CHAPTER - THREE

CAUSATION

(a) THE FACT OF CHANGE

The transient and impermanent character of all phenomena in the universe and the functional nature of various events in the psychical and physical realm is emphasised by Buddhism and Dev Dharma. Everything is held to be in the form of process, in a state of becoming and whatever exists is held to originate from some causes and conditions and is subject to dissolution also. They alike claim change at the core of all things and deny any permanent substance abiding within the matrix of change. The Buddha proclaims that since every phenomena that is experienced arises and passes away, every such phenomena is also non-substantial (sabbe Dhamma anattā). He thus states "All the elements of being are non-self." ¹ Devatma in a similar manner rejects the notion of a substantival entity and asserts that Nature is in a ceaseless process of change, growth, development and dissolution. Thus the fact of perpetual change is emphasised and the notion of an unchanging being denied. He asserts "Nature is changeable,
that is, it is every moment changing in its entirety." ²

**Nature of Change:**

The various characteristics of change which the Buddha and Devātmā refer to are those of regularity, necessity, uniformity and objectivity. The uniformity and regularity of events is to be observed in Nature. This can be known by means of experience. The necessity which they accord to change is that they do not vary in the effect according to the varying time and place. Devātmā claims that all changes take place methodically depending on certain factors and do not take place haphazardly nor are they chance occurrences. Buddhism likewise upholds the factor of necessity which implies the conditionality of all things. Since all events have conditional existence, there is held to be nothing that can exist independently and unconditionally. No animate or inanimate existence is immune from the influences of change and causation. Both thinkers contend that all compounded things are conditioned and in a state of flux.

**Objective Nature of Change and Causation:**

The fact of impermanence of all phenomena is
regarded as being objective as its operation is 'given' to be observed in Nature. These religious leaders alike, refute the claim of the Idealist that change and causation are mere matters of words, mental creations having no objective reality. The Buddha said instead about causation "It is made neither by me or another. Whether the Tathāgata were to arise in this world or not, this constitution of things (dhamma-dhātu) is eternally existent. Concerning this (the constitution of things) the Tathāgata has insight, is fully enlightened." 3 Dev Dharma asserts that whenever a new existent comes into being, it is in accordance with some immutable process of Nature and when it grows or evolves gradually, it is due to the laws of Nature. Hence he states "No where and under no circumstances do any changes take place hapazardly or unmethodically but they do so by certain fixed or immutable laws of Nature." 4

**Theory of Process:**

Buddhism and Dev Dharma emphasise the dynamic character of change and explain existence in terms of process. According to Buddhism, "The real nature of the universe is that it consists of temporary principle.
which cease to exist, but not without serving as conditions for further temporary principles, not without continuity." ⁵ Dev Dharma asserts that everything in the universe is held to be made of the constituents of matter and force. Of the latter concept it is asserted "Force in whatever form it exists, inanimate, organic, conscious or self-conscious, is always self-active, self-changing." ⁶ Events are governed by causal laws and Nature is held to be autonomous in its working. They alike conform to process ontology wherein Nature is depicted as a novel creative process marked by transience and all events are related to dynamic causal links that keep the process moving.

In rejecting an Annihilationist view on the one hand and a Substantialist standpoint on the other, the Buddha's observation is that for those who perceive through proper insight the arising of the things of the world, there is no belief in non-existence or annihilation and for those who perceive the ceasing of the things of the world there is no belief in immutability. Devātma avoids the Idealist contention as it divided the universe into a 'world of being' and a 'world of phenomena' and found the two parts unbridgeable, and the Materialist view is also avoided as it denies
qualitative values and adheres to an annihilationist theory. He claims "It is also a fact that by all this constant change, no matter or force in Nature is ever lost or becomes extinct." Devātma does not endorse the principle of annihilationism of soul, yet he does assert that in certain circumstances, under the influence of the process of degeneration, the life force regresses into inorganic forces. Dev Dharma unlike Buddhism upholds an emergent view of causation and due to this factor, there is a certain uniqueness observed in the effects. In the process of change wherein Nature brings about new forms and qualities, there is an uniqueness in certain respects as a result of evolution.

Buddhism and Dev Dharma assert that the all pervasive and often imperceptible character of change is an evident feature of our sensory and introspective experience. There is a similarity in the doctrines of these thinkers on the fact of change which also reflects their notion of time and they alike would be in agreement with the statement of Whitrow". . . . the idea that time is ultimate and irreducible does not commit us to the unnecessary hypothesis that it is absolute, for
moments do not exist in their own right but are mere classes of co-existent events. 8 They appear to be in accord with the view that all events are explicable by the methods of experience and experimental investigation in an objective manner without resorting to any form of supernatural agency or power inhering in change. To construe a mysterious entity behind changes is to indulge in a metaphysical realm of speculation. Existence is basically a process of inter-relations, inter-linkage of causal phenomena, rather than materialization of essences, a co-dependent arising of changing forms. The purpose of putting forth the fact of causation in both Buddhism and Dev Dharma was to explain the contingent nature of existence and to elucidate the dynamic inter-relations in the physical and psychical realm.

