

Volume 20, No. 3  December 2023

JOURNAL OF

Islam in Asia

A Refereed International Biannual Arabic – English Journal

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

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JOURNAL OF *Islam in Asia*

Volume 20, No. 3 December 2023

ISSN: 1823-0970 E-ISSN: 2289-8077

Journal of Islam in Asia

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E-ISSN: 2289-8077

JOURNAL OF ISLAM IN ASIA

Vol. 20, No. 3, December 2023

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31436/jia.v20i3>

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Opulence of Islam in Western Countries: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions

Keindahan Islam di Negara Barat: Kajian Terhadap Sumbangan Muhammad Hamidullah

Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani* and Thameem Ushama**

Abstract

This paper aims to explore the opulence of Islam in Western nations, paying special attention to the contributions of Muhammad Hamidullah, one of the most influential Islamic scholars of the 20th century, whose works have been translated into English, German, Sindhi, and Turkish. His writings have gained widespread acclaim. The paper also examines his writings, demonstrating Muhammad Hamidullah's bravery. This study holds significance because he maintained the highest standards of academic integrity. The study further examines his contributions to critical areas of Islamic scholarship, including Islamic politics, Hadith literature, Qur'anic translation, Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) biography, and Islamic international law. These areas of study could be a valuable and trustworthy source of information. The study briefly addresses his foreign education, his prolonged stay for research, his acquisition of foreign languages, his strategies for promoting Islam through his writings, and his determination to bring the light of Islam to non-Muslims in order to highlight the splendour of Islam. His writings serve as the primary sources for illuminating the splendour of Islam, and a qualitative content analysis of them has been the methodology employed in this study. Finally, the study provides

* PhD. Scholar at ISTAC-IIUM, Lecturer, Institute of Southern Punjab Multan, Pakistan.

** Corresponding author and a Professor at the Department of Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion, AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, and ISTAC, International Islamic University Malaysia. Email: thameem @iium. edu. my

information about him and his commitment to advancing Islam in the West to a global audience.

Keywords: Educational Visits, Foreign Publications, International Conferences, and Promoting Islam.

Abstrak

Kertas kerja ini bertujuan untuk meneroka keindahan ajaran Islam di negara-negara Barat, memberi perhatian khusus kepada sumbangan Muhammad Hamidullah, salah seorang sarjana Islam paling berpengaruh pada abad ke-20, yang karyanya telah diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Inggeris, Jerman, Sindhi, dan Turki. Tulisannya telah mendapat pujian yang meluas. Kajian ini itu juga meneliti tulisannya, menunjukkan keberanian Muhammad Hamidullah. Ianya penting kerana mengekalkan standard integriti akademik yang tertinggi. Kajian itu seterusnya mengkaji sumbangan kritis beliau dalam bidang keilmuan Islam seperti politik Islam, kesusasteraan Hadis, terjemahan al-Quran, biografi Nabi Muhammad (saw), dan undang-undang antarabangsa Islam. Bidang pengajian ini boleh menjadi sumber maklumat yang berharga dan boleh dipercayai. Kajian itu secara ringkas juga membincangkan pendidikan beliau di luar negara, tempoh penyelidikan, pemerolehan bahasa asing, strateginya untuk mempromosikan Islam melalui tulisannya, dan keazamannya untuk membawa cahaya Islam kepada orang bukan Islam untuk menonjolkan kemegahan Islam. Tulisan beliau berfungsi sebagai sumber utama untuk menerangi keindahan ajaran Islam, dan analisis kandungan kualitatif mengenainya telah menjadi metodologi yang digunakan dalam kajian ini. Akhirnya, kajian itu memberikan maklumat tentang beliau dan komitmennya untuk memajukan Islam di Barat kepada khalayak global.

Kata kunci: Lawatan Pendidikan, Penerbitan Asing, Persidangan Antarabangsa, dan Mempromosikan Islam.

