



## PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND THROUGH SCIENCE FICTION GENRE

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### Abstract

*Since time immemorial, most cultures have hypothesized in the possibility of extra-terrestrial life. The fact that the supernatural or intelligent life has existed in the cosmos has reignited a fresh debate, which attracts serious discussion by professional scientists and scholars. Even the authors and film producers today are increasingly counting on the theme of fascinating encounters with aliens in their creatively imaginative ventures. In many popular depictions, during apocalypse, there is a common belief that aliens have flown down to earth as peace messiahs to prevent extermination of living species. Humanitarians as well as film makers on science fiction too have reaffirmed the notion that while humans have aggressively destroyed civilizations, the peace-loving extra-terrestrials have been depicted in various genres as attempting to come to our rescue. This paper highlights two themes underlying the significance of science fiction in promoting peace for mankind: (1) to explore whether science fiction cinema/genre can be effective in propagating conflict resolution, peace and progress on a universal level and (2) to assess the crucial role of contemporary authors and movie-makers who experiment with the genre of Ufology with the hope of bringing about a new peace-policy on planet earth.*

**Key words:** science genre, science fiction, peace, humanoids, aliens etc.



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### Introduction

From the beginning of time, mankind has had to struggle hard for survival. After a long stressful day, even in those times, looking up at the night sky, ancient man must have felt either fear or comfort at the sight of the stars and the moon. In his mind, the celestial bodies may slowly have been transformed into supernatural powers. Moreover, most cultures speak of messiahs of peace and non-violence, many of whom are actual historical figures. Many times such messiahs are depicted as either residing in the stars or descending to earth, or rising up to higher zones. Have these messengers of peace come from the stars? Or, have these messiahs been native human beings with extra-ordinary deep-rooted wisdom, intelligence and vision?

In this milieu, the literary histories of science fiction from the time of H.G. Wells who penned *The Time Machine* in late nineteenth century created a successful fictional spell for scientists and writers to generate inspirational instances of alternative utopian worlds. Since then, the 1950s witnessed a growing body of creative science fiction (sci-fi) writers and film makers who strived to embody science fiction tales, mainly with off-Earth settings, giving wings to their fantasy of adventure and travel, exploration and UFO sightings, courage, and utopian conquest. However, in a contrasting situation, a simple study of the mythology of any culture shows gods and goddesses having strong human traits of anger, jealousy, suspicion, love, care, forgiveness, bravery, treachery etc. Most of the times, these gods and goddesses in our mythologies have also fought with each other, displaying the violence of human traits. As such, the traits of divinity that are reflected in mythology can be said to be the product of the human mind. For instance, massacre and death have been associated with war gods and goddesses. The Indian myths worship Goddess Kali for death and destruction. She is depicted with four arms—one carries a bloody sword, while another holds aloft a severed head and around her neck hangs a necklace of skulls (Cavendish, 2005, p. 1458). Likewise, in Greek myths, Poseidon the god of the sea is known for both his violent temper and his tendency to bear long grudges. Thus many of the myths attached to him revolve around the tragic consequences of his violent pursuit of mortals (Ibid).

There is an exclusive body of sci-fi films in the 1950s—the greatest decade for fiction proliferation that opens a window on the cultural paranoia through the invasion narratives. It juxtaposes the issue of peace and conflict through the screens of nuclear war, the cold war, the space race delusions etc. In one such fascinating science fictional account, the *Saucer Movies* (1998) is the first book to analyze the relationship between movies and the UFO spectacle. It especially explores the theme of extraterrestrial beings in the context of a different genre and mythology. The work examines around 300 films—from 19<sup>th</sup> century to recent times with various encounters and experiences with aliens. Author Paul Meehan brings out piercing debates on the UFO contacts and conspiracies.

