Cognitive tools from Vedanta Philosophy
By Praseed Pai K.T.

About the Presenter

- A Seasoned Software Engineering Professional with more than twenty five years of Exposure

- Author of Two books on Computer Programming

- Explorer in "Philosophical Tools for Software Engineering" (Has Presented on it, Written one university accredited paper, Designed a Pattern based on Advaita Vedanta to transition from OOP to FRP)

- An Expert level professional in Cross Cultural Encounters

- A Critique of Digital Technology Fads (Programmers will be better off , if they stick to Programming. Do not run after so called AI/ML, BlockChain etc) - "Plumbing is preferred over Painting!"

- I also help Programmers eliminate their "Math-Phobia"

What is Vedanta?

- In a nutshell, Philosophical school of thought based on the Upanishads
- Upanishad falls under the last section of Vedas
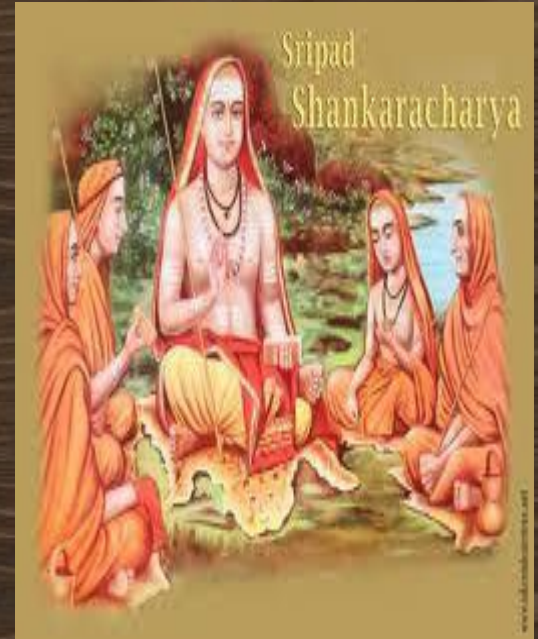- Chronologically, Upanishad period is the last age of vedic period

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Atman/Brahman Philosophy

- According to Advaita Vedanta, Brahman is the Absolute Reality
- The Universe is called "JAGAT"
- Anything which is in a flux like JAGAT might be having a non dual, unchanging and overarching force seems to be a plausible thing ? Answer from the common sense says Yes
- If such h a force exists , it will be stationary or omnipresent ? The omnipresent seems to be the most probable answer.
- if it is omnipresent, you / me and all you see around is part of that one force right?
- If that is the case, whatever is permanent in your or me is that ! (Body, mind, intellect , I conscious goes away) What remains is ATMA, which is part of the Brahman. Thus, Atman is Brahman .
- Four Mah Vakyas
    - Prajnanam Brahma (प्रज्ञानम् ब्रह्म)
    - Aham Brahma Asmi (अहम् ब्रह्म अस्मि)
    - Tat Tvam Asi (तत् त्वम् असि)
    - Ayam Atma Brahma (अयम् आत्मा ब्रह्म)

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Advaita Vedanta – Sri Sankara

- Lived between 788 AD – 820 AD

- Travelled across India to fight ritualism, heterodox schools and unified India at a spiritual level

- Wrote Commentaries on Brahma Sutra, Bhagavad Gita and Ten Upanishads

- Wrote "Prakarana Granthas" (Philosophical treaites) like Bhaja Govinda, Atma Bodha , Viveka Chudamani

Sripad Shankaracharya

Essence of Advaita, as per Sankara

Brahma Satya, Jagan Mithya. Jivo Brahmaiva Na Parah

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Three Levels of Reality/Consciousness

Three Levels of Reality

- Vyvaharika (Transactional Reality)
- Prathibhasika (Phenomenal state)
- Paramarthika (Ultimate Reality)

Three Levels of Consciousness (Avasta Traya)

- Jagrat (Conscious state)
- Swapna (Sub Conscious sate)
- Sushupti (Un-Consciouss state)
- Thuriya (Fourth state , Beyond all these , Super-Consciouss)

