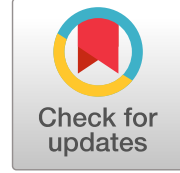


A WOMAN IS NO MAN. A TRANSLATOR IS (NO) AUTHOR? RESISTING THE SHARED SUBORDINATION OF WOMEN AND TRANSLATORS THROUGH *TRANSLATORHANDLING*

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Abstract



This article proposes translatorhandling as a conceptual framework to theorize the intentional and strategic interventions made by feminist translators across textual, peritextual, and epitextual realms. It aims to expand the current understanding of translator visibility and reframe the role of the feminist translator within the evolving field of Feminist Translation Studies (FTS). This study argues that through translatorhandling, feminist translators not only ‘womanhandle’ texts to amplify silenced women’s voices and make language speak for women but also assert their creative agency and professional visibility primarily through epitextual channels. Etaf Rum’s *A Woman is No Man* and its Turkish translation, *Kadının Sesi Yok* [A woman has no voice] by Arzu Altınanıt, constitute the case of this research. Thematic analysis of Altınanıt’s blog, *Bir Çevirmenin Dünyası* [A Translator’s World], and her X (formerly Twitter) posts demonstrates how she engages in translatorhandling as a form of dual resistance: amplifying women’s voices and challenging the systemic invisibility of translators. The findings reveal how she publicly claims interpretive agency, contests the industry’s erasure of translators, and positions herself as a co-creator. Mapping this emerging practice, the article highlights translatorhandling as a powerful feminist intervention that transcends textual boundaries, positioning translator’s voice as a force of solidarity and transformation in public discourse.

Keywords: translatorhandling, feminist translation, translator’s visibility, Arzu Altınanıt, *A Woman is No Man*, *Kadının Sesi Yok*

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The historical relationship between women and translation/translators is deeply embedded in their shared condition of subordination. Both have traditionally been perceived as derivative, secondary, and reproductive, occupying peripheral positions within patriarchal hierarchies. As Sherry Simon observes, '[t]ranslators and women have historically been the weaker figures in their respective hierarchies: translators are handmaidens to authors, women inferior to men' (1996, p. 1). Similarly, von Flotow (1997, p. 75) argues that translation has historically been framed in gendered terms, often in ways that reinforce its association with femininity and inferiority. As patriarchal systems have marginalized women's contributions, literary and publishing spheres have historically deemed translation secondary, effacing the translator's role. This dual marginalization—where both women and translators are denied full recognition of their intellectual contributions—places them in a shared struggle for visibility and agency.

Feminist Translation Studies (FTS), growing out of an awareness of this structural analogy, aims to 'identify and critique the tangle of concepts which relegates both women and translation to the bottom of the social and literary ladder' (Simon, 1996, p. 1). Seeking to dismantle these traditional hierarchies, FTS redefines translation as an act of creative and intellectual production rather than a simple, passive reproduction (Andone, 2002, p. 135; Chamberlain, 1988, p. 466; Godard, 1989, p. 47; von Flotow, 2023). Accordingly, feminist translators reject the conventional notions of fidelity and invisibility, instead embracing an interventionist approach that asserts their agency and visibility as co-authors and co-creators (von Flotow, 1997, pp. 21-22; Federici & Fortunati, 2011).

Etaf Rum's debut novel *A Woman is No Man* (2019) and its Turkish translation *Kadının Sesi Yok* [A woman has no voice] (2022) constructing the case of this study, offer a particularly resonant ground for exploring the shared subordination and shared resistance of women and translators. In her novel, Etaf Rum, a Palestinian American author, delves into the experiences of three generations of Palestinian American women living in Brooklyn. Through the characters Isra, an immigrant bride brought to New York, her mother-in-law Fareeda, and her daughter Deya, the story highlights cultural and familial pressures that silence women's voices, while also revealing the seeds of resistance that can emerge when women seek to reshape their destinies. The novel's

title itself, *A Woman is No Man*, resonates as a blunt statement on how patriarchy frames womanhood: a woman, in essence, is deemed inferior to a man, lacking equal rights or voice. The novel's frank depiction of generational trauma and its emphasis on women's longing to speak out have resonated with a global audience, positioning it as a New York Times bestseller. It has been translated into multiple languages, including Turkish, French, Italian, German, and Arabic.

When *A Woman is No Man* was translated into Turkish in 2022 by Arzu Altınanıt, it was published with the title of *Kadının Sesi Yok*. This re-titling foregrounds the fundamental theme of the novel, the voicelessness of women. While the novel's central question addresses how Palestinian American women might reclaim their voices, the Turkish translation raises an additional, equally compelling question: how could the translator herself, another traditionally marginalized figure, claim her own visibility within a publishing market that often erases the translator's creative role? In carrying Rum's narrative into Turkish, Altınanıt confronts a parallel dynamic: just as Rum's female characters refuse to be muted, can the translator likewise refuse to remain unheard and unseen?

