The Thai Translation of *Un violador en tu camino*: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

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ABSTRACT

In Thailand, the advocacy group Feminist Liberation that emerged alongside the pro-democracy protests in mid-2020 following the COVID-19 pandemic translated *Un violador en tu camino*, a song composed and performed publicly by Chilean feminist collective Las Tesis and since hailed as a feminist anthem, into Thai as *Sita Lui Fai* and adapted the original choreography to construct their public discourse around gender-based violence. To answer the overarching question of how transnational feminism was enabled by translation, this paper investigates how the Chilean feminist discourse has changed upon introduction into the target context using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal critical discourse analysis of the Thai translation and its choreography. The results show that while both versions similarly highlight the structural cause of gender-based violence, the Chilean lyrics place greater focus on feminist theoretical pedagogy in contrast to the Thai translation's function as an affective vehicle for anger as exemplified by the adoption of a more colloquial term for "patriarchy", the choice of specific pronouns to challenge Thai seniority culture, and the emotionally charged modifications to the original choreography. With multiple references to the monarchy, the song has been re-signified to reflect the reality of gender oppression specific to Thailand. Translation has thus served as a tool through which transnational feminism has been fostered. Feminist Liberation's collaboration with other advocacy groups additionally indicated their intersectional framework where LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive healthcare, students' rights are inextricably linked to the goal of gender equality.

Keywords: *Sita Lui Fai*; *Un violador en tu camino*; Translation; Transnational Feminism; Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Following the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020, two widespread phenomena transpired. Firstly, the restrictions on public movement which largely translated into stay-at-home orders had unintended consequences, i.e., the surge in domestic violence against women across the globe (UN Women, 2020). Next, the pandemic catalysed numerous anti-establishment protests around the world as it inadvertently yet opportunely exposed administrative incompetence in handling the health crisis, not to mention that several authoritarian regimes capitalised on the pandemic to secure more power (Simon, 2020). Indeed, during those quiet months without any local transmissions in mid 2020, Thailand witnessed the largest turnouts for anti-government protests since the 2014 coup.

While the youth-led protests were initially characterised as a broad pro-democracy movement, many advocacy groups – most notably Feminist Liberation Group (previously Women Liberation Group; hereafter Feminist Liberation) – soon emerged to campaign for marginalised groups' rights in tandem with the broader pro-democracy umbrella. Feminist Liberation

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occasionally joined forces with Seri Teoy Plus Group (hereafter Free Gender) and Nakrian Laew (hereafter Bad Student), an LGBTQ+ rights group and a students' rights group, respectively, to organise their own rallies, independent of the core pro-democracy demonstrations. In light of the worldwide rise in domestic violence against women during the pandemic, civic action – whether independent or collaborative - by such organisations proved apt and timely as it brought to the fore many structural issues faced by women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and students in Thailand. To raise wider awareness concerning these marginalised groups' rights, these collectives often drew on feminist and gender discourses as well as other tactical repertoires that had been employed elsewhere in the world.

At the centre of this nascent feminist movement was *Sita Lui Fai* – literally *Sita Walks through Fire* – the Thai translation by Feminist Liberation of the Chilean feminist choreographed song *Un violador en tu camino*, or more commonly known in English as *A Rapist in Your Path*, which has been hailed as a feminist anthem since the second public performance, on 20 November 2019, of the song by Las Tesis, a Chilean feminist collective (Serafini, 2020, p. 291). One of the reasons the song resonates with women across borders is attributable to its lyrics, which accentuate "the structural nature of gender violence in society" (Serafini, 2020, p. 291), and upend the conventionally phallocentric perception of gender-based violence as an individual act of crime committed against women on an interpersonal level (Bronfman, 2021; Ellis & LeBrón, 2019). The conception of the modestly choreographed yet compellingly powerful song was Las Tesis's attempt to popularise feminist theory based on Argentine anthropologist Rita Segato's work, thereby making it easily digestible to the public (Bronfman, 2021; Ellis & LeBrón, 2019) and transforming feminist pedagogy into a more accessible form to reach a wider audience (Hinsliff, 2020).

In Thailand, Feminist Liberation adopted the Chilean song to forward its domestic feminist movement and also adapted the original lyrics and choreography to reflect the specificities of patriarchy in Thailand. During the process of what Millán (2016) calls "the globalization of feminism and gender discourses", translation is indispensable as Xie (2018, p. 79) posits that "[n]o matter how far it dates back in history, globalization begins with translation, and translation enables and facilitates globalization". In fact, it is perhaps not an overstatement to affirm that translation has given rise to a form of global activism known as "transnational feminism" (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Kaplan, 1994; Bacchetta et al., 2002; Mohanty, 2003) defined by Millán, as "a concept that envisions the possibility of a nonhomogeneous community that can be auto-reflexive of the cross-cutting inequalities and power differences that are constructed in continuous dialogue between different actors wherever they may be located" (2016, p. 3).

With translation as a means through which feminist and gender struggles traverse national borders, this paper aims to investigate the role translation plays in serving "transnational feminist dialogues and solidarities" (Castro & Ergun, 2018, p. 133), particularly through the Thai version of the Chilean song and the adapted Thai choreography. Thus, in an attempt to answer the overarching question of how transnational feminism was enabled by translation, the study firstly examines how the Chilean feminist discourse has changed upon introduction through translation into the target context using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) multimodal critical discourse analysis due to the methodological framework's analytical consideration for both linguistic and visual elements. Accordingly, special attention is paid to the linguistic and extralinguistic transposition of the song and its Thai choreography from its original Chilean locale to the Thai polity. Secondly, to trace the extent to which the Thai translation has served to shape, crystalise, and transform local Thai feminist dialogues and discourses, online conversations on Thai Twitter

around the performance of *Sita Lui Fai* are extracted for discussion. Lastly, the study also looks at Feminist Liberation's collaboration with related advocacy groups that were formed after the pro-democracy camp to better contextualise the multimodal analysis of the Thai-translated song.

While much research has been done on translation and activism, little has been explored on the role of translation in mediating feminism activism, as far as protest songs are concerned. This study represents an attempt to add to the dearth of research fusing song translation and feminism activism using multimodal critical discourse analysis as an analytical tool.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the "cultural turn" in Translation Studies in the early 1990s (Bassnett, 2007), translation, far from being a mere mode of language transfer, has been reconceptualised as a practice that is necessarily driven by extra-linguistic and extra-textual factors – be they social, cultural, or political. Translators themselves have also been rethought as agents that are "involved in complex power negotiations" (Bassnett, 2007), consciously or otherwise.

