

## Digitising Interpretation: Transforming Tafsir Al-Mishbah in the Context of the Living Quran

*Digitalisasi Penafsiran: Transformasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah dalam konteks Living Qur'an*

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### Abstract

This research aims to explore the relationship between digitizing interpretation, texts, messages, and societal practices through the transformation, reception, and deconstruction of Tafsir Al-Mishbah. The issue of digitizing interpretation is often viewed solely through the lens of technological transition and historical narrative, overlooking its societal implications. This study seeks to delve into the interplay among these elements by examining the digitization process, features of the digital application, and societal reception of Tafsir Al-Mishbah. It outlines three problem formulations: the digitalization process, features in the digital application, and reception within the digitization phenomenon. To address these formulations, a qualitative netnographic research method was employed. Data were collected through observation and documentation, primarily from video recordings on the Quraish Shihab YouTube channel, which provides insights into the digitization process and various versions of Tafsir Al-Mishbah. The research concludes that digitalization serves as a means to transform Tafsir Al-Mishbah, enabling independent Qur'an study while maintaining ties with authoritative figures. It bridges innovations with limitations present in printed editions, catering to the public's needs. Furthermore, the digitization of Tafsir Al-Mishbah is closely tied to Quraish Shihab's interpretation of divine promises, as referenced in QS. al-Qamar [54]: 17, 22, 32, and 40. This study highlights the often-overlooked aspects of digitalization, showcasing its relationship with innovation, ideology, and public reception. It underscores that the transformation of religious texts, including the Qur'an and Tafsir, contributes to the discourse on the living Qur'an and living Tafsir.

Keywords: digitalization; *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*; reception; *living Qur'an*; *living tafsir*.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan antara digitalisasi interpretasi, teks, pesan, dan praktik-praktik sosial melalui transformasi, penerimaan, dan dekonstruksi Tafsir Al-Mishbah. Isu digitalisasi interpretasi seringkali hanya dipandang melalui lensa transisi teknologi dan narasi sejarah, mengabaikan implikasi sosialnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelajahi interaksi di antara elemen-elemen tersebut dengan memeriksa proses digitalisasi, fitur-fitur aplikasi digital, dan penerimaan sosial terhadap Tafsir Al-Mishbah. Ini menguraikan tiga rumusan masalah: proses digitalisasi, fitur-fitur dalam aplikasi digital, dan penerimaan dalam fenomena digitalisasi. Untuk mengatasi rumusan-rumusan tersebut, digunakan metode penelitian kualitatif netnografis. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan dokumentasi, terutama dari rekaman video di saluran YouTube



Quraish Shihab, yang memberikan wawasan tentang proses digitalisasi dan berbagai versi Tafsir Al-Mishbah. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa digitalisasi berfungsi sebagai sarana untuk mengubah Tafsir Al-Mishbah, memungkinkan studi Qur'an independen sambil mempertahankan hubungan dengan tokoh-tokoh otoritatif. Ini menjembatani inovasi dengan batasan-batasan yang ada dalam edisi cetak, memenuhi kebutuhan publik. Selain itu, digitalisasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah erat terkait dengan interpretasi janji-janji ilahi Quraish Shihab, sebagaimana disebutkan dalam QS. al-Qamar [54]: 17, 22, 32, dan 40. Penelitian ini menyoroti aspek-aspek yang sering diabaikan dalam digitalisasi, memperlihatkan hubungannya dengan inovasi, ideologi, dan penerimaan publik. Ini menekankan bahwa transformasi teks keagamaan, termasuk Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir, berkontribusi pada wacana tentang living Qur'an dan living tafsir.

Kata Kunci: Digitalisasi; *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*; resepsi; *living Qur'an*; *living Tafsir*.

## Introduction

The issue of digitizing *Tafsir* often receives inadequate attention in Qur'an and Tafsir studies, which typically focus on normative historical narratives but fail to explore the multifaceted relationships between texts, messages, and societal practices.<sup>1</sup> The study of technological transitions extends beyond mere historical chronology, shedding light on the intricate connections between texts, messages, and societal practices. Often, the discourse surrounding the living Qur'an predominantly revolves around activities centered on "consuming" the Quran, overlooking its roles as a commodity that is both "consumed" and "produced" and "distributed," as articulated by Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra. An overlooked aspect of the living Qur'an phenomenon is the process of Qur'an production, including printing, as well as its distribution through sales and dissemination.<sup>2</sup> These activities exemplify the multifaceted nature of the living Qur'an in society. With technological advancements, traditional production and distribution methods evolve into various new forms, notably digitalization. The "living" Qur'an transcends mere consumption activities, manifesting in diverse societal engagements that encompass production, distribution, and consumption. This phenomenon underscores a facet of the living Qur'an that remains largely unexplored by many researchers, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive understanding of its multifaceted presence in daily life.

Previous studies have overlooked the study of Qur'an digitalization and its interpretation in relation to practical activities and people's experiences with the Quran, primarily due to the perception that digitalization merely represents a transition from print to digital media. The neglect of this aspect stems from the prevailing assumption that digitalization merely entails a shift in presentation medium, as observed in the

<sup>1</sup> Natalia K Suit, *Qur'an Matters: Material Mediations and Religious Practice in Egypt* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Heddy Shri Ahimsa-Putra, "Living Qur'an: Beberapa Paradigma Kajian". Delivered at Talkshow Pekan Raya 23 event. organized by the Student Association of the Study of Al-Qur'an and Tafsir at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, on October 19 2023

descriptive focus of previous research on the transformation of the Qur'an and its interpretation in digital spaces, such as websites and applications.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, prior researchers have often associated digitalization with issues of shifting authority<sup>4</sup> and religious contestation,<sup>5</sup> overlooking its broader implications. These research typologies fail to encompass studies concerning the production of the Qur'an or interpretation works as integral parts of Qur'an practice in social life. This oversight restricts the concept of the living Qur'an solely to its consumption aspect, neglecting its production dimension and thereby diminishing its essence.

