# THE EVOLUTION OF *AL-FAḤSHĀ'* AND *AL-MUNKAR* IN THE MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ERA: AN ECO-SUFI SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** This study aims to expand the understanding of the concepts of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* through an eco-sufistic perspective using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach. Traditionally, these two terms have been understood in moral and social contexts. However, this research offers a reinterpretation that broadens the scope of both concepts. *Faḥshā'* is understood as environmental damage caused by irresponsible human activity, while *munkar* represents internal corruption, such as egoism and behavior that contradicts human nature. Through Charles Sanders Peirce's triadic theory (sign, object, and interpretant), this study explores Quranic verses to connect the spiritual and ecological dimensions of both concepts. The results show that *faḥshā'* reflects the destructive impact of humans on nature, arising from unchecked greed and exploitation. On the other hand, *munkar* reflects internal dissonance that disrupts the harmony of humans with themselves, society, and their environment. This perspective integrates Sufistic ethics with environmental sustainability issues, emphasizing that ecological awareness is an integral part of Islamic teachings. This approach not only enriches Quran-based ecological discourse but also highlights how Sufism can inspire the development of holistic behaviors that maintain the balance of nature. This study makes a significant contribution by expanding the interpretation of Quranic verses relevant to contemporary ecological issues, while strengthening the role of Islamic spirituality in addressing the pressing challenges of environmental degradation in the modern era.

**Keywords:** Semiotic Analysis, Faḥshā' and Munkar, Eco-Sufistic Exegesis.

## Introduction

The study of the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* in the eco-sufistic context highlights the need to expand the understanding of these two terms, which have traditionally been understood only in the moral and social realms, to include their negative impact on the environment. Traditionally, *faḥshā'* has been interpreted as immoral behavior that disrupts the social order, while *munkar* is understood as actions that contradict religious teachings (Razak & Rahim, 2021).

However, from an eco-sufistic perspective, these terms can be reinterpreted to encompass ecological damage and the disharmony between humans and nature. *Faḥshā'* not only refers to social moral violations but also to environmental damage caused by the exploitation of nature, while *munkar* reflects internal dissonance that disrupts the relationship between individuals, society, and the environment. This approach broadens the scope of both terms to include the ecological dimension of human responsibility toward nature (Musa et al., 2024).

Ecological studies have often been conducted using certain Quranic verses that are frequently referenced, such as those regarding the creation of nature and humanity's responsibility as khalīfah (stewards) on Earth (Sutanto, 2019). However, other verses that are also highly relevant in an ecological perspective, such as those often recited in prayers (Algifari & Zuhra, 2022) and that aim to prevent immoral acts (*faḥshā'*) and *munkar*, have not received adequate attention. So far, the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* have often been interpreted narrowly, limited to moral and social behavior. In contrast, from an eco-sufistic perspective, Sufis have developed broader and deeper meanings of these terms, encompassing environmental degradation and ecological responsibility (Zulkarnaen et al., 2023).

In various studies, the terms *al-faḥshā'* and *al-munkar* are often examined together, referencing Surah Al-Ankabut, verse 45. This verse links the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* as the results or consequences of performing prayer (*salat*) correctly and consciously (Algifari & Zuhra, 2022). These studies also highlight the concepts of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* separately, including research on the terminology of *faḥshā'* in the Qur'an, which discusses the term independently without linking it to *munkar* (Prasetya, 2021). However, the meanings of these terms in various studies tend to be interpreted in a limited way, without deeper or broader exploration. Previous research often repeats the same definitions without expanding the concepts into more complex contexts or those relevant to contemporary social phenomena. Therefore, it is interesting to reexamine *faḥshā'* and *munkar* from a different perspective, such as using Charles Sanders Peirce's interpretive semiotic theory. This approach allows the exploration of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* as signs (signs) that can be analyzed through icons, indices, and symbols, providing new insights into the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar*. From the above explanation, the author uses Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, which consists of signs, objects, and representamen, integrated into a triadic approach.

Research with this theme is actually not a new theme. Previously, there had been similar studies conducted by other researchers, such as the Thesis conducted by Andy Rosyidin entitled "Fahsya' dan Munkar dalam Al-Qur'an Dengan Analisis Teori Anti-Sinonimitas", which resulted in a conclusion that the words *faḥshā'* and *munkar* have a relationship or intersection of similarities (correlation), namely: 1) *faḥshā'* and *munkar* are crimes that arise from the temptation of Satan, 2) *faḥshā'* and *munkar* are two inseparable parts, *faḥshā'* is part of the act of *munkar* whose meaning includes crimes in general (Rosyidin, 2020). Second, the research conducted by Muh. Nurul Ihsan with the title "Konsep *al-Faḥshā'*

dalam Al-Qur'an (Studi Penafsiran Wahbah al-Zuhaili dalam Kitab Tafsir al-Munir'', which resulted in a conclusion that in general the connotation of the act of al-fahsya' is divided into two, namely physical and spiritual. As an implication, this study is expected to provide a new perspective both from the aspect of interpretation and the variant of deviations identified as *al- faḥshā'* behavior. From the two studies above, none of the previous studies have the same focus and purpose as this study. Researchers have tracked various Islamic study research platforms and have not found the same research as this study. For that, this is where this study finds novelty compared to previous studies with similar themes and focuses (Ihsan, 2022).