Today some of the block buster sci-fi films like the *Avatar* (2009) warn the extreme extent of human violence. While depicting the messengers of peace, it empathizes with their plight as they continuously appear on the scene trying to restore a balance towards sanity and the dignity of

human existence. At present, we can say with confidence that our life as human beings need not have to go through the same degree of violence generated by us humans that our ancient ancestors may have suffered. But peace on Earth still seems to be as elusive as ever. Whether it is mass scale genocide or violation of an individual's dignity in thought, word or action, war, skirmishes, crime (of which uncountable numbers are unreported) and unrest are still everyday news. As per a recent research, there have been 144 armed conflicts (47 wars) since 1989 and 254 armed conflicts (114 wars) since 1946 (Themner & Wallensteen, 2014, p. 541). Also, according to recent statistics gathered by the United Nations, there are 4,289,792 registered Syrian refugees and over 5,000 schools have been destroyed in Syria in the wake of The Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) conflicts (Crawford, 2015) that points towards the unpredictable hostilities of this millennia.

At such a crucial time, every responsible citizen of the earth should realize the importance of the role of peace and endeavor to create a strong peaceful environment so that mankind may progress (and not just in the material sense). The advantages of peace cannot be challenged by any reasonably sensible person. Much has been said in favour of peace such as "The most disadvantageous peace is better than the most just war", "Peace is more important than all justice", "I prefer the most unjust peace to the justest war that was ever waged", "There never was a good war or a bad peace", etc (Rummel par.1).

The debate between peace and conflict seems to continue unendingly, since conflict is based on a balancing of powers among interests, capabilities, and wills. It depends on what people want, can get, and are willing to pursue. Most experts argue that conflict behavior, whether hostile actions, violence, or war, is then a means and manifestation of this process (Ibid). Thus the building of peace, according to Rummel, depends on the process of participation in adjustment between what people, groups or nations want, can and will do.

#### **Science Fiction—A Popular Genre For Promoting Peace Discourse**

Science Fiction has been termed, among other things, as the "Literature of Ideas" by Pamela Sargent (Marg, Fleming, & Allen, 2014, para.1). Some more definitions of Science-fiction are worth considering at this point. Gregory Benford understands SF as a controlled way to think and dream about the future (Ibid). Jeffrey Carver looks at it as a genre where "thinking about possibilities" is a way of life while Frederik Pohl declares that "Science fiction is the very literature of change" (Ibid).

Richard Landes in *Heaven on Earth: The Varieties of the Millennial Experience* (2011) provides a supporting evidence to suggest emergence of new genres especially the films which become powerful means to curb a holocaust situation. The author suggests that most of the UFO discourse has mainly appeared in imaginative literature and films. It had significantly articulated a meditation on human aggression and the future of war that currently plays a powerful role in both popular and strategic political thinking about peace and international relations (399). In the same direction, Murray Leinster's *First Contact* (1945), inspired by H.G. Wells' theme, is a sci-fi theme about the first meeting between humans and extraterrestrial life. The subject allows the author to explore issues related to xenophobia and transcendental realm in an idealistic culture.

In an analogous attempt to sustain a research on real life experiences with the aliens, Bridget Brown in *They Know Us Better than We Know Ourselves: the History and Politics of Alien Abduction* (2007) provides diversified views drawn from numerous interviews of individuals abducted by aliens. In one of claims by the 'contactees' of the extraterrestrials, there could be probability that the aliens may act as caretakers of the human race—a commonplace belief to redeem humans in an event of a catastrophe. The author also indicates that the lines between spirituality and science often get blurred as the aliens find comparison with angels, gods and demigods.

Iain M. Banks' enormous works also has an immense share in this genre featuring mainstream science fictional interstellar plots. Banks, termed as one of the "50 greatest British writers since 1945" wrote popular fantasy novels adapted by filmmakers and television series. His works like *Consider Phlebas* (1987), *The Culture Series* deals with the fictional universe, which exists synchronously with human society on Earth. The stories center on the Culture—a utopian, post-scarcity society of humanoids, aliens, and a very advanced artificial intelligences living in semi-anarchist habitats spread across the Milky Way galaxy. The main theme of the novels like *The Excession* (1996), *The Player of Games* (1988) and *Look to Windward* (2000) delve into an unconventional world comprising of curiously different humanoid-machines, its denizens dwelling in an amicably-structured synergetic society.

In a breathtaking classic fictional utopia, Damon Knight in *The Rule Golden* (1954) depicts the galactic aliens to be advocates of peace policies. The author intricately suggests that the war-mongering humans aim to control the nonbelligerent extraterrestrial beings through interstellar

conquest wherein the government and religion can have a vital role for restoring the peace situation in existent civilization.

