Jīva or the Individual Soul
All the schools of philosophy admit a self in some way or other; but they differ much with regard to the nature of the self. The views of the Čārvākas and the Buddhists are solely empirical and realistic. Some other schools like the Naiyāyikas, the Vaiśeṣikas, the Mīmāṃsakas, and the Jainas uphold a permanent soul with agency and attributes to meet the various realistic demands. But still, to them the soul is not essentially conscious by nature. The soul is somewhat jaḍa or nescient with the attribute of adventitious consciousness or knowledge.

Again, the Sāṁkhya, Pātālījala, and the Advaita schools of philosophy uphold a purely transcendental true self, the apparent soul with an ego being nothing but a mixture of self and non-self. To them the self is pure consciousness without any attribute and attachment (nirguṇa, nirlepa). It will be shown in the course of our discussion that Śrī Jīva and other Gauḍīyas differ from all these views to get rid of the defects involved in the views of those schools.

The Čārvākas uphold materialistic views of the self which are again different according to different sects of the Čārvākas. The Čārvākas who are called bhūtātma-vādins or dehātmavādins hold that the self is nothing but the physical body constituted of the four bhūtas or kinds of material atoms, with its consciousness which is also a by-product of the four elements. The atoms constituting the body by their inter-action with one another secrete consciousness, just as beatlenut, lime, beatle-leaf, etc. combined with the saliva of the mouth when chewed produce a red tinge. Thus, the self is nothing but this physical body with consciousness as its by-product.
When this body disintegrates in death the so-called self also vanishes.

But this view, according to other schools is not at all tenable. Even the illustration to prove consciousness to be a product of elements is not appropriate. In the case of the production of the red-tinge from beatle-leaf, etc. it may be said that the elements of the red-tinge remained unmanifested in the beatle-nut, lime, etc. as to produce the tinge. But, it cannot be held even by the Čārvākas, that consciousness lies unmanifested in the four kinds of atoms to produce consciousness in the body.

Again, if the body be the seat of consciousness - its product, there should have been consciousness also in a dead body (1). Moreover, an entity which is revealed by consciousness (cidbhāṣya) as an object, cannot be the self (subject) (2), just as an object like a table or a book cannot be the self. Hence, the self must be some reality as the subject other than the body.

There were more advanced Čārvākas who maintained indriyātma-vāda or the view that the senses separately or collectively are what we call the self. Thus, according to this view, the self is constituted by the different senses or faculties of the senses. So when a person loses these faculties, his self also ceases to be.

The common objection to this view is that the senses or their faculties cannot be said to be the self, because, how can one recollect what one has seen even after his sense-faculty of seeing (eye) is

(1) Sarīra-saṃyuktam mṛteṣu vyabhicārataḥ / Bhāṣā-pariccheda. Page 207. (Nirmayasagar)
(2) Vedānta-sūra Page 81 (Advaita Akṣara)
lost? (3). Again, the senses are but instruments or karaṇa of experience, and as such cannot be the kartr or the agent of experience. An axe does not handle itself. It is the wood-cutter that handles the axe and fells trees with it. So also the senses as karaṇas presuppose an agent, (4) that operates those karaṇas or instruments, and is, therefore, other than the instruments. The agent should be the self.

Here another school of more advanced Cārvākas, who holds the doctrine of mana-ātma-vāda, tides over this difficulty by holding that mana or antahkaraṇa, or the mind which is the inner-sense is the self in us. This self - the manas can recollect some object perceived through the senses even after the senses are destroyed. It is the manas as the self which co-ordinates and correlates experiences gathered through the senses, each of which has its own different sphere with regard to the perceptions of colour, sound, taste, etc. Thus, when we see a gunshell bursting before our eyes and producing at the same time an ear-splitting sound, this self as manas combines the two - the sound and the flash of the explosion as caused by the same object - the gun-shell. This co-ordination is not possible by any of the senses - the eye or the ear, whose faculties are restricted only in perceiving the light and the sound.

But, this view of antahkaraṇa as the self is also not tenable on the same ground that it, being the inner sense or karaṇa, cannot

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(3) Tathātvam cedindriyānām upaghātē kathām smṛtih / भवाभू-परिच्छेदः - Page 212 (N.S.)
(4) Karanām hi sakartṛkam/ Ibid - Page 205 (N.S.)
be the kartr or agent, and presupposes some other agent which should be the self which operates through this antahkarana. Again, if manas as self is held to be atomic then its attributes like knowledge, pleasure, pain, etc. would not have been perceived (5) by us, owing to the atomic measurement of their locus - the mind.

