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Epistemic Violence 2.0: The Algorithmic Censorship of Selected Asian Feminist Narratives in Translation

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Abstract

The paper draws on feminist critiques of translation bias and postcolonial translation studies to combine theoretically driven analysis with a close reading of comparative translations produced by human translators and machine translation platforms. This approach highlights instances in which political metaphors, poetic silences and gendered language are mistranslated or neutralised altering the meaning of feminist discourse. Using feminist literary works in Hindi and Persian as examples of misinterpretations such as Google's mistranslation of Hindi gendered pronouns and the softening or replacement of radical feminist language with apolitical phrasings the paper postulates a critical humanities intervention rather than presenting an empirical evaluation of machine translation. It contends that translation is not a neutral act but rather a site of ideological framing where some narratives are emphasised while others are weakened or eliminated.

Keywords: translation, machine coloniality, epistemic violence, algorithmic bias, algorithmic untranslatability, feminist narrative

Introduction

When literature and poetry transcend the linguistic and cultural boundaries, , they offer a window through which to understand the respective worldviews. Algorithmic translation extends this potential by determining which meanings are acceptable, which silences are legible, and which voices are censored. Within feminist and postcolonial scholarship, Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak have argued that silence has long been conceptualised as a two-pronged state: a sign of erasure and oppression as well as a tactic of refusal and resistance.[1] Silence frequently serves as an intentional disruption, rather than as an absence, of legibility and a refusal to be easily absorbed into prevailing epistemologies of trauma, such as repression and fragmentated expressions. Translation, when mediated through colonial and patriarchal frameworks, silences the 'subaltern' voice by rendering it discursively illegible or by reconfiguring it to fit hegemonic discourses, as demonstrated by Spivak's now-canonical concept of 'epistemic violence.'[2] This epistemic violence has now migrated from colonial administrative knowledge systems to globally and digitally

[1] Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Duke University Press, 2003): Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (Routledge, 1993). https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822384649.

[2] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (University of Illinois Press, 1988), 280.

universalised computational ones. Translation has taken on a new technological form in modern contexts; wherein digital infrastructures are becoming increasingly important to global circulation: the algorithm. Considering what I refer to as 'Epistemic Violence 2.0,' the algorithmic censorship and distortion of non-western feminist narratives by AI-powered translation systems, epistemic violence can be revisited and reconceptualised in this context. This reconceptualisation is more than just a symbolic continuation of Spivak's criticism. Instead, it reacts to a real change in the ecology of knowledge production around the world. However, tracing the curves of that change necessitates a philosophical and historical analysis wherein algorithmic epistemic violence emerges as the latest iteration of the relationship between the world and regulations of knowledge making and translation.

This paper delineates three historical eras in the interplay between translation and epistemic violence. Initially, colonial translation systems established hierarchical linguistic structures that marginalised colonised knowledge systems. Second, late twentieth-century globalisation established English as the standard medium for international comprehension. The present phase, 'Epistemic Violence 2.0,' is defined by algorithmic mediation, wherein automated technologies homogenise linguistic diversity on a large scale under the guise of efficiency and accessibility. In contrast to previous manifestations of translation violence[3] that were overtly linked to imperial institutions, the very possibility or act of translation allowed any culture to be spoken about in a shared register. This became a form of violence when it silenced pluralism and forced a universalising discourse that marginalised alternative histories and suffering. Machine translation through algorithmic mediation similarly functions through infrastructural obscurity, rendering its distortions as technological certainties rather than political choices. The methods of text transmission across borders and languages have rapidly evolved with the advent of machine learning-driven translation tools such as DeepL, Microsoft Translator and Google Translate. Prior postcolonial discussions of translation frequently focused on issues of foreignisation, domestication, and faithfulness; however, the digital age has brought in new levels of mediation, including data-driven biases, opaque algorithmic logics, and a universalising push for linguistic standardisation. The question at hand is not just whether non-western feminist narratives are faithfully translated into English, but also whether the very silences, omissions, and untranslatable idioms that make up their resistance power are reduced to forms that are generic and readable by westerners.

Culturally specific metaphors, elliptical structures, or intentional silences that refuse disclosure are common ways that non-western feminist writings encode trauma. This demands an examination of culturally embedded metaphors of violation and resilience in Mandarin or Arabic feminist essays, the gender-neutral pronouns of Hindi that collapse into masculine defaults in digital translation, or the elliptical cadences of Japanese feminist poetry. These methods are not only literary but also philosophical and political in their ways of expressing trauma that defy linguistic conventions instead of being random peculiarities of language. Such strategies are deliberate in literary works and texts, yet they run the risk of being mistranslated, removed, or even worse, depoliticised when they are fed into algorithmic systems that have been trained primarily on the predominant western corpus-linguistic methodology.[4] Herein algorithmic mediation turns into algorithmic censorship

[3] Veena Das, 'Violence and Translation,' *Anthropological Quarterly* 75, no. 1 (1 December 2002), 107. https://doi.org/10.1353/anq.2002.0005.

[4] Kim Ebensgaard Jensen, 'Corpora and Cultural Cognition: How Corpus-Linguistic Methodology Can Contribute to Cultural Linguistics,' *Cultural Linguistics* (3 May 2017), 480. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-4056-6_22.

leading to a newer form of epistemic violence which systematically filters human complexities using optimisation techniques that prioritise fluency, neutrality, and safety at the expense of semantic clarity and emotional accuracy while silencing the potential for any literary resistance by enforcing intelligibility in accordance with the standards of a global Anglophone audience. This epistemic violence contrasts with the previously prevailing form of biases (the skewed representations) and distortion existing in human translation as well, yet it frequently functions and censors through convergence by merging and collapsing many differences into 'standard', 'neutral' norms while looking fair.

This phenomenon, which I would like to call 'algorithmic untranslatability,' is the foreclosure of feminist meaning, not because something is inherently untranslatable, but rather because algorithmic infrastructures are unable to manage its complexity. This rejection is reminiscent of previous colonial translation tactics that either ignored or reframed the 'untranslatable'[5] to conform to Eurocentric epistemologies.[6] However, this violence is scaled, automated, and depersonalised in the digital age. Under the pretence of technological neutrality, feminist epistemologies are standardised for global readability, leading to what I refer to as 'machine coloniality,' a technologically mediated continuation of colonial translation logics.

