Chapter III

Epic, Classical and Technical Literature

Epics

The law of Karma, now quite an axiom, is subjected to the utmost scrutiny in these texts and its numerous logical implications are all carefully analysed. We thus read of Larkanâdeya telling Yudhishthira that man’s deeds, good and bad, go on accumulating from time to time and that, though the body dies after a time, the Soul remains to reap the consequences of the actions performed during the lifetime of the individual. The deeds(karma) follow the Soul like a shadow(chayevanu-gatam sada) or fructify as seeds do to become plants (paktim phelanam iva bijavapah). There is no escape to the individual from the bondage of his own actions

1. Mbh., III. 181. 23 f. 2. Ibid., III. 200.24
3. Ibid., III. 181. 25 4. Ibid., III. 35. 18
which never miss to recognise their agent even like the
calf which can identify its mother even in a herd thou-
sand in strength:

Yatha dhenusahasresu
    vatso vindati mataram /
Tathā ' ' subhāsubham karma
    kartaram anugacchati //

No deed is therefore lost( na karmāṁ vipranāsō'sti ),
and the effect is of the same nature as the deed; while
good actions mean happiness and well-being, misery is
the penalty for a crime:

Svakarmaṇo'nurupam hi
    phalam bhunjanti jantavaḥ /
Subhena karmāṇa bhūtir
dūkhāṁ syat pātakena tu //

5. Padmapurāṇa, Bhumikhaṇḍa, LXXXI. 47; cf. Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa, xiv. 15 ff.
6. Mbh., V. 27.10  7. Skandapurāṇa, Āvantya, 198.31
Heaven is the witness of human actions, and all experience happiness or misery in accordance with their deeds (atmadoseair niyacchanti sarve duhkhasukhe janah). Good actions lead to good results (punyam kurvan punyakirtih), the bad to bad results (papam kurvan papakirtih); and Yama, ruler of the world of the Fathers, is good to the good, bad to the bad (sivam sivam asivo’sivam).

Virtuous acts like sacrifice (kratu, yajñā), rigorous penance (ugratapasa), bounty (dana), being non-violent (ahimsa-nirata) or a hero (sura) in battle lead to heaven, the sacred world where live the virtuous. Life in heaven is

8. Íbbh., I. 68. 28 f. 9. Ibid., I.73.29;III.279.10
10. Ibid., V.35.51 11. Ibid., V. 42. 6
12. Ibid.,III.114. 6; Ram., I. 14. 55; II.105. 32
15. Íbbh.,III.247. 4; IV. 64. 25; V. 141. 46;157.12
16. Ibid.,III. 181. 41; this is often identified with Indra’s heaven.
not at all permanent and, once the merit is exhausted, the individual comes down from heaven, even as Yayati was required to do. The Viṣṇupurāṇa would distinguish this heaven as that associated with the Moon who is known to nourish the fathers, especially during the dark fortnight when he is on the wane (krṣṇapakṣa pitṛ āpya-
vayati sitemūh). The road to this world is located north of Agastya, south of the line of the Goat and exterior to the Vaisvānara path. It is called the path of the fathers (pitrīyana) and it was formerly traversed by the ancient rṣis who performed Agniḥotra. For the sid-

17. Kudgala refuses such a heaven offered to him (Mbh. III.247.39) but seeks and later attains by meditation (āhyāna) the highest state which is permanent and from which there is no return (Ibid., verses 40 ff); in another context (Mbh. III.238.9), however, the heavenly life achieved by heroes who die in battle is spoken of as eternal (aksaya).

18. Rem., II. 13. 1

19. II. 12. 11 ff.

20. Vṛt., II. 8.80 ff.; similar accounts are available in the MP. and the Bhāgavata. For details see Wilson’s translation of the Vṛt., II. 264 ff.
dhes of subdued senses (vasinah), continent (brahmacarinah), and pure (vimalah), undesirous of progeny and hence victorious over death (santatim te jugupsanti tasman artyur jitas ca taia), the path is the path of the gods (devayanana) which lies north of the solar sphere, north of the Nāgavithi and south of the seven rṣis. These enjoy immortality (amaratva) and are exempt from repeated death (apunarmarañ). For those, however, whose mind is constantly engrossed in religious meditation on the Supreme Vīṣṇu, the reward is residence in his highest heaven (vishnoh paramam padam) where live great devotees like Dhruva. Good deeds seem to have a sound and an auspicious odour (subham gandham) which reaches heaven.

The soul taking up another body after losing one is likened in the B.G. to a man who throws off his worn-out garments (vasaññi ārpani) to wear those that are new (na-
vanī). Practice of Yoga is prescribed here for him who aspires for the Supreme Benefit. Death may interrupt a man's yogic practice but does not take away his reward for the merit acquired by him till then. Such a man will have a lower prize, the world to which the godly men go after death. Travelling by the dark path(kṛṣṇagati) of 'smoke, night, the waning half of the month, the six months of the southern course,' he attains to the light of the Moon and stays there for changeless years(sāsvatīṃ samāḥ). Then he returns to earth to be born in the house of pure and prosperous folk(sucīnaṃ srimatāṃ gehe), or, if more lucky, even in the family of yogins so that he will have the opportunity to continue his yogic practice from where he left in his previous life. And he is 'led onward, without a will of his own, by that former striving'(purvabhāṣena tenaiva hriyate hy āvāsopi saḥ).

So labouring stoutly, through many births, a man finally

26. BG., VI. 41
27. Ibid., VIII. 25; VI. 41
achieves adeptship traversing by the Way Supreme (param 28
gatim). This is the bright (sukla) way of the knowers of Brahman who, passing through 'fire, light, day, the waxing half of the month, the six months of the northern course,' reach Brahman (gacchanti brahma brahmavidocana 29
nah), and never again return to earth (yaty anavrttim).

Heaven is not meant for those who do no penance (a-
taptapavasah), who do not perform great sacrifices (a-
mahayajnayajinah), who are not truthful (anrtah), who are unbelievers (nastikah) and who revile the Veda (vedan
nidadamah). A regular list of these offenders who all go to hell (niraya) or the lowest worlds (adhama 32
lo-
kan) is made in the Ramayana. Different kinds of hells (paraka), all situated below the earth and beneath the waters, are also prescribed for different crimes. But we also read that the evil-doers (parah) are baked in

28. Ibid., VI. 41-45 29. Ibid., VIII. 24,26
32. Ram., VI. 63. 3 33. Mbh., III. 191. 21 f.
34. IV. 17. 34 fr. 35. VP., I.6. 41 ff.;II.6
the fire of the cycle of birth and death(samsāresu ... 37 paśyamānāḥ). As the BG. would put it, these who are 'besotted workers of evil'(duṣkrtināḥ muḍhāḥ), the 'basest of men'(naraḍhamāḥ) are doomed to a demonic existence(āsura bhava). "Falling into demonic wombs and bewildered in birth after birth," they go to the lowest 38 state(adhamam gatim). The very contact with sinners is punishable by low births. Thus Satadhuna found culpable of the sin of talking to an infidel was condemned to several mean births, of a dog, a jackal, a wolf, a vulture, a crow and a peacock. When as a peacock he could bathe in the ablutions of an āsvamedha performed by his father-in-law, he was able to regain his human form. And even while in heaven, if one does wrong, the penalty is that he quits heaven(svargaḥ lokāḥ bhrasyati nastacestah).Na-

36. Mbh., III. 181. 18 37. BG., VII. 15
38. Ibid., XVI. 19-20 39. VP., III. 18
40. Mbh., V.12. 17, 20
hura had to leave heaven and even become a python for his impertinence there; and, in the course of his conversation in that state with Yudhishthira, speaks of a threefold destiny for man after death—life in heaven (svaragābasa) if he has practised harmlessness (ahimsā) and bounty (dana), human life (manusya) again for lesser virtues and birth in low wombs (tiryagyoni) if he is culpable of excessive passion (kāma), anger (krodha), cruelty (hiṃsa) and greed (lobha).