This article examines precisely that intersection. Building on FTS arguments, eager to dismantle the shared subordination of women and translators, it explores how the Turkish translator Altınanıt's work on *Kadının Sesi Yok* exemplifies an act of resistance on two fronts. On the textual front, her translation carries Rum's feminist critique into a new linguistic and cultural context, ensuring the voices of oppressed women characters in the novel are heard in Turkish. On the professional front, she navigates a publishing industry culture that often undervalues or disregards translators' labour and significance. Accordingly, this study analyses: (1) how Arzu Altınanıt, as the Turkish translator, amplifies the novel's theme of marginalized women's voices; (2) how she subverts the traditional invisibility of translators by asserting herself as a co-creative agent and reclaiming her agency through what can be termed **translatorhandling**; and (3) what this case demonstrates about the transformative potential of feminist translation practices in empowering both women and translators.

To address these research questions, this study conducts thematic analysis of epitextual materials, including the Turkish translator Arzu Altınanıt's personal blog, *Bir*

Çevirmenin Dünyası [A Translator's World], and her posts on X (formerly Twitter). To this end, firstly, all blog entries and X posts published up to July 2025 were compiled, with particular focus on those related to *A Woman is No Man* and *Kadının Sesi Yok*, as well as those that problematize the subordination and oppression of both women and translators. Then, these materials were manually coded and analyzed thematically to explore how Arzu Altınanıt advocates for silenced women and asserts her translatorship through translatorhandling by flaunting her signature epitextually across digital platforms.

The following sections discuss the shared subordination and resistance of women and translators, introduce the concept of *translatorhandling*, and then analyse Altınanıt's translation of *A Woman is No Man* as a case study before concluding with broader implications.

Women and Translators: Shared Subordination & Shared Resistance

The systemic subordination of women in patriarchal societies closely parallels the marginalization of translators in literary production. Patriarchal literary traditions have often silenced women, casting them as minor figures rather than authors or powerful characters. Similarly, translation has historically been framed as a secondary and derivative endeavour. As Andone argues, '[t]he original is the natural, the truth, and the paternal authority, whereas the translation, like the woman, is secondary and imitation' (2002, p. 143). This understanding reduces both women and translators to mere reproductive agents rather than creators.

FTS directly addresses the subordinate positioning of both women and translators within their conventional hierarchies. By highlighting how both groups have been dismissed as secondary, FTS underscores the need to empower them concurrently. It not only enables language to speak for women but also seeks to dismantle traditional sexist conceptions of translation and, in turn, cultivate a new understanding of both translation and the role of the translator. Feminist translators argue that translation is a form of creative production and a type of original writing, rather than merely a mechanical reproduction (Andone, 2002, p. 135; Chamberlain, 1988, p. 466; Godard, 1989, p. 47; von Flotow, 2023). Accordingly, within FTS, the translator's role shifts from passive to interventionist, directly challenging traditional approaches that advocate for

translator invisibility. Feminist translators who align their work with feminist activism deliberately overstep the boundaries of conventional fidelity and invisibility, asserting their agency through visible and intentional textual interventions (von Flotow, 1997, pp. 21, 22; Federici & Fortunati, 2011). Foregrounding this interventionist approach, Barbara Godard introduces the concept of ‘womanhandling the text,’ which she defines as follows:

[t]he feminist translator, affirming her critical difference, her delight in interminable re-reading and rewriting, flaunts the signs of her manipulation of the text. Womanhandling the text in translation would involve the replacement of the modest, self-effacing translator. Taking her place would be an active participant in the creation of meaning, who advances a conditional analysis. Hers is a continuing provisionality, aware of process, giving self-reflexive attention to practices. The feminist translator immodestly flaunts her signature in italics, in footnotes - even in a preface (1989, p. 50).

‘Womanhandling’ empowers translators to assert their presence by ‘flaunting their signatures’, incorporating footnotes, or adding prefaces that elucidate their translatorial choices. Through these deliberate interventions, the translator explicitly marks her presence. She ceases to be an invisible, neutral conduit and instead becomes an engaged participant in meaning-making, who actively stands in solidarity with female authors and characters. von Flotow’s (1991) framework of feminist translation strategies, particularly prefacing and footnoting, closely aligns with Godard’s conception of womanhandling, as both aim to foreground the translator’s active and self-reflexive engagement with the text, most notably in paratextual spaces such as footnotes and prefaces. Although more recent feminist translation discussions (Castro & Ergün, 2018, p. 129; Castro & Spoturno, 2022, para. 9-10; Castro et al., 2024, p. 8) have noted that these strategies emerged within the specific linguistic, literary, cultural, and socio-political context of the Canadian feminist translation movement and therefore may not be universally valid, tracing the feminist translator’s presence and visibility through textual and peritextual elements continues to be a highly relevant analytical approach. The study of translators’ visible interventions in prefaces and footnotes appears to remain a crucial aspect of contemporary feminist translation scholarship, which continues to regard such practices as vital indicators of translator agency and visibility.

