

**TASA'WWUF (ŞŪFISM): ITS ROLE AND IMPACT ON THE CULTURE OF CAPE
ISLĀM**

by

SERAJ HENDRICKS

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Summary of Dissertation

The primary focus of this dissertation is to establish the extent to which *taṣawwuf*, commonly referred to as Islamic Spirituality, impacted on Cape Muslim culture.

The study spans the time period between the arrival of the first significant political exiles at the Cape in 1667 to the founding of the Muslim Judicial Council in 1945.

To this end a short historical review of *taṣawwuf* as it unfolded since its inception in the Muslim world is given in order to provide the necessary background against which any study of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape must be measured. This, in the author's opinion, has not been attempted before in local studies in any systematic way.

To further augment this study, a review of the nature and character of *taṣawwuf* as it emerged in the geographical areas from whence the political exiles and slaves were brought to the Cape is also engaged.

As part of the conclusion to this dissertation an "afterword" is provided that briefly sketches the post-1945 theological milieu that increasingly witnessed the emergence of new anti-*taṣawwuf* pressures within the Muslim community.

Key Terms:

Tasawwuf; Sufi; Panentheism; Tariqa; Metaphysics; Theology; Islam; Muslim; Myths; Symbols; Legends; Magic; Spirituality; Spiritualism; Dhikr; Mosques; Cape Muslim milieu.

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Glossary:

<i>‘aqīda</i>	beliefs
<i>‘aql</i>	Intellect, mind
<i>‘awām</i>	ordinary or common people
<i>‘azīmat</i>	talisman
<i>‘ibāda</i>	worship
<i>‘ishq</i>	Intense love
<i>‘Ālam al-Jabarūt</i>	World of Power
<i>‘Ālam al-Malakūt</i>	World of Dominion
<i>‘Ālam al-Mulk</i>	the Human World or the visible World of Nature
<i>‘ālim, pl. ‘ulamā</i>	Scholar of Islām
<i>‘ubūdiyya</i>	absolute servanthood
<i>ṣabr</i>	forbearance
<i>ṣalāh</i>	Formal prayers
<i>ṣiyām</i>	fasting
<i>akhaṣṣ al-khawā</i>	the superlatively elite
<i>akhlāq</i>	ethics
<i>al-‘āda muḥakkama</i>	The Legal Prerogative of Custom
<i>al-Nafs al-‘Ammāra</i>	The Inciting Soul
<i>bi l-Sū’</i>	
<i>Al-Nafs al-Kāmila</i>	The Perfect Soul
<i>al-Nafs al-Lawwāma</i>	The Reproachful Soul
<i>Al-Nafs al-Marḍiyya</i>	The Soul ‘Found Pleasing’
<i>Al-Nafs al-</i>	The Serene Soul
<i>Muṭma’inna</i>	
<i>Al-Nafs al-</i>	The Inspired Soul
<i>Mulhama</i>	
<i>al-Nafs al-Nāṭiqa</i>	The Rational Soul
<i>Al-Nafs al-Rādiyya</i>	The Contented Soul

<i>al-Nafs al-Shahwāniyya</i>	The Passional Soul
<i>Badl, pl. abdāl</i>	substitute or replacement
<i>baqāʾ</i>	subsistence
<i>baraka</i>	spiritual influence
<i>bidʿa</i>	innovation
<i>bidʿa hasana</i>	a praiseworthy innovation
<i>bidʿa makrūha</i>	reprehensible innovation
<i>bidʿa mandūba</i>	recommended innovation
<i>bidʿa mubāḥa</i>	permissible innovation
<i>bidʿa muḥarrama</i>	forbidden innovation
<i>bidʿa sayyiʾa</i>	a blameworthy innovation
<i>dhikr</i>	Invocation, remembrance
<i>dhākir</i>	invoker, rememberer
<i>dāʾirah</i>	circle
<i>duʿā</i>	prayers
<i>Ṣaff</i>	rank, line, or row
<i>Ṣafā</i>	purification
<i>Ṣafwa</i>	selected, or the choicest part of a thing
<i>ḍawābiṭ</i> sing. <i>ḍābiṭ</i>	regulating variables
<i>Ṣūf</i>	wool
<i>Ṣuffa</i>	a bench or low veranda
<i>fanā</i>	extinction or the soul's passing away in God
<i>fanāʾ</i>	annihilation
<i>farḍ</i>	obligatory
<i>fiqhī</i>	juristic
<i>ghayb</i>	the unseen
<i>ghayb al-ghayb</i>	the unseen of the unseen
<i>ghayriyya</i>	otherness
<i>ghusl</i>	greater ablution

<i>Ḥajj</i> ,	Annual pilgrimage to Makka.
<i>Ḥalqat</i>	Circle, an assembly of <i>dhākirīn</i> (invokers)
<i>ijāza</i>	Authorization, licence
<i>ilbās al-kbirqa</i>	Donning of the frock or cloak
<i>irshād</i>	guidance
<i>isnād</i>	chains of transmission
<i>istiḍād</i>	spiritual and intellectual capacities
<i>jalī</i>	loud
<i>jamāʿa</i>	group
<i>jihād</i>	To expend effort in the way of, to exert oneself for a cause
<i>Jumaʿ</i>	Friday congregational prayers
<i>kalām</i>	Scholastic theology
<i>karāmāt</i>	miracles
<i>khafī</i>	silent
<i>Khalīfa</i>	spiritual leader
<i>khalwa</i>	Spiritual retreat
<i>khawāṣ</i>	the elite
<i>kbirqa</i>	A patched frock or cloak representing induction into the order
<i>kufr</i>	inimical unbelief
<i>madhhab</i>	School of thought
<i>maʿrifa</i>	Knowledge, especially of the inspired type
<i>maṣlaḥa</i>	beneficial practices
<i>mafḥūm</i>	the possible implications of the text, that which is understood from the text.
<i>mafsada</i>	harmful practices
<i>majdhūb</i>	One in a state of spiritual derangement, a “holy fool”
<i>malāmati</i>	Self blame
<i>manṭūq</i>	the direct, literal meaning of the text
<i>maqāmāt</i>	Spiritual stations

<i>Masbrūʿ</i>	that which has a basis in the Quran, <i>Sunnah</i> , <i>Qiyās</i> (analogical reasoning), or <i>Ijmāʿ</i> (consensus of opinion).
<i>mawlūd</i>	birthday
<i>Mawlid al-nabī</i>	The Prophet's birthday
<i>muʿāmalāt</i>	practical duties
<i>mubtadʿin</i>	novices
<i>mujarrabāt</i>	Spiritualism, tested spiritual remedies
<i>muqaddam</i>	a sectional leader
<i>murīd</i>	Student, aspirant, seeker, one inducted into a <i>ṣūfī</i> order
<i>murāqabah.</i>	Self contemplation
<i>murshid</i>	Spiritual guide
<i>naḥs</i>	Soul, self
<i>Qawāʿid al-Fiqhiyya</i>	General Rules of Islamic Jurisprudence
<i>qiblah</i>	the direction of Makkah
<i>Qāḍī</i>	judge
<i>qurba</i>	nearness to God
<i>rūḥ</i>	Soul; pl. <i>arwāḥ</i>
<i>raʿfa</i>	compassion
<i>raḥma</i>	mercy
<i>sabwī</i>	sobriety
<i>shataḥāt</i>	extravagances
<i>sharīʿah</i>	A term that includes the law, belief system, and ethics of Islām.
<i>silsila</i>	chain of transmission
<i>sukr</i>	intoxicated
<i>suḥba</i>	companionship
<i>Taʿayyun Jasadi</i>	determinations of Being in corporeal forms
<i>Taʿayyun Mithālī</i>	determinations of Being in symbolic forms
<i>Taʿayyun Rūhī</i>	spiritual determinations of Being in souls
<i>taʿayyunāt</i>	emanations

<i>ṭarīqa</i>	Way, path, order
<i>taṣawwuf</i>	Islāmic Spirituality
<i>tabarru</i>	a donation
<i>tablīl</i>	To recite <i>lā ilāha illallāh</i>
<i>tabmīd</i>	To recite <i>alḥamdu lillāh</i>
<i>takhliya</i>	emptying
<i>taqdīr</i>	divine predestination
<i>tark al-ikhtiyār</i>	the abandonment of choice
<i>Tasbīḥ</i>	To recite <i>subḥān Allāh</i>
<i>taḥliya</i>	adornment
<i>tawassul</i>	seeking the intercession of saints
<i>tauba</i>	repentance
<i>tawḥīd</i>	Uniqueness of Being, especially as applied to God
<i>tawwāb</i>	One who has repented
<i>tazkiyyat al nafs</i>	purification of the lower self
<i>thawābit</i> sing. <i>thābit</i>	axioms
<i>Tibb al-nabawī</i>	Prophetic Medicine
<i>Uṣūl al-Fiqh</i>	Principles of Islamic Law
<i>ḥaḍrah,</i>	congregational <i>dhikr</i>
<i>ḥijāb</i>	veil
<i>ḥāl</i>	Spiritual state; state of being
<i>ḥulūliyya</i>	positing the possibility of a personal union with God
<i>walī, pl. awliyā</i>	Friend of God; friends
<i>waḥdat al-wujūd</i>	Unity of Being
<i>wuḍū</i>	ablution
<i>Āyāt al-Aḥkām</i>	Qurʾānic verses related to legal edicts
<i>zāhid</i>	An ascetic
<i>zuhd</i>	asceticism

Transliteration Key:	
ﺀ	أ
b	ب
t	ت
th	ث
j	ج
ḥ	ح
kh	خ
d	د
dh	ذ
r	ر
z	ز
s	س
sh	ش
ṣ	ص
ḍ	ض
ṭ	ط
ẓ	ظ
ʿ	ع
gh	غ
f	ف

q	ق
k	ك
l	ل
m	م
n	ن
h	ه
w	و
y	ي
Long Vowels:	
ā	آ
ū	ؤ
ī	ئ
Diphthongs:	
aw	ؤ
ay	ي
iy	ي
uww	و

Transliteration Key:	
◌	أ
b	ب
t	ت
th	ث
j	ج
	ح
kh	خ
d	د
dh	ذ
r	ر
z	ز
s	س
sh	ش
ṣ	ص
ḍ	ض
ṭ	ط
ẓ	ظ
ʿ	ع
gh	غ
f	ف
q	ق

k	ك
l	ل
m	م
n	ن
h	ه
w	و
y	ي
Long Vowels:	
ā	آ
ū	ؤ
ī	ئ
Diphthongs:	
aw	ؤ
ay	ي
iyy	ي
uww	و

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Two circumstances resulted in a lasting personal interest in the history and role of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

The first is a consequence of the legacy left behind by my grandfather, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, who founded the al-Zāwiya institution in 1920. The legacy he established was subsequently continued through his three sons, Shaykh Mahdī Hendricks, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Hendricks, and Shaykh Mujāhid Hendricks. This exposure naturally led to a keen and vital interest in the *taṣawwuf* perspective - an interest, indeed, that was sustained and nurtured throughout my ten years of study in Makkah.

