

In the Name of



Allah

LORD  
GRACEFUL  
MALIK  
ALLAH



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE

ANSAR

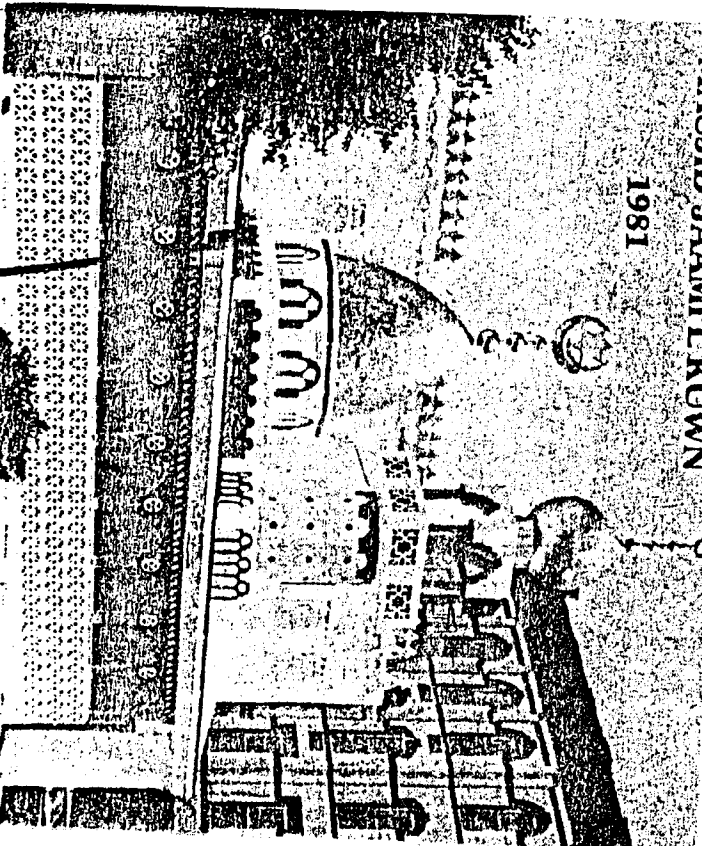
GUILT

in America

INTERVIEWS WITH FORMER ANSARS

MASJID JAAMI' KUWN

1981





From 1975 onwards Isa officially changed his birthdate to 1945 and claimed that he was born exactly one hundred years after the Sudanese Mahdi (b. 1845), (Isa Muhammad, *Allah's Creation, The Human Body*, Edition 55, (U.S.A.: Ansaru Allah Community, 1979), inside cover).

**INTERVIEW : I**

**Name:** Wafia 'AbdAllaah  
**Place of Birth:** Trinidad  
**Age:** 28 years old  
**Nationality:** American

**Question:**  
 How old were you when you first joined the Ansaru Allaah community and how long were you a member?

**Answer:**  
 I was 19 when I first joined. I was a member for about one full year. For three months in Georgia and the rest of the time in New York City.

**Question:**  
 What attracted you to the group?

**Answer:**  
 The first time I encountered the group, I was just introduced to Islaam and I was looking for someone to give me more Islaam. I joined them because my former husband had also met them and we both thought their teachings were a little more militant than the World Community.<sup>1</sup> They seemed to be more definite about what they were doing.

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<sup>1</sup> The World Community of Islam is one of the names which Warith Deen Muhammad, the son of Elijah Muhammad, gave his followers after the death of his father in 1975. See pages iv of the preface for more detail about Elijah Muhammad.

**Question:**

What became of your personal belongings when you joined?

**Answer:**

We didn't have too many personal belongings and the ones that we did have were clothes and things so those we kept, but the general rule in New York was that personal things became community property. This usually meant things like furniture and things like that...bigger things than we had.

**Question:**

When you entered the community, what were the living conditions?

**Answer:**

When I entered the community we lived in a building that was called "New Sisters' quarters". There were some beds, but not everyone had a bed. The rest of us slept on mattresses, some on blankets and some on sleeping bags on the floor. It was very crowded. The only time there was space to walk around was in the day time when everybody got up. We stayed there for the orientation period, which I believe was about 2 weeks, then everyone was moved on to other quarters depending on the job which they were assigned. The new quarters I went to were more liveable, you might say. There was an average of three people to a room. There was enough space, everyone had beds and a corner of their own. It was in a building where there was a kitchen and when it was open, we were allowed to use it. We all shared the one bathroom on our floor. That's basically how it was.