This investigation has two stakes. First, it compels us to broaden the scope of translation studies to include digital infrastructures, where meaning is guarded by algorithms rather than human translators. Second, it challenges feminist theory to consider how technology implements new, more subtle, quicker, and more difficult-to-oppose forms of silencing. Given the current situation, it becomes imperative to ask whether the subaltern can be heard when her speech is algorithmically transcribed, translated, and disseminated, in response to Spivak's question about whether she can speak.

The paper argues that algorithmic translation imposes a new form of censorship that needs to be viewed as epistemic violence in and of itself. It explores how digital translation systems enact epistemic violence by enforcing a universalising grammar that eliminates the linguistic and affective complexity of feminist writing from non-western regions. I examine how machine-led translation skews the resistant textures of women's voices by concentrating on the algorithmic mistranslation of gendered pronouns and the flattening of feminist poetics in Hindi and Persian. Selecting Hindi and Persian is methodologically deliberate due to their structurally distinct yet equally revealing challenges to machine translations without being epistemically distorted. The paper illustrates how algorithmic infrastructures perpetuate colonial and patriarchal hierarchies under the pretence of technological neutrality, while feminist translation provides counter-archives of care, opacity, and refusal through close readings of the Indian works of Mahadevi Varma as well as Forugh Farrokhzad's Persian poetry and Sholeh Wolpé's human translations of Farrokhzad's works. Algorithmic infrastructures deprive language of ambiguity, metaphor, and affect, transforming politically charged expressions into depoliticised fragments, in contrast to human translators who negotiate cultural nuance and feminist intent. It also illustrates how algorithmic translation enacts a cross-temporal violence that erases both historical memory and present critique by contrasting canonical figures like Farrokhzad and Varma with contemporary translation of their work. By doing this, I present 'Epistemic Violence 2.0' as a critical framework for

[5] Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (Verso, 2013), 33.

[6] Vinay Dharwadker, 'A.K. Ramanujan's theory and practice of translation' in *Post-colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, ed. Susan Bassenett and Harish Trivedi (Psychology Press, 1999), 132.

comprehending how, in the name of technological efficiency, digital infrastructures perpetuate patriarchal and colonial logics.

Epistemic violence and algorithmic mediation

Spivak in her foundational contribution titled 'Can the Subaltern Speak?'[7] and then in a significantly revised version of her book *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of Vanishing Present*[8] theorised the concept of 'epistemic violence' referring to the colonial attempt of systemic silencing the subaltern or colonised subject as the *Other*, as a passive idea, as an object of the Western knowledge system rather than a knower, an active participant or a speaking subject. She strongly emphasised the erasure and silence of subaltern voices during colonial regimes of knowledge. The structural modes of representation that rewrote, mistranslated, or disregarded the colonised people's epistemologies were also used to enact this violence in addition to overt repression. The stakes of epistemic violence change but remain the same in the digital age. Similar types of silencing are reproduced by algorithmic mediation, especially through automated translation systems, but in different registers. The impossibility of feminist expression to endure intact in the data-driven infrastructures of linguistic computation is like what Spivak described as the subaltern's inability to 'speak' in colonial archives.

Based on studies of machine translation conducted by Antonio Toral, it has been observed that machine translation systems are trained to maximise the probability of a target sentence given the source, using large corpora where the most frequent word sequences dominate the objective function. The research revolves around datasets with lexical variety, which are assessed based on 'type-token ratio (TTR)'[9] and lexical density. According to his research, machine translation shows a lower type-token ratio than human translation, indicating that it selects a limited, high-frequency subset of possible lexical choices rather than the richer variety a human might employ. Additionally, Toral also admitted that the proportion of content words, is also reduced in machine translation (MT) outputs, especially for neural machine translation (NMT), which produces more function-word-heavy, 'simpler' sentences. In his own words, he argues that machine translations 'tend to be simpler and more normalised and to have a higher degree of interference from the source text that [human translators] HTs.'[10] Antonio Toral[11] and Nikita Mathur, Timothy Baldwin, and Trevor Cohn [12] and other studies have consistently demonstrated that neural translation models prioritise fluency and probabilistic likelihood over semantic accuracy, yielding the outputs

[7] Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' 280.

[8] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Harvard University Press, 1999), 127. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjsf541.

[9] Antonio Toral. 'Post-editese: An Exacerbated Translationese,' In *Proceedings of Machine Translation Summit XVII: Research Track,* ed. Mikel Forcada, Andy Way, Barry Haddow, Rico Sennrich (European Association for Machine Translation, 19-23 Aug 2019), 276. https://aclanthology.org/W19-6627/.

[10] Toral, 'Post-editese,' 280.

[11] Toral, 'Post-editese,' 280.

[12] Nikita Mathur, Timothy Baldwin, and Trevor Cohn. 'Putting Evaluation in Context: Contextual Embeddings Improve Machine Translation Evaluation,' in *Proceedings of the 57th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, ed. Anna Korhonene, David Traum, Lluìs Màrquez, Florence, Italy, July-August 2019 (Association for Computational Linguistics), 2800. https://aclanthology.org/P19-1269/.

that appear natural while concealing culturally particular meanings. This tendency is especially important for languages where grammatical gender, honorifics, and affective registers encode social ties in a way that is different from English.

