



The Light — U.K. edition

May 2007

The Lahore Ahmadiyya monthly magazine from U.K.

Contents:

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| • Mian Fazl-i Ahmad <i>sahib</i> —
<i>Brief obituary</i> 1 | • Questions about the “second manifestation”
of God’s help —
by Zahid Aziz 5 |
| • My dream of our Prophet, by Bushra Ahmed 2 | • An interview about Woking
by Zahid Aziz 7 |
| • Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s <i>criticism of secular
philosophy and vindication of Divine revelation</i> —
by Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu 2 | |

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Assalamu alaikum: Our next meeting —

Date: **Sunday 6th May 2007**

Time: **3.00 p.m.**

Speaker: **Dr Ali Zamir Khan**

Regular activities:

Darus-i Quran and Hadith:

Every Friday at 2.30 p.m.

Meetings of the Executive:

First Sunday of every month at 2.00 p.m.

Meeting of the Jama‘at:

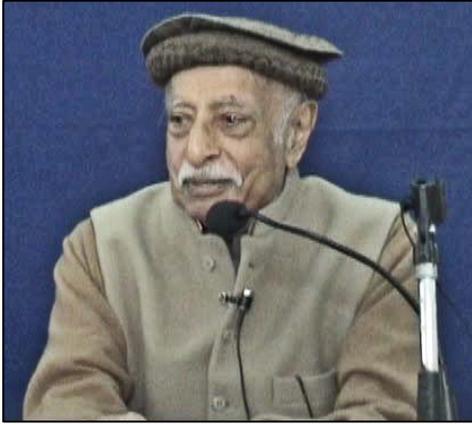
First Sunday of every month at 3.00 p.m.

Mian Fazl-i Ahmad sahib

It is with the deepest regret that we announce the death, in Lahore on 1st April, of *Mian Fazl-i Ahmad sahib*, a senior-most figure in the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore — *inna li-llahi wa inna ilaihi raji‘un*. He reached 89 years of age on the day of his sad demise. The Mian sahib was a son-in-law of Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali and son of Shaikh Mian Muhammad who had held the office of President of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore for a time in the 1950s. The Mian sahib himself was for long Financial Secretary of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Lahore and Chairman of its Foreign Missions Committee. In this latter capacity, and by virtue of his many visits outside Pakistan, he was

well known in the foreign branches of the Anjuman in Europe and North and South America.

The Mian sahib gave much time, money and energy for the work of the Anjuman over many decades. He extended his warm and gracious hospitality to many visitors from Ahmadiyya branches abroad who went to Lahore and he helped them in every way during their stay. While being a wealthy industrialist, he was at the same time a highly refined and cultured man. He was sociable and genial with everyone equally, whether they were high or low, rich or poor. He addressed gatherings of the Jama‘at on many occasions and his speeches, usually impromptu, always suited the moment and captured the mood of the audience perfectly.



Mian Fazl-i Ahmad addressing the Annual Gathering in Lahore last December

The Mian sahib was a very engaging raconteur and conversationalist. One incident he related was that once he went to see a friend, a leading businessman, and he found there another visitor already with his friend. The visitor was a leading Maulana of the Jama'at Islami, a religious-cum-political party in Pakistan which is in the forefront of branding Ahmadis as non-Muslim. The friend introduced the two, and told his visitor that Mian sahib was a Lahore Ahmadi. The Mian sahib instantly said to the Maulana: "Please make me a Muslim", referring to the fact that Ahmadis, of course, already do what is required to make a person a Muslim, namely, profess the *Kalima*. The Maulana laughed and replied: "Let it go, Mian sahib. All this is just politics". Here, then, is a confession, albeit privately, by a leading figure of the Jama'at Islami that declaring Ahmadis as non-Muslim is nothing other than political power play, having no connection with any religious issue.

We extend our condolences to Mian Fazl-i Ahmad sahib's wife, Tahira begum, and other family members, and pray that Allah grants him forgiveness, receives him into His mercy, raises his grades in the hereafter and makes him join the righteous servants who departed earlier — *Ameen*.

