Bridging Translation and Engagement: A Paratextual Study of Publishers' Notes

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Abstract

Focusing on the intersection of translation and activism, the current study aimed to address the issue of publishers' activist agency in the socio-political context of post-revolutionary Iran. In so doing, it mainly drew on Tymoczko's (2010a) conceptualization of political and ideological agency and activism as engagement and her classification of its different forms. The data came from a body of publishers' notes, written on Persian translations of six English books selected through criterion sampling from the works that apparently enjoyed a level of prestige among the international readers, and reflected the Other's views on religious, philosophical, political, and socio-cultural issues, which considering the fundamental values of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the post-revolutionary State tries to keep, could make them a possible site of translational activism. The results showed that in their notes the publishers had encoded their engagement by using a combination of different forms of engagement, i.e., publicizing, witnessing, rousing, inspiring, and mobilizing; they also revealed their interest in introducing the unfamiliar territory of the foreign to the Persian-speaking readers, and in increasing their understanding of the Other's culture. They emphasized the importance of tolerance, pluralism, openness, and mutual respect in cultural exchanges but introduced the source Islamic culture and its set of moral values as criteria for determining the validity of the Other's presented ideas and beliefs and rejecting what did not meet such criteria.

Keywords: Activism, Agency, Ideology, Other, Self

Introduction

Language Recent developments in the field of Translation Studies have led to an increased interest in the theme of translation activism, and a proliferation of studies that read and discuss translations as "records of cultural contestations and struggles," or "a means of fighting censorship, cultural repression, political dominance, physical coercion," and "fostering cultural nationalism and even revolution" (Tymoczko, 2010c, p. 3). To the researchers' best knowledge, a brief but significant synopsis of such studies has been presented in three advanced resource books: (1) *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Activism* (2020), which introduces four paradigms of the translator activist: as a witness-bearer, voice-giver, vernacular mediator, and as revolutionary (Gould & Tahmasebian, 2020). The book offers a unique overview of literary, cultural, and political translations in various activist contexts, and strives to make the role of translation visible in different fields such as promoting and enabling social change and equality, supporting human rights, and challenging autocracy and injustice across the world; (2) *Translation, Resistance, Activism* (2010b) which discusses cases of significant translations and translation movements that have had major contributions in changing societies in many parts of the world, and have participated in ideological and political dialogue and struggles; and (3) *Translation and Opposition* (2011), which examines issues of power struggle, ideology, censorship, and identity construction through a body of case studies with the final goal of showing how translation could be utilized as a political tool at the service of constructing differences, hindering communication, and breaking cultural or political relationships.

Taken together, the studies included in these sources, as representative of many studies carried out in this area of research, view translation as a potential site of empowerment. Their main concern, however, seems to be shedding light on how the agency of translators takes an activist form, as well as the way they resist, oppose, or support political or moral positions. In so doing, they discuss pragmatic and theoretical issues like translators' choices, the partial nature of resistant translations, and the roles of resistant translations in the target culture.

It seems that such studies could also be of great significance in the unique socio-political context of post-revolutionary Iran. Since its establishment after the cultural and ideological Islamic Revolution in 1979, the State has maintained a unique official "anti-Western/anti-American ideological stance" (Golmohammadi, 2019, p. 94). It has tried to resist politically, culturally, and economically against outside influences which could turn its territory into a landscape of consumption in relation to absorbing overseas ideas and products. Accordingly, many Iranian agents of translation who work in the post-revolutionary era have found themselves involved in a sort of sociopolitical activism concerning this issue, as it has driven them to consciously or unconsciously support certain post-revolutionary Iranian governments' rights or interests. Nevertheless, only a few studies deal with the Iranian context (e.g., Farahzad, 2013; Ghaderi, 2018; Maddahi & Mollanazar, 2021), none of which has examined the ways publishers' notes reflect the issue of activism (engagement) in the context of post-revolutionary Iran. Thus, the current study aims to specifically address this research gap, in the hope it will shed light on the ways publishers' notes have contributed to maintaining the State's Ideological stance and its decades of politics of dissent. In so doing, the study adopts Tymoczko's (2010a) conceptualization of political and ideological agency and activism as engagement (and her classification of its different forms), which enables translation agents to act proactively and initiate ethical, political, and ideological actions based on their commitment to specific principles, and participate in collective action and organized programs.

