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Is the Buddhist Notion of "Cause Necessitates Effect (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*) Scientific?

by A. D. P. Kalansuriya

Causality in Buddhism: an introduction

The notion of causality (Pāli: *paṭiccasamuppāda*; Sanskrit: *pratītya-samutpāda*) is central to Buddhism. The Buddha testifies to its key role in the Buddhist religion thus: "He who sees causality sees the Dhamma" (*yo paṭiccasamuppādaṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati*).[1] In their own way, the Pāli *Nikāyas*, employing the conceptual tools available in the wider Indian thought, deal elaborately with this notion. But then, does the notion of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) express a universally valid truth? Does the causal argument here render its conclusion certain or only highly probable? We shall attempt to answer these questions in this paper.

In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the notion of causality is explained in this way: "Causation has the characteristics of objectivity, necessity, invariability and conditionality" (. . . *tathatā avitathatā anaññathatā idappaccayatā ayuṃ vuccati . . . paṭiccasamuppāda*).[2] *Paṭiccasamuppāda* is a combination of the two words *paṭicca* "dependent" and *samuppāda* "arising." Accordingly, *paṭicca-samuppāda* denotes "dependent arising" or "conditioned origination" or "conditioned genesis." The *Majjhimā Nikāya* explicates this causation by the following general formula: *imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti, imassa uppāda idaṃ uppajjhāti; imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti; imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhāti.*[3] A literal rendering of this reads as follows: "When *this is, that* comes to be; from the arising of *this, that* arises. When *this is not, that does not* come to be; upon the cessation of *this, that* ceases also."

At this juncture, philosophically speaking, an analysis would make explicit the nature of the notion of causality in Buddhism. But, then, which analysis? Thinkers may disagree. To put it differently, would it be valid to explain the central notions of Buddhism by way of another religion? Or should they be explained by way of modern science? Or should they be explained within their own context (the natural context to which they conceptually belong)? Admittedly, we face a significant issue here, and it relates to the nature of the function of philosophy. For, throughout its long and varied history, 'philosophy' has meant many different things. This is a complex issue which we cannot dwell on here. But we shall clarify our position, very briefly, in this way. Along with the later Wittgenstein, we say that "Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."[4] The reference here is to a thorough misunderstanding of our language. But how has this misunderstanding of our language arisen? It is due not to simple error, but to a bewitchment whose source lies partly in the human propensity for seeking an essence, a unity or a simplicity which is non-existent. And, therefore, a misunderstanding of our language gives rise to a misuse of language which, in turn, gives rise to perplexities. They baffle and confuse us. Wittgenstein himself saw a way through all this perplexity: "What is your aim in philosophy?—To shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle."[5] Accordingly, philosophy does not involve itself in the primary sense of imparting straightforward factual information, but simply in description of the hidden and nebulous sources of our confusion and bafflement; of showing how we are misled and how we can reorientate ourselves. The consequence is clarity, which means that philosophical problems should completely disappear. To put the point yet more explicitly, the conceptual tool which is emphasized here is as follows: not to use words out of context and not to isolate a word from the life to which it belongs, in which it is used, in which it has meaning. We wish to examine and analyse the truly Buddhistic notion of causality by way of the above-mentioned conceptual tool.

If we determine "not to use words out of their natural context" as a central conceptual tool in our present analysis of the notion of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), it is of prime significance

to note the nature of the conceptual structure of Buddhism.[6] The Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, says the following about his thought-process: "I am one of those who profess the basis of a religion . . ."[7] In the same context, the Buddha clearly emphasizes his ideology as religious. This is evident from the following: ". . . it was not useful, not related to the fundamentals of religion, and not conducive to revulsion, dispassion, cessation, peace, higher knowledge, realization and *nibbāna*."[8] The logical nature of the Buddhist religion is evidently hinted at, as will be clear from a careful understanding of the above-mentioned contentions of the Buddha himself. The religious nature of Buddhism is further made explicit by the moral code and the procedural guide emphasized by the Buddha with reference to the *summum bonum—nibbāna*—the transcendent. The moral code is embodied in the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, the *middle* mode of conduct by which the sage crosses to the safety of *nibbāna*—the final liberation of mind which is like the extinction of a lamp. What gradually unfolds seems to be the ethico-religious nature of Buddhism as against its scientific or empirico-epistemological or any other kind of nature. To make the point clearer still, what is made explicit is that the central doctrine of Buddhism remains an ethical one and never an empirical hypothesis or theory or doctrine which is either 'true' or 'not-true' ('false') *empirically*. And this way of treating Buddhism—limiting Buddhism to its natural context, namely, a religious one, may elicit a combative counterblast from the Buddhist modernists. We hope to argue against them in the sequel.

