

Reply to allegation that Maulana Muhammad Ali earlier wrote that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet

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As a preface, I highlight below certain extracts from quotations which have been discussed later in this article. What Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote himself or quoted from others in *The Review of Religions (RoR)*, regarding the beliefs of the Ahmadiyya Movement about prophethood, is as follows:

1. “the Holy Prophet [Muhammad] was the last of prophets” (*RoR*, November–December 1903).
2. “This is the *Umma* which, though not having any prophets (*nabi*) in it, has those who receive the word of God like prophets” (*RoR* Urdu edition, April 1904).
3. “what is called *nubuwwat* (prophethood) in the prophets is designated *muhaddasiyyat* in him [as in Hazrat Mirza sahib]” (*RoR*, April 1904).
4. “Prophethood came to an end with him [Prophet Muhammad], not only because he came last of all, but also because the excellences of prophethood reached their climax in his holy person.” (*RoR*, November 1904)
5. “Therefore all prophethoods end with the prophethood of the Holy Prophet [Muhammad], and so it ought to have been, for that which has a beginning has also an end.” (*RoR*, January 1906)
6. “After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, God has closed the doors to all prophethood and messengership. However, for his perfect followers, who obtain light from his perfect character by imbuing themselves in his colouring, this door is not closed because they are, as it were, images of his pure and holy personage.” (*RoR*, Urdu edition, May 1906)
7. “a reader of his writings cannot discover the least difference between the [Mirza Ghulam] Ahmad of to-day and the Ahmad of the time of the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*. ... The one theme of all his writings is the superiority of Islam over all other religions because of the continuity of the gift of Divine revelation in this religion. It is on this that he laid stress thirty years ago, and it is on this that he lays stress to-day.” (*RoR*, June 1906)

¹ This document was first published in June 2014 and has been revised and expanded in January 2020.

8. "In short, we believe Muhammad to be the last of the prophets ... But no century has passed on Islam that has been without men receiving revelation from God." (*RoR*, February 1911)
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The Qadiani *Jama'at* has long been trying to prove that Maulana Muhammad Ali, in his writings before the Split in 1914, expressed the belief that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet. This is a complete misrepresentation, just like their misrepresentation that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be a prophet. Maulana Muhammad Ali answered these allegations several times during his life, from the Split in 1914 to nearly the end of his life.² He replied that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, when using the words 'prophet' and 'messenger' about himself, had explained that he was using these terms in a *metaphorical, non-real sense* and that it is an allowable practice in Islam to apply these terms in those senses to one who is not a prophet, but who receives revelation in the manner of a saint (*muhaddas*) in Islam. Such a person is not a prophet in the terminology of Islamic theology. It was in these senses that Maulana Muhammad Ali too had described Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as 'prophet' or 'messenger'.

The Maulana went on to add in his reply that some leading figures in the Qadiani *Jama'at* had themselves written, before the Split in 1914, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad could only be called 'prophet' in the literal, dictionary sense of this word in Arabic, as meaning one who makes prophecies, and had added that after the Holy Prophet Muhammad no prophet can come.

It is entirely unjustified for the Qadiani *Jama'at* to treat the words 'prophet' and 'messenger' in Maulana Muhammad Ali's writings as if he is using them **according to the Qadiani *Jama'at* conception** of the status of Hazrat Mirza sahib. Let us then explain what is the Qadiani *Jama'at* concept of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad being a prophet:

1. The Qadiani *Jama'at* belief is that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet and therefore all other Muslims who do not believe in him are non-Muslims, just as Christians and Hindus are non-Muslims. They believe that a person cannot now become a Muslim by proclaiming the well-known *Kalima Shahada* but that he must, in addition, also profess and proclaim belief in Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet.

² See for example *Meri Tahrir Main Lafz Nabi Ka Isti'mal*, 1918 and 1941 editions.

2. The Qadianis believe that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad first announced his claim of being a prophet in his booklet *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala* published in November 1901. They hold that in this publication he cancelled and abrogated all his previous statements, made from 1891 onwards, in which he denied claiming to be a prophet, affirmed that no prophet can come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and explained that the words 'prophet' and 'messenger' applied to him in the linguistic or metaphorical sense in which these words can be applied to the *auliya* or Muslim saints.

Maulana Muhammad Ali, in his writings before the Split, including articles in *The Review of Religions*, never accepted the above two beliefs. In fact, as we will show later, in *The Review of Religions* he published **pre-1901** writings of Hazrat Mirza sahib, which means that he regarded them as still valid and correct descriptions of his claims.

Sense in which words 'prophet' and 'messenger' are used about Hazrat Mirza sahib

Let us look at Hazrat Mirza sahib's explanations of the sense in which he used these words:

1. "Do not level false allegations against me that I have claimed to be a prophet in the real sense. Have you not read that a *muhaddas* (saint) too is a *mursal* (messenger)?... We believe and acknowledge that, according to the real meaning of *nubuwwat* (prophethood), after the Holy Prophet Muhammad no new or former prophet can come. ... But in a metaphorical sense God can call any recipient of revelation as *nabi* or *mursal*.... I say it repeatedly that these words *rasul* and *mursal* and *nabi* (prophet) undoubtedly occur about me in my revelation from God, but they do not bear their real meanings."³
2. "I say repeatedly that, in these revelations, the word *mursal* or *rasul* or *nabi* which has occurred about me is not used in its real sense. The actual fact, to which I testify with the highest testimony, is that our Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the *Khatam-ul-anbiya* and after him no prophet is to come, neither an old one nor a new one. ...But it must be remembered that, as we have explained here, sometimes the revelation from God contains such words

³ *Siraj Munir*, pages 2–3. *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 12, p. 4–5.

about some of His saints in a metaphorical and figurative sense; they are not meant by way of reality.”⁴

3. “From the beginning, as God knows best, my intention has never been to use this word *nabi* as meaning actually a prophet, but only as signifying *muhaddas*, which the Holy Prophet has explained as meaning one who is spoken to by God. ... Therefore, I have not the least hesitation in stating my meaning in another form for the conciliation of my Muslim brethren, and that other form is that in every place instead of the word *nabi* the word *muhaddas* should be understood, and the word *nabi* should be regarded as having been deleted.”⁵
4. “... by the word *rasul* is only meant ‘one sent by God’, and by the word *nabi* is only meant ‘one who makes prophecies’, having received intimation from God, or one who discloses hidden matters. As these words, which are only in a metaphorical sense, cause trouble in Islam, leading to very bad consequences, these terms should not be used in our community’s common talk and everyday language. It should be believed from the bottom of the heart that prophethood has terminated with the Holy Prophet Muhammad.”⁶

Statements in *The Review of Religions* confirm ending of prophethood

It is in the above senses that the words *prophet* and *messenger* have been used about Hazrat Mirza sahib in articles in *The Review of Religions (RoR)* written by Maulana Muhammad Ali when he was editor, or translated by him from writings of Hazrat Mirza sahib. The clear proof of this is that in this magazine in the same period there are statements confirming that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet and that after him only saints can come, Hazrat Mirza sahib being such a saint (*wali* or *muhaddas*).

1. *The Review of Religions*, November–December 1903

In his translation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s book *Tazkirat-ush-Shahadatain* serialised in the November–December 1903 issue, Maulana Muhammad Ali has translated an extract as follows into English:

“In answer to this objection, I stated that **the Holy Prophet was the last of prophets** and, therefore, if his successors had been called prophets, the finality

⁴ *Anjam Atham*, p. 28, footnote. *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 11, p. 27–28, footnote.

⁵ Public statement, 3rd February 1892. *Majmu'a Ishtiharat*, 1986 edition, volume 1, pages 312 to 314.

⁶ Letter dated 7 August 1899, published in *Al-Hakam*, 17th August 1899, p. 6.

of prophethood would have become a moot point. On the other hand, if none of the successors had been called a prophet, the similarity with the Israelite prophets who succeeded Moses could not have been established. It was, therefore, ordained by Divine wisdom that the first successors of the Holy Prophet should not be called prophets, so that it may be a sign that **the Holy Prophet was the last prophet**, and that thus the finality of prophethood should be established. It was also ordained that the last successor of the Holy Prophet, the Promised Messiah, should be called a prophet, so that the resemblance referred to above, might be complete.”