With exquisite travels to interstellar, intergalactic spaces, John W. Campbell, a pioneer editor for Science Fiction magazines, wrote significant novels on alien-based themes. In *Invaders from the Infinite* (1969), the canine-humanoid Ortolians perceived wrongly as invaders on earth, startlingly turn out to be peaceful creatures. In addition, Joseph Schlossel, a science fiction writer, and a pioneer of the space-opera genre, is credited for “tremendous inventiveness in his adventures, with intergalactic wars and invasions on an immense scale”. His works *Invaders from Outside* (1925), *Hurled into the Infinite* (1925), *A Message From Space* (1926), *The Second Swarm* (1928), *To The Moon by Proxy* (1928) and *Extra-Galactic Invaders* (1931) take the readers to a futuristic space expeditions (“Joseph Schlossel – Wikipedia”).

In a spectacular era of fiction literature, “Publicity Campaign” (1953) a short story by Arthur C. Clarke, depicts humans as antiheroes—spreading anti-alien propaganda to Earth people. The short story published in the “London Evening News” begins with a group of Hollywood officials discussing their newest alien horror movie widely publicizing the frightening effects of alien invasions. Subsequently Prince Zervashni—a peaceful alien contacts Earth and finds the people on earth to be exceptionally violent. The story undoubtedly conveys a dark side of humanity where the inhabitants of earth are a dreadful exception in making peace with the totality of the universe.

Thus, taking this concept further, this paper explores the feasibility of science fiction being able to promote ideas that will make life on earth better for all, in every sense of the word. In an important milieu, the science fiction as a genre witnessed a significant rise in the era of post-world-war II and chronicled the steady advancement of science and technology which brought many blessings into our lives, namely, electricity, running water faucets, flush toilet systems, washing machines, dish washers, speedy ways of communication and travel, etc. In the 1960s and 1970s, Issac Asimov has been credited as one of the exponents popularizing science fiction bringing in a new genre of sci-fi literature and American television series. It also exhibited the American’s growing obsession with resourcefulness and ultra-sophisticated technologies. In a way, the major source of ideas for scientists and technocrats for the existing cutting-edge technology is traced to the fictional accounts of science fiction—combining innovation science besides imagination. Even the 21<sup>st</sup> century science fiction integrates the humane rudiments while

assessing scientific problems or dreams of the present to future scenarios and stories. Overall, times and intergalactic travel, robots, and convenience technologies will continue to grasp the attention of readers as they always have. Modern genetic mapping, nanotechnologies, “designer babies” and cloning, looming disaster from global warming, or energy deficiencies, for example, are inspiring themes for science/human narratives, continuing the cycle by exciting scientists to substitute scientific and high-tech resolutions (Preist, 2010, p. 706). To Assimov, modern science fiction is the only form of literature that consistently considers the nature of the changes that face us, the possible consequences, and the possible solutions. He defined science fiction as that branch of literature which is concerned with the impact of scientific advance upon human beings (Allen, 1971, p. 262). In addition, Asimov’s novel *The Gods Themselves* (1972) simultaneously explores the potential unity of all races—a three-gendered species and the possibility of exploring a bizarre alien society.

In the perspective of imaginative yet a popular responsive tool, can science-fiction take up the cause of promoting conflict-free zones throughout mankind’s habitat? Can science-fiction take up the challenge to promote peaceful co-existence between all living creatures all over the universe?

Dick Allen is probably thinking along the same lines when he asks, ‘Is it any wonder that a new generation has rediscovered science fiction, rediscovered a form of literature that argues through its intuitive force that the individual can shape and change and influence and triumph; that man can eliminate both war and poverty; that miracles are possible; that love, if given a chance, can become the main driving force of human relationships?’(Allen, 1971, p. 3).

