

When Vaginas Speak Chinese: Mobilizing Feminism through Translation

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ABSTRACT

As a cross-cultural activity, translation is central to feminist praxis. To examine the dynamics of translation, Taiwanese gender politics, and cultural mobility of feminist discourses, I investigate two Chinese translations of *The Vagina Monologues* published in Taiwan. In the first part of my article, I compare the political and institutional contexts in which the two different Mandarin Chinese translations were produced, discuss how Eve Ensler's play was first introduced to Taiwan in 2000 by Ch'en Ts'ang-to as an initiative against gender-based violence, and explain why it was retranslated by Ting Fan and Ch'iao Se-fen in 2014. In the second part, I draw on select examples from those two translations to analyze how the two groups of translators represent subversive female bodies and sexualities in the Chinese language. By conducting the cross-analysis, I argue that translation, as a nuanced form of feminist activism, facilitates the dissemination and circulation of feminist awareness in cross-cultural encounters.

Keywords: Activism; cultural mobility; feminist translation; Taiwan; *The Vagina Monologues*; women's movements