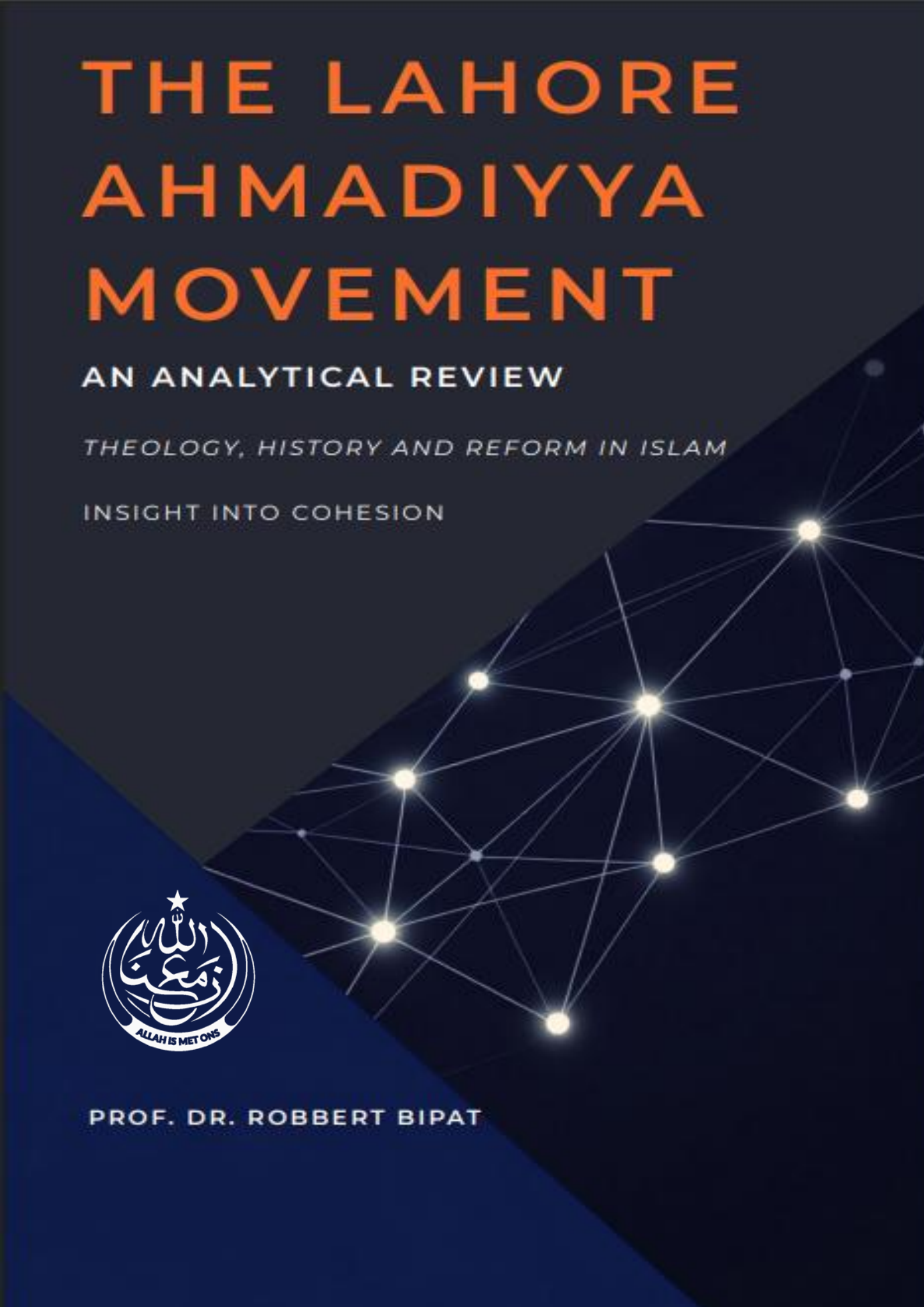
THE LAHORE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW

THEOLOGY, HISTORY AND REFORM IN ISLAM

INSIGHT INTO COHESION



PROF. DR. ROBBERT BIPAT

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Foreword

This work has its origins in the need to analyze the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in an accessible, careful and source-oriented way. In the regular discussion on this movement, central themes — such as prophethood, messiahship, *jihad* or institutional succession — are dealt with in a much-fragmented way, so that the interconnection remains hidden and underexposed. This work aims to provide insight into precisely this coherence: not from a polemic point of view, but by means of systematic ordering, critical use of sources and a precise conceptual analysis.

For me as an author, this subject has never had a purely academic or historical character. In debates about the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, I was forced to take a defensive position for many years. Almost reflexively, we were asked to show why we consider ourselves Muslims, why affiliation with the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement does not mean a break with conventional Islam, and how the exegesis of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad remains within the bounds of Islamic doctrine. This experience did not lead to reluctance, but rather forced a sharper reflection on sources, definitions and starting points.

A decisive turning point occurred when I accepted the chairmanship of the central board of the Surinamese Islamic Association in 2010. This change was not just a change in administrative style but stemmed from the insight that Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented the Islam not as a defensive, static tradition, but as a living religion that can be convincingly substantiated in the contemporary context through reason, revelation and spiritual experience. From this insight I formulated a principally moral opinion: we are Muslims, and the burden of proof to refute this rests with the person who claims the opposite. This shifted the debate from defense to analytical clarity. It is not our job to constantly legitimize our Islamic identity in the face of unfounded objections; whoever wants to place us outside Islam must demonstrate on what basis he could do so. This is not a polemical hardening, but a return to a more honest and pure premise: "Back to the Qur'an!"

My professional background as a doctor and scientist, particularly as a professor of physiology, has strengthened this approach. Medicine and scientific methodology are

centered on empirical observation, evidence, critical testing and knowledge-modesty. From this perspective, the Lahore Ahmadiyya movement's emphasis on reason shows a strong affinity with scientific rationality. It shows that faith does not have to be opposed to rational inquiry, but that they can reinforce each other when faith is based on insight, argumentation, ethical awareness and spiritual experience.

A key point in this is the doctrine of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*: the final seal of prophethood by Muhammad (saw). Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this finality is consistently reasoned through. It does not recognize any new prophet after Muhammad (saw), nor does it recognize the literal physical return of an earlier prophet. After all, a physical return of Jesus would imply a renewed prophethood after Muhammad (saw). Therefore, the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation of Jesus' death and the typological return of the Messiah fits a return defined in terms of functional, task-oriented, and spiritual analogy. Throughout forty years of study, administrative experience, and dialogue with various theological currents, my insight into these issues has deepened. Not all questions have become simpler; some have turned out to be more complex. Yet one conviction has grown stronger: my association with and participation in the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement has not distanced me from Islam, but has rather contributed to becoming a better Muslim. This has led to placing the Qur'an more centrally, developing a deeper appreciation for the Prophet Muhammad (saw), avoiding sectarian denunciation, and promoting a principled defense of religious freedom and Islam with reason, dignity, and service.

Since the end of my chairmanship in 2025, my personal engagement has undergone a transformation. The emphasis has shifted from administrative and organizational tasks to an active, written analysis of Islam and Ahmadiyya theology. Where administrative responsibilities mainly require a reactive and mediating attitude, the written record offers the necessary space for analytical order and in-depth reflection. This publication is the result of this shift.

The premise is that an adequate analysis of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement requires that its primary sources, terminology, and historical context be approached from its own exegetical framework. This does not imply that all theological tensions are removed, but rather that a movement must be analyzed primarily from its own self-

understanding before an external theological or historical judgment is made. The purpose of this work is therefore to provide insight into the interrelationship of these theological positions.

This publication is aimed at all readers who want to delve into the theological and exegetical outlines of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. The work does not aim to present a polemical argument, but rather a clear structuring of themes, sources and concepts. If this work contributes to a more balanced understanding of the position of the movement and clarifies how it can function as a path of substantive deepening within Islam, then this objective has been achieved. May this work therefore be read as an invitation to honest inquiry, reflection and a deeper understanding of Islam as I have come to appreciate it within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

Prof. dr. Robbert Bipat

Summary

This book analyzes the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement as a reform movement within Islam. It examines how this movement unites the mission of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad with the absolute finality of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw), the authority of the Qur'an and the command for the peaceful dissemination of Islamic knowledge. Rather than describing an isolated grouping, this work exposes a coherent frame of mind in which doctrine, exegesis, institutional structure, and spiritual practice come together. Initially, the book highlights Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya's apologetic argumentation, in which Islam is presented as a rationally grounded, revealed, and spiritually verifiable religion. Subsequently, the focus shifts to the Qur'anic underpinning of Jesus' death and the conceptual return of the Messiah. These issues are essential because they directly touch on *the messianic claim of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation of* Khatam-an-Nabiyyin: after Muhammad (saw) no new prophet appears and no previous prophet returns - literally.

The book then examines how Mirza Ghulam Ahmad demarcates his own religious status. Concepts such as *muhaddathiyyah*, *nubuwwat-i tammah*, *zilli nubuwwat*, *wahy nubuwwat*, *wahy wilayat* and the pamphlet *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala* are used to clarify the distinction between divine inspiration and real Prophethood. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, his claim does not imply a new, independent or legislative prophethood, but a reform mandate within the completed prophetic order of Muhammad (saw). The titles *Mujaddid*, the Promised Messiah and the Mahdi are therefore read as three interrelated aspects of one mission.

The practical side of this mission emerges in the explanation of *jihad* as a peaceful, intellectual, moral and spiritual effort. The so-called"*jihad* of the pen"is central to this: **Islam is defended and spread through Qur'anic evidence, publication, translation, teaching, dialogue and exemplary character.** The institutional continuation of the movement is also discussed, with attention to *Al-Wasiyyat*, the Anjuman, the"Second Force", the discussion of *khilafat* and the split of 1914.

The book also examines the personal and communal dimensions of reform. It presents *fana*, *baqa*, and *liqa* as Qur'an-based stages of spiritual growth that do not imply any literal union between Creator and creation. It then interprets *bai'at* as a voluntary commitment to moral discipline, service to Islam, community building, and participation in an organized reform program.

Finally, the book charts the historical and current contribution of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement regarding Qur'anic translation, publication, mission, interreligious dialogue and intellectual accountability. The emphasis is on the monumental exegetical work of Muhammad Ali, MA, LLB, the international expansion and the way in which the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement presents Islam as a rational, peaceful and spiritually active worldview. The conclusion is that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's actions within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement do not represent a paradigm shift or break with Islam, but constitute a moment of reform. Within this framework, the authority of the Qur'an, monotheism, the conclusion of prophethood, intellectual responsibility and peaceful mission are reaffirmed as core values.

Key words: Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement; Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad; *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*; *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*; finality of prophethood; *muhaddathiyyah*; *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala*; *Mujaddid*; Promised Messiah; Mahdi; death of Jesus; typological return; *Wafat-e-Masih*; *jihad* of the pen; *Al-Wasiyyat*; Anjuman; *khilafat*; *fana*; *baqa*; *liqa*; *bai'at*; Islamic reform; mission; interreligious dialogue; Qur'anic translation; publication; intellectual accountability; public presentation of Islam; contemporary knowledge transfer.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the purpose, delineation and method of this book. It places the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement within a broader framework of doctrine, Qur'anic interpretation and history, and formulates the central question: how does the reform mission of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad relate to the finality of prophethood (*Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*), the authority of the Qur'an and a peaceful intellectual mission? This forms the conceptual basis for further analysis. The name *Ahmadiyya* also requires further explanation. Within Lahore Ahmadiyya sources, this name is not primarily associated with a separate religious identity or with a new community outside Islam, but with *Ahmad*, the first name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). According to this tradition, this name was given to him by his mother before his birth, after she had received the command in a vision to call him that. The movement therefore reads its name as a reference to an Ahmadi form of Islam: peaceful, morally convincing, mild and universally proclaiming. Thus, the name is not understood as an indication of a new religion, but as an expression of a reform movement that seeks its legitimacy in the prophetic source of Islam.

1.1 Reason and purpose of the book

The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is often approached from separate controversies surrounding messiah, prophethood, jihad and institutional succession. Such a reductive approach clarifies the central points of discussion but detracts from the intrinsic coherence of the whole. This book therefore opts for a thematic structure in which historical context, defence of Islam, Qur'anic interpretation, prophetic finality, reform claim, jihad, institutional continuation, spirituality, *bai'at*, literature and mission are treated as interconnected parts of one framework of interpretation.

1.2 Demarcation and central question

The central question of this book is how the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement develops a reform vision in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is recognized as *Mujaddid*, *Mahdi* and Promised Messiah, without adopting a new, independent or legislative prophethood after Muhammad (saw). Historical data are therefore treated selectively:

they are included insofar as they contribute to the understanding of this theological, exegetical and institutional demarcation.

1.3 Method and sources

The approach of this book is source-oriented and thematic. The analysis is based on works by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, publications by Maulana Muhammad Ali and later literature by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. The emphasis is on textual explanation, conceptual demarcation and the relationship between doctrinal, historical and institutional themes. Qur'anic verses, classical terms, and historical events are discussed to the extent that they are necessary to understand the movement's framework of interpretation. The reference list is therefore intended as a guide rather than an exhaustive bibliography.

When Qur'anic verses are quoted or discussed in this book, the most recent translation by Maulana Muhammad Ali and his accompanying explanations and commentary are considered, unless otherwise stated. This choice is in line with the source-oriented character of the book and with the central place that his translation of the Qur'an occupies within the Lahore Ahmadiyya tradition. It does not mean that other translations are disregarded, but that the internal terminology and argumentation of the examined tradition are consistently read from its own primary interpretive framework.

To avoid terminological ambiguity, this work consistently distinguishes between general language, technical theological meaning and the specific interpretive interpretation within the Lahore Ahmadiyya tradition. This distinction is particularly relevant for key concepts such as *nubuwwat*, *muhaddath*, *mujaddid*, *jihad*, *bai'at* and *khilafat*, because the same terms can be given different semantic accents in different historical, linguistic and theological contexts. In line with this, the general Islamic sources in this work are hermeneutically arranged in accordance with the approach that Maulana Muhammad Ali sets out in *The Second Coming of Jesus* (DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.21929499). The Holy Qur'an serves as the primary foundation, as *Habl Allah* and *Hakam*: the absolute and unchangeable norm, as well as the decisive criterion in theological and legal disputes. Verses with an allegorical or ambiguous meaning

(*mutashabihat*) are interpreted within this framework in the light of the fundamental and unambiguous verses (*muhkamat*). Hadith traditions then fulfill the function of explaining, concretizing and practical application of Qur'anic principles, through prophetic practice (*Sunnah*). Traditions that relate to narrative traditions or future prophecies are methodologically tested against the Qur'an; what is demonstrably contrary to Qur'anic principles is not accepted as authoritative.

1.4 Reading guide

The reading guide briefly explains each chapter's role in the book's structure. Together, the chapters form a gradual route from historical and theological context to Qur'anic explanation, prophetic finality, reform claim, peaceful *jihad*, institutional continuation, spiritual development, *bai'at* and the historical and current contribution of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement.

