SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE
Different views regarding number of sources of knowledge. Views of Čārvāka, Baudhā, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya. Pāṇ劫a, (Rāmānuja) Naiyāyika, Prabhakara, Bhaṭṭa, Advaita Vedanta, and Pauruṣika schools. Śrī Jīva's admission of ten pramāṇas, viz. - Perception, Inference, analogy (upamāna), verbal testimony (śrutī and Purāṇa), postulation, non-perception, intuition (ārṣa); inclusion (sambhava), indicative movements (ceṣṭā) and tradition (aṭṭīya). Weakness of all pramāṇas except śabda or scriptural texts. Śrutī including the Purāṇas highest authority being apauruṣeya. Vaidūṣya-pratyakṣa based on Śrutī infallible. Validity of Śrutī independent and axiomatic. Śrī Jīva's loyalty to Śrutī : adherence to śākyārtha or primary meaning. Śrutī-pramāṇa stronger than perception and inference. Advaita view - Śrutī for ignorant - refuted. Mīmāṁsaka view refuted. Six linga or criteria to determine the purport of the Vedas. Purāṇas revealed to Vyāsa - comprehensible interpretation of the Vedas. Purāṇas also apauruṣeya as fulfilment of the Vedas. Superiority of Purāṇa due to accessibility to all castes and sex. Division of purāṇas as sāttvika, rājasika and tāmasika. Sāttvika purāṇa superior to others. Difference of views even in sāttvika-purāṇas. Brahma-sūtras revealed to Vyāsa as solution and clarification of meaning of the Vedas. Revelation of Bhāgavata to Vyāsa as the best interpretation of the Brahma-sūtras. Bhāgavata revealed to Vyāsa in his superconscious state - highest authority or source of knowledge with regard to spiritual matters.
Indian philosophers hold different views with regard to prāmāṇa or the sources of knowledge or valid cognition. In a verse narrating the number of the sources of knowledge admitted by different schools, we find that the Gārvākas admit only one source of knowledge, viz. perception, while the Buddhists and the Vaiśeṣikas admit two, viz. perception and inference. The Sāmkhyāites and Pātañjalas and some others admit three sources of knowledge as perception, inference and verbal testimony. The Naiyāikas admit four admitting upamāna also as a distinct source of knowledge. The Prabhākaras hold that there are five sources of knowledge adding arthāpatti or postulation with perception, inference, verbal testimony and upamāna. The Bhāṭṭas and the Advaita-vedāntins admit six sources, viz. perception, inference, verbal testimony, upamāna and arthāpatti along with another distinct source of knowledge called anupalabdhi by which negations are apprehended. The Paurāṇikas however admit eight prāmāṇas with sambhava and aitihya, i.e. inclusion and tradition, in addition to the six mentioned.

It may be noted here that Rāmānuja admits only three prāmāṇas by including all other prāmāṇas either in perception or in inference. We shall, in course of our discussion, show how Śrī Jīva has accepted all these extant sources of knowledge adding even ārṣapramāṇa and cēṣṭāpramāṇa and has placed Śrutipramāṇa above all other prāmāṇas specially with regard to spiritual matters. Again, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa being the best interpretation of the Brahma-sūtras is to be

(1) Mānameyodaya - Page 8 (Adyar).
(2) Yatindramataṭipikā - Page 8 (Ramakrishna Math, Madras)
regarded as the highest scriptural authority according to Śrī Jīva.

The Čārvākas admit only one source of knowledge, viz: perception which is of course admitted by all the schools of philosophers. Being extremely empiricists they deny even inference as a valid source of knowledge. Those who admit inference as a valid source hold vyāptijñāna or invariable concomitance as the basis of inference. (3) But according to the Čārvāka the determination of vyāpti

(3) Indian philosophers regard Vyāptijñāna or the knowledge of invariable concomitance as the kāraṇa or the chief means or basis of inference. It is found that certain things in nature are invariably connected with, or co-existing with, some other things, but not necessarily vice-versa; e.g. smoke is invariably connected with fire, a cloth is invariably connected with threads, but fire or the threads are not similarly invariably connected with smoke or a cloth, since fire and threads may remain even without smoke or a cloth. This invariable connection or concomitance of a certain thing with some other thing is vyāpti or pervasion of that thing to the other thing. Determination of such vyāpti reasonably forms the basis of inference, since the existence of the vyāpya (pervaded) necessarily proves the existence of the vyāpaka (pervader). Therefore, the inference of a vyāpaka item produced by the knowledge of the existence of a vyāpya item in some locus (pakṣa) is regarded as valid, and its source vyāpti-ijñāna - a valid source of knowledge.
is not possible because of the doubt about the invariability of the con-comitance (vyabhicārasamśāya). Though the co-existence of smoke and fire may be observed in many cases, yet it is not possible to observe all the cases of smoke and its pervasion (vyāpti) by fire, since there may be innumerable cases of smoke in our unknown regions, or in time past and future (4). Therefore, since vyāptiniścaya is not possible due to vyabhicārasamśāya, there can be no inference as a valid source of knowledge. What we call inference is only an unreliable guess-work. Verbal testimony (śabda-pramāṇa) is also not a reliable source of knowledge, since, according to the Gārvaka, all statements (vākyā) whether common or Vedic, are liable to be erroneous or deceptive. Therefore, perception through the sense-organs is the only valid source of knowledge which stands on the capability of the sense-organs to know objects as they are.

It should be understood here that though all the schools of Indian philosophers admit perception, they differ in their views and definition of perception. Generally, perception is defined as the knowledge produced through the contact of the sense-organs with their objects. Almost all schools except the Advaitins and the Jainas accept this view.