Introduction

One of the most well-known academics in the Indo-Pak region, Muhammad Hamidullah, dedicated his life to advancing the Islamic Sciences (Qur'an, Hadith, and Fiqh). Despite being a native of Hyderabad, he had travelled to several nations, including France, Germany, Turkey, Pakistan, Europe, and Saudi Arabia, to witness the splendour of Islam. His methods for educating non-Muslims about Islam included writing books, conducting research, giving lectures abroad, and participating in conferences and seminars. His life serves as a testament to genuine religious fervour. His works stand out from those of his contemporaries and are distinctively different from them. His uncle offered him the advice to make it plain to non-Muslims what Islam looks like when the foundations of the British Raj in India became unstable. God endowed Hamidullah with various positive character attributes, including his excellent recall, tenacity, generosity, and sincere devotion to Islam. He decided to coexist with non-Muslims and dispel the myths about Islam that were turning non-Muslims against it.¹

History is replete with instances of clashes between the West and Islam. With the dawn of the twenty-first century, the phase of the struggle for world hegemony intensified, and worries about religious and civilisational issues have grown significantly.² At the start of the 19th century, tensions began to be settled. As Muslim culture and practices spread throughout Western nations, these disputes started to fade. Samuel Huntington's study provided the West with new guidelines for its approach towards the Muslim world.³ Arnold Toynbee and Basil Mathew are thought to have used the phrase "clash of civilisations" in their scholarly papers back in 1923 and 1926, respectively. Numerous experts have attempted to disprove the inaccuracy of Islamic moral teachings by studying Islamic studies. Instead of seeking knowledge, those academics looked into Muslim

¹ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics*, King Abdulaziz University Press (2015), p. 13

² Koechler, Hans. "After September 11: Clash of civilizations or dialogue." lecture given at the University of the Philippines, Asian Center Manila (2002).

³ Minhas Majeed Khan, "Is a Clash between Islam and the West inevitable." *Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2016): 1-23.

rights and Islamic ideals in terms of logical facts and attempted to alter the originality of Islamic law. They made an effort to portray Islam as a primitive and uncivilised faith. As a result, the misleading perception of Islam emerged as a formidable barrier to its path to success.

Additionally, the Muslim community was small then, making it challenging to portray Islam's principles. A comparison between Christian truth and the fallacy of Islamic philosophy was the goal of many European authors' work and Nicholas of Cusa's efforts.⁴ Western nations have many misconceptions regarding the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his character. Many Muslims migrated to the West for better work at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. As the Muslim population continues to increase over time, they have the opportunity to start spreading Islamic ideals to dispel all the myths propagated by those who support the decline of Islam.

Initially, there was not much literature on Islamic studies in languages other than English. Even so, English-language versions of numerous Islamic texts are available. The grandeur of Islam outweighed even books and the presence of Muslims in Western nations. Muslims must be free to live freely to uphold their Islamic traditions. According to Murad Hoffman, "*We should understand that the most successful way of giving invitation of Islam in a purely Non-Muslim environment is that we should spend our lives silently, peacefully and confidently. Definitely, one day our neighbours will be attentive towards our cleanliness, friendship, love, honesty and seriousness. Then, they will ask about our invitation to Islam.*"⁵

A brighter star in the 20th century contributed to the spread of Islamic knowledge and whose work in other languages may enable non-Muslims to comprehend Islam's significance. According to Murad Hoffman, Muhammad Hamidullah embodies the characteristics of an influential

⁴ Christopher Levy, Ian, Rita George-Tvrtković, and Donald F. Duclow. *Nicholas of Cusa and Islam: polemic and dialogue in the Late Middle Ages*. Brill, 2014.

⁵ Hofmann, Murad Wilfried. *Journey to Islam: diary of a German diplomat (1951-2000)*. Islamic Foundation, 2002.

preacher. The works and writings of Hamidullah are highly regarded by his generation's scholars, writers, and preachers.

