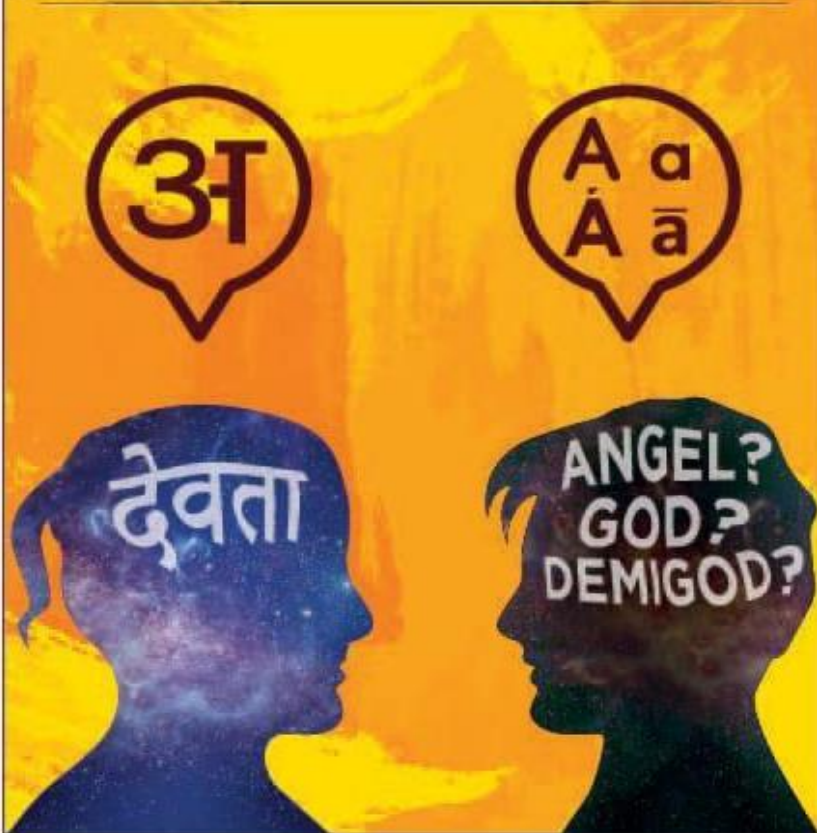# Infinity Foundation

presents a path-breaking new book

SANSKRIT NON-TRANSLATABLES

— The Importance of Sanskritizing English —

Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji

अ

अ अ
अ ā

देवता

ANGEL?
GOD?
DEMIGOD?

SANSKRIT NON-TRANSLATABLES

—— The Importance of Sanskritizing English ——

### Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji

THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED BOOK THAT CHALLENGES
THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE!

SANSKRIT WORDS WITHOUT ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS!

AUM is NOT AMEN • DEVATA is NOT GOD •

AHIMSA is NOT NON-VIOLENCE

- This book is a path-breaking and audacious attempt at Sanskritizing the English language by introducing powerful Sanskrit loanwords into English vocabulary without translation, thus enriching it.

- Translation of Sanskrit words and phrases into English compromises their deeper meaning. The book explains the inadequate translation of many Sanskrit terms into English. It spotlights how the profound meanings get lost.

- The very form, sound and manifestation of words and terms in Sanskrit carry effects that cannot be separated from their conceptual meanings.

- Sanskrit words are contextual. When a Sanskrit word is substituted with a single word or phrase in the translated language without reference to context, crucial distinctions are lost, and the most fertile, productive and visionary dimension of dharma eradicated and relegated to antiquity. This is often carried out under the guise of modernity.

- *Sanskrit Non-Translatables* launches a new movement using the words as a device for protecting key ideas from getting distorted, plagiarized, digested or allowed to become obsolete.
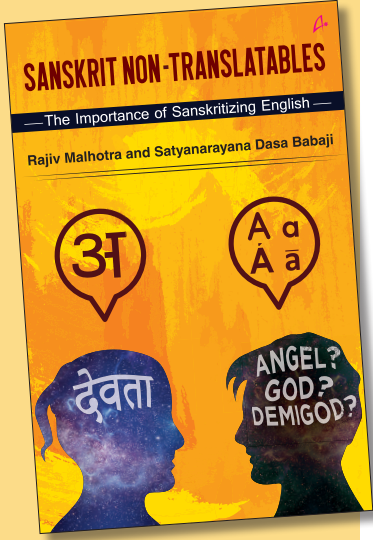
Imprint: **Amaryllis**
Release Type: **Original**
Subject: **Non-Fiction**
Format: **Royal**
Page Extent: **288 PP**
Binding: **Hardcover with dust jacket**
Territory: **World**
Pub. Date: **November 2020**
ISBN: **978-93-90085-48-4**
Price: **₹450**

Published by

AMARYLLIS
an imprint of **Manjul Publishing House**

Distributed by

Harper Collins

E-mail: HarperCollinsSales@harpercollins-india.com
Tel: 0120 - 4044827

Rajiv Malhotra is a world-renowned researcher, author, speaker, and public intellectual on contemporary issues that relate to civilizations, spirituality, and science. Rajiv founded Infinity Foundation in Princeton (USA) in 1994 and conducted original research in myriad fields, influencing thinkers worldwide.

