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In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

The Islamic View

Patron: Mr Nasir Ahmad • Editor: Dr Zahid Aziz



Worldwide Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

A Magazine of the Central Ahmadiyya Anjuman, Lahore

Available online at: www.jamaat.uk/islamic-view/

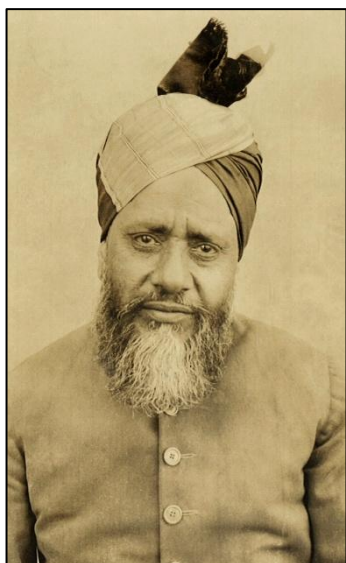
October 2026 • Vol. 2, No. 10

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The Late Maulana Muhammad Ali (1874–1951)

by the late Maulana Sh. Muhammad Tufail



[Maulana Muhammad Ali died on 13 October 1951. It is customary to devote the October issues of our magazines to his memory. The article below, which summarises his life, was published in *The Islamic Review*, December 1951 (pages 12–17), written by Maulana Sh. Muhammad Tufail who was working in the Woking Muslim Mission in England at the time as assistant *Imam*. He had earlier served in various capacities at the centre of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in Lahore, including assisting Maulana Muhammad Ali in some of his projects, and came to Woking in September 1951. Later on, Maulana Tufail became *Imam* of the Woking Mosque, and subsequently served the branches of the Movement in the West Indies. This article in *The Islamic Review* was accompanied by several photographs, not included here. We reproduce it below with some editing.]

Early childhood and college career

With the passing away of Maulana Muhammad Ali in October 1951, the Islamic world has indeed lost a great literary figure of present-day Islam. It was probably in the winter of 1874 that this famous translator of the Holy Quran was born at Murar, a small village in the Kapurthala State, India. He was the fifth son of Hafiz Fateh Din, the headman of the village.

He was not yet five years old when he was sent to the nearest village school of Dialpur with his brother, Aziz Bakhsh, who was four or five years older than he. After three years the two brothers were sent to Kapurthala High School, and from there they passed their matriculation examination in 1890. Muhammad Ali was a brilliant boy. He did very well in school. When he returned home during the holidays he used to take part in the village games, especially *kabaddi*. At school he played cricket.

At this age his love of virtue and truth was proverbial. His teachers and class fellows had great respect for him. Before going to school he was not taught to read and recite the Holy Quran but, having an inherent love for this sacred book, he used to study it till he learnt to recite it by himself. After he had completed his education at school, his father was rather anxious to give him higher education, and with scarce means he managed, somehow, to provide funds for sending both of his sons to Government College, Lahore. The Maulana spent five years in this college, taking his B.A. in 1894, and M.A. in 1895.

As to his academic activities, his college career was quite brilliant too. He had a special aptitude for mathematics, in which subject he headed the list of candidates at Punjab University. When he once asked for a certificate from one of his professors, the only remark noted was:

“He is the best mathematician of our College.”

For his M.A., he took English as his subject and was one of the five candidates, out of twenty-three, declared successful in the examination. Strangely enough, during his college days he never took part in literary activities. He never wrote anything for publication and never appeared on the college platform to deliver a speech. He was only interested in long walks, athletic sports, and football. And even at the age of seventy-five he went for long walks early in the morning. This was perhaps the secret of his good health even in his old age.

After taking his B.A. in 1894, and while still attending the M.A. classes in Government College, he joined Islamia College, Lahore, as a professor of mathematics when he was only nineteen. After getting through his M.A., while still working in Islamia College, he joined the Law College and came out second, first, and third in the three Law Examinations of Punjab University.

Joins the Ahmadiyya Movement

In 1897 he left Islamia College for Oriental College, Lahore, where he worked as a professor till 1900, when he left that college, too, to start practice as a lawyer in Gurdaspur, Punjab. But before three months had passed he decided to begin the great work of his life as editor of the *Review of Religions*, in obedience to the wishes of the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, a renowned religious writer and the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1890.

It was in 1892 that the Founder of the Movement paid a visit to Lahore, and the two brothers frequently went to meet him. They had heard a lot about his reputation as a great saint in their village, which was situated at a distance of about twenty miles from Qadian. They heard from his own lips that the time had come when Islam was destined to triumph in the world, and were impressed with the truth of this claim.

