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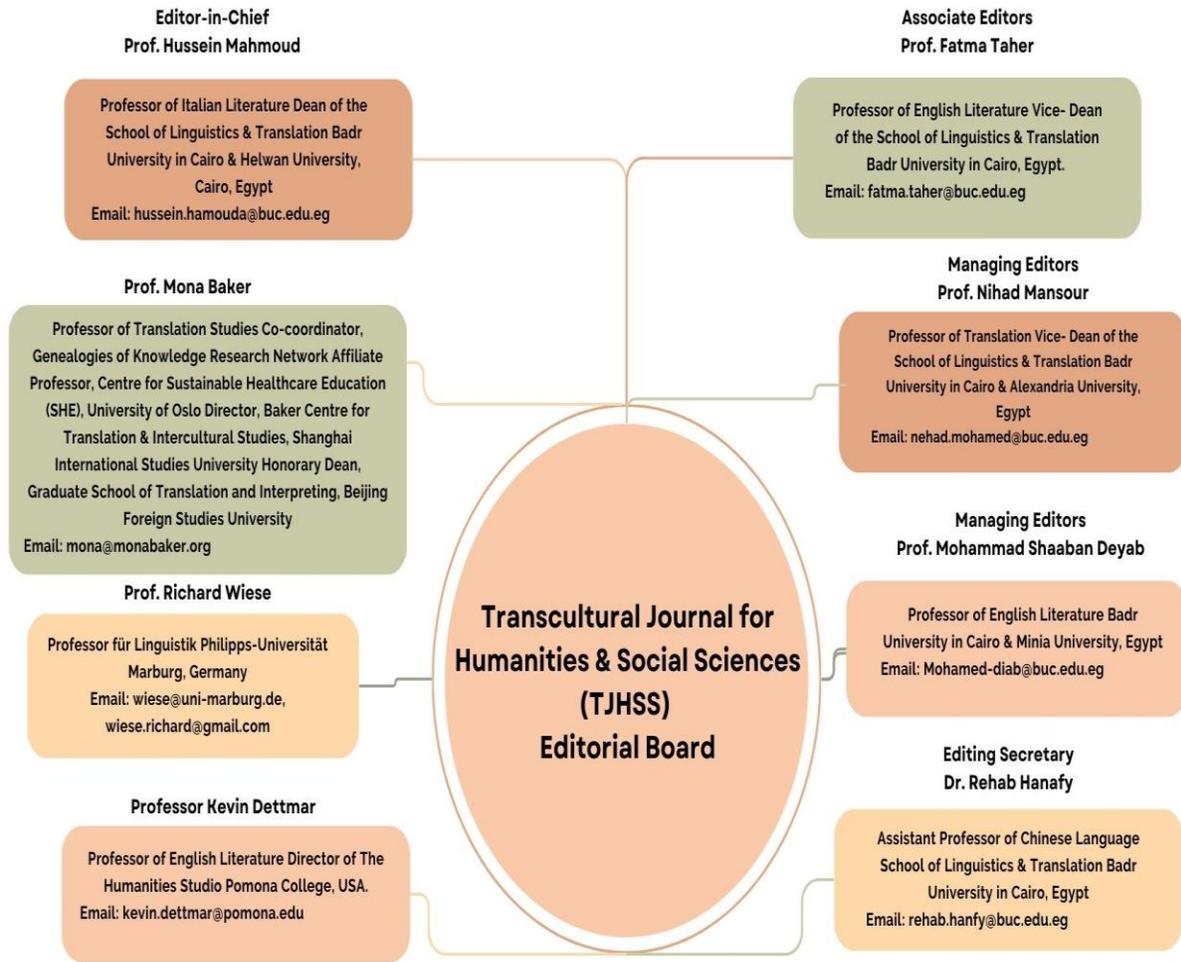
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To promote interdisciplinary studies in the fields of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences and provide a reliable academically trusted and approved venue of publishing Language and culture research.

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## Editorial Foreword

The first section of this edition of the research papers of the International conference on Transnational Feminism: Explorations, Communications, Challenges & Horizons is clearly conceived as a collection of research papers on the diversified approaches of the intersection between feminism, literature, linguistics, and translation. The diversity of the research papers closely connects to academic experiences and cultural backgrounds of the contributors. While presenting diversity in approaches, this section contributes to achieving a collective discussion of the multifaceted concept of translational feminism.

The section includes studies on the challenges of recent development of translational feminism, gender problematics in the translation of non-literary texts, the English translation of the *The Odyssey* (2018), gender bias in machine translation, the deafening effect of non-feminist translations of literary works, Arab Egyptian Feminist Voices in Translation, and lastly written in Arabic; obsession & rebellion in feminist movements writings.

