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TAFSIR RAHMAT: HISTORICAL TRACES AND BACKGROUND OF OEMAR BAKRY'S WORK

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ABSTRACT

Tafsir Rahmat by Oemar Bakry is one of the scholarly legacies of Indonesian Islamic scholars that deserves to be studied and appreciated. This tafsir employs a communicative and informative language style, making it easier for readers to understand the meanings of Qur'anic verses. Its emergence served as a response to various socio-religious issues of the time, which had not been adequately addressed by previous Qur'anic interpretations. This study uses a library research method with a descriptive-analytical approach-collecting data and analyzing it as the basis for drawing conclusions. The findings show that *Tafsir Rahmat* consists of one volume, written over a period of three years (1981-1983), published in 1984, and translated into Sundanese in 1986 by M. Sulaiman in three volumes. It falls under the category of *tafsir bil al-ra'yi*, with a *lughawi* (linguistic) style, and follows the *ijmali* (global) method. This study contributes to revealing the significance of *Tafsir Rahmat* as part of the communicative and contextual heritage of Nusantara Qur'anic exegesis. Moreover, it clarifies the interpretive methods used by Oemar Bakry and highlights the relevance of his work to the socio-religious dynamics of his time, while also enriching the body of local tafsir literature that has long been underrepresented in academic discourse.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is a holy book revealed by Allah SWT as a way of life, and its teachings provide straight guidance (*shirat al-mustaqim*) for His creations, serving as a fundamental foundation (Shihab, 1995). The verses within the Qur'an address numerous subjects, including law, monotheism (tauhid), economics, social issues, and more. Undoubtedly, the Qur'an offers solutions to problems across various aspects of human life. However, precisely because it is the word of God, its verses must first be interpreted to ensure their meaning is properly understood and not misinterpreted (Amri, 2014). It is widely acknowledged that Islamic scholars have

produced numerous works that illuminate and foster understanding, particularly for Muslims. However, a closer look at Indonesia reveals that our scholars are by no means inferior to those from the Middle East or "popular" figures like Fazlur Rahman and Sayyid Qutb. The reality, however, is strikingly different; it seems challenging for them to produce works, such as tafsir (exegesis) (Hidayati, 2018). Several assumptions can be considered. One potential external factor is the slow adoption of electronic media in Indonesia, which could otherwise disseminate information or serve as a supporting platform. On the other hand, an internal factor is the reluctance to localize and widely spread the ideas of indigenous scholars. This is because Indonesian academics tend to be more loyal to and enamored with established foreign figures than with the works of local scholars, and they are more influenced by them.

Indonesia's experience with Western colonialism (pre-independence) was a significant catalyst for the people's desire to break free from colonial shackles. Yet, after gaining independence, the Indonesian populace faced various challenges that led to internal divisions. The term "Nationalist Islam" was at least echoed then as a result of Islamic politics, signifying the fusion of Nationalism (kebangsaan) with Islamic thought. Notably, around the 19th century, Middle Eastern nations experienced pressure from Western powers, who had previously endured a "Dark Age" due to church dogmatism. This context spurred the emergence of intellectual pioneers such as Jamaluddin Al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh (Anwar & Hasanudin, 2022). However, it was precisely during that time that Europe strove to overcome this decline.

During that era, Islam (the Eastern nations) experienced a Golden Age, where its people lived in harmony, a stark contrast to Europe, which was even then ravaged by plagues, beginning in Italy (Eresmair, 2019). Subsequently, the Eighth Crusade occurred, which marked the genesis of intellectual exchange between Islam and Christianity. This is evident, for instance, in Syria's liberation from Christian rule and the allowance for Christians to live peacefully within that city (Pradana, 2021). However, that war exerted pressure on Islam. One consequence was the desire of the Europeans to acquire knowledge from Muslim scholars; it's even recorded that they committed plagiarism of Muslim works, including the theory of the invisible hand, popularized by Adam Smith (Eresmair, 2019). Another prominent reason, beyond the skepticism toward Islam arising from the Crusades, is the significant attention paid to the intersection of Islamic teachings as guided by the Qur'an, which are believed to originate from their own scriptures (Christian) or from Judaism.