Table 1. Reading guide per chapter

Chapter	Lahore Ahmadiyya interpretation
Chapter 2	Discusses how *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* defends Islam as a rational, revealed and spiritually experiential religion, with attention to reason, revelation, the normative position of the Qur'an, criticism of competing doctrines and the reform program of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.
Chapter 3	Examines Jesus' death, the typological return of the Messiah, and the missionary context through works including *Tauzeeh-e-Maraam*, *Izala-e-Auham*, and *Fath-e-Islam*, showing why these themes are essential to understanding Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's later claim.
Chapter 4	Clarifies the finality of prophethood, the self-interpretation of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the limits of prophetic language, with special attention to *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*, *muhaddathiyyah*, divine communication without legislative prophethood and *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala*.
Chapter 5	Defines the positive claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as *Mujaddid*, Promised Messiah and Mahdi within the completed Islamic order, and connects these titles with the typological Second Coming, the Mahdi expectation and the meaning of *bai'at*.
Chapter 6	Explains *jihad*, within the Lahore Ahmadiyya interpretation, as a peaceful intellectual, moral, and spiritual effort, and connects the "*jihad* of the pen" with publication, translation, debate, education, religious freedom, and reasoned proclamation.
Chapter 7	Discusses *Al-Wasiyyat* as testamentary and institutional text, with emphasis on institutional continuation, succession authority, the "Second Force", the role of the Anjuman, the Council of Trustees, the discussion of *khilafat* and the split of 1914.
Chapter 8	Analyzes spiritual development, Sufi terminology, and monotheistic boundaries through the concepts of *fana*, *baqa*, and *liqa*, emphasizing that closeness to Allah does not imply ontological union.

Chapter 9	Interprets *bai'at* as a voluntary religious, moral, and organizational commitment to personal devotion, Qur'anic obedience, community building, and participation in an organized reform program.
Chapter 10	Evaluates the historical and current contribution of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement to Qur'anic translation, publication, mission, interreligious dialogue, reform of Islamic thought, public presentation of Islam and peaceful knowledge transfer.

With this reading guide, the framework for the further construction of the book has been established: the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is not approached in isolation from a single controversy, but from the connection between source use, theological demarcation, historical development and practical reform. The next chapter, therefore, begins with the defensive foundation of this whole and examines how *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* presents Islam as rationally defensible, Quranically grounded, and spiritually active.

Chapter 2: Defense of Islam

This chapter deals with the defensive basis of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's reform work. Based on the book *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya,* we examine how Islam is defended as a religion that is reasonably justifiable, confirmed by revelation and can be experienced spiritually. The discussion shows how reason, the authority of the Qur'an, moral reform and criticism of other doctrines come together in one program of intellectual and religious renewal.

The reason for this defence must be placed in the context of nineteenth-century India. During this period, the Islamic community was confronted with Christian missions, colonial power relations, orientalist criticism and reform movements such as the Arya Samaj. Against this background, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented Islam not merely as a traditional religious heritage that had to be defended, but as a living religion that also in this intellectual and religious context possesses persuasive power through reason, revelation and spiritual experience.

Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya aims to show that Islam is both intellectually defensible and spiritually effective. The work is based on three interrelated pillars: reason, revelation and spiritual experience. These pillars do not function as separate means of evidence, but as parts of a single reform-oriented argument: Islam is defended in the face of external criticism and at the same time represented as a source of inner renewal for the Muslim community. The reasoned defense of religious conviction and the call for reform are thus brought together in one argumentative framework.

The emphasis on public scrutiny is also striking. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad attached great importance to debate, refutation and rational argumentation. His offer of 10,000 rupees to anyone who could disprove his evidence functions as a rhetorical and apologetic device in this context: it underlines his confidence in the evidential value of the Qur'an and in the ability to openly and critically examine religious truth.

2.1 Argumentative structure of *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*

The core of *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* consists of a series of interconnected propositions. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad first defends that Islam is recognizable as a true religion through a combination of rational argumentation, Qur'anic argumentation, and spiritual

experience. He then states that reason and revelation are not mutually exclusive but mutually confirm in their proper relationship. The Qur'an is presented as a preserved, coherent and guiding book that possesses normative authority. The prophethood of Muhammad (saw) is underpinned by his character, steadfastness and lasting historical influence. Finally, reform is given a necessary place, because ritualism, superstition and uncritical imitation have weakened the spiritual vitality of the community, according to this analysis.

According to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Islam was in a dual crisis in the nineteenth century. Internally, the spiritual vitality of the community was weakened; Externally, the pressure increased due to Christian polemics, Western ideas and reform movements such as the Arya Samaj. He found that religion had often been reduced to outward habit, while inner conviction and spiritual seriousness had faded into the background. That is why *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* presents the defence of Islam at the same time as a call for inner renewal.

The objective of *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* therefore was to demonstrate that Islam can be defended as a true religion through reason, revelation and spiritual experience. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad bases religious truth not only on tradition, but also on arguments that can be examined intellectually. In his view, true revelation and common sense cannot really clash because Allah is the source of both. This gives the work a defensive, critical and reform-oriented character.

An essential characteristic of the work is the positive relationship between reason and revelation. True revelation, according to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, is not opposed to rational thinking, but confirms and deepens it. The Qur'an, therefore, functions not only as a source of spiritual guidance, but also as a basis for reasonable argumentation. The believer is urged to actively seek truth, read critically, and develop spiritual discipline, rather than mindlessly following traditions.

Rationality occupies a central place in *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*. Beliefs should not be accepted solely on authority, but should be examined and tested. Faith is therefore connected to reflection, argumentation and inner seriousness. In this approach,

intellectual inquiry is not a threat to religion, but a means of discerning its truth more sharply.

2.2 Rationality, Qur'anic authority and doctrinal criticism

From this principle, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad criticizes teachings that he considers internally contradictory or incompatible with strict monotheism. He mentions, among other things, polytheistic representations and the attribution of human characteristics with inherent limitations to the divine. His reasoning is that Allah, who created the human mind, cannot reveal a doctrine that permanently undermines that mind. This thought forms the basis of his criticism of various religious views outside of Islam and supports his belief that Islam is rationally more consistent than other religious systems, according to his argument.

In *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*, the Qur'an is presented as a text that offers both rational coherence and spiritual direction. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad compares the Qur'an with other religious scriptures and argues that, according to his analysis, they have been influenced to varying degrees by tradition, interpretive admixture or doctrinal development. On the other hand, he emphasizes the intellectual coherence, moral clarity and spiritual effect of the Qur'an. Religious authority is thus not only associated with obedience but also with reasonable testing and inner confirmation.

Connected with this is the view that the Qur'an is the decisive normative revelation. According to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, this text has been reliably and completely preserved and can therefore serve as a benchmark for individual and communal life. According to him, the Qur'an is in line with the order of nature, promotes moral purity and offers a clear picture of Allah. It is precisely the combination of normative authority and rational persuasiveness that gives the Qur'an its special status.

2.3 Revelation, Prophethood, and Religious Authenticity

The concept of continuous divine communication also plays an important role. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states that Allah can also guide people in the present, especially those who are morally pure, internally disciplined and spiritually receptive. In this view, revelation is not a closed historical memory, but a living reality. Reason remains necessary, but according to him, the intellect cannot reach all the highest spiritual

truths on its own. Therefore, divine communication provides additional guidance and affirms the abiding closeness of Allah.

In *Islami Usul ki Filasafi*, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad connects this premise with Surah Fatiha, in which the believer prays daily: "Guide us on the right path". According to his interpretation, this prayer presumes that divine guidance is not a closed historical fact, but a current reality. If Allah were no longer to give guidance to sincere seekers, *Ihdin-nas-sirat-al-mustaqim* would lose its existential meaning and spiritual growth would be closed on principle. In contrast to this view, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad emphasizes Allah as the Living God, who also responds in the present to those who sincerely seek Him.
An important part of *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* is devoted to the defense of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad cites Muhammad's character, life, steadfastness, and enduring influence. He presents Muhammad's reputation for honesty and trustworthiness, reflected in the title *al-Amin*, as compelling moral evidence. His perseverance under persecution is also interpreted within this reasoning as an indication that his actions were not driven by self-interest. The absence of material benefit and the lasting social transformation of his mission are cited as signs of the genuineness of his mission.

The comparative criticism in *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* focuses mainly on Christianity and Hinduism. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad argues that doctrines such as the trinity and polytheism are incompatible with reason and strict monotheism. His criticism focuses primarily on doctrines and religious systems, not on the personal intentions of individual believers. Through this emphasis on doctrinal analysis, he presents Islam as the most coherent form of belief in one absolute Allah.

An important criterion for religious authenticity is moral purity. Faith should be manifest in character and behaviour, such as honesty, humility, and compassion. According to this approach, religion that has no influence on personal and social life becomes a ritual without content. That is why the Qur'an is presented not simply as a textbook, but also as an instrument of character building.

2.4 Tawhid, miracles and reform agenda

Tawhid — the unity of Allah and a core principle of Islam — forms the basic structure of the argument. True religion rests on the recognition of one absolute Allah. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presents this teaching not only as a theological starting point, but also as a basis for rational conviction and spiritual growth. In this line, *tawhid* appears as an intellectual necessity, while *shirk* — the attribution of partners to Allah — is seen as irrational and an obstacle to moral and spiritual development. This view emphasizes a direct relationship between believer and Creator, without divine incarnations or other mediating figures.

From this proposition, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad also gives a specific interpretation to miracles and prophecies. According to him, miracles are not random breaches of natural laws, but signs that refer to a deeper divine order behind visible reality. As a result, the attention shifts from the spectacular to the meaningful. Prophecies are not understood as magical prophecies, but as inspired insights that clarify the relationship between Allah and man. In this way, he connects faith with rational reflection and religious experience.

On this basis, the work develops a clear reform agenda for the Islamic community. It calls for a return to the core principles of Islam and for a renunciation of superstitions, baseless traditions and cultural additions that have clouded the teachings. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presents himself as a reformer with a mandate given by Allah to redirect the faith to its original values. In this way, *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya stands i*n the broader tradition of Islamic reform and at the same time formulates an answer to the intellectual and religious challenges of the nineteenth century. It is precisely the combination of defence and reform that determines the special characteristic of this work.

This chapter therefore forms the defensive basis for further analysis. The defence of Islam in *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya* shows how reason, revelation, *tawhid* and reform are intertwined. In the next chapter, this foundation is applied to a concrete and decisive theme of Qur'anic interpretation: the death of Jesus, the typological return of the Messiah and the way in which this interpretation partly determines the missionary self-interpretation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Chapter 3: Qur’anic explanation of Jesus' death, messianic correlation and missionary self-interpretation

This chapter examines the Qur’anic and missionary arguments surrounding Jesus' death, the messianic correlation, and the self-interpretation of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The analysis of works such as *Tauzeeh-e-Maraam*, *Izala-e-Auham* and *Fath-e-Islam* shows that the discussion of Jesus is not just a separate theme of Qur’anic interpretation, but plays a key role in the defence of Islam, the explanation of the messianic expectation and the formulation of a peaceful reform mission.

The biographical context is important here insofar as it explains the nature of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's mission. His connection with Punjab, Qadian and Lahore, his education in the Qur’an and hadith, his experiences in Sialkot and his confrontation with missionary and colonial criticism show why his actions were understood as both defensive and reform-oriented. His death in Lahore in 1908 later took on special significance, because it was precisely there that an interpretive and institutional continuation of his ideas took shape.

3.1 The death of Jesus in Qur’anic perspective

A fundamental theme in these sources is the substantiation of the claim that Jesus is no longer alive. Where the main line outlines the connection with the messianic claim, this chapter concentrates on the way in which this argument is constructed in a polemical context, especially in the face of Christian missionary claims about Jesus’ superiority over Muhammad (saw).

Within this reasoning, the death of Jesus is not a side issue, but a key concept in the argument against a literal return. Lahore Ahmadiyya sources refer to verses such as 3:55, 5:117, 19:33, and 4:157–158 to argue that according to their explanation, Jesus died of natural causes and that his elevation relates to honour, rank, and closeness to Allah, not bodily ascension into heaven. This creates room for a typological interpretation of the second coming of the Messiah.

3.2 Linguistic and contextual argumentation

The linguistic and contextual argumentation in these sources revolves primarily around the concepts o*f tawaffa* and *rafa'a*. According to the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, the use of *tawaffa* in the Qur'an usually refers to dying or taking away the soul, while verse 5:117 is given special weight by the fact that Jesus says there: "But when You caused me to die (*tawaffaitani*)...". An interpretation such as bodily inclusion is rejected within these sources because, according to this analysis, it does not find sufficient support in the lexical data and is in tension with other Qur'anic passages. The concept o*f rafa'a* is understood in the same line as an honourable increase in rank and status, not as a physical ascension. In support of this, reference is made to the prophet Idris (as), who is also said to have been exalted (*rafa'nahu*); within this discourse this is understood as an indication of spiritual elevation. Finally, human necessities are pointed out: the Qur'an mentions that Jesus and his mother ate food (5:75), and within this argumentation it is deduced that Jesus, as a human being with an earthly body, cannot permanently live physically outside the normal human conditions of existence.

3.3 The universal law of mortality

The universal law of mortality is substantiated in these sources with several Qur'anic lines. For example, it is pointed out that no human being before the Prophet Muhammad (saw) was given eternal physical presence (21:34). In addition, the Qur'an states that the human body is created from dust, lives on earth, dies there, and will be resurrected from it (7:24–25), so that a physical transition to a heavenly sphere would break through this divine order. The analogy of vegetation in 39:21 is also quoted to illustrate that every life is subject to a cycle of growth, decay and death.

3.4 Textual legitimization of the messiahship

The sources do more than identify Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the Promised Messiah; they explain how this status is textually and typologically grounded in a broader pattern of religious fulfilment. Just as the Gospel tradition presents John the Baptist—not Elijah's literal return—as fulfilling Elijah's role, these sources portray Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as the spiritual fulfilment of the Messiah's coming. They interpret

images such as “breaking the cross” and “killing the swine” as symbols of refuting Christian doctrines and combating moral corruption. They also describe his direct divine communication as *ilham*, or inspiration, and present his writings and statements as supported by the divine guidance he experienced while defending Islam. The reason for this messianic self-interpretation was not an isolated personal title, but a confluence of exegetical, defensive and historical circumstances. In the nineteenth-century context, the alleged physical survival of Jesus was used by Christian missionaries as an argument for the superiority of Jesus over Muhammad (saw), while at the same time many Muslims held to the expectation that Jesus would literally return from heaven. For Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, this combination posed a theological problem: it seemed to strengthen Christian claims on the one hand and to burden the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw) on the other. The defence of Jesus’ natural death therefore became the necessary condition for a different reading of the Second Coming: not the return of the same prophet, but the coming of a reformer from the community of Muhammad (saw) who fulfils the messianic task in spiritual agreement.