Later, in March 1897, Muhammad Ali paid a visit to Qadian in the company of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din (the founder of the Woking Muslim Mission, England), who was also at the time a professor in Islamia College, and who had earlier joined the Ahmadiyya Movement. There he too enlisted himself as a member of this great revivalistic movement in Islam. He had his religious instruction in the company of the Founder there and was enlightened as to the deeper meaning of Islam.

His joining the Ahmadiyya Movement opened a new chapter for him. Had he not come into contact with the dynamic personality of the Founder, he could not have been such a great religious authority on Islam today.

After joining the Movement he remained at Lahore for three years, and during that time he paid frequent visits to Qadian and did the work of rendering into English many of the manifestos issued by the Founder. This was only the beginning of his literary career.

A visit to Qadian in those days was a rather hard task as the village was situated at a distance of about eleven miles from the nearest railway station of Batala and accessible only through an *ekka* (the native unsprung carriage) on a country road. But often would Muhammad Ali walk this distance at midnight on Saturdays in the company of friends, and come back on foot on Sunday evening for his work in the college.

Dedicates his life to the service of Islam

When he decided to start work as a lawyer in 1900, he sought the advice of his teacher, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who, after some time, told him that he was thinking of starting an English monthly to carry the message of Islam to Europe and America, and that he would like him to edit it. Muhammad Ali immediately gave up the idea of working as a legal practitioner. Assiduously learning all he could in the company of the Founder of the Movement, he undertook to convince the world of the beauties and practicability of the teachings of Islam for the rest of his life.

*[Insertion by the Editor: The original article omitted the following detail, which helps in understanding its next paragraph. In 1901, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, after consultation with his senior followers, decided to start a monthly English magazine entitled *The Review of Religions*. He announced: "It was always a matter of sadness and anxiety for me that all those truths, the spiritual knowledge, the sound arguments in support of the religion of Islam, and the teachings giving satisfaction to the human soul, which have been disclosed to me and are still being made known to me, have not yet benefited the English-educated people of this country or the seekers-after-truth of Europe. This pain was so intense that it was no longer bearable. But God Almighty intends that before I pass away from this temporary abode all my aims should be fulfilled so that my last journey is not one of disappointment. So to fulfil this object, which is the real purpose of my life, there is a suggestion that ... a magazine in English be published for the fulfilment of the objectives mentioned above."]*

The first number of the *Review of Religions* came out in January 1902. Dealing with all the burning questions which troubled men's minds in those days, the *Review* within a period of three years acquired fame not only in India but also in the religious circles of England and America. Its great merit was its clear exposition of the religion of Islam, though at the same time it carried on powerful controversy with other religions, particularly with Christianity.

Commissioned to undertake translation of the Holy Quran into English

The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement had, however, also a desire to get the Holy Quran translated into English, to which he gave expression in 1891 in his book entitled *Izala-e-Auham*. He passed away on 26th May 1908 at Lahore, and the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya, Qadian, which was founded by him to carry on his mission, worked under the guidance of the late Maulana Nur-ud-Din, who was a great scholar and religious divine of his age. In 1909, Muhammad Ali, while still in the service of the Anjuman, was called upon to undertake the work of the translation of the Holy Quran. It took him eight years to accomplish the task. The labour spent on this translation is evident from the wealth of the footnotes attached to it. The author had to work hard for these years, tracing not only original authorities and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and all such questions as are dealt with in the notes, but also the great Arabic lexicons on which he based his interpretations wherever he made a departure from the interpretations of the current translations. He worked on it for almost twelve hours daily and had at times to perform the task in a standing posture, for which he kept a high desk to enable him to work in this position.

Creation of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore

By this time differences had arisen in the Ahmadiyya Movement. That is a sad aspect of the story, but one could not help it. The Founder has been misunderstood and misrepresented by his friends and foes alike. A certain number of his followers, overpowered with passion and fanaticism, thought that the Founder was a prophet in the real sense of the term and all those who did not accept him as such were outside the pale of Islam. After the death of the Founder's successor, Maulana Nur-ud-Din, in 1914, Muhammad Ali had to leave Qadian in April 1914 owing to these differences on doctrinal issues with the party in Qadian and he took up residence at Lahore where a new Anjuman was formed under the name of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, of which Muhammad Ali was chosen the President.