(*RoR*, November-December 1903, p. 436-437; bolding is ours)

It is plainly stated here twice, in English words used by Maulana Muhammad Ali, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet, and that this was an established belief in Islam. If, after this belief has been firmly established for centuries, the Promised Messiah comes, and the word ‘prophet’ is used for him, as for example in Hadith, then it cannot negate the fact that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the last prophet. As explained in the statements of Hazrat Mirza sahib given earlier, the use of this word in his case is “in a metaphorical and figurative sense” and “not meant by way of reality”.

2. *The Review of Religions*, April 1904: ‘The Blessings of Islam’

2.1: This is a translation from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s book *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, a book published in 1893, and occurs on pages 117 to 126. Here, speaking of the highest spiritual stage that a person can reach, it is written:

“When a person reaches this stage, he is no more a man of this world, and is granted the guidance and high place granted to the holy prophets and messengers of God before him, as if he were their image. Such a man becomes the inheritor of the blessings granted to the prophets and he is their vicegerent upon earth. What is termed *mujiza* in the prophets is termed *karamat* in him, and what is termed *ismat* (sinlessness) in the prophets is called *mahfiziyat* (protection) in him, and what is called *nubuwwat* (prophethood) in the prophets is designated *muhaddasiyyat* in him.”

(*RoR*, April 1904, p. 120–121. See *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, p. 237–238)

We have reproduced the extract above exactly as in the magazine. The words in parentheses and the terms printed in italics are as in the original. Thus it is stated here that the highest spiritual stage a person can reach is that of being a *muhaddas*, a saint who is not a prophet.

The same article is found in the Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, pages 115–122. The above extract in it is on page 117. In this Urdu version there is some further text at this point quoted from *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam* not included in the English version. We translate that text below:

“The sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad indicate that a *muhaddas* is potentially a prophet and if the door of prophethood had not been closed, every *muhaddas* possessed in himself the power and capability to become a prophet. It is according to this power and capability that it is allowable to apply the word *nabi* to a *muhaddas*. That is, we can say: the *muhaddas* is a prophet. ... It is this application that Allah indicates by shortening the Quranic reading ‘We did not send before you any *rasul* or *nabi* or *muhaddas*’ to the reading ‘We did not send before you any *rasul* or *nabi*’ and considering just these words to be sufficient.”⁷

(Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, p. 117. See *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, p. 238–239)

Here it is clearly stated in *The Review of Religions*, quoting Hazrat Mirza sahib, that a *muhaddas* can be called ‘prophet’ (*nabi*) and ‘messenger’ (*rasul*), and that this usage is explicitly allowed by Allah as well as the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

2.2: Further on in the article cited above, it is written in regard to the person who reaches the highest spiritual stage in Islam, the stage Hazrat Mirza sahib claimed to have attained:

“What is *walayat* (saintship) but the attainment of such a nearness to, and dignity in, the presence of the Almighty Lord as brings to one the gift and favour of having his prayers accepted most of all? The *wali* or the saint is the friend of God, and it is a test of sincere friendship that his requests be granted on most occasions.”

(*RoR*, April 1904, p. 122. Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, p. 118. *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, p. 242)

The word “saintship” has been added in parentheses in the article itself.

2.3: On the next page in this article it is clearly stated that Hazrat Mirza sahib has appeared as a *mujaddid* like those who appeared before in Islam:

“...and in the commencement of every century, especially when the world goes astray from probity and righteousness and is involved in darkness, He raises a vicegerent of the Holy Prophet, in the looking glass of whose nature the person of the Holy Prophet is imaged forth. The representative so raised shows the excellences of the Holy Prophet whom he follows ...”

(*RoR*, April 1904, p. 123)

The words *commencement of every century* shows that he is referring to the

⁷ Note: If Qadianis or other Muslims do not understand his last statement, that Allah shortened the reading “We did not send before you any *rasul* or *nabi* or *muhaddas*” to the reading given in the Quran in 22:52, “We did not send before you any *rasul* or *nabi*”, we suggest that they consult their own scholars and ask them to explain what this means!

coming of *mujaddids*, of whom he is one. The words translated as “vicegerent” and “representative” of a prophet are *qa'im maqam nabi* in the original Urdu (see Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, p. 120, and *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, p. 247). Both the translation and the original term indicate that the person is not himself a prophet.

3. *The Review of Religions*, April 1904: 'Restoring the Dead to Life'

This article in the same issue of April 1904 (p. 126–137) is based on certain sections of *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, which are translated with some re-arrangement of material and additions. Its contents from *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam* can be found between pages 192 to 224 of that book. It discusses the point that by following the Holy Prophet Muhammad a Muslim can even now rise to the great spiritual heights where he receives knowledge, revelation and assistance from God, his prayers are accepted and no one can stand against him. It says of Hazrat Mirza sahib:

“Such a one has been raised by God in Islam in this age and he is present among us.”

(*RoR*, April 1904, p. 136)

Only a few lines further on, the article concludes as follows on page 137:

“The Muslims are the people who though not called prophets are like prophets spoken to by God, and though not termed apostles, the brilliant signs of God are manifested at their hands like apostles.”

The same article occurs in the Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, pages 122–131. The above extract is given in it in exactly the words used by Hazrat Mirza sahib in *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*. If we may translate the Urdu more literally, it reads:

“This is the *Umma* which, though not having any prophets (*nabi*) in it, has those who receive the word of God like prophets, and though not having any messengers (*rasul*) in it, has those who show God's clear signs like messengers.”

(Urdu edition of *RoR*, April 1904, p. 131. See *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, p. 224.)

The view here is clearly expressed that no prophet or messenger (*nabi* or *rasul*) can arise among Muslims, but only the *likes* of prophets and messengers among whom is Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

4. Conclusion from April 1904 issue

We thus see that in the April 1904 issue of *The Review of Religions*, both English and Urdu, two articles are published from a book written by Hazrat Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad long ago in 1893, namely, *Ainah Kamalat-i Islam*, in which he discusses his own claim, and what spiritual ranks can be attained by Muslims after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This is a plain rebuttal of the Qadiani standpoint that his claim of being a *muhaddas*, a non-prophet who receives revelation, rather than a prophet, was abrogated in November 1901 and elevated to a claim of being a prophet.

5. *The Review of Religions*, November 1904

This issue contains a translation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's famous lecture given at Sialkot that very month. It is written in it regarding the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

“Prophethood came to an end with him, not only because he came last of all, but also because the excellences of prophethood reached their climax in his holy person.” (*RoR*, November 1904, p. 395)

A few pages further on, while discussing the qualities of those who upon whom the holy spirit is sent and who attain the highest degree of closeness to God, it is written:

“In Muhammadan theologic terminology such a person is called a *nabi* (prophet), a *rasul* (messenger), or a *muhaddas* (reformer).” (p. 409)

The terms shown in italics here are printed in Arabic letters in the magazine. This statement shows that the qualities that were attained by prophets and messengers before Islam are attained among Muslims by persons who are raised as saints or *muhaddas*.

Subsequent to the above extract, the article uses only the word ‘prophet’, as in: “The prophets are the recipients of Divine revelation and are spoken to by God”. But this extract has already made clear that he is speaking about the saints that arise in Islam, known as *muhaddas*, who attain those qualities of prophets which continue among followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

6. *The Review of Religions*, July 1904

The following words of Maulana Muhammad Ali from an article in the July 1904 issue are presented by the Qadiani *Jama'at* to prove that he believed Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be a prophet:

“It is such a prophet that the world needs, and not the missionary “prophet” who knows very little besides abusing righteous men and sacred principles. Such a one has even now been vouchsafed to us by Almighty God but he is rejected as the former prophets were rejected. ... Such a prophet is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian who claims to be the Promised Messiah...”

