

THE CONCEPT OF AL-FISQ / AL-FAASIQ IN THE QURAN AND ITS HISTORICAL ADVENTURE OF TRANSFORMATION

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ÖZET

Gerek Kur'ân'da gerekse İslâm düşünce tarihinde en sık kullanılan kavramlardan biri de şüphesiz fisk (الفسق) kelimesidir. Kur'ân-ı Kerim'in pek çok âyetinde bu kelimenin türevleri kullanılmış olup, bunların büyük bir çoğunluğunda muhatap kâfir, müşrik ve münâfiklardır. Bununla birlikte fisk kelimesi zaman zaman müslümanların bazı davranışları hakkında da söz konusu edilmiştir. Mezhepler Tarihi'ne baktığımızda ise fisk kavramının neredeyse büyük günahlarla özdeşleştirildiğini ve mürtekib-i kebire (büyük günah sahibi) için fâsık sözcüğünün kullanılmaya başlandığını görmekteyiz. Bu bağlamda ilerleyen dönemde fisk kavramında anlam daralması meydana geldiğini söylememiz mümkün gözükmemektedir. Hadis Usûlü sahasına geldiğimizde de benzer bir durum karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Nitekim cerh-ta'dil alanında yazılmış pek çok kaynakta da fâsık râvi tabiri, büyük günah işleyen kişiler ve bid'at sahipleri hakkında kullanılmıştır. Bu makalede, fisk kavramının geçirdiği bu serüven hakkında bilgi verilmeye çalışılmıştır.

Anahtar sözcükler- Fısk, fâsık, fisku'r-râvî, bid'at, mürtekib-i kebire, Kur'ân, hadis, Sünnet, Mezhepler Tarihi, Hadis Usûlü

ABSTRACT

One of the most frequently used concepts both in the Quran and the Islamic intellectual history is, undoubtedly, the concept of "al-fisq" (الفسق) (disobedience, transgression). Derivatives of this word are used in many verses of the Quran, of which vast majority is associated with disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites. However, the word of "al-fisq" has also been used, from time to time, for certain behaviors of Muslims. When we look at the History of Islamic Sects (al-Mazâhib), we notice that the concept of al-fisq was almost associated with the major sins (*al-kabaair*) and that the word "al-faasiq" (disobedient person, transgressor) was often used for the perpetrator of major sins (*al-murtakib al-kabeerah*). In this sense, we can say that a "narrowing" has occurred in the meaning of the word "al-fisq" during the subsequent periods. When we consider the field of Methodology of Hadith, we also come across to a similar situation. Indeed, the expression of a "faasiq narrator" has been used for the perpetrators of major sins and for heterodox persons (al-mubtadi') in many sources written on "al-Jarh and al-Ta'dil" field. In this article, an attempt is made to provide information on the adventure which the concept of "al-fisq" has experienced throughout Islamic history.

Keywords: al-Fisq (disobedience), al-faasiq (disobedient), fisq al-rawi (narrator's depravity), bid'ah (heresy), al-murtakib al-kabeerah (perpetrator of major sins), Quran, Hadith, Sunnah, History of Islamic Sects (al-Mazaahib), Hadith Methodology

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Introduction

The concept of “al-fisq” (disobedience) is derived from the root “f-s-q” فسق in Arabic, which is used in the Quran many times, both in verbal forms, in adjectival forms and as singular / plural nouns. The widespread use of this word in the Quran has also found a similar response in Hadith Methodology and History, whereby it has consequently been one of the most widely used terms. Especially the holy verse in Chapter 49, Hujurât, reading:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنْ جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَنْ تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْحَبُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

“O you who believe! If a *faasiq* (wicked person) comes to you with an important information, investigate it thoroughly (whether it is correct or not) lest you should harm a people in ignorance, then become regretful over what you have done,” (Hujurât, 49/6) has played a decisive role in using “al-fisq” as a reason to reject a hadith narrator. As a result, the condition to stay away from “al-fisq” was required of the hadith narrators.

Now, taking into account grammatical usages of the word “f-s-q” such as verb, infinitive, active participle and similar, we want to draw attention to these usages.

The verb “fasaqa” (فَسَقَ) in dictionary has meanings such as “of fresh dates, splitting its shell to go out” (Azharî, 1384/1964, VIII, 414; Ibn Fâris, 1423/2002, IV, 502; Jawharî, 1410/1990, I, 1543) and “to depart from / to disobey Allah’s commandments, to act sinfully or immorally”. (Farâhîdî, no date of publication, V, 82; Azharî, 1384/1964, VIII, 414; Jawharî, 1410/1990, I, 1543; Askarî, no date of publication, p. 230) According to the statement by **Raghib al-Asfehaani** (death around 425/1034), when this verb is used for someone, it means “that person strays away from the circle / control of the Sharia”. In addition, “al-fisq” is a more general expression than “kufr” (disbelief); at this point, although it does not make any difference whether the sins are many or few in number for the use of the word “al-fisq”, it is more common to use it for plurality of sins. Generally, a person who, after accepting and confessing the precepts of the religion (Sharia), violates or offends all or part of these rules is called “al-faasiq” (disobedient). The word “al-faasiq” is also used for a person who is radically unbeliever because he has also violated the order to obey Allah, which a sound mind and an intact human nature is normally expected to submit.