Ethics and causal formula

The main argument in our paper notes initially that the background of the notion of causality is ethico-religious. It should be kept in mind, at the outset, that if the notion is applied without reference to the other notions that form its normal background, nonsense is produced, for the notion remains empty. This is what the later Wittgenstein describes as "when language is like an engine idling, not when it is doing work" (*wenn die Sprache leerlauft, nicht wenn sie arbeitet*).[9] We propose that the Buddhistic notion of causality needs to be employed within the conceptual structure of Buddhism to avoid it being made meaningless. Quoting from the

Nikāyas themselves, we showed that the notion of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is embedded not in a made-up scientific causal formula but in an ethico-religious groundwork, essentially woven into ancient Indian thinking.

However, it appears that the Buddhist modernists are at variance with our above contention. K.N. Jayatilleke and D.J. Kalupahana are the prominent Buddhist modernists who have forwarded an argument basically different from ours. For instance, Jayatilleke contends, "Those occurrences which are causally connected are considered to have the following relation, namely, that (1) 'Whenever A is present, B is present' (*imasmiṃ sati idaṃ hoti*) and (2) 'whenever A is absent, B is absent' (*imasmiṃ asati idaṃ na hoti*). This means that B does not occur unless A is present and B occurs only when A is present. Thus a one-one correlation is established between the conditions constituting the cause and their effect. This is a scientific view of causation as opposed to the practical common-sense view."[10] Elsewhere Jayatilleke says that Buddhism is concerned primarily with the sense of the notion of causality which denotes the causal laws that operate in bringing about the continued genesis of the individual.[11] With reference to the notion of causality, Kalupahana says, "Thus the causal principle as stated in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas* seems to include all the features of a scientific theory of causation—objectivity, uniqueness, necessity, conditionality, constant conjunction, productivity, relativity—as well as one-one correlation."[12]

Although both these Buddhist modernists discuss at length the notion of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), it is difficult to take seriously their assurances that it is similar to the scientific notion of causality. For in this connection what they do is to follow the 'so-called' Mill's methods of induction. Even as Mill did, the Buddhist modernists have to face the logical consequences of the conception of a cause as a sufficient and necessary condition. To put it differently, the occurrence of A necessitates the occurrence of B; and B does not come to be without A occurring. Serious difficulties lie in determining whether, in fact, these relations hold. Similar difficulties appear as regards the notion of causality in Buddhism, if its difficulties are similar to those in Mill's methods of induction. It is unnecessary to add that both Jayatilleke and Kalupahana equate the nature and function of causality in Buddhism with those in Mill's method of induction by way of their so-

called 'scientific view of causation.'

Both Jayatilleke and Kalupahana are true to the contentions in the *Nikāyas* when they emphasize and re-emphasize that the order or the fixed nature of phenomena—the regular pattern of phenomena or conditionality—exists, irrespective of the arrival of the Buddhas. But this emphasis is not the end but the beginning of the inquiry, namely, the serious need to note the logical nature of the notion of causality. A paraphrasing of the significant words that are made explicit with reference to Buddhistic causation such as 'necessity,' 'objectivity,' 'invariability' and 'conditionality' will not help at all to work out a good basis or a rationale. The point we labour all along can be elucidated thus. What does the word *avitathatā* ("necessity") denote? Jayatilleke says that ". . . since there is no failure even for a moment to produce the events which arise when the conditions come together, there is said to be 'necessity.'"[13] Kalupahana in his own way elaborates the denotation of the word *avitathatā* ("necessity") thus: "The traditional anthropomorphic meanings attached to the word 'necessity' have been rejected, and the empiricist view that it denotes a lack of exception or the existence of regularity has been accepted."[14] Ironically, though, this way of treating the word 'necessity' can have an adverse effect on the understanding of the true Buddhistic notion of causality. To elucidate this point we shall take the first sentence of the causal formula describing the nature of the conditioning of the individual, namely, 'ignorance conditions the volitional activities' (*avijjā paccayā saṃkhāra*). But, then, what is the nature of the causal relation between *avijjā* ("ignorance") and *saṃkhāra* ("volitional activities")? Jayatilleke does not make any attempt to note and specify the logical nature of this relation. Kalupahana's arguments run a similar course. It is not very clear why the words 'necessity' and 'empiricality' are brought together in Kalupahana's thesis. The problem seems not so much to be what is being affirmed, as what is denied. To put it even more explicitly, it appears as if there is a synthetic relation of necessitation, or alternatively, 'an empirical necessity.' On the one hand, it is not at all clear what is being denied and on the other, it is not clear what those who believe in synthetic relations of necessity take them to be. Therefore, it is difficult to take seriously Kalupahana's assurance to the effect that "necessity," when divorced of "anthropomorphic meanings," is equivalent to "a lack of exception or the existence of regularity."