Machine translation uses probabilistic models that value fluency over fidelity and normativity over deviation, in contrast to human translators who can purposefully preserve ambiguity, tension, and context. Because the machine methodically transforms feminist voices into idioms and grammars that are familiar to prevailing epistemic orders, this process is not neutral. For instance, Hindi gendered pronouns (*vah/wah* or *woh*), which are not necessarily always marked gender but are also recorded with distance, number and even respect and politeness, have a lot of semantic and cultural weight in Hindi, with their use simultaneously encompassing 'he,' 'she, ' and 'they,' whereas algorithmic infrastructures reconfigure them into rigid gender binaries that are ingrained in Anglophone systems. Similarly, in cases where Hindi is strongly gendered such as use of adjectives (*acha ladka*- good boy/ *achi ladki*- good girl), occupational nouns, verbal inflections, nuances which the machines often ignore. In machine translation, resolving such ambiguity is not a neutral process. Empirical studies have shown MT systems consistently assign gendered English pronouns based on probabilistic inference from training corpora when they come across gender-neutral source languages like Hindi, Bengali and Persian.[13] These inferences are based on the dataset fed into machine such as occupational and social stereotypes. Consequently, the intentional ambiguities in the source texts are overwritten. Beatrice Savoldi, Marco Gaido, Luisa Bentivogli and colleagues,[14] in their systematic review of gender bias in machine translation, demonstrate that the masculine default influencing these probabilistic assignments stems from structurally androcentric training datasets, indicating that the distortion is intentional and a consistent characteristic of the system's design. Computational standardisation diminishes the feminist value and literary style of ambiguity. Under the guise of efficiency, algorithmic systems often convert gender-fluid terms into rigid, male-centred English pronouns, reinforcing patriarchal norms. This shift is not just a simple linguistic error or neglect but an epistemic distortion that exists by design. Likewise, ambiguity, silence, and metaphor which are central to Persian feminist poetry, particularly in the work of Farrokhzad, are routinely reduced to literal and depoliticised English phrases in machine translation. Persian literature scholar Ali Seyed-Gohrab noted in his book *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry* that Persian's literary system and rhetoric devices are mainly built with 'imagery, metaphors, and theories about them,'[15] especially in poetry wherein 'mundane earthly metaphors received a transcendent attribute, making the language ambiguous.'[16] Thus the intentionally layered figurative language in Farrokhzad's work that critiques patriarchy and politics are de-radicalised by machine translations. Further Rebecca Gould added that the tradition of Persian poetic ambiguity has been crucial as a form of political

[13] Sourojit Ghosh and Aylin Caliskan, 'ChatGPT Perpetuates Gender Bias in Machine Translation and Ignores Non-Gendered Pronouns: Findings across Bengali and Five Other Low-Resource Languages.' *AIES '23: Proceedings of the 2023 AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society*, Montreal, August 2023, (Association for Computing Machinery), 902–3, https://doi.org/10.1145/3600211.3604672.

[14] Beatrice Savoldi, Marco Gaido, Luisa Bentivogli, Matteo Negri, and Marco Turchi, 'Gender Bias in Machine Translation,' *Transactions of the Association for Computational Linguistics* 9 (2021), 847. https://doi.org/10.1162/tacl_a_00401.

[15] Ali A. Seyed-Gohrab, *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry* (Brill, 2012), 1.

[16] Seyed-Gohrab, *Metaphor and Imagery in Persian Poetry,* 10.

protection wherein the concept of inimitability is used but gets shattered when rendered literally in translation. She argues that 'beyond its contribution, to Arabic and Persian literary theory, the concept of inimitability has a significant, and largely unexplored, contribution to make to the study of translation generally.'[17] Further, MT renders Farrokhzad's work especially susceptible to the domesticating logic of machine translation systems. Thus, what begins as a poetics of sensual ambiguity and resistance becomes emotionally muted and reshaped for global standardisation and readability.

Publicly known translation websites like Google Translate and Microsoft Translator largely present themselves as impartial mediators of linguistic diversity. However, their methods and designs are essentially ideological wherein they enforce certain set of universal grammars that mask gendered, cultural, and political complexities and subtleties. This reduction amounts to a new regime of epistemic violence rather than a mere technical error. The algorithmic archive uses *statistical generalisation* to silence, whereas the colonial archive did so by omission or misrepresentation. They eliminate the very deviations that characterise feminist writing as subversive by favouring majority linguistic usage, the grammatically 'correct' form, and the semantic average. For example, algorithmic infrastructures reconfigure the gendered pronouns' instability in Hindi.

Furthermore, algorithmic mediation poses as neutral and efficient. The algorithmic censor is concealed within the machine's probabilistic logic, whereas the colonial censor was visible in the archive. Here, the epistemic violence is precisely in its invisibility: feminist epistemologies are silenced because of 'improving accuracy' or 'user-friendliness,' rather than as political erasure. Under the pretence of technological inevitability, algorithmic infrastructures essentially uphold patriarchal and colonial logics. They actively reconstitute feminist voices into politically sanitised fragments that are acceptable to a global readership but devoid of their critical force, in addition to failing to convey these voices across linguistic boundaries.

These algorithmic mediations can be viewed as instances of 'hermeneutical marginalisation,' which is the erasure of interpretive resources required to understand feminist meaning, in accordance with Miranda Fricker's definition of epistemic injustice. In addition to being misrepresented, the feminist text is also rewritten within colonial and patriarchal epistemologies. Ruha Benjamin's discussion of 'the New Jim Code'[18] and Safiya Noble's criticism of search engines as places of 'algorithmic oppression'[19] serve as reminders that these technological systems are designed to perpetuate prevailing power structures rather than being coincidental. Accordingly, algorithmic translation rearticulates epistemic violence in computational form, serving as a twenty-first-century extension of colonial mediation.

Therefore, it is necessary to expand the discussion of epistemic violence into what could be referred to as 'Epistemic Violence 2.0' to comprehend the connection between feminism, translation, and digital infrastructures. As a structural form of censorship rather than just a technical artefact, this framework emphasises how algorithmic mediation is

[17] Rebecca Ruth Gould, 'Hard Translation: Persian Poetry and Post-National Literary Form.' *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 54, no. 2 (2018), 199. https://doi.org/10.1093/fmls/cqx039

[18] The New Jim Code describes how supposedly so-called neutral technologies reproduce racial, gendered, and colonial hierarchies under the guise of innovation.

[19] Algorithmic oppression presents how digital systems reinforce structural bias by privileging dominant cultural narratives as default within data and search infrastructures.

changing the conditions of feminist expression. Not only is mistranslation a risk, but feminist discourse is also at risk of being structurally reshaped into something it is not. In this way, the digital era creates its own subalternity: feminist authors express themselves, but algorithmic systems make them unintelligible or, worse, universally understandable at the expense of their radical uniqueness.

Theoretical framework: Silence, translation, and the algorithmic reinscription of power

This section gathers the conceptual tools required to examine how digital translation systems implement a novel form of silencing in postcolonial feminist texts, situating the paper at the nexus of (a) feminist/postcolonial explanations of untranslatability and silence, (b) traditional translation studies arguments concerning epistemic harm and domestication/foreignisation, and (c) emerging criticisms of algorithmic bias and infrastructural power. The objective is to demonstrate how current theory explains the political stakes of mistranslation and to expand on that theory by defining terms and mechanisms that capture the unique logics of digital mediation, such as 'machine coloniality,' 'algorithmic untranslatability,' and 'Epistemic Violence 2.0.'

