STATUS OF THE WORLD
The conception of the Ultimate Reality cannot be complete without a reference to the world - with regards to its nature and its relation to the Ultimate Reality. But to ascertain the real nature of the world we need go deep into the primary principle which manifests as the world, and have to determine the true nature of that principle.

Śaṅkara ascribes the appearance of the world to māyā which is indescribable or false. The world is a modification of that principle of māyā which is neither absolutely real nor absolutely unreal. The world shares the nature of māyā and is ultimately declared to be false in Śaṅkara's system. Brahman is the sole Reality from the transcendental point of view. The world though empirically real, is metaphysically unreal or false, and is, therefore, held as an appearance or vivarta of Brahman. Being the manifestation or modification of a false principle, the world is as false as māyā. The falsity of māyā or the world means that it is 'sadasadyamani-vacanīya' - not definable either as 'sat' or as 'asat'. In other words, māyā or world is neither existent or real (sat) as Brahman, nor is it non-existent (asat) like a hare's horn.

It is perceived empirically to be existent just as an appearance like a rope-snake is perceived to exist. The relation of such a world with the Ultimate Reality - Brahman is ādhyāsikā-tādātmya or false identity just like the relation of the rope-snake with the actual rope. Such false identity does in no way disturb the purity and the absolute unity of Brahman.
Thus, the world which is a modification of nescience (māyā), or an appearance (vivarta) of Brahman, dissolves in that supreme unity of Brahman, when nescience is completely destroyed in the final liberation, just as the rope-snake dissolves into the actual rope when the ignorance is removed.

So it is that the theory of creation maintained by the Sāṅkarites is called as Brahma-vivarta-vāda or māyikapariṇāma-vāda. But according to Rāmānuja the status of the world is quite different. According to him the world is not an unreal appearance or an illusory modification of Brahman. It is a real modification of acit which is an integral part of Brahman. Brahman remains unmanifested with subtle conscious jīvas (sūkṣma-cit) and subtle matter (sūkṣma-acit) as His body, before world creation. At the time of creation, those subtle conscious jīvas assume different bodies or forms as different deva, manuṣya, etc., and the subtle matter manifests as the material world. Thus, the material world is nothing but manifestation or modification of the acit or insentient part of Brahman; and so Rāmānuja's view is named as Brahma-pariṇāma-vāda. Since the subtle cit and acit stand as body of Brahman, the world and souls which are but manifestations of sūkṣma cit and acit, are also related to Brahman as His body. Thus, the relation of the world and the jīvas with Brahman is ātma-saṃśāra or the body-soul relation as is held by Rāmānuja.

Hence, according to Rāmānuja, the world is existent and real when it exists. The world and its objects are in no way false as...
long as they exist, though they are not permanent. They are perishable and transitory (nasāvara); but they are real so long as they exist either in gross manifested or subtle unmanifested forms. Though Rāmānuja is said to be an advocate of Brahma-Parināmavāda, it should be noted that by parināma or modification of Brahman, Rāmānuja means the modification of the body or the prakāra of Brahman. But, since that prakāra or body which is but subtle disembodied states of souls, and unmanifested matter (sūkṣmacit-acit), is not different from Brahman but is a part and parcel of Brahman, modification of that body is virtually modification of Brahman Himself, for which his view is considered to be Brahma-parināma.

But the Vallabha school holds an unique position in maintaining essential modification of Brahman for the manifestation of the world. The world is not the modification of māyā or body or power of Brahman but is transformation of the essence of Brahman (svarūpa-parināma). The same essence (svarūpa) of Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the world. This svarūpa-parināma is avikṛta-parināma as well, which means that inspite of his transformation as the world He does not undergo any perversion or change within Himself. Though this position does not satisfy the test of Logic, the Śrutitexts, which are the final authority with regard to the Ultimate, are clear on the point that Brahman retains His essential integral nature in spite of becoming the world Himself (1).

