



Launching *Feminist Translation Studies*

Olga Castro & María Laura Spoturno

To cite this article: Olga Castro & María Laura Spoturno (2024) Launching *Feminist Translation Studies*, *Feminist Translation Studies*, 1:1, 1-5, DOI: [10.1080/29940443.2024.2411513](https://doi.org/10.1080/29940443.2024.2411513)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/29940443.2024.2411513>



Published online: 06 Nov 2024.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 385



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

EDITORIAL



Launching *Feminist Translation Studies*

It is sensible to say that feminist translation studies comes at the crossroads between two relatively young yet very dynamic disciplines: translation studies and feminist studies. As such, it is not surprising that the first publications openly claiming the label ‘feminist translation’ – at least in the Western academic tradition – emerged no more than a few decades ago, by scholars who were both translation practitioners and feminist activists in their cultural milieu. Much has been written about the fertile environment provided by the geopolitical and sociolinguistic context of Quebec from the 1970s to the early 1990s. Framed within the struggle for sovereignty over anglophone Canada, the cultural development in this francophone territory was then extraordinary, with avant-garde feminist writers occupying a particularly prominent place. These French-speaking feminist writers undoubtedly *had* to be heard (via translation) in the rest of English-speaking Canada. We thus have, on the one hand, translation advancing the cause of feminism by enabling these Quebecois authors to cross borders within Canada and beyond. On the other, feminism was key to translation, as it fostered new understandings that challenged mainstream theoretical and practical analyses about translation at the time. Canadian scholars at the forefront of this cultural movement produced pioneering work reflecting upon the potential, limitations, ethics and implications of literary ‘feminist translation.’

This is not to say Canadian feminist translation scholars and practitioners were the first to implement a feminist approach to translation, to identify the instrumental role of translation for broadening the scope of cross-border feminist encounters or to theorize about these issues. In fact, the feminist historiography of translation provides us with numerous examples of specific, though often isolated, gender-conscious interventions and reflections that had taken place centuries ago, as well as with other contemporary (and also subsequent) approaches to those coming from Quebec. Yet, by explicitly claiming the ‘feminist translation’ label, the so-called Canadian school is generally considered to have established feminist translation studies as a distinct area of research.

Since those beginnings, studies of translation and feminism have flourished. It was not until the 2010s, however, that the field of feminist translation studies experienced a significant surge, with feminist theories and gender insights informing a vast number of theoretical studies and practical inquiries on both translation and interpreting, as well as at a pedagogical and professional level. Indeed, many scholars in translation studies as well as practising translators and interpreters, individually and collectively, have adopted feminist perspectives on their academic and professional work over the years. More recently, as we have argued elsewhere, feminist scholars and activists, particularly those working from a transnational feminist stance, have shown a growing interest in the study of translation. Conceptualising translation ‘in the era of transnational feminisms’ (Castro and Spoturno 2020, 13) implies understanding translation as a crucial instrument in building alliances to challenge prevailing hegemonies in today’s world defined by

globalization and neoliberal values. We would posit, then, that this most relevant moment in the development of the discipline could be termed as a *transnational turn* in feminist translation scholarship.

These interdisciplinary encounters have led to an unprecedented epistemological and geopolitical growth in feminist translation studies (Castro et al. 2020). In terms of thematic development, providing an accurate overview of feminist translation studies has become increasingly challenging in a rapidly expanding and complex field. Still, as we illustrate in our comprehensive contribution 'Translation and Feminisms', published online at *Dictionary of Gender in Translation* (Castro and Spoturno 2022), a substantial number of research themes can be clearly identified. Some of the primary areas of enquiry have unearthed the contributions of feminist and/or women translators and interpreters across history; studied feminist and gender-conscious translation strategies in the literary, audio-visual or advertising domains; scrutinized the translation and circulation of women writers and feminist writings; analyzed the cultural and socio-political aspects of work by women translators, interpreters, writers, artists, publishers and other agents; examined the role of translation and interpreting in enabling (or disabling) transnational feminist as well as human rights activism, within and across different regions of the world; paid attention to pedagogical practices in the feminist and/or in the translation and interpreting classroom; or explored the implications, opportunities and risks posed by technology, machine translation and artificial intelligence. In all cases, an emerging interest in adopting intersectional perspectives is noticeable, with a greater number of approaches highlighting the need for transdisciplinary cooperation across feminisms and race studies, indigenous studies, decolonial studies, ecocriticism, LGBTIQ+ studies, queer studies or, more recently, disability studies.

