

4. Orthodox Explanation

The orthodox explanation of Dependent Origination is detailed and intricate. Its study requires extensive knowledge of the texts and of the Pali language.¹ Much of that material is beyond the scope of this book and here a basic summary will suffice.

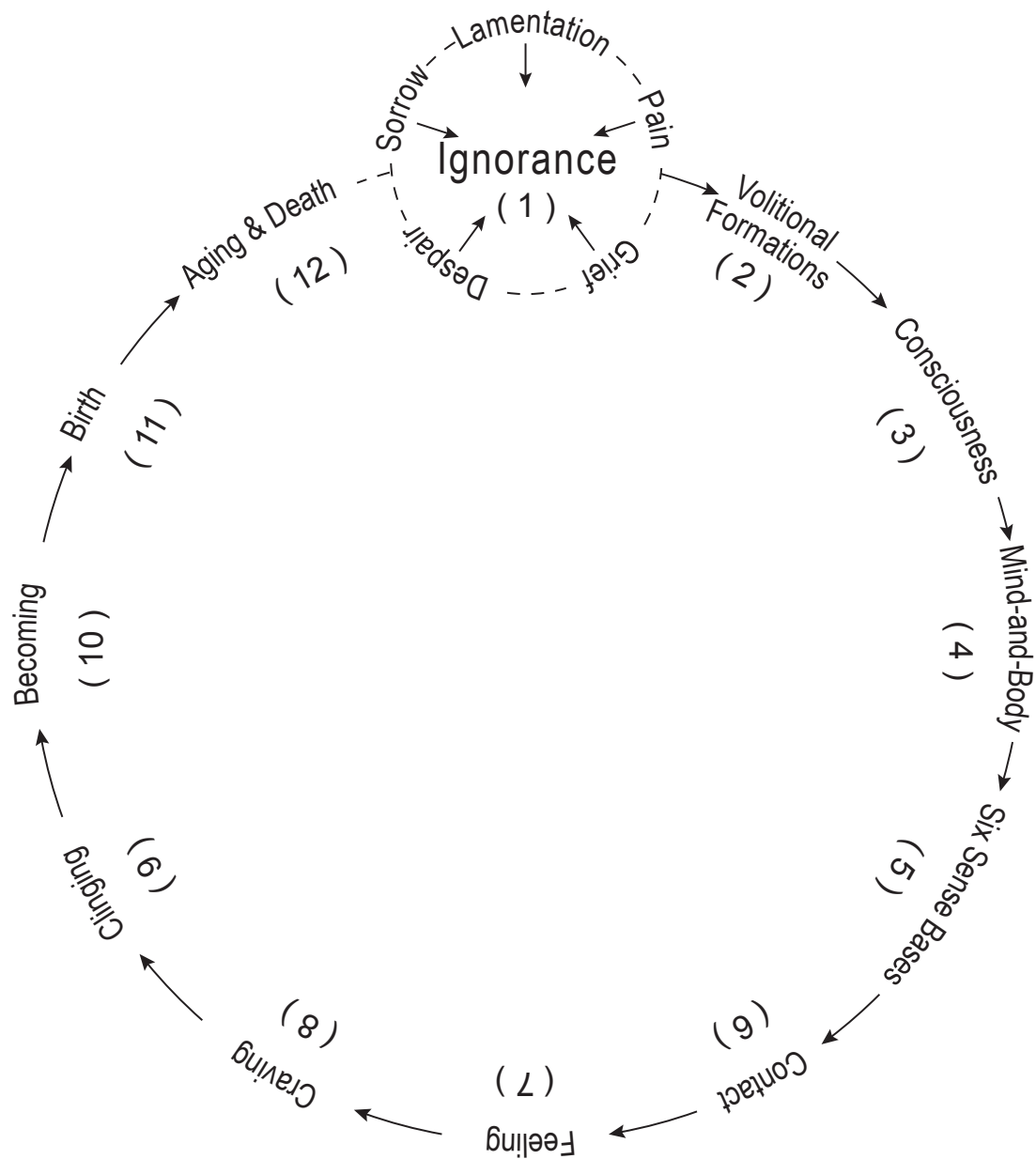
A. Factors of Dependent Origination

Avijjā (1) → *saṅkhārā* (2) → *viññāṇa* (3) → *nāma-rūpa* (4) → *saḷāyatana* (5) → *phassa* (6) → *vedanā* (7) → *taṇhā* (8) → *upādāna* (9) → *bhava* (10) → *jāti* (11) → *jarāmaraṇa* (12) ... *soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassa-upāyāsā* = *dukkha-samudaya* (origin of suffering).

The cessation of suffering follows the same sequence.

The cyclical nature of dependent origination may be illustrated as follows: [97]

¹ See the *Paccayākāra-Vibhaṅga*: Vbh. 135-192; Vism. 517-586; VbhA. 129-213; Comp.: *Paccaya-paricchedo*.



