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TITLE

Beyond the visible: revealing the creative power of the Cape enslaved and the empowering influence of Sufi inspired Islam.

STUDENT: REDAWAAN HENDRICKS

STUDENT NUMBER: 914504

SUPERVISOR: DR NICOLA CLOETE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother and father. With love and eternal appreciation.

All praise and thanks are due to the Almighty Allah who always guides me to the right path. There are some significant people whom I have to acknowledge for their support and encouragement during the journey of this dissertation.

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I dedicate to you, Steven Covey’s wise council:

Live, Love, Learn and Leave a Legacy.

To my friends and family scattered across the world in the USA, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Senegal, Germany, Vietnam, Taiwan, New Zealand, Japan, Swaziland and South Africa. Thank you for your support and prayers.

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This dissertation is the start of my new journey.

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"Deprived of their original language, the captured and indentured tribes create their own, accreting and secreting fragments of an old, epic vocabulary, from Asia and from Africa, but to an ancestral, an ecstatic rhythm in the blood that cannot be subdued by slavery or indenture, while nouns are renamed and the given names of places accepted...The original language dissolves from the exhaustion of distance like fog trying to cross an ocean..."

From Derek Walcott's speech, *The Antilles: Fragments of Epic Memory*, on the occasion of his acceptance of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1992.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 SLAVE AGENCY DRIVEN BY SUFI ISLAM

This dissertation will contextualise Sufi Islam and its centrality in the process that the Cape enslaved embarked upon to ensure their independent development since the first enslaved people arrived on the shores of Cape Town until slavery was abolished in 1838 and towards the end of the century. A theoretical framework of power will be utilised to appraise slave agency which has been driven by Sufi infused Islam, that laid the foundations for change and enabled the gaps in community life to be enriched by Muslim common religious *Sūfī* practices. Many of the enslaved people resisted acceptance of the prevailing slave master's religion of Christianity and instead opted to embrace Islam. The form of Islam that evolved at the Cape was a particular type of Islam which was strongly influenced by Sufism. This reality is a subtle, yet powerful, way in which the Cape enslaved resisted the hegemonic forces of the slave masters in particular and the colonial authority in a broader sense.

The dissertation will set about to explore the communal, social and cultural spaces which opened up for the enslaved to develop a sense of self and community. These spaces enabled the development of a range of Muslim Common Religious Practices that evolved at the Cape and which was infused with Sufi Islam, the development of an own language of communication and religious beliefs. Acts of resistance took place throughout the Cape colony and were recorded in the mosques, madrassah's and in the homes of the freed slaves. The slaveholders could not control these private and public sites, as they attempted to dominate the enslaved people. In essence, the enslaved had used these

spaces as sites of empowerment inspired by Sufi Islam, they showed that they would never accept the designation of 'slave'.

The development of Islam and the growth of a Sufi inspired Muslim community at the Cape, was a significant process which contained a range of ideological and political realities. Realities were shaped by subtle, yet profound challenges to the prevailing structure of colonial hegemony. Islam was present in the Cape from soon after the European settlers arrived to establish a halfway station on their journey to the East Indies. However, it was only at the turn of the seventeenth century that the practice of Islam took on a visible form, with the establishment of a *madrassah* and later, a mosque. At first the practice of Islam was steeped in traditions of mystical Islam that were both informal and largely lacking in visible shape and form.

Adil Bradlow (1988:3) relates that on the sides of Table Mountain and in the forested areas around Cape Town these early Islamic practices centred around the exiled *shaykhs* who were schooled in the teachings of *Sūfism*. The *shaykhs* formed various Muslim community clusters and established themselves in *Sūfī* orders to facilitate teachings about the mystical aspects of Islam. From the daily life practices of these *shaykhs*, early converts learnt the basic elements and practices of Islam. Looking carefully at the time of the Constantia exiled leaders in the middle of the seventeenth century, to the arrival of *Shaykh* Yusuf and his group of companions towards the end of the seventeenth century, one can observe a linear and progressive connectedness. These shayhks were significant in advancing Islam in the Cape.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, the areas of worship moved from Table Mountain and the forests to the suburban living quarters and where the modes of

learning were loosely implemented, they began to reflect higher levels of organisation, driven by a centralised theoretical framework. Bradlow (1988:3) believed that, this was “a shift away from an essentially mystical expression of Islamic practice”. These *Sūfī* infused Islamic foundations were laid down by the early pioneers such as Tuang Yusuf and the Constantia *Shaykhs*. This matrix was later formalised through the teachings of Tuang Guru and the Imams. This shift to formalisation culminated in the establishment of the first mosque in 1795. The nature and character of Islam practiced formally in the mosque carried with it the *Sūfī* inspired Muslim common religious practices. This enabled the Muslim enslaved to emerge from the hegemonic force of colonial mastery and to develop a worldview of their own.

Understanding how Islam became formalised and the effects it had on the community at the Cape, requires a closer look at the various changes that were driven from the ground up by the enslaved community. It was evident that the internal need for change which emerged from within the people played a significant role in this regard. In this respect, the contribution of Tuangs Yusuf, Tuan Guru and the early Imams, the development of Afrikaans as the lingua franca, the establishment of an alternate system of education through the *madrassah* system and the proliferation of a range of Muslim common religious practices is perhaps without parallel. In certain instances these influences were direct, and in others not so obvious. The practice of Islam was not allowed by law during the time the VOC was the ruling administrators, which had a direct influence on the practice of Islam and forced it to be practiced in secret (Mason 2002: 12).

At the same time the slow withering away of the political hegemony of the colonial administrators by the end of the eighteenth century created an enabling environment for the development of a degree of social space, that made possible the changeover from a

secretive way of practicing to a more public and visible way of practicing. The development of a Muslim community at the Cape, was in fact, a significant process which was driven by ideological and political realities. Out of this emerged a sense of resistance towards the prevailing structure of the ruling class hegemony in Cape Town.

The process of empowerment and Islamisation emerges out of a larger landscape of social forces. Islamisation in this instance can be viewed as the process of a significant portion of Cape Town society adopting the religion of Islam. It was in effect an Islamist social and political system introduced into a society with an indifferent social and political makeup (Rafudeen 2005). My central argument in this dissertation is that the growth and development of Sufi inspired Islam at the Cape displayed subtle movements of collective resistance and provided impetus to the enslaved to agitate against the prevailing system of domination and exploitation.

It would become evident that in spite of the fact that the enslaved and the formerly enslaved were excluded from the mainstream colonial power structures and social institutions, they were able to evolve their own set of structures and institutions. They might not have gone about it in a conscious and overtly resistant manner, but they were able to carve an independent lifestyle of their own. This contradiction is evident in their practices of their Muslim common religious practices, the development of an own language and their educational endeavours through the madrassah system. In the ensuing chapters, I consider the growth of Islam and a Muslim community that came to represent more than subtle challenges to the existing arrangement of power relations. These challenges originated not so much from any radical actions undertaken by the Cape Muslims themselves, but rather from the different set of social relations that the

growth of *Sūfī* inspired Islam ushered in: a set of social relations that in many important areas challenged the dominant configurations established by the colonial slave masters.

1.2 ENSLAVEMENT RESISTANCE

Through positioning the process of Islamisation within the context of resistance studies, this dissertation aims to contribute to the existing historical discourse on the enslavement heritage of Cape Town and challenges the notion that no significant forms of collective resistance took place at the Cape during the period of enslavement. This research on the process of Islamisation in the Cape argues that the enslaved were indeed capable of constructive and creative forms of resistance.

My pivotal argument is that from the latter part of the eighteenth century, the enslaved in Cape Town began to express their resistance to the existing structure of society in collective terms. Resistance that eventually took the form of a dramatic spread of Sufi inspired Islam amongst the enslaved of Cape Town, and the formation of a Muslim community. This practice of Islam as resistance was enacted through the development and use of Afrikaans as the Muslim community's own language, the establishment of institutional systems of education through the *Madrassah* system and the dynamic institution of *Sūfī* inspired Muslim Common Religious Practices. People's places of origin and where they lived were also key to the diversity in Islamic expression in the Cape during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Dangor 1997). It is a strange coincidence that Dutch colonialism, unwittingly, was responsible for the introduction of Islam into the Cape in the seventeenth Century and thus unintentionally laid the groundwork for enslavement resistance. Muslims were forcibly moved to the Cape from different areas of the world, each bringing with them a distinct culture (Dangor 1997). The early, diverse Muslim arrivals to the Cape, in particular slaves and convicts, were

housed in slave lodges, stables and the homes of their slave masters, together with people of other faith traditions (Davids 1989: 5). The fact that people lived in close proximity to each other resulted in acculturation for the Muslims.

It was also declared illegal for any religion to be practiced, taught or advanced, in private or public, other than that of the Reformed Protestant Church (Davids 1978: 10). As Dangor (1997) articulates, the early development of Islam in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries shows distinct signs of syncretism articulated in later Muslim rituals and practices and reflected in all aspects of their lives. Starting from birth, Muslim practices have clearly expressed the influence of other religions and cultures. They did this through complex religious ritual and spiritual exercises (Dangor 1997: 141). In this dissertation I trace some of the major influences on the lives and practices of Muslims in the Cape, which resulted in a rich heritage that adds to the diverse social fabric of South African society.

1.3 LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR CHANGE

Cape slavery was very different from countless European slave colonies. The Cape economy was not based on export-orientated plantation production of staples, where large numbers of slaves were located on plantations. Instead slaves were spread over small-scale settler farms and mostly in and around households of slave owners in urban Cape Town (Malan 2008: 1).

At the Cape, the emergence of an independent slave culture, driven by Islam, was largely through alternative cultural, religious and social practices as they resisted their legal definition as property and asserted their rights as people and their dignity as human

beings (Jordan 2006). In this way the urban Cape enslaved made extensive use of the increased legal space created by legislative improvements to reject the dominant culture of their slave masters and embrace their own language, education, social and religio-cultural practices (Scott 1990: xiii).

Southeast Asian influences on language, religion, education and common religious practices are easily discernable at the Cape, however these also emanated from Indonesian political exiles, convicts and Chinese traders, not only the enslaved. Many Cape slaves came from Africa, Madagascar and India and many of them were Muslim, including those from the Indonesian archipelago (Bradlow and Cairns 1978: 94).

The materialisation of an independent slave culture, in pre-manumission Cape Town, was evident in the altering levels of consciousness among slaves (Bank 1994). This dissertation probes the culture of the powerful and searches for the subsumed histories of enslaved presence and agency (Baderoon 2009: 97).

1.4 MOTIVATION

The primary focus of this dissertation is to explore the extent to which Cape slaves, and in particular Muslim slaves, inspired by Sufism, demonstrated resistance to co-option into the dominant slave owner hegemony since late seventeenth century Cape Town. I explore how they manipulated the enhanced legal and social spaces that opened up to them, within the expanding urban Cape Town setting. I scrutinise the development of their own sense of value, identity and self-worth through acts of resistance, language, education, religion and socio-cultural practice, driven by *Sūfī* Islam, demonstrating how the enslaved engaged in community and evolved a unique identity of their own. This study covers the period between 1670 until shortly after the abolition of slavery in 1838,

as it is the period in which there was rapid adoption and growth of Islam among the enslaved and the former enslaved people, which laid the foundation for the enslaved to undergo a transforming consciousness and awareness of self.

I then focus on the early nineteenth century Cape enslaved people, and in particular Muslim enslaved, and how through everyday resistance, they exerted their power of self-determination and evolved as a vibrant, independent community, with a unique and diverse culture and lifestyle. It also explores how they resisted the attempts of urban slave owners to maintain a collective ideological hold over them.

The urbanisation of Cape Town created an enabling environment for the enslaved, and in particular Muslim enslaved, to develop spaces of autonomy and emboldened them to resist the power of the slave-owners and their dominant hegemony. Furthermore, the fact that the enslaved in the city could easily move around town on their various errands, and their absorption into an urban underclass, helped to weaken the social control of slave owners over the enslaved. This scenario enabled the enslaved to evolve vibrant communities with their own characteristics and value bases which still endure today (Bank 1991; Bank 1994; Bickford-Smith 1983; Groenewald 2010; Shell 1994; Worden & Crais 1994).

The countless challenges I experienced in attempting to verify the social realities of the enslaved is underscored by Lenta (1999: 103), who asserts that few spoken words were recorded by the enslaved and former enslaved people at the Cape. The attitudes and practices of those who were in positions of power led to the exclusion of the voices of the enslaved and their interest from socio-economic, political and historical processes. To understand the experiences of the enslaved at the Cape during the 19th century, we need

to turn to the issues of power within this disempowered group of people to establish a sense of how they came together as a community in the pre-emancipation era.

The development of the urban Cape slave community and their ability to evolve as a vibrant, self-contained community, with its own unique and diverse culture and lifestyle inhibited the attempts of urban slave owners to maintain a collective hold over the enslaved in the city. The family, paternalism, religion, values and morality of slave owner ideology took little hold in the enslaved people. The seemingly powerful hegemonic forces of the urban slave owning ruling class failed to serve as agreed and accepted forms of domination over the enslaved people (Bank 1991: 86).

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Recent academic discourse has begun to uncover the hidden social world of the former Cape enslaved people that debunks the myth that the enslaved and former enslaved people at the Cape were powerless, voiceless and largely cultureless. Any existing recording of enslavement narrative was done by those in power with vested interest to reflect reality in the manner that suited them best (Lenta 1999: 103). As Jackie Loos notes, most travel writers who wrote about life at the Cape during the seventeen and eighteen centuries, were European men who regarded slavery as a necessary evil (2004:1). They were generally oblivious to, or they did not care, about the underlying and overt tensions between the enslaved people and their slave masters.

This research project explores the development of an own language, education system, cultural practices, religion, family relations and resistance against slave masters through an examination of reports of the Slave Office and legislation, historical travelogues,

reports of the Office of the Special Magistrate and the Slave Office, as well as archival records, about enslaved and former enslaved people at the Cape, as reflections of hidden transcripts. I critically engaged archival records and travelogues for evidence of the emerging powers of the Cape enslaved people to resist the slave owner hegemony within the emerging urban Cape Town and the role that Islam played in cultivating hidden transcripts and spaces of free expression.

1.6 SPECULATIVE HISTORY AND CASE STUDIES

Whilst there is ample evidence to demonstrate the social conditions of the enslaved and freed population at the Cape, I will use the method of speculative history with a great deal of caution. According to Yvette Abrahams (1996: 4), speculative history “is an attempt to read through the text and work my way around it.” According to Barraclough (1991: 14), “the history we read ... though based on facts, is strictly speaking, not factual at all, but a sense of accepted judgements”.

Scharma (1991:322) further states that:

This is not to say, I should emphasise, that I scorn the boundary between fact and fiction. It is merely to imply that even in the most austere scholarly report from the archives, the inventive faculty.... is in full play. This is not a naively relativist position that insists that the lived past is nothing more than an artificially designed text... but it does accept the rather banal axiom that claims for historical knowledge must always be fatally circumscribed by the character and prejudice of the author.

Speculative history, then, according to Abrahams (1996:4), shifts the emphasis from fact to judgement. It does not, however, abolish this dichotomy altogether and this

dissertation endeavors to maintain the integrity of the factual aspects of the archival and travelogue evidence, while drawing informed conclusions and analysis.

Through this research I have sought to uncover the hidden texts and voices of the enslaved people, in particular the urban Muslim enslaved, within the available archival court records and travelogues. My approach is in line with Lenta's observation of the importance for postcolonial theorists and subaltern studies to fill in the gaps in the textual production of a community (1999: 103). Concern in this instance is not only with recorded discourse, but the recovery of excluded discourse. Gayatri Spivak in an earlier iteration of this argument, stated that in order to properly understand a people, the question must be asked, "Can the subaltern speak?", as it is evident that in the colonialist production of reality, the subaltern has no recorded history and cannot speak (1995: 24). I examined archival records and travelogues for evidence of enslaved narratives. My conclusions are drawn based on legislative, environmental and social factors to determine the motivations and intended outcomes of slavery discourse and action. In many respects the subaltern voice can emerge, if one observes their actions within their social and political environment, where they engage in daily life and activities.

To this extent I have made use of a variety of case studies to portray the life style of the enslaved and former enslaved people at the Cape. Using these case studies of the lives of the enslaved, from the archival records and travellers accounts, enables us to delve into their daily lives . It allows us the opportunity to contextualise their actions and draw inferences of their state of mind. Case studies are an in-depth investigation of one particular individual, group, time-period or event. They investigate underlying principles of an occurrence within a real-life context. Case studies encapsulates a wide spectrum of different viewpoints and perspectives, as opposed to the one dimensional way of seeing

a person or group of people. This enables us to gain a far more enhanced understanding of the person or people and the situation under scrutiny (Ong & Weiss 2000). Case studies have been utilised here to *explain*, *describe* or *explore* events or phenomena in the everyday historical environment in which they occur which assists our comprehension of the period under discussion and helps to understand and explain the underlying connections and passageways between speculation and reality. The case study approach assists with the search for the obvious questions of '*how*', '*what*' and '*why*' in a historical context. The case study approach can offer added awareness into *what* gaps existed in the lives of people who do not have a voice in the form of written records (Gilgun 1994: 371)

1.7 SPACES FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY

Early examples of enslaved people's mobility and uncontrolled exercise of moments of freedom, limited as they were, during the last third of the seventeenth century was evidenced by the institution of the Burgherwacht, "... because of instances of arson, theft and other acts of violence and lawlessness perpetuated by blacks on the run..." (Kaapseplakkaatboeke 1696: 295). Evidence like this, that there were spaces available to the enslaved to move around freely, was available, though not easily detectable.

Even though the slave masters maintained firm control over their enslaved population at the Cape, their means of control evidently had its limitations initially. Slaves were able to move around under the cover of darkness of the night and were effectively able to formulate and engage in their own forms of social practices. To curtail this social mobility, slave masters made it compulsory for slaves to carry lanterns at night so that they could be identified, and their movements monitored (Plakkaaten Sept 1754: 106; Sept 1786:

100). Failure to comply with these regulations came with severe punishment. Slave masters also enforced a law that the enslaved carry a permission letter from their slave owner indicating the reason for them to be out in public during dark (Plakkaaten July 1760:31).

The risk of punishment for engaging in certain social and religious activities was high for the enslaved populations especially during the second half of eighteenth century. The largest portion of the population at the Cape during that time was officials who worked for the VOC (Dutch East India Company) and free burghers who came to the Cape to exploit the emerging economic opportunities. The town was sparsely populated with barely one hundred houses to accommodate these inhabitants (Lockyer 1711: 289) and the possibility of illegal movement detection was high.

The collection of fire wood by the enslaved was one way in which the enslaved could move around freely in the town and the surrounding mountainside during daylight hours. The lower reaches of Table Mountain was a favourite foraging place for the collection of firewood, especially during the cold winter months when the Cape weather would be at its most intense. These chores allowed the enslaved extended movement away from the observation of their slave owners (Ross 1980: 8). This level of mobility through the cutting and collection of wood did enable some of the enslaved to slip from their masters' constant observation and in so doing, help the runaway slaves who often sought refuge among the forests on the slopes of Table Mountain and surrounding mountain peaks (Ross 1980: 9).

Throughout the ages laundry, or the washing of clothes, has always been regarded as time consuming and physically demanding, but necessary. It became one of the first chores that a wealthy mistress of a household would outsource to hired or enslaved help

(Strasser 1982: 105). During the early years of the Cape colony, enslaved women were found outdoors, engaged in washing clothing of their mistresses and their families. These activities often took place on the mountainsides of Table Mountain in the fresh water streams flowing down into the sea. For at least two centuries the washing places in and along the Platteklip Stream were among those most used by slave women and their descendants (Jordan 2006: 14)

Even though it was physically demanding work, enslaved and former enslaved women chose to undertake it, as laundry became “the optimal choice for a black woman who wanted to create a life of her own” (Hunter 1997: 57). Washerwomen had considerable opportunities to physically move around freely without the immediate supervision of their masters or mistresses (Bank 1991: 30). This physical space outside of the immediate influence of their slave masters’ control enabled enslaved women to develop social relations with each other, establishing social circles beyond their masters’ influence (Van der Spuy 1993: 142).

Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was about one hundred houses in Cape Town, which were mostly family dwellings. The kind of personal relationships that existed at the beginning of the century significantly changed towards the end. It would have become difficult for slave masters to distinguish between slave and freed slave nor would they have been able to track all the activities of their slaves on a daily basis. From the 1760s onwards the Cape experienced exponential growth and social relations between the various groups become more multi-faceted as more Europeans entered the Cape colony. As the group dynamics among slave owners, free burghers and traders shifted, so the spaces between the rulers and the ruled increased in size (Bradlow 1988: 111).

Adil Bradlow proposes that

Hidden from the prying eyes of their masters and overlords, in their mountain and forest hideaways, small Muslim communities established themselves around the personality of a religious leaders or *shaykhs*. From the example and teachings of these *shaykhs*, the early Muslims - who were mostly enslaved - learnt the essential components and practices of Islam. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, there was a shift away from an essentially mystical expression of Islamic practice.... This shift is highlighted in the establishment of the town's first mosque in 1795 (Bradlow 1988: 3).

1.8 A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF POWER

In this dissertation I explore the dynamic, relational and interactive aspects of contestation and conflict between the two disparate groups consisting of slave owners and the enslaved people in the Cape. This provides a clearer sense of how the power relations between individuals of less powerful socio-economic and cultural disposition responded to ongoing processes of material and communal domination (Hansard 2004: 1). A range of concepts of power are presented here because structurally similar modes of domination will bear a resemblance to one another and elicit similar reactions and patterns of resistance (Scott 1990: x)

Michel Foucault deliberated extensively on the two faces of power, in his book *Discipline and Punish* (Hoare & Smith (1971) where one form of power can be easily seen as dramatic, overwhelming, rapid and violent and where the other is silent, almost undetectable and sluggish. The first one is commonly called “power”, while the next one is often

not described in that way (we call it “order” or “discipline”). The truth of the matter is, we usually see more “power” in police officers in riot gear attacking rioters, than in a bureaucrat applying policies and procedures. The Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, who was held in prison by Mussolini, advanced the idea of power further in his *Prison Notebooks* with his widely influential notions of ‘hegemony’ and the ‘manufacture of consent’ (Gramsci 1971). Gramsci regarded the capitalist state as constituting two overlapping components, a ‘political society’ (which rules through force) and a ‘civil society’ (which rules through consent). From his *Prison Notebooks*, Antonio Gramsci’s marked distinction in the field of power is that between *hard* and *soft* power, this very much sounds like Foucault’s two types of power.

Jones (2006: 55) provides more clarity on the distinction between domination and hegemony. He argues that

“hegemony is moral and intellectual leadership which treats the aspirations and views of subaltern people as an active element within the political and cultural programme of the hegemonising bloc”.

In my view, supported by the perceptions of Gaventa (2003: 2), Foucault is one of the few writers on power who recognises that “power is not just a negative, coercive or repressive thing that forces us to do things against our wishes, but can also be a necessary, productive and positive force in society.” The archival evidence of the individual choices made, and issues raised by members of this slave and free society could be used to reconstruct this community’s experience within the period before emancipation, which reflects the contexts, urgencies and desires of this subaltern group. The various travel logs written by European travellers, including reports from various authorities, reveal a wealth of information about the Cape enslaved, which are located in

reports of the Office of the Protector of Slaves, reports of the Special Magistrates and Court Transcripts. These documents reveal a wealth of information about the socio-cultural conditions of the enslaved in the Cape and with a more nuanced exploration provide additional substance to the historical sense of the lifestyle and world of the enslaved.

Foucault (1991: 194) concludes by stating:

We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it “excludes”, it “represses”, it “censors”, it “abstracts”, it “masks”, it “conceals”. In fact power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.”

Cultural responses to slavery were, by definition, collective and served primarily to separate the identity of slave and master, and to solidify connectedness between slaves and other members of the subordinate class. Underclass actions, directed at the avoidance or disruption of structures of domination, took increasingly active and overt forms in the Cape.

1.9 CONFINING THE APPLICATION OF SPECULATIVE HISTORY

The challenge to my research project is the lack of physically written sources, as the earliest Cape Muslims did not produce written documents that survived to guide us as to the daily lived experience of their world.

As John Mason notes, the men and women who were responsible for the cultivation and growth of Islam in South Africa were labourers, exiles, bandieten (convicts), and slaves

that the Dutch East India Company (VOC) brought to the Cape during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Mason 2002: 8). The first substantial group of Muslims to arrive at the shores of Cape Town seem likely to have been Mardyckers from Amboyna in the southern Moluccas, who landed in 1658, only six years after the VOC established a refreshment station at the Cape in 1652 (Mason 2002: 8)

One of the ways I devised to develop my argument was to draw on the presence of phenomenon, such as prevalence of several kramats in and around Cape Town, the tombs of *shaykhs* and Imams, who evolved as highly respected individuals, as holy places and 'Auliya' or friends of Allah. Kramat burial places according to Jaffer (1996:10) "on and near the Cape peninsula have been associated with particular *shaykhs* and Imams for nearly 300 years in some cases and have long been places of pilgrimage for local Muslims", who seek strength and inspiration from the presence of the holy essence of the Auliya (Jaffer 1996: 10). What we see at the Cape in the form of physical structure and ritualistic practices are not unique to this locale. Many holy sites that serve as centres of spiritual empowerment in the *Sūfī* practices are to be found in other places in the Islamic world across the globe (Hiskett 1984: 9).