**Question:**

How did you earn a living?

**Answer:**

I, personally, did not bring any money into the community. My husband did go out with the other brothers and solicited money.

He went out and sold books, incense, and oils - I believe - and they also collected money on the trains, talking about the school and things like that. They had a daily quota to meet and this is the way that money was brought into the community.

**Question:**

How did the sisters bring in money?

**Answer:**

Well, I know of sisters who were on public assistance and they had to get their check cashed and turn the whole thing over to the community. I can say that because I lived with at least one sister who had to go out and do that and she was complaining about it. And she wasn't the only one or the first one that I knew of, that's why I can say that. She was complaining that she had to turn her whole check over to the community and sometimes she needed personal money to do things. So, she took some out secretly because it was hers. That's how they had to do it.

**Question:**

What position did you hold in the community?

**Answer:**

The first job I was assigned was to work in the office which had to do with correspondence and filling book orders. Letters came into the community - I don't know where they came in, but by the time they got to us, they had been opened and read and we were supposed to answer them. Other letters were just orders to be filled. In the part of the office that I worked, we sat down and read through each letter. We then found the file of the individual who was writing it, if there was a file, and familiarized ourselves with the information in the file. Then we answered the letter as though we knew the person, using the scriptures, (at that time, the understanding of the scriptures was not just the Qur'aan but also the Bible) and a lot of Isa's doctrines from his literature. When this was done, someone proofread the letter, a

typist typed it up and when everything was finished they are put in envelopes, taken out to the post office and mailed out. This is what that office did. Like I said, there were a lot of books and things in the office and some people took care of filling orders for them. Packages were wrapped, and the stuff was taken to the post office. I wrote letters for a while, I did research for a while and at one point, I was assigned to be the assistant supervisor. I took over whenever the supervisor left the office. The other job I requested was to work in the kitchen, once they opened a kitchen in the building where I lived. I worked in the kitchen with another sister and we cooked food on a large scale for everyone who lived in that building. We prepared the meals, served the meals and cleaned up. Those were the two jobs I had. Sometimes we were sent out to the libraries and I went out to do research — research for books that were being written. And I also tutored when we were having classes.

**Question:**

What caused you to leave the community?

**Answer:**

Well, I wasn't personally ready to leave the community even though I knew there were things which were wrong, but my husband was ready to leave. I prayed and prayed, and asked Allah to give me some guidance as to what to do, because I was torn between staying in the community where I had been taught that I should be, and going with my husband. Even after I had left because of all the teachings that I had received, I thought that I had done something wrong. I felt mentally bonded to the place until I started learning about the *Sunnah*<sup>1</sup> and real Islaam. Then I stopped feeling as though I was supposed to be there.

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<sup>1</sup> Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) composed of his sayings, actions and approvals.

**Question:**

How do you now view the time that you spent in the community?

**Answer:**

Looking back, the thing that seems to stick out most in my mind is that I was under a lot of pressure for different reasons. There was a lot of stress — there was a lot of paranoia in the community. Everybody kept looking for spies. They always thought they had some government spy in the community and so everybody was being looked at. You had to try to keep yourself clean — you might say. For, even if you didn't do anything, somebody was accusing you of something. I remember being under a lot of pressure. Just the whole thing of the family being separated, men in one building and women in another. I thought that was not right because we didn't have the support of our own families. There was also the thing about the "*Green Room*"<sup>1</sup>. You had to make an appointment with your spouse to spend time with him. And not just that, when I lived there, the "*Green Room*" was located up the street. So when it was your turn to go to the "*Green Room*", everybody knew where you were going, and that was crazy and embarrassing. And then everybody knew when you were coming back in the morning. So, that wasn't good at all. You had to spend a lot of time with the sisters. You definitely had to learn how to deal with people, that was one thing. Because you had to live with people and work with people, we had to work very hard, long hours. There was not that much time for you to think for yourself. You were always scheduled to be doing something. When you had some free time, you had to do what you had to do, like take care of your personal things. But in general the thing that seems to stick out

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<sup>1</sup> The room designated for conjugal relations which was accessible by turns according to a set schedule.

is the pressure that I was under just trying to deal with everything that was coming at me.

