CALL FOR PAPERS

Under the aegis of transnationalism and purposefully looking for interconnectedness and exchange of ideas, we are inviting contributions for a forthcoming book focusing on Sci-Fi literature from India and Canada and their renditions of religious themes.

Scholars working on or interested in Canadian and/or Indian Sci-Fi literature are invited to consider the topic of religion from a variety of perspectives. The book will ask and (hopefully) answer questions related to the status of religion in Sci-Fi literature from a postcolonial angle.

In the words of Jessica Langer, "[t]he figure of the alien comes to signify all kinds of otherness, and the image of the far-away land, whether the undiscovered country or the imperial seat, comes to signify all kinds of diaspora and movement, in all directions." (Langer, 2011: 4)

Therefore, we are inviting contributions which could also make the transition from the real historic past of India and Canada to the fictional worlds depicted by Sci-Fi authors from the respective countries. A complete disconnection of reality and fiction is also a topic of interest for the present book.

As former British colonies, India and Canada have a shared history of stifling religious diversity in colonized territories by the colonizers and afterwards consolidating on diversity of faiths, especially after Canada and India declared their independence. One of the research purposes of the present volume is to discover whether the postcolonial histories of Canada and India are traceable in Sci-Fi literature's treatment of religious themes. Is Sci-Fi literature mirroring the postcolonial condition of both India and Canada? Have religions/ faiths been instrumental in establishing a pristine/out-of-history background in Sci-Fi texts? Are Canadian and Indian Sci-Fi writers offering solutions for a 'de-colonized' frame of mind or, on the contrary, are their texts reproducing a colonialist impetus which extends to the outer space? Is religion (with all its possible facets, institutional, spiritual, etc.) or absence of religion an instrument of power in Sci-Fi literature? These are only a few suggested research directions that the forthcoming book will dwell on.

The volume will have a few main strands on which interested authors can bring their contribution:
	- Defining and redefining religions and religious institutions in Indian and/or Canadian Sci-Fi literature;
	- Politics and religion in Indian and/or Canadian Sci-Fi literature (religious wars; religion as activism/ propaganda (e.g.: for space colonization));
	- Absence of religions and their institutions in Indian and/or Canadian Sci-Fi literature (replacement of religion/ re-inventing or creating new religions/faiths; science as religion).

Possible themes (but not restricted to these)
Apocalyptic futures
Religion and utopias/ dystopias/ New religions/ Alien faiths and religions
Religious symbols and supernatural beings (gods/angels/demons/saints)
(New) Creationist mythologies
Cyborgs and other beings/ New (transgender) beings and species and their faiths
Ethics, faith and religion – robots, AI and other sentient beings

Suggested Canadian Sci-Fi writers (not restricted to)

William Gibson
Margaret Atwood
Elisabeth Vonarburg
Phyllis Gotlieb
Robert Charles Wilson
Emily St. John Mandel
Robert J. Sawyer

Suggested Indian Sci-Fi writers (not restricted to)

Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain
Priya Sarukkai Chabria
Manjula Padmanavan
Vandana Singh
Rimi Chatterjee
Mainak Dhar
Jayant Narlikar
Gautam Bhatia

References:

Langer, J. *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
Rieder, John. *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction*. Middletown, 2008.
McGrath, James A. Ed. *Religion and Science Fiction*. Pickwick Publications, 2011.

You are kindly invited to email your paper Abstract (500 words) & Short Biodata (150 words) to both editors of the book:

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Deadline for submission of abstracts: 15th January, 2023. You will be intimated of selection by 28th February, 2023.

Accepted contributors will need to submit papers of around 6,000 words by December 31st, 2023.