Rajiv's works include *The Battle for Sanskrit, Breaking India, Being Different, Indra's Net,* and *Academic Hinduphobia.*

Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji, PhD, is a Vaishnava scholar and practitioner. He is the founder of Jiva Institute of Vedic Studies, which promotes Vedic culture, philosophy, and Ayurveda through education. He has authored fifteen books related to Indian culture and philosophy, and several important publications in many prestigious journals. He was honored by the late president of India, Dr. Pranab Mukherjee, for his extraordinary contribution towards presenting Vedic culture worldwide.

Sanskrit Non-Translatables

The Importance of Sanskritizing English

Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji

Foreword by
Nityananda Misra

AMARYLLIS

SYNOPSIS

Sanskrit Non-Translatables is a path-breaking and audacious attempt at Sanskritizing the English language and enriching it with powerful Sanskrit words. It continues the original and innovative idea of non-translatability of Sanskrit, first introduced in the book, *Being Different*. For English readers, this should be the starting point of the movement to resist the digestion of Sanskrit into English, by introducing loanwords into their English vocabulary without translation.

The book presents a thorough mechanism of the process of digestion and examines the loss of adhikara for Sanskrit language because of translating its core ideas into English. The movement launched by this book will resist this and stop the programs that seek to turn Sanskrit into a dead language by translating all its treasures to render it redundant. It discusses 54 non-translatables across various genres that are being commonly mis-translated. It empowers English speakers with the knowledge and arguments to introduce these Sanskrit words into their daily speech with confidence. Every lover of India's sanskriti will benefit from the book and become a cultural ambassador propagating it through routine communications.

For updates on the book, see forthcoming website: sanskritnontranslatables.com

Praise for *Sanskrit Non-Translatables*

"This book takes the battle for Sanskrit into the territory of the English-speaking public. It makes a convincing case that English is deficient in its ability to express the profound meanings of the shastras for which Sanskrit words are necessary. By following the authors' advice, English will become enriched with key Sanskrit terms that are non-translatable. As English has assimilated non-translatable terms from virtually all major world languages, and takes pride in doing so, there is no reason why it should hesitate to do so for Sanskrit, a Classical language very much alive today. I congratulate the authors for their innovative thinking and bold initiative."

– Swami Govindadev Giri,
Trustee and Treasurer, Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Teerth Kshetra

"As an avid student of Rajiv Malhotra's combative intellectual journey, I was anticipating this book. In the characteristic Indian Dharma Rakshak Parampara – defending Indian civilization over millennia by both shastra and shaastra – in the lineage of shaastra exegetes such as Yaska, Adi Shankara, Guru Gorakhnath, Ramanujacarya, Hemacandracarya, Gyaneshwar, the Sikh Gurus, Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda, Rajiv Malhotra is a one-man army to take on Western thought. After the 19th century honeymoon with Sanskrit-Hindu intellectual heritage, Western thought has had the political agenda of subverting Hinduism and Hindu culture by the Macaulayised assault on its texts and thoughts. Like a seasoned strategist, Malhotra began from the outer circle and has moved into the conceptual *garbhagrha* of the Western methodology with this book, *Sanskrit Non-Translatables*. This comes after his earlier works articulating the Hindu Civilization as the alternative (*Being Different*), exposing the adversary's agenda of fracturing this alternative (*Breaking India*), counterpoising it with Hinduism's deep conceptual integrity (*Indra's Net*), dispossessing the adversary of the 'weapon' they had tried to

appropriate (*The Battle for Sanskrit*) and now the heart of the matter – the counterattack on the studied subversion of the conceptual frame of Hindu civilizational thought by 'Christianising' the core categories through motivated interpretive translations. This book takes fifty-four indisputably foundational concepts, arranges them in a fourfold typology that moves from *terra firma* to *terra cognita* to the cosmos, and contests the irrationality, the untenability and the 'design' of their widely employed English equivalents. The demolition of this conceptual subversion sets free the autonomy of the Indian thought and mind. With its well-thought out prefatory essays, this is a book that every English-educated Indian must read to further 'decolonise' his mind and stand up to the hegemony of Western thought."

