



ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY

1. Where does it come from & how do we know about it?
2. What does it say?
3. What are its implications for everyday living?

ABSTRACTED SUMMARY OF THE TALK CONTENT

February 2018



Indus Valley

Ganges Valley

1. WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Vedas are the Source

VEDAS

- Rig-Veda
- Sama-Veda
- Yajur-Veda
- Atharva-Veda



UPANISHADS

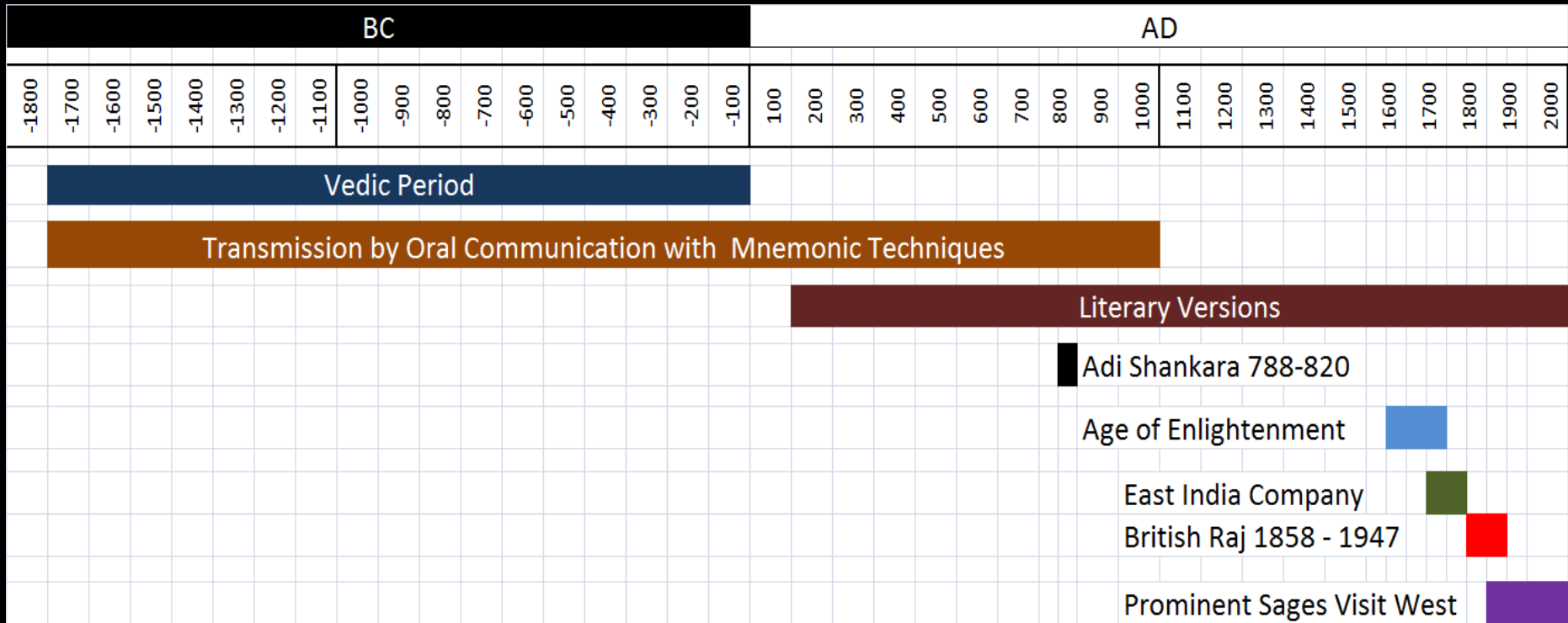
- Eesha
- Kena
- Katha
- Taittireeya
- Aitareya
- Mundaka
- Mandukya
- Prashna
- Brhadaranyaka
- Chandogya

'Vedanta'

Terminology

- **Vedas** - the works that contain the knowledge
- **Upanishads** – chapters at the end (anta) of the Veda
- **Advaita Vedanta** – system of Philosophy centred on non duality – drawn from the Upanishads
- There are other closely linked Vedanta systems as well e.g. Yoga System of Patanjali

