

Concept of Ikhlas, Semantic and Sufistic Perspective: Study of Tafsir Al Wajiz Wahbah Al Zuhaili and Ruhul Ma'ani Al Alusi

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Abstract . This research examines the semantic dimensions of the term *ikhlaṣ* in the Qur'an and its interpretation within Sufi exegetical discourse. This study is motivated by the semantic development of *ikhlaṣ*, particularly the distinction between its lexical meaning and its technical-religious meaning in Islamic discourse. Addressing this issue academically is crucial, as a proper understanding of *Ikhlas* significantly influences a Muslim's practice of worship (*ubudiyah*). The aim is to identify the interpretations and categories of Qur'anic verses related to *Ikhlas* through semantic and Sufi lenses. Using qualitative methods with a semantic approach, data were collected from various linguistic derivatives of the term in the Qur'an. This analysis uses *Tafsir Al-Wajiz* for contextual exploration and *Tafsir Rub Al-Ma'ani* for Sufi depth. The findings indicate that although the *masdar* (gerund) form of *Ikhlas* is absent in the Qur'an, its conceptual essence exists through various noun and verb variants. This study concludes that *Ikhlas* encompasses two dimensions: the literal meaning in non-ritual contexts and the technical meaning related to worship, such as the meanings of solitude, being chosen, pure milk, and other linguistic meanings. In the context of worship, *ikhlas* means purifying one's devotion solely for the sake of Allah. Furthermore, Sufi interpretation emphasizes spiritual depth, where the meaning of *sincerity* is shaped by the spiritual attainments of its practitioners.

Keywords : *Ikhlas* , Semantics, Sufistic, *Tafsir Al Wajiz*, *Ruhul Ma'ani*

Introduction

Gaining a correct understanding of a particular term or concept is crucial, as the foundation of human thought is built upon an understanding of various terminologies. In the Islamic context, one term that has attracted significant attention is *Ikhlas* (*sincerity*/ purity). This term serves as a central concept widely studied in various fields of worship (*ibadah*), Sufism (*tasawwuf*), and even theology (*aqidah*). In the realm of worship, for example, when discussing the concept of intention (*niyyah*), *Ikhlas* is a fundamental element in forming an intention for worship. Within the discipline of Sufism, this term is treated as a distinct subject of study. Among Sufis, sincerity is considered a defining characteristic of the prophets and the *siddiqin* (*those who are truthful*). For a *salik* (*spiritual traveler*) to reach God spiritually ¹, they must possess a soul characterized by *Ikhlas*.

So, how is the semantic construction of this term established? Historically, the word *Ikhlas* was already used among pre-Islamic Arabs, although its application in their communication remained general. In this context, "general" means that the term *Ikhlas* in pre-Islamic discourse differed from the meaning understood by Muslims today, particularly in relation to worship. In Islamic law (*sharia*), *Ikhlas* relates to sincerity in performing worship to Allah while avoiding showing off (*riya'*). Essential aspects of *ikhlas* (sincerity) include the self-concept as a servant of

¹ Muhammad Fethullah Gülen, *Sufism for All of Us* (Republika Publishers, 2014). P. 124

God, transcendental motives in behavior, the absence of destructive elements—including superiority and wild desires as well as emotional regulation.² Before the arrival of Islam, the semantic meaning of *Ikbilas* and its various morphological derivatives (*tasri'f*) was primarily worldly or secular. At *that time, the term referred to the purity* found in water or milk, sincerity in friendship, freedom, and several other similar meanings.³

In its development, the term *Ikbilas* underwent a semantic evolution after the arrival of Islam. The meaning of *Ikbilas* shifted from the secular and worldly orientation used by pre-Islamic Arabs to the spiritual and otherworldly meanings brought by Islam. In Arabic semantics, this is recognized through the theory of semantic shift or transferred meaning (*al-manqūl*). This theory explains that certain words have many alternative meanings, but among these meanings, it is possible to identify a specific meaning that emerged later. This applies to many Islamic terms that existed morphologically and semantically before Islam; however, with the arrival of Islam,⁴ these terms—including the term *Ikbilas*—acquired new nuances and dimensions of meaning.