For clarity's sake, can Kalupahana answer the following question: How does one come across 'a lack of exception or the existence of regularity'? By experience or by reasoning a priori? To hammer the way out of the impasse of this causal hotch-potch is, of course, possible, but very difficult and a shift of emphasis in the right direction is called for. Apparently, such a shift of emphasis may not be based on the attempts of either Kalupahana or Jayatilleke. The reason relates to a misunderstanding of the limitations on the subject matter at hand.

The implication here is the acceptance of the serious philosophical technique of humbly trying to explore Buddhism from within its own context. This philosophical technique is made explicit by Wittgenstein by his notion—"avoiding engine idling"—not to use the central notions of an argument outside their territory. And what Buddhist modernists have done is to wrongly read hardened meanings of modern generations into Buddhist terminology which, conceptually, belongs to the thought-structure of ancient Indian philosophy. Admittedly, it would certainly be a mistake to suppose that an introduction of Graeco-Roman philosophical concepts is unwarranted. But our emphasis relates to an exercise in which the effort should have been to reveal the limitations of the subject matter at hand—Buddhism, in the first instance.

The Buddhistic 'causal relation': Its nature

As a precursor to Kalupahana's likely answer, let us turn to the question raised previously, namely, "How does one come across *a lack of exception or the existence of regularity*"? In an empiricist web of understanding, which incidentally is his approach, the answer should simply be, "experience." But this is no more than mere generalization of the data—of the observed (perceived) instances on which it is based. However, the propositions expressing Buddhist causal laws or 'about' causal law-like instances such as *avijjā paccayā saṅkhāra* ("ignorance conditions (= causes) volitional acts"), *jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ* ("birth conditions (= causes) death"), etc., are no mere summaries of what has happened in the past, of the states of affairs that might for instance be offered as evidence in favour of such laws. If they are laws, the proper logical form of such laws is best expressed through the hypothetico-con-

ditional 'if-then' rather than the categorical 'all . . . are.' To put the matter thus would be worth the effort, since it would help avoid all 'ontological commitments.'[15] Therefore, what should be done in this connection is merely to investigate the applications of the causal law. In itself, therefore, a causal law is a rule or a prescription to which a truth-value cannot be assigned. The most we could do is to apply it to various contexts, scientific, ethico-religious, poetic, political and so on.

What emerges explicitly from this analysis, for the moment, is that the Buddhist causal laws just noted are neither empirical generalizations nor mere summaries of what has happened. They simply are morality-oriented rules or prescriptions.[16] Admittedly, the primitive causal formula in Buddhism which runs thus: *imass' uppādā idaṃ uppajjhāti . . . imassa nirodhā idaṃ nirujjhāti* ("from the arising of this, that arises: upon the cessation of this, that ceases also") testifies to this. Stated in an abstract form it reads as follows: "From the arising of A, B arises; from the cessation of A, B ceases also." When it is applied to "the continued genesis of the individual" in the proper Buddhist context, philosophically speaking, the central concern centers upon the need to note the *logical nature* of the relation between A and B. That is to say, to note the logical nature of the relation—empirical (probable) or ethical or necessary or *a priori* or empirico-necessary[17] or any other. But, then, what is the *logical nature* of the relation between cause and effect (abstract formula) or birth and decay-death or ignorance and volitional acts (concrete formula)?

