

Chinese Science Fiction in the Global Context



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According to the 2020 China Science Fiction Industry Report, the gross annual output value of China's science fiction industry in 2019 was 45.635 billion yuan. This cultural industry consists of hardcopy books, film and TV series, video games, and peripheral products. Since 2016, the Chinese Association for Science and Technology (CAST) has begun organizing the annual conventions. The Vice President of the People's Republic of China, Li Yuanchao, participated in the first convention. He called himself a science fiction fanatic. His brief appearance brought lots of media attention to the cultural industry of Chinese science fiction.

Chinese science fiction has been developing exponentially since the completion of Liu Cixin's *The Three-Body Problem* in 2010. In 2015, Liu Cixin won the Hugo Award for best full-length novel at the 73rd World Science Fiction Convention. Now Chinese science fiction is being translated into Arabic, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and many languages all over the world. Since then, more Chinese writers have become globally renowned, including: Han Song, Wang Jinkang, Chen Qiufan, Hao Jingfang, and Xia Jia, among many others.

The international fame of Chinese science fiction has also created a new wave of the fascination with global science fiction in China. The names of H. G. Wells, Jules Verne, Isaac Asimov, and Strugatsky brothers have never been obscure to Chinese readers. Now their splendid works continue to receive significant attention in the 21st century, far beyond their birthplace.

It is timely and necessary to reflect on how science fiction connects the world. The goal of this special issue is to investigate the latest developments of this two-way reception of science fiction and to reflect on relevant methodological issues. The contributors of this special issue ask: can we study science fiction as world literature? Can science fiction teach us, human beings, how to better interact with the environment?

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