

Corruption, Modern Risk, and Qur'anic Ethics: A Dialog on the Interpretation of QS Al-Rūm (30): 38–45 with Modern Social Theory, Ulrich Beck's Risk and Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility

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Abstract: This article examines the concept of *fasād* in QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 through a dialogical approach between classical–contemporary Qur'anic exegesis and modern social theories. By prioritizing the authoritative interpretations of classical and modern mufasssirs, this study establishes the linguistic and socio-moral meaning of *fasād* before engaging Ulrich Beck's Risk Society theory and Hans Jonas' Ethics of Responsibility. The findings demonstrate that *fasād* is not merely an individual moral failure but a systemic social phenomenon comparable to manufactured risks in modern society. Furthermore, the ethical imperative embedded in the Qur'anic discourse resonates strongly with Jonas' future-oriented responsibility. This integrative approach offers a novel reconstruction of Qur'anic ethics, positioning *fasād* as a key concept for addressing contemporary ecological and social crises without undermining the integrity of traditional tafsir.

Keywords: *Fasād*; QS al-Rūm; Risk Society; Ethics of Responsibility; Qur'anic Ethics.

Introduction

The global ecological and social crisis today exhibits an increasingly complex, systemic character that transcends local and generational boundaries. Climate change, environmental degradation, social inequality, and various ecological disasters can no longer be understood merely as natural events, but rather as consequences of human actions structured within modern social, economic, and political systems, (Andini, Riddo. 2022). In this context, the discourse on ethics and human responsibility toward nature and the future of humanity has become a central issue in contemporary global discourse, (Marfai, M. A. 2019).

The Qur'an, as a normative text with timeless relevance, has long warned about this phenomenon thru the concept of *fasād*. One of the most explicit verses is QS al-Rūm (30):41: "Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what people's own hands have earned, (Zaid, N. H. A. (2016)." This verse is often quoted in Islamic discourse, particularly in the moral and ecological context, but it is frequently reduced to an individual normative interpretation as a consequence of personal sin without being linked to the broader social structure and system of damage production.

However, when read in the context of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45, the concept of *fasād* appears as a cohesive discourse encompassing social justice, economic responsibility, cosmic reflection, and a warning about the historical consequences of human actions. This series of verses indicates that *fasād* is not merely an individual moral issue, but also a social and structural phenomenon that has far-reaching impacts on the order of human life and the universe (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān; Ibn 'Āshūr, al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr).

Thus, the relevance of QS al-Rūm (30):41 in contemporary discourse lies not only in its moral message but also in its potential as a foundation for Qur'anic ethics in responding to modern crises produced by humans themselves.

On *fasād* in the Qur'an have been conducted using various approaches. Most previous research has focused on the semantic and linguistic analysis of the root word فساد, emphasizing the shift in meaning from moral to social corruption (Izutsu, Ethico-Religious Concepts in the Qur'an). This approach successfully maps the field of meaning of *fasād*, but often stops at the conceptual level of language.

On the other hand, thematic exegesis (tafsīr mawḍū'ī) on *fasād* generally emphasizes the dimension of normative ethics, such as the prohibition against causing corruption, the command to maintain the balance of nature, and the call to obey Allah (Quraish Shihab, Tafsir al-Mishbah). Although important, this approach tends to not yet link the concept of *fasād* with modern social theories that explain how such damage is produced systemically in contemporary society.

Meanwhile, studies that attempt to integrate the Qur'an with modern social theory are still relatively limited and often apologetic or normative in nature, without first establishing a strong interpretative foundation from classical and contemporary exegetes. As a result, the dialog between the Quranic text and social theory often gets trapped in the imposition of external concepts onto the text.

Based on the literature review, this study identifies a significant research gap in the absence of a systematic framework that places Qur'anic exegesis as the primary interpretive foundation before engaging modern social theory. Existing discussions have not sufficiently prioritized the interpretation of *fasād* through classical and contemporary tafsir traditions while simultaneously considering its linguistic and socio-historical contexts. For

this reason, the present study first reconstructs the meaning of *fasād* as articulated by classical and contemporary exegetes, particularly in relation to QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45, and then examines the interpretive findings through the analytical perspectives of Ulrich Beck's Risk Society Theory and Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility. This sequence is deliberately maintained in order to preserve the authority and integrity of the exegetical field, while allowing modern social theory to function as an analytical instrument rather than as a framework that replaces Qur'anic interpretation.

On this basis, the article seeks to develop a conceptual novelty in the form of a reconstruction of Qur'anic ethics that is responsive to contemporary ecological and social risks. The study therefore focuses on three interrelated questions: how the meaning of *fasād* is understood by classical and contemporary exegetes across relevant Qur'anic verses, especially QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45; how Beck's Risk Society Theory and Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility can illuminate the social, ecological, and normative dimensions of *fasād*; and what conceptual contribution can emerge from the dialogue between Qur'anic exegesis and modern social theory in formulating a Qur'anic ethical framework for contemporary society. Through this approach, the study aims to demonstrate that the interpretive tradition of the Qur'an can remain normatively authoritative while still engaging productively with modern theories of risk, responsibility, and ecological crisis.

Method

This study employs a qualitative library-research design with a multidisciplinary and interpretive approach. The method is intended to facilitate an in-depth examination of Qur'anic texts and classical-to-contemporary exegetical traditions while simultaneously creating an analytical space for dialogue with modern social theory. The multidisciplinary character of the study does not place modern theory above Qur'anic exegesis; rather, it maintains tafsir as the primary epistemological basis from which the meaning of *fasād* is established. Modern social theories are subsequently employed to examine the broader social, ecological, and ethical implications of those exegetical findings. This methodological sequence is important in order to preserve the authority of the interpretive tradition while enabling Qur'anic ethical concepts to engage with contemporary social realities.

