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Dinath, Yasmeen. Patel, Yusuf. Seedat, Rashid.

2014
Wits University Press
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/38441
Dinath, Y., Patel, Y. and Seedat, R. 2014. Footprints of Islam in Johannesburg, in Harrison, P., Gotz, G. Todes, A. and Wray, C. (Eds.). Changing Space, Changing City. Wits University Press.

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Chapter Title: Footprints of Islam in Johannesburg

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Book Title: Changing Space, Changing City

Book Subtitle: Johannesburg after apartheid - Open Access selection

Book Editor(s): PHILIP HARRISON, GRAEME GOTZ, ALISON TODES and CHRIS WRAY

Published by: Wits University Press

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.18772/22014107656.27

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23 Footprints of Islam in Johannesburg

YASMEEN DINATH, YUSUF PATEL AND RASHID SEEDAT

Religious identities are profoundly influencing place-making and socio-spatial organisation of twenty-first-century cities around the world and they are in turn being hybridised by their contact with the urban environments in which they locate. Islam in particular has become the focus of much global geopolitical debate and research in the post-9/11 world. Its spatial footprint across the continents has become a visible public part of major cities and towns. Islam in Western Europe and North America has over the past two decades come to occupy an increasingly public presence in the city. Muslim communities, long hidden from view by virtue of their small numbers, are emerging more visibly in the spatial fabric of these cities.

While there seems to be a significant body of academic literature discussing place-making and built environments in cities of the Muslim world, there are fewer texts that explore the urban environment dynamics of the Muslim diaspora. To date, there has been a dearth of academic work published on Islam's spatial footprint in South African cities, including Johannesburg. Tayob (1995) discusses the development of Islam in South Africa and shows how its resurgence plays out in different parts of the country. His treatment of the spatial dynamics is only tangential to his overall argument. In a different vein, Jeppie (2001) is mainly concerned with the Cape Muslim identity, with a mono-focus on the Western Cape. Paulsen's (2003) principal area of enquiry is on the syncretic beliefs and practices of Malays[1] in Gauteng. While it has a strong spatial emphasis, it examines only Muslims who live in coloured group areas such as Westbury, Bosmont, Eldorado Park and Ennerdale. Sadouni (2012) examines the presence of the Somali community in Mayfair, Johannesburg. Although her work (see Chapter 24) has a strong socio-spatial emphasis,

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it focuses on a new and still small component of the wider Muslim community in the city. In a similar vein, Fakude (2002) traces the development of Islam in the townships, focusing briefly on Soweto. He is concerned with developing a socio-political critique of relations between Muslims in the townships and the 'established' Muslim communities – mainly those of Indian or Malay origin. It is clear that the subject is under-researched and this contribution to the literature of urban spatial planning aims to at least add one fresh perspective and stimulate additional scholarship.

In this chapter we aim to unveil the spatial footprint of Islam in Johannesburg, tracing how it originated and how it has evolved and transformed. In discussing how the spaces of Islam are produced and imprinted onto the spatial landscape, we reveal how Islam in Johannesburg has in turn been shaped and influenced by the social, economic and spatial politics of the city. Our research has drawn on a review of academic literature on Islam and the development of Islam in South Africa. This has been supplemented by the three authors' collective experiential knowledge of Muslim communities in Johannesburg, as well as their training and experience as spatial planners in the city.

We explore three overarching and interconnected themes so as to illuminate the socio-spatial presence of Muslims in Johannesburg. The first theme is the emergence of a heterogeneous Muslim community in Johannesburg and its impact on space in the city. There is no doubt that Muslims across the world are bound by a common faith and share the fundamental tenets and day-to-day practices of their religion – expressed in the notion of the *ummah*, or the global congregation of Muslims. However, Muslim identity across the world is differentiated across national, linguistic, racial and ethnic lines. Similarly, the Muslim community of Johannesburg is differentiated along these and other lines. These heterogeneous and multiple identities are expressed in the spaces of Islam in the city.

The second theme focuses on the impact of Islam and the Muslim community on the spatial fabric of Johannesburg. From the time of their arrival in the city, and in spite of their relatively small numbers, Muslims have enjoyed a significant presence due to their prominence in resistance politics, professions such as law and medicine, commercial activity and their distinctive dress and places of worship. They have been able to assert a *publicness* of Islam and have sustained spatial growth and prominence of Islamic spaces across Johannesburg over a century and a quarter.

The third theme concerns the reproduction of Islamic social relations in the city, which has ensured, and will ensure, the continued existence of a distinctive community. This includes spaces for culture, entertainment and prayer as well as educational and welfare institutions. We conclude with a view on the future of the Muslim community in Johannesburg.

Emergence of a heterogeneous Muslim community in Johannesburg

The variety of Islamic schools of jurisprudence and outlook, embedded as they are in the historical development of Islam, race and ethnicity – given Islam's particular development in South Africa – and the impact of social class relations, have led to a heterogeneous

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community of Muslims in Johannesburg. Consequently, Islamic outlook and practice differ significantly between different social groups and this has differential impacts on the use of space in the city. Gender politics, briefly explored here, add a further dynamic to the heterogeneity in the Muslim community of Johannesburg. This heterogeneity is obviously not unique to Johannesburg. It is rooted in the global history of Islam and the way Muslims from different parts of the world with their various backgrounds came to locate in the city. A brief look at this history provides a vital context to understanding the socio-spatial make-up of Islam in Johannesburg.

Islam, established in the seventh century, has spread globally both as a religion and as a civilisation, taking root and enmeshing itself often seamlessly in different cultures and societies. Today Islam is regarded as one of the fastest-growing religions with over one billion Muslims worldwide (Al-Sheha, 2011). This is expected to grow to 2.2 billion by 2030, making Muslims more than 25 per cent of the world's population (Grim and Karim 2011).

The guiding values and laws of Islam are codified in the Holy Quran, supplemented by the lifestyle and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH),[2] known as the *sunnah*. The five pillars of Islam constitute the basic framework for Muslims (Al-Sheha 2011). The first pillar is the testimony of faith (*shahaadath*), whereby Muslims declare that there is none worthy of worship but Allah (God) and Muhammad is his messenger. The second pillar is *salaah* (prayer). *Zakaah*, or obligatory charity, is the third pillar. The fourth is fasting in the month of Ramadaan. The fifth pillar is the hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

While the five pillars of Islam are a strong and common uniting framework for Muslims, the political history of Islam after the death of Prophet Muhammad has resulted in a variety of alternative practices and interpretations. The Prophet did not ordain anyone to lead after him but encouraged *shura* (consultation) in deciding on matters of leadership. The first four caliphs chosen to lead were Abubakr, Omar, Uthman and Ali.[3] Those who regarded Ali (the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law) to be the immediate successor of the Prophet because he came from within the household of the Prophet later became known as Shia Muslims. Sunni Muslims, on the other hand, accept Abubakr as the first caliph on the understanding that, although Ali was highly regarded by the Prophet for his leadership qualities, he was very young (Armstrong 2000). Shia Muslims also believe (although to differing extents among different Shia groups) in several ordained imams emanating from the lineage of Ali, including The Twelfth Imam (The Hidden Imam) who will return to guide Muslims. The Sunni-Shia divide is one of the main schisms in Islamic identity.

Over time, *madhhabs* or 'schools of thought' emerged from the work of Muslim scholars and jurists. The main *madhhabs* within the Sunni stream are Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali. The main *madhhab* in the Shia stream is the Jafari school, derived from the work of Imam Jafar-as-Saddiq (Armstrong 2000). More esoteric forms of Islam also took root to counter the jurisprudential approach. Sufis, for instance, developed a concern with the inner self, aiming to reach higher levels of spirituality and a state of being that enables divine revelation.[4] The period 1500–1700 represents Imperial Islam, when absolute monarchies