In an attempt to have a wide reach and significant impact, the second section is allocated for miscellaneous research papers written in English, Spanish and Chinese. A semantic visual study of the image of orientalism in Indian epic tales, literary dissection the literary works of Antonio de Zayas, (Spanish), how poetry reflects and summarizes social life, and a study of Lin Shu's travelogues prose in Chinese are engaged in and/or preoccupied with recent trends and fast growing leaps in linguistic and literary studies.

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## **Section I**

## Transnational Feminist Translation and the Skirmishes of Anglo-American Gender Identity Politics: No need to translate

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**ABSTRACT:** This article explores the role of translation in the recent global development of transnational feminism. It specifically examines the challenges faced in transnational communication among feminist organizations and individuals. Additionally, it examines the role of the Anglo-American world in nurturing feminist ideas, while also introducing and promoting divisive "gender identity politics." The argument posits that although the academic and political work produced in English over the past fifty years has been strong and useful, it has also had negative implications. The argument is therefore to focus on generating as much transnational feminist translation and translation studies as possible in order to learn about and validate what exists in other cultures, as well as learning what the Anglo-American culture can glean from them.

**Keywords:** Translation, transnational feminism, gender and gender identity, non-translation.

### INTRODUCTION

Feminism is a political movement that seeks to address, critique and remove sexist discrimination against women, worldwide. Ideas that might today be labelled and viewed as "feminist" have existed for centuries and in many different cultures — from the texts of Buddhist nuns in the *Therīgāthā* dating from about 2000 BC (2017) to Christine de Pizan's *La cité des dames* ([1405]2021), to Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) to the suffrage movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that finally succeeded in forcing male authorities to assign women citizens the "right" to vote, to present-day 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Second Wave and Third Wave feminisms. *Transnational feminism*, an increasingly visible development since the 2010s, seeks to facilitate and proliferate the conversations around issues facing women or discriminating against women, *worldwide and decolonially*. It works with translation. Indeed, it cannot operate without translation.

Feminism is not new. But it constantly needs re-energizing as patriarchal forces, supported by politicians, religious, medical and legal authorities as well as commercial interests continue to chip away at the rights that women gain and assert.

This article presents the role that translation plays in the recent worldwide development in feminist thinking that has come to be called *transnational feminism* and that is concerned with the development of a globalized but locally-focused approach to feminist work, writing, publishing, knowledge production and dissemination. It looks specifically at the challenges facing transnational communications among feminist organisations and individuals, due to the powerful, some say "neo-colonial" role that Anglo-American academia, media, politics and publishing have played in fostering feminist ideas on the one hand and more recently, in introducing and promoting divisive "gender identity politics" on the other. The argument is that while the academic and political work produced in English over the

past fifty years has been exceptionally strong and useful, it has also had negative aspects: for one, it has fostered the neo-colonial assumption that all women worldwide can be assisted by and should subscribe to the feminisms devised in Anglo-American/European centres (Niranjana, 1998). More recently, feminism has come face to face with the conflictive development and promotion of gender identity politics. This development seems to hold women – as an experienced ‘minority component’ of society - responsible for the diversity of “genders,” expecting them to share their worlds with transwomen and other non-binary individuals. At the same time, it allows this diversity to impinge on women’s rights, women’s spaces, and women’s lives by undermining, even seeking to eliminate, the “category of women” from academic and many other areas of social interactions (Riley, 1988; Scott, 2010). Currently, confusion and conflict reign in the area of Anglo-American gender politics and feminism, and for the sake of transnational feminism this article argues that it may be time to take a big step back from so-called “globalized” Anglo-American feminisms and move instead toward research, development and support of “local” versions. To succumb to and participate in the gender identity conflicts that are in full swing in the English-speaking world is to damage if not destroy feminism’s invaluable and important focus on women.

### ***Transnational Feminism and Translation***

At least two important truths rule transnational feminist translation work: first, translation is absolutely necessary for any attempt at transnational communications about or in support of feminist topics. Because the “transnational” moves beyond borders, and deliberately seeks to reach out to the ‘others’, long set aside by Anglo-American and more generally ‘western’ powers, the *transnational always means translation*, as is shown in *River in an Ocean: Essays on Translation*, a recent collection of essays on translation by Southeast Asian, African and Middle Eastern women in diaspora (Abbas, ed., 2023). And second, translation is never an absolutely neutral practice. Nor is it ruled by one individual, the translator. Translation is done for a purpose, it is intentional; there is always a reason for someone to commission a translation, produce a translation and/or publish and disseminate a translation. As such, any translation is affected by the target language context, by the purpose driving the translation, by the translator’s politics and their general understanding of the issues at stake in the source language, as well as by editors’ and publishers’ decisions.