However, given the plethora of misconceptions that surround the subject and despite my extensive personal involvement in the *taṣawwuf* traditions, there are few areas within Islām that are in need of greater objectivity - both from those who regard themselves as adherents of the tradition and those who choose to oppose it.

As the product of a predominantly subjective milieu, therefore, I will endeavour, to the best of my ability, to provide an objective analysis.

A second circumstance that focussed my interest on *taṣawwuf* at the Cape in particular was my encounter with the scholars and literature of those who had contributed and taken a vital interest in Cape Muslim history. The contributions of four of these I regard as having been seminal in shaping my own views and responses: the late Achmat Davids, Yūsuf Da Costa, Adil Bradlow, and Suleman Essop Dangor - the former two largely through a long and personal association. Achmat Davids' *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap* - while not focussed on *taṣawwuf* in any particular way - inspired an awareness that elevated the role of Muslims in the making of Cape history to much more than the footnote status it was accorded in the standard accounts of history in South Africa. While Achmat Davids at that point - the

early 1980s - of his own intellectual genesis resisted the admission of *taṣawwuf* into his general theoretical perspectives, it was Adil Bradlow who had taken the initiative in this regard. His Master's dissertation, *Imperialism, State Formation and the Establishment of a Muslim Community at the Cape Good Hope, 1770-1840: A Study in Urban Resistance*, submitted in 1988 was most likely the first to unequivocally assert the centrality of *taṣawwuf* in the shaping of Cape Muslim religious attitudes and practices. Despite the importance of his insights and contribution, his citation of a solitary published work on *taṣawwuf*, *Sufism and Shariah: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Effort to Reform Sufism*, by Muhammad Abdul Haq Ansari, makes his a daring attempt indeed.

The two works, however, that have made the strongest impact on this study are the *The Influence of Tasawwuf on Islamic Practices at the Cape* by Yusuf Da Costa in *Pages From Cape Muslim History* (1994), and Suleman Dangor's translation of Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar's *Zubdat al-Asrar* (The Essence of Secrets) (1990).

While Da Costa's work is largely descriptive in nature it has proven an invaluable source for the uniqueness of some of its detail. Short as a work of that nature necessarily has to be, it was the first - as late as 1994 - and according to my knowledge, that was dedicated to an exclusive treatment of the history of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

Dangor's translation, on the other hand - and another first of its kind - opened a dimension of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar that was both unknown and even unexpected. This "dual" aspect of Shaykh Yūsuf as a determined political freedom fighter and a metaphysician of the Ibn 'Arabian type may even have surprised many into silence. The notion, too, that *ṣūfīs*, and particularly those of the contemplative and gnostic types, were quietist would certainly have been seriously challenged by this translation.

While Da Costa's study appeared as a direct challenge, or invitation, to a more in-depth study of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape, Dangor's translation had a more transformative effect. Previous to this translation, most of the studies dealing with Shaykh Yūsuf dealt with the socio-political dimension of his life - including Dangor's earlier

published dissertation, *Shaykh Yūsuf of Makasar*. This exposure to Shaykh Yūsuf's thought, along with my relatively extensive acquaintance with the thought of Ibn ʿArabī, resulted in a firm resolve to both examine the life of Shaykh Yūsuf in greater detail, and to further explore the impact he had made on the shaping of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

A useful study and translation of some of the works of Shaykh Yūsuf was also engaged by Mustapha M. Keraan in an Honours dissertation (1994) at the University of the Western Cape entitled *Selected Writings of Shaykh Yusuf al-Khalwati*.

However, beyond the works of Bradlow, Da Costa, and Dangor - particularly up to the mid-1990s - very little of substance pertaining to the history of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape has been contributed i.e. in both the public and academic domains.

One work, however, that has provided interesting insights into what is sometimes referred to as Muslim Common Religious Practices, or MCRPs, is that of Ahmed Mukadam. His Master's dissertation, *Muslim Common Religious Practices at the Cape: Identification and Analysis* (1990), while not directly dealing with the subject of *taṣawwuf*, provides interesting insights into the "common" practices, symbolism, myths, and legends that are often associated with *ṣūfi*-inspired social milieus. This dissertation of his has been followed by an even more vigorous treatment of this subject in two subsequent papers: *Towards Defining "Popular Islam"* published in the Occasional Journal of ICOSA (2000), and *Identifying the Face and Form of Cape Popular Islam*, published in the IPSA Journal of Islamic Studies (2005) for the International Peace University of South Africa.

Along with the latter two works, other papers and articles that emerged later in the 1990s and that dealt specifically with *taṣawwuf* were Abdulkader Tayob's *Contemporary Sufism in South Africa* (1996) presented to the Department of Religious Studies, University of Cape Town, and his essay *Turning to the core: Sufism on the Rise?* (1999) published in the Annual Review of Islam in South Africa by the Centre for Contemporary Islam at the University of Cape Town. These two works, however, and as the title of the one implies, largely deal with contemporary issues affecting *taṣawwuf* rather than historical ones.

Ebrahim Moosa's article, *Islam in South Africa* (1995), in *Living Faiths in South Africa* edited by Martin Prozesky and John De Gruchy, appears more in the manner of a taxonomic treatment of *taṣawwuf* with its extensive references to dualist typologies such as "high" and "low" Islam; "scripturalist" and "popular" Islam etc. A particular category of "Neo-Sufism" espoused by the Deobandis he also regards as a form of "high" Islam. Apart from a number of useful insights furnished by the essay, this nebulous taxonomy served to obfuscate rather than elucidate the history and location of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape. The essay, of course, deals with a much broader range of topics than just *taṣawwuf* and also extends to cover Islām as it developed throughout South Africa.

Another essay, in a vein similar to Da Costa's treatment of the subject, is *Sufism at the Cape: Origins, Development and Revival*, by Fakhruddin Owaisi that appeared in the *Occasional Journal of ICOSA* (2001). This essay is also a descriptive rendition of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape but adds some interesting new detail to Da Costa's rendition.

A primary source, however, that most singularly convinced me of the need for a more in-depth study of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape was the Compendium of Tuan Guru. In early 1997 I acquired a copy of the Compendium from the South Africa Library. My first reading of the Compendium quite clearly indicated to me that very few who had written on his life before had in fact read the work. The major obstacle here, of course, would have been access to the Arabic Language. A recent commentary on, and translation of, the Compendium entitled *The Compendium of Tuan Guru: Translation and Contextualisation* (2004) by Auwais Rafudeen certainly demonstrates the importance - although not necessarily indispensable - of competence in the Arabic language for those who wish to engage this sort of study at a more productive level.

In short - and with noted exceptions in Bradlow, Da Costa, and Dangor - it was the general paucity of available literature on *taṣawwuf* writings with respect to the Cape that originally acted as one of the chief inspirations for this dissertation. The last still unpublished work of Achmat Davids, *Slaves, Sheikhs, Sultans, and Saints*, compared

to all his previous writings, constitutes the most comprehensive treatment of the role of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

Another key consideration for undertaking this study is the fact that *taṣawwuf* is almost universal to Islām. There is hardly an area inhabited by Muslims today that has not been affected by one strand of *taṣawwuf* or another. The Western Cape is one such area. Moreover, over the centuries *taṣawwuf* has diversified into a bewildering number of *ṭarīqas*. This diversification has proven problematic to both the student who has undertaken a superficial study of the matter and to the person who is affiliated to one or another of the *ṭarīqas* but whose understanding and attachments are determined by purely local considerations. The need for contextualising *taṣawwuf*, therefore, within the broader framework of its variegated manifestations elsewhere in the Muslim world, and particularly against the backdrop of its historical unfolding, acted as another persuasive factor in seeing this project through to the end. Islām, after all, arrived at the Cape 900 years after its establishment. It arrived, therefore, in the full richness of the diversity that already characterised the global Muslim community. One of the results of that is that within 100 years of Islām's advent at the Cape it was already characterised by a diversity of expressions. Within the context of the history of Islām at the Cape it is imperative to understand this diversity and its impact upon our culture.

Nonetheless, despite the shortcomings and weaknesses that this study may reveal under future review and examination, it is hoped that some of the "new" detail and perspectives it has brought to the subject would be of some profit to future researchers. During the course of this study I have been fairly direct in my criticism of others - perhaps overbold on occasion - particularly of some of the earlier views held by the late Achmat Davids. But, in line with J. E. Mason's observation, my very indebtedness to him is visible in the extent to which I have critically engaged his views.

The gaps I have attempted to close during the course of this dissertation are particularly those related to the subject of *taṣawwuf* per se. There are a number of basic errors that ever so often appear in the prevailing literature on the matter - the

understanding of continuity, for example, within particular orders being one case in point.

The gaps I have left untouched, however, are still far greater. One of the areas that would still require a colossal effort to explore in any detail is the primary sources that have been left unexamined. Also a more thorough study of the extant *ṣūfī* orders - including a number of *mawlūd jamā'ats* - particularly those that are able to trace their roots to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, also needs to be done.

1.2 Research Methodology

The research methodology for this dissertation has incorporated both Library and Field research with an emphasis on the qualitative rather than the quantitative aspects of such research.

1.2.1 Library Research

This included an extensive consultation of books, journals, periodicals, theses, academic papers, and newspapers relevant to the subject at hand. In this respect I have also had the benefit of easy access to the well-stocked al-Zāwiya Library. The latter has proved an invaluable source for its wealth of Arabic works on *taṣawwuf*. The internet, on more than one occasion, has also been a valuable source of information.

1.2.1.1 Field Research

Two approaches were adopted in this respect: Interviews and Observation.

1.2.1.2 Interviews

Since a large part of Cape Muslim history has not been documented - either in official publications or in archival material - interviews with relevant people have been conducted to supplement the slow but steady growth of available literature on the subject addressed in this dissertation. This is one area, though, that requires

much more extensive attention, particularly with regard to case-specific studies. A number of interviews, for example, that I conducted, and not included in this dissertation, were of a detail more suited to such studies. They have, however, created a sharp awareness of the need to examine the individual *ṭarīqas* at the Cape in greater detail. It would have been impossible, for example, to include all the details of the genesis and subsequent diversification of the *Qādirīyya* order in a study such as this.

1.2.1.3 Observation

A large part of the discussions surrounding the methodologies employed by various *ṭarīqas* at the Cape have been based on personal observation of these methods. In this respect I enjoy an advantage of fairly extensive experience of both the participative and non-participative types - locally in Cape Town and also abroad, particularly in Makkah.