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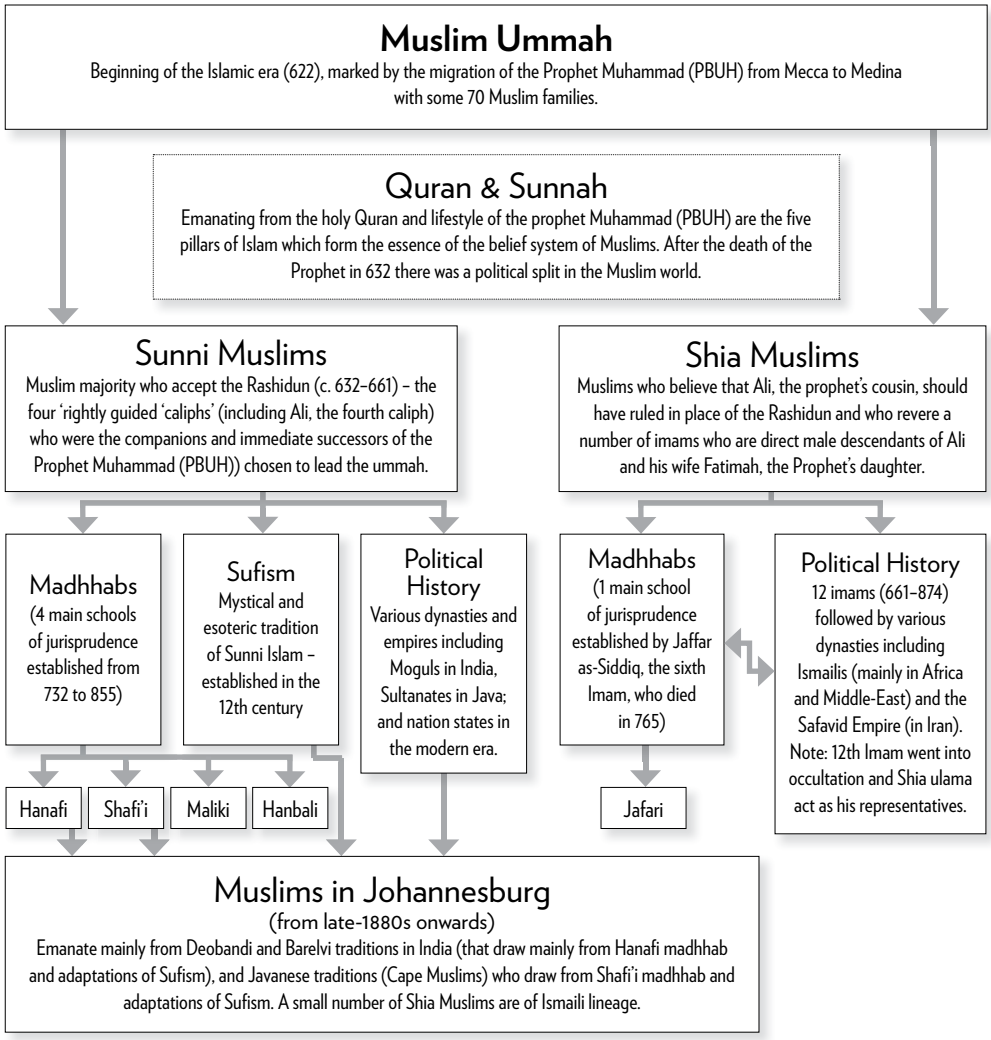


FIGURE 23.1: The origins of various schools of Islamic jurisprudence and thought that influence the practice of Islam in Johannesburg

were established as military states – the three major Islamic empires at this time were the Ottoman Empire led from Turkey, the Safavid Empire in Iran and the Mughal Empire in India (Armstrong 2000). These three empires, together with the Javanese (Indonesian) Islamic sultanates,[5] constituted the culmination of Islamic civilisation that came to 'rule the world'. They represent the height of Islamic culture, pride and global influence. The rise of the West eventually translated into colonial rule over India and Indonesia by the British and the Dutch.

Much of what shapes Islamic religious views in South Africa today derives from this history, given the strong influence of the Indian and Malay communities in the country. The origins of the various schools of thought and religious beliefs, as well as the socio-political

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histories that influence the practice of Islam in Johannesburg today, are summed up in Figure 23.1.

Islamic schools of thought in Johannesburg

Most of the Muslims in the Western Cape are descended from Malaysian, Javanese and Bengalese slaves who were brought to the Cape Colony from the Indonesian/Malaysian archipelago and the Indian coastal regions by the Dutch in the mid seventeenth century. A small number were political exiles, and some of these were learned Imams who made a major impact on the spread of Islam in the Cape in the early years of colonisation (Tayob 1995).[6]

Malay Muslims, the majority of whom are Sunni and followers of the Shafi'i *madhhab*, draw from a mystical tradition that was influenced by Sufism and pre-Islamic Javan traditions, as well as from the strong sense of justice that led Javan Muslims to fight colonialism. Muslims of Indian origin in South Africa are also Sunni, but mainly follow the Hanafi *madhhab*. They are further characterised into two prominent movements, namely Deobandi and Barelvi, which to differing extents draw on forms of Sufism that evolved in India, which has its own rich spiritual traditions rooted in Buddhism and Hinduism. The Deobandis in South Africa tend to be mainly from Gujarati-speaking communities and the Barelvi from Urdu-speaking communities. Thus the Malays, the Deobandis and the Barelvi represent in a simple way the ethnic differences and diversity among South African Muslims (Dockrat 2005).

The Deobandi movement began in the 1860s in a *darul-uloom* (Islamic seminary) north of Delhi, and came to represent an inward approach focusing on reconnecting with the roots of Islam and practising their religion in a 'pure' form – close to the way it was done in early times. In a similar vein, the Barelvis reconnect with earlier Islamic times but revere *pirs* (spiritual guides) and observe certain celebrations, ceremonies and festivities.[7]

The Tablighi Jamaat then emerged, with the Deobandi school as its frame of reference. The Tablighi Jamaat is well established in South Africa, and serves as an instrument for the propagation of Islam (*da'wah*), with a specific methodology including door-to-door visits inviting people to 'pure Islam'.

Another important response to colonial rule and growing westernisation in India came from the Jamaat-e-Islami led by Abul A'la Maududi, who took a more outward approach premised on striving for justice and regaining political power by establishing an Islamic state (Zainuddin 2000). Muslim organisations in South Africa such as the Muslim Youth Movement, the Call of Islam and Qibla arguably drew largely, although not solely, from the Maududi tradition. These organisations played an active role in the anti-apartheid struggle and served as a critical and alternative voice keeping the Muslim community focused on the plight of the oppressed and the fight for justice in South Africa. The Call of Islam and Qibla actively aligned themselves, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, with mainstream liberation organisations such as the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress. With a strong presence in Cape Town, they drew on the rich tradition of struggle of the early

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Muslims who fought colonial rule from the time they were brought there as slaves and prisoners in the eighteenth century.

In contemporary Johannesburg the dominant religious outlook is Deobandi. Most of the mosques and madrassas[8] in the city are run by the Jamiatul-Ulama, which is the leading theological body for Muslims in the city. It bases its teachings and practice on the Deobandi movement. Even the religious outlook of the Malay community in Johannesburg is being influenced by this perspective (Paulsen 2003). Although Islam is growing rapidly among the African community, with a growth of over 50 per cent between 1991 and 2001 (Jeppie and Vahed 2005), it is still relatively small and diverse with varying relations to the Indian Muslim community (Fakude 2002).

Race, class and gender

Apart from the separate *madhhabs* of Muslims from Indian or Malay descent, race was another key marker of difference. While the Malays in the Cape have retained their faith for over 200 years, they also shared many physical, cultural and linguistic characteristics with the nascent coloured population, who were mostly Christian. Cape Muslim identity thus became closely tied to the emergent coloured identity. Adhikari (1993) argues that by the mid nineteenth century the Cape Colony's black population had several social identities, such as Malays, Hottentots, Griquas and others. These groups grew and developed together, developing an additional shared identity through their common socio-economic status. This was fuelled by increasing social interaction after their emancipation from slavery.

Although they were not a homogeneous group, Muslims of Indian descent spoke Indian languages, dressed in distinctive Indian Muslim dress and maintained close links with their native country.[9] In the early years, due to their tenuous status, they considered themselves citizens of India who sought to improve their livelihoods in South Africa. It was only in 1961 that the authorities finally agreed to grant Indians South African citizenship. In contrast, the citizenship of Cape Muslims was unambiguous. 'Difference was expressed through a language of ethnicity; the Malay Muslim was different to the Indian or Asiatic Muslim. Threats of "Asiatic repatriation" and other hardships placed on them by the government made "Malay" a preferable term of identification' (Jeppie 2001: 84).

There were also occupational differences between the Indian and Cape Muslims who moved up to Johannesburg. The latter tended to work as unskilled labourers or artisans – a tradition they brought with them from the Western Cape. Many Indian Muslims started off as traders (door-to-door hawkers) or worked as assistants in Indian-owned businesses, later graduating to owning their own small shops. While the really successful *vehparis* (business people) became wholesalers, the vast majority of enterprises remained survivalist. In later years, this translated into discernible class differences between the communities. This class cleavage deepened between Indian and Malay Muslims over the course of the twentieth century, and had a profound impact on the ability of the respective communities to establish and maintain an Islamic infrastructure in the city.