**Question:**

What is your present view on their doctrines?

**Answer:**

Well, in their doctrine everything seemed to revolve around Imaam Isa's stuff because we would have things coming out of the Qur'aan and someone would be doing the opposite to that and you would try to tell them and they would say, well Imaam Isa said that we could do such and such. As though his word was above the word of Allah *Subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa's*.<sup>1</sup> So, what do you call that? There was a lot of that. And if that wasn't bad enough, a lot of times things weren't even coming from the man himself, but the people who were in authority above you. The whole thing was a source of confusion because people did whatever they wanted. And the people who were in authority under them could tell you whatever they wanted to tell you and the excuse would be "Imaam Isa said so", and that was supposed to be the last word. That's what their teachings simmered down to. As far as I can see, it was the worship of Isa. And because we hardly ever saw him, that put a kind of mystic edge around the whole personality of the man, himself. The ones who worked over there in the house where he did most of his work saw him, but the rest of us hardly ever saw him. That's basically what it came down to.

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<sup>1</sup> May He be Glorified and Exalted.

**Question:**

What would be your advice to those people who are seeking the truth (non-Muslims) and those who are involved in this particular community?

**Answer:**

One thing would be to study, to know your Lord, but before studying, definitely try to get close to Allah by staying with your Qur'aan.

For the people who are truly seeking the truth and praying to Allah to help them find the way, they should keep doing that and keep reading the Qur'aan, because Allah *Subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa* reveals to us in the Qur'aan the proper ways of doing things. For a long time the Qur'aan was all I had. Then study the *Sunnah* of *Rasoolullah*<sup>1</sup> (ﷺ), what he said, and what he did, because we cannot live this *Deen* (religion) without the example of *Rasoolullah* (ﷺ). They have to study to see what's there rather than listening to someone else interpreting things for them. Everyone has their opinions and we have to know for ourselves what our *Deen* is, so we can help ourselves and each other.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Messenger of Allah, i.e., Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

<sup>2</sup> Interview conducted by Jamil Muhammad in Brooklyn, N.Y., on May 25, 1988.

## INTERVIEW : II

**Name:** Siddiq Muhammad

**Place of Birth:** New York

**Nationality:** American

**Question:**

When did you first join the community?

**Answer:**

I joined the community in June 1968. Basically, when I came, there was myself and a brother named 'Abdul-Baseer who ran the Madrasah in Brooklyn, and maybe two or three other brothers who were peripheral, that Isa could count on.

**Question:**

What attracted you to the community?

**Answer:**

I came there because I was totally fed up with the *Darul-Islam Movement*<sup>1</sup> and I wanted to know what this revelation that Allah had sent to the Prophet ( ﷺ ) and called Islaam was really about. I was not learning this in the *Darul-Islam Movement*, may Allah reward them for their efforts, but what they taught was not good enough for me. I knew a brother who, prior to my coming into Islaam, I used to get high with and he was associated with Isa. He had heard about Isa and he would tell me more about him. One day when *Darul-Islam* brothers were celebrating the birthday of the Prophet ( ﷺ ), Isa and a bunch of his cronies showed up. They looked different. They had Tar-

<sup>1</sup> The largest *Sunni* Islamic group founded by Afro-American Muslim converts in the mid sixties. It was led by Yahya 'Abdul-Kareem until the late seventies when its leadership was co-opted by a Pakistani *Sufi* extremist by the name of Mubarik al-Jilani. Those who did not join Jilani re-organized themselves under the leadership of Jamil al-Amin (Rap Brown) who is presently based in Atlanta, Georgia.

bushes (Fezes) on, a ring in their noses and a bone in their ears. I inquired as to who they were and what they were about and the only response I got was: "Stay away from them' cause they are crazy", which turned out to be real, but they didn't give me a reason why. They just told me to stay away from them etc., which caused me to pursue them further to find out why I should stay away. I knew one of the brothers, so he invited me out of Coney Island and I accepted the invitation. I came with a number of questions. Questions which I had asked at *Darul-Islam* but had not received an answer or very little explanation. Isa's whole thing was to always have an answer. Again, as I found out later, the answers were all either fabricated or distorted, but none-the-less he answered all my questions.

