

## THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGATION AND RELATIONS

The Dependent Origination (*paticcasamuppada*) is the law of the origin of states depending upon some causes or conditions. There is nothing like a self independent entity. Everything comes into existence depending upon some other thing. It is said that "When this exists, that exists; on the arising of this, that arises. In the absence of this, that does not come into existence; on the cessation of this, that ceases to be".<sup>1</sup> It is stated that there are twelve links, which make the wheel of becoming (*bhava-cakka*) revolve. These are the (1) Ignorance (*Avijja*), (2) Activities (*Sankhara*), (3) Birth-consciousness (*Vinnana*), (4) Mind and Body (*Nama-rupa*), (5) Six-Senses (*Salayatana*), (6) Touch (*Phassa*), (7) Feeling (*Vedana*), (8) Desire (*Tanha*), (9) Clinging (*Upadana*), (10) Becoming (*Bhava*), (11) Birth (*Jati*), (12) Decay & Death (*Jara-marana*). With these links, the circle of existence goes on revolving and exhibits the *samsara* as a fact of life.

The relation (*paccaya*) has been explained as that from which an effect derived from a cause comes- *paticca etesma etiti paccayo*<sup>2</sup>. It has the characteristics of rendering service<sup>3</sup>. The state which renders service to the standing or arising of a state only is said to be its cause or condition<sup>4</sup>. Where one *dhamma* by its arising or persistence is a helper to another *dhamma*, that first named is the causally relating *dhamma* to the last named. Thus, a relation (*paccaya*) is not only relating thing but also an assisting agency (*upakaraka*). There are twenty four types of relation, which have been enumerated, explained and illustrated in the *Patthana-pakarana*<sup>5</sup>, the seventh book of the *Abhidhamma-Pitaka*. They are namely (1) *Hetu-paccaya* (root-condition), (2) *Arammana-paccaya* (Object-condition), (3) *Adhipati-paccaya* (Dominance-condition), (4) *Anantara-paccaya* (Contiguity-condition), (5) *Samanantara-paccaya* (Immediate-condition), (6) *Sahajata-paccaya* (conasance-condition), (7) *Annamanna-paccaya* (Mutuality-condition), (8) *Nissaya-paccaya* (Base-

condition), (9) *Upanissaya-paccaya* (Decisive-condition), (10) *Purejāta paccaya* (Pre-existence-condition), (11) *Pacchājāta-paccaya* (Post-existence-condition), (12) *Āsevana-paccaya* (Repetition-condition), (13) *Kamma-paccaya* (Action-condition), (14) *Vipāka-paccaya* (Resultant-condition), (15) *Āhāra-paccaya* (Nourishing-condition), (16) *Indriya-paccaya* (Faculty-condition), (17) *Jhāna-paccaya* (Concentration-condition), (18) *Magga-paccaya* (Path-condition), (19) *Sampayutta-paccaya* (Association-condition), (20) *Vippayutta-paccaya* (Dissociation-condition), (21) *Atthi-paccaya* (Presence-condition), (22) *Natthi-paccaya* (Absence-condition), (23) *Vigata-paccaya* (Disappearance-condition), and (24) *Avigata-paccaya* (continuance-condition).

The law of Dependent Origination with its twelve factors, is no doubt, anterior to the theory of relations (*paccaya*), as is evident from the *Nikāyas*. These two are two facets of the same doctrine. The former describes the things that are related and the latter, the way in which things are related. In other words, we can say that the law of dependent origination explains the process of existence of conditioned things. The theory of relation (*paccaya*) explains the relation existing between different phases, coming into existence. Such relations are explained in conditioned things only.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, the two constitute one consistent whole, the one supplementing the other.

Again, the theory of relation (*paccaya*) is the final development of the theory of causality discovered and propounded by the Buddha. And, it was also said that the theory of relations was formulated by the *Ābhidhāmmikas* in an attempt to place the theory of Dependent Origination on a more philosophical foundation. To find out how far the attempt of the *Ābhidhāmmikas* had been a success is the purpose of this paper. The present paper expounds the brief description of the causal relation of the two terms of each of the eleven propositions of the causal chain with reference to the twenty-four types of relation.