My dream of our Prophet

A poem by Bushra Ahmed

On the Birthday of the Prophet,
My eyes opened and we met.
I asked him "Who are you?"
He replied "I am your Rasool".
He continued "Are you ready for the Hereafter?
Are you really ready to meet your Master?
You suffer a lot I know but you are not frail,

Though I still wish I could stop your pain.
You must struggle,
It's a constant battle.
Do good, be good,
I did, as much as I could.
If you keep fighting *iblis*,
You will be rewarded with bliss.
The garden is yours forever,
The bushes, the trees, the hedges,"

Then he made his exit and to Allah he returned,
I cried a river and my stomach churned,
I reached for him in my sleep,
I did not realize and began to weep.
It is by his example we will benefit,
That is the greatest reward and gift.
May he rest in everlasting peace,
May we follow him complete,
He is with us all,
He saves our soul.
Please remember him especially on this day,
From the straight path we must never stray.

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's criticism of secular philosophy and his vindication of Divine Revelation

by Prof. Henry Francis B. Espiritu, Ph.D. Cand.

Introduction: Failure of Secular Philosophy to satisfy the hearts of spiritual seekers

Theistic philosophers of varied creedal convictions have composed numerous dissertations disproving atheism and agnosticism by means of philosophical and logical analyses. However, owing to the overly cerebral and analytically complicated way in which their treatises were written, they failed miserably in touching the discerning hearts of spiritually thirsty souls who are seeking for innate certainty in their pilgrimage of faith. Indeed, there is a grave spiritual peril in employing philosophy as the basis of refuting atheism and agnosticism. A philosophical argument used to prove God's existence can be logically controverted and counter-arguments can be likewise deployed to deny the existence of the Supreme Being. Therefore, using philosophy to prove or disprove the existence of a Supreme Being is not only desperately tentative and spiritually counterproductive, but also outrightly barren.

A Punjabi Sufi saint of medieval India, Hazrat Fariduddin Ganj-i-shakar (circa, A.D., 1173-1266) complained regarding the uncertainty of philosophical reasoning (as a way of ascertaining the Absolute Truth) in his pathetic prayer to God. He cried deep within his spirit:

O my soul, philosophy is weariness to the heart — arguments fly here and there and like arrows, counter-arguments fly in different directions piercing my head heavy with scholarly suppositions. I searched the Beloved at the gate of philosophy, I seek my Friend in the winding paths of logic ... but alas, the arrows of pros-and-cons have killed me. O my Beloved, I seek refuge in You from the confusions and scruples of my restless mind. Grant me grace to reach Thy vision. It is Thy Face alone that suffices my parched and barren heart.¹

Hazrat Mirza's distrust of human philosophy's claim to know the absolute truth

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908) — another Punjabi mystic and theologian considered by his followers as a great *mujaddid* (renewer) of Islam — echoed Hazrat Baba Farid's complaint regarding the uncertainty of a faith that is solely based on human philosophy. Philosophy cannot be an indubitable basis of our faith in God because it is based on the suppositions of the human mind.² The human mind alone, if unaided by God's mercy (*rahmat*) and self-revelation (*ilham*), cannot fathom the great mysteries of life, the universe, and existence. Philosophy, despite its claim to certainty and universality, is nothing but a bewildering array of contradicting views and theories that often change according to times and climes.³ Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad insists that the only way by which humankind can arrive at the absolute conviction of God's existence is by reflecting on the self-revelation of God in the Holy Book (*Al-Quran*) as explained and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad. The reflective reading of God's self-revelation as found in the Holy Quran and the reverential devotion accorded to the *Sunnah* (Holy Tradition) of the Prophet of Islam, are for Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the potent arsenals in

refuting the menace of atheism and agnosticism in the heart of humanity.⁴

Philosophy (even if such a philosophy is "theistic") — as an incomplete vehicle in ascertaining the existence of God — can only bring the person to a logical and mental assent of the possibility of Divine existence. By deductive as well as inductive reasoning, one is compelled to assent verbally and mentally that indeed God exists. Theistic philosophy often uses naturalistic arguments in proving the reality of God's existence — but this contemplative reflection of nature is not enough. One will accept in a cerebral manner the fact of God's existence but despite this mental assent, one's heart is still void of absolute certainty (*haqq-ul-yaqeen*). The heart can never be serene and tranquil until it reaches certainty of faith (*tahqiq-ul-iman*). Certainty of one's faith in God can be only attained by taking hold of the truth of Revelation as found in the Holy Quran, since the Holy Book is God's self-revelation of His Person to His creatures.