**Question:**

What was the membership like in the early days?

**Answer:**

At that time there were just a few of us -- we were in Coney Island<sup>1</sup> at the time. During that time we bounced from place to place swelling to about 15 brothers and dropping off to about 5 when times got rough.

**Question:**

When and why did the group evolve into a flourishing community?

**Answer:**

The major change that took place was when we finally ended up on Bushwick Avenue. That was around November of '73. That was the turning point of Isa's operation. Shortly thereafter, or six months thereafter, around June '74, things started to really change. We went from selling the literature to begging on the streets. That turned his whole organization around. That gave

<sup>1</sup> A borough of New York.

him a great influx of money. Once during that period, I took a half million dollars to the bank — in cash. There were so many coins that they closed the bank for two hours so that they could count them. I mean, he has been a millionaire from that point, since '74. This was a man who was always insane but now he had money and money is power. So he began to buy up Bushwick Avenue, piece by piece. Now he controls that whole area.

**Question:**

What were the social conditions of the community?

**Answer:**

The social life of the people really began to take a definite shape with the move to Bushwick Avenue. Now, he could exercise his power in a controlled environment. An environment in which he created confusion so that he could take advantage of it. In other words, he allows all types of things to take place there so that he can justify his own wrong doing and to control the minds of his followers. He allows adultery, he allows homosexuality, he allows lesbianism. He encourages lesbianism among his wives as well as with the other sisters. He has orgies — I'm telling you things which I know for a fact because I lived with him for about 8 of the 11½ years that I was there — and, during the times in which I lived with him, he invited me to participate in his orgies. *Al-Hamdulillaah*<sup>1</sup>, I did not come to Islaam for that. I did these things before I came to Islaam so the temptation was not in my mind.

**Question:**

What were the living arrangements in the community?

**Answer:**

When Bushwick Avenue began to take form, Isa now had con-

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<sup>1</sup> Praise be to Allah.

trol of the brother's wives. The sisters lived in the sisters' quarters, brothers lived apart from their mates in brothers' quarters, and children were separate, both from their fathers and mothers, in the children's quarters. And, as the community grew, this structure grew. For some of his cronies he bought a couple of apartment buildings and he allowed them to sleep with their wives and to live with their wives, and have what may be called a normal relationship. Everyone else had to be intimate with his wife on a rotating basis in what was called the "*Green Room*" — you've probably heard of it. Because of the limited amount of space, the "*Green Room*" was a room designated for intimacy. When your name was in that rotation for that evening, you shared the "*Green Room*" with your wife.

**Question:**

What became of one's possession when he joined the community?

**Answer:**

You had no possessions, all of your possessions belong to the community. The theory he employs is : everything is owned by everyone. Yet, the only person's name on anything is his. He controls everything, he is in absolute control and the people worship him. He has told me and he has told others, "Don't Pray," and, we didn't pray, "Don't Fast," and, we didn't fast. We went to Trinidad and committed adultery. When I questioned him about this, I said, "What's happening, we are supposed to be Muslims?" He said, "Siddiq, there are many things about Islaam that you do not understand." And he left it like that. He's very shrewd. He doesn't tell you outright that you can commit adultery, he does so indirectly. He's like *Shaytaan* (Satan). He is *Shaytaan*. He's like the Jinn that whispers into your heart that plays upon your lower desires. Because you are looking at this man like — well at that time, I thought that he

was sent by Allaah. So anything he said you don't really question. And the more it appeals to your lower desires, like, "I can do this and be Muslim too!" the more attractive his teachings becomes. So, this is how he uses and manipulates people. Theoretically, nothing is yours. If you have a car, you sign your car over to him. If you have a house, you sign your house over to him. You go take your money out of the bank and give it to him. Now, he has a very stringent indoctrination. In the beginning when we were just forming it was a lot less stringent.