It is important that the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation does not simply deny the messianic expectation. The coming of the Messiah belongs precisely to the prophetic expectation as it appears in known and considered authentic traditions. These traditions speak of the descent of the son of Mary, his action as a righteous judge, the breaking of the cross, the killing of the swine and the presence of an imam from the community itself. Therefore, the reasoning cannot be reduced to the proposition that Jesus is dead and therefore nothing more can be expected. The real question is how these prophetic announcements are to be understood when they are read alongside the Qur’anic argument about Jesus’ mortality and alongside the teachings of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*.

Within his own explanation, this position was presented not merely as a result of reasoning, but also as the fruit of divine guidance. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad described his understanding of the death of Jesus, the meaning of the messianic prophecies, and his own task as connected with *ilham*, prayer, Qur’anic study, and inner conviction. The inspiration had no legislative character and was not presented as a new order of revelation next to the Qur’an. Rather, it functioned as confirmation of a way of

interpretation in which two facts are taken seriously at the same time: on the one hand, the Qur'anic indications for the death and mortality of Jesus, and on the other hand, the authentic hadith expectation that the Messiah would come. The solution in this reading lies not in denial of the hadith, but in typological interpretation: the promised coming is fulfilled by a person from the *ummah* of Muhammad (saw) who embodies the messianic function, task and spiritual meaning. The claim that he is the Promised Messiah thus arises from the connection between Qur'anic explanation, prophetic tradition, divine inspiration and the need to defend Islam convincingly again in a time of missionary confrontation.

The title Promised Messiah therefore refers in this context to function and mission, not to bodily identity with Jesus of Nazareth. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad understood his messianic task as restoring pure monotheism, refuting Christological exaggerations, purifying religion of superstition, and calling for moral reform. The expressions "the breaking of the cross" and "the killing of the swine" are not read literally or violently in this line, but symbolically: they indicate the refutation of doctrines that, according to this view, are contrary to *tawhid* and the combating of moral and spiritual impurity. The messiahship thus takes on a defensive and reforming meaning: the Messiah does not appear to bring a new religion, but to make Islam visible again as a living, rational and morally transforming religion.

For the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this explanation is decisive because it places the messianic claim within the boundaries of Islamic doctrine. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is recognized as the Promised Messiah because, according to this interpretation, he fulfills the task indicated in the hadith and in the religious expectation, but he is not understood as a new, independent or legislative prophet. His inspiration remains subordinate to the Qur'an, his authority remains derived from Muhammad (saw), and his messianic meaning is understood as that of a *Mujaddid* and *Muhaddath* within the *ummah*. The claim is therefore not read as a break with *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*, but rather as an application of it: since no prophet can appear after Muhammad (saw), the promised messianic fulfillment must take place in the form of a follower who reflects the spiritual function of Jesus without literally returning his prophetic person.

3.5 The Living Power of Muhammad's Prophethood

The discussion about Jesus' death also had an important defensive goal for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. Christian missionaries often argued that Jesus was alive in heaven, while Muhammad (saw) had died. From this they concluded that Jesus had a higher or more permanent position. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad reversed this reasoning. According to him, the lasting power of a prophet lies not in physical survival, but in the spiritual effect of his message. Jesus had died as a human being, but the prophethood of Muhammad (saw) remained alive because the Qur'an, his example and the spiritual reform within his *ummah* remained constantly active.

Therefore, when Lahore Ahmadiyya sources speak of Islam as a religion with a "living prophet", they do not mean that a new prophet will appear after Muhammad (saw). The phrase refers to the lasting spiritual influence of Muhammad's prophethood. This influence is visible in the enduring power of the Qur'an, in the moral formation of believers and in the actions of reformers such as *Mujaddids*, who redirect the community to the original message in times of decline. In this context, reference is often made to Qur'an 62:2–3, where the mission of the Prophet is linked to the first believers and to "others among them who have not yet joined them". Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, this is read as an indication that the cleansing and teaching effect of Muhammad's prophethood also reaches later generations within the ummah, including through reformers who call the community back to the Qur'an and the sunnah. In this sense, according to the Lahore explanation, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is not a competitor of the Prophet, but a proof of the efficacy of his completed prophethood.

This interpretation makes it clear that the death of Jesus, the messianic claim and the lasting efficacy of Muhammad's prophethood are closely linked within this argument. If Jesus does not live on physically, nor does he return literally, the messianic fulfillment cannot be understood as the return of the same historical prophet, but as the appearance of a reformer within the community of Muhammad (saw), who fulfills the messianic function in a spiritual and typological sense. In this way, the Christian argument of the "living Jesus" is replaced by an Islamic counter-argument: the real living power lies in the continuous efficacy of the Qur'an and in the lasting influence of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw). Since this activity becomes concretely visible in teaching, publication, proclamation and community building, this theological

explanation naturally leads to the question of how Mirza Ghulam Ahmad shaped his mission in a practical and institutional way. Within the same reasoning, both the denial of Jesus' virgin birth and the confirmation of his death take on a special theological significance for the principle of *tawhid*. They serve to avoid any idea that Jesus would be outside the general human order by an exceptional origin, a permanent physical existence, or a unique heavenly status. Maulana Muhammad Ali confirms this line in *Masih-Maood*, while Maulana Hakim Nuruddin in *Ibtal Uluhiyyat-i-Masih* emphasizes that the doctrine of Jesus' virgin birth, viewed from a strict conception of *tawhid*, must also be critically rejected. According to this approach, Islam cannot subscribe to a doctrine that could strengthen the Christological claim to Jesus' divinity. The non-virgin birth and mortality of Jesus, therefore, do not function as ancillary exegetical positions, but as essential elements in the protection of Islamic monotheism.

3.6 Organizational structuring: the five-pronged action plan

For Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the missionary significance of this explanation was not limited to theological argumentation. It asked for a concrete form of organization through which Islam could be defended, explained and disseminated. That is why he formulated a fivefold organizational framework:

Table 2. The Five-Fold Plan of Action for the Spread of Islam

Field of activity	Description
Book production	Writing and publishing works, such as *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*, to substantiate the truth of Islam with reasonable and Qur'anic arguments.
Posters and pamphlets	Widely distributing short texts to answer misconceptions, challenge opponents and inform interested readers.
Hospitality	Receiving visitors in Qadian for conversation, explanation, spiritual formation and religious dialogue.
Correspondence	Answering questions, objections and requests from researchers, critics and interested parties at home and abroad.
Oath of allegiance (*bai'at*)	To form a community of followers who volunteer to spiritual reform, moral discipline, and mission support.

The later deployment of missionaries in different parts of the world can be seen as a practical elaboration of this fivefold action plan: publication, correspondence, personal formation, community bonding and organized proclamation were thus linked together.

3.7 Criticism of religious and social decay

The sources contain sharp criticism of both Christian missionary ideas and forms of passivity within the Muslim community. Religious scholars, referred to as the *ulama*, are criticized when, according to these sources, they hold to beliefs such as the physical ascension of Jesus and thereby hinder a correct understanding of Jesus' death, messianic typology, and prophetic finality. In addition, it warns against worldliness: education and associations can be useful, but according to this analysis, remain insufficient if they are not linked to spiritual devotion to Allah. Finally, it is emphasized that the defense and dissemination of Islam require personal and financial sacrifices, especially in comparison with the extensive resources available to Christian missionary organizations.

This chapter has shown how the discussion about Jesus' death, the typological return of the Messiah and the missionary context come together in the self-positioning of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The next step, therefore, is not a repetition of the messianic claim, but a more careful examination of the limits of prophetic language and the finality of prophethood. The next chapter deals with these questions on the basis of statements in which Mirza Ghulam Ahmad delineates his own status within the completed prophetic order of Muhammad (saw).

Chapter 4: The conclusion of prophethood, self-interpretation and prophetic language

This chapter focuses on the conclusion of prophethood and on the way in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad demarcates his own religious status. Central to this are his statements about *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*, *muhaddathiyyah*, divine communication and the limits of prophetic language. By systematically discussing these sources, the chapter clarifies why the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement does not read his claim as new, independent or legislative prophethood after Muhammad (saw).

4.1 Sources and self-status statements

This chapter systematically brings together evidence from the writings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad that are relevant to the question of how he formulated his own status. Whereas the previous chapters have thematically summarized the vision of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this chapter concentrates on its source-based underpinnings: formulations, distinctions and repeated statements that delineate his position within the finality of prophethood.

On October 20, 1891, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made a statement in the Delhi Mosque in which he explicitly stated that anyone who denies the finality of prophethood is stepping outside the boundaries of the faith. This statement, which was later quoted again, is read in this chapter as an expression of a consistent theological position. He repeatedly reaffirmed his belief in the *kalima* and recognized Muhammad (saw) as the last of the prophets.

The 257 references brought together in this chapter come from a wide range of works, including the books *Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya*, *Izala-e-Auham*, *Haqiqat al-Wahy, a*nd other publications from the period 1884–1908. Their common significance lies mainly in the repetition of the same distinction between *nubuwwat-i tammah* — perfect prophethood — and *muhaddathiyyah* — divine communication without legislative authority. As a result, the chapter provides documentary material for a pattern that has been sketched conceptually.

4.2 *Muhaddathiyyah*: Divine Communication Without Prophethood

Central to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's self-understanding is the concept of *muhaddath*, a term that he explains in detail in his writings. In Islamic tradition, a *muhaddath* refers to someone who is addressed by Allah and receives divine inspiration, without thereby being a prophet in the complete or technical sense. To substantiate this, he refers to the well-known hadith about Umar ibn al-Khattab in *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab Fada'il Ashab an-Nabi, hadith 3689. In it, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) says that among earlier communities there were people who were inspired or spoken to without being prophets, and that if there was anyone of such persons in his community, it would be Umar. Within this interpretation, this tradition forms an important precedent for the distinction between divine inspiration and real prophethood.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad repeatedly emphasized that *muhaddathiyyah* does not imply a full-fledged prophethood. When he spoke of a partial prophethood (*juzi nabi*), he meant only that a *muhaddath* receives divine communication and can obtain knowledge of the unseen, while this remains strictly subordinate to the final prophethood of Muhammad (saw). In his explanation, it is therefore about similarity in certain characteristics of revelation, not about an independent prophetic status.
The decisive difference between a *muhaddath* and a full-fledged prophet, according to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, lies in the absence of a new *shari'ah* — divine law. He emphatically stated that he did not bring any new law, introduce a new *kalima*, make no change in prayer or fasting, and made no claim to independent prophethood. That is why he consistently described himself as an *ummati* — follower — of Muhammad (saw). Also in *Tauzeeh-e-Maraam* (1891) he makes it clear that the form of prophetic inspiration of which he speaks is not a perfect prophethood, but a derivative and limited form that he r*efers to as muhaddathiyyah*.

According to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the status of *muhaddath* does not come from an independent divine mission, but from perfect obedience to and reflection of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). This status remains completely derived and dependent. His point is that spiritual elevation is only possible within the connection with the final prophethood of Muhammad, and never outside of it.

4.3 *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin* and the exclusion from later prophethood

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's theological position was fundamentally based on his belief in *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin* — the finality of prophethood with Muhammad (saw). He repeatedly quoted the Qur'anic verse in which Muhammad (saw) is referred to as the "seal of the prophets"(*Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*) (33:40). In his writings, he emphasized that this verse excludes the possibility of the appearance of a perfect prophet with new legislation after Muhammad (saw).

In *Izala-e-Auham* (1891), Mirza Ghulam Ahmad formulated his position as follows: "Of true prophethood, however, only the *mubashshirat* — good tidings — the *munzirat* — warnings — remain, foreknowledge of unseen things, exhaustive knowledge of and insight into the Qur'an, and divine knowledge. The prophethood that is perfect and complete and contains all the excellent revelations has ended. "With this he distinguished *nubuwwat-i tammah* — perfect prophethood — from *zilli nubuwwat* — derived or reflective prophethood — in which only the latter remains possible for followers of Muhammad (saw).

An important theological argument that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made is that the literal return of Jesus of Nazareth as a prophet would be impossible according to this reasoning, because it would undermine the *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*. He wrote that the arrival of an earlier messenger was blocked by the impenetrable wall of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*. Instead, he interpreted the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah metaphorically: according to him, they refer to someone with the spiritual qualities of Jesus, not to Jesus himself.

In *Hamamat al-Bushrah* (1894), Mirza Ghulam Ahmad explicitly stated: "Don't you know that the Merciful Lord has declared our Holy Prophet to *be Khatam-an-Nabiyyin* without any exception, and our Holy Prophet has also explained that this verse *la nabiyya ba'di* amounts to: there will be no prophet after me. For truthful ones, it is clear that if we agree to the coming of another prophet after our Holy Prophet (saw), it would automatically mean that we have opened the door of prophetic revelation that

was closed." This statement underlines his principled rejection of independent prophethood after Muhammad (saw).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad emphasized that the door to prophetic revelation with legislative authority is permanently closed, but divine communication (*ilham*) remains accessible to righteous followers of Muhammad (saw). He stated that it is not appropriate that after the Holy Prophet, the *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*, another prophet should be sent or that the completed prophethood should be reopened.

4.4 *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala* and the Limits of Prophetic Language

This section discusses *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala* and the questions that have arisen around this pamphlet. While the broader line deals with the status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, this section focuses on the use of words, mystical concepts, the demarcation of revelation and the later influence of the scripture.

The later Qadiani faction refers to the group that continued in Qadian after the death of Maulana Nur-ud-Din in 1914 under the leadership of Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad. The separation arose not only from organizational disagreements, but mainly from disputes over the meaning of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's status, the scope of prophetic language, the position of non-Ahmadi Muslims, and the question of whether the movement should be led by a personal *khilafat* or by the Anjuman established by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement linked its own origins in Lahore precisely to the rejection of new prophethood after Muhammad (saw), of *takfir* of other Muslims and of a personal, central caliphate model that it felt did not correspond to the original institutional set-up. For further reference, this sketch can be compared to Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Split in the Ahmadiyya Movement* (1918).

Ordinary Meaning and Special Theological Significance

The controversy revolves around the distinction between the ordinary meaning of terms and their special theological use. Within Islamic orthodoxy, any claim to *nubuwwat is c*onsidered extremely sensitive because of the principle of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin* — the finality of prophethood. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad acknowledged this sensitivity, but at the same time argued that the problem was narrowed too much when

the word *nabi* was denied without further nuance, while according to him that term did indeed occur in his revealed language.

That is why he distinguished the lexical meaning of *nabi* — someone who brings news from the unseen — from the technical meaning of the word within Islamic theology, where it refers to an independent carrier of revelation and legislation. By describing himself as a *muhaddath*, he wanted to make it clear that he was entitled to divine inspiration, but not to a new or independent prophethood.

In that regard, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad argued that terms such as *risalat* and *nubuwwat* can have a broader meaning in Arabic than in the technical language of Islamic teachings. In religious terminology, however, according to him, *nabi* and *rasul* are reserved for figures who bring a new *Shari'ah*, abolish parts of a previous law or do not fall under the authority of a previous prophet. It was precisely from this category that he wanted to distinguish his own position.

