

**Proof of plagiarism by Rajiv  
Malhotra and Aravindan  
Neelakandan – identified by  
Richard Fox Young**

Dated 25 July 2015

Compiled by [Sanjeev Sabhlok](#)

**PLAGIARISM**

**[CONFIRMED]**



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# 1. Prolegomena

## 1.1 Note by Richard Fox Young regarding how he chanced upon this

### — Prolegomena on Rajiv Malhotra's Plagiarism —

From now until I no longer need to, I'm going to be tweeting on confirmed instances of plagiarism found in two of three books by Rajiv Malhotra: *Breaking India* (2011) and *Indra's Net* (2014). There is a third book, *Being Different* (2011), which appeared between the other two; with it, I am, at the moment, unconcerned. Others who might be more interested in *Being Different* than I am, should give it a close look for more of the same issues I raise here, about Malhotra's integrity and originality. Note that even though *Breaking India* lists Aravindan Neelakandan as a joint author, I treat the book as though it were primarily Malhotra's. Insofar as I can tell, Malhotra is the sole author of *Indra's Net*.

Before 2011, I knew very little about Rajiv Malhotra except that he had a reputation for intemperate attacks on certain Hinduism Studies scholars, including, first and foremost, Wendy Doniger of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.<sup>1</sup> In March of that year, I attended the *Breaking India* book launch, held on the campus of Princeton University in Princeton, New Jersey, where I happen to live and work (but not at Princeton University). On that occasion, I was present with a colleague, Sunder John Boopalan. Afterwards, troubled by the things we had heard Malhotra say, we began a close reading of *Breaking India*, cover to cover, and recently published a rebuttal.<sup>2</sup>

One day while reading *Breaking India*, a passage on the German Orientalist Max Müller sounded oddly familiar, redolent of the language in a book I knew quite well, *India and Europe* (1988), by Wilhelm Halbfass, my Ph.D. mentor at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia in the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> Pulling my copy off the shelf and placing it beside *Breaking India*, this was what I found:

#### Halbfass, *India and Europe*, p. 133

We have already encountered Müller (1823-1900) as a descendent of the Romantic Movement and its longing for the origins. Besides his Indological work, Müller also made a number of contributions to linguistics and religious studies, some of which have been quite influential.

#### Malhotra, *Breaking India*, p. 26

Max Müller (1823-1900) was a descendent of the Romantic movement and its longings for civilization's origins. He also made many influential contributions to linguistics and religious studies.

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<sup>1</sup> On Malhotra in the previous decade, see McComas Taylor, "Mythology Wars: The Indian Diaspora, 'Wendy's Children' and the Struggle for the Hindu Past," *Asian Studies Review* 35/2 (2011): 149-168.

<sup>2</sup> "Studied Silences: Diaspora Nationalism, 'Kshatriya Intellectuals' and the Hindu American Critique of Dalit Christianity's Indianness." In *Constructing Indian Christianities: Culture, Conversion and Caste*. Edited by Chad M. Bauman and Richard Fox Young (New Delhi: Routledge, 2014), pp. 215-238.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Halbfass, *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

As I read on, I soon realized that while this was by no means the worst instance of plagiarism I would find Malhotra committing, it would be stereotypical (structurally and linguistically, the sentences are virtually identical, unaffected by minor paraphrasing, “many” for “a number of,” etc.). As it turned out, one of the worst was right there on the same page of *Breaking India*. Before I take that up (see Example 1), I should point out how puzzled I was that Malhotra had plagiarized a mundane sentence of the kind any college freshman could have composed. Wilhelm Halbfass had a luminous mind, and almost anything he wrote was worth quoting—but this? And it galled that Malhotra would kidnap Halbfass’s words (as it were) and hold them hostage when in other places (*Indra’s Net*, in particular) he mounts a campaign of sustained and hateful vilification against him.<sup>4</sup> My conscientization began in March, 2011, and I have not looked back since. Nothing, however, has moved Malhotra to change his ways, and over the four years that I have followed him, from *Breaking India* to *Indra’s Net*, he has proved himself not only to be a serial plagiarizer but also a trigger-happy serial accuser of others whom he suspects of plagiarizing him (on which, see the tweets I did at the beginning, based on his Yahoo emails). I’ve sat on the evidence of his own indiscretions too long. It’s time to break the silence, and as Malhotra works outside of academe—and is therefore unaccountable to an institutional review board that might assess the evidence against him—I’ll have to make my case right here on Twitter, a medium of which he is himself a master.

It seems fitting that the norm I adopt to assess the evidence of plagiarism in *Breaking India* and *Indra’s Net* comes from *Rights, Rules, Regulations*, Princeton University’s code of academic integrity,<sup>5</sup> sections 2.4.6, 2.4.7, and 2.4.9 especially. Although Princeton norms do not differ substantially from others in effect at comparable institutions of higher education in the United States today, I use them because Malhotra and the Infinity Foundation he presides over derive considerable benefit from their location in the vicinity of the University. His writings commonly allude to his being a Princeton resident, and his credibility is much-enhanced when he claims that research for his books was done at the University’s famed Library.<sup>6</sup> Nor can I forget that *Breaking India* was released on the University campus.

Hereafter, plagiarism should be understood to mean what it means in Princeton’s *Rights, Rules, Regulations*, section 2.4.7: “The use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment.” As a kind of “diagnostic test”<sup>7</sup> of Rajiv Malhotra’s scholarly output, I will apply an analysis similar to the one found in section 2.4.9 of the same code to each of seven plagiarism examples. A Sanskrit maxim (*sthālipulākanyāya*) that says the rice in a pot must all be undercooked if even a single grain comes out unready to eat, suggests that one may infer from the examples I adduce that *Breaking India* and *Indra’s Net* were published before they were ready to leave the kitchen.

<sup>4</sup> My rebuttal in late 2014 of Malhotra’s aspersions upon Wilhelm Halbfass can be found by searching on Twitter with the hashtag #SheldonPollockUnfiltered.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.princeton.edu/pub/rrr/part2/index.xml#comp24>

<sup>6</sup> For one such acknowledgment, see *Indra’s Net*, p. 375.

<sup>7</sup> Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 101.

## 1.2 Princeton University rules

### **Princeton University** *Rights, Rules, Regulations*

#### **2.4.6 General Requirements for the Acknowledgment of Sources in Academic Work**

The academic departments of the University have varying requirements for the acknowledgment of sources, but certain fundamental principles apply to all levels of work. In order to prevent any misunderstanding, students are expected to study and comply with the following basic requirements. If you have any questions about when and how to cite your sources, ask the course instructor. An important general rule is this: if you are unsure whether or not to acknowledge a source, always err on the side of caution and completeness by citing rather than not citing.

#### **Quotations**

Any quotations, however small, must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a footnote) by a precise indication of the source—identifying the author, title, place and date of publication (where relevant), and page numbers. Any sentence or phrase which is not the original work of the student must be acknowledged.

#### **Paraphrasing**

Any material which is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text. A thorough rewording or rearrangement of an author's text does not relieve one of this responsibility. Occasionally, students maintain that they have read a source long before they wrote their papers and have unwittingly duplicated some of its phrases or ideas. This is not a valid excuse. The student is responsible for taking adequate notes so that debts of phrasing may be acknowledged where they are due.

#### **Ideas and Facts**

Any ideas or facts which are borrowed should be specifically acknowledged in a footnote or in the text, even if the idea or fact has been further elaborated by the student. Some ideas, facts, formulas, and other kinds of information which are widely



known and considered to be in the "public domain" of common knowledge do not always require citation. The criteria for common knowledge vary among disciplines; students in doubt should consult a member of the faculty.

Occasionally, a student in preparing an essay has consulted an essay or body of notes on a similar subject by another student. If the student has done so, he or she must state the fact and indicate clearly the nature and extent of his or her obligation. The name and class of the author of an essay or notes which are consulted should be given, and the student should be prepared to show the work consulted to the instructor, if requested to do so.

### **Footnotes and Bibliography**

All the sources that have been consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in a bibliography, unless specific guidelines (from the academic department or instructor) request that only works cited be so included. However, the mere listing of a source in a bibliography shall not be considered a "proper acknowledgment" for specific use of that source within the essay or report; a footnote or endnote must also appear after the information or quotation from that source. Neither shall the use of a footnote at the end of a sentence or paragraph in which only minor word changes have been made from the original source be considered "proper acknowledgment." The extent of indebtedness to the author must be made clear.

### **Electronic and Other Sources**

The requirement to acknowledge sources is not limited to printed material such as books or journal articles. Information is now readily available through many newer media, including text and images on the World Wide Web, CD-ROM, and electronic mail. Information or quotations from any of these sources must be properly cited; ask your course instructor for guidance on how to cite such sources. At a minimum, acknowledge any information, text or image from the World Wide Web by noting the name and author of the site (if available), the Internet address, and the date you accessed the site.

Princeton University  
*Rights, Rules, Regulations*

**2.4.7 Definitions of Academic Violations under the Jurisdiction of the Faculty-Student Committee on Discipline and the Subcommittee on Student Life and Discipline of the Graduate School Faculty Committee**  
With regard to essays, laboratory reports, or any other work submitted to fulfill an official academic requirement, the following are considered academic infractions:

**Plagiarism**

The use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. "Outside source" means any work, published or unpublished, by any person other than the student (see [section 2.4.6](#)).

Princeton University  
*Rights, Rules, Regulations*

#### 2.4.9 Examples of Plagiarism

The following examples provide a range of plagiarism from verbatim copying to thorough paraphrasing. The examples and comments offer clear guidance about how a source may be used and when a source must be cited.

**Original source:**

From: Alvin Kernan, *The Playwright as Magician*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979, pp.102–103.

From time to time this submerged or latent theater in Hamlet becomes almost overt. It is close to the surface in Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. It is even closer to the surface when Hamlet enters his mother's room and holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

**1. Example of verbatim plagiarism, or unacknowledged direct quotation (lifted passages are underlined):**

Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. For example, there is Hamlet's pretense of madness, the "antic disposition" that he puts on to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from plucking out the heart of his mystery. When Hamlet enters his mother's room, he holds up, side by side, the pictures of the two kings, Old Hamlet and Claudius, and proceeds to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made, presenting truth by means of a show. Similarly, when he leaps into the open grave at Ophelia's funeral, ranting in high heroic terms, he is acting out for Laertes, and perhaps for himself as well, the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

**Comment:** Aside from an opening sentence loosely adapted from the original and reworded more simply, this entire passage is taken almost word-for-word from the source. The few small alterations of the source do not relieve the writer of the responsibility to attribute these words to their original author. A passage from a source may be worth quoting at length if it makes a point precisely or elegantly. In such cases, copy the passage exactly, place it in quotation marks, and cite the author.



## 2. Example of lifting selected passages and phrases without proper acknowledgement (lifted passages are underlined):

Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. For example, in Act 1, Hamlet adopts a pretense of madness that he uses to protect himself and prevent his antagonists from discovering his mission to revenge his father's murder. He also presents truth by means of a show when he compares the portraits of Gertrude's two husbands in order to describe for her the true nature of the choice she has made. And when he leaps in Ophelia's open grave ranting in high heroic terms, Hamlet is acting out the folly of excessive, melodramatic expressions of grief.

**Comment:** This passage, in content and structure, is taken wholesale from the source. Although the writer has rewritten much of the paragraph, and fewer phrases are lifted verbatim from the source, this is a clear example of plagiarism. Inserting even short phrases from the source into a new sentence still requires placing quotations around the borrowed words and citing the author. If even one phrase is good enough to borrow, it must be properly set off by quotation marks. In the case above, if the writer had rewritten the entire paragraph and only used Alvin Kernan's phrase "high heroic terms" without properly quoting and acknowledging its source, the writer would have plagiarized.