I have seen this man. Sisters would come in, brothers' wives, he would take them to the back, have sex with them and then go out and *Salaam* (greet) the brother. I mean like, everything is alright. Out of the eight years that I lived with him, off and on — mostly on — I can say that he committed adultery, almost every day. And that's a very very light figure. It is amazing that you could be in the midst of something so wrong and think it be so right.

**Question:**

What were the socio-economic conditions within the community like?

**Answer:**

The socio-economic conditions were pitiful. This "negro" lives like a king — literally. He snaps his fingers and people just jump. Any woman in the community is his for the taking. It's not quite that simple, but if he wants it, he gets it eventually. Anything he wants he buys. I have seen him throw away ten thousand dollars worth of shoes, then go out and buy ten thousand dollars worth more, while people right across the street don't even have anything to eat. They are eating beans while this "negro" flaunts and spends ten thousand dollars on shoes. I was his driver. I took him to buy them. When you reflect back, it's frightening what faith in the wrong thing will do.

**Question:**

How does Isa maintain control over his followers?

**Answer:**

The thing that keeps him in power — besides *Shaytaan*<sup>1</sup> - is the children. You should hear them recite Qur'aan. He dangles the children in front of you. Where else in America can you go and the children speak all Arabic. They speak English with an accent (those who have been there since birth). They are learning Qur'aan. The man has millions and millions of dollars so he provides this. The *Adhaan*<sup>2</sup> is called and a hundred to two hundred people dressed as Muslims, flow out of the houses to the Masjid. It is a beautiful sight if you don't know that it is just a mirage. To participate in this play you must give up your soul. You must forfeit your belief in Allah. That's what he does, he takes your belief in Allah, that's why people leave there in worse spiritual condition than when they arrived. Because they think that they have left Islaam, they think that this was it, they go back to drugs or alcohol, robbing and stealing, worse than what they did before they came. I know several brothers who are really in a terrible state because we didn't learn to fear Allah. We learned to fear this man. He said don't fast. The reason being we were working real hard, trying to get our quota. And he said you can break your fast as long as you are working *Fee sabeelillaah*.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes while we were working in the construction of Bushwick Avenue, *Salat*<sup>4</sup> came and went and it was like "You are working *Fisabeelillaah*, so you are making *Salat*."

<sup>1</sup> Satan.

<sup>2</sup> Call to prayer.

<sup>3</sup> In Allah's path or for Allah's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Arabic *Salaah*. Five times daily prayer obligatory on every Muslim above the age of puberty. See p. 68 of this book for more detail.

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As long as he said it was cool, it was cool. And that's *Shirk*. As individuals we are supposed to examine what comes from the lips of anyone. But we put our faith blindly in him and he took total advantage of it. If he doesn't like you, then you can get severely beaten up. That's minor. You can lose your life. When I was there it wasn't that way. It was getting that way, but it wasn't that way.

**Question:**

How did the members earn a living?

**Answer:**

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Each brother is required to bring in anywhere from \$25 to \$100 per day per man, depending upon Isa's monetary needs at the time. If he needs some new clothes or a new wardrobe or whatever, then he just cranks up the quota. And your quota determines your liberties in the community. Whether you'll sleep with your wife, whether you'll be given a hard time, whether you'll be beaten up, etc. This is one of the tools that he uses. He is a master mesmerizer and he is a master con-man. He creates an illusion — the illusion is *Islaam*. The reality is *Shaytaan*. All those things on Bushwick Avenue, *Allaahu Akbar*<sup>1</sup> signs, the gaudy masjid, all the gold and glitter — it's all a set-up. It's a stage set to get you, the innocent bystander, involved so that he can rape you for anything he can. And if you feel like staying on — cool - he'll rape you some more. And if you feel like leaving — cool — 'cause someone else is waiting to take your place. And that's how he feels about you.

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<sup>1</sup> Allah is the Greatest.

**Question:**

What positions did you hold in the community?

