

BOOK REVIEW

Luise von Flotow and Hala Kamal (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender*, Routledge, 2020; 594 pages.

Edited by Luise von Flotow and Hala Kamal, the *Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender* (2020) is an exploration of one all-important aspect of the ‘cultural turn’ in translation studies: the intersection of translation, feminism, and gender. In the *Handbook*, von Flotow and Kamal undertake the major task of bringing together state-of-the-art research on this delicate intersection from all over the world. Combining theory and practice, the *Handbook* is divided into an introduction, five parts and an epilogue: “Translation and Publishing Women”, “Translating Feminist Writers”, “Feminism, Gender and Queer in Translation”, “Gender in Grammar, Technologies and Audiovisual Translation”, and “Discourses in Translation”. With articles by scholars from all parts of the world, the book is a solid platform for nuanced academic voices in the field.

Part I, aptly entitled “Translating and Publishing Women” brings together twelve articles that explore the work of women translators and publishing projects in different parts of the world. From South America to Iran, and from Poland to America, this section maps a territory of women and publishing around the world. The section opens with a compelling article that is the result of a roundtable discussion by seven women scholars. Together, they explore the issue of textual authority of translators within the interdisciplinary framework of the feminist studies, literary studies, and translation studies triad. The following chapters integrate myriads of voices: Rajkumar Eligedi explores the work of Volga, an Indian translator who translates feminism into Telugu. The integration of time and place is essential to the work of Sima Sharifi and Hilary Brown. Sharifi delineates the translation of feminist texts before and after the Iranian Revolution and Brown discusses women translators of early modern Europe. Ruth Abou Rached and Sanaa Benmessaoud bring the focus back to the Arab world, specifically Iraq and the Maghreb, whereas Rosa Basaure et al. and Gabriela Yañez take it all the way to South and Latin America, with articles that highlight women’s representation in the South American cultural scene and the translation of metonymy and gender in testimonial literature by Latin American women, respectively. As for Europe, Olga Castro and Helen Vassallo tackle a cultural initiative, that is, the “Year of Publishing Women”, taken by Pakistani-British author Kamila Shamsie, who called on British publishing houses to

publish for only women for one year. Ewa Rajewska provides a ‘herstory’ of Polish women translators, whereas Pilar Godayol focuses on censorship and women writers in translation, with an emphasis on Spain under Francoism. Lastly, Biyu (Jade) Du offers an intriguing study of gender issues in interpreting studies in China.

Part II deals with specific cases of translating women writers. Elizabeth Gibbels writes on the transfer of Mary Wollstonecraft’s feminist ideas through translation and paratexts, while Garima Sharma focuses on Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* and its translations into Hindi. Three different authors in this part take an interest in Simone de Beauvoir: Julia Bullock studies two selected translations into Japanese, Hala Sami highlights de Beauvoir’s translation into Arabic, and finally Marlène Bichet expands her selection to include the translation of other French authors, namely Héléne Cixous and Monique Wittig, beside de Beauvoir. Lastly, María Laura Spoturno’s article engages with the translation of Gloria Anzaldúa’s seminal work *Borderlands/La Frontera*.

Part III goes over the translation of feminism, gender, and queer theories from the English language. The intellectual questions raised in the eight chapters revolve around the intersection of feminist, gender, and queer theories on the one hand and translation on the other hand, asking how translation introduces such concepts and the linguistic as well as cultural barriers translators face in the process. In Part III, three main streams of research can be tracked, although they are all concerned with the intersection between queer and translation, and they all give historical backgrounds of their different contexts. The first stream is concerned with the intersection between theories and practices in European non-Anglo countries. In Chapter 19, Pauline Henry-Tierney offers a literature review of books and articles stretching from 1998 to 2018 about gender and queer translations. On the same wavelength, in Chapter 24, Laura Fontanella traces queer feminist groups in Italy and Spain using translation as a political and queer transfeminist tool. The second stream in Part III displays analytic accounts of Eastern Europe in Chapters 20 and 21. Chapter 20 and Chapter 21, by Kornelia Slavova and Tatiana Barchunova, respectively, discuss Soviet and post-Soviet Russia and Central and Eastern Europe. However, while Slavova discusses the collapse of communism and the rise of feminism in CEE, asking if translation can create or change reality, Barchunova claims a history of feminist thought in Russia prior to the interest in gender and feminism in the 1990s.