Buddhism and Science

Let us turn, first, to Kalupahana. He says: "Without being a partisan of any one of these metaphysical views, the Buddha adduced empirical causal explanations."[18] We contend that what Kalupahana's contentions amount to is, simply, a misusing of contexts—empirical and ethico-religious—from which the logical nature of the causal relation in Buddhism is not made explicit. Admittedly, the relation not only remains nebulous but is also attended by very significant difficulties. We shall see one difficulty in what follows. Does "decay-death" (the effect) follow by necessity from "birth" (the cause)? The ethico-religious character of Buddhism is destroy-

ed if the answer to it is supplied in the negative. To put it differently, one has to give an affirmative answer to the question just mentioned. And, therefore, *empirical relations* in the sense of "high degree of probability" or "low degree of probability" are logically not possible here. To Kalupahana, the case seems to be both ethico-religious and scientific at the same time. That is to say, the relation between "cause and effect" is both *necessary* and *empirical*. According to Kalupahana, the relation appears *necessary*, because "decay-death *must* arise from birth" in order to retain the central ground-work in Buddhism. To drive home the point, according to the primitives in Buddhism, *decay-death* by necessity cannot arise, if *birth* is non-existent. The *Saṃyutta Nikāya* testifies to this conclusion in this way: *katamo ca paṭiccasamuppādo? jātipaccayā . . . jarāmaraṇaṃ*[19] ("What is causation? Upon birth, decay-death arises"). Alternatively, within the conceptual structure of Buddhism, it is theoretically impossible to entertain a view which embodies the position that the effect (= decay-death) arises from cause *other than* birth. However, if Buddhist modernists wish to argue against this view (which in itself is a very difficult thesis), they should incorporate two things:

(i) that the formula which involves "birth conditions (= necessitates) decay-death" needs radical revision,

and

(ii) that a basically different alternative doctrine of salvation originating from the very conceptual structure of Buddhism is logically possible.

Needless to say, both (i) and (ii) cannot be accommodated within the conceptual structure of Buddhism which is a religion with a set moral code according to the Buddha himself.[20] Why? Because (i) and (ii) above adversely affect the very groundwork of Buddhism. The reason relates to the logical impossibility of entertaining an alternative *means* other than the *ariyaṭṭhangikamagga* with reference to the *summum bonum* (*nibbāna*), within the context of Buddhism. Logically speaking, the Buddhist conceptual structure can accommodate *only one* means and *only one* goal. Non-buddhist religious tenets or scientific tenets or poetic tenets

or any other tenets cannot be accommodated in it at all. It is evident, therefore, that to read empiricism into the truly Buddhist causal formula is, first, a central philosophical error. Second, it gives rise to considerable theoretical difficulties.

It is logical to entertain the following: The claim that "the Buddha adduced empirical causal explanations," impressive though this claim may be, remains unsupported. Again, Jayatilleke's claim too, namely, "This is a scientific view of causation as opposed to the practical common-sense view,"[21] remains unsupported. Admittedly, as made explicit, causal explanations in Buddhism are not empirical (i.e. scientific) but ethical. The central notions that arise from its conceptual structure are ethical. To put the matter thus would be worth the effort, since it would help avoid philosophical errors, pseudo-problems and bewitchments. For instance, the relation between

(i) "Upon birth, decay-death is conditioned (= necessitated)" (*jātipaccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ*),

(ii) "Upon ignorance, volitional acts are conditioned (= necessitated)" (*avijjā paccayā saṅkhāra*),

(iii) "Cause conditions (= necessitates) effect," etc.,

are *necessary ones*. It is because birth necessarily conditions (= necessitates) decay-death, according to Buddhism. Alternatively, *the* one and only way or *paṭipadā* also has been designed on a moral code by the Buddha to uproot the cause (birth), so that the effect (decay-death) can be uprooted at the same time. And, therefore, what is implied is a necessary, sacrosanct and ethical relation between cause and effect in Buddhism. We emphasize the ethical (= sacrosanct) nature as the central characteristic of the notion of causality in this ethico-religious ideology. Buddhist modernists have made it a *fashion* to read hardened meanings of modern generations such as empiricism, positivism, science, parapsychology, psychology, psycho-analysis, etc., into Buddhism, which is primarily built on the constraints of agriculture, pastoralism and the environment affecting it. These in turn are embedded in ancient Indian civilization. This *fashion* almost amounts to a philosophical error, namely, confusion of contexts—to expect an empirical (probable) relation

from an ethico-religious ideology where such a relation is logically impossible. If Buddhist religious notions were to be carefully analyzed, for clarity's sake, within their own context, then the following will be revealed:

(i) the ethico-causal formula

and

(ii) its application to phenomena.