Indeed, the visibility—or more often, the invisibility—of the translator has been one of the most extensively debated issues in Translation Studies. Lawrence Venuti’s

oft-cited influential work *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995/2008/2018) forms an essential backdrop to any discussion of how translations are received in contemporary literary markets. Venuti argues that the dominance of English in global publishing has established a fluency norm, where translations read so smoothly that the translator's work becomes invisible. Anglophone cultures, he contends, favour translations that do not 'sound' like translations (Venuti, 1995/2008/2018). Critics often praise a work as 'reading as if it were written in English,' a statement that ironically negates the creative process of the translator. Although Venuti's framework is not explicitly feminist, it resonates with FTS in its opposition to the translator's erasure. FTS's concept of 'womanhandling the text' closely parallels Venuti's advocacy of foreignizing strategies, which seek to disrupt the illusion of textual transparency and assert the translator's visible presence. Both 'womanhandling' and 'foreignizing' advocate for textual and paratextual—or more precisely, peritextual—interventions that serve to enhance the translator's visibility (Godard, 1989; Venuti, 1995; von Flotow, 1991, 1997). Drawing on Genette's (1997) distinction between peritext (elements physically attached to the text) and epitext (external materials related to the text but existing outside the book), Koskinen (2000, pp. 99, 100) argues that translator visibility should be pursued not only textually, but also paratextually and extratextually. In Koskinen's tripartite model of visibility, textual visibility refers to the translator's choices and interventions within the translated text itself. Paratextual visibility pertains to the translator's presence in peritextual elements such as book covers, prefaces, footnotes, afterwords, and annotations. Koskinen's concept of extratextual visibility adds a further dimension to the visibility models proposed by Venuti and FTS, extending it into epitextual domains such as interviews, reviews, public talks, or critical writings by translators or other agents. This expanded conception of visibility allows Translation Studies scholars to explore translator visibility within epitextual realms, thereby moving beyond a strictly textual focus. The exponential rise of online and digital platforms has profoundly broadened these epitextual domains, offering new opportunities for translators to assert their presence, construct professional identities, and engage with wider audiences (Desjardins, 2024; Freeth, 2024).

This study argues that the expanded conception of visibility should be integrated into discussions within FTS, which underscores the agency and visibility of the feminist translator through womanhandling the text, primarily on the textual and peritextual

levels. Accordingly, it introduces a new term, ***translatorhandling***, to encompass the full range of textual, peritextual, and epitextual strategies and interventions employed by feminist translators both to amplify silenced women's voices and assert their own creative translatorship and thus challenge the traditional barriers to textual visibility. By drawing on and extending Barbara Godard's concept of womanhandling, translatorhandling further emphasizes the translator's paratextual, specifically epitextual, manoeuvring to control the narrative surrounding her own work, labour, and visibility. It describes how a translator not only reworks the text but also actively engages with how the translation is presented, marketed, and discussed in the public sphere, thereby asserting her presence as a creative agent rather than an invisible intermediary. This may involve publishing a blog series, participating in social media discourse, or giving interviews that highlight her agency, translatorship, and specific translation choices and interventions. It can also entail mobilizing conversations around industry norms, such as the persistent failure to credit translators on book covers or online listings. In doing so, translatorhandling acknowledges that the feminist translator's political and ethical commitments do not end with the final draft of the text; rather, they extend into the broader cultural negotiation of what the author, source text, and translation signify and how the translator's labour is acknowledged or overlooked by publishers, critics, and readers.

Translatorhandling does not displace womanhandling; rather, it builds upon it. Womanhandling the text involves rewriting or supplementing a source text to reflect feminist insights, thus ensuring that female characters, authors, or perspectives are not muted in translation (Godard, 1989). Translatorhandling expands that activist posture both by thinking epitextually and by insisting that the translator's own role should not be silenced either. Translatorhandling does not leave the text alone to speak for itself; rather, it allows the translator's own voice to resonate in interviews, social media posts, and commentary on the novel's themes. In this sense, translatorhandling underscores the multilayered nature of feminist translation and makes the conception of the feminist translator more comprehensive. Translatorhandling fights against all forms of oppression and subordination, and it adopts a gender-inclusive and intersectional perspective in this struggle, which goes beyond textual and peritextual limitations. Accordingly, this study suggests that translatorhandling is essential to the shared

struggle against the parallel subordination of women— indeed, all gender identities— and translators. The Turkish trajectory of *A Woman is No Man* illustrates how these theoretical and conceptual points converge in the practices of translator Arzu Altınanıt. As the novel itself centres on the voices of oppressed women, an intriguing question arises: will the translator, who is herself potentially marginalized by industry norms, also remain invisible, or will she step into the spotlight? The following sections examine this case in detail and explore how Arzu Altınanıt navigates this tension.

Translatorhandling in Action: *Kadının Sesi Yok* by Arzu Altınanıt

Arzu Altınanıt is a prolific Turkish literary translator who has translated over forty books, mostly works of fiction, from English into Turkish, nearly thirty of which are authored by women and feature female protagonists at their centre. After working for many years as a teacher and later at a British publishing house, she began her career in literary translation following her retirement (Çeviri Kitabı, n.d.). She also maintains a personal blog titled *Bir Çevirmenin Dünyası*, where she shares her reflections, critiques, and experiences on a wide range of topics, including books, literature, translation, her own translation processes, the publishing industry, daily life, and travel. Altınanıt explains that the blog, which she initially launched to share her perspectives on translation, gradually evolved into a more personal and wide-ranging platform. Over time, it has expanded in scope and served as a comprehensive space that reflects various aspects of life, culture, and translation from a translator's point of view (Altınanıt, n.d.). This online space thus functions not only as a personal and intellectual outlet but also as a platform through which she publicly reflects on her translational choices and interventions, while simultaneously asserting her translatorship and professional agency. In addition to her blog, Altınanıt's social media presence, particularly her posts on X (formerly Twitter), serves similar functions, offering a dynamic platform where she engages in real time with topics such as literature, translation, authorship, translatorship, translators' rights, women's rights, animal rights, environmental concerns, and current political issues. Her oppositional stance against all forms of oppression and resistance to hegemonic power structures is also readily apparent in her social media activity, which frequently reflects a broader critical and political consciousness.