The study seeks to answer the following question: What range of engagement forms can be discerned in the publishers' notes added to the Persian, translated books published in post-revolutionary Iran?

Method

The current study was a corpus-based, descriptive-explanatory, qualitative research that was carried out on a group of publishers' notes, written on Persian translations of six English books selected through criterion sampling from the works that apparently (1) enjoyed a level of prestige among the international readers (they were either winner of national or international prizes, best sellers, or *written by recognized U.S. political figures), and* (2) reflected the Other's (conflictual) views on religious, philosophical, political, and socio-cultural issues, which considering the fundamental values of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the post-revolutionary State tries to keep (as stated in the Bylaw of Cultural Indicators approved by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution on 25.09.1382/16. 12. 2003), could make them a possible site of translational activism (engagement). Table 1 shows the English and Persian titles of the books (See References for other bibliographical information).

Table 1. English and Persian Titles of the Corpus Books

No.	English Title	Persian Title
1	*Religion and Science*	علم و دین در جامعه
2	*Awakening the Buddha Within: Eight Steps to Enlightenment: Tibetan Wisdom for the Western World*	بیداری بودای درون
3	*Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930*	آگاهی و جامعه
4	*The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir*	اتاقی که در آن اتفاق افتاد: خاطرات کاخ سفید
5	*Fear: Trump in the White House*	ترس: ترامپ در کاخ سفید
6	*Crisis: The True Story of an Unforgettable Year in the White House (1982)*	بحران

Data analysis involved a content, thematic analysis of the publishers' notes with regard to Tymoczko's (2010a) conceptualization of political and ideological agency and activism as engagement. Based on her remarks, the following operational definitions were provided to detect the textual manifestation of engagement in the corpus under study:

1. *Mobilizing:* statements that encourage the Persian-speaking readers to take collective actions

2. *Rousing:* statements that give rise to negative emotions or feelings such as hatred or anger in the Persian-speaking readers

3. *Inspiring:* statements that fill the Persian-speaking readers with positive feelings such as hope and interest, or wish

4. *Inciting to rebellion:* statements that encourage or stir up violent or unlawful behavior

5. *Witnessing:* statements that bring events, deeds, activities, etc. to the Persian-speaking readers' focus as evidence for the stated ideas and information such as claims, arguments, descriptions

Nevertheless, for this study, *publicizing* was also added as a category to refer to those statements that gave out information about the books, people, etc. for advertising or promotional purposes and

for making them widely known. The same approach had been previously taken by Ghaderi (2018) for covering the data that she had been examining with regard to the notion of engagement and could not be covered by Tymoczko's (2010a) five explicitly proposed forms of engagement.

In the examination of the notes, the second part of the Bylaw on Policies to Confront Cultural Invasion that was approved on 24.12.1378/14.03.2000 by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution acted as a guide. As long as (translated) books are concerned, the bylaw maintains that the following strategies should be adopted to take initiation and *proactively* avoid cultural invasion (as cited in Rahmani, 2017, p. 171):

– Assisting in the creation of national understanding by enhancing cultural and intellectual development by means of promoting thoughts, and exchanging ideas by employing logical methods;

– Assisting in the creation of stability to achieve economic, social, and cultural development and preventing Westernization;

– Expanding the culture of criticism, and argument according to spiritual values, basics and principle stances;

– Creating mental convergence between domestic circles and abroad, by means of magnifying economic and cultural structures while respecting national values and Islamic culture;

– Providing grounds for having expert dialogues to arrive at cultural strategies that are in line with national objectives without slandering, insulting others, and violating laws;

– Studying social problems to find general solutions;

– Reviewing ways of preventing the cultural, political, and social infiltration of enemies to prevent the independence of the country;

– Preventing populism and demagogy, and reliance on correct beliefs, habits, and methods.