Such publications as *Translation and Power* (Tymoczko & Gentzler, 2002), *Translation and Conflict* (Baker, 2006), *Translation, Resistance, and Activism* (Tymoczko, 2010), *Self-Translation and Power* (Castro et al., 2017) have further cemented the oncoming of a 'power turn' in translation studies (Carcelén-Estrada, 2018). Drawing on narrative theory, Mona Baker details in her seminal monograph (2006) how translators and interpreters engage in both the reinforcement and subversion of hegemonic narratives which serve as ideological fodder in conflict zones. Meanwhile, collections edited by Tymoczko and Gentler (2002), and Castro et al. (2017) illustrate how translation is employed to empower or disempower marginalised groups and legitimise power itself.

In fact, the proliferating academic interest in the role of translation in sociopolitical activism can be attested by a growing number of studies (Baker, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2018; Carcelén-Estrada, 2018; Gould & Tahmasebian, 2020; Pérez-González, 2010, 2013; Wang & Zhang, 2017) that have been conducted along this line of thought. Some of these publications shed light on how fansubbing and fandubbing – audiovisual modes of translation – have been used to satirise Spanish political leaders (Pérez-González, 2012, 2013) and Chinese media censorship authorities in a spirit of sociopolitical criticism (Wang & Zhang, 2017).

In examining translating and interpreting services rendered by Traduttori par la Pace/Translators for Peace (Italy), Translators United for Peace (Japan), Tlaxcala, Translator Brigades, ECOS, and Babels, Mona Baker (2013) explores translators' and interpreters' role as both global justice activists challenging the status quo and as professionals working in the service economy. Baker (2014) delves further into how such narrative strategies as selective appropriation, temporality, relationality, causal emplotment, genericness, particularity, normativeness and narrative accrual are adopted in a subtitled political commercial to *configure*, rather than represent, reality.

Scholarship on feminist translation is conventionally credited to Western-centric roots where the Canadian school consisting of writings by de Lotbinière-Harwood (1991), Simon (1996), and von Flotow (1997) is often "presented as the original, universal paradigm of feminist translation" (Castro & Ergun, 2018, p. 126). However, as pointed out by Castro and Ergun (2018, p. 127), "discursive political intervention made in various process of translation in pursuit of gender justice – e.g. the strategic use of translation as an apparatus of cross-border dialogue to disseminate feminist ideas and build transnational feminist solidarities" predates feminist

interventionist practices by the Canadian school of feminist translators (e.g. Marlene Wildeman, Barbara Godard, Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood) who translated several experimental feminist works from Québec French into English.

In their efforts to subvert misogynistic language and advance feminist causes (Levine, 1984) in literary texts, early feminist translators – Canadian or otherwise – often resort to supplementing, prefacing, footnoting and hijacking (von Flotow, 1997) to 'correct' the originals in their translations. On the other hand, later feminist translation scholars put forward such translation strategies as the addition of feminine markers, the use of gender-inclusive language (Hassen, 2011), and a non-sexist language (Castro, 2010).

Despite a recent flurry of academic activity in feminist approaches to translation, there remain three crucial gaps in extant literature on feminist translation studies. Firstly, except contributions by Devika (2008), Mwangi (2009), and Yu (2015) which investigate, respectively, the translation of feminist theory into the Indian state of Kerala, the amplification of women's issues through translation and adaptation of an original French novella into a Kiswahili play in Tanzania, and the importation of feminism into China through multiply translated versions of two foundational feminist works, the discipline remains largely Euro-and Anglo-American centric, resulting in the perpetuation of "the false impression that feminist translation is exclusively on and of the West" (Castro & Ergun, 2018, p. 138).

Secondly, with the exception of three edited volumes by von Flotow and Farahzad (2017), Castro and Ergün (2017), and von Flotow and Kamal (2020), translation in the context of feminist activism is still very much under- researched. Even though the three collections cover many geopolitical settings including China, Cuba, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Iran, Iraq, India, Morocco, and Mexico, much of the Global South like, for instance, Thailand is still left out of the picture. Furthermore, most of the publications mentioned above are still confined to literary works, despite advancements in communications technology facilitating discursive exchanges through numerous non-literary outlets. The transposition of feminist discourses and dialogues via, for instance, social media and protest songs is yet to be explored.

Meanwhile, in Thai academia, there exist studies that examine the representation of feminist ideology in literary texts (Mo & Tanauraksakul, 2017; Puyati, 2017; Witchayapakorn, 2015), audiovisual productions (Arunrangsiwed & Seedoung, 2020; Naijarun et al., 2020; Namphadorn, 2014; Pengbun et al., 2019), historical archives (Jaifai, 2017), but to date none has incorporated translation in their analytical process. Except for Pengbun et al.'s (2019) investigation into women characters in the Thai translated version of the original Chinese *Baiyinna*, none of the other works have specified whether their object of analysis was a source text or a translation as if the two bore an indistinguishable resemblance to one another and involved no mediation. Additionally, their analyses (Arunrangsiwed & Seedoung, 2020; Mo & Tanauraksakul, 2017; Pengbun et al., 2019) are often confined to matching each woman character with the strain of feminism they represent.

Finally, as an academic strand in its own right, song/music translation is similarly underserved – whether in Thai or anglophone academia – with the only exception being a collection of edited essays in *Translation and Music* (Susam-Sarajeva, 2008). The dearth of research on song/music translation and its activist potential has persisted despite music's "unparalleled capacity to generate and transmit affective states" (Drott, 2015, p. 175) and the fact that 'dissident' music including protest songs is steeped in its history of political activism (Susam-Saraeva, 2018). By conjoining song translation with feminist activism, this research aims to redress the balance and contribute to the discursive expansion of both feminist and song translation studies.

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METHOD

DATA SELECTION AND COLLECTION

Feminist Liberation was chosen as the primary source of data collection owing to their role in the revival of feminist activism in tandem with the broader pro-democracy movement. For analysis purposes, the poster containing the Thai version of *Un violador en tu camino* and the official choreography practice video posted by Feminist Liberation via their Twitter account (@femliberateth) were saved to local storage to, firstly, examine how the Chilean feminist discourse has changed up on introduction through translation into the target context.