But the advocates of the validity of inference as a source of knowledge, including the Buddhists assert that the arguments of the Gārvāka against inference are not tenable. Though there may be such vyabhicāra-samśaya (doubt of breach of con-comitance) in the cases

(4) Sarvadarśana-samgraha — Bauddhādāvāna.
of illogical and unscientific vyāptijñāna, yet there should be no
vyabhicāra—samāyasya when the determination of vyāpti vyāpti is based
on kārya—kāraṇa-bhāva, or the apriori principle of causation, or,
when it is based on tādātmya, or the apriori principle of identity.
Since the relation of invariable con-comitance of smoke with fire is
based on the law causation, i.e., since smoke is produced from its
cause—fire, so there can be no doubt that smoke is invariably asso-
ciated with fire. Therefore, there being no possibility of vyabhicāra-
samāyasya, determination of vyāpti is quite possible in such cases.

Again, when the determination (nis'caya) of invariable con-
comitance is based on the apriori principle of identity, there should
be no vyabhicāra—samāyasya. When something is inferred to be a tree
because it was a śimsapā (tree), the vyāptijñāna underlying such in-
ference cannot be liable to any doubt of variation. A śimsapā must be
a tree without fail. Therefore, though observation of all the cases
of smoke and their pervasion by fire is not possible, yet inference
is possible from such vyāpti-nis'caya through the apriori principles
of the law of causation or the law of identity. (5).

The Naiyāyikas also maintain that if there be any doubt about
vyāpti, we should resort to some anukūla tarka (6) or some argument
based on the law of causation or any other established law.

Again, when the Ācāryakas say that inference is no valid source
of knowledge due to such and such reasons, they admit, in a way, the

(5) "Kārya-kāraṇa-bhāvāt vā svabhāvāt vā niyāmakāt/
Avinābhāvaniyam..." Sarvadarśana-sāgraha— Banddha-darśana.
validity of inference as a source of knowledge. They cannot observe all the cases of inference so as to know their invalidity through perception. Therefore, inference must be regarded as a valid source of knowledge. In fact all our behaviours and efforts are predominantly guided and regulated by inference.

But the Buddhists being extremely rationalistic do not admit the authority of the scriptures as a valid source of knowledge, and consequently they do not attach much importance to śabda-pramāṇa or verbal testimony as a distinct source of knowledge. They include verbal testimony in inference, since, according to them, though verbal testimony may produce some true knowledge, the process involved in the origination of the knowledge from a sentence (śabda) is similar to that of inference. A sentence does not directly reveal any object or objects like the sense-organs (pratyakṣa-pramāṇa). Rather, the words in the sentence serve as a hetu or probans for the inference of the meaning through various speculative steps of vyāpti-jñāna and pakṣadhamatājñāna (existence of the probans in some locus).

The Vaiśeśikas, though they admit the authority of the Vedas, include all verbal testimony, common and scriptural, in inference, and thus admit only two pramāṇas - perception and inference. Perception is defined as a knowledge produced through the contact of the sense-organs with their objects (indriyārtha-sannikarṣa-jānyam jñānāṁ pratyakṣam). Again, conjunction of the internal organ mind with the particular sense-organ, (indriya-manāḥ-saṃyoga), and conjunction of the soul with mind (atmamanāḥ-saṃyoga) are also necessary for the perception. This definition of the Nyāya-Vaiśeśika school
has been generally accepted by most of the schools.

The Sāmkhya and the Pātañjala schools admit three kinds of valid sources of knowledge, viz. perception, inference, and verbal testimony (āgama) (7). They hold together with all other advocates of śabda-pramāṇa, that verbal testimony possesses some characteristics quite different from those of inference. While an inference originates from vyāpti-jñāna and paksadharmatājñāna, verbal knowledge is produced from words with the help of the knowledge of expectancy (ākāśā), fitness (yogyatā), etc. which are not required in the case of an inference. According to the Sāmkhya and Pātañjala, cittavṛtti or mental mental modifications produced through the sense-organs, or through vyāptijñāna, etc. are primarily regarded as pramāṇa, and the sense-organs and vyāptijñāna, etc. are regarded as pramāṇa in a secondary sense. The resultant knowledge as pramā is the appearance of the knowledge in puruṣa by way of reflection. (8).

Thus, according to Sāmkhya and Pātañjala schools and all other advocates of śabda-pramāṇa, verbal testimony must be regarded as a distinct valid source of knowledge. Laukika śabda or common words may be pramāṇa or apramāṇa i.e. valid or invalid; but śrutī-texts (āgama) or words are always pramāṇa or valid because of their revealed and eternal nature. Of course, to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika schools the Vedas are also not eternal, but always valid being composed by omniscient God.

(7) Yoga-sūtra 1. 7; Sāmkhya-sūtra - 1. 37.

(8) Phalamaviśtah pauruseyascittavṛttibodhah, buddheḥ pratisamvedi puruṣa iti/ Yoga-sūtra-bhāṣya - 1. 7.
According to the Sāṃkhyā and Pātañjala schools the details of an object are known only through perception (viśeṣa-vadhāraṇārtha vṛttih pratyaksam) (9).

Inference and verbal testimony being kinds of mediate knowledge (parokṣa-jñāna) provide only a general knowledge of the objects (sāmānyāvadhāraṇārtha vṛttih). While perception is produced through mental modification (citta-vṛtti) caused by the various kinds of contact of the sense-organs with their objects, inference is produced by the knowledge of the invariable relation of a liṅgin (probandum) and liṅga (probans) (10).

The Jaina, however, broadly admit two kinds of knowledge immediate and mediate, or aparokṣa and parokṣa (11). They regard ordinary perceptions through sense-organs and mind as parokṣa or mediate knowledge. But those ordinary sense-perceptions are also regarded as perceptions only for practical purposes (12).

The truly immediate perceptions are those extraordinary perceptions which are technically called avadhijnāna (clairvoyance), manah-paryaya (telepathy), and kevalajñāna or the final illumination (13).

Parokṣa or mediate knowledge, according to the Jaina includes mati-jñāna and śrutajñāna (14).