**Answer:**

I stayed in the community from 1968 to almost 1982 and I guess I was on every rung of the ladder, from the dog house to the master's table. I went to Washington DC and founded that branch. I went to Trinidad and helped to establish the *Jamaat*<sup>1</sup> down there. I became the national spokesman for the organization and every rung in between. I was in charge of collecting the money from the brothers. I had all types of leadership positions in between there. I had an opportunity to see him the way very few people could see him. I had an opportunity to see a real *Shaytaan* at work. He is surely not a Muslim. Anyone who can commit adultery, three or four times in a day, who doesn't make prayers...when I have seen him praying it is for show, when it is politically astute for him to pray — his grand entrance. Everything that the Prophet was, he is not. This "nigger" is just gaudy, gold everywhere. He is so obvious, but only to those who know. But to those who are ignorant, he is so right. There are many many ignorant people. Again, we did not learn to love Allah. The love of Allah was not taught, the love of Allah was not emphasized. The love of Allaah was not there. The love of your children is there. The love of all these things except for Allah *Subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa*<sup>2</sup> is there, because if you love Allah, you've got to get out of there. The man is *Shaytaan*. The things he does. He'll see a couple come into the community and they may have a very good working relationship. He'd try to break that relationship up, gain control of the woman, and if the woman was to his liking, have sex with her and then turn her loose into the community. He is cold-blooded.

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<sup>1</sup> Community. (Arabic. *Jamaa'ah*).

<sup>2</sup> May He be Glorified and Exalted.

**Question:**

Why did you remain so long in the community and why did you eventually leave?

**Answer:**

He was like a father to me. He taught me things that my father never taught me. However, one thing that he could never teach me was Islaam and that was the one thing I wanted the most. That's what I thought he was teaching me and that's why I stayed as long as I did. And, I left like other people left — still believing in him but totally disillusioned with what surrounded him, not knowing that if the body is sick, the head has to be sick too. Again it was the knowledge of Islaam, after I left that started to turn me around. You know, I almost killed my brother when I came back to N.Y. and he had returned back from Saudi Arabia talking about Isa in a negative way. I almost took his life. He just told me, "OK, you can get angry, but you are only angry because you know that I am telling the truth. You know that he is a liar. How can you teach the truth through a lie? You know that Isa is a liar. How can he be a man of Allah and he is a liar like that?" I could trust him (my brother). Everyone else who approached me had an angle. They wanted me to join their club. I had already left one club. I was not going to join another club. So I bounced around for a while — not even practising — not making *Salat*<sup>1</sup>, cause I really didn't make *Salat* while I was at the community. You know, I didn't see the need to make *Salat*, *Astaghfirullaah*<sup>2</sup>. You must understand. Everything was done because Isa said so, not because Allaah said so, not because the Prophet (ﷺ) said so. So if I saw Isa not making *Salat* then why should I make it? That was my rationale. Islaam is seen through his understanding and its so fascinating.

<sup>1</sup> Five times daily prayer obligatory on every Muslim above the age of puberty.

<sup>2</sup> May Allah forgive me.

Because here is this black man who waves the nationalist flag, pushing the black thing and downing the white man. The white man is the devil, the blue-eyed are condemned to be despised as apes. The whole trip. He's the only one who has all the answers.

But, if you are there you literally have no rights. The only thing you have the right to earn is the privilege of being there *Astaghfirullaah*.

**Question:**

What is your present view of your time spent with the cult?

**Answer:**

Looking back, *Al-Hamdulillaah* — I'm not there anymore. I can only ask Allah for forgiveness for the wrong I did participate in when I was there, for the large amount of people that I was responsible for bringing there and to thank Allah *Subhaanahu wa ta'aalaa* for taking me away from there. And I beg Allah for more brothers, like yourself, who have the knowledge and the desire to fight the enemies of Islaam.

**Question:**

What are your recommendations for those seeking the truth?

**Answer:**

In conclusion, the best thing that I can suggest to combat this idiot is knowledge. We created this individual by being brought up in the Christian dogma, the Jesus figure — that's what he represents — And he is shrewd enough to say: "I didn't say that — you did". But in your heart and your mind — you want this Jesus figure, he just fills the void. It's sad that he's in our era and that he is causing as much damage to Allah's religion as what he is.

And may Allah reward all those who are trying to stop him in whatever humble way.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This interview was taped for the author by the interviewee in Baltimore MD in June 1988.

