

MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT, WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INTERFAITH
RELATIONSHIPS

BY

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ABSTRACT

Interfaith relationships, broadly speaking, refer to interactions and relationships between individuals or communities from different religious backgrounds. These relationships are shaped by various factors, including cultural norms, family expectations, societal pressures, and the willingness to respect and understand differing religious beliefs and practices. In the context of Islam, interfaith dialogue seeks to promote mutual understanding and cooperation, addressing both shared values and differences in order to foster peaceful coexistence. This study focuses on the life and contributions of Muhammad Hamidullah, an influential scholar in contemporary Islamic thought, particularly in interfaith relations. Hamidullah emphasised the importance of interfaith dialogue, arguing that mutual respect and understanding between Muslims, Christians, and Jews—based on their shared Abrahamic heritage—are vital for peaceful societal coexistence. His work in this area is essential in understanding how Islamic thought can contribute to broader interfaith initiatives. He adopted innovative methods in education and da'wah (Islamic outreach), stressing the role of knowledge in strengthening faith, especially among converts. His scholarly contributions, including discovering, editing, and translating important Islamic manuscripts, further deepen Islam's accessibility to diverse audiences. This study analyses Hamidullah's unique approach to interfaith relations and his contributions to Islamic thought, mainly through his interpretations of Qur'anic verses related to the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* (Jews and Christians). His work highlights the common moral and spiritual values that link these religions, and he argues that acknowledging these shared principles can create a foundation for dialogue and cooperation. This study also examines Hamidullah's interactions with Orientalists and his ability to respond to critiques using their research methods, which earned him great respect in academic circles. The methodology of this study is qualitative, employing content analysis to explore Hamidullah's key writings on interfaith relationships, Islamic thought, and societal cohesion. The findings reveal that Hamidullah's insights into interfaith dialogue emphasise the importance of understanding others' religious and cultural contexts and promoting a world built on peace, tolerance, and mutual respect. His legacy inspires efforts to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western civilisations, mainly through education and scholarly engagements. In conclusion, this study affirms Muhammad Hamidullah's significant role in fostering interfaith dialogue. It highlights the ongoing relevance of his work in contemporary efforts to build a more harmonious and respectful world. The findings offer a foundation for further research into how Islamic scholarship can contribute to global interfaith cooperation and understanding.

خلاصة البحث

تشير العلاقات بين الأديان، بشكل عام، إلى التفاعلات والروابط التي تنشأ بين الأفراد أو المجتمعات المنتمية إلى خلفيات دينية مختلفة، حيث تتأثر هذه العلاقات بعدة عوامل، من بينها الأعراف الثقافية والتوقعات العائلية والضغوط المجتمعية ومدى استعداد الأفراد لاحترام وفهم المعتقدات والممارسات الدينية المختلفة. وفي سياق الإسلام، يسعى الحوار بين الأديان إلى تعزيز الفهم المتبادل والتعاون، من خلال معالجة القيم المشتركة والاختلافات بهدف تحقيق التعايش السلمي بين الأفراد والمجتمعات. تركز هذه الدراسة على حياة ومساهمات محمد حميد الله، أحد أبرز العلماء في الفكر الإسلامي المعاصر، لا سيما في مجال العلاقات بين الأديان، حيث شدّد على أهمية الحوار بين الأديان، مؤكّداً أن الاحترام المتبادل والتفاهم بين المسلمين والمسيحيين واليهود—استناداً إلى التراث الإبراهيمي المشترك—يعدّ أمراً ضرورياً لتحقيق التعايش السلمي في المجتمعات. وتُعدّ أعماله في هذا المجال أساسية لفهم كيفية مساهمة الفكر الإسلامي في المبادرات العالمية للحوار بين الأديان. اعتمد حميد الله منهجاً إبداعياً في التعليم والدعوة الإسلامية، حيث ركّز على دور المعرفة في تعزيز الإيمان، لا سيما بين المعتنقين الجدد للإسلام، كما ساهم في تطوير الدراسات الإسلامية من خلال اكتشاف وتحقيق وترجمة مخطوطات إسلامية مهمة، ما ساعد في جعل التراث الإسلامي أكثر إتاحة لجمهوريات متنوعة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل النهج الفريد الذي اتبعه محمد حميد الله في التعامل مع العلاقات بين الأديان ومدى تأثيره على الفكر الإسلامي، خاصة من خلال تفسيراته لآيات القرآن الكريم المتعلقة بأهل الكتاب (اليهود والمسيحيين)، حيث سلّطت أعماله الضوء على القيم الأخلاقية والروحية المشتركة التي تربط بين هذه الديانات، ورأى أن الاعتراف بهذه المبادئ المشتركة يمكن أن يكون أساساً للحوار والتعاون بين أتباع الديانات المختلفة. كما تتناول الدراسة أيضاً تفاعل حميد الله مع المستشرقين وقدرته على الرد على الانتقادات الموجهة إلى الإسلام باستخدام الأساليب البحثية ذاتها التي اعتمدها المستشرقون أنفسهم، ما أكسبه احتراماً كبيراً في الأوساط الأكاديمية، حيث أثبت قدرة الفكر الإسلامي على التفاعل النقدي مع التحديات الفكرية الحديثة. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة على منهج التحليل النوعي للمحتوى، حيث يتم استكشاف كتابات حميد الله

الرئيسية حول العلاقات بين الأديان والفكر الإسلامي والتماسك المجتمعي، وتكشف النتائج عن أن رؤى حميد الله في الحوار بين الأديان تؤكد على ضرورة فهم السياقات الدينية والثقافية للآخرين، وتعزيز عالم يقوم على السلام والتسامح والاحترام المتبادل، كما أن إرثه الفكري لا يزال يُلهم الجهود الرامية إلى ردم الهوة بين الحضارات الشرقية والغربية، لا سيما من خلال التعليم والتفاعل العلمي. وتؤكد هذه الدراسة على الدور البارز الذي لعبه محمد حميد الله في تعزيز الحوار بين الأديان، كما تسلط الضوء على استمرار أهمية أعماله في الجهود المعاصرة لبناء عالم أكثر انسجامًا واحترامًا متبادلًا، وتوفر النتائج أساسًا لمزيد من الأبحاث حول كيفية مساهمة الدراسات الإسلامية في تعزيز التعاون والتفاهم العالمي بين الأديان.



APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

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This Thesis is dedicated to my late Father, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Gilani, who laid the foundation for what I have turned out to be in life.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Interfaith dialogue refers to cooperative, constructive, and positive interaction between people of different religious traditions and spiritual or humanistic beliefs at both the individual and institutional levels. It is distinct from syncretism, or alternative religion, in that dialogue often involves promoting understanding between different religions or beliefs to increase acceptance of others rather than to synthesise new beliefs.

An increasingly prevalent issue today is dialogue among the followers of different religions.¹ People live globally with diverse ethnicities, religions, and cultures.² Moreover, interreligious dialogue is vital for maintaining harmony and peaceful coexistence.³ There have been numerous tragic events in history. The 9/11 attacks, the Israel-Palestine conflict, aggression against Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, Muslim-Buddhist conflicts in Thailand, the massacre of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, and conflicts in Jammu-Kashmir are a handful of the conflicts that continue to ravage the world today.⁴ It is believed that all religions teach love and sympathy for other human beings. However, many heinous acts have been perpetrated in the name of religion, resulting in the casualties of many innocent people, including women and children.⁵ Therefore, we must unite people of different religious and cultural backgrounds and make a meaningful contribution through interreligious dialogue for

¹ Leonard Swidler, "The Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious Dialogue," in *Dialogue for Interreligious Understanding: Strategies for the Transformation of Culture Shaping Institution*, ed. Leonard Swidler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 47-52.

² Hilal Wani, Raihanah Abdullah, and Lee Wei Chang, "An Islamic Perspective in Managing Religious Diversity," *Journal Religions* 6 (2015): 642-656, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel6020642>.

³ Muhammad Elius, Issa Khan, Mohd Roslan Bin Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, and Kamaruzaman Bin Noordin, "Islam as a Religion of Tolerance and Dialogue," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* (2019): 18, 52.

⁴ Rohan Gunaratna, "Global Threat Forecast," *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses* 10, no. 1 (January 2018): 1-6, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2634985>; Ahmad Husni Haji Hasan, "An Islamic Perspective of the Interfaith Dialogue Amidst Current Inter-Religious Tensions Worldwide," *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 1, no. 1 (2011): 25-35.

⁵ *Human Rights Watch*, 2016, Retrieved from www.hrw.org.

the greater interest of humanity.⁶ Interreligious dialogue is essential for reducing and mitigating interreligious tensions.⁷ History has recorded many initiatives of interreligious dialogue. Islam teaches love, tolerance, and sympathy for other human beings as a universal religion.

Muslims have been vital in promoting interreligious harmony since Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).⁸ The Qur'ān includes multiple examples⁹ of dialogue, and the dialogues include those between prophets and God, angels and God, prophets and their people, and even dialogues with the devil.¹⁰ Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was a model for positive engagement before his Prophethood.¹¹ That was why people used to call him al-Amin, 'the trustworthy', and as Sadiq, 'the truthful'.¹² Islamic history bears many examples of positive interreligious relationships.¹³ However, today, interreligious dialogues have been misunderstood and misinterpreted, especially post-9/11, which sparked a sustained and ongoing hate campaign against Islam and Muslims.¹⁴ Nevertheless, several studies have sought to eliminate prevalent misunderstandings, especially those Westerners advocate.¹⁵ This study seeks to contribute to this response to mitigate tensions and promote interreligious harmony.

⁶ Kazi Nurul Islam, "World Peace through Interreligious Dialogue," paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Interreligious Dialogue: An Islamic Approach 17 Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, University of Dhaka, Dhaka, 2010, 27-29.

⁷ Muhammad Elius, Issa Khan, Mohd Roslan Bin Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, and Kamaruzaman Bin Noordin, "Islam as a Religion of Tolerance and Dialogue," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* (2019): 18.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Qur'ān, Surat an-Nahl 16:125; Qur'ān, Surat al-Mā'idah 5:48; Qur'ān, Surat al-Ḥujurāt 49:13.

¹⁰ S. B. Humaid, "Islam and Dialogue with the Other," in *Interfaith Dialogue: Cross-Cultural Views* (2010): 23-46.

¹¹ Mohammad Elius, Issa Khan, Mohd Roslan Bin Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, and Kamaruzaman Bin Noordin, "Islam as a Religion of Tolerance and Dialogue: A Critical Appraisal," *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies* 18, no. 52 (2019): 96-109.

¹² A. Kurucan and M. K. Erol, *Dialogue in Islam: Qur'an, Sunnah, History* (London: Dialogue Society, 2012).

¹³ Khairulnizam Mat Karim and Suzy Aziziyana Saili, "Inter-Faith Dialogue: The Qur'anic and Prophetic Perspective," *Journal Usuluddin*, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur (2009): 65-93.

¹⁴ Craig Considine, "The Racialization of Islam in the United States: Islamophobia, Hate Crimes, and 'Flying While Brown'," *Religions* 8, no. 9 (2017): 165.

¹⁵ Muhammad Hashim Kamali, "Diversity and Pluralism: A Qur'anic Perspective," *ICR Journal* 1, no. 1 (2009): 27-54.

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the Arabian Peninsula was a region where people of various faiths were present. There were Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, polytheists, and others not affiliated with any religion. When one looks at the life of the Prophet (pbuh), one may draw on many examples to portray the high level of interfaith relations. To understand and judge these relations, one must investigate the period in which Islam was a formal state, with the specific laws laid down by the Prophet (pbuh) under the tenets of the religion. Even though one can observe examples of interfaith relations shown by the Prophet (pbuh) in the thirteen years of his stay in Makkah, one may incorrectly think that it was only to improve the profile of the Muslims and the social status of Islam. After all, after the migration to Madinah, we could see the many agreements made with Jews, Christians, polytheists, and others.

Given the development of human beings, societies, fundamentals, thoughts, opinions, and ideologies have been an essential part of the growing world. The dynamics of any school of thought, making it worthwhile, raise bars on the significance of each dimension of that subject. The world is categorised into two blocks: the Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Muslims, on a general level, are encountering numerous issues on a global level. With different opinions and schools of thought, Muslim communities worldwide are divided into different sects. Having rivalries over differences, their natural push factors include internal divisions, religious disagreements, and socio-political conflicts, which can drive them away from their communities or lead to tensions. These challenges can lead to alienation or a desire for more harmonious environments. On the other hand, their natural pull factors lie in the shared religious and cultural values that connect Muslims, offering a sense of unity and belonging, especially in the face of differing religious priorities with non-Muslims. The pull of common faith and the support of fellow Muslims can serve as an anchor, attracting individuals back to a sense of community despite the rivalries and divisions within.

On the contrary, Muslims who understand current issues and today's challenges must play their part to ensure that non-Muslims see and acknowledge that Muslims are not supposed to be their enemy and that they are the followers of peace and prosperity for all human beings. They are also responsible for answering the Muslim youth facing mental dilemmas and complexities between rapid changes in the world and traditional

codes of life. The youths are desperate to know what changes they can religiously and traditionally accept and what is unacceptable.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) followed the patterns of a peaceful and prosperous system where all humans could live together. He never forced non-Muslims to follow in his footsteps and was kind and humble to Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He has been praised as a great humanist, and many non-Muslim scholars have written about the humanitarian activities and kindness of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He patiently faced all the negativity from his enemies and remained utterly optimistic about maintaining a peaceful system where Muslims and non-Muslims could grow as better human beings. He never ignited his followers to create conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims. It was because of his positive energy emerging from love and courage that he was adored by many. People obeyed him from the core of their hearts resulting in him maintaining a peaceful social system followed by groups of different religions and cultures. The point to be noted after this lengthy discussion is that, in the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Jews, Christians, and Muslims shared the same land. They had many rivalry issues due to their different beliefs, but the Prophet (pbuh) spread the message of patience and calmness as the leader of the land. Everyone was allowed to follow and practice religious and cultural norms, and nobody could interfere with the other person's personal beliefs.

Moreover, it is prohibited to force anyone to be part of a group of religion and culture. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself set the laws for a group not to force anyone to accept their beliefs, and insulting behaviour and prejudice towards the out groups (non-Muslims) were also not allowed. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily mean the Muslims were friendly with the non-Muslims. This history only conveys the message that everyone can follow his personal beliefs and norms, and nobody can disturb others' privacy. For the sake of peace and prosperity, interfaith relationships are mandatory.

There are some remarkable examples from the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), such as how the Muslims and the Non-Muslims shared the same piece of land to live peacefully. This was when Muslims were in the majority and were under the Prophet's (pbuh) fellowship.

- The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of *Najrān*: The treaty of Najrān guaranteed the Christians' security for "their lives, religion and property". It gave Christians' freedom of religion, stipulating that there would be no interference in the practice of Christianity, nor would any cross be destroyed. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stated, "The Muslims must not abandon the Christians, neglect them, and leave them without help and assistance since I have made this pact with them on behalf of Allah."¹⁶
- The Second Caliph, Umar Ibn al-Khattab, Extended Civil Liberties to Non-Muslims: During Umar's caliphate, the *dhimmi*s (religious minorities in an Islamic State) enjoyed complete religious freedom and civil liberties. They had the full right to practice socio-religious affairs and carried the cross in procession. As for the issue of enforcing conversion to Islam, Caliph Umar and his administrators never adopted such policies, and they always maintained the Qur'anic principles that there is no compulsion in religion. Not only did non-Muslims have the right to complete religious freedom, but they also enjoyed the right to equal citizenship. During Umar's time, a Jew disposed of a plot of land, and a mosque was constructed on the site. Upon learning about this incident, Umar had ordered the demolition of the mosque and returned the land to its original owner. A Lebanese Christian scholar, Cardahi, wrote in 1933, "This house (with the above piece of land) of the Jew, known as Bait al Yahudi, still exists and is well known."¹⁷

To sum up the treatment of non-Muslims during the era of Muhammad (pbuh) and Umar (R.A), we could say that Islam, with its moral principles, introduced to the world a much-needed sense of justice, moderation, and coexistence among world religious and predominantly minority religious groups within Muslim nations. Justice, tolerance, patience, and interfaith harmony can lead the world to prosperity and peace.

¹⁶ ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin ‘Abd Ullah al-Suhaīlī, *al-Rawḍ-ul-Unuf fī Tafsīr as-Sīrah an-Nabawīyyah li-Ibn Hishām*, vol. 3 (Berūt: Dār al-Kūtib al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2002), 5.

¹⁷ Prof. Cardahi, "The Second Caliph 'Umar & Extending Civil Liberties to Non-Muslims" (Egyt: Dar Al-Ifta Al-Misriyyah, 2002), 82.

If the coexistence of Muslims and non-Muslims was possible during the great Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), it could also be possible today.¹⁸

Muhammad Hamidullah was a prolific author whose imposing life writing field was characteristically distinguished from other personalities. He devoted his life to religious and academic works and inspired many scholars to serve the cause of Islam. In modern times, it is also surprising enough for every scholar to observe, on the one hand, the circumstances in which Hamidullah lived and the large number of valuable works produced by him about different subjects and to see, on the other hand, that these were of high academic standards. He has almost covered the whole range of Islamic studies in his writings and tried to explore the accurate picture of Islam and its fundamental sciences. Muhammad Hamidullah was one of the Muslim scholars and preachers born in India, then migrated to the West and settled there. The reason for his migration from the motherland to Europe was the invasion of Nizam's territories (the princely state of Hyderabad) by Indian forces in 1948, which led to its annexation into India. While the Muslims could not expel them, Muhammad Hamidullah's uncle, Qāḍī Mahmūd, suggested that he should migrate to Europe to start *Da'wah* (preaching) there. Although the dimensions of his work spread over all these spheres- theology, the Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth*, *Fiqh*, Islamic History and culture, ethics, politics, economics, *Sīrah*, relationships with other religions, and Islamic History were his favourite subjects. He devoted his life to conveying the message of Islam. He used all means of communication in this mission, as his work was a legacy that he bequeathed to all Muslims in the form of excellent knowledge and love for Islam. Although he took France as a centre for his *Da'wah*, his vision was global, as he had an essential role in spreading the message of the Qur'an, especially in French, as the translation impacted many French people and convinced them to embrace Islam. In addition, we should not forget to mention Türkiye and its people, where he used to teach in its universities officially and gave valuable lectures for three months every year, and this work continued for twenty-five years. He also held discussions and debates with Orientalists and explained the actual image of Islam. He focused on *Dawah's* activity in the non-

¹⁸ Aḥmad bin Ḥussān al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan al-Kūbra' lil Bayhaqī*, vol. 8 (Berūt: Dār al-Kūtib al-‘Ilmīyah, 1424), 59.

Muslim communities, as it is said that more than thirty thousand French people converted to Islam due to his efforts.

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the development of Islamic thought, particularly in the realm of interfaith relationships, are both significant and timely, especially in today's increasingly interconnected world. As a scholar deeply engaged with both Islamic tradition and the broader intellectual currents of his time, Hamidullah championed the importance of fostering mutual understanding and respect between people of different faiths. His work, which spans a wide range of subjects as explained above, delves into the crucial task of bridging gaps between Muslims and non-Muslims, particularly Christians and Jews, who share common Abrahamic roots. This makes his contributions vital for understanding how Islam can not only preserve its own identity but also engage meaningfully with other world religions.

Studying Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought is crucial for several reasons. First, it provides an intellectual toolset for understanding the ethical, theological, and historical dimensions of interfaith dialogue, a skill highly relevant in an increasingly globalized world where interfaith relations are often strained. Second, it offers a broader perspective on Islamic scholarship, showing how Islamic teachings can contribute to global conversations on tolerance, peace, and mutual respect. Lastly, in the context of Pakistan, where interfaith issues remain deeply embedded in the socio-political fabric, studying Hamidullah's approach equips students with the intellectual foundation to contribute meaningfully to interfaith dialogue and cooperation in their communities and beyond. His work serves not only as an academic endeavour but also as a call to action for those who seek to build bridges between cultures and religions in a world that urgently needs peace and understanding.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The postmodern era presents a critical challenge to the global Islamic community, the *Ummah*, in understanding and preserving its Islamic identity while accurately presenting Islamic thought and culture in a meaningful way. Postmodernism often promotes the validation of all religions simultaneously, encouraging a perspective where religion is seen as increasingly irrelevant to societal affairs. This outlook has led to a rise in interfaith dialogues and debates that frequently place truth and falsehood on

an equal plane, blurring the boundaries between good and evil. Such developments have contributed to societal confusion, alienation among individuals, and a decline in unity. In this context, Islam is positioned as a source of unity and harmony, capable of bridging divides and fostering cohesion across diverse societies.

Muhammad Hamidullah, a distinguished contemporary thinker, has contributed invaluable to the discourse surrounding these issues. His work offers a comprehensive examination of interfaith relationships, grounded in *Shar'īah* and aimed at promoting Islamic thought. Hamidullah believes that Islam, while safeguarding its unique identity, advocates for positive and tolerant relationships with other faiths¹⁹. His extensive experiences in France and other Western countries enriched his perspective, allowing him to approach interfaith relationships with a dynamic and nuanced understanding. His scholarship reflects a deep engagement with the principles of interfaith dialogue, emphasizing respect, mutual understanding, and a commitment to intellectual rigour.

This research explores Muhammad Hamidullah's ideas regarding interfaith relationships, delving into his views, concepts, and methodologies to better understand his intellectual legacy. His work serves as a valuable resource for addressing contemporary interfaith challenges, offering practical frameworks for dialogue and cooperation. This study critically examines the principles Hamidullah has identified for interfaith relations, the nature of his Islamic thought, and the solutions he has proposed for modern challenges. By analysing his contributions, this research aims to shed light on how his ideas can be applied to foster harmony and understanding in today's global society.

The relevance of Hamidullah's work is particularly evident in the contemporary context, both in Pakistan and worldwide. In Pakistan, where the nation is marked by religious diversity and interfaith tensions, his intellectual framework provides a roadmap for fostering peaceful coexistence within a pluralistic society. His teachings illustrate how Islamic thought can act as a unifying force, offering solutions to bridge gaps between different religious communities. On the global stage, interfaith conflicts remain a pressing issue, often fuelled by misunderstandings and a lack of dialogue. Hamidullah's emphasis on commonalities among the Abrahamic faiths, combined with

¹⁹ Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah, *Khuṭbāt-i-Bahāwalpur* (Lāhore: 'Ilm-o-'Irfān, 2000), 89.

his methodical and respectful approach to interfaith engagement, provides a compelling model for addressing these challenges with compassion and clarity.

The study of Muhammad Hamidullah's work is significant for its potential to enrich contemporary discourse on interfaith relationships. By evaluating his insights and applying them to the present day, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing development of Islamic thought in this field. It seeks to analyse his methods, principles, and proposed solutions, providing an analytical assessment of his work to uncover its relevance and applicability in addressing historical and modern interfaith challenges. His emphasis on fostering unity through intellectual and moral engagement remains a cornerstone for promoting harmony in diverse and pluralistic societies today.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present research answers the following questions.

1. Who is Muhammad Hamidullah? What is his life, education, and work?
2. What are his ideas, views, and thoughts regarding the need for interfaith relationships?
3. What are his contributions to developing Islamic thought in interfaith relationships?
4. What is Muhammad Hamidullah's methodology for approaching interfaith relationships?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research focuses on achieving the following objectives.

1. To explore the life, education, and work of Muhammad Hamidullah.
2. To study Muhammad Hamidullah on interfaith relationships and interfaith harmony.
3. To analyse Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to developing Islamic thought in interfaith relationships.

4. To explore and evaluate the methodology of Muhammad Hamidullah in approaching interfaith relationships.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to comparative religions, while not consolidated into a single work, are evident across several of his writings, including *Sermons of Bahawalpur*, *The Political Life of the Prophet (PBUH)*, *Introduction to Islam*, and his Qur'anic translations. His engagement with comparative studies, shaped by his exposure to Western civilization and his linguistic abilities, provides unique and balanced perspectives that deserve greater attention. While his biography often overlooks this dimension, a closer examination of his work could yield valuable insights for advancing interfaith harmony and mutual understanding. These reflections have the potential to offer significant contributions to religious studies and their role in fostering social cohesion.²⁰

Many Islamic scholars and eminent *Sīrah* writers have elaborated their views in favour of Muhammad Hamidullah regarding his contribution to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships. For example, Rehan Qasmi says,

After the Second World War, the importance of international law was strongly realised in the United Nations. So, along with the establishment of the United Nations, a manifesto was prepared, and laws were formulated to establish mutual relations and resolve another conflict. Muhammad Hamidullah has shed light on the domestic and international laws of Islam, relations with non-Muslim governments and the rights and issues of national minorities, and the methods of peace and war and relations with non-Muslim nations have also been discussed. Muhammad Hamidullah's books include the letters of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his answers, decrees, agreements, Da'wa-e-Islami, the appointment of workers, donations of land, trusts, wills, and documents of the Khilafat-e- Rashidah, etc. Similarly, he has done excellent research on topics like independence, powers, diplomacy, war, mutiny, robbery, treatment of prisoners of war and enemies, and Muslim women in the army. According to Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi,

²⁰ Zafar Qasmi, *Darak, Muhammad Hamidullah's Thoughts in Non-Semitic Religions, Services of Muslim Scholars in Comparative Religions* (India: Aligarh, 2020), 80.

Muhammad Hamidullah can be called the founder of the international law of Islam in the modern era without any fear or danger.²¹

Muhammad Abdullah says,

Hamidullah's writings and articles have been reviewed to describe how he has described the purpose of his study of religions and religions, which is to present the truth of Islamic teachings compared to other religions. Also, the distinctions between Islamic beliefs and teachings are revealed by studying comparative religions. It is also the scholarly duty of a preacher to present Islam in the context of contemporary events and sciences. Muhammad Hamidullah's style in the study of religions is, on the one hand, pious and benevolent; on the other hand, he is also researching and impartial. They present unbiased facts instead of pushing and imposing any ideas on their audience. Scholars and thinkers emphasise inter-faith dialogue, but Muhammad Hamidullah has realised this need theoretically and academically and worked as a communicator in inter-faith. Moreover, "you were known as the ambassador of Islam in the West."²²

Muhammad Ilyas al-Azmi writes about the authenticity of Muhammad Hamidullah's knowledge in his article that the latter has a keen eye on the beginning and evolution of international law and its history along with its beauty and ugliness, and he is aware of their stubbornness and prejudice along with the knowledge of Western intellectuals. Therefore, after this study and observation, he concludes that the laws presented by Europe are insufficient for reconciliation and peace between the Islamic world and Western countries. At the same time, Islam offers fundamental international law, and the laws of Islam are the same for every religion and nation. Muhammad Hamidullah's outstanding quality is that he compares the international laws of Islam with the ancient and modern international laws of Europe and then makes it clear that Islamic laws are better than all in every aspect.²³ Samee-Ullah Bhat's research article elaborates on how Muhammad Hamidullah led his life alongside the description and critical evaluation of his significant works concerning *Sīrah*.²⁴ It discusses that Hamidullah devoted his lifetime efforts to academia and to the more significant cause

²¹ Rehan Akhtar Qasmi, "Dr. Hamidullah and International Law" (Lahore: Tarjuman al-Qur'an, 2018), 89-97.

²² Muhammad Abdullah, "Study of Religions by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah," *Muarif Islami*, Pakistan, 2 (Hamidullah No), (2016): 311-356.

²³ Muhammad Ilyas Al-Azmi, "Muhammad Hamidullah and International Law," *Fikr O Nazar*, Islamabad, Pakistan 2 (Hamidullah No), (2016): 199-206, <https://iri.aiou.edu.pk/>.

²⁴ Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

of serving Islam. His work's broader view explores, elaborates, and discusses almost every Islam-related field and topic. The fundamental sciences of Islam are the basis of his exploration, including his studies on Fiqh, theology, *Ḥadīth*, *Sīrah*, culture, politics, and history. However, he admired *Sīrah* and Fiqh the most.

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the science of Siyer (the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)) are crucial in advancing Islamic scholarship, particularly in the context of understanding the life and legacy of the Prophet. Adem Apak emphasizes that Hamidullah's work in this field stands out for its depth and innovation. Beyond his extensive publications, Hamidullah introduces new methodologies for studying the Prophet's life, incorporating historical and analytical frameworks that enriched traditional approaches. His contributions to Siyer, alongside his scholarly work in areas such as *Ḥadīth* and Islamic jurisprudence, highlight his ability to blend classical Islamic scholarship with modern academic techniques. This distinctive approach has not only expanded the scope of Siyer's studies but also fostered a more nuanced understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's life, making Hamidullah a central figure in contemporary Islamic thought. His work serves as a valuable resource for both scholars and students, facilitating a deeper engagement with the prophetic biography in a way that is both intellectually rigorous and faithful to Islamic traditions.²⁵

Muhammad Ghazali holds Muhammad Hamidullah's works and personality in the highest regard, expressing profound respect and admiration for his contributions. He presents Hamidullah as a towering figure in Islamic scholarship, providing an insightful overview of his academic achievements and their significance in the study and practice of Islam. Al-Ghazali highlights how Hamidullah's scholarly endeavours not only deepen the understanding of Islamic teachings but also emphasize their practical application, reflecting a harmonious blend of intellectual rigour and spiritual relevance. Through his thoughtful reflections, Ghazali underscores Hamidullah's enduring legacy as a scholar whose work continues to inspire and guide students and scholars alike.²⁶

²⁵ Adem Apak, "Muhammed Hamidullah in Siyer İlmine Katkıları," *Uludağ Üniversitesi* 13, no. 1 (January 1, 2004).

²⁶ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 183-187.

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the development of Islamic thought are significant, particularly in the context of interfaith relationships and the nuanced interpretation of Islamic texts. His critical approach to the Qur'an and *Hadīth*, as explored by Shahid Rahman and Habibur Rahman, underscores his ability to blend scholarly rigour with a deep respect for Islamic traditions. Hamidullah's works, such as *Muhammad: The Prophet of Islam* and *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, reflect his commitment to critically engaging with Western and Muslim intellectual traditions. By applying a juridical sociological lens, Hamidullah demonstrates how Islamic texts could be interpreted in a manner that acknowledges historical context while maintaining fidelity to the faith. His work also addresses the challenge of reconciling Islamic thought with Western academic perspectives, thus bridging a gap that has long existed between the two. Hamidullah facilitates a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings through his contributions, opening pathways for constructive dialogue in interfaith relations. His approach exemplifies how Islamic scholarship can be both critical and faithful, fostering intellectual exchanges that promote mutual respect and understanding among different religious communities.²⁷

The study *Current Challenges in Interfaith Relationships within the Muslim Ummah: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions* by Muhammad Haroon and Khaleeq Ur Rehman provides a comprehensive exploration of the intricate dynamics of interfaith relationships, highlighting Muhammad Hamidullah's pivotal role in advocating tolerance, cooperation, and justice within the Muslim Ummah. By addressing challenges such as misinterpretation of Islamic teachings, political manipulation, nationalism, and the global implications of interfaith tensions, the study underscores Hamidullah's emphasis on education, policy reform, and dialogue as crucial tools for fostering harmonious relationships. The research's qualitative approach situates Hamidullah's work within historical and contemporary contexts, demonstrating his belief in justice and legal frameworks as foundations for peaceful coexistence, while also emphasizing the significance of grassroots efforts, NGOs, and international collaborations in bridging gaps between diverse faith communities. The study resonates deeply with Hamidullah's insights on the importance of media and technology in

²⁷ Shahid Rahman and Habibur Rahman, "Muhammad Hamidullah's Critical Thinking: Analyzing His Approach to Orientalism and Qur'an-Hadith Interpretation," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa Raushan Fikr* 13, no. 2 (July 13, 2024): 48.

shaping interfaith perceptions, advocating for responsible storytelling that promotes inclusivity and combats stereotypes. While the research effectively connects Hamidullah's principles to actionable strategies for modern challenges, it could be further enriched by specific references to his seminal works, such as *The Muslim Conduct of State*, and examples of successful interfaith initiatives inspired by his theories. Nevertheless, the study effectively situates Hamidullah's scholarship as a guide for navigating the complexities of interfaith dynamics in a globalized world, reinforcing the relevance of his vision for cultivating environments where diversity is celebrated, mutual understanding is prioritized, and interfaith harmony becomes a shared reality.²⁸

Syed Munir Wasti explores the production of books in the United States following the death of Muhammad Hamidullah in 2002, analysing various levels and series of publications that emerged in the aftermath of his passing. Wasti delves into writings that encompass biographies, critical studies, tributes, and literary contributions, each reflecting different facets of Hamidullah's immense scholarly legacy. His analysis underscores the ongoing relevance of Hamidullah's work in various fields of Islamic thought.²⁹

Zaheer U Din Behram examines Muhammad Hamidullah's role in shaping preachers of Islam through his academic contributions and practical applications of Islamic principles. Behram highlights Hamidullah's da'wah efforts among non-Muslims, beginning with his migration to Europe at the suggestion of his uncle during the British Raj's dominance over Hindustan. Settling in France, Hamidullah pursued his vision of spreading the message of Islam globally, teaching the Qur'an to those unfamiliar with its teachings and embodying a broader mission of interfaith dialogue.³⁰

Mahmud Rifat Kademoglu offers a heartfelt reflection on Muhammad Hamidullah's extraordinary character, emphasizing his profound humility and

²⁸ Muhammad Haroon and Khaleeq Ur Rehman, "Current Challenges in Interfaith Relationships within the Muslim Ummah: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions," *Scribd*, accessed January 27, 2025, <https://www.scribd.com/document/726612639/Article-Current-Challenges-in-Interfaith-Relationships-Within-the-Muslim-Ummah>.

²⁹ Sayyid Munir Wasti, "Muhammad Hamidullah: Hayat, Khidmat, Maktubat/ 'Alam-i-Islam Ka Namwar Saput: Muhammad Hamidullah," *Pakistan Perspectives* 20, no. 1 (2015): 179.

³⁰ Zaheer U Din, Behram, "Muhammad Hamidullah and His Efforts in Grooming of Preachers: A Descriptive Analytical Study," *Majallah-e-Talim o Tahqiq* 4, no. 1 (2002): 9.

unwavering dedication to his scholarly pursuits. Through a personal encounter that left a deep and lasting impression, Kademoglu vividly illustrates Hamidullah not just as a distinguished academic but as a deeply compassionate individual whose actions consistently embodied his values. The article paints a compelling portrait of a man whose intellect was matched only by his humanity.³¹

Munif Z. F. Nordin and Nor Fariza Mohd Nor delve into the Qur'anic concept of *Ahsan al-Qawl* as a fundamental linguistic framework for interfaith communication. Their research presents an innovative model for analysing discourse within interfaith contexts, focusing on the intricate relationships between God and humanity as well as interpersonal connections rooted in human nature. By emphasizing the principles of tolerance, respect, equality, and non-violence, their study underscores the critical role of interfaith dialogue in fostering social harmony in Pakistan. Moreover, they advocate for more substantial minority rights, recognizing the necessity of open, respectful communication in bridging religious divides.³²

Khan et al. explore pathways to strengthening interfaith harmony between Pakistan's majority and minority communities. Their study highlights the transformative power of humility, tolerance, and politeness in social interactions, arguing that patience and mutual respect are essential pillars of peaceful coexistence. By encouraging the adoption of these values in daily life, the researchers seek to pave the way for a more inclusive, harmonious society where diversity is embraced, and differences are navigated with grace and understanding.³³

Muhammad Hamidullah's work on the Islamic theology of revelation plays a pivotal role in fostering interfaith dialogue, particularly in the context of comparative theology. As César Andrade Alves highlights, Hamidullah is a significant figure in this field due to his profound insights into the concept of divine revelation within Islam, making him an ideal interlocutor for discussions with Christian theologians. His contributions provide a foundation for meaningful theological exchange, particularly in

³¹ Mahmud Rifat Kademoglu, "Remembering Muhammad Hamidullah," *Islam & Science* 1, no. 1 (2003): 143.

³² Munif Zariruddin Fikri Nordin and Nor Fariza Mohd Nor, "Promoting Interreligious Understanding through the Holy Qur'an," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 155 (2014): 184-188.

³³ Ihsan Ullah Khan, Azizullah Jan, and Khalil Ur Rahman, "Attitudes about Interfaith Harmony: A Case Study of Muslims and Hindus Social Relationship in District Swat," *Global Regional Review* 4, no. 3 (2019): 397-402.

light of the ecumenical goals set forth by the Second Vatican Council. By categorizing the issues surrounding revelation as explored by Hamidullah, Alves underscores the potential for fruitful dialogue on Islamic and Christian theological perspectives. Hamidullah's scholarship offers valuable perspectives on how divine revelation is understood in Islam, providing a bridge for comparative theological discussions that not only promote mutual understanding but also respect the distinctiveness of each tradition. His work, therefore, holds promise for advancing theological exchange that is both academically rigorous and ecumenically sensitive.³⁴

Fakih Hamdani's research on interfaith dialogue in Islam underscores the critical role that religious understanding and respectful engagement play in fostering peaceful coexistence. Through a systematic literature review, his study identifies key factors that contribute to the effectiveness of interreligious dialogue, such as recognizing commonalities between faiths, upholding core beliefs, and avoiding indifference towards one's religion. These factors are essential in shaping public perceptions of dialogue's success. Hamdani's work emphasizes that interfaith dialogue in Islam is not just about theological exchange but about creating a space where mutual respect and inclusivity can thrive. This research highlights how such dialogue can contribute to broader societal goals, fostering peace and cooperation among diverse religious communities. Through his findings, Hamdani advocates for an approach to interfaith dialogues that balances the integrity of each faith tradition with a commitment to peaceful coexistence and collective well-being.³⁵

Md. Sanaullah's analysis of interfaith dialogue in Islam provides a profound exploration of the scriptural basis for interreligious engagement, particularly in a world marked by conflict and religious extremism. His study highlights the vital role of interfaith dialogue as a peacebuilding tool, promoting fraternal relations and communal harmony among followers of different faiths. At the same time, Sanaullah cautions against potential pitfalls in dialogue, emphasizing that genuine interfaith exchange cannot compromise the fundamental beliefs of any religion, nor should it lead to

³⁴ César Andrade Alves, "Muhammad Hamidullah on the Islamic Theology of Revelation: Topics for a Discussion on Comparative Theology," *Pontificia Universidade Católica do Paraná* 9, no. 14 (July 19, 2021): 84.

³⁵ Fakih Hamdani, "Interfaith Dialogue in Islam," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Approach Sciences and Technologies (MULTI)* 1, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.62207/c6ahas14>.

syncretism or indifference towards one's own faith. By scrutinizing the Quran and Prophet Muhammad's life, the article demonstrates how Islam provides clear directives on how to approach interfaith dialogue, ensuring that it is both respectful and consistent with Islamic principles. The study advocates for a balanced approach to dialogue, where mutual respect is fostered while protecting the integrity of each religious tradition. Sanaullah's work thus serves as a guide for engaging in interfaith dialogue without compromising religious identity or engaging in practices that contradict Islamic teachings.³⁶

The study *Challenges to Inter-Faith Peace in Pluralistic Society: An Appraisal of Modern Approaches for Sustainability* by Shahid Muhammad, Muhammad Shahid Habib, Naseem Akhter, Ghulam Ahmad, Muhammad Mubashir Saleem, and Yar Khan examines the hurdles faced in fostering sustainable interfaith peace within pluralistic societies. It identifies critical challenges such as identity issues, the lack of credible representation within groups, and the reluctance of communities to compromise on perceived threats to their identities. The study emphasizes the pivotal role of religion in resolving interfaith tensions and advocates for including religiously motivated and moderate stakeholders in designing solutions. It critically appraises various methodologies, proposing that while theological and political approaches are more feasible and result-oriented, specific settings require tailored strategies. By integrating descriptive and analytical methods, along with essential statistics, the study underscores the importance of context-specific solutions to address the complexities of interfaith relations. The research also highlights the need for collaborative efforts to develop comprehensive frameworks that promote inclusivity and mutual respect.³⁷

The study *The Reception of Dr. Hameed Ullah's Ideas within the Pakistani Intellectual Landscape* by Muhammad Umar Riaz Abbasi, Muhammad Ilyas Aazmi, Abdul Ghaffar, Hafiz Taj Din, and Talib Ali Awan examines the intricate interplay of political, religious, and societal factors that have shaped the reception of Hamidullah's innovative religious ideas within Pakistan's intellectual community. By analysing the

³⁶ Md. Sanaullah, "Interfaith Dialogue in Islam: A Scriptural Scrutiny," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 19, no. 3 (January 1, 2014): 86-91.

³⁷ Shahid Muhammad, Muhammad Shahid Habib, Naseem Akhter, Ghulam Ahmad, Muhammad Mubashir Saleem, and Yar Khan, "Challenges to Inter-Faith Peace in Pluralistic Society: An Appraisal of Modern Approaches for Sustainability," *PalArch's Journal of Archeology of Egypt / Egyptology* 19, no. 2 (2022).

evolution of public discourse under varying political regimes—both authoritarian and democratic—the study highlights the challenges of harmonizing modernity and tradition in Islamic thought. It underscores Hamidullah’s enduring influence on interfaith dialogue, reconciliation, and social justice, demonstrating how his concepts resonate with Muslims striving to balance their faith with the complexities of modern society. Despite obstacles posed by political power structures, religious authorities, and societal conventions, his ideas foster dialogue and rejuvenation, promoting principles of pluralism, compassion, and intellectual diversity. The study identifies trends in the reception of his revolutionary religious ideas across different periods of governance, emphasizing the necessity of promoting intellectual freedom, amplifying underrepresented viewpoints, and creating platforms for constructive engagement within Islamic communities. By leveraging the transformative potential of Hamidullah’s insights, this research envisions a pathway toward a more just and inclusive society, not only within Pakistan but also globally, reinforcing the value of his contributions to contemporary Islamic discourse.³⁸

Hafiz Ghulam Anwar Azhar and Zahoor Alam delve into the foundational principles of Islam, emphasizing its roots in humanity and its ultimate goal of fostering peace and harmony. Their discussion highlights that the core teachings of Islam advocate kindness, compassion, and respect as essential elements for building a cohesive and just society. Conversely, they point out that rudeness, disrespect, and negative behaviour erode these values, bringing about discord and diminishing the dignity of humanity. The crux of their study underscores a vital message: positivity and virtuous conduct serve as catalysts for individual and collective progress, prosperity, and stability. They argue that when communities embrace the principles of respect, tolerance, and cooperation, they are better equipped to address challenges and achieve meaningful development.

On the other hand, evil actions—rooted in selfishness, hostility, and disregard for others—lead to chaos, societal disintegration, and widespread disgrace. Through their analysis, Azhar and Alam call for a return to the moral and ethical values enshrined in Islamic teachings, urging individuals and societies to uphold these principles in their

³⁸ Dr. Muhammad Umar Riaz Abbasi, Dr. Muhammad Ilyas Aazmi, Dr. Abdul Ghaffar, Hafiz Taj Din, and Dr. Talib Ali Awan, "The Reception of Dr. Hameed Ullah’s Ideas within the Pakistani Intellectual Landscape," *Remittances Review* 9, no. 2 (2024).

everyday interactions. By doing so, they believe humanity can transcend divisions, foster harmony, and cultivate an environment of peace and progress for all. Their work serves as a poignant reminder of the transformative power of positivity and the enduring relevance of Islamic values in addressing contemporary social issues.³⁹

Sheikh Taher Amini Golestani's research on Prophet Muhammad's model of interreligious dialogue, particularly through his letter to the Christians, offers valuable insight into how Islamic teachings can serve as a framework for promoting peace and cooperation among different religious communities. In a world increasingly marked by violence and extremism, this letter stands as a significant example of how religious dialogue can be conducted peacefully and constructively. Golestani highlights the importance of this letter, known as *The Promise of Muhammad to the Christians till the end of the World*, as a foundational document that strengthens the ties between Muslims and Christians. The letter's emphasis on mutual respect and peaceful coexistence challenges the misuse of religion to justify violence, particularly in the name of Islam. Widely acknowledged by both Sunni and Shi'a traditions, as well as Christian sources, this letter underscores the potential of religious teachings to foster global ethics and resolve conflicts. Golestani's work illustrates that Prophet Muhammad's model of interreligious dialogue, rooted in respect and cooperation, remains a powerful tool for addressing contemporary issues of violence and fostering peace in the modern world.⁴⁰

Gustavo de A. Coelho's chapter on Islam and interreligious dialogue explores the evolving theological stance within Islam that supports religious pluralism and interfaith cooperation, particularly through key declarations such as *The Amman Message*, *A Common Word Between Us and You*, *The Marrakesh Declaration*, and *The Human Fraternity Document*. Coelho traces the development of these ideas and highlights the network of religious authorities and scholars who have been instrumental in authoring these pivotal texts. These declarations not only advocate for religious pluralism but also emphasize the importance of dialogue as a means to strengthen international cooperation on human rights, citizenship, and social cohesion. They present a unique, religiously grounded approach to modernity, proposing that a renewed

³⁹ Hafiz Ghulam Anwar Azhar and Zahoor Alam, "The Role of Elected Scholars on Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan - A Research Study," *Journal of Islamic Civilization and Culture* 3, no. 01 (2020): 1-18.

⁴⁰ Sheikh Taher Amini Golestani, "Prophet Muhammad's Model of Interreligious Dialogue Based on Research on the Letter to the Christians," *University of Ljubljana* 74, no. 2 (January 1, 2019): 109-124.

engagement with religious values can play a crucial role in rebuilding social stability and political harmony in the Middle East. Coelho's analysis underscores how these interfaith initiatives not only foster mutual respect but also demonstrate how religious teachings can be a force for peace, collaboration, and the promotion of shared ethical values in the public sphere.⁴¹

Recep Çiğdem explores the complexities of interfaith marriage by examining its legal and cultural dimensions within Islamic law across diverse societies. The study emphasizes that adapting to a new culture while maintaining a marriage presents significant challenges, leading to the conclusion that individuals may find greater stability by marrying within their own cultural and religious traditions, as advised by Imam Abu Hanifa.⁴²

Mahan H. Mirza critically analyses three contemporary *Sīrah* works written in English, focusing on their portrayal of the events of Najrān as interpreted by Tariq Ramadan, Martin Lings, and M. Salabi. His research suggests that Western accounts of the Prophet's life may be less reliable for historical accuracy, but they still provide valuable theological insights when examined alongside classical Islamic sources.⁴³

Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi investigates the application of Islamic Shariah in addressing the concerns of religious minorities. His study highlights historical evidence demonstrating that Muslim states have historically provided more just and equitable treatment to minorities compared to non-Muslim nations. He argues that non-Muslims would benefit from applying Islamic legal principles designed for minority protection, especially given the challenges that Muslims face as minorities in non-Muslim-majority countries.⁴⁴

Husayn Haykal underscores the significance of interfaith relationships by analysing various covenants established by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with non-

⁴¹ Coelho, "Islam and Interreligious Dialogue," *Oxford University Press eBooks*, June 18, 2023, 99-126.

⁴² Recep Çiğdem, "Interfaith Marriage in Comparative Perspective," *Acta Orientalia* 68, no. 1 (2015): 59-86.

⁴³ Mahan H. Mirza, "A Delegation of Christians from Najrān Visits the Prophet Muḥammad: Contemporary English *Sīrah* Literature for a Western Audience," *Islamic Studies* 2, no. 20 (2011): 159-170.

⁴⁴ Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, "Islamic Shari'ah and the Question of Minorities," *Policy Perspectives* 6, no. 1 (2009): 63-77.

Muslim communities. He engages with Orientalist perspectives and the critiques posed by their followers, offering a thorough historical account of the Prophet's life both before and after his prophethood. His work provides a nuanced understanding of how these agreements fostered coexistence and mutual respect.⁴⁵

John Andrew Marrow examines the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) across 16 chapters of his book, demonstrating how the Prophet forged alliances with Christians, Jews, and polytheists to cultivate societal harmony. Marrow posits that these agreements were not only religious covenants but also integral to the political framework of Madinah, where the Prophet (pbuh) was perceived by his contemporaries as a leader with far-reaching governance strategies.⁴⁶

In his book *Restoring the Balance: Using the Qur'an and the Sunnah to Guide a Return to the Prophet's Islam*, Marrow presents historical treaties between Muslims and non-Muslims as revolutionary in their vision of coexistence. He argues that the Prophet (pbuh) safeguarded the polytheists of Madinah, and he calls for contemporary Muslims and Christians to reassess their shared history to overcome present-day interfaith conflicts.⁴⁷

Ibrahim Mohammad Zein and Ahmed El-Wakil comprehensively analyse the Prophet Muhammad's covenants with various faith communities. Their research highlights how the *Constitution of Madinah*, the covenants with Jews and Christians, and the truce with the people of Makkah exemplify the Prophet's commitment to peace and justice. They conclude that these historical agreements serve as enduring models for fostering interfaith harmony and equitable coexistence.⁴⁸

Likewise, Asmatullah Siddiqui, in his research paper, analyses the views of al-Faruqi on interfaith discipline and his struggles for the Movement for Islamization of

⁴⁵ Muhammad Husayn Haykal, *The Life of Muhammad*, trans. Isma'il Ragi al-Faruqi (Hometown, IL: North American Publication, 1976), 52.

⁴⁶ John Andrew Morrow, *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (New York: Angelico Press/Sophia Perennis, 2013), 356.

⁴⁷ John Andrew Morrow, *Restoring the Balance: Using the Qur'an and the Sunnah to Guide a Return to the Prophet's Islam* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), 119.

⁴⁸ Ibrahim Mohamed Zein and Ahmed El-Wakil, *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad: From Shared Historical Memory to Peaceful Co-Existence* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2022), 52.

Knowledge. He also discusses and describes al-Faruqi's thoughts on Tasawwuf. He demonstrates that:

Islam sees itself regarding Judaism and Christianity, namely, as the same identity but reformed and purged of accumulated tampering.⁴⁹

Furthermore, John Andrew declares interfaith relationship as one of the most talked-about terms of this era. In his latest study, he justifies a Muslim perspective on Islam and religious freedom. He says,

Islam is a system of belief that is entirely a devotional, ethical, spiritual and legal worldview. Despite this, religious freedom is everybody's right.⁵⁰

A qualitative study by Stephan B. Chapman and Marvin A. Sweeny presents an outlook on the Hebrew Bible in Judaism, the Old Testament in Christianity, and the Hebrew Bible in Islam. This research work consists of six parts. In the fourth section, the author describes the historiography of the former and the latter Prophets, identifying the connection between interfaith relations. The study's key finding is that the Qur'ān justifies the authority and authenticity of the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity.⁵¹

1.6 RESEARCH GAP

A thorough review of the existing literature, including relevant articles and books, reveals a significant research gap in the academic discourse surrounding the contributions of Muhammad Hamidullah to Islamic thought, particularly in the context of interfaith relationships. While numerous studies have explored various aspects of Hamidullah's scholarship—ranging from his work on Islamic jurisprudence and history to his translations and discoveries of key Islamic manuscripts—there remains a distinct lack of focused research that examines explicitly his role in shaping interfaith dialogue. As far as can be ascertained, no existing study has comprehensively analysed *Muhammad Hamidullah's Contribution to Islamic Thought with Special Reference to*

⁴⁹ Ataullah Siddiqui, "Ismail Raji al-Faruqi: From 'Urubah to Ummatic Concerns," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 16, no. 3 (1999): 1-26, 9.

⁵⁰ John Andrew Morrow, *The Islamic Interfaith Initiative: No Fear Shall be Upon Them* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), 16.

⁵¹ Stephen B. Chapman and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 408.

Interfaith Relationships, leaving an unexplored avenue for further investigation. This gap underscores the importance of this research, as it seeks to provide new insights into Hamidullah's perspectives on religious coexistence, his engagement with non-Muslim scholars, and his contributions to fostering dialogue between different faith communities.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The core of any research endeavour lies in the methodology chosen to explore and analyse the subject. A qualitative research methodology is adopted for Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions to the Development of Islamic Thought, with Special Reference to Interfaith Relationships. This approach aligns with the nature of the study, which is grounded in exploring textual and theoretical frameworks rather than statistical data.

Qualitative research encompasses a family of methodologies that prioritize understanding phenomena' depth, context, and meaning. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on measurable and numeric outcomes, qualitative methods delve into a subject's subjective and interpretive dimensions.⁵² This method is particularly suited for the present research, which seeks to understand and analyse Muhammad Hamidullah's intellectual contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships.

The study has employed content and textual analysis as the primary methods to achieve this. Content analysis systematically examines texts to uncover patterns, themes, and insights that, in the current study's case, shed light on Hamidullah's perspectives.⁵³ Textual analysis focuses on a close reading of his original works to interpret and contextualize his views on Islamic thought and interfaith dialogue.⁵⁴ By combining these methods, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of Hamidullah's contributions.