The Qur'an, as a revelation from Allah, has made a great contribution to reshaping the Arabic language, particularly in the fields of grammar, literature, and semantics.⁵ The Qur'an contains many words that, through linguistic derivation (*tasrif*), share the same root as the term *Ikbilas*. Semantically, the use of various forms of this word in the Qur'anic verses remains within the context of literal (*lughawi*) and technical (*syar'i*) meanings. Examining this through a semantic approach, integrated with exegetical explanations (*tafsir*), is crucial to gain a holistic view of how this term evolved semantically in the pre-Qur'anic and post-Qur'anic eras. One category of post-Qur'anic semantic development is the interpretation of *Ikbilas* among Sufis. This study is expected to academically explore the nuances of this semantic evolution.

Previous studies on the term *Ikbilas* have used a semantic approach. Two important studies have made significant contributions in exploring the meaning of *Ikbilas* through the semantics of the Qur'an. The first study, entitled "*Ikbilas in the Qur'an: A Semantic Perspective of Toshibiko Izutsu*" (2018) by Muflihun . Hidayatullah investigated the relevance of the use of the term *Ikbilas* in the context of facing calamities. His findings indicate that, semantically, the Qur'an does not use the term *Ikbilas* in relation to enduring misfortune .

The second study, written by Sri Yolanda Fahendri in 2024, is titled "*Exploring the Meanings of Mukblas and Mukblis in the Quran.*" This research aims to uncover the different meanings of *mukblas* and *mukblis* and their applications in the context of everyday life. The results show a clear distinction between the two: *mukblas* refers to individuals who have achieved a level of sincerity, while *mukblis* refers to those who are still striving to achieve it.

Based on the objectives and results of the two studies mentioned above, it can be clarified that the specific objective of this study is to examine the semantic meaning of the term *Ikbilas* in the Qur'an and to provide a Sufi perspective on the term. This Sufi dimension is a theme that has not

² Lu'luatul Chizanah and M. Noor Rochman Hadjam, "Penyusunan Instrumen Pengukuran Ikhlas," *Psikologika: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian Psikologi* 18, no. 1 (2013): 39–49, <https://doi.org/10.20885/psikologika.vol18.iss1.art5>. h. 47

³ Miftahur Rahman, "Said Al-Ikhlash in the Koran: Semantic Study," *Al-Quds: Journal of Al-Quran and Hadith Studies* 2 (2018), <https://journal.iaincurup.ac.id/index.php/alquds/article/download/016/392>. P. 123

⁴ Ali Syairowani, *At-Tambid Fi 'Ilmi Al-Mantiq* (Muassasah Intilikis Dar Al-Ilmi, nd). h. 28

⁵ Syarifuddin Ondeng et al., "The Role of the Qur'an (The Influence of the Qur'an in Shaping Arabic Language and Literature)," *AL-QIBLAH: Journal of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language* 3, no. 1 (2024): 84–98, <https://doi.org/10.36701/qiblah.v3i1.1334>. P. 45

been discussed in the two previous studies. The problem of this study is the persistent confusion between the linguistic meaning of Ikhlas and its technical-legal (*syar'i*) definition . This problem requires academic clarification to ensure that the inaccurate understanding is restored to its proportional position. Based on this background, the objectives of this study are: first, to determine the semantic meaning of the term *Ikhlas in the Qur'an* ; and second, to analyze the Sufi interpretation of the term *Ikhlas in the Qur'an* .

This study employs qualitative library research based on Qur'anic textual analysis and selected classical and contemporary exegetical sources. This study is conducted through five systematic stages designed to explore the concept of ikhlas from semantic and sufistic perspectives: 1) Textual Exploration (Identification): Identifying Quranic verses containing the term ikhlas and gathering their specific commentary data from Wahbah al-Zuhaili's Tafsir Al-Wajiz and Al-Alusi's Ruhul Ma'ani. 2) Categorization (Classification): Classifying the commentary data into two main approaches: the semantic-linguistic aspect (literal meaning and word derivation), prominent in Al-Wajiz, and the sufistic-spiritual dimension (maqamat and inner meaning), dominant in Ruhul Ma'ani. 3) Semantic Analysis: Analyzing the relational meaning of ikhlas (synchronically and diachronically) to examine how Al-Zuhaili defines its boundaries within legal and practical theological contexts. 4) Sufistic Analysis: Examining Al-Alusi's commentary through a Sufi lens to uncover the spiritual essence and levels of ikhlas, as well as its implications for soul purification (tazkiyatun nafs). 5) Conceptual Synthesis: Comparing the findings from both tafsirs to formulate an integrated, comprehensive concept of ikhlas. Data collection involved the analysis of the term *Ikhlas* and its various derivative forms, which were then grouped morphologically and analyzed semantically in relevant verses. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of the terms analyzed, the researcher referred to the interpretations of *Tafsir Al-Wajiz* and *Ruhul Ma'ani* , as well as the dictionaries of *Mukhtar As-Sahhab* and *Al-Bisyri* . From these sources, the author compiled several meanings of the word *Ikhlas* . This was followed by an analysis of the components of the meaning of *Ikhlas* from a semantic and Sufi perspective.