– Dr. Kapil Kapoor,
Chairman, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla

"Rajiv Malhotra carries his battle for Sanskrit a step further in this book. Short of having Sanskrit itself as the language of pan-Indian intellectual discourse, we must insist that as long as English continues to play this role, Sanskrit words should be used in English on account of their unique semantic valence so that a whole culture and an entire worldview is not lost in translation."

– Prof. Arvind Sharma,
McGill University

"*Sanskrit Non-Translatables* by Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji is an important book that provides lucid explanations of the central concepts of Sanatana Dharma, and brings attention to the many errors and distortions that have been introduced by the use of English words that do not quite do justice to the Sanskrit originals. It makes a powerful case for what it calls the Sanskritization of the English language by introducing key Sanskrit loanwords into English vocabulary and keeping them untranslated. This is a bold and innovative approach that deserves to be pursued in parallel with teaching Sanskrit itself. It is nothing short of spreading Vedic

sanskriti into the English-speaking world by penetrating their minds with powerful Sanskrit terms."

– Dr. Subhash Kak,
author of *Matter and Mind, The Gods Within*, and other books

"This is an indispensable book addressing the difficult situation today – that Sanskrit terms pregnant with meaning cannot be translated into any foreign language; yet we have to make them understandable to people of other cultures who want to learn Sanskrit from the point of view of *jigisha* rather than *jijnasa*. The authors have worked hard to collect relevant material from various sources to prove that the English translations of many Sanskrit terms are false and misleading."

– Dr. Korada Subrahmanyam,
author of *Theory of Language: Oriental & Occidental*, and other books

"This book is an eye-opener and argues a highly original and audacious thesis to enrich the English language by adding Sanskrit words that have no English equivalent. These unique words bring profound meanings discovered by the ancient rishi-s. For English language speakers, it will not only enhance their vocabulary but also introduce them to entirely new concepts for understanding of reality."

– Dr. Vijay Bhatkar,
Chancellor, Nalanda University

Contents

Foreword

Anuvada, which literally means 'saying again' or 'restating' ('*anuvadanam anuvadah*'), is the Sanskrit word for translation. An *anuvada* can be from Sanskrit into Sanskrit, from Sanskrit into Indian languages or from Sanskrit into other languages like English. Owing to the highly mathematical and flexible nature of Sanskrit, it is possible to have a perfectly equivalent *anuvada* from Sanskrit into Sanskrit. The second sutra of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutra* reads, '*yogah chitta-vritti-nirodhah*', and the *anuvada* in Sanskrit could be '*chittasya vrittinam nirodhanam yogah*'. In languages originating from (or borrowing heavily from) Sanskrit, Sanskrit words can be used as they occur in the original and the *anuvada* can still be quite effective. For example, in Hindi, the *anuvada* of the above sutra could be '*chitta ki vrittiyon ka nirodha yoga hai*'. When it comes to languages that do not share the same history and culture as Sanskrit, a great part of the meaning is lost in translation. In English, the *anuvada* of the above sutra could be: 'Union (yoga) is the suppression of the modifications of the unconscious mind'. To a reader who knows both Sanskrit and English, this *anuvada* will be nowhere close in spirit or meaning to the original Sanskrit sutra. A Hindi speaker reading the above Hindi translation will understand the intent of Patanjali far better than an English speaker reading the English translation. This is because the words *yoga*, *chitta*, *vritti*, and *nirodha* are used in a similar sense in Hindi as they are used in the sutra.

In this much-needed and pertinent book, Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji detail fifty-four Sanskrit words from nine themes with their common English translations and highlight what the English translations fail to capture. The authors make a compelling case for using Sanskrit words as is in English translations. Rajiv Malhotra had introduced this concept in his book *Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism*, and has highlighted the need for Sanskritization of English for a long time. Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji is a traditionally trained Sanskrit scholar who has translated important texts like the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Sandarbha* works of Srila Jiva Goswami into English. They offer insightful views into etymologies and ranges of meanings of important Sanskrit words and how their common English translations fail to capture the essence of the original words.

