CHAPTER II

JĪVĀTMAN AND THE BODY

Once the validity of the pramāṇa as championed by Kadhva is admitted there should be little difficulty in allowing objective reality to the body as well. Every pramāṇa, whether it is perception, inference or testimony, depends directly or indirectly on senses which themselves constitute a part of the body. We might go further and assert that there can be no perception—at least external—without sensation of some sorts, no inference without perception and no testimony without some assistance from the first two. Experience (anubhava) too, both internal and external, is intrinsically connected with the states of the body, like the sense of pain, pleasure, anger etc. As for the sākṣin, we may remember, it cannot act in abstract, in isolation from the body, at any rate in its normal course. Similarly also illusions are due mostly to the defective working of the senses, and this again points to the reality of the body. And finally all knowledge as we possess it is a necessary prelude to desire and instrumental in the attainment of the desired end.1 The effort for attaining the desired end leads in its turn to action,2 which with the karma-indriyas for its instrument implies the body as its end.

But to assert the reality of the body is neither to equate it nor to identify it with the jīva. The Cārvākas seem to have done precisely that, denying the specific distinction of the spirit beyond that of what might be termed as epiphenomenon of

1. Aparokṣam parokṣam va jñānam īstasya sādhanam—A.V. I 1, 54
2. Kāryatā ca na kācit syād īstasādhanam vinā—A.V. I 1, 42
matter. Man, according to them, is no more than the totality of his body if we do not exclude a few special phenomena like knowledge, which also belong to the same body. Strange enough, the position of the Advaitins would seem to favour the Carvāka contention when they claim that in our ordinary experience we identify body and soul. A man is often seen bemoaning his fate in statements like, 'I have fallen on evil times,' when it is only his wife or children that are the casualties. He is apt to ascribe to his own self the qualities of the outer world, and more especially those belonging strictly to his body. For he asserts: I am stout; I am thin; I am fair; I am standing; I leap. The qualities of the sense organs are also transferred: I am dumb, deaf, one-eyed, blind. Such is the case also with the qualities of the internal organ (antahkarana), like desire, wish, doubt, resolution.  

For Madhva this is little better than quibbling. Granted that man regards his body as his sole and exclusive property, even in his wildest dreams he does not identify his own self with it. The distinction between the two is never lost sight of. Our normal language as well as perception testifies what our everyday experience reveals. We say: 'I have a body'; and not 'I am a body'. Thus the spiritual nature of the soul is not confounded with the material nature of the body.

True enough, people may at times speak of the body and soul somewhat confusedly. But the confusion is due mostly to the imprecision and inaccuracy of language and expression. The close and intimate union between body and soul, which may

3. I.Ph. pp. 477s
4. Dehādanyo'nuhbhavata ātmā bhāti sarīrinām/ mama deha iti vyaktām mamārtha itivat sadā/—A.V. II 2, 42
5. Dehātmavām yadi na tat prāptam pratyakṣatah kvacit/ mama deha iti hyeva na deho'hemiti premā/—A.V. III 2, 61
be easily compared to live embers, must be regarded as a partial reason for the glib expressions that attribute the qualities of one to the other. But men know that their experience is otherwise, and precisely otherwise at that. For it is an unassailable fact that no man suffers the illusion in which he begins to doubt his own identity: Is it myself or not. And this is precisely why the Advaitin's assertion that non-self is imposed on the self makes little sense.

Even when, however, the reality of the body and of the soul is established, and a real distinction between the two is admitted we may still be confronted with a further question: how does the non-spatial spiritual entity that is the jīvātman come to be or continue to be related to the body which is spatially extended? The problem has been variously tackled by earlier Indian thinkers. In their effort to find a solution even the spiritualistic schools have gone to the extent of ascribing spatial characteristics to the self in reality, if not in name. Thus the self is regarded as extending to and comprising the whole of the universe, or by contrast shrunk to the size of a grain. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad embodies the view that the span from head to chin—pradesamātra—is the measure of the self in extension. As against this view the Jainas maintain that the jīva takes on the size of the body it assumes. Śaṅkara's position is that the ātman itself is of infinite size though one may regard it as atomic (anu) when it shares in the nature of its adjunct or buddhi.

6. Ibid. 63-67
7. na cātmanyasaṁabhramah kvāpi drśṭah/ na hi kaścid ahamaham na bhavāṁiti bhranto drśyate/*V.T.V., 349-50
Cf. infra pp 106 cs
8. Vedanta pp. 121s
9. Ibid.
Like his predecessor Rāmānuja, Madhva also takes care to insist that the jīva is atomic by nature. But neither its partlessness nor its simplicity is any impediment in its relation with the body. Using the age-old analogies Madhva explains the action of the jīva on the body: as a drop of sandal paste smeared on one point, and affecting the whole body; or like a lamp spreading its light all around from its fixed pedestal. We must note that in their 'essence' the paste or the light is confined to one spot. It is only in its actions that extension could be ascribed to it. Such is the case also with the jīva. While remaining absolutely simple in his essence and confined to a point he informs the entire body by his attribute of cognition. Even in such an analogy, it might further be objected, the jīva should have a spot of its own where it resides and from where it establishes contact with the rest of the body as from a point of reference. Else one jīva could simultaneously inform any number of bodies, and all of them intrinsically, too. Madhva seems to concede the cogency of the argument, and citing an authoritative text from Praśna Upaniṣad (III 6) asserts that the interior of the heart is what constitutes the residing centre for the jīva. Apropos of Madhva's position it will be of interest to note that Caraka and Śuāruta too regard the heart as the seat of consciousness.