### **Science fiction films and peace**

The science fiction films as a genre can be studied as a powerful mass-awakening tool of promoting peace and harmony regardless of one’s ethnicity, class, lineage, religion or gender. The 1950s films had ‘soulful’ alien characters doing justice to their silver-screen characters, making them relevant even in the present era of ultra-revolutionized animation. One such film with an overpowering message to the war-mongering humans is *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951). The movie comes with a cautionary message in the contemporary conflicting stints, with the humans heading for its own annihilation, to the mulishly violent human race with a peace ultimatum. A tense drama about first contact with aliens, the theme follows an alien messenger Klaatu, who is sent to Earth with a warning for the human race. Upon landing, he is accidentally

shot by a nervous soldier and then whisked away to a secure facility where he is interrogated by bureaucrats. He soon realizes that the only way to get his message to the people of Earth—and not be hidden away by its oppressive governments—is to go out among the people. Realizing the incorrigible human mentality, the humanoid alien Klaatu pointedly tells them that the people of Earth have a choice. They can join the other planets in peace, but should they threaten to extend their violence into space, “this Earth of yours will be reduced to a burned-out cinder” (“Day the Earth Stood Still film – Wikipedia”).

A key proportion of science-fiction cinema revolves around the conflicts ranging from acceptability to violence between humans and aliens. As compared to the humans, the movie makers depict aliens’ sophisticated in terms of uncanny power or intelligence. There are some of the films in discussion of this study that have peace appealing themes—aiming to do away the depressing emotions of fear and hate— a popularized theme in the latest movies.

A sci-fi film based on alien encounters, *It Came from Outer Space* (1953) depicted the benign aliens who accidentally land on earth and assist the humans in their ventures. So also, an avant-garde film *The Second Renaissance* (2003); a two-part short film comes with a communiqué that the Machines—symbolic of beings of peace—with a higher intelligence than humans, are viciously oppressed by blood-lustful humans. The brutality with which the humans massacre the Machines is reminiscent of the recent human tragedies thereby raising an alarm to cope with the genocide situation that seems to loom over the human race.

Today, cinema on the big and small screens has captured the imagination of the masses on a much bigger scale than printed books. The audio-visual content ensures that its power to influence is much more than that of the print media. It is fast becoming a teaching aid and its effectiveness makes a strong case for being used to instruct and educate masses. Considering how powerful a media cinema can be, one should keep in mind the scope of its influence on the viewer. The susceptible masses are likely to attempt to follow the hero’s attitude, behavior pattern, speech and action blindly, e.g. adolescents blindly imitating heroes in their act of smoking, drinking and violence. On the other hand, some positive aspects may also be followed to the dot if found appealing.

In an interview conducted by Vikas Shah, Tom Sherak, President of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (best known for their Academy Awards, also referred to as “Oscars”) says that movies have an equally powerful role in bringing about social change, promoting value

systems, teaching vice and virtue and showing right and wrong (Shah, 2011). Tom Sherak further says that decline of values have resulted in the rise of individualism, lack of respect, intolerance, dishonesty, lack of empathy and disregard to other's concerns. Inequality and poverty have promoted many other social evils like violence, crime and class divisions. The greed and democratic deficit among people has resulted in rising corruption and failing public services. We are living in a time marked by sharp moral decay in our society. Movie, with its enormous reach and powerful influence over people is probably best placed to bring about a behavioral change ("Role of Movies in Society").

This paper will explore the problem "CAN SCIENCE FICTION GENRE/CINEMA BE EFFECTIVE IN PROPOGATING CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACE AND PROGRESS ON A UNIVERSAL LEVEL?"

In Science-fiction, the concept of a superior being from outer space is highly popular. As mentioned before, mythologies from almost all cultures talk about such beings. In more recent times, there has been a lot of sporadic discussions about UFO's, mostly originating from the West. This notion of the earth being visited by aliens has gripped the imagination of the western masses to an extent close to hysteria which is reflected in blockbuster celluloid. In India, the average educated citizen is familiar with this concept, but not obsessed with it, probably because here, organized religion is the opium of the masses.