A most distinctive Cape Muslim ceremony, *Rampie-sny*, which is a celebration of the Prophet Muhammed's birthday, can be linked to *Sūfī* practices (PBUH). It is when women retire to the mosque in the morning to bind bunches of cut and scented orange leaves together, while reciting melodic verses of praise in honour of the Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). The ritual seen and described by the Swedish traveler, Carl Peter Thunberg, in 1772 was a *Rampie-sny* according to Achmat Davids (1991: 29). He reminds us here of the exceptional and rare proof connecting the lives of the early *shaykhs* to the more researched and familiar times towards the end of the century (Davids 1991: 29). It is

evident that the *shaykhs* played a vital role in ensuring that the various *Sūfi* orders, such as the Qadriyyah, were firmly embedded in the Cape colony. There “can be little doubt that *Shaykh* Yusuf continued to practice (in exile at Zandvleit) ... the religious rites and ceremonies associated with his order, the Khalwatiyyah”, including the embrace of members (da Costa 1994: 129).

1.10 *SŪFI* PRACTICES FILLS IN THE GAPS

In the 1770s, Anders Sparrman the Swedish botanist, described the very elaborate and ritualised procedures of a Muslim enslaved burial while they visited the shores of the Cape Colony. These were clear expressions of Sufi ritualistic practices contained in the Sufic world of people residing in the places of origin of the enslaved people at the Cape (Shell 1989: 58).

The *Sūfi tariqa* clearly influenced Muslim burial rituals in its scope and application and by the end of the nineteenth century several *tariqa*’s had become “part of the Islamic fabric at the Cape”, as reported by a traveller in 1797 and as practised in the Western Cape up to the present day (da Costa 1996: 129-136). The range of writers on the subject appear then to have reached some consensus that Sufism has been present from virtually the beginning of Cape Islam and that it has strongly influenced the development of local practices and beliefs. As Mason observed, during the last couple of centuries, Sufism’s presence and relevance seems to have been widely accepted (Mason 2002: 3).

One could think that these connections are not substantial enough to form a convincing argument, but these statements have been further supported by other scholars. In an unpublished manuscript, Achmat Davids provides substantial descriptions of the beliefs and practices of the Cape Muslim community spanning many years up to the very recent

(Davids (unpub): 1, 7-8, 13-14).

The release from prison in 1793 of Tuan Guru, an exile from the Indonesian Islands and an extremely well educated Muslim scholar, is an important moment in the evolution of the enslaved community at the Cape. Again Mason (2002) makes the important observation that Tuan Guru was the key figure to whom the establishment of the first madrassah and the first mosque in the Cape is accredited to. Given the content and scope of his writings and teachings through the madrassah system and the pulpit within the mosque, his influence in shaping the philosophical and religious base of the Cape Muslim community became evident (Mason 2002: 12)

This position was further supported by Bradlow who noted that Tuan Guru was able to effect this repositioning of the Muslim religious practice and medium of education because he possessed that unique combination of Islamic scholarship and at the same time he was well schooled in the Sufi traditions and practices (Bradlow 1988: 4). The manuscript penned by Tuan Guru, while he was exiled from his home country and imprisoned on Robben Island, 'Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Iman' (Manifestations of Islam and Faith), and included an extensive discussion on Islamic law. This cemented the bedrock for social and cultural interaction, which inevitably carved a direction for communities and society to develop among the Cape enslaved people (Rahman 1979: 150).

Enslaved people could be regarded as outsiders, the socially dead, who had been taken against their will from their homelands and thrust into an extremely unfamiliar environment (Mason 2002). They shared a common fate, having been stripped of their identities, but it is exactly because slaves were socially dead, they were "desperate for life" (Patterson 1991: 21 as cited by John Mason (2002). Enslaved people looked for and discovered membership in a community different from that of their masters; both to find

a sense of cultural independence and to reduce their social isolation from the mainstream culture of the slave owner. Few experiences were more scary than the one that the enslaved, Prize Negroes, and free black people of the Cape had in common and the intense need for spiritual accomplishment, that many have put forward as an integral aspect of their lives (Mason 2002: 16).

Driven by such prevailing conditions of common hardship, slaves adapted, recreated, and invented religious and other forms of social and cultural practices in which they found “cleansing and its concomitant rebirth” (Reis 1969: viii). Likewise, when he talks about conversion to Islam among the slaves of nineteenth-century Bahia in Brazil, Joao Jose Reis underscores the yearning for “spiritual security”, as well as for social acceptance by enslaved people (Reis 1993: 114). Like the slaves of the United States and Brazil, Muslim converts in South Africa longed “to find meaning and value in life, despite the suffering that ‘their flesh is heir to’” (Armstrong 1993: xix).

Substantial research over the years have been conducted in the area of identity influenced by psychological conditioning and socio-cultural interactions, particularly among religious and social minorities (Tessler 1978: 395, Waddell and Vernon 1987: 13-23, Lewis 1978 19-38, Paranjpe 1986 78-94). There seems to be a natural progression among religious minorities to form visible social units and cultural practices, including some of the cultural values and expressions from the dominant culture, but maintaining its own sets of social-cultural and traditional norms in the face of the strong hegemonic forces demanding its complete integration. This is a generally observable phenomenon, even though the ways in which these general practices evolve are unique to geographic and social conditions (da Costa 1994: 239). In this dissertation I will further examine the development of urban Cape Town and the spaces which opened up for the enslaved and

free in the town, to carve a new set of social relations for themselves.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 BACKGROUND TO DIVERSITY & ACCULTURATION

Having provided a framework of the power relations at the Cape and how this master-slave relationship changed, it became evident that the enslaved population at the Cape displayed great prowess in establishing a code of community conduct among themselves. By embracing their diversity and through the process of acculturation they exploited free spaces by means of public ritual to exercise independent power, using Islam as a vehicle towards community respectability.

This dissertation is informed by the considered opinions of a wide range of scholars such as Boeseken (1964; 1977), Bradlow (1978), Davids (1980), Theal (1909), Worden (1995;1998), Mason (2002), Jeppie (1996), Dangor (1994) and Da Costa (1994). These scholars confirm the multiplicity of the ways in which Islam was expressed in the Cape during the early seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Together they create a picture of the convergence of influences from various geographic regions, the manner in which the enslaved were housed in the urban Cape Town and later moved to the outlying areas of the Cape colony and the kinds of Islamic practice these factors produced. Muslims were brought to the Cape as indentured laborers, slaves, convicts, political exiles and soldiers. They were transported against their will from various regions of the world, such as Africa, India, the East Indian Archipelago and Ceylon and bringing with them diverse forms of

Islamic practice. I will explore how trade and the urbanisation of Cape Town encouraged the fusion of cultures into a unique blend of Muslim practices at the Cape, due to the enslaved being housed in the Slave Lodge and various households throughout the city. This level of residential proximity encouraged cultural and religious mixing to create a unique blend of Islam, influenced also by Christianity and Hinduism (Lewis 1949: 587).

From the outset, the practice of Islam was restricted by a wide array of provisions such as the statutes of India, which placed heavy restrictions on Muslim residents in the Batavian Empire, and as the Cape formed part of this control area, it applied to its inhabitants as well. The public expression of Islam was prohibited, no religion was to be practiced, , in private or public, other than the Reformed Protestant Church (Davids 1978: 10).

The Auwal *Masjid* (mosque) was established only in 1797 and the Dorp Street *madrasah*, which was its pre-cursor, started operating shortly before (Davids 1980: 93). Despite these attempts by the colonial authorities, there was a fairly rapid spread of Islam at the Cape as informal Muslim practices were conducted in the forests, on the mountain slopes around Cape Town and inside the private homes of the former enslaved people. These processes were driven by the *Sūfī* inspired religious leaders and Imams from among the enslaved people. A major factor for conversion was that Islam provided these socially and economically marginalized groups of people group membership and a sense of acknowledgement of their humanness. When they adopted the new religion, these enslaved people gained a new social identity, but could still keep practicing some of their old traditional and customary practices.

2.2 PUBLIC RITUAL AND COMMUNITY POWER

In this dissertation I argue that the actions of the enslaved and freed people at the Cape, through the development of an own language, the creation of an independent education system, adoption of *Sūfī* Islam and the practice of common Muslim religious practices should be regarded as evidence of contested terrain and an expression of inverted power. As Ralph Milliband says in Marston (1989), when he talks about the ideological hegemony of the ruling class, the discussion of the development of political consciousness among subordinate groups in society “requires the inclusion of the concept of a battle being fought on many fronts and on the basis of tensions and contradictions which are present in the actual structures of work and life ... the ideological terrain is highly contested territory” (Marston 1989: 54).

If one applies the framework alluded to by Milliband (1977) it helps to gain an understanding of the importance of the public and private rituals and Muslim common religious practices of the Cape enslaved, which in recent years has increasingly been lauded with attention in social historiography. As Sean Wilentz (1999) points out, what might have once appeared as stories on the periphery, has come to take centre stage as scholars try to understand the origins and emergence of Cape enslavement social ideology and culture. By focusing on the emergence of language, the spread of religion, common religious practices and alternate education strategies, I will demonstrate how subordinate groups like the enslaved and freed people at the Cape, were able to express their perceptions of and reactions to the hegemonic forces of their colonial masters. These public and private demonstrations of group solidarity provide a frame of reference for coming to grips with the subordinate ideologies that evolved to challenge the pervasive power of the status quo of colonial hegemony.

2.3 EXPLOITING FREE SPACES TO EXERCISE POWER

Although their status as non-persons prevented the enslaved from gaining personal autonomy through the accumulation of capital and property, it did not stop them from finding some form of power. In this dissertation, I suggest, guided by Elizabeth Jordan's arguments, that the enslaved people at Cape Town, who were assigned tasks in and around the homes of their colonial masters and places of commerce and trade, worked within the parameters of their enslavement expectations to create physical and psychological zones of personal, as well as collective, autonomy (Jordan 2006). Through the routine domestic and public performance of their labour, the enslaved people became "fixtures" on the landscape, and over time their presence not only went unquestioned but their activities largely unnoticed (Herman 1999: 97, Scott 1990: 58- 60). They could partake in social, educational, cultural, and economic activities simultaneously with their work, as long as they looked busy, and completed their chores at the end of the day (Gefou- Madianou 1992; Scott 1990; Tebutt 1995).

Although the slave codes of 1754 forbade the enslaved, owned by more than three masters, from gathering in groups larger than ten, they often met in small groups in various locations around Cape Town while collecting wood, fetching water or selling produce on behalf of their masters, attended Muslim schools and participated in Muslim common religious practices and developed their own language for communication among themselves (Mentzel in Worden et al. 1998: 62). During these moments they had opportunities to establish meaningful relationships with one another, creating and maintaining domestic networks along the lines of those described by anthropologist Carol Stack (Stack 1974a). Stack (1974) describes essential resources including food, material goods, and even services such as domestic help, as exchanged through "domestic networks", embedding each member in a web of reciprocal obligation.

Given the mobility of the enslaved, these networks are likely to have extended beyond their places of work. Hawking of fruit and vegetables, collection of wood and washing, amongst others, would have served as a pass, permitting them to come and go as they pleased. While performing these wide range of tasks, they could have visited any number of households on route to and returning from performing their duties. These stops could have drawn other enslaved people into the networks, breaking the monotony and isolation of the domestic routine, and perhaps providing additional goods and information to be exchanged among its members. As such, their daily tasks not only ensured their ease of passage through town, but provided a means for transporting goods for exchange, trade, or sale (Shell 1994: 184-5, Worden 1985: 99). The enslaved, who in performing their tasks, conveyed such items throughout the urban center on a daily basis and would have been perfectly poised to participate in it.

Moreover, they could have served as “go-betweens” for funneling much needed items to runaway servants and slaves who lived on the slopes of Table Mountain. Although the enslaved living in Cape Town on occasion deserted and never started an insurrection, they could have provided much of the necessary support for those who did. When given the opportunity, the enslaved people went about the town performing their duties, and in doing so, they exercised power. Whereas the taverns in town may have attracted some of the enslaved, the emerging spaces which emerged all over the city were better suited to their specific social, cultural, educational and material needs (Bank 1991).

As such, performing their tasks all over the city not only proved an effective strategy for surviving enslavement, but these spaces themselves became important loci for the transmission of culture, information about education and the religion of Islam, the

development of a new language of communication and the maintenance of community (Scott 1990: 128). Here among peers, they resisted domination, and reclaimed some of the autonomy and dignity lost to their enslavement. Importantly, the ties created in these spaces did not end with emancipation, but instead over time, provided the foundation for a working class identity (Armstrong and Worden 1988: 148, Bank 1991: 210). It is within the framework of these evolving processes that the foundations of slavery heritage in Cape Town was cemented through emerging physical and metaphysical spaces of interaction among enslaved people.

2.4 ISLAM AS VEHICLE TOWARDS RESPECTABILITY

These emerging spaces enabled religion, to stimulate vibrant areas for the emergence of slave culture. It was noted that until the nineteenth century, conversion to Islam was a social occurrence rather than a religious one (Robert Shell 1994; Robert Ross 1983). This has to be understood within the context of slavery. They argued that the enslaved of all creeds were powerless, exploited, humiliated and dominated primarily through violence. Since the power structures were controlled by the slave owning class, these slaves endured secular excommunication that was often supported by religious exclusion (Dadoo 2014: 75). In contrast, Orlando Patterson, in a more generic psycho-sociological study about slavery maintains that it is precisely on account of this degradation that slaves yearned for the reinstatement of their dignity. They felt deprived of their social value and dignity (Patterson 1982). Based on Patterson's argument, Islam accorded to them a momentous alternative since they believed that by adopting this way of life they would move from the margins of settler society to the centre of the Muslim community.

The religious leaders (or *shayks*) helped in filling this spiritual vacuum for the enslaved and free blacks by attracting them to Islam and initiating them into their mystical fellowships. With the perpetuation of these brotherhoods (*turuq*) there emerged several small, covert, isolated and secretive Muslim communities in the Cape during the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries that were structured around the practices of Sufism. Another phase of Cape Muslim history was ushered in as early as the 1770's when there appeared signs of a shift to overt kinds of organisation resulting from the Dutch government's increasing acceptance of more open Islamic worship (Dadoo 2014: 74). At that time the government showed greater neutrality to regular prayers held in private homes. During the last decade of that century Muslims first held open-air Friday prayers, then set up the first *madrassah* and constructed the first mosque (Bradlow and Cairns 1977: 19).

Such acts of power established the groundwork for increased expansion and strengthening of the enslaved Cape Muslim community. In this regard, Tuan Guru played a prominent role after his release from prison. As a sound Islamic scholar, he composed the *Ma'rifat al-Islām wa l-Īmān* (Knowledge of Islam and Faith) which is a compilation containing a discourse in Islamic theology, the ideological framework within which the enslaved and previously enslaved, could function harmoniously while oppressed in the broader Cape society (Dadoo 2014: 76).

The views of Davids (1980), Shell (1994) and Patterson (1982) underline the social value of religion for creating group cohesion and building spiritual fellowships among oppressed members of society. At the same time, the educational value of religion was amplified by the slaves' desire to attain literacy as a means towards enhancing their social

status. The Islamic tradition of teaching enabled literate Cape slaves to gain better positions and some semblance of respectability in their masters' households. The great popularity of mystical practices among early Muslims of the Cape, points to the fulfilment of the substantive and psychological functions of religion among them.

2.5 SOME ATTEMPTS OF SPECULATIVE HISTORY AND ORAL HISTORY

This is not a conventional history of Cape Muslims that I have applied here, nor is it in fact a strict historiography. These disciplines of study would invariably have been undertaken by individual researchers who would have recorded data concerning the Cape Muslim community, with presupposed frameworks of how they perceived the actions and behaviour of this community. Thus, the accounts by missionaries, travellers, government agents, colonial historians, orientalist scholars and politicians have been regarded within this framework. Instead of entirely relying on their interpretive handling of their subjects, I have attempted to instead, extract from their writings the signs of visible inter group reactions of popular movements in the Cape. I have applied a selective approach, reflected in the Eurocentric notions of history, to make sense of the existence of Islam in the empowerment process in the lives of the enslaved community at the Cape. As Bradlow (1998) stated:

The official VOC records often clearly state the religious persuasion of people.

Where the established historiography fails, however, is in understanding how the personal religious convictions of individuals came to take on a social character.

Another aspect of my approach is located in the field of common religion, demonstrated through the development and application of a range of Muslim Common Religious Practices (MCRP). Oral history and myth have brought to light how the popular masses

perceived some of the important personalities such as Tuangs Yusuf and Guru and the array of early Muslim leaders buried in the Kramats around Cape Town, within the historiography of Cape Muslim history and in turn how such perceptions informed and shaped their behavior.

It is contended that oral traditions are an important source of history. For example, at the Cape both Tuan Yusuf and Tuan Guru wrote the *Qur'ān* from memory and these texts were accepted as the uncontested and pure Word of Allah (God) by their two communities. Perhaps the particular quality of *Sūfī* Islam, created an enabling environment for such beliefs, perceptions and actions. The history of Cape Islam can be regarded as essentially that of *Sūfī* Islam. For this specific reason it was of the utmost importance, to contextualise the contentions contained in this dissertation, to delve into the inner workings of *Sūfī* Islam and the way in which it was practiced by the Muslim enslaved and former enslaved people at the Cape (Mukadam 1990: 27).

To formulate a better understanding in this regard, it is important to unpack the impact of the various religious leaders, the development of Afrikaans, the role of *Sūfī* Islam and the innovative education strategies employed in the growth and development of Islam in the Cape. Although few primary sources exist to verify a large parts of the central arguments of this dissertation, a combination of oral traditions and a variety of other sources inform my approach which captures the trajectory and form of the process of Islamisation and its empowering effect on the enslaved people of Cape Town.

2.6 THE TANDEM EFFECT OF ARABIC AFRIKAANS, IMAMS AND EDUCATION

One of the major concerns in my approach was understanding the role of Arabic Afrikaans, the influence of personalities such as the Imams and how education influenced the Cape enslaved community. Here Davids (1980) work is invaluable. Children of the enslaved and free black population were excluded from attending the church schools which catered for the children of colonial masters. The homes of Imams, and later prayer rooms and mosques were transformed into *madrassahs* which catered for the educational requirements of Muslim children. Tuan Guru established a *madrassah* in Dorp Street in 1793 which stimulated the role out of a whole lot of schools in the homes of number of Imams in the neighbourhood. Davids (1980) established that the *Ma'rifat al-Islam wa'l Iman*, penned by Tuan Guru, became the most commonly used textbook in the *madrassahs*. It had a significant influence on the social and religious life of the Cape Muslims during the 19th century and beyond. The lessons in the *madrassahs* were delivered in Cape Dutch or Afrikaans. The creation of these schools exposed Muslims to Islamic literature in Arabic. Afrikaans was employed as the medium of tuition and it needed the translation of Arabic books into Afrikaans. The *Imams* were not to read or write in Latin, so they proceeded to write the translations in Afrikaans with Arabic letters (Davids 1990:37; Van Selms 1951: 7).

The *madrassahs* provided an education framework through which the children of the enslaved could easily transition into the world of Islam. The *madrassahs* had a decisive role in the transition of the Imams as organic leaders, who maintained a crucial role in providing information and guidance to their congregations of the enslaved and freed Muslims onto the path of Islam. The adoption of Islam and the establishment of *madrassahs* could be viewed as the Cape Muslim's passive, but dynamic way of resisting the co-opting forces of the dominant cultural hegemony of their colonial masters and

former masters and their attempt to preserve their own existing and evolving cultural identity.

2.7 A HARMONIOUS MODE OF LIVING.

This evolving alternative lifestyle of the Cape Muslim enslaved was socially fluid and even the enslaved and freed slaves could rise to the position of Imam. The system of schooling initiated by Tuan Guru did not have teaching and learning as an end in itself and was thus self-perpetuating as it contributed significantly to the way in which Muslims perceived themselves (Rafudeen 2006: 93). Furthermore, students were taught in the language they were most comfortable with. As Robert Shell writes,

Muslim education encouraged conversion in many ways: first, the [*madrassah*] system was open to all children, regardless of race or religion, thereby drawing hundreds of otherwise excluded children into the Islamic circle; second, Imams conducted the lessons in a language – Afrikaans – which appealed to the largest linguistic pool at the Cape, and finally, the Islamic schools offered an alternative education for many people hostile to, or suspicious of, the ruling Christian order. (1993: 443)

Perhaps most significantly, the Cape Muslim alternative provided the subjugated with a true sense of belonging to an increasingly vibrant community that could ensure that one's "cradle to the grave" requirements – pertaining to birth, marriage and death – are provided for in an emotionally fulfilling manner. Writing in 1829 a Reverend Elliot, commented:

The case is widely different with a slave who becomes a convert to Muhammedanism [meaning Islam]; he immediately becomes a real, not a nominal member of an extensive society, every member of which recognizes his claim to a full and ungrudging share of all the privileges, and charities of brotherhood. It is not in the Mosque alone that he feels himself a social being; in every house inhabited by a Musselman [meaning a Muslim] he finds a home and a brother, and in every assembly whether convened for purposes of religion or festivity, he takes his place with confidence among free men, and in the general flow of kindly feeling, almost forgets his bonds. (Shell 1993:457)

As will be demonstrated in this dissertation, that the intellectual basis for Muslim self-assertion in this period is to be found in the part of the compendium which contains Tuan Guru's writing of the *Umm al-Barahin* (The Demonstrative Proofs), a classic *Ash'arite* text on Islamic belief. In Cape Town, the *Umm al-Barahin* was partially memorized by students and copied in their notebooks (*kopiesboeke*) up until the 1850s. In addition, it sparked a continuing tradition of *aqidah* studies in Cape Town that popularized and disseminated the *Ash'arite* worldview. Rafudeen (2005) notes that the proliferation of the text and the regular, life-long manner in which a *murid* – in the Cape context, a congregant of a specific mosque – imbibed its teaching from his or her Imam ensured suitable pedagogic conditions for the unpacking and absorption of a complex text (Rafudeen 2005).

In a later publication, Rafudeen (2006: 95) further argues that the transcription of this theological text enabled the Muslim community to be secured in an independent, self-contained worldview. This worldview paralleled and provided an alternative to the colonial one. Simultaneously the contents of the text had the associated effect of undermining notions of colonial superiority by teaching where power truly lay. What

truly counted in the scheme of things was to know this power and not be deluded as to the nature of ultimate reality. Many of the enslaved, through learning the text, had such knowledge. Since the colonists generally did not have such knowledge, it was, in fact, the socially oppressed group that had the superior, liberating access to reality. This in turn created a mindset under-awed by colonial dominance that, in fact, subverted the notion of dominance, and that was consequently prepared to challenge their social hegemony.

2.8 ALTERNATE STRATEGIES OF POWER THROUGH MUSLIM COMMON RELIGIOUS PRACTICES (MCRP's)

Mason's work (2002) suggests the acceptance of a new religion and development of an own language and independent education was evidence of acts of resistance and the expression of power.

He further explains how Islam provided the newly converted enslaved people with a means to comprehend the secular world, of making decisions about it, and of living with an amount of self-respect within it,

These alternate strategies which were diametrically opposed to the expectations of the colonial slave owners, led converts toward a deeper and more powerful truth than the truth of slavery. God entered their lives to reconstruct souls that slavery and colonial oppression had made every effort to destroy. The message of slavery was social death; God's message was life. To the heart of the believer, the application of these alternate life strategies brought the quite inner peace to the troubled souls of the enslaved (Mason 2002: 23).

It is of the utmost importance at this juncture to consider the transformative effects of the array of Muslim common religious practices within the context of alternative

expressions of power. If popular Islam is an expression of liberation then surely, its various parts, the rituals, the traditions, the legends, the innovations, the holy places, persons and artefacts all fit into an important set of common responsive actions (Hunwick 2004: 149) .

Islam's early pioneers advocated, with the medium of commonly accepted activities, against the interests of hegemonic class systems and its attempts at overall control of all the inhabitants in the town, including the enslaved. Imams of both the early 16 and 17 hundreds, who spread Islam through covert activities, as well as the Imams who from the 1800's onwards, in more institutionalised fashions, had the power to control the supply of religious ideas and practices.

