CHAPTER IV
A COMPARATIVE ACCOUNT

In the preceding three chapters, we have exposed the nature of philosophy on human condition and temporality as formulated by Jaspers and Buddha respectively. With regard to Jaspers, we have taken into account such main concepts as existence, temporality, historicity, ultimate situation, freedom and transcendence. As to the Buddhist philosophy, we have discussed the concept of existence, selflessness, temporality, suffering, and freedom (nibbāna). In this chapter, we shall reflect upon what has already been discussed, and compare and contrast Jaspers' philosophy with that of early Buddhism.

Philosophy and Dhamma

At the outset, we find that both Jaspers and Buddha have started philosophizing on human condition by rejecting some traditional thoughts that were prevailing at their time. Jaspers' philosophical development arises out of his dissatisfaction with the rigorous doctrines of Hegelian Absolute Idealism and materialism.

According to Jaspers, both idealism and materialism have looked upon human existence in quite extreme ways. That is, idealism regards existence as having an essence that can be realized through reason; it is possible to integrate a picture of man and the world into a unified and closed system. Materialism, on the other hand, considers existence as being composed of material things, which can be justified and governed by the law of nature like other objects in the world. For Jaspers, it leads to nihilism,
the belief that nothing has any value; especially the values of religion and humanism are regarded as meaningless.

Idealism emphasizes the abstract dimension of man, whereas materialism focuses more on the empirical aspect. Both the philosophies, according to Jaspers, have overlooked a concrete dimension of man that he calls ‘existential’, and thus have been presenting only one side of human existence.

For this reason, Jaspers argues that the task of philosophy is to make man realize, or awaken him to, his own possibilities, since human existence for him is not a piece of wax that may be molded to any shape or form and is devoid of any ideas of its own. The distinguishing feature of Jaspers’ philosophy therefore lies in the fact that it attempts to come to understanding of the human possibilities in and through the unique historical individual. It highlights the dynamic temporal dimension and finitude of man and at the same time making room for transcendental reflection.

Jaspers thus advocates a fresh reflection not only on existence, but also on how to make philosophy meaningful and close to our day-to-day life. He philosophizes by reflecting on the existential situation of man rather than explaining man in terms of abstract theories. Like Buddha, Jaspers starts with the concrete situation of man’s life without any metaphysical presuppositions. For him, philosophy goes beyond the conceptual limitations of idealism and materialism and aims at awakening man to his immense possibilities.
In the same manner, Early Buddhism that has been developed and preached by Buddha out of his realization also goes against the two main systems, that is, idealism of *Upanisads* on the one hand, and materialism of the *Cārvākas* on the other. According to Buddha, these two theories present man and the world in a rather extreme manner. One system believes in transcendental self as the underlying element of all beings, while the other denies an existence of such self and accepts only empirical self or physical existence as real. Unlike the *Upanisads*, Buddha does not believe in eternal essence of existence, and unlike the *Cārvākas*, he does not deny the possibility of transcendental dimension of man, that is, he goes beyond the empirical realm. For this reason, Buddha asks his followers not to be entrapped by these two extreme views as they believe in the eternal being (*sat*) and non-being (*asat*) and thereby failing to grasp the reality of existence. He takes the middle path, which defies both systems by declaring that reality of existence is neither eternal being nor non-being, but is becoming (*bhava*).

Jaspers points out that the philosophical truth cannot be put on display to the public eyes as if it were the object in the world, it needs to be worked out and realized by the individual himself; it is the truth that one lives by. We cannot understand philosophy by its definition, because the real meaning of it cannot be put in words; a comprehensive definition of philosophy is not possible. Thus, in order to know what philosophy is, one must philosophise, that is, he has to get himself involved while philosophizing.

Like Jaspers, Buddha also points out that his teaching (*Dhamma*) is aimed at awakening man to his own potentialities in order to overcome suffering; it is not interested in speculative thinking. Thus, Buddha sets
aside the metaphysical questions, as they are not concerned with the real situation of human existence.¹ Like Jaspers, Buddha further states that the real meaning of Dhamma has to be realized not through speculative thinking or reasoning, but through practicing. "One must come and see himself."²

Jaspers clearly points out that philosophy is mainly concerned with human situation; it aims at illuminating man his authentic possibilities, which eludes any empirical investigation, it also directs our attention to human condition in order to awaken or enlighten man to his own situation. Similarly, Buddha says that his Dhamma is aimed at analysing the real situation of man and presenting the way to realize it.