Raghib al-Asfehaani, showing the Quran verse: “*Is the ‘mu’min’ (faithful) like the ‘al-faasiq’?*” (Sajda, 32 /18) as an example, takes attention to the fact that the words “mu’min” (مُؤْمِنٌ) and “al-faasiq” (believer and disobedient) are used as the opposite of each other; he also states that the word “al-faasiq” (فَاسِقٌ) is more general than “kaafir” (كَافِرٌ) (unbeliever), and the word “zaalim” (ظَالِمٌ) (wrongdoer) is more general than “al-faasiq” (Raghib al-Asfehaani, no date of publication, I, 491-492. Also see Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 302). Accordingly, there is the relation of “general – special” between the words “kaafir”– “al-faasiq”– “zaalim”, and thus, we can say that, in terms of scope, “al-faasiq” stands somewhere between “kaafir” and “zaalim”.

The word “feseqa” (فَسَقَ) is also given the meaning of “fecera” (فَجَرَ) (to sin / commit adultery). (Jawharî, 1410/1990, I, 1543. Also in a meaning close the one here “fâcira” (فَاجِرَةٌ) (dissolute woman) and for women the word “fawâsiq” (فَوَاسِقٌ) (little dissolute) is used. See Ibn Seedah, no date of publication, VI, 242; Ibn Manzûr, no date

of publication, I, 3414. Also there is a hadith narrated from the Prophet (pbuh) as *“How will be your state when your women become **“fâsiq” (disobedient/dissolute)!”***. See Bukhârî, no date of publication, VIII, 441 (no: 3630, in the biography of Ibn Abbas al-Himyârî).). As we understand from the assessments of Arab linguist **Abu Hilal al-Askari** (death after 400/1009), there is both a different tone of meaning and a common point between the words “al-fisq” and “fucuur” (فُجُورٌ) (debauchery). Namely, while al-fisq means “to forsake the submission to Allah by perpetrating major sins”, fucuur means “to rapidly fall on sins and to act unrestrained morally / to be indifferent regarding religious precepts”. In this sense, there is a subtle difference / nuance between the two words. In contrast, taking into account that the committer of *saghair* (minor sins) can not be called as a “faajir” (فاجر) (dissolute person), it can be said that both “faasiq” and “faajir” unite in a common point of “perpetrating major sins.” (For assessments, see Askarî, no date of publication, p. 231.)

In addition, Abu Hilal al-Askari argues that the verb “go forth” contained in the meaning of “fisq” فِسْقٌ is not of an ordinary “going out” but it expresses one which is an unwanted / undesired / nasty action, and that it is precisely this reason that the mouse coming out from its niche for mischief is called “fuvaysiqa” (فويسقة) in order to emphasize this particular action. Also according to him, there is some depravity / disorder meaning in the emergence of fresh palm from its shell (considering its decay), and there is a similar undesired depravity / disorder meaning in departing from submission to Allah through major sins (*al-kabeerah*), which is also described with the concept of “fisq”. (Askarî, no date of publication, p. 230. Regarding the use of “fuveysiqa” (little / smallish / tiny fâsiq), the diminutive form of “fâsiqa”, for the mouse as it comes out from its niche and disturbs and frightens people, also see Farâhîdî, no date of publication, V, 82; Azharî, 1384/1964, VIII, 414; Firûzâbâdî, 1399/1979, III, 268.

According to Raghîb al-Asfehaani, the reason why the mouse is called “fuveysiqa” is that it lives in dirt and fisq (filth), or according to another view, it repeatedly enters and exits from its niche. Therefore, the Prophet (pbuh) said: *“Kill the mouse; because it damages water vessel (by turning over wax / oil lamp, etc.), it causes to burn the house together with the contents.”* (See Raghîb al-Asfehaani, no date of publication, I, 492). The information on this hadith from the Prophet (pbuh) will be given in the section where we deal with the word “fisq” in its usage in hadiths.

The narration on the killing of mice has been the subject to the interpretation of some dreams as well. According to Damîrî (death 808/1405), the Egyptians famous Hadith and Fiqh (Islamic Law) scholar, and the author of animal encyclopedia, the mouse dreamt means a fâsiq woman (of poor moral, dissolute); which is based on the above narration about the killing of “fuveysiqa” (See Damîrî, no date of publication, II, 61). We do not understand how the said narration can be used in the interpretation of the mouse dreamt as a fâsiq woman.) In other words, there is a “going out as a result of certain deterioration” in all of these usages, according to al-Askari.

According to the findings of the linguist scholar and poetry narrator **Ibnu'l-A'râbî** (death 231/846), the active participle of the word “feseqa” is “faasiq” فاسيقٌ and although this word is a true Arabic word, it has never been heard and encountered in the literature and poem of the Jaahiliyya (Ignorance Period), which is indeed an astonishing

situation (Jawharî, 1410/1990, I, 1543; Ibn Fâris, 1423/2002, IV, 502; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Râzî, 1408/1987, p. 503; Fîrûzâbâdî, 1399/1979, III, 268.

