

# Hindu Religious and Philosophical Concept in Context of Globalization and Multiculturalism: “Jivatman”

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## ABSTRACT

In the 20th and 21st centuries, active interactions have occurred between representatives of various cultures and traditions. This influences religious and philosophical concepts, including those in India. Modern people wish to learn more about ancient Hindu concepts and values.

The concept of the soul plays an important role in the formation of personal and cultural identity. In this article, we focus on the term “jivatman.” Within the framework of Indian culture and philosophy, concepts such as “Atman,” “Paramatman,” “jiva,” and later “jivatman” are integral to the traditional heritage that is preserved and passed down through generations. In the context of philosophical knowledge, it is important to distinguish concepts such as Atman and soul, since they have different meanings in the religious and philosophical traditions of India. Atman is the inner Higher Self, while the soul (jiva) is the bearer of life and is subject to the laws of karma. Some philosophers and researchers identify “jivatman” as a synonym for “jiva,” meaning the soul, while others equate it with the concept “Atman.” Cultural memory plays a key role in preserving this heritage, and the various interpretations of the term “jivatman” can be attributed to the processes of globalization and the politics of multiculturalism. We examined the interpretation of the term “jivatman” in dictionaries, analyzed its use in ancient texts, and considered the opinions of philosophers, neo-Hindu religious leaders, and researchers, including Mircea Eliade, Sri Aurobindo, Srila Prabhupada, and others. The emergence of representatives of the “new Indian mythmaking,” such as Devdutt Pattanaik, also influenced modern Hindu religious and philosophical thought. Analyzing his works, we observe a tendency to conflate the two terms (Atman and jiva) leading to their identification as a single concept.

Our research indicates that Devdutt Pattanaik’s analysis often lacks depth and fails to delve into the fundamental essence of Indian philosophy. This tendency towards simplification can lead to a superficial comprehension of the foundational principles and ideas that form the basis of Indian spiritual traditions.

## KEYWORDS

*being, spirituality, culture, multiculturalism, traditions, soul, identity, identification, memory, philosophical knowledge, values, communication*

## Introduction

Residents of the USA and European countries, particularly Ukraine, have shown interest in Eastern practices such as yoga, Ayurveda, and meditation. Beyond engaging in these spiritual practices, some people seek to learn more about ancient Hindu concepts and values. As a result, there is a demand for translations and adaptations of Hindu epics, myths, and philosophical treatises. The publication of these works leads to the popularization and simplification of Hinduism, transforming the religion into a “spiritual product.”

Globalization has a high impact on the Hindu religious and philosophical system. It influences practices not only outside India but also within the country. It has become commonplace to conduct online pujas and listen to man-

tras on YouTube, gurus and spiritual teachers actively publish their insights on social media and engage in discussions on gender issues.

For Ukraine, becoming acquainted with the culture and religions of India presents new opportunities for interstate communication and the strengthening of political and economic relations. Whereas the country previously focused primarily on developing ties with Western nations, the current global challenges have prompted Ukraine to continue partnerships with Asian countries, including India. Showing respect for India’s intellectual history can improve communication and collaboration with Indian counterparts. Furthermore, understanding Hindu values can also help in building long-term partnerships.

Globalization and multicultural policies also create an environment that promotes heightened interactivity among representatives of different teachings, particularly within

the sphere of understanding the human soul. In the Indian context, representatives of new mythmaking (including Amish Tripathi, Kavita Kané, Devdutt Pattanaik, etc.) appear. They present Indian mythology and philosophy through the lens of 21st-century perspectives.

The concept of the human soul in philosophy plays a significant role in shaping religious beliefs, fostering spiritual development, and guiding the search for the meaning of life and being. The nature of the soul has captivated Indian philosophers and scholars since antiquity. Viewed as an enduring and spiritual aspect of an individual, the concept of the soul serves as the basis for comprehending moral principles. The concept of the soul plays a significant role in the formation of personal and cultural identity. In the context of religious diversity, multiculturalism, and active intercultural communication, the concept of soul serves as a universal that unites aspects of existence and helps people of the digital age with different cultural backgrounds and values find common ground.

Given that terms like "Atman" and "jiva" are pivotal in denoting the spiritual essence of Hindu philosophy and Hinduism, it is logical to consider a term such as "jivatman," which amalgamates these two concepts. In the tapestry of Indian culture and philosophy, concepts like Atman, Paramatman, jiva, and their composite, jivatman, constitute an integral part of the traditional heritage, safeguarded and transmitted across generations. Cultural memory assumes a key role in preserving this heritage, primarily through sacred texts, the retelling of myths, the observance of religious practices, and the perpetuation of oral traditions.

This work primarily focuses on elucidating Devdutt Pattanaik's thoughts on jivatman. A contemporary Indian mythologist engages in the interpretation of myths and Indian philosophy, while also rendering ancient truths in a more accessible and simplified format tailored to the needs of modern individuals. Devdutt Pattanaik elucidates complex concepts using myths, symbols, and allegories, thereby aiding individuals in understanding themselves. This creative exploration of philosophical concepts can spark interest in ancient philosophy, enable individuals to understand their beliefs and values, find their identity, and foster identification with mythical characters.

### Research methods

This article extends our previous study on the nature of Atman and jiva (Ryzhik, 2024). In this article, we continue to analyze Devdutt Pattanaik's interpretations of one of the central themes in Indian philosophy, with a particular emphasis on the concept of "jivatman," which synthesizes these two terms.