In line with that, this research aims to address the gap in previous studies by examining digitalization as an integral aspect of the living Qur'an and living Tafsir, formulated into three key problems. The first problem formulation focuses on the process of digitalizing *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, exploring the transition from its print form to digital media. Secondly, attention is directed towards the features present in the *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* digital application, serving as a reference for comparing elements of continuity, change, and further development between the digital and printed versions. Lastly, the research delves into the reception surrounding the digitalization phenomenon of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, providing insights into how the digital version is perceived and utilized by its audience. These three problem formulations serve as crucial starting points to challenge the prevailing research trend, which neglects the production of the Qur'an and interpretation works in discussions on the living Qur'an and living Tafsir.

This research operates on the premise that the living Qur'an encompasses not only direct Qur'an practices within the Qur'an community but also extends to the realm of Qur'an transformation and interpretation works. The inevitability of transformation is highlighted, drawing parallels to the Quran's evolution from oral

3 Zaenal Enjen Muttaqin, "Kajian Al-Qur'an Di Tengah Disrupsi Digital: Pengemasan Ulang Materi Ulumul Qur'an Di Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Islam Indonesia," *Maghza* 8, no. 2 (2023): 223–237. Althaf Husein Muzakky, "Al-Qur'an Di Era Gadget: Studi Deskriptif Aplikasi Qur'an Kemenag," *Jurnal Studi Al-Qur'an* 16, no. 1 (2020): 55–68. Adi Pratama Awadin and Dadan Rusmana, "Model Al-Qur'an and Tafsir Models: Internalization of the Development of Digital Media," *Ishlah* 5, no. 2 (2023): 221–234. Antika Wulandari, "Johanna Pink: Transformasi Digitalisasi Penafsiran Al-Qur'an Masa Kini Berbasis Media Sosial," *Qudwah Qur'aniyyah* 1, no. 1 (2023): 19–28. Syarif Hidayat, "Al-Qur'an Digital (Ragam, Permasalahan, Dan Masa Depan)," *Mukaddimah* 1, no. 1 (2016): 1–40. Fitriani and Izzah Faizah Siti Rusydanti Khaerani, "Digitalisasi Tafsir Al-Qur'an Berbasis Website," in *Proceedings The 1st Conference on Ushuluddin Studies* (Bandung: Gunung Djati Conference Series, 2021), 188–201.

4 Tati Rahmayani, "Pergeseran Otoritas Agama Dalam Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an," *Maghza* 3, no. 2 (2018): 189–201. Debi Ayu Puspitasari, "Kebijakan Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an Digital Di Indonesia: Studi Perkembangan Aplikasi 'Al-Qur'an Kementerian Agama' Dan Permasalahannya," *J-PAI* 8, no. 1 (2021): 12–22. Anis Maisa and Nur Rohman, "Pentashihan Al-Qur'an Digital Di Indonesia: Peran, Otoritas, Dan Legitimasi LPMQ," *Academic Journal of Islamic Principles and Philosophy* 2, no. 1 (2021): 25–42.

5 Achmad Rifai, "Tafsir Web: Digitalization of Qur'anic Interpretation and Democratization of Religious Sources in Indonesia," *Jurnal al-Tibyan* 5, no. 2 (2020): 152–170.

revelation to its transcription on various mediums such as date palms, stones, and eventually manuscripts. The advent of the printing press further transformed the Qur'an into printed formats widely distributed via various media. Subsequently, the Qur'an transitioned into digital forms, exemplified by smartphone applications.<sup>6</sup> Each transformation engenders reader receptions, encompassing aspects of receiving, responding to, utilizing, or engaging with the Qur'an content.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* as an application represents more than a mere shift in presentation medium; it also embodies and contributes to specific receptions of the Quran.

To validate this assumption, the research adopts a netnographic approach combined with qualitative methods, leveraging virtual exploration to comprehend the realities within the digital sphere.<sup>8</sup> The research process begins with observations and documentation utilizing a virtual space fieldsite approach to prepare and collect data. Primary data sources include both the digital application and printed versions of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, along with video recordings from the Quraish Shihab YouTube channel detailing the digitization process. Secondary data comprises literature directly or indirectly related to the research object, encompassing books, articles, documents, and other sources. Following data collection, the analysis and interpretation phase involves visualizing and condensing the gathered information. To enhance the analytical process, the research findings will be contextualized using Sam D. Gill's informative-performative theory and Ahmad Rafiq's reception theory.

### ***Evolution of the Quran: From Oral Revelation to Standardized Text***

The history of the Qur'an spans from its revelation until the present, encompassing not only its 23-year revelation period<sup>9</sup> but also its transmission and transformation processes. The Qur'an underwent multiple stages prior to its revelation to Prophet Muhammad. Initially, God's revelation was sent down to the *lauh al-mahfuzh*, then to the heavens of the world (*bait al-'izzah*), and finally to Prophet Muhammad through Gabriel.<sup>10</sup> The content of God's message received by

6 Muhammad Mustafa A'zami, *Sejarah Teks Al-Qur'an Dari Wahyu Hingga Kompilasi*, terj. Sohirin Solihin (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2005), 71–74; Muhammad Fajar Mubarak and Muhammad Fanji Romdhoni, "Digitalisasi Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir Medisa Sosial Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas* 1, no. 1 (2021): 111–112.

7 Ahmad Rafiq, "Sejarah Al-Qur'an: Dari Pewahyuan Ke Resepsi (Sebuah Pencarian Awal Metodologis)," in *Islam, Tradisi, Dan Peradaban*, ed. Sahiron Syamsuddin (Yogyakarta: SUKA-Press, 2012), 73.

8 Robert V. Kozinets, *Netnography: Redefined*, 2nd Edition. (London: Sage Pubicatin Ltd, 2014).

9 Ingrid Mattson, *Ulumul Qur'an Zaman Kita*, terj. R. Lukman Yasin (Jakarta: Mizan, 2013), 46.

10 Muhammad 'Abd al-Azhīm al-Zarqānī, *Manāhil Al-'Irfān Fī 'Ulūm Al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabiy, 1995), 37–43. Muhammad Mustafa A'zami, *Sejarah Teks Al-Qur'an Dari*

Prophet Muhammad also underwent transformation. Initially conveyed in a non-scientific or non-natural language system, it was later transmitted orally in Arabic and memorized by the Arab people, who had strong traditions of memorization.<sup>11</sup> Despite being written on various materials by the companions, such as leaves, palm fronds, rocks, skin, and animals, oral confirmation remained crucial.<sup>12</sup> These processes illustrate that from the outset, God's message was transmitted and transformed in various forms, from revelation to spoken Arabic.