Revelation in Quran and Life of the Prophet: Foundations of ascertaining spiritual truths

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's spiritual magnum opus, *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* (Ahmadiyya Proofs), is a veritable reflective commentary of God's Words that combines his spiritual, mystical, and experiential insights of Divine enlightenment in the course of his prayerful reading and introspective meditations of the Holy Quran.⁵ Furthermore, *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* and other spiritual writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad utilize the pure Word of Allah in the Quran and the righteous precedents set by Prophet Muhammad in the *Sunnah* to elucidate, exemplify, and instantiate the Divine truths found in the Holy Quran. According to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Holy Book, the perfect exemplary conduct of the Prophet, and the private revelations of certainty (*ilham*) vouchsafed by Allah to His beloved saints (*awliya*) are indeed indispensable testimonies in proving the existence of God (*Ibid.*).

God's revelation of His Divine Attributes is a gift of grace (*ni'mat*) and mercy (*rahmat*). Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is aware that understanding the Holy Quran can only happen when God bestows

¹ Amir Munir Suhrawardi, *Baba Farid ka Munajat (Baba Farid's Supplications)*. Pakpattan, Pakistan: Khanqah Kitab-khanah, n.d.; p. 38.

² Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *The Great Muslim Reformer of the Present Age*, Lahore Ahmadiyya Publications, 2001; pp. 31-32.

³ See at length: Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *op. cit.*, specifically the sections, "Emergence of Dialecticians" and "The Appearance of the Mujaddid of the Times"; pp. 16-23.

⁴ See: Naseer A. Faruqi, *Ahmadiyyat in the Service of Islam*, pp. 82-85. Cf. also Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *op.cit.*, specifically Chapter II, "The Basis of the Holy Imam's Dialectics [*Ilm Al-Kalam*]"; pp. 25-49.

⁵ See: Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *A Brief Sketch of My Life [Kitab-al-Bariyya]*, 1996; Chapters 4 & 5 "Spiritual Experiences" and "Divine Appointment and Claims"; pp. 16-32.

enabling grace to the person reading and contemplating its message. The holy prophets, saints (*awliya*), and regenerators of faith (*mujaddid*) encountered the Supreme Lord in a very intimate way. Their very own saintly lives are perfect models and proofs of the Reality of God. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claims that his divine office as the renewer (*mujaddid*) of Islam for the fourteenth century of the Islamic era (Hegira) is God's bestowal of mercy on the Islamic *Ummah* (community). He understood that his commission as a *mujaddid* is for the revitalization of the Islamic faith, which was attacked by atheism, agnosticism, colonial missionary-peddlers, positivistic empiricism, and materialism.¹

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as *Mujaddid* and his office of upholding Divine Revelation

The devout believer can show to the world the reality of God and the truth of His presence in the universe, because he himself has experienced God in his very own inner life. Whereas a secular philosopher — no matter how theistic he is in his philosophical commitment, and no matter how well he proves God's existence in his characteristic cold rationalism — can never produce the spiritual fervor, ecstatic joy, and divine zeal of the Prophets and saints. Through revelation (*wahy* or *ilham*), prophets, saints, and regenerators of the faith perceive in their souls the absolute truth and certainty of monotheism, as revealed in the pure light of the Holy Quran. Thus, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a *mujaddid* and saint is bold in his confidence in the truth of Divine Revelation. Furthermore, he firmly exhorts the faithful to put their trust in the Holy Quran and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet as indubitable bases of true faith. He says:

“My dear ones, the sterile logic of this world is a ‘Satan’. And the ephemeral philosophy of this world is like *Iblis*. It greatly covers the light of faith and gives rise to bravado and takes one close to atheism. So you should guard yourself against this and develop a humble and meek heart and become such that you obey the commandments without dispute and dissent, just as a child obeys his mother. ... I have attained this perfection by following the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet and if the ultimate objective of religion is to develop a personal relationship with God, I have by following the Quran and the Holy

Prophet, achieved this objective. There is no other religion in the world that can transport a man to these heights. Islam is the only living and true faith, a faith by following which, one attains to God-realisation.”²

During the British Raj in India, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, through his writings, exerted his utmost to revitalize the faith of Indian Muslims when anti-Islamic forces vehemently attacked the tenets of Islam. By giving rational, mystical, as well as spiritual proofs on the truth of Islam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad guided the Muslims of India in that difficult and torturous period of their history. During the British colonization of India, irreligious forces inimical to Islam strived to remove the inborn love for Islam in the heart of the Indian Muslims by conducting slanderous propaganda aimed against Islam and by imposing laws that endeavored to efface the beautiful Mughal-Islamic heritage — a civilization which was largely inspired by Islam. Atheistic ideologies, sectarian divisions among Indian Muslims, as well as materialistic and positivistic empiricist philosophies aided the anti-Islamic forces of British colonialism in denigrating Islamic faith and traditions.