Through the course of this dissertation I will explore areas of Muslim common religious practices and movements, probing into common Muslim spirituality among the enslaved at the Cape. The application of sacred symbols, whether they be located within texts, ideas, or practices, becomes evident when we scrutinise the impressive and practical manner in which Shayck Yusuf, Tuang Guru and the array of Imams who followed in their wake, was able to gain control of their personal and emotional inner forces firstly then were able to exert control over their social environment. In instances where real power evaded them, they would utilise the symbolism of power to their own benefit and to that of their respective communities. They succeeded in doing this through *Sūfi* Islam, "by integrating the authority of official Islam into the fundamental understanding and sympathetic appreciation of the spiritual interests of disadvantaged and harshly repressed human beings" (Mukadam 2009: 86).

2.9 ASSERTING POWER WITH PRACTICE OF *TAKDIR* (PRE-DETERMINED WILL OF GOD)

In understanding the evolution of the altering mindset of the enslaved the philosophical framework laid by *Shaykh* Yusuf, Tuan Guru and the teachings of the Imams provides an important contextual framework. Being enslaved would not have dissuaded these Imams from exercising their power of authority, this type of power would be in *iradah*, i.e. the Will of God, as was set out for a person. This is supported by the Holy *Qur'ān* (*Ali MS 2015: 92*) “Verily Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice.” In terms of Islamic jurisprudence or *Fiqh*, slaves would not be allowed to lead the Friday congregational or *jumaáh* prayers, for which freedom from slavery was a fundamental requirement. It was postulated

that the slave, being exempted from paying the compulsory poor rate (*zakah*), even though he has a *nisab* (the minimum property on which *zakah* is due), is incomplete (the communal word is *onvolkoem*) with regard to expressing the four basic principles of faith – belief, prayer, paying *zakah*, and fasting-required from the person who leads the *jumaáh* prayers (Marasabessy 2004: 127).

In this way the teaching within the compendium, as contextualized by Tuan Guru, enabled the enslaved to gain advancement within the community of Muslims and to attain leadership positions, in spite of their station in life.

Having been set free from the control of their mental enslavement in this way, the enslaved were able to partake in the combination of Muslim common religious practices which their membership to this community provided. The ceremonial approach characterised the cultural-religious practices of the Cape Muslim enslaved, and it is evident in such activities as *rampie sny*, *gadat*, *doopmal* (the naming ceremony of the

new-born baby with all its trimmings: with crow-foot-like insignia drawn on the forehead, the baby being carried on a tray decorated with flowers) and the *kersopstiek*. These practices illustrate the power of the syncretic mysticism of the eighteenth century on the cultural life of the Muslim community.

Marasabessy has also show how this syncretic spirituality accommodated “aspects of Hinduism and animistic forms of worship into the religious practice of Islam by the newly converted” [enslaved] “It was through *madrassah* education at the Cape that these new cultural traits were established and merged into everyday life” (Marasabessy 2004:126).

The Muslim common religious practices, the development of an own language, the institutionalisation of *madrassah* education and the adoption of their own religion ushered in an alternative worldview that was in contrast to the ideologies and practices of slavery, colonialism, and slave master power relations. John Mason’s work demonstrates how it also enabled the enslaved and freed converts to show that the world of the spirit was a more superior reality than the everyday world of slave owner’s threats and punishment. He notes that it also underscored the teachings which the Imams directed at the enslaved and former enslaved converts: “though their bodies were enslaved, their souls were free ... It validated Islam’s claims of embodying a superior ‘cosmology and... moral order in a world of duplicity” (Mason 2002:22).

These practices, therefore, had a major influence on the humanity of the Cape Muslim enslaved and the way in which they viewed themselves. Goolam Karim (1998: 3) says that; “Islam flowers when it is suppressed, as shown by the early Muslims who have contributed immeasurably to the prosperity of the Cape”, for instance by the local application of Dutch to develop the language and influence of the written and spoken

words of Afrikaans, the development of a locally fused education system and the application of a range of Muslim common religious practices.

2.10 THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE TRANSFER OF IDEAS

Education became a powerful means towards the spread of ideas and the development of skills among the enslaved. The growth of the free black population was a major factor in the establishment of *madrassahs* as they had, "the education, personal autonomy, accommodation, and free time permitted by urban occupations, to organize religious schools" (da Costa 1990: 65).

Through the organisation and influence of the *Madrassah* system the different Afro-Asian groups were able to interact largely on the basis of the same teachings (Ajam 1986: 28). Thus, the piety of the content of the compendium of teachings initially drafted by Tuan Guru, and used by the Imams, directly informed and influenced the rituals of the community. The transcribing of parts of the text through *kopiesboeke* contributed to the solidification of Afrikaans as the lingua franca of the community. The universality of its theological component undoubtedly made the process of racial assimilation among the enslaved so much easier. Bradlow positions these practices within the wider Cape socio-political dynamic:

The infrastructural matrix (initiated by Tuan Guru) fostered new sets of social relations within the town, prevailing these as an alternative to the prevailing configuration of social relations. It is in this sense that the process of Islamisation came to embrace a subtle challenge to the hegemony of capitalist social relations within the town. (1988: 132)

It has become clear that under Tuan Guru's leadership and tutelage the Auwal mosque became more than just a place of gathering of the faithful to worship Allah, perform daily prayers and for children to be schooled in the practice and laws of Islam. The school offered an alternative for people and:

... was the first school to develop outside the structure of ruling class hegemony" ... it was to become the focal point of an expansionist impulse that not only sought to regularise the practice of Islam but also to popularise its message among the inhabitants of the town. (Bradlow 1988: 146)

It became evident that was it not for the strong and well-organised *madrassah* education system, that was the order of the first six decades of the nineteenth century, Arabic-Afrikaans, as a literary form, would never have originated and evolved. The *madrassahs* were the ideal venues for the transfer of religious and cultural ideas because, thanks to the unified educational approach, they were attractive to large groups of Cape enslaved and free blacks. The *madrassahs* contributed greatly to the common social life of the enslaved and free-blacks of the nineteenth century in the Cape. In addition, Muslim education made it easy for everyone to be educated in Islam. The *madrassahs* were open to everyone, even to interested Christians. More people were exposed to Islam and race did not play a role which enabled Islam to become a viable alternative to Christian education (Shell 1993: 8).

Little evidence exists on levels of literacy among the enslaved in the period before 1750. This does not necessarily mean the Eastern slaves who were forcibly transported to Cape Town could not read or write. They came from a background where it was common for

people to read and write, and they recorded folklore in their specific writing and oral history.

Given the demands placed upon them by the growing Muslim population, the nineteenth century Cape Imams were constantly in a process of adjusting from one role to another. Not only spiritual leaders concerned exclusively with the religious and spiritual problems of their congregations, they often had to initiate action to ease the burden of the community's difficult lives. They endeavoured to find practical solutions under very difficult and trying circumstances (Davids 1995: 55). Despite the status and respect Imams enjoyed in their congregations, they were still of an oppressed people, and to practice Islam in the Christian dominated society which prevailed at the Cape, was seen as a privilege, not a right (Davids 1995: 56). As we have seen, the first *madrassah* opened in 1793. Three decades later, there were several *madrassahs*, the largest enrolling nearly 500 students (Mason 2002: 17). The Imams taught their pupils "to read and write Arabic", "to observe the facts prescribed by the *Qur'ān*, [to attend] the service of the mosques, and [to make] their wives and children conform to these rites" (Imperial Blue Book 1835: 207). The most significant gain of Muslim education in the nineteenth century was, the contribution of the Imams to Afrikaans as a written language (Van Selms 1953). This is an important aspect of the argument I am developing.

The worldview of the enslaved operated at a physical level, however its critique was subtle, hidden from the Dutch by its complex and relatively alien language (Malay with a strong Arabic bent, and later Afrikaans hidden in Arabic characters). Its institutional forms, communicating as they did a metaphysical vision, would have appeared relatively innocent to their slave masters. This combination of seeming harmless practices coupled

with subtle technique, is effectively summed up by two statements presented to a commission on slavery in 1830, both quoted by Ajam (1986).

On the one hand, their statement at the commission outlined the educational objectives of the Muslim community:

To be conscious of God, of reward and punishment, to follow prescribed religious duties and ensure their families do so, to obey authority, work industriously, not to drink or commit crimes (Ajam 1986: 55).

On the other hand, the following quote hints that the ultimate order of existence is the inverse of the present social one:

... the Priest's endeavour to make Slaves believe that though their bodies are held in slavery, yet their souls are free, and they may trust in God to make them free when they die. (Ajam 1986: 52).

Ajam, on the importance of the application of the local language and the success of Muslim schools, states:

Vernacular education was building on the existing cultural base brought to the learning situation rather than have the base supplanted by a foreign language and new culture specifically as first the Dutch and later the British schoolmasters attempted in the schools functioning at the pleasure of the Bible and School Commission since 1809. (Ajam 1986: 56)

This is an indication of the importance of the role of the Imams as agents of change towards the empowerment of their communities.

CHAPTER 3

URBANISATION OF CAPE TOWN AS A CITY OF ENSLAVEMENT

3.1 THE VOC's GLOBAL NETWORKS

Having gained insight into the diverse nature of life at the Cape and the various ways in which the enslaved exploited these spaces that opened up to them through innovative Muslim community practices, language and education, it is important to cast our gaze to the global influences that impacted on these communities at the Cape. The Cape was established as a halfway station in the VOC's global trade networks, which transformed urbanised Cape Town into a cross cultural city of enslavement where enslaved people in turn, embarked upon autonomous action beyond their living spaces, through the enactment of hidden transcripts.

Similar to what transpired in the port cities in the Indian Ocean region, which were controlled by the VOC (Dutch East India Company), the enslaved population of the Cape was indeed deeply affected by fluctuations in commercial activities which spanned the whole region of the Indian Ocean area. Casting a critical eye over the forced movement of prisoners and those who were banished from their homelands, Cape Town is revealed as deeply under the control of the VOC, in intricate demographic and socio-cultural networks. Due to this kind of ingrained connectedness, developments at the Cape did not evolve on an independent path of self-determination, but rather remained connected to the broader system of enforced labour, which was practiced throughout the Indian Ocean region. The discussion below reveals how this connectedness shaped the way in which slavery evolved over time since the arrival of the first load of enslaved people in the mid-seventeenth century (Worden 2016: 391).

My first consideration in exploring this phenomenon is Kerry Ward's (2009) argument that the VOC empire expressed itself through a wide array of networks that converged to form an intricate web of imperial power. Although they eventually evolved as independent, the nodes of empire remained interlinked. Their independence was always expressed within the framework of the requirements of the VOC. The VOC waged a robust campaign of coercion to overcome the challenges of other individuals and independent entities attempting to create a foothold within the lucrative trading area of the Indian Ocean. Looking attentively at the VOC's network of deployment of its workforce and its use of slavery, reveals how empires are established and maintained through the creation and management of this vast array of interlocking fields of limited sovereignty (Ward 2009: 26).

The Indian Ocean has been characterised as an 'interregional arena' (Bose 2005: 6), connecting Malaysia, Chinese, Indians, Arabs and Africans operating in this vast and expansive trading space. It is an area in which many European countries and the USA rubbed shoulders with Africa, the Middle East and the East Indies. Before the widespread use of steam power in the Indian Ocean, the maintenance of the core of its trade networks was determined in the ever changing winds that blew across the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The monsoon winds that blew in from the northeast of the globe, between November and April and from the northwest between June and October, largely determined the nature and timing of trade and interaction between this diverse group of trading countries. The vast array of networks were forged through the seasonal movement of people and their trading interests and interactions (Bose 2005: 6).

Discussions on the Indian Ocean slave trade inevitably juxtapose its own significance with the more thoroughly researched slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean. Slave trade

has a long, noteworthy history within the region of the Indian Ocean, which has its origins as far back as 4,000 years ago. The rise of Islam and the exponential growth in commercial activities across the vast oceans and along the stretches of coastline of the world gave rise to the expansion of port cities and the need for cheap labour (Campbell, 2004a).

Trade was multidirectional, with people moving within Africa, from Africa to the Middle East, and from the eighteenth century onwards to the East Indian islands, to India and the Americas. Indian slaves were shipped to Indonesia, the islands, Cape Town and the Middle East while Indonesians were moved to South East Asia and Cape Town and Africans were transported from the Mozambican coastline to Cape Town and the Indian Ocean Islands (Hofmeyr 2007: 9).

The history of slavery in the Indian Ocean is more complex than the narrative of the Atlantic Ocean region, with the Indian Ocean line between enslaved and free persons continuously moving and changing. The majority of the enslaved in the Indian Ocean were usually not to be found in plantation settings and were instead integrated into households of the slave owners. The chances to move about relatively freely or of manumission were thus far greater. Debt slavery or trading of a family member were also strategies followed in times of natural disasters which could affect the slave owners adversely, such as drought or famine (Campbell 2004b).

The VOC imported slaves to multiply the existing workforce in the Cape as demand for labour grew alongside the growth of the colony. The VOC, however, could not rely on West Africa from which to import slaves because the Dutch West India Company had already established itself as a major trading entity in this region (Shell 1994). Also, the directors of the VOC, the Heren XVII, did not want indigenous people to be forced into slavery, which they regarded as risky for business because the locals were familiar with

the terrain and could easily escape from bondage. The VOC turned towards potential sources in the east such as the East African coast, the middle South Asian region and the easternmost Asian region to supply the additional labour (Vink 2003: 131-177). As the first Dutch occupation drew to a close, the colony's preference changed from imported Asian slaves to that of African slaves from the western Indian Ocean.

3.2. CROSS CULTURAL INTEGRATION FORGED THROUGH DUTCH TRADE ACTIVITIES.

The Dutch Indian Ocean slave trade was instrumental, though unintentional, in the migration of people, forced and otherwise, which led to multi-cultural infusion and amalgamation across the region. It also enhanced the economic exchange and ensured linkages between formerly non-existent trade partners. The Dutch further played a significant role in the integration of the Indian Ocean region by fashioning explicit and far reaching linkages across the region and merging previously isolated cultures and societies on the southwestern and eastern outreaches of the Indian Ocean region. In the seventeenth century, Batavia (Jakarta), became the central axis of a thriving intra-Asiatic or country trade. From here they would go on to spread their trading influence throughout the region. The company directors shared their sentiments with the high government at Batavia in 1648:

The country trade and the profit from it are the soul of the Company which must be looked after carefully because if the soul decays, the entire body would be destroyed (Vink M 2003: 5).

The Dutch Indian Ocean slave system would proceed to source labour from three connected sub-regions: the westernmost including East Africa, Madagascar, and the Mascarene Islands (Mauritius and Réunion); the middle, South Asian circuit of the Indian

subcontinent (Malabar, Coromandel, and the Bengal/Arakan coast); and the easternmost, Southeast Asian circuit of Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea (Irian Jaya), and the southern Philippines (Abu-Lughod 1989: 34, 253).

Influenced by “central place theory” or “location theory” of the German geographers Walter Cristaller and August Lösch, historian Fernand Braudel (1992: 30) suggests that world trade before the onset of the industrial revolution was concentrated in urban centres, consisting of an “archipelago of towns.” An integrated system of connected concentrated locations, from multifunctional “world-cities” to less specialized regional and local centres, serviced and drawing support from their home countries. Applying these concepts to the Indian Ocean, Chaudhuri (as cited in Vink 2003) draws our attention to the powerful role of the region’s great trading and commercial geographic areas, from the South East Coast of Africa and Red Sea coasts to Southeast China seas. This maritime connection of Indian Ocean port cities was connected by sailing boat (Vink 2003: 9).

All of these city based trading centres and their neighbouring areas were reflective of classic slave societies, where enslaved people played an important service provision role to support the lifestyle of the mainly urban, but also growing rural elite, and the production of basic foods and merchandise. Notwithstanding their low rank in society exercised great pressure on cultural developments and, for instance, formed a high proportion (over 20–40%) of the total population in the Cape (Watson 1980: 8, 14).

Slavery was a crucial aspect of Dutch colonial settlements all over the Indian Ocean region, making use of the established and very public system of slavery in the mercantile, urbanised cities in Southeast Asia and other locations in the Indian Ocean (Vink 2003:

11). The Dutch became the latest entrant during the latter part of the sixteenth century in Indian Ocean systems of forced movement of peoples, cultural integration and business relations.

Enslaved people at the Cape were owned either by the VOC or private business men and women involved in a variety of commercial activities lending itself to services and production. Similar to the Dutch settlements across the Indian Ocean basin, enslaved people in urban Cape Town were used as general workers in a diverse combination of job tasks.

Some networks of knowledge in the Indian Ocean region intersected with the VOC in ways that the company was not able to influence nor contain. Some Muslim routes of pilgrimage to and from the holy lands in Saudi Arabia created paths of knowledge, religion and culture in the region. They overlapped with the VOC's practices of forced migration through the practice of slavery where the enslaved came into contact with and were influenced by Islam in their locations of banishment, sale or labour. The VOC officials certainly feared or at least disliked the transmigration of Islam through their networks, but there was little they could do to prevent it. Some religious exiles like *Shaykh* Yusuf of Macassar, Tuang Guru and other religious leaders, who were exiled from the Dutch controlled colonies in the East Indies and incarcerated at the Cape, were highly educated and respected scholars of Islam (Ward 2009: 17).

Their influence among the enslaved and the freed people in the Cape would have been profound in the development of an independent slave culture and the adoption of religious otherness from the European slave masters. This phenomenon would play a

significant role in breaking the hegemonic control that the slave masters attempted to exert over the enslaved.

3.3 THE CAPE AS A HALFWAY STATION

The Cape of Good Hope was initially intended by the directors of the VOC as a halfway station for their ships on its way the East Indies. It was to provide replenishments of fresh food and water to the ship's crews and a recovery spot for their sick and ailing sailors.

For a number of years this was the exclusive point of call for ships from the VOC, but due to its strategic position other ships started to use the refreshment facilities established and provided by the VOC. This situation led to the semi-permanent settlement which became known as Cape Town. The VOC laid claim to all the arable land in and around the growing urban centre and controlled access to fresh water which was a crucial resource needed by all passing ships. The VOC grew in power and stature as they controlled land alienation and irrigation rights. The Company garden was a rich resource that produced fresh fruit, vegetables and herbs for both physical health and dietary requirements to the passing ship's crews. Crews would have spent months on the open sea, exposed to the elements of nature and suffering severe illness as a result of the absence of fresh food and water. The growing slave population tended the Company gardens, worked in the dockyard and serviced the expanding households of the permanent European inhabitants. The enslaved population also provided firewood for the kitchens of the burgeoning population and to keep the biting Cape winter cold at bay. At the end of the eighteenth century the Cape was firmly established as a permanent and expanding settlement with a distinct urban and slaving character (Boshof and Fourie 2010: 5).

Earlier during the eighteenth century the Cape was generally regarded as a poor performing economy that relied heavily on foreign trade in the form of passing ships, plying their trade between Europe and the East Indies. However, the *opgaaf rolls* (tax return records) show that the Cape had a strong local economy supported by the drive from local market forces. Although these local market related demands were not entirely influenced by the passing marine trade (van Duin and Ross 1987: 8), the ships were an important economic stimulus. A wide range of support services were provided to sailors from passing ships to take care of their health and travel needs. The distance between Europe and the East Indies was vast and ships spent months on the open seas before docking at the halfway point at the Cape. Many houses in Cape Town during that period served as public houses for entertainment and accommodation (Schutte 1980).

Not all ships trading on this route stopped over at the Cape for refreshments and trade. Many ships routed via harbours located along the Brazilian coast and some of the islands spread over the vast areas of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Information gathered from ships logs indicate that the Atlantic Ocean Island of St Helena was a very popular place of anchorage for ships from the British East India Company. Ships originating from the Portugese ports often let down their anchors in the port on the coast of Mozambique (Boucher 1974: 5-6).

By their very nature, cities are places that draw people from many surrounding areas and distant lands in search of economic enterprise opportunities or to be closer to family and friends. This accumulation of people create places of extreme population density; spaces where people live very close to each other with personal space restricted. One of the foremost commentators on the issue of slavery and its effects on the human population, Jim Dyos, stated that, “the massing of physical structures and the social massing of people

were the most self-evident products of the urban process” (Cannadine & Reeder 1982: xv).

Cities are static in that they occupy a specific space and have a specific social structure. However, they are influenced by their wider social, cultural, economic and political environment regionally and globally. Therefore cities are flexible, fluid and constantly shaped and reshaped by micro and macro dynamics (Cannadine & Reeder 1982: xiii). In support of this argument, Fields says:

It is unrealistic to abstract a city from its context... A city by itself is not a meaningful unit of analysis. The fate of slavery in a particular urban area depends, not merely on the fact of enslavement, but on the precise character of the urban area in question and on the nature of its integration into its surroundings. (1985: 51)

Urban Cape Town was inextricably bound to its surrounding rural areas as it served as a hub for the sale and distribution of rural agricultural products. Cape Town was the market place for local purchasing, as well as international trade and export. Due to its proximity to the port it also served as the market place for slaves that were purchased by rural based farmers. A common practice among Cape Town slave owners and the rural farmers was the renting out of slaves and these transactions were most often concluded in the city, where the slaves lived within the household precincts of their masters.

The city and its surrounding rural areas were furthermore firmly linked to the world economic system. Colonial port cities acted as the connecting points between enslavement communities and the major cities and population of the colonial powers. The importance of Cape Town as a port city grew in stature over time as the amount of trade passing through the port from Europe grew in volume. There was also an increasing

presence of English speaking merchants within the city and a steady increase of political control through the establishment of official local government structures. All this grew the city's stature as a strategic and valuable space for the growing trade from Europe towards the East (Ross and Telcamp 1985: 3).

During the Dutch colonial period, the monopoly on trade was firmly in the hands of the VOC, as independent trade activities by those outside the employ of the VOC were not encouraged. The VOC positioned itself as the sole player and beneficiary of trade relations, of both wholesale and retail, within the Cape colony and its partners over the ocean to the east and the west. The expansion of the Cape economy and the accompanying growth of international trade under British colonial rule saw a flood of immigrants into the Cape colony from Europe, looking to fashion a living in the new outpost at the tip of Africa. The result was a burgeoning merchant society which further shaped the future of Cape Town as a strategic trading post (Meltzer 1989: 33). With the growth of urban Cape Town as a halfway station between Europe and the East Indies, accompanied with the burgeoning trade in spices, the spaces for free movement of the enslaved increased as they fulfilled a wide range of tasks for their masters. The burgeoning city as a halfway station enabled the enslaved and freed people with freedom of movement, even though it was limited, it did come into existence.

3.4 COSMOPOLITAN NATURE OF CAPE TOWN

A wide variety of people from many corners of the world made up the population of Cape Town. These included VOC administrators, soldiers and artisans from the Netherlands, Germany, Scandinavia and the Baltic, passing crewmen and passengers from across the Atlantic worlds, slaves from Madagascar, India, Java, Sri Lanka, Bali, Saluwesi, and the islands of eastern Indonesia, Europeans, Chinese and Asian convicts sent from Batavia

and Colombia and exiled Asians who had challenged the Dutch colonial rule through its proxy, the VOC, and its political and economic control in the East Indies. A number of VOC employees remained in the Cape after their contracts came to an end and took possession of land for farming on the outskirts of Cape Town. Others remained for the duration of their lifetime, not out of choice, but through the enforced demands of their enslavement or convict status (Worden 2012: x).

Cape Town undoubtedly took on the characteristics of a slave owning society, very much like the Dutch colonial regions in the Indian Ocean. This is evident in the fact that a large amount of those who worked for the VOC owned at least one slave, which gives one an idea of the scope and size of the practice of slavery. It is fortunate that for the year 1731 a complete demographic profile of the town is available. According to Worden's discussion of these records the enslaved formed 42.2 per cent of the population, with VOC employees making up 30.3 per cent, free burghers 18.5 per cent and freed slaves and convicts 9 per cent (Worden et al. 1998: 50). Similarly, Banks shows how by 1806, slaves formed 55 per cent of the town's inhabitants, although these population figures excluded government employees, it does include both privately owned and government slaves (Bank 1991: 236).

The town also had a large migratory population group made up of upcountry farmers coming to market and visiting crewmen, soldiers and ship's passengers who filled the streets and places of entertainment when their ships were in port. The geographic spread of Cape Town was immense. Its economic survival was fueled by a fast growing settler farming economy in the outer regions of the Cape colony. An outer region that spread over vast distances as the time went by, during the first and second centuries after the Dutch landed in 1652. The town was the route through which supplies of all goods from

overseas were channeled to the farms, cattle farmsteads and small towns of the Cape interior.

Worden's extensive work discusses the fact that the Cape had another hinterland in the south-west Indian Ocean, connecting it to Madagascar, current day Mozambique, Sri Lanka, India and to the VOC's administrative capital in Batavia and the Indonesian archipelago and beyond. The Netherlands, located within the North Atlantic region, also provided the Cape with its growing need for manpower and daily supplies. Worden further notes that the ports in the Netherlands were inevitably shaped by the influence of migratory patterns of labour which were in turn linked to the wide ranging migratory pattern of labour in northern and central Europe. These are the historical dynamics that we have to be aware of when trying to grasp the intricacies of the Cape Colony within its global geographic position (Worden 2012: x).

