The Influence of Bakhtiar’s Sufi Belief in Futuwwa on Her Qur’ān Translation

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ABSTRACT
Qur’ān translations are forms of traditional or rational tafsīr (exegeses). Laleh Bakhtiar, an Iranian-American who converted from Christianity to Islam, applied a rational approach in her Qur’ān translation. Extensive research has surveyed Bakhtiar’s Feminist perspectives (Kidwai, 2018) and her reliance on dictionaries (Hassen, 2012). However, the investigation of the influence of her Sufi views on her translation has not been previously addressed. This paper is an empirical account of the impact of Bakhtiar’s Sufi belief in futuwwa on her translation choices. To achieve this goal, Bakhtiar’s translations of the verses that include the term َّتَطَّفَّى َفَتَأ (a young man) and its derivatives are analytically compared to Sufi and Shi‘ī translations to analyse Bakhtiar’s choices and highlight her adaptation of allegorical hermeneutics. The underpinning approach of this paper is a combination of Gerard Genette’s paratexts (1997) and Hussein Abdul-Raoof’s criteria of the Sufi approach to Qur‘ānic exegesis (2012). The main finding is that by adopting al-bāṭīn [esoteric] meaning and rejecting az-zahir [exoteric] meaning, Bakhtiar goes far away from orthodox Islamic traditions in her interpretation of the Qur‘ān. Moreover, through applying the concept futuwwa to men and women, she deconstructs the patriarchal framework, in which the virtue of futuwwa exists, and expands the connotative meaning of this aspect, which results in sending radical messages completely different from those in the source text. Future researchers can broaden the scope of the analysis and examine a plethora of contemporary Qur‘ān translations to explore the effect of the translators’ beliefs on their interpretations of the Qur‘ān.

KEYWORDS
Esoteric meaning, Exoteric meaning, Futuwwa, Paratexts, Sufism

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1. Introduction
Qur’ān translations are forms of tafsīr [exegeses], mainstream and non-mainstream. The former relies on Sunna and hadith, while the latter minimises the role of hadith and employs the use of personal opinions. Raof (2012) classifies non-mainstream exegeses as Sunni (Mu‘tazili, Ash’ari & Sufi) and non-Sunnī (Shi‘i, Isma‘ili & Ibāḍī). Mainstream exegeses apply tafsīr bi-l-ma‘thūr, tafsīr transmitted from Prophet Muhammad, as-saḥaba [the companions], at-tabī’i un [the first successors], and tabi’ at-tabī’i un [the successors of the successors] (Abu Zahra, 2015). On the other hand, non-mainstream exegeses implement tafsīr bi-r-ra‘y; they apply ta’wil [interpretation] of the verses of the Qur‘ān.

Although Sufi teachings first attracted Sunnis, and a large number of early Muslims lived spiritual lives out of unbounded piety, today it is common to find Sufis who hold Sunni beliefs and at the same time value Shi‘ī leaders. Several scholars consider Sufism as the heart of Islam, yet others perceive it as an unacceptable distortion of Islamic beliefs and way of life (Rahim, 2013). The opponents of Sufism defend their stance by confirming that it did not exist during the time of Prophet Muhammad and that Sufis apply a subjective approach in their interpretation of the Qur‘ān (Musharraf, 2013). They believe that each verse in the Qur‘ān has up to seven deeper meanings; they rely on the hidden meanings (Sands, 2006; Ayoub, 1984). Thus, Sufis invoke allegorical hermeneutics and incorporate exegetical views that are not compatible with the literal sense of the Qur‘ānic verses.

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This paper is based on a chapter in my PhD thesis, in which I compare four Qur'ān translations to explore the impact of the translators' ideologies on their translation choices. While examining the paratexts of the selected translations (prefaces, introductions, forewords & footnotes), I realised that the preface of Laheh Bakhtiar's translation (2012) sends messages that Bakhtiar believes in Sufism, and she "practices spiritual integrity (futuwwa) or spiritual chivalry" (ix). She mentioned that she was educated in Sufism which comprises both Sunni and Shi'i views. This statement raises the question of whether, in her Qur'ān translation, Bakhtiar utilises az-zähîr [exoteric] meaning common in Sunni schools or al-bāṭīn [esoteric] meaning frequently applied by Shi'is.