Historical Perspective

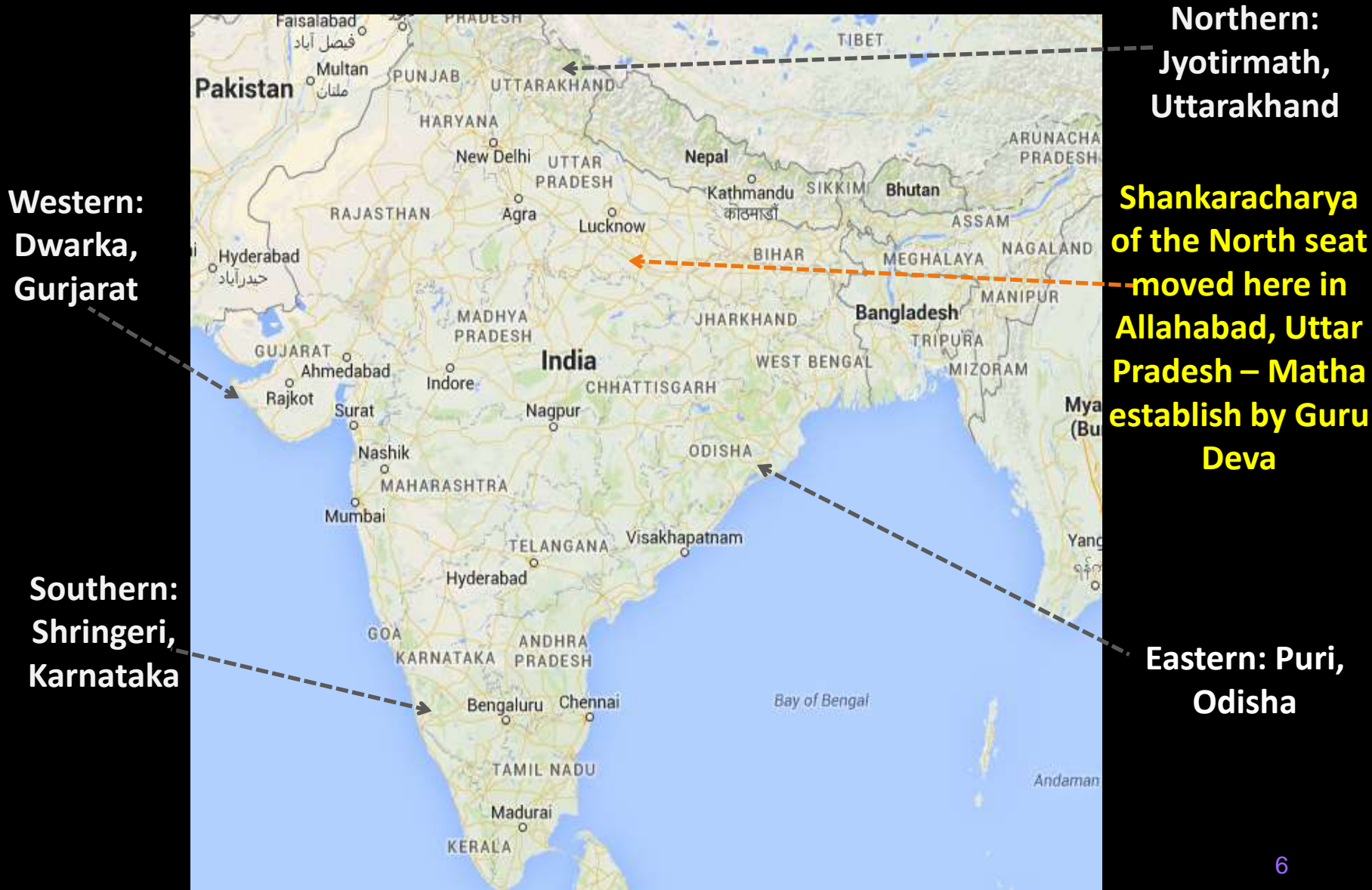


Organisation - Adi Shankara

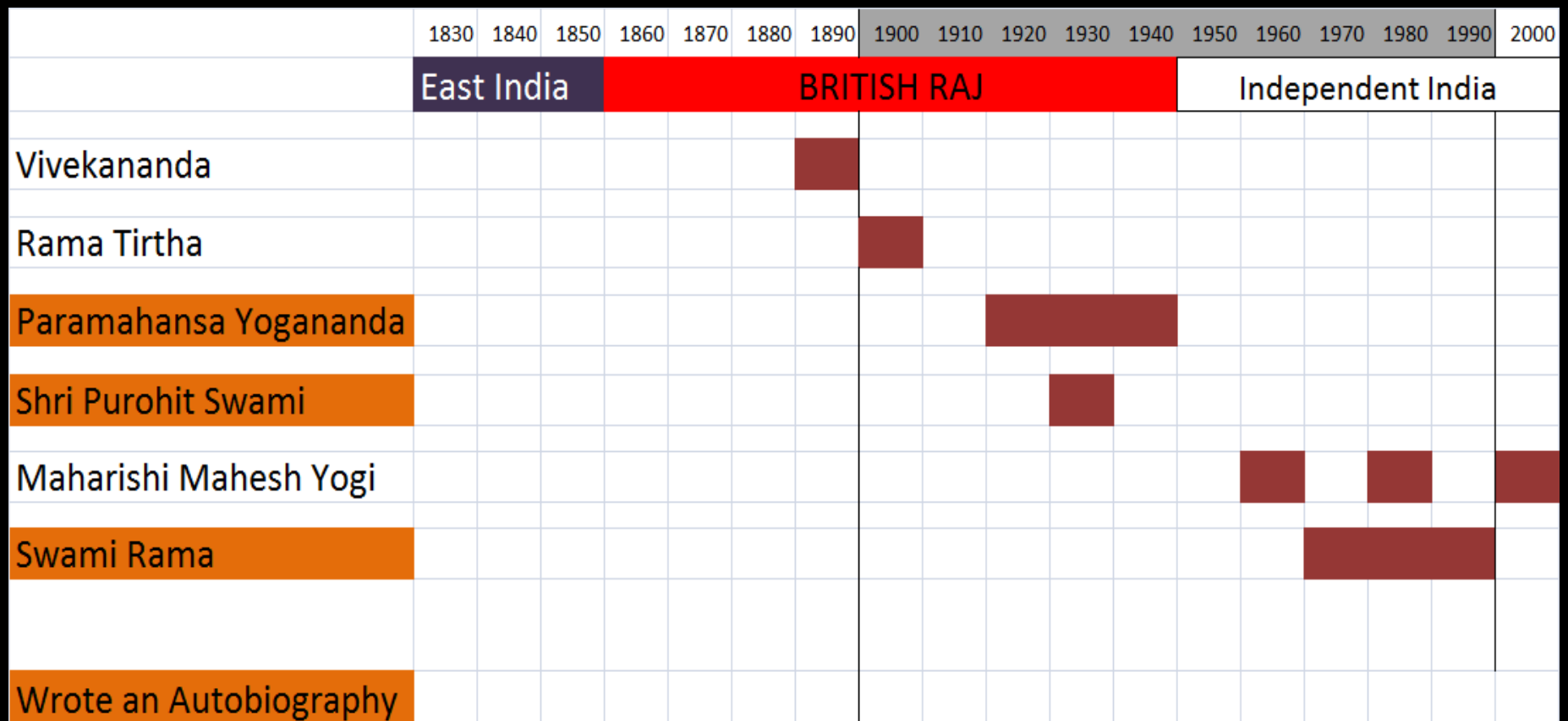


- Adi Shankara – 788 – 820
- Rediscovered the essence of Vedic Knowledge