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(9) Yoga-bhāṣya - 1. 7.
(10) Sāṃkhyā-sūtra - 1. 100.; Sāṃkhyā-Kārikā - 5.
(11) Pārīkṣāmukha-sūtra - 2. 2.; Tattvārtha-sūtra 1. 11-12.
(12) Tattvārtha-vṛtti - 1. 11.
(13) Ibid - 1. 12.
(14) Ibid - 1. 11.
Matijnāna denotes ordinary sense-perceptions mentioned before, and also inference (anumiti), recollection (smṛti), recognition (pratyavijñā), and guess (ūha) (15). The other kind of parokṣa is śruta-jñāna which means verbal knowledge. The Jainas regard the valid cognitions themselves as pramāṇas because they are capable of bringing about good and avoiding evil.

The Naiyāikas, however, add along with others a fourth kind of pramāṇa called upamāṇa which, according to them, is the knowledge of similarity (sādṛśya-jñāna) which produces a resultant knowledge (upamiti) of the meaning of a word, according to the instruction of some experienced person (atidesa-vākyārthasamāna). The Vedāntins however consider such knowledge of the meaning of a word to be a form of inference, and interpret upamāna and upamiti in a different way. According, to them the perception of similarity in a particular object with an object absent, is the source as upamāna to produce the reverse knowledge of similarity in the absent object with the present one. When we perceive the similarity of Caitra staying at home with Maitra moving in the street, the perception of similarity in Maitra produces a reverse knowledge of similarity in absent Caitra with Maitra present. This knowledge of similarity in absent Caitra cannot be a perception, nor can it be an inference because of being instantaneous after the perception of similarity in Maitra. Therefore, this knowledge of similarity in Caitra being a distinct kind of valid knowledge, its source the perception of similarity in Maitra (with Caitra) is the distinct source called upamāna.

(15) Tattvārtha-vṛtti - l. 13.
The Pravākaras among the Mīmāṃsakas admit, in addition to these four, a fifth distinct source of knowledge called arthāpatti or postulation which is admitted also by the Bhāṭṭas and the Vedantins. When some experienced fact or a fact known from scriptural text cannot be explained without assuming some other fact, then this assumption or postulation of the other fact being a fresh knowledge is arthāpatti pramāṇa (16)/postulation.

The knowledge of the perceived fact as otherwise inexplicable or impossible (annyathānupapatti-jñāna) is the arthāpatti-pramāṇa or the source which leads to the postulation. When a person called Devadatta is perceived to be growing fat inspite of not taking food by day, the fact of his growing fat inspite of fasting by day, can not be accounted for without the assumption that he takes some food at night (divā abhuñjānasya Devadattasya pinatvam rātribhojanam vinā anupapannam). Therefore, it is assumed or postulated that Devadatta must be taking some food at night. (ato Devadattasya rātribhojanam kalpayāmi) : (17).

(16) Most of the systems of Indian philosophy draw a clear line of demarcation between pramāṇa and pramāṇa i.e. between the source of knowledge and the resultant knowledge. Thus pratyakṣa–pramāṇa (i.e. the sense-organs) produces pratyakṣa–pramāṇa or perceptual knowledge. Anumāṇa–pramāṇa (i.e. vyāpti–jñāna) produces anumāṇi or inferential knowledge. Śabda–pramāṇa (words or sentences) produces śabda-bodha or verbal knowledge, and so on.

(17) Vedānta-Paribhāṣā - Page 121. (R. K. Mission)
Arthapatti may be of two kinds, viz drṣṭarṇthapatti or postulation from perceived facts, and ērutschārṇthapatti or postulation from facts known from the Āruti. According, to the Prabhākaras, Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and some of the schools of Vedantins arthapatti must be regarded as a distinct source of knowledge because it cannot be included in inference, and also because the introspection after such knowledge comes in the form - "I postulate" (kalpayāmi), and not in the form - 'I infer' (anuminomi). Those who include arthapatti in inference, regard the anupapattijnāna as a form of vyatireka-vyāptijnāna or the knowledge of negative concomitance. Thus, according to them postulation is a kind of inference through vyatireka-vyāptijnāna. The Bhāṭṭas refute this view showing that there are some distinct characteristics in arthapatti which distinguish it from inference. In arthapatti there must be an apparent conflict between two facts which is not required in the case of an inference. The introspective knowledge (ānuvyavasāya) like 'I presume' also distinguishes arthapatti from inference. According, to the Vedāntins vyatirekavyāpti is not regarded as a cause of inference. So, arthapatti which may be reduced to a form of vyatireka-vyāptijnāna cannot lead to any inference. It can only lead to a presumption of postulation which is introspected as 'I postulate', and not as 'I infer'.

The Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas and also the Advaita Vedantins while admitting the said five sources of knowledge, admit a sixth source called anupalabdhi or non-perception (of the negatum) by which various kinds of negations are directly apprehended. According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school, Prabhākaras, and some others the negations are perceived through the respective sense-organs through which the
positive objects are perceived. A particular odour and its absence are both perceived through the same sense-organ of smell. But the Bhāṭṭas and the Advaitins contend that any contact of the sense-organs with negations is impossible.

Though sense-organs may be necessary to apprehend the locus of the negations, the sense-organs cannot possibly have any contact with the abstract negations. Therefore, the source through which direct apprehension of the negations originates is the non-perception of the negata (pratīyogyanupalabdhi) of the negations (18). Of course, to apprehend a particular negation like 'the negation of a jar' (ghato*nāsti), the recollection of the negatum (pratīyagisvarana) is also necessary as an accessory. Therefore, pratīyogyanupalabdhi or in short anupalabdhi must, according to them, be regarded as the sixth distinct source of direct apprehension of negations.

The Advaita school of Śaṅkara, amongst the Vedantins agree with the Bhāṭṭas by admitting these six pramāṇas, as is said about the Advaitins that they follow Bhāṭṭa in empirical matters (Vyavahāre tu Bhāṭṭanyayāḥ). But the Advaitins have their own conception of perception quite different from others. In perception the knower, the knowledge, and the known become unified as it were. The knower which is nothing but consciousness limited by mind becomes one with the consciousness limited by the perceived object through the mental modification which goes out to pervade the object.