Again, even if the mind be not atomic but of greater size, then pleasure, pain, etc. would pertain to such self - the mind. Such a mind of medium size must have modifications or changes in pleasure, pain, etc. which cannot possibly be perceived by the changing mind itself (6). There must be some other unchanging self to perceive these changes of the mind. Therefore, mind can in no way be the self - the seat of consciousness.

The Buddhists are generally called nairātmanāvin or anatmanāvin because they do not admit any permanent self, since, according to them, everything which exists is momentary. If there is a self it is nothing but the series of momentary cognitions. It is this series of Vijnāna which is the subject in us. Each momentary cognition is self-revealing, there being no other self to reveal it. Nor can any momentary cognition be possibly revealed by the succeeding momentary cognition - the previous momentary cognition being absent at the time of the succeeding cognition. According to some, the series of momentary 'I' - concepts (ālaya-vijnānadhārā) as contrasted with object-taking cognitions (pravṛtti-vijnāna),

(5) Mano'pi na tathā jñānādya-dhyānadhāram tadā bhavet/
   Bhāṣā-parīcchāda - Page 113 (N.5.

(6) Siddhānta-bindu - Page 20; Na tat svābhāsaṃ drṣyāvatā/
   (Bharadwaj Oriental Research Institute, Yogasutra - 4. 19.
is what may be regarded as the self.

This view of momentary cognitions as the self is also rejected by all the orthodox schools of Indian philosophers, and also by the Jainas on various grounds. A momentary cognition can be proved or established to be momentary only when it can be proved to be non-existent through the time preceding and succeeding it. This presupposes a permanent consciousness or subject which apprehends all the time preceding and succeeding the momentary cognitions or objects. Thus, only an eternal consciousness that comprehends the whole of time past, present and future, can apprehend and establish the momentariness of anything—a cognition or an object.

Moreover, cognitions like recollection (smṛti) and recognition (pratyavijñā) cannot be explained without admitting a permanent consciousness or conscious self comprehending both the past and the present. Therefore, the Buddhists' denial of the permanent self, and its reducing the self into a series of momentary cognitions, do not bear examination.

The Jainas, however, believe in the existence of permanent souls. According to them there are many selves each of whom is endowed with consciousness. Unlike the Naiyāyikas who think that consciousness is an adventitious attribute of the individual self, the Jainas contend that it is an intrinsic constant quality of every self. What is peculiar to their system is the belief that the soul, though permanent and eternal, expands and contracts according to the size of the body it occupies. Consciousness being
an intrinsic quality of the soul, the latter does not lose it even at the state of liberation.

Agency and knowerhood are natural attributes of the jīvas. The jīvas are dragged down to worldly life by their karma and when freed from the fetters of karma through penance and wisdom, they rise up and up till they reach the divine sky (alokākāśa) where they remain in liberated state. The Jaina view of the contraction and expansion of the soul in consonance with the body which it attracts through its actions or karma, does not find favour with such thinkers as the Nyāya-vaiśeṣikas, Mīmāṃsakas, Sāṃkhya, Pāṇṭaṇjalaśa and the Vedāntins who point out that the Jaina admission of the contraction and expansion of the soul will make the souls mutable and perishable.

The Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas also admit permanent souls with agency and knowerhood; though the souls are eternal and all-pervading. It is the seat of consciousness (7). But according to some later Bhāṭṭas each soul has got two aspects (parts) - one nescient, and the other of the nature of consciousness, just like a fire-fly which carries both light and darkness. Thus, ātman is jñānājñānāhāsvarūpā, i.e. is of the nature of both nescience and consciousness (8). The nescient aspect accounts for all its modifications like desire, pleasure, pain, etc. and the conscious aspect accounts for the awareness of all objects including these modifications. This nature of the self as jñānājñāna or nescience-cum-consciousness is revealed at the time of deep sleep, as is proved by the recollection after

(7) Ātma caitanyārāyah / Mānameyodaya Page - 191 (Adyar)
(8) Vedānta-Sāra Page 78 (Adwaita Akrama)
waking — 'I could not know anything' (na kīṇḍiḍaṇḍiṣeṁ) (9).