- Wrote commentaries & original works
- Toured India
- Reorganised swamis under 4 mathas – ‘seats’ – each led by a Shankaracharya

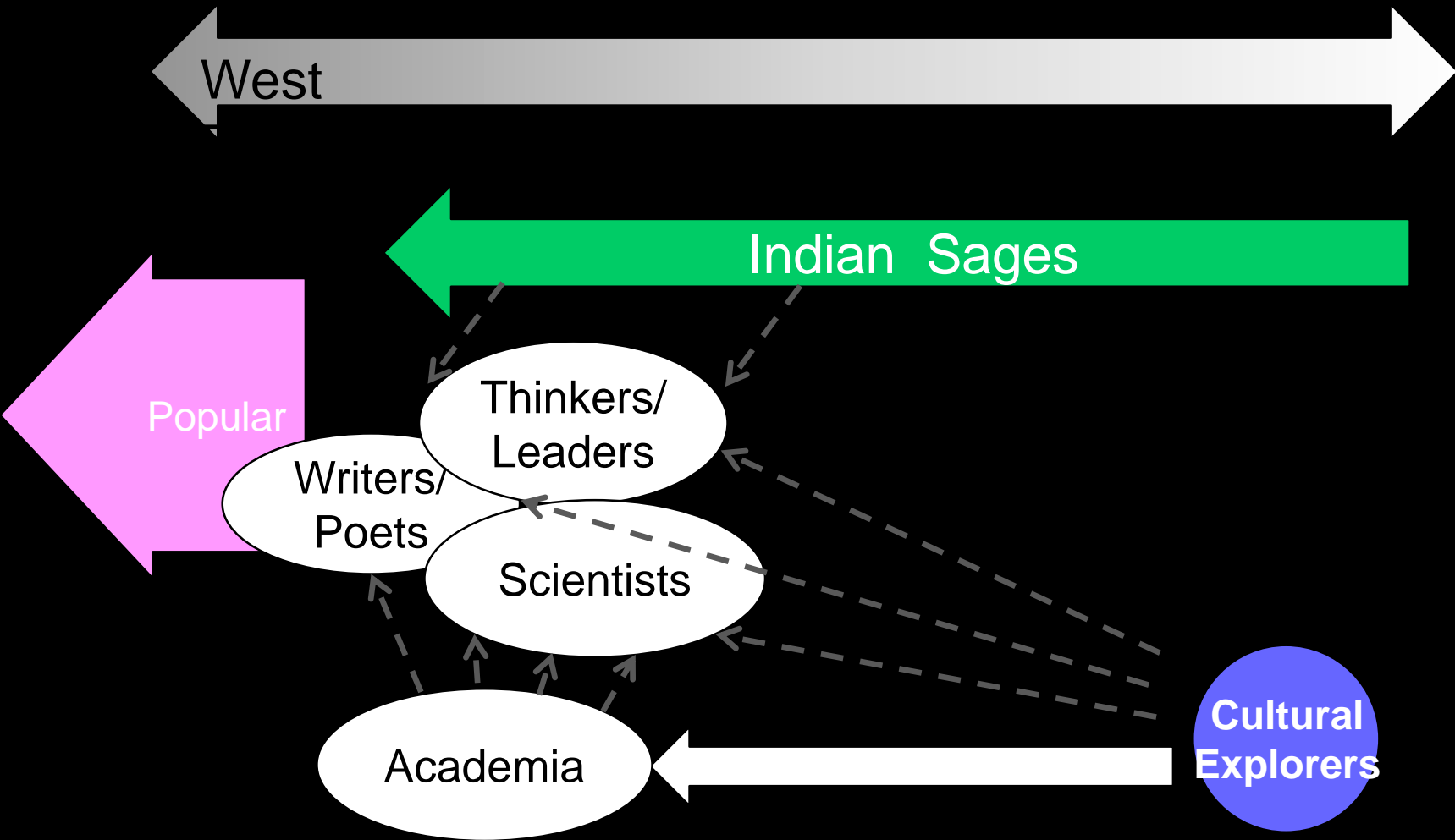
Locations of the 4 Mathas in the Shankaracharya Tradition