Before delving into Devdutt Pattanaik's interpretations, we will first explore the definition of the concept of "jivatman" as presented in various dictionaries, such as "A Sanskrit-English Dictionary" by A. Macdonell (1893), "A Sanskrit-English Dictionary" by M. Monier-Williams (1899) and "The Student's English-Sanskrit Dictionary" by V. S. Apte (1893). The use of the term by philosophers, neo-Hindu religious leaders, and modern researchers will also be examined. Among these figures are Mircea Eliade (1990), Sri Aurobindo (2012), Srila Prabhupada (1968; 1974), and Aju Mukhopadhyay (2020). In addition, an analysis will be conducted on the frequency of use of the term "jivatman" in ancient Indian texts, including "Shivarahasya Purana" (Ribhu Gita – Shivarahasya Amsha 6, n.d.), "Brahma Samhita" (Sri Brahma-Samhita 5.20, n.d.) and "Yogashikha Upanishad" (Upanishads 110, 2023), among others.

An important source we will analyze in this article is the book "Devlok with Devdutt Pattanaik 2" (Pattanaik, 2017). This book is based on the television show of the same name, with its second season airing in 2016 on Epic TV. In this show, Devdutt Pattanaik answered questions related to Indian mythology and philosophy. The mythologist contextualizes ancient truths based on the needs of modern society, striving to elucidate the meaning of life and the nature of human existence through the lens of Hindu philosophy. His work serves as a bridge between ancient Indian wisdom and modern philosophical knowledge, offering insights into the complexities of being, while also trying to preserve cultural memory through the retelling of traditional narratives and concepts.

This work utilizes the conceptual and methodological frameworks developed by contemporary Ukrainian philosophers, dedicated to the ongoing search for new contours of spirituality and cultural identity. These include the book "Communication and Culture in a Global World" by Yevhen Bystritsky, Serhii Proleev, and Roman Zimovets (2020), the examination of culture and identity by Iryna Starovoi-tova and Liubov Yurchenko (2022), the analysis of culture, traditions, and multiculturalism by Vitaliya Gotynyan-Zhuravlova (2022), the exploration of cultural memory by Viktor Levchenko (2022), the examination of spirituality, culture, and values by Zoia Atamaniuk (2023), and Yulia Brodetska's (2023) concept of being and philosophical knowledge within the context of the methodological crisis of modern philosophy.

The aim of this study is to analyze how the basic foundations of Hindu philosophy and religion are transformed in the era of globalization through the concepts of Devdutt Pattanaik, with a specific focus on the term "jivatman".

Based on this aim, we establish the following tasks:

- examine the theoretical frameworks of modern Ukrainian philosophers, who define new dimensions of spirituality;
- conduct a search for interpretations of the term "jivatman" in dictionaries and analyze its usage in ancient texts;
- study the texts of philosophers, neo-Hindus, and researchers of Indian culture to gain a deeper understanding of the interpretation of the term;
- analyze Devdutt Pattanaik's views on this topic to understand whether his concept represents an effort to preserve traditional philosophical thought or a simplification of Hinduism under the influence of globalization and multiculturalism;
- find out the impact of globalization on the Hindu ethical, religious and philosophical concepts;
- understand the worldview meaning of Hindu religious and philosophical concepts and their influence on modern Ukraine.

### Results and Discussion

In modern Ukrainian scientific society, there is an active study of cultural and multicultural processes, new forms of philosophical knowledge, spirituality, ethical principles, and values. Vitaliya Gotynyan-Zhuravlova (2022) notes that multiculturalism is a critical problem for research, and this term is understood not only as tolerance of cultural diversity but also as a requirement for recognition of the rights of different racial, religious, and cultural groups for their harmonious coexistence. Zoia Atamaniuk (2023) believes that the impact of culture on the individual is twofold: on the one hand, this process occurs through the attraction of the individual to values and knowledge, and on the other

hand, through the individualization of a person. In her opinion, the process of assimilating culture in an individual occurs throughout his life.

Viktor Levchenko (2022), as well as Iryna Starovoitova and Liubov Yurchenko (2022), refer to the phenomenon of “cultural memory” in their works. Yulia Brodetska (2023) raises questions of existence, philosophical knowledge, and philosophical turn in the context of the methodological crisis in modern philosophy. As the researcher notes, modern philosophy is becoming a place for a new interpretation of classical knowledge in connection with sociocultural, economic, and political changes in society.

The book “Communication and Culture in a Global World” by Yevhen Bystritsky, Serhii Proleev, and Roman Zimovets (2020) deserves special attention. In it, the authors reflect on what is happening to people in the era of globalization, raise the topic of the insecurity of the degradation of the culture of discourse in the public sphere, and also determine the mutual connection between globalization, culture, and communication.

We believe that the religious and philosophical system of modern Hinduism deserves special attention not only from Indologists but also from researchers from other fields. In May 2024, after a six-year pause, the 5th All-Ukrainian Conference of Indologists was held in Kyiv (Lukash, 2024). It shows the interest of the scientific community in India and its culture.