(18) Vedānta-Paribhāṣā - Page 135 (R.K.Mission)
Thus, the consciousness limited by the mental modification (vṛttayavacchinna-caitanya) also becomes one with the object-consciousness (viṣaya-caitanya). The perceptuality of a cognition depends on the criterion of such unification, and not on being produced by sense-organs. (19).

Rāmānuja amongst the Vaiṣṇava Vedantins strung a different note by including upamiti, arthāpatti, etc. in perception or inference, and by admitting only perception, inference, and verbal testimony (āgama, śabda) as the three distinct valid sources of knowledge. (20).

Śrī Jīva, however, accepts not only the said six pramāṇas but also all other extant pramāṇas admitted by the Paurāṇika and the Ālāmkārika. Ārṣa, sambhāvanā, aitihya and ceṣṭā are also admitted by him as different pramāṇas or valid sources of knowledge in empirical matters. He enumerates and explains the ten pramāṇas in his sarvasambādīnī. (21). But he emphatically declares that these pramāṇas except śabda cannot produce any knowledge about the transcendental or Ultimate Reality. But, laukika śabda or ordinary verbal testimony is equally meant for empirical purposes. With regard to spiritual and transcendental matters laukika śabda famē no better than other ordinary pramāṇas.

Therefore, it is only alaukika śabda or śruti which is capable

(19) Vedānta-Paribhāṣā - Page 14 (R.K.Mission)
(20) Tāni pramāṇāni pratyakṣaṁnumāna - śabdākhyāṇi tripyeva / Yatindramatadīpikā - Page 8 (R.K.Mission (Madras)).
(21) Vide Sarvasambādīnī - Page 8 (Sahitya parishad ed.)
of revealing such transcendental realities. All the orthodox schools are unanimous in this point. Specially the PürvaMīmāṃsakas and all the schools of Vedantins lay special emphasis on the authority of the Śrutī by declaring that the Śrutis are apauruṣeya or not composed by any person. They eternally exist in the same form as they are now(22) though they may appear time to time from God at the time of creation. Being not composed by any person or by God, they reveal realities directly and independently. The Śrutis are direct reports of truths and realities, and not reports of the experience of any person. It is, therefore, that the Śrutis are differentiated from Smṛritis which follow from them. Being not composed by any person the Śrutis are free from the possibility of involving error or deceit. They are intrinsically valid. As they constitute an independent source of knowledge regarding all spiritual matters they have been regarded as a separate pramāṇa. The validity of the scriptural knowledge, says Śaṅkara, is self-established or axiomatic (nirapekṣa - svataḥsiddha) just as the validity of the light or the eyes is with regard to revealing colour (23). The validity of the verdict of the eyes with regard to colour cannot be questioned.

The validity of the Śrutis as pramāṇa is also independent (nirapekṣa) in as much as it does not require any other pramāṇa at its root like laukika śabda to vindicate the validity. Śrī Jīva quotes from Bhāmatī in support of his view that though the Śrutis require the help of some perception i.e. the perception in hearing

(22) Vedanta-paribhāṣā, Page 116 (R.K.Mission)

(23) Brahmaśūtra - Śaṅkara-bhāṣya - 2. 1. 1.
the words of the śrutis, in the origination of the verbal knowledge of the śruti-texts, yet they do not require any perception or any other pramāṇa for the validity of that verbal knowledge (svatahsiddha-pramāṇabhāvasya svakāryapramitau parānapekṣatvāt .. juxtaposed) pratyakṣa-pekṣatvāt) (24). All other schools of theistic Vedāntins including the Gauḍīya school admit the self-validity of scriptural knowledge, and independence of the śrutis with equal emphasis and on the same grounds.

The Pūrva-Mīmāṃsakas and the Advaitins are regarded as very loyal to the authority of the śruti, though all the orthodox schools admit the authority of the śrutis. Both of them regard the śruti-texts as apauruṣeya or revealed, being not composed by any person. But, their loyalty towards the Vedas is also partial and restricted as Śrī Jīva hints in his Sarvasambādīnī. The Mīmāṃsakas contend that the Vedas are authoritative only with regard to some activity enjoined by the injunctions, since the primary force and import of words are determined to mean such activity. (25). Therefore, the validity of the Vedas does not extend to mean Brahman or Ātman as the final import of the Vedas, since Brahman is an existent entity (śiddha-vastu), and not connected with any activity. Thus, according to them the most important part of the Vedas, viz. the Upaniṣads are not valid testimony with regard to its own subject-matter, Brahman.

By presenting this view of the Mīmāṃsakas Śrī Jīva seems to indicate that the loyalty of the Mīmāṃsakas towards the authority

(24) Bhāmatī - l. l. 1.
(25) Kāryārthe eva Vedasya prāmāṇyena siddhiḥ, tatraiva sakti-tātparyayoraWadhāritvatvāt/

Sarvasambādīnī-Page 16.
of the Vedas is partial. He also refutes their view by establishing that the Vedas are also valid testimony with regard to existents (siddha-vastu) and, therefore, the Upaniṣads are also authoritative with regard to its own meaning (26).

It may also be suggested in this connection that the loyalty of Śaṅkara towards the authority of the Vedas is restricted though he admits the Vedas to be apauruṣeya and nirapekṣa or independent with regard to its validity. Śaṅkara sticks to his philosophy of niṣ-praṇāča or nirguṇa Brahman which he identifies with the essence of the individual souls. For this purpose he resorts to lakṣaṇā or implication whenever the Vedic texts go against his favoured view, and interprets those texts in favour of his philosophy. But lakṣaṇā is admissible only when the meaning of a sentence becomes absurd if the words are taking in their primary meaning. Śrī Jīva has pointed out that Śaṅkara resorted to lakṣaṇā even where the primary meaning through śakti is quite possible and reasonable. Again, Śaṅkara had to explain all texts describing qualified Brahman as having only empirical validity, because they do not describe the true nature of Brahman but only Its conditioned (sopādhika) aspect. Those texts are meant for worship by men of lower fitness, or for providing the negata (pratiyogā) of the negations like 'neti', 'neti' which describe the true nature of Brahman.