Against this historical backdrop, the defense and renewal of Islam were the reasons that impelled Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to declare his *mujaddidiyyat* (divine role of reformation) and to criticize all man-made philosophies that denigrate the pristine revelation of Islam.³ Human knowledge devoid of guidance from the All Intelligent God will cause the weakening of faith, degradation of morals, laxity in worship, and loss of a compassionate heart characterizing a proper human being. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad — seeing the extreme poverty of human philosophy in explaining the purpose of life — warned the Muslims not to trust in the directions of human minds not sanctified in the truths of faith. To quote from Dr. Basharat Ahmad in his assessment of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's scathing critique of mundane philosophy:

“A philosopher is like a blind man, groping in the dark, trying to discover some argument. It is quite possible that he may or may not find correct arguments by this blind search and he may or may not draw the correct conclusions from these. That is why God, the Most High, has differentiated between a prophet and a philosopher in the

¹ See at length: Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, 1984; pp. 8-23.

² *Izalah-i Auham*, quoted by Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

³ Cf. Maulana Muhammad Ali, *True Conception of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, pp. 1-17, 49-55.

Quran: ‘Can a seeing man and a blind man be alike? (35:19)’ ... Thus the difference between a philosopher and a prophet is the same as the difference between a blind man and a man with his sight ... Hence, all those perfect followers of the Holy Prophet [i.e. saints] who had tasted of the spiritual experience based their invitation to men on this personal experience of God...” — Dr. Basharat Ahmad, *op.cit.*, p. 32.

To be continued in next issue.

Questions about the “second manifestation” of God’s help

by Zahid Aziz

In his booklet *Al-Wasiyyat* (‘The Will’), published two and a half years before his death, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad comforted his followers with the news that, just as his Movement was blessed with Divine support during his life, so after his departure God would continue to help his Movement with a “second manifestation of Divine power” (*qudrat sani* or *saniyya*). We received an e-mail at the *ahmadiyya.org* website on April 6th from a Luqman Ahmed asking some questions about our interpretation of this as compared with the Qadiani Jama‘at interpretation. The e-mail began as follows:

“ I would like to start by thanking people who have worked so hard to put up the website *ahmadiyya.org*. My name is Luqman and I am a resident in the city of Maple, Canada. I have briefly gone through your website which is very well made. It represents the beliefs of your community in a true manner. By the grace of Allah I am an Ahmadi [Qadiani] and I study in Jamia Ahmadiyya Canada. If you don’t mind, I have a very simple question to ask. Again and again on your website, you have mentioned Promised Messiah’s (peace be on him) book ‘Al-Wasiyyat’ [The Will] to show that the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) made Anjuman in charge after him. You also mentioned that the Promised Messiah himself created Anjuman-e-Ahmadiyya. But when we read *Al-Wasiyyat*, we find that when the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) mentions the second manifestation, he says that: ‘And that second manifestation cannot come unless I depart.’ (full text is given later). Why did he say that it cannot appear unless I depart when Anjuman was already established? ”

Response: I am thankful for your kind comments about our website and I much appreciate that you wish to learn of our viewpoint.

It is your misunderstanding that we regard the Anjuman which Hazrat Mirza sahib created as being the ‘second manifestation’ of Divine help to come after him. The Anjuman is a body of human beings working by its human judgment. We do not claim that its decisions are inspired and directed by God Himself, as the Qadiani Jama‘at claims about its Khalifa. The Sadr Anjuman was created by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad for the purpose of managing and administering the funds and the work of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and was given the final authority by him in all such matters. It was not created to be a spiritual mentor or an intermediary between man and God.

The e-mail continues:

“ What is your interpretation of this sentence? We Ahmadis believe that he referred to Khilafat in this sentence and Khalifah would be the head of the community after the Promised Messiah (peace be on him). Another thing that you should remember is that we Ahmadis [Qadianis, as you call us] also have Anjuman but it is not on top of the Khalifah.”