B. Definitions²

1. *Avijjā*: ignorance of suffering, of the origin of suffering, of the cessation of suffering, and of the way leading to the cessation of suffering (the Four Noble Truths), and according to the *Abhidhamma*, ignorance of the past, of the future, of the past and future, and of Dependent Origination.³

² For these definitions, see, e.g.: S. II. 2-4; Vbh. 135-8. For further explanations, see the references in the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Vibhaṅga-Aṭṭhakathā* quoted above.

³ *Pubbanta*, *aparanta*, and *pubbantāparanta* (the past, the future, and the past and future), see: Dhs. 195-6.

2. *Saṅkhārā*: Bodily volition (*kāya-saṅkhāra*), verbal volition (*vacī-saṅkhāra*), and mental volition (*citta-saṅkhāra*),⁴ and according to the Abhidhamma, meritorious volition (*puññābhisaṅkhāra*), demeritorious volition (*apuññābhisaṅkhāra*), and imperturbability-producing volition (*āneñjābhisaṅkhāra*).⁵ [98]

3. *Viññāṇa*: the six kinds of consciousness: eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), ear-consciousness (*sota-viññāṇa*), nose-consciousness (*ghāna-viññāṇa*), tongue-consciousness (*jivhā-viññāṇa*), body-consciousness (*kāya-viññāṇa*), and mind-consciousness (*mano-viññāṇa*).⁶

4. *Nāma-rūpa*: ‘mind’: feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), intention (*cetanā*), contact (*phassa*), and attention (*manasikāra*); and ‘body’: the four great elements (*mahābhūta*) and form that depends on these four great elements. The Abhidhamma defines ‘name’ as the feeling aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*), the perception aggregate (*saññā-khandha*), and the volitional formation aggregate (*saṅkhāra-khandha*).⁷

5. *Salāyatana*: the six sense bases: eye (*cakkhu*), ear (*sota*), nose (*ghāna*), tongue (*jivhā*), body (*kāya*), and mind (*mano*).

6. *Phassa*: the six kinds of contact, by way of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.⁸

⁴ *Kāya-saṅkhāra* = bodily volition (*kāya-sañcetanā*); the twenty volitional formations by way of the body (the eight wholesome volitions of the sensuous sphere and the twelve unwholesome volitions). *Vacī-saṅkhāra* = verbal volition (*vacī-sañcetanā*); the twenty volitional formations by way of speech (as above). *Citta-saṅkhāra* = mental volition (*mano-sañcetanā*); the twenty-nine volitional formations of the ‘mind door’ (*mano-dvāra*), which have not yet manifested as a bodily or verbal ‘medium of communication’ (*viññatti*).

⁵ *Puññābhisaṅkhāra* (wholesomeness that ‘shapes’ the course of life) = the thirteen wholesome intentions (eight intentions of the sensuous sphere—*kāmāvacara*—and five intentions of the sphere of form—*rūpāvacara*). *Apuññābhisaṅkhāra* (unwholesomeness that shapes the course of life) = the twelve unwholesome intentions of the sensuous sphere. *Āneñjābhisaṅkhāra* (state of stability that shapes the course of life) = the four wholesome intentions of the four formless spheres (*arūpāvacara*).

⁶ A more detailed description: the thirty-two mundane kinds of consciousness (the five kinds of consciousness of wholesome fruition—*kusala-vipāka*, the five kinds of consciousness of unwholesome fruition—*akusala-vipāka*, and the twenty-two kinds of mind-consciousness). Alternatively: the thirteen kinds of consciousness (the five kinds of consciousness of wholesome fruition, the five kinds of consciousness of unwholesome fruition, the two ‘mind elements’—*mano-dhātu*, and the mind-consciousness element unaccompanied by a root cause and accompanied by joy—*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu-ahetuka-somanassa-sahagata*) arising in the course of an individual existence (*ṭvatti-kāla*: between conception and death), plus the remaining nineteen kinds of consciousness arising in both the course of an individual existence and at the moment of conception.

⁷ See the appendix to chapter 1 of *Buddhadhamma*, on the five aggregates (as yet untranslated).

⁸ *Phassa* is the contact between the internal sense base, the external sense object, and the consciousness of that particular sense faculty.

