FREE WILL AND COMPULSION IN B.G. XVIII. 14, 59, 61

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INTRODUCTION

The claim has frequently been made that the Bhagavad Gītā is a text which advocates fatalism or human compulsion and allows no, or little, room for free will. And the claim has also been made that the Gītā is ultimately a work which has a place for free will and which puts fatalism in a proper perspective by demonstrating what that place is. [1]

In what follows I want to weigh these claims by examining three passages from Chapter XVIII of the Gītā that would seem to lend support to the claim that the Bhagavad Gītā advocates fatalism.

Following the statement and discussion of each of these three passages I will try to test, poke and probe the arguments that each passage seems to be advancing by doing three things: first, by restating each of the three passages as formal arguments which conclude that man has no free will; second, by commenting briefly on each of the premises and conclusions of the arguments, and, third and finally, by making some observations on the arguments as a whole in order to see whether they have merit or not. We might begin by getting some technical terms out of the way.

I would suggest that we get rid of the word "fatalism" [2] and use in its place the more general word "compulsion." If the issue that we are pursuing is the issue of how the Gītā relates to the human will's ability to act or not act (and that's what fatalism, compulsion and free will all come down to, in the end) then we shall avoid a great deal of initial confusion if we get rid of the notion of fate and introduce the notion of

compulsion in its stead. Fate, cosmic compulsion, is after all merely one form of compulsion, and we may want to consider other forms of compulsion in addition to it, e.g., psychological compulsion, Karmic compulsion, divine compulsion, physical compulsion, and so on. Our concern then will be with "free will" and "compulsion" and our question with respect to them will be a rather narrow one: Do the passages under consideration, B.G. XVIII. 14, 59 and 61, support human compulsion or not?

Two Definitions: Compulsion and Free Will

I would like to propose the following definitions for our terms. An action is free, we will assume, whenever the person who did the action could have not done the action, i.e. he could have done differently. Suppose you go to a battlefield and fight. Were you free? Or were you compelled? The issue is decided by asking, Could you have not gone to the battlefield? Could you have run away instead? And if you ran away, could you have instead gone to the battle? If the answer to these questions is in the affirmative then we shall say that you were not compelled in what you did. More formally, we can say, where A is a person and x is any action of that person:

> A is or was free in choosing and/or doing x if and only if A could choose and do, or A could have chosen and done, not-x.

Similarly, we can say that an action is compelled whenever the person who did the action could not have not done the action, i.e. he could not have done differently. Again, where A is a person and x is any action of that person, we can say:

> A is or was compelled in choosing and/or doing x if and only if A could not choose and do, or A could not have chosen and done, not-x.

The definitions of "free will" and "compulsion" can be made enormously

more complicated than they are if one considers the various possible combinations between choosing and doing. But I'm going to eschew such an undertaking, sacrificing completeness for the sake of simplicity, in order to get on with the business at hand, i.e. applying our definitions and understandings of free will and compulsion, however incomplete they might be, to the three Gītā passages that have put a claim on our attentions in this matter.

I. The Daiva Arguments for Compulsion: B.G. XVIII. 14

Perhaps the most troublesome [2a] passage on compulsion in all of the Gītā is the passage offered here. Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna of the five causes for the bringing about of any action, whether of body, speech or mind. These five causes then become the set of necessary conditions for the coming into existence of any human action. In other words, each of the five is essentail for the occurrence of any action, right or wrong, and no action occurs that has not been preceded or accompanied by all of the five.

> The body, the agent in the body, the various organs of action, the many kinds of efforts or energies, and daiva as the fifth. (B.G. XVIII. 14) [3]

The argument for compulsion contained in this passage turns on the meaning of "daiva". It has been variously and bewilderingly rendered as "fate," "providence," "destiny," "divine power or will," and even "chance." From the myriad definitions offered inside as well as outside the epic and non-epic traditions, two interpretations crystalize. One interprets daiva as a personal force [4], best translated as "God," while the other interprets daiva as an impersonal force [5], best translated as "Fate." Each interpretation has its defenders and I think nothing can be learned from attempting to answer the somewhat dreary and profitless question on which they all

seem to turn, viz., Which translation or interpretation is the correct one? I think it is more profitable and far less dreary to take each interpretation and set forth the two arguments associated with them. What we then have are two daiva arguments for compulsion, one a personal daiva argument for compulsion and the other an impersonal daiva argument for compulsion. Let me set out each of these arguments, test them for philosophic soundness by commenting on each of the premises in the arguments, and then evaluate and criticize each argument.

The Personal Daiva Argument for Compulsion

Suppose we interpret daiva, as God, a personal force or personal providence or personal destiny that somehow oversees human affairs and actively participates in them. We are told in B.G. XVIII. 14 that every human action depends on daiva as the fifth of the necessary conditions or causes of that action. So we know that if an action is done then daiva is present. But if an action is not done then we cannot tell whether daiva is present or not for there are four other necessary conditions or causes for human action, any one of which might have been lacking.

What does it mean to say that daiva, personal daiva or God, enters human action? Let's assume, for I can see no other way of explicating "personal daiva" as a cause of human action in this curious context, that personal daiva participates as one of five necessary conditions of human action by giving or withholding assent for that action. If the other four conditions are present, viz., the body, the agent, the action organs, and desire or effort, then the action will occur if daiva says, 'Go!'; and it will not occur if daiva says 'No go!'. What could be simpler? So we have:

The Personal Daiva Argument for Compulsion

1. If you did x then daiva assented to x.

2. If daiva assented to x then you could not have done not-x.

3. So if you did x then you could not have done not-x.

4. But if you could not have done not-x then you were not free.

5. S'pose you did x.

6. Therefore, you were not free.

Let me comment on each of the premises of this argument:

1. This conditional premise follows from B.G. XVIII. 14 and our discussion of what it means to be a necessary condition together with what it means to have daiva as a cause of an action.

2. If daiva assented to x then he withheld his assent to not-x; and if he withheld his assent to not-x then you couldn't have done anything else but x. (We assume that daiva cannot assent to both x and not-x simultaneously, which would be tantamount to assenting to everything which would be tantamount to not having personal daiva as a necessary condition for actions at all, i.e. to assent to everything is to make the necessity of daiva vacuous and moribund.)

3. This conclusion follows logically from 1 and 2.

4. This premise follows from the definition of "free will" given in the Introduction, viz., if you could not have done differently than you did, e.g., done not-x in place of x, then you are not free but compelled in your actions.

5. This premise supposes that you did an action, i.e. it supposes that all five necessary conditions are present and x occurred.