Thus, we find that Śaṅkara also rejects in a way the validity of a great portion of the Upaniṣads by denying their primary meaning or

(26) Upaniṣadāmapi svārthe prāmāṇyamastyeva / Sarvasambādīnī - Page 17.
Śākyārtha. Thus Śaṅkara's loyalty to the authority of the Vedas also seems to be restricted.

On the other hand, Śrī Jīva along with other Gauḍīyas claims to have interpreted all the Upaniṣadic texts in their primary meaning taking the śākyārtha or direct meanings of the words as far as possible. Therefore, their loyalty to the Vedas and their validity is unrestricted and unquestionable.

Although Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin agrees with other orthodox Indian thinkers in accepting the authority of the Vedas, yet his attitude towards the Vedas or the Śruti deserves a special mention. Unlike the advocates of other systems of Indian philosophy, Śrī Jīva has included the Purāṇas specially the Bhāgavata Purāṇa within the scope of Śruti or the revealed scripture. According to him the Śrīmad-Bhāgavata Purāṇa contains the essence of the Vedas and the Brahma-sūtras, and hence its authority is in no way inferior to that of the Vedas and Upaniṣads. So, we find that Śrī Jīva propagates all his theories and doctrines as the real purport of the Śruti-teachings though he has discovered them from Purāṇas. He has tried to substantiate his contention by quoting from the Upaniṣads wherever possible.

With view to place the scriptural authority, specially the authority of the Bhāgavata above all other pramāṇas, Śrī Jīva has admitted the validity of all the pramāṇas and has also shown the weakness of all ordinary pramāṇas except Śabda or scriptural authority. Though, the other nine pramāṇas like perception, inference, etc. are valid sources of knowledge, they are weak and unreliable in
determining transcendental truths and realities. Since perception, etc. are all connected with a pramāṭr or a cognising subject, and since all human cognisers are liable to bhrama (error), pramāda (omission) vipralipā (deceit) and karaṇāpātava (defects of the sense-organs), cognitions produced by those ordinary pramāṇas are always liable to be invalid or doubtful. In every such cognition it remains undetermined whether it is pramāṇa, or pramaṇabhāsa i.e. whether it is a valid cognition or not (a false one) (27). Therefore, the extant ordinary pramāṇa are weak and unreliable even in determining empirical matters.

On the other hand, sābdapramāṇa or scriptural authority is above these defects being independent of other pramāṇas, and being free from the said defects of the subject.

Sābdapramāṇa may be helped by other pramāṇas according to their capacity either in its own function of producing the verbal knowledge, or by corroborating its meaning.

As for example, perception (as of the Vedic words) is necessary for the origination of sābdapramāṇa or the valid verbal cognition from any scriptural text. Again, perception may help sābda like "agnir himasya bhesajam" (fire is a remedy for cold) by corroborating the fact.

But, sābdapramāṇa is the most potent in the case of conflict with other pramāṇas. While other pramāṇas cannot contradict or invalidate sābda, sābda which is independent holds good even by

(27) anyeṣāṃ prayapuruṣabhramādidosamayatānyathā - pratīti-darsanena pramāṇam vā tadābhāsaṃ vetti puruṣairnirṇetumasakyaṃvāt. Sarvasambadhini - Page 5. (Sāhitya Pariṣad ed.)
invalidating other pramāṇas. (28).

Again, sabda-pramāṇa or scriptural authority is the only means or source of knowledge with regard to spiritual and transcendental matters to which the other pramāṇas have no access. The ordinary pramāṇas like perception, inference, etc. are incapable of revealing and establishing any transcendental reality (29).

Śrī Jīva describes and analyses all kinds of perception to argue for and illustrate their weakness. But this weakness and unreliability are not to be ascribed to the valid perception of the seers (vaidūṣa-pratyākṣa) which is based on scriptural authority.

The perception of the seers being based on the Śruti are indeed above all human defects like error, doubt, etc. The perceptions of common man are subject to doubt, since they are sometimes found to be erroneous. When a person is deceived or misled by a false perception, he begins to doubt even his valid perceptions until he is conformed of the truth through the instruction of some wise authoritative person. The six kinds of perception through the five sense-organs and the mind which are again divided as determinate and indeterminate, are all beset with such dubitableness and weakness. But sabda is above all these defects being independent and having its root in itself. The sentence like "Himalayas are the seat of hima" (snow) does not require the help of

(28) Taśya tu nairapekṣayāt / Yathāśākti kvaicdeva taśya taīh
sācivyakaranaḥ, svādhīnasya taśya tu tānyupamardyāpi
pravṛtti darsanāt / tena pratipādite vastuni taīh
virodhamasākhyatāt | Sarvasambādini - (Vangāya Sāhitya
Pariṣad) Page - 6.

(29) teṣām śaktihiraspiśye vastuni taśyaiva tu sādhakatamātyāt/
any other pramāna to be verified, because the word 'Himalaya' itself confirms the truth. Again, the sentence like "thou art the tenth", when it produces the valid cognition as "I am the tenth" immediately removes the veiling ignorance without depending on anything else. Being independent and most potent, śabda sometimes invalidates perception, just as śabda or verbal testimony of the astronomy (jyotiḥ—śāstra) describing the moon as very great in size invalidates our perception of the moon as so small. Though sometimes śabda is helped or corroborated by perception, sometimes again śabda is quite independent of any perception as in the case of planatory influences on human body which can be determined only through śabda-pramāna or the śāstras.

Some may say (to uphold the position of perception as the absolute valid source of knowledge), what is established by the perception of all persons may be accepted as truth. But this conclusion is not tenable because it is never possible for all persons to meet to give their verdict. Besides, it cannot also be contended that what is perceived by many is truth, since, what is perceived by many is also seen to be otherwise in some other region, or is known to be otherwise through some science or secular śāstra. Therefore, śabda-pramāna is most potent and reliable in determining truth. And in certain cases, śabda-pramāna is the only possible source of knowledge.