The finality of prophethood and the *Kalima* of Islam

The belief in the finality of the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad was perhaps never brought under discussion so explicitly before. The question engaged Muhammad Ali's attention for a considerable time. His various writings and his book, *Al-Nubuwwat fi al-Islam*, made this point very clear. There has not been anybody else for many centuries past who has so elaborately discussed and defended the conception of the finality of prophethood (*Khatam Nubuwwat*). His writings in this respect are unique.

The other point which he emphasized was that whoever declares his faith in the *Kalima* (There is no god except Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger) is a Muslim and nobody has any right to dub him a *kafir* (unbeliever). Declaring brother Muslims *kafirs* had sapped the vitality of Muslims and had divided them against one another. This was a happy pastime of the so-called *mullahs*. When such a practice made its way through the

followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sometime after his death, Muhammad Ali and Khawja Kamal-ud-Din stood up against it. To them this was quite alien to the teachings of Islam and what they had been taught by the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Work at Lahore

When Muhammad Ali settled in Lahore he practically started from scratch. There was no organization and there were no funds to further the cause of Islam. A handful of men assembled and decided to carry on the task of the propagation of Islam assigned to them by the Founder of their Movement. As *Amir* (spiritual leader) and President of the Anjuman, Muhammad Ali had manifold duties. Besides all this, he steadily pushed on with his literary work. His English translation of the Holy Quran with commentary was published in 1917, and the Urdu translation and commentary was published during the early 1920s in three volumes. He was a prolific writer, being the author of a large number of books, booklets and tracts, in English and Urdu, on both the doctrinal and the historical sides. He contributed about 7,000 pages to the English literature on Islam and about 10,000 pages to the Urdu literature on Islam. *Muhammad The Prophet, Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad, The New World Order, A Manual of Hadith*, and an Urdu translation of *Sahih Bukhari* with commentary are some of his books which have also been greatly appreciated. He was a missionary to the core of his heart and this attitude we observe in all his writings. When the educated classes of Muslims were dazzled by the glory of Western civilization, Muhammad Ali's writings showed them the right path.

Muhammad Ali, the man

The secret of the success of Muhammad Ali lay in his unwavering faith in God kept active by his constant study of the Holy Quran, the *Hadith*, and the inspiring words and memory of the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and last but not least, his devotional prayers. Muhammad Ali was a very hardworking man and methodical in his work. He had unassuming habits. He could not pose. Though he is no more among us, I can still remember every aspect of his behaviour. How he talked, how he moved, how innocent and childlike sometimes his behaviour was. The sphere of his activities was diverse, as was his nature. It is rather difficult to describe him in full as he was. Only those who have seen him and lived with him may feel and remember the live personality behind him.

He always spoke gently. His gestures were very few. While addressing his audience from the pulpit he had a gentle and simple manner. He would never strive for effect. Unnecessary oratorical expressions were perhaps alien to his nature. He said nothing superfluous nor was there anything superfluous in his writings. Whatever he felt he expressed in simple, unassuming language. He would quote the Holy Quran and the *Hadith* quite accurately, but at quoting poetry he was not good. He would forget half the line or alter the sequence of words, not caring, not knowing about the metre.

I can very well remember one bright morning. It was most probably in 1947, the occasion was *Id al-Adha*. I observed him dressed in a *sherwani* of dark brown colour (it looked like a new one) and a white *shalwar*. He had a Faiz cap on his head. Generally he used a turban but on that occasion he had a cap. More or less this was his dress throughout his life. In this respect he did not much change. He started his sermon with the recitation of the Holy Quran in a low voice. He stood straight and held his right hand with his left just a little below the abdomen. This posture was very common to him. As he proceeded with his sermon he steadily moved his face sideways. His movements were reserved for a while but when he wanted to emphasize some point, he lifted his left hand with its palm towards the audience and raised his voice and became enthusiastic. He then let his hands move freely. Sometimes he would place one of his hands on his hip, in his effort to bring home some point to his audience, and point out with the first finger of the other to make them really understand it. He then pressed the palms of his hands against each other, sometimes running his fingers into one another. When he was finished with the sermon, he stretched his arms to the utmost to ask forgiveness and pardon from God, and then quietly sat down. This is how he gave an address in public. Ah! We shall never see him standing before us again.

