

**Exploring the Foundations of an Islamic  
Identity in a Global Context:**  
A Study of the Nature and Origins  
of Cape Muslim Identity

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by

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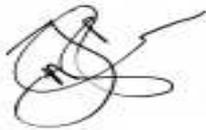
## DECLARATION

**The Registrar (Academic)**

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL (WESTVILLE CAMPUS)

Dear Sir

I, **Abdul Taliep Baker (REG. NO. 200302457)**, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, **Exploring the Origins of an Islamic Identity in a Global Context: A Study of the Nature and Origins of Cape Muslim Identity**, is the result of my own investigation and research and that it has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or to any other University.



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(Signature)

18 February 2009

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(Date)

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## **Abstract**

**Author:** Abdul Taliep Baker

**Title:** Exploring the Foundations of an Islamic Identity in a Global Context:  
A Study of the Nature and Origins of Cape Muslim Identity

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This thesis primarily deals with the nature and origins of Cape Muslim identity. The purpose of this study is to (1) define the nature of Cape Muslim identity (2) explore the origins of Cape Muslim identity (3) identify the factors impacting on Cape Muslim identity (4) and assess the response of Cape Muslims to the challenges to their identity.

The hypothesis underlying this study is that Cape Muslim identity is unique and distinguishes itself through adherence to certain rites and ceremonies, primarily derived from a Malay/Indonesian type of Islam, as established by religious leaders who came from those regions. This study explores this assumption and attempts to determine the extent of Malay/Indonesian Islam on Cape Muslim rites and ceremonies.

The study also identifies the contemporary ideological and theological formations that challenge Cape Muslim identity.

## **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, I would like to dedicate this research to my grandfather, the late *Haji* Yusuf Baker (*may Allah have mercy on his soul*), and to all those who have played a meaningful role in my educational development.

*“Whoever cannot show gratitude towards people, cannot show gratitude towards God”*

(Hadith)

I would like to start by thanking Allah, the Almighty, for granting me the strength and guidance to complete this somewhat challenging task.

I would like to thank my wife, Amina, and children, Hasan, Husayn and Muhammad Noor, as well as my parents, the late Rushdien (*may Allah have mercy on his soul*) and Nafeesa, for their unconditional love, sacrifice and support, and for always believing in me.

I would like to thank Professor Yusuf Da Costa for giving me the initial inspiration, encouragement and assistance to pursue my studies further.

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I would like to thank Brothers Yusuf Feltman, Nagib Martin, and Sulayman Wentzel for proofreading and commenting on some of the main chapters, and all those who have sacrificed their time for interviews and filling in questionnaires.

Finally, I would like to thank the National Research Foundation (NRF) for granting me a scholarship that has made this research possible.

Saudi Arabia, 2009

A.T. Baker

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## Introduction

إمام عبد الله المظلوم ابن المظلوم مولانا قاضي عبد السلام التدوري بلدا  
الشافعي مذهبا والأشعري عقيدة

The Oppressed Imam `Abd Allāh, son of the Oppressed, Our Master, *Qādi* `Abd al-Salām, from the country of Tidore, a follower of the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab*, and an *`Ash`ari* in terms of *`Aqīdab* (doctrine) - (Guru, 1786: 600)

This is how Tuan Guru identifies himself in his book, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa al-Īmān*, after completing it in 1786. This book not only formed the basis of Islamic education at the Cape but it was also the basis for Cape Muslim identity. Even though Shaykh Yūsuf is regarded as the father of Islam at the Cape, it is Tuan Guru, who came almost a century later, who established the foundations for a Cape Muslim identity. This is derived from his statement above, which also forms the basis and has inspired largely, this study. What is clear from the statement is that Tuan Guru openly declares his identity; firstly starting with his lineage, the son of *Qādi* `Abd al-Salām; secondly, he mentions his country of origin, Tidore – Java - Indonesia; thirdly, he identifies himself as a follower of the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab* (Legal Tradition); and finally, he identifies himself as a follower of the *Ash`ari`Aqīdab* (Doctrinal Tradition). It is quite evident, that even as an 'oppressed' political exile to the Cape, Tuan Guru was very proud of both his ethnic and religious identity. This is besides the fact that (1) he was an ardent scholar of *tasawwuf*, or Sufism, as can be seen in his writings (2) he encouraged the Muslim community (mostly slaves) of his time to adhere to the cultural traditions of their forefathers, as can be seen in his participation in one of the first recorded cultural-religious events, observed by Thunberg in 1772. (Thunberg, C.P. 1986: 48-49) In addition to this, he established the first mosque, the first *madrasah*, and to him is attributed one of the first *Qur'āns*, written by his own hand. Tuan Guru's teachings have undoubtedly had a long lasting impact

on Islam at the Cape, forming the basis for a Cape Muslim identity. This is enough evidence to award him the accolade, the ‘*Father of Cape Muslim Identity*’. Thus, taking our cue from the ‘Master’ – Guru himself, we wish to define the nature of Cape Muslim identity and explore its origins. Hence the title, *Exploring the Foundations of an Islamic Identity in a Global Context: A Study of the Nature and Origins of Cape Muslim Identity*’.

### **1. Outline of Research Topic**

This research deals with the nature and origins of Cape Muslim identity and factors impacting on this identity.

### **2. Rationale for Research**

The identity of Muslims at the Cape has been a subject of debate among scholars for several decades. The appellation “Malay”, while embraced by many leaders and community members has also been challenged by scholars and community leaders, both for reasons of historical accuracy (India was the place of origin of the majority of Cape slaves) and ideology (the Islamic identity supersedes all other identities). The alternate term “Cape Muslim” has generally come to be accepted as more appropriate.

It is my contention that the diversity in the rites and ceremonies among Cape Muslims is more pronounced than elsewhere in South Africa. While it has been assumed by some scholars and Cape Muslims themselves that these have their roots in Malay/Indonesian Islam, others contend that this is not the case. This study intends to confirm the diverse origins of Cape Muslim rites and ceremonies, while at the same time examining the extent of the Malay/Indonesian influence on local identity, among other things. Furthermore, it will identify the major challenges to what Cape Muslims regard as their “distinct” identity.

### **3. Purposes of the Study**

The main objectives of this research are to:

- explore the nature of Cape Muslim identity
- trace the origins of Cape Muslim identity
- identify the factors impacting on Cape Muslim identity
- assess the response of Cape Muslims to challenges to their identity

### **4. Key/Critical Questions**

- What is the nature of Cape Muslim identity?
- What are the origins of Cape Muslim identity?
- Which factors have impacted and are impacting on Cape Muslim identity?
- How have Cape Muslims responded to challenges to their distinct identity?

### **5. Significance of the Study**

The study will provide an insight into the multiple identities of Cape Muslims. It will reveal how these identities have been constructed over generations and what major challenges confront Cape Muslims in their determination to maintain their identity. The study will benefit those with a keen interest in identity formation and change, and to those concerned about the impact of globalization on local cultures.

### **6. Research Approach & Methodology**

The primary methodology adopted for this particular research was both descriptive and analytical. The research was based on literature, interviews and personal observations.

## **Literature**

This study relies mainly on information taken from relevant books, journal articles, news articles, and manuscripts etc. With technological advancement affecting all areas of research, the internet has become a very useful tool in searching for information for this study. I was able to use the internet not only to gather relevant information but also to conduct interviews and send and receive questionnaires through interactive e-mailing. Because of the fact that I was based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, during my research, I had to rely a lot on electronic books and articles. This in a sense also affected the way in which I conducted my interviews and the limitations of the interviews.

## Manuscripts

It is important to note that many of the manuscripts analyzed for this research proved to be very useful in confirming many of the traditions relating to the Cape Muslims. In particular, Tuan Guru's manuscript, which was very useful in many ways, confirmed aspects of Cape Muslim identity relating to their education, doctrinal traditions, legal traditions and spiritual traditions. Similarly, the *rivāyat*, *mawlūd*, and *dhikr* manuscripts confirmed to a large extent aspects of the cultural-religious and *sūfi* traditions of the Cape Muslims. What proved to be even more useful in these manuscripts were the dates they provided. I could use these dates, in the absence of tangible evidence, to trace back the origins of these traditions. In fact, tracing back the origins of practices proved very challenging because of the lack of information available. Also, I could not trace the exact origins of the local traditions from the books I reviewed, nor from the many people whom I interviewed, formally and informally, because their accounts were based mainly on assumptions and hearsay. I therefore found that analyzing the contents and dates of these manuscripts was very important, especially because of the lack of information, as well as the fact that there was not a lot of tangible evidence available.

## **Interviews**

Certain aspects of this research are based on interviews for which a specific questionnaire was prepared. In some instances, questionnaires were not administered. I have also relied on some information which is directly relevant to this research on data collated from interviews conducted previously for an Honours research paper that I completed in 2002, entitled, *Survival Mechanisms for an Islamic identity at the Cape: A Cultural-Linguistic Study*.

**Note:** the qualitative approach was used to collect and analyze the data.

### Selection of Participants

Interviews were conducted with specifically identified individuals and scholars from the local Muslim community who were either *au fait* with Cape Muslim teachings and practices or were actual participants in the various rites and ceremonies with first-hand knowledge. These interviews were conducted in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Riyadh (Saudi Arabia).

### Data Capturing

I interviewed at least eight religious leaders/scholars and eleven members of the community. Among the eight religious leaders, one interview with a South African scholar was conducted telephonically, one was conducted personally in Johannesburg, three were conducted at various locations in Cape Town and the remaining three were conducted personally with South African scholars based in Riyadh.

Among the community members who were interviewed or filled in questionnaires, four responded via the internet, five were interviewed at various locations in Cape Town, and an old married couple was interviewed in Riyadh.

The fact that I was based in Riyadh made it very difficult for me to conduct my interviews effectively, even though I was able to conduct some of the interviews there. To obtain some input from scholars and community members alike, I decided to e-mail the questionnaires to some community members in Cape Town, and interview some of the community members

based in Riyadh. Of the 10+ questionnaires sent via the internet, four responded positively. In addition, I was also able to conduct four interviews with community members based at my location in Riyadh. These included three scholars, two from Cape Town and one from Kimberly, and a couple from Kensington in Cape Town. Most of the interviews that I was able to conduct lasted at least for two hours. Finally, most of the interviewees were willing participants. The interviewees participated with enthusiasm and I did not sense any reluctance or suspicion among them. This to some extent compensated for the disappointed I felt at the lack of responses from many of those to whom I have sent questionnaires.

#### Nature and Analysis of Interviews/Questionnaires

The interviews/questionnaires were centred on the origins of the participants – where they originally came from, their educational backgrounds, their familiarity with and participation in certain cultural-religious and *sūfī* practices, and their responses to outside challenges. The interviews/questionnaires were structured in a certain way to elicit specific responses from the participants.

It was clear from the responses in these interviews/questionnaires that most of the participants identified with similar educational structures (based on the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* and doctrinal teachings of Tuan Guru) as well as the cultural-religious and *sūfī* practices prevalent at the Cape. However, the participants varied in their responses to the outside challenges, some were even non-responsive, as if it did not affect them in any way.

What could be deduced from this is that Cape Muslims in general identify with the same educational structures, cultural-religious and *sūfī* practices, and that they are either not affected by, not interested in, or not familiar with the outside challenges impacting on their identity.

## **Personal Observations**

According to Mc Call & Simmons, “participant observation involves some amount of genuinely social interaction in the field with the subjects of the study, some direct observation of relevant events, some formal and a great deal of informal interviewing, some systematic counting, some collection of documents and artifacts, and open-endedness in the direction the study takes” (Mc Call & Simmons 1969: 1)

Since I belong to the Cape Muslim community and have personally observed most and participated in some practices, which form the focus of this research, I have relied to some extent on my personal observations. This proved to be very useful in the absence of effective interviews.

## **7. Research Theory & Hypothesis**

Religious identity is distinguished by means of clearly defined doctrines, rituals and customs, as well as clearly established criteria for drawing the borderlines that separate the particular religion from all the others.<sup>1</sup> According to Berger, identity is a process “continuously created and re-created in each social situation”. (Berger 1963: 124) Based on this theory, I have assumed the following hypothesis: The identity of Muslims at the Cape has been fashioned by a wide range of factors in the past and continues to be fashioned by new developments.

## **8. Key Assumptions**

By interviewing religious leaders and community members respectively, the study would yield valuable information about specific Cape Muslim rites and ceremonies.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_identity)

## **9. Scope of Study**

The study is confined – by the very nature of the topic – to the Western Cape. While the findings are specific to this region, the discussion on factors impacting on identity formation can be applied to Muslim identity in South Africa in general.

## **10. Limitations of Research**

This research is not applicable to all Muslim communities in South Africa. It has been established that Muslims have diverse origins and have been influenced by a variety of factors. The research does not take into account global influences such as consumerism, which affects most communities around the world.

## **11. Prior Research**

The identity of Cape Muslims has been the subject of debate and discussion ever since I D Du Plessis referred to them as “Cape Malays” in his publications. Bangstad, Bradlow, Boeseken, Da Costa, Dangor, Davids, Ebrahim, Haron, Jeppie, Karim, Moosa, Mukadam, Owaisi, Rafudeen, Shell, Tayob have all written on aspects of Islam at the Cape, relating to the origins and history of Cape Muslims, and their language and literature, culture, education, and religious/spiritual expression. A few have dealt specifically with the issue of identity, such as Haron, *Conflict of Identities : The Case of South Africa’s Cape Muslims*, Davids, *The Words the Slaves made*, Vahed and Jeppie, *Multiple Communities : Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa*. All the above-mentioned sources have been used in the thesis and Haron’s article has been reviewed below. David’s paper deals with the acculturation of Muslim slaves at the Cape and the influence of Tuan Guru’s teachings on the social lives of Cape Muslims. Vahed and Jeppie’s study focuses on the “struggle” of South African Muslims for an identity.

However, none of the above writers has systematically traced the legal, doctrinal, cultural and spiritual roots of Cape Muslim rites and ceremonies. The present study intends to fill this gap in knowledge of the Cape Muslim community.

## **12. Overview of Chapters**

### **Chapter One**

This chapter primarily focuses on the theoretical aspects of identity. Here reference is made to a discussion on what identity essentially is, the various types of identity, and the impact of globalization on identity. In addition, it also concentrates on identity in Islam with special reference to the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition), also touching briefly on the identity crisis in the Muslim world which relates to the issue of Islamic identity vs. national identity.

This is very relevant as it highlights the current crisis of Identity facing Muslims all over.

For most of the theoretical references, I have extensively relied on Wikipedia on-line encyclopedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org>. In terms of the various discussions and viewpoints of scholars and the impact of globalization on identity Paul Kennedy's *Globalization and National Identities : Crisis or Opportunity?*, was a very useful and appropriate reference. Stuart Hall gives a different dimension to cultural identity, especially when he suggests that identity is not something that is immutable, or unchangeable, but rather that it is continuously changing. Finally, Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah in his article, *Islam and the Cultural Imperative*, has given me a good perspective on culture/cultural identity in Islam, using the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition) as a basis.

### **Chapter Two**

This chapter is more of an application of the theoretical aspects of identity, with special attention given to religious identity. Religious identity is distinguished by the means of clearly defined doctrines, rituals and customs, as well as clearly established criteria for drawing the

borderlines that separate the particular religion from all the others.<sup>2</sup> This particular understanding of religious identity will be useful in outlining the nature of Cape Muslim identity. Thus, chapter two focuses on the nature of Cape Muslim identity in terms of their adherence to certain doctrinal traditions, legal traditions, cultural-linguistic traditions and finally their spiritual traditions. We also look at the impact of Islamic education on Cape Muslim identity as established by Tuan Guru in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Here, a first hand exposure to Tuan Guru's teachings in the form of a copy of the original manuscript, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa al-Imān*, proved to be very useful.

This particular chapter relies extensively on historical facts and data. Thus, the most appropriate references in this case would be the works of local Muslim scholars such as Achmat Davids and Yusuf Da Costa. The works of I.D. Duplessis, Frank Bradlow and Robert C. Shell are also important for cross-referencing and an outsiders' perspective. However, the primary reference would be the works of Achmat Davids, who has researched a variety of topics on early Cape Muslim identity, from slavery to emancipation, social cohesion to disputes and conflicts among Cape Muslims etc. Achmat Davids in particular has written extensively on the history of Cape Muslims. Some of his works include (1) *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, (2) *The History of the Tana Baru*, (3) *The Words the Slave Made*, and (4) *Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims*. Furthermore, more contemporary and analytical studies on the Cape Muslims include the works of Abdulkader Tayob, Shamiel Jeppie, and Muhammad Haron etc.

### **Chapter Three**

This particular chapter focuses on the origins of Cape Muslim identity, which goes beyond the borders of South Africa, tracing the passage of Islam to the Cape back to its original location (Arabia) via Southeast Asia and East Africa respectively. This chapter compares Islam in Cape Town with Islam in these particular locations.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_identity)

For Islam in Southeast Asia, which includes, Indonesia and Malaysia, I rely mainly on the works of Martin Van Bruinessen and Masdar Hilmy. Like many other scholars, Van Bruinessen has written extensively on Islam in Southeast Asia, covering Sufism, politics, education and culture etc. Some of his works include, (1) *Controversies and Polemics Involving the Sufi Orders in Twentieth-Century Indonesia*, (2) *Global and Local in Indonesian Islam*, (3) *Origins and Development of the Sufi Orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia*, (4) *Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu*, (5) *Kurdish `ulama and their Indonesian disciples*, (6) *Indonesia's Ulama and Politics: Caught Between Legitimising the Status Quo And Searching for Alternatives, Shari`a Court*, (7) *Tarekat and Pesantren: Religious Institutions in the Sultanate of Banten*, (8) *Shaykh `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani and the Qadiriyya in Indonesia*, (9) , *The tariqa Khalwatiyya in South Celebes* (10) *Tarekat and tarekat teachers in Madura*, (11) *Wahhabi influences in Indonesia, real and imagined*. Also central to this study is the work of Hilmy, who discusses a very important concept in Malay-Indonesian Islam, i.e. the *slametan* ritual. This particular work is very significant in a sense that besides discussing the *slametan* ritual, it also outlines the cultural aspects of Malay Islam, which aptly compares to the cultural practices of the Cape Muslims. Both Van Bruinessen and Hilmy provide the necessary background information about the Islamization of Southeast Asia as well as the influence of Sufism in that particular process.

For Islam in East Africa, I have relied on the works of Anne K. Bang, Randall L. Pouwels, and Abdurahman I. Doi. Bang's particular focus is on the `Alawis in East Africa, more specifically, Zanzibar. Doi again focuses on Sufism in Africa in general, and provides some relevant information on Sufism in East Africa specifically. Whereas, Pouwels looks at Islam in East Africa in general.

#### **Chapter Four**

The final chapter deals mainly with the outside/global Islamic influences on the local community. Here special attention is given to the influences of specific groups/movements

who have come from the ‘outside’ (of the local community), trying to influence the local brand of Islam. These groups include, but are not restricted to, *Sūfīs*, Brelvis, *Wahhābi/Salafīs*, *Tablighi/Deobandis*, *Shiites* and *Abmadis*, and Modern Reformers, all of whom have been competing for a ‘spiritual space’ (Haron (1)) within the local Muslim community.

This particular chapter relies mainly on the works of Abdulkader Tayob, Muhammad Haron, Goolam Vahed and Shamiel Jeppie. All of these works make reference to a variety of different groups and influences, which proved to be very useful in this regard. For first hand information about the various groups, I have relied on the websites of some of these groups, such as the *Abmadi* website (<http://www.muslim.org>) and the Shiite’s official site (<http://www.afosa.org/Aboutus3.php>) respectively. This is mainly because of a lack of local information about these particular groups. The work of Vahed and Jeppie, *Muslim communities: Muslims in post-Apartheid South Africa*, gives a fresh perspective on the history and future of Islam in the new South Africa. Finally, on the *sūfī* influences, I have used Fakhruddin Owaisi as a primary reference. Like Haron, Owaisi also gives a fresh perspective on Sufism. The difference between these two scholars is that the latter’s study specifically focuses on Sufism at the Cape, whereas the former focuses on Sufism in South Africa in general. Also, Haron’s study is on Muslim groups in general, in which he includes a section on Sufism.

### 13. Literature Review

#### *Conflict of Identities: The Case of South Africa’s Cape Malays* – Muhammed Haron

This is a research article written by Muhammed Haron in which he primarily deals with the issue of ‘Cape Malay’ identity vs. ‘Cape Muslim’ identity. In this study, the author revisits the question of identity by examining the texts that specifically deal with the Cape Muslim community. These include the works of I.D. Du Plessis (1944), Robert C. Shell (1974), M.G.Harris (1977), Frank Bradlow and Margaret Cairns (1978), and Achmat Davids (1980), Ismoeni Taliep (1982), Anne Lyon (1983), Shamiel Jeppie (1987), Mohamed Adhikari (1989)

etc. As can be seen, apart from Du Plessis work, these studies have been conducted mainly during the 1970s and 1980s. According to the author, after Adhikari no other work of note appeared on this subject except those that analysed the 1994 tercentenary of Islam in South Africa.

After a careful study of the various sources dealing with the issue of Cape Muslim identity, the author then proposes a few thoughts on how to mediate between the use of these identities without having to reject the one for the other; bearing in mind that the conflict of identities remain problematic without a satisfactory solution in sight. According to the author, the writings that were examined demonstrated to what extent the researchers and community grappled with the problem of identity. The author concludes his study by acknowledging the fact that there are still much to be researched on the subject and that no comprehensive text is available which provide a detailed and conclusive study of the Cape Muslim community. He therefore proposes that this gap could be filled by (1) an in-depth archival research on the subject and (2) to study the genealogies of as many individuals and families as possible which will provide concrete proof regarding their origins and background.

*The Early Cape Muslims: A Study of their Mosques, Genealogy and Origins* – Frank R. Bradlow and Margaret Cairns

This book is jointly authored by Frank R. Bradlow and Margaret Cairns. It is not a comprehensive study of early Cape Muslims, but rather a limited study of facets of their history. The book comprises of three main chapters, the first dealing with the history of the Awwal Mosque, the second dealing with the genealogy of a Cape Muslim family and the third dealing with the geographical origins of the Early Cape Muslims.

In chapter one, Bradlow discusses the establishment of the first mosque in Cape Town, or the Awwal Mosque situated in Upper Dorp Street, Cape Town. In doing so, Bradlow also provides the background for its establishment, including a description of the imams who

officialiated at the particular mosque (from its inception to 1955) and the politics surrounding the administration of the mosque. In chapter two, which has largely been inspired by the first chapter, Cairns does a study of the genealogy of the family who has been connected to the Awwal Mosque for more than 169 years. Cairns traces this particular family's roots back to their ancestors, Saartjie and her husband Achmat of Bengal, who originally established the Awwal Mosque. According to Bradlow, this is almost certainly the first genealogical study of an early Cape Muslim family. Furthermore, in the final chapter, which has also been inspired by the first chapter, Bradlow attempts to establish quantitatively and geographically the origins of the community formerly known as the 'Cape Malays', today known as the Cape Muslims, to distinguish them from later immigrants. In his study, Bradlow discovers the diverse origins of the Cape Muslim community – which includes Africa, India, and Malay/Indonesia etc. His main conclusion derived from this study is that the majority of the early Muslims came from India and not from Indonesia as is assumed by many.

*Pages from Cape Muslim History* – Yusuf Da Cosa and Achmat Davids (ed.)

This book is jointly edited by Yusuf Da Cosa and Achmat Davids, who are among the pioneering local Muslim scholars on Cape Muslim history. It is a somewhat unorthodox approach to the study of Cape Muslim history, which is not necessarily a chronological account. The authors have chosen certain themes, which focus on historical personalities, events, traditions etc., around which aspects of Cape Muslim history has been written.

In chapter one, Da Costa traces the origins of the Cape Muslims, concentrating on the period of slavery from 1652 to its abolishment in 1834. Chapter two is a biographical account of Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar (1626-1699) written by Suleman Dangor, in which the latter discusses certain phases in the life of Shaykh Yusuf, from his birth to his death. These phases include, his education, his resistance to the Dutch, his life in exile, his impact at the Cape, his literary contributions and his death at the Cape in 1699. In chapter three, Davids highlights

the formation of the Cape Muslim community, concentrating on the education system as established by Tuan Guru. Again in chapter three, Davids discusses the survival of Islam at the Cape especially during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter four concentrates on the personality of Imam Achmat Sadick Achmat, as an *imam*, soldier, politician, educator and scholar during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Chapter five highlights the *Hanafi-Shafi'i* dispute that emerged in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with special focus on the impact of the *Hanafi* scholar, Abū Bakr Effendi, who arrived at the Cape in 1862. In chapter six, Da Costa focuses on the personality of Muhammad Salih Hendricks, a scholar of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, highlighting certain events in his life such as, the conversion of his family to Islam, his education in Makkah, his return from Makkah, the *Jumu'ah* agreement, the Al-Zawiyah mosque controversy etc. The next chapter, chapter six, also written by Da Costa, concentrates on yet another, but more recent, personality – Shaykh Muhammad Salih Solomon, who could be considered one of the most influential *hifẓ* teachers at the Cape. In this chapter, Da Costa specifically concentrates on the *hifẓ* tradition at the Cape, tracing back its origins and using Shaykh Muhammad Salih as a key personality, among others. In the final chapter, Da Costa, discusses the influence of *Tasawwuf* - Sufism on Islamic practices at the Cape, concentrating on its history and origins.

*Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia* – Martin Van Bruinessen

This is one of the many articles written by Van Bruinessen on Islam in Southeast Asia. As the title suggests the article mainly deals with the origins and development of the *sūfi* orders in the region. In this particular study, Van Bruinessen discusses the role of Sufism in the Islamization of Southeast Asia, the links with the centres of learning (in Arabia), the impact of Sufism on Malay/Indonesian Islam, and the future of Sufism in the region, among other things. Besides this, Van Bruinessen also focuses on some of the early *Sūfi* personalities in the region, such as `Abdurra'uf of Singkel associated with the *Shattari Sūfi* Order, Yusuf of Makassar (also known as Shaykh Yusuf) associated with *Khalwati Sūfi* Order, `Abd al-Samad of Palembang (South Sumatra)

associated with the *Sammani Sūfi* Order etc. Van Bruinessen also highlights the extent of the influence of the Arabian *sūfi* scholars, such as Ahmad al-Qushashi (d. 1660), Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1691) and Muhammad al-Samman (d. 1775) etc. on the early Southeast Asian *sūfi* scholars. Furthermore, Van Bruinessen also deals with locally established orders such as *Shiddiqiyah*, *Akmalīyyah* etc., as well as neo-*sūfi* orders such as the *Tijāni Sūfi* Order, which attaches itself to the *Shari`ah* and the personality of the Prophet.

Finally, as mentioned above, Van Bruinessen has written many other articles on Islam in Southeast Asia, some of which have also been used in the current research. These include, *Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu*, *Kurdish `ulama and their Indonesian disciples*, *The tariqa Khabwatiyya in South Celebes* etc.

*Islam and Javanese Acculturation: Textual and Contextual Analysis of the Slametan Ritual* – Masdar

Hilmy

This study is a MA thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, at McGill University in Canada, written by Masdar Hilmy. It focuses on a very important concept/ritual in Malay/Javanese Islam – the *slametan* ritual. The *slametan* ritual has been the subject of debate among many scholars of Islam in Java, Indonesia. On the one hand, some scholars view this particular ritual as being animistic and syncretistic, derived mainly from Hinduism and Buddhism, and on the other hand, it is viewed as an Islamic ritual, which is considered a product of Sufism.

In this particular study, Hilmy tries to demonstrate a comprehensive picture of the *slametan* ritual using an approach that combines both textual and contextual perspectives. Furthermore, the author also attempts to examine the extent to which Islam and Javanese tradition is entangled with one another within the *slametan* ritual.

In chapter 1, the author mainly discusses the coming of Islam to Java, Indonesia, and the Islamization of Java. This seems to serve as the necessary background for the discussion on

the nature of the *slametan* ritual in Javanese Islam, whether it is animistic, syncretistic, or Islamic. Chapter 2 focuses on the *slametan* ritual itself, providing a description thereof and discussing its role in Javanese Islam, focusing on its basic conception, its pattern and practical implementation, and the ongoing controversy surrounding it. The third and final chapter offers textual-religious and contextual-cultural analysis of the *slametan*, in which the author wishes to determine whether the *slametan* ritual is theologically animistic, syncretistic or Islamic.

*The History of Islam in Africa* – Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (ed.)

This book is written by a number of authors and supervised and edited by Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels. As the title suggests it primarily deals with the history of Islam in Africa written on ‘a continent-wide scale’. The book is mainly concerned with the dynamics of religious interaction between the “essentials” of Islam and the particular historical, cultural, and environmental factors which produced diversity and indigenous expressions of Islam. In addition, it aimed at providing comprehensive studies of the experience of Muslim communities all over Africa.

The various parts of the book, especially parts two and three, cover the history of Islam in the different regions of Africa, including North Africa, East Africa, West Africa and Southern Africa, and are regional and chronological in scope. Part one have been entitled “Gateways to Africa”, which in simple terms refer to the entry points of Islam into Africa. These include from the north, Egypt and Morocco, and from the east, the Indian Ocean. However, the final part, deals with general themes such as Islamic law in Africa, Muslim women in Africa, *Sūfi* Brotherhoods in Africa etc., and is primarily drawn from the chronological and regional chapters of parts two and three, in order to liven and enrich their comparative studies.

The authors who have participated in the formulation of this book have been recognized among the best and authoritative scholars on the history of Islam in Africa. Some have began

writing on Islam in Africa already in the 1960s, while others have started in the 1970s and 1980s, bringing the fresh fruits of scholarship derived from their dissertations.

*Islamic Resurgence in South Africa – The Muslim Youth Movement - Abdulkader Tayob*

This book is a study of Islamic resurgence in a minority Muslim situation in South Africa, with special focus on the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM) in South Africa. The author uses the term ‘Islamic resurgence’ to indicate the diverse range of Islamic movements that have tried to reclaim a place for Islam in the public arena (Tayob 1994: xi), or in Haron’s analysis, those competing for a ‘spiritual space’ (Haron (1)).

The first chapter deals with the theoretical foundation for understanding the efforts of the MYM to establish its religious and political place among Muslims in South Africa. The second chapter contextualizes Islamic resurgence in South Africa by reviewing two centuries of Muslim history in South Africa, during which time Islamic “orthodoxy” developed all over South Africa, providing the background for alternative Islamic movements. Chapter three traces the rise of the educated elites within the developing South African society during the twentieth century. It was only after World War II that Islamic resurgent groups began to emerge, setting the groundwork for the establishment of the MYM in 1970.

Furthermore, the following chapters, chapter four to chapter six, focuses specifically on the MYM, each chapter highlighting a different phase within the development of the movement. The first phase emphasized the completeness and accessibility of the “Islamic way of life”, intent on claiming a central place within the Muslim community in South Africa. According to the author, this was to an extent a Muslim version of the campaign for “Black Consciousness” which was prevalent in most university campuses throughout South Africa. In the second phase, a new Islamic ideology emerged which the author refers to as “Islamism”. This was in response to the established Muslim orthodoxy as well as the political crisis of Apartheid in South Africa. It was also primarily affected by the success of the Iranian

revolution, as well as the proposed “reforms” of the Apartheid state. The third and most recent phase highlights further development within the MYM, moving from Islamism to contextualization as the dominant strategy of the movement, breaking the pattern of conventional Islamic responses to the political situation in South Africa.

# Chapter One

## *Theory of Identity*

### **1.1. Introduction**

The search for identity has become one of the major concerns for scholars and individual members of a particular group or society alike. It has been one of the main areas of studies in multicultural, democratised societies. This includes all the different forms and types of identity, be it ethnic, racial, national, linguistic, or religious.

This chapter focuses mainly on understanding what identity is, outlining the various types of identities, assessing the impact of globalization on identity, and elucidating Islam's approach to the issue of identity, with particular reference to the primary Islamic sources, the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* (Prophetic Tradition).

### **1.2. Understanding Identity**

#### **1.2.1. Defining Identity**

For psychologists who have studied identity in conjunction with philosophy, 'identity' refers to a sense of sameness and continuity as a person: 'either as a subjective phenomenon or as an objective deliverance, as a feeling, or as a truth. Others define it as an essentially psychosocial phenomenon where the sense of 'me' or 'myself' is formed in relation to others and their responses. Accordingly, this process is also perceived as an ongoing process. (Gilliat-Ray 1998: 347) This particular (social) theory suggests that the individual cannot be viewed in isolation from his/her social interaction with others and that identity is an ongoing process. Reviewing twentieth century sociological thinking on this topic, Paul Kennedy cites the opinion of Jenkins, who argues that 'individual identity' — embodied in selfhood — is not meaningful in

isolation from the social world of other people. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 5) Furthermore, a number of different inclusions and exclusions are simultaneously taking place, in order to accommodate all sorts of tags and characteristics that give us identity, personal identity, cultural identity and social identity. (Pérez)

Identity is not as transparent and unproblematic as we think. In fact the more we delve into the study of identity, the more complicated it becomes, and therefore it is not as straightforward as it seems. Thus, Stewart Hall, an ardent scholar of cultural identity, suggests that instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think of identity as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation.<sup>1</sup> If we consider Hall's suggestion then we should come to the conclusion that identity is not something that is immutable, or unchangeable, but rather that it is continuously changing. This meaning is appropriately illustrated in the following words, "It (identity) is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere 'recovery' of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hall, S., *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*, <http://www.lwbooks.co.uk/ReadingRoom/public/IdentityDiaspora.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

### 1.2.2. Individual Identity vs. Social Identity

The following discussion on individual identity vs. social identity is primarily based on Paul Kennedy's *Globalization and the Crisis of Identities?*, which he outlines in the introduction under the sub-heading *Understanding Identities* (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 2-6):

Economists and psychologists view individuality and individual identities as separate and distinctive from social identities. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 4) There appear to be two selves with the individual/personal unique self being regarded as more real, more significant and quite different from the socially learned or social self. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 4) Furthermore, others have argued that individual and social identities are 'entangled' with each other, are produced by 'analogous' processes and are both 'intrinsically social'. This particular view suggests that there is an overlap between individual and social identities. According to the 'interactionist theory' the overlap between individual and social identities is guaranteed by the fact that the self is constituted through interactions with significant others who provide us with various definitions of ourselves. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 4) In other words, we are unable to know ourselves except through our perceptions of how others see us and how they respond to our characteristics and actions. Accordingly, social identity simultaneously becomes synonymous with 'collectively shared' identity and 'the way in which we more or less self-consciously locate ourselves in our social world'. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 5) Thus, the individual has to invest in the social positions and cultural identities — nationhood, ethnicity, vocation, class and so on — offered by society. Identification, therefore, 'stitches ... the subject into the structure'. When this occurs, social identity 'marks the ways in which we are the same as others who share that position and the ways in which we are different from those who do not'.

From another angle, Kennedy presents different dimension to the notion of identity, which refers to the existence of two different and contradictory ways of thinking about

identification. On the one hand, identities are something we are 'obliged' to assume and they involve 'attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us'. This scenario seems to open the door to a rather different interpretation of individual identity, one that endows the self with more capacity to act autonomously. It also seems to accept that social identity does not always occlude individual personal identity. Thus, the 'balance of power' between society and social actor, structure and agent is tipped more decisively towards the latter. Other writers have been prepared to go somewhat further in recognizing not only the agent/actor's scope for autonomy but also the capacity to activate this through the individual's personal rather than his/her social self and identity.

Furthermore, Kennedy, cites the view of Albrow, who insists that 'the transformations of structure which the multiplication of worlds has created' means that we need to distinguish self (constructed out of the membership of social groups and everyday social life) from personal ('forged out of individual experience' and enables individuals to give 'accounts of themselves') identity. Personal identity is not membership of particular social groups but 'the unique identifier' to which everyone is entitled' namely, 'the universality of the right to be a distinct human being'. In addition, Giddens believes that the individual is more or less compelled to take charge of the self as a reflexive project given the weakening hold of once-powerful solidarities such as class, occupation, church, locality, gender and family and their declining ability to define and confine our life experiences. Accordingly, 'self-identity becomes a reflexively organised endeavour' which requires the construction of a biography and a striving for coherence in the face of growing exposure to a multiplicity of global influences. (Danks and Kennedy 2001: 5)

What can be deduced from Kennedy's study is that identity is not as clear cut as it seems. This is especially true when contrasting individual/personal identity with social identity. Thus,

the extent to which we are unique in our individual/personal identity is even largely affected by our interaction with others, which according to the ‘interactionist theory’ mentioned in this discussion is ‘intrinsically social’.

### 1.2.3. Minority Group Identity

A minority group is a sociological group that does not constitute a politically dominant plurality of the total population of a given society. A sociological minority is not necessarily a numerical minority — it may include any group that is disadvantaged with respect to a dominant group in terms of social status, education, employment, wealth and political power.<sup>3</sup> Because of the fact that a minority group does not necessarily refer to a numerical minority, as was the case of the blacks in South Africa, scholars rather prefer using the term ‘subordinate group’. The main cause for being classified as a minority is discrimination. This refers to discrimination against a subordinate group because of race, religion, gender, economic status, and disability.<sup>4</sup>

There are various types of minority groups:

- Racial/Ethnic Minority<sup>5</sup>: this refers to a racial/ethnic minority group, which is common in most countries. These groups could either refer to migrant, indigenous, or nomadic communities, e.g. Hispaniards living in America (migrant).
- Religious Minority<sup>6</sup>: refers to a religious group who has a faith different to that held by the majority, e.g. Muslims living in Britain.
- Gender/Sexual Minority<sup>7</sup>: usually refers to gender minority groups such as gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexuals. These groups are especially common in the west.

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, <http://en.wikipedia.org>

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

- Age Minorities<sup>8</sup>: these usually refer to groups who are subjected to discrimination because of age. Discrimination against the young (e.g. against children in society) is referred to as adultism and against the elderly, ageism.
- Disabled Minorities<sup>9</sup>: refers to disabled people who are disadvantaged by their impairments, e.g. people in wheelchairs, or blind people.

An important concept to understand, when dealing with the issue of minority groups, is the concept of marginality. This is because a minority group is either a group that marginalizes itself from the rest of the community, or a group subjected to some form of marginalization/discrimination by the rest of the community. (Gilliat-Ray 1998: 348) In certain instances some groups, for various reasons, choose to marginalize themselves, or prefer to be marginalized. Within the Developed World, racial, or ethnic minority groups, stand out as being the most marginalized social groups.