⁵² Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2017), 992.

⁵³ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071878781>.

⁵⁴ Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2022), 632.

The study has drawn extensively on primary sources, including Hamidullah's books, articles, and conference papers, to ensure an authentic and nuanced analysis of his ideas.⁵⁵

Digital tools, including databases and digital libraries, were employed to access a wide array of scholarly materials, ensuring a thorough and well-rounded exploration of the topic.

For several reasons, this methodology is particularly well-suited for the study of Hamidullah's contributions. First, his writings on interfaith relationships and Islamic thought require a deep engagement with textual material to uncover his philosophical and practical approaches.⁵⁶ Second, the qualitative approach allows for exploring complex and nuanced ideas that cannot be reduced to quantifiable measures.⁵⁷ Third, by emphasizing content and textual analysis, the methodology ensures that Hamidullah's views are appropriately understood in historical, cultural, and intellectual contexts.⁵⁸

Additionally, the qualitative framework is justified because it accommodates the interdisciplinary nature of the research. Hamidullah's work touches on theology, philosophy, history, and interfaith relations, all requiring a method that integrates diverse perspectives and analyses complex relationships. The use of content and textual analysis has provided the flexibility needed to address these multifaceted dimensions comprehensively.⁵⁹

In conclusion, the qualitative research methodology, grounded in content and textual analyses, has provided a robust and effective framework for exploring *Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships*. By prioritizing primary sources and employing rigorous analytical methods, the

⁵⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Political Life of the Holy Prophet* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1974).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2017), 992.

⁵⁸ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071878781>.

⁵⁹ Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 7th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2022), 632.

research ensures an authentic and nuanced understanding of his ideas while situating them within the broader discourse on interfaith relations and Islamic thought.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In a world increasingly defined by its diversity and pluralism, understanding the role of religion in fostering interfaith harmony is more crucial than ever. The 9/11 attacks marked a turning point in global consciousness, highlighting the often misunderstood interplay between religion and international relations. While modern and postmodern paradigms have sought to explain these dynamics, Islamic history offers its own profound contributions, mainly through the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Muhammad Hamidullah's work sheds light on these historical insights, emphasizing their relevance in contemporary interfaith dialogues.

The *Treaty of Madinah*, documented and analysed by Hamidullah, is a groundbreaking example of interfaith governance.⁶⁰ This treaty, established by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), was not just a political agreement but a moral and social contract that laid the foundation for coexistence among diverse communities. It emphasized mutual rights, shared responsibilities, and collective peace, principles that resonate deeply with modern interfaith dialogue efforts.

Postmodernism provides a powerful theoretical lens to frame this study within a broader intellectual context. Postmodernism, as described by Lyotard,⁶¹ rejects overarching ideologies and embraces pluralism and diversity. This philosophical stance aligns with Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships, which promotes tolerance and mutual respect while preserving the distinct identity of Islam. The postmodern critique of universal truths and its emphasis on contextuality enable a nuanced exploration of Hamidullah's ideas, offering insights into how his principles can inform contemporary challenges.

⁶⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Political Life of the Holy Prophet* (Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publications, 1974).

⁶¹ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 144.

At the same time, postmodernism's relativistic tendencies, as noted by thinkers like Foucault⁶² and Derrida,⁶³ present challenges to religious and cultural cohesion. By framing religion as a cultural artifact, postmodernism risks undermining its moral and ethical authority. Hamidullah's work counterbalances these excesses, providing a cohesive framework rooted in Islamic teachings that promotes unity without diluting religious identity.

This framework is not merely theoretical but has profound practical implications. In an era marked by interfaith tensions, global migration, and cultural relativism, Hamidullah's emphasis on shared values and collective peace offers a roadmap for building bridges between communities. His ideas demonstrate how Islamic thought can contribute meaningfully to global interfaith dialogue, providing tools to navigate the complexities of diversity while fostering harmony.

By integrating postmodernism's emphasis on diversity with Hamidullah's principles of interfaith harmony, this study positions itself at the intersection of historical insight and contemporary relevance. It not only revisits Islamic history but also reimagines its lessons for the modern world, offering a framework that is as intellectually robust as it is practically transformative.

⁶² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage, 1995), 352.

⁶³ Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016), 40th Anniversary Edition.

CHAPTER TWO

LIFE, EDUCATION, AND WORKS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Hamidullah stands as a luminary within the community of scholars who ardently dedicate themselves to the cause of Islam with unwavering devotion and enthusiasm. His profound contributions to Islamic studies internationally testify to his sincere commitment. Muhammad Hamidullah's educational process is evident in the breadth and depth of his writings, which span various facets of Islamic studies, ranging from the original texts of the Qur'an to the enduring principles of Islamic governance. Muhammad Rashid Sheikh, in his book dedicated to Muhammad Hamidullah, sheds light on the teaching aspects of this remarkable scholar. Sheikh says,

Hamidullah played a great role in educating and serving the Muslim community in France, imparting knowledge on subjects ranging from the teachings of the Qur'an to Islamic matrimonial practices.¹

Sheikh emphasises that both Eastern and Western scholars have recognised Muhammad Hamidullah's expertise, acknowledging him as a standard authority in Islamic knowledge.

Muhammad Hamidullah's tireless work and efforts have become a cornerstone in the foundational sciences of Islam, marking a profound and sincere service to society. Notably, he stands out among scholars who painstakingly sought out and rectified numerous valuable Arabic manuscripts, particularly those dating back to the unseasonable periods in Islamic history. A distinguishing characteristic of Muhammad Hamidullah was his multilingual proficiency. He possessed a command over Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, and French. Furthermore, his linguistic capabilities extended to Turkish, Russian, Latin, and German. This linguistic versatility undoubtedly broadened the scope of his research and facilitated his engagement with diverse sources and perspectives. The breadth of Muhammad Hamidullah's research and writing expertise encompasses pivotal areas within Islamic scholarship. His contributions include notable

¹ Muḥammad Rāshid Shaīykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 193.

works on the translation of the *Qur'ān*, *Ḥadīth* literature, the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), International Islamic Law, Islamic Politics, and the archival heritage of Islam. Each area represents a facet of Muhammad Hamidullah's comprehensive understanding of Islam and his dedication to exploring its diverse dimensions. In examining Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly legacy, it becomes evident that his work transcends temporal and geographical boundaries. His impact on Islamic studies is not confined to a specific era or region; instead, it resonates globally, leaving an indelible mark on the intellectual landscape of Islamic scholarship. One cannot overlook Muhammad Hamidullah's significant role in disseminating Islamic knowledge in France. His efforts to educate and guide the Muslim community in a non-Islamic environment underscore his commitment to bridging cultural gaps and fostering understanding. The teachings he imparted, ranging from the fundamental principles of the Qur'an to the nuanced aspects of Islamic marital traditions, reflect a holistic approach to Islamic education.

Moreover, Muhammad Hamidullah's recognition as a standard authority by scholars from both the East and the West speaks to the universality of his contributions. His expertise serves as a reference point for those seeking a deeper understanding of Islamic principles, enriching global Islamic scholarship. In delving into Muhammad Hamidullah's endeavours to discover and rectify valuable Arabic manuscripts from the unseasonable periods of Islamic history, one gains insight into his commitment to preserving the intellectual heritage of Islam. His meticulous efforts unearthed historical treasures and ensured the authenticity and accuracy of Islamic teachings for future generations. Muhammad Hamidullah's linguistic acumen, encompassing a range of languages beyond traditional Arabic and Persian, facilitated a more comprehensive engagement with Islamic sources. His command of English and French enabled him to communicate the richness of Islamic thought to a broader audience, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers.

The areas of Muhammad Hamidullah's research, including the translation of the Qur'an, exploration of *Ḥadīth* literature, and in-depth analysis of Islamic law and politics, collectively contribute to a holistic understanding of Islam. His writings serve as valuable resources for scholars and students alike, providing insights into the diverse facets of Islamic thought and practice. In the end, Muhammad Hamidullah emerges as a towering figure in Islamic scholarship whose contributions extend far beyond the

confines of a specific time or place. His dedication to Islam's cause, intellectual breadth, and linguistic proficiency positions him as a beacon of knowledge and understanding in Islamic studies. The legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah endures as a source of inspiration for scholars and seekers of knowledge, reflecting the timeless relevance of his work in the ongoing conversation surrounding Islam and its intellectual heritage.²

2.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

2.2.1 Migrations of his Ancestors (*Nawāiīt*)

When the background of Muhammad Hamidullah's family is investigated, it often begins with the *Nawāiīt* tribe. This tribe is unique because it included many critical scholars and intelligent individuals who loved Islam deeply. Muhammad Hamidullah came from a well-known family within this tribe. The *Nawāiīt* community has its roots connected to the *Banū Hāshim* family. Muhammad Hamidullah's grandfather proudly acknowledged that they were a part of the Hashim family. The *Nawāiīt* tribe holds significance in Muhammad Hamidullah's family history. It is unique because it had numerous scholars and intellectuals devoted to Islam. Muhammad Hamidullah's family, being a part of this tribe, has inherited this tradition of knowledge and love for Islam. It is interesting to note that the *Nawāiīt* community traces its roots back to the Banu Hashim family. This family connection adds a layer of historical importance to Muhammad Hamidullah's lineage. His grandfather's acknowledgement of their belonging to the Hashim family underscores a sense of pride and connection to the broader history of Islam. In essence, Muhammad Hamidullah's family history is intertwined with the *Nawāiīt* tribe, a community with a rich heritage of scholars and a strong affiliation with the *Banū Hāshim* family, further emphasising their deep connection to the history and values of Islam.³ Muhammad Hamidullah told his cousin, Nadia Batul Ahmed, “We are related to Muhammad Rasulullah (pbuh) and Ṣaḥābah”.

During the Umayyad dynasty, Hajjaj Ibn-e-Yusuf was the governor of Ḥijāz. He was a cruel man who spread much oppression, which became a ruling motive for the migration of the *Nawāiīt* tribe from Madinah to Baghdad in AD 691. However, Baghdad

² Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

³ Yusuf Kokan Umari, *Khānwāda-e-Qāḍī Badru ad-daulah* (Madras: Dār-ut-Taṣnīf, 1963), vol. 1, 24.

could not become their permanent residency due to the injustice of the ruler of that time, so they moved to Badrah in AD 1341. It was their second migration, but in AD 1351, the tribe's chief, Sayyed Abdur Rahman, died, and they had to migrate from Badrah to India.⁴ According to Muhammad Hamidullah, “the people of the Nawait community arrived in India around 1333-48; it was a time duration when a famous traveller, named Ibn-e-Battuta (AD 1307-77) visited this country”.⁵ Over time, the *Nawāiit* moved from one city of India to another and settled there. They lived in Batkal, Konkan, Bijapur, Malabar, Mumbai, Madras, Arcot, Vellore and Hyderabad.⁶

The word *Nawāiit* is spelt differently as Nevoyat, Navyat, Nawaiyat, Nawayth and *Nawāiit*; however, all these words have the same meaning, which is “newcomers”. The main settlement of this migrant Muslim community is in the areas of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala. According to Thurston, “the name of *Nawāiit* community is converted from Hindustani and Marathi words for “newcomer”.⁷ The *Nawāiit* tribe was further divided into many different clans named *Palkar*, *Chaudhri*, *Khatib*, *Dalwai*, *Sabbai*, *Shakir*, *Shakri*, *Sabir*, *Tahir*, *Qari*, *Quraishi*, *Qāḍī*, *Qāḍī Mamun*, *Makki* and *Malik*.⁸

The ancestors of Hamidullah belonged to the clan of *Qāḍī* and were reputed to have worked as *Qāḍī* of Madras.⁹ One of the most famous *Qāḍī* of Madras was *Qāḍī* Salahuddin Muhammad Ayyub, who was appointed for this post in 1985 and he was a descendent of *Qāḍī* Badrud Daulah (d.1863), the grandfather of Muhammad Hamidullah.¹⁰ Most of the families of the *Nawāiit* community belonged to the *Shāfa‘ī* School of Fiqh and *Hanaḍī* School of Jurisprudence, *Ahl al-Sunnah Wal Jamā‘ah* and *Shī‘ah* School of Thought. For instance, under the guidance of Shah Tahir Deccan (d. AD 1549.), the clan of Tahir became the follower of *Shī‘ah* sect. Shah Tahir became famous as a religious scholar and leader. His popularity as a teacher created suspicion in the mind of the Safavid ruler, Shah Ismail, who exiled him to Kasha (Iran). Later, he

⁴ ‘Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 47-57; Ibid., 24-25.

⁵ Yusuf Kokan Umari, *Khānwāda-e-Qāḍī Badru ad-daulah* (Madras: Dār-ut-Taṣnīf, 1963), vol. 1, 24.

⁶ ‘Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 55.

⁷ Edger Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras: Government Press, 1909), vol. 5, 272.

⁸ ‘Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 202-262.

⁹ Muḥammad Ubaīdullah, “Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah kay Chand Maktūbāt,” *Ma‘ārif* (Azamgarh), 172, no. 4 (October 2003): 281.

¹⁰ ‘Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 56.

was forced to leave Iran and eventually took refuge in Ahmad Nagar (Gujarat), India. On introduction to Sultan Burhān Nizām Shah (AD 1508-1553), he was appointed as one of his advisors. Shah Tahir impressed upon the Sultan to proclaim Shiism as the official religion of the region.

The people of the *Nawāiī* community were reported to be generally centred on religious obligations. Learning Islamic education, memorising the Qur’ān, and acquiring Arabic and Persian languages had been an old tradition of these people. Muhammad Hamidullah had mentioned in one of his letters to one of his close relatives that this family's old scholars were passing away one by one and that there could be no one to take their place. So, the family members should pay attention to acquiring Islamic knowledge.¹¹ Apart from learning more than one language and memorising the Qur’an, there was another family tradition of celebrating the *Bismillah* ceremony at every child's initial education step when he reached the age of four and a half years. After the celebration of this ceremony, the child was supposed to be admitted to a *maktab* or *madrashah* for further education. These people were bound to maintain their old family traditions, so they preferred to marry the people of their tribe.¹²

2.2.2 Intellectuals from his Ancestry

Muhammad Hamidullah was born into a family that was full of well-known intellectuals. The work done by his ancestors for the devotion to Islam in terms of spreading Islamic knowledge showed the sincerity of each scholar of this family from generation to generation. The origin of his ancestral chain belonged to the *Nawāiī* community, and it was the tradition of that time among the people of this community to use Hashimi and *Nawāiī* as their surname, for example, Maulvi Nasiruddin Hashimi and Maulvi Ghauth Shar-ul-Mulk *Nawāiī*. Two scholars from his ancestors, Allaudin (776-835) and Ali Ibn-e-Ahmad al-Mahaimi Mahaimi (1374-1432), were prominent personalities¹³ who authored a well-known exegesis of the Qur’an titled *Tablīr-ur-*

¹¹ Muḥammad Ubaīdullah, “Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah kay Chand Maktūbāt,” *Ma‘ārif* (Azamgarh), 172, no. 4 (October 2003): 281.

¹² Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiī* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 143.

¹³ Abd-ar-Raḥmān Pervāz Islāhī, *Makhdūm ‘Alī Mahāimī: Ḥayāt Athār wal Afkār* (Mumbai: Naqsh-i-Konan Trust Publications, 1976), 128.

Rahman wa Taisir-ul-Mannan, also known as *Tafsir al-Mahaimi* which was first published in 1878 in *Bulaq* (Egypt) at the insistence of Maulana Muhammad Jamaluddin Dehlvi, who was the Minister of Business Affairs in the state of Bhopal. Following the genealogical table given by Hamidullah is crucial to understanding the chronicity of his ancestral chain.

Ata Ahmad Shafi settled in India in AD 1351; he was the first one amongst the ancestors of Muhammad Hamidullah to do so. He belonged to Badrah, but when he reached Goa, he travelled widely to other cities in South India, including Bijapur, Gulbarga, Arcot, and Madras. Kachchh (Gujarat) was the last city where he had lived and died.¹⁴ He had two sons, Faqih Makhdoom Ishaq and Faqih Makhdoom Ismail (d. 879 A.H. / AD 1474), inclined towards Islamic studies. The son of Faqih Ismail, Abu Muhammad *Qāḍī* Ahmad, was a brilliant student who had the distinction of being the first *Qāḍī* in his family. Furthermore, Muhammad *Qāḍī* Ahmad had two sons named Maulla Khalilullah and *Qāḍī* Mahmud Kabir. Maulla Khalilullah was the grandfather of Habibullah Bijapur (d.1041 A.H. / AD 1631), who was a renowned Sufi of the state of Deccan during the reign of Ali Adil Shah (d. 988 A.H. / AD 1580), and being a *Qāḍī* of that area, he served Bijapur.

The grandfather of Hamidullah's father, Muhammad Ghauth Sharf-ul-Mulk, was born on July 17th, 1752, in an old city of India known as Arcot (Tamil Nadu) and obtained his primary education related to the Qur'an, *Ḥadīth*, and Fiqh from his grandfather Nizām-ud-din Ahmad Saghir (d.1189 A.H / AD 1775). His educational expertise was remarkable because he was well-versed in the Arabic language, traditional sciences, logic, and philosophy.¹⁵ He stayed in Madras for a considerable time and was the tutor of Azimullah, son of Amir-ul-Umara. Amir-ul-Umara was a *Nawāb* (a Muslim ruler or governor in South Asia, typically under the Mughal Empire or later during British rule) of that time. However, after he died in 1804, Azimullah was declared a *Nawāb* of Madras. Azimullah tributed his teacher with great respect and honour and graced him with the titles of Sharf al-Mulk, Sharaf-ud-Daulah, Maulvi Muhammad Ghauth Khan, and Bahadur Ghalib Jang. In 1808, he decided to devote the

¹⁴ A.R. Momin, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah," *Tarjumān-e-Islām* 53-54 (Jan.-June 2003): 12.; Muḥammad Rāshid Shāykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 8.

¹⁵ Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāiit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 146-149.

rest of his life to the cause of Islamic education, so he resigned from his position. Maulvi Ghauth Sharf al-Mulk became the author of 30 Arabic, Persian, and Urdu books. His most famous book is *Nathr-ul-Marjan fi Rasm Zamzam-il-Qur'an*, which has seven volumes and a commentary of the Qur'an.¹⁶ This book was first published by Majlis Ishat-ul-Uloom, Hyderabad, in 1904. Muhammad Ghauth died on 11th Safar, 1238 A.H / November 7th, 1822, and his grave is near the Wala Jahi Mosque.¹⁷

Maulvi Muhammad Ghauth Sharf al-Mulk had two sons, Abdul Wahab (d. 1258 A.H / AD 1842) and Hamidullah's paternal grandfather, Muhammad Sibghatullah *Qāḍī* (d. 1863). Muhammad Sibghatullah *Qāḍī* was a high-ranked personality and had won the title of Badru Daulah. In the official documents of that time, he was addressed with the names *Qāḍī-ul-Mulk*, *Qāḍī Mehkma-e-Alia Sarkar*, *Nawāb* Karnataka, and Dadrus Khan Bahadar. He was coherent in three different languages: Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. His interest was not just in traditional educational subjects; he was more inclined towards rational sciences, including astronomy, philosophy, and medicine.

Furthermore, his remarkable contribution was his hard work as a religious and social reformer to eradicate the innovations that prevailed in society.¹⁸ He was elected as a chairman of the Board of Directors of Madrassah-e-Azam (Madras) in AD 1851. However, due to Edward Balfour's (the Director of the National Library of Madras) decision to introduce English, local languages, and science subjects in the courses of study, he objected and later submitted his resignation. He believed that the curriculum of the Madrasah should concern traditional education, and including such subjects might affect this.¹⁹

Muhammad Sibghatullah also worked on South Indian classical history. In 1747, he was elected for the post of *Qāḍī* al-Quzat of Madras by *Nawāb* Ghulam Ghauth Khan. The post of *Qāḍī* al-Quzat was the highest in judicial administration at that time. He was awarded the titles of Munsif-ud-Daulah, Madalat Khan Bahadur, and Mustaid Jang. *Qāḍī* Sibghatullah authored 29 books in Arabic, 24 in Persian, and 14 in Urdu on the crucial topics of Islamic education. His two books are of high prestige; the first one

¹⁶ Ibid., 146-149.

¹⁷ Ibid., 160.

¹⁸ Ibid., 437.

¹⁹ Muḥammad Rāshid Shaīykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 21.

is *Faiz-ul-Karim*, and the second is the Urdu commentary of the Qur'ān. *Qāḍī* Badru Daulah passed away before the completion of the commentary. Later, this commentary was completed by Maulana Nasiruddin Ahmad in seven volumes and was published by Azizi Publications, Madras. He died on July 13th 1863, near masjid Wali Jahi in old Madras city.²⁰

Abu Muhammad Khalilullah (d. 1943), the most renowned personality of this lineage, was the father of Hamidullah. He migrated from Madras to Hyderabad with his brother and settled there permanently. His personality is an exemplary model for the practice of Eastern civilisation and education. After completing his education, he worked as assistant revenue secretary of Aurangabad. Later, he was appointed a secretary at the Revenue Department of Nizām State. When he joined the department, he was initially hired as a secretary, but over time, he was consistently promoted due to his sincere and valuable efforts.

When he reached the overage period of his life, he held the post of Director of the Revenue Department during the time of Nizam's government. Khalilullah made many efforts to promote the prosperity of his society. His most significant accomplishment was setting up a non-interest lending society, which was among the initial institutions in Hyderabad. He was also interested in agriculture and focused on girls' education.²¹ He was overly concerned with the nurture of his children. Daily, he used to write the lessons of the Qur'an and *Ḥadīth* in the notebooks of his children, so in this way, many members of his family could preserve the Qur'anic information which Khalilullah wrote.

Khalilullah was the author of many books, and a few well-known ones include *Guldastah-i-Ma'rifat*, *Toḥfat-ul-Khulān fī Masā'il-ul-Islāmī-wal-'Imān*, *Toḥfat-ul-Atjāl*, *Rehnumā-i-Tarbīyat*, and *Azīz-ul-Urf*.²² He married the daughter of *Nawāb* Qasim Jhang from Karnataka and had five children: three sons (Muhammad Sibghatullah, Muhammad Habibullah and Hamidullah) and two daughters.

²⁰ 'Azīz Jang, *Tārīkh-un-Nawāīit* (Hyderabad: Vila Academy, 1976), 146-149.

²¹ Muḥammad Rāshid Shāyikh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 21.

²² Muḥammad Sa'ad 'Ālam Qāsmī, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah aur Islāmī 'Ulūm kī Taḥqīq wa-Tadwīn," *Tahqīqāt-e-Islāmī* 22, no. 1 (2003): 96.

The two elder brothers of Hamidullah joined the Revenue Department and assisted their father. His brothers, Sibghatullah and Habibullah, held the post of Deputy Director and Dean of the department. Their significant effort was to improve the management of their society. Sibghatullah was more concerned about statistical surveys and established a non-interest banking society to provide interest-free loans. Employees of this department were allowed to get interest-free loans.²³

2.2.3 Early Life of Muhammad Hamidullah

Muhammad Hamidullah, a distinguished scholar of Hyderabad, was born in the historic locality of Katal Mandi.²⁴ From an early age, he displayed extraordinary dedication to his studies. His father, recognizing his passion for learning, ensured he never missed his lessons, even if it meant having breakfast on the way to class.²⁵

Gifted with an exceptional memory, Hamidullah demonstrated an extraordinary ability to retain knowledge. He recalled that at the age of four and a half, he had already memorized several verses of the Qur'an before being formally taught.²⁶ His *Bismillah* ceremony in early 1911 marked the beginning of his religious education. He later reminisced that when his ceremony took place at four years, four months, and four days, he had already memorized the first verses of *Surah Iqra* and recited them before his father had completed his recitation.²⁷

After completing elementary education in 1913, Hamidullah was admitted to *Dār-ul-'Ulūm*, a prestigious *madrāsah* in Hyderabad. In 1919, he pursued further Islamic education at *Jāmi'ah Nizāmīyyah*, where he specialized in *Qur'ān*, *Ḥadīth*, *Fiqh*, *Kalām* (*scholastic theology*), *logic*, and *philosophy*. He completed his *Maulvi*

²³ Muḥammad Rāshid Shāykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 22-23.

²⁴ Aḥmad 'Aṭṭāullah, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah," *Ma'ārif* (Azamgarh) 174, no. 1 (2004): 58.

²⁵ Muhammad Tahir, ed., *Encyclopaedic Survey of Islamic Culture* (Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2003), vol. 6.

²⁶ Aḥmad 'Aṭṭāullah, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah," *Ma'ārif* (Azamgarh) 174, no. 1 (2004): 59.

²⁷ Muḥammad Rāshid Shāykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 53.

course in 1923 and *Kamil* in 1924.²⁸ His curriculum at *Jāmi‘ah Nizāmīyyah* included various renowned Islamic texts, such as *Mishkat-ul-Masabih* in Ḥadīth, *Mukhtaṣar-ul-Quduri* in Fiqh, *Uṣūl-us-Shāshī* in jurisprudence, and *Al-Fiqh-ul-Akbar* by Imam Abu Ḥanifah in theology.²⁹

Despite his strong foundation in traditional Islamic studies, Hamidullah was drawn to modern education, which was gaining popularity in India. His family initially disapproved of his interest in English studies, leading him to learn the language secretly while preparing for his matriculation exams.³⁰ His efforts paid off when he secured the top position in the examination, impressing his father with his dedication.³¹

He later pursued higher education at Osmania University, completing his L.L.B and M.A. degrees with a specialization in theology and international law.³² He was among the first students to study Public International Law, a subject newly introduced under the guidance of the League of Nations.³³

2.3 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUNDS AND INFLUENCES

2.3.1 Educational Journey

Hamidullah’s formal education began under the guidance of his father before he enrolled in *Dār-ul-‘Ulūm* and later *Jāmi‘ah Nizāmīyyah* for advanced Islamic studies. His academic excellence led him to earn degrees in theology and law from Osmania University, which laid the foundation for his future research endeavours.

His passion for knowledge took him beyond India. Initially, he pursued a PhD at *Jāmi‘ah Nizāmīyyah*. However, with university approval, he submitted his

²⁸ Muhammad Latif Ahmad, "Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah kī Ta‘ālmī Zindgī: Jāmi‘a Nizāmīyyah kī Chāar Dīwārī main," *Al-Tanvir* (Hyderabad, 2005): 74.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 74-75.

³⁰ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), 1-258.

³¹ Muḥammad Rāshid Shaīykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 103.

³² Aḥmad ‘Aṭṭāullah, "Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah," *Ma‘ārif* (Azamgarh) 174, no. 1 (2004): 60.

³³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 386.

dissertation on International Law in Islam to the University of Bonn, Germany, where he earned his doctorate in 1953.

After returning from Europe, he briefly lectured at Osmania University before securing academic positions in Germany and France. He was also affiliated with the Centre National de La Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in France. Additionally, he delivered lectures at various universities across Europe and Asia, further solidifying his reputation as a leading Islamic scholar.³⁴

2.4 FOREIGN VISITS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Following his L.L.B degree, Hamidullah took on a research associate role at Idārah-e-Taḥqīqāt-e-‘Ilmīyyah (Research Institute of *Osmania University*). His research focused on *Islamic and European International Law: A Comparative Study*, an area of significant academic interest. Recognizing the importance of his work, Osmania University awarded him a scholarship to collect material from Muslim and European libraries.³⁵

Initially, he conducted research in Hyderabad, but with the university’s approval, he expanded his study to Hijaz, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Türkiye, where he accessed valuable manuscripts and legal texts. This phase of his journey was not just an academic endeavour but also a cultural exploration, allowing him to compare the rich legal traditions of Islamic and European civilizations. His work in this field earned him recognition as a leading scholar in Islamic international law.

In 1935, his doctoral dissertation *Die Neutralität im Islamischen Völkerrecht* (*Neutrality in Islamic International Law*), was published in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (ZDMG), a prestigious German academic journal. This research was later revised and expanded into his renowned book, *The Muslim Conduct of State*, which became a seminal work in Islamic legal studies.

Hamidullah’s pursuit of higher education did not stop there. He sought a second doctorate in England but faced challenges as British universities did not recognize his

³⁴ Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah, *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr* (Islamabad: Idara Tahqeeqat-e-Islami, 2018), 17.

³⁵ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p.2.

Bonn University degree. Consequently, he moved to Sorbonne University in Paris, where he completed a post-doctoral degree in *Documents on Muslim Diplomacy in the Time of the Prophet and Orthodox Caliphs* in 1935. His work was later published in Paris, maintaining its original title. Although he had aspirations for a third doctorate at Leningrad University in Russia, financial constraints prevented him from pursuing it, and he returned to Hyderabad in 1936.³⁶

Beyond his academic achievements, Hamidullah had a deep emotional connection to the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the regions he inhabited. He wrote biographies of the Prophet in English, Urdu, and French. His research on the Prophet's military campaigns led him to conduct field studies in Saudi Arabia, culminating in his book *The Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)*. His meticulous documentation of battlefield sites resulted in significant cartographic contributions. His first trip to Hijaz in 1932 allowed him to prepare an initial map of Uhud. During subsequent visits in 1939 and 1946, he revised his work and developed detailed maps of Badr and Khandaq.³⁷

In 1974, at 66, he continued his research with the same vigour as his youth. While visiting King Fahad University in Saudi Arabia, he impressed observers with his unwavering commitment to completing *The Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)*.³⁸ Another one of his significant research endeavours took him to Zarah, a small village near Qatif, to examine locations the Prophet (pbuh) visited during his early trading years. His study provided new insights into the historical and geographical significance of Zarah, further enriching the understanding of early Islamic history.³⁹

Hamidullah's foreign research visits not only expanded his academic contributions but also demonstrated his lifelong dedication to Islamic scholarship. His efforts to bridge the gap between Islamic and Western academic traditions continue to inspire researchers in Islamic studies today.

³⁶ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 185.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁹ Zafar Ishaq Ansari, "Great Encounters-Karachi, Paris and Dhahran," *Impact International*, January-March 2003, 24-27.

2.5 PROFESSIONAL LIFE OF HAMIDULLAH

Practically, Hamidullah started to work in 1933 when he was in Germany. He was appointed as a lecturer and was supposed to teach Arabic and Urdu at Bonn University, Germany.⁴⁰ He continued his lectureship even when he returned to Hyderabad in 1936 and remained connected with the Department of Theology at Osmania University. After a few months, he was moved to the Department of Law of Osmania University and delivered lectures about International Law. Along with his lectureship job, he continued his research work for Islamic studies; notably, he made a renowned contribution to Islamic Jurisprudence. In other words, being a researcher and influential author, Hamidullah rendered outstanding service to Islam and Muslims. After ten years of service at Osmania University, he discontinued his job due to the disturbing situation in Hyderabad.

In 1946, the Nizam of Hyderabad elected Hamidullah as a member of the delegation of the United Nations Security. He tried to eradicate the forcible annexation prevalent in Hyderabad caused by Indian dominion. The delegation had not settled the matter until the state of Hyderabad fell to the government of India in September 1948.⁴¹ Hamidullah founded the Hyderabad Liberation Society to work towards recognising Hyderabad as a separate state from India in 1948. He decided to take no action until the question of Hyderabad was considered by the United Nations Organization (UNO). Unfortunately, this question could not be resolved in favour of the Muslims. Hamidullah was persistent, and his efforts were kept on for this political injustice until the death of *Nawāb* Osman ‘Ali Khan in 1967.⁴² Hamidullah did not want to settle in Hyderabad; instead, he preferred to stay in Europe to spread awareness about Islam's social and moral values. A significant period of his life was spent in France, converting non-Muslims to Islam. He remained occupied with research work, writing articles and books, and delivering lectures on the essential details of the Qur’an, *Ḥadīth*, *Fiqh*, *Sīrah* and Islamic History.⁴³

⁴⁰ Abdur Rehman Momin, "Professor Dr Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Culture* 77, no. 4 (2003): 83-90.

⁴¹ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 185.

⁴² Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 4.

⁴³ Muḥammad Jahāngīr Tamīmī, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: ‘Ilm-o-‘Amal kā Paīkar-e-Khās," *Oriental College Magazine* (Lahore), Vol. 78, Nos. 3 & 4 (2003): 105.

He went to France and used official travel documents for his visits. However, he had never used an easy way of acquiring French nationality that would entitle him to a French passport. He maintained his Hyderabad citizenship, hoping for the occupied Hyderabad to regain its freedom so he could one day return to his homeland. He is recognized as the last citizen of Hyderabad state by some of the writers who worked to write his biography.⁴⁴ When the government of Pakistan was at its initial growing stage, Hamidullah was invited by the government to help draft the constitution of Pakistan. This constitution was supposed to follow Islamic Laws. In parallel to his participation in the decision of constitution-making, he was selected as a member of the Board of Talimat-e-Islamiyah in Islamabad from 1949 to 1950. The committee of this Board consisted of many eminent scholars, including Hamidullah, Maulana Sayyed Sulaiman Nadvi, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Professor Muhammad Abdul Khaliq, Mufti Muhammad Jafar Husain Mujtahid, and Muhammad Zafar Ahmad Ansari.⁴⁵ These members were mainly concerned with advice on constitutional matters to solve them under Islamic regulations.⁴⁶

While in France, Hamidullah persisted in his research efforts, dedicating a significant portion of his job tenure to the renowned French research centre, Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique (CNRSF). He actively disseminated his knowledge during this substantial period by consistently contributing articles to reputable English, French, and Urdu journals. His scholarly focus encompassed the fields of Qur'an, *Hadīth*, *Sīrah*, and *Fiqh*, maintaining a parallel trajectory with his prolific publishing endeavours. Hamidullah's presence at CNRSF showcased his commitment to academic explorations and highlighted his dedication to sharing valuable insights across multiple languages and cultural contexts. Through his contributions to well-known journals, he played a crucial role in fostering a broader understanding of Islamic studies in international scholarly circles.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ M.H. Faruqi, "The Last Citizen of Hyderabad," *Impact International*, January-March (2013): 42-44.

⁴⁵ Zafar Ishaq Ansari, "Great Encounters-Karachi, Paris and Dhahran," *Impact International*, January-March 2003, 25.

⁴⁶ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 4.

⁴⁷ Abdur Rehman Momin, "Professor Dr Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Culture* 77, no. 4 (2003): 85.

For the opulence of Islam, he made participation in seminars and conferences a crucial part of his academic activity. He visited many cities and mosques in France to promote Islam. His commendable contribution to the opulence of Islam was through writing research papers, articles, and books to spread awareness about Islam, and he actively participated in discussion sessions. He impressed his oppositional participants and particularly satisfied many orientalists with his research-oriented papers and influential answers, with references, to the questions raised by the orientalists.⁴⁸

Apart from publishing and attending conferences, Hamidullah used another way to contribute his knowledge, delivering lectures on some crucial topics of Islamic history and culture at different universities in India, Germany, Pakistan, Türkiye, France, and the Arab world. As a researcher and scholar, he tried his best to serve Islam worldwide. His lectureship was not confined to Bonn University and Osmania University only. In 1935, he delivered a lecture on the History of Islamic economics at Sorbonne University, Paris. While delivering this lecture, he convincingly made his students agree that economic federation originated from the beginning of the Islamic period. In addition, from 1954 onward, Hamidullah made it his annual task to visit three different cities (Istanbul, Ankara, and Erzurum) in Türkiye during the summer and delivered lectures there. A Turkish doctor, Zaki Velidi Togan (d. 1970), who was the director of the Islamic Research Institute, invited Hamidullah to deliver a lecture at the University of Istanbul about Islamic History and Culture.

Hamidullah continued his duty of delivering lectures even after the death of Dr Zaki Velidi Togan. Many eminent scholars of Türkiye found it very useful to attend the lectures of Hamidullah, and they felt highly inspired by his personality. They included the Director General of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art, and Culture (Istanbul), Ekmeleddin, and Professor Salih Tug, a former Dean of the Faculty of Theology at Marmara University.⁴⁹

Hamidullah also visited Pakistan to deliver lectures. For instance, in 1980, the Islamiyah University of Bahawalpur sent an invitation to Hamidullah to share his

⁴⁸ Ghitrif Shahbaz, ed., *Muhammad Hamidullah: Mujaddid-e-Uloom-e-Sirat* (Delhi: Foundation for Islamic Studies, 2003), 62.; Muḥammad Rāshid Shaʿīykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 123-134.

⁴⁹ Yusuf Zia Kavacki, "Debt We Owe in Turkey," *Impact* (London), 34; A.R. Momin, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah," *Tarjumān-e-Islām* 53-54 (Jan.-June 2003): 15-16.

detailed information about the subjects related to the basic knowledge of the Qur'an, *Ḥadīth*, Fiqh, Islamic History, and International Islamic Law. From March 8 to March 20, 1980, he delivered twelve lectures at Islamiyah University of Bahawalpur without having notes in front of him. All these lectures were well organized, with authentic references from sources. These twelve lectures were compiled and published as a book titled *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr*. His way of delivering lectures without having notes showed his command over the subjects of the Qur'an, *Ḥadīth*, *Fiqh* and International Law.

Hamidullah thoroughly studied original works, which became key references in *Shar'īah*, International Law, and the History of Islam. At the end of each lecture, the participants were allowed to raise as many questions as they wanted on doubts about the topic of their lesson. Hamidullah addressed every question with detailed descriptions, which eventually became very popular. Later, the book *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr* was translated into the English language titled *The Emergence of Islam*, and it was published in 1985 by the Islamic Research Institute of Islamabad.⁵⁰ In 1980, Ziaul-Haq, the then-president of Pakistan, also invited him to settle permanently there. He did not accept this offer because he was waiting for his return of Hyderabad citizenship. He wanted to struggle for Hyderabad state's independence while residing in France because he had great love for the native people of Hyderabad. In 1992, when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif repeated Ziaul-Haq's offer, he refused again, with the exact reason for returning to Hyderabad.⁵¹

On January 19th, 1996, he was offering his prayer at Jām'ī Masjid of Paris when he suddenly fell to the ground. After this disturbance of health, he was admitted to Nanuz Hospital of Paris. He was diagnosed thoroughly, and a severe disease of Hypothermia Artrial, Tachory Thema Bi Ventiricala, was identified in his tests. The treatment for the disease was kept on, but his condition was becoming unbearable day by day. His grandniece, Sadidah, made an appointment for Hamidullah in Florida for better treatment, and she wanted to look after him well. Hamidullah passed his last stage of life after seven years of bed rest. He stayed in Florida until December 17th, 2002, the day when he died. His funeral prayer on December 18th, 2002, was offered by Yusuf

⁵⁰ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 186.

⁵¹ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 4.

Zia Kavacki in Jacksonville. Zia was the Islamic Association of North Texas Imam and a renowned Turkish Islamic scholar. After the funeral prayer, he was buried at the Muslim graveyard of Jacksonville, Florida.⁵²

Hamidullah had spent the life of a bachelor. However, he was not cut off from his family as his pedigree was continued through his elder brothers, Muhammad Sibghatullah and Muhammad Habibullah. His first elder brother had three sons: Ahmad Ataullah, Muhammad Saifullah, and Muhammad Khalilullah. These three brothers were highly educated and served Hyderabad for an extended period. Ahmad Ataullah retired as an engineer from the Indian Institute of Chemical Technology in Hyderabad. He settled in Hyderabad and remained there his whole life, but his daughter, Sadida, went to live in Jacksonville, Florida. At her home, Hamidullah spent his last days of life and passed away there. Ahmad Ataullah's brother, Saifullah, adopted the profession of a lawyer, and he practised at the High Court of Hyderabad. The third son of Muhammad Sibghatullah worked as a Professor at Jawahar Lal Nehru Technology University of Hyderabad. Muhammad Habibullah left one son, Obaidullah, who served the Madrasah Muḥammadīyyah as its director.⁵³

2.6 MAJOR WORKS

Hamidullah, for a considerable period, served as a professor at Osmania University in Hyderabad, India. Afterwards, he extended his teaching services to universities in Germany and France. His connection to the National Centre for Scientific Research in France lasted approximately twenty years. Hamidullah expanded his academic pursuits, delivering lectures at various European and Asian universities. Hamidullah possessed a diverse linguistic repertoire, encompassing not only Eastern languages such as Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu but also Western languages like English, French, German, Italian, and more. His scholarly contributions were extensive, particularly in introducing the people of the West to authentic Islamic teachings and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), as depicted in numerous articles and books written in various European languages.

⁵² Muḥammad Rāshid Shaīykh, *Muḥammad Ḥamidullah: Ḥayat, Khidmat aur Maktūbāt* (Faisalabad: al-Mizzen Publishers, 2003), 273-277.

⁵³ Ibid.

Hamidullah was blessed with extraordinary abilities and made full use of these talents. He always approached his work thoughtfully and cautiously, never adopting a confrontational or aggressive style. He studied classical and modern sources extensively and presented his findings methodically and positively. His scholarly writing and speaking style, combining scientific reasoning and deduction, greatly influenced modern scholarly discourse.

Hamidullah focused on two main things: the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and international law. According to Ahmed Ataullah,

He wrote more than 165 books and almost 1,000 articles. He has over 1,000 publications to date. His notable works include his translations of the Qur'an into English and German. These translations are highly regarded. In the *Khutbat-e-Bahawalpur*, there is a short list of Hamidullah's books and articles in different languages. Here is a breakdown: Urdu (12), Arabic (21), Persian (2), English (18), and German (6), adding up to 64 in total. Hamidullah was passionate about sharing knowledge about the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He wrote extensively on this topic in simple and easy-to-understand language. His writings aimed to make information accessible to a broad audience. In addition to focusing on the Prophet's life, Hamidullah was deeply involved in international law. He wanted to contribute to the understanding of legal matters on a global scale. Ahmed Ataullah, a source on Hamidullah's work, indicates that he was a prolific author with an impressive output. This extensive body of work showcases his dedication to knowledge dissemination.⁵⁴

One of Hamidullah's standout achievements was translating the Qur'an into English and German. These translations have played a crucial role in making the holy text accessible to a broader audience, transcending language barriers. The significance of these translations is highlighted by their mention in the *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr*, where a brief inventory of Hamidullah's works in various languages is provided. Looking at the breakdown of his works, it is evident that Hamidullah was proficient in multiple languages. His writings were not confined to one language but spanned Urdu, Arabic, Farsi, English, and German. This multilingual approach underscores his commitment to reaching diverse audiences and fostering a better understanding of his subjects.

⁵⁴ Dr. Sahibzada Sajid ur Rahman, *Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah Hayāt wa Afkār, Ulume Islamia mein Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah ki Khidmāt* (Islamabad: IRI IIUI, 2019), 23.

Hamidullah's main focus areas were the life of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and international law. Ahmed Ataullah says, "he authored 157 books and more than 1,000 articles, with over 1000 publications to date."⁵⁵ Some of his articles, especially his translations of the Qur'an into English and German^{56,57}.

2.7 ACADEMIC WORK AND PUBLICATIONS

Hamidullah made a profoundly impactful and original contribution to Islamic scholarship by discovering, editing, and translating rare and invaluable manuscripts. These manuscripts covered diverse subjects, including *Hadīth*, *Sīrah*, Fiqh, Islamic history, biographical literature, and medicine. His meticulous efforts in unearthing these treasures were pivotal in preserving and sharing crucial aspects of Islamic knowledge. Hamidullah's list of important edited works notably reflects the breadth and depth of his scholarly pursuits. His dedication to exploring these manuscripts has enriched the understanding of various facets of Islamic studies. The significance of his contributions lies not only in the discovery and editing process but also in the subsequent translations that made this wealth of knowledge accessible to a broader audience, leaving an enduring mark on the intellectual heritage of Islam.

One of Hamidullah's noteworthy contributions to *Hadīth* literature was the unearthing of the *Ṣaḥīfah Ḥammām bin Mūnbba* by Ḥammām bin Mūnbba. This significant and early *Hadīth* manuscript remains extant to this day. This valuable discovery involved two copies of the manuscript, one found in a Damascus library and the other in a library in Berlin. Hamidullah, displaying meticulous scholarship, published the manuscript after carefully comparing these two versions. The publication of *Ṣaḥīfah Ḥammām bin Mūnbba* in 1953 in Damascus marked a crucial moment for *Hadīth* scholars. Recognizing its importance, Hamidullah further contributed to its accessibility by providing Urdu and English translations, published in Hyderabad in 1955 and 1961. Hamidullah's commitment to verifying the authenticity of these

⁵⁵ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 13.

⁵⁶ Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah, *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr* (Islamabad: Idara Tahqeeqat-e-Islami, 2018), 427-432.

⁵⁷ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 13.

manuscripts took him on a journey from Berlin to Beirut and finally to Damascus. The journey aimed to substantiate that these copies precisely represented the *Ṣaḥīfah* prepared by Abū Hurayrah (d. 58 A.H. / AD 677) for his pupil Ḥammām bin Mūnbbā (d. 101 A.H. / AD 719). The meticulous nature of Hamidullah's efforts underscores the importance of maintaining accuracy and authenticity in preserving and presenting early Islamic texts. In essence, Hamidullah's work on the *Ṣaḥīfah Ḥammām bin Mūnbbā* stands as a testament to his dedication to scholarship and the preservation of significant Islamic manuscripts. His role in making this early *Ḥadīth* manuscript accessible through meticulous publication and translations has undoubtedly contributed to the broader understanding of Islamic history and tradition.

In a notable discovery, Muhammad Hamidullah identified a rare manuscript of *Sunan Sa'īd Ibn Manṣūr* in Türkiye, showcasing his dedication to preserving Islamic heritage. Mawlana Habibur Rahman Azami undertook the meticulous editing of this invaluable *Ḥadīth* collection, while Muhammad Hamidullah contributed an insightful introduction to the manuscript. The subsequent publication from Dhabhail, Gujarat, in 1968 marked a significant milestone in making this rich collection more accessible to scholars and enthusiasts. Through these collaborative efforts, the scholarly community gained a deeper understanding of *Sunan Sa'īd Ibn Manṣūr*, exemplifying Hamidullah's commitment to disseminating Islamic knowledge.

Muhammad Hamidullah made a significant contribution to the world of botanical science through the recovery and editing of the *Kitāb al-Nabāt*, authored by Abu Hanifah al-Dinawari (d. 882 A.H). In 1973, a pivotal moment arose with the publication of this noteworthy work in Cairo. Hamidullah's dedication to this project was evident in his tireless efforts to locate and compile the manuscript. The pages were discovered in Sana and a North African library, requiring meticulous comparison with existing copies to ensure accuracy. Hamidullah's comprehensive approach involved adding necessary references, resulting in a complete and authentic book version. This diligent and devoted endeavour was not just a contribution to the study of botanical science; it also exemplified Hamidullah's commitment to rigorous research and methodology. The English translation of *Kitāb al-Nabāt* by Professor Hamidullah, subsequently published in Pakistan, further extended the reach of this valuable work. Through his meticulous efforts, Hamidullah revived a significant botanical manuscript and demonstrated the importance of scholarly dedication in advancing the

understanding of scientific disciplines. *Kitāb al-Nabāt*, in its recovered and edited form, stands as a testament to Hamidullah's scholarly excellence and enduring impact on the fields of science and research.⁵⁸

2.8 WORKS IN ENGLISH AND THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Muhammad Hamidullah, a luminary in Islamic scholarship, embarked on his literary journey at a young age with his inaugural article gracing the pages of *Nau Nihāl*, an Urdu magazine, in 1924. The subject of this early piece was a travelogue recounting the journey from the Nizam's Hyderabad to Madras. This initial foray into writing foreshadowed a prolific career marked by deep scholarly engagement and a profound connection to the Islamic tradition of learning. Hamidullah's intellectual prowess was grounded in a keen awareness of the primary sources of Islam. As a distinguished researcher of the 20th century, he undertook a formidable task: delving into original Islamic sources often tucked away in the dusty recesses of libraries across the Muslim world. His commitment to scholarship found a home at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), where he dedicated his life to pursuing knowledge.

Throughout his long and distinguished career, Hamidullah produced many significant books and articles that became foundational works in Islamic studies. These contributions, spanning English, French, German, Arabic, and Urdu, showcased his versatility as a scholar. His literary impact extended far beyond language barriers, with translations of his works reaching diverse audiences worldwide. A testament to his global influence, Hamidullah delivered lectures at prestigious universities in France, Türkiye, Egypt, Pakistan, Malaysia, and various other countries. His engaging presence at conferences further solidified his reputation as a popular and respected speaker. These lectures and his prolific writings fortified his legacy as a formidable figure in Islamic scholarship. The breadth of Hamidullah's literary output is staggering. He authored over a hundred books and penned approximately 1,000 scholarly essays and articles, delving into various aspects of Islam and related fields. His commitment to excellence is evident in the continuous refinement and development of his works. With each new edition, he enriched his books by incorporating new notes and explanations. This meticulous

⁵⁸ Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction* (Lahore: Idara-e-Islamiyat, 2003), 18.

approach ensured that subsequent editions were not merely reprints but enhanced versions, offering readers additional insights and information. His efforts in editing rare manuscripts were noteworthy among his contributions, which he undertook with precision and dedication. His ability to breathe new life into these manuscripts, often through extensive notes and explanations, elevated their utility and informativeness, surpassing the originals.

Muhammad Hamidullah's intellectual journey is a testament to a life dedicated to pursuing knowledge, scholarly rigour, and disseminating Islamic wisdom. His impact resonates globally, with his works continuing to shape the discourse in Islamic studies, leaving an indelible mark on the intellectual landscape of the Muslim world and beyond. The following is an introduction to some of his important works and a list of his edited rare manuscripts, starting with *Muslim Conduct State*.

"Muslim Conduct of State" stands as a groundbreaking work in Muslim International Law, showcasing the scholarly acumen of Muhammad Hamidullah. Conceived initially as a master's thesis at Osmania University of Hyderabad, this seminal book was first published in 1941 in Lahore. Serving as a comprehensive exploration of Muslim International Law, it encapsulates the entirety of Hamidullah's research findings at the time. This foundational work evolved over subsequent editions, with the current edition being the ninth, as Hamidullah continued to enrich it with new material and ideas. The ongoing refinement reflects his commitment to staying abreast of developments and expanding the depth of his insights. "Muslim Conduct of State" has become a model for reforming Muslim International Law, a testament to its enduring relevance and scholarly significance. The book not only delves into the theory but also the practice of statecraft during the early Islamic period. Hamidullah's meticulous examination of historical precedents provides valuable insights into the principles that guided Muslim states in their interactions on the international stage. Including theoretical foundations and practical applications enhances the book's utility, making it a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and students. Its popularity is evidenced by its enduring status as one of Hamidullah's most renowned works. Its reception has been such that it became a designated textbook in the realm of Islamic International Law, further attesting to its educational and scholarly impact. As a masterful exploration of the conduct of Muslim states on the international front, the book bridges historical Islamic principles and contemporary considerations in international relations. In summary, "Muslim Conduct of State" is a testament to Muhammad Hamidullah's intellectual prowess and dedication to advancing Islamic scholarship. Its evolution through multiple editions underscores the author's commitment to his work's ongoing refinement and relevance, ensuring that it remains a guiding light

for those seeking an understanding of Muslim International Law and the complexities of statecraft in the early Islamic era.⁵⁹

Muhammad Hamidullah's *Introduction to Islam*, first unveiled in 1957, has emerged as an enduring beacon of knowledge, experiencing multiple reprints and translations into over a dozen languages. Its widespread acclaim is a testament to its profound impact on readers globally. This seminal work masterfully encapsulates the essence of Islam, presenting it to a modern and educated audience. Structured in chapters, each resembling a monograph, the book meticulously explores specific subject matters related to Islam. Its division into distinct chapters enhances readability and allows readers to delve into specific facets of Islamic teachings. The comprehensive nature of the content ensures that it serves as a comprehensive guide to the multifaceted dimensions of Islam.

In conclusion, *Introduction to Islam* is a literary jewel Muhammad Hamidullah crafted. Its enduring popularity, widespread translation, and multiple editions underscore its significance as a timeless guide to Islam. Hamidullah's skilful presentation of Islamic principles in a clear, engaging, and comprehensive manner has left an indelible mark on readers worldwide, making this book an invaluable contribution to Islamic literature.⁶⁰

In 1935, Muhammad Hamidullah published his inaugural work on *Sīrah*, delving into the profound biography of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This seminal book not only narrates the life of the Prophet but specifically focuses on the diplomatic correspondence that transpired between Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his Companions. Within the pages of this historical exploration, Hamidullah negotiates through the Prophet's life, shedding light on the great moments and interactions that defined the course of Islamic history. The unique emphasis on diplomatic correspondence offers readers a perspective on the Prophet's leadership and the strategic engagements with his Companions in various contexts. The book bridges historical narrative and diplomatic complexities, presenting a comprehensive account of the Prophet's multifaceted role as a statesman and leader. Hamidullah's meticulous research and insightful analysis contribute to a deeper understanding of the diplomatic exchanges that shaped the early Muslim community. This early contribution to the *Sīrah* by

⁵⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 32.