Buddha also points out the role of the individual in realizing his own condition. That is to say, the Buddha's teaching is just like a guidebook that shows the way to a person who gets lost, so that he may reach destination. For that matter, one has to work out the way himself. Likewise, one must depend on himself for realizing the real situation of existence. Each man is a lamp to himself. That is the reason why Buddha says: "Be Island unto thyself, be refuge unto thyself and do not have the other as thy support."³

Jaspers in his book "the Great philosophers" highly regards Buddha a paradigmatic individual who has exerted a historical influence of "incomparable scope and depth." He is impressed by the Buddha's message for mankind, which emphasizes that each man has potentialities to be developed and realized with his own effort. Jaspers fully agrees with

¹ See above, p. 37
² See W. Rahula., What the Buddha Taught, p. 9
³ D. II, pp. 61-62
Buddha that philosophical truth is to be comprehended through the individual’s insight. He clearly states:

This Knowledge lies within the power of the individual.
It is won by his own insight based on power of his own moral conduct; No God bestows insight...it is not prayer, not grace, and not sacrifice that brings redemption... ⁴

Thus, Jaspers, Like Buddha, regards the unique and historical individual’s effort as a necessary condition for realizing his immense potentialities. He also emphasizes that one can claim to have realized the philosophical truth only when he lives by it, because this truth is not separable from the whole man’s being.

Moreover, both Jaspers and Buddha equally assert that the truth, which they are searching, belongs to none, since everyone has potentialities to realise it. What both want to convey is: one should not blindly cling to his own idea and underestimate the other as wrong, because the truth is to be realised, and not to be monopolised. For Jaspers, philosophers never claim to possess the truth. In the same way, Buddha also makes it clear that the truth is there; he just discovers it and points it out.

However, some dissimilarities between these two great philosophers can also be pointed. For Jaspers, philosophy is not absolute as it is on the voyage of inquiry, its answer is always keeps open; those who engage in philosophising will never regard the truth they have found as final or perfect, and nobody is perfect, Buddha’s Dhamma on the other

hand asserts that there is a possibility of finding the Absolute truth (Nibbāna), and a person who realises it can be called a noble and perfect one (arhant).

There is also another dissimilarity between these two great personalities. While Buddha has suggested a definite path or methodology to attain authentic life or the enlightenment and set up a community (saṅgha) to be a representative and witness of his teaching, Jaspers, in contrast, does not systematically point out a definite path to be followed; he simply says that man has immense possibilities, which he can obtain through the act of philosophizing.

Analysis of existence

As mentioned earlier, with regard to the concept of man Jaspers makes it clear that man can be analyzed into two dimensions; either as an object of inquiry or as freedom. He elaborates that as object of inquiry, man becomes an object of study of the various scientific disciplines such as psychology, biology, anthropology, economics and sociology etc. while as existential being or freedom, man surpasses such disciplines. Jaspers' conception of man can be understood from the following statements:

Man as a whole can never become the object of scientific investigation. Man is always more than he knows about himself. This is true both of man in general and of the individual man, we can never draw up a balance sheet

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5 See Karl Jaspers, The perennial scope of philosophy, p. 56
and know the answer, either concerning man in general or concerning any individual man.\textsuperscript{6}

Thus, science fails to understand man as a whole because it cannot exhaust or capture the holistic being of man. It explores man only through objective methods as discrete slices or aspects, which cannot fathom the subjective being of the individual. The individual takes an act of transcendence from sheer empirical domain to the existential realm, which is characterized in terms of uniqueness, freedom and creativity- the realm of \textit{Existenz}. \textit{Existenz} is governed by authentic truth leading to authentic intersubjective encounters.

Though a study of man in this dimension has contributed a lot of advancement to the fields of biology, education, medicine etc., which undoubtedly bring benefit to mankind, it does not exhaust the immense possibilities of man, which cannot wholly be investigated by empirical dimension.\textsuperscript{7} In other words, scientific disciplines take only the empirical domain into account, but overlook the individual freedom or existential character of our being.