(b) CONTINUITY AND INTER-RELATEDNESS

Devātma considers Nature to be a causal whole and asserts that every change in any part of Nature is effected by the actions of different forces of Nature itself. Early Buddhism held everything to be inter-dependent in nature, conditioned and causally produced. Anything permanent and eternal was denied. The insight gained by the Buddha enabled him to realize that every
phenomena is causally produced and that change and causation are the true characteristics of existence. They alike regard the causal principle to be cosmic in its operation. The inter-dependence of phenomena in the physical and psychical realm is emphasised. The Buddhist doctrine is directed towards setting out the basic conditions for the process of existence which takes the form of the paticcasamupāda series. The inter-linkage between misery and the causal formulation that leads to its solution is pointed out. In Dev Dharma the orientation is towards an explication of the laws of Nature with particular reference to the individual depicting the potency of actions with regard to causing the evolution or devolution of the life-force.

Dev Dharma does not deviate from a naturalistic framework and it is the laws of Nature and the inter-connections among phenomena that assumes prominence. There is held to be no existent that may always be immune from causal influences. There is no claim to any type of non-spatial and non-temporal existence. The causal character of the inter-relationship of events leads to the rejection of rationalism and apriori theories as a means to knowledge and occasions the emphasis on empirical methods in discerning the truth. As a
naturalist Devatma is to contend the following positions:

(i) He regards Nature as a self-sufficient, self-existent, eternal whole and as the only reality. There is held to/no event unrelated to everything else.

(ii) In conformity with naturalism, transcendental reality is rejected along with the rejection of intuitive or mystic experience as a means to knowledge.

(iii) Every entity is caught up in the vortex of ceaseless change. Every change is held to exhibit inter-relations of a causal nature.

(iv) The causal inter-relationship of events are to be known by means of verification and observation.

(v) His theory of naturalism is also found to be intimately associated with humanism. Any form of anthropomorphism is avoided and all natural events are held to have causes that are themselves natural events.

The Buddha's doctrine is essentially a doctrine of causes and conditions. The causal relationship is
depicted as connection between mutually dependent causes and an effect. The spheres in which causality predominates are the physical (organic and inorganic) order, psychological order, moral and spiritual order. These groups prove to be all-inclusive. Buddhism believes in transitive causation wherein one state transmits its causal energy to another. The conception of dependence (pratītya) enabled the Buddha to avoid the two metaphysical assumptions concerning causation, namely the potential existence of the effect in the cause, hence the identity or substantival connection between them or the potential non-existence of the effect, hence the non-identity or absence of connection between cause and effect.

In Buddhism, things are not static in nature to which something happens, to be a thing is to be a causal phenomenon and therefore conditioned. On this basis of causality, it was possible for the Buddha to define, the past, present and future in the following manner; "Whatever form (rūpa) there has been which has ceased to be, which is past and has changed is called and reckoned as 'has been' (ahosi) and it is not reckoned as 'it exists' (atti) nor as 'it will be' (bhavisati). Whatever form is not arisen, not come to be is called
or reckoned 'it will be' and is not reckoned 'it exists' or 'it has been'. Whatever form has become and has manifested itself is reckoned or termed 'it exists' and it is not reckoned 'it has been' or 'it will be'. This passage tends to show that the theory according to which the past and the future exists in the present or even the view that the thing exists during the past, present and future are the results of unwarranted linguistic usages. The temporal copulas 'was', 'is now' or 'will be' are not to be confused with the timeless copulas of logic.

Devātmā asserts that an event can recur only under those conditions which were essential for its occurrence in the first instance, and in the absence of these conditions, the event cannot recur. This is similar to the Buddhist view wherein the occurrences which are causally connected are considered to have the following relation namely (i) whenever A is absent, B is absent. This can be likened to a scientific view of causation as opposed to a practical commonsensical view. As Stopping observes "The practical agent, however, is content with a relation that is determinate only in the direction from cause to effect,
whenever A occurs, E occurs. But the scientific investigator wants 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. 10

Devātma sets out an empirical theory of causation and does not endorse the view which deems it necessary to impose metaphysical presuppositions relating to ultimate origin of the universe, ultimate eternal Being etc, in explaining causation. He upholds the necessity of causal concomitance according to natural laws. He asserts that each sphere is governed by its own laws which cannot be reduced to other causal terms of another sphere e.g. the laws of psychology cannot be reduced to physical or biological laws and the laws of biology be reduced to the laws of physics and chemistry.

The Buddhist theory asserts that the essence of a thing is its immanent law of relation. In the causal sequence milk, butter, ghee etc. it is emphasised that one should not consider 'milk' to persist in the curds or vice versa. It is also not the case that the terms milk, curds, butter etc., are mere names.
which do not denote anything real. The fact is that one should not overstep convention by calling what comes to be called 'curds' by the name 'milk', 'butter' etc., and then assume that milk or butter is in some mysterious way present as an entity in the curds so that each one of these terms denotes an entity that persists without being perceived. As in Deva Dharma, Buddhism also upholds the empirical necessity of causal concomitance.