Raghib al-Asfehaani reports the statement of Ibn al-A'râbî we conveyed here as follows; "It has never been heard that the word "fâsiq" is used for characteristics of people; but they have used this word for the separation of the fresh dates from its shell." (Raghib al-Asfehaani, no date of publication, I, 492. Also see Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 302.). **Murtazaa az-Zabîdî** (death 1205/1791) quotes a saying from one of the linguist scholars of his teachers, whose name does not specify. Accordingly, the word "fisq" is one used in the Islamic terminology; that is, it is one specific to Muslims, and it is not known to have been used before in the meaning in which it has gained a widespread usage. Although its original meaning is "go forth", this word has been the subject of Islamic definitions and in Sharia law (Fiqh), it has transformed a new genuine and customary meaning. (Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 304. For the considerations on the status of the word "fisq" before the Quran period, see also Öge, 2000, p. 2-3.) In such a case, we should understand from these determinations that it was not that there were not any words derived from the word فسق "f-s-q" during the Jaahiliyya but only that "faasiq" had not been used for nasty attributes of the people.

According to **Jurjaanî** (death 816/1413), "faasiq" means a person who utters and believes the Tawheed expression (*kalematu's-shahadat*) but does not act accordingly." (Jurjaanî, 1405, p. 211).

The word "fusûq" فسوق also means go forth, and according to **Abu'l-Haytham** (d.?), this act of going forth may sometimes manifest itself in the form of a (any) sin or sometimes as a polytheism (*shirk*). (Azherî, 1384/1964, VIII, 414; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 303). **İbn Manzuur** (death 711/1311) thinks that the word "fusuuq" means "to abandon the religion" while **Tahânawî/Thânawî** (v. 1158/1745) suggests that it has the meanings "to stray away from the right path, to forsake the submission to Allah by perpetrating major sins", and "to transgress the boundary defined by Sharia" (Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Tahânawî/Thânawî, 1996, I, 1273).

As a general assessment, it can be pointed out that while the word "al-fisq" was often used for plants and animals during pre-Islamic period (in the sense of "coming out" such as date splitting and emerging out from its shell, chick going forth from the egg, germination of the sees, mouse, etc..), it has gained a more specific sense with Islam in the meanings of "stray away from the right path, disobey Allah's commandments, violate the precepts of Islam", and consequently, the word "al-fisq" itself and its derivatives have been used for both pagans, Jews, Christians and hypocrites, and for Muslims who act contrary to the precepts of the religion (Şafak, 1996, XIII, 37).

Concept of Fisq and Its Derivatives in the Quran

In the Quran, the concept of fisq is mentioned in 7 places in its verbal noun form "fisq" (فسق) / "fusuuq" (فسوق), 10 places as a conjugated verb "fasaqa" (فسق) and in 37 places as an active participle adjective "faasiq" (فاسق) as an attribute of a person (committer of fisq). It is used more comprehensively than the word "kufr" (disbelief),

meaning as “the opposite of faith” and as “the opposite of obedience to religious precepts” in other verses, with a close association with the terms “guidance” and “straying”. However, we notice that in the 7 verses of the Quran in which the words *fisq* / *fusuq* are used, Muslims are addressed and major sins except “shirk” and disbelief such as “eating dead animals, blood, flesh of swine, and flesh of animals slaughtered / dedicated for other than Allah; seeking fortune by divining arrows; harming the counter party in debt relations; disobedience to the Prophet (pbuh); mocking with the believers and calling them with nicknames, and so on” are intended with the concept of “*fisq*” (Şafak, 1996, s. 37. For a study listing the verses according to their order of revelation, see Öge, 2000, p. 108-124).

In a general view, it is possible to summarize the beliefs / behaviors called “*fisq*” in the Quran under two headings as follows:

- **“those associate with belief”**; such as disbelief, denial, oppression, polytheism, neglect, depravity, straying, not ruling with which Allah has revealed, hypocrisy, discord etc.

- **“those associate with practices/deeds”**; such as lying, eating flesh of animals slaughtered without mentioning Allah’s name, disloyalty to the promise made, harming the writer clerk and the witness, debauchery, dissolute life (pertness and lust), libertine, homosexuality, certain actions contrary to the spirit of pilgrimage, and calling people with nicknames (For detailed information, see Hızarcı, 2002, p. 11-51).

Regarding the usage examples of the verbal noun of “*fisq*” and its derivatives in the Quran, **Ibn Seedah** (death 458/1066) makes the following comments on the word “*fusuq*” in the verse (بَشِّرِ الْإِسْمَ الْفُسُوقَ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ) “*How evil is the name of fusuq (disobedience) after faith!*” (Hujurât, 49/11): “That is, what evil thing is your calling a person as ‘O Jews! O Christian!’ after such person has become a believer. In other words, it means, do not condemn an individual with the previous disbelief. It is also likely that any nickname which a person does not welcome may have been intended in this verse. What is expected of a believer is that he should call his brother only with the names which the latter likes best.” (The author quotes this as a comment by al-Zajjâj. See Ibn Seedah, no date of publication, VI, 242; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 303).