The poster features the Thai lyrics in white letters against a black background; the Thai title *Sita Lui Fai* and the parenthesised English name are placed on a red strip in the top left corner of the poster (see Figure 1 below). The presence of the English title *A Rapist in Your Path* suggests the source language into which the feminist group tapped to produce the Thai translation due to their lack of command over Spanish, despite drawing inspiration from the original Chilean Spanish version. With ten stanzas of one to five lines each, the Thai version slightly departs from the Spanish lyrics that contain ten stanzas of two to four lines each.

The video recording of the choreography was shared on 14 November 2020 by Feminist Liberation along with captions inviting more sympathizers to learn the dance and join their next public performance of the song. The performers' faces in the video are blurred to prevent identity identification and, presumably, possible legal complications.

Secondly, to trace the extent to which the Thai-translated song has served to shape, crystallise, and transform local Thai feminist dialogues and discourses, online conversations on Thai Twitter around the performance of the choreographed song were extracted by inputting สีดาลุยไฟ [*Sita Lui Fai*], the Thai title of *Un violador en tu camino*, as the search term.

Lastly, data on their collaboration with related groups, since their founding in June 2019 until December 2020, was also aggregated by trawling through their Twitter account to better provide a context in which the song is analysed multi-modally. However, to ensure data manageability, information drawn from the collective's interactive and collaborative activity with other advocacy groups is limited to those founded after the first pro-democracy mobilisation in mid-July 2020.

MULTIMODAL CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

As a form of multimodal discourse, the Thai translated song performed with its choreography in public is best analysed using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis as the methodological framework. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) is a disciplinary marriage of Multimodality and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), first proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996).

CDA was first developed by prominent linguists including Fairclough (1989), van Dijk (1997), and Wodak and Meyer (2001) as a critical linguistic approach to "analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 2), "scrutinis[ing] the intended ideological representations" conjured up by language (Ramanathan & Tan, 2015, p. 66), and ultimately "shed[ding] light on what exists below the surface of discourse" (Dezhkameh et al., 2021, p. 232). Later, MCDA was devised to encompass – as units of analysis – a combination of different semiotic modes in a communicative artefact or event, since "the meaning of any message is

distributed across different modes and not necessarily evenly" (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2009, p. 6). Simply put, MCDA is concerned not only with language but also with what Kress and van Leeuwen term "visual communication" (2006) whose metafunctions are modelled on Halliday's (1978) three metafunctions of language as follows (Table 1):

TABLE 1. Three metafunctions of language and visual components

Metafunctions of Language (Halliday)	Metafunctions of Image (Kress and van Leeuwen)	Function
Ideational	Representational	What does the text/image say about the world?
Interpersonal	Interpersonal	What is/are the social relation(s) between the producer, the audience, and/or the object represented?
Textual	Compositional	How do all the signs in a text or an image connect together to make a coherent, meaningful whole?

Each of these metafunctions is fulfilled through different components and thus can be analysed using different analytical tools. Due to limited space, however, the tools used for analysis are not laid out in this subsection but are incorporated into the analysis of *Sita Lui Fai* and its Thai choreography in the following section. While the Thai lyrics poster is analysed for the three metafunctions of both its language use and visual design, only the visual communication of the choreography video involving its representational, interpersonal, and compositional metafunctions is analysed. Finally, this study draws on Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) MCDA that was partially developed from Fairclough's (2003) discourse analytical tools, hence the references, too, to the latter's analytical concepts.

SITA LUI FAI: A MULTIMODAL CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

According to Halliday's (1978) systemic functional grammar, which is the most used method in CDA, discourse fulfils three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The three metafunctions serve, respectively, to uncover ideas implicit and explicit in a text, the relationship between those involved in a discursive event, and the way in which information is presented. The analysis of the Thai poster will be discussed in linguistic terms with a focus on its similarities with and differences from the Chilean Spanish lyrics.

CDA: LINGUISTIC SIMILARITIES

Firstly, the Thai translation is, ideationally, very similar to the original Chilean song. The ideational metafunction can be realised through transitivity defined as "the study of what people are depicted as doing … [or] … who does what to whom, and how" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 104). Transitivity consists of participants (as subjects, objects, or indirect objects of verbs), processes (as six process types of verbs), and/or circumstances (as adverbial elements). In both versions, patriarchy is identified as the main culprit of gender-based violence and is embodied in state institutions including the police, the military, the judiciary, and the president.

Likewise, "women" as a social category are established as the primary victim of patriarchy and body autonomy is thus the central demand in both versions. Rape culture also figures prominently as a contributing factor to the entrenched problem of gender-based violence as

demonstrated through the lines exposing slut shaming "And the fault wasn't mine not because of where I was or how I dressed" and "how slutty I am or where I have fun, it's MY business" in the Chilean and Thai lyrics, respectively[1] (Table 2, line 7).

Additionally, personification and functionalisation are both adopted as representational strategies of social actors to refer to the state and state institutions. The personification of the state as a rapist nullifies its seeming neutrality as a sexless and genderless entity and lays bare its agency as an activated social actor of gender-based violence. Although functionalisation is typically used to connote legitimacy (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 81), the police, the military, the president, the judiciary, and the institution in line 9 of the Chilean and Thai lyrics are functionalised, that is, being depicted in terms of their functions, not to be legitimised but to stress the state's role in legitimising state institutions that prop up the rapist state. The personification of the state as a rapist also brings into sharp relief the hypermasculinised nature of the state itself and the aforementioned state apparatuses.