This research adopts a qualitative case study design grounded in the principles of FTS. It takes an exploratory and interpretive stance to address the research questions. Altınanıt's blog writings and social media posts constitute a rich body of epitextual material that frames her work beyond the translated texts themselves. To explore how she articulates her translatorship, how she engages with feminist translation concerns, and how she translatorhandles the overall process, this study employs thematic analysis of relevant epitextual materials with particular attention to her translation of *A Woman is No Man* and the broader themes of women's and translators' in/visibility and subordination.

Thematic analysis, one of the most frequently used qualitative methods, is conducted to identify, analyse, and interpret main themes, i.e., repeated patterns of meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 78, 86). As Braun and Clarke (2006) note, one of the key strengths of thematic analysis lies in its flexibility (p. 78). They distinguish between two primary approaches: inductive and theoretical thematic analysis (pp. 83, 84). Inductive thematic analysis is data-driven, meaning that codes and themes emerge directly from the data without being shaped by pre-existing frameworks or the researcher's prior assumptions (p. 83). In contrast, theoretical thematic analysis is guided by the researcher's existing theoretical interests or analytical focus, making it more explicitly shaped by predetermined concepts (p. 84). Nevertheless, due to the flexible nature of thematic analysis, these two approaches are not mutually exclusive; researchers often draw from both in practice, blending inductive and theoretical strategies as needed. Thanks to the flexibility offered by thematic analysis, this study integrates both theoretical and inductive analyses. Drawing on FTS and more specifically the concept of translatorhandling, a theoretical thematic approach was initially employed to identify the main themes. Subsequently, inductive thematic analysis was applied to the data set to identify sub-themes, allowing for a nuanced representation of the diverse patterns emerging from the corpus.

During the data collection process, Altınanıt's all blog writings, published between April 17, 2013 (the date of her first post), and March 10, 2022 (the date of her

last entry)¹, as well as all her X (formerly Twitter) posts² shared between April 2011 and July 2025 were compiled. The researcher then conducted an iterative reading of the entire data corpus. Through theoretical thematic analysis, two dominant themes were identified: (1) Amplifying women's voices and (2) Resisting the invisibility of translators.

Amplifying women's voices

Born and raised in Brooklyn to Palestinian immigrant parents, Etaf Rum draws heavily on her own lived experiences to craft her debut novel that breaks cultural taboos around domestic abuse, forced marriage, and the expectation of silence imposed on Arab and Muslim women. In her prologue, Rum openly reflects on the motivations behind writing *A Woman is No Man*, foregrounding the personal and political stakes of storytelling:

I was born without a voice, one cold, overcast day in Brooklyn, New York. No one ever spoke of my condition. I did not know I was mute until years later, when I opened my mouth to ask for what I wanted and realized no one could hear me. Where I come from, voicelessness is the condition of my gender, as normal as the bosoms on a woman's chest, as necessary as the next generation growing inside her belly. But we will never tell you this, of course. Where I come from, we've learned to conceal our condition. We've been taught to silence ourselves, that our silence will save us. It is only now, many years later, that I know this to be false. Only now, as I write this story, do I feel my voice coming (Rum, 2019, prologue).

As is clear from this excerpt, *A Woman is No Man* is a novel written to give voice to, and speak on behalf of, voiceless women. Accordingly, rendering it accessible in other languages through translation can be seen as a continuum of this effort. The Turkish translation, *Kadının Sesi Yok*, has undeniably contributed to making Etaf Rum and her silenced characters heard in a new linguistic and cultural terrain, thereby amplifying their voices. Although it is not possible to determine with certainty who made the final decision regarding the title of the Turkish translation, the choice of

¹ As Altınant explained in an email (personal communication, July 7, 2025), her nearly three-year hiatus from her blog, *Bir Çevirmenin Dünyası*, had no specific reason: 'I couldn't produce content for a while, so I quit'. She added that she plans to return to blogging soon.

² As Altınant's X account is protected, and her posts are accessible only to approved followers, written permission was obtained to cite selected posts.

Kadının Sesi Yok [A woman has no voice] can be interpreted as a gesture of support by all translatorial agents involved in the translation process—including the translator, editor, and publisher—for the source text’s aim to give voice to women. At the very least, their choice clearly reflects an awareness of the novel’s central purpose.