More precisely, this can be understood through Harmut Bobzin's observation: *"The Qur'an refers in various ways to the teachings of the Christians and Jews, which it partially adopts, partially corrects or completely rejects. Thus it is not surprising that, from the beginning, the Qur'an also became the object of Christian and Jewish interest"* (Bobzin, 2004). Such a perspective enables various dimensions of their thought regarding Islam through the Qur'an, especially after the aforementioned war. We even understand that several works by Western scholars subsequently claimed the Qur'an was merely a plagiarism of earlier Christian and Jewish

scriptures. Theodor Nöldeke is one such example. Nöldeke, a German Orientalist, launched his work titled "Geschichte des Qur'ân" in 1860, with his thinking emphasizing the Qur'an's alleged influence from Jewish and Christian traditions. His opinion, as written in his book, states that the Qur'an is Muhammad's own composition. However, he contended it did not directly refer to earlier scriptures because Muhammad was supposedly unfamiliar with them. Instead, Nöldeke argued it was solely based on traditions of belief and high regard for Jewish and Christian teachings. Naturally, such a claim sparked controversy among Muslims, who believe the Qur'an is solely divine revelation (Panandang, 2023).

This perspective is what likely led Muslim scholars to believe that to refute such claims, they must offer an understanding rooted in the historical record of the Qur'an's revelation, along with its universal and perfecting teachings. Muhammad Mustafa A'zami, for instance, undertook this in his book, "The History of The Qur'anic Text From Revelation to Compilation: A Comparative Study With the Old and New Testaments," where he directly compares the Qur'an with the Bible itself (Mustafa A'zami, 2011). This context then inspired Muslim thinkers and the Muslim community to contribute to understanding the teachings guided by divine revelation (the Qur'an). It also spurred them to provide proof of its truth so that these teachings could be applied in real life.

Accompanying the dynamic development and expansion of Islam, its reach extended to various corners of the world through diverse missionary channels including trade, marriage, education, and politics (Al Fiqri, 2024). Indonesia is one such example, having already been influenced by earlier teachings such as Hinduism and Buddhism. Islam entered Indonesia via several routes, and there are various accounts regarding its initial arrival. These include the Gujarat Theory, proposed by Pijnepel (13th century), as well as the Persian Theory by Hoesin Djajadiningrat, which, along with the Arab Theory, posits that Islam arrived in Indonesia in the 7th century CE (Ningsih, 2021). From that time onward, Islam was well-received by the indigenous population for several reasons. These include the friendly demeanor of Indonesian inhabitants towards all foreign arrivals and the existing religious values already integrated into and permeating the local culture. These factors facilitated Islam's assimilation and socialization within the society (Ghofur, 2020).

Additionally, observing the many attitudes, traditions, and customs of the society that embraced Islamic values ultimately led to the majority of Indonesia's population becoming Muslim adherents (Jailani & Rachman, 2020). Following this, Muslims actively participated and contributed to national progress, playing a crucial role in resisting colonial powers to achieve independence. However, it's undeniable that Indonesia is a unified nation with diverse characteristics, including varied religious and nationalistic ideologies. Consequently, there have been several rebellions aiming to align Indonesia more closely with specific societal aspirations, such as communism, nationalism, or the establishment of an Islamic state (DI/TII).

However, the majority of devout Muslims, adhering to the advice of their scholars, desired and proposed the integration of these two ideologies: Islamic and Nationalist. This aspiration became an external factor in Indonesia's Islamic politics, subsequently leading to the emergence of political parties oriented around both concepts. Yet, realizing such a grand vision was far from easy. The journey was fraught with complexities, struggles, and persistent slander. Events like the G30S/PKI coup attempt and the arrest of several religious scholars, accused of harming or planning actions that threatened the state's continuity, constantly challenged this endeavor. One notable figure was Buya Hamka, the author of the Al-Azhar tafsir, who was imprisoned by the Indonesian government in 1964 and detained in various resting houses in the Puncak area, including Bungalow Herlin, Harjuna, Mess Brimob Megamendung, and the Cimacan Police Detention Room (Murni, 2015).

It's understood that the major task of the Indonesian government post-independence was to provide justice, welfare, and a decent life for its people. Simultaneously, this is where scholars, particularly for Muslims, became essential in offering an understanding of how the Qur'an, as a guide, responds to these problems. Their contributions can't be overlooked, as their efforts in writing scholarly works and their orientation towards national movements for Indonesia stand as proof of their consistent commitment to protecting the nation from issues leading to destruction, whether from internal divisions or external threats. Among the notable figures for their services is the author of modern Indonesian tafsir, Oemar Bakry (Federspiel, 1996). His tafsir, titled Rahmat (Tafsir Rahmat), was written with the hope of becoming a mercy for humanity, aligning with the Qur'an's purpose as "a mercy for all worlds" (*rahmatun lil 'alamin*) (Jalaluddin, 2021).