The primary sources of the study consist of the Qur'an, with particular emphasis on QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45, and selected works of classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegesis. These include *Jāmi' al-Bayān* by al-Ṭabarī, *al-Jāmi' li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* by al-Qurṭubī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* by Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr* by Ibn 'Ashūr, and *Tafsir al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab. These exegetical works were selected because they represent different historical periods and interpretive orientations, thereby enabling the study to trace the development and continuity of the meaning of *fasād* from classical to contemporary tafsir. Secondary sources include works on modern social theory, especially Ulrich Beck's theory of the risk society and Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility, as well as scholarly literature concerning environmental ethics, ecological crises, contemporary risk, social responsibility, and Qur'anic studies (Beck, 1992; Jonas, 1984).

The analysis proceeds through several interconnected stages. First, verses containing the root ف-س-د and its various derivations are mapped in order to identify the semantic field of *fasād* within the broader Qur'anic discourse. This stage is intended to prevent the interpretation of *fasād* in QS al-Rūm from being isolated from its wider Qur'anic usage. The mapping process examines the contexts in which the term and its derivatives appear, the actors associated with *fasād*, the forms of damage described, and the moral or social consequences attached to them. The analysis subsequently focuses on QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45 as the principal locus of the study.

Second, the interpretation of QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45 is examined comparatively across classical and contemporary tafsir. Particular attention is given to linguistic meaning, textual context, socio-historical background, normative orientation, and the relationship between human action and the emergence of *fasād*. At this stage, the interpretations produced by the mufasssirs are treated as the primary epistemological foundation of the study. The objective is not to reinterpret the Qur'anic text through an external theoretical framework, but to reconstruct the semantic and normative dimensions of *fasād* from within the tafsir tradition itself.

Third, the exegetical findings are brought into critical dialogue with Ulrich Beck's Risk Society Theory and Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility. This theoretical engagement occurs only after the interpretive structure of *fasād* has been established through tafsir. Beck's concept of the risk society is used to analyse the social and structural dimensions of contemporary forms of damage. Beck argues that late-modern societies increasingly confront risks generated by their own processes of industrialisation, technological development, economic organisation, and institutional decision-making rather than risks originating solely from external or natural forces (Beck, 1992). From this perspective, *fasād* can be examined not merely as an individual moral transgression but also as a category capable of illuminating cumulative and systemic forms of damage produced through modern social structures.

Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility complements this social diagnosis by providing a normative framework oriented toward the future consequences of human action. Jonas argues that modern technological power requires a corresponding expansion of ethical responsibility because human decisions now possess the capacity to affect ecological systems, future generations, and even the long-term conditions of human existence (Jonas, 1984). His

principle of future-oriented responsibility is particularly relevant to the normative dimension of QS al-Rūm (30): 41, especially the phrase *la'allahum yarji'ūn*, which can be read as containing a corrective and preventive ethical orientation rather than merely a retrospective judgment upon human wrongdoing.

The analytical framework therefore moves through three epistemologically distinct but interconnected levels. The first level reconstructs the normative meaning of *fasād* through the Qur'anic text and tafsir tradition. The second uses Beck's theory to diagnose how contemporary societies produce ecological and social risks through complex technological, economic, and institutional systems (Beck, 1992). The third uses Jonas's ethics of responsibility to articulate the prospective ethical obligations that arise from the possibility of large-scale and intergenerational harm (Jonas, 1984). Through this sequence, modern social theory functions as an external analytical instrument that expands the contemporary relevance of Qur'anic ethics without replacing the interpretive authority of tafsir.

The final stage consists of conceptual reconstruction. Findings from the exegetical analysis and theoretical dialogue are synthesised to formulate a Qur'anic ethical framework for responding to contemporary ecological and social risks. This reconstruction seeks to demonstrate that the Qur'anic discourse on *fasād* contains not only a moral critique of destructive human behaviour but also normative resources for addressing systemic damage, preventive responsibility, ecological sustainability, and intergenerational justice. The conceptual reconstruction therefore emerges from a dialogue between the normative structure of Qur'anic interpretation, Beck's diagnosis of modern risk production, and Jonas's future-oriented ethics of responsibility.

Epistemologically, this study maintains a clear distinction between interpretation and theoretical analysis. Qur'anic meaning is first reconstructed through authoritative exegetical traditions, while modern social theory is subsequently employed to analyse its contemporary social implications. Beck and Jonas are therefore not treated as interpretive authorities over the Qur'an but as analytical interlocutors that help articulate the relevance of Qur'anic ethical principles to modern social and ecological conditions. This distinction is intended to avoid theoretical imposition upon the text while preserving the possibility of productive interdisciplinary dialogue.

The scope of the study is deliberately limited. Although the Qur'an employs the root *فسد* in multiple contexts and with different semantic implications, this research does not attempt to provide an exhaustive analysis of every manifestation of *fasād*. Instead, it focuses primarily on QS al-Rūm (30): 38–45 because this passage provides a particularly significant textual basis for examining the relationship among human conduct, social disorder, ecological damage, moral responsibility, and corrective action. Other verses containing the same semantic root are used principally to illuminate the broader Qur'anic semantic field of *fasād*. Through this methodological limitation, the study seeks to maintain analytical depth while developing a coherent dialogue between Qur'anic exegesis, modern risk theory, and future-oriented ethics.

Results and Discussion

1. Interpretation Of *Fasād* In The Interpretation Of The Qur'an

a) The Root and Meaning of *Fasād* in the Qur'an

The word *fasād* in the Qur'an has its roots in the trilateral *فسد*, which in classical Arabic refers to the basic meaning of damage, destruction, or the coming out of a state of balance and worthiness. In *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, Ibn Fāris explains that the root of this word contains the meaning of *khurūj al-shay' 'an al-i'tidāl*, which is the exit of something from a straight and proportional condition. This basic meaning is the foundation for all derivations of *fasād* in the Qur'an, whether they refer to moral, social, or cosmic aspects.