## 3. Example of paraphrasing the text while maintaining the basic paragraph and sentence structure:

Almost all of Shakespeare's Hamlet can be understood as a play about acting and the theatre. For example, in Act 1, Hamlet pretends to be insane in order to make sure his enemies do not discover his mission to revenge his father's murder. The theme is even more obvious when Hamlet compares the pictures of his mother's two husbands to show her what a bad choice she has made, using their images to reveal the truth. Also, when he jumps into Ophelia's grave, hurling his challenge to Laertes, Hamlet demonstrates the foolishness of exaggerated expressions of emotion.

**Comment:** Almost nothing of Alvin Kernan's original language remains in this rewritten paragraph. However the key idea, the choice and order of the examples, and even the basic structure of the original sentences are all taken from the source. Although it would no longer be necessary to use quotation marks, it would absolutely be necessary to place a citation at the end of this paragraph to acknowledge that the content is not original. Better still would be to acknowledge the author in the text by adding a second sentence such as—"Alvin Kernan provides several examples from the play where these themes become more obvious"—and then citing the source at the end of the paragraph. In the case where the writer did not try to paraphrase the source's sentences quite so closely, but borrowed the main idea and examples from Kernan's book, an acknowledgment would still be necessary.

### 1.3 Notice asserting authorship of Rajiv Malhotra and Aravindan Neelakandan



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as the authors of this work

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## 2. Plagiarism of Maurice Olender

### 2.1 Example 1: From Olender's *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*

#### Example 1

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation  
(lifted passage highlighted in yellow)

##### Original source

Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 90-91.

Using taxonomic and comparative methods, the new discipline, like other natural sciences, should strive to reveal the providential unity underlying the variegated world of appearances. This providential order had been inscribed in nature at the beginning of time, and it was the task of comparative philology and mythology to find its traces in myths and religions, among which, Christianity of course occupied a unique position.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra and Aravindan Neelakandan, *Breaking India: Western Interventions in Dravidian and Dalit Faultlines* (New Delhi: Amaryllis, 2011), p. 26, with an endnote reference on p. 478.

The use of comparative methods, the new discipline, like other natural sciences, should strive to reveal the providential unity underlying the variegated world of appearances. This providential order had been inscribed in nature at the beginning of time, and it was the task of comparative philology and mythology to find its traces in myths and religions, among which, Christianity of course occupied a unique position.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Max Müller opposed Darwinian theories to explain the origin of languages, which he felt were not of animal origin. He said famously that no process of natural selection will ever distill significant words out of the notes of birds or the cries of beasts. (Max Müller, 1869, 354).

**Comment:** Except for the first words, including, apparently, the relatively technical term “taxonomic,” Malhotra and Neelakandan have taken this entire passage straight out of Olender without quotation marks or attribution or further modification. Endnote 21 only adds extraneous information; the authors’ indebtedness to an outside source remains unacknowledged.

### 2.1.1 Proof: Olender's book

"origin, nature, and laws" of linguistics one could explore the link between the development of thought and the invention of language.

Max Müller took a resolutely optimistic view of the contribution that the new methods of the natural sciences could make to history. Although Renan differed with the Oxford don on a variety of issues, he shared this euphoric outlook. In a letter to Marcellin Berthelot published in October 1863 he praised recent successes in comparative philology and mythology: "Concerning our race in particular, we now have, thanks to the subtle researches of Kuhn, Max Müller, Pictet, and Bréal, a clearer view of the primitive Aryans . . . prior to their dispersion than we have of certain contemporary societies in Africa and Central Asia."<sup>27</sup>

Scholars in general were convinced that comparative methods would reveal, if not the origins of mankind, at least a period much earlier than that accessible through even the most ancient written documents. Renan was keen to tell Berthelot what rank he thought the new sciences ought to occupy: "Comparative philology and mythology take us back well beyond historical texts, almost to the beginnings of human consciousness. If the sciences are ordered by chronology, then these two disciplines should rank between history and geology" (p. 636).

Max Müller was unambiguous about the orientation of his research: "We are entering into a new sphere of knowledge, in which the individual is subordinate to the general and facts are subordinate to laws. We find thought, order, and design scattered throughout nature, and we see the dark chaos of matter illuminated by the reflection of the divine spirit."<sup>28</sup>

These words suggest a scientific program consonant with a theological effort to reveal the divine in all things. Max Müller hoped to apply this program to the new philology. Using taxonomic and comparative methods, **the new discipline, like**

**other natural sciences, should strive to reveal the providential unity underlying the variegated world of appearances. This providential order had been inscribed in nature at the beginning of time, and it was the task of comparative philology and mythology to find its traces in myths and religions, among which Christianity of course occupied a unique position.**

The theological intentions that governed Max Müller's approach explain why the comparative method sometimes functioned in his work as a way of replacing or even annihilating historical time.<sup>29</sup> He did not hide the apologist aspect of his desire to show that all religions were based on the same intuition, the same revelation, the same providential truth. The Christian side of his work became militant in his recommendations to missionaries. Max Müller deplored the tactlessness they sometimes exhibited in their dealings with pagans: "The man who is born blind is to be pitied, not berated. . . . To prove that our religion is the only true one it surely is not necessary to maintain that all other forms of belief are a fabric of errors."<sup>30</sup> Indeed, missionaries should find it advantageous to stress the resemblances among various beliefs and creeds rather than accentuate their differences. Such a pragmatic approach, inspired by the new "science of religion," should make it easier "to look out more anxiously for any common ground, any spark of the true light that may still be revived, any altar that may be dedicated afresh to the true God."<sup>31</sup>

If Max Müller fought hard for recognition of "the legitimate place of the religions of those called uncivilized,"<sup>32</sup> the logic of his argument simultaneously assured the immense superiority of Christianity "over all other religions."<sup>33</sup> This conviction even became a cornerstone of his scientific approach: "The Science of Religion will for the first time assign to Christianity its right place among the religions of the world; it will show for the first time what was meant by the fullness of time; it will restore to the whole history of the world, in its unconscious



### 2.1.2 Proof: Breaking India

26 | BREAKING INDIA

#### *Friedrich Max Müller*

While in the Veda we may study the childhood, we may study in Kant's *Critique* the perfect manhood of the Aryan mind.

– Max Muller<sup>19</sup>

Max Müller (1823–1900) was a descendant of the Romantic movement and its longings for civilization's origins. He also made many influential contributions to linguistics and religious studies. Like Renan, his prolific writings reached a wide readership. For more than forty years, both the scholars worked with the concept of race, using the categories of Aryan and Semite.<sup>20</sup> But they differed in major ways. Max Muller took the position that no single culture had exclusively come up with monotheism, which was the common property of humanity, and that linguistic structures turned this into multiple religions, including both monotheistic and polytheistic forms.

Max Müller did not want to use the Indian civilization to introduce polytheism into the development of Christianity the way Renan wanted to. Nor did he go the other way and try to make the Aryans appear monotheistic the way Pictet did (discussed later). Instead, he emphasized linguistic differences to explain the divergent religious views. Muller wanted a science of religions to reveal the divine in all things. The use of comparative methods, the new discipline, like other natural sciences, should strive to reveal the providential unity underlying the variegated world of appearances. This providential order had been inscribed in nature at the beginning of time, and it was the task of comparative philology and mythology to find its traces in myths and religions, among which Christianity of course occupied a unique position.<sup>21</sup>

Max Müller served as a functionary for the colonialists and for Christian evangelists, while being deeply interested in ancient Indian texts. This orientation is reflected in one of his letters addressed to the duke of Orkney, who was the British secretary of state for India. Muller wrote on 16 December 1868: 'The ancient religion of India is totally doomed and if Christianity doesn't step in whose fault will it

### 3. Plagiarism of Andrew Nicholson

#### 3.1 Example 2: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

##### Example 2

**Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation**  
(lifted passage highlighted in yellow)

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 3.

Nor was there an idea that schools such as Sāṃkhya and Mīmāṃsā had commonalities that differentiated them from the non-Hindu philosophies of the Jainas and Buddhists.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 158.

At first, schools such as Samkhya and Mimamsa did not explicitly state that they had commonalities that differentiated them from non-Hindu philosophies of the Jains and Buddhists.

At the end of the paragraph in which the sentence above occurs, Malhotra placed an endnote, no. 6. On p. 326 of *Indra's Net*, that endnote reads as follows:

<sup>6</sup> Nicholson, 2010, pp. 3, 5, 25.

**COMMENT:** Except for a small amount of paraphrasing, Malhotra lifts the sentence right out of Nicholson, word-for-word. Endnote 6 provides some bibliographic information about the source, *but not enough*; without quotation marks, the full extent of Malhotra's reliance on an outside source remains undisclosed.

### 3.1.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

#### INTRODUCTION {3}

medieval period, it became almost universally accepted that there was a fixed group of Indian philosophies in basic agreement with one another and standing together against Buddhism and Jainism.

In pre-twelfth-century India, many thinkers today labeled “Hindu” went to great efforts to disprove one another’s teachings, including use of *ad hominem* attacks, straw man arguments, and other questionable means. There was no understanding then that all of these thinkers were part of a shared orthodoxy. Nor was there an idea that schools such as Sāṃkhya and Mīmāṃsā had commonalities that differentiated them from the non-Hindu philosophies of the Jainas and Buddhists. Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the influential seventh-century Mīmāṃsaka, wrote that “the treatises on righteousness and unrighteousness that have been adopted in Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Pāñcarātra, Pāśupata, and Buddhist works . . . are not accepted by those who know the triple Veda.”<sup>5</sup> Likewise, Sāṃkhya and Yoga philosophers faulted Vedāntins and Mīmāṃsakas for their uncritical acceptance of Vedic authority, which included the performance of what they considered immoral animal sacrifices.<sup>6</sup> One author of this period, the eleventh-century Śaiva author Somaśambhu, even asserts that Vedāntins, Mīmāṃsakas, and those who worship other gods such as Viṣṇu will be reborn in hells unless they undergo a complicated conversion ritual designed to make them full-fledged Śaivas.<sup>7</sup>

Later codifiers of Indian traditions sought to depict the “six systems of philosophy” (*ṣaḍdarśanas*) as sharing a fundamental commitment to the authority of the Veda that unified them as Hindus and made them understand themselves as fundamentally different from Jainas and Buddhists. However, no single, well-demarcated boundary between “affirmers” (*āstikas*) and “deniers” (*nāstikas*) existed before the late medieval period. But by the sixteenth century, most Mīmāṃsakas and Vedāntins did understand themselves united in their shared commitment to the Vedas over and against other groups they designated as *nāstikas*. In this book, I tell the story of this remarkable shift, arguing that the seeds were planted for the now-familiar discourse of Hindu unity by a number of influential philosophers in late medieval India. I give particular attention to one such philosopher, Vijñānabhikṣu, a sixteenth-century polymath who was perhaps the boldest of all of these innovators. According to him, it was not just that all of the philosophies of the *āstikas* agreed on the sanctity of the Veda. He claimed that, properly understood, Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Vedānta, and Nyāya were in essence different aspects of a single, well-coordinated

### 3.1.2 Proof: Indra's Net

#### 158 Indra's Net

Only much later did thinkers assert that the differences between astikas and nastikas were too large to be bridgeable, whereas the internal differences among the various astika positions were deemed to be less significant. At first, schools such as Samkhya and Mimamsa did not explicitly state that they had commonalities that differentiated them from non-Hindu philosophies of the Jains and Buddhists. But over time, there emerged codifiers who consolidated what became known as the six systems of Indian philosophy and gave them prominence over the rest. Later still, these six got further consolidated with a shared commitment to Vedic authority, by which they differentiated themselves from Jains and Buddhists.<sup>6</sup>

The grand consolidation into what we now call Hinduism evolved only after Shankara's death, when his own followers incorporated the rival schools into a 'Vedic family' which included the Samkhya and Yoga schools. A number of venerable sages played an important role in the consolidation and crystallization of the astikas as a well-bounded category, including Madhava (fourteenth century), Madhusudana Sarasvati (sixteenth century) and Vijñānabhikṣu (sixteenth century). Madhava was important not only because he was a minister of the powerful Vijayanagara Empire, but also because he became the head of the Sringeri matha founded by Shankara. Madhusudana even argued that some of the astikas were deliberately teaching in ways that would keep people from following the nastikas such as Jains and Buddhists.<sup>7</sup> Vijñānabhikṣu, in the sixteenth century, continued the consolidation further.<sup>8</sup>

It is fair to say, however, that by the sixteenth century, astika had crystallized and solidified to correspond roughly to today's Hinduism and that nastika meant Buddhists, Jains, and materialists. This sense of being a Hindu continues to this day. The goal of each of these thinkers was to organize, classify and rank different philosophies in order of merit, thereby showing them to be part of the astika family. The Sanskrit term for such a compendium is '*samgraha*' or '*samuccaya*' (collection).