Feminist translation and translation studies, which have been amply discussed and developed in Anglo-American and European academic environments and are becoming visible in Latin America, Africa and Asia, constitute a very particular approach to translation. First and foremost, such an approach to translation involves the careful selection of appropriate and relevant texts for translation; then comes the labour of making this text accessible to the target audience in their particular language and culture — by adding prefaces, footnotes and applying other interventionist means, if necessary. Next, considerable efforts must be deployed to ensure that negative influences added by editors, publishers and other political forces do not interfere in the text, and finally the translated text has to be disseminated to its target readership. The selective translation and discussion of feminist texts from around the world can only help promote a transnational feminist network of activists and politicized academics. In the words of Latin American authors De Lima Costa and Alvarez in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (2014) such translation is: “politically and theoretically indispensable to forging feminist, prosocial justice and

antiracist, postcolonial, and anti-imperial political alliances and epistemologies.” (De Lima Costa and Alvarez, 2014, p.557-558).

While these objectives of social justice, antiracism, postcolonialism and anti-imperialism may sound rather grand and difficult for any one person to envisage, every translated text that builds feminist awareness, knowledge and practice and that reaches a target audience is of value in the work of this basically intersectional, decolonial approach. For many, simple knowledge-building is an important goal of transnational feminist translation. What is happening in other women’s lives and societies? How can we learn about such things, without the interference of biased media and politicized information, whether official or social mediatic?

And then there are transnational feminist translation studies, a branch of an academic discipline that examines and studies translations. The feminist approach studies translations of feminist texts, translations of texts authored by women, and translations completed by women translators; it examines so-called key texts that underlie our cultures — Bible translations or translations of Nordic mythologies or of the Qur’an, for example — to see to what extent these works undermine or support women’s rights and needs. More recently, the research focus has turned to audiovisual products – films, TV series, advertising, video games and their translation – to study how women’s lives and opportunities are presented in these media (Boito, 2023; Bosseaux, 2023). One recently published feminist translation studies project that turned out to be strikingly transnational is the *Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender* (2020) in which academics from around the world addressed a variety of questions related to the intersection of contemporary (and past) feminisms and translation: it included a study of the celebrity factor that comes with consecutive interpreting by women in China (Du, 2020); a study of how the translated instructions on cleaning products in the Arab world designate these products only for women (Dawood, 2020); an article on Volga, the Telugu translator, who worked from English, French and Russian, to single-handedly bring feminist ideas into Telugu society in India in the 1970s (Eligedi, 2020); a comparative analysis of the Spanish translations — in Spain and in Latin America — of the same Chicana/American author, Gloria Anzaldúa, that points to the sociocultural differences between these two closely related spheres and the different translatorial intentions (Spoturno, 2020); an analysis of the work of “naïve” Russian translators of Anglo-American feminist texts in the 1990s as new concepts and terms entered the post-Soviet Russian vocabulary (Barchunova, 2020). The broad array of topics in this collection, including work on the translation of literary, institutional, commercial, audiovisual, and religious texts, provides a repertoire of ideas to stimulate further research on translation from a feminist perspective across the world. More recent topics — feminist translation studies in international development projects driven by the United Nations and ‘western’ NGOs (Flotow, 2022) and on climate change (Khafagy, 2023) — merit further work, as they affect women around the world.

Transnational feminist translation studies began with concerted efforts by academics to build knowledge about women’s work, women’s lives, women’s needs, and requirements worldwide by not only doing translations of relevant texts but also studying, analyzing and writing about them. Such transnational work is concerned with continuing and broadening this research and disseminating knowledge worldwide. Translation is the tool.

### ***Challenges facing Transnational Feminist Translation/Studies***

Translation projects and research projects on translation face many different challenges: funding, publishing opportunities, research grant applications, and the like. However, challenges specific to feminist transnational efforts also include the following: the power and dominance of English as the current “lingua franca” in academia, the power and dominance of Anglo-American/European-run global institutions, and the focus on women.

The dominance of English in academia and worldwide communications has had both very productive and very negative aspects. On the productive side, it allows feminist scholars from many different languages and cultures to communicate quite successfully and has allowed the dissemination of (Anglo-American and European) feminist ideas, concepts, arguments, and discussions around the world. On the negative side, this has had a “neo-colonialist” effect, imposing ‘western’ ideologies and approaches as though they were universal, which has caused local knowledges to be downgraded, neglected, and dismissed in favour of the more powerful ‘western’ variety.