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While the majority of Muslims in Johannesburg identify themselves as Indian or Malay, there have always been a minority of African Muslims who originally hailed from Mozambique and Malawi. In many cases, they lived, worked and worshipped alongside their co-religionists. The muezzins (those appointed to make the call to prayer and often to take care of the mosques) in most of Johannesburg were, and remain, African Muslims. In line with the belief that all Muslims are equal except for their righteous character, the dominant Indian and Malay Muslims had no problems with African Muslims performing the esteemed role of call to prayer or praying with them. African Muslims, however, still faced social discrimination, which followed broader patterns of relations between different race groups in the South African context. In time, sizeable Muslim communities emerged within African townships such as Soweto.

Gender is a key marker of heterogeneity in Islam in Johannesburg. In the early days of Muslim settlement in Johannesburg, most women assumed the less publicly visible and more traditional roles of childminding, cooking and housekeeping. With the influence of modernity and secular resistance to apartheid, a small number of Muslim women activists rose to prominence during the 1940s and 1950s.[10]

During the early 1970s, housewives in the newly created group area of Lenasia gathered in homes within walking distance of each other to hold religious talks and learning sessions where the Quran and other instructive texts were read and discussed. These were informally known as *tabligh* groups.[11] They served an important social purpose as they provided a religiously sanctioned form of interaction with strangers in these new neighbourhoods. These groups also furthered the teachings of the Deobandi outlook of Islam. It was from this pool of women that faith-based organisations began to recruit women into madrassas and administrative support positions. This initiative, pioneered by the Central Islamic Trust, created an important source of paid work for many Muslim women who would otherwise have battled to find employment due to the social and political barriers imposed on them. Women's *tabligh* gatherings in residential areas are still active. Zahraa McDonald (2005), in her research on the Tablighi Jamaat, found that these gatherings by women still occur in Lenasia, Brixton, Crosby and Mondeor.

Another significant aspect of Muslim women's participation in the public life of Johannesburg is the great debate that has grown around the matter of whether or not it is advisable to have women attending mosques and public places of worship and to perform the five daily prayers as an integral part of the congregation. This has been a point of vehement contestation among followers of the different Islamic traditions in Johannesburg.

The historic dominance of the Deobandi tradition across the former Transvaal has meant that the majority of the city's mosques are not open to female worshippers. Mosques in the city that do allow women to pray in them or that allow women to lead the congregation take on an anomalously large regional catchment area, particularly for the extended prayers that occur at *Jummah* on a Friday, during the holy month of Ramadaan and on Islamic religious holidays.

Muslim women in Johannesburg have played a key role in Islamic social welfare and

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non-profit community organisations since the 1970s. Thus many women who were prevented from participating in full-time employment by socio-cultural and political barriers found ways to contribute to community organisations instead.

The impact of Islam on the spatial fabric of the city

Initially, sections of the Muslim community were housed together in enclaves close to the city centre, due to official segregationist policies. By the middle of the twentieth century, Muslims had been pushed out into new, racially defined settlements on the periphery of the city as a result of the strict implementation of the policy of apartheid. In the 1980s, apartheid settlement patterns began to erode in Johannesburg as black people – many Muslims among them – began moving into white suburbs. This started a process of 'greying' the city that has continued unabated ever since. The advent of democracy in 1994 created the basis for further movement by both existing Muslim communities and new Muslim migrants into clusters of suburbs where they had not previously ventured. The spatial presence of Muslims in Johannesburg can thus be characterised as a process of centralisation in segregated areas close to the urban core, followed by decentralisation into racially exclusive settlements on the periphery and ultimately dispersal across the city in the post-apartheid period (see Figures 23.2 to 23.5). In the next section of the chapter, we trace the different phases of this process in a little more detail.

Settling in the Transvaal

Islam was present in Johannesburg prior to the Union of South Africa in 1910. Indian Muslims started arriving in the Transvaal Republic from Natal in 1881 in search of economic opportunity (Pahad 1972). They were followed by significant numbers of 'passenger Indians' (who had paid their own passage to South Africa and were not tied to an indenture), mainly from Gujarat. Malays who moved to the Transvaal came from Kimberley, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. Those who came from Port Elizabeth had gone there from Cape Town as army recruits into the Malay Corps, although some absconded. They later made their way into the interior, while others migrated to Johannesburg directly from Cape Town (Ebrahim 2009).

In the space of a dozen years, the discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand in 1886 transformed a landscape occupied by a few boer farmhouses and African homesteads into southern Africa's largest and wealthiest city. The Gold Rush lured people from all parts of the world, including India and Malaysia. Muslims arrived in Johannesburg in the late 1880s, and by 1896 they numbered several thousand according to a census carried out within a distance of three miles from the Market Square. The census found that there were 50 907 whites, 42 533 Africans, 3 831 Malays and coloureds, and 4 807 Indians and Chinese (Randall and Desai 1967: 1). Although the number of Muslims is not precise, their numbers would have been sizeable among both the 'Malay and coloured' and 'Indian and Chinese' categories.

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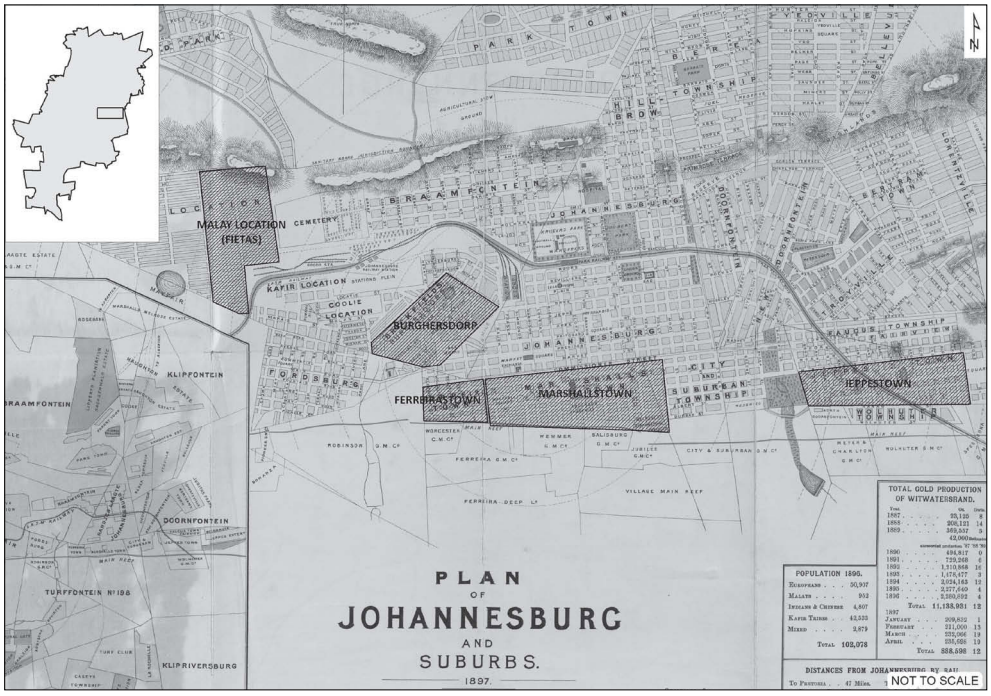


FIGURE 23.2: The footprint of Islam in Johannesburg in 1897
Source: BW Melville[13]

The dominant marker of identity in South Africa, from the point of view of the colonial and later the apartheid state, was race. In spite of the religious commonality between Indian Muslims and Malays, Muslims were eventually subsumed within the categories of 'Indian' and 'coloured' respectively, and were forced to settle in particular areas accordingly.

In the late 1890s the Transvaal Republic government granted Malays land in Ferreirastown, which became known as Malay Camp, and the site on which they pitched their tent to observe their five daily prayers was later developed into the Kerk Street Mosque (Paulsen 2003). Over the course of a few years, the initial Muslim character of Malay Camp changed and the community appealed to the Kruger government for another site for their community. Around the turn of the twentieth century, the government gave land to the community next to Vrededorp, which became known as Malay Location. The area was later named Pageview, but was known as 'Fietas' to its inhabitants. The 23rd Street Mosque was established there by the Malay community in 1900 and became not only a place of worship but a comprehensive religious and cultural centre (Paulsen 2003).