(*RoR*, July 1904, p. 255. Urdu edition, July 1904, p. 248.)

As shown above, in the issues of *The Review of Religions* for April 1904 and November 1904 the ending of prophethood with the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the coming after him of, not prophets, but saints (one who is a *wali* or *muhaddas*), is clearly stated. It is, therefore, impossible that in an issue published between these two dates, namely the July 1904 issue, Maulana Muhammad Ali should be expressing a belief contrary to this.

The context of this quotation is that a Christian magazine suggested that a Christian missionary in India needs to be a "prophet" who denounces the sins of people. Maulana Muhammad Ali writes in reply that it is not sufficient to condemn sins but that such a prophet should bring about certainty in people's hearts that God exists, so that they refrain from sins. It is according to that prophetic function, i.e., showing people the existence of God, that he is describing Hazrat Mirza sahib as "such a prophet". Immediately before this description (pages 254-255), he gives the example of how the Holy Prophet Muhammad extirpated evil from Arabia by "making the existence of God clear by heavenly signs [which] bring about a certainty in men's mind as to the reward of good and punishment of evil deeds".

What is meant by "prophet" here is clear if we refer again to the article mentioned above, *Restoring the Dead to Life*, in the April 1904 issue of *The RoR* (p. 126 to 137). It is stated there that the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

"is the only spiritual resurrection, the only raiser of the dead to life ... This spiritual resurrection brought about by the Holy Prophet was not limited to the companions, but the powerful and all-knowing Lord ... made the blessings continuous which were to be granted to those who walked in his footsteps, and did not limit them to one age or one generation or one people." (p. 133)

It is then stated at the end of the article:

"The Muslims are the people who though not called prophets are like prophets spoken to by God, and though not termed apostles, the brilliant signs of God are manifested at their hands like apostles." (p. 137)

Therefore, the words "such a prophet is Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian" mean that he is one of those who is not a prophet or messenger but shows the existence of God to people through signs like those granted to prophets.

In fact, Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din, answering a question on 10 June 1908, shortly after Hazrat Mirza sahib's death, gave the same explanation, that the work of breathing spiritual life into fallen people is done by prophets **and** by the *auliya* of Muslims. He said that Moses raised his nation from a state of

savagery to the level of civilized people, then Godly people, and then made them the chosen and near ones of God. After the Jews deviated and fell from this position, God sent Jesus among them and he raised many of them to the same high level as Moses had done. When, later, Jesus' followers gave up the right path, Allah sent the Holy Prophet Muhammad. He adds:

“Similarly, due to the Holy Prophet's purifying influence, among Muslims a very large number of people became Godly and God's near ones, and this went on for three hundred years. Then during the time of the *mujaddid* of each century new generations, by accepting the truth, became God's near ones. In the times of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani and Imam Baqir Jafar Sadiq, due to their holy teaching their generations became Godly and God's near ones. Then at the hands of Khwaja Muin-ud-Din Chishti, Shaikh Shahab-ud-Din Suhrawardy, Khwaja Naqshband and Imam Rabbani Alf Sani, from among large numbers of people who had fallen below the level of civilized humanity thousands became Godly persons and God's near ones. After them, many other *auliya* came into the world, through whom God again raised thousands of people from a low and degraded life to become humans of a high moral standard.

In the present time of our Promised Messiah, people were involved in innovations, *shirk* and unbelief to a great extent. He used to say that in this corrupt age if a person merely takes the oath at the hands of Ahmad to repent from his sins, this itself is a great transformation of purification, bearing in mind the conditions of this age. ... '*Holding religion above the world*' was the principle taught by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, his *khalifas*, the generation after his Companions, the generation following that generation, and all holy ones and those who brought guidance from God. ... If they had not come into the world, remember that man would not have been human but animal and worse than animal.”

(*Al-Hakam*, 10 July 1908, p. 13)

Thus the Promised Messiah was continuing the spiritually purifying work of the *mujaddids* and the *auliya* who had appeared before him among Muslims.

7. The Review of Religions, January 1906

When Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad published his Will, entitled *Al-Wasiyya*, in December 1905 and January 1906, its English translation was published in *The Review of Religions*. In that translation, we find the following extract, in which he has clearly affirmed that prophethood ended with the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

“All truths which can lead a man to God are contained in it [the Quran]. Neither will any new truth come after it, nor was there any truth before it which is not present here. Therefore **all prophethoods end with the prophethood of the**

Holy Prophet, and so it ought to have been, for that which has a beginning has also an end.”

(*RoR*, January 1906, p. 30; bolding is ours.)

8. *The Review of Religions*, May 1906

In this issue there is a lengthy article entitled *A Short Sketch of the Ahmadiyya Movement* by Maulana Muhammad Ali, from pages 171 to 205. An Urdu version of this article appeared in the May 1906 issue of the Urdu edition of the *RoR* from pages 163 to 192.

8.1: Tracing the history of the Movement chronologically, it is stated near the beginning, after quoting the Hadith report that God will raise a reformer at the beginning of every century, that Hazrat Mirza sahib claimed to be the *mujaddid* of the 14th century *hijra* (p. 172, English; p. 164, Urdu). Then his claim to be the Promised Messiah in 1891 is mentioned, after which the article goes on to deal with the fierce opposition to him that arose as a consequence. At this point Maulana Muhammad Ali writes:

“The claimant to Messiahship explained his position in three books issued soon after the announcement referred to above. These were the *Fateh Islam*, the *Tauzih-i-Maram* and the *Izala-i-Auham*.”

(*RoR*, English, May 1906, p. 173)

The books mentioned here contain plain denials by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of the allegation that he was claiming to be a prophet and state at length that his claim, as Messiah, was that of being a *muhaddas*, not prophet. To quote from these books:

“Here, if it is objected that the like of Jesus must also be a prophet because Jesus was a prophet, the reply to this in the first place is that our Lord and Master [Prophet Muhammad] has not laid it down that the coming Messiah shall be a prophet; ... Besides this, there is no doubt that I have come as a *muhaddas* from God...” (*Tauzih Maram*, p. 17, 18; *RK*, v. 3, p. 59–60)

“There is no claim of prophethood. On the contrary, the claim is of sainthood (*muhaddasiyyat*) which has been advanced by the command of God.” (*Izala Auham*, p. 421–422; *RK*, v. 3, p. 320)

“Every sensible person can understand that if God is true to His promise, and the promise given in the *Khatam an-nabiyyin* verse, which has been explicitly mentioned in the Hadith, that now, after the death of the Prophet of God, peace and the blessings of God be upon him, Gabriel has been forbidden forever from bringing ‘revelation of prophets’ (*wahy nubuwwat*) — if all these things are true and correct, then no person at all can come as a messenger (*rasul*) after our Prophet, peace be upon him.” (*Izala Auham*, p. 577; *RK*, v. 3, p. 412)

The article then covers the subsequent history of the Movement, through the 1890s and on to the early 1900s till the time shortly before this article was published in 1906. Nowhere in this chronological treatment is there any mention of Hazrat Mirza announcing in 1901 that he was now claiming to be a prophet and that his denials of such a claim, issued since claiming to be Promised Messiah in 1891, were mistaken and invalid.

8.2: The article gives the explanation of why the name 'Ahmadiyya' was given to the Movement in 1900, namely, that the Holy Prophet, apart from his name 'Muhammad', had also the name 'Ahmad' and the Makkan period of his life was a manifestation of this name, and thus 'Ahmad' points to the peace and tranquillity that the Holy Prophet was to spread in the world. In the English version the explanation concludes with the words:

“In these last ages the manifestation of the name Ahmad is again destined to be the chief characteristic of the progress of Islam, and the Ahmadiyya movement is the true representative of that phase.” (p. 179, English)

The same words in the Urdu article are as follows if we translate them back:

“Thus by naming the movement as Ahmadiyya the real aim is to show that this is the age in which the attribute of beauty of the Holy Prophet will be manifested, as was the case at Makkah during the first thirteen years of his mission, and it is in this sense that Ghulam Ahmad is the *burooz* of Ahmad, may peace and the blessing of Allah be upon him.” (p. 171, Urdu)

Thus Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came to spread in the world those aspects of the message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad which are signified by the name 'Ahmad' of the Holy Prophet. He himself is Ghulam Ahmad, who is Ahmad's *burooz*. Under 8.3 below it is shown that a *burooz* of the Holy Prophet is not a prophet.