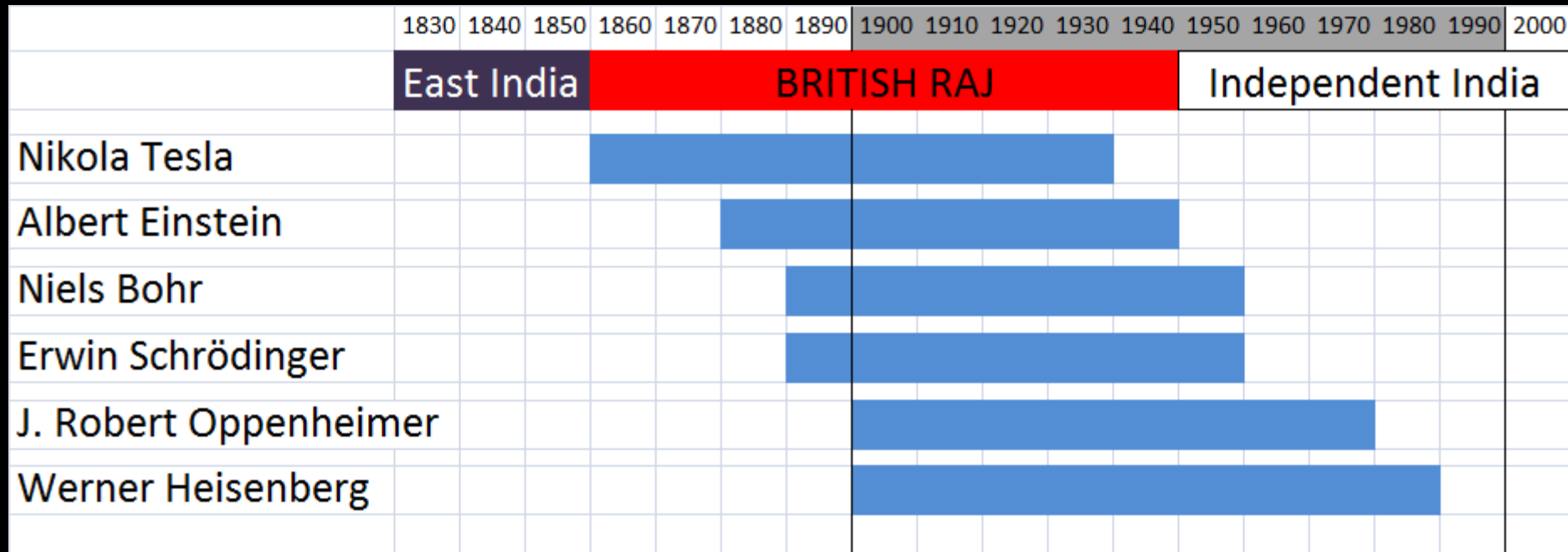
Some of the Prominent Indian Sages Who Came to the West