The word 'Alien' refers to the unknown. Curiosity for the unknown has always been the starting point of new knowledge and as such, a very important and positive trait in human nature. But suspicion for the 'other', for anyone who is different and not like us, is a twin trait that goes hand-in-hand with this positive curiosity. Thus we are suspicious of those who belong to other racial groups, religious groups, language groups, economic groups, socio-cultural groups, etc. Suspicion is likely to develop into animosity. The extreme end result of this kind of hate is likely to be war. Violence and conflict have always been a part of human life and continues to trouble us undeterred in our present everyday lives. A massive part of our time, energy and resources are spent in dealing with such issues. If this same time, energy and resources could be channelized towards ensuring a better future for all, there would be fewer worries for mankind.

For the purpose of this study, the focus is on three films, namely, *EXTRA-TERRESTRIALS*, *KOI MIL GAYA* and *BONKU BABUR BONDHU*'. The films in discussion, one from Hollywood and the other two from Bollywood, have a similar, if not identical story-line, with probably a



common origin. Both show the bonding between a vulnerable human and an equally if not more vulnerable alien from outer space, in spite of the surrounding hostile atmosphere. Both films show the human involved as benefitting from this liaison.

#### **CASE STUDY 1:**

##### **EXTRA TERRESTRIALS**

*EXTRA TERRESTRIALS* is about an alien botanist who has come to collect samples in a California forest who then gets lost while the other aliens flee, since Government agents appear on the scene. A ten year old boy named Elliott, who is also trying to hold out his own against an older sibling, finds and shelters him in his room.

Pretending to be ill in the morning, Elliot stays back home from school to be with the alien. Elliot's brother Michael and five year old sister, Gertie, meet the alien later and keep him sheltered in their house without their mother's knowledge.

Elliott begins to experience a psychic connection with the alien resulting in some hilarious and entertaining moments.

Meanwhile, E.T.'s health seems to be failing. He tries to contact his own people using simple innovative devices available. Elliot's health also seems to be on the decline. Their house is raided by government forces that isolate and quarantine both ET and Elliot. Elliot recovers and is distressed to see ET's deteriorating condition. But ET also recovers since his people have been contacted and are returning to pick him up. Elliot and his family as well as friends helps ET reach the space-ship, even while being chased by government officials. In a poignant farewell scene, E.T.'s heart glows as he prepares to return home. He tells Elliott "I'll be right here", pointing his glowing finger to Elliott's forehead. As he leaves in his spaceship, there is a rainbow in the sky.

#### **CASE STUDY 2**

##### **KOI MIL GAYA**

In *KOI MIL GAYA*, a scientist creates a computer program using which, variations of the syllable *Om* are sent into space with the intention of communicating with alien life. No one takes him seriously. But a spaceship does appear with rather immediate tragic consequences. In the excitement and confusion, the car in which he is travelling overturns and he is killed. His son is born mentally challenged and has a rough time in a world which is cruel to lesser beings.

This son Rohit accidentally comes across his father's equipment and along with a sympathetic friend, Nisha, and summons aliens inadvertently.

One alien is left behind by chance and is discovered by Rohit who, along with Nisha shelters him. They call him Jadoo. Jadoo uses his powers to empower Rohit who becomes noticeably bright. He becomes physically fit also and goes on to win sports events.

But the police capture Jadoo, who is then rescued by Rohit. Jadoo's kin and friends are contacted by Rohit and Nisha who help him return to his planet. But Rohit' also loses his newly acquired physical and mental fitness. This is also a blessing in disguise since he cannot be punished because he is mentally challenged.

Jadoo is able to restore Rohit's new abilities permanently even from across space, making it possible for Nisha and Rohit to live a normal life together.

### **CASE STUDY 3**

#### **'BONKU BABUR BONDHU**

Satyajit Ray's Alien is a short science fiction story 'BONKU BABUR BONDHU' written in Bengali by Satyajit Ray in 1962, which was published in the Ray family magazine, *Sandesh*. It is about a spaceship landing in a village pond in Bengali hinterland. To the ignorant and unsuspecting villagers, it becomes a temple which they assume has risen from unknown depths. The alien reaches out to a young village boy called Haba (meaning foolish) through dreams and also gets involved with some playful mischief.

Satyajit Ray himself speaks of "the benign nature of the creature, and the fact that it is small and acceptable to children and possessed certain superhuman powers — not physical strength but other kinds of powers, particularly, types of vision, and that it takes an interest in earthly things" (Robinson,2004,p. 294).