More active study of Hindu concepts can lead to positive changes in Ukrainian society as a whole: increasing the level of spirituality and morality in society, helping to improve the physical and mental health of people through yoga and meditative practices, etc. The concept of karma, the consequences of our actions in this and future lives, contributes to the development of ethical consciousness. Intercultural communication and integration of ancient knowledge into modern esoteric and pseudo-esoteric teachings make it possible to preserve philosophical traditions and values in constantly changing conditions.

The identification of spirituality within the framework of Indian philosophical knowledge reveals a profound understanding of such concepts as Atman and jiva, highlighting the intrinsic connection between individual identity and universal consciousness. Consideration of these concepts constitutes an ontological aspect that impacts the fundamental understanding of being. Although the term “jivatman” appears infrequently and often indirectly in traditional sources and texts, its usage has increased in recent times, particularly with the rise of various neo-Hindu movements and sects within Hinduism. The term “jivatman” combines two fundamental concepts of Hindu philosophy: “jiva” and “Atman.” The combination of these two Sanskrit terms into the compound word “jivatman” generates semantic ambiguity, leading to discrepancies among specialists in the field of neo-Hinduism and Modern Hinduism. Interpretations of the term “jivatman” by various authorities vary in their semantic meanings, making it challenging to provide a clear and consistent definition.

For instance, in A. Macdonell's (1893) “A Sanskrit–English Dictionary,” jivatman is defined as “individual soul.” In M. Monier-Williams' (1899) dictionary, two additional definitions are provided for the phrase “individual soul”, namely, “living” and “personal”, and the term jivatman is also interpreted as “life principle,” with the individual soul contrasted against Paramatman. In contrast, “The Student's English–Sanskrit Dictionary” by V. S. Apte (1893) presents jiva and jivatman with slightly different meanings, designating them as “embodied soul.”

Regarding orthodox Hindu sources, the term “jivatman” appears very rarely. These mentions of the term help us to emerge into the cultural memory of early Hindu philosophical texts, and try to understand the sense of “jivatman.” In the “Bhagavata Purana,” the word “jivatman” is used about four times, where it is interpreted as “living entity” and “individual spirit soul” (Jiva atma, n.d.). In comparison, the term “jiva” appears more than twenty times in the “Bhagavata Purana” (Jiva, n.d.).

Also, the term “jivatman” is found in the “Shivarahasya Purana,” specifically in a section called “Ribhu-Gita,” which features a dialogue between the sage Ribhu and the sage Nidaga concerning the Higher Self and Brahman (Ribhu Gita – Shivarahasya Amsha 6, n.d.). The word “jivatman” also appears once in the “Brahma Samhita,” one of the earliest texts to present Krishna as the supreme deity (Sri Brahma-Samhita 5.20, n.d.).

The concept of “jivatman” is mentioned in the Upanishads, though much less frequently than the terms “Atman” and “jiva.” The “Yogatattva Upanishad” of the Muktika canon deserves special attention, particularly for the following phrase defining “samadhi”: “Samadhi is that state in which the Jivatman (lower self) and the Paramatman (higher Self) are differenceless (or of equal state)” (Upanishads 110, 2023: 918).

Atman is an uncreated point and a part of Paramatman, meaning Atman is identical to Paramatman. In contrast, the soul (jiva) is a substance that resides within any living being and is subject to the law of karma. Paramatman divides into countless Atmans, and each Atman at a specific point of existence interacts with a certain local form of matter. If everything that exists is viewed as a manifestation of Atman, or more precisely, Paramatman, then individual souls are also part of this single reality. However, the usage of the term “jivatman” in this context remains confusing.

As noted by Mircea Eliade, in the “Yogatattva Upanishad,” the terms Purusha, Ishvara, Self, and God are replaced by Jivatman and Paramatman. Mircea Eliade suggests that the practical aspects of the “Yogatattva Upanishad” might hold greater significance than its Vedantic orientation. According to him, the text of the Upanishad serves as a manual with guidelines for ascetics. From this perspective, terminology holds less interest for the reader compared to practical guidance (Eliade, 1990: 128–135).

Based on the existing definition of the term “soul” in orthodox Hindu philosophy as “jiva,” the usage of the compound word “jivatman” automatically becomes unnecessary. The famous neo-Hindu philosopher, guru, and revolutionary thinker Sri Aurobindo writes about the same thing, only in different words: “I have used the words Jiva and Jivatman in these and all the passages in exactly the same sense – it never occurred to me that there could be a difference. If I had so intended it, I would have drawn the distinction – the two words being similar – very clearly and not left it to be gathered by inference” (Sri Aurobindo, 2012: 66).

To provide clarity in discussions concerning the term “jivatman,” it makes sense to draw clear boundaries between the terms “jiva,” “Atman,” and “jivatman.” Allow us to present our insights on this subject.

Atman is the highest spiritual individual consciousness of the Self, representing pure spirit; it is antimaterial, uncreated, indivisible, eternal, infinite, unchanging, formless, and indefinable as the supreme principle. Atman is a local conditional point of Paramatman, characterized by inactivity and contemplation. In some sources, Atman is referred to as the conditional point of Paramatman. Paramatman,

in turn, is paradoxically identified as both absolute emptiness and absolute fullness, the source from which all phenomena of the material world emerge.

Jiva is a sensual, or individual soul capable of acting, feeling, experiencing, and creating; it is a kind of energetic subtle substance through which the Atman realizes itself in the material world. Thus, the existence of jiva determines the presence of Atman. The term jivatman itself becomes redundant, as jiva always exists only in connection with Atman. Since the nature of jiva is a substance directly related to Atman, Sri Aurobindo is correct in asserting that jiva and jivatman are essentially the same. In other words, these terms express the same semantic meaning.