The last two years of his life

He had a severe attack of coronary thrombosis at Karachi in the month of September last year [1950]. For full forty days he was struggling with life and death and then he recovered. On December 10th, 1950, he reached Lahore. His friends had gathered at the Lahore station to receive him. People took him out sitting in a chair which was placed by the wall of the platform. He looked completely exhausted but smiled and shook hands with all those who were present. The next day, despite the advice of doctors, he started work. As he could not sit on a chair for long, he ordered his bed to be moved to his office. Here he would sit and go through the proofs of the new edition of the Holy Quran, reply to letters, and send instructions to the Anjuman's office. When visitors came, he listened to them but said very little in reply. Talking for him was forbidden as that might affect his lungs, which had become weak through his prolonged illness.

The climate of Lahore had a soothing effect on him and his health steadily improved. He could stroll a little now, and worked harder. For the annual gathering of the Anjuman held every year in the month of December, he dictated two long speeches which were later read out in the meeting. He emphasized the need of opening missions in Hong Kong, Turkey, and Egypt. Two more months slipped by peacefully. In March 1951, he was doing his work with the zeal of a young man. I requested him once not to exert himself so much. He smiled and said that he could not live without work; if he stopped doing anything he would cut short his life; this work kept him going. He did not listen to what his friends and doctors said. He had his own theories and he stuck to them to the last. He wanted to finish the proofs of the Holy Quran that were coming from England. He had another

programme in mind. He wanted to make a tour of Europe, staying at the Woking Mosque and then in Berlin, and when returning visit the Middle East and perform the *Hajj*.

The passage was booked for April [1951], but when the doctor examined him in March, he dissuaded him from undertaking such a long journey. In April he had another attack and once more he was in the hands of nurses and doctors, who struggled hard day and night for his recovery. The proofs of the Holy Quran were still coming and that was his only worry. He wanted to see the Quran printed as early as possible. He personally looked through every detail of it. It was on May 31st 1951 when his friends, relatives, and followers saw him off to Karachi for the last time. He looked pale and exhausted and sat quietly in a chair. When the train whistled, he stood up, and with shaking legs and hands said goodbye to all who had come. The train faded away in the mist, taking away the soul which was so dear and near to many hearts.

He had booked his train seat for Lahore for 15th October. Five or six days before his demise he became very quiet and lost all interest in things around him. He wanted to come to Lahore as early as possible. He told his attendants that he must go on the 13th otherwise it would be a bit difficult for them to take his body to Lahore. He seemed to know that his appointed time had come. Everybody tried his best to get a seat for him on the 13th of October 1951, but it was not possible. He died on that date and it was his body which was taken to Lahore that day. His coffin arrived in Lahore the next day in the evening. About a thousand people gathered at the Lahore railway station to receive him. They lifted his body at 8 p.m. from the train with tears in their eyes. The funeral services were led by Maulana Aziz Bakhsh, his elder brother, in the mosque at Ahmadiyya Buildings. At 9.40 p.m. his body was slowly lowered into its earthly abode for eternal rest. Forty-five minutes later people showered flowers on his grave and prayed for him for the last time and slowly and sorrowfully moved out of the graveyard. It was quiet after a while. Only the pale moon was shedding its yellow light over his grave.



Turkish Islamic scholar Omer Riza Dogrul describes meeting Maulana Muhammad Ali

Omer Riza Dogrul was a Turkish Islamic scholar, writer and a deputy to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. He wrote the following article about Maulana Muhammad Ali after the Maulana's death in 1951, in which he pays tribute to his services to Islam and also gives an account of meeting him in Lahore in February 1951. It was published in *The Islamic Review*, May 1952. Sadly, Dogrul had already died in March 1952 before his article was published. The heading of his article was: *A Heavy Loss for the Muslim World* —

Muhammad Ali and his Work. It was printed with the following subheading as extracted from his article:

“I can truthfully say that I have read in full the 7,000 pages written in English. These are quite sufficient for me to judge the full extent of my great debt of knowledge to him.”

For this photo on the right, we acknowledge the following source:
www.kapiyayinlari.com/Yazar/omer-riza-dogrul/127646

The debt I owe to Muhammad Ali

With the death of Muhammad Ali we have lost a man who devoted his whole life to the service of Islam; a savant and a thinker, he was a hard worker and a prolific writer. I was profoundly moved on learning this sad news through reading *The Islamic Review* for November, 1951. He was certainly the greatest Muslim thinker and writer of our time, and was possessed of a sound and fertile brain, a pure heart full of enthusiasm, a faith which was profound and unshakable, and a knowledge that was limitless. During his lifetime he devoted all his capabilities and talents to one object, the revival of Islam, the brushing aside of useless superstition among Muslims, and re-establishing the original doctrine of Islam in its pristine beauty. And he rejuvenated its lost force. This good worker in a saintly cause, whose days of work are over, was called Muhammad Ali of Lahore, famous translator and commentator of the Quran into English. He was an eminent personality who left his mark on the world by this supreme work and a host of other books on Islam.