1.3 Theory and Perspectives

Like those who have lived before us, we too have fished certain objectives from the sea of human possibilities. These in turn have firmed up premises that support them, and from these premises an entire outlook has been spun...(Smith, 1989: xii).

Studies on *taṣawwuf* at the Cape are still in their infancy. Much more remains to be revealed. After an extensive programme of reading and research it was this circumstance that prompted a phenomenological approach as the most useful one to disclose the phenomenon of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

According to Rafudeen there are two important features to the phenomenological approach: one, “it includes the significance of constructed meanings and symbolic values of events and personalities in their understanding”; and two, that phenomenological “accounts of religious issues are imbued with metaphysical

significance and are sensitive to discursive constructions of reality and history.” (Rafudeen, 1998: 63).

In line with Schimmel too, this study assumes that,

...the phenomenological approach is well suited to the study of Islam, especially the model which Friedrich Heiler developed...For he tries to enter into the heart of religion by studying first the phenomena and then deeper and deeper layers of human responses to the Divine until he reaches the innermost sacred core of each religion, the centre, the Numinous, the *deus absconditus*. (Schimmel, 1994: xii).

The question, however, remains whether an open-ended phenomenological approach implies a licence to randomly ascribe phenomena according to the subjective tastes and inclinations of the observer? The answer must certainly be negative. Even in the classical Husserlian sense of the term “consciousness is directed to what it takes to be an external world (or to its own past and future etc.) through its *Intentionalität* (intentionality)...” (Bowker [Ed.], 2000: 444). Within “consciousness” data appear to demand a degree of consistency. Elaborating further on this circumstance of the consciousness the *Oxford Concise Dictionary of World Religions* states:

Thus “you” may appear in my consciousness with the consistency of a person whom I can label and name; I do not have to resolve the argument about solipsism before extending the intentionality of my consciousness toward “you” as a consistent appearance in my own consciousness...Moreover, “you” appear in my consciousness with the characteristic of marking off

other appearances with an equal consistency, so that together we can label a world of appearances and name it...(Bowker[Ed.], 2000: 444).

The phenomenological approach to the degree that it is evident in this study has been drawn from two extrapolations of the above.

First is the fact that phenomenology, as it was understood by those who embraced epoche (or bracketing out all assumptions of truth, existence etc.), considered the approach as the most conducive to an empathetic engagement of phenomena - especially religious phenomena. It is an approach, as Schimmel put it, which provides an entry point for the excavation of the inner meanings of religion.

The second is in the naming, or labelling, of such phenomena. Naming is a product of diagnosis, and it is as diagnosticians that phenomenologists differ. This point is made by Huston Smith in his discussion on Heidegger. Heidegger, he observes, may have been acute as a symptom-spotter "alerting us" says Smith "to the West's slope towards nihilism, calculative thought, and the manipulative arrangements its scientific, technological social order impose on life." (Smith, 1989: 31). As a diagnostician, however, he considers Heidegger unreliable, and demonstrates the point through Heidegger's apparent misreading of the concept metaphysics which Heidegger ultimately regarded as having been the precursor to modern science and therefore rejected it. Of critical importance in this respect is the fact that Smith ascribes this misreading, amongst others, to Heidegger's persistent ignoring of the later works of Plato. For some inscrutable reason he focussed on Plato's earlier works alone. (Smith, 1989: 31). The critical point is that at the level of diagnostics it is difficult to review phenomena in complete abstraction from its history. Failing this would render a phenomenological approach compatible with nearly anything. It is perhaps for this reason that Heidegger shocked the world, where, as the newly appointed rector of Freiburg, he called upon Germany during the course of his inaugural speech "to move itself into the primordial powers of Being, with the Nazi party in the vanguard." (Blackburn, 1996: 170).

A significant portion of this study may be viewed, therefore, as an attempt to empathetically engage a number of events that have been, in one way or another, affected by the march of history. Phenomenology is an empathetic exploration of phenomena, not the confessional acceptance of a belief. Hence Schimmel's own quite candid admission in her work entitled *Deciphering The Signs of God: A Phenomenological Approach*, that it is "difficult to remain distanced when dealing with religion, and the personal bias of the researcher cannot but be reflected in the study - a bias which, in my case, certainly leans more towards the mystical and poetical trends inside Islam than towards its legalistic aspect..." (Schimmel, 1994: xii).

It is certainly hoped, in line with my claims to objectivity in the *Motivation*, that my own biases are held in check through a phenomenological approach.

Nonetheless, there are issues of taxonomy, frequent in literature of this nature, that need to be addressed. These issues I consider a necessary preamble to this study on the whole. The one concerns the classification of certain religious practices into "Great" and "Little" traditions; the other considers the *shari'ah-taṣawwuf* dichotomy.

1.3.1 Great and Little Traditions

A theory that features prominently in discussions and analyses of *taṣawwuf* is that of "high" and "low" Islām originally advanced by Robert Redfield in his exposition of "Great Traditions" and "Little Traditions". (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 206). This dichotomy - or dualist typology - has been further popularised by Geertz and Gellner. (Asad, 1986: 6). Fundamental to this idea is the general distinction between the "high" and hence learned and literate Islām of the urban classes and the "low", hence ignorant and illiterate (or semi-literate) Islām of the rural peasantry.

The pejorative connotations of the term "low" are unquestionable and hence found a niche in "modernist" or "progressivist" discourses on Islām.

One of the progenitors of this approach amongst Muslim academics and intellectuals is Fazlur Rahman. The ambiguities, however, that are evident in Rahman's

discussions on “high” and “low” Islam - the “low” aspect often associated with *taṣawwuf* - are equally evident in those, subsequent to him, who embraced this perspective.

In his earlier writings, for example, Ebrahim Moosa equates magic, ecstasy, and saint cults with “low” Islām - “low” or “folk” Islām in the context of his essay, *Islam in South Africa* (1995), being largely synonymous with *taṣawwuf*. “High”, or “universal”, Islām, on the other hand is equated with the “scripturalist” and puritanical Deoband versions of Islām. The question that naturally begs to be answered is what, precisely, is meant by “universal” in this context? Does it mean that the tenets of scripturalist Islām in Deoband articulations of the same are universally applicable to all humanity? Or that within their interpretations there is a pluralist accommodation of other faiths? The rigorist and exclusivist outlook with which the Deoband school has oftentimes been identified hardly merits the term “universal”. On the hand, at the annual *Chistī* celebrations in India, men and women of different faiths converge upon the shrine of Muḥīn al-Dīn al-Chistī in paying their respects to the saint. While scenes of this type would evoke the ire of most puritans, there yet appears a sense of universal sharing in this articulation of “low” Islām that would most likely be condemned in Deoband articulations.

Talal Asad attempts to locate the problem in his critique of Geertz and Gellner when he states:

A representation of social structure that is cast entirely in terms of dramatic roles tends to exclude other conceptions ...But even a narrative about typical actors requires an account of the discourses that orient their behaviour can be represented (or misrepresented) by actors to each other. In a dramatic play in the strict sense, these discourses are contained in the very lines the actors speak. An account of indigenous discourses is, however, totally missing in Gellner’s narrative.

Gellner's Islamic actors do not speak, they do not think, they *behave*. (Asad, 1986: 8).

Further on he says:

Yet for Geertz, as for Gellner, the schematization of Islam as a drama of religiosity expressing power is obtained by omitting indigenous discourses, and by turning all Islamic behaviour into *readable gesture*. (Asad, 1986: 9).

The "schematization" above refers to the dual typology of Islam into "high" and "low".

Even if we admit, however, that Islāmic behaviour may be recast as "readable gesture", then the failure, or refusal, of the likes of Geertz and Gellner to read the "fine print" is somewhat mystifying. The joining of Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists in the case of Muʿīn al-Dīn al-Chistī does not happen as a spontaneous act of euphoria or enlightenment. This type of behaviour finds its expression through discourse - through contest and debate. When I questioned the man who had been part of a group that video-taped the *urs* for me about the presence of Hindus at the ceremony his response was simple and immediate: "The grace of Allāh" he said, "and the blessings that Allāh has been bestowed on Ḥaḍrat Muʿīn al-Dīn Chistī are available to everyone." Expecting a reply along the lines of accommodating the "other" for proselysing purposes, I was somewhat surprised by this answer. In the procession, of course, in the drama of colour and ritual, he was just another actor.

The ambiguities - if not outright contradictions - of the "high-low" dualist typology are further highlighted by Asad in his rejoinder to Gellner's view that the urban bourgeoisie has "a natural distaste for public festivals." "Anyone" Asad states, "who has lived in a Muslim community, or read relevant historical accounts...will know the

rites of passage are more elaborate among ‘the well-heeled urban bourgeoisie’ than among the lower urban strata.” (Asad, 1986:).

None of the above is designed to dismiss the existence of “low” or “popular” expressions of anything. Indeed, Imām Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (1058-1111), amongst many others, has roundly condemned the *shataḥāt* (extravagances) of the charlatans amongst the *ṣūfiyya*. (Al-Ghazālī, 1985:117). Nonetheless, extravagance and charlatanism are not the province of *taṣawwuf* alone. Some of these features are eminently indicated within the ambit of the *sharī‘ah* itself. An example at the Cape is the belief that a Muslim has to perform a *farḍ* (obligatory) *ghusl* (greater ablution) at the onset of the month of *Ramaḍān*. This apparently devotional act is non-existent in Islamic Law. There are numerous other instances akin to the latter mentioned one that eminently merit the appellation “folklorish“ or “popular” - all of which have been taught by the *imāmate* of “high” Islām.

On the other hand, while little may be adduced to gainsay the folklorish nature of some of these *fiqhī* (juristic) beliefs, a lot might be said to elevate some of the ecstatic experiences of *ṣūfī* practitioners as representing sublime and cultivated responses to the spirituality that lies at the heart of Islam as a religion. In this respect it is worth quoting Hodgson at length:

From everyday moments of recollection, with such selflessness as they bring, the mystic may rise to ever more intense levels of awareness, which can take ecstatic forms. Ecstasy, carrying with it both intense euphoria and a sense of total clarity about reality, can occur in very diverse contexts. But so far as it has played a role in historical mystical traditions, it has done so as part of a total self-assessment and self-discipline. It is in such a context that an ecstatic experience (‘oceanic’ or otherwise) is most likely to carry with it the moral standpoint of universality. Always the ground of

mystical life, in this historical sense, is a striving for clarity and sincerity; whatever the level is they have reached, mystics, both Sūfis and others, have spoken most persistently in metaphors of Light and Truth. To this sort of clarity, the touchstone of relevance to everyday life will apply. A primary criterion that mystics have used to test the 'geniuieness' of an ecstatic experience - that is whether it is from God or from the Devil (or possibly consists merely in a similar, perhaps organically related but abortive, subjective event) - is the enduring relevance to all dimensions of a person's life, including the everyday. (Hodgson, 1974[Vol.1]: 399-400).