In 1896, about half of the Indian population of Johannesburg were living in an area set aside as a residential area by the Transvaal Republic, called 'Coolie Location' (adjacent to the Malay Location in Fietas) and Brickfields (Burghersdorp). The other half were distributed through the city centre, Ferreirastown, Marshalltown (west of Sauer Street), City and Suburban, Fordsburg and eastern Braamfontein (Randall and Desai 1967). In time, the Indian Muslim community established its own mosque in Fietas, known as the 15th Street Mosque.[12]

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One of the earliest significant sites of Islam in Johannesburg is Mia's Farm. Situated on the farm Waterval at Halfway House, it was once in the northern rural hinterland of the city and was the seat of the Waterval Islamic Institute, a nationally and internationally recognised Islamic education institute established in 1940 by the well-resourced and devout Indian Muslim Mia family. This institute provided free Islamic education and attracted scholars from around the world. Today Mia's Farm is at the heart of one of Johannesburg's significant high-value property growth nodes, the R40 billion Waterfall City development. As owner of the land, the Waterval Islamic Institute, which continues to provide Islamic education and social services to a national and global audience, has secured a 22 per cent shareholding in the development company and will receive considerable monthly revenue with which to continue its activities (Fife 2008a,b).

Withstanding discriminatory legislation

For much of the twentieth century, successive governments sought to impose discriminatory legislation on Indians and coloureds, which had a direct impact on Johannesburg's Muslim communities. This included restrictions on trade, residence and occupation as well as the denial of basic democratic rights that persisted in different forms until the demise of apartheid in 1994. As the state attempted to impose one form of discrimination or another, it was often met with fierce resistance, sometimes forcing the state to retreat. This included resistance campaigns pioneered by MK Gandhi at the turn of the century and by Dr Yusuf Dadoo, a prominent political figure in the Muslim community of Johannesburg and leader of the Transvaal Indian Congress in the 1940s.

In 1948, the National Party came to power on the platform of apartheid and within a short space of time introduced a raft of oppressive legislation against black people. The Group Areas Act of 1950 proved to be one of the most important pillars of 'grand apartheid' and had a devastating impact on trade and residence, for the Muslim community in particular. In the mid 1950s, Pageview was declared a white group area and new coloured group areas such as Albertville were created in the western part of the city. African people who lived in the Western Native Township, which adjoined Newclare and Sophiatown, were forcibly removed to Meadowlands and Diepkloof between 1956 and 1960. This area was initially used as an emergency camp for coloured people displaced by the Group Areas Act, but it was later extended, declared a coloured group area and renamed Westbury. Bosmont was added in 1962 to this cluster of coloured townships on the western edge of Johannesburg. Riverlea, located about 10 km south-west of the city centre and south of Main Reef Road, was proclaimed a group area in 1960 (Paulsen 2003) (see Figure 23.3).

These settlements were relatively well located, but had little room for expansion. As a result, the apartheid government decided to establish Eldorado Park, some 30 km south-west of central Johannesburg, as a new coloured group area in the late 1960s. Some years later, Ennerdale was established as a coloured group area even further from the major centres of employment. These two townships have since become the largest coloured settlements in Gauteng province. Malays – as a minority within the coloured 'population

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group' – began setting up Islamic institutions such as mosques, madrassas and burial societies in every locality to which they were moved (Paulsen 2003). The buildings were generally modest due to the lack of financial resources in the Malay community.

The pattern of settlement for Indians was somewhat different. Lenasia – with the suffix 'Asia' in its name, leaving no doubt about the ethnicity of its intended inhabitants – was created in the mid 1950s as the only group area for Indians in the City of Johannesburg. Indians were forcibly moved from all corners of the white city, and by the late 1970s the struggle against removal from Fietas, the largest remaining settlement, was by and large defeated. A handful of Indians remained in Jeppestown, Ferreirastown, Burghersdorp, Fordsburg and Fietas, while the vast majority found themselves in Lenasia (Figure 23.3). The Indian community comprises Muslims, Hindus (three linguistic groups) and Christians and each of these religious groups has made their mark on the spatial footprint of Lenasia. But Muslims are the most numerous and well resourced, which meant that their impact on space in Lenasia has been especially profound.

The most obvious symbols of Islam are its mosques, which dominate the landscape of the township. Lenasia has more than 30 mosques, essentially one in each neighbourhood. In keeping with the heterogeneity of Islam, some mosques, such as the Saaberie Chishty Mosque in Lenasia Extension 6, embrace a strongly Barelvi outlook, while others practise within the dominant Deobandi tradition.

Over time, Muslim organisations in Lenasia built their own madrassas and *darul-ulooms*, set up a variety of charities to cater for Muslims and non-Muslims alike, developed small businesses such as halaal eateries and butcheries to cater for Muslim dietary requirements, and established businesses that sold clothing for Muslims.

It was only in the 1970s that the government agreed to establish Marlboro Gardens as a group area for people who lived and traded in Alexandra Township (Figure 23.3). At the time, this was not considered part of Johannesburg since it fell under the Sandton municipality.

Dispersal from the mid 1980s

As apartheid began to crumble during the mid to late 1980s and the city began to grey, Muslims began to seek places of residence outside the group areas they had been confined to under apartheid. Since this was not yet legal, many Muslims arranged white nominees or 'fronts' in order to acquire business or residential property closer to or in the central areas of the city. It was in the former white working-class neighbourhoods closest to the city centre, such as Mayfair, Bertrams and Bezuidenhout Valley, where this first began to occur (Figure 23.4). Many of the white property owners in these areas were reaching retirement or were reticent about the changes taking place in the city and were therefore willing to sell and leave the area.

These areas not only offered affordable property for sale but also better access to places of trade and employment for Muslim communities who had been commuting from far-flung group areas for several decades. Once a few pioneering moves by Muslim families were made into these areas, others (often extended family and friends of those who had

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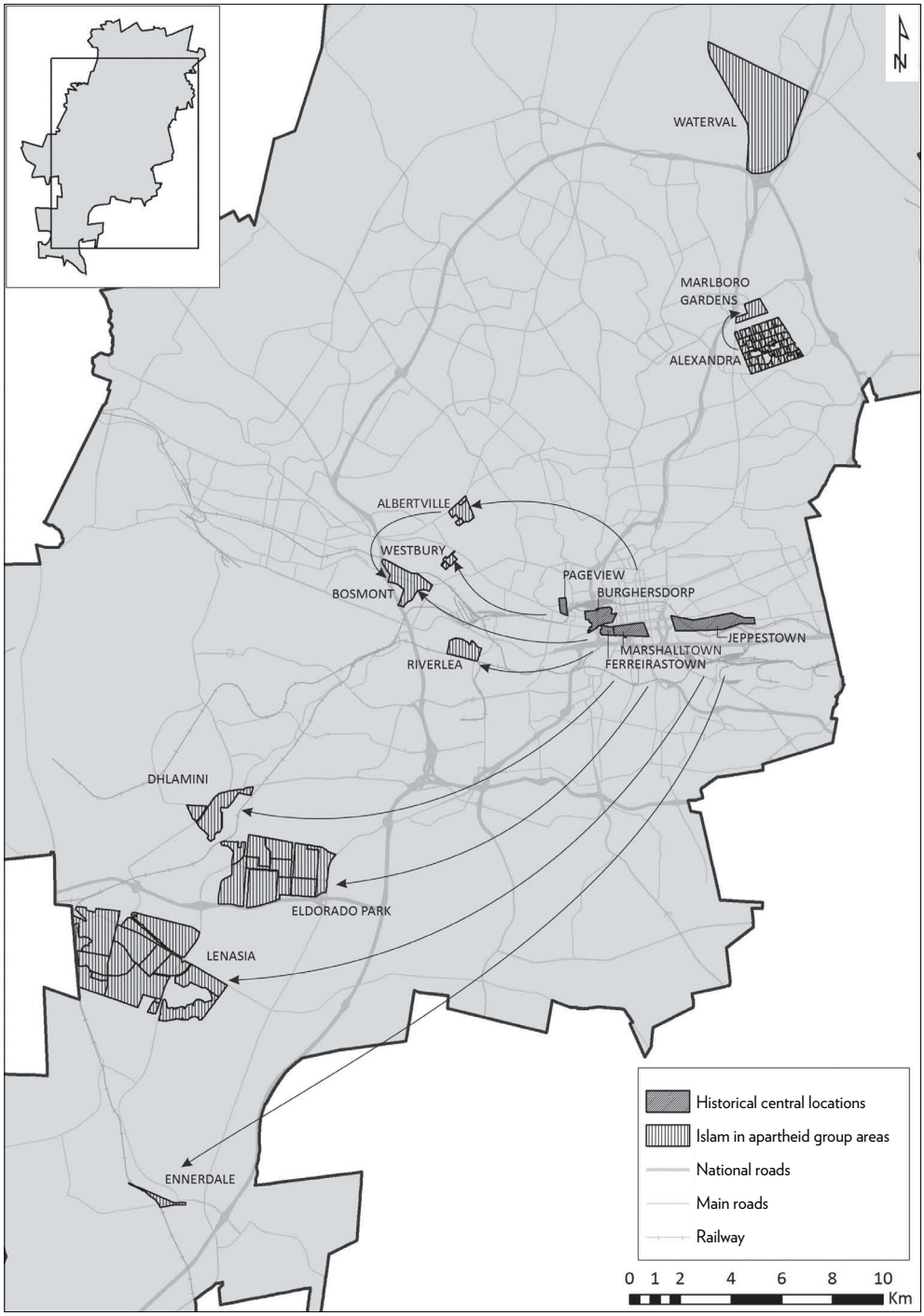


FIGURE 23.3: Islam racialised and displaced to apartheid group areas

Data sources: MDB (2010), CoJ (2011). Cartography by Miriam Maina

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first moved) took comfort in knowing that such moves could be made and felt more at ease about their fears of being found out, or of being alienated or isolated in the new surroundings. The result was a gradual normalising and then popularising of moves out of group areas and into the former white suburbs of Johannesburg.

