Introduction
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Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah (1908 A.D. – 2002 A.D.) is one of those eminent scholars of the Indo-Pak subcontinent who left great impact on the Muslim world through their significant contribution to the fundamental sciences of Islam and sincere services to the society at large. Although, he belonged to Hyderabad (A.P., India) but he passed major parts of his life in Paris occupying himself with delivering lectures and writing books on the important aspects of Islamic sciences (Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqh). It goes to his credit that he had command on different well-known languages of the world including Arabic, Persian, Urdu, English, French and was also well-familiar with Turkish, Russian, Latin and German languages.

Dr. Hamidullah was a prolific author. His imposing life in the field of writing was characteristically distinguished from other personalities. His life devoted to religious and academic works inspired many scholars for serving the cause of Islam and contributing to Islamic learning in modern times. It is also surprising enough for every scholar who observes the circumstances in which Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah lived on the one hand and the large number of valuable works produced by him about different subjects on the other hand with high academic standard. His personality as a writer is compared with Abu Nasr al-Farabi (d. 950 A.D.), Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111 A.D.) and Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (d. 1762 A.D.). While discussing different issues and examining others' studies, he adopted a critical approach towards them. He has
almost covered the whole range of Islamic studies in his writings and tried to explore true picture of Islam and its fundamental sciences. Although, the dimensions of his works spread over all these spheres- theology, the Qur'ân, Hadîth, Fiqh, Islamic history and culture, ethics, politics, economics but Qur'ân, Hadîth, Fiqh and Sîrah were his favourite subjects. His contributions to these subjects had been quite remarkable and were universally recognized in academic circle from the point of richness of material and high standard of research.

In the field of Quranic studies, his contributions are mainly, translations the Holy Qur'ân into three languages of West i.e. French, English and German, edition and publication of Mushaf-e-Uthmānī and collection and compilation of the bibliography of translations of the Holy Qur'ân in 125 different languages of the world. Dr. Hamidullah’s contribution to Hadîth literature is also much significance. He did his best to establish the authenticity and historicity of Hadîth literature with strong evidences and convincing arguments. In the field of Hadîth Dr. Hamidullah showed main interest in the study of history of its compilation and in the discovery of the earliest collections of Hadîth. He was successful in this venture as he discovered some very early collection of Ahâdîth including Sahîfah Hamâm Ibn Munabbih. On the basis of these collections he removed the misgiving spread by orientalists and also by some unknowing Muslim scholars under their influence that in the early period the Ahâdîth were transmitted only orally and there was no system of preserving them in written form. So, the Ahâdîth can not be considered accurate and
reliable. He brought out impressive evidences to show that apart from a number of companions who had prepared their own personal collections of Aḥādīth, a large number of Aḥādīth had been dictated by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Another contribution of learned author was collection and compilation of Kitāb al- Sard, one of the earliest collections of Hadith.

In the field of Islamic history his works are mainly related to the Sīrah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in French, English and Urdu. The significant contribution of Dr. Hamidullah to Sīrah is that he has written on such aspects of Sīrah which were not touched by other scholars or were dealt with in marginal manner like judicial system in the time of Prophet (SAW), political life of the Prophet, state administration, diplomatic relation and educational system in the period of the Prophet (SAW). With regard to the Sīrah another significant contribution was collection and compilation of the documents of the times of the Prophet (SAW) which included the text of his letters and that of his agreements with the people of Makkah and different tribes of Madinah and adjoining areas. He also discussed the role of different tribes in the development of the Prophet's mission, which helps to understand the background and rationale of many decisions taken by the Prophet (SAW) particularly in relation to his agreement with different tribes. Dr. Hamidullah also studied thoroughly the Prophet's relations with his contemporary rulers with reference to the original sources and his study contributed to give a good understanding of rationale of his relations with different rulers and tribal chiefs. Moreover, he brought out several reasons for the importance to the
study of *Sirah* of the Prophet (SAW) for Muslims and non-Muslims in the present days when modern sciences had made unimaginable progress.

As far as Islamic law is concerned, Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah was well-versed in this subject and showed keen interest in spreading this knowledge to the Muslim world through his lectures and writing. His contribution as a scholar of Islamic law had been remarkable. Apart from translating the works on Islamic law in Urdu from different languages, he himself produced many important works on this subject. In these works he thoroughly discussed different aspects of Islamic law and interpreted the provisions of *Shari'ah* keeping in view the demands of modern times and problems of the present days. He also examined the sources of *Fiqh* and methodology for bringing out legal points through them. His discussion about the importance and scope of *Ijtehād*, principles of its application and contribution of early jurists to the development of this institution has great significance. It is noteworthy that while responding to the problems of modern period, he himself applied the mechanism of *Ijtehād*. His emphasis on the institutional *Ijtehād* was a revolutionary step in this direction. His contribution to *Fiqh* and Islamic law also included discovering and compiling the important documents of the Prophet's time which contain basic rules and regulations of Islam for the conduct of relationship with non-Muslims.

A very important work of learned scholar about Islamic law is related to International law particularly his study of the rules and regulations of *Shari'ah*
which governed relationship of Muslim state with non-Muslim subjects and countries. He is considered the first Muslim scholar who contributed to this important subject in English in a very systematic and detailed way. His works on Islamic international law are significant in several respects. Firstly, they bring to fore important aspects of Islamic international law that hitherto had been almost unknown both in the Islamic countries and the West. Second, his studies dispel the misgiving that Islamic law recognises only one category of relationship between the Islamic state and other states, that of war and belligerency. Thirdly, they examine the development of the concept of neutrality in Islamic international law. Fourthly, these works bring to fore the legal concept and practices of Islamic international law according to the requirements of modern world. Moreover, Dr. Hamidullah did his best in drawing attention of the scholar of the whole world to the Charter of Madinah as “the first written constitution of the world”, which contained very rich material about the international relations in Islam.