In Hodgson's portrayal, the actors are given a voice.

Complementary to this discussion is the following examination of the interaction between the *sharī'ah* and *taṣawwuf*, and the function of myth, symbol, and legend in the broader framework of *taṣawwuf*.

1.3.1.1 *Sharī'a*, *Taṣawwuf*, and Muslim Common Practices

In typical Geertzian style, Davids links the Cape myths and legends - and a number of other common Muslim practices at the Cape - to Javanese mythology and folklore. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 14-5). The legend, for example, claiming that Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn (of whom more later) walked across the water, he says, is a "direct appropriation" of the sea-goddess Ratu Kidul of Javanese mythology. Like Ratu, he too came to assume a role of "spiritual protection" to the slave fisherman who toiled along the Atlantic seaboard. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 14-5).

These interpretations and linkages, however, are drawn from a broader rationalist cum purist-minded narrative that posits rather sharply defined distinctions between

“Islamic“ and “un-Islamic” beliefs and practices. “From Raffles to Van Leur” Van Bruinessen observes, “it has been claimed by colonial civil servants and missionaries that, especially in Java, Islam was nothing more than a thin veneer, underneath which one could easily discern an oriental world view that differed in essential respects from the transcendentalism and legal orientation of Middle Eastern Islam. The religious attitudes of the Indonesians, it was said, were more influenced by the Indonesian religions (Hinduism and Buddhism)...” (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 1). From this perception of Islam evolved the classic *santri-abangan* dichotomy, complimented by the *priyayi*.

The *santri* are the practitioners of purer versions of Islam; the *abangan* are considered nominal Muslims who adopted an eclectic system of beliefs and practices; while the *priyayi* are an elite version of the latter. (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 2). Van Bruinessen, like Hodgson, is of the view that Geertz’s schema was influenced by his “reformist Muslim informants.” (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 2). Davids’ view of a “Shariah-centric” Islam also appears to coincide in meaning with Geertz’s *santri*-nized version of pure Islam. The usage of the term “Shariah-centric” of course, is highly problematic¹ The term lacks clarity from a number of points of view. Is it intended to imply a religious approach that gives precedence to the *shari‘a* over *taṣawwuf*; or one that posits an approach that excludes foreign influences such as, for example, animistic and Hindu influences? Moreover, are both puritanical and more liberal interpretations of the *shari‘a* (if understood as a combination of beliefs, legal precepts, and practical ethics) included in the term “Shariah-centric”? Geertz’s classification, it appears, seems to suffer the same shortcomings of an “ideology” as Stiglitz puts it, that “provides a lens through which one sees the world, a set of beliefs that are held so firmly that one hardly needs empirical confirmation.”²

Firstly, it assumes an exclusivist rationalism on the part of Islam that, even under the most rigorist of scriptural analysis, it hardly assumes for itself. The Qurān is replete with references to eschatological and numinous realities. When the Qurān, for example, states that the “seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein glorify Him. Nor is there anything but glorifies Him with praise; yet you understand not

their glorification” (Qurān, 17: 44), then it is hard to imagine that sensitive people within the faith will not find a corresponding resonance to this verse within themselves. Hence we discover the importance of *dhikr* to *ṣūfis* who view the act as a collective glorification of God that includes “the seven heavens and the earth”; in other words, the entire created order. *Dhikr*, in this sense, is a primordial re-enactment of a Divine articulation as Qurānic text. Where then lies the locus for definitions of *santri* or *abangan*, of “high” or “popular” expressions of Islam? Does it lie within the Qurānic text itself, within interpretations of the text, or within the human response to that text? The definitions often lack specificity, and are normally located within general acts or outward expressions that purport to be Islāmic, and not, as they ought to be, *within specific instances of an act* where there is a visible rupture between the doctrines and the methods. To consider otherwise is, in a typical Hodgsonian sense, to deny the actor a voice - which is nothing other than a crude reductionism of the other. Phenomenologically - in the Friedrich Heiler sense of the term - this reductionism finds an echo in Hodgson’s statement that “mystical experience is as incommunicable to those insensitive to it as is musical experience to those deaf from birth.” (Hodgson, 1974[Vol.1]: 135).

Secondly, the schema erects Indonesia itself as a prototypical model for the non-normative *abangan* practices. It ignores the possibility that many of these practices may well have accompanied earlier Muslim settlers from the presumed nomos-oriented Middle East. In fact the evidence appears to point quite the other way. “Few of the observers of Indonesian Islam” Van Bruinessen says, “who pontificated about its being so different from Arab Islam...had ever been to another Muslim country.” (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 3). Talal Asad, quite pertinently, holds a similar view.

As an example Van Bruinessen relates the method of an Indonesian *dukun* (magical specialist) in trying to establish the identity of a thief. His assistant - a young girl - is required to blacken her thumbnail with ink and then instructed to stare at it until the liminal features of the culprit become visible. He is then believed to be the perpetrator. While appearing “typically Indonesian”, he says that the selfsame practice is found in Lane’s “Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians.”

Normative legal Islam, and quite correctly, would dismiss this type of evidence with contempt. But the critical point is made that certain Indonesian *abangan* practices are more likely a result of a complex agglutination and synthesis of multiple cultures throughout the Muslim world - an aspect of that world which Hodgson refers to as “Islamicate”, rather than “Islamic”, to distinguish it from the more essentialised aspects of Islām. (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 30)³. A less controversial example would be the practice called “kersopstiek” (burning candles) common in the Cape for many years. While this practice is linked to Indonesian patterns of sacred celebrations, there is evidence that this was practiced during the *Mawlūd* commemorations as early as the tenth century. The following is a tenth century account of a *mawlūd* celebrated in Makkah:

Each year on the 12th of Rabi al-Awwal, after the evening prescribed prayer (salat al-Maghrib), the four qadis of Makka (each representing one of the schools of law) and large groups of people including the scholars (fuqaha) and notables (fudala) of Makka, shaykhs, zawiya teachers and their students, magistrates (ruasa), and scholars (mutaammamin, literally, ‘turbaned ones’) leave the mosque and set out collectively for a visit to the birthplace of the Prophet (saw) shouting out invocations (dhikr) and tahlil (la ilaha allallah). *The houses on the route are illuminated with many lanterns and large candles* [italics mine]. A great many people are out and about. They all wear special clothes and take their children with them. (Kabbani, 1998[Vol.3]: 12)

A third problem of the schema is the perception that Muslim common practices in “Javanese Islam” were simply mere accretions of Hindu influences. No provision is made for the possibility that certain selected Hindu practices may well have been

Islamicised, that is, as Van Bruinessen contends, “incorporated into a Muslim system of meaning.” (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 7). Woodward, according to Van Bruinessen, took the study a bit further and compared scripturalist Hinduism with the prevailing common practices. He found no support for these practices in Hindu scriptures. He concluded that these practices therefore had to be located within the Muslim community itself. Van Bruinessen concurs in large part with this latter conclusion but further holds, contrary to Woodward, that these practices were also common to all religions throughout the archipelago “irrespective of the scriptural religion nominally adhered to”. (Van Bruinessen, 1999: 29-30).

While Van Bruinessen correctly locates these practices in global rather than local expressions of Islām, we also need to look at how they may have evolved in the first place; and, in the process, examine some of the interactions and potential for tension that may arise between *sharī'a* and *tarīqa*.

The adoption of new or extraneous cultural patterns into Muslim practices is normally filtered by a well-known concept in Islamic Law called *al-āda muḥakkama* (The Legal Prerogative of Custom). Textual support for this principle is found in the Qurānic verse: “*wa ’mur bi l-’urf*.” (Qurān, 7: 199). The line is variously translated as “and enjoin kindness” (Pickthall, 1980: 163) or “command what is right” (Ali, 1946: 400) or “and enjoin good” (Shakir, 1982: 159). But the line, based on the nuances within the term ‘*urf*, may equally be rendered as “and enjoin what the *sharī'a* recognises as good in the prevailing custom.” (al-Fādānī, 1991[1]: 289). A Prophetic saying adduced to support this principle is that related by ‘Abd Allah b. Mas‘ūd: “*mā ra’āhu al-Muslimūn hasanan, fabuwa ‘ind Allāhi hasanan*” (That which Muslims deem good, is likewise deemed good by Allāh). (al-Fādānī, 1991[1]: 289-290).

This is a challenging area of Islamic Law made more complex by definitions and interpretations of what constitutes *maṣlaḥa* (beneficial practices) and *mafsada* (harmful practices). These concepts, in turn, are intertwined with the idea of *bid‘a* (innovation). More specifically, a *bid‘a* is an act or event for which there is no apparent scriptural support - whether by way of *manṭūq* (the direct, literal meaning

of the text as the Literalists hold) or by way of *mafḥūm* (the possible implications of the text as the majority of Islamic scholars hold). Depending, therefore, on the degree of *maṣlaḥa* or *mafasada* accompanying the act such an act would be declared either a *bidʿa ḥasana* (a praiseworthy innovation) or a *bidʿa sayyiʿa* (a blameworthy innovation). In this respect the *sharīʿa*, in its strictly legal aspect, assumes a regulatory role. To the extent that the act either conforms to or violates the general principles of the *sharīʿa*, it will be deemed, on the one side of the scale, as either a *bidʿa wājiba* (obligatory innovation), a *bidʿa mandūba* (recommended innovation), or a *bidʿa mubāḥa* (permissible innovation); and, on the other side, a *bidʿa makrūha* (reprehensible innovation) or a *bidʿa muḥarrama* (forbidden innovation). A detailed study of the history of Islamic jurisprudence will also further reveal considerable differences of opinion concerning the *thawābit* (sing. *thābit*, axioms) and *ḍawābiṭ* (sing. *ḍābiṭ*; regulating variables) that inform the principal sources of *Fiqh* (Islamic Law) viz. *Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Principles of Islamic Law) and *al-Qawāʿid al-Fiqhiyya* (General Rules of Islamic Jurisprudence) - of which *al-ʿāda muḥakkama* is one. In view of the aforementioned framework - albeit cursory in outline - within which the concept of *al-ʿāda muḥakkama* is considered, the precarious nature of too simplified a division between “scripturalist” and “popular” Islām becomes evident. Many literalist puritans do not even admit the basic division of *bidʿa* into the *ḥasana* and the *sayyiʿa* forms. On the other hand, numerous Islamic scholars of impeccable credentials have generated extensive textual evidence, of both the *manṭūq* and *mafḥūm* types, to support the more “popular” forms of Islamic expression such as group *dhikr* - whether of the silent (*khafī*) or the loud (*jalī*) types - or the practice of *tawassul*⁴ (seeking the intercession of saints in *duʿā*).