### 1 Relation between Ignorance (*Avijjā*) and Activities (*Saṅkhāras*):

When, in the *Kāma-vacara* plane, one contemplates on the nature of ignorance in order to get rid of it, the resultant activities are obviously conditioned by ignorance as the object condition (*ārammaṇa-paccaya*).<sup>7</sup> But however a person, in the *Kāma-vacara* plane, performs acts of charity and the like in order to get rid of ignorance, or when a person, in the

*Rūpāvacara* plane, practises meditation for the same purpose, the ignorance does the function of a decisive condition (*upanissaya-paccaya*) in respect of the activities, representing the act of charity and the practice of meditation.<sup>8</sup> Again, when a man enjoys greed which is accompanied by ignorance, ignorance stands to the activities representing the enjoyment as an *ārammaṇa-paccaya*. Similarly, when in the case under consideration, the ignorance becomes a dominant object or a driving power, the relation becomes an instance of *ārammaṇādhipati* or *ārammaṇūpanissaya-paccaya*. When however a person, being misled on account of ignorance, commits the immoral acts of killing and the like, the ignorance as a driving power stands in *upanissaya-paccaya* to the activities, representing the act of killing.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Relation between Activities (*Saṅkhāras*) and Consciousness (*Viññāṇa*):

The activities are technically known as *Kamma* and hence they are said to stand in *Kamma-paccaya* to the resultant consciousness. The priority of fructification of a particular *Kamma* is determined by its relative strength or power, and so the fructifying *Kamma* is also regarded as an *upaṇissaya-paccaya* of the resultant consciousness.<sup>10</sup> Thus, activities stand as *Kamma* as well as *Upanissaya-paccaya* to the resultant consciousness.

## 3. Relation Between Consciousness (*Viññāṇa*) and Mind Body (*Nāma-rūpa*):

Here, (*Viññāṇa*) is not restricted to *vipāka-viññāṇa* (resultant consciousness) alone but is taken in a wider sense including volitional consciousness (*abhisankhāra-viññāṇa*) also. The term *nāma-rūpa* also does not stand only for *nāma* and *rūpa* blended together, but severally for *nāma*, *rūpa* and *nāma cum rūpa*. Because *Viññāṇa* sometimes (e.g. in the *arūpa*-plane) gives rise to *nāma* alone, sometimes (in *rūpa*-plane) to *rūpa* alone and sometimes to both *nāma* and *rūpa* (e.g. in the *Kāma*-plane). The *viññāṇa* stands to *nāma* in the following nine relations, each of which has the causal characteristic of 'co-presence with the effect': *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *sampayutta*, *vipāka*, *āhāra*, *indriya*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>11</sup> It also stands to *hadaya-vatthu* (heart- base), at the time of rebirth (*paṭisandhi*), in the same nine relations, only replacing *sampayutta* by *vippayutta*. It also stands to other physical aggregates (except the *hadaya-vatthu*) in eight relations, excluding only the *aññamañña* from

the nine above in case of *hadaya-vatthu*.<sup>12</sup> The *abhisaṅkhāra-viññāṇa* however is related to the physical aggregates in relation of *upanissaya*.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Relation between Mind-body (*Nāma-rūpa*) to Six Senses (*Salāyatana*) :

It has been discussed in three ways, namely the relations between *nāma* and *salāyatana*, the relations between *rūpa* and *salāyatana* and the relations between *nāma-rūpa* and *salāyatana*.