Results and Discussion

Sincerity (Ikhlas) in the Qur'an

The word Ikhlas, when traced back to its morphological origin, is *the masdar* (verbal noun) of the word *akhlasa* . Upon closer examination, this verb is formed from the root letters *khā – lām – śād* (خ – ل – ص). These three letters produce a wide variety of words, which appear as verbs and nouns. A key characteristic of Arabic ⁶is that its vocabulary is generally built on a root system (*istiqaq*). ⁷The word *Ikhlas* , which is *the masdar* (verbal noun) of the pattern (*wazan*) *أخلص* (*akhlasa*), does not appear in *its literal masdar form* within the verses of the Quran. Instead, various other forms or patterns related to its meaning—either as verbs (*fi'il*) or nouns (*isim*)—are found throughout the Quran. For a clearer explanation, please see the following analysis table:

⁶ “KOMPONEN MAKNA ‘IKHLAS’ DAN ‘RIDA’ DALAM ALQURAN,” *MULTIKULTURA*, ahead of print, January 25, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.7454/multikultura.v2i1.1128.P.15>

⁷ D. Hidayat, *Al-Balagh Li Al-Jami' Wa As-Sawahid Min Kalam Al-Badi'* (PT. Karya Toha Putra & Bina Masyarakat Qurani, nd). p. 41

Table 1:
Derivatives of the Word Ikhlas in the Koran

No	Surat/ Verse	Word form	Verse
1	An-Nisa'/146	أَخْلَصُوا	﴿إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ...﴾
2	Al-Baqarah/ 139	مُخْلِصُونَ	﴿...وَلَنَّا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ﴾
3	Al-A'raf/29	مُخْلِصِينَ	﴿...وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ﴾
4	Yunus/ 22	مُخْلِصِينَ	﴿...دَعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ لئنِ أَنْجَيْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ﴾
5	Az-Zumar/2	مُخْلِصًا	﴿فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾
6	Az- Zumar/11	مُخْلِصًا	﴿قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ﴾
7	Ghafir/ 14	مُخْلِصِينَ	﴿فَادْعُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾
8	Yusuf/ 24	الْمُخْلِصِينَ	﴿...كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾
9	Al-Hijr/40	الْمُخْلِصِينَ	﴿إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمْ الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾
10	As-Saffat/ 40	الْمُخْلِصِينَ	﴿إِلَّا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُخْلِصِينَ﴾
11	Yusuf/ 54	أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ	﴿وَقَالَ الْمَلِكُ انْتُونِي بِهِ أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ لِنَفْسِي...﴾

12	Yusuf/ 80	خَلَصُوا	﴿فَلَمَّا اسْتَيْأَسُوا مِنْهُ خَلَصُوا نَجِيًّا...﴾
13	Sad/ 46	أَخْلَصْنَاَهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ	﴿إِنَّا أَخْلَصْنَاَهُمْ بِخَالِصَةٍ ذِكْرَى الدَّارِ﴾
14	Al-'An'am/ 139	خَالِصَةً	﴿...وَقَالُوا مَا فِي بُطُونِ هَذِهِ الْأَنْعَامِ خَالِصَةٌ لِذُكُورِنَا...﴾
15	Al-A'raf/ 32	خَالِصَةً	﴿...قُلْ هِيَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا خَالِصَةٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ...﴾
16	An-Nahal/66	خَالِصًا	﴿...نُتَقِيكُمْ مِمَّا فِي بُطُونِهِ مِنْ بَيْنِ فَرْثٍ وَدَمٍ لَبْنَا خَالِصًا سَائِعًا لِلشَّارِبِينَ﴾