8.3: Then the article makes the following statement:

“The central doctrine of the Ahmadiyya movement is that its founder is the *Promised Messiah* and the *Promised Mahdi*...”

(*RoR*, English, May 1906, p. 179. Italics as in original.)

In explanation of these titles, a lengthy quotation of more than one page is given from the Supplement to 'The British Government and Jihad', by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, published in July 1900. In this quotation, after explaining the meanings of the words *Masih* (Messiah) and *Mahdi*, and declaring that “the grace of God and His mercy have made me the heir to both these titles in this age”, he writes the following, as given in the English edition of *The Review of Religions*:

“The way in which this manifestation has taken place is known in Islamic terminology as *baruz*.” (p. 180)

The question is quite simply this: when Hazrat Mirza wrote the above words in July 1900 what did he understand by the concept of *burooz*? The Qadiani *Jama'at* admits and acknowledges that he meant by it a non-prophet who comes in resemblance of a prophet. In his book *Ayyam-us-Sulh*, published in August 1898, he had answered an objection as follows:

“Objection: Only a prophet can be the like of a prophet.

Answer: The entire Umma is agreed that a non-prophet takes the place of a prophet by way of *burooz*.” (p. 163; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 14, p. 411)

In fact, in that very supplement to ‘The British Government and Jihad’, on page 2 he writes that his claim is to be: “*mujaddid* of the time, *wali*, *qutub*, Messiah and Mahdi”. This, then, is the claim of Hazrat Mirza sahib **in the same book** from which Maulana Muhammad Ali has quoted a long extract in his above *Review of Religions* article.

8.4: After giving this quotation Maulana Muhammad Ali writes:

“The most important doctrine of the Ahmadiyya movement arises out of the claim of its founder to be the Promised Messiah or Messenger of the last ages.” (p. 181, English)

By ‘Messenger’ here is meant a saint or *mujaddid* who appears as a *burooz* of a prophet. A further proof of this is that in the Urdu version in the same sentence the word corresponding to ‘Messenger’ here is given as *khatam-ul-khulafa* (see *RoR*, Urdu edition, May 1906, p. 172, last line). This means the *khalifa* of the Holy Prophet who was to appear in the last days.

8.5: Further on, discussing what is the concept of Promised Messiah in Islam, Maulana Muhammad Ali first of all refers to the *khilafat* verse of the Quran (24:55) and writes that God promised that He would:

“raise successors to the founder of Islam ‘like unto’ the successors that had been raised to Moses (Alquran xxiv:54). In accordance with this promise it was necessary that the last successor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad should be the like of the last successor of Moses, i.e., a Messiah should appear among the Muslims like the Messiah that had appeared among the Jews.” (p. 188, English)

This is exactly the argument which the Maulana presented much later in the footnote to this verse in his English translation of the Holy Quran. He wrote there: “... and it was on this verse that the claim of the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement, was based.” His claim was based on the verse which promised that *khalifas* to the Holy Prophet

would arise among Muslims in the likeness of the Israelite prophets after Moses, the last such *khalifa* arising in the likeness of Jesus. It was not based on any of the verses which the Qadiani Jama'at later presented to claim that prophets can come after the Holy Prophet Muhammad. He was thus a *khalifa* of the Holy Prophet, just as there were several *khalifas* of the Holy Prophet before him.

8.6: On page 192 of the article there is a paragraph in which the following point is argued:

“The existence of God ... is known only through revelation and through the wonderful manifestations of Divine power and knowledge which are shown through the prophets and messengers of God. It is for this reason that Almighty God has been raising His messengers from time to time, so that witnessing the manifestation of Divine power, people may have a certain faith in God which may work a pure transformation in their lives. ... Hence Almighty God has sent a messenger, the Promised Messenger of the last ages — because He who promised knew that a heavenly messenger would be needed in the last ages for the regeneration of the world.”

Maulana Muhammad Ali is referring to a *specific function* performed originally by the prophets and messengers of old, that of showing the existence of God by means of Divine signs, which is still required. Those who are raised among Muslims to perform that function are the saints and *mujaddids* that have been arising in their history. This is what Hazrat Mirza sahib himself wrote about it:

“We can prove to every seeker-after-truth, conclusively and definitely, that from the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad till the present day there have been, in every century, godly persons *through whom God has shown heavenly signs* to other communities to guide them [towards Islam]. There have been in Islam persons such as Sayyid Abdul Qadir Jilani, Abul Hasan Khartani, Abu Yazid Bustami, Junaid of Baghdad, Muhiyud-Din Ibn Arabi, Zul-Noon of Egypt, Mu'in-ud-Din Chishti, Qutub-ud-Din Bukhtiar, Farid-ud-Din of Pak Patan, Nizam-ud-Din of Delhi, Shah Wali-ullah of Delhi, and Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind. The number of such persons runs into thousands, and the miracles of so many people are recorded in scholarly and learned works that even a prejudiced opponent, despite his great bias, has to concede finally that *these persons showed miracles and extraordinary signs.*” (*Kitab al-Barriyya*, p. 67; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 13, p. 91–92; italics are ours)

Elsewhere he writes:

“It is absolutely essential that, after the death of the Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, there should arise among the Muslim people, at times of troubles and tribulations, *reformers who are assigned the particular task, out of the many tasks of the prophets*, that they call to the true religion, and remove every innovation that has been mixed with the religion, and show people the truth of the faith from every angle, through having

received heavenly light, and draw people to truth, love and purity through their own holy example.” (*Shahadat-ul-Quran*, p. 48; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 6, p. 344–345; italics are ours)

It may also be noted that in the Urdu version of the article the word used for “messenger” is *mursal*: “Almighty God has sent a *mursal*, the Promised *mursal* of the last ages because He who promised knew that a *mursal* would be needed” (p. 183). The word *mursal* is applied to those sent by God, whether prophets or saints. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad writes: “The prophet (*nabi*) and the *muhaddas* are on a par in terms of being sent ones (*mursal*). Just as God has called prophets as *mursal*, so has He termed those who are *muhaddas* as *mursal*” (*Shahadat-ul-Quran*, p. 27; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 6, p. 323).

8.7: Dealing with the “chief points of difference between the Ahmadiyya movement and the orthodox Muslim sects” (p. 194, English; p. 184, Urdu) the first such point is stated to be as follows:

“The Ahmadiyya movement holds that Islam is a living religion, by which it means that in Islam the door to Divine revelation is always open...”

As an evidence of this, in the English article Maulana Muhammad Ali quotes the hadith about the coming of *mujaddids*. In the Urdu version this mention of this hadith appears as follows:

“Take, for example, this hadith which promises the coming of a *mujaddid* at the head of every century. The man who will be appointed for this task of reform of religion cannot be appointed except by Divine revelation.” (p. 184, Urdu)

Thus we see that this hadith about the coming of *Mujaddids* is mentioned twice in this article. See **8.1** above for the first occurrence.

8.8: Another passage in this article by Maulana Muhammad Ali, which is cited in his criticism, is as follows:

“This movement holds that the Holy Prophet is the seal of prophets, and no other prophet can appear after him except one who is spiritually his disciple and who receives the gift of prophecy through him. It is only a true Muslim who walks in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet that can become a prophet. It is in this sense that this movement considers its founder to be a prophet.”