The relationship between jiva and Atman is the condition under which Atman identifies itself by contemplating itself within jiva. Atman is not energy because it is antimaterial. As previously stated, Atman is absolute emptiness or absolute fullness, a paradox that eludes complete comprehension by the human mind. In contrast, jiva consists of subtle energy, belonging to the astral plane, and embodies feelings, passions, emotions, and impulses – everything inherent in the nature of the soul. Thus, the soul (jiva) should be recognized as a subtle substance with various physical parameters, such as size, shape, specific localization within the material universe, and methods of interaction with the external world of Maya. These attributes enable Atman to realize itself as it navigates the Wheel of Samsara or the cycle of reincarnations.

Given that Atman possesses a supramaterial nature, it cannot be destroyed, altered, or subjected to any form of transformation. It is intangible and beyond the grasp of human senses and intellect. Atman is impossible to touch, comprehend, understand, hear, see, or feel. As an individual unit of Paramatman (the World Spirit), Atman is a conditional particle of God Himself. The term "conditional" is used because Atman cannot be separated from Paramatman; it is an indivisible continuation of it.

When considered within the framework of human consciousness, Atman can be likened to a drop of water separated from the world's ocean. However, if we transcend this paradigm, the ocean represents an antimaterial phenomenon that permeates infinite space and remains beyond human understanding and comprehension. Consequently, Atman itself becomes a point that reduces to zero, seemingly disappearing and transforming into a conditional antimaterial unit of Paramatman. This intricate interplay between Atman and Paramatman illustrates the profound connection between being and spirituality in Hindu philosophical knowledge.

It is this conditional point that forms energy around itself, manifesting as the material soul (jiva). In essence, the antimaterial Atman, a conditional particle of Paramatman, realizes itself in the material world through jiva. The soul (jiva) experiences and accumulates personal karma and engages with the events of the external material world, periodically reincarnating from body to body in accordance with the karmic law of cause and effect.

Atman remains the contemplator and controller of the actions performed by its individual soul, jiva. As a conditional particle of Brahman and consequently a co-creator, Atman generates its own jiva, tasked with actualizing the intentions of its Higher Self (Atman).

From the moment Atman creates jiva, it begins to realize itself by contemplating the material illusion of Maya surrounding it, seeing its reflection as in a mirror. Once Atman

forms jiva, the two together constitute a living entity capable of incarnating in the bodies of various beings, such as humans, animals, fish, etc. Through jiva, Atman is embodied in these diverse forms. Nonetheless, Atman always remains the highest principle.

When considering a person as an essence, it is important to recognize that a person is neither a physical body nor even a jiva. The true essence within the human body is Atman, the Higher Self. When the body dies, Atman, as the supreme absolute spiritual principle of the Self, departs from the body while remaining connected to jiva. In this state, Atman fully retains self-awareness and all accumulated karmic experiences, being ready for new incarnations.

When Atman enters the world of the material illusion of Maya, it begins to recognize itself as the individual consciousness of the Self. Paramatman permeates the entire material universe it has created, and, within the illusion of Maya, experiences itself as myriads of individual Atman-consciousnesses. In reality, these are all manifestations of one supreme, infinite spiritual Self. It is the illusion of Maya that causes Paramatman to perceive these myriads of Atmans. The entire material world is an illusion. This illusory material world of Maya, formed by Brahman, allows Paramatman to experience itself as countless Atmans. These Atmans, enclosed within jivas, perceive themselves as distinct material entities.

Based on the above reasoning, we can conclude that Atman and jiva are distinct concepts. Atman is a conditional, uncreated point of Paramatman, whereas jiva is a subtle energy substance. The soul possesses feelings, experiences, and passions, and has certain material parameters. Unlike Atman, jiva has form and characteristics inherent to material objects. Given these differences, Atman cannot be equated with jiva, nor can jiva be equated with Atman. Substituting these terms is, at the very least, incorrect. Consequently, combining these two terms into the compound word "jivatman" is unnecessary, as the existence of jiva inherently implies the presence of its individual Atman. This distinction is preserved within the rich traditions and cultural memory of Indian philosophy.

Moksha (liberation), as the ultimate goal of the individual Atman, signifies the complete departure of Atman from the material world and its return to the bosom of Paramatman. The jiva, which accompanies Atman on its journey through the Wheel of Samsara, ceases to exist once Atman exits the material world. This reasoning indicates that jiva and Atman are phenomena of different natures.

For further examination, a dialogue was extracted from "The Great Transcendental Adventure: Pastimes of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in Australia and New Zealand" by Kurma Dasa (1999). This communication features Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, engaging in a discussion with Professor Ian Watson, a Senior Lecturer in Indian Philosophy at La Trobe University (Melbourne, Australia).

Srila Prabhupada poses a query to Ian Watson: "Jivatma is eternal. Do you accept or not?"