In terms of its geopolitical expansion, the field of feminist translation studies has also been enhanced by the work of scholars, educators, activists and practitioners coming from a variety of academic traditions and disciplinary backgrounds, who conduct and publish their research in multiple languages and/or following different academic language conventions. These contributors are extensively discussing not only case studies contextualized in a wider range of political, social and cultural spaces, but also navigating renewed epistemologies, teaching practices, and (re)visiting the ethics of feminist translation from their distinct situated positions.

This epistemological and geopolitical growth has been reflected in and fueled by an equally increasing number of conferences, symposia and thematic panels devoted to addressing different facets of the field, framed both within translation studies and feminist studies. At the same time, courses on gender and translation in different university settings have proliferated in many parts of the world, be it as specialist modules offered as part of a research-led curriculum, or, perhaps more often, as one-off sessions in a generalist module about contemporary translation theories – either way, the result is invariably rewarding, as these courses are leading to a greater interest among postdoctoral researchers, PhD candidates and MA students from diverse regions, who ultimately bring fresh perspectives that help ensure a healthy development and consolidation of the field. This expansion has also been accompanied by a noticeable rise not only in the number of monographs and textbooks, but also edited volumes and journal special issues published in a larger variety of languages – to the extent that keeping track of all these publications is becoming

a notably difficult task. And yet, our own experience as editors and contributors to these publications, as well as anecdotal evidence gathered in informal discussions with other colleagues, revealed that the number of submissions far exceeded the capacity of the journals and anthologies while, simultaneously, more and more studies on feminism, gender and translation or interpreting were being published in non-thematic issues of generalist journals.

What the field lacked, to the best of our knowledge, was a peer-reviewed periodical specifically dedicated to exploring the multiple encounters between translation studies and feminist studies. This new journal, *Feminist Translation Studies*, fills this gap, aiming to become a recognized home for those who identify as feminist translation scholars. Envisioned by Olga Castro and enthusiastically supported by Maria Laura Spoturno, it seeks to help strengthen and ensure a sustained advancement of the field. At a time when new thematic journals on translation studies are emerging and when different journals on feminist studies are being introduced in a variety of disciplines, the dynamic and promising field of feminist translation studies can now also take pride in its new journal. This periodical publication will act as a reference point where established and early-career scholars, graduate students, practitioners, activists and educators alike can participate in stimulating conversations, whether as contributors aiming to engage with a like-minded audience or as readers seeking a credible source for current discussions in the field. By providing a platform of debate and recognition within the academic community, acknowledging the distinct problems, methods and objectives inherent to this research field, the journal will serve as a unique channel for promoting ongoing scholarly discussions.

Feminist Translation Studies is a refereed international journal that invites submissions of original theoretical research articles by scholars, empirical papers by practitioners and activists, as well as pedagogic studies by trainers and educators. It releases two issues per year, and starting in 2025, it will also publish a special issue annually on timely topics within its aims and scope. The journal submission portal for research papers is permanently open, and, after successfully going through a double peer-reviewed process, they are published with a DOI as 'online first' articles before being assigned to a specific issue.

The journal publishes original papers in English that advance (intersectional) feminist perspectives within the disciplines of translation and interpreting studies, as well as translation-related perspectives within the discipline of (transnational) feminist studies. By focusing on a range of geopolitical contexts, language combinations and academic cultures, the journal demonstrates the diverse range of interests and pursuits in feminist translation studies and addresses activism across and among the so-called global North and global South. Crucially, this involves not only recruiting participants and authors from a wide range of communities worldwide, but also discussing the unique questions and challenges that this broader participation introduces to the field.

