhist theory of momentariness it is claimed that though there is action there is no agent. It doesn't admit anything which is unchanging or permanent in time. Nothing exists for more than a moment. These are only the doing out not the doer. Doer is not a substance or essence but is an aggregate of different mental factors. It doesn't amount to fatalism because there is always room for the 'freewill' in choosing an action, considered to be appropriate. Role of freewill is underlined in Buddhist backed by nothing other than knowledge It makes room for self-effort in so far as one can overcome *avidya* in order to be established in the state of *vidya* by virtue of which one remains immune to the cycle of birth and death. There is no need of unchanging entity called 'self' which takes the rebirth because rebirth is indicative of continuity. The future life is nothing but a series of point instants. In respect of karma Buddhism don't deny the scheme of values underlined as *Purusharthas* in classical systems. *Moksha* can be equated with *Nirvana*. *Nirvana* literally, means the 'state of extinction'. It refers to state of perfection whereof one is not subject to the cycle of birth and rebirth which is termed as *Samsara*. It is attainable by self-effort which implies proper means or auxiliaries for doing right *karmas*. In this sense *artha* and *kama* assume value. Dharma, in its core sense of term, refers to the fundamental essence or the underlying principle which is responsible for the continuous of karmic chain called *samskara*. So, dharma in this sense, not only means right vision but mode of life backed by right vision. Buddhism ends with strong note of optimism as it lays down eightfold path which avoids the extremes of self-indulgence and self-modification. It not only spells out practical but conceives the state of liberation (*nirvana*) as an existential state which can be achieved here and now.

## Conclusion

'Impermanence' is the permanent feature of the reality. Change is the unchangeable law of universe. Change is encountered in the form of the laws in the state of nature as well as in the 'karmic domain'. In state of nature, it appears as the 'causal law' and the karmic domain it appear in the form of 'karmic law'. Causal uniformity and karmic uniformity are variant expressions of underlying order termed as '*Rita*' in the *Upanisadic* literature. Buddha brings into focus the notion of cosmic order on account of which there are strict uniformities in the state of nature and the karmic law in the moral domain. According to the doctrine of 'Momentariness' (*ksanikavada*) both 'matter' and 'non-matter' are subject to change. In case of causal uniformities there is no room for human intervention whereas in case of 'action' it is the human will that plays the decisive role. 'Morality' depends on the 'freewill' as well as the 'intention' of human agent. An action in order to be 'good' as should have been the result of freewill and must be intended right 'goal' 'end'. Though mind is a discriminate faculty it is 'will' that determines what one really does.

Though in the Buddhist Philosophy there is no focus on metaphysics, a metaphysical world-view can be re-constructed from the ethical views. Everything is conditional as effect arises on account of the presence of the antecedent's circumstances. In human life anything that happens is conditioned by the antecedent conditions. The difference between the causal uniformity and karmic uniformity consists in the fact that in case of karmic uniformities there is a presence of human agent and operation of 'freewill'. Everything in the state of nature is subject to flux. There is nothing which is identical in two different moments. That is true of living and non-living as well. Nothing is identical to succeeding moments. For example, a thing at T1 and T2 are neither identical nor completely different but similar. 'Similarity' is mistaken for 'identity'. There is the succession of changing states which is mistaken for 'continuity'. It is on account of ignorance that the impermanent realities are mistaken to be permanent.

Existence is defined in terms of its causal efficiency. Causal potency to gives rise to the effect. Though there is stick determinism with regard to cause and effect there is role of freewill because one is free to determine the antecedents and thereby, the consequence. There are no lives for fatalism because it allowed to freewill. One can change the effect by changing the antecedent. if a lamp is burning by withdrawing the factors or components like oil, oxygen or wick, one can make the lamp extinguish. Similarly, the cause being there, effect comes into being and cause being removed, the effect can be prevented. They apply the causal formula to the cycle of life with twelve links of the wheel (*bhavacakra*), showing how the past causes the present and present causes the future and the past, present and future are causally linked. As was the past, so is the present and as we live in the present, so shall be the future. If there is no 'soul' there would be no continuity of the same entity. In such case who takes rebirth? Moreover if there is no soul in the traditional sense of the term who attains *Nirvana*? Buddhists answer it by saying that rebirth is to be construed in the sense of continuity. The future life is nothing but a series of changing states. The first moment of the series called 'future' is preceded by last moment of the series called 'present life'. So, there ist he continuity of series. In this sense there is a rebirth. So everyone, by

virtue of one's action, follows a particular line of continuity which is different from another chain of continuity. So Nirvana denotes a states which makes one free from being subjected to repeated birth and death. So this is possible because of exercise of freewill and self- effort.