Linguistically, the sentence structure of QS al-Rūm (30):41 shows such a strong emphasis on causality, (Ibn 'Āshūr, *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*). The use of *fi'l māḍī zahara* (it has appeared) shows that *fasād* is not a latent potential, but rather an empirical reality that has been manifested. The selection of passive forms in semantics shifts the focus from direct actors to visible structural consequences in social and ecological life, (Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī). The phrase *فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ* (*fi al-barri wa al-baḥri*) by the mufasssir is not understood geographically only, but as the totality of human living space. Ibn 'Āshūr emphasized that the mention of these two regions is a form of *isti'ārah 'āmmah* which covers the entire domain of human activity that produces, distributes, and ecological relations. The most significant side is the phrase *بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ* (*bimā kasabat aydī al-nās*), where the word *aydī* (hands) serves as *majāz 'an al-fi'l al-ikhtiyārī*, which is a symbol of conscious and planned action, (al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*). With this structure, the Qur'an expressly demonstrates the principle of ethical causality, *fasād* is not a cosmic coincidence, but rather a product of repeated and systemic human choice, (al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*).

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī does not only interpret *fasād* as a moral consequence, but as a symptom of the corruption of *nizām al-wujūd*. In *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*, he asserts that this order of *al-nizām* (cosmic) is a manifestation of divine wisdom, and that any ethical deviation resulting from human actions inevitably gives rise to cosmic resonances. Therefore, *fasād* is not understood as a mere external punishment, but rather as an

ontological consequence of human actions that undermine the harmonious relationship between reason, shari'a, and nature. This cosmological reading of al-Rāzī reinforces the position of fasād as a systemic phenomenon that cannot be reduced to individual error, while at the same time opening up spaces for conceptual dialogue with modern risk theories that see damage as a structural effect of human rationality itself.

Mufassirs generally position fasād as an antonym of two key concepts in the Qur'an, *iṣlāḥ* (improvement) and *mīzān* (balance). The Qurtubī emphasizes that fasād is not just a destructive act, but a condition of destruction of the order that was previously in a balanced state and functioning normatively. Thus, fasād never stands alone, but is always associated with the violation of the principles of order, justice, and balance that Allah wills.

In the Qur'an, derivations of the word fasād appear in various contexts and surahs, including QS al-Baqarah (2):11–12, QS al-A'rāf (7):56, QS al-Qaṣaṣ (28):77, and QS al-Rūm (30):41. The distribution of these verses shows that fasād is not limited to one specific domain, but covers a wide spectrum ranging from deviations from faith, social tyranny, to environmental damage. However, all of these contexts still stem from one main source, namely human actions that deviate from divine guidance. In this study, modern social theory is not used as an instrument of verse interpretation, but rather as an analytical tool to read the social implications of the normative structure of the Qur'an. Therefore, a dialogue with Ulrich Beck's Risk theory and Hans Jonas' Ethics of Responsibility is placed after an interpretive analysis, as part of ethical and social reflection

b) *Fasād* in Classical Tafsir

1. Al-Ṭabarī: *Fasād* as a Result of Collective Vices

In Jāmi' al-Bayān, al-Ṭabarī interprets fasād as a direct result of human vices, both individually and collectively. When interpreting QS al-Rūm (30):41, he asserts that the damage on land and sea arises because man abandons obedience to Allah and violates the limits of the Shari'a³. Interestingly, al-Ṭabarī does not limit fasād to personal moral damage, but associates it with widespread social impacts, such as diminished natural blessings, the outbreak of disasters, and the disruption of the order of people's lives. al-Ṭabarī's view shows that since the early period of interpretation, fasād has been understood as a phenomenon of a collective nature and structural impact, although it is still framed in theological and moral language.

2. Al-Qurtubī, Social and Ecological Damage

The Qurtubī expands the scope of the meaning of fasād by explicitly including social and ecological dimensions. In his interpretation of QS al-A'rāf (7):56 and QS al-Rūm (30):41, he asserts that fasād includes environmental destruction, social oppression, and economic injustice committed by humans⁴. For him, the prohibition of doing fasād is not only moral-religious, but also has real social implications in social life. This approach of the Qurtubī is important because it shows that classical mufassir had recognized the link between human sin and the destruction of nature, long before ecological issues became a global concern in modern discourse.

c) *Fasād* in Contemporary Modern Interpretation

a. Ibn 'Āshūr: *Fasād* and the Destruction of Civilization

In *al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr*, Ibn 'Āshūr interprets *fasād* as the destruction of civilization (*kharāb al-'umrān*), which includes the destruction of social, economic, and political systems due to greed and abuse of human power. He emphasized that *fasād* is systemic and repetitive, and does not always appear in the form of instant physical destruction. This reading of Ibn 'Āshūr is particularly relevant for the modern context because it highlights the structural dimension of *the fasād*, without abandoning the normative basis of the Qur'an

b. Sayyid Quṭb and Fazlur Rahman: Social Structure and Ethics

Sayyid Quṭb, in *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, understands fasād as the result of a social system that deviates from the principles of justice and monotheism. According to him, when humans build a social order without divine value, fasād becomes a historical necessity⁷. Meanwhile, Fazlur Rahman emphasizes that fasād should be read within the framework of the social ethics of the Qur'an, where damage arises from human failure to realize the values of justice and collective responsibility⁸. These two figures show a shift in interpretation from the focus of the individual to the analysis of social structures and public ethics.

d) General Pattern of *Fasād* Meaning

Based on the search of classical to contemporary interpretations, the synthesis of the meaning of *fasād* can be formulated as follows:

- 1) The main reason: human actions that deviate from divine guidance;
- 2) Nature of the damage: systemic, widespread and recurrent, not limited to individuals;

3) The normative purpose of the verse: social correction and restoration of balance (*islāh*).

This synthesis shows that *the fasād* in the Qur'an has a depth of meaning that goes beyond individual moral understanding, and opens up space for dialogue with modern social theory without losing its root of interpretation.