The operation of a rigorous law like this means that the misfortune one suffers from is of his own making, and that no body else need weep over his lot. Rāma thus consoles the bereaved members of Vāli’s family saying that Vāli met his fate as a result of his own actions in his previous lives (prāptah kriyāphalam) And Hanuman

41. Ibid., III. 178. 45 42. Ibid., III. 178. 9 ff. 43. Rām., IV. 25. 9
advises Tara, wife of Veli:

Gunadosaktaṃ jantuḥ
svakarmaphalahetukam /
avyagrastad avapnoti.
saryam pretya 'subhasubham //

'Socya Socasi kam socyam
dīnām dīnānukampase /
Kasya ko va nu socyo'sti
dehe'smin buddhopame //

Sakuntalā blames her own past sins when Dṛṣyanta refuses to acknowledge her as his legal wife (kim nu karkaśubham pūrvaṃ kṛtavyat asmi janmani). Draupadi attributes all her misfortunes to her manifold wrongs (kilbiṣa) to the gods on a previous occasion. If Duryodhana refused to give up Yudhishthira's share of the kingdom and was ready to fight with the powerful Pāṇḍavas, he was

45. Mbh., I. 68. 70
46. Ibid., IV. 19. 28
acting only in accordance with the promptings of his evil deeds in the past (karma krtam purastad...papakam).

The rule laid down by the doctrine of Karma is sometimes extended to its logical limit. Dundubha, we are told, had to become himself a snake for threatening his friend Khagama with a false snake. And Pandu had to die when united with his wife because he killed the sage Kindama who, in the form of a stag, was united with a hind.

But it goes to the credit of the Epics that they believe that suffering the consequences of a sin is not the only way of annulling its influence. These texts appear to see the cruelty involved in condemning the individual, throughout his future life, for one offence committed in a weak moment. Since punishment is intended to be only a deterrent, the individual must have always an opportunity to improve. The idea is already mooted in the Upanisads and perhaps earlier even in the Vedic

47. Mbh., V. 47. 6 ff. 48. Ibid., I. 11
49. Ibid., I. 109 50. See supra, p. 72
period. But it is very prominent in the Epics and Popular literature where we read of numerous ways by which the evil consequences of a sinful action can be averted. We are thus told that hearing holy stories, visiting holy places, meeting holy people and bathing in holy waters can destroy sin. Sacrifice (yajña) and penance (tapas) have the same efficacy. Punishment meted out even on earth is able to obliterate the effect of many an evil deed. Rama thus tells Vali:

Rājabhir dhṛtadandasa tu
kṛtvā pāpāni maṇavaḥ /
Nirmalāṁ svargam āyanti
santah sukṛtino yathā //

Śasanād va vimokṣad va
stenaḥ steyād vimucyate /

51. See supra, pp. 2 ff.
52. Mbh., III. 70. 33; Ram., I. 1. 97; VP., I. 22. 88.
53. Mbh., III. 92. 20; VP., V. 38. 11; these are listed in Mbh., III. 80-83.
Where such total annihilation of the effect of the deed is not possible, its fruition can at least suffer some delay as in the case of plants which do need time to ripen:

Na tu saddock'ti'saysa
dṛśyate karmāṇaḥ phalam /
Kālo'py aṅgībhavaty atra
sasyānam iva paktaye //

Thus Vedavati who was insulted by Rāvana, could avenge herself only in her next life, meant for the purpose, as Sītā, daughter of Janaka. Akin to the same idea is the conception that the fruit of good actions may be stayed for some time, evil prevailing all the while.

54. Mbh., III.92.21 f.
55. VP.,II.8; an elaborate list occurs in Mbh., III. 80 ff.,90,121 etc.
56. Mbh.,V.13. 12,18; Rām., I. 14. 55;VP.,I.6. 28
57. Mbh.,I. 57. 79
58. Rām., IV. 18. 33 f.
59. Rām., III. 49. 27
60. Ibid., VII. 17
without any raison d’être therefore (vṛddhaty adharmaṁ
naras tato bhadrāṁ pasyati).

A sort of "refinement" of this idea of temporary suspension of the result of actions occurs in three different ways. The action of this life will fructify at the corresponding period of life hereafter:

Bālo. yuvā ca vrddhas ca
yat karoṁ subhaṁ subsidam /
Tasyāṁ tasyāṁ avasthāyāṁ
tat phalam pratipadyate //

In the second alternative, it is enough if the action is retaliated in the next life, and no specific period is fixed. Thus elsewhere in the same Epic we read the same verse excepting for the last line which runs bhunāk-
te janmani janmani. The third version combines both

61. Mbh., III. 92. 3 f.


63. Mbh., XII. 179. 16.
these and makes one suffer, birth by birth, at the same stage:

\[
\text{Yasyām yasyām avasthayaṁ}
\]
\[
yat karoti sukaśubham /
\]
\[
Tasyām tasyām avasthayaṁ
\]
\[
bhunkte janmane janmane //
\]

It is probably in accordance with this principle that the idea occurs that Sisupāla who fought with Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been fighting with him for a third time in a third incarnation. In the past he was Hiranyakāśipū when Śrī Kṛṣṇa had taken the Man-Lion (Nṛsīmha) incarnation, and Rāvana 65 when he was Śrī Rāma.

On the other hand there are actions, generally evil in nature, whose result is too quick. These are those which incite a curse, and the consequence is experienced by the individual almost at once. King Kalmāśapāda be-

64. cited by Hopkins, op. cit., p. 593 as in Mbh. XIII. 7. 4.
65. Mbh., II. 70. 46
came a man-eating demon the moment he was cursed by Sakti for his misbehaviour. And Nāhuṣa had to become a python when so cursed for his arrogance while in heaven. So also King Sudāsa had to be transformed into a cannibal monster immediately after the great seer whom he wronged cursed him.

Taken together these theories concerning the fruition of actions should give the impression that it is impossible to predict when a particular deed yields its result. Even this point is stressed in one passage of the Mbh., where Yudhiṣṭhira tells Draupadī that it is a secret known only to the gods (devaguhya) when actions, good or bad, will have results. Man must perform his duty (kartavya) without calculating the time of its fruition.

66. Mbh., I. 166. 9 fr. 67. Ibid., III. 178. 45
68. Ibid., XIII. 6. 32; cf. Hopkins, loc. cit., p. 584 n; each one of these three is known to have returned to his original form after a time which shows clearly that the effect of a curse is as temporary as it is sudden.
69. Ibid., III. 32. 3, 33.
tion (phala). But considered severally they do answer some intricate problems of a firm believer in Karma. After knowing that it is in the nature of certain deeds that they fructify only after some time, he will not be worried that some body who wronged him is not yet punished and that the good he himself did long ago is not yet rewarded.