6. The conclusion follows logically from 3, 4 and 5.

Some Observations

First, let's examine what it means for daiva to give assent as opposed to daiva's not giving assent. Following this explication I shall turn to some criticisms which the personal daiva argument for compulsion must face.

Suppose that you are on a battlefield and that you decide to engage in the battle on that field. Suppose that you rush into the thick of the fight thrusting with your spear and jabbing with your sword. And when it's all over you stop by my chariot and we discuss the question as to whether you were free or compelled in what you were doing. And suppose that I remind you that God assented every time you thrust and every time you jabbed. But that every time you jabbed God withheld his assent for a thrust. And that every time you thrust God withheld his assent for a jab. If so, then isn't it the case that even if you'd wanted to thrust when you were jabbing, or even if you'd wanted to jab when you were thrusting, you couldn't have done it. And you couldn't have done it because God had already assented to a jab or a thrust only and not both at once. And suppose you even agree, confessing that at one moment during the battle God must have withheld his assent, for you were willing and able to come to a friend's rescue but your sword and spear seemed unwilling to answer to you, for your legs and arms seemed frozen and unable to respond to your will, and then the moment passed and the battle poured over you: That's what it's like when God withholds his assent. You couldn't have rescued your friend - you were compelled to fight where you were. You could not have done differently than you did. You were not free. So much for what it's like for personal daiva to give and withhold assent.

Second, a point regarding the theological status of this assenting God is bound to arise. It is interesting to note that he is just one more necessary condition along with four others. And being "just one more" he is curiously limited in his power. His power is worthless, in fact, unless it is played along with the other four causal conditions. In other owrds, this so-called "God" may be willing and anxious for you to perform some action but unless the other conditions are present his willingness and eagerness are doomed to be frustrated: The daiva of B.G. XVIII. 14 is a limited and relatively impotent personal divinity at best.

Third, when this limited God assents to an action being performed, what criteria does he employ in assenting? Does he have a reason for assenting? If he has no reason or criterion then he is irrational. If he has a reason, what then? The reason cannot, however, be moral, rational or practical (to name but a few criteria for assenting to action) because many of the actions that are done in this world, actions to which he must have assented or they wouldn't have been done, are immoral, irrational and impractical. This limited God is of necessity, we must conclude, either irrational (acting or assenting without reason) or immoral or impractical.

Fourth, if personal daiva is going to be implicated in every human action and if this daiva is anthropomorphic, as we are assuming, and if assenting is an action, then is personal daiva also not committed to having the five necessary conditions for an action apply to his own assenting actions. And if so is there a higher order daiva which assents to his assentings? Or can his assentings be reflexive in the sense that personal daiva can be self-assenting? Does he then assent

to his own assenting? And is that also an action? The observation sounds silly, I suppose, and it promises to get regressively sillier, but I include it for the sake of completeness.

Fifth, following hard upon the two previous observations, to assume that daiva is present in all human actions as an assentor is to implicate daiva in every immoral human action. If daiva assents every time there is a rape, murder or robbery then personal daiva must be morally repugnant. And if the charge of moral repugnance can be levelled at personal daiva, then why not spiritual repugnance, religious repugnance, intellectual repugnance, and all the other repugnancies that human actions are capable of generating as well?

Sixth, the argument implies that the agent can have power over daiva, a curious power but power nonetheless, because the agent can get daiva to assent to anything, whether within reason or without reason, that the agent desires. Suppose I want to raise my arm. And I raise it knowing that daiva, God, must have assented to the raising. So it raises. Good enough. God and I are working in perfect harmony. Suppose I raise it a second, then a third, fourth...twentieth...a hundreth time? And I do it maliciously in order to demonstrate my control over God. Suddenly the compulsion-shoe is on the other foot and it is now I who control God for there is now surely a sense in which God must do my bidding in virtue of my acting in this way. Do you want God in your power? Do you want to compel God to assent? Then try reading the next sentence? There, you're doing it!

There is an interesting inversion of the argument for compulsion here. Is God free or compelled in assenting to my arm raising? Could he have done differently? We would ordinarily assume that he could.

And yet the repetition of the arm raising for the sole purpose of exhibiting human allmightiness over God seems to indicate that the agent now controls God and it is God who is compelled to one action and no other.

Seventh, the argument leads to the observation that daiva as God is involved in a lot of my silly or petty actions such as blinking, sneezing, swallowing, scratching, wrinkling the nose, flexing the toes, and so on and on. Is the majesty of divine assent to be bound up with such trivialities? It is a busy deity, to be sure, that gets involved in every human action. But surely such complicated involvement is absurd; and any argument that leads to an absurdity must be, itself, absurd.

Eighth and finally, the personal daiva argument for compulsion together with several of our previous observations, must lead to the observation that the presence of daiva or God is wholly unnecessary to human action. It must seem clear that the other four necessary conditions are sufficient to bring about human action and that daiva is but a redundant fifth wheel that serves no useful and practical purpose for the production of human actions: Daiva is not a difference that makes a difference.

We must conclude that if daiva be interpreted as a person then he appears to be a weak and manipulable toady with a rather silly occupation; he is, if our observations are correct, impotent, irrational, impractical, repugnant, useless and redundant, attributes that would tend to question the power and the majesty of this personal being. Our conclusion must be that daiva cannot be interpreted as God and that the personal daiva argument for compulsion fails.

Let me expand on the observation that assumes that when daiva alone

is present the other necessary conditions must be redundant by turning to our second alternative interpretation of daiva.

The Impersonal Daiva Arguments for Compulsion

Suppose we interpret daiva not as God but as impersonal destiny or fate. This is surely the least interesting interpretation that could be given, for the issue of free will and compulsion seems then all but decided with no holds barred. However, there are several instructive problems that make this interpretation worth pursuing and there is a further distinction to be made within this interpretation that could lead to free will. This latter distinction depends on just how total the force of impersonal fate or destiny is meant to be.

Complete or universal fatalism covers everything, while incomplete or guarded fatalism [6] leaves, it would seem, a small amount of libertarian elbow room in which free will can swing about. For the latter we have:

The Impersonal Daiva Argument for Incomplete Compulsion

1. If some events are completely and unalterably established or decreed then you cannot do differently than those events decree.

2. Some events are completely and unalterably established or decreed.

3. Therefore, you cannot do differently than those events decree.

4. Therefore, you are not free.

Commentary:

1. This conditional premise is simply the statement of the argument of incomplete compulsion or fatalism. It is roughly parallel to the doctrine of predestination in the theologies of St. Paul, St. Augustine and John Calvin.