The enslaved would be owned by the company to service its many business establishments at the Cape 58egali town. As I indicated earlier, the VOC had established a number of trading settlements in the south and south east Asia region which operated with a range of forced labour and debt bondage systems. At the Cape the forced labour was in the form of chattel bondage, which meant that it was ownership bestowed upon the slave owners. Slaves were regarded, not as human beings, but as actual property which could be bought, sold, traded or inherited (Ward 2011: 179).

The Khoi and San people, who were indigenous to the land, lived at the southern tip of Africa for centuries and did not integrate fully into the social, cultural and economic life crafted by the VOC at the Cape. They remained an anomaly and curiosity to the colonial inhabitants, lingering on the edges of Cape society. During the 1970's Shirley Judges conducted research into the living conditions and poverty in Cape Town and made the

following submission, that “the bottom rung of the urban socio-economic ladder was occupied, not by the slaves, but by the lighter skinned Hottentots” (Judges 1977: 125). Moodie, a wealthy European landowner, testified before the 1824 Commission of Enquiry into the living conditions of the so called natives at the Cape and declared that some enslaved were highly skilled and were able to provide services blacksmiths, carpenters, coopers and masons. This status was corroborated by a Mr William Reeves, a travelling shoemaker who provided hand crafted footwear to the elite (Theal 1898: 266). In the same 1824 Commission of Enquiry, John Cannon, stated that "Common European Labourers, if hired as such, get no more than a Slave; nor Mechanics if the two are equally good" (Theal GM 1898: 460). The following adverts from local newspapers show that slave and free labour in Cape Town towards the end of the period of slavery, was very much driven by the preference of the slave owners and employers and they did not draw very clear distinctions between the two:

Wanted. Six or Eight Tailor-Boys, Slave or Free, to whom will be given 30 Rds. per month each; if required, they can be engaged by the Year and paid by the Month. Apply to J.M.T. Brown, Ready-made Clothes Warehouse, No. 2 Short-Market Street. (De Zuid-Afrikaan, 2 July 1830).

To Shoemakers. Wanted. Four or Five good Shoemakers, to whom liberal wages will be given. No objection to slaves, if of good character. (South African Commercial Advertiser, 26 February 1826)

Requested for hire, A Man Servant. A Free Black or Slave of Good Character would be preferred... (De Zuid-Afrikaan, 25 February 1831)

Wanted, an able Confectioner, either a Christian [i.e. European] or a Slave - Apply to No. 29 Plein Street. G.C.Greffrath. (De Zuid-Afrikaan, 12 August 1831)

Throughout the period of enslavement at the Cape, the labour provided by slaves was predominantly service as opposed to production oriented (Worden 1985: 4). Retail, transport and domestic services were the major areas of service provision and there were about four thousand urban enslaved people engaged in these service provision areas, mainly deployed within the domestic environment. During this period about 65% of the urban slave population was engaged in domestic work such as house boys, housemaids, cooks, scullions, wash boys, laundresses, nursery maids, gardeners and butlers (Bank 1991: 37).

During the eighteenth century in Cape Town, lodging-housekeeping was one of the foremost services provided by the free burger population of the town. They also traded in luxury, essential and basic products to the local and migratory population who constantly passed through on the voyages to and from the East Indies. Enslaved people working in the domiciles of the slave owners and serving their domestic needs, as well as in the plethora of lodging houses catering for migratory clientele and in retail stores (Ross 1980: 1).

3.5 BEYOND THEIR LIVING SPACES

The living spaces of the enslaved who lived in the domicile of their masters was not always confined to these areas as a rule. They would occasionally roam beyond the confines of the domestic unit into the streets of the sprawling and growing city, to the nearby square or onto Table Mountain. Those slaves who were kept as house boys or house maids and who earned the trust of their masters or mistresses, were often sent on errands around the town. These practices would take them away from the immediate scrutiny of the owners. This practice was employed as in the case of Candasa, a house maid, who were, “often sent out [by her owners] to the baker and the butcher and for

other articles required for the house” (Complaint case of Candasa, s.o. 3/5, Report of the Guardian of the Slaves for the Half-Year, December 1829 to June 1830).

Cape Town is situated on the slopes of the Table Mountain range, which provided the city with many fresh water streams for replenishment. The city also has a rich reservoir of underground fresh water holdings running across the city bowl. It was a daily routine for the enslaved to fetch fresh water for the households of their masters. Gathering and social interaction at the many water pumps throughout the city was a daily occurrence in which the enslaved people of the city participated (Ross 1985: 110).

Shell wrote further:

In all pre-industrial communities, the place where water is fetched is a traditional gathering spot. At the Cape, courtships, bargaining and arguments were frequently carried on at such spots to such an extent that '*plakkaats*' were issued to prohibit the dawdling of diverse elements of *knechts* and slaves at such places. (1978: 11)

It became evident that the enslaved and freed people of Cape Town, towards the end of the slavery period, fully utilised their momentary sojourns of freedom to socialise with their fellow enslaved when they congregated in these free spaces, possibly catching up on the recent news making the rounds at the dinner tables of their masters and mistresses and catching up on stories about their fellows in bondage. In an attempt to curtail these activities, which was regarded as unsavoury by the slave masters, the statute books still had active legislation which decreed that any slave “found gambling near the public water pump will be immediately tied

to a pole erected there for that purpose, and flogged by the constables (Theal 1898: 156).

Enslaved people in the city had occupations such as basket makers, billiard markers, sailmakers, silversmiths, habit makers, hatters, watchmakers and wagon makers – giving an indication of the level of sophistication and artistry that was required to provide for the city's growing economic needs. As time went by, and the working lives of urban slaves evolved to adjust to the changing demands of their occupations, it required them to become more flexible and mobile. This level of mobility also extended to the daily lives of domestically located enslaved people, as they had to respond to the needs of their masters brought on by their burgeoning economic interests.

Physical mobility inevitably meant that the close monitoring by the slave owners was drastically curtailed and opened up the possibilities of greater contact among enslaved people (Bank 1991: 45).

3.6 AUTONOMOUS ACTION THROUGH HIDDEN TRANSCRIPTS

Stemkowski has noted that the population of Cape Town was also divided along religious lines. Islam grew in leaps and bounds in the first half of the nineteenth century and its numbers as well as the social networks that developed through it, offered a very attractive alternative to the ideologies of their masters, the slave owners. For those who had been enslaved, including many of the Free Blacks, it provided a mechanism whereby they could resist the lure of the slave master influence. (Stemkowski 2006: 3).

This was one of the major limitations that the slave owners faced, that they were compelled to acknowledge that their slaves were not merely property, but also human beings, with human values, desires and emotions. This is an expression of the power

exerted by slaves in reaction to the domination of their masters, as demonstrated earlier by Foucault (Dooling 1999: 225).

An inevitable contract existed between enslaved and freed former enslaved men and women. This was a clear and evident difference until the British implemented legislation to ameliorate the situation of the enslaved. This combined the Khoi Khoi, Prize Negroes and Free Blacks, which confused the difference between enslaved and free citizens, which contributed to the transitional phase for the enslaved and formerly enslaved to evolve an independent lifestyle away from the control of the slave masters (Stemkowsky 2006: 2). During the early nineteenth century a diversified urban economy emerged which encompassed a growing group of merchants that saw large numbers of enslaved labourers involved in the service industry (Bank 1994)

Social control of the enslaved family members was rapidly eroded during the pre-emancipation period by the emergence of community by enslaved and freed people and the strengthening of enslaved family. The formation of family units further enabled enslaved and formerly enslaved people's connectedness. to create a sense of family and community, in spite of attempts and legislation to control every aspect of the social life of the enslaved (Bank 1994). However, there were extensive and persistent ties of family and friendship that bound together freed slaves in Cape Town and there were substantial sacrifices made in order to free their kin and, on occasion, friends. This is an indication of the growing sense of power among Cape enslaved people, who took their destiny into their own hands by purchasing the freedom of their fellow enslaved and not waiting for their slave masters to bestow these freedoms upon them (Shell 1994: 119 & 389).

James Scott advanced the notion that power relations is a dialectical process whereby the actions of the dominant forces shape that of the subordinate and the other way around

(1990: 27). This is a continuous process that takes place within lengthy time frames. However, these forces of domination inevitably prompt a subculture of resistance whereby the subjugated resist the hegemony, maintain their sense of self-respect and manage their lives under severe conditions of oppression. Scott describes two, competing “transcripts”: the official or public transcript embodying dominant values and norms, and the hidden transcript created and enacted “off stage” by and among subordinates. Autonomy is expressed by the subordinate through the hidden transcript (Jordan 2006: 27). Sites for hidden scripts evolve in spaces of social marginality, where the constant vigilance and observation of the masters, or in this instance slave owners, is not a constant threat. These sites evolve in a multitude of locations enabled by the growth of populations in urban areas and the proliferation of independent sites occupied by the subjugated (Jordan: 28).

The “hidden transcripts” had a tendency to take root among people who shared the same jobs and who experienced the same levels of physical mobility (Scott 1990: 124). This scenario would proceed to lay the foundation for the evolution of multiple sites and instances of independent enslavement activities across the growing urban Cape Town and its surrounding areas. Within these emerging liberated moments and free spaces the Cape enslaved were able to define their own modes of education, worship and every day cultural practices, separate from the slave owners’ influence.

CHAPTER 4: *SŪFISM* AT THE CAPE

4.1 *SŪFISM* (TASSUAWUF)

The Cape, which was initially established as a halfway station, eventually morphed into a burgeoning urban city influenced by cross-cultural forces driven by enslavement practices. Within this burgeoning cityscape the roots of islamisation and the growth of *Sūfi Tariqas* provides the context of how, through the practices of Sufi Islam, the enslaved were able to resist the overbearing force of the slave masters and in so doing were able to emerge from a state of social death and reclaim their dignity. Covert *Sūfism* (also known as Tassuawuf) rituals provided an important alternative at a time when Islam could not be publicly practiced in the early days of the Cape colony. According to Cassiem (2007), once these restrictions were lifted, and normative Islam became the major way in which Islam was conducted, it became evident that the “founding fathers” of Islam in South Africa were trained in Islamic mysticism of *Sūfism*. It was through the practice of *Sūfism* that the Cape enslaved people were able to resist the hegemonic forces of their colonial slave masters and demonstrated their power of self-enablement.

The first significant group of Muslims to arrive at the Cape, from Amboyna in the southern Moluccas, landed in 1658, only six years after the establishment of the VOC ‘refreshment station’ at the Cape in 1652. Their initial role, was to defend the settlement from attacks by local indigenous people and to perform heavy labour, which the Europeans were not prepared to do (Davids 1981: 177).

For Adil Bradlow (1995) the arrival in 1667 of three exiled *Sūfi shaykhs*, the Orang Cayen (men of power), marks the true beginning of Cape Muslim history. As discussed in my introduction between the late seventeenth and late eighteenth centuries, small Muslim communities coalesced around *Sūfi shaykhs*, such as the Orang Cayen and *Shaykh Yusuf* (Bradlow 1995: 2-3). A second, more public period began with the opening of the first *madrassah* (Muslim school) and mosque at the end of the eighteenth century.

The company immediately sent two of the Orang Cayen, both of whom were *Sūfī* shayks, to the company's forest in Constantia hills, in an attempt to isolate them from slaves and free blacks in Cape Town. *Shaykh* Yusuf arrived three decades later accompanied by a party of nearly fifty, including wives, children, servants, slaves, and several Imams. The VOC sent them to Zandvleit, a farm even further removed from Cape Town than was Constantia. Again the goal was to isolate them from potential converts but Bradlow (1995: 2-3) contends that these efforts failed.

The *shaykhs* quietly attracted followers from among the slaves and free blacks, instructed them in the philosophy and practices of *Sūfism*, and initiated them into their respective *Sūfī tariqas* (literally, path or way; conventionally, order or brotherhood), thereby laying the foundations of Islam at the Cape. Bradlow (1995: 2-3) argues that before these men died they ensured the survival of their *tariqas*, and of Cape Islam, by investing others with the authority to initiate new members. In this way, "several *tariqas* came to be established at the Cape, each with (its) own network of *shaykhs* and *murids* (initiated members of the *tariqa*)".

By the 1770s Muslims regularly held services in private Cape Town homes without officials stopping them (Thunberg 1986: 100) and by the 1790s, Muslims were holding open-air Friday services in a quarry just outside the city limits, also unhindered by the authorities (Davids 1980: 100). Finally, local Muslims legally opened a *madrassah* in 1793 and the first South African mosque sometime between 1795 and 1804 (Davids 1991:37). From here on the Muslim population maintained a growth trajectory in line with the development of the Cape's economy, population and infrastructure (Shell 1993: 413-418).

4.2 THE ROOTS OF ISLAMISATION: AND THE GROWTH OF *SŪFĪ TARIQAS*

The deep levels of disempowerment and alienation of the enslaved, found an answer in the practice of Islam in the Cape. However the availability of Islamic practice and its initial growth in the beginning stages was mainly driven by strong leaders, individuals who brought with them a form of Islam steeped in mysticism. Islamic mysticism, *Sūfism* or better known as *tassawwuf*, "... is primarily concerned with the inner state of the soul, rather than external behaviour" (Ansari 1986: 31). Ansari (1986: 32) further explains that it can also be deemed as, "... a quest for reality, an enlightenment or gnosis".

Sūfism, however, is not maintained in separation to the *shari'ah* (Islamic Law). On the contrary, mainstream *Sūfism* has always clarified that mystical experiences is as a result of these outward expressions (Bradlow 1998: 113). Ansari further explains that the *shari'ah* is determined in two ways: "... the usual sense of rules and regulations of the *Qur'ān* and *sunnah* worship and rites, morals and society, economy and government... (however) It is also used in a far broader sense to include everything which God has prescribed (*shari'ah*) directly or through the Prophet (SAW)... *Shari'ah* in this sense is a comprehensive system of faith and practice." (Ansari 1986: 71).

In his discussion of nineteenth century *tariqas* in Africa, Martin (1976:1) defines them as, "... hierarchically organized mystical organisations" and says that the establishment and increase of *tariqas* or *Sūfi* orders, "..... introduced a collective and organised spirit into mysticism," he believes that they created new social societies; societies that straddles kinship groups, classes, professions and lineages. (Martin 1976:1)

Given the intensity of involvement by the adherents of these *Sūfi tariqa* practices, "out of the intensity of their experiences, a highly cohesive body could be created that spread throughout whole regions of lands" (Martin 1976: 2). That *tariqas*, therefore, meant both

simplified as well as mystical connections between a *shaykh* (guide) and his *murid* (follower), meant that at times, such organisation could be manipulated for political expediency. Martin cautions however “that no brotherhood, has any inherent tendency towards political action, no special call to defend Islam nor to participate in what has been “primary resistance (1976:2). These mainly mystical organisational orders, seldom, if at all, depart from their primary function, even in the face of intense external pressures. Adil Bradlow further argues that within *Sūfism* there are two main philosophical traditions that are extremely appropriate to the matters mentioned above (1998: 116). The one tendency supported by the philosophy of *wahdat-ul-wajud*, is inward looking, reflective and tends towards isolationism (Ansari 1986: 42 – 45), while the other, gaining traction from the philosophical tradition of *wahdat-ul-shahud*, is activist externally perceived and often action oriented (Ansari 1986: 45 – 47). Nobody embodies one or other tendency exclusively, it is important to note that to understand Islam at the Cape, one has to be cognisant of the fact that of the two, the former tended to be more prevalent among the mystics of the Indonesian Archipelago (Al Attas 1978:167).

Al-Attas argues that, even as far back as the thirteenth century, the Indonesian Archipelago has significantly reshaped what is known as the “Muslim world”. Al-Attas (1978: 161) postulates that the character and nature of this early Islamisation movement (from 1200 to 1400) was politically motivated, as the Archipelago’s social structure was reconfigured in accordance to the requirements of the *Shari’ah* (Islamic law). The Islamic world view was already firmly embedded into the belief system of the societies who occupied this region, by the time Europeans explored the area for trade.

al-Attas says:

Islam came to the Archipelago couched in *Sūfī* metaphysics. It was through tassawwuf that the highly intellectual and rationalist religious spirit entered the receptive minds of the people... ; this emergence of rationalism and intellectualism set in motion the process of revolutionising the Malay-Indonesian world view. (1978: 165)

al-Attas (1978: 165) argues that this evolving worldview produced a sense of "spiritual equality" and sense of "worth" that found roots within the movement of popular culture. This is predictably the outlook that filtered into the consciousness of the enslaved and free men and women at the Cape during the period of enslavement and beyond. As al-Attas indicates, "prejudice against, and fear of Islam influenced western imperialism in attempting a consistent policy of separating Muslims from their religion" (1978: 174). The long battles the Muslim rulers of the East Indies were engaged in against the Dutch colonial rule, and the fact that this opposition was couched in religious overtones, served to enable Islam to find traction among ordinary people and change it into an ideology that served to firm the of movements of covert resistance to enslavement and subjugation. This is an indication of the influence of Sufi Islam and how it impacted on the lives of the Cape enslaved and freed people to embolden them with a sense of self-worth against the attempts of the slave owners to subjugate them and submit them to their will.

4.3 DEFINING *SŪFĪ SM*

There are ongoing attempt by academics and scholars to clearly define *Sūfism* or *tasawwuf*, as it is commonly known, and the following are but some of these attempts by a few distinguished scholars in the field (Anjun 2006: 227).

Spencer Trimingham (1971: 1) defines mysticism as a specific method of approach to

reality by making use of intuitive and emotional spiritual faculties. These faculties are generally dormant but they can be called into play through training under guidance. Annemarie Schimmel defines the spiritual current in a wider sense and holds that it is the consciousness of the one reality that can be called Wisdom, Light, Love or nothing. Mysticism is the love of the absolute, for the power that separates true mysticism from mere asceticism, is love (1975: 4).

According to Anjum some believe that the origin of *Sūfism* can be found in religious traditions prevalent before the establishment of Islam, while others believe that the *Qur'ānic* prescriptions and the practice and preaching of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be on him) provided the foundation of *Sūfī* doctrines and practices (Anjum 2006).

4.4 THE SPECULATIVE EXISTENCE OF *SŪFISM* AT THE CAPE

If all of the previous discussion is the reality of the expression of *Sūfism*, then how do we proceed to establish its presence among the Cape enslaved community? We can certainly begin with the fact that John Mason (2002: 10) supports the argument put forward by Bradlow (1988: 85) that during the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries, there were a few Muslim communities at the Cape - small, isolated, and organized around the practices of *Sūfī* mysticism. The constraint, as Bradlow (1998: 85) himself puts forward, is one of physical evidence and documented sources, early Cape Muslims produced no written documents that survived. However, much of the writing *Shaykh Yusuf* produced while living in the Indonesian archipelago is still available and are kept in archives in Malaysia and the Netherlands and some have clarified some of these issues under consideration.

Bradlow was dependent on the oral traditions of the Cape Muslim community and on the

presence in the immediate vicinity of Cape Town of several *karamats*, to craft his argument. The tombs of certain *shaykhs* and Imam have come to be regarded as saints. He was, in addition, able to draw on Suleman Essop Dangor's brief 1982 biography of *Shaykh* Yusuf, which discusses his membership in the Khalwatiyyah, a *Sūfī tariqa*, and provides translations of some of his devotional writing (Dangor 1982).

Bradlow traced the local origins of particular *tariqa* to one or another of the exiled *shaykhs*. Karamats (holy places of burial) in Constantia, Macassar (Faure), and elsewhere on and near the Cape Peninsula have been associated with particular *shaykhs* and Imams for nearly 300 years in some cases. The respect bestowed upon saints and the paying visits to their tombs is in line with with *Sūfī* practice in other parts of the world (Hiskett 1984: 9).

Achmat Davids (as cited by John Mason (1991:11-12) acknowledges the claim that the Constantia exiled *Shaykhs*, Abdurahman Matebe Shah and Sayed Mahmud, established a *tariqa*, the Qadriyyah, at the Cape. He goes on to argue that Qadriyyah doctrines decisively shaped the beliefs and practices of the Cape Muslim community. Elsewhere he links two of the most distinctive Cape Muslim ceremonies, the *Rampie-sny*, which celebrates the Prophet's birthday, and the *Ratiep*, some very elaborate rites, which will be discussed in more detail and provided its proper context later among the various *Sūfī* practices at the Cape (Davids 2002: 12). According to Mason (1991:29) Davids also argues that the ritual observed and described by the traveler Thunberg in 1772 was a *Rampie-sny* (cutting and scenting of orange leaves), a rare piece of evidence linking the days of the early *shaykhs* to the more thoroughly documented period from the 1790s onwards.

Da Costa also accepts the role of the Constantia *shaykhs* in the establishment of the Qadriyyah at the Cape. He believes that there "can be little doubt" that *Shaykh* Yusuf

"continued to practice [in exile at the Cape]... the religious rites and ceremonies associated with his order," the Khalwatiyyah, including the initiation of members. He traces the influence of *Shaykh Yusuf's tariqa* on Muslim burial rituals, as reported by a traveler in 1797 and as practiced in the Western Cape up to the late twentieth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, he writes that a large number of *tariqas* had been established, and their practices had become "part of the Islamic fabric at the Cape" (Da Costa 1994: 129-135). It seems likely that the proposition that *Sūfī tariqa* have been present from inception of the Cape Muslim community and that they have strongly influenced the development of local practices and beliefs had been generally accepted.

In his explanation of the hadith, *al-Du'a yarudd al-Qada* (Prayers deflect the decrees of God), Imam al-Ghazali uses an example of a battle field to demonstrate his point:

The shields protecting the one side he compares to the making of *du`ā'*, while the arrows that will inevitably be directed at them from the opposing side he compares to the *qada* (predetermined decrees) of God. Without the shields there will be no protection; likewise, without *du`ā'* (prayer) there is no protection against the preordaining capacity of God. (al-Ghazali, 1996: 90)

The making of *du`ā'*, like *sabr* when one is confronted with grave danger is regarded as a matter of goodwill towards Allah which could deliver a good result or stop a bad thing from happening. It is worth observing that in all of these attitudinal states the issue of fatalism is absent. If this is what determines acceptance of one's fate, then it becomes evident why Shaikh Yusuf showed this tremendous level of tolerance to his state unfortunate state as a captured exile.

Seraaj Hendricks says it best when he writes that:

in this *Sūfī* worldview, there is not only one predestined hegemonic future, but ‘many’ futures which may or may not be intersected by moments of adversity – the outcomes of which, in turn, will be contingent on the degree of courtesy exercised in the face of those adversities. The resignation of *Shaykh* Yusuf, therefore, is not resignation to a permanent and inexorable future, but one which, if accepted with the necessary courtesy towards God, holds within itself the promise of a different and better future (Hendricks S 2002: 124).

Hendricks (2002: 169) believes Imam Muding’s testimony during 1825 to the Colebrooke and Bigge Commission is an example of this “paradox of intrinsic human freedom as a function of submission to a higher deity alone” when dealing with the question of slavery. He cites Imam Muding as saying “Their bodies are in slavery, but we teach them to believe that their souls are free and that they must look up to God to set them free when they die” (Davids 1980: 96)

This could be encapsulated in the *Sūfī* attitude that a Muslim suspended between the choices of *shukr* (gratitude) and *sabr* (forbearance). If the result is in your favour he/she is thankful, when the outcome is not in your favour, *forbearant*.

4.5 SPECULATING ABOUT *SŪFĪ* INFLUENCE

Bradlow sounds a caution that one must not make the mistake of condensing this process of popularisation of *Sūfī* Islam (1998: 165). In projecting onto the evolving Islamic mindset of the enslaved people and underclass at the Cape, it is important to take heed of the overarching developmental process demonstrated by Ansari when he describes the process of Islamisation:

The first step on this way is to call people to God; the next is to purify them and make them servants of God and the last is to establish the rule of His *shari'ah*. (1978: 90)

Bradlow postulates that upon reflection of the evolving and dynamic process of Islamisation at the Cape, this process is evident (1998: 165). While Davids (1980), Worden *et al* (1998), Shell (1993) and others have eloquently communicated the reality that Muslims were present at the Cape since the early days of Cape colonization. Bradlow advances the notion that it is imperative to be aware that the presence of Muslims does not automatically mean Islam was practiced as a formal religion (Bradlow 1998: 43-46).

As a practical demonstration of the existence of *Sūfi* Shaykhs and their probable influence in the spread of Islam, Bradlow suggests that:

Oral traditions for example, express the view that the two Karamats in Constantia, the graves of Matebe Shah (RA), Sayyid Mahmud (RA) and Sayyid Abdur Rahman (RA) *are* (own emphasis) the resting places of Muslim saints, or more correctly Awlia (1998: 120).

