



#### CNN's Hinduphobic documentary "Believers"

CNN recently aired a documentary titled 'Believers' hosted by Reza Aslan who claimed he was helping remove the misconceptions regarding world religions, Hinduism being the focus of this particular episode. However, Reza Aslan, far from bringing in an objective, positive, respectful commentary on the religion followed by at least a billion people worldwide, decided to portray Hinduism using the same 'caste, cows, curry' lens that Rajiv Malhotra often speaks about. His program focused on a marginal, fringe sect called the Aghoris, alleged cannibals, who according to him seemed to represent the sum total of what constituted Hinduism's much maligned caste system. The whole episode was shot on the banks of the Ganga, considered to be holy for Hindus, which however did not faze Aslan who deemed it courteous to call it a 'giant toilet'. Rajiv Malhotra, deeply pained by this extreme distortion of a non-violent, highly idealistic, pluralistic faith took to the air waves doing a Facebook Live event with two representatives Nikunj Trivedi and Parth Parihar from the Hindu Student Council in America. They deconstructed various frames from the documentary and the ramifications of the distorted portrayal of Hinduism on the diaspora Hindus in particular and adherents of the faith in general. The video has gone viral and chalked up viewership by the thousands every hour on Facebook. The discussion can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Some comments from the FB wall of Rajiv

**Vijay Chaitanya Nistala** · 36:09 Rajiv Malhotra ji beats them because he understands their language - glib talk, subtext, agenda, bias - and translates it to plain english, and gives them back in plain english. Who can counter that unless they know more about Hinduism than Rajiv ji; and if they do know so much, why would they even attempt it.

**Vishal Pandey** · 19:15 Rajiv sir atleast u r making us aware bcoz no one in our country were aware about all this...even most of our religious gurus are unaware about it.

#### Swadeshi Indology Conference Series – SI-2

The second edition of the Swadeshi Indology Conference Series, an initiative of Infinity Foundation India was held in February at IGNC, New Delhi. The conference ran for three days and was a continuation of the critique of the Neo-Orientalism school of thought which defined India based on its own interpretative lens which is neo-orientalist. Both SI-1 held in July 2016 and the recently concluded SI-2 took on Prof. Sheldon Pollock, the chief protagonist of the Neo-orientalist school of Indology. There were 35 papers interspersed with plenary talks and a traditional format of debate called Vakyartha sadas. Many themes ranging from critiques of the neo-orientalist school's



theory on rasa, chronology, philology, Buddhism, desacralisation and so on were taken up and presented by scholars using the traditional Indian lens. Prizes were given out for the best papers and draft versions of two monographs (outcomes of papers from SI-1) and the draft proceedings of SI-1 were released. The videos of the inaugural and valedictory sessions of the conference can be seen [here](#) and [here](#). The best paper and monograph presentations have also been uploaded and they can be accessed via [this playlist](#). The remaining paper presentation videos are still being edited and finalised and they will also be made live soon.



Some comments from the FB wall of Rajiv

[Satyabir Singh Tekoria](#) God save us all. We have been taught distorted history of India. Real history of Indian heritage is foreign to us. We need to reinvent it. God bless Rajiv Malhotra who has taken a lead in this endeavor. Sanskrit is the mother of all languages. Alas! Those who study Sanskrit as treated as an inferior species. We all ought to study Sanskrit as its usage in daily conversation cast a positive healing impact on our body, mind and soul because of the salutary vibrations radiated by its words....

[विनोध राजामनी](#) Good job and nice home team Rajiv ji. Time for Indian text books to correct their colonial boot-licking vocabulary such as 'hindu mythology'.

### Talk at Foreign Services Institute

At a lecture delivered to students of the Foreign Services Institute in Delhi, on February 20<sup>th</sup> 2017, Rajiv



Malhotra spoke about how as future representatives of brand India, these students had to arm themselves to be the best ambassadors for their country. He talked about how this could be achieved by teaching to these students what the Indian Grand Narrative is and how this should be leveraged abroad by India's diplomats. He said that the External Affairs Ministry had to do a study of the portrayal of India in America and then engage with the Americans to reiterate and project the true depiction of India which is not always done. He speaks about how America does something called Area Studies where they study every other country they are engaging with while India is simply clueless on this count. Rajiv points out that while Pakistan was very savvy in getting their points of view accepted with the think tanks in the US, India was not even there in the picture. He pointed out that MEA should have regular

coaching in civilizational narrative for its students who are the future ambassadors of India. There were other important insights that Rajiv gave in this significant talk which can be viewed [here](#).

Some comments from the FB wall of Rajiv

[Bharathi Hariharan](#) · 49:28 Great to see Rajivji address the future diplomats of India. Hope they hang on to his every word and go on to read his books. We can then hope for well informed, well groomed true Indian representation in the international stage.

[Deepak Jha](#) · 1:21:28 Brand India was distorted by leftist interpretation of our civilization and culture, which should be change

### Idea of Bharatiya Exceptionalism

Rajiv Malhotra gave a talk at IGNOU on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 at the program called Idea of Bharat. In this talk, he outlined the Grand Narrative of India or what he termed as Bharatiya Exceptionalism. He said that every nation or civilization had a story of itself which is taught to all its citizens right from their childhood. The manner of teaching is with stories, symbols, motifs and so on. Hence there is an American Exceptionalism, a Chinese Exceptionalism, a Russian Exceptionalism, a Japanese Exceptionalism and so on. All these narratives are built through distinctive stories, anecdotes and actions that serve to strengthen this narrative in the minds of its citizens. When these stories of exceptionalism are built, it is always to showcase how the particular



culture and civilization is the best and exceptional. In the case of Bharat however, the narrative so far built is one of fragmentation, caste, oppression, human rights



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abuses and so on. It is a narrative which seeks to break up the country into its fragmented parts by exploiting the faultlines instead of forging it into one strong entity. The entire video can be watched [here](#).

Some comments from the FB wall of Rajiv

**Samrat Chowdhury** Sir, serious scrutiny is required of our universities and academics. The central government must include you in the panel and implement changes which is the need of the hour !

**Shakti Bhardwaj** Sir why dont u wrote a book of Mahabharat and other religious stories of India... otherwise youth will end up reading devdutt patnaik's books wher he misrepresent the facts

### Infinity Foundation seeks aid for its activities

Here are the ways in which you can help:

1. Sponsor a scholar from our side for INR 40,000/month.
2. We are looking to nurture 108 scholars who will represent our side.
3. Sponsor printing of books and distribution activities INR 5,00,000 annual
4. Sponsor research assistant for Rajiv Malhotra – 60,000\$ annual
5. Sponsor cost of Academic Director for our conferences at INR 50,000 / month. Number of academic directors will vary depending on the nature of the conferences.

6. Sponsor videography/video editing, expenses for Rajiv Malhotra tours and SI conferences – INR 8,00,000 annual
7. Sponsor our RM works translation into regional languages effort – INR 50,000/month
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