Like Buddha, Jaspers denies any eternal essence of man, since the so-called essence is what man creates himself throughout his life. Man is a unity of weakness and potentiality, situation and freedom, temporality and transcendence, he is not a finished product; he can visualize himself more than he merely is. "Man is everything and he is nothing."\textsuperscript{8} Jaspers

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6} Ibid, pp. 61-62
\item \textsuperscript{7} Jaspers often uses the word 'existence' when he refers to man in empirical dimension, and the word 'Existenz' in existential dimension or freedom. For this reason, we may say that human existence can be classified as existence and existenz.
\item \textsuperscript{8} See Karl Jaspers, The perennial scope of philosophy, p. 56
\end{itemize}
emphasizes that man finds his freedom in temporal acts. Man as long as he is a man, can never be outside the concrete lived moments. Yet, he can transcend the bonds of temporality through his projective intentions. He takes an act of transcendence from the empirical realm to that of existential and from the existential realm to that of Infinitude (God).

Similarly, Buddha also states that human existence (puggala or satta) can be classified into two main categories, corporeality (rūpa) and mentality (nāma). The first dimension can be seen or observed through five sense organs, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. As such, the external world that appears in forms of visible object, sound, oduor, taste and tangible object becomes the object of knowledge through sense organs. At this stage, human existence remains as an object of study or investigation like other objects, he is ‘empirical existence, or Dasein, to use Jaspers’ terminology. It is subject to the law of nature, that is, changing, suffering and death.

But at the same time, there is another dimension of human existence, that is, name-dimension (nāma), which refers to the mind, because mind is something one knows by name but cannot grasp. It is regarded to be creative, because it represents the subjective activities of man, namely, feeling, perceiving, thinking and knowing, which are known in the technical terms as vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra and viññāna respectively. Thus, human existence can be analysed into these five aggregates, namely, rūpa, vedanā, saññā, saṅkhāra, and viññāna as discussed earlier.

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9 See above, p. 5
11 See above pp.1-5
The non-substantiality of existence is another view echoed by both Jaspers and Buddha. For Jaspers, man is without permanent substance and thus cannot be put into any fixed form; he is "Existenz," which is always in a perpetual state of self-creating. As to Buddha, human existence is non-substantial; it is without self or soul (anattā). As such, man is a dynamic being (bhava). At this point, however, there is slightly difference between these two great thinkers, that is, while Jaspers confines the non-substantiality only to human existence; he does not deny the essence of other beings, Buddha extends anattā not only to man, but also to all beings without exception. It is considered to be one of the three “marks” (lakkhana) of all beings, along with impermanence (anicca) and suffering (dukkha). To substantiate the non-substantiality of existence, Jaspers analyses human existence into several modes such as empirical existence, consciousness as such, spirit, etc. and emphasises that man encompasses all, whereas Buddha further analyses human existence as twelve bases (āyatanas) and eitheen elements (dhātus).

Moreover, it must be pointed out that both Jaspers and Buddha have a similar purpose of denying the essence of man. Jaspers points out the inadequacy of science for its attempt to study and explain man only in terms of objectivity, which, he argues, leaves no room for freedom and transcendence, it leads to dehumanization; his purpose is to awaken man to his potentialities. Buddha, on the other hand, rejects the views that believe in the essence of man, be it called idealism, or be it materialism, because such views only lead to suffering and misery. His purpose is to awaken man to his own situation so that he can reach the state of real happiness. What Buddha and Jaspers emphasise is that man can surpass his empirical or historical dimension, for his real being is free.
Thus, with regard to an analysis of man, there is a striking similarity between two philosophies. Jaspers emphasizes that the real nature of man cannot be reduced to the Absolute idea or an object. He sees human existence as a synthesis of facticity as well as possibility; the first being rigid and finite, the second dynamic and infinite. Buddha too explains man in terms of objective as well as subjective dimensions. The first one is composed of material elements and is therefore subject to the law of change, whereas the second cannot be seen in the objective form but must be comprehended through a sense of consciousness.

Temporality

With regard to temporality, Both Jaspers and Buddha hold the same view that it implies change, finitude or limitation of man, as well as his involvement in the world which gives him joy as well as suffering. Yet, Buddha goes further when he extends temporality to other beings as well; every being has its own time. But time according to Buddhism has no ontological status; it is a mere convention (paññatti) and therefore is regarded as unreal from the angle of ultimate reality (paramattha-sacca), though it is real in conventional sense (sammati-succa).12

For this reason, the Buddhist holds that there are two levels of truth; empirical and Absolute. At the empirical level, there is a world governed by time with its entire vicissitudes, which produces suffering. At the transcendental level, there is the eternal rest that brings liberation or nibbāna.