(1A) Taittirīya- Up. - 2. 6; Śvetāsvatā- Up. - 6. 1. 19
He creates the world as *līlā* or sport in which only the 'sat' aspect of Brahman is manifested; the other two aspects of intelligence and bliss are veiled in material objects by His divine will. But in the jīva His two aspects of sat and cit - existence and consciousness are manifested (2), while the three aspects of sat, cit, ānanda abide completely in Him only. The world being a real transformation is not an illusion, and the relation it bears to Brahman is that of an effect to its cause.

The Lord manifests different qualities in different objects according to His will, and everything in the world is Brahman. But ignorance (māyā) veils that vision, and creates in our mind other māyika objects similar to the real objects of the world with 'selfishness' and 'mineness' attached to them. The objects viewed as Brahman are the real world (Jagat), and the māyika objects viewed with selfishness are samsāra, which being the creation of soul's ignorance causes bondage to the souls. While avidyā through ignorance of one's own self and superimpositions causes bondage, vidyā through renunciation, yoga, and knowledge, etc. destroys avidyā and its creation the samsāra, and the soul attains final liberation. But, the world as Jagat is not destroyed by vidyā though the samsāra is destroyed (3). It may be said that the conception of two worlds as real and māyika - as Jagat and samsāra, is contribution of Vallabha (4).

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(2) Indian Philosophy. Vol.II - Page 757.
(3) *Samsārasya layo muktau na prapañcasya karhicit/ Āmūbhāṣya - 2. 3. 5.*
With regard to the status of the world the Gaudiya Vaishnavas have occupied a distinctive position by resorting to the doctrine of śakti-parināma as contrasted with the doctrines of Brahma-vivarta of Śaṅkara, and Brahma-parināma of Rāmānuja, and svarūpa-parināma of Vallava. In their case also to determine the real nature and status of the World, we have to consider carefully the principle which manifests or evolves as the material world. According to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin, we know, the world is created by Paramātman out of his māyā-śakti which is regarded as a vahiranga-śakti or extraneous power of the Lord. Thus we must have a clear conception of the vahiranga-śakti or māyā-śakti of Paramātman in order to ascertain the real nature and status of the world.

It is already mentioned that this māyā-śakti is called vahiranga or extraneous because it does not pertain to the essential nature of the Lord, and has only a distant relation with the Lord. As māyā-śakti belongs to the partial manifestation of the Lord, and is experienced at a lower plane of existence, for this reason also it may be regarded as vahiranga or extraneous. However, in order to describe the nature of this vahiranga māyā-śakti, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin quoting a Bhagavata verse (5) interprets in the Bhagavat-Sandarva that māyā is that which is apprehended outside the Ultimate Reality or Brahman, and ceases to be apprehended with the realisation of Brahman. It cannot be apprehended in its own essential nature; i.e. without being supported by Brahman it cannot manifest itself. By stating that māyā-śakti is outside the Ultimate Reality, Śrī Jīva

(5) Bhāgavata-2.9. 33.
gives a position to māyā-śakti different from that of Śaṅkara.

According to Śaṅkara māyā-śakti is the only śakti of Brahman which makes the jīvas and the world appear. On the other hand, according to Śrī Jīva, māyā-śakti occupies an inferior position. It is inferior to both the svarūpa-śakti and taṭastha-śakti of the Lord.

Śrī Jīva holds māyā-śakti of the Lord, i.e. of Paramātman to be the material cause of the world. This provides the clue of determining the nature and status of the world.

The Vedantins in general admit two kinds of cause—the upādāna or the material cause, and the nimitta or the efficient and other causes. But, while in the case of ordinary effects, the material cause is always different from the efficient cause, in case of the world, the Vedantins assert, the same Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the world (6). Śrī Jīva also as a Vedantin subscribes to this view; but he has introduced Paramātman as a partial aspect and manifestation of the Lord concerned directly with the causation of the world. He is both the material and efficient cause nimitta of the world. Paramātman is the efficient cause (nimitta) in His pure aspect, and is the material cause—upādāna of the world in the aspect of being qualified by His māyā-śakti.