A man suffering now from the consequences of his evil actions in the past may, in the course of his regret, tend to grow pessimistic. It is probably to console such men that we read in one passage of the Mahābhārata that pleasure and pain follow each other in a cycle, and that, like the farmer who takes his crops as they come, one must be happy when possible and bear misery when it comes:

70. Such a doubt is actually expressed by Kuntī who wonders why Draupadī has not been rewarded for her goodness (Mahābhārata, V. 88. 47)

71. Ibid., III. 245. 13 ff.; cf. V. 36. 45
Sukhāduḥkhe hi puruṣaḥ
prāyanopasevate /
Nātyantam asukham kascit
prāpnoti puruṣarpashabha //
. . . . . . . . .
Sukham āpataṁ seved
duḥkhāṁ āpataṁ sahet /
Kālaprāptam upāsita
sasyānāṁ iva karaśakaḥ //

Of the same import must be the idea that the individual can benefit by the merit of others or 'secure a remittance of his evil Karma involuntarily.' Pāndu sends word to Yudhiṣṭhīra, through Nārada, that, if he performs the Rājasūya, not only he, even his ancestors also can go to heaven. And Yayati, fallen from heaven through arrogance, goes back on his descendant Gaṅga offering one-eighth of the merit of his penance (tapasāḥ

72. Ṝmbh., II. 11. 66 f.
...astabhāgena). The same King refuses a similar gift offered by Sibi on an earlier occasion. So also Rama is unable to accept the offer by the sages Sarabhaṅga and Sutiksna of all the heaven worlds earned by them through penance. Far from suggesting a general disfavour of any transfer of merit, the idea seems to be that such transfer is impossible outside the family. In this light must be considered the view that the son can secure absolution to the father from his sins, as in the case of Prahlada who prays to Viṣṇu to forgive the sins of his father. The very birth of a son is often enough to save the father from hell(Put) and lead him to heaven instead. At the birth of Prithu, consequent on the rubbing of Vena's right arm, the father was saved from this hell and taken to heaven:

73. Ibid., V.119. 28 74. Ibid., I. 88. 8 ff.
75. Ram., III. 5. 31; 7.11 ff. 76. Hopkins, op. cit., p.588.
77. VP., I. 20. 21 78. Mbh., I. 220. 14
79. Ibid., I. 103. 17 80. VP., I. 13. 39 ff.
Satputreṇaiva jatena
veno' pi tridivam yayau //

Punnamno narakat tratah
sutena sumahatmanā //

The wife appears to be entitled for a share in the merit of her husband whom she can follow to heaven and even partake of his celestial enjoyments as did Sata-

82 dhuna's wife. In one place the Ramayana speaks of this as her special privilege in contrast with all other relatives including the son:

Āryaputra pīta mātā
bhrātā putras tathā snuṣā //

Svāni punyani bhunjānanāṁ
svāṁ svāṁ bhagyam upāsate //

Bhartur bhāgyam tu bharyaṅkā
prāpnoti purusārsabha //

81. Maṅg., I. 109. 29; 116. 25
82. Viṣṇ., III. 18. 64 ff. 83. Raṁg., II. 27. 4 ff.
This does not, however, mean that she is exempt from the operation of the law of *karma*; elsewhere in the same epic the world of gods is pointed out as the destination of true wives (*bhartrādrāhav ratah*) who earn it by their merit (*devaloke mahīyante punyena svena karmāḥ*). The idea appears to be that the wife earns, not only her own merit, but also a portion of her husband's as a reward for her fidelity.

On exceptional occasions a voluntary transfer of merit appears to be possible. King Vipasaṅgit who, for a small offence, had to visit hell on his way to heaven finds that his presence in hell is soothing to the inmates of this region undergoing torture. Taking compassion on these sufferers, he requests Indra who had come to take him to heaven, to relieve them of their misery by his good works:

86. *Mār. P.*, Chap. XIV
Tasmād yat sukṛtam kiṃnīn 
maṃasti tridasadhipa /
Lucyantam tena narakāt
paśino yātanāgataḥ //

Like merit even sin is transferable, and the evil one does affects also both his ancestors and descendants. Kuntī thus exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira to do his duty and fight lest his ancestors sink down through his inaction(yudhyas-va rajadharmena mā nimajjīhi pitamahān).

Elsewhere it is pointed out that the evil one does brings its penalty on one's sons or grand-sons even:

Nadharmās carito rajan
sadyaḥ phalati gaur iva /
Sānair āvaryamāno hi
kartur mūlani kṛntati //

Putreṣu vā napṛṣu vā
na ced ātmanī pāsyati /

87. Mbh., V. 130. 32
88. cited by Hopkins, loc. cit., as in Mbh. I.80.2 f.; the
Phalaty eva dhruvaṁ pāpaṁ
gurubhuktam ivodare //

Pāpaṁ karma kṛtaṁ kīcchid
yadi tasmāṁ na drṣyate /
Nṛpate tasya putreṣu
pausṭreṣv api ca napṛṣeṣu //

Lest the hardened evil-doer feel that he himself is at any rate safe, it is said on another occasion that he alone must suffer the consequences, implying probably that if others share it is only after he has his turn:

Na karmanā pituḥ putreḥ
pitā vā putrakarmanā /
Mārgenaṁyena gacchanti
baddhāḥ sukṛtaduṣkṛtaiḥ //
Yat karoti..tat kartaiva samāśnati //

first verse is in Manusmṛti(IV. 172) and the third in Mbh. XII.139.22(N.S.Press edition). I cannot trace the second verse.

89. Mbh., XII. 153. 38,41(N.S.Press Edn.)
In the same light must be considered the belief that it is the mistake of the King if a calamity overtakes any of his subjects (rājadāsana hi jāmatāsprṣyate). If, in Rāma's kingdom, a brahmin lost a young son, it was because Rāma did not punish Sambūka, a sūdra, who was observing penance to which he was not entitled. The brahmin complains to Rāma that his inadequate dispensation of justice had brought misery like his in his kingdom; and once Sambūka was beheaded, the boy appears to have regained his life. A king who is slothful and does not punish an offence will be himself deemed guilty of the fault as a penalty (rāja tv asasana papasya tad avap-noti kilbisam).

Normally no one may reach heaven with the earthly body, but certain people of exceptional merit have this rare privilege. In the Mbh., we read of the sage Mudgala

90. Mbh., V. 130. 15, 18
91. Rām., VII. 73 ff.
92. Ibid., IV. 18. 34
93. As such the law of Karma and Transmigration is not flouted.
94. III. 246. 28 ff.
being informed that his merit entitled him to the highest privilege (paramāṁ gatim) or entering heaven with his own body (sasarira). The Angel (devadūta) tells Mudgala:

Dayā satyam ca dharmas ca
tvayi sarvam pratiṣṭhitam /
Jītas te karmabhīr lokāḥ
prāpto'si paramāṁ gatim //

Aho dānas vighusṭam te
sumahat svargavasibhiḥ /
Sasariro bhavaṁ ganta
svargam sucāritavṛata //

Mudgala, however, found the blessing to be only temporary in duration, and is hence reported to have refused the offer. The same privilege was accorded, we read in another context of the same Epic, to Yudhīśthira, but this time to last permanently. His brothers who were also

here is the revival of the old body, stripped of all its weaknesses and limitations and tempered well enough to meet all the requirements of a denizen of heaven. The AV. appears to refer quite clearly to the wholesale revival, in heaven, of the old body destroyed by the funeral fire:

\[ \text{Yād vo agrī ājahād ekam āṅgām} \\
\text{pitṛlokām gamayām jātāvedaḥ} / \\
\text{Tād vā etat punar ā pyāyayāmi} \\
\text{sāṅgāḥ svargē pitāro mādayadhvam} // \\
\]

103. \text{Taitt. Sam.} would have that the sacrificer who offers the adāthya libation of Soma, without pouring it out, can ascend to heaven alive (\text{jivantam evainam svargam lokam gamayati}). The Brāhmaṇa's harp on the theme pretty often. The \text{SB.} thus speaks of the pious sacrificer being rewarded with a whole body (\text{sarvatanur eva sāṅgāḥ})

100. Hopkins, \text{RI.}, \text{p.145 f.}; Keith, R.\text{PVU}, \text{II.405}; contrast Roth (\text{JAC}, 1853, \text{III.343}) who seems to feel that the divine body can have nothing to do with the earthly body discarded on the funeral pyre.