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12 See Th. Stcherbatsky, The Central conception of Buddhism, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), pp. 82-86
Now it is clear that the striking similarity between Jaspers and Buddha can be reflected upon from the fact that both of them are not interested in existence of time as such, both rather pay attention to time in which man's whole being is involved; the existence of time is possible only when it is conceived through consciousness. This becomes obvious when Jaspers has pointed out time in various dimensions, but lays stress only on existential time.

As discussed earlier, Jaspers makes it clear that time can be seen from different aspects; physical, psychological, historical and existential. In the first three dimensions, time may be observed, analysed and measured in terms of minute, hour, day and night, past, present and future etc., but it is not the case with respect to the last, that is, the existential time. Hence, the division of time as past, present and future is relative; they are not completely cut off from each other. As a result, man can retain the past, observe the present and project himself into the future, because such dimensions are relative. Since time is inseparable from consciousness, whenever it comes to man's awareness, it comes in the mode of the present. That is to say, the basic phenomenon of time is seen in the form of 'now'.

However, the present includes not only 'now point', but also the remaining two dimensions, namely, past and future. "It is the moment in fashion of all time."13 This implies that the present moment is real; it is the most effective moment that plays a decisive role in determining the past or creating the future. Thus, in the light of temporality human existence is to be understood as 'the not yet', 'the no longer', and 'the here and now'. In short, man's being is always in the process of becoming, it cannot be described in a complete or fixed form.

13 See above, p. 68
Like Jaspers, Buddha also holds a similar view that human existence is temporal or momentary. He is not interested in whether time as such exists or not, what he points out is the phenomenon of changing, which is the basis of temporality. This has been clearly elaborated in the principle of Dependent Origination (Paticca-samuppāda), in which the process of existence is explained in terms of cause and condition. It is stated that existence is time-bound; for its cause and condition can be observed from three perspectives, namely, past, present and future. Of these, the present is regarded to be the most important moment, because it is the turning point at which man can turn himself back to the past or project himself towards the future. In this sense, only the present is real, as what is the past had already gone, and the future is yet to come. At this point, it is clear that both Jaspers and Buddha give importance to the present rather than to the past or the future.

However, there are dissimilarities between these two philosophies, particularly with regard to three dimensions of time. Buddhism has looked at time not only in a short span of the present life but also in a long duration of life as well. This has been explained in the law of Paticcasamuppāda in which the reality of the past and future life is accepted. It is believed that the present existence has gone through indefinite birth and rebirth owning to causes and conditions like ignorance, desire, action etc. Jaspers on the other hand does not believe in existence of the past or future life in that sense, he speaks of only one present life. For Jaspers, those who hold such belief are living in self-deceiving world.

14 See above, p. 134
15 M. III. 187
16 See above, p. 126
For the Buddhist, time is not only applicable to the present moment of ‘now’ but cover a duration of one’s life time, that is, the present life, Jaspers is concerned with the present only in terms of the present moment, not with a division of time as a long duration of past, present or future life. Whether the past or next life exists or not is not his concern. This brings him close to Buddha who also does not pay much attention to what happened in the past or what will be in the future, but concentrate on what is going on at the very present moment.

But one should not jump to the conclusion that both Jaspers and Buddha fail to take the lesson from the past, because what both intend to say is that one can take a stock of past and future, yet the most creative moment is ‘now’. The past is already gone whereas the future is yet to come. We may learn from the past and make a plan for the future, but the proposed plan will be accomplished only when we start doing it now. Both Jaspers and Buddha are more concerned with lived time, that is, the time in which one gets himself involved. There is no complete cut off between past, present and future, because whatever comes to our consciousness comes in the mode of the present moment.

The concept of kamma can be compared to that of Jaspers’ historicity. For Jaspers, historicity is a necessary condition of existence; the individual acts in a particular situation, his life is influenced and shaped by tradition and culture. This is a historical fact confronted by human beings. But the individual is not wholly determined by culture and tradition. He can review them and give a new meaning to them. The individual may be conditioned by limitations like time and tradition, he can surpass them. Even for Buddha, the individual is characterised by his kamma. As he says: “Human beings are the owners of their action, hires to their action, the
action is their womb from which they are born, the action is their friend, their refuge. 