Response: Regarding the words “it cannot appear unless I depart”, please note that this second manifestation of God’s help for a Divinely-established Movement comes in order to show that that Movement is indeed from God. During the lifetime of the man sent by God, his followers wonder whether, after he has died, God will still continue to support their Movement. Those who don’t believe he is from God tend to think that his success in his lifetime is due to his personality rather than help from God and his Movement will not last after him. Therefore, it cannot be proved *until he has departed* that God continues to assist and give success to his Movement after him.

Nowhere in *Al-Wasiyyat* has Hazrat Mirza sahib mentioned anything about the kind of *Khilafat* or *Khalifa* that exists in the Qadiani Jama‘at, neither by using this term nor as a concept. You say you also have an Anjuman “but it is not on top of the Khalifah”. The second Khalifa, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad, stated in a lengthy speech on this subject in 1925 that the original rules of the Anjuman as created by the Promised Messiah “did not include the existence of the khalifa of the time”, and that after he became khalifa a resolution was passed to the effect that the Anjuman must accept whatever the khalifa says. But he considers this resolution *not sufficient* to establish the khilafat because he says:

“... the Anjuman which can pass the resolution that it shall obey the khalifa in everything, if ten years later it says that it shall not obey him, it is entitled to do so according to the rules of the Anjuman.”

Then he declares that the khilafat remains:

“...at the mercy of a few men who can, if they so wish, allow the system of khilafat to continue in existence, and if they do not so wish, it cannot remain in existence ... Because the institution of khilafat was not included in the basic principles of the Jama‘at, the movement lives in the constant danger [that] ... by the stroke of the pen of ten or eleven men Qadian can at once become Lahore.” (*Al-Fazl*, 3 Nov. 1925)

Therefore, he introduced in 1925 a new system whereby the Anjuman was made subservient to the khalifa. **Eleven** years after becoming khalifa, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad was still finding that the Anjuman was “on top” of the khalifa (to use your words). One wonders what kind of a second manifestation of the power of God was this, which was at the mercy of a few men (of the Qadiani Jama‘at from 1914 onwards), who could put an end to that manifestation and turn Qadian into Lahore!

The original Urdu speech can be read on the Qadiani Jama‘at website alislam.org in the collection of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad’s writings entitled *Anwar-ul-‘Ulum* (see volume 9, number 9).

In his e-mail Luqman Ahmed then quotes a couple of passages from *Al-Wasiyyat*, whose relevant part we give below:

“For it is essential for you to see the second manifestation, too, and its coming is better for you because it is everlasting the continuity of which will not end till the Day of Judgement. And that second manifestation cannot come unless I depart. But when I depart, then God will send this second manifestation for you which shall always remain with you ... And after I am gone there will be some other persons who will be the manifestation of the second power.”

He poses the following question: “Which people are mentioned here. I am sure he would not refer to Anjuman as persons.”

Response: Even the very words used by Hazrat Mirza sahib, “some other persons”, cannot refer to the khilafat system of the Qadiani Jama‘at. A continuous, unbroken system of succession, and one which supposedly is to continue uninterrupted till

the Day of Judgment, cannot be described as “some persons”, which means “individuals here and there”.

In a second e-mail, sent very shortly after the one above, Luqman Ahmed quotes this time from our translation of *Al-Wasiyyat* a note by Maulana Muhammad Ali relating to the above passage. We reproduce that quote below:

“It must be remembered that by the “second power” (*Qudrat Sani*) is meant nothing other than the Divine assistance which must make its appearance after the death of the Promised Messiah. Read again the words on page 13: ... These words are clearly a translation of the Promised Messiah’s revelation: “I will make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the Day of Judgment.” Therefore, to take the “second power” as referring to a particular individual is to abuse these words. As to the words, “after me there will be some other individuals who will be manifestations of the second power”, these do not show that khalifas are being spoken of. If Hazrat Mirza had wanted to convey that, he would have written that after him there would be his khalifas who would be manifestations of the second power. The words “some other individuals” clearly show that the Promised Messiah did not have in mind any institution of khilafat, which is why the word *khalifa* is not found anywhere in the whole of *Al-Wasiyyat*. Had such a system of khilafat been meant, then this was the right occasion to speak of it openly and to say that his khalifas would be the manifestations of the second power. We must not throw the words of the Will behind our backs in pursuit of our own views.”

Luqman Ahmed asks us: “Now, Qadianis interpret the second manifestation as Khilafat which according to Maulana Muhammad Ali Sahib is impossible. But he does not tell us his interpretation of these words. Please let me know what exactly is second manifestation according to the Lahori Jamaat.”