Consider the example of the word *maya*, which is commonly translated into English as 'illusion'. The authors point out that besides *maya* being a 'wondrous Shakti of Bhagavan', in some traditions, it is the cause of illusion and not illusion per se in the Advaita Vedanta tradition. Having learned the concept of *maya* in my childhood from both Hindi and Sanskrit sources, I am aware that another meaning of *maya* is *kripa* (loosely translated as 'compassion'), as attested by the *Anekartha-sangraha* of Acharya Hemachandra (medieval Jain scholar and polymath) and as cited in the work *Bhakti-Sudha* by Karapatri Swami (a guru in the Advaita Vedanta tradition). Thus, 'illusion' or 'deception' is only one of the many meanings of the word *maya* (Acharya Hemachandra lists four meanings in the *Anekartha-sangraha*) and translating *maya* as 'illusion' reduces a word with many shades of meaning to a single narrow meaning. The authors draw our attention to a plethora of other such mistranslations. For example, *advaya-jnana* is more appropriately translated as 'non-dual consciousness' and not 'monistic consciousness'.

While discussing the non-translatable terms, the authors also throw light on many significant concepts in Hinduism. The

discussion on Om clarifies several misconceptions about the word that have recently been made popular by a prominent Hindu guru. The discussion on the *mahabhuta*s shows how words like 'space', 'fire', and 'air/wind' fail to capture the essence and profound meanings of the words *akasha*, *agni*, and *vayu*. When we say 'space', we do not get an idea of *shabda* (loose translation, 'sound') but the concept of *akasha* in Hindu philosophy is inextricably linked with the concept of *shabda*, as the definition of *akasha* in the *Tarkasangraha* (a seventeenth century treatise on logic and reasoning by Annambhatta) clarifies: "*shabda-gunakam akasham*".

The important differences between the Indic concept of *svarga* and *naraka* and the Abrahamic concepts of heaven and hell are discussed in detail by the authors. While discussing *ahimsa*, Rajiv Malhotra and Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji incisively point out that opposite meaning (or *virodha*) is only one of the six senses of the prefix '*a*' (from '*na*'). This is known to students of Sanskrit grammar but presenting such fine nuances to laypersons is what the book succeeds at. The chapter on *Kavya* is a refreshing end to the book with discussions on words like *kama*, *bhava*, *prema*, and *ananda*. As per the *Nitivakyamrita* (a work on ethics and ethical values by the Jain scholar Somadeva Suri), *kama* is that which grants gratification abounding in bodily sentiment to all indriya-s ("*abhimanika-rasanuviddha yatah sarvendriya-pritih*"). This is a very broad concept which can never be captured by a narrow word like 'lust', as the authors convincingly prove.

Sanskrit Non-Translatables, with its lucid language, will be easy for laypersons to comprehend. The exhibits and tables will serve as useful mnemonics for the readers. The book will immensely benefit the readers and writers of the third category of the *anuvada* mentioned before—from Sanskrit to languages like English.

We know for a fact that translations of important texts from one language to another can never be wholly effective or completely true and faithful to the original. To truly understand and appreciate Shakespeare, one has to read Shakespeare in the original Elizabethan

English. With both concepts and fifty-four examples, *Sanskrit Non-Translatables: The Importance of Sanskritizing English* vividly shows how the 'lost in translation' effect is amplified manifold when translating from a highly structured, refined, rich, and potent language like Sanskrit to a language like English. Readers of the book will realize how translations of Sanskrit texts into Hindi or other Indian languages, which retain much of the original Sanskrit vocabulary, are far more effective than translations into English. The translation of the *Valmiki Ramayana* into English by Robert Goldman (professor of Sanskrit at the University of California, Berkeley) is no doubt good, but the Hindi translation published by Gita Press is undoubtedly better. For a reader who understands Hindi, the latter should be the first preference.

This must-read book will reach many readers across the globe. My sincere hope is that it inspires many of them to learn Sanskrit and read the texts of Hinduism in the original Sanskrit with Sanskrit commentaries, the best *anuvada* possible.

<div align="right">

Nityananda Misra, author of
Mahaviri: Hanuman-Chalisa Demystified and other books
Mumbai, 2020

</div>

Preface

Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji

The Ancient Indian Psyche

The thinkers of ancient India, the rishi-s and muni-s, had a deep understanding of the fact that the universe functions on some basic principles of rhythms of the cosmos known as ritam, and to maximize well-being, humans must exist in harmony with it. To this end, human life was organized at two levels: individual and social. Further, at the individual level, human life was considered in four parts: brahmacharya, grihastha, vanaprastha, and samnyasa. Considering a life span of one hundred years, twenty-five years were allocated to each stage of life. In order to be in harmony with ritam, an individual, as well as a society, must strive for the four pursuits known as purushartha-s: dharma, artha, kama, and moksha.