Many intellectuals within what is now considered the Hindu family developed their own organizing principles in which all astika schools



### 3.2 Example 3: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

#### Example 3

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow; moved passages highlighted in red)

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 116.

It follows that there are two paths to final liberation. The path of knowledge (*jñāna*), offered by the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta systems, can lead to meditation with objects and can be efficacious for enlightenment. But the follower of Sāṃkhya or Vedānta will have to endure the state of *jīvanmukti*, as suggested by BS 4.1.15 and Ch. Up. 6.14.2. However, Viṣ. Pu. 6.7.35 suggests that Yoga can cause immediate release, destroying *prārabdha* acts and bypassing *jīvanmukti* altogether. Yoga, according to Vijñānabhikṣu, is the fast track to complete liberation.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 160.

Vijñānabhikṣu claimed that there are two paths to final liberation. The first, the path of knowledge (*jñāna*) offered by Sāṃkhya and Vedānta can lead to enlightenment, but the follower will have to endure continued embodiment during the state of *jīvanmukti* (living in a liberated state).<sup>14</sup> However, the second, the path of yoga as the Vishnu Purana suggests, brings immediate liberation, destroying *prārabdha* (past life) acts and bypassing *jīvanmukti* altogether.<sup>15</sup> Yoga in this discussion includes many spiritual practices, including meditation. This makes yoga the 'fast track' to complete liberation.

In the paragraph above, Malhotra inserts two endnotes, nos. 14 and 15. On p. 326 of *Indra's Net*, the two endnotes read as follows:

<sup>14</sup> As suggested by BS 4.1.15 and Ch. Up. 6.14.2.

<sup>15</sup> Vishnu Purana, 6.7.35.

**COMMENT:** Except for a small amount of paraphrasing (e.g., "liberation" for "release"), Malhotra lifts the sentence right out of Nicholson, almost word-for-word, and with the same basic structure. Endnotes 14 and 15 merely move the references lifted from Nicholson to the back of the book, disguising their origin in an outside source that remains unacknowledged.



### 3.2.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

[116] YOGA, PRAXIS, AND LIBERATION

is no power equal to Yoga." "Power" means that by leaving behind previous acts that have already begun to produce results, Yoga by itself is the cause of quick liberation.<sup>11</sup>

Vijñānabhikṣu had previously suggested that only Yoga can lead to the stage of objectless meditation. And it is only by means of objectless meditation that acts that have already begun to produce results (*prārabdhakarman*) can be destroyed. It follows that there are two paths to final liberation. The path of knowledge (*jñāna*), offered by the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta systems, can lead to meditation with objects and can be efficacious for enlightenment. But the follower of Sāṃkhya or Vedānta will have to endure the state of *jīvanmukti*, as suggested by *BS* 4.1.15 and *Ch. Up.* 6.14.2. However, *Viṣ. Pu.* 6.7.35 suggests that Yoga can cause immediate release, destroying *prārabdha* acts and bypassing *jīvanmukti* altogether. Yoga, according to Vijñānabhikṣu, is the fast track to complete liberation. Although Sāṃkhya, Vedānta, and Yoga can all lead to liberation, Yoga is the best of the three solely in terms of its efficiency.

Vijñānabhikṣu takes the statement from *Mokṣadharmā* quite seriously that "There is no knowledge equal to Sāṃkhya. There is no power equal to Yoga."<sup>12</sup> This suggests a division of labor between the systems. The Yoga system is the most efficient means to enlightenment, but not the highest system in terms of true or ultimate doctrines. There is little or nothing in the *Yogasūtras* that would suggest that the ultimate relationship between the *puruṣa* and Brahman is difference and non-difference. Both Sāṃkhya and Yoga function on a lower theoretical level than the Vedānta; both are dualistic systems, primarily (or, a modern historian would say, exclusively) concerned with the level of difference. Yet, according to Vijñānabhikṣu's brand of Bhedābheda Vedānta, this level is ultimately sublated by the state of non-difference, or non-separation, between Brahman and the individual self. Vijñānabhikṣu even uses the terms "conventional" (*vyāvahārika*) and "ultimate" (*pāramārthika*) to describe these two levels in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*. For Vijñānabhikṣu, it would have been even more apt for the passage just quoted from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* to read, "There is no knowledge equal to Vedānta." Vedānta acknowledges God and teaches of an ultimate level that surpasses the duality of *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*.<sup>13</sup> But in spite of its philosophical ultimacy, it is inferior to Yoga on the level of practice.

The larger question at stake in this extremely technical discussion of the mechanisms that cause *jīvanmukti* and its cessation has to do with

### 3.2.2 Proof: Indra's Net

160 Indra's Net

medieval consolidators of contemporary Hinduism as analogous to European doxographers. A doxography is a compilation of multiple systems of thought which are examined for their interrelationships, and sometimes new classifications are proposed. It is like a survey of various philosophies from a particular point of view that is looking for relationships across various systems. Often the bias of the doxographer is expressed by the set of schools that he includes and the ones he excludes, and the criteria by which he ranks them.<sup>12</sup>

Nicholson goes into great detail to show that the writings and classifications by rival Indian schools changed during the medieval period, with many cross-borrowings and new alliances.<sup>13</sup> He argues that this Indian genre, akin to European doxography, served as the means to cross-fertilize among traditions, thereby making each tradition more accessible to others.

The scholar Vijnanabhikshu is a good example to illustrate that there was continuity in Hinduism prior to colonialism. He and his sixteenth-century contemporaries were precursors to an evolving pre-colonial Hinduism that culminated in Vivekananda's movement. This was not a break from the past, nor was it based on imported ideas. It brought many streams together in a creative manner.

Vijnanabhikshu claimed that there are two paths to final liberation. The first, the path of knowledge (jnana) offered by Samkhya and Vedanta can lead to enlightenment, but the follower will have to endure continued embodiment during the state of jivanmukti (living in a liberated state).<sup>14</sup> However, the second, the path of yoga as the Vishnu Purana suggests, brings immediate liberation, destroying prarabdha (past life) acts and bypassing jivanmukti altogether.<sup>15</sup> Yoga in this discussion includes many spiritual practices, including meditation. This makes yoga the 'fast track' to complete liberation. (Note that Vijnanabhikshu was not following Patanjali's Yogasutras in every respect.)

Therefore, he advocated yoga as practice, but at the same time he did not discard Vedanta's method of inquiry into the nature of Brahman, nor Samkhya's technique of discrimination between purusha (being, self) and prakriti (nature, matter). He could mix and match all three systems and did not see them in contradiction. He believed that

### 3.3 Example 4: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

#### Example 4

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 122-123.

Vijñānabhikṣu regarded the practices of the Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, and Yoga schools to be different but complimentary paths. While yoga is the most direct of those paths, the contemplative practices of the Vedānta and Sāṃkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regards the goal of all three systems to be identical; it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), pp. 162-163.

He regarded the practices of the Vedānta, Samkhya, and Yoga schools to be different but reconciled as complimentary paths. While yoga is the most direct of those paths, the practices of the Vedanta and Samkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regarded the goal of all these systems to be identical: it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation.<sup>18</sup>

At the end of the paragraph above, Malhotra inserts an endnote, no. 18. On p. 326 of *Indra's Net*, endnote 18 reads as follows:

<sup>18</sup> Nicholson, 2010, pp. 122-123.

**COMMENT:** Except for minor paraphrasing (e.g., “He” for “Vijñānabhikṣu”), Malhotra lifts the sentence right out of Nicholson, word-for-word, without quotation marks. Endnote 18 provides some bibliographic information, *but does not provide enough*. Without an express acknowledgement that Nicholson is the author of these words, a reader naturally assumes that they are Malhotra's own. As stipulated in section 2.4.6 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities*, “Any quotations, however small, must be placed in quotation marks.” This one happens to consist of 68 words!

### 3.3.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

[122] YOGA, PRAXIS, AND LIBERATION

Brahman. The disjunction, or isolation, in question is specifically the disjunction between *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. But the other aspect of *kaivalya* is the abiding of the *puruṣa* in its own natural state (*svarūpapratisthā*). No longer does the *puruṣa* exist in the adventitious, temporary state of separation from Brahman. When it reverts to its natural state, it reverts to the state of being non-separate from Brahman. Therefore, *kaivalya* is not just a turning away, as it often seems when translated. It is also a turning toward. While turning away from *prakṛti*, the liberated *puruṣa* is simultaneously turning toward Brahman, returning to its original relation of non-separation. Yet the relation of separation is also real for a certain amount of time. When the *puruṣa* is yoked to the *guṇas* in the phenomenal world, it is separate from Brahman. But Vijñānabhikṣu considers this state of separation to be characterized by instability (*apratisthātva*). Thus he says in the quote cited previously from the *Yogasārasaṅgraha*: "The individual self is not stable as something apart from Brahman." Note the contrast made by his choice of Sanskrit terms—at the time of liberation or *kaivalya*, the *puruṣa* is established in its own nature (*svarūpapratisthā*). During its time in the world as separate from Brahman, the *puruṣa* is unstable (*apratisthā*). Hence, there is an underlying mechanism to explain why *kaivalya* occurs from the Vedāntic standpoint as well as from the Yogic. All things tend to return to their natural state of equilibrium. For the *puruṣa*, that state is non-separation from Brahman.

In the state of *kaivalya*, the individual self becomes what it is, reverting to its natural state. In the *Yogasūtras*, one dimension of this natural state is described as disjunction from the *guṇas* of *prakṛti* and freedom from pain. Patañjali says nothing about Brahman or about the embodied self's relation to Brahman. For Vijñānabhikṣu, this is not surprising—as he says in his commentary on the *Sāṃkhyasūtras*, to understand each school correctly, one must understand its proper scope. The scope of the Sāṃkhya is the philosophical discrimination between that which is self and that which is not self. Yoga offers a detailed discussion of the practical means to the disunion of these two, of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. But only Vedānta describes the individual self's relation to the highest self, or Brahman. It is unnecessary to choose one of these three systems as correct and the other two as wrong, for the *darśanas* are complementary, not contradictory.

Vijñānabhikṣu regarded the practices of the Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, and Yoga schools to be different but complementary paths. While Yoga is the most direct of those paths, the contemplative practices of the Vedānta and Sāṃkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regards the goal of all

YOGA, PRAXIS, AND LIBERATION [123]

three systems to be identical: it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation. The attempts by modern scholars to portray Vijñānabhikṣu either as an apostate Sāṃkhya or as a Yogin who paid lip service to Vedānta and Sāṃkhya go against the fundamental tenet of Vijñānabhikṣu's late works, the unity of the philosophical systems.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, these modern attempts are themselves based on historical assumptions about the proper ways of categorizing Indian philosophical systems and identifying the authentic doctrines of each of the schools. As shown in the brief historical survey of the relation between Yoga and Sāṃkhya presented in chapter 4, these classificatory schemes are by no means obvious or without their own set of problems. In chapter 7, I show how modern scholars fought over Vijñānabhikṣu's legacy in their own attempts to set down the precise relationship between the schools of Indian philosophy.