It so happened that after taking part in the World Muslim Conference at Karachi in February, 1951, we spent several days in Lahore. Here our first duty was to pay a visit to Maulana Muhammad Ali. We had read his writings in Turkey for thirty years with great benefit to ourselves. He enlightened us on many matters, for he had penetrated deeply into the spirit of Islam and understood its aims and objectives, and had set out to explain them to others. He wrote with equal facility in English and his native tongue. Through his writings in English we were able to understand what he had to say. It has been calculated that he wrote altogether 7,000 pages in English and 10,000 in Urdu. I can truthfully say that I have read in full the 7,000 pages written in English. These are quite sufficient for me to judge the full extent of my great debt of knowledge to him.

On our arrival at Lahore we were confronted with a very full programme of activities, but when I was told that he wished to see me, I solved my difficulty by scrapping the official

scheduled arrangements, and taking his emissary by the arm, said to him, "Let's go to see Maulana."

On the way I asked him, "How is he getting on and what is he working on?" He replied:

"At one time all hope of saving his life was given up, as he was greatly incapacitated by severe heart attacks. But thanks to the care of his entourage he has pulled through. He ought not to work, but nonetheless, he does. Whenever we request him to rest, he replies: 'Let me work; rest is death; it is only by working that I feel that I am alive.'

He is at present revising the new edition of his translation of the Holy Quran into English, and will not rest until he has checked all the proofs himself. His only wish is that he will live long enough to complete this work. *Insha Allah*, he will live long enough."

Face to face with Muhammad Ali

On our arrival at the Maulana's house I asked that we should cause him no inconvenience. "I will go to his room and kiss his hand," I said. I was promised that my wishes would be fulfilled, and so I waited in the drawing room. After one or two minutes I saw a light shining through the open door; I was irresistibly drawn towards it, and a moment later was embracing Muhammad Ali. His form had really acquired a sort of transparency and translucidity which were not of this world. His hair and beard, which were exceptionally white, surrounded his face like a halo. He was of striking stature. His eyes were pale and dim, and gave the impression that his thoughts were already not of this world. I spoke in order not to tire him; I treated subjects which I knew would interest him, and as I was very well informed about these ideas, he received my remarks with a sympathetic smile.

Somebody brought him some sheets of paper on a roller. "These must be your proofs," I said. "Please let me look them over with you." He appeared to appreciate my efforts not to tire him. I was able to observe that his work was well on the way to its final completion. As far as I can remember, twenty parts of the Quran had already been corrected and only ten remained to be completed. As the proofs had been prepared with the greatest of care, and the text and corrections had been treated with equal attention, the checking was quickly carried out. I asked him: "What are your other occupations?" He replied slowly in a deep voice:

"I have sworn an oath to send a complete set of my works to all the libraries of the world. I have 5,000 complete sets of my works, for which my friends have collected money in order to send them to all the important libraries of the world. Would you kindly give me a few addresses of libraries that would be interested in receiving them?"

I immediately wrote down several addresses, and he gave them to his secretary. I made as though to retire, but he stopped me. He said:

“I have read your translation of the Holy Quran entitled *Tanri Buyrugü* (The Order of God). I have the first and second editions in my library, and I hope that you will publish a third. I beseech you to do all that lies in your power to express the enlightenment of Islam. I am sure that you will never in any way give satisfaction to the fanaticism of the narrow-minded people or even consider supporting the views of the intolerant.”

I kissed his hand and asked permission to leave. This was my first and, alas, my last, interview with him.

His life and work

Muhammad Ali was born about 1874, in the village of Murar, in the province of Kapurthula. His education was a success; he was an excellent mathematician as well as a man of letters. He studied law at the University of the Punjab and started to embark on a legal career, but destiny had ordained that he should contribute to the revival of Islam. He met Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement. He joined forces with him at the same time as Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, and for many years they were engrossed in profound religious studies. He was editor of *The Review of Religions*, and was asked by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman in 1909 to translate the Holy Quran into English. It took him eight years working twelve hours a day to complete the translation and the commentary.