The transition from oral transmission to written transmission of the Qur'an paralleled its gradual transformation, adapting to the circumstances of the time. Upon recognizing the potential loss of Qur'an memorizers in battle, Caliph Abu Bakr al-Shiddiq formed a special team to compile the Qur'an into one mushaf.<sup>13</sup> This mushaf<sup>14</sup>, initially entrusted to Abu Bakr and subsequently passed down to Umar bin Khattab and Hafsa bin Umar, eventually reached Utsman bin 'Affan, who tasked Zaid bin Tsabit with standardizing the Qur'an text. This standardized mushaf served as the basis for unifying the Qur'an text into the Ottoman mushaf,<sup>15</sup> with copies distributed to Islamic regions and became the standard for the text of the Qur'an.<sup>16</sup> To facilitate non-Arabic speakers' reading, punctuation was introduced to prevent errors.<sup>17</sup> Initially transcribed manually, the Qur'an underwent successive transformations, including production via printing machines and CD-ROMs before digitalization into applications and websites.<sup>18</sup> The Quran's transformation mirrors that of other religious texts, such as tafsir. The ongoing transmission and transformation of religious texts are inevitable, meeting the evolving needs and demands of the times.

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*Wahyu Hingga Kompilasi*, terj. Sohirin Solihin (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 2005), 37–43.

11 Aksin Wijaya, *Arah Baru Studi Ulumul Qur'an* (Yogyakarta: IRCiSoD, 2020), 84.

12 A'zami, *Sejarah Teks AL-Qur'an Dari Wahyu Hingga Kompilasi*, 71–74.

13 Asma Afsaruddin, *The First Muslim: History and Memory* (Oxford: Oneworld Publication, 2007), 29.

14 The term "mushaf" is the result of the ijtihad of the Companions during the time of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq ra. to name the collection of Qur'an they had written. At first, several friends proposed the term "al-safar", but it was rejected by Abu Bakar al-Siddiq ra. because there are similarities with the name of the Jewish holy book. Then others proposed "mushaf", a term used by the Habsyah people. The proposal was finally accepted and agreed upon. Mochammad Samsukadi, "Sejarah Mushaf Uthmani (Melacak Transformasi AL-Qur'an Dari Teks Metafisik Sampai Textus Receptus)," *Religi: Jurnal Studi Islam* 6, no. 2 (2015): 243–245.

15 Samsukadi, "Sejarah Mushaf Uthmani (Melacak Transformasi AL-Qur'an Dari Teks Metafisik Sampai Textus Receptus)," 243–245.

16 Afsaruddin, *The First Muslim: History and Memory*, 48–49.

17 A'zami, *Sejarah Teks AL-Qur'an Dari Wahyu Hingga Kompilasi*, 71–74.

18 Charles Hirschkind, "Media and the Qur'an," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 341–348.

### *The Complexities of Digitalization and Textual Existence*

Thus far, only human actions are considered to contribute to the social world, while other physical objects are not considered to have a significant impact and influence on individual or societal activities. This assumption confines the understanding of text to abstract ideas, disregarding the physical presence of text objects. However, material objects play a crucial role in shaping societal dynamics.<sup>19</sup> While acknowledging that objects lack life and agency, it's essential to recognize their interdependence with human activity.<sup>20</sup> The normalization of objects in our surroundings often leads to their perceived insignificance in contributing to human life.

The normalization of objects leads to a chronological viewpoint regarding the digitalization phenomenon, simplifying it as a mere transition from old to new technology, thereby overlooking its complex nature. Digitalization entails more than just changing presentation methods; it involves evolving old discoveries with new ones, maintaining a symbiotic relationship between old and new technologies.<sup>21</sup> Consequently, previous technologies are not necessarily eradicated but integrated into new advancements.<sup>22</sup> For instance, the digitalization of the Qur'an does not eliminate calligraphic decoration from printing or manual handwriting. Similarly, the written transmission of the Qur'an in mushaf form does not eradicate the previously existing oral transmission.<sup>23</sup>

The study of technological transitions unveils intricate relationships between texts, messages, and societal practices, extending beyond normative chronological narratives to encompass various layers of societal engagement.<sup>24</sup> Throughout history, the Qur'an has continuously integrated with technology, resulting in diverse Qur'an development activities,<sup>25</sup> including illumination, interpretation, translation, printing, audio-visual recording, and digitalization. Technological advancements

19 The discourse on this matter is described in three terms, namely living the Qur'an, the lived Qur'an, dan the living Qur'an. See Ahmad Rafiq, "Teks Dan Praktik Dalam Fungsi Kitab Suci: Sebuah Pengantar," in *Living Qur'an: Teks, Praktik, Dan Idealitas Dalam Performasi Al-Qur'an*, ed. Ahmad Rafiq (Yogyakarta: Asosiasi Ilmu Al-Qur'an & Tafsir se-Indonesia dan Lembaga Ladang Kata, 2022), vi–vii.

20 Suit, *Qur'an Matters: Material Mediations and Religious Practice in Egypt*, 3–6.

21 Stephen G. Nichols, "Digitized Manuscripts & Literary Hermeneutics: New Challenges," *Poetica* 48, no. 3 (2016): 284, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26600439>.

22 Liv Ingeborg Lied, "Digitization and Manuscript as Visual Object: Reflections from Studies Perspective," in *Ancient Manuscripts in Digital Culture: Visualisation, Data Mining, Communication*, ed. David Hamidovic, Claire Clivaz, and Sarah Bowen Savant (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 26.