In these systems of thought, the inter-relationships do not exhibit the existence of any metaphysical principle of substance, Self or supernatural being. They alike reject supernatural causes. Any enduring entity either in matter or mind is categorically denied. They uphold the fact that when the qualities change, this entails that the object also changes. The characteristic of the transience of phenomena does not become apparent as universal, as this factor is not given attention and concealed by continuity. The rise and fall of all conditions may be thought as adhering to an unchanging substratum underlying and supporting the aggregates, but the Buddha and Devātmā criticise this notion as being a misconception and emphasise causal inter-relationships.
Devātmā's theory of evolutionary naturalism differs from the traditional type of naturalism which denies the psychology of the human soul. Devātmā refers to the origin of life from lifeless forms to show how the different levels of existences are inter-related. He states "By the working of the evolutionary course in Nature, several kinds of its material objects change and assume better and better forms and qualities, similarly many of its non-living forces too, get changed into living ones at first. Then out of these living forms, some change into organised living forces and build various kinds of vegetable, animal and human forms endowed with different qualities." With the growth of various sciences like geology, biology and biochemistry, such concep-tions are fortified by a veritable body of knowledge. Geology makes it plain that the first forms of life were structurally simple. Darwinian evolutionary theory showed how a continuous selective process could give rise to complex mechanisms by natural means. Biochemistry analysed the components of living systems in such a way as to suggest lines of derivation from pre-living systems. The homo-sapien being an evolute shares certain features in common with lower
existences as well as exhibiting emergent qualities of its own.

Buddhism and Dev Dharma represent everything in the universe to be evanescent, dynamic and causation is one of functional inter-dependence. They appear to conform to process philosophy. They alike place due importance on the individual and do not assimilate all aspects of the personality into the physical world as such reductionism does not afford one a true picture of the individual. The behaviour of living bodies and minds is not explicable by purely physical terms. In avoiding the pitfalls of a metaphysical concept of substance, they alike revert to a causal explanation that depicts everything, physical and psychical to be dynamic in nature. Buddhism and Dev Dharma exhibit similarities with regard to the factor of impermanence, inter-relatedness and universal character of change. Existence is the capacity to produce change and mutation in the order of natural things.

(c) THEORY OF CAUSATION:

In Buddhism and Dev Dharma alike, the process of life is not a haphazard process, the relation of causation is considered to be one of 'consecution' where
there is no destruction of one thing and creation of another, but only a constant, infinitely graduated change. According to Buddhism, the wheel of the cosmic order goes on "Without maker, without known beginning, continuously to exist by nature of concatenation of cause and effect."  

According to Deva Dharma, wherein Nature is the unlimited, self-existent whole, it is affirmed of Nature "It has no Creator, or Maker or First Cause." Neither Buddhism nor Deva Dharma favour the view which posits an inner supernatural teleology at work in Nature, and repudiate the theory of deliberate creation by an Omnipotent God. 

**Cause of Suffering:**

The Buddhist formula of causation was initiated by the deploring fact of misery prevailing in the world, to seek a solution to which was considered to be immanent. The solution to the former fact led to the elaboration of the doctrine which culminates in 'Nirvāṇa'. The basic principle was that birth is the condition of all misery and thus it is emphasised "If there were no birth at all in any way, of anything or anywhere, in the complete absence of birth, would old age and dying be discerned? No. Therefore, in this case, precisely, this is the cause, source, the
origination, the condition of old age and dying, namely birth." 15 In Buddhism, the theory of dependant origination is marked by the term 'paticca–samupāda'. Buddhaghosa commenting on the term 'samupāda' states that the word denotes the presence of a plurality of conditions and their occurrence together (in bringing about a result). 'Samupanna' means when it arises, it arises together i.e. co-ordinately, not singly, not without a cause. All phenomena under the law of change can be indicated as passing through utpāda (origination), sthiti (staying), jara (growth) and nirodha (destruction). It is a series of successive states. The term 'paticca–samupāda' literally means 'arising in correlation with' and signifies that if certain conditions are present, a product arises. By eliminating the conditioning factors, the process can be terminated.

**The Trend of Naturalistic Causation in Dew Dharma:**

Dew Dharma emphasises the importance of causation in all spheres of life and the principle inherent in this system is that 'to be – is to be related'. The existence of every man, animal and plant is said to depend on the existence of its own life forces. Living beings appear by the mutual action of its forces and
matter. Everything in Nature is held to be composed of the constituents of matter and force. No other reality besides Nature is posited. Devātmā refers to the evolution or devolution of an individual according to certain conditioning factors. He asserts the casual inter-relationship of all events. Man's destiny is to realize his ideal within Nature. He speaks of naturalistic causation which may give rise to certain evolutionary growth or lead to degenerative trends also. All events in the universe are held to be subject to causal factors and the same set of conditions which are responsible for the occurrence of an event are deemed necessary to produce a similar recurrence of the event. This is in conformity with the Buddhist view that only if certain initial conditions are present, the effect ensues and never in the absence of all those conditioning factors.

In both Buddhism and Deva Dharma, the law of causation is applied to explain psychological as well as physical processes of existence. They explicate on the conditionality and inter-relatedness of all phenomena in Nature. These laws of cause and effect are considered to be objective in nature and have universal application. They assert that unconditional
and independent existence is not possible.

Wheel of Causation in Buddhism:

The doctrine of paticcasamuppāda implies the fact of conditionality and interdependence of the manifold phenomena of existence. The twelve links of the causal chain can be set forth as follows:

I - II - Through Ignorance (avijjā) conditioned are the karma formations (Sākhāra).

II-III - Through Karma formations (Sākhāra) conditioned is consciousness (Viññāna in a new birth).

III-IV - Through consciousness (Viññāna) conditioned are mentality and corporeality (nāma-rūpa).

IV-V - Through Mentality and corporeality (nāma-rūpa) conditioned are the six sense bases (saḷāyatana).

V-VI - Through the six sense bases (saḷāyatana) conditioned is sense impression (phassa).

VI-VII - Through sense impression (phassa) conditioned is feeling (vedanā).

VII-VIII - Through feeling (vedanā) conditioned is craving (tanhā).