Meanwhile, there had been a split in the Ahmadiyya Movement. On the death of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1908 some of his supporters who wrongfully interpreted his intentions attributed to him the claim of a prophet, and treated those who would not accept this view as unfaithful. Muhammad Ali broke with them, and in 1914 set up, with the help of his associates, *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam*, at Lahore. He was elected president of the organization. Muhammad Ali believed that the Prophet Muhammad was the Last of the Prophets, and there were none to come after him. Furthermore, nobody has the right to dub another an unbeliever (*kafir*) once he has recited the *Kalima*, which says: “there is but one God, and that Muhammad is His Messenger.”

Later, Muhammad Ali published a translation and commentary on the Holy Quran in the Urdu language, and this was followed by other works. As most of these works were written in English, they helped to spread the light of Islam across the whole world.

Until he breathed his last, Muhammad Ali gave his life to the spreading of the publications of Islamic literature, and published without interruption many new works; this activity went on without hardly a break.

His chief objective was to reveal the true meanings of Islam, to show it in its full glory so that it would give satisfaction to human beings brought up under modern education. For this purpose his first field of activity was to combat all false legends and superstitions prevalent among Muslims which were in contradiction with common sense. He wished to restore the simplicity of Islam, and reject all that was opposed to this. But his chief objective was not that of pleasing this generation, but the search for historical truth. His work was essentially of historic value, which will live for ages to come.

[Editor's Note: Under the above subheading, *His life and work*, the information given in the first two paragraphs has already been given in the previous article by Maulana Tufail. We have not excluded this as being repetition because it shows that figures from the general Muslim community, outside the Ahmadiyya Movement, and outside the Indian subcontinent, were well-aware of the following two facts: (1) Maulana Muhammad Ali's close association with the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, and (2) the reason for the split in the Ahmadiyya Movement and the formation of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman as Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement being that it adhered to the doctrines that no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and that no one who proclaims the *Kalima* of Islam can be declared as *kafir* by another Muslim.]

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## Last entry in the diary of Maulana Muhammad Ali, in his own handwriting

3.3.51  
 Received a letter from Mr. H. W. Thomas yesterday - containing a copy of a letter from Mr. H. W. Thomas - Abdul Aziz, Camden, New Jersey, dated 29th Jan. 51, containing eleven names of persons who had joined Dolar - also copy of a report for publication in The Islamic Review containing names of eight persons who joined Dolar, in and who belong to England and Holland, including one belonging to Australia. The news is no doubt Dolar has been signed of which is no become - میں نے دینے کے لئے

This entry, in the pen of Maulana Muhammad Ali, reads as follows:

3.3.51

Received a letter from Woking yesterday — containing a copy of a letter from Mr. H. W. Thomas — Abdul Aziz, Camden, New Jersey, U.S.A., dated 29th Jan 51, containing names of eleven persons who had joined Islam — also copy of a report for publication in the *Islamic Review* containing names of eight persons who joined Islam, and who belong to England and Holland, including one belonging to Australia. Nineteen converts to Islam; the news is no doubt a harbinger of what is yet to come. — *Yadkhulūna fī dīni-llāhi afwāj-an*.

The Arabic quotation at the close is from a verse of the Holy Quran, chapter 110, which mentions people “entering into the religion of Allah in companies” (110:2).

The source of this image is *Paigham Sulh*, special issue on Maulana Muhammad Ali, 26 December 1951, page 55.

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An exhortation by Maulana Muhammad Ali

“The Ahmadiyya *Jamaat* stands for spreading Islam in the world and taking the Holy Quran to people. Do not let this tradition of yours go into decline. I will say again to my young friends, and say it again and again: keep alive the traditions of your community. Adhere to the Islamic code of morals and behaviour, read the Quran, listen to it, ponder over it and act upon it. The day will come, for each and every one of your elders, when you will bury their bodies in the ground with your own hands, and your descendants will do the same to your bodies. **My young friends, I stress upon you with the greatest emphasis and advise you not to bury your traditions along with the bodies of your elders. Keep them alive** and take them forward lest people say that this community is dying away.”