2. This premise follows from B.G. XVIII. 14 and the interpretation of daiva as impersonal incomplete fate.

3. This conclusion follows logically from 1 and 2.

4. This conclusion follows from 3 together with the definition of "free will" given in the Introduction.

Some Observations

I have a single observation to make. The significant force of the argument turns on the extension or reference of "some." Logically, "some" means "at least one" and we have three possible alternatives: "Some" in the first premise can mean that only one event is compelled, all the rest are free; or it can mean that only one event is free and that all but that one are compelled; or it can mean that various combinations of free and compelled events between these extremes are possible. On the first alternative there could be no long term practical difference between incomplete compulsion and complete free will; on the second interpretation there could be no long term practical difference, again, between incomplete compulsion and complete compulsion. For example, suppose that when you go into battle it has been decreed by impersonal daiva that you shall carry a blue spear (thereby satisfying the first alternative that some, i.e. one, events be completely and unalterably established by daiva) but that everything else that you do is free. How does this situation differ practically from the libertarian's position with respect to complete free will? Or make the compelled event even more trivial, if the reader is still not convinced - how about a fated sneeze just before the battle? Or, on the second alternative, suppose that your sneeze is free but all else in your life is compelled. How does that situation differ practically from the fatalist's position with

respect to complete compulsion? On the third alternative the significance of the compulsion would depend not on the number or quantity of actions being compelled but more to the point, on their importance or triviality in one's life. Therefore, for the impersonal daiva argument for incomplete compulsion to be significant at all, what is fated or compelled must make a difference to one's life. But, this, in the end, is not a substantially different conclusion from the interpretation that we are going to take up next. And that conclusion and this interpretation both seem closer to what B.G. XVIII. 14 intends.

The second interpretation of impersonal daiva states that daiva is a force that is total and complete in its decrees allowing no sifnificant libertarian elbow room. So we have:

The Impersonal Daiva Argument for Complete Compulsion

1. If all events are completely and universally established or decreed then you cannot do differently than those events dictate.

2. All events are completely and unalterably established or decreed.

3. Therefore, you cannot do differently than those events dictate.

4. Therefore, you are not free.

Commentary:

1. This conditional premise is merely the statement of the argument of complete or universal fatalism. It is notoriously adhered to by Stoics, the Ājīvikas and many Moslems. It says, rather vacuously, perhaps, that what will happen will happen. In other words, the future has always been pre-planned and nothing can de-plan it.

2. This premise follows from B.G. XVIII. 14 and the interpretation of daiva as impersonal complete fate.

3. This conclusion follows logically from 1 and 2.

4. This conclusion follows from 3 together with the definition of "free will" given in the Introduction.

Some Observations

Again, I have a single observation. If daiva is fate then what's the use or purpose of the other four "necessary" conditions for an action? It cannot have the same status of necessity as the other four because they would always be subservient to it. If daiva were fate then the other four conditions would not be necessary conditions. But the other four conditions are necessary conditions. Therefore, daiva cannot be fate. Thus if you're daived to fight on the battlefield thrusting with a spear then whether body, agent, organs and efforts are there as necessary conditons or not is quite beside the point: What is daived must happen and neither all your piety not wit, nor body, agent, organs and efforts, can lure it back to wipe out half a line or less of it. The conclusion must be that to avoid a great redundancy daiva cannot be interpreted as fate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have seen that the daiva arguments, wherein daiva is interpreted as God or fate and wherein fate be explicated as incomplete or complete, simply won't work, i.e. the objections and problems to these interpretations are too overwhelming. And if the daiva arguments for compulsion won't work, we must hunt elsewhere if we are going to find grounds for compulsion and against free will in the Bhagavad Gītā. We turn next to the second set of compulsion arguments.

II. The Yantra Argument for Compulsion: B.G. XVIII.61

Perhaps the most picturesque and imaginative passage on compulsion in the Gītā is the passage offered here. Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that the Lord is within him and that the movements that Arjuna makes are no different than those made by a puppet or marionette in response to the mechanism or strings manipulated by the puppet master in the staged illusion or staged play that he has created. The passage reads:

> Īśvara lives in the hearts of all being, Arjuna:
> by his māyā he causes all being to turn around
> as if they were mounted on a machine (yantra). [7]

The argument for compulsion contained in this passage turns on the meaning of "yantra." The passage says in effect that man is an automaton, no better (or no worse) than a machine, whose guidance mechanism is out of his control and under the control of the Lord, the master Puppeteer or master Machinist who lives within, in the hearts of, all beings.

The Personal Yantra Argument for Compulsion

The yantra argument seems to presuppose a personal Puppeteer, and not an impersonal Puppeteer, an interpretation which doesn't make much sense, anyway, who has complete control of the movements of his puppets. Furthermore, while two personal yantra arguments are possible here, paralleling our daiva arguments, above, I'm going to present and examine only one personal yantra argument, the personal yantra argument for complete compulsion, and leave without presentation or comment the second possible argument, the personal yantra argument for incomplete compulsion. I have three reasons for taking this tack: First, we have already treated an argument for incomplete compulsion above, viz., the

daiva argument for incomplete compulsion, and the results were not satisfactory in furthering our understanding of compulsion in the Gītā; a repetition at this point would be useless. Second, the passage we are examining quite plainly does not intend an argument for incomplete compulsion, i.e. the Gītā at XVIII. 61 is not amenable to an incomplete compulsion interpretation. Third, in our discussion of complete compulsion we shall be touching on one aspect of incomplete compulsion and it is probably the only interpretation of incomplete compulsion that would be of interest and practical concern here, anyway; I refer to the question as to whether the yantra manipulates bodily movements alone and not the mind (giving us incomplete compulsion, for the mind would be free) or whether the amnipulator of the machine or strings controls both body and mind (giving us complete compulsion). So we have:

The Personal Yantra Argument for Complete Compulsion

1. If all of your movements are completely controlled by another then you are not free in any of your movements.

2. All of your movements are completely controlled by another.

3. Therefore, you are not free in any of your movements.

Commentary

1. This conditional premise follows from B.G. XVIII. 61 and the meaning of "free will" mentioned in the Introduction. The Gītā passage relates, strictly speaking, to turnings and movements; it seems to leave the mind and will free.

2. This premise follows from B.G. XVIII. 61. The "another," who has control, complete control over the movements of the body, is the Lord, the master Puppeteer, who resides in the hearts of all beings.

3. The conclusion follows logically from the premises, of course, and it relates to bodily movements. It is not clear, once again, from the passage whether these movements could affect mind and will. But if the Sāṁkhya metaphysics that seems to underlie the psychology of the Gītā applies here then movements of the guṇas would extend to mind as well as body, to subtle body, buddhi and manas, as well as to the gross body. If this metaphysics does apply to mind and body then the power of the Puppeteer extends totally to the human puppet and the compulsion is truly complete. On the other hand, if the puppet metaphor rather than the Sāṁkhya metaphysics is the model to be followed here then the bodily movements alone are compelled and the compulsion is incomplete (puppets don't have minds).