TABLE 2. The Chilean and Thai lyrics of *Un violador en tu camino*

Verse No.	**Line No.**	***Un violador en tu camino* [*A rapist in your path*]**	***Sita Lui Fai* [*Sita Walks through Fire*]**
1	1	El patriarcado es un juez que nos juzga por nacer, [The patriarchy is a judge (male) that judges us for being born]	เราเกิดมาก็ถูกตัดสิน ถูกกัดกินจากชายเป็นใหญ่ [We have been judged since birth, eaten away by patriarchy]
	2	y nuestro castigo es la violencia que no ves. [and our punishment is the violence you don't see]	คือระบอบที่ย่ำยีเรา คือความรุนแรงที่มึงไม่มอง [It's the system that tramples on us, the violence that YOU don't look at]
2	3	El patriarcado es un juez que nos juzga por nacer, [The patriarchy is a judge (male) that judges us for being born]	เราเกิดมาก็ถูกกดหัว ต้องเจียมตัวให้ชายเป็นใหญ่ [Since we were born, our heads have been pressed low, we must submit to patriarchy]
	4	y nuestro castigo es la violencia que ya ves. [and our punishment is the violence that you've seen]	คือความเชื่อที่ย่ำยีเรา คือความอัปรีย์ที่**มึง**ต้องมอง [It's the belief that tramples on us, the wickedness that YOU must look at]
3	5	Es femicidio. Impunidad para mi asesino. [It's femicide Impunity for my killer (male)]	**มึง**นั่นแหละ ฆาตกร ทำเป็นสอนให้เราหมอบกราบ [It's YOU who is the murderer, teaching us to prostrate ourselves]
	6	Es la desaparición. Es la violación. [It's disappearance It's rape]	สั่งให้เราอยู่ในโอวาท **มึง**นั่นแหละที่ข่มขืนเรา [Ordering us to be obedient, it's YOU who rapes us]
4	7	Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba ni cómo vestía. (x4) [And the fault was not mine, not because of where I was or how I dressed]	**กู**จะแรดจะร่านยังไง จะไปเที่ยวไหน มันก็เรื่องของ**กู** (x4) [however slutty I am or where I have fun, it's MY business]
5	8	El violador eras tú. (x2) [The rapist (male) was you]	**มึง**ต่างหาก ที่ข่มขืนเรา [It's YOU who rape us] **มึง**นั่นแหละ ที่ข่มขืนเรา [It's YOU who rape us]

[1] The English back translation of the Thai version is provided by the researcher herself.

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6	9	Son los pacos, [It's the cops (male)] los jueces, [the judges (male)] el Estado, [the state] el Presidente. [the president (male)]	(9.1) ตำรวจ [The police] (9.2) ทหาร [the military] (9.3) ศาลยุติธรรม [the judiciary] (9.4) ทั้งประเทศ [the whole country] (9.5) สถาบัน [the institution]
7	10	El Estado opresor es un macho violador. (x2) [The oppressive state is a rapist macho man]	รัฐเพิกเฉยต่อเสียงของเรา ก็คือรัฐที่ข่มขืนเรา (x2) [The state that ignores our voices is the state that rapes us]
8	11	Duerme tranquila, niña inocente, [Sleep well (feminine), innocent girl]	โถถถถถ อีพระราม เราเจ็บเจียนตาย [Huh, You Rama. We are in pain on the verge of death]
	12	sin preocuparte del bandolero, [Do not worry about the bandit (male)]	มึงยังดีใจ/ที่เรา/ลุยไฟ [YOU are still glad we walked through fire]
	13	que por tu sueño dulce y sonriente [Your sweet and smiling sleep]	มึงทำให้สีดาเป็นเหยื่อ [YOU make Sita a victim]
9	14	vela tu amante carabinero. [Is watched over by your loving policeman]	มลทินมัวหมอง/ไม่ใช่/ของเรา [The taint and the blemish are not ours]
10	15	El violador eres tú. (x4) [The rapist (male) is you]	มึงนั่นแหละที่ข่มขืนเรา (x3) [It's YOU who rape us] มึงนั่นแหละที่ฆ่าเราตาย [It's YOU who kill us]

CDA: LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES

Despite the similarities, there are still marked differences between the Chilean Spanish original and the Thai translation. Firstly, the two versions' textual presentations diverge as can be seen from, for stance, their differing positioning of themes and rhemes in lines 1 and 3. Themes and rhemes are a textual toolkit that fulfils the textual metafunction of language use. The theme refers to "the point of departure of the clause where the speaker/writer sets out the topic for the rest of the clause" (Punkasirikul, 2018, p. 39) while the rheme refers to "the rest of the clause which usually includes the verbal process and other content" (ibid.).

Textually, the Thai translation underscores the victimisation of women as sexual objects while the Chilean version places more emphasis on the perpetrator, that is, patriarchy. For one thing, the foremost placement of the term "El patriarcado" [the patriarchy] in the theme position in lines 1 and 3 of the Chilean version accentuates patriarchy as an activated – as opposed to passivated – social actor of gender-based violence. In the rheme position, the use of verb "es" [is] classified as a relational verb which serves to signify states of being further presents the statement as a fact. In the same lines, the verb "juzga" [judges] categorised as a behavioural verb that denotes psychological states externalised behaviourally is used in active form to accentuate the active role patriarchy plays in the process from the internalisation of misogyny to the externalisation of gender-based violence. Meanwhile, the Thai version highlights the primary victim of patriarchy through the theme positioning of "เรา" [*rao*: we] representing women in lines 1 and 3. The verb "ถูกตัดสิน" [*took-tad-sin*: judged] in its passive form followed by the object participant "ชายเป็นใหญ่" [*chai-pen-yai*: patriarchy] additionally spotlights women on the receiving end of patriarchy.

Another distinguishing feature is the Thai version's more palpable expression of anger as manifested through certain lexical choices. Firstly, in Thai, the term "patriarchy" can be translated as either the more technical and esoteric "ปิตาธิปไตย" [*pitatipathai*] or the more colloquial and semantically straightforward "ชายเป็นใหญ่" [*chai-pen-yai*]. The term "ปิตาธิปไตย" can be broken

down into two main units, "ปิตา-" [*pita-*] and "-ธิปไตย" [*-tipathai*], which are decipherable as "father" and "supremacy", respectively. Meanwhile, "ชายเป็นใหญ่" [*chai-pen-yai*] is simply "male is superior". The Thai translation has opted exclusively for the latter term in the first and third lines of the lyrics as its semantic reception by the audience is likely more immediate and its "emotive resonance" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 201) more impactful.

Secondly, the choice of pronouns used in the Thai translation is loaded with the interpersonal metafunction and further serves as an emotive boost to the song due to the presence of pronominal stratification in Thai. It should be noted that in English the interpersonal metafunction is mainly realised through "grammatical mood" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 105) in the form of declarative, interrogative, or imperative clauses, and markers of modalisation which indicates the speaker's commitment to what they are saying (ibid., p. 168). However, in Thai, the interpersonal metafunction can be realised through the choice of pronouns since the wide range of Thai pronouns is rooted in Thai seniority culture, the pronominal choice thus often reflects how the speaker positions themselves in relation to the interlocutor in terms of age, social status, and degree of intimacy. The first-person pronoun "กู" [*ku*: I] and the second-person pronoun "มึง" [*mueng*: you] carry twofold connotations – one of deep intimacy and the other of rudeness. In the first case, *ku* and *mueng* are used between those who regard each other as intimates, sometimes, irrespective of age. Conversely, when used among acquaintances, strangers, or interacting parties that occupy different rungs on the social ladder, these two pronouns typically connote rudeness.