This problematic goes hand in hand with that of the global institutions — the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Health Organization, and others — as well as the multitude of non-governmental organizations, most of whom use English and therefore English-based ideologies, methods of communication, and epistemologies to do their work. Again, the Anglo-American source cultural power inherent in these institutions downplays the value and importance of local cultures and knowledges which are subjected to the universalizing discourse carried by largely English-language organisms.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the focus of all feminist work, interest and discourse is on women, and this means a focus on sexual difference. For centuries, women have faced discrimination precisely because of their sexual difference from men, a difference that is a socially and politically sensitive topic in most societies and cultures. No text about women can avoid the fact that sexual difference is a constitutive factor in any social organization. Any change in women’s status upsets this social ‘order.’ Further, women’s sexual difference is not only a political issue, it is also emotional, and therefore, sensitive. Sex is a sensitive topic.

One good example of this particular challenge to transnational feminist translation is the translation history of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (OBOS) (1973), the well-known American feminist handbook on women’s reproductive health. Put together in the 1970s as a source of feminist information for women beyond the patriarchal medical system, it addresses topics such as sexuality, sexual relations, pregnancy, abortion, masturbation, maternity, birthing, menopause and many more, and includes individual women’s testimonies — all as a knowledge building and dissemination project. Translated into about forty languages worldwide, this book, which now consists of numerous sizeable volumes, has presented translators and publishers with striking challenges: censorship, first and foremost, not only by the state (Li, 2018) but also by the translators, who need to make the text ‘work’ in their own culture. Kathy Davis’ 2007 study — *The Making of Our Bodies, Ourselves: How Feminism Travels across Borders* — of how this book has travelled via translation attests to the difficulties its contents present: in some cultures (French, in West Africa, for example) it served as an inspiration for a separately authored local work for local women; in others, (the Latin American Spanish version) certain chapters were simply left out. Two recent French versions, *Corps Accord: Guide de sexualité positive* (La CORPS féministe, 2019) (Quebec/Canada) and *Notre Corps, Nous-Mêmes* (Collectif Notre corps, nous-mêmes, 2020) (France), however, show a new tendency, which

leads into the next segment of this paper, namely the current focus on gender identities that seems to be eradicating women in Anglo-American work.

### ***Genderism***

Genderism has become an umbrella term for the contemporary interest displayed and promulgated in Anglo-American academia, media, social media, pop culture, and increasingly, in parts of the political, medical, and educational establishments in promoting a multiplicity of genders. Developed since the 1990s, this focus is seen to derive from academic theorization of the 1980s and 1990s, namely post-structuralism, deconstruction, and queer theory as Kathleen Stock argues in *Material Girls. Why reality matters for feminism* (Stock, 2021, 60-75). The writings of academics such as Teresa De Lauretis (1991), Judith Butler ([1990]1999), Eve Sedgwick Kosofsky (1991) are considered particularly important in this regard, due to the activism their work on non-binary sexual identities and on the proliferation of gender identities inspired. Queer theory, in particular, has become attractive to an entire generation as it describes, legitimates, and studies the diversity of gender options and the impact of this diversity across a wide spectrum of lived experiences. Some argue that these developments are also linked to technological experimentation and innovation and the business aspects of such work (Raymond, 1993, 2023).

For some, the activism based on queer theory has offered not only diverse gender options, but also visibility and dignity for these options. For others, queer theory makes for a certain rebellious pleasure in causing those who do not subscribe (often the older generation) deliberate discomfort (Gonzalo Itarregui, personal communication, October 2023.) For still others, it has occasioned considerable technical, chemical, hormonal, and surgical interventions that they will feel throughout an entire lifetime as gender options are addressed both chemically and surgically. Indeed, judging by reports from gender clinics in the USA and the UK, the numbers of young people undergoing such intervention via puberty blocker treatments, hormone treatments, double mastectomies and so-called bottom surgeries as they seek to become *the other* gender have increased enormously in the last years. The medical establishment's current practice to identify and name gender dysphoria in children and young people and treat them with what seems to be a rather binary option — *the change to the other gender* — is an increasingly widespread Anglo-American phenomenon (Neuburger et al., 2013; Thomas, 2023; Kirkey, 2023.)

The rise of “queer” and the discourse around it has also valorized the multiplicity of gender identities as a topic for academic study across many disciplines and in many fields — from political science and economics to literary studies and, of course, translation studies. In fact, translation itself has been described and theorized as “queering” a text (Spurlin 2014.) As a result of this exciting trend that validates and experiments with many different gender options — whether performative, discursive, sexual or technological — feminism with its activist focus on women has slipped to the far end of the spectrum. Since the late 1990s, feminism in Anglo-America has been increasingly labeled as “binary”, “essentialist”, “out-dated” or “old-fashioned” and, worse, “privileged.” Feminism, some now say, has been transformed from activism to theory, from the concrete to the abstract, shifting its focus away from the discriminations imposed on women due to their sex to the much vaguer realm of gender. (Strimpel, 2022.)