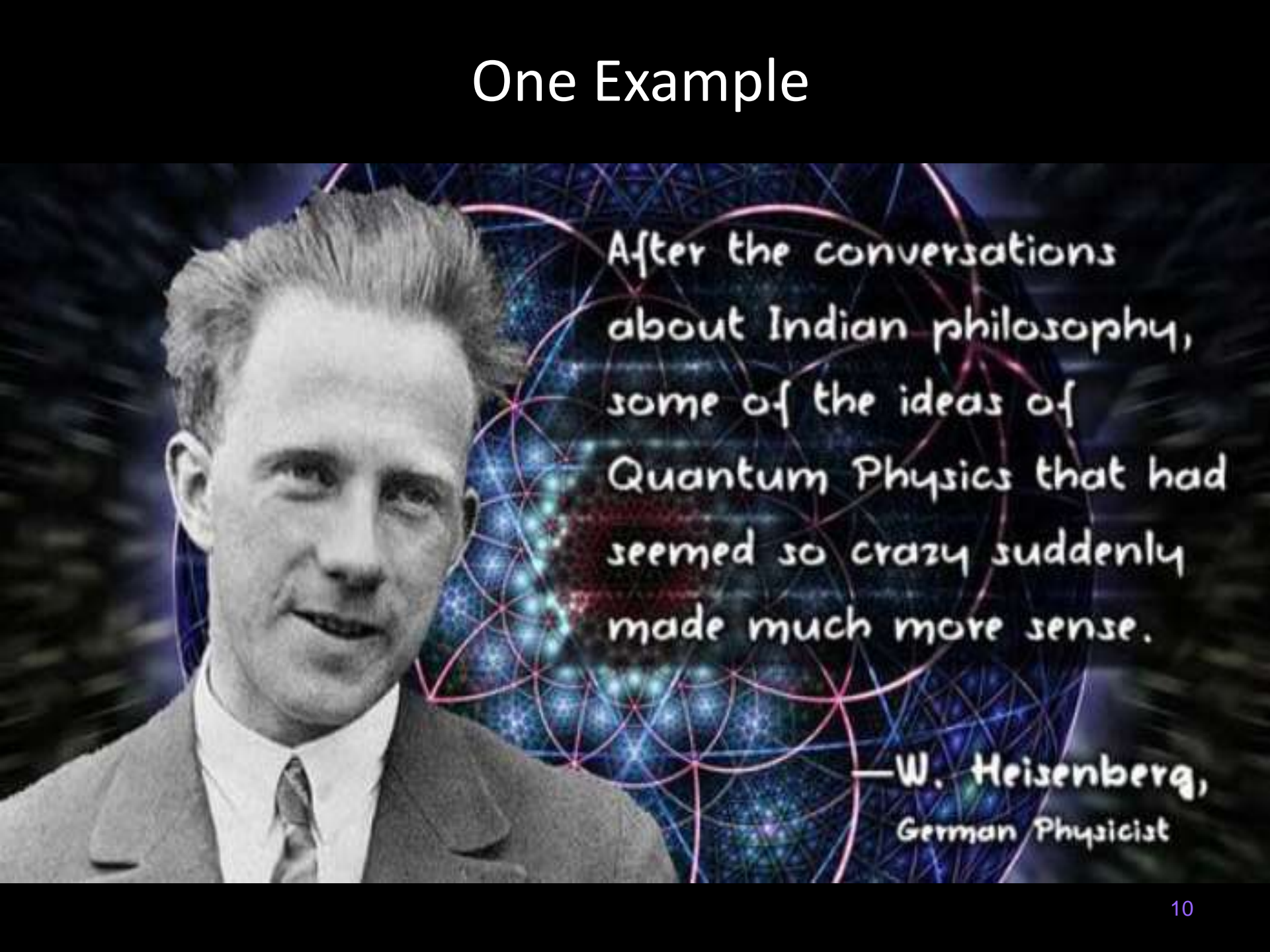
How This Knowledge Came to The West



Dates for The Famous Scientists Who Were Influenced



One Example



After the conversations about Indian philosophy, some of the ideas of Quantum Physics that had seemed so crazy suddenly made much more sense.

—W. Heisenberg,
German Physicist

One Western Philosopher – Schopenhauer was Particularly Moved

He said:

In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. Its has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi



YEAR	1923	1928	1933	1938	1943	1948	1953	1958	1963	1968	1973	1978	1983	1988	1993	1998	2003
AGE	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85
					Under Guru Deva												
	Childhood & Education				Discipline			West		West		West					



**His Holiness Śrī
Śāntānanda
Sarasvatī**

quote from 1961:

If you begin to be what you are, you will realise everything, but to begin to be what you are, you must come out of what you are not.

You are not those thoughts which are turning, turning in your mind; you are not those changing feelings; you are not the different decisions you make and the different wills you have; you are not that separate ego.

Well then, what are you? You will find when you have come out of what you are not, that the ripple on the water is whispering to you 'I am That', the birds in the trees are singing to you 'I am That', the moon and the stars are shining beacons to you 'I am That'.

You are in everything in the world and everything in the world is reflected in you, and at the same time you are That – everything.

(Good Company , p 22 – Published by The Study Society)

2. Advaita Vedanta – WHAT DOES IT SAY

- Brahman & Atman

Brahman – is the ultimate reality

Wiki Definition: Brahman is the cause of all that exists. It is the pervasive, genderless, infinite, eternal truth and bliss which does not change, yet is the cause of all changes. the infinite source, fabric, core and destiny of all existence. The "creative principle which lies realized in the whole world"
Brahman is "the infinite source, fabric, core and destiny of all existence. The "creative principle which lies realized in the whole world"

Wiki: The word Atman means the inner self, the soul, the immortal spirit in an individual, and all living beings including animals and trees. The inmost core of every person is not the body, nor the mind, nor the ego, but Atman – "Soul" or "Self". Atman is the spiritual essence in all creatures.

Atman is that which one is at the deepest level of one's existence.

Atman is synonymous with the witness, it's the place you are seeing things from. You can perceive the world, thoughts feelings etc, but you can't perceive the witness – that's what you are in the core & where you are looking from

To put that as simply as possible, we could say it's the soul, the principle of life, the Self

- Some Example Models

The Essence of Advaita Vedanta

Brahman = Atman

The 'Nature' or 'Qualities' of Brahman/Atman

Are

Sat

Chit

Ānanda

Being

Consciousness/
Knowledge

Bliss

Four Great Vedic Statements: Mahāvākyas

1. **prajñānam brahma - "Prajñāna is Brahman"**

(Aitareya Upanishad 3.3 of the Rig Veda)

2. **ayam ātmā brahma - "This Self (Atman) is Brahman"**

(Mandukya Upanishad 1.2 of the Atharva Veda)