Muhammad Hamidullah's Educational Visits

Muhammad Hamidullah was born at Katal Mandi, a historic location in Hyderabad, on February 19, 1908, the 16th of Muharram 1326 AH. In order to give his children a solid educational foundation, his father was concerned about their elementary education and religious upbringing. Father and other family elders provided Hamidullah with his early education. When he reached level six, he enrolled in Dar al-Ulum, and in 1919, he enrolled in Jami'ah Nizamiyah to continue his education. He studied the Qur'an, Fiqh, Kalam, Logic, and Philosophy there, completing the Maulavi and Kamil courses in 1923 and 1924, respectively. Osmania University in Hyderabad is where he earned his LLB and Master's degrees.⁶

His research work caused him great concern. He tried to gather information for his dissertation by visiting several libraries in Hyderabad. When he finished all the available books, but his research was still incomplete, he travelled to Egypt for more information. He met some German orientalist from Bonn University there. They invited Muhammad Hamidullah to their university in recognition of his research achievements. In addition, they promised to grant him the D. Phil doctorate in eleven months if he submitted the same thesis to their university. They made an offer without any financial backing. Nevertheless, thanks to a transfer scholarship from Osmania University, he finished his research at Bonn University. The first Western nation Hamidullah visited for research-related educational purposes was Germany.

The journey to Germany and the completion of the research were intended to examine the outcomes of legitimate research findings. His objective at the time was not to begin evangelising Islamic principles to non-Muslims. His subsequent trip was from Germany to England, where he spent

⁶ Hyderabad: also known as Hyderabad Deccan, located in the south-central Deccan region of the Indian subcontinent with its capital at the city of Hyderabad.

three years. He struggled to complete his higher education during this time, but English universities did not value his Bonn University degree. As a result, he decided to travel to France, where he registered at the Sorbonne University and earned a second doctorate, the D.Litt. After that, in 1936, he returned to Hyderabad and began working as a lecturer at Osmania University. Hamidullah worked in this position in addition to providing numerous political services.

For example, when India was about to achieve independence, the Nizam of Hyderabad appointed Hamidullah as a prominent member of his commission and charged him with representing the state of Hyderabad at the UN. He was sincere in his work, evidenced by his overseas travel until the end of his studies and his political service after returning. However, it is unclear whether he made any efforts to spread Islam in Western nations. When white men took over Madras (The Raj Era 1858 to 1909), and it seemed impossible to achieve independence, his devotion to the opulence of Islam became obvious.⁷ Muhammad Hamidullah decided to illuminate these non-Muslims in this situation with the light of Islam.

Muhammad Hamidullah was advised to preach Islam to these white people by his uncle Qadi Mahmood Sahib. So, he decided to relocate to France. He travelled to France to promote Islam and decided to speak in the language of white men while using genuine authenticity. He worked on completing this task for the remainder of his life and succeeded in his mission. His work had a positive impact on Muslims around the world as well as on French Muslims.

In 1985, Hamidullah was awarded the highest civilian award in Pakistan, Hilal-e-Imtiaz. It was due to his devotional efforts for the cause of Islam. He donated the whole awarded money to the Islamic Research Academy, International Islamic University, Islamabad, in recognition of which the institute set the names of its library in his name.⁸ He was also

⁷James Wynbrandt, A brief history of Pakistan. Infobase Publishing, 2009. p.11

⁸ Abdul Azim Islahi, Medieval Islamic economic thought: Filling the great gap in European economics, Publisher

nominated for the King Faisal Award. However, he refused to have it and feared that if he were to accept any worldly reward for his work, he might not get his due in the hereafter.⁹

Promoting Islam through Writing

To advance the actual image of Islam, Muhammad Hamidullah became fluent in several languages. He worked to improve his language skills so non-Muslims could learn about Islam's message. It was intended to make reading easier for foreign readers by promoting Islam in other languages. Hamidullah's most notable contribution was his attempt to adapt Islam's moral principles to the mindset and psychology of the time's Westerners. Author Muhammad Hamidullah produced numerous religious and scholarly works throughout his lifetime.¹⁰

His writings set him apart from other academics and served as an inspiration to many non-Muslims in France. He was a passionate researcher and a devout scholar of Islam. He went into detail on each of the main areas of Islamic study. For instance, there are translations of the Qur'an, Hadith, Islamic law, and Sirah. His initial interest was in studying law on a global scale. His entire life was devoted to law between 1930 and 1940. He produced numerous Urdu translations of legal texts written in French and English. The Osmania University Department of Translation also released those books. We can assert that Muhammad Hamidullah provided some of the earliest high-quality books in Urdu on the subject matter of contemporary international law.