By sticking to the bylaw, then, the researcher tried to show how in the notes, the publishers have used different forms of engagement to discuss various issues (themes) that aim to implement the suggested strategies and convince the potential target audience to take side with their ideo-political, activist stance. First, the main points of each paragraph (as the unit of thought) were highlighted and their main themes were detected. Then, the themes' relevant forms of engagement were appointed. Finally, each of the themes extracted from the notes was discussed with regard to their relevant forms of engagement, and examined in terms of the aspects that contributed to the implementation of the bylaw's suggested strategies and hence the maintenance of the State's official resistance discourse.

Results

The publishers have discussed various issues in different lengths and order in their notes. The following subsections provide a brief discussion of the results of the data analysis under the title of each theme presented in the notes.

1. Book's Significance, and the Publisher's Aim of Publishing Its Translation

In two (33.33%) of the notes, the publisher tried to draw attention to the significance of the book and the publisher's aim of publishing its translation. In *Consciousness and Society*, the reader is

informed that the book is a member of a collection of books entitled *The Collection of Thoughts of the New Era* which aims to acquaint Persian speakers with the main currents of thought and theorizing in one of the most important periods of the history of human thought, i.e., from the mid-nineteenth century to the middle of the present century. By doing so, the publisher *publicizes* the book and the collection to which it belongs. Then, he lets the readers know that this period *witnessed* huge advancements in the evolution of thought and the transformation of the method of research. Finally, the publisher goes on to put that the collection especially includes analytical writings that discuss new ideas and thoughts, presented in the field of social sciences, artistic and literary criticism, and psychology. However, he emphasizes that only those works have been included in the collection that have more or less reached the level of prestige and status of "classic" books or describe the mainstream of thought and theorizing. That is, they have left the purely ideological and political encounters, debates, and controversies behind. Thus, drawing attention to the significance of the book, the publisher *inspires* interest in its reading (Farhangi, 2012).

Similarly, in the note written on *Crisis*, the publisher maintains that the significance of the book lies in the revelation of many behind-the-scenes currents and connections of mysterious figures (e.g., Ghotbzadeh) with the Americans, and their secret meetings with the author, Hamilton Jordan, at the height of the hostage crisis. The publisher adds that in describing these secret meetings, Jordan refrains from revealing these figures' names in the text. But, after the execution of Ghotbzadeh, he sees no benefit in keeping his name secret and reveals it in a TV interview.

In this way, the publisher *publicizes* the book and *inspires* interest in reading the book by explicitly referring to its significance and content from his sarcastic point of view, and provides the author's TV interview as a *witness* for his criticism and *rouses* anger with regard to the whole circumstances described (Hafteh, 1983, p. 4).

2. Introducing the Source Culture

Three publishers (50%) have aimed at introducing the source culture and increasing the readers' understanding of it. However, two different approaches have been taken by the publishers in this way:

In the publisher's note added to *Religion and Science* (Jami, 2019, p. 4) and *The Room Where It Happened* (Kabir, 2020, pp. 3-12), the source culture has been the object of the publisher's implied criticism. Both publishers have taken a critical stance, the first one toward Western civilization, capitalism, and socialism, and the second one toward the source culture's political system. The first note sheds light on the fact that the author, himself, has been in conflict with the source society's cultural attitudes in such areas as religion, human rights, and class or ethnic systems. However, the second one levels criticism at Trump's administration and his beliefs, opinions, political decisions, and actions with which he disagrees, as well as his governance.

Nevertheless, in the third book, i.e. *Consciousness and Society*, the publisher has looked positively at the source culture and referred to the mid-nineteenth century to the middle of the present century as one of the most important periods in the history of human thought, in which the evolution of thought and transformation of research methods have been huge and noteworthy (Farhangi, 2012, p. 5).

In sum, all of the publishers have tried to *publicize* some information about the Other's culture. The first two have approached the Other's culture from a critical point of view. They have tried to *rouse* negative feelings in the readers about the issue, and mainly used the author as a *witness* to their

claims. However, the third one has valued it positively and shared his affection for the source culture and *inspired* readers with interest in the book and the source culture.