EEpistemological Sources for Advaita

- Perception (Pratyaksha)
- Inference (Anumana)
- Comparison (Upamana)
- Testimony (Sabd)
- Postulation (Arthapathi) – Contextual Implication
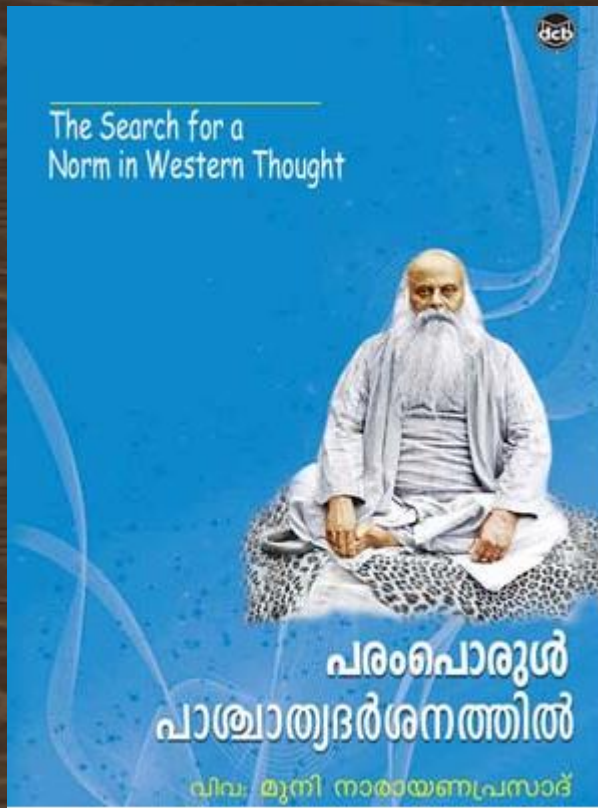- Non – Availability (Anupalabdi)

ETool #0

Key notions of Philosophy for discrentionary power

Some key notions from Philosophy

- Reductionism vs Holism

- Materialism vs Idealism (Metaphysics)

- Empiricism vs Rationalism (Epistemology)

- Induction, deduction and abduction (Method of Science and Thinking in General)

- Science and Falsificationism

- Philosophy,Theology,Theosophy

ETool #1

IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A NORM OR THE ABSOLUTE

Importance of having Norm or the Absolute

- If a Norm is not specified, we will do a relative evaluation of everything
- Every Subject has got
  - A Norm
  - Realm
  - Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology
- Every System has got
  - An Organizing Principle
  - Scope
  - Structure, Behavior and Function
- At a Linguistic level
  - Inherent structure
  - Cultural Span
  - Syntax , Semantics and Pragmatics
- Applications
  - Abstaining from a "White Paper Contest"
  - How to Interview a Candidate?

ETool #2

Purva Paksha Style of Argument

EPurva Paksha style of argument

- Understand the view of the opponent thoroughly and state them in a philologically correct manner and without logical fallacies

- Understand and specify reason (Cause/Effect) for each of the assertions made by the opponent.

- Specify the epistemological sources for the assertions made by the opponent.

- Suggest a alternate universal premise for the statements you want to refute , along with a concrete example

- After refutation, specify new assertion about the same.

ETool #3

Logic vs Dialectics - Dialectical Approach of Vedanta discourse

Stress on Dialectics in Advaita Philosophy

Laws of Logic

- Law of Identity (A = A or A <> something else)
- Principle of Non-Contradiction (A and not A => false)
- Law of Excluded Middle (Things should be True or False, not in between)

Laws of Dialectics

- Process of Change
  - Reality is modelled as a process of change. What is true can become false in the future
- Principle of Contradiction
  - Since change is constant , Contradiction being the dynamic underlying change is also constant
- Principle of Relationship
  - Parts are Meaningful only in the relationship to the whole

ETool #4

Negation as a way to prove something

Proof by Negation in Advaita

- Neti Neti (Via Negativa)
- How to Talk about Limits of something?

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ETool #5

Prroof by Contradiction as tool in Vedanta

Cause and the Effect!