7. *Vedanā*: the six kinds of feeling: feeling arising from contact by way of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.⁹

8. *Tañhā*: the six kinds of craving: Craving for forms (*rūpa-tañhā*), craving for sounds (*sadda-tañhā*), craving for smells (*gandha-tañhā*), craving for tastes (*rasa-tañhā*), craving for tactile objects (*phoṭṭhabba-tañhā*), and craving for mind objects (*dhamma-tañhā*).¹⁰

9. *Upādāna*: the four kinds of grasping: *kāmupādāna* (grasping onto sensuality: to forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tactile objects); *diṭṭhupādāna* (grasping onto views, opinions, theories, and beliefs); *sīlabbatupādāna* (grasping onto rules and observances, believing that in themselves these rules and observances lead to purity); and *attavādupādāna* (grasping onto ‘self’; creating a false idea of self and then clinging to this idea). [99]

10. *Bhava*: the three spheres of existence: the sense-sphere (*kāma-bhava*), the fine-material sphere (*rūpa-bhava*); and the immaterial sphere (*arūpa-bhava*). Alternatively: 1) the sphere of ‘kamma’ (*kamma-bhava*)—the active process of becoming (equivalent to meritorious volition, demeritorious volition, and imperturbability-producing volition; see *saṅkhāra*, above), and 2) the passive process of becoming (*uppatti-bhava*)*, equivalent to the sense sphere, the fine-material sphere, the immaterial sphere, the sphere of perception (*saññā-bhava*), the sphere of nonperception (*asaññā-bhava*), the sphere of neither-perception-nor-nonperception (*nevasaññānāsaññā-bhava*), the sphere of one-constituent being (*ekavokāra-bhava*), the sphere of four-constituent being (*catuvokāra-bhava*), and the sphere of five-constituent being (*pañcavokāra-bhava*).¹¹

*Also known as ‘rebirth-process becoming.’

11. *Jāti*: the birth of the five aggregates; the arising of the sense spheres (*āyatana*). Alternatively, the arising of specific phenomena.¹²

⁹ Feeling can be divided into three kinds: pleasant, painful, and neither-painful-nor-pleasant, or into five kinds: pleasant bodily feeling, painful bodily feeling, pleasant mental feeling, painful mental feeling, and equanimity—*upekkhā*.

¹⁰ Craving can be divided into three kinds: *kāma-tañhā* (craving for gratification by way of the five senses; delight in sensuality); *bhava-tañhā* (craving for eternal life; desire associated with the an eternalist view); and *vibhava-tañhā* (craving for extinction; desire associated with an annihilationist view). Multiplying these three kinds of craving with the six kinds mentioned above yields eighteen kinds; multiplying these eighteen with the pair of external and internal fields yields thirty-six; multiplying these thirty-six with the three periods of time (past, present & future) yields one hundred and eight (A. II. 212-3).

¹¹ *Uppatti-bhava* is a term from the Abhidhamma (e.g., Vbh. 137); in the later suttas the term used is *paṭisandhi-puna-bhava* (see: Nd. II. 17, 50).

¹² The last of these definitions, ‘the arising of specific phenomena,’ is used to explain Dependent Origination in the context of a single mind moment, following the teachings at: Vbh. 145, 159, 191.

12. *Jarāmaraṇa*: *jarā* (aging; a weakening of the faculties), and *maraṇa* (death; the breaking up of the aggregates; an end of the ‘life faculty’—*jīvitindriya*). Alternatively, the degeneration and dissolution of specific phenomena.¹³

C. General Explanations

Here are several examples that give a brief and simple explanation for these factors of Dependent Origination:

(*Āsava* →) *avijjā*: the belief that going to heaven is the highest happiness; the belief that killing others will bring happiness; the belief that suicide will bring happiness; the belief that birth as a brahmā will bring immortality; the belief that heaven is reached by making propitiatory offerings; the belief that Nibbāna is reached by undertaking austerities; the belief that there is a presently existing self that will be reborn as a result of certain actions; the belief that nothing exists after death. Thence:

→ *Saṅkhārā*: thinking and inclining in the direction of or in accord with such beliefs (above); conceiving modes of conduct and action (*kamma*) based on such intentions; these actions can be good (*puñña*), bad (*apuñña* or *pāpa*), or ‘imperturbable’ (*āneñja*—see *āneñjābhisāṅkhāra*, above). Thence:

→ *Viññāṇa*: awareness and cognition of sense impressions that specifically conform to such intentions. A consciousness with particular qualities is generated. At death, the force of volitional formations (*saṅkhārā*)—created *kamma*—induces rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*), with appropriate properties, to take rebirth in a plane of existence suited to it.

→ *Nāma-rūpa*: birth leads to a body and a life that is prepared to perform subsequent *kamma*. There arise the body aggregate (*rūpa-khandha*), the feeling aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*), the perception aggregate (*saññā-khandha*), and the volitional formation aggregate (*saṅkhāra-khandha*), which possess the properties and deficiencies endowed in them by the force of previously generated *kamma*. These aggregates are also conditioned by the nature of the particular plane of existence, depending on birth say as a human being, animal, or celestial being. [100]

→ *Salāyatana*: to respond to the external world, to enable cognition, and to satisfy personal needs, however, there must be a channel for associating with the external world. With the support of ‘mind-and-body’ (*nāma-rūpa*), life proceeds according to the force of *kamma* (‘kammic momentum’) to the point where there arise the six senses: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and the mind, which cognizes internal phenomena.