He (Paramātman) is the upādāna or stuff of the world in the sense that He is the root or ground of creation, and not the modifying material cause of creation. In fact, the modifications

(6) Ṣaṅkara-sūtra - 1. 4. 23.
into the forms of the world are of His māyā-sakti. So Paramātman is not disturbed in His essential integrity. Śrī Jīva further says that Paramātman is, in the primary sense, material and efficient cause of the world because of being the omnipotent root. Māyā-sakti is also the efficient and material cause of the world but in a secondary sense, being entirely dependent on the Lord. The māyā-sakti is nimitta in that aspect which is connected with puruṣa or jīva as kāla, karma, daiva and svabhāva, i.e., time, actions, proneness to actions, and their impressions. This nimitta aspect of māyā-sakti is called Jīva-māyā as contrasted with guṇamāyā or upādāna-māyā which is the material cause of the world. This guṇamāyā which is constituted of the three guṇas is prakṛti or pradhāna. It is called pradhāna because it is the primary or supreme principle in comparison with its effects like mahat (intelligence), etc. It is also called Prakṛti because it underlies as the substratum in all causes and effects. It is also called 'avyakta' or unmanifested (indiscrete) because of its remaining in an undifferentiated state (7).

Thus, the two aspects of the principle of causality, viz. nimitta and upādāna are ascribed to māyā-sakti, and each of the aspects has a reference to jīva (the individual self), and prakṛti (the material nature), respectively.

With regard to the function of the jīvamāyā or the nimitta aspect of māyā-sakti it is held that it veils the wisdom and self-consciousness of the jīvas.

But guṇamāyā or the upādāna aspect manifests the material world. At the time of dissolution it remains as the balance of the three guṇas, and at the time of creation it changes and evolves into different forms due to the disturbance of the equilibrium of the three guṇas. In this sense māyā is called srṣṭi-sthityanta-kāriṇī, or the śakti which causes the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the world. In the Upaniṣads and Bhāgavata māyā is represented figuratively as tri-coloured which has a reference to the three guṇas (8).

The jīvamāyā or nimitta-māyā, as the source of efficient causation, involves the four categories of kāla, daiva, karma and svabhāva.

Kāla is one of the nimitta: described as the kṣobhaka or source of provocation which causes a stir in the three guṇas of māyā to effect a breach in the equilibrium of the guṇas for the production of the forms of the world. A verse from the Bhāgavata (9) is referred to, to show that by this function of kāla, Paramātman places the seed of creation in the guṇamāyā.

Kāla, in a sense, regulates the process of creation but in its turn is regulated by Paramātman who is eternally beyond kāla, and being the controller of kāla is not affected by it.

Karman also is described as the nimitta or an accessory cause of this disturbance, and comprises of the acts done not by the real ego, but (the empirical ego (ego of the jīvas in phenomenal existence),

(8) Svetāsvatara-Up. - 4. 5.
(9) Bhāgavata - 3.5. 26.
causing rebirth and bondage. Such acts, therefore, as devotional worship, etc., which proceed from the real ego of the jīva, are not to be included in this category.

Daiva means the obvious proneness to karman for the production of consequences.

Svabhāva again is described as the impressions left by Karman (tatsamskārah) (10).

But all these are connected with the jīvas while they are in bondage by the power of māyāsakti.