In many cases the push factor was the lack of land for expansion in places like Lenasia due to natural population growth and migration from Natal. The alternative was to find homes further away from the city centre in places such as Lenasia South and Zakariyya Park (Figure 23.4). Many who decided to stay in group areas cited fear of the unknown, fear of loss of social support systems and neighbourly relations, fear of being anonymous, and the fear of not having access to Islamic social infrastructure as reasons for not wanting to make the leap.

Once a critical mass began to reside within the new areas, moves were quickly afoot to create local prayer facilities known as *musullahs*[14] in houses that were donated to the congregation by a benevolent donor or purchased using funds raised by the local organising committee. These would later grow into fully fledged mosques with governing committees and community-sourced funding for maintenance and operations. As an increasing number of families from former group areas relocated to the greying suburbs of Johannesburg, the footprint of Islam grew. Mosques – along with burial preparation facilities and madrassas – were set up in the western suburbs of Mayfair, Homestead Park, Mayfair West and later Crosby (Figure 23.4).

As mosques sprang up in these new territories and more homes were purchased, improvements were made to the old working-class housing stock that characterised the Mayfair area. Extended families moved into these properties and renovated them extensively in order to cater for their large families, their domestic workers (in outbuildings) and their motor vehicles. Not only did the facades of these houses change the streetscape dramatically, but the coverage of the small stands increased substantially, often up to boundary lines. The increasing density and intensity of the use of space meant that the physical fabric of Mayfair and its residential areas changed. So too did its aesthetic. A flashy pastiche of architectural styles was introduced with these home renovations by the upper-middle-class families moving into them and the in-vogue architectural features and cladding of the day were often replicated by many homes on one street or within a street block.

More local mosques and *musullahs* meant that for each of the five daily prayers men would take to the streets to walk to their local mosque. The streets became a meeting place for local Muslim men and women to get to know their new Muslim neighbours and community.

In the mid 1990s the influx of Muslim families into Mayfair extended its tentacles into Homestead Park, Mayfair West and Crosby. This brought similar physical and spatial changes to these areas as described for Mayfair. With these changes the local high streets (in the case of Mayfair, Church Street and Central Avenue) began to diversify their offerings. As the market responded to new demand created by a resident Muslim population, halaal

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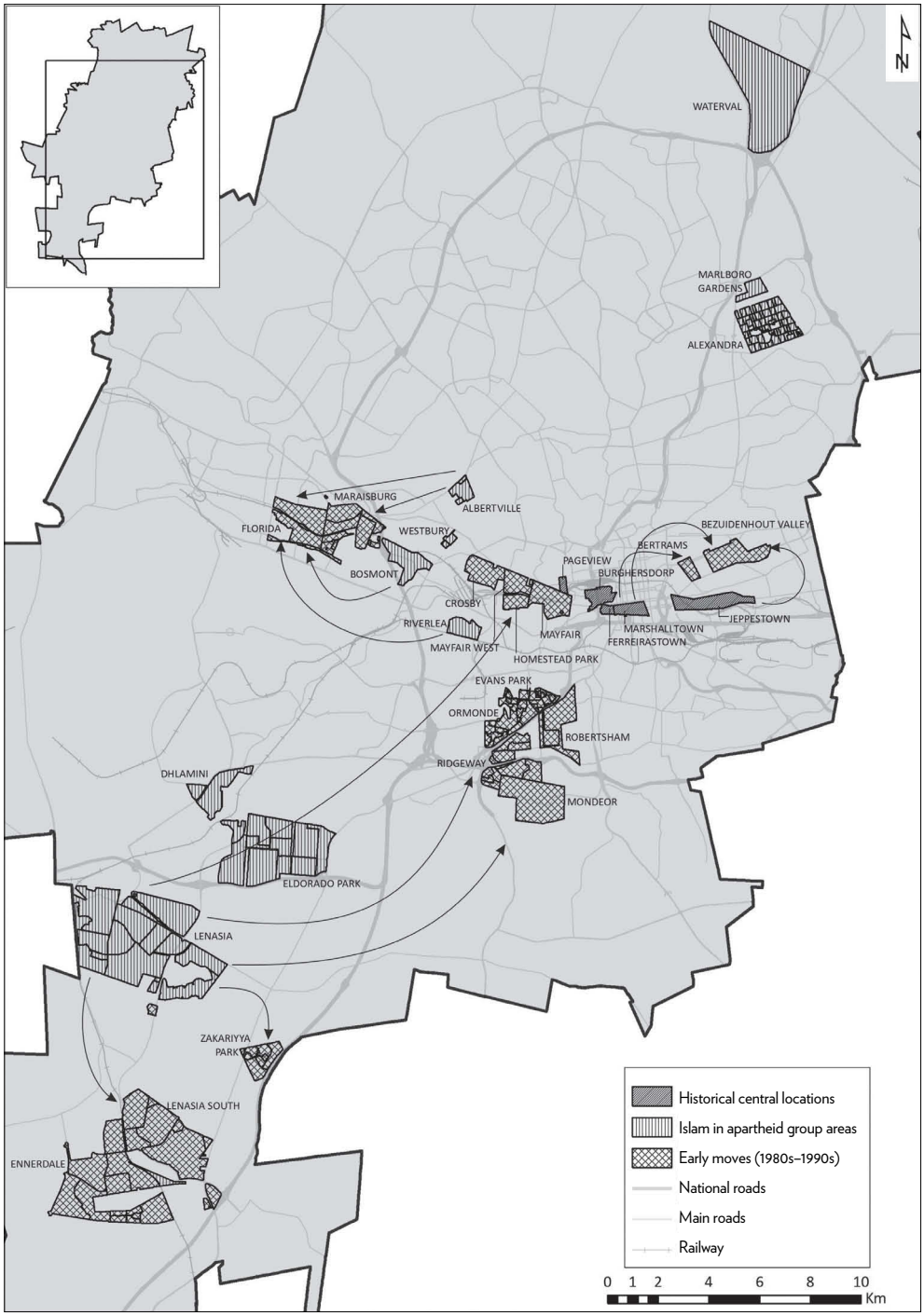


FIGURE 23.4: The first wave of Muslims move out of group areas, 1980s–1990s

Data sources: MDB (2010), CoJ (2011). Cartography by Miriam Maina

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eateries and Muslim-owned halaal butcheries, Muslim medical practitioners and other Muslim enterprises began to have a presence on main shopping streets in these areas. In the east of the city a similar trend was emerging. Areas such as Bezuidenhout Valley and Bertrams saw an influx of Muslim families and the establishment of *musullahs* and mosques, albeit in smaller numbers and less spatial concentration than in Mayfair. In the southern suburbs of the city many Muslims families moved into Ormonde, Evans Park, Mondeor, Robertsham and Ridgeway, bringing mosques and madrassas, but their spatial impact has been more diffuse than in Mayfair. Further to the west of the city, some Muslims (mainly from Malay communities) began moving into the formerly white suburbs of Florida and Maraisburg. These areas are depicted in Figure 23.4.

As South Africa entered the democratic era in the early 1990s, the freedom to acquire property outside of the group areas and without the need for nominees or fronts led to Muslim households venturing still further away from the group areas. In what seemed to be a second wave of migration, some who had lived in Mayfair since the 1980s began to sell up and move to areas further north and to the north-west in suburbs such as Houghton, Killarney, Emmarentia, Greenside, Northcliff and Auckland Park (Figure 23.5). Many of those who moved were young families who were looking to access better schooling in the northern suburbs. Another push factor for families making a second move out of Mayfair was a deteriorating public environment that had resulted from a combination of factors, including increased pressure on public infrastructure due to increased densities, and poor maintenance and urban management.

The new freedom to locate anywhere in the city meant that those who initially were wary of moving out of group areas in the 1980s began to consider suburbs much further away once Muslim communities were set up there.[15] As this dispersal took place, and the journey of Islam through the city unfolded, social changes started to appear in the congregations of many of the new suburban mosques. The colours of Islam in Johannesburg were changing.