23 Suit, *Qur'an Matters: Material Mediations and Religious Practice in Egypt*, 7–8.

24 Suit, *Qur'an Matters: Material Mediations and Religious Practice in Egypt*, 4.

25 Fadhli Lukman, "Digital Hermeneutics and a New Face of the Qur'an Commentary: The Qur'an in Indonesian's Facebook," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 56, no. 1 (2018): 95.

not only manifest as products but also serve as mediums for disseminating Qur'an activities like teaching, reading, and interpretation.<sup>26</sup> These advancements also target the transformation of tafsir works, transitioning from physical forms to CD-ROMs, websites, and applications, exemplified by the *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* digital application.<sup>27</sup> Such activities reflect the social, cultural, and historical context in which Islam emerged and developed,<sup>28</sup> showcasing innovative approaches to Qur'an presentation while maintaining the Quran's unchanging substance since the time of Prophet Muhammad PBUH.<sup>29</sup>

### ***M. Quraish Shihab, The Qur'an, and Technological Literacy***

M. Quraish Shihab, born on February 17, 1944, in Sideneng Rampang district, South Sulawesi, bears the surname "Shihab," indicating his Indonesian-Arab descent from his father's family, Abdurrahman Shihab (1905-1986). Abdurrahman Shihab, a revered religious figure in Makassar and a professor of interpretation, served as the rector of the Indonesian Muslim University (1959-1965) and IAIN (now UIN) Alauddin Makassar (1972-1977).<sup>30</sup> His father's influence cultivated an environment of education for Quraish Shihab, who was encouraged from childhood to follow and listen to Qur'an teachings and stories.<sup>31</sup> Quraish Shihab completed his primary education in Ujung Pandang before pursuing further studies in Malang, where he studied under Habib Abdul Qadir BilFaqih at the Darul-Hadits al-Faqihiyah Islamic Boarding School for two years. In 1958, he continued his education in Cairo, enrolling as a class II student at Tsanawiyah al-Azhar. He obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in the Department of Tafsir and Hadith, Faculty of Ushuluddin, Al-Azhar University from 1967 to 1969, followed by his doctoral studies in the same field, which he completed in 1980.<sup>32</sup>

26 Mahbub Ghozali, Achmad Yafik Mursyid, and Nita Firtiana, "Al-Qur'an (Re)Presentation in the Short Video App Tiktok: Reading, Teaching, and Interpretive," *Social Sciences & Humanities* 30, no. 3 (2022): 1278.

27 Nashr Hamid Abu Zayd, "Everyday Life, Qur'an In," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qur'an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 88.

28 Gary R Bunt, "The Qur'an and the Internet," in *The Routledge Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. George Archer, Maria M Dakake, and Daniel A. Madigan (New York: Routledge, 2022), 384.

29 Bunt, "The Qur'an and the Internet," 387-391.

30 Abdi Risalah Husni Alfikar and Ahmad Kamil Taufiq, "Metode Khusus Muhammad Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsirnya," *Jurnal Iman dan Spiritualitas* 2, no. 3 (2022): 375.

31 M. Djidin and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Indonesia Interpretation of the Qur'an on Khilafah: The Case of Quraish Shihab and Yudian Wahyudi on Qur'an 2: 30-38," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic dan Studies* 57, no. 1 (2019): 150, 10.14421/ajis.2019.57143-166.

32 "Profil Singkat M. Quraish Shihab," M. Quraish Shihab Website, accessed April 8, 2023, <http://quraishshihab.com/profil-mqs/>.

Upon returning to Indonesia after completing his studies, Quraish Shihab assumed numerous academic and governmental roles, contributing significantly to various institutions and initiatives. Quraish Shihab held academic positions at esteemed universities and institutions in Indonesia, including UIN Alauddin and UIN Syarif Hidayatullah. Additionally, he served as the Chairman of the Central Indonesian Ulema Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia/MUI). In the realm of government, he held prominent positions such as Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia and Ambassador of Egypt-Somalia-Djibouti. He actively participated in the National Sharia Council and Lajnah Pentashih al-Qur'an of the Ministry of Religion. Demonstrating his commitment to society, Quraish Shihab established the Qur'anic Study Center (Pusat Studi Al-Qur'an/PSQ) in 2004. Through PSQ, he aimed to promote a friendly and inclusive understanding of Islam to the public, fostering various programs like Mufassir Cadre Education.<sup>33</sup>

Despite his extensive engagements across various fields, Quraish Shihab remains remarkably productive, having authored no fewer than 61 works,<sup>34</sup> predominantly focused on interpretation but spanning diverse writing formats. His works encompass a range of formats, including commentaries on other interpretations,<sup>35</sup> *tafsir nuzuli*,<sup>36</sup> compilations of lectures,<sup>37</sup> thematic, and analytical (tahlili) interpretations like *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*,<sup>38</sup> as well as translations of the Quran.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, he has addressed contemporary issues through thematic interpretations such as *Wasathiyah*<sup>40</sup> and *Corona Ujian Tuhan*,<sup>41</sup> reflecting his responsiveness to public discourse.<sup>42</sup> The multitude of works, each presenting distinct variants, underscores Quraish Shihab's significant contribution to the development of Qur'an studies and interpretation in Indonesia.

33 "Profil Singkat M. Quraish Shihab."

34 "Profil Singkat M. Quraish Shihab."

35 M. Quraish Shihab, *Rasionalitas Al-Qur'an: Studi Kritis Atas Tafsir Al-Manar* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2008).

36 M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: Tafsir Atas Surat-Surat Pendek Berdasarkan Urutan Turunnya Wahyu* (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 1997).

37 M. Quraish Shihab, *Sahur Bersama M. Quraish Shihab Di RCTI* (Bandung: Mizan, 1997).

38 M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

39 M. Quraish Shihab, *Al-Qur'an Dan Maknanya* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2021).

40 M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyah: Wawasan Islam Tentang Moderasi Beragama* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2019).

41 M. Quraish Shihab, *Corona Ujian Tuhan: Sikap Muslim Menghadapinya* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2020).

42 Atik Wartini, "Corak Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsir Al-Mishbah," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 11, no. 1 (2014): 117.