The entire linguistic analysis and interpretation of *fasād* in this section is entirely derived from classical and contemporary interpretations of *mufasssīr*. The author does not redefine meaning, but compiles a synthesis of the discourse of interpretation that has been established as an epistemological basis for cross-disciplinary analysis in the next section.

Discussion

1. Meaning of *Fasād* in Tafsir Al-Qur'an

The concept of *fasād* is one of the key terms in the Qur'an that has a wide and layered scope of meaning. Etymologically, the word *fasād* is derived from the root of the word فسد, which in classical Arabic treasures refers to the basic meaning of damage, destruction, or the exit of something from a balanced and decent state. Ibn Fāris explained that this root contains the meaning of *khurūj al-shay' 'an al-i'tidāl*, which is the exit of something from a straight and proportional condition. This basic meaning becomes the semantic foundation for all uses of the word *fasād* in the Qur'an, whether it is related to moral, social, or cosmic damage.

In the Qur'anic framework, *fasād* is conceptually always positioned as the opposite of *islāh* (improvement) and *mīzān* (balance). The Qurṭubī emphasizes that the prohibition of *fasād* is not only related to individual destructive acts, but also concerns the destruction of the social and natural order that was previously in a state of equilibrium. Thus, *fasād* is not just an action, but a structural condition that reflects the disruption of the order of life that Allah wills.

The distribution of verses containing the derivation of the word *fasād* in the Qur'an shows the breadth of the field of meaning. Verses such as QS al-Baqarah (2):11–12, QS al-A'rāf (7):56, QS al-Qaṣaṣ (28):77, and QS al-Rūm (30):41 show that *fasād* is not limited to one specific domain, but covers various dimensions of human life. However, there is a consistent common thread in all of these verses, namely that *fasād* is always associated with human actions and their impact on the order of life, both on land and at sea.

In the classical tradition of interpretation, al-Ṭabarī interprets *fasād* as a direct consequence of human vices, both individually and collectively. While interpreting al-Rūm (30):41, al-Ṭabarī asserts that the damage seen on land and in the sea is the result of humans abandoning obedience to Allah and violating His provisions. This damage is not only moral, but also has a real impact on social life, such as the loss of blessings, the emergence of disasters, and the disruption of community stability. This view shows that since the early period of interpretation, *fasād* has been understood as a phenomenon that transcends personal error and has a collective dimension.

The Qurṭubī expands this meaning by emphasizing the social and ecological dimensions of the *fasād*. In his interpretation, the prohibition of doing *fasād* includes actions that damage the environment, cause social injustice, and disturb the balance of social life. He explicitly attributes *fasād* to the destruction of nature as a result of human behavior that transcends boundaries. This approach suggests that ecological consciousness has actually been present in classical interpretations, although it is expressed in a normative-theological framework.

Meanwhile, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī presents a more philosophical reading by viewing *fasād* as a form of cosmic disharmony. According to him, the damage that occurs in nature and society is a manifestation of the disruption of the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and God. In this framework, *fasād* is not solely understood as a punishment, but rather as an ontological consequence of man's deviation from the divine order. al-Rāzī's perspective shows that *fasād* has a profound cosmological dimension and cannot be reduced to a matter of individual ethics.

In modern and contemporary interpretations, the meaning of *fasād* is increasingly shifting towards structural and civilizational analysis. Ibn 'Āshūr, for example, understood *fasād* as the destruction of civilization (*kharāb al-'umrān*), which includes the destruction of social, economic, and political systems due to greed and the abuse of human power. He emphasizes that *fasād* is systemic and often does not appear directly in the form of physical destruction, but rather through the slow but sustained degradation of social values and institutions.

2. QS. Al-Rūm (30):38 - 45 as a Social Ethics Unit

a) The Position of Qs. al-Rūm (30):38 - 45 in the Structure of the Surah

QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 forms a thematic unity that presents the social ethical structure of the Qur'an in its entirety. This series of verses does not stand as a separate moral statement, but rather as a normative construct that links human actions, social order, and cosmic equilibrium. In this context, the discussion of *fasād* cannot be separated from the principles of social justice, human responsibility, and the corrective purpose of revelation. Verses 38–39 open this unit with a command to grant rights to relatives, the poor, and travelers, as well as a

critique of economic practices that undermine the values of justice and blessings. Al-Ṭabarī interprets this verse as affirming that social inequality and economic exploitation are forms of violation of the order that Allah wills. Ibn 'Āshūr adds that the justice of distribution in this verse is not just an individual moral encouragement, but a foundation of social ethics that sustains the sustainability of society.

Verse 40 then reminds man of the source of all existence and order: creation, sustenance, life, and death are entirely in the power of God. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī interprets this verse as a criticism of human pride that considers itself autonomous from divine law. This theological awareness became an ethical prerequisite before the Qur'an outlined the social consequences of human actions.

The pinnacle of this ethical unit lies in verse 41, which states that the *fasād* has appeared on land and in the sea as a result of the deeds of human hands. The Qurṭubī understands *fasād* as damage that includes moral, social, and environmental dimensions, while Ibn 'Āshūr asserts that the mention of "land and sea" indicates the extent of the impact of such damage. Thus, the *fasād* in this verse is not local or incidental, but rather reflects a systemic disruption to the order of life.

The purpose of the appearance of the *fasād* is affirmed through the phrase *li-yudhīqahum ba'da alladhī 'amilū la'allahum yarjī'ūn*. The mufasssīr agreed that this verse contains pedagogical and corrective dimensions. Al-Rāzī emphasized that suffering from damage is not a punishment alone, but a means of consciousness to return man to the right path. Thus, the ethics of the Qur'an in this context are reflective and transformational, not destructive.

Verses 42–45 complement this unit of ethics with a call to historical and existential reflection. The commandment to walk the earth and pay attention to the fate of the forerunners serves as a warning that social destruction has a recurring pattern when humans ignore the principles of justice and responsibility. Quraish Shihab emphasizes that historical reflections in these verses aim to build a collective ethical consciousness, not just nostalgia for the past.