What appears more evident, though, is that the more puritanical-minded - particularly those influenced by modern-day *salafism*⁵ - have sought to narrow the margins of and ignore the nuances that inform this vast corpus of Islamic Law. Naturally there are nuances within the *salafist* tendencies too. There are the ultra conservative tendencies such as the erstwhile Saudi Arabian grand mufti Shaykh ʿAbd Allah b. Bāz; and a more progressivist *salafism* as in the works of Shaykh

Rashīd Riḍā. To appropriate, however, the phrase “scripturalist Islām” - with its subtle connotation of “scholarly Islām” - in their favour is little more than academic sleight of hand. One of the foremost Egyptian Quranic exegetes - particularly in *Āyāt al-Aḥkām* (Qurʿānic verses related to legal edicts) - of the twentieth century, Dr Miṣʿad al-Nabrāwī⁶, was an ecstatic in group *dhikr*. This is not to deny that there are manifestations of “popular” Islām that would leave even the most liberal of Islamic scholars with much more than just a few doubts. The sheer crudeness of spirit in which some group *dhikr*s is conducted can unsettle even the most composed of people. The transformation of certain shrines in the Muslim world into pseudo Tourist industries with a view to pure economic gain for their keepers is another case in point. The problem, of course, does not lie in any particular instance of crudeness which may more easily be identified, or any such instance of economic exploitation - after all, the “popularity” of the *Hajj*, for example, is itself rapidly becoming in danger of being exploited for economic purposes. The problem lies in the underlying assumptions that inform the definitions of “high” and “low” Islām; of “scripturalist” and “popular” Islām. Without reference to specific acts or events these terms are almost meaningless. Moreover, in the works of Fazlur Rahman, and others who have followed his lead, these terms appear to reflect more starkly the ideological persuasions of the authors, rather than any capacity within these terms to yield useful information about the nature of Muslim practices. A more “useful” alternative to this approach is that of Segundo Galilea who, as cited by Mukadam, “suggests that popular religion be seen as spirituality.” (Mukadam, 2000: 99). Quoting Rahner in support of Galilea’s position he states:

...alongside all these variegated psychological and social relations lies a deep seated need for completion and salvation to be found only in God. (Mukadam, 2000: 99)

This more empathetic view of things considers the possibility that “popular” religion may be more than a mere psychological or social reflex; and that “the Ultimately

Real is not just a psychological or social cipher but...a transcendent infinity...against the finitude of the human condition.” (Mukadam, 2000: 99).

The value of this approach, however, finds its expression in the following statement:

Viewing popular religiosity as an authentic spirituality not only allows us to appreciate its subtleties and depths but it also assists in avoiding official condescension and thus allows the spiritual response of common people to be viewed with respect and significance. (Mukaddam, 2000: 99).

It goes too, without gainsay, that if *religion as such* is viewed in its essential aspect of spirituality, then the above approach equally applies to the more standard religious acts of worship such as the *ṣalāt* (prayers) and *ṣiyām* (fasting) for example. No degree of “scripturalist Islām” can hide this fact. Within the world of Islām, however, there is a diversity of religious interpretations and persuasions. But these diverse persuasions are more determined by personal perspectives than any degree of attachment to scripturalism. Relevant in this regard is Hodgson’s interesting distinction between the *sharīʿa* as “responsibility” and *taṣawwuf* as “responsiveness”. While both persuasions may adduce scriptural support, the puritanical-minded emphasise the normative, and hence “responsibility” side of the equation, to the almost total exclusion of the numinous or “responsiveness” side. Conversely, and to the opposite extreme which is relatively rare, the *ṣūfī*-minded may emphasise the numinous to a point of total disregard for the *sharīʿa*, as happened in the case of certain *bāṭinī*⁷ sects. Beyond this, to view the *sharīʿa* and *taṣawwuf* as inherently antagonistic would be far from the truth⁸. On the contrary, while there have been moments of severe tension there have always existed, side by side, a perceived complementarity. This complementarity is encapsulated by a saying attributed to Imām Mālik:

He who learns jurisprudence and neglects *taṣawwuf* becomes a reprobate; and he who learns *taṣawwuf* and neglects jurisprudence becomes an apostate. (al-Kurdī, 1343AH: 405).

Cyril Glasse also notes Imām al-Ghazālī’s role in resolving the tensions between the two. After his efforts, Glasse observes, “there emerged the image of a new organism, a complete body with mysticism or *taṣawwuf* as its heart, theology as its head, philosophy as its rationality binding the different parts together, and law as the working limbs.” (Glasse, 1989: 138).

In general, however, the conflict is normally between *taṣawwuf* as such and the puritanically-minded. The erection of *sharī’a* and *taṣawwuf* as inherently and diametrically opposed is in fact a purist construct.

In *ṣūfī* discourse God is not only alive, but near and ever-creating; a sublimely wondrous Being with an infinite capacity for creating wondrous things. There is an experienced seamlessness between the natural and the supernatural. It is these boundaries of experience, and, as a consequence, the boundaries of the *sharī’a*, that *ṣūfīs* persistently push and challenge - hence the tension between the *sharī’a* as “responsibility” and *taṣawwuf* as “responsiveness”.

To the puritanically-minded, and the ultra legalists of the Islamic classical period, God is ultimately the Lawgiver, the Judge who has sealed His contract with humanity. The “letter” is not only important, but decisive. Affairs of the spirit and the sacred are postponed to the Day of Judgment. There is little room for matters of *baraka* (spiritual influence) in this world.

To the tensions between these polarities the likes of Imām al-Ghazālī and Ibn ‘Arabī responded. Their responses, however, while both being competent jurists, were largely in favour of the “spirit” - the “letter”, or purely literal, on its own, they appear to have resolved, being much too limiting. It is little wonder, therefore, that both of them received such an extraordinary response in the spiritually animated world of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. These were the influences which, while

recognising the *sharīʿa* as “responsibility”, unreservedly declared the centrality of the numinous. These were the influences too, that created the space for a far more tolerant embrace and application of the principle of *al-ʿāda muḥakkama*. It is precisely at this level - a sensitivity to the numinous as “responsiveness” - that we discern the contours of *taṣawwuf* in Cape Muslim culture.

While myths and legends have little or nothing to do with *taṣawwuf* they are often the popularised by-products of a spiritual culture deeply interfused with *taṣawwuf* elements. Mythopoeia as creative or imaginative response requires the same sensitivities and dispositions that enable a spiritual response to the symbols within the Qurān. Without *taṣawwuf* as matrix - albeit in a rudimentary form - it is very unlikely that Cape Muslim history would have been preserved in the manner it has.

1.4 Structure

This dissertation comprises eight chapters of which this one, dealing with the motivation, research methodology, and theory and perspectives, forms the first chapter.

The second chapter deals with the concept of *taṣawwuf* - its origins and meanings - and the various *tariqas* as they developed and took shape over the centuries. Included in this chapter is a discussion of the various doctrines and methods that characterise these particular orders. This chapter is considered necessary as a preamble to gaining a better and more holistic understanding of *taṣawwuf* as it manifested itself at the Cape.

The third chapter is an attempt to narrow down the scope of the study to an examination of the specific geographical locations from whence Islām originally came to the Cape. The areas identified in this respect were the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, India, East Africa, and the Ḥaḍramawt in Yemen. During the course of reviewing Islam in these regions the focus was once again on the genesis, nature and character of *taṣawwuf*.

The fourth chapter introduces the main focus of this dissertation by examining the impact of prominent Muslim savants who had arrived at the Cape before the turn of

the seventeenth century. The period covered in this chapter is between 1667 and 1700. The bulk of the chapter, however, is dedicated to the biographical data, the thought, and spiritual proclivities of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar.

The fifth chapter examines the unfolding of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape between the years 1700 and 1807. The attempt here is to both identify the *ṭarīqa* affiliations of the various *ṣūfī* shaykhs who arrived at the Cape during this period, and to examine the manner, if at all, in which the continuities between shaykh and *murīd* were effected. While a number of prominent shaykhs receive considerable attention the main focus is on Tuan Guru and his Compendium - a work of more than 600 pages. An analysis of this work - which has not been attempted until very recently - is a further attempt at a definitive location of Tuan Guru's *ṭarīqa* affiliations.

The sixth chapter deals with the period between 1807 and 1880. This chapter attempts to trace the causes behind the general decline in both the *sharī'ah* and *taṣawwuf* dimensions of Islām and challenges the view that this was an age in which *taṣawwuf* was relegated to the margins of the Muslim community by a so-called *sharī'ah*-oriented interpretation and application of Islām. The chapter ends with an examination of the contributions of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi who died in 1880.

Chapter seven reviews the period stretching from 1880 to 1945 - the year in which the Muslim Judicial Council was established and in which Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks had passed away - and examines the impact made by the arrival of a new votary of *ṣūfī* shaykhs, starting with Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī who arrived in 1880.

Chapter eight engages a number of contentions, comments, and conclusions drawn from the general findings and personal insights provided by this study. It also presents a number of recommendations for future research and ends with an “afterword” that takes a brief look at the post-1945 development of and challenges presented to *taṣawwuf* during that period.

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CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Origins of the term *Ṣūfī*

It is of interest to note that the important classical lexicons such as the *Lisān al-‘Arab* of Abu l-Fadl b. Manthur (b.630-d.711 AH), the *al-Qamūs al-Mubīṭ* of Muhammad b. Ya‘qūb al-Fayrūzabādi (729-817/1329-1415), and the *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ* of Muhammad b. Bakr ar-Razi (d.666/1268) omit the term *ṣūfī* despite the fact that the latter author had written two works on *Ṣūfism* - the *Sharḥ al-Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyyah* and the *Ḥadā‘iq al-Ḥaqā‘iq* (al-Zirkilī, 1984: 55). A notable exception is the *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr* of Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Fayyūmi (d.770/1368) who, nevertheless, refers to it rather cryptically as a "Man of the people called the *Ṣūfiyya*" and then adds that it is a *kalima muwallada* (a foreign term) (al-Fayyūmi, n.d.: 352). No further meanings are given by al-Fayyūmi. This omission from the major lexicons becomes more remarkable for the reason that during the periods that they were compiled the terms *ṣūfī* and *taṣawwuf* were already widely known and well-established. Although it is not the purpose of this dissertation to examine the matter in great detail two possible views may be forwarded to explain this anomaly:

- a) The *ṣūfis* and scholars of *taṣawwuf* had themselves not satisfactorily resolved the problem.
- b) The *ṣūfis*, in particular, were more concerned - in an almost literal sense - with the spirit of the tradition viz. its meaning, rather than the "letter" or physical name.