The Prāvākara Mīmāṃsakas, though they do not admit such double nature of the self, hold the self to be an all-pervading, eternal, indivisible substance (dravya). It is the seat of consciousness and not essentially consciousness. Like the Nyāya-vaiśeṣika schools it holds consciousness, pleasure, pain, etc. to be adventitious special attributes of the soul.

According to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools the soul is a permanent all-pervading substance, but different in different bodies. Each soul has an atomic mind conjoined with it. Fine distinguishing attributes or viśeṣa-guna are produced in the soul by soul-mind conjunction. Those attributes are cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition, merit and demerit, and knowledge-impressions (samskāra).

But, admission of such souls nescient by nature possessing adventitious attributes like knowledge, pleasure, etc. will lead to many sorts of difficulties. According to such view the state of liberation would be a state, devoid of consciousness and bliss, only the self remaining as a nescient substance like a stone. Thus, the state of liberation would cease to be a puruṣārththa or the supreme human end. Again, the self being insentient by itself cannot reveal a cognition which according to them is revealed by a following cognition called anuvyavasāya. But, if that cognition as anuvyavasāya requires to be revealed again by a following cognition, that would lead to an infinite series which is absurd. If again, the anuvyavasāya

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(9) Bhāṭṭastu 'prajñānaghana evānandamayaḥ' — ityādiśruteḥ śrūṣuptau prakāśa-prakāśasadbhāvāt .. ajñānopahitaṁ caitanyamātmeti vadati/ Vedāntasāra — Page 78.
(Advaita Āśrama); Jādabodhatmaka iti Bhāṭṭah/ Siddhānta-bindu (B.O.R.I.) Page — 12
does not require to be revealed in order to reveal its own object - the first cognition, it becomes useless to admit the anuvyavasāya to reveal the first cognition, because the first cognition should reveal its own object without being revealed itself. But admission of a self as essentially consciousness which can reveal cognitions being self-luminous itself, removes all these difficulties.

Thus, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika theory of self as a nescient substance is refuted by all Vedāntins, Sāmkhya, Pāṇātjala, and others. According to the advaita-vedanta as propounded by the Śaṅkrites, the self is nothing but pure consciousness, all-pervading and eternal. And, as such consciousness cannot have any division or limitation, it is one without a second.

According to them individual souls appear to be plural only due to their adjuncts - minds and bodies, but are really one and identical with the supreme self - Brahman. Brahman which is consciousness Itself becomes different subjects or the knowing selves being reflected in different minds. The self as the witness-consciousness (sākṣai-caitanya) is the revealer of mind and ego which are entirely material (jada). It is devoid of all attributes, agency, and knowerhood which are superimposed on it by the adjuncts. The self is self-shining or self-luminous in the sense that it reveals every thing else but does not require to be revealed. It is always the subject (Viṣayin) as revealer of all things, but never an object. Thus, when discriminated from all its superimposed attributes and characters, it is essentially identical with Brahman - the supreme
Self. The jīvas transmigrate from life to life with their lasting individuality until they are liberated through the realisation of their true nature. The process of liberation is that the aspirant jīvas receive instructions about their real nature from their preceptors and through the means of śravaṇa, manana, and nididhyāsana—or meditation—of their true nature as eternally free, and as śāṁkā identical with pure Brahman, they attain freedom, or perfection already accomplished by removing the ignorance about it.

The Śāṁkhaṇya and the Pātañjala schools also admit the nature of the self as consciousness (caitanya-svabhāva) pure, eternal, and all-pervading. But the individual self of the jīvas cannot be one and the same because that would lead to great chaos and confusion. Pleasure and pain, birth and death, bondage and liberation in different individuals cannot be explained by one self. When one soul is liberated there should be no soul in bondage. Though it may be contended by the Advaitins that the order of difference of pleasure and pain, etc., may be explained by admitting different adjuncts (Upādhi-bhedāt), the Śāṁkhaṇya's reply to this is that though the adjuncts may be different, the one self possessing the adjuncts being the same, all different and contradictory attributes and states like pleasure, and pain, bondage and liberation abide in and affect the same self, which is absurd and impossible (10). Therefore, plurality of individual souls must be admitted to maintain the natural order perceived in the Jīvas. In all other respects

(10) Upādhirbhidyate na tu tadvān. Śāṁkhaṇya-sūtra - 1.15'.
regarding the self, the Sāṃkhyaite's views are almost similar to that of the Advaitins.

But Rāmānuja goes further in refuting and rejecting the advaita theories with regard to the nature of the individual self or soul.