Overall, QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 can be understood as a cosmic social ethical unit that links economic justice, theological awareness, and human responsibility to the impact of one's actions. In the framework of interpretation, these verses affirm that *fasād* is not just a violation of individual morals, but an indicator of the disturbance of the balance of relations between humans, society, and nature. This understanding serves as a normative basis for a further reading of the social and ethical implications of these verses in a broader context.

b) Social Ethics and the Distribution of Justice (QS al-Rūm [30]:38–39)

Verse 38 commands the granting of rights to relatives, the poor, and travelers, which the Qurṭubī understands as the foundation of social justice and the mechanism for the prevention of structural damage in society (al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān*). This distribution justice is not merely an individual moral imperative, but part of the social order that maintains balance (*mīzān*).

Allah said: *"So give rights to relatives, the poor, and those who are on the way. That is better for those who desire the face of Allah; and they are the lucky ones."* (QS al-Rūm [30]:38).

According to al-Ṭabarī, this verse affirms the foundation of social ethics in the form of the obligation to distribute economic justice as a manifestation of obedience, not just individual good.² Ibn Kathīr emphasizes that the fulfillment of social rights is an indicator of piety that has a direct impact on the stability of society.

Verse 39 then criticizes economic practices that are exploitative and accumulative through the metaphor of usury. Ibn Kathīr asserts that this verse shows the failure of an economic system that is oriented towards pseudo-growth but undermines social solidarity (Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*). Thus, from the beginning of this series of verses it has been emphasized that *fasād* is not born suddenly, but is rooted in unequal socio-economic practices. The next verse reinforces the structural critique:

"And a usury that you give to increase people's wealth, it does not increase in the sight of Allah..." (QS al-Rūm [30]:39).

The Qurṭubī understands this verse as a condemnation of exploitative economic mechanisms that widen social inequality.⁴ Thus, these two initial verses lay the framework: when distribution is violated and accumulation is justified, then the social foundation towards *fasād* is formed.

c) The Principle of Fasād as a Result of Human Actions (QS al-Rūm [30]:41)

From the point of view of *balāghah*, the sentence arrangement of QS al-Rūm (30):41 shows a significant pattern of *taqdīm ta'khīr*. The mention of *al-fasād* comes first before the reason (بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ), emphasizing the urgency of the impact before appointing the perpetrator. This pattern suggests that the Qur'an seeks to shift the reader's consciousness from the search for individual scapegoats to a reflection on the social consequences that have occurred. This existing structure also contains a pedagogical dimension where people are first faced with a crisis (*fasād*), only then are they realized that the crisis originates from their own collective actions. Thus, this verse is not deterministic, but rather reflective corrective. The conceptual culmination of this series is found in QS al-Rūm verse 41:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ

"There has been a see□ of corruption (fasād) on land and in the sea caused by the deeds of human hands, so that Allah may feel for them a portion of the consequences of their deeds, so that they may return." (QS al-Rūm [30]:41)".

Al-Ṭabarī interprets fasād as a marker of the emergence of various forms of drought damage, food crisis, insecurity that are the consequence of human violations of Allah's commands collectively, not individually, (al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān). The emphasis on the phrase bimā kasabat aydī al-nās shows the unequivocal principle of moral causality: corruption is the result of human actions. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī expands the meaning of fasād as the disruption of cosmic harmony, in which the natural order is no longer in harmony with the purpose of creation due to deviant human behavior (al-Rāzī, Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb). This interpretation is important because it shows that fasād is not limited to moral or social aspects, but includes ecological and cosmic dimensions.

Ibn 'Āshūr, in the modern context, interprets fasād as the destruction of civilization (fasād al-'umrān), i.e. the condition in which material progress actually results in systemic destruction due to the loss of the ethics of responsibility (Ibn 'Āshūr, al-Taḥrīr wa al-Tanwīr). This interpretation is an important bridge to dialogue with modern social theory without damaging the field of interpretation meaning. The mufasssir agree that the fasād in this verse originated from human actions, not random cosmic wills. Al-Ṭabarī interprets fasād as drought, food crisis, and social insecurity due to collective vices. The Qurṭubī expands it to include environmental damage, disruption of life systems, and loss of natural blessings.

Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī adds a philosophical dimension by calling fasād an imbalance (ikhtilāl al-niẓām) between man, nature, and divine law, which signifies the breakdown of cosmic harmony. This interpretation shows that fasād is not incidental, but systemic and repetitive, and has social, ecological, and moral dimensions at the same time.

d) Historical Reflection and Ethical Correction (QS al-Rūm [30]:42 - 45)

Verses 42 - 45 direct people to do historical reflection by tracing the fate of the previous people. According to Sayyid Quṭb, this appeal aims to awaken structural awareness that the destruction of civilization is not a coincidence, but the result of a recurring social pattern (Quṭb, *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*). These verses also affirm that the Qur'an's warnings are not deterministic, but corrective. The purpose of the mention of fasād is to open up the space for repentance, reparation (iṣlāḥ), and social responsibility before the damage reaches an irreversible point. This verse 42 commands historical reflection:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُشْرِكِينَ

"Say (the Prophet Muhammad), 'Travel on earth, and see how the ancients were ended. Most of them are polytheists.'"

According to Ibn 'Āshūr, this verse affirms the function of history as a laboratory of social ethics, in which the destruction of past civilizations becomes empirical evidence of the moral law of causation. Fasād is thus not just a contemporary phenomenon, but a recurring pattern in human history. Verse 43 continues with the normative appeal:

فَاقْمْ وُجُوهَكُمْ لِلدِّينِ الْقَيِّمِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ يُصَدِّقُونَ

"Therefore, turn your face to the right religion (Islam) before it comes from Allah one day (the Apocalypse) that cannot be denied. On that day they were separated."