Silence and untranslatability as feminist strategies

While the human translation itself has never been an innocent and benign alternative, as it has traditionally employed domestication, ideological filtration as well as censoring, algorithmic translation is illustrated not by distortion but by automation and opacity which covert episodic interpretive loss into systemic erasure. Yet silence is rarely just absence. It has been interpreted as methodical when it comes to Asian feminist literary traditions. As argued by King-Kok Cheung[20] as well as Patti Duncan,[21] silence, manifested through voiceless gestures, authorial hesitation, textual ellipses, functions as a deliberate tactic of resistance,[22] a refusal to comply with colonial and patriarchal regimes of knowledge's insistence on transparency. For instance, scholars have extensively documented that Farrokhzad's poems are defined by a deliberate resistance to transparency and linearity, wherein the pauses, the metaphoric opacity,[23] and her deliberate use of ambiguities around gender wherein she explore 'the self both within and beyond heterosexual love relationships.'[24] In her work, desire demands that the reader must grapple with what remains unsaid and unaddressed. Likewise, Varma, through her poetic style in Hindi in the early twentieth century, constructed

[20] King-Kok Cheung, *Articulate Silences: Hisaye Yamamoto, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Joy Kogewa* (Cornell University Press, 2018), 2. https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501721120.

[21] Patti Duncan, *Tell This Silence: Asian American Women Writers and the Politics of Speech* (University of Iowa Press, 2009), 2. https://doi.org/10.1353/book8872.

[22] Duncan, *Tell This Silence,* 16.

[23] Marta Simidchieva, 'Men and Women Together: Love, Marriage and Gender in Forugh Farrokhzād's *Asir,*' in *Forugh Farrokhzad, Poet of Modern Iran: Iconic Woman and Feminine Pioneer of New Persian Poetry,* ed. Dominic Parviz Brookshaw and Nasrin Rahimieh (Bloomsbury Academic, 2023), 22. https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755606832.

[24] Farzaneh Milani, *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers* (Syracuse University Press, 1992), 132.

silences not as voids but purposely as richly affective gestures like inflections of longing,[25] pain,[26] and resistance[27] that remain embedded in a feminist poetics as a genre that refused patriarchal legibility.

However, these silences are frequently regarded as deficiencies in translation. When machine translations systems are trained on parallel and lexical corpora, the lack of output is regarded as an error or failure, pushing to complete the sentence or context even when semantic equivalence is complex or ambiguous. Despite their attention to poetics, human translators like Sholeh Wolpé struggle to convey Persian ambiguity in English without diminishing it. Wolpé repeatedly mentioned in several interviews her difficulty in other projects with ' a language where we don't have gendered pronouns, no "he" or "she," the translated poetry I was picking up had genders. All the birds were "he." And God is a "He",'[28] thus emphasising that her purposeful use of Persian nouns and pronouns instead of the gendered pronouns was a deliberate choice no previous translator of the same texts had made. In another instance she noted that she, 'agonized for months over how to present the idea of the "inner self" without philosophical impositions.' As she explained, 'In [the] Sufi tradition, the "I" stands between our true self and the Beloved. Once it is destroyed, we unite with the Divine and hence recover our true self.'[29] In contrast, algorithms overcome the challenge rather than 'face' it. Silence is considered as a state of error state for a machine which is expected to be filled, smoothed out, or left out for readability. So, in cases where silence is strategically used in feminist literature as a rejection or lack of clarity, this methodology becomes structurally incompatible with the machine translation system which attempts to provide clarity by getting rid of the ambiguity. In this sense, feminist opacity is turned into erasure through algorithmic translation, which effectively silences the silence itself. Édouard Glissant advocates for this idea of 'right to opacity'[30] which is the refusal of complete understanding to fight colonial reduction. This same perspective—opacity as agency—can be applied to feminist writers in Hindi or Persian who choose to preserve idioms, metaphors, or gender markers that defy easy translation into English. Furthermore, the political implications of untranslatable content are poignantly highlighted by Emily Apter's work in *The Translation Zone*. According to Apter, the untranslatable is a generative category[31] rather than a deficit since it highlights the boundaries of linguistic universality and the enduring nature of cultural singularity. However, the untranslatable are treated as noise

[25] Karine Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma and the Chhayavad Age of Modern Hindi Poetry* (University of California Press, 1983), 44.

[26] Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma and the Chhayavad Age of Modern Hindi Poetry,* 91; Priti Saxena. 'Separation Pain in Mahadevi Verma's Poem "Prabha",' *RESEARCH HUB International Multidisciplinary Research Journal* 10, no. 2 (28 February 2023), 24. https://doi.org/10.53573/rhimrj.2023.v10n02.006.

[27] Karine Schomer, *Mahadevi Varma and the Chhayavad Age of Modern Hindi Poetry* (University of California Press, 1983), 4.

[28] Theodore McCombs, 'Sholeh Wolpé: If I Do Not Translate, It's A Sin,' *Guernica* (October 2017), https://www.guernicamag.com/sholeh-wolpe-not-translate-sin/.

[29] Alta L. Price, 'Women Translating the Classics: An Interview with Emily Wilson, Sholeh Wolpé, and Arshia Sattar,' in *Words Without Borders: The Home for International Literature* (August 2018), https://wordswithoutborders.org/read/article/2018-08/women-translating-the-classics-emily-wilson-sholeh-wolpe-arshia-sattar/.

[30] Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation,* translated by Betsy Wing (University of Michigan Press, 1997), 189.

[31] Apter, *Against World Literature*, 86.

to be removed by algorithmic infrastructures. Drawing on these notions, we can see how algorithmic infrastructures violate the feminist insistence on the irreducible. In Hindi or Persian, what is considered radical withholding turns into a gap in English, where the political power of opacity is lost.

Translation, epistemic violence, and postcolonial critique

In the digital age, Spivak's fundamental idea of epistemic violence, the stifling of marginalised voices through hegemonic representational frameworks, remains remarkably relevant. Spivak contends that the translator has an ethical obligation[32] to respect the source language's rhetorical figuration, historical context, and emotional depth.[33] Algorithmic systems shirk this duty, viewing translation as a data optimisation exercise that prioritises fluency, universality and efficiency over subtlety. However, as argued by Lawrence Venuti, fluency is not a neutral metric of translation. Instead, he writes,

> Fluency is not in itself domesticating; the problem is rather posed by fluent strategies that are narrowly restricted to the current standard dialect of the translating language. In producing an illusionistic effect of transparency, any fluent strategy conceals the translator's inscription of an interpretation through the application of receiving cultural resources and ideologies.[34]

In the name of ultimate transparency, algorithmic translation represents the ideal of seamless intelligibility that completely removes the translator and makes both cultural specificity and human mediation invisible. In AI contexts, the 'smoothness' Venuti criticises turns into a machine aesthetic of fluency that brutally represses cultural dissonance, accent, and opacity—all of which are feminist forms of resistance.