VIII-IX - Through craving (tanhā) conditioned is
clinging (upādāna).

IX-X  - Through clinging (upādāna) is conditioned the process of becoming (bhava).

X-XI  - Through the (karmic) process of becoming (bhava) conditioned is rebirth (Jāti).

XI-XII - Rebirth (Jāti) conditioned are decay and death (jara-marana) sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus arises the whole mass of suffering.  

(i) In Buddhism, ignorance is the cause of egoism. Individuality is the product of avijjā (ignorance) and the false sense of 'I' is nurtured and strengthened in ignorance. Avijjā conceals the real nature of life which is sorrowful and the craving for existence is considered by the Buddha as one of the factors of moral bondage. Even amidst suffering, man's clinging for life cannot be overcome due to the factor of ignorance.

(ii) Saṅkhāras refer to rebirth - producing volitions manifested in bodily, verbal or purely mental actions. It refers to the fact that all things that are made or compounded have existence only in the making and in the wide sense of the term, the term 'saṅkhāra' has reference to the 'will-force' which determines the new
existence in the process of rebirth. The actions may be pure or impure and thus are considered to be meritorious or demeritorious and are karma - resultant.

(iii) **Karma** formations condition consciousness. The Samyutta text states "That which one wills, determines, tends to do is a support for a stationing of consciousness." Even if the tendency remains it will serve as a support with the same results, but if one neither wills, nor determines nor tends to do anything, there will be no resting place and consequently no future production of rebirth and unhappiness.

(iv), (v) and (vi) Through consciousness conditioned are mentality and corporeality. Viññāna and nāma-rūpa are interdependent. These in turn condition the six sense bases which serve as a basis for desires. The activity of the six senses gives rise to impressions (phassa) which are produced when the senses come into contact with objects of the world.

(vii) and (viii) Through sense impression conditioned is feeling which are accorded as being either pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. From feeling arises tanhā or thirst or longing. The Dhammapada proclaims "As, if the root be injured, even a hewn tree grows up anew
mightily, so, if the excitement of thirst be not wholly dead, suffering, ever and anon, breaks out again." 18

(ix) From thirst arises clinging or upādāna. The link 'upādāna' constitutes clinging to sensory experience, erroneous opinions, rules and rituals and ego beliefs. There are held to be different kinds of craving for desires which include those concerned with objects, bodily sensations, mind objects with regard to a belief in and desire for eternal existence or a belief in and desire for personal annihilation.

(x) Upādāna in turn conditions bhava or becoming which is of two kinds – karma process being the active side of existence and rebirth process being the passive (reactive karma-resultant) process. The karma process consists of rebirth-producing volitions and the mental phenomena associated with it which altogether constitute karma or action. The rebirth process comprises the karma resultant groups of existence. Due to clinging, one may perform a meritorious or demeritorious action and this is a factor which impels rebirth leading to a future manifestation of the five groups of existence (corporeality, perceptions, mental formations, feelings, consciousness). Hence in the continuous process of
causation, through the process of becoming conditioned is rebirth.

(xi) - (xii) - Birth (Jāti) is explained as the manifestation of the five groups of existence. Where there is ever-repeated process of rebirth, there is decay and death and conversely where there is no rebirth, this constitutes the end of sorrow. It is from birth that there arises old age, death, pain, lamentation, anxiety, despair.

In early Buddhism, the links of the chain are but phases of being and express their mutually dependent order through the world of sentient existence. In the absolute sense, there is no self or ego-entity. Causation in the Buddhist analysis refers to the factors that maintain the process of the individual in a cycle and the elimination of such causes occasions the cessation of the formation of aggregates that constitute the individual. It is the factors of dispositions or saṅkhāra that occupies a major role in the cycle of causation as it is responsible for bringing about renewed rebirth. The effect of one's actions in any of the three modes, bodily, verbal or mental form a cumulative process. Once the karmic process itself is rendered barren, then there is no more rebirth or
suffering. Hence the route to the pacification of dispositions will involve renunciation from attachment and craving. This leads ultimately to the goal of Nirvāṇa (salvation).