In order to offer room for lively debate and dialogue, space is allocated in each issue for shorter pieces that may pose either broader or more specific questions of interest. These range from reviews of recent and significant publications in the field to roundtable chapters and discussions, interviews, in-conversation pieces, review essays, and critical commentaries on feminist translations, all of which will be typically commissioned by the editorial team. As the journal establishes itself, as general editors, we would like to explore additional types of outputs, such as pedagogical

experiences and proposals for teaching feminism and translation in different academic settings, or translations of key articles originally published in languages other than English that have not yet received enough scholarly attention worldwide. We unreservedly recognize that a multilingual journal would be ideal in terms of inclusivity, though this aspiration is hindered by practical issues. At this stage, we lack the resources to provide translation services and an adequate review process across languages. As a result, English remains the working language for publication in the journal.

Feminist Translation Studies boasts a diverse editorial team, with its two general editors currently based in Spain and the UK, and in Argentina. The journal also benefits from the invaluable collaboration of Vasiliki Misiou, our assistant editor located in Greece, and the crucial assistance of Luciana Carvalho Fonseca, our book review editor based in Brazil. Committed to fostering a plural forum, the editorial board is composed of renowned scholars in the fields of translation studies and feminist studies with a wide geographical and interdisciplinary coverage, with affiliations to higher education institutions in Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Egypt, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Peru, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Turkey, UK, U.S.A., and other countries. Editorial board members will conduct peer-reviews of manuscripts, offer the editors recommendations for possible referees, promote the journal, solicit papers at conferences and, whenever necessary, provide strategic editorial advice to the editors.

As co-founders and first general editors of this journal, we want to take the opportunity to extend our gratitude to all colleagues who have agreed to be part of this initiative, as well as to those who endorsed the project as we were making progress during the lengthy process of starting a new journal. We are particularly indebted to Kate Morse and Patrick Fallon, from Taylor and Francis, for their early support, perseverance and dedication to make this journal become a reality.

We are thrilled to formally launch *Feminist Translation Studies*, with an inaugural issue that clearly showcases the abiding interest and generous support within the broader scientific community, both from renowned scholars and activists and a new generation of researchers that bring innovative studies and perspectives to the fore. Feminist translators, book reviewers and peer reviewers have also contributed their expertise and wisdom to this issue. The first issue of this gap-filling journal represents a rich tapestry of voices, arising from various regions of the world. They undoubtedly highlight the dynamism and potential of this field of study, which, we firmly believe, is here to stay.

Funding

The work was supported by the Agencia Nacional de Promoción Científica y Tecnológica [PICT-2021-GRFTI-00753]; Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas [PIP 112202101 00773CO]; Ministerio de Universidades [BG22/00123]; Universidad Nacional de La Plata [H967].

References

- Castro, Olga, Emek Ergun, Luise von Flotow, and María Laura Spoturno. 2020. "Towards Transnational Feminist Translation Studies." *Mutatis Mutandis. Revista Latinoamericana de Traducción* 13 (1): 2–10. <https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.mut.v13n1a01>.
- Castro, Olga, and María Laura Spoturno. 2020. "Feminismos y traducción: apuntes conceptuales y metodológicos para una traductología feminista transnacional." *Mutatis Mutandis. Latin American Translation Journal* 13 (1): 11–44. <https://doi.org/10.17533/udea.mut.v13n1a02>.
- Castro, Olga and María Laura Spoturno. 2022. "Translation and Feminisms." *Dictionnaire du genre en traduction/Dictionary of Gender in Translation/Diccionario del género en traducción*. <https://worldgender.cnrs.fr/en/entries/translation-and-feminisms/>.

Olga Castro

University of Warwick, UK

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

✉ olga.castro@warwick.ac.uk  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2825-9618>

María Laura Spoturno

Universidad Nacional de La Plata / CONICET, Argentina

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9678-5767>