

The 3rd East Asian Translation Studies Conference (EATS3) – June 2019

Abstract:

Challenges for Transnational (Local to Global?) Translation Studies in the Field of Feminism and Gender

Luise von Flotow

The conference theme, “*From the Local to the Global and Back. Translation as a Construction of Plural and Dialogic Identities of East Asia,*” is very relevant to questions raised in current research and publishing projects around the topic of feminism, gender and translation. The book project *Translating Women. Different Voices and New Horizons* (2017. ed. Luise von Flotow and Farzaneh Farahzad) sought to move this research precisely from the ‘local to the global,’ seeking out, commissioning, editing and publishing work on questions related to women translators and women writers in translation from beyond the Anglo-American Eurozone, which has largely dominated the field. Political issues around the influence of the ‘West’ abounded in this project, as did the question of the hegemony of English. The current project – a Handbook on Translation, Feminism and Gender (eds. Luise von Flotow and Hala Kamal) – is facing similar challenges: can local ‘Western’ feminism be translated into global spheres? How does this particular ‘local’ affect the ‘global?’ What happens in the area of women’s rights, and gender relations when the influence of the ‘West,’ translated for the ‘global’ is interpreted as neo-colonial interference? And what is the effect of English as the lingua franca, not only of the ‘local West’ but well beyond?

My talk will focus on research projects on translation in the area of feminism and gender studies in order to explore two big questions that are currently impacting such work: the power of the ‘West’ and the hegemony of English. While calls for transnational feminism have increased in volume and number (Alvarez, Sonia et al (2014); Castro, Olga and Emek Ergun (2017)), and while translation plays an important role in ‘transnational’ communications, the sensitive area of women’s studies, feminism and gender remains complicated in this regard. I will present and discuss some of these complications.

Alvarez, S. et al. (2014). *Translocalities/Translocalidades: Feminist Politics of Translation in the Latin/a Americas*. Durham, Duke University Press.

Castro, O. and E. Ergun (2017). *Feminist Translation Studies. Local and Transnational Perspectives*. London, Routledge.