In one respect, Buddhism is akin to Devātma as it upholds the same basic principle that there is no 'substratum' as such, but only manifestations, activities or processes. Both thinkers are basically found to reject the assimilation of the human world to the physical world which is one of physicalism, and neither do they assert that the universe is one infinite consciousness which is a view of Idealism. They are in accord in emphasising the potency of actions in influencing an individual's future destiny. Devātma speaks of the need to develop higher powers and holds that man's being is subject to evolution or devolution and it is the former that occasions the development of higher powers of perception. Buddhism likewise emphasises the fact that an individual progresses spiritually by following an ethical code and this occasions the growth of certain higher powers of perception in him. Devātma's philosophy is found to place emphasis on the fact that every living being belonging to the animal and human kingdom has besides the drive for life
developed pleasure affording feelings. The individual desires to live and also desires to avoid misery and pain. Since the soul or life-force of man is regarded as being essentially a part of nature and subject to change, there is no belief in the freedom of soul. The human soul he sets out to show has no transcendental counterpart and cannot be isolated from a biological and physical setting. Since the soul is a part of Nature, its ideal is within it. According to Devātmā, the soul is an organism which aids in bodily growth and sustenance and such a life force is involved with nutritive, motor, sensory, effective, conative and cognitive functions. As such it is the doer and as the doer it effects change and gets changed. DevāDharma does not create a dualism between morality and spirituality as he does not relate the former to the natural world and the latter to the supernatural world. Spirituality is confined to man's relation in Nature. Devātmā claims the inanimate world as the first basis of existence. But there have been emergence of new, unique levels of existences with qualities, not reducible though dependent on the basic inanimate level of existence. With the rise of new species, it was observed that they did not merely exhibit certain laws of behaviour but changed
in such a way that new regularities of behaviour replaced the old. The direction of evolution, Devātmā points out, is not towards disembodied life but towards more and more complicated embodied existences. The characteristics of Nature are that changes are not uni-directional and changes may exhibit an evolutionary trend or devolution. The process of change is not merely the re-shifting of pre-existing materials in accordance with the physical law, but the materials are themselves subject to alteration. The process of evolution is countered by the opposite process of devolution. While certain conditions contribute to higher forms of existence, there are also conditions that lead to degeneration and dissolution of existing forms and if the latter process continues, they disintegrate and lose their identity. Deva Dharma concentrates on the processes of growth and decay with reference to the human life force or soul and in such a context he speaks of the evolution or devolution of the soul depending on the ethical character of acts performed by an individual. Egoistic pleasures and pursuit after desires leads to the development of various low loves and low hates and to actions motivated by them. While wholesome actions lead to strengthening
of the life force, unwholesome actions lead to its
degeneration. The freedom from low loves and low hates
is only a necessary condition for the strengthening
of the life force. It is not sufficient for the preser-
vation of its powers. Evolution of altruistic powers
are also deemed necessary to retain its strength. If
the soul has progressively evolved, it can further its
existence in a subtle body, yet when devolutionary
changes dominate, its constructive power is exhausted
and the life force dies with that of the gross body.
In relation to the individual's perfectibilism, it is
said that the good or evolution of man need not be
considered to have been the result of his conflict with
the good of other entities. Conversely, man's partici-
pation in the process of cosmic change for the better
assures him of the health and growth of his soul or
life-force, and its powers and man in this sense
harvests immediately the effect of his deeds. "The
significance of such an integral philosophy is that
man's aspiration for spiritual evolution should not be
interpreted merely as a 'strive for betterment' of his
own self but as a sustained effort at making cosmic
evolution a distinct possibility." 19 The fact involved
here is that is that man cannot 'develop' at the cost
of others and cannot develop at all by working at cross
purposes with Nature but should work to assist the evolutionary or constructive process of Nature. Devo Dharma posits the goal of evolutionary perfectibilism.

The Notion of Continuity in the Buddhist Doctrine:

The objection that is commonly raised against the Early Buddhist theory of rebirth is that of 'continuity' without presupposing any persisting substratum. The notion of 'continuity' plays many different roles in language and the objection misleads one by assuming a single picture of what is to count as continuity. As Wittgenstein points out in his 'Philosophical Investigations', "the strength of a thread does not reside in the fact that some one fibre runs through its whole length, but in the overlapping of many fibres." The meaning of 'continuity' has to be understood in the right context in Buddhism and this notion is not incompatible with the absence of atman. The Buddhists utilize the metaphor of the flame to show how there is continuity even though the process is ever changing. In the process of rebirth viññāna or consciousness may be taken as the link as long as one does not take it as identical and permanent in past, present and future. Consciousness itself is
dependent on conditions and in the absence of these conditions, there is no consciousness.

At the outset, a distinction is made between rebirth and transmigration. The latter involves the reappearance of the Self in another body at rebirth. Buddhism holds that rebirth is not transmigration and the following passage from the Buddhist scriptures clarifies this notion: "Milanda: Is there Nagasena, any being which passes from this body to another body?

Nagasena: No, your Majesty.

Milanda: If there were no passing from this body to another would not one then in one's next life be freed from the evil deeds committed in the past?

Nagasena: Yes, that would be so if one were not linked again with a new organism. But since, your majesty, one is linked again with a new organism, therefore one is not freed from one's evil deeds." 20 The text further clarifies that it is not the same name and form which is born in the new existence; but with the present name and form one does a good or wicked deed and due to its effect another collection of aggregates arises in the next existence. In clarifying
the notion of continuity, the Visuddhimagga claims
"It is only elements of being possessing a dependence that arrive at a new existence; none transmigrated from the last existence nor are they any in the new existence without causes contained in the old..... There is no entity, no living principle, no elements of being transmigrated from the last existence to the present one; nor, on the other hand do they appear in the present existence without causes in that one." 22

The dynamics of rebirth in Buddhism is explicated on the basis of the law of karma which affords the impetus for rebirth. In the actual process of rebirth the groups (psycho-physical aggregates) which have come into being in this existence will perish and others will come into being in the next existence, but not a single element of being will pass on from this existence to the next. The role of 'karma' as a psycho-ethical continuum is to be understood as something dynamic, something in flux. 'Death' of an individual constitutes a mere break up of a particular psycho-physical combination of aggregates (which is termed as 'being'), only to give rise to a new combination of a psycho-physical complex so long as there is karmic energy to replenish this process. Thus does the process of
'breaking up' and 'recombining' of नामे-रूप (skhandas) continue in the cycle of birth and rebirth as long as the law of karma occasioned by deeds operates.

In Buddhism, the 'self' is considered to be an assemblage of aggregates (skhandas). It would be a futile enterprise to look for exactly the same entity (self) within them. Even if such an entity were to be taken as an hypothesis, it would be a difficult task theoretically to explain its relation to the ongoing flow of these processes. Buddhism does not consider the need for such an hypothesis. 'Identity' according to Buddhism, is to be found in the cumulative continuity of the processes themselves.