Sheikh Arshad claims that Muhammad Hamidullah is to blame for the idea of analysing Western art and education from an Islamic perspective becoming so popular in the Islamic world. It was believed that an effort

Routledge, SM Ghazanfar – 2004, p.7.

⁹Sohel Ahmad, Roger G. Schroeder, The impact of human resource management practices on operational performance: recognizing country and industry differences, *Journal of Operations Management*, Volume 21, Issue 1 January 2003, pp. 19-43.

¹⁰ Syed Faiyazuddin Ahmad, "Story of King Faisal Prize ", *Impact International*, January-March, 2003, p. 20.

should be made to gather international legal principles similar to Islamic restraints and give them a new shape to represent something new to the rest of the world. The Islamization of knowledge was the term for this idea.¹¹

Many academics attempted to learn more about this in 1980. However, if we read Muhammad Hamidullah's earliest books on international law in Urdu, we would realise that he was the first to put much effort into this idea. He examined Western international law and international relations theories, presented his findings concerning Islamic warfare and its governing principles, and assessed brand-new inconsistent outcomes. By examining how Western ideas and practises relate to Islamic law, Muhammad Hamidullah provided the foundation for this Islamic education.

Muhammad Hamidullah became interested in studying Islamic International Law after studying international law. His first study of Islamic law from a global perspective was for his degree at the German university Bonn. His second lengthy research project with two key sections earned him a degree from the University of Paris. The discussion is in the first section, and the documents about the Prophet Covenant and the Caliphate of *Rashidun* are in the second section. He decided to write Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) biography after becoming intrigued by the life of the Prophet while working on the facts of these documents. After finishing his studies at Sorbonne University, he began writing the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) *Sirah*. He dedicated the remaining five to six decades of his life to studying *Sirah* after becoming involved. He stopped doing research on international law after this point. Although he had written numerous articles, no new book could be found during this time.

His work has a prominent status in the literature of the Hadith. For instance, the work of Muhammad Hamidullah can be a good initiative if someone wants to write the history of Hadith. The reason for Hamidullah's work's authenticity is that many earlier writers thought that the written

¹¹ Muhammad Arif, Imran Ali, and Muhammad Asfaham. "Domestic Policies of General Zia Ul Haq towards Islamization during 1979-88." *Harf-o-Sukhan* 6, no. 1 (2022): 60-69.

work on the Hadith collection began two to three centuries after the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). As a result, some misconceptions and deceptions about the authenticity of Hadith literature were disseminated. Muhammad Hamidullah tried to demonstrate that this viewpoint is a myth and nothing more than a fabrication. He provided evidence to demonstrate that Hadith's writing and preservation date back to the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

From the Knowledge of *Hadith* to the Knowledge of *Sirah*

A student of Abu Hurairah (d.677-78 CE), Hammam ibn Munabbih (d.719 CE), worked on compiling a Sahifa that contained 140 hadith. He referred to every Hadith that he had heard from Abu Hurairah. The manuscripts of this Sahifa were frequently asserted to be in Berlin and Damascus. This Sahifa served as evidence that Hadith recording began in the first century. Hamidullah frequently travelled abroad in order to dispel the misconceptions of orientalist regarding the preservation of the Hadith. 'Sahifa Hammam Ibn Munabbih' is the name of the document he published. He claimed that this manuscript serves as proof of this Sahifa and that all the Hadith contained therein are Abu Hurairah's accounts. This document was published in Urdu and English by Hamidullah from Hyderabad in 1955 and 1961.¹²

After focusing on assembling proof for the Hadith work, Muhammad Hamidullah changed the focus of his research to the Sirah of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He shed light on all the significant and incidental occurrences in his life. After reading Muhammad Hamidullah's work, many academics and intellectuals feel there is no way to continue studying the Sirah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). His work was not the result of discovering any new information in the Sirah of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) but rather was the result of Hamidullah's removal of misconceptions by responding to questions with the appropriate

¹² Muhammad Hamidullah "Aan-Hazrat salla-llahu alayhi wa sallam aur Khulafa-e Rashidin ka ta`alluq Tijarat se" (Urdu) (trade as related to the Prophet and his caliphs), *The Monthly Tajalli*, Hyderabad Deccan, March, 1927, vol.1, no. 1, pp. 48-54.

references. Earlier authors have never disputed his work on *Sirah*. His writing was extensive, comprehensive, thorough, thought-provoking, stimulating, inspiring, educational, informative, and enlightening.