→ *Phassa*: cognition takes place by the contact or coming together of three factors: the internal sense bases (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind), the external sense objects (sights, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile objects, and mind

¹³ For this alternative definition, see the preceding endnote.

objects), and consciousness (eye-, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-, and mind-consciousness). With cognition:

→ *Vedanā*: there arises feeling (or ‘sensation’), either as pleasure (*sukha-vedanā*), pain (*dukkha-vedanā*), or a neutral feeling (*adukkhamasukha-vedanā* or *upekkhā-vedanā*). For unawakened beings, the process does not end here; as a consequence:

→ *Taṇhā*: when experiencing pleasure, there is delight, covetousness, or greed. When experiencing pain or discomfort, there is aversion, annoyance and hostility. A person is agitated and wishes for the feeling to disappear. He wishes to escape from the painful object, seeking to replace it with a pleasurable object. Alternatively, a person experiences a neutral feeling, of indifference, which is a subtle feeling classified as a form of pleasure, since there is no aversion. It is a mild feeling of ease. Thence:

→ *Upādāna*: when desire is heightened, there is grasping. A person becomes attached to and preoccupied with an object. Before an object is acquired there is craving; after the object is acquired there is grasping. Grasping is not confined to desirable sense objects (*kāmupādāna*), but extends to views and opinions (*diṭṭhupādāna*), to ways of practice for acquiring desired objects (*sīlabbatupādāna*), and to a sense of self (*attavādupādāna*). These different forms of grasping are linked. As a consequence, there is:

→ *Bhava*: the intention to act in response to the aforementioned grasping. This intention, which conforms to the specific craving and grasping, leads to the entire range of behaviour (*kamma-bhava*), as good, bad, or ‘imperturbable’ (*āneñja*). For example, a person may wish to go to heaven and believes that certain actions will lead to this end, and thus performs these actions. At the same time, he prepares the ‘conditions for existence’—the five aggregates—that will appear in the state of existence befitting that kamma (*uppatti-bhava*). When creation of kamma operates in this way, at the moment when a lifespan ends, the force of the accumulated kamma (*kamma-bhava*) impels the next stage of the cycle:

→ *Jāti*: starting with rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*), which conforms to the ‘kammic momentum,’ there is birth in a realm of existence appropriate to that kamma. The five aggregates arise and life begins: ‘mind-and-body,’ the six sense bases, contact, and feeling arise and the wheel of dependent origination continues. [101] With birth, there is certain to be:

→ *Jarāmaraṇa*: deterioration and destruction of life. For unawakened people, aging and death are constantly felt to threaten and oppress them, both overtly and subconsciously. Therefore in the life of ordinary people, aging and death are linked to:

... *Soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassa-upāyāsa* (sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair), which collectively are called ‘suffering.’ The concluding line of Dependent Origination is thus: ‘Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.’

As dependent origination exists as a cycle, this stage of sorrow, etc. is not the end. In fact, this collection of qualities becomes another important factor causing the cycle to rotate further. Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are evidence for mental impurities called *āsava* that fester in the heart. There are four such impurities or ‘taints’: 1) the desire for gratification by way of the five senses and by way of the mind (*kāmāsava*); 2) the holding fast to certain beliefs, like ‘I am the body’ or ‘this body is mine’ (*ditṭhāsava*); 3) satisfaction in a particular state of existence, considering it superior, precious and happy; the wish that one can abide in such a state and experience joy forever (*bhavāsava*); and 4) ignorance of things as they are (*avijjāsava*). Aging and death are the marks of decline and decay, and they run counter to these mental impurities. For example, in regard to sensuality, aging and death lead people to feel that they will be separated from pleasurable, desired sense objects. In regard to views, when a person identifies with the body, he grieves when the body changes. In regard to ‘becoming,’ a person fears that he will miss the opportunity to abide in a desired state of existence. And in regard to ignorance, a person lacks basic understanding, of say the nature of aging and the proper course of conduct in relation to aging. When a person who lacks proper understanding thinks of or encounters aging and death, he experiences fear and gloom and behaves in a misguided way. The ‘taints’ thus act as fuel, giving rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair the moment a person contacts aging and death.

Sorrow, lamentation, etc., reveal mental obscurity. Whenever these negative emotions are present, the mind is dim and dull. When one of these mind states arises, it is accompanied by ignorance, as confirmed by the *Visuddhimagga*: *Sorrow, pain, grief and despair are inseparable from ignorance, and lamentation is found in one who is deluded. So when these are established, ignorance is established;*¹⁴ *This is how ignorance should be understood to be established by sorrow and so on;*¹⁵ *As long as these [sorrow, etc.] go on occurring so long does ignorance occur.*¹⁶ [102] Therefore it is said: *With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance.*¹⁷ One can conclude that for unawakened persons aging and death, with their retinue of sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair, are a condition for the arising of ignorance, providing the next link in the cycle of dependent origination, without interruption.