⁶⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam*, 3rd ed. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1968), 4.

Hamidullah exemplifies his commitment to unravelling the layers of Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) life and legacy. By highlighting the diplomatic dimensions, Hamidullah chronicles historical events and underscores the Prophet's adeptness in managing affairs with wisdom, foresight, and a profound sense of diplomatic acumen. This work lays the foundation for subsequent studies on the Prophet's biography, offering a valuable resource for scholars, students, and enthusiasts seeking a more nuanced understanding of Islamic history.

Muhammad Hamidullah's concise treatise titled *The Battlefields of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)* is a comprehensive exploration of the sites associated with the Prophet's military expeditions. Initially published in Lahore, this insightful work uniquely combines information from classical sources with data acquired through fieldwork and topographical maps. The treatise, available in both English and Urdu, emerged because of Hamidullah's dedication to unravelling the geographical and historical dimensions of the Prophet's military campaigns. Using a multidimensional approach, Hamidullah drew upon classical Islamic texts, conducted on-site investigations, and meticulously consulted topographical maps to document the locations linked to the Prophet's expeditions. In the 1930s, during his travels that likely transpired on his return to India from Europe, Hamidullah visited Madinah, Makkah, and Taif. These journeys were not mere excursions; they were scholarly endeavours aimed at pinpointing the exact locations of the battlefields associated with the Prophet. Armed with the data presented in early Islamic texts, Hamidullah measured and verified the sites, producing detailed maps and graphs that added a tangible dimension to the historical narrative.

The translated versions of the treatise of Hamidullah in English and French incorporated additional material, enriching the scope of the original work. Beyond the geographical aspects, the treatise delves into each battle's political and diplomatic backdrop, offering readers a holistic understanding of their significance in shaping the early Islamic landscape. Hamidullah's meticulous approach to marrying historical records with firsthand observations underscores the scholarly rigour applied to this work. *The Battlefields of Prophet Muhammad* is a testament to Hamidullah's commitment to historical accuracy and a valuable resource for those seeking a detailed

and nuanced exploration of the Prophet's military engagements and their broader impact on early Islam's political and diplomatic landscape.⁶¹

Hamidullah's article *Hilf al-Fuzul*⁶² contributed to the *Dā'irah Ma'ārif-e-Islāmīyyah* (Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam, published by the Punjab University in Lahore, Pakistan) provides a detailed description of this pre-Islamic Alliance of Virtues. The Makkan people formed it to reform the society and help the depressed. The Prophet (pbuh) was a part of it before he became a Prophet. Even after the Prophethood, he wished to support such a pact. This article is the best research on that topic in any language. Its references took more space than most other works on the same topic.

In 1981, Muhammad Hamidullah edited and published *Islam, Philosophy, and Science: Four Public Lectures Organized by UNESCO in June 1980*. This compilation encapsulates the essence of four public lectures delivered by Hamidullah, convened by UNESCO. Exploring the intersections of Islam, philosophy, and science, the lectures reflect Hamidullah's scholarly engagement with these themes. The publication serves as a valuable contribution to the discourse on the relationship between Islam, philosophy, and science, showcasing Hamidullah's intellectual prowess and commitment to fostering understanding at the intersection of these domains.

In 1979, Muhammad Hamidullah authored *Muḥammad-Ur-Rasūlullah*, a succinct exploration offering a concise survey of the life and accomplishments of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). This work delves into the multifaceted aspects of Prophet Muhammad's existence, encapsulating his teachings, actions, and profound impact on Islamic history. Hamidullah's narrative skilfully handles the historical landscape, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of the Prophet's life and mission. The book is a valuable resource for those seeking a succinct yet comprehensive overview of the pivotal figure in Islam. Hamidullah's commitment to clarity and brevity in *Muhammad Rasulullah* reflects his dedication to making the Prophet's life accessible and comprehensible to a broad audience.

⁶¹ Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction* (Lahore: Idara-e-Islamiyat, 2003), 18.

⁶² *Hilf-ul-Fuzul* (translated as the "Alliance of the Virtuous") was a pre-Islamic alliance formed in Mecca in the 5th century CE, before the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) received his prophethood. This alliance was composed of several prominent tribes in Makkah who came together to promote justice, support the oppressed, and uphold moral values.

Published in 1986, *The Prophet's Establishing a State and His Succession* is a compilation of Muhammad Hamidullah's early scholarly papers that underwent subsequent revisions and improvements.⁶³ This collection offers insights into Prophet Muhammad's pivotal role in establishing a state and the subsequent dynamics of leadership succession in early Islamic history. Hamidullah, known for his dedication to meticulous research, presents a nuanced examination of the historical and political dimensions surrounding the Prophet's statecraft. Through revisions and improvements, Hamidullah ensured the accuracy and relevance of the content, reflecting his commitment to scholarly excellence. This compilation is a testament to Hamidullah's continuous refinement of his work, providing readers with an enriched understanding of the Prophet's transformative contributions to the socio-political landscape of early Islam.

Muhammad Hamidullah's translation of *Sharḥ al-Sīyar al-Kabīr* by Shams al-Aimmah al-Sarakhsi into French, intended for UNESCO, faced an unfortunate setback as his aspiration to see it published by the organization was not realized. However, providentially, this substantial undertaking was published in Ankara, Türkiye, through the efforts of the Religious Affairs Foundation. This achievement occurred at a time when Hamidullah's health was starting to decline. Despite the initial unfulfilled desire for UNESCO's endorsement, the fruition of this significant work in Ankara is a testament to Hamidullah's enduring commitment to scholarly endeavours and his contribution to making Islamic legal literature accessible to a broader audience.

Muhammad Hamidullah's culminating scholarly contribution came in the form of a profound lecture series known as *Khūṭbāt-e Bahāwalpūr*. This series comprised 12 remarkable lectures delivered during Rabī' ul-Awwal 1400 Hijrah (March 1980) at the Islamic University in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, marking the celebration of the 1400th year of Hijrah. The final revision of the associated book took place on the 26th of Ramadan, 1408 (1988). Hamidullah's delivery was in easy-to-understand Urdu, characterized by a uniquely simple, informal, and lucid style. In a departure from academic conventions, his lectures were notably devoid of jargon and pedantry. Remarkably, Hamidullah presented the 400 pages verbatim, without referring to any notes, to an audience

⁶³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Prophet's Establishing a State and His Succession* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2006).

comprising scholars and students at Bahawalpur Islamic University. The lectures, imbued with Hamidullah's remarkable memory and eloquence, served as a manifestation of the great tradition of early Islamic scholarship.

In an era where a scholar's memory was considered an essential asset, Hamidullah exemplified this tradition with finesse. The thematic richness of *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur* covered a wide array of topics, providing insights into various dimensions of Islamic knowledge. Hamidullah's delivery transcended mere academic discourse; it was a transmission of wisdom and understanding deeply rooted in Islamic traditions. The lectures seamlessly blended historical context, legal perspectives, and spiritual guidance, creating a comprehensive knowledge of Islamic thought. Despite his advanced age, Hamidullah's intellectual vigour remained undiminished, and his ability to captivate an audience persisted. The Bahawalpur lectures were a testament to his encyclopaedic knowledge and a beacon of inspiration for scholars and students alike. The simplicity and clarity with which Hamidullah conveyed complex ideas ensured that the lectures were accessible to a broad audience, contributing to the democratization of Islamic knowledge. In the years following the delivery of *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur*, Hamidullah continued to be a revered figure in the scholarly community. His enduring impact on Islamic studies and commitment to fostering understanding and appreciation for the richness of Islamic thought solidified his legacy as a luminary in Islamic scholarship. The lectures, preserved in the form of a book, continue to serve as a valuable resource for those seeking profound insights into the diverse dimensions of Islam. The simplicity of Hamidullah's delivery and the depth of his knowledge make *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur* a timeless contribution to the ongoing conversation surrounding Islam and its intellectual heritage.

The Emergence of Islam is the English translation of Muhammad Hamidullah's seminal work, *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur*. Published by the Islamic Research Institute in Islamabad, Pakistan, in 1993, this work is a valuable and popular resource for exploring Islamic thought, society, and institutions. In the foreword to the book, Zafar Ishaq Ansari lauds Hamidullah as one of the most distinguished Muslim scholars from the formative period of Islam's intellectual and institutional history. Acknowledging Hamidullah's vast reservoir of knowledge, Ansari highlights the author's endeavour to portray the genesis and growth of Islamic thought, society, and state. The book meticulously delineates the development of institutions designed to give practical shape

to the Islamic worldview. Hamidullah's synthesis of Islam's unfolding in history is a hallmark of the book. It transcends the conventional narrative by capturing Islam's multifaceted evolution – as a religion, community, state, intellectual tradition, and a set of institutions inspired by the message of Islam. The author's scholarly prowess is evident in his ability to weave together these complex threads into a coherent and comprehensive narrative. The work not only delves into the historical emergence of Islam but also provides insights into its various dimensions. It offers a panoramic view of Islam's development, illustrating its transformative impact on societies and individuals. The author's deep engagement with primary sources and his commitment to accuracy contribute to the reliability of the narrative. Hamidullah's exploration of Islamic thought, society, and state extends beyond a mere historical account. He endeavours to present a holistic understanding of Islam's trajectory, encompassing its spiritual, social, and political dimensions. By elucidating the evolution of institutions inspired by Islamic principles, the book offers readers a nuanced perspective on the enduring impact of Islam on human civilization.

The Emergence of Islam is a historical account and a scholarly reflection on the intellectual and institutional foundations that have shaped Islamic civilization. Hamidullah's ability to synthesize diverse aspects of Islamic history and thought makes this work valuable to studying Islam's intellectual and cultural heritage. As a testament to the enduring relevance of Hamidullah's insights, the book continues to be a sought-after resource for those seeking a profound understanding of Islam's emergence and multifaceted influence on human societies. In Ghazi's opinion, *The Emergence of Islam* is, perhaps, the best representative of the balanced, moderate and accommodative approach characteristic of Hamidullah."⁶⁴

2.9 HAMIDULLAH'S WORKS IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Having spent approximately half a century in Paris, French became Muhammad Hamidullah's primary academic and research language. His substantial contributions to the French language are remarkable, although a comprehensive exploration of each is beyond the scope here. During his extensive academic tenure in France, Hamidullah

⁶⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999).

engaged profoundly with the French language, enduringly impacting the academic landscape. His prolific writings and scholarly works in French cover various topics related to Islam, Islamic law, and international relations. These contributions testify to Hamidullah's linguistic versatility and commitment to fostering a deep understanding of Islamic studies within the French-speaking academic community. His engagement with the French language enriched his scholarship and facilitated the dissemination of Islamic knowledge in a linguistic and cultural context distinct from his native languages. However, three of his works are introduced here as an illustration:

Muhammad Hamidullah stands as a unique scholar, holding the distinction of translating the Qur'an into three European languages: French, English, and German. The French translation, initially proposed by French Orientalist Louis Massignon, was published in Paris in 1959 and stands as the most extensively read translation of the Qur'an in any European language. In 1960, portions of the English translation were released in South Africa. Notably, the German translation, while comprehensive, has yet to be published. Hamidullah's unparalleled achievement in rendering the Qur'an accessible in multiple European languages underscores his commitment to fostering cross-cultural understanding and engagement.⁶⁵

Hamidullah's magnum opus in the field of *Sīrah* (the Prophet's biography) is his French book *Le Prophete de l'Islam sa vie et son oeuvre*, which was first published in 1959 in Paris. New editions appeared with new data and other additions. Hamidullah prepared the final edition, the fifth, in 1989. The book consists of two volumes. It is a treasure of information relating to the political, economic, and social practices and institutions of 6th-century Arabia.⁶⁶

Imam Bukhari's celebrated work *al-Sahih* was rendered into French by some Western Orientalists. Professor Hamidullah compared the French translation with the original Arabic text and identified hundreds of errors. This book, comprising 600 pages, was published in Paris. He prepared a detailed and exhaustive index of *Imām Bukharī's aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ* in Arabic and French.

⁶⁵ Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, *Islamic Thought: An Introduction* (Lahore: Idara-e-Islamiyat, 2003), 18.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

2.10 WORKS IN URDU

Muhammad Hamidullah has made significant contributions in Arabic, French, and English publishing to promote Islamic literature, just as he has made remarkable accomplishments in Urdu. Despite Urdu not being his native language, he has excelled, staying true to his roots in Pakistan. Below is a list of some of his notable books.

1. Muhammad Hamidullah's noteworthy work, *Content of the Qur'an on Population*, focuses on exploring the Qur'anic perspective on population-related matters. This English translation is published in Hyderabad Deccan and delves into the Qur'anic teachings regarding population dynamics and related aspects. Hamidullah's scholarly approach in deciphering and presenting the Qur'anic content contributes to a nuanced understanding of how Islamic scripture addresses issues related to population, reflecting his dedication to elucidating Islamic teachings for a broader audience.
2. *The Holy Prophet (pbuh) and Youthfulness*, authored by Muhammad Hamidullah, was published by Jamiat Muslim Youth in Sikander Abad, Deccan, in 1940. In this publication, Hamidullah explores the aspects of the Holy Prophet's life related to youthfulness. The book, crafted with insightful perspectives, gives readers a deeper understanding of the Prophet's experiences and teachings during his youth. Hamidullah's work is valuable for those seeking insights into the Prophet's life and its relevance to the youth.
3. Muhammad Hamidullah served as the translator for the United Nations Charter, offering his linguistic expertise to make the document accessible. His contribution was crucial in bridging linguistic gaps and fostering understanding of the United Nations' foundational principles across diverse communities.
4. The insightful work *Islamic Government*, authored by Muhammad Hamidullah, is a beacon of knowledge and guidance. Published by *Majlis-e-Dā'iratul-Iṣlah* in Hyderabad Deccan, this comprehensive exploration delves into the multifaceted aspects of an Islamic government. The treatise meticulously elucidates the methods, politics, religious underpinnings, and nuanced governance management within an Islamic framework. Muhammad Hamidullah's approach is characterized by a balanced and informed perspective, providing readers with an understanding of the issues inherent in an Islamic

government. His emphasis on the methods employed reflects a keen awareness of the practical aspects of governance within an Islamic context. The exploration of Islamic politics within the text unveils the unique principles and values that underpin the political landscape in Islam. Muhammad Hamidullah, with his depth of knowledge, articulates the distinct nature of political structures in Islam and how they align with the broader objectives of the faith. Religion, as a central theme, is intricately woven into the narrative, highlighting the inseparable connection between governance and religious principles. Muhammad Hamidullah elucidates how Islamic values serve as a guiding force in shaping the policies and decisions of an Islamic government.

5. Furthermore, the treatise addresses the critical aspect of managing a government from an Islamic perspective. Muhammad Hamidullah offers insights into the principles of administration, shedding light on how an Islamic government negotiates the difficulties of governance while staying true to its foundational beliefs. In essence, *Islamic Government* by Muhammad Hamidullah emerges as a seminal work that informs and inspires contemplation on the profound relationship between governance and Islam. The publication serves as a valuable resource, contributing to the discourse on Islamic political thought and providing a comprehensive guide for those seeking a deeper understanding of the principles that govern an Islamic state.
6. *Islamic State*, a publication by Publishers of the Qur'an in Lahore, spanning 208 pages, delves into the multifaceted dimensions of the Islamic state. This insightful work adds depth to the understanding of the principles guiding Islamic governance.
7. *Genealogy of Supervision (Ansāb-ul-Ashrāf)*, researched by Muhammad Hamidullah and published by *Dār al-Ma'ārif* in Egypt in 1959, explores the intricate lineage of supervision. Authored by Aḥmed bin Yaḥya', known as Al-Baladhurī, this work is a testament to Hamidullah's commitment to delving into historical and genealogical aspects. The publication is valuable for those interested in understanding the nuanced connections and heritage within supervision and leadership.

8. *The Islamic State: The Evidence by the Prophethood*, published in Lahore by Publishers of the Qur'an, is a 208-page exploration that delves into the foundations of the Islamic State.
9. *Tadwīn-e-Qānūn-e-Islāmī* by Imam Abu Hanifa, published in Karachi by Urdu Academy Sindh in 1983, is a concise work spanning 80 pages that sheds light on the compilation of Islamic law according to the teachings of Imam Abu Hanifa.
10. In his translated work *Modern International Law*, Muhammad Hamidullah provides a comprehensive Urdu rendition of the original book *Les Origines Droit Interna* by Nys, E. This translation serves as an accessible resource for readers interested in exploring the origins and dynamics of modern international law. Muhammad Hamidullah's expertise and linguistic proficiency make the intricate subject matter more accessible to Urdu-speaking audiences, bridging the gap between the complexities of international law and broader readership.
11. *Khūṭbāt-e-Bahāwalpūr*, a significant publication by Muhammad Hamidullah, is featured in Publication 2 from *Idārah-e-Taḥqīqāt-e-Islāmī*, International Islamic University, Islamabad, 1988, encompassing 466 pages. This manuscript holds particular importance, as Muhammad Hamidullah's signature on the title page indicates. Through this work, Muhammad Hamidullah delivers 12 compelling lectures in easy-to-understand Urdu, covering various aspects of Islamic thought and history. The inclusion of his signature adds a personal touch, further emphasizing the author's connection to this valuable contribution to Islamic literature.
12. *How to Study the Life of the Prophet (pbuh)* provides valuable guidance on approaching the study of Prophet Muhammad's life. It serves as a practical resource, aiding readers in understanding and delving into the profound aspects of the Prophet's biography.
13. In *Roman and Islamic Institutions of Slavery*, compiled by Hamidullah from Hyderabad Deccan, the intricate dynamics of slavery in both Roman and Islamic contexts are explored. The compilation offers insights into historical perspectives, shedding light on the institutions that shaped the practice of slavery.

14. In political texts from *Ahad-e-Nabawī* to *Khilāfat Rāshidah*, translated by Maulana Abu Yahya Imam Khan Naushahrawi and published by Lahore Majlis-e-Taraqī-e-Adab in 1960, a compilation of political insights is presented, drawing from the era of *Ahad-e-Nabawī* to *Khilāfat Rāshidah*.
15. In *Sīrat ibn Ishāq*, initially authored by Muhammad bin Ishaq, Muhammad Hamidullah undertakes the role of researcher and compiler. His contribution involves delving into the historical narrative of Ibn Ishaq, shaping it into a comprehensive and scholarly work that reflects his dedication to preserving and elucidating the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
16. *Ṣaḥīfah Hammām bin Mūnbbā*, published in Karachi by Rashid Ullah Yaqoob in 1998, spans 203 pages. This work is a testament to Muhammad Hamidullah's meticulous efforts in unearthing and presenting the earliest extant *Ḥadīth* manuscript, contributing significantly to studying Islamic traditions and knowledge.
17. *Battlefields of the Prophet's Era* by Muhammad Mian Siddiqui, published in Rawalpindi by Academic Centre in 1998, explores the historical sites associated with the Prophet's military expeditions, providing valuable insights into that era.
18. *Rule in the Prophet's Era*, published by Urdu Academy Sindh in Karachi in 1987, is a comprehensive work by Muhammad Hamidullah spanning 298 pages. The book delves into the governance and administrative aspects of the Prophet's (pbuh) era, and it features a detailed 53-page index at the end, enhancing its accessibility and reference value.
19. *Principles of Inter-Country Law*, published by Maktaba Ibrahimiyah in Hyderabad Deccan, is a substantive work by Muhammad Hamidullah, spanning 212 pages. The book meticulously explores the foundational principles of international law between nations, offering valuable insights into this complex legal domain.
20. *Al-Qur'ān fī Kul-i-Lisān*, Hyderabad Deccan. In this book, Muhammad Hamidullah said that translations of the Qur'ān have been published in 67 languages worldwide. Later, Muhammad Hamidullah added more languages to it and collected content from 150 languages, which was gradually published in

the Paris Monthly *France Islam*. Editions have also been published in Urdu, French, and other languages.

21. *Kitāb al-Dhākhīr wal-Takhf*" by *Qāḍī* Rashid bin Zaid, Researcher and Compiler: Muhammad Hamidullah, Government of Kuwait, 1959. In the introduction of this book, Muhammad Hamidullah wrote a research case. This book indicates that Hazrat Amir Mu'awiya had relations with some rulers of China and India from the time of The Umayyad Caliphate to the time of Caliph Mamun. This book also mentions letters of exciting things, which were destroyed in the treasury of Imam Mustansar Billah in 460-461 AH. This book lists the gifts sent to the Abbasid caliphs and their nobles from time to time by the Shahan of India or by these caliphs to the courts of these princes.
22. *Principles of Inter-Country Law*, published by *Maktaba Ibrāhimīyyah* in Hyderabad Deccan, is a substantive work by Muhammad Hamidullah, spanning 212 pages. The book meticulously explores the foundational principles of international law between nations, offering valuable insights into this complex legal domain.
23. *The Qur'an* is a historical commentary on the Qur'an, including a bibliography written in Turkish. It was published in Istanbul in 1995, with commentaries on Turkish translations and Turkish examples of Surah Fatiha.⁶⁷

2.11 GLOBAL EVENTS AND MOVEMENTS

The focus of this research centres on academic congresses, with particular attention to the "World Congress of Orientalists," where scholars convene to delve into various aspects of Oriental and Islamic studies. A central figure in this narrative is Hamidullah, whose role and contributions merit in-depth analysis. Hamidullah was crucial during the twenty-first Congress of Orientalists hosted in Istanbul. Notably, among the myriad presentations delivered at this event, his paper titled *A Contemporary Examination of the Sources of Islamic Jurisprudence (Apart from the Qur'an, Ḥadīth, Consensus, and Analogy) based on the Strong Narrations of the Jurists* stands out. His research delved

⁶⁷ Izhar-Ullah Shah and Tariq Mujahid Jahlmi, "Taṣānīf wa Maqālāt-e- Muḥammad Ḥamīdullah," *Fikro-Nazar* 40-41, no. 1-4 (2003): 595-613.

into unexplored dimensions of Islamic jurisprudence beyond the conventional sources, such as the Qur'an, *Hadīth*, consensus, and analogy.

The work of Hamidullah significantly enriched the academic discourse at the Congress, shedding light on less-explored facets of Islamic jurisprudence. It is important to note that his paper was just one of the many diverse topics covered at the Congress, underlining the breadth and depth of scholarly discussions. Hamidullah's presence and presentation were pivotal in making the twenty-first Congress a highly successful and intellectually stimulating event. It showcased his expertise and underscored the significance of exploring diverse dimensions within Islamic studies.

The participation of Hamidullah served as a prime example of the vital role scholars play in advancing knowledge and encouraging interdisciplinary dialogues during academic congresses. In conclusion, Hamidullah's contribution to the Congress of Orientalists, as elucidated in this text, was instrumental in elevating scholarly discourse. His exploration of Islamic jurisprudence from unconventional perspectives exemplifies the rigorous and diverse nature of discussions at such scholarly gatherings. Subsequent sections will delve into a more comprehensive analysis of the proceedings at the congress.

2.11.1 Hamidullah and the Orientalist Council of Turkey

An event in Türkiye demonstrated that academic journeys can be, to some extent, quite fascinating. The event focused on two key aspects: (1) a conference of scholars who had been studying Eastern and Islamic subjects, and (2) the libraries in Türkiye. The rich tradition of teaching Eastern and Islamic studies in European universities has deep roots extending centuries. Orientalist groups have flourished within this academic landscape for over a hundred years, contributing significantly to understanding Eastern cultures and civilizations. However, a relatively recent development in this scholarly field is the World Congress of Orientalists, an event that has been part of the academic calendar for over a century. This distinguished congress convened every three to four years, and it was a global platform for scholars to engage with diverse facets of Eastern studies. The 10th World Congress of Orientalists unfolded in Istanbul, marking its second occurrence in this historic city in 1951, after 1933. The event spanned a week, featuring morning and evening sessions to accommodate various scholarly

contributions. Such was the magnitude of participation that papers had to be meticulously categorized across various themes and disciplines. The congress organizers further subdivided the discussions into four distinct categories within the broad field of Islamic studies, reflecting the depth and diversity of scholarship within this domain.

This careful organization facilitated focused deliberations and ensured that scholars could delve deeply into specific areas of interest. The success of the congress was not merely measured by its scale but also by the resolutions and initiatives it generated. One noteworthy resolution urged governments to compile comprehensive lists of manuscripts in public libraries, emphasizing the importance of preserving and documenting these valuable historical artefacts. The scholarly discussions at the congress extended beyond theoretical considerations, emphasising the practical study of historical documents. In response to the collective interest in advancing Islamic studies, an association dedicated to the comprehensive exploration of this field was established. This organizational structure aimed to foster collaboration among scholars, facilitating the exchange of ideas and resources. Looking ahead, the congress participants made a strategic decision regarding the location of the next gathering. England was selected as the host country for the upcoming session, scheduled to take place in three to four years. This decision highlighted the congress's global nature and underscored scholars' continued commitment worldwide to advancing and disseminating knowledge in Eastern and Islamic studies.

Apart from Istanbul, several other Turkish cities displayed cultural items and ancient artefacts, including books, pictures, old tools, and more, numbering in the hundreds of thousands. In Islamic studies, Istanbul played a key role in the conference, serving as a vital centre for intellectual exchange. Its historical significance, particularly as the heart of the Ottoman Empire, made it a fitting location for scholars to gather and share knowledge. The city's unique position between East and West offered a rich backdrop for Islamic culture and civilization discussions.

Meanwhile, the Library of Osmania University in Hyderabad, India, received high praise for its remarkable collection of Islamic manuscripts and academic resources. As a leading institution in preserving Islamic knowledge, the library's contributions were recognized for serving as a crucial repository of scholarly works, furthering the

dissemination of knowledge to future generations. Hyderabad, the city where Prof. Muhammad Hamidullah spent a significant part of his life, holds a special place in the academic world for its dedication to preserving and promoting Islamic scholarship.

Muhammad Hamidullah presented a paper at the 10th World Conference of Orientalists entitled *A Modern Study of the Sources of Islamic Jurisprudence (Apart from the Qur'an, Hadith, Consensus, and Analogy) based on the Strong Narrations of the Jurists*.⁶⁸

2.11.2 Orientalist Council of Cambridge

The International Congress of Orientalists held in the illustrious city of Cambridge in 1954 marked a significant chapter in the academic exploration of Eastern studies. This twenty-first instalment followed the previous congress in Istanbul. The choice of Cambridge over Oxford, attributed to its venerable university and enchanting cityscape, underscored the careful consideration of historical and aesthetic factors.

Scheduled from August 21 to August 28, 1954, the conference boasted diverse participation from scholars across various fields. Three years later, the decision to hold subsequent meetings in Germany hinted at the congress's global nature and enduring impact. Queen Elizabeth II's acceptance of the invitation from the Royal Asiatic Society added a regal touch to the event, enhancing its prestige.

Initially, the organizers planned religious services for Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish attendees. However, the Arab delegates' lack of interest prompted a shift in focus. Papers were translated into English and distributed to all participants, fostering inclusivity and ensuring widespread access to the scholarly content. While formal speeches constituted a staple of the conference, including colourful films stirred mixed reactions. Unconventional ideas also found a platform, such as the suggestion that Makkan worshippers of "Allah" were significant traders during a period of ignorance.

⁶⁸ International Congress of Orientalists, *Proceedings of the Twenty-second Congress of Orientalists: Held in Istanbul, September 15th to 22nd, 1951*, ed. Ahmed Zeki Velidi Togan (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1957); Syed Sabahuddin Abdul Rahman, *Islam and the Orientalists* (Azamgarh: Darul Musannefin Shibli Academy, 2003).

Another provocative claim posited that the Prophet of Islam had fabricated the Qur'an through "literary forgery," a notion met with a combination of intrigue and scepticism.

Notably, the presence of delegates from Russia added an unexpected geopolitical dimension to the conference. Contrary to some expectations, English translations of the papers were made available to all participants. The diversity of views presented reflected academic discourse and political affiliations. Participants with neutral or non-partisan perspectives found comprehending the bold claims echoing political biases challenging. Russia's motives, as discerned from the discussions, appeared to revolve around rebuilding and forming a socialist bloc with Muslim countries under its influence. The choice of Cambridge as a venue, known for its commitment to freedom and neutrality, raised questions. The strategic intent seemed to be showcasing support for freedom and democracy, influencing Muslim citizens under its rule and fostering unity among Muslim nations. The geopolitical landscape of the time played a crucial role in shaping the narratives presented at the conference. Many Islamic countries expressed dissatisfaction with Western powers like the United States, Britain, France, and the Netherlands. These grievances found a platform for expression during the conference. Russia, seizing the opportunity to demonstrate solidarity with the oppressed and position itself as a champion of freedom and non-alignment, sent representatives to support Israel.

The conference drew approximately nine hundred participants, each contributing to various sections based on their expertise and tasks. The interdisciplinary nature of the discussions, coupled with the geopolitical undercurrents, made the Cambridge Congress a pivotal moment in the ongoing dialogue between Eastern and Western scholars. The exchange of ideas, however contentious at times, played a crucial role in shaping academic discourse and influencing political perspectives in the following years.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Denis Sinor, *Proceedings of the Twenty-third International Congress of Orientalists: Cambridge, 21st-28th August, 1954* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1954), 421 pages.

2.12 ACHIEVEMENTS

In a notable acknowledgement of his unparalleled contributions to Islamic education, Muhammad Hamidullah received the prestigious *Hilāl-e-Imtīyāz* from the Government of Pakistan in 1985. This distinguished award recognized his outstanding achievements and carried a substantial monetary component as a token of appreciation. The gesture aimed to honour Hamidullah's significant impact on Islamic education, reflecting the nation's gratitude for his dedicated scholarship.

In a demonstration of his steadfast commitment to the greater good, Hamidullah, rather than retaining the financial reward personally, chose to redirect the entire sum to the Islamic Research Academy of the International Islamic University in Islamabad. This philanthropic decision underscored his selfless dedication to advancing Islamic knowledge and the propagation of academic pursuits. By contributing the award funds to the Islamic Research Academy, Hamidullah exemplified the spirit of benevolence and a genuine concern for the collective welfare of the Islamic scholarly community; in appreciation of Hamidullah's generous donation, the institute reciprocated by bestowing a lasting honour upon him. The library at the International Islamic University's Islamic Research Academy was named after Hamidullah, symbolizing a perpetuating legacy tied to his enduring commitment to Islamic education. This recognition not only celebrated his academic achievements but also served as a testament to his philanthropic spirit and the enduring impact of his contributions to the scholarly landscape. Muhammad Hamidullah's acceptance of the *Hilāl-e-Imtīyāz* and his subsequent benevolent gesture exemplified the symbiotic relationship between individual accomplishment and collective progress. His decision to channel the financial reward into the academic realm reflected a broader ethos of utilizing personal recognition for the more significant benefit of the Islamic educational community. This episode in Hamidullah's life is a shining example of how academic excellence, philanthropy, and institutional development can intersect to shape a legacy rooted in scholarly pursuits and community welfare.⁷⁰

Not only did the Pakistan government tribute Hamidullah, but The King Faisal Foundation of Saudi Arabia also nominated him for the prestigious King Faisal Award.

⁷⁰ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 9.

This time again, he refused to have this award by saying he feared that if he accepted the worldly awards, he might not get his reward in the hereafter; only his sins would be mentioned in his book of deeds, and that was why he kept on saying, he had no intention of receiving awards.⁷¹ His detachment from worldly appreciation and serving Islam for no reward except the happiness of Allah is an appealing example for Muslim scholars.⁷²

2.13 SOLIDARITY OF CHARACTER

Hamidullah was endowed with appealing God-gifted qualities, including a good memory and a strong determination. He possessed a pious character and maintained discipline in spreading Islamic knowledge. As previously mentioned in his *Bismillah-khuwānī*, he had already learnt the verses of *Surat al-Alaq*. Learning this *surah* without the help of his teacher shows that he was a bright student from childhood. He had learnt the Qur'an by heart and many *aḥādīth* at an early age. He remembered well the arrangement of books in his ancestor's library at Hyderabad. The most appealing thing about his memory is that he delivered twelve lectures on '*Ulūm-e-Islāmīyyah* and *Sharī'ah* at the University of Bahawalpur with complete references and details.

While delivering lectures, he never used any notes to answer students' questions.⁷³ The evidence of his pious character is his simplicity of living, modesty in his work, honesty in his relations, generosity for needy and deserving people, kindness for the students who asked questions, and devotion to research work. He always tried to help needy and depressed people. For instance, daily, many visitors went to his home. He remained very active in replying to his students and researchers, as his students from different countries wrote letters to him, and he responded to all the questions mentioned in the letters on time. His personality traits were apparent in his actions. For example, he shared his manuscripts or copies of his printed articles with his students and researchers at his own expense, no matter from which country his students or researchers belonged. In addition to this, he had remained very generous to widows, orphans, and poor people. He remembered to help these people by maintaining a list of

⁷¹ Syed Faiyaz Uddin Ahmad, "Story of King Faisal Prize," *Impact International*, January-March (2003): 20.

⁷² Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 9.

⁷³ A. R. Momin, "Muḥammad Ḥamidullah," *Tarjumān-e-Islām* 53-54 (Jan.-June 2003): 20.

them with their names and addresses. He extended financial help towards them at regular intervals. He distributed the money among his relatives, friends, deserving persons, and some academic institutions based on the number of awards he received.⁷⁴

Another characteristic feature of his piety was his habit of being disciplined in every sphere of his daily life. He always maintained his fixed schedule for every task and handled the situation to complete assignments accordingly. Moreover, his disciplined and simple life could be observed from his habit of taking meals, whereby he did not eat anything between meals. He liked to eat rice, curd, fruits, and milk. He did not eat meat for thirty-five years in Paris because halal meat availability was impossible then. He was a nobleman who never accepted any gift from anyone in his life; instead, he donated his own award money for the sake of helping others. Whenever he spent money on others, he never demanded reimbursements. His work on the translation of the Qur'an was published in many copies, and the publisher earned millions of Francs, but Hamidullah did not take a single Franc as royalty.⁷⁵

He never got married and led a life of simplicity with sincere devotion towards his aim of life. Kademoglu⁷⁶ described Hamidullah's physical appearance as that of a man who was not too tall but of medium height and had an intelligent-looking physique. His dignified beard, which had adorned his face, looked like a symbol of recognition of his personality. His suits were elegant and double-breasted. He used to wear these sorts of attire in public places in Europe. He changed his dressing style when he travelled to Eastern countries like Pakistan, where he started to wear *Kurtā*, *Pajāma*, and a cap.⁷⁷ He was very punctual in the completion of every task. For instance, he never answered the letters he received from his students or researchers late. The speciality of his responses was that he always replied briefly, and the responses were related to the

⁷⁴ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 188.

⁷⁵ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 10.

⁷⁶ Mahmud Riffat Kademoglu, "Remembering Muhammad Hamidullah," retrieved from: <http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Remembering+Muhammad+Hamidullah-a0119627464>, accessed on: 13 October 2023.

⁷⁷ A. R. Momin, "Muhammad Hamidullah," *Tarjumān-e-Islām* 53-54 (Jan.-June 2003): 15-16.

situations. It was his habit to be at a venue ahead of time whenever there was a meeting, conference, or seminar.⁷⁸

Hamidullah used to sit in the Mosque (Le Mosque de Paris) after offering his Friday prayer near a fountain surrounded by an appealing garden full of roses. Sitting at this place was for the ease of Muslims, as this place was easily accessible for any Muslim to come and greet him. He was not a part of any group or organization. Along with Islamic jurisprudence, Hamidullah greatly supported women's empowerment in Islam. He insisted on answering a question that was asked about Western feminism, and he stated that,

The assertion that Western feminists have little to offer Muslims is often rooted in the perspective that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) represents the archetype of a true feminist. This viewpoint contends that the principles laid out by the Prophet in early Islamic society addressed gender issues in a manner that promoted equality, justice, and dignity for women. However, in the current state of Muslim societies, challenges persist and attempting to alleviate these challenges by exclusively empowering one gender, whether men or women, is seen as counterproductive. Proponents of this perspective emphasize the interconnectedness of men, women, children, families, and communities within Muslim societies. They argue that attempting to empower one segment of the population while implicitly blaming others for societal issues may exacerbate problems rather than resolve them. Such an approach, they contend, overlooks the intricate web of relationships that form the fabric of Muslim societies and may inadvertently deepen existing divides. The assertion that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the first true feminist is often grounded in historical and textual analyses of his teachings. Advocates point to instances where the Prophet championed women's rights, granted them legal protections, and challenged prevailing societal norms detrimental to their well-being. These advocates argue that embracing the comprehensive approach of the Prophet, which considers the welfare of the entire community, is vital to addressing contemporary challenges Muslim societies face.⁷⁹

Critics of exclusive empowerment initiatives caution against adopting Western feminist models without due consideration for the cultural, social, and religious contexts of Muslim communities. They argue that transplanting external frameworks may not effectively address the unique challenges faced by Muslim women and may inadvertently clash with deeply ingrained cultural and religious values. In navigating

⁷⁸ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 10.

⁷⁹ Ahmad Attaullah. "Muhammad Hamidullah." *Maarif* (Azamgarh), 2004.

the complexities of gender dynamics within Muslim societies, proponents of a holistic approach emphasize the importance of fostering collaboration and understanding between men and women. They advocate for initiatives promoting dialogue, education, and awareness to bridge gaps and cultivate a shared commitment to the community's well-being. Ultimately, the discourse on feminism within Muslim societies reflects diverse perspectives, encompassing those who assert the Prophet's example as a blueprint for gender justice and those who advocate for a nuanced, context-specific approach. The ongoing conversation highlights the need for thoughtful, culturally sensitive strategies that address the multifaceted challenges Muslim communities face, acknowledging the interconnectedness of all segments within society.⁸⁰

2.14 CONCLUSION

Muhammad Hamidullah stands as a towering figure in the realm of Islamic studies, leaving an indelible mark on the understanding and propagation of Islam. His lifelong dedication to the study and dissemination of Islamic knowledge reflects a profound commitment to the principles and teachings of the religion.

Born in 1908 in Hyderabad, India, Hamidullah's intellectual journey began at an early age. His passion for learning and deep connection to the Islamic tradition made him a formidable scholar. His early writings, such as the article published in 1924 in *Nau Nihāl*, an Urdu magazine, hinted at the trajectory of his future contributions to Islamic scholarship. Hamidullah's academic sojourn took him to Europe, where he studied Islamic jurisprudence, history, and languages. His intellectual prowess and multilingual abilities became evident as he engaged with Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, French, Turkish, Russian, Latin, and German. This linguistic proficiency allowed him to explore diverse source materials, bridging the gap between cultural and linguistic spheres. Upon settling in France, Hamidullah's contributions extended beyond academic pursuits. He became a central figure in the intellectual landscape, lecturing at universities in France, Türkiye, Egypt, Pakistan, Malaysia, and other countries. His teachings were not confined to traditional academic settings; he actively engaged with

⁸⁰ Ahmad Attaullah. "Muhammad Hamidullah." *Maarif* (Azamgarh), 2004.

the Muslim community in France, helping them understand and practice Islam in the context of their lives.

Hamidullah's extensive literary output encompasses over one hundred books written in multiple languages, including English, French, German, Arabic, and Urdu. His writings span various topics, including the Qur'an, Islamic law, the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and various aspects of Islamic history and tradition. The diversity of his work reflects the breadth of his scholarship and the depth of his engagement with Islamic knowledge. One of Hamidullah's notable achievements was his groundbreaking work on translating the Qur'an. He holds the unique distinction of being the only scholar to have translated the Qur'an into three European languages: French, English, and German. His translations, mainly the French version published in 1959, remain widely read and respected, serving as a bridge for non-Arabic speakers to access the profound teachings of the Qur'an. Hamidullah's commitment to accuracy and authenticity exemplifies his meticulous efforts to discover, edit, and translate rare manuscripts. His unearthing of the *Ṣaḥīfah Ḥammām bin Mūnbbah*, a significant early *Ḥadīth* manuscript, and the subsequent publication of its English and Urdu translations in 1955 and 1961 underscore his dedication to preserving the rich heritage of Islamic texts.

In the realm of *Ḥadīth* literature, Hamidullah's discovery of *Ṣaḥīfah Ḥammām bin Mūnbbah* sheds light on the meticulous scholarship that characterized his career. The manuscript, with its origins traced to Abu Hurairah and his pupil *Ḥammām bin Mūnbbah*, became a focal point of Hamidullah's research, emphasizing the importance of authenticity in preserving the oral traditions of Islam. The compilation and editing of rare manuscripts extended to works such as *Sunan Sa'īd Ibn Manṣūr* and *Kitāb al-Nabāt* by Abu Hanifah al-Dinawari. Hamidullah's tireless efforts to bring these valuable texts to light reflect his dedication to academic excellence and his role as a custodian of Islamic heritage. Hamidullah's significant contribution to the study of Islamic law is exemplified in his pioneering work, *Muslim Conduct of State*. Originally submitted as a master's thesis to the Osmāniyyah University of Hyderabad, the book, first published in 1941, remains a foundational text in Muslim international law. Its enduring popularity attests to its relevance in understanding statecraft's theoretical and practical aspects in the early Islamic period.

His engagement with Islamic political thought is further exemplified in his major Arabic work, *Al-Wathāiq al-Siyyāsīyah*, a compilation of more than 300 documents about the period of the Prophet (pbuh) and the four Caliphs. The depth and breadth of this collection reveal Hamidullah's meticulous curation of historical sources, shedding light on the political landscape of early Islam. The legacy of Hamidullah extends beyond academic pursuits to his engagement with contemporary issues facing Muslim societies. His series of lectures, known as *Khutbat-e Bahawalpur*, delivered in 1980 at the Islamic University in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, exemplifies his commitment to addressing the challenges of the time. The topics covered in these lectures spanned a range of subjects, from the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to contemporary issues facing the Muslim world. Hamidullah's recognition by the Government of Pakistan with the *Hilāl-e-Imtīyāz* in 1985 underscored the significance of his contributions to Islamic education. His decision to donate the entire monetary award to the Islamic Research Academy of the International Islamic University in Islamabad reflects his selfless commitment to advancing Islamic scholarship rather than personal gain.

In assessing Hamidullah's impact on Islamic studies, one cannot overlook his role as a bridge between Eastern and Western scholars. His ability to articulate Islamic ideas in multiple languages facilitated a nuanced understanding of Islam among diverse audiences. This linguistic dexterity was not merely a tool for communication; it was a means of fostering mutual understanding and dispelling misconceptions about Islam. The scholarly journey of Muhammad Hamidullah traverses continents, languages, and centuries of Islamic history. His legacy endures as a beacon guiding scholars and learners alike. The light he kindled through his dedication to Islam, extensive knowledge, and linguistic versatility continues to illuminate the path for those seeking to understand the richness of Islamic tradition and its timeless relevance.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HAMIDULLAH'S ISLAMIC THOUGHT

3.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND ITS IMPACT

3.1.1 Prophet Muhammad's Madinian Period: Shaping Interfaith Relations

The Madinah period of Prophet Muhammad's life, which commenced with his significant migration (Hijra) to Madinah in 622 CE, is undoubtedly one of Islamic history's most pivotal and transformative phases.¹ It is a period that holds immense historical significance and profoundly impacted the development of Islamic thought and practice, especially concerning interfaith relations. Hamidullah, a prominent Islamic scholar, provides a valuable lens through which we can analyse this period and gain insights into how Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) established a pluralistic society in Madinah.²

As contemporary societies grapple with the challenges of religious diversity, the Madinah model serves as a timeless source of guidance and inspiration, promoting the values of tolerance, coexistence, and mutual respect.³⁴ This era unfolded at a time when Madinah was home to a diverse array of tribes and religious groups, including Muslims, Jews, and Pagans⁵. Prophet Muhammad's leadership and mediation skills were central to formulating and implementing this social contract, as he intended to focus on the complexities of inter-group relations with wisdom and diplomacy.⁶

¹ W. Montgomery Watt, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 7: *The Foundation of the Community: Muḥammad at Al-Madina AD 622-626/Hijrah-4 AH* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015), 43.

² Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam—A General Picture* (İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım Yayım, 1995), 11.

³ Ikenna Paschal Okpaleke, "Transformational Dialogue and Christian Identity in a Multi-Religious Context: Nigeria in Focus," *Religions* 13, no. 12 (2022): 1166.

⁴ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 9.

⁵ Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁶ John L. Esposito and John Obert Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 19.

3.1.2 Islamic Expansion

Under the guidance of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the subsequent caliphs, the early phase of Islamic expansion stands as a seminal period in Islamic history, marked by significant developments in interfaith interactions.⁷ This era, which witnessed the spread of Islam beyond the Arabian Peninsula, was characterized by religious pluralism, diplomacy, and coexistence. Hamidullah, a prominent Islamic scholar, delved into this period with a comprehensive examination, highlighting the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. The importance of this era lies not only in its historical significance but also in its demonstration of Islam's inherent capacity for pluralism and its approach to managing diverse religious communities. The expansion of Islam during this period was not merely a political conquest but also an unfolding of a complex interplay between different cultures and religions. The early Islamic state, as it expanded, encountered various religious communities, including Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians. The Islamic approach in these interactions often reflected tolerance, negotiation, and mutual respect.⁸

One of the critical features of this period was the practical application of Islamic teachings in governance and societal organization, especially concerning non-Muslim communities. The concept of *dhimmi* (protected person) was introduced, providing certain rights and protections to non-Muslims living within the Islamic state. This status, while indicative of a hierarchical social structure, also underscored a commitment to protect religious minorities and their places of worship, as evidenced by various treaties and agreements documented during this period.⁹

The teachings of the Qur'an significantly influenced the Islamic approach to interfaith relations during this expansion. Verses advocating respect for "People of the Book" (referring to Christians and Jews) and the acknowledgement of shared religious heritage played a crucial role in shaping the policies of the Islamic state towards these communities. The Qur'an emphasises commonalities, such as the belief in one God and

⁷ Adam J. Silverstein, *Islamic History: A Very Short Introduction*, vol. 220 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 5.

⁸ Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 33.

⁹ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 1-21.

reverence for shared prophets, facilitating a respectful and cooperative approach¹⁰. Hamidullah's analysis also extends to the conduct of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the subsequent caliphs in their interactions with non-Muslim communities. Their approach often involved diplomatic engagements and treaties that ensured mutual rights and responsibilities. One notable example is the Treaty of Ḥudaybīyyah, which, despite its initial appearance as a setback for Muslims, later paved the way for peaceful relations and the spread of Islam in Arabia.¹¹

Under the caliphates following the *Khulafa' Al-Rashidin*, particularly during the Umayyad and Abbasid periods, the Islamic empire expanded into new territories, encountering diverse cultures and religions. This expansion necessitated a pragmatic approach to governance, accommodating the complexities of administering a multi-religious empire. The translation movement initiated during the Abbasid Caliphate, which involved the translation of scientific, philosophical, and religious texts from various languages into Arabic, is an example of the intellectual and cultural exchange during this period.¹²

Furthermore, the expansion of Islam during this era also led to significant socio-economic interactions. Trade routes under Islamic control facilitated exchanges of goods, ideas, and religious beliefs. These interactions often occurred in an environment of mutual respect and coexistence, contributing to the history of Islamic civilization.¹³ In addition to the practical aspects of governance and societal interaction, the early phase of Islamic expansion is also notable for its theological implications. The encounters with different religious communities prompted Islamic scholars to engage in theological debates and discussions, further enriching Islamic jurisprudence and

¹⁰ John L. Esposito, *The Straight Path* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹¹ Ahmad Husni Haji Hasan, "An Islamic Perspective of the Interfaith Dialogue Amidst Current Inter-Religious Tensions Worldwide," *Global Journal Al-Thaqafah* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1-12.

¹² Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2022).

¹³ Syed Muhammad Khan, "Islamic Caliphates," *World History Encyclopedia*, Retrieved November 22, 2019, 20.

thought. This era saw the development of various schools of Islamic thought, each contributing to the rich diversity of Islamic jurisprudence.¹⁴

Hamidullah's examination of this period provides valuable insights into the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. His analysis, grounded in historical context, demonstrates the adaptability and inclusiveness of Islamic governance and society. This period in Islamic history, emphasising coexistence and mutual respect, offers important lessons for contemporary societies grappling with religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. The early phase of Islamic expansion, as explored by Hamidullah, thus serves as a critical reference point for understanding the Islamic worldview on interfaith relations. It showcases Islam's historical engagement with religious diversity, offering a blueprint for modern societies seeking to foster a spirit of tolerance and mutual respect among diverse religious communities.¹⁵

During this phase of Islamic expansion, the spread of Islam was not confined to the Arabian Peninsula but extended to neighbouring regions and beyond. This expansion was marked by a series of military campaigns, diplomatic efforts, and peaceful conversions that gradually brought various lands and peoples under the influence of Islam. One of the distinguishing features of this early Islamic expansion was its approach to religious diversity. Islam exhibited remarkable tolerance and accommodation, unlike many conquests of the time, where the dominant culture sought to impose its beliefs and practices on conquered peoples. This approach was rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasized the freedom of religion and the importance of respecting the beliefs of others.¹⁶

The concept of *dhimmī*, mentioned earlier, played a central role in the Islamic governance of non-Muslim communities. The *dhimmī* status was granted to non-Muslims, primarily Christians and Jews, who lived within the Islamic state. While they

¹⁴ Issa Khan, Muhammad Elius, Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, Kamaruzaman Noordin, and Fadillah Mansor, "A Critical Appraisal of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam," *SAGE Open* 10, no. 4 (2020): 2158244020970560.

¹⁵ Akintunde E. Akinade, "Abiding Faith: Varieties of Christian Responses to Islam," in *Christian Responses to Islam in Nigeria: A Contextual Study of Ambivalent Encounters*, 71-101 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2014), 14.

¹⁶ Dominique Gaurier, "Islamic International Law: Historical Foundations and Al-Shaybani's Siyar, written by Khaled Ramadan Bashir," *Journal of the History of International Law/Revue d'histoire du droit international* 22, no. 2-3 (2020): 503-505.

were required to pay a special tax (*jizyā*) and adhere to certain restrictions, such as not bearing arms, they were protected and allowed to practise their faith. This system of governance recognized the rights of religious minorities and their contributions to society. It was not merely a form of tolerance but a demonstration of a commitment to coexistence and mutual respect. In many cases, non-Muslims could participate in various aspects of public life, including serving in administrative roles and contributing to the cultural and intellectual heritage of the Islamic world.¹⁷

The approach to interfaith relations during this period extended beyond legal and administrative frameworks. It was also reflected in the conduct of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the early caliphs. For instance, in the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, a peace treaty between the Muslims of Madinah and the Quraysh tribe of Makkah, the terms were negotiated with an emphasis on peaceful coexistence.¹⁸ Although the treaty faced initial challenges, it ultimately led to a calm period and allowed for Islam's spread. Similarly, Prophet Muhammad's interactions with Jewish and Christian communities in the Arabian Peninsula were marked by a spirit of dialogue and cooperation. He engaged in discussions with Jewish scholars and sought common ground with Christians. These interactions set a precedent for peaceful coexistence and interfaith engagement.

As the Islamic empire expanded during the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, it encountered many cultures, languages, and religions. This diversity necessitated a flexible and pragmatic approach to governance. The translation movement during the Abbasid era, where Greek, Persian, Indian, and other texts were translated into Arabic, facilitated intellectual exchange and contributed to the preservation of knowledge. In many regions under Islamic rule, non-Muslim communities were allowed to govern themselves according to their religious laws and traditions. This policy, known as the millet system, granted a considerable degree of autonomy to religious minorities. It

¹⁷ Ovamir Anjum, "Dhimmi Citizens: Non-Muslims in the New Islamist Discourse," *Reorient* 2, no. 1 (2016): 31-50.

¹⁸ Salih Yucel and Mursal Farman, "Rereading the Hudaybiyya Treaty: With Special Reference to Ibn Umar's Role in Fitan," *Religions* 14, no. 666 (2023): 1.

allowed for the coexistence of different legal systems and contributed to the cultural richness of the Islamic world.¹⁹

Moreover, the economic interactions facilitated by the Islamic empire brought together people from various religious backgrounds. This interaction often occurred in an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation, fostering a sense of interconnectedness among diverse communities. The early Islamic expansion also witnessed theological discussions and debates. Islamic scholars engaged with the theological perspectives of other religious traditions, leading to a deeper understanding of religious diversity.²⁰ These interactions contributed to the development of Islamic jurisprudence and theology as scholars grappled with questions related to religious pluralism and the status of non-Muslims.