I am very surprised by this question as it is dealt with clearly in Maulana Muhammad Ali’s note. The “second power” is the promise of God given to Hazrat Mirza sahib in the words: “I will make those who follow you above those who disbelieve till the Day of Judgment.” And we have seen this fulfilled. In all the issues of difference between Hazrat Mirza sahib and other Muslims, his views have always been becoming more and more prevalent. The death of Jesus is accepted more and more. As regards his interpretation of jihad, recent world events have forced Muslims to proclaim the same peaceful, spiritual meaning as he taught. That is the Divine help after the departure of the Promised Messiah. There have been persons among Ahmadis who triumphed in debate over opponents of Islam and opponents of the Promised Messiah. This promise

that his followers would be “above” his rejectors was fulfilled through them.

Hazrat Mirza sahib has also written in *Al-Wasiyyat* that after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad there also took place a “second manifestation” of Divine power to help the Muslims (the first manifestation being during the life of the Holy Prophet). The Qadiani interpretation implies that the Divine help granted to the Holy Prophet’s followers after him *was not ever-lasting and came to an end*, but the Divine help granted to the followers of Hazrat Mirza sahib after him *will last forever*. Such a notion is absolutely unacceptable. In fact, as Hazrat Mirza sahib wrote many times, his own coming is in accordance with God’s promise to help the religion of the Holy Prophet Muhammad forever. Hazrat Mirza sahib’s own coming was itself a part of the second manifestation of Divine power (*qudrat saniyya*) that came after the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

When Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din was the Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, he was asked the question, only ten months before his death, “what is meant by *qudrat saniyya*?” He replied:

“When the founder of a community is completing his work, then in order to accomplish that work the manifestation of the power of God takes place, as it says in the Holy Quran: ‘This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour upon you’. Its manifestation took place in the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. But after him, this continued in the times of his *khalifas*, deputies and *mujaddids*. They were all the ‘second power’ (*qudrat saniyya*). The second power cannot be limited to a particular form. Whenever any nation becomes weak, then Allah the Most High, out of His wisdom, sends the second power in order to strengthen it.” (*Badr*, 22 May 1913, pages 3 – 4)

He did not give the reply: “I am the *qudrat saniyya*”, as would be expected if the Qadiani interpretation was correct. The real ‘second manifestation of Divine power’, which is to last forever, is that which was granted to Muslims to carry forward the mission of the Holy Prophet Muhammad after his death with the help of God. The Divine power that came during the life of Hazrat Mirza sahib, as well as the one he mentions as coming after him, are both a part of that same Divine assistance which was granted to the Muslims after the Holy Prophet. ■

An interview about Woking

by Zahid Aziz

Amy Waldman, a writer for *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine (based in Washington DC) and a Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard, contacted our Woking Muslim Mission website in January to say that she was doing research on the history of British Muslims and wanted to learn more about the history of the Woking mosque. Specifically, she was interested in the takeover of the mosque by migrants from Pakistan in the 1960s, as mentioned on our website. I responded with some brief information and later she told me that she would be coming to London and wished to interview me to collect further material for her research. It was due to her interest in the topic of the takeover that in the April issue of this magazine I reproduced the statement by B.A. Misri and published my response to his account.

Amy Waldman met me on 31st March to conduct the interview, which lasted for two hours. I first explained the background to how the Woking Muslim Mission started, as follows. From the time that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad started his mission, he expressed a deeply-held wish to propagate Islam to the West, and he was convinced that if Islam was presented in the light in which he was expounding it, then it would attract the people of the West. He wrote, in 1891, of the vision he had been shown by God, in which he saw himself making a speech in London, after which several birds fell into his hands. His interpretation was that his message would reach the West and capture the hearts. Many young Western educated Muslim men in India were attracted to his message and through him were filled with the same passion and conviction. Two prominent among these were Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din.

I went on to say that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad started an English language magazine, the *Review of Religions*, with Maulana Muhammad Ali as Editor. Through this magazine, and in fact even before, contact was maintained with converts in the West, for example Abdullah Quilliam in England and Russell Webb in America. Shortly after the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din had occasion to visit England in connection with a court case before the Privy Council. That was concluded quickly and he then started his real work, that of presenting the teachings of Islam to the public here.