Of these two men, Jefferys writes that archival sources verify that both were political exiles from Java, banished to the Cape for resisting Dutch imperial interests (1936: 89). This is proven by a writing at one of the graves. It reads as follows:

Bradlow then further cautions the assumption that these *shaykhs* acted as organic intellectuals in the Gramscian sense of the term (1998: 130). This position seems contentious in that they may not consciously have engaged in the dynamic leadership roles as classical organic leader are depicted, but their actions certainly had the resultant

effect. However Bradlow further warns that while they were “able to interpret the brutal harshness of the prevailing social relations in a manner appropriate to mystics, one must not make the mistake of suggesting that they consciously formulated any ideology of anti-colonial resistance; the evidence simply does not exist to claim this. Furthermore, there is no evidence that these *shaykhs* were encouraging the enslaved to actively resist their enslavement” (1998: 130). However, the Islamic procedures implemented by these religious leaders is an indication of Islam infused with the tenets of mysticism and a strong sense of resistance to the prevailing religious order of their slave masters. The fact that the enslaved people at the Cape adopted the religion of Islam in large numbers is a clear indication of their ability to exercise their free will. They did this in spite of the threat of severe punishment, should they defy the law and act in defiance of their masters.

4.7 SOCIAL DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Mason discusses Orlando Patterson’s seminal 1982 work on the “social death” of the enslaved, providing a very accurate description for the state of the enslaved at the Cape (2006: 6). It firms up the speculative nature of my understanding and provides a contextual framework to make sense of the evolving mind-set of the enslaved people in the Cape colony.

Mason (2006: 6) proceeds to explain that in the Cape, as in other slaveholding societies, slavery was much more than a system of forced labour. Slaves inhabited a social, political, and cultural netherworld which is what Orlando Patterson termed “social death”. Everywhere it has existed, he argues, the slave-owning social order has defined the enslaved as outsiders, devoid of rights and subject to exploitation, degradation, and violent domination. The enslaved were nonpersons: “He or she was socially dead as a

legal entity (a person with independent capacities or rights or powers) and as a civic being (a recognized member of the socio-political order" (Patterson 1998:27).

Mason (2006: 8) reports that Patterson goes on to argue that because slaves were degraded they were "all the more infused with the yearning for dignity" and because of their isolation and liminality, they were "acutely sensitive to the realities of community" (Patterson 1982: 337). Nearly all enslaved people dreamed of becoming once again "legitimate members of society", of being "socially born again". The enslaved may have been socially dead, but they desperately sought social life (Patterson 1991: 21-2). At the Cape, the enslaved and free blacks found a new life in *Sūfī* inspired Islam. Through conversion they became legitimate members of Muslim society, even as they remained outside mainstream colonial society.

Thus, the daily worship continued in the mosques, *madrasah's* and homes of the free Muslims, whilst on a daily basis, Muslims were adjusting their religious perceptions to create alternative ways of meeting their religious and spiritual interests. Muslim Common Religious Practices (MCRP's) such as the religio-cultural practices of *Ratiep*, *Rampies sny* (cut), the commemoration of the dead, holy nights etc., to which we will turn our attention in a subsequent chapter, played a significant role in advancing this emerging alternative lifestyle. These have filled the spiritual emptiness in their lives by creating actions and procedures of sacred power that can recreate the balance in their lives that their enslavement has taken away. As Mukadam has indicated they succeeded in achieving this through *Sūfī* -Islam, by commandeering the power of Islam with the spiritual needs people who disempowered and emasculated through slavery (Mukadam 1990: 88).

Salman Nadvi (1982: 13) states unequivocally that there are three causes for the spread of Islam in South Africa, of which the first is “Islam itself”, referring to the status of equality and dignity conferred on its recipients, whilst the second were traders and the third, the benign and social service the *Sūfī* s provided the Muslim community, spanned their lives from birth to burial.

David Chidester's contention is that the practice of *Sūfism* in early Cape Town can be regarded as a revitalisation movement of a lost traditional world. The enslaved were compelled to adopt new ways of understanding their reality and power – new ways of being human under dehumanising conditions and advances that:

when they have provided spiritual resources for people suffering under colonial, imperial or other forms of foreign domination and deprivation, primal religions have generated ways of being human, that draw together old traditions and new innovations under extreme conditions of dehumanization (Chidester 1991:13).

Wherever Muslims went one of the foremost things they did, to consolidate their religion, was to build a mosque, which served as a nucleus around which the Muslims developed all their activities, whether in religion, or in the educational, social or political spheres (Nadvi 1982:36). Given the nature of early Cape colonial society, the enslaved were not able to institutionalise their religion immediately nor were they able to gain meaningful political power in the city. Islam thus owes its initial and continued existence and perpetuation in large parts to the arrival of early Muslim *Sūfī* practitioners such as *Shaykh* Yusuf (d.1699), Qadl 'Abd al-Salam (d. 1710) and others in the Cape, with the subsequent developmental work being perpetuated by the countless Imams who followed in their wake.

CHAPTER 5 MUSLIM COMMON RELIGIOUS PRACTICES (MCRP)

5.1 SHAYKH YUSUF'S ROLE IN THE SPREAD OF ISLAM AND MCRP's

The urbanization of Cape Town and the gradual seeping of Sufi inspired Islam into the communal life of the Cape freed and enslaved population, created fertile ground for the emergence of a sense of newfound belief amongst this oppressed group of people.

Having appropriated the physical spaces which opened up for them in the city, the Cape enslaved crafted a new language of communication, arranged their own mode and medium of education and adopted the alternative religion of Islam. This religion of Islam, having been infused with *Sūfī* sm, enabled the enslaved Muslims and freed Muslims to embark on a series of popular community based activities in the form of Muslim Common Religious Practices (MCRP's). Ahmad Mukadam defines Popular Islam :

Popular Islam is the response of common people in their negotiation of a sense of sacred power relative to person, place and time in their attempt to consolidate, by appropriation, existing experiences of power or to compensate for disempowerment. (2000: 8)

According to oral tradition it is believed that slaves and free blacks occasionally moved from Cape Town to Zandvliet, where *Shaykh* Yusuf used to instruct them in the fundamentals of Islam (Dangor 1981: 56). In addition, many of his companions were also accomplished teachers and would have taught the small population of slaves and free blacks. Tradition also contends that *Shaykh* Yusuf instituted gatherings of *maulud* in Cape Town, as well those of the "7 nights", "40 nights", the "*gadat*" as well as the "*rampies sny*", which I will discuss in more detail later on. Although traditionally associated with *Sūfī* sm, these gatherings could be used as teaching moments to not only instruct Muslims in

Islam, but also to build a sense of community and tradition in what was then a very harsh and unfriendly environment.

Having conducted a study of the texts written by *Shaykh* Yusuf, Seraj Hendricks (2009: 43) inferred that *Shaykh* Yusuf would have undoubtedly taught the small Muslim community the fundamentals of *aqidah* (Islamic beliefs) and *fiqh* (Islamic law). He would have also taught them the *Mawlūd* ceremony as well as certain *awrad* and *adhkaar* (religious litanies) which they would have used to keep the remembrance of Allah alive in difficult social conditions and personal circumstances.

Where possible, the group recitation of these litanies would have created a sense of community among them. But perhaps the most important thing taught by *Shaykh* Yusuf would have been practical ethics. These ethics, as noted by Hendricks, would have revolved around the concepts of patient perseverance (*sabr*), earnest supplication to the Almighty (*du`ā'*), the contented acceptance of divine destiny (*taqdir*) and excellent manners (*adab*) (2009: 67). These concepts still firmly anchor the traditional Cape Muslim worldview. As Seraj Hendricks (2009: 178) further explains, patience and the acceptance of destiny are not simply passive characteristics. While one has to imbibe and develop these qualities, one has to show proper *adab* to Allah by making *du`ā'*. That is, one seeks Allah's help and assistance in all situations one encounters, knowing that seeking such assistance will guarantee the best outcome for one's self (even though this might not appear to be the case at a worldly level). The popular application of these religious principles was through the medium of Muslim common religious practices.

Cape Town was not a conducive place for the Shaikh's to apply the normal *Sūfī* path of developing disciples on the usual training path of sacrifice, perseverance and obedience

to their *shaykh*. Given the prevailing conditions of enslavement, the goal was to stimulate the growth of Islam, a goal in which *Shaykh* Yusuf, Tuang Guru and others who came after them eminently succeeded (Hendricks 2009: 226).

The Muslim enslaved community at the Cape inherited syncretic practices and culture, which their forefathers originally brought with them from the Malay and Indonesian archipelago and various parts of Africa. Syncretism may be characterised as an evolutionary process of adaptation of customs which are part of the traditions of other religions. These syncretic practices, cultures and customs, are regarded over time, as part of their pure and true Islamic religion. The practices under discussion can originally be ascribed to the influence of Buddhism, Hinduism and Africa traditional customs, but also steeped in the traditions and practices of *Sūfī* sm. They are the outcome of a long history of interaction with other religious and cultural groups and the latter's adherence to their various tribal customs and beliefs originating from Africa and the East Indies (Paulse 2003: 11)

5.2 DEFINING MCRP's AND THE DYNAMICS OF POWER

To arrive at an understanding of popular Islam, we have to consider the issues of power dynamics, in the early Cape enslavement community, where Muslim Common Religious Practices (MCRP) evolved as a matter of power and the appropriation of powerful sacred symbols. In this instance, Chidester agrees that:

We do not require any hypothesis about "needs" in order to document, interpret, and analyse the patterns and processes of the universal human ability to symbolize whatever may be held or beheld to be sacred in the forms of discourse, practice and association in human societies; because sacred symbolic forms are

invested with power, they coalesce with economic, social, and political power interests (1988:86).

Instead of reducing popular religion to psychological or socio-psychological reflections, it would be best to try and understand these creative Muslim common religious practices as ritual performances and analyse their highly charged power interests (Mukadam 1990: 8). In his consideration of modern popular Italian Christianity, Guiseppe Ruggieri (1986: 97), proposes the application of Gramsci's theories. Gramsci is regarded as one of the central figures, who deepened our understanding and application of the purist Marxist positions on the class struggle within its popular context. He wrote extensively about popular religion, as the vehicle through which the traditionally deprived sectors of society express their need for an altered socio-political state. He focused on their particular uniqueness, the way in which they live their lives and the expression of their culture (Ruggieri 1986). In order to make sense of popular Islam we must consider its historical roots. The socio-political environment of the present historic popular movement and the Cape colonial enslavement era are of course three and a half centuries apart.

Since my motivation towards the understanding of Cape Muslim beliefs and practices of the Cape enslaved is bound in the dynamics of power, I turn to Burridge:

The redemptive process indicated by the activities, moral rules, and assumptions about power which, pertinent to the moral order and taken on faith, not only enable a people to perceive the truth of things, but guarantee that they are indeed perceiving the truth of things... for not only are religions concerned with the truth about power, but the reverse also holds: a concern with the truth about power is a religious activity. (1980: 5)

As I have indicated earlier on, the Cape enslaved people originate from diverse cultures, from different and distant geographical areas and varied languages, yet as Mukadam reminds us “Islam’s impact and message has taken firm root in its adherents who have come to appreciate the power of their beliefs and practices” (1990: 15).

I have also alluded earlier to the position of Karl Marx that the ideas of the dominant *are* the dominant ideas, which he regards as a politico-historical fact. I have contrasted this with the opposing views of Michel Foucault (1978; 1980) and others who argue that where there is power exerted by the powerful, there is power applied in the opposite direction by those who are experiencing this oppression. This is the non-traditional perception of power, as I use it for my argument and which I return to in more detail in the concluding chapter, but for now will be content with the summative view expressed by in the formulation of a definition of Muslim popular religion by Burrridge:

The definition implies, and therefore leads us to expect – despite the conservatism of particular religious orthodoxies – that religious activities will change when the assumptions about the nature of power, and hence the rules which govern its use and control, can no longer guarantee the truth of things. (Burrridge 1980: 7)

In addition Mukadam agrees by saying that:

Popular Islam is the response of common people in their negotiation of a sense of sacred power relative to person, place and time in their attempt to consolidate, by appropriation, existing experiences of power *or* to compensate for disempowerment. (1990:22)

This conceptual framework for Popular Islam in mind I would like to consider its evolution during the early years of colonial rule at the Cape. In this chapter I analyse the past common Muslim religious practices of the Cape enslaved within a paradigm of power dynamics, bringing my argument on the shape of Muslim resistance to colonial hegemony to its final conclusion.

Suleman Dangor's (1997 :14) work is valuable in this regard. He relates that during religious festivals conducted by the enslaved and freed people at the Cape, graveyards were lit up by lots of candles "in order to light the souls of the departed on their dark passage to another world" (1997 :142). For a hundred days after burial, the grave of the departed was visited by surviving relatives. On the seventh, fortieth and hundredth day some prayers were administered for the benefit of the deceased (Mayson 1861: 26). The practice of praying for the deceased for a hundred days at the grave site is characteristic of the *Sūfi* Khalwatiyyah *tariqa*. A feature of the new year ceremony, which ushers in the month of Muharram, was a "Malay dance" (probably the *ratieb*) performed to the accompaniment of a song in honour of the Prophet Muhamed (PBUH) (Davids 1980: 5).

5.3 MUSLIM COMMON RELIGIOUS PRACTICES IN ACTION

5.3.1 MAULUD AN NABI

According to Abdul Taliep Baker (2019) the *Mawlūd* celebrations are known to have taken place in the Sunni-Islamic world since the thirteenth century. *Mawlūd*, literally means birthday, and also refers to the text used for the narration of the events of the Prophet Mohamed's birth (P.B.U.H.). From around the fifteenth century, the recitation of long praise poems became integrated as part of the ritual. The poems, themselves known as *Mawlūds*, became known by the names *Mawlūd Sharaf al-Anām* or *'Iqd al-Jawāhir*. The

poems achieved great popularity and spread to many parts of the Islamic world (Bang 2003: 148).

The annual *Mawlūd* celebrations start on the 12th of *Rabī `al-Awwal*, the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the Islamic calendar, and carries on into the next few months. The initial *Mawlūd* which is held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Rabī `al-Awwal* is referred to in the Cape to as *Koemis Mawlūd* (Davids 1980: 25). The celebration of the *Mawlūd*, that can be traced to the 19th century, based on a review of a 19th century-old handwritten *Mawlūd Sūrat* (belonging to the Adams' family, from Athlone, Cape Town), follows the exact same format as the *Mawlūd Sūrats* today. This celebration has assumed a distinctive shape and form in the Cape (Da Costa and Davids 1994: 135.)

It is normally 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*, on the Saturday afternoon, reciting *Salawāt*, praises to the Prophet (Davids 1980: 25).

5.3.1.1 THE FIRST RECORDED MAWLŪD IN SOUTH AFRICA

Thunberg, a Swedish botanist, on his visit to the Cape as early as 1772 observed a Muslim community activity and narrated his experience as follows:

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... Incense was burned. The men sat cross-legged on the floor, dispersed all over the room. Several yellow wax candles were lighted up... 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 (1986: 48- 49).

While Thunberg interprets this celebration as a New Year celebration, I concur with Abdul Baker (2009: 60) who explains 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 *Rabī` al-'Auw-wal* 1186 A.H. This is indeed the month in which the Prophet Muhammad was born – the 12th of *Rabī` al-'Auw-wal* (570 C.E.). Thus the Islamic month of *Rabī` al-'Auw-wal* is significant to Muslims as it is primarily associated with the birth of the Prophet Muhammad. Thunberg also makes reference to a great book on a cushion. He however refers to this book as a *Qur'ān* (*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.

5.3.2 THE *RATIB AR-RIFA'* OR COMMONLY KNOWN AS *RATIEP*

5.3.2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE *RATIEP*

Mason explains that *Sūfis* have adopted a number of disciplines to help the initiate attain a true knowledge of God (2002: 22). Among the most common are fasting, silence, celibacy, and the *dhikr*, the rhythmic chanting of prayers and liturgies. The ceremonies of one of

the oldest *Tariqas*, the *Rifa'iyyah*, often involve practices very similar to the *Ratiep* – dancing, the chanting of the *dhikr*, and, at the moment of transcendence, falling "upon objects such as serpents or knives ..." (Rahman 1979:152). In the Indonesian archipelago, one of the most distinctive *Rifa'iyyah* rituals performance known as the *rapa'l* and in Malaysia it is called the *dubbus*, from the Arabic word for an iron awl. During the *rapa'i* members of the *tariqa* pierce their bodies with swords, knives, and awls. The point of the rite is to demonstrate the power of God, which allows "the adept to come out of the ceremony without his body showing any evidence of having been harmed" (Baker 2009: 63).

According to Paulse *Ratiep* or *khalifa* is an old Malaysian tradition, characterised by piercing the body with sharp objects, or hitting it with a sharp sword without causing blood to flow, together with chanting in Arabic and the beating of drums (*rabanas*) (2003: 102). Muslim scholars differ on the origin and purpose of the *Ratiep*. Some scholars are of the opinion that it is a foreign Hindu custom which became closely associated with the religion of the Muslim enslaved in the Cape. This practice had a profound effect on the other enslaved and contributed to their conversion to Islam (Davids 1980: 33). Some Islamic scholars are of the opinion that it is a practice which demonstrates the power of Islam and the powers of deep concentration and belief. It is part of the *Rifā'ī Sūfī* order and is still currently practiced.

John Mason (1999: 6) relates the following instances of *Ratiep* performances during the early days of slavery at the Cape. The first written account of a *Ratiep* is found in the records of the 1813 trial of Griep, a free black from Mozambique, on charges of killing another former enslaved, Abdul Zagie, during a ceremony at the Diep River home of the former enslaved, Hammat of Macassar. Griep admitted that he had been at fault. One

evening at about midnight, he said, he and several other men had “performed the... Callifat”, (which is an old term used to describe the *Ratiep*). While rotating the tip of a sword on the stomach of a supine Zagie, he had recited “some mystic prayers”. Unfortunately, Zagie died from his wound as the sword caused “the entrails of the aforementioned Abdul Zagie (to spill out of) his belly, whereupon [Griep] sewed up the wound, continually repeating his prayers”, but it was in vain (Cape Archives Depot, CJ 805, Court of Justice Sentences, 1812-13, no. 37). Zagie’s death suggests that this was nothing other than a rite gone wrong.

There are other recorded instances of the *Ratiep* by European travellers. Their descriptions of the various ceremonies differ somewhat, but many similarities combine to give the sense of a distinct practice.

5.3.2.2 A SENSE OF POWER OVER THEIR COLONIAL MASTERS

It is likely that the early Muslim enslaved people used the *Ratiep* to maintain their dignity and attract other slaves to the religion of Islam. In addition to that, the *Ratiep* also gave them a sense of power over their colonial masters. According to Davids (1989: 7) “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 recouped some of their dignity. 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; whom they believed possessed the ultimate power. Baker (2009: 63) attributes this to a strong belief system (*ʿAqīdah*) based on

Islamic Monotheism (*Tawhīd*) This state of mind, as I discussed in an earlier chapter, was the essence of what informed Tuan Guru's teachings.

5.3.3 THE *HADDĀD* CELEBRATION

5.3.3.1 DESCRIPTION AND PRACTICE

The social life of Muslims is determined by the Islamic religion and is tailored to fit into the Islamic socio-cultural pattern. One of these socio-cultural patterns is the community prayer meeting, *Haddād*, also known as *arwāh*. The word *arwāh* is the plural of the word *rūh* which means soul. The *Haddād* or *arwāh* is made with the intention that the blessings of it should be on the soul of the deceased (Paulse 2003: 83). The *Rātib al-Haddād* is literally translated as the compilations of the blacksmith. This is a set of *adhkār* (spiritual hymns) compiled from authentic sources by the *Sūfi Shaykh `Abd Al-lāh ibn `Alawi al-Haddād*. The *Shaykh* is from the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order and hails from Hadhramaut in Yemen (Baker 2009: 62).

Baker states that according to Achmat Davids the *Rātib al-Haddād* only became popular after 1910, when *Shaykh `Abdullāh Tāhā Hamildīn* translated it into Arabic-Afrikaans (2009: 62). Davids has such a translation in his possession, which he has personally reviewed. He argues that because these *dhikrs* were not transcribed nor translated earlier (in the 19th or even eighteenth century) it could not have existed in the 19th century. On the contrary, Baker cites Yusuf Da Costa's evidence from Mr. G. Petersen, who was an old resident of Kensington, that both the *Rātib al-Haddād* and the *Mawlūd al-Nabi* were practiced by his grandfather in the early nineteenth century (Baker 2009: 62; Da Costa & Davids 1994: 135). It could possibly even be traced back to Tuan Sa'īd who also belonged to the *Bā`Alawi Sūfi* Order, and who arrived at the Cape in 1744, from Mocca in Yemen.

Baker identifies the following strands that formed the matrix of the world of the enslaved (2009: 83): adherence to a particular doctrinal tradition (the *Ash`ari Aqīdah*, following a particular legal tradition), the *Shāfi`i Madh-hab* (practicing certain cultural-religious traditions – *Mawlūd*, *Haddat*, *Ratiep* and other traditions associating with a particular religious/sacred language – Arabic) and association with a specific *Sūfi* order - '*Alawi Sūfi* Order, *Qādiri Sūfi* Order, or *Qādiri Sūfi* Order etc.

The *Haddād* consists of the recitation of certain chapters from the *Qu`rān*, praises of Almighty Allah, supplications and prayers. It is a common Thursday night activity in some of the major cities in South Africa in reverent respect for the Friday, the communal prayer day. These gatherings are held in private homes, with neighbours taking turns in arranging a *Haddād* at their homes, but is sometimes also held at the *Masjid* (Paulse 2003: 83). On occasion it would also be held on a Sunday night as during early times the Muslims expressed their religiously conscientiousness through daily practice (Davids 1989: 224, 227).

On a Thursday night after sunset no radios could be heard playing and no cinemas were attended, in fact no un-Islamic entertainment was allowed. The only thing that could be heard was the recitation of the *Qur`ān* or that of the *Haddād* which is also known as the *arwāh* and the fragrance of *miang* (burnt incense) could be smelled (Carrim 1990). Even during this modern age of television and video it is still observed that no television will be switched on in certain Muslim homes on a Thursday night.

5.3.3.2 *SŪFI* INSPIRED

Suleman Dangor (1994) argues that the *Haddād* owes its popularity to the *Sūfi tariqas*. The use of terminology also indicates the influence of the *tariqa*. Those who

attended lessons (*dars*) in the mosque intent on raising the moral level of the society, called themselves *mureed* (disciples) of their teacher, the *shaykh al-Islam*. George Foster reports that in 1772 he found slave meetings were held weekly:

in a private house belonging to a free Mahomedan, in order to read, or rather chant, several prayers, and chapters of the *Qur'ān*. As they have no priest among them, they cannot partake of any other acts of worship. (1777: 60)

This description by Foster, though indicating the general lack of understanding of Islam among European travellers, sheds light on the existing practices at the time and reveals that there were congregations for *dhikr* as well as for *salaat* (obligatory prayers). This in turn is an indication of the prevalence of Sufi practices during this period at the Cape..

Paulse (2003: 84) reminds us that the *Haddād*, *merang* and *barakat* originate in part from within the environment of the enslaved when freedom of religion hardly existed amongst the enslaved population. It gave the enslaved a feeling of community and an opportunity to participate in a religious activity, suspending for a moment their reality of enslavement. At the same time the institution of the *barakat* taught the slaves to care for their fellow Muslims. The religious aspect conforms to Muslim spiritual practices because the *Haddād* and *merang* are always preceded by a complete *khatam* (communal recitation) of the holy *Qur'ān* (Davids 1990: 27, 35).

The *Haddād* and *merang* are not strictly Islamic practices, but were religious alternatives created by the Muslim enslaved prior to 1804 when they were not allowed to practice Islam freely as a religion. These practices were innovations, rooted in the history of the country and reflecting the heritage of the religious struggle of the Muslim enslaved people at the Cape.

4.3.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HOLY NIGHTS

There are certain common Muslim traditions emanating from the historic Cape enslavement society of a traditional and spiritual nature, strongly influenced by Sufiism. These events found expression in the form of a series of holy nights, commonly known as 'big nights', with distinct cultural religious practices. These include, the night of *Mawlūd al-Nabi* (Birthday of the Prophet) on the 12th of *Rabī` al-Awwal*, *Laylat al-Mi`rāj* (the night of the Prophet's ascension) on the 27th of *Rajab*, *Laylat al-Barā'ah*, commonly known as *Ruwa* (the night of immunity) on the 15th of *Sha`bān*, and finally *Laylat al-Qadr* (the night of power – revelation of the *Qur`ān*) which is usually celebrated on the 27th of *Ramadān* (Tayob 1999: 73; Du Plessis 1944: 14). I look at these in turn to establish their significance in the worldview of the enslaved.