The table above displays verses containing word variants that are semantically related to the word *Ikhlas*, even though they appear in different *sigbat* (morphological forms). In general, forms that share the same root as *Ikhlas* are divided into two categories: Nouns (*Isim*) and Verbs (*F'il*). Variants that are categorized as nouns include: *mukbli ṣ ina* (مُخْلِصِينَ), *mukbli ṣ an* (مُخْلِصًا), *al-mukbla ṣ ina* (الْمُخْلِصِينَ), and *kbali ṣ atun* (خَالِصَةً). Below are the morphological details of each word:

The word مُخْلِصِينَ (*mukblisim*) is the masculine plural form of the word مُخْلِصٍ (*mukblis*). Morphologically, this word comes from the template word (wazan) أَفْعَل (*af'ala*), specifically: أَخْلَصَ - يَخْلُصُ - إِخْلَاصًا - مَخْلُصٌ - مَخْلُصِينَ (*akblasa - yukblisu - ikbblāsan - mukblis*). From this series of conjugations (*tasrif*), it is clear that the word مُخْلِصٍ is an active participle (*ism fa'il*) which refers to the doer or subject of an action.⁸ When translated, this word means 'a sincere person' or 'a person who acts sincerely.' Morphologically, the word *mukbli ṣ an* (مُخْلِصًا) is basically the same as *mukbli ṣ ina* (مُخْلِصِينَ); the difference is that this word is in *isim mufrad* (singular noun) form, indicating a singular meaning.

Meanwhile, the word "believers" with *fatah* in the letters *lam* is in the form *ism maful*, which shows a passive meaning (object).⁹ Just like the word "sincerely" explained earlier, these two words are built from the same *wazan* (pattern), namely the *do* (*af'ala*) pattern. The morphological sequence is as follows:

⁸ Muhammad Jabir and Wahyu Pratama Putra, "ANALISIS POLA DAN KEDUDUKAN ISIM FĀIL DALAM SURAH ĀLI 'IMRĀN," *Albariq: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, no. 1 (2021): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.24239/albariq.v2i1.14.P.2>

⁹ Rifa Rafkahanun and Agus Nero Sofyan, "Analisis Nama Diri Orang Berbahasa Arab di Indonesia: Kajian Morfo-Semantik," *MABASAN* 15, no. 1 (2021): 79–94, <https://doi.org/10.26499/mab.v15i1.429.P.83>

Be sincere – be sincere – sincerity – a sincere person – a sincere person.

The difference between the two lies only in *the vowel* (vowel sign) on the letter *lam*. For *the isim Fa'il* (active participle), the letter *lam* has *kasrah*, so it is read as مُخْلِصٌ (*mukhlis*). Meanwhile, for *the isim Maf'ul* (passive participle), the letter *lam* has *fathah*, so it is read as مُخْلَصٌ (*mukhlis*), which literally means "something that has been purified" or "purified."

The word *khālisatun* (خَالِصَةٌ) is a feminine active participle (*ism fa' il*) derived from the single root *khalasa* (خَلَصَ). The active participle of *thulāthi Mujarrad* (trilateral root) is formed using a fixed pattern, namely *bobot fā' il* (فاعل). If traced through its conjugation (*tasrif*), the form is: *kehalasa – yakhlusu – khalū ṣ an – khāli ṣ*. Literally, this word can be translated as "something pure".¹⁰ Here, the difference is seen between *isim fail* (active participle) with the form أَخْلَصَ (*akhlasa*) and the form خَلَصَ (*kehalasa*). The first contains the prefix 'me-' (transitive), while the second does not (intransitive).