Quraish Shihab's commitment to disseminating Qur'an messages is evident in his varied presentation and packaging methods, which evolve alongside technological advancements. Since 1997, Quraish Shihab has embraced diverse media platforms to expand the reach of his works and convey his message effectively. This includes television appearances for sahoor programs on channels like RCTI and Metro TV, as well as engagement on social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. Moreover, his printed works have undergone digitalization processes, making them accessible as e-books. The recent digitalization of *Tafsir al-Misbah* as a digital application exemplifies his continuous efforts to leverage technology for Qur'an dissemination. Quraish Shihab's recognition of technology's importance in conveying Qur'an messages drives his ongoing efforts to update the presentation of his works, ensuring their relevance and accessibility in today's digital age.

### ***Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Illuminating Quraish Shihab's Vision for Qur'an Understanding***

The writing of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* is intricately linked to Quraish Shihab's political, social, and cultural milieu, reflecting his reality and knowledge. Quraish Shihab's work emerges as a response to his concern over a prevalent societal phenomenon wherein the Qur'an is merely treated as reading material, devoid of deeper understanding. Activities involving specific surahs like QS. Yasin, al-Waqi'ah, and al-Mulk often lack a correct comprehension of their meanings, potentially diminishing the Quran's intended purposes. He attributes this phenomenon to the community's struggles with the Arabic language of the Quran, posing a barrier to understanding. Motivated by his moral responsibility as an intellectual to provide Qur'an understanding to all segments of society, he authored *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*.<sup>43</sup> This rationale forms the foundation for presenting *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* to the Indonesian populace, aiming to bridge the gap between the Quran's Arabic text and Indonesian speakers, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of its message.

The presentation of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, targeted for the general public, reflects Quraish Shihab's aim to influence comprehension levels and facilitate the application of Qur'an teachings in real-life contexts. Adapting to diverse levels of Qur'an understanding, the interpretation adopts a social nuance approach, focusing on societal patterns (*ijtimā'i*) to resonate with readers. Additionally, supplementary information such as vocabulary, general verse meanings, verse correlations (*munāabah*), and reasons for revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) is included to aid comprehension. These components are systematically packaged in an analytical

43 Quraish M. Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2021), vol. 1, xvi-xvii.

(tahlili) manner, beginning with an analysis of each surah's overarching theme and establishing connections between surahs to reveal the Quran's holistic harmony.<sup>44</sup> Quraish Shihab's presentation methodology mirrors his intent to effectively convey the Qur'an messages to the public, ensuring their comprehension and applicability in daily life.

Quraish Shihab's works, including *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, stem from and respond to societal dynamics, aiming to address shortcomings and resonate with the public. *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* represents a departure from Quraish Shihab's previous thematic interpretation format (maudhū'i), introducing a systematic tahlili presentation method.<sup>45</sup> While a similar systematic presentation existed in his earlier work, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim*,<sup>46</sup> it failed to garner significant public response due to perceived lack of engagement and verbosity.<sup>47</sup> The presence of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* is Quraish Shihab's effort to answer this response by avoiding the model of his previous works and proposing a new interpretation format that is more "down-to-earth" with the community.

### **The Features of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*: A Comparison between Printed and Digital Versions**

The decision to digitize *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* into a smartphone application was driven by several considerations, particularly addressing the diverse needs of both researchers and the general public. Initially, the plan involved creating a digital version mirroring the printed format as PDF files, catering to researchers familiar with *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. However, this approach posed challenges for beginners and the general public in navigating the work effectively. Recognizing the preference for thematic delivery, as evidenced by previous television broadcasts, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* was transformed into a smartphone application offering two viewpoints: sequential (tahlili) and thematic. The sequential presentation mirrors the printed version,

44 Hasani Ahmad Said, "Tafsir Al-Mishbah in the Frame Work of Indonesian Golden Triangle Tafsirs: A Review on the Correlation Study (Munasabah) of Qur'an," *Heritage of Nusantara* 3, no. 2 (2014): 211–232. M. Quraish Shihab, "How Do Singular and Plural Methods Applied? Review Shihab's Exegesis," *World Applied Sciences Journal* 32, no. 5 (2014): 769–779.

45 The interpretive methodology map used is the mapping carried out by Islah Gusmian.

46 *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim* a work of interpretation (tafsir) that uses a systematic chronological presentation (*nuzuli*). This tafsir presents 24 Makkiyyah suras. This number and the selection of surahs in it were also chosen based on discussions related to religious, national, and social life. The themes chosen for limiting and selecting the surahs are also based on the number of surahs read by the public. Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Karim: Tafsir Atas Surat-Surat Pendek Berdasarkan Urutan Turunnya Wahyu*, vii.

47 Islah Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia, Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2013), 109.

catering to researchers, while the thematic presentation, distinct from the printed format, aims to simplify Qur'an study for beginners by addressing topics relevant to their lives.<sup>48</sup>



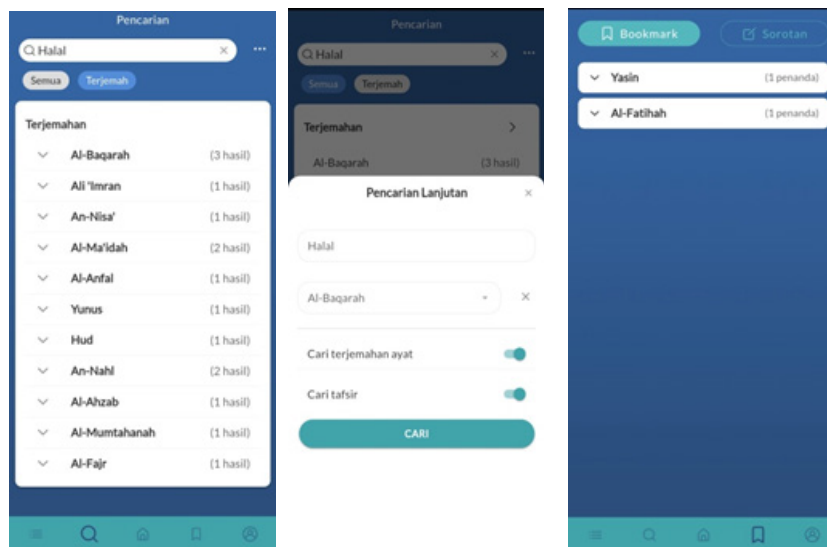
Picture 1: The Display of Tafsir Al-Mishbah Digital Application in sequential and thematic versions

The digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* considers societal needs, preferences, and acceptance, resulting in innovative features absent in the printed version. The digital application incorporates topics relevant to daily life, such as noble morals and legal rights, with varying depths of explanation. Additionally, an independent search feature allows users to explore specific themes, providing translations or interpretations of searched words within surahs and verses. Moreover, the application offers a feature to mark the last read part, facilitating seamless reading experiences and reducing repetition.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, accessibility features cater to individuals with disabilities, ensuring inclusivity in accessing the tafsir's messages.<sup>50</sup> Overall, the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* goes beyond a mere shift in presentation media, serving as a platform for innovative enhancements.

48 Arkka Dhiratarata, "Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah" in the Youtube channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AME\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AME_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).

49 Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, digital edition 2023.

50 Nasywa Shihab, "Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah" in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AME\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AME_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).



Picture 2: The display of the translation searching feature; searching feature designed for certain surahs;

The innovations in the digital version of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* primarily encompass additional features and presentation techniques, maintaining substance parity with the printed version. The interpretation of Surah al-Fātihah in the digital version mirrors the printed edition's structure, including an opening and two verse groups. A notable non-substantive addition in the digital version is Quraish Shihab's preface for the 2021 edition, reflecting the latest release incorporated into the application. Furthermore, the digital version features a separate sub-chapter for concluding remarks, detailing the inception and completion dates of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*'s writing, along with expressions of gratitude to various parties.<sup>51</sup>

### **The Purpose of Digital Transformation of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* Response to Contemporary Challenges**

The introduction of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* as a digital application<sup>52</sup> is part of the Qur'an Study Center's (PSQ)<sup>53</sup> initiatives, offering subscription-based access

51 Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, digital edition 2023.

52 This application is still only available in the Android version, while the iOS version is still in the development stage. The Android version is prioritized because it adapts to the large number of Android smartphone users, which is around 89%. Another consideration is that purchasing power to buy Android devices is much more affordable than other devices.

53 Pusat Studi Al-Qur'an (The Qur'an Study Center) is an institution founded by M. Quraish Shihab which consistently promotes the values of the Qur'an to Indonesian society in particular and the world community in general.

with additional benefits and a trial period. Subscription grants full access to the *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* application, while non-subscribers receive limited access, with a seven-day trial period available. This subscription model serves as a sustainable funding mechanism, with proceeds utilized for further product development. Cost-effectiveness is emphasized, as subscription fees are claimed to be more economical than purchasing the printed version<sup>54</sup>, eliminating additional shipping expenses. Moreover, digital applications offer time efficiency compared to the lengthy printing process and provide space efficiency with the entire tafsir condensed into a digital format, enhancing accessibility for readers, particularly during travel.<sup>55</sup>

Digitalization marks a crucial milestone for the future trajectory of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*,<sup>56</sup> facilitating its introduction to a global audience and addressing challenges posed by language barriers and limited international recognition. The endeavor to make the Qur'an more accessible to diverse audiences necessitates digitalization, particularly to extend the reach of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* beyond its current prominence predominantly among Indonesian readers. However, the predominance of Indonesian language in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* presents a hurdle for its international recognition, as Arabic or English are more commonly associated with Qur'anic scholarship.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, the personalized approach of Quraish Shihab in his works, coupled with his relatively low profile outside Indonesia, contributes to the limited awareness of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* among scholars and the general public globally. Even prominent figures like Sheikh Ahmad al-Tayyeb, the Grand Sheikh of al-Azhar Egypt, were unaware of the extent of Quraish Shihab's contributions to Qur'anic interpretation.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, the digitalization initiative serves as a strategic endeavor to broaden the reach of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* and enhance its visibility among a broader international audience.

The digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* represents an adaptive response to contemporary technological advancements, ensuring its continued relevance and accessibility in the digital age. The emergence of digital technology has transformed

54 The subscription fee for the *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* digital application is IDR. 500,000 for lifetime access, while the price for the printed version is IDR. 3,800,000. A free version of the app is also available, but with limited access. Users are also given free trial access to the premium version for 7 days.

55 Nasywa Shihab, "Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah" in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AMe\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AMe_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).

56 Currently a project is underway to translate *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* into English.

57 Ulil Abshar Abdalla, "Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah" in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AMe\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AMe_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).

58 Muchlis M. Hanafi, "Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah" in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AMe\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AMe_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).

various aspects of human life, including religious practices and moral frameworks, in the era of global disruption. In this context, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* serves as a beacon of guidance, offering insights derived from Qur'anic values to navigate the complexities of modern life amidst the deluge of information. By embracing digitalization, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* extends its reach and impact, enabling widespread access to Qur'anic teachings across diverse societal groups, transcending geographical barriers and temporal constraints.<sup>59</sup>

### ***The Ease that God Promises***

During the launch of the *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* application, Quraish Shihab expressed gratitude for the ease he experienced while developing the interpretation work. He recounted instances where he effortlessly found solutions to challenges encountered during the writing process, including locating opinions in literature needed for *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. This ease persisted throughout the development stages, from the broadcast of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* on Metro TV to the launch of its digital application. Quraish Shihab attributed this remarkable ease to the divine promise of Allah SWT, which guarantees facilitation in studying the Qur'an, as mentioned in QS. Al-Qamar [54]: 17, 22, 32, and 40.<sup>60</sup>

The ease referred to in QS. Al-Qamar [54]: 17, 22, 32, dan 40<sup>61</sup> is Allah SWT's effort to provide an understanding of the Qur'an to humankind. In his written explanation in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, Quraish Shihab explains the ease referred to in the verse as follows.