Some Observations

First, the yantra argument, like the daiva argument beofre it, underscores an important point, viz., that I am not the performer of (my) actions; rather prakṛti and the guṇas only perform: The Puppeteer or daiva are the controlling factors but ignorance leads me to believe that I am the performer. More on this when we discuss the karma argument for compulsion, below.

Second, this yantra argument for complete compulsion leads us to the same old compulsion that we met with in the first of our daiva arguments for compulsion. Hence, many of the same old observations and criticisms will apply to the yantra argument. For example, we are bound to inquire into the reasons that the Puppeteer has for pulling the strings now this way, now that: If there are no reasons then is the Puppeteer irrational? If there are reasons then what are they? Is the Puppeteer free or compelled by his own guṇas in his string pulling activities in precisely the same way as we are in responding to those pullings? Is the string pulling or the machine manipulation arbitrary and irrational, again, or does he obey certain laws? If he obeys those laws, the law of karma,

let's say, is there room for free will there? (We shall return to this point below). Does the Puppeteer make silly or trivial movements as well as irrational or repugnant movements? Does he make movements that lead to sin (pāpa) and is he not then directly involved in that sin? Does this not raise questions, once again, as to the moral nature of the Puppeteer? Or, again, is the Puppeteer blameless because even he is controlled by another force or power or fate outside even his powers as a mere puppet Master?

Third, does the Master pull the strings for physical movements only or is such pulling not really shorthand, given the metaphor of yantra, for all actions, as with the daiva argument, above, whether of body, speech or mind? The control that the passage clearly, intends, is surely total control, total compulsion, and not merely partial, i.e. physical, compulsion only. But this again involves the Puppeteer in sin.

We must conclude that the problems that the yantra argument faces are in many respects identical with those faced by the personal daiva argument. As a result, we must come to the same conclusion, viz. that the yantra argument for compulsion won't work for it raises too many unsolvable problems. Not the least of these problems is that the yantra argument involves the Lord, as Puppeteer, in too many actions from which moral theology bids us keep him free, actions involving him in evil, sin and suffering.

One response to this criticism and several others mentioned above, would involve pointing out that the Puppeteer performs his manipulations out of a sense of justice and according to a law higher than his own whims or desires or reasons, i.e. if he, himself, follows the moral directives of a greater Puppeteer than himself this would absolve him of the blame

that he is immoral, irrational or arbitrary in his manipulations of strings or machines. That higher law to which even the Puppeteer and daiva are subject is the law of karma which by controlling svabhāva, the guṇas and prakṛti becomes the ultimate Puppeteer in the universe. The law of Karma, it now becomes apparent, undergirds both the daiva and the yantra arguments, and it can be used to absolve both daiva and the Puppeteer of moral blame. [7a] The question with which we began this study, Do the passages in B.G. SVIII. 14, 59 and 61 support human free will or not?, would seem to come down in the end to the law of karma and to the question, Does the law of karma support human free will or not? We turn finally to the karma argument for compulsion.

III. The Karma Arguments for Compulsion: B.G. XVIII. 60

Perhaps the most familiar passage on compulsion in the Gītā is the passage offered here. Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna that his own nature (svabhāva) and his own past actions (karma) will compel him to fight even against his own will. The passage reads:

> Son of Kunti, bound by your own karma born of your own nature (svabhava) that which from delusion you desire not to do you will do even against your will. [8]

The argument for compulsion contained in this passage turns ultimately on the meaning of "karma." Karma ("action") is "the name for the creative power (visargaḥ) which causes the births of beings" (B.G. VIII. 3), and karma is that which "has been alloted (to beings) according to the guṇas born in their own natures" (B.G. XVIII. 41). But not only is karma the alpha of existence, standing at the beginning of all and everything, bringing that all and everything into existence, it is also the omega of

existence, as well, the result and the residue of action, itself.

Finally, karma stands between alpha and omega as one's own nature, created by the guṇas of the past, leading to actions and results in the future; in other words, past karma (guṇas and prakṛti) causes present karma (svabhāva) which leads to future karma (phala): Karma, it seems, is just as inexorable as daiva and just as mechanical as yantra.

Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna, "Helplessly, every man is compelled to action by the guṇas inherent in the material world (prakṛti)" (B.G. III.5); and he tells Arjuna that his resolve not to fight is in vain, "For your nature (prakṛti) will compel you to fight" (B.G. XVIII. 59). So we have:

The Karma Argument for Compulsion

1. If you are compelled to act then you are not free.
2. Karma compels you to act.
3. Therefore, you are not free.

Commentary

1. This conditional premise follows from the definition of "free will" and "compulsion" given in the Introduction.
2. This premise is based on Gītā passages already quoted above. The Gītā has numerous passages which link prakṛti, the guṇas and past karma to svabhāva, present actions and their future karmic results. Underlying the entire discussion, of course, is the law or principle of karma, the doctrine of moral causation that says that good actions will lead to good results and bad actions to bad results. [9]
3. This conclusion follows logically from 1 and 2.

Some Observations

First, the compulsion in the karma argument for compulsion is ordinarily seen as complete or total compulsion. And karma is ordinarily

interpreted as an impersonally operating principle. The argument would ordinarily be called, then, "the impersonal karma argument for complete compulsion". This argument is to be distinguished from three other possible arguments, viz., the personal karma argument for complete compulsion, the personal karma argument for incomplete compulsion and the impersonal karma argument for incomplete compulsion. The latter two arguments that depend on incomplete compulsion, i.e. arguments that say, in effect, that there are actions where the law of karma does not apply, or where it applies selectively, are not arguments with which we shall be concerned. The reasons for eschewing an extended discussion of limited karma are twofold: First, we have already treated incomplete compulsion above (see supra pp. 11-13) with uninteresting theoretical results, and another treatment here would be redundant at best; second, I do intend to say something about the limitations of karma below with results that plainly entail incomplete compulsion, so to avoid repetition again we will postpone our discussion, a new discussion, of incomplete compulsion until then.

Second, the two karma arguments that I would like to pursue, are, first, the impersonal karma law argument for complete compulsion, and, second, the personal karma law argument for complete compulsion. So we have:

The Impersonal Karma Law Argument for Complete Compulsion

1. If you are completely compelled to act then you are not free.

2. Impersonal Karma law completely compels you to act.

3. Therefore, you are not free.

Commentary

1. Again, the conditional premise follows from the definition of "free will" and "compulsion" mentioned in the Introduction.