The usually simplistic explanation of their uses as a manifestation of one's rudeness falls short of accounting for its source, namely, anger. That the employment of such pronouns is deemed either presumptuous or expressive of anger is contingent on one's social status, age and, therefore, authority. In the Thai translation, the subjugated speaker *ku* destabilises the tacit rules of usage as the first-person pronoun is employed to address higher authorities and, consequently, underscores the emotional state of the speaker, i.e., anger. At an interpersonal level, the insertion of these emotionally loaded pronouns (as emboldened and underlined in lines 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, and 15) additionally turns the power asymmetry on its head, thereby empowering those who identify as *ku* with the speaker.

Further, the issue of slut shaming is addressed differently in the two versions. In line 7 of the Chilean Spanish lyrics, the past form of relational verb "era" [was] is used not only to exonerate women from the usual rhetoric of women inviting sexual assault to themselves or "asking for it", but also to connote the fleeting nature of their non-existent guilt and, concurrently, subvert the persistence of women's "bad reputation" after their experience with sexual assault. The Thai translation, instead, textually places the first-person pronoun *ku* as the theme and utilises the colloquial "แรด" [*raed*: slutty] and "ร่าน" [*raan*: slutty] as, unlike English, the double behavioural verb in the rheme position. As Punkasirikul (2018) cautions when CDA is applied to Thai, many English adjectives are instead classified as verbs in Thai – hence some Thai sentences seemingly do not carry any "verb" equivalent to the English relational verb "be". Following Fairclough's (2003, p. 171) observation that "[i]ntonation and other aspects of oral delivery are also relevant to a speaker's degree of commitment", the colloquial lexical choices and the emphasis on "MY business" in the form of a positive declarative statement in the Thai version serve thus to heighten its modality and evoke a greater degree of emotive resonance.

When considered together with the state institutions listed in line 9 as the perpetrators of rape, the choice of pronouns becomes even more significant for those state apparatuses constitute what Fairclough (1992, p. 56) terms "the social conditions and effects" at an institutional level. Particularly of note is the term "สถาบัน" [*sathaban*: institution] in line 9.5 and the order in which

all the state institutions appear. While *sathaban* is strictly equivalent to "institution" in English, its implications extend far beyond its immediate meaning as this Thai term is often used as a shorthand for the complete phrase *sathaban kasat*, which refers to Thailand's monarchical institution.

After the launch of popular dissent in mid-2020, several anti-government protesters have faced police intimidation, false arrest, and violent crackdown. The roles of these state institutions can be listed in ascending order of "influence" as follows: the police carry out the heavy lifting of physically repressing dissidents, the military is nominally at the helm of the executive branch, the judiciary is judicially abetting political suppression, while the whole country is impervious to the daily incidence of power abuse. The monarchy as an institution is brought up last because it encapsulates one of the longest-standing forms of patriarchy and, in the present political climate of Thailand, wields absolute power over the preceding state institutions, which have long acted on behalf of the monarchy. As the most powerful institution in Thailand, the monarchy is to be held in deepest reverence and this is reflected through the enforced application of *rachasap*, or "royal vocabulary", when talking to or about the royal family. The use of the self-referential pronoun *ku* and the second-person reference to the state institutions, especially the monarchy, as *mueng,* transgress the social norms and represent a symbolic challenge to the institutions that constitute the hypermasculinised state.

The allusion to the monarchy with the use of "the institution" in line 9.5 is further reinforced by the verse that ranges from lines 11 to 15. The phrase "You Rama" in line 11 refers to the main hero Rama from *Ramakien*, one of the national epics composed by King Rama II of Thailand who based the master plot off *Ramayana*, a Sanskrit epic from India. This canonised work of literature is familiar to all Thai people due to its compulsory teaching in Thai schools and its pervasive influence on Thai art. The story revolves around the war between Rama, a reincarnation of God of Preservation Vishnu, and Thotsakan, a ten-faced and twenty-armed demon king. The war is a result of the latter's abduction of the former's wife, Sita. Several battles have been fought to rescue Sita, on Rama's part, and to keep her captive, on Thotsakan's part. When Sita is eventually retrieved to Rama's side, she is subjected to ordeal by fire to prove her purity and fidelity to her husband, Rama.

As suggested by Machin and Mayr (2012, p. 84), the speaker/writer can use pronouns to "evoke their own ideas as being our ideas and create a collective 'other' in opposition to these shared ideas". Indeed, the verse containing lines 11 to 15 above evokes a sense of a collective us as Sita through the use of pronouns *mueng* [you] and *rao* [we, us], thereby giving voice to Sita's resentment at the fire ordeal and, in the process, weakens the phallocentric point of view. Sita is no longer merely one of the many impersonal female characters in Thai literature but, instead, she is equated with the subject "We" in line 14. She now represents Thai women who, like her, are often subjected to purity test and judgment. The verse demystifies the process of ordeal by fire with *our* articulation of the pain that the test causes to *us* women, as fleshed out in line 11. Sita has transitioned from a voiceless virtuous woman into an angry victim throughout the verse, and this echoes the ideational metafunction of the first verse in the song, where women as victims of patriarchy are accentuated in place of the original lyrics' emphasis on the perpetrators. The Thai title of the song that literally means *Sita Walks through Fire* refers precisely to the fire ordeal to which Sita is subjected. Here, it is also worth noting the discrepancies between the Chilean and Thai titles. While the former encapsulates the fear felt by women walking alone on the street, a daily occurrence, the latter diverts and, by referencing a work of literature, emphasises more the use of women as 'property' that belong to men (hero and villain).