Shadow and appearance as a derived representation

To interpret the tension around expectations about the end times, religious fulfilment and future divine interventions, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad used classical Sufi concepts such as shadow or reflection (*zill*) and appearance or becoming visible (*burooz*). With these concepts, he did not describe himself as an independent religious authority, but as a derivative reflection of the Prophet Muhammad (saw). The mirror metaphor was intended to make it clear that, in his opinion, his religious status remained entirely dependent on the prophetic source he reflected.

The idea of so-called shadow prophethood functions in this context as a theological demarcation. Just as a mirror image adds nothing to the original, so a derived spiritual status would not violate the seal of prophethood according to this reasoning. The emphasis is therefore not on independence, but on representation and dependence.
When Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states that “Muhammad is the Prophet and no one else", he directly connects this with his doctrine of appearance or becoming visible (*burooz*): what becomes visible in him, according to this explanation, is not a new prophethood, but a reflection of the achievements of Muhammad (saw). In this way he tries to explicitly exclude any impression of a second, independent prophetic claim.

No new law: the border of *sahib-i-shari'ah*

An important part of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's defence is the distinction between different forms of revelation. According to him, the *wahy nubuwwat* — prophetic revelation related to legislation — has been definitively closed. He therefore did not place his own experiences in that category, but under *wahy wilayat*: divine communication that can be given to saints or pious people without bringing a new law. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad explicitly denied the status of *sahib-i-shari'ah* — bearer of a new law — stating that he did not introduce a new law and did not abolish any Qur'anic commandments. Nor did he claim an independent prophethood (*mustaqil*), but saw himself as a spiritual heir. In his argument, he also used the biblical precedent of Joshua as the *burooz* of Moses: a successor that perpetuates the authority of the pastor without introducing a new religious law. Within Islamic mysticism, this functions as a theologically safe category to describe continuity without breaking the finality of revelation.

The disputed thesis of a change of course in 1901

Within the later Qadiani faction, the opinion arose that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1901 distanced himself from his earlier denials of prophethood. However, the broader source context makes that reading less obvious. Attempts to dismiss almost all texts from before 1901 as obsolete raise tensions with statements and publications from the following years. An important element in this debate is the trial of **Maulvi Karam Din** in 1904. In this context, three years after the pamphlet in question, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad affirmed under oath that his status matched the description in *Tiryaq-ul-Qulub* (1902), in which he explicitly calls himself a *ghair nabi* — non-prophet. Critics point out that the dating of the alleged reversal was later shifted from 1902 to 1901 by proponents to reduce tensions with later statements and publications.

Testimonies of continuity after 1901

In religious historiography, the collective memory of contemporaries weighs heavily. One of the strongest arguments against the theory of a change of course, therefore, is the affidavit of seventy direct followers — *ijma*, or consensus. These individuals, who had already sworn allegiance to the movement's spiritual reform and mission before 1901, solemnly declared that they had not observed any radical change in their teacher's claims upon the publication of *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala*. In Islamic legal terms,

this is considered a form of *tawatur* — testimony that has been handed down many times. For this group, the pamphlet was not a new claim, but a refinement of the metaphorical language that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had been using for some time. The idea of a "new claim" arose, according to this reading, only years after his death, under the influence of the internal political dynamics of the movement, and not because of the textual reality of 1901.

This discussion mainly shows how the discussion around *Aik Ghalati Ka Izala* revolves around terminology, interpretive frameworks and later elaboration. In doing so, she prepares the discussion of the positive claim: only after this demarcation of language, revelation and prophetic finality can it become clear what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad does claim to be within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation.
The transition to the next chapter therefore lies in the positive formulation of the claim. After it has been determined which forms of prophethood and revelation are excluded according to the Lahore interpretation, it can be examined what meaning the titles *Mujaddid*, Promised Messiah and Mahdi do have within a strict Islamic and Qur'anic reform framework.

Chapter 5: The True Claim in Context: *Mujaddid*, Promised Messiah and Mahdi

This chapter builds on the previous demarcation of prophethood and examines what Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad does claim to be according to the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. The titles *Mujaddid*, Promised Messiah and Mahdi are not treated here as separate or competing claims, but as coherent dimensions of one reform mission. The chapter shows how this claim is placed within the completed Islamic order, with emphasis on Qur'anic reorientation, monotheism, moral reform and peaceful proclamation.

5.1 Introduction: The True Claim as a Reformer

The question of the true claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad can only be answered carefully when it is placed within the theological and historical framework in which his mission was formulated. In polemical discussions, his claim is often narrowed down to the question of whether he was a prophet. However, such an approach does not do sufficient justice to its own terminology, the religious context and the logic of reform within which its actions are understood by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Within this interpretation, the focus is not on the introduction of a new prophethood, but on the appearance of a reformer appointed by Allah who makes Islam active again in a time of religious, intellectual and moral crisis.

5.2 Naming and prophetic source

The name *Ahmadiyya* is not primarily derived from the personal name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, but from *Ahmad*, the first name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). According to this tradition, this name was given to him by his mother even before his birth, after she had been instructed in a vision to call him that. This emphasizes that the movement understands its identity as a continuation of the prophetic mission of Muhammad (saw), especially in its peaceful, moral and spiritual dimension.

5.3 Three dimensions of the claim

The core of this claim consists of three closely related dimensions. First, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is seen as the *Mujaddid* of the fourteenth Islamic century: a reformer who, in accordance with the Islamic expectation of periodic renewal, appears to purge the faith of misconceptions and trace the community back to the Holy Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Second, he is identified as the Promised Messiah, not in the sense of a physical return of Jesus, but as one who acts in spiritual likeness to Jesus. Third, he is recognized as the Mahdi, not as a political or military conqueror, but as a figure guided by Allah who, according to this interpretation, asserts Islam through evidence, reason, spiritual strength and moral reform.

5.4 The Mahdi in general Islamic expectation and Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation

In the broader Islamic tradition, the *Mahdi* is usually understood as a figure guided by Allah who appears at the end of a period of confusion, injustice, and religious decay to restore justice and reorient the community toward truth and obedience to Allah. The word *Mahdi* literally means "the guided one". In many classical representations, the *Mahdi* is linked to expectations surrounding the end times: restoration of justice, strengthening the Muslim community, combating error and preparing for a broader religious turnaround. In popular or politically colored interpretations, this figure sometimes takes on the character of a future ruler or military leader. Yet the core of the concept remains not purely political, but religious: the *Mahdi* is the one who, through divine guidance, calls the community back to the right path.

The expectation of the *Mahdi* is given different emphases in different Islamic movements. In many Sunni views, the *Mahdi* is seen as a future righteous leader from among the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), who will appear at the end of time to fight injustice and restore the community. This expectation is present in the Sunni world, but usually does not belong to the core of the doctrine of faith in the same sense as the five pillars or the articles of faith. In the twelve-Shiite tradition, on the other hand, the Mahdi occupies a much more central place: he is identified with Muhammad al-Mahdi, the twelfth imam, who, according to this teaching, lives in secrecy and will return to restore justice and divine guidance. In some ismaelite

interpretations, the Mahdi thought is more strongly associated with the ongoing imamate and with the role of a living, God-led imam as a bearer of spiritual authority. In addition, Islamic history also has Mahdic movements in which the expectation was worked out politically and revolutionarily, such as the nineteenth-century Mahdiyya in Sudan under Muhammad Ahmad, who presented himself as *Mahdi* and led a reform and resistance movement against the rule of the time.

These examples show that the Mahdi expectation does not have a completely uniform form within Islam. Sometimes the emphasis is on a future political leader, sometimes on a hidden imam, sometimes on spiritual authority and sometimes on reform in times of crisis. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement consciously positions its own explanation within this broader variation, but opts for a non-military and non-political interpretation. In this view, the Mahdi is above all the one who, through divine guidance, makes the truth of Islam visible again, refutes religious misconceptions and calls the community to moral and intellectual reform.

Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this expectation is not denied, but rather accentuated. The emphasis shifts from political power and military restoration to religious reform, intellectual defence of Islam and moral revival. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is therefore understood as Mahdi in the sense of an Allah-led reformer who makes Islam visible again as a rational, peaceful and spiritually powerful religion in a time of colonial domination, Christian missionary criticism, internal divisions and religious stagnation. This interpretation is in line with the Lahore Ahmadiyya emphasis on the *"jihad* of the pen": the Mahdi conquers not by weapons, but by the Qur'an, evidence, prayer, publication, character building and service to humanity.

The distinction between the general expectation and the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation lies mainly in the nature of the expected victory. Where many traditional descriptions connect the *Mahdi* with visible social or political change, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement reads its role primarily as spiritual and intellectual reorientation. In this view, the *Mahdi* is not a bringer of a new law nor an independent prophet, but a servant of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) who brings the existing Islamic truth back into operation. That is precisely why the title *Mahdi* is not treated

separately from the concept of *Mujaddid*: both refer to divine guidance that leads the community back to the original power of Islam.

This transition is important for the further construction of the chapter. The Mahdi title mainly describes the direction and operation of the reform mission: leadership, revival and victory through truth. The term *Mujaddid* then clarifies the theological category in which that mission should be placed, according to the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. It is about reform within the completed Islamic order, not about new legislation or independent prophetic authority. The claim to be Promised Messiah and Mahdi does not stand alone within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, but is placed within a broader pattern of Qur'anic designations and prophetic expectations. This is not about the introduction of a new doctrine of faith in addition to Islam, but about the question of how, according to Islamic sources, Allah provides guidance, restoration and reform in times of religious decline. The arrival of a reforming figure is thus understood as an expression of Allah's ongoing concern for the community of Muhammad (saw).

5.5 Qur'anic and hadith references to the coming of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi

A first source line begins at Surah al-Jumu'ah 62:2–3. In these verses, the mission of Prophet Muhammad (saw) is described as reciting Allah's signs, cleansing the believers, and teaching the Book and wisdom. That mission is not limited to the first generation, but also associated with "others among them who have not yet joined them." Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, this points to the lasting effect of Muhammad's prophethood in later times. This explanation is reinforced by the well-known tradition of this verse in *Sahih al-Bukhari* 4897 and *Sahih Muslim* 2546a–b: when asked about these "others", the Prophet laid his hand on Salman the Persian and said that if the faith were among the Pleiades, a man or men of his people would attain it. This tradition is read as an indication that religious revival can take place in a later period by a person with Persian affiliation.

A second source line concerns the well-known hadith about the coming of Jesus, the son of Mary. *Sahih al-Bukhari* 2476 and related traditions speak of his coming as a righteous judge, breaking the cross and killing the swine. In *Sahih al-Bukhari* 3449 the wording is: "How will it be with you when the son of Mary descends among you and

your imam will be from among you?" The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement does not deny this expectation, but reads it in conjunction with the Qur'anic argument that Jesus died and with the teachings of *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*. As a result, the coming of the Messiah is not understood as the physical return of the same prophet, but as the appearance of a person from the *ummah* of Muhammad (saw) who fulfills the messianic task.
The expressions "the breaking of the cross" and "the killing of the swine" therefore take on a symbolic and missionary meaning within this explanation. The breaking of the cross refers to the refutation of Christological doctrines that, according to this view, are contrary to pure monotheism. The killing of the boar is read as an image for combating moral and religious impurity. Thus, the Messiah does not appear in this interpretation to bring a new law or to establish a separate religion, but to defend Islam, cleanse the faith, and redirect the community to the Qur'an and the example of Muhammad (saw).
A third source line is formed by the hadith about the *Mujaddid*. In *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Kitab al-Malahim, hadith 4291, it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet Muhammad (saw) said: "Allah will raise up for this community at the beginning of every century someone who will renew its religion for it." This tradition is of particular significance within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, because it provides a clear Islamic category for reform after Muhammad (saw). A *Mujaddid* does not bring a new law of revelation and does not act as an independent prophet, but renews the understanding, practice and spiritual operation of the existing Islamic message.
A fourth source line concerns the traditions about the *Mahdi*. In *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Kitab al-Mahdi, hadith 4282, there is talk of a man from the Prophet's community or family whose name corresponds to that of the Prophet and who will fill the earth with righteousness after it was filled with injustice. *Sunan Abi Dawud* 4284 mentions that the Mahdi belongs to the family of the Prophet and is descended from Fatimah. Sunan *Abi Dawud* 4285 also speaks of the restoration of justice and fairness after a period of oppression. *Jami'at-Tirmidhi* 2230 also contains a related narration about a man from the house of the Prophet whose name corresponds to his own. These texts make it clear that the Mahdi expectation in hadith literature is connected to guidance, restoration and justice in a time of decline.

Within Ahmadiyya sources, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's Persian descent is also pointed out in this context. His family is described as originating from Khurasan in Persia and connected to the Barlas-Moghul lineage, whose ancestor, Mirza Hadi Beg, settled in

Qadian. This background is especially connected with the tradition of Salman the Persian and the Pleiades: the faith, when it seemed far away, would be re-attained by a man from Persia. However, the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation of the Mahdi traditions does not only emphasize physical descent, but especially spiritual kinship with the Prophet through perfect imitation, service to the Qur'an and restoration of Islam. The Persian lineage is therefore seen as an additional clue within a broader pattern of prophetic indications, not as the sole foundation of the claim.

The connection between these sources is decisive for the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Qur'an 62:2–3 and the hadith on Persia point to the continued effect of Muhammad's prophethood in later generations. The hadith about the descent of Jesus and the imam from the community points to a messianic fulfillment within the *ummah*, not to a new prophetic order outside of it. The *Mujaddid* hadith offers the category of periodic religious renewal. The Mahdi traditions add to this the image of divine guidance, restoration of justice and victory over religious confusion. Together, these references form a framework in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is understood as a reformer, Promised Messiah and *Mahdi* within the completed Islamic order.

Temporary conclusion: within this explanation, *Mujaddid*, Promised Messiah and Mahdi are not three separate or competing titles, but three aspects of one reform mission. The title *Mujaddid* indicates the theological category: renewal of the faith without new law or independent prophethood. The title Promised Messiah indicates the spiritual fulfillment of the expectation around Jesus, without his physical return. The title Mahdi emphasizes divine guidance and the restoration of religious justice in a time of decline. Thus, the claim is not placed outside Islam, but rather within the lasting effect of the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and the closed prophethood of Muhammad (saw).

This order prepares the following paragraphs. First, the concept of *Mujaddid* is discussed as the key to reform within the completed Islamic order. Then the Promised Messiah is treated as a typological fulfillment of a prophetic expectation. Finally, the Mahdi is explained as a guided reformer whose task is not military or political, but intellectual, moral and spiritual in nature.

5.6 The *Mujaddid* as a theological key

From this perspective, the concept of *Mujaddid* is the key to a careful interpretation of his claim. A *Mujaddid* is not a legislative prophet and not an independent bringer of a new religious order. His authority is derived, subservient and completely subordinate to the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad (saw). He does not appear to replace or modify Islam, but to make its original truth visible again. The reformer restores what has become obscured, corrects what has been distorted by custom, sectarianism, or superstition, and defends religion against new intellectual challenges. In this sense, the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is fundamentally reformatory and not prophetic in the independent or legislative sense of the word.