3. Introducing the Author to Persian-speaking Readers

Not surprisingly, the publishers of four books (75%) have allocated a part of their notes to introduce the author of the source text to their Persian-speaking readers:

The publisher's note of *Religion and Science* includes some necessary, impressive details such as the author's family, educational and professional background including the places he had studied or taught in, other books he had written, his expertise, and the awards he had won, his activist deeds and their public impressions, and the author's stance towards ideological, philosophical, and social issues. It also provides a synopsis of the author's ideas presented in his major works. In brief, it introduces him as a blue-blooded lord, home-schooled scientist, secular philosopher, a denier of God and soul, religion and Christianity, an anti-war and pacifist activist, anti-socialism and capitalism, and the young author of influential works such as *The Principles of Mathematics*, *the Problems of Philosophy*, and *Why Am I not a Christian?* (Jami, 2019, pp. 2-9)

The other three publisher's notes are *Fear, The Room Where It Happened*, and *Crisis.* As could be expected, the publishers try to introduce the authors as providers of first-hand, detailed, and documented political narrations on the U.S. presidents and behind-the-scenes stories of the White House which are worth reading. According to the notes appended to the first two books, the authors are prominent, well-known, American political figures: John Bolton, is introduced as a 1974 law graduate of Yale University, a longtime Republican figure in the United States who has served in various governments, e.g., as the U.S. Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations in the George W. Bush administration, the National Security Adviser to the Donald Trump administration. He is described as one of America's most anti-Iran political figures, one of the main supporters of the Mujahedin-e Khalq terrorist organization and skeptical of international institutions, and a supporter of the idea that Iraq had nuclear weapons (Kabir, 2020, pp. 7-13); and Hamilton Jordan is introduced as the White House Chief of Staff and Carter's closest adviser and confidant who carried out numerous secret missions on Carter-related issues in Iran and has been involved in all of the White House's high-level decisions, and a provider of investigative and documentary reports whose notes taken during his service reveal what is often considered a state secret (Hafteh, 1983, p. 3). Finally, Bob Woodward, the author of the third book, is introduced as the teller of the *true* story of President Trump, who has documented investigative and documentary reports on eight presidents from Nixon to Obama, in his resume, and this time describes the unprecedented details of President Donald Trump's tense life inside the White House and how he managed foreign and domestic policy (Nahl, 2018, p. 7).

In sum, not only does each of the notes communicate the publisher's interest in the book, but also tries to convince the readers that the author it is introducing is impressive, and deserves status, proposing that reading the book provides a unique opportunity to become familiar with the author and his ideas and stories, and as such *inspires* the readers with interest in reading the book. In so doing, each publisher *publicizes* the author and his ideas and works and makes the readers *witness* the author's achievements and deeds. However, in cases where the author's ideas and his political, ideological, or philosophical stance contradict the vast public's religious beliefs like when he denies God, religion, human being's soul, or takes anti-Iran actions, he tries to *rouse* negative feelings such as anger, and hatred. The same happens when the publisher tries to make the readers accompany the author in his negative attitude toward the source (socio-political) culture.

Additionally, in the case of *Religion and Science*, the publisher also uses the author as an example to *inspire* the readers and fill them with necessary feelings for positive social change (hope and faith) in achieving the desired goals. It convinces them to take action, and do similar activist deeds, by making them believe that they can perform the same activist deeds in their own societies.

4. Introducing the Publisher's Stance about the Author's Ideas

In five books (83.33%), the publishers give the Persian readers some approximate idea of their stance about the book content and the author's proposed ideas. In three of them, the publishers have adopted a hardline stance against some of the ideas proposed by the author of the books: In *Religion and Science*, Russell's ideas about God, human beings' souls, death, and life after death, etc. have been rejected and considered as naive, and mere claims without any proof. Then, the publisher tries to provide counterarguments for their rejection, and in this way has even used allusion to Mowlānā's poems (Jami, 2019, pp. 7-9); and in *Awakening the Buddha Within*, reincarnation and human beings' having several lives, found in Buddhism, have been criticized, and Buddhism has been introduced as an invalid, non-divine system of thought (Mordad, 2000, p. 2).