The second category is *fi'il* (verb), namely: أَخْلَصُوا – أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ – خَلَصُوا. If we look closely, these three verbs are in the form of *Madhi* (past tense); what differentiates them is the *mujarrad* (basic) and *maẓid* (augmented) forms. خَلَصُوا (*Khalasū*); This is a *Madhi verb* that carries the vowel *dammah* (*mabni*) because it is connected with the letter *waw*; its original form ends in *fathah*, namely خَلَصَ (*kehalasa*). This word is a *Madhi fi'il* that has not received any prefix (namely *thulathi*). *mujarrad*); in other words, it is a basic verb. أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ (*Astakhlis -hu*): This is a *mudhari verb* (present/future tense) derived from *the verb Madhi استخلص* (*istakhlasha*). This verb is an additional form that gets the prefix *hamzah*, *sin*, and *ta'* at the beginning of the word. In Arabic, these prefixes usually mean "to ask" or " ¹¹to demand". When conjugated (*tasrif*), *the pattern* is: *istakhlasa – yastakhlis ṣ u – istikhla ṣ an* root *word khala ṣ a* with the addition of the prefix *hamzah* in the study of *Sarf* (morphology), this pattern usually contains a causative or transitive meaning (*muta'addi*).¹²

Based on the explanation above, although the Qur'an does not explicitly use the word *Ikhlas* as a verbal noun (*masdar*), its meaning remains. The various nouns and verbs discussed previously semantically encompass the concept of *Ikhlas as a whole*.

Meaning of Ikhlas in Tafsir Al Wajiz Wahbah Az Zuhaili from a semantic perspective

In the previous description, the word "Ikhlas" is not mentioned directly; however, the Quran presents many verses related to the meaning of Ikhlas through various forms of the word. When analyzed semantically, the word *Ikhlas* contains two forms of meaning: a linguistic meaning and a sharia (technical/religious) meaning. In semantics, the process of meaning formation in a term is explained through the theory of *al-manqūl* (semantic transference).¹³ *Al-Manqūl's* theory explains that there are several forms of terms with non-singular meanings; however, among these meanings, it is possible to trace which appeared first and which appeared later.

¹⁰ Adib Bisri and Munawwir AF, *Al-Bisri: Indonesian-Arabic Dictionary* (Pustaka Progresif, 1999). P. 171

¹¹ Bisri and AF, *Al-Bisri: Indonesian-Arabic Dictionary Arabic - Indonesian*. P. xvi

¹² Moh Nizar Alwi, *ANALYSIS OF FI'IL TSULATSI MUJARROD AND MAZID AND THEIR BENEFITS IN THE BOOK AYYUHAL WALAD*, 2020.

¹³ Syaerowani, *At-Tambid Fi' Ilmi Al-Mantiq*.

The word *Ikhlas* is formed from the series of letters kh – l – s (خ – ل – ص), which initially had several alternative meanings: pure, clear, sincere, liberated, and various other connotations.¹⁴ Historically, these various meanings were used by Arabs in their daily communication. When Islam came, it infused the concept of *Ikhlas* with a new dimension alongside its existing meanings. Although the word *Ikhlas and its various derivatives had a common meaning among pre-Islamic Arabs*, Islam refined this definition by integrating the core value of Tawhid (the oneness of God). *Consequently*, in this context, *Ikhlas carries* the meaning—as cited by various scholars—of purifying worship solely for the sake of Allah.

After searching and analyzing words related to *Ikhlas* in the Qur'an, the verses can be categorized into two patterns: word variants that indicate linguistic meaning (*lughawi*) and word variants that indicate Islamic legal/technical meaning (*istila b*). This categorization can be seen in the following table:

Table 2:
The Meaning of *Sincerity* in the *Quran*

NO	Linguistic Meaning	Technical Meaning of Sharia
1	Then the king said, "Bring him to me; I will appoint him ... to a position of trust for me Yusuf/ 54	Except for those who repent, improve theirways of life, hold fast to Allah , and dedicate their religion sincerely ...to Allah. They will be with those who believe An-Nisa'/146
2	...So when they despaired of it, they consulted privately Yusuf/ 80	And for us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds, ..." and we are sincere to Him Al-Baqarah/ 139
3	Indeed, We chose them for their special quality: .remembrance of the Hereafter Sad/ 46	And call on Him by making your religion sincere to ..." Him, as He created you, then you will return to Him Al- A'raf /29
4	And they said, "What is in the bellies of these animals is "... only for our males Al - An'am / 139	So worship God, surrender your religion completely to .Him Az-Zumar/2
5	Say, "That is for the believers in this world, and "... especially for them on the Day of Resurrection Al- A'raf / 32	In this way, so that We can keep away from him evil ..." and immoral acts. Indeed, he is one of Our chosen ". servants