The third stream is the largest and showcases the diversity of ‘feminisms’ worldwide. In Poland, for example, Ewa Kraskowska and Weronika Szwebs explain that before the translation movement introduced feminist ideas, there was a celebrated epitome of a strong woman who can be the breadwinner, keeper, and savior of the homeland. In India, Nishant Upadhyay and Sandeep Bakshi discuss the existence of queer and gender non-conforming persons who expressed their sexualities before translation and thus pose a question about the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized post-colonially. In China, Wangtaolue Guo explores pre-modern homoeroticism and non-normative sexualities in China, dating before the translation movement. On the other hand, another researcher discussing the status in China, Zhongli Yu discusses the role of translation in Chinese feminism, however different it is from Western feminism.

Part IV, entitled “Gender in Grammar, Technologies, and Audiovisual translation” can be said to tackle two main issues in translations between English and Romance languages and Arabic. One of the issues is grammatical gender and the other is linguistic sexism. Bruna Di Sabato and Antonio Perri discuss grammatical gender and the use of the masculine as generic. Johanna Monti, likewise, discusses grammatical gender and its role in the construction of male power, in the field of machine translation. Both come under the first issue: grammatical gender. Under the umbrella of linguistic sexism come the six other papers. Enora Lessinger discusses eight UN texts and their Spanish and French translations that were supposed to fight sexism, but in which the translations fall into the trap of linguistic sexism. Departing from the thesis that changing the way language works leads to a different reality, Sama Dawood attempts an analysis of the translation of sexist cleaning product labels and provides alternative translation strategies that counter the existent ones. Nihad Mansour poses a question about non-professional/volunteer subtitlers adopting a feminist approach in their linguistic renderings. Irene Ranzato investigates sexist manipulation in dubbing to see how translated texts, dubbed into Italian, filter narratives in which women attempt to come into their own. Nada Qanbar investigates the extent to which women working in the field of audiovisual translation are aware of the sexist images and expressions contained in the audiovisual texts they translate and explores the question whether they take a stand towards mitigating them. Silvia Pettini offers background content analysis of female roles in war games’ storylines.

As for Part V, it grapples with issues of discourse and translation. The translation of religious discourse constitutes a large portion of the authors' interest in this part. On the one hand, Mathilde Michaud discusses the ways in which Bible translators have consolidated the book's patriarchal biases throughout the history of its translations. On the other hand, Rim Hassen takes an interest in feminist strategies in women's translations of the Qur'an. In addition, Doaa Embabi similarly engages with Islamic discourse, but by exploring the negotiation of meaning in translations of Islamic feminist texts into Arabic. The other, smaller, portion of the part takes into consideration more than one kind of discourse. Boya Li seeks to uncover the role translation has played in the advancement of feminist knowledge about women's bodies and health in China after socio-economic reforms were introduced in 1978, while Nesrine Bessaïh and Anna Bogic provide an overview of some of the research focusing on feminist texts about women's sexual and reproductive health and their transnational circulation through translation. Handegül Demirhan, at the end of part IV, reflects on the possible definitions and nature(s) of feminist children's literature. The epilogue by Beverly Curran, finally, discusses teaching translation awareness where many students are interested in the link between their linguistic and cultural identities and how they can be explored through translation practice that includes a range of texts.

The *Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender* is a collection of articles tackling issues at the intersection of feminism and gender, and translation. Luise von Flotow and Hala Kamal have successfully grouped papers into five parts on the basis of the different general topics they tackled, moving from translating women to translating feminist writers. Then, they dive deeper to discuss concepts in the texts themselves: feminism, gender and queer in translation. Afterwards, they move to discuss 'media' i.e. machine translation and audiovisual translation. Finally, the book discusses discourses in translation. The editors Luise von Flotow, known for her decades long work on feminist translation and Hala Kamal, known for her lifelong academic and activist pursuit of a better world for women have successfully compiled an essential resource for those interested in feminism and translation, not only through the articles they compiled, but also in giving space to a younger generation of researchers and widening the scope of translation studies, as well.

In its transnational scope, the *Routledge Handbook of Translation, Feminism and Gender* includes work related to more than twenty countries and across a variety of languages and cultures. It is also worth noting that the editors have given ample room for Arab researchers, specifically Egyptian researchers from

different universities in Egypt, with articles by Sama Dawood, interested in computer-assisted translation and interpreting, Doaa Embabi, working on Islamic feminism and its intersection with translation, Nihad Mansour, specialized in linguistics and translation, and Hala Sami, focusing on women in literature and translation. More Arab scholars have been involved in the project as reviewers, including Tahia Abdel Nasser, Omaima Abou-Bakr, Hebatallah Aref, Amani Badawy, Nadia El-Kholy, Hoda Elsadda and Ferial Ghazoul. In this sense, the *Handbook* carries an additional value in the contributions of Arab scholars to the current debates on translation, feminism and gender.

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