101. \text{XVIII. 4. 64} \quad 102. Muir, \text{OST.}, \text{V.298 n.}, \text{304 f.}; Hopkins, \text{op. cit.}, \text{p.146}
in the next world. The TB. and the TB. are also aware of such rewards; the former promises ascent to heaven with body(sasarīra eva svargam lokam eti) for knowing the nature of the Nāciketa fire; and the latter holds that the reward for one who performs the horse-sacrifice is that he goes to the other world even with his earthly body(sasarīrah sambhavati).

But in one passage in the SB. we read of men not being able to achieve immortality (amṛtatva) without 'shuffling off their mortal coil' (nātaḥ paraḥ kascana saha sas-

rīrēśmṛto). And in the Epic also, though Yudhīṣṭhīra was adjudged fit to enter heaven with his earthly body, he is said to have betrayed too often his deep attachment towards his relatives while on earth, and had to take a bath in the

103. VI. 6. 9. 2
104. IV.6.1.1; X.1.8.6; XII. 8. 3. 31
105. III. 11. 7. 4 106. XXI. 4. 3
107. X. 4. 3. 9 108. MBH., XVII. 3. 28; XVIII.3.29 ff.
celestial Ganges to forget his mundane associations and behave as befits a resident in heaven. Such passages are probably indicative of a later time when the idea of bodily ascent to heaven came to be found unworkable.

An extremely important idea, mooted clearly, for the first time in these texts, is that Karma is not the sole cause of our experience in this world. Many of our afflictions on earth can be traced to a very powerful entity called Fate which is known by such names as Daiva, Dīṣṭā, Kāla, Krta, Dhr, Niyati, Bhavītavya, Bhavītyata, Bhagadheya and Vidhi. The supreme power of this entity and man’s helplessness when he has to combat this force when it is unfavourable to him are very frequently alluded to in these texts. In the Padmapurana we read:

Vedādisāstram akhilam prapathantu lokah
kuvantu nama satataṁ kaśtipalasevām /

109. cf. the Amarakosa (IV. 28) in which we read Daivaṁ diś- tam bhagadheyaṁ bhāgyaṁ stri niyatir vidhiṁ.

110. Kriyakhanda, V. 56.
Ugram tapah pretidinam pratisadhuyantu
na sris tathapi ca bhaajty atibhagayahinam //

In the same strain the Skandapurana would ask us to remember:

'Sitam hutasad api daivayogat
sanjayate candramaso'pi tapah /
Paragrahat saukhyasamudbhavo'tra
bhuto'bhavad bhavi na martyaloke //
Daivadhine sarire'smin
gupabhavyena karma'nā /
Vartamano'budhas tatra
kartasmiti nibadhyate //

It was under the swooning sway of Fate (daivamohabalaakte) that Duryodhana ignored the advice of Vidura warning him against the power of Yudhisthira's brothers. So

111. Nagarakhanda, 147. 57; Kedara, 11. 10
112. Mbh., II. 92. 56 (N.S. Press Edn.)
also if Yuvanāśva drank the holy water in Bhṛgu's hermitage and got a son himself, instead of Bhṛgu as was intended, it is a work of fate (daivakṛta). Shīma was but an instrument in the hands of fate when he killed the demons guarding the lake containing the Saumānīka flowers (kale-pāśā). It is under the spell of Kala, says Rāma, that one commits sin and brings suffering to his entire family. If Rāvana was averse to hear the saving advice of Marica, it was because he was prompted so by fate (kalacakoditah). And the bereaved Tara attributes the death of Valin and her own consequent widowhood, not to Rāma personally, but to fate which took his form (Ramarupena kālah karsati). The murdered man himself holds this view. Rāma attributes his own banishment, not to the ill-will of Kaikeyī, but to the influence exerted.

113. Ibid., III.126.22  114. Ibid., III.158.42
115. Rām., VI. 36. 7  116. Ibid., III. 40. 2
117. Ibid., IV. 25.42  118. Ibid., IV. 17. 51
by fate (kr̥tāntavihita); and the resultant calamity to
Dasaratha, according to his own verdict, owes its ex-
istence to Fate (bhavitavyataya nāma idān ā vyaśana
mahat). Marriages are made in Heaven, and if Shukra
could marry Devasena it was because the Creator's de-
sire was such (vihito brahmana).

The fatalism propounded in these passages is else-
where condemned as vigorously. First, it is pointed out
that Fate is not only a malevolent power, but a benefi-
cent force sometimes like Chance or Fortune. Man's
happiness and misery (sukhadūkhaka) can both be traced to
its influence. As the Padmapurana would say:

Lābhālābhe sukhe duhkhe
vivahe mṛtyuji āvane

119. Ibid., II.22.16 120. Ibid., II.59.20
121. Mbh., III. 218. 43
122. Ibid., I.194.5; 198.5 ff.; II.75. 1 ff.; VII.24.2, 5
123. Mbh., III. 31. 20; XII. 173. 28
Bhoge roga viyoge ca
daivam eva hi karanaṃ //

kurupah kukulai mūrkhā
tusitacaraninditaḥ //

Sauryavikramahīnas ca
daivad rajyani bhuṇjate //

The vulture Sampati, who saw before him a multitude of edible monkeys, exclaims that fortune (Vidhi) always shows the way to man (vidhiḥ kila naram loke vidhānenanuvertate).