Another important source of knowledge is inference. Inference generally involves five members, vis. pratijñā, hetu, udāharana, upanaya and nigamana. Its validity depends on the correct knowledge
of invariable concomitance or vyāptijñāna of the probans (hetu) and probandum (śādhyā), and on the correct knowledge of the existence of the probans (hetu) in the subject or the locus (pakśa) of the inference (pakśa-dharmatājñāna). But inference is also equally weak and unreliable because it is difficult to ascertain whether the probans perceived in the locus is actually what it is perceived to be. It is also equally difficult to determine whether the mark (liṅga, hetu, śādhanā) and the item to be inferred (śādhyā) are actually related by invariable concomitance, since, our experience being limited, there might be vyabhicāra or breach of the invariable concomitance outside our experience. Such doubt may stand in the way of determining invariable concomitance. Again, dust or vapour (vāspa) rising out from some place may sometimes be mistaken for smoke. Perception of such smoke as a mark or probans will only lead to an erroneous inference. If again, we are required to know the mark as real smoke by knowing the existence of fire in that locus, then inference will involve the defect of mutual dependence or petitio principii (30). Therefore, śabdapramāṇa invalidates inference as well. In some cases, of course, inference may help or corroborate śabdapramāṇa.

The major sources of knowledge like perception and inference being thus proved to be defective and unreliable, the other minor sources of knowledge like upamāṇa, arthāpatti, etc. are evidently not dependable (31).

(30) Dhūma - dhūmābhāṣayoragnisadhbhāvāsvabhāvamātra - pratipatteragnijñānādevasamāhūmaśādhyāśādhanāsamabhīvyahārāt parasparasrayah prasajyeta/(Sarvasambādinī - Page 7)

(31) Tadevam mukhyayoreva tayorabhāṣikrtau paranītu svayamevānapēksyāni bhavanti / (Page 8) - Ibid.
Śabda occupies a superior position also because all acquisition of knowledge even of children depends on words used by their parents and other superiors (32).

Now that it has been proved that śabda is the only dependable pramāṇa, it is still to be considered and determined what kind of śabda (verbal testimony) it is which is to be resorted to as the supreme pramāṇa. It is not sufficient to hold that the words devoid of falsity, etc. is that supreme śabda-pramāṇa. For, everyone may consider the words in favour of his opinion to be devoid of falsity according to his own understanding, and thus there can be no final decision (33). Though words faithfully reported by one who knows the fact (/aptoktam vākyam) are regarded as valid śabda-pramāṇa for practical purposes, they are equally liable to be erroneous like perception, etc. because of the ignorance or report of the speaker. Thus, such common words or sentence (laukika śabda) may be valid or invalid as a source of knowledge, and are, therefore, not dependable in determining truth.

Therefore, the Vedas, and other scriptural texts based on the Vedas, which are called alaukika śabda-pramāṇa, should be regarded as the supreme śabda-pramāṇa which we should depend on to determine truth, specially spiritual reality (34). These Vedas which

(32) Drśyate cātibālānām mātaraścādita-śabdādeva sarvajñānā-pravṛtthiḥ/ (Sarvasambādini - Page 8)
(33) Svamatigrhīte pakṣe bhramādirahito'yameveti prati-svam matabhedē nirpayābhāvāpateḥ/ (Ibid - Page 9)
(34) Sa eva nikhilaitihyamālāpamahāvākya-samudāyah śabdo'tra śṛṇyate, sa ca śāstrameva, tacc ādā eva... apauruṣeyam vākyam, tadeva bhramādirahitam sambhāvitam/ (Ibid - Page 9)
exist from time without beginning (anādisiddha) are sentences not composed by any person (apauruṣeyam vākyam). The similar Vedas appear again and again at the time of creation from the Lord (Īśvara) who is the cause of everything. Being so they are free from falsity, and are never liable to be erroneous. It is the validity of Vedas as pramāṇa which is unquestionable and constant (avyabhisāri-pramāṇa). It is by the grace of God that some men only accept the Vedas as such supreme pramāṇa.

Śrī Jīva has quoted Bhamati to show that the verbal knowledge from the Śruti-text is always stronger than even perception on which the verbal knowledge depends for its origination. Since we have to hear the Vedic texts at first to gain their verbal knowledge, perception is said to be jyeṣṭha or first-born. But, perception though first-born (jyeṣṭha) cannot negate the verbal knowledge produced by the Śruti-texts because it is born later (kaniṣṭha). Rather, it is the general rule that the first-born knowledge is negated by the later born knowledge if both the cognitions are born independently, just as the first-born cognition of a silver in a conch-shell is negated by the knowledge of the conch-shell which is born later independently. This has been declared by Jaimini in his aphorism stating that in case of two cognitions originating one after another (independently), the previous one should be weaker than the latter (35).

Quoting these arguments and decision of Vācaspati in his own favour, Śrī Jīva concludes saying that first-born perception is

(35) Pūrvāparye pūrvadaurvālyam, etc. PūrvaMīmāṃsā - 6. 5. 54.
often to be negated by subsequent inference or verbal knowledge, as in the case of the perception of the sun-disc as possessing small size which is negated by a subsequent inference based on the argument that a big thing is also perceived as small from a great distance, or by the verdict of the śāstras stating the sun to be very great.

Śrī Jīva does not agree with the Advaitins who hold that the Vedas like ordinary perception, inference, etc. have validity only so long as ignorance prevails, and validity of the Śruti ceases when ignorance is sublated. Since the Vedas are apauruṣeya or not composed by any person, they cannot have any necessary relation with ignorance or ignorant persons. Nor can it be objected that the injunctions of the Vedas will lose their practical validity when all persons will be liberated. As the time will never come when all jīvas will be liberated, there will always be some persons with regard to whom the teachings and injunctions of the Vedas will hold good. Nor can it be said that the Vedas are meant for the ignorant (avidyāvad-visaya), because, even the liberated associates of the Lord are found to have recited the Vedas like Sāma, etc. Even the Lord sets forth his creation according to the limits and methods mentioned in the Vedas which are his own creation. The Advaitins who hold all dualism including the Vedas to be imaginary and false, unwittingly disparage the validity of the Vedas, and consequently their philosophy is proved to be non-vedic (tanmatam avaidikaviśeṣa iti) (36).