Proof by Contradiction in Advaita

- Is there a Creator God for this Universe?

- What is the Material Cause of the Universe?

- The Creator can be Efficient Cause or Instrument, but should not be the Material Cause. If that is the case, we need to agree that Creator is everything. Thus, something which evolves into everything will eventually vanish, as anything which evolves has to die. So creator will die like any created things

- If the creation happened with material cause which existed besides the creator, the existence of material should be equalent to the creator. Thus, if Material can exist without a creator, why cannot Universe emerge itself (will be a lingering doubt). Why creator chose to creator this universe itself has lot of paradoxes! As someone with Goal won't be Perfect. IF there is a second (Material). Then creator is not omniscient. Anything finite will evolve and die. So creator is not a possibility, as the creator will itself search for its own creator

ETool #6

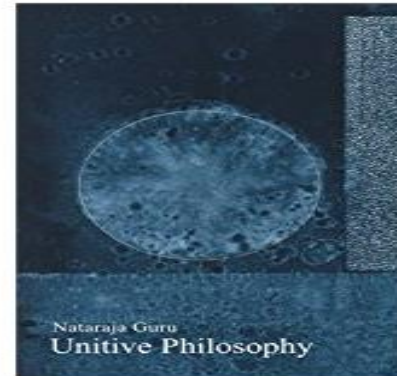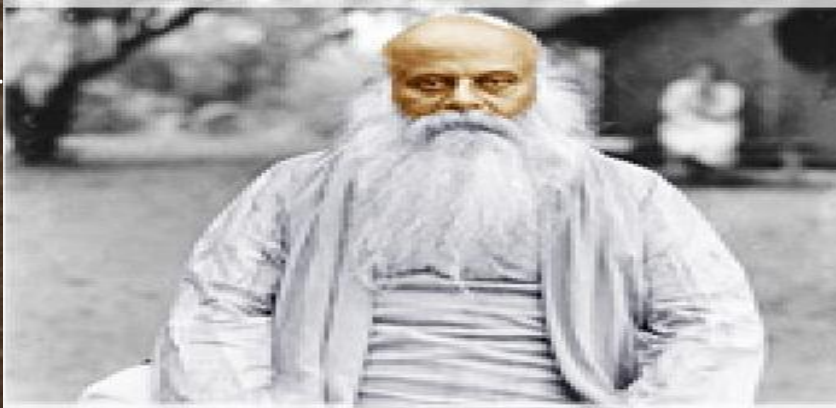Understand the Impedance mismatch between India and the West

Western Thinking vs Indian Reasoning

1	Western Philosophy	Indian Philosophy
2	Objective Reasoning (Content based)	Subjective Reasoning (Context based)
3	Materialistic	Idealistic
4	Reductionist	Holistic
5	Logic	Dialectics
6	Entity	Relationship
7	Linear	Cyclical

ETool #7

Positive Affirmation of Brahman – A way to look at the world

Positive Affirmation of Brahman

सत् चित् आनान्द

Sat - Chit - Anand

Truth - Consciousness - Bliss

Nataraja Guru
Unitive Philosophy

Existence-Essence-Bliss
Ontology-Epistemology
– Axiology

A mapping of "SAT-CHIT-ANAND"

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SAT	CHIT	ANANDA
Existence	Essence	Bliss
Ontology	Epistemology	Axiology
Who am I?	What Can I know?	What should I do?
Matter	Mind	Bliss
Structure	Behavior	Function

Conclusion

- Philosophy for Discretionary power (Tool #0 – Video 3)
- Necessity of having a norm (Tool #1– Video 4)
- lPurva Paksha Style of Argument (Tool #2 – Video 5)
- Logic vs Dialectics (Tool #3 – Video 6)
- Negation as a proof for something (Tool #4 – Video 7)
- Proof by Contradiction in Advaita (Tool #5 – Video 8)
- Impedance mismatch between East and the West (Tool #6 – Video 9)
- Positive affirmation of Brahman (Tool #9 - Video 10)
- Conclusion (Video 11)