This study uses a qualitative content analysis method with Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic approach, where the interpretation applied is based on Sufistic exegesis (Guibert et al., 2023; Istiqomah & Kristanty, 2021). The aim of this research is to systematically and deeply identify messages found in printed media or written texts. In the process, the researcher collects Quranic verses related to the concepts of *faḥshā'* and *munkar*, then connects and analyzes them through the triadic theory developed by Charles Sanders Peirce. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of these concepts from the Quranic perspective.

**Eco-Sufistic Interpretation**

Eco-sufism, or often referred to as ecosufism, is ecology-based Sufism, which means spiritual awareness that can be achieved by understanding the interaction between systems of existence, particularly within the surrounding environment (Syahida, 2023). In an ecological context, this can be interpreted as preserving nature being part of preserving oneself. Furthermore, damaging nature is equivalent to destroying the means of attaining ma'rifah (gnosis or deep understanding of God). Eco-sufism encourages humans to live ethically in harmony with nature and God. Eco-sufism has been widely discussed in Western studies under terms such as *ecosophy,*

*philosophy of ecology, deep ecology, and environmental philosophy* (Syahida, 2023). To understand eco-sufism, there are two key terms must be understood that eco and sufistic : eco (something that pertains to the environment or ecology) and sufistic (relating to Sufism, which often deals with aspects of mysticism and spirituality within Islam) (Willms, 2020).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, a major movement emerged in the Western world emphasizing the importance of environmental preservation. At that time, ecology—the science that studies the reciprocal relationships between living organisms and their environment, including interactions among organisms and abiotic components such as soil, water, and air—was still known only to a small group of academic and applied biologists. However, within a short period, ecology gained widespread attention and began to be regarded as an essential framework for understanding the relationship between humans and their environment (Syahida, 2023).

As the movement progressed, ecology became an increasingly popular and familiar term among the public. No longer confined to the academic sphere, the concept of ecology began to permeate various media, including newspapers, magazines, books, and general literature. This transformation marked a shift in ecology from a specialized scientific discipline to a vital part of public discourse on sustainability and environmental preservation. The term "ecology" itself originates from the Greek words oikos and logos. Oikos means "house" or "dwelling place", while *logos* refers to "knowledge". Taken together, ecology can be understood as the knowledge of organisms in their habitats. Some also define ecology as the relationship between multiple organisms or a group of living beings and their environment (Gufron & A. Hambali, 2022).

The scope of ecology includes the analysis of interactions between organisms and their environment at various levels of biological organization, covering individuals, populations,

communities, and ecosystems. Individual ecology studies how organisms adapt to environmental conditions, while population ecology focuses on the dynamics of groups of individuals within a single species. At the community level, ecology explores the interactions between different species within a specific area, whereas ecosystem ecology examines the flow of energy and material cycles between biotic and abiotic components. Additionally, ecology includes global studies, such as the impact of climate change on biodiversity and the balance of the biosphere as a whole (Syahida, 2023).

Sufism, or Tasawwuf, is a term that refers to mysticism (esotericism) within Islam with the ultimate goal of achieving union with God. The term "sufistic" refers to anything related to the teachings, values, or practices of Tasawwuf (Sufism), which is the spiritual branch of Islam aimed at drawing closer to Allah through the purification of the soul, the embodiment of ethical values, and the attainment of ma'rifah (the knowledge of Allah). The term "sufistic" is often used to describe characteristics, views, or approaches influenced by the principles of Sufism, such as divine love, simplicity, and spiritual introspection (Soleh, 2024; Syahida, 2023).

Al-Ghazali, particularly in The Alchemy of Happiness, states that Sufism is a journey of the soul towards purification and truth. Sufistic values include the intention to recognize humility, subdue the ego, and live in harmony with the will of Allah. This path is aimed at achieving spiritual enlightenment by cleansing the heart and aligning one's actions with divine guidance, emphasizing a deep connection to God and a commitment to ethical living (Gufron & A. Hambali, 2022).