The *Saṃyutta Nikāya* testifies to this end thus: . . . *thitā va sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idappaccayatā*: (". . . this order exists—the fixed nature of phenomena—the regular pattern of phenomena").[22] The exact meanings of the key notions in this passage, such as *order, fixed nature of phenomena,* and *regular pattern*, are not that clear. However, the same *Nikāya* notes: *jāti-paccayā jarāmaraṇaṃ* ("Upon birth, decay-death is conditioned"). Apparently, the case appears to be as follows: The abstract causal formula makes explicit *a necessary relation* between birth and decay-death; and this is projected onto the external world of our experience *in concreto*. The subconcept of compulsion or of efficiency is implicitly contained in the Buddhist notion of causality. If so, it is not possible to take seriously the assurances of Buddhist modernists—Jayatilleke, Kalupahana, and others—that Buddhist causality is *scientific*.

In scientific practice, causality is dissociated from any notion of efficiency or compulsion. That is to say, in the scientific context, causal connection is replaced by a functional relationship of a mathematical sort. Admittedly, once the mathematical function is established, the agency of causal compulsion ceases to be a problem for science. But such a complex theoretical exercise is not undertaken in Buddhism. Again, the claim that Buddhist causality is also scientific is further weakened, when Buddhist modernists read the scientific notion of 'one-one correlation' into the wider notion of *paṭiccasamuppāda*. What is a 'one-one correlation'? What impact does it have on the truly Buddhist notion of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)? The scientific investigator attempts to find a relation that is equally determinate in either direction, that is, he seeks a one-one relation: 'whenever X occurs, E occurs, and E does

not occur unless X has occurred':[23] but this formula does not mean "X will be followed by E" or "X will bring about E" or "X gives rise to E" or "X necessitates E," but simply what acceleration a particle will have under given circumstances, i.e., it tells us how the particle's motion is changing each moment, and not where the particle will be at some future moment. Therefore, the formula which embodies 'one-one correlation' can absorb the idea that it is not rendered necessary that causes should precede their effects. Bertrand Russell has formulated this idea in this way: "The law makes no difference between past and future: the future 'determines' the past in exactly the same sense in which the past 'determines' the future."[24] But the Buddhist causal formula, even if it implicitly contains a primitive one-one correlation, by necessity cannot absorb this Russellean idea which is scientific, simply because its scope is thoroughly limited. For instance, the reversibility of the temporal order of cause-effect direction cannot be accommodated in the Buddhist model; but the reversibility of the temporal order of events can be accommodated in the scientific causal model without damaging it. In this sense, it is hardly possible to accept the Buddhist causal formula as scientific. The truly scientific notion of causality, therefore, not only entertains *probability* but is also capable of accommodating the notion of *the reversibility of the temporal order of events.* What emerges explicitly from this is that both the notions of "probability" and of "*the reversibility of the temporal order*" have no place in truly Buddhist causality. This may be restated as follows: these notions are not ingredients of truly Buddhist causality. Buddhist causality, therefore, is not only primitive, but is also not scientific.

The logical nature of the Buddhist causal formula becomes even clearer once the notions of *order* and of *the fixed nature of phenomena*, as understood within the Buddhistic context, are further elaborated. How are we made aware of the so-called fixed nature of phenomena and the order in the cosmos? Is the order in the cosmos universally valid? Clear answers to both these questions are found in Buddhism. For instance, the fixed nature of phenomena and the order in the cosmos were discovered by the Buddha and revealed to us. Kalupahana puts the idea in this way: "Thus, having experienced particular instances of causation through sensory as well as extrasensory perception, the Buddha arrived at a general theory of 'causality' or 'causal uniformity,' which could be

considered a universally valid principle."[25] But, if the order and uniformity in the cosmos are *universally valid*, the causal relation which is said to exist between cause and effect—birth and decay-death, ignorance and volitional acts—is also *universally valid*. To clarify it further, the relation between cause and effect in primitive Buddhism is certain (or necessary). It is not possible, therefore, to take seriously the assurance of either Jayatilleke or Kalupahana that Buddhist causality is scientific and empirical (probable).