The function of the nimitta or jīva-māyā is two-fold, viz. knowledge (vidyā) and ignorance (avidyā), the first causing emancipation and the second bondage. The jīva by itself is eternally emancipated (svato mukta eva). In some souls this consciousness of eternal freedom is evident as in the case of eternally emancipated souls; but in most cases it is veiled, or obscured as in the case of those who are subject to ignorance caused by māyā. In the case of the souls in bondage, it is through vidyā that their veil of ignorance is removed leading to their final liberation through the knowledge of their true nature. But this vidyā-śakti should not be confused with the vidyā-śakti termed as yogomāyā which is a modification of svarūpa-śakti or Cit-śakti. The vidyā-śakti which is a modification of māyā-śakti is only a door or gate-way to that vidyā-śakti which actually brings our final emancipation through the grace of the Lord. (10A)

(10A) Ibid, Page 171.
Again, avidyā or nescience which is also a modification of māyā-sakti has two-fold function, viz. of (a) āvarana or veiling, and (b) of vikṣepa or distractions. The āvarana-power conceals the true nature of the jīva as pure and free, and vikṣepa distracts the knowledge of the jīvas by producing false notions. By its influence jīvas think themselves to be independent agents, and also beset with impurities and imperfections.

With regard to guṇamāyā or upādāna-māyā which is the stuff or the material cause of the world, it is said in the Bhāgavata (11) that it consists of dravya, kṣetra, prāṇa, ātman, and vikāra. The word 'dravya' means five subtle elements. And 'kṣetra' means prakṛti. Prāṇa is the vital principle. 'Ātman' here means prakṛta-ahamkāra, or the ego which is a modification of prakṛti. And 'vikāra' means five sense-organs, five active organs, and the mind together with the five gross elements (mahābhūta). Deha or the material body which is an aggregate constituted of these gross elements, and sense-organs continue like a stream or series as of the seed and its sprout. The body is like a sprout which again produces the seed of karma, which again produces the body as a sprout (effect), and so on. Thus, the upādāna aspect of the māyā called guṇamāyā is the material source of the material creation.

With regard to the process of creation Śrī Jīva refers to the Bhāgavata verses (12) where it has been stated that when Pradhāna and its modifications like mahat, etc. were stirred by the Lord, a

\[\text{(11)}\] Dravyah kṣetram prāṇa ātma vikāraḥ
Tatt-samhato bijarhapravahāḥ// Bhāgavata - 10. 63. 25.

material egg (the material universe as Hiranyagarbha) was born, and from that egg the cosmic person called Virat appeared. The egg referred to is described to contain the elements of water, etc. each surrounded by the other finer elements. Here it is to be understood that though described as manifestations of the Lord, Hiranyagarbha and Virat are not His aprakrtta (beyond nature) manifestations, but are prakrtta (phenomenal) manifestations being the subtle and the gross cosmic bodies respectively. These two aspects are superimposed on the Lord as His manifestations for the sake of worship and meditation. The wise ones do not accept these manifestations as His real manifestations, but consider these to be His external bodies. Though this theory of manifestation of maya-sakti as held by Sri Jiva differs from the Samkhya theory of evolution of prakrti, the manifestations being completely subservient to Paramatman, yet it seems that this school has been influenced by the Samkhya system in holding the world as real, and in holding the modifications of prakrti almost similar to that of the Samkhya.

The world or creation is not unreal or false like a vivarta or appearance as the Saankarites hold.

According to the Saankarites the world being the modification of maya which is itself an illusory principle, is as illusory or false as maya. But to Sri Jiva neither maya-sakti of the Lord nor its modification as the world is illusory or false.

In order to refute the falsity of the world and maya as professed by the Saankarites, Sri Jiva puts forward various arguments in
refutation of the various doctrines and theories which the Śaṅkarites hold.

In the first place the māyā-śakti of the Lord cannot be an illusory principle of nescience, because then it could not have as its support Brahman who, according to them, is of the nature of pure consciousness devoid of any attribute or ego. The Śaṅkarites hold pure Brahman to be both the support (āśraya) and object (viṣaya) of that illusory principle of nescience (13) which is the cause of error. But, how can such a pure Brahman of the nature of consciousness be the support or cause of error? Therefore, the word māyā cannot and does not mean ajarāna or nescience.