Next, it is pointed out that it is not always the case that Fate is different from our own antenatal deeds. Pointing out this identity the Agnipurana says

Svam eva karma daivākhyām
‘viddhī dehāntara-rjitam’ //

The Padmapurana puts the idea more poetically:

125. Rām., IV. 56. 4
126. Chap. 226. 1
127. Kriyakanda, V. 55
Sanjaya consoles Chitraratha pointing out to him that it is the inviolable law of fate (Kāla) that his sons should suffer for their evil deeds. Jharmavyadhya tells the sage Kausika that, for his cruelty as a hunter, the responsibility lies, not with him, but with his fate (Vidhi) in the form of his evil deeds perpetrated in the past (purakṛtasya, papaśya karmadosah). Rama tells the bereaved members of Vāli's family that there is no force in the world more powerful than fate (Kāla, Niyati) which is none other than the fruit of one's past actions (kriyaphala). And we are asked to remember that the power of human will or Endeavour is great, and fate of this description can always be vanquished:

Tasmāt purusam eva

srestham ātur manisīnaḥ /

Pratikulan tathā daivāṁ

paurusena vihanyate //

There are many other passages in the Epic which point out that our endeavour or will can crush Fate even if it is different from karma. It is an idler (ālasa) who is fatalistic (dāivaparāyana) that attributes his failures to causes other than his own inaction. Laksāmaṇa rebukes Rāma, who attributed his misfortune to Fate, saying that his was the creed of a coward and a weakling (vī-klabo vīryahino yāḥ sa dāivam anuvartate). And Rāma himself, who later defeats Raavana, says that he fought Fate's mistake by human valour (dāivasampādito dōga manuṣeṇa maya jitaḥ). The Skandapurāṇa would like us to bear in mind that the result we achieve is really only proportional to the effort we put in; one earns pearls serving a lion, but

132. Mi. Chap. 121. 11 ff. 133. Rām., II. 23. 6 ff.
only bits of bone from service with a jackal:

Yādṛśa naraṃ ca sevata
    tādṛśaṁ phalaṁ asnute /
ghanatas sevayoccatvān
    kṣudrasya kṣudrātāṃ tatha //

Sīhhasya mandire sevā
    muktāpañhalakāri mata //
śṛgalarāmandire sevā
    tv asthilabhakāri mata //

A sort of moderation is attempted when the view is propounded that human experience owes its existence to a number of causal factors operating together. When three or four of these have combined to determine the lot of a man, his Fate (Daiva, viḍhī) and Personal Endeavour (Pauruṣa, Svakarma) have each their own place in the apparatus as one among many influences. But where these two alone are the determining factors, their

136. Mbh., III. 181. 32. 137. Mbh., III. 33
power is equal, and without either of them no achievement is possible. The consoling advice of Arjuna to Draupadi is that the destruction of her enemies, the Kurvas, would be effected, not only through the agency of her husbands, but also through the decree of Fate (Yudhisthirani- 140 yogena daivam ca vidhiniḥsitaḥ).amba, rejected by Salva, whom she loved, blames, not only herself, but also the creator (Dhata).

From the foregoing discussion it appears that Fate (Daiva) in Epic literature is generally non-distinguishable from the fruition of a man's past deeds. It is sometimes believed, no doubt, to be an inscrutable power from without; but on both occasions we have the assurance that it is not unassailable. It is considered to be only as potent as our own effort, though it is admitted quite clearly that its cooperation is also quite necessary for the

138. Ibid., I.25.18 ff.; II.15.11; V.77.1ff. etc.
139. Ibid., V.76. 3;192. 15; cf. also V. 75. 5 ff.
140. Mbb., V. 80. 46 141. Ibid., V.173. 6 ff.
successful accomplishment of all human enterprises

God (Iśvara) is several times mentioned in this literature as the Supreme Power in the Universe, man being only an agent working at His Will. It is He that is responsible for our birth, death and rebirth. Even immortality is sometimes a gift of the gods to those with whom they are pleased. Struck by Viśiṣṭa's devotion to the path of virtue (dharma), Brahma grants him, a demon, immortality (amaratva). Ordinarily heaven is man's own achievement, but often it seems to be equally a gift of God. Krishna is thus known to have promised the world of heaven after death to the flower-seller who was very decent to Him, as also to the hunter who shot his foot thereby bringing His Krishna-incarnation to a close. The idea is more prominent in the BG. which would have that it is at the behest of the Supreme Lord that man performs his duty

142. Ibid., III. 187; XII. 31. 12 ff.; XIV. 3. 1 ff.
143. Ibid., I. 1. 195 (N.S. Ed.)
144. Mbh., III. 259. 31
145. Vp., V. 19. 26
146. Ibid., V. 37. 66
and dedicates all his acts and their fruits. Such an act on the part of man is designed to release him from the bondage of Karma. Here is an attempt to merge individual action in Cosmic action, and individuality in cosmos. This is indeed a great achievement for man. The doctrine of Karma is neither annulled thereby, nor its logic done away with altogether. The endeavour here is rather at a "remarkable synthesis" of the "axiom of Karma with the belief in a Personal God of Grace and Love, admitting its inexorable-ness but tempering, moralising and sanctifying it with the idea of Divine Cosmic Work and Grace." Not to transgress the law of Karma but to transcend it is the effort of the Bhagavadgita.

Another teaching of the BG. is that man must work in spite of himself, and that Prakrti and its gunas drive him to act whether he will or not. This is however not a lesson

147. S.K.De, IO.,1942,p.31
150. III. 33; XVIII. 59 ff.
in determinism for, elsewhere in the text, the liberty of the individual to choose his own line of action is admitted and it is laid down that a man is his own friend or foe (atmaive by atmano bandhur atmaive ripur atmanah) in deciding his own future. This is certainly ample freedom conceded to man. After all how much more freedom can a man hope for in a world where are in operation 'forces of nature far mightier than fruit human will'? And to speak of Prakṛti and the guṇas is to speak succinctly of the concepts of heredity and environment whose imperceptible yet inevitable guidance of the human will can never be gainsaid. To be able to play an important part in shaping one's future is about all that human freedom can connote. A good deal more does the Bh. promise when it speaks of man being able to work like a master rather than like a slave.

What the wise man ought to do and what he ought not

151. VI. 5
152. S.K. Helvalkar, IT. of EG., p. xxi.
is clearly indicated in the BG. The conduct of those who act in view of a reward is condemned with as much force as of those who would push the doctrine of karma to its 'misdirected logical extremes' and decide to stop all activity. What is recommended to all is "right action," not inaction, "freedom in action," but not "freedom from action."

Classical Literature

The tendency of the Bhūpas is only continued in these texts to whom the doctrine of saṁsāra seems to be as much a "postulate of nature as the rising and setting of the Sun." Full knowledge of this doctrine is shown here on occasions too numerous to enumerate. Chan's actions, we are told, are dependent on the current of the chain

153. Chap. III, II. 42 ff.; IX. 21 etc.

154. Ibid., II. 42 ff. 155. Ibid., III. 5

156. Aldous Huxley (ISP of BG., p. 19) likens this to the doctrine of 'holy indifference' taught by St. Francis.

157. C.W. Gurner, IO., 1942, II. 113 158. Naig., VI. 102
of causes operating from times without beginning (anādi-
dhāvi svaparaṃparāyā hetusrajaḥ srotasi). The political
activities of Dilipa could be inferred, says Kalidāsa,
by their results as antenatal impressions are by their
consequences in this birth (phalānumeyāḥ prārambheḥ saṁ-
skarāḥ prāktanā iya). So also Vāgīsa lays down that ac-
tions are followed by results (kriyāphalānīva suniti-
bhajam), and that in the fall of a fool there is no
other agency but his own vice (nijadosēna kudhir vi-
nasyati). If Nala hesitated at first to carry out the
request of Indra, which meant losing Damayantī for him-
self, it was because the gravity of his sins in a pre-
vious birth gave him the courage to deny such great
gods (uoṣatatrataḥ duritanaṁ anyajanānāṁ mayuiva krtaman).
Abandoned by Rāma, Sītā is convinced that her misfortune
came out of her own misdeeds in the past (janmāntarapataka-

159. Raghu, I. 20 160. Sīsū, III. 26
161. Ibid., XVI. 35 162. Nais, V. 104
It is out of the nature of one's deeds done in another birth that love springs between two people and bursts into bloom. For the inexplicable grief one experiences on beholding a beautiful object or hearing a melodious sound, it is some antenatal association remembered at that time that is responsible. Hämsapadika's excellent song so distresses Dusyanta that he explains saying:

Ramyāṇi vikṣya madhurāṁ ca niśamya āabdāṁ
paryutṣaṃ bhavati yat sukhito'pi jantuḥ /
Tac cetasa smarati nūnam abodnāpūrvam
bhāvasthirāṇa jananaṁtaraṁ sauḥṛdani //

Among other ideas well-known to these texts also are the beliefs that sacrifices, gifts and death in battle bring heaven, that the moon is the abode of the fathers.