According to Rāmānuja the individual self, though of the nature of consciousness, have also consciousness as its attribute. The souls are innumerable and of atomic measurement though imperishable and eternal. Though the soul is atomic yet its attributive knowledge (dharma-bhūtajñāna) is originally unlimited though it becomes limited by the karma or actions of the Jīva. Having knowledge as its attribute the self is the knower (jñātā) denoted by the word 'aham' or 'I' (ahamārtha). It is not devoid of ego as the Śāṅkarites hold. It has got agency (kārttva) as well. It possesses all attributes like cognition, pleasure, pain, etc. which are but different modifications of cognition itself (dhi-viśeṣāḥ prakṛti-tāḥ). Thus, the self is not devoid of attributes or nirguṇa as the Advaitins or Sāṃkhyaite hold.

In fact, according to Rāmānuja there is nothing nirviśeṣa, i.e. indeterminate or unqualified. None of the testimonies like perception, inference, and verbal testimony can prove any attributeless consciousness. Any reason or probans (hetu) for the inference of attributelessness of consciousness will lead to attribution of consciousness by that probans. The self is svayam-prakāśā or self-luminous in a sense different from that of the Śāṅkarites. The self
knows itself and therefore is not only the subject, but is also the object of that knowledge, which Śaṅkarites deny.

The Jīvas who are of atomic measurement being like conscious monads possess attributive knowledge which spreads all around like the light of a lamp. This attributive knowledge may attain infinitude or perfection which is its real nature when freed from its limiting factor avidyā or karma of the Jīvas.

The Jīvas are like so many cells in a living organism. They are amongst the constituent factors in the life of the Absolute. So the relation of the Jīvas to Brahman is sārīra—sārīribhāva or body-soul relation.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin bases his conception of soul mainly upon the texts of the Upaniṣads (śruti), Bhāgavata, Gītā, Viṣṇupūrāṇa, and on some verses of Jāmātrumuni.

In the first place, it should be mentioned that the Jīva is by nature pure, and beyond māyā and is also the witness of his mental modifications which are produced due to its contact with māyā. These mental modifications appear in the Jīvas in their waking and dreaming states and dissolve in the state of deep sleep. So it is stated that jāgrat (waking), svapna (dreaming) suṣupti (deep sleep) pertain to the minds or buddhi, and not to ātman who is the witness to all these states.

This Jīva being the witness or knower of his body, mind, etc. is called kṣetrajña as is found in many verses of the Bhāgavata and
Gītā (11). Śrī Jīva regards the individual souls as the infinitesimal parts of the taṇṭasthā sakti or the marginal power of Paramātman.

Jīva is also eternal and immutable as is denoted by the words kuṭastha and aksara (12). Though pure by nature, Jīva is entitled to all sorts of enjoyment, and subjected to sufferings through its contact with prakṛti (13). Thus, it follows that though eternal and immutable by nature (like Paramātman), Jīva is overpowered by prakṛti or māyā-sakti because of possessing various limitations, and adverse attitude towards God (Bhagavad-Vaimukhya).

The Jīva is of the essence of consciousness and bliss, and is therefore beyond prakṛti or māyā-sakti. But, it has consciousness or cognition as attribute as well (15). Therefore, it is a subject or knower by nature (jñāṭṛ). Being the knower it is also the enjoyer (bhakṭṛ) and agent (kāṭṛ) (16). This is also vindicated by the fact that the individual soul or Jīvātman is denoted by the word 'aham', and as such it possesses a real ego or 'I'-hood (ahaṃbhāva). The soul is different in each body, and is of atomic measurement. Śrī Jīva quotes Śruti-texts (17) in support of the atomicity of the

(11) Bhāgavata 5. 11. 12; Gītā 13. 1.
(12) Gītā 15. 16.
(13) Gītā 13. 20.
(14) Paramātma-Sandarbha (Murshidabad edition) Page 89.
(16) Ibid - Page 89.
Eṣo'ṇūrātma./ ——— Mundaka-Up. - 3. 1. 9.
individual souls. He puts forward arguments as well for this atomic (anu) measurement. The souls being eternal must either be atomic or all-pervading. If the souls were all-pervading, they could not have been controlled and directed by Paramātman as their antaryāmin. They are atomic also because of their being infinitesimal expressions of the tatasthā sakti of the Lord.