This has occurred in translation studies too: in Canada, Sherry Simon's *Gender in Translation. Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (1996), a book concerned exclusively with women's issues in translation and translation history,

does not mention feminism in the title. Flotow's *Translation and Gender. Translating in the 'Era of Feminism'* (1997), similarly concerned with women's work and visibility in translation, also emphasizes gender in the title and places scare quotes around the "era of feminism." And Eva Karpinski's *Borrowed Tongues. Life Writing, Migration and Translation* (2012), a book exclusively about women's autobiographical life-writing and translation in exile/migration and diaspora, does not mention women in its title at all. A distinct lull in the use of the words *feminism* and *woman/women* can be noted in Anglo-American academia since the late 1990s. Moreover, in academic disciplines touching on sociocultural questions — literary studies, political science, sociology, and related fields — the "category of women" as an area of study has been discouraged and even eliminated.

The influence on translation of this trend is clearly visible in the two recent French translations of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* mentioned above (*Corps Accord*, 2019; *Notre corps, nous-mêmes*, 2020). First of all, the prefaces of both books explain and justify the fact that the word "femme" [woman] has been used to translate the word "woman" in the English source text. In *Corps Accord* (2019), the Quebec-French version of four selected chapters of *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, the explanation reads as follows:

Tout au long du livre, nous utilisons le terme "femme" d'une manière non essentialiste. A travers ce mot, nous faisons référence à une catégorie sociale et un vécu d'oppression et de discrimination partagé par les personnes qui s'identifient à divers degrés sur le spectre de la féminité, qu'elles soient des femmes cis ou trans, des personnes non binaires ou même des personnes assignées femmes à la naissance mais qui ne se reconnaissent pas dans cette désignation. (*Corps Accord*, 2019, p.13-14.)

Here, the use of the word "femme" is explained and justified by its expansion to include the widest possible set of identifications, including anyone who has experienced or sensed some kind of discrimination for their femininity. The term "femme/woman" thus comes to refer to the history of a generalized social group that has lived certain shared "experiences of oppression and discrimination." It almost seems to imply that while women have had a history they have somehow become extinct.

The currently prevailing genderism is evident in other parts of the translated text as well; for example, in a segment that provides information on menopause, noting the fact that this is not an illness but a "normal part of a woman's life," the English reads:

Menstrual and menopausal changes, for example, are a normal part of a **woman's** development. (my emphasis, *Our Bodies, Ourselves* 2011:188)

The Quebec/French translation does not translate "woman" as "femme" in this case. Instead, it provides the following version:

*Les changements menstruels ou liés à la ménopause, par exemple, font partie de la vie physiologique des femmes cis\* et de certaines personnes non-binaires\* et hommes trans\* [my emphasis].* (*Corps Accord*, 2019, p. 116.)

"Woman" has become tri-partite here too. The term includes "cis-women," certain "non-binary persons," and "transwomen." The translation effect of genderism is clearly visible as it stretches the bounds of the word "woman," which represents the female sex, to include a series of other gender options. One might be justified in asking: "Where have all the women gone?" In fact, other recent coinages to replace

the term “woman” such as “menstruator,” or “person with a uterus” and “birthing person” for “mother” make this question rather urgent.

The rise of Anglo-American gender talk and gender ideology over the past twenty years has seen a number of other translation issues develop. Indeed, the term “gender” itself has proven quite untranslatable. It is most often just transliterated, rewritten in the translating language in a way that may reproduce the pronunciation in English. But it inevitably means differently. The Bulgarian academic and *OBOS* translator, Kornelia Slavova, for example, writes about the Anglo-American term “gender” as “nomadic and volatile” (2014, 31) and explains that while it has been an “inspirational and revolutionary” concept in her part of the world, it is also “neo-colonialist, confusing and foreign.” Further, she points out that since it was not developed “through grassroots discussion” in East Central Europe, it remains “imposed foreign material.” (2014, p. 31).

Joan W. Scott describes the term “gender” as vague and therefore not translatable. She writes,

there is no single original concept of gender to which subsequent translations can refer. Instead, there has been an ongoing conversation across linguistic and cultural boundaries in which the term is addressed, disputed, qualified, and adapted; in the process the ambiguities that the term itself has acquired, the tensions it contains, are revealed.” (2016, p. 356-357).