Each individual possesses unique characteristics, known as his/her prakriti or nature. According to ideal dharmic social thought, an individual functioned in society in line with his prakriti and was provided with appropriate education. At the collective level, society was organized into four broad categories called varna-s: brahmana (teacher/educator), kshatriya (warrior/king/queen), vaishya (manager/business sector), and shudra (service sector). The varna was not birth-based but was dependent on the

individual's acquired prakriti. Every society, which functions as an organized unit, comprises these four unavoidable categories for its sustenance, propagation and prosperity. While these categories have emerged unconsciously all over the world, ancient Indian thinkers recognized it and provided a theory supporting the four varna-s to consciously organize society. Indian society was based on this template and functioned peacefully for thousands of years, scaled paramount heights and attained much glory.

Historically, many great personalities appeared to rectify the situation whenever balance was disturbed. Bhagavan Shri Krishna himself proclaims that He is the propagator of the varna system (*Gita* 4.13), and He appears to restore dharma whenever it is challenged by adharma (*Gita* 4.7).

This ancient system, however, started crumbling when Indian society was invaded by Western forces, primarily with Alexander around 324 BCE. Thereafter, it experienced a downward spiral though its resilience was not completely eliminated. Even when India came under foreign rule, around 1192 CE, and later, under the prolonged rule of the Mughals, its education system was not tampered with and the varna-s survived. The fatal blow came in 1854, when the Indian education system was callously destroyed by the British. It was replaced by the Western education structure to produce clerks to help them control the vast empire. Unfortunately, Western education has no such insight into human life, leave alone the cosmic ritam. Tragically, even post India's independence in 1947, no efforts were made to reclaim the millennia-old heritage. Instead, what continues to this day are the borrowed education system and the constitution of the West, which are a complete mismatch for the Indian psyche.

The Modern Indian Psyche

Modern-educated Indians are a confused lot. Not only have they lost faith in their own traditional values, they are also unable to

embrace a Western lifestyle in totality. Most educated Indians portray a Western demeanor, yet in their private lives they practise several beliefs that emanate from ancient tradition, especially at times of birth, death, marriage and festivals. However, they are untrained in their ancient beliefs because nothing in the modern education system fosters them. They may know of and practise certain traditions but have forgotten and surrendered the true meaning and perform them out of a sense of ritual. The lack of sufficient knowledge about one's own sanskriti, and training under the Western education system, has resulted in Indians developing an inferiority complex with regards to their rich sanskriti and dharma. Many derive pleasure in deriding the ancient sanskriti, revealing the unfortunate situation and reality of the modern Indian psyche. Furthermore, dharmic terminology has been inadequately translated into English. Terms such as atma, moksha, dharma, and prakriti are profound concepts in themselves; they are not mere words that can be translated into a single English word. The terms have to be understood and applied as they are; when translated naively into English, the terms lose their original deeper meaning, which has further led to devaluation of Indian sanskriti. To compound matters, a massive effort has been made by missionaries to digest Indian sanskriti into Christianity. The modern Indian psyche thus has to bear a great misfortune in losing its civilizational heritage.

The Torch Bearer

Several Indians are aware that Indian sanskriti is in peril and is being attacked by forces from within and outside. A handful of them are highlighting and being vocal about the danger of it getting lost and are making efforts to revive it. Rajiv Malhotra and Infinity Foundation are leading this resistance and revival. I first heard Rajiv at a WAVES conference in Florida in the US and was taken in by what he spoke. I was teaching a summer course

in Hinduism at Rutgers University, and I was eager to meet Rajiv before returning to India.

When I arrived at Rajiv's home, he was working on a manuscript. Even before I sat down, he shot a question at me, "Do you know anything about Jiva Gosvami?" He then casually went on to explain how keen he was to know about *achintya-bheda-abheda siddhanta* propagated by the Indian philosopher Jiva Gosvami (1513-1598). I was instantly taken aback because studying and teaching the works of Jiva Goswami is my domain of expertise and passion; in fact, I founded an entire institute named after him. I had been working on a mammoth project for over two decades of translating and commenting on the magnum opus of Jiva Gosvami titled *Shat Sandarbha*. I never imagined I would make such a deep connection with an Indian living outside India, and one whose intense focus is on Hinduism. Rajiv Malhotra is an Indian intellectual warrior, who is fully absorbed in saving Indian sanskriti and fighting the breaking-India forces. I knew for certain that it was only by the will of Shri Krishna that we met. And although I did not know how, I understood that Rajiv and I had an important mission in common.

I left after our first meeting, excited to share my work and to hear Rajiv's penetrating questions that would go on to refine my thinking with the pinpoint accuracy that he demanded. The first document I shared with him was a paper on achintya-bheda-abheda. He relished the paper, adding that it would be of immense help for his book. He invited me to help him in his work *Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism*. I gladly obliged, as I felt life would be breathed back into Mother India. Our friendship cemented and we would meet during my teaching assignments at Rutgers. Over the years, we have recorded several videos on a variety of subjects. Three years ago, the idea of recording Sanskrit non-translatables arose. Rajiv had already introduced this concept in his book, *Being Different*. He proposed that we create fifty-four episodes on Sanskrit non-translatable

words. I was very excited with the idea and over the next two years, we made video recordings at his residence in New Jersey, as well as at our center, Jiva Faridabad, in India. Jessica Richmond co-ordinated our recording sessions and organised the required material.