From the explanation above, the author uses the term "sufistic" to emphasize the values contained within it. The terms Sufism and sufistic are interconnected, yet they differ in their nuances depending on the context. Sufism refers to the overall teachings of tasawuf, encompassing spiritual practices, ethical

values, and the philosophy taught in the Sufi tradition. This term is more commonly used in academic discourse, especially in English, to discuss tasawuf as a spiritual branch of Islam. On the other hand, "sufistic" is used descriptively to characterize the qualities, traits, or aspects related to tasawuf, such as humility, simplicity, and divine love. Therefore, "sufistic" can be understood as the practical dimension or application of the values of tasawuf in daily life (Gufron & A. Hambali, 2022).

Ekosufistik is a fusion of the aforementioned meanings, and another interpretation is presented by Albert Schweitzer and Paul Taylor regarding nature. They suggest that nature is a manifestation of God, meaning that the natural world is a representation or embodiment of the divine on Earth. This view aligns with the idea that nature is not merely a physical entity but also a spiritual expression of God's presence, and humans should approach it with reverence, respect, and harmony, recognizing its sacredness. In this sense, eco-sufism emphasizes a deep spiritual connection between humans and the environment, encouraging ecological responsibility as an integral part of the spiritual journey (Gufron & A. Hambali, 2022). Indeed, according to Ibn Arabi, as the khalīfah (steward) on Earth, humans are meant to live in harmony with the planet. He emphasizes that humans have a responsibility to care for and protect the Earth as a divine trust. In his view, the relationship between humans and nature is not one of domination but of partnership. Ibn Arabi's perspective suggests that the natural world reflects the divine, and by engaging with it with respect, care, and mindfulness, humans can fulfill their spiritual duty and live in alignment with God's will. This aligns with eco-sufism, which advocates for a deep, harmonious relationship between humanity and the environment (Husna & Bariroh, 2024; Meldayati, 2016).

## The Meaning of *Faḥshā'* and *Munkar*

The word *faḥshā'* in the Mu'jam al-Ma'āni dictionary is defined with several meanings. The word *faḥshā'* (فحشاء) in its general meaning is interpreted as obscene, filthy, vulgar, pornographic, vile, excessive, beyond normal boundaries, conspicuous, and shameful. Meanwhile, in the Qur'an, بالفحشاء - فاحشة with the kasrah (vowel mark) on kha' and ba' is interpreted as "with obscenity or with vile deeds". Whereas when written with al (الفاحشة - فاحشة) with an alif after the fa', it means vile deeds, which are the same as الفحشاء – فحشاء, meaning vile actions.

On the other hand, the word *al-munkar* in the Al-Ma'āni dictionary is often used similarly, though with different vowel markings. Broadly, the meaning associated with this word is "reprehensible", "an act of evil", "denial", or "disbelief". Generally, this word is interpreted as cursing, accusing, denying, permitting, or rejecting, with the verb انكر – ينكر (Ankara - yankiru) with the fathah on alif, meaning to deny or reject (Kamus, 2025).

The concepts of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* in Islam refer to behaviors that are considered sinful or disgraceful in religious teachings. Etymologically, *faḥshā'* (الفحشاء) comes from the root word "*faḥshā'*" which means a very bad, evil, or immoral act, such as adultery and other amoral behaviors. In the Qur'an, *faḥshā'* is described as an action that is not only prohibited but also has the potential to damage social morality. These behaviors are seen as harmful to both individuals and the broader community, threatening the moral fabric of society (Kamus, 2025). One example of a verse that uses this term is QS. Al-A'rāf (7): 33, which mentions the prohibition of vile acts and sins. Meanwhile, *munkar* (المنكر), derived from the root word "nakara", meaning "to reject" or "to deny", refers to any form of action that contradicts Islamic teachings and must be avoided. In QS. Al-Imran (3): 104, Muslims are urged to call to goodness and prevent evil. Historically, these two concepts reflect efforts to maintain the morality of individuals and the collective Muslim community, by avoiding actions that

harm or contradict the principles of the faith. In practice, preventing *faḥshā'* and *munkar* becomes part of the social and da'wah (missionary) duty, where Muslims are expected to actively contribute to creating a morally sound society. Therefore, understanding the terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar* is important in establishing a social ethical foundation that aligns with Islamic teachings (Namira, 2024).

In the concept of eco-sufism, Sufis interpret this verse not only based on the general meaning of the words but also with a deeper understanding. The term *al-faḥshā'* is interpreted as vile actions committed by humans that occur externally or actions that are not inherently part of the individual (not embedded in their being), such as acts of destruction, theft, or rape. On the other hand, *al-munkar* is explained as damage that originates internally, within the human self, such as desires (*nafs*) or something inherent in human nature, like the intuition of the heart. This interpretation highlights the interconnectedness between external actions and internal states, emphasizing that both external and internal forms of corruption must be addressed in maintaining harmony with the self, society, and the environment (Al-Qusyairi, 2015).