Several important points may be made concerning the previous explanations:

1. The cycle of Dependent Origination as explained above is usually called the ‘wheel of becoming’ (*bhava-cakkha*) or the ‘wheel of rebirth’ (*saṃsāra-cakkha*), and it covers three distinct lifetimes: *avijjā* and *saṅkhārā* comprise one lifespan; *viññāṇa* to *bhava* comprise another lifespan; and *jāti* and *jarāmaṇa* (with sorrow, lamentation, etc.) comprise a third lifespan. By determining the middle interval

¹⁴ Vism. 576.

¹⁵ Vism. 577.

¹⁶ Vism. 529.

¹⁷ M. I. 54.

(*viññāṇa* to *bhava*) as the present life, the three stages (containing twelve factors) can be connected to three periods of time:

1) Past life = *avijjā* and *saṅkhārā*.

2) Present life = *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedanā*, *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, and *bhava*.

3) Future life = *jāti* and *jarāmaraṇa* (with sorrow, lamentation, etc.).

2. In this three life division, the present life is considered the principal period of time. The relationship of the past to the present is only viewed in the light of causal factors; the results manifesting in the present are traced back to the causes in the past (past causes → present results). Similarly, the view to the future concerns results; present causes are linked to future results (present causes → future results). Therefore, only the present contains both results and causes, which can be depicted as four stages:¹⁸

1) Past causes (*atīta-hetu*) = *avijjā* and *saṅkhārā*.

2) Present results (*pacuppanna-phala*) = *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, and *vedanā*.

3) Present causes (*pacuppanna-hetu*) = *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, and *bhava*.

4) Future results (*anāgata-phala*) = *jāti* and *jarāmaraṇa* (with sorrow, lamentation, etc.).

3. From the explanations of each factor above, it is evident that some definitions for these factors overlap or match. The factors can thus be grouped as follows:

1) *Avijjā* with *taṇhā* & *upādāna*

In the general explanations of ignorance above it is clear that craving (*taṇhā*) and grasping (*upādāna*), especially grasping onto a sense of self, are inherent in each example. When a person does not understand the truth and mistakenly identifies with a 'self,' there will be selfish desires and attachments. [103] In the phrase, 'With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance,' the taints of sense-desire, becoming, and views (*kāmāsava*, *bhavāsava*, and *diṭṭhāsava*) are all connected to craving and grasping. Therefore, whenever ignorance is mentioned, there is always a link to craving and grasping.

Similarly, in the explanations of craving and grasping there is always a link to ignorance. When there is an identification with 'self,' there is craving and grasping. The many forms of selfishness stem from not knowing the truth of conditioned phenomena. The more a person generates desire and attachment, the more impaired are his critical faculties. He increasingly fails

¹⁸ These are called the four 'classifications' (*saṅgha*) or the four 'groups' (*saṅkhepa*).

to apply mindfulness and wisdom, and his true discernment of things decreases.

Therefore, ignorance as a past cause and craving & grasping as present causes have essentially the same meaning. The reason ignorance is used in the past and craving and grasping are used in the present is to show the chief determining factors in different sections of the cycle.

2) *saṅkhārā* with *bhava*

The definitions for *saṅkhārā* and *bhava* are almost identical. The difference lies in the principal agent that is emphasized or in the range of focus. The definition for *saṅkhārā* emphasizes intention, which is the principal agent behind action (*kamma*). The definition for *bhava* is broader, distinguishing between the active process of becoming (*kamma-bhava*) and the passive process of becoming (*uppatti-bhava*). The active process of becoming also has intention as the principal agent (like *saṅkhārā*), but the term *kamma-bhava* has a wider meaning than *saṅkhārā*, encompassing the entire range of human behaviour. The passive process of becoming refers to the five aggregates, arising from the active process of becoming.

3) *viññāṇa* to *vedanā* with *jāti* & *jarāmarāṇa* (and sorrow, lamentation, etc.):

The factors of *viññāṇa* to *vedanā* refer to results in this life. The reason these factors are listed in detail here is to show how present resultant factors interact and produce present causal factors, which then lead to future results.

Jāti and *jarāmarāṇa*, as future results, demonstrate that when present causal factors exist, there will inevitably be future results. *Jāti* and *jarāmarāṇa* are here used only as a summary, referring to the arising and ceasing of *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa* and *vedanā*. And they are used to emphasize the arising of suffering, to reveal the point linking the process to the beginning (at ignorance). Therefore, *viññāṇa* to *vedanā* and *jāti* & *jarāmarāṇa* are essentially the same and can be used interchangeably.