In line 15, the disclaimer "The taint and the blemish are not ours" is highly intertextual as it unmistakably references the official statement issued on 29 August 2020 in the Royal Gazette that announced the restoration of King Rama X's former royal noble consort to her title. The published reinstatement begins with the phrase "for Miss Sineenat Wongvajirapakdi is not a tainted and blemished person, by His Royal Command, therefore, His Majesty would like for Miss Sineenat Wongvajirapakdi to return to the title of Royal Noble Consort Sineenat … as if she has never been stripped of her military ranks and royal decorations" (Royal Gazette, 2020, p. 1; my translation). The sentence "The taint and the blemish are not ours" draws a parallel between the form patriarchy takes in modern-day Thailand and that which is prevalent in Thailand's 'greatest' works of literature, saturated with patriarchal ideology. To explicate, women in some of the best-known Thai literary texts are often caught in a tug of war between the 'hero' and the male villain. Nonetheless, the female characters end up bearing the brunt of male aggression by being branded as promiscuous women, simply because they have been shuffled around by the 'hero' and the male villain.

In the case of the Royal Noble Consort, the news of her previous deposition was similarly broken with a royal announcement that is two pages long and composes detailed descriptions of her misconduct and malice towards the queen. The line "The taint and the blemish are not ours" in the song serves to absolve of sexual promiscuity not only women in Thai literature, but also women in modern-day Thailand. In the Chilean version, on the other hand, the exoneration of women is done via "And the fault was not mine, not because of where I was or how I dressed". Furthermore, with the lines "Sleep well, innocent girl. Do not worry about the bandit. Your sweet and smiling sleep is watched over by your loving policeman", the Chilean original goes one step further by not only identifying the role of state institutions as perpetrators of gender-based violence, but also undermining the popular narrative of police as protectors of the people.

In contrast to the first two verses, which give prominence to the "we" victim of gender-based violence, the later verses of the Thai version shift their focus to the perpetrators and the acts of violence, as can be seen in the multiple references to the monarchy and the refrains in lines 8 and 15 "It's YOU who rape us" and "It's YOU who kill us", respectively. The verbs "rape" and "kill", classified as material verbs which denote "concrete actions that have a material result or consequence" (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 106), are used in the Thai lyrics to provide a sharp contrast to the more static relational verb "is" in "The rapist is you" of the Chilean hymn, as the former foreground both the theoretical and concrete basis on which gender-based violence is inflicted on women by the aforementioned state institutions, whereas the corresponding lines in the Chilean version place greater emphasis on the hypermasculinised nature of the state and, by extension, state institutions, without concretising the role of the state in perpetrating acts of violence itself.

All in all, the original is more theorical in its delivery of the ideational and textual metafunctions; it serves more to simplify the structural causes of gender-based violence. The magnitude of anger in the original lyrics somewhat pales in comparison to that conveyed through the Thai translation. It could be said, therefore, that the original song fulfils the stated objective by the Chilean feminist collective, Las Tesis, of making accessible a theoretical understanding of gender-based violence, while the Thai song is much more concerned with the affective and, hence, interpersonal metafunction of its lyrical delivery, understandably because the Thai translation was produced in the aftermath of several pro-democracy protests.

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MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS

Next, the objects of multimodal analysis are taken from the release of the Thai lyrics and a video recording of their choreography practice video circulated on Twitter. Feminist Liberation (then still known as Women Liberation Group) published the Thai lyrics of *Un violador en tu camino* on its Twitter page on 7 November 2020 as shown in Figure 1:

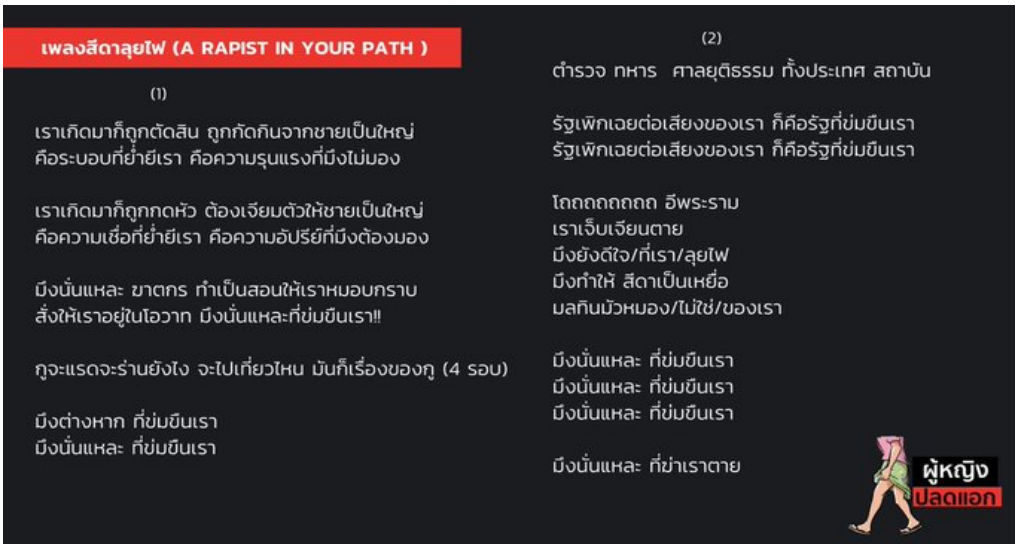

FIGURE 1. *Sita Lui Fai* released by Feminist Liberation Group

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), as with language, visual design can be interpreted in terms of three metafunctions, i.e., representational, interpersonal, and compositional. Meanwhile, people, places, and objects depicted in images are collectively termed "represented participants" or RPs, for short (ibid., p. 114).

Firstly, as visualised in Figure 1, the poster's representational metafunction is realised mainly through its compositional configuration. At the representational level, the poster is a conceptual image, that is, a visual design that represents "participants in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, or structure or meaning" (ibid., p. 79) – as opposed to a narrative image that represents "unfolding actions and events, processes of change, transitory spatial arrangements (ibid., p. 59). Its conceptual affordance is realised along with the compositional metafunction which explains "the way in which the representational and interactive elements are made to relate to each other, the way they are integrated into a meaningful whole" (ibid., p. 176). The composition of the poster relates its representational meaning mainly through salience achieved, in this case, via colour, tone, and foregrounding.