The latter view is summed up by the words of al-Hujwiri:

Therefore, since the people of this persuasion have purged their morals and conduct, and have sought to free themselves from natural taints, on that account they are called Sufis; and this designation of the sect is a proper name inasmuch

as the dignity of the Sufis is too great for their transactions to be hidden, so that their name should need a derivation (al-Hujwiri, 1982: 30).

The same meaning is conveyed by al-Qushayri when he states that "This group (the *ṣūfis*) are too well-known and firmly established to depend (for their credibility) on sound, lexically derived meanings". (al-Qushayrī, n.d [vol.2]: 55).

For further clarification we briefly need to look at some of the terms that suggest themselves as source words. These "source words" may broadly be divided into Arabic and non-Arabic sources.

2.1.1 Arabic Source Words

Ṣafā meaning "purification". The objection here is that if the root word is *ṣafā* then its derivative would be *ṣafawī* and not *ṣūfī*.

Ṣaff meaning rank, line, or row. The first row in congregational prayers in Islām or the first row in *jihād* has been accorded a special status because it symbolizes those who are in the first rank of spirituality. The derivative of *ṣaff* however, would be *ṣaffī*.

Ṣuffa, meaning a bench or low veranda. During the time of the Prophet (pbuh) a number of his companions disengaged themselves from normal worldly activities and devoted themselves to an ascetic way of life. They came to be known as the *Aṣḥāb al-Ṣuffa* or "Companions of the Bench". They spent the greater part of their lives in acts of devotion on a low veranda in the vicinity of the Prophet's (pbuh) mosque. The correct derivative of *ṣuffa* however, would be *ṣuffī*. (Haeri, 1993: 1; Valiuddin, 1996: 1-2; al-Qushayrī, n.d [Vol.1]: 550-1; Ibn Taymiyya, n.d.[Vol.11: 5-7).

Ṣufab, a pre-Islamic Arab tribe named after a man called *Ṣufab* whose real name was Ghawth ibn Murr ibn Udd Ṭabikha. The tribe was known for its extreme piety and was in charge of the affairs of the pre-Islamic pilgrims who performed their annual pilgrimage in Makkah. They were also assigned the socially

esteemed duty of leading the pilgrims in holy procession from ‘Arafat down to the Ka’ba (al-Fayrūzabādī, 1330AH[Vol.3]: 164). Ibn Taymiyya, while recognising the etymological soundness of the term *ṣūfī* as a derivative of *ṣufab* rejects it as a source word on the following grounds:

- a) The tribe was not sufficiently well-known, especially amongst the ascetics.
- b) Had this been the source word then it would have been more appropriate to apply it to the Companions (*Ṣabāba*) of the Prophet, the Successors (*Tābi‘ūn*) to the Companions, and the Successors to the Successors (*Tābi‘ al-Tābi‘ūn*) of the Companions.
- c) That most of the people who refer to themselves as *ṣūfīs* are either not aware of this tribe or reject being associated with a pagan tribe of pre-Islamic times (Ibn Taymiyya, n.d[Vol.11]: 6).

Ṣafwa, meaning those who are selected, or the choicest part of a thing. This is rejected on the grounds that its derivative would be *Ṣafwī* (Haeri, 1993: 1).

Ṣūf, meaning wool. On etymological grounds alone this is the commonly accepted root word - by the majority of scholars - for *ṣūfī* (Lane, 1872: 1748). The etymological soundness of the word is given further support by the fact that the earlier ascetics often donned woollen garments to express their inner detachment from the world and their rejection of what they perceived to be an excessive materialism of the earlier Islamic dynasties, particularly the Umayyad Dynasty. While accepting the soundness of its derivation from the root word *ṣūf* both al-Qushayrī and al-Hujwiri, as mentioned above, rejected the view that the term *ṣūfī* is reducible to purely etymological considerations. al-Qushayri further adds to this the contention that not “all the members (*qawm*) of the *ṣūfī* way engaged in the wearing of woollen garments”. (al-Qushayrī, n.d.: 550). Bhatnagar, while being mistaken in his understanding that al-Qushayrī had fully accepted the legitimacy of this derivation, makes the interesting observation that “in Persian a dervish or an ascetic is named 'pashmina push' i.e. a person wearing a woollen frock”. (Bhatnagar, 1984: 1-2).

Amongst the notable exceptions who reject the soundness of this derivation is

Adalbert Merx. According to Julian Baldick (1992: 31) Merx maintains "that sufi could not originally have meant 'wearer of wool', because logically an Arabic word formed in this way would have to mean 'a man made of wool' or 'a seller of wool'". It is both linguistically and conceptually difficult to understand how Merx came to the conclusion that *ṣūfī* means "a man made of wool". This connotation seems to be exclusive to him. The second meaning he assigns to *ṣūfī*, namely, "a seller of wool", does not correspond to the received standards of Arabic morphology. In Arabic a "seller of wool" is called a *ṣawwāf* (Anīs and Naṣr et al, 1972[Vol.1]: 529). There are many parallels to this in the Arabic language. For example, a butcher is called a *jazzār*, a greengrocer a *baqqāl*, a money-exchanger a *ṣarrāf* etc.

2.1.1.1 Non-Arabic Source Words

Sophos or *sophia*, a Greek term meaning "wise" from which the word philosophy is derived. Generally speaking linguists, unlike Merx (Baldick, 1992: 31), have rejected the claim that the term *ṣūfī* has been derived from the Greek term "sophia" for the reason that the Greek letter *sigma* was usually transliterated into Arabic as a *Sīn*. Stoddart holds the view that the "connection with the Greek sophia ... is generally regarded as no more than a pious pun, since the Greek letter *sigma* is regularly transliterated by the Arabic letter *sīn*, and not by *ṣād* as in *ṣūfī*. It is interesting to note, however, that in much later times; the Turks transliterated Hagia Sophia ... as *Aya Şūfiya*; replacing here the Greek *sigma* with the letter *ṣād* (Stoddart, 1983: 20).

The improbability of this derivation is further supported by reports that the term *ṣūfī* was already well-known before the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mun (167-218/783-833) founded the *Bayt al-Hikma* (Hall of Wisdom) which inaugurated the era of prolific Greek translations into the Arabic language (Hodgson, 1974[Vol.1]: 412). Suhrawardī states in his *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif* (al-Suḥrawardī, 1983: 63) that Hassan al-Basri (d. 110/728) was reported to have said, "I saw a *ṣūfī* while circumambulating (*ṭawāf*) around the kaʿba and offered him something but he

refused. He said, 'I have four *dawāniq* (about two-thirds of a *dirham*) and that is enough for me". Even if we assume that this event occurred during the last ten years of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī's life it would have been before the era of Greek translations. Another instance cited by al-Suhrawardī (1983: 63) is the following saying attributed to Ṣufyān al-Thawrī (97-161): "Had it not been for Abū Hāshim the Ṣūfī (d.150) then I would never have known the subtle nature of arrogance." While the impact of Greek philosophy on later developments of *ṣūfism* - particularly on certain gnostic and philosophical forms - cannot be denied, it seems unlikely, contrary to Baldick's view, that the term *ṣūfī* was derived from *Sophia*.

En Sof, a Hebrew term meaning "endless and infinite" (Rastogi, 1982: 3). Rastogi avers that "the word 'Sufi' is definitely not derived from 'suf' meaning wool: it has family likeness with the Greek word 'Sophia' meaning wisdom, and the Hebrew term 'En Sof' meaning infinity"(Rastogi, 1982: 3).

Here, once again, there appears to be a confusion between the early application of a term and its later developments. We have here what may be called a retrospective imposition of meaning. While there may be a philosophical and conceptual "family likeness" between later expressions of *ṣūfic* thought on the one hand, and Jewish mysticism and Greek philosophy on the other, there is also equally a "family likeness" between *ṣūfī* in its meaning of "wearing wool" and the practice of wearing sheepskins by early Jewish and Christian ascetics. Titus Burckhardt states that

...what has never been pointed out is that many Jewish and Christian ascetics of these early times covered themselves in imitation of St. John the Baptist in the desert only with sheepskins. It may be that this example was also followed by the early Sufis. Nonetheless "to wear wool" can only be an external and popular meaning of the term *Tasawwuf*..(Burckhardt, 1995: 15).

The point that needs to be made here is that while the evidence - both etymologically and in terms of the practice of the earlier Muslim ascetics - seem to favour the derivation of the term *ṣūfī* from the root word *ṣūf* meaning “to wear wool”, many scholars have failed to take into consideration, in the process of analysing the origins and derivation of the term, its initial application and the later conceptual configurations which the meaning of the term came to embrace. Burckhardt himself gives expression to this view when he says that “since doctrinal truths are susceptible to limitless development and since the Islamic civilization had absorbed certain pre-Islamic inheritances, Sufi masters could, in their oral or written teaching, make use of ideas borrowed from those inheritances provided they were adequate for expressing those truths which had to be made accessible to the intellectually gifted men of their age and which were already implicit in strictly Sufic symbolism in a succinct form.” (Burckhardt, 1995: 15). Moreover, given the Arab penchant for word-play and given the fact that most of the Arabic root words cited above convey one or another aspect of the manifold dimensions of the *ṣūfī* way it comes as no surprise that many of these meanings came to be incorporated into general *ṣūfī* discourse. For a fuller extrapolation of this discourse we now turn to the definitions of *taṣawwuf*.

2.2 Definitions of *Taṣawwuf*

In the *ʿAwārif al-Maʿārif* al-Suhrawardi (1983: 57) mentions that more than a thousand definitions exist for *taṣawwuf*. Many of these "definitions" however, are short, elliptical statements which presuppose a much broader knowledge of *taṣawwuf* in order for them to be understood. An example of this is in the "Book of Definitions" (*Kitāb al-Taʿrifāt*) by Jurjānī (al-Jurjānī, 1982: 59-60). Amongst the many definitions of *taṣawwuf* which he offers is the short phrase *tark al-ikhtiyār* (the abandonment of choice). The original author of this phrase no doubt had in mind the fact that one of the aims of *taṣawwuf* is to reject one's personal tastes, whims, and fancies in favour of direction and spiritual guidance offered by divine revelation. Given the Arab's love for brevity it comes as no surprise to encounter

such an abundance of elliptical statements proffered as definitions. In fact Arberry ascribes one of the reasons for the popularity of the *Kitāb al-Taʿrūf* (The Doctrine of The Sufis) by al-Kalābādī - being a short work - to this love. (Arberry [trans.], 1976: xiii). Amongst the Arabs we have the proverbial *kbayr al-kalām ma qalla wa dall* (The best of speech is that which is brief and to the point). We could also add that many of these sayings, recorded in later works as definitions, might well have been spontaneous, elliptical answers by *ṣūfī* masters to questions asked by their students who were already well schooled in the broader and general concepts of *taṣawwuf*.