For instance, he did not limit himself to Hadith and books on *Sirah* when he began to describe the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Instead, he looked for manuscripts, ancient literature and classic works from the Dark Ages, history, books about related travel, and other books. He employed all the information he acquired through these sources to create a commentary on *Sirah* to aid in understanding. The two editions of this *Sirah* study were written in French. The way he describes the events and Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) experiences in life is very endearing; for instance, if he had written a paragraph about the incident of any war that took place in some place between any two tribes, in the following paragraph he elaborated on where the war was started and why it happened, which two tribes were involved, and why they failed to settle. This way, every incident's history was covered by his description.¹³

Additionally, he had a distinct method for developing new research topics. An incident involving Ka'ab ibn Ashraf can be added in this regard. He was a Jewish tribe leader who consistently protested against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). A rumour that Muhammad ibn Musalma Ansari had murdered him was spreading. The uniqueness of Muhammad Hamidullah's observation was that he posed the question of how a Muslim leader could carry out the murder of another leader at night by sending his servants. Many authors have now explained how Muhammad bin Musalma Ansari went to kill Ka'b, which passage he went through, and which sort of dress code he followed, but Muhammad Hamidullah observed that he raised this issue. Is this unethical method of killing someone permitted in Islam, he questioned? His in-depth observation is demonstrated by the questions he asks. Even though his issues are valid, the leading historians do not share his perspective. So, The senior Jew who opposed the Prophet, Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, passed away, and the Ban al-Nar family and the Jews were severely

¹³ Aslam Abdallah, "Muhammad Hamidullah: Scholar Par Excellence." *Islamic Horizons*, Sept.-Oct. 1995: 46-47.

affected. The conflict in Khaybar culminated in several hostile Muslim-Jewish encounters that started with the incident. There seem to be some discrepancies and hazy reports that have either been wholly overlooked or for which a sufficient explanation is lacking, despite the helpful research conducted by earlier researchers. The current study aims to evaluate the reliability of the accounts of Ka'b's murder in light of some shocking information scattered throughout the era and tafsir compendia in unexpected places.¹⁴

Furthermore, it would be impossible to find an answer to these questions in the writings of previous authors. These questions have not been addressed by any of Muhammad Hamidullah's contemporary writers. Regarding his responses, Muhammad Hamidullah always looked for trustworthy documentation first. For instance, he first checked Ka'ab's status before figuring out which city he was from. If he belonged there, what did Yathrib City's boundaries look like? He conducted a search of Madinah's surroundings to support his claim that he was not from Yathrib. Therefore, it was possible that Musalma Ansari quietly killed him if his residence was not known with certainty. He thus demonstrated that the claim that the Jewish leader was assassinated because of his disagreements with Islam was untrue. In addition to demonstrating the correct response, Muhammad Hamidullah provided reliable references.¹⁵

His research methodology consisted of asking the most logical questions before revealing the solutions from a factual standpoint. Due to his commitment to the veracity of his response, one aspect of his research methodology is still unclear: the length of time he spent looking for one unique declaration.