Jāmāṭṛmuni describes the jīvas also as vyāpanaśīla which is interpreted by Śrī Jīva to mean that the atomic souls due to their subtlety have entered into all creatures as their inmost selves.

A most important point with regard to the nature of the souls is the self-luminosity or svayam-prakāśatva of the souls. Jāmāṭṛmuni who has described the nature of the souls in an exhaustive manner, states that the self-luminosity of the souls should be defined as "svasmai śvaprakāśatvam".

Śrī Jīva agreeing with Jāmāṭṛmuni in all the points stated with regard to the nature of the souls, points out the significance of the word 'svasmai' as follows:—

The objects like a jar, etc. are not svayaṃ-prakāśa because they are jaḍa, and require some light to illumine them. But a light does not require another light to illumine it. So, in this sense the light may be said to be svayaṃ-prakāśa āśā (self-revealing). But the light is also svayaṃprakāśa only to a seer or a subject who knows it. The light is not svayaṃprakāśa or self-revealed to itself (svasmai). But ātman or soul is self-revealing to its own
self (svasmi svayam-prakāśa) without requiring any other subject or revealing factor. This distinguishes ātman from all other objects, senses, mind, etc.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin is even ready to accept the noted definition of svayam-prakāśa put forward by the Advaitins as "avedyatve sati aporokṣa-vyavahāra-yogyatvam" with a little change in the meaning of the word "avedyatve sati" as "parāvedyatve sati". The definition of the Advaitins literally means - "That which is capable of treatment as something immediate without being known, is svayam-prakāśa". The ātman according to the Śaṅkrites is capable of being treated as immediate (as 'I') without being object of knowledge.

According to them ātman being always the subject is never an object, and is therefore 'avedya' (not object of knowledge). But according to Śrī Jīva, ātman being self-conscious or self-knowing is ātman both the subject and the object, and is thus 'vedya' (object of knowledge) but is never an object of knowledge to anyone else. Therefore, ātman is 'parāvedya' i.e. not known by anyone else (18). This change in the definition or in the meaning of the definition is indicated by the word 'svasmai', which indicates the self-knowing character of ātman.

Though, of course, ātman, according to Śrī Jīva, is known by Paramātman, and may thus be objected to be known by some one else (parāvedya), Śrī Jīva refutes this objection by asserting that

(18) Paramātma-sandarbhā - Page 101.
Paramātman being the ultimate nature of ātman is not 'para' or 'other' than the ātman. Therefore, though known by Paramātman, ātman is not paravedya (19).

But, such self, which being the knower of itself and of other objects is distinct from all other objects, cannot still know the omniscient Lord, which marks its inferiority to Paramātman.

The distinct position of ātman is because of its being of the nature of consciousness. According to Śrī Jīva this nature of consciousness signifies that it is itself consciousness and it infuses consciousness into others like the body, sense-organs (20). Thus, its character as consciousness is to be understood as opposite to the character of materiality. Similarly its characteristic of being bliss is to be understood as opposite to the character of being misery. The bliss-hood of ātman is proved by its being the object of unconditional love. Being of the nature of bliss the self is dearest to all (21).

It has been stated already that this ātman of the nature of consciousness and bliss is denoted by the word "aham" or 'I'. Therefore, 'ahambhāva' or the 'I'-hood which refer to ātman or self should not be included in 'yusmadartha' or non-self as the Śaṅkarites do.


(20) (Bhāgavata - 6. 4. 20.) Ibid - Page 104.

Sri Jiva argues that 'I'-concept of the self is the one by which false identification of the self with the modifications of prakṛti, viz. the body, senses, etc. becomes possible. If the self would have been devoid of 'I'-hood, its false identification with or infusion into others, like body, etc. would not have been possible. Because the identification of the self with body, etc. is made in the form of 'I'-concept in the body, etc., so it follows that the 'I'-concept refers to the self. Of course, there is another ego which is produced by such false identification and which veils the wisdom of jīvas and causes their worldliness. But the 'I'-hood which is in the nature of the self is pure, and does not cause worldliness. Thus, there are two kinds of 'I'-concept, one natural to the self, and the other mundane being caused by prakṛti or māyā-śakti (22).

So, it is that at the time of sleep the mundane ego being dissolved like all other mental modifications, is not recollected after waking; but the 'I' of the self which persists throughout is recollected. In the recollective judgement after waking as - 'mām-aham nājñāsiṣām' - 'I could not know myself' the word "mām" refers to the mundane ego absent, and not known at the time of sleep; and the word 'aham' refers to the real ego which persisted even at the time of sleep, and is so recollected after waking (23).