As such, the individual has to take responsibility for what he does. Yet, one has a capacity to surpass one’s own kamma by taking the right action as mentioned in the doctrine of the noble eight-fold path.

Ultimate situation and Dukkha

Both Jaspers and Buddha agree that suffering is the undeniable fact of human existence. Jaspers subsumes it under the concept of the boundary situations, which have been classified into four categories, namely, situation as such, death, struggle and guilt. Buddha includes suffering in the principle of the four noble truths, which have been divided into three more items, namely, cause of suffering, cessation of suffering and way to cessation of suffering.

According to Jaspers, suffering can be viewed in various forms like physical pain, diseases, mental illness etc. It is called a boundary or ultimate situation, because it can happen to all men, which nobody can afford to ignore. For Jaspers, a person who ignores this fact or who treats it as if it were avoidable is regarded as living in the world of Utopia, he is not true to himself just like someone pretends to be happy even in reality he is sad and sorrowful. In other words, suffering would not bring anything if it did not affect our heart or touch the whole being; it is the same as the other phenomenon.

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17 M. III. 203
18 See above, p. 77
19 See above, p. 143
Jaspers admits that nobody likes suffering; everybody wants to be free from it. This is the reason why each of us fights against suffering as we hope that it may be cured or eradicated someday. Of course, we may succeed to some extent, but in the final touch we are the losers. It is obvious that there are numerous of diseases, which prompt biologists, chemists or doctors to conduct a research with a great expectation that all diseases would be eradicated. But once one disease has gone the other comes in. Just like the world today, people over the world still suffer from incurable diseases like cancer and Aids, for example. Can we rely upon a new medicine? Can suffering be completely eradicated with medical advancement?

Jaspers would say it is impossible unless we live in the world of Utopia. Then, what can we do in this situation? Should we just live and let things happen? Jaspers would not recommend us to be a mute spectator, rather he suggests one should react to suffering in a proper way or in ‘existential’ manner, to use his terminology.

There are two ways, Jaspers says, in which one could deal with the problem of suffering; one is plain, empirical or unexistential, and another is spiritual or existential. In the first case, one deals with suffering by the act of evading, that is, one may not want to know what kind of disease from which he suffers, he may hide his genuine character, may avoid being responsible by pointing a finger at the other etc. Those who commit these acts are deceiving themselves. Without existential attitude toward suffering, man becomes unconcerned and indifferent to those who are suffering, he may keep himself distance from them, may dismiss them as too weak. For Jaspers, the reaction of this sort does not bring anyone close to his real being; he is not awake to his real situation.
Contrary to the first one, man with the existential attitude will look at suffering as a sign to leap forward to his real being. He does not hide his suffering; instead he regards it as his real situation and accepts it with strength and encouragement, since he firmly believes "everybody must bear and fulfill his burden, no one can relieve him of it."\textsuperscript{21}

In this connection, the similarities between Jaspers and Buddha may be pointed out. Both hold the same view that suffering is a real situation (ariya-sacca) of existence; it is not an illusion. More importantly, both agree that suffering makes man realize his true being more than happiness. Just as a medicine will be useful only for those who suffer from diseases not for a healthy person, just so the Buddha's \textit{Dhamma} would be meaningless and irrelevant if everybody is happy, and the true being (\textit{Existenz}) will remain dormant if everybody were free from suffering. For this reason, both Jaspers and Buddha state that it is suffering that shows the way to transcendence. It is through reflection on existential situation and temporal dimension of life that eternity can be realized. There is no pre-existing eternity, since eternity originates in time. Thus, one can obtain happiness only when one accepts suffering as reality and responds to it with existential attitude. As Jaspers says: "It is from shipwreck that I rise a happy man."\textsuperscript{22}

With regard to the notion of death, Jaspers is close to Early Buddhism in holding that it befalls everyone and one should have right attitude towards it in order to guard himself against hedonism and eternal idealism. Both suggest that one should face death with courage and accomplish his own duty as soon as he can. No one knows when death will

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 203
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 203
take place; it can strike us anytime. At this point, however, there is a slight difference between these philosophies. While Jaspers regards death as the end of possibilities of man, because human existence for him has only this present life; he does not believe in the next life or rebirth, Buddhism holds that death is not the end of everything, it is only cessation of cause and condition; man may be reborn if such cause and condition for his existence still remains.

