PREFACE

The fascinating and yet difficult topic of Determinism and Freedom has been much debated and discussed by thinkers down the corridors of time. In this debate, two groups have emerged prominently, — one group accepting determinism at the cost of freedom, and the other espousing the idea of total freedom. The obvious implication has been that the acceptance of either of the standpoints entails a rejection of the other. It is encouraging however to find that the possibility of a third alternative which would suggest the acceptance of aspects of the two has been conceived by some philosophers.

The major task of our thesis is to argue for the plausibility of the third alternative which holds that human life may be determined and is yet free. Our submission is that we have brought in our own dimensions of analysis to the argument in the present project. We have pointed to the difficulties inherent in accepting either of the extreme stands and also positively made a case for considering human life in terms of the inextricable wovenness of 'deterministic' and 'free' aspects.

We have commenced our discussion (Chapter 1) by analysing some important definitions of determinism and tracing the development of the doctrine in diverse realms of thought.
In this connection we considered it important to take a close look at scientific determinism (Chapter 2) and metaphysical determinism (Chapter 3). Within the realm of scientific determinism itself we considered the transition from the deterministic to the indeterministic analyses since it provides illuminating implications for the concept of human freedom. We also considered the two major questions raised in the context of determinism and human freedom which have evoked varied responses and constitute the determinism-freedom spectrum. The responses considered are: fatalism, hard determinism, total freedom, libertarianism and compatibilism. With the exception of the last one, the others were found to be unsatisfactory. We have hence devoted an entire chapter (Chapter 4) to a discussion of the compatibility theory of freedom. In chapters 5 and 6, we have sought to illustrate our thesis with the help of the concepts of social action and the doctrine of karma. In the concluding chapter (Chapter 7) we have brought together the strings of our argument.
The dissertation entitled "On Some Implications of Determinism and Moral Freedom" which was submitted by me for the M.Phil. Degree provided the nucleus of the argument of the present thesis. I submit that the present work is a much more elaborate and critical study of the whole issue of determinism and moral freedom.

30 AUGUST, 1982

CHAMU NAMASIVAYAM