One key reason for writing this tafsir was that existing Qur'anic translations and interpretations at the time were difficult for many to understand, as they didn't align well with proper Indonesian linguistic structures. Because of this, Oemar Bakry sought an innovative approach to help people easily grasp the meaning and content of the Qur'anic verses, resulting in the tafsir named Rahmat. This current writing will explore the background, biography, and characteristics of Tafsir Rahmat, offering insight into the work of our predecessor, Oemar Bakry.

II. METHODS

The researcher employed qualitative research, emphasizing the library research method. This approach aims to explain reality and is presented through descriptive-analytical writing with detailed sentences and accessible language. This differs from quantitative methods, which require experimentation to obtain data (Sugiyono, 2013). Additionally, this research also aims to understand the background of the issues raised in this study. The ultimate goal is to achieve results outlined in the research objectives by examining the primary source of Tafsir Rahmat in depth, and by gathering various previous studies (literature review) to serve as a comparative basis for this research.

In qualitative research, the data produced isn't in the form of numbers; instead, it consists of expressions or statements in written form. (Baidan & Aziz, 2016) This approach is highly relevant to the current research because the necessary data is already available in both primary sources and other media. The process simply requires comparing these data sources to reach a conclusion that accurately represents each piece of information. Consequently, theoretical research (library research) is inherently abstract, rather than concrete (Baidan & Aziz, 2016).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Biography of Oemar Bakry

He was born in "Jorong," a village near Lake Singkarak in Solok, West Sumatra, specifically on June 26, 1916 (Bakry, 1984). His education began at a village school before he continued to a connecting school in the small town of Singkarak. In 1931, he completed his studies at Diniyah Putra, and in 1932, he graduated from Sekolah Thawalib in Padang Panjang. His next educational pursuit was in Padang, at Mu'allimin al-Islamiyah, where he graduated in 1936 with top honors. Subsequently, in 1954, he attended the Faculty of Letters at the University of Indonesia but did not complete his degree there. He was widely known as Datuk Tan Besar. His intellectual career began between 1933 and 1936, when he started teaching at various schools, including his alma mater, Sekolah Thawalib in Padang.

Before delving into his career, it's worth noting that Sekolah Thawalib (Thawalib School) was a renowned center for modern Islamic education. It was founded by Buya Hamka's father, Haji Abdul Karim Amrullah, from Maninjau, Agam Regency, on May 11, 1911. Initially, the school began as a study group at the "Jembatan Besi" surau (prayer house), now known as Masjid Zuama, in Padang Panjang (Fuad Nasar, 2025). This also includes the founder's son, Buya Hamka, who enrolled in the school in 1918. The influence on his later works is undoubtedly linked to his education and intellectual career. One clear piece of evidence is how he used Indonesian language and a contextual approach in his interpretations. The entry of modern Islamic thought, particularly through Tafsir Al-Manar, initially began as lectures by Muhammad Abduh and were later compiled by his student, Rashid Rida. Quraish Shihab, as quoted by Kharlie, states that Tafsir Al-Manar was authored by three main scholars: Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Rashid Rida. This is rooted in the philosophy of Islamic modernism, where Muhammad Abduh was influenced by Jamaluddin Al-Afghani's ideas. The genesis of this tafsir, therefore, stems from Abduh's lectures while teaching at Al-Azhar, which were then recorded and published by his student, Rashid Rida (Tholabi Kharlie, 2018). Despite being under Dutch colonial supervision at the time, this book managed to enter Minangkabau and became a daily reading in Sekolah Thawalib.