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## Manuscript of an Urdu *khutba* by Maulana Muhammad Ali

When Maulana Muhammad Ali would deliver a *khutba*, a person would be deputed to note it down, usually the editor of the *Paigham Sulh*. Then that person would handwrite a draft copy, and Maulana Muhammad Ali would go through it, making any amendments, before publication in the *Paigham Sulh*. The editor of this magazine (*The Islamic View*) has in his possession, from the papers of Maulana Abdul Haq Vidyarthi, manuscripts of three such *khutbas* from 1931, delivered during the month of Ramadan. Shown below is

[illegible]



**Headstone on the grave of Maulana Muhammad Ali in Miani Sahib Cemetery, Lahore,** stating that he sacrificed the prospects of a bright worldly career in 1900, and for the next fifty years he produced 50,000 pages of writings in support of the religion of Islam and in reply to objections of the critics of Islam, which were published in several languages. He wrote commentaries of the Quran, and just after completing the revised edition of his English translation of the Quran and laying a permanent basis for the propagation of the Quran, he died the death of a martyr on 13 October 1951, 10 Muharram 1371.

# New publication: *Science, Islam, and the Ordered Development of Life*

Written by Dr Robbert Bipat

Review by Zahid Aziz

When I first heard about the publication of this book in mid-September 2026, and I glanced through the **Preface** to it, I wrote the following comment in a WhatsApp group:

“What a wonderful and thought-provoking statement, summarising the real and proper relationship between Islam and science. Muslims who write about this subject would do well to pay heed to these comments. Dr Bipat's book will earn high regard for Islam in the eyes of all thinking human beings as well as showing Muslim enthusiasts how science really relates to Islam.”

My reason for making this comment can be seen if I further quote from a Friday *khutba* I delivered on 8 May 2026, entitled *The Quran and Modern Science*. It began as follows:

“It is unfortunate that sublime and inspiring teachings of religion are often turned into gimmicks by many of their followers, with which they then try to impress other people. As a result, the teachings lose their real significance, and even become a matter of ridicule among intelligent and thinking persons. I am referring here to the subject of the Quran and modern science, and the many writings and presentations produced by Muslims claiming that various modern scientific discoveries had already been stated in the Quran. The basic truth of the connection between the Quran and knowledge of the world around us is highly compelling and faith-inspiring, but it is overshadowed by superficial and baseless conclusions put forward by enthusiastic Muslims who have got carried away and have applied little thought to the matter.”

The clear impression created by these writings, which I am referring to in this extract, is that modern science is a fruitless pursuit because it has only managed to discover what was in the Quran already from centuries before. There is also a condescending attitude in these writings, an air of superiority, as if to say: We Muslims knew all this before you discovered it. Presentations and arguments of this kind are unsound and superficial, and of little help in spreading the teachings of the Quran about studying and acquiring knowledge, nor are they of any benefit to the advancement of science. One contradiction which comes to mind is that, while proclaiming so excitedly that modern scientific discoveries were already foreseen in the Quran, the same people reject the use of scientific discoveries for pre-determining the start of the lunar months of the Islamic

calendar and they insist that, unless the new moon is personally sighted by the physical eye of a Muslim witness, the new month cannot start.

It is, therefore, a matter of sheer delight that this new publication stands in stark contrast to the kind of commonly encountered approach mentioned above. Professor Dr Robbert Bipat is a medical doctor, as well as a Ph.D. academic and researcher in physiology. He also has deep knowledge of the religion of Islam and the Quran, and has studied other religions as well. He was President of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Islamic association SIV in Suriname for five years. We can do no better than to quote extracts from his Preface, as below.

“This book grows out of the convergence of my positions as a scientist, physician, university professor in physiology, and practicing Muslim. Across the laboratory, clinic, classroom, and mosque, I have repeatedly returned to one central question: does rigorous scientific inquiry weaken belief in the Creator, or can it deepen a disciplined awareness of the order, balance, fragility, and moral responsibility of life? My answer is that faith and inquiry need not be rivals when each is allowed to speak at its proper level. Science investigates mechanisms, evidence, histories, and causes within the created order; the Quran asks what an intelligible, life-sustaining, morally significant world discloses about Allah as Creator, Sustainer, Guide, and Judge.

The aim of this work is not to make religion replace science, nor to force science to prove every article of faith. Both approaches are inadequate. If religion is used to avoid evidence, inquiry is weakened; if faith is made dependent on unstable scientific claims, belief becomes fragile. The stronger path is methodological honesty. Science explains how natural processes operate; philosophy asks why an ordered and intelligible world exists at all; revelation teaches how human beings should read creation as sign, mercy, trust, measure, guidance, and accountability.