(p. 195, English)

This passage is on par with what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had written in *Izala Auham* in 1891:

“The fact that our Holy Prophet is the *Khatam-un-nabiyyin* prohibits the coming of any other prophet. However, such a prophet as obtains light from

the lamp of the prophethood of Muhammad, and does not possess full prophethood, who in other words is also called a *muhaddas*, is exempt from this restriction because, due to his obedience to the Holy Prophet and due to his being *fana fir-rasul*, he is included within the person of the Last of the Messengers, just as a part is included in the whole." (*Izala Auham*, p. 575; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 3, p. 410–411)

It is thus clear that in the passage in *The Review of Religions* the words "except one who is spiritually his disciple" refer to a *muhaddas*, since a *muhaddas* is described by Hazrat Mirza sahib in *Izala Auham* as "such a prophet as obtains light from the lamp of the prophethood of Muhammad".

In the Urdu article in *The Review of Religions*, the above passage is a little more amplified. It adds in the middle:

"After the Holy Prophet Muhammad, God has closed the doors to all prophethood and messengership. However, for his *perfect followers*, who obtain light from his perfect character by imbuing themselves *in his colouring*, this door is not closed because they are, as it were, *images* of his pure and holy personage." (p. 186, Urdu; italics are ours)

The "perfect follower" who is an "image" of the Holy Prophet, being coloured with "his colouring", is a *muhaddas*. This is what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had written long ago in his book *Nishan Asmani* in 1892:

"I firmly believe that our Holy Prophet Muhammad is the *Khatam-ul-anbiya*, and after him no prophet shall come for this *Umma*, neither new nor old. Not a jot or iota of the Holy Quran shall be abrogated. Of course, *muhaddases* will come who will be spoken to by God, and possess some attributes of full prophethood by way of reflection (*zill*), and in some ways be coloured with the colour of prophethood. I am one of these."

(*Nishan Asmani*, May 1892, p. 28; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 4, p. 390–391)

The Urdu version, a little way after the extract quoted above, adds the following words:

"The finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad does not prevent the coming of someone who is his *bu-rooz*, but no new Shariah can come after him." (p. 186, Urdu)

This concluding statement settles that Maulana Muhammad Ali is referring to non-prophets and *muhaddases* as the only ones who can arise after the finality of prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

8.9: The article concludes with the following paragraph in the English edition of *The Review of Religions*:

“The founder of the movement predicts a great future for it. Two promises, he says, were made concerning the success and triumph of his mission, both of which are published in the *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*. The first of these related to his own life time and foretold an unparalleled triumph in spite of the hardest opposition. ... The second promise foretold the great success of the movement after the founder’s death which consists in its triumph over all the religions of the world. In his will which has been published lately, he has clearly explained this point, and the wonderful fulfilment of the first promise is shown to be a clear indication that the second promise will also be fulfilled. It is also predicted that the movement will achieve great success under the guidance of one of his sons who will be Divinely inspired, but until God appoints such a person to accept *bai‘at*, any member of the movement whose righteousness is borne testimony to by forty of his brethren may initiate persons into the movement, the management being under the control of an association which has already been appointed under the name of the Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya.”

(*RoR*, May 1906, p. 204–205)

Maulana Muhammad Ali has here in 1906 expressed *the same views* which he put forward at the time of the Split in 1914, and ever afterwards, on the main issue which became the source controversy with the Qadiani *Jama‘at*. The basic doctrine of the Qadiani *Jama‘at* is that *immediately* upon the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a *khilafat* came into being, whereby the *khalifa* or head has absolute power over the movement both for spiritual and administrative purposes. They assert that it is essential for all members to take the *bai‘at* on the hand of this one man, the *khalifa*, who rules with absolute supremacy. They claim that the “second promise” mentioned by the Founder in his will (as referred to in the above passage) is the establishment of such a *khilafat*. However, according to Maulana Muhammad Ali in the above article, the “second promise” is that the movement, after the Founder’s death, will triumph over all other beliefs, and he has described the systems of spiritual and administrative governance of the movement to be quite the opposite of the Qadiani conception.

A frequent, major charge brought against Maulana Muhammad Ali by the Qadiani group is that he accepted the *khilafat* system upon the death of the Founder when Maulana Nur-ud-Din became head in May 1908, but rejected this system at the time of the Split in 1914 due to being opposed to Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. The above quotation shows that Maulana Muhammad Ali’s conception of how the movement would be governed was always the same, being that which was set out by the Founder in his will in 1906.

It may be noted that the Qadiani belief in the Founder being a prophet is inextricably connected with their *khilafat* system: that a prophet must be

followed by *khilafat*. However, Maulana Muhammad Ali in this 1906 article does not present any such *khilafat* to be established as imagined by the Qadianis. Therefore they cannot argue that he believed the Founder to be a prophet.

It may be said that the Maulana has mentioned the prophecy that “the movement will achieve great success under the guidance of one of his sons who will be Divinely inspired, but until God appoints such a person to accept *bai‘at* ...”. Mirza Mahmud Ahmad did not claim to be such a Divinely inspired person at the time of the Split. So no objection can arise as to why the Maulana did not accept him as *khalifa* at that time.

In fact, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad did not agree that the system of governance mentioned above by the Maulana (after the words “but until God appoints such a person to accept *bai‘at*”) was what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad meant in the Will, nor did he agree that it was ever in force after his death. Therefore it cannot be claimed that Maulana Muhammad Ali earlier held the same views as the Qadiani *Jama‘at*. His views above are totally the opposite of theirs.

9. The Review of Religions, June 1906

Maulana Muhammad Ali followed the article dealt with above by an article about the life of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, entitled *The Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, in the June 1906 issue of *The Review of Religions*, from pages 229 to 256. An Urdu version of this article appeared in the June 1906 issue of the Urdu edition of *The Review of Religions* from pages 215 to 252.

9.1: Coming to the publication of his first book *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in the 1880s, Maulana Muhammad Ali writes that in this book he published a revelation in which:

“he claimed to be the promised reformer of the fourteenth century of Hejira. ... This claim was, at the publication of *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, generally accepted by the Muslim theologians and laymen, and they rejoiced at the appearance of a reformer among them in accordance with the prophecy which promised a reformer to the Muslims in the beginning of every new century.”

(*RoR*, June 1906, p. 234)

Thus his claim was to be *mujaddid*. Maulana Muhammad Ali adds that this book won recognition from Muslims in general in spite of the fact that:

“In this work were published revelations in which he was addressed as Messenger of God, as a Prophet, and as a warner. He was even addressed as Jesus Christ and as the Messiah. But in spite of this he was recognised as the recipient of Divine revelation by the leading Muslim theologians.”

(*Ibid.*, p. 235)

This is clear proof that being called as Messenger of God and Prophet did not make his claim to be that of a Messenger and Prophet, and that neither he nor the “leading Muslim theologians” took these words about him to mean that he was claiming anything more than being a *mujaddid*. Later on, towards the end of this article, Maulana Muhammad Ali tells us that the *only change* which subsequently took place was that he came to believe that “no old prophet can come back, but that it must be a follower of the Holy Prophet who should be raised to the dignity of the Messiah” (p. 254). This change came about in 1891, after which he continued to deny that he was claiming to be a prophet, as admitted by the Qadiani Jama‘at. We discuss this point further below.

9.2: Referring to his claim of being *mujaddid*, his popularity among Muslims after this claim, his later claim of being Promised Messiah, and the popularity giving way to bitter opposition, Maulana Muhammad Ali writes:

“Matters remained in this condition for seven years during which time Ahmad was generally admitted to be the religious leader and inspired reformer of the Muslims. ... But the year 1891 was a time of great transition in his life, and it divides his life into two parts from more points of view than one. It was the year in which he announced that he was the *Promised Messenger* of the last ages, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. As a *Messenger of Heaven*, the Muslim submitted to his claims and had no fault to find with him, but as the *Promised Messenger*, there was no epithet of irreverence, no word of calumny, which was not applied to him. ... His virtues and his righteousness were recognised by all; he was hailed as the reformer for the fourteenth century of Hejira and was even accepted to be a recipient of Divine revelation and a messenger of heaven, but as soon as he said that he was no other than the promised messenger of the last ages, he was proclaimed to be an arch-heretic by the very men who had only a year or two before extolled his valuable services in the cause of Islam.”