2. This premise is based on the traditional Indian interpretation of the law of karma together with our previous discussions and select passages from the Bhagavad Gītā, e.g., "Every man is compelled to act according to his own nature (prakṛti), even the wise man. All creatures follow prakṛti; for who can prevent it?" (B.G. III.33)

3. This conclusion follows logically, once again, from the premises.

Some Observations

First, the initial model that we shall follow in interpreting the law of karma, or "karma law", as we shall call it, is that provided by the natural sciences in their use of the word "law." Under this interpretation karma law, like any natural or empirical law, states that whenever an event of a certain specified sort occurs then it follows that an event of another specified sort will invariably occur. Empirical law is merely a summary of repeatable phenomena in the world. However, we are faced with at least two types of natural law and our model for karma law can follow only one. Carl Hempel describes the two types:

> In the simplist case, a law of strictly universal form, or briefly, a universal law, is a statement to the effect that in all cases satisfying certain antecedent conditions A (e.g., heating of a gas under constant pressure), an event of a specified kind B (e.g., an increase in the volume of the gas) will occur; whereas, a law of statistical form asserts that the probability for conditions A to be accompanied by an event of kind B has some specific value p.[10]

The model that we shall use for karma law is the former, the law of strictly universal form, for karma law does not deal with probabilities just as it does not deal with incomplete compulsion. But, while karma

law has the form of a universal natural law, it is neither deduced from higher order laws nor is it dependent on empirical evidence for its truth value nor are its predictions couched in terms of near certainty or highest probability. Karma law, in other words, is not an empirical law for its predictions are always metaphysically necessary and certain.

Yet both karma law and empirical law explain phenomena that have occurred, they predict phenomena that will occur. The power of the so-called "nomological deductive method of explanation" in both empirical law and karma law is grounded in the logical form that each law has. Each attempts to deduce the explanandum, the event to be explained, E, from the explanans, i.e. both the set of prior conditions, C_1, $C_2 \ldots C_n$, together with either the empirical laws, L_1, $L_2 \ldots L_n$, or karma law, K:

> Thus a nomological explanation shows that we might in fact have predicted the phenomenon at hand, either deductively or with a high probability, if, at an earlier time, we had taken cognizance of the facts stated in the explanans. [11]

But, Hempel continues, the predictive power of nomological explanation in the laws of the natural sciences goes beyond the mere phenomenon at hand because it permits predictions "concerning occurrences other than that referred to in the explanandum," for the empirical laws say, in effect, "whenever and wherever," i.e. whether in the future or in the past, C_1, $C_2 \ldots C_n$ then E. Similarly, karma law is equally powerful in postdictive, predictive, and explanatory power but by adding the element of metaphysical certainty to this power it goes beyond the model of empirical law into a category of law quite separate and novel. Under karma law, then, we ought to be able to explain and predict after the fashion of empirical law by subsuming the explanandum under statements of fact together with karma law.

Consider these examples: Let E be a statement about the suffering that you experience from a battle wound, e.g., from an arrow in your leg; and let E' be a statement about the intense suffering that you experience from the same wound. The empirical nomological explanation for this suffering would involve using specific physiological, neurological and physical conditions, C, for example, C_1 an open wound in the leg, C_2 a nerve exposed to a bronze arrow point and the air, C_3 being conscious and in normal physical condition, and so on, together with empirical law L, for example, whenever C_1 and C_2 and C_3 then E. Since the conditions C_1, C_2 and C_3 are present we can deduce E and our empirical nomological explanation is complete.

The karma nomological explanation for E', the intense suffering, will follow the same logical form but with a modification in both content and result. The empirical law might explain your suffering but it would not, I am suggesting, explain your intense suffering, nor why you were on the battlefield, nor why the arrow was there when you were there, and so on. The karma nomological explanation, in other words, does not conflict with nor replace the empirical nomological explanation but, rather, it attempts to supplement it. The explanation that the karma explanans provides is not so much an explanation as a justification, i.e. it is an explanation that concerns itself not with how you came to suffer pain, the empirical laws will answer that, but it concerns itself with why it was you who had to suffer intense pain and why it was just or right that it had to happen to you. The karma nomological explanation states its law, L, as: Whenever there is bad behavior, b_1, $b_2 \ldots b_n$ then there must necessarily be a punishment result, p; and whenever there is good behavior, g_1, $g_2 \ldots g_n$ then there must necessarily be a reward

result, r. The explanandum or justificandum, the event to be justified, E', is "I feel intense pain," and that pain is the punishment result p. The bad behavior that brought about this pain or punishment, p, may or may not be related to the immediate conditions, C, of the battlefield, the arrow in your leg, and so on. They may only be the occasion and not the causes of your pain. Those causes, b_1, $b_2 \ldots b_n$ could be the bad behavior of this life or a previous life or lives: But in the end we know that what happened to you had, of necessity, to happen to you.

The point of all this exploration of the parallels between natural law and karma law is three fold; first, to show that both laws allow us in some sense to explain and predict phenomena; second, to show that both laws appear to function impartially and automatically; third, to show that if karma law functions not only impersonally but also inexorably and remorselessly (two things we probably wouldn't say about passive empirical law) then free will would seem to be impossible.

Second, but while there are similarities between the two types of laws there are, as we have seen, differences as well. And it is the presence of several of these differences in karma law that makes possible a kind of control over the latter that does not, cannot, obtain with respect to empirical law. We have already considered one of these differences, viz., the non-empirical nature of karma law; that is to say, karma law is not discovered through empirical tests and observations, it is not confirmed or verified by empirical tests and observations, it is not merely a general summary of observations of repeatable empirical phenomena, and it is not probable but certain in its predictions and explanations. But now consider these further differences: Karma law is just because it discriminates between people; its operations can be deferred and its consequences can be owed into the future; it is

all-knowing; and it is all-powerful; and precisely because of all these qualities, I am going to claim, karma law can be controlled by human beings. In fact, as I shall conclude, the law of karma seems to be more like a person, a God, than a universal cosmic law. Let me explain the four qualities of karma law, and the conclusions to which they point:

1. "Karma law is just" means that under karma law everyone gets what's coming to him; everyone gets what they deserve and everyone deserves what they get, no more and no less. As a result we can say that karma law discriminates in the sense that not everyone gets the same or an equal reward or punishment; but, rather, the punishment fits the crime, the reward fits the virtuous action.

2. "Karma law justice can be deferred" means that the law has a way of holding back into the future its punishments and rewards for bad and good deeds. Sometimes pay back must wait a lifetime or longer before it manifests itself. As a result punishments and rewards can be owed into the future, i.e., they can be deferred. [12] The mechanism and rationale of this deferment remains a mystery though one might hypothesize that immedia e payment, as opposed to deferred payment, would produce a chaos matched only by the final days of the Kali yuga.