Scott views the “universal element” in the disputes, adaptations and discussions around the meaning and import of the term “gender” as lying in “the conundrum of sexual difference [...] that efforts to translate gender repeatedly expose” (2016, p. 366), i.e. in the human condition. This is a truism that Teresa De Lauretis already pointed out in her “note on translation” in 1990<sup>1</sup>. Introducing a series of articles on Italian feminisms of that period, her comments on translation come as an afterthought, at the end of her introductory essay. Today, these comments have become urgent.

Finally, even Judith Butler has had her say on this question. In “Gender in Translation. Beyond Monolingualism” (2019, p. 7) she writes about “the smug monolingualism” of anglophone academics on the topic of gender who seem to

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<sup>1</sup> Note on Translation

Any act of translation is fraught with problems. The dense substratum of connotations, resonances, and implicit references that the history of a culture has sedimented into the words and phrases of its language is often simply untranslatable; thus the act of translation is often a rewriting of the original language (in this case, Italian) and a reconfiguration or interpretation of its plurivocal meaning by means of connotations and resonances built into the words and phrases of the second language (in this case, American English). For example, Italian does not normally use the word *gender* for the sex-based distinction between female and male, as English does. Instead, Italian uses  *Sesso*, “sex,” and the adjective  *sessuato/ sessuata*, “sexed,” where the English would say “gendered,” as in the phrase “gendered thinking” ( *pensiero sessuato*) or “gendered subject” ( *soggetto sessuato*). The phrase “sexed subject” is also used in English, however, with a meaning distinct from “gendered subject.” The translation “gendered subject” was preferred here because it better conveys the sense of the original Italian. As for the common phrase  *il sesso femminile*, it was more often rendered by the traditional English equivalent, “the female sex.” Another problem is posed by the adjective  *femminile*, which is translated as “female,” although it also corresponds to the English “feminine.” The latter, however, is strongly resonant with “femininity,” the ideological construct of woman’s “nature,” which feminism has taken pains to deconstruct; alternatively, outside the context of feminist discourse, the phrase “feminine freedom” sounds rather like an advertisement for “personal hygiene” products. Thus, in spite of the biological connotations that hover around the term  *female*, that term was preferred in most instances:  *liberta femminile*, for example, is translated as “female freedom.” (1990, p. 21.)

assume that their concepts apply worldwide. She also recognizes the “problem of *conceptual non-equivalence* that emerges in the practice of translating gender” (my emphasis, 7) and goes to some length discussing how/why specifically French language feminisms and gender discussions have trouble with Anglo-American gender talk. Meanwhile it has long been clear in international development projects, at a far remove from metropolitan, academic French, that UN gender-mainstreaming talk raises even more pertinent differences and questions around the translatability and applicability of such concepts to other parts of the world (Parpart 2014).

In fact, and in summary, since the concept of gender derives from English-language research on sexology of the 1950s and 1960s, and since it was adapted for use by English-language feminist theorists in the 1970s and 1980s and since it was subsequently expanded by English-language queer theorists into the gender identity politics that exist today, this developmental history is anglophone. It is, in fact, *local*, with its own epistemology, its own etymological history, its own politics and ideology, none of which transfers smoothly to other cultures or languages. The vagueness of the term, the disputes around what it means and refers to and its complex etymology – as well as its local aspects – keep this term and its Anglo-American derivatives such as “genderqueer,” “genderfluid,” “gender mainstreaming” tied to the locale in which this gender talk developed in the first place.

This is evident again in the Gender Diversity Terminology resource prepared and published by Pennsylvania State University in Fall 2023. The guide lists and defines the many different gender labels students might encounter or wish to subscribe to as they return to university for the Fall Term (2023), among others “genderqueer, AFAB/FAAB (assigned female at birth), AMAB/MAAB (assigned male at birth), agender, bigender, trigender, pangender, genderless, demigirl, demiguy, gender gifted, genderfluid, misgender, neutrois, transfeminine, transmasculine...” and more. The document also provides the following definition of gender, which points to ever more volatile and differentiated aspects of what “gender” might mean:

A complex combination of roles, expressions, identities, performances, and more that are assigned gendered meaning by a society. Gender is both self-defined and society-defined. How gender is embodied and defined varies from culture to culture and from person to person. Gender is a spectrum rather than a binary. (*Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, 2023*).