In view of the significant contributions of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah to Islamic law, I selected the present topic for my Ph.D thesis. To the best of my knowledge, no research work has been done so far on this particular aspect of his academic contribution. Several works of modern scholars about Dr. Hamidullah’s academic contributions are available in Arabic, Urdu, English and other languages. But these works do not contain detailed study of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s contribution to Islamic law. So, to fill up this gap I attempted in the present thesis to study and evaluate his works on Islamic law.
and bring out their distinctive features in an objective way. I feel that the work would be useful for the assessment of Dr. Hamidullah’s contribution to Islamic law.

The main objectives of the present research work are:

1. To evaluate Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s achievements in Islamic studies especially Islamic law.

2. To examine Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s studies on different aspects of Islamic law particularly nature and characteristics of Islamic law, sources and principles of Islamic jurisprudence, concept of *ijtehad* and its scope in modern period.

3. To highlight his studies on International law of Islam.

4. To critically analyse the juridical views of Dr. Hamidullah about the problems of modern period.

Apart from the introduction and conclusion, the whole work is divided into seven chapters. These are as follows:

1. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah: His Family Background and Personality

2. Dr. Hamidullah’s works on *Qur’ân, Hadith* and *Sirah*- A General Survey

3. Critical Study of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Works on Islamic Law

4. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s views on Islamic Law
5. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Perceptions of Ijtehad.

6. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Juridical Response to the Problems of Modern Period

7. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Studies on Islamic International Law.

The first chapter (Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah: His Family background and Personality) is divided into three sections. The first section gives details about the ancestors of Dr. Hamidullah with his genealogical table. The second section deals with his early life, education, taking into account those distinguished teachers who helped to build up his personality as a scholar and thinker. The third section discusses his academic life as a teacher, writer and promoter of Islamic learning.

The second chapter is related to the study of Dr. Hamidullah’s works on Qur’an, Hadith and Sirah literature. This chapter evaluates his works on the above subjects giving a brief account of the contents of each work. The third chapter (Critical Study of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Works on Islamic law) contains a detailed study of Dr. Hamidullah’s works on Islamic law with critical approach. The forth Chapter examines the views of Dr. Hamidullah on definition, concept, philosophy and distinctive features of Islamic law gives his stand point about legislation and amendment in the Islamic law and influence of Roman law on Islamic law. Dr. Hamidullah’s perception of Ijtehad and his views about scope, principles of Ijtehad and mechanism of institutional Ijtehad in modern period has been discussed thoroughly in fifth Chapter.
The sixth chapter (Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s Juridical Response to the Problem of Modern Period) gives a critical analysis of Dr. Hamidullah’s juridical views about socio-economic and political problems of modern period. While presenting his solution to the new problems, Dr. Hamidullah applied the principle of *Ijtihad* to bring out the Shari’ah’s attitude toward them. The seventh and the last chapter of the thesis evaluates Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah’s contribution to Islamic International law. The chapter contains detailed study of Dr. Hamidullah’s Urdu and English works on this important subject of Islamic law mainly with reference to three conditions – peace, hostility and neutrality.

In course of preparation of the present thesis I mainly studied the works of Dr. Hamidullah on Islamic law. The well-known books of modern scholars on Dr. Hamidullah were also consulted. I collected material for the present thesis from a large number of books, reference works, journals and periodicals available in the well-known libraries of Aligarh and Hyderabad including library of the Institute of Islamic Studies, AMU, Maulana Azad library, AMU, library of *Idārah Tahqīq wa Tasnīf-e-Islāmi* (Aligarh), library of *Idārah ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān* (Aligarh), Osmania University library (Hyderabad), Sayyed Salar Jang Museum library (Hyderabad), library of *Jāmi’ah Nizāmiyah,* (Hyderabad), library of Urdu Research Centre (Hyderabad), library of *Idārah Adābiyat-e-Urdu* (Hyderabad).
I have also attempted to collect relevant information through interview with a number of scholars and researchers of Aligarh and other places. These included Prof. Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi (Department of Islamic Studies, AMU), Prof. Muhammad Saud Alam Qasmi (Dean, Faculty of Theology, AMU), Prof. A.R. Momin (Department of Sociology, University of Bombay). Dr. Shahid Ali Abbasi (Department of Islamic Studies, Osmania University, Hyderabad), Dr. Hasanuddin Ahmad (Chairman, Minority Commission of A.P., Hyderabad), Mr. Ahmad Ataullah (nephew of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, Hyderabad). Prof. Muhammad Mustafā Sharif (Chairman, Department of Arabic, Osmania University, Hyderabad), Maulana Abu Bakr al-Hashimi (Ex-Director, Dāirat al-Maʿārif-i-Uthmāniyah, Osmania University, Hyderabad).

The present work is a humble attempt to bring forth the significant achievements of Dr. Hamidullah in the field of Islamic law. The work can not be claimed to be free from error. Under my limited ability I tried my best to consult the relevant works and present the thesis in a good form. It was only by the Grace and tauffiqa of Allah Taʾāla that I was able to complete it.