Al-Rāzī interprets this verse as a demand for structural correction, not just personal repentance. A return to religion is understood as the restoration of a value order that sustains social justice and cosmic balance.

e) Tafsir Verses 44 – 45 In the Principle of Responsibility and Consequences

This series closes with the affirmation of individual and collective responsibility: "Whoever is a disbeliever, the consequences of his disbelief befall himself..." (QS al-Rūm [30]:44–45)

Ibn Kathīr emphasizes that this verse affirms the principle of ethical consequences: every human action has an impact that returns to him, both on a personal and social scale. Thus, QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 forms a complete narrative of causal ethics, in which fasād is the logical result of a deviation of values, and iṣlāḥ is the normative demands of the Qur'an.

f) Fasād as Social Ethics

Based on the reading of verse by verse and the interpretation of classical to contemporary mufasssir, it can be synthesized that:

- 1) Fasād cause: human actions that violate social justice and value balance;
- 2) Properties of fasād: systemic, widespread, and impactful across space (land-sea) and across time;
- 3) The purpose of the mention of fasād: social correction and restoration of the cosmic order (iṣlāḥ).

3. Dialogue of Tafsir Qs. Al-Rum (30):38 - 45 with Ulrich Beck's theory and Hans Jonas' ethics of responsibility

a) Epistemological Reasons for Dialogue of Tafsir with Modern Social Theory

After the meaning of *fasād* has been established through linguistic analysis and the authority of classical to contemporary mufassir interpretation, this article enters the stage of cross-disciplinary analysis. At this stage, the Qur'an is no longer the object of new interpretation, but rather a normative source whose basic meaning has been established and then analyzed for its social implications with the tools of modern social theory. This approach is in line with the principles of multidisciplinary Qur'an study which emphasizes a firm distinction between *tafsīr* and *taḥlīl ijtīmā'ī* (Rahman 1982; Arkoun 1994).

Dialogue with modern social theory is not intended to replace the framework of interpretation, but rather to explain how the meaning of *fasād* that has been formulated by the mufassir operates in contemporary social reality. In this context, the theories of Ulrich Beck and Hans Jonas were chosen because they have a strong thematic and normative equivalence with the structure of the meaning of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45.

First, QS al-Rūm (30):41 explicitly mentions damage on land and sea (*al-barr wa al-baḥr*) as the result of human deeds (*kasabat aydī al-nās*). Mufassirs, such as al-Qurṭubī and Ibn 'Āshūr, understood this verse as a statement of social and moral causality, not merely a description of natural phenomena. This theme has a direct correspondence with Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society, which explains that modernity produces man-made risks that are systemic and transcend local boundaries (Beck 1992).

Second, the normative purpose of the verse "*la'allahum yarji'ūn*" (for them to return) indicates an ethical orientation that is corrective and preventive. This orientation is in line with Hans Jonas' ethics of responsibility which emphasizes the moral obligation of human beings to the future and sustainability of life (Jonas 1984). Thus, the dialogue of interpretation with Beck and Jonas presents conceptual novelty without having to dismantle the field of interpretation meaning that has been built by the mufassir.

b) Fasād as a Social Risk in Ulrich Beck's Perspective

In Risk Society, Ulrich Beck explains that modern society is characterized by the production of risk that comes from human activities themselves, not from nature. These risks are systemic, difficult to predict, cross-regional, and cross-generational (Beck 1992). This concept provides a relevant analytical framework for understanding *fasād* as explained in the commentary of QS al-Rūm (30):41.

Classical mufassirs such as al-Ṭabarī and al-Qurṭubī assert that *fasād* is the result of collective vices and social injustices committed by humans. The damage does not stop at individual perpetrators, but extends to the social and ecological order. In Beck's perspective, this character is synonymous with modern social risk which is cumulative and cannot be limited by traditional moral mechanisms alone.

The series of QS al-Rūm (30):38–40 emphasizes the distribution of social justice of the rights of relatives, the poor, and the traveler as the foundation of social ethics. When these principles are violated, verses 41–42 show the structural consequences of widespread *fasād*. This pattern is in line with Beck's thesis that risk is not an incidental event, but rather the result of a social system that fails to control the impact of its own actions (Beck 2009). Thus, through Beck's framework, the *fasād* in QS al-Rūm can be understood as:

Damage that is systemic, not sporadic;

- 1) Socially produced risks, not purely natural disasters;
- 2) A cross-generational phenomenon that demands social reflexivity.

This reading does not change the meaning of the interpretation, but rather emphasizes the structural dimension that the mufassir has hinted at from the beginning.

c) Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility and the Normative Dimension of Qs. al-Rūm

If Beck's theory explains how *fasād* is socially produced, then Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility provides a normative framework for how humans should respond to these conditions. Jonas departs from a critique of classical ethics that focuses on immediate and short-term impacts, while modern technology and social systems have long-term consequences that threaten the sustainability of life (Jonas 1984).

Jonas's main principle "Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life on Earth" has a strong normative conformity with QS al-Rūm (30):41. The phrase *li-yudhīqahum ba'da alladhī 'amilū* is understood by mufassir such as Ibn 'Āshūr as a pedagogical warning for people to realize the impact of their actions before the damage becomes total.

In Jonas's framework, *fasād* is understood not only as a moral violation of the past, but as an ethical failure to consider the future. Thus, this verse contains the demands of a preventive ethics that emphasizes the precautionary principle, in line with the Qur'anic orientation to *iṣlāḥ* and the restoration of the cosmic order.