The white text against the muted black background conveys solemnity, while the red strip backgrounding the Thai title *Sita Lui Fai* and the parenthesised English name in the top left corner brings attention to the urgency of the content. The colour scheme consisting of black and red carries an affective load consistent with that which is evoked by the lyrics. Black can conjure up a multitude of meanings including power, darkness, despair, sophistication, to name but a few. Red, on the other hand, not only symbolises such intense emotions as passion and anger but is also frequently evocative of sexual promiscuity. In the bottom right corner, Pooyhing Plod-Aek, the

group's original nomenclature, which translates literally as "women liberate", is broken into two lines with "women" being on the upper row and "liberate" being on the lower and is preceded with a headless woman holding up her skirt. The use of the red background to bolster the word "liberate" on the bottom row can be construed as a way of foregrounding sexual liberation for women, in sharp contrast to the traditional label of sexual promiscuity assigned to 'bad' women.

Additionally, the feminist group adapted its own Thai lyrics of *Un violador en tu camino* into three more versions to help promote the causes of other advocacy groups that emerged at around the same time and to denounce the repressive state, following charges against a 17-year-old gender equality activist from Feminist Liberation. The adaptations entitled *Tamtaeng Lui Fai* [Abortion Walks through Fire] and *Nakrian Lui Fai* [Students Walk through Fire] were posted later on Twitter to demand abortion rights and students' rights in solidarity with the advocacy groups Tamtang TH and Bad Student, respectively. The most recent version *Ratsadorn Lui Fai* [The People Walk through Fire] was performed on 13 January 2021, the day on which the teenaged activist was ordered to report to the police on the charges of violating the Emergency Decree and the Public Assembly Act (Khamenkit et al., 2021), to show her support.

The three adaptations contain lyrical modifications in an attempt to foreground the oppressive forces behind issues surrounding abortion, frequent violations of students' bodies and rights by schoolteachers across Thailand, and civil liberties. The multimodal dimension of the adapted versions has also been altered to highlight the relevant issues. While detailed explication of their linguistic and multimodal resources falls outside the purview of this study, a glimpse into their existence suffices to demonstrate the expansive scope of the feminist group's ideological alignments.

The final axis of the multimodal analysis centres on the choreography of the song. The official practice video is the only full choreography version since their public acts were only partially recorded by Twitter users in attendance. Thus, it is used as the main unit of multimodally choreographical analysis.

Although, overall, the visual structures of both choreographical versions function as a narrative representation of gender-based violence, as the Thai choreography[2] is mostly modelled on the Chilean original, a significant departure from the Chilean version[3] with regard to the penultimate verse and the camera angle results in a change in the former's representational and interpersonal metafunctions.

During the original lines "Sleep well, innocent girl. Do not worry about the bandit, your sweet and smiling sleep is watched over by your loving policeman", the Chilean participants of the act cup their left hand around their mouth. Along with the altered lyrics (from lines 11 to 14), the Thai version also entails a couple of dance moves derived from Khon, a Thai traditional dance genre reserved exclusively for the enactment of *Ramakien*. In place of the hand cupping, the Thai female performers thump their right foot forward and – while keeping their arms level with their body – bend them towards their shoulders. This step is followed by a cutthroat gesture signifying Sita's experience with deadly pain. The line "YOU are still glad we walked through fire" is acted out with the right-hand index finger pointing forward, followed immediately by a thumping right foot again. Finally, concluding the line "The taint and the blemish are not ours" is the showing of the middle finger. In congruence with the lyrics, the Thai choreography demonstrates a much greater degree of affective investment than that in the Chilean original.

[2] Available at <https://twitter.com/femliberateth/status/1327325472129118208>.
[3] Available at <https://bit.ly/3XG6MMu>.

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The interpersonal meaning of the Thai choreography also differs as realised mainly through gaze and distance. Firstly, the Thai performers look directly at the viewer in a horizontal frame. The direct gaze is described as a "demand", meaning the RPs' gaze demands something from the viewer which engenders stronger viewer involvement (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, p. 118). Social distance, indicative of RPs' social relations with the viewer, can induce different degrees of intimacy. The Thai performers standing at close social distance, where the viewer can see the whole figures of the RPs without any empty space around, activate feelings of intimacy and relatability. The Chilean performers, however, stand at a public distance while looking up or to the side and the camera pans throughout the crowd. This gaze falls into the category of an "offer" whereby the RPs become the viewer's object of contemplation, thus lessening the RPs' engagement with the viewer.

PUBLIC DISCOURSE AND COALITION

The Thai version of *Un violador en tu camino* and its public performances provoked a wider debate on sexism and patriarchy. Following the pride parade-themed pro-democracy march nicknamed Mob Tungting 2 [Effeminate Protest 2], which was organised mainly by Free Gender and joined by Feminist Liberation on 7 November 2020, questions about cultural mandates that long legitimised the subjugation of women were posed. Take, for example, a viral tweet showcasing a project entitled Women outside Literature by a university student. The project features illustrations of eight female characters (one of which is Sita) in Thai literature with a reinterpretation of their character agency. These female roles are conventionally referred to collectively as Women in Literature. At first glance, these women differ greatly from one another, seeing that some of them are lauded as virtuous while some are a laughingstock or outright slut shamed. That said, what they all have in common is their subjection to the male gaze and, accordingly, their assigned reputation by the male characters in the literary texts in which they appear. This project, launched in the wake of *Sita Lui Fai*, works toward subverting the male gaze at the eight women and reassign intrinsic value to them without male validation. As such, the women are no longer contained within the narrow confines of "Women in (Thai) Literature" but assume agentic roles outside those dictated by literature, hence the linguistic overturn of the project title, Women outside Literature.

On 8 November 2020, a march to the royal palace to demand monarchy reforms was organised and later met with yet another police crackdown. In response, the then Women Liberation Group released a public statement headed *Letter from Women to King Vajiralongkorn*, in which they insisted that "We, Women Liberation, as the people who are the true owners of sovereignty, along with other people, do not bear any malice toward the king or his family. We wish to change the unjust system merely to make it transparent and concretely accountable. We are therefore writing this letter to demand the hidden truth and restore justice to everyone and every gender in Thai society" (Feminist Liberation, 2020: online; my translation). As per the letter, the feminist group was evidently aware that the existence of the monarchy is emblematic of absolute patriarchal power. Nevertheless, their stand on this institution was one of compromise, rather than abolition, as signalled by their reference to the king "as the monarch of the country under democracy" (ibid.), understandably as a safeguard against a possible lèse-majesté charge, which carries a maximum sentence of fifteen years in prison.