The emergence of various schools of Islamic thought during this period further enriched the intellectual landscape of Islam. These schools, such as the *Ḥanafī*, *Malikī*, *Shafīʿī*, and *Ḥanbalī*, offered different interpretations of Islamic law and jurisprudence.²¹ While they shared core beliefs, they allowed for diversity in legal opinions and practices. In conclusion, the early phase of Islamic expansion, as examined by Hamidullah, provides valuable insights into the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. This period is a testament to Islam's capacity for pluralism, tolerance, and coexistence. The principles of equality, justice, and respect for religious diversity were enshrined in legal frameworks and embodied in the conduct of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the early caliphs.²²

The concept of *dhimmī*, the millet system, and the translation movement all indicate a pragmatic and inclusive approach to governance and intellectual exchange. These historical precedents offer important lessons for contemporary societies addressing religious diversity and interfaith dialogue challenges. As modern societies struggle with issues related to religious pluralism, the early Islamic expansion serves as

¹⁹ Javad Haghnavaz, "A Brief History of Islam (The Spread of Islam)," *International Journal of Business and Social Science* 4, no. 17 (2013): 21-31.

²⁰ Abdullah Sahin, "Critical Issues in Islamic Education Studies: Rethinking Islamic and Western Liberal Secular Values of Education," *Religions* 9, no. 11 (2018): 335.

²¹ Alan Guenther, "A Colonial Court Defines a Muslim," *Islam in South Asia in Practice* 33 (2009): 293.

²² Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

a timeless source of inspiration. It underscores the possibility of coexistence and cooperation among diverse religious communities. It reminds us that mutual respect and dialogue can pave the way for peaceful and harmonious societies, even in the face of differences. Hamidullah's examination of this era provides a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic perspective on interfaith relations. It offers a valuable framework for building inclusive and respectful communities in today's diverse world.²³

3.1.3 Qur'anic Exegesis

Hamidullah's approach to interpreting the Qur'an in the context of interfaith relations presents a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the Islamic holy scripture. His analysis emphasizes the relevance of specific Qur'anic verses that advocate tolerance and dialogue as timeless principles guiding Muslim interactions with people of other faiths. These verses, such as "*There is no compulsion in religion*"²⁴ and "*To you, your religion, and to me, my religion*"²⁵, are not regarded by Hamidullah as mere historical edicts but as enduring principles that promote coexistence and mutual respect.

The verse "*There is no compulsion in religion*" holds particular significance in interfaith relations. It was revealed in the city of Madinah, which was home to diverse religious communities, including Muslims, Jews, and Pagans. This verse underscores the Islamic principle of freedom of belief and religion, a cornerstone for creating a society where diverse religious beliefs can peacefully coexist. Hamidullah's interpretation of this verse emphasizes that faith is a profoundly personal journey, and no individual should be compelled to follow a particular religion against their will.²⁶

Similarly, the verse "*To you, your religion, and to me, my religion*" encapsulates the essence of mutual respect within religious diversity. Revealed during religious tension and conflict in Makkah, this verse advocates for peaceful coexistence and

²³ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Constitutional Problems in Early Islam," *İslam Tetkikleri Enstitüsü Dergisi* 5 (1973): 15-35.

²⁴ Qur'an, *Surah al-Baqrah* 2:256.

²⁵ Qur'an, *Surah al-Mā'idah* 6:109.

²⁶ Yohanan Friedmann, *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 12.

acknowledges the presence of multiple faiths. Hamidullah underscores that this verse reflects Prophet Muhammad's respect for different religious traditions, emphasizing the importance of maintaining peaceful relationships despite theological disagreements. Hamidullah's interpretation goes beyond historical context; he argues that these Qur'anic verses possess universal value and continue to guide contemporary Muslims in their interactions with people of other faiths. Applying these principles in today's diverse and interconnected societies is crucial for fostering interfaith dialogue and understanding.²⁷

Furthermore, Hamidullah's analysis highlights the Qur'an's broader vision of a pluralistic society. Through these verses, the Qur'an provides a framework for an inclusive society where different religions are tolerated and genuinely respected.²⁸ This respect for diversity is not passive; it entails active engagement with different faiths, promoting a deeper understanding and appreciation of religious pluralism. In addressing Muslim communities' challenges in navigating their faith in a pluralistic world, Hamidullah suggests that no compulsion in religion and acknowledging different religious paths are fundamental. These principles can play a pivotal role in addressing religious intolerance and discrimination issues. By adhering to these Qur'anic teachings, Muslims can contribute positively to building inclusive societies where religious diversity is perceived as a source of strength rather than conflict.²⁹

In summary, Hamidullah's approach to Qur'anic exegesis in interfaith relations offers profound insights into Islamic teachings' inclusive and tolerant nature. His emphasis on key verses that advocate tolerance and dialogue underscores the continued relevance of the Qur'an in guiding Muslim interactions in a religiously plural world. This interpretation not only elucidates the inherent flexibility within Islamic teachings but also provides a valuable framework for Muslims to promote coexistence and mutual respect among diverse religious communities.³⁰

²⁷ Muhammad Hashim Kamali, "Diversity and Pluralism: A Qur'anic Perspective," *ICR Journal* 1, no. 1 (2009): 11-18.

²⁸ Muhammad Haniff Hassan, "Interpreting Islam and Plural Society," *ICR Journal* 1, no. 1 (2009): 11.

²⁹ Hakan Çoruh, "A New Hermeneutical Approach to the Qur'an with Special Reference to the Narrative of Prophet Yaḥyā (John the Baptist) in the Qur'an and the Bible," *Religions* 13, no. 10 (2022): 982.

³⁰ Noor Achmad, "Inter-Religious Harmony: A Historical Overview," *Tawasuf: Indonesian Journal of Moderate Islam* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-10.

To further appreciate the significance of Hamidullah's interpretation, it is essential to delve deeper into the specific verses he highlights and the principles they embody. The verse "*There is no compulsion in religion*"³¹ serves as a cornerstone of Islamic teachings on religious freedom and tolerance. This verse was revealed in Madinah, a city where the Muslim community was in contact with various religious groups, including Jews, Christians, and Pagans. The context of its revelation is significant in understanding its implications. Allah clarifies that faith is a personal choice and conviction in this verse. In other words, coercion or force has no place in matters of religion. This principle reflects the Islamic belief that genuine faith must come from the heart and cannot be imposed on anyone. It emphasizes the individual's right to practice religion according to their conscience.

Hamidullah's interpretation of this verse highlights its timeless relevance. It underscores the fundamental Islamic value of respecting the autonomy of individuals in matters of faith. Muslims are reminded that their faith should not be imposed on others and that they should approach interfaith interactions with an attitude of respect for individual choices and beliefs. The verse "*To you, your religion, and to me, my religion*"³² reinforces the idea of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence in the face of religious diversity. It was revealed during a period of intense opposition to the message of Islam in Makkah, where Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his followers faced persecution and rejection.

This verse is a testament to the Prophet's commitment to peaceful dialogue and acknowledgement of different religious beliefs in society. It conveys a powerful message of tolerance and underscores the importance of maintaining respectful relationships, even with profound theological disagreements. Hamidullah's interpretation of this verse emphasizes the need for Muslims to adopt a similar attitude in contemporary times. It encourages Muslims to recognize and respect the religious diversity in today's world. Rather than seeking to impose their beliefs on others, Muslims are encouraged to engage in constructive dialogue and to foster an environment of mutual understanding.

³¹ Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqrah 2:256.

³² Qur'an, Surah Al-An'am 109:6.

Hamidullah's analysis of these Qur'anic verses goes beyond their literal meaning. He delves into the principles and values they represent, advocating for their practical application in the lives of Muslims. His interpretation aligns with the broader Islamic tradition of promoting peaceful coexistence, dialogue, and mutual respect among people of different faiths. In contemporary society, where religious diversity is a reality, the teachings of these Qur'anic verses gain even greater significance. They offer a framework for Muslims to engage positively with people of other faiths, build bridges of understanding, and contribute to harmonious coexistence in a pluralistic world.³³

One of the critical aspects of Hamidullah's interpretation is his insistence on the universality of these Qur'anic principles. He argues that these verses are not limited to a specific time or place but hold relevance for Muslims worldwide and throughout history. This perspective aligns with the idea that the Qur'anic message is timeless and can guide Muslims in various contexts and situations. Furthermore, Hamidullah's interpretation emphasizes the proactive role that Muslims can play in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding. Instead of being passive observers in a diverse society, Muslims are encouraged to actively engage with people of other faiths, to learn about their beliefs, and to share their convictions respectfully.³⁴

Hamidullah's approach to Qur'anic exegesis in interfaith relations offers a robust framework for Muslims to negotiate the complexities of a pluralistic world. It promotes the values of tolerance, dialogue, and mutual respect, which are not only in line with Islamic teachings but also contribute to promoting peace and harmony in an increasingly diverse and interconnected global society. Moreover, Hamidullah's interpretation aligns with the broader objectives of Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of promoting justice, compassion, and understanding in all aspects of life. The Qur'anic verses he highlights remind Muslims of their ethical and moral responsibilities in a diverse world.

In short, Hamidullah's approach to Qur'anic exegesis within interfaith relations offers a profound and relevant perspective for Muslims today. His interpretation of key

³³ Hafiz Iftikhar Ahmed and Syed Naeem Badshah, "A Critical Analysis of the Tafseer, Tadabur-ul-Qur'an and Maarif ul Qur'an," *Al-Azhār* 5, no. 02 (2019): 37-49.

³⁴ Resid Haylamaz, "Islam's Universality and the Risale-i Nur's Method of Interpreting the Qur'an's Universality," *Tsaqafah: Jurnal Peradaban Islam* 10 (2014): 245-278.

Qur'anic verses underscores the importance of religious freedom, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence. It encourages Muslims to actively engage with people of other faiths and promote mutual respect and dialogue. These principles align with Islamic teachings and resonate with the universal values of human rights, freedom of belief, and the promotion of peaceful coexistence among diverse communities. Hamidullah's interpretation is a valuable resource for Muslims seeking to take the challenges and opportunities of religious diversity in the contemporary world. It reminds us that the Qur'anic message of tolerance and dialogue is a timeless and essential guide for building inclusive and respectful societies.

3.1.4 The Significance of *Ḥadīth* Literature in Interfaith Relations

Hamidullah, a distinguished Islamic scholar, places significant emphasis on the *Ḥadīth* literature as a valuable source of guidance for Muslims in their interactions with individuals of different faiths. The *Ḥadīth* literature consists of the sayings, actions, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and plays a pivotal role in elucidating the practical aspects of Islamic teachings. Hamidullah's focus on the *Ḥadīth* literature underscores the belief that the Prophet's life provides a comprehensive model for Muslims to emulate, particularly in fostering harmonious interfaith relations.³⁵

One of the remarkable instances Hamidullah highlights is the Prophet Muhammad's gesture of standing up as a mark of respect for a Jewish funeral procession. This act of respect transcended religious boundaries and exemplified the universal values of compassion and empathy. It showcased the Prophet's commitment to treating all individuals with honour and dignity, regardless of their religious backgrounds. The significance of this *Ḥadīth* lies in its ability to illustrate the universality of Islamic principles. The Prophet's respect for the deceased and his empathy towards grieving individuals are values that extend beyond religious affiliations.³⁶ Hamidullah's citation of this *Ḥadīth* emphasises the importance of such

³⁵ Ahmad Faizuddin Ramli, Jaffary Awang, and Zaizul Ab Rahman, "Muslim Scholar's Discourse on Buddhism: A Literature on Buddha's Position," in *SHS Web of Conferences*, vol. 53 (2018): 4001.

³⁶ Fazlur Rahman, "Islam and Medicine: A General Overview," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 27, no. 4 (1984): 585-597.

actions in interfaith relations. It underscores that compassion and respect can serve as bridges to foster understanding and goodwill among individuals of different faiths.

Hamidullah's approach to the *Ḥadīth* literature extends beyond individual instances to highlight the broader theme of mutual respect in interfaith interactions. He contends that the Prophet Muhammad's interactions with people of different faiths were characterized by fairness, kindness, and respect for their beliefs. These interactions set a precedent for just and equitable treatment of individuals from diverse religious backgrounds. The *Ḥadīth* literature contains numerous accounts of the Prophet engaging with non-Muslims in various contexts. These interactions encompassed trade, diplomacy, social engagements, and more. Through these instances, the Prophet's commitment to justice and equity shines through, providing Muslims with practical guidance on exploring the complexities of a multi-religious world.³⁷

In the contemporary context, the *Ḥadīth* literature retains its relevance and significance. In a world marked by religious diversity and global interconnectivity, the principles derived from the Prophet's actions and sayings in the *Ḥadīth* literature offer a timeless framework for Muslims to engage positively with individuals of different faiths. Hamidullah's approach encourages Muslims to understand the Prophet's conduct as documented in the *Ḥadīth* and internalize and apply these principles daily. By doing so, Muslims can promote interfaith dialogue, understanding, and cooperation.³⁸ These principles guide Muslims in navigating the challenges of a diverse and interconnected world, fostering peaceful coexistence and mutual respect.

One of the fundamental principles emphasized in the *Ḥadīth* literature is the importance of justice in all interactions, including those with individuals of different faiths. Prophet Muhammad's actions and sayings consistently underscore the need for fairness and equitable treatment. For example, the *Ḥadīth* literature contains accounts of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) adjudicating disputes between Muslims and non-Muslims. In these instances, he ensured that justice was served, regardless of the religious backgrounds of the parties involved. This commitment to justice is a guiding

³⁷ Mohamed Amine Brahim and Housseem Ben Lazreg, "Post-Islamism and Intellectual Production: A Bibliometric Analysis of the Evolution of Contemporary Islamic Thought," *Religions* 12, no. 49 (2021): 85.

³⁸ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Dialogue Between Islam and Buddhism through the Concepts Ummatan Wasāṭan (The Middle Nation) and Majjhima-Patipada (The Middle Way)," *Islamic Studies* (2009): 367-394.

principle for Muslims in their interactions with people of other faiths. It reinforces the idea that Muslims should treat all individuals fairly and justly, irrespective of religious differences.³⁹

Another significant theme in the *Ḥadīth* literature is the importance of kindness and compassion. Prophet Muhammad's interactions with non-Muslims often exemplified these qualities. He would visit the sick from different religious backgrounds, assist those in need, and offer words of comfort and solace. Hamidullah's emphasis on these aspects of the *Ḥadīth* literature underscores the role of kindness and compassion in interfaith relations. Muslims are encouraged to demonstrate empathy and concern for individuals of different faiths, just as the Prophet did. These acts of kindness can foster goodwill and bridge understanding between communities.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the *Ḥadīth* literature contains numerous instances of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) engaging in dialogue and discussion with people of different faiths. These interactions were characterized by respect for differing beliefs and a commitment to peaceful discourse. The Prophet's approach was to engage in constructive conversations to promote understanding and mutual respect. Hamidullah's interpretation of these *Ḥadīth* highlights the value of dialogue in interfaith relations. Muslims are encouraged to engage in meaningful conversations with individuals of different faiths with a spirit of openness and respect. Such dialogues can lead to greater mutual understanding and dispel misconceptions or stereotypes.⁴¹

In summary, Hamidullah's emphasis on the *Ḥadīth* literature as a source of guidance for interfaith relations underscores the practical wisdom encapsulated in the actions and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The *Ḥadīth* literature provides a rich repository of the Prophet's conduct, highlighting respect, fairness, and tolerance principles in interactions with individuals of different faiths. The example of the Prophet standing up for a Jewish funeral procession epitomizes his commitment to treating all

³⁹ Md Mashiur Rahman, "Islamic Perspective of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)," *Journal of Asian and African Social Science and Humanities* 4, no. 2 (2018): 28-44.

⁴⁰ Murjazin Murjazin, Abid Nurhuda, and Thariq Aziz, "Community Social Education in the Perspective of the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW," *IJECA (International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application)* 6, no. 2 (2023): 161-170.

⁴¹ Issa Khan, Muhammad Elius, Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, Kamaruzaman Noordin, and Fadillah Mansor, "A Critical Appraisal of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam," *SAGE Open* 10, no. 4 (2020): 2158244020970560.

individuals with honour and dignity, regardless of their religious affiliations. This act exemplifies the universal values of compassion and empathy.⁴²

Hamidullah's exploration of the *Ḥadīth* literature goes beyond isolated instances to emphasize mutual respect in interfaith interactions. These principles, derived from the *Ḥadīth* literature, offer Muslims a practical and timeless framework for engaging positively with individuals of different faiths in the contemporary world. Hamidullah's work, therefore, serves as a reminder of the enduring relevance of the *Ḥadīth* literature in shaping the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. The *Ḥadīth* literature provides insights into the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) conduct, offering a blueprint for Muslims to take the challenges and opportunities of religious diversity in the modern world. It reminds Muslims that justice, kindness, and dialogue are essential in fostering harmonious interfaith relations.

Furthermore, Hamidullah's approach encourages Muslims to view the *Ḥadīth* literature as a source of inspiration and guidance for their daily lives. By internalizing and applying the principles in the *Ḥadīth*, Muslims can positively promote interfaith dialogue, understanding, and cooperation. In a world where religious diversity is a reality, the *Ḥadīth* literature is a timeless resource for Muslims seeking to engage with individuals of different faiths in a spirit of respect and mutual benefit. It reminds Muslims that the Prophet Muhammad's example provides a model of behaviour that transcends religious boundaries and promotes the universal values of justice, kindness, and dialogue.⁴³

In summary, Hamidullah's emphasis on *Ḥadīth* literature as a source of guidance for interfaith relations underscores the profound wisdom embedded in the actions and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The *Ḥadīth* literature is a testament to the Prophet's commitment to justice, kindness, and dialogue in his interactions with individuals of different faiths. It offers Muslims a timeless framework for navigating the complexities of a multi-religious world, fostering peaceful coexistence and mutual respect. Hamidullah's work serves as a reminder of the enduring relevance of *Ḥadīth* literature in shaping the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. It encourages Muslims

⁴² Zainul Abas and Abdul Ghofur, "Maintaining Religious Harmony through Collaboration Strategies," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Literature and Muslim Society* 6, no. 2 (2021): 11-17.

⁴³ Noor Achmad, "Inter-Religious Harmony: A Historical Overview," *Tawasuf: Indonesian Journal of Moderate Islam* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-10.

to draw inspiration from the Prophet's conduct and to actively apply these principles in their interactions with individuals of different faiths. By doing so, Muslims can promote interfaith dialogue, understanding, and cooperation, ultimately fostering a more harmonious and inclusive society.

3.1.5 Political and Economic System of Islam

Hamidullah's examination of Islam's political and economic systems provides valuable insights into the principles underpinning interfaith relations. One of the key concepts he highlights is justice within the Islamic framework. This concept is foundational in Islamic governance and jurisprudence. Justice in Islam entails the fair and equitable treatment of all individuals, irrespective of their religious beliefs. In the context of interfaith relations, the principle of justice is particularly significant.⁴⁴ Hamidullah argues that a just society is inherently more inclusive and tolerant of religious diversity. When the rights and dignity of individuals from different faiths are upheld and protected, it creates an environment where interfaith cooperation and coexistence can thrive. Moreover, Islamic governance strongly emphasises public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*), another central concept in Hamidullah's analysis. Public welfare in Islam refers to the collective well-being of society. It encompasses policies and practices that promote the common good and avoid harm to society.⁴⁵

The relevance of public welfare in the context of interfaith relations lies in its emphasis on the well-being of all members of society, regardless of their religious affiliations. Hamidullah argues, as noted by Azim Islahi that policies and practices prioritising public welfare reduce the potential for inter-religious tensions. By focusing on the common good, societies can create inclusive policies that benefit individuals from diverse religious communities. The implications of these principles for contemporary societies grappling with religious diversity are significant. In today's world, many nations are characterized by religious pluralism, and this diversity can lead

⁴⁴ Murad Wilfried Hofmann, Review of *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* by Tariq Ramadan, *Journal of Islamic Studies* 15, no. 3 (September 2004): 386-391, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/15.3.386>.

⁴⁵ Mahmood Monshipouri, "The West's Modern Encounter with Islam: From Discourse to Reality," *Journal of Church and State* 40, no. 1 (1998): 25-56.

to religious discrimination and tensions. Hamidullah's analysis suggests that societies can effectively address these challenges by prioritizing justice and public welfare.⁴⁶

The concept of justice ensures that individuals from different religious backgrounds are treated fairly and equitably under the law and in society at large. This is not only a matter of legal rights but also of social inclusion and acceptance. In a just society, individuals can freely practice their faith and participate in the social and economic life of the nation without fear of discrimination or persecution. Furthermore, the emphasis on public welfare highlights the importance of policies and practices that benefit all members of society. In a pluralistic context, this principle underscores the need for inclusive policies that consider the well-being of individuals from diverse religious communities. By promoting the common good, societies can create environments where interfaith cooperation is possible and encouraged.⁴⁷

In Islam's approach to interfaith dynamics, as elucidated by Hamidullah, the emphasis is on justice, fairness, and the well-being of all members of society, irrespective of their religious affiliations. This approach aligns with Islam's historical record of tolerance and cooperation with non-Muslim communities. Throughout Islamic history, there are examples of Muslim-majority societies living in harmony with religious minorities. Hamidullah's work reinforces that these historical precedents are rooted in Islamic justice and public welfare principles. One of the fundamental principles emphasized in the Islamic concept of justice is the equitable treatment of all individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs. This principle is rooted in the Qur'an and the *Hadīth* teachings, underscoring that justice is a fundamental value in Islam.⁴⁸

The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the importance of justice, stating, "*O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do*".⁴⁹ This

⁴⁶ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

⁴⁷ Sahir Dewji, "The Aga Khan's Discourse of Applied Pluralism: Converging the 'Religious' and the 'Secular,'" *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 47, no. 1 (2018): 78-106.

⁴⁸ Anver M. Emon, *Religious Pluralism and Islamic Law: Dhimmis and Others in the Empire of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 45.

⁴⁹ Quran, Surah Al-Anfāl 8:5.

verse highlights the obligation of Muslims to stand for justice, even when it may involve bearing witness against their community. In the context of interfaith relations, the principle of justice takes on added significance. Muslims are expected to treat individuals of different faiths fairly and equitably. This extends to matters of law, commerce, and social interactions. By upholding justice in their interactions with people of other faiths, Muslims can contribute to an environment of trust and respect.

Furthermore, the concept of justice in Islam includes the protection of the rights and freedoms of religious minorities. Muslims are called upon to ensure that individuals from different religious backgrounds are not subject to discrimination or persecution. This commitment to justice extends to the protection of places of worship and the religious practices of non-Muslims. Public welfare (*maṣlahah*) is another central concept in Islamic governance and jurisprudence. It refers to the well-being and common good of society. Islamic principles emphasize the importance of policies and practices that promote public welfare and avoid harm to society.⁵⁰ In the context of interfaith relations, the concept of public welfare serves as a reminder of the need to prioritize the well-being of all members of society, regardless of their religious affiliations. Policies and practices that promote the common good contribute to social cohesion and reduce the potential for inter-religious tensions.

For example, ensuring access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for individuals from diverse religious communities manifests the principle of public welfare. When societies invest in the well-being of all their citizens, it creates an environment where individuals can thrive, contribute to society, and engage in interfaith dialogue and cooperation. In summary, Hamidullah's analysis of Islam's political and economic systems highlights the pivotal role of justice and public welfare in establishing equitable and harmonious interfaith relations. These Islamic principles offer valuable guidance for addressing contemporary challenges related to religious diversity and inter-religious tensions. By prioritizing justice and public welfare, societies can create inclusive and tolerant environments where individuals of different religious backgrounds can coexist, cooperate, and contribute to the common good.

⁵⁰ Rehman, "Accommodating Religious Identities in an Islamic State: International Law, Freedom of Religion and the Rights of Religious Minorities," *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 7, no. 2 (2000): 139-165.

Islam's approach to interfaith dynamics, as elucidated by Hamidullah, underscores the importance of justice, fairness, and the well-being of all members of society, regardless of their religious affiliations. These principles are a foundation for building bridges of understanding and cooperation among individuals of different faiths. They remind Muslims of their responsibility to uphold justice and promote public welfare in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. In conclusion, Hamidullah's analysis of Islam's political and economic systems provides valuable insights into the principles underpinning interfaith relations.⁵¹ The concepts of justice and public welfare are central to the Islamic framework and offer guidance for addressing contemporary challenges related to religious diversity. By adhering to these principles, societies can create inclusive and harmonious environments where individuals of different faiths can coexist and contribute to the common good. Islam's emphasis on justice and public welfare is a timeless reminder of the importance of fairness, equity, and the well-being of all members of society, irrespective of their religious affiliations.

3.1.6 The Role of Justice and Equity in Interfaith Relations

Hamidullah's work delves into the crucial themes of justice and equity, particularly in interfaith relations. These principles, as highlighted by Hamidullah, are integral to establishing and maintaining a peaceful and cooperative environment among diverse religious communities.⁵² The moral imperatives of justice and equity are deeply ingrained in Islamic ethics and transcend religious boundaries. In Islam, justice, known as *'adl*, is regarded as a fundamental virtue. The Qur'an and *Hadīth* literature reference the significance of treating all individuals fairly and equally. Importantly, this principle is not confined to interactions within the Muslim community but extends to dealings with people of other faiths.

⁵¹ Issa Khan, Muhammad Elius, Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, Kamaruzaman Noordin, and Fadillah Mansor, "A Critical Appraisal of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam," *SAGE Open* 10, no. 4 (2020): 2158244020970560.

⁵² Ahmad Fauzi Bin Abdul Hamid, *Islamic Resurgence in the Periphery: A Study of Political Islam in Contemporary Malaysia with Special Reference to the Darul Arqam Movement 1968-1996* (PhD diss., Newcastle University, 1998), 45.

Hamidullah draws our attention to the Prophetic model, which exemplifies how justice and fairness should be practised in interfaith relations. Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) interactions with individuals from diverse religious backgrounds during his time provide practical illustrations of these principles. Notably, the *Constitution of Madinah*, established by the Prophet, guaranteed the rights and protection of all residents, regardless of their faith. This document exemplifies the Prophet's unwavering commitment to justice and equity in a pluralistic society.⁵³

Furthermore, within the *Ḥadīth* literature, instances abound where the Prophet (pbuh) exemplified respect and fairness toward non-Muslims. Hamidullah meticulously refers to specific *Ḥadīths* illuminating the Prophet's consideration for the beliefs and practices of those outside the Muslim faith. These *Ḥadīths* are tangible manifestations of the practical application of justice and equity in interfaith interactions. In contemporary societies of diversity, adherence to these principles is not merely a moral imperative but a pragmatic necessity. Hamidullah's exploration of these *Ḥadīths* underscores their relevance in navigating the complexities of our modern world. In societies, religious affiliations and the commitment to justice and equity become crucial factors in maintaining social harmony and potential conflicts. The consequences of discrimination and injustice are profound, capable of inciting social unrest and perpetuating tensions that reverberate through communities.

Conversely, societies prioritising justice and equity lay the groundwork for environments where individuals from diverse religious backgrounds can coexist harmoniously and engage cooperatively in shared pursuits. By referencing specific *Ḥadīths* that showcase the Prophet's (pbuh) respect for non-Muslim beliefs and practices, Hamidullah provides a tangible and historically rooted foundation for applying justice and equity in interfaith relations. This reinforces the moral underpinnings of these principles and positions them as practical tools for fostering societal well-being and cooperation amidst the religious diversity that defines our contemporary global landscape.⁵⁴

⁵³ Carl W. Ernst, *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2006), 26.

⁵⁴ Taofeek Muhammed Thani, Ibrahim Dahiru Idriss, Adamu Abubakar Muhammad, and Hafsat Sulaiman Idris, "The Teaching Methods and Techniques of the Prophet (pbuh): An Exploratory Study," *Journal of Hadith Studies* (2020): 26-31.

The profound significance of justice and equity in interfaith relations reverberates universally. These principles align seamlessly with the core values of fairness, human rights, and equality embraced across religious and ethical traditions. Justice and equity emerge as unifying forces in a global religious diversity and multiculturalism landscape, constituting a shared platform for interfaith dialogue and collaboration. They provide a common foundation, fostering understanding and cooperation among individuals and communities representing different faiths, addressing shared challenges and promoting common values. Hamidullah's emphasis on justice and equity in interfaith relations echoes the universal moral imperative. It serves as a beacon, illuminating the path towards treating all individuals fairly and respectfully, irrespective of their religious affiliations. These principles, deeply embedded in Islamic ethics and exemplified by the Prophetic model, extend beyond theoretical constructs to offer practical guidance for cultivating peaceful coexistence and collaboration within diverse societies. Central to Hamidullah's teachings is recognising that religious boundaries do not confine justice and equity; they transcend doctrinal differences. Instead, they provide fertile ground for fostering interfaith dialogue and understanding in a world where religious diversity, justice, and equity stand as foundational values, acting as catalysts for creating a more just and harmonious coexistence among individuals and communities of varied faiths.

The resonance of justice and equity in interfaith relations lies in their inherent alignment with broader ethical principles embraced by diverse religious traditions. These principles connect individuals and communities who may differ in their religious convictions but find commonality in their commitment to fairness, human rights, and equality. In embracing justice and equity, diverse faiths converge on shared values, fostering an environment conducive to collaboration and mutual respect. Moreover, justice and equity become instrumental in navigating the complexities of interfaith dialogue. They provide a framework through which diverse perspectives can converge, facilitating meaningful conversations that transcend religious barriers. As individuals and communities engage in these dialogues, the principles of justice and equity offer a roadmap for finding common ground, promoting understanding, and addressing shared concerns.

In conclusion, Hamidullah's emphasis on justice and equity in interfaith relations is a testament to their universal significance. These principles transcend

religious boundaries, offering practical guidance for promoting peaceful coexistence and cooperation in diverse societies. By resonating with broader values upheld across various faith traditions, justice and equity become the cornerstone of interfaith dialogue and the foundation for building a more just and harmonious world where individuals and communities of diverse faiths can thrive together in shared respect and understanding.⁵⁵

The concept of justice and equity has always held a central place in human societies, transcending geographical boundaries, cultural differences, and religious affiliations. It is a fundamental pillar of morality and ethics that guides interactions with fellow individuals. Hamidullah's work, particularly in interfaith relations, is a poignant reminder of the enduring significance of justice and equity in fostering harmonious coexistence and cooperation among diverse religious communities. As expounded in Islamic teachings, the ethical principle of justice is not exclusive to the Islamic faith; it is a universal value that resonates with people of all religious backgrounds. In the Islamic tradition, justice is known as '*adl*', and it is considered one of the core virtues individuals should embody daily. The Qur'an, the holy scripture of Islam, and the *Hadith* literature, which comprises the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), contain numerous references to the importance of treating all individuals with fairness and equality.⁵⁶

This emphasis on justice in Islam extends beyond the boundaries of the Muslim community. It encompasses interactions with people of other faiths and belief systems. In a world where religious diversity is a reality, applying principles such as justice and equity becomes paramount in ensuring peaceful coexistence. Hamidullah's scholarship highlights this universal aspect of justice, emphasizing its importance in interfaith relations. The Prophetic model, which Hamidullah accentuates, serves as a guiding example of how justice and fairness should be practised in interfaith relations. The life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is replete with instances where he interacted with individuals from diverse religious backgrounds during his time in Arabia. These interactions provide practical illustrations of the principles of justice and equity. One of

⁵⁵ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Managing Religious and Ethnic Diversity for Peace and Harmony: Islam and Buddhism in the Malay World of Southeast Asia," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 129-140.

⁵⁶ Majid Khadduri, *The Islamic Conception of Justice* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 1984), 22.

the most notable examples is the *Constitution of Madinah*, established by the Prophet. This constitution guaranteed the rights and protection of all residents of Madinah, irrespective of their faith or ethnicity. It exemplifies the Prophet's unwavering commitment to justice and equity in a pluralistic society.⁵⁷

At the heart of Hamidullah's insights lies the recognition that justice and equity are dynamic forces capable of shaping the very fabric of our existence. By embracing and upholding these principles, individuals contribute to cultivating an environment conducive to all flourishing, irrespective of their religious backgrounds. The lived expression of justice and equity fosters a space where diverse individuals can coexist and thrive. In this context, justice and equity cease to be abstract concepts and become transformative agents in the social landscape. They create a harmonious milieu where individuals can explore life with security, dignity, and fairness regardless of their religious affiliations. When justice and equity become foundational pillars of societal interactions, they pave the way for actualising human potential, unburdened by the constraints of religious differences.

Hamidullah's work invites us to contemplate the profound impact that justice and equity can have on the well-being of individuals and the harmony of societies. It encourages a shift in perspective—from perceiving these principles as lofty ideals to recognizing them as practical tools for constructing inclusive and thriving communities. By transcending religious boundaries, justice and equity become unifying forces that bind people together in a shared commitment to the common good. In conclusion, amidst the diverse religious landscape of our world, the principles of justice and equity emerge as indispensable guides, illuminating a path toward mutual understanding and shared humanity. Hamidullah's teachings underscore that these principles are not ethereal abstractions but living virtues capable of shaping the very essence of our daily interactions. As individuals and communities embrace the practice of justice and equity, they create environments where people, irrespective of their religious backgrounds, can flourish and coexist harmoniously.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Noor Achmad, "Inter-Religious Harmony: A Historical Overview," *Tawasuf: Indonesian Journal of Moderate Islam* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-10.

⁵⁸ Asma Afsaruddin, "The Hermeneutics of Inter-Faith Relations: Retrieving Moderation and Pluralism as Universal Principles in Qur'anic Exegeses," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2009): 331-354.

Moreover, the principles of justice and equity serve as a bridge between different faith communities. These principles offer a path toward reconciliation and cooperation in a world where religious tensions and conflicts have sometimes led to strife and division. They provide a common language through which individuals of diverse faiths can engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration. In conclusion, Hamidullah's scholarly work serves as a reminder of the enduring importance of justice and equity in interfaith relations. These principles, deeply rooted in Islamic ethics and exemplified by the Prophetic model, offer practical guidance for individuals and communities seeking to foster peaceful coexistence and cooperation in diverse societies. They transcend religious boundaries and provide a foundation for interfaith dialogue and understanding.⁵⁹

As Muslims and non-Muslims alike focus on the complexities of a world marked by religious diversity, justice, and equity, we stand as timeless values that can guide us towards a more just and harmonious coexistence among individuals and communities of diverse faiths. Hamidullah's insights remind us that, at our core, we all share a common humanity and a shared responsibility to treat one another with fairness, respect, and equity, regardless of our religious affiliations.

3.1.7 Continuity and Change in Islamic Thought

Hamidullah's exploration of Islamic thought on interfaith relations is not static but represents a dynamic and evolving perspective that responds to the changing global circumstances of our time.⁶⁰ To better understand the evolution and continuity of his thought, it is instructive to undertake a comparative analysis with other contemporary Islamic scholars. This approach reveals both commonalities and divergences, shedding light on the dynamic nature of Islamic thought and the adaptability of Islamic principles to diverse contexts.

⁵⁹ Dominique Gaurier, "Islamic International Law: Historical Foundations and Al-Shaybani's Siyar, written by Khaled Ramadan Bashir," *Journal of the History of International Law/Revue d'histoire du droit international* 22, no. 2-3 (2020): 503-505.

⁶⁰ Mohamed Amine Brahimi and Housseem Ben Lazreg, "Post-Islamism and Intellectual Production: A Bibliometric Analysis of the Evolution of Contemporary Islamic Thought," *Religions* 12, no. 49 (2021): 9-11.

One of the prominent areas where Hamidullah's views align with those of other scholars is his emphasis on the Madinah model. This model, exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad's time in Madinah, is a significant paradigm for interfaith relations within Islam. Scholars like Muhammad Mustapha⁶¹ share Hamidullah's perspective, recognizing the importance of the Madinian period as a source of valuable insights into how a pluralistic society can be established under a single political framework. This alignment underscores the acknowledgement within contemporary Islamic scholarship of the historical significance of the Madinah era in shaping Islamic perspectives on interfaith coexistence.

However, it is in the interpretations of specific *Hadīths* that Hamidullah offers a unique perspective on interfaith engagement. While the Madinian model resonates with other scholars' views, Hamidullah's analysis of certain *Hadīths* provides a distinctive lens to understand the Prophet's teachings on interfaith relations. His emphasis on the Prophet's gestures of respect towards non-Muslims, such as standing up as a mark of respect for a Jewish funeral procession, highlights the practical and tangible ways in which the principles of justice and equity were manifested in the Prophet's actions.⁶² This unique perspective enriches the discourse on interfaith engagement within Islamic thought.

The comparative approach to Islamic thought, as demonstrated by the alignment with certain scholars and the divergence in interpretations of specific *Hadīths*, underscores the dynamic nature of the Islamic intellectual tradition. It acknowledges that scholars may draw from a common historical and theological foundation while offering distinct insights and interpretations based on their research and analysis. Furthermore, Hamidullah's work provides a comprehensive insight into the Islamic perspective on interfaith relations. His analysis is firmly grounded in historical context, allowing readers to appreciate the nuances of Islamic thought as it evolved. By examining the Madinian period, the early Islamic expansion, and the foundational

⁶¹ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 31.

⁶² Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 21-24.

Islamic texts and principles, Hamidullah offers a holistic view of how Islamic thought has developed in response to various historical and social contexts.⁶³

Hamidullah's work is not confined to historical analysis alone; it is enriched with theological and jurisprudential interpretations. His deep engagement with Islamic scriptures and jurisprudence provides a robust framework for understanding the Islamic approach to coexistence and cooperation in a multi-religious world.⁶⁴ This interdisciplinary approach ensures that his analysis is historically grounded and theologically and legally informed, offering a well-rounded perspective on interfaith relations within Islam. One of the key takeaways from Hamidullah's scholarship is the recognition of Islam's inherent flexibility. He highlights the religion's capacity to adapt to cultural and social contexts while remaining true to its core principles. This adaptability facilitates peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding among diverse religious communities.

In the contemporary global landscape, characterized by religious pluralism and the ever-expanding reach of globalization, the scholarship of Hamidullah not only endures but stands as an indispensable resource. His work emerges as a cornerstone for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers alike, delving into the realms of interfaith dialogue and the pivotal role of religion in cultivating global peace and mutual understanding. By tapping into the profound reservoir of Islamic thought on interfaith relations, Hamidullah's analyses offer invaluable insights, serving as a compass for navigating the intricate challenges of religious diversity and coexistence in the modern world. In essence, Hamidullah's scholarship remains a beacon guiding those engaged in the critical discourse of interfaith dialogue and the complexities surrounding the intersection of religion and global affairs. The relevance of his work is underscored by its applicability to contemporary challenges, providing a bridge between the rich heritage of Islamic thought and the pressing issues of our time. Hamidullah's unique contribution lies in blending the traditional with the contemporary. Through comparative analysis with other scholars and an interdisciplinary approach that weaves

⁶³ Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

⁶⁴ Meirison Alizar and Qasim Muhammadi, "Islamic Sharia and Non-Muslim Citizens in Kanunname During Sultan Abdul Hamid II of the Ottoman Empire," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 27, no. 1 (2019): 11-16.

together history, theology, and jurisprudence, he presents a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on how Islam approaches coexistence and cooperation in a world marked by religious diversity. This integrative approach enriches our understanding of Islamic thought and positions Hamidullah's work as a guide for those seeking solutions to the intricate challenges posed by our increasingly interconnected global society.

One of the pivotal aspects of Hamidullah's scholarship is its emphasis on the adaptability of Islamic principles. His work contends that these principles, rooted in the Islamic tradition, possess a resilience that enables them to respond effectively to the contemporary challenges of religious pluralism and the imperative for interfaith dialogue. This adaptability serves as a testament to the dynamic nature of Islamic thought, allowing it to remain relevant in addressing the evolving needs of our globalized world. Moreover, Hamidullah's exploration delves into the historical context of Islamic thought, unveiling the deep roots from which contemporary perspectives on interfaith relations arise. Hamidullah provides a sturdy foundation for comprehending the continuity and richness of Islamic principles within diverse socio-cultural contexts by illuminating the historical evolution of Islamic thought in this domain.

In conclusion, Hamidullah's scholarship stands not only as a reflection of the dynamic nature of Islamic thought on interfaith relations but also as a guidepost for navigating the intricate landscape of our modern, interconnected world. His work, with its interdisciplinary approach and comparative analyses, captures the adaptability of Islamic principles and unveils the historical depth and contemporary relevance of Islamic thought on issues of religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. As we grapple with the challenges of our time, Hamidullah's scholarship continues to be a source of wisdom and guidance, encouraging thoughtful engagement and fostering a deeper understanding of the intersections between religion, diversity, and global cooperation.⁶⁵

The dynamic nature of Islamic thought is a testament to its ability to evolve and adapt while maintaining its core principles. This adaptability is not a recent development but has been a hallmark of Islamic thought. Hamidullah's exploration of Islamic thought on interfaith relations serves as a contemporary example of this adaptability, demonstrating how Islamic principles can be applied to address the

⁶⁵ Joseph M. Schwartz, "Misreading Islamist Terrorism: The 'War Against Terrorism' and Just-War Theory," *Metaphilosophy* 35, no. 3 (2004): 273-302.

complex challenges of our time. In examining the evolution and continuity of Hamidullah's thought, it becomes evident that his perspective is not fixed in a particular era or context but is responsive to the changing global circumstances. This responsiveness reflects the inherent dynamism within Islamic intellectual tradition, which allows for the revaluation and reinterpretation of Islamic principles considering contemporary challenges.

One of the key areas where Hamidullah's views align with those of other contemporary scholars is his emphasis on the Madinian model. This model, rooted in the historical context of the Prophet Muhammad's time in Madinah, provides valuable insights into how a pluralistic society can function under a single political framework. Scholars such as Muhammad Zebiri⁶⁶ share Hamidullah's perspective, recognizing the Madinian period as a formative phase that informs Islamic perspectives on interfaith coexistence. The Madinian model emphasizes the importance of justice, equity, and the establishment of a social contract that respects the rights of all residents, irrespective of their religious beliefs. This model is a practical example of how Islamic principles can be applied in a diverse and multi-religious society. It highlights the Prophet Muhammad's role as a statesman and community leader who upheld the principles of justice and equity in his interactions with various religious communities.

However, it is in the interpretations of specific *Hadīths* that Hamidullah's perspective takes on a unique character. While the Madinian model aligns with the views of other scholars, Hamidullah's analysis of certain *Hadīths* provides a distinctive lens through which to understand the Prophet's teachings on interfaith relations. His emphasis on the Prophet's actions that demonstrated respect towards non-Muslims, such as standing up as a mark of respect for a Jewish funeral procession, underscores the practical and tangible ways in which the principles of justice and equity were manifest in the Prophet's behaviour.⁶⁷ This unique perspective enriches the discourse on interfaith engagement within Islamic thought.

The comparative approach to Islamic thought, as illustrated by both the alignment with certain scholars and the divergence in interpretations of specific

⁶⁶ Kate Zebiri, "Relations between Muslims and Non-Muslims in the Thought of Western-Educated Muslim Intellectuals," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 6, no. 2 (1995): 255-277.

⁶⁷ Richard Bonney, *Jihād: From Qur'ān to Bin Laden* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 21-52.

Hadīths, highlights the dynamic nature of Islamic intellectual tradition. It acknowledges that scholars may draw from a common historical and theological foundation while offering distinct insights and interpretations based on their research and analysis. This diversity of perspectives within Islamic thought is a testament to the richness and complexity of the tradition. Furthermore, Hamidullah's work explores the theological and jurisprudential aspects of interfaith relations in Islamic thought. His deep engagement with Islamic scriptures and jurisprudence provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the Islamic approach to coexistence and cooperation in a multi-religious world.⁶⁸ By grounding his analysis in theological and legal foundations, Hamidullah ensures that his historical, theologically and legally informed perspective offers a well-rounded view of interfaith relations within Islam.

One of the most significant takeaways from Hamidullah's scholarship is the recognition of Islam's inherent flexibility. He highlights the religion's capacity to adapt to cultural and social contexts while remaining faithful to its core principles. This adaptability facilitates peaceful coexistence and mutual understanding among diverse religious communities. In the contemporary world, characterized by religious pluralism, globalization, and interconnectivity, Hamidullah's scholarship retains its relevance. His work serves as a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers interested in interfaith dialogue and the role of religion in fostering global peace and understanding. By drawing from the rich heritage of Islamic thought on interfaith relations, Hamidullah's analysis offers valuable insights into navigating the complex challenges of religious diversity and coexistence today.

Finally, Hamidullah's scholarship stands as a beacon illustrating the dynamic nature of Islamic thought concerning interfaith relations. Employing a comparative analysis alongside an interdisciplinary approach encompassing history, theology, and jurisprudence, he offers a comprehensive and nuanced perspective on the Islamic approach to coexistence and collaboration in a world characterized by religious diversity. His scholarly contributions highlight the adaptability of Islamic principles, the profound depth of their historical context, and their ongoing relevance in addressing contemporary challenges related to religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. Hamidullah situates his work within a broader intellectual landscape by delving into a

⁶⁸ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

comparative analysis with other scholars, showcasing the diversity of thought within the Islamic tradition. This approach enriches our understanding of Islamic perspectives on interfaith relations and emphasizes the multiplicity of voices within the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Furthermore, Hamidullah's interdisciplinary approach, spanning history, theology, and jurisprudence, complicates his exploration of interfaith relations. This holistic method allows him to draw insights from various fields, providing a more nuanced understanding of the subject. By integrating these diverse perspectives, Hamidullah contributes to a more comprehensive framework for navigating the complexities of religious diversity and cooperation. His emphasis on the adaptability of Islamic principles underscores the living nature of Islamic thought. Rather than presenting a static worldview, Hamidullah's scholarship recognizes the dynamic capacity of Islamic teachings to respond to the evolving needs of humanity. This adaptability becomes particularly relevant when addressing contemporary religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue challenges.

Moreover, Hamidullah delves into the historical context of Islamic thought, revealing the deep roots from which contemporary perspectives on interfaith relations emerge. By understanding the historical evolution of Islamic thought on this subject, Hamidullah provides a foundation for appreciating the continuity and resilience of Islamic principles in diverse socio-cultural contexts. As we contemplate the evolution and continuity of Islamic thought within the realm of interfaith relations, Hamidullah's work prompts reflection on the dynamic nature of religious traditions. His scholarship serves as a testament to the enduring relevance of Islamic principles in fostering coexistence and cooperation among diverse religious communities. It encourages us to recognize the shared values and principles that transcend the boundaries of faith and culture, urging thoughtful dialogue and exploration for the betterment of our global society.

In conclusion, Hamidullah's scholarly legacy offers a profound understanding of the Islamic approach to interfaith relations. It sparks a broader dialogue on the dynamic nature of religious traditions and their capacity to address the challenges of our ever-changing world. His work invites us to embrace a holistic perspective that

recognizes the adaptability and resilience of Islamic thought, inspiring collaborative efforts for a more harmonious and interconnected global society.

3.2 THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Within this chapter, “Theological Foundations” pertains to the fundamental beliefs, concepts, and principles forming the core framework of Hamidullah’s scholarly exploration of Islamic thought. These foundational elements primarily revolve around the deep comprehension of monotheism (*Tawhīd*) and its profound implications. Hamidullah’s theological perspective is intricately woven with these principles, extending their influence on his views on interfaith relationships, societal cohesion, and spiritual enlightenment. This section thoroughly explores these theological foundations, aiming to illuminate their significance within the context of Hamidullah’s substantial contributions to Islamic scholarship. The bedrock of Hamidullah’s theological framework is the concept of *Tawhīd*, emphasizing the oneness of God in Islamic belief. His scholarly pursuits delve into the multifaceted dimensions of *Tawhīd*, examining its theological, philosophical, and practical implications. This exploration extends beyond theoretical discourse, influencing his perspectives on fostering understanding and harmony between faiths.

Hamidullah’s theological foundations also play a pivotal role in shaping his vision for societal cohesion. The principles derived from *Tawhīd* contribute to his advocacy for social justice, equality, and compassion. His theological stance encourages a harmonious coexistence of diverse communities, reflecting the broader Islamic ethos of unity amidst diversity. Furthermore, these foundations illuminate Hamidullah’s path toward spiritual enlightenment. The profound understanding of *Tawhīd* serves as a guiding light in his spiritual journey, emphasizing the intimate connection between the individual and the Divine.

This spiritual dimension, rooted in Islamic theology, informs his approach to personal development and pursuing higher moral values. This exploration into Hamidullah’s theological foundations unveils the beliefs that extend far beyond doctrinal boundaries. These foundational elements permeate his scholarship, influencing his theoretical contributions to Islamic thought and shaping his practical approach to fostering interfaith understanding, societal harmony, and spiritual growth.

3.2.1 *Tawhīd* (Monotheism) and its Implications

Islamic thought is founded upon theological principles, and at its core lies the fundamental concept of *Tawhīd*. *Tawhīd*, often translated as ‘oneness’ or ‘unity,’ holds a central and profound place in Islamic theology, extending far beyond the simplistic notion of monotheism found in Western theological discourse.⁶⁹ It encompasses believing in one God and profoundly understanding God’s nature, essence, and attributes. In Islamic theology, *Tawhīd* is not a mere theoretical proclamation of God’s uniqueness but a doctrine that proclaims God’s absolute indivisibility and incomparability.⁷⁰ Every attribute, action, and essence attributed to God in Islam reinforces this belief. This profound concept of *Tawhīd* shapes a believer’s entire spiritual, intellectual, and moral landscape, colouring their perception of the world and their place within it.⁷¹

The *Shāhadah*, the Islamic testament of faith, is a daily reminder of this core belief. When a Muslim recites, “*There is no deity but God, and Muhammad is the messenger of God,*” it is not just a statement of faith but an affirmation of a life commitment.⁷² This commitment is to live in harmony with the understanding of *Tawhīd*, allowing it to influence every thought, decision, and action. Hamidullah delves into the concept of *Tawhīd* with a depth that few before him have achieved. His global perspective, shaped by diverse experiences and studies, allows him to focus on the vast ocean of *Tawhīd*’s implications, shedding light on how the belief in God’s oneness should manifest in the daily life of a believer.⁷³

Hamidullah views the comprehension of *Tawhīd* not as a culmination but as the initiation of a profound metamorphic odyssey. This expedition guides adherents to

⁶⁹ Abdullah Sahin, "Critical Issues in Islamic Education Studies: Rethinking Islamic and Western Liberal Secular Values of Education," *Religions* 9, no. 11 (2018): 335.

⁷⁰ Md Mizanur Rahman, *Sovereignty in Islamist Political Thought: Continuity and Change* (Normal, IL: Illinois State University, 2019), 45.

⁷¹ Khalil Athamina, "Abraham in Islamic Perspective: Reflections on the Development of Monotheism in Pre-Islamic Arabia," *Der Islam* 81, no. 2 (2004): 184-205, <https://doi.org/10.1515/islam.2004.81.2.184>.

⁷² Harold G. Koenig and Saad Al Shohaib, "Muslim Beliefs, Practices, and Values," in *Health and Well-Being in Islamic Societies: Background, Research, and Applications* (2014): 27-41.

⁷³ Alison Pargeter, *The New Frontiers of Jihad: Radical Islam in Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 75.

discern the divine imprint in every facet of God's creation, from celestial galaxies to minuscule organisms. Parray said,

This realization would naturally cultivate virtues of justice, respect, and equality within a believer's soul. Moreover, he expounded that if God is the exclusive origin of all existence, an intrinsic interconnection is established among all created entities. This interconnectedness implies a divine blueprint wherein each creation possesses inherent value and purpose. In essence, Hamidullah envisioned *Tawḥīd* as a transformative lens unveiling the interconnected tapestry of creation, fostering values emanating from recognizing a singular divine source permeating every aspect of existence.⁷⁴

Hamidullah's perspective unfolds as a breath of fresh air in the context of societal harmony. To him, "divisions and discrimination are not merely societal maladies but entrenched violations of *Tawḥīd*'s foundational tenet". Embracing the oneness of God demands the recognition of unity within His creation, rendering prejudice and bigotry indefensible. Hamidullah's elucidation of *Tawḥīd* extends beyond individual spirituality, offering a profound lens through which to analyze and address social issues. In his worldview, societal ills are not isolated problems but manifestations of a more profound departure from the principle of divine unity.

Furthermore, Hamidullah's insights transcend the confines of intra-faith considerations, significantly contributing to the discourse on interfaith dialogue. He advocates that a genuine understanding of *Tawḥīd* should propel Muslims toward approaching adherents of other faiths with openness and receptivity. For him, *Tawḥīd* is not a doctrine that fosters exclusivity; instead, it becomes a bridge for connecting with the divine expressions in various faith traditions. Such an understanding encourages Muslims to perceive reflections of the same Divine essence in the beliefs of others, fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding. In short, Hamidullah's perspective on *Tawḥīd* emerges as a holistic framework that addresses the individual's spiritual journey and extends its transformative influence on the societal and interfaith dimensions. It envisions a world where the principle of divine unity becomes a catalyst for dismantling barriers, nurturing empathy, and fostering a shared recognition of the sacred interconnectedness that binds all of God's creation.