In the Name of

**INTERVIEW : III**

**Name:** Fatima Muhammad<sup>1</sup>

**Place of Birth:** Trinidad

**Age:** 22

**Nationality:** American

**Question:**

How old were you when you first joined the Ansars and for how long were you a member?

**Answer:**

I was 17 years old and I remained a member for 4 years.

**Question:**

What attracted you to the movement?

**Answer:**

I was searching for Islam and Allah, and that was the only thing that seemed right at the moment.

**Question:**

What happened to your personal belongings when you joined the group?

**Answer:**

Once you enter the community, personal belongings are taken away like your T.V., bedroom set, etc. The only things you could own are clothes, shoes and things of that sort.

**Question:**

What are the living conditions like?

**Answer:**

Males and females are separated once you move into the com-

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<sup>1</sup> Her name has been changed by her request as it would be detrimental to the stability of her present marriage.

munity. They live in separate quarters. Six sisters sleep in one bedroom. They each have their mat and their bag in which they keep their personal belongings on the floor.

**Question:**

How did you earn a living and how did the brothers earn their living?

**Answer:**

Everyone in the community had a job. I was working with books. They encourage the women to get on welfare. All the brothers go out and they peddle and they are supposed to bring in a quota like \$50 a day. They have a list of female members and they approach you at your work place and they ask you to get on welfare. Isa said that during the time of slavery all black people got a certain amount of mules and after slavery it stopped so this is a way of the white people paying black people back.

**Question:**

Was there punishment for the brothers if they did not make the quota?

**Answer:**

Yes, they were punished if they did not bring a certain quota back. They were beaten by a group called the *Mujahids* and if they were married they were denied access to their wives.

**Question:**

Did people get married in the community and was the marriage based on the Qur'aan and *Sunnah*?

**Answer:**

I did not get married in the community but the last marriage was performed in 1980. You don't get married anymore. He gives the brothers "mates" but he himself has concubines. He himself has more than four mates. There is no Islamic marriage anymore.

**Question:**

What was Isa's position with the women of the community and how many children does he have?

**Answer:**

If a new sister joined the community and she was good looking he would approach her. Isa loved women. To join the community you had to fill in a form and have a photograph taken. He chose the sisters he wanted to be with and he made them work at Passion. Passion is the building where he lives. It's No: 716 (Bushwick Avenue). I worked in Passion. **I was one of Isa's concubines too.** There were over 100 children there, the children of the sisters who worked in Passion and other sisters who were in the community and children of a lot of sisters who left. Sometimes it would happen that there would be 4 or 5 sisters pregnant for him at a time and he had not married them. They were all concubines, some of them wives of other brothers and some of the brothers went for it because they were sort of hypnotised by Isa. He would say, "You are striving for Paradise, so you do not want to have any material things." But he himself would have a 100 *Jallaabeeyahs*<sup>1</sup> made of the best materials and the brothers might have 1 or 2 dingy looking *Jallaabeeyahs*. And whereas the brothers might have only a pair of old boots he had more than a 100, and he himself had the most expensive. He would tell the brothers not to wear gold as the Prophet (ﷺ) said that men should not wear gold and Isa himself would wear gold. According to him, his reason for wearing the gold was to cover the cost of his burial in case he dies while travelling. He himself travels to all sorts of places Egypt, Sudan, etc. The other brothers should not wear gold because they don't travel. Once you are inside the community you blindly accept everything. Later you realise it to be all a waste of time.

<sup>1</sup> Sudanese gown worn by males.

**Question:**

What advice would you give to a person contemplating joining the community?

**Answer:**

I would tell them about the living conditions at Bushwick — living in one room with 18 children, the paint peeling off the walls, a crib normally meant for one baby, may have 2 to 3 babies... circumstances not suitable for human habitation. When I had my baby, the nurses were supposed to come to the house to check him. They don't allow any contact with outsiders or family members if they are not in the community, as they regard them as *Kaafirs* (disbelievers). They asked me to go out to the *Dunyaa* (world) and live with my family till the child gets better, but then I never went back.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Interview conducted by Jamil Muhammad in Brooklyn N. Y., on the 25th of May, 1988.