#### 1.2.4. Types of Identity

A Canadian researcher, Joanna A. Rummens, in her study of identity in Canada has enumerated various types of identity, (Rummens 2001: 8-13) some of which include:

- **Aboriginal/Indigenous/Native/First Nations Identity:** This usually refers to the identity of the natives of the land, or of a particular country. For example, in South Africa this would refer to groups like Xhosas and Zulus, and in America this would refer to the Native Red Indians. These groups usually adhere to certain traditional healing practices, rituals, culture, games and subsistence.
- **Ethnic Identity:** This is based on a presumed common genealogy or ancestry. These groups are also usually united by certain common cultural, behavioural, linguistic, or religious practices and traits. The concept of ethnicity is rooted in the idea of social groups

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*

which are distinguished by shared nationality, tribal affiliation, genealogy, religious faith, language, or cultural and traditional origins.<sup>10</sup> The most common ethnic groups in America, for example, are the Hispanics (origin: Latin America + Spain), Black or African American (origin: Africa), White American (origin: Europe, North Africa, Middle East).<sup>11</sup> In South Africa examples of ethnic groups include Malays (origin: Southeast Asia), Indians (origin: India), Whites (origin: Europe (British and Dutch)). (Haron (d))

- **Racial Identity:** This refers to a sense of group or collective identity based on a common racial heritage with a particular racial group. Race is rooted in the idea of a biological classification of *Homo sapiens* according to chosen genotypic and/or phenotypic traits.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Janet Helms, in her study of Black and White racial identity, cites Casas's definition of race, which she viewed as very useful: "A sub-group of peoples possessing a definite combination of physical characters, of genetic origin, the combination of which to varying degrees distinguishes the sub-group from other sub-groups of mankind." Thus, race is determined by physical features, i.e. skin pigmentation (black, white, and tan), eye colour (brown, blue, and green), hair type/colour (black, brown, and blonde), and facial features. It even sometimes includes height (short, tall, and medium). Furthermore, ethnicity and race are seen as related concepts but they differ a lot in meaning. In fact the application of race sometimes seems to overlap with ethnicity.
- **Linguistic Identity:** This usually refers to groups sharing a common language. It is usually a trait of a certain ethnic or national group.<sup>13</sup> For example, Chinese language (relative to people of Chinese origin), Turkish language (relative to people of Turkish origin), Spanish (relative to people of Spanish origin), and German language (relative to people of German origin). Furthermore, most countries especially in the west are

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<sup>10</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_identity)

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*

<sup>12</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_identity)

<sup>13</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_identity)

multiracial and therefore one will also find many languages being spoken there. In South Africa in particular, which has a multilingual language policy, there are 11 official languages that are used. These include, English, Afrikaans, Xhosa, Zulu, IsiNdebele, Northern Sotho, Sesotho, Setswana, SiSwati, Tshivenda, and Xitsonga, nine of which belong to native groups within South Africa, and two (English and Afrikaans) of which were inherited from the colonialists. Besides this, the South African Language Policy also caters for other languages such as German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Portuguese, Tamil, Telegu and Urdu. Furthermore it also acknowledges religious languages such as Arabic (for Islam) and Hebrew (for Judaism).<sup>14</sup>

- **National Identity:** This usually refers to a group of people belonging to the same nation or country, sharing a common descent, a common language, a common culture and a common religion. However, because of multiracial, multi-cultural and multi-lingual groups in many countries, sharing common traits is not the only distinguishing factor of national identity. It also includes shared values and norms of behavior, certain duties toward other members, and certain responsibilities for the actions of the members. It is therefore possible for people with difference in personalities, belief systems, geographical locations, time and even spoken language, to regard themselves and be seen by others, as members of the same nation.<sup>15</sup>
- **Religious Identity:** This is a matter of self – identification and self – declaration of those, who only believe in, or also follow the doctrines of a particular religion. Religious identity is usually distinguished by the means of clearly defined doctrines, rituals and customs, as well as clearly established criteria for drawing the borderlines that separate the particular religion from all the others.<sup>16</sup> In some religions it includes identifying with a specific

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<sup>14</sup> Refer to SALanguages Website, <http://salanguages.com>

<sup>15</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_identity)

<sup>16</sup> Refer to *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious\\_identity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_identity)

religious or sacred language, e.g. Hebrew (for Judaism), Arabic (for Islam), Sanskrit (for Hinduism), Latin (for pre-Vatican Catholicism), and Avestan (for Parsees). Regarding this, John F.A. Sawyer writes, “Common to many religions is the tradition that rituals must be performed in a particular language, frequently a language clearly distinguished from the language of everyday use. In some cases it is a special variety of the participants own language, perhaps an obsolete, forgotten dialect, while in others it is a completely different language which is totally unintelligible to the worshippers.” (Sawyer 1999: 24)

Natural differences between human beings based on race, nationality, ethnicity and language, if used in a negative way leads to discrimination. It is this that has given rise to ideologies such as racism<sup>17</sup> and nationalism.<sup>18</sup> In other words, when race, nationality, ethnicity, language are used to discriminate then it is used in a negative way. Many people or groups through the years and even up to the present have used and still use race, nationality, ethnicity and language to discriminate against others. To draw on our own local experience, for example, we find that in the history of South Africa, the Apartheid government, headed by a white racial group mainly of Dutch origin, used race and language to discriminate against others (blacks and coloureds). “With the enactment of apartheid laws in 1948, racial discrimination was institutionalized. Race laws touched every aspect of social life, including a prohibition of marriage between non-whites and whites, and the sanctioning of “white-only” jobs. In 1950, the Population Registration Act required that all South Africans be racially classified into one of three categories: white, black (African), or coloured (of mixed decent). The coloured category included major subgroups of Indians and Asians. Classification into these categories was based on appearance, social acceptance, and descent. For example, a

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<sup>17</sup> Racism is commonly defined as a belief or doctrine where inherent biological differences among the various human races determine cultural or individual achievement, with a corollary that one's own race is superior and has the right to rule others. (Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism>)

<sup>18</sup> Nationalism is an ideology that holds that a nation is the fundamental unit for human social life, and takes precedence over any other social and political principles. (Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalism>)

white person was defined as "in appearance obviously a white person or generally accepted as a white person." A person could not be considered white if one of his or her parents were non-white. The determination that a person was "obviously white" would take into account "his habits, education, and speech and deportment and demeanour." A black person would be of or accepted as a member of an African tribe or race, and a coloured person is one that is not black or white. The Department of Home Affairs (a government bureau) was responsible for the classification of the citizenry. Non-compliance with the race laws were dealt with harshly. All blacks were required to carry "pass books" containing fingerprints, photo and information on access to non-black areas."<sup>19</sup> In 1974, the Apartheid Government even introduced a policy (*Afrikaans Medium Decree*) that forced all black students to learn the Afrikaans language and to be taught secondary school mathematics, social sciences, geography and history in the language, which was seen as an outright discrimination against black indigenous languages.<sup>20</sup> However many black students opposed this policy. In fact, on June 16, 1976, thousands of black students met for a rally to protest more effectively against having to learn Afrikaans in school. This led to one of the worst tragedies in South African history. On that particular day, hundreds of students lost their lives to racial/linguistic discrimination.<sup>21</sup>

A similar experience is shared by many black minority groups throughout the world, even by the most advanced democratic nations, such as America and Britain

### 1.3. The Impact of Globalisation on Identity

#### 1.3.1. Understanding Globalization

Globalization (or globalisation) can be defined as the increasing interdependence, integration and interaction among people and corporations in disparate locations around the world. It is an umbrella term which refers to a complex of economic, trade, social, technological, cultural

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<sup>19</sup> The History of Apartheid in South Africa - <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/~cale/cs201/apartheid.hist.html>

<sup>20</sup> Wikipedia - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soweto\\_riots](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soweto_riots)

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*

and political interrelationships. Though the term has been used as early as 1944, Theodore Levitt is usually credited with its first use in an economic context.<sup>22</sup> This is despite the fact that it has been used in other contexts as well. Scholars have categorized it as follows, (1) *industrial* globalization (alias *transnationalization*) - rise and expansion of multinational enterprises, (2) *financial* globalization - emergence of worldwide financial markets and better access to external financing for corporate, national and subnational borrowers, (3) *political* globalization - spread of political sphere of interests to the regions and countries outside the neighbourhood of political (state and non-state) actors, (4) *informational* globalization - increase in information flows between geographically remote locations, (5) and finally, *cultural* globalization - growth of cross-cultural contacts.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, globalization, or global ideas spread in various ways, by various means. This is achieved mainly through the exchange of cultures or modern technology:

**Global cultural exchange:**

Multiculturalism or cultural exchange is achieved through the following

- International film industry - export of Hollywood and Bollywood movies
- International travel and tourism
- Immigration, including illegal immigration
- Consumerism or the spread of local consumer products (e.g., food) to other countries (often adapted to their culture)
- World-wide fads and pop culture such as Pokémon, Sudoku, Numa Numa, Origami, Idol series, YouTube, and MySpace.
- World-wide sporting events such as FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games.

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<sup>22</sup> Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalization>

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

- Formation or development of a set of universal values<sup>24</sup>

The imported culture can easily supplant the local culture, causing reduction in diversity through hybridization or even assimilation. The most prominent form of this is Westernization, but Sinicization of cultures also takes place.

#### **Global Technology:**

- Development of a global telecommunications infrastructure and greater transborder data flow, using such technologies as the Internet, communication satellites, submarine fiber optic cable, and wireless telephones.
- Increase in the number of standards applied globally; e.g. copyright laws and patents<sup>25</sup>

#### **1.3.2. Globalization vs. Identity**

Globalization is generally perceived in a negative light. This is in all its different areas of influence. In terms of the linguistic and cultural sphere, it is often perceived to be a destroyer thereof. Thus, John Tomlinson writes, “Typically, it has been associated with the destruction of cultural identities, victims of the accelerating encroachment of a homogenized, westernized, consumer culture.” He further adds that anti-globalization activists have interpreted it as ‘a seamless extension of western cultural imperialism’. (Tomlinson) In another sense it has been viewed as just another term for Americanization, as it is believed by some observers that the United States could be one of the few countries (if not the only one) to truly benefit from it.<sup>26</sup>

On the contrary, Tomlinson argues that cultural identity, properly understood, is more a product of globalization than a victim. He is thus of the opinion that globalization, far from destroying identity, has been perhaps the most significant force in *creating and proliferating* it. He bases this on the fact before the age of globalization people were not interested in identity. People never saw the need to define their identity. To clarify this point Tomlinson cites an

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*

example of David Morley's commentary of Roger Rouse's study of Mexican labour migrants to the United States, who points out that these people 'moved from a world in which ... *identity was not a central concern*, to one in which they were pressed . . . to adopt a particular form of personhood (as bearers of individual identities) and of identity as a member of a collective or "community" . . . which *was quite at odds with their own understanding of their situation and their needs*'. This leads Tomlinson to believe that identity may not be a universal concept but rather a modern way of socially organizing – and indeed regulating – cultural experience. (Tomlinson) This further strengthens the argument that globalization, instead of destroying identity, generates it.

## 1.4. Identity in Islam

### 1.4.1. Identity in the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*

The primary Islamic sources do not deal specifically with the concept of identity; neither do they make specific reference to the word identity. However, the *Qur'ān* does discuss issues relating to identity, such as language, nationality, race, tribal differences in humans. (*Qur'ān*; 30:22, 49:13) In this way, it acknowledges the fact that there are differences in human beings. In fact, these are perceived to be natural differences, and as part of human nature. Furthermore, the phenomenon of nationhood is very common in the *Qur'ān*. Besides particular reference to race and language, the *Qur'ān* makes continuous reference to this concept, either describing various nations, such as the Romans/Byzantines (*Qur'ān*, 30:1), and the Israelites (*Qur'ān*, 30:1), reminding Muslims of the destiny of nations who rejected faith. In fact one chapter of the *Qur'ān* is entitled *Sūrat al-Rūm* (The Romans) and another chapter *Sūrah Bani Isrā'il* (The Children of Israel/Israelites). The *Qur'ān* even makes reference to some ancient nations/civilizations, such as `Ād and Thamūd (*Qur'ān*, 41:13), who were totally destroyed because of their rejection of faith. `Ād (12 times in the *Qur'ān*) refers to the people of the Prophet Hūd (*Qur'ān*, 7:65) and Thamūd refers to the people of Prophet Sālih (11:61).

Furthermore there are two words used in the *Qur'ān* to refer to a nation, i.e. the word *qawm* (قوم) which appears 5471 times in the *Qur'ān* and the word *'ummah* (أمة) which appears 49 times. However, the former seems to refer to nation in general and the latter, in its single form, seem to refer more to the Islamic nation in particular.

Thus according to the *Qur'ān* it is natural to be different in terms of race, nationality, and language. The main reason for these differences are merely for *ta'aruf* (*Qurān*; 49:13) – to become acquainted with one another (Wehr 1974: 605), or in other words to recognize one another – in order to identify one another. It is important to note that these racial, national, ethnic and linguistic differences could be used in a positive or a negative way and it is obvious that the *Qur'ān* uses them in a positive way – recognizing the natural differences among human beings. In fact, the *Qur'ān* views this as part of Allah's signs to prove His greatness and majesty. (*Qur'ān*; 30:22)

It is evident from the above that in Islam discrimination is not based on race, nationality, and language, but on *taqwā* (*Qurān*; 49:13) – consciousness of God, or piety (Wehr 1974: 1094). The Prophet Muhammad also recognised the natural differences in human beings and opposed all forms of discrimination based on race, language, nationality, wealth and even culture.<sup>27</sup>

The message of Islam was never for a specific group of people. It was always considered a universal one, a message to all of humanity (*Qurān*; 2:18, 3:4). It is a message that transcends race, nationality, and even geographical boundaries, and this is despite the fact that the original message was revealed in the Arabic language, in an Arab context. This is emphasised by both the *Qur'ān* and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad.

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<sup>27</sup> Here reference is made to the *Hadith* (Tradition) of the Prophet found in the *Musnad* of Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, "Indeed, there is no preference for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor black-skinned over red-skinned (white) except through *taqwā*."

It was with this non-discriminatory philosophy that the early Muslims spread the message of Islam to the different parts of the world, taking into consideration the natural differences among people, as well respecting their customs and traditions, accepting what was good amongst them and rejecting what was against the basic principles of Islam. (Abd-Allah)

The actions of the early Muslims were primarily based on the *Qur'ān* and *Hadīth*. The Prophet tolerated many of the cultural practices of others. In one particular case, he stopped his companion, `Umar<sup>28</sup>, from discriminating against a group of black African converts who were beating drums and dancing with spears in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, during the celebration of *Īd*.<sup>29</sup> In fact, he even allowed his wife `Ā'ishah, to view this particular activity. The Prophet referred to the group of Africans in this story as the “sons of Arfida”. It is clear from the story that the “sons of Arfida” had their own distinctive cultural tastes and conventional usages. In a commentary on the above incident, `Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, writes, “The fact that they had embraced Islam did not mean they were also required to commit cultural apostasy or become subservient to Arab customs. The Prophet allowed Muslim Arabs agency in their social expression and extended a similar right to non-Arabs. By his affirmation of the “sons of Arfida,” he established an overriding *sunna* and abiding legal precedent for respecting different ethnic and cultural traditions and acknowledging the emotional needs, tastes, and cultural inclinations of all who embraced his teaching. The Prophet cultivated openness and objectivity towards others—this was also part of his lesson to `Umar—and such openness enabled his companions to acknowledge the good in other cultures even when, as was the case with the Byzantine Christians/Romans (*al-Rum*), they were not only hostile to the

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<sup>28</sup> It is important to note that the account found in Al-Bukhārī refers to the particular companion as Abū Bakr and not `Umar.

<sup>29</sup> This is based on an account given by Umar Faruq Abd-Allah which he has taken from *Musnad al-Jumaydi, Islam and the Cultural Imperative* - <http://www.crosscurrents.org/abdallahfall2006.pdf>

rise of Islamic power on their southern flank but constituted Islam's most formidable enemy.” (Abd-Allah)

Early expressions of Islamic law also echoed this type of tolerance. Moreover, Islamic law tolerated other cultural expressions and dealt with it under the principle of *`urf/`adab* (customary law). In Islamic law, *`urf* and *`adab* connote those aspects of local culture which are generally recognized as good, beneficial, or merely harmless. Of course this respect for culture did not amount to “blanket acceptance.” (Abd-Allah) This means that if *`urf/`adab* contradicts the principles of Islamic law, and is in itself recognized as harmful, or evil, then it is rejected. The recognition of sound custom was viewed by many of the early jurists as important in the application of the law. They did however, differentiate between *tashabbuh* (subservient imitation of others), which is considered forbidden or reprehensible, and sound custom. (Abd-Allah) In addition, in Islamic law, custom is not regarded as a proof in itself, but rather it is regarded as teleological, which supports the judicial process. In other words, if a jurist gives a legal judgement he should consider the local customs. According to al-Shatibi, a well known Islamic jurist from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, “handing down legal judgements in harmony with the good aspects of local culture/custom fulfilled the Islamic objective of buttressing societies general well-being.” (Abd-Allah) Accordingly, to reject sound custom and usage was not only counterproductive, it brought excessive difficulty and unwarranted harm to people.

A summary of the place of culture or cultural identity in Islam can be taken from Ahmed Mukadam's thesis, *Muslim Common Religious Practices at the Cape – Identification and Analysis*, in which he, with some reservation, cites the opinion of Al-Faruqi in drawing the parameters of contending cultural systems, “This absoluteness of Islamic culture did not make it intolerant of the ethnic sub-cultures of its adherents, of their languages and literature, of their folk customs and styles. But it has distinguished the culture of Islam from adah, literally, local

custom, the provincial content which Islam tolerated even to the point of regarding it juristically acceptable, but which it always kept in the place proper to it.” (Mukadam 1990: 17)

#### 1.4.2. Islamic Identity vs. National Identity – the Post-Ottoman Period

As we have seen in the preceding section, the message of Islam is universal, transcending race, nationality, ethnicity and even geographical boundaries. Thus, the Islamic nation (*ummah*), taking on this universal quality, transcends these boundaries. Ideally, Muslims see themselves as one global nation. It was the *khilāfat* (caliphate) that essentially kept the *ummah* together since the time of the Prophet. However, with the expansion of the Islamic territories, it became more and more difficult to govern the Islamic nation (*ummah*) from one central point. Besides this, the *khilāfat* had its own internal politics and challenges. Robert Johnson, in his study of the decline and fall of the Ottoman Empire, lists five main reasons for the decline and fall of the Turkish/Ottoman Empire, besides European intervention. These include: (1) the moribund nature of the Ottoman government and the empire’s relative decline economically; (2) the spread of nationalism in the Balkans; (3) the attempts to revive Turkey by the 'New Ottomans' and 'Young Turks'; (4) the German attempts to generate a sphere of influence in the Middle East, and (5) the impact of the Balkan Wars. (Johnson 2005) Thus, the *khilāfat*, which in this case was represented by the Ottoman Empire, was challenged from various angles, which eventually led to its collapse at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is interesting to note that among the reasons for the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, was the ‘spread of nationalism in the Balkans’. (Johnson 2005) The fall of the Ottomans led to fragmentation in the *ummah*. Muslims no longer saw themselves as belonging to one universal *ummah*, but they began to see themselves as distinct nations. National boundaries started to be clearly defined.

It is especially since the fall of the Ottomans, that Muslims began to fall prey to Nationalism – its outer expression being the nation-state. This led to an identity crisis in the

Islamic world. Questions started to surface, i.e. Who am I? Is my identity national or religious? For example, Am I a Muslim first, or am I an American/Saudi Arabian/South African first? These are the type of questions that faced most Muslims around the globe. Muslims were thus torn between their national identity and their religious identity, between loyalty to the state and loyalty to Islam.

### **1.5. Conclusion**

There seems to be currently an identity crisis in most regions of the world. Not surprisingly, therefore, the discussion on identity has become extensive and identity deconstruction has become a very important debate among scholars. Adding to this is the impact of globalization, which according to some scholars has come to destroy both ‘individual’ and ‘social’ identities.

What is relevant to the current study is the definition and understanding of cultural-religious identity, and minority group identity. The nature of Cape Muslim identity is in essence a cultural-religious/Islamic identity of a specific minority status religious group in South Africa. The tools used to spread ideas and information globally are relevant to our discussion on the global Islamic influences on Cape Muslim identity which will specifically be dealt with in the final chapter.

## Chapter Two

### *The Nature of Cape Muslim Identity*

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The Cape Muslims form a part of the greater South African Muslim population which constitutes roughly 2% of the general South African population of close to 45 million people. As a religious group, South African Muslims are classified as a Muslim Minority in a country dominated by Christianity and other faiths. (Vahed and Jeppie 2004: 1) However, in recent years, their minority status have been challenged by progressive Muslim groups who believe that South African Muslims should form part of a new, democratic and changing South Africa, where they are no longer seen as a minority, but that they form an integral part of the greater South African community, where all people, their cultures, their religions etc. are equal.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, there has always been a debate around the identity and origins of the Cape Muslims. Early sources refer to them as ‘Cape Malays’ rather than ‘Cape Muslims’, which has been considered by their own scholars as both discriminative and derogative. The argument, among other things, rests mainly on the fact that the Muslim community of the Cape was made up of a large variety of people with diverse origins. These include Indonesian, Malaysian, Indian, and African etc. According Bradlow and Da Costa the majority of Cape Muslims was of Indian origin. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 10; Bradlow 1978: 103) This has probably led many scholars to conclude that Cape Muslim identity were more so influenced by individuals of Indian origin, in particular Bengal. (Bradlow 1978: 83) In addition to this, Achmat Davids has also associated many of the Cape Muslim practices, such as *Rampie-sny*<sup>2</sup> and *Ratiep* etc. with Indian-Hindu traditions. (Davids 1980: 25) It is therefore mainly

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a paper entitled, “South African Muslim Minorities: Between integration and rejection”, delivered by `Abd al-Rasheed Brown, pp. 7-10 , at the IPSA Seminar in Cape Town, 2005, entitled, *South African Muslims in a Changing World: Issues and Strategies*.

<sup>2</sup> Refers to the Orange Leaf Festival during the *Mawlid* celebrations.

based on the diversity of the Cape Muslim community in terms of their origins that scholars among them have objected to the term ‘Cape Malay’, as referred to by I.D. Du Plessis and others.

In a recent study on Cape Muslim identity, Muhammad Haron, revisits the issue in his study, *Conflict of Identities*. Haron examines all the books, research papers and articles written on the Cape Muslims in general and Cape Muslim/Malay identity in particular. In his conclusion, he acknowledges the fact that the issue of Cape Muslim/Malay identity is an unresolved one in need of further in depth research and analysis. He also brings to our attention that the use of the term ‘Cape Malay’ in particular, continues to be a contested terrain where there are a fair number of voices in support of it and an equal number opposed to it. (Haron (4))

When one analyzes the conflict in using the term ‘Cape Malay’ as opposed to ‘Cape Muslims’ in reference to the Muslims of the Western Cape, one finds that the former refers to ethnic identity and the latter to religious identity.

The ethnic classification, i.e. ‘Cape Malays’, was preferred by some scholars for various reasons and has been employed as follows:

- **ethnic & Malay dominance** – the Malay group of Muslims was dominant,
- **linguistic** - because during the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Cape Muslims primarily spoke various forms of Malay, the lingua franca of the Malay/Indonesian Archipelago,
- **political** – the use of the term was considered as a natural consequence of the political developments within the country – also use by the Apartheid Regime as tool for its main philosophy, i.e. “Divide and Rule”,
- **used by the Department of Home Affairs as a racial classification** - the Population Registration Act no.30 of 1950 divided the South Africans into four distinct categories, namely Whites, Indians, Africans, and Coloureds; it defined the latter as ‘not a white person or a native’. The Coloured group was further sub-divided into 'Cape Malay,' Other Coloureds, Khoisan, Bastards etc.,

- **diplomatic ties with Southeast Asia** – Achmat Davids used the term Cape Malay in the 1990s to build a relationship between Southeast Asia and the Cape Muslim community,
- **societal attitudes and behaviour** – it was reinforced by the attitudes and behaviour of society which was predominantly Christian,
- **preference** – some scholars merely preferred using the term Cape Malay. (Haron (4))

Some of the reasons that might have been overlooked when searching for the rationale behind the use of the term ‘Cape Malay’ could be the following: (1) **leadership** - the fact that most of the leaders such as Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru etc. were Malay in origin, (2) **dominance in Malay-Indonesian culture** – many of the cultural-religious practices and even the foods of the Cape Muslims have Malay origins. It could therefore be argued that leadership especially played an important role in shaping the identity of the Cape Muslims, as well as their ethnic classification by scholars as ‘Cape Malays’. Besides this, these leaders played an important role in establishing Islam at the Cape, through education and establishing the cultural-religious traditions, which mainly originated from the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago.

Furthermore, most of Western Cape's Muslims were placed into the 'Cape Malay' category; and the term remained employable by even those who moved to other parts (e.g. Mafeking, Kimberley, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Johannesburg) of the country as well as to the neighbouring states (Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia). (Haron (4)) M. Abdurahgiem Paulsen in his thesis entitled, *The Malay Community of Gauteng*, makes reference to the ‘Malay Quarter’ in Johannesburg/Gauteng, the Malay cultural-religious traditions like the *Mawlūd*, the *Hājab* which they refer to as a *Gadat/armāb*, the *tammāt*, the *Ratiep* etc. which still exist among the ‘Malay Muslims’, who have settled in areas like Bosmont, Nuclare, Eldorado Park and their surrounding areas. (Paulsen (undated): 83) In fact, during a visit to Johannesburg in May 2004, I had the opportunity to observe and even participate in many of these cultural-religious practices, which took place mainly in the Bosmont and Eldorado Park areas,

which has a majority ‘Malay Muslim’ population.<sup>3</sup> What was very striking was the similarity in the way these practices were conducted in Johannesburg and the way they are conducted in Cape Town. It was as if you sitting somewhere in Cape Town, yet it was miles away. Therefore, besides taking the name ‘Cape Malays’, these Muslims who went to settle in Johannesburg during the ‘Gold-rush’ towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also continued and perpetuated the traditions of the Cape, establishing mosques that were initially headed by imams that came from the Cape. (Tayob 1999: 68, Paulsen (undated): 29) Furthermore, I had a similar experience, when I visited the ‘Malay’ area in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, in June 1999. Here, I also attended some religious ceremonies, which were also very similar to that of the Cape Muslims. In particular, I attended a *Hājah* which was referred to as the *Fātibah* instead.<sup>4</sup> Adding to this, Yusuf Feltman, a resident from Kimberly, also informed me that in Kimberly they also had a ‘Malay Quarter’ and that many of the Cape cultural-religious traditions, such as the *Mawlūd*, the *Gadat*, the *Hājah* and even the *Ratiep* were very popular among Muslims of Kimberly. According to Feltman, all these practices, with the exception, of the *Ratiep* are still being upheld in Kimberly.<sup>5</sup> It is very interesting to see how these migrants from the Cape established themselves elsewhere in South Africa and even abroad, basing their Islam on the same traditions as that of the Cape Muslims. This is without deviating from the original Cape Muslim traditions.

On the contrary, there were also other scholars like Auwais Rafudeen, Frank Bradlow and others who rather preferred using the term ‘Cape Muslims’ instead of ‘Cape Malays’. Rafudeen was among the contemporary scholars who regarded the term ‘Cape Malay’ as discriminative and derogative. He seemed to have followed scholars like Shamiel Jeppie who also opposed the use of the term ‘Cape Malay’ to refer to the Muslims of the Western Cape. Jeppie also preferred to use the term ‘Cape Muslims’ instead. In fact, he has vehemently criticized I.D. Du Plessis’ use of the term in a critique entitled, *Historical Process and the Constitution of Subjects*. According to Haron, Jeppie “concretely

<sup>3</sup> This refers to my visit to Johannesburg between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2004, in which I observed and participated in some of the religious practices such as the *Mawlūd*, the *Hājah* and the *Ratiep* etc.

<sup>4</sup> This refers to my visit to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe from June to July 1999, in which I observed and participated in some of the religious practices such as the *Mawlūd* and the *Hājah* etc.

<sup>5</sup> Interview –Yusuf Feltman – 11 December 2006

demonstrated the diabolical role Du Plessis played as a researcher, academic and administrator in not only reinventing but also in reinforcing this identity as a natural consequence of the political developments within the country.” (Haron (4)) Frank Bradlow on the other hand saw it rather fit to use the term ‘Cape Muslims’ because of his analysis that the majority of the slaves of the Western Cape came from India and not from Indonesia as it has been incorrectly assumed by many of the Muslims of the region. (Bradlow 1978: 83) It is also worth mentioning that Achmat Davids, one of the leading Muslim historians of the Cape, explicitly criticized the use of the term ‘Cape Malay’ in his book, *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*. According to Haron, Davids' statement was made at the time when the general Muslim populace sympathized and supported the internal and external liberation movements against apartheid. He also adds that in the socio-political context of the time the oppressed masses rejected all the ethnic labels imposed by the state. (Haron (4)) Furthermore, in Haron’s assessment of Davids’ use of the term ‘Cape Muslim’ he seems to have been inconsistent. This is with reference to the fact that when the Malaysians and Indonesians forged commercial and cultural contacts with South Africa during the 1990s Davids tacitly accepted the term ‘Cape Malay’ and used it interchangeably with the term ‘Cape Muslim’. (Haron (4))

It is evident from the above that there is much debate around the use of the term ‘Cape Muslims’ as opposed to ‘Cape Malays’ or vice versa, in reference to the Muslims of the Western Cape. Even many Muslims of the Western Cape are under the impression that they are purely Malay in origin. However, this is not the case, as the Muslim pioneers of the Cape came from diverse origins and backgrounds. These include as mentioned earlier, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Africa and even the Middle East etc. In fact, according to Bradlow, 51, 36% of the slaves and free blacks hailed from India and only 44, 38 % came from the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago. (Bradlow 1978: 103) Da Costa also makes us aware of these facts when he discusses the origins of the Cape Muslims in *Pages from Cape Muslim History*. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 10) Despite the diverse origins of the Cape Muslims the influence of a Malay-Indonesian Islam still seemed to be dominant throughout. Thus, Robert Shell in

his study of the establishment and spread of Islam at the Cape concludes that the word Indonesian is the most accurate term and that even though some slaves came from India, Ceylon and Macao, their religious influence was so slight that the broader 'Asian' term is unwarranted. (Bradlow 1978: 80)

For the purpose of the current study, I will rather be focusing on the religious classification, 'Cape Muslims', rather than the ethnic classification, 'Cape Malays'. This is because the former relates more to the topic under discussion, i.e. Cape Muslim identity, while at the same time, being acutely aware of the sensitivity surrounding the issue. This however, does not at all disregard Malay-Indonesian ethnic influence on Cape Muslim identity. In fact, Cape Muslim identity cannot be viewed in isolation from Malay-Indonesian ethnic influence, which I believe, as I explained earlier, dominated the identity of the Cape Muslims. One will therefore see in the succeeding chapter the impact of Malay-Indonesian Islam on the identity of the Cape Muslims.

The current chapter will focus mainly on the nature of Cape Muslim identity, which includes all aspects of their religious (Islamic) identity. It looks at their identity in terms of their adherence to certain doctrinal traditions, legal traditions, cultural-linguistic traditions and finally their spiritual traditions. It also looks at the impact of Islamic education on Cape Muslim identity as established by Tuan Guru in the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. All these will be linked to their origins, which have mainly been rooted, among others, in Malay-Indonesian Islam.

## **2.2. The Doctrinal (*Aqīdah*) Traditions of the Cape Muslims**

Among the early Muslims there existed two distinct Doctrinal Traditions, i.e. the *Māturidi* doctrinal tradition and the *Ash`ari* doctrinal tradition. These constituted the traditions of the *Ahl as-Sunnah* (those who follow the authentic teachings of the Prophet Muhammad of Islam) as opposed to *Mu`taẓilab*, primarily based on reason. The *Māturidi* doctrinal tradition was named after its founder, Abu Mansur al-Maturidi (d. 333/944) and the *Ash`ari* doctrinal tradition was named after its founder, Abu Al-Hasan Al-Ash`ari (d. 324/935). (Watt 1985: 64-65; Lewinstein 1994) The majority of the *Hanafi* Muslims (Lewinstein 1994; Zysow 2002: 235; Williams 1961: 180), subscribe to the former

doctrinal tradition and the *Shāfi'i* Muslims follow the latter. (Watt 1985: 81) The following is a statement by John Alden Williams who had the following to say about the two doctrinal positions, “Among the *Shāfi'i* School of Baghdad, Māturīdī's contemporary al-Ash'arī played the same role Māturīdī had among the Ḥanafīs of Samarqand, and of the two men al-Ash'arī has become the better known. While there were certain disputed questions between the two schools they founded, their aims were basically the same: to refute Mu`tazilī theology and reaffirm the doctrines of the Old Believer Sunnis with the aid of logical demonstration and philosophic concepts.” (Williams 1961: 188)

The Cape Muslims in particular followed the *Ash`ari* Doctrinal Tradition, as taught by Tuan Guru at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. (Davids (undated): 25)

### 2.2.1. *Aqīdah* (Doctrinal) Teachings at the Cape – Tuan Guru (Master Teacher)

The early Cape Muslims had a very structured educational system. The educational structure was pioneered by a scholar by the name of *ʿAbdullāh bin Qādi ʿAbd al-Salām* (Tuan Guru) who was an exiled prince from Java, who arrived at the Cape in latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Hence the criticisms levelled against the Early Cape Muslims, i.e. they were illiterate, had no structured education etc. are completely unfounded.

Historically Tuan Guru's teachings impacted greatly on the lives of the local Muslims, though there were others before him who also contributed tremendously to the educational structures of the Cape Muslims. In this regard, Davids quotes Mayson as saying; “Although Islamic education today is terribly fragmented and disorganized, there was a time in the nineteenth-century Cape history that the Cape Muslims had a highly organized system of education”. (Davids 1991:61) This system was adopted by almost all of the Islamic Missionary Schools (*Madāris*) throughout the Western Cape.

In 1793, after being released from prison on Robben Island, Tuan Guru started the Dorp Street Islamic Missionary School (*Madrāsah*). (Davids 1989: 2) According to many historians this was the first institutionalized Islamic Missionary School ever established in Cape Town. (Davids 1991 and Mahida 1993) His teachings were mainly geared towards establishing Islamic Monotheism (*Tawhīd*) among the

Muslim slaves. However, this school and many others like it were not just popular among Muslim slaves but also attracted non-Muslim slaves. Reverend James Willis Sanders [1838], who admired the educational efforts of the Cape Muslim community, declares, "... They have always deeply sympathized with their brethren in slavery. They have raised a fund to make as many as they could free, and have opened schools for the instruction of the coloured children... the black man has no desire to enter into the Christian Church whose gates have been long shut against him, he prefers joining with those who have been his friends in his distress, who invited and encourage him to bring his children to the same school, to attend the same mosque, and to look forward to meeting in the same paradise." (Davids 1991: 57)

While he was in prison on Robben Island, Tuan Guru wrote an Arabic/Malay work, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa al-Īmān* (The Understanding of Islam and Faith), primarily dealing with Islamic Monotheism, based on the *Ash`ari* doctrine. This particular section dealing with *`Aqīdah* is Tuan Guru's transcription of the *Ummul Barāhīn* (The Demonstrative Proofs), also called the *Sanusiyyah*, written by a North African scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Yūsuf al-Sanūsi (d. 1490) of Tlemcen. (Rafudeen 2004: 1) The *Ummul Barāhīn* which manifested itself in the teachings of Tuan Guru came to be referred to locally as the *twintig sifaats* (twenty attributes). Furthermore, Tuan Guru's book also included basic teaching in *Fiqh* (Islamic Law), *Hadīth*, amulets, and some *Anwād*<sup>6</sup> especially associated with the *Shādhili* and *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Orders. (Guru 1786: 149, 153, 198, 213, 285; Rafudeen 2004: 1) He used this particular book to teach the slaves and free blacks at the Dorp Street *Madrasah*. (Davids 1991) Up till the latter part of the last century, this system of education was still in existence, but was also eventually challenged and replaced by other educational systems. Moreover, the influence of Tuan Guru's *tawhīd*-based teaching had without doubt impacted greatly on the minds and identity of the Muslims at the Cape. Achmat Davids mentions the impact of this book on the identity of the local Muslims in the following words, "the *Marifatul Islami wal Imani* had a profound influence on the social

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<sup>6</sup> Refers specific litanies and invocations of a certain *Sūfi* order, taken mainly from the *Qur`ān*, to be recited daily or at certain occasions.

life of the Cape Muslims during the nineteenth century. It was their basic reference on religious issues, even cited as such in a Cape Supreme Court litigation in 1873.” Davids adds that, “its philosophical positions still form the approach to *‘aqīda*, (the Islamic belief system), and became the subject of several Arabic-Afrikaans or Afrikaans in Roman script publications in the late nineteenth and during the twentieth centuries”. (Davids 1989: 13) Among the more recent publications include the Afrikaans work of Shaykh Amien Fakier, entitled *Akiedatoel-Moesliem* (The Muslim’s Doctrine), published in 1982. Accordingly, the last pages 115-119 include the last portion of the *Ummul Barāhīn* text translated in Afrikaans. (Rafudeen 2004) In addition to this, Shaykh Amien’s later work, written in English, the *Ar-Risaalah Al-Mufeedah*, locally referred to as the Al-Mufeedah, also includes the *Ummul Barāhīn* text. (Fakier 1995: 34-40) More details of the book and its author will be included in the following section. It is especially due to popularity of these works that many of the local Muslims still remain familiar and identify with the *‘aqīdah* teachings of Tuan Guru, among other things. This has also been confirmed by some of the participants whom I have personally interviewed.<sup>7</sup>

### 2.3. The Legal Traditions of the Cape Muslims

The majority of Cape Muslims, even up to the present, follow the *Shāfi‘i Madh-hab* (Legal Tradition/School)<sup>8</sup>. They are among the 15 % percent of the world Muslim population that follow this particular Legal Tradition/School. The *Shāfi‘i* s are mainly found in Indonesia, Southern Arabia, Lower Egypt, parts of Syria, Palestine, East Africa, India and South Africa.<sup>9</sup>

The school is named after its founder Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi‘i (767-819), who was born in Gaza, Palestine. (Fakier 1995: 346) Imam al-Shafi‘i was brought up in Mecca where he received his

<sup>7</sup> This refers to some interviews conducted with some members of the Cape Muslim community, in particular, those conducted with Yusuf Toefy and Abdul Muhaimin Abduraouf – Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 8 December 2006.

<sup>8</sup> *Shāfi‘i* Legal Tradition: this refers to the tradition/school (*madh-hab*) of Islamic Law (*Fiqh*) primarily based on the interpretation of Al-Shāfi‘i

<sup>9</sup> *Shāfi‘i* Islam - <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-shafii.htm>

primary Islamic education. He later taught in both Baghdad and Cairo and followed a somewhat eclectic legal path, laying down the rules for analogy that were later adopted by other legal schools.<sup>10</sup>

The Cape Muslims were firm adherents of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. This is evident from their attitude towards other legal traditions. For example the introduction of the *Hanafi Madh-hab*<sup>11</sup> at the Cape by the famous Abū Bakr Effendi caused a major uproar among the resident *Shāfi`i* Muslims. Effendi was a *Hanafi* scholar from Turkey sent by the Ottomans in 1862 in response to a request by the Muslims at the Cape for a religious guide to instruct them on matters of religion. (Da Costa, Davids: 82) He was not very successful in his mission mainly because he belonged to the *Hanafi Madh-hab*. However, he managed to establish the Ottoman Theological School, which is considered as one of the first schools of higher learning at the Cape. This was among the first encounters of the Cape Muslims with other legal traditions. There were other encounters later but despite this the majority of the Cape Muslims remained steadfast on the teachings of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*.