In Buddhist framework *Jivanmukti* is one who lives in the world but doesn't have any attachment with the world. *Jivanmukta* understands that if there is a desire for something in particular it leads to embryonic consciousness on account of which one has to be re-born. So, *jivanmukti* is always vigilant in course of doing action. Every action performed by *jivanmukta* is tempered by the knowledge of the *dhamma*. For all practical purposes, the knowledge of *dhamma* is instrumental in facilitating the way for the attainment of liberation. In Buddhist ethical framework, 'suffering' (*dukkha*) plays the catalytic role because when one tries to reflect on the nature of suffering one understands the significance of four noble truths and the righteous path laid down by Lord Buddha. '*Nirvana*' doesn't mean freedom from life. It is not negation of life. Rather it is a state of 'no-desire' or desireless-ness. So, Nirvana can be compared to a journey where remains in the process through which one cultivates knowledge and more the outings and greater is the freedom from the karmic bondage. The moot question is nirvana is unique tendency off course no one wants to live in bondage and there is a tendency on part of every living being to overcome the state of bondage and suffering. In so far as ones tries to there is a innate tendency to overcome and suffering that can be also characterize as also a tendency to attain state when one is no more effected by bondage of world, the karmic bondage.

Is *jivanmukta* free from causal determinism? Yes, though he lives in the world he does not belong to it, just as water drop on a lotus leaf is not stick to it. Since *dhamma* refers the eternal principle by which the world is sustained there is not only the need of individual effort but also organized effort in form of *sangham*, '*Sangham Saranam gachami*' signifies that if the collective life is not conducive it would stand on the way cultivation of discipline leading to the state of highest attainment. The path to *Nirvana* can compared to a journey. The journey finds terminus on attainment of *Nirvana* which is not a state of non-existence or no-experience but a state of positive bliss. It means that 'mind' is still in existence in the state of *Nirvana*. Though there is the 'mind' it is free from the push and pull of desires that bind one to the life-cycle. It is a state where there is feeling of absolute serenity and tranquility, compared to state of extinction of flame-like desires that that consume the happiness or contentment of 'mind'. But how to account for elemental ignorance (*avidya*)? How to overcome it? Even having a body, generates desire. On fulfillment of one desire, new desire is generated. Though ignorance subjects one to the wheel of life every individual has the inherent potency to go overcome the spell of desires which constitute the vicious circle. When one has the knowledge of the causal necessity between cause and effect and consequent bondage one begins to realize that the bondage is one's own making. It enkindles the hope that since bondage is own making liberation can also be attained through self-effort. But the perennial ethical question is : to how to overcome the existence dilemma? Sometimes you know what is the truth, but we don't have the inclination to follow it, This is a universal moral dilemma, but this dilemma is to be solve uncouncted by the individual has to be solve by the individual himself. The more and more one encounters

the dilemma, the more and more there is the self-examination on the part of the self-conscious individual which makes one realize the truth. At this point the enlightenment of the master plays its catalytic role which facilitates cultivation of knowledge and thereby overcome *avidya* (ignorance) and a strong will to overcome the state of bondage. Moral weakness is a fact in respect of many individuals but the way the enlighten individuals act hold out the hope that given the state of moral weakness there is no reason why one cannot overcome it. Buddha's life itself was the living example. Karmic determinism does not mean that 'determinism' is opposed to 'freedom'. Rather, 'freedom of will' becomes meaningful against the canvas of 'determinism'. Exercise of 'freewill' consists in overcoming the constraints or the determining factors.

The karmic law in Buddhism provides a causal model which incorporates the essence of other causal models such as *Satkaryavada, Astkaryavada and Vivartavada* in Indian classical systems. It subscribes to *Satkaryavada* in so far as the causal potency is admitted in Buddhist framework on account of which the effect comes into existence out of the antecedent conditions. It can be taken a form of *Asatkaryavada* in so far as nothing is same in two different consecutive moments. *Asatkaryavada* states that effect follows by negating its antecedents. It is *Vivartavada* because the world of permanence is an appearance. Similarity at two consecutive moments is mistaken to be identity on account of which recognition is possible. Thus in Buddhist causal framework karmic there is a happy synthesis of different causal views advanced by classical systems of Indian Philosophy.

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