

# Chinese Dreams: (Self-)Orientalism and Post-Orientalism in the Reception and Translation of Liu Cixin's *Three-Body* Trilogy

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## **Abstract**

After receiving the Hugo Award in 2015 for the English translation of *The Three-Body Problem*, Liu Cixin's *Three-Body* trilogy and its translations into a large number of languages have been a massive success, prompting many reactions and much praise. In this article, I attempt to discuss first the global processes of translation and reception of Liu's novels beyond China. I particularly focus on the Orientalist imaginary conveyed by the publication of the trilogy, at a time when Chinese science fiction has become a tool for the Chinese soft power strategy based on the culturalist and nationalist discourse of the "Chinese Dream." I also examine the reception in China of the success of Liu Cixin's translations, and the way in which Chinese media and officials are also engaging in a process of self-Orientalization.

In a the second phase, I try to question the task and the strategy of the translators when confronting these Orientalist projections: how does a translator makes himself or herself an accomplice of these fantasies, and how can she/he engage in a post-Orientalist or anti-Orientalist approach? This reflection is illustrated by concrete examples from my own translation of Liu Cixin's trilogy into French.

## **Keywords**

translation, reception, Liu Cixin, *Three-Body* trilogy, Orientalism, post-Orientalism