⁷⁴ Tauseef Ahmad Parray, "Islamic Democracy or Democracy in Islam: Some Key Operational Democratic Concepts and Notions," *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 2, no. 2 (2012): 66-86.

3.2.2 *Tawhīd* and Spirituality

Tawhīd is not merely an abstract theological concept but a source of profound spirituality for Muslims. Hamidullah emphasizes that *Tawhīd* is the cornerstone of Islamic spirituality. The belief in the absolute oneness of God connects a believer to the Divine in the most intimate manner. When a Muslim internalizes the concept of *Tawhīd*, it leads to a deep sense of God-consciousness (*taqwa*).⁷⁵ This consciousness shapes every aspect of a believer's life, from daily prayers to interactions with others. Hamidullah believes that *Tawhīd* should result in profound awe and reverence for God, leading to humility and devotion in worship.

Furthermore, *Tawhīd* is a constant reminder of God's presence in every moment of a believer's life. It fosters a sense of reliance (*tawakkul*) on God, knowing He is the ultimate source of guidance and support. This spiritual dimension of *Tawhīd* encourages believers to seek God's pleasure and strive for moral excellence in their actions.⁷⁶

3.2.3 *Tawhīd* and Ethics

The implications of *Tawhīd* extend to the ethical framework of a believer. Hamidullah stresses that *Tawhīd* should lead to a profound sense of moral responsibility. If God is the singular source of all creation, then every creation deserves respect and dignity regardless of their religious or cultural background. *Tawhīd*, according to Hamidullah, "inherently rejects any form of discrimination or prejudice. Believers are called to treat all fellow human beings with justice and fairness, recognizing the inherent worth of every individual".⁷⁷ This ethical stance is not limited to interactions within the Muslim community but extends to interactions with people of all faiths and backgrounds. Hamidullah believes that *Tawhīd* encourages believers to promote societal justice and equity actively. The principles of justice (*‘adl*) and public welfare (*maṣlahah*) are

⁷⁵ John L. Esposito and John Obert Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 56.

⁷⁶ Mas'udul Alam Choudhury, *Tawhidi Epistemology and Its Applications: Economics, Finance, Science, and Society* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 2.

⁷⁷ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 142.

integral to Islamic governance and social ethics. *Tawhīd*, as the foundational concept, reinforces the importance of upholding these principles in all aspects of life.⁷⁸

3.2.4 *Tawhīd* and Interfaith Relations

One of the most significant contributions of Hamidullah is his exploration of how *Tawhīd* can shape interfaith relations. He argues that a proper understanding of *Tawhīd* should lead Muslims to approach adherents of other faiths with an open heart and mind. *Tawhīd*, as conceptualized in Islamic theology, emphasizes the unity and oneness of God. This unity, according to Hamidullah, “transcends religious boundaries. If God is indeed the singular source of all creation, then the Divine is present in other faith traditions as well.”⁷⁹

Hamidullah champions the idea that a believer’s recognition of the Divine in other faiths should promote mutual respect and understanding. He believes that *Tawhīd* encourages Muslims to see reflections of the same God in other faith traditions, fostering a sense of interconnectedness among all believers in God. In practical terms, Hamidullah advocates for dialogue and cooperation among people of different faiths. He believes that *Tawhīd* should serve as a bridge for interfaith relations, promoting peaceful coexistence and collaboration in addressing shared global challenges.⁸⁰

In summary, *Tawhīd* is not merely a theological concept confined to academic discussions but a guiding principle for a believer’s life journey. Hamidullah’s profound insights into *Tawhīd* and its implications have left an indelible mark on Islamic scholarship. His work serves as a testament to the depth and richness of *Tawhīd*, bridging the realms of theology, spirituality, ethics, and interfaith relations. Through his scholarship, Hamidullah emphasizes that *Tawhīd* has the potential to bring about spiritual enlightenment, societal cohesion, and interfaith harmony. It serves as a beacon

⁷⁸ S. Abdullah Schleifer, "Understanding Jihad: Definition and Methodology," *Islamic Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (1983): 117.

⁷⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah and Syed Maududi, "Islamic Philosophy: A Survey of the Major Islamic Philosophers and Their Ideas," *Cosmic Journal of Religious Studies* 1, no. 01 (2022): 1-4.

⁸⁰ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 7-9.

of light, guiding believers in their relationship with God and their interactions with fellow human beings.⁸¹

In a world marked by diversity and pluralism, Hamidullah's teachings on *Tawhīd* offer a timeless message of unity, respect, and cooperation. His legacy continues to inspire scholars and practitioners interested in the role of religion in fostering global peace and understanding. Hamidullah's work underscores the profound depth of *Tawhīd*, highlighting its capacity to enrich the lives of individuals and contribute to the betterment of society. As we reflect on his contributions, we are reminded that *Tawhīd* is not just a theological concept; it is a transformative force that can shape our world for the better.

3.2.4.1 Muhammad Hamidullah's Concept of Tawhīd and the Abrahamic Faith Paradigm in Modern Geopolitics

The Abrahamic faith paradigm in modern geopolitics refers to the strategic use of religious commonalities among Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to promote diplomatic relations, peace-building efforts, and political cooperation, particularly in the Middle East. Rooted in the shared ancestry of Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim), this concept has been employed to foster interfaith dialogue and regional alliances. The Abraham Accords, signed in 2020, serve as a significant example, normalizing diplomatic relations between Israel and several Arab states under the premise of shared religious heritage.⁸²

While the Abrahamic faith paradigm has been promoted as a means to encourage religious tolerance and coexistence, critics argue that it is often used as a political tool rather than a genuine theological effort. Institutions such as the Abrahamic Family House in the UAE, which includes a mosque, church, and synagogue, symbolize interfaith unity but have been perceived as instruments of soft power diplomacy rather

⁸¹ John L. Esposito and John Obert Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 34.

⁸² Matan Kaminer, "The Abrahamic Ideology: Patrilineal Kinship and the Politics of Peacemaking in the Contemporary Middle East," *Millennium* 52, no. 2 (2024): 198-220, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298231208446>.

than deep theological reconciliation⁸³. The focus on Abrahamic religions excludes non-Abrahamic faiths, limiting its effectiveness as a genuinely inclusive interfaith model.⁸⁴

In contrast, Muhammad Hamidullah's *Tawhīd* (Oneness of God) offers a more universally inclusive framework for interfaith relations, emphasizing spiritual unity over geopolitical interests. While the Abrahamic faith paradigm prioritizes diplomatic engagement among select religious groups, Hamidullah's *Tawhīd* seeks to transcend religious and political boundaries, fostering sincere interfaith cooperation based on divine oneness and shared ethical values.

Muhammad Hamidullah's concept of *Tawhīd* and the Abrahamic faith paradigm emphasize interfaith unity but differ in their theological foundations, practical applications, and ethical implications. While Hamidullah's perspective on *Tawhīd* is rooted in spirituality, ethics, and inclusivity, the Abrahamic faith model has often been utilized as a political and diplomatic instrument, particularly in Middle Eastern geopolitics.

Hamidullah's understanding of *Tawhīd*, or the Oneness of God, is a spiritual and ethical principle that encourages Muslims to recognize divine reflections in all faith traditions. He asserts that if God is the Creator of all humanity, divine truth is not exclusive to Islam but is present across different religious traditions. This perspective, he argues, should inspire Muslims to engage in interfaith relations with sincerity, openness, and respect, fostering an inclusive worldview where believers see unity in religious diversity. By contrast, the Abrahamic faith paradigm is built on theological and historical commonalities between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, particularly their shared reverence for the Prophet Abraham. This framework has been a foundation for interfaith diplomacy and peace initiatives, such as the Abraham Accords, which sought to normalize relations between Israel and Arab nations by emphasizing their

⁸³ J. A. Hoffman, *Islam and Statecraft: Religious Soft Power in the Contemporary Middle East* (New York: ProQuest, 2023).

⁸⁴ H. Kadri and E. F. A. Abdelsalam, "Geopolitics of Religion: How Does Religion Influence International Relations and States' Foreign Policies?" *International Journal of World Policy* 12, no. 3 (2020): 67–85.

shared religious heritage.⁸⁵ While this model promotes religious unity in a geopolitical context, its primary function remains political rather than spiritual.⁸⁶

Hamidullah's *Tawhīd* advocates for genuine interfaith dialogue, fostering mutual respect and ethical cooperation. He argues that *Tawhīd* transcends theological exclusivism and promotes a sense of shared humanity. His interpretation extends beyond the Abrahamic traditions and applies universally, creating a theological basis for justice, compassion, and cooperation among all religious communities. On the other hand, the Abrahamic faith paradigm has been increasingly leveraged as a geopolitical tool. The Abraham Accords, mediated by the United States, represent a clear example of religious unity framed within political agreements. Critics argue that this approach serves more as a diplomatic instrument than a theological effort to foster religious understanding.⁸⁷ A practical manifestation of this is the Abrahamic Family House in the UAE, which houses a mosque, church, and synagogue. While it symbolizes interfaith cooperation, some scholars suggest that such projects prioritize political messaging over deep theological reconciliation.⁸⁸

Hamidullah presents *Tawhīd* as a guiding principle for personal ethics, social justice, and interfaith harmony. He sees *Tawhīd* as a transformative force that shapes a believer's relationship with God and engagement with society. Unlike some exclusivist theological interpretations, Hamidullah's vision celebrates religious diversity as a manifestation of divine wisdom and encourages constructive engagement with people of all faiths⁸⁹. In contrast, when the Abrahamic faith model is employed in a geopolitical context, it often operates under strategic interests. While it does promote interfaith dialogue, its realpolitik approach sometimes prioritizes diplomatic relations over

⁸⁵ Matan Kaminer, "The Abrahamic Ideology: Patrilineal Kinship and the Politics of Peacemaking in the Contemporary Middle East," *Millennium* 52, no. 2 (2024): 198-220, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03058298231208446>

⁸⁶ H. Kadri and E. F. A. Abdelsalam, "Geopolitics of Religion: How Does Religion Influence International Relations and States' Foreign Policies?" *International Journal of World Policy* 12, no. 3 (2020): 67-85.

⁸⁷ J. A. Hoffman, *Islam and Statecraft: Religious Soft Power in the Contemporary Middle East* (New York: ProQuest, 2023).

⁸⁸ H. Kadri and E. F. A. Abdelsalam, "Geopolitics of Religion: How Does Religion Influence International Relations and States' Foreign Policies?" *International Journal of World Policy* 12, no. 3 (2020): 67-85.

⁸⁹ Y. Alçiçek, "Religious Geopolitics in the Middle East: The Importance of Jerusalem for Abrahamic Religions" (Master's Thesis, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Ankara University, 2017).

genuine theological inclusivity.⁹⁰ While both *Tawhīd* and the Abrahamic faith paradigm promote religious unity, their methods differ significantly. Hamidullah's *Tawhīd*-based vision is profoundly theological and inclusive, offering a profound framework for interfaith relations, whereas the Abrahamic faith paradigm functions primarily within geopolitical negotiations.

Hamidullah's understanding of *Tawhīd* transcends theological exclusivism, advocating a universal model for interfaith engagement that goes beyond political alliances. His teachings encourage believers to seek divine truth in a way that fosters a sense of unity, regardless of religious tradition. In contrast, despite its emphasis on shared religious heritage, the Abrahamic faith concept is often constrained by geopolitical interests, limiting its capacity to serve as a true interfaith bridge. While both approaches contribute to peacebuilding, Hamidullah's *Tawhīd* offers a more deeply rooted spiritual model for fostering interfaith harmony, making it an authentic interfaith theology rather than a politically motivated framework. The genuine pursuit of peaceful coexistence and religious harmony necessitates moving beyond geopolitical interests and embracing a theological commitment to unity, mutual respect, and the ethical teachings of *Tawhīd*.

3.2.4.2 Muhammad Hamidullah's Interfaith Strategies: Lessons for Engaging the West and India

Islamic law, historical precedents, and the diplomatic strategies of the Prophet Muhammad shaped Muhammad Hamidullah's perspective on Muslim interactions with non-Muslims. He distinguishes between Jews and Christians (*Ahl al-Kitāb*) and the polytheists of Makkah (*Mushrikūn*), emphasizing different approaches based on theological recognition and political context. He views Jews and Christians as recipients of divine revelation and advocates for coexistence, legal autonomy, and economic cooperation, as seen in the *Constitution of Madinah* and the Treaty of Najran. The Qur'an's recognition of *Ahl al-Kitāb* allowed for social integration, including intermarriage and trade, while ensuring mutual respect under Islamic governance. However, his analysis of the Makkah polytheists highlights a stark contrast due to their

⁹⁰ R. Foster, N. Megoran, and M. Dunn, "Towards a Geopolitics of Atheism: Critical Geopolitics Post the 'War on Terror'," *Political Geography* 40 (2017): 98–115.

rejection of *Tawhīd* and hostility towards early Muslims. The *Mushrikūn*'s repeated treaty violations and persecution of Muslims led to conflict, culminating in their eventual integration into the Muslim community after accepting monotheism. While *Ahl al-Kitāb* were accommodated within the Islamic framework, the *Mushrikūn* were engaged based on their actions, either through self-defence or reconciliation when they abandoned idolatry.

Applying Hamidullah's insights to contemporary relations, engagement with the West should focus on theological and ethical commonalities with *Ahl al-Kitāb*, advocating for Muslim rights through legal channels, interfaith dialogue, and economic partnerships while countering Islamophobia via media representation and strategic alliances with faith-based justice groups. The principles of the Prophet's treaties can guide policies that ensure Muslim participation in governance and prevent marginalization. In India, where historical grievances influence Hindu-Muslim relations, a strategy of legal advocacy, social integration, and political coalition-building with other marginalized communities is crucial. Acknowledging cultural ties while resisting exclusionary nationalism through constitutional mechanisms and grassroots initiatives can prevent communal divisions. Non-violent resistance, inspired by the Ulama's struggle against British rule in 1857, can counter discrimination while strengthening Muslim economic self-sufficiency and intellectual representation. Both contexts require a balance between political pragmatism and religious integrity, ensuring that engagement is rooted in justice, dignity, and coexistence, as exemplified in the Prophet's diplomacy and Hamidullah's scholarship.

3.2.5 Concept of Mercy and Compassion

Islamic thought encompasses theological foundations; among them, the concept of *Rahmah*, often translated as 'mercy' or 'compassion,' holds a central place. This cherished principle is not merely an abstract theological concept but a guiding force that actively permeates the daily lives of Muslims worldwide. Every ritual, prayer, and moment of reflection in the Islamic tradition reverberates with the essence of *Rahmah*.⁹¹ It is invoked in the opening chapter of the Qur'an, where God is described as the *Most*

⁹¹ Marcia Angell, "The Quality of Mercy," *New England Journal of Medicine* 306, no. 2 (1982): 98-99.

Gracious, Most Merciful. Hamidullah, a distinguished scholar in Islamic theology, brought a fresh and insightful perspective to this time-honoured concept of *Rahmah*. His exploration delves deep into the multifaceted dimensions of mercy, highlighting its pivotal role in personal spiritual journeys and broader societal constructs and interfaith engagements.⁹²

To understand *Rahmah* fully, one must turn to the characterization of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the Qur'an as *a mercy for all creatures*. This characterization goes beyond a mere accolade; it defines the essence of his prophetic mission. Through his life and teachings, the Prophet exemplified how to lead a life brimming with compassion, kindness, and mercy. Hamidullah's insights reveal that this mercy extends far beyond the Prophet's immediate community; it encapsulates all of humanity. Hamidullah's work underscores a crucial point: the concept of *Rahmah* extends beyond ritualistic acts of worship. Recognizing the Prophet as a beacon of divine mercy is transformative for him. It calls upon believers to pivot from a passive acknowledgement of faith to an active embodiment of its core tenets. This emphasis on active benevolence reiterates that being a true Muslim is not confined to theological affirmations alone; it is about actualizing the values the faith cherishes, with *Rahmah* being foundational.⁹³

In today's contemporary age, characterized by multifaceted interactions and exchanges, Hamidullah's emphasis on internalizing *Rahmah* gains even more significance. He posits that a genuine understanding of this concept prepares Muslims to exude compassion, kindness, and understanding in every interaction.⁹⁴ Whether these interactions occur within their community or stretch across cultural, religious, or social divides, *Rahmah* should always be at the forefront. However, Hamidullah's discourse on mercy is not confined to personal realms but ventures beyond societal and global landscapes. He champions the idea that societies rooted in the principles of mercy and compassion inherently foster harmony and justice. Empathy becomes the cornerstone

⁹² Muhammad Hamidullah, "Embassy of Queen Bertha of Rome to Caliph al-Muktafi Billah in Baghdad of the Year 293H/906," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 1, no. 4 (1953): 272-300.

⁹³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Woman* (Islamabad: Da'wah Academy, International Islamic University, 1989).

⁹⁴ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

for conflict resolution in such societies; the marginalized receive due attention, and diversity is celebrated rather than shunned.⁹⁵

The ongoing global discourse on interfaith dialogue gains a rejuvenating lens through Hamidullah's perspective on *Rahmah*. His emphasis on mercy offers a refreshing outlook in an era of religious tensions. Instead of treading the oft-trodden paths of theological debates, which can inadvertently widen rifts, Hamidullah urges followers to foreground universally cherished values, such as mercy. In doing so, he posits that mutual respect and understanding can flourish. Furthermore, Hamidullah astutely observes that *Rahmah's* advocacy for compassion is not an exclusively Islamic domain. Countless religious traditions echo similar sentiments and values. Identifying these overlapping principles can pave the way for meaningful interfaith engagements, wherein communities collaborate not as theological opponents but as advocates for shared human values.⁹⁶

Venturing into the annals of Islamic history, Hamidullah highlights many instances where *Rahmah* manifested profoundly. From the magnanimity of rulers and the sagacity of scholars to the simple acts of everyday individuals, the annals of Islamic history brim with instances where mercy took precedence, inspired by the Qur'anic tenets of *Rahmah*. In conclusion, Hamidullah's exploration of mercy and compassion in Islam is not a mere theoretical exposition. It is a clarion call, an invitation to understand and embody *Rahmah's* multifaceted glory. His work serves as a beacon, guiding believers toward a world where compassion trumps animosity, understanding dispels ignorance, and mercy is celebrated as an intrinsic human value.⁹⁷

Hamidullah's scholarship in this realm stands as a beacon of enlightenment. Possessing a global perspective shaped by his diverse experiences and studies, he delves into *Rahmah* with a *depth* that few before him have achieved. His insights are not restricted to the theological dimensions of *Rahmah*. Instead, he provides the vast ocean of its implications, shedding light on how the belief in God's mercy should manifest in

⁹⁵ Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 33.

⁹⁶ John Wansbrough, "The Safe-Conduct in Muslim Chancery Practice," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 34, no. 1 (1971): 20–35.

⁹⁷ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Managing Religious and Ethnic Diversity for Peace and Harmony: Islam and Buddhism in the Malay World of Southeast Asia," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 129-140.

the day-to-day life of a believer.⁹⁸ For Hamidullah, understanding *Rahmah* was not an end. It was the beginning of a transformative journey that would lead believers to see God's mercy in all His creations, from the vast galaxies to the smallest organisms. According to Ismail,

His (Hamidullah's) realization would be organically in still values of justice, respect, and equality in a believer's heart. Furthermore, Ismail articulated that if God is the singular source of all creation, it logically follows that all creation is interlinked. This profound interconnectedness suggests a divine design where every creation has inherent value and purpose.⁹⁹

This perspective offers a refreshing view of societal harmony. For Hamidullah, division and discrimination are not just social ills; they are fundamental violations of the principle of *Rahmah*. He argues that acknowledging God's mercy means recognizing the unity of His creation, making prejudice and bigotry untenable. Hamidullah's insights on *Rahmah* also enrich the discourse on interfaith dialogue. He champions that a proper understanding of *Rahmah* would lead Muslims to approach adherents of other faiths with an open heart and mind.¹⁰⁰ It would encourage them to see the reflections of the same Divine in other faith traditions, promoting mutual respect and understanding.

To conclude, *Rahmah* is not just a theological concept for academic discussions but a guiding light for a believer's life journey. Hamidullah's contributions in elaborating on the multifaceted nature of *Rahmah* have left an indelible mark on Islamic scholarship. His work serves as a testament to the profound depth of *Rahmah*, bridging the realms of theology and practical life and emphasizing the potential for spiritual enlightenment, societal cohesion, and interfaith harmony.

⁹⁸ Nehaluddin Ahmad, Mohammed Hussain, and Pehin Haji Ahmad, "Classical Islamic Legal Account of Modern International Law," *J. Int'l L. Islamic L.* 16 (2020): 175.

⁹⁹ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

¹⁰⁰ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Managing Religious and Ethnic Diversity for Peace and Harmony: Islam and Buddhism in the Malay World of Southeast Asia," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 129-140.

3.2.6 Evolution of Hamidullah's Thought

In Islamic academia, the legacy of Hamidullah stands as a prominent thread woven with dedication and intellectual fervour. Hamidullah was not merely a scholar; he was a true luminary whose scholarly pursuits mirrored the multifaceted shifts of his era. As the world around him transformed, so did his intellectual views, evolving in response to his time's diverse challenges and opportunities. His upbringing in Hyderabad shaped Hamidullah's early years, the then centre of Islamic learning and culture. This city provided a fertile ground for his initial perspectives, exposing him to the rich Islamic traditions that would later become the foundation of his academic pursuits. The intellectual atmosphere of Hyderabad nurtured his curiosity and deepened his respect for Islamic knowledge.¹⁰¹

Hamidullah was born into a family that valued education and Islamic scholarship. He received his early education at home, where he was introduced to the Arabic language and Islamic texts. This early exposure to the richness of Islamic knowledge sparked his intellectual curiosity and set him on a path of lifelong learning. As a young scholar in Hyderabad, Hamidullah was privileged to study under renowned Islamic scholars who imparted knowledge and a deep reverence for the Islamic tradition. The city was a vibrant hub of Islamic learning with a rich history of producing scholars and theologians. This environment profoundly influenced Hamidullah's intellectual development, shaping his early perspectives on Islam and its teachings.¹⁰²

However, his academic journey at the University of Bonn in Germany marked a significant turning point. This European experience immersed him in Western academic traditions, offering a contrasting perspective to his Eastern roots. Hamidullah's decision to study in Germany broadened his horizons, allowing him to engage with diverse scholarly perspectives and methods. At the University of Bonn, Hamidullah pursued advanced studies in various fields, including Islamic law, Arabic literature, and Islamic history. He engaged with scholars from different backgrounds and participated in dialogues that challenged his preconceptions and expanded his intellectual toolkit. During this period, he developed a deep appreciation for academic

¹⁰¹ Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

¹⁰² Sajid Ali, "Muhammad Hamidullah's Thoughts on Islamic Law," *Advance and Innovative Research* (2019): 149.

rigour and critical thinking, skills that would serve him well throughout his scholarly career.¹⁰³

One of the key elements of Hamidullah's intellectual journey was his ability to synthesize the knowledge he gained in Hyderabad with the insights he acquired in Germany. He recognized that the Islamic tradition was vast and diverse, encompassing various perspectives and interpretations. Rather than viewing this diversity as a source of division, he saw it as a testament to the richness of Islamic thought. Hamidullah's unique approach was characterized by his commitment to a comprehensive understanding of Islam. He believed that Islamic knowledge should be dynamic and adaptable, capable of engaging with the challenges and complexities of the modern world. This perspective allowed him to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western intellectual traditions, demonstrating Islamic teachings' compatibility with the contemporary era's demands.¹⁰⁴

World War II brought about a transformation not only in global politics but also in the intellectual landscape. The aftermath of the war led to a period of introspection for many scholars, including Hamidullah. He felt compelled to revisit the principles and concepts central to Islamic governance and statehood, particularly in the context of newly independent nations seeking their identities. Hamidullah turned to Islamic history for inspiration, particularly the early Islamic state's governance model. His seminal work, *The Muslim Conduct of State*, delved into the complexities of Islamic governance, demonstrating how centuries-old principles remained relevant in contemporary settings. His scholarship provided a blueprint for newly formed nations, guiding them in establishing just and ethical governance systems rooted in Islamic values.¹⁰⁵

In this work, Hamidullah meticulously examined the principles of justice, equity, and accountability that underpin Islamic governance. He argued that these principles, drawn from the Qur'an and the Sunnah (the practices and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)), were relevant in the past and held immense value for

¹⁰³ Mahmud Rifat Kademoğlu, "Remembering Muhammad Hamidullah," *Journal of Islam & Science* 1, no. 2 (Winter 2003).

¹⁰⁴ Abderrazak Belabes, "The Writings of Muhammad Hamidullah in French Trends and Novelties," *Hamdard Islamicus* 40, no. 4 (2017): 25-32.

¹⁰⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Haidarabad's Contribution to Islamic Economic Thought and Practice," *Die Welt des Islams* 4, no. 2/3 (1955): 73-78.

contemporary societies. Hamidullah's scholarship in this period guided emerging nations striving to chart their course in a post-colonial world. His work blueprinted leaders and policymakers to establish just and ethical governance systems rooted in Islamic principles.¹⁰⁶ By emphasizing the compatibility of Islamic values with the aspirations of newly independent nations, he contributed to developing a distinct Islamic political thought that transcended geographical boundaries. During the Cold War, when the world was divided into competing ideological blocs, Hamidullah offered a unique perspective on the role of Islam. He envisioned Islam not as a passive observer but as a potential bridge between these opposing ideologies. Drawing from Islamic teachings, he highlighted the faith's emphasis on socio-economic equity and individual liberties, positioning it as a unifying force that transcended the ideological divide.¹⁰⁷

Hamidullah's approach offered a refreshing perspective in a world polarised by ideological conflicts. He believed that Islam, emphasising social justice, compassion, and ethical conduct, could serve as a unifying force. His vision was not about imposing Islamic values on others but rather about presenting Islam as a framework for addressing common human challenges.¹⁰⁸ Hamidullah's unique perspective on Islam's role in the Cold War era was informed by his deep understanding of Islamic principles and global geopolitics. He saw Islam as a faith that could offer a way out of the ideological gridlock, promoting dialogue, understanding, and cooperation among nations with different worldviews.

Hamidullah's vision called for a renewed understanding of Islam to address contemporary challenges while remaining faithful to its core principles. He advocated for a balanced and inclusive interpretation of Islamic principles, prioritising compassion and dialogue over confrontation and division. As the Cold War era gave way to globalization, characterized by increased connectivity and cultural diversity, Hamidullah continued to adapt his scholarship to the changing times. He recognized the

¹⁰⁶ Jamal Badawi, *Muslim/Non-Muslim Relations* (Halifax, NS: IDM Publications, 2015), 12.

¹⁰⁷ John L. Esposito and John Obert Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 23.

¹⁰⁸ David Thomas, "Islam and Conflict Resolution: Theories and Practices," *Islam & Christian Muslim Relations* 11, no. 2 (2000): 269.

importance of interfaith dialogue, rooted in Islamic scriptures emphasising peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding, and respect for diversity.¹⁰⁹

His advocacy for interfaith dialogue extended beyond theoretical discussions, as he actively encouraged individuals and communities to come together in a spirit of harmony and cooperation. His efforts aimed at building bridges between religious and cultural communities, promoting mutual respect and understanding in an interconnected world. In his later years, Hamidullah's intellectual pursuits encapsulated a holistic vision of Islam. He endorsed the principle of *ijtihad*, or independent reasoning within Islamic jurisprudence, recognizing the dynamic nature of societies and the challenges they face. He believed that *Ijtihād* allowed Islam to remain relevant and responsive to the needs of every age, ensuring its adaptability without compromising its foundational principles.¹¹⁰

In Hamidullah's view, *Ijtihād* was not a departure from tradition but a means of ensuring that Islamic jurisprudence could evolve and adapt to changing circumstances. It represented a commitment to the ongoing interpretation and application of Islamic law in a way that responded to the ever-evolving needs of society. In conclusion, Hamidullah's journey, from his formative years in Hyderabad to his academic pursuits in Europe and his responses to the global events of his time, offers a comprehensive study of intellectual evolution. His life and work are a testament to Islam's timeless relevance and a guidepost for navigating its contemporary challenges.¹¹¹

Hamidullah's legacy serves as a reminder of the importance of scholarship, dialogue, and adaptability in the face of a changing world. His example encourages us to approach the challenges of our time with an open mind and a commitment to the values that underpin our beliefs while also seeking common ground and understanding with others. In a world that often seems divided, Hamidullah's legacy is a beacon of

¹⁰⁹ Dawood I. Ahmed and Moamen Gouda, "Measuring Constitutional Islamization: The Islamic Constitutions Index," *Hastings International & Comparative Law Review* 38 (2015): 1.

¹¹⁰ Fajri Matahati Muhammadin, "Book Review: *Muslim Conduct of State*, by Muhammad Hamidullah," *IIUM Law Journal* 29, no. 1 (2021): <https://doi.org/10.31436/iiumlj.v29i1.628>.

¹¹¹ Tariq Ramadan, "Ijtihad and Maslaha: The Foundations of Governance," in *Islamic Democratic Discourse: Theory, Debates and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. M.A. Muqtader Khan (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 11.

hope, showing us that intellectual exploration and thoughtful engagement can lead to a more harmonious and inclusive future for all.

3.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Hamidullah's *Theological Foundations* exploration opens a gateway into the scholarly endeavours within Islamic thought. This chapter, centred on fundamental beliefs, concepts, and principles, unveils the core framework that underpins his profound insights. At its heart lies the cornerstone of monotheism, *Tawhīd*, a concept that transcends theoretical discourse to shape Hamidullah's perspectives on interfaith relationships, societal cohesion, and spiritual enlightenment. In the following exploration, we will delve into the multifaceted dimensions of *Tawhīd*, navigating its theological, philosophical, and practical implications and tracing its influence across the broad spectrum of Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic scholarship. The bedrock of Hamidullah's theological framework is undeniably the concept of *Tawhīd*. Within Islamic belief, *Tawhīd* encapsulates the profound understanding of the oneness of God. It is not merely an abstract theological concept but a guiding principle that permeates every facet of Hamidullah's scholarly pursuits. As we embark on this exploration, we encounter a scholar deeply engaged in unravelling the complexities of *Tawhīd*, not only as a theoretical construct but as a lived experience with far-reaching implications.

The journey into *Tawhīd* is multifaceted, encompassing theological, philosophical, and practical dimensions. Hamidullah's scholarly pursuits of these realms with precision and depth, offering a comprehensive understanding of *Tawhīd*. The theological exploration scrutinizes the essence of divine oneness, delving into the scriptures, traditions, and interpretations that form the foundation of Islamic belief. Hamidullah's meticulous examination not only elucidates the theological underpinnings but also unveils the intricate interplay between *Tawhīd* and the broader Islamic worldview. The exploration extends to the philosophical implications of *Tawhīd*. Hamidullah engages with the philosophical inquiries arising from the concept of divine oneness, exploring its implications for metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. His intellectual curiosity leads to a nuanced understanding of how *Tawhīd* shapes the philosophical discourse within Islamic thought. Hamidullah bridges the gap between

theology and philosophy through this lens, creating a holistic framework that enriches both disciplines.

Practically, *Tawhīd* becomes a guiding force in Hamidullah's perspectives on interfaith relationships. The oneness of God, as understood through *Tawhīd*, serves as a common ground that fosters understanding and harmony between different faiths. His theological foundations lay the groundwork for advocating an open-hearted and open-minded approach to engaging with adherents of other religions. *Tawhīd*, in this context, becomes a bridge that connects diverse communities, transcending religious boundaries and promoting a shared recognition of the sacred interconnectedness that binds all of God's creation. Furthermore, Hamidullah's theological foundations are pivotal in shaping his vision for societal cohesion. The principles derived from *Tawhīd* contribute to his advocacy for social justice, equality, and compassion. As we explore this dimension of his scholarship, we encounter a scholar deeply committed to translating theological principles into practical actions for the betterment of society. His emphasis on social justice echoes the inherent values embedded in *Tawhīd*, where the oneness of God mandates recognition of the intrinsic value and dignity of every individual.

The vision for societal cohesion, rooted in *Tawhīd*, extends beyond mere coexistence to a harmonious blending of diverse communities. Hamidullah's theological stance reflects the broader Islamic ethos of unity amidst diversity. In his view, the principles emanating from *Tawhīd* provide a framework for building inclusive societies where individuals from different backgrounds coalesce in a shared pursuit of justice, equality, and compassion. Beyond interfaith relationships and societal cohesion, these theological foundations illuminate Hamidullah's path toward spiritual enlightenment. The profound understanding of *Tawhīd* serves as a guiding light in his spiritual journey, emphasizing the intimate connection between the individual and the Divine. Within this dimension of his scholarship, one discerns a scholar who not only theorizes about the nature of the Divine but also explores the practical implications of this understanding on personal development and the pursuit of higher moral values.

As it is analysed through the convolution of Hamidullah's theological foundations, it is found that a scholar whose contributions extend far beyond doctrinal boundaries shapes not only his theoretical contributions to Islamic thought but also his practical approach to fostering interfaith understanding, societal harmony, and spiritual

growth. Hamidullah's *Theological Foundations* exploration unravels beliefs that transcend academic discourse. It is a narrative that weaves theology, philosophy, and practicality together, creating a comprehensive framework reflecting the depth and breadth of Islamic thought. *Tawhīd* emerges as the guiding principle, a luminous thread that connects the various dimensions of Hamidullah's scholarship, illuminating pathways for understanding, harmony, and enlightenment.



CHAPTER FOUR

HAMIDULLAH'S WORKS ON INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIP

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Muhammad Hamidullah, an erudite scholar and a prolific writer, has significantly contributed to the vast ocean of Islamic scholarship. His works span various dimensions of Islamic studies, providing rich insights and profound understandings that inspire scholars and students alike.¹ Among his numerous contributions, his thoughts and writings on interfaith relationships stand out as particularly pertinent, given the contemporary global context of religious plurality and the pressing need for interreligious dialogue and mutual understanding. This chapter aims to meticulously dissect and analyse Hamidullah's contributions to this specific area of Islamic thought, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of his approach, methodologies, and the impact of his work on fostering interfaith relationships.²

Hamidullah's engagement with interfaith relationships is not only academic but also deeply rooted in the Islamic tradition's intrinsic values of tolerance, respect, and coexistence. His approach to the topic reflects a balanced and moderate understanding, steering clear of extremist interpretations while maintaining a firm grounding in Islamic theology and jurisprudence. By doing so, he has carved out a space for constructive dialogue and mutual understanding between Islam and other world religions, highlighting the commonalities and respecting the differences.³

In his extensive writings, Hamidullah consistently emphasizes the need for religious harmony and cultivating mutual respect among diverse faith traditions. He believes that such an approach is not only beneficial for societal cohesion but is also in

¹ Jamal Badawi, "Muslim/Non-Muslim Relations: An Integrative Approach," *J. Islamic L. & Culture* 8 (2003): 23.

² Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 66.

³ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 11.

line with the teachings of Islam.⁴ Drawing from the Qur'an and the *Ḥadīth*, he points out numerous instances where Islam encourages positive interactions with followers of other faiths, particularly the People of the Book (Jews and Christians). He cites verses from the Qur'an that speak of the shared monotheistic roots and the commonalities in moral and ethical teachings between Islam and these two major world religions.⁵

Hamidullah takes a keen interest in the historical interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims, providing a thorough analysis of various treaties, pacts, and interactions that took place during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He argues that these historical precedents provide a solid foundation for contemporary interfaith relationships, showcasing Islam's inherent capacity for tolerance and peaceful coexistence.⁶ His emphasis on knowledge and understanding also characterizes Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships. He advocates for Muslims to understand other religions comprehensively, urging them to engage in comparative religious studies and interreligious textual analysis. He believes such scholarly pursuits would pave the way for more informed and respectful dialogues between different religious communities, ultimately fostering a spirit of harmony and mutual respect.

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the field of interfaith relationships are invaluable. His works provide a rich reservoir of knowledge and insights, guiding Muslims and non-Muslims toward mutual understanding, respect, and peaceful coexistence. His balanced and moderate approach, rooted in Islamic teachings, sets a benchmark for how Muslims can explore the complex terrain of interfaith relationships in today's globalized and pluralistic world. By emphasizing shared values, common roots, and the importance of knowledge and understanding, Hamidullah has laid a foundation for building bridges between different faith traditions, fostering a spirit of unity in diversity. This chapter, therefore, seeks to delve deeper into his works, exploring the nuances of his approach and shedding light on how his contributions continue to resonate and remain relevant in contemporary discourses on interfaith relationships.

⁴ Noor Achmad, "Inter-Religious Harmony: A Historical Overview," *Tawasuf: Indonesian Journal of Moderate Islam* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-10.

⁵ Quran, Surah Al-Aḥqāf 29:46.

⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Muhammad ibu Ishaq (The Biographer of the Holy Prophet)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 15, no. 2 (1967): 77.

4.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIP

The interfaith relationships throughout history are complex and multifaceted, intricately woven with peaceful coexistence and tumultuous conflict threads. To fully understand the trajectory of these relationships, it is imperative to delve into the socio-political, cultural, and religious landscapes that have shaped interactions between diverse faith communities over the centuries. One of the most significant chapters in this historical narrative is marked by the advent of Islam in the 7th century CE, and this period introduced a set of guiding principles that would shape Muslim interactions with followers of other religions for centuries to come.⁷

In the pre-Islamic Arabian society, the religious landscape was predominantly characterized by tribal affiliations and polytheistic practices. While religious pluralism existed, it was often overshadowed by intertribal conflicts and a lack of a universal ethical framework to govern interfaith interactions.⁸ The emergence of Islam brought about a radical shift in this landscape. Advocating for the oneness of God, Islam established ethical guidelines for social conduct, which included directives on how to interact with people of other faiths. Central to Islamic teachings on interfaith relations are the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, and the *Hadīth*, the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). These texts collectively provide a comprehensive framework for Muslims in their engagement with followers of other religions. The Qur'an emphasizes the importance of respectful and just treatment of non-Muslims. This is especially evident in its references to the People of the Book—Jews and Christians—who are recognized as recipients of earlier divine revelations (Qur'an 29:46). The life and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) further elucidate these principles, showcasing his commitment to establishing peaceful and just relations with diverse religious communities.⁹

⁷ Hafiz Muhammad Farooq Abdullah and Hafiz Atif Iqbal, "Hijrat-e-Habāsha: A Role Model for the Muslim Minorities in the Promotion of Dialogue and Pluralism, in the Contemporary Age," *Jihāt ul Islām* 16, no. 1 (2022): 1-15.

⁸ Sheila C. Gordon and Benjamin Arenstein, "Interfaith Education: A New Model for Today's Interfaith Families," *International Review of Education* 63, no. 2 (2017): 169-195.

⁹ Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 222.

The historical context of interfaith relationships during the advent of Islam was not without its complexities¹⁰. While there were remarkable instances of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect, there were also moments of conflict and tension. These conflicts were often rooted in political and social strife rather than religious animosity. This reflects the intricate web of alliances, power dynamics, and historical grievances that characterized the Arabian Peninsula during this period.¹¹

The works of Muhammad Hamidullah provide a nuanced understanding of this historical context. Hamidullah emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between the religious teachings of Islam and the socio-political complexities of the 7th-century Arabian society. He argues that the Qur'anic principles and the Prophetic traditions provide a solid foundation for building positive and respectful interfaith relationships, even amidst socio-political challenges.¹²

Hamidullah's analysis of historical interfaith interactions under the banner of Islam highlights the religion's inherent capacity for fostering peaceful and just relations with diverse religious communities. He stresses the need for contemporary Muslims to draw inspiration from these historical precedents. Advocating for a return to the Qur'anic principles and Prophetic traditions, Hamidullah argues that these should serve as guiding beacons in navigating the complexities of interfaith relationships in the modern world.¹³

The historical context of interfaith relationships, particularly during the advent of Islam, offers examples for contemporary societies to reflect upon. The Qur'an and *Hadīth* provide timeless principles that encourage respectful, just, and peaceful interactions with people of other faiths. These texts set a precedent for Muslims to follow. Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work is crucial in illuminating this historical context, offering insights and analyses that remain highly relevant for anyone seeking to understand the foundations of interfaith relationships in Islamic thought. His

¹⁰ Kurdi Fadal, "The Qur'an and Inter-Religious Relation Models in Contemporary World," *Jurnal Theologia* 31, no. 2 (2020): 185-208.

¹¹ Meraj Ahmad Meraj, "Islamic Directives of Interfaith Dialogue," *The Scholar-Islamic Academic Research Journal* 3, no. 1 (2017): 20-35.

¹² Muhammad Said Mitwally Ibrahim, "Interfaith Dialogue: A Muslim Legal Perspective on Its Validity, Concept, and Practices," *Insights* (20724586) 3, no. 1 (2010): 12-23.

¹³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The First Written Constitution in the World* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, 1986), 65.

meticulous research and balanced approach have significantly contributed to the discourse on interfaith relations. Hamidullah highlights the potential for harmony, mutual respect, and coexistence in the Islamic tradition.¹⁴

This historical narrative is not just a relic of the past but continues to resonate in contemporary discussions about interfaith relationships. In a world increasingly marked by religious pluralism and global interconnectedness, the lessons from this period are more relevant than ever. They offer valuable insights into how diverse religious communities can coexist peacefully, respecting each other's beliefs while fostering a shared commitment to justice and mutual understanding. The early Islamic period also demonstrates how religious teachings can transcend the confines of their historical context to offer timeless principles applicable in various settings. The Qur'anic emphasis on justice, respect, and kindness towards people of all faiths is a guiding principle for Muslims and non-Muslims. These teachings, combined with the Prophetic example, offer a blueprint for interfaith engagement that is both respectful and empathetic.¹⁵

Furthermore, the historical context of interfaith relationships in Islam underscores the importance of differentiating between religious teachings and the socio-political realities of the time. This distinction is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of interfaith dynamics, both in the past and present. It allows for a more nuanced appreciation of the complexities involved in these relationships, moving beyond simplistic narratives that often dominate contemporary discourse. The role of figures like Muhammad Hamidullah in elucidating these aspects cannot be overstated.¹⁶ His work dissecting the historical nuances of Islamic teachings on interfaith relationships provides a valuable resource for scholars, religious leaders, and laypersons. By drawing on religious texts and historical contexts, Hamidullah's

¹⁴ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Islam and Buddhism," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, ed. Catherine Cornille (2013): 360-375.

¹⁵ Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources* (VT: Inner Traditions, 2006), 384.

¹⁶ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

contributions offer a balanced perspective deeply rooted in scholarship yet accessible to a broader audience.¹⁷

The historical context of interfaith relationships during the advent of Islam, as illuminated by the works of scholars like Muhammad Hamidullah, offers a rich and complex narrative. This narrative provides valuable lessons for contemporary societies grappling with religious diversity and interfaith dialogue challenges. The principles of justice, respect, and peaceful coexistence, espoused in the Qur'an and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), continue to serve as guiding principles for building harmonious interfaith relationships. Hamidullah's scholarly contributions underscore the enduring relevance of these principles, highlighting the potential for a world where diverse faiths coexist in mutual respect and understanding.

4.3 HAMIDULLAH'S APPROACH TO INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIP

4.3.1 The Concept of *Ahl al-Kitab*

Muhammad Hamidullah has significantly influenced the understanding of interfaith relationships within Islamic thought. His focus on the *Ahl al-Kitab* or the People of the Book, which refers to Jews and Christians, reflects his deep commitment to religious diversity and fostering understanding and respect among different faith communities. Hamidullah recognized Islam's unique status of the People of the Book, stemming from their monotheistic beliefs and adherence to divine scriptures.¹⁸ He frequently refers to Qur'anic verses that acknowledge the divine origins of the Torah and the Bible and advocate for respectful and harmonious relationships with their followers (Qur'an 29:46). Hamidullah believes that the common scriptural roots shared by these Abrahamic faiths provide a foundation for building positive and constructive interactions, promoting a spirit of mutual respect and understanding.¹⁹

¹⁷ Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

¹⁸ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

¹⁹ Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

In thoroughly examining the theological underpinnings of the concept of *Ahl al-Kitab*, Hamidullah highlights the shared monotheistic roots and moral and ethical teachings common to these faiths. He posits that these shared values should be the basis for peaceful coexistence and mutual respect rather than sources of conflict or contention. Recognizing these shared values, according to Hamidullah, “is pivotal in creating an environment where followers of different faiths can coexist harmoniously, respecting each other’s beliefs and practices”.²⁰

Hamidullah addresses the inherent challenges and complexities of interfaith relationships. He acknowledges the theological differences between Islam and the People of the Book but maintains that these differences need not hinder positive interactions and mutual respect. Advocating for an approach grounded in knowledge, dialogue, and empathy, Hamidullah encourages Muslims to engage in meaningful conversations with Jews and Christians. This, he believes, would help clarify misconceptions and foster understanding.²¹ Hamidullah’s perspective on the *Ahl al-Kitab* also emphasizes the importance of justice and equity, echoing Qur’anic injunctions that call for just and fair treatment of all people, irrespective of their religious affiliations (Qur’an 4:135). He argues that upholding justice is an essential Islamic value that must be observed in all interactions, including those with the People of the Book. This commitment to justice, he believes, is crucial for creating a just and harmonious society.²²

Examining the practical aspects of these interactions, Hamidullah delves into the historical examples the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) set in his dealings with Jews and Christians. He focuses on various treaties, pacts, and agreements the Prophet (pbuh) forged with different religious communities. These historical instances showcase Islam’s capacity for diplomacy, coexistence, and mutual respect.²³ Such examples give

²⁰ Muhammad al-Ghazali, "Muhammad Hamidullah (1908-2002)," *Islamic Studies* 2 (2003): 183-187.

²¹ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Administration of Justice under the Early Caliphate: (Instructions of Caliph ‘Umar to Abu Musa al-Ash’ari) (17 H)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 19, no. 1 (1971): 1.

²² Jamal Badawi, "Muslim/Non-Muslim Relations: An Integrative Approach," *J. Islamic L. & Culture* 8 (2003): 23.

²³ Mohammad Said Mitwally Ibrahim, "Interfaith Dialogue: A Muslim Legal Perspective on Its Validity, Concept, and Practices," *Insights* 3, no. 1 (2010): 11-32.

contemporary Muslim communities insights into engaging respectfully and justly with People of the Book, thereby fostering peace.²⁴

Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships, particularly regarding the *Ahl al-Kitab*, reflects a profound appreciation for religious diversity and an in-depth understanding of the shared monotheistic roots of Muslims, Jews, and Christians. His scholarly work is a rich source of knowledge and insights for fostering harmonious coexistence based on mutual respect, justice, and a commitment to dialogue. His contributions to this field are invaluable, providing a foundational framework for positive and constructive interfaith relationships. Hamidullah's emphasis on recognizing shared values, addressing challenges with empathy and understanding, and upholding justice in all interactions continues to be highly relevant. This approach serves as a valuable resource for anyone seeking to focus on the complexities of interfaith relationships in a manner that aligns with Islamic principles and values.²⁵

Hamidullah's work highlights the historical context of interfaith relations and offers practical guidance for contemporary engagement. His call for dialogue and understanding resonates strongly in today's world, where interfaith interactions are increasingly common and necessary.²⁶ Hamidullah's teachings help bridge the gaps between religious communities, fostering an environment where diverse faiths can coexist harmoniously by promoting an approach that values knowledge, empathy, and mutual respect. His interpretation of Qur'anic teachings regarding the *Ahl al-Kitab* serves as a reminder of the potential for common ground and shared values among different religious traditions. It underscores the importance of focusing on similarities rather than differences, promoting a narrative of inclusivity and respect. This perspective is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary issues such as religious intolerance and sectarianism. By embracing Hamidullah's approach, individuals and

²⁴ Ataulah Siddiqui, "Pope Francis, Islam, and Dialogue," in *Pope Francis and Interreligious Dialogue: Religious Thinkers Engage with Recent Papal Initiatives*, ed. Harold Kasimow and Alan Race (2018): 169-182.

²⁵ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Managing Religious and Ethnic Diversity for Peace and Harmony: Islam and Buddhism in the Malay World of Southeast Asia," *Journal of Malay Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 129-140.

²⁶ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

communities can work towards a more inclusive and respectful interfaith dialogue, contributing to a more peaceful and understanding world.²⁷

Moreover, Hamidullah's emphasis on justice and equity in interfaith relationships is critical to his teachings. He posits that justice is a fundamental Islamic value and a universal principle that should guide all human interactions. This focus on justice transcends religious boundaries, offering a universal framework for interfaith engagement that is ethical and respectful.²⁸ In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships, particularly his views on the *Ahl al-Kitab*, offers a comprehensive and insightful framework for understanding and navigating the complexities of interfaith dialogue. His work, grounded in a deep understanding of Islamic teachings and a commitment to religious diversity, provides valuable guidance for contemporary efforts to foster mutual respect and understanding among different faith communities. Hamidullah's legacy in this field inspires and informs scholars, religious leaders, and laypersons alike, underscoring the importance of knowledge, empathy, and justice in building harmonious interfaith relationships.

4.4 HAMIDULLAH'S INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC THOUGHT

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly contributions have significantly impacted contemporary Islamic thought, especially interfaith relationships. His profound understanding and inclusive approach to the People of the Book (*Ahl al-Kitab*), primarily Jews and Christians, have reshaped Muslim attitudes towards interfaith dialogue and cooperation. Hamidullah recognizes the special status of the *Ahl al-Kitab* in Islam, emphasizing the historical and theological connections between Islam and other Abrahamic faiths. This perspective has been instrumental in encouraging a more

²⁷ Hafiz Muhammad Farooq Abdullah and Hafiz Atif Iqbal, "Hijrat-e-Habāsha: A Role Model for the Muslim Minorities in the Promotion of Dialogue and Pluralism, in the Contemporary Age," *Jihāt ul Islām* 16, no. 1 (2022): 1-15.

²⁸ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Islamic Theology of Religious Pluralism: Building Islam-Buddhism Understanding," in *Pluralism in Islamic Contexts: Ethics, Politics and Modern Challenges*, ed. Mohammed Hashas (Cham: Springer Verlag, 2021), 129-140.

nuanced understanding and acceptance of religious diversity within the Muslim community.²⁹

Hamidullah's emphasis on dialogue and understanding has had a tangible effect on how contemporary Islamic leaders and scholars approach interfaith initiatives. By advocating for engagement based on mutual respect and shared values, he has inspired a generation of Muslims to participate more actively in interfaith dialogues, conferences, and community service projects. These interactions have helped bridge gaps between different religious communities and promoted a deeper understanding and cooperation among them.³⁰

This shift towards a more inclusive approach is evident in various global contexts, where Muslims, inspired by Hamidullah's teachings, are increasingly at the forefront of interfaith activities. His work has encouraged Muslim communities to explore common ground with other faith traditions, leading to collaborative efforts in social justice, peacebuilding, and humanitarian aid. These cooperative ventures underscore the practical implications of Hamidullah's approach, demonstrating how shared humanitarian values can transcend religious differences.³¹

4.4.1 Challenges in Interpreting and Applying Hamidullah's Approach

Despite the relevance and influence of Hamidullah's work, interpreting and applying his approach to interfaith relationships is not without challenges. One of the key difficulties lies in the diverse cultural and societal contexts in which Islam is practised. These varied contexts can lead to different interpretations of Hamidullah's teachings, requiring a careful and nuanced application of his principles. Adapting his approach to suit different Muslim communities' specific needs and circumstances remains complex.³² Furthermore, some critics of Hamidullah's approach argue that it may be

²⁹ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

³⁰ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 6.

³¹ Muhammad Hamidullah, Jean Jolivet, Rahat Nabi Khan, and Jacques Berque, *Islam, Philosophy and Science* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983), 1-4.