¹⁴ Omer bin Abdullah. "Muhammad Hamidullah: A Lifetime of Service to Islamic Scholarship." *Islamic Horizons*. July-Aug, 1999, pp. 23-25.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Major Works in French and English

Hamidullah joined the Oriental Studies Research Centre of France and spent 25 years there.¹⁶ During his extended stay in France, he was short of many necessities of life, but this did not affect his spirit of writing.¹⁷ His most worth-gaining work is the translation and commentary of the Qur'an in French. Up to now, its 20 editions have been published. The most widely accepted book of Hamidullah was initially written in French and had the title of *Le Champs de Bataille a Temp di Prophet* (The Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him)). All parts of this book were published individually in Islamic Review (London) from 1952 to 1953.¹⁸

After its publication, this book was also published and translated into several different languages, including Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Sindhi. Along with this marvellous work, many articles in these languages were also written by Muhammad Hamidullah. His major works are apparent in almost seven languages. For instance, in English, he has written 12 books, out of which five books are of leading status. These books' titles comprise *The Battlefields of Prophet Muhammad* (Peace be upon him), *The Emergence of Islam*, *The First Written Constitution*, *Introduction to Islam and Muhammad Rasulullah* (pbuh).¹⁹ The first book was about the services of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) when he possessed the Muslim army's Commander-in-Chief position. Hamidullah has clearly described the strategies, rules and achievements of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in this book.

His book *The Emergence of Islam* is the embodiment of different lectures on the subject of the development of the Islamic worldview.

¹⁶ Abderrazak, B. Titre en anglais: The writings of Muhammad Hamidullah in French: Trends and innovations. 2019, p. 321.

¹⁷ David Ehrhardt & Ami V. Shah Introduction: Abdul Raufu Mustapha and the study of difference and power in African states, *Oxford Development Studies*, 2020, 48:4, 307-314

¹⁸ Sadida Athaullah, "Muhammad Hamidullah", *Impact International*, January-March, 2003, pp. 14-15.

¹⁹ Musfir b. Atiq al-Dusari, "al-Tamin al-Ta'awuni, bayn Ahlam al-Nazariyah wa Awham al-Waqi'" Paper presented to the Forum of al-Tamin al-Ta'awuni, held at Riyadh during 20-22 January 2009.

Similarly, other books are also related to the major branches of Islamic studies. A few renowned articles in English include *Islam in Europe, Islamic Studies in Modern Europe, Islamic Conception of World Order, Islamic Precedents on Division of Power between Centre and Component Part, and Oriental Libraries in the East and West*.²⁰ Besides these articles, there are many other informative publications in English by Hamidullah to cover maximum knowledge about different spheres of life in the light of Islam.

Works in Urdu and Other Languages

Apart from French and English books and publications, Hamidullah has also worked in Urdu, Arabic, Persian, Turkish and German. The total number of his books in all languages is 174, but the number of articles is innumerable. For instance, the book *Doctor Muhammad Hmidullah* written by Muhammad Arshad Sheikh has a section of his list of Urdu articles, 335. All articles in this language are of supreme importance. However, a few well-known articles in this language are Hyderabad educational conference, *Madras ki sair, Urdu Jhandi Boli, Arz-e-Haal, Daak ke khaat, Mjlis-e-Aqwam* (it has two episodes), *Gool maiz conference, Tipu Sultan ki Muasharti Eslahat, Baber Badshah, Siyasi Mashiyat, Islam ki Haybat Agyar ke Dilo Mein, Arab aur Habsha, Hyderabad ki Khudmukhtari Aur es ka Maazi wa Haal, Hijrat, Hyderabad ka Haq Azadi, Maktubat e Iran, Maktubat e Roos, Maktubat e Damishk, Maktubat e London, Maktubat e Berlin*, and William Marçais french translation. In addition, the total number of books written in Arabic is 30 and articles in Persian are 6.²¹

International Representation of Islam through Conferences

Muhammad Hamidullah, based on his knowledge and research on Islamic values, was considered a significant representative of Islam at French Educational Research Centers. In different religious conferences, many non-Muslims from different religions were invited to give evidence

²⁰ M.H. Faruqi, "The last citizen of Hyderabad", *Impact International*, January-March, 2003, pp. 42-44.

²¹ Qari Muhammad Tahir, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah ke chand tafarrudat, *Fikr-o-Nazar* Vol. 40-41, Nos. 4,1. April – September, 2003 / Safar – Rajab, 1424H. pp. 271-286.

from their religions regarding many social and political issues. Similarly, Hamidullah was invited to such international conferences, where experts of different religions participated and conducted inter-faith dialogues. Hamidullah also took part in elaborating inter-faith dialogues.