While the jīva informs the body by its consciousness it does not however act through it in a way that is haphazard or amorphous. The activity of the jīva is canalized through and

10. Anorapi jīvasya sarvaśarirāvyāptir yujyate/ yathā haricandanaivipula ekaśeṣaṣapatiṣṭyāḥ sarva-śarirāvyāptih/ ...yathālokaśya prakāśagunena vyāptir jyotirūpenāvyāptih eva cidguṇena vyāptir jīvarūpenāvyāptih/—B.S.Bh. II 3, 23.25
11. Hṛdi hy esa ātmā—Ibid. II 3, 24
12. I.P.C. p.1
specified by what we know as senses. Their disparate operations are in turn synthesized by manas. Though the activity of the senses is thus an everyday experience for man and a subject of scientific treatment today, each philosophical system in India has its own theories about it, more or less elaborate and heavily biased by its metaphysical tenets. Thus the Jainas distinguish the five senses into dravyendriyas and bhāvendriyas which may be practically rendered as sense organs and their psychic counterparts. The dravyendriya itself may be viewed as a purely external, physical organ such as the eye, and the internal invisible faculty of the soul which alone is worth the name of sense. As a matter of fact, however, the Jainas refuse to regard senses as distinct entities, somewhat superadded to the soul. Sense organs may be likened to windows for the soul to look out on the world of cognition. But all cognition, including sense knowledge is to be attributed to the jīva alone. The function of the senses is only to remove the covering which would otherwise keep knowledge from revealing itself. The jīva is present in all parts of the body. The knowledge it generates, therefore, in association with a particular part of the body e.g. eye, is called by a particular name, e.g. vision. But to see belongs to the soul, not to the eye. The same reasons hold good also in the case of manas. It is superfluous to endow it with an existence of its own, since the function ascribed to it could very well be fulfilled by the jīva itself.15

The Sāṇkhya prefers to regard indriya as an instrument of the soul. A sense organ may essentially be described in its origin as a determinate product of ahaṅkāra and in its function as an instrument of the jīva. The system on the whole admits eleven sense organs—five of cognition (buddhindriyas); five of action (karmendriyas) and the internal organ or manas.

15. I.P.C. pp.2-3; Dasgupta I p.184
At times, however, we come across another view which regards buddhi and ahankāra as other forms of the internal organ. Ahankāra, however, is amorphous by itself which comes to be specified and determined in the form of sense organs. It is moreover psychophysical in its essence. The sense organs to the extent that they are modifications of ahankāra share also in its peculiar nature. As instruments, however, they provide manas with direct impressions of objects. Manas reacts on the data by way of assimilation and discrimination. Then ahankāra treats them by its unity of apperception. And finally buddhi determines them further and hands them over to the self.\textsuperscript{14}

The views of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas and the Mīmāṃsakas on sense organs resemble those of the Sāṅkhya. But there are differences, too. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, for example, admit only one internal organ and that is manas. Its existence is proved from its function which is to perceive pleasure and pain. But the Mīmāṃsakas argue that the internal organ is known as such because its operation in the perception of the self and its qualities takes place independently of the external senses. It is only with regard to the external objects that it must be dependent on the activity of the external senses since it cannot come in contact with outer world directly.\textsuperscript{15} As against the Sāṅkhya position the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika maintains that the external senses are material while the manas is not; and that the objects which the external senses can apprehend are restricted (niyata-visaya) while those the manas could are not (sarva-visaya).\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{14} I.P.C. p.4
\textsuperscript{15} I.P.C. pp.16-17
\textsuperscript{16} p.19, Op.Cit.
Whatever be the lucubrations put in by Madhva's followers on the subject, his own treatment of the senses is scanty and oblique. He seems to have taken for working hypothesis the general scheme enunciated by other schools of old, ignoring their subtleties. So if his position does differ, or ought to differ from those of others it is we who should ferret it out, often by bringing out what is implicit.

In general Madhva admits six of the classical senses—the five external and the manas. The organs of action are also mentioned. But as we have seen, he regards sāksin as the sense par excellence. But because it is spiritual by nature Madhva is bound to differ from the Vaiśeṣikas who maintain that all the senses are material in their make-up. He must also disagree with the Sāṅkhyaśa who regard all senses as products of ahaṅkāra. The sāksin is not. Once the spiritual nature and the excellence of the sāksin is safeguarded, Madhva does not hesitate to subscribe to the Sāṅkhyā scheme of the three guṇas constituting the sense organs and the rest of the world. In the intimate relation that exists between the body and the soul, the sattva guṇa links the soul with the manas and with the organs of cognition, the rajas with the organs of action, and the tamas with the body. Similarly all activity considered internal, namely, that of manas and organs of cognition must be attributed to sattva; that of organs of action to rajas and the bodily activity like impressions—vedana—to tamas.18

The position which manas enjoys in Madhva psychology is second only to sāksin. As such manas is without a beginning.