(a) *Nāma : salāyatana*- In the *arūpa*-plane, at the moment of rebirth (*patisaṅkhi*), *nāma* as *vipāka* is related to the sixth organ in the following seven ways namely, *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *sampayutta*, *vipāka*, *atthi*, and *avigata*.<sup>14</sup> Besides, the *nāma* as *abyākatahetu* (viz. morally neutral *alobha* etc.) stands as *hetu-paccaya* to the said sense-organ and similarly the *nāma* as psychical nutriment (*arūpi-āhāra*) stands to the same as an *āhārapaccaya*. And also during the process of continuity (*pavatta*), including that of cognition, the *nāma* as *vipāka* has the same relations with the sixth sense-organ. The *nāma* as activities however bears to the said organ all the above relations excepting the *vipāka* which is possible only between terms which are resultants (*vipākas*). In the other planes, viz. *Kāma*vacara and *rūpa*vacara, at the moment of rebirth (*patisaṅkhi*), *nāma* as *vipāka* is related, through the heart-base, to the sixth sense organ in the same seven ways mentioned above. To the other five sense-organs, however, it is related, through the four primary elements, in six ways, viz. *sahajāta*, *nissaya*, *vipāka*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>15</sup> The relations of *hetu* and *āhāra* are also possible in the same way as in the case of *arūpa* plane. And also during the process of continuity, including that of cognition, the *nāma* as *vipāka* has the same relations with the sixth sense organ as *vipāka*. The *nāma* as *vipāka*, however, bear to the said organ all the above relations excepting the *vipāka*. To the remaining five sense-organs, during the process of cognition, the *nāma* as *vipāka* is related, through the corresponding five sense-bases (*cakkhuppāsādādi-vatthu*) in four ways, viz. *paccajāta*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>16</sup> The same relations also hold good between *nāma* as volition and the five sense organs.

(b) *Rūpa : Salāyatana* : There is no *rūpa* in the *arūpa*-plane, and so the question of determination of relation between *rūpa* and *salāyatana* in that plane simply does not arise. In the other planes, however, the

physical base of heart, at the moment of rebirth (*paṭisandhi*), is related to the sixth sense-organ in the following six ways : *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>17</sup> The four primary material elements, however, are related, at the moment of rebirth as also during the process of continuity, to the remaining five sense organs according as they arise in the following four ways : *sahajāta*, *nissaya*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>18</sup> The faculty of material vitality (*rūpa-jīvitindriya*) is related to the five sense organs, at the moment of rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) as well as during the process, in three ways, viz., *atthi*, *avigata* and *indriya*. *Āhāra* is related to the same five sense-organs, during the process by way of *atthi*, *avigata* and *āhāra*.<sup>19</sup> The *hadayavatthu* is related, during the process, by way of *nissaya*, *purejāta*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.

(c) *Nāma-rūpa* : *Salāyatana* : In the *kāma* and *rūpa*-plane, at the moment of rebirth (*paṭisandhi*), the *nāma* (consisting of three *vipākakkhandhas* viz. *vedanā*, *saññā* and *saṅkhāra*) and *rūpa* (*hadayavatthu*) stand to the sixth sense organ (viz. *manāyatana* or *viññāna*) in the following ways, namely, *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *vipāka*, *sampayutta*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>20</sup>

#### 5. Relation between Six-Senses (*Salāyatana*) and Touch (*Phassa*) :

The first five sense organs are related to the respective objects in six ways, viz. *nissaya*, *purejāta*, *indriya*, *vippayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*. The sixth sense organ viz. *manāyatana* is related to the mind impression (*mano-samphassa*), which is a form of *vipāka* or resultant consciousness, in nine ways, namely, *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *vipāka*, *āhāra*, *indriya*, *sampayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*.<sup>21</sup>

#### 6. Relation between Touch (*Phassa*) and Feeling (*Vedanā*) :

With reference to the five doors (*pañcadvāra*) the visual-impression (*cakkhu-samphassa*) is related to the feeling, arising at the eye-base in eight ways.<sup>22</sup> viz. *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *vipāka*, *āhāra*, *sampayutta*, *atthi* and *avigata*, and identical is the case of other four kinds of impressions. To the corresponding feelings, accompanying the process of *sampañicchana*, *santīraṇa* and *tadārammaṇa* in the *Kāma*-plane, the visual impression and the like are related by way of *Anantariūpanissaya* only. The mind-impression (*mano-samphassa*) accompanying the *manodvārāvajjana*, is related to the feelings, in the

*kāmāvacara* plane, accompanying the process of *tadārammaṇa* by way of *upanissaya-paccaya* only.<sup>23</sup>

Touch also serves as the *nissaya-paccaya* (dependence-condition) for the arising of feeling, the latter cannot arise without a foot-hold on the former.