In the other two books, the criticism has taken its strongest form: in *The Room Where It Happened*, the translated book has been regarded as a reflection of the claims and views of John Bolton, an enemy of Iran, which cannot be considered completely true; it has been reminded that some of the claims are contrary to certain facts and clear international documents (Kabir, 2020, p. 19); while in *Crisis,* the publisher clarifies his stand more elaborately. He suggests that the author's ideas are not as objective as the author claims. They are biased, and a seemingly futile attempt to justify Carter's way of dealing with Iran, and to acquit him of his mistakes (which in the publisher's view, led to the hostage-taking) (Hafteh, 1983, p. 4). The publisher then states that even the former hostages, leveled criticism at the continuation of these mistakes, and the U.S. conspiracy against the Islamic Revolution of Iran (e.g., Tabas case). He goes on to remind us that the hostages were released, although Jordan has tried not to completely describe the scene of their showing anger at Carter's policies (Hafteh, 1983, p. 5). In the publisher's view, the readers already know about the author's bias. Yet he still feels the need to discuss some other warning points. He rejects the author's claim that Imam Khomeini promised in Paris that after the establishment of the Islamic Republic, he would go to Qom and be content with the spiritual leadership of his people. He states that this is not true and Imam had always stressed the need for the clergy to intervene in politics (Hafteh, 1983, p. 5). He also criticizes the author's attempt at portraying Carter as a man of God and humanity, a man with religious beliefs, and suggests that Carter's actions during his four years in office showed his ugly face to the world and proved that his claims of human rights have been nothing more than a deception (Hafteh, 1983,).

Referring to the U.S. invasion of Tabas, the publisher emphasizes that it was done under the guise of a rescue operation aimed at freeing innocent people. However, in his view, if this plan was carried out completely, not only the hostages would not be saved but the lives of hundreds and thousands of other innocent people would be endangered. He claims that Carter committed this crime to maintain his position, not to rescue the hostages, as Jordan claims (Hafteh, 1983).

The publisher also talks of Jordan's aim of covering up the disgraceful defeat of the United States in the hostage-taking event. He rejects his conclusion that Iran did not benefit from hostage-taking. He quotes Imam Khomeini's reference to the occupation of the spy nest as the second revolution that brought many fruits and thwarted other conspiracies against the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Finally, he suggests that when Jordan talks about the mass media and American and European newspapers,

he tries to introduce them as independent and free. But the publisher deems it wrong, as in his view they are completely dependent and mostly in the hands of the Zionists (Hafteh, 1983).

Nevertheless, in *Fear*, contrary to the mentioned cases, the publisher introduces the book as the provider of the most documented narration of the first year of Trump's presidency, whose focus is on the heated debates and decision-making process in the president's office, the White House operating room, the Air Force One, and his residence. It seems that by calling the book *The True Story of President Trump as Told by Bob Woodward* he shows his approval of the content of the book and his harmony with the author's standpoint (Nahl, 2018) which describes the situation as "an administrative *coup* d'état" and a "nervous breakdown" of the U.S. executive branch (Nahl, 2018, p. 8).

On the whole, in these books, the publishers try to summarily *publicize* the authors' (controversial) religious, ideological, or political ideas, and combine them with their own interpretations and comments which seemingly aim at *rousing* negative feelings in the readers. In this regard, the publisher of *Religion and Science* brings Mowlānā's poems as a *witness* to his arguments which is also quite *inspiring* in reestablishing religious faith in the readers; while the publisher of *Crisis* refers to political events as a *witness* to support his claims and *mobilize* the readers to take side with the publisher or the State's official stance; and finally the publisher of *Fear* brings the Woodward's description of the situation as an *inspiring witness* for the readers to *mobilize* them to take side with the State's anti-U.S. official stance.