3. "Karma law is all-knowing" means that for the law of moral causation to be effective it must be able to take unmistakable and universal account of every action, whether of thought, word or deed. It can observe hearts, minds and spirits as well as the grosser activities of human beings. Further it must be able not only to take account but to remember what it takes, filing it, if necessary, for future reference and pay back.

4. "Karma law is all-powerful" means that there is nothing that can withstand its justice and the delivery of that justice. When the time comes, however mysteriously decided, for justice to be done, nothing can prevent its manifestation, or the prevention is very narrowly controlled, as we shall see. If the moment in battle comes when you are shot by an arrow and if the karmic conditions are right then you will suffer intense pain. You might prevent the intense pain by committing suicide or by taking some drug but that choice in turn is narrowly controlled by your nature which has also been karma determined.

These four qualities of karma law, viz., its justness that allows it discrimination; its ability to defer results; its all-knowingness; and its all-powerfulness, make karma law controllable or manipulable, as we shall see.

Third, we all know that it is by controlling nature as described by empirical law that we can get various benefits from nature. Thus by virtue of understanding the law of gravity we can control masses of matter in such a way that we can compel the weights on pendulum clocks and the ocean tides acting on mill wheels to work for us. There is a metaphorical sense in which by our knowing what matter must do we have been able to turn it to our own advantage. Or consider another metaphor. When I raise a mass of matter above the ground there is a metaphorical sense in which I have disordered the universe. The universe is out of order because suddenly everything is not in its proper place. The law of gravity waits its chance to put things right. Then one day the prop holding up the risen mass drops and the mass falls -- justice and order reign, once again. Is it possible to apply these models and metaphors of work and advantage, of order and disorder, in empirical law to karma law?

I want to focus on two of the qualities of karma law mentioned above, viz., that of justice and that of deferring and being owed. We agree that bad deeds receive bad results because that's just. And we know that the bad results can be deferred in time and hence they can be owed to the agent of the bad deed, and that's just, too: Everyone gets his due, sooner or later. But is it possible to not merely defer future punishments but to get rid of them altogether? Suppose that I purposely undergo some penance now in order to balance out some future punishment or other. Wouldn't that cancel the punishments? If it didn't then that wouldn't be just. There would be a good act, penance, that wasn't properly rewarded, and we know that karma law couldn't abide that. But if I can erase future punishments by present penances then why can't I guarantee future rewards by present penances, i.e. by overpenancing now? Can't I manipulate the karma law, then, and put its results in my debt, so to speak? The Indians, the Hindus especially, have seen the yogas as ways of subtly manipulating "inevitable" karma law, after all, and the Gītā is no exception in its recommendation of the yogas for this manipulation of the "inevitable." But then there is a sense in which karma law can be worked to my advantage. But if I can work it to my advantage, then I'm free and not compelled.

These observations about karma law and its manipulation lead us from the impersonal karma argument, where the model for interpretation was empirical law, to the personal karma argument for complete compulsion, where the model for interpretation is a Person. So we have:

The Personal Karma Law Argument for Complete Compulsion

1. If you are completely compelled to act then you are not free.

2. Personal karma law completely compels you to act.

3. Therefore, you are not free.

Commentary

1. Again, the conditional premise follows from the definition of "free will" and "compulsion" mentioned in the Introduction.

2. This premise is based on our previous discussion of the four qualities of karma law, viz., that it is just or all-good, that its operations are deferable, that it is all-knowing and that it is all-powerful, i.e. it is like a Person and it sees to it that justice is always done.

3. This conclusion follows logically, once again, from the premises.

Some Observations

First, the model that we shall follow in examining personal karma law is that of a Person, a God. The qualities frequently attributed to God, even within Hinduism, are goodness, knowledge and power.[13] If we define a "person" as any being who possesses psychological capacities or characteristics such as sensation, memory, consciousness, intelligence or wisdom, and will or desire, then karma law becomes a candidate for being called a "person." A person, furthermore, has certain duties or responsibilities together with the ability for carrying out those duties. This unblushing anthropomorphism with which we now speak of karma law is curious to say the least but because it is an anthropomorphism is no reason to reject it. The anthropomorphism reaches a climax when we speak of the behavior exhibited by karma law in doing its duty of punishing wickedness and rewarding goodness. To carry out this duty involves sensation (she, if we may employ the feminine for a change, can receive information about human behavior), memory (she can store that information),

consciousness (she is aware of that information), intelligence (she can classify that information as punishable or rewardable), will (she desires to act on the information that she has received, stored, been made aware of and classified) and action (she can act on what she wills). Finally, to carry out her function it would seem that she must be good or just, for all of her behavior must be good or just; she must be omniscient, for she must make no errors; and she must be omnipotent, for nothing must prevent karma law from doing her work of justice. These are all qualities and powers of God, surely, and the temptation is to stop referring to karma law as an "it", or even a "she", and call her instead "She."

Second, the question now before us is simply this: If karma law ("Ms. Law" to you) is personal then are we completely compelled? It can be argued that karma law can be prevented from doing Her duty, that I can escape the inevitable punishment or reward due to me, i.e. that I can be free and not compelled to suffer or be rewarded, and in four possible ways: First, by the yogas or some similar deferring or retarding activity; Karma law takes note of these activities and Her fated or inexorable visitations on me are retarded and I am free not compelled. Second, by balancing evil by good and vice versa; by good acts I can balance out or cancel out the karma punishment and by bad acts I can balance out or cancel out the karma rewards; either way, I am free and not compelled to suffer or be rewarded. Third, by penances and by aggressively going on the karma offensive I can put karma law in my debt, i.e. I can get karma law in my power; for example, by storing up good karma, through a version of what the Vedas called tapas, I might be able to guarantee that my future with respect to punishments and rewards will be as I want it and not as karma law wants it. After all, it is

karma law who is really compelled with respect to justice and not I: Karma law must always reward the good and punish the evil; karma law must always redress the balance of pain over pleasure, of suffering over happiness; and that puts karma law in my power, not I in Hers. Fourth, by prayer the inevitable results of karma law might be assuaged, diminished or erased; as a God, karma law can take cognizance of human prayer, and though historically this is not a real option, as are the other three escapes from the meritableness of karma law, we have, with prayer, a possibility for escape. [14] I know of no temples or prayers dedicated to karma law, but times may change. The point is that karma law as a Person is in a position to respond to prayer and that She has all of the qualities of a real prayer responder.