With regard to the notions of struggle and guilt, both Jaspers and Buddha equally assert that both are the necessary conditions for existence, with which every one has to face. Both state that the individual has to struggle in order to achieve his chosen ends, which cannot be achieved at one stroke. Since ordinary man cannot have perfect knowledge, his choice or action may be based on wrong assessment of situation, or may be influenced by unwholesome intention, which may produce adverse consequences upon others. This leads to the experience of guilt. Jaspers' concepts of struggle and guilt may be compared to the Buddha's notions of 'tanha' and 'hiri' respectively. At this point, both are different; while Jaspers holds that struggle and guilt cannot be completely rooted out, Buddha states that it is possible to do so provided that one must follow the right path.23

Freedom and Transcendence

Buddha would agree with Jaspers about his emphasis on freedom in existential dimension, which cannot be displayed in the objective manner. This is because Buddha also lays stress on spiritual freedom, which is to be realized or seen as an internal or private experience. But he would not agree

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23 See above, pp. 146-147
with Jaspers about his referring to Transcendence or God as the primal source of freedom. As mentioned earlier, Jaspers’ notion of existential freedom is to be distinguished from determinism and indeterminism, since he believes that man is endowed with the ‘original will’ or ‘volition.’ This volition is freedom, since it is the original will that wills itself, and is without cause or motive. In this sense, to be born as human being is to be free.

This is the reason why Jaspers says: “Freedom exists as volition.”\textsuperscript{24} On its surface, this point seems to be similar to the Buddhist concept of *kamma*, in which intention (*cetanā*) is considered to be a criterion of action. Yet, while looking at this point deeply, it is found that both Jaspers and Buddha are quite different. Jaspers regards intention as freedom, since it is the primal source of action. Buddha on the other hand considers intention as a necessary condition of *kamma* or action, which is not always free, but it is free only when it is devoid of defilements bondages like passion, hatred, delusion etc.

At this point, it may be mentioned that intention for the Buddhist can be viewed from two levels; immanent and transcendental. The former refers to the ordinary person whose intention is influenced by the bondages just mentioned above. The latter belongs to the person whose intention is free from the bondages, and who has attained the absolute Goal or the Bliss (*Nibbāna*). According to the Buddhist, freedom is linked to Transcendence in the sense that one can achieve the Bliss or Transcendence through freedom.

\textsuperscript{24} See Jaspers, Philosophy Vol. II, p. 133
According to Buddhism, human action is not always free because it is normally determined by psychic factors (*cetasikas*), which manifest as causes and conditions. For this reason, freedom can be considered in two different ways: either as freedom of the will or freedom from the will. The former may be called relative freedom, whereas the latter the absolute freedom. Jaspers on the one hand regards the free will or intention as always being free, because he does not consider the psychic factors to be a cause or motive of existential freedom. That is to say, only psychological freedom can be explained in terms of cause and condition, while existential freedom is free from any cause whatsoever.

Here the point of difference is that for Jaspers, intention or the volition is self-caused; it does not depend on any other causes or motives, whereas for the Buddhist intention is not always free; it depends on some cause and condition such as delusion, hatred and desire. However, the Buddhist believes that only the intention or will of the liberated person (*Arahant*) can be said to be ‘free.’ Jaspers describes freedom only in terms of decision-making condition, whereas Buddha goes further by regarding freedom as the state that is free from cause and condition. Moreover, Jaspers holds that man is born free, whereas Buddha points out that man is never born free.

The Buddhist holds that freedom means freedom from desire (*tanhā* or *trīṣṇā* Skt.), which is considered to be the cause of frustration or suffering and bondage, whereas Jaspers argues that it is impossible for man to live without desire or struggle. Jaspers does not regard freedom as absolute, because it has to be realized in situation, whereas Buddha states

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25 See above, p. 150
that freedom is regarded as the absolute reality. Jaspers’ emphasis is on historicity, whereas Buddha’s emphasis is on Nibbāna.

Furthermore, the Buddhist holds that freedom or Nibbāna itself is considered to be Transcendence, there is no other Being standing above it. In other words, freedom and transcendence is one and the same according to Buddhism. Jaspers, on the other hand, believes that freedom and Transcendence is not the same, since freedom is not something that we create, but it is to be bestowed on us by Transcendence (God).