



Ahmad Shafeeq,
Ahmad Nurullah,
Ali Razaa and
Khalil Mahmood



Abdullah Muhammad, Abu Kalam,
Abdus Subhan and Abdullah Ali

Muhammad Sadiq



"I became a fairly good jazz musician and it started to pay well. So, I decided to make it my career and pursued it further. In those days, there were not too many opportunities for the people of African descent....As a musician, I used to hear people talk about Islam, but everything I heard about this religion, sounded so foolish that I did not care much about it. Then, one day in 1947, a friend gave me a book, "The Life of Muhammad," written by Sufi M. R. Bengali. I was in tears after reading that book....I prayed to Allah for forgiveness of my past sins and took a solemn pledge to live a life of piety."



Cleveland, Ohio 1956

Prince Hall Auditorium



Bashiruddin Usama, Muhammad
Ameen, Mubarak Ahmad, Ali Razaa



Hanif Ahmad, Abdullah Muhammad,
Mubarak Ahmad, Abdul Malik

Abdul Malik



While serving in the U.S. military in North Africa Abdul Malik met an Ahmadi Muslim. After returning home he found the U.S. Ahmadiyya headquarters in Chicago, IL. For two years he would drive from Milwaukee, through 'Jim Crow' counties to the Chicago Mosque. There he received lessons and orientation into Islam from the then Head Missionary, Khalil Ahmad Nasir. After accepting Ahmadiyya in 1946 he was given permission to start an Ahmadiyya mission in Milwaukee.

"The Dayton community was another important indication of the consolidation of African Americans in the Ahmadiyya movement. This community was almost one hundred percent black in the 1950s, and African Americans planned, funded, and built the Ahmadi mosque [Dayton Mosque] there in 1955. This was probably the first mosque built in America exclusively by African American converts. Also in Ohio, Wali Akram, a black Ahmadi led another African American Muslim community that flourished in Cleveland in the 1950s. This Mosque of more than two hundred Ahmadis maintained extensive records of its members and was noted for its "inter-ethnic marriages." The Ahmadiyya movement also shaped the religious ideas of an African American group

of Sunni Muslims in Lincoln Heights, Ohio during these years.

Thus, a dynamic group of African American Ahmadi leaders developed in the 1950s, including Mursil Shafeek, president of the Dayton community, who was fluent in Arabic, though limited in formal education; Muhammad Sadiq, a jazz trombone player in the 1940s who became president of the New York City and New Jersey communities; Bashir Afzal, a New York City leader in the 1950s; and Rashid Ahmad, who went to Pakistan to prepare for missionary work in the late 1940s and became an important Ahmadi figure in St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee, and New York in the 1950s." – *Islam and the African American Experience, Richard Brent Turner*

AFRICAN AMERICAN JOURNEY TO ISLAM

... and they prayed too.



AHMADIYYA
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