Subsequently, in 1937, he became the Director of the Muhammadiyah Teachers' School in Padang Sidempuan, North Sumatra Province. It's also worth noting that modern Islamic thought, as implemented in Muhammadiyah education founded by KH. Ahmad Dahlan, likely explains why

several scholars who attended Thawalib School later became Muhammadiyah administrators. This includes Buya Hamka himself, who also studied under prominent Muhammadiyah figures like Ki Bagus Hadikusumo and AR. Fakhruddin during his scholarly journeys to Yogyakarta and Pekalongan (1924-1925) (Murni, 2015). When Japan was about to occupy Indonesia around 1938, he decided to return to teach at his alma mater, Sekolah Thawalib. He was also recorded as having served as Director of The Public Typewriting School, established around January 21, 1938, in Padang Panjang, which was later transformed into Taman Kemajuan and remains so today. Beyond education, he was also a renowned *da'i* (Islamic preacher), frequently delivering lectures in many places, including Jakarta, Bandung, and his home region of West Sumatra. Due to his extensive knowledge and critical thinking, he was invited to lecture at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, on December 22, 1983. Subsequently, he also lectured at IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya on February 11, 1984, IAIN Imam Bonjol Padang on March 26, 1984, and at Bung Hatta University Padang on March 28, 1984.

Business and Activist Career

His career began around the 1930s, where he served as a member of PERMI (Persatuan Muslim Indonesia). He later became a leader of Masyumi for the Central Sumatra region, encompassing Jambi, Riau, and West Sumatra. Beyond that, he was also the chairman of IKAPI (Indonesian Publishers Association) for the Jakarta Raya area, and involved with various foundations such as Al-Falah, Pemeliharaan Kesucian Qur'an Karim, and Thawalib Jakarta. His business career was remarkably impressive, involving collaborations with foreign entities from Europe, America, and Asia. He was also the founder and managing director of "Mutiara" in Jakarta and "Angkasa" in Bandung, both operating in the offset printing and publishing sector. He first ventured into the printing business on November 1, 1951, with "Mutiara" in Bukittinggi. This was followed by the "Angkasa" publisher in Bandung on January 13, 1966, which then expanded into offset printing in 1971. Finally, "Mutiara" Jakarta was established in 1972, also focusing on offset printing.

He also actively participated in several seminars, including the IPA (International Publishers Association) Congress in Kyoto, Japan, in 1976, and subsequently in Copenhagen (Amir, 2013). Oemar Bakry gained prominence in the late 1970s when he criticized the work of H.B. Jassin, often referred to as Indonesia's "Pope of Literature," deeming it controversial. Jassin had published a poetic translation of the Qur'an titled "Al-Qur'an Karim Bacaan Mulia," which was reportedly very popular at the time. After reviewing and analyzing Jassin's work, Oemar Bakry issued a strong critique, stating that the work was unfit for publication due to its significant errors, which could cause public unrest. He argued that Jassin's translation was inadequate, containing numerous mistakes. Oemar Bakry emphasized that accurate translation requires a deep command of Arabic, religious knowledge, and, of course, excellent Indonesian. He attributed Jassin's errors to his lack

of in-depth Arabic comprehension. Conversely, Bakry acknowledged that the Indonesian used in Jassin's work was exceptionally good.

Oemar Bakry' Literary Contributions

His first work was Tafsir Madrasy, initially written in Arabic in 1937 and gaining popularity around the 1950s. This tafsir features a unique approach where it lists *mufradat* (individual word meanings) followed by their interpretations. It employs the tahlili (analytical) method, offering diverse interpretations and cross-references with other Qur'anic verses. The discussion directly addresses the meaning and content of the verses, yet provides extensive and detailed explanations, including a thorough analysis of the *mufradat*. Here are some other works he authored (Devi Permatasari, 2021);

a. Qur'anic Studies (Tafsir)

Tafsir Rahmat was written between 1981 and 1983, a period of three years. It utilizes the Indonesian language, and its approach heavily emphasizes contextual interpretation.

b. Hadith Studies

Al-Hadith as-Shahihah (The Authentic Hadith), explanation of 50 Hadith.

c. Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)

Makarimul Akhlak (Noble Character/Ethics), Akhlak Muslim (Muslim Ethics/Character), Pelajaran Sembayang (lesson on Prayer), Merawat Orang Sakit dan Menyelenggarakan Jenazah (Caring for the Sick and Managing Funerals), and Dengan Taqwa Mencapai Bahagia (Achieving Happiness Through Piety).

d. Socio-Political Works

Islam Menentang Sekularisme (Islam Against Secularism), Bung Hatta Selamat Jalan Citacitamu Kami Teruskan (Farewell, Bung Hatta, We Continue Your Ideals, Bunga Rampai Sumpah Pemuda (Anthology of the Youth Pledge), and other related works.

e. Language

Indonesian-Arabic-English Dictionary, Arabic-Indonesian Dictionary.