5.3.4.1 MIRAJ OF THE PROPHET

In this month, according to Muslim tradition, the *Mi`rāj al-Nabi* (Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) to heaven) took place. The advent of the *Mi`rāj* of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is commemorated in almost all the *Masājid* in South Africa, but mostly in Cape Town. The day is observed with optional fasting. Lectures are delivered in the *Masjid* at night which deals with the Prophet's earthly journey from the Sacred *Masjid* (*Masjid al-Harām*) in Makka to the remote *Masjid* in Jerusalem (*Masjid al-Aqsā*), and thereafter the Prophet's (P.B.U.H)'s heavenly journey from the *Masjid al-Aqsā* to the seven heavens and back in the same night. Also discussed is the Prophet (P.B.U.H)'s receiving the command to perform the five daily prayers from the Almighty 'Allah. This day is observed on the 27th night of the month of Rajab. From the beginning of the month

of *Rajab* the Muslim community start to prepare themselves spiritually for the month of *Ramadān* that lies ahead. All earthly pleasures are abstained from and virtuous deeds increased (Carrim 1990).

5.3.4.2 LAYLAT AL-BARĀ'AH

Laylah al-Barā (night of freedom and purification) or *Ruwa*, as it is commonly known in Malaya and amongst Muslims in South Africa, is celebrated and commemorated on the 15th night of the month of *Sha'bān*. Normally the 14th, 15th and 16th days of this month are observed with an optional fast. The programme for *Laylat al-Barā'ah* includes the recitation of *Sūrah Yāsīn* thrice with a special *du'ā'* (prayer) after each recitation. Imam Paulsen (2003: 107), describes the evening's events as follows, "On the 15th night the whole community gathers at the various *Masājid* 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'*, or prayer, 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) *Tawāl al-'Umr* – to be granted a long life, (2) *Daf' al-Balā'* – protecting the community from calamities, (3) *Istighnā 'an al-Nās* – grant dependence on Allah alone, and not people. A lecture is optional, explaining the significance of the night. One is also encouraged to fast on the days of the 14th, 15th, 16th 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 (Carrim 1990).

5.3.4.3 LAYLAT AL-QADR (KERSOPSTEEK)

Laylat al-Qadr, which is locally commemorated on the 27th 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 27th night (Du Plessis 1944: 16; Paulsen 2003: 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 (Baker 2009: 74). This is the night on which the first *Qur'ānic* revelation was revealed to the holy prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the cave of Mount Hira in the outskirts of Makka. On this night every Muslim home is decorated and has on display the best bedding, curtains, tableware and flowers that the family can afford. After *Maghrib Salāt* (prayers) candles are lit in every room of the house while *Surah al-Qadr* (chapter 97 of the Holy *Qur'ān*) is recited. The candles give more light to the house and the recital of the *Surah* is to demonstrate the divine light (the Holy *Qur'ān*) that the Almighty Allah has sent down to the earth. It is from these practices that the night is known amongst the Cape Muslim people as *Kersopsteek* (lighting of candles) (Du Plessis 1947: 16; Paulse 2003: 110).

5.3.5 THE *TAMAT* CEREMONY

Among the Cape Muslim cultural-religious practices is also the *tammat* ceremony, which refers to a significant day in the life of a child. This is when he or she masters the recitation of the *Qur'ān* in particular. It also means that he or she will now be able to recite directly from the *Qur'ān* and no more from the *surat*, from which he or she took his or her elementary *Qur'ānic* lessons. *Surat* 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 or she learns how to recite the *Qur'ān* applying

all its rules and regulations. Usually the ceremony takes place in the mosque where a group of children are 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 *tajwid*. The *tajwid* is the art of reciting the *Qur'ān* according to specific rules of pronunciation (Wehr 1974: 146). The following is a description of the *tammam* ceremony which Du Plessis took 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 *Qur'ān*. 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. Each boy and girl was tested separately... The younger the successful candidate the more credit to him or her... There is no time limit. Some of the pupils are ready for examination in six months; others again spend years learning a perfect pronunciation... (Du Plessis 1944: 16, 17)

The male graduate is dressed in Arabian attire, complete with *sorbaan* or turban and the female graduate wears a *medora*, hand stitched head cloth, on her head. The graduates are accompanied to the *Masjid* by an entourage of boys and girls. These attendants are usually younger than the graduates and dressed slightly differently (Davids 1980: 25). The *tamat* is seen as an encouragement so that the child may strive towards higher Islamic education. Islam stresses the importance of education but the format of these *tamats* are not strictly Islamic (Paulse 2003: 70).

5.3 SPIRITUAL VACUUM FILLED BY SACRED POWER

Ahmad Mukadam (2009: 86) believes that we should regard these Muslim common religious practices as an important reflection of Islam being performed in a particular social and historical setting. These practices continued in the communities, mosque and *madrassah's* on a daily basis, as Muslims adjusted their religious perceptions to devise different ways of satisfying their religious and spiritual needs under conditions of enslavement.

These Muslim common religious practices persisted not only as a revitalising set of practices for common people, but as a truly spiritual response to their conditions of enslavement. Kruss conceptualises it as follows.

In a system that denies one meaningful identity and social existence, and against which one feels powerless to effect any changes, it is to alternative socio cultural activities, more than overt political action that one tends to look in order to gain some degree of one's humanity. (1985: 209)

According to Davids (1980) Muslim common religious practices evolved from the world into which the enslaved were thrust at the Cape. The Auwal mosque and other mosques witnessed the evolution of most of the Cape Muslim traditions *or* common religious practices like *Rampie-sny* and "*Merang*", a religious ceremony followed by feasting that could have started here as a communal "get-together". During the early nineteenth century the *Merang* was arranged through the mosque on the seventh, fortieth and hundredth day after the occurrence of death. Members of the congregation were required to make a contribution of one shilling, called the "Tallie" for the purchase of cooking ingredients such as vegetables, fish and rice which were served on occurrence of a death. Portions of fish and rice, as well as other types of cakes and deserts were also

sent to those who could not attend as many were still confined to their living quarters by their masters.

Many of these traditions are unique to the Cape and have been borrowed from other traditional activities from parts of Africa and the East Indies which the Cape Muslims infused into their lifestyle when it was necessary, for their survival, but also to attract non-Muslims from the enslaved and freed communities to Islam.

The formal community of Islamic leaders under Tuan Guru and a plethora of Imams, looked for a wide range of strategies and tactics in achieving their status and claims to power. These endeavours to gain positions of power, were channelled through Muslim common religious practices as a form of religious response to diametrically oppose, the oppressive and debilitating conditions experienced by the enslaved.

CHAPTER 6 EDUCATION STRATEGIES BY THE ENSLAVED

6.1 ROLE OF *MADRASSAH'S* IN COMMUNITY BUILDING

The enslaved and free people at the Cape succeeded in building and strengthening community networks through a range of Muslim religious based practices and ensured that the spiritual needs of the enslaved were met. This inspired them with the knowledge of sacred power. The madrassahs played a decisive role in community building and through the education strategies implemented by the enslaved, developed a new education philosophy. This new education philosophy was promoted through a strong madrassah education system, which advanced Arabic Afrikaans literacy among the enslaved.

The mosques and *madrassahs* (Muslim schools) in the Cape, since the late eighteenth century, played a central role in the transmission of the emerging Muslim cultural-religious ideas. The thinking and writing of Tuan Guru provided the theoretical base for Muslim education through the *madrassahs*. The Imams actively promoted these ideas through their daily work with the enslaved in the *madrassahs* and mosques as well as in the surrounding communities. As Jeppie has noted that the Imams interpreted Islam for a people caught in between their colonial masters and the indigenous people at the Cape. The Imams interacted with their universal philosophy, their 'common sense' understanding of reality but in the process established a domain of religious authority (Jeppie 1996: 157).

Jeppie (1996:158) argues that though they were modest politically, the Imam's were extremely forthwith in their efforts to find a significant position within Cape Town and in the Muslim community. The enslaved and free black population was destined to remain in a disempowered position within the larger Cape society, however this theological philosophy created the space for them to function as a united cultural-religious community. The enactment of this world view, which also infused the thinking of the converted free black slave masters, even enabled a softening of the severity of the treatment imposed upon their Muslim slaves. From humble beginnings, Islam evolved into a significant force among the enslaved and free black population (Marasabessy 20014: 127).

Jeppie (1996: 161) proceeds to explain that Madrassah education can be regarded as the vehicle that motivated new cultural traits among the enslaved and freed people at the Cape and the religion of Islam expedited this movement. The *madrassahs* taught a brand

of education that appealed to a substantial portion of the enslaved and freed black people at the Cape.

During 1838, the Reverend James Willis Sanders, a Christian missionary expressed his respect and awe for the educational efforts of the Cape Muslim community, in particular the position taken up by the Imams, religious leaders. He recognized the central role that the *madrassahs* played as a cohesive hegemonic force:

... they have always deeply sympathised 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 so long shut against him, he prefers joining with those who have been his friends in his distress, who invited and encouraged him to bring his children to the same school, to attend the same mosque, and to look forward to meeting again in the same paradise (Rochlin, 1982: 141).

6.2 TUAN GURU AS AGENT OF CHANGE

Lubbe (1986: 29) reports that in his to his will, located in the Cape Archives (Cape Archives, MOOC 7/1/53 No. 66), Tuan Guru was a former prince of the principality of Tidore in the Ternate Islands. Officially, Abdullah ibn Qadi Abd al-Salam, the Muslim community bestowed upon him the esteemed name of Tuan Guru, meaning Mister Teacher. He together with three other people were found guilty of plotting against the Dutch colonial powers in the East Indies. Tuan Guru arrived at the Cape on the 6th April 1780 and was immediately transferred to Robben Island (Cape Archives, CJ 2568 dated 25 April, 1781).

During his imprisonment on Robben Island he wrote the *Ma"rifah al-Islam wa al-Iman*

(manifestation of Islam and faith), which elaborates on *qalam* (Word of God), *tauhid* (Ones of God), and *fiqh* (Study of laws pertaining to ritual requirements of Muslim devotees). This is an all-embracing and wide-ranging discussion of the Ash'arite dogmatic creed of Sunnism which he finished transcribing in 1781 (Davids 1990: 14). Records in the Cape Archives indicate that on his release from his incarceration on Robben Island, he found lodgings in Dorp Street, Cape Town, where he founded the first recognized *madrassah* in the Cape and indeed in South Africa (Cape Archives, RDG 115).

The *madrassah* was established to educate the enslaved and free black people of the Cape who had become Muslim. As a consequence, Muslim education in the Cape was based on the Ash'ari concepts of *takdir*, *iradah*, *taqwah*, *iktisab*, *qadha* and *qadhar*. These notions were central to the formation and influence of the Cape Muslim practice (Marasabessy 2004: 126).

In his *Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Iman*, Tuan Guru deliberated in detail about the conceptual framework of his philosophical theology. This is regarded as the founding document that shaped the educational framework of *madrassah* education in the Cape. It also established the framework for the evolution of the form and substance of the world of the enslaved people at the Cape. His philosophical leaning was towards being a Rational-Traditionalist (Davids 1990: 13).

6.3 EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Bunyamin Marasabessy (2004: 129) explained that Tuan Guru's theological philosophy, which encapsulated the substance of the Cape slave world, and the basic philosophy of the educational endeavours at the Dorp Street *madrassah*, is talked about in great detail in the *Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Iman*. Marasabessy (2004: 130) proceeds to explain that

Ash'ari rational-traditional theological philosophy advances a strong notion of determinism, that everything happens due to the will of Allah, which infused the thinking of the enslaved people at the Cape and imbued them with a sense of acceptance of their fate. This world view, fostered by the Ash'ari rational-traditional theological framework also advanced the possibility of social mobility to enslaved people, who ordinarily had no hope of advancement beyond their state of enslavement. They accessed social mobility through their Islamic practice and so did not need to seek it through their liberation from slavery. This would partly explain why there was never widescale attempts by the enslaved to cast off their shackles of enslavement.

It further contextualises why the eighteenth and nineteenth century Cape Muslims never organized against their slave owners and superiors, but they vigorously opposed the regulations thrust upon them during the nineteenth century small pox epidemic, and the closure of their cemeteries under the state's professed concern of health issues in 1886 (Mayson 1865: 137).

6.4 RATIONAL-TRADITIONAL DOGMATIC SCHOOL OF THOUGHT

According to Ajam (1974: 54) the founder of Tuan Guru's rational-traditional dogmatic school of thought, Abu 'I-Hasan 'Ali ibn Isma'il al-Ash'ari, was born in Basra in 873 CE. Tuan Guru exceptional leadership qualities are evidenced in his work among the enslaved and newly freed people of Cape Town. Apart from his concerted efforts to establish a Muslim education school for children of the enslaved, he also blazed a revolutionary trail in the establishment of a proper framework for the implementation, of Islamic principles and law according to the Muslim holy book, the *Qur'ān*. These efforts, to play a decisive role in the development of the Muslim community, obviously would have come with extreme difficulties and huge challenges. There were many legislative regulations that

made it difficult for Muslims to practice their religion. In spite of this seemingly disempowered position maintained by the Muslim leadership, they exerted the classic positions of power from below, as expounded by Foucault and others (Foucault 1991, Antonio 1971, Gaventa 2003). This situation demonstrated that in spite of the legislated constraints and the concerted efforts by Christian missionaries to convert the enslaved to the gospel as, prescribed in the Bible, the levels of conversion to Islam outstripped that of Christianity by considerable margins (Lubbe 1986: 31).

According to Achmat Davids (1980: 37), when Tuan Guru became Kadi or Chief Imam at the Cape after his imprisonment, he concerned himself, among all his other activities, primarily with the teaching of Islam. From the Auwal Mosque in Dorp Street he taught the children of slaves and freed black people the principles of the *Qur'ān* and to read and write Arabic. (Davids A 1980:45) His school became a crucial medium through which he and the Imams ensured the continuance of the culture and religion of the community. The growth in numbers of Tuan Guru's school became a matter of concern as the increased activity around the mosque amplified:

The Earl of Caledon, who preceded Sir John Cradock as Governor had been convinced that, if the slaves were left in a state of ignorance, they would fall prey to the zeal of the Mohamedan priests, who at the time were conducting a school in Cape Town that was attended by 375 slave children. (Davids 1980: 45)

6.5 THE MA'RIFAH AL-ISLAM WE AL-IMAM

Ajam (1974:64) underscores the fact that the basic elements in the world of the enslaved people at the Cape, were drawn from the rational traditional philosophy of Sunnism, of which Tuan Guru was a follower. Tuan Guru explains this philosophy in great detail in the

Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Imam. The document became the most important textbook in the school, and enhanced writing amongst the enslaved as sections were copied into students' note-books. In this manuscript the Ash'ari concepts of *takdir* (predetermination), *iradah* (the Will of God), *taqwah* (piety, attained through fearing God, and being submissive to His commands) and *iktisab* (acquisition – in the sense that God created the acts of man, and acquires them) – all linked to *Qada* (the Judgement of God) and *Qadar* (the Decree of God) are extensively laid out.

Ajam (1974: 64)) postulates that Tuan Guru managed to craft a set of social relations in which the enslaved and or free black slave owners could maintain a peaceful coexistence (1974). Hereby, it was possible for a slave to be made Imam of a congregation or an assistant Imam of a mosque, for differences between men were not judged in terms of social position or wealth, but differences in achieving levels of piety (*taqwah*) (Ajam 1974: 64).

The *Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Imam* not only shaped the social life of the Cape Muslims during the nineteenth century in numerous ways, it became a fundamental reference point for all aspect of life that touched them in every way. Its central philosophical position still constitutes the approach to *aqida* (the Islamic belief system), and became the subject of a range of Arabic-Afrikaans and Afrikaans-Roman manuscripts in the late nineteenth and throughout the twentieth centuries (Ajam 1974).

This philosophical framework created the environment around which the Cape slave world rotated, and explains the Cape Muslim total acceptance when confronted with setbacks of a physical or emotional nature, or natural disasters, or politics. They would articulate everything in terms of

Alles is in die takdier van Allah (everything is determined by Allah); or every happening being articulated in terms of this perception of predetermination – *Alles is in die kadaa-kadar van Allah* (everything is according to the general and particular decrees of Allah) (Marasabessy 2004: 127).

During its developmental years, the *madrassahs* in the Cape, the chief works prescribed were those penned by Tuan Guru. How much of the full range of subjects covered in his writings was taught is not evident. It is, however, clear that emphasis was placed on both - *aqida* (beliefs) and *salah* (prayers) – this focus has remained through the years into the present day Islamic practice in the Cape (Hendricks 2005: 261). Marasabessy (2004: 131) concludes that it looks like it was the *Ma'rifah al-Islam wa al-Iman* had the biggest influence on the Cape enslaved and free black community, and which propelled Islamic education in the Cape.

6.6 A RECOGNISABLE MADRASSAH EDUCATION SYSTEM

According to Marasabessy (2004: 129) the Cape Muslim Islamic educational system was formally launched when the Dorp Street *Madrassah*, opened in 1793. As the first formal organization through which the Cape Muslims were organised, it was enormously effective in drawing students from the Cape enslaved population. During the year 1807, this *madrassah* accommodated 372 enslaved and Free Black students (Horrell 1970:10). This number was boosted to 491 students by the year 1825 (*Imperial Blue Book* 1835: 210). Nevertheless *madrassahs*, in the households of a range of Imams, continuously established in Cape Town and by 1832 no less than 12 Muslim schools existed

The concerns of the Earl of Caledon about the activities of the Imams is therefore obvious, who were instructing the slaves with teachings from the *Qur'ān* and to read and to write

Arabic (Hoge 1951: 111). During this period many of the male enslaved and the free black population in Cape Town were securely Muslim (Shell 2006: 107)

In Cape Town, schools were effectively utilised to grow and spread the religions of Islam and Christianity. Throughout missionary history in Africa, scholars have recognised that education provided a most powerful appeal for conversion, especially when non-religious features of the missionary culture were combined with a religious message (Beidelman 1974: 245). The Muslim *madrassahs* in the Cape, played a similarly crucial role in combining education with the conversion of the enslaved and free populations. These *madrassah* schools educated more students of colour than all the other educational institutions in the Cape colony put together. It was reported that one Imam conducted a school in the 1820's in Cape Town "attended by some 370 slaves" (Shell 2006: 103).

The growth was significant enough that in 1795 a mosque was required to accommodate all the students (Hoge 1951: 117). As the number of *madrassahs* grew it became important to coordinate the education system. It seems as if this did take place, for by 1854, Islamic education at the Cape was very well organised and under the stewardship of a single Imam Moota, or a "superintendent general of education". It was tasked with the job of coordinating the educational endeavours of the schools set up by converts to Islam (De Kock, 1950).

Even though Islamic education today is unorganised, there was a time in their nineteenth century Cape history that the Cape Muslims had a very well organised system. This is what facilitated the development of the Afrikaans language variety of the Cape Muslim community.

6.7 ARABIC AFRIKAANS LITERACY AMONG THE ENSLAVED

Probably the first proof of literacy among the enslaved is a letter written in 1760, by the enslaved September of Boughies (Franken 1953:69). This letter was part of the evidence in the murder case of Michiel Smuts, the Company's bookkeeper, killed by a group of run-away slaves led by Alexander of Sumatra (Ross 1983: 19). After some consideration of the circumstances around the trial and the evidence placed on record it was suggested that the letter was written by September of Boughies (Franken 1953:67). However, Achmat Davids (1990: 17) is of the opinion that the relevant letter could have been written by another person and addressed to September. Be that as it may, the letter provides us with a notion of the status September of Boughies had amongst the Bughanese enslaved people in Cape Town. He was looked upon as their 'doctor' and advice giver – he was the person they could confide in about their pain and suffering. Most significant though, is that the letter informs us that September of Boughies could read and write, and that he was engaged in written communication with other Bughanese enslaved in the Colony. This is an indication that he was not the only person who could read and write among the Bughanese enslaved in Cape Town. We are further informed by an enslaved man, named Gedult of the Cape, who declared that September had would normally sit on his bed and write (Franken 1953: 69). Drawing conclusions from this evidence, one can assume that there was an active network of communication among the Bughanese in particular in the Cape. Even though this is the only surviving letter, one can assume that there must have been others that have been written by the enslaved to carry news between each other. The Arabic script was also applied to communication in Malayu, thus if they could read the Arabic script, one can draw the inference that they could have used it for Malayu correspondence amongst the Malayu-speaking enslaved (Davids 1990: 17).

Achmat Davids (1990: 18) relates a story of Frans of Bengal, who was enslaved (Cape Archives, A604/9) in 1806 when he led Javaansche Artillery at the Battle of Blouberg. He was designated by Tuan Guru (Cape Archives, CO 3984.798) to play this significant leadership role. Given the subsequent responsibilities bestowed upon him, it is reasonable to assume that he could read and write. In 1800 he dedicated a memorial to Sir George Young, whereby he made an appeal, on behalf of the Muslim enslaved community, for a piece of land in Vanderleur Street, District Six (Cape Archives, BO 154 item 236; BRD 17) for the purpose of constructing a mosque.

His grasp of Malayu, and his capacity to record this language in the Arabic script, becomes evident when he was requested, on 2 May 1807, to rewrite, in Malayu, an appendix in Arabic script of Tuan Guru's will for the official records of the Master's Office (Cape Archives, MOOC 7/1/53 No. 66112). Achmat Davids (1990: 18) concludes with the acknowledgement that it is his signature on his 1800 memorial, when he signed his name using the Arabic letters (*fah rah alif nun shin o "Fraans"*), which indicate to us that there were occurrences in which they would transcribe the creolized Dutch in their sacred script (Cape Archives, BRD 17).

6.8 PROLIFERATION OF THE MADRASSAH'S

These *madrassah's* were comparatively large institutions catering to hundreds of students. Abraham Leslie Behr (1952: 175), a historian of education in South Africa, noted that in the 1820's an Imam was conducting a school in Cape Town, "attended by some 370 slaves to whom he taught the *Qur'ān* and how to read and write Arabic". John Schofield Mayson (1861: 23), an English Army officer, reported in the 1850's, that there were "two large Malay schools in Cape Town, in which the reading of the *Qur'ān* in Arabic

is taught." According to him these schools were advertised in the court calendars and street directories.

An entry written into the Imperial Blue Book of the time, indicated that the number of "Free Black Scholars and of Slaves instructed in the School of a Mahometan Priest in Cape Town in 1825 was 491." It declares that these schools alone had more black pupils than the combined total of the other educational institutions in the Cape colony. This is an indication that more *madrassahs* were in existence and that they had larger numbers of students from the communities of the enslaved (Shell 1983: 10). These large schools were not the only ones in existence as there were many smaller establishments implemented by elderly retired Imams, these schooling activities would be conducted in their homes, or in the mosques. Imam Achmat was a teacher who plied his trade in this way: "I was formerly a fishmonger but being old, I confine myself to the instruction of children in the mosque every day" (Evidence of Two Mahometan Priests 1835: 210). Approximately eighty entries of "Malay Schoolmasters" in the street directories of the period, confirm the wide distribution of these institutions (South African Court Calendars and Street Directories, 1809 - 1890, *passim*).

Subsequent to the establishment and proliferation of these *madrassah's*, schools were either situated in the mosque or the homes of the Imams. Many of these smaller schools were run by elderly retired Imams, as each mosque would organise an educational programme for the children of its congregation, as well as newly converted adult enslaved and freed Cape Town inhabitants (Evidence of Two Mahometan Priests: 210).

The Imams who ran these schools were seemingly very highly respected and the parents of the children of the schools felt indebted to them for the service which they provided. These house-schools run by elderly, religiously educated men were still around in the

middle of the 19th century. Mayson (1861: 23) reported in the 1850s: "in several of the priest's houses there are smaller schools, at which, according to the assurances of the Malays, boys and girls receive an equal instruction in English, Dutch, reading, writing and the rudiments of their belief". A decade after Mason's visit and recording of his experiences to the Cape, Lady Gordon Duff wrote in one of her many letters that, "on Monday, I am going to see the school which the priest keeps at his house" (Duff - Gordon, Letters from the Cape, p. 139). The testimony of Doctor Philip Eduard Faure, a prominent Cape professional, lends further weight to this argument. He reported to the Commission on Education of the Cape Colony in the eighteen sixties that, "The Mohammedans value education more than the other blacks" (Cape Archives: CCP/1/2/3/2/1).

6.9 ARABIC AFRIKAANS EVOLVED

Imam Achmat van Bengalen succeeded Tuan Guru as teacher and by 1825 it was reported that 491 children attended the school (Davids 1980: 94). Davids (1980:45) asserts that Tuan Guru's school contributed greatly to the evolution of the Muslim community in the Cape in particular and South Africa generally:

Out of this school developed the written language of the Cape Muslim community - Arabic-Afrikaans - which was so commonly used at the Cape until the 1930s. Arabic-Afrikaans is actually Cape Dutch or vernacular Afrikaans, written in Arabic script. The first printed work in Arabic-Afrikaans was the *Al Qawal Al Matim* printed in 1856. This book preceded the first printed Afrikaans book in Roman script by almost six years.