## Charles Sanders Peirce's Semiotics

Charles Sanders Peirce, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States, on September 10, made a significant contribution to semiotics theory. Peirce is renowned for his triadic concept and trichotomy theory. However, his works are inseparable from logic and his position as a philosopher, being regarded as one of the founding figures of pragmatism (Hurley, 2023; Ramadhan et al., 2024).

Peirce grew up in an intellectual family; his father, Benjamin Peirce, was a renowned mathematician. After completing his education at Harvard, Peirce developed thoughts that combined logic, mathematics, philosophy, and semantics. One of his most

important contributions is his theory of semiotics, where he introduced the concept of the sign and how meaning is formed through the relationship between the sign, the object, and the interpretant.

Although his contributions are recognized as foundational to the development of modern philosophy, Peirce lived a life marked by financial and social challenges, leading to much of his work being widely acknowledged only posthumously (Baihaqi, 2021). The triadic model of Charles Sanders Peirce is a theory that explains the process of meaning-making through the relationship of three main elements in semiotics: the sign, the object, and the interpretant. According to Peirce, a sign is something that represents or refers to a specific object, either directly or indirectly. The object is the reality or entity referred to by the sign, which can be a concept, thing, or phenomenon. Meanwhile, the interpretant is the understanding or meaning generated in someone's mind when they interact with the sign.

This model demonstrates that meaning is not the result of a direct relationship between the sign and the object but rather the outcome of an interpretive process involving human comprehension. Peirce's triadic approach distinguishes his theory from other semiotic theories and provides a more dynamic framework for understanding how signs function in constructing communication and understanding (Namira, 2024).

x = ground

y = object

xy = interpretant
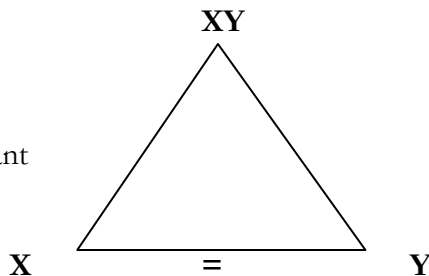


**Picture 01.** Triadic Semiotika Pierce

In Peirce's semiotics, each aspect is divided into Secondness and Thirdness. In Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, the

process of meaning-making for a sign (sign) is explained through its connection to three fundamental ontological categories: Firstness, Secondness, and Thirdness.

- **Firstness** refers to pure qualities that are directly present without any connection to other elements, such as the intrinsic nature of a sign before it interacts with an object or interpretant. For example, the red color on a stop sign represents a perceptual quality that exists independently.
- **Secondness** involves the concrete relationship or interaction between the sign and the object it refers to. At this stage, there is a tangible duality, such as when the red color on the stop sign directly signifies the action or command to stop.
- **Thirdness** encompasses the mediation process, in which the sign and the object are understood through interpretation involving human experience and knowledge. For example, the interpretation that the stop sign requires drivers to stop their vehicles is the result of *Thirdness*.

Thus, this theory explains that meaning is dynamic and involves pure quality (*firstness*), causal relationships (*secondness*), and interpretive mediation processes (*thirdness*), providing a comprehensive foundation for understanding the process of signs and their meanings (Baihaqi, 2021).

## The Application of Charles Sanders Peirce's Theory to the Ecosufistic Interpretation of the Meanings of *Fah}shā'* and *Munkar*

The terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar* in the Qur'an are often mentioned together, although in some verses, these two terms are explained separately. Their mention together in a single verse can be found in three places: QS. Al-Ankabūt (29): 45, QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21, and QS. Al-Nahl (16): 90. Meanwhile, the term Fah}shā', mentioned separately in the Qur'an, appears 13 times in various forms, including its root word and variations. This term refers to

reprehensible actions, immorality, or sins that clearly contradict moral values or religious teachings. On the other hand, the term *munkar* is mentioned 16 times, referring to bad, evil deeds that contradict common sense or religious teachings and are socially unacceptable (Arabi, 1999; Namira, 2024).

Verses that independently mention the term Fah}shā' include: QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 169 & 268, QS. Al-A'rāf (7): 28 & 33, QS. Al-Isrā' (17): 32, QS. Al-Nūr (24): 30, QS. Al-Mumtahanah (60): 12, and QS. Al-Mā'idah (5): 90. Meanwhile, the term *munkar* appears in the Qur'an in the following verses: QS. Ali Imrān (3): 104 & 110, QS. Al-A'rāf (7): 157, QS. Al-Taubah (9): 67 & 71, QS. Al-Haj (22): 41, QS. Luqmān (31): 17, QS. Al-Mumtahanah (60): 12, QS. Al-Nisā' (4): 148, QS. Al-Mā'idah (5): 79, QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21, QS. Al-Hadīd (57): 27, and QS. Hūd (11): 78 & 116.