The gender labelling, as in the list above, with which university students (and the general public) are currently advised, if not urged, to reveal their sexual orientation and gender identity – and recognize others’ - is a relatively recent phenomenon; the term “cisgender”, for example, dates from the 1990s but only entered the *Oxford English Dictionary* in 2015. And while the word “homophobic” has been in the dictionary since 1971, “transphobic” was added only in 2013. Nevertheless, such terminology is now in rampant use, and not only for descriptive purposes. The term “TERF”, an abbreviation derived from “**t**rans **e**xclusionary **r**adical **f**eminist,” is an example of how such a gender label becomes insulting, aggressive, a slur, and downright dangerous for those on the receiving end.

### ***Violent Linguistic Skirmishes: TERFS and gender critical feminists***

On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner issued a document on current violence against women and girls.

Produced by Reem Alsalem, the UN special rapporteur on such violence, the document is entitled *Allow women and girls to speak on sex, gender and gender identity without intimidation or fear*. Its introductory paragraph clearly states the issue:

*Threats and intimidation against women expressing their opinions on sex and sexual orientation is deeply concerning, said Reem Alsalem, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls in a statement today. In the context of disagreements between some women's rights activists and transgender activists in a number of countries in the Global North, Alsalem warned of that violence against women and intimidation against people for expressing differing views. (Alsalem, 2023).*

The parties involved in the current skirmishes where terminology such as TERF is in use are identified here: “women’s rights activists” on the one hand and “transgender activists” on the other. And the document describes the extent of these skirmishes:

*We have witnessed incidents of verbal and physical abuse, harassment, and intimidation, with the purpose of sabotaging and derailing [women's/feminist] events as well as silencing the women who wish to speak at them. (Alsalem, 2023).*

Those affected by such threatening behaviour, individuals such as J.K. Rowling (2020) and Kathleen Stock in the UK (2021), as well as numerous other less well-known women in the UK, the USA and Canada have attested to such abuse. Indeed, the UN document lists these various reprisals against women to include censorship, legal harassment, employment loss, loss of income, removal from social media platforms and speaking engagements, and the refusal to publish research conclusions and articles... all part of what has been lightly termed the “cancel culture,” in which social censorship drives official/institutional censorship of those who do not comply with the assertions, demands and beliefs of transgender activism and genderism, more generally.

The transgender activist side and its considerable number of fans and lobby groups have developed and promoted aggressive language such as TERF on social media platforms (for an array of examples, check <http://terfisaslur.com/>) and appeared in mobs to disrupt academic and public talks, shout speakers down and harass and threaten them in public and in their private lives. They are supported by strong organizations such as the Stonewall Equality Limited organization in the UK and a crowd of experts among “gender-specialized” psychologists, medical specialists and clinics as well as politicians and academics, driven, as some argue (Raymond, 2023) by the technologization of gender identity – the development of chemical, hormonal, surgical and other treatments that promote a lucrative industry of “transgenderism”.

Even certain academics assert an absolutely aggressive stance toward feminism. In the introduction to a recent special issue of the *Transgender Studies Quarterly* (2022) 9 (3): 311–333, editors, Serena Bassi and Greta LaFleur, claim that feminism today is in fact “postfascist feminism,” since, they write, it uses the same techniques as 1930s Nazi and Italian fascist propaganda for its cause. They end their 20-page diatribe with the finding that feminism today is “right-wing, ultra-conservative, white-supremacist, and obviously anti-Semitic” (Bassi & LaFleur, 2022, p.316). Theirs is a typical battering ram in the skirmish.

On the other side of the skirmish, on the other ‘team’ (Biden, October 2023), are the “gender critical feminists” and other women’s groups who continue to focus on women, setting aside the finer points of gender performativity, publicly-declared sexual orientation, or what Kathleen Stock refers to as “the fiction” that large parts of Anglo-American sociopolitical culture seems to subscribe to, namely that biological sex is a matter of individual choice and feeling that can be adjusted and fixed with the right dosage of hormones, other chemicals, and surgeries or simply announced.

For those who are partisan to “gender critical feminism”, the definition of “woman” is clear: it is “adult human female”. Further, they insist that their concern with women, now termed gender critical feminism, is not *about* transwomen. In fact, this is viewed as a popular mischaracterisation that trans activists and lobby groups deploy against feminist groups (against women) and these groups’ steadfast focus on women (Lawford-Smith, 2020).

Others engage with the elimination of women and women’s struggles for rights and recognition from public discourse, for instance, they address the daily use in Canadian media of the term “pregnant people” rather than “pregnant women,” or of terminology such as “menstruator” or “person with a uterus” for women. Zoe Strimpel writes, “we have to honor the actual meaning of words, like woman. We have to insist that those meanings are important. We have to go back, again, to first principles.” (Strimpel, 2022, para. 36) Still others, like Kathleen Stock (2021) and Helen Joyce (2021) in the UK, Amy Hamm in Canada, and Janice Raymond (2023; (1979) 1994) in the USA write articles and entire books on the issues that genderism raises against women and feminism, make regular appearances for interviews and talks (often interrupted by trans activists), and risk the loss of their employment for the views they hold and the perspectives they develop.