The central contention here is that algorithmic translation does not only duplicate the domestication which has been historically linked to human translators, rather, it also reconfigures translation into an infrastructure process regulated by statistical optimisation. While human translation entails contextual interpretation that may be challenged or amended, neural machine translation systems proactively standardise such language variation by favouring neutrality, fluency, and universally comprehensible modes of communication. Subsequently, some of the basic features of feminist literature such as silence, ambiguity, emotional excess, and culturally ingrained metaphor, are not intentionally suppressed in machine translation but made computationally impracticable. Additionally, the emphasis on English language as the principal target attempts to underscore its status as the predominant medium for the global circulation of Asian writings through publishing, academia, and digital platforms. Thus, analysing this trajectory exposes how technological systems further perpetuate the established linguistic hierarchies while ostensibly maintaining political neutrality.

This hegemonic dominance of language becomes even more violent in a postcolonial setting. As noted by Tejaswini Niranjana in *Siting Translation*, translation has long been used as a colonial tool to appropriate and 'domesticate the colonised and repress their

[32] Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 191.

[33] Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 186, 187 and 193.

[34] Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation,* 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2008), 10–11.

heterogeneity by dismissing it as "fantastic" and "barbaric".'[35] The epistemic richness of languages like Hindi and Persian is silenced by algorithmic translation, which maintains English as the default horizon of intelligibility. The subversive layering of language breaks down when Mahadevi Varma's poetry, which is full of cultural idioms of suffering and feminine subjectivity, is translated into flattened English phrases. Similarly, algorithmic domestication makes Farrokhzad's radical feminist subjectivity, which has its roots in Persian cultural idioms, palatable for consumption around the world.

As a result, algorithmic translation is structurally complicit in epistemic violence in addition to being inaccurate. By removing texts' resistive textures and rewriting them in dominant, patriarchal grammars of legibility, it perpetuates what Spivak refers to as the 'epistemic erasure' of the subaltern.

Machine coloniality and algorithmic untranslatability

'Machine coloniality' now uses computational infrastructures that normalise English as the universal language, whereas colonialism used to be carried out by the overt imposition of foreign languages and interpretive frameworks. By encoding local epistemologies into models trained on western linguistic corpora, this machine coloniality imposes a universalising grammar that rejects their specificity.

The paradox whereby digital systems erase untranslatability by falsely resolving it is what I call 'algorithmic untranslatability.' 'Algorithmic untranslatability' denotes linguistic or emotional components that are not only challenging to translate but are routinely misrepresented due to biases in model training, data shortages, design principles, or optimisation for prevailing language standards. Indicators comprise semantic flattening, the erosion of cultural referents, and their replacement with generic equivalents. Thence, algorithms impose a false equivalency, reducing complex metaphors and silences to simple, domesticated English, while human translators may recognise and preserve the strangeness of the source. For example, automated systems reduce the Hindi word *shakti*, which means 'power,' 'feminine energy,' and 'divine force,' to just 'power,' losing its feminist and cultural connotations. These examples are not used as statistically representative samples, rather they serve as illustrative probes that expose systemic patterns in algorithmic translation. Farrokhzad's imagery of broken bodies and suppressed desires is translated into fragmented, literal phrases in Persian, where the emotional impact fades. This process colonises and miscommunicates. Algorithmic infrastructures replicate the same erasure dynamics that postcolonial critique has long recognised in colonial translation practices by substituting domestication for opacity. Thus, the modern manifestation of epistemic violence is machine colonialism.

Trauma, affect, and the limits of automated interpretation

Linearity is frequently resisted by trauma narratives, particularly those written by women in postcolonial settings. According to Cathy Caruth, one of the leading theorists in trauma studies, belatedness, repetition, and speech pauses[36] that defy representation are

[35] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (University of California Press, 1992), 165. https://doi.org/10.1525/9780520911369.

[36] Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7–8. https://doi.org/10.1353/book.20656.

characteristics of trauma. Farrokhzad uses fragmentation and sudden silences to convey the affective weight of trauma under patriarchy, while Mahadevi Varma frequently uses elliptical imagery to describe forms of suffering that cannot be fully named.

However, the goal of algorithmic translation is to maximise continuity and fluency. By filling in the gaps and 'smoothing out' discontinuities, it destroys the very frameworks that feminist literature uses to encode trauma. Metaphor is reduced to literal equivalency, silence to absence, and affect to information. Feminist trauma poetics are only readable in depoliticised, emotionally drained forms because algorithms are unable to process affective density, which represents a significant epistemic loss. These translation models and systems lack the scope to interpret culturally embedded emotions, trauma registers, and relational significance beyond mere lexical equivalence. This limitation is technical as the machine translation and learning architectures do not have accessibility to embodied memory, historical knowledge, and social nuance that influence the expression and recognition of trauma, depoliticising emotionally charged languages. Thereby the issue is not that algorithms and machines deliberately erase or distort affect, rather it is the design and the architecture that makes affect and emotion less significant, letting the existing hierarchies of intelligibility be reproduced through translation that seems neutral and objective. However, identifying this violence, identifying 'epistemic violence 2.0,' opens the door to envisioning what digital translation might look like in a feminist, decolonial, and morally responsible way.

The postcolonial critique of translation as epistemic violence, the talks about silence and untranslatability, the logics of machine coloniality, and the algorithmic erasures of affect and trauma all point to the same disturbing truth: digital infrastructures of translation are not neutral instruments but they are active participants in the reproduction of colonial and patriarchal power. Affect is not interpreted but erased, and silence is not preserved as feminist rejection but overwritten as error in what was once a question of cultural asymmetry in human translation. Whether Farrokhzad's radical poetics or Varma's inflections of gendered subjectivity, feminist writings in Hindi and Persian are only readable within the strict constraints imposed by algorithmic grammars that value speed, efficiency, and legibility over subtlety, ambiguity, and resistance. This doubles the violence by removing the linguistic and cultural specificity of feminist discourse and portraying the resulting mistranslations as universal and objective. This makes 'epistemic violence 2.0' more than just a continuation of colonial translation regimes; rather, it is a transformation of them, incorporating their logics into commonplace technologies that govern knowledge access around the world. The critical task of imagining alternative infrastructures, translation practices, archives, and platforms that centre rather than erase feminist epistemologies, is made possible by the fact that the violence is infrastructural. The following section shifts its focus to these counter-infrastructures of resistance and refusal.