Muslim migrants: social diversification of the ummah

In the apartheid era, the Muslim community in Johannesburg basically comprised Malays and Indian Muslims, with growing pockets of African Muslims in black townships. The apartheid regime's restrictive immigration laws and antagonistic international relations meant that very few Muslim migrants entered the country, let alone Johannesburg. The result was the creation of spatially confined and socially insular pockets of Muslim communities and spaces in the city. The advent of democracy normalised international relations and 'opened' the borders, leading to an influx of Muslim migrants from Asia, the Middle East and Africa – including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, Nigeria and Somalia. Their presence in the city has led to a diversification from the established authority of the Deobandi religious outlook and the long-held perception that Muslims were Indian or Malay.

There are some Muslim migrant groupings who, despite being present in significant numbers, have chosen to locate themselves within or near to the established South

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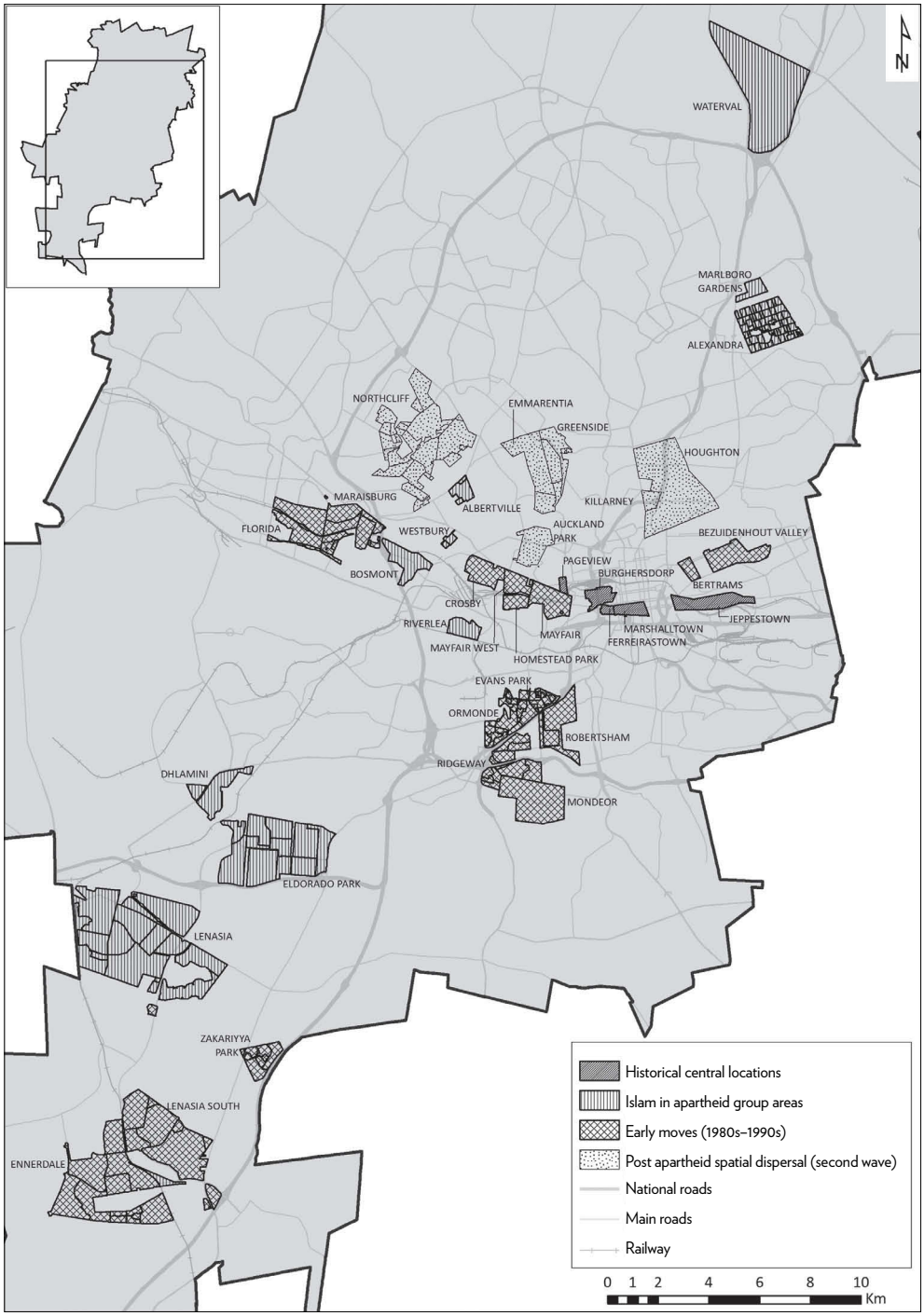


FIGURE 23.5: The spatial dispersal of Muslims after apartheid: the 'second wave'

Data sources: MDB (2010), CoJ (2011). Cartography by Miriam Maina

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African Muslim communities. This has brought interesting diversity to former ethnically homogeneous group areas. Muslim migrants from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh have, despite immigration laws, been steadily making their way to Johannesburg since the late 1980s. Once South Africa entered democracy and its borders became more porous, many more of these Indo-Pak Muslim migrants were recruited by established Indian Muslim communities to provide relatively cheap labour in their retail and wholesale businesses. Still more came independently to Johannesburg in search of a better life and economic prospects. Many of them entered the established Indian group areas either due to relational family networks (seeking support from family members who may have migrated to Johannesburg a few years earlier) or to the perception that it would be in these areas where the demand for their services would be greatest (for example, Indian Gujarati barbers and tailors).

While many of these migrants find themselves at the bottom of the economic and social pecking order in areas that are dominated by established Muslim communities (Lenasia, Marlboro, Mayfair), they have been fully integrated into the practice of religious ritual in these parts. Their presence in mosques and at other Muslim community gatherings gives an interesting diversity to a previously Indian- or Malay-dominated congregation. In some parts of Johannesburg such as Lenasia, where migrants have chosen to locate in close proximity to established Muslim communities, their presence has served to subordinate or suppress the racial label attached to being Muslim; rather, being a Muslim has become the superordinate identity ascription of the local community.

Another example is the position of the Somali community that has occupied parts of Mayfair. Their presence in that locality, as opposed to in another inner-city neighbourhood, was mainly due to the presence of mosques, madrassas and halaal establishments (Jinnah 2010). However, with time they have sourced their own funds to create mosques and associated religious infrastructure of their own, thus concretising the link between their religious identity and their national or ethnic identities. While these types of grouping would rarely overtly exclude Muslims of other ethnicities or nationalities from participating in prayers or other Islamic activities in their facilities, language would automatically deter others from attending.

Then there are other Muslim migrant groupings that have chosen to locate independently of the established South African Muslim communities – either because their location is more suited to their means of earning a living or because they consciously choose to be separate from the established Muslim communities. The Turkish Muslim community in Johannesburg is one example of how migrant Muslim communities are having an impact on both the spatial dispersal of Islam through the city and on the social and ethnic diversification of the Muslim congregation across Johannesburg. The local Turkish community has not thus far geographically attached itself to the established Muslim communities of the city, but interacts with local Muslim aid organisations as and when this would help access indigent local communities and extend the reach of their local charity work.[16]