5. Reader's Responsibility

In the concluding part of two (33.33%) publishers' notes, the publishers have placed the ultimate responsibility for the final judgment of the (controversial) contents of the book on the readers. They both have invited or it might be better to say *mobilized* them, with varying degrees of severity, to do further analysis of the ideas expressed in the books. Doing so, the publisher of *Religion and Science* respectfully has asked the readers for their feedback and cooperation and *publicized* a "valuable" book, i.e. *A Study and Critique of Selected Thoughts of Bertrand Russell* by Allameh Mohammad-Taqi Ja'fari for reading (Jami, 2019, p. 9), and the publisher of *Awakening the Buddha Within* has *publicized* some must be consulted sources (the Qur'an, the Tradition) for evaluating them, rejecting and criticizing whatsoever is contrary to, or not in line with the contents of them and *rousing* negative feelings in them (Mordad, 2000, p. 2).

6. Publisher's Account of the Author's Work

In three (50%) of the books, i.e. *Fear, The Room Where It Happened* (Kabir, 2020, pp. 15-18), and *Crisis (Hafteh, 1983, pp. 3-6),* and an almost big part of the notes have been dedicated to the publishers' account of the books.

At first look, introducing the subject of the book and offering an outline of its content could be considered a usual act, aiming to engage the potential readers and encourage them to read the book by drawing their attention to its value. Nevertheless, a close examination of these parts of the notes shows that the publishers have taken ideology and politics seriously, and provided a clear introduction to the political creeds and doctrines that have dominated and shaped the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the themes and directions of the U.S. ideological and political attitude toward it. Their distinctive competing, and sometimes conflicting values have been highlighted. Extended coverage has been also given to key contemporary political issues such as the U.S. presidential election, hostage-taking in Iran, and nuclear weapons, especially supported by details on

the political scene of the U.S and major ideas and deeds of important political figures of both countries, which help reinforce a politically and ideologically informed understanding of the book.

All told, all of the publishers have tried to *publicize* some information about the U.S. political scene from a critical ideologically and politically informed position, *rouse* negative feelings in the readers about the conflicting political issues and figures and the like, and mainly used the political events as a *witness* to their claims, and have *inspired* readers with interest in the book and *mobilized* the readers to take side with them or the State's official stance.

7. Debts and Acknowledgements

In two (33.33%) of the books, i.e. (1) *Consciousness and Society (Farhangi, 2012, p. 5),* and (2) *The Room Where It Happened (Kabir, 2020, p. 19),* the publisher has taken the note written on the book as a chance for thanking those who have had theoretical and practical contributions to the project of book translation and publication. This could be quite *inspiring* and considered a nice gesture of polite professionalism and sincere appreciation. Yet, both of the publishers' notes seem quite successful in the books' gaining recognition of importance among the readers as the first publisher *publicizes* the contributors as the providers of cultural services in general and even calls some of them by their names and titles, and the second one goes an almost similar way and talks of the book translation and publication as careful, research-based teamwork which has resulted in a quality annotated translation presented in a short time. It seems that both notes take a *mobilizing* form and convince the readers to buy and read them.

8. Introducing Prominent Figures

This topic has been discussed in four (75%) of the books. In *Religion and Science,* the note ends with an invitation to the readers to further analyze the thoughts of the author by reading *A Study and Critique of Selected Thoughts of Bertrand Russell*, a valuable work, authored by Allameh Mohammad-Taqi Ja'fari, an Iranian Shia scholar, philosopher, intellectual, and Islamic theologist. *Publicizing* one of the famous works of this prominent figure, the publisher seemingly aims at clarifying the issues discussed in the book, and at *mobilizing* the readers to take action and read the book. He *inspires* faith in them by introducing the fact that the ideas that the author represents can be different from what many other prominent figures believe in the target culture (Jami, 2019, p. 9).