³² Yetkin Yildirim, "The Madinah Charter: A Historical Case of Conflict Resolution," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 20, no. 4 (2009): 439-450.

overly optimistic, potentially overlooking the historical and contemporary challenges that Muslims face in interactions with other religious communities. These critics suggest that while Hamidullah's ideals are commendable, they might not fully address the realities and tensions that often emerge in interfaith contexts. This criticism points to the need for a balanced approach that recognizes both the potential and the limitations of interfaith dialogue as envisioned by Hamidullah.³³

4.4.2 Hamidullah's Legacy in Interfaith Dialogue

Hamidullah's legacy in the field of interfaith dialogue is substantial and enduring. His work has been pivotal in fostering a more empathetic and nuanced approach to interfaith relationships within the Muslim world. By highlighting the common spiritual heritage shared by the Abrahamic faiths and advocating for mutual respect and understanding, he has contributed significantly to changing the narrative surrounding interfaith interactions in Islamic discourse. His teachings inspire contemporary initiatives to foster interfaith harmony, drawing on his dialogue, justice, and mutual respect principles.³⁴

The relevance of Hamidullah's approach in the modern world is particularly pronounced in the face of increasing religious pluralism and global interconnectedness. His principles of dialogue and understanding offer vital guidance for addressing the challenges and opportunities that this pluralism presents. The ongoing influence of his work is evident in various interfaith programmes and collaborations that aim to bridge differences and promote peace and understanding among different religious communities.³⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships, especially regarding the *Ahl al-Kitab*, provides a comprehensive and insightful perspective that is historically grounded and relevant to contemporary challenges. His emphasis on dialogue, justice, and mutual understanding offers a valuable framework

³³ Issa Khan, Muhammad Elius, Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor, Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff, Kamaruzaman Noordin, and Fadillah Mansor, "A Critical Appraisal of Interreligious Dialogue in Islam," *SAGE Open* 10, no. 4 (2020): 2158244020970560.

³⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, Jean Jolivet, Rahat Nabi Khan, and Jacques Berque, *Islam, Philosophy and Science* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983).

³⁵ Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 12-15.

for Muslims seeking to engage constructively with people of other faiths. While his approach is not without criticisms and challenges, Hamidullah's contributions continue to shape and guide efforts toward fostering a more inclusive and harmonious interfaith landscape. His legacy remains a key influence in contemporary Islamic thought and interfaith dialogue, underscoring the importance of his work in promoting understanding and cooperation among diverse religious communities.

4.5 PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S INTERACTIONS WITH DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS GROUPS

4.5.1 The *Constitution of Madinah*

Muhammad Hamidullah's in-depth analysis of the *Constitution of Madinah* is a cornerstone of his scholarly work on interfaith relationships. This document, established by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), is renowned as one of the earliest examples of a written constitution that forged a framework for governing a diverse, pluralistic society. Hamidullah's examination of this charter reveals its groundbreaking role in establishing peace, justice, and mutual respect among the various religious communities in Madinah.³⁶ In his detailed exploration of the *Constitution of Madinah*, Hamidullah underscores its significance as more than just a political agreement; it was a moral and spiritual guide embodying Islamic principles of justice, equality, and respect for individuals regardless of their religious beliefs. The Constitution explicitly detailed the rights and responsibilities of Muslims, Jews, Christians, and Pagans, ensuring their protection and freedom within the nascent Islamic state. This charter, according to Hamidullah, "served as a pioneering model for a societal structure where diverse religious groups could coexist while maintaining their religious autonomy."³⁷

Hamidullah lauds the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) foresight in crafting a societal framework that accommodated religious diversity within a cohesive social structure. This approach, Hamidullah posits, was instrumental in fostering an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect among different faith groups in Madinah.

³⁶ Yetkin Yildirim, "The Madinah Charter: A Historical Case of Conflict Resolution," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 20, no. 4 (2009): 439-450.

³⁷ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The First Written Constitution in the World: An Important Document of the Time of the Holy Prophet*, 3rd ed. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraī, 1975).

The charter, he argues, is not only a historical document but also a practical model that remains relevant in contemporary times, especially in a world where religious diversity and pluralism are increasingly prominent.³⁸

Hamidullah's analysis emphasises the *Constitution of Madinah*'s role in establishing legal and social norms transcending tribal and religious affiliations. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) set a precedent for a societal order based on shared values and collective responsibility rather than mere religious identity. This aspect of the Constitution, Hamidullah suggests, is particularly instructive for modern societies grappling with issues of religious and cultural diversity.³⁹

Zaleha et al. discuss Hamidullah's perspective on the *Constitution of Madinah*:

It demonstrated the Prophet Muhammad's commitment to establishing an inclusive community where dialogue and mutual understanding were prioritized. This approach was revolutionary, particularly given the historical context marked by tribal conflicts and religious tensions. As Hamidullah points out, the Prophet's leadership in this regard was not only a display of political acumen but also a reflection of the ethical and humanitarian principles of Islam.⁴⁰

Furthermore, Hamidullah's work highlights the practical implications of the *Constitution of Madinah* for contemporary interfaith relations. He argues that the principles enshrined in this charter could guide modern societies in fostering interfaith harmony and coexistence. The Constitution's emphasis on collective security, mutual respect, and the protection of minority rights are concepts that Hamidullah believes could be effectively applied in contemporary pluralistic societies to address the challenges of religious and cultural differences.⁴¹ In conclusion, Muhammad Hamidullah's analysis of the *Constitution of Madinah* offers a profound insight into the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) approach to managing a multi-religious society. This

³⁸ Halim Rane, "The Islamic Doctrines of War and Peace," in *Reconstructing Jihad amid Competing International Norms* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 23, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230620988_6.

³⁹ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 23.

⁴⁰ Zaleha Embong, Nazri Muslim, Nik Yusri Musa, Amaal Fadhlini Mohamed, and Lina Mastura Jusoh, "Principles of Social Integration in the Constitution of Madinah," *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* (2021): 11-14.

⁴¹ Saïd Amir Arjomand, "The Constitution of Madinah: A Sociolegal Interpretation of Muhammad's Acts of Foundation of the Umma," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, no. 4 (2009): 555-575.

historic charter, as explored by Hamidullah, serves as a testament to the Prophet's visionary leadership and a lasting model for building peaceful and just societies in a diverse world. Hamidullah's work underscores the relevance of the *Constitution of Madinah* as a foundational document for promoting interfaith understanding and cooperation, making it a significant reference for contemporary discussions on religious pluralism and communal harmony.

4.5.2 The Covenant of Najrān

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly exploration of the interactions between the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the Christian community of Najrān offers profound insights into the Islamic perspective on religious diversity and tolerance. His analysis of the Covenant of Najrān, an agreement established between the Islamic state and the Christians of Najrān, highlights Islam's respectful and protective stance towards religious minorities. Hamidullah meticulously examines the terms of this covenant, emphasizing how it not only guaranteed the Christians' freedom to practice their religion but also assured them of protection and security under Islamic governance.⁴²

In his work, Hamidullah argues that the Covenant of Najrān was a strategic political alliance and a sincere embodiment of Islamic principles of tolerance, respect, and protection of religious minorities. Ahmed El-Wakil states "*that the Covenant of Najran is a testament to the Prophet Muhammad's commitment to creating an inclusive society where diverse religious groups could coexist peacefully and with dignity. As Hamidullah points out, the Prophet's (pbuh) approach in this covenant reflects the Qur'anic injunctions that call for justice, kindness, and the protection of all people, regardless of their faith.*"⁴³

Hamidullah highlights the significance of the Covenant of Najrān in the broader context of interfaith relations. He posits that this historical precedent offers invaluable lessons for contemporary societies, particularly in areas where religious minorities seek

⁴² Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

⁴³ Ahmed El-Wakil, "The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of Najran: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 273-354.

assurance of their rights and freedoms. In Hamidullah's view, the covenant serves as a practical model for modern states, demonstrating how governance can be inclusive and respectful of religious diversity.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Hamidullah emphasizes that the Covenant of Najrān illustrates the early Islamic state's commitment to upholding the rights and well-being of religious minorities. This commitment, he argues, is grounded in the Islamic ethos of empathy and equity, which extends beyond mere tolerance to active protection and respect for the beliefs and practices of non-Muslim communities.⁴⁵ In his detailed analysis, Hamidullah also addresses the implications of the Covenant of Najrān for contemporary Muslim-majority societies. He suggests that the principles enshrined in this covenant can guide modern Islamic nations in fostering an environment of coexistence and mutual respect. This is particularly relevant in contexts where the rights of religious minorities are a subject of concern. By revisiting this historical covenant, Hamidullah provides a framework for contemporary Islamic societies to reaffirm their commitment to pluralism and religious freedom.⁴⁶

The Covenant of Najrān, as explored by Hamidullah, also offers insights into the diplomatic skills and the visionary leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The Prophet's approach to negotiating and establishing this covenant demonstrates his profound understanding of the complexities of religious and social dynamics. Hamidullah underscores the Prophet's ability to balance religious principles with practical governance, ensuring that the societal fabric remained cohesive while honouring its diversity.⁴⁷

Hamidullah's examination of the Covenant of Najrān contributes significantly to the discourse on Islamic history and interfaith relations. He presents this covenant as a clear example of how Islam, from its early days, has been a religion that not only tolerates but also respects and protects the rights of religious minorities. This historical

⁴⁴ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'ān," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

⁴⁵ Anver M. Emon, *The Limits of Constitutionalism in the Muslim World: History and Identity in Islamic Law*, Constitutional Design for Divided Societies, Forthcoming, *Islamic Law and Law of the Muslim World Paper No. 08-09* (2008): 233, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1086767>.

⁴⁶ Ahmed El-Wakil, "The Prophet's Treaty with the Christians of Najran: An Analytical Study to Determine the Authenticity of the Covenants," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, no. 3 (2016): 273-354.

⁴⁷ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam—A General Picture* (İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım Yayım, 1995), 28.

perspective, according to Hamidullah, “*is crucial for understanding the Islamic approach to religious diversity and for addressing contemporary challenges related to interfaith engagement and minority rights.*”⁴⁸ In short, Hamidullah’s analysis of the Covenant of Najrān sheds light on an essential aspect of Islamic history that has profound implications for modern interfaith relations. His work demonstrates the early Islamic state’s commitment to religious tolerance and minority rights, offering a model for contemporary societies striving to create an inclusive and respectful environment for all religious groups. The Covenant of Najrān, as elucidated by Hamidullah, stands as a vital historical precedent, reaffirming the principles of tolerance, respect, and protection inherent in Islam and offering valuable lessons for fostering peaceful coexistence in a diverse world.

4.5.3 Treatment of Polytheists

Muhammad Hamidullah’s discussions on the Prophet Muhammad’s interactions with Makkah polytheists reveal a significant aspect of the Islamic approach to religious diversity and tolerance. In his analysis, Hamidullah distinguishes between the Prophet’s opposition to the oppressive practices of the polytheists and his profound desire for their guidance toward truth. He portrays the Prophet’s approach as one marked by mercy, patience, and a genuine aspiration for peaceful coexistence, even during persecution and hostility.⁴⁹ Hamidullah emphasizes that the Prophet’s interactions with the polytheists were driven by his commitment to conveying the message of Islam and inviting them to embrace the truth. High ethical standards and compassion consistently characterized this approach. Hamidullah highlights several incidents from the *Sīrah* (biography of the Prophet) where the Prophet (pbuh) displayed unparalleled mercy and forgiveness towards the polytheists, even when he was able to retaliate. These instances demonstrate the Prophet’s adherence to the principles of mercy and forgiveness as integral elements of his mission.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ahmed El-Wakil, “The Prophet’s Letter to al-‘Alā’ b. Al-Ḥaḍramī: An Assessment of Its Authenticity in Light of the Covenants and the Correspondence with the People of Yemen,” *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 30, no. 2 (2019): 231-262.

⁴⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam—A General Picture* (İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım Yayım, 1995), 45.

⁵⁰ Nadira Mustapha, “Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law” (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 21-26.

Hamidullah's portrayal of these interactions underlines the Islamic ethos of compassion, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence. He argues that these principles, exemplified by the Prophet (pbuh), are not merely historical anecdotes but remain relevant and applicable in contemporary contexts, particularly in dealing with religious diversity and opposing beliefs. This perspective is crucial in understanding the Islamic approach to non-Muslim communities, especially those with fundamentally different religious beliefs.⁵¹ In his scholarly work, Hamidullah also addresses the challenges the Prophet (pbuh) faced in his interactions with the polytheists. He notes that despite the persecution and hostility directed towards him and his followers, the Prophet (pbuh) remained steadfast in his mission, choosing to respond with patience and compassion. This approach, Hamidullah suggests, reflects the Qur'anic injunctions to repel evil with good and to maintain justice and righteousness, even in the face of adversity (Qur'an, 41:34).⁵²

Furthermore, Hamidullah's analysis extends to the broader implications of treating polytheists in contemporary Muslim communities. He suggests that the Prophet's example provides valuable guidance on how Muslims today can engage with those who hold different beliefs. This includes maintaining a respectful dialogue, showing kindness, and upholding the principles of justice and equity in all interactions. Hamidullah posits that these principles are essential for building a harmonious and pluralistic society.⁵³ Hamidullah also delves into the transformative impact of the Prophet's compassionate approach on many polytheists. He recounts instances where the Prophet's kindness and magnanimity led to the conversion of several individuals who had previously been staunch opponents of Islam. As narrated by Hamidullah, these stories highlight the power of mercy and compassion in overcoming enmity and fostering reconciliation.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 56.

⁵² Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 19-31.

⁵³ Hafiz Muhammad Farooq Abdullah and Hafiz Atif Iqbal, "Hijrat-e-Habāsha: A Role Model for the Muslim Minorities in the Promotion of Dialogue and Pluralism, in the Contemporary Age," *Jihāt ul Islām* 16, no. 1 (2022): 1-15.

⁵⁴ Benaouda Bensaid, "Crossroads between Muslim Spirituality and Environmental Sustainability," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 13, no. 1 (2018): 65-81.

Hamidullah's scholarly work offers a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) interactions with religious groups, including the Makkan polytheists. His analysis of these interactions showcases the Islamic commitment to justice, compassion, and respect for diversity. Hamidullah's contributions are invaluable, providing insights and lessons pertinent to fostering harmonious interfaith relations in today's pluralistic world. Through his writings, he lays down a robust foundation for engaging with religious diversity consistent with Islamic principles and conducive to creating a just and harmonious society. Hamidullah's work serves as a reminder of the relevance of the Prophet Muhammad's example in contemporary times, particularly in promoting peaceful and tolerant coexistence among diverse religious communities.

4.6 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

4.6.1 Interfaith Dialogues and Treaties

Hamidullah's extensive work comprehensively analyses the role of dialogues and treaties in promoting peaceful interfaith relationships. Through his meticulous documentation and analysis of various historical events, Hamidullah has highlighted the significant efforts made by Muslims to engage diplomatically with other religious communities. These efforts, as Hamidullah notes, reflect the genuine intent of Islam to foster harmonious interactions with different faith groups.⁵⁵ In his scholarly work, Hamidullah cites the Prophet Muhammad's interactions with diverse religious communities as exemplary instances of Islamic diplomacy. He emphasizes that these interactions were not mere political strategies but were deeply rooted in the Islamic ethos that values mutual respect, understanding, and coexistence. From drafting treaties to dialogues with religious leaders, these engagements were guided by principles beyond tolerance, advocating for active respect and peaceful coexistence.⁵⁶

Hamidullah highlights the importance of upholding justice, honesty, and integrity in all interfaith interactions. He argues that these principles are central to

⁵⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Cultural and Intellectual History of Indian Islam," *Die Welt des Islams* 3, no. 3/4 (1954): 127-144.

⁵⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, Jean Jolivet, Rahat Nabi Khan, and Jacques Berque, *Islam, Philosophy and Science* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983).

Islamic teachings and crucial for establishing trust and credibility in interfaith engagements. This approach to diplomacy, as Hamidullah suggests, is essential in building lasting and meaningful relationships between different religious communities.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Hamidullah's analyses of various treaties, such as the Constitution of Madinah and the Covenant of Najrān, reveal the intricate balance between religious obligations and the practicalities of governance in a pluralistic society. He points out how these documents exemplify the Islamic commitment to protecting the rights of religious minorities and ensuring their full participation in society. These treaties, according to Hamidullah, "*serve as historical precedents that can guide contemporary Muslim societies in their interactions with diverse religious groups.*"⁵⁸

Hamidullah also explores the broader implications of these treaties for contemporary interfaith dialogue. He posits that the principles embodied in these historical documents provide a framework for modern interfaith interactions. By revisiting these treaties, Hamidullah believes that contemporary Muslim communities can find guidance on how to delve into the complexities of religious diversity while remaining true to their Islamic principles. This approach, he suggests, is vital for fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding in today's globalized world.⁵⁹ In his comparative analysis, Hamidullah also addresses the challenges faced in interfaith dialogues and negotiations. He recognizes that while the Islamic principles of dialogue and coexistence are clear, their application in diverse cultural and political contexts can be challenging. Hamidullah thus emphasizes the need for flexibility, empathy, and a deep understanding of the socio-political dynamics that influence interfaith relations. He argues that effective interfaith dialogue requires a firm

⁵⁷ Muhammad Ismath Ramzy, Rahimi Md Saad, and Abdul Muhsien Sulaiman, "Religious Ethics for Appreciating Cultural Diversity," *Journal of Dharma* 47, no. 1 (2022): 99-116.

⁵⁸ Ibrahim Zein and Ahmed El-Wakil, "Remembering the Covenants of the Prophet Muḥammad: Shared Historical Memory of Good Governance and Peaceful Co-Existence," *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC)* 25, no. 2 (2020): 219-262.

⁵⁹ Ibrahim Zein and Ahmed El-Wakil, "Khālid b. al-Wālid's Treaty with the People of Damascus: Identifying the Source Document through Shared and Competing Historical Memories," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 31, no. 3 (2020): 295-328.

grounding in one's faith and an openness to understanding the beliefs and perspectives of others.⁶⁰

Hamidullah's work highlights the contemporary relevance of the Prophet Muhammad's diplomatic engagements with other religious groups. He illustrates how these historical examples can inform current efforts to build peace and understanding between Muslims and followers of other faiths. Hamidullah believes that the legacy of the Prophet's diplomacy offers valuable insights for addressing modern issues such as religious conflict, intolerance, and the marginalization of minority groups.⁶¹ Moreover, Hamidullah's analysis extends to the practical aspects of implementing the principles of Islamic diplomacy in interfaith engagements. He delves into the methodologies and strategies that can be employed in contemporary settings, suggesting approaches that both respect Islamic teachings and are responsive to the realities of a diverse and interconnected world. He advocates for an approach to interfaith dialogue that is inclusive, participatory, and geared towards mutual learning and understanding.⁶²

Muhammad Hamidullah's comparative analysis of interfaith dialogues and treaties offers a profound insight into the Islamic perspective on interfaith relations. His work underscores the importance of dialogue, justice, and mutual respect in fostering peaceful coexistence between religious communities. Hamidullah's scholarly contributions provide invaluable guidance for contemporary Muslims and interfaith practitioners, highlighting how the principles of Islamic diplomacy can be applied to modern challenges and contexts. His work remains a crucial resource for those seeking to understand and engage in interfaith dialogue in a manner that is consistent with Islamic principles and conducive to building a just and harmonious society.

⁶⁰ Andrew Orton, "Interfaith Dialogue: Seven Key Questions for Theory, Policy and Practice," *Religion, State & Society* 44, no. 4 (2016): 349-365.

⁶¹ Salih Yucel and Ismail Albayrak, *The Art of Coexistence: Pioneering Role of Fethullah Gulen and the Hizmet Movement* (New Jersey: Tughra Books, 2015), 89.

⁶² Jonathan Eberhardt Shaw, *The Role of Religion in National Security Policy Since September 11, 2001* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2011).

4.6.2 Comparative Religious Studies

Muhammad Hamidullah stands as a towering figure in comparative religious studies. His scholarly endeavours in this field are marked by a deep commitment to exploring the nuances of diverse religious traditions, meticulously comparing their teachings, practices, and worldviews with those of Islam. A profound respect for all faiths characterizes Hamidullah's approach. He seeks not to critique or belittle other religions but instead to forge pathways of understanding, highlighting the shared principles and values between Islam and other world religions. Through his rigorous analysis, Hamidullah identifies common religious tenets across different faiths, including monotheism, the importance of compassion and justice, and the imperative to lead a morally upright life. One of the most notable aspects of Hamidullah's work is his in-depth exploration of monotheism across various religious contexts. He delves deeply into how this central belief is expressed in different faiths, drawing parallels between Islam's *Tawhīd* (the oneness of God) and similar concepts in Christianity, Judaism, and other religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism. His scholarly efforts underscore the belief in a supreme deity as a fundamental element common to many religions, fostering a sense of kinship and interconnectedness between Islam and other faiths.⁶³

Hamidullah's discussion of moral and ethical values is particularly insightful. He focuses on how virtues such as compassion and justice are revered across various religious traditions. He draws parallels between the Qur'an and the Ḥadīth teachings in Islam, emphasising mercy and fairness, with corresponding teachings in the Gospels of Christianity, the Torah of Judaism, and the Dharmic scriptures of Hinduism and Buddhism. Hamidullah posits that these shared values provide a robust foundation for Muslims and adherents of other religions to establish relationships grounded in respect and mutual understanding.⁶⁴ In addition, Hamidullah extends his comparative study to the practical aspects of religious observance and ethics. He examines how religions approach fundamental practices such as prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage, noting similarities and differences in the practices and their underlying intentions. For instance, he draws comparisons between Islamic practices like *Ṣalah* (prayer) and *Zakah* (charity)

⁶³ Md Maruf Hasan and Muhammad Mumtaz Ali, "Tazkiyat Al-Nafs and Scientific Worldview: Contrast and Critique," *International Journal of Advanced Research in Islamic and Humanities* 3, no. 4 (2021): 27-42.

⁶⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 89.

and analogous practices in Christianity and Judaism, such as prayer in monastic traditions and the concept of tithing. He observes that while the external forms of these practices may differ, the underlying principles of devotion, self-discipline, and altruism are strikingly similar.⁶⁵

Importantly, Hamidullah does not ignore the differences between various religious traditions. He recognizes that unique beliefs, rituals, and theological nuances characterize each faith. He believes acknowledging and respecting these differences is essential for fostering authentic interfaith dialogue. Hamidullah argues that understanding the uniqueness of each tradition is as critical as recognizing shared values. This approach prevents misunderstandings and promotes a deeper appreciation of each religion's identity.⁶⁶ Another key aspect of Hamidullah's approach is his advocacy for interfaith education. He firmly believes that educating Muslims about other religions, and vice versa, is vital for cultivating an environment of mutual respect and understanding. He supports initiatives that encourage the study of different religious texts and histories, seeing this to dispel myths and misconceptions and to foster a more inclusive and empathetic worldview.⁶⁷

Furthermore, Hamidullah addresses the historical interactions between Islam and other religions in his scholarly works. He explores periods in Islamic history when Muslims coexisted with people of other faiths, such as in Spain and the Ottoman Empire. His analysis of these interactions provides insights into how they influenced religious thought and practice. He highlights instances of cooperation, mutual enrichment, and periods of conflict, thus offering a nuanced understanding of the historical dynamics of interfaith relationships. In summing up Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to comparative religious studies, his work transcends mere comparison of religious doctrines. His efforts represent a sincere endeavour to understand and appreciate the diversity of religious experiences and expressions. By emphasizing the commonalities and respecting the differences between Islam and other

⁶⁵ Benaouda Bensaid and Salah Machouche, "Muslim Morality as Foundation for Social Harmony," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 14, no. 2 (2019): <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol14no2.5>.

⁶⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Woman* (Islamabad: Da'wah Academy, International Islamic University, 1989), 33.

⁶⁷ Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

religions, Hamidullah lays a solid foundation for more informed and respectful interfaith dialogue. His focus on shared values of monotheism, compassion, and justice, coupled with an acknowledgement of the unique aspects of each faith, provides the framework for understanding religious world knowledge. His advocacy for interfaith education and in-depth analysis of historical interfaith interactions further enrich this framework. His contributions to comparative religious studies are a cornerstone for scholars and practitioners alike, guiding them to foster deeper understanding and peaceful coexistence among faith communities.

4.6.3 Interreligious Textual Analysis

Muhammad Hamidullah's contribution to interreligious textual analysis is monumental, offering a unique perspective on studying religious scriptures. His approach is not merely comparative but profoundly analytical and aims at uncovering the shared ethical and moral foundations among different religious traditions. Hamidullah's scholarly work in this area involves meticulously examining Islamic sources alongside scriptures from other religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism, to highlight overlapping themes and teachings.⁶⁸

In his analysis, Hamidullah delves into the nuances of religious texts, moving beyond surface-level similarities to unearth deeper shared values and principles. He is particularly interested in how these shared values could foster mutual understanding and respect between followers of different faith traditions. This approach is groundbreaking in scope and depth, challenging the prevailing notion that different religious texts are disparate and incompatible. Hamidullah's work in interreligious textual analysis is not limited to the Abrahamic faiths. He extends his comparative studies to include Eastern religions, examining the teachings of Buddhism and Hinduism concerning Islamic principles. His findings often reveal surprising parallels in concepts such as compassion, justice, and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment, suggesting a universal thread of moral and ethical guidance across these diverse religious landscapes.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Farooq Hassan, "Place of Muslims and Christian Dialogue in Islamic Shariah/Law and the Contemporary World," *The Islamic Culture* 24 (Dec 2018): 34-43.

One of the critical aspects of Hamidullah's approach is his focus on the context in which religious texts were revealed or written. He believes that understanding the historical, cultural, and societal background of these texts is crucial for an accurate interpretation and comparison. This context-sensitive approach allows him to draw more meaningful parallels between the teachings of different religions, enhancing the credibility and depth of his comparative analysis. Hamidullah's work also emphasizes the importance of interreligious textual analysis in addressing contemporary challenges religious communities face. He argues that by highlighting the commonalities in religious teachings, scholars and followers of different faiths could build bridges of understanding and cooperation. He believes this approach could dispel misconceptions, correct misunderstandings, and create a more peaceful and harmonious coexistence among faith communities.⁷⁰

Moreover, Hamidullah's comparative studies often explore the ethical and theological implications of religious teachings. He examines how different religions address fundamental questions about the nature of the divine, the purpose of human existence, and the path to spiritual fulfilment. His findings reveal that, despite doctrinal differences, there is a remarkable convergence in these religions' ethical and spiritual aspirations. This observation leads him to advocate for a greater appreciation of religious diversity, viewing it not as a source of division but of human spiritual experience.⁷¹

Hamidullah's work in interreligious textual analysis is not just academic; it has practical implications for interfaith dialogue and cooperation. He believes understanding different religions' shared values and teachings could pave the way for more effective and meaningful interfaith initiatives. By demonstrating the common ethical ground among religions, Hamidullah provides a strong foundation for collaborative efforts in promoting peace, social justice, and environmental stewardship.⁷² In addition to his scholarly contributions, Hamidullah advocates using interreligious textual analysis in educational settings. He proposes that incorporating

⁷⁰ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 11-23.

⁷¹ Jibreel Delgado, "Religions, Lifeways, Same Difference: Defining Dīn in the US, the Middle East, and South Asia," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 33, no. 1 (2016): 1-24.

⁷² Muhammad Said Mitwally Ibrahim, "Interfaith Dialogue: A Muslim Legal Perspective on Its Validity, Concept, and Practices," *Insights* (20724586) 3, no. 1 (2010): 43-47.

comparative religious studies into educational curricula could foster a greater understanding and respect for religious diversity among young learners. This educational approach, he believes, is essential for nurturing a generation that is well-equipped to focus on a religiously pluralistic world.⁷³

Hamidullah's pioneering work in interreligious textual analysis also addresses the challenges of religious fundamentalism and extremism. By highlighting the shared moral and ethical teachings across religions, he provides a counter-narrative to extremist interpretations that often exploit religious texts for divisive purposes. His approach offers a more inclusive and harmonious understanding of religious teachings, promoting a narrative of unity and shared human values.⁷⁴ In short, Muhammad Hamidullah's extensive work in interreligious textual analysis offers a profound insight into the commonalities among different religious traditions. His approach is a testament to the potential of scholarly inquiry in bridging gaps in understanding and fostering mutual respect among diverse faith communities. Hamidullah's contributions in this field are invaluable, providing a robust framework for engaging with religious diversity in a manner that is consistent with the principles of peace, understanding, and coexistence. Through his pioneering work, Hamidullah has laid a foundation for future scholars and practitioners in interreligious studies, underscoring the importance of this approach in contributing to a more harmonious and interconnected global society.

4.6.4 The Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah

The Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, as explored by Muhammad Hamidullah, is a seminal event in Islamic history, marked by profound lessons in diplomacy, strategic negotiation, and peaceful conflict resolution. Hamidullah's in-depth analysis of this historical agreement between the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the Quraysh of Makkah offers insights into Islamic principles of peace and reconciliation. He emphasizes that the treaty was not

⁷³ Madinah F. Hamidullah, Jung Ah (Claire) Yun, Lindsey M. McDougale, Jongmin Shon, Hyuk Yang, and Ashley Davis, "Exploring Individual Predictors of Variation in Public Awareness of Expressive and Instrumental Nonprofit Brands," *Journal of Philanthropy and Marketing* 27, no. 1 (February 2022): e1710, <https://doi.org/10.1002/nvsm.1710>.

⁷⁴ Noor Achmad, "Inter-Religious Harmony: A Historical Overview," *Tawasuf: Indonesian Journal of Moderate Islam* 1, no. 1 (2013): 1-10.

merely a political move but a reflection of the Islamic ethos of patience, forbearance, and the pursuit of peace, even in the face of adversity.⁷⁵

Hamidullah examines how the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) explored the complex political situation with patience and wisdom. The Prophet's willingness to negotiate and make concessions for the greater good of the Muslim community exemplifies a strategic and long-term vision for peace. This approach is a timeless example for Muslims and non-Muslims, illustrating the importance of patience and strategic thinking in negotiations.⁷⁶ The significance of the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, as highlighted by Hamidullah, lies in establishing a peaceful coexistence between Muslims and the Quraysh. This treaty was a turning point, demonstrating that diplomacy, patience, and a commitment to peace are central to the Islamic worldview. Hamidullah argues that the treaty laid the groundwork for future interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims, providing a blueprint for peaceful interreligious relations.⁷⁷

Hamidullah's analysis extends to the specifics of the treaty. He notes how the terms, initially perceived as unfavourable to the Muslims, eventually played a crucial role in the spread of Islam and the strengthening of the Muslim community. This strategic foresight of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is a critical aspect of the treaty, showcasing his ability to prioritize long-term gains over immediate victories.⁷⁸ The Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah also exemplifies the Islamic principles of conflict resolution. Hamidullah points out that the Prophet's approach aligned with Qur'anic teachings advocating peace and reconciliation. The treaty underscores the importance of mutual respect and understanding as foundations for any lasting peace agreement. Hamidullah

⁷⁵ Mohd. Hisham Mohd. Kamal, "International Legal Personality of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh)," *IJUM Law Journal* 25, no. 2 (2017): 161–78, <https://doi.org/10.31436/iiumlj.v25i2.341>.

⁷⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, "The Jewish Background of the Battles of Jamal and Siffin," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 30, no. 4 (1982): 235.

⁷⁷ Mashood A. Baderin, "The Evolution of Islamic Law of Nations and the Modern International Order: Universal Peace through Mutuality and Cooperation," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 17, no. 2 (2000): 57-80.

⁷⁸ Muhammad Hashim Kamali, "Peace in the Islamic Tradition: One Vision, Multiple Pathways," *ICR Journal* 7, no. 2 (2016): 157-187.

emphasizes that these principles are relevant to the historical context and guide contemporary conflict resolution and peace-building efforts.⁷⁹

Furthermore, Hamidullah's work sheds light on the transformational impact of the treaty on intertribal relations in Arabia. The period following the treaty saw a significant reduction in hostilities and increased conversions to Islam. This change in the social and religious landscape of Arabia underscores the effectiveness of peaceful engagement and dialogue in resolving conflicts and fostering societal change.⁸⁰ In his comparative analysis, Hamidullah also addresses the challenges and criticisms faced by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in making the treaty. He discusses how some of the Prophet's companions initially viewed the treaty's terms as a setback. However, Hamidullah highlights that the Prophet's wisdom and trust in God's plan were crucial factors in turning what seemed like a disadvantage into a significant victory for Islam. This aspect of the treaty demonstrates the importance of faith and trust in leadership during negotiations.⁸¹

Hamidullah also explores the role of the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah in shaping the diplomatic practices in Islamic governance. He suggests that the principles embodied in the treaty became foundational elements in the Islamic approach to diplomacy and international relations. This historical perspective is crucial for understanding Islamic diplomatic traditions and their implications for modern international relations.⁸² The Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah also serves as a model for interfaith dialogue and cooperation in contemporary times. Hamidullah argues that the principles of mutual understanding, respect, and peaceful negotiation are essential today, marked by religious and cultural diversity. By applying the lessons from the Treaty of Ḥudaybiyyah, contemporary

⁷⁹ Lailial Muhtifah, Zaenuddin Hudi Prasajo, Sukman Sappe, and Elmansyah Elmansyah, "The Theology of Islamic Moderation Education in Singkawang, Indonesia: The City of Tolerance," *HTS Theologes Studies / Theological Studies* 77, no. 4 (2021): a6552, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6552>.

⁸⁰ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 2-7.

⁸¹ Saïd Amir Arjomand, "The Constitution of Madinah: A Sociolegal Interpretation of Muhammad's Acts of Foundation of the Umma," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41, no. 4 (2009): 555-575.

⁸² Rasha Diab, "Legal-Political Rhetoric, Human Rights, and the Constitution of Madinah," *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 36, no. 3 (2018): 219-243.

Muslim communities and leaders can focus more on the complexities of interfaith relations.⁸³

Moreover, Hamidullah's treaty analysis provides insights into Islamic leadership's ethical and moral dimensions. He highlights the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) commitment to ethical conduct, even in challenging political decisions. This ethical dimension, as pointed out by Hamidullah, is a key aspect of Islamic teachings and provides a moral framework for leaders in both religious and secular contexts.⁸⁴ In conclusion, Muhammad Hamidullah's comprehensive study of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah offers a rich and nuanced perspective on the Islamic approach to diplomacy, negotiation, and peacebuilding. His work illuminates the strategic and ethical dimensions of the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) leadership, providing valuable lessons for contemporary peace efforts and interfaith relations. Hamidullah's analysis underscores the relevance of Islamic principles in addressing modern challenges, significantly contributing to understanding Islamic history and its application in today's world. Through his examination of the Treaty of Hudaibiyah, alongside his discussions on other interfaith dialogues, treaties, and comparative religious studies, Hamidullah provides a framework for fostering peaceful and respectful interfaith relations, grounded in the rich tradition of Islamic diplomacy and ethics.

4.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF HAMIDULLAH'S CONTRIBUTIONS

4.7.1 Contemporary Application of Hamidullah's Work

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly contributions to interfaith relationships are relevant today, offering valuable insights and frameworks for fostering harmonious relations between faith communities. His extensive work provides a foundation for understanding and navigating the complex landscape of interreligious dialogue and coexistence. In a world increasingly characterized by religious diversity and interconnectivity, Hamidullah's principles of mutual respect, understanding, and

⁸³ Ahmad Sunawari Long, "Promoting Positive Peace via Inter-Religious Dialogue: Bridging Understanding Among Muslims and Non-Muslims" (Faculty of Islamic Studies & Arabic Language, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, University Park, Oluvil, April 4, 2022).

⁸⁴ Hafijur Rahman, "An Evaluation of the Aqabah Pledges and the Charter of Madinah to the Birth of Political Authority in Islamic Political Thought," *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Araştırmaları Dergisi* 9, no. 5 (2020): 3379-3396.

peaceful coexistence are more pertinent than ever. One of the key contemporary applications of Hamidullah's work is seen in various interfaith initiatives across the globe. These initiatives draw inspiration from his writings, particularly his emphasis on dialogue, understanding, and shared ethical and moral values across religions. Hamidullah's approach to interfaith relationships encourages a more profound exploration of commonalities while respecting and acknowledging the uniqueness of each faith tradition.⁸⁵

4.7.2 Case Studies of Interfaith Initiatives

The Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) in the United States, founded by Eboo Patel, is a prime example of an organization embodying Hamidullah's principles. The IFYC's mission is to build a movement of young people from diverse religious backgrounds committed to interfaith dialogue and collaborative service. This organization's approach aligns closely with Hamidullah's advocacy for recognizing shared values and respecting religious differences, as it fosters a space where young people can engage in meaningful conversations and joint actions while honouring their diverse religious identities.⁸⁶ In the United Kingdom, the Three Faiths Forum (3FF) works tirelessly to build understanding and lasting relationships between people of all faiths and beliefs. The 3FF's programmes, which encourage dialogue and interaction, foster a culture of respect and mutual understanding – principles that resonate deeply with Hamidullah's teachings. The 3FF emphasises open dialogue and knowledge-sharing among faith traditions, which mirrors Hamidullah's call for informed and respectful interfaith engagements.⁸⁷

The Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama in India, is another organization that reflects Hamidullah's vision. It organizes interfaith dialogues and workshops, promoting compassion, tolerance, and mutual respect among religious communities. This organization's work echoes Hamidullah's emphasis on

⁸⁵ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 43-47.

⁸⁶ Eboo Patel, *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016), 34.

⁸⁷ Shana Cohen, "Assessing the Impact of Interfaith Initiatives," in *Evaluating Interreligious Peacebuilding and Dialogue: Methods and Frameworks* 3 (2021): 197.

fostering understanding and peace through dialogue, reflecting his belief in the power of interreligious engagement to bridge divides and build a more harmonious society.⁸⁸

Hamidullah's work also has significant implications for academic and educational settings. His approach to interreligious textual analysis and comparative religious studies offers a valuable pedagogical tool for religious education. By incorporating Hamidullah's methods in academic curricula, educational institutions can foster a generation of students who are well-versed in the principles of interfaith dialogue and understanding. This educational undertaking prepares individuals to contribute positively to a religiously diverse world.

Furthermore, Hamidullah's insights into historical events like the Treaty of Hudaibiyah provide contemporary leaders and diplomats with models for conflict resolution and peacebuilding. His analysis of these events underscores the importance of strategic thinking, patience, and a commitment to ethical principles in diplomacy – qualities essential for addressing the complex challenges of the modern world.⁸⁹ In interfaith dialogue, Hamidullah's contributions have been instrumental in shaping a more inclusive and empathetic approach within the Muslim community. His work encourages Muslims to engage more actively and constructively in interfaith initiatives, helping to build bridges of understanding and cooperation with followers of other faiths. This approach is particularly significant in countering religious exclusivist narratives and fostering a more pluralistic and peaceful world.

Hamidullah's emphasis on shared ethical and moral foundations across religions also offers a counter-narrative to religious extremism. By highlighting the shared values and teachings in different religious scriptures, Hamidullah provides a foundation for interfaith solidarity and collective action on global issues such as social justice, environmental stewardship, and human rights. His work demonstrates the potential of interfaith collaboration in addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time.⁹⁰ In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the study of interfaith relationships are invaluable, offering profound insights and practical guidance for

⁸⁸ Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, *World Peace: Dalai Lama Nobel Peace Prize Laureate* (1989): 29.

⁸⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah, "The Jewish Background of the Battles of Jamal and Siffin," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 30, no. 4 (1982): 235.

⁹⁰ Saheer A.F. Muzaffar, "Practicable Ideals? A Proposal for Revitalizing the Rights of Forced Migrants in Islam," *Journal of Refugee Studies* 14, no. 3 (2001): 250-275.

contemporary interfaith engagement. His work is a testament to the Islamic commitment to dialogue, understanding, and coexistence, guiding current and future efforts to build harmonious relations between diverse faith communities. Hamidullah's legacy inspires individuals and organizations worldwide, underscoring his scholarly work's enduring relevance and impact in promoting a more inclusive, peaceful, and interconnected world.

4.8 ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INITIATIVES IN PROMOTING PEACE AND UNDERSTANDING

The effectiveness of interfaith initiatives in fostering peace and understanding is a multi-dimensional and vital aspect of contemporary society, reflecting the increasing interconnectedness and diversity of the global community. These initiatives are essential in bridging gaps between religious communities and fostering a harmonious coexistence based on mutual respect and shared values. Evaluating their impact requires a comprehensive understanding of various metrics and indicators.

4.8.1 Creating Spaces for Dialogue and Mutual Learning

Creating spaces for dialogue and mutual learning is a fundamental aspect of effective interfaith initiatives, a concept significantly underscored in the works of Muhammad Hamidullah. These platforms are crucial as they enable individuals from diverse religious backgrounds to share their beliefs, interact, and learn about each other's faith traditions. This process is instrumental in dismantling barriers of ignorance and misunderstanding, which are often at the root of religious intolerance and conflict. Hamidullah's scholarly work, particularly his nuanced approach to the People of the Book, or *Ahl al-Kitab*, serves as a guiding framework for these dialogues, emphasizing the importance of mutual understanding and shared monotheistic roots in fostering interfaith relationships.⁹¹ Structured conversations within these dialogues, as encouraged by Hamidullah, are essential. They allow participants to discuss their faiths openly and honestly, creating an environment where empathy is developed and

⁹¹ S. Ayse Kadayifci-Orellana, "Inter-Religious Dialogue and Peacebuilding," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Inter-Religious Dialogue*, ed. Catherine Cornille (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 149-167.

stereotypes are challenged. This setting enables individuals to confront and reassess their preconceived notions about other faiths, leading to a more nuanced understanding and appreciation of religious diversity. Hamidullah's emphasis on the divine origins of the Torah and the Bible, as recognized by the Qur'an, supports this exchange of ideas and beliefs, contributing to the broader community by fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect.⁹²

Moreover, the scope of these dialogues often extends beyond mere verbal exchanges. Inspired by Hamidullah's interdisciplinary approach, interfaith initiatives frequently include joint cultural events, workshops, and educational programs. These activities offer opportunities for deeper engagement and a more profound understanding, allowing participants to immerse themselves in the richness of different faith traditions. Joint cultural events, such as festivals or celebrations, provide insightful glimpses into the traditions and practices of different religions, fostering a greater appreciation and respect for each other's beliefs. Educational programmes in these initiatives play a crucial role. They are structured to provide comprehensive knowledge about different religions, addressing common misconceptions and offering historical and cultural contexts vital for understanding each faith's complexities. Through these educational endeavours, deeply aligned with Hamidullah's scholarly work, participants understand the similarities and differences between religions, leading to more respectful and informed interfaith interactions.⁹³

These dialogues and educational programmes also help participants develop critical skills necessary for living in a pluralistic society. Skills such as active listening, empathy, respectful questioning, and articulating one's beliefs are nurtured. These are essential for constructive conversations about faith, aligning with Hamidullah's vision of a world where religious beliefs often intersect with public life and policy. Interfaith dialogues are significant in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, especially in regions with high religious tensions. Hamidullah's insights into the historical interactions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) with various religious groups provide timeless examples of tolerance and wisdom. In these contexts, interfaith initiatives, drawing upon

⁹² Andrew Orton, "Interfaith Dialogue: Seven Key Questions for Theory, Policy and Practice," *Religion, State & Society* 44, no. 4 (2016): 349-365.

⁹³ Renee L. Bowling, "Religious Literacy and Interfaith Cooperation: Toward a Common Understanding," *Religious Education* 117, no. 1 (2022): 4-18.

Hamidullah's work, can serve as vital platforms for reducing misunderstandings and building trust between religious communities. By bringing people together to share stories and perspectives, interfaith dialogues, underpinned by Hamidullah's teachings, can help dismantle walls of division and foster a sense of shared humanity.⁹⁴

Furthermore, these dialogues often inspire participants to engage actively in their communities. After participating in interfaith learning, individuals guided by the principles outlined by Hamidullah are more likely to be involved in community service projects, advocacy work, or other activities that promote social cohesion and understanding. This engagement is crucial in creating more inclusive and harmonious communities.⁹⁵ In summary, creating spaces for dialogue and mutual learning, as Muhammad Hamidullah advocates, is a cornerstone of successful interfaith initiatives. These platforms are essential for sharing beliefs and traditions and fostering an environment where empathy, understanding, and mutual respect are developed. Hamidullah's work significantly contributes to breaking down barriers of ignorance, promoting a culture of inclusivity, and building a more harmonious and tolerant society. These initiatives are about understanding each other's beliefs and building resilient relationships and communities in the face of division and conflict. Through these efforts, interfaith initiatives, inspired by Hamidullah's teachings, contribute significantly to a more peaceful and cohesive world where diversity is accepted and celebrated.

The effectiveness of these dialogues in fostering understanding and peace, as demonstrated in Hamidullah's work, is evident in various global contexts. In areas where religious strife is prevalent, interfaith dialogues, grounded in Hamidullah's teachings, have been instrumental in initiating conversations that challenge the status quo and pave the way for reconciliation and healing. Additionally, these dialogues contribute to a broader societal understanding of religious pluralism. They help dispel myths and prejudices surrounding certain faiths, promoting a more accurate and holistic view of various religious traditions. This broader understanding, deeply influenced by

⁹⁴ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Amal Khoury, and Emily Welty, *Unity in Diversity: Interfaith Dialogue in the Middle East* (Washington, DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 34-37.

⁹⁵ Sachi Edwards, *Critical Conversations About Religion: Promises and Pitfalls of a Social Justice Approach to Interfaith Dialogue* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2016), 1-14.

Hamidullah's scholarship, is critical in a world increasingly characterized by religious diversity.

Interfaith initiatives also play a role in shaping public policy and societal norms. By bringing diverse religious perspectives to the table, these dialogues, reflecting Hamidullah's inclusive approach, ensure that multiple voices are heard in formulating policies affecting religious communities. This inclusive approach is vital for developing respectful policies and considering different religious beliefs and practices. Furthermore, the educational implications of these dialogues, particularly in academic settings, resonate with Hamidullah's emphasis on education. In schools and universities, interfaith initiatives can provide a framework for inclusive and respectful discussion of religion, a sensitive topic. These discussions, aligned with Hamidullah's vision, can be instrumental in nurturing a more knowledgeable, respectful, and tolerant generation of different faiths.

4.8.2 Inspiring Collaborative Action

Inspiring collaborative action is a critical aspect of interfaith initiatives, as highlighted by the teachings of Muhammad Hamidullah. These initiatives extend beyond conversation, promoting joint service projects where individuals from diverse faith backgrounds collaborate to address common social challenges. Such collaborative actions, grounded in Hamidullah's principles, are practical demonstrations of interfaith cooperation, showcasing how people with different beliefs can unite for the greater good. These projects often tackle significant issues like poverty alleviation, environmental conservation, and community development, underlining the universal values shared across religions and aligning with Hamidullah's emphasis on shared social responsibility.⁹⁶

Hamidullah's teachings have highlighted the importance of collaborative efforts among faith groups, particularly in addressing societal issues. His interpretations of Islamic texts encourage Muslims to engage in positive and respectful relationships with people of other faiths. He advocates for shared social responsibilities and active

⁹⁶ John Andrew Morrow, *The Islamic Interfaith Initiative: No Fear Shall Be Upon Them* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), 78.

engagement in societal welfare, regardless of religious differences. This ethos is reflected in interfaith projects that address critical societal issues, demonstrating the practical application of these teachings. The success of these collaborative actions is not solely measured by their tangible outcomes but also by the relationships they foster among participants. When individuals from various faith backgrounds work together on shared goals, it creates a unique opportunity for them to build trust and understanding. This environment is crucial for breaking down prejudices, as participants witness firsthand the shared values and goals that transcend their religious affiliations. Hamidullah's work underscores the importance of such interactions in fostering mutual understanding and respect among different religious communities.⁹⁷

Joint service projects, such as community clean-ups, food drives, or educational workshops, embody Hamidullah's vision of interfaith cooperation. These initiatives enable participants to engage in meaningful work that benefits the wider community, fostering a sense of solidarity and shared purpose that transcends religious differences. Moreover, the collaborative nature of these projects provides a platform for participants to learn about each other's faith in a more informal and practical context, further deepening their understanding and respect for one another. Furthermore, these joint efforts often lead to the development of long-lasting relationships and networks, echoing Hamidullah's advocacy for sustained interfaith dialogue and cooperation. The bonds formed during these collaborative actions can become the foundation for future interfaith activities and initiatives, creating a ripple effect of positive change within communities. This aspect of interfaith collaboration is essential, ensuring interfaith efforts' continuity and long-term impact.⁹⁸

Additionally, collaborative projects have a broader societal impact, as envisioned by Hamidullah. They are visible and tangible examples of how interfaith cooperation can lead to positive social change, challenging religious division and conflict narratives. By demonstrating the potential of joint action among different faith groups, these initiatives inspire others to participate in similar efforts, amplifying their impact and reach. The capacity of interfaith initiatives to inspire collaborative action is

⁹⁷ Yasin Aktay, "Religious Bureaucracy, Re-Interpretation of Islamic Teachings in Turkey: An Interview by Prof. Yasin Aktay with Prof. Ali Bardakoğlu," *Sociology of Islam* 1, no. aop (2023): 1-21.

⁹⁸ Mischa Altmann, Aniko Bunta, and Olivier Mazimpaka, "Religion & Sustainability: The Contribution of Religious Belief in Moving Society Towards Sustainability" (2012): 34.

a crucial measure of their effectiveness.⁹⁹ These joint efforts address significant social challenges and foster community and mutual understanding among participants from diverse religious backgrounds. By working together towards shared goals, individuals from different faiths can break down barriers of prejudice and build a more cohesive and compassionate society. The broader implications of such collaborative efforts are profound. They represent a shift from passive coexistence to active cooperation, as Hamidullah advocates.¹⁰⁰

The educational impact of these collaborations is noteworthy. Joint educational programmes and workshops conducted by interfaith groups provide platforms for dialogue and learning, fostering a deeper understanding of different cultural and religious perspectives among young people. These educational efforts are instrumental in shaping a generation that is more informed, empathetic, and equipped to navigate a religiously diverse world.¹⁰¹ Hamidullah's work, which includes comparative religious studies, provides a scholarly foundation for such educational endeavours, emphasizing the importance of knowledge and understanding in interfaith relations. Moreover, the success of interfaith collaborative actions has significant implications for peacebuilding efforts. In areas rife with conflict, interfaith collaborations have provided neutral grounds for dialogue and conflict resolution, helping to ease tensions and build bridges between divided communities. These efforts highlight the role of faith communities as peacemakers, utilizing their moral authority and grassroots connections to foster reconciliation and peace. Hamidullah's insights into the peaceful teachings of Islam and his emphasis on dialogue and mutual respect make his work particularly relevant in these contexts.¹⁰²

In short, the ability of interfaith initiatives to inspire collaborative action significantly contributes to their effectiveness. These efforts echo Hamidullah's teachings beyond fostering tolerance and actively engaging diverse religious

⁹⁹ Shana Cohen, "Assessing the Impact of Interfaith Initiatives," in *Evaluating Interreligious Peacebuilding and Dialogue: Methods and Frameworks* 3 (2021): 197.

¹⁰⁰ Scott Blakemore, "Faith-Based Diplomacy and Interfaith Dialogue," *Brill Research Perspectives in Diplomacy and Foreign Policy* 3, no. 2 (2019): 1-124.

¹⁰¹ Sidrah Shoaib and Asia Shabbir, "Interfaith Dialogue; Role of Diverse Trends in Peace Building," *AL-Qalam* 26, no. 1 (2021): 346-365.

¹⁰² Reina C. Neufeldt, "Interfaith Dialogue: Assessing Theories of Change," *Peace & Change* 36, no. 3 (2011): 344-372.

communities in meaningful partnerships that address critical social issues. By working collaboratively, individuals from different faith backgrounds demonstrate the power of unity and cooperation, setting a precedent for a more inclusive, empathetic, and collaborative society. The positive outcomes of these initiatives extend across various sectors, including community development, environmental conservation, education, and peacebuilding, underscoring the far-reaching impact of collaborative interfaith actions.

4.8.3 The Ongoing Relevance of Hamidullah's Teachings

The enduring relevance of Hamidullah's teachings in contemporary interfaith dialogue and cooperation is profoundly evident in the ethos and activities of various modern organizations. These groups skilfully demonstrate how Hamidullah's principles of dialogue, mutual respect, and collaborative action are effectively applied in diverse contexts to foster peace and understanding. Their initiatives and programmes stand as living embodiments of the enduring impact of Hamidullah's work and highlight his significant contribution to the foundation of effective interfaith dialogue and cooperation.¹⁰³ The Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC) exemplifies Hamidullah's teachings in action. Dedicated to empowering young individuals from various faith backgrounds, the IFYC aligns with Hamidullah's vision of fostering understanding across diverse religious groups. This focus on youth leverages their openness to new ideas and potential to influence community attitudes positively. The IFYC's initiatives, such as training workshops and leadership seminars, immerse young people in the practical aspects of interfaith dialogue, thereby cultivating a new generation of leaders committed to advancing interfaith understanding.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, the Three Faiths Forum (3FF) enhances interfaith understanding through its comprehensive educational programmes and dialogue sessions. By addressing the root causes of religious misunderstanding and conflict, the 3FF equips individuals with essential knowledge and skills for effective interfaith engagement,

¹⁰³ Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Islam and Buddhism Relations from Balkh to Bangkok and Tokyomuwo_1312 177. 186," *The Muslim World* 100 (2010): 1-6.

