

A Study of Futuristic Threads of India in Connection with Interplanetary System depicted in Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars Trilogy

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Abstract

Science fiction explores the futuristic interplanetary multilateral relationships. The present paper explores and studies the delineation of India, its multilateral relationships with the futuristic world and Mars and India's role and influence on other factors in Robinson's Mars Trilogy where India is interfaced seamlessly with the world and Mars after 2050.

Keywords: future, dispute, bilateral, affairs, myths

Delineation and representations of India and Indian identity in the Western (American, British or Canadian) and Indian Science fiction have multiple similarities as Siparno Banerjee writes "While the British texts deal with the country (India) as a concrete geographical region with internal and external socio-political markers, the North American works transfer India to a pseudo-mythical dimension- either by constructing a Hindu society on another planet representing a stage in Indian history, or by creating a far future society hanging in a geopolitical limbo (as good as transporting it to another planet or to an alternative world)." (Banerjee, 158-159) In the fifteenth century, some earliest discourses on India are found in British literature are pessimistic, bias, dark and different as P K Nayar writes "The monstrous was a part of the project to dehumanize Indian space, to locate Indian culture as radically different and flawed. With these two proto-colonial aesthetic modes the English mapped India as different, inhuman, chaotic, varied and dark" (05) In the 17th Indian Sci-Fi Conference, Dr. Srinarahari, the secretary of IASFS, underscores the Asian myths and advanced technology and the need to preserve the past, and adopt to the contemporary progress of new high-tech technologies and foretell the far future life.

The depiction of ancient Indian Hinduism, Buddhism and myths in the context of an alien planets' colonization in the far future in Anglo-American science fiction writer Roger Zelazny's *Lord of Light* (1967), the sentient machines' control over the Indian society in a far future in Jan Jensen's *Shiva 3000*, the futuristic Indian society in British writer Ian McDonald's *River of Gods* (2004) are noteworthy. R K Gupta in his *Trends in Modern Indian Fiction* explained various emerging trends in Modern

Indian fiction like science fiction. Modern Indian fiction concerns with various historical, legendary, and mythical subjects that further emerged in various forms of science fiction or other forms of fantasy.

The present research paper explores and studies the delineation, depiction and reflection of India in a far future life with the select work of Kim Stanley Robinson's Mars Trilogy. Multiple futuristic threads of India in the context of interplanetary system depicted in Robinson's *Red Mars* (1994), *Green Mars* (1995) and *Blue Mars* (1996) are explored and studied.

Robinson's Mars Trilogy is one of the masterworks in utopian science fiction that depicts the terraformation of Mars planet. The trilogy is set in a future Martian life which is highly influenced by the interplanetary (Earth and Mars) relationships, medical advancements, high-tech societies, and a revolutionary research in science and technology. India and other Terran countries like China, Brazil play a significant role in the upcoming far future interplanetary affairs.

During the terraformation of Mars, many citizens of Terran countries break Mars Treaty and flood onto Mars with the dream of employment, security, and so on in *Red Mars*. Due to this emigration, there are threats before Mars' economic basis and its ideal economic system as Arkady, one of the first hundred Martian colonizers, explains "According to the treaty's own provisions, countries can become voting members of the treaty council by establishing an interest here, which is why we're seeing all the new national scientific stations, the Arab League, Nigeria, Indonesia, Azania, Brazil, India and China and all the rest. And quite a few of these new countries are becoming treaty members specifically with the intent to break the treaty at renewal time." (Robinson, 334) Here India is delineated as one of the major powers along with other countries like Brazil, China in the upcoming world set by 2050. Robinson depicts India is interested country in the Martin life because for the emigration quota to Mars, there is a joint proposal of India along with China as "The day's topic, as it had been for the past two weeks, was emigration quotas. China and India had a joint proposal

to make;"(Robinson, 371)

The enmity between India and Pakistan is depicted in a far future life set after 2050, and 2100 in Red Mars and Green Mars. The major cause of the enmity is the dispute of Kashmir, so there is a futuristic nuclear war between India and Pakistan on the same depicted as "India and Pakistan had used nuclear weapons in Kashmir. Africa was dying, and the north bickered over who should help first."(Robinson, 489) In the year of 2061, the longstanding war between India and Pakistan is depicted as "By April of 2061 much of south Asia was at war. Most of the fights were long-standing conflicts, such as Cambodia versus Vietnam, or Pakistan versus India; but some were attacks on Subarashii flags, as in Burma and Bangladesh." (Robinson, 510)

The political dispute of Sikhs, Punjab is submitted to the arbitration of the World Court after 2061 in Green Mars. When there is the fall of the arbitrator of international disputes, UN (United Nations) in the year of 2061, the World Court has emerged as the most powerful arbitrator in the world as During his visit to Mars, William Fort informs about the interest of India in the world court to solve the political dispute of Sikhs, Punjab in the world court as "At the end of the year the World Court rules on any outstanding problems, we try to support the treaties any way we can. India has been interested, and went through the program with Sikhs in the Punjab, and it's working so far. Other cases have proved more difficult, but it's been instructive. The concept of semi-autonomy is receiving a lot of attention."(Robinson, 381)