Cape Muslim Imams and teachers were forced to find a way in which to transmit knowledge to their students who effectively could not read or write. A creative solution

was devised through combining their student's ability to read the Arabic script with their ability to speak Afrikaans and in so doing devised a new methodology to produce texts that they could read and understand. The consequential Arabic-Afrikaans texts which flowed from this innovation played a vital role in the teaching and learning of Islam by the enslaved adults and their children in the *madrassahs* (Dangor 2008: 130).

Previously, religious education had in all probability been delivered in the households of the free blacks, with perhaps an organised system having been at *Shaykh* Yusuf's place of refuge at Faure in 1694. It was at Faure during *Shaykh* Yusuf's student school time, according to oral tradition, that the *Qur'ān* was first recited in South Africa (Rochlin 1982: 141).

The rote learning approach is starkly evident in the application and use of the *koples boek*. According to this methodology of teaching the student had to transcribe a lesson, either from a chalkboard or dictation by a teacher, in a book called a *koples boek* (Jappie 2011: 5). It is through the survival of these notebooks, or *koples boeke* that we get an idea of the teaching methods and content of *madrassah* education during the early days of slavery education at the Cape. These student notebooks demonstrate the educational process which existed in the nineteenth century. These books provide evidence which we can use to track the changes in the medium of instruction from Melayu to Afrikaans in nineteenth century Cape *madrassah* education (Marasabessy 2004: 127).

6.10 ISLAM FUNCTIONED AS A BINDING FORCE

The *madrassah's* egalitarian approach enabled them to educate children, who would otherwise have been excluded from educational opportunities and in turn welcomed them into the fold of Islam. Christianity was viewed as the religion of the State, a State

which excluded the enslaved and freed black people from participation in all aspects of its social, political and economic life. Most people at the Cape, including the enslaved and free black people, communicated in the newly evolved language of Afrikaans. The Imams conducted their *madrassah* lessons in Afrikaans and this proved to be most attractive and comforting to their client base.

The *madrassahs* thus became the nucleus of a successful educational outreach that, utilizing the compendium of Tuan Guru as its core text. In addition to becoming a highly visible section of urban Cape Town, this community of enslaved and former enslaved people had developed a set of social structures and relations that acted as an alternative to the dominant colonial hierarchy. The effect of this educational activity was the development of a self-aware, self-confident Muslim personality which is indicative of the creative power that was wielded by the enslaved at the Cape (Rafudeen 2006: 93). They effectively created a world of their own and resisted the hegemonic forces of the colonial slave master society which bore down relentlessly upon them as an enslaved and newly freed people.

CHAPTER 7: THE ROLE OF THE IMAMS IN THE EVOLUTION OF AFRIKAANS

7.1 IMAMS AS FIGURES OF AUTHORITY AND INFLUENCE

The evolving methodology of teaching and the formation of an alternative religious based education system among the freed and enslaved people at the Cape enabled the religion of Islam to act as a communal binding force. This emerging situation cast the Imams in the role of organic intellectuals and projected them as figures of authority and influence. Through their status and involvement in the freed and enslaved community

they developed a worldview from below. By developing alternate strategies of education and community building, through Arabic Afrikaans and Sufism, they redefined the power relations between the enslaved people and the slaveowners.

This chapter deliberates on the significant development of the language of Afrikaans and the role of the imams as a small evolving but highly regarded group. The Imams, who in their very unique situation, had to execute the role of colonial “organic intellectuals,” to use Gramsci's term for “articulating a subaltern cause”, yet enabled by the colonising power to create a local outright clerical tradition Hoare & Smith :1971: 38). The Imams produced a hegemonic discourse of their own. Yet as Jean and John Comaroff remind us “the hegemonic proportion of any dominant ideology may be greater or lesser. It will never be total” (1991: 25). The Imams were figures of great religious power and inspiration but their significant contribution was never acknowledged.

By the 19th century, according to Shamiel Jeppie (1996: 155), the public practice of religion at the Cape, in particular Islam, was flourishing. The community of Imams (*Muslim priests*) was at first mostly made up of liberated convicts and their offspring, who led the way in setting up mosques and madrassah's (Muslim schools) and becoming *Imams* to their respective congregations, which was made up of both enslaved and ‘free blacks’. During this time, Jeppie notes the Imams assumed positions of influence and played a crucial role in the evolving Muslim community. As Jeppie further explains, the execution of public ritual was vital to creating power relations and the Imams used ritual to ‘reiterate and represent their authority in an ongoing way’ (Jeppie 1996: 155). The community of Imams during this period took on the form of hierarchy, and the role of Imam was passed on from father to son. This practice of passing on leadership led to

countless disputes and contestations of legitimacy within this Muslim community during this time, which resulted in the establishment of a whole host of new mosques. The fragmentation of mosque congregation often led to a dissatisfied breaking away and establishing their own mosque (Argun 200: 49-66).

Jeppie (1996) notes that stationed in the Cape Colony, these Imams were regarded as 'ulama (singular, 'alim; literally 'knower') because they were the most knowledgeable about Islamic law and practice. The hierarchical position of Imams for a period established through his performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca, However, the role of Imam was often passed down from father to son or claimed by a strategically placed and ambitious teacher or community leader in prayer. (Jeppie 1996: 139-162).

It is with a firm understanding of Islam at the Cape that one would gain a deeper grasp of the functional role that these Imams performed in this emerging community infused by enslavement. The activities of the Imams would gain meaning within the context of the unique nature of Islam at the Cape, if one takes a pause and reflect on it on a deeper and practical level. Like Peter Brown (1982: 105), who wrote the following about holy men in history :

It was through the hard business of living his life for twenty-four hours in the day, through catering for the day-to-day needs of his locality, through allowing his person to be charged with the normal hopes and fears of his fellow men, that the holy man gained the power in society that enabled him to carry off the daily responsibilities of his assigned position

The Imams demonstrated a very unusual sense of commitment and allegiance to the British colonial power at the Cape, but it seems that they were not completely

comfortable with the colonisers. In this regard Shamiel Jeppie (1996: 153) states that “they expressed innumerable, seemingly minor, gestures of dissent and assertions of independence against the state”.

7.2 THEIR ROLE AS ORGANIC INTELLECTUALS

Jeppie (1996: 139-162) advances the notion that the Imams seemed to be ‘articulating a subaltern cause, yet enabled by the colonizing power to create a local peaceful clerical tradition’. They experienced a level of respectability and in their unique position in the enslaved community they had to play the role of colonial ‘organic intellectuals,’ to repeat Antonio Gramsci’s (Hoare & Smith 1971: 330) very descriptive phrase,

The accepted precepts of Islam - *Qur’ān* and Hadith writings – do not declare priesthood as a central component of the religion. Arnold Green (1978), Nikki Keddie (1972), Michael Fisher (1981), Dale Eickelman (1985) and Alan Christelow (1985) go to great lengths to demonstrate that if one looks in detail at the role and function of the Muslim leadership, in a historical and anthropological, sense then the existence of a recognised clerisy is very evident. However, some authors go to great lengths to demonstrate that if one looks in detail at the role and function of the Muslim leadership, in a historical and anthropological sense, then the existence of a recognised clerisy is very evident (Robinson 1985; Hiskett 1973; Martin 1976; Wilks 1968).

The Muslim teachers of the eighteen and nineteen century were men who were first exiled to Robben Island, which served as a penal colony, off the coast of Cape Town. Upon their release from the island they joined the enslaved and freed enslaved communities around Cape Town and largely blended into the communal landscape. Quietly going about establishing and leading Muslim based religious activities (Davids 1987).

At the inception of the 1800's the new British administration seemed much more accommodating to the needs of the Cape Town Muslims, who felt bold enough to petition Andrew Barnard (the husband of Lady Anne Barnard) for a mosque (CAD, BO 155, Item 236):

in which they may pay their Adoration to God, conformably to the principles of their Religion... They assume themselves your Excellency will admit that nothing conduces so much to the good order of Society as a due observance of Religious Worship. They therefore humbly implore your Excellency to grant them a little spot of unoccupied land, of the dimensions of one hundred and fifty feet square, whereon to erect, at their own Expense, a small Temple to be dedicated to the Worship of Almighty God.

Shamil Jeppie (1996) cites the hierarchical and hereditary nature of the Imamate of this period as causing religious disputes, as well as leading to a proliferation of mosques (1996: 155). The disagreements between the various mosque communities gave way to serious confrontations, leading the authorities to seek an advisor schooled in the laws of Islam to mediate between the conflicting communities. In 1863, this advisor arrived in the person of Abu Bakr Effendi, an Ottoman Kurdish scholar who was a practitioner of the Islamic Hanafi school of law. His religious orientation would cause further conflict, as most of the Cape Muslims were followers of the Shafi school of thought and practice (Argun 2000).

Some of the muslim teachers were initially incarcerated on Robben Island and upon their release they went to live and teach among the enslaved and freed population at the Cape (Mason 2002: 12). The most significant figure, as already discussed, was 'Abd Allah Qadi

'Abd Al-Salaam, later known as Tuan Guru ('Mister Teacher'), released from prison in 1793 and instrumental in the creation of both the first *madrassah* and the first mosque at the Cape.

7.3 SOCIAL STATUS OF THE IMAMS

With the establishment of mosques and their congregations, the complexity of the Imams' role increased. The position of Imam provided an elevated community position and a small amount of remuneration. Those who were in this position strived to maintain their station in the community and used this as a means of advancement for their children and friends. The result was that sometimes those who became Imams were not necessarily the most capable or qualified people leading to contestation within the community, often ending up in the court of law. These conflicts, however, did not break down the cohesion within the affected communities (Davids 1995: 54).

There is not enough evidence to suggest that the Imams were formally organized in a clerical grouping but Mason (1861: 16) stated that the Imams who had performed the hajj "are held in great repute for superior sanctity" and congregants "regard the non-pilgrim priests as ignorant and self-constituted".

As Davids (1991: 38) notes, the improvement of one's life condition within the Muslim community was a possibility even though one would be in a condition of enslavement. A number of Cape Town Imams were emancipated men, however Achmat van Bengel was still enslaved when the position of assistant Imam of the Dorp Street mosque was bestowed upon him. However, they were highly regarded in their status as most knowledgeable in daily aspects of Islamic theology and law (Mayson 1861: 16).

According to Mayson a number of Imams engaged in a range of temporary occupations to supplement their income, which is an indication of the diverse roles they undertook to make a living as religious leaders and educators:

Like the former enslaved people of the city engaged in numerous occupations, so the range of work the part time Imams engaged in was of a multitude nature. They were teaching to the enslaved who were not able to provide financial reward for this service and so Imams had to supplement their income through casual labour and informal employment. (1861: 16)

Muding told the 1824-5 Commission that “The priests subsist by various occupations that they are engaged in; by cutting up and retailing wood, retailing fish, rice etc., buying and selling at auctions” (Papers Relative etc. 1835).

In spite of the financial constraints experienced by their congregants, the Imams were rewarded in a minor fashion by those who could afford to give them something through communal contributions:

At marriages and births there is a trifling contribution made at the discretion of the parties, never exceeding one or two rix dollars, and sometimes if the parties are poor, nothing is paid. There are also small contributions for a festival, which is common on those occasions when the parties can afford it. This is when the ceremony takes place at the house, but when at the place of worship there is no such thing allowed (Papers Relative etc. 1835: 209).

It is not easy to determine at what age Imams were bestowed with leadership positions, but most of them were well advanced in years and had status in their communities. An anonymous writer describes meeting a “malay priest, on whose face the wrinkles of age had long taken possession and who was highly respected by his followers” (Gleanings

1806: 246).

Jeppie (1996: 150) argues that work did not eliminate importance of worship, these two practices connected and complimented each other that led to a balanced lifestyle which accommodated both. There was no religious guidance on how a religious leader should be remunerated or how he should ensure an income to sustain his family. However, the congregants would contribute to the living cost of the Imams in whatever small manner that they could.

Upon closer scrutiny of the street directories of the time, it is evident that Muslim schools were widely in use and that parents of the enslaved and former enslaved put a substantial value on the importance of the religious education of their children. About eighty records of "Malay schoolmasters" are to be found in the street directories (South African Court Calendars and Street Directories, 1809). One of the most extraordinary accomplishment of the Imams through their educational endeavours throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century, was their contribution to Afrikaans as a written language. As I discuss elsewhere in this dissertation, Afrikaans evolved out of the need for a common language among the enslaved at the Cape and a Cape "Malay" Imam, was responsible for the publication the first book in Afrikaans in the 1850s (van Selms 1953: 61-103).

7.4 FIELDS OF POWER OCCUPIED BY THE IMAMS

The Imams were practical men who did not exclusively rely on religious ideology to establish and maintain their influential positions in society. Communities come into being through far reaching cultural and social endeavours and these cultural and social endeavours are in turn intensely influenced by ideology and discourse (Ortner 1989:14).

The finer measures applied by the Imams, to ensure their hegemonic position, was not necessarily through the way they preached to their congregations from the pulpit, during weekly Friday prayer, or the way in which they led the community in discussion around issues of Islamic law and application. It gave expression in their daily practice; in what they did. It is a field in which power relations are declared, actioned, adjusted, and formulated.

In instances such as this the religious leaders utilised ritual to enforce and perpetuate their leadership positions. Considering early Cape Town Islamic public ritual should therefore be central to any study of Islam at the Cape (Jeppie 1996: 155). The presence of Imams at a marriage were an imperative for such a union to be effectively concluded in the eyes of the community. All births had to be sanctified by an Imam to name the child. The presence of the Imams to lead the prayer and burial ritual was paramount to ensure safe passage of the soul of the deceased into the after-life (Shell 1984: 55). All major religious festival required the presence of the Imam to legitimize the ceremonial process. Kollisch provides a colourful description of a wedding ceremony and no major transitional event such as this, without an Imam there leading the ceremonies, would be socially acceptable (1867: 35). The Imams led their congregations in the acceptance of the status quo, as socially and economically disempowered by the dominant colonial powers, but instilled within them the belief in the salvation of the after-life. It seems that while the Imams did not harbor any needs for political high office, they were driven by the need to carve a special niche for themselves in the lives of the enslaved and former enslaved people of Cape Town.

Ralph Miliband (1977: 53) maintains that the Imams seemed to play a central role in the

conscientisation of the enslaved regarding their value and significance as Muslims. By concentrating on practices of public ritual, we can understand how this subordinate group, was able to voice their understanding of the realities of their enslavement. Through public, but mostly private ritual and practice and through the establishment of communal identity which forged group identity, that enabled the enslaved and freed Muslims to challenge the overbearing burden of their enslavement condition (Marston 1989: 256). The Muslim rituals, practices and ceremonies by the enslaved and former enslaved people in the Cape, which we have dealt with earlier, could be regarded as an expression of contested terrain, where the public ritual and social life of the Cape Muslims were fields of power in which the Imams established and maintained their authority.

7.5 ALTERNATE STRATEGIES THROUGH ARABIC AFRIKAANS

Arabic-Afrikaans, or the use of the Arabic script to write the Afrikaans language, has its roots in the 1800s in Cape Town. At first Malayu was a common language for the enslaved population which many either spoke or were familiar with and it eventually became the most commonly spoken dialect of the developing Muslim community in the Cape (Jappie 2011). Malayu speakers, says Jappie (2011), who formed part of the enslaved and freed population at the Cape, were not able to write with the Roman script. However, because they would constantly recite from the *Qur'ān* they were able to read and write in Arabic. These two skills of reading and writing enabled them to become versed in the the *Jawi* system, where Arabic letters are used to write Malay. Cape Dutch was eventually chosen as the commonly spoken dialect of the Muslim community and it became the mode of teaching in the madrassahs throughout the Cape colony. In this way a new language saw the dawn of light in the form of Arabic-Afrikaans which used a locally adapted *Jawi* system. The following is a sample of Arabic Afrikaans:

ان دي كُونُغْ سَنَكِبْ اس بِيْدِي هُوَك الله تَعَالَا ان فَارَلِكُ الله تَعَالَا اِسْ بَاسْ فِرْ اَلْدِي اِشْنْ

“En die konungskap is by die hoege Allah ta`ālā en waarlik Allah ta`ālā is baas vir al die iets.” (quote from the Qur`ān – Sūrat al-Mulk 67:1)

Hein Willemse (2015: 6) has the following to say about the development of Afrikaans in South Africa and the way in which the enslaved people responded to the language of their slave masters :

“The construction of language as 'an international language', or 'a tribal language,' or 'a language of love,' or 'a language of the oppressor' has little to do with the language itself. It says more about the social environment where language serves as a metaphor for a variety of ideas, images, aspirations, emotions, orientations, and most crucially economic, political and social power. One of the major ways in which colonialism affected the subjugated is the denial of their being, their psyche: often the subjugated see themselves as becoming fully human only when they act or behave like the colonialists, i.e. to imitate their speech, their institutions and their behaviour. Often people formulate an anti-colonialist stance countering such colonial institutions. (2015: 6)

Having been stripped of their rights and dignity , Muslims at the Cape were not allowed to freely engage in the practice of their chosen religion. The first mosque, the Auwal *Masjid* (also known as the Dorp Street *Masjid*), was established only in 1798 (Davids 1980: 47). In the early years of colonialism at the Cape, Islam was kept alive mainly through the *tariqas* (*Sūfi* orders) (Da Costa 1994: 131). There is proof of *Sūfi* (mystic) practices at around the culmination of the seventeenth century in the form of the *dhikr* (chanting) sessions that *Shaykh* Yusuf of Macassar, a *Sūfi* master of the Khalwatiyyah Order, engaged in with his enslaved Muslim converts at his place of banishment in

Macassar (Dangor Y 1994).

Dangor (2008: 130) demonstrates that the development of Arabic-Afrikaans speech and writing is an indication of how Muslim leaders and their followers had to find innovative ways to communicate with people who hailed from many different parts of the world. In a novel way they latched onto the fact that their students could read the Arabic script, even though they were not able to understand it. Further they realized that their students could speak the Afrikaans language. In a novel way they combined these two skills to work in tandem and produced text Afrikaans texts written in Arabic script, which their students could read and understand. This innovation enabled the teachers of Islam to create learning materials which were accessible to their students and it played a vital role in transmitting the basic Islamic teachings to the new recruits.

7.6 PARALLEL WORLD VIEW – A VISION FROM BELOW

Muslim slaves and Free Blacks created a world of their own with ideas of resistance based on their religion of Islam, which was infused with Sufi philosophical practices and worldviews (Davids 1990:15–6). This alternative lifestyle of the enslaved and freed blacks was of a more subtle nature, which did not openly challenge the hegemonic force of the slave owners, but it demonstrated a force of undermining power by their own “religion and ceremonial practices of Islam” which was, to them, an expression of an alternative to the Christian religion the VOC attempted to institute (Ward 2009: 233–4).

Among themselves, the enslaved wrote and circulated oral transcripts, did away with the discriminating descriptions of their enslavement and attempted to communicate a new set of affirming values in the face of their status of enslavement and disempowerment. When they were in the immediate surroundings of their slave masters, they would

engage in the appropriate behaviour required by people of their station in life and would even go the extra mile to please their masters by endorsing the virtues of the official transcript (Trotter 2009: 53).

Scott (1990: 111) argues that “the public transcript of domination [is] ontologically prior to the hidden, backstage transcript” The colonial slave masters created narratives to enforce their will, which the enslaved reacted to by creating their own hidden transcript of “offstage responses and rejoinders to that public transcript” (Scott 1990: 111). The public transcript played an essential part in the formation of the hidden transcript which was contained within the confines of the freed and enslaved community networks and community at the Cape.

Many of the texts mentioned in this and other chapters, clearly express this alternative “ideological orientation” of the early Muslims in their reading, writing and language habits, expressed through the medium of Arabic-Afrikaans (Dangor 2008:131). An example of this articulation is threaded through the written works of Tuan Guru, demonstrating a subtle, but unambiguous undertone of undermining of the dominant slave owner hegemony at an intellectual and philosophical level. These and the writings of *Shaykh* Yusuf of Macassar “anchored the Muslim community in an independent, self-contained worldview” running parallel to the worldview maintained by the colonial rulers (Rafudeen 2006: 95). Their physical enslavement and disempowerment led them from general disillusionment to a sense of empowerment. These Arabic Afrikaans written pieces contained concepts of freedom of the spirit and the soul which imbued the Muslim converts with the earlier mentioned belief that even though as physical beings they were in bondage, their spiritual selves were free.

7.8 EARLY READING AND WRITING BY THE CAPE ENSLAVED

The practice of reading and writing is more than just the exploitation of space and time. It is a cultural system expressed in the way in which reading is undertaken, where it is done and by whom, the manner in which it is carried out and the purpose which drives these actions (Johnson 2003; 2010).

There is not much substantial evidence of the reading and writing abilities of the early enslaved people at the Cape, but there is some. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was not unusual to find their signatures in Roman and Arabic letters on official documents, however it was not a practice that was commonly undertaken (Armstrong 2012: 126; Harris 1977: 170; Worden 2004: 74). Most of the early Muslims signed their last will and testaments with a cross, but there were some who could read and write Arabic because they could read the holy *Qur'ān* in Arabic (Dangor 1994; Haron 2006; Ward 2012: 85-90). There is evidence of the enslaved and free blacks being able to read and write in the form of letters and notes.

Two historical anecdotes point to literacy among the enslaved. In 1786 a group of enslaved people hatched a plan to escape from their master's control and to travel into the greater Cape colony. They used the services of a freed black man by the name of Valentyn van Dapoer to falsify a pass for them that would secure them safe passage to travel, supposedly on behalf of their masters to run and errand. During a river crossing, while the river was flowing strongly and they struggled to cross to the other side, they lost the pass in the rushing waters. Without security to ensure their safe passage they were forced to return to the town and there convinced a school boy to write them a new letter, dictated by one of the escaping group (Worden & Groenewald 2005: 547-8).

Sometime before August 1760, in Stellenbosch at the Cape the Bugis slave, Upas, had been ill for two months. He wrote a short note to another Bugis slave who was widely known to be a healer, asking him for help. September, the name of the healer, received the note and kept it in his wooden chest in the slave quarters where he was living. The letter was written in the two slaves' mother tongue, Bugis, and in that language's script (Koolhof and Ross 2005:281).

According to Archie Dick (2012) the literacy levels of some slaves in the Cape Town Slave Lodge made it easier for the VOC to administer the Lodge. In 1716 a list of regulations were attached to the outside, as well as the inside of the front door of the Lodge (Jeffreys en Naudé 1948:65), which is an indication that slaves were able to read this information. Jan Smiesing was born and baptised in 1697 in the Slave Lodge and spent almost his whole life there, meeting this wife Anna Dapoer and becoming the teacher of the enslaved inhabitants. Upon his death as a freed black, he left behind a writers table, a book holder with books and three bibles. His diary, which has been transcribed, is possibly the only remaining piece of writing by an enslaved inhabitant of the Slave Lodge (Schoeman 2005: 659). The first Muslim teachers were dependent on Arabic texts with Malay translation, just as this had been the practice in the tradition in which they had been raised (Rusden 2004, 2005). As discussed earlier this shifted to Arabic-Afrikaans, of which there are approximately eighty literary titles in existence (Versteegh 2015: 286).

In the early days of the Cape colony and its *Sūfī* devotions, Muslim community scholars like *Shaykh* Yūsuf al-Maqassārī *Shaykh* Yūsuf are reported to have instructed their followers using Arabic texts (Van Bruinessen 1990a: 158, note 25; Haron and Keraan 2008). Years later the same process and course of action was embarked upon by Tuan Guru and the Imams of Cape Town which I deal with in separate chapters.

The creation of special Islamic schools led to the expansion of a local reading and writing culture and the reading and writing of the growing community, through the school system, comprised mainly of Afrikaans-Arabic transcriptions (Shell 2006: 103).

7.8 ATTRACTION OF *SŪFISM*

The new converts to Islam were undoubtedly attracted by the *Sūfī* character of Islamic teachings, as they were desperately looking for the kind of spirituality they could not find in the Christian churches (Mason 2002). It is likely that the fascination with magic was also a draw card, more compelling for converts than *fiqh* (Islamic law) and theology. The rudimentary Islam they were taught was confined to reciting the Qurʾān and learning about their daily obligations as practicing Muslims. Magic and the use of amulets occupy an important place in the surviving documents which were written in Arabic-Afrikaans. Hans Kähler lists five items (nos. 52, 61, 62, 63, 64) which deal with this topic (1971) and there could probably be more of these documents yet to be discovered, or which have been destroyed over time as people did not realise their significance (Jappie 2011: 61-66). The two researchers, Van den Berg (1886) and Van Bruinessen (1990a), talk about the existence of a large number of extra-curricular written pieces on (black) magic and incantations in Indonesia, which ostensibly were rather widespread among the students in the Cape too, in spite of the fact that they were not included in the official curriculum.