#### 7. Relation between Feeling (*Vedanā*) and Desire (*Taṇhā*) :

Feeling stands to desire as *upanissaya* in as much as the former is the driving power conditioning the latter.<sup>24</sup> It serves as a nourishing-condition (*āhāra-paccaya*), for desire to arise and develop, it must be fed by pleasurable feeling. It also assists in the arising of desire by way of controlling condition (*indriya-paccaya*), since desire is controlled or determined by the pleasurable nature of the object. Lastly, feeling may appear to be continuance-conditions (*avigata-paccaya*) because once the pleasurable feeling is absent, one does not crave for it.<sup>25</sup>

#### 8. Relation between Desire (*Taṇhā*) and Clinging (*Upādāna*) :

The desire serves clinging as a root condition (*hetu-paccaya*), for just like the root of a tree, which draws up sap from earth and water and carries it up to nourish the tree and as a result the tree blossoms forth and bears fruit, even so desire, rooted in desirable objects, draws up the essence in the form of pleasure so that at last man clings to those pleasurable objects. Desire is also served as nourishing-condition (*āhāra-paccaya*), and also as a dominance-condition (*adhipati-paccaya*) for dominated by the strong desire for pleasurable objects, one clings on to them.<sup>26</sup>

The *Kāmatāṇhā* is related to *Kāmuṇipādāna* by way of *upanissaya* inasmuch as the latter arises with respect to the objects of the former. In other words, *Kāmatāṇhā* leads one to *Kāmuṇipādāna*. To the other three *upādānas* viz. *diṭṭhupādāna*, *sīlabbatupādāna* and *attavādupādāna*, however, the *Kāmatāṇhā* is related in seven ways, namely *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *sampayutta*, *atthi*, *avigata* and *hetu*.<sup>27</sup>

#### 9. Relation between Clinging (*Upādāna*) and Becoming (*Bhava*) :

All the four kinds of *upādānas* are related to the *rūpa* and *arūpabhavas*, as well as to the moral volitions and the life-continuum of

the *Kāma-bhava* by way of *upanissaya-paccaya* only. To the accompanying immoral volitions of the *Kāma-bhava*, they are related by way of *sahajāta*, *aññamañña*, *nissaya*, *sampayutta*, *atthi*, *avigata* and *hetu-paccaya*. In the case of non-accompanying (i.e., immediately preceding) volitions, however, only the *upanissaya-paccaya* would hold good.<sup>28</sup>

*Upādāna* also serves as nourishing condition (*āhāra-paccaya*) for becoming (*bhava*). If one does not continue to cling on to this or that state of becoming, then there would be no rebirth.

#### 10. Relation between Becoming (*Bhava*) and Birth (*Jāti*) :

Here, becoming refers to only *Kamma-bhava* or the activities, which are responsible for birth by way of being its *Kamma-paccaya* and *upanissaya-paccaya*.<sup>29</sup>

*Bhava* also serves as resultant (*vipāka-paccaya*), because, it is the effectiveness of becoming of the desire to be born that is manifested in the birth of a new being.

#### 11. Relation between Birth (*Jāti*) and Decay and Death (*Jarāmaraṇa*):

Birth is related to the decay & death by way of resultant-condition (*vipāka-paccaya*) for the latter are nothing but the fruitioning of the cause which is birth. It also serves as a contiguous condition (*anantara-paccaya*) for immediately after birth, the decay and death follow because of impermanence. Then, as pre-existence-condition (*purejāta-paccaya*) and also absence (*natthi*) and abeyance (*vigata*) conditions, birth serves the consequent suffering etc.<sup>30</sup>

*Jāti* is also *upanissaya-paccaya* of *Jarāmaraṇa* inasmuch as in the absence of *jāti*, *jarāmaraṇa* is impossible, while on the occurrence of *jāti*, the latter invariably follow.<sup>31</sup>

The above remarks would clearly bring into light the relation existing between the theory of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) with the twelve factors and the theory of Relations (*Paccaya*). The attempt of the *Abhidhammikas* to place the theory of Dependent Origination on a more philosophical foundation had thus been proved to be a success. With the formulation of the theory of Relations, the problem

how the things that are given in the theory of Dependent Origination are related and in what way, is very consistently solved.