In order to answer this question, I implement an eclectic approach, a combination of Genette’s paratexts (1997) and Raof’s criteria of the Sufi approach to Qur'ānic exegesis (2012). First, I review articles about Sufism and the concept of futuwwa as an element of Sufi beliefs. According to Shaykh Fadhalla Haeri (2019), the Sufi path of self-transformation ends with futuwwa, jihad an-nafs to reach mākārin al-akhlāq [good morals] or spiritual enlightenment. The term relates to the characteristics of al-fātā, Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Therefore, I read the whole Qur'ān, verse-by-verse, and select the ten verses that include the word فتى [a young man] and its derivatives. Then I analytically compare Bakhtiar’s translation of these ten verses to another Sufi translation and a Shi'i translation, with the aim of exploring the impact of Bakhtiar’s Sufi belief in futuwwa on her translation choices for these terms.

2. Sufism and the Sufi Belief in Futuwwa

The term Sufism was coined in Kufa when Jabir Ibn Hayyan was described as a sufî, a man who seeks deeper and more intimate relation to God (Ibn Arabi, 1961; Nicholson, 1947). The Sufi school in Kufa was close to Shi’a teachings of the unification with God and the inner experience of tawhid [God’s unity]. Linguistically, the term Sufi literally means "woollen," “someone wearing wool,” or “practicing purification to achieve mākārin al-akhlāq [good morals]” (Abdul-Wahid 2004, p. 529). Sulaiman Lebbe Rifai (2021) confirms that Sufism is a spiritual journey to purify one’s heart and soul in order to find the truth of divine love and knowledge. According to Sachiko Murata (1992), the Sufi path comprises three stages: It begins with muruwwa, moral reasonableness, which leads to futuwwa, spiritual integrity, and then ends with wašāya, sainthood.

Sufis value muruwwa and futuwwa and consider them significant virtues toward self-development. Cyrus Ali Zargar, (2019) states that muruwwa means manliness, and before Islam, Bedouin tribes linked muruwwa to characteristics such as “loyalty, generosity, patronage, and retaliation” (p. 6), while futuwwa, translated as chivalry, refers to a young man with good morals. He declares that “In Islamic ethical texts more broadly, futuwwa came to represent all that might be noble in a young man: courage, self-restraint, humility, modesty, and honesty” (p. 2). Lloyd Ridgeon (2010) and Erik Ohlander (2008) contend that, in Iran, futuwwa movements, absorbed by Sufi orders, relate the term futuwwa to the fatâ, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the symbol of good manners and manliness.

Although the two components of virtue: futuwwa and muruwwa were defined as traits of the honorable young man, Sufis focus on futuwwa since it is al-maqsid [the purpose], spiritual chivalry.

Sufis use the term futuwwa to describe young men as ideal warriors who reached mākārin al-akhlāq. Sufis do not use the term for slaves nor women since, for them, women’s virtue is “modesty, or hayā” (Zargar, 2019, p. 4). By confining this term to men, Sufis endow it with a patriarchal framework. However, examining Bakhtiar’s translation, I found that she utilises the Sufi term futuwwa for men and women. For example, she uses it for Abraham in Q 21: 60, the fīṭrā [young men] of the cave mentioned in Q 18: 13, and fatayātkum in Q 24: 33. Bakhtiar’s choices show the changes in the usage of the term from focusing on the patriarchal theme of great men to employing it for men and women. Thus, de-gendering the term futuwwa in Bakhtiar’s translation requires investigating the criteria of the Sufi approach to Qur’ānic exegesis.

3. The Sufi Approach to Qur’ānic Exegesis

The Sufi tafsīr [exegesis] developed in the Islamic history because some mystic scholars attempted to understand the texts of the Qur’ān and hadīth according to mystical theories and practices. They outweighed the esoteric (allegorical) meaning of the Qur’ān over the exoteric (literal) meaning. According to Raof (2012):

Allegorical hermeneutics is rational and is hinged upon the following: (a) personal opinion (dalîl zannî), (b) discovery of meaning (istinbâtî), (c) symbolism and allusion (išārî), (d) probability (al-îhtîma‘î), and (e) connotative meaning (al-ma‘na al-bâtnî). Allegorical exegesis represents Sufi and Mu’tazili exegetical views. (p. 2)