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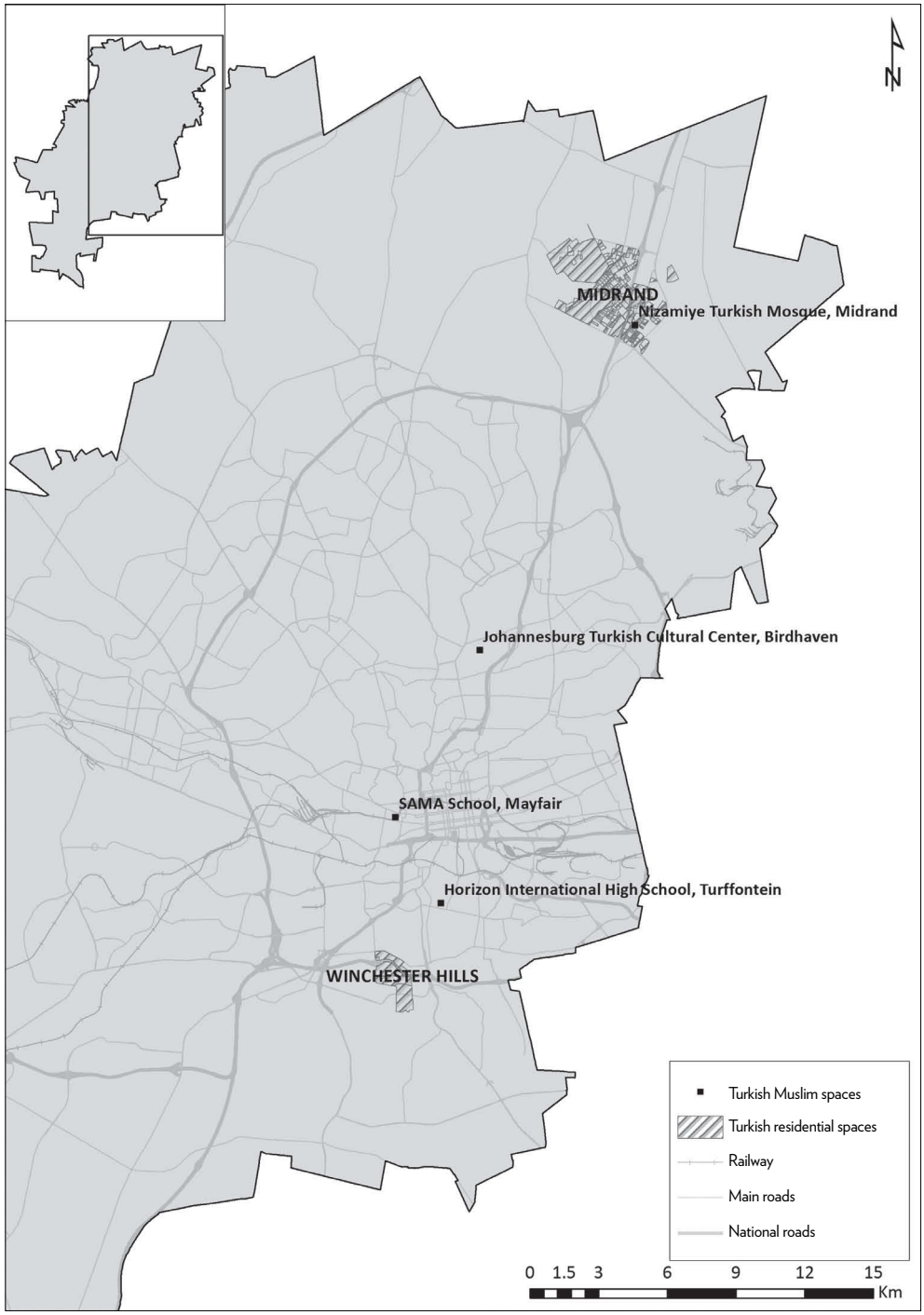


FIGURE 23.6: The footprint of the Turkish Muslim community in Johannesburg, 2012
Data sources: MDB (2010), CoJ (2011). Cartography by Miriam Maina

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Turks in Johannesburg recently made a very public statement of their presence and contribution to the city in the form of the majestic Nizamiye Mosque and Islamic Centre located in Midrand. The mosque is said to be the largest in the southern hemisphere and has become a significant tourist attraction in Johannesburg. It is likely to shift the epicentre of the Turkish community in Johannesburg northwards away from Turffontein, Winchester Hills and Mayfair (SAMA School) to Midrand.[17] Figure 23.6 depicts the current Turkish Islamic spatial footprint in Johannesburg.

Reproduction of Islamic social relations

In this section we explore those institutions and practices that reproduce Islamic social relations in the city, with particular emphasis on their spatial impact. The most obvious and significant of these is the mosque and its associated (madrassa and *tabligh*) activities, which create a powerful centripetal force for Muslims wishing to find a place in the community. There has always been a strong sense of wanting to be close to a mosque in the location and lifestyle choices of Muslim communities in Johannesburg.

While relocation threatens to disrupt familiar home-based support systems cultivated between neighbours and friends in an area, the presence of a mosque in the area to which one is being relocated symbolises hope of access into another support system. While years of political oppression may have initially been the reason for the strong emphasis on place-based support systems and collaboration in Muslim communities of Johannesburg, the strong bonds being forged today in areas that are newly occupied by Muslim families and businesses seem to be rooted more in religious principles than the need to survive oppression. Support systems in local Muslim communities in Johannesburg are often formed and strengthened through the interactions members have with the activities of the mosque.

The original role of the mosque in the Prophet's time was to fulfil the total development needs of the community and was not limited to a building for ritualistic worship (Rasdi 1998). In many cases the mosque is a space that facilitates interaction between different subgroups (defined by ethnicity, nationality or age) and promotes the expression of a superordinate collective identity. This less obvious role of the mosque in various parts of the city has become especially significant due to the increasing diversity of the Muslim community.

While Muslims who use it may see themselves as part of a global common Muslim *ummah*, there is also an underlying (sometimes overt) tension between the followers of the various schools of thought on how Islam should be practised. This is divisive and acts as a sub-label that Muslims ascribe to themselves to express their allegiance to a particular interpretation/way of practising Islam. For this reason, some mosques in Johannesburg have been labelled as 'belonging' to a certain type or group of believers. The result is that the mosque may be shunned by members in its immediate vicinity who choose to attend a mosque in an adjacent neighbourhood instead. Simultaneously, the mosque develops a much wider catchment area to include Muslims from far-flung areas of the city who are willing to travel a much greater distance in order to find better

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resonance with their belief in the particular school of thought or interpretation of Islam represented in that masjid.

Tayob (1999) notes that mosques in South Africa are established and constructed by followers or factions of divergent Islamic schools of thought. The spatial network of mosques situated across the City of Johannesburg is not a homogeneous one but a hybrid one. The mosque as a spatial site of worship in the city takes multiple layered identities. It is often ascribed an ethnic identity based on the dominance of a particular ethnic group in its congregation or even based on the largest financial contribution made for its establishment. It is usually ascribed a religious sub-identity based on the particular Islamic school of thought it espouses and follows in its sermons and method of prayer, and of course its global identity as belonging to the global religion of Islam.

Where there is a significantly large resident Muslim population in the city, in areas such as Lenasia, Marlboro and the Fordsburg-Mayfair-Crosby residential areas, there is a much more complex and fine-grained separation of mosques according to *madhhabs*. The result is that while there may be more established large mosques that represent the dominant school of thought, there are many smaller masjids and *musullahs* in close proximity to each other, each having a small congregation for the five daily prayers and each ascribing a slightly different identity to itself on the basis of following different schools of thought and perhaps even different ethnicities. Examples include the Somali Mosque, the Shafi'i mosques and the Sultan Bahu Mosque.

Mosques in the city are spatial anchors for new and established Muslim communities. What is also significant to the footprint of Islam in Johannesburg is that due to the centrality of the practice of the five daily prayers as a compulsory pillar of Islam, 'proximity to a mosque' becomes one of the key criteria for decision-making on residential and commercial property investment choices. Especially in residential areas, mosques in Johannesburg cast what Francois Viruly[18] refers to as a 'value-shadow' – where properties in closest proximity to a mosque peak in value due to an increase in demand driven by the desire among Muslim believers to be living in close proximity to a mosque and all its activities.

Curiously, what has been experienced when mosques have been established in formerly white areas of Johannesburg is that the existing non-Muslim residents have sold their properties. This has enabled new Muslim entrants into these areas to purchase a number of properties in very close proximity to the mosque. Also, as in the case of the Robertsham Mosque adjacent to the M1 south, it has allowed the mosque committee and its funders to appropriate stands adjacent to the mosque to provide much needed off-street parking or to expand its activities. The result is a spatial clustering of mosque-related activities and of properties owned by Muslims.

Despite the public presence and political acknowledgement of Islam in Johannesburg, the development of mosques in Johannesburg's former white suburbs and office nodes has not gone uncontested. Often residents' associations and individual residents of suburbs in which a new mosque is planned have submitted objections based on the impact the mosque will have on parking and traffic in the area.

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By far the most contentious element of a new mosque is the volume and frequency of the public address system that delivers the muezzin's call to prayer (*adhaan*) to the neighbourhood five times a day. Most objections raise noise and intrusiveness of this action as their primary objection to a mosque development in the suburbs. In Greenside in the early 2000s, the Mosque of Mercy allayed residents' fears about noise by making transmitters available to every Muslim household in the area so that the call to prayer could be beamed silently into people's private homes (Davie 2006). Still, most proposed new mosque developments in the suburbs have seen the local town planning authorities bombarded with objections from local non-Muslim residents.

Mosques in Johannesburg vary in size and status too. The larger mosques that have active and well-resourced governing committees are often favoured for the auspicious *Jummah* (Friday) prayer. Smaller, less well-resourced neighbourhood and workplace mosques are frequented for all other daily prayers, based on proximity (often walking distance).