Another instance of the domination of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* at the Cape is the *Jumu`ab*<sup>12</sup> controversy that emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century. According to Achmat Davids this issue seems to have developed in the 1870's. (Davids 1980: 56) The problem stemmed from the fact that in Cape Town many mosques were emerging, and almost all of them were performing the Friday Congregational (*Jumu`ab*) Prayer. The Muslims of the Cape feared that this would impact on the *Shāfi`i* rule that makes it a condition for the validity of the *Jumu`ab*, to have at least forty members attending it. (Davids 1980: 56) This caused a major dispute among the *Shāfi`i Imams* of the Cape, to the extent that assistance was sought from Mecca. The advice received from Mecca was that the Muslims of Cape Town should ideally perform one *Jumu`ab* on a Friday. The advice seems to have been disregarded by most of the *Shāfi`i Imams* of the Cape. Instead, they continued to have *Jumu`ab* at all the mosques. However, this was followed by the normal Afternoon (*Zuhr*) Prayer. This meant that

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *Hanafi* Legal Tradition: this refers to the tradition/school (*madh-hab*) of Islamic Law (*Fiqh*) primarily based on the interpretation of Abū Hanīfah

<sup>12</sup> *Jumu`ab*: this refers to the Friday Congregational Prayer

the mosques would perform the *Zuhr* Prayer immediately after the *Jumu`ab* Prayer. Their reasoning were that should their *Jumu`ab* Prayers not be valid, there were less than forty people in the congregation and because of the various mosques performing it, they would still have performed the normal *Zuhr* Prayers. They continued doing this until 1914, when some effort was made to have one *Jumu`ab* in Cape Town. During this time a delegation of learned scholars arrived from Zanzibar, under the leadership of Shaykh Abdullāh bin Muhammad Ba Kathīr. The delegation, known as the Bakathir Delegation, sent to assist the local leaders in resolving the *Jumu`ab* Issue. (Bang 2003: 115; Davids 1980: 56) Upon their arrival the delegates immediately set out to settle the dispute. They met with the *Imams* of the various mosques and came to a joint agreement to have only one *Jumu`ab* in the the Cape Town region. They agreed that the one *Jumu`ab* would take place at the Chiappini Street Mosque, which was chosen to be the *Jāmi`* Mosque<sup>13</sup> of the Cape Town region. It is important to note that choosing one particular mosque for a *Jumu`ab* in an area where there are many other mosques is also based on the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. (Davids 1980: 59)

The *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* continues to be the dominant legal tradition in the Western Cape. This can be seen in, (1) the daily devotional practices of the local Muslims, (2) the current *madrasah* system and, (3) the *Fiqh* books used by them. The strong adherence of the Cape Muslims to the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* is especially evident from the books used and produced by local scholars and teachers. Earlier *Shāfi`i* works include books produced in Arabic-Afrikaans, referring either to a translation of a *Shāfi`i* work from Arabic into Afrikaans and written in Arabic script, or an explanation thereof. (Haron (2) 2001: 8) Even Tuan Guru's book, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa al-Imān*, which was used as one of the main reference books by the early Cape Muslims, included basic lessons in *Fiqh* based on the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. (Davids 1980: 52; Guru 1786: 12)

It is interesting to note that one of the most important reference books, used currently by almost every *madrasah* and every home in the Western Cape is the *Ar-Risalab Al-Mufeedah*, mentioned earlier.

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<sup>13</sup> *Jāmi`* Mosque: the mosque chosen to host the *Jumu`ab* Prayer in an area where there are many other mosques, usually the biggest one.

As the title suggests, the *Al-Mufeedah* is a book on general Islamic knowledge. However, it focuses mainly on basic *`Aqīdah* (doctrine) based on the teachings of Tuan Guru, and practical *Fiqh* matters based on the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*, such as *tahārah* (cleanliness), *salāh* (prayer), *zakāh* (alms), *sawm* (fasting), marriage etc. The book, which was originally written in Afrikaans in 1982, was translated into English and published in 1995, to capture a wider audience. It has always been the most popular reference on basic *`Aqīdah* and *Fiqh*, though it contains information about other related Islamic matters. Its author, Shaykh Amien, a well-known scholar and interestingly, a descendent of the famous Tuan Guru, has also produced a number of books on the *Rātib al-Haddād*, the *Hājab* and the *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, the most famous of which is the *Al-Murshid*. He seemed to have followed in the footsteps of his ancestor, Tuan Guru.

Other popular *Fiqh* books locally produced include Shaykh Abduraghiem Sallie's collection, which also deals with similar topics to those found in the *Al-Mufeedah*. The difference between the two authors is that the former includes all these topics in one book and concentrates mainly on the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*, whereas the latter includes them in separate books in which he includes the opinions of both the *Hanafi* and *Shāfi`i Madh-habs*. Sallie's works captures a much wider audience and seem to appeal to both *Hanafi* and *Shāfi`i* Muslims, as well as to those interested in a comparative study of *Hanafi* and *Shāfi`i* practical *Fiqh*.<sup>14</sup> Despite the two different approaches as seen above, the one being more specific and the other one being more comparative, these books were produced to suit the needs of a majority *Shāfi`i* community and a minority *Hanafi* community. A final book, worth mentioning, is the *Shāfi`i Fiqh* book written by Mawlanā Yusuf Karaan entitled, *Tuh-fatul Ikhwaan*.<sup>15</sup> This is another popular book among the Cape Muslims dealing with almost the same topics as that of Shaykhs Amien Fakier and Abduraghiem Sallie respectively.

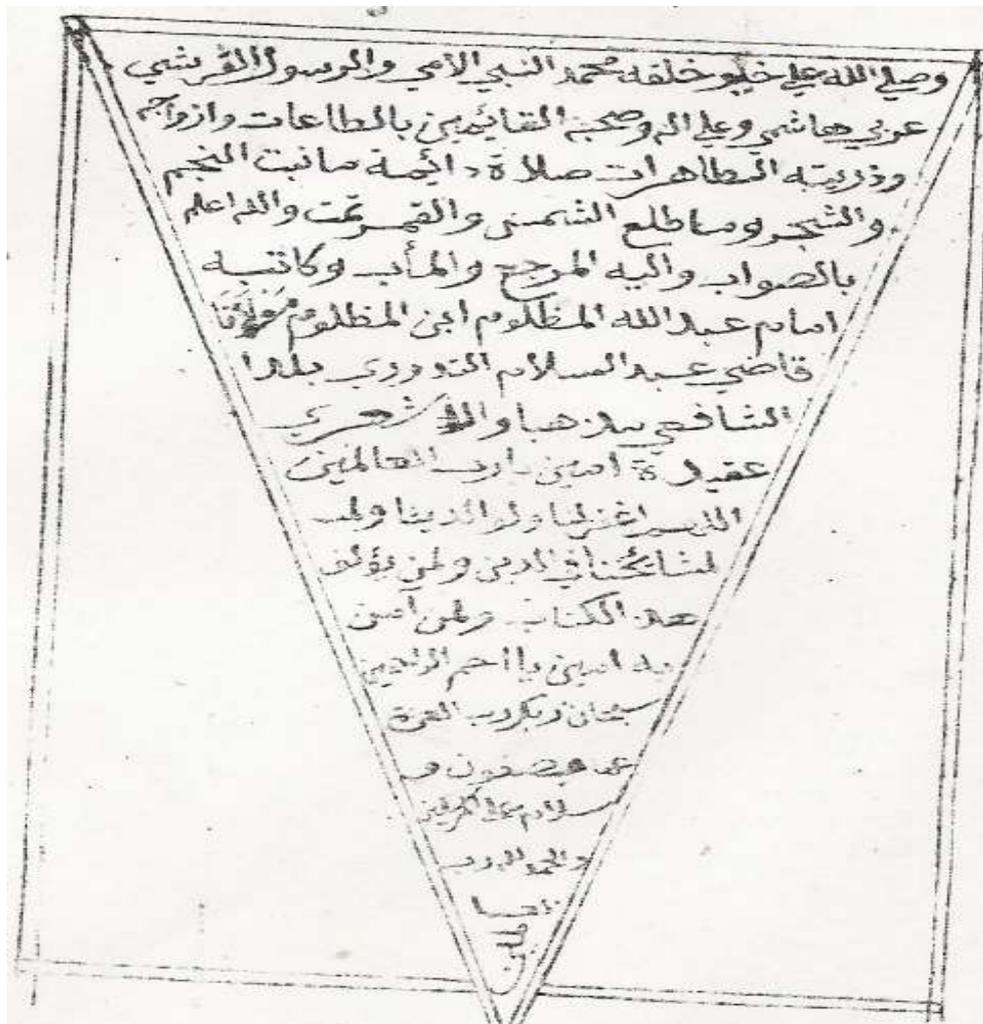
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<sup>14</sup> Refer to Top Boutique's Website for a collection of Shaykh Abduraghiem Sallie's books, which include books on *Salāh, Hajj, Zakāh, Fasting, Marriage, Divorce* etc., <http://www.islamicwear.net/books/books6.htm>

<sup>15</sup> I was unable to get a copy of this book, but I did find some information about it on the Al-Rashad Online Books website, <http://www.al-rashad.com/Tuh-fatul-Ikhwaan-Shafii-Fiqh-Book/>

Finally, Tuan Guru who established the foundations for the teaching of Islam at the Cape, in his book, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa-Īmān*, also testifies to fact that he was a *Shāfi`i* in terms of Islamic Jurisprudence - Meaning, that he followed the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. (Davids 1989: 25; Guru 1786: 600)

It is evident from the above that there has always been a strong *Shāfi`i* tradition among the Cape Muslims. Even today one still finds that the majority of Cape Muslims follow and are schooled in this tradition. The tradition was without doubt inherited from the pioneers of Islam at the Cape, who mainly came from the regions of Southeast Asia and North-East Africa, where the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* dominated.



**Tuan Guru's Title from his manuscript *Ma`rifat al-Islām wal-Īmān***  
 Imam Abd Al-lāh, the oppressed, son of the oppressed, our esteem master, Qādi Abd al-Salām, from Tidore, follower of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*, follower of the *Asb`ari* Doctrinal Tradition (Guru 1786: 600)

## 2.4. The Cultural-Linguistic Traditions of the Cape Muslims

### 2.4.1. Cultural-Religious Practices of the Cape Muslims

Islam being a collectivist culture (Gudykunst 1998: 47) emphasizes the importance of standing together as a single unit. Thus the cultural-religious practices especially at the Cape were very much and still are very much group orientated. The cultural-religious aspect of Islam at the Cape has played a significant role in the identity of the Cape Muslims, according Ahmed Mukadam, in his description of Islam at the Cape, which he refers to as 'Popular Islam'. (Mukadam 1990: 57) In other instances these practices are considered purely innovative (*bid`ah*), and are very much frowned upon. It is important to note that the legal status of these practices such as *Mawlūd*<sup>16</sup> and certain *adhbkar* are currently being challenged, debated, and questioned by Muslims all over. However, this is not relevant to the current study. What is important is the historical relevance and the impact these practices had on the early Cape Muslims.

Though there are many cultural practices prevalent among the Muslims at the Cape, this research will only cover some of them in detail, especially those related to religion or religious identity. The practices include the *Rātib al-Haddād*<sup>17</sup>/*Gadat*, the celebration of the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad (*Mawlūd al-Nabi*),<sup>18</sup> the *Ratiep* (Caliphate Display), the *Hājab*, the *Adhbkar* of Ramadān, the *tammāt* ceremony, commemoration of the 'Big Nights' etc.

Furthermore, the mentioned practices were conducted primarily in Arabic and were mainly geared towards reinforcing *tawhīd* and strengthening Muslim unity. Finally, the cultural-religious practices of the Cape Muslims also had a strong sense of *sūfī* mysticism attached to it which made the slaves collectively feel a sense of belonging, though Abduraghiem Paulsen and Achmat Davids, have referred

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<sup>16</sup> *Mawlūd*: literally means newborn, but locally it refers to the occasion of celebrating the Prophet's birth

<sup>17</sup> Literally means the *Compilation of the Blacksmith*

<sup>18</sup> Muslims refer to *Mawlūd al-Nabi* as the birthday of the Prophet *Muhammad*. This is celebrated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Rabi`al-`Awwal*, which is the third month of the Islamic calendar. The celebration of the birthday of the Prophet of Islam is common among most Muslims all over the world, especially the local Muslims.

to some of the cultural-religious practices of the Cape Muslim as syncretistic, derived mainly from Buddhism and Hinduism. (Davids; Paulsen (undated): 61)

Moreover, there is an inherently social dimension to these practices. Muslims of the Cape are up to this day still very much identified and distinguished by their adherence to them. In addition to this, it is mainly the cultural traditions of a particular group that makes them unique and distinguished from 'others', forming the basis for a local or indigenous expression of Islam.

Finally, the fact that many of these practices survived up to the present indicates the strong spirit of commitment among the individuals to perpetuate them. It also indicates that the foundations that were laid down by the Muslim pioneers at the Cape such as Tuan Guru must have been firm.

### **The Cultural-Religious Practices of the Cape Muslims and the *Riwāyt Sūrat***

The textual origins for most of the cultural-religious practices of the Cape Muslims lie in an Arabic book referred to locally as the *Riwāyt Sūrat*. As will be seen in the development of the current chapter, the *Riwāyt Sūrat* seemed to be an important source text for many of these practices. In fact, after the *Qur'ān*, the *Riwāyt Sūrat* is seen as the most important book among the Cape Muslims, especially the older generation. Besides the importance of knowing the *Qur'ān*, the knowledge the *Riwāyt Sūrat*, especially the ability to read it and practice it, is seen in certain communities as a condition for leadership. In other words, it is necessary for a potential leader to have knowledge of the *Qur'ān*, as well as knowledge the *Riwāyt Sūrat* and the practices associated with it. In addition to this, the *Riwāyt Sūrat* is a very important religious book that has been locally revered in a similar manner as the *Qur'ān*.

The perception of most of the Cape Muslims is that the *Riwāyt Sūrat* is exclusively a *Mawlūd* book. However, after studying its content I found that this was not the case, and that it is comprised of a variety of texts on *Mawlūd*, *Qasīdabs* (ritual songs), *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns, sing. *dhikr*) and *'Aqīdab* attributed to various authors. In my study of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century *Riwāyt Sūrat*, I found that it included the following texts: *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* (Al-Bukhāri), *Mawlid al-Barzanji* (Abū Ja`far al-Barzanji),

*Qasīdah al-Burdah* (Imām Al-Būsīri), *Du`ā' Khatam al-Qur`ān – voor-werk*, *Aqīdat al-`Awām* (Ahmad al-Marzūq), *Adhkār Ramadān and the Rātīb al-Haddād* (Abdullāh bin `Alawi al-Haddād) etc.

**(a) *Mawlūd al-Nabi* – Celebration of the Prophet's Birthday**

*Mawlūd* celebrations are known to have taken place in the *Sunni*-Islamic world since the thirteenth century. From around the fifteenth century, the recitation of long panegyric poems became incorporated as part of the ritual. The poems — which were themselves known as *mawlid*<sup>19</sup> — usually recounted the life of the Prophet Muhammad, combined with words of praise. A number of such poems are known from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. However, the most universally known and recited *mawlid* was composed in the eighteenth century, by Ja`far bin Hasan al-Barzanji (1690-1765). His *mawlid* became known by the names *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* or *Ṭiqd al-Jawābir*. The poem achieved great popularity, and spread to large parts of the Islamic world. (Bang 2003: 148)

The *Mawlid* celebrations begin on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Rabi` al-Awwal*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the Islamic calendar, and continues for months in succession. The initial *Mawlūd* held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Rabi` al-Awwal* is locally referred to as *Koemis Mawlūd*. (Davids 1980: 25) Interestingly, the celebration of the *Mawlūd* has taken on a very unique form at the Cape,<sup>20</sup> which could be traced to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 135) It is usually held over a weekend, Saturday and Sunday. A certain community or group would volunteer to host the event. Invitations are then sent out to two male *Mawlūd Jamā`ats* (groups) and a variety of female *Mawlūd Jamā`ats*. (Davids 1980: 25) The females are expected to attend the *Rampie-sny*<sup>21</sup>, on the Saturday afternoon, reciting *Salawāt*, praises of the Prophet. (Davids 1980: 25) The actual event will then take place on the Sunday, where the males are usually invited from the morning onwards, and the females from the afternoon onwards. The males usually gather in the mosque and the females in the mosque hall/*madrasah*. The two male groups will sit on two separate sides in front

<sup>19</sup> *Mawlid*: literally means birthday, also refers to the text used for the narration of the events of the Prophet's birth

<sup>20</sup> This is based on a review of a 19<sup>th</sup> century-old handwritten *Mawlūd Sūrat*, belonging to the Adams' family, from Athlone, Cape Town, which follows the exact same format as the *Mawlūd Sūrats* today.

<sup>21</sup> *Rampie-sny* refers to cutting of orange leaves by the female participants, accompanied by the recitation of the *Salawāt* (salutations on the Prophet of *Islam*). As mentioned earlier, it is also referred to as the Orange-leaf Festival. According to Achmat Davis the cutting of the orange leaves has its origins in Hindu traditions. On the contrary, Ahmed Mukadam has associated with the *sūfi* concept of *barakah*, referring to the blessings of the Prophet. (Mukadam 1990: 62)

of the mosque, the one group challenging the other with the most beautiful poetry in praise of the Prophet. This interaction between the two groups is referred to as *tokang* (lead-in) and *jawab* (*jawab* – response). The one group will start to recite some poetry of praise – the *tokang* and the other group will try to beat the other group with an equal or bettered response – *jawab*.<sup>22</sup> This is a whole-day event which usually ends after the ‘*Ishā*’ (evening) prayer, with supper, a short talk, a vote of thanks to the participants, who each receives a *barakat*.<sup>23</sup> Through the day, guests are served with the most succulent foods and the most delicious cakes and sweetmeats.<sup>24</sup> This practice, like many others, seemed to be unique to the Cape. I could not find exact information as to when this practice started at the Cape; however, I did find two handwritten manuscripts used for this occasion. One belonged to Imam ‘Arafie Manuel of Simonstown, which dates back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the other one, belonging to the Adams’ family from Athlone, Cape Town, which dates back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, in the latter manuscript I found a watermark on the pages of Queen Victoria with the year 1945 inscribed on it. Whether the manuscript was written in that particular year is unknown.<sup>25</sup>

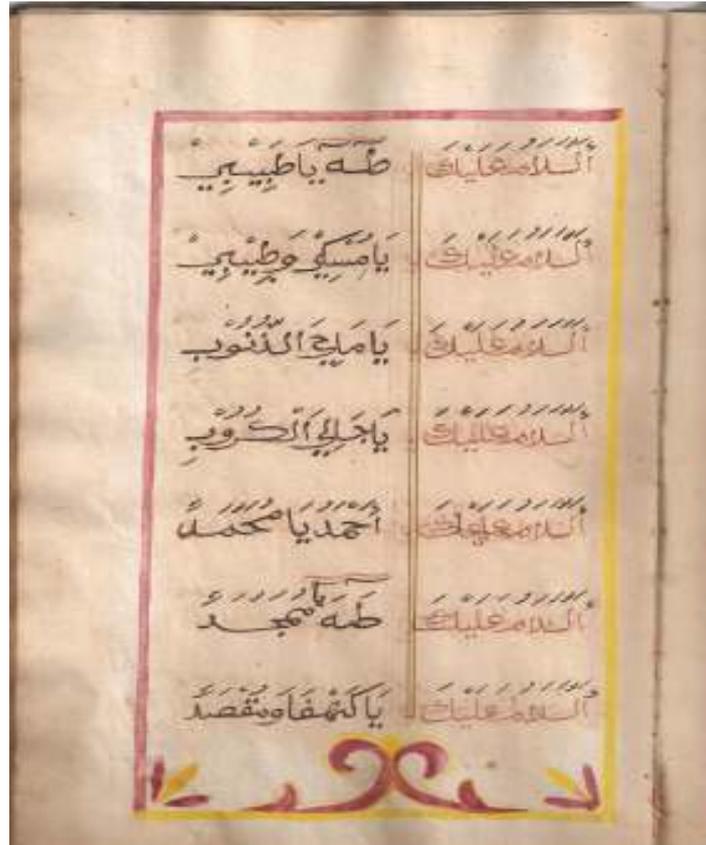
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<sup>22</sup> Also refer to the thesis of M. Abdurahgiem Paulsen entitled, *The Malay Community of Gauteng: Syncretism, Beliefs, Customs and Development*, for a detailed explanation of this *Mawlid* form, which he discusses in Chapter 6.2.3.

<sup>23</sup> Literally means blessings, but contextually it refers to a parcel/plate/bowl containing cakes, sweet meats and fruits etc.

<sup>24</sup> This is based on my personal observation and participation in these events for the past 15 years.

<sup>25</sup> The first manuscript was passed on to me by brother Abduragmaan Thebus, a member of the *Gabiebiyyah Mawlid Jama`ah* (group) from Ocean View, Simonstown, and the second one was passed on to me by a member of the Adams’ family, from Athlone, Cape Town.



An excerpt from a handwritten *Mawlid Sūrat* (book) of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, belonging to the Adams' Family, from Athlone



An excerpt from a handwritten *Mawlid Sūrat* (book) of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, belonging to Imam `Arafie Manuel from Simonstown

Locally there are two distinct texts used for the celebration of the *Mawlid*, i.e. the *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* and the *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, both of which have been derived from the *Rimāyat Sūrat*.

**(i) Mawlid Texts**

***Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām***

The *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* is a name derived from a specific text from which the *Mawlid* is recited. It includes narrations and poetry about the birth and life of the Prophet Muhammad. The text was written by scholar by the name of *al-Bukhārī*. This however is not the famous eighth century *Hadīth* (Prophetic Tradition) Scholar. According to Shaykh Amin Fakier who has also extensively researched and translated some of the contents of the *Rimāyat Sūrat* the *al-Bukhārī* referred to in the *Rimāyat Sūrat* is a later scholar from Iraq.<sup>26</sup> I could not verify this information, however I did find that according to a discussion of the origins of the *Ashraqaal/Qiyām/Salāmi* on the *Iqra'* website ([www.iqra.net](http://www.iqra.net))<sup>27</sup>, it was composed by Shaykh Ahmad bin Qasim. If this is true then he must have carried the title, *Al-Bukhārī*. This is based on the fact that the content page of Imam `Arafīe's *Rimāyat Sūrat* suggests that it was written by *Al-Bukhārī*.

In the *Rimāyat*, *Al-Bukhārī* narrates events in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, especially his birth, with praise poetry in between. What is interesting about *al-Bukhārī*'s style is that he narrates an event and when he comes to a culminating point he brings in poetry in praise of the Prophet Muhammad. His style is very much in line with the style of Arab writers, classical or modern. It is also narrated in a way that makes for easy memorization and study.

No official translation has been published on the text, though Shaykh Amien Fakier and Maulanā Karaan have translated sections thereof.<sup>28</sup> These (translations) are incomplete and much work must be done in this regard. In addition to this I could not locate the date on which this text was written.

<sup>26</sup> Telephone interview with Shaykh Amien Fakier – June 2002

<sup>27</sup> *Iqra'* Website “SALAAMS IN MAWLID U'N NABI OF IMAM BARZANJI” - <http://www.iqra.net/Salaams/salaams4.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Telephone interview with Shaykh Amien Fakier and a personal interview with Maulanā Yusuf Karan – June 2002

Finally, in a local context the *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* text has interestingly enough been reserved by the majority of the locals exclusively for the commemoration of the Birthday (*Mawlūd*) of the Prophet Muhammad. In other words, this text will only be recited in the Islāmic month of *Rabi` al-Awwal*, specifically on the 12<sup>th</sup>, which is the birthday (*Mawlūd*) of the Prophet, and also the months following it. On this day almost all of the local mosques would celebrate the *Mawlūd* reciting from the *Sharaf al-Anām* of Al-Bukhāri. The only mosque that I am aware of where another text is used for the *Mawlūd* celebration is the Azzavia mosque in Walmer Estate. Apparently they use al-Barzanji's text which will be discussed next.

An extract from *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām*.

صلى عليك الله يا عدناني، يا مصطفى يا صفوة الرحمن،  
الحمد لله الذي أعطاني، هذا الغلام الطيب الأرداني.

May Allah salute you, O the one who is from ancient Arab descent (ʿAdnāni), the chosen, the Most Merciful's purest being, All praise is due to Allah, the one who has granted me this good young lad, a descendant of the Northern Arabs (Ardāni).



An excerpt of the *Mawlid Sharaf al-Anām* text from the *Riwayāt Surat* of Imam ʿArafie Manuel of Simontstown, passed on to him by his father from generation to generation – 1304 A.H. / 1886 C.E.

***Mawlid al-Barzanji***

This text is also about the life of the Prophet Muhammad written by Ja`far bin Hasan al-Barzanji (1690-1765), a eighteenth century Islamic poet. This text is especially popular among *Tariqah's* (spiritual brotherhoods) in the Middle East, North Africa and East Africa. (Bang 2003: 140; Davids 1989: 6)

According to Martin van Bruinessen the *Barzanji Mawlid* is very popular among the *Qadiri Sufi* Order. (Van Bruinessen (5)) In fact while visiting Makkah in Ramadān 2000, I had the opportunity of attending *Qadiriyyah Sufi Dhikr*, and there I witnessed the *Barzanji Mawlid* being recited. In addition, I was given one of the texts used by the group, and when I compared it to the local texts it corresponded. The only variations were the tune and the manner in which it was recited.<sup>29</sup> Van Bruinessen also informs us that Barzanji is the name of the most influential family of *ulamā* and *tariqa shaykhs* in southern Kurdistan. (Van Bruinessen (5))

Furthermore, Al-Barzanji's style is somewhat different from Al-Bukhārī in the sense that the former gives a brief summary of the main events of the Prophet's life in a type of poetic narrative form, whereas Al-Bukhārī concentrates specifically on the events of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad with poems of praise in-between. Barzanji's *Riwayāt* is written in such a way that it is easy to understand if you are Arabic speaking and also easy to memorize.

There are a number of translations of Al-Barzanji's *Mawlid* available in English and Afrikaans. Many local scholars have also translated the text. What stands out among the local translations is the Arabic-Afrikaans translation by Shaykh Ismā`il. The latter in his Arabic introduction to his translation informs us that he was requested by some people to translate the *Riwayats* of Al-Barzanji. (Hanīf 1938:1) Shaykh Ismā`il completed his translation in the beginning of the Islamic month of Sha`bān in 1357 of the Islamic year, which corresponds to 1938 CE. (Hanīf 1938: 52) Shaykh Ismā`il in his translation also includes the *fatwā* (legal ruling) of the famous commentator of the *Qur`ān*, Jalāl al-Dīn

<sup>29</sup> This is based on my personal observation and participation in a *Qadiri dhikr* which took place on a farm in the outskirts of Madīnah – Saturday, 8 January 2000.

al-Suyūṭī. This is however one of the few or maybe even the only early translation of Al-Barzanji, though the other translations are more recent. Among the more recent translations of Al-Barzanji is that of Imam Manie (Abdurahmaan) Bassier<sup>30</sup>, H.A.R. Osman<sup>31</sup>, and a translation done by the *shaykhs* of the Azzavia Mosque in Warmer Estate<sup>32</sup>. It is important to note that the difference between Shaykh Ismā`īl’s translation attempt and those who came after him is that he translated the complete text of *Mawlid al-Barzanji*, whereas the others only translated certain sections thereof.

An extract from *Mawlid al-Barzanji*:

و أتيت أمه في المنام فقيل لها إنك قد حملت بسيد العالمين و خير البرية و سميته إذا وضعته  
 محمدا لأنه ستحمده عقباه

And it came to his mother in a dream, and it was said to her; “Indeed you are carrying the master of the worlds and the best of mankind, and if he is born then name him Muhammad (the praised one), for he will be forever praised”...



An excerpt of the *Barzanji Mawlid* text from *Riwayāt Sūrat* of Imam Abdul Aziz of Mitchells Plain in Cape Town, passed on to him by his father from generation to generation – 1318 A.H. /1900 C.E.

<sup>30</sup> Imam Manie translated a series of different *riwayāt* in English for the Boorhanul Islam *Mawlid* issues.

<sup>31</sup> H.A.R. Osman translated a selection of *riwayāt* and the *asbraqal* in both English and Afrikaans -

<sup>32</sup> The Azzavia shaykhs translated a selection *riwayāt* and the *asbraqal* in English -

**(ii) The First Recorded *Mawlūd* in South Africa**

Thunberg, a Swedish botanist, on his visit to the Cape in as early as 1772 observed the Javanese Muslims (Early Cape Muslims) coming together in an apartment of a house in Cape Town to celebrate in a collective manner. We will cite his observation:

"On the 28th of June, the Javanese here celebrated their new year. For this purpose they had decorated an apartment in a house with cloths that covered the ceiling, walls, and floor. In front at some distance from the farthest wall an altar was raised, from the middle of which a pillar rose up to the ceiling, covered with narrow slips of gilt paper and silk alternately: from above downwards, ran a kind of lace between the projecting edges. At the base of this pillar were placed bottles with nosegays stuck in them. Before the altar lay a cushion, and on this a large book. The women, who were all standing or sitting near the door were neatly dressed, and the men wore night-gowns of silk or cotton. Incense was burned. The men sat cross-legged on the floor, dispersed all over the room. Several yellow wax candles were lighted up. Many of the assembly had fans, which they found very useful for cooling themselves in the great heat necessarily produced by the assemblage of a great number of people in a small space. Two priests were distinguished by a small conical cap from the rest, who wore handkerchiefs tied round their heads in the form of a turban. About eight in the evening the service commenced, when they began to sing, loud and soft alternately, sometimes the priests alone, at other times the whole congregation. After this a priest read out of the great book that lay on the cushion before the altar, the congregation at times reading aloud after him. I observed them reading after the Oriental manner, from right to left, and imagined it to be the Alcoran [the *Qur'ān*] that they were reading, the Javanese being mostly Mahometans. Between the singing and reading, coffee was served up in cups, and the principal man of the congregation at intervals accompanied their singing on the Violin. I understood afterwards, that this was a prince from Java, who had opposed the interests of

the Dutch East India Company, and for that reason had been brought from his native country to the Cape, where he lives at the Company's expense." (Thunberg, C.P. 1986: 48-49)

### **An Analysis of Thunberg's Observation**

Thunberg interprets this celebration as a New Year celebration. Other scholars have concluded that this was in fact an *Īd* celebration. In my analysis of his description I found that this most probably was a *Mawlūd* Celebration. This conclusion is based on a conversion of the Gregorian date, 28 June 1772, given by Thunberg to the Islamic date. The Gregorian date supplied by the latter corresponded to the 26th of *Rabi` al-ʿAwwal* 1186 A.H. This is indeed the month in which the Prophet Muhammad was born – the 12th of *Rabi` al-ʿAwwal* (570 C.E.). Thus the Islamic month of *Rabi` al-ʿAwwal* is very significant to Muslims as it is primarily associated, amongst other things, with the birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

The nightgowns Thunberg refers to is in actual fact a *thawb*<sup>33</sup>, which is especially worn by Muslims during prayer and other religious gatherings. However he could have mistaken it for a nightgown as the *thawb* was very much similar to the nightgowns that European males wore at the time.

Thunberg also makes reference to a “great book” on a cushion. He however refers to this book as a *Qurʾān* (Alcoran) as he observed it being read from right to left. It seems as if he was unaware of the fact that Arabic in general is read from right to left. In my analysis of his observation and based on my conclusion that this celebration was indeed a *Mawlūd* celebration, I am also of the view that the “great book” mentioned in his observation was most likely a *Mawlūd* book and not a *Qurʾān*. Thus the possibility of this being a *Rimāyat Sūrat* is great. Further evidence that this was not a *Qurʾān* is the fact that the recitation and chanting was accompanied by a violin. I don't think that they would have accompanied *Qurʾānic* recitation with a violin. This, even at present, would be considered a prohibition or an abomination in Islam.

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<sup>33</sup> *Thawb*: an Arabic word which refers to a cloak-like garment.

In the end, Thunberg refers to the person leading the procession as a prince from Java. Scholars have speculated that this was in fact Tuan Guru.

**(b) The *Rātīb al-Haddād/ Gadat***

The *Rātīb al-Haddād* is literally translated as the compilations of the blacksmith. This is a set of *adbkār* (spiritual hymns) compiled from authentic sources by the *Sūfī* Shaykh `Abd Al-lāb ibn `Alawi al-Haddād. The *Shaykh* is from the *Bā` Alawi Sūfī* Order and hails from Hadhramaut in Yemen.

According to Achmat Davids the *Rātīb al-Haddād* only became popular after 1910, when *Shaykh* `Abdullāb Tābā Hamildīn translated it into Arabic-Afrikaans. (Davids 1989: 31) I have such a translation in my possession, which I have personally reviewed. Davids argues that because these *dbikers* were not transcribed nor translated earlier (in the 19th or even 18th century) it could not have existed in the 19th century.

On the contrary Yusuf Da Costa presents some evidence from Mr. G. Petersen, who was an old resident of Kensington, that both the *Rātīb al-Haddād* and the *Mawlūd al-Nabi* were practiced by his grandfather in the early nineteenth century. (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 135) It could possibly even be traced back to Tuan Sa`īd who also belonged to the *Bā` Alawi Sūfī* Order, and who arrived at the Cape in 1744, from Mocca in Yemen.

Furthermore, I have found a printed version of the *Rātīb al-Haddād* in a *Rivāyat Sūrat* that was printed in 1304 A.H. (Islamic Date), corresponding with 1886 C.E. The manuscript belonged to one of the early Imams of Simonstown, Imam Muhammad `Arafī Manuel. It is presented along with other popular texts, such as, the *Sharaf al-Anām* and the *Barzanji Mawlūd* Texts. This is an indication that the *Rātīb al-Haddād* could have existed at the Cape long before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact the possibility exist that the *Rātīb al-Haddād*, along with another *Bā` Alawi* practice, the *Rātīb al-`Attās*, could have originated from early *Bā` Alawi* Shaykhs, such as Tuan Sa`īd (1743) and Shaykh `Abd ar-Rahīm bin Muhammad Al-`Irāqī (1880). (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 135)



An excerpt of one of the Arabic-Afrikaans texts of the *Rātīb al-Haddād* translated by Shaykh Abd Allāh Tāhā Gamielien – early 20<sup>th</sup> century

### (c) The *Rātīb ar-Rifā'ī* / *Ratiep*

Another cultural-religious practice that Muslims at the Cape were and still are distinguished by such is the *Ratiep* (Caliphate Display)<sup>34</sup>. This practice in particular has impacted greatly on the identity and dignity of the Cape Muslim slaves. Goolam Karim writes: “Since the public and private expression of Islam was banned on pain of death by the authorities at the Cape, the *Ratib* was a protest ritual dissimulated as entertainment. The social role of the *Ratib* amongst the early Muslims maintained devotionism in the nascent community assisted in coping with stress and influenced many slaves converting to Islam. It so empowered deviant street children, that the ‘skollies’ became saints. The ritual was a ‘politicisation of mysticism’ and was a unique expression of Muslim piety in local context”. (*Karim* 1998: 3) However the *ratiep* is slowly becoming extinct. Despite this it is still very much practiced on the Cape-flats and the outskirts of Cape Town. In *Karim* words: “*Ratib* still continues to flourish under the shadows of Table Mountain despite the animus from the textualist clerisy. Islam flowers when it is suppressed as shown by the early Muslims who have contributed

<sup>34</sup> The *Ratiep* is a specific cultural ritual the individual goes into a spiritual trance, cutting himself with a sword or piercing sharp objects (the daboes) into his body. The ritual would be accompanied by the beating of drums and chants. It is slowly becoming extinct.

immeasurably to the prosperity of the Cape, by the creolisation of Dutch to originate the language and influence the culture of the Afrikaners". (Karim 1998: 3)

The motives however differ from the *Ratiep* of the early Muslim Slaves who used it to maintain their dignity and attract other slaves to the religion of Islam. Moreover the *Ratiep* also gave them a sense of power over their colonialist masters. According to Achmat Davids the *Ratiep* is a synthesis of two distinct cultural components, Islamic spiritual recitation and animistic ritual practices, and was in all probability, used by the Muslims to attract non-Muslim slaves to their fold. Attractive indeed it must have been, for despite their bondage of slavery, 'Ratiep' would have given the slaves a personal power over their bodies, a power, which would have established for him a dignity. (Davids 1989: 7)

Even though these slaves were subjected to very harsh and difficult conditions they still managed to maintain their dignity and showed very little fear to their masters. Thus when piercing sharp objects into their bodies it gave them a sense of power and created fearlessness within them for their masters. They would fear God only; who they believed possessed the ultimate power. This could mainly be attributed to a strong belief system (*Aqīdah*) based on Islamic Monotheism (*Tawḥīd*). This as mentioned earlier was the essence of Tuan Guru's teachings.

### **A Description of the *Ratiep* in Cape Town – A Personal Account**

The *Ratiep* like many other *dhikers* in Cape Town starts with the *voor-werk* (introductory *dhiker*). (for more details refer to the section on the *Hājab*) The ceremony is headed by the *khalīfah* (representative) who usually sits behind the *bunk*<sup>35</sup>, on which the swords and *taboestes* are displayed, beautifully decorated, with different coloured flags (green, white, black, red etc.). On these flags which is found hanging down the sides of the *bunk*, are *Qur'anic* inscriptions. After the *voor-werk* the *khalīfah* recites the *du`ā* and the *silsilab*<sup>36</sup>, or the names of the *shaykhs* linked to the *Rifā`i Sūfī* Order. This is then followed by the recitation of the *tablīl*<sup>37</sup> and the *salawāt*, accompanied by the beating of drums (*dolle*) and some

<sup>35</sup> A special structure made out of wood on which the instruments and flags are displayed.