As the translator of *A Woman is No Man*, Altınanıt appears deeply invested in the feminist message of Etaf Rum’s novel, namely, that women’s stories of oppression need to be heard and valued. In her public statements, Altınanıt aligns herself with the women characters and the woman author, positioning the act of translation as an extension of feminist solidarity. This is evident in how she discusses the novel and her experience translating it. On her social media, Altınanıt openly expresses admiration for Etaf Rum and emphasizes the joy and responsibility of bringing Rum’s story to Turkish readers. In a post announcing Rum’s works, Altınanıt wrote: ‘Etaf Rum is an author I truly enjoyed translating. I translated her first novel, *Kadının Sesi Yok*, for İthaki Publishing. In her second book, *Evil Eye*, our paths crossed with Koridor Publishing’ (Altınanıt, 2024)³. This brief announcement, shared on X on the eve of the 2025 release of Rum’s second novel, is telling. Altınanıt’s enthusiastic tone, ‘an author I translated with great pleasure,’ highlights her personal connection to Rum’s voice. Implicitly, she suggests that translating the novel was not just a job but a labour of love, motivated by the novel’s significance. The fact that she mentions both the first and second books and the publishers indicates her desire to make her contribution visible in the literary community. She is essentially announcing: I am the one who brought Etaf Rum’s story to you in Turkish.

Beyond her commentary on the author, Altınanıt’s epitextual interventions also engage deeply with the novel’s content, particularly its exploration of women’s silencing and empowerment. She contextualizes the novel by linking its central theme, giving voice to voiceless Arab American women, to the parallel struggles experienced by women in Türkiye. Through her blog and social media posts, Altınanıt highlights key quotes and themes from the novel, thereby guiding Turkish readers toward a deeper engagement with its feminist message. The following excerpts from her blog posts illustrate this approach:

³ All Turkish excerpts from Altınanıt’s blog and X posts were translated by the researcher, preserving their original tone and stylistic nuances.

I am currently translating *A Woman is No Man* by Etaf Rum. Etaf Rum is a young Palestinian American author, and *A Woman is No Man* is her debut novel. She has depicted so beautifully how traditions oppress women, how in some cultures women have no voice, and what might happen once they become aware of their own voices, that I can't pull myself away from the translation (Altınanıt, 2020a, para. 5).

[...] the book is about women... about a woman trying to rid herself of the anguish within... about silent, suppressed, and subdued women... women who are forced to accept the destiny imposed upon them simply because they are women, who yield to it and perpetuate it across generations, who are unable or afraid to speak out, who are raised to believe that silence is a virtue, and who internalize that belief (Altınanıt, 2020b, para. 4).

A brilliantly crafted novel that keeps the reader engaged until the very end. At a time when violence against women is at its peak, this book questions and criticizes the roles imposed on women. It demonstrates how social norms, pressures, and teachings can limit people, and shows that it is not impossible to break free from them. It is proof that women, too, have a voice (Altınanıt, 2020b, para. 10).

As the culture portrayed in the novel is not so different from our own socially and culturally, the translation wasn't at all difficult. From the food to the customs, from parent-child relationships to the societal place of girls, the similarities to our own culture made things easier. At the same time, it was deeply painful [...] (Altınanıt, 2020b, para. 11).

As these excerpts reveal, Altınanıt positions herself almost as an advocate or spokesperson for the novel's women, extending her engagement beyond the confines of the translated text. Her epitextual commentary serves to amplify the novel's feminist message and convey it to broader audiences. This digital epitextual intervention by Altınanıt—amplifying the voices of both Etaf Rum and her silenced characters—can be seen as a continuation of von Flotow's feminist translation strategies (1991, 1997), such as prefacing and footnoting, traditionally employed in the peritext. Moreover, it underscores the theoretical need to extend the discussion into the epitextual realm, a need addressed by the newly proposed concept of translatorhandling, which encompasses such multifaceted practices.

Altınanıt's efforts to amplify women's voices extend well beyond the specific case of Etaf Rum's *A Woman is No Man* and her Turkish translation, *Kadının Sesi Yok*. A closer examination of her translation portfolio reveals a consistent focus on works authored by women or centred on women's experiences. This alignment is particularly noteworthy in feminist translation theory. Altınanıt has introduced Turkish readers to a

broad range of both contemporary and canonical female voices, including Charlotte Brontë, Brit Bennett, Amy Harmon, Sarah Winman, and Evie Wyld. Her commitment to foregrounding women authors through translation reflects a deliberate and sustained feminist orientation. Importantly, this commitment is not confined to the translated texts themselves; rather, as evidenced in the case of *Kadının Sesi Yok*, it also manifests in her broader epitextual engagement through blog entries and X posts. She frequently celebrates works by women authors she has translated or admired. For example, in her X post shared on International Women’s Day, Altınanıt proudly states: ‘When I looked back, I realized how many women authors I’ve translated. To these, *Kadının Sesi Yok* and *Marvellous Ways’in Bir Yılı* for which I haven’t yet received the translator’s copies, have now been added. We are strong, productive, and creative. #IAmAWoman #March8’ (Altınanıt, 2022b). In another striking blog post where she discusses Tracy Chevalier’s collection *Reader, I Married Him*, which was inspired by Charlotte Brontë’s feminist classic *Jane Eyre*, Altınanıt underscores the significance of women’s contributions to the literary field. She introduces: ‘Stories by 21 women writers inspired by a woman author, are translated by a woman translator... I’d say don’t miss it’ (Altınanıt, 2018, para. 15). At this point, it is worth noting that Altınanıt has also translated Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* into Turkish. She expresses her pride in undertaking this significant project as follows: ‘And finally [the *Jane Eyre* translation] is finished. I am exhausted too, but the satisfaction and joy of having translated the first feminist novel in world literature is worth everything’ (Altınanıt, 2017, para. 11).