163. Rāghu, XIV. 62  164. Nāis., XIII. 38

165. Abh. Sēk., V.2; cf. Wordsworth who speaks of "Something that still remembers what was so fugitive." M. Hiriyanna (AmP., VII. 352 f.) looks upon this passage as a weighty argument in support of Transmigration.
(caṇḍam pitṛsthānātayopasthe), that the stay in such a heaven is impermanent and that the virtuous man must return to earth once his merit is exhausted. Kalidāsa uses the last of these ideas for one of his beautiful hyperboles. Describing Avanti, he says that it is the resort of those who, by virtue of their merit, had gone to heaven for enjoyment and returned after its conclusion:

Svalpibhūte sucaritaphale
svargiṇām gaṅ gatānām /
Sesaiḥ punyaih hṛtaṁ iva
divāḥ kantimat khandaṁ ekam //

Direct reference to Transmigration is also made. Birth, old age and death are together likened once to a water-wheel whose long ropes 'go round and round, night and day, to the five races of men!' (saṁsarrantyo naṁtaṁ-

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166. Kumar., II.12; Naĩs., V.15 ff.; Karṇa, Vv. 12,22; Uru, pp.89,114; Paṅga., I. 21.
167. Naĩs., XXI. 121
168. Ibid., VI. 99 ff.
169. Naṅk., I.30
170. Karṇa., VIII. 254
The misery entailing such a Transmigration (punærñavekæsa), and its consequent undesirability (tyajye bhave) are both stressed, and methods are suggested for escape from it (bhavevitaye).

Many of these methods are only adopted from the Epics. We thus read even here that holy people, holy verses, holy places and holy waters destroy sin. The old idea of transference of both merit and sin continues even in this literature; the former is both volunatry and involuntary; but the latter is generally involuntary. Siva, disguised as a young mendicant, offers Parvati half his own store of merit (puræsangsanãcitam tapah). And Karna offers to give the merit of his Agnistoma to Indra who begs alms from him.

174. Kir., II. 55; Kilav., II. 15  175. Neis., V. 18
177. Neis., XI. 112; Sis., XII. 67; AnR., loc. cit.; Kuar., Act I
178. Kuar., V. 50
in the shape of a brahmin (tena hy agnistomaphalen dadami). But sometimes one may unconsciously benefit another who is comparatively lower than himself. Sambuka is thus known to have reached heaven, not by his own penances, but through contact with Rama when the latter killed him. And the demon Arisṭanemi courts death at the hands of Sri Kṛṣṇa certain that he would thereby achieve the immortal worlds (vignunā hatasyapi aksayo loko me bhavisyati). Sin is similarly transferred to another. The sin of the pupil affects not him, not his relatives, but the teacher (atitya bandhun avalaṅghya mitrany ācaryan āgacchati sisyadosah). And the faults of the subjects fall on the king whose own misdeeds are responsible for all the calamity in the state. Dasyanta, who has to be thus vigilant of the activities of his subjects, complains that, with the misery brought on him by the separation from Śakuntalā, he is absent-minded and unable to attend to this duty (prajasu kah kena pathā prayati

179. Karn., p. 81
180. URC., pp. 59 ff.
181. Bal., p. 46
182. Paṇ., I. 19
ity åsågato veditum asti saktih; and when he hears that
a message from Karna awaits him, he wonders, whether
through his misdeeds, the creepers and trees in the pe-
ance-grove of Karna have stopped putting forth flowers
and fruits (ahosvit prasavo manamapaśitar viśāṁbhitot
virudham).

Different types of fruition of actions are known
here also. The Epic story of Sisupāla fighting with Śrī
Kṛṣṇa in three incarnations is repeated in the Sisupāla-
veda of Hāgha. And if, according to the Epics, a curse
brings punishment in the same life, we are now told that
supreme merit and the vilest sin have their consequence
in the same birth within three years or three months or
three fortnights or even three days:

Tribhir varṣaiḥ tribhir masaiḥ
tribhiḥ paksaiḥ tribhir dinaiḥ /

183. Abh. Sak., Act VI
184. Ibid., Act V. 9
185. I. 48 ff.
186. Hit., II. 60
atyugrapunyapapānām
ihaiva phalam āśnute //

Along with such ideas is also the Epic consolation that no one need be too worried over his present lot, since good luck and bad luck come one after another. Describing the beauty of the dawn a pupil of Śaṇḍuva reflects:

Yāty ekato'strasikharām patir oṣadhinām
āvīṃkṛtārunapuraḥsara ekato'rkaḥ /
Tejodvayasya yugapad vyasanodayabhyaṁ
loko niyamyata ivātmadasāntarāgū //

Among the special methods known in this literature for the eradication of sin may be noted the idea that, if sin was perpetrated through ignorance, it loses its venom (kṛṣṇatvam ajñānavasād āveinasah). Subsequent good conduct and regret for the past is quite certain to destroy it wholesale (samaṇaḥ...vucibhir guṇair aghaṁyaṁ...tamaḥ).

187: Abh. Śaka., IV. 2
188: Naiṣ., IX. 131
189: Kṛṣṇa, VI. 20; cf. Naiṣ., V. 25.
and, in the case of a hero giving up his life in battle, the very blood that flows out then is believed to wash off all his sins (sāṃkhya-vikṣetrasūragrāvad asrakṣālītekhi-
lanjāghalaghunām).

The Grace of God which comes to those who move Him by prayer is also known to be similarly efficacious. The other gods who had gone to Viṣṇu with the request that he should devise means of freeing them from the ravages of Ṛavana, tell Him that He is there only to favour and bless humanity (lokanugrahā evaiko hetus te janmakarmānoḥ), that even if one remembers Him, the man is purified (kevalam
samarāṇenaiva puṇasi purusam), and that He can bring about freedom from rebirth (abhuyas sannivṛttaye). That Ahalyā was able to regain her human form by the very touch of Rāma’s feet proves the same idea.

190. Nāṣ., V. 25
191. Nāṣ., XXI. 75 ff.; Nā., I. 3; Kir., XVIII. 37; Kūmar., I. 57 etc.
192. Rāghu, X. 31
193. Ibid., X. 29
194. Ibid., X. 27; cf. Śī., XIX. 86
195. Ibid., XI. 33 ff.
Kane and Fortune, two other powerful factors influencing our experience on earth, as the Epic literature has already pointed out, are now very familiar, and their utmost capacities are completely gauged. The latter, known often now as Sri, is really a beneficent force welcome to all. But one favoured by Fortune is warned that he must be ever alert for, like a weak woman who cannot bear much strain, this influence is never steady or powerful:

Atyuochrite mantrini parthive ca

vistabhya pādam upatisṭhate sriḥ /
Sā strīsvabhāvad asahā bharasya
tayor āyor ekataram jahāti //

The former is no doubt more powerful and often makes one feel that it is unassailable:

Sasidivākarayor grahanipānam
gajabhujaṃgamaṃayor api bandhanam /

196. PT., I.65,82; this is sometimes (II.121,232;III.61) called Keśa and Vidhi even which usually mean Fate, the malevolent power.