The statement *فَفَسَقَ عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ* was used also about Satan in the Quran (Farâhîdî, no date of publication, V, 82; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414). The famous Arab linguists **Yahya b. Zeyaad al-Farraa** (death 207/822) and **Abu’l-Abbas** (v.?), understand and interpret this holy verse as “*He departed from the command of his Lord*”; **Abu Ubaydah Ma’mar b. al-Musannaa** (death 209/824 ?) as “*He forsook the obedience to his Lord,*” and **al-Ahfesh** (There are a few persons who have been famous under the name of “al-Ahfesh” among Muslim Scholars such as al-Ahfesh al-Asgar, al-Ahfesh al-Dimashqî, al-Ahfesh al-Awsat, al-Ahfesh al-Akbar. The person of interest with our subject among these is probably the famous scholar of Basra Language School is al-Ahfesh al-Awsat (death 215/830 ?), who wrote such books on the Quran as *Ma’âni al-Quran*, *Kitâbu Ghareeb al-Quran*. For information, see Koçak, 1988, I, 526) as “*He rejected his Lord’s command.*” (Azharî, 1384/1964, VIII, 414; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 303).

The word *faasiq* in the following verse is clearly used as the opposite of the believer (that is, with a meaning of a disbeliever):

(أَفَمَنْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنًا كَمَنْ كَانَ فَاسِقًا لَا يَسْتَوُونَ) “Then, is one who is a mu’min (believer) like one who is defiantly *faasiq* (disobedient)? Certainly they are not equal.” (Sajdah, 32/18).

The fact that unbelievers are considered to be “faasiq” is expressed as follows in another verse: (وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ) “But whoever disbelieves after that - then those are the defiantly *faasiq*.” (Nour, 24/55). It is reminded in these verses that those unbelievers who commit the “fisq” action mentioned will go to Hell, as follows:

وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فَسَقُوا فَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ النَّارِ الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَكَذِّبُونَ

“But as for those who defiantly *fasaquu* (disobeyed), their refuge is the Fire. Every time they wish to emerge from it, they will be thrown into the Fire again while it is said to them, ‘Taste the punishment of the Fire which you denied before.’” (Sajdah, 32/20).

The reason why these persons have become “faasiq” is stated that they did not believe in the existence of the Hell (thus the Hereafter) / they denied it. The following verse also has the same meaning:

وَالَّذِينَ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا يَمَسُّهُمُ الْعَذَابُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ

“And for those who deny Our verses / revelations, the punishment will touch them for their defiant disobedience (*yafsuquun*)” (An‘âm, 6/49).

It would not be a mistake to say that the word “faasiq” in this holy verse is also used as opposite to the believer (mu’min): (وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ) “The truth is that, most of the people are “*faasiq*” / disobedient people.” (Mâ’idah, 5/49). Because, if we think this verse together with the verse, “And most of the people, even if you desire it eagerly, will not believe” (Yusuf, 12/103), we can draw such a conclusion. If most of the people are not going to believe and also most of them are “faasiq”, then naturally, this majority of unbelievers form the group of “faasiqs” and consequently the group “disbelievers / infidels”, which leads to the conclusion that “fisq” is the opposite of faith, at least with respect to belief.

The verse in Chapter 9, Tawbah, (إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ) “Verily, the hypocrites are the defiantly disobedient ones (*faasiquun*)” (Tawbah, 9/67) shows very clearly that the hypocrites are also among the disobedient crowd.

We should keep in mind that the wording “fisq” used for unbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites is also used for sinful Muslims, although not very common as the others. Indeed, the sources reporting the reason of revelation of the verse we quoted at the beginning of this article, “O you who believe! If a *faasiq* (wicked person) comes to you with an important information, investigate it thoroughly.” (Hujurât, 49/6) are almost in consensus that it was revealed about al-Waled b. Ukba b. Abu Muayt (For detailed information about it, see Ibn Kâni‘, 1418, III, 180 (number: 1155); Mizzî, 1400/1980, XXXI, 53-60 (number: 6723); Ibn Hacar, 1412/1992, VI, 614-617 (number: 9153).), who had been assigned by the Prophet (pbuh) to the tribe of Sons of Mustaliq to collect Zakat (Alms). (There are arguments that the reason of revelation of the verse mentioned here was not al-Waled b. Ukba b. Abû Muayt. See Öge, 2000, p. 57-61.). But al-Waled fears and becomes anxious that they would kill him due to some previous disagreement with a person in that tribe, and returns without collecting the Zakat; moreover, he also claims that the tribe has abandoned Islam and rejected to submit Zakat. Believing this, the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions started to make

preparation for war in anger. After a while, the related verses were revealed and the situation was clarified (For example, see Tabarî, 1420/2000, XXII, 286-288; Zamahşarî, VI, 370, no date of publication, I-VII; Ibn Katheer, 1401, IV, 209). al-Waled b. Ukba is the brother of Othman bin Affan of the same mother and is known to submit Muslim on the day of the conquest of Mecca. In that case, if we accept the widespread opinion that the word “faasiq” in the verse was revealed about him, then this would mean accepting that the word “fisq” could be used for some Muslims, apart from unbelievers and hypocrites.