## The Meaning of *Faḥshā'* and *Munkar* as Worldly Desires and the Self (*Al-Nafs*), *QS. Al-Ankabūt* (29): 45:

In Peirce's semiotics, the terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar* serve as the **representamen**, while the **object** is the verse from Surah Al-Ankabut (29:45), which reads:

اُتْلُ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَاَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ اِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاۤءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَذِكْرُ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ

*"Recite, [O Muhammad], what has been revealed to you of the Book and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality (faḥshā') and wrongdoing (munkar). And the remembrance of Allah is greater. And Allah knows that which you do".*

The interpretation (**interpretant**) of this verse in light of Peirce's triadic model allows for various layers of meaning:

ويقال الفحشاء هي الدنيا، والمنكر هو النفس. ويقال الفحشاء هي المعاصي، والمنكر هو الحظوظ. ويقال الفحشاء الأعمال، والمنكر حسبان النجاة بها، وقيل

ملاحظته الأعواض عليها، والسرور والفرح بمدح الناس لها. ويقال الفحشاء رؤيتها، والمنكر طلب العوض عليها.

It is said that *faḥshā'* represents the worldly life (dunyā), while *munkar* represents the self (nafs).

o This suggests that *faḥshā'* symbolizes worldly temptations that lead individuals astray into materialistic desires, ignoring spiritual guidance.

o Meanwhile, *munkar* reflects the inclinations of the self, which tend to follow desires and whims without considering ethical principles or spiritual teachings.

Some interpret *faḥshā'* as sinful actions (ma'āṣī), while *munkar* relates to personal indulgences (ḥuẓūẓ).

o In this sense, *faḥshā'* refers to specific immoral deeds, while *munkar* signifies the selfish pursuits that divert focus from spiritual goals.

Others explain *faḥshā'* as harmful or immoral acts, while *munkar* is the assumption that such deeds can secure salvation or rewards in the afterlife.

o This emphasizes the misguided belief that certain actions, though unethical, might lead to divine rewards, thus reinforcing the importance of aligning one's intentions with divine will.

Another perspective sees *faḥshā'* as the recognition of one's deeds, while *munkar* is the expectation of compensation or reward for them.

o This highlights the danger of performing good deeds for worldly praise or material gain rather than for sincere devotion to Allah.

These interpretations emphasize the dynamic interplay between *faḥshā'* (external temptations) and *munkar* (internal desires), illustrating how they can influence human behavior and spiritual orientation. Within an ecosufistic framework, these concepts could further extend to the ethical responsibilities humans have toward

the environment and their role as stewards (*khalīfah*) of the Earth. This interpretation calls for a balance between worldly life and spiritual growth, ensuring that neither desire for material gains (*faḥshā'*) nor selfishness (*munkar*) disrupts the harmony of existence (Al-Qusyairi, 2015).

Additionally, *faḥshā'* can also be interpreted as the perception of immoral actions, while *munkar* refers to the desire to receive a reward or compensation for those actions. In another interpretation, *faḥshā'* refers to the immoral deeds that are apparent in life, while *munkar* is the joy or pride one feels when receiving a reward or praise from others for those deeds, even if the actions themselves are neither right nor wrong. All of these interpretations reflect a broader understanding of *faḥshā'* and *munkar*, which are not only limited to actions or deeds, but also encompass psychological and social aspects that influence a person's relationship with themselves and their surrounding environment (Kusuma & Laili, 2021; Namira, 2024).

In ecosufistic interpretation, the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* are not only understood as immoral and reprehensible actions, as they are commonly interpreted. Al-Qushairī, in his book, states that *faḥshā'* refers to 'ard (destructive behavior), while *munkar* refers to al-nafs (the self). In the context of verses related to prayer, this meaning suggests that prayer serves to prevent immoral actions arising from within the human self, as well as actions that result from human behavior in the world. This verse specifically indicates that *faḥshā'* and *munkar* are not confined to the scope of prayer, as is often conventionally interpreted. This interpretation has broadened, linking spirituality with ecology, encompassing the impact of human actions on the environment (Al-Qusyairi, 2015).