These inter-faith dialogues were centred on attitude, spiritual, and religious statements. Muhammad Hamidullah's participation was skilful and with a devotional attitude. Many non-Muslim experts from the confidence of Muhammad Hamidullah got inspired and turned to Islam. His presence was not limited to international countries; he visited France's capital city and other cities. Muhammad Hamidullah delivered lectures at Muslim and non-Muslim centres in France. In different cities in France, he visited many mosques and delivered lectures on Christianity. Mostly, he tried to describe the strength of Islam by comparing Islamic values and the teachings of other religions. His presence at international conferences and seminars shows the practicality of his mission. According to Khursheed Ahmed, Muhammad Hamidullah had attended meetings in his own country and went to foreign countries to attend international conferences. Throughout his life, at every place of education and conferences, he has successfully spread the light of Islam.²²

Preaching Islamic Values among Non-Muslims

Many French males and females have accepted Islam due to the teachings of Muhammad Hamidullah. He was neither bound to any specific way of preaching nor a member of any preaching commission. He used two ways of preaching to accomplish his mission. Firstly, his preaching comprises honest and polite conversation through his religious articles, lectures, and publications. Secondly, his personality was a true reflection of Islamic *Sirah*. He was a man of strong and pious character. The prominent traits of his personality are contentment, courteousness, strong determination and faith in Allah. He always met with non-Muslims with respect and never filled his heart with hatred of their religion. Non-Muslims

²² Abdul-Majid al-Ghouri, Muhammad Hamidullah – Safir al-Islam, Damascus: Dar Ibn Kathir. (1430/2009), p.56

were impressed by his knowledge, expression of speech and sincerity toward Islam. He kept up his efforts in an environment where most people were against him. In one of his letters, he mentioned that,

Many people had converted to Islam. This was not due to the actions of Muslims but due to the will of Allah, according to Hamidullah. Hamidullah was a confident person, and his courage was remarkable. It was counted in his daily routine that one or two non-Muslims visit Hamidullah and accept Islam daily. A famous life incident of a French Musician can be quoted. This French musician once met an Arab Representative to dine together. There, he listened to the recitation of the Qur'an. Many people gathered there. They kept silent and listened to the recitation in a particular way. It amazed this musician. He confessed that the intonation and pitch of sounds he studied earlier were nothing in front of this recitation. At first, he could not understand the recitation and called it a unique type of music. He stated that this world needs much time to reach the level of sound patterns in which the recitation was performed.

For him, it was hard to believe that a human being created this music and how a person could organise the tone of this music. He tried to raise questions, but people made him silent. At the end of the recitation, he began to investigate which sort of music this was. People around him said it was not a piece of music; it was the recitation of the Qur'an. He asked if this was the reciter who created this music. Then people answered that neither the reciter has created this recitation nor the Qur'an has ever been concerned with music. This sort of recitation is an art of *tajwid*. The musician again raised another question: who invented this art of *tajwid*? On this, people replied that this concept of *tajwid* has been followed since 1400 years earlier when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught the Holy Qur'an to people, and he taught with the rules of *tajwid*. The French musician said if this reciter has recited the Qur'an in the same way as Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) taught it, then there is no doubt this book is from Allah. He added that this world has not yet reached the high standards for rules and regulations associated with the art of music, shown through this recitation. He went to different people

at different mosques, listened to the recitation repeatedly, and concluded that the Qur'an is a book of Allah.²³

He went to Hamidullah and said, "*I want to accept Islam.*" Hamidullah helped him, but at first, neither could he understand what this musician was addressing about music and the way of *tajwid* he listened, nor could he judge to what extent this musician was proper. He appointed an Algerian Muslim, who was studying in Paris, to teach the musician the Qur'an. After one and a half months, the Algerian and the musician came to Hamidullah. The Algerian Muslim said this musician had doubts about the Qur'an, and he could not satisfy him.