<sup>36</sup> Used in Sufism to refer to spiritual ties

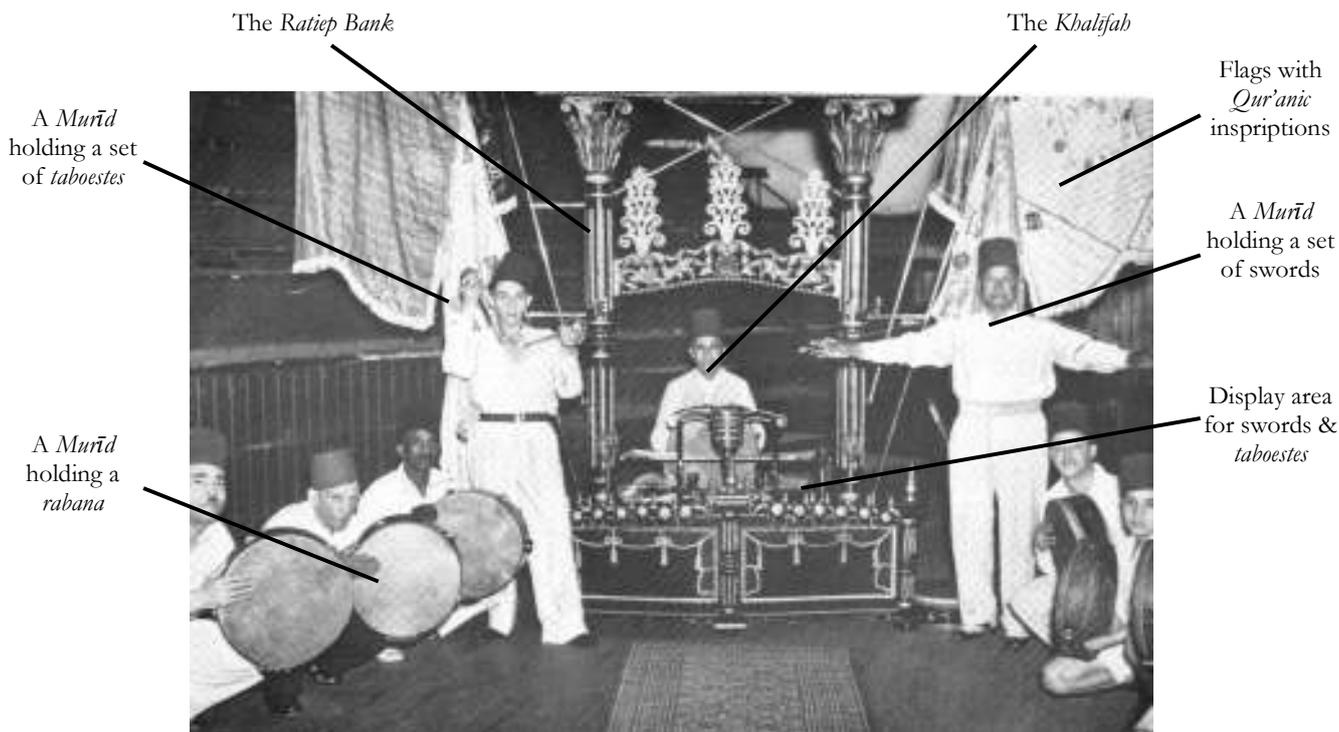
<sup>37</sup> *Tablīl* means to recite the Arabic phrase, '*lā ilāha illallā*', which means "there is no god worthy of worship except Allah"

tambourines (*rabanas*). A cloud of smoke from the *meyang* or *lubān* (incense) hangs in the air, giving off a fragrance of another kind, which has an immediate spiritual effect on those present. The *kehalifah* is usually the first one to perform the *Ratiep* ritual. Thus, mesmerized by the recitation of the *qasidabs* (ritual songs) and the beating of the drums, the *kehalifah* performs the ritual, by either striking his hand or parts of his body with a sword, or piercing his body with a sharp iron instrument (*taboeste/dabbūs*) which may vary in shape and size. He is then followed by his *murīds* (disciples) who are all given a chance to engage in the ritual. Furthermore, the *Ratiep* is divided into four different *jadds*<sup>38</sup>. These four *jadds* represent the four main *Awliyā'* (saints) who are called upon to be present for blessings and protection. The first *jadd* belongs to `Abd al-Qādir Jilāni, who is seen as the head of all the *Awliyā'*, the second belongs to Ahmad al-Kabīr al-Rifā`i, the *shaykh* of the *Rifā`i Sūfi* Order, the third belongs to Ahmad bin `Alwān, and the final *jadd* belongs to Muhammad al-`Aydrūs. During the performances, *qasidabs* are recited relating to the respective *Awliyā'*. In between some *qasidabs* are also recited from a popular *Qādiri Sūfi* text, as well as from the *Mawlūd Sharaf al-Anām*, mentioned earlier. The performances end with the recitation of the *Ashraqaal*, where salutations and blessings are recited in praise of the Prophet Muhammad which is followed by the closing *du`ā* (supplication). Finally, as is customary, the guests are served with some foods/snacks or cakes.<sup>39</sup>

It is very important to note that the early accounts of the way the *Ratiep* was conducted given by scholars and old participants alike are very much similar to the way it is conducted today. Thus, there is not much difference in the way it was conducted then and the way it is conducted now. (Du Plessis 1944: 38)

<sup>38</sup> *Jadd* is an Arabic word which means grandfather/ancestor. ([www.muhammadith.org](http://www.muhammadith.org)) However in this context it seems to refer to a spiritual ancestral connection with a specific *wali* (saint).

<sup>39</sup> This account is based on my personal experience and participation in the *Ratiep* on various occasions for the past twenty years.



A picture of an early Cape Ratiep Jamā`ab found in I.D. Du Plessis' book, *The Cape Malays*, written in 1944, with illustrations of the instruments and terms used for the ceremony. (Du Plessis 1944: 36)

**(d) The Hājah**

Locally the *Hājah* is one of names given to a customary religious ceremony whereby specific chapters of the holy *Qur'ān* is recited, praises of Allah and His Messenger are chanted, the *Rivāyāt* of *al-Barzanji* and the *Ashraqaal*<sup>40</sup> are recited and the ceremony concluded with a supplication for mercy and forgiveness (*du`ā' khatam al-qur'ān*). Some of the other names given to this ceremony are *werk* (the Afrikaans translation of the Arabic word *`amal* which means good deeds); *arwāḥ* meaning spirits (of the deceased persons) probably because of the fact that in the final supplication special emphasis is made on supplicating on behalf of the deceased persons. It is also referred to occasionally as a *merang*. (Davids 1980: 95)

Moreover the *Hājah* among other things has especially been associated with the 7<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> day post-death ceremony. Professor Da Costa traces this tradition back to *Shaykh Yūsuf* who

<sup>40</sup> Towards the end of the *Hājah*, after the fourth *rivāyat* of *al-Barzanji* is recited, it is customary for the entire congregation to stand and recite *salawāt* (salutations) and *salām* (peace) on the Prophet. This is referred to as the *Ashraqaal/Qiyām/Salāmi*

subscribed to and was the head of the *Khalwati Sūfī* Order in Indonesia. This religious ceremony, according to the latter is very much part of the *Khalwati Sūfī* tradition and has survived up to the present. In addition to this Robert Semple recorded that: “(the Muslims) alone extended their care and seem to cherish their grief. On the third, seventh and fortieth day they again assemble around the grave pour sweet-scented waters upon it, and strew over it the choicest flowers”. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 131) Though this is still generally practiced at the Cape, the ceremony has moved from the grave to the home of the deceased. The tradition has primarily been inherited from the pioneering Malay-Indonesian slaves and political exiles such as *Shaykh Yūsuf* who were very strong adherents to their tradition and culture. Interesting evidence have been discovered in the Cape Archives by historian N. Erefaan Rakiep in the form of a will and testimony of one of the slaves dating back to as early as 1832. I personally had the opportunity to view this evidence. The evidence relates to a person by the name of *ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad*, who was a slave working on a farm at Mosterd Baai, today known as the Strand.<sup>41</sup> *ʿAbd aṣ-Ṣamad* in his will and testimony, giving clear instructions in Dutch that if anything should happen to him the *imam* of the Dorp Street (*Aw-wal*) Mosque at the time, Imam Aḥmad van Bengalin, should take care of his burial. In addition to this, the *Imam* should also perform the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 40<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> day post-death ceremony.<sup>42</sup> Finally, all evidence suggests that this particular tradition was brought to the Cape by these slaves and political exiles. In fact in an interview with two Malaysian students who were studying at ICOSA in the year 2000, I was informed that this tradition is still practiced by some of the Malaysian people, though it is rapidly fading.<sup>43</sup> In addition to this, the *Hājah* is also recited on the occasion of a name-giving ceremony (*doepmaal*)<sup>44</sup>, a wedding anniversary,

<sup>41</sup> Refer to article on Helderberg.com Website, *Fascinating facts unearthed about the history of Strand Muslims*, [http://www.news24.com/Regional\\_Papers/Components/Category\\_Article\\_Text\\_Template/0,,303-716-743\\_1418174~E,00.html](http://www.news24.com/Regional_Papers/Components/Category_Article_Text_Template/0,,303-716-743_1418174~E,00.html)

<sup>42</sup> Interview – a series of interviews, formal and informal, conducted with N. Erefaan Rakiep – June 2002.

<sup>43</sup> Informal interviews conducted with two Malaysian students at ICOSA in the year 2002.

<sup>44</sup> The name-giving ceremony (*doepmaal*) usually takes place on the 7<sup>th</sup> day after the child is born mainly by the male members of the family and friends, and includes the recitation of certain verses/chapters from the *Qurʾān* (i.e. *Āyat al-Kursi*, *Sūrah al-Qadr*, *Sūrah al-Kawthar*, *Sūrah al-Ikhlās*, *Sūrah al-Falaq*, and *Sūrah al-Nās*), the recitation of the *adhān* (call to prayer) in the infants right ear and the *iqāmah* (prayer announcement) in the left ear, the actual pronouncement of the name, the clipping of a piece of the infant’s hair and putting something sweet in his/her

and a 21<sup>st</sup> birthday etc.

Furthermore, the *Hājab* is sometimes erroneously referred to as a *Rātib al-Haddād/Gadat*, but they are very distinct from each other, though specific sections of the *Hājab* have been incorporated into the *Gadat*. In fact the first part of the *Hājab* has locally been incorporated into most forms of *dhikr*, be it a *Mawlūd*, *Qādarī* or even a *Rātib ar-Rifā`ī (Ratiep)*. This is locally referred to as a *voor-werk* which serves as an introduction to the *actual dhikr*. This is probably the reason why some of the local Muslims have used the word *Gadat* synonymous with the word *Hājab*.

Interestingly enough the *Hājab* is a unique handpicked compilation of various sections of the *Riwāyāt Sūrāt* which I believe to be a local production. The compilation in detail includes the recitation of *Sūrahs Yāsīn, al-Mulk, al-'Ikhlās, al-Falaq, an-Nās, al-Fātiḥah*, the first and last part of *al-Baqarah* including *Āyāt al-Kursi*, the recitation of the ninety-nine names of the Allah (*Asmā al-Husnā*), salutations on the Prophet Muhammad, his family and his companions, a part of the *Qasīdat al-Burdah* referred to locally as the “*Yā Akraman*” or the “*Dhikr Jalāli*”, a part of the *Mawlūd* of Al-Barzanji, finally the *Ashraḳal* and concluded with a supplication (*du`ā*). The first part up to the salutations on the Prophet and the concluding supplication (*du`ā*) is included in the *Du`ā' khatam al-Qur`ān*. This all together is locally referred to as a *werk*, an *arwāb* or a *ḥājab*. Despite the heavy criticism levelled against this tradition it is still nevertheless strongly upheld by the majority of the local Muslims. Regarding this Achmat Davids writes, “These traditions are unique to the Cape and have in instances been frowned upon by the Muslim purist. Nevertheless, it was necessary, not only for the survival but also for the spread of Islam among the heathen slave and Eastern Free Black community.” (Davids 1980: 95)

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mouth (*tabniq*), a *du`ā* for the wellbeing and prosperity of the infant, ending with the recitation of the *salawat*, praising and saluting the Prophet, during which time the infant is past on to every male present, before being past on to the mother.

**(e) The *Adhkār* of *Ramadān***

There are unique practices associated with the Islamic month of *Ramadān*, which exist at the Cape up to the present. These practices play a vital role in the commemoration of *Ramadān*. Besides the sharing of cakes, food, or '*boeka*<sup>45</sup> treats', there are also *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) used to uplift the spirit during the month of *Ramadān*. These *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) seem to be unique to the Cape Muslims as I have not observed them elsewhere. These *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) usually forms part of the '*bilals-werk*', or the Bilal's (Prayer Announcer) portfolio. Within the structure of the local Mosque, the Bilal's portfolio entails, announcing the daily prayers, announcing the Friday prayer, announcing *ʿĪd* prayers and finally leading the *Adhkār* of *Ramadān*. Thus the *Adhkār* of *Ramadān* has become a significant part of the '*bilals-werk*', or the Bilal's (Prayer Announcer) portfolio. They include:

**(i) The *Munāyāt* (or *Munājāt*)**

This is a special form of the *salawāt*<sup>46</sup> that is specifically recited before the *adhān*<sup>47</sup> of the *ʿIshaa* (evening) Prayer during the month of *Ramadān*. This practice also seems to be very unique to the Cape Muslim community. It has not been observed elsewhere. The practice is however slowly disappearing but can still be observed at a few mosques in the Cape region, especially in Bo-Kaap, Simonstown/Ocean View and Athlone.

I was unable to trace the origin of the practice but it seems to have originated in the Cape. I was however able to find an Arabic written text of this particular *salawāt* form. The text was compiled by one of the resident *bilāls*<sup>48</sup> of Bosmont and was passed on from generation to generation. This particular tradition has its roots in the Muslim community of Cape Town.

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<sup>45</sup> *Boeka*: this is a Malay word that means to break one's fast.

<sup>46</sup> Placing salutations upon the Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>47</sup> Islam's Call to prayer

<sup>48</sup> *Bilāl*: a local term used to refer the one who announces the Call to Prayer (*Adhān*). *Bilāl* is associated with the Prophet of Islam's companion, *Bilāl bin Rabāh*, who was the first person to announce the Call to Prayer in the history of Islam.

**(ii) The *Tarhīm***

The name refers to a specific form of *dhikr* (spiritual hymn) read before the *adbān* of *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer. The word *Tarhīm* means to invoke God's mercy. Throughout the *Tarhīm* the caller invokes the mercy of God. Like the *Munāyāt*, the *Tarhīm* also seems to be unique to the Cape Muslim community and can also be observed in a few mosques in the Cape region, in particular Ocean View and Kensington.<sup>49</sup> I was informed a few of the elderly residents of Ocean View that this was a normal practice that dates back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Interestingly enough I was able to locate the lyrics of *Tarhīm* in the century year old *Rimāyat Sūrat* that belonged to Imam `Arafī Manual of Simonstown. (Ar-Rifā`i 1304 (Islamic Date): 122) This brings me to the conclusion that this practice could have existed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century towards the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, the *Tarhīm* and the *Munāyāt* have always been associated with each other by the local Muslims, and therefore if the *Tarhīm* could have existed early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, then so could the *Munāyāt*.

Both the *Tarhīm* and the *Munāyāt* play an important role in the Cape Muslims' *Ramadān* program. Among other things, the *Tarhīm* and the *Munāyāt* characterizes the celebration of *Ramadān* at the Cape.

An extract from the *Tarhīm*:

يا أرحم الراحمين ارحمنا ثلاثا و عافنا و اعف عنا و على طاعتك و شكرك أعنا يا حي يا قيوم

O The Most Merciful among the merciful, have mercy on us (x3), grant us pardon, forgive us,  
and assist to be obedient and grateful to You, O The Living, The Eternal

<sup>49</sup> This is based on my personal observations as a resident of Ocean View. It is also based on the comments of Nagieb Martin based in Riyadh, but originally from Kensington in Cape Town, after proofreading this particular chapter.



An excerpt of the *Tarhim* from *Riwayāt Surat* belonging to Imam `Arafie Manuel of Simonstown – 1304 Hijri (Islamic Date)

**(iii) The *Adhkār* of the *Tarāwīh* Prayer**

In addition to the *Tarhim* and the *Munāyāt* the Cape Muslims also read certain *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) and *Du`ās* (supplications) after the *Tarāwīh* Prayer<sup>50</sup> during the month of *Ramadān*. Most of these spiritual hymns and supplications could be traced back to the authentic traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, the only difference being that they are read in congregation and not individually. Certain sections seem to have been derived from other significant *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) compilations existent among the Cape Muslims, such as the *Rātib al-Haddād* and the *Rātib al-`Attās etc.* Other than that, the format of these *Adhkār* (spiritual hymns) is very unique to the Cape Muslims.

Some of the *adhkār* (spiritual hymns) and *du`ās* (supplications) recited during and after the *Tarāwīh* Prayers:

لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له، له الملك وله الحمد يحيي ويميت وهو على كل شيء

قدير، اللهم صل على سيدنا محمد صلى الله وسلم عليه

<sup>50</sup> *Tarāwīh* Prayer: special prayers exclusively performed during the month of *Ramadān*.

There is no god but Allah alone, He is One and has no partners, to Him belongs the Kingdom and all praise is due to Him, He gives and takes life, and He has power over all things. O Allah

place salutations and peace upon our master Muhammad ρ.

اللَّهُمَّ يَا مُجِيبَ دُعَاءِ السَّائِلِينَ وَ يَا قَابِلَ التَّائِبِينَ يَا رَاحِمَ الضُّعْفَاءِ وَالْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْيَتَامَى  
وَالْمَسَاكِينِ، اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لَنَا بِفَضْلِكَ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَتُبْ وَزَكِّ وَاعْفُ عَنْ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمِينَ، آمِينَ،  
آمِينَ، يَا اللَّهُ، وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ وَسَلَّم عَلَيْهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

O the One responds to the prayers of those who ask, the One Who accepts the repentance of those who repent, the One Who is Merciful towards the weak, the poor, the orphans and the needy. O Allah, forgive us all, through Your Grace and Generosity. Also, pardon, purify and forgive whoever says, "Aameen (x3) Yaa Allah – O Allah Accept". Finally, May Allah place salutations and peace upon him (Muhammad), and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

These are some of the *adhbkar* (spiritual hymns) and *du`as* that are recited during the *Tarāwih* Prayers throughout the Cape. The media has played a vital role in reviving some of these traditions. With the introduction of the local Muslim radio stations these recitations, including the *Tarhīm* and the *Munāyāt* (at certain mosques), could be heard live, in every home, during the month of *Ramadān*. The production of these *adhbkar* (spiritual hymns) and *du`as* (supplications) on compact disks (cds) and cassettes has further reinforced these traditions.

#### (f) The *Tammāt* Ceremony

Among the Cape Muslim cultural-religious practices is also the *tammāt* ceremony, which refers to a significant day in the life of a child. This is when he/she masters the recitation of the *Qur`ān* in particular. It also means that he/she will now be able to recite directly from the *Qur`ān* and no more

from the ‘*sūrat*’<sup>51</sup> from which he/she took his/her elementary *Qur’anic* lessons. Usually the ceremony takes place in the mosque with a group of children being tested by a panel of learned *shaykhs* or *imams*. The children are tested mainly on their pronunciation of the Arabic letters and their application of the *tajwīd*<sup>52</sup> rules. Sometimes the children are also tested on cleanliness as they are expected by law to be clean before touching or reciting from the *Qur’ān*. The following is a description of the *tammat* ceremony which I.D. Du Plessis’ has taken from the Cape Argus in 1935:

“Yesterday a ceremony, the origin of which goes back into the shadows of many centuries ago, was performed in District Six—a ceremony which brought joy to seven small boys and pride to their parents and friends. It was a ceremony which ranks second in importance only to a visit to Mecca. Seven *Muslim* boys, whose ages ranged from nine to fourteen, squatted before the Priest, Sheik Berhardien, and under the approving eyes of 400 men and women, recited chapters from the Koran. “It was a difficult test. They not only had to be word-perfect, but each phrase, each sentence, had to be enunciated in the purest Arabic, with particular attention to punctuation and inflection of the voice. “On the stroke of nine o’clock, the boys, clad in their Eastern turbans, wooden sandals, and gowns of fine silk, walked slowly in procession from their school. . . . to the mosque. “Each examinee was guarded by two bestmen walking at his side, the foremost of the procession carrying the Koran. . . - Inside the mosque hundreds of *Muslims* sat on the floor and patiently awaited the arrival of the boys. Above them the women, almost hidden in the semi-darkness, peeped through the bars of the galleries.... The pupils sat in front facing the priests, and behind them were the bestmen. The deep silence that had preceded their entry was broken as the first boy began slowly and in a high-pitched voice to chant the prescribed chapter. A murmur of “Allah” from the assembly showed that the audience appreciated the

<sup>51</sup> *Soorat*: literally means chapter of the *Qur’ān* (Wehr 1974: 441), but in this context it refers to a specific book that introduces the child to the recitation of the *Qur’ān*, during which he/she learns how to recite the *Qur’ān* applying all its rules and regulations.

<sup>52</sup> *Tajwīd*: the art of reciting the *Qur’ān* according to specific rules of pronunciation. (Wehr 1974: 146)

beauty of the boy's pronunciation.

“Each boy was tested separately, the examinations lasting till midday.

“Every pupil passed. The joy of the audience knew no bounds. The feast was on.... Outside in the yard 300 eggs, 210 lbs. of meat, 182 lbs. of rice, 50 lbs. of potatoes and onions, Indian cooking fat, cinnamon, curry and other spices had been simmering for hours in huge cauldrons into the mixture known to every *Muslim* as *Buriyani*, a highly-prized delicacy...

“The younger the successful candidate the more credit to him.... There is no time limit. Some of the pupils are ready for examination in six months; others again spend years learning a perfect pronunciation. ... When a boy is qualified to sit for examination the parents pay in a small sum towards the cost of the ceremony and the feasting. The feasting at the mosque is a popular part of the ceremony, but it is in their homes that the successful candidates come to realise the true significance of their months of work.” - Cape Argus, 23 September 1935 (Du Plessis 1944: 16, 17)

The *tammat* tradition like many of the other traditions of the Cape Muslims is slowly fading away. Nonetheless, though not as elaborate as before, it can still be observed in some *Madrasahs* of the Western Cape. I personally saw it being observed in recent years at the *Madrasah al-Quds* in Gatesville, Athlone<sup>53</sup>, and *Al-Hidaayah Madrasah* of Aunty Faiqah's, a home-based *Madrasah*<sup>54</sup> in Crawford, Athlone.

### **(g) Big Nights (*Groot Aande*<sup>55</sup>)**

The ‘Big Nights’ refers to significant nights within the Cape Muslim calendar. These include, the night of *Mawlid al-Nabi* (Birthday of the Prophet) on the 12<sup>th</sup> of Rabi` al-Awwal, *Laylat al-Mi`raj* (the night of the Prophet's ascension) on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Rajab, *Laylat al-Bara'ah/Ruwa*<sup>56</sup> (the night of immunity) on

<sup>53</sup> This I observed while I was a staff member of ICOSA based at the *Masjid al-Quds* Islamic Centre in Gatesville, Athlone.

<sup>54</sup> This I observed when I was invited personally on a few occasions by Aunty Faiqah Kriel to test the students' recitation during a *tammat* ceremony.

<sup>55</sup> This is a translation of Big Nights in Afrikaans.

<sup>56</sup> This night is locally referred to as *Ruwa*, which has most probably been derived from Malay.

the 15<sup>th</sup> of Sha`bān, and finally *Laylat al-Qadr* (the night of power – revelation of the *Qur`ān*) which is usually celebrated on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Ramadān. (Tayob 1999: 73; Du Plessis 1944: 14, 15)

On these nights, the mosques are usually packed to capacity, with special programs being arranged by the mosque committees:

### ***Mawlūd al-Nabi***

The *Mawlūd al-Nabi* programme usually includes recitation of the *salawāt*, *riwāyāt* (narrations) of *Al-Barzanji* or *Sharf al-Anām*, a lecture relating to the *sīrah* (biography) of the Prophet Muhammad, with snacks and drinks served in between. *Rampies* are also prepared a day before at the Orange Leaf Festival and presented to the attendees. Traditionally the mosque was usually beautified with trimmings, flowers, and palm leaves.<sup>57</sup> This has faded away and can hardly be observed in any of the local mosques.

### ***Laylat al-Mi`rāj***

The programme for *Laylat al-Mi`rāj* includes recitations from the *Qur`ān*, in particular verses relating to the Prophet's ascension, usually from *Sūrah Banī Isrā`īl* (Chapter 17) or *Sūrah al-Najm* (Chapter 53), together with a lecture relating to the *Mi`rāj* and the *Salāh*.

### ***Laylat al-Barā`ah***

The programme for *Laylat al-Barā`ah* includes the recitation of *Sūrah Yāsīn* thrice with a special *du`ā`* after each recitation. Imam Abdurahgiem Paulsen, an imam of the Malay community in Johannesburg describes the evening's events as follows, "On the 15<sup>th</sup> night the whole community gathers at the various *Masajid* from *Maghrib Salāh* until well after *'Ishā' Salāh*. Immediately after *Maghrib Salāh* the males collectively recite *Sūrah Yāsīn* thrice. This is followed by a special *du`ā`* which is repeated by the congregation, led by the Imam at the completion of each *Sūrah Yāsīn*. Each *Surah Yāsīn* is recited with the intention of acquiring a specific blessing: (1) *Tawl al-'Umr* – to be granted a long life, (2) *Daf`*

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Hajji Koebra Manuel (80 yrs old), an old resident of Simonstown, June 2003. I also informed about this by other residents from Ocean View, originally from Simontown.

*al-Balā'* – protecting the community from calamities, (3) *Istighnā 'an al-Nās* – grant dependence on Allah alone, and not people. (Paulsen (undated): 107-108)

A lecture is optional, explaining the significance of the night. One is also encouraged to fast on the days of the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> of Sha`bān. According to Paulsen, it is also customary on this night to visit the graveyard and making *du`ā'* for all Muslims, based on the action of the Prophet. (Paulsen (undated): 108)

### ***Laylat al-Qadr***

Finally, *Laylat al-Qadr*, which is locally commemorated on the 27<sup>th</sup> night of Ramadān, is the climax of devotion during the month of fasting. Even though *Laylat al-Qadr* could fall on any of the odd nights in the last ten nights of Ramadān, somehow, particular emphasis have been put on the 27<sup>th</sup> night. Traditionally on this night, the houses of the Cape Muslims are spotlessly cleaned and candles are lit. The night has also therefore been referred to as 'kers-opsteek'<sup>58</sup>, which means, the lighting of candles. This tradition now seems to be an out-dated practice and is known only to the older generation. (Du Plessis 1944: 16; Paulsen (undated): 110)

Special programmes are also held at the local mosque in the form of *dhikr* (spiritual hymns), *tilāwat al-qur'ān* (recital of the *Qur'ān*), the performance of certain *nafl salāh* (supererogatory prayers), talks related to *Laylat al-Qadr* etc. in order to gain the full spiritual benefit of the night.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> This is an Afrikaans word, which means the lighting of candles.

<sup>59</sup> This is based on my personal observations of these practices on various occasions during the month of *Ramadān* at a few local mosques at the Cape.

### 2.4.2. Linguistic Traditions of the Cape Muslims

Language plays an important role in one's identity. According to Achmat Davids the slaves spoke many different languages but the language of communication used by the Muslims by the end of the eighteenth century, which outstripped the other languages, was indeed *Malayu*. (Davids 1989: 16) According to the latter, the reason for this “could be attributed to the fact that it [*Malayu*] became the vehicle for the transmission of religious ideas among the slaves”. Davids also alludes to the fact that *Malayu* was adopted by Tuan Guru as the “medium of the Dorp Street *Madrasah* in 1793”. (Davids 1989: 18) In addition to this, *Malayu* was the one language that was understood by the majority of the slaves. This could be one of the reasons why *Malayu* was chosen by Tuan Guru as the medium of instruction in his Dorp Street Missionary School.

The Cape Dutch was a challenge to the *Malayu* language during the nineteenth century. It eventually replaced the *Malayu* language. According to Achmat Davids, “It [Cape Dutch], however, did not immediately replace *Malayu*, though it came to co-exist with *Malayu* until about 1880”. (Davids 1989:18)

I think that Cape Dutch eventually outstripped *Malayu* because of the power relation between the colonized and the colonizer. This was the relationship between the master (Dutch Colonialist) and the slave, the master forcing his language and culture onto the slave. The establishment of Cape Dutch as the language of communication at the Cape was thus inevitable. Despite this, many of the words from the languages of the slaves, especially *Malayu* and *Bugbanese* were incorporated into the Cape Dutch language, which later became known as Afrikaans. (Davids 1989:18)

The *Malayu* language was primarily the language of identity for the Malay-Indonesian slaves. As for the language of identity for Muslims in general it is undoubtedly the Arabic language. Arabic is seen as a religious/sacred language which is not only the lingua franca of the Middle East and North Africa, but also, in a religious context, the ‘lingua franca’ of Muslims all over the world. There is not a single Muslim that is not familiar with the Arabic language. This is mainly because of the fact that the

primary sources of Islam, specifically the *Qur'an* and *Hadith* is written in the Arabic language. Also, most Islamic rituals related to prayer (*salāh*), pilgrimage (*hajj*), supplications (*du`ās*), spiritual hymns (*dhikrs*) etc. are conducted in the Arabic language.

### **The Arabic Phenomena at the Cape**

An interesting phenomenon that existed and that still exists today is the fact that the Cape Muslims, who identify themselves with the Arabic language, have mastered the recitation and writing of the language without being able to speak and understand it. Up to the present, the Arabic language has always been perceived, especially by the local Muslims as a sacred or religious language.

It is worth mentioning that during the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a strong Arabic writing tradition existed among the local Muslims. The local scholars were writing religious texts in Afrikaans, using the Arabic script. This is locally referred to as Arabic-Afrikaans. According to Muhammad Haron there are about 74 extant Arabic-Afrikaans texts written between 1856 and 1957. These texts included a variety of Islamic studies topics, such as, *Aqidah* (Islamic Creed), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), Arabic Grammar and Spirituality etc. (Haron 2001: 8) However, the work that stands out the most is the *Bayān ad-Dīn* of the *Hanafi* scholar, Abū Bakr Effendi.

The *Bayān al-Dīn* was by far the first published Arabic–Afrikaans text locally. In addition to this it has also been regarded as one of the first published Afrikaans text in South Africa. (Mahida 1993: 25 and Davids 1991: 113) It was preceded by the *Zamespraak tusschen Klaas Waarzegger en Jan Twijffelaar*, published in 1860, and which is generally regarded as the first book in Afrikaans. The essential differences between the two publications are: (i) *Zamespraak* uses language for comic effect and the *Bayān al-Dīn* to convey serious religious ideas; (ii) *Zamespraak* uses Roman script and the *Bayān al-Dīn* Arabic lettering. (Davids 1991: 115) It was completed in 1869 by its author, *Abū Bakr Effendi*, and in 1877 it was printed by the Turkish Ministry of Education in *Islambol* (Constantinople, later: Istanbul) and presented as a gift from the Ottoman government to the Cape Muslim community. (Mahida 1993:25) The importance of the *Bayān al-Dīn* to the Arabic-Afrikaans literary tradition stems from its breaking

away from the language usage, and extending the spelling system of the Arabic-Afrikaans scripts, which preceded its appearance. Effendi also added new lettering symbols to the existing symbols of the Arabic-Afrikaans alphabet of the time. (Davids 1991: 115)

The difference between the *Bayānudin* and the previous texts is that it is an Afrikaans work written in Arabic script, whereas the others were mainly Arabic texts. Here the Arabic script was merely adopted. It is thus quite significant in the sense that it is symbolic to the unique Arabic-Afrikaans literary tradition that existed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was thus a very important contribution to the Arabic language and the identity of the local Muslims. Significantly, Achmat Davids traces this tradition back to the thirteenth century when Sultan Muhammad Shah became the ruler of the Malaysian Empire. *Malayu* being the medium for religious instruction at the time was introduced to writing in Arabic script and even the Arabic alphabet was adopted. (Davids 1989: 16-17) Thus in *Tuan Guru's* Missionary school the *Malayu* language was written in Arabic script. *Tuan Guru* also seems to be the pioneer of teaching the Arabic language in terms of writing and reading. It is interesting to note that the latter did not concentrate on teaching Arabic in terms of speaking and understanding, despite the fact that he knew the Arabic language very well. The fact that he wrote a book, mentioned earlier, in Arabic indicates to me that he must have had a command of the Arabic language. Besides this, *Tuan Guru* even wrote a number of *Qur'ānic* texts from memory with very few mistakes. A copy of one of these *Qur'ānic* texts can still be viewed today at the Dorp Street Mosque in *Bo-Kaap*. Adding to this, as will be seen in the following chapter, is that he was also an Arabic interpreter between the Dutch and the Johannese (Arabs) in 1773. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) This is further testimony of the fact that *Tuan Guru* was a master of the Arabic language, on various levels and in various disciplines.

It is my contention that because of the infrastructure and because *Tuan Guru*, the pioneer in Cape Muslim Education, tried to be realistic in terms of his Arabic linguistic ability and the ability of those who would continue with his teachings, he concentrated mainly on the reading and writing of the

language. It would be easier to maintain the language in terms of reading and writing. His teaching of reading and writing of the Arabic language and his teachings of Islamic Monotheism, as seen earlier, remained popular among the Cape Muslims until the latter part of the twentieth century. Achmat Davids writes; “The educational method was essentially a rote learning process, and the *Malayu* rhythmic mnemonics – imported from the Southeast Asian Archipelago during their days of slavery, and used for the teaching of the consonant and vowel sounds of the Arabic alphabet – was until recently still used in Cape Town. He goes further, “There is thus hardly a Cape Muslim, over the age of 30 years who has not been taught Arabic in this manner, and does not remember these rhythmic mnemonics”. (Davids 1989) This is the profound impact it had on the identity of the Cape Muslims.

## 2.5. The Spiritual (*Sūfī*) Traditions of the Cape Muslims

The characteristics of an Islamic identity at the Cape will be incomplete if one does not acknowledge the impact of Sufism /*Tasawwuf* on the lives and identity of the local Muslims. There is no doubt that Islam was brought here by *shaykhs* subscribing to various *sūfī* orders (*ṭarīqahs*). These included the *Khalwati*, *Bā`Alawi*, *Qādiri*, *Sammani*, *Shattari*, *Naqshbandi*, *Rifā`i*, *Shādhili* and *Chisti Sūfī* Orders etc. In the first quarter of the twentieth century Zwemer recorded the existence of a number of *zāwiyah*'s<sup>60</sup> of “mystic or dervish brotherhoods” and comments: “When one remembers the influence of these orders in the History of *Islām* ... one is not surprised at the strength of Islam (at the Cape).” (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 135) *Shaykh* Ahmad Hendricks of the Al-Zawiyah Mosque in Cape Town, writes in an article on *Tasawwuf* (Islamic Mysticism): “...And it is this very spirit, seen in the legacy of our forefathers that kept Islam alive in the Cape at the foot of Africa. *Tasawwuf* or Islamic Spirituality, is as indigenous to South Africa as is the Protea; a captivatingly beautiful but hardy flower capable of surviving the hottest summers and the coldest winters.” (Hendricks) He appears to also believe that *Tasawwuf* had a substantial impact on the survival of Islam in South Africa in general and at the Cape in particular.

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<sup>60</sup> A *zāwiyah* is a special place where *sūfī dhikrs* are held, it literally means corner

The order, which in my analysis had the greatest influence on the local community, was undoubtedly the *Bā`Alawi Ṣūfī* Order that mainly originates from *Ḥaḍḥramawt* in Yemen. Although, the *Qādiriy-yah* and *Rifā`iyyah* are very close to this order. Evidently the local practices and the texts mentioned earlier originate from this order in particular. Therefore if these practices and these texts had such a great influence on the lives and identity of the local Muslims then I do believe that the *Bā`Alawi Ṣūfī* Order has made its mark on the Islamic identity of the local Muslims. That the local Muslims have a strong *ṣūfī-Islāmic* identity can be seen in their cultural-religious practices and their veneration for the pioneers who laid down the foundation for their Islamic identity.

The impact of the *ṣūfī* orders on the identity of the Cape Muslims can especially be seen in their practices which have been associated with a specific order, for example the *Rātīb al-Haddād*, associated with the *Bā`Alawi Ṣūfī* Order, the *Rātīb ar-Rifā`i*, associated with the *Rifā`i Ṣūfī* Order, and the recitation of the *Birzanji Mawlūd*, associated with the *Qādiri* (Van Bruinessen (5)) and the *Bā`Alawi Ṣūfī* Orders (Bang 2003: 148) etc. Most of the local Muslims engage in these practices without being formally introduced or initiated into the specific order. It seems as if many of these practices have become more of a ritual in which the person engages, without affiliation to the particular order. (Owaisi: 1) In most cases the ritual practices remained, without association to the particular order. Also, spiritual ties (*silsilah*) were severed.

The spiritual ties and teachings of these orders were revived especially through visits from *shaykhs* throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the present. Despite this, for most of the locals, the practices still remain a ritual, though recognized as an integral part of their Cape Muslim identity. (Tayob 2003)

**Early Cape *Sūfi* Masters and their *Tarīqah* Affiliations**

Below is table showing the early Cape spiritual masters, their locations at the Cape, their affiliations in terms of the respective *sūfi* orders, and their dates of arrival at the Cape:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Cape Location</b>	<b><i>Tarīqah</i> Affiliation</b>	<b>Year of Arrival</b>	<b>References</b>
Shaykh `Abd ar-Rahmān Matebe Shah	Constantia	<i>Qādiri Sūfi</i> Order	1667	Da Costa and Davids 1994: 130
Shaykh Mahmūd	Constantia	<i>Qādiri Sūfi</i> Order	1667	Da Costa and Davids 1994: 130
Shaykh Yūsuf	Macassar	<i>Khawāzi,</i> <i>Naqshbandi,</i> <i>Shattari,</i> <i>Bā `Alawi, Qādiri</i> <i>Sūfi</i> Orders	1694	Dangor 1994: 12; Van Bruinessen 1991: 251-269
Shaykh Nūr al-Mubīn	Oudekraal	<i>Qādiri Sūfi</i> Order	1716	Owaisi (undated): 4
Sayyid `Alawi/Tuan Sa`īd	Bo-Kaap	<i>Bā `Alawi Sūfi</i> Order	1744	Da Costa and Davids 1994: 135
<i>Hajji</i> Matarim	Robben Island	<i>Qādiri Sūfi</i> Order	1744	Owaisi (undated): 4
Tuan Guru ( <i>Qādi</i> `Abd as-Salām)	Bo-Kaap	<i>Assumed to be</i> <i>Bā Alawi,</i> <i>Shādhili Sūfi</i> Order	1780, or even earlier in the 1770s	Guru 1786: 149, 198, 213 and 285; Owaisi (undated): 4; Davids 1980: 43
Sayyid `Abd ar-Rahmīn al-`Irāqi	Mowbray	<i>Bā `Alawi Sūfi</i> Order	1880	Da Costa and Davids 1994: 137 Owaisi (undated): 4

Sayyid Muhsin al- `Idrūs	Mowbray	<i>Bā`Alawi, Qādiri Sūfi Orders</i>	Beginnin g of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century	Da Costa and Davids 1994: 137 Owaisi (undated): 6
Mawlanā `Abd al- Latīf	Athlone	<i>Chesti Nizāmi Sūfi Order</i>	1905	Owaisi (undated): 5

The table above gives us an idea of when the pioneers of Islam arrived at the Cape and their *tariqah* affiliations, to point out the impact of the *sūfi* orders on the establishment of Islam at the Cape. We also see that these masters arrived at the Cape throughout the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is also evident from the above table that most of these pioneers were associated with the *Bā`Alawi* and *Qādiri Sūfi* Orders which is probably the main reason why the practices of these particular orders is so strong at the Cape. It also indicates the profound impact of these particular orders on the identity of the Cape Muslims.