After the second staging of the choreographed song on 14 November 2020, the feminist group announced its name change from Women Liberation Group to Feminist Liberation Group on the grounds that the term "women" restrictedly presupposes a movement exclusively by women

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and for women, which runs counter to their manifesto. On 15 November 2020, they organised a public seminar on gender in politics that elicited a viral tweet of a user who self-identified as a man. According to the Twitter user, he could relate to the topic under discussion due to his experience with sexual assault and, by following many feminist Twitter accounts, he felt he was much better educated on issues of gender diversity and inequality.

In January 2021, Feminist Liberation could be seen retweeting posts from the collectives Bad Student, which mobilised students to join their sit-down in front of the Ministry of Education, and FreeQueer&NonBi, which promoted the message "not only women can get pregnant". When their public narrative is considered in conjunction with their movement alliances, it is evident that their ideological affiliation does not stop at raising awareness of gender-based violence but encompasses advocacy of democracy, LGBTQ+ rights, reproductive rights, and educational reforms, to name but a few.

Their pro-LGBTQ+ stance is most perceptible through their participation in Mob Tungting 2, organised by Free Gender, a pro-LGBGQ+ rights group formed in parallel with the emergence of pro-democracy demonstrations whose aim is to "fight for democracy and gender justice", as per its Facebook statement, and in Mob Nakrian Laew [Bad Student Protest] held on 21 November 2020. Feminist Liberation performed once more *Sita Lui Fai* at the latter protest to support Bad Student's campaign against sexual harassment and assault by schoolteachers. That Feminist Liberation cooperated with other advocacy groups demonstrated an intersectional lens through which they forwarded their movement.

DISCUSSION

Since the emergence of pro-democracy demonstrations in mid-2020 triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, socio-political issues that had been kept under the rug throughout previous decades were finally brought to the limelight. Interestingly, while movements embodying such issues might not have been entirely unprecedented, what marked them out was the fact that they were mostly led by youth in the face of widespread obliviousness to these socio-political concerns in public discourse. Mainstream media in Thailand oftentimes play the role of a propaganda mouthpiece for the state seeing that they frequently reproduce the social, cultural, and political status quo.

During the political crisis, the feminist movement in Thailand did not only mirror Chilean women's movements of yore but also borrowed its expression from the latter's existing repertoire of contention, most notably the feminist song, *Un violador en tu camino*, and its choreography. The performance had been replicated in multiple countries before it was taken up by Thailand's Feminist Liberation. The excursion of the song beyond its original border is a testament to the universality of gender-based violence across the globe, on the one hand, and the transnational propensity of feminist activism, on the other. By adopting and adapting the Chilean song to the Thai context, the feminist group engaged in a solidarity movement of transnational feminism without glossing over the underlying differences in patriarchal structures between Thailand and Chile.

A multimodal critical analysis of the song and its public performance has demonstrated the degree to which they adhere to or differ from the lyrical and choreographic original. Both versions identify patriarchy as the main culprit of gender-based violence and state institutions like the police, the military, the judiciary, and the president as the embodiment of patriarchy. Similarly, "women" as a social category have been established as the primary victim of patriarchy and body autonomy has been the central demand of liberation. Rape culture also figures prominently as a

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contributing factor to the entrenched problem of gender-based violence, as demonstrated through the lines exposing the practice of slut shaming. The personification of the state as a rapist brings into sharp relief the hypermasculinised nature of the state and, by extension, state apparatuses.

Overall, the most conspicuous difference between the Chilean and Thai versions is that the former focuses on feminist theoretical pedagogy in contrast to the latter's function as an affective vehicle for anger, as exemplified by the Thai adoption of a more colloquial term for "patriarchy" to make the song more layperson-friendly, and the choice of specific pronouns to challenge Thai seniority culture as enforced in part through pronominal stratification. Moreover, with multiple explicit references to the monarchy, one of the longest-standing patriarchal institutions, it has been re-signified to reflect the reality of gender oppression specific to Thailand. The conventionally mandatory use of a "royal vocabulary" when one talks about or to the royal family is also flouted in the service of blurring the class line between the "commoners" and the "royals". The visual dimension of the published lyrics, including the accompanied dance moves, have been harnessed to the same semantic end. Another departure from the original Chilean feminist mobilisation is the Thai feminist group's absorption of LGBTQ+ rights into their ideological scaffolding in addition to the fundamental agitation against gender-based violence.

The collaboration of Feminist Liberation with other advocacy groups indicated their intersectional framework, where the fight against an authoritarian school culture and the government's gatekeeping of LGBTQ+ rights was incorporated in their agenda. However, it should be noted that the intersectionality of their framework diverges from that theorised by Crenshaw (1989, 1991), in the sense that race is not a central component in Thai politics. While Crenshaw's intersectional feminism accentuates the compounding effects of race and class on the oppression of Black women in the US, Feminist Liberation gave precedence to more "liberal" concerns such as body autonomy, reproductive healthcare, and LGBTQ+ rights, without addressing class issues that derive from the economic structure.

CONCLUSION

On the surface, the differences between *Un violador en tu camino* and *Sita Lui Fai* might seem greater than the similarities. Nonetheless, considering that both countries have a shared history of military dictatorships, the ensuing emergence of their respective women's movements is not arbitrary, not least because under dictatorship public welfare invariably drops and financially disadvantaged groups fall further below the poverty line, causing a surge in domestic violence against women and exacerbating the pre-existing issue of gender inequality. While it is tricky to measure the success of any social movement, the impact of *Un violador en tu camino* and *Sita Lui Fai* should still be evaluated on their own terms, namely, as a work of discursive politics because, after all, "lasting social change is made possible by changes in how people understand their situations and how they perceive their options for altering those situations" (Young, 1997, p. 25). In this sense, the dissemination of new discourses through the translation of the choreographed song is not simply for aesthetic or cathartic purposes but constitutes a form of political activism. By bringing their protest to the public arena, the feminist group has achieved what Hayward and Komarova (2020) terms "visibility as recognition" as not only individual and collective identities are constructed but both individual and collective empowerment are channelled. Transnational feminism, indeed, could not have transpired without translation as a process of intercultural mediation (Liddicoat, 2016) that facilitates the transnational traveling of feminist discourses and frameworks in the hope of subsequently catalysing social change. This study thus represents an

attempt to add to the dearth of research fusing song translation and feminism activism using multimodal critical discourse analysis as an analytical framework.

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