This quote shows that the Sufi approach to Qur’ānic exegesis is not a traditional tafsîr [exegesis], which relies on al-ma‘na az-zâhîr [exoteric] meaning. This quote illustrates that displaying Sufi perspectives in Qur’ān translations results from applying a rational/hypothetical tafsîr [exegesis], suggestive interpretation. According to Al-Juwayni (d. 478/1085), rational exegesis is classified as tawîl maqâbûl or ghair sa‘îgh/madhûm; the former is an acceptable hypothetical interpretation of the Qur’ān, while the latter is “not a permissible, unacceptable hypothetical interpretation of the Qur’ān” (Al-‘Akk, 1986, p. 59). Raof (2012) classifies Sufi theologians as non-mainstream exegetes because they reject az-zâhîr [exoteric] meaning and adopt al-bâtnî [esoteric] meaning. Thus, Sufi translators of the Qur’ān highlight the connotative meaning and ignore the denotative meaning.
The Sufi approach to Qur’anic exegesis minimises the role of hadith, which is highly considered by mainstream exegetes. Based on this approach, the Qur’an has inward meanings (Quasem, 1979). Raof (2012) confirms that the Sufi approach is viewed as ta’wil rather than tafsir [exegesis], and he sets four criteria for the notion of ta’wil. These criteria are: ad-dalil az-zan/n/ ijtihad [hypothetical opinion], istinbāt [discovery of meaning], al-ma’na al-bātūn [esoteric meaning], and ihtimal [probability]. Raof adds that, unlike the traditional approach to Qur’anic exegesis, the Sufi approach is not necessarily based on Qur’anic intertextuality (tafsīr al-qur’an bil-qur’an). Thus, Qur’ānic translators who apply the Sufi approach invoke esoteric meanings and rely on ijtihad to display their beliefs.

4. Bakhtiar’s Sufi Belief in Futuwwa in Her Qur’ān Translation

4.1 Detecting Sufi Beliefs in the Paratexts of Bakhtiar’s Translation

Paratexts are elements around the text; they impact the reception of the target text (TT). Paratexts comprise peritexts and epitexts (Genette, 1997, pp. 1-2). Peritexts are divided into publishers’ and translators’. Examples of publishers’ peritexts are the covers of the books, the visibility of the translators’ names, titles, title pages, and blurbs, whereas translators’ peritexts are prefaces, forewords, introductions, and footnotes. Epitexts are interviews, reviews, TV shows, self-commentaries by the translators, and the awards received by the translators (Batchelor, 2018). These tools send messages about the translated text.

The preface of Bakhtiar’s translation shows that she was a Sufi Iranian-American psychologist. Her father was an Iranian physician from Tehran, and her mother was a Protestant American from Idaho. It also reveals that Bakhtiar married an Iranian-Muslim architect and moved to Iran when she was twenty-four years old. At that age, she converted from Christianity to Islam, and, at Tehran University, she learned the teachings of Islam, Qur’ānic Arabic, and Sufism by Seyyed Hossein Nasr.

Furthermore, the preface of Bakhtiar’s translation gives information about her methodology of Qur’ān translation. She confirms beginning with the words, preparing lists of all the nouns, verbs, and particles that appear in the Qur’ān, translating from these lists, and then creating a database. Bakhtiar states that she applied formal equivalence to produce Qur’ānic translation that relates to a larger audience through using inclusive language.

Additionally, in her preface, Bakhtiar (2012) states that she neither uses footnotes nor parenthetical phrases because “the Qur’ān is not a historic text, frozen in the time period of its revelation” (xvi). She agrees with “Al-Ghazzali [who] says each person should read or recite [the Qur’ān], not as a historical document, because then it loses its eternal quality, but as it relates to the person reading or reciting it” (p. xvi). This statement sends a message that Bakhtiar’s choices reflect her understanding of the Qur’ān and display her theological views.

Moreover, in her preface, Bakhtiar reveals her belief in futuwwa. She states that her translation “is the translation of a person who practices spiritual integrity (futuwwa)” (xix) and that in the Sufi path muruwwa [manliness] leads to “futuwwa [young manliness] or spiritual chivalry” (xx). According to Tymoczko (2003), “[T]he ideology of a translation resides not simply in the text translated, but in the voicing and stance of the translator, and in its relevance to the receiving audience” (p. 183). Bakhtiar’s position in her translation aligns with the beliefs of her Sufi teacher who states:

The guilds and different orders of chivalry (futuwwāt) reveal a link between Shi‘ism and Sufism because on the one hand they grew in a Shi‘ite climate with particular devotion to ‘Ali and on the other hand many of them became attached to Sufi orders and became their extension in the form of ‘craft initiations’. (Nasr, 1970, p. 238)

Nasr’s quote explains that the term futuwwa is a Shi‘i-Sufi expression since its core is the Shi‘i belief in Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib, and it is attached to the Sufi orders. Thus, the translation of the word فَتْیَة fatā [a young man] and its derivatives are analysed and compared to the Sufi translation by Hulusi (2013) and the Shi‘i translation by Naqvi (2016) to explore the impact of Bakhtiar’s views on her translation choices.