Altınanıt’s broader feminist outlook further reinforces her commitment to amplifying women’s voices. Especially on her X account, she does not confine herself to issues of translation but frequently advocates for women’s rights more generally. For instance, in August 2021, shortly after the fall of Kabul, Altınanıt used her platform to draw attention to the plight of Afghan women. ‘We call on world leaders: Protect the security, rights, and freedoms of Afghan women and girls!’ she tweeted, rallying support for a petition to safeguard women under Taliban rule (Altınanıt, 2021a). Although this tweet is unrelated to her translation projects, it is revealing of Altınanıt’s identity as a feminist activist. By raising her voice for Afghan women, she positions herself as part of a global sisterhood and as someone unafraid to speak out publicly for oppressed women. Similarly, in 2022, she used her platform to express solidarity with Iranian

women who were silenced, oppressed, and even killed under a patriarchal regime, sharing a petition and urging her followers to sign it. In one of her posts supporting silenced Iranian women, she asserts, 'A woman has a voice' (Altınanıt, 2022c). This statement, though brief, encapsulates her broader feminist stance. Altınanıt's epitextual presence thus functions as an amplifier, a metaphorical microphone, through which the silenced voices of women are projected more loudly into the public sphere. Through all these epitextual efforts, Altınanıt demonstrates what translatorhandling means in practice on the level of amplifying voices of the silenced. The next section will examine how she similarly intervenes on a second, interrelated front: challenging the very structures that often silence translators like herself.

Resisting the invisibility of translators

Parallel to her efforts to amplify women's voices in both literary and social spheres, Altınanıt's epitextual activities are also fiercely directed toward asserting her own visibility and translatorship and, by extension, the visibility of translators more broadly. In feminist translation terms, this constitutes a direct challenge to the entrenched norm of translator invisibility and subordination. Altınanıt does not merely reflect on these issues in her blog; she actively contests them in practice, frequently employing sharp, witty, or impassioned rhetoric on her X account to call out instances where translators are ignored or undervalued. Through such actions, she performs resistant visibility as a translator. Altınanıt's epitexts thus serve as a compelling case study in how a translator can publicly resist erasure and assert her role as a co-creator by translatorhandling.

Inductive thematic analysis of the relevant epitexts reveals that, in addition to actively challenging the invisibility and subordination of translators, Altınanıt also advocates for translators' rights and affirms the creative labour inherent in the act of translation. She consistently critiques all stakeholders in the publishing industry, publishers, online book retailers, critics, and readers alike, urging them to recognize and appreciate the translator's contribution. Her digital discourse calls for collective responsibility and concrete action, insisting that the contributions of translators be fully acknowledged and credited across the entire literary ecosystem.

The most central concern repeatedly emphasized by Altınanıt is the routine omission of translators' names from both peritextual elements and epitextual spaces. She frames this exclusion as a profound form of disrespect and a systematic devaluation of translatorial labour. Altınanıt's epitextual resistance, articulated through her blog and X account, against the invisibility of translators and her determined stance on the issue long predates the case study of *Kadının Sesi Yok* and continues unabated to this day. For example, in her 2014 blog post titled 'Why,' Altınanıt discusses and wholeheartedly supports a petition titled 'Çevirmene Saygı' [Respect the Translator], which had been initiated by a young literary translator. She writes:

The primary aim of this campaign is to raise awareness. [...] This is a situation that deeply troubles all literary translators. You spend countless hours translating page after page, and when the book is finally published, the author's name, the title, and the publisher are prominently featured on the cover, while your name appears in inner pages in tiny print, if it appears at all. On book retail websites, all bibliographic details are listed, down to the page count, yet the translator's name is omitted. Readers and bloggers post reviews, praising the author and thanking the publisher, as if the book were originally written in Turkish. This is truly a form of disrespect that urgently demands a firm and collective 'Enough!' (Altınanıt, 2014a, para. 6).

In another blog post titled 'Kitap Satış Sitelerinin Büyük Saygısızlığı' [The Great Disrespect of Book Retail Websites], Altınanıt opens with a pointed acknowledgment of how frequently she raises the issue of translator invisibility: 'Some of you will say, "Here she goes again." Some of you will complain, "We're tired of hearing about your respect-the-translator discourse"' (Altınanıt, 2015, para. 1). This rhetorical move underscores the emotional and professional weight the issue carries for her. She then elaborates on the problem, writing:

When you visit book retail websites, you can find every kind of information about the book: the author's name, the publisher, the size of the book, the type of paper, the ISBN, and the plot summary. But what about the translator's name? In most cases, it's NOT there! What kind of disrespect is this? Are we worth less than a book's size or the quality of its paper? How can something like this be overlooked? The books you sell and profit from—we are the ones who translate them. Is it so difficult to include the translator's name there as well? Publishers already provide this information when submitting bibliographic details, and yet you, the retailers, clearly do not care enough to include the translator's name. It's unacceptable (Altınanıt, 2015, para. 4).