Hamidullah said that the thing on which this musician laid his faith foundation was unclear, and what answer could be given to remove his doubts. However, he started with the name of Allah and asked him to tell Hamidullah his doubts. He replied that he had heard that the Qur'an is still preserved as it was saved during the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and he had learnt the Qur'an from this man but got confused in one place. He was of the view that something was missing. He elaborated on his confusion by telling about his learning experience from this man who taught him surah Nasar. In this surah, he paused between the words '*Afwaja*' and '*fasabhe*'. However, according to his knowledge of sound patterns, there should not be a pause between these two words. Hamidullah said he was amazed when this musician asked this question. Hamidullah tried to look for a person in his surroundings who had some knowledge about the rules of tajweed and the art of music, but there was no one with such sort of competency. After a while, Allah put the answer in Hamidullah's mind, and he said in his childhood that when he was learning the Qur'an, his teacher punished him for pausing between these two words.²⁴

²³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam and Communism – A Study in Comparative Thought*, Paris, (First published in 1950, Second Edition Paris 1975; Fourth print Hyderabad Deccan 1981).

²⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, "An-Hazrat salla-llahu alayhi wa sallam aur Khulafa-e Rashidin ka ta'alluq Tijarat se" (Urdu) (trade as related to the Prophet and his caliphs), *The Monthly Tajalli*, Hyderabad Deccan, March, 1927 vol.1, no. 1, pp. 48-54.

Then he recited these two words without pausing, and the musician was thrilled. He took Hamidullah into his lap and said it should be recited without pause. Hamidullah appointed another teacher to teach him the rules of *tajwid*. On and off, this musician came to visit Hamidullah and repeated the sentence about the Qur'an, saying that this is the book of Allah. This musician proved to be the best Muslim and spent a successful life as a Muslim and died in 1970.²⁵

In one of his interviews, he stated the many obstacles in his way, but instead of facing these obstacles, he achieved significant results. His statement about the current situation of his efforts is that *'The government is against, the church is against, and they have all the resources, but instead of this, people are becoming Muslims. This is an astonishing thing. I cannot say anything except that it is due to the Kindness of Allah and the Blessing of Allah'*²⁶ which shows his fearless attitude against the French government. In addition, his spoken and written words are evidence of his belief in Allah and that the results achieved are due to the will of Allah, showing his humbleness and genuine love for Allah.²⁷

Conclusion

The techniques mentioned above for spreading Islam among non-Muslims demonstrate the authenticity and commitment of Hamidullah towards disseminating Islamic knowledge. Whether it was through composing books, disseminating research articles, delivering speeches, engaging in discussions with scholars, or participating in international conferences and seminars, Hamidullah exerted his utmost effort at each stage to advance Islam. His works genuinely reflect his ardour. His works are esteemed in academic circles as innovative and of exceptional quality.

²⁵ Qari Muhammad Tahir, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah ke chand tafarrudat, *Fikr-o-Nazar*, Vol. 40-41, Nos. 4,1. April – September, 2003 / Safar – Rajab, 1424H. pp. 271-286.

²⁶ Faruqi, M.H., "The last citizen of Hyderabad", *Impact International*, January-March, 2003pp. 42-44.

²⁷ Sayyid Qasim Mahmud, Doctor Muhammad Hamidullah ki Behtarin Tahriren (The Best writings of Dr. Hamidullah), New Delhi: Farid Book Depot. *Majallat al-Ahkam al-Adliyah* (1349), Sharh Al-Atasi, Hims (Syria): n.p.

For any aspiring researcher, his works can serve as a strong and dependable foundation for new areas of study. He covered nearly all significant aspects of Islamic education. He spent much of his life in Paris, where many non-Muslims embraced Islam. The conversion of these individuals serves as proof of Hamidullah's success. He was a selfless author who wrote for the betterment of the new generation, not for personal gain. The publishers who published Hamidullah's French works became wealthy, but Hamidullah did not accept any payment for his work. Instead, he donated his award money to those in need and research institutions.

He devoted his life to the cause of Islam by setting aside his desires. To put it briefly, Muhammad Hamidullah's written works cover various topics about Islamic disciplines, past events, traditions, and jurisprudence. His valuable additions have had a lasting influence on Islamic research, and his expertise in various languages enabled him to share his expertise with diverse global communities.

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