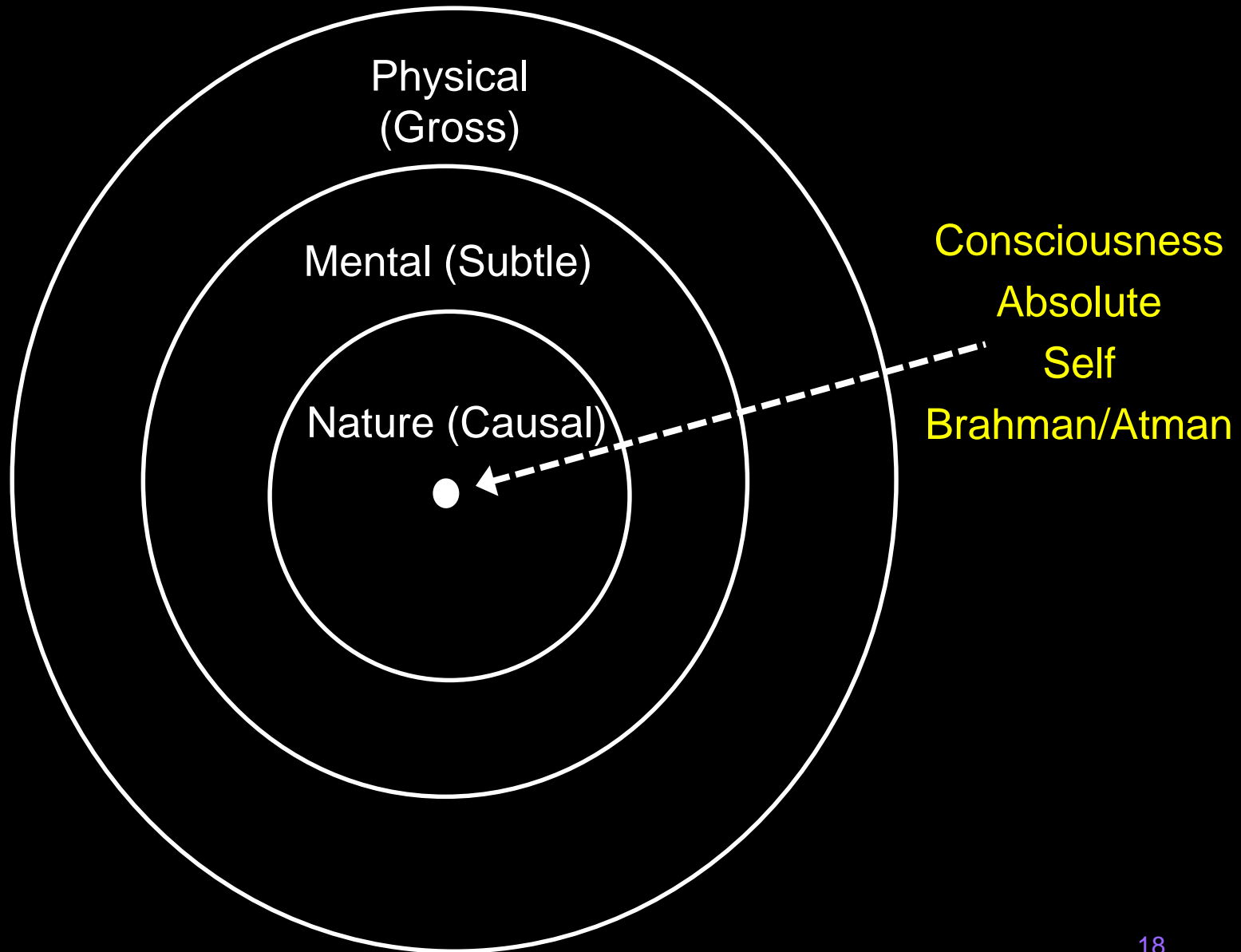
3. **tat tvam asi - "Thou art That"**

(Chandogya Upanishad 6.8.7 of the Sama Veda)

4. **aham brahmāsmi - "I am Brahman", or "I am Divine"**

(Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.10 of the Yajur Veda)