These blog posts collectively function as a manifesto for translator visibility. By articulating her concerns in a public forum, Altınanıt transforms personal frustration into a broader, collective call for structural change within the publishing industry. This same activist stance is equally evident in her X posts. Through the strategic use of hashtags such as #çevirmenveeditöründeadıvar [#thetranslatorandeditorhaveaname] and #çevirmeninadıyok [#thetranslatorhasname], she draws attention to systemic patterns of erasure and mobilizes support for recognizing the translator's contribution.

In her X post on 7 March 2022, Altınanıt directly refers to her translation of *A Woman is No Man*, using irony to critique the erasure of her role as translator: 'Dear @DRdunyasi, it seems Etaf Rum wrote *Kadının Sesi Yok* in Turkish. Please show some respect for labour. The woman has no voice, and the translator has no name' (Altınanıt, 2022d). This post clearly reveals that Altınanıt is acutely aware of her dual battle against the subordination of both women and translators. It is also worth noting that the phrase 'the translator has no name' intertextually evokes the iconic Turkish feminist novel, *Kadının Adı Yok* [Woman has no name] by Duygu Asena, thereby suggesting a parallel struggle for the recognition of both women's and translators' voices. Just three days before this post, Altınanıt had already voiced her frustration regarding the omission of her name in the listing of *Kadının Sesi Yok*, stating: 'Yet again, the same carelessness. According to @DRdunyasi, the translator has no name. And I am utterly tired of experiencing this with every new book' (Altınanıt, 2022e). Her frustration intensifies in a much later post, where she writes: 'We're exhausted, but @DRdunyasi is not. Yet again, disrespect for labour. Once again, the translator's name is missing. It's not just me, my colleagues are complaining too, but who cares?' (Altınanıt, 2025a). This post demonstrates that the issue extends beyond a single case of *Kadının Sesi Yok* and continues to persist as a structural problem in the publishing industry, even as late as 2025. By explicitly voicing both individual and collective discontent, Altınanıt positions herself as an advocate for structural change and greater recognition of translational labour. On February 7, 2025, she initiates a crowdsourced list on X, writing: 'Sales sites that do not bother to write the translator's name, disregarding labour: I will add them to the list as more come. I would appreciate contributions from you all' (Altınanıt, 2025b). She then tagged several major online book retailers that are known to omit translator or editor information. This post is effectively organizing a public accountability campaign. Altınanıt takes on a coordinating role, soliciting information from the community ('as

more [names] come, I'll add to the list') and offering to compile and publicise a list of shame. The tone is determined, implying that there are sadly many such sites, but they will now be named and shamed collectively. This is a clear example of the translator not just demanding her own visibility but fighting structurally for all translators' visibility. It's activism in the pure sense: identifying a problem, gathering allies, and pressing for change. The fact that Altınanıt explicitly frames the omission as 'not bothering' and 'disregarding labour' ties back to her feminist perspective that unrecognized labour is an injustice. By publicly listing companies that engage in this practice, she effectively warns them that translators are mobilized and watching. This level of outspoken critique is uncommon in the traditionally modest profession of literary translators, which makes Altınanıt's voice even more significant as a form of feminist resistance.

On her X account, Altınanıt consistently and explicitly challenges all stakeholders in the literary world who perceive translation as an effortless and insignificant task. She frequently underscores the labour-intensive nature of the profession and the personal sacrifices it entails. For instance, in a post on 9 September 2020, she addresses major platforms, stating: 'Dear @DRdunyasi and @idefixcom, to deliver a proper translation of a book for which you include every detail except the translator's name, a translator sacrifices sleep, endures back pain, gives up their social life. In short, they invest serious labour. A bit of care, please' (Altınanıt, 2020c).

More significantly, Altınanıt affirms the translator's creative and interpretive agency, consistently framing translation as a form of authorship. She draws explicit parallels between a translator's labour and an author's role, aligning with the feminist translation ethos that views translation as a creative act of rewriting. In one of her blog posts, she articulates: 'You may not believe this, but a translator can make a very well-written book look terrible or can make a very poorly written book look amazing' (Altınanıt, 2014b, para. 9). This excerpt reveals her conviction that translators have substantial interpretive power. It shifts the reader's perspective by asserting that the success of a text in the target language depends not solely on the original author but also on the translator's skill and intervention. Altınanıt forcefully rejects the notion that translators merely 'copy' a text, instead positioning them as co-authors. A powerful tweet illustrates this view: 'People always ask translators how the authors they translate 'nourish' them. I believe what's more important is what translators contribute