A cursory study of some of these definitions and statements will reveal, however, that they differ mostly in their wording and their emphases.

Nonetheless, the following three definitions are adequate for the purposes of this dissertation:

i) Shaykh Abū Bakr al-Shibli has defined *taṣawwuf* in the following manner: “Its beginning is the knowledge (*maʿrifa*) of God and its end is His unification (*tawḥīd*)”. (Mahmud, n.d.: 41).

ii) According to Junayd al-Baghdādī it means that “...God causes you to die to yourself and makes you alive in Him.” (Mahmud, n.d.: 37).

iii) According to Shaykh al-Islām Zakariyya Anṣārī *ṣūfism* “teaches one to purify one's self, improve one's morals, and build up one's inner and outer life in order to attain perpetual bliss. Its subject matter is the purification of the soul and its end or aim is the attainment of eternal felicity and blessedness.” (Valiuddin, 1996: 3).

These three definitions - the first pertaining to the intellect (*ʿaql*), the second to a state of being (*ḥāl*), and the third to ethics (*akhlāq*) - cover the major concerns of the *ṣūfī* quest.

The first definition therefore, deals with the ultimate or metaphysical aspects of *taṣawwuf*. However, two important points need to be noted here.

Firstly, the word *tawḥīd* is not to be understood as a simple affirmation of faith in the Divine Unity of God, nor is it to be understood in terms of Islamic scholastic

theology (*‘aqīda*) as codified by Abū l-Ḥasan al-ʿAsha‘ri which deals with the philosophical issues surrounding the Divine Attributes (will, power, knowledge etc.) of God.

Tawḥīd, in *ṣūfī* discourse, refers to the realisation of the essential Unity of Being. This evokes the second point viz. the Intellect. In this context “Intellect” does not refer to the ordinary or "mundane" functioning of the discursive faculties or human reason. "Intellect", as Glasse states, is to be seen as the equivalent of “*intellect, or nous*, as understood in Platonism or Neoplatonism. It is the faculty which, in the microcosm or in man, is the embodiment of Being or Spirit“ (Glasse, 1989: 45). Differently expressed, it is the divine prolongation or extension of the essence of the Divine Unity in the illusory world of materiality. Gaining access to the Intellect is, therefore, tantamount to realising the essence of the divine Unity of Being. This is what is meant by *tawḥīd* in the first definition.

The second definition emphasises the importance of renouncing the ego or lower self. Arrogance, conceit, and self-centredness are considered amongst the greatest veils between an individual and God. It is this state of being or condition which Rābi‘a al-‘Adawiyya gave expression to when she said: “If I seek repentance of myself then I shall have need of repentance again.” (Bhatnagar, 1984: 42). Rābi‘a considered the mere acknowledgement of the individual ego a major sin.

The third definition relates to the development and refinement of the morals. This is in keeping with the Prophetic saying, "I have been sent to perfect the morals of people" (al-Ṣuyūṭī, n.d.: 97). This perfection, as it were, is made possible through the twin processes of “emptying” (*takhliya*) and “adornment” (*taḥliya*). That is, emptying the self of all blameworthy qualities, and adorning it with all praiseworthy qualities (al-Kurdī, 1346AH: 430). To assist in this process certain *adhbākār* (sing. *dhikr*, or the remembrance of God) are prescribed by the *ṣūfī* orders. While the definitions we have discussed embrace the doctrinal aspects of *taṣawwuf*, the various prescribed *adhbākār* and litanies embrace the methodological aspects.

For purposes of this dissertation *taṣawwuf* will be viewed as that process which sets out to “liberate” what is perceived as the lower self from its worldly attachments; or, differently expressed, to attain the condition of *baqāʾ* (permanent life in God) after *fanāʾ* (annihilation of the self) (Schimmel, 1978: 55). To assist in this process certain methods - or spiritual supports - such as invocations, *adhbkār*, litanies, and spiritual retreat (*khalwa*) are prescribed - all of which has, as its final aim, the realisation of the Unity of Being, or *tawḥīd*.

Hence our discussion on *taṣawwuf* will consider the extent to which all four elements mentioned above (viz. *taṣawwuf* as pure metaphysics, *taṣawwuf* as ontology, *taṣawwuf* as ethics, and *taṣawwuf* as methodology) are operative or otherwise in the making of Cape Muslim culture. Our approach, therefore, in *ṣūfī terms*, will be “inclusivist” - and not “exclusivist” which views *taṣawwuf* from a purely metaphysical point alone. The exclusivist approach would, in any case, not do justice to the purpose of this project nor, in fact, to a general thesis on *taṣawwuf* per se. It is this aspect of *taṣawwuf* that Lings refers to when he says, “The exclusive aspect of Sufism only concerns those who are qualified to be travellers in the fullest sense.” (Lings, 1981: 34). And those qualified “in the fullest sense” - even within the vast ambit of the *ṣūfī* tradition - are few indeed.

2.3 Origins of *Taṣawwuf*

The basic point of departure here, as throughout the dissertation, will be that *taṣawwuf* is firmly rooted in the Quran and the *Sunnah* (practical model) of the Prophet Muhammad (Danner, 1989[Vol1]: 239). The argument in favour of this is, that while a comparative study of mysticism in the manner of Julian Baldick (1992) and Margaret Smith (1995), for example, has its obvious uses it has little or nothing to do with the way in which ordinary Muslims or, for that matter, ordinary Christians and Jews, read their sacred texts. While it may be true that an inter-textual academic study of comparative mysticism will invariably generate its own and possibly different sets of meanings and value - depending, of course, on the particular theoretical orientations concerned - it is equally true that a

devotional reading of those same texts will render a completely different set of meanings and value. In the phenomenological sense therefore, in order for us to understand the impact of *taṣawwuf* on Muslim society it is irrelevant to the purpose to know whether *taṣawwuf* is a product of inter-religious cross-pollination or whether the sacred texts upon which it is based are historically authentic or not. Reductionist syncretistic interpretations, however, will be referenced where relevant. It is in this sense that the general approach of this dissertation finds common ground with Alfred Guillaume in his discussion on the early Muslims and their revolt against the materialism of the Caliphates of Damascus and Baghdād when he says that they “enjoined austerity and prayer and gave themselves up to a life of contemplation and religious exercise. To what extent they were influenced by factors and forces outside Islam is of no moment. What is certain is that Islam itself with its doctrine, fasting, and litanies (dhikr), provided the authoritative background of their lives.” (Guillaume, 1954: 143).

This view, as an example of the polemic surrounding this question, stands in sharp contrast to that of North who believes, fairly uniquely, that mysticism in Islām developed as a consequence of the unmystical nature of the Qurān (North, 1952: 143). Islamic mysticism, according to him, represents a revolt against the tiring formalities of Islam. Ironically, though, his literalist reading of the Qurān does not differ much from the literalism of a number of Muslim theologians opposed to the idea of *taṣawwuf* in Islam. To the *ṣūfis* the very reading of the Qurān is one of the greatest litanies to be performed. For this they have adequate textual support from both the Qurān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh). Amongst the many verses they turn to is the following: “Indeed, those who read the Scripture of Allah, and establish worship, and spend of that which We have bestowed on them secretly and openly, they look forward to imperishable gain.”(Qurān, 35:29). Amongst the well-known Prophetic traditions cited in support of the very recitation of the Qurān as litany is the one narrated by Tirmidhī which states that for every letter recited in the Quran there is the

equivalent of ten rewards in the form of divine blessings (al-Tirmidhī, 1983[Vol.5]: 161). What does however, seem more problematical about their textual readings and interpretation of the Qurān is the meaning of *ṣūfism* or mysticism they bring to bear on their interpretations. North's definition of *ṣūfism* that it is "an ascetic movement that ultimately led to pantheism", and that it "made its appearance quite early, and in its first manifestations was not characterised by any mystical speculation, but only by asceticism and quietism" (North, 1952: 107), does not help much in trying to understand his comments on the unmystical nature of the Qurān. Particularly so in view of his contention that God, in Islam, is so transcendent that He has been rendered into an abstraction which is not "far removed from pantheism" (North, 1952: 107). If we assume that his observations of the transcendence of God are based on his interpretations of the Qurān, which in all probability they are, and if we further assume that the pantheism which he refers to in his definition is synonymous with his usage of the term "mystical speculation", which became explicit in later *ṣūfism*, then we are forced to conclude, on his own terms that mysticism eminently has its roots in the Qurān; and not, as he himself initially claims, as a result of "the lack of mysticism in the original content" (North, 1952: 107).

These are some of the intractable contradictions which many a scholar has lapsed into as a result of an almost compulsive need to reduce one or other of the great religious traditions to a simple set of eclectic borrowings and external influences. To revert to the original point of departure, viz. that *taṣawwuf* is rooted in the Qurān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh) we turn to two instructive texts from both sources that describe both the origins and the ideals of *ṣūfism*.

The first is from *Sūrah* (chapter) *Wāqī'a* in which people are classified into three categories :

- a) The people of the left-hand (*aṣḥāb al- mash'amah*).
- b) The people of the right-hand (*aṣḥāb al-maymanah*).
- c) Those who are near to God (*muqarrabūn*); alternatively referred to as the "foremost" (*sābiqūn*).

The first group are those who have rejected faith. The second group are the righteous ones who are consistent in the fulfilment of their religious duties towards God. They are described as "a multitude of those of old and a multitude of those of later times"(Qurān, 56: 39-40). And finally there are the *muqarrabūn*. They are a special group of believers who have attained the highest rank in spiritual development. In *ṣūfī* terminology they are often described as the superlatively elect (*akbaṣṣ al-khawāṣ*) whose intensity of faith has bestowed upon them the special privilege of enjoying nearness to God.

The theme of "nearness to God" is further taken up in the following Prophetic Tradition: "My servant continually seeks to draw near to Me through supererogatory acts until I love him. And when I love him I become the ears with which he hears, the eyes with which sees, the hands with which he grasps, and the feet with which he walks." (al-Zubaydī, 1986: 483-4). Similar "spiritual" types are mentioned in another verse in the Quran where it is stated that "...We have given the Book for inheritance to such of our servants as We have chosen: but there are among them some who wrong their own souls (*ẓālimun li nafsihī*); some who follow a middle course (*muqtaṣid*); and some who are, by God's leave, foremost in good deeds (*sābiqun bi l-khayr*)..." (Qurān, 35: 32).