(36) Sarvasambādinī - Page 11.
Sri Jiva has put forward various quotations from the Vedas and Brahma-sutras, and even from Saṅkara's commentary on the Brahma-sutras to prove the eternity of the Vedas, and to prove that the Vedas are not composed by any person. All texts supporting 'tarka' or reason should be understood as referring to reasons stated in the śrutis or based on the śrutis. They should not be understood as destructive or independent reason, because independent reasoning has been denounced in the Brahma-sūtra - 'tarkā-pratisthānāt' (37).

The Māṁsaka view that the Śruti-texts refer only to activities and rituals (kārye) and not to any existent reality (siddhavastu) has also been refuted.

In this way, the authority of the Vedas having been proved as supreme, the methods of ascertaining the meaning and final import of the Vedas should be known as - (a) upakrama-upasamhāra, or the introduction and the conclusion, (b) abhyāsa or repetition, (c) apūrvatā or the character of being not known before, (d) phala, the statement of results, (e) arthavāda, or eulogising and (f) upapatti, or reasoning. These six are the criteria of determining final import of the śāstras (tātparya-nirṇāyaka-liṅga). All the Vedantins including Saṅkara admit that what is acintya or beyond the jurisdiction of logic being beyond nature should not be put to logical tests.

Now the Vedas being supermundane words their final import must also be alaukika, or super-mundane.

(37) Brahma-sūtra - 2. 1. 11.
Therefore, that final import of the Vedas is to be determined not through logic, but with the help of the Vedas through the methods like upakrama, etc. mentioned before (38).

After establishing the authority of the Vedas in determining matters transcendent (39), Śrī Jīva invests the Purāṇas with an authority equal to that of the Vedas. He argues that the Vedas in the present decadent age are difficult to master and understand, and the sages who interpret them do not agree. Therefore, the scriptures which can truly determine the obscure sense of the Vedas are itiḥāsa and Purāṇa (40).

The Purāṇas were brought into existence, for this specific purpose of rendering the unfathomable meaning of the Vedas comprehensible to the ordinary mortals. The great sage Vyāsa (41) who was himself the classifier of the four Vedas, and an incarnation of the supreme Being for that purpose, propagated the Purāṇas which were revealed to him in his super-conscious state.

(38) Tadevam veda nāma laukikaśabdastasya paramam pratipādyam Yattadalaukikatvādacyāntyameva bhavisyati; tasmīn servāśraya tadupakramādibhih sarveśmaṇḍupari yadupapādyate tadevopāsyamiti/ Sarvasamādānī - Page 22.

(39) Aprākṛpta-vacanalaksanō veda evāsmākam sarvātīta - sarvāśraya - sarvācintīyācaryavahāvam vastu vividisatām pramanām/ Tattvasandarbha - Page 20 (Śrīmatīnya Research Institute)

(40) Tatra ca Vedāśabdasya sampratī dusprāratvādurdha-digamārthatvāc c tādarthānirnāyakānām munīmāmapi parasaravirodhād Vedarūpo Vedārtha-nirnāyakāscetiḥāsā-purāṇātmakaḥ sabda eva vicāraṇīyaḥ/ Ibid - Page 26 (C.R.I.)

(41) According to Śrī Jīva, Vyāsa is the incarnation of the knowledge of Lord.
The Purāṇas are so called because they complete or fulfil the meaning of the Vedas (पुराणपुराणम्). In addition to this view he also suggests that a complement cannot be different from that which it completes e.g. the incomplete part of a golden bangle can be made complete only by gold and not by any other baser metal. It is further stated that those topics of the Vedas which are called ākhyāna, Upākhyāna, gāthā and kalpa are elaborately dealt with in the Purāṇas; and in this dealing the Purāṇa also elucidates and amplifies what is vaguely or implicitly contained in the Vedas.

To extend the status of the Vedas to the Purāṇas, Śrī Jīva Goswāmin shows the sameness (abheda), as well as, the distinctness (bheda) of the two.

The purport of the Vedas and the Purāṇas is the same and both of them are of the nature of impersonal (apauruṣeya) logos validating themselves through themselves, without deriving their authority from any personal source. The difference between the two is only in the use of accents (śvara-bheda), and in some peculiar arrangements (krama-bheda) of the Vedic texts (42).

In order to substantiate his views he quoted from the different Śrutis and Purāṇas. In the Mādhyaṃḍi Śruti it is said (Oh, Maitreyī) Rk, Śāma, Yayur, Āthrava, Itihāsa, Purāṇa are the

(41) श्लोक — प्रवृत्तिः (42) विशिष्टाकार्था — प्रतिपदाकापदाकादानबाणायाम—
पार्थशयेत्वसवाभेदापि श्वाराक्रमभेदाभेदानिर्देशार्तौ—
पुपुपस्वे तात्वकसंदर्भाः — Page 26 (C.R.I.)
outcome of the breath of the all-pervading God (43). In the Chānda-
dogya-Upaniṣad - it is mentioned "- Oh Lord! I am reading Ēkākṣa Rk, 
Yayur, Sāma, Atharva, and Itiḥāsa - Purāṇa, the fifth Veda which 
is classified amongst the famous Vedas" (44).

In this way Jīva Gosvāmin puts the Vedas and the Purāṇas on 
the same rank as infallible source of knowledge and consider the 
Purāṇas to be a fifth order of the Vedas besides the four (Ṛk, 
Yayur, Sāma, Atharva) which are usually considered to be the 
Vedas proper.

Now, in order to prove the supremacy of the Purāṇas over 
the Vedas he said, apart from the greater intelligibility, the 
Purāṇa is superior to the Vedas owing to the fact that it can be 
studied not only by the Brahmins and other higher castes, but also 
by women and śūdras, and, therefore, it is not restricted to any 
special caste or sex (45).