Al-Ankabūt (29): 45



Faḥshā' wa al-Munkar       The World and the Self (Al-Nafs)
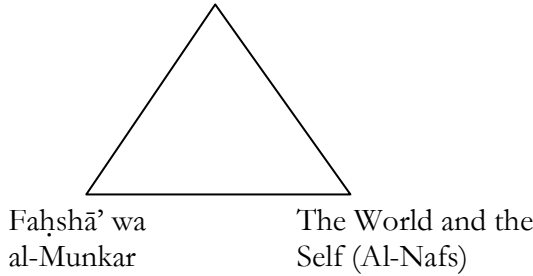
**Picture 02.** Triadic Charles Sanders Pierce

## The meaning of *Faḥshā'* and *Munkar* as Everything that is Extremely Evil and Everything Prohibited by Sharia, QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعْ خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ مَا زَكَا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَبَدًا وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُزَكِّي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

*"O you who have believed, do not follow the footsteps of Satan. And whoever follows the footsteps of Satan, indeed, he enjoins immorality (faḥshā') and wrongdoing (munkar). And if not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, not one of you would have been pure, ever, but Allah purifies whom He wills, and Allah is Hearing and Knowing".*

In his work Ṣafwah al-Tafāsir, Imam Muhammad ʿAlī al-Ṣābunī explains that the term *faḥshā'* refers to everything that is extremely evil, namely actions that are clearly contrary to moral norms and religious teachings. Meanwhile, *al-munkar* is interpreted as everything prohibited by Sharia or actions that are not accepted by reason and religious teachings. According to al-Sabuni, *al-faḥshā'* is associated with actions that directly damage social and moral order, while *al-munkar* refers to all forms of actions that are rejected by the two primary sources of religion, namely reason and revelation (Al-Sabuniy, 1981).
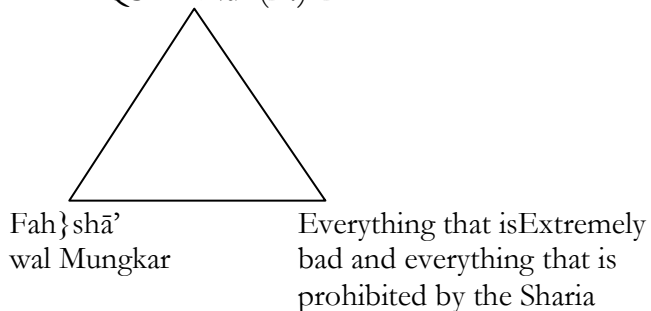
Imam Al-Ghazali, in his interpretation, highlights that the terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar* hold profound significance concerning moral and spiritual understanding in Islamic teachings. Referring to the verse in Al-Nūr (24): 21:

*"And if it were not for the favor of Allah upon you and His mercy, and because Allah is Most Compassionate, Most Merciful".*

This verse underscores the importance of purity in behavior within social life. In the context of *faḥshā'*, Al-Ghazali explains that it encompasses all forms of actions that lead to moral and social corruption, such as vile deeds, dishonesty, and destructive behavior. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that such actions can disrupt societal order and harm the balance between the spiritual and social (environmental) dimensions.

In the context of *munkar*, Al-Ghazālī links it to actions that are explicitly contrary to religious teachings and sound reason. *Munkar* refers to anything that is rejected by Sharia because it undermines the harmony of human relationships with God and with fellow beings. Al-Ghazālī adds that every individual must avoid *faḥshā'* and *munkar* in daily life, as these two elements have the potential to hinder a healthy relationship with Allah and to harm society as a whole. Therefore, awareness of moral errors must be cultivated within each individual as part of the effort to achieve spiritual perfection (Gufron & A. Hambali, 2022).

QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21

Fah}shā' wal Mungkar

Everything that isExtremely bad and everything that is prohibited by the Sharia

**Picture 03.** Triadic charles sanders pierce

The meaning of the terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar* as something that reaches an extreme level and something rejected by innate human nature.
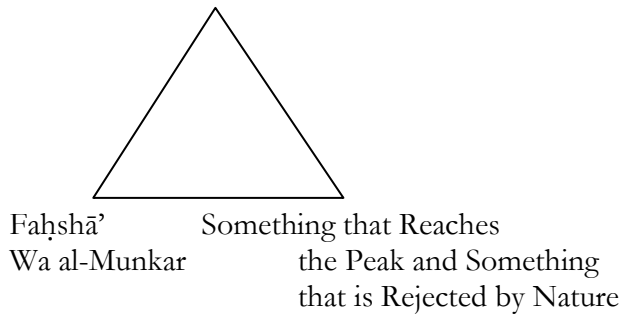
**QS. Al-Nahl (16) :90:**

اِنَّ اللهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْاِحْسَانِ وَاِيْتَاۤئِ ذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَيَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاۤءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ

*"Indeed, Allah commands justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives and forbids immorality (faḥshā'), wrongdoing (munkar), and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded".*

In the Tafsir of Ibn Kathir, *faḥshā'* and *munkar* are explained in the context of ethics as all forms of bad actions that are prohibited, whether in speech, deeds, or behavior that disrupt moral order. Ibn Kathir states, "أي ينهى عن كل قبيح من قول أو فعل أو عمل", which means that *faḥshā'* refers to all kinds of evil encompassing words, deeds, and wrongful or reprehensible actions, such as adultery. This indicates that *faḥshā'* includes anything that prevents a person from achieving goodness and perfection, both in social behavior and in their spiritual relationship with Allah.