¹⁴ Muhammad Ar-Razi, *Mukhtar As-Sabbah* (Maktabah Lebanon, 1989). P. 161-162

6 We give you to drink from what is in their bellies, ..." . Except **Your chosen servants among them**

between the excrement and the blood, **pure milk**,

As-Saffat/ 40

".delicious to the drinkers

An-Nahal/66

Based on the classification in the table, it can be observed that the first group (on the left) consists of verses containing variants of the word *Ikhlas* used with its linguistic meanings. As previously mentioned, this linguistic meaning is general and is not specifically related to the concept of "purity of worship" of Allah. The first verse in this group is a quote from *Surah Yusuf*, verse 54. The context of this verse relates to the story of the King, who ordered his officials to bring Prophet Yusuf from prison to be appointed to a high position near him. The word *أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ* (*astakhlishubu*) in this verse comes from the same root as "Ikhlas"—namely kh -ls (خ-ل-ص)—but in the morphological pattern *Istaf'ala* (استفعل). According to *Tafsir Al-Wajiz*, this word is interpreted as: "I will make him my personal servant, one of my closest confidants, and my advisor."¹⁵ Here, the word *أَسْتَخْلِصُهُ* is interpreted as a trusted person or a chosen person. Of course, this meaning falls within the linguistic definition of the root word *Ikhlas*. This particular context does not relate to the worship of Allah, but rather to social interactions between people.

Meanwhile, the second verse is an excerpt from *Surah Yusuf*, verse 80. The word *خَلَصُوا* (*khalaṣū*) in this verse is a *fi'il madhi tsulasi mujarrad* (trilateral verb in the past tense). This verse fragment tells the despair of Yusuf's brothers when he arrested his brother, Benjamin, who was accused of taking the king's measuring cup—an act which, of course, was Prophet Yusuf's strategy to keep his brother with him. The word *خَلَصُوا* comes from the root خ - ل - ص (kh -l- ṣ). According to *Tafsir al-Wajiz*, this word is interpreted as *انفردوا متناجين سرا فيما بينهم*, which means: 'they withdrew to consult privately among themselves.' In this context, the word *خَلَصُوا* is interpreted as *انفردوا* (to withdraw or isolate oneself),¹⁶ This relates to the attitude of the Prophet Yusuf's brothers, who were distraught over Yusuf's decision to detain their brother, Benjamin. They then withdrew to deliberate among themselves on how to respond to the decision. Based on this interpretation, the word *khalaṣū* (*خَلَصُوا*) in this part of the verse has a more *lughawi* (linguistic/literal) meaning, because it only describes the state of Yusuf's brothers who acted in isolation. This meaning is not related to the relationship of worship to Allah, which is the *terminological* (technical/theological) meaning of the word *Ikhlas*.

Meanwhile, in *Surah An-Nahl*, verse 66, there is the word *khālisan* (خَالِصًا), which is an *isim fa'il* (active verb). This verse discusses the signs of Allah's greatness found in livestock. Allah creates pure milk in the stomachs of livestock; this milk is between blood and feces, yet remains uncontaminated by either. *Tafsir Al-Wajiz* explains this expression as:

¹⁵ Wahbah Zuhaili, *At-Tafsir Al-Wajiz 'Ala Hamis Al-Quran Al-Azim* (Dar Al-Fikri, n.d.).P. 243

¹⁶ Wahbah Zuhaili, *At-Tafsir Al-Wajiz 'Ala Hamis Al-Quran Al-Azim* . P.246

والقذر
and dung."¹⁷ "We have provided for you pure milk to drink, which comes from between blood

The word " *kbālisan* " (خَالِصًا) in this verse is interpreted as " *ṣāfiyan* " (صافيا), which means pure. It is important to note that the meaning of "pure" in this context is linguistic and not technical (*sharia*); this is because the context of the verse describes the purity of animal milk, not purity in the sense of worship or sincerity.

Meanwhile, *Ikhla* > *s* analyzed in the right column can be seen as various variations of the meaning of *Ikhla* > *s* in the context of terminology (*syar'i*). This is characterized by defining *Ikhla* > *s* as purity purified through faith (*ima* > *n*) and monotheism (*tawhi* > *d*).