In the midst of the recordings, Rajiv suggested we write a book based of the content of the videos and I immediately agreed. With the fifty-four video episodes and this book, we are taking a big step forward to actualizing Rajiv's mission. Just as Western terminology has entered the Indian psyche, Indian terminology should also enter not only Western, but also the modern Indian's mind. This will be a great step towards reclaiming our sanskriti. I give my blessings that Rajiv Malhotra's vision be realized.

Preface

Rajiv Malhotra

Since twenty-five years, Infinity Foundation has been challenging the prevailing narratives with groundbreaking research and provided original perspectives on dharma and its rightful place in the world. An important book published by the Foundation, *Invading the Sacred: An Analysis of Hinduism Studies in America,* in 2007, took aim at the Freudian psychoanalytic critiques of Hinduism being propagated by a powerful nexus in the Western academia and being spread among Indian intellectuals. The book gave birth to, and incubated, a solid and entrenched opposition that cannot be ignored today. It spurred the Indian diaspora to recognize the pattern of attacks on Hindu dharma under the garb of academia and audaciously 'talk back' to the establishment of Western scholars. This 'reversing the gaze' on Western intellectual elites found its way rapidly to India where it shaped a new generation of self-confident Indians. The term 'Hinduphobia' was adopted by Infinity Foundation to turn the spotlight on to a serious issue and it has now entered the everyday lexicon of serious thinkers worldwide.

Infinity Foundation's next pathbreaking book, *Breaking India: Western Interventions in Dravidian and Dalit Faultlines*, detailed Rajiv Malhotra's twenty years of research, talks, and writings on how external forces are trying to destabilize India by deliberately undermining its civilization. The book proved how such efforts

are targeted at obfuscating, and ultimately aborting any collective identity of the present-day Indian, based on a positive view of his/her civilization. It exposed the foreign nexuses and applied the term 'sepoys' to refer to their Indian accomplices. The book highlighted that the project to intellectually fragment, or 'break' India targets Hinduism because it is seen as the robust foundation cementing its diversity. Several watchdog movements have sprung into action because of the book, *Breaking India*. It has triggered a domino effect with a plethora of researchers associating themselves with this genre of scholarship to expose more instances of the same syndrome. The theories and vocabulary introduced in the book are now used widely.

The next authoritative work by Infinity Foundation, *Being Different: An Indian Challenge to Western Universalism* addressed the central question: who we as Indians are, and what distinguishes us from others, especially from the West. It presents an original and coherent view of dharma as a family of traditions and unabashedly challenges the West's claim of being the universal lens for studying world cultures. Western Universalism is unfortunately still used as the template for mapping and defining all cultures and therefore, it is vital to be conscious of its distorted interpretations of Indian traditions. *Being Different* has prompted a wide section of Indians to question various simplistic views and interpretations of their traditions, including some that are commonly espoused even by their own guru-s, family and political leaders. It is a beacon for serious intellectuals on how to 'take back' Vedic heritage by understanding it on its own terms.

Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity, exposes the widely held thesis in Western academia that Hinduism is a recent invention. This fallacious and ludicrous argument was fabricated during British rule over India in the latter part of the nineteenth century, resulting in dangerous consequences even in post-independent India. The central point of this thesis asserts that Swami Vivekananda, one of the most renowned votaries of Hindu

philosophy of the nineteenth century, plagiarized Western secular and Christian ideas and then recast them in Sanskrit terminology to claim their Indian origin. Besides critiquing this thesis, the nexus behind it, and defending Swami Vivekananda's vision, the book puts forward a vision for the future of Hinduism.

The Battle for Sanskrit: Is Sanskrit Political or Sacred, Oppressive or Liberating, Dead or Alive? challenges Sheldon Pollock, arguably the most influential contemporary Sanskrit scholar in Western academia. The consistent theme underlying his entire work is to characterize Sanskrit as the root cause of all of India's current social problems. This thesis attributes to Sanskrit a range of negative issues including social disharmony and lack of innovation. Arguments deeply damaging to the Indian civilization have been formulated by Pollock based on questionable assumptions and interpretations.