### 3.3.2 Proof: Indra's Net

162 Indra's Net

century who developed the term 'Hinduism' under the pressure of the new explanatory category of 'world religions' were influenced by these earlier philosophers and doxographers, primarily Vedantins, who had their own reasons for arguing the unity of Indian philosophical traditions.<sup>17</sup>

Vijnanabhikshu's writings on Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta suggest that, in harmony with Patanjali, he understood yoga to be both a philosophical system and a practice of self-transformation. As such, yoga was amenable to adaptations and interpretations. His integration involved some innovative philosophical arguments concerning the relationship between difference and non-difference, between parts and whole, and so on. He believed that Bhedabheda Vedanta was superior because it was best able to reconcile all the schools consistently with the Upanishads.

#### *From Vijnanabhikshu to Vivekananda*

The foregoing overview of Vijnanabhikshu shows that Vivekananda's project was in many ways a continuation of what the medieval Hindu doxographers were already doing. Vivekananda wanted to harmonize the major strands of yoga. Toward that end, he treated separately each of the traditional four expressions of yoga that are also explained in the Bhagavad-Gita—*raja*, *bhakti*, *karma*, and *jnana*—but kept them on an equal plane, as four options that can be mixed and matched by an individual rather than seeing them in an absolute hierarchy. He felt that yoga was compatible with Vedanta. The former he saw as a practical technique that confirmed spiritual liberation (or self-realization recorded by the *rishis* in the Veda) through personal experience (*anubhava*); the latter he saw as the standard of reference for self-realization in line with Vedic testimony (*sruti-pramana*).

Vijnanabhikshu had contributed to the emergence of a proto-Hinduism to which Vivekananda became a worthy heir. In the same manner, Vivekananda established common ground between yoga and Vedanta. He regarded the practices of the Vedanta, Samkhya, and Yoga

Historical Continuity and Colonial Disruption 163

schools to be different but reconciled as complementary paths. While yoga is the most direct of those paths, the practices of the Vedanta and Samkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regarded the goal of all these systems to be identical: it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation.<sup>18</sup>

Vivekananda's challenge was also to show that this complementarity model was superior to models that emphasized conflict and contradiction. He showed great philosophical and interpretive ingenuity, even to those who might not agree with all his conclusions.<sup>19</sup> The intellectual position of Bhedabheda, which is a suitable foundation for his Practical Vedanta, is not as well known today as Advaita Vedanta.

Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga unity, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and others was generally to borrow English terminology as a way to present his own ideas more persuasively because of the influence of colonial and Orientalist polemics.<sup>20</sup>

#### The colonial disruption

What I have shown thus far in this chapter is that long before the colonial influence in India, there were new kinds of thinkers (such as Vijnanabhikshu) who were comparing various Hindu schools and integrating them in novel ways to develop unified Hindu thought. I shall now show how the continuity of the Hindu tradition and the dynamic equilibrium among Indian thinkers were severely disrupted by colonial interventions.

Underlying this disruption were several factors. A great deal of colonial understanding of India was shaped by the European need to use India as raw material to formulate arguments for their *internal* intra-European debates. Some of these debates concerned the problem of pantheism, the pagan assumption of the complete immanence of divinity in the world of nature—which was seen as a major threat to Christian monotheism. There was a strong desire to prove that the



### 3.4 Example 5: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

#### Example 5

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation

(lifted passages highlighted in yellow; transmutation highlighted in red)

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 14.

Yet there are also many apparent contradictions between the āstika schools, as a student with even the most cursory knowledge of Indian philosophical polemics will show **Vijñānabhikṣu's challenge** is to show that the **complementarity model** he espouses is **superior to other models emphasizing conflict and contradiction**. Even his detractors must admit that he often shows extraordinary **philosophical and interpretive ingenuity**, whether or not all of his arguments to this end are ultimately persuasive.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), pp. 162-163.

**Vivekananda's challenge** was also to show that this **complementarity model** was **superior to models that emphasized conflict and contradiction**. He showed great **philosophical and interpretive ingenuity**, even to those who might not agree with all his conclusions.<sup>19</sup>

**COMMENT:** Although Malhotra copied only the second half of Nicholson's first sentence, the lifted parts are verbatim and unmarked as a quotation. The second sentences of both are virtually identical in substance and structure; Malhotra's, however, is a paraphrase. In such a circumstance, section 2.4.9 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations* stipulates the following: "Although it would no longer be necessary to use quotation marks, it would absolutely be necessary to place a citation at the end of this paragraph to acknowledge that the content is not original." Just for fun, my next tweet will demonstrate that endnote no. 19 does something entirely different, leaving the matter unresolved and deepening an astute reader's dismay at the shoddiness of Malhotra's workmanship and the carelessness of his publisher, HarperCollins. **Malhotra:** On top of everything else, Malhotra borrows Nicholson's language (without acknowledgement) to make a point about "Vivekananda" that Nicholson originally intended to be about "Vijñānabhikṣu," who lived in the 1500s. Thus far, I've not concerned myself with substance, only with plagiarism, but here I cannot help but observe that Malhotra's lack of "academic integrity" shows up not only in his repeated failure to acknowledge outside sources but also in his unscrupulous manipulation of them.

are complementary and not at all contradictory.<sup>37</sup> This claim has some plausibility, since the various schools of Indian philosophy do have different central foci: Mīmāṃsā focuses on exegesis of Vedic ritual injunctions, Vedānta on the nature of Brahman, Nyāya on logical analysis, Vaiśeṣika on ontology. Yet there are also many apparent contradictions between the *āstika* schools, as a student with even the most cursory knowledge of Indian philosophical polemics will show. Vijñānabhikṣu's challenge is to show that the complementarity model he espouses is superior to other models emphasizing conflict and contradiction. Even his detractors must admit that he often shows extraordinary philosophical and interpretive ingenuity, whether or not all his arguments to this end are ultimately persuasive.

#### PREMODERN PHILOSOPHY IN A POSTCOLONIAL WORLD

After Richard Rorty impugned what he described as “modern doxographies,” he registered his support of another genre of writing about philosophers, called “intellectual history.” Included in this genre is one particular subcategory:

I should want to include under “intellectual history” books about all of those enormously influential people who do not get into the canon of the great dead philosophers, but who are often called “philosophers” . . . people like Erigena, Bruno, Ramus, Mersenne, Wolff, Diderot, Cousin, Schopenhauer, Hamilton, McCosh, Bergson and Austin. Discussion of these “minor figures” often coalesces with thick description of institutional arrangements and disciplinary matrices.<sup>38</sup>

Had Rorty concerned himself with the Indian intellectual sphere, he would have certainly included Vijñānabhikṣu in his list. Like those thinkers, Vijñānabhikṣu exists somewhere at the fringes of the philosophical canon. Unlike Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja, he did not found a lasting intellectual lineage, nor were hagiographies composed about his life. There was little time for that—he lived during the final flourishing of the Sanskrit intellectual tradition, just a few years before the Mughal Emperor Jahangir officially recognized the British East India Company in 1617, part of a series of events that would lead to British political dominance of the subcontinent. By indications such as the small number of his manuscripts available in Indian archives, Vijñānabhikṣu's influence among Sanskrit intellectuals was not as great as the enormous impact of the Bhedābheda Vedāntins

### 3.4.2 Proof: Indra's Net

schools to be different but reconciled as complementary paths. While yoga is the most direct of those paths, the practices of the Vedanta and Samkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regarded the goal of all these systems to be identical: it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation.<sup>18</sup>

Vivekananda's challenge was also to show that this complementarity model was superior to models that emphasized conflict and contradiction. He showed great philosophical and interpretive ingenuity, even to those who might not agree with all his conclusions.<sup>19</sup> The intellectual position of Bhedabheda, which is a suitable foundation for his Practical Vedanta, is not as well known today as Advaita Vedanta.

Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga unity, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and others was generally to borrow English terminology as a way to present his own ideas more persuasively because of the influence of colonial and Orientalist polemics.<sup>20</sup>

## The colonial disruption

What I have shown thus far in this chapter is that long before the colonial influence in India, there were new kinds of thinkers (such as Vijnanabhikshu) who were comparing various Hindu schools and integrating them in novel ways to develop unified Hindu thought. I shall now show how the continuity of the Hindu tradition and the dynamic equilibrium among Indian thinkers were severely disrupted by colonial interventions.

Underlying this disruption were several factors. A great deal of colonial understanding of India was shaped by the European need to use India as raw material to formulate arguments for their *internal* intra-European debates. Some of these debates concerned the problem of pantheism, the pagan assumption of the complete immanence of divinity in the world of nature—which was seen as a major threat to Christian monotheism. There was a strong desire to prove that the

### 3.5 Example 5A: Same plagiarism REPEATED TWICE in the same book

— Just for Fun —

A new twist on self-plagiarism!  
(repeated passages highlighted in yellow)

#### Original source

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 163.

Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga unity, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and others was generally to borrow English terminology as a way to present his own ideas more persuasively because of the influence of colonial and Orientalist polemics.<sup>20</sup>

#### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 329, endnote 19.

Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga philosophy and spirituality, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and other Europeans of the time was to borrow English terminology in order to present his own philosophy more persuasively. He did so because his own philosophical tradition had been savaged by colonial and Orientalist polemics (Nicholson 2010, pp. 65, 78).

**COMMENT:** In the previous tweet, I noted that endnote 19 does not do what it should (viz. acknowledge Nicholson as the author of the verbatim quote on p. 163 of *Indra's Net*). Instead, endnote 19 repeats a subsequent paragraph on the same page of *Indra's Net*—p. 163—but with minor changes. *It is as if Malhotra had plagiarized himself*, although the suspicion seems reasonable that an unacknowledged outside source was copied once and then forgotten before it was copied and paraphrased again. One way or the other, HarperCollins itself bears much of the blame for publishing a book so shoddily edited. **N.B.:** Poor Andrew Nicholson has been sucked into this hole in *Indra's Net* (and, identically, into endnote 20!). Nothing on either p. 65 or p. 78 of *Unifying Hinduism* has any bearing at all on the topics discussed in Malhotra's endnotes 19 and 20.



schools to be different but reconciled as complementary paths. While yoga is the most direct of those paths, the practices of the Vedanta and Samkhya schools are also means to the same end. He regarded the goal of all these systems to be identical: it is the reuniting of the individual self with Brahman, in its natural state of non-separation.<sup>18</sup>

Vivekananda's challenge was also to show that this complementarity model was superior to models that emphasized conflict and contradiction. He showed great philosophical and interpretive ingenuity, even to those who might not agree with all his conclusions.<sup>19</sup> The intellectual position of Bhedabheda, which is a suitable foundation for his Practical Vedanta, is not as well known today as Advaita Vedanta.

Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga unity, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and others was generally to borrow English terminology as a way to present his own ideas more persuasively because of the influence of colonial and Orientalist polemics.<sup>20</sup>

## The colonial disruption

What I have shown thus far in this chapter is that long before the colonial influence in India, there were new kinds of thinkers (such as Vijnanabhikshu) who were comparing various Hindu schools and integrating them in novel ways to develop unified Hindu thought. I shall now show how the continuity of the Hindu tradition and the dynamic equilibrium among Indian thinkers were severely disrupted by colonial interventions.

Underlying this disruption were several factors. A great deal of colonial understanding of India was shaped by the European need to use India as raw material to formulate arguments for their *internal* intra-European debates. Some of these debates concerned the problem of pantheism, the pagan assumption of the complete immanence of divinity in the world of nature—which was seen as a major threat to Christian monotheism. There was a strong desire to prove that the



18 Nicholson 2010, pp. 122-123.

19 Although Vivekananda was a passionate advocate of a Vedanta-Yoga philosophy and spirituality, he was not averse to drawing on elements of Western philosophy and metaphysics that were popular at his time. His predilection for Herbert Spencer and other Europeans of the time was to borrow English terminology in order to present his own philosophy more persuasively. He did so because his own philosophical tradition had been savaged by colonial and Orientalist polemics. (Nicholson 2010, pp. 65, 78)

20 Nicholson 2010, p. 65, 78.

21 The stakes were high, as the theories proposed resulted in assigning an internal hierarchy among Germans, English, French and other Europeans. Sanskrit and its civilization became a pawn in this game of identity politics among Europeans.