17. Prākṛtam śuddhacaitanyam aksam tu dvividham matam... pañcendriyamanobhedāt prākṛtam ād vidham smrtam/
---A.V. II 1, 28.30

18. Jñāṇendraśrīca manasaḥ sattvam badhnāti pūrussa/ rajah karmendriyair nityam śāriṛenā tamas tathā/ āmaram yat tu kartṛham tat sattvendraśhīmānyate/ rajasātvendraśhīmānyata karaṇāḥ k armaṅkṛṣṇaṁ/ śāriṛaṁ vedanaśyāṁ tu tamaśī h yabhi- manyate/---Db.T.R. II 5.19
And from the beginningless time it alone without a second must be credited to be the depository of all the traces, left behind by the jīva's experiences through life after life. Constituted by the three gunas it remains so until the definitive release of the jīva from samsāra is achieved. At the cosmic dissolution it is reduced to its elemental, subtle form. When a new creation takes place, however, the subtle manas acquires a certain amount of growth by the accretion of the elements of matter. But whether in its subtle form or otherwise, manas has always the deposit of samskaras in its keep. Thus while it is an essential means for the jīva to act in and through the body, ironically enough manas is the one that binds the self to its adjunct and samsāra. That is precisely why release may be said to consist in breaking the link between the jīva and manas so far as it is the support of samskaras.19

However real and onerous may be this grip of manas and samskaras on the soul, there is also a beneficial side in their operation—and that is memory. As we have seen, memory is the function of manas. What is more, memory must be regarded as the primary function of manas with all its samskaras. Another function of manas is recognition—pratyabhijñā. For in its aspect of the past, recognition is dependent on samskaras, just as its aspect of the present it owes to the activity of the senses. But recognition is not mere memory or pure perception. Neither is it a mixture of both. It is a mental act where the manas, thanks to its samskaras connects the past to the present and affirms and interprets both the data as related to each other. On this alone can the sākṣīn place its seal of evidence

19. Vāsanā sarvavastūnām anādyanubhāvagatāh/ santye-vāśesa-
 jīvānām anādīmanasi sthitāḥ/ trigunātmakam mano'ātyāva yāvan
 muktāḥ sadātanam/ tatraivalāṣa-samskarāḥ sañciyante sadaiva ca/
sūksmatvena laye sacca prākṛtaṁ upačyate/ srṣṭikāle yadā
 tanna kutah samsārasamsthitāḥ/—A.V. III 2, 5-7’
so that the person readily submits himself to the validity of the act with a statement like 'This is that'. Any judgment on reality, we might say then, presupposes activity of manas.

Its origin from ahankāra and its functions described so far would still place manas at the material level, however exalted that level might be. How does it then lend itself to sākṣin whose nature is spiritual through and through? Madhva proffers a solution which may be regarded as a tour de force by his admirers, and deus ex machina by his adversaries. The solution has it that the manas in us, or what we call internal organ—antaḥkaraṇa—is twofold: the one material, made of matter with its three gunas and the other spiritual, participating in the spiritual nature of the ātman. Just like the union between the jīva and its body the one between the two folds of manas lasts only until the release. In fact it might be argued that ultimately it is the rupture between these two that spells salvation for the jīva which has now the spiritual manas absorbed in itself. And finally this tendency of seeking a counterpart in the spiritual world for almost everything material leads Madhva to postulate the existence of the spiritual sense-organ also, as of the nature of ātman. They are present in Viṣṇu and Śrī essentially and eternally. As for the others who are in bondage, they will be found in them together with their counter-parts.

20. Mānasām taddhi viṣṇānam tacca sākṣipramāṇakam/ atītānāgatam yadhved yogibhir dṛṣṭyate'ṛjasā/-A.V. II 1, 59

21. Manaścā dvividham smṛtam/ cetanam ca jaḍam ceti caksurādyam tathāiva ca/ cetanam tvindriyam nyātmasvarūpān nāparaṃ smṛtam/ muktānām cetasām tveva baddhānām ubhināyām tatha/-BAU.Bh. III 5 (p.269)

22. Aksāni ca svarūpāni nityajñānātmakāni ca/ viṣṇoh śṛīyas tathāvatiḥcyayogyag dviśiddhāni tu/ svarūpāni ca bhinnnāni bhinnāni tṛividhāni ca/ daivasuraḥ madhyātmā pratyakṣām īritam/-V.T.V.,31
With all this ingenious mechanism of sense organs we must not lose sight of the fact that there is a certain hierarchy about it, which leads up to and works under sāksin, the sense par excellence. It is sāksin that gives meaning to others and holds them together. The 'sense' that cognizes in a person is sāksin, and not any other. Theirs is only to supply the data. It is for sāksin to apprehend them, stamp them with its authority or reject them.