Again, the Śaṅkarites compare the world with an illusory silver or a dream to assert its falsity; but Śrī Jīva contends that even a superimposed silver or a dream is not false or illusory. When a mental modification in the form of a silver is produced by experiencing a real silver, the mental modification lies dormant in the form of Samāskāra. Again, the sight of a similar lusturous object excites the dormant impression to produce a recollection of the silver without any enquiry into the particulars of the thing in front. This is what we call error. But the silver recollected, or the recollection of the silver is not false. A dream or the objects of dream are also not false, but are recollections of the objects seen during the waking state. Therefore, such comparison with dream or superimposed silver does not make the world false.

Here in the analysis of error Śrī Jīva seems to have accepted

(13) Āśrayatva—viṣayatvabhāginī nirvibhāga-citireva kevalā/
    Samkṣepa-śārīraka - 1.3/9.
akhyātivāda or the theory of non-apprehension held by Prabhakara Mīmāṃsakas, in opposition to anirvacanīyakhyātivāda or the theory of illusory creation in error held by the Śaṅkarites. Though at some places in the scriptures the world has been described as āropa or as superimposed, that does not signify the falsity of the world. That which is really accomplished or existent somewhere, may only be superimposed elsewhere. That which is not existent or real, e.g. a sky-flower, cannot be superimposed anywhere. Therefore, if the world has been described somewhere as āropa that does not mean that the world is false; but rather, it signifies that the world is actually existent somewhere. Thus, no object is actually false. The superimposition of the world or of worldly objects upon Paramātman, who is pure, may be false (knowledge), but the world is not false. Though the world according to Śrī Jīva is supported in the pure substratum - the Lord (Paramātman), yet it has no intrinsic relation with Him (14).

Again, the Śaṅkarites contend that māyā as nescience must be admitted in Pure Brahman, for, otherwise the dual world cannot be explained. It is māyā by the power of veiling and projection that māyā as nescience projects this dual world by veiling the true nature of the non-dual Brahman. But, Śrī Jīva contends that the dual world may easily be explained by admitting the supralogical supreme powers in Brahman. Paramātman who is essentially immutable may have modifications through the supralogical powers just as a cintāmaṇi or a produce-all stone produces all things, or just as a magnet makes the pieces of iron to move. Therefore, there is no reason for the assumption of nescience or ignorance in Brahman who is of the nature

(14) Paramātman - Sandarīha - Page 193.
of self-luminous consciousness.

The word 'māyā' also does not mean anything like 'indrajāla' or magic as the Śaṅkarites hold. The word 'māyā' means such power which accomplish various events and objects (vicitrārthakara-śaktivaicittam), by deriving the word as "miyate anmāyā" - that by which is composed (15). Thus 'māyā' being sākti or power has got no touch of falsity in it.

Though in some places of the Bhāgavata there is description even of vivarta or apparent transformation, that is to be considered as 'gaṇa' or secondary, because that statement lies in the topic of Jñānayoga; but pariṇāma or actual modification being described in its own topic, i.e. in the topic of creation, is the primary meaning. Therefore, the final import of the Śrīmad Bhāgavata is in actual modification or pariṇāma, and not in vivarta or apparent transformation. The statement of falsity of the world like the statement of transitoriness of the world is only for the sake of realisation of the unthinkable powers of the Lord, and to produce a sense of abhorance to the world, since the world makes us adverse to the Lord. By such statement it is not meant that the world by itself is false or non-existent. The Brahma-sūtras emphatically declare that the world is not like a dream because of its possessing characteristics different from dream (16).

Again, as sākti is non-different from sāktimat - the cause, and because the effects are but manifestations of sākti, Śrī Jīva advocates sat-kāryavāda which means that effects are nothing but the

(15) Paramātma-Sandarbha - Page 188-189.
(16) Vaidharmacca na svapnādiyat/ Brahma-Sūtra - 2. 2. 29.
manifestations of the cause in part with the manifestation of some particular characteristics of the cause (17).