(22) Sa ca suddhasvarūpamātraniṣṭhatvāt na saṃsāraheturiti spaṣṭam etadeva ahamkāradvayam/
Paramātma-sandarbha - Page 107.
(23) Paramātma-sandarbha - Page 108
This real 'I'-hood of the self is different in each individual as the selves also are. Though in the Bhāgavata and other scriptures some statements are found about the unity of souls, they should be understood as indicating the similar nature of all souls as consciousness, without discriminating their differences as different parts of Paramātman. And such statements have been made only to the aspirants of jñāna, since such knowledge of undifferentiated consciousness is necessary for Jñāna-yoga of the Jñānins.

It should also be understood that the consciousness of the jīva being its natural characteristic is not a product or modification. Moreover, because body and mind also attain agency (kaṭṛtva) due to their contact with the consciousness of the jīva, and because no insentient thing can attain any agency without any connection with consciousness, so agency which originates from the contact with consciousness must be a natural characteristic of that consciousness. Therefore, ātman possesses agency as its natural characteristic.

Again, bhokṛtṛtva or enjoyerhood is also a natural characteristic of ātman, because enjoyerhood is also a kind of knowledge (saṃvedana). It is stated in the Bhāgavata (24) that puruṣa is the cause of enjoying pleasure and pain. Thus, agency, enjoyerhood, and knowerhood are natural characteristics of jīvātman.

Jāmāṭrāmuni has also described jīva as Paramātmaikasesatva-svabhāvah' which has been interpreted by Śrī Jīva as one possessing

the characteristic of being different from the part of Paramātman.
The word 'āmśatva' means 'āmśatva' or the character of being a
portion (spiritual portion). This is the character of jīva even at
the time of liberation. This characteristic being natural to
Jīvātman is not due to the limitation of any adjunct as the
Śaṅkarites hold. The jīvas are naturally like the particles of the
rays of Paramātman being the particles of his natural inscrutable
power (25). It should also be understood that the jīvas are āmśas
or parts of Paramātman qualified by jīva-sākta, and not of pure
Paramātman. And also that jīvas are His āmśa or parts due to their
being sākta of Paramātman (26). So jīvas are called viśhimāṃśa of
Paramātman, and not svāṃśa like the avatāras. But, as limited by
adjuncts like the body and mind, jīva is partially a portion of
prakṛti as well (27).

Jīvātman is also described as jīva-sākta being identical with
taṭastha sākta of Paramātman. Though jīvas, are like rays, yet they
are constantly supported by Paramātman within Him as His sākta.
Like the sākta jīvas also cannot exist without Paramātman - the
substratum.

The jīva is also stated to be an accessory cause (sādhana) of
His creation of the world. Jīva as connected with kāla, karma and
sāṃskāra, i.e. with time, action-residues, and knowledge-impressions


(26) Jīvasakti-viśistaiva tava jīvo 'mśaḥ, na tu śuddhasya
    iti gamayati; jīvasya tāṭaśaktirūpaṇaivāmśatvamityeted
    vyayayati/ Paramātma-sandarbha - Page 136.

(27) Paramātma-sandarbha - Page 124.
which are called nimitta-māyā being accessory cause of bondage and creation, are the factors which agitate, or bring a stir in prakṛti whereby it undergoes modifications as the upādāna for the creation of the world.

Śrī Jīva holds that though jīva considered separately is a 'substance' or 'dravya', really it is to be regarded as similar with its source - the taṭasthā sakti. It is therefore that the jīvas have been stated in the Viṣṇupurāṇa to be kṣetrajña-sakti of the Lord (28). So, as sakti the jīva bears the relation of acintyabhedabheda with Paramātman - the Lord.

It may be mentioned in this connection that while Śaṅkara maintains the relation of abheda or identity between Brahman and jīva, Rāmānuja holds jīva as prakāra or viśeṣaṇa or adjectival to Brahman, which amounts to admitting some bheda between jīva and Brahman. But Śrī Jīva by maintaining jīva as sakti of Brahman (Paramātman) holds a view distinct from the views of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, since, as sakti jīva stands in the relation of acintyabhedabheda or supralogical identity-cum-difference with the Lord, as well. Thus, reconciles the views of Rāmānuja and Śaṅkara to a great extent.