Also, the word “fusuuq” was used in the verse on Hajj (Pilgrimage) for Muslims performing their Hajj tasks: “*Hajj is [during] well-known months, so whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by ihraam], there must be for him no sexual relations, no fusuuq (disobedience) and no disputing during Hajj.*” (Baqarah, 2/197. For considerations on the meanings of fusûq in this verse, see Öge, 2000, p. 77.).

At this point, we ought to remind also the verse (An‘âm, 6/121), (وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ) “*And do not eat of that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed, it is grave fisq (disobedience).*” The order here is to the believers as well. Indeed, Abu Abdellah al-Bukhari (death 256/870), in a section title dealing with this verse, examines the issue of saying “Bismillâh / In the name of Allah” on the slaughtered animals and a person who deliberately abandons mentioning it; after quoting from Ibn Abbas as “*there is nothing wrong in forgetting to say ‘Bismillâh’ while slaughtering*”, the author provides his view ; “the person who forgets to say “Bismillâh” can not be called as “faasiq” (وَالنَّاسِي لَا يُسَمَّى فَاسِقًا) (Bukhârî, 1410/1990, Zabaaih wa al-Sayd (Slaughtering and Hunting), 15). This shows, according to al-Bukhari, that the persons blamed with fisq in the said verse are those believers who abandon saying “Bismillâh”, probably by forgetting but not intentionally.

Finally, we can also state that the word “fusuuq” mentioned in the verse introducing principles for writing debts was used for Muslims as well; “... *Let no scribe be harmed nor any witness. For if you do so, indeed, it is [grave] fusuuq in you...*” (Baqarah, 2/282).

In conclusion, it can be stated that the term “fisq / faasiq” is both a doctrinal (religious) and a moral concept according to the Quran, and that it is used for disbelievers, polytheists, hypocrites and Muslims (For detailed information on the use of this concept in the Quran and for semantic analyses, see Öge, 2000, p. 12-54. In addition, for the considerations regarding the meaning shift of this concept in the Quran and on the narrowing its meaning to be used as “committer of major sin” (murtakib al-kabîra) after termination of revelation, see also Öge, 2000, p. 80 and more. (The author thinks that such narrowing of the meaning and using it for major sins is a largely well-directed approach. See p. 87). On the other hands, there are some researchers arguing that this word may not be used for believer. For example, see Özdemir, 1998, p. 512 and more. (The author argues that, when the verses are taken into account, disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites can be qualified as “fâsiq” but a believer can never be called with this concept) (p. 515). In the section where we treated the verses, we have seen that this was also possible.).

At this point, we consider it worthwhile to briefly (For detailed information on the subject, see Tatlı, 2013, p. 21-54.) deal with the meanings assigned to the word “fisq” and its their derivatives in Hadits and in Islamic thought history:

Use of the Concepts Related with Fisq in the Hadiths

The word fisq and its derivatives (feseqa, faasiq, faasiqa, fawaasiq, fussaqa, fusuuq, fuwaysiqa etc..) mentioned in the hadiths and in the sayings of the companions / their followers (taabi'ûn) are used in the meaning of "committing major sins other than disbelief and polytheism, and violating religious orders and prohibitions" (Ibn al-Atheer, 2005, p. 693-694; Yavuz, 1995, XII, 202; Şafak, 1996, s. 37).

For example, in a *marfo' hadith* (hadith attributed to the Prophet) quotation from **Abdullah b. Mas'ood**, "Cursing to a Muslim was *fusuuq* (disapproved as a major shame / immorality)" (سَبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوْقٌ) (For example, see Bukhârî, 1410/1990, Imaan (Belief) 35 (number: 48), Adab (Manners) 43 (number: 5697); Muslim, no date of publication, Imaan 116 (number: 64).).

Also in a hadith narrated by **Abu Zarr** who reported to have personally heard the Prophet (pbuh) saying, it was emphasized that:

لَا يَزِمِي رَجُلٌ رَجُلًا بِالْفُسُوْقِ وَلَا يَزِمِيهِ بِالْكَفْرِ إِلَّا ارْتَدَّتْ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ صَاحِبَهُ كَذَلِكَ

"If a person accused of being *fusuuq* and *kufr* is not *faasiq* in actual fact, then this title will return to the accuser" (Bukhârî, 1410/1990, Adab 44 (number: 5698).).

Abdurrahman b. Shibl b. Amr al-Ansaarî al-Awsî, who was among the companions of the Prophet, reported a *marfo' hadith* as follows:

(إِنَّ الْفَسَاقَ هُمْ أَهْلُ النَّارِ...النِّسَاءِ) "Women who do not give thanks to the blessings and who do not tolerate misfortunes are *fussaaq* and thus will end up in the Hell." (Ahmad, 1429/1430, III, 1983 (number: 15531).).

In addition, another companion with the name of **Mihjan b. al-Adra'** narrated a saying of Prophet (pbuh) as follows:

(...فَلَا يَنْفَى مُنَافِقٌ وَلَا مُنَافِقَةٌ وَلَا فَاسِقٌ وَلَا فَاسِقَةٌ إِلَّا خَرَجَ إِلَيْهِ...) "When *ad-Dajjal* enters Medina, all hypocrite and *faasiq* and *faasiqah* (disobedient men and women) will gather around him" (Ahmad, 1429/1430, IV, 2608 (number: 18997).).