22 Herling, 2006, gives a good account of this debate as it related to the German understanding of the Bhagavad-Gita.

23 For various reasons, many modern commentators assume Samkhya was always atheistic. Some find that God is superfluous in the system. Others want Samkhya to function as an analogue to Darwin's theory of evolution, a rigorous school which was not other-worldly. Yet others such as Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya are Marxist historians who want to show a thriving atheistic tradition.

24 Larson, 1995, pp. 142-2, p. 58.

25 It is important to note that sruti is often trumped by smriti if the context so demands. For example, women's property rights and marriage age changed against the sruti, as per A.S. Altekar, 'The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization'. Delhi, Motilal Banarsidas, 1995, pp. 353-4.

26 Krishna 1991, p. 14.

27 Nicholson, 2010, p. 13.

28 Nicholson, 2010, p. 18.

29 Nicholson, 2010, p. 163.

30 Studies that avoid using the categories of 'dharma' or the 'West' (accusing them of being essentialist) invariably fall into this trap, crippling any further efforts to understand the intended objects of their gaze, and ultimately reinforcing the status quo of Western domination. My work steers clear of the infinitely regressive trap of post-modern nihilism; it does not permit outlying exceptions to negate the overwhelming salience of characteristic features in either civilization, Indian or Western.

## 4. Plagiarism in footnotes/endnotes

### 4.1 A note on notes

#### — A Note on Notes —

As some of Rajiv Malhotra's most alarming violations of current standards for responsible scholarship are found tucked away, out of sight, in the endnotes of his books, it might help to remind ourselves of why a scholar's notes matter, whether found at the bottom of a page or the back of a book.

"[Footnotes] are the humanist's rough equivalent of the scientist's report on data: they offer the empirical support for stories told and arguments presented. Without them, historical theses can be admired or resented, but they cannot be verified or disproved. As a basic professional and intellectual practice, they deserve the same sort of scrutiny that laboratory notebooks and scientific articles have long received from historians of science."

Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History*  
(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. vii

### 4.2 Example 6, Part 1a: Plagiarism of Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism* in the endnote

**Example 6, Pt. 1a**  
**Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation**  
**(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)**

**Clarification:** Endnote 2, which takes up all but a few lines of pp. 344-345 of *Indra's Net*, has so much wrong with it that I must break it up into five small chunks to make it manageable. Those five chunks come from Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*, pp. 43, 44, 52, 53, 54, 39, and 41 (in that order). Here's the first.

**Original source**

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 43.

According to Vijñānabhikṣu, the terms difference (*bheda*) and non-difference (*abheda*) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyāyika terminology, non-difference is understood as identity (*tādātmya*) while difference is the negation of identity, called "mutual absence" (*anyonyābhāva*). However, these two terms, difference and non-difference, so central to discussions of the relation between the self and Brahman, can also be understood to mean separation (*vibhāga*) and non-separation (*avibhāga*). By adopting this alternate interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other.

**Copied in**

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 344, endnote 2.

Vijñanabhikshu argued that the terms difference (*bheda*) and non-difference (*abheda*) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyayika, non-difference is understood as identity (*tadatmya*) while difference is the negation of identity, called "mutual absence" (*anyonyabhava*). However, these two terms can also be understood to mean separation (*vibhaga*) and non-separation (*avibhaga*) of self from Brahman. By adopting this alternative interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other.

**COMMENT:** Apart from minor paraphrasing and a few deletions, the entire passage comes verbatim out of Nicholson, p. 43. Two things in particular make Malhotra's endnote 2 a briar patch of plagiarism: 1) quotation marks have not been placed around the lifted passages; and 2) nowhere in this long note is there any mention of the full range of pages from which the material was taken (including, in this section, p. 43).

#### 4.2.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU'S "DIFFERENCE AND NON-DIFFERENCE" VEDĀNTA [43]

With regard to this, we reply: You claim that the statements of difference contradict statements of non-difference only because they refer to difference regarding artificial conditions. But why not claim that the statements of non-difference contradict statements of difference because they refer to non-difference in the form of non-separation, etc. [and not complete identity]? Both are logically consistent.<sup>10</sup>

Here Vijñānabhikṣu lays out his basic strategy for reconciling the statements of difference and non-difference that appear in the Vedas, and likewise for logically accommodating both difference and non-difference in a way that the Naiyāyikas will find logically rigorous. According to Vijñānabhikṣu, the terms difference (*bheda*) and non-difference (*abheda*) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyāyika terminology, non-difference is understood as identity (*tādātmya*) while difference is the negation of identity, called "mutual absence" (*anyonyābhāva*).<sup>11</sup> However, these two terms, difference and non-difference, so central to discussions of the relation between the self and Brahman, can also be understood to mean separation (*vibhāga*) and non-separation (*avibhāga*). By adopting this alternate interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other. Although Vijñānabhikṣu introduces this suggestion in response to an Advaita *pūrvapakṣin*, the argument could equally well appear in response to a Dvaita Vedāntin, since the Dvaitin engages in the same reductive project, only reversed: he is forced to explain away statements of non-difference after taking statements of the difference between Brahman and the individual self as axiomatic. From the point of view of the Bhedābheda-vādin, both Advaitin and Dvaitin share the mistake of always interpreting the words "non-difference" and "difference" in the Upaniṣads as univocal, not understanding their equivocality.

After introducing these alternate meanings for the two words, Vijñānabhikṣu has to show that they are logical ways of characterizing the relation between Brahman and the individual self. He does this by appealing to quotes from revealed texts (*śruti*) and traditional texts (*smṛti*) that refer to the self being "divided" or not "divided":

Non-difference in the form of non-separation is also heard in revealed texts such as: "In which way pure water poured into the pure [water] is like that, in that way, O Gautama, is the self of the learned seer. But it is not a second,



## 11: Mithya, Open Architecture and Cognitive Science

1 Original: 'Purnam adah, purnam idam purnat purnam udachyate; purnasya purnam adaya purnam evavasisyate.' (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 5.1 1).

2 Difference and non-difference: Vijnanabhikshu argued that the terms difference (bheda) and non-difference (abheda) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyayika, non-difference is understood as identity (tadatmya) while difference is the negation of identity, called 'mutual absence' (anyonyabhava). However, these two terms can also be understood to mean separation (vibhaga) and non-separation (avibhaga) of self from Brahman. By adopting this alternative interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other. He argues this by appealing to the authority of the grammatical Dhatupatha, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots: And it is not the case that when there is the word 'non-difference' (abheda) in the sense of 'non-separation' (avibhaga) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root 'bhid': 'bhid', in the sense of splitting (vidarana), meaning also in the sense of separation (vibhaga). Vijnanabhikshu takes pains to emphasize that 'separation' is a primary meaning of the word 'difference'; not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as 'separation' is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (anyonyabhava). (Nicholson 2010, 44). Wholes and Parts: To show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent, Vijnanabhikshu makes a subtle distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as 'part': amsa and avayava. While the selves are the amsas of Brahman, they are not the avayavas of Brahman. Vijnanabhikshu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an avayava can be understood in the everyday sense of the word 'part'. However, an amsa has a specific technical meaning in the Brahmasutra and in his philosophical writings: to be a part (amsa), something must be of the same class (sajatiya) as the whole (amsin) and be the adjunct of non-separation (avibhagapratyogin). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (tadanuyogin). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (jivatva). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one

#### 4.3 Example 6, Part 1b: Plagiarism of Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism* in the endnote

##### Example 6, Pt. 1b

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 44.

He does this by appealing to the authority of the grammatical Dhātupāṭha, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots:

And it is not the case that when there is the word 'non-difference' (*abheda*) in the sense of 'non-separation' (*avibhāga*) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root 'bhid': 'bhid', in the sense of splitting (*vidāraṇa*), meaning also in the sense of separation (*vibhāga*).

Vijñānabhikṣu takes pains to emphasize that 'separation' is a primary meaning of the word 'difference', not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as 'separation' is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (*anyonyābhāva*)

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 344, endnote 2.

He argues this by appealing to the authority of the grammatical Dhatupatha, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots: And it is not the case that when there is the word 'non-difference' (*abheda*) in the sense of 'non-separation' (*avibhaga*) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root 'bhid': 'bhid', in the sense of splitting (*vidarana*), meaning also in the sense of separation (*vibhaga*). Vijñanabhikshu takes pains to emphasize that 'separation' is a primary meaning of the word 'difference', not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as 'separation' is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (*anyonyabhava*). (Nicholson, 2010, 44).

**COMMENT:** Compared with Pt. 1a, the paraphrasing here is insignificant; as a whole, the passage comes from Nicholson, p. 44. Without quotation marks, it makes no real difference that Malhotra inserts a bibliographic reference. In any event, he mentions only the current page, 44, not 43. See section 2.4.9 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations*. N.B.: The sentences highlighted in green are Nicholson's translation of Vijñānabhikṣu, copied by Malhotra.

### 4.3.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

[44] VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU'S "DIFFERENCE AND NON-DIFFERENCE" VEDĀNTA

different from that, divided (*vibhakta*).” And in the traditional texts: “And undivided within beings, He stands as if divided. Whether manifestly or unmanifestly, He is truly the supreme *puruṣa*.”

We understand this passage to mean that ultimately, there is non-difference [from that Brahman] in the form of non-separation, etc. But we do not understand this passage to mean that there is a difference due to artificial conditions (*upādhi*) which are ultimately false (*mithyā*).<sup>12</sup>

Vijñānabhikṣu remarks that in the opinion of the Advaita Vedāntins, half of the statements of scripture are false—those statements expressing difference between the individual self and Brahman. The advantage of being able to understand difference and non-difference in terms of separation and non-separation is that it allows us to understand all of the statements that refer to Brahman as being true, instead of having to explain them as merely referring to the artificial conditions that appear to limit Brahman in the world.

Following this, Vijñānabhikṣu has to give linguistic justification to argue that “separation” (*vibhāga*) and “non-separation” (*avibhāga*) are legitimate ways of glossing the words difference and non-difference. He does this by appealing to authority of the grammatical *Dhātupāṭha*, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots:

And it is not the case that when there is the word “non-difference” (*abheda*) in the sense of “non-separation” (*avibhāga*) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root *bhid*: “*bhid*, in the sense of splitting (*vidāraṇa*),” meaning also in the sense of separation (*vibhāga*).<sup>13</sup>

Vijñānabhikṣu takes pains to emphasize that “separation” is a primary meaning of the word “difference,” not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as “separation” is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (*anyonyābhāva*). Any Naiyāyika or Vedāntin who insists on the latter meaning instead of the former is merely arguing from the verbal conventions of his own school, not from any fundamental principles of the Sanskrit language.

Of course, Vijñānabhikṣu is not arguing that in all scriptural passages difference should be understood as “separation” and not as “mutual absence.” To maintain this would be just as arbitrary as a Naiyāyika’s insistence that the opposite should be the case. It would also violate the law

## 11: Mithya, Open Architecture and Cognitive Science

1 Original: 'Purnam adah, purnam idam purnat purnam udachyate; purnasya purnam adaya purnam evavasishyate.' (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 5 1.1).

2 Difference and non-difference: Vijnanabhikshu argued that the terms difference (bheda) and non-difference (abheda) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyayika, non-difference is understood as identity (tadatmya) while difference is the negation of identity, called 'mutual absence' (anyonyabhava). However, these two terms can also be understood to mean separation (vibhaga) and non-separation (avibhaga) of self from Brahman. By adopting this alternative interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other. He argues this by appealing to the authority of the grammatical Dhatupatha, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots: And it is not the case that when there is the word 'non-difference' (abheda) in the sense of 'non-separation' (avibhaga) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root 'bhid': 'bhid', in the sense of splitting (vidarana), meaning also in the sense of separation (vibhaga). Vijnanabhikshu takes pains to emphasize that 'separation' is a primary meaning of the word 'difference'; not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as 'separation' is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (anyonyabhava). (Nicholson 2010, 44). Wholes and Parts: To show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent, Vijnanabhikshu makes a subtle distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as 'part': amsa and avayava. While the selves are the amsas of Brahman, they are not the avayavas of Brahman. Vijnanabhikshu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an avayava can be understood in the everyday sense of the word 'part'. However, an amsa has a specific technical meaning in the Brahmasutra and in his philosophical writings: to be a part (amsa), something must be of the same class (sajatiya) as the whole (amsin) and be the adjunct of non-separation (avibhagapratyogin). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (tadanuyogin). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (jivatva). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one



#### 4.4 Example 6, Part 2: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

##### Example 6, Pt. 2

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotation  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

**Clarification:** Part 2 of endnote 2 of *Indra's Net* consists of 489 words. So far, I have been able to fit everything onto a single page. Not this time!

##### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), pp. 52, 53, 54.

To make his case that this sūtra should be read literally, not figuratively as the Advaitins do, Vijñānabhikṣu understands that he has to show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent. To do this he makes a subtle distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as 'part': *aṁśa* and *avayava*. While the selves are the *aṁśas* of Brahman, they are not the *avayavas* of Brahman. Vijñānabhikṣu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an *avayava* can be understood in the everyday sense of the word 'part'. However, an *aṁśa* has a specific technical meaning in the *Brahmasūtras* and in his philosophical writings: to be a part (*aṁśa*), something must be of the same class (*śajātiya*) as the whole (*aṁśin*) and be the adjunct of non-separation (*avibhāgapratiyogin*). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (*tadanuyogin*). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (*ātmatva*). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (*sattya*), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion. In this passage, Vijñānabhikṣu employs two relational terms from Navya Nyāya: subjunct (*anuyogin*) and adjunct (*pratiyogin*). In the Naiyayikas' stock example: there is absence of the pot in the ground, the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same as saying there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say the selves are parts of Brahman, it is quite something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a 'part' and the selves called the 'whole', Vijñānabhikṣu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation as it might appear at first glance. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the *anuyogin* is the locus while the *pratiyogin* is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the *pratiyogin* of separation while the tree would be the *anuyogin*. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and re-attach themselves to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout the entire process, however, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged. One way of expressing such a one-way relation of separation may be explained by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijñānabhikṣu's favourite passages from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: 'There is nothing different from it, yet it is different from everything' (*Viṣ Pu.* 1.16.78). Less enigmatically, one might gloss this to mean that, although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those very same selves.

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), pp. 344-345 endnote 2.

**Wholes and Parts:** To show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent, Vijnanabhikṣu makes a subtle distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as 'part': *amsa* and *avayava*. While the selves are the *amsas* of Brahman, they are not the *avayavas* of Brahman. Vijnanabhikṣu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an *avayava* can be understood in the everyday sense of the word 'part'. However, an *amsa* has a specific technical meaning in the Brahmasutra and in his philosophical writings: to be a part (*amsa*), something must be of the same class (*sajatiya*) as the whole (*amsin*) and be the adjunct of non-separation (*avibhagapratiyogin*). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (*tadanuyogin*). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (*jivatva*). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (*sattya*), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion. In this passage, Vijnanabhikṣu employs two relational terms from Navya Nyaya: subjunct (*anuyogin*) and adjunct (*pratiyogin*). In the Naiyayikas' stock example: there is absence of the pot in the ground, the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same as saying there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say the selves are parts of Brahman, it is something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a 'part' and the selves called the 'whole', Vijnanabhikṣu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the *anuyogin* is the locus while the *pratiyogin* is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the *pratiyogin* of separation while the tree would be the *anuyogin*. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and re-attach themselves to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout the entire process, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged. This one-way relation of separation may be explained by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijnanabhikṣu's favourite passages from the Vishnupurana: 'There is nothing different from it, yet it is different from everything (1.16.78). Although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those same selves. (Nicholson, 2010, pp. 52-53).

**COMMENT:** Although here the paraphrasing is far from insignificant compared with Pts. 1a and 1b (especially in the beginning), the passage as a whole comes right out of Nicholson, pp. 52, 53, and 54, although 54 is not listed. Since the copied material does not stand within quotation marks, it makes no real difference that Malhotra inserts a bibliographic reference. See section 2.4.9 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations*: "Any quotations, however small, must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented beyond the regular margin." N.B.: The sentences highlighted in green are Nicholson's translation of Vijñānabhikṣu, copied by Malhotra. Not standing within quotation marks and not being indented, the passage cannot stand out from the rest and therefore merges, confusingly, with the remainder of section 2 of Malhotra's endnote 2. N.B.: As for the terms highlighted in red, note that Malhotra—without any textual warrant whatsoever—has arbitrarily substituted "jivatva" for Nicholson's "ātmavta," even though *ātmavta* is found in the Sanskrit original (for which, see Nicholson, endnote 27, p. 213 of *Unifying Hinduism*).

#### 4.4.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

if it [Brahman] were a single, partless whole, then there might again be the undesirable occurrence of bondage for someone who has been previously liberated. For although the liberated part is disjoined from one internal organ (*antahkaraṇa*), there is the possibility of union with another internal organ. In the same way, the space that is limited by one pot, even when that pot is broken, eventually comes back into relation with another pot.<sup>25</sup>

This is a variation on the familiar criticism of Advaita that it cannot account for liberation. The limitationists' model can account for the conventional appearance of difference between various selves, one self apparently being liberated while another is bound, since liberation just means that the artificial limiting condition (*upādhi*) has been destroyed. But it cannot account for the permanent liberation of selves—on the model of the pots and space, there would be the constant possibility of the self's backsliding and ceasing to be liberated. That is because any given section of space might be surrounded by a new pot, even after the previous one is broken.

After advancing numerous arguments for the inadequacy of the limitationist and reflectionist models, on the basis of both scripture and inference, Vijñānabhikṣu suggests that his own doctrine of part and whole should be accepted as the last one standing:

We have seen the examples of the moon and the moon's reflection in the water, space and the space limited by a pot, fire and its sparks, shade and heat, woman and man. All these correspond to viewpoints like reflectionism, limitationism, the doctrine of part and whole (*aṁśavāda*), and so forth. Because they conflict, it is impossible for all of these views to be true—only one can be accepted. The rest of the examples should be understood as only partially expressing that which is intended everywhere. This being the case, it is appropriate to accept just the doctrine of part and whole.<sup>26</sup>

Vijñānabhikṣu does not completely reject the other metaphors for the relation between Brahman and the self. To the extent that these other views have similarities with his own, they might be regarded as partially true. To argue that the doctrine of part and whole is the only one that can be completely accepted he repeatedly cites *BS* 2.3.43: "a part, due to being stated as different . . ." However, simply to cite this sūtra is not enough. To make his case that this sūtra should be read literally, not figuratively as the Advaitins do, Vijñānabhikṣu understands that he has to show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent. To do this, he makes a subtle

distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as "part": *aṁśa* and *avayava*. While the selves are the *aṁśas* of Brahman, they are not the *avayavas* of Brahman. Vijñānabhikṣu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an *avayava* can be understood in the everyday sense of the word "part." However, an *aṁśa* has a specific technical meaning in the *Brahmasūtras* and in his philosophical writings:

To be a part (*aṁśa*), something must be of the same class (*sajātiya*) as the whole (*aṁśin*) and be the adjunct of non-separation (*avibhāgapratīyogin*). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (*tadanuyogin*). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (*ātmatva*). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (*sattva*), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion.<sup>27</sup>

In this passage, Vijñānabhikṣu employs two relational terms from Navya-Nyāya, subjunct (*anuyogin*) and adjunct (*pratīyogin*).<sup>28</sup> In the Naiyāyikas' stock example, "there is absence of the pot in the ground," the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same thing as to say that there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say that the selves are parts of Brahman, it is quite something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a "part" and the selves called the "whole," Vijñānabhikṣu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation as it might appear at first glance. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the *anuyogin* is the locus, while the *pratīyogin* is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the *pratīyogin* of separation, while the tree is the *anuyogin*. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and reattach to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout this entire process, however, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged.<sup>29</sup> One way of expressing such a one-way relation of separation is by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijñānabhikṣu's favorite passages from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: "There is nothing different from it, yet it is



different from everything" (*Viṣ. Pu.* 1.16.78). Less enigmatically, one might gloss this to mean that, although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those very same selves.

The other half of Vijñānabhikṣu's technical definition of a part (*aṃśa*) stipulates that a part must be of the same class (*sajātīya*) as the whole. Vijñānabhikṣu offers examples of two such properties that Brahman and the selves share: selfhood (*ātmatva*) and existence (*sattva*). Another property that Brahman and selves have in common is consciousness (*cittva*).<sup>30</sup> For Vijñānabhikṣu, however, being bliss (*ānandatva*) does not qualify as a shared property. This is because, he argues, the term "bliss" or "happiness" when applied to the liberated self or Brahman can only refer to a complete absence of suffering. It therefore does not refer to a positive state, as the word does in everyday statements such as "Devadatta is happy." Vijñānabhikṣu borrows this argument from the Sāṃkhyas and in arguing the position cites the *Sāṃkhyasūtras* in support of his view.<sup>31</sup> Vijñānabhikṣu also emphasizes here that properties like selfhood and existence must not be conflated. This is a rejection of Śaṅkara's view that the consciousness, existence, and bliss of Brahman are in fact one and the same. Furthermore, according to Śaṅkara, they are not properties of Brahman—they are identical with Brahman. Vijñānabhikṣu also differs from Rāmānuja on this issue, since Rāmānuja holds that bliss is a property of Brahman. Vijñānabhikṣu believes that Brahman possesses multiple properties but bliss is not among them. Strictly speaking, bliss exists only in the realm of *prakṛti*, and therefore it cannot be a property of Brahman.<sup>32</sup>

In his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras*, Vijñānabhikṣu seeks to justify all of the traditional metaphors he has inherited from other Bhedābheda-vādins, in spite of their apparent dissimilarities and inconsistencies. An ocean and its waves, fire and its sparks, the sun and its rays, and a father and his son are all different in their specific details. The father is clearly the cause of his son (along with the mother, of course), but it seems implausible to modern sensibilities that a son can be described as a part of his father. Likewise, in the case of a fire and its sparks, the sparks cease to be parts of the fire as soon as they are distinguishable as sparks. Furthermore, with all of these metaphors except for the first, there appears to be no eventual reabsorption of the parts back into their whole—only the ocean creates waves that manifest as distinct parts of the ocean as a whole and then reabsorbs those same waves. Recognition of the inadequacy of these metaphors is implicit when the Advaita objector in the *Vijñānāmṛtabhāṣya* asks, "How do we know that the relation of part and



## 4.4.2 Proof: Indra's Net

### 11: Mithya, Open Architecture and Cognitive Science

1 Original: 'Purnam adah, purnam idam purnat purnam udachyate; purnasya purnam adaya purnam evavastishyate.' (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 5.1.1).