¹⁰⁴ Megan A. Weiss, "Interfaith Youth Core: Theology and Religious Commitment in One of America's Most Prominent Youth Interfaith Organizations" (Thesis, College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, Spring 2016), 11-19.

reflecting Hamidullah's emphasis on education as a crucial element in building interfaith relationships.¹⁰⁵ The Forum's programmes provide safe environments for individuals to explore and appreciate the diversity of religious beliefs, fostering mutual respect and understanding. The Foundation for Universal Responsibility, established by the Dalai Lama, reflects another aspect of Hamidullah's teachings. This organization promotes ethical and compassionate actions among individuals from various religious and cultural backgrounds. It emphasizes shared values across different faiths and underscores the importance of ethics and compassion in creating a peaceful world, mirroring Hamidullah's principles.¹⁰⁶

The impact of Hamidullah's teachings on these organizations is significant. They create platforms for dialogue and build bridges of understanding, cultivating mutual respect among various religious communities. Their application of interfaith cooperation in addressing societal challenges showcases the tangible benefits of embracing Hamidullah's interfaith engagement approach.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, the legacy of Hamidullah's teachings extends beyond the immediate outcomes of these programmes. By instilling values of dialogue, mutual respect, and collaborative action in participants, these organizations contribute to the long-term goal of establishing a more inclusive and harmonious global society. They prepare individuals to coexist peacefully with those of different faiths and actively engage with and learn from each other.

These initiatives have effectively bridged cultural and religious divides, demonstrating that Hamidullah's vision for a cohesive and respectful global community is aspirational and achievable. The IFYC's youth-focused approach ensures that the principles of interfaith dialogue and cooperation are ingrained in the next generation. The 3FF's educational approach tackles misconceptions and prejudices at their root, promoting a deeper, more empathetic understanding of different faith traditions. The Foundation for Universal Responsibility extends the scope of interfaith dialogue by incorporating ethical and moral considerations, fostering shared responsibility among people from different backgrounds. Additionally, these organizations frequently

¹⁰⁵ Shana Cohen, "Assessing the Impact of Interfaith Initiatives," in *Evaluating Interreligious Peacebuilding and Dialogue: Methods and Frameworks* 3 (2021): 197.

¹⁰⁶ Patricia Guernelli Palazzo Tsai, "Universal Responsibility as a Key Concept for an Interreligious Dialogue with the Mahāyāna Geluk Tradition," *CrossCurrents* 72, no. 4 (2022): 307-322.

¹⁰⁷ Jennifer Bose and O. K. Clinton, "Interfaith Service," *Youth Theology Institute Journal* (2012): 21.

collaborate with stakeholders, including educational institutions, community groups, and policymakers. Such collaborations are essential for creating a broad-based movement toward interfaith understanding and cooperation.¹⁰⁸

In essence, the work of these organizations, inspired by Hamidullah's teachings, embodies a comprehensive approach to interfaith dialogue. Their efforts, encompassing education, community engagement, and ethical discourse, are crucial in addressing the complexities of interfaith relations in the modern world and pave the way for a future where religious diversity is celebrated as a vital component of human society. Hamidullah's influence extends to how these organizations engage in interfaith dialogue and action. His scholarly approach, combining deep Islamic knowledge with an understanding and respect for other religions, is a model for how interfaith engagement should be conducted. This approach is not about diluting one's faith but about understanding and respecting the beliefs of others, finding common ground, and working together for the common good.¹⁰⁹

The success of these organizations in promoting interfaith understanding and cooperation underscores the timeless nature of Hamidullah's teachings. His work dates back several decades and remains relevant and influential in today's increasingly interconnected and diverse world. Hamidullah's approach to interfaith dialogue, characterized by respect, empathy, and a commitment to learning, inspires those involved in interfaith work. Furthermore, the effectiveness of these organizations in fostering interfaith harmony has broader implications for global peace and understanding. In a world where religious misunderstandings often lead to conflict, the principles espoused by Hamidullah and practised by these organizations provide a path to greater harmony and cooperation. By bringing people of different faiths together to dialogue, learn, and work on joint projects, these organizations help break down suspicion barriers and build bridges of understanding.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Hossain B. Danesh, "Towards an Integrative Theory of Peace Education," *Journal of Peace Education* 3, no. 1 (2006): 55-78.

¹⁰⁹ Yetkin Yildirim, "The Madinah Charter: A Historical Case of Conflict Resolution," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 20, no. 4 (2009): 439-450.

¹¹⁰ Daniel Yankelovich, *The Magic of Dialogue: Transforming Conflict into Cooperation* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 78.

In addition to fostering understanding and cooperation, these organizations contribute to societal development. Their collaborative projects and initiatives address various societal challenges, including poverty, environmental degradation, and education. These efforts demonstrate the practical application of interfaith cooperation in improving lives and communities, reflecting Hamidullah's belief in the role of religion in societal welfare. In conclusion, the ongoing relevance of Muhammad Hamidullah's teachings is evident in the work of organizations like the IFYC, 3FF, and the Foundation for Universal Responsibility. Their diverse and impactful initiatives showcase Hamidullah's enduring influence and are crucial in promoting peace, understanding, and cooperation among the world's diverse religious communities. Their success underscores the timeless nature of Hamidullah's teachings and their critical role in guiding contemporary efforts toward achieving interfaith harmony and mutual respect.¹¹¹

4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this comprehensive analysis, the study has meticulously examined the invaluable contributions of Muhammad Hamidullah in the realm of Islamic thought, focusing mainly on interfaith relationships. Hamidullah's profound knowledge and insightful perspectives have undeniably established a legacy that continues to guide scholars, practitioners, and enthusiasts in interfaith dialogue. His nuanced approach, particularly towards the People of the Book, or *Ahl al-Kitab*, demonstrates a deep-seated respect and a call for harmonious coexistence based on mutual understanding and shared monotheistic roots. Hamidullah's emphasis on the divine origins of the Torah and the Bible, as recognized by the Qur'an, highlights the recognition of the commonalities among these Abrahamic faiths. This approach fosters respect and mutual recognition, which is crucial for peaceful coexistence. His interpretations and teachings underscore a profound respect for the religious texts of Judaism and Christianity, acknowledging their significant roles in shaping religious thought and culture.

The contemporary relevance of Hamidullah's work is evident in the plethora of interfaith initiatives and dialogues that continue to draw upon his teachings and

¹¹¹ Dagmar Grefe, *Encounters for Change: Interreligious Cooperation in the Care of Individuals and Communities* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 256.

principles. Modern endeavours, such as the Interfaith Youth Core and the Three Faiths Forum, embody the spirit of Hamidullah's call for dialogue, mutual understanding, and collaborative action. These initiatives, assessed through their ability to foster dialogue, inspire collaborative service, and transform attitudes, highlight the enduring impact and practical applicability of Hamidullah's contributions.

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly legacy in the domain of interfaith relationships is both profound and far-reaching. His balanced approach, deep respect for diverse faith traditions, and practical frameworks for interfaith engagement inspire and guide contemporary efforts toward fostering a world characterized by understanding, respect, and peaceful coexistence. Through its comprehensive analysis of Hamidullah's works and the contemporary applications of his teachings, this study underscores the timeless relevance and vital importance of his contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships. His legacy illuminates the path toward a more harmonious and inclusive world. It serves as a reminder of the shared values and common humanity that bind us all, regardless of our religious affiliations. Hamidullah's work exemplifies a bridge between historical scholarship and modern application, making his contributions a treasure of Islamic intellectual history and a beacon for current and future interfaith endeavours.

In a world increasingly divided by religious misunderstandings and conflicts, the teachings of Hamidullah provide a roadmap for dialogue and mutual respect. His insistence on recognizing the shared monotheistic roots of the Abrahamic faiths offers a platform for deeper understanding and collaboration among followers of these religions. His scholarly work, characterized by rigour and an empathetic approach to other faiths, is a model for current scholars and practitioners in interfaith dialogue. In essence, Hamidullah's work transcends the boundaries of time and geography. It offers timeless principles for interfaith engagement, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, education, and a collaborative spirit. His teachings continue to resonate in the initiatives and programmes of contemporary organizations dedicated to fostering interfaith understanding.

These organizations, driven by Hamidullah's principles, play a critical role in addressing the challenges of religious diversity in the modern world. In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the study and practice of interfaith

relationships remain indispensable. His work guides pursuit of a more understanding, respectful, and peaceful world. The enduring relevance of his teachings in contemporary interfaith initiatives is a testament to the universality and timelessness of his insights into the complex dynamics of interfaith relationships. Hamidullah's legacy, therefore, not only enriches Islamic scholarship but also continues to inspire and inform efforts toward building a more harmonious global community.



CHAPTER FIVE

MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH’S METHODOLOGY IN INTERFAITH DEVELOPMENT

5.1 GLOBAL PEACE AND INTERFAITH HARMONY

The aspiration for global peace and interfaith harmony has been a perennial pursuit for intellectuals, spiritual leaders, and policymakers worldwide. This pursuit is grounded in the understanding that peace does not stem from the silencing of discordant voices but from the symphony of diverse perspectives harmonizing through dialogue and mutual respect. The role of interfaith dialogue in promoting such global peace is paramount. It fosters an environment where the followers of the world’s major religions—Muslims, Christians, and Jews—can come together not just in the spirit of tolerance but with the intent to understand, respect, and find common ground.¹ Interfaith dialogue is an intricate process that transcends the mere exchange of beliefs. It is an endeavour that seeks to establish a connection on a deeper philosophical and ethical level.

Muhammad Hamidullah’s work presents a thoughtful exploration of the moral fibres that provide knowledge of monotheistic religions. He offers a nuanced approach to the Qur’anic verses that address the *Ahl-al-Kitāb*—a term used within Islam to refer to Jews and Christians. One of the most pivotal verses implores, “*O people of the book, come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but God*”.² This call is emblematic of the pursuit of common theological and ethical grounds for fruitful interfaith dialogue.³

The historical coexistence of Muslims, Christians, and Jews within Islamic societies provides a testament to the practicality of such harmonious living. The life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), as depicted in the *Sīrah*, was rich with his interactions with non-Muslim communities characterized by mutual respect and coexistence.

¹ Giancarlo Anello, *Global Religions and Interreligious Dialogue Today: A Legal Perspective* (Padua: Cedam, 2022), 11.

² Quran, *Surah Al-Nisā’* 3:64.

³ Thameem Ushama and Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani, “Muhammad Hamidullah’s Role in Interfaith Dialogue,” *Al-Risalah: Journal of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (ARJIHS)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 295-311.

Muhammad Hamidullah's analysis of these events showcases them not as mere past occurrences but as exemplary models for contemporary interfaith engagement.⁴ The principles derived from these historical narratives illustrate Islam's inherent commitment to respectful engagement with other faiths founded on justice and equality.

In today's interconnected global landscape, the dialogue between different faiths is challenging. Misunderstandings and misinterpretations can and do lead to conflict. However, Muhammad Hamidullah firmly believes that education and shared knowledge could achieve unprecedented global harmony. He stresses that a sophisticated understanding of the teachings of different religions and a commitment to empathetic engagement are pivotal in dispelling misconceptions and fostering peace. His emphasis on sincerity and the genuine desire to understand the 'other' reflects his methodological approach to interfaith dialogue.⁵

Hamidullah's perspective on dialogue is anchored in the belief that it should be an engagement that delves into different faiths' theological and moral dimensions. It should be a space where individuals are willing to listen, learn, and reflect upon the values and beliefs of others. This form of dialogue does not seek to dilute one's faith but to enrich the understanding of the world's diverse expressions of divine worship and human spirituality. Muhammad Hamidullah's writings on coexistence celebrate the diversity within the human family. He posits that the common Abrahamic heritage of Muslims, Christians, and Jews lays a solid foundation for dialogue and cooperation. This shared heritage, steeped in centuries of scriptural and traditional interlinkages, is evidence of the interwoven history and mutual influence these faith communities have had on one another.⁶

The practical application of interfaith dialogue in promoting global peace is multifarious. It spans the realms of academic discourse, community engagement, and personal relationships. When individuals from different religious backgrounds come together in dialogue, they contribute to a culture of peace that transcends doctrinal differences. The Qur'anic vision of dialogue, as interpreted by Muhammad Hamidullah,

⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, "A Note on the Notion of Khilafat and Its Modern Application," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 4, no. 4 (1956): 278-284.

⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah, "Muhammad Rasulullah: A Concise Survey of the Life and Work of the Founder of Islam," Series (1974): 23-26.

⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam Peygamberi* (Istanbul: Beyan Yayinlari, 1966), 45.

is one of proactive engagement, where peace is actively pursued through pathways of justice, knowledge, and understanding.⁷ Hamidullah's insights provide a comprehensive and actionable framework for engaging with individuals of differing religious backgrounds. His scholarly work serves as a beacon for those intent on nurturing peace and harmony in a world characterized by religious diversity. By championing respectful and informed dialogue between Muslims, Christians, and Jews, he has laid a solid foundation for interfaith relations that can significantly enhance the quest for global peace. His legacy is a powerful reminder of the transformative power of dialogue—rooted in respect, empathy, and a collective commitment to the common good.

Hamidullah's commitment to dialogue is more than a theoretical proposition; it is a call to action for individuals and communities to engage in meaningful exchanges that transcend the superficiality of platitudes and reach into the core of shared human experiences. His approach to interfaith dialogue is not one of compromise or syncretism but of mutual recognition and respect for the integrity of each faith tradition. The contemporary relevance of Muhammad Hamidullah's work lies in its practical application to current interfaith initiatives. His emphasis on dialogue provides a roadmap for de-escalation and reconciliation in a world where inter-religious tensions can escalate into conflict. He presents a model of engagement where each participant enters the dialogue with the intention not to convert but to understand and not to defeat but to discover.⁸ This process is inherently educational, as it requires participants to articulate their own beliefs but also to listen to the narratives of others actively.

Hamidullah's perspective is rooted in the Islamic principle of *'adl* (justice), which is essential for any meaningful interfaith dialogue. Justice in this context is not limited to legalistic interpretations but encompasses the broader ethical imperative to recognize the dignity and worth of every individual, regardless of their religious affiliation. This is reflected in the Qur'an's exhortation to Muslims to engage with others in "*the way that is best*", implying a conversation characterized by kindness, respect, and clarity.⁹ The importance of interfaith dialogue, as envisioned by Muhammad Hamidullah, extends beyond preventing conflict; it is a proactive step

⁷ Qur'an, *Surah al-Mā'idah*, 5:48.

⁸ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Introduction to Islam*, 3rd ed. (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1968): 23-29.

⁹ Qur'an, *Surah al-Nahl* 16:125

towards building a cohesive society where diversity is celebrated and different religious communities can work together towards common goals. Such dialogue can foster a shared sense of belonging and citizenship, where different faiths contribute to the social fabric in a spirit of cooperation and mutual enrichment.

Moreover, Hamidullah's approach to interfaith dialogue underscores the importance of shared ethical and moral values as a basis for collaboration. He argues that while theological differences are significant, the ethical teachings of love, compassion, and service to humanity are universal values that can unite people across religious divides.¹⁰ These values can drive social action and community service, enabling people of different faiths to come together to address societal challenges such as poverty, injustice, and environmental degradation. Muhammad Hamidullah also recognizes the emotional and spiritual dimensions of interfaith dialogue. He acknowledges that religious beliefs are deeply personal and can evoke strong emotions. As such, interfaith dialogue requires sensitivity and empathy to express these emotions in a safe and respectful environment. By sharing personal religious experiences and narratives, individuals can connect on a human level, fostering empathy and understanding.¹¹

In conclusion, Hamidullah's contributions to global peace and interfaith harmony discourse are timeless and timely. His work offers a paradigm that is not only informed by the rich traditions of Islamic scholarship but is also deeply attuned to the complexities of modern interreligious relationships. Muhammad Hamidullah has provided a valuable framework for individuals and communities seeking to build bridges across religious divides by advocating for a dialogue based on mutual respect, shared values, and empathetic understanding. His legacy is one of hope and possibility—a reminder that the vision of a peaceful and harmonious world is within reach through respectful engagement and shared commitment.

¹⁰ Abdul Azim Islahi, *Muhammad Hamidullah and His Pioneering Works on Islamic Economics* (Jeddah: Scientific Publishing Centre, King Abdulaziz University, 2014), p. 1-258.

¹¹ Thameem Ushama and Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani, "Muhammad Hamidullah's Role in Interfaith Dialogue," *Al-Risalah: Journal of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (ARJIHS)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 295-311.

5.2 MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH'S COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO *AHL-AL-KITĀB*

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly endeavours within Islamic jurisprudence and interfaith dialogue have been marked by a distinct comparative approach, particularly towards the *Ahl-al-Kitāb*, or People of the Book, a term employed within Islamic discourse to refer to Jews and Christians. His work in this area is characterized by meticulous examination and analysis to uncover common ground between Islam and the other Abrahamic faiths. Muhammad Hamidullah's efforts have contributed to the scholarly field and provided practical pathways for interfaith understanding and cooperation.¹² In the context of the Qur'an, the term *Ahl-al-Kitāb* is used to denote a relationship of respect towards Jews and Christians, recognizing the shared monotheistic heritage and the revelation of earlier scriptures.

Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* is rooted in the Qur'anic directive that calls for respectful engagement with them. One of the pivotal verses that guide this engagement is found in the Qur'an, where God says, "*And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in the best way, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, 'We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.'*"¹³ According to Muhammad Hamidullah, this verse sets the tone for a constructive and peaceful dialogue based on mutual belief in God and shared values.

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarship often highlights the scriptural similarities between the Qur'an and the earlier revelations, such as the Torah and the Gospel. He notes numerous instances where the Qur'an corroborates the narratives found in the Bible, such as the stories of prophets like Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. His comparative analysis extends to these texts' moral and ethical teachings, emphasising compassion, justice, and the importance of community.¹⁴ Through this examination, Muhammad Hamidullah affirms that while distinct theological elements are unique to each faith, the moral imperatives guiding human conduct are strikingly convergent. One

¹² Shaheen Sardar Ali and Javaid Rehman, "The Concept of Jihad in Islamic International Law," *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 10, no. 3 (2005): 321-343.

¹³ Quran, Surah Al- 'Ankabūt 29:46

¹⁴ M. Hussain Amjad, "The Muslim Theological Perception of the Scriptures of the Ahl al-Kitāb," *Malakand University Research Journal of Islamic Studies (MURJIS)* ISSN: 2708-6577 1, no. 2 (2019): 9-19.

of the areas where Muhammad Hamidullah's work is particularly poignant is in examining the concept of covenant in both the Qur'an and the Bible. He draws parallels between the Qur'anic notion of God's covenant with humanity and the Biblical accounts of covenants between God and the prophets. This shared concept of a divine covenant, according to Muhammad Hamidullah, provides a profound commonality that can serve as a cornerstone for interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding.¹⁵

Muhammad Hamidullah's comparative method also thoroughly analyses the theological discussions that have historically shaped Muslim-Christian-Jewish relations. He examines the theological debates in medieval times and the more contemporary discussions in the modern context. Through this historical lens, Muhammad Hamidullah provides insights into how these interreligious debates have evolved and how they can be reframed to foster greater understanding.¹⁶ In his analysis, Muhammad Hamidullah does not hesitate to address the doctrinal differences among the religions. He believes that acknowledging these differences is crucial for an honest dialogue. However, he emphasizes that interfaith engagement should not focus on the points of contention but rather on the shared beliefs and values that can unite individuals and communities. Muhammad Hamidullah argues that such a focus can lead to a collaborative effort toward common objectives, such as social justice, peace, and the betterment of humanity.¹⁷

The practical application of Muhammad Hamidullah's comparative approach is evident in his encouragement of interfaith initiatives that bring together Muslims, Christians, and Jews to work on community development projects, educational programmes, and peacebuilding activities. By engaging in joint efforts, adherents of these faiths can experience firsthand the teachings of compassion and service central to their respective scriptures. Muhammad Hamidullah also recognizes the role of religious leaders and scholars in facilitating this process of finding common ground. He calls for an informed clergy who are well-versed in their traditions and knowledgeable about other faiths. This knowledge, he posits, is essential for leading congregations in a way

¹⁵ Ismail Albayrak, "The People of the Book in the Qur'an," *Islamic Studies* 47, no. 2 (2008): 301-325.

¹⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 45.

¹⁷ Shaheen Sardar Ali and Javaid Rehman, "The Concept of Jihad in Islamic International Law," *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 10, no. 3 (2005): 321-343.

that promotes mutual respect and cooperation rather than division and misunderstanding.¹⁸

Another significant aspect of Muhammad Hamidullah's comparative work is his attention to religious texts' linguistic and historical contexts. He advocates for carefully reading scriptures that consider the original language, cultural background, and historical circumstances in which the texts were revealed or written. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the meanings and intentions behind the scriptures, reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation and misrepresentation.¹⁹ This meticulous attention to context enriches the interfaith dialogue and paves the way for a more nuanced appreciation of each other's religious heritage. Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly pursuit does not stop at theoretical analysis; he is deeply committed to the practical implications of these scriptural and theological commonalities. He posits that the shared narratives and ethical codes within the sacred texts could serve as a blueprint for collaborative social action. For instance, the emphasis on social justice in both the Bible and the Qur'an could inspire joint initiatives between Muslims, Christians, and Jews to tackle issues such as poverty and inequality. Muhammad Hamidullah sees these shared commitments as opportunities to live out the precepts of one's faith in partnership with others, embodying interfaith cooperation and solidarity.²⁰

Muhammad Hamidullah's approach also extends to the legal frameworks within Islam and Christianity, analysing the similarities and differences in how the two religions approach law and ethics. He notes that while the *Shar'īah* and Canon Law have unique features, they aim to guide the faithful in a life of righteousness and virtue. By comparing the methodologies and objectives of these legal systems, Muhammad Hamidullah provides a platform for mutual understanding among legal scholars and practitioners from different faith traditions. In the context of interfaith education, Muhammad Hamidullah's work has been particularly influential. He advocated for a

¹⁸ David A. Westbrook, "Islamic International Law and Public International Law: Separate Expressions of World Order," *Virginia Journal of International Law* 33 (1992): 819.

¹⁹ Thameem Ushama and Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani, "Muhammad Hamidullah's Role in Interfaith Dialogue," *Al-Risalah: Journal of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (ARJIHS)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 295-311.

²⁰ Abderrazak Belabes, "The Writings of Muhammad Hamidullah in French Trends and Novelties," *Hamdard Islamicus* 40, no. 4 (2017): 25-32.

curriculum that includes the study of world religions, focusing on the values and principles that unite rather than divide. According to Muhammad Hamidullah, such education “can play a pivotal role in shaping the attitudes and perceptions of young minds toward followers of other faiths. It can help cultivate a generation that is tolerant and appreciative of the rich diversity of religious expressions.”²¹

Muhammad Hamidullah is also a strong proponent of interfaith dialogue to resolve conflicts. He believes that many of the world’s disputes have a dimension of religious misunderstanding or intolerance. By bringing together leaders and believers from different faiths to dialogue, Muhammad Hamidullah is convinced that common ground and solutions to seemingly intractable conflicts could be discovered. The impact of Muhammad Hamidullah’s comparative approach goes beyond academic circles. It has influenced policymakers and peacebuilders who recognize the importance of faith-based diplomacy in international relations. Muhammad Hamidullah’s insights into the common ethical ground among the Abrahamic faiths provide a valuable framework for diplomatic initiatives that seek to build bridges across religious divides.²²

Muhammad Hamidullah’s work continues to resonate in the efforts of interfaith organizations worldwide. His commitment to scholarly rigour and a genuine desire for peace has inspired many to continue finding common ground. Organizations promoting interfaith understanding draw upon his methodology, using scriptural reasoning and theological reflection to build relationships and understanding.²³ Muhammad Hamidullah’s comparative approach to the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* is a testament to his lifelong dedication to fostering interfaith understanding and cooperation. His work serves as a reminder of the power of dialogue and the importance of focusing on shared values and beliefs. Muhammad Hamidullah’s legacy is of intellectual openness, compassionate engagement, and an unwavering commitment to pursuing knowledge and understanding across religious lines. Through his scholarly efforts, he has provided a valuable

²¹ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 23.

²² Iymen Nazir, “Comparative Religion” (PhD diss., Central University of Kashmir, 2021), 43.

²³ Zainab Amin, Mohyuddin Hashmi, Samina Begum, and Rashida Parveen, “An Analytical Study of the Scientific and Intellectual Efforts of Muslim Thinkers in the Context of the Reorganization of Islamic Sciences,” *Journal of Positive School Psychology* 7, no. 6 (2023): 793-808.

blueprint for interfaith dialogue that remains relevant and vital to the ongoing efforts for global peace and communal harmony.

5.3 INTERFAITH RELATIONS: INSIGHTS FROM THE *SĪRAH*

The life of Prophet Muhammad, known as the *Sīrah*, is a chronicle replete with dialogue, engagement, and mutual respect between Muslims and the *Ahl-al-Kitāb*. As narrated in Islamic tradition, these historical encounters offer profound insights into interfaith relations and remain an essential reference for contemporary discourse.²⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, with his extensive research on the *Sīrah*, provides an analytical lens through which these interactions can be understood and applied in the modern context of interfaith dialogue. One of the most significant case studies from the *Sīrah* that illustrates interfaith relations is the *Constitution of Madinah*, which the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) established upon his migration to the city. This document is considered by many scholars, including Muhammad Hamidullah, as one of the earliest examples of a pluralistic constitution. It granted equal rights to all citizens of Medina, irrespective of their religion, and set forth principles for communal harmony and collective security. The *Constitution of Madinah* not only delineated rights and responsibilities for Muslims, Jews, and other tribes but also provided a framework for the peaceful resolution of disputes and established the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as a leader for all city inhabitants, thus setting a precedent for interfaith governance.²⁵

Muhammad Hamidullah's interpretation of this historic event highlights the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) commitment to principles of justice, inclusivity, and community welfare. He posits that the *Constitution of Madinah* exemplifies the Islamic ethos of societal peace and coexistence, where the community's welfare is placed above sectarian interests. In today's context, this document serves as a model for societies seeking to create inclusive legal frameworks that accommodate diverse religious

²⁴ Hafiz Muhammad Waseem Abbas, Aqsa Tariq, Usman Liaqat, Zainab Iftikhar, Hafiz Saeed Ahmed, and Hafiz Sajid Mahmood, "Dimensions of International Relations: Principles from the Seerah of Holy Prophet (PBUH)," *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology* 19, no. 4 (2022): 1131-1140.

²⁵ Riaz Ahmad Saeed, "Muslim-Christian Relations in the Era of Prophet Muhammad: Review of Najrān Delegation's Case in Modern Context," *Al-Milal: Journal of Religion and Thought* 1, no. 2 (2019): 17-37.

groups.²⁶ Another pivotal event in the *Sīrah* is the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) interaction with the Christian delegation from Najrān. The delegation visited Medina to engage in a theological discussion with the Prophet. Instead of a confrontational debate, a respectful dialogue ensued that allowed both parties to present their religious perspectives. Muhammad Hamidullah notes that the Prophet even offered the Christian delegation the use of his mosque to perform their prayers.²⁷ This act of hospitality towards the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* underscores the respect for religious practices different from one's own, an approach central to modern interfaith engagement.

The encounter with the Christian delegation from Najrān, as Muhammad Hamidullah interprets it, sets an example for interfaith dialogue characterized by mutual respect and a willingness to understand differing beliefs. It shows that interfaith dialogue is not about compromising one's faith but about seeking to understand and respect the faith of others.²⁸ This narrative from the *Sīrah* is particularly relevant in contemporary times when religious exclusivism is on the rise, and there is a need for spaces where faith communities can engage in open and respectful dialogue. Muhammad Hamidullah also draws attention to the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) treatment of the Jewish tribe of Banū Qurayza. While the eventual outcome for the tribe was tragic, Muhammad Hamidullah emphasizes the Prophet's initial efforts to uphold treaties and maintain justice. He stresses that the Prophet Muhammad's first and preferred approach was diplomacy and fair treatment. The lessons from this episode, according to Muhammad Hamidullah, "*revolve around the importance of maintaining justice and honouring agreements, which are crucial elements in contemporary interfaith relations.*"²⁹

Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah discusses the Prophet Muhammad's letters to the rulers of the Byzantine and Persian empires, inviting them to consider the message of Islam. As Muhammad Hamidullah suggests, these letters were invitations

²⁶ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 46.

²⁷ Muhammad Hamidullah, "The Christian Monk Abu'Amir of Medina of the Time of the Holy Prophet," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 7, no. 4 (1959): 231-240.

²⁸ Alwani Ghazali and Muhammad Kamal, "Interreligious Dialogue Models: From the Life of the Prophet Muhammad" (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2023), 54.

²⁹ Sadik Kirazli, "Re-Examining the Story of Banū Qurayzah Jews in Medina with a Reference to the Account of Ibn Ishāq." *Australian Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 1 (2019): 1-17.

to faith and extended the hand of political and social peace. They represent an approach to interfaith relations that goes beyond theological discourse and acknowledges the sociopolitical dimensions of interfaith engagement.³⁰ The *Hijrah* (migration) to Abyssinia is another significant event that Muhammad Hamidullah often cited. When a group of early Muslims faced persecution in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) directed them to seek refuge with the Christian king of Abyssinia, known for his just and humane rule. The king granted the Muslims protection and refused to extradite them to their persecutors despite the demands from the Meccan emissaries. Muhammad Hamidullah views this episode as a testament to the potential of interfaith solidarity and protection of the oppressed, regardless of their religious affiliation.³¹

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work on these historical encounters provides a nuanced understanding of the *Sīrah* and its application in contemporary interfaith dialogue. He demonstrates that the Prophet Muhammad's interactions with the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* were characterized by a commitment to justice, mutual respect, and the pursuit of peaceful coexistence. These principles, Muhammad Hamidullah argues, are timeless and can inform present-day interfaith relations.³² In sum, the *Sīrah* offers a rich repository of lessons on interfaith relations. Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly interpretation of these events from the life of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) provides a nuanced understanding of how these historical interactions can guide contemporary interfaith dialogue. His analyses reveal that the Prophet's dealings with the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* were not just incidental occurrences but were guided by principles that can be adapted to modern contexts.

5.4 ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS AND SOURCES OF CONFLICT

Misconceptions and misunderstandings have long been sources of conflict among different faiths. In the quest for interfaith harmony, addressing these misconceptions is

³⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 65.

³¹ Hafiz Muhammad Farooq Abdullah and Hafiz Atif Iqbal, "Hijrat-e-Habāsha: A Role Model for the Muslim Minorities in the Promotion of Dialogue and Pluralism, in the Contemporary Age," *Jihāt ul Islām* 16, no. 1 (2022): 1-15.

³² Imtiyaz Yusuf, "Islam and Buddhism Relations from Balkh to Bangkok and Tokyomuwo_1312 177. 186," *The Muslim World* 100 (2010): 45.

crucial. Muhammad Hamidullah's work provides significant insights into this aspect, mainly focusing on the Islamic perspective. His scholarly contributions serve to identify and clarify common misconceptions that have historically led to discord, offering context and resolution to contentious issues such as polygamy, the incident of *Banū Qūrayzah*, and the historical Jewish exile. One of the most prevalent misconceptions in the context of Islam is the practice of polygamy. Often portrayed as a hallmark of Muslim culture, polygamy has been a subject of significant misinterpretation and controversy.³³

Muhammad Hamidullah explains that while polygamy is permitted in Islam, it is not an obligation or an unbridled right. The Qur'anic verse that allows polygamy does so with strict conditions, including fairness and the ability to support multiple wives financially and emotionally.³⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah emphasizes that this provision was revealed in the context of war when caring for widows and orphans became a significant societal concern.³⁵ He further clarifies that Islam did not introduce the practice but regulated it, as it was already prevalent in pre-Islamic Arabian society.

The incident involving the Jewish tribe of *Banū Qūrayzah* is another historical event that is often cited as a source of conflict and misunderstanding between Muslims and Jews. This incident, which occurred after the Battle of the Trench, resulted in the execution of several men from the *Banū Qūrayzah* tribe. Muhammad Hamidullah discusses this event, providing historical context and dispelling common misconceptions. He notes that the judgment against *Banū Qūrayzah* was based on the breach of a treaty and the prevailing tribal laws of the time, not purely on religious grounds.³⁶ This context is crucial for understanding the event, as it is often misrepresented in modern discussions, leading to a skewed perception of Islamic justice and relations with Jewish communities.

In discussing the historical Jewish exile, Muhammad Hamidullah addresses another area where misconceptions have led to discord. The exile of Jews from the Arabian Peninsula, particularly from Madinah, is often cited without a nuanced

³³ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

³⁴ Quran, Surah Āl-Imran 4:3.

³⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 65.

³⁶ Jamal Badawi, *Muslim/Non-Muslim Relations* (Halifax, NS: IDM Publications, 2015), 26.

understanding of the socio-political context of that period. Muhammad Hamidullah explains that these exiles were not blanket expulsions based solely on religious identity but were responses to specific political alliances and treacheries during a turbulent time in early Islamic history.³⁷ He stresses the importance of understanding these events within the broader historical and geopolitical context rather than viewing them through contemporary religious conflict.

Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to these contentious issues demonstrates the importance of historical context in addressing misconceptions. He advocates for a thorough and nuanced understanding of history, which is essential for resolving present-day conflicts rooted in misinterpretations of the past. This approach is particularly relevant in contemporary interfaith dialogues, where historical grievances often overshadow the potential for understanding and reconciliation. Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's work highlights the need for accurate and contextualized interpretations of religious texts. Misconceptions often arise from literal or out-of-context interpretations of religious scriptures. Muhammad Hamidullah emphasizes the importance of understanding the Qur'an and *Ḥadīth* in their historical and situational contexts. This interpretation method helps clarify misconceptions and provides a more accurate understanding of Islamic teachings and practices.³⁸

In addressing misconceptions and sources of conflict, Muhammad Hamidullah also highlights the role of education. He advocates for educational programmes that provide factual historical information and encourage critical thinking and empathy. Such type of education can play a pivotal role in breaking down stereotypes and building bridges of understanding among different faith communities. Muhammad Hamidullah's work in addressing misconceptions and sources of conflict serves as a guide for contemporary scholars and practitioners in the field of interfaith dialogue. His methodology of combining historical context with a nuanced understanding of religious teachings offers a way to resolve conflicts and foster mutual respect among faiths. His contributions remind us that peace and harmony among diverse religious communities

³⁷ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 45.

³⁸ Jamal Badawi, "Muslim/Non-Muslim Relations: An Integrative Approach," *J. Islamic L. & Culture* 8 (2003): 23.

are achievable when misconceptions are addressed and a deeper understanding is sought.³⁹

In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly efforts in identifying and clarifying misconceptions contribute significantly to interfaith relations. By providing historical context and addressing contentious issues such as polygamy, the *Banū Qūrayzah* incident, and Jewish exile, he paves the way for a more informed and empathetic approach to interfaith dialogue. His work demonstrates that understanding the past in its proper context is crucial in resolving present conflicts and building a future where different faiths can coexist in harmony and mutual respect.

5.5 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Interfaith dialogue requires a careful and considered methodological approach. Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions in this field, particularly his emphasis on applying logical and scientific argumentation in interfaith discourse, have provided significant insights into how such dialogues can be structured for constructive theological exchange. His methodological principles focus on fostering a dialogue that is both respectful and rooted in intellectual rigour. One of the foundational aspects of Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to interfaith dialogue is the application of logical reasoning. Logical argumentation, as Muhammad Hamidullah posits, is essential in ensuring that interfaith discussions are coherent, consistent, and based on sound principles. This approach helps avoid misunderstandings and misinterpretations often arising from emotionally charged or dogmatic positions. Muhammad Hamidullah advocated for a dialogue rooted in reason, where participants engage with each other's beliefs and practices through rational discourse.⁴⁰

Alongside logical reasoning, Muhammad Hamidullah also emphasizes the importance of scientific argumentation in interfaith dialogue. This involves using empirical evidence and historical analysis to discuss religious beliefs and practices. For

³⁹ Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani and Thameem Ushama, "Opulence of Islam in Western Countries: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions," *Journal of Islam in Asia* 20, no. 3 (2023): 289-308.

⁴⁰ Thameem Ushama and Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani, "Muhammad Hamidullah's Role in Interfaith Dialogue," *Al-Risalah: Journal of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (ARJIHS)* 7, no. 2 (2023): 295-311.

instance, when discussing scriptural texts, Muhammad Hamidullah encourages the examination of historical contexts, linguistic analyses, and archaeological findings to provide a more comprehensive understanding of these texts.⁴¹ This scientific approach ensures that interfaith dialogue is grounded in factual accuracy and helps prevent the perpetuation of myths and misconceptions about different religions. Muhammad Hamidullah's methodological principles also emphasise mutual respect and empathy. For interfaith dialogue to be constructive, it must be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect, where each participant acknowledges the dignity and sincerity of the other's beliefs. This respect extends beyond mere tolerance and involves a genuine effort to understand and appreciate the perspectives of others⁴². Muhammad Hamidullah asserts that empathy is crucial in interfaith dialogue, as it allows participants to see beyond their religious framework and understand the experiences and beliefs of others.

Another fundamental principle in Muhammad Hamidullah's approach is the importance of historical context in theological discussions. He argues that many religious beliefs and practices can only be fully understood within their historical context. By situating religious texts and traditions within their historical framework, participants in interfaith dialogue can gain a deeper understanding of each other's faiths. This historical perspective helps avoid anachronistic interpretations and provides a more nuanced view of religious traditions. Muhammad Hamidullah also emphasizes the need for clarity and precision in interfaith dialogue. He advocates a clear definition of terms and concepts to avoid ambiguity and confusion. This precision is paramount in discussing theological concepts with different interpretations or connotations in different religious traditions. Clear communication helps ensure that participants discuss the same concepts and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings.⁴³

In terms of the structure of interfaith dialogue, Muhammad Hamidullah suggests a systematic approach where discussions are organized around specific themes or questions. This structured approach allows for a focused and in-depth exploration of topics rather than a superficial overview of disparate issues. Organizing dialogues

⁴¹ Muhammad Zia-Ul-Haq, "Framework of Inter Faith Dialogue in Al-Sharî 'a Al-Islâmiyyah," *Journal of Research (Faculty of Languages & Islamic Studies)* 12 (2007): 88.

⁴² Jamilah Muhsinah Hamidullah, "Appraisal of Middle School Students' Participation in a Social Skills Training Program" (Master's Thesis, Union Institute and University, 2011), 67..

⁴³ Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

around central themes allows participants to engage more deeply with each other's beliefs and practices. Muhammad Hamidullah's methodological approach to interfaith dialogue also involves a commitment to continuous learning and adaptation. He recognizes that religious understanding is not static and that interfaith dialogue is an ongoing process of learning and growth. This approach calls for openness to new information and perspectives and a willingness to revise one's understanding by considering new insights.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah highlights the importance of inclusivity in interfaith dialogue. He advocates for including diverse voices and perspectives, ensuring that a single viewpoint or tradition does not dominate the dialogue.⁴⁵ This inclusivity ensures that interfaith dialogue is representative and considers the diversity within and between religious traditions. In conclusion, Muhammad Hamidullah's methodological approach to interfaith dialogue provides a comprehensive framework for engaging in constructive theological exchanges. His emphasis on logical and scientific argumentation, coupled with mutual respect, empathy, historical context, clarity, structured discussions, continuous learning, and inclusivity, offers valuable guidance for interfaith dialogue. His principles ensure such dialogues are respectful, enlightening, intellectually rigorous, and grounded in a deep understanding of the world's diverse religious traditions.

5.6 CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT

Islamic thought, a rich and multifaceted field encompassing theology, jurisprudence, and the study of the Qur'an and *Hadīth*, has been the focus of extensive scholarly work. Among the scholars who have significantly contributed to this field is Muhammad Hamidullah, known for his critical analysis of *Hadīth* authenticity and Qur'anic preservation. His meticulous approach to Islamic texts, combining historical context with a profound understanding of Islamic principles, has been influential in addressing some of the most contentious areas in Islamic theology and jurisprudence.

⁴⁴ Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 7-16.

⁴⁵ Tasleema Bashir and Hamid-Ullah Guide Marazi, "Inter-Religious Dialogue in Islamic Perspective: A Study of Faith-Based Reconciliation" (PhD diss., 2013), 45.

5.6.1 *Ḥadīth* Authenticity

The study of *Ḥadīth* authenticity has long been a pivotal aspect of Islamic scholarship, given the fundamental role of *Ḥadīth* as a source of Islamic law and ethics. Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work in this area stands out for its rigorous and methodical approach. The *Ḥadīth* reports detailing the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) are crucial in shaping Islamic jurisprudence and moral conduct. However, the authenticity of these reports has been a subject of considerable debate, primarily due to concerns about their accuracy and reliability. In addressing the authenticity of *Ḥadīth*, Muhammad Hamidullah employs a meticulous methodology, one that is marked by stringent evaluative criteria. Recognizing the profound impact of *Ḥadīth* on Islamic law and ethics, he emphasizes the necessity of a comprehensive analysis to ascertain their veracity.⁴⁶ This analysis involved an in-depth examination of the *isnad* (chain of narrators) and the *Matn* (text of the *Ḥadīth*).

The *isnad* is critical in the science of *Ḥadīth*. It involves tracing the lineage of narrators who transmitted the *Ḥadīth* from the time of the Prophet (pbuh) to when it was recorded. This chain is crucial for establishing the credibility of the *Ḥadīth*. A *Ḥadīth* with a robust and uninterrupted chain of trustworthy and competent narrators is generally deemed reliable. Muhammad Hamidullah's work scrutinizing the *isnad* aims to ensure that only *Ḥadīths* with robust and unbroken chains are considered authentic. In addition to the *isnad*, Muhammad Hamidullah also focuses on the *matn* or the actual content of the *Ḥadīth*. This involves analysing the text for consistency with the Qur'an and other established *Ḥadīths* and assessing its coherence and relevance to the context in which it was reported. His approach is to authenticate the chain of narrators and ensure that the content of the *Ḥadīth* is logically sound and in harmony with the broader Islamic teachings.⁴⁷

Muhammad Hamidullah's rigorous approach to *Ḥadīth* authentication is driven by the understanding that the misreporting or fabrication of *Ḥadīths* could lead to significant distortions in Islamic jurisprudence and ethics. He is acutely aware that throughout Islamic history, various factors, including political influences and sectarian

⁴⁶ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification, and Criticism of Hadith* (London: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2014), 56.

⁴⁷ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 11-14.

biases, have led to the propagation of unauthentic *Ḥadīths*. Therefore, his stringent methodology is a scholarly endeavour and a means to preserve the integrity of Islamic teachings. The significance of Muhammad Hamidullah's work in the context of *Ḥadīth* authenticity cannot be overstated. His methodical approach has served as a beacon for later scholars, emphasizing the importance of a balanced and thorough approach to the science of *Ḥadīth*. By advocating for strict evaluative criteria and a comprehensive analysis of both the *isnad* and *matn*, Muhammad Hamidullah has contributed to safeguarding Islamic law and ethics from potential distortions.⁴⁸

His work in this area also highlights the dynamic nature of Islamic scholarship, where rigorous academic inquiry is applied to religious texts. This approach is crucial in ensuring that the teachings of Islam remain true to their sources, thus maintaining their relevance and applicability in diverse contexts and times.⁴⁹ Muhammad Hamidullah's contribution to studying *Ḥadīth* authenticity is critical to his extensive scholarly legacy. His meticulous approach to evaluating the *Ḥadīth*, encompassing both the chain of narrators and the content of the reports, has been instrumental in distinguishing authentic *Ḥadīths* from those potentially misreported or fabricated. This work underscores the complexity and depth of Islamic scholarship and reinforces the importance of rigorous academic inquiry in preserving and interpreting religious texts.

5.6.2 Contextual Understanding of *Ḥadīth*

In the vast expanse of Islamic scholarship, the *Ḥadīth* literature occupies a central position, serving as a key source for Islamic law and ethics. Muhammad Hamidullah's work in this area is particularly noteworthy for its emphasis on the contextual understanding of *Ḥadīth*. He posits that each *Ḥadīth*, a report of the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), must be comprehensively understood within the context of its reporting. This context is vital for appropriately applying the *Ḥadīth* in Islamic law and ethics.⁵⁰ His approach underlines a crucial aspect of traditional Islamic

⁴⁸ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification, and Criticism of Hadith* (London: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2014), 33.

⁴⁹ Muhammad Asif Ayub and Iftikhar Hussain, "An Overview of the Dawah of Islam in the West and the Role of Dr Muhammad Hamidullah," *Al Manhal Research Journal* 3, no. 2 (2023): 15-17.

⁵⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah, Jean Jolivet, Rahat Nabi Khan, and Jacques Berque, *Islam, Philosophy and Science* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983).

scholarship - the need for a profound understanding of the circumstances under which a *Ḥadīth* was narrated.

The significance of context in understanding *Ḥadīth* cannot be overstated. Context includes the historical, social, cultural, and political conditions prevailing during the *Ḥadīth*'s narration. This understanding is pivotal because the *Ḥadīth* were not merely abstract statements but often responses to specific situations, questions, or challenges the early Muslim community faced. Muhammad Hamidullah's emphasis on this aspect ensures that the *Ḥadīth* are not misinterpreted or misapplied in contemporary times.⁵¹ Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to contextual understanding also includes examining the text (*matn*) and the chain of narrators (*isnād*), considering their historical backdrop. This method acknowledges that the *Ḥadīth* are not isolated pronouncements but are deeply embedded in the lived reality of the Prophet (pbuh) and the early Muslim community. A more accurate and nuanced understanding can be achieved by situating the *Ḥadīth* within their proper historical context, which is crucial for their application in modern Islamic jurisprudence and ethical considerations.⁵²

This methodology is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary issues within Islamic jurisprudence. The dynamic nature of modern society, with its unique challenges and complexities, requires an informed approach to Islamic law that respects traditional sources and is adaptable to current contexts. Muhammad Hamidullah's work provides a model for this approach, allowing contemporary scholars to draw relevant and meaningful conclusions from the *Ḥadīth* literature. Moreover, Muhammad Hamidullah's emphasis on contextual understanding highlights the importance of scholarly rigour in Islamic studies. It necessitates a deep knowledge of the *Ḥadīth* texts and the historical, cultural, and linguistic milieu of the era in which they were compiled. This comprehensive approach ensures that interpretations are grounded in a thorough understanding of the Islamic tradition and apply to contemporary Islamic discourse.⁵³

⁵¹ Tauseef Ahmad Parray, "Journal of Humanity & Islam," *Journal of Humanity & Islam* 1, no. 1 (2011): 11-27.

⁵² Recep Senturk, *Narrative Social Structure: Anatomy of the Hadith Transmission Network, CE 610-1505* (New York: Columbia University, 1998), 44.

⁵³ Syed Iftikhar Ali Gilani and Thameem Ushama, "Opulence of Islam in Western Countries: A Study of Muhammad Hamidullah's Contributions," *Journal of Islam in Asia* 20, no. 3 (2023): 289-308.

In addition, Muhammad Hamidullah's approach serves as a guard against the misuse of *Ḥadīth* in justifying actions or beliefs that are incongruent with the spirit of Islam. By advocating for a contextual understanding, he provides a means to filter out misinterpretations or manipulations of *Ḥadīth* texts, which have historically led to sectarianism or extremism in some instances.⁵⁴ In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's work emphasizing the contextual understanding of *Ḥadīth* contributes to Islamic scholarship. His approach, which considers the historical, cultural, and situational circumstances surrounding each *Ḥadīth*, offers a profound method for interpreting these texts. This methodology not only aids in avoiding misinterpretations but also ensures that the rich heritage of *Ḥadīth* literature continues to provide relevant guidance in contemporary Islamic thought and practice. His work guides modern scholars, underlining the importance of a balanced and contextual approach to one of Islam's primary sources.

5.6.3 Qur'anic Preservation

Preserving the Qur'an, the central religious text of Islam, has been a focal point of Islamic scholarship and religious practice. Muhammad Hamidullah's extensive research in this area has significantly contributed to understanding how the Qur'an has been meticulously preserved since it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). His analysis of the historical process of the Qur'an's compilation and preservation following the death of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) offers a comprehensive insight into this critical aspect of Islamic history and tradition.⁵⁵ Muhammad Hamidullah's work delves into the detailed process through which the Qur'an was compiled and preserved. He examines the early methods of Qur'anic transmission, initially through oral traditions, where the verses were memorized and recited by the Prophet's companions and later through written records. His research underscores the reliability of these methods, highlighting

⁵⁴ Ali Usman Qasmi, "The History of *Ḥadīth* Literature: A Review of Muslim and Western Theoretical Perspectives," *Historian* 7, no. 2 (2009): 77.

⁵⁵ S. Moinul Haq, "Al-Qur'an and Hadith Literature as Source-Material for the Study of Sirah (Biography) of Prophet Muhammad, SAW (A Brief Survey)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 35, no. 1 (1987): 1.

the stringent measures employed to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the Qur'anic text.⁵⁶

The oral preservation of the Qur'an, known as Hifz, involved memorization and recitation by the companions of the Prophet (pbuh), who diligently ensured that the Qur'an was transmitted accurately. This practice of memorization and oral transmission has been a continuous tradition in Islamic history, with millions of Muslims worldwide memorizing the entire Qur'an, thus preserving it generation after generation. In addition to oral preservation, the written compilation of the Qur'an also played a crucial role in its preservation. Critical companions of the Prophet (pbuh) led this effort under the caliphate of Abu Bakr and later Uthman ibn Affan. Muhammad Hamidullah meticulously analyses the historical records and manuscripts from this period, demonstrating how this process was carried out with utmost care and precision.⁵⁷

Muhammad Hamidullah's findings affirm the traditional Islamic narrative that the Qur'an we have today is the same as that revealed to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He notes the unanimity among the Prophet's companions regarding the authenticity of the compiled Qur'an and how this consensus further validates the integrity of the Qur'anic text. His research dispels doubts and misconceptions about preserving the Qur'an, reinforcing the belief that the Qur'an has been preserved in its original form, both orally and in writing.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's study of Qur'anic preservation extends to analysing the earliest manuscripts. His examination of these manuscripts provides concrete evidence of the early and meticulous recording of the Qur'anic text, showcasing the high degree of reverence and seriousness with which this task was undertaken.⁵⁹

The significance of Muhammad Hamidullah's work in Qur'anic preservation cannot be overstated. His scholarly approach provides a thorough and reliable account of how the Qur'an has been preserved throughout Islamic history. This work contributes

⁵⁶ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification, and Criticism of Hadith* (London: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2014), 12-22.

⁵⁷ Sarah Zubair Mirza, "Oral Tradition and Scribal Conventions in the Documents Attributed to the Prophet Muhammad" (PhD diss., 2010), 56.

⁵⁸ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam—A General Picture* (İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım Yayım, 1995).

⁵⁹ Samee-Ullah Bhat, "Life and Works of Muhammad Hamidullah: An Overview," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 6, no. 1 (2016): 57-68.

to the academic study of the Qur'an and reaffirms the faith of millions of Muslims in the authenticity and sanctity of their holy scripture.⁶⁰ Muhammad Hamidullah's research on preserving the Qur'an is a testament to his dedication and scholarly rigour. His comprehensive analysis of the historical process of the Qur'an's compilation and preservation following the death of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) supports the traditional Islamic view of the Qur'an's meticulous preservation. This work remains an essential reference for scholars and students of Islamic studies. It serves as a significant contribution to the understanding of one of the fundamental aspects of Islamic faith and history.

5.6.4 Addressing Contentious Areas in Islamic Theology and Jurisprudence

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work significantly addresses contentious Islamic theology and jurisprudence areas. Renowned for his balanced approach, Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarship seamlessly blends traditional Islamic thought with an acute awareness of contemporary issues. His engagement with Islamic jurisprudence demonstrates a profound understanding of how Islamic law can be interpreted and applied to modern-day challenges, including gender rights, economic justice, and various societal issues.⁶¹ In the field of gender rights, Muhammad Hamidullah's work is notable for its progressive interpretation within the framework of Islamic law. He delves into the Qur'anic texts and *Hadith* to extract and highlight the principles of equality and justice that Islam espouses for both men and women. His analysis often challenges prevailing cultural practices that are mistakenly regarded as Islamic, thereby offering a more nuanced and equitable understanding of gender rights in Islam. This approach is critical in addressing misconceptions about women's rights in Islamic jurisprudence and showcasing Islam's intrinsic advocacy for gender equality.⁶²

⁶⁰ S. Moinul Haq, "Al-Qur'an and Hadith Literature as Source-Material for the Study of Sirah (Biography) of Prophet Muhammad, SAW (A Brief Survey)," *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society* 35, no. 1 (1987): 1.