We have previously pointed out that the word "fuvaysiqa" is used about the mouse in the Arabic language. Certain hadith sources (For example, see Farâhîdî, no date of publication, V, 82; Ibn Fâris, 1423/2002, IV, 502; Raghîb al-Asfehaani, no date of publication, I, 492; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 304.), by drawing attention to this usage, report that Prophet (pbuh) ordered killing the mouse even if it is inside the Sacred Areas (al-Haram), by saying; "أَقْتُلُوا...الْفُوَيْسِقَةَ... Kill the *al-fuwaysika* (mouse); because it damages water vessel, it causes (by turning over wax / oil lamp, etc.) to burn the house together with its contents." (The narration in the form of "Kill the *fuvaysiqa*..." is not found in the traditionally accepted hadith resources. Abû Bakr al-Ismâîlî (death 371/981) reported Âisha saying on this subject as follows: "I have not heard the Prophet (pbuh) ordering us to kill the mouse nor calling it "fuvaysiqa". But, Sa'd b. Mâlik narrated to me that the Prophet (pbuh) had ordered killing "fuvaysiqa". (See Ismâîlî, 1410, I, 498).

Although not starting with the wording "Kill the *fuvaysiqa*...", there are wide narrations in the sources which deal with the subjects in the following parts of the narration; that is, ordering to cover water vessels and to put off candles, and reminding that "fuvaysiqa" may cause to burn the house. For example, see Bukhârî, 1410/1990, Bad' al-Khalk 16 (number: 3138), Isti'zân 49 (number: 5937); Muslim, no date of

publication, Ashriba 96 (number: 2012). Also see Jâhiz, 1416/1996, V, 121, 270. In such a case, the imperative form at the beginning of the narration may have also been inserted later.).

Although it is possible to infer from this saying that the term “fuvaysiqa” is used only for mouse, this expression is understood to include, along with mouse, certain other harmful animals as well.

Indeed, according to another marfo‘ hadith narrated from Aisha, (**خَمْسٌ فَوَاسِقُ**) (**يُقْتَلْنَ فِي الْحِلِّ وَالْحَرَمِ**), five things are considered to be **faasiq** and therefore it is allowed to kill them both inside and outside the Sacred Region (al-Haram). These animals, killing of which by a person in Ihram is not considered as a sin, are mainly predatory animals namely mice, scorpions, hawk, crow and aggressive dogs (al-kalb al-aquur) (For example, see Bukhârî, 1410/1990, Bad’ al-Khalk 16 (number: 3136); Muslim, no date of publication, Hajj 67 (number: 1198. Instead of “scorpion”, “snake” is mentioned. In addition, the previous narration says, “*There are 4 things, all which are fâsiq*” and lists four items not five; Tirmidhî, no date of publication, Hajj 21 (number: 837). Also see Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 304.

Also in some narrations reported from Âisha, the animal mentioned here are listed one by one and the adjective “fâsiq” is used for each of them separately: (**الْحَيَّةُ فَاسِقٌ وَالْعَقْرَبُ فَاسِقٌ وَالْفَأْرَةُ فَاسِقَةٌ وَالْغُرَابُ فَاسِقٌ**). See Ahmad, 1429/1430, V, 3612 (number: 25811), 3646 (number: 26071); Ibn Mâcah, no date of publication, Sayd 19 (number: 3249). Although there are several mouse species, it is understood that not all of them are expressed with the concept of “fuvaysiqa”. Indeed, Damîrî points out that only the house mouse is called “fuvaysiqa”. See Damîrî, 1992, p. 131). When asked if it was allowed to eat crow or not (**أَكَلَ الْغُرَابَ**), Aisha and Ibn Omar replied, “*Whoever eats it after Messenger of Allah has called it as a faasiq?*” (Ibn Mâcah, no date of publication, Sayd 19 (number: 3247); Ibn Râhûyah, 1412/1991, II, 402 (number: 955)). **Abu Suleiman al-Khattabi** (death 388/998) argues that by this answer, the intention was to forbid to eat crow as it is considered faasiq (Ibn al-Atheer, 2005, p. 694; Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414; Zabîdî, 1410/1990, XXVI, 304. Ibn Manzûr points out here that as all these animals are filthy, they are all named as fâsiq by metaphor (ibid.).).

The author of *Ghareeb al-Hadith*, **Ibn al-Atheer** (death 606/1209), reports another view, which he also shares as we understand, commenting that the reason for this is these animals have moved away from the immunity (reverence) limits both within and outside the Sacred Region, that is, they are not entitled to be sacred / immune in any way (Ibn al-Atheer, 2005, p. 69. Also see Ibn Manzûr, no date of publication, I, 3414).