By integrating these matching definitions, each stage in the group of four causes and results (point #2 above) comprises five factors: [104]

1) Five past causes: *avijjā*, *saṅkhārā*, *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, and *bhava*.

2) Five present results: *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa* and *vedanā* (= *jāti* & *jarāmarāṇa*).

3) Five present causes: *avijjā*, *saṅkhārā*, *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, and *bhava*.

4) Five future results: *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa* and *vedanā* (= *jāti* & *jarāmarāṇa*).

Compiled in this way, these factors are known as the twenty 'conditions' (*ākāra*).

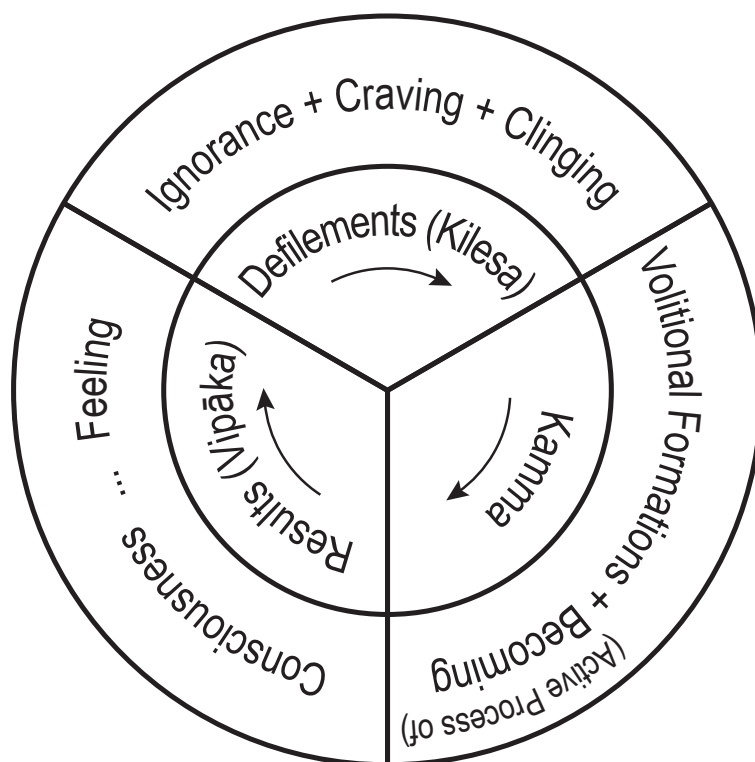
4. In accord with the preceding definitions, it is possible to classify the twelve factors of Dependent Origination into three groups, which are called the three ‘rounds’ (*vaṭṭa*):

1) *Avijjā*, *taṇhā*, and *upādāna* are defilements (*kilesa*). They are the causes behind thinking and acting. This group is called the ‘round of defilement’ (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*).

2) *Saṅkhārā* and (*kamma-*) *bhava* refer to actions (*kamma*) that shape the course of life. They are known as the ‘round of intentional action’ (*kamma-vaṭṭa*).

3) *Viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa* and *vedanā* are results (*vipāka*). They are the fruits of *kamma*, and become the conditions for producing subsequent defilements. Collectively, they are known as the ‘round of results’ (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

The relationship between these three rounds can be illustrated in the following way:¹⁹



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¹⁹ These three rounds are found in the commentaries. They are a simple, down-to-earth way of explaining Dependent Origination and the round of rebirth. For example, a person may act prompted by defilement in order to acquire a desired object. If the result of this action is a pleasurable feeling, desire is increased, leading to further actions and results. If, however, a person’s actions do not lead to the desired object, the result is an unpleasant feeling; a defilement in the form of anger arises, which becomes an additional result of the person’s actions.

5. As mental defilements are the source of various forms of kamma, shaping the course of life, defilements are thus designated as the beginning of the cycle. Following this designation, there are two starting points to the cycle, known as the two ‘roots’ (*mūla*) of the ‘wheel of becoming’ (*bhava-cakka*):

1) Ignorance is the starting point from the past, influencing the present up to feeling.

2) Craving is the starting point in the present, resulting from feeling and influencing the future up to aging and death.

As mentioned earlier, these two factors are the prominent defilements in each respective stage: ignorance follows from sorrow, lamentation, etc., while craving follows from feeling.²⁰

In reference to rebirth, the orthodox explanation distinguishes between the case wherein ignorance is prominent and the case wherein craving is prominent:

Ignorance is a primary agent causing beings to be reborn in a bad destination (*duggati*). When ignorance dominates the mind, people are unable to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, and helpful and harmful. They tend to act in a deluded and unprincipled way, opening the door to serious misconduct.