Suleman Dangor (2008: 124) confirms that academics only became aware of the real value of these writings in the mid 20th century, mostly through the efforts of Adrianus van Selms who applied the term “Arabic-Afrikaans” literature for the first time in his book *Arabies-Afrikaansche Studies – ’n tweetalige (Arabies en Afrikaans) kategismus* (“Arabic-Afrikaans Studies – a bilingual catechism”) in which it was described as “literary work

which is written in Afrikaans with Arabic letters". In his Übersicht über die Arabisch-Afrikaansche Literatur ("Survey of Arabic-Afrikaans Literature") van Selms mentioned ten examples of this writing. Unfortunately, only two of these manuscripts are known, Risalat fi Aqidat al-Tawhid ("Treatise on the Doctrine of Tawhid") and Risalat Mushtamil 'ala Ziyarat al-Qubur ("Treatise on visiting graves") (Davids 1991c: 90). According to Piet Muller (1960: 38) at least 21 manuscripts had been uncovered by 1960, however, the details of these have not been made known. Hans Kähler (1971) listed 51 titles in his Studien über die Kultur, die Sprache und die Arabisch-Afrikaansche Literatur der Kap-Malaïen, in the chapter "Die Arabisch-Afrikaanse Literatur", declaring that the titles of the outstanding 13 must still be clarified (Dangor 2008:124).

7.9 DIALECTIC PROCESS OF POWER RELATIONS

As time went by and the prospects of returning to their homelands faded, the Cape Muslims became detached from the living practice of their earlier learning in their South East Asian previous life, their isolation forced them to rely on remembered texts from their past experience. Orakci captured this state of mind very accurately:

When a community of believers begin to rely on knowledge of their religion from their forefathers and no longer referred to their original sources, a process of imitation is manifested in the community. (2007: 51)

L.W.C. van den Berg (1886), upon instruction from the Dutch colonial authorities in Indonesia, provided a report on the learning system and the curriculum in the Dutch East Indies. He published a report on the teaching in the *pondok pesantren*, which are Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. In his report, he gives detailed information about the methods and textbooks used. At the elementary level children learnt to write in

Arabic and made use of small books which contained one *juz*' (literary meaning 'part'), one of the 30 parts of varying lengths into which the *Qur'ān* is divided. At the next level, the main aim was to instill in the students the basic principles of Islam, focusing on the religious duties and the rituals. At this stage they memorized Arabic primers together with a Malay or Javanese translation (Versteegh 2015:289).

According to Archie Dick,

the early educational and religious Muslim community in the Cape was pragmatic, tolerant, flexible, and eager to read and write. Imams gave lessons in Cape Dutch (later Afrikaans), which was the dominant language among Muslim children who attended both government and mission schools (2002:35).

As early as 1778, Old and New Testaments were sent to the Cape in Arabic script from the Netherlands for shipment to the East (Rochlin 1993: 50). Cape Muslims would later print their own books. There was therefore no shortage of reading and writing settings in Arabic writing. Through their reading and writing of Afrikaans in Arabic script, Cape Muslims have created an independent worldview as an alternative to the predominant Christian and Dutch one of the VOC.

Arabic-Afrikaans language and writings served to hide from the colonial rulers and slave owners "undermining" ideas and beliefs (Rafudeen 2005:33). Through the medium of reading and writing and the creation of a new language, in the form of Afrikaans, the enslaved at the Cape managed to create an independent worldview as an alternative to the one fostered by the VOC and the slave masters. Elizabet Jordan (2006) proposes that power relations are in a dialectical process in which the actions of the dominant shape

those of the subordinate and vice versa, continuously and over time.

This dialectical relationship was not only in reading and writing, but also through storytelling and re-enacted folk tales that the enslaved were able to recall their Eastern and African heritage and merge these with the folklore-world of their colonial European masters and the indigenous people at the Cape (Bleek en Lloyd 1968; Theal 1882). The folklore of the enslaved and free black communities assumed a fusion of different cultures due to its diverse origins. These religious and cultural practices were carried forward through the many generations in the form of oral tradition and religio-cultural practices facilitated by *Sūfi* inspired Islam.

The language of Afrikaans and an independent education system crafted by the Imams therefore became the vehicle through which the enslaved and freed populations at the Cape were able to forge their own identity and communicate their sense of independence from the colonial masters. It was not open rebellion, but it certainly was a way of establishing fields of community power where language and education carved unique spaces for the enslaved and freed population could engage in their daily lives, freed from the gaze of their slave masters.

CHAPTER 8

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 CONSOLIDATION OF THE EMERGING MUSLIM COMMUNITY

If nothing else, the argument presented in this dissertation demonstrates that the process of Islamisation, inspired by Sufism, starting in the late seventeenth century, exerted a significant and dire influence on the nature of social relations in and around Cape Town. Within the midst of the gradually growing colony, an alternative system of social configurations had begun to embed itself. Entrenched in the experience of several decades of living under the oppressive yoke of slavery, a Muslim community had taken shape. A community whose social institutions and practices provided subtle, but substantial challenges, to the hegemony of the major structure of the colonial social setup.

Also, somehow as a reaction to this process and partly as a result of the general need to maintain colonial hegemony, a series of largely unsuccessful attempts had been applied by the colonial masters to minimise the effect of this encroaching phenomenon. The manner in which the colonial state had gone about to curb the ongoing threat of these actions from the enslaved, had in fact done the opposite and propelled the growth of Islam among the enslaved on a forward trajectory. This takes cognisance of the fact that nearly two-thirds of the town's enslaved and freed inhabitants had embraced Islam by the time the colonial administrators had abolished the system of slavery by the mid-19th century (Worden et. al. 1998).

The phenomenal growth of Sufi inspired Islam lay to waste any assertion that the enslaved were basically resigned to their fate as disempowered members of the Cape society. Some would maintain that dynamic as this process of Islamisation has been, it is not motivated by any political agenda. By embracing Islam and membership of the Muslim community meant that the enslaved turned their backs on the colonial structures that fed on their disempowerment, both politically and ideologically (Mason 2002).

From the initial activities by religious leaders around Constantia and the creation of an emergent community at Zandvliet, Muslim leaders had practiced Sufi inspired Islam in the face of defiance of their colonial masters. During the early initial stages, Sufi Islam was practiced in secret locations unbeknown by their colonial masters, and it is clear that the confidence gained by their faith enabled the enslaved to practice their religion in the open. Muslims had waged a subtle, secretive and later public battle to worship according to their own conscience and in doing so succeeded in implanting the values of freedom within a very repressive environment (Bradlow 1988). The level of social and political freedom enjoyed by the Muslim community positioned them, largely, out of the influences of ruling class hegemony.

8.2 EXTENSION OF POWER AND RECLAIMING THEIR BODIES

It is evident that due to the reconstitution of social relations within the town, Muslims felt more displaced within the colonial society at the Cape. They embarked on a starkly different ideological alternative, in spite of not openly confronting and rejecting colonial expectations. Davids speaks of a "ceremonial, rather than a resistant, Islam" (Davids 1980). It is a reflection of the power harnessed by the enslaved to carve a path of their own, separate from the hegemonic framework of their slave masters. When Muslims came together to worship in their respective mosques or to socialise in the form of Muslim common religious practices, they utilised these occasions to create a better world for themselves and their offspring. The Cape Muslims of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries did not embark on overt resistance, but they did struggle against the ideological frameworks which kept them enslaved.

If one takes a mere cursory glance at the lives of the Muslim enslaved at the Cape it would seem like they are merely obsessed with ceremonial activities and would not fight against their condition of enslavement. Bradlow argues that:

...the establishment of Islam at the Cape and the growth of the Muslim community were processes permeated throughout by profound ideological and political considerations; considerations that embraced subtle, yet fundamental challenges to the prevailing structure of ruling class hegemony... (1988).

The shaycks and Imams developed a mindset, firmly situated in religion, which questioned the hegemony of colonial social relations. This was not "an ideology of anti-colonial resistance....", rather the shaycks made sense of the "the brutal harshness of the prevailing social relations" for their followers to grasp the reality of their experiences (Mason 1995: 47).

It is important in conclusion to refer to the position, which I have previously discussed, about the role that the theology of Tuan Guru played in creating a community ethos which made it manageable for both the enslaved and the slave owners to conduct their daily activities in close proximity to each other. According to Bank (1991) the Muslim community, did not discriminate between the enslaved and the free or between those of Asian or African descent, rather Islam:

amplified the distance between [white] owner and slave so as to separate the slave's identity from... the dominant class ideology, and simultaneously drew slaves closer to a particular strata of the urban underclass: free blacks. (Bank A 1991: 119)

Resistance was not a mere philosophical state of mind, it was grounded in Sufi inspired rituals such as the *Ratiep*, the *Mawlūd* celebration and the ceremonies celebrating the

holy nights. These *Sūfi* inspired ceremonies, in which the new adoptees of Islam participated, provided them with a feeling of contentment and this was very attractive to the enslaved. By taking part in these rituals they had to experience an immense sense of control over their minds and bodies, even though they were enslaved and their bodies belonged to the slave masters. They engaged in what Jean Comaroff (1985) has called "the ritual reconstruction of the body." She wrote widely about religious practices black people engaged in under apartheid in South Africa and made the following statement:

when expressions of dissent are prevented from attaining the level of open discourse... ritual provides an appropriate medium through which the values and structures of a contradictory world may be addressed and manipulated. (1985: 196)

For the enslaved, these acts and rituals could be them reclaiming their minds and bodies which, under the enslavement system, belonged to their slave masters. In these subtle acts of inverted power, the enslaved reasserted their ownership over their bodies; they took them back from their owners and gave it instead to their God in worship. Sufi inspired Islam at the Cape attracted the enslaved and other outsiders not because it promoted a revolutionary social upheaval, but as Reis (1997: 114). puts it, because it fostered a revolution in the lives of its followers, it gave them dignity and it created new personalities for its members which was delivered through their adoption of the philosophies and practices of Sufi Islam.

CHAPTER 9

RELEVANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.11 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

In the context of public narratives of slavery, my discussions about the methods employed by the Cape enslaved to construct an alternate reality for themselves compels me to ask a very basic question: why do we want to preserve the memory and performance of these practices that hark back to the colonial period which remind us of our enslavement past? One answer is in the fact that much of what is regarded as hidden and forgotten is still alive in the language of Afrikaans and the manner in which Cape Muslims still practice their religion.

They may have been, albeit unconsciously, preserving some of the tenets of enslavement life of the past to make sense of the way in which their religion gave them a sense of meaning in the diverse South African society of today – keeping alive things from the "past" in order to make good use of it in the present. In many ways, the preservation of the cultural practices, and the transformation of them into sites of public memory of slavery, can also fulfill a good function in the present. The learnings about the survival strategies of their ancestral forefathers and mothers, could be accompanied by learning about the hard labour that made it possible for descendants of the enslaved people to live such a vibrant cultural life, infused with a special brand of religion. They could learn about the resilience of the enslaved people who endured the painful institution of slavery, their strategies of survival, their social and cultural creativity under life conditions that were precarious and horrible, and the intelligence that led them to challenge the system of oppression under which they lived. Knowledge about the heritage of enslavement

today could be sites of learning. It can be wisely and intelligently used to teach racial pride in the present world, in which non-whites still endure racial discrimination.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

One of the most important academic challenges is to undertake a study of the early *shaykhs* who have contributed significantly to the culture of *tasauwwuf* at the Cape. It is assumed that there is a significant amount of primary sources available among the family members of enslavement ancestry. The continued existence of *Mualud* and *Thikr* groups and their continued practice and growth are good indicators of the way in which *tasuawwuf* has embedded itself into the lives of people of enslavement origin. Amongst these personalities are *Shaykh* Yusuf himself, Tuan Guru, Imam Ismael Dea Malela, Paa Schaapie and Sayyid Alawi of Mocha,

A thorough investigation, also needs to be made of the former residents of the Constantia area to determine the influence left behind by the Polsbroek *Shaykhs* such as, *Shaykhs*: Matera, Mtebe Shah and their companions. This should shed more light on the early practices and influences of *tassauwwf* in that area. A comprehensive study of the continued practices of the array of Muslim Common Religious Practices, that continue to be implemented today in the Cape Muslim community, would provide rich sources of information about the traditions that have been handed down through the generations of former enslaved people.

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Chapter LXVII *Surah Mulk* – Chapter Dominion of the *Qur'ān*

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TERMINOLOGY

LIST OF TERMS EXPLAINED

Adab. When it does become manifest then it is considered an act of courtesy (adab) towards God to accept the outcome in a forbearant manner.

Adhkaar. Religious litanies which they would have used to keep the remembrance of Allah alive in difficult social conditions and personal circumstances.

Ahli Sunni wa al-Jama'ah. They are those who hold on to the examples of the Messenger of Allah, the ones who unite themselves upon that and they are the Companions of the Messenger, the Scholars of Guidance, who follow the Companions and whoever travels upon their path in terms of belief, speech and action until the Day of Judgement

Alles is in die kadaa-kadar van Allah. Everything is according to the general and particular decrees of Allah

Alles is in die takdier van Allah. (everything is determined by Allah); or every happening being articulated in terms of this perception of predetermination –

Aqīdah. A strong belief system based on Islamic monotheism. Islamic creed or articles of faith. Quranic formulation includes belief in God, angels, prophets, scriptures, and the Day of Judgment.

Ash'arite. It is the foremost theological school of Sunni Islam which established an orthodox dogmatic guideline based on clerical authority, founded by the Arab theologian Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari (d. 936 / AH 324). The disciples of the school are known as Ash'arites, and the school is also referred to as the Ash'arite school, which became the dominant theological school within Sunni Islam.

Auliyyaa. Highly regarded and revered friends of Allah.

Auwal Masjid (mosque). The Auwal Masjid is the first and oldest mosque built in South Africa. This is evident according to very strong oral tradition which also confirms that Imam Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam, also known as Tuan Guru, was the first Imam at this mosque.

Awrad. Religious litanies which the Cape Muslims would have used to keep the remembrance of Allah alive in difficult social conditions and personal circumstances.

Azimats. The charm of a composite material comprised of a piece of paper, cloth or a certain piece of wood, with Arabic writing, worn on a certain part of the body that is considered to be inflicted with illness and can prevent diseases, disasters, etc. It was also believed to ward off evil spirits.

Barakat. It literally means blessings, but contextually it refers to a parcel/plate/bowl containing cakes, sweet meats and fruits etc. In the course of the day, guests are served succulent foods and delicious cakes and sweetmeats at religious gatherings.

Batavia (Jakarta), the VOC's central Asian headquarters and seat of the Governor-General and Council of the Indies, became the central axis of a thriving intra-Asiatic or country trade.

Dalil. Providing Qur'ānic scripture support to certain statements or religious positions.

Dhikr. The rhythmic chanting of prayers and liturgies normally conducted in the home of a Muslim. Muslims believe dhikr is one of the best ways to enter the higher level of Heaven and to glorify the Oneness of Allah.

Djiekers. Recitations in praise of the Prophet (called djiekers in Malayu),

Doopmal. The naming ceremony of the new-born baby with all its trimmings: with crow-foot-like insignia drawn on the forehead, the baby being carried on a tray decorated with flowers.

**Du`ā'.** Prayer. In the terminology of Islam, du`ā' literally meaning invocation, is an act of supplication. The term is derived from an Arabic word meaning to 'call out' or to 'summon', and Muslims regard this as a profound act of worship. This is when Muslims from all over connect with God and ask him for forgiveness and favors.

Fiqh. Islamic jurisprudence which often described as the human understanding of the sharia, that is human understanding of the divine Islamic law as revealed in the Quran and the Sunnah (the teachings and practices of the Islamic prophet Muhammad and His companions).

Gadat. a special group supplication, normally commemorating the death of a loved one or celebrating a birthday, or the birth of a baby etc.

Haddād, also known as arwāh. The word arwāh is the plural of the word rūh which means soul. The Haddād or arwāh is made with the intention that the blessings of it should be on the soul of the deceased

Hajj. pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca. An annual Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the holiest city for Muslims. It is a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be carried out at least once in their lifetime by those who can afford to do so.

Haqiqa. The ultimate truth. An effect produced or achieved; anything done or that comes to pass; an act; an event; a circumstance.

Hegemony in this case means the success of the dominant classes in presenting their definition of reality, their view of the world, in such a way that it is accepted by other classes as 'common sense'.

Ideological Hegemony. It is a system of thought control. Ideology or ideological hegemony is linked to a set of ideas and beliefs that act to uphold and justify an existing or desired arrangement of power, authority, wealth and status in a society. Social power can be exercised within any given society through ideology.

Iktisab. Acquisition – in the sense that God created the acts of man, and acquires them.

Imam. An Islamic leadership position. It is most commonly used as the title of a worship leader of a mosque and Muslim community among Sunni Muslims.

Iradah, i.e. the Will of God, as was determined for a person and to strive for something one wants or desires.

Jawap. (Response). The two male groups will sit on two separate sides in front 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 (response)

Jumaáh prayers. Friday afternoon congregational prayers conducted by Muslim congregants.

Kersopsteek. Lighting of candles. The most important day in the month of Ramadaan fast, is the 27th night which is described in the Quran as the 'night of power'. It is said in the Koran that during this holy night the sins of the faithful are forgiven and the angels and souls of heaven come down to earth to perform many miracles. Muslims clean their houses in preparation for this night and candles are lit

Khalifah, Also known as Ratieb. Also used when refering to a Teacher.

Khalwatiyyah Tariqa. A school or order of Sufism, or specifically a concept for the mystical teaching.

Koemis Mawlūd. The initial Mawlūd which is held on the 12th of Rabī `al-Awwal is referred to in the Cape.

Kramats. A shrine that honors a holy person in Islam, particularly in South Africa. Another word for kramat is mazaar. Muslims visit the shrines to show their respect and gratitude for the holy men who brought Islam to the Cape.

Laylah al-Barā. Night of freedom and purification or Ruwa, as it is commonly known in Malayu and amongst Muslims in South Africa, is celebrated and commemorated on the 15th night of the month of Sha'bān.

Laylat al-Qadr. Is locally commemorated on the 27th night of Ramadān, is the climax of devotion during the month of fasting.

Ma'rifat al-Islam wa'l Iman, penned by Tuan Guru, became the most commonly used textbook in the madrassahs.

It is a compilation containing a discourse in Islamic theology, the ideological framework within which the enslaved and previously enslaved, could function harmoniously while oppressed in the broader Cape society

Madrassah. An Islamic school or college, literally a "place of instruction," especially instruction in religious law.

Mardyckers. Derived from mardycka or maredhika and is sometimes regarded as meaning that they were free people

Masjid. Also referred to as a Mosque. A masjid is a place of worship for Muslims. Any act of worship that follows the Islamic rules of prayer can be said to create a masjid, whether or not it takes place in a special building.

Mawlūd Sūrats. Written recitals delivered during the Mawlūd celebrations.

Mawlūd, literally means birthday, and also refers to the text used for the narration of the events of the Prophet Mohamed's birth (P.B.U.H.)

Medora. A hand stitched and embroidered head cloth, worn on her head by women during maulud or weddings.

Mi'rāj al-Nabi. According to Muslim tradition it is the ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) to heaven.

Miang . Burnt incense which is burnt during muslim religious celebrations and life events.

Murid. In the Cape context, a congregant of a specific mosque and initiated members of the tariqa.

MCRP. Muslim Common Religious Practices

Nisab. The minimum property on which zakah, charity, is due.

Onvolkoem. Meaning incomplete. It is incomplete (the communal word is onvolkoem) with regard to expressing the four basic principles of faith – belief, prayer, paying zakah, and fasting-required from the person who leads the jumaáh prayers.

Orang Cayen . Men of power and status.

PBUH. Stands for Peace Be Upon Him, which refers to Prophet Mohamed.

Qada. Refers to the Judgement of Allah, but it is believed that Allah is all merciful and beneficent.

Qadar. Meaning fate, divine fore-ordainment, predestination, but literally "power", it is the concept of divine destiny in Islam.

Qalam . The divine word of God or Allah.

Ramadān. The month of Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and the month in which the Quran was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Fasting during the month of Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam.

Rampie-sny. It is a celebration of the Prophet Muhammed's birthday. Women gather in the mosque to cut and scent lemon tree leaves, fold it in wrapping paper or small pieces of material, and gift it to men as part of the tradition known as 'rampies sny'.

Ratiep. The ratiep is a trance-linked art form characterised by stabbings with sharp objects to the arms and other bodily parts, with out any signs of bodily harm. The ratiep art form is rooted in Sufi Muslim traditions.

Ruwayai. An epic poem expounding the heroic deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Sabr. Forbearance, a philosophical orientation which is seminal to Muslim spirituality and lifestyle at the Cape. while sabr is the province of the human being in his/her capacity as an agent of free choice. When the outcome is positive he/she is thankful, when negative, forbearant.

Salah. Meaning "prayer" or "invocation" is the second of the Five Pillars in the Islamic faith, and an obligatory religious duty for every Muslim. It is a physical, mental, and spiritual act of worship that is observed five times every day at prescribed times.

Salawāt. Recital of praises to the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

PBUH. PEACE BE UPON HIM. An honorific phrase used by some Muslims after any mention in speech or print of the Islamic prophet Muhammad

Shari'ah. It is an Islamic religious law that governs not only religious rituals but also aspects of day-to-day life in Islam. Sharia, literally translated, means "the way."

Shaykh. A title denoting a political or spiritual leader of a community. Shaikh ul-Islam 'leader of Islam', was the title of the highest religious office in Ottoman Turkey. Shaikh also means 'chief' or 'head'.

Shukr. Shukr is to recognise a blessing and display it. To show gratitude.

Sorbaan or turban. It is a type of Arabian headwear based on cloth winding around the head. Additionally, turbans have often been worn by nobility, regardless of religious background.

Sūfism. Known as tasawwuf in the Arabic-speaking world, is a form of Islamic mysticism that emphasizes introspection and spiritual closeness with God. While it is sometimes misunderstood as a sect of Islam, it is actually a broader style of worship that transcends sects, directing followers' attention inward.

Sūrah Yāsin. Is the term for a chapter of the Quran. There are 114 surahs in the Quran, each divided into Ayahs (verses).

Sūrah . Is the term for a chapter of the Quran. There are 114 surahs in the Quran, 86 are classified as Makki, while 28 are Madini. Each are divided into verses (āyāt)

Takwah. differences in the acquisition of degrees of piety

Tallie. Members of the congregation were required to make a contribution of one shilling, called the "Tallie" for the purchase of cooking ingredients such as vegetables, fish and rice which were served on occurrence of a death.

Tammāt ceremony. It refers to a significant day in the life of a child. This is when he or she masters the recitation of the Qur'ān in particular

Taqdier. Divine predestination. The taqdier of God is, however, neither absolute nor inexorable. There is a symbiotic relationship, and one extensively explored by Sūfi's, between taqdier and acts of courtesy towards God – of which Sabr is a crucial one. Taqdier may, in turn, determine favourable outcomes for the future. Taqdier then, is essentially the province of God in His ineffable aspect

Taqwah (piety, attained through fearing God, and being submissive to His commands)

Tariqa. It is a school or order of Sufism, or specifically a concept for the mystical teaching and spiritual practices of such an order with the aim of seeking Haqiqa, which translates as "ultimate truth".

Tassuawuf. It is an Arabic term for the process of realizing ethical and spiritual ideals; meaning literally "becoming a Sufi," tasawwuf is generally translated as **Sufism**. The primary obvious meaning of the term comes from suf, "wool," the traditional ascetic garment of prophets and saints in the Near East.

Tauhid (Ones of God). Meaning "unification or oneness of God"; also romanised as Tawheed, Touheed, Tauheed or Tevhid) is the indivisible oneness concept of monotheism in islam. Tawhid is the religion's central and single most important concept, upon which a Muslim's entire faith rests

The Qur'ān. It is the Islamic sacred book, believed to be the word of God as dictated to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel and written down in Arabic. The Koran consists of 114 units of varying lengths, known as suras ; the first sura is said as part of the ritual prayer. These touch upon all aspects of human existence, including matters of doctrine, social organization, and legislation.

Tajwid. It is the art of reciting the Qur'ān according to specific rules of pronunciation
Tokang (lead-in). During the Mualud celebration the two male groups will sit on two separate sides in front 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 (response)

Turuqs. Sufi brotherhoods. Any of the orders or congregations of Sufism, formed around a master.

Ulama. It is a body of Muslim scholars who are recognized as having specialist knowledge of Islamic sacred law and theology.

Umm al-Barahin (The Demonstrative Proofs), a classic Ash'arite text on Islamic belief, together with one of its commentaries.

VOC. The Dutch East India Company, officially the United East India Company (Dutch: Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie; VOC) was a megacorporation founded by a government-directed amalgamation of several rival Dutch trading companies (voorcompagnieën) in the early 17th century.

Zakah. A payment made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious purposes. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam.

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