The Battle for Sanskrit addresses these issues head-on with a vigorous *purva paksha* or argument of Pollock's Neo-Orientalist school of thought – an influential school that has spawned new adherents and created a lineage of Western scholars and Indian sepoys today. The book led to multiple conferences of Swadeshi Indology and triggered a greater awareness of the deep and insidious goals of Western Indology and the broader academia. *The Battle for Sanskrit* was precipitated by the proposal of an Adi Shankara Chair at Columbia University sponsored by the Sringeri Peetham (one of the four important peetham-s established by the philosopher Adi Shankara), whose Academic Committee was to be headed by Sheldon Pollock. The effect of the book and the awareness it created has discouraged sponsors from pursuing the establishment of such a chair. After the Shankaracharya, head of Sringeri, was personally approached and briefed on the contents of the book, he was convinced not to proceed with the proposed Chair. This created a huge controversy among Non-Resident Indians in the United States who had championed this Chair as a vehicle for popularizing themselves and advancing their own business interests. Infinity Foundation, however, has never shied

away from controversy or risks when required for the sake of protecting the wider interest of dharma.

Infinity Foundation has also formulated, funded and implemented numerous major interventions which have affected the civilizational discourse in positive and non-trivial ways.[1] The Foundation became widely acknowledged as the leader in influencing the way scholars are approaching their work on India's civilization, history, archaeology, social sciences, arts, and other fields. Besides intellectuals, its work has deeply influenced people from various walks of life, not just Indians and people of Indian origin, but all those who have an all-abiding interest in these matters.

The Foundation has been producing videos on several subjects that showcase the use and application of a dharma-based lens to study our civilization. This has resulted in a new awakening: to promote the use of our *drishti* (i.e., the ability to look through the dharmic lens). It has adopted the term *kurukshetra* or battlefield, to describe the present-day encounter of civilizations. The Foundation has expanded beyond the mode of pure research, and engages with the general public, providing new insights into the social and political dynamics at work in this kurukshetra.

The Foundation's books have a common approach: to present an analysis of distorted theories and their effects, and to expose the falsities and assumptions, of these theories. The target readership is the serious intellectual in support of the Foundation's aim to develop Intellectual Kshatriyas. These kshatriyas are using the Foundation's core ideas and vocabulary to aid in the thinking, analysis, dissection, and strategic response to the attacks on dharma, thus providing new perspectives. Any coherent body of thought or knowledge system assumes a powerful impact as a thought carrier and a tool of change, in pragmatic and intellectual ways, if it is supported by its own consistent vocabulary. The histories and progress of a civilization can be seen as an evolution of its conceptual framework and vocabulary in understanding itself and the world.

The theory of Sanskrit Non-Translatables is one such powerful framework and has its own vocabulary of terms. It was introduced for the first time in the book, *Being Different*. The theory elucidated that Western scholars and Westernized Indians are accustomed to translating and mapping dharmic concepts and perspectives onto Western frameworks, which is a form of digestion of Vedic civilization into their civilization. *Being Different* argued that this practice is highly problematic. Dharmic traditions are compromised and some elements even atrophy once it becomes acceptable to substitute them with Western equivalents, even though the substitutes do not accurately represent the original Indian idea.

While this problem exists to some extent in all inter-civilizational encounters, it is particularly acute when dharmic concepts in Sanskrit are translated into Western languages. Not only does Sanskrit, like all languages, encode specific and unique cultural experiences and traits, but the very form, sound, and manifestation of the language carries effects that cannot be separated from their conceptual meanings. The non-translatable nature of Sanskrit and its deep meanings are compromised by the cultural digestion of dharma into the West through the inadequate translation of vocabulary. In the course of this digestion, crucial distinctions and understandings are lost, important direct experiences of the rishi-s sidelined, and the most fertile, productive and visionary dimension of dharma eradicated and relegated to antiquity. This loss is often carried out under the guise of modernity.

The current book takes these ideas forward and launches a new movement using Sanskrit Non-Translatables as a device for protecting key ideas from getting distorted, plagiarized, or allowed to become obsolete. The role of Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji has been critical as the subject-matter expert to explicate the nuances of meanings of the important Sanskrit words used to illustrate their non-translatability.

This book is not meant for teaching Sanskrit. It undertakes to explain the inadequate translation of many Sanskrit terms into

English, which is commonplace. It spotlights several Sanskrit terms that are loosely and unthinkingly replaced with English translations and shows how the deep and profound implications of these words get lost.

Though primarily meant for the English speaker/reader, many of these discussions are also relevant to resist the usage of these English terms in native Indian languages.