to those works. A good translation is a great fortune for any author' (Altınanıt, 2021b). As these two statements demonstrate, Altınanıt reverses the traditional author-translator hierarchy, where authors are seen as creative geniuses and translators as passive conduits. By asserting that translators 'add' something essential to a text, she reclaims agency, mirroring feminist re-readings of women's labour as active, intellectual, and generative rather than secondary or derivative. Accordingly, Altınanıt does not portray herself as a neutral conduit, but as a collaborator in the writing project. In a review article published after the Turkish translation of *A Woman is No Man*, the critic concludes the piece by explicitly naming Altınanıt: 'The novel *Kadının Sesi Yok* was published by İthaki with Arzu Altınanıt's translation. Meanwhile, the translator and Etaf Rum are a good duo' (Arkın, 2022, para. 14). The notion of a translator-author duo presented here departs from the traditional hierarchy in which the author alone is foregrounded, and the translator is rendered invisible. This framing closely aligns with Sherry Simon's feminist conception of translation as a collaborative 'writing project'—'a project in which both writer and translator participate' (Simon, 1996, p. 2). Altınanıt shares this review on her X account with evident pride. Quoting the excerpt, she writes: 'One of the most meaningful compliments I've ever received: "It is clear that the translator and Etaf Rum are a good duo"' (Altınanıt, 2022a). This public acknowledgement not only reinforces her sense of co-authorship but also affirms the value of translator visibility within the broader literary field.

In summary, Altınanıt's epitextual actions powerfully demonstrate resistance to the invisibility of the translator. By writing manifestos on her blog, directly challenging industry players on social media, and organizing collective advocacy, she is flaunting the signs of her manipulation of the text in a broader sense, reshaping the wider discursive environment so that the translator is no longer excluded. Altınanıt not only translates feminist content; she acts as a feminist agent within the literary field, actively advocating for systemic change. Her efforts illustrate how a translator's epitextual presence can function as a form of translatorial activism. She is translating the norms of the industry, so to speak, from ones that silence to ones that acknowledge. Through translatorhandling, Altınanıt reclaims power: she handles her public narrative to highlight her role and labour, effectively refusing to be the silent, invisible translator that literary tradition might expect her to be.

Conclusion

Arzu Altınanıt's work around *A Woman is No Man*—through both her translation *Kadının Sesi Yok* and the intricate web of epitexts she has crafted—stands as a powerful example of translatorhandling, a concept introduced in this study. Altınanıt enacts a dual resistance: she amplifies the silenced voices of both fictional and real women, and she simultaneously resists the systemic silencing of the translators within the literary field. In doing so, she brings to life the feminist translation visions of scholars such as Sherry Simon, Luise von Flotow, and Barbara Godard, who called for translators, often women, to assert their agency and turn translation into a site of feminist intervention through what Godard once termed womanhandling.

The case of *A Woman is No Man* in Turkish translation, with its rich epitextual layers, illustrates the dual struggle at the heart of feminist translation. On the one hand, Altınanıt's work challenges the silencing of women by faithfully and forcefully carrying their voices across linguistic and cultural boundaries. On the other, she challenges the invisibility of translators by persistently insisting that those who labour to bring literature into new linguistic realities deserve to be seen, named, and acknowledged. Her practice of translatorhandling in epitextual realms including her blog and X account, thus offers an affirmative response to the question posed in the title of this article: *A Woman is No Man. A Translator is (No) Author?* Despite the deeply entrenched subordination and invisibility historically imposed on translators, Altınanıt demonstrates that a translator, through both textual intervention and translatorhandling the discourse surrounding her translation, can subvert this hierarchy. Her epitextual resistance affirms that translation is not merely reproductive labour but a creative and intellectual act, and that the translator, like the author, has a voice—one that matters.

Through translatorhandling, Altınanıt extends the life of the feminist text beyond its pages. In essence, Altınanıt exemplifies how a translator can be a translator-activist, and how her epitextual discourse can itself be read as an extension of the translation, a continued writing of the story in the social realm. Her contributions remind us that in the struggle for equality and recognition, the voices behind the scenes are sometimes the ones that need to be the loudest. As feminist translation moves forward, cases like

this highlight the transformative potential of practitioners who don't just translate, but who live out the principles of feminism in every facet of their work. Arzu Altınanıt's pen and platform prove that the translator's pen can indeed be as mighty as the sword in challenging silence, whether it be the silence imposed on women or on translators. Through her, we witness feminist translation not only as a theory or technique, but as a lived and multilayered praxis of resistance and solidarity.

To conclude, translatorhandling illuminates the potential for feminist translators to intervene not only in the textual realm but also in the public and discursive spheres surrounding literary production. It offers a model for how translators can carve out visibility and assert their agency in a literary landscape that frequently marginalizes them—without overshadowing the authorial voice of the original. Moreover, translatorhandling is not limited to in-text, woman-centred struggles. It resists all forms of oppression, offering a more gender-inclusive and intersectional perspective that aligns with the broader paradigm shift within FTS toward inclusivity, plurality, and intersectionality.

As digital platforms continue to reshape the terrain of authorship and readership, translatorhandling emerges as a dynamic and ever-expanding site of feminist resistance and visibility. There is no doubt that translators will increasingly find more space to engage in such practices within epitextual realms that not only allow them to challenge their historical invisibility but also invite new forms of academic inquiry in Translation Studies. Despite the limitations of this single case study focused on Altınanıt and her work on *Kadının Sesi Yok*, the concept of translatorhandling has the potential to catalyse future research across languages, cultures, and contexts. More importantly, this research calls upon all stakeholders in the literary field, publishers, retailers, critics, readers, and scholars alike, to recognize that the translator, too, has a voice. And when that voice is attuned to feminist politics, it has the power to transform silence into solidarity.

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