(*RoR*, June 1906, p. 235; italics as in original article)

It is **perfectly and undeniably clear** that ‘messenger’ here means *mujaddid* and recipient of Divine revelation. He writes above:

“As a *Messenger of Heaven*, the Muslim submitted to his claims and had no fault to find with him, ...”

The *only* claim that Muslims accepted on his part was that of *mujaddid* of the fourteenth century *hijra* or recipient of Divine revelation. It is a universally admitted historical fact, which is acknowledged by opponents of the Ahmadiyya Movement as well as the Qadiani *Jama‘at*, that the *only* claim he had made before 1891 was that of *mujaddid*. Therefore the words “Messenger of Heaven”

mean nothing other than *mujaddid* sent by God, as shown by the plain fact that other Muslims *never* accepted him as anything more than *mujaddid*.

Moreover, it is acknowledged by the Qadiani *Jama'at* that when he claimed to be Promised Messiah in 1891 he did not claim to be a prophet. They admit that, at least from 1891 to 1901, he did not claim to be a prophet and that he denied any such claim. Therefore the term "Promised Messenger" used by Maulana Muhammad above does not mean "prophet".

Therefore, **all subsequent usage in this article** of the words 'prophet' or 'messenger' for Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad means Divinely-appointed and inspired *mujaddid*.

9.3: There is a paragraph near the end which begins as follows:

"Notwithstanding the change from time to time of the attitude of the public towards the claims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a reader of his writings cannot discover the least difference between the Ahmad of to-day and the Ahmad of the time of the Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya. ... The one theme of all his writings is the superiority of Islam over all other religions because of the continuity of the gift of Divine revelation in this religion. It is on this that he laid stress thirty years ago, and it is on this that he lays stress to-day."

(*RoR*, June 1906, p.253. The entire paragraph runs from p. 253 to 254.)

According to the Qadiani *Jama'at*, however, a vast change was announced by him in 1901, in that before 1901 he denied claiming to be a prophet but from November 1901 onwards he claimed to be a prophet. It is written in this extract that he had been stressing the continuity of the gift of revelation in Islam *equally* since his earliest writings till now (i.e., 1906). The Qadiani *Jama'at* holds that he came to realize in 1901 that this gift which continues is prophethood, and not just revelation.

The extract quoted above continues as follows:

"In like manner, he has not from the time that he began to receive revelation entertained the slightest doubt as to the Divine origin and truth of the words he has been receiving. He was as sure of the truth of the words, "Is not God sufficient for His servant," revealed to him at his father's death thirty years ago, as he is of any words which he receives now." (p. 253-254)

Thus Maulana Muhammad Ali writes in 1906 that the revelation received by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, since the start of his receiving revelation, has always remained of the same kind. It was, in 1876, the type of revelation received in Islam as promised for saints, and it was the same type in 1906.

The paragraph ends as follows:

“His belief with regard to the excellence of the Holy Prophet over all other prophets has also been the same throughout, and we find it stated in his earliest writings in poetry as well as in prose that no Divine blessing can be attained except through the Holy Prophet. This is the doctrine which he teaches now when he says that no old prophet can come back, but that it must be a follower of the Holy Prophet who should be raised to the dignity of the Messiah, because the Divine blessings which an old prophet attained to were not attained through the Holy Prophet.” (p. 254)

This is the *only* change which took place in his belief between the time of writing *Barahin Ahmadiyya* in the 1880s and the time when Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote the above article in 1906. He realised, around 1890, that Jesus could not come back and that it would be a follower of the Holy Prophet who would appear as the Messiah. There was *no further change*, as alleged by the Qadiani *Jama'at*, along the lines that when he first claimed to be the Promised Messiah in 1891 he considered his position to be that of a *muhaddas* or saint but in 1901 he realised that his position was that of a prophet.

9.4: It is stated in this article:

“The writings of Ahmad inviting men to accept him as the Promised Messenger and Islam as the true religion are all of a general nature, but two of these may be specially mentioned. These are a letter to the Amir of Afghanistan and one to her late Majesty, the Queen Empress [Victoria]. The letter to the Amir was written in Shawwal 1313 A.H., i.e., 1896 C.E.”

(*RoR*, June 1906, p. 252)

We have already shown that the term “Messenger” for him anywhere in the article can only mean *mujaddid*. Thus “Promised Messenger” here is Promised Messiah. But there is additional proof of our point here. The letter to the Amir was written in 1896, and, as later stated in this article (p. 253), the letter to Queen Victoria was written in 1897, followed by another in 1898. It is acknowledged by the Qadiani *Jama'at* that from 1891 to 1901 he was claiming to be the Promised Messiah but repeatedly denying that he was claiming to be a prophet. So, what was he inviting the Amir of Afghanistan and Queen Victoria to accept him as? Obviously not as a prophet! Moreover, as Queen Victoria died in January 1901, she could never have known that he claimed to be a prophet.

9.5: To sum up, in this article of June 1906, Maulana Muhammad Ali has **not** presented Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as a prophet because:

1. The only claims he is mentioned as making are that of *mujaddid* in the 1880s and that of Promised Messiah in 1891.
2. The “Messenger” that Muslims accepted him as, was according to his status that he put forward in the 1880s.

3. The "Messenger" that Muslims rejected him as, was according to his status put forward in 1891.
4. The only change that took place since the claim of being *mujaddid* was that he came to realize that Jesus cannot return to this world and that the coming Messiah is he (Hazrat Mirza sahib) himself.
5. The "Promised Messenger" that he invited two monarchs to accept him as, was according to his status that he put forward in 1891.

10. *The Review of Religions*, June 1906: Another article

In the issue of *The Review of Religions* discussed above (June 1906), the article preceding the above one examines certain Christian revivalist movements and their claims to spiritual revival and deliverance from sin. On the last page of the article the Islamic conception of revival is briefly discussed, from which we quote below:

"... if Revival can now be brought about in the world, it can only be brought about through a Messenger of God. ... To the Muslims is promised a revival in the beginning of every new century of Hejira, but this revival is in accordance with the Divine law, for of it we are told in a tradition of the Holy Prophet that 'Almighty God will raise in the beginning of every century one who shall revive for it its faith.' The Muslim faith, therefore, witnesses in the beginning of every new century a revival which is completely in accordance with the Divine laws and the Divine promise. Regarding the last ages, Almighty God had given a promise of a marvellous Revival to be brought about through the advent of the Messiah which is quite in accordance with Divine laws ... God's way of bringing about a spiritual and moral regeneration in the world is to raise a prophet, and such a one He has even now raised in the person of the Promised Messiah..."

(*RoR*, June 1906, p. 228)

It is perfectly clear from this that Maulana Muhammad Ali here regards Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as one of the *mujaddids* of Islam, who arose from time to time. No doubt is left that the word *messenger* at the beginning of this extract and the word *prophet* in the closing lines refers to *mujaddids*.

11. *The Review of Religions*, June 1908

Upon the death of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Maulana Muhammad Ali wrote an obituary in *The Review of Religions*, June 1908, pages 222–230. Regarding his claims, for which he was opposed by other Muslims, the Maulana writes that "Up to the year 1889 he was universally admitted" by the Muslims to be "the best champion of Islam against hostile religions and the ablest exponent of its doctrines", but that in 1889 he found fault with certain of their

beliefs “with regard to the advent of the Mahdi and the Messiah”. He then writes:

“These declarations combined with the claim which he advanced on the basis of Divine revelation, viz., that he himself was the Promised Mahdi and Messiah, led to the raising of an outcry against him ... The leading Mullahs prepared a *fatwa* against him in which he as well as his followers were declared to be heretics deserving to be murdered. The hostile attitude that was thus assumed by the orthodox Muslims towards the new sect still exists, but of late it has softened in a marked degree.”

(*RoR*, June 1908, p. 228)

Here, in tracing the history of his claims and Muslim opposition to them, it is nowhere mentioned that, later in 1901, he declared himself to be a prophet, as held by the Qadiani *Jama'at*.

