

CALL FOR PAPERS FOR A GUEST-EDITED EDITION OF THE JOURNAL OF TRANSLATION STUDIES IN AFRICA

FEMINISMS AND TRANSLATORS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH

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In a powerful gesture on 15 November 2024, a Māori member of the Australian Parliament invoked the cry of *khambata, khambata* during a parliamentary session, and conflated in that act a translation and an adaptation of an assertion of autonomy, action and resistance. In an embodied language replete with the dramatic motion of collective action, she led the protest into the sanctorum of the well of the Parliament, in full view of a world unused to this idiom in that setting. The medium of the Internet conveyed the shock waves and transmitted that text, its lexicon and locale, to the whole world.

In 1974, rural women in the Indian state of Uttarakhand in a profound act of translation of the notion of the Self as Nature, courageously clasped to their bodies, ash trees to prevent them from being axed down, and gave an environment preservation movement its nomenclature – the Chipko movement. The Quechua women of the Amazon, the Sami of Norway, indeed women in many marginalised and non-visible regions of the world have all enacted powerful translations of their realities and world views in imaginative and effective ways, not only finding unique modes of resistance to domination and oppression, but also of self-expression and articulation of their thoughts and desires in languages which go beyond linguistic systems to be globally understood. Anchored in their own locales, these statements from ordinary and exceptional women both reinforce and diverge from normative feminist narratives and theories of feminism and translation emanating from the metropolises of the global North.

In these narratives we may find a different understanding of language itself, as well as a cultural exploration and expansion of the female role. Does the fact of being a non-English speaking, non-monolingual region and people push the boundaries for an understanding of translation and the translational? How can we then think feminism? Is Feminist equal to ?women practitioners? How do we define feminism by translation? Is it limited to female translators? Is it the translation of works by women? Or do we refer to a set of commitments to the subversion of hierarchical structures?

When we think feminism, by default we use the parameters, concepts and ideation emanating from the metropolises of the USA and Western Europe. .The paradigm of the global North have

defined feminism for the longest time. The link between radical movements, translators and knowledge production and dissemination is well documented, in the role that translation and translators have played in energising and shaping the cultural, the social and the political in diverse parts of the world. Accessibility to a text in a familiar language paves the way for new ideas. With this special edition, we would like to explore the role of women translators in the Global South as they produce, transmit, and decolonize knowledge. Specifically this call envisions a conversation between Africa and other global South contexts, including but not limited to the African diaspora, on the special ways in which feminist thought and agency play out through translation viewed as a mode of the production and dissemination of knowledge. The plural form 'feminisms' in the topic refers to our view that feminism is enacted in unique ways, both constrained and defined by local/different contexts.

We invite contributors to explore the uniqueness of Global South feminisms in the awareness that culturally the Global South is not a swathe of homogenous, undifferentiated peoples and contexts. By this we mean attending to the feminism as it plays out in local contexts, shaped and is shaped by locally grounded self-articulation, self-fashioning and self-determination. Feminist movements here have many trajectories often intersecting and overlapping with other regional, national, and global concerns. What is the connection between these feminisms and translation?

We encourage a broad conceptualisation of feminism through the prism of the works of female authors, their translations and translators. Equally, recognising that not all women creative artists work through written languages, we encourage consideration of other modes and media in which women conceptualize and express their agency, for instance in the retrieval of indigenous knowledge systems, or the translational experience of religious and spiritual practices that reinforce female agency and autonomy. Thus we include the consideration of all three of the Jakobsonian translations, i.e., intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic as interventions in the conversation on feminism.

We encourage interdisciplinary analysis of these aspects of translation including ethnographic explorations, cultures performances, medical texts and indigenous curative practices, legal frameworks of property and inheritance, media representations, religious and spiritual practices, environment communication and activism, semiotics of art and objects, to name a few.

We invite abstracts of approximately 500 words, for both conceptual and empirical papers of about 8000 words on the broad theme above.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- The translation of female authors
- Female translators and their work
- Translation in feminist reform movements
- Different assertions of feminism, such as religion, politics or culture
- Feminist movements and translation
- Feminist voices in translation
- Intersemiotic/multimodal/intermedial translators or translations
- The Global South as a context for feminism and translation
- Comparisons of feminisms in the Global south
- Translations of indigenous knowledge systems
- Female authors (academic, fiction, popular) as epistemic translators

Timeline:

- Submission of abstracts: 14 March 2025
- Decision on abstracts: 11 April 2025
- Submission of papers: 1 January 2026
- Feedback from reviewers: 28 February 2026
- Submission of final version of papers: 1 July 2026
- Publication: 1 September 2026

Abstracts should be sent to JTSA2026@ufs.ac.za

Please send all submissions in Word format and name the document with your surname.