“... Allah SWT. make it easier to understand the Qur'an, among other things, by bringing it down little by little, repeating the description, giving a series of examples and parables concerning abstract things with something that is visible to the senses through choosing language that has the richest vocabulary and is easy to pronounce and understand, popular, feels beautiful to the hearts of those who hear it, and is in accordance with human nature so that there is no confusion in understanding the message.”<sup>62</sup>

The explanation above explains the ease that Allah SWT has given to humankind in order to understand the Qur'an, during the transmission process,

59 Nasywa Shihab, “Launching Aplikasi Tafsir al-Misbah” in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AMe\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AMe_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs).

60 Quraish Shihab, “Launching Aplikasi Tafsir Al-Mishbah” in the Youtube Channel of *Quraish Shihab*, [https://youtu.be/kSo\\_AMe\\_20U?si=SbF\\_bMuO-I0TPNgs](https://youtu.be/kSo_AMe_20U?si=SbF_bMuO-I0TPNgs)

61 These four verses have the same redaction, namely “*walaqad yassarnā al-qur’ān li al-dzīkr fahā min al-muddakir*” (“We have made it easy to learn lessons form the Qur’an: will anyone take heed?”)

62 Quraish M. Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah: Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2021), vol. 13, 242-243.

substance, and language delivery.

Interestingly, there is a difference in explanation between written delivery and oral delivery regarding the ease mentioned in QS. al-Qamar. In the context of digitalizing *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, Quraish Shihab explains this ease with an explanation that is different from the interpretation in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. If the written explanation in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* tends to explain the meaning of the verse in general, in the context of digitalization, Quraish Shihab explains the ease of the verse by including his personal experience. In his oral explanation, according to Quraish Shihab, the word “we” in the verse implies the involvement of parties other than God. Among them are printing, broadcasting, digitalizing, and other parties who have facilitated the process of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* from the beginning until now. The easiness that he continuously obtains, including in the development of digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, is none other than a form of *wasilah* (intermediary) given by Allah SWT in order that the messages of the Qur’an be easily understood by others. The difference in context that created these two different explanations implies that the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* contains the connection between Quraish Shihab and his reception of the Qur’an, not just maintaining the medium of presentation.

### ***An Effort to Make the Qur’an Down-to-Earth in a Digital Society***

*Tafsir Al-Mishbah* has evolved to become a vital component of daily life in Indonesia, serving as both an academic reference and a practical guide for the general public and preachers. Due to its use of straightforward Indonesian language, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* is sought after as reading material, facilitating easy comprehension of the Qur’an’s contents. Its significant influence is evidenced by its adaptation into a television program on a private channel in Indonesia. Furthermore, its recent digitalization into a smartphone application highlights its ongoing transformation across various platforms, solidifying its integration into the daily lives of Indonesian individuals

The creation and evolution of an interpretation work are intricately linked to societal acceptance and underlying motives, shaped by the diverse dynamics and issues within the social space.<sup>63</sup> *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*’s presence in society, from its inception to its ongoing development, is driven by a dedication to serve society’s needs. Given the significant technological advancements, with over 5.16 billion internet users worldwide,<sup>64</sup> embracing digital transformation has become imperative.

63 Gusmian, *Khazanah Tafsir Indonesia, Dari Hermeneutika Hingga Ideologi*, 219.

64 Cindy Mutia Annur, “Jumlah Pengguna Internet Global Tembus 5,16 Miliar Orang Pada Januari 2023,” *Databoks*, last modified 2023, accessed December 21, 2023, <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/datapublish/2023/02/03/jumlah-pengguna-internet-global-tembus-516-miliar-orang-pada-januari-2023>.

Beyond necessity, digitalization offers an opportunity to reach a broader audience, with inherent advantages in financial, spatial, and temporal efficiency compared to traditional printed formats.

In contemporary times, interpretation works like *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* are defined by their orientation towards serving society, emphasizing the Qur'an's role as a guiding book for humanity, rather than engaging in ideological struggles.<sup>65</sup> Quraish Shihab's approach, both in verbal and written explanations, tends to avoid divisive interpretations, fostering inclusivity amidst differences.<sup>66</sup> Amidst the overwhelming influx of information, the digital transformation of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* serves as a platform for individuals to independently study and comprehend the Qur'an, while still respecting the authority figures in this realm.

The digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* has revolutionized people's engagement with the Qur'an, enabling independent study while maintaining ties to authoritative figures. The alignment between Quraish Shihab's Indonesian context and the readers' background enhances understanding and minimizes misinterpretations of Qur'anic verses, which can vary due to cultural differences. This authoritative approach to interpretation helps to uphold religious authority in the face of widespread access to information, ensuring continuity and stability in religious understanding.

### Reception Behind the Virtual Scenes: An Effort to Deconstruct the Digitalization Phenomenon

The digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* is intricately linked to Quraish Shihab's interpretation of divine ease as mentioned in QS. al-Qamar [54]: 17, 22, 32, and 40. Drawing from Sam D. Gill's and Ahmad Rafiq's<sup>67</sup> delineation of the two functions of the holy book, Quraish Shihab's understanding of divine ease, manifested through the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, exemplifies the performative function of the Qur'anic text. This digital development stems directly from the Qur'an itself, serving as its starting point. Conversely, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, as a product of interpretive thought, embodies the informative function of the holy book. While there may appear to be an overlap between these functions, distinctions exist. When viewed as

65 Abdul Mustaqim, *Pergeseran Epistemologi Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2008), 83–85; Abdul Mustaqim, *Aliran-Aliran Tafsir: Dari Periode Klasik Hingga Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2005), 79–81.

66 Munirul Ikhwan, "An Indonesian Initiative to Make the Qur'an Down-to-Earth: Muhammad Quraish Shihab and His School of Exegesis", *Dissertation* (Freie Universitat Berlin, 2015), 160–161. Muhammad Alwi HS, "'Diam Adalah Emas': Eksklusivitas Tafsir Pada Term Yang Tidak Diterjemahkan Dalam Tafsir Al-Mishbah Karya M. Quraish Shihab," *Suhuf* 16, no. 1 (2023): 1–19 <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v16i1.819>;

67 Ahmad Rafiq, "Living Qur'an: Its Texts and Practices in the Functions of the Scripture," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 22, no. 2 (2021): 481–483.



an abstract representation of Quraish Shihab's Qur'anic comprehension, aligns with the informative function. However, in terms of its tangible form and presentation, the digitization of embodies the performative function, facilitating its dissemination and accessibility.