This understanding emphasizes the importance of upholding moral ethics in daily life and avoiding actions that could harm the social and spiritual order (Al-Sabuniy, 1981). Meanwhile, in the Tafsir Al-Wajiz, this verse explains actions that go beyond mere justice (*'adl*); it emphasizes providing any form of assistance, whether material or non-material, sincerely and wholeheartedly, to relatives—whether they are close family, distant relatives, or even anyone in need (Online, 2022). Additionally, Allah forbids all His servants from committing despicable acts that are condemned in the eyes of religion, such as adultery and murder; from engaging in mungkar—actions that contradict moral and religious values as well as established customs; and from fostering hostility toward others, which stems from acts of oppression and abuse(Al-Sabuniy, 1981).
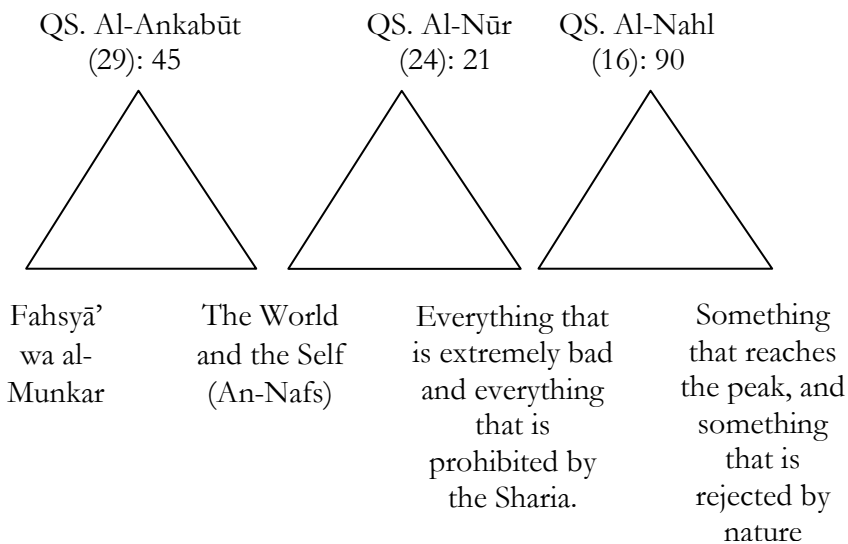
Al-Nahl (16): 90

Faḥshā'
Wa al-Munkar

Something that Reaches
the Peak and Something
that is Rejected by Nature

**Picture 04.** Triadic Charles sanders pierce

From the explanation above, the author divides the meaning of *al-faḥshā'* into two parts:

**External *al-Faḥshā'*.** This refers to everything that occurs outside the human body. As interpreted by Al-Qushayri, it includes the worldly realm and all forms of evil deeds, such as adultery, murder, robbery, environmental destruction, and any other reprehensible acts. **Internal *al-munkar*.** This pertains to the internal aspects of humans, namely the heart. It includes everything that is rejected by the innate nature of creation (*fitrah*), such as envy, jealousy, and shirk, which are referred to as *faḥshā'* in Surah Al-A'raf (7:28).

In other verses, the explanation of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* encompasses the meanings found in the three verses above, referring to major sins and corruption, as stated in QS. Al-Ankabūt (29) :45 and Al-A'rāf (7): 28 (major sins), including shirk. It also refers to adultery, as highlighted in QS. Al-Nahl (16): 90, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 169, and QS. Al-Nisā' (4): 15, 19, 25. Furthermore, it includes social sins such as spreading false news (hoaxes), shirk, and acts that harm societal harmony.

QS. Al-Ankabūt (29): 45     QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21     QS. Al-Nahl (16): 90

| Fahsyā' wa al-Munkar | The World and the Self (An-Nafs) | Everything that is extremely bad and everything that is prohibited by the Sharia. | Something that reaches the peak, and something that is rejected by nature |

**Picture 05.** All triadic Charles sandes pierce

From the explanation above, the eco-sufistic approach and Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotics are used to expand the meanings of the terms *faḥshā'* and *munkar*, which are traditionally interpreted in moral and social contexts, making them more relevant to ecological and spiritual dimensions.

**Expansion of Meaning in the Context of Eco-Sufism**

*Faḥshā'* includes all forms of damage caused by humans to the environment, such as environmental destruction, pollution, and ecological crimes. On the other hand, *munkar* refers to internal human corruption, such as selfishness, envy, and behaviors that contradict human nature (*fitrah*).