Moreover, jīvatman is sakti or a part of His sakti by its own intrinsic nature, and not due to any contact with ignorance and karma. This view refutes the view of Advaitins who hold that the jīva may be regarded as His prakṛti or sakti only due to its contact

(28) Viṣṇupurāṇa - 6. 7. 63.
with adjuncts like avidyā, kāma, and karma. Coming to the point that jīva is regarded as taṭasthā or the marginal power of Paramātman, Śrī Jīva remarks that the jīva is marginal because it is by nature beyond māyā-śakti, and it is also not included in Paramātman. It is not included in Paramātman because jīva's defects do not in any way concern Paramātman (29) while jīva is overpowered by avidyā-śakti, Paramātman is not affected by that in any way.

It is often seen that when a portion of the rays of the sun is covered by a shadow, still the sun is not covered by that shadow. Just like that Paramātman is not affected by the defects which affect the jīva inspite of the jīva being His śakti.

Śrī Jīva supports his conception of taṭasthā śakti by a text from Nārada-Pañcarātra (30) where it is stated that the jīvas who come out of Paramātman as conscious manifestations are taṭasthā or marginal.

Though identical with Paramātman as His śakti or aṁśa, jīvatman is to be known also as different from Paramātman. There are innumerable śrutī and smṛti texts to testify the difference of jīva from Paramātman (31).

The most famous verse in Viṣṇu-purāṇa (32) which the Advaitins put forward to support their view of essential unity of jīva and

(29) Paramātma-sandarbha - Page 127.
(31) Śvetāsvatara-Upanīṣā - 1. 6. 8. 9. 4. 6.
(32) Vibhedajanaka'-jñāne nādāmātyantikaṃ gate/
    Ātmano Brahmaṇo bhedam asantām kah kariṣyati//
    Viṣṇu-purāṇa - 6. 7. 94.
Paramātman is interpreted by Śrī Jīva in support of the view of difference of jīva, stating that the interpretation of the Advaitins is extremely strained (kaṇṭaṣrṣṭa eva).

The verse is interpreted by Advaitins as follows:—

When the ignorance which creates difference is entirely destroyed, who can again create the non-existent difference between Ātman and Brahman?

But Śrī Jīva considers the word 'asantam' (non-existent) to be a predicate and not an adjective of 'bheda' or difference. Thus, the meaning stands—'when the ignorance which creates difference in jīvas, (like a God, a man, and animal, etc.) is entirely removed, the natural difference between Brahman and Ātman cannot be made non-existent by any one (Kaḥ kariṣyati)'. Therefore, even when the jīva attains final liberation, and lies absorbed in Paramātman forsaking all ignorance, the jīva attains the characteristics similar (sādharmya) to that of Paramātman, and not absolute unity with Him.

This is what has been meant by the Upaniṣadic and Gītā-texts like—"He attains supreme 'sāmya' or similarity", "they attain my 'sādharmya' or similar characteristics", "one who knows Brahman verily becomes Brahman", etc.

Therefore, we should not get confused by the texts mentioning sakti or jīva sometimes as identical with, and sometimes as different from Paramātman. Due to jīva's similarity with Paramātman as consciousness (cidaviśeṣāt), and due to their inseparability, and
also due to their mutual permeation (parasparānupravesāt) jīva or sakti is sometimes mentioned as identical with Paramātman.

Again, in some other places, jīva or sakti is mentioned as different from Paramātman because sakti or potency of a single substance is found to be many and various, which indicates the difference of sakti from saktimat. For this reason jīva is mentioned as different from the Saktimat-Paramātman.

In establishing his viewpoints with regard to the nature of Ātman Śrī Jīva has to enter into various controversies with the Śankarites both in arguments, and in the meaning of texts. The Advaitins put forward the Gīta text - 'Kṣetrajñam cāpi mām biddhi'(33) etc. to prove that kṣetrajña as jīva is identical with Paramātman.

But Śrī Jīva contends that the word 'kṣetrajña' in that verse cannot mean jīva because of the use of the words 'api' and 'sarva-kṣetresu'. Jivatman cannot be the knower of all the kṣetras (bodies, etc.) being the knower of only his own kṣetra. And the word 'api' (also) indicates that an additional kind of Kṣetrajña is being stated there who is the knower of all the kṣetras.

The Lord Himself is to be known as such Kṣetrajña which is meant by the Gīta verse. Thus, there are two kinds of Kṣetrajña, and this has been vindicated also by two Bhāgavata verses - 'Kṣetrajña etā manaso vibhuti', etc. and 'Kṣetrajña ātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ, etc.'.