Moreover, the Vedas are very extensive literature, and are 
hard to go through in all their different branches thoroughly at 
the present age by the average people, and the studying of one or 
two branches of it cannot produce a correct understanding of the

(43) Ekvam vā are 'syāmahatdbhūtasya niśvasitametad 
yadṛgvedyo jurvedah / Śāmavedo 'tharvāngirasa itiḥāsāh purāṇām/ 
Bṛhadāṟṇyaka-Ūp. 2. 4. 10.

(44) Ṛgvedam bhagavo 'dhyemi yajurvedam Sāmavedam 'tharvanam 
caturthamitiḥāsām purāṇām pāncaḥmaṃ vedānāṃ vedam /
Chāndogya-Ūp. - 7. 1. 2.

(45) Tathāpi sūtādi nāmadhikārah/ Tattvā-sandarlo - Page 33. 
(C.R.I.)
purport of the Vedas, and thus are of little use in the present decadent age. Hence one has to fall back in the Purāṇas and Iti-hāsas as easier alternatives. Of the Itihasas and Purāṇas the latter is preferred to the former.

But the problem is that in the present age the Purāṇas are not all available, and also they refer to various Gods. Therefore, to the average people, it is difficult to determine the fight one, and so the doubt regarding the acceptance of some of them naturally arises (46).

Therefore, the classification of the Purāṇas is essential according to this school, and they classify them under three heads, viz. sattvika, rājasika and tāmasika. Here the verses from the Matsya Purāṇa are quoted to explain that the sattvika Purāṇas deal with the greatness of Vishnu, the rājasika with that of Brahma, and the tāmasika with that of Śiva (47). There is a fourth miscellaneous kind (Samkīrṇa) which speak of Sarasvatī, the Pitṛs, and other deities or semi-divine beings (48).

The above graduation of the Purāṇas, which is mentioned in the Matsya-Purāṇa, mainly based on the degrees of sattvika quality,

(46) Atha purāṇaṁamevam pramāṇya sthite'pi teṣāmapi sāmastyenāpracara-drūpavānānādevatāpratipādakaprayatvāt arvacinaih kṣudrabuddhibhirartho duradhigama iti tadāvastha eva sansārayāḥ/ Tattva-sandarbha - Page 39 (C.R.I.)


is quite satisfactory according to Jīva Gosvāmin, because Sattva-guna is the basis or foundation of all knowledge of truth. In fact, it is the sattvika quality which is the gateway to the knowledge of Brahman, and, therefore, to indicate the Ultimate Reality the importance or efficacy of the sattvika Purāṇas, amongst other Purāṇas, is reasonably emphasised.

Jīva Gosvāmin says — though the sattvika Purāṇa is the highest, yet the problem is not solved because of the fact that the sattvika Purāṇas also describe the Ultimate Reality differently — somewhere as saguna, somewhere as nirguna, and so on (49).

Therefore, to solve this difficulty it is suggested to take the help of the Brahma-sūtras, which Veda-Vyāsa himself composed to clarify the meaning of Vedas and Purāṇas, and which are accepted by all the different schools. But this suggestion also is not of much help, because the sūtras are very brief and subtle, and in order to bring out the meaning of these sūtras, the different interpreters interpreted them in their own way.

So, according to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmin, the Bhāgavata Purāṇa which is an exhaustive commentary of the Brahma-sūtras by Vyāsa himself, is the only source-book which can solve the problem.

(49) Tathāpi paramārthe'pi nānābhangya vipratipadyamānānām samādhanāya kim syāt? Page 41. Tattva-sandarbha (C.R.I.).

'Nānābhangyeti/sagunām nirguṇam jñānagunakaṁ jaḍamidyādikam kutilayuktikadamvair nirūpayatāṁ ityarthāḥ/
Obviously, the value of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa is greater than the other Purāṇas and the other commentaries on the Brahma-sūtra also. The exclusive authority of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavata is maintained by Jīva Goswāmin on the supposition that Vyāsa himself after having composed the Brahma-sūtra, and having brought the different Purāṇas into existence, was not completely satisfied. He, therefore, composed the Bhāgavata which he obtained through superconscious intuition.

In this final book he found a synthesis of all the Śāstras, and it forms the only genuine commentary of his own sūtras (50).

The work proceeds with an exposition of the Gāyatrī which forms the essence of the Vedas. The reason of its authoritative ness is also found in the fact that it was revealed to Vyāsa in his spiritual superconscious state. The Bhāgavata is the most sāttvika of all the Purāṇas, because it is dear to the Lord and desired by all devotees (51).

The theory of this school, thus, believes that the themes of the Brahma-sūtra and the Bhāgavata respectively are identical; for, what appeared to Vyāsa's mind in a subtle form and was expressed by him in the form of brief sūstras, is said to have been

(50) 

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatasya Bhagavatpriyatvena
bhāgavatabhiṣṭatvena ca paramasāttvikatvam/
Tattva-sandarbha - Page 45.

(51) 

Mīśa—sūtrānāmakṛtrima—bhāsyabhūtaṃ samādhi labdhham-
āvīrbhāvitaḥ/ Tattva-sandarbha - Page 42.
amplified in the Bhāgavata in the form of an extensive Bhāṣya or commentary on these sūtras.

Thus to sum up, we find that according to the Gauḍīyas the ordinary means of knowledge are of no avail whatsoever in the apprehension of the ultimate spiritual Reality. Sabda in the sense of the Vedas, the Brahma-sūtras, and the Purāṇas and especially the Bhāgavata Purāṇa as an elaborate exposition of the meaning of the Brahma-sūtras, constitutes the real source of our knowledge of spiritual truth. According to Śrī Jīva the Bhāgavata is the highest authority to determine the nature of the Ultimate Reality.

(52) Sarva-pramāṇānāṁ Cakravartibhūtam/

Tattva-sandarbha - Page 41 (C.R.I. ed.)