Another narration involving the concept of fisq is the Quran verse on Hajj,

فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ

“... So whoever has made Hajj obligatory upon himself therein [by entering the state of Ihraam], there is [to be for him] no sexual relations and no **fusuuq** (disobedience) and no disputing during Hajj.” (Baqarah, 2/197) and the related hadith narrated by **Abu Hurairah**, containing an explanation parallel to this verse;

مَنْ حَجَّ لِمَا فَلَمْ يَرْفَثْ وَلَمْ يَفْسُقْ رَجَعَ كَيَوْمِ وَلَدَتْهُ أُمُّهُ

“Whoever performs Hajj (Pilgrimage), does not have not sexual intercourse with his wife (during its period) and does not perform any **fisq**, he is (sinless) as the day he was born from his mother.” (Bukhârî, no date of publication, Hajj 4 (number: 1449); Muslim, no date of publication, Hajj 438 (number: 1350); Tirmizî, no date of

publication, Hajj 2 (number: 811. The last part reads as follows: “*All his previous sins are forgiven.*”).).

In some narrations attributed to the companions and to the followers (taabi‘ün), it is understood that they also employed the concepts related to *fişq* (Yavuz, 1995, s. 202). For example, **Sa‘d b. Abu Vakkas** was reported to have named Haruriyyah, a sect of Harijiyyah, as **faasiq** (وَكَانَ سَعْدٌ يُسَمِّيهِمُ الْفَاسِقِينَ) (Ibn Abu Shayba, 1409, VII, 561 (number: 37925); Bukhârî, no date of publication, Tafseer, 218 “Chapter Kahf” 5 (number: 4451); Nasâî, 1411/1991, VI, 392).

Omar b. al-Khattab (death 23/644) asked **Harem b. Hayyaan**, who had said (إِيَّاكُمْ وَالْعَالِمِ الْفَاسِقِ) “*Beware of faasiq scholars!*” what he meant by that statement, which the latter responded as, (إِمَامٌ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِالْعِلْمِ وَيَعْمَلُ بِالْفِسْقِ) “*Scholars who speak with knowledge but practice fişq thus causing deviations of the people from the right way.*” (Dârimî, 1421/2000, Mukaddima 29 (number: 13/305).).

Ibn Abbas (death 68/687), **Taavus** (death 106/725), **Atâ** and some other scholars were reported to have said, (كُفْرٌ دُونَ كُفْرٍ وَفُسُوقٌ دُونَ فُسُوقٍ) “*There are so and so kufr (disbeliefs) and such and such fusuuq*” (Tirmidhî, no date of publication, Imân 15 (number: 2635).), emphasizing that there are various stages of kufr and fusuuq.

In a marfo‘ hadith narrated from **Anas b. Malik** (death 93/711), the term “infamous” in the expression: “*When the knowledge (‘ilm) has fallen on the hands of infamous people...*” was interpreted by **Zayd**, one of the narrators in the proof of the hadith as (إِذَا كَانَ الْعِلْمُ فِي الْفَاسِقِ) “*When the knowledge is in the hands of faasiq scholars.*” (Ibn Mâcah, no date of publication, Fitan 21 (number: 4015). It is not clear whether the Zayd mentioned here is a companion of the Prophet (pbuh) or whether he is Zayd b. Yahya b. Ubeyd al-Khuzâî, the teacher of the teacher of Ibn Mâcah. As there are not any indications in al-Sindî annotation of Ibn Mâcah’s book nor in Muhammad Fuad Abdelbaaqî’s dissection, we preferred the Zayd listed in the proof of the chain of the narrators.).

Ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (v.124/741), when asked the status of a person who did not fast (without excuse) during Ramadan, replied as, “If such a person is one of the **faasiq** people, he is to be painfully punished!” (Abdurrazzak, 1403/1983, VII, 445 (number: 13827), IX, 232).

al-Sha‘bî (death 104/722) comments that مَنْ تَزَوَّجَ فَاسِقًا فَقَدْ قَطَعَ رَحِمَهُ “Whoever marries a faasiq person, he/she will abandon his/her relatives.” (Ibn Abu Shayba, 1409, III, 505).

Usage of the Concept “Fisq / Faasiq” in the of History of Islamic Thought

The wide, partially relative and estimative scope of the concept of “*fişq / faasiq*” in the Quran and Sunnah has also reflected to the religious literature formed in this parallel, and consequently, extensive discussions have taken place regarding the definitions and scope of these two terms (Şafak, 1996, s. 37). In this sense, for example, although *fişq* is a Quranic concept, some sects encountered in the History of Islamic Sects are assigned it different meanings according to their understandings, and considered it as identical with the perpetrator of major sins (For example, see Özdemir, 1998, p. 499. On the analysis of major sin - *fişq* matching, see Öge, 2000, p. 85-87.).

Now, with a view to provide an example of how the concept of “fisq / faasiq” was used by some sects, it will be helpful to remind briefly how the former belief sects approached to this concept in the past.