The necessary character or the *universally-valid* character of Buddhist causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) makes the Buddha's so-called generalization unassailable and sacrosanct. And this position is consistent with Buddhism, the religion of the Buddha: but it must also be emphasized that the sacrosanct Buddhist position is basically different from that of science. In Buddhism:

(i) "birth (*jāti*) necessitates or produces decay-death (*jarā-maraṇam*)," which expresses *a necessary connection.*

But in science the scientist looks for a general law of the following form:

(iia) "whenever an event of type X occurs, an event of type Y occurs."

An example will make explicit the scientific causal formula:

(iib) "whenever a gas is heated, its volume remaining constant, its pressure rises."

This proposition expresses *the connection* between the two events "a gas being heated" and "the pressure rising." But it *does not* express *a necessary connection*; it expresses *a probable connection of a high degree of probability* only. Therefore, the notion of "one event necessitating this or that event" is not implicitly contained in the scientific concept of causality, whereas this notion is implicitly contained in Buddhist causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). To repeat, first, Buddhist causality not only expresses a necessity, a production, but also emphasizes *a necessary connection*; and, second, Buddhist causality is unassailable. Truly scientific causality denies

both necessity (necessary connection) and unassailability. The idea is better expressed by D.M. Taylor and A.J. Ayer. With reference to the notion of necessity, Taylor says: "... the notion of one event necessitating another is senseless."[26] And as regards the notion of unassailability, Ayer says, "... no laws are sacrosanct, none is safe from rejection in the light of further experience, because, while we have to rely on some laws in building up our picture of the world, they do not always have to be the same ones ... so there is no scientific hypothesis, no factual generalization of any kind and no presupposition, of which we can say that it is unassailable."[27] And as Buddhism accepts necessity, unassailability and sacrosancticity, what emerges into explicitness is the basic distinction between science and Buddhism. It is the case that both science and Buddhism use the word 'causality' in their respective argumentations, deliberations, presuppositions, etc. However, this is not going to make Buddhism scientific.

Religious systems, inclusive of the Buddhist one, originating in the desire for practical rules of *good* conduct are basically primitive. The central attempt in religions is to solve certain problems that are not *yet* treated as coming within the scope of science. Alternatively, the meaning of a word in a religious ideology, which emphasizes rules of *good* conduct, is not identical with a technical word in a scientific language. What we mean here is that the meaning of a technical term in a scientific language cannot be derived from the meaning of the same word in ordinary language. The way in which the concept of causality in Buddhism is given application by Buddhist modernists is unintelligible. It involves the conflation of a concept from one category with another taken from another category. This gives rise to meaninglessness of one kind or another. Admittedly, therefore, one has to be extra careful when borrowing scientific terms and using them elsewhere—in religion, politics, poetics, aesthetics, ethics and so on.

Again, in certain areas of science, the scientists go one step further towards a special technical langauge. Here one is involved, not only with a special terminology of words with very different meanings, but with the fundamentals of a specific linguistic structure. All these lend weight to the thesis that Buddhism and science are basically different in nature, scope and goals. Any attempt to explain Buddhism through science, therefore, leads to emptiness alone.