This is a local struggle; a power struggle between different factions with hard boundaries. It pits generations, groups of intellectuals and academics, medical practitioners, gender clinics, psychologists and entire institutions against each other, and, as the UN rapporteur reports (Alsalem, 2023), is seriously impinging on women’s rights to express their views on sexual orientation, gender and related sensitive issues. It is a sizeable part of the contemporary cancel culture.

Should it be translated? Transported to other lands and languages? Do these genderist orientations and the struggles around them, their promotion through media and pop culture, as well as the legal and now increasingly pedagogical/educational issues they raise — in Anglo-America — need to be brought into play in other cultures? Given the fact that the word “gender” alone has proven to be quite untranslatable, given the “local” nature of the genderist phenomenon, and given the confusion, chaos and conflict currently seething in Anglo-America on these issues, it might be best to set the language of genderism and its opponents aside, report on what is happening and analyse the problems, *but not translate*. What would be the benefit to the goals of transnational feminist translation to engage with these struggles, bound as they are to Anglo-American culture, cultural history, politics and economics? How would such translation benefit marginalized groups elsewhere in their own gender orientations? While work “from beyond” – from other cultures and politics - may sometimes be a solid argument *for* translation, there is the equally strong rebuttal of neo-colonialist Anglo-American influences that undermine or completely negate existing local

knowledges and the practices based on them. Moreover, the toxicity of the current debates is entirely negative. Good reasons here for non-translation.

## CONCLUSION

### *Back to Transnational Feminist Translation and Translation Studies*

It seems wise in these times of increasingly confused and conflictive “genderism” to not pursue the translation of texts or even the language that derives from these struggles. The language is unstable and relates to the Anglo-American pop and media/driven culture that has focused on the options and opportunities of queer. Queer does not first and foremost address women; queer and the adherents of queer have been instrumental in sidelining women’s issues, and even women’s existence as a group. Further, in these unsettled times, the risk of conflict stemming from views such as Beatrice Spallaccia (2022) arguing that American youth fiction focused on “transchildren” is progressive while the other cultures who have not yet embraced this concept are “backward,” does not bode well.

Better to focus on producing as much transnational feminist translation and translation studies as possible in order to learn about and validate what exists in other cultures, and what the Anglo-American culture might learn from them. The 2015 collection of texts, *Provocations. A Transnational Reader in the History of Feminist Thought* (Alcalde, Bordo, & Rosenman, 2015) works in that direction, collecting and presenting “feminist texts” in translation along with academic commentary and explanation from a series of different cultures, thus broadening the spectrum. Similarly, the Colombian translation studies journal *Mutatis Mutandis* (Castro, Ergun, Spoturno & Flotow, eds. 2020) has recently broadened its approach by commissioning and producing two transnational feminist issues with articles in Portuguese, Spanish and English preceded by solid abstracts in the other languages, thus countering the ‘English-only’ academic recipe that has long been in place.

In English, too, the transnational approach has been much more energetically pursued, with Emek Ergun publishing *Virgin Crossing Borders* (Ergun, 2023), an account and analysis of her translating Hanne Blank’s book *Virgin: The Untouched History* into Turkish followed by a study of the Turkish reception. Julia Bullock and Pauline Henry-Tierney’s recent collection, *Translating Simone De Beauvoir’s The Second Sex. Transnational Framing, Interpretation and Impact* (Bullock & Henry-Tierney, 2023), which examines Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Hungarian, Polish, English, and Japanese translations of Beauvoir’s book is another approach toward transnational interests in feminist work. Finally, the Canadian collection of twelve different essays on translation composed by women from southeast Asia, Africa and the Middle East, *River in an Ocean* (Abbas, 2023) not only extends the reach of women translators’ voices but brings issues such as those first referred to by De Lima Costa and Alvarez in 2014 into the picture: namely: the need to decolonialize accounts of women’s migrancy, refugeeism, life in diaspora, racialization, poverty and their work as translators of some of the many languages of the ‘global south’ about whose interactions and combinations the Anglo-American and European translation studies know little. Finally, and most recently, the appearance of an academic article on the controversies triggered by competing Chinese translations of the works of a radical feminist South Korean group (Cheng, 2023) reveals many other areas of study in the field of transnational feminist translation that are available and worthy of attention, and far more so, perhaps than the linguistic (and physical) skirmishes around “genderism” in the ‘global north.’

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