However, in (1) *The Room Where It Happened* (Kabir, 2020, pp. 2-13), (2) *Crisis (Hafteh, 1983, pp. 3-5),* and (3) *Fear* (Nahl, 2018, p. 7), the notes *publicize* some of the prominent, the high-ranked U.S. political figures, mainly amid the accounts of the U.S. political scene (the first and second books), or when introducing the author as the creator of well-documented books about these figures (the third book). This seemingly natural act of referring to such people in the aforementioned cases, however, *inspire*s the potential audience with an interest in reading them and *mobilizes* them to buy the books, and the critical tone of the publishers when giving an account of the events they have played a role in, *rouses* negative feelings in them.

9. Publisher's Expectation

The publishers of two (33.33%) of the books have talked about their expectations. In *Consciousness and Society,* the publisher hopes that now that the publishing house is implementing another phase of its publishing program, the result will be welcomed by experts and will be useful for those who are interested, and they will help us to enrich this collection as much as possible. Such statements take a

publicizing form and give the readers some clues about the activist purposes the publisher pursues by publishing the collection in general, and the book, in particular, *mobilizes* them to contribute to the very same deed and *inspires* the readers with hope by shedding light on the value and the possible positive outcome of reading the text (Farhangi, 2012, p. 5).

Interestingly, however, the publisher of *Crisis* talks of his decision to omit and summarize those parts of the book which have been devoted to the U.S. domestic affairs and the course of that country's election campaign, as he considers them as not being interesting to the Iranian readers. He also talks of his expectations that the readers will notice the unjust parts of the book, and will not let the Americans re-establish their foothold in Iran by publishing books about Iran. In his ideological view, the Iranian nation of martyrdom will not be deluded by foreigners (Hafteh, 1983, p. 6). So, the publisher adopts a critical standpoint and *publicizes* his thoughts, *rouses* negative feelings in the readers regarding his discussed issues, *mobilizes* them to take sides with him, and *inspires* interest in a guided reading of the book.

Discussion

To As Pellatt (2013, p. 86) suggests, the publishers' notes have provided the chance of enabling "propaganda, including justification and promotion of the author and the work" and guide the reading task, so that in some cases it may even "shift the focus of the work by suggestion" . A close examination of the publishers' notes revealed their primary attempt at broadening the readers' perspectives on the ideological, philosophical, and sociological aspects of life. However, their notes also give a deep sense of distrust and criticism. The publishers have a highly strong presence in their notes. They have benefited from them highlighting their ideological and political positions and directing the reading process. Doing so, they have tried to introduce the views and ideas of the authors, which they have deemed harmful and contrary to the vast Islamic Iranian society (e.g., those denying the existence of God, or human souls) from an ideologically-formed position, and then they have endeavored to convince their readers to take sides with their positioning before reading the content of the book and follow their path of resistance.

The results seem consistent with previous studies done by Ghaderi (2018), and Maddahi and Mollanazar (2021) who have found paratexts as a significant site of translation activism in Pahlavi and post-revolutionary era in Iran, respectively. As Table 3 shows, the publishers have used a combination of different forms of engagement in their notes.

Table 3. The Cumulative Table of the Statistical Analysis of the Publisher's Notes

Book Titles	The Number of Themes Related to Each Form of Engagement					
	Publicizing	Witnessing	Rousing	Inciting to Rebellion	Inspiring	Mobilizing
Religion and Science	5	2	3	0	3	2
Awakening the Buddha Within: Eight Steps to Enlightenment: Tibetan Wisdom for the Western World	2	0	2	0	0	1
Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930	3	2	1	0	3	2
The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir	6	3	4	0	3	2

Fear: Trump in the White House	4	2	3	0	2	1
Crisis: The True Story of an Unforgettable Year in the White House (1982)	5	4	5	0	4	3

Publicizing

Publicizing has been used in all (100%) of the six publishers' notes. As could be rightly expected, in their notes, the publishers have tried to publicize the book, the author, and his ideas and works. They have also tried to give some information about the Other's culture. Therefore, the researchers decided to add *publicizing* to Tymoczko's introduced forms of engagement to refer to this feature. The publishers have aimed to create public awareness of original contributions to knowledge and to encourage Persian-speaking readers to read the books and advance their understanding of innovative ideas and claims in different branches of knowledge that might otherwise have been kept secret. Additionally, the publishers make their readers aware that their reading also yields indirect rewards as they receive the intellectual credit, recognition, and prestige that come with such an understanding of the world and its obtained knowledge.