4.2 Analysing Bakhtiar’s Translations of the Derivatives of the Word فَتْیَة fatā in Q 18

The word fatā [a young man] and its derivatives are mentioned in ten verses: Q 4: 25, Q 12: 30, Q 12: 36, Q 12: 62, Q 18: 10, Q 18: 13, Q 18: 60, Q 18: 62, Q 21: 60, and Q 24: 33. Four of these verses are in Sūrat Al-Kahf, and in her translation of these verses, Bakhtiar adheres to the Sufi belief in futuwwa and renders the word فتیة fatā as “a spiritual warrior (m)” (Bakhtiar, 2012, p. 350). Examining these verses will reveal the impact of Bakhtiar’s Sufi beliefs on her choices. Thus, in this paper, I investigate the effect of Bakhtiar’s Sufi beliefs on shaping the meanings and messages of the selected verses.

Q 18 opens and closes with references to the Qur’ān; it takes its name Al-Kahf from the story of the people of the cave (verses 9-26). This Sūra also deals with other two stories: the story of Mūsā and the man of knowledge (verses 60–82), and the story of Dhul-Qarnayn and his life and travels in the service of God (verses 83–99). The words فتیة fityā and al-fityā appear in the story of the sleepers of the cave, and the word فتیة fityā appears twice in the story of Mūsā. Table 1 below shows Bakhtiar’s translation of Q 18: 10, which includes the word al-fityā.
Table 1
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 18: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shiʿi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 10</td>
<td>إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالَ وا</td>
<td>And when the spiritual warriors took shelter in the cave, then, they said: Our Lord! Give us mercy from Your Presence and furnish us with right mindedness in our affairs. (p. 274)</td>
<td>youths (p. 289)</td>
<td>youths (p. 298)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that Bakhtiar renders the term الْفِتْيَة al-fityā as “the spiritual warriors” although the meaning of the word is “young men between adolescence and manhood” (Al-Muʿjam Al-Wasīṭ, 2004, p. 673). In Q 18: 10, God tells the story of the young men who fled from their people for the sake of their religion. They feared persecution, so they fled taking refuge in the cave of a mountain to hide from their people. When they entered the cave, they asked God to show mercy and kindness towards them (Ibn Kathīr, 2002). Unlike Bakhtiar, both the Sufī Hulusi (2013) and the Shiʿī Naqvi (2016) render the word الْفِتْيَة al-fityā as “youths”. Bakhtiar’s unusual choice shows that she imbues her translation with an ideological colour of Sufism, which flourished in Iran since the Mongols-dominion period in the 12th century (Lewisohn, 1998). Her choice of “the spiritual warriors” reflects her Sufī belief in futuwwa, which symbolises a series of ethical values. Hence, Bakhtiar utilises al-maʿna al-bāṭin [the esoteric meaning]; this choice endows the term with specific characteristics not shown in the verse. Table 2 below demonstrates that Bakhtiar adheres to the same choice in her translation of Q 18: 13:

Table 2
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 18: 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shiʿi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 13</td>
<td>نَّحْن  نَق صُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَه مِبِالْحَق ۚ إِنَّه مْ فِتْيَةٌ آمَن وا</td>
<td>We relate this tiding to you with The Truth. Truly, they were male spiritual warriors who believed in their Lord and We increased them in guidance. (p. 274)</td>
<td>youths (p. 290)</td>
<td>youths (p. 299)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that Bakhtiar renders the term فِتْيَة fityā [young men] in Q 18: 13 as “male spiritual warriors” unlike the Sufī Hulusi (2013) and the Shiʿī Naqvi (2016) who utilise “youths”. In Q 18: 13, God gives the story of the people of the cave in detail stating that they were young men who believed in God and that God increased them in guidance (Ibn Kathīr, 2002). Similar to Sufīs who believe that each verse in the Qur’ān has seven layers of meanings, Bakhtiar transfers the deepest meaning of the verse to convey the message that these young males were more accepting of the truth and more guided than the elders who adhered to the religion of falsehood. Sufīs who believe in futuwwa link the term to makārim al-akhlāq [good morals] which is “attained through jihad an-nafs” (Ali, 2020, p. 9; Al-Jader, 1999). Bakhtiar’s choice reflects her Sufī belief in the spirituality of Prophet Mohammad and confirms that futuwwa is part of al-akhlāq represented in al-fatā, Imām Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Prophet Muhammad’s cousin and son-in-law.