It is precisely here that there is an essential difference between the recognition of a reformer inspired by Allah and the acceptance of a new prophet after the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). The doctrine of *khatm-e-nubuwwat*, according to this approach, excludes any later prophet who would bring a new law, a new order of revelation, or an independent religious authority. However, the completion of prophethood does not mean that Allah's guidance for the community ceases. On the contrary, the living power of Islam is expressed precisely in the fact that in times of decay Allah raises up people who remind the believers of the original message. This guidance is not a continuation of prophethood, but a form of spiritual support within the boundaries of completed Islam.

In this way, the concept of *Mujaddid* fulfils a theological pivotal function between the expectation of revival and the rejection of new prophethood. It explains how a reformer supported by Allah can act with authority, insight and spiritual strength, without stepping outside the community of Muhammad (saw). Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is therefore not seen as the origin of a new religious norm, but as the one who makes the existing norm effective again: the Qur’an is once again placed at the center, the position of Muhammad (saw) is defended, and Islam is once again presented as rational, alive and morally transformative.

5.7 The Promised Messiah and the Typical Second Coming

The claim to the messiahship must also be understood in this light. The expectation of the return of the Messiah is not taken literally in this interpretation as the physical descent of the prophet Jesus from heaven. It is understood as a prophetic designation of a person who resembles Jesus in character, task and spiritual function. Just as Jesus appeared at a time when the Mosaic community was in need of inner renewal, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appears according to this view at a time when the Islamic world is confronted with colonial domination, Christian missionary criticism, religious stagnation and internal divisions. The name "Promised Messiah" therefore does not indicate identity with Jesus, but correspondence in commission.

This typological approach is essential, because it connects the messianic expectation with the finality of prophethood. When Jesus would literally return as a prophet, after Muhammad (saw) another prophet would appear in the world. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement sees this as incompatible with *Khatam-an-Nabiyyin*. Therefore, the Second Coming is not understood as the return of the same historical person, but as the appearance of a follower of Muhammad (saw) who fulfills the spiritual task of Jesus in a new religious context.

The comparison with Elijah and John the Baptist offers an important interpretive model here. In the Jewish expectation, the return of Elijah was expected, but according to the evangelical pattern, that expectation was fulfilled in John, who acted in spirit and power of Elijah. Within the Lahore explanation, this parallel functions as an indication that prophetic language about "return" does not necessarily imply bodily identity. It can also point to similarity in task, spiritual function and reforming mission. For the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this explanation takes on special significance due to the historical circumstances in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad performed. Christian missionary criticism often used the alleged living status of Jesus as an argument for his superiority over Muhammad (saw). By defending the natural death of Jesus while at the same time typologically explaining the messianic second coming, this argument is reversed: not Jesus' physical survival, but the enduring spiritual power of Muhammad's prophethood is living proof of the truth of Islam.

Therefore, in this view, the title Promised Messiah is not a stand-alone honorary title, but a functional designation. It describes the task of refuting Christological exaggerations, restoring monotheism, placing the Qur'an at the center and presenting Islam again as rationally and spiritually convincingly. The messianic claim thus takes on meaning within a broader reform program that remains completely subordinate to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw). This explanation is closely related to the doctrine of *Wafat-e-Masih*, the belief that the prophet Jesus died like other prophets before him. If Jesus does not live physically in heaven, his return cannot be expected as the physical return of the same person. The prophecies about his coming must then be read as symbolic and typological indications. The "coming of the Messiah" in that case means the coming of someone who fulfills the same spiritual function: refuting Christological exaggerations, restoring pure monotheism, combating religious misconceptions and calling for inner reform. In this context, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is seen as the fulfillment of a religious pattern, not as a break with the Islamic doctrine of prophetic finality.

5.8 The Mahdi as a Guided Reformer and the Practical Mission

The title *Mahdi* also takes on a specific and practical meaning within this approach. The Mahdi is not primarily presented as a political ruler or military leader who restores Islamic power through violence. Rather, he is "the guided" one who, in a period of confusion, makes the correct interpretation of Islam visible again. His task consists of leading, refuting error, putting the Qur'an at the center and calling the community to moral and intellectual revival. In this way, the *Mahdi* expectation is directly in line with the broader theme of *jihad* as a spiritual, intellectual and ethical effort.

This makes it clear why the claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in this tradition cannot be separated from his practical mission. Its meaning lies not only in a title, but in the program associated with that title. That program includes the defense of the oneness of Allah, the affirmation of the completeness of the Holy Qur'an, the purification of Islam of superstition and fatalism, the refutation of missionary attacks, the reform of the moral life of Muslims, and the presentation of Islam as a universal, peaceful, and rational religion. The true test of his claim therefore lies not only in

terminological struggles, but above all in the question of whether his work corresponds to the function that the Islamic tradition assigns to a reformer.

5.9 *Bai'at*, identity and Lahore demarcation

Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, it is therefore strongly emphasized that the recognition of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad does not constitute a new creed alongside Islam. The fundamental creed remains: there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. Joining the reform movement, or the *bai'at* to the reformer, is understood as a practical commitment to service to Islam. It means a commitment to moral discipline, obedience to the Holy Qur'an, love for Prophet Muhammad (saw), peace, humility and active dissemination of religious truth. The *bai'at* is therefore not a substitute for Islamic identity, but an organized form of devotion to the reform of that identity.

At the same time, this framework explains why different interpretations of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim have emerged within the broader Ahmadiyya history. Some formulations place a stronger emphasis on prophetic language, while the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement consistently interprets this terminology in the sense of *muhaddath*, *Mujaddid* and spiritual closeness to Allah, without accepting actual prophethood after Prophet Muhammad (saw). This distinction is of great importance for a balanced assessment. The question is not only which words are used, but also how they are theologically defined and what limits are placed on them. In the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, the boundary remains clear: no new prophet, no new law, no new religion, but a reformer within Islam.

5.10 Summary conclusion and transition to jihad

The true claim of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad can therefore be summed up as a claim to divine appointment for reform, not to independent prophetic authority. He understands his mission as subordinate to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), rooted in the Holy Qur'an and aimed at the restoration of Islam in a time of global religious confrontation. Its messianic and mahdi-like function consists of refuting erroneous religious ideas, defending monotheism, restoring faith in the Qur'an, and mobilizing believers for peaceful, intellectual, and moral *jihad*.

Seen in this way, his claim does not constitute a deviation from the finality of prophethood, but a specific application of it. Precisely because Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the last prophet and the Holy Qur'an contains the completion of revelation, any subsequent reform must submit to it completely. In this context, he appears as the Promised Messiah and Mahdi not as a competitor of the Prophet, but as a servant of his cause; not as a source of a new religion, but as a witness to the enduring life force of Islam. The recognition of his claim therefore means, within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, participation in a reform project that seeks to return Islam to its pure source, defend it rationally and make its moral beauty visible again in contemporary intellectual and social contexts.

The ultimate triumph of Islam in this context is understood not militarily or imperialistically, but intellectually, spiritually, and morally. Verses such as 61:9, 24:55 and 41:53 are read as indications of a gradual historical process in which truth, evidence, moral reform and the power of the Qur'an become increasingly visible. This chapter thus forms the necessary bridge to chapter 6: if Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as Promised Messiah and Mahdi is not a political or military conqueror, but a reformer within the completed Islamic order, then his jihad must also be understood primarily as a peaceful effort through the Qur'an, the pen, the word and an exemplary character.

Chapter 6: Jihad as a peaceful effort

This chapter discusses *jihad* as a peaceful, intellectual, moral, and spiritual endeavor within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation. The emphasis is on the "*jihad* of the pen": defending and spreading Islam through Qur'anic argumentation, publication, teaching, dialogue and exemplary character. This makes it clear how the reform claim from the previous chapter takes shape in practice without coercion, violence or political domination.

6.1 Jihad of the pen, moral reform and peaceful proclamation

The core of this view is that *in* contemporary religious and social contexts, jihad is primarily understood as effort through argumentation, knowledge and moral persuasion. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement considers defending Islam through books, articles, lectures, translations, debate, and teaching to be an appropriate form of *jihad* in circumstances where religious truth is publicly judged for reasonableness, ethical strength, and spiritual credibility. The truth of the Qur'an should therefore not be made visible by coercion, but by explanation, evidence and an attitude to life that embodies the moral force of Islam.

In concrete terms, this *jihad* of the pen takes shape in the writing and distribution of books, translations and commentaries that make Islam understandable to readers in a variety of intellectual and social contexts. Examples include Qur'anic translations, apologetic works, pamphlets on the death of Jesus, publications on the finality of prophethood, and treatises defending Islam against Christian missionary criticism or Orientalist misunderstandings. In all these cases, *jihad* does not consist of fighting people, but of responding to ideas with text, argumentation and explanation.
This interpretation is therefore closely related to the principle that there is no compulsion in religion. According to this approach, the spread of Islam should not take place through violence, political domination or social pressure. True religious conviction comes only through insight, voluntary consent, and moral example. *Jihad* therefore does not mean enforcing belief, but removing misunderstandings, answering criticism and inviting reflection with wisdom and dignity.

In the Qur'anic language, this approach is mainly linked to verses such as 16:125, which calls for proclamation with wisdom and good admonition, and 25:52, which speaks of a great *jihad* with the Qur'an. These verses support the idea that the religious battle is primarily waged with revelation, explanation, argumentation and steadfastness. *Jihad* in this sense is not only a defense against external criticism, but also a method of presenting the Qur'anic message in a clear, reasonable, and ethically convincing way.
The role of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is understood within this framework as that of *Mujaddid*, *Mahdi* and Promised Messiah whose mission was not military or political in nature. His mission, according to the Lahore explanation, was to defend Islam against Christian missionary criticism, religious misconceptions, materialistic worldviews and moral decay. This defense took shape mainly through writings, debate, prayer, spiritual reform and the formation of a community that had to make Islam visible through word and character.

In this view, jihad also possesses a pronounced inner dimension. The believer is called to overcome selfishness, sin, worldliness, and moral weakness. This inner struggle is not separate from public proclamation: only those who reform themselves can credibly represent Islam. The "*jihad* of the pen" therefore also presupposes a *jihad* of character, in which knowledge, humility, service and moral discipline reinforce each other.
The ultimate impact of Islam in this approach is expected by truth, reason, spirituality and moral example, not by military force. Thus, *jihad* is the practical translation of the reform claim discussed in Chapter 5: Islam is defended and spread through the Qur'an, the pen, the word, and an exemplary life.

6.2 Qur'anic underpinnings of jihad

The Qur'anic verses about *jihad* that are central to the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement connect religious effort mainly with the Qur'an, evidence, moral fortitude, religious freedom and peaceful proclamation. The table below arranges these verses and presents the corresponding Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, placing armed struggle only within strictly defensive boundaries.

Table 3. Qur'anic verses about jihad and the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation

Qur'an verse	Core content	Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation
25:52	"So obey not the disbelievers, and strive against them a mighty striving with it."	The phrase "with it" refers to the Qur'an; the greatest *jihad* is therefore struggle through revelation, argumentation, explanation, and moral persuasion.
16:125	"Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner."	Islam is to be proclaimed through wisdom, sound reasoning, good counsel, and dignified dialogue.
2:256	"There is no compulsion in religion — the right way is indeed clearly distinct from error."	Religious conviction must be voluntary; *jihad* therefore cannot mean forced conversion.
22:39–40	"Permission to fight is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. … Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah."	Armed struggle is permitted only as self-defense against persecution and aggression.
2:190	"And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but be not aggressive. Surely Allah loves not the aggressors."	Fighting is allowed only against actual aggression and remains bound by moral limits.
60:8	"Allah forbids you not respecting those who fight you not for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly."	Peaceful and just relations with those who do not fight Muslims are affirmed.
29:69	"And those who strive hard for Us, We shall certainly guide them in Our ways."	*Jihad* is understood broadly as sincere striving in moral, spiritual, and religious life.
9:73 / 66:9	"O Prophet, strive hard against the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be firm against them."	Since hypocrites were not fought militarily, this striving includes moral firmness and argumentative resistance to falsehood.
61:9	"He it is Who sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may make it prevail over all religions."	Islam's triumph is understood as the manifestation of truth, evidence, and spiritual power.
41:53	"We shall show them Our signs in the remotest regions and among themselves until it is clear to them that it is the Truth."	The truth of the Qur'an becomes visible gradually through history, experience, and inner awareness.

In summary, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement considers *jihad* in contemporary contexts primarily as the effort to defend and spread Islam through the Qur'an, reason, moral example, publications, education, and dialogue. Armed struggle is not denied as a historical possibility, but strictly limited to self-defense against persecution and

aggression. The normal and highest form of *jihad* is therefore jihad with the Qur'an: the struggle of the pen, the word and the character. After this discussion of *jihad* as a peaceful, intellectual and moral effort, attention shifts to the question of how the reform mission was continued organizationally. Therefore, the next chapter deals with *Al-Wasiyyat*, the Anjuman, and the institutional design of the movement.

Chapter 7: *Al-Wasiyyat*, organizational continuation and succession authority

This chapter examines how Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's reform mission was institutionally continued after his passing away. Based on *Al-Wasiyyat*, the Anjuman, the "Second Force" and the later discussion about *khilafat* it becomes clear how theological conviction, moral discipline and organizational responsibility were linked. The chapter thus forms the transition from doctrinal and missionary themes to the question of how a religious reform movement can be sustainably governed and continued.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad valued not only doctrinal clarity but also institutional continuity. Therefore, the *Anjuman* was given a central place as an organizational framework for the continuation and dissemination of his religious and intellectual program. After his death, this structure within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is understood as a collective instrument for the preservation, interpretation and dissemination of his legacy.

The word *Anjuman* generally means association, council, meeting or governing body. In the context of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, it does not refer to a loose group of persons, but to an organized institution responsible for governance, resource management, publication, education, mission, and the practical implementation of the movement's goals. The *Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya* was established in 1906 as a central organ under which activities such as the spread of Islam, education, publications, financial administration and arrangements around the cemetery were brought together. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, this is important because the Anjuman is seen as a collective and institutional follow-up body: not one person, but a council with fixed powers had to continue the religious and organizational mission after Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's death.

- **Institutional succession: The text presents the** Anjuman *founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a*s the legal and administrative succession body, describing decisions made by the Anjuman after his death as binding.

- **The Second Manifestation:** The concept of the “Second Force" (*Qudrat Sani*) is explained as divine support that becomes visible in the stabilization and continuation of the community after the death of a religious reformer.
- **Theological demarcation:** The text affirms the finality of legislative prophethood while defending the possibility of divine communication with chosen followers.
- **Conflict over authority:** The sources describe a fundamental dispute over the nature of leadership after 1914, specifically the transition from an administrative Anjuman structure to a personal *khilafat* model under Mirza Mahmud Ahmad.