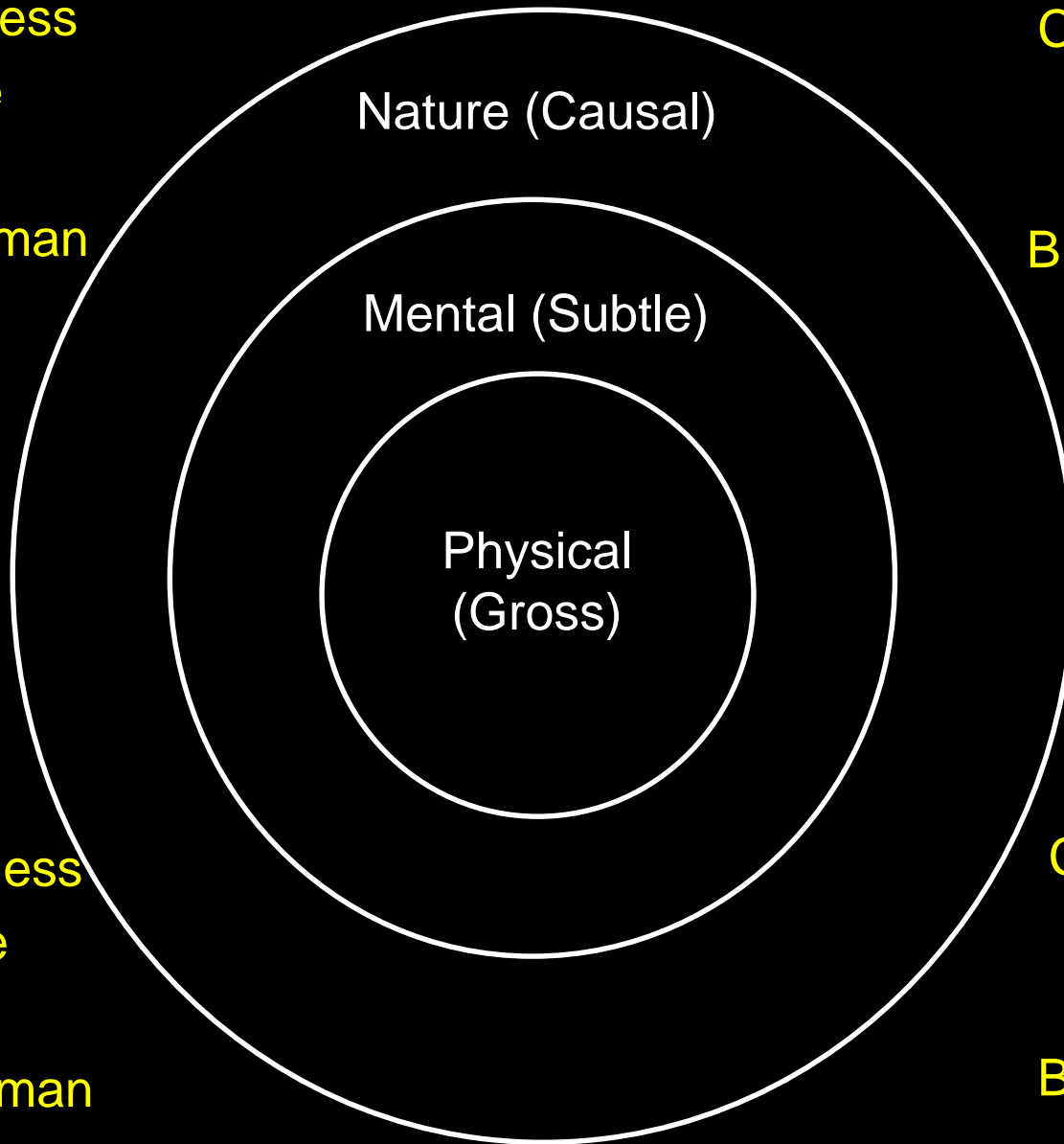
The Cosmology of Vedanta



The Cosmology of Vedanta

Consciousness
Absolute
Self
Brahman/Atman

Consciousness
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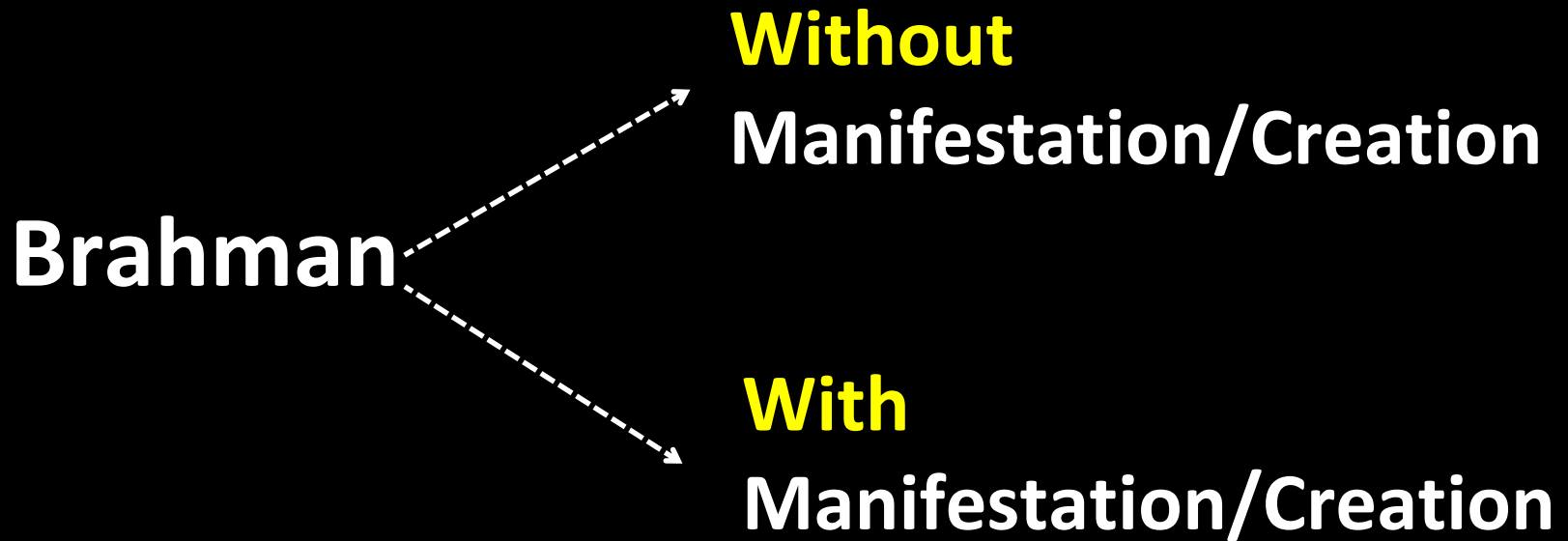
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Levels of Consciousness – माण्डूक्य उपनिषद्, Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, Atharva Veda

	State	What we see in this state	Ignorance about my True Nature	Error (that I am the body)
1	Waking	World	Yes	Yes
2	Dreaming	Dream	Yes	Yes
3	Deep Sleep	Blankness	Yes	No
4	Turiya		No	No

Types/Conditions of Brahman



Another Analogy



Another Analogy



Multiplicity



Erwin Schrödinger



The multiplicity is only apparent. This is the doctrine of the Upanishads. And not of the Upanishads only. The mystical experience of the union with God regularly leads to this view, unless strong prejudices stand in the way.