We must conclude then that viewing karma law as a Person, far from leading to the complete compulsion the argument intends, points instead to a quite different conclusion: Personal karma law can guarantee that my will is free. [15]

Conclusion

The conclusions to which our discussions of B.G. XVIII. 14, 59 and 61 seem to have drawn us are these: Under B.G. XVIII. 14, we met three daiva arguments for compulsion. The most telling criticism of the first of these, the personal daiva argument for compulsion, was that in making personal daiva or God a necessary condition for actions God emerges as a weak and manipulable toady with a rather silly occupation who is, at the same time, impotent, irrational, impractical, useless and redundant. We concluded that any argument which leads to an absurdity must be absurd and that the personal daiva argument for compulsion must fail. The most telling criticism against the second argument, the personal daiva

argument for incomplete compulsion, did not differ substantially from the criticism offered against the third argument, the impersonal daiva argument for complete compulsion. That criticism was: If daiva were fate, i.e. if impersonal daiva had completely ordained everything then the other four conditions to action, viz., body, agent, organs and efforts, would be unnecessary, i.e. they would not be necessary conditions; but they are, ex hypothesi, necessary conditions to action; therefore, daiva cannot be fate. Consequently, the impersonal daiva arguments for complete and incomplete compulsion must fail.

Under B.G. XVIII. 61 the most telling criticism of the personal yantra argument for complete compulsion was that in making the Lord the Puppeteer we faced many of the same criticisms offered against the personal daiva argument for compulsion. Thus the Puppeteer is involved in the production of silly and trivial actions, as well as being responsible for immoral and sinful actions. Further, the Puppeteer's actions become irrational and senseless unless there is a higher law or reason which controls and guides even the Puppeteer. Because of these problems and conclusions the yantra argument for compulsion must fail.

Under B.G. XVIII. 60 we met two karma arguments that purported to support human compulsion. The first of these, the impersonal karma law argument for complete compulsion, led us to interpret karma law as a Person and from there we were led to the personal karma law argument for complete compulsion. The most telling criticism against the latter, and pari-passu against the former, as well, was that personal karma law can be controlled and manipulated through yoga, penance, prayer and other moral and spiritual austerities and exertions. Both arguments must fail, therefore, since man can now control karma law and, in controlling karma law he is free.

With respect to the question with which this study began (see supra p. 62) we have seen that B.G. XVIII. 14, 59 and 61 cannot be used to support human compulsion. Not only do these passages fail to give sound arguments to support human compulsion but the argument from karma law would seem to demonstrate in the end a support for human free will.

FOOTNOTES

1. A brief review of some of these claims follows: R.C. Zaehner is the chief proponent of a fatalistic interpretation of the Bhagavad Gītā:

> However wrong the dharma imposed on you by your caste and by circumstances may appear to you, you are none the less in duty bound to do it, and if you refuse then Fate, that is, God's will, will take you by the forelock and make you. (Zaehner then quotes B.G. XVIII. 59-61. R.C. Zaehner, Hinduism (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.103).

And of the same in the Mahābhārata in general:

> God controls fate [lower case 'f' this time] and man is powerless before it. (Ibid., p. 106).

On the other hand, Zaehner softens this strict fatalism pointing out that fate takes two in order to operate:

> Though the Mahābhārata stresses time and again the primacy of fate over human effort, it none the less compares the two to the rain which prepares the ground and the seed that man puts into it: the two are interdependent and work in harmony together. (Ibid.)

W. Douglas P. Hill argues that the Gītā tries, inconsistently, to advocate both free will (on a lower level) and fatalism (on a higher level) and fails. This double view of truth - the higher and the lower - "explains the apparent weakness of Hindu doctrine in general"

and leads, apparently, to fatalism;

> Freedom in the Gītā, is an illusory liberty of choice, working within the bounds of an ultimate determinism. (W. Douglas P. Hill, The Bhagavadgītā, Second Edition (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1953), p.48).

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan states quite boldly, "The Gītā believes in human freedom." (Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy,Two Volumes (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1929), Vol. I, p.573). And reiterates the point in his later work on the Gītā where he says, "The Gītā is inclined to the Pelagian doctrine [which "believed in free will, questioned the doctrine of original sin and asserted that men acted of their moral effort."] (S. Radhakrishnan, The Bhagavadgītā (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1948/1973),pp.64,63).

Surendranath Dasgupta concurs with Radharkrishnan, and, referring to the five-fold conditions of actions, states:

> The general implication of the Gītā seems to be that, though the action follows necessarily as the product of the fivefold collocation, yet the self can give a direction to these actions. . . (Surendranath Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, Five Volumes (Cambridge at the University Press, 1932/1965), Vol. I, p.516).

On the other hand, Dasgupta admits that given the fact that actions are due to all five elements (body, agent, sense organs, desire and daiva) "it would be wrong to think the self or the agent to be the only performer of actions" (Ibid., pp. 515-516), thereby reserving a commitment to complete free will.

Elliot Deutsch argues that the Gītā holds two views regarding free will and determinism (fatalism): "The Gītā denies that man has a 'free will' over the empirical events or happenings in his life," at

the same time the Gītā holds that "man's nature and his range of action are not essentially restricted to the empirical domain." Ultimately, Deutsch states, man can, "through an act of love and knowledge. . . overcome all of the sources of that which determines him." (Eliot Deutsch, The Bhagavad Gītā (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), pp. 181, 188).

A.L. Herman also believes that the Gītā espouses both free will and compulsion (fatalism) and does it consistently by espousing two interwoven but distinct views of man and the universe, views which contain a solid belief in human free will (but at the lower level, thereby agreeing with Hill but not with Deutsch) side by side with a solid belief in human fatalism (at the higher level, again agreeing with Hill but not with Deutsch). (A.L. Herman, An Introduction to Indian Thought (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1976), p.243-267).

Sri Aurobindo similarly argues for both free will and compulsion in the Gītā, and also espouses two aspects of man to account for them. The lower nature acts according to the mechanism of Nature (prakṛti) and the higher Person in man acts without such restraints. Aurobindo contends, however, that

> . . .nine-tenths of our freedom of will is a palpable fiction. . . .

determined as it is by past karma. The Gītā, he concludes, supports the view that

> . . .the freedom of the will. . .is very relative and almost infinitismal. . . .(Sri Aurobindo, Essays on the Gita,First Series (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1949/1922), pp. 276, 277).

Finally, Mohandas Gandhi defends the free will which he sees espoused in the Gītā stating:

> There is no freedom and no peace except in conforming our will to His will. . .We have the freedom of surrendering ourselves to the Worthiest of Masters. . . .

An unrestricted, undetermined free-will is but a "will-o'-the-wisp," Gandhi says. (Mahadev Desai, The Gita According to Gandhi (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1946), p. 114).