Case studies in algorithmic censorship of feminist texts

Prior to discussing individual texts, it is important to highlight the centrality of case studies of feminist literature in Hindi and Persian for comprehending 'epistemic violence 2.0.' The theoretical framework (as mentioned in section 3) illustrated how algorithmic translation flattens culturally embedded metaphors, erases affect, and systematically silences ambiguity. However, abstract criticism by itself is unable to fully convey the significance of these interventions; only by following the effects of these interventions through real literary texts that have undergone both human and machine translation can they become concrete. Through case studies, we can observe how algorithmic systems alter, distort, or depoliticise

feminist poetics, from the classic to the modern, from locally rooted to globally circulating. They shed light on the ethical and epistemic ramifications of worldwide dissemination in addition to the mechanisms of digital flattening. We can observe the persistence and escalation of algorithmic violence across time, language, and cultural context by looking at both modern and classic literature, Sholeh Wolpé on the one hand, and Mahadevi Varma and Forugh Farrokhzad on the other. The following discussion on feminist infrastructures and counter-archives of refusal is made possible by these cases, which offer a tangible lens through which the abstract dynamics of machine coloniality, translational bias, and epistemic erasure are brought into focus. Additionally, the machine translations that are analysed in this paper were generated and evaluated using publicly available translation tools such as Google Translation, Microsoft Translator, DeepL and Cockatoo, accessed between May and September 2025.The outputs were collected in one session to reduce the differences and upgradations between models and are presented without any alteration. These translations are not meant to show how all machine translation systems work, but rather to show how the most popular and dominant platforms operate.

Mahadevi Varma (Hindi): Silence, rasa, and flattened affect

The interaction between algorithmic translation and traditional feminist literature shows how the very characteristics that make these works disruptive are flattened by digital infrastructures. Machine translation makes Mahadevi Varma's poetry, which is praised for its nuanced silences, layered metaphors, and affective registers, seem banal. Hindi's ability to evoke gendered subjectivity and emotional depth is neutralised into universalising English expressions that lose much of their original impact. Algorithms that interpret ambiguity as error and erotic metaphors as neutral descriptors deprive Farrokhzad's erotic-poetic defiance, and her refusal to distinguish between desire and critique, the body and language, of its intensity. By denying the right to opacity and erasing resistance as excess or noise, these distortions show how machines impose a grammar of legibility that neuters feminist power.

Before discussing ideas for feminist infrastructures and counter-archives, we require hard data that demonstrates how algorithmic systems distort feminist poetics. The abstract claims of Section 3 on real verses are tested in the two brief case studies that follow: one from modern Persian (Farrokhzad) and one from modern Hindi (Varma). I illustrate the specific losses—semantic, affective, and political—that constitute 'epistemic violence 2.0' in each case by contrasting an AI-style rendered with a human, poet-translator sensibility (where available).

For instance, silence and metaphor—gestures that undermine rigid gendered identities—are hallmarks of Varma's poetry. In her well-celebrated poem तुम्हें बाँध पाती सपने में![37] (I wish I could bind you in a dream!) in her 1933 collection नीरजा (Neerja), she represents a voice that blends the embodied experience of womanhood with spiritual longing. In lines such as:

पावस-घन सी उमड़ बिखरती,
शरद-दिशा सी नीरव घिरती,

[37] Mahadevi Varma, तुम्हें बाँध पाती सपने में!, Kavita Kosh (March 2016), paras 2–3. http://kavitakosh.org/kk/तुम्हें_बाँध_पाती_सपने_में!_/_महादेवी_वर्मा, (I wish I could catch you in my dreams! / Mahadevi Verma - Poetry Dictionary).

धो लेती जग का विषाद
ढुलते लघु आँसू-कण अपने में!

मधुर राग बन विश्व सुलाती
सौरभ बन कण कण बस जाती,
भरती मैं संसृति का क्रन्दन
हँस जर्जर जीवन अपने में!

Personally translated

Like rain clouds, I outpour and scatter,
Like the autumn horizon, I quietly surrounding,
Washing away the sorrow of the world
With the falling drops of my own tears.

As a sweet melody, I lull the world to sleep,
As fragrance, I settle in every grain deep,
I fill the universe's lament with my being,
Laughing, I carry life's weariness within me.

Machine translated (DeepL AI version):

Like a rain-cloud, swelling and scattering,
Like the autumn sky, silently closing in,
It washes away the world's sorrow
in its falling, tiny tears!

Becoming a sweet melody, it lulls the world to sleep,
Becoming fragrance, it permeates every particle,
It soaks up the cries of the universe
into its own frail, laughing life!

In Varma's language, emotional expression becomes an epistemic mode, a means of knowing through affect, by striking a careful balance between sensuality and sanctity. As she puts it metaphorically, the monsoon-cloud (पावस-घन), the autumnal silence (शरद-दिशा सी नीरव), and the speaker's embodied effort to absorb and transform the world's sorrow are all part of the multi-layered network of sensory images. The Hindi language condenses metaphor, rhythm, and cultural register (rasa), a sophisticated aesthetic grammar where the feminine voice uses affect to perform moral and epistemic work. Invoking *rasa* (aesthetic emotion) and *shringara* (sensual devotion) as interwoven registers of feminine subjectivity, her metaphors carry cultural textures firmly anchored in Indian aesthetics. While the difficulty of translating *rasa* predates algorithmic and machine translations, and equally affects human translators, yet the machine translation has intensified this struggle by putting lexical equivalence ahead of emotional evocations. The delicate play of tone and imagery are reduced to flat, sentimental description that make sense but are aesthetically inert.