The notion of necessary connection made explicit in Buddhist causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), conceptually speaking, is consistent with that of *nibbāna*—the *summum bonum*. It is this consistency that elicits the ethical nature of Buddhist causality as against the so-called empirical (scientific) one. For instance, the notion of *paṭiccasamuppāda* ("causality") not only emphasizes *jāti* ("birth") necessitating *jarāmaraṇaṃ* ("decay-death"), but is also included in the uprooting of *jāti* ("birth") which is *nibbāna* ("emancipation = freedom"). To put it differently, if *jāti* ("birth") is not uprooted, the person is reborn in an unending manner (it necessitates *jarāmaraṇaṃ* and *punabbhavo*). It must now be very clear that the *only* salvation is the attainment of *nibbāna* and that the *only* means is the *ariyaṭṭhangikamagga*. The implication, soteriologically, is the logical impossibility of an alternative doctrine of salvation in Buddhism. Logically it suggests the necessary (certain) character of the relation between *jāti* ("birth") and *jarāmaraṇaṃ* and *punabbhavo* ("decay-death" and "rebirth"). Cannot one attain *nibbāna* by following a *means* other than the *ariyaṭṭhangikamagga*? The only possible answer is in the negative. For, within the strictly limited religious model in Buddhism, it is not possible to entertain any alternative doctrine of salvation. Emancipation (= *nibbāna*) is the only salvation meaningful and the *ariyaṭṭhangikamagga* the only *means* by which it can be attained. Therefore, an alternative doctrine of salvation in Buddhism is simply self-contradictory. If so, this doctrine must have a central impact on notions such as *jāti* ("birth"), *jarāmaraṇaṃ* ("decay-death"), *punabbhavo* ("rebirth"), *avijjā* ("ignorance"), *saṅkhāra* ("volitional acts"), etc. This is because these ideas have no meaning outside the context of Buddhism.

To put the point differently, they have meaning only within the limited boundary of the Buddhist religion. The notion of *probability* is foreign to the ethico-religious conceptual structure of Buddhism which is embedded in ancient Indian (aryan) thinking. To elaborate: If Buddhism were to be meaningful, *avijjā* ("ignorance") must necessitate *saṅkhāra* ("volitional acts") and *jāti* ("birth") must necessitate *jarāmaraṇaṃ* ("decay-death"). The words used in this type of discourse have emotive meaning only. By *emotive meaning*, we mean a disposition to produce emotional and attitudinal effects on the hearer, the follower, the disciple

or anyone else. Therefore, from a logical point of view, there exist no probable (empirical) relations. The only relation that exists between cause and effect or *avijjā* and *saṅkhāra* or *jāti* and *jarā-maraṇaṃ* or any other in Buddhism is a morality-oriented necessary one. If so, it is needless to add that an alternative doctrine of salvation in Buddhism is theoretically non-present, because there is no space for doubt-denial conditions or probability-conditions or inductive generalizations or mathematical deductions.

NOTES

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Sri Lanka, Peradenia, Sri Lanka.

1. Ed. V. Trenkner and R. Chalmers, *Majjhimā Nikāya*, Tr. I. B. Horner, *Middle Length Sayings*, Vol. I, London, PTS, 1954-9, 190-1.
2. Ed. L. Feer, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Tr. C.A.F. Rhys Davids and F.L. Woodward, Vol. II, London, PTS, *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, 1917-30, 26.
3. *Majjhimā Nikāya* (op. cit.,) Vol. I. 262-4.
4. L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1953, p. 47e.
5. Ibid., p. 103e.
6. I have dealt with this notion, elaborately, elsewhere: see A.D.P. Kalansuriya, "The Ethico-religious Nature of the Conceptual Framework of Buddhism, *Dialogue*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1 & 2, August, 1977, pp. 51-60.
7. *Majjhimā Nikāya*, Vol. II, 211.
8. Ibid., 431.
9. *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 51.
10. K.N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, London, Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1963, p. 449.
11. K.N. Jayatilleke, *The Message of the Buddha*, Ed. Ninian Smart, London, Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1975, p. 197.
12. D.J. Kalupahana, *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, Honolulu, The University Press of Hawaii, 1975, p. 98.
13. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, p. 447.
14. *Causality: The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, p. 93.
15. A.D.P. Kalansuriya, "Wittgenstein, Meaning Model and Buddhism," *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. IV, No. 3, April 1977, pp. 381-91.
16. See, "The Ethico-religious Nature of the Conceptual Framework of Buddhism," *Dialogue*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1-2, August 1977.
17. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, p. 453: "It closely resembles the Regularity Theory except for the fact that it speaks of the *empirical necessity* (avitathatā)."

18. *Causality*, p. 143.
19. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Vol. II. 25.
20. *Majjhimā Nikāya*, Vol. II. 211.
21. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, p. 449.
22. *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Vol. II. 25.
23. L.S. Stebbing, *Modern Introduction to Logic*, London, 1945, p. 264.
24. Bertrand Russell, *Mysticism and Logic*, Longmans, 1919, p. 195.
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27. A.J. Ayer, *Probability and Evidence*, London, Macmillan, 1972, p. 25.