Jonas's ethics of responsibility enriches the reading of the tafsir by affirming that "return" (*yarji'ūn*) is not

just an individual repentance, but a change in the ethical paradigm in managing social and ecological life.

d) Comparative Analysis of Social Interpretation and Theory

Dimension	Interpretation of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45	Ulrich Beck	Hans Jonas
Source of corruption	Human actions (kasabat aydī al-nās)	Social risk production	Ethical negligence
Nature of damage	Systemic and widespread	Global and intergenerational	Sustainable
Focus of analysis	Moral	Structure of modernity	Ethics of the future
Normative response	Repentance and <i>iṣlāḥ</i>	Social reflexivity	Precautionary principle
Ultimate goal	Cosmic balance	Risk control	Sustainability of life

Thus, Beck and Jonas's theory does not serve as an alternative interpretive framework, but rather as a conceptual device for reading the implications of the structure of language, QS al-Rūm (30):41 itself in particular on the principle of causality (*bimā kasabat*), the scope of damage (*al-barr wa al-baḥr*), and corrective purpose (*la'allahum yarji'ūn*). Modern social theory in this context serves as a reflective articulation of Qur'anic ethics that has been implicitly structured in the text.

4. Theoretical implications and novelties

The main novelty of this article lies in the formulation of Qur'anic ethics as a risk-based public ethics oriented towards cross-generational responsibility. Through the dialogue of the interpretation of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 with Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society and Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility, this study shows that the Qur'an not only contains a moral critique of damage, but also provides a preventive normative framework for managing the socio-ecological risks of modern society.

a) Theoretical Implications for the Study of Qur'an Tafsir

The dialogue between the interpretation of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 and Ulrich Beck's Risk theory and Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility show that the concept of *fasād* in the Qur'an has a theoretical capacity that goes beyond individualistic moral readings. Classical and contemporary mufasssīr tafsīr such as al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, and Ibn 'Ashūr consistently place *fasād* as the result of human actions that have a wide impact on the social and cosmic order. Nevertheless, the structural, accumulative, and cross-generational dimensions of such damage have not been fully elaborated within the framework of modern social theory.

Through this dialogical approach, *fasād* is no longer understood solely as individual moral deviation (*khurūj 'an al-ṭā'ah*), but rather as a form of ecological social disruption produced by human practices that ignore the principles of balance (*mīzān*) and improvement (*iṣlāḥ*). Thus, QS al-Rūm (30):41 serves not only as a moral warning verse, but also as a normative ethical framework that is relevant to reading contemporary social and ecological crises. The theoretical implication of this finding is to strengthen the position of the interpretation of the Qur'an as a source of critical reflection on the problems of the modern ummah. Tafsīr does not stop at the reproduction of past meanings, but is able to dialogue reflectively with modern social theory without losing its epistemic authority. In this context, the Qur'an appears not as a text "translated" into modern theory, but as a normative horizon that enriches the critique of modernity itself.

b) Non-Reductionist Multidisciplinary Interpretive Model

In terms of methodology, this article offers a multidisciplinary interpretation study model that is non-reductionist. The linguistic and semantic analysis of *fasād* is fully based on the authority of classical and contemporary mufasssīr in accordance with the rules of Tafsīr, (Sarmin, S., 2023). Modern social theory is presented in a limited and measurable way, namely at the stage of social implications analysis, not at the stage of determining the meaning of the text, (Jones, P., 2009). This model consciously avoids two extreme tendencies in contemporary Qur'anic studies. First, theoretical reductionism, which is the imposition of modern social theory as the main instrument of interpretation of verse. Second, normative interpretive exclusivism, which is the reading of verses that are confined to individual morality without opening up space for dialogue with the latest social reality.

With a strict separation between the level of interpretation (*tafsīr*) and the level of social analysis (*tahlīl ijtīmā'ī*), this approach remains faithful to the scientific discipline of interpretation while meeting the demands of multidisciplinary studies. This model is not only relevant to verses about environmental degradation, but it can also be replicated in the Qur'an's study of social justice, power, and human responsibility as caliphs on earth.

c) Risk-Based and Responsibility-Based Reconstruction of Qur'anic Ethics

The main novelty of this article lies in the reconstruction of Qur'anic ethics resulting from the dialogue of interpretation with Ulrich Beck's Risk theory and Hans Jonas's Ethics of Responsibility. In this framework, *fasād* is understood as a form of socio-ecological risk produced by human actions, while the normative purpose of the verse 'la'allahum yarjī'ūn' is interpreted as a reflective call to stop social practices that have the potential to destroy the sustainability of life.

Beck's theory serves to explain that the structural nature of working is no longer local or temporary, but cross-regional and cross-generational. Meanwhile, Jonas's ethics of responsibility provides a strong normative foundation for reading QS al-Rūm (30):41 as a call for preventive ethics, not simply a reactive response to the damage that has already occurred. Based on this dialogue, the Qur'anic ethics reconstructed in this article have three main characters:

- 1) Be preventive, not just corrective,
- 2) Future-oriented, not tied to momentary consequences, and
- 3) Based on collective responsibility, not just individual piety.

This reconstruction does not interfere with the field of authoritative interpretation of the meaning, but rather extrapolates the normative potential of the Qur'an that has not been maximized in the discourse of interpretation. In the context of the global ecological crisis, this reading places the Qur'an as a relevant and transformative source of public ethics.

d) Contributions of Articles to Contemporary Academic Discourse

Overall, this article contributes to three main academic domains. One, in the study of the interpretation of the Qur'an, by offering a *fasād* reading that is faithful to the mufassir tradition as well as being open to cross-disciplinary dialogue. Second, in the study of religion and society, by showing how religious texts can function as a normative source of criticism of the risks of modernity. Third, in the discourse of Qur'anic ethics as a normative alternative that is in line with the demands of the sustainability of life.

With this approach, QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 is read not only as a unit of religious text, but as a unit of cosmic social ethics relevant to answer the challenges of the times. This is the position of this article's novelty in the contemporary Qur'anic research landscape.

5. Theoretical Implications and Novelties

Reconstruction of Qur'anic Ethics, From Individual Morality to Social Risk Ethics

The main findings of this article show that the meaning of *fasād* in QS al-Rūm (30):38–45, as understood by classical and contemporary mufassir, does not stop at the category of individual sins or personal moral violations, (Oktaviani, I., 2020). In contrast, *fasād* emerges as a social phenomenon that is systemic, accumulative, and has a broad impact on the social order and cosmic balance. This reading derives its strong legitimacy from the commentaries of al-Qurṭubī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, and Ibn 'Āshūr who affirm that damage on land and sea is the collective result of human actions that transcend ethical boundaries.