7.1 Testamentary Transition and the “Second Force"

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad based his will on revelations that are connected in the text with his imminent death. This moment is not presented merely as closure, but as a transition to a new phase in the manifestation and effect of divine guidance. According to the text, Allah's support manifests itself in two distinct manifestations:

The law of two manifestations

1. **First Manifestation:** The divine power that becomes visible during the life of the saint himself.
2. **Second Manifestation:** The divine power that becomes visible after the death of the saint, when the community initially falters but is then stabilized. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad draws parallels with Abu Bakr after the death of Muhammad (saw) and with Joshua after Moses.

Disaster predictions

The text also refers to impending global disasters, especially severe earthquakes in the spring, which are interpreted as signs of divine discontent with the materialistic state of the world. Within this reading, such events function as a prelude to spiritual change and to the eventual strengthening of the movement.

7.2 Testamentary conditions and moral discipline

Within Al-Wasiyyat, testamentary conditions are given a practical and moral function. The arrangement around the cemetery in Qadian, known as *Bahishti Maqbara*, is not treated here as a separate main theme, but as an illustration of the way in which sincerity, willingness to sacrifice, moral reliability and financial responsibility were institutionally linked to the continuation of the mission. The funds that arise from these schemes are linked in the text to the spread of Islam, the publication of religious literature and the support of the needy within the movement.

Table 4. Testamentary conditions as an illustration of moral and institutional discipline

Condition	Description
Financial contribution	A contribution to the costs of the site, the fence and infrastructure (such as a bridge and well).
Testamentary bequest	The obligation to leave at least 1/10 (*Moessi*) of all property (movable and immovable) to the Anjuman through a will.
Spiritual integrity	The deceased must have been sincere and pious, free from innovations (*bid'ah*) and polytheism (*shirk*), and must have respected the rights of fellow human beings.

7.3 Anjuman, Trustees and Succession Authority

Against this backdrop, the sources highlight a crucial distinction between a collective Anjuman structure and a personal succession model. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad established the *Sadr Anjuman Ahmadiyya* as the supreme administrative authority for the practical affairs of the movement. The day-to-day execution was the responsibility of the *Majlis-i Mu'timidin*, the Council of Trustees, while the Anjuman provided the broader institutional framework within which funds, publication, education, mission, and community affairs were administered. In a handwritten note dated October 27, 1907, he stated:

The role of the Anjuman

- Decisions of the Anjuman taken by majority vote are absolute and binding. This emphasis on joint consultation is in line with Qur'an 42:38: "and their affairs are settled by mutual agreement" (*wa amruhum shura baynahum*). Qur'an

3:159 also supports this principle: it instructs the Prophet to consult the believers in matters and then, when a decision is made, to trust in Allah.

- His own right of veto only applied during his lifetime.
- The Anjuman is referred to as the “successor of the divinely appointed Khalifa", with which Mirza Ghulam Ahmad refers to himself.

The Council of Trustees (*Majlis-i Mu'timidin*)

In February 1906, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad approved fourteen men as members of this council. Among the most important names were:

- **Hazrat Hakim Maulvi Nur-ud-Din** (chair)
- **Maulvi Muhammad Ali** (secretary)
- **Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din** (judicial advisor)

7.4 Theological Key Points

Al-Wasiyyat clarifies the position of the movement within the broader Islamic tradition based on some recurring theological key points:

- **Finality of Prophethood:** The law of the Qur’an is final and will not be repealed. The door to legislative prophethood is closed.
- **Continued Revelation:** Although there will be no new law, Allah continues to speak to the righteous persons. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is described as a follower of Muhammad (saw) who receives divine communication without independent or legislative prophethood.
- **The Death of Jesus:** The text explicitly states that Jesus died physically and will not physically return to earth. The prophecies of his return are applied to the coming of the Promised Messiah, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

7.5 Institutional crisis and split (1914)

The sources document Maulana Muhammad Ali's sharp criticism of the developments after the death of the first successor, Maulana Nur-ud-Din, in 1914. This episode is presented as a decisive moment in the institutional reorientation of the movement. According to the documentation, radical changes were made under Mirza Mahmud

Ahmad that substantially changed the relationship between the Anjuman and the central leadership:

Transformation to autocracy

1. **Replacement of the name:** In the regulations, the name of the "Promised Messiah" was replaced by that of Mirza Mahmud Ahmad as absolute authority.
2. **Redefinition of powers:** Where the Anjuman was previously presented as sovereign, in this new order she was subordinated to the will of the Khalifa.
3. **Exclusion:** Ahmadis who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new Khalifa were labeled sinners by him.

The reaction of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

In response to this shift to a personal and autocratic governance model, the *Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam was e*stablished in Lahore. According to the Lahore explanation, it preserves the original principles of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. In doing so, the Anjuman retains the highest institutional authority, and the emphasis is on the spread of Islam, not on the glorification of an individual leader.

Quotes by Mirza Mahmud Ahmad (1925)

In a 1925 speech, Mirza Mahmud Ahmad stated that:

- the institution of a personal *khilafat* was not included in the original basic principles of the Anjuman;
- he was willing to sacrifice "old followers and companions" of the founder to secure this new system of khilafat;
- the powers of the Anjuman were deliberately reduced to those of a mere advisory body.

After this institutional discussion, the focus shifts to the inner dimension of reform. The next chapter, therefore, deals with the spiritual stages in which personal purification, abiding devotion, and closeness to Allah are central.

Chapter 8: Spiritual development, Sufi concepts and clear demarcation of monotheism

This chapter shifts the focus from institutional continuation to the inner dimension of reform. The concepts of *fana*, *baqa* and *liqa* are discussed as stages of spiritual development that are interpreted in a Qur'anic way within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and are strictly delineated in a monotheistic manner. Thus, the chapter shows how personal purification, abiding devotion, and awareness of Allah's nearness are part of the same reform program that has been described theologically and institutionally before.

8.1 Theoretical framework

Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, the Sufi terms *fana*, *baqa* and *liqa* are understood as successive stages of spiritual development that are in accordance with the Qur'an and the prophetic teachings. The movement emphasizes that authentic Sufism is not a separate or esoteric teaching outside of Islamic law (*Shari'ah*), but expresses the inner dimension of Islam. Inspired by the writings of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and later scholars, this interpretation places a strong emphasis on the Qur'anic foundation of these concepts, especially Qur'an 2:112, and on a critical rejection of mystical fallacies that would blur the line between Creator and creation. Against this background, *fana* is first treated as the starting point of this spiritual development and as the necessary condition for the subsequent stages of consolidation and proximity.

8.1.1 *Fana*: self-denial and complete focus on Allah

Definition and Core Meaning

Fana (Arabic: فناء, "perishing" or self-denial) in Sufi terminology refers to the abandonment of the ego and the complete submission of the human will to Allah. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, *fana is* understood as the unconditional surrender of one's own will to Allah. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad connects this concept with Qur'an 2:112: "*Yea, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is*

the doer of good to others, he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve." According to this interpretation, the expression *"submits himself entirely to Allah"* refers to the stage of *fana*. In this phase, the lower self is symbolically overcome: the believer renounces self-interest and desires in favor of complete focus on Allah. In the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this is also referred to as *fana fi-llah* and is connected to the Qur'anic virtue *istiqamat*, i.e. steadfastness in Allah's way.

Spiritual and ethical implications

Fana is described within this approach as a process of far-reaching moral and spiritual purification, in which human inclinations are brought into conformity with Allah's will. In this phase, the focus on Allah is central and desires, pride and selfishness lose their decisive role. Ethically, this translates into humility, sincerity, altruism, and commitment. The completion of *fana* is thus presented as the realization of the deeper meaning of Islamic surrender: the complete focus of life on Allah and on the service of His creation. In this sense, *fana* marks the fundamental inner transformation that allows for further spiritual development.

Place within Islamic spirituality

In many Sufi traditions, *fana* is known as *fana fi-llah*, the complete submission of the self to Allah. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement places this concept emphatically within the Qur'anic teachings. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad connects *fana* with the Qur'anic commandment of total surrender in faith and deed. In doing so, the movement makes it clear that *fana* is not an esoteric concept outside of Islam, but a Qur'anic ideal of perfect surrender. It is the first stage of spiritual development, in which the soul is purified through spiritual discipline and man learns to curb his lower inclinations to turn completely to Allah.

8.1.2 *Baqa*: Constant Closeness and Divine Guidance

Definition and Core Meaning

Baqa (بقاء, "survival") is described as the second stage, in which the seeker is settled in the presence of Allah after the purification of the self in *fana*. According to the Lahore

Ahmadiyya Movement, the phrase "*and he is the doer of good to others*" in Qur'an 2:112 refers to this state of *baqa*. The term indicates a new spiritual life in which the believer acts under divine guidance, after the lower impulses have been quieted. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad defines *baqa* as a state in which Allah's guidance permeates man's actions, so that his activity flows from spiritual inspiration rather than from self-centeredness.

Spiritual and ethical implications

At the stage of *baqa*, it is assumed that the human will has been brought into lasting harmony with Allah's will. The believer is therefore characterized by steadfastness in goodness and righteousness. The moral qualities developed in *fana* take on a permanent character in this phase and are expressed in action in the service of others. In the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, it is emphasized that this state is possible only after *fana* has been fully realized. Man is then presented as the recipient of a renewed spiritual life force, through which divine qualities are reflected in his actions in a metaphorical sense. This formulation is a figure of speech and does not mean that man and Allah really become one being.

Place within Islamic spirituality

In classical Sufi literature, *baqa is o*ften referred to as *baqa bi-llah*, or survival through Allah. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this does not refer to a literal fusion with Allah, but to a spiritual existence after *fana* that been perpetuated by Allah. *Baqa* thus denotes a Qur'anic state of enduring closeness, inspired devotion, and lasting action in accordance with divine guidance.

8.1.3 *Liqa*: encounter with Allah and awareness of His nearness

Definition and Core Meaning

Liqa (لقاء, "meeting") is represented as the highest stage of spiritual realization, in which the believer experiences an intense awareness of Allah's nearness. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this term is interpreted as a state of complete certainty and intimate connection with the Supreme Being. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad states that the words "*he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor*

shall they grieve" in Qur'an 2:112 refer to the reward of the *liqa* condition. In this stage, the believer attains such a degree of certainty of faith, trust and love that Allah's nearness is experienced as if one were seeing Him. Fear of the future and regret about the past make way for inner peace. This state relates to the concept of *ihsan*, which in the prophetic tradition is described as worshipping Allah as if one were seeing Him.

Spiritual and ethical implications

From this description follow clear spiritual and moral consequences. In *liqa*, the believer is described as one who attains deep inner peace and a strong awareness of Allah. This condition also has moral significance, because qualities such as mercy, justice, and love of truth are seen as reflections of divine qualities in human actions. It is important that this experience remains a metaphor: it points to Allah's nearness and power, not to a literal unification. Therefore, the movement rejects explanations that equate this state with *wahdat al-wujud* — the idea that Creator and creation are truly one — and rather aligns itself with *wahdat ash-shuhud*, the consciousness of Allah's presence without real fusion.

Place within Islamic spirituality

Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, *liqa is p*laced within a Qur'anic and prophetic framework of spiritual completion. The term does not refer to an independent mystical teaching outside of Islam, but to the highest degree of consciousness of Allah that, according to this interpretation, can be derived from the Islamic sources of revelation. As the culmination of the process that begins with *fana* and is perpetuated in *baqa*, *liqa* marks the completion of Islamic spirituality in a strictly monotheistic and non-literal sense.

8.2 Coherence and specific emphasis within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement

The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement presents *fana*, *baqa* and *liqa* as three interrelated stages of spiritual development anchored in the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition. *Fana* is the starting point of complete surrender to Allah; *baqa* then refers to the perpetuation of an attitude to life guided by Allah; and *liqa* refers to the highest experience of closeness, certainty and consciousness of Allah. Characteristic of the

Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is the redefinition of classical Sufi concepts in accordance with the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, with an emphasis on strictly monotheistic spirituality. The common meaning of these three concepts lies in the gradual realization of obedience to, love and awareness of Allah, without there being any essential unification between man and Allah.

8.3 Textual substantiation

Qur'an 2:112 (first part)

The phrase "*Yea, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah*" is interpreted by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as referring to the core of *fana*. Within this reading, the believer surrenders his faculties, desires and will to Allah, symbolically overcoming the lower self. The verse thus functions as a textual basis for a conception of *fana* as radical self-denial and complete focus on Allah.

Qur'an 2:112 (middle part)

The phrase "*and he is the doer of good to others*" is included in the same explanation at the stage of *baqa*. According to this interpretation, after the realization of *fana*, the believer is brought to a new spiritual life, in which action takes place under divine guidance and morally good deeds are accomplished without self-centeredness. In this context, the verse part functions as a textual foundation for *baqa* as a permanent state of action in accordance with Allah's will.

Qur'an 2:112 (last part)

The words "*he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for such nor shall they grieve*" are explained by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as referring to the state of *liqa*. In this interpretation, the believer achieves a high degree of spiritual closeness and certainty, where the experience of Allah's presence is accompanied by the disappearance of fear of the future and sorrow for the past. The verse is thus read as a textual foundation for *liqa* as the culmination of spiritual completion.

Qur'an 8:17

Qur'an 8:17 — "*So you did not kill them, but Allah killed them; and you did not throw when you threw, but Allah threw, that He might confer on the believers a goodly benefit from Himself. Surely Allah is Hearing, Knowing*." — is used by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as an illustration of the way in which the *liqa* state is understood. According to this explanation, divine power can manifest itself in the actions of a prophet or saint, while the human actor remains fully human. The reference to the battle of Badr in this context serves to emphasize that extraordinary acts are attributed to Allah's activity and not to a deification of man.

This chapter has set out the central concepts and spiritual stages within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, with attention to textual underpinnings and interdependencies. The reinterpretation of classical Sufi concepts in the light of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* shows how a form of spiritual development is formulated within this tradition in which the unity of Allah, moral discipline and inner experience are connected. This discussion therefore forms a concluding perspective on the place of spirituality within the broader framework of the movement's doctrine and Qur'anic interpretation. At the same time, it prepares the transition to the next chapter, in which *bai'at* is treated as a personal and communal commitment to this reformist path.

Chapter 9: *Bai'at*, Religious Commitment, and Common Reform

This chapter treats *bai'at* as a personal, moral, and organizational commitment to religious reform. The analysis shows how this vow functions within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement as voluntary devotion to Allah, obedience to the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (saw), community building and active service to Islam. In this way, *bai'at* forms the link between inner spirituality, institutional cohesion and practical participation in a reform mission.

9.1 Definition and Core Meaning

The Arabic word *bai'at* (بيعة) literally means covenant, oath of allegiance or solemn vow. In the Islamic tradition, it denotes a voluntary and publicly recognizable commitment in which a believer joins a religious cause, leadership or community. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this practice is understood functionally: not as a cult of personality or separate profession of faith, but as an organized devotion to the service of Islam. This gives *bai'at* meaning as a link between personal religious discipline and participation in a collective reform program.