197. Ibid., I. 65

198. PT., II.5-6; for other passages in the same strain
-123-

Matimatāṁ ca nirikṣya daridratāṁ
vidhir aho balavāṁ iti me matih //

Very often it is a non-enterprising (avyasayin) slug-
gard (alasa), a fatalist (daivapara) devoid of valour (sa-
hasaś ca parihīna) who cannot recognise in this power
his own deeds in the past (pūrvajamākrtaṁ karma). Jal-
hāman puts the idea very poetically indeed:

Ambhodhiṁ sthalatāṁ sthalaṁ jalaṁhitāṁ dhūrilavaṁ
merur mṛtkaṁatāṁ trnaṁ kulisatām
vajram trnaklibatām /
Vahniṁ sitalatāṁ himsam daśamatāṁ āyati
yasy ecchaya
lilādurīlaṁdbhutavyasanaṁ tasmāi namah
karmame //

Once this realisation comes in, we must put forth vi-
gorous endeavours for the success of our enterprise;
and the standard of our achievement entirely depends

see Hit., II.39; Nīti, p.22; Subh., p.17; Spm., fol.24.
199. Hit., I. 21
on the standard of our enterprise. No one crowned the Lion as the King of beasts; the position is what the Lion himself earned by his own valour:

Tasmāt purusakāreṇa
yatnaṁ kuryād atanditaḥ //

Nabhiṣekān na samśkarāḥ
simhasya kriyate mrśaiḥ /
Vikramārjutavattasya
svayam eva mrigendrata //

Na kasyacit kascid iha svabhāvad
bhavaty udārōbhimaṭaha khalo va /
Loke gurutvam viparitatiṁ vā
svacgestitāṁ eva naraṁ nayanti //

As a rule our actions succeed only when there is Fortune assisting us. Nor can Fortune, by herself and without any human effort, bring about any fruition, even as the single wheel of a chariot cannot set it

into motion. Both the factors are always necessary:

Tad evam daivapurusakaraabhajam yuktasyayathnam
karyasiddhayah sambhavanti. Yatah:

Prasarati matir karyarambe driibhavati smrtir
svayam upanamanti artham rantra na gacchati vi-
plavam. /
Phalati sakalam tat kim citraam samunpatim
asnute
bhavati ca ratir slaghye ktrye narasya bhavisya-
tah. /*/

It should be of interest to note, in this context, a
late work on Grammar, called Daiva which has a com-
mentary called Purusakara. The work actually derives
its name from its author whose name is Deva; but the
commentator tries a pun in giving the peculiar name to
his gloss. His idea appears to be that, even as in all
enterprises Fate and human effort go hand in hand, so
also his commentary is essential for the proper under-
standing of the text.

202. Ibid., I. 20; PT., III. 299 including verse 106.
203. TSS., I, 1905
In the *Yudhishthiravijaya* of Vasudeva we read of Sri Krishna telling Yudhishthira that one must act in spite of the fact that success depends on Fate (udayo daivyaprabha-vah prayatanamatra vyayam sadaiva prabhavaḥ); but he is contradicted by Arjuna whose creed is that effort well applied transcends Fate (yutnas sukṛto'tiyati daivam). To one two who may be confused by these/conflicting opinions the way is shown by the *Kitopadesa* which exhorts man to act, with or without cooperation from Fate, for then he can have the consolation that his failure is by no means the consequence of any omission on his part at least:

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Udyoginām purusasimham upaiti lakṣmī
daivā hi daivam iti kāpuruse vadanti /
Daivām nihatya kuru pauruṣam ātmasaṅktyā
yutne kṛte yadi na siddhyati kutra dosah //
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204. VI. 80 ff. 205. Ibid., VI. 81
206. I. 22
Technical Literature

It is expressly admitted in the Law-books that there is no one in the world who is absolutely good or bad, and that the individual is allowed to enjoy or suffer in slices:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Yady ācarati dharmāṁ sa} & \\
\text{prāyasaṅdharmam āpasaṅāḥ /} & \\
\text{Tair eva cāvrto bhūtaṁ} & \\
\text{svarge sukhāṁ upaśnute} & \\
\text{Yadi tu prāyasaṅdharmāṁ} & \\
\text{sevate dharmam āpasaṅāḥ /} & \\
\text{Tair bhūtaṁ sa parityakto} & \\
\text{yāṁḥ prāpnoti yātanaṁ //} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

We do read of Yudhīśthīra who, for uttering a lie but once in his life, was taken on a visit to hell en route to heaven.

For a sinner, the shape of the body he takes in the

207. Manu, XII. 20 f. 208. Ṛbh., XVIII. 3
next life depends upon the nature of the mental disposition (bhāva) with which he acted. Manu speaks elaborately of the different kinds of birth (yoni) which follow the performance of different deeds (karma). One who steals rice is thus born as a mouse (chānayaḥ nṝtvā bha-

vaty ākhuḥ), and he who steals flesh as a vulture (maṁ-

saṁ grāhah). In the much later Visnuśṛti an elaborate list is made of various forms of theft along with their own peculiar penalty, and throughout the discussion we are treated to a lively symbolism. Certain diseases are believed to be the outcome of specific antenatal sins. The Karmāvīpaka of Sātātapā and the later Mahārṇava of Māndhāṭr, son of Madanapāla, deal with this theme in extenso.

But rebirth in low forms is not the only punishment for sin. Sometimes the offender takes after death

209. Manu, XII. 81  
210. Ibid., XII. 53 ff.  
211. Ibid., XII. 62  
212. Ibid., XII. 63; Visnu, XLIV. 21  
213. Book XLIV.  
214. cf. Jolly, Recht und Sitte, p. 253  
215. cited Kāsa, HMD., I. 128  
216. Ibid.
another body capable of receiving the punishments meted out to him by Yama in Hell. After having thus atoned for his sins, he later assumes a new body which is absolutely unconnected with his previous misconduct. The fact that the same section in the code of Manu recognises both these kinds of punishment may perhaps mean that the individual was sent to hell first and next made subject to the operation of the law of karma.

Sins may be distinguished into intentional (kṣaṇataḥ kṛta) and unintentional (akṣaṇataḥ kṛta); the latter can be cured by the study of the Veda (vēdābhyaśa); but one can get rid of the former only by observance of a number of expiations (prayascītta); many of which are really the methods suggested in the Epics and Classical literature for the eradication of sin. The old idea of transference of merit and demerit seems to be very popular in this li-

220. These are listed by Manu, XI. 46 ff.
terature. A bad king, we are told, takes upon himself the *sins* (*māla*) of his subjects; if he is dutiful, a sixth of the *merit* (*dharmasaṅgha*) of his subjects. The same is the penalty for a man who eats in the house of an embryo-killer (*bhrūṇeḥ*), a husband who tolerates an unfaithful wife, a teacher an undutiful pupil and a king a thief. Likewise a priestly guest robs his inhospitable host of all his *merit* (*sukṛta*), as does the injured man that of his perjurer. Among other ancient ideas continued in legal literature may be mentioned inherited sin and delayed fruition of an evil act.