The dialogue of interpretation with Ulrich Beck's theory of risk expands the horizon of this meaning by placing *fasād* as a form of *manufactured risks*, namely risks produced by the human social system itself. By this framework, *fasād* is understood as a logical consequence of modernity failing to control the long-term impact of its actions. The Qur'an, through QS al-Rūm (30):41, has already offered a moral diagnosis of the phenomenon that in modern sociology was only formulated at the end of the 20th century. This integration resulted in an important shift in Qur'anic ethics: from reactive ethics (punishment for transgressions) to reflective ethics that demanded awareness of the social and ecological consequences of human actions. In this context, *fasād* is not just a consequence, but an indicator of a structural ethical crisis.

In the context of contemporary society, *fasād* as understood in QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 finds its new relevance in the form of systemic risks generated by global economic, technological, and environmental governance. Ecological risks, climate crises, resource exploitation, and structural inequality are no longer the result of individual actions, but rather the consequences of socially and politically institutionalized collective decisions, (Andini, R., 2022). In Ulrich Beck's framework, this condition marks a shift from risk distribution to risk production, where society no longer simply faces danger, but actively produces it through the modernity system. The Qur'anic *fasād*, thus, can be read as an ethical category for assessing man's failure to manage the risks he has created himself.

The application of the dialogue of the interpretation of QS al-Rūm (30):38–45 with modern social theory has resulted in some important conceptual findings. First, fasād can be understood as a category of *ethical risk* in the Qur'an, namely damage born from repetitive, systemic, and institutionalized human actions, (Iqbal, S., 2024). This interpretation emphasizes that fasād is not just an individual moral violation, but a collective failure to maintain a balance in the relationship between humans, nature, and the social system, (Febriyanti, E., Kholid, N., & Hartono, R., 2025).

Second, Ulrich Beck's theory of risk society helps explain how fasād is produced and distributed in the context of advanced modernity. Ecological and social risks do not arise as mere side effects, but as an inherent consequence of instrumental rationality that ignores long-term impacts. Within this framework, the Qur'anic fasād finds its contemporary relevance as an ethical critique of the logic of modern risk production. Third, Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility provides a normative orientation for the response to the fasād. The principle of prudence and responsibility across generations is in line with the Qur'an's corrective purpose which directs man to reflect and change before damage reaches an irreversible point. Thus, the Qur'anic ethics reconstructed in this study are preventive, reflective, and future-oriented.

Overall, the results of this analysis show that the dialogue between the interpretation of the Qur'an and modern social theory does not result in the subordination of the text to the theory, but rather enriches the articulation of Qur'anic ethics as a normative framework relevant in managing the social and ecological risks of contemporary society.

6. Hans Jonas' Theory of Responsibility Ethics as Implicit Qur'anic Principles

While Beck's theory explains how fasād are produced in modern social systems, Hans Jonas's ethics of responsibility provides a normative foundation for responding to these conditions, (Kinasih, S. E., 2024). Jonas's principle of emphasizing responsibility for the sustainability of future life has strong resonances with the normative purpose of QS al-Rūm (30):41, especially the phrase *la'allahum yarji'ūn*. The mufasssirs, especially Ibn 'Āshūr, interpreted this phrase as a divine pedagogical purpose: the destruction of the manifestation of human beings to return to the correct ethical order. In Jonas' framework, this message can be read as a call for preventive ethics to act before the damage becomes irreparable. Thus, QS al-Rūm not only condemns damage, but also proposes a *precautionary principle* that is in line with future ethics.

Jonas's main contribution to this dialogue lies in his ability to articulate the ethical dimensions that have been implicit in interpretation, but have not been systematically formulated as a theory of responsibility across generations. Thus, Qur'anic ethics is not only relevant to the normative societies of the past, but also has a responsibility to contemporary ecological and social crises.

Theoretical novelty of the article

The three aspects of its novelty are:

a) Methodological novelty

This article consistently prioritizes the interpretation of mufasssir as the foundation of meaning, then analyzes its social implications using modern theory, not the other way around. This approach avoids the reduction of interpretation into an external theoretical framework.

b) Theoretical novelty

The integration of Ulrich Beck's Risk theory and Hans Jonas' Ethics of Responsibility in the study of Qur'an interpretation is still very rare. This dialogue opens up new space for the development of risk-oriented, sustainability, and future-oriented Qur'anic ethics.

c) Conceptual novelty

This article formulates fasād as a category of risk ethics of the Qur'an, which is a concept that bridges classical interpretation with the challenges of global modernity without undermining the terrain of the authoritative meaning of the Qur'an

Conclusion

This article asserts that fasād in QS al-Rūm (30):38–45, as understood by classical and contemporary mufasssir, is a systemic social phenomenon that has a wide impact on the cosmic balance. Authoritative interpretations suggest that damage on land and sea is a consequence of human actions that transcend ethical and structural boundaries.

A dialogue with Ulrich Beck's Risk theory shows that the concept of fasād has a strong correspondence with the idea of man-made risk in reflexive modernity. Meanwhile, Hans Jonas' ethics of responsibility provides a normative framework that clarifies the ethical purpose of QS al-Rūm, which is to encourage humans to act responsibly for the sustainability of future lives.

Thus, this article concludes that the Qur'an not only offers a moral critique of harm, but also provides a foundation of preventive ethics that is relevant to respond to contemporary social and ecological crises

Based on these findings, this article recommends several directions for the development of follow-up studies:

- 1) The development of Qur'anic ethics is risk-based, especially in issues of ecology, technology, and public policy.
- 2) The integration of other non-hermeneutic social theories in the study of interpretation, such as political ecology theory or environmental ethics, while maintaining the authority of interpretation.
- 3) A comparative study of interfaith faith, to see how the concept of future responsibility is formulated in other religious traditions

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