Similarly in translation the verses about the story of Mūsā, Bakhtiar transfers the word لِفَتَىٰه lifatāh applying al-bāṭin [esoteric] meaning although the term has a different meaning than the meanings of the words الْفِتْيَة al-fityā and فِتْيَة fityā in Q 18: 10 and Q 18: 13. Table 3 below highlights Bakhtiar’s translation of Q 18: 60:
Table 3
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 18: 60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shiʿi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 60</td>
<td>وَإِذۡ قَالَ م وسَىٰ لِفَتَىٰهُ لَآ أَبۡرَح حَتَّىٰ أَبۡل غَمَجۡمَعَ ٱلۡبَحۡرَيۡنِ أَوۡ أَمۡضِيَ ح ق بٗا</td>
<td>Mention when Moses said to his spiritual warrior: I will not quit until I reach the place of meeting of the two seas even if I will go on for many years. (p. 280)</td>
<td>the youngster in his service (p. 295)</td>
<td>boy [i.e. servant] (p. 305)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows that Bakhtiar transfers the hidden meaning of the word لِفَتَىٰه lifatah, which contextually means to his male servant. In Q 18: 60, God tells the story of Mūsā who said to his boy-servant that he would keep on travelling until he reached the place where the two seas met (Ibn Kathīr, 2002). The Sufi Hulusi (2013) renders the term as “the youngster in his service” and the Shiʿi Naqvi (2016) transfers it as boy [i.e. servant], whereas Bakhtiar is adamant to keep using “spiritual warrior,” which reflects her views in the concept futuwwa. The word لِفَتَىٰه lifatah refers to Yushaʿ Ibn Nun, Mūsā’s nephew, follower, student, servant, and successor. Bakhtiar uses al-bāṭ in [esoteric] meaning since Yushaʿ was a young man who learned knowledge from Mūsā, and for Sufis, who extract the deep meanings of verses, Yushaʿ has the characteristics of futuwwa. She also sticks to the same choice in Q 18: 62 as shown below:

Table 4
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 18: 62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shiʿi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 62</td>
<td>فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَىٰهَا أَهۡتِنَا غَدَآءَنَا لَقَدۡ لَقِينَا مِن سَفَرِنَا هَٰذَا نَصَبٗا</td>
<td>Then, when they crossed, he said to his spiritual warrior: Give us our breakfast. Certainly, we met fatigue from our journey. (p. 280)</td>
<td>servant (p. 295)</td>
<td>boy (p. 305)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Q 18: 62, God completes the story of Mūsā saying that when Mūsā and Yushaʿ had passed beyond the junction between the two seas, Mūsā asked his servant to bring their meal as this journey had certainly exhausted them (Ibn Kathīr, 2002). Bakhtiar’s consistent use of al-bāṭin [esoteric] meaning of قَطَى fatā [young men] and its derivatives as “spiritual warrior” confirms her Sufi belief in the allegorical meaning of the term. For her, as a Sufi, Yushaʿ is not a mere servant; he is al-fatā, who has makarim al-akhlaq [good morals].

4.3 Analysing Bakhtiar’s Translations of the Derivatives of the Word قَطَى fatā in Q 12
Like Q 18, Q 12 opens and closes with references to the Qurʾān; it deals with the story of Yūsuf, the response of people in Mecca, the punishment met by earlier disbelievers, and encouragement for the Prophet. Table 5 below shows Bakhtiar’s translation of Q 12: 30, which includes the word قَطَى fatāhā:

Table 5
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 12: 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shiʿi)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 30</td>
<td>وَقَالََ نِسۡوَة َ في ٱلۡمَدِينَةَ اِمۡرَأَت َ ٱلۡعَزِيزَِ ت رََٰوِد َ فَتَىٰهَا عَن نَّفۡسِهِۦ قَدَۡ شَغَفَهَا ح بًّا إِنَّا لَنَرَىَٰهَا فِي ضَلََٰلٖ مُّبِينٖ</td>
<td>And the ladies in the city said: The woman of the great one solicits her spiritual warrior, enticing him to evil. Surely, he captivated her longing. Truly, we consider her to be clearly wandering astray. (p. 219)</td>
<td>slave (p. 237)</td>
<td>slave boy (p. 239)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Influence of Bakhtiar’s Sufi Belief in Futuwwa on Her Qur’ān Translation