In Buddhism, the causal series is not considered to be a discrete one of perishing particulars as in that case, memory and moral effort would be rendered inexplicable. Memory is accounted for as an associated function, one of interaction of different factors in the process of consciousness. In the analysis of memory, it is asserted that "Each expired state (of experience) renders service (upakāra) to the next. In other words, each on passing away, gives up the whole of its energy (paccaya-satti) to its successor. Each
successor therefore, has all the potentialities of its predecessors and something more.... (All this) takes place in the memory process." 23 Thus as all impressions are indelibly recorded in this palimpsest-like mind, and as all potentialities are transmitted from each momentary consciousness to another with the rapidity of a dynamic process, memory is not referred to as a separate function as it is apparent that one's existence is cumulative though continuously changing.

**Affinities between Buddhism and Dya\(Dhara\)ma:**

The salient features of similarity in both these theories is that they alike reject the intervention of metaphysical or supernatural agents, in causation. They do not admit miracles or any divine intervention in natural processes. Secondly, man is not considered to be a divine archetype. They do not make any reference to an eternal Self. Thirdly, causal happenings are verified on the basis of certain higher power of perception and they admit the possibility of the enlargement of man's perceptual powers. Fourthly, neither thinker accepts self-causation nor external causation. The theory of self-causation referred back to substantival
existence (astitva) and all phenomena were explicated on the real nature of the true Self. External causation is one of extreme naturalism wherein man is conditioned solely by his physical conditions and his psychic counterpart has no real efficacy and is held to be reducible to the former. Fifthly, Buddhism and Deva Dharma are in accord in assigning positive freedom to the individual to determine his future in accordance with certain causal principles and the freedom that is relegated to the individual is that he possesses free-will to make the self effort to achieve the goal posited. Knowledge of causal factors is essential and one can therefore choose to follow the path that is conducive to the final aim.

The teachings of Buddhism and Deva Dharma show certain affinities in their application of the theory of causation. The causal factors are used to explicate the destiny of the individual with regard to the degeneration or evolution of character and emphasises the potency of acts in initiating certain effects. Causation explains both psychological and physical processes of existence and elucidates the nature and origin of consciousness, the consequence of good and evil acts and delineates the path to achieve absolute peace.
They alike use causal explanations to repudiate the notion of a Divine Arbiter or Omnipotent Creator. The goal which they posit does not refer to the liberation of a divine and perfect soul. The causal view is seen to exclude the principle of Self as a metaphysical principle beyond change. Causation also points to the possibility of knowledge. By knowing the causal order, one can know the real nature of all things and events. Though these religions differ in the ideals posited, yet their respective views on causation exhibit certain features which are parallel. They assert the law of causation to be operative in both the physical and moral spheres. Man achieves liberation according to the observance of moral and spiritual discipline in life. They alike do not accept the hypothesis of a divine arbiter and use the law of causation to repudiate the metaphysical presuppositions of 'eternal substance' and 'Divine Being'.

(d) **OBJECTIVITY OF THE CAUSAL ORDER**

Buddhism and Dow Dharma set out causation to be an objective principle. That a causal sequence or concomitance occurs and all that one does is discover this, is implied in their theories of causation.
The Buddhist texts emphasise the factor of objectivity and it is stated "Whether the Tathāgatas arise or not, this order exists, namely the fixed nature of phenomena, the regular pattern of phenomena or conditionality". 24 This order of things the Tathāgata (the Buddha) is said to comprehend and in setting out the teaching forms the occasion for the testing out of these facts. The path is set out so that one should verify the truth by following it. In Devātmā Dharma, one finds the causal relationship to be immutable and every phenomena that takes place does so in accordance with some fixed law of Nature and no event occurs without the entailment of such laws. By immutable law of Nature, Devātmā refers to the fact that the same set of conditions produce the same effect. The Devātmā Śāstra states "All the phenomena by which changes take place in nature are immutable, and have always been uniform i.e. they do not vary in their effect with the varying time or place." 25

Buddhism asserts all things to be subject to conditionality and all conditions themselves are conditioned. Hence the fact is that 'causation' is not one thing, and things or ingredients involved in causation another, for ontologically they are inseperable. Causation is
not subjective in the sense of a category imposed by the mind. An example that illustrates the Buddhist view is the following: "The arising of pain when one puts one's hand in the fire is not just 'constant conjunction', it an experience of the causal phenomena 'fire' in relation to what it is to be the causal phenomenon 'human being'." The Buddhist theory of causation makes it clear that each phenomenon that occurs in a sequence of the causal process is a condition for the next. This order of causation exists whether there are 'enlightened beings' to teach it or not. The truth is there to be discovered and whosoever discovers it, must find it to be the same. The knowledge that whatever phenomenon that is experienced is causally produced and causally conditioned is arrived on the basis of unbiased perception.

In Deva Dharma, the causal laws are not subjective in nature but objectively given. They are to be discerned by experiential and experimental means. Nature is regarded as being a complete and self-existent, autonomous whole and its laws are to be discovered by observation and experience. The changes that take place in nature and conditioned by its own inexorable laws. Nature is self-existent and autonomous in its working and brooks
no outside influence in its operation. He states "If the self-sufficiency and universality of causal law is admitted, there are no room for miracles when they are defined as supranatural intervention in natural processes."