The alien characters in the films in discussion—Spielberg's ET and RakeshRoshan's JADOO share most of the common characteristics, which are vastly different from some of the usual Hollywood stereotype aliens who have evil intentions towards human beings.

In *EXTRA TERRESTRIALS*, E.T.'s physical appearance is not only vastly different from humans but does not comply with our socio-cultural concepts of good-looks either. As such, it seems to be an open invitation for hatred and disgust which is likely to culminate in violence. Audiences may consider humans to be better-looking, on the basis of socio-cultural concepts. The viewer is likely to be disgusted by the deliberately created appearance of the alien and automatically feel

more superior, which in turn is likely to widen the possible divide between human and alien. The appearance of E.T. is perceived as abnormal and unacceptable as compared to the normal and acceptable appearance of the human characters. The fear and suspicion for the unknown is also reflected in the protection attire of the government team who come to take E.T. away. This fear is noticeably absent in Elliot, who does not come to any harm through direct contact with E.T. Suspicion on part of humans is noticeably prominent in the manner in which Elliot's house is put under surveillance and the government's hunt for ET.

It seems ironical that in spite of the deliberate creation of suspicion, humans did not and probably have no intention of harming E.T. at all. The creation of a hostile atmosphere seems to be a deliberate attempt to keep the audience's attention within grip. With the viewer's sympathy definitely towards E.T., there is relief that humans did not harm the lovable creature, thus proving that we humans are not evil. So the viewer is left feeling satisfied.

In *KOI MIL GAYA*, Jaadoo's physical appearance is also unlike humans. He is discovered by Rohit, who is mentally retarded. The viewer is made to accept, like and empathize with a fellow human who is differently challenged along with an alien who is different in many respects. The seamy side of human character is also displayed in the characters of the bullies who make Rohit's life unpleasant.

The depiction of E.T. and Jadoo as lovable characters is a strong step towards bridging the gap between human and alien. In no way do the actions of ET or Jadoo convey any intentional or accidental harm towards humans. Both E.T. and Jadoo obviously have many superior powers to compensate for the lack of so-called attractiveness. The lack of good looks adds to their vulnerability which the viewer finds so appealing.

There is a strong bonding between Elliot, his siblings and E.T. A similar bonding is found between Jadoo, Rohit and Nisha. While Elliot and his family try their best to protect E.T., E.T. does his part in helping them on various occasions with his superhuman powers. Jadoo also helps Rohit regain normalcy and thus adapt better. Even though the situation is ripe for hostility and aggression, the innocent open-heartedness and open-mindedness of Elliot and E.T. as well as Rohit and Jadoo make a strong case for mutual friendship, bonding and support between two species.

Though the inevitable farewell has to be said ultimately, there is no harsh vacuum that E.T. leaves behind. He indicates that he will always be present in Elliot's mind. One is reminded of

John Milton when he states in *Paradise Lost*, “The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven” (Milton, 1817, p. 11).

Jadoo’s touch is also ultimately made permanent in Rohit’s mind since his disabilities are cured by Jadoo. Elliot and E.T. as well as Rohit and Jadoo both prove that with open-mindedness and good intentions along with intelligence and vigilance, it is possible to build a heaven based on peace, conflict resolutions and negotiations instead of a prospective hell of suspicion, hate and violence.

If humankind desires to progress, a conducive environment is required. All round progress cannot be possible in an atmosphere of war and terror. Whether the terror is home-grown or from outer space, as depicted by most science-fiction movies, it has to be dealt in a suitable manner. Strong peace-policies are the need of the times along with a strong military to protect peace. No doubt governments all over the world and the U.N. are doing their level best in this direction but unless we are fully geared to meet the challenges of the situation, we may have a lot to regret at a later date. Predictions of doomsday have been made in almost every culture. Nuclear holocaust is a more recent threat. If we humans want to take control of our own destinies, we need to frame bold strategies and work purposefully towards their implementation.