Table 5 shows that Bakhtiar utilises “her spiritual warrior” for the word فتى ُ فتَى، whose zahir [exoteric] meaning is “slave”. It is rendered as “slave boy” by the Shi’i Naqvi (2016) and “slave” by the Sufi Hulusi (2013). In Q 12: 30, God states that the news of what happened between the wife of ‘Aziz of Misr and Yusuf spread in the city as women of chiefs said that she was luring her servant to have sex with her, and they criticised her and considered her astray (Ibn Kathir, 2002). Based on tafsīr [exegeses], al-ma‘na az-zahir [exoteric meaning] is “slave”, while al-ma‘na al-bātîn [esoteric meaning] is fatâ, from futuwwa, a spiritual warrior who reached makharij al-akhlaq [good morals] (Bendjebbar & Jidel, 2021). Bakhtiar’s choice reflects her belief in Yusuf’s chastity. Table 6 below shows Bakhtiar’s translation of Q 12: 36, which includes the word فتَىٰ فتَى fatayān:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 36</td>
<td>ﻮَرَنَخَلَ مَعَهُ ةِسَطِيْنَ قُتُنَّا، قَالَ اَحْدَهُمَا إِلَى أَرْبَيْنَيْ عَصَرَ خَمۡرٗا وَقَالَ اَحْدَهُمَا إِلَى أَرْبَيْنَيْ عَصَرَ فِي رَأِيَتۡهِ: أَنَا حَنّا لَكُم بِتَأۡوِيلِهِ ۡۡاَحۡمِلۡ وَا َۖ مَتَأۡكِلۡ وَنَهَا َۖ لَمۡ تَأۡكِلۡ وَنَعۡلَ مَتَأۡكِلۡ وَنَعۡلَۡ ۖ أَيۡنَ يُنَأِّنُونَۚ بِتَأۡوِيلِهِ ۡۡاَحۡمِلۡ وَا َۖ مَتَأۡكِلۡ وَنَهَا َۖ لَمۡ تَأۡكِلۡ وَنَعۡلَۡ ۖ أَيۡنَ يُنَأِّنُونَۚ B. And there entered with him in the prison two male spiritual warriors. One of them said: Truly, I see myself pressing grapes in season. And the other said: Truly, I see myself carrying bread over my head from which birds are eating. They said: Tell us the interpretation of this. Truly, we consider you among the ones who are doers of good. (p. 220)</td>
<td>two young men (p. 238)</td>
<td>two young men (p. 240)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 demonstrates that Bakhtiar employs “two male spiritual warriors” for the word فتَيَا فتَيِّا fatayān. Q 12: 36 says that when Yusuf arrived at the prison, he met two other sentenced criminals, who were also admitted there. One of them was the cup-bearer of the king, and the other was a cook. These two were accused of trying to poison the king through food or drink, and their case was under investigation; therefore, they were kept in prison. These prisoners thought Yusuf was a man of piety, so they asked him to give an interpretation of their dreams (Ibn Kathir, 2002). Bakhtiar’s choice of al-bātîn [esoteric] meaning of fatâ equates these prisoners to Yusha’s as a spiritual warrior who seeks makharij al-akhlaq [good morals]; however, by this choice, she decontextualises the term and changes its meaning. She expands the connotations of the term and generalise its use. Table 7 below gives another example of ignoring the contextual meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shi’i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 62</td>
<td>ۖ وَقَالَ لَهُ اِبْنِيَ اَجۡعَلۡ وَا َۖ مَتَأۡكِلۡ وَنَهَا َۖ لَمۡ تَأۡكِلۡ وَنَعۡلَۡ ۖ أَيۡنَ يُنَأِّنُونَۚ B. And Joseph said to his spiritual warriors: Lay their merchandise into their saddlebags so that perhaps they will recognize it when they turned about to their household so that perhaps they will return. (p. 223)</td>
<td>servants (p. 240)</td>
<td>young ones [servants] (p. 243)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 shows that the Shi’i translator Naqvi (2016, p. 243) considers the context and renders the term فتَيَا فتَيِّا “young ones [servants]”, and the Sufi Hulusi (2013) transfers it as “servants”, while Bakhtiar sticks to al-bātîn [esoteric] Sufi meaning in all contexts. In Q 12: 62, when Yusuf’s brothers entered on him in his court, he knew them, but they did not recognise them because they threw him away when he was a child. Yusuf ordered فتَيَا فتَيِّا fityāni [his servants/slaves] to put the money or the merchandise his brothers brought with them to exchange for food into their saddlebags (Ibn Kathir, 2002). Bakhtiar’s insistence to use al-bātîn [esoteric] meaning deviates the contextual meaning since Yusuf’s servants cannot be equated to the people of the cave, Yusuf, or Yusha in their morals and purification.