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### Footnotes and References

1. *Imasmim Sati idam hoti, imassa uppāda idam uppajjati. Imasmim asati idam na hoti, imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati* - *Majjhima-nikāya*, II. (Ed.) Bhikkhu J. Kashyap. Nalanda, 1955. p. 257.
2. *Visuddhimagga*, (Ed.) Dwarikadasa Shastri. Varanasi. 1977. p. 450.
3. "upakāraḥ lakṣhaṇo paccayo" - *Ibid*.
4. "yo hi dhammo yassa dhammassa thitīyā vā upattiyā vā upakaraḥ hoti tassa paccayo ti vuccati" *Ibid*.
5. *Paṭṭhāna-pakaraṇa* I, (Ed.) Bhikkhu J. Kashyap, Nalanda, 1961, pp. 3-11.
6. *Paṭṭhānanāyo pana āhaccapaccayatthitā ārabha pavuccati. Abhidhammatthasaṅgaho* (Ed.) Revatadharmā. Vaaranasi. 1965. p. 210.
7. "Sā hi avijjāṃ khayato veyato sammasanakāle kāmāvacarānaṃ piṇṇābhisaṅkhārānaṃ ārammaṇa-paccayena paccayo hoti" *Visuddhimagga*, p. 457.
8. "Avijjāsamattikkamathāya pana dānāni ceva kāmāvacarapūññakiriyavattūni purentassa, rūpāvacarajjhānāni ca uppādentassa dvinnāṃ pi tesam upanissayapaccayena paccayo hoti" *Ibid*.
9. "Esā hi avijjā ārabha rāgādīnaṃ uppajjanakāle ārammanapaccayena, garuṃ katvā assādanakāle ārammanadhipati-ārammanupanissayehi, avijjāsamūlaphassa anūdinavassavino pāpātīpātāni karontassa upanissayapaccayena paccayo hoti" *Ibid*.
10. "Kusalākusalāṃ kammam vipākassa upanissaya-paccayena paccayo" - *Paṭṭhāna-pakaraṇa* I, p. 138.
11. "yaṃ hetum paṭisandhīyam pavattiyā vā vipākasaṅkhātā nāmaṃ tassa upanissaya vā amissaya vā paṭisandhikā vā aññaṃ vā vipākavūṭṭhanāṃ saha-jāta-āñña-nissaya-sampayuta vipākāhārindriya-atthi-avigatapaccayehi navadhā paccayo hoti" - *Visuddhimagga*, p. 474.