Most mosque complexes in Johannesburg have become hubs for associated religious infrastructure. Madrassas are one of the first accompanying establishments to join a mosque in an area. Historically, in areas such as Fietas, madrassas were run in teachers' homes. As the numbers of students increased just prior to relocation into group areas, faith-based organisations such as the Central Islamic Trust approached the government for permission to rent school premises to conduct classes in the afternoons. This was continued in the group areas until some madrassas received enough donor funding and revenue from fees to be able to construct their own premises. Most madrassas were then built adjacent to mosques.

The lack of early childhood development facilities in group areas was a long-lamented problem. The state's failure to provide facilities of this type created a gap that both the market and the range of Islamic faith-based organisations began to fill. Mosque complexes such as Nur-ul-Islam Mosque in Lenasia and the LMA Centre in Duck Avenue in Lenasia added a nursery school to their premises to cater for Muslim toddlers. This pattern of developing supporting religious infrastructure to accompany the development of a mosque has been repeated in areas such as Greenside and Northcliff. Both these suburbs now have a mosque, a madrassa and Islamic nursery schools.

Unlike in parts of the Middle East, leisure activities seldom form part of Johannesburg's mosque complexes. Leisure activities in Johannesburg are often, but not always, linked to the availability of halaal food and eateries.[19] Muslims in Johannesburg tend to develop cognitive maps of various points in the city that offer halaal food and this influences the ways in which they use the city when shopping, eating out or spending their leisure time.

Muslims in Johannesburg: looking to the future

About 1 300 years after its beginnings, Islam took root in Johannesburg and has grown as an important part of the make-up and identity of the city, mainly due to the fervour of the local Muslim community who have remained fairly steadfast in maintaining and promoting

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the faith. In South Africa, unlike in many other parts of the world, the freedom to publicly practise Islam and live as a Muslim is a right that is protected by the constitution of the country. Mosques, headscarves and mass prayer gatherings, outlawed in some countries and on the receiving end of much political resistance in others, are a normalised and (mostly) accepted part of South African public life and have been for a number of years. Muslims in Johannesburg are integrated fairly seamlessly into broader society and have benefited from the constitutional dispensation in South Africa which is in part a product of their own contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle.

Going forward, there is likely to be an increasing dynamism between the way Muslims with their diverse religious and socio-political outlooks continue to shape spaces in Johannesburg, and in the ways that the city's development policies, informed by the South African constitutional state, will continue to engage with all communities, including Muslims.

Although the location of Muslim communities, with their associated social infrastructure, is likely to be concentrated in certain parts of the city, it is also probable that further dispersion will occur across Greater Johannesburg as movement patterns are influenced by economic and transportation imperatives. Generational perspectives will also shape these patterns. Younger people and families tend to be more mobile while older folk seem to prefer to remain in established settings. Thus new Islamic institutions and footprints are likely to be established and championed by younger people as they disperse across the city. Spatial, locational and movement patterns will no doubt impact on and represent the extent to which Muslims deal with their identity in Johannesburg. The heterogeneity of the community and growing identity assertion should see tendencies of assimilation and insularity sit side by side. Both assimilation and insularity will take on different expressions according to the various and changing outlooks of Muslims.

Islam is practised with much diversity and varying levels of conviction on the part of individual Muslims. Identity is also asserted with great diversity, from an emphasis on physical and traditional attributes in a religious codified sense to more assimilated understandings with an emphasis on the universal values of Islam. While not widespread, ideological contestation within the Muslim community centres around the interpretation of the religious text and global Islamic experience, but also around the role Muslims should play in society.

The demographics of Johannesburg, like those in the rest of the country, are changing rapidly. While the Indian and Cape Muslim groups remain dominant the number of indigenous African Muslims is rising. In addition, the in-migration of Muslims from all over the world into Johannesburg means that the spectrum of global influence is wider and richer. This is adding to the colour and depth of Islamic life in the city, and giving rise to interesting dynamics between the more established Muslim communities in Johannesburg and newer migrant Muslim communities.

No doubt, the identity and practice of Islam in Johannesburg, together with their socio-spatial dimensions, will be increasingly enmeshed in the collective experiences, cultures

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and traditions of the established Muslim community, the strongly rising indigenous African Muslim community and the myriad new migrant Muslim communities. All of this makes the footprint of Islam in Johannesburg both colourful and interesting, and one that will continue to enrich the city as it grapples with ways of managing its own urbanisation, diversity and growth.

Acknowledgement

Figure 23.1 was compiled by Yusuf Patel.

Notes

1 There has been some debate in the literature about the appropriate designation for 'Coloured Muslims' in South Africa and the preferred term appears to be 'Cape Muslims' (Ebrahim 2009; Jeppie 2001; Tayob 1995). Since the focus of this chapter is on Muslims in Johannesburg, we felt that the term Cape Muslims might lead to some confusion and therefore decided to use the term 'Malay'.

2 PBUH – Peace be upon Him. It is encouraged in the Quran that salutations be recited after the name of the Prophet is invoked.

3 The caliphs were not prophets and had to rely on the teachings of the Prophet and on their own insight (Armstrong 2000).

4 The most well-known Sufi intellectual, Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali (1058–1111), believed that only ritual and prayer could bring human beings closer to God. In the thirteenth century another famous Sufi, Jalal al-Din Rumi, promoted divesting oneself of egotism and selfishness as the path to God (Armstrong 2000).

5 Java is one of Indonesia's largest islands, and contains the majority of the country's population. Much of Indonesia's history unfolded on this island, including the colonial occupation by the Dutch East Indies. 'By the end of the 16th century, Islam, through conversion firstly amongst the island's elite, had surpassed Hinduism and Buddhism as the dominant religion in Java. During this era, the Islamic kingdoms of Demak, Cirebon, and Banten were ascendant. The Mataram Sultanate became the dominant power of central and eastern Java at the end of the 16th century. The principalities of Surabaya and Cirebon were eventually subjugated such that only Mataram and Banten were left to face the Dutch in the 17th century' (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Java).

6 Tayob (1995: 54) succinctly describes the development of Islam in the Cape until the end of the nineteenth century: 'Until 1804, the resources of mystical Islam provided spiritual support under conditions of slavery. With the advent of religious freedom, at the end of the eighteenth century, Muslims came out into the open. Mosques and schools made public Islamic jurisprudence and theology. Rites and rituals, in addition to mosque-related and jurisprudential disputes, formed the key aspects of the Muslim community in the nineteenth century.'

7 These include festivities held at graves of popular saints, the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and a belief in the omnipresence of the Prophet, as well as ceremonies which include devotional music (*qawali*) as a form of divine remembrance and purification of the soul.

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8 A madrassa is where local Muslim children of school-going age who attend secular schools during the morning receive religious instruction for two hours each weekday afternoon.
9 The religious profile of the Indian community in South Africa in 1960 was Hindu (68.6 per cent), Muslim (20.7 per cent), Christian (7.5 per cent) and other (3.2 per cent); and in 1980 there were 468 300 Hindus and 90 984 Muslims in Natal and 33 404 Hindus and 66 808 Muslims in the Transvaal. It is worth noting that Hindus made up just 2.1 per cent and Muslims 1.2 per cent of the South African population as a whole (Pillay et al. 1989: 145–153).
10 Dr Zainab Asvat, Amina Pahad, Cissy Gool, Rahima Moosa and Amina Cachalia, to name just a few examples.
11 These are now more commonly referred to as *taleem* groups.
12 Although the mosques on 15th and 23rd streets were within short walking distance of each other, religious and racial divisions prevented unity between the communities.
13 This image is available online at WIReDSpace (Wits Institutional Repository on DSpace).
14 *Musullah* is the Arabic term for a 'Muslim place of prayer that, unlike a mosque (masjid), is not consecrated because it is temporary or rented'; the Urdu term for such places is *jamaat khanas*.
15 Unlike many other groups affected by apartheid separation, many Indian Muslims were able to afford housing in the city's wealthy northern suburbs. These included entire extended families or working professionals who wanted to live closer to places of work and enjoy the leisure opportunities available in the suburbs
16 Personal communication with A Inal, Director, Turquoise Harmony Institute, Birdhaven, Johannesburg, 30 January 2012.
17 Personal communication with A Inal, Director, Turquoise Harmony Institute, Birdhaven, Johannesburg, 30 January 2012.
18 Personal communication with F Viruly, Property Market Consultant and Professor of Property Studies (then based in) the School of Construction Economics and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, 18 April 2009.
19 In South Africa and in Johannesburg in particular, most Muslim communities, no matter how liberal or conservative, consider the consumption of haram meat or products that are derived from haram meat (such as bovine gelatine) as a boundary that they will not cross.

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