The performative function of the text within the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* aligns with Ahmad Rafiq's classification of functionalist reception, emphasizing users' motives and beliefs over understanding the Qur'an's content.<sup>68</sup> Quraish Shihab's explanation of the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* links it to the promised ease in QS. al-Qamar, prioritizing his personal beliefs and experiences over normative interpretations of the verse. This departure from normative explanations, evident in *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*, underscores Shihab's focus on individual beliefs and experiences. In his interpretation, Shihab elucidates Allah's provision of conveniences for humanity to understand the Qur'an, spanning its transmission, substance, and linguistic aspects. These normative explanations often tie back to the Qur'an's revelation and its original audience in Arab society. Conversely, the reception of ease in QS. al-Qamar concerning *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*'s digitalization, conveyed orally by Shihab, diverges from the Qur'an's revelation era, addressing contemporary societal contexts instead.

The arguments developed in this research show that the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* cannot be interpreted solely as a form of transition in presentation media to keep pace with technological advances. This simplification will have the impact of reducing other meanings and closing the possibility of new meanings that will emerge over time. In a broader scope, the digitalization of the Qur'an and tafsir works is relatively neglected in the discourse of the living Qur'an and living tafsir. This neglect also has the impact of narrowing the scope of the living Qur'an and living tafsir, which is filled with studies that are only oriented towards consumption of the Qur'an, not production and distribution. On the other hand, thus far, attention to interpretive works has been directed more towards the abstract ideas contained therein, while the physical form of the text and the appearance of the work tends to be ignored. Society tends to underestimate the existence and role of objects and place more value on human actions in shaping the social world.<sup>69</sup>

The prevailing perception of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* as solely the work of Quraish Shihab limits broader considerations of its physical form and digital adaptation, often normalizing digitalization as an inevitable response to technological progress. This

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68 Rafiq, "The Reception of the Qur'an in Indonesia: A Case Study of the Place of the Qur'an in a Non-Arabic Speaking Community," *Dissertation* (The Temple University, 2014), 148–154.

69 Suit, *Qur'an Matters: Material Mediations and Religious Practice in Egypt*, 3–6.

normalization overlooks the potential for new interpretations and meanings that may emerge from the digitalization process, stifling innovation and creative exploration of this phenomenon.

The perception of digitalization as synonymous with progress and print as emblematic of traditionality reflects a binary oppositional logic that oversimplifies complex phenomena. This binary logic, which categorizes things in absolute terms, warrants deconstruction to unveil the multifaceted meanings inherent in the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. Deconstruction, as advocated by Derrida, challenges the notion of a single authoritative interpretation,<sup>70</sup> recognizing the perpetual openness of human experience and language.<sup>71</sup> In this dynamic context, texts serve as symbols that only partially encapsulate meaning, prompting an ongoing struggle for interpretation. Thus, while digitalization may symbolize progress, its true significance extends beyond technological advancement to encompass reception, ideology, and innovation.

## Conclusion

The digital transformation of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* represents a significant response to contemporary societal demands for accessible religious resources and enhanced engagement with sacred texts. By digitizing this renowned tafsir, efforts have been made to extend its reach to a wider audience, thereby fulfilling the evolving needs of diverse communities. The incorporation of innovative features such as bookmarking, thematic inte

rpresentation tools, and accessibility enhancements underscores a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that individuals from various backgrounds, including those with disabilities, can engage meaningfully with the Qur'an commentary. Moreover, this digital adaptation facilitates independent Qur'an study while maintaining connections with authoritative figures, thus addressing the contemporary challenge of navigating shifts in religious authority in modern society.

The ethos of ease, as articulated by Quraish Shihab in QS. al-Qamar, serves as a guiding principle throughout the digitalization process, foregrounding the importance of personal experiences in interpreting religious texts. This emphasis on individual engagement with the Qur'an fosters a dynamic relationship between readers and the sacred text, challenging normative interpretations and inviting diverse

70 Amanu Abdul Aziz, "Dekonstruksi Gender Perspektif Rasyid Ridha," in *Di Manakah Gerangan Kebenaran*, ed. Abd Muin. (Jakarta: PTIQ Press, 2022), 11–12.

71 Ahmad Saleh Mukarom, Syihabul Fuqan, and B. Busro, "Tradisi Pembacaan Maulid Barzanji Dalam Perspektif Fenomenologi-Dekonstruksi Derrida," *Al-Adyan: Journal of Religious Studies* 2, no. 1 (2021): 23.

perspectives. Through this lens, the digitalization of *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* emerges not merely as a technological advancement but as a testament to the ongoing dialogue between religious texts and societal realities. By embracing digital innovations, scholars and practitioners can navigate the complexities of contemporary life while enriching their spiritual journeys through deeper Qur'an exploration.

While this study has shed light on the transformative potential of digitizing *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* and its implications for contemporary Qur'an study, several avenues for future research remain unexplored. Further investigation could delve into the reception of digital tafsirs among different religious communities and the impact of digitalization on traditional modes of Qur'an interpretation. Additionally, exploring the intersection of digital humanities and religious studies may offer insights into innovative approaches for engaging with sacred texts in the digital age. As technology continues to evolve, ongoing research in this area promises to deepen our understanding of the dynamic relationship between religion, technology, and society.

### **Supplementary Materials**

The data presented in this study are available in [insert article or supplementary material here] (Usually the datasets were analyzed from library research can be found in the whole data references ).

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### **Authors' contributions**

All listed authors contributed to this article. R.A. wrote the original draft, reviewed and edited it, and wrote the formal analysis, compiled the resources, conceptualised the study, and managed the project administration. S.N.I was responsible for the methodology and validation and supervised the project

### **Data availability statement**

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

None of the authors of this study has a financial or personal relationship with other people that could inappropriately influence or bias the content of the study.

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