The obituary ends with the following words:

“The great works of the secular and religious education of the Muslims and the propagation of Islam which he had commenced will now be conducted, as even they were conducted in his life-time since the publication of his will, by the Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, while Maulvi Hakeem Noor-ud-Din has been selected as the successor of the Promised Messiah in the leadership of the movement.” (p. 230)

There is no mention here of the doctrine that a *khilafat* has been established after his death because he was a prophet. It is the basic tenet of the Qadiani *Jama'at* that, as he was a prophet, a *khilafat* was established by God after him. Therefore, Maulana Muhammad Ali is not presenting him as a prophet. On the contrary, the Maulana has expressed the same views which he expressed from the publication of *The Will* in 1906 ever afterwards, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad created the Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya to run the affairs of the Movement.

12. *The Review of Religions*, Urdu edition, June-July 1908

There is an article by Hazrat Maulana Nur-ud-Din in this issue (pages 257–280), entitled ‘The death of the Promised Messiah’. In listing the achievements of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Maulana Nur-ud-Din begins as follows:

“In our country, or from our country, (1) Sayyid Muhammad Jaunpuri, (2) Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith of Delhi, (3) the Mujaddid Alif Sani, (4) Shah Waliullah, and (5) Sayyid Ahmad Bareilvi, are the men who claimed to be mujaddids, and people accepted them as mujaddids. Their achievements, praise be to Allah, are not hidden from us, but as regards what this man achieved, may Allah forgive him, only the wise people can make a comparison.” (p. 261)

The achievements of Hazrat Mirza sahib are clearly stated here to be those of a *mujaddid*.

Maulana Nur-ud-Din also writes in this article that, at the death of the Promised Messiah, Allah united his followers so that:

“Even though there exist not one but four sons of Hazrat Mirza and a grandson, there exists Mirza’s son-in-law who combines the names Muhammad and Ali [Nawab Muhammad Ali of Malerkotla] and is able and worthy, and there exists Mirza’s father-in-law who is like a father, yet the entire community took the pledge at the hand of an outsider.” (p. 260, see also p. 263)

The fact that a successor was chosen by the community who is an unrelated outsider, instead of a close relative, is regarded as a matter of pride and a favour of God by Maulana Nur-ud-Din. Does the Qadiani *Jama* ‘at consider it a matter of pride and a favour of God that an unrelated man can be chosen to be Head of the Movement instead of a family member of Hazrat Mirza sahib?

13. *The Review of Religions*, January 1911

In January 1911 a multi-faith conference under the name *Convention of Religions in India* was held at Allahabad. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din delivered a speech at this convention on 9 January. Maulana Muhammad Ali had also been invited but as he could not go in person he sent a lecture which was read out by Maulana Sadr-ud-Din. The text of Maulana Muhammad Ali’s lecture was published in *The Review of Religions*, January 1911 (pages 1–20), and that of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din in the February issue.

In his lecture, entitled *Islam*, Maulana Muhammad Ali begins by describing Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as “That great Reformer of these latter days” (p. 1). Then he mentions that “the first condition for joining the brotherhood of Islam” is:

“to believe not only in the truth of what was revealed to the Prophet of Islam, but in the truth of whatever had been revealed to all the prophets before him” (p. 4–5).

In the whole treatment of this belief, quoting various verses of the Quran, Maulana Muhammad Ali refers only to the Holy Prophet and the prophets *before him*. He ends the topic by saying that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement declared that “the Holy Quran makes it obligatory upon its followers to accept all the prophets who are accepted by large numbers of the human race” and that this was why the Founder had said that the righteous leaders of the Hindu religion “were all the chosen servants of God to whom he sent down His grace” (p. 6). Along with this the Maulana adds the following about Islam:

“What it has in common with all religions is that it is a revealed religion like them, while it is distinguished from them in being the final and perfect revelation of God. Hence the Holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) is called *Khatam-un-Nabiyyin* or the ‘Seal of the Prophets’.”

(*RoR*, January 1911, p. 7)

The meaning of the Holy Prophet being *Khatam-un-Nabiyyin* is clearly given here as the one who received the “final and perfect revelation of God”. It is “final” because no revelation can come after it which makes its recipient a prophet. The continuance of revelation in the sense of God merely speaking to the saints and holy men of Islam for their enlightenment and strengthening their faith in God is a different matter.

14. *The Review of Religions*, February 1911

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din’s speech to the above-mentioned Convention was published in the February 1911 issue, pages 45–54. There is a footnote under the heading stating as follows:

This paper was read on the 9th January, 1911, by Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, B.A., LL.B., of Lahore, before the Convention of Religions at Allahabad with the following introductory remarks: “I belong to the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam — a sect founded by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian in the last decade of the 19th century. The sect does not differ from other Islamic sects in any cardinal principle of Muhammadanism but in one thing. Our Holy Prophet Muhammad promised us a Messiah who was to come to revive religion in days to come, and we accept the fulfillment of these prophetic words in the person of our Master, the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement.”

Here the Ahmadiyya Founder is not described as a prophet but as Messiah and as *mujaddid*, i.e., reviver of religion. It is quite true that he refers in this speech to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as having been raised by God as:

“an apostle of Islam, who declaring himself to be an humble servant of Prophet Muhammad, restored again the religion of toleration and liberal mindedness — which had been taught by his Master some thirteen hundred years back.”

(*RoR*, February 1911, p. 50)

And he goes on to call him “this Apostle of the present age” (p. 50). But what does apostle, i.e. messenger, here mean? Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din says:

“Among prophets similarly, *he alone can claim, as Muhammad did, to be the last of the sacred race*, who shows you the way to that spiritual perfection which means the receiving of Divine revelation.” (p. 52; italics are ours)

“In short, *we believe Muhammad to be the last of the prophets*, not only because he gave us a complete code of guidance in life here, but because he also enabled us to claim heritage of Prophets. He says: *‘Ulama ummati ka-anbiya bani Israil* — “The divine scholars amongst my followers will be like the Prophets of Israelites.” He also promised us an inspired Reformer at the head of each century, who is called “Mujaddid” in the Muslim terminology. And we find the fulfilment of these prophetic words in the annals of Muhammadan history.” (p. 53–54; italics are ours)

So the Holy Prophet is the last prophet, and after him there arise “divine scholars”, “inspired Reformers” and “Mujaddids”. This is what he meant by describing Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as an “apostle”.

To make the matter even clearer, he adds:

“But no century has passed on Islam that has been without men receiving revelation from God. For instance, Omar bin Abdul Aziz; Ba-Yazid of Bustam; Junaid of Baghdad; Mohy-ud-Din Ibn Arabi of Spain; Sh. Abdul Qadir of Gilan: and in India Moin-ud-Din Chishti, Sheikh Ahmad Mujaddid Alif Sani, Nizam-ud-Din Aulia, Bawa Farid Shakar Ganj, Data Ganj Bakhsh, Shah Wali-ul-Lah and Sayed Ahmad Bareilvi, may be counted amongst men who were blessed with the word of God. ...

... revelation would have become a myth pure and simple, as it is at present in Europe, *if the head of our century had not seen its promised Mujaddid*. God raised Ahmad in the Punjab, who presented his own pattern to his fellow-beings. He showed that his implicit obedience to the Quranic laws and his faithful observance of the holy practices of the Prophet, had secured him the highest grace, the revelation.” (p. 54; italics are ours)

Here Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is declared to be a *Mujaddid* in the line of previous saints and *Mujaddids* who arose in the history of Islam.

15. *The Review of Religions*, February 1914

In this issue an article by another author carried the heading *Ahmad as a Prophet* – II. Maulana Muhammad Ali, as editor, added a footnote to this heading which read as follows:

“The word *prophet* is used here not in the strict terminology of the Muslim Law, the holy Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, being the last of the prophets in that sense, but in the broad sense of one endowed with the gift of prophecy by Divine inspiration, a gift which is promised to every true Muslim by the holy Quran, and one which was possessed in an eminent degree by the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.”