## 2.6. Conclusion

This particular chapter has seen the theory of identity being applied to Cape Muslim identity. We have identified certain traditions as distinguishing features of a Cape Muslim identity. These include, as outlined in the introduction to this particular chapter, doctrinal traditions, legal traditions, cultural-linguistic traditions and spiritual (*sūfi* traditions). Thus a typical description of Cape Muslim identity is: (1) adherence to a particular doctrinal tradition – the *Ash`ari Aqīdah*, (2) following a particular legal tradition – the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*, (3) practicing certain cultural-religious traditions – *Mawlūd*, *Gadat*, *Ratiēp* and other traditions (4) associating with a particular religious/sacred language – Arabic, (5) following or association with a specific *Sūfi* order - *`Alawi Sūfi* Order, *Qādiri Sūfi* Order, or *Qādiri Sūfi* Order etc. Understanding the nature of Cape Muslim identity allows us to relate it to ‘others’ and explore its origins which is the main focus of the following chapter.

## Chapter Three

### *The Origins of Cape Muslim Identity*

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The origins of the Cape Muslim Community are extensively linked to the origins and affiliations of its pioneers, those who established and spread Islam at the Cape. This chapter will especially focus on the origins and affiliations of the Cape Muslim Pioneers.

“Ideas follow trade routes, but not necessarily voluntarily. This was the case when the first Muslim, Ibrahim van Batavia, a slave, splashed ashore in Table Bay in the second half of the seventeenth century; shipped to southern Africa by an unlikely agent of Islam—the Dutch East India Company.’ Islam arrived in southern Africa as a coincidence of geography, colonization, slavery; and the geopolitics of mercantile commerce. A new society emerged, ‘where the South Atlantic joins the Indian Ocean, and Calvinist Christianity with Roman law bobbed, uneasily, at the confluence of a sad human sea that flowed as much from the Muslim East Indies as from the tip of Africa’.” (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 327)

This is Robert Shell’s opening statement in his study of the history of Islam in Southern Africa (1652 – 1998), which is to a large extent the truth of what happened to the Muslims of South Africa. The Muslim Pioneers who established Islam at the Cape seem to have come from various places and this is mainly due to the efforts and activities of the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) and the British Colonialists. In fact, the Cape of Good Hope was the half way mark between Europe and the East Indies. It was also a dumping ground for bandits and political exiles. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 330) The activities of the Dutch and the British during the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries were concentrated mainly in Southeast Asia and East Africa. In the centre of all of this was the Middle East, the birthplace of Islam, its place of origin. From the Middle East Islam spread in various directions, North, East, South and West. It is my contention that Islam came to South Africa, directly

from the Middle East via East Africa, as well as indirectly from Southeast Asia, where it was first established.

In this chapter we explore the links between Islam at the Cape, and Islam in Southeast Asia (Malaysia, Indonesia/Java etc.) and East Africa, with particular focus on common doctrinal traditions, legal traditions, cultural-religious traditions and *sūfī* (spiritual) traditions.

### 3.2. Passage of Islam to the Cape via Southeast Asia

As is evident, Islam was brought to the Cape by *Sūfī* masters. Most of these masters came from Southeast Asia at a time when Sufism dominated the Islamic world. Sufism was especially established in the Middle East, North Africa, East Africa and lastly Southeast Asia. By the time that Shaykh Yūsuf, who is considered to be the founder of Islam in South Africa, arrived at the Cape Sufism was already established in most parts of the Islamic world<sup>1</sup> including Southeast Asia. The earliest records of Sufism in Southeast Asia date back to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Even though the possibility exists that it could have existed in the area long before this time.<sup>2</sup>

Although Sufism only became popular in the region in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century there is evidence of Muslims being resident there already in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> According to most historians, the Islamization of the Malay Archipelago started from this period onwards. Some historians even believe that Sufism played a major role in the process of Islamization in the region. Historian, Martin van Bruinessen records an opinion of an Australian scholar, Anthony Johns, who suggested that ‘Islamization was due to active proselytization by *Sūfī* missionaries accompanying foreign merchants.’ Johns also informs us that *Sūfī*-type preachers are mentioned in various indigenous accounts and speculates that ‘there was a close connection between trade guilds, *Sūfī* orders and these preachers, that provided the moving force behind Islamization.’<sup>4</sup> Van Bruinessen however disagrees, because

<sup>1</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, "Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* (Jakarta), vol. I, no.1 (1994), 1-23 – [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#_ftn1)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

according to him, the early sources mentioning *Sūfi* orders date from the late 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards.<sup>5</sup> He cannot, however, say for sure that Sufism did not exist in the region earlier. Furthermore, there is a great deal of evidence that points to the fact that Islam was introduced to the region by merchants from Southern Arabia, especially from Hadhramawt in Yemen. According to Dr. Najīb Salībī, Zayn al-Ābidīn who was from the `Azamat Khān Family from Hadhramaut, Yemen, married the daughter of Sultan Jahūr. He had three sons who were dispersed all over the Archipelago and fought the Spanish in 1532. He adds that Islam entered the (present day) Philippines through his (Zayn al-Ābidīn) son Hasan. In fact the king embraced Islam at his hands and he married his (the king's) daughter. As a result, Islam spread all over the (present day) Philippine regions. Among the countries of the Malaysian Archipelago, it is worth mentioning, as confirmation, explicitly announced from the highest cultural platforms, by Dr. Dato (Muhādir bin Muhammad), the Head of the Malaysian Ministry, who said regarding the Hadhramis (those from Hadhramaut), "Malaysia did not resist Islamic occupation, nor did they pretend to embrace Islam. Instead, they chose it (Islam) and they were guided towards it, by Muslim merchants who came to their countries from Hadhramaut. They were present in all parts of the world and they did not have the form of indecency or dictatorship of the imperialists. Instead, they were truthful, reflecting the tolerant teachings of Islam. Thus, the rulers of the various regions were fascinated by their behaviour, and therefore they embraced Islam and they encouraged their people to do the same."<sup>6</sup>

Therefore, if it is true that Islam was introduced by these merchants from Southern Arabia, then one can conclude that the Islamization of the region could have been influenced by *Sūfi* Islam. This is because medieval Sufism especially flourished in the North African and Middle Eastern regions before Islam was introduced to Southeast Asia. The first centuries of the Islamization of Southeast Asia

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid*

<sup>6</sup> Taken from an article written in Arabic about the role of Hadhramawt in Southeast Asia, "*Dawr hadramawt fī janūb sharq asiya*" - [www.saggaf.net](http://www.saggaf.net)

coincided with the period of flourishing of medieval Sufism and the growth of the *Sūfī* orders.<sup>7</sup> Van Bruinessen gives an overview of the emergence and development of *Sūfī* orders according to J. Spencer Trimingham's observation in his book, *The Sūfī Orders in Islam*; "Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, who made moderate, devotional Sufism acceptable to the scholars of the Law, died in 1111; Ibn al-`Arabi, whose works deeply influenced almost all later *Sūfīs*, died in 1240. `Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, around whose teaching the tarékat Qadiriyya was organised, died in 1166 and `Abd al-Qahir al-Suhrawardi, for whom the Suhrawardiyya is named, a year later (but it is not clear from when on we can actually speak of tarékat in these cases). Najmuddin al-Kubra, one of the most seminal figures of Central Asian Sufism, the founder of the Kubrawiyya order and a major influence on the later Naqshbandiyya, died in 1221. The North African Abu'l-Hasan al-Shadhili, founder of the Shadhiliyya, died in 1258. The Rifa`iyya was definitely an order by 1320, when Ibn Battuta gave us his description of its rituals; the Khalwatiyya crystallized into a tarékat between 1300 and 1450. The Naqshbandiyya was a distinct order in the lifetime of the mystic who gave it its name, Baha'uddin Naqshband (d. 1389), and the eponymous founder of the Shattariyya, `Abdullah al-Shattar, died in 1428-9."<sup>8</sup> Even according to this observation, the great possibility exists that Islam was introduced to Southeast Asia by merchants most likely influenced by Sufism. In addition to this, if the *Hadhramis* (those from Hadhramawt, Yemen) did introduce Islam to the region it was most likely a *Sūfī* type of Islam. The *Hadhramis*, even today, have been associated with the *Bā`Alawi Sūfī* Order, especially following the teachings of Imām al-Ghazālī, in both *Shari`ah* (Law) and *Tariqah* (Spirituality). The *Bā`Alawi Sūfī* Order played a significant role in early Malay-Indonesian Islam and continues to play a significant even in present day Malay-Indonesian Islam.<sup>9</sup>

In support of the idea that *Sūfī* Islam accompanied the Islamization process, Masdar Hilmy, an M.A. student at McGill University in Canada cites the opinion of Dr. A.H. Jones who regards Sufism

<sup>7</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, "Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* (Jakarta), vol. I, no.1 (1994), 1-23 – [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#_ftn1)

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

<sup>9</sup> Taken from an article: *The Bā`Alawi Order* - <http://www.sufimuslimcouncil.org/hr/Spirituality/PDF/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20The%20Bā%20Alawi%20Order.pdf>

as the key to any explanation of the Islamization of Java, Sumatra and other parts of Indonesia. The latter further asserts that the *Sūfi* movement was almost identical with the Islamic world during a period of 500 years, from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. He therefore believes that it is not an exaggeration that the Islamization of Java coincided with the peak of *Sūfi* influence in the rest of the Muslim world. (Hilmy 1999: 22)

### 3.2.1. *Sūfi* Influences on Early Islam in Southeast Asia

There is a significant amount of *Sūfi* orders that existed in the first few centuries of Islam in Southeast Asia. Among the most significant orders were the *Qādiri* Order, the *Rifā'i* Order (linked to the al-`Idrūs family from Hadhramawt), the *Shattari* Order, and the *Naqshbandi* Order. Other orders include the *Sammāni* Order, and the *Khalwati* Order.

The Southeast Asian orders had significant links with the Middle East. It is important to note that Arabia, especially Mecca and Medina were the centres of all these orders. The early Southeast Asian scholars travelled at length to the Arabian Peninsula to study the *Shari`ah* (Islamic Law), coupled with *Tarīqah* (Spirituality). It was here that they were either introduced to a particular *Sūfi* order, or strengthened their affiliations with an existing order.<sup>10</sup> The early Southeast Asians, or *Jāwah* as they were called in Mecca and Medina, were taught and influenced by the best scholars of Mecca and Medina. These scholars include Ahmad al-Qushāshi, Ibrāhīm al-Kurāni and Ibrāhīm's son Muhammad Tāhir. They were prominent scholars of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In particular, these scholars taught the disciplines of many *Sūfi* orders, but their Indonesian students had a strong preference for the *Shattari* Order.

Among the early Southeast Asian scholars who studied in Arabia were Abdurra'uf of Singkel and his contemporary Yūsuf of Makassar. Abdurra'uf studied with both Qushāshi and Kurāni and was sent back to Sumatra as a *Khalīfab*<sup>11</sup>, where he introduced the *Shattari Sūfi* Order to the region. According to Van Bruinessen, the *Shattari* Order easily accommodated itself with local tradition and

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

<sup>11</sup> *Khalīfab*: usually refers to a representative of the *shaykh* of a particular Sufi order

became the most 'indigenized' of the orders. In addition to this, the *Shattari* Order became so significant that for several generations the Indonesian students wanted to study under Kurāni's successors and be initiated into the that particular order.<sup>12</sup>

Yūsuf of Makassar, or Shaykh Yūsuf as he was locally called, also studied under the *shaykh*, Ibrāhīm al-Kurāni. In fact, Shaykh Yūsuf spent two decades in Arabia, studying under al-Kurāni and others. Shaykh Yūsuf was initiated into various *Sūfi* orders. He received the *ijāzab*<sup>13</sup> for the following *Sūfi* orders: the *Naqshbandi*, the *Qādiri*, the *Shattari*, the *Bā`Alawi* and the *Khalwati* Order.<sup>14</sup> He provides the *silsilah*<sup>15</sup> for all these orders.<sup>16</sup> He also claims to have been initiated into the *Dasuqi*, the *Shādhili*, the *Chisti`Aydusi*, the *Ahmadi*, the *Madani*, the *Kubrawi* Order and several less known orders.<sup>17</sup> Shaykh Yūsuf especially established the *Khalwati* Order in the Archipelago. Shaykh Yūsuf combined the techniques of the *Khalwati* Order with a selection of those from other orders. Later this became known as the *Khalwati-Yūsuf* and took root in the South Celebes especially among the Makassarese aristocracy.<sup>18</sup> He is also believed to have belonged to the *Rifā`i Sūfi* Order. (Nasr 271) According to van Bruinessen, he claims to have been initiated into this particular order by Nūr al-Dīn ibn 'Alī ibn Hasanjī ibn Muhammad Hamād al-Rānīrī (d. 1076/ 1666).<sup>19</sup>

For centuries the Southeast Asians travelled to Arabia in search of knowledge. Even after the time of Abdurra'uf and Shaykh Yūsuf one still found the Southeast Asians travelling to Mecca and Medina to learn from its *shaykhs* the *Shari`ah* and the various *Sūfi* disciplines. Almost a century after Abdurra'uf and Shaykh Yūsuf, the *Jāwab* (Southeast Asians) were again attracted to the teachings of

<sup>12</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, "Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* (Jakarta), vol. I, no.1 (1994), 1-23 –

[http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#_ftn1)

<sup>13</sup> *Ijāzab*: special permission from a particular *shaykh* to teach or practice the teachings of a particular discipline. In this case the permission to teach or practice the teachings of a particular Sufi order. It can also refer to a teaching certificate.

<sup>14</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, "Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* (Jakarta), vol. I, no.1 (1994), 1-23 –

[http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#_ftn1)

<sup>15</sup> *Silsilah*: refers the spiritual chain from one *shaykh* to another

<sup>16</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, "Origins and development of the Sufi orders (tarekat) in Southeast Asia", *Studia Islamika* (Jakarta), vol. I, no.1 (1994), 1-23 –

[http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Sufi%20orders%20in%20Indonesia.htm#_ftn1)

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

<sup>19</sup> *ibid*

Muhammad bin `Abd al-Karīm al-Sammān. Al-Sammān managed to combine the *Khawṭi*, the *Qadiri* and the *Naqshbandi* with the North African *Shadhili dhikr* (in all of which he had *ijāzab*), and developed a new ecstatic way of *dhikr* for which he composed a *rātib*<sup>20</sup>. This combination became known as the *Sammāniyyab*. In this way, the *Sammāni Sūfi* Order came into existence. In fact, the ecstatic form of this *dhikr* used to be common in Cape Town and was erroneously dubbed the *Samman*.

### 3.2.2. The *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* in Southeast Asia

Like the Cape Muslims, the Malays from the Archipelago also predominantly follow the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. This can be seen when considering their religious practices as well as the books they use. The *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* seemed to have taken root in the Archipelago since the beginning of Islam in the region. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, an Indonesian scholar, makes reference to Ibn Battuta's observation upon visiting Samudra, on his way to China in 1345 A.D., that Islam had been established in the area for almost a century and that the king and his people were all followers of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*.<sup>21</sup>

It is most likely that the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* entered the region through the *Hadhramis* from Yemen. The *Hadhramis*, even today, are strong followers of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. (Bang 2003: 23) In addition to this, there have also been some Kurdish (*Sunni*) influences in the region and therefore the possibility exists that they could have also been responsible for spreading the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. They were greatly influenced by the teachings of Imām al-Ghazali, the famous *Shāfi`i* Jurist, and were responsible for bringing the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* to the region. The *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* even today is followed by the majority of the Southeast Asians.<sup>22</sup>

### 3.2.3. The Doctrinal Traditions of the Muslims in Southeast Asia

Among the schools of religious dogma or creed in Islam is the Ash'ari school of belief, named after its founder, Abu al-Hasan Al-Ash'ari (AH 260-324/874-935 CE). The Ash'ari school of belief forms part

<sup>20</sup> *Rātib*: a litany consisting of invocations and *Qur'anic* verses

<sup>21</sup> Taken from Islam in Indonesia by P. A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, a chapter prepared for the book, "Islam -- The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims" by Kenneth W. Morgan – <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1656&C=1646>

<sup>22</sup> *Shāfi`i* Islam - <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/intro/islam-shafii.htm>

of *Sunni* Islam and is adhered to and supported by the majority of Muslims who follow the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab*. Furthermore, the *Ash'ari* doctrine deals primarily with the principles of belief in Islam as opposed to practical legal matters, which are dealt with mainly by the schools of jurisprudence, such as the *Shāfi'i, Hanafi, Hanbali and Māliki Madh-habs*. (R.M. Frank, G.F. Haddad) Thus, we also find that the Southeast Asian Muslims, who adhere to the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab*, as established earlier, mainly follow the *Ash'ari* creed. This is also evident in the books used in the majority of *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) in the Archipelago. In his study of religious books used in most *pesantren* across the region, Van Bruinessen lists the following books dealing with belief or *aqīdab*, i.e. *Umm al-barabīn* (also called *Al-durra*) by Abu `Abdallah M. b. Yūsuf al-Sanusi (d. 895/1490), *Kifayat al-`awamm*, by M.b.M. al-Faddali (d. 1236/1821, see GAL II, 489), and also the *`Aqidat al-`awamm* by Ahmad al-Marzuqi al-Maliki al-Makki (1864). It is important to note, that all of these books mainly deal with the *Ash'ari* creed. One can therefore safely conclude that the Southeast Asian Muslims also follow the *Ash'ari* creed in matters of belief, in addition to following the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab* in matters of law.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.2.4. The Cultural Traditions of the Muslims in Southeast Asia

Before one understands Malay-Indonesian cultural-religious traditions, one has to understand an important concept that forms an integral part of every cultural-religious practice or ceremony. This is the concept of *slametan*, which is the quintessence of Malay-Indonesian cultural-religious practices or ceremonies. Also by understanding this concept, we will also be able to understand many of the Cape Muslim cultural-religious traditions. Moreover, we will notice that many of the Cape Muslim cultural-religious traditions have been rooted in Malay-Indonesian Islam.

#### (a) Understanding the Concept of Slametan

The *slametan* refers to a Javanese Muslim ritual conducted to gain the pleasure of God. (Hilmy, M. (1999), p. 49) *Slametan* are the main rituals that Javanese villagers celebrate at life-cycle events (childbirth, circumcision, marriage, death) or when making important personal or public decisions

<sup>23</sup> Taken from a research paper written by Martin Van Bruinessen, Kitab Kuning Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/kitab\\_kuning.htm#\\_ftn1](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/kitab_kuning.htm#_ftn1)

(moving to a new place, or changing jobs). (Schweizer 1998) It is also used to celebrate important Islamic events such as the birthday of the Prophet of Islam (*Mawlūd an-Nabi*), the two `ids (*Īd al-Fitr* و *Īd al-Adhā*) and the Islamic New Year (*Anwal Muharram*). It is further also used to socially integrate a particular village or to ward off evil spirits. (Hilmy 1999: 49) Hilmy mentions that socio-anthropologist, Clifford Geertz, has divided the *slametan* into three distinct categories, i.e. *slametan* for life-cycle events, ‘calendrical *slametan*’ and *slametan* concerned with the social integration of a village which is referred in Java *berih desa* (literally means ‘cleansing of the village’ from evil spirits). (Hilmy 1999: 49)

Furthermore, the word *slametan* is derived from the Arabic word *salāmatan* (سلامة) which means peace, safety, security, harmony or prosperity.<sup>24</sup> Thus the main intent for the *slametan* ritual is for peace or prosperity for both the individual and society. Participants hope that the communal ritual will smooth the succession of the person in need to another step in the life cycle or that it will lend support for making major decisions. In the village, the *slametan* is the main means for producing social solidarity and for expressing wealth and differences of religious orientation. Focusing on ritual within the community establishes the internal aspect of *slametan* rituals. In addition, rural *slametan* have been influenced by the Javanese courtly traditions and the larger society. Hence, *slametan* also reflects *outside forces* – economic, political, and symbolic – the external aspect of *slametan* that I will also discuss. (Schweizer 1998)

Hilmy describes the *slametan* ritual as follows:

The process of the *slametan* is usually accompanied by a traditional Javanese meal which usually consist of rice cones (sometimes of yellow rice), decorated with side dishes of fish, eggs, meat, vegetables, and fruits, presenting a wide variety of colours and shapes of side dishes (*tumpeng*), usually cover with banana leaves. Furthermore there are also one or two kettles of tea and a number of glasses for the

<sup>24</sup> Taken from the *Muhaddith* search programme – <http://www.muhaddith.org>

guests. It is important to note that most socio-anthropologists believe that the food (*kenduren*) is the essential aspect of the entire ritual.

The ritual usually takes place in the front room of the house. The food covered with the banana leaves is placed in the centre of the room, with the men sitting cross-legged around the mats, or *sila* (J.). In addition to this, Javanese incense (*menyan* or *dupa*, J.) is burnt, with its odours covering the entire room. Once all the guests have arrived, the host will address them. Locally this address is referred to as *ujub* (J., statement of intent) which is made to welcome and thank the guests for attending, to explain the purpose of the *slametan* (circumcision, naming of a child, marriage, or death of a family member), mention the general reason (safety, or avoiding bad luck), and lastly apology for lack of eloquence in the speech or the inadequacy of the food. The ceremony begins with the prayer or *du`ā`* which is the second most important part of the *slametan*. The *du`ā`* is called *donga* or *ndonga* (J.), which is led by a special religious person such as a *modin* (J., an official religious specialist) or a *kiyayi* (J., Islamic teacher). According to Hilmy, the *donga* primarily consists of verses from the *Qur`ān*. The most common passage chanted is the opening chapter, called the *fātihah*. The *fātihah* is usually accompanied by other selected verses or chapters from the *Qur`ān*. The latter also mentions that the Chapter of *Yāsīn* (*Sūrah Yāsīn*) is always recited at a death *slametan*, while the Chapter of Sincerity (*Sūrah al-Ikhlās*) is recited at exorcisms, when the *slametan* is intended to restore peacefulness. The *donga* is concluded with a special prayer (*du`ā`*) by the *modin* in which everybody raises their hands saying *āmīn* (may God accept), and when the *du`ā`* is finish, everybody rub their hands over their faces in order to absorb the spiritual blessings descending from heaven.<sup>25</sup> When the *donga* is finished, the *modin* is invited by the host to begin the meal, who, is in turn, followed by the rest of the guests. Using the banana leaves/plates provided, each guest will dish for himself. The particular guest will only eat part of the food that he has dished, wrapping the remainder in the banana leaf to take home after having thanked the host. Sometimes the host distribute the food packages in containers of plaited

<sup>25</sup> It is important to not that the procedure mentioned here is not specific to the *slametan* ritual but it is conducted in this way for every supplication/prayer, whether after the five daily prayers or any other Islamic ritual.

bamboo (*besek*, J.) for the guests to take home. The food taken home is referred to as *berkat* (J.), most probably derived from the Arabic word *barakat* (بركة) which means blessings. This is because some of the blessings of the ceremony are taken home, for the families of the guests to partake in it. (Hilmy 1999: 54-57)

In summary, the integrals of the *slametan* include: the *Ujub* (statement of intent/welcoming address), the *Du'ā/Donga* (Prayers and Supplication), The *Kenduren* (Ritual Meal). The *slametan* for whichever purpose it is given, resembles to a large extent, the *hājab/werk/merang* at the Cape, which has also in a similar way been associated with post-death rituals, birthdays, anniversaries, and name giving ceremonies.

Finally, it is important to mention that there are divergent views among socio-anthropologists regarding the origins of the *slametan*, most of who believe that it has a strong Hindu-Buddhist connection.

### **(b) Nature of the *Slametan***

Many scholars argue about the religious nature of the *slametan* ritual, whether it is Islamic or syncretistic. In this section, I will briefly outline the various arguments given by these scholars; this is with reference to Masdar Hilmy, who has done some extensive research on the subject. Hilmy cites the arguments and opinions of a few primary scholars on the subject, i.e. Clifford Geertz, Mayar and Moll, Mark R. Woodward.

The arguments of the scholars seem to centre mainly on the question of whether or not the *slametan* was derived from traditional Javanese culture and through the process of acculturation became part of Javanese Islam. In the first instance, Clifford Geertz, one of the leading ethnographers on Java, is of the opinion that the *slametan* ritual stems mainly from traditional Javanese culture, which therefore makes it a syncretistic ritual rather than a purely Islamic one. Scholars, Moller and Mayer seem to follow Geertz in his opinion. According to these scholars the ritual stems mainly from the

*abangan* (syncretistic) communities in Java. The *abangan*, according Hilmy, are the communities of Java which are not strict adherents to Islam, rather they follow a syncretistic type of Islam, as opposed to the *santri* community, who are strong and upright adherents to Islam. Geertz further argues that the ritual is comprised of mixed Indian, Islamic and Javanese elements, which makes it very much syncretistic in nature. According to the latter, “it is this syncretistic quality that makes up the ‘peasant culture’ and, in turn, forges firm religious identity of the so-called ‘Javanese religion’”. On the contrary Mark Woodward, one of the later anthropologists, argues in the first instance that the *slametan* ritual, especially in Central Java, is not a village ritual, but rather is modelled on the imperial cult of the court of Yogyakarta, which has been inspired by Sufism. This perspective sees the ritual as rooted in the textual sources of Islam, and not in the peasant animistic tradition, as indicated by Geertz and others. Woodward perceives it to be merely a matter of practical adaptation of ‘normative piety’ of Islam to the local culture and thus contends that it is not contradictory to each other at all. (Hilmy 1999: 62) The leads Hilmy to conclude that the *slametan* can be viewed as a product of cultural accommodation between Islamic values and Javanese culture. (Hilmy 1999: 63) The main issue of concern therefore is to determine whether the *slametan* ritual is a product of Islam, which is a *Sufi* type of Islam, or whether it is syncretization of Indian, Islamic and Javanese cultures, as viewed by Geertz and others.

It is important to note that the objective here is not to prove that the *slametan* is an Islamic ritual but rather it is to highlight the divergent views on the subject in order to understand the various dimensions of the ritual. Despite all of this, the *slametan* still plays a significant role in Javanese Islam even up to the present. Hilmy leads one to conclude that there is continuous process of reform and Islamization that is taking place in Southeast Asia, more specifically in Java, Indonesia. The Islamization which started in the fifteenth – sixteenth century seems to be an ongoing process. A concept such as the *slametan* has also been affected by this process (Islamization). (Hilmy 1999: 65) A lot seems to depend on the type of worldview held by the person or family giving the *slametan*. The *abangan*, who has a syncretistic view of Islam, will act accordingly and the *santri*, who is upright

adherent to Islam, will act accordingly. For example, the *santri* who seems to have more of traditional and pure Islamic worldview, and who tries to steer away from the syncretistic type of Islam, will view the ritual meal or *kenduren* as a *sadaqah* (charitable act) rather than an offering to the spirits for *barakah* (blessings), which is more associated with the *abangan*. *Slametan* are therefore given by *santri* Muslims and *abangan* Muslims alike. However, lately the *santri* Muslims have played a significant role in the proceedings of the ritual, especially leading the ritual for the *abangan* Muslim. The *abangan* therefore started to rely heavily on the *santri* to lead the proceedings. The reason for this is that a significant aspect of the ritual, i.e. the recitation of the verses from the *Qur'an* and the *du'a* at the end, requires the input of a religious and knowledgeable person, who will undoubtedly be a *santri* Muslim. In this way the Islamization of the *slametan* occurred, which scholars like Hefner claims to be an ongoing process. This is somewhat different from the way Geertz and others have viewed it, i.e. a ritual belonging purely to the *abangan* or *kejawen* cultural heritage. (Hilmy 1999: 65) While Woodward contends that it belongs to the *santri*, Hefner and others take a more moderate position, saying that these two different communities share the ritual for their common spiritual needs. It is fairly apparent that there is a difference in the way the *abangan* view the *slametan* and the way the *santri* views it. In spite of this there still remains a sense of harmony (*rukun*) between the two groups. As mentioned earlier, the one group depends a lot on the other. In other words the dependency of the *abangan* on the *santri* for holding the *slametan* is the most apparent case in point. (Hilmy 1999: 67) Viewed from a social perspective, the *slametan* has been, and still is, a strong institutional ritual within the wider structure of Javanese rituals. As a preserved ritual within Javanese society, the *slametan* can function as a “theological bridge” between the *abangan* Muslims and the *santri* Muslims. The *abangan*. --very often combined with *priyayi* (aristocrat) — and the *santri* Muslims are thereby able to share a theological paradigm based on, citing Geertz’s words, ‘contextual relativism’ and ‘relativistic tolerance’. In this respect, the *slametan* has a pivotal role in preserving the theological paradigm of what has insofar been called ‘Javanese Islam.’” (Hilmy 1999: 50)

Finally, besides the puritan groups, which do not partake in any ritual act that has not been explicitly sanctioned by the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*<sup>26</sup>, most Javanese participate in the ritual, be it the *abangan* or the *santri*. The *slametan* thus still remains an essential part of Malay/Javanese Islam.

### (c) *Slametan* and Malay Cultural-Religious Practices

#### (i) The *'Aqīqah* – The Name Giving Ceremony

The *'aqīqah* or name giving ceremony is called *bercukur rambut* (haircutting) in the Malay language. This usually takes place on the seventh day after the birth of the child. According to the Malay tradition the child's hair is cut by a religious person in the company of all guests that are invited to the ceremony. This is done with the purpose of thanking Allah for a prosperous childbirth. During the ceremony the father would carry the baby in his arms, walking around the circle of guests, while they recite the *salawāt*.<sup>27</sup> Sometimes the ceremony is accompanied by a *kompang*<sup>28</sup> group of singers who will recite some *adbkār*<sup>29</sup> and *salawāt*.

The events that take place, such as the cutting of the hair and the naming of the child are based on the authentic Islamic tradition that encourages parents to shave the child's hair on the seventh day after birth. The tradition also encourages parents to slaughter one sheep for a girl and two sheep for a boy on the day of the name giving ceremony. This is referred to as *'aqīqah*.<sup>30</sup>

#### (ii) The Circumcision Ceremony

This refers to the feast that takes place after the circumcision of a child, usually a male child. Locally the ceremony is referred to as *bersunat*. The circumcision is a purely Islamic act that is compulsory in according to the *Shāfi'i* and *Hanbali Madh-habs*.<sup>31</sup> However, the feast that accompanies it is more of a cultural event. In traditional Malay society the circumcision ceremony usually takes place when the child is between the age of five and ten years old. During the ceremony a boy or a group of boys who

<sup>26</sup> Refers the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, the prophet of Islam. This particular tradition is taken from Al-Bukhāri – <http://www.muhammad.org>

<sup>27</sup> Refers to certain religious songs in praise of the Prophet, saluting him.

<sup>28</sup> A single headed hand beaten drum

<sup>29</sup> *Adbkār* are religious spiritual hymns in praise of God.

<sup>30</sup> Literally: the hair of the new born, or technically: sacrifice (*Fiqh al-Lughab* (Muhaddith Program)) – <http://www.muhammad.org>

<sup>31</sup> *Al-Mansū' at al-Fiqhīyyah* - <http://www.muhammad.org>

will be circumcised are taken through the village before the circumcision is done. In addition to this, special *adbkār* (spiritual hymns) and *salawāt* (salutations on the prophet of Islam) are sung usually by a group of *kompang* players.<sup>32</sup> At some occasions the *Mawlūd al-Barzanji* is also recited.<sup>33</sup>

### (iii) The Marriage Ceremony

The marriage ceremony usually starts the night before the actual wedding ceremony, called *malamberinai*. The main activities on this night include the solemnization of the marriage (*akad nikah*) conducted by the religious officer called the *Imam* or *TokKadi*. This is the official agreement of a wedding in Islam, where after the bride and the groom become officially married. This is a purely Islamic act, the requirements of which are:

1. The *Walī* (Male representative of the Bride – father, brother or uncle)
2. The *Ijāb* and *Qabūl* (offer and acceptance)
3. The *Mahr* (dowry)
4. The *Shāhidayn* (two (male) witnesses)

With all the requirements fulfilled the marriage contract is sealed. This is followed by the *berinai* ceremonial, whereby the couple sits on a decorated platform, while the family members from both sides (bride and groom) alternatively apply henna to the hands of the couple. Meanwhile a group of *kompang* players will sit cross-legged on the floor and sing some joyful songs to entertain the couple and all those present, those preparing the food for the next day. The songs are usually taken from '*kitabberzanji*' (the *barzanji mawlūd* text) and old Malay songs. The next day, on which the actual wedding ceremony takes place the bridegroom walks slowly in procession towards the bride's house for a distance of about one hundred to two hundred metres. The party, led by womenfolk and

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<sup>32</sup> Taken from a research article written by Mohd Hassan Abdullah, "Idiosyncratic Aspects of Malaysian Music: The Role of the Kompang in Malay Society" – [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file\\_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Kurdish Ulama and their Indonesian Disciples* - [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurdish\\_ulama\\_Indonesia.htm](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurdish_ulama_Indonesia.htm)

accompanied by bearers of the decorative flowers called *bunga mangga*, consists of family members and friends of the bridegroom. The group of *kompang* players will walk in procession and again sing some songs until the bridegroom enters the bride's house.<sup>34</sup> In the company of family and friends the wedding couple sits on a decorated platform. The family and friends will congratulate and bless them, while the *kompang* players once again sing some joyful songs, most probably also taken from *'kitabberzanji'* (the *barzanji mawlūd* text).

#### (iv) The Post-Death Ceremony

This refers a special *slametan* or prayer ritual on the third, seventh, fortieth, hundredth, and the thousandth day after a person has died. In addition to this, the ritual also takes place annually on the day of death.<sup>35</sup> The practice is purely cultural and has no basis in Islam. Due to this, it cannot be considered as an Islamic ritual. It is therefore considered to be a syncretistic ritual most likely inspired by Buddhist, Hindu, Javanese tradition. (Hilmy 1999: 43) Some scholars have even considered it to be a *Sūfi* ritual, which has been particularly associated with the *Khalwati Sūfi* Order. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 131) The post death ceremony also takes place during Islamic month of *Sha'ban* which is usually held in the graveyard. It also sometimes includes cleaning the graves.<sup>36</sup> Besides the fact that the ritual has no basis in Islamic and considered to be a syncretistic ritual, it has been subjected to some form of Islamization. This is with reference to the fact that some Islamic elements has been included into the ritual, such as the recitation of specific verses from the *Qur'ān* and an Islamic prayer (*du'ā* or *donga*) which forms an integral part of the ritual as highlighted above. In Hilmy's description of the *slametan* ritual he mentions that *Sūrah Yāsīn* (Chapter 35 of the *Qur'ān*) is always recited at post death *slametan*. (Hilmy 1999: 57)

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid*

<sup>35</sup> Taken from Islam in Indonesia by P. A. Hoessein Djajadiningrat, a chapter prepared for the book, "Islam -- The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims" by Kenneth W. Morgan – <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1656&C=1646>

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

**(v) *Khatam al-Qur'ān* Ceremony**

This refers to a special ceremony conducted by parents when their child completed his/her study of the *Qur'ān*. This usually takes place after a student has mastered the introductory studies and goes on to learn the rest of the *Qur'ān*. The ceremony begins with the pupil sitting on a specially decorated platform and reading a few verses of the *Qur'ān* in front of his/her teacher and parents. This is usually to demonstrate his/her competence in reciting the *Qur'ān*. This is then followed by the *slametan* ritual, which is considered to have some religious significance.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, the basic religious instruction also includes instruction in ritual purification and in performance of the *Salah*, the daily ritual prayers, and in the proper way to formulate the intention to fast the following day, an intention that should be expressed every evening during the month of Ramadan.<sup>38</sup>

**(vi) *Mawlūd al-Nabi* Ceremony**

The *Mawlūd al-Nabi* ceremony is held in commemoration of the birth of the prophet (of Islam), which usually takes place annually on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Rabi' al-Annwal* (3<sup>rd</sup> Islamic month). It is special day of celebration in Indonesian/Javanese Islam that is also a national public holiday. On this particular day, celebrations in the form of the recitation of *salawāt* and *rinvāyāt* in praise of the Prophet (of Islam), take place all over Indonesia and Malaysia. The recitations are also at times accompanied by a group of *kompang* players.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Taken from Islam in Indonesia by P. A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, a chapter prepared for the book, "Islam -- The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims" by Kenneth W. Morgan – <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1656&C=1646>. Also taken from a research article written by Mohd Hassan Abdullah, "Idiosyncratic Aspects of Malaysian Music: The Role of the Kompang in Malay Society" – [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file\\_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Taken from Islam in Indonesia by P. A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, a chapter prepared for the book, "Islam -- The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims" by Kenneth W. Morgan – <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1656&C=1646>

<sup>39</sup> Taken from a research article written by Mohd Hassan Abdullah, "Idiosyncratic Aspects of Malaysian Music: The Role of the Kompang in Malay Society" – [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file\\_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf)

The commemoration of the Prophet's birth is ranked equal to the two major festivals of Islam in importance. In Surakarta and Jogjakarta in Java it starts on the sixth of the month with the opening of a fair which is announced by the playing of the holy gamelan in the yard of the mosque. The religious part of the commemoration of the Prophet's birth is a recital by the leader from one of the well-known biographies of the Prophet -- written either in verse or in rhythmic prose -- interspersed with songs of praise sung by the leader or by the leader and congregation together.<sup>40</sup>

It is interesting to note that commemoration recitals, normally taken from 'kitabberzanji', take place not only on the birthday of the Prophet but also on other occasions such as the annual commemoration of the death of one's parents, or at the time of the hair-sacrifice of one's child, or on the night before a boy's circumcision, or the night before a marriage ceremony. Sometimes only the prayers for well-being suffice, for in Central Java at the feast for well-being -- the *slametan* -- the kind of food served is of greater importance than anything else.<sup>41</sup>

### (vii) The *Īd* Ceremony

The *Īd* ceremony is a purely Islamic ritual that takes place either after Muslims have fasted the month of Ramadan, called *Īd al-fitr* (*the Īd of breaking fast*), or the day of sacrifice during the *Hajj* ritual, called *Īd al-adhā* (*the Īd of sacrifice*). It is therefore also customary for Southeast Asian Muslims to have a special *slametan* on these days, which includes a ritual meal -- *kenduren*.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Taken from Islam in Indonesia by P. A. Hoesein Djajadiningrat, a chapter prepared for the book, "Islam -- The Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims" by Kenneth W. Morgan -- <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=1656&C=1646>

<sup>41</sup> *ibid*

<sup>42</sup> Taken from a research article written by Mohd Hassan Abdullah, "Idiosyncratic Aspects of Malaysian Music: The Role of the Kompang in Malay Society" -- [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file\\_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/file_download.php/eca37fd7d3a17d2b56dc27d57d44bc02abdullah.pdf). Also taken from Masdar Hilmy, "Islam and Javanese Acculturation: Textual and Contextual Analysis of the *Slametan* Ritual" 1999.