The craving for existence (*bhava-taṇhā*) induces people to be born in good destinations (*sugati*). When such craving leads the way, people tend to focus on the good qualities of life. When thinking of the future, they want to be born in heaven or to be reborn as a brahmā. In this life they seek wealth, honour, and fame. Prompted by such desire, they calculate and act to achieve their goal. To be a brahmā they develop *jhāna**, to go to heaven they are generous and morally upright, to be wealthy they diligently earn money, or to seek honour they are charitable. With this care and effort they are able to perform good deeds better than someone dwelling in ignorance.

**Jhāna*: meditative absorption; concentrative absorption.

Although ignorance and craving are designated as ‘starting points,’ they are not a ‘first cause’:

Bhikkhus, the beginning point of ignorance is not apparent, so that one may say: ‘Ignorance was not before; it has since come to be.’ Concerning this matter, I say:

²⁰ The commentaries state the different purposes for distinguishing and explaining these two ‘roots’: *avijjā* refers to people who are opinionated (*diṭṭhi-carita*); *taṇhā* refers to people who are greedy (*taṇhā-carita*). Alternatively, the section with ignorance as root is used to eliminate an annihilationist view, whereas the section with craving as root is used to eliminate the eternalist view; or, the former section refers to beings who dwell in the womb, while the latter refers to spontaneously born beings. See: *Vism.* 578.

‘Indeed, with this as condition, ignorance is apparent.’²¹

There is an identical passage concerning craving for existence.²² [106]

The following passage addresses both ignorance and craving as ‘root causes’:

*Bhikkhus, for the fool, obstructed by ignorance and bound by craving, this body has thereby originated. So there is this pair of conditions, of body and external name-and-form. Dependent on this pair there is contact by way of only six sense bases. The fool contacts by way of these sense bases, or by way of one among them, and thus experiences pleasure and pain.*²³

6. The interconnection between the factors of dependent origination corresponds to a single connection or a set of connections collectively known as the twenty-four ‘supports’ (*paccaya*), following the explanation in the *Abhidhamma*.²⁴

Moreover, each factor can be expanded upon. For example, consciousness (or the mind) can be analyzed according to its quality (as wholesome or unwholesome), its level, and its destination in a particular state of existence. Similarly, form (*rūpa*) can be analyzed according to different types, properties, and states of existence.

It does not seem necessary here to present these twenty-four supports or the elaborate details for each factor. Readers who take a special interest may investigate directly in the *Abhidhamma* texts.

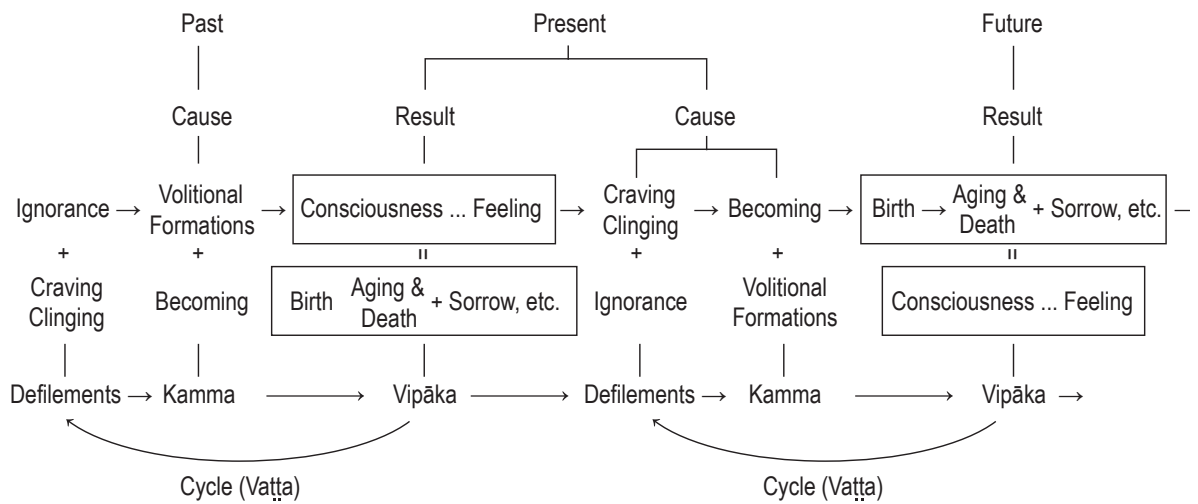
The preceding explanations can be illustrated in the following way:

²¹ A. V. 113; *Vism.* 525; following from this sutta passage, ignorance is said to have the five hindrances (*nivaraṇa*) as ‘nourishment.’ [See the section: ‘Breaking the Cycle.’]

²² A. V. 116; *Vism.* 525; the nourishment for *bhava-taṇhā* is ignorance.