The opening letters of *Surah al-Baqarah* give the book its first intellectual posture: humility before divine knowledge. Maulana Muhammad Ali renders *Alif Lām Mīm* as “*I, Allah, am the Best Knower*” (Muhammad Ali, 2002). This does not diminish human investigation; it places it in proportion. Human knowledge is real, valuable, and morally required, but it remains partial. The more deeply one studies cosmology, geology, biology, physiology, ecology, medicine, and human origins, the more necessary it becomes to distinguish mechanism from meaning, evidence from worship, and scientific explanation from ultimate dependence.

... believers should not protect faith by avoiding evidence, nor surrender faith to every changing intellectual fashion. The Quran repeatedly calls human beings to observe, compare, verify, travel, reflect, and remember. This book therefore receives the natural

world as a field of Allah’s signs while refusing to turn the Quran into a technical textbook of cosmology, geology, genetics, physiology, ecology, or paleontology. My being part of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is important to this book because it gives me an intellectual and spiritual home in which reason, revelation, scientific inquiry, and moral responsibility can be held together without fear. This tradition has encouraged me to think openly about cosmology, geology, biology, evolution, physiology, medicine, ecology, and human origins while remaining anchored in the Quran, the finality of prophethood, the Unity of Allah, and the moral purpose of human life. It allows me to ask difficult questions without treating questions as disloyalty, to receive scientific evidence without making science ultimate, and to read creation as a field of signs without forcing the Quran into changing scientific categories. In that sense, the Lahore Ahmadiyya framework is not a side note to this work; it is one of the reasons I can reason about everything discussed here with confidence, humility, and interpretive restraint.

I offer these reflections as a scientist who values evidence, as a physician who has learned that knowledge must be joined to compassion, and as a Muslim who receives creation as a field of signs. My purpose is not to collapse science into theology or theology into science, but to let each speak truthfully at its proper level. Science asks how created systems work; revelation teaches why creation matters and how human beings should respond—with humility, gratitude, disciplined inquiry, mercy, worship, and responsibility.

Therefore, I dedicate this book to Maulana Muhammad Ali, whose interpretations of *Rabb*, *Mizān*, and *Qadar* inspired this work; who explained why Adam need not be understood as the first biological human being; and who remained humble despite his profound scholarship.”

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Events at the Berlin Mosque

by Amir Aziz, *Imam of the Berlin Mosque*

1. Open Monuments Days, 12–13th September 2026

The historic Berlin Mosque in Wilmersdorf participated in the *Tag des offenen Denkmals* (Open Monuments Days), which was celebrated throughout Berlin.

During the two days, approximately 700 visitors had the opportunity to visit the historic Mosque, learn about its remarkable history and architecture, and gain insight into its important role in the history of Islam in Germany. As one of Berlin’s significant religious and cultural landmarks, the Mosque welcomed people from different backgrounds and

promoted dialogue, understanding, and appreciation of cultural heritage.

The participation of the Berlin Mosque in the Open Monuments Day once again demonstrated that the Mosque is not only a place of worship but also an important part of Berlin's cultural, historical, and architectural heritage.



Visitors gather in the front garden of the Mosque on one of the Open Days



Imam Amir Aziz giving a presentation inside the Mosque

[See more photos and videos at this link](#)

2. Peace Prayer Day at the Berlin Mosque, 18th September 2026

On 18 September 2026, a special Peace Prayer was organized at the historic Berlin Mosque in Wilmersdorf to mark the beginning of Muslim Culture Week in Berlin.

The prayer brought together people from different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds with a shared message of peace, compassion, mutual respect and harmony among humanity.

The prayer was conducted in Urdu, Persian, Arabic, German, English, Turkish, Bengali, and Kurdish, reflecting the rich diversity of the Muslim community and the multicultural character of Berlin.

The Islamic message of peace was highlighted through the Quranic teaching that saving one human life is like saving all humanity. The gathering emphasized that faith should inspire people to protect human dignity, respect one another, and work together for a peaceful society.

The event concluded with a universal prayer for peace, asking for peace in families, communities, nations and throughout the world. The Peace Prayer served as a meaningful opening to Muslim Culture Week and reaffirmed the Berlin Mosque's commitment to interfaith understanding, dialogue and peaceful coexistence. The Mosque was full.

Photos and one video of scenes from the occasion now follow





Press on the image above to play video (or [visit this link](#))

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For books on Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement, please visit our websites:

www.ahmadiyya.org

www.ahmadiyah.org

(in Indonesian)

www.alahmadiyya.org

www.aaiil.org

Read a selection of Lahore Ahmadiyya literature on the website archive.org at the link:

<http://bit.ly/4ok2NTj>