27 Buddhism likewise does not mention supernatural influences at work regarding the causal process. The Buddha through insight claimed direct knowledge of the causality of all events. Avoiding all metaphysical disputes of any kind, the Buddha advocated a middle path between extremes so as to attain an experiential insight into the nature of 'things as they are' without bias and without clinging to conceptual precommitments of any kind. The true nature of things is their causal dependence. The views that assumed the extremes of 'it is' and 'it is not' were criticised by the Buddha. In the Kātyāyanavāda Sutta, 28 for example, the Buddha explains that knowing the truth of causality means not fixing the mind on the tendency of involvement in statements that assume independent and self-substantiated reality. The monk must realize the true nature of things and come to know the laws governing events for himself in order to attain liberation.

Devātmā's treatment of causation may be regarded as being a description of the process of continuous change
linked by conditions that are dynamic in nature. The real nature of all things and the laws they are subject to are to be known unhampered by subjective likes and dislikes. Being committed to a scientific spirit, Devatma claims that no belief is too sacred to the re-examined or re-evaluated or rejected if new facts came to light that made such a change imperative. Relying on experience as the judge of truth and on experimental investigation, Devātmā declares "Whereas a man can sometimes get true knowledge about the cause of one or other method in Nature by hypothesis, yet by this method, he arrives at totally wrong conclusions about the causes of several other phenomena". Experimental investigation, experiential observation and the principles of logical reasoning are regarded as the modes to achieve knowledge of Nature's laws.

Concerning the fact of subjective attitudes interfering with sense-impressions, the Buddha's attitude is that this factor tends to distort the interpretation placed upon sense-impression. Hence the necessity of non-attachment to the objects of the world is emphasised. One is also cautioned against clinging to metaphysical beliefs of immutable self, God etc. One may posit an eternalist or nihilist theory on the facts observed due
to one's craving for persistence of existence or annihilation of existence accordingly. Prejudice and bias lead to wrong and erroneous conclusions. Devātmā likewise refers to various attitudes, likes and dislikes which interfere with our perception of the truth. He states "All kinds of falsehood, evil deeds, crimes and sins which are to whatever extent rampant all over the earth are the direct and inevitable outcome of the various kinds of low loves and hates which dominate the human heart". 30

Devo Dharma resembles Buddhism in that it also rejects metaphysical issues relating to the supernatural world. The Buddha and Devātmā caution against subjective pre-judices and habitual tendencies that may be a cause of distortion of truth and reality.

(e) FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE CLAIMS OF DEVĀTMĀ AND THE BUDDHA

A factual description of the life process in relation to the individual is made in terms of causation by both Devātmā and the Buddha. Devātmā employs the method of science and supports an evolutionary view of existence. The Buddha's causal theory is based on the insight he achieved by paranormal powers. Devātmā makes
reference to the development of perceptual powers, the Devāṃkta to reveal the truth relating to the individual's destiny. The Buddha and Devatma eschewed belief in Omniscience. Despite various points of affinity in thought, there are a few significant divergences.

The Buddhist law of causation clarifies the truth of suffering, its cause, its cessation and the way leading to its cessation, and sets forth the conditioned origination of unhappiness. The dharma enunciated by the Buddha and the central truths contained therein are all held to be inferences derived from the insight into the true nature of things 'as they are'. The term 'things' denoted processes which are all subject to the law of causation and such laws are regarded as being infallible in nature. Devatma on the other hand does not claim infallibility for his theory of causation as he bases his theory on the scientific method of investigation and admits the possibility of modification if new facts come to light. He insists on the reality of Nature alone and emphasises that philosophy and religion be concerned with facts as they exist in Nature and one should not transcend the implication they afford as mere theorising independent of facts is largely speculative in nature.
The causal theory in Buddhism shows how the combination of phenomena known by the conventional name of 'person' is not a mere play of chance but that each phenomenon of this process of existence is dependent on other phenomena which form the condition for this birth. Devātmā on the other hand asserts that the human soul or life force is an unique emergent entity. He does not refer to past existence or karmic influence. Devātmā states "Each life force can construct a body peculiar to its own nature. Life force in man or soul in man can build a human body and no other body. The theory of transmigration runs counter to this biological fact".31 Buddhism does not assert transmigration wherein the 'soul' persists in future births, but it does accept the tenets of rebirth wherein past deeds of an individual show fruitful effect, which principle is denied by Devātmā. The Buddhist account of rebirth emphasises conditions for this factor and states "That desire, that lust, that lure, that craving, those graspings after systems, that mental standpoint, that dogmatic bias which is concerned with body—that is called the 'cord of rebirth'. The ceasing of these is called ceasing of the cord of rebirth".32 Therefore, it is the fading away of ignorance and the consequent development of the
factor of non-attachment that occasion the extinguishing of the karma formations and once this happens there is no more arising of the psycho-physical aggregates, that form the human being.