Surah An-Nisa verse 146 discusses the rewards for people who repent, improve themselves, and are sincere in practicing their religion. Likewise, Surah Al-Baqarah verse 139 explains the attitude of the Prophet and believers who remain steadfast in worshipping Allah sincerely. These two verses refer to worship carried out by believers with sincerity towards Allah. In Tafsir Al-Wajiz, the phrase *wa akhla ṣ ū* *dīnahum lillāh* (وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ) is explained as follows: "They purify their deeds by abandoning pride (*riya*), hypocrisy, and obedience to other than Allah."¹⁸ This interpretation shows that the two verses refer to the meaning of *Ikhla*'s in the sense of sharia law, namely, the purification of worship to Allah alone.

As for Surah Az-Zumar verse 2, the word chosen is *mukhlisan* (مُخْلِصًا), which is an active participle noun (*isim fa>'il*) derived from the morphological pattern *af'ala* (أَفْعَلَ). This verse discusses Allah's command to worship Him sincerely and devoutly.

The expression *mukhlisan* is explained in *Tafsir al-Waji* > *z* as:

"Be devoted and obedient to Him, free from polytheism (*shirk*) and ostentation (*riya*)."¹⁹

The command to worship in this verse is accompanied by the command to perform it with sincerity (*ikhlas*). This shows that the word *ikhlas* here aligns with its technical (terminological) meaning, because the *ikhlas* mentioned in the verse is directly related to worship, which is a core part of Sharia teachings.

The meaning of Ikhlas according to the Sufi-oriented interpretation of Ruhul Ma'anu al Alusi

Sufi life is closely linked to spiritual practice, which aims to draw as close as possible to the Creator.²⁰ In interpreting the Quran, Sufis have different approaches to meaning, which are largely shaped by their unique spiritual experiences. There are two main approaches they use when interpreting the verses of the Quran: Theoretical Mysticism. The first approach interprets the Quran through the framework of mystical theory. Spiritual Intuition: The second approach relies on the

¹⁷ Wahbah Zuhaili, *At-Tafsir Al-Wajiz 'Ala Hamis Al-Quran Al-Azim*.P.275

¹⁸ Wahbah Zuhaili, *At-Tafsir Al-Wajiz 'Ala Hamis Al-Quran Al-Azim* . P.102

¹⁹ Wahbah Zuhaili, *At-Tafsir Al-Wajiz 'Ala Hamis Al-Quran Al-Azim*.H.459

²⁰ Muhammad Nur Hakim et al., *Simbol Masyarakat Sufistik: Studi Peran Majelis Dzikir Al-Khidmah*, 4, no. 3 (2023).P. 528

spiritual instrument (*qalb* or heart) to unearth the deep esoteric meanings hidden behind the literal text.²¹

One of the most frequently used references in Sufi commentary is the commentary on *Rub al-Ma'ani* by Al-Alusi. Born in Baghdad in 1217 AH (1802 AD), Al-Alusi, whose full name was Shihāb al- Dīn Ma ḥ mūd Afandī, was a prominent Iraqi scholar. He died at the age of around 52 years on 25 Dzulqa'dah 1270 AH (1854 AD) and was buried in the family cemetery in the Karkh district, Baghdad.²² Although Al-Quran scholars categorize Al-Alusi's work in the Sufi genre (Ishari), it is also recognized that his exegesis uses a variety of interpretive approaches.²³

To understand the Sufi meaning of the word *Mukhlis*, it is a good idea to examine Al-Alusi's interpretation of the verses related to this term. First is the interpretation of verse 139 of Surah Al-Baqarah:

"And for us are our deeds, and for you are your deeds, and we are sincere to Him..."

The word *Mukhlisun* in the verse is the masculine plural form (*jam' muzakkar*) of the word *Mukhlis*. Al- Alusi interprets the phrase *وَوَحْنٌ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ* as "sincerity in actions or deeds, seeking nothing but His pleasure."²⁴ At first glance, this interpretation does not differ significantly from that of other commentators ; however, Al- Alusi does not stop at this definition. To support his Sufi-oriented interpretation, he presents several Sufi perspectives to sharpen the meaning of the word *Mukhlis* or *Ikhlās*.

Some Sufi figures whose opinions are quoted include Said bin Jubair, who explains *Ikhlās* (sincerity) as:²⁵

.Sincerity means not associating anything with God in His religion and not showing off one's good deeds to anyone

"Sincerity is that you do not associate partners with Allah in His religion and do not show off (*riya*) your deeds to anyone."