India attempted to develop bilateral relationship with Praxis, one of the powerful mega corporations of the world. Praxis is identified an emerging coalition of progressive elements on Earth in Green Mars. Those countries which were given less than what they deserved in Mars Treaty, invited the Praxis, for the multilateral relationships as William Fort provides a full details of it in his invited talk on Mars as "In a way yes, but we've tried to give the relationships a different nature. We've dealt with countries large enough to make the partnership more balanced. We've had dealings with India, China, and Indonesia. These were all countries that were shortchanged on Mars by the treaty of 2057, and so they encouraged us to come here and make inquiries like this one." (Robinson, 384)

Impacts of international relations after the year of 2061 on India are depicted in Green Mars. The Earth after 2061 is highly influenced by the exercise of power by the multiple powerful mega-corporations like Armscor, Consolidated, Praxis, and others. The bilateral relationship of India with Praxis is highly influenced by

the Consolidated, a mega-corporation which is against the Praxis. India is attempting to solve the Kashmir dispute with the help of Praxis, but Consolidated does not want to increase the holdings and impact of Praxis over Kashmir disputes. Therefore, Consolidated attempts to add fuel in the fire as "Consolidated had seized the opportunity of the break to attempt a hostile takeover of Praxis holdings in Kashmir, which in effect meant starting a large coup or small war against the government of Kashmir, from Consolidated base in Pakistan. Which would of course draw India into it. And India had been dealing with Praxis lately as well. India versus Pakistan..." (Robinson, 510)

The collapse of West Antarctic ice sheet and its impact of Indian major cities are delineated in Green Mars. Due to the eruption of volcanoes, there is the collapse of the West Antarctic ice sheet. This collapse has largely influenced the coastal cities of the world as "Bangladesh would have to be entirely evacuated; that was three hundred million people, not to mention the other coastal cities of India, like Calcutta, Madras, Bombay. Then London, Copenhagen, Istanbul, Amsterdam, New York, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Miami, Rio, Buenos Aires, Sydney, Melbourne, Singapore, Hong Kong, Manila, Djakarta, Tokyo ... and those were only the big ones."(Robinson, 557-558)

Diplomatic relations of India with Martian government are influentially described by the novelist in Green Mars. How India supports Mars for Martian sovereignty is one of the major happenings in the select works. The Martians want to claim the sovereignty of Mars. They decide to get semi-autonomy status to Mars. In order to make their claim of sovereignty very powerful, the Martians attempt to develop the diplomatic relations with the Terran countries as Maya asserts "We are claiming sovereignty according to international law, and we appeal to the World Court to confirm this legal status immediately. We have signed preliminary treaties affirming this independence, and establishing diplomatic relations, with Switzerland, India, and China."(Robinson, 591)

In order to escape and save the nation, India developed alliance with United Nations and other countries during the devastation caused by the sea rise level in Blue Mars. India does not expect any relief or help from G-11 and other metalates as "India and China, as the largest of the badly devastated countries, were also extremely influential in the current situation, because how they chose to cope made a big difference everywhere. They made alliances with each other, and with the UN and its new allies; they refused all help from the Group of Eleven, and the meta nationals that were now fully intertwined

into the affairs of most of the G11 governments."(Robinson 162)

Migration of Indian minorities to Mars after 2100 is depicted with a list of causes in *Blue Mars*. We see the emigration of people from populous countries like India and China to Mars. This is the emigration of minority citizens who are not fully satisfied with their autonomy in their nation. Many Indian citizens and minority people move to Mars as "In India the elevator cars of the cable that touched down at Suvadiva Atoll, south of the Maldives, were constantly at capacity, full of emigrants all day every day, a stream of Sikhs and Kashmiris and Muslims and also Hindus, ascending into space and moving to Mars."(Robinson, 348) and further "Lots of Terran governments are trying it (emigration), whether it makes sense or not. China, India, Indonesia, Brazil-they're all going for it, and if they keep emigration at the system's capacity, Mars's population will double in about two years."(Robinson, 348-349)

After 2110, during his visit to Trinidad and Tobago of earth in *Blue Mars*, Nirgal, the Martian, watched the dance (of Ramayana) performed by a small young woman with six arms as Maya tells "This is the dance of Ramayana...It is as old as civilization, and in it they speak of Mangala" (Robinson, 178). It shows how Indian myth has become an integral part of the world.

To conclude, this optimistic, threatening, challenging and interesting delineations of India set in a far future in connection with the international conflict over Kashmir dispute, political dispute of Sikhs to the World Court, Indian myths, the long lasting enmity with Pakistan, the migration of Indian minorities to Mars, India's alliance

with UN, diplomatic affairs with and support for Mars semi-autonomy, and India's interest in Mars prove Mars Trilogy an excellent literary piece on India set in the far future after 2061, and 2100.

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