4.3 Analysing Bakhtiar’s Translation of the Word فتَىٰ فتَيَا fatâ in Q 21
Q 21 takes its name Al-Anbiyâ’ from the list of prophets mentioned from verse 48 to verse 91. It aims at reassuring Prophet Mohammad by reminding him of God’s grace and support to his prophets. Q 21 stresses the fact that Prophet Muhammad has
been sent to the whole world with the same message of the earlier prophets, and it warns the disbelievers of the Judgement Day, from which there is no escape. Table 8 below illustrates Bakhtiar’s rendition of the word ﷺ in Q21: 60:

**Table 8**
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 21: 60

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shi’i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 21: 60</td>
<td>E. قَالُوا مَسَأَلُوهَا فَتَيُّوْنَ يَكُونُوهُمُّ لَهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ. They said: We heard a spiritual warrior (m) mention them. It is said he is Abraham. (p. 308)</td>
<td>a young man (p. 324)</td>
<td>a young man (p. 337)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 shows Bakhtiar’s choice of “a spiritual warrior” for the word ﷺ, which means “a young man between adolescence and manhood” (Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasit, 2004, p. 673). Her choice differs from the Shi’i translation by Naqvi (2016) and the Sufi interpretation by Hulusi (2013), who transfer this word as “a young man”. Q 21: 60 reports that when people saw the idols that they were worshiping smashed, they said that they heard a young man called Ibrahim talking with inferiority about their idols, and perhaps he was the one who plotted against them (Ibn Kathir, 2002). The verse does not imply that the reporters in the verse were praising the one who destroyed the idols. This positive connotation to Ibrahim results from Bakhtiar’s opinion of him. Bakhtiar’s choice of “a spiritual warrior” symbolises a series of ethical values and conveys her Sufi belief in futuwwa.

**4.4 Analysing Bakhtiar’s Translation of the Word ﷺ in Q 4 and Q 24**

Q 4 takes its title An-Nisā’ from its focus on the rights of women (verses 3–4, 127–30). It urges justice to children and orphans and mentions inheritance (verses 5–12) and marriage laws. Q4 also focuses on the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book (verses 44, 61); it warns Muslims against oppressing the weak and helpless (verses 71–6) and the intrigues of the hypocrites (verses 88–91, 138–46). Bakhtiar’s translation of the word ﷺ in Q4: 25 reveals her ideologies as it is shown in table 9:

**Table 9**
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 4: 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shi’i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 4: 25</td>
<td>ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ</td>
<td>ومن لَمْ يَتَّبِعُوا مَنْ مَّتَكِينِ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ</td>
<td>And whoever of you is not affluent to be able to marry the ones who are free, chaste females, the female believers, then, from females whom your right hands possessed, the ones who are female spiritual warriors, female believers (p. 74)</td>
<td>girls in their possession (p. 115)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 highlights the fact that Bakhtiar violates limiting the concept of futuwwa and the characteristics of the fatā, who is religious and has makarim al-akhlaq [good morals] to men. She renders the word ﷺ in Q 4: 25 as “female spiritual warriors” although the term means “female slaves”. The verse says that whoever cannot afford to wed free believing women may marry believing girls from their slaves. This meaning is reflected by the Shi’i Naqvi (2016) and the Sufi Hulusi (2013), who utilise “slave girls” and “girls in their possession” respectively. However, Bakhtiar does not differentiate between men and women; she states “that this translation was undertaken by a woman to bring both men and women to equity” (Bakhtiar, 2012, xxii). This statement reveals Bakhtiar’s intention to embrace gender balance. Table 10 below confirms Bakhtiar’s use of futuwwa for women:

**Table 10**
Bakhtiar’s Translation of Q 24: 33

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Source Text</th>
<th>Bakhtiar (Sufi)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufi)</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shi’i)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 24: 33</td>
<td>ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ</td>
<td>ولا لُكُرُوا ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ</td>
<td>Compel not your spiritual warriors (f) against their will to prostitution when they (f) wanted chastity, that you be looking for the advantage of this present life. (p. 334)</td>
<td>bondmaids (p. 350)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 shows that Bakhtiar renders the word فَتِّيَاتِك مْ fatayātikum in Q 24: 33 as "your spiritual warriors (f)"; however, the contextual meaning is "slave girls" (Ibn Kathīr, 2002). The Shiʿī translator Naqvi (2016) transfers the term as "slave girls"; similarly, the Sufī translator Hulusi (2013) utilises "bondmaids". Bakhtiar's different choice confirms that Iranian "Sufīs were not convinced by the apparent meaning (al-zahir) of the verses, but they sought to discover (al-bātin) the hidden meanings of the Qurān’s phrases" (Musharraf, 2013, p. 34). Bakhtiar selects the esoteric meaning of the word, which is only understood by Sufīs who are familiar with this hidden meaning, which is not mentioned in the ST. Furthermore, table 10 demonstrates that Bakhtiar adds the letter "f" to emphasise the feminist perspective common in America. Table 11 below summarises Bakhtiar’s translations of the word فَتًى fatā and its derivatives in the ten verses in the Qurān to highlight her views:

Table 11
The Different Lexis for the Word فَتًى Fatā [a Young Man] and Its Derivatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Bakhtiar</th>
<th>Naqvi (Shīʿī)</th>
<th>Hulusi (Sufī)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q 4: 25</td>
<td>فَتِّيَاتِك مْ</td>
<td>your female spiritual warriors</td>
<td>slave girls</td>
<td>girls in their possession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 30</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>her spiritual warrior</td>
<td>slave boy</td>
<td>slave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 36</td>
<td>فَتًانِ</td>
<td>two male spiritual warriors</td>
<td>two young men</td>
<td>two young men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 12: 62</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>his spiritual warriors</td>
<td>young ones [servants]</td>
<td>servants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 10</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>the spiritual warriors</td>
<td>youths</td>
<td>youths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 13</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>male spiritual warriors</td>
<td>youths</td>
<td>youths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 60</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>his spiritual warrior</td>
<td>boy [i.e. servant], the youngster in his service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 18: 62</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>his spiritual warrior</td>
<td>boy</td>
<td>servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 21: 60</td>
<td>فَتًى</td>
<td>a spiritual warrior (m)</td>
<td>a young man</td>
<td>a young man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 24: 33</td>
<td>فَتِّيَاتِك مْ</td>
<td>your spiritual warriors (f)</td>
<td>slave girls</td>
<td>bondmaids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 highlights Bakhtiar’s consistency in using "spiritual warrior" for the term فَتًى fatā and its derivatives. It also shows that Bakhtiar utilises the concept futuwwa to men and women, which reflects the expansion and generalisation of using the term. Thus, Bakhtiar’s translation of the word فَتِّيَاتِ fatayāt confirms not only her theological stance but also her sociocultural ideologies regarding gender equality since she does not confine faith, generosity, integrity, and jihad an-nafs [self-improvement] to men.

5. Conclusion
In this paper, I aimed to analyse Bakhtiar’s translation of the Qurān into English to explore the influence of her belief in the Sufī concept futuwwa on her translation choices. I used Genette’s paratexts (1997) to detect Bakhtiar’s Sufī views in her preface and introduction along with Raof’s criteria of the Sufī approach to Qurānic exegesis (2012) to investigate her translation of the ten verses that include the term فَتًى fatā [a young man] and its derivatives.

The main finding is that Bakhtiar relied on al-bātin [esoteric] meaning and ignores az-zahir [exoteric] meaning, which makes her translation different from Qurān interpretations based on orthodox Islamic traditions. Bakhtiar was affected by living in Iran and America; her use of "spiritual warriors" for the word فَتًى fatā [a young man] reflects her Sufī stance. Adding the letter “(f)” to indicate that the word refers to the feminine gender echoes her feminist perspectives. Secondly, Bakhtiar developed the connotation of the virtue of futuwwa, existing in a patriarchal framework (Zargar, 2019), as she generalised the meaning of this specific term and utilised it for men and women. She interpreted the term allegorically as a symbolic term for honorable morals,
humility, chivalry, purification, faith, and self-improvement. Finally, it is clear that the concept of futuwwa differs from one Sufi to another; this fact is revealed through the comparison between Bakhtiar’s choices and those by the Sufi translator Hulusi, whose translation choices are not influenced by the belief in futuwwa.

The scope of this paper is limited to two Sufi translations and one Shi’i translation. I aimed to examine the impact of Bakhtiar’s Sufi belief in futuwwa on her translation choices. The findings and limitations of this paper suggest the need for further research. First, it is recommended that in future researchers the scope of the comparison can be should broadened to cover more Sufi Qur’ān translations and explore more Sufi concepts. A potential future avenue of research could also be exploring the influence of the translators’ contexts, environments on their choices. There is a need for a study that investigates the impact of the translator’s theological views on shaping the meanings and messages of the Qur’ān.

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The Influence of Bakhtiar’s Sufi Belief in Futuwwa on Her Qur’ān Translation

