

Psychological Aspects in the Doctrine of Dependent Origination

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Abstract : This research is an attempt to examine psychological aspect of the Buddha's most cardinal and fundamental doctrine of Dependent Origination (paṭiccasamuppāda) along with drawing out a clear picture of the constituents from the law of causation and analyzes the mental states and motivational factors behind each constituent among twelvefold links. Meticulous research into the doctrine of Dependent Origination reveals how the main links from the doctrine of dependent origination provide a framework for psychological analysis through volitional formation (saṅkhāra), consciousness (viññāna), mentality and materiality (nāma-rūpa), contact (phassa), feeling (vedanā), craving (tanhā) and clinging (upādāna). This paper further illustrates the notion of perception (saññā) which can be found in the function of volitional formation (saṅkhāra) - a contributing factor, according to modern psychology, in the role of understanding human (puggala) motivation. The psychological analysis of dependent origination expounds the concept of personality highlighting present existence through the inter-relationship of the five faculties (pañcaupadānakkhandhā), viz., form (rūpa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saññā), volitional formation (saṅkhārā) and consciousness (viññāṇa).

Keywords : dependent origination, perception, motivational factors, feelings

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