In response, Professor Watson seeks clarification from Srila Prabhupada: "It depends on what you mean by jivatma." This phrase suggests that Ian Watson casts doubt on the term "jivatman," implying a lack of clear definition surrounding the issue. Had experts on the topic of jivatman held a definitive stance, Professor Watson would not have posed such a question to Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada further elaborated that according to Vedic literature, there exists God (Paramatman) and the individual soul (jivatman). In response, Professor Watson asserted that, according to Hinduism, jivatman is equivalent to Paramatman. Essentially, Ian Watson implies that jivatman shares the same properties as Paramatman. Consequently, if jivatman merges with Paramatman, it becomes Paramatman. However, it would have been more precise to utilize the term "Atman" instead of "jivatman" in this context, providing a clearer response. The usage of jivatman by both authorities only serves to complicate the understanding of these concepts.

When Srila Prabhupada queries the professor, "If they are one, why is the jivatma under the control of maya?", he overlooks a crucial point—that jivatman is subject to the influence of a localized aspect of Maya, just as the entire Paramatman is subject to the influence of the entirety of the Universe's Maya. Paramatman pervades the entire material universe and is inherently connected to it, suggesting its inability to exist independently from it. It's important to consider that Paramatman, who formed this illusion of Maya itself, is subject to Maya to the same extent that Maya is subject to Paramatman. This process is dialectical and reciprocal.

Professor Watson responds to Srila Prabhupada's question with a short phrase, stating, "We've forgotten." In reply, Srila Prabhupada remarks, "If you've forgotten, that means you're defective. If the jivatma equals the Paramatma, why should he have defective understanding? That means that he is not perfect. That means he is not Paramatma. Jivatma means sometimes in illusion, but the Paramatma is never in illusion. This is our Vaisnava philosophy."

Ian Watson states: "All right, you could put it that way. But what was the jivatma before it became illusioned?" To which Srila Prabhupada replies: "There was no 'before' or 'after'. The jiva is eternal."

In this instance, Srila Prabhupada utilizes two terms interchangeably for the same concept: initially "jivatman" and subsequently "jiva." This suggests that, for him, "jivatman" and "jiva" hold identical semantic meanings, akin to the perspective of Sri Aurobindo. However, both terms are employed inaccurately, as only Atman remains eternal, having never been created either before or after. It would be more appropriate to use the term Atman (rather than jiva) in his statement: "There was neither a 'before' nor an 'after.' Atman is eternal."

Although Srila Prabhupada interprets "jivatman" as synonymous with Atman, at this juncture, he inexplicably refers to the term "jivatman" as "jiva," akin to Sri Aurobindo's approach. Regarding "eternity," Srila Prabhupada would be accurate if he intended, in this context, the individual Higher Self of the entity (Atman) rather than jiva. This distinction is crucial, as jiva constitutes a subtle energy substance that ceases to exist when Atman departs, returning to the embrace of Paramatman.

During the conversation, Ian Watson remarked: "But you seem to be suggesting that each one of us are a little bit of God somehow." To which Srila Prabhupada said, "Yes. You can say 'small God'."

Srila Prabhupada's assertion that each of us is a little God holds merit. When individuals direct their inner focus towards their core, they reconnect with their highest spiritual essence (the supramaterial point known as Atman), which constitutes a fractional aspect of Brahman. Therefore, by their inherent primordial nature, individuals embody Atman or a fragment of Paramatman, that is, God.

Srila Prabhupada's discourse with Professor Watson leaves ambiguity regarding the concept of jivatman. There is a lack of clarity in Srila Prabhupada's usage of the term "jivatman," as he interchangeably assigns its meaning to both Atman and jiva.

The conversation mentioned above includes interpolations by the author. Kurma Dasa highlights that "it was obvious that the Professor was a staunch proponent of Mayavadi philosophy, the very same insidious and misleading doctrine <...>." It's important to note that Mayavada, also known as Advaita Vedanta of Shankara, is not endorsed by Hare Krishnas and is subject to active criticism. In this context, it's pertinent to recognize that the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta emphasizes the identity of Atman (and not a separate entity called jivatman) with the impersonal Brahman (*Bowker, 2000: 12-13*).

In one of Srila Prabhupada's letters (1968), an alternate definition or understanding of jivatman may be presented:

"Purusa means God or Krishna. Atma, there is Paramatma and jivatma. Both are atma because they are spiritual, but the living entities are called jivatma. Jivatma means the small particle of atma which has tendency to fall down in the material atmosphere. He is called jivatma. And Atma or Supersoul, who never falls in material contamination, is called Paramatma or Supersoul. And because He does not fall under material illusion, Another Name is Acyuta—Acyuta means never fallen."

In the letter, Srila Prabhupada asserts that Atman is both a Paramatman and a jivatman. This statement implies that jivatman is Atman, Atman is Paramatman, and thus jivatman is Paramatman. Consequently, the precise definition of jivatman remains ambiguous. Srila Prabhupada appears to, like others, use the term jivatman inconsistently. Either jivatman is synonymous with Atman, or it is equated with Paramatman, or it refers to jiva. Furthermore, in another part of the letter, Prabhupada describes jivatman as "the small particle of atma." This introduces a contradiction within his discourse, as he initially identifies jivatman with Paramatman, only to later describe it as a component of Atman itself.

Srila Prabhupada asserts that Paramatman, as the Supersoul, "never falls in material contamination" and "His another Name is Acyuta." However, it's important to note that Paramatman, as the omnipresent essence permeating the entire universe, encompasses both material and non-material realms. While Paramatman transcends material illusion, it is also immanent within it, interacting with both matter and illusion. Hence, there exists a reciprocal influence between material illusion and Paramatman during their interaction.