According to Maulana Muhammad Ali, the essence of the *bai'at* lies in a joint effort for the defense, reform and spread of Islam. On the one hand, the union confirms the classical Islamic declaration of faith (*shahadah*) — bearing witness to the unity of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad (saw) — and, on the other hand, concretizes the willingness to put religious responsibility above worldly interests. It is precisely this combination of affirmation of faith and practical devotion that explains why *bai'at* takes on both spiritual discipline and organizational significance in this context.

9.2 Qur'anic basis and conditions of the *bai'at*

The Qur'anic underpinnings of *bai'at* within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement are not derived from one isolated verse, but read within a broader textual pattern of fidelity, obedience, solidarity and commitment to a just cause. In this reading, Qur'an 9:119 and 3:103 are given particular significance. The call to be "with the truthful" and to hold

fast together to the “rope of Allah” is applied to religious cooperation with a *Mujaddid*: not because his person becomes the object of faith, but because his mission is seen as a moment of revival within the community of Muhammad (saw).

The ten conditions of the *bai'at* can therefore be read as a compact moral and religious program that is related to central core Qur’anic concepts: *tawhid*, *taqwa*, prayer, social responsibility, *sabr*, obedience to Allah and His Messenger, humility, religious priority, service and common loyalty. Together, these conditions do not constitute a new doctrine of faith, but an organized application of existing Islamic values within a reform community.

The first three conditions connect the *bai'at* to the core of Islamic worship and moral purification. The avoidance of *shirk* is associated with *tawhid*, as expressed in Surah al-Ikhlas (112:1–4). Moral purity is in line with Qur’anic notions of *taqwa* and morality, including the avoidance of fornication, slander and suspicion (17:32; 49:12). Observing prayer and remembering Allah place *salah* and *dhikr* at the center as enduring forms of worship and spiritual discipline (2:43; 20:14).

The fourth and fifth conditions focus on social responsibility and steadfastness. The avoidance of harm to others is linked to Qur’anic notions of respect for life, honor and human dignity (5:32; 49:11–12). Steadfastness under trial is associated with *sabr*, the moral perseverance repeatedly called for in the Qur’an (2:153; 3:200). The sixth condition emphasizes obedience to Allah and His Messenger, or *ittiba*, urging the believer to take the prophetic example as a normative guide (4:59; 33:21).

The last four conditions further elaborate this religious devotion in character building and social responsibility. Humility and modesty, *tawadu*, are associated with the Qur’anic description of the servants of the Most Merciful and with warnings against pride (25:63; 31:18–19). The preference of religious interests over worldly interests is in line with the call to put Allah and His cause above property, family ties and social advantage (9:24). Service to humanity, *khidmat-e-khalq*, is associated with cooperation in kindness and care for the vulnerable (5:2; 90:12–17). The last condition is understood within this thematic reading as lasting loyalty to the reform community,

obedience in the good and commitment to peaceful *da'wah* and *islah* through education, good counsel and wisdom (3:104; 16:125).

Qur'an 3:103, in which believers are called upon to hold on to the "rope of Allah" together and to avoid division, also functions as a key text in this regard. From this perspective, *bai'at* appears not as a new religious obligation alongside Islam, but as a tool to promote religious cooperation, discipline, and organizational cohesion. In doing so, it is in line with the broader emphasis of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement on collective responsibility and institutional continuity.

9.3 Bai'at in the time of the Holy Prophet

The practice of *bai'at* has a clear basis in early Islamic history. During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw), his companions took a vow of allegiance at various times. Such oaths did not necessarily mark the transition from unbelief to faith, but often functioned as confirmation of pre-existing convictions, strengthening common solidarity, and expressing a willingness to stand firm under difficult circumstances. A well-known example is the *Bai'at al-Ridwan* during the events of Hudaybiyyah, to which the Qur'an refers in 48:18. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya explanation, this event shows that a formal vow can also fulfill an important religious and organizational function within an already existing faith community. From that parallel, the later *bai'at* within the Ahmadiyya movement is understood as a continuation of a prophetic precedent of organized religious devotion.

9.4 The interpretation of Maulana Muhammad Ali

An important source for the interpretation of *bai'at* within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement is the work of Maulana Muhammad Ali, *The Necessity of the Bai'at*. It emphasizes that the *bai'at* does not add any new religious content to Islam, nor does it constitute a separate declaration of faith with regard to Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. According to this explanation, the content of the faith remains entirely determined by the fundamental Islamic teachings: belief in Allah and in Muhammad (saw) as His Messenger.

The specific character of the *bai'at*, according to Maulana Muhammad Ali, lies in its practical and normative dimension. The central promise —that religion will be put above worldly things— shifts the emphasis from mere assent to concrete religious commitment. Thus, the *bai'at* is presented as a voluntary declaration of willingness to put personal resources, time and character formation at the service of Islam. This explanation is in line with the broader Lahore Ahmadiyya approach, in which religious identity is always linked to moral discipline, intellectual commitment and institutional continuity.

9.5 *Bai'at* within the Ahmadiyya Movement

Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad introduced the *bai'at* in 1889 as an organizational framework for those who wanted to commit themselves to his reform mission. Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, this move is interpreted against the background of his role as *Mujaddid*, *Mahdi* and Promised Messiah, and not as the basis for a new prophethood or a separate religious identity. The *bai'at* is thus understood as a practical form in which followers express their willingness to participate in a project of religious revival within the boundaries of Islam.

The p*urpose of the bai'at* is to form a community that works together for the defense of Islam, the dissemination of religious knowledge, moral reform, spiritual development, and peaceful *da'wah* through argumentation and education. In this sense, it functions not merely as a ceremonial ritual, but as a practical instrument for the organisation of a religious reform movement. It is precisely this emphasis on active participation that explains why the *bai'at* in Lahore Ahmadiyya sources is presented as a means of discipline, continuity and collective commitment. The thematic connection with the Qur'anic basis of the ten conditions has been elaborated in the previous discussion and is summarized below in a compact manner.

9.6 The ten conditions of the *bai'at*

When establishing the *bai'at*, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad formulated ten conditions to which participants voluntarily commit. These conditions cover faith, worship, moral purity, social responsibility, and service. In line with the previous thematic discussion, they can be read as a concentrated elaboration of core values that in principle belong

to general Islamic ethics, but within the *bai'at* take on an explicitly organized and disciplinary character.

- avoiding all forms of idolatry;
- abstaining from sinful behavior;
- maintaining prayer;
- avoiding harm to others;
- steadfastness under trials;
- obedience to Allah, the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (saw);
- humility and modesty;
- preferring religious interests over secular interests;
- service to humanity;
- loyalty to the reform community, obedience in the good and commitment to peaceful proclamation and reform.

The interconnection between these conditions is theologically and practically important. They combine the unity of Allah and obedience to Allah, the Qur'an and the Prophet with moral purity, humility, steadfastness, service to humanity and willingness to put religious interests above worldly interests. As a result, the *bai'at* appears not only as a formal act of accession, but as a compact program of character building, community discipline and religious responsibility. In that respect, chapter 9 is in line with the previous discussions of reform, exegesis, spirituality and institutional continuity.

9.7 Spiritual and Organizational Significance

In addition to its organizational function, the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement also attributes a *clear spiritual meaning to the bai'at*. According to Maulana Muhammad Ali, a public vow has an important psychological and religious effect: by consciously and openly expressing his commitment, the believer is constantly reminded of his responsibilities and objectives. The *bai'at* thus functions as a means of self-discipline, moral stabilization, and fortitude in times of trial or discouragement.

From an organizational perspective, the *bai'at* contributes to community building and continuity. It creates a collective framework within which education, publications, dialogue and religious activities can be organised. In doing so, it is directly in line with

the emphasis that has been placed in previous chapters on the Anjuman as the bearer of the religious and intellectual legacy of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The *bai'at* thus appears as a hinge point between personal commitment and institutional coherence.

9.8 *Bai'at* as an instrument of reform

Within the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, the *bai'at* is ultimately understood as an instrument of religious reform and community building. It does not add any new articles of faith to Islam, nor does it constitute a declaration of faith in a new prophethood. Rather, its significance lies in the fact that it constitutes a voluntary commitment to actively support, defend and propagate Islamic teachings. When the *bai'at* is read in conjunction with Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's position as *Mujaddid*, *Mahdi*, and Promised Messiah, it appears as part of a broader reform program.

The emphasis is on moral cleansing, spiritual development, intellectual defense of Islam and peaceful dissemination of religious knowledge. In this sense, *bai'at* is not only a historical practice, but also an organizational and spiritual framework for participation in a movement that understands its mission as a revival of the original teachings of Islam. From this personal and organizational connection, it can then be understood how the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement has historically translated its ideal of reform into publication, mission, dialogue and worldwide dissemination of Islam.

Chapter 10: The Lahore Ahmadiyya Contribution to Qur'anic Translation, Publication, Mission and Intellectual Accountability

This concluding chapter examines how the theological, exegetical, spiritual and institutional premises of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement take shape historically and currently in Qur'anic translation, publication, mission, interreligious dialogue and intellectual accountability. The emphasis is on the movement's continued contribution to the peaceful dissemination of Islamic knowledge and to the public presentation of Islam as a rational, moral and spiritual living religion. This chapter thus functions as a synthesis and evaluation of the previous chapters.

10.1 Historical context and objective

The significance of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement cannot be deduced solely from its doctrinal position on the Promised Messiah and Mahdi. Its significance also lies in the way in which it explains, defends and makes Islam accessible in various linguistic, social and intellectual contexts. Since the institutional formation of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore in 1914, the movement has been dominated by the presentation of Islam as a religion that finds its normative basis in the Holy Qur'an, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad (saw), rational argumentation, moral example and peaceful proclamation. Although its origins must be placed against the background of colonial power relations, Christian missionary activity, Orientalist critiques and internal religious stagnation, its objective remains topical: it continues to work to strengthen intellectual confidence in the truth, reasonableness and spiritual power of Islam. The movement sees its work not as the formation of a separate religious identity from Islam, but as a continuous service to the explanation, dissemination and public presentation of Islamic knowledge. This self-conception explains why its activities continue to take shape through literature, translation, lectures, missionary activities, digital publication and public dialogue.

10.2 Literary production, translation and systematic presentation

An important area of contribution concerns the literary production and reception history of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Maulana Muhammad Ali occupies a central place in this development. His English translation and commentary of the Holy Qur'an, the first edition of which appeared in 1917, is among the earliest complete English Qur'anic translations by a Muslim scholar with detailed commentary. The significance of this publication lies partly in the fact that English-language readers in that period often had to rely on translations by non-Muslims, in which polemical or orientalist presuppositions could have an effect. By translating the Qur'an into clear English and providing rational, linguistic and theological explanations, Maulana Muhammad Ali offered an instrument to make Islam more accessible and to justify the content in English-speaking contexts. His work *The Religion of Islam* also fulfils a similar systematizing function. It presents faith, worship, morality, social principles, and legal themes as parts of a coherent religious and moral system. The methodological significance of this lies in the attempt to present Islam in a textually substantiated, conceptually ordered and rationally responsible way, without reducing it to defensive polemics.

In addition, the movement focuses on translating and disseminating Islamic literature in various languages, including English, Urdu, Dutch, German, French, Indonesian and Spanish. This multilingual approach reflects the conviction that Islam is not tied to one culture, people or language, but should be accessible to a wide range of readers as a universal message. By making Islamic core texts available outside the Arabic and Urdu-language context, the movement contributes to international knowledge transfer and the wider dissemination of Islamic literature. Digital archives, websites and publication series continue this educational and missionary function and make it clear that its publication work is not only historical, but also of current significance.

10.3 Mission Activities and Global Community Building

A second area concerns missionary activities and transnational community building outside South Asia. The Woking Muslim Mission in England, linked to figures such as Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, historically played an important role in introducing Islam to a

European audience. The mission presented Islam as rational monotheism that was compatible with moral seriousness, spiritual deepening and intellectual reflection. Through lectures, publications and personal contacts, Islam was made accessible to European readers and listeners. In this context, the Woking Mosque developed into a center of Islamic presence, dialogue and publication in Britain. It should be noted that in the second half of the twentieth century, the Woking Mosque and its mission gradually ceased to be under the direct influenceof the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and came under the control of circles with a different religious and institutional orientation. As a result, Woking is primarily part of the movement's historical contribution, while continuing its current missionary and publication work through other centres, communities and digital channels. Missions also emerged in other regions, while communities in Germany, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Suriname, Guyana, the United States and South Africa, among others, continue to function. The Berlin mosque and mission also illustrate the attempt to represent Islam in European contexts in an intellectually accessible and culturally understandable way. This geographical spread shows that the movement understands its mission not exclusively locally or South Asian, but as part of a broader Islamic mission to peaceful knowledge transfer that continues to this day.

10.4 Jihad of the pen and peaceful proclamation

Characteristic of this spread is that it is not linked to political power or coercion, but to what the movement refers to as the "*jihad* of the pen": argumentation, education, publication and exemplary behaviour. This gives the interpretation of jihad discussed in chapter 6 concrete institutional and missionary form. The spread of Islam is understood as a process of argumentative persuasion through text, reason, dialogue and moral example. This approach focuses on religious freedom, interreligious dialogue and voluntary consent. The significance of this lies mainly in contexts in which Islam is confronted with representations of violence, fatalism or anti-intellectualism.

10.5 Reform of Islamic thought

A third contribution lies in the reform of Islamic thought. The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement considers the Holy Qur'an as a normative criterion for doctrine and practice

and from that point of view criticizes superstition, exaggerated worship of saints, fatalism and sectarian heresy. The rejection of *takfir* has both ethical and theological significance: it aims to preserve the unity of the *ummah* and to counteract sectarian polarization. At the same time, the movement develops rational and source-oriented approaches to themes such as Jesus' death, the return of the Messiah, the finality of prophethood, revelation, religious freedom, peace and the relationship between Islam and science.

Controversial or socially sensitive themes are also not avoided within this publicist tradition, but examined from sources, historical context, linguistic analysis and moral reflection. Examples include discussions about the age of Hazrat Aisha at her marriage to the Prophet Muhammad (saw) and divergent interpretations of the birth of Jesus. In such matters, the movement uses an exegetical and rational method that seeks to answer topical questions without making Islam dependent on an extra-Islamic framework of assessment.