**(viii) Exorcism**

Among the Javanese Muslims, the *slametan* ritual is also used for exorcism. This is mainly conducted to rid the house or village of evil spirits, or to ward away evil. Usually for this purpose *Sūrah al-Ikhlās* (Chapter 112 of the *Qur'ān*) is recited to restore harmony in the house or village. (Hilmy 1999: 57)

**(d) Ramadan Traditions in Malay-Java**

In a recent study done by Andre Moller we see the similarities in the way the Indonesian/Javanese Muslims uphold certain traditions and the way the Cape Muslims do it. These traditions, especially those associated with the *Tarāwīh* prayers in Ramadan, are very similar to the traditions of the Cape Muslims. In his study, 'Islam and *Traweh* Prayers in Java', Moller highlights the differences in the way two variant mosques in Java conduct the *Tarāwīh* prayers, i.e. the An-Nur modernist mosque and the traditionalist Ar-Rahman prayer house. Both these mosques adhere to specific traditions for the completion of their Ramadan rituals. Besides the differences between the two mosques in terms of the number of *raka'at* (prayer cycles) performed for the *Tarāwīh* prayers, both mosques seem to follow more or less the same traditions. These traditions would include the recitation of the *salamāt* before the *adhān* of the 'Ishā' (evening) prayer, specific *adbkār* in between the *Tarāwīh* prayers, the announcement of the *niyyah* (intention) for fasting the next day. Here are some of the traditional *adbkār* taken from Moller's description of the *Tarāwīh* Prayers at the An-Nūr Modernist Mosque and the Ar-Rahmān Traditional Prayer house (Moller 2006: 8-15):

*Allābumma salli 'alā sayyidinā Muhammad - Allābumma salli wa sallim 'alayh*

O, God, bless our leader, Muhammad; O God, bless and grant him salvation

*Allābumma salli 'alā sayyidinā wa mawlānā Muhammad - Allābumma salli wa sallim 'alayh*

O God, bless our leader and master, Muhammad - O God, bless and grant him salvation

*Allābumma salli 'alā sayyidinā wa nabiyyinā wa habibinā wa shafi'inā wa dhukbrinā wa mawlānā*

*Muhammad - Allābumma salli wa sallim 'alayh*

O God, bless our leader, our Prophet, our beloved, our intercessor, our saviour, and master,

Muhammad - O God, bless and grant him salvation

*lā ilāha illā llaāh muhammadun rasūlullāh*

There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Prophet of God

*Subhānallāh, wal-hamdu lillāh, wa lā ilāha illallāh, wallāhu akbar*

Glory be to God, and All Praise is due to God, and there is no god but God, and God

is greater

*Astagfirullāh, lil-mu'minin wa l-mu'minat*

God, forgive the believing men and the believing women

(special *du'ā* (supplication) by the *imām*)

*Subhānallāhhu wa bihamdih*

Glory be to God, and to Him praise

*Lā ilāha illallāh*

There is no god but God

*Wa ilāhukum ilāhun wāhidun, lā ilāha illā huwar-rahmānur-rahīm*

And your God is the One God, and there is no god but He, the Most Gracious, the Dispenser

of Grace

*Lā ilāha illallāhu wāhdahu lā sharīkalah, lahul-mulku wa lahul-hamdu yūhyī wa yūmītu wa huwa 'alā kulli*

*shayin qadīr*

There is no god but God, the One, without any partners, to Him is the kingship and to Him is

all praise, He brings life and He brings death, and He has the power over everything

*Allāhumma salli 'alā sayyidinā muhammadin 'abdika wa rasūlikan-nabiyyil-ummiyyi wa 'alā ālihi wa as-*

*sabbihī wa sallim*

O God, bless our leader, Muhammad, Your servant and prophet, the illiterate apostle, and

grant his family and companions peace

*Subhānal-mālikil-quddūs, Subhānal-mālikil-quddūs, Subhānal-mālikil-quddūs*

Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Holy, Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Holy,

Glory be to the Sovereign, the Most Holy

*Subbūhun qudusun rabbunā wa rabbul-malā'ikati war-rūb*

Most Glorious and Most Holy, Lord of the angels and the Spirit

*Allāhumma innaka 'afwun karīm, tubib-bu l-'afwa fa'fu 'annī*

O God, truly You are the Most Forgiving and Most Noble, You love forgiveness,

so forgive me

*Allāhumma innā nas'aluka ridāka wa l-jannata wa na'ūdhu bika min sakhatika wan-nār*

O God, we ask for Your favours and Paradise, and we seek Your protection from Your

discontent and from the fire

When comparing the *adbkār* above with that of the Cape Muslims we can immediately draw some similarities between the two locations. There seem to be a definite link between the *Tarāwīh* practices of the Indonesian/Javanese Muslims and the Cape Muslims. In fact, we will find that the manner in which the traditional mosques in Indonesia/Java perform the *Tarāwīh* prayer is very much in line with the way the traditional mosques at the Cape perform the *Tarāwīh* prayer, among other things, as seen in the previous chapter. What is also comparatively striking is the fact that these traditional mosques, despite reciting familiar *adbkār*, also follow the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab*. This can especially be seen in the amount of *raka'āt* (prayer cycles) for the *Tarāwīh* prayer, the way the *Witr* prayer is conducted, and the pronouncement of the *niyyah* (intention) for fasting at the end, which is all based on the *Shāfi'i Madh-hab*.

**(e) The *Rifā`i* Practices**

The *Rātib ar-Rifā`i* or *Ratiep* as it is referred at the Cape is a *dhikr* practice associate in particular with the *Rifā`i Sūfi* Order attribute to Ahmad ar-Rifā`i (d. 467/1175). The Order became widespread in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, particular in Sumatra and the Malay peninsula, probably through the teachings, and efforts of its most famous representative, Nūdr al-Dīn ibn 'Alī ibn Hasanjī ibn Muhammad Hamād al-Rānīrī (d. 1076/ 1666), who arrived in Aceh in 1047/ 1637 or even earlier. According to Nasr and others, Shaykh Yūsuf of Makassar also belonged to this particular order. (Nasr: 271)

The practice is commonly known in the Malay world as the *dabbūs* ceremony. The word *dabbūs* in Arabic means iron awl, and it is so named because an iron awl serves as one of the main instruments used in the ceremony. (Nasr: 271) Martin van Bruinessen has the following to say about the *dabbūs*, “*Debus* practitioners use metal spikes of the same form as those used by *Rifā`i* dervishes, and it is these spikes that have given the practice its name (Ar. *dabbūs*, "spike, needle"). Whereas *Rifā`i* dervishes (and in Kurdistan, *Qadiri* dervishes) actually pierce their bodies with these spikes and other sharp objects, however, in Indonesia the acquisition of invulnerability has become the chief object of the exercise. The spikes do not pierce the skin, however much hammered; sharp knives don't make cuts; and, as is widely believed, even bullets cannot harm the skilled practitioner.” (Van Bruinessen 2000: 361-395) Interestingly, the iron awl or *dabbūs* referred to here, is referred to among a Cape Town *Rifā`i* group as *tamboeste/taboeeste*, which is most probably a distorted version of the word *dabbūs*.<sup>43</sup>

Even though the *dabbūs* ceremony is only practiced in certain parts of the Archipelago it nevertheless remains a distinguished practice that has survived over many centuries. The members of the *Rifā`i Sūfi* order in Sumatra and Malacca perform the *dabbūs* ceremony from time to time. In addition to this the *dabbūs* ceremony can also be observed in the Banten-Cirebon region, in the Moluccas. (Van Bruinessen 2000: 361-395) Furthermore there are various texts used for the ceremony,

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<sup>43</sup> Personal observation of the *Ratiep* ceremony – 10 September 2006

depending primarily on the region. Among the most popular texts used for the ceremony is the *Rātib al-Rifā`i*, *Rātib al-Sammān* and in certain places, *manāqib* Shaykh `Abd al-Qadir's. In some cases a combination of different texts are used. In a study of the texts used in the Archipelago for this particular ceremony, Van Bruinessen observes the following: “*Debus* practitioners appear to have been eclectic, combining invocations from various *Sūfi* orders (Rifa`iyya, Qadiriyya, Sammaniyya) with magic of non-Islamic origin. At one place, the recital of a Rifa`i or Sammani *rātib* may bring about the required effect of invulnerability, at another the reading of the *manāqib* of `Abd al-Qadir Jilani. The latter used to be common practice in north Banten and Cirebon.” (Van Bruinessen 2000: 361-395) Interestingly, Van Bruinessen also came across the *Mawlid al-Barzanji* also being recited for a *dabbūs* ceremony.<sup>44</sup>

The following account of the *dabbūs* or *rapa'i* ceremony is by R. L. Archer. The description was related to him, so he claims, by members of the *Rifa`iyyah* in Padang on the west coast of Sumatra:

“The *dabbūs* performance must be held under the leadership of a true *khalifah*, i.e., a spiritual successor of the Founder of the Order, in whose name the ceremony is performed; this leader must also have a license from his *guru* (teacher) authorizing him to conduct these otherwise dangerous exercises.

A person who desires to receive instruction in this exercise must bring as a present a belt of white cloth, three needles and a certain amount of money. These pupils are made up mostly of young men, eighteen to twenty years of age. The instruction is given in a lonely place to which people seldom come. It is necessary that the pupil and the teacher be not disturbed. During the days of training the pupil neither eats nor drinks until he has attained his objective. Some of them hold out as long as twenty days, but in case they are unable to hold out that long, the *khalifah* orders them to return home. Those who are able to hold out till the completion of the

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<sup>44</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, *Kurdish `Ulama and their Indonesian Disciples* - [http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurdish\\_ulama\\_Indonesia.htm](http://www.let.uu.nl/~martin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/Kurdish_ulama_Indonesia.htm)

ceremony are regarded as the true pupils of the *khalifah's dabbūs* and are then prepared to go with him from place to place giving public exhibitions of this mysterious ceremony.

The *dabbūs* exhibition is usually given in the evening after seven o'clock. The *khalifah* and his pupils gather in a public place and after receiving and returning their respectful salutations they offer praise to their Lord and Muḥammad and to the patron saint of their Order (Ahmad al-Rifā`i), while at the same time they beat loudly on a drum to attract the attention of the people. The recitation of praise prescribed by the master of the Order is supposed to excite holy visions in the minds of the brethren who are favored by Allah's grace; some will see a vision of the founder of the Order, others will by degrees attain to the ecstatic condition to which is attached the quality of invulnerability. Then by turning their weapons upon their own bodies they demonstrate to the witnesses the power of Allah and the excellence of the master of their Order....

The conclusion of the ceremony is a prayer of thanksgiving to Allah for bringing them safely through the exercise..."<sup>45</sup>

In conclusion, when viewing the *Ratib al- Rifā`i* ceremony, or the *dabbūs*, or the *rapa'i* as it is also locally referred to in the Archipelago, we find that there are many similarities between the way it is conducted in the latter location, East Africa and South Africa (Cape Town). There seem to be a definite link between the *Rifā`i* practices in all these different locations. Some of these links will be seen in the succeeding sections of this research.

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<sup>45</sup> This account is given Seyyed Hossein Nasr in his book, *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations*, under the heading *Sufism in the Malay-Indonesian World* by Osman bin Bakar.

### 3.3. The Passage of Islam to the Cape via East Africa

#### 3.3.1. East African Influences

The connection between Islam at the Cape and Islam in Eastern Africa, has been to a large extent underplayed. These connections/networks also played a major role in Cape Muslim identity. Through these connections many religious traditions were either introduced or strengthened at the Cape. Even though these connections between East African Islam were not as strong as the connections between Malay-Indonesian Islam, one cannot disregard the impact they had on Cape Muslim identity. As mentioned earlier in the introduction, British and Dutch colonialism played a major role in forging these connections/networks. Travel also played an equal important role in establishing and strengthening these connections. This included traveling of local Muslims to Arabia (for *Hajj* and other religious purposes). The travels were usually by boat/steamers and included stopping over at main shipping ports along the East African coast (Durban (South Africa), Beira (Mozambique), Dar es Salaam/Zanzibar (Tanzania); Mombasa (Kenya), and Aden (Yemen)).<sup>46</sup> It also included traveling of scholars and highly influential personalities to Cape Town via East Africa (e.g. Mirza Isfahani Abu Talib Ibn Muhammad Khan – Iran (1799), Shaykh `Abdullah, son of `Abd al-`Aziz - Mecca (1824), Sultan Abdullāh – Johanna (1834) Abu Bakr Effendi - Turkey (1862), Shaykh `Abdullāh Bakathir – Zanzibar (1914)). These personalities either spent some time at the Cape or settled there. (Bang 2003: 115; Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 335)

The connections between the Cape and East Africa/Middle East go back to as early as 1773. This is with reference to the Johannese connection which was an established connection between Johanna (Anjouan) and the Cape. In 1773, a Cape slaver—de Snelheid—visited the island of Johanna (Anjouan)<sup>47</sup>. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) According to James Armstrong, a historian of Cape

<sup>46</sup> This is based on the *hajj* travels of *Hajji* Bakaar Manuel an old Simonstown resident, who travelled to Mecca by steamer in 1903, via West Africa, through the Mediterranean Sea and the Suez canal, and returning via East Africa. He recorded his entire trip in his diary which is currently in the safekeeping of his daughter *Hajji* Koebra Manuel.

<sup>47</sup> Johanna (a.k.a. Anjouan), was the most frequented island in the Comoros group in the Mozambique channel. It was long subject to Muslim influence and was also a slave entrepôt. The local dynasty was founded in 1506 by Muslims from Shiraz in Iran. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336)

slavery, the Johannese leaders remembered all the previous DEIC<sup>48</sup> visits to their “ancestors” and looked forward to renewed contact. On board the ship was an Arabic interpreter who Armstrong believes was Tuan Guru, as he clearly identified himself as the “*oppressed Imam, Abdallah ibn al Mazlum Qadi Abd al Salam al Taduri, a Shafii by religious rite, and Ash’ari by conviction.*” (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) Interestingly, this is exactly the same way Tuan Guru identifies himself in his book, *Ma`rifat al-Islām wa al-Imān*, as mentioned in the previous chapter. (Guru 1786: 600) This also confirms Tuan Guru’s presence at the Cape long before 1780 as was speculated by Achmat Davids and others. It also increases the likeness that the person leading the *Mawlid* celebration (28 June 1772), as described by Thunberg in the previous chapter, could have in fact been Tuan Guru, which was speculated by historians all along. (refer to previous chapter) Furthermore, according to Shell this connection even continued up to the 1850s. Mayson mentions that in 1820 and 1821 a number of distinguished Arabs from the Island of Johanna visited the Cape colony. The delegation was kindly received by the government, and was hospitably entertained by the Cape Muslims, whom they further instructed in the faith and practice of Islam, and with whom they had constantly been corresponding, sending them *Qur’ans* and other books. The next visit was from the sultan of the island, Abdullāh, in 1834, who stayed at 61 Bree Street. Mayson mentions that in the 1850s “their Johanese friends” provided the Muslims with supplies of Areca nuts and Betal leaf, (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) which proves that Johannes connection continued up the mid-nineteenth century.

The passage of *haji* (pilgrimage to Mecca) was also a means to connect with other Muslims along the East African coast. Shell provides an interesting account by James Backhouse, a Christian missionary writing in the early 1830s, of the routes of the first *hajjis*: “Their priests wore turbans, and garments of various colours; some of them made pilgrimages to Mecca, going to Arabia by way of Mauritius.” On the early pilgrimages along this well-sailed Cape slave route; these *hajjis* would have met other leaders of their faith. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 335)

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<sup>48</sup> DEIC - Dutch East India Company

The East African connection is further strengthened through the local scholars who travelled to Mecca via East Africa for religious purposes, such as studying Islam or performing pilgrimage. One such scholar especially stands out, i.e. Muhammad Salieh Hendricks. Hendricks travelled to Mecca in 1888 in pursuit of Islamic knowledge. His teachers there among others were ‘Umar bin Abī Bakr Bā Junayd and Muhammad bin Sa`īd Bābsayl, Abū Bakr Shattah, Sulayman Shattah. These teachers were steeped in the *tasawwuf* tradition which they passed on to their student, Muhammad Salieh. According to Da Costa, his teacher, Muhammad bin Sa`īd Bābsayl in particular, was a *Mufti*<sup>49</sup> of the *Shāfi`i Madhab*. (Bang 2003: 115; Da Costa and Davids 1994: 106) It was here that Hendricks made the connection with the East African (Zanzibari) scholar, Abdullāh Ba Kathīr, who later hosted him in Zanzibar, in which he spent an entire year in the service of the Zanzibari community, acting as a temporary *Qādi* (Judge) and performing various other religious duties. Besides this, he also acquired religious and mystic knowledge from scholars like Ahmad bin Sumayt and his friend and companion, Abdullāh Ba Kathīr. Ba Kathīr and Ibn Sumayt would also later assisted him in resolving the *Jumu`ah* issue that surfaced at the Cape. (Bang 2003: 115) Hendricks thus played an instrumental role in establishing a strong and long standing connection between Zanzibar and the Cape. Gustav Gerdener, a theologian from Stellenbosch who worked among the Cape Muslims, in 1915 confirmed the continuing importance of the East African links, noticing that “Zanzibar has been a source of inspiration on more than one occasion, as when a [Cape] deputation visited that quartet some years ago on behalf of a Mohammedan college [the Tafalah Institute] then in building at Claremont, and as when a deputation of three priests [i.e., imams] visited Zanzibar a few months ago to settle a certain dispute.” In addition to this, Reverend Thomas Fothergill Lightfoot pointed out in 1910 that the opening of steamship passages to Zanzibar had “rendered the pilgrimage to Mecca more practicable.” He added, “there are now in Cape Town many followers of Islam who have obtained a knowledge of their creed [*sic*] some at Mecca and Zanzibar.” (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 335)

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<sup>49</sup> A *mufti* is an Arabic word which refers a person who gives legal advice, or a person who delivers legal rulings – [www.muhammadith.org](http://www.muhammadith.org)

Finally, Robert Shell concluded that the Cape Muslims enjoyed a wide range of contacts with the other Muslims on the East coast of Africa, contacts maintained in part by the pious obligations of the *hajj* (pilgrimage). (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) Besides the East African and Malay-Indonesian influences and connections, there were other influences and connections that impacted greatly on Cape Islam. These include direct connections with the Muslim heartland in the Middle East (Makkah, Madinah, Yemen and Iraq), Turkey – the Ottomans, and Egypt. What is interesting about these connections is that they mainly come via East Africa. We will discuss these connections and influences in more detail in chapter four, when we look at the global influences on Cape Muslim identity.

### 3.3.2. The Spread of Islam to East Africa – A Brief History

Even though Islam's connection with East Africa goes back to the time of the Prophet when Muslims migrated to Abyssinia (Ethiopia)<sup>50</sup> in the early days of Islam (Al-Mubarakpuri 2002: 118), it seems as if the spread of Islam in the region only really took place from the 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century onwards. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 251)

Islam made its first impressions through commercial exchanges between Africans and Muslims, and *jihad* never became the important instrument of conversion or enforcement in East Africa that it was in other places. Following the first conversions on the northern coast, the tenth through the fifteenth centuries was a time of steady and peaceful expansion southward in the wake of developing trade. By 1500, and as early as 1200 in a few locations, Islam had become the majority religion of coastal peoples. Arab, Persian, and even Indian immigrants played their parts in this process, yet it is false to see the emergence of Islam in East Africa as an extrinsic phenomenon. Rather, these were centuries when Islam was adopted, adapted, and internalized, as a coastal “African” religion. By 1500, Islam had become central to Swahili society and identity everywhere.’ (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 251)

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<sup>50</sup> This was a very important event in the history of Islam, which is referred to as the first *hijrah* in Islam.

The crucial vehicle of this process was trade. While many scholars in the past recognized this fact, they viewed Islamization in East Africa as solely the result of Arab commercial initiative, which included the founding of coastal sites like Shanga, Mombasa, Kilwa, and others. Contacts with other peoples of the Indian Ocean did play an important part in the mechanism of change; however, it is important now to recognize that to understand the conversion of coastal peoples and the nature of coastal Islam, the broader context of cultural and religious change among Africans have to be taken into consideration. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 253)

### 3.3.3. East African Islamic Traditions and the Cape Connection

There are many common traditions shared by the Muslims of East Africa and the Muslims of the Cape. These include their legal traditions, their doctrinal traditions, certain aspects of their cultural traditions and finally their spiritual traditions. Thus we find that, like the Cape Muslims, the Muslims in East Africa follow the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* for one, most likely influenced by the *Ash`ari* doctrine. In addition to this they also adhere to similar cultural traditions, such as the celebration of the *Mawlūd al-Nabi* with recitations from the *Mawlūd al-Barzanji*, the *Rātīb al-Rifā`i* (Ratiep) (Doi 1997: 293), and the *Rātīb al-Haddād*. Furthermore, they also enjoyed similar *Sūfi* traditions especially related to the *`Alawi*, *Qādiri*, *Shādhili* and *Rifā`i Sūfi* Orders (Doi 1997: 293, 294; Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 259, 264). These were among the most influential orders in East Africa, though there were others as well. It is interesting to note that these orders also played a similarly influential role at the Cape, as seen in the previous chapter.

#### (a) The Legal Traditions in East Africa

##### (i) The *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*

Though there were other legal traditions prevalent in East Africa, the most influential and dominant seem to be the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. In fact, already when Ibn Battuta visited the East African coast in 1331, he mentioned encountering only *Shāfi`is*. Also, in the sixteenth century Santos observed that many followed “the Xaphaya (*Shāfi`i*) sect. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 256)

Randall Pouwels believes that the decline of heterodoxy in the Islamic heartlands after 1100 and the continued importance of the Red Sea, Yemen, and the Hadhramaut in the commerce of the western Indian Ocean, helped assure the conversion of most coastal Muslims to *Shāfi`i* Islam. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 256) It was mainly through the efforts of the *`Alawis* from Hadhramaut, in Yemen, who were steeped in the *Shāfi`i* tradition, that *Shāfi`i* tradition spread in and around the Indian Ocean, including East Africa and Southeast Asia. According to Anne Bang their main mission was to spread the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. (Bang 2003: 23) These *`Alawis* also played a major role in spreading Islam in both Southeast Asia and East Africa.

Regarding the influence of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* on the East African coast, Pouwels observes the following:

“Islam established a presence on the coast and hung on for several more centuries, it appears that *Shāfi`i-Sunnis* had a lasting influence on the major commercial centres. The emergence of a wealthy and influential commercial class contributed to the proliferation of neighbourhood mosques all along the coast and to the popularity of the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab*. It was trade that attracted clans like the Mahdali to the major *entrepôts*, and because clans like the Mahdali demonstrated an ability to bring prosperity wherever they settled, the example they set of lives devoted to pious *Shāfi`i* observances would have greatly influenced many coastal Africans and explains why they were given dynastic titles like “The Father of Gifts (Abul-Mawahib).” (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 257)

## **(b) Cultural-Religious Traditions in East Africa**

### **(i) *Mawlūd al-Nabi* Celebration**

The *Mawlūd* celebrations were very popular among the Muslims in East Africa. Interestingly, among other things, it has also been highly influenced by the *`Alawis* from Hadhramaut in Yemen. Anne Bang writes, “Another explicit outward manifestation was the *`Alawi* celebration of *mawlid* (Swahili: *maulidi*) in honour of the Prophet or a departed saint. The occasion was usually marked as a great

spectacle, with banners, flags, music and the recitation of poetry. These were occasions where the learned *shaykhs*, the devout members and non-members alike could participate in a popular expression of faith. The East African *‘Alawi mawlid* celebrations became vehicles both for Islamization and social re-stratification — particularly in Lamu and Zanzibar. (Bang 2003: 22)

According to Roman Loimeier the *Mawlūd* has been propagated in Zanzibar since the late 19th century. Initially a solemn affair and mainly restricted to the recitation of praise poems in Arabic, from the early 20th century onwards the festival soon became popular across the island, with new forms of *mawlid* arising celebrated not only on the occasion of the Prophet’s birthday but throughout the year.<sup>51</sup> What is interesting about the *Mawlūd* in Zanzibar, is that Muhammad Salieh Hendricks, as referred to earlier, on his return to Cape Town also assisted in reorganizing the islands *Mawlūd* celebrations. (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 107)

### **(ii) The *Rifā`i* Practice**

The *Rifā`i* practice is also very popular in East Africa as it is in some other parts of the world. It is especially popular among the members of the *Rifā`i Sūfi* order in Zanzibar, along the East African coast. In fact during a visit to Durban in September 2006, I had an interesting encounter with some of the Zanzibaris who has settled there, since their arrival in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. While meeting with them in a mosque centre in Chatsworth, they performed the *Rifā`i* practice which was not much different from the way it was conducted at the Cape.<sup>52</sup>

The *Rifā`i* practice in East Africa includes swallowing fire and using sharp instruments to pierce parts of the body. The members of the order use drums and tambourines while reciting the *dbiker* and songs of praise for Allah, the Prophet, and Shaykh Aḥmad al-Rifā`i. (Doi 1997: 293)

<sup>51</sup> Peter Probst & Gerd Spittler - *From an Anthropology of Astonishment to a Critique of Anthropology’s Common Sense: An Exploration of the Notion of Local Vitality in Africa* - [http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/sfbs/sfb-fk560/-sub/publikationen/probst\\_spittler.komplett\\_27\\_07.pdf](http://www.uni-bayreuth.de/sfbs/sfb-fk560/-sub/publikationen/probst_spittler.komplett_27_07.pdf)

<sup>52</sup> Interview with the Zanzibari *Ratiep* group in Chatsworth – 8 September 2006

**(iii) The *Rātīb al-Haddād***

Like the *Rātīb al-Rifā'i* alluded to earlier, the *Rātīb al-Haddād* also seems to be popular in the region (East Africa). It became especially popular due to the influence of *'Alawi sūfi* order in East Africa. The *Rātīb al-Haddād* as well as the *Rātīb al-'Attās* were among the many *dhikars* that were passed to scholars of East Africa, from generation to generation. (Bang 2003: 71) To make a connection between the Cape and East Africa, there is evidence that these particular *adbkār* were passed on to Muhammad Salieh Hendricks by 'Abdullāh Ba Kathīr, during his stay in Zanzibar. However, it is important to mention that he also received the *ijāzab* to recite certain *'Alawi dhikars* from his teacher, Bā Junayd while he was in Makkah. (Bang 2003: 115)

**(c) Spiritual Traditions in East Africa****(i) The *Qādiri* and *Shādhili Sūfi* Orders**

These two *sūfi* orders, among others, were probably the most popular orders in East Africa. According to Abdur-Rahman Doi the *Qādiri Sūfi* Order has the largest following in East Africa. However, the *Shādhili Sūfi* Order is the strongest in Uganda and Zanzibar, followed by the *Qādiri Sūfi* Order (Doi 1997: 294) Furthermore, in the Benadir towns and the Comoro Islands, on the other hand, the *Qādiri* and the *Shādhili* orders had grown popular over the previous centuries, so when *'ulamā* (scholars) from those places turned up in growing numbers in East African locations, these religious orders arrived with them. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 264)

**(ii) The *'Alawi Sūfi* Order**

The *'Alawi Sūfi* order has been by far, the most influential group in East Africa. They influenced many of the East African *Sūfi* practices and they formed a very important part in the Islamization of the Region. (Bang 2003: 23) Furthermore, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Pate became the new home for various, high-profile Muslims who, besides having trade connections throughout the Indian Ocean as far as Java, strongly adhered to the *'Alawi tariqa* of the Hadhramaut. Among these were a number of sharīf clans and others noted for their learning and piety. The most noteworthy of these clans were the al-

Husayni, the Jamal al-Layl, the Abu Bakr bin Salim, and the al-Masila Ba Alawi clans. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 259) According to Anne Bang, there were many prominent scholars who belonged to the *ʿAlawi Sūfi* order. These include Ahmad bin Sumayt and Abdullāh bin Muhammad Ba Kathīr, who, as mentioned earlier were *Qādis* in the Sultanate courts in Zanzibar in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Bang 2003: 154) There is also evidence that these scholars, especially Ba Kathīr, passed on some of the *ʿAlawi* traditions to Muhammad Salieh Hendricks in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### (iii) The *Rifāʿi Sūfi* Order

The *Rifāʿi* Order is especially popular on the East African coast and in Zanzibar. (Doi 1997: 293) The existence of the *Rātib al-Rifāʿi*, as referred to earlier is enough evidence of the presence of the order in East Africa, especially in Zanzibar where it has become a popular practice.

### 3.4. Conclusion

It is clear from the current chapter that Malay/Indonesian Islam, especially, has had a lasting impact on the type of Islam established at the Cape. This does not exclude the East African influences on Islam at the Cape. As can be seen many of the traditions in both East Africa and Southeast Asia, especially those related to culture and Sufism, are very much similar to those established at the Cape.

This chapter also draws one's attention to a very important concept in Malay Islam, i.e. the concept of *slametan*. The *slametan* has played a significant part in the cultural-religious traditions of the Cape Muslims, and this is even without their knowledge. Thus, understanding the *slametan*, helps us to better understand many of the cultural-religious practices of the Cape Muslims, especially the post-death ceremony, the *tammat* ceremony, the *Mawlūd* ceremony and other ceremonies which are common among the Malays and the Cape Muslims. Other common cultural-religious traditions, highlighted in this chapter, include the *Tarāwīb* traditions and the *Rifāʿi/Ratiep* Practices. Comparatively, the Malays, the Muslims in East Africa and the Cape Muslims share common (1) legal traditions - all follow the *Shāfiʿi Madh-hab*, (2) doctrinal traditions – *Asb`ari Aqīdah*, (3) cultural-

religious tradition – *Mawlūd* celebrations, *Rifā`i/Ratiep/Dabbus* Practices and other practices (4) *Sūfi* traditions and affiliations - *Alawi Sūfi* Order and *Rifā`i Sūfi* Order.

## Chapter Four

### *Global Islamic Influences on Cape Muslim Identity*

#### **4.1. Introduction**

Throughout the history of the Cape Muslims, various groups, with different ideologies and traditions, have tried to change the identity established by the pioneers who brought Islam to the Cape. The preceding two chapters have outlined the nature and origins of this identity. The issue of identity and the influences of ‘others’ form an integral part of modern, contemporary discourse and scholarship. When referring to global Islamic influences, we are actually referring to the influences of various Islamic groups on local Muslim identity, which have been promoted through various means, such as media, institutes, and modern technological advances, which includes internet, satellite (television and radio), and new forms of telecommunication.

This chapter will focus on the influences of specified groups within the Global Muslim community who have impacted on the identity of the Cape Muslims, especially during the last century. It will also focus on when and how these groups have influenced local Muslim identity. These groups specifically include, the *Sūfis*, *Brelvis*, *Wahhābi/Salafis*, *Tablighi/Deobandis*, *Shiites* and *Abmadis*, and Modern Reformers, all of whom have been competing for spiritual space within the local Muslim community.

#### **The Role of the Media**

There are various means of spreading ideas and information. Traditionally, ideas and information have been spread through educational institutes (religious institutes (mosques), schools, and universities) and print media (books, newspapers and magazines). However, in recent years other means of disseminating information have come to the fore, which include

audio-visual media (radio, television, as well as telecommunication) and internet. These media forms have even advanced further with satellite or mobile connections.

Traditional means of disseminating information meant that there were certain restrictions on acquiring information. For example, an institution would restrict or control the information transmitted to its followers or adherents. However, today many of these restrictions are no longer present. This is mainly because of the process of globalization, in which a person has access to a world of information through modern media, such as satellite television/radio and the internet. Even though certain countries are trying hard to restrict access to certain information media, such as television and internet, by filtering and blocking information, they cannot stop everything that comes through these media forms. In addition, the introduction of satellite or mobile connections, whether associated with television, telephone or internet, have made it even more difficult to restrict information from filtering through to the masses.

All of these modern developments have even affected the transfer of information in the Muslim world. As religious education becomes more available to the Muslim masses and local Muslim media to an increasing extent give voice to the multiplicity of local and global Islamic discourses (and influences). (Bangstad 2004: 40), information is no more as restricted as it has been in the past. People have easy access to information, instantly, through the click of a button. Even Muslims have advanced in using these modern media forms, without excluding traditional media forms, which are still used to spread information. These modern trends have given rise to the establishment of Muslim radio stations, television networks, and internet sites.

In South Africa, various groups have used the different media forms, traditional or modern, to propagate their ideas and ideologies. In terms of print media, we find various newspapers, magazines, booklets, or journals being distributed within the Muslim community,

either on a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annual basis. These include the Muslim Views (monthly), *Al-Qalam* (monthly), *Boorbanol* Magazine (monthly), the IPSA (ICOSA) Occasional Journal (annual), *Al-Miftaab*, *Al-Jamiat* (Jamiat al-Ulama - Kwzn), *Ar Rasheed* (Jamiat al-Ulama - Gauteng), The *Majlis* (*Majlisul Ulama SA*) PE, *Al-Haadi* (*Madrasah Ta'leemuddin*) Isipingo Beach, *Awake* (*Young Men's Muslim Association*) Actonville, and *An Nasiba* (*Madrasah Arabia Islamia*) Azaadville. Most of these print media forms reflect different, and contested, shades of opinion among Muslims. (Vahed and Jeppie 269-270) Furthermore, Muslim radio stations have also become very popular within the last decade, including Voice of the Cape (VOC) – MJC, Radio 786 – IUC, Radio Islam (Jamiat al-Ulama) - Gauteng, The Voice - Gauteng, Channel Islam International (CII) – Gauteng . As can be seen, most of these radio stations target local and regional markets all over South Africa. However, Johannesburg-based Channel Islam International (CII), which started broadcasting in October 2000, is an international station that broadcasts to over 150 countries worldwide. In addition to this some of these radio stations, such as Radio Islam (<http://www.radioislam.co.za>), Voice of the Cape (<http://www.vocfm.co.za>), and recently Radio 786 (<http://www.radio786.co.za>), have audio streaming which also gives access to an international audience.

Many Islamic organizations in South Africa, including theological institutes, have set up websites that cover the latest developments in the Islamic world, as well as theological issues. Many of these websites are interactive, and the Muslim public is free to communicate online for *fatwabs* (religious decrees) or advice. (Vahed and Jeppie 269-270)

Finally, the 'new media' is playing a crucial role in forging and reaffirming a broader Muslim identity internationally across the boundaries of sectarian and national divisions through, for example, the live broadcast of the funeral of Hamas founder Sheik Ahmed Yassin, who was murdered by the Israeli government in March 2004, interviews with Muslims subjected to harassment in the West, and other such coverage. (Vahed and Jeppie 269-270)

## 4.2. *Sūfī* Influences

Among the various traditions, Sufism undoubtedly had the most profound impact on Cape Muslim identity. As we have seen in the preceding chapters it played a significant role in the establishment of Islam in South Africa by its pioneers who were steeped in the *sūfī* tradition. These pioneers came from areas where a *sūfī* type of Islam dominated the scene. Shaykh Yūsuf, the founder of Islam at the Cape, belonged to a large variety of *sūfī* orders. Before his arrival at the Cape and after his return to Makassar in Indonesia from 20 years of study in Arabia, the Shaykh in particular established the *Khalwati Sūfī* Order which came to be known as the *Khalwati-Yūsuf*. Thus the *Khalwati Sūfī* Order established by the *Shaykh* in the region bore the name of the one who established it, i.e. Shaykh Yūsuf. Besides laying the foundation of Islam in South Africa, the *Shaykh* also laid the foundation of a strong *sūfī* tradition that would stand the test of time. This tradition became, as expressed in the words of Shaykh Ahmad Hendricks, "...as indigenous to South Africa as is the Protea; a captivatingly beautiful but hardy flower capable of surviving the hottest summers and the coldest winters."<sup>1</sup>

We find that anything related to Sufism always found easy acceptance by the local Cape Muslims. This is probably because of the rich *sūfī* legacy that exists among them. Even though through time, spiritual ties or *silsilah* were severed in most cases, many of the *sūfī* practices remained. The result in this case was that small groupings would be formed which come together to practice *sūfī* rituals, without having an eminent *shaykh* as head of the order... "Thus one finds communities where practices related to Sufism have become part of (local/popular) Islam itself, but the original orders and *sūfī shaykhs* who established these practices have been gone and forgotten." (Owaisi: 2) This is typical of what happened at the Cape. For example the case of the *Rātīb al-Haddād*, which is a *sūfī* ritual that belongs the *Bā`Alawi Sūfī* Order. The *Rātīb al-Haddād*, or the *Gadat* as it is locally referred to, is a very popular

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<sup>1</sup> Hendricks, A., *Tasawwuf: Islamic Spirituality*, <http://mysite.mweb.co.za/residents/mfj1/tasawwuf2.htm>

practice among the Cape Muslims. However, as we have seen, for most of the locals it is merely a ritual which has become part of an indigenous expression of Islam.<sup>2</sup> In this particular case spiritual ties were severed, and the *shaykhs* or orders who established it 'have long been forgotten', and in some cases even unheard of.

*Sūfi* rituals such as the *Rātib al-Haddād* remain a significant part of the local popular Islam. These rituals, together with the shrines of saints, become the symbols of Sufism, "even in the absence of organized Sufi brotherhoods..." The continuous presence of these symbols serves as an impetus for future revival and keeps a subconscious relationship with Sufism alive. (Owaisi: 1) This, to some extent explains the continuous revival of Sufism, especially during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There were many *sūfi* orders that existed among the Cape Muslims, as discussed in chapter two, some more significant than others. Among the more significant orders were the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order, the *Qādiri Sūfi* Order, the *Rifā`i Sūfi* Order, *Shādhili Sūfi* Order, and the *Chisti Sūfi* Order, associated mainly with the Indian Muslims who joined and became a significant part of the established Cape Muslim community towards the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These orders most probably gained their significance through the rituals associated with them, as well as through continuous visits from *shaykhs* linked to the particular order. For example the *Qādiri Sūfi* Order saw visits from leading personalities associated with it, such as Mawlanā Abd al-Alim Siddiqui al-Qādiri (1935 and 1952), Mawlanā Fazlur Rahman Ansari al-Qādiri (1970 and 1974), Mawlanā Ibrahim Khustar al-Qādiri (1968 and few other times), Hazrath Pir Zainul Abidin al-Qādiri (1961, 1973 and 1983) In addition to this, the *Chisti Sūfi* Order also enjoyed visits from some of its luminaries, such as Pir Mahboob Ali Shah, Khawajah Faqir Muhammad Shah and Hazrath Ambar Shah Warisi. Even though most of these *shaykhs* specifically visited the Indian community, they did attract many disciples from the 'Cape

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<sup>2</sup> This is based on interviews conducted and questionnaires distributed to a variety of local Muslims.

Malay' community. (Owaisi: 7) It was through the contacts with these *shaykhs* that the spiritual ties, that were once severed, were rekindled. It seems as if there were more visits from *shaykhs* to the Indian Muslim community of Cape Town and that spiritual ties were very important to them.

Recently, several *shaykhs* visited the Cape 'Malay' Muslim community, such as the Shadhili Shaykh, Umar Abdallah of Comoros (1981), the Naqshbandi Shaykh, Sayyid Abd al-Qadir from Syria (during the 1980s), and Qadiri Shaykh, Sharif Umar of the Comoros (during the 1980s). Thus it was the last two decades that witnessed a significant *sūfi* revival among the Cape 'Malay' Muslim community. Even though the spiritual ties were severed, the symbols which served as an impetus for revival have always been present.