Even in this literature *Fate* (*Daiva*) is sometimes identified with our past *karma*, and at other times it is regarded as an external influence to which we owe

221. *Manu*, VIII. 304 ff.; cf. Dusyanta's statement in the *Abh. Sak.* (II. 13): Teṣaṁ *sadbhāgam aksayeṇa dadyāt* *Śrānyāka hi nah.*

222. *Ibid.*., VIII. 317

223. *Ibid.*., III. 100

224. *Vāj.*, II. 75


many of our sins (pāpa). But, in both cases, man is asked, not to be upset by its existence, and carry on with his endeavour (daivam scintyāṁ tu āṁsase vidyate kriyā). Sins are always washed off by expiations (prayāscittā) whatever be the agency responsible for them. Fate (Daiva) and human endeavour (purusākāra) are but the two wheels of the same chariot and, if either is missing, no movement is possible.

In the ancient system of Hindu Medicine (Āyurveda) the belief prevails that the very womb that a man enters to take a birth, the food-juice (āhāra) of the mother and the mental traits that he assimilates as a foetus (garbha), the sense-organs (indriya) with which he is endowed are all dependent, we are told, on the past deeds (Karma) of the individual. The constructive and destructive operations of

228. Manu, XI. 47
229. Yañ., loc. cit.
230. Manu, loc. cit.
231. Yañ., I. 351
232. Carak., IV. 2. 24 ff.; 3. 26
233. This is also called Daiva.
Āyur, Pitta and Kapha, on which a man's health depends, are said to go on in unison with his past Karma; and when, through misuse of intelligence (prajñaparādha), the man follows on the path of evil (adharma) and sins, illness (vyādhi) is produced. Some of the diseases so originating are even named as in the case of leprosy (kustha) which is said to spring from antenatal insensibility (paramārtyā purūraktarakṣa-yogga ca tvagdosō bhavati). Jolly makes an elaborate list of such diseases. "In Susruta's system of medicine," he points out, "a certain class of diseases is attributed to the act of fate (daivatāla), as having been caused by divine wrath, or by the mystic potencies of charms or spells, or by contagion. Sudden paroxysms of fever and sudden death or paralysis caused by lightning are quoted as instances of such diseases. There was, besides, a popular belief, originating in the doctrine of karmapāka, or ripening of acts, according to which certain aggravating diseases and infirmities were

supposed to be due to some offences committed in a previous existence, leprosy, e.g., being regarded as the result of a heinous crime perpetrated in a former life; blindness, dizziness, and lameness as being the consequence, respectively, of killing a cow, cursing a Brahman, and stealing a horse; stinking breath as being caused by uttering calumnies; and incurable illness as due to injuring a person; epilepsy as the result of usurious practices, etc."

Fate (Dāive) in this literature is believed to be no other than our own deeds in the past (Daiyam ātmakrtam, 238 vidyāt karma, yey paurveśhikam). This is both ripe and unripe; and while the former is inviolable, the latter which is weak (duraleza) can always be destroyed by human means (purusakara).

The Hora portion of astrology (Jyotisha) is essentially concerned with revealing to man the matured state of his good and bad actions in his previous existences:

238. Čar. III. 3. 38; cf. also IV. 2. 42
239. Ibid.; for a good discussion of the topic, see Basu-gupta, H1P, p. 404.
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Horety ahoratra vivalkam eke
vanahanti purvapararvanalopat/
karmanijah purvabhave sad adah
yat tasya paktim samahivyansakti

240

Yad upacitam anyajanmani
subhasubha tasya karnanah paktim/
Vyanjayati sastram etat
tamasi dravyani dipa iva

241

Another belief of Astrology is that the movement of planets and stars (agrahanakasatravayoga) determines the good or bad that happens in the Universe (jagatah subhasubhasambhayah). In both cases it is not a note of pessimism that the Astrology of the ancient Hindus strikes. Planets and stars, and our own conduct in our past lives are not believed to

240. Varahamihira, Horasastra, I. 3

241. cited by Rudra in his vivarana on the above as in Sravali, but the verse is not found in Kalyanavarna's work of this name.

242. Bhutotpala on BS., I.1. 8
be the sole determiners of our present destiny; they show, at best, the "tendencies" we inherit from the past; and when these tendencies are bad the power rests with us to check them.

As a jurist Kautilya attaches due weight to the influence of Fate which he identifies with accidents (upanipāta), and the provisions he makes concerning deposits (upaniṅṅika) are so important that they are continued in principle even now. It is Kautilya's ordinance that no deposit may be reclaimed if it is known to have been destroyed under unforeseen circumstances; when forts or country-parts are destroyed by enemies or wild-tribes, (para- cakraṭavikābhyaṁ āurgarāstravilopa), when the messenger entrusted with the delivery of the property dies on the way (ante ra vā mṛtasya), or when the merchandise is 'lost or destroyed owing to inherent defects or to some unforeseen accidents' (bhresopaniṁpatābhyaṁ desakāloparodhi dattam).

243. Jolly, loc. cit. 244. Arthasastra, III.11.64
nastāṁ vinastāṁ vā).

But as a politician and an Economist, Kauṭilya is aware of the dangers of fatalism which can paralyse the foreign policy of the state. Among enemies who are easily uprooted he who trusts in Fate (daivātrāmanā) is enumerated. A very important obstruction to profit (labhavighna) is, we are told, 'faith in the auspiciousness of of lunar days and stars' (mangalatithinaksatrestitva). Kauṭilya says that wealth is the star for wealth, and the fool who goes in quest of the stars is the one most likely to lose all his wealth (artha):

Naksatram atiprechchantam
bālam artho'tivartate /

Artho'hy arthasya naksatram
kim karīyanti tārakah //

Kauṭilya does admit that the affairs of the world are

245. *Arthasastra*, VI. 1. 97

246. Ibid., IX. 4. 142; Jayaswal (Menu and Yajñavalkya, p.101 f.) translates the word by "Politics", but the context seems to warrant "wealth" only.
governed, not only by human (manusa) causes, but by providential causes (daīva) as well like fortune (sya) and misfortune (aneva); the human is what is anticipated (ūṛṣṭākaritam manusam), while the providential is what is unforeseen (ūdrṣṭākaritam daivam). What he deprecates is the tendency to attach an undue weight to things unforeseen.

The very elaborate study made in the Epic and Popular literature of the law of Karma, its manifold implications and its position vis-à-vis Fate, Chance or Fortune and God who all influence human experience on earth, has certain vital disclosures to make to the student of Hindu Ethics in general and to one who would trace the origin and growth of this doctrine in Hindu literature. The latter would find this period a time when the doctrine of Karma, established clearly, for the first time, in the Upanisads, was known enough to be axiomatic. But so far from being regarded as an inevitable doom, the doctrine appears

247. Arthasastra, VI. 2. 98
to have provided ample scope for reflection as a result of which it seems to have lost its apparent terrific exterior. People now realise that there is no escape from the law, but they know more than one way seeking relief from the consequence of an evil deed committed at random. This doctrine has, to them, 'nought of the boar but the skin.' The former would also realise that the law of Karma is only just but not brutal in import, and is after all not so fierce as it appears to be. Karma is but one among many factors influencing our experience in this world. Sometimes it is even identical with fate. Even when it is different from fate, neither of these two can afflict the man who can use his personal endeavour or will, more powerful than either of these two factors, to put an end to their influence. Chance or Fortune and God exert only a beneficiary influence, and are there only to help us when our enterprise is virtuous.