Advancement of Conflict-resolution studies and strategies may be taken up in a serious way right from grass-root levels. Science fiction books and films, including animations could be reframed and re-presented to include conflict-negotiation strategies and the benefits of their use. Current story-lines usually revolve around good versus bad and the inevitable (though unrealistic) moral that good usually wins. If the story-lines were made to shift to accommodate the good trying to negotiate, persuade and eventually convert the bad into understanding and appreciating the advantages of peace and progress over conflict, violence, war and terror, the young audience may imbibe the philosophy. This would definitely be more desirable than the negativities that seep into young minds from the senseless violence depicted in most science fiction films today. The recent presentation of *Gulliver’s Travels* on celluloid shows Jack Black trying to promote the conversion of violent hatred towards peaceful co-existence.

The benefits and advantages of strong peace are not just required for a science-fiction scenario, but urgently and immediately applicable in our own times and lives today to bridge the gap not only between one human and another but between all beings on earth.

Only in recent times has the importance of kindness towards animals and environmental balance gained impetus, opening our minds to the senseless cruelty that other animals have faced at the hands of humans at all times. Entire species are well on their way to extinction only because of human-generated cruelty. If humans find justification in cruelty such as killing animals for cosmetics, medicines, fashion-wear, food or perhaps just pleasure, there should not be much to complain about if aliens were to subject humans to similar cruelty.

On the other hand, the joys and benefits of living in harmony with animals cannot be denied. The advantages of having pets for loyal friends and stress busters, dog-squads to sniff out mines and bombs etc. are common knowledge.

Science-fiction loyalists should imagine and depict a world where the benefits of peace, cooperation, communal harmony and love for all creatures of as well as the planet earth are clearly spelt out for the viewer to understand and implement in his/her personal life.

Sinclair Lewis, Nobel Prize winner for Literature in 1930, had observed that if husband and wife cannot live together in peace, how could neighboring nations be expected to do so?

If getting into conflicts has become a part of human nature, then there is all the more reason to advocate the cause of conflict-resolution and negotiations, because even if there is no threat from the stars, there may be threat from much closer quarters — other nations, other people, etc.

Thus, in ideal cases, science-fiction should depict human-kind as strong enough not only to be able to hold their own against any covert or overt attack from outer space, but also persuade the aggressive beings from other galaxies to accept the philosophy of strong peace for great progress.

### **Conclusion**

Today all over the world, the newspapers and mass-media are ablaze with headlines about our very own 'human'—invaders of colossal aggression—in a perpetually tainted atmosphere of appalling fear. Most of the sci-fi genre depicts the human's initial raw experience with an alien welcomed with great hostility on planet Earth. The plot lines reveal tremendous aggression where the military is involved to launch an attack on the UFO spaceship and incapacitate the peace-harboring alien visitor only to be exposed to the first-hand human paranoia. The writers and film producers should take optimum advantage of science and technology and must unvaryingly focus on 'Peace' as the crux value for sustaining the human civilization. Herein comes the pivotal role of the creative makers as peace-mongers who can depict characters with

unclouded emotions seeming to suggest to the warring agencies that there is more to human heart—much beyond the terror and rage—an utopian future for the human race!

This study has strived to emphasize the need to speed up evolution of a positive, rational attitude and an open-mind construct in order to face the challenges of the present day as well as the future. Films like *ET* and *KOI MIL GAYA* can play an important and strategic role in this project. Young audiences will want to experiment with being open-minded, friendly, helpful and caring because the projection of friendship between Elliot and ET is extremely appealing to the heart. Involvement with inter-species friendship is definitely more desirable than wanting to experiment with guns and other forms of violence.

Whether aliens bring messages of peace or aggression of any kind, humans first need to be strong enough to defend themselves and the planet. This strength should be monitored by a foolproof system which prevents misuse at all cost. A strong peace based on justice is only possible if there is a strong military to defend it. Building such a system will not be a child's play. Neither will this be done in one day. Science-fiction creators should present possible concepts so that we humans start thinking along these lines.

Science fiction creators should also visualize and project the concept of the ideal future which would be inclusive of all species and where worlds and environment will be protected. A projection of such a world, then, maybe, will at least persuade us humans to live together in negotiated peace instead of life-claiming violence being the order of the day. Since we claim to be the most superior species on this planet, let us also take up the responsibility of looking after our mother planet and all her creatures instead of putting forth plunder and devastation.

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