(Erwin Schrodinger)

Albert Einstein

“A human being is part of a whole, called by us the Universe, a part limited in time and space.

He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness.

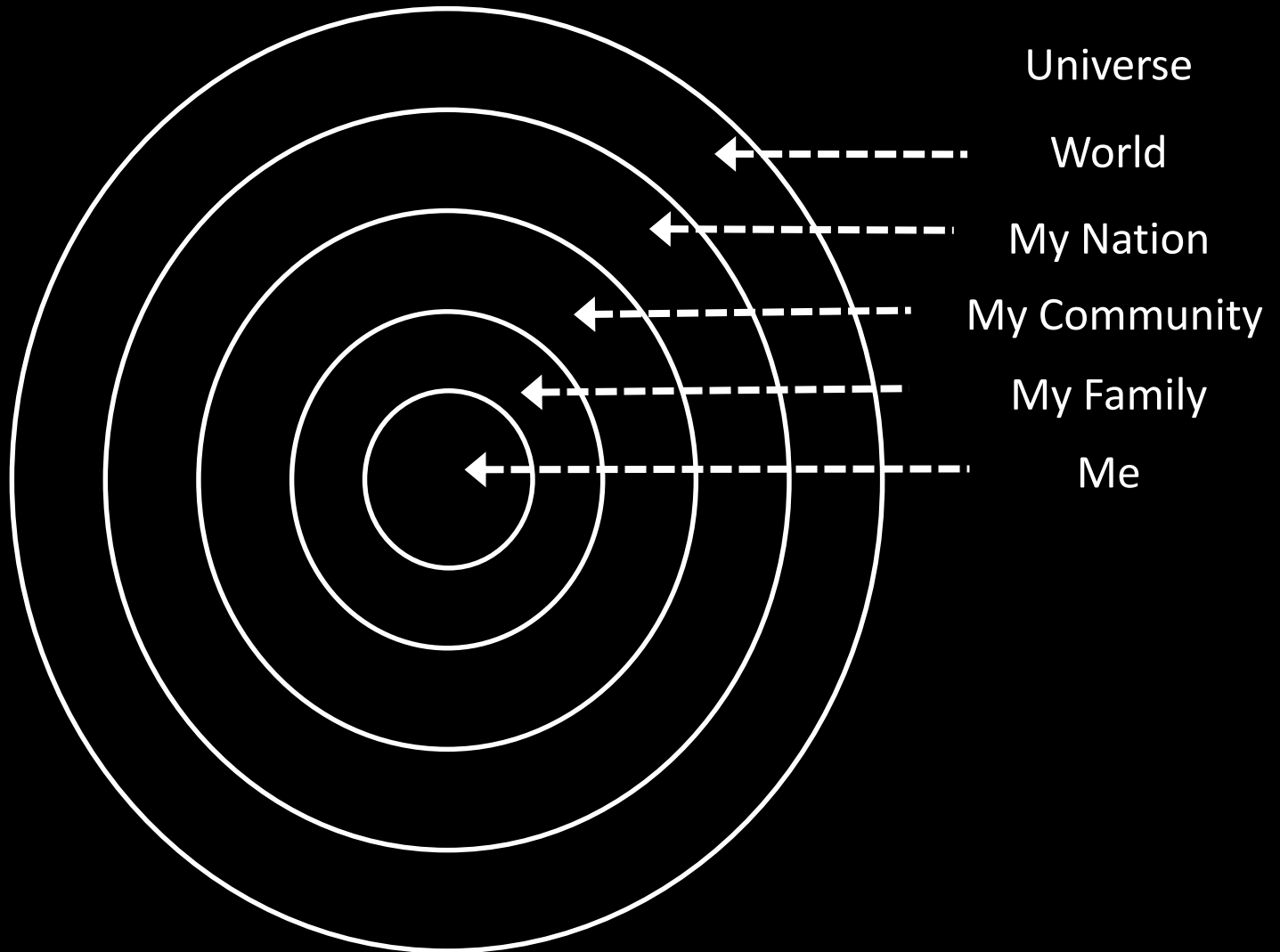
This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us.

Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”



**WHAT ARE THE
PRACTICAL
IMPLICATIONS?**

Circles of Awareness





Limitations

Happiness

Mindful -
ness

Wisdom

Expansion

Present
moment

Meditation

Me & Mine

'Thee & Thine',
'Them'



Me & Mine

'Thee & Thine',
'Them'



Sarve Bhavantu Sukhina

May all be happy;

May all be without disease;

May all have well-being;

May none have misery of any sort.

— Brhadaranyaka Upanishad

ॐ सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।

सर्वे भद्राणिपश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःख भाग भवेत् ॥

Outline

Themes

**PRESENT MOMENT
WISDOM
HAPPINESS
LIMITATIONS
MINDFULNESS
EXPANSION
MEDITATION**

Outcomes

Practical Philosophy Course Content

Practical Philosophy – Parts 1 – 9 Course Content

1. WISDOM
2. HAPPINESS
3. LOVE
4. PRESENCE OF MIND
5. FREEDOM
6. WAY OF ACTION
7. WAY OF DEVOTION
8. WAY OF KNOWLEDGE
9. WAY OF
HOUSEHOLDER

Kena Upanishad 2:3

The man who claims that he knows,
knows nothing, but he who claims
nothing, knows.