This perspective highlights that these two terms involve human responsibility not only toward themselves but also toward the environment as part of worship to Allah.

Using Peirce's triadic theory (sign, object, and interpretant), the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* can be analyzed more deeply:

- As a **sign**, these terms function to represent bad behavior.
- As an **object**, they are connected to Quranic verses that describe moral and environmental corruption.
- As an **interpretant**, their meanings evolve into a call for preserving morality and ecology.

This approach integrates moral, spiritual, and ecological awareness, emphasizing the interconnectedness of human actions, spiritual responsibility, and environmental stewardship.

### QS. Al-Ankabūt (29) :45:

اُتْلُ مَآ اُوْحِيَ اِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتٰبِ وَاَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ ۗ اِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ

*"Recite what has been revealed to you of the Book (the Qur'an) and establish prayer. Indeed, prayer restrains from immoral (faḥshā') and wicked (munkar) behavior".*

- **Faḥshā' as Interpretant**: A representation of worldly temptations that lead humans to external destruction, such as destructive acts toward nature and immoral behavior.
- **Munkar as Interpretant**: Internal corruption stemming from human desires, such as selfishness, greed, or actions opposing spiritual values (Al-Qusyairi, 2015).
- **Interpretant**: This verse highlights that prayer plays a preventive role against *faḥshā'* (external corruption) and *munkar* (internal corruption), thereby fostering harmony between humans, their external environment, and their inner selves.

### QS. Al-Nūr (24): 21:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَّتَّبِعْ خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ فَاِنَّهٗ يَأْمُرُ بِالْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللّٰهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهٗ مَا زَكٰى مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ اَحَدٍ اَبَدًاۙ وَّلٰكِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُزَكِّيْ مَنْ يَّشَآءُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ سَمِيْعٌ عَلِيْمٌ

*"O you who believe, do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Whoever follows the footsteps of Satan—indeed, he commands immoral (faḥshā') and wicked (munkar) deeds".*

- **Faḥshā' as Interpretant**: All extremely immoral or reprehensible actions, such as adultery, vulgar behavior, or anything that disrupts the social order.
- **Munkar as Interpretant**: Behaviors that contradict Sharia and sound reason, such as hypocrisy or actions that oppose religious values (Al-Sabuniy, 1981).
- **Interpretant**: This verse emphasizes that *faḥshā'* represents external temptations leading to disgraceful actions, while *munkar* represents internal states arising from Satan's influence, steering humans away from their innate nature (*fitrah*) and Allah's guidance.

**QS. Al-Nahl (16): 90:**

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْاِحْسَانِ وَاِيْتَاۤئِ ذِى الْقُرْبٰى وَيَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاۤءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ

*"Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids immorality (faḥshā'), wickedness (munkar), and oppression".*

- **Faḥshā' as Interpretant**: All reprehensible deeds that cause destruction, including speech, actions, or immoral behavior, encompassing moral violations and social sins.
- **Munkar as Interpretant**: Matters that contradict human nature (*fitrah*), such as injustice, oppression, or actions that violate religious and cultural norms (Al-Sabuniy, 1981).
- **Interpretant**: This verse highlights that *faḥshā'* represents actions that reach the peak of wickedness, while *munkar* refers to anything rejected by human *fitrah* and religious principles.


**General Meaning of Interpretant from the Three Verses**
- **Faḥshā'**: Interpreted as external corruption, covering all forms of destructive actions toward the environment, morality, and social harmony.

- **Munkar**: Interpreted as internal corruption stemming from human desires and ego, opposing *fitrah* and religious teachings.

Together, these concepts emphasize human responsibility in maintaining spiritual, social, and ecological balance. This integrated understanding reinforces that avoiding *faḥshā'* and *munkar* is not only about personal morality but also about broader social and environmental stewardship as part of worship to Allah.

## Conclusion

This study suggests that the meanings of *faḥshā'* and *munkar* can be broadened within the framework of eco-sufism to include not just moral and social harm, but also ecological damage. By applying Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, these terms are interpreted not merely as prohibitions against immoral actions, but also as representations of human responsibility toward the environment. *faḥshā'* encompasses harmful actions outside of human beings, such as the exploitation and destruction of nature. On the other hand, *munkar* refers to the internal corruption within humans, such as selfishness and actions that oppose their natural disposition (*fitrah*).

This expanded interpretation highlights the deep ecological relevance of the Quranic verses concerning *faḥshā'* and *munkar*, reinforcing the importance of these concepts in guiding ethical behavior. The understanding of these terms provides a broader foundation for social and ecological ethics within Islam, encouraging a more responsible relationship with both the environment and one's inner spiritual state. By integrating ecological awareness into the concepts of moral and spiritual corruption, this approach offers a comprehensive ethical framework rooted in Islamic teachings.

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