While conversing with Dr. Patel and several other associates, Srila Prabhupada observes that in Mayavada philosophy "Jivatma and Paramatma [are] the same," and adds that "So this should be clearly understood, that in this body both the Paramatma and jivatma living" (*Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, 1974*).

As discussed earlier, Advaita Vedanta philosophy emphasizes the concepts of Atman and Brahman. It can be inferred that the translation of the term Atman as jivatman within the framework of Advaita Vedanta likely emerged during the period of European scholarly engagement with Hinduism. In this context, Srila Prabhupada's assertion that "in this body both the Paramatma and jivatma living" seems to contradict his previous statement in the letter: "And Atma or Supersoul, Who never falls in material contamination, is called Paramatma or Supersoul" (*Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, 1968*).

How can Paramatman exist in the body if it "never falls into material contamination"? Paramatman, in the process of creating the material universe, differentiates into myriads of conditional points of Atmans – individual consciousnesses – each of which unites with its personal jiva, which in turn is embodied in a physical body. It fosters a profound sense of identification within the framework of Indian spirituality, wherein the individual soul seeks union with the divine essence. Thus, each individual Atman becomes a manifested entity in the material world while remaining an inextricable part of Paramatman. Given this, Paramatman, being omnipresent and therefore permeating the entire material universe, or Maya, is present in every physical body. However, it is important to clarify that Paramatman is present in each body not as Paramatman itself, but as separate Atmans – individual consciousnesses. Figuratively, the myriads of Atmans can be compared to the myriads of drops of the world ocean called Paramatman.

How do modern researchers interpret the term "jivatman"? The book "Discovery of Self: Who Am I?", released in 2020 and authored by a group including poet and critic Aju Mukhopadhyay, who is interested in the teaching and philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, addresses this question. In the chapter "Origin of Consciousness," Mukhopadhyay writes that "Self is considered to be the atman or soul. The soul in an individual is known as jivatman which is part of the atman or cosmic consciousness" (*Mukhopadhyay, 2020: 163*).

From this, it follows that the author equates Atman with the soul. As noted in previous work (*Ryzhik, 2024*), such identification has become more common recently, but it often results in a distortion of the original meaning and a misunderstanding of Hindu philosophy. Atman and soul are not only distinct concepts but also represent different substances. Atman is an uncreated point and part of Paramatman, whereas the soul (jiva) is a substance residing in any living being and is subject to the law of karma. Therefore, equating Atman with the soul is a fallacy. We suggest that this trend of equating Atman with the soul may stem from the influence of multiculturalism, globalization, and Westernization on the interpretation of Hindu philosophy. Nowadays, ideas and concepts from diverse cultures often undergo simplification to make them more accessible to a wider audience. This simplification can lead to a blending of complex philosophical concepts and a misunderstanding of traditional spirituality.

Aju Mukhopadhyay interprets jivatman as the individual soul, which he believes is "part of the atman or cosmic consciousness." However, this raises the question: how can the individual soul (jiva) be part of the Atman if the jiva is the sheath of the Atman and animates it? The jiva allows the Atman to manifest in the material world. Since Atman is a part of Paramatman, it would be more accurate to state that jivatman (jiva + Atman) is part of Paramatman.

Let us turn to the philosophical worldview of the modern Indian mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik. The popularity of his works can be explained by the reluctance of the modern audience to delve into the deep meanings of religious and philosophical concepts. In the era of globalization, many people are not interested in broadening their horizons by reading treatises and special literature, but want to acquire "quick knowledge." Understanding this, Devdutt Pattanaik adapts complex spiritual ideas and presents knowledge and values in a new style with specific recommendations for integration into everyday life. Let us dwell on Devdutt Pattanaik's interpretation of the term "jivatman."

While discussing the Atman, Devdutt Pattanaik asked the following question: "What's the difference between jeevatma and paramatma?". He responds as follows: "Jeevatma is khandit, incomplete, and paramatma is akhand, complete. There are two distinct words – para-atma and paramatma. Para-atma is others. If I don't respect you, it shows that I've become so arrogant that I don't acknowledge your atma, think that you have no atma. If I acknowledge that all living beings have the same soul inside different bodies, I'm conscious of the para-atma. When we bring together the entire world's atma, so that it is infinite, that is paramatma; this is akhandit, unbroken, without boundaries. Jeevatma (an individual soul) has boundaries, is caught up in karma. Paramatma is not <...>" (*Pattanaik, 2017, Chapter 6*).

When Devdutt Pattanaik describes Paramatman as "something akhand, complete," he aligns with many orthodox sources of Hinduism. However, his understanding of the term jivatman raises some issues. It is noteworthy that neo-Hindu gurus have understood this term differently. For instance, Sri Aurobindo considered jivatman synonymous with jiva, while Srila Prabhupada at times referred to jivatman as Atman and at other times as jiva. Dictionaries often define jivatman as the individual soul, a definition that also applies to the jiva.

Devdutt Pattanaik asserts that in Hinduism "there are two distinct words – para-atma and paramatma." Immediately, doubt arises about the authenticity of the word "para-atma," because this term cannot be found in dictionaries or traditional texts on Hinduism. If only we accept the idea that Devdutt Pattanaik made a certain discovery in Hinduism, which he defined as the concept of para-atma. But even so, he does not have a clear and precise explanation for this word. He briefly states, "para-atma is others," a phrase too compressed to convey the term's full meaning.