(*RoR*, February 1914, p. 41)

16. *Paigham Sulh*, 10 March 1914

The Urdu paper *Paigham Sulh*, later the organ of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, was launched in July 1913. In its issue dated 10 March 1914, there is an article by Maulana Muhammad Ali entitled *Hazrat Mirza sahib's Claim to Prophethood*. This was obviously published shortly before the Split in the Ahmadiyya Movement, while Maulana Muhammad Ali was still at Qadian. Below we present its translation:

Start of article:

Ever since Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sahib claimed to be Promised Messiah, there is perhaps no other point on which people have stumbled as much as on this point, to think that he claimed prophethood. It is curious that the words *nabi* and *rasul* are present in those revelations of the Promised Messiah which date from long before *Barahin Ahmadiyya* and were published in this book, yet despite this when in those very days Maulvi Muhammad Husain Batalvi published a review on these revelations, no objection was raised. The only reason for this [lack of objection] was that the mere occurrence of these words in revelations was not objectionable.

The reason why these words are now brought under discussion is his claim to be Messiah and Mahdi. Accordingly, we see that as soon as he made this claim, controversy started on these words, and since then till now even many sensible and intelligent people have stumbled on it. A respected friend, whose name I will not mention, has made the same error, or at least this is how it appears from a reply he gave to a question from someone, that he considers that Hazrat Mirza sahib actually claimed *nubuwwat* and *risalat* in the real sense of these words. The Promised Messiah himself had to clarify this issue again and again, in the same way as he clarified the issue of the death of Jesus. Hence, it is seen from his early writings after claiming to be Promised Messiah how far he found it necessary to clarify this issue. Nonetheless, the objections continued, and this is why there are so many writings of his to be found on this issue, a fact which no one can deny.

As an example, I copy here a statement from *Anjam Atham* which was written seven or eight years after he claimed to be Messiah. In the footnote on page 26 of this book, he first quotes someone's objection as follows:

“The followers and the opponents of Mirza sahib have gone to opposite extremes. If a man says that he believes in the Holy Quran, says prayers, keeps fasts and teaches Islam to people, then it is not befitting to call him *kafir*. However, it is also not befitting to raise him from the rank of a scholar to that of prophethood.”

He has replied to this in the words which I quote below in full, even though it is very lengthy.

[*Translator's Note:* We have placed this quotation after this article, so as not to disturb the article.]

It is entirely baseless to think that after this the Promised Messiah may have made some new claim. Whatever was his claim, it had been published

long before, and the claim remained the same till the end. It is only an explanation of the same claim which is found in different writings afterwards. In *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala* too, there is no new claim, but only a reply of these objections and an explanation. He has certainly not written in it that his prophethood previously was not real, but metaphorical, and has now become real. Here too, the claim to prophethood is in the sense of *burooz* and metaphorically, not in a real sense. Hence he writes in it:

“And if no person can be a prophet and messenger in the sense of *burooz*, then what is the meaning of the following: Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours. It should be borne in mind that, according to this sense, I do not deny prophethood and messengership. It is in this sense that the Promised Messiah has been called *nabi* in the *Sahih Muslim*. If one who receives news of the unseen from God is not to be called *nabi*, tell us what he should be called?”

To summarise, the Promised Messiah has not made a new claim in this announcement [*Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*], but explained the same, earlier claim. To take this announcement as being opposed to some other writing is to create a contradiction in his writings by yourself. If a point is explained scores of times, the words would be different every time. It is possible that the arguments presented may be different, but the meaning would be the same.

I hope these few words will throw full light for Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis on the real claims of the Promised Messiah.

Muhammad Ali, Editor, *Review of Religions*, Qadian, District Gurdaspur.

End of article.

Given below is the translation of the lengthy quotation from Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's book *Anjam Atham* which Maulana Muhammad Ali incorporated within the above article at the point we indicated:

“There is a contradiction in his [i.e., the objector's] statement. On the one hand he says very kindly that it is wrong to call a Muslim as *kafir*, and on the other he says about me that my followers really believe me to be a messenger of Allah and that I have claimed prophethood in fact. If his first view is right, that I am a Muslim and believe in the Holy Quran, then this second view is wrong in which he says that I myself claim prophethood. And if his second view is right, then the first is wrong in which he says that I am a Muslim and believe in the Holy Quran. Can a wretched imposter who claims messengership and prophethood for himself have any belief in the Holy Quran? And can a man who believes in the Holy Quran, and believes the verse ‘He is the Messenger of Allah and the *Khatam an-nabiyyin*’ to be the word of God, say that he too is a messenger and prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad?”

“*Insaf Talb* [pen name of the objector] should remember that I have never, at any time, made a claim of *nubuwwat* or *risalat* [prophethood or messengership] in the real sense. To use a word in a non-real sense, and to employ it in speech

according to its broad, root meaning, does not imply heresy (*kufr*). However, I do not like even this much, for there is the possibility that ordinary Muslims may misunderstand it.

However, by virtue of being appointed by God, I cannot conceal those revelations I have received from Him in which the words *nubuwwat* and *risalat* occur quite frequently. But I say repeatedly that, in these revelations, the word *mursal* or *rasul* or *nabi* which has occurred about me is not used in its real sense. (*Author's Footnote*: Such words have not occurred only now, but have been present in my published revelations for sixteen years. So you will find many such revelations about me in the book *Barahin Ahmadiyya*.) The actual fact, to which I testify with the highest testimony, is that our Holy Prophet, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, is the *Khatam al-anbiya* and after him no prophet is to come, neither an old one nor a new one.

Whoever says that he is a *nabi* or *rasul* in the real sense, as a fabrication, after our Holy Messenger, he departs from the Quran and the commandments of the Shariah, and is a *kafir* and liar. In summary, it is my belief that whoever claims prophethood in the real sense, and wishes to become a prophet directly, separating himself from the grace of the Holy Prophet and that sacred fountain, that person is irreligious and without faith. Presumably, he would create a new *kalima* of his own, and amend the acts of worship and the commandments to some extent. Undoubtedly, he would be like Musailima, the Liar, and there would be no doubt in his being a *kafir*. How could we say about such an evil person that he believes in the Holy Quran?

But it must be remembered that, as we have explained here, sometimes the revelation from God contains such words about some of His saints in a metaphorical and figurative sense; they are not meant by way of reality. This is the whole controversy which the foolish, prejudiced people have dragged in a different direction. The name 'prophet of God' (*nabiullah*) for the Promised Messiah, which is to be found in *Sahih Muslim* etc. from the blessed tongue of the Holy Prophet, is meant in the same metaphorical sense as that in which it occurs in Sufi literature as an accepted and common term for the recipient of Divine communication. Otherwise, how can there be a prophet after the *Khatam al-anbiya*?"

(*Anjam Atham*, footnote, p. 26–28; *Ruhani Khaza'in*, v. 11, p. 26–28)

The above article by Maulana Muhammad Ali, with the lengthy quotation from the book *Anjam Atham*, shows conclusively that the Maulana believed, **before the Split**, that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had **not** claimed to be a prophet at any stage in his life, and that **no change in his claim** had occurred in November 1901 when he wrote *Ayk Ghalati Ka Izala*. This was the publicly announced belief of Maulana Muhammad Ali in all the years up to the Split in 1914 when Maulana Nur-ud-Din died.

Concluding note

In the treatment of this subject above, we have of course dealt with many specific instances regarding which objections have been raised to the effect that Maulana Muhammad Ali had earlier expressed the belief that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a prophet. Further than just clarifying such individual instances, we have also shown more generally that all the way from the November-December 1903 issue of *The Review of Religions* to 1914 Maulana Muhammad Ali himself wrote, or he quoted statements of others, that the Holy Prophet Muhammad was the Last Prophet and what remains after him is the experience Divine revelation received by Muslim saints.

If there are any other individual instances of the use of the word 'prophet' or 'messenger' by him which we have not specifically covered above, the arguments given in this document provide a *sufficient and indeed comprehensive answer* for those cases as well.

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