Rousing

Rousing has been used in all (100%) of the six publishers' notes. The publishers seem to be fully aware of the fact that they are working in the religious and ideological context of post-revolutionary Iran, and the sensitivity of their cultural work. In the presentation of those ideas that have been considered contrary to the official ideological stance of the State or the vast public's beliefs and ideologies, they have tried to *rouse* negative feelings such as anger and hatred in the readers whenever they have introduced the anti-Islamic, atheist ideas, and beliefs of the authors, especially those presented in the translated books. They show a negative attitude towards their non-divine teachings and claims and even criticize the Other's secular culture.

Mobilizing

Mobilizing has been used in all (100%) of the six publishers' notes. One of the publishers' goals has been enhancing public awareness. They have done their best to encourage their audience to not only read the books but also approach them from a critical point of view. Acknowledging the value and significance of the books and their authors, they have tried to mobilize them to contribute to the analysis of the contents of the books. Nevertheless, this encouragement seems to be ideologically charged as they have introduced the Qur'an and other Islamic sources as the providers of the criteria for interpreting and judging the ideas presented in the books.

Inspiring

Inspiring has been used in five (83.33%) of the six publishers' notes. The publishers have tried to inspire the readers with interest in reading the books and in the source culture. In some cases, they have also used the author as an example to *inspire* the readers with hope and faith in social change by introducing him as an activist pacifist. Additionally, as a nice gesture of polite professionalism and sincere appreciation, a part of the notes has been dedicated to thanking those who have had theoretical and practical contributions to the project. This could be quite *inspiring*.

Witnessing

Witnessing has been used in five (83.33%) of the six publishers' notes. The publishers use witnessing on different occasions: (1) for providing evidence for the criticism or claims made about the source culture, or the ideas presented by the authors; (2) or for making them aware of the positive aspects

of the source culture. Thus, *witnessing* has been mainly realized by bringing examples of major deeds, works, and events. On the whole, this form of engagement presents some sort of respect toward the Other's culture and beliefs as well as respect toward the readers, as it seemingly tries to base the argument on solid facts and avoids prejudice.

Conclusion

The study examined translations in the light of Tymoczko's (2010a, p. 213) conceptualization of political and ideological agency and activism as engagement, and reviewed and classified the Iranian publishers' applied forms of engagement in their notes appended to the translated books.

The results of the study revealed the activist role that the publishers had assumed in post-revolutionary Iran's cultural exchanges with other countries of the world. They used a combination of different forms of engagement in their notes. As could be expected, the publishers had tried to *inspire* the readers with interest in reading the books and in the source culture, and with hope and faith in social change. They had *publicized* their ideological and political positions, and the views and ideas of the authors, which they had deemed harmful and contrary to the vast Islamic Iranian society's beliefs (e.g., denying the existence of God). In so doing, they had adopted a critical, ideologically-formed position to *rouse* negative feelings in the readers, and had endeavored to *mobilize* them to take sides with their positioning before reading the content of the books, and hence follow their path of resistance.

Their notes reflect their deep commitment to *the goal they seemingly share with the State, i.e.,* enhancing public awareness of original contributions to knowledge as their notes encourage Persian-speaking readers to read their selected, translated books and advance their understanding of innovative ideas and claims expressed in them. Yet, they also echo the publishers' respect for the other significant State concern during cultural exchanges with other Western or Eastern countries which is keeping the Islamic nature of the society.

The findings of the study may help translation scholars to well investigate the relationship between power, culture, resistance, translation, and literature; and find traces of power relations and ideological implications in translation. However, it is noteworthy to mention that the current study has been done on limited paratexts; texts, and other paratexts could be worth investigating. It is also suggested that further research should be undertaken to investigate how the publishers' notes could affect the reception of their translated books in the examined translation context, i.e., post-revolutionary Iran.

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