Therefore, the Chāndogya texts — "vācārambhanam vikāryām-adheyaṁ, mṛttiketyeva satyam" (18) — means that the effects are not different from the cause, though the cause is different from the effects. Thus, the world is not different from Paramātman endowed with the power of causing the world. The Chāndogya-text does in no way mean the falsity of the effects or of the world as the Śaṅkarites hold.

The Chāndogya text — "O good-looking! this (world) was 'sat' (existent) before (creation)" means that the world was existent as sat (Brahman) even before its manifestation. This also testifies that the world is not false. Now a question may arise here; if 'Sat' or Brahman is the upādāna of this world, and if vivarta or apparent modification is not tenable, and if the world is parināma or actual modification of Brahman, why should not the world be as pure and immutable as Sat or Brahman?

If the world is otherwise, i.e. impure and mutable, it should necessarily be considered as an appearance like nacre-silver. Śrī Jīva refers to a Bhāgavata verse (19A) to solve this problem and states that there is no absolute rule that all the characteristics of the upādāna should persist in the upādeya or effect.

(18) Chāndogyopanisad — 6. 1. 4.
(19A) Bhāgavata — 10. 87. 32.
The burning capacity of fire is not perceived in the light produced from the fire (20).

Śrī Jīva also refers to the Śrīdhara's commentary on a verse of Viṣṇupurāṇa where this illustration of origination of dissimilar effects has been described.

But, after refuting vivarta-vāda and falsity of the world Śrī Jīva asserts that though the world is not false like a rope-snake, it is in every respect transitory and destructible. Therefore, it cannot be regarded as real, since reality means constancy in all times past, present and future. Since the world as such is not constant at all time - (trikālāvyabhicārābhāvāt), it cannot have sattva or reality. That only can have sattva or reality which is devoid of both the defects of being vivarta and parināma, i.e. which is neither an appearance nor a modification (21). Now if the world is not sat or real, what is the meaning of the Chāndogya text which states that the world was real or 'sat' before creation ("sadeva somya idamagrasūt"). Śrī Jīva states that the word 'sat' in this text means Brahman and His potency or 'śakti' as the subtle state of the world, mutually identified. The assertion of the world (denoted by the word 'idam') as 'sat' or real, refers to the subtle state of the world as śakti of Brahman. Therefore, the world as manifested world is not 'sat', being transitory. But the world as śakti of Paramātman being eternal and immutable is sat or real as stated in the text. Therefore, the theory of

(20) Dahanādyudbhave prabhādau dāhakatvādīdharmādārāsanāt/ Paramātmanā-Sandarbhā. Page 226.

(21) Vivarta-parināmasiddhatvena taddosadavābhāvavatveva hi vastuni sattvam vidhiyate/ Paramātma-Sandarbhā. Page 225.
Sat-kārya also refers to the subtle state of the effects. The effects existent as the world are existent before their creation or manifestation only as subtle states of the effects, not as manifested forms.

As the world is only a manifestation of māyā-śakti of the Lord, the relation of the world with the Lord should be the same as the relation of māyā-śakti to the Lord.

The relation is 'acintya-bhedābhedā' or identity-in-difference as already discussed (22). Being the manifestation of the power residing in Him, it has no doubt in some way identity with the Lord, but it has all the more difference from Him being the manifestation of His extraneous power of Vahiraṅgā śakti.

Thus, it stands that though the world may be superimposed somewhere yet it is not false. The world is not false though it may be fleeting like a dream due to its transitoriness. Being the actual modification of the māyāśakti of Paramātman the world is as real or actual as impermanent things can possibly be. It stands in the relation of acintya-bhedābhedā with Paramātman who maintains through svarūpa-śakti His purity and integrity inspite of the modification of His śakti as the world. By maintaining this view of such modification through unthinkable supralogical powers Śrī Jīva has maintained like Śaṅkara the purity and integrity of Paramātman and on the other hand he has refuted the falsity of the

(22) Vide Page - 119.
world by establishing its reality as much as is held by Rāmānuja.