Meanwhile, Fudail bin Iyad spoke about the meaning of *Ikhlās* :

.Leaving work for the sake of others is hypocrisy, and working for the sake of others is idolatry

"Abandoning one's deeds for the sake of others is *riya* (showing off), while performing one's deeds for the sake of others is *shirk* (associating partners with Allah)."

Huzaifah al-Mar'asi is of the opinion that *sincerity* is:

²¹ M. Ulil Abshor, *EPISTEMOLOGI IRFANI (Sebuah Tinjauan Kajian Tafsir Sufistik)*, pt. 1, 3 (2018), <https://scispace.com/pdf/epistemologi-irfani-sebuah-tinjauan-kajian-tafsir-sufistik-5e9kqsquyr.pdf>.

²² Nurun Nisaa Baihaqi, *CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERPRETATION OF RŪ Ḥ AL-MA' Ā N Ī*, sec. 2, 2 (2022), file:///C:/Users/User/Downloads/enjangsyamsulmaulana,+No+2+August+2022+Jurnal+Skripsi+Luar+(Nurun+Nis sa)+115-130.pdf. P. 117

²³ Anas Mujahiddin, "Corak Isyari dalam Tafsir Ruh al-Ma'ani Karya al-Alusi," *Ulumul Qur'an: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* 2, no. 1 (2022): 111–21, <https://doi.org/10.58404/uq.v2i1.97>.

²⁴ Sihabuddin Al-Alusi Al-Baghdadi, *Rub Al-Ma'ani Fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Azīm Wa as-Sab'a al-Masani* (Muassasah al-Risalah, 2010).P.475

²⁵ Sihabuddin Al-Alusi Al-Baghdadi, *The Spirit of Meaning in the Interpretation of the Qur'an al-Azīm Wa as-Sab'a al-Masani*. P. 475

.That the servant's actions must be consistent both inwardly and outwardly

"A condition in which a servant's actions are identical (in harmony) between his inner self and his outer appearance."

Abu Ya'kub al- Makfuf said:

.That a servant should hide his good deeds as he hides his bad deeds

"A servant should hide his good deeds as he hides his evil deeds."

Presentation of views on the meaning of *ikhlas* (sincerity) from Sufi figures serves as a foundation for Al-Aluči in interpreting the Sufi dimension (*isyyar*) of the term. At first glance, these opinions may appear to offer diverse perspectives; however, taken together, they illustrate the *profound depth of ikhlas* within Sufi circles. According to As-Sarraj, a prolific Sufi scholar, this diversity in defining ikhlas is rooted in the unique spiritual experiences of each Sufi during their journey.²⁶ For example, when a Sufi is overcome by a certain spiritual state (*baal*), such as *fanaa'* (self-destruction), that inner experience greatly influences their interpretation of the concept of ikhlas.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the word *ikhlas* (sincerity) in the Quran from the perspective of semantics and Sufism, the following conclusions can be drawn: First, morphologically, the word *ikhlas* is a *masdar* (verbal noun) derived from the word *أخلص* (*akhlasa*) following *the waḥan* (pattern) *أفعل* (*af'ala*). Second, in the Quran, this word refers to the purity of the soul in its relationship with Allah. However, in its various derived forms, this word also includes meanings unrelated to worship, such as isolated, chosen, pure milk, and other linguistic applications. Third, the Sufi meaning of *ikhlas* in the Quran is deeper; it relates to spiritual practice and is closely related to the experiential insights of the Sufis. Fourth, among the Sufi interpretations are: not associating partners with Allah in obedience, not showing off one's deeds to anyone, and ensuring that a servant's actions are in harmony between the outer (*ẓāhir*) and inner (*batiniyah*). Furthermore, abandoning a deed for the sake of human beings is considered *riya* (hypocrisy), while doing a deed to seek human praise is considered *shirk* (polytheism). The novelty of this study lies in the comparative analysis of semantic and sufistic meanings based on *Tafsir Al-Wajiz* and *Rub al-Ma'ani*. Previous studies have limited the term *ikhlas* strictly to its semantic meaning.

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²⁶ Abshor, *IRFANI EPISTEMOLOGY (A Review of Sufi Commentary Studies)*, part 1.

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