The post-apartheid period, besides signifying an opportunity to build a new South Africa, also witnessed a significant revival of Sufism. The visit from as-Sayyid Muhammad ibn Alawi al-Maliki al-Hasani of Makkah in 1997 set the platform for a new period revival of Sufism in the Western Cape. Like many of the early shaykhs and pioneers, the Sayyid, besides being a descendant of the Prophet, belonged to the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order, of which he was also the head. During his first visit a large number of people took *bay`ah* from the *Sayyid*, including prominent community *shaykhs* and imams. This was very significant in that the spiritual ties which were once severed were once again renewed. The *Sayyid* visited again in 2000 strengthening the connection with his *murids* countrywide. According to Fakhruddin Owaisi, who is also an ardent disciple and student of the *Sayyid*, "One of the most important impacts of the Sayyid's visit was that he gave Sufism and its practices a justification and a 'green light' from the Shariah point of view..." This according to the latter, is mainly because of the fact that, "Over the years the Ulama at the Cape, especially those who had studied at Wahhabi institutes in Saudi Arabia, had become very suspicious about, if not completely against these (practices)." (Owaisi: 7) This marked the beginning of new era in *sūfi* revival in the Western

Cape and set the standard for the arrival of other great spiritual leaders. The *Sayyid's* initial visit was subsequently followed by a visit from the *Shaykh* of the *Shadhili-`Alawi Sūfi* Order, Shaykh Ahmed Alawi bin Murad, in October 1997. *Shadhili-`Alawi Sūfi* Order was introduced at the Cape a few years prior to the Shaykh's visit by Shaykh Mahdi Hendricks, who is also the local *muqaddam* (deputy). Also in 1997 and then again in 2000, Shaykh Hazim Abu Ghazala of the *Qadiri-Shadhili Sūfi* Order from Jordan visited his *murids* who had established the order prior to his visit. After this, the *Shaykh's* visits became more regular, attracting many of the locals, young and old, to this particular order. In the following year (1998), the *khalifah* of the Naqshbandi Order from the USA, Shaykh Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, visited the Cape and gave a number of talks on Sufism. Many were inspired by his talks and as a result were initiated into this particular order. This included two prominent personalities, i.e. Prof. Yusuf Da Costa and Imam Hasan Walele. Da Costa was made the local representative - *khalifah* and since then many have been initiated into the order, until it received a visit from the Grand Shaykh of the worldwide Naqshbandi Order, Mawlanā ash-Shaykh Muhammad Nazim Adil al-Haqqani in October 2000. The Naqshbandi Order has seen tremendous growth over the last decade and has become perhaps one of the most popular orders in Cape Town specifically and in South Africa in general.

The local media has also played a major role in the revival of Sufism at the Cape. Both community radio stations have been instrumental in the coverage of live *dhiker* programmes and visits from *shaykhs*. They have also arranged special programmes on Sufism featuring prominent local *sūfi* personalities such as Prof. Da Costa, Imam Hasan Walele and Shaykh Abduragmaan Alexander, the current head of the Cape Mazar Society. In addition, Muslim Views, one of the most popular Muslim newspapers at the Cape, "covered, with extra enthusiasm, the visits of prominent *sūfi* shaykhs and have ran a series of articles on the history of Sufism and its orders." (Owaisi: 9) The new *sūfi* revival has also made use of electronic

media – the internet to promote Sufism. Locally many of the *sūfi* orders have their own websites allowing many people, especially the *murids* access to the particular order. These specifically include the *Naqshbandi Sūfi* Order (<http://www.naqshbandi-sa.org>),<sup>3</sup> the *Qādiri-Shādhili Sūfi* Order (<http://www.qadirishadhili.com>), as well as the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order (<http://mysite.mweb.co.za/residents/mfj1/index.htm#CONTENTS>), represented by the *shaykhs* of the *al-Zawiyah* mosque. Besides this, some of the websites allow *murids* access to the *shaykh* of the order through e-mail and live link-ups in the form of electronic conferences. For instance, the *shaykh* of the Naqshbandi order has regularly been speaking to his *murids* in Cape Town via electronic conferences. This means that people can also take initiation – *bay`ah* via the internet. In addition, local bookshops like International Book Services (IBS) have also ensured a constant supply of books on Sufism. (Tayob 2003) Another area that has contributed towards this revival is the local educational institutes. For example, ICOSA (now IPSA – the Islamic Peace University of South Africa) has since 1999 made Islamic Spirituality a compulsory subject.

Even though many scholars tend to believe that many of the orders are new to the Cape, this is only true to a certain degree. The truth is that many of these orders by far predated the contemporary revival period. For example, we find that the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order, which has by far been the most influential, in both form and practice, has been around since the beginning of Islam at the Cape. It is also important to mention that Shaykh Muhammad Sālih Hendricks of the *al-Zawiyah* Mosque was instrumental in promoting the *Bā`Alawi* practices at the Cape. (Owaisi: 7) As we have seen in the preceding chapter, the *Shaykh* received *ijāzah* for these particular practices from prominent *shaykhs* in Arabia and East Africa. (Bang 2003: 115) Adding to this, he as well as his successors maintained a long standing relation with the *shaykhs* of this particular order. Even in recent years, his grandsons, Shaykhs Siraj and Ahmad

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<sup>3</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*. [www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

Hendricks, while studying at *Umm al-Qurrā'* University in Makkah, perpetuated this relationship<sup>4</sup>, in terms of their regular contacts with Shaykh, Sayyid Muhammad bin `Alawi al-Maliki. (Owaisi: 7) This relationship also pre-empted the *Sayyid's* visit in 1997. In fact, the *Sayyid* was hosted by the *shaykhs* of the al-Zawiyah mosque.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, *Bā `Alawi* practices formed a significant part of Cape Muslim identity, which includes the celebration of *Mawlūd*, the *Rātīb al-Haddād* and the *Rātīb al-`Attās* and other forms of *dhikr*. Another example is the *Shādhili Sūfi* Order, which has also been around for a long time. In particular, I found a group from Ocean View (originally from Simonstown), practicing a very peculiar form of *dhikr*. Further investigation revealed that this was a *Shādhili dhikr*, introduced to the people of Simonstown, by a group of Zanzibaris who visited Simonstown in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup> The *dhikr*, locally referred to as the *samman*, was passed on from generation to generation. Through the years the *dhikr* practice began to fade away. The last time this particular *dhikr* was performed in full participation was during the 1990s. However, in recent years, old Simonstown members have been trying to revive the *dhikr*.<sup>7</sup> It is clear that the contemporary revival period of Sufism was in many cases a renewal of broken spiritual links and a formalization of many of the orders which mainly existed in its ritual form.

### 4.3. *Brelvi* Influences

*Brelvi'ism* or *Brelvi* Islam is manifested locally in a form of Islam referred to as *Sunni* Islam. Barelwi Sunnism, the Ahle Sunnah Movement, or just the Sunni movement, is a movement within Sunni Islam that was started by Ahmed Rida Khan of Bareilly, India (hence the term

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<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> As students at ICOSA, we had the opportunity to have a personal meeting with the *Sayyid* at the al-Zawiyah complex where he was staying during his visit in 1997.

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Hajji Koebra Manual, an old Simonstown resident – June 2003.

<sup>7</sup> In 2003, I was personally approached by Toyer Manual, an old resident of Simonstown, whose father, Zakaria Manual, was one of the *khalifas* – representatives of the *dhikr*, to assist in reviving the *dhikr*. My particular duty was locate a specific *wird* – the *Wazīfah*, which was usually read before the commencement of the actual *dhikr*. Subsequently I found that it was one of the *wirds* that belonged to the *Shādhili Sūfi* Order.

Barelwi). Imam Ahmad Raza Khan's followers are called Barelvis simply because he was resident of the town Bareilly, in Rohaikand (western portion of present-day Uttar Pradesh).<sup>8</sup>

The *Brelvi/Sunni* are characterized by their performance of popular Islamic practices such as the celebration of the *Mawlūd*, traditional *sūfi* practices, reverence of *sūfi* saints - *Awliyā Allah* and other related practices. (Vahed 2002: 4) In addition, they have also been characterized by the commemoration of *ʿAshūrāh* – 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram, with special emphasis on the Martyrdom of Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet. (Vahed 2002: 2) Their rivals, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement, with which they share a history of antagonism and rivalry, which goes back to the Indo-Pakistan region, have accused them of engaging in anti-Islamic, *bid`ah* practices. Besides this, they have also been accused of destroying the concept of *Tawhīd*, with a number of beliefs of *shirk*, perpetrating acts of grave-worship, elevating the Prophet and the *ʿAwliyā* to the pedestal of Godhood.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, in South Africa *Brelvi/Sunni* brand of Islam preceded the *Tablighi/Deobandi* brand of Islam. This brand of Islam came with the Indian Muslim pioneers, who first settled in Durban in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Mahida 1993: 22) It started facing opposition from Deobandi *ʿulamāʾ*, who flourished in the beginning of the last century and the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement which was established in the 1960s. (Mahida 1993: 56, 90; Tayob 1995: 71)

*Brelvi/Islam* was established in the Cape region, when the first Indian Muslims settled there in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (Owaisi: 7) In terms of the cultural practices and *sūfi* traditions it was very similar to that of the established 'Malay' brand of Islam that was present at the Cape. The common practices included, the celebration of the Prophet's birth (*Mawlūd*), visiting and revering the graves of saints, certain *sūfi dhikr* practices, and the commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram. Thus, it easily adapted itself to the practices of the local Muslims.

<sup>8</sup> "Barelvi", Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barelvi>

<sup>9</sup> *The Salafi and Barelvi Mutants*, <http://www.themajlis.net>

Even though many of the Indian Muslims follow the *Hanafi Madh-hab* it was well received, with very little opposition from the local Cape Muslims. In terms of religious practice the Indian and ‘Malay’ Muslims have always had a good relationship. This is especially evident in the fact that there were intermarriages that took place between Indians and ‘Malays’, Indians and Malays attending the same *Madrasabs*<sup>10</sup> and also the relationship between Indian and Malay leadership, (Owaisi: 5) many of whom served on the local *‘ulamā* body, the MJC.<sup>11</sup>

Finally *Brelvi/Sunni* Muslims have never been seen as an opposition or a threat to local ‘Malay’ Islamic identity and this is most probably attributed to the common religious practices between them. However, the extent of the *Brelvi/Sunni* influence is noticeable in the change in the way many of the local practices are performed. Even though there are many common religious practices among *Brelvi/Sunni* Muslims and ‘Malay’ they differ a lot in form and practice. A typical example is the way the *Mawlūd* is celebrated among the two groups. What is common is not the way the *Mawlūd* is conducted, but more the emphasis of upholding it. It is important to note that in recent years especially, *Brelvi/Sunni* forms of conducting certain common religious practices have influenced the way it is conducted among the ‘Malay’ Muslim community. This is with special reference to the recitation of certain *qasidabs* such as the *Qasidah al-Burdah*, *dhikrs* such as the *Qādiri dhikr*, emphasis on talks at *Mawlūd* functions, and certain practices related to visiting the *Karāmats*, or *‘Awliyā* and the *‘Urs* celebrations.<sup>12</sup> However, despite this, they still blend well with the local ‘Malay’ community. Moreover, they have become a significant part of the Cape Muslim community.

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<sup>10</sup> Based on an interview with Jaynodien Martin, who came from mixed Indian-‘Malay’ marriage and who also got married to a ‘Malay’ – 12 December 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Refer to the MJC’s official website.

<sup>12</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawab Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*. [www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

#### 4.4. *Tablighi/Deobandi* Influences

The *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement is a *Sunni* Muslim missionary and revival movement - *da`wab* movement, established in the 1920s by a Deobandi scholar, Mawlanā Muhammad Ilyas Kandhalawi in the Mewat province of India.<sup>13</sup> According to Yahya Sadowski, Mawlanā Ilyas, as he was generally referred to, despite being a Deobandi scholar came from a distinguished family of Sufis. (Sadowski 1996) Mawlanā Ilyas's main reason for establishing the movement came from his concern that knowledge of Islam was often only superficial. Adding to this, the he found that Muslims, especially Hindu converts, were practicing a mixed, almost syncretistic, form of Islam, which incorporated many Hindu cultural aspects.<sup>14</sup> He therefore developed a lifelong passion for fostering a consciousness of the Islamic creed and promoting the practice of Islamic ritual. (Sadowski 1996) He wished to transform Muslims, who were practicing a syncretistic form Islam, based on Hindu cultural practices.<sup>15</sup>

Unlike other *da`wab* movements, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement, following the vision of its founder, Mawlanā Ilyas, were more interested in reforming (*islāh*) the Muslim community, rather than delivering the message to non-Muslims. (Sadowski 1996) In this regard, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement could be considered a reformist movement, rather than a missionary (*da`wab*) movement. Fundamentalist movements concerned with similar problems usually raised money from their adherents to build new mosques to attract distinguished *`ulamā* to preach and combat the rustic traditions that had seeped into local practice. The *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement reversed this formula, requesting from its members to volunteer time, not money and organizing them into missions (*jama'at*), whose original purpose was to travel to cities so that they could learn from the *`ulamā*. They eventually realised that it was more important to live Islam than to study it. Internally, the missions sought to create an

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<sup>13</sup> *Wikipedia* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi\\_Jamaat#searchInput](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi_Jamaat#searchInput)

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid*

egalitarian atmosphere in which members emulated the dress, speech, and habits of the Prophet Muhammad. Externally, they emphasized not preaching but practice: much of their energy was focused on encouraging other Muslims to assemble in community prayer, quietly inviting passers-by to join them either in large outdoor rallies or at smaller gatherings in public buildings such as airports. (Sadowski 1996) Sadowski, drawing on Barbra Metcalf, is of the opinion that although *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement's aim is to remake adherents' lives, the sought-for transformation "is not viewed instrumentally, that is, by the expectation that the transformation of individuals will ultimately produce a just society"... but rather "the concern is wholly with orienting Muslims toward an Islamic pattern in individual lives, the one dimension of life over which one appears to have full control. The shape of the larger world is simply left to God." (Sadowski 1996)

Furthermore, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement was founded on a simple message by which individuals committed themselves to re-creating, as far as possible, the lifestyle of the Prophet in the modern world. (Tayob 1999: 70) The movement asks the Muslims at-large to spend their time and money in spiritual journeys (called "*gashf*" or in Arabic "*khurooj*") to seek religious knowledge ("*Taleem*") and promote the faith. During these scheduled journeys (usually for a specified period of 4 months, 40 days, 10 days, or 3 days), members of each travelling group (called *jama'ats*) learn the basic tenets of Islam from each other.<sup>16</sup> The life of the *tablighi*<sup>17</sup> is summed up in six basic principles, referred to as the 'six points': (1) Conviction of faith, (2) Humility & Devotion in Salah, (3) Acquiring knowledge and remembrance of God, (4) Good behaviour towards Muslims and others, (5) Purity of intention, (6) and Inviting to God.<sup>18</sup> Thus using the 'six points' as a basis, the *jama'at* which usually consists of 5 to 20 members, with an *amir* chosen by the group, goes out into the Muslim community, moving

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<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> An individual adherent of the *Tabligh Jama'at*

<sup>18</sup> *Wikipedia* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi\\_Jamaat#searchInput](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi_Jamaat#searchInput)

from one town to another. The *jamā`at* usually encamps at the mosque of the town they visit where they engage in various activities. These activities include, learning (*ta`lim*) in the form of *kitāb* reading<sup>19</sup> (usually from the *Fadā`il A`māl* - Virtues of Deeds written by Mawlanā Zakaria, or alternatively from the *Riyād al-Salḥīn* – Gardens of the Pious written by Imam Nawawi), *gasht* – calling the local community Muslims to attend the congregational prayer.<sup>20</sup> The stress in the movement was not at all on book learning but rather on face-to-face, or "heart to heart," communication. (Metcalf 2002: 10) Furthermore, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement considers its activities, especially going out into the Muslim community, for specified periods, as *jihād* – not in the mundane sense of the word – holy war, but rather meaning striving in the path of Allah. The person who therefore dies during these journeys is considered a *shahīd* – one who has died in Allah's cause.

The various groups or *jamā`āt* of a particular region, city or province also gather on a weekly basis at the main center called the *markaz* for reports on current activities and to plan future activities and journeys.<sup>21</sup> These meetings also include consultation or *mashūrah* with members, or group leaders. In addition to this, each country or continent has a main *markaz* – headquarters. The main international *markaz* is in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, India. Europe's main *markaz* is in Dewsbury, England. East Asia's main *markaz* is located in Jakarta, Indonesia. The main African *markaz* is in Durban, South Africa.<sup>22</sup>

Most scholars or analysts have viewed the movement as being apolitical, without any overt political agenda. In fact, they do not believe that Islam specifies an ideal political system. In addition, "they condemn terrorism..." and as we have seen thus far, "...their focus is on the spiritual enlightenment of the soul and adheres to the Islamic creed and rituals." (Sadowski

<sup>19</sup> *Kitāb* reading refers to an educational session by reading from a prescribed book – *kitāb*.

<sup>20</sup> *Wikipedia* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi\\_Jamaat#searchInput](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi_Jamaat#searchInput); Muhammed Haron, *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*. [www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

<sup>21</sup> Interview Mawlanā Yusuf Feltman – 31 December 2006

<sup>22</sup> *Wikipedia* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi\\_Jamaat#searchInput](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tablighi_Jamaat#searchInput)

1996) Thus, Barbra Metcalf, a scholar specializing in South Asian Islam referred to them as "an apolitical, quietist movement of internal grassroots missionary renewal" and compares its activities to the efforts to reshape individual lives by Alcoholics Anonymous.<sup>23</sup> Another scholar, Olivier Roy, a prominent authority on Islam at Paris's prestigious Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, described them as "completely apolitical and law abiding."<sup>24</sup> Sadowski believes that it is precisely because of their apolitical stance that (1) governments from Tunisia to Pakistan have not only tolerated but encouraged their spread and (2) that they have passed largely unnoticed by the West. (Sadowski 1996)

Furthermore, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement was initially introduced to South Africa in the 1960s among the Gujarati traders by a local businessman, Goolam Mohemmad Padia, also known as Bhai Padia. Bhai Padia or Brother Padia, who is also regarded as the father of *Tabligh* in South Africa, was exposed to *Tabligh* during a pilgrimage to Makkah. He was very impressed by what he saw, and subsequently visited New Delhi where he learnt *Tabligh* methods and philosophies first hand. (Vahed 2002: 5)

The *Tablighi Jama`at* was an offshoot of the Deobandi movement. In some ways, it represented an intensification of the original Deobandi commitment to individual regeneration apart from any explicit political program...Always closely tied to men with traditional learning and the holiness of Sufis, *Tablighi Jama`at* nonetheless took its impetus from a desire to move dissemination of Islamic teachings away from the *madrasa*, the heart of Deobandi activity, to inviting "lay" Muslims, high and low, learned and illiterate, to share the obligation of enjoining others to faithful practice. (Metcalf 2002: 8) In a similar way, the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement in South Africa has aligned themselves with the Deobandi '*ulamā*' from Transvaal and Natal with whom they share the same roots and fundamental beliefs. In certain instances they played a major role in establishing Deobandi seminary schools – *Dār al-Ulūms*. In particular, the

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<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*

establishment of the *Dār al-ʿUlūm* of Newcastle (est. 1973) in Natal and the *Dār al-ʿUlūm* of Azaadville in the Transvaal - *Madrasah Arabia Islamia* (est. 1982).<sup>25</sup> Besides these two seminary schools there are a number of other (Deobandi) schools for both girls and boys that emerged throughout South Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. These schools were established the following areas: (1) Boys - *Madrasah Taʿleemud-Deen* in Isiphingo Beach (Kwazulu Natal), *Dār al-ʿUlūm Zakaria* in Lenasia (Gauteng), *Madrasah Inʿamiyyah* in Camperdown (Gauteng), and *Jamiyah Mahmudiyyah* in Springs (Gauteng) (2) Girls – Girls Madrasah in Lenasia (Gauteng), *Madrasahul-Banaat* in Azaadville (Gauteng), Girls Madrasah in Newcastle (Kwazulu Natal). Furthermore, interesting development has taken place in Cape where two Deobandi based boys’ schools and one girls’ school have emerged within the last decade. The first institute refers to *Qāsim al-Ulūm* is based on Vanguard Drive Highway, near Mitchells Plain, inspired by and named after the long-standing principal of *Dār al-ʿUlūm* of Newcastle, Mawlanā Qasim Sima. This particular institute was established approximately ten years ago by a group of Newcastle graduates, using more or less the same syllabus as *Dār al-ʿUlūm* of Newcastle. It was thus seen as a daughter institute of the latter institute. The second institute is *Madrasah Arabiyyah Islamiyyah*, also established about ten years ago by Mawlanā Taha Keraan, who was among the early graduates of Mias Farm in Gauteng and also a graduate of *Dār al-ʿUlūm* in India. This particular school is based in the outlying Strand region of Cape Town. The third institute refers to a girls’ school, Shaykh Zakaria Girls’ Madrasah, established by Mawlanā Dawood Samson, who is also a graduate from *Dār al-ʿUlūm* of Newcastle. This particular institute is based in the Parkwood Estate area, near Grassy Park.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Based on an interview with Mawlanā Yusuf Feltman – 31 December 2006; and Mahida’s *History of Muslims in South Africa: A Chronology*

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Mawlanā Yusuf Feltman – 31 December 2006

In South Africa, the *Deobandi* Islam and the *Tablighi* Islam have always been seen as one entity. This has probably led most local scholars, such as Muhammad Haron and Abdulkader Tayob to use the two categories interchangeably. For instance, Muhammad Haron<sup>27</sup> attributes the controversial Azaadville incident<sup>28</sup> to the *Tablighi/Deobandi Movement*, whereas Tayob attributes it to the Deobandis (Tayob 1999: 89) Even Goolam Vahed who has done an extensive study of the *Tablighi -Sunni* conflict in South Africa has used the two interchangeably. (Vahed 2002: 5) The *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement's strong affiliations with the Deobandis have made it at times difficult to distinguish between the two, even though scholars have tried to treat them as separate entities.

The *Tablighi/Deobandi* influence on Cape Muslim goes back to the initial contacts made with the Cape, especially during the 1960s. (Bangstad 41) The *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement in particular flourished in Cape Town during the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. Their activities were especially popular in the poorer township areas such as Bonteheuwel, Manenberg, Steenberg, as well as the outlying regions such as Paarl, Stellenbosch, Strand and Ocean View. Locally, the movement has drawn crowds of people to its cause and in the process reformed many individuals who had been involved in gangsterism and drugs. In fact, many of these individuals seem to have opted for this movement because it suited their behaviour patterns; they were not at any stage ostracized or looked down upon for what they had committed in the past as might have been the case in other movements. They also felt more secure with the support the theologians had given the TJ (*Tabligh Jama'at*).<sup>29</sup> A *markaz* – regional headquarters was set up at the Muir Street mosque in District Six, Cape Town, where the various groups gather on a weekly basis, especially on a Friday night for deliberation and

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<sup>27</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*. [www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

<sup>28</sup> This refers to the incident in which a *sunni* Muslim was killed in Azaadville by a group of *Deobandis/Tablighis* during the mid-nineteen eighties while preparing for a *Mawlid* function.

<sup>29</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*. [www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

consultation. Their activities have encouraged local Muslims to travel across the country and abroad for scheduled journeys (3 days, 10 days, 40 days and 4 months), religious studies and even to attend annual gatherings – *ijtima`*, held either in Gauteng or KwaZulu-Natal. Through the years the Cape has witnessed bus loads of local Muslims traveling up country for the annual gatherings objectively held during the Easter and Christmas holidays. This was probably seen as a better alternative and a means of countering the disintegration and mischief (*fitnah* and *fasād*) befalling Muslims during these festive times. The fact that many students from Cape Town pursued their religious studies at Deobandi institutes in the former Transvaal and Natal from the early 1970s further strengthened the *Tablighi/Deobandi* influence on Cape Muslim identity. These students preferred to study at two particular institutes, i.e. *Dār al-`Ulūm* of Newcastle (est. 1973) in Natal and the *Dār al-`Ulūm Zakaria*. It is interesting to note that *Dār al-`Ulūm* of Newcastle since its inception, even though it aimed at attracting students from the local Muslim community in Natal, it has always had a majority Cape Muslim student population. According to some of the students that studied at the latter institute, the principal of the institute, Mawlanā Cassim Sima, has always been accommodative towards them, allowing them to study the *Shāfi`i Fiqh* instead of prescribed *Hanafi Fiqh* and also allowing them to participate in their traditional practices, such as reading the *Rātīb al-Haddād* on Thursday nights and celebrating the *Mawlūd al-Nabi*.<sup>30</sup> Besides, Cape Muslim students refused outright to be taught Urdu and *Hanafi fiqh*. This was against the normal practices and policies of the established Deobandi institutes. Thus, the Mawlanā was often criticized by other Deobandi *`ulemā* for his moderate position. Another interesting development at the latter institute is the fact that recently it has even employed a *Shāfi`i fiqh* teacher, which is unprecedented.

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mawlanā Yusuf Feltman – 31 December 2006 and M. Yusuf Toefy – 8 December 2006.

The *Tablīghī/Deobandī* ‘*ulemā*’ were especially critical of certain religious practices prevalent among the local Muslims of Cape Town specifically, and other parts of the country in general. These practices especially included the *Mawlūd* celebrations, the *asbraqal/salāmi*, the celebrations of the ‘big nights’ (*Mawlūd*, *Mi`raj*, *Barā`ah*, and *Qadr*), visiting the graves of saints – the *amliyā Allah*, making the *du`ā* (supplication) audibly after the compulsory prayers, and the *takbīr* (proclamations of the greatness of God) on ‘*id*’ festival days. (Tayob 1999: 72) They considered all these practices to be an innovation or *bid`ah* in Islam. The anti-*bid`ah* rhetoric in the Transvaal was present in the ‘*ulama*’ booklets, sermons, and school syllabi. However, the most effective rhetoric was not restricted to speech and the written word but took effect in specific gestures and acts by the protagonists of the particular viewpoint. (Tayob 1999: 72) This is besides the fact they were strong adherents of the *Hanafī Madh-hab*, sometimes also considered to be very fanatical about it. These ideas undeniably influenced many of the locals, both those who were studying at the Deobandī institutes, as well as those locals who were involved in the *jama`at* activities. It is important to note that the anti-*bid`ah* rhetoric, even though it goes back to the founders of the movement, could have also been influenced by the Wahhabi scholars who were already present in the Indo-Pakistan region in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, during which time Deobandism emerged, which is just after the establishment of the *Dārul `Ulūm* Deoband in 1866.

Towards the end of the 1990s, and up to the present the *Tablīghī/Deobandī Movement* started to lose its momentum. They started losing support and were being criticized on various levels. The criticism against them were as follows: (1) many Muslims felt that there was no need that they be called to prayer because one should know one’s duties and leave it to the individual’s conscience, (2) even though they are concerned with ‘Allah’s work’ they neglect their duties towards their kith and kin particularly when the male breadwinner goes on gush

for 40 days ...<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, they were also heavily criticized by the student groups, i.e. MSA and MYM for wanting to impose their traditional views. This is besides being criticized by their long standing foes, the Brelvi Movement, referred to as the *Sunnis* in southern Africa, for its criticism of their popular Islamic practices.<sup>32</sup> In addition to this, the degeneration and loss of support in the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement's activities could also possibly be attributed to a decision taken by its local leaders of the movement to rather restrict the participation in the annual gatherings to the national '*ulemā*', which used to have international participation. In other words, the annual gatherings are no longer considered as international events, but rather they are considered to be national events. As international events, the annual gatherings attracted larger crowds of local Muslims, which meant more support and greater prospects for recruitment. It could also be attributed to a move towards *tasawwuf* (Tayob 2003) – spirituality among the members of the movement.<sup>33</sup> Despite all of this, *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement had great support among the Muslims of South Africa in general. It is however difficult to determine the number of South African members in the moment. However, their impact and growth could be measured in terms of the first annual gathering in South Africa, which was held in Ladysmith during the Easter vacation in 1966, which attracted about 300 people, and a gathering in 1999, in Durban which attracted approximately 25000 people.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4.5. *Wahhābi/Salafī* Influences

The term *Wahhābi* generally refers to a follower of Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhāb, a 18<sup>th</sup> century reformer, from Najd in Arabia, and *Salafī* refers to a person who follows in the footsteps of the *Ahl al-Salaf* or *Al-Salaf Al-Sālihīn* – pious predecessors, which includes the companions of the Prophet and those who came after them. Furthermore, some scholars

<sup>31</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*.  
[www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

<sup>33</sup> Interview Mawlanā Yusuf Feltman – 31 December 2006

<sup>34</sup> Vahed, G., *Contested Meanings and Authenticity: Indian Islam and Mubarram "Performances" in Durban*,  
<http://www.sephis.org/pdf/vahed1.pdf>

refer to `Abd al-Wahhāb as one of the first modern ‘fundamentalists’.<sup>35</sup> `Abd al-Wahhāb followed the teachings of Ibn Taymiyah and heavily opposed the prevailing practices in Arabia, especially in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, during which time, was dominated by a popular *Sūfi* Islam, governed by the Ottoman Empire. (Ebrahim 2004: 85) He declared that many of the prevailing practices were innovations – *bid`ah*, bordering on heresy. He was equally opposed to the widespread laxity in adhering to traditional Islamic laws. He also felt that questionable practices such as visiting holy sites and venerating them, visiting the graves of the pious predecessors, and visiting special mosques were allowed to continue, whereas the religious devotions which Islam did require were being ignored. Furthermore, he started to lay emphasis on the importance of *tawhid* (monotheism). Thus he and his followers came to be called *muwabbhidūn* - Unitarians, which they prefer over the term *Wahhābi*.<sup>36</sup>

In the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century, the *Wahhābi* brand of Islam was adopted by the Al Saud family, who were leaders in the fight against domination and rule of Ottoman Turks over the Arabian Peninsula. Therefore, with a new form of leadership in Arabia, and the formation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, *Wahhābism* become the dominant Islamic tradition in Arabia. Through its alliance with the Al-Saud family, it gained great popularity and renewed importance.<sup>37</sup>

However, it seems as if *Wahhābism* only started to gain worldwide popularity in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially after the 1970s, when Saudi Arabia discovered oil. It was also during this period, that *Wahhābism* was formally introduced to South Africa, even though it could have influenced the local Muslims much earlier, many of whom were not comfortable with it. (Ebrahim 2004: 84) Moreover, the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a new brand of scholars emerging at the Cape, most of whom, graduated from Saudi Arabian institutes, in

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<sup>35</sup> “Wahhābism and Wahhābi Muslims”, <http://atheism.about.com/od/islamicsects/a/wahhābi.htm>

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

<sup>37</sup> “Wahhābism and Wahhābi Muslims 2”, [http://atheism.about.com/od/islamicsects/a/wahhābi\\_2.htm](http://atheism.about.com/od/islamicsects/a/wahhābi_2.htm)

particular the Islamic University of Madinah. Among the initial graduates include scholars such as Shaykh Ebrahim Gabriels, former president of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) and current president National `Ulema Council of South Africa (NUCSA), Shaykh Erefaan Abrahams, Shaykh Shaheed Esau and Shaykh Igsaan Taliep and others. These particular scholars have, since their return, played a leading role within the local Muslim community and have especially aligned themselves to the MJC, which is considered to be the most influential `ulemā' body in the Western Cape. Besides these scholars, many others have followed in their footsteps. In fact, there are approximately 30 students who are currently enrolled at the Islamic University of Madinah.<sup>38</sup> This particular university produces the largest number of local graduates from Cape Town. It is therefore most likely that the institute, which has undeniably been aligned with the *Wahhabi/Salafi* tradition<sup>39</sup>, could have influenced the local graduates in some way or the other. It is probably because of this that some locals have classified this particular brand of scholars as *Wahhabis*, promoting *Wahhabi/Salafi* traditions.<sup>40</sup> (Owaisi: 8) In addition to this, many short courses have been set up over the years by the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) at the two main institutes in Cape Town, i.e. the Islamic College of Southern Africa and Dārul Arqam<sup>41</sup>, with a great deal of emphasis on `Aqīdah and *Hadīth*. WAMY, which represents the *Wahhabi/Salafi* tradition in South Africa, has its headquarters in the Gauteng region, and has been in operation since the 1970s. (Tayob 1995: 149) Furthermore, WAMY has also been actively involved in distributing *Wahhabi/Salafi* literature, which focuses mainly on following the correct belief – *aqīdah* and practices based on the authentic *Sunnah* of the Prophet. Many of these books also have a strong anti-*bid`ah*

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<sup>38</sup> Interview with M. Yusuf Toefy and Abdul Muhaimin Abduraouf, students at the Imam University in Riyadh – 8 December 2006.

<sup>39</sup> Also refer to Da Costa, Y. “The Wahabi Menace comes to the Cape”, [http://www.sunnah.org/aqida/cape\\_town\\_wahabi/wahabi\\_menace\\_capetown.htm](http://www.sunnah.org/aqida/cape_town_wahabi/wahabi_menace_capetown.htm)

<sup>40</sup> *ibid*

<sup>41</sup> These two institutes have now combined to form the Islamic Peace University of South Africa (IPSA).

rhetoric<sup>42</sup> During these courses, which usually carry on for about two weeks, special scholars are brought in from Saudi Arabia, particularly from the institute mentioned above, to present various subjects to those present. It was evident from these courses that these scholars were trying to promote the *Wahhabi/Salafi* tradition. Potential students were identified to pursue further studies in Saudi Arabia, and during the interviews between these students and these particular scholars, specific questions related to *ʿAqīdab* and adherence to certain cultural practices were asked.<sup>43</sup>

Like the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement, the *Wahhabi/Salafi* Movement is also intent on reforming the community based on the teachings of the *Qurʾān* and the authentic *Sunnab* (Tradition) of the Prophet Muhammad. It is viewed as a puritan movement. Thus, anything that does not conform to these two sources (*Qurʾān* and *Sunnab*) is considered as an innovation – *bidʿah*. The *Wahhabi/Salafi* Movement has also been very critical about certain practices not condoned by the *Qurʾān* and *Sunnab*. Like the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement, it has condemned the celebration of *Mawlūd*, *dhikrs* made in congregation, the celebration of ‘big nights’, and visiting the graves of the saints – *Awliyā Allah*. all of which are popular religious practices at the Cape. However, even though it shares some of the same sentiments as the *Tablighi/Deobandi* Movement, it has even criticized the latter for some of its anti-*sunnab* practices relating to the scheduled journeys (3 days, 10 days, 40 days and 4 months) and the annual gatherings – *ijtimaʿ*, which it feels has no basis in the *Qurʾān* and *Sunnab* of the Prophet. Besides this, the *Wahhabi/Salafi* Movement has especially been critical about *taqlid* – blind following a particular *madh-hab*. It has even been accused of being anti-*madh-hab*,<sup>44</sup> even though it has particularly aligned itself to the *Hanbali Madh-hab*. (Ebrahim 2004: 84) It is perhaps a

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<sup>42</sup> After attending the courses arranged by WAMY, at ICOSA, I was presented with a gift package, which included a variety of items, including some literature which I carefully scrutinized.

<sup>43</sup> This is based on my personal attendance of these courses at ICOSA in June 1996 and August 1997. After these courses participants were presented with a certificate of attendance.

<sup>44</sup> “Salafis - The Blindest Taqleed”, <http://themajlis.net/Sections-article283-p1.html>

misperception that the movement is accused of being anti-*madh-hab*. In an interview with two students studying at Imam ibn Saud University in Riyadh, I came to understand that the teachers at this particular institute, most likely ‘Wahhabi’ inclined, were very respectful towards the various *madh-habs*. This has led me to believe *Wahhabi/Salafi* scholars are not that antagonistic towards the views of the other *madh-habs*.<sup>45</sup> Besides, I also came to also understand that perhaps these scholars were more concerned about *madh-hab* fanaticism, which leaves very little scope for a different opinion and which also breeds intolerance.

*Wahhabi* influence on the local Cape community, even though some people believe that it is slowly fading away, is still present. As long as there are students present in Saudi Arabia, *Wahhabi* based institutes and *Wahhabi* literature distributed among the local Muslims, and even free internet access, there always exists the possibility of *Wahhabi* influence. In addition to this, pilgrimage to Makkah and Madinah is also another means of coming into contact with Wahhabism. In fact, during the *hajj* (pilgrimage) season in particular, pilgrims are exposed to *Wahhabi* related literature which is usually distributed freely by the Saudi government. This is besides the bookshops in Makkah and Madinah which mainly stock this brand of literature.

#### 4.6. The Influence of Modern Reformist Movements

In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, another brand of Islam emerged and influenced the Cape Muslim identity, a modern reformist Islam, which manifested itself in the teachings of Hasan Al-Bannah from Egypt and Abu al-A`lā al-Mawdūdi from the Indo-Pakistan region. Like many of the other reformist movements these movements were also concerned about degeneration within the Muslim community and the impact of Western imperialism, which was affecting most Muslim communities. On the one hand, Hasan Al-Bannah called for a comprehensive and activist Islam which is expressed by M. Hoosain Ebrahim in words of

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<sup>45</sup> Interview with M. Yusuf Toefy and Abdul Muhaimin Abduraouf, students at the Imam University in Riyadh – 8 December 2006.

Richard Mitchell, “The goal of the movement was to establish an Islamic order instead of an Islamic state.” (Ebrahim 2004: 97) This was in a sense different from the Iranian model, which aimed at establishing an Islamic state. Al-Bannah advocated evolutionary change over radical revolution in order to recreate early Madinan community of the Prophet Muhammad. (Ebrahim 2004: 97) Al-Mawdūdi, from which many revolutionary models, like the Iranian revolution, were derived, rather called revolutionary change and the establishment of an Islamic theocratic state.

Modern reformist movements especially affected the Muslim community during the struggle against apartheid. Many Muslims felt that not enough guidance and support were coming from the local religious leaders (*‘ulamā*), in the fight against Apartheid. (Moosa 1989) Many, especially the youth, were also disheartened by the traditional approaches to modern reform. This has probably led them to seek guidance elsewhere. Thus, we find that some groups adopted the Muslim Brotherhood Model, based on the teachings of Hasan al-Bannah from Egypt, North Africa (Tayob 1995: 140), some adopted the South Asian model, based on the teachings of Abul-A‘la al-Mawdūdi (1903-1979), and some adopted the Iranian Model, based on the teachings of Ayatollah Khomeini and Dr. Ali Shariati. Local groups that were especially influenced by this modern reform were the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM), the Call of Islam, and the *Qiblah* Movement. Regarding this, Anneli Botha writes, “An Islamic revival in South Africa began in the 1950s, as teachers and professionals in the Western Cape tried to mobilize themselves into coherent movements. The Islamic revival essentially derived its religious inspiration from modern Islamic movements in Pakistan and Egypt. In December 1970 the Muslim Youth Movement of South Africa (MYM) was established. The Iranian revolution in 1979 had a massive impact on the consciousness of South African Muslims and

led to the formation of the Qibla Mass Movement, an anti-apartheid movement inspired by the universal egalitarian message of the Islamic revolution in Iran.”<sup>46</sup>

The MYM in particular seem to have opted for a more rational approach to modern reform within the local community, thus they preferred the Egyptian model as outlined by Hasan Al-Bannah and the Muslim brotherhood movement. They also had some reserved inclination towards the Mawdūdi model and the Iranian revolutionary model. It was quite clear from their aims and the Islamic studies programme adopted by the MYM that they preferred the approach of Hasan al-Bannah, which was based on internal reform. The members of the *Qiblah* Movement rather preferred radical change and were thus very much inspired by the objectives of the Iranian revolution – to establish an Islamic state.