Buddhism rejects the notion of utter annihilationism of the personality, as it does not subscribe to either a theory of eternalism or to the theory that there is total destruction at the death of the person. According to the Buddha, to say that he who acts is the same as the one who experiences, that unhappiness is made by oneself, is to arrive at eternalism (that there is an eternal self). To say that one acts and another experiences, that unhappiness is made by another, is to arrive at annihilationism (that there is a self but it is annihilated at death). The true explanation, the Buddha claims is the sequence of conditions. Deva Dharma subscribes to a theory that is in many respects radically different from Buddhism. Under certain circumstances, the life-force of the human-being can regress into inorganic forces with the death of the person. In his account of evolutionary naturalism, either the soul or life-force of a man degenerates and lapses into inorganic forces of Nature or it evolves and at the time of death, is able to build a subtle body for itself depending on the quality of
actions performed by the individual which is responsible for the soul's evolution. Every being has both processes of evolution and devolution or value-disvalue working in it. If the devolutionary process were to be dominating in a being, it would die, but if the process of evolution dominates, it thereby secures and furthers its existence.

This theory of the effects of an ethical evolution of an individual leads to a further conclusion and points out a major difference between Deva Dharma and Buddhism. Devātmā asserts the persistence of being by the evolution of the life-force of the human being and advocates necessary moral and ethical precepts needed to lead to such an evolution, while Buddhism seeks release from the re-constitution of the psycho-physical factors that constitute a being and seeks total dissolution of the aggregates so that no more rebirth is entailed. Hence Buddhism seeks release from suffering seen in the vicious cycle of birth and death, by ethical progress and unlike Deva Dharma this theory does not entail pro- logation of being in a subtle body.

The Buddha made the claim that those who violate moral causation have to face the consequences within
this life and hereafter. The Buddha asserts "Action is the field, consciousness the seed, and craving the moisture that leads to rebirth of a being". There is a demarcation to be made in this regard between Buddhism and Deva Dharma wherein they differ. Devātmā upholds the view that man is effected immediately by the moral acts in the sense that they tend to effect the evolution or devolution of his life force directly which in turn entail further effects. Hence, he says "Every physical, mental, and spiritual activity brings about an immediate change corresponding to its nature... According to this immutable law of change, man harvests immediately the results of good or bad feelings or deeds". Man is therefore found to harvest immediately the result of his good or evil motives and volitions in as much as it leads to the soul's growth or degeneration. Though deeds are cumulative in having potential of karmic force to bring about rebirth, Buddhism does not speak of a rigid determinism between act and fruit; whereas Devātmā asserts a necessary determinism of every good or evil act that is held to affect the life-force of the human being.

Buddhism posits the final and ultimate goal of
'Nirvāṇa'. Of one who has achieved this aim, it is pointed out that he is without measure. In Deva Dharma, 'Vikāsa' or 'Evolution' is the goal in view and the 'perfect man' in his theory is not one who has attained the final Ideal, for according to evolutionary trends, further levels of perfection is possible. Hence, the basic goal of the human being is to assist the evolutionary process and become evolved by co-operation with the constructive or evolutionary trend.

Buddhism does put forward certain principles of an ethical and moral nature in order to achieve the goal of Nirvāṇa and yet such a code is regarded as forming a means to an end and not the end itself. It is more of an instrumental value in being useful in order to achieve the goal and can then be discarded. But in Devātmā's philosophy, moral and ethical values are considered to be the constitutive and definitive character of evolutionary perfectibilism. His main principles are not only conducive to the end aimed at but the evolutionary process is part of the goal and the goal itself, for the 'ideal person' can effect a further evolutionary change in the course of time.

Buddhism elucidates the need for an attitude of
detachment and non-attachment to the things of the world so as to eliminate craving and desire. Unlike Buddhism, Devādharma does not advocate the views of absolute non-attachment and emphasises active involvement in all spheres of Nature. Though Buddhism does uphold the importance of wholesome motives and volitions, yet it does deem the ultimate goal to be beyond the sphere of altruistic and moral responsibilities of the society. According to Buddhism, "If the world of disposition (sānkhaṇa) or the sphere of the dispositionally determined (sankhāta) is unsatisfactory and a source of human suffering, it follows that the world of non-dispositions (Vipakkhaṇa) or the sphere unconditioned by dispositions (asankhāta) is satisfactory. It is the world of natural causal happening".35 Devatma accepts the reality of Nature and emphasises that the life force of man is intimately related to the other life-forces of Nature. Hence, it is asserted, "All the beings of the various worlds of Nature, evolve or become better to the extent to which they co-operate with or assist or serve its evolutionary or constructive process".36 However, though Buddhism does not speak of enhancing the life power in the sense Devādharma does, it does not divorce itself
from altruism and the principles of benevolence, compassion towards all beings and selfless service to the unfortunate, as these are all essential precepts of Buddhism.

Devātmā refers to certain powers termed the Dev-Shaktis which give insight about the evolution and devolution of soul forces. The unique light of the Dev-Jyothi is the source by which the nature of the soul and the conditions for its evolution or devolution are known and so also the course by which it can pursue its future destiny. The Dev-Shaktis are due to biological and cultural evolution. In Buddhism, higher psychic abilities reveal various other insights which are different from tenets set out by DevaDharma. Buddhism admits the possibility of psychic abilities of telepathy, clairvoyance, retrocognition, psychokinesis, clairaudience and the knowledge of the destruction of defiling impulses. It was by such insight that the Buddha had the knowledge of the forces of karmic influences and rebirth.

Despite differences, the Buddha and Devātmā uphold the fact that man is capable of enlarging his perceptual powers. Causation is considered to be a natural process. The objectivity of the causal law as put forward by each
individual thinker is emphasised and both of them claim their respective doctrines are absolutely true and their truth can be verified by means of verification by experience.
REFERENCES

1. Dhammapada verse 279 tr. Dr. Radhakrishnan, Oxford University Press, 1968, p. 147