Dr G.W. Leitner (d. 1899), who had been Principal of Government College Lahore and the

first Registrar of the University of the Punjab in Lahore, had built a Mosque in the town of Woking in 1889, with funds from Indian Muslims, chiefly the Begum (Lady Ruler) of Bhopal. When Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din came to see the Woking Mosque in 1913, he found that it was generally disused and was private property. The Khwaja sahib, with the help in particular of two eminent Indian Muslims in England, Mirza Sir Abbas Ali Baig and Syed Ameer Ali, had the Mosque placed under a Trust for Muslim use. This Mosque Trust then allowed the Khwaja sahib to establish the Woking Muslim Mission there and appointed him Imam of the Mosque.

The Woking Mission and Mosque were the chief centre of Islam in the U.K. for more than fifty years, and were acknowledged by all sections and persuasions of Muslims. The Mission's propagation of Islam was what was called "non-sectarian", which meant it did not make direct reference to the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. However, the interpretation of Islam it presented was based on Lahore Ahmadiyya views and it promoted the literature of our Jama'at. And, of course, it was largely financed and staffed by Lahore Ahmadiyya members. This state of affairs prevailed as long as the Muslims who used the services of the Mosque and Mission were, in general, fair minded, enlightened, and free of the narrow ideas and sectarian bigotry taught by the common mosque *mullas* of the Muslim world. When religious leaders of this ilk started to come to Britain during the 1960s, in the wake of the large scale immigration from the Indian subcontinent, they immediately launched a campaign organized under a "Woking Regeneration Committee" to wrest the Mosque from the Ahmadiyya-influenced and sponsored Mission. In this they succeeded literally by physical means due to the support from the last Imam B.A. Misri, as he himself has written. Moreover, as the Mission was housed at the Mosque by permission of the Mosque Trust, an independent body with the Pakistan ambassador as its chairman, this Trust yielded to pressure to expel the Mission from there.

I was also able to give Ms Waldman my own personal recollections and observations of the Woking Mission as the Muslim national centre in the U.K. in the 1960s (as a teenager at the time). At Eid functions we saw some three to four thousand people arriving for prayers at Woking by train and coach from all over the country. The national press and television would also be there to report and interview people. Then I also recalled the news that began to appear in the Urdu weekly newspapers of those days in Britain about the campaign to take the Mosque out of Ahmadi hands.

To illustrate the work of the Mission, I showed Ms Waldman some copies of the first series of *The Islamic Review*, from the earliest ones in 1913, to some from the 1920s, and on to 1940, and then a few copies of the large-size magazine from the 1950s and 1960s, when it was more international, with news and features from all over the newly independent Muslim countries. I presented her with a copy of the book *Eid Sermons at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking*, compiled by Mr Nasir Ahmad.

I also gave her a copy of an item in the December 1964 issue, which gave a glimpse of the situation that was developing. A supporter of the Mission wrote to the Editor saying that when he approached his friends to become subscribers to *The Islamic Review* they refused on the grounds that the magazine and the mission are "Mirza'i". The Editor replied that while it was true that the Founder of the Mission, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, was a follower of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, he had created this as a non-sectarian mission and it had always been operating along the same lines. He acknowledged that the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement had been providing funds for the Mission without which "this magazine could not possibly have survived for so long" but this did not mean that *The Islamic Review* was the organ of this Movement. The appearance of this letter shows that the campaign against the Mission was gathering pace in 1964.

The ousting of the Woking Muslim Mission and takeover of the Mosque can now be seen as part of the whole trend towards intolerance among Muslims, which is why it would be relevant to Ms Waldman's subject of research. Pakistan itself underwent a similar takeover. The political movement which brought Pakistan into existence believed in a non-sectarian, enlightened Islam. It had a similar view of Islamic governance and polity as that of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Its leading figures held Maulana Muhammad Ali, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and other Lahore Ahmadiyya leaders in high regard. But these principles were overthrown and abandoned by governments from the 1970s onwards following pressure from the rising orthodox religious parties preaching a programme of intolerance and bigotry.

I also said to Ms Waldman that the Islamic values of inter-Muslim unity, steadfast propagation of Islam, tolerance towards our non-Muslim neighbours and local British friends, and respect for the law of the land, for which the Woking Mission stood, are still held high by the U.K. Lahore Ahmadiyya Jama'at. We thank Amy Waldman and look forward with interest to any research paper or publication she produces with her conclusions.