12. "Thapetva pana vatthurūpam sesarūpassa imesu navasu aññamaññapaccayam apanetvā sesehi atthahi paccayehi paccayo hoti" Ibid. p. 475.
13. "Abhisankhār aviññānam pana assasattarūpassa vā pañcavokārabhave... Upanissayavasena ekadhā vā paccayo hoti" - Ibid.
14. "Paṭisandhiyam tāva avakamsato sahaajāta-aññamañña- nissaya-sampayutta-vipāka-atthi- avigatapaccayehi sattadhā nāmañ chaṭṭhāyatanassa paccayo hoti" - Ibid. p. 470.
15. "Itaesañ pana tam pañcānnañ cakkhāyatanādinam catumahāphūtasahāyam hutvā sahaajāta- nissaya- vipāka- vippayutta- atthi-avigatavasena chahākarehi paccayo hoti" Ibid.
16. "Tattheva hi pavatte sesānañ cakkhāyatanādinam pañcannam cakkhupasādhādivatthukam itarañ pi vipākānāmañ pacchājāta- vippayutta- atthi-avigata-paccayehi catudhā paccayo hoti" Ibid. p. 477.
17. "Rūpato hi paṭisandhiyam vatthurūpam chaṭṭhassa manāyatanassa sahaajāta-aññamañña- nissaya- vippayutta- atthi- avigatapaccayehi chadhā paccayo hoti" - Ibid.
18. "Cattāri pana bhūtāni avisesato paṭisandhiyam pavatte... cakkhāyatanādinam sahaajāta- nissaya-atthi- avigatapaccayehi catudhā paccayo hoti" - Ibid.
19. "Etesañ pana cakkhādinam pañcannam paṭisandhiyam pavatte ca atthi-avigata - indriyavasena rūpajitum tidhā paccayo hoti. Āhāro ca atthi- avigatāhāravasena tidhā vā paccayo hoti" Ibid.
20. "Paṭisandhiyam tāva pañcavokārabhave khandhattaya- vatthurpasankhātāñ chaṭṭhāyatanassa sahaajāta-aññamañña- nissaya - vipāka-sampayutta-vippayutta-atthi- avigatapaccayādihi paccayo hoti" - Ibid. p. 478.
21. "Cak khāyatanādinu tāva pañca cakkhusamphassādibheduato pañcavidhassa phassassa nissaya- purejāta-indriya- vippayutta- atthi-avigatavasena chadhā paccayā honti. Tato param ekam vipākamanāyaatanam anekabhedassa vipākamanosamphassassa sahaajāta- aññamañña-nissaya-vipāka-āhāra-indriya-sampayutta- atthi- avigatavasena navadhā paccayo hoti" - Ibid. p. 479.
22. "Tattha hi pañcadvāre cakkhupasādhādivatthukānañ pañcannam vedanānañ cakkhusamphassādiko phasso sahaajāta aññamañña- nissaya- vipāka-āhāra-sampayutta-atthi-avigatavasena atthadhā paccayo hoti" - Ibid. p. 480.
23. "yā pana tā manodvāre tadārummajavasena pavattā kāmāvacaravedanā tāsāñ manodvāravajjana- sampayutto manosamphasso upanissayavasena ekadhā vā paccayo hoti ti" - Ibid.
24. Ibid. p. 481.
25. Kalupahana, D.J., "The Philosophy of Relations in Buddhism" (2) *University of Ceylon Review* Vol. XIX, 1962, p. 189.

26. *Ibid.*
27. "Eiṭha ca evaṃ desite upādānacatukke purimassa kāmupādānassa kāmataṇhā upanissayavasena ekadhā va paccayo hoti. taṇhābhinandītesu visayesu uppattito. Sesattayassa pana sahaajāta- aññamañña- nissaya- sampayutta-atthi-avigata- hetuvasena sattadhā vā paccayo hoti" - *Visuddhimagga*, p. 485.
28. "Rupārūpabhavānam hi kāmabhavapariyāpannassa ca kāmabhavē... upanissayapaccayavasena ekadhā vā paccayo hoti. Kāmabhavē attanā sampayuttākusala- kāmabhavassa sahaajāta-aññamañña- nissaya- sampayutta-atthi-avigata- hetupaccayappabhedehi, sahaajātādīhi paccayo hoti. Vippayutassa pana upanissaya paccayeneva ti" - *Ibid.* p. 48.
29. "So hi jātiyā paccayo, na upapattibhavo. So ca pana kammāpaccaya- upanissayapaccayavasena dvedhā paccayo hoti" *Ibid.*
30. Kalupahana, D.J. "The Philosophy of Relations in Buddhism" (2) *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XIX, 1962, p. 189.
31. "Tasmā ayaṃ pi jāti- jarāmarañassa ceva sokādinam ca paccayo hoti ti veditabbā. Sā pana upanissaya-koṭiyā ekadhā vā paccayo hoti ti" - *Visuddhimagga*, p. 487.