2. "Fate" may be variously rendered in Sanskrit by daiva ("Providence"), haṭha ("Force"), yadṛcchā ("Chance") and niyati ("Necessity"). The common element that seems to run through them all, however, is the view that the causal control over events is out of the hands of the agent: "Fate" means that the agent's actions are compelled.

2A. I say "troublesome" because of all the anger and bewilderment that the word daiva has caused. Daiva has been variously rendered as "presiding deities" (Besant, Judge), "the Elemental Realm" (Hill), "the Lord as the Author of all action" (Rāmānuja), "God" (Arnold, Dasgupta), "Divine Will" (Thomson), "the Unseen" (Gandhi), "Destiny" (Deutsch), "Providence" (Barnett, Radhakrishnan) and "Fate" (Mascaro, Edgerton, Zaehner). Hill says, "Daiva causes great difficulty" (Op. Cit., p.204), While Zaehner responds, "There is no difficulty about this word as Hill supposed." (R.C. Zaehner, The Bhagavad Gītā (Oxford University Press, 1966), p.388. Finally, Edgerton cries out against all of those who would comment on B.G. XVIII. 14 and its description of the five factors of actions:

> It is a quite simple and naive attempt to suggest the factors which are involved in carrying out any action whatever. . . .Each of the five words is to

be taken in the simplest possible sense and no comment is really needed - except that all existing comments are worthless and misleading. (Op. Cit., p.102)

3. adhiṣṭhānaṁ tathā kartā karanaṁ ca pṛthag-vidhaṁ
vividhāś ca pṛthak-ceṣṭā daivaṁ c'aiv'ātra.

B.G. XVIII. 14

4. Thus, see Arnold, Besant, Dasgupta, Hill, Judge, and footnote 2A, above.

5. Thus see, among others, Edgerton, Mascaro and Zaehner. Also, Heinrich Zimmer says of daivam that it is ". . .a sexless, anonymous power or factor that is divine; a neuter; . . .cannot be personified. . . [nor] reached by prayer, oblation, or magic spell." (Heinrich Zimmer Philosophies of India (Princeton University Press, 1953), pp. 100-101).

6. "Guarded" in the sense that Karl Potter uses the word:

> Guarded fatalism is the fear that, although some conditions of some events are open to my control, there is at least one event crucial to the attainment of complete freedom which is not open to my control. . .there is a point beyond which I cannot go. (Karl H. Potter. Presuppositions of India's Philosophies (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p.50).

7. iśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ hṛd-deśe, 'rjuna, tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantr' ārūḍhāni māyayā

B.G. XVIII. 61

7A. Consider the following 5th century A.D. verse attributed to Bhartṛhari:

> We praise the gods, but they are in the power
> of fate;
> so fate deserves our praise. But fate can
> only give
> the invariable fruit of any given deed.
> If fruit is bound to deed, what use the gods
> and fate?
> Give all your praise to virtuous deeds,
> for over them
> not even fate has power.
> (Sanskrit Poetry from Vidyākara's "Treasury", Translated by Daniel H.H.Ingalls (Harvard University Press,1968), p.309).

8. svabhāva-jena, Kaunteya, nibaddhaḥ scena karmaṇā
kartum' n'ecchasi yan mohāt, kariṣyasy avaśo 'pi tat

B.G. XVIII. 60

See also the following verse in support of the above:

> The Lord (prabhu) does not create actions for men nor does He act. Neither does he unite actions with their results. But rather it is svabhāva, itself, that does all of this. (B.G. V.14)

9. Cf. Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.2.13.

10. Carl G. Hempel, "The Logic of Functional Analysis" (1959) in Readings in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences, Edited by May Brodbeck (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), pp. 183-184.

11. Ibid., p.184.

12. Thus the effects of karma can be divided, between ārabdha karma, on the one hand, which is the result of actions that have begun to produce effects, and anārabdha karma, on the other, which is the result of actions that have not yet begun to produce effects. The latter is, in turn, divided into prāktana karma, the results of actions done in previous incarnations which have not yet begun to produce effects; and kriyamāṇa karma, the results of actions done in this incarnation which have not yet begun to produce effects. Cf. Troy Wilson Organ, Hinduism, Its Historical Development (Barron's Educational Series, Inc., 1974), p. 188.

13. Cf. A.L. Herman, The Problem of Evil and Indian Thought (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976), pp. 235-242.

14. Historically, in Indian thought, some Naiyāyikas of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school as well as Aurobindo Ghose have argued that the law of karma is under the control of God. Cf. A.L. Herman, The Problem of Evil and Indian Thought, Op. Cit., pp.225, 227.

15. There is one added advantage to the suggestion that karma law is a Person. One of the puzzles that has plagued Indian philosophers for over two thousand years is the so-called theological problem of evil. And Western philosophers, since the time of Plato have also been plagued with the same problem, searching for a theodicy, a justification (dikē) of the ways of God (theos) to man, that would solve it. The problem is most familiar in this form:

1. If God is all good and
2. if God is all knowing and
3. if God is all powerful and
4. if evil exists then
5. why is there evil when God could prevent it (he's all powerful) and God would want to prevent it (he's all knowing and all good)?

The solution lies in turning to theodicies.

Indian philosophers have been stopped by the puzzle largely because of the third premise: God, Īśvara, is not all-powerful, for the law of karma, it has been claimed, applies even to God, and in controlling God the law of karma diminishes his power. (Cf. Wendy D. O'Flaherty, The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology (University of California Press, 1976), p.14). But now, with personal karma law as a possibility or as an hypothesis, two solutions to the theological problem of evil are suddenly available. First, a theodicy is available, for now Īśvara, like any other anthropomorphic being, can follow any of the four ways of circumventing the fated or compelled results of karma law for mankind. Īśvara can now truly be called "all-powerful", for you can pray to Īśvara to stop the intense pain in your leg that the arrow and your previous karma had

caused and he can do it. Īśvara, hearing your prayer can either practice yoga or balance out the bad karma by good acts or draw on good karma that he has stored up for just such an occasion or turn to prayer and to karma law, Herself, and thereby relieve you of the inevitable suffering. Whatever route is chosen the point is that a theodicy is available in which the theological problem of evil might be solved. Second, a karmadicy is available, for now you can appeal to karma law yourself without going through the intercessing intermediary, Īśvara. The problem that now faces us is no longer the theological problem of evil but, rather, the karmalogical problem of evil. The problem would be stated in this form:

1. If karma law is all good and
2. if karma law is all knowing and
3. if karma law is all pwoerful and
4. if evil exists then
5. why is there evil when karma law could prevent it (She's all powerful) and karma law, knowing about evil, would want to prevent it (She's all knowing and all good)?

The solution lies in turning to what we may now call "karmadicies," the various justifications of the ways the karma law to man.