Again, with regard to the texts supporting the atomic nature of the jīvas, the Śankarites interpret the word 'āpu' as subtle

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(33) Gītā - 13. 2.
(sūkṣma) or difficult to be known (durjñeya).

According to them ātman which is all-pervading is very difficult to be known because of its subtlety or fineness. But Śrī Jīva contends that the word 'āṇu' cannot mean unknowability, because in the text 'eso'ṇurātmā cetasa veditaṁ yah* (34) - this 'āṇu' ātman is to be known by intellect, the word 'āṇu' can never mean impossibility of knowing when such 'āṇu' ātman is to be known by intellect. Moreover, since jīvātman has been stated (35) to be born of Paramātman as His part, it cannot be all-pervading like Paramātman. Therefore, jīva is āṇu-parimāpa or atomic in size.

But, such jīvātman with atomic size can infuse consciousness into the whole body connected with it by some special attribute or capacity (36).

Though such jīvas who are pure and unborn by nature should not have any birth, yet they are born. Śrī Jīva states in his Paramātma-Sandarbha that they are born with the birth of their personal adjuncts - mind, body, etc., which are modifications of prakṛti. In this sense the jīvas are born from Paramātman who possesses both the jīvas and prakṛti as His sākti or powers. The sākti or the potency called the jīvas who lie absorbed in Paramātman with their impressions dormant at the time of dissolution of all the products or modifications of prakṛti, again at the time of creation, being attached to prakṛti with its modifications, have their dormant impressions stirred.

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(34) Mundaka-Up. - 3. 1. 9.
(35) Gītā - 15. 7
(36) Prabhavavisēṣṭupāt guṇādeva bhavati/ Paramātma-Sandarbha - Page 114.
up, and attain the state of contact with the adjuncts like the body, senses, and mind, and are in this way born from Paramātman (37).

The jīvas as His marginal powers are innumerable (anantaḥ). They are divided in two groups. One group includes those who are prone and devoted to God from time without beginning (anāditaḥ) (38). They are favoured by the display of antaraṅga śakti or internal essential power of the Lord, and are His eternal associates like Gaṅga, etc. They possess the knowledge of their real nature as eternally subservient to the Lord (39).

The second group consists of those jīvas who are from time without beginning adverse to the Lord. They are made worldly being overpowered by māyā which finds its way in them through the loophole of the defect of being averse to God (40). They are averse to God because of their forgetfulness of their real nature as eternally subservient to the Lord. It is this group of jīvas averse to God who are born with the birth of their adjuncts from Paramātman qualified by jīva-śakti. This birth of the jīvas is nothing but the attainment of individuality (ādhyātmikavasthā-prāptireva) due to false notion of their own birth at the birth of their own adjuncts(41).

In this way those jīvas, who are also pure and unborn by nature, get their bondage and birth through ignorance or avidyā which is a part of māya-śakti. The other part of māya-śakti is vidyā which is

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(37) Paramātmaśandarbha - Page 154.
(38) Ibid - Page 150.
(39) Ibid - Page 150.
(40) Ibid - Page 151.
(41) Ibid - Page 153.
conducive to jīva's liberation. Vidyā and avidyā are both parts of māyā-śakti.

The jīvas get bondage when they are in ignorahce; but mokṣa or their final liberation is manifested (sphurati) or revealed when they attain to vidyā or self-realisation. Mokṣa or the state of liberation is a natural characteristic of the jīvas which is eternally existent in them. It is only revealed to them through vidyā. Thus mokṣa is eternal, and not a product (42).

But this vidyā which is a modification of māyā-śakti should not be confused with the supreme vidyā which is the modification of svarūpa-śakti. Rather, this vidyā is a door, or means leading to that vidyā - the modification of svarūpa-śakti which is also called Yogamāyā, and by which Jivatman can attain its summum bonum. Though the eternally free souls are always favoured by this yogomāyā, other ordinary souls also in order to reach to their final goal have to secure the grace of this yogomāyā through the door mā of vidyā - the aspect of māyā-śakti which leads gradually to liberation. Thus, according to Śrī Jīva the other souls are also not eternally doomed. They are also entitled to realise the Ultimate Reality, and attain the summum bonum of their life which is associated with supreme bliss.

(42) Nitya eva mokṣah / Paramātma-sandarbhā - Page 171.