Chapters 1 and 2 cover the rationale and need for Sanskrit Non-Translatables and ingeminate key ideas on the subject from *Being Different*. The discussion on the origins and unique nature of Sanskrit lays the foundation. The Non-Translatables will play a critical role in the kurukshetra as carriers of deeper ideas and embedded cultural assets, and in the encounters between dharma and adharma.

Chapters 3 through 11 discuss several specific non-translatable terms that are being carelessly translated. For each term discussed, careful and deep thought has gone into explaining why the common translations are inadequate and how they create distortions and confusion. The goal is to lay a strong foundation for readers to start using these Sanskrit words when speaking or writing in English. The aim is to instill confidence that the non-translatable words can be used effectively in everyday engagement in English, enriching the language with new ideas and experiences from the Indian traditions.

To ensure reader friendliness, diacritic marks for Sanskrit pronunciation have only been used in the notes. Most Sanskrit terms have been italicized when they first appear, and this may be repeated in some cases. A Sanskrit term will often be accompanied by a brief phrase in parentheses, providing its approximate and provisional meaning in English. Many Sanskrit terms in the main text are spelled in more than one way depending on the source – for instance, 'Shankara' and 'Sankara'. Purists in Indian scholarship may raise issues with some of these compromises. But our battles are selected carefully and with focus, and this means making practical accommodations.

At certain places in this book where multiple interpretations of the shastra exist within our traditions, the Gaudiya Vaishnava sampradaya's viewpoint is used as the basis for illustrating the non-translatability. This choice is *not* to preclude other traditional views. Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji belongs to that tradition, hence we use that view. However, we invite collaborations with experts from other dharmic traditions so that the full richness of each Sanskrit concept can emerge from various perspectives. The focus is to explain that various Sanskrit terms are not translatable to English words. Using a particular Dharmic tradition serves to illustrate this point.

Authors

Rajiv Malhotra
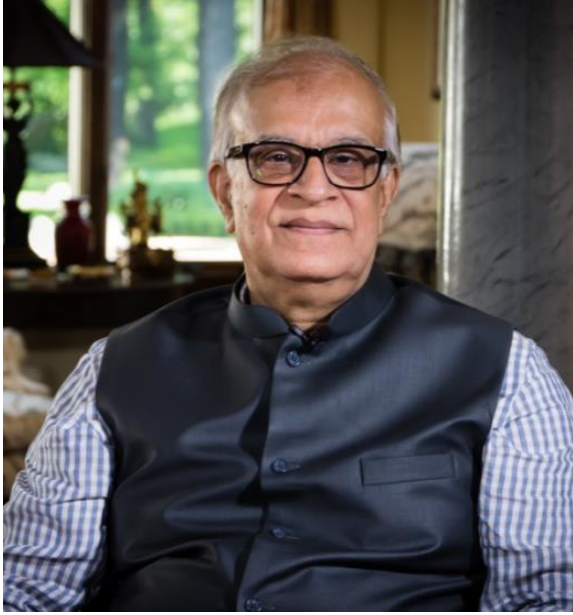
Rajiv Malhotra is a world-renowned researcher, author, speaker, and public intellectual on contemporary issues as they relate to civilizations, spirituality, and science. His experience includes software development, Fortune 100 senior corporate executive, strategic consultant, and successful entrepreneur in IT and media industries. At the summit of his career he globally controlled 20 technology companies. He retired at age 44 to work full-time on philanthropy, research, and public service. Rajiv founded Infinity Foundation in Princeton (USA) in 1994 and conducted original research in myriad fields, influencing thinkers worldwide.

Rajiv's works include *The Battle for Sanskrit*; *Breaking India*; *Being Different*; *Indra's Net*; and *Academic Hinduphobia*.

Authors

Satyanarayana Dasa Babaji

Babaji Satya Narayana Dasa, PhD, is a Vaishnava scholar and practitioner. He holds five post graduate degrees: a doctorate degree, a master's degree in Sanskrit, a law degree, and masters and undergraduate degrees in Engineering (IIT, Delhi). He is the author of 15 books related to Indian culture and philosophy. Babaji has been published in The Journal of Hindu Studies as well as The Journal of Vaishnava Studies. He is a contributing author to two books, *Krishna*, and *Free Will, Agency, and Selfhood* in Indian Philosophy, (OUP). He has also contributed to a 26-volume series published by the Indian Council of Philosophical Research.

Dr Dasa is the founder of Jiva Institute of Vedic Studies to promote Vedic culture, philosophy, and Ayurveda through education. He has initiated a program for preservation, translation, and publication of ancient Indian works of science and wisdom and serves as a visiting professor at the State University of New Jersey, Rutgers, and American Hindu University. He was honored by the late president of India, Dr Pranab Mukherjee, for his extraordinary contribution in presenting Vedic culture worldwide.