**INTERVIEW : IV**

**Name:** Raisa Muhammad

**Date of Birth:** July 13, 1958

**Nationality:** American

**Question:**

How old were you when you first joined the Ansaru Allaah community?

**Answer:**

I was 21 years old at that time.

**Question:**

What attracted you to this cult?

**Answer:**

I met a brother, one of the brothers who was selling on the street and we just started talking and the conversation went from there. He started *tableeghing*<sup>1</sup> me and introducing me to the Ansar doctrine. I was interested in Black awareness, and a lot of the Ansar doctrine has to do with being Black, your roots, etc., the oppression of the Black man and Black woman and so on...It also attracted me because I had dealt with the Nation of Islam<sup>2</sup> at one point. So, the cores are basically the same — where they come from.

**Question:**

When you come into the community as a member, what became of your personal possessions etc.?

**Answer:**

This question I can't really answer because I never lived within the community. I have a close friend. We were supposed to move in at the same time, but I changed my mind. She went in.

<sup>1</sup> *Tableegh* means to invite to Islaam

<sup>2</sup> The name of Elijah Muhammad's cult which he founded in the early thirties in Detroit. See the preface p. iv for more detail.

I can tell you from that aspect, from what she told me when she came out. She only went in with a foam mattress and her clothes. She was not on public assistance and she didn't have any income, so there was nothing to take, just her clothes which kinda got shared around. If you had four or five outfits and sister so-and-so only had one, then it was appropriate that you share your clothes with this sister. That's the only thing I know of from that aspect. Like I said, I did not live there. I only came as a visitor and stayed around for about a year and a half — almost two years.

**Question:**

What was your position in the community and how did you contribute to the community?

**Answer:**

I had no position at all because I didn't live there. As a matter of fact I wasn't really considered part of the community. All they would say is, "Sister. When are you going to come home? When are you going to come live here?" And because I chose not to live there, I was more or less ostracized. As for as support, I supported them very well, but it wasn't directed to the Imaam, it was to my mate who was supposed to come out everyday and make a quota and give it to the community. Because I wanted to spend time with him, I said, "Come to my *Bait* (house) and I will give you the money." And I would give him the amount of money he had to turn in and that's how I supported the community.

**Question:**

What was the quota which the men had to meet and what would happen to them if it was not met?

**Answer:**

As far as the quota was concerned, it changed from time to time. At one time it was \$35 dollars a day then it had gone up to \$40,

then \$45. There was even a time when they had to make \$55 a day. If they didn't make it, whoever was in charge would get on the radio (within the community) and say, "Salaam Alaikum!<sup>1</sup> Brother so-and-so did not turn in his quota this morning" Then they would send sisters out as spies. The sisters would come out and they would watch the brothers and see what they were doing and come back and report what they saw.

**Question:**

What do you know about the "Green Room"?

**Answer:**

As far as the "Green Room" is concerned, I didn't have to deal with it because I never lived within the community. I know that my mate had a wife in the community and you had to make appointments. If the person in charge of the "Green Room" had a gripe with you, then you didn't get an appointment. The "Green Room" was a room where you and your wife could co-habitate. They said this was because there wasn't space available for men and women to live together as couples. You had the brothers in one building, the sisters in another building and the children in another building. So this room was more or less where brothers and sisters could go and spend time together. There was a time when, for a while, they were told that they had no "Green Room" privileges. The "Green Room" privileges were sometimes taken away for any reason. I think the reason given at one time was that they needed to build up their Islaam. There were stipulations on everything concerning sex.

**Question:**

When you refer to your "mate", do you mean your husband?

**Answer:**

He was my mate. When I came into Islaam, I thought that was

<sup>1</sup> Peace be unto you.

how it was. He told me that he chose me for his wife and we would be together but he couldn't marry me right away because he had a wife and he didn't get permission from the Imaam, and unless the Imaam gave him permission, then we couldn't go and have this big wedding that I wanted to have. Because he made intentions on me, that made everything that comes along with marriage OK. I didn't know any better and I'm thinking this brother is a Muslim and he wouldn't lie about stuff that has to do with Islaam because he is a Muslim. I was not naive to the streets, but I thought this brother had a little more honesty about him than the other "negroes" I used to deal with out in the streets.