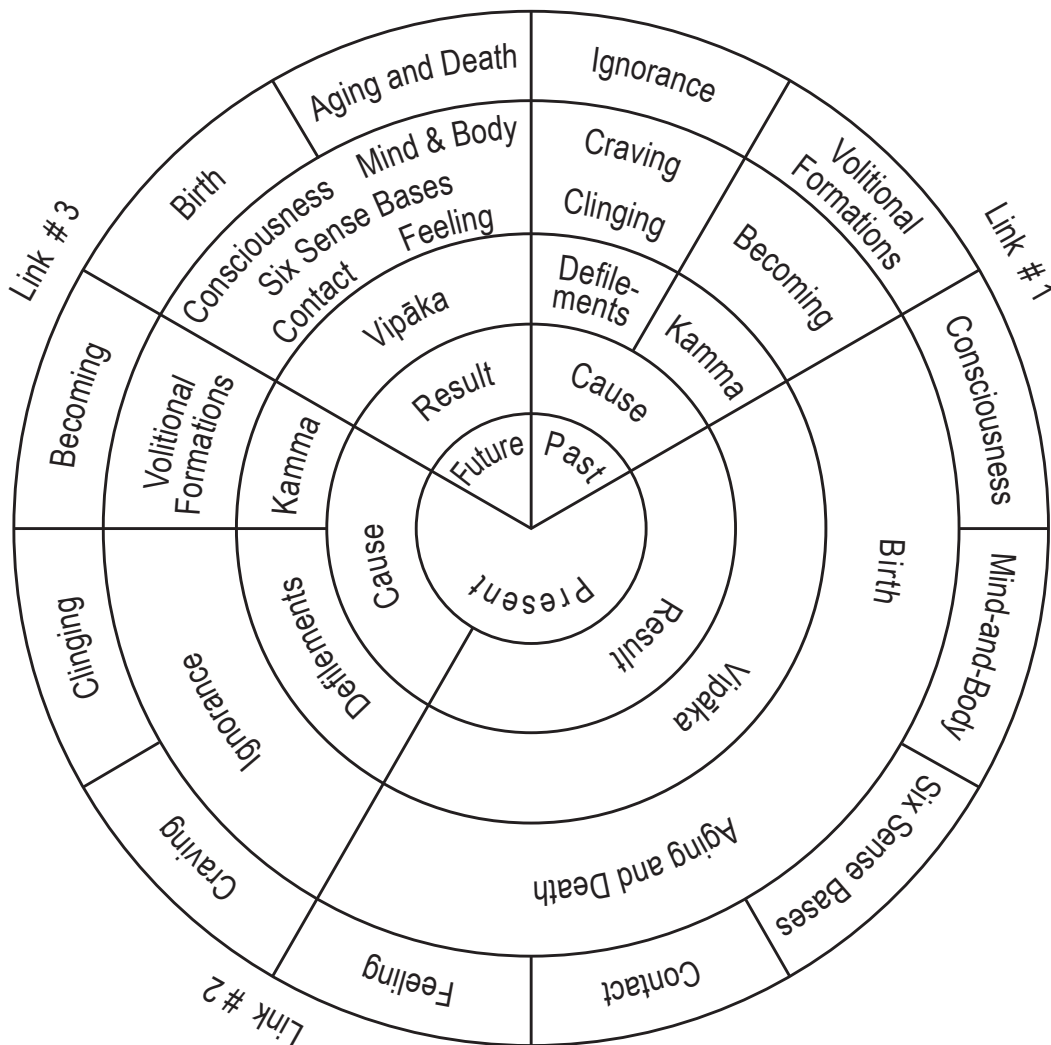
²³ S. II. 23-4. [Bhikkhu Bodhi posits that ‘external name-and-form’ here represents the entire field of experience available to consciousness; see n. 48, p. 740, ‘The Connected Discourses of the Buddha,’ Wisdom Press.]

²⁴ *Paṭṭhāna* (Pali Canon volumes 40-45); the explanation is called the *Paṭṭhāna-naya*. See also *Comp.*: *Paccaya-paricchedo, Paṭṭhānanayo*.



[107]

or:



Note: The section on causal factors corresponds to 'origin' (*samudaya*) in the Four Noble Truths, because these factors are the agents of suffering. The section on results corresponds with 'suffering' (*dukkha*) in the Four Noble Truths.

Alternatively, the section on causes is called 'active-process becoming' (*kamma-bhava*), because this process generates causes. The section on results is called the passive process of becoming (*uppatti-bhava*), because this process contains results.

There are three 'links' (*sandhi*) between cause (*hetu*) and effect (*phala*): 1) (the first) cause-effect link (*hetu-phala-sandhi*); 2) the effect-cause link (*phala-hetu-sandhi*); and 3) (the second) cause-effect link (*hetu-phala-sandhi*).