2 Difference and non-difference: Vijnanabhikshu argued that the terms difference (bheda) and non-difference (abheda) can each be understood in at least two ways. In Naiyayika, non-difference is understood as identity (tadatmya) while difference is the negation of identity, called 'mutual absence' (anyonyabhava). However, these two terms can also be understood to mean separation (vibhaga) and non-separation (avibhaga) of self from Brahman. By adopting this alternative interpretation, it is possible to explain both the statements of difference and the statements of non-difference that appear in the Vedas without arbitrarily subordinating one to the other. He argues this by appealing to the authority of the grammatical Dhatupatha, which sets down the meanings of Sanskrit verbal roots. And it is not the case that when there is the word 'non-difference' (abheda) in the sense of 'non-separation' (avibhaga) there is a figurative usage, due to the rule of the root 'bhid': 'bhid', in the sense of splitting (vidarana), meaning also in the sense of separation (vibhaga). Vijnanabhikshu takes pains to emphasize that 'separation' is a primary meaning of the word 'difference'; not a figurative meaning. Establishing this allows him to argue that understanding difference as 'separation' is just as legitimate as understanding it as mutual absence (anyonyabhava). (Nicholson 2010, 44). Wholes and Parts: To show that the doctrine of part and whole is logically coherent, Vijnanabhikshu makes a subtle distinction between two different Sanskrit words that are both typically translated as 'part': amsa and avayava. While the selves are the amsas of Brahman, they are not the avayavas of Brahman. Vijnanabhikshu wishes to make this distinction by saying that an avayava can be understood in the everyday sense of the word 'part'. However, an amsa has a specific technical meaning in the Brahmasutra and in his philosophical writings: to be a part (amsa), something must be of the same class (sajatiya) as the whole (amsin) and be the adjunct of non-separation (avibhaga) (pratiyogin). The whole is the subjunct of non-separation (tadanuyogin). When referring to the part as being of the same class as the whole, one must be consistent with regard to the property under discussion. For instance, when discussing the part being a self, one should say it falls under the class of selfhood (jivatva). When discussing the part as existent, etc., one

should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (sattva), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion. In this passage, Vijnanabhikshu employs two relational terms from Navya-Nyaya: subjunct (anuyogin) and adjunct (pratiyogin). In the Naiyayikas' stock example, 'there is absence of the pot in the ground', the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same as saying there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say the selves are parts of Brahman, it is something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a 'part' and the selves called the 'whole', Vijnanabhikshu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the anuyogin is the locus while the pratiyogin is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the pratiyogin of separation while the tree would be the anuyogin. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and re-attach themselves to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout this entire process, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged. This one-way relation of separation may be explained by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijnanabhikshu's favourite passages from the Vishnupurana: 'There is nothing different from it, yet it is different from everything.' (1.16.78). Although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those same selves. (Nicholson, 2010, pp. 52-53) Western academics and their Indian followers typically translate Bhedabheda as 'Difference-in-Identity' philosophy, presumably to link it with Western thinkers such as Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities with some Western thinkers, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar 'difference-in-identity' cannot be the translation of bhedabheda. According to Nicholson, a preferable translation would be the more literal 'difference and non-difference', because linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa. (Nicholson, 2010, p. 39). The Upanishads contain two types of passages: statements of difference (bhedavakyas) and statements of non-difference (abhedavakyas). Since the Vedas must be unified, there are multiple interpretative strategies. Advaitins subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference, while Dvaitins do the opposite.

## 4.5 Example 6, Part 3a: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

### Example 6, Pt. 3a

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotations  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

#### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 39.

In the few places in Western secondary literature on Indian philosophy where Bhedābhedavāda is mentioned, it is typically translated as "Difference-in-Identity" philosophy, presumably in an attempt to make it seem more familiar by linking it with the Western tradition of "Difference-in-Identity" typified by thinkers like Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities between these Western thinkers and Indian Bhedābhedavādins, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar, "difference-in-identity" cannot be the translation of *bhedābheda*. A preferable translation is the more literal "difference and non-difference," since linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa.

#### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 345 endnote 2.

Western academics and their Indian followers typically translated Bhedabhedas as 'Difference-in-Identity' philosophy, presumably to link it with Western thinkers such as Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities with some Western thinkers, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar 'difference-in-identity' cannot be the translation of *bhedabhedas*. According to Nicholson, a preferable translation would be the more literal 'difference and non-difference', because linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa. (Nicholson, 2010, p. 39).

**COMMENT:** According to section 2.4.9 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations*, quotation marks become unnecessary when the language of an outside source is so thoroughly rewritten that the original wording is no longer present. In such a case, however, a note remains obligatory, and, preferably, mention of the original source in the body of the text. Here, Malhotra has inserted both a bibliographic reference and a first-time phrase, "According to Nicholson" (highlighted in red). The effect is deceptive, since quotation marks are missing from everything after the phrase "According to Nicholson"—not to mention everything in front as well. **N.B.:** Although the passage comes verbatim from Nicholson, notice how Malhotra twists the meaning to voice a version of the "sepoys" argument he has so effectively popularized: Nicholson's "In the few places in Western secondary literature on Indian philosophy" becomes Malhotra's colossal transmutation, "Western academics and their Indian followers". On social media, Malhotra would call such Indians "sepoys".

### { 3 } VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU'S "DIFFERENCE AND NON-DIFFERENCE" VEDĀNTA



#### THE MEANING OF "BHEDĀBHEDA"

Does the term *bhedābheda* present a logical impossibility? It is a *dvandva* compound, consisting of the words *bheda* (difference) and *abheda* (non-difference).<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Bhedābheda philosophy would be the philosophy of "difference and non-difference," holding out the promise of bridging the apparently unbridgeable disagreements between philosophers who subscribe to the theory of difference (or dualism, *dvaita*) and complete, unqualified non-difference (non-dualism, *advaita*). In the few places in Western secondary literature on Indian philosophy where Bhedābheda is mentioned, it is typically translated as "Difference-in-Identity" philosophy, presumably in an attempt to make it seem more familiar by linking it with the Western tradition of "Difference-in-Identity" typified by thinkers like Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities between these Western thinkers and Indian Bhedābheda philosophers, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar, "difference-in-identity" cannot be the translation of *bhedābheda*.<sup>2</sup> A preferable translation is the more literal "difference and non-difference," since linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa.

Since basing a philosophical system on both difference and non-difference appears to be the equivalent of arguing both "*p* and not-*p*," one possible explanation of the doctrine of *bhedābheda* might involve a denial or suspension of the principle of contradiction, "*p* and not-*p* cannot both be true." Some critics have understood the meaning

should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (sattva), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion. In this passage, Vijnanabhikshu employs two relational terms from Navya-Nyaya: subjunct (anuyogin) and adjunct (pratiyogin). In the Naiyayikas' stock example, 'there is absence of the pot in the ground', the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same as saying there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say the selves are parts of Brahman, it is something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a 'part' and the selves called the 'whole', Vijnanabhikshu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the anuyogin is the locus while the pratiyogin is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the pratiyogin of separation while the tree would be the anuyogin. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and re-attach themselves to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout this entire process, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged. This one-way relation of separation may be explained by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijnanabhikshu's favourite passages from the Vishnupurana: "There is nothing different from it, yet it is different from everything." (1.16.78). Although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those same selves. (Nicholson, 2010, pp. 52-53) Western academics and their Indian followers typically translate Bhedabheda as 'Difference-in-Identity' philosophy, presumably to link it with Western thinkers such as Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities with some Western thinkers, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar 'difference-in-identity' cannot be the translation of bhedabheda. According to Nicholson, a preferable translation would be the more literal 'difference and non-difference', because linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa. (Nicholson, 2010, p. 39). The Upanishads contain two types of passages: statements of difference (bheda-vakyas) and statements of non-difference (abheda-vakyas). Since the Vedas must be unified, there are multiple interpretative strategies. Advaitins subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference, while Dvaitins do the opposite.



#### 4.6 Example 6, Part 3b: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

##### Example 6, Pt. 3b

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotations  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

###### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 41.

Two types of passages are most significant for him: statements of difference (*bhedavākyas*) and statements of non-difference (*abhedavākyas*). For Vijñānabhikṣu, the primary flaw of Advaitic interpretive strategies is that they subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference.

###### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 345 endnote 2.

The Upanishads contain two types of passages: statements of difference (*bhedavakya*) and statements of non-difference (*abhedavakya*). Since the Vedas must be unified, there are multiple interpretative strategies. Advaitins subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference, while Dvaitins do the opposite.

**COMMENT:** Again, according to section 2.4.6 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations*, "Any quotations, however small, must be placed within quotation marks," followed by "a precise indication of the source," either in the body, a footnote, or endnote. In this last section of endnote 2 on p. 345 of *Indra's Net*, one finds neither quotation marks nor any indication at all that any of the wording is lifted, verbatim, from an outside source. Note, too, here at the end, that Malhotra has jumped from plagiarizing Nicholson on p. 41 to plagiarizing him even more glaringly on p. 39.

#### 4.6.1 Proof: Nicholson's book

VIJÑĀNABHIKṢU'S "DIFFERENCE AND NON-DIFFERENCE" VEDĀNTA {41}

Upaniṣads, those portions of the Veda that describe the nature of Brahman (*brahmakāṇḍa*), while the prior school concentrates on the parts of the Veda that describe the performance of rituals (*karmakāṇḍa*).<sup>7</sup>

Although the two schools do have significant differences in the content of their interpretations, the Uttara Mīmāṃsā, or Vedānta, nonetheless accepts most of the interpretive principles developed by the earlier school for the interpretation of the Veda. One of these is the principle that the entire Veda itself is a single extended sentence (*ekavākyatā*) and hence can never be self-contradictory. This principle has many significant consequences, but perhaps the most important is that it forced schools of Vedic interpretation to interpret the entire Veda as being a unitary text with a single message. Discarding parts of the text because of their apparent contradiction with other, more celebrated passages was not an acceptable option. Instead, this principle encouraged creativity on the part of interpreters, to use whatever means they had at their disposal to show that anomalous passages did not disagree with what they took to be the main message of the Vedas.

Vijñānabhikṣu believes that Bhedābheda Vedānta is superior because it is the only Vedāntic school capable of making sense of all of the statements found in the Upaniṣads. Two types of passages are most significant for him: statements of difference (*bhedavākyas*) and statements of non-difference (*abhedavākyas*). For Vijñānabhikṣu, the primary flaw of Advaitic interpretive strategies is that they subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference. For instance, the eighth-century Advaita Vedāntin Śaṅkara dubbed four Upaniṣadic sentences as "great statements" (*mahāvākyas*): "You are that" (*tat tvam asi*), "I am Brahman" (*ahaṃ brahmāsmi*), "This self is Brahman" (*ayam ātmā brahma*), and "Brahman is consciousness" (*prajñānaṃ brahma*). Each of these statements seems to suggest strongly that the individual self (*jīvātman*) is identical to Brahman. Yet there are statements elsewhere in the Vedas that state the difference between Brahman and the individual self. Because of the principle that the Vedas are a single complex sentence, these statements cannot simply be ignored or rejected as fallacious. There are a number of strategies for making sense of these statements of difference without acknowledging that they have the same weight as statements of non-difference. Often these involve resorting to secondary, or figurative, interpretation (*lakṣaṇā*). Vijñānabhikṣu summarizes one of these interpretive strategies of the Advaitins, whom he dismissively labels as "modern thinkers":

should refer to it as falling under the class of existence (*sattva*), etc. Following this procedure, there will be no confusion. In this passage, Vijnanabhikshu employs two relational terms from Navya-Nyaya: subjunct (*anuyogin*) and adjunct (*pratiyogin*). In the Naiyayikas' stock example, 'there is absence of the pot in the ground', the pot is the adjunct in the relation, while the ground is the subjunct. It is important to see that the relation of absence only goes one way: to say that there is absence of the pot in the ground is not the same as saying there is absence of the ground in the pot. Likewise, although it is possible to say the selves are parts of Brahman, it is something else to say that Brahman is the part of the selves. Therefore, to avoid the possibility that Brahman could also be called a 'part' and the selves called the 'whole', Vijnanabhikshu must argue that separation is a one-way relation, not a two-way relation. In the relation of separation or non-separation, the *anuyogin* is the locus while the *pratiyogin* is that which separates from the locus. In the example of leaves falling from a tree, the leaf would be the *pratiyogin* of separation while the tree would be the *anuyogin*. In the case of the selves and Brahman, it is the selves that separate from Brahman at the time of creation and re-attach themselves to Brahman at the time of the world's dissolution. Throughout this entire process, Brahman, the whole, remains unchanged. This one-way relation of separation may be explained by paradoxical statements of difference and non-difference, such as one of Vijnanabhikshu's favourite passages from the Vishnupurana: 'There is nothing different from it, yet it is different from everything.' (1.16.78). Although all of the selves are its parts, Brahman is not dependent on, or affected by, the states of bondage and liberation of those same selves. (Nicholson, 2010, pp. 52-53) Western academics and their Indian followers typically translate Bhedabheda as 'Difference-in-Identity' philosophy, presumably to link it with Western thinkers such as Bonaventure, Spinoza, and Hegel. Although there are meaningful similarities with some Western thinkers, purely on the basis of Sanskrit grammar 'difference-in-identity' cannot be the translation of *bhedabheda*. According to Nicholson, a preferable translation would be the more literal 'difference and non-difference', because linguistically it leaves open the question of whether difference is ultimately subsumed under non-difference, or vice versa. (Nicholson, 2010, p. 39). The Upanishads contain two types of passages: statements of difference (*bhedavakyas*) and statements of non-difference (*abhedavakyas*). Since the Vedas must be unified, there are multiple interpretative strategies. Advaitins subordinate statements of difference to statements of non-difference, while Dvaitins do the opposite.