Devdutt Pattanaik then discusses that "If I don't respect you, <...> I don't acknowledge your atma." It is unclear why he includes this in a discussion of para-atma and paramatma.

He further asserts, "If I acknowledge that all living beings have the same soul inside different bodies, I'm conscious of the para-atma." Here, instead of continuing to use "Atman," he shifts to using the word "soul," typically denoted in Sanskrit as jiva. This shift raises questions about Devdutt Pattanaik's understanding of the difference between Atman and jiva, as they are distinct concepts in Hindu philosophy.

Devdutt Pattanaik notes that "when we bring together the entire world's atma, so that it is infinite, that is paramatma." While this is correct, it is important to clarify that the disunity of Atmans is a conditional concept. Ideally, all Atmans are never truly divided and represent a single, absolute, indivisible, eternal Paramatman that permeates all space and the material Universe.

Devdutt Pattanaik then states that "jeevatma <...> is caught up in karma" and "Paramatma is not." According to the law of cause and effect, it is not the Atman but the jiva that accumulates karma through reincarnation. The jiva, connected with the individual Atman or Higher Self, develops and accumulates karma. Thus, it is the jiva, not the jivatman, that is ensnared by karma, while the Paramatman is the Supreme Self of the entire Universe.

Since Paramatman encompasses an infinite number of Atmans, each representing the Higher individual Selves in the Universe, then, according to the logic of these reasons, we can accept the idea that Paramatman himself is

captured in the Karma of the entire material Universe. Only if we hypothetically assume the disappearance of the material Universe, which Hinduism terms illusion or Maya, can we assert that Paramatman is liberated and is not enslaved by Karma.

In the course of discussing Jainism and Buddhism, Devdutt Pattanaik is asked, "Hinduism has a similar concept of rebirth?". Devdutt Pattanaik responds by revisiting the topic of jivatman: "There are similarities in many of these concepts, but intellectuals will fine-tune them as separate concepts. The Bhagavata Purana will say that atma is god. So you have it, I have it. In Hinduism the concept of jeevatma and para-atma emerges, but we don't realize this because we are ignorant. We are confused and not looking correctly. When we do, we will know that there's god in you and in me. That will liberate us <...>" (*Pattanaik, 2017, Chapter 6*).

Devdutt Pattanaik states that "the Bhagavata Purana will say that atma is god." However, he does not specify the exact location of this phrase in the "Bhagavata Purana." A similar statement can be found in the seventh canto: "Atma refers to the Supreme Lord or the living entities" (*Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.7.19–20, n.d.*).

It is important to note that the Supreme Lord, referred to by Devdutt Pattanaik as "god", should be called Paramatman, not Atman. Atmans are individual consciousnesses or Higher Selves, which, when united with jivas, are considered living beings. It should also be noted that the "Bhagavata Purana" in recent decades is presented by the Hare Krishna movement followers in their interpretation, which might make it less reliable as an authoritative source when discussing the nature of Atman.

In Hinduism, Paramatman is the highest principle, equivalent to God or Brahman. Since Brahman (Paramatman) is omnipresent and permeates all space and the material universe, it is present in every living being, but only in the form of individual Atmans. Therefore, Atman is not God himself, as Devdutt Pattanaik claims, but rather a conditional part of God, representing the Highest individual consciousness of the Self.

Devdutt Pattanaik (*2017, Chapter 6*) further states, "In Hinduism the concept of jeevatma and para-atma emerges, but we don't realize this because we are ignorant." However, the concept of jivatman has never existed within Hinduism and still does not exist. The mythologist seems to believe he has realized this concept. If there were a concept in Hinduism explaining Jivatman and Paramatman, it would be found in the sources. Orthodox texts discuss the connection between Atman and Paramatman. This suggests that Devdutt Pattanaik relies on English sources rather than Sanskrit orthodox texts when studying Atman and Paramatman.

According to Devdutt Pattanaik, "When we do, we will know that there's god in you and in me" and "that will liberate us." However, the idea of God's omnipresence is widely known, not only to religious authorities and adherents but also to ordinary people who are not religious. This understanding of God's omnipresence has not necessarily led to liberation.

In his article "A Body with Eight Bends," Devdutt Pattanaik (*2019*) writes: "His [Ashtavakra's] conversations with Janaka are very popular, where he [Ashtavakra] draws attention to the connection between the spirit within us and the spirit that is present all around us, i.e. the relationship between Jeevatma and Paramatma, or simply, Atma and Brahman."

It is important to emphasize that Paramatman is an anti-material spiritual principle and one of the names of Brahman in Hindu philosophy. While Atman and jivatman are distinct concepts. The mythologist conflates these terms, treating them as synonymous. In reality, the "spirit that is present all around us" he refers to is the Atman, not the jivatman. It is the Atman that is the internal spiritual principle (according to Devdutt Pattanaik), although here it is necessary to clarify that the so-called "spirit" is the highest essence of the being – the Higher consciousness of the Self.

### Conclusion

In modern Ukrainian scientific society, there is an active study of cultural and multicultural processes, new forms of philosophical knowledge, spirituality, ethical principles, and values. We believe that the study of religious and philosophical concepts of other religions, particularly Hinduism, has a positive impact on the worldview of modern people, helps to adapt to constantly changing sociocultural realities, and allows one to achieve success in communication with representatives of other cultures.