10.6 Public image of Islam and interreligious dialogue

The movement's contribution to the public representation of Islam can also be interpreted analytically. By presenting Islam as peaceful, rational, morally justifiable, and spiritually active, it offers a corrective to both anti-Islamic stereotypes and internal extremist tendencies. The emphasis on peace, moral reform and intellectual conviction is in line with the broader view that the strength of Islam lies in truth, character and divine guidance, not in external power. Several examples of this can be found within the publicist tradition of the movement. Thus, exponents of this movement have argued, on the basis of historical, biographical and textual arguments, that Hazrat Aisha, according to their chronological reconstruction, was already an adult at the time of her marriage to the Prophet Muhammad (saw). A second example is that already towards the end of the nineteenth century, Maulana Nur-ud-Din defended, on the basis of philosophical argumentation and religious writings, a minority interpretation according to which Jesus would have been born naturally, through the intervention of a man. These examples are not presented here as generally accepted Islamic conclusions, but as illustrations of a specific Lahore Ahmadiyya publicist method. In both cases, a much-discussed criticism is not defensively avoided, but examined

through source criticism, chronological reconstruction, rational analysis, and historical and moral contextualization. The influence of the movement cannot, therefore, be measured solely quantitatively in terms of numbers of converts, institutions, or publications. It is also qualitative: the movement provides concepts, texts and arguments with which Islam can be explained and defended in different languages and intellectual contexts. In this sense, it functions as a conduit for the dissemination of Islamic knowledge to new linguistic, geographical and cultural spaces.

10.7 Summary assessment

This book examines how the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement formulates a reform vision in which Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is recognized as *Mujaddid*, Mahdi and Promised Messiah, without accepting a new, independent or legislative prophethood after Muhammad (saw). In summary, the movement's contribution can be seen as a lasting combination of translation, publication, mission, dialogue and reform. In doing so, it gives practical form to the theological and institutional principles discussed in the previous chapters. The movement translates and disseminates Islamic sources, publishes systematic works for the explanation and defense of Islam, supports missions and communities in different parts of the world, and develops a reform-oriented discourse around the Qur'an, the finality of prophethood, religious freedom, and peaceful proclamation. Chapter 10 thus shows that the recognition of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi within the Lahore tradition is not only a doctrinal position, but is part of an enduring historical and institutional program of knowledge transfer, religious accountability, public presentation and peaceful dissemination of Islamic knowledge.

Glossary

This glossary provides concise explanations of key concepts that recur in the document. The definitions are intended as an aid to reading and follow the meaning given to the terms in the discussed Lahore Ahmadiyya context.

Table 5. Glossary of key terms

Understanding	Meaning
Aik Ghalati Ka Izala	Literally: "Correction of an error." Generally: a clarifying polemical text. Lahore usage: explains prophetic language, revelation and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's status.
Ahmad	Literally: "most praised." Generally: a name of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Lahore usage: linked to Islam's peaceful, moral and universal presentation.
Ahmadiyya	Literally: related to *Ahmad*. Generally: name of the Ahmadiyya movement. Lahore usage: a reform identity within Islam, not a separate religion.
al-Amin	Literally: "the trustworthy." Generally: honorific of Prophet Muhammad (saw). Lahore usage: cited as moral evidence of his truthfulness.
Al-Wasiyyat	Literally: "the will." Generally: testamentary instruction. Lahore usage: basis for institutional continuity, moral discipline and the Anjuman's role.
Anjuman	Literally: association or council. Generally: organized body. Lahore usage: institutional framework for governance, publication, education and mission.
bai'at	Literally: covenant or pledge. Generally: oath of religious allegiance. Lahore usage: voluntary commitment to moral reform, discipline and service to Islam.
baqa	Literally: abiding or remaining. Generally: spiritual subsistence after self-denial. Lahore usage: steady action in Allah's guidance without union with Him.
Bahishti Maqbara	Literally: "heavenly cemetery." Generally: a consecrated burial place. Lahore usage: linked in *Al-Wasiyyat* to testamentary discipline and moral sincerity.
Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya	Literally: "proofs of Ahmadiyya." Generally: apologetic defense of Islam. Lahore usage: presents Islam through reason, revelation and spiritual experience.

bid'ah	Literally: innovation. Generally: religious addition outside authentic Islamic teaching. Lahore usage: rejected as a cause of doctrinal and moral decline.
burooz	Literally: manifestation or appearance. Generally: visible representation of a spiritual reality. Lahore usage: derived reflection without independent prophetic authority.
da'wah	Literally: invitation or call. Generally: inviting others to Islam. Lahore usage: peaceful proclamation through explanation, teaching and dialogue.
dhikr	Literally: remembrance. Generally: remembering Allah through prayer and devotion. Lahore usage: inner discipline supporting reform and spiritual focus.
fana	Literally: passing away or effacement. Generally: self-denial before Allah. Lahore usage: surrender of the lower self without union with Allah.
Fath-e-Islam	Literally: "victory of Islam." Generally: reformist missionary work. Lahore usage: explains peaceful mission, publication and organized defense of Islam.
ghair nabi	Literally: "non-prophet." Generally: one who is not a prophet. Lahore usage: denies any independent prophetic status for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.
Hadith	Literally: report or narration. Generally: record of the Prophet's words, deeds or approvals. Lahore usage: read under the Qur'an's authority.
Ihsan	Literally: excellence or beauty. Generally: worship with awareness of Allah. Lahore usage: spiritual consciousness without union with Allah.
ijma	Literally: consensus. Generally: collective agreement of qualified Muslims. Lahore usage: shared testimony of followers on continuity after 1901.
ilham	Literally: inspiration. Generally: divine communication to a righteous person. Lahore usage: distinguished from legislative prophetic revelation.
islah	Literally: reform or restoration. Generally: moral and religious improvement. Lahore usage: renewal of Islamic understanding and practice.
istiqamat	Literally: steadfastness. Generally: perseverance in Allah's way. Lahore usage: sustained moral discipline within reform and spiritual development.

ittiba	Literally: following. Generally: obedience to Allah, the Qur'an and the Prophet. Lahore usage: loyal adherence to Islamic reform within Muhammad's final prophethood.
Izala-e-Auham	Literally: "removal of misconceptions." Generally: theological clarification. Lahore usage: explains Jesus' death, messianic typology and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim.
jihad	Literally: striving. Generally: effort in Allah's way. Lahore usage: chiefly peaceful moral, spiritual and intellectual effort; armed struggle only in self-defense.
jihad of the pen	Literally: striving by the pen. Generally: intellectual defense and proclamation. Lahore usage: spreading Islam through writing, translation, teaching and dialogue.
juzi nabi	Literally: "partial prophet." Generally: limited prophetic-like communication. Lahore usage: refers to *muhaddathiyyah*, not independent prophethood.
kalima	Literally: word or formula. Generally: Islamic confession of faith. Lahore usage: unchanged creed affirming Allah's unity and Muhammad's messengership.
Khatam-an-Nabiyyin	Literally: "Seal of the Prophets." Generally: Qur'anic title of Muhammad (saw). Lahore usage: affirms finality of prophethood.
khatm-e-nubuwwat	Literally: sealing of prophethood. Generally: doctrine of prophetic finality. Lahore usage: excludes later independent, legislative or parallel prophethood.
khidmat-e-khalq	Literally: service to creation. Generally: care for humanity. Lahore usage: moral duty within *bai'at*, reform and social responsibility.
khilafat	Literally: succession. Generally: religious leadership after a founder. Lahore usage: debated after 1914 in relation to Anjuman authority.
Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement	Literally: Lahore branch of Ahmadiyya. Generally: reform movement within Islam. Lahore usage: recognizes Mirza Ghulam Ahmad as *Mujaddid*, Messiah and Mahdi, not independent prophet.
la nabiyya ba'di	Literally: "no prophet after me." Generally: prophetic statement on finality. Lahore usage: supports rejection of any later independent prophethood.
liqa	Literally: encounter or meeting. Generally: awareness of Allah's nearness. Lahore usage: spiritual certainty without ontological union.

Mahdi	Literally: “the guided one.” Generally: expected guide and reformer. Lahore usage: divinely guided moral and intellectual reformer, not military ruler.
Majlis-i Mu'timidin	Literally: council of trustees. Generally: administrative board. Lahore usage: body entrusted with practical institutional responsibilities.
Moessi	Literally: testator. Generally: one who makes a will. Lahore usage: member who bequeaths a fixed share of property to the Anjuman.
mubashshirat	Literally: glad tidings. Generally: reassuring divine indications. Lahore usage: non-legislative good news within continued divine communication.
Mujaddid	Literally: renewer. Generally: reformer who renews the faith. Lahore usage: category for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad’s reform mission within Islam.
muhaddath	Literally: one spoken to. Generally: recipient of divine inspiration. Lahore usage: inspired follower, not an independent or legislative prophet.
muhaddathiyyah	Literally: being spoken to. Generally: divine inspiration without prophethood. Lahore usage: explains revelation-like communication under Muhammad’s final prophethood.
munzirat	Literally: warnings. Generally: cautionary divine indications. Lahore usage: non-legislative warnings within continued divine communication.
mustaqil	Literally: independent. Generally: self-standing authority. Lahore usage: excludes prophethood separate from or parallel to Muhammad (saw).
nabi	Literally: one who gives news. Generally: prophet receiving divine revelation. Lahore usage: distinguished between broad language and technical prophethood.
nubuwwat	Literally: prophethood. Generally: divinely appointed prophetic office. Lahore usage: final in Muhammad (saw), with only non-legislative inspiration continuing.
nubuwwat-i tammah	Literally: complete prophethood. Generally: full prophetic office with normative authority. Lahore usage: ended with Muhammad (saw).
Qadian	Literally: town in Punjab. Generally: birthplace and early centre of the Ahmadiyya movement. Lahore usage: historical origin, distinct from later Lahore institutional identity.

Qudrat Sani	Literally: second manifestation of power. Generally: divine support after a reformer's death. Lahore usage: community stabilization through institutional continuity.
rafa'a	Literally: to raise or elevate. Generally: elevation in rank or honour. Lahore usage: Jesus' exaltation in status, not bodily ascension.
rasul	Literally: messenger. Generally: prophet sent with a mission. Lahore usage: technical prophethood remains closed after Muhammad (saw).
sabr	Literally: patience. Generally: steadfastness under trial. Lahore usage: virtue required for *bai'at*, reform and moral discipline.
sahib-i-shari'ah	Literally: bearer of law. Generally: prophet bringing new legislation. Lahore usage: status explicitly not claimed by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.
salah	Literally: prayer. Generally: prescribed Islamic worship. Lahore usage: central discipline within *bai'at*, reform and spiritual formation.
shahadah	Literally: testimony. Generally: Islamic confession of faith. Lahore usage: unchanged affirmation of Allah's unity and Muhammad's messengership.
shari'ah	Literally: path or way. Generally: divine law and religious order. Lahore usage: no new *Shari'ah* after Muhammad (saw).
shirk	Literally: association. Generally: attributing partners to Allah. Lahore usage: rejected as the opposite of *tawhid* and a core doctrinal deviation.
sunnah	Literally: way or practice. Generally: the Prophet's normative example. Lahore usage: interpreted under the Qur'an's authority as practical guidance.
takfir	Literally: declaring unbelief. Generally: judging a Muslim to be outside Islam. Lahore usage: rejected as sectarian practice harmful to the *ummah*.
taqwa	Literally: guarding or awareness. Generally: God-conscious piety. Lahore usage: moral vigilance central to reform, worship and character building.
tasawwuf	Literally: spiritual discipline. Generally: Islamic spirituality or Sufism. Lahore usage: Qur'an-based spirituality within strict monotheistic limits.
Tauzeeh-e-Maraam	Literally: clarification of purpose. Generally: theological explanatory work. Lahore usage: explains messianic typology, Jesus' death and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's status.

tawadu	Literally: humility. Generally: modest conduct before Allah and others. Lahore usage: virtue required in *bai'at*, reform and character building.
tawaffa	Literally: to take fully. Generally: taking the soul or causing death. Lahore usage: key term in arguing for Jesus' natural death.
tawatur	Literally: successive transmission. Generally: widely transmitted testimony. Lahore usage: supports continuity of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim after 1901.
tawhid	Literally: making one. Generally: affirming Allah's absolute unity. Lahore usage: foundation of reform, anti-shirk argument and Islamic spirituality.
Ulama	Literally: learned ones. Generally: Muslim religious scholars. Lahore usage: discussed in relation to interpretation, authority and criticism.
ummah	Literally: community or nation. Generally: the community of Muslims. Lahore usage: linked to unity, reform and shared religious responsibility.
ummati	Literally: member of the *ummah*. Generally: follower of Muhammad (saw). Lahore usage: places Mirza Ghulam Ahmad within Muhammad's community and authority.
wahdat al-wujud	Literally: unity of existence. Generally: mystical doctrine of being. Lahore usage: rejected when understood as real union of Creator and creation.
wahdat ash-shuhud	Literally: unity of witnessing. Generally: awareness of divine presence. Lahore usage: affirms spiritual nearness without real fusion with Allah.
Wafat-e-Masih	Literally: death of the Messiah. Generally: doctrine that Jesus died. Lahore usage: basis for a typological, non-literal return of the Messiah.
wahy nubuwwat	Literally: prophetic revelation. Generally: revelation with normative authority. Lahore usage: ended with Muhammad (saw).
wahy wilayat	Literally: saintly revelation. Generally: divine communication to the pious. Lahore usage: non-legislative inspiration without independent prophethood.
zill	Literally: shadow or reflection. Generally: derived representation. Lahore usage: dependent spiritual status adding nothing to Muhammad's prophethood.

Shadow prophethood (*zilli nubuwwat*)	Literally: shadow prophethood. Generally: metaphorical, derivative prophethood. Lahore usage: no independent, legislative or parallel prophethood.

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About the Author



Robbert Bipat (born February 13, 1969) is a Surinamese physician, physiologist, professor, author, and socially engaged scientist. He has been affiliated with the Faculty of Medical Sciences at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname since 1997. There, he has guided and inspired generations of students while advancing his own academic career from lecturer to professor of physiology. At the heart of his teaching and research is the human being: how the body maintains balance, what happens when that balance is disrupted, and how knowledge can contribute to better healthcare, prevention, and public health.

Bipat studied medicine at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname and obtained his PhD in 2004 from Hasselt University in Belgium, focusing his doctoral research on kidney function. His scientific interests are broad and touch upon themes closely related to daily life, such as diabetes, hypertension, nutrition, stroke, non-communicable diseases, and medicinal plants. With over a hundred international scientific publications and contributions to national health protocols—including guidelines for hypertension and diabetes—he applies his expertise not only to advance science but also to create practical solutions that improve people's health.

Alongside his academic work, Bipat has consistently dedicated himself to educational governance, community engagement, and interfaith dialogue. He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences from 2017 to 2021 and has been the Chairman of the Research Council at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname since 2024. He has also contributed for many years to the Surinaamse Islamitische Vereniging (Surinamese Islamic Association), serving as its chairman from April 2010 to April 2025. Since 2010, he has been a member of the Inter-Religious Council in Suriname (IRIS), an involvement stemming from his dedication to interfaith cooperation.

Furthermore, he regularly shares his insights through articles on religious themes in The Light magazine, published by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement in the United Kingdom. He is also working on books exploring the relationship between Islam—specifically Ahmadiyya—and areas such as science. In July 2025, he was honored with a presidential decoration by the President of Suriname for his social and civic contributions. His life's work reflects an enduring commitment to knowledge, faith, health, and building connections between people.

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