

Excerpt from: Satkari Mookerjee, The Pramanavarttikam of Dharmakirti p 82/83

If again observation (of co-presence) and non-observation (that is observation of the absence of both) be not the requisite conditions of the concomitance in agreement and the concomitance in difference, how can we be sure that smoke will not fail to accompany fire?

The reason is: Verse 34

། མེ་ལི་འབྲས་སུ་དུ་བ་སྟེ། ། འབྲས་སུ་འོས་ཀྱི་རྗེས་འཇུག་ཕྱིར།

། དེ་མེད་པར་ཟི་དེ་ཡོད་པ། ། ལྷུ་དང་ལྷན་པ་ལས་འདས་འགྱུར། །

kāryaṃ dhūmo hutabhujah kāryadharmānuvṛttitaḥ /
sa bhavaṃs tadabhāve tu hetumattāṃ vिलांghayet //

34 ab

Smoke is the effect of fire,

as the characteristics of the effect are observed to be present in it.

Now what was not observed before is observed when certain facts have been observed and is deduced that the (subsequent) entity is the effect of the (antecedent) entity. This (triple) test is found to be satisfied by smoke.

[C] The relation of cause and effect is ascertained by the application of triple test. If one is to demonstrate by experiment that smoke is the effect of fire, one has to show that
(1) there is neither smoke nor fire previously present in a place,
(2) fire is produced and smoke is observed to follow,
(3) fire is removed from the place and so not observed, smoke also is not observed.

In all (1) non-observation of the smoke before its emergence,
(2) observation of fire and observation of smoke,
(3) lastly, non-observation of fire and non-observation of smoke,
these are the three steps in which there are three cases of non-observation and two cases of observation, and this necessary concomitance shows that the subsequent entity is the effect and the antecedent is the cause. This is an anticipation of the position of J. S. Mill's third Canon-the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference.

34cd

*If it (effect) were to come into existence even when it (the cause) were absent,
it would forfeit the character of being conditioned by the cause.*

Even when it is observed in one single case to conform (to the canon) it is proved that (the subsequent event) is the effect. If it were not the effect it would not follow even once from what is not its cause. If the effect could happen in the absence of its own cause, it would be a case of an event happening without cause.

For when an event comes into existence in the absence of another, the latter cannot be a cause. (On your supposition) smoke can come into existence in the absence of fire and so it cannot have fire as its cause.