⁶¹ Abdul Azim Islahi, "Hamidullah on Mutuality Based Islamic Insurance," *Journal of Islamic Banking and Finance* 32, no. 1 (January 2014): 57-69.

⁶² Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 67-70.

Regarding economic justice, Muhammad Hamidullah's insights have been equally impactful. He explores the Islamic economic system, emphasizing its principles of fairness, equity, and prohibition of exploitation. His work in this area is particularly relevant in the context of contemporary financial challenges, such as income inequality and unethical business practices. By revisiting Islamic economic principles, such as *Zakah* (obligatory charity), prohibition of interest (*riba*), and ethical business conduct, Muhammad Hamidullah provides valuable guidelines for establishing a just economic system that aligns with modern economic realities while staying faithful to Islamic teachings.⁶³

Moreover, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to the broader societal issues in Islamic jurisprudence are noteworthy. He addresses various aspects of social justice, human rights, and individual and state responsibilities within an Islamic framework. His work in this area involves interpreting Islamic law, considering contemporary challenges and advocating for a dynamic application of Islamic principles to cater to the evolving needs of society. His approach recognized the importance of *Ijtihād* (independent reasoning) in Islamic jurisprudence, advocating its use in adapting Islamic law to contemporary circumstances.⁶⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarship in Islamic theology also tackles some of the most complex and debated topics, such as the attributes of God, free will, and predestination. He approached these topics with a depth of knowledge and a rational methodology, often engaging with classical Islamic theological debates and providing insights that are both profound and accessible to the modern reader. His work in this area is a testament to his ability to focus on complex theological concepts while remaining grounded in the Qur'anic text and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).⁶⁵

In addressing these contentious areas, Muhammad Hamidullah's work is characterized by intellectual rigour and a deep respect for the Islamic tradition. His ability to reconcile traditional Islamic scholarship with modern challenges has made his

⁶³ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

⁶⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 43.

⁶⁵ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 31.

work invaluable to academics and the broader Muslim community seeking to understand and apply Islamic principles in the contemporary world.

5.6.5 Principle of *Ijtihad*

In Islamic jurisprudence, the principle of *Ijtihad*, which signifies independent reasoning and interpretation, plays a crucial role. Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work puts significant emphasis on this principle. He champions a dynamic and adaptive approach to Islamic jurisprudence, advocating for using *Ijtihād* to address contemporary challenges while staying true to the fundamental principles of Islamic law. His perspective on *Ijtihād* is especially relevant in today's rapidly changing global context, where the Muslim community faces new and complex issues.⁶⁶ In Islamic legal theory, *Ijtihad* refers to the exertion of effort by a qualified scholar to derive legal rulings from Islamic sources. This process is not merely an intellectual exercise but a serious undertaking that requires a deep understanding of the Qur'an, *Hadīth*, Islamic legal theory, and the socio-cultural context. Muhammad Hamidullah recognizes that while the primary sources of Islamic law – the Qur'an and *Hadīth* – remain constant, their application can vary according to time, place, and circumstance. His advocacy for *Ijtihād* is rooted in the understanding that a static interpretation of these sources could not effectively address the evolving needs of the Muslim community.⁶⁷

A balance between continuity and change characterizes Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to *Ijtihād*. He argues that while upholding Islamic law's core values and principles is essential, there must also be room for flexibility and adaptation in response to new situations and challenges. This approach is fundamental in a globalized world where Muslims are part of diverse societies and are confronted with issues that were not explicitly addressed in the classical Islamic legal texts.⁶⁸ One of the

⁶⁶ Abdul Hamid Abu Sulayman, *Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations: New Directions for Islamic Methodology and Thought* (Herndon, VA: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993), 45.

⁶⁷ Tariq Ramadan, "Ijtihad and Maslaha: The Foundations of Governance," in *Islamic Democratic Discourse: Theory, Debates and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. M.A. Muqtader Khan (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 3-20.

⁶⁸ Tauseef Ahmad Parray, "Islamic Democracy or Democracy in Islam: Some Key Operational Democratic Concepts and Notions," *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 2, no. 2 (2012): 66-86.

areas where Muhammad Hamidullah applies the principle of *Ijtihād* is in the realm of contemporary social issues. He explores how Islamic law could guide matters such as human rights, gender equality, and economic justice, which are significant in the modern world. Applying *Ijtihad*, he could offer interpretations of Islamic law that are both relevant to contemporary society and consistent with Islamic principles.⁶⁹

Muhammad Hamidullah's emphasis on *Ijtihād* also reflects his recognition of the diversity within the Muslim community. He understands that Muslims live in various cultural and societal contexts, so a singular interpretation of Islamic law may not be applicable or appropriate for all communities. *Ijtihād* allows this diversity to be acknowledged and accommodated within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence. Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's advocacy for *Ijtihād* is a testament to his commitment to intellectual rigour and scholarly inquiry in Islamic studies. He encourages scholars to engage deeply with Islamic texts, use their reasoning skills, and consider the contemporary context in their interpretations. This approach ensures that Islamic jurisprudence remains dynamic and responsive to the needs of the Muslim community.⁷⁰

5.6.6 Islamic Theology: Divine Attributes and Human Free Will

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarly work in Islamic theology, particularly on divine attributes and human free will, significantly contributes to Islamic thought. His engagement with these topics reflects a deep understanding and interpretation of Islamic doctrine, particularly in reconciling human agency with divine omniscience. In exploring these themes, Muhammad Hamidullah delves into classical theological debates, offering profound and relevant insights to contemporary discussions.⁷¹ The discussion of divine attributes in Islamic theology primarily revolves around understanding the nature and qualities of God as described in the Qur'an and *Hadīth*. This includes attributes such as knowledge, power, mercy, and justice. Muhammad

⁶⁹ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 7-9.

⁷⁰ Abdul Azim Islahi, "The Legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah in Islamic Economics," MPRA Paper No. 80149 (July 13, 2017): 1-21, <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/80149/>.

⁷¹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *Islam—A General Picture* (İstanbul: İnkılâb Basım Yayım, 1995), 56.

Hamidullah's work in this area is characterized by his meticulous approach to the Qur'anic text and *Hadīth*, where he seeks to offer interpretations grounded in traditional Islamic teachings while being accessible to modern readers.⁷²

One of the central debates in Islamic theology that Muhammad Hamidullah addresses is the relationship between divine attributes, particularly God's omniscience, and human free will. This debate centres around how human free will can coexist with God's complete knowledge of the past, present, and future. Muhammad Hamidullah approaches this complex issue by offering nuanced interpretations that uphold human responsibility and accountability within the framework of God's omniscience. His interpretations strive to balance the affirmation of divine attributes and the acknowledgement of human agency. In addressing the concept of human free will, Muhammad Hamidullah engages with the rich tradition of Islamic theological discourse, which includes various schools of thought such as the *Ash'arī*, *Mu'tazilī*, and *Maturidī*. His work reflects an understanding of the different perspectives within these schools while also contributing his unique insights. He emphasizes the importance of human free will in Islam's moral and ethical realm, arguing that human beings are responsible for their actions and that this responsibility is a cornerstone of Islamic ethics and law.⁷³

Muhammad Hamidullah's treatment of these theological topics is not merely academic; it has practical implications for how Muslims understand their relationship with God and their responsibilities in the world. By offering interpretations rooted in traditional Islamic theology yet adaptable to contemporary understandings, his work guides Muslims seeking to take on the challenges of modern life while remaining faithful to their religious beliefs. Moreover, Muhammad Hamidullah's discussions on divine attributes and human free will indicate his broader approach to Islamic theology, characterized by intellectual rigour, respect for traditional sources, and a willingness to engage with modern questions and challenges. His work in this area is a testament to

⁷² Mohammad Hashim Kamali, *A Textbook of Hadith Studies: Authenticity, Compilation, Classification, and Criticism of Hadith* (London: Kube Publishing Ltd, 2014), 34.

⁷³ Jonathan Eberhardt Shaw, *The Role of Religion in National Security Policy Since September 11, 2001* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2011).

the dynamic nature of Islamic theology and its capacity to address fundamental questions of human existence and spirituality.⁷⁴

In summary, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic theology, particularly in divine attributes and human free will, are substantial. His nuanced interpretations and engagement with classical theological debates demonstrate a deep understanding of Islamic doctrine. His work contributes to the Islamic theological discourse and offers valuable insights for contemporary Muslims grappling with questions of faith, free will, and their relationship with the divine.

5.6.7 Intellectual Rigor and Accessibility

Muhammad Hamidullah's approach to Islamic theology and jurisprudence is a commendable blend of intellectual rigour and accessibility. His work on complex theological and jurisprudential issues showcases a profound commitment to scholarly depth, contextual understanding, and respect for the rich traditions of Islam. Notably, Muhammad Hamidullah has managed to navigate these intricate subjects in a way that rendered them comprehensible and relevant to academic circles and the broader Muslim community.⁷⁵

One of the key aspects of Muhammad Hamidullah's work is his intellectual rigour. He delves into the depths of Islamic scholarship with a critical eye, ensuring that his interpretations and conclusions are well-founded in traditional sources, such as the Qur'an, *Hadīth*, and the works of classical Islamic scholars. His research is characterized by a meticulous examination of texts, a thorough understanding of historical contexts, and an unwavering commitment to accuracy and authenticity. This rigour is evident in his exploration of various subjects, ranging from the *Hadīth* authentication to the nuances of Islamic legal theory.⁷⁶ In addition to his scholarly depth, Muhammad Hamidullah is keenly aware of the need for contextual understanding. He recognizes that Islamic teachings and principles could not be adequately understood or

⁷⁴ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 34.

⁷⁵ Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 45.

⁷⁶ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Muslim Conduct of State* (Kuala Lumpur: The Other Press, 2011), 76.

applied without considering the historical, cultural, and societal contexts in which they were rooted. This approach is particularly significant when dealing with complex issues such as applying Islamic law in contemporary contexts or interpreting theological concepts like divine attributes and human free will. By situating Islamic principles within their appropriate contexts, Muhammad Hamidullah has ensured that his interpretations remain faithful to the essence of Islamic teachings and relevant to modern-day challenges and questions.⁷⁷

Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's respect for Islamic tradition is a hallmark of his work. He has approached Islamic scholarship with a deep reverence for the legacy of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the classical scholars who shaped Islamic thought. This respect reflects personal belief and a scholarly stance acknowledging Islamic intellectual history's richness and depth. He views tradition not as a static relic of the past but as a living, dynamic stream of knowledge that continues to inform and guide the Muslim community. Muhammad Hamidullah's ability to make complex theological and jurisprudential discussions accessible to a broader audience is perhaps one of his most significant contributions. He presents Islamic teachings concisely and relatable without compromising on scholarly depth. His writings and lectures bridge the gap between academic scholarship and the practical concerns of the everyday Muslim, enabling a broader audience to engage with and benefit from the rich traditions of Islamic thought.⁷⁸

In essence, Muhammad Hamidullah's work is a testament to the harmonious blend of intellectual rigour and accessibility in Islamic scholarship. His approach serves as a model for contemporary scholars and students of Islam, demonstrating how deep academic inquiry can be combined with a clear and engaging presentation of Islamic teachings. Through his work, Muhammad Hamidullah has contributed immensely to the understanding of Islamic theology and jurisprudence, making these fields more accessible and relevant to people across different walks of life.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Nadira Mustapha, "Muhammad Hamidullah and Islamic Constitutional Law" (Thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), 7-12.

⁷⁸ John L. Esposito and John Obert Voll, *Islam and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 78.

⁷⁹ Shelomo Dov Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, ed. Norman A. Stillman (Leiden: Brill Academic Pub, 2009), 391.

5.6.8 Impact and Legacy

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought have left an indelible mark on the field, profoundly impacting how Islamic theology and jurisprudence are approached and understood in the contemporary world. His critical analysis and methodological approach have established him as a pivotal figure in Islamic scholarship, and his work continues to serve as a vital reference point for scholars and students alike. One of the most significant aspects of Muhammad Hamidullah's impact lies in his methodological approach. He has successfully bridged the gap between traditional Islamic scholarship and the challenges of the modern world. His approach is characterized by a deep reverence for classical Islamic sources and traditions and an acute awareness of the contemporary socio-cultural and ethical landscapes. This balance enables him to provide interpretations and insights rooted in tradition and relevant to modern times. This methodological framework has inspired a generation of Islamic scholars and thinkers who seek to negotiate the complexities of applying Islamic principles in a rapidly changing world.⁸⁰

Muhammad Hamidullah's work in areas such as *Ḥadīth* authenticity, Qur'anic preservation, *Ijtihad*, and the reconciliation of divine attributes with human free will has provided scholars with a robust foundation for further research and study. His rigorous approach to these subjects has encouraged a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of Islamic theology and law, fostering a scholarly environment where critical inquiry and intellectual honesty are paramount. Furthermore, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions extend beyond academia into the broader Muslim community. His ability to make complex theological concepts accessible and relatable has helped many Muslims better understand and engage with their faith. His work has been instrumental in educating the Muslim community on Islamic law and ethics, enhancing their religious and spiritual lives.⁸¹

The legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah is also evident in how contemporary Islamic scholarship has evolved. His emphasis on contextual understanding and applying *Ijtihād* in the face of new challenges has paved the way for a more dynamic

⁸⁰ Bashir Ahmad Malik, *Ijtihad, Islam, and the Modern World* (New York: St. John's University, 2002), 67.

⁸¹ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam: Lectures on the Development of Islamic Worldview, Intellectual Tradition and Polity* (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1999), 59.

and responsive approach to Islamic jurisprudence. This approach is crucial in a globalized world where Muslims are part of diverse and often complex societal structures. Muhammad Hamidullah's work serves as a reminder of the adaptability and relevance of Islamic thought in addressing the ethical and legal challenges of the 21st century.⁸²

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In the culmination of this extensive exploration of Muhammad Hamidullah's life, works, and enduring legacy in interfaith relationships, it becomes abundantly clear that his contributions are far from a mere historical or theological footnote. Instead, they serve as a profound source of guidance and inspiration for contemporary scholars, religious leaders, policymakers, and individuals dedicated to the cause of interfaith dialogue. Hamidullah's wisdom, drawn from a deep well of Islamic knowledge, offers hope in a world characterized by religious diversity, globalization, and complex challenges. His teachings highlight the immense potential of religious traditions to promote peace, tolerance, and mutual respect among communities with differing beliefs.

One of the most striking takeaways from this study is the practical applicability of Hamidullah's insights to the challenges and opportunities of our time. As our world grapples with issues ranging from religious extremism to interfaith conflicts, his work provides a roadmap for building bridges of understanding and reconciliation. It emphasizes the transformative power of open and respectful dialogue, a principle he consistently championed throughout his life. Furthermore, Hamidullah's legacy underscores the critical role of scholarship and thoughtful dialogue in advancing our understanding of interfaith relationships. His meticulous research, deep familiarity with Islamic sources, and unwavering commitment to academic rigour serve as a model for contemporary scholars. His work is a testament to the potential of rigorous scholarship to promote interfaith understanding.

⁸² David A. Westbrook, "Islamic International Law and Public International Law: Separate Expressions of World Order," *Virginia Journal of International Law* 33 (1992): 819.

Perhaps one of the most compelling aspects of Hamidullah's contributions is their practical applicability to the challenges and opportunities of our time. As our world struggles with issues such as religious extremism, sectarianism, and interfaith conflicts, Hamidullah's teachings offer a roadmap for building bridges of understanding and reconciliation. Central to his approach is the promotion of dialogue. Hamidullah consistently advocates for open and respectful dialogue between individuals of different faiths. His interactions with scholars and leaders from various religious backgrounds demonstrate dialogue's power in breaking down barriers and building connections.

Moreover, Hamidullah's legacy underscores the critical role of scholarship and thoughtful dialogue in advancing our understanding of interfaith relationships. His meticulous research, deep familiarity with Islamic sources, and unwavering commitment to academic rigour serve as a model for contemporary scholars. His work is a testament to the potential of rigorous scholarship to promote interfaith understanding. A fundamental aspect of Hamidullah's vision is that differences in faith should not be viewed as insurmountable obstacles but as opportunities for learning, growth, and mutual enrichment. This perspective becomes increasingly essential in a world where religious diversity is a reality. Hamidullah's teachings challenge us to engage with one another with open hearts and a willingness to learn from one another's traditions.

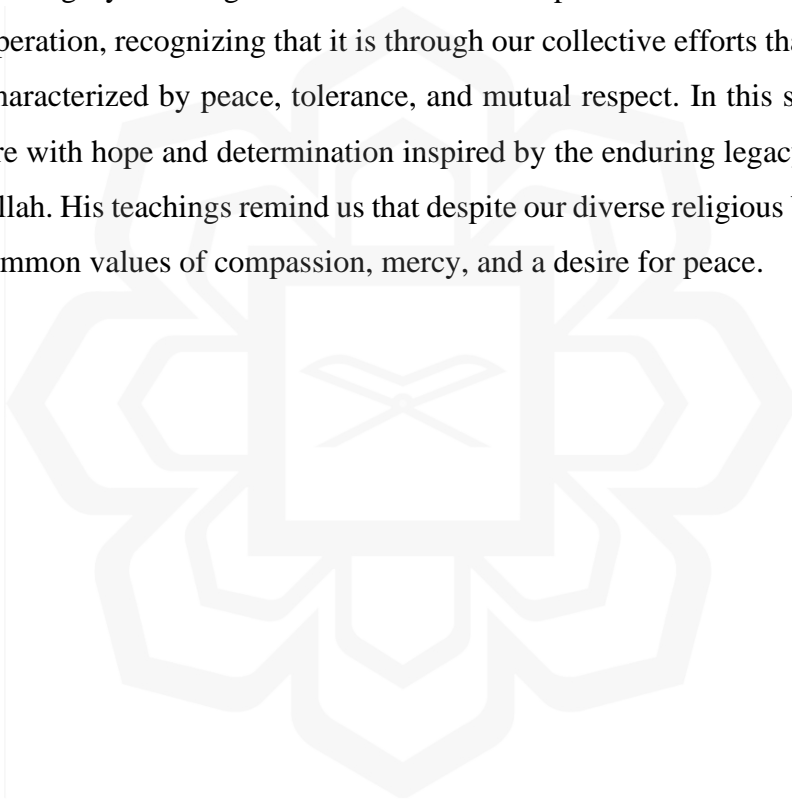
His emphasis on the universality of core values, such as compassion and mercy, serves as a unifying force that transcends religious boundaries. Hamidullah's interpretation of Islamic teachings, especially those concerning the People of the Book (Jews and Christians), offers a framework for Muslims to engage positively with followers of other religions. His works demonstrate a deep respect for the historical and theological underpinnings of Islam while simultaneously advocating for a pluralistic and inclusive approach to religious diversity. Muhammad Hamidullah's legacy is a call to action for individuals and communities alike. It urges scholars to continue the dialogue he has passionately advocated for, recognizing that exchanging ideas and perspectives is a powerful tool for breaking down barriers. It calls upon religious leaders to promote understanding and tolerance within their communities. It challenges policymakers to create environments conducive to interfaith dialogue and cooperation.

On an individual level, Hamidullah's teachings encourage us to be ambassadors of peace and understanding. They remind us that our interactions with people of different faiths can be opportunities to build bridges and foster connections. Hamidullah's life inspires those who focus on the complexities of interfaith relationships with grace and empathy. Hamidullah's legacy is a reminder that interfaith dialogue is not a one-time effort but an ongoing commitment. It is a journey into the potential of religious teachings to foster peace, tolerance, and mutual respect among diverse communities. His work serves as a guiding light, showing us the way toward a world where differences in faith are not barriers but opportunities for learning, growth, and mutual enrichment.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, Muhammad Hamidullah's teachings and unwavering commitment to interfaith dialogue offer hope. They remind us that despite our challenges, there is a path toward a more inclusive, harmonious, and interconnected global society. In this vision, the legacy of scholars like Muhammad Hamidullah continues to inspire and guide us toward a more just, compassionate, and united world. In conclusion, studying Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought, particularly in interfaith relationships, is not merely an academic exercise. It is a journey to understanding the potential of religious teachings to foster peace, tolerance, and mutual respect among diverse communities. As the world grapples with increasing religious diversity and the challenges that come with it, Hamidullah's work offers a guiding light, showing us the way toward a more inclusive and harmonious global society.

The enduring significance of Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions lies in their historical or theological relevance and their practical applicability to the challenges and opportunities of our time. His work serves as a reminder of the power of scholarship and thoughtful dialogue in bridging divides and promoting a more peaceful and inclusive world. As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, Muhammad Hamidullah's teachings and unwavering commitment to interfaith dialogue offer hope. They remind us that despite our challenges, there is a path toward a more inclusive, harmonious, and interconnected global society. In this vision, the legacy of scholars like Muhammad Hamidullah continues to inspire and guide us toward a more just, compassionate, and united world.

The significance of Hamidullah's legacy extends beyond the boundaries of any one faith or community. It is a testament to the enduring power of dialogue, understanding, and respect in building a more peaceful and harmonious world. As we reflect on the life and works of Muhammad Hamidullah, we are reminded of the potential for positive change within each of us and the role we can play in fostering a more inclusive and compassionate global society. In the final analysis, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships are not confined to the pages of history; they are an ongoing source of inspiration and guidance for those who seek to promote understanding and harmony among people of different faiths. His legacy challenges us to continue the important work of interfaith dialogue and cooperation, recognizing that it is through our collective efforts that we can build a world characterized by peace, tolerance, and mutual respect. In this spirit, we look to the future with hope and determination inspired by the enduring legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah. His teachings remind us that despite our diverse religious backgrounds, we share common values of compassion, mercy, and a desire for peace.



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This study on Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to Islamic thought, with a special focus on interfaith relationships, offers a nuanced understanding of his profound impact on this field. The key findings reflect Hamidullah's multifaceted scholarship and enduring legacy in fostering a deeper appreciation of Islamic perspectives on interfaith dialogue.

Born in Hyderabad, India, in 1908, Hamidullah's early life and education were shaped by a rich environment of Islamic tradition and intellectual growth. His formative years exposed him to various cultural and scholarly influences, which laid the groundwork for his later contributions. His educational journey took him to Germany and France, where he expanded his linguistic repertoire, acquired a deep understanding of Islamic scholarship, and developed a global perspective that enriched his intellectual endeavours.

Throughout his career, Hamidullah produced extensive work, including translations, commentaries, and original research, significantly enriching Islamic literature. A central theme of his scholarship was his interpretation of *Tawḥīd* (monotheism). Hamidullah viewed *Tawḥīd* not just as a theological concept but as a unifying principle that could foster harmony among diverse faiths, bridging differences through a shared recognition of the divine.

Integral to this study is the historical context in which Hamidullah's ideas were formed. The Prophet Muhammad's Madinian period, characterized by the establishment of a pluralistic society, served as a key influence on Hamidullah's vision of interfaith coexistence. His analysis of this era emphasized principles of respect, tolerance, and cooperation inherent in Islamic thought, which were exemplified in the Prophet's interactions with non-Muslim communities. The *Constitution of Madinah*, which Hamidullah studied in depth, provided a model of inclusive and equitable governance, highlighting the protection of rights for diverse religious groups.

Hamidullah's work on the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* (People of the Book) is especially notable. He approached scriptural and historical narratives concerning Jews and Christians with empathy and meticulous scholarship. His interpretations of Qur'anic verses and *Hadīth* emphasized Islam's recognition of these religious communities and advocated for coexistence and mutual respect. His comparative religious studies further explored the commonalities between Islamic teachings and other faith traditions, fostering an atmosphere of understanding and collaboration.

The thesis also examines Hamidullah's insights into contemporary challenges in interfaith relationships. Issues such as religious extremism, Islamophobia, and geopolitical conflicts are explored in light of Hamidullah's teachings, demonstrating their relevance in addressing modern interfaith tensions. His emphasis on dialogue, mutual respect, and shared values provides a framework for tackling these challenges and promoting a more inclusive global society.

In summary, this study highlights Muhammad Hamidullah's significant contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships, emphasizing the enduring relevance of his ideas in today's world. His scholarship provides valuable lessons for fostering peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding among diverse religious communities. By bridging the gap between historical Islamic principles and contemporary interfaith challenges, this research underscores the transformative potential of Hamidullah's work, offering a guiding light for scholars, policymakers, and religious leaders dedicated to promoting harmony and understanding in an interconnected world.

6.2 ROLE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF MUHAMMAD HAMIDULLAH

6.2.1 Evaluation of his Contributions to Interfaith Relationships

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to interfaith relationships stand out as an integral aspect of his scholarly legacy, marked by a deep understanding of Islamic theology and history and a commitment to fostering inclusivity and mutual respect. His work in this area reflects a theoretical and practical approach, offering profoundly relevant insights in today's increasingly interconnected world.

Hamidullah's approach to the Qur'anic recognition of the *Ahl-al-Kitāb* (People of the Book) is groundbreaking. By emphasizing Islam's inherent respect for Jews and Christians, he places the foundation for a more inclusive understanding of interfaith relationships within the Islamic tradition. His nuanced interpretations challenged prevailing stereotypes and misconceptions, demonstrating how monotheism (*Tawhīd*) could connect diverse faith traditions as a unifying principle. This inclusive perspective is not only rooted in scriptural analysis but also informed by a deep appreciation of the historical and cultural contexts in which Islamic teachings evolved.

He adopts a methodological approach that is critical yet empathetic, extracting principles of universal relevance from Islamic texts. This allows him to bridge gaps between Islam and other religions, fostering dialogue highlighting shared values and common goals. His work serves to counter divisive narratives and underscores the pluralistic potential of Islamic thought.

Hamidullah's scholarship focuses on the historical context of interfaith relationships in early Islam. His analysis of the Prophet Muhammad's Madinian period highlights that Islamic principles of coexistence, mutual respect, and cooperation were practically implemented in a pluralistic society. The *Constitution of Madinah*, for example, becomes a focal point in his work, serving as an exemplary model of inclusivity and equity. Hamidullah also studied the early Islamic expansion, which involved interactions with diverse religious communities, offering valuable lessons for contemporary interfaith contexts. By rooting his analysis in these historical precedents, Hamidullah demonstrates how Islamic teachings inherently support pluralism and respect for religious diversity. This historical grounding has given his work authenticity and relevance, enabling it to resonate with modern audiences.

Hamidullah's scholarship is not limited to academic discourse; it extends into the practical realm of interfaith engagement. He proposes actionable steps, such as interfaith dialogues, educational reforms, and community initiatives, to promote understanding and cooperation among religious communities. His ability to connect theological principles with real-world challenges has made his work particularly impactful, addressing contemporary issues like religious extremism, Islamophobia, and geopolitical tensions. His writings have also influenced a generation of Muslim scholars and practitioners, providing a robust foundation for further exploration of interfaith

relationships. By fostering an atmosphere of empathy and collaboration, Hamidullah's work offers practical solutions for building bridges between faiths, ensuring his legacy as a key contributor to modern interfaith discourse.

Hamidullah's emphasis on inclusivity, respect, and dialogue is relevant in addressing today's challenges in interfaith relationships. His comparative religious studies enrich the field by highlighting commonalities between Islam and other traditions, challenging divisive rhetoric, and promoting shared values. His scholarly rigour and empathetic approach provide a model for navigating the complexities of interfaith interactions in the contemporary world.

In essence, Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to interfaith relationships transcend the boundaries of academic scholarship. They offer practical insights and guidance for fostering mutual respect and understanding, providing a beacon of hope for a more harmonious and inclusive global society. His work serves as a reminder of the transformative power of scholarship that is deeply rooted in tradition yet open to the diversity of human experience.

6.2.2 Impact on Contemporary Thought and Scholarship

The influence of Muhammad Hamidullah's work on contemporary Islamic thought and interfaith scholarship is profound and far-reaching, characterized by a nuanced and practical approach to Qur'anic exegesis and *Hadīth* literature. His scholarship bridges the gap between traditional Islamic teachings and the pressing challenges of modern interfaith relationships, offering insights rooted in classical wisdom yet responsive to contemporary needs.

Hamidullah's methodical and empathetic interpretations of Islamic texts have become an invaluable resource for scholars, practitioners, and researchers. His work has been instrumental in fostering a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the Qur'an and *Hadīth*, addressing misconceptions about Islam and promoting a nuanced perspective in academic and public discourse. This approach has allowed him to connect Islamic principles with modern-day challenges, particularly in the realm of interfaith relationships, where his emphasis on mutual respect and shared values has inspired productive dialogue and cooperation between diverse faith communities.

His scholarship has also significantly influenced the practice of interfaith dialogue, providing a framework that emphasizes respect, empathy, and common humanity. Hamidullah has challenged divisive rhetoric and encouraged a spirit of collaboration by focusing on the shared ethical and moral foundations across religions. His approach to dialogue transcends mere tolerance, fostering more profound understanding and meaningful engagement between religious traditions.

Hamidullah's influence extends into contemporary Islamic jurisprudence, where his insights have informed discussions on how Islamic law can be applied in a modern, pluralistic world. His interpretations of *Shar'īah* reflect a dynamic understanding of its principles, making them relevant to the complexities of contemporary society. These contributions have provided modern jurists and scholars a framework for navigating the interplay between tradition and modernity in Islamic law.

In education, Hamidullah's work has played a pivotal role in shaping curricula for Islamic studies programmes around the world. His writings on theology, interfaith relations, and Islamic history are frequently included in academic courses, equipping students with a balanced and holistic understanding of these subjects. This has contributed to developing a new generation of scholars and leaders dedicated to advancing interfaith harmony and understanding.

Moreover, Hamidullah's contributions have left an indelible mark on public discourse about Islam and interfaith relations. His scholarly rigour and openness have countered polarized portrayals of Islam, presenting a balanced narrative that fosters informed and respectful conversations about religion. This counter-narrative has been particularly impactful in addressing global challenges such as religious extremism and intolerance, offering solutions grounded in the principles of peace, justice, and cooperation in Islamic teachings.

Hamidullah's scholarship also highlights the rich diversity within the Islamic tradition, promoting a pluralistic understanding of Islam that challenges monolithic interpretations. This inclusive perspective has been instrumental in fostering mutual respect and appreciation both within the Muslim community and across religious divides. His insights into Islamic governance and ethics have further informed policymaking and community engagement, guiding for addressing the complexities of religious diversity in ways that promote social cohesion and harmony.

In essence, Hamidullah's impact on contemporary Islamic thought and interfaith scholarship is multifaceted, encompassing theoretical insights, practical guidance, and a legacy of inclusivity and dialogue. His work has enriched academic understanding while providing tools for addressing the challenges of modern society. By bridging the gap between the rich heritage of Islamic thought and the dynamic realities of the modern world, Hamidullah's scholarship continues to inspire scholars, policymakers, and community leaders worldwide.

6.2.3 Creative Dimensions of M. Hamidullah's Interfaith Scholarship

Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to interfaith relationships reflect an extraordinary blend of intellectual rigour, practical insights, and a visionary approach to fostering harmony in a pluralistic world. His life and work demonstrate how scholarship, deeply rooted in tradition, can address contemporary challenges with creativity, inclusivity, and empathy. Below are the key creative thinking aspects derived from his contributions, emphasizing their significance in navigating interfaith relationships during his life and beyond.

Qur'anic Interpretation and Unity Across Faiths

Hamidullah's approach to the Qur'anic recognition of *Ahl-al-Kitāb* (People of the Book) exemplifies his creative thinking in presenting Islam as inherently inclusive. His interpretation highlights the shared monotheistic principles between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, using the concept of *Tawhīd* (oneness of God) as a unifying force. This perspective challenged the divisive stereotypes of his time and invited adherents of different faiths to see commonalities in their spiritual and ethical foundations. By contextualizing Qur'anic teachings within their historical and cultural milieus, he provides a fresh lens to understand interfaith harmony, ensuring the relevance of his scholarship in both academic and practical realms.

The Constitution of Madinah as a Model for Interfaith Coexistence

Hamidullah's emphasis on the Prophet Muhammad's leadership during the Madinian period reveals his innovative application of early Islamic governance principles to modern interfaith relationships. His analysis of the *Constitution of Madinah* underscores its timeless significance as one of the first documented frameworks for pluralistic coexistence. He creatively highlights how this constitution formalized relationships between Muslims, Jews, and other tribes, establishing mutual rights and responsibilities, respect for religious freedom, and mechanisms for conflict resolution. Hamidullah positions this as a prototype for inclusive governance, showcasing its potential as a guiding model for contemporary societies navigating religious diversity.

Bridging Theory and Practice

Hamidullah's contributions transcend theoretical discourse, embodying practical solutions for interfaith challenges. His methodological approach creatively combines theological insights with actionable recommendations. For example, his advocacy for interfaith dialogues and educational reforms demonstrates his ability to translate scriptural principles into tangible strategies for fostering understanding. By encouraging community initiatives and collaborative projects, Hamidullah seeks to build bridges between faiths, addressing issues such as religious extremism and Islamophobia. This pragmatic orientation ensures that his work is not confined to academic circles but directly impacts interfaith relations at the community level.

Historical Grounding for Contemporary Relevance

One of Hamidullah's creative strengths is his ability to draw from the rich historical legacy of Islam to inform modern-day interfaith relationships. His analysis of early Islamic interactions with diverse religious communities during the Prophet's time and the subsequent Islamic expansions reveals principles of coexistence, mutual respect, and pluralism embedded in Islamic teachings. By situating his insights within this historical framework, he provides a robust foundation for addressing contemporary issues, ensuring the authenticity and relatability of his scholarship.

Addressing Misconceptions and Promoting Empathy

Hamidullah's scholarly rigour and empathetic approach enabled him to counter Islam misconceptions while fostering mutual respect. His ability to analyse and respond to critiques by Orientalists and other scholars of different traditions showcases his intellectual flexibility and creative problem-solving. By engaging constructively with critics, Hamidullah presents Islam not as a monolithic or exclusionary tradition but as a dynamic faith capable of dialogue and cooperation. This approach effectively challenges divisive rhetoric, promoting a narrative of inclusivity and shared humanity.

Comparative Religious Studies as a Tool for Dialogue

Hamidullah's deep engagement with comparative religious studies adds another dimension to his creative thinking. He explores shared ethical and moral foundations across faiths, emphasizing their potential to foster collaboration rather than division. By highlighting these commonalities, he provides a framework for dialogue beyond mere tolerance, encouraging meaningful engagement and mutual enrichment. His post-doctoral research, which delved into Islamic diplomacy during the Prophet's era, further reflected his innovative use of history and theology to address real-world issues in interfaith relations.

Expanding the Academic and Public Discourse

Hamidullah's impact on interfaith relationships extends into education and public dialogue, where he champions inclusivity and diversity. His works became key resources in Islamic studies curricula worldwide, shaping the perspectives of future generations of scholars and leaders. Through his writings and public lectures, he has actively engaged with a global audience, presenting a balanced and nuanced understanding of Islam's role in fostering interfaith harmony. His work contributes significantly to countering polarized portrayals of Islam, offering a counter-narrative grounded in principles of justice, peace, and coexistence.

Intellectual and Cultural Diplomacy

Hamidullah's creative thinking also extends into intellectual diplomacy, where he acts as a cultural bridge between Islamic and Western traditions. His comparative analyses of Islamic and European international law advance academic understanding and foster greater appreciation for the shared heritage of these legal systems. His ability to synthesize diverse perspectives has demonstrated his commitment to fostering dialogue across cultural and religious divides.

Practical Lessons from Historical Research

Hamidullah's research on the Prophet Muhammad's life, including his detailed studies of battlefields and geographical locations, demonstrates his innovative approach to integrating historical scholarship with practical applications. His meticulous work on the *Battlefields of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)*, for example, has not only enriched historical understanding but also highlighted the Prophet's strategic acumen and ethical conduct during wartime. These insights provide lessons on leadership, justice, and diplomacy that remain relevant to interfaith interactions today.

6.3 RELIGIOUS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 Practical Recommendations for Promoting Interfaith Relationships

Considering Muhammad Hamidullah's extensive contributions to interfaith dialogue and understanding, the following practical recommendations emerge as essential steps to foster mutual respect and cooperation among diverse religious communities. These recommendations are grounded in his teachings and offer actionable strategies for cultivating interfaith harmony.

- **Organizing Interfaith Dialogues:** Establishing platforms for respectful and open conversations between individuals of different faiths is crucial. These can take the form of panel discussions, workshops, informal gatherings, or seminars to create spaces for sharing beliefs and fostering mutual understanding.
- **Incorporating Interfaith Education in Curricula:** Integrating knowledge of various religious traditions into school and university curricula helps combat

ignorance and prejudice while equipping students to become ambassadors of interfaith harmony.

- **Interfaith Community Service Projects:** Collaborative efforts, such as community development or humanitarian aid initiatives, provide opportunities for individuals of different faiths to work together toward shared goals, building strong interpersonal bonds.
- **Role of Religious Leaders and Institutions:** Religious leaders and institutions play a pivotal role in promoting interfaith cooperation. By endorsing and participating in interfaith activities, they set a powerful example for their communities to engage positively with others.
- **Media and Public Discourse:** Media can significantly influence perceptions of religions. Positive coverage of interfaith interactions and narratives promoting respect and tolerance can shape public attitudes and challenge stereotypes.
- **Policy Advocacy and Legal Frameworks:** Advocacy for inclusive legal frameworks that protect religious freedoms and minority rights is fundamental. Governments should adopt policies that promote equality, prohibit discrimination, and ensure religious freedoms.
- **Interfaith Research and Scholarship:** Promoting academic studies on interfaith relations enriches understanding and informs policy decisions. Scholarly insights into theological and cultural aspects of interfaith dynamics can guide practical initiatives.
- **Creating Interfaith Spaces and Networks:** Developing physical or virtual spaces for regular interactions and collaborations among people of different faiths encourages ongoing dialogues and cooperation.
- **Fostering a Culture of Empathy and Respect:** Cultivating societal attitudes of empathy and respect involves recognizing the dignity and worth of all individuals, regardless of religious differences. Addressing biases and prejudices is essential for creating harmonious societies.
- **Engaging Youth in Interfaith Initiatives:** Youth involvement in interfaith programmes fosters early values of tolerance and understanding. Giving them

opportunities to participate in educational and community initiatives ensures innovative approaches to interfaith challenges.

In conclusion, these recommendations, inspired by Hamidullah's teachings, provide a comprehensive and actionable framework for promoting interfaith relationships. They emphasize the collective role of individuals, religious leaders, institutions, and policymakers in building a more peaceful and inclusive society.

6.3.2 Policy Suggestions for Addressing Challenges in the Present Age

Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarship offers significant insights for developing inclusive and respectful policies to address challenges related to religious diversity and interfaith relations in the contemporary era. These suggestions focus on fostering harmony and addressing extremism and discrimination.

- **Developing Inclusive Policies:** Policies must accommodate diverse religious needs, such as recognizing holidays, providing spaces for worship, and respecting religious attire. Inclusivity acknowledges the value religious diversity brings to a society's cultural and social fabric.
- **Countering Religious Extremism:** A multifaceted approach is essential, combining preventive education programmes that promote critical thinking and empathy with reactive measures addressing socioeconomic grievances and marginalization.
- **Facilitating Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation:** Policies should support interfaith initiatives at local and international levels, encouraging collaboration on shared concerns such as poverty, social justice, and environmental protection.
- **Protecting the Rights of Religious Minorities:** Legal frameworks must ensure equal rights and protections for minority religious groups, addressing hate crimes and religious intolerance with accountability and justice.
- **Upholding Religious Freedoms:** Policies must safeguard individuals' rights to practice their religion freely, ensuring alignment with international human rights standards while balancing public interests.

- **Promoting Education and Awareness:** Comprehensive religious literacy programmes in schools and public awareness campaigns can reduce stereotypes and foster respect for religious diversity across society.
- **Engaging Religious Leaders and Communities:** Consulting religious leaders in policy-making processes ensures culturally sensitive and practical solutions. Their influence can promote interfaith cooperation and peaceful coexistence.
- **Addressing Socioeconomic Inequalities:** Reducing disparities in access to resources, education, and opportunities mitigates underlying tensions related to religious diversity and reduces the appeal of extremist ideologies.
- **Fostering International Cooperation:** Governments and international organizations must share best practices and coordinate responses to global challenges such as religious extremism and discrimination, promoting interfaith understanding on a global scale.
- **Creating a Culture of Respect and Tolerance:** Legal, institutional, and societal efforts should work collectively to establish norms that value religious diversity and encourage peaceful coexistence.

In conclusion, these policy suggestions, inspired by Hamidullah's monumental work, provide a roadmap for creating societies that celebrate religious diversity and promote mutual understanding. By implementing these recommendations, governments, organizations, and communities can work toward a more peaceful and cohesive global society.

6.4 PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

6.4.1 Future Directions for Research and Interfaith Initiatives

Muhammad Hamidullah's extensive contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relationships provide a rich foundation for future research and initiatives. His principles and methodologies offer valuable tools for addressing contemporary challenges and fostering a more inclusive, harmonious world.

6.4.1.1 Applying Hamidullah's Principles to Contemporary Challenges

One of the most promising avenues for future research is the application of Hamidullah's principles to address pressing global challenges. His emphasis on dialogue, compassion, and understanding can guide efforts in key areas:

- **Migration and Refugees:** The global refugee crisis presents an opportunity to apply Hamidullah's interfaith principles to foster community cooperation in providing refuge, support, and dignity to displaced populations. Research could explore interfaith policies that emphasize empathy and collaboration.
- **Climate Change and Environmental Stewardship:** Environmental crises demand collective action across faiths. Hamidullah's teachings on compassion and stewardship can inspire interfaith initiatives focused on conservation, sustainable practices, and advocacy for responsible environmental policies.
- **Global Conflicts and Peacebuilding:** Hamidullah's commitment to dialogue offers a blueprint for addressing conflicts rooted in religious or ethnic tensions. Future research could examine how interfaith efforts have contributed to reconciliation and peacebuilding in conflict zones.

Hamidullah's vision of a world united by empathy and dialogue provides a roadmap for tackling modern challenges. His teachings encourage collaboration among diverse communities to address global issues with a shared sense of humanity and purpose.

6.4.1.2 Developing New Interfaith Initiatives

Inspired by Hamidullah's work, there is great potential for creating innovative interfaith initiatives that adapt his principles to contemporary needs:

- **Interfaith Educational Programmes:** Comprehensive interfaith education, from primary schools to universities, can play a transformative role in shaping tolerant and empathetic societies. These programmes could teach about various religions, dispel misconceptions, and foster a culture of mutual respect.
- **Interfaith Humanitarian Partnerships:** Collaborative efforts to address poverty, hunger, and healthcare disparities can unite religious communities

around common humanitarian goals. Such initiatives demonstrate the potential for religious diversity to contribute to shared human progress.

- **Interfaith Peacebuilding Networks:** Networks focusing on conflict resolution, dialogue, and reconciliation processes can expand their impact by addressing root causes such as economic and political disparities. These networks offer a model for preventing and resolving conflicts through collaboration.

New interfaith initiatives rooted in Hamidullah's principles can play a pivotal role in building bridges across religious divides, fostering coexistence, and promoting shared values in an increasingly diverse world.

6.4.1.3 Exploring Digital and Virtual Interfaith Spaces

In an era of digital connectivity, creating virtual interfaith platforms presents a unique opportunity to transcend geographical boundaries. Online spaces can enable global audiences to engage in meaningful dialogue, share resources, and collaborate on projects, fostering cross-cultural understanding in ways physical spaces cannot.

6.4.1.4 Evaluating the Impact of Interfaith Initiatives

The effectiveness of interfaith initiatives, including educational programmes, humanitarian projects, and peacebuilding efforts, must be evaluated. Rigorous assessments can identify successful strategies, refine methodologies, and ensure the sustainability of interfaith collaborations.

6.5 CLOSING THOUGHTS ON THE EVOLVING ROLE OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Muhammad Hamidullah's legacy highlights the evolving role of interfaith dialogue in promoting global peace, social cohesion, and mutual understanding. His principles of empathy, respect, and dialogue are indispensable in an interconnected and diverse world.

- **The Globalization of Interfaith Dialogue:** Technology has transformed interfaith dialogue into a global phenomenon. Online platforms allow

individuals across continents to engage in discussions, collaborate on global issues, and promote cross-cultural understanding. However, navigating the complexity of religious diversity on such a scale requires sensitivity, respect, and adaptability.

- **The Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Conflict Resolution:** Interfaith dialogue has proven effective in conflict zones by fostering reconciliation, building trust, and addressing the root causes of disputes. Preventive efforts that promote tolerance and respect can create environments where peace and coexistence flourish.
- **Interfaith Dialogue and Social Cohesion:** Interfaith initiatives strengthen social cohesion in increasingly diverse societies by emphasising shared values and common humanity. These efforts address religious and cultural differences, fostering inclusive communities where diversity is celebrated.
- **The Evolving Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Education:** Interfaith education equips individuals with the knowledge and empathy to understand religious diversity and dispel misconceptions. Lifelong learning initiatives, including community workshops and interfaith seminars, further expand the scope of interfaith understanding.
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Despite its promise, interfaith dialogue faces challenges such as entrenched prejudices and theological differences. However, these challenges also present opportunities for constructive dialogue, greater inclusivity, and the elevation of marginalized voices.

In conclusion, the evolving role of interfaith dialogue, as exemplified by Muhammad Hamidullah's work, underscores the power of shared values in addressing global challenges. His legacy reminds us of the transformative potential of dialogue, compassion, and understanding in bridging divides and fostering harmony across faith boundaries.

In exploring the life, works, and enduring legacy of Muhammad Hamidullah, it becomes evident that his contributions to interfaith relationships are historically significant and profoundly relevant to contemporary challenges. His scholarship, deeply rooted in Islamic tradition, offers guidance for fostering peace, tolerance, and mutual

respect in a world marked by religious diversity and globalization. Hamidullah's teachings emphasize the transformative potential of religious traditions to promote understanding and reconciliation, serving as a beacon of hope for scholars, leaders, and individuals alike.

A central takeaway from this study is the practical applicability of Hamidullah's insights to modern-day issues such as religious extremism, interfaith conflicts, and sectarianism. His advocacy for open and respectful dialogue as a means to address these challenges is a recurring theme in his work. Through his lifelong commitment to interfaith dialogue, he demonstrated how thoughtful engagement and exchanging ideas can break down barriers and build bridges of understanding among diverse communities.

Hamidullah's meticulous scholarship and deep engagement with Islamic texts serve as a model for contemporary scholars. His work underscores the critical role of academic rigour in advancing interfaith relationships and highlights how differences in faith can become opportunities for growth and mutual enrichment. His interpretation of core Islamic values, such as compassion and mercy, provides a unifying framework for fostering positive interactions across religious boundaries.

The study also reveals Hamidullah's emphasis on the universality of shared values among different faiths, particularly in his interpretation of Islamic teachings about the People of the Book (Jews and Christians). His inclusive approach underscores the potential for pluralism within the Islamic tradition and challenges reductionist narratives often dominating public discourse. Hamidullah's work advocates for a pluralistic and inclusive approach to religious diversity by highlighting the historical and theological foundations of Islam.

Hamidullah's contributions extend beyond theoretical discourse, offering actionable insights for interfaith dialogue, community engagement, and policymaking. His teachings call upon scholars to continue the dialogue he so passionately championed, religious leaders to promote tolerance and understanding within their communities, and policymakers to create environments conducive to cooperation and coexistence. On an individual level, his legacy inspires people to act as ambassadors of peace and understanding in their everyday interactions.

The enduring relevance of Hamidullah's teachings lies in their ability to bridge historical understanding with contemporary realities. His emphasis on dialogue, shared values, and mutual respect challenges us to view religious diversity not as an obstacle but as an opportunity for learning and growth. His work serves as a guiding light, showing how religious teachings can contribute to a more inclusive, compassionate, and harmonious world.

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected, the insights gained from Muhammad Hamidullah's scholarship offer a vision of hope. His legacy is a reminder of the enduring power of thoughtful dialogue and scholarship to promote understanding and harmony among diverse communities. The study of his life and works is not merely an academic exercise but a call to action to embrace the shared values of humanity and work toward a more peaceful and inclusive global society.

From the research study of Muhammad Hamidullah's academic contributions to Islamic thought and interfaith relations, it is evident that his work has left an enduring legacy, offering valuable insights into navigating the complexities of contemporary interfaith dynamics. His early life and education laid the foundation for a scholarly journey marked by a dedication to Islamic scholarship and interfaith dialogue, significantly enriching Islamic literature and fostering a balanced approach to religious studies, emphasising similarities and differences between Islam and other faiths.

Hamidullah's works highlight the importance of promoting peace, tolerance, and mutual understanding as central Islamic teachings. His methodology offers a practical blueprint for addressing modern interfaith challenges, mainly through his emphasis on Quranic principles such as *Rahmah* (mercy), peace, justice, and compassion, which he interpreted as universal values applicable to all humanity. These teachings provide a powerful counter to narratives of hatred and division, emphasizing the potential of religion to foster harmony rather than discord.

A notable aspect of Hamidullah's scholarship is his nuanced treatment of interfaith relations, particularly his respectful approach toward the People of the Book (Jews and Christians). His advocacy for interfaith harmony and understanding underscores its necessity for achieving global peace and security. He highlights the importance of mutual respect, tolerance, and compassion among people of different

faiths, offering an academic foundation for fostering cooperation and coexistence in pluralistic societies.

His application of *Shariah* principles, such as *Ijtihad* (free reasoning), to modern contexts is particularly innovative. By advocating for contemporary concepts like citizenship instead of traditional terms like *Dhimmi*, he provides a progressive framework for interfaith relations in the modern world. He has also critiqued the misuse of Islamic concepts like *Jihad* by certain groups to justify violence, reaffirming its true essence as a striving for peace and justice.

Hamidullah's scholarship not only provides historical insights into interfaith interactions during the Madinian period and early Islamic expansion but also offers practical strategies to address contemporary challenges such as extremism and Islamophobia. His academic contributions extend to Islamic jurisprudence, interfaith dialogue, and policy recommendations, encouraging policymakers and religious leaders to adopt more inclusive approaches.

His legacy is evident in the influence of his work on organizations like The World Muslim Congress, The Islamic Society of North America, and The Interfaith Dialogue Association. These entities have embraced his teachings to promote interfaith understanding and collaboration. Moreover, his work continues to guide scholars and policymakers toward creating a more inclusive and harmonious global society by championing dialogue, empathy, and mutual respect.

The study of Muhammad Hamidullah's academic work underscores the profound impact of his contributions on contemporary scholarship and its application. His legacy provides a foundation for addressing global challenges and inspires individuals, communities, and governments to work collectively toward a more peaceful and inclusive world. His teachings are a testament to Islamic thought's transformative power in fostering interfaith harmony and understanding, ensuring that his influence endures across generations.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of Muhammad Hamidullah's contributions to interfaith relations and the challenges of religious diversity, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Inclusion of Religious Leaders in Policy-Making:** Religious leaders and communities should actively participate in government-level policy-making processes to ensure inclusive policies reflecting diverse perspectives.
2. **Addressing Socioeconomic Inequalities:** Develop and implement strategies to reduce social and economic disparities between followers of different religions, addressing the root causes of tensions and conflicts.
3. **Promoting International and Multi-Religious Cooperation:** Formulate strategies to foster dignified collaborations and coordinated interactions among people of various religions, promoting shared values and mutual respect on a global scale.
4. **Encouraging a Culture of Tolerance and Respect:** Promote a culture of empathy, tolerance, and respect through education and dialogue, fostering mutual understanding among diverse religious communities.
5. **Future Research on Contemporary Challenges:** In light of Muhammad Hamidullah's principles, future research should explore solutions to contemporary global issues such as migration, climate change, and global conflicts, focusing on interfaith collaboration.
6. **Implementing Interfaith Initiatives:** Advance work on interfaith educational programmes, humanitarian partnerships, and peacebuilding networks, guided by Hamidullah's vision for multi-religious societies.
7. **Exploring Digital and Virtual Interfaith Possibilities:** Leverage digital platforms to create virtual interfaith spaces that transcend geographical boundaries, promoting meaningful dialogue and collaboration in the digital era.
8. **Promoting Inclusion and Shared Values:** Governments and communities should prioritize efforts to promote inclusion and shared human values, fostering an environment where diversity is embraced as a strength.
9. **Combating Prejudices and Stereotypes:** Reject entrenched prejudices and stereotypes, encouraging healthy academic dialogue to address religious differences while promoting practical inclusion and representation.

10. **Advancing Interfaith Dialogue for Social Harmony:** Recognize religious diversity as an asset and promote interfaith dialogue to address challenges, ensuring social harmony, peace, and order rather than division.
11. **Providing Access to Authentic Information:** Ensure students and young scholars access accurate and authentic information about different religions to combat distorted ideas and encourage healthy critical thinking.



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