The original's spiritual doubleness, rhythmic alliteration, and performative silences are all lost in this machine-rendered rendition. The English syntax of emotional containment

domesticates the rasa of longing, which is so essential to Varma's feminist mysticism. Her poetics of dissolution are stripped of their native philosophical affect by the algorithm's 'universalising grammar,' which renders them into a sentimental self-help tone. By transforming what was once a gesture of epistemic resistance into consumable sentimentality, the algorithm does more than just mistranslate; it disciplinarily reinscribes the feminine voice into a global neoliberal lexicon of emotion. As the commercial and highly globalised sentiments and lexicons look for market-friendly affective norms such as resilience, clarity and redemptions, thereby universalising the grammar, and neutralising expression of rage, ambiguity, and grief, turning emotions into things that everyone can feel without thinking about their social, political or cultural context.

There are three obvious and noteworthy losses: (1) affective agency: Varma's speaker is an active alchemical agent (absorbing and transmuting sorrow), but the machine version makes the action feel passive and sentimental; (2) cultural density: terms like आँसू-कण carry miniature aesthetic and ritual histories (tear-particles as sacramental residue) that are flattened to 'drops'; and (3) rhythmic/sonic compression: the original's alliteration and measured pauses (which stage silence as technique) are smoothed into prosaic English. These translation errors are not minor. They are structural: the algorithm prioritises syntactic fluency and lexical equivalency over maintaining pauses, silences, and culturally specific affect. A politically charged feminine poetics is reduced to a harmless, exportable emotion because of this epistemic softening. Silence and specificity are turned into generic emotion in this microcosmic instance of 'epistemic violence 2.0.'

Forugh Farrokhzad (Persian): erotic transgression and depoliticised cadence

گنه کردم گناهی پر ز لذت
در آغوشی که گرم و آتشین بود
گنه کردم میان بازوانی
ه داغ و کینه‌جوی و آهنین بود

در آن خلوتگه تاریک و خاموش
نگه کردم بچشم پر ز رازش
دلم در سینه بی‌تابانه لرزید
ز خواهش‌های چشم پر نیازش

Originally translated by Sholeh Wolpé (from Sin / گناه)[38]

I have sinned a rapturous sin
in a warm enflamed embrace,
sinned in a pair of vindictive arms,
arms violent and ablaze.

In that quiet vacant dark
I looked into his mystic eyes,
found such longing that my heart
fluttered impatient in my breast.

[38] Sholeh Wolpé, *Sin: Selected Poems of Forugh Farrokhzad* (University of Arkansas Press, 2010), 3.

Machine-translated (Microsoft Translator AI version):

> *I have committed a joyful sin*
> *in an embrace of passion,*
> *in the quiet dark I saw his eyes,*
> *and my heart beat fast inside me.*

Despite its apparent accuracy, the machine translation removes the subversive tension from Farrokhzad's verse. '*Gonah*' (sin), originally published in 1956, is an erotic and theological term in Persian, meaning a purposeful provocation that turns desire into a kind of rebellion. The complexity in the Persian language system that are dealt through metaphors, honorific distance, poetic ambiguity, especially when done in erotic defiance, does not have a direct English equivalence and can have multiple interpretations at the same time. The complex and layered emotional and political resonance is largely neutralised by the AI and machine translations, which replace 'rapturous' with 'joyful' and 'fluttered impatient' with 'beat fast.'

In contrast, the human translation by Sholeh Wolpé, who herself is an Iranian-born American poet, maintains, or at least attempts to maintain, the poem's moral ambiguity, rhythm, and breath. Echoing the poet's struggle with patriarchal theology, her use of the term 'rapturous sin' and 'vindictive arms' places the act within a dialectic of pleasure and punishment. In contrast, the machine flattens such intensity into readability, creating an emotionally sanitised and standardised text that does not recognise cadence or ideology. This is a technological erasure of feminist transgression rather than just a loss of poetic nuance. The algorithmic translation through its design model recodes the radical confession into a palatable romantic moment by enforcing an implicit moral grammar that favours emotional restraint over the unruliness of desire. Thus, the very structures that purport to democratise access to Farrokhzad's work goes on to undermine her political project, which was to transform erotic subjectivity into public feminist speech.

Additionally, in digital circulation, where translated poems are automatically added to databases for machine learning or platforms like Google Books, this distortion becomes even more significant. By guaranteeing that only sanitised versions are algorithmically readable, the very systems that amplify visibility also script invisibility. Like past colonial misreadings of non-western texts, as Spivak profoundly discusses, the algorithmic domestication of non-western feminist rage into 'neutral' global English demonstrates how machine coloniality upholds epistemic hierarchies through language.

Feminist infrastructures of translation and counter-archives of refusal

In space where patriarchy has institutionalised silence as a type of epistemic order, feminist writing, especially when translated, becomes a radical infrastructure for refusal. Translating women's experience, emotion, and embodied knowledge from one language to another is more than just a language exercise; it's a way to reclaim agency, engage in ethical witnessing, and counter-memory. Here, translation serves as a bridge and a form of rebellion, filling in epistemic gaps while opposing hegemonic norms that dictate whose suffering can be read, recalled, or atoned for. As brilliantly put by Spivak, 'translation is the most intimate act of

reading.'[39] Thus, translation requires more than just some general knowledge and laws of language. It also necessitates understanding of the other's culture and then entering the realm of the author and their context.

Moving from critique to creativity, from analysis of loss to imagination of possibility, feminists must address and challenge algorithmic violence in the logics of speed, transparency, and universality that underlie machine translation rather than merely calling for improved tools. Feminist scholars and practitioners have started to envision archives and infrastructures that value cultural specificity, opacity, and multiplicity to combat this algorithmic violence. This change aims to reinterpret what translation might mean in feminist and postcolonial contexts rather than 'fix' machine translation.

Language itself becomes a site of insurgent translation in the poetic landscapes of Mahadevi Varma, where women's interiorities, suppressed desire, and affective labour are made readable within patriarchal vernaculars that frequently aim to erase them. As argued by Ganesh N. Devy, every *bhasha* (language) is a way of seeing, and when a *bhasha* dies, a way of seeing the world disappears with it.[40] He continues that loss of language is not just a mere loss of vocabulary but of an entire worldview. By eliminating the plural ontologies present in Hindi or Persian feminist expression and reducing them to globally 'legible' English phrases devoid of ethics and texture, algorithmic translation perpetuates this colonial violence. Thus, translation is not merely a mechanical, semantic and linguistic transfer of meaning but an ethical interaction that preserves rather than flattens difference.[41] By embracing ambiguity, resisting closure, and acknowledging opacity, the translator becomes an active participant in upholding the epistemic integrity of marginalised voices, which are rendered insignificant in machine translation. Translation as a feminist practice requires maintaining rather than breaking relational meanings. Feminist works enter what Sara Ahmed refers to as 'feminist survival archives,'[42] collective repositories of anger, resistance, and memory when it circulates in transnational digital spaces. When translated, her works about ecological grief, societal pressures and domestic abuse open new channels for readers to connect with her, even if they are not in her situation. Here, the politics of translation are not about faithfulness to an original but rather to the affect of refusal, to the assertion that women's lives, especially those from the linguistic periphery, are essential to modernity's critique rather than an afterthought. Suggested infrastructure models described below are aspirational but not hypothetical. These ideas are largely drawn and based on established practices in preserving community archiving, feminist translation collectives as well as ethical language preservation initiatives. However, their full incorporation into digital systems might pose challenges of its own sort.