Globally, Ukraine has been actively seeking to strengthen its security in recent years and is therefore exploring new possible areas of cooperation and partnership. Historically, the country has focused on European integration, leaving strategic partnerships with Asian countries, including India, in the shadows. However, in modern conditions, taking into account geopolitical needs, there is a need to improve relations with the countries of the East. Developing partnerships with India will positively impact economic growth and strengthen national security. In order to build harmonious communication with representatives of India, one should understand their ideological principles and values.

Based on the analysis of texts and works relating to the concept of "jivatman," we can conclude that in the era of active multiculturalism and globalization, modern Hindu religious and philosophical thought is undergoing changes. Such changes can be attributed to the simplification of ancient truths for a wider audience, the modernization of complex concepts to attract new audiences, and the popularization and commercialization of religion. Hindu ethical principles revealed in ancient epics remain relevant today.

Hindu philosophy remains relevant today, attracting interest from researchers of Hinduism and individuals seeking to deepen their spirituality and connection with the divine. Through the study of ancient texts, dictionaries, and the ideas of renowned philosophers and gurus, it becomes evident that the term "jivatman" has been subject to varied interpretations. Some understand it as the soul, while others interpret it as the Atman. Sri Aurobindo, for instance, considered jivatman synonymous with jiva, whereas Srila Prabhupada referred to jivatman as Atman in some instances and as jiva in others. Dictionaries often define jivatman as the individual soul, a definition that also applies to jiva.

Contemporary Indian mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik addresses significant philosophical topics in his works, including the term "jivatman." Our analysis indicates that Devdutt Pattanaik conflates the terms "Atman" and "jiva," treating them as identical and using them synonymously.

Devdutt Pattanaik's works exemplify the influence of mass media on modern sociocultural spaces. Our research, as noted in our prior work (*Ryzhik, 2024*), demonstrates that Devdutt Pattanaik seldom delves deeply into the essence of philosophy. He tends to present religious aspects without engaging with the profound philosophical

meanings. This simplification can lead to a superficial understanding of the foundational principles and ideas underpinning Hindu spirituality. The primary reasons for such simplifications include the processes of globalization and multiculturalism. Modern researchers and philosophers often study the works of both national and international authors, viewing ancient texts from a broader perspective.

These processes are particularly pertinent in the context of globalization and multiculturalism, where researchers have access to a wide array of information about the traditions and philosophical views of various cultures. However, it is crucial to balance the study and analysis of diverse viewpoints with an appreciation for unique national concepts that highlight the distinct characteristics of specific cultures.

We consider it essential to continue investigating how representatives of "new Indian mythmaking" interpret ancient truths. This ongoing study will help us understand how Indian philosophy is evolving in the contemporary world, shaped by the needs and interests of 21st-century society.

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## Індуїстська релігійно-філософська концепція в умовах глобалізації та мультикультуралізму: поняття «дживатман»

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У ХХ-ХХІ століттях спостерігається активна взаємодія між представниками різних культур та традицій. Це вносить свої корективи до релігійно-філософських концепцій, у тому числі в Індії. Сучасні люди прагнуть дізнатися більше про древні індуїстські концепції та ціннісні орієнтири.

Концепція душі відіграє важливу роль у формуванні особистої та культурної ідентичності. У цій статті ми зупинилися на терміні «дживатман». У рамках індійської культури та філософії такі поняття як «Атман», «Параматман», «джива» і згодом «дживатман» є частиною традиційної спадщини, яка зберігається і передається через покоління. У контексті філософського пізнання важливо розрізнити такі поняття, як Атман і душа, оскільки вони мають різні значення у релігійно-філософських традиціях Індії. Атман є внутрішнім вищим «Я», тоді як душа (джива), є носієм життя і підлягає законам карми.

Одними філософами та дослідниками «дживатман» ідентифікується як синонім «дживи», тобто душі, а іншими – як Атман. Культурна пам'ять відіграє ключову роль у збереженні цієї спадщини, а різні інтерпретації терміну «дживатман» можна пояснити процесами глобалізації та політикою мультикультуралізму.

Ми приділили увагу інтерпретації терміна «дживатман» в словниках, розглянули його використання в стародавніх текстах та проаналізували думки філософів, неоіндуїстських релігійних лідерів та дослідників, серед яких Мірча Еліаде, Шрі Ауробіндо, Шріла Прабгупада та ін. Поява представників «нової індійської міфотворчості», серед яких можна відзначити Девдатта Паттанаїка, також впливає на сучасну індуїстську релігійно-філософську думку. Аналізуючи його роботи, ми спостерігаємо тенденцію до змішування двох термінів – «Атман» і «джива», що призводить до їх ідентифікації як одного й того ж поняття.

В епоху активного мультикультуралізму та глобалізації сучасна індуїстська релігійно-філософська думка зазнає змін. Наше дослідження показує, що Девдатт Паттанаїк рідко вдається до глибин або суті індійської філософії. Подібна симпліфікація може призвести до поверхневого розуміння ключових принципів та ідей, що утворюють основу індійської духовності.

**Ключові слова:** буття, духовність, культура, мультикультуралізм, традиції, душа, ідентичність, ідентифікація, пам'ять, філософське пізнання, цінності, комунікація

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