Despite the varied approaches, all of these movements had one thing in common – reforming the Muslim community; and fighting Western imperialism and locally, Apartheid. As it can be seen, some preferred radical change over passive resistance or internal reform. Locally, modern reformation can be summed up in three main categories, (1) passive resistance, represented by the traditional groups, e.g. the *Tablighi/Deobandis* and the *Sūfis*. (2) revolutionary change, represented by the revolutionary groups, e.g. *Qiblah*, (3) internal reformation, represented by the Muslim Brotherhood Movements, e.g. the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM).

#### **4.7. The Influence of Progressive Muslim Groups (with special reference to Claremont Main Road Mosque)**

Among the groups that came onto the scene a bit late, and is considered more progressive in Cape Town, is the Claremont Main Road Mosque Group. The group is mainly supported by the present MYM of Cape Town, as well as scholars and students from UCT, and is under the guidance and leadership of people like *Imām/Doctor Abdul Rashied Omar*, *Mawlānā/Doctor*

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<sup>46</sup> Anneli Botha - *PAGAD: A Case Study of Radical Islam in South Africa*

Ebrahim Moosa and others. The Claremont Main Road Mosque could be seen as a platform for a more liberal and progressive form of Islam, attracting young intellectuals that are looking for innovative ways of expressing themselves as Muslims.

The officials of the mosque promote religious tolerance and religious pluralism, thus encouraging interfaith dialogue. This can be seen in the articles and *khutbabs* posted on their website, and is also based on the fact that they would invite non-Muslim speakers to address the mosque congregants on issues of faith.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, they also promote gender equality and have taken a very uncompromising position in this regard; allowing women and men to stand together in prayer with a *thin rope* separating the two groups. (Tayob: 1999) The rationale for this is that men and women pray together with no separation at the most holiest of places, *Al-Masjid Al-Harām* (The Sacred Mosque in Mecca), so why should they pray separately elsewhere.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, their position on gender equality is quite evident considering the fact that they allowed the feminist, Professor Amina Wadud Muhsin, to deliver the pre-*khutbab* talk at the mosque, during the time of *Jumu`ah*, in August, 1994. (Tayob: 1999) Regarding the incident, which he considered to be innovative, Abdulkader Tayob writes, "The response to the pre-sermon was overwhelming. The mosque was flooded with local media to record the event. Mosque officials had made sure that such an event would not be lost to posterity, nor should this public statement for the place of women in Islam be ignored. While South African newspapers lauded the mosque's stand for women's rights, most Muslims were alarmed at this development. Religious scholars particularly organized a campaign to halt the new trend in Claremont. Their indignation took the form of pamphlets, lectures against Claremont's modernism, joint 'ulema meetings and conferences, and a petition calling for the imam's removal from office." (Tayob: 1999) This was indeed an historic event that had a long lasting

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<sup>47</sup> Refer to Claremont Main Road Mosque website, <http://www.wagiet.org/head.htm>

<sup>48</sup> Badran, M., *Rites and Rights: the Mosque Movement From Mecca to Main Street*, <http://www.theamericanmuslim.org/>

impact on the local community, in a sense that local Muslims generally viewed the developing mosque as being modern and liberal, and ultimately disassociating themselves from it.

Even though the mosque has been marginalized by many of the local Muslims, it still continues to attract a number of youth and liberal minded Muslim intellectuals. On the one hand they have challenged many of the legal traditions, such as the role of women Islam, the celebration of *Eid al-Adhā* with Mecca, and performing only eight *raka`āt* for the *Tarāwih* prayers as opposed to twenty *raka`āt*, but on the other hand they still promote many of the cultural traditions, like the *mawlūd*, *hajat*, *adbkār* for the *Tarāwih* prayers and other related traditions.<sup>49</sup>

#### 4.8. *Shī`ite* Influences

The Shiites or Shi'a are the Muslim minority who split off from the majority Sunnis or Sunna. They currently make up some 10 to 15 per cent of all Muslims. They are, however, very strong in certain regions and have had a lasting influence on Islamic spiritual life.<sup>50</sup> Throughout history Muslims have always been divided in terms of Shiites and Sunnis, especially following the demise of the Prophet. The division was sparked off by the question of who was then the legitimate leader of the Muslim community. The Shiites stressed the special role of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Mohammed. They see him as the only legitimate successor to the Prophet, and take their name from him: Shi`at Ali, meaning the party of Ali.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, even among the Shiites there were a number of different groups/sects, some of whom have become extinct. The most common groups are the Ismailis, the Zaidis and the *Ithnā`Ashari* sect. The differences between these groups primarily lie in the issue of the *imams*, whom they regard as being infallible. The infallibility of the imams forms part of the basic Shiite doctrine.

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<sup>49</sup> This is based on informal talks with one of the congregants of the mosque, Mr. Nazeem Manual, who usually reads the *adbkār* and *salawat* at the mosque on occasions such as the *Tarāwih* prayers and *Mawlūd al-Nabi* celebrations.

<sup>50</sup> Darul Islam Website, *The Shiites, the Great Split in the Islamic Faith*, , <http://www.darulislam.co.za>

<sup>51</sup> *ibid*

(a) The Zaidis or Fiver Shiites - for them the line of Imams ends with Zaid, a son of the 4th Imam, who fell in the year 470 during the revolt against the Umayyads. They are moderate and tolerant, particularly towards the Sunnis (for example they do not revile the first three caliphs). Their faith does not include waiting for the *mahdi* nor the idea of the concealed Imam. One distinctive feature is that they stress the successful fight of the appropriate person for the imamate and thus reject the principle of heredity, which the other Shiites adhere to. Zaidite dynasties ruled in Yemen for over 1000 years, from 901 to 1962.<sup>52</sup>

(b) The Isma'ilites or Sevener Shiites: they are the most heterogeneous and mysterious of all the Shi'ite movements, yet characterized by exceptional vitality. For them the line of Imams ends with Isma'il, a son of the 6th Imam, who was designated by his father as his successor but died before him in 760. Sections of the Isma'ilites accord Ali special status and see the line of 7 Imams as ending with Isma'il's son Mohammed. They profess a chiliastic expectation of the mahdi and share with the Twelver Shiites the idea of the Hidden Imam. Their ideas are philosophically very speculative and contain numerous Ancient Persian and neoPlatonic elements. To some extent they claim that the initiated have secret knowledge, and differentiate between an inner (secret) and external (visible) divine revelation.<sup>53</sup>

(c) The *Ithnā `Asharis*/Twelver Shiites – this particular group is followed by the majority of Shiites.<sup>54</sup> According to this denomination of *Shi'ism* which is prevalent in Iran, Iraq and among Shi'as of India the Prophet of Islam was succeeded by twelve Imams. `Ali and his sons Hasan and Husayn were followed by nine others Zaynul Abidin, Muhammad al-Baqir, Jafar as Sadiq, Musa al-Kazim, Ali ar-Rida, Muhammad at-Taqi, Ali al-Hadi, Hasan Al-Askari and al-Mahdi.

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid*

<sup>53</sup> *ibid*

<sup>54</sup> *ibid*

Each was persecuted by the reigning Sunni Caliph, with the exception of the twelfth, who was taken into occultation by God in 874 and has not been seen since the “Great Occultation”. He will return in due course as the Mahdi to establish justice in the world, and usher in the “final Judgement”. Shi’as are required to display allegiance to the Prophet and twelve imams, to whom God has given divine responsibility for interpreting Islamic revelation. (Vahed 2002: 9) Furthermore, this group, which is in the majority, follows the legal system of Imam Ja`far al-Sādiq, or the Ja`fari Madh-hab. Unlike the Sunnis, its interpretation of the *Qur`ān* seems to be very rational. Theologically, the Twelvers have aligned themselves with the Mu`tazili Doctrine. They put a great deal of emphasis on *ijtihād* or legal reasoning. This impacts a great deal on their understanding of Islam, which as compared to *Sunnis*, is extremely rational. The Sunni understanding of Islam is primarily textually based, with a great deal of emphasis on the *Qur`ān* and *Sunnab*.<sup>55</sup>

Even though possible Shiite influences could be traced back to the early Cape Muslims in terms of the Johannese connection (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336), established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the Apartheid era where the Iranian Revolutionary model was adopted by anti-Apartheid groups (Tayob 1995: 149), it was only formally introduced to the Cape Muslims in the beginning of the 1990s. In the first instance, the Johannese connection refers to the connection between Cape Muslims and the people of Johanna (Comoros), as mentioned in the previous chapter. According to Robert Shell, the Johannese were (Shiite) Muslims who were originally from Iran. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336) There exists the possibility that they could have influenced the Cape Muslims during this period (1770-1856), based on Shell’s account that the Johannese instructed the Cape Muslims in religious matters. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 335) Despite speculations about the possible influence of *Shi`ism* during this period, the practical devotional expressions of the early Cape Muslims revealed

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<sup>55</sup> *ibid*

very little influence. Moreover, *Shi'ism* might not have influenced practical devotional expression or the doctrine of the early Cape Muslims, but they did influence other areas, such as Islamic dress. Paintings of the early Cape Muslims reveal definite Shiite influences on Islamic dress, in particular the wearing of red turbans, which is a distinctive feature of the Shiite dress code, as opposed to white turbans associated with the *sunni* dress code. (Levtzion and Pouwels 2000: 336)

Furthermore, a strong Shiite opposition emerged during the 1980s, against those anti-Apartheid groups which had been inspired by the Iranian Revolutionary Model. (Moosa 1989) Some even adopted it for their fight against apartheid. These groups included *Qiblah*, Call of Islam and the Muslim Youth Movement (MYM). However, the MYM were a bit more cautious in their association with the Iranian Model, especially because of the Shiite stigma attached to it. The MYM also felt that its success was not a model for Muslims in South Africa. (Tayob 1995: 149) These groups were inspired by this model because of its success against Western imperialism.

The Iranian Revolution was by far the most successful resistance against Western imperialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, giving rise to the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Many believed that this was a great achievement for Islam. Thus, Muslims all over the world were attracted to it in their fight against oppression and imperialism. The success of the Iranian revolution meant for most of Muslims the triumph of Islamic ideology and its establishment in a state structure... The Iranian revolution represented a new reality to which all Muslims could relate their history, ideals and the objective of reviving the Islamic *Ummah*. That revolution meant for them that, in practice, Islam could win against imperialist powers and oppression. (Abdelnasser 1997) This did not exclude South African Muslims, especially during the Apartheid era. Nevertheless, those who adopted the Iranian Revolutionary Model were ostracized and branded as Shiites. Ebrahim Moosa refers to the embracing of the Iranian

Revolution as a ‘political conversion’ to *Shi’ism*. (Moosa 1989) This is despite the fact that they might have not formally practiced *Shi’ism*, or embraced its doctrine. The main attraction was Islamic revolution. In the greater scheme of things, it seems as if these groups were merely looking for an ideal model in their fight against Apartheid, which some of them, in particular *Qiblah*, seemed to have found in the Iranian model.

Furthermore, it was only through the establishment of the Ahlul Bait Foundation of South Africa’s (AFOSA) that the formal teachings of *Shi’ism* (in its *Ithna ‘Ashari* form)<sup>56</sup> were introduced to the Cape Muslim community in particular. According to the AFOSA website in which it describes the background of the formal introduction of *Shi’ism* to the Cape, “there were requests for a Shi’a ‘Alim to come and lay a solid foundation of Shi’aism. This request was met, and a Shi’a ‘Alim (Sayed Aftab Haider) came to settle in South Africa for this express purpose. This in itself served to bring together various scattered Shi’a groupings throughout the country under one umbrella, the Ahlul Bait Foundation of South Africa (AFOSA).”<sup>57</sup> Intent on drawing the South African Muslim community to the teachings of *Shi’ism*, the Ahlul Bait Foundation was initially established in Cape Town in 1991, and thereafter it spread to other parts of South Africa. However, the group’s headquarters remains in Cape Town.

Since the formal introduction of *Shi’ism*, the AFOSA has worked hard within the broader community to spread its teachings among the locals, through their established centers and various media forms. To date, the foundation has published various articles and distributed many books, as well as their bi-monthly bulletin, *Al-Hujjab* (The Proof)<sup>58</sup>, throughout the country. According to the AFOSA website: “One of the main functions of the office is to organise books and literature from different resources in the world and distribute them among the people across the country for the purpose of propagation and teaching. We also

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<sup>56</sup> Ahlul Bait Foundation of South Africa Website - <http://www.afosa.org>

<sup>57</sup> Ahlul Bait Foundation of South Africa Website - <http://www.afosa.org/Aboutus3.php>

<sup>58</sup> The bi-monthly magazine, *Al-Hujjab*, is no longer in circulation since 2005 (<http://www.afosa.org/Aboutus3.php>)

published small booklets and notes about Islamic ideology and opinions like a book on Imam Husayn and another book on Qur'an in Islam.”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the foundation claims to have “two Islamic Radio Stations operating in the Cape region with a huge listenership of over 500,000, on which their teachings have featured prominently on several occasions.”<sup>60</sup> No evidence of these two radio stations exists, except that they could possibly be referring to the two local Muslim radio stations, Radio 786 and Voice of the Cape, which seem to be very unlikely. Besides using print media and radio, the local Shiites have also made use of electronic media. They have an official website ([www.afosa.org](http://www.afosa.org)), with satellite television links, which is also used to propagate their teachings.

Despite the AFOSA’s efforts to propagate *Shi’ism*, it seems that they have been unsuccessful within the broader Muslim community. This is most probably due to the strong adherence of the local Muslims to traditional *Sunni* Islam, based on the *Shāfi’i Madh-hab* and the *Ash`ari Aqīdab*. This could also possibly be attributed to the strong opposition against *Shi’ism*, especially from the local *‘ulamā* bodies. This could explain AFOSA’s apparent shift in focus, from the broader Muslim community, to the Black townships specifically. At the Cape, *da`mah* activities are thus concentrated mainly in areas such Nyanga, Guguletu and Philippi, where *madrasahs* and prayer rooms were set up. In particular, they established the Al-Jihad centre in Guguletu, the Islamic Centers in Philippi (1997) and in Mbekweni, Paarl (1997), which serves as a prayer room and *madrasah* for those living in the area.<sup>61</sup> Besides these, centers were set up in townships throughout the country, including Johannesburg, Pretoria, Kroonstad, Bloemfontein, Pietersburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth.<sup>62</sup>

Since the introduction of *Shi’ism* (in its ‘political’ form) within the Cape Muslim community in the 1980s, there has always been opposition. Anti-Shiite sentiment has been

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<sup>59</sup> Ahlul Bait Foundation of South Africa Website - <http://www.afosa.org/Aboutus3.php>

<sup>60</sup> *ibid*

<sup>61</sup> *ibid*

<sup>62</sup> *ibid*

expressed within the community, especially by the *ʿulamā* fraternity. Traditional *Sunni ʿUlamā* bodies throughout the country such as the Muslim Judicial Council - MJC (Western Cape), *Jamʿiyyat al-ʿUlamā* (Gauteng and Durban) and *Majlis al-ʿUlamā* (Port Elizabeth) have come out strongly against *Shiʿism*, in the form of pamphlets, *khutbahs*, newspaper articles and radio programmes. In particular, the MJC, under the supervision of Mawlanā Taha Karaan, has published and distributed various booklets on *Shiʿism*. A live *Sunni-Shiite* debate, arranged by ITV in Gauteng, also took place in 2004 between Mawlanā Taha Karaan from the MJC and a Shiite scholar from Iran, S. Abdullah Hoseini.<sup>63</sup> In September 2005, a documentary was screened on SABC2, which aimed at giving an informative insight into the fundamental and doctrinal differences between Shiites and Sunnis, and how Islam will move forward into the future. It also featured interviews from academic scholars, Prof. Yusuf Dadoo from UNISA and Prof. Suleman Dangor from UKZN, including viewpoints from Sunni theologian Dr Yunoos Osman and a Shia Imam, S.A. Hoseini. In addition to this, the documentary exposes the fact that despite the differences between Shiites and Sunnis, they do agree on the core fundamentals - the Five Pillars - and (recognize each other as Muslims). However, there remain significant differences between the two forms of Islam. From the initial question of political leadership, some aspects of spiritual life have been affected and now differ between the two groups of Muslims.<sup>64</sup> The main aim of this screening seem to be a local response to the international news' bias coverage of Sunni and Shiite conflicts following the US invasion of Afghanistan and more recently, Iraq.

It is evident that despite many efforts, *Shiʿism* was never very successful in the broader Muslim community. However, this has not stopped its proponents from propagating their

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<sup>63</sup> Refer to the audio recording of the debate.

<sup>64</sup> Taken from a news article on VOC FM Radio entitled, *SABC2 documentary to look at Shia/Sunni issue* - <http://www.vocfm.co.za>

beliefs among the local Muslims. In this way, *Shi'ism* continues to harbour the potential to influence the Cape Muslim community which adheres to the Sunni tradition.

#### 4.8. *Ahmadi* Influences

Even though the Ahmadis consider themselves as Muslims, they are considered by the majority of Muslims, to be out of the fold of Islam. This is mainly because of their belief that their leader, Mirza Goolam Ahmad, the founder of the movement, was a prophet. This is against the beliefs of traditional *sunni* Islam, which considers the Prophet Muhammad as the final prophet and the seal of all prophets (*ḵbātām al-nabiyyīn*). Moreover, they are also characterized by their interpretation of *jihād* ("holy war"), which they consider as a campaign by peaceful, rather than military, methods and their belief about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Ahmadis maintain that Jesus did not die on the cross but was taken down while unconscious and resuscitated... The Ahmadiyya split into two factions over the understanding of the status of their leader, Mirza Goolam Ahmad: the Qadianis, who accepted him as a prophet and followed his teachings, and the Lahoris, who accepted him only as a reformer, not as a prophet.<sup>65</sup>

The Ahmadi influence on Cape Muslim identity goes back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, following a visit from a famous Ahmadi scholar. This referring to Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, accompanied by Lord Headley, who visited South Africa at the invitation of some businessmen from Durban, Natal, in 1926. The seeds of Ahmadism could already have been planted during this period.<sup>66</sup> The movement only officially started its missionary activities in South Africa in its orthodox Qadiani form, during the 1940s. (Mahida 1993: 124) Furthermore, the movement was formally established in South Africa by Mr. Dawood Sydow. The organization was first known as The Mediator Islamic Association and was affiliated to the Central Anjuman in Lahore. However, at the beginning of the 1980s, following the advice

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<sup>65</sup> "Heretic Groups", Darul Islam Website, [http://www.darulislam.co.za/pdf/heretic\\_groups.pdf](http://www.darulislam.co.za/pdf/heretic_groups.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement in South Africa* - <http://www.muslim.org/photos/sa.htm>

of a visiting Ahmadi scholar, Maulana Jaggoe from Holland, the movement changed its name to the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam (Lahore) South Africa. Maulana Jaggoe also encouraged the movement to establish its own center. On his departure, the movement immediately set in motion plans for raising funds for a centre, which was opposed by the local Muslim community. Due to opposition from the local Muslim community who considered them as non-Muslim, they were unable to raise funds for their institute and other intended projects.<sup>67</sup>

Furthermore, a regular monthly magazine was published and Mr. Sydow kept the flag of Ahmadiyyat flying high with inspiring lectures, extensive debates with missionaries, maulvis, scholars of religion and just about all seekers of the truth from all walks of life. He also wrote some booklets in defense of the truth, several pamphlets and articles for *The Light* and spent a number of years in Lahore during the sixties.<sup>68</sup> Through the years, the movement has printed various booklets, articles and newsletters to promote its teachings. Despite the efforts to promote Ahmadiism in South Africa, only a handful of the local Muslims were attracted to their teachings. Even during the 1980s, during which time they had become very famous; to say that their membership was 100 would have been an exaggeration. They were but a small inexperienced group who feared for their safety.<sup>69</sup> Following in the footsteps of other Muslim countries, Muslim organisations in South Africa such as the Institute of Islamic Shari'ah Studies, Muslim Judicial Council, Muslim Assembly, Qibla and several others declared them to be non-Muslims, and out of the fold of Islam. The feud between the Ahmadis/Qadianis and the local Muslims had begun as early as 1965. (Mahida 1993: 124)

The movement especially became famous during the 1980s during the landmark trial between them and members of the local *ʿulamā*. In September 1982, the Ahmadis issued

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid*

<sup>68</sup> *ibid*

<sup>69</sup> *ibid*

summons against the Muslim Judicial Council and four other Muslim parties as a first step in their continued battle for recognition as Muslims. During the civil trial in the Cape Supreme Court, attended by more than 400 Muslims from all over South Africa and nine overseas Muslim observers, including a judge and an advocate of the Pakistan Supreme Court, the Judge refused the Ahmadis' application saying that she did not intend giving judgement on theological disputes. (Mahida 1993: 124) The Ahmadis pursued the matter further and were eventually granted a hearing. After the hearing, the Judge dismissed the Muslims' case, ordering them to pay the costs, including that of the two counsels... The Muslim Judicial Council was shocked when it received a legal bill of Rand 470 000 after the trial at the Supreme Court in which judgement was given in favour of the Ahmadis... The MJC which had initially defended the action, withdrew from the trial before the judgement was handed down, saying that the Court had no right to rule upon a Muslim religious issue. The Jamiatul 'Ulama' of Natal and the Transvaal together with funds from the South African Muslim community as well as Muslim States paid the bill in full. (Mahida 1993: 124) All of this was due to the fact that the Ahmadis were declared by the majority of the local Muslims as being out of the fold of Islam. Local Muslims took a firm stand against them, proclaiming them as non-Muslims, denying them the religious rights and refusing them to bury their dead in traditional Muslim Cemeteries. In addition to this, they were not allowed access to local mosques and they not allowed to get married to traditional *sunni* Muslims. (Mahida 1993: 124) The local '*ulamā*' in particular came out strong against them, speaking out against them from mosque platforms and distributing pamphlets throughout the province. This was strongly felt by the members of the movement. In a speech prepared for an Ahmadiyyah Convention in North American, Columbus, Ohio, August 1995, Ibrahim Muhammed, an Ahmadi from Cape Town recalls the attitude of the '*ulamā*' towards his movement, "When this news of our intentions reached the Maulvis, they became so incensed that they started on a full scale, what

they called, 'jihad' against our Jamaat. Every mosque under their control was given instructions to preach against Ahmadis. Many pamphlets depicting Hazrat Mirza Sahib in the most vile way were widely distributed throughout the Province. Those politically motivated amongst them made such baseless allegations that we were abetting the apartheid regime in order to incite the public against us. A committee of ten was appointed by them to conduct a witch hunt and hound out Ahmadis.”<sup>70</sup>

Despite the outcome of the trial, the Ahmadis still remain outcasts within the local community. They are still considered by the majority of the local Muslims as being out of the fold of Islam. This applies even to those who forge relations with them and sympathizes with them. In general they have had very little influence on the majority of the local Muslims. This is probably due to the way they have been dealt with from all segments of the local Muslim community. Local Muslims have therefore become very careful and mindful of the consequences of forging ties with them.

#### 4.8. Conclusion

It is quite clear from the above discussion that global groups/movements have tried to influence Cape Muslim identity, all competing for a ‘spiritual space’<sup>71</sup> and trying to either reform, or win the favour of the local Muslims. We could sum up the impact of the various groups as follows:

- (1) some were easily accepted by the local community, e.g. the *Sufis* and the *Brehis*
- (2) some were seen as an opposition and a threat, e.g. the *Tablighi/Deobandis*, and the *Wahhabi/Salafis*
- (3) some were ostracized and were treated as outcasts, e.g. the *Shiites* and the *Ahmadis* (the Shiites to a lesser degree).

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<sup>70</sup> *ibid*

<sup>71</sup> Haron, M., *The Dawah Movements and Sufi Tariqat: Competing for spiritual spaces in contemporary South(ern) Africa*.  
[www.uga.edu/islam/dawah\\_tariqat\\_sa](http://www.uga.edu/islam/dawah_tariqat_sa)

The responses of Cape Muslims could in a sense be attributed to common religious practices between the local Muslims and the various “global” groups. In other words, they easily accepted those groups who shared common religious traditions and practices, and rejected anything foreign.

## **Conclusion**

### **Discussion**

A study of Cape Muslim history and identity is very interesting in that it has a very rich legacy that goes back to the pioneers who established Islam in South Africa in general and at the Cape specifically, which can even be further traced to the Muslim heartlands via Southeast Asia (Malaysia and Indonesia) and East Africa respectively.

In this particular study we have seen what constitutes Cape Muslim identity, where it comes from and what challenges it faces. It has been clear throughout that the Cape Muslims are a unique group of people with distinguished traditions and practices. These traditions and practices, as outlined in this study, are firmly rooted and form a significant part of a local expression of Islam, which has since been indigenised to form what we refer to as Cape Muslim identity, or “Cape Islam”. Furthermore, the adherence to these specific traditions and practices has enabled local Muslims to counter the challenges and outside influences that face them, especially in the wake of contemporary local and global developments.

It is clear from our discussion above that Cape Muslim identity, or Cape Islam has been deeply rooted in the Islam established by the pioneers of the Cape such as Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru. It is an Islam that can be traced back to its original birthplace via Southeast Asia and East Africa respectively.

Finally, it is evident that the diverse theological and ideological groups that have attempted to influence Cape Muslims have not had a significant impact on the practices of Islam at the Cape, contrary to what might have been expected following Berger’s theory that identities are in a continuous state of flux. While Cape Muslims wrestled with their political or national identity (with some eager to identify themselves with Indonesia/Malaysia, especially after 1994), their aggregate cultural, religio-spiritual, theological, and legal identity appears to have remained intact – contrary to

the hypothesis that they would “submit” to the ideological orientations of the many and varied groupings at the Cape.

### **Recommendations**

This study must be viewed as a preliminary attempt to trace the origins of Cape Muslim rites and traditions to their very source. Further, more in-depth research is required to either corroborate or contradict the findings of this research which to some extent challenges the prevailing notion of “Cape Islam” being influenced exclusively or primarily by Malay/Indonesian Islam. There has been a tendency to ignore the influence of East African Islam at the Cape. While this study has made reference to it, there is a need for more extensive research into what I believe to be a very important area of study.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>abangan/kejawen</i>	Malay/Javanese	syncretistic communities in Java
<i>`ādah</i>	Arabic	Custom
<i>adhān</i>	Arabic	call to prayer
<i>`Adnānī</i>	Arabic	a descendant of the Northern Arabs
<i>Ahl al-Sunnah</i>	Arabic	People of the <i>Sunnah</i>
<i>Ahmadi</i>	Arabic	a follower of Mirza Goolam Ahmad, the founder of the <i>Ahmadi</i> Movement
<i>`aqd nikāh</i>	Arabic	marriage contract
<i>`amal</i>	Arabic	work
<i>`aqīdah</i>	Arabic	doctrine/ideology/belief
<i>`aqīqah</i>	Arabic	name giving ceremony
<i>Ardānī</i>	Arabic	someone who is from ancient Arab descent
<i>arwāh</i> (sing. <i>rūh</i> )	Arabic	lit. souls, it is another name for <i>hājah</i> (see the meaning of the word <i>hājah</i> below)
<i>Ash`ari</i>	Arabic	A follower of Abu al-Hasan Al-Ash`ari, the founder of the <i>Ash`ari</i> doctrinal tradition

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>asbraqal</i>	Arabic	customary practice of standing at the end of the <i>hājab</i> , and reciting the <i>salawāt</i> (salutations) and <i>salām</i> (peace) on the Prophet, also referred to as the <i>qiyām</i> or <i>salāmi</i>
<i>al-`awāmm</i>	Arabic	The general public
<i>awliyā'</i>	Arabic	saints, also locally referred to as <i>karāmats</i>
<i>anwal Mubarram</i>	Arabic	The first of Muharram
<i>bay`ab</i>	Arabic	a pledge of allegiance (to a particular <i>shaykh</i> or group)
<i>Bā`Alawi</i>	Arabic	lit. the children/descendants of `Alawi, also refers to one of the <i>Sūfi</i> orders
<i>berih desa</i>	Malay/Javanese	literally means 'cleansing of the village' from evil spirits
<i>berkat</i>	Malay/Javanese	food taken home is referred to as
<i>bercukur rambut</i>	Malay/Javanese	haircutting
<i>bersunat</i>	Malay/Javanese	circumcision
<i>beseke</i>	Malay/Javanese	plaited bamboo
<i>bid`ab</i>	Arabic	innovation (in doctrine)
<i>bilals-werk</i>	Cape Malay	prayer announcer's portfolio
<i>Brelvi</i>	Arabic/Indian	A follower of Ahmed Rida Khan of Bareilly, India, or an association with <i>Brelvi</i> movement

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>al-Bukhārī</i>	Arabic	someone who is from a place called Bukharah – also refers to the famous <i>hadīth</i> scholar
<i>dār al-‘ulūm</i>	Arabic	lit. the house of sciences, it refers to a religious seminary
<i>da`wah</i>	Arabic	propagation/invitation
<i>Deobandi</i>	Arabic/Indian	a follower of or an association with <i>Dār al-‘Ulūm</i> Deoband or the <i>Deobandi</i> Movement
<i>dhikr</i>	Arabic	remembrance (of Allah) / spiritual hymn
<i>doepmaal</i>	Afrikaans	lit. baptism, refers to a name giving ceremony
<i>donga</i>	Malay/Javanese	prayer
<i>du`ā'</i>	Arabic	prayer
<i>fajr</i>	Arabic	morning prayer
<i>fasād</i>	Arabic	mischief
<i>al-fātībah</i>	Arabic	The opening chapter
<i>fatwā</i>	Arabic	legal ruling
<i>fītnah</i>	Arabic	disintegration
<i>gadat</i>	Cape Malay	a specific religious ceremony at the Cape which is a compilation of specific <i>adhkār</i> taken from an Arabic text called the <i>Rātib al-Haddād</i> , belonging to the <i>Bā`Alanvis</i>

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>Hadramis</i>	Arabic	those who come from Hadramawt in Yemen
<i>hadīth</i>	Arabic	Prophetic tradition
<i>hājab</i>	Arabic	lit. need, at the Cape it is refers to a specific religious ceremony in which specific chapters of the holy <i>Qur'ān</i> is recited, praises of Allah and His Messenger are chanted, the <i>Rivāyāt</i> of <i>al-Barzanji</i> and the <i>ashbraqal</i> are recited and the ceremony concluded with a supplication for mercy and forgiveness ( <i>du`ā' khatm al-qur'ān</i> )
<i>hajj</i>	Arabic	Pilgrimage
<i>Hanafī</i>	Arabic	A follower of Abū Hanīfah, the founder of the <i>Hanafī madh-bab</i>
<i>`id</i>	Arabic	celebration/festival
<i>`id al-adhā</i>	Arabic	festival of sacrifice
<i>`id al-fitr</i>	Arabic	festival of ending the fast
<i>ijāb</i>	Arabic	offer
<i>ijtimā`</i>	Arabic	meeting/gathering
<i>imām</i>	Arabic	religious leader
<i>`ishā</i>	Arabic	evening prayer
<i>islāb</i>	Arabic	reformation

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>jadd</i>	Arabic	lit. ascendant/grandfather, in the context of the <i>Ratiep</i> it refers to a spiritual ancestral connection with a specific <i>wali</i> (saint)
<i>jamā`at</i>	Arabic	a group
<i>Jāwah</i>	Arabic	the Southeast Asians/Javanese
<i>jawab/jawāb</i>	Cape Malay/Arabic	response
<i>jihād</i>	Arabic	striving/war in defence of Islam or Muslims
<i>jumu`ab</i>	Arabic	Friday congregational prayer/Friday
<i>kenduren</i>	Malay/Javanese	a ritual meal
<i>'kers-opsteek'</i>	Afrikaans	to light candles
<i>khalīfah</i>	Arabic	representative, successor
<i>khātam al-nabiyyīn</i>	Arabic	seal of all prophets
<i>khātm al-qur`ān</i>	Arabic	completion of the <i>Qur`ān</i>
<i>koemis mawlūd</i>	Cape Malay	the first <i>mawlūd</i> held on the 12 <sup>th</sup> of Rabī` al-Awwal
<i>kompang</i>	Malay/Javanese	a single headed hand-beaten drum
<i>laylat al-barā`ah</i>	Arabic	the night of immunity
<i>laylat al-mi`rāj</i>	Arabic	the night of the Prophet's Ascension
<i>laylat al-qadr</i>	Arabic	the night of power
<i>madh-hab</i>	Arabic	legal school/tradition
<i>madrasah</i>	Arabic	Islamic religious school
<i>Mahdī</i>	Arabic	divine guide

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>mabr</i>	Arabic	dowry
<i>malamberinai</i>	Malay/Javanese	wedding ceremony
<i>markaz</i>	Arabic	centre/headquarters
<i>Māturidī</i>	Arabic	a follower of Abu Mansur al-Maturidī, founder of the <i>Māturidī</i> doctrinal tradition
<i>mawlid</i>	Arabic	lit. birthday/the specific text used for the narration of the events of the Prophet's birth
<i>mawliūd</i>	Arabic	lit. newborn, but locally it refers to the occasion of celebrating the Prophet's birth
<i>menyan / dupa</i>	Malay/Javanese	Javanese incense
<i>merang</i>	Cape Malay	it is another local name for <i>hājah</i> (see the meaning of the word <i>hājah</i> above)
<i>meyang or lubān</i>	Cape Malay	Incense
<i>modin (Javanese/Malay)</i>	Malay/Javanese	an official religious specialist
<i>Mu`taẓilab</i>	Arabic	followers of the <i>Mu`taẓili</i> doctrine
<i>munāyāt / munājāt</i>	Cape Malay/Arabic	secret conversations
<i>murid</i>	Arabic	a <i>sūfi</i> term meaning a follower/disciple of a particular <i>shaykh</i> or <i>sūfi</i> order
<i>Muwahhidīm</i>	Arabic	unitarians, refers to a puritan movement which emerged in Morocco and assumed power from 1130-1269

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>niyyah</i>	Arabic	intention
<i>qabūl</i>	Arabic	acceptance
<i>qādi</i>	Arabic	a judge
<i>Qasīdah al-Burdah</i>	Arabic	the “poem of the scarf” written by al-Busīri
<i>qawm</i>	Arabic	nation/civilization
<i>Quraysh</i>	Arabic	one of the tribes of Arabia
<i>Rabi` al-Awwal</i>	Arabic	the third month of the <i>Hijri</i> calendar
<i>rampie-sny</i>	Cape Malay	refers to the Orange-leaf Festival which is the cutting of orange leaves by the female participants of the <i>mawlid</i> , accompanied by the recitation of the <i>salawat</i>
<i>rātib al-`attās</i>	Arabic	A religious ceremony at the Cape which involves reciting a compilation of specific <i>adhkār</i> belonging to the <i>Bā` Alawis</i>
<i>ratiep</i>	Cape Malay	a ceremony which involves the use of swords to demonstrate the superiority of faith over matter
<i>riwāyat</i>	Arabic	narrations
<i>rukun</i>	Malay/Javanese	harmony
<i>sadaqah</i>	Arabic	charitable act
<i>Salafi</i>	Arabic	a follower of the <i>Ahl al-Salaf</i> , pious predecessors / a puritan Muslim

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>salamāt</i>	Arabic	salutations (on the Prophet)
<i>santri</i>	Malay/Javanese	upright Muslim communities in Java
<i>sayyid</i>	Arabic	lit. master/mister, also refers to a member of the Prophet's household
<i>Shādhili</i>	Arabic	a follower of Abū al-Hasan al-Shādhili, or an association with the <i>Shādhili ṣūfi</i> order
<i>Shāfi'i</i>	Arabic	a follower of al-Shāfi'ī, or an association with the <i>Shāfi'i madh-hab</i>
<i>shāhidayn</i>	Arabic	two witnesses
<i>Shari`ah</i>	Arabic	Islamic Law
<i>Shi'i</i>	Arabic	A follower of Shiite Islam
<i>sila (Javanese/Malay)</i>	Malay/Javanese	mats
<i>silsilah</i>	Arabic	used in Sufism to refer to spiritual ties
<i>slametan</i>	Malay/Javanese	refers to a Javanese Muslim ritual conducted to gain the pleasure of God
<i>ṣūfi</i>	Arabic	a follower of <i>Tasawwuf</i> , or Sufism
<i>sunnaḥ</i>	Arabic	a tradition of the Prophet
<i>sūrah</i>	Arabic	chapter
<i>sūrat</i>	Arabic/Cape Malay	A book
<i>tablighi</i>	Arabic	a follower of or association with the <i>Tabligh</i> Movement
<i>taboestes/ dabbūs</i>	Cape Malay/Arabic	an iron awl/sharp instrument used in the <i>ratiep</i> ceremony

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>tablīl</i>	Arabic	To proclaim ' <i>lā ilāha illa Allāh</i> ' – there is no god but Allah
<i>takbīr</i>	Arabic	proclamations of the greatness of God – to say <i>Allāhu Akbar</i>
<i>taleem/ ta`līm</i>	Arabic	teaching/instruction/learning
<i>tammat</i>	Arabic/Cape Malay	lit. a verb meaning to complete; locally it refers to a ceremony on the completion of the <i>Qur`ān</i>
<i>taqwā</i>	Arabic	piety/god-fearing
<i>tarāwīḥ</i>	Arabic	special night prayers during the month of Ramadan
<i>tarḥīm</i>	Arabic	to proclaim the mercy of God
<i>tarīqab</i>	Arabic	lit. a path, refers to a spiritual path or a spiritual order or brotherhood
<i>tasawwuf</i>	Arabic	Islamic spirituality
<i>tashabbuh</i>	Arabic	subservient imitation of others
<i>tawḥīd</i>	Arabic	to proclaim the Oneness of God
<i>thawb</i>	Arabic	a cloak
<i>tokang</i>	Cape Malay	a lead-in (during the <i>mawḥūd</i> ) recitals
<i>TokKadi</i>	Malay/Javanese	religious officer
<i>ujub (Javanese/Malay)</i>	Malay/Javanese	<i>statement of intent</i>

<b>Word</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<i>`ulamā</i>	Arabic	religious scholars
<i>'ummah</i>	Arabic	Nation
<i>`urf</i>	Arabic	Custom
<i>roor-werk</i>	Afrikaans	an introduction to the <i>actual dhiker</i>
<i>Wahhābi</i>	Arabic	a follower of Muhammad bin `Abdul-Wahhāb, or an association with the <i>Wahhābi movement</i>
<i>wali</i>	Arabic	male representative of the Bride – father, brother or uncle etc.
<i>werk</i>	<i>Afrikaans</i>	work
<i>zāwiyah</i>	Arabic	lit. corner, a special place where <i>sūfi dhikers</i> are held
<i>zūbr (Prayer)</i>	Arabic	midday prayer

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