According to the **Kharijism** sect, a faasiq among the people of the Qibla (direction of the Sacred House, Ka‘bah) is to be considered an unbeliever; thus, a faasiq may not be an imam to the congregational prayer for praying behind. According to **Hasan al-Basri** (death 110/728) a faasiq is a hypocrite (but he was reported to have abandoned this view later). **Mu‘tazilah** introduced a more varied view to the issue; they called the perpetrator of major sins as “faasiq” and claimed that such people were neither believers nor disbelievers so they would remain in a location between the two final destinations (i.e. Paradise and Hell) and in the Hereafter (*al-manzila bayna’l-manzilatayn*). The **Murjiah** sect postponed their opinions on the faasiq believers to the Hereafter. According to them, a person believing at heart is still a full believer before the Allah even if he, without any deception, declares by his tongue that he is a disbeliever or he worships idols or even he joins Judaism or Christianity in a Islamic homeland; thus, as he is a faithful believer to Allah, he is Allah’s friends of people of Paradise.

According to **Ash‘aris**, another major sect from Ahl al-Sunnah, a person who commits major sins is a believer thanks to his faith but he is a faasiq due to the major sin and fisq which he has committed.

According to **Maaturidi**, a perpetrator of major sins does not lose his title of “believer / mu‘min”, explaining that committing such major sins is not due to lack of faith, but it actually originates from various psychological factors such as strong carnal desire, excessive anger, unawareness, ardor etc. Maaturidi also emphasizes that perpetrators of major sins retain their title of “believer” as long as they affirm the existence of the Allah, and pays special care not to use the name “faasiq” for such people, arguing that those who are named as “faasiq” are “unbelievers”. Because according to him, unbelievers are those persons who have abandoned logical inference (bringing proof) and have preferred disbelief and heresy. According to Ahl al-Sunnah scholars other than Maaturidi, a perpetrator of major sin is not to be declared / considered as a “infidel” unless such person he commits an act of disobedience, regarded as a fisq, by considering it lawful (halaal), by underestimating it disrespectfully and in mockery. It is even permissible to pray behind a faasiq person, that is, he can be an imam to the congregational prayer (For detailed information and sources, see Öge, 2000, p. 80-105; Yavuz, 1995, s. 202-205; Özdemir, 1998, p. 501-512, 519; Bebek, 2002, XXV, 164).

In summary, the essential element in fisq is the presence of consciousness state and intentionality in the crimes and sins committed, and also, the committed act should have a social dimension, not limited between the person and Allah. In other words, the effects of the committed sin go beyond the self and reach the violation limits of fundamental rights and freedoms of other individuals, thus, of the society. This indicates that fisq is a factor adversely affecting legitimate order and conduct of the individuals and community (Öge, 2000, p. 85).

Conclusion

In this article, we have attempted to determine how the concept of “fisq” and its derivatives are used in the Quran, in Hadiths and in Islamic thought. As a result, we have seen that the concept of “fisq / faasiq” is one of the most commonly used concepts used both in the Quran and in the history of Islamic thought. To point out briefly, several words derived from these concepts were used in many verses of the Quran, majority of which addresses to disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites. However, the word “fisq” (disobedience) is also used for certain behaviors of the Muslims from time to time. In this limited study, we have clearly observed that, based on the holy verses of the Quran, the said word has been employed for Muslims as well.

The concept of “fisq / faasiq” has also been widely used in the hadiths, in parallel to the Quran verses. In hadith narrations, this word has the meaning of committing major sins and violation of orders and prohibitions of the Islam. Besides this, the concept of fisq/faasiq was also used for certain animals such as mice, scorpions, hawk, crow and aggressive dogs, and it is reported that their killing is permitted even within the Sacred Region (al-Haram).

When we look at the History of Islamic Sects, we see that the concept of “fisq” is removed from its very wide umbrella covering disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites with an overwhelming majority and restricted to a narrower sense. Thus, it was during this period that the word “fisq” was rendered almost identical to the major sins and the word “faasiq” was used for perpetrators of major sins (*murtakib al-kabeerah*) among Muslims. In this sense, it seems possible to say that a “**narrowing of meaning**” has occurred in the word fisq. Of course, we should not forget that the discussions about the relationship of faith – deed taking place during the second and third century of Hijra had great impacts on this narrowing of meaning.

Although some scholars argue that the news transmitted by such faasiq persons should not be accepted as authentic even if it was true in order to avoid making such ahl al-bid’ah persons famous in the eyes of society, the main point emphasized by the holy verse is what has been said rather than the personality of the person who has said it. This does not mean that we should accept it without investigating the person no matter who it is. Of course, the personality of the individual who brings the news is also very important. When considering to accept the narrations from non-Muslims such as unbelievers and polytheists, it is absolutely required to take into account such “non-belief” qualities of these persons. The fact that they are unbelievers already forbids them to gain the title of “a narrator”. One can never be sure what is hidden in the inner worlds of those persons who prefer infidelity against Islam, and what vicious opinions may lie under their words.

But when the narrator is a faasiq, the priority will be to investigate what he says since he is a Muslim. Because, the give judgment about fisq is a matter of independent reasoning (ijtihad), and even if decided that the person is faasiq, a faasiq person may tell the truth as well. The truth will not turn into falseness by the fact that the person reporting it is faasiq.

In conclusion, we should not, therefore, act hastily when attributing the quality of “faasiq” to a narrator, on the one hand, and even if we decided that he is faasiq, we

should not reject the news outright but we should conduct a careful and thorough investigation, and accept it if it comes to be true.

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