Feminist infrastructures of translation

Building feminist translation infrastructures means rejecting patriarchal and colonial taxonomies that label women's vernacular writing as 'regional' or 'minor.' These

[39] Ganesh N Devy, *The Being of Bhasha: A General Introduction to the People's Linguistic Survey of India* (Orient Blackswan, 2010), 6.

[40] Devy, *The Being of Bhasha,* 111.

[41] Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, 186.

[42] Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Duke University Press, 2017), 255. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822373377.

infrastructures reframe translation as a web of moral interdependence in which meaning moves across histories, tongues, and bodies. Virginia Woolf's insistence that women must establish linguistic and spatial liberty within the phallocentric literary canon is the reminiscent of this project.[43] Contemporary feminist translation, however, is collective and translingual, it arises from shared acts of listening, rewriting, and reworlding, in contrast to Woolf's modernist solitude.

According to Emily Apter, untranslatability itself can be a feminist act since it demands the Other's opacity[44] and delineates the boundaries of appropriation.[45] In this way, the AI generated English translation of Farrokhzad's Persian confession of desire increases rather than diminishes its subversive power, revealing the moral economies that control female speech in all cultures. Like Varma's metaphorical idiom, the words have a hint of untranslatable meaning, in a way they reflect a refusal to be completely domesticated by global legibility. By writing from within the crack, these women transform linguistic boundaries into points of defiance.

Refusal as feminist praxis

Refusal is another form of resistance to algorithmic capture. This refusal is a tactic, not a sign of silence. It creates what Saidiya Hartman refers to as a 'critical fabulation,'[46] a creative re-creation of what history has declined to document. This critical fabulation provides a feminist translation approach that maintains the archive's silences as sites of epistemic tension rather than resolving or redeeming them. An ethics of non-closure, a refusal to fully know the oppressed, is emphasised by Hartman. This translates into counter-archives that prioritise situated opacity, affective fragments, and speculative recoveries over extractive legibility and digital transparency in the context of algorithmic mediation. Boaventura de Sousa Santos referred to the algorithmic repression of feminist narratives from the Global South as epistemicide,[47] which is the systematic eradication of alternative knowledge and worldviews. However, these feminist translations give rise to counter-archives that are living constellations rather than static repositories: texts, songs, oral traditions, and digital performances that collectively thwart epistemicide. They preserve the trembling voice, the personal sorrow, and the sensory details of survival that are discarded by dominant cultures. Additionally, as per Audra Simpson's theory of refusal,[48] refusing to be recognised within prevailing frameworks can be a form of sovereignty in and of itself. Feminist infrastructures of translation can be viewed as counter archives that reject the extractive transparency of global linguistic capitalism as a generative stance as opposed to withdrawal. These infrastructures, such as Simpson's Indigenous refusal, envision alternative meanings rather

[43] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (Hogarth Press, 1929).

[44] Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (Verso, 2013), 25.

[45] Apter, *Against World Literature,* 77.

[46] Saidiya Hartman, 'Venus in Two Acts.' *Small Axe* 12 no. 2 (June 2008), 11. https://doi.org/10.1215/-12-2-1.

[47] Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide* (Paradigm Publishers, 2014), 92.

[48] Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Duke University Press, 2014), 7. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822376781.

than attempting to be included in prevailing epistemic orders.[49] Refusal for feminist authors may entail the deliberate use of metaphors, idioms, or syntactic devices that are difficult to machine parse. These textual gestures are survival strategies rather than failures, preventing feminist criticism from being tamed into the polished legibility that platforms require.

A transhistorical continuum of feminist translation, not as cultural equivalency but as insurgent relationality, is encountered when reading these feminist texts like *Gonah* (sin) or *Neerja* of Farrokhzad and Varma respectively together. Their writings reflect what Mohanty refers to as a 'feminism without borders,'[50] in which resistance to the systems of silencing is the foundation of solidarity rather than sameness.[51] Their refusal to disappear into abstraction is accentuated by the translation of their poems into international languages, which does not lessen their local texture.

Feminist futurities

In the end, feminist translation infrastructures and counter-archives of refusal are philosophical claims that show how women's writing can subvert epistemic hierarchies, preserve ethical memory, and produce new grammars of care when translated across languages and contexts. These infrastructures serve as a reminder that, when reframed through feminist ethics, translation is an act of radical refusal, continuity, and care rather than consumption. Moreover, imagining feminist futures is inextricably linked to the task of building infrastructures and counter-archives. For the field of translation studies, literary studies or feminist studies, this framework of understanding newer version of epistemic violence necessitates a renewed focus on technological mediation as a locus of power rather than treating it merely as an instrument. Ethics in the world of AI and machine, features the necessity to assess the linguistic system for cultural responsibility along with precision. Feminist scholarships and methodology may continue to maintain opacity, resistance and emotional complexity, which are as essential as attaining global visibility. Safiya Noble's criticism of algorithmic bias[52] serves as a reminder here that infrastructures reflect values; establishing feminist values in translation would entail incorporating justice, care, and diversity into the translation process itself. Neither seamless communication nor universal access are promised by these futures. Rather, they accept partiality, slowness, and unevenness as virtues in and of themselves. Reimagined through feminist praxis, translation is more about maintaining relationships across differences than it is about being faithful to an original. Such a vision offers a feminist ethic of translation as an act of care, refusal, and world-making, rejecting the techno-utopian promise of complete comprehension.

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[49] Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus*, 11.

[50] Chandra Talpade Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders: Decolonizing Theory, Practicing Solidarity* (Duke University Press, 2003). https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822384649.

[51] Mohanty, *Feminism without Borders*, 7.

[52] Safiya Umoja Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (NYU Press, 2018), 29.

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