## 4.7 Example 7, Part 1: From Nicholson's *Unifying Hinduism*

### Example 7, Pt. 1

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotations  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

**CLARIFICATION:** From here, I move from endnote 2 to endnote 4 on p. 346 of *Indra's Net*. Although this is, blessedly, a smaller amount of plagiarism to work with, it helps to break it up into three parts. Here's the first.

#### Original source

Andrew J. Nicholson, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), p. 37.

This relation is commonly portrayed as a relation of cause (*kāraṇa*) and effect (*kārya*), or a relation of part (*aṃśa*) and whole (*aṃśin*). But each Bhedābheda-vādin stakes out his separate view of his individual interpretation of the precise meaning of these philosophical terms. Bhāskara, for instance, takes the view that when the individual self (*jīva*) is termed a part (*aṃśa*) in philosophy and scripture, it is not a part in its normal sense but, rather, has a technical meaning: it is limited by the artificial conditions of mind (*antaḥkaraṇopādhyavacchinna*).

#### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014), p. 346 endnote 4.

This relation is commonly portrayed as a relation of cause and effect, or part and whole. But each Bhedābheda scholar has his interpretation of this. Bhaskara, for instance, takes the view that when the individual self (*jīva*) is termed a 'part' it is not a part in its normal sense; rather, it has a technical meaning: it is limited by the artificial conditions of mind.

**COMMENT:** As we are now familiar with the definition of "plagiarism" in section 2.4.7 of Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities* ("The use of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. 'Outside source' means any work, published or unpublished, by any person other than the [author]"), it seems unnecessary to linger longer on the problem in Malhotra's endnote 4: being a quotation lifted verbatim out of Nicholson, unmarked by quotation marks and unacknowledged, it is a clear-cut case of flagrant plagiarism. Neither here nor in the next two sections, is there any mention of Nicholson.



## 4.8 Example 8: From Shrinivas Tilak's *Understanding Karma*

### Example 8

Verbatim plagiarism; unacknowledged quotations  
(lifted passages highlighted in yellow)

**Clarification:** Endnote 29 on pp. 332-333 of *Indra's Net*, has so much wrong with it that I must break up the original source that it plagiarizes into three sections.

#### Original source

Shrinivas Tilak, *Understanding Karma: In Light of Paul Ricoeur's Philosophical Anthropology and Hermeneutics*, (North Charleston, SC: BookSurge Publishing, 2007), pp. 241, 244, 246.

[241] The medieval deity known as Viṭṭhala (an incarnation of Viṣṇu that was popular in areas of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka) who is traditionally depicted as the advocate of the poor and the needy belonging to the weakest and most disadvantaged sections of Indic society now known as the 'subaltern' should also be considered in this context.

[244] There is no adequate documentary evidence for understanding the origin and development of Viṭṭhala as a subaltern God. The word is non-Sanskritic and is probably of Kannada origin. The earliest epigraphic reference to Viṭṭhala in this form dates from 1216 C.E. (Deleury 1960: 190-191). Viṭṭhala seems to have emerged as an alternative to the existing pantheon of brahmana gods as a result of a serious critique of the socio-religious order obtaining at the beginning of the second millennium. Out of love and solidarity with the poor and the oppressed, Viṣṇu manifested Himself as Viṭṭhala (God of the poor) so described because the poor and the downtrodden were destined to be his primary audience and constituency. Over the centuries, Viṣṇu/Nārāyaṇa or Viṭṭhala evolved as advocate of the poor, the destitute (*Dios siempre Mayor*) and the untouchable. This peculiar relationship obtaining between the poor and their advocate God constitutes the heart of the devotional literature created by the poet saints (men and women) of Maharashtra. The relationship with God is expressed in terms of identity and solidarity with one's fellow poor and the oppressed. Relating to God is not a purely intellectual affair; it means to love the poor through him.<sup>132</sup>

[244] <sup>132</sup> To know God as liberator is to strive to liberate and to do justice. To be just is to behave toward the poor as God has behaved toward the poor (Proverbs 14: 21; Exodus 22: 20-23; see Araya 1983: 53).

[246-247] These included the potter, tailor, barber, gardener, housemaid, etc. to subaltern devotees, Viṭṭhala was readily and directly accessible to the masses. Whereas Viṣṇu or Śiva had become more rigidly codified in the hands of the brahmana priest, Viṭṭhala, God of the subaltern, became increasingly 'human.' Viṭṭhala's devotees (lay tradesmen and women, occasionally some brāhmaṇas) began to express their religiosity in utter material helplessness and with appeals for help. More often than not, it was expressed as entreaty, a form that simultaneously conveyed personal biographic details and urgent appeals of help. The typical entreaty announces the wretched material condition of the petitioner with a plea for help. Words employed to describe and petition Viṭṭhala refer to specific actions that he was most obligated to perform on their behalf as part of his vocation. Some of the more commonly employed themes in the petition included descriptive adjectives of Viṭṭhala: *dīnanātha* (protector of the lowly), *dīnabandhu* (friend of the poor), *dīnavatsala*

#### 4.8.1 Proof: Tilak's book

[compassionate to the needy], and *dīnadāyāla* (merciful-to-the needy). Ekanath (1533-1599 C.E.), a popular brahmana householder and devotee, pleads to his God Viṭṭhala:

I am lowly (*dīna*), poor (*hīna*), the lowest of the low (*ranka*).  
Therefore, it is that I have come to Thee (Abbott 1929: 28).

Tukaram, perhaps the most famous of the devotees of Viṭṭhala, depicts himself in one of his devotional compositions in Marathi (abhangā) as a blind and crippled pilgrim on the road to Pandharpur where the main temple to Viṭṭhala is located:

I am a cripple O God,  
I have neither hands nor feet.  
I have none to help me, neither father, nor mother.  
O friend of the destitute! (Deleury 1969: 95).

Dinkar (1628-1694 C.E.), who was the composer of a literary work on miscellaneous subjects of philosophy, ethics, and social duties called *Anubhavadinakara*, admonishes his God to:

Save the needy, provide a helper  
Protect in time of distress, O Brother-of-the-needy  
(Dīnabandhu) (Abbott 1929: 68).  
Thou seest, Dinakar is needy,  
O Rama, Lover of the needy (Dinavatsala)  
Do not let go my hand  
O Refuge of saints and sadhus (Abbot 1929: 70).

Ramadas, a contemporary of Tukaram and a major poet-saint and devotee of Rāma (an incarnation of Viṣṇu), laments:

I am without a protector; I am amongst the low, the miserable, and the poor (Abbott 1929: 44). How great a burden shall I impose on Rama? Will he not get wearied with me? Yet the Protector of the lowly (Dīnanātha) will run to my help when in distress (Abbott 1929: 53).

Mahipati (1715-1790 C.E.) studied the lives of the poet saints such as Tukaram and our knowledge of them is mainly due to his works *Santāīlāmṛta* or *Bhaktīlīlāmṛta*. It is believed that he was inspired in this project by Tukaram himself to chronicle the biographies and legends of the poet saints, as he was able to gather them (Deleury 1960: 17). Many of these poet saints were women of high literary ability (Janabai and Bahinabai for instance). In the hymn of praise to Viṭṭhala (Pāṇdurangastotra) Mahipati describes how Dīnadāyāla helped various female saints in their daily chores. Viṭṭhala's emergence was thus also instrumental in creating a new religious role for subaltern women like Janabai (d. 1350 C.E.), the housemaid to Namdev, who was himself one such fervent devotee of Viṭṭhala. Whenever housework became too burdensome for her, Janabai's God took human form and helped her to pound and clean the rice, sweep the house, and collect the fuel for the kitchen fire (Abbott 1929: 167). Damaji (ca. 1500 C.E.), another devotee, was a keeper of grain for the Sultan of Bidar. At a time of great famine when people were starving and dying of hunger Damaji distributed the king's grain. God saved him from punishment by appearing as an outcaste messenger with a bag of money far in excess of the value of the grain. Another king once ordered Sena, the barber, to visit the court. Since he was in the midst of prayer, Sena ignored the summons. Angered by this act of insolence the king ordered his officers to have

#### 4.8.2 Proof: Indra's Net

him arrested and thrown into the river. Just then Viṭṭhala took the form of Sena and appeared at the king's palace to serve him. The sight of Sena appeased the king and his life was spared (Abbott 1929: 169).

##### Copied in

Rajiv Malhotra, *Indra's Net: Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity* (New Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2014) pp. 332-333.

29 In medieval India the deity known as Vitthala (an incarnation of Vishnu that was popular in parts of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka) was traditionally depicted as the advocate of the poor and the needy belonging to the weakest and most disadvantaged sections of society. Vitthala, then, should also be considered in this context. Vitthala was especially sympathetic to the poor and hence he was appropriated by the Hindu masses during that time of distress. There is no adequate evidence on the historical origin and development of this deity as a subaltern God. The word is non-Sanskritic and is probably of Kannada origin. The earliest epigraphic reference to Vitthala in this form dates from 1216 CE (Deleury, 1960, pp. 90-91). Vishnu manifested Himself as Vitthala (God of the poor), so described because the poor and the downtrodden were destined to be his primary audience and constituency. Over the centuries, Vishnu-Narayana, or Vitthala, evolved as advocate of the poor and destitute. This peculiar relationship obtaining between the poor and their advocate God constitutes the heart of the devotional literature created by the poet saints (men and women) of Maharashtra. The relationship with God is expressed in terms of identity and solidarity with the poor and the oppressed. Relating to God is not a purely intellectual affairs; it means to love the poor through him. Vitthala was readily and directly accessible to the masses. Vitthala, God of the subaltern, became increasingly 'human'. Vitthala's devotees began to express their religiosity in utter material helplessness and with appeals for help. It was typically expressed as an urgent appeal of help with common references to Vitthala as: *dinanatha* (protector of the lowly), *dinabandhu* (friend of the poor), *dinavatsala* (compassionate to the needy), and *dinadayala* (merciful-to-the needy). Tukaram, perhaps the most famous of the devotees of Vitthala, depicts himself in one of his devotional compositions in Marathi as a blind and crippled pilgrim on the road to the main temple of Vitthala. Dinkar, who was a medieval literary composer on miscellaneous subjects of philosophy, ethics, and social duties called *Anubhavadinakara*, appeals to Vitthala thus: save the needy, provide a helper, protect in time of distress, O Brother-of-the-needy (*dinabandhu*) (Abbott, 1929, p. 68). In the hymn of praise to Vitthala, Mahipati (eighteenth century) describes how Vitthala helped various female saints in their daily chores. The popular folklore and worship of Vitthala included his help to the poor, especially women.

**Comment:** Apart from minor paraphrasing and major deletions, the entire passage comes verbatim out of Tilak. Despite the deletions, all one needs to do is follow the 'yellow-brick road,' from one highlighted section in Tilak to the next: the structure of the copy is nearly identical to the source. As stipulated in Princeton University's *Rights, Rules, Regulations* 2.4.6, "Any quotations, however small, must be placed in quotation marks or clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a footnote) by a precise indication of the source—identifying the author, title, place and date of publication (where relevant), and page numbers." In endnote 29, there are neither quotation marks nor acknowledgements for any of the three pages from which the passages were lifted. Where else in *Indra's Net* might one find similar infractions of standard policy on academic integrity?