Oemar Bakry'ss Tafsir Rahmat

This tafsir can be considered a concise interpretation, consisting of only a single volume, thus classifying it under the ijmalī (global) method of tafsir. In this work, Oemar Bakry connected his interpretations with the technological advancements of the time, addressing topics such as marriage, science and technology, worship, health, community economics, socio-politics, faith, and other themes found in the Qur'an (Federspiel, 1996). He emphasized the importance of *dakwah* (inviting to Islam) to humanity, as Allah SWT states in Qs. An-Nahl 125-128. At a glance, this tafsir resembles M. Farid Wajdi's work, Tafsir Al-Mufasssir, also consisting of a single volume. Both aim to enable readers to easily grasp guidance and understand the meaning within.

Oemar Bakry had a specific reason for limiting his tafsir to a single volume. He believed that modern individuals are often preoccupied with worldly affairs and lack ample time to read lengthy and dense tafsirs filled with *khilafiah* (differences of opinion) and *israiliyat* (narratives of Jewish or Christian origin). Therefore, he felt a concise interpretation would make it easier for them to grasp the Qur'an as a guide for life (Bakry, 1984). Furthermore, the limited proficiency in Arabic among the Indonesian populace served as another reason for writing this tafsir in Indonesian, aiming for ease of understanding.

This tafsir spans 1333 pages and offers explanations that are concise yet comprehensive, presented in a unique, easy-to-understand, and engaging style. The cover is blue, and the initial pages feature a photograph and biography of the author. Its layout moves from right to left, with the Qur'anic verse on the right, followed by its translation and interpretation on the left. Essentially, the interpretations in this tafsir provide a broad explanation of the verses' meanings, tailored to fit the page limit, as each explanation is contained within a single page. Despite its concise nature, readers can easily grasp the content, allowing them to truly comprehend the guidance and wisdom of the Qur'an (Federspiel, 1996).

According to Oemar Bakry, Tafsir Rahmat utilizes Indonesian language that incorporates newer terminology and spelling. Here are some examples supporting this claim: First, Oemar Bakry replaced certain words with their contemporary equivalents. For instance, the word *samawat*, which is typically translated as "langit" (sky/heaven) in Indonesian, was rendered as "ruang angkasa" (outer space). This choice was intended to reflect the vastness of modern scientific knowledge regarding the universe and its associated terminology (Bakry, 1984). Second, Oemar Bakry added explanatory words, often enclosed in parentheses, to prevent readers from encountering difficulties or having questions about the meaning of the verses. For example:

وَالَّذِينَ يَمْسِكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ

"And as for those who follow (the teachings of) the Book (the Torah) and establish Prayer, We will surely not waste (nullify) the reward of those who do good." (Bakry, 1984).

This tafsir is undoubtedly a work we should appreciate, representing the arduous efforts of Indonesian scholars. While Oemar Bakry, as a human being, naturally had both strengths and weaknesses in his work—even despite his criticisms of H.B. Jassin—this should inspire us, the younger generation. It's our responsibility to inherit the knowledge of our predecessors and strive to create valuable works that contribute to human well-being. The advancements of the current era provide easy access to delve into knowledge as effectively and creatively as possible, paving the way for a more advanced national civilization.

History of Writing and Characteristics of Tafsir Rahmat

True to its name, the hope for this tafsir is that it serves as a mercy for all humanity, just as stated in Qs. Yusuf, verse 2. Another goal was for it to address contemporary societal issues that existing Indonesian Qur'anic interpretations struggled to answer, thus responding to readers' requests for a more meaningful interpretation (Anwar & Hasanudin, 2022). Thanks to his extensive knowledge and profound thinking, he successfully completed it within a three-year period (1981-1983). Next, Tafsir Rahmat was first published in 1984. In 1986, it was translated into Sundanese by M. Sulaiman, becoming "Tafsir Rahmat Basa Sunda," which expanded into 3 volumes (Bakry, 1986). In Tafsir Rahmat, the interpretation follows the tartib mushafi (order of the Qur'anic text), beginning with Surah Al-Fatihah and concluding with Surah An-Nas. The interpretation of each surah always starts with detailed information about the surah being studied, such as its theme, number of verses, alternative names and their reasons, place of revelation, and so on. For example, in Surah Al-Fatihah, Oemar Bakry explains its number of verses, its other names and their origins, where it was revealed, and the reason for its placement at the beginning of the Qur'an (Bakry, 1984).

The chosen language style in Tafsir Rahmat is reportive, leaning towards conveying moral messages (as seen in Qs. Al-An'am: 91-95). It employs a scientific language style (Qs. Al-Maidah: 87-88), making it more elegant, communicative, simple, and emphasizing clear reporting. Tafsir Rahmat falls under the category of tafsir bil al-ra'yi (interpretation based on personal reasoning and opinion) because the author predominantly prioritizes reasoning and intellect in his interpretations, without deviating from linguistic rules. This approach aims for easy public acceptance in understanding the meaning of a verse. The dominant characteristic of this tafsir can be described as lughawi (linguistic). Oemar Bakry consistently examines the linguistic context, specifically in Indonesian. He focuses on improving translations to align with Indonesian spelling and usage, thereby facilitating comprehension (Labib Jalaluddin, 2021).

The example of Tafsir

Qs. Al-Furqan (25) verse 2

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا

"He it is to whom belongs the dominion of the outer space and the earth. He has no son, nor is there any partner in His dominion. And He has created everything and determined its (harmonious) measure with utmost precision".

Verse 2 explains that the God who sent down the Qur'an is All-Powerful and the Perfect Creator. The Qur'an He revealed is more perfect and complete than all His previously revealed scriptures. All the principles for achieving salvation in this world and happiness in the afterlife are already included within it (Bakry, 1984).

Qs. Al-Mu'minun (23) verse 33

وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ أُمَّةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ وَأَنَا رَبُّكُمْ فَاتَّقُونِ

"And indeed, this (monotheistic religion) is your religion—a single religion—and I am your Lord, so be mindful of Me. "

Oemar Bakry explained that, fundamentally, religions descended based on Tawhid (monotheism). He asserted that it's inappropriate for Abrahamic religions to be fractured by division, just as it is for the Muslim community to be fragmented by different schools of thought (madhhabs) or personal desires. Unity and solidarity should never be broken; on the contrary, strength lies in unity, and disunity leads to destruction (Bakry, 1984).

Qs. Ali-Imran (3) Verse 159

فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

"So by a mercy from Allah, you (Muhammad) were lenient with them. And if you had been rude in speech and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely (upon Him)."

Oemar Bakry explained that this verse highlights the noble characteristics of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He was kind and gentle towards believers, demonstrating an open-mindedness that embraced consultation in matters of both war and worldly affairs, always refraining from harshness or hard-heartedness. Furthermore, the Prophet was known for his justice, never betraying trust, particularly in the distribution of war spoils. Crucially, through his delivery of *dakwah* (invitation to Islam) and the Noble Qur'an, he guided believers from the profound darkness of polytheism into the illuminating light of faith and piety (Bakry, 1984).

IV. CONCLUSION

Tafsir Rahmat is a single-volume Qur'anic exegesis, spanning 1333 pages, authored by Oemar Bakry (born June 26, 1916) from West Sumatra. He completed the work over a three-year period, from 1981 to 1983. It was first published in 1984, and subsequently, in 1986, M. Sulaiman translated it into Sundanese, expanding it into three volumes. This tafsir was written with the hope of serving as a merciful guide for the Indonesian community at the time, and it also aimed to address contemporary societal problems that previous Indonesian tafsirs had not adequately resolved, thus fulfilling readers' desire for a more relevant interpretation.

Oemar Bakry was a multifaceted figure: an organization and party activist, a businessman, and a renowned Islamic preacher. Notably, he was invited to lecture at Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, and several other universities. His intellectual development was significantly influenced by modernist Islamic thinkers like Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Ridha, an influence that took root during his education at Sekolah Thawalib around 1932. In the business sphere, he founded printing

and publishing houses named "Mutiara" and "Angkasa." His leadership extended to various organizations; he served as the Director of the Muhammadiyah Teachers' School in Sidempuan and chaired several foundations, including IKAPI (Indonesian Publishers Association), Pemeliharaan Kesucian Qur'an Karim, Al-Falah, and Thawalib. He was also a member of PERMI (Persatuan Muslim Indonesia). His most notable work, *Tafsir Rahmat*, is characterized by its linguistic (lughawi) approach. It employs the ijmalī (global) method of interpretation and is categorized as *tafsir bil al-ra'yi* (based on personal reasoning). The tafsir is written in an elegant, simple, concise, and easily understandable language, with a reportive and communicative style.

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