What seems almost certain from my own reading of the Qurān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet is that *taṣawwuf* - despite the diverse expressions it assumed in later times - was definitely grafted onto a native tendency. While, as mentioned previously, the impact of other philosophical and theosophical systems on later expressions of *taṣawwuf* cannot be denied, the meaning intended was not one of mere passive absorption but also as an "indigenous" intellectual and spiritual response to competing systems. One way - and in particular with regard to the *ṣūfīs* - of meeting this challenge is to couch what they consider to be immutable truths in a language and idiom that are suited to the needs of the time. This function of language as a vehicle serving a purely utilitarian purpose is of particular interest in contemporary perennialist discourse. Its point of departure is that while Divine Truth is both immutable and perennial the expression thereof

must be linked to the intellectual and spiritual climate of the time. While this attitude might seem patronising at first it does, on closer consideration, accord to language a psychological importance and a respectability which is its due. However, it denies language any role in the shaping of what is perceived as higher metaphysical truths.

Nasr, in describing the apparent incoherence of the Qurān - considered to be sacred by Muslims down to the last letter - articulates this view when he says that “The Quran displays human language with all the human weakness inherent in it becoming suddenly the recipient of the Divine Word and displaying its frailty before a power which is infinitely greater than man can imagine.” (Nasr, 1980: 47-8; Schuon, 1979: 44).

A concluding observation to be made here with regard to the question of origins and borrowings in the inter-religious discourse - and not always adequately accounted for in studies pertaining to the subject - is the exclusivist religious need, shaped by the normative piety demands of each respective tradition, to question the truth-claims of each tradition. The paradigm of this need takes the form of “what has gone before has been absolutely distorted, what comes after is a product of absolute borrowing.” In general Muslim inter-faith or inter-religious discourse - despite the fact that it is an article of Muslim faith to believe in the essential authenticity of previously revealed religions - undue emphasis is often placed on the distorted nature of those religions. Conversely, in Christian discourse for example, excessive emphasis is placed on the claim that the Islamic faith is a mere compilation of arbitrary borrowings. The result of this exaggerated concentration on borrowings and distortions - often latent in academic studies - is that it leads not so much to a stripping of their respective truth-claims, which characterises the original intention, as to a sclerotic stereotyping of the particular cultural systems under study. There is no originality, no native genius, and no diversity within cultures. What ostensibly purveys itself as objective cultural studies turns out to be, with disconcerting frequency, a political exercise of cultural domination.

2.4 Historical Development of *Taşawwuf*

I am in agreement with Schimmel that a more accurate understanding of its historical development can only be arrived at after more detailed studies of its personalities - particularly of the earlier Sufis - are made available. (Schimmel, 1959: 60-1). Failure to observe this has not only lead to a sequentialist view of history which, according to Eickelman and Piscatori, views the historical process as “a layer-cake form of historical periods” and which imagines these periods as “one authoritative act of domination following another”; but also, in my opinion; to a sequentialist view that subjects all processes - whether of the outwardly observable historical kind or the more subjective experiential kind - to an evolutionist paradigm with all its optimistic assumptions of human progress (Eickelman et.al[Ed.], 1990: 11). Despite these limitations, however, it may be helpful to distinguish as Osman bin Bakar (Bakar, 1989[Vol.2]: 263) does, between *ṣūfism* in its historical unfolding and *ṣūfism* as individual experience. According to Bakar, *ṣūfism* as an “intellectual exposition of doctrines and methods” has always creatively interacted and adapted itself to the specific needs and demands of any particular historical period. On the other hand, *ṣūfism* as individual experience has always centred around the effort to realise the spirituality of Islām as expounded in the primary sources of the Qurān and *Sunnah* (Prophetic example). While the former is subject to the vicissitudes of historical change the latter is contingent on the capacity of the individual - irrespective of time and place - to realise the “spiritual truths” espoused by the Qurān and *Sunnah* which will always remain the same reality. This approach enables overcoming the contradictions invariably encountered in studies which attempt to explain both processes as a single lineal development in history - an approach which has, as its paradigm, a rather oversimplified trajectory of *ṣūfic* development from an initially primitive stage (pure asceticism) to a more advanced metaphysical/gnostic stage. Schimmel is not far off the mark in arguing that to “analyse the mystical experience itself is next to impossible since words can never plumb the depths of this experience.”⁹ It would be "easier", she continues, "to understand Sufism through given structures."

(Schimmel, 1978: 7). One of the main themes of this dissertation will be the attempt to understand and assess the impact of *taṣawwuf* on Cape Muslim culture by analysing certain recognised structural elements of *ṣūfism*. Amongst the chief structural elements we will be considering are the following :

- a) The symbols and images employed by *ṣūfīs*.
- b) Methods of spiritual education.
- c) Particular spiritual exercises engaged in by *ṣūfīs*.
- d) The existence of *ṣūfī* Orders at the Cape.

Having said that let us return to a brief synopsis of the historical phases of *taṣawwuf*. Whilst the designation of categories into periods of "Formation", "Consolidation", "Organisation", and "Revivalist" are not strictly my own, the *chronological arrangement* of the phases definitely are. To this end the following structure has been developed:

- for the "Period of Formation" a number of personalities representative of the formative process during this period have been selected.
- for the "Period of Consolidation" (a period characterised by enormous theoretical literary output) the concentration is upon some of the major *ṣūfī* authors and their written works.
- for the "Period of Organisation" the major *ṣūfī* orders that emerged in a more formal manner after almost six hundred years of formation and consolidation form the focus of the discussion.
- the "Revivalist Period" is discussed against the backdrop of apparent decay in the Muslim world and the emergence of new and influential *ṣūfī* orders.

2.4.1 A Period of Formation

From Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (21-110/642-728) to Mansūr al-Ḥallāj (244-309/857-922).

While a number of Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) such as Ḥāritha, Ḥudhayfa, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī, the first four Caliphs - Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān and ʿAlī - are counted amongst the most important of earlier *ṣūfīs* (Bhatnagar,

1984: 35-8; See also al-Hujwiri, 1982[Chapter 7]), Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, nevertheless, enjoys one of the most central positions of this era (Arberry, 1963: 33). This centrality may be attributed to the fact that Ḥasan forms the chief link in the initiatic chains of transmission (*silsilas*) between the Companions and most of the later *ṣūfī* orders. While asceticism may describe the dominant quality of Ḥasan's *ṣūfism*, it certainly does not limit him to it nor does it accurately describe the general *ṣūfīc* ethos of this period. Furthermore, asceticism cannot be viewed as an end in itself nor, as Margaret Smith (1995: 169) has it, as a means for bodily and sensory purification alone. Ḥasan the ascetic - "The wise man is he who considers this world as nothing and with this consideration he seeks the next..." (Smith, 1995: 169) - cannot be separated from Ḥasan the disinterested devotee - "How excellent is he who takes no thought of his own interest so that his patience is for God's sake, not for the saving of himself from Hell; and his asceticism is for God's sake, not for the purpose of bringing himself into Paradise" (Bhatnagar, 1984: 38)) - nor from Ḥasan the intoxicated lover - "The lover is drunk and he does not wake up from his drunkenness until he sees the beloved" (Tor, 1987: 117). Rābī'a al-ʿAdawīyyah (95-185/713-801), famed woman saint of Baṣrā, while known for the intensity of her asceticism (Glasse, 1989: 328)) is also considered by Nicholson to be a "conspicuous example of truly mystical abandonment" (Nicholson, 1979: 4). Bhatnagar credits her as the person who *introduced* the idea of "disinterested love in Sufism" and quotes the following saying of hers to prove the point: "O my God if I worship Thee on account of the fear of Hell then burn me in Hell, and if I worship Thee with the hope of Paradise then exclude me from it, but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not from me thine eternal Beauty" (Bhatnagar, 1984: 42). However, Bhatnagar attributes a similar saying to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī without accrediting him with a similar status. Nicholson on the hand considers Rābī'a's "mystical abandonment" as almost unique during the eighth century. What is more interesting, though, is that he sees this abandonment as emerging against a backdrop of an almost all-pervasive fear - "fear of God, fear of Hell, fear of death,

fear of sin” (Nicholson, 1979: 4) - which dominated this period. The meaning of fear in the context quoted, nevertheless, remains totally unclear.

Another important figure during this period was Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī (d.200-1/815-6). The gnostic underpinnings of his *ṣūfism* is evident from his definition of it as “the apprehension of divine realities” (Nicholson, 1979: 14). But as the student of the great ascetic, Dāwud al-Ṭā‘ī (d.781), his sayings are also replete with the benefits of asceticism. On being asked by Sulayman al-Dārānī (d.215/830) about the means of attaining obedience (*ṭā‘a*) to God he replied: “...by the expulsion of worldly attachments from the heart and, should there remain anything of such attachments in the heart then not a single prostration (to God) would be considered valid” (al-Sulamī, 1986: 89). This trend, namely, a strong interaction of ascetic cum gnostic elements in the expressions of *ṣūfism*, seem to dominate this era until the middle of the 3rd/9th century. However with the advent of the second half of this century a new tendency towards speculative mysticism seems already to have emerged. This appears evident in the person of Dhū l-Nūn al-Miṣrī (180-245/796-859), a more detailed study of whom, Schimmel speculates, might well reveal the truth or otherwise of the claim that he was indeed the first of the “theosophical” *ṣūfis* (Schimmel, 1978: 47). While this claim still stands in need of authentication and while it may be true that he made certain important contributions to the *ṣūfīc* understanding of *tawhīd* (the doctrine of the unity of God), of *ma‘rifā* (gnosis), and the various stages of spiritual development (Rahman, 1979: 135), it is equally important not to overlook the fundamental asceticism that described his life-style. Al-Qushayrī’s (n.d[Vol.1]: 58) report that Dhū l-Nūn reduced the ‘Abbāsīd Caliph al-Mutawakkil (d.247/861) to tears while admonishing him, and that whenever the people of piety (*ahl al-warā*) were mentioned in his presence then he would exhort them to make haste in the mentioning of Dhū l-Nūn, is a clear indication of this. While asceticism remained the fundamental base (and not merely a phase) of *ṣūfism* the gradual crystallization of *ṣūfī* doctrine and methods remained well on course. A significant figure in this process of crystallization is Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī

(d.260/874). Often referred to as the model of the intoxicated (*sukr*) branch of *ṣūfis* he is also probably the first to elaborate in great theoretical detail the doctrine of *fanā* (extinction or the soul's passing away in God) (Rahman, 1979: 135). It is this doctrine Schimmel maintains, rather than alleged vedantic influences as proffered by R.C Zaehner, which lead him to his goal. (Schimmel, 1978: 47).

This process of systematization was virtually completed in the person of al-Junayd al-Baghdādī (d.297/910). Known for his doctrine of sobriety (*sahwī*) - counterpart of the previously mentioned doctrine of intoxication (*sukr*) - Junayd brought the legalistic and *ṣūfistic* ethos of Islam, which were straining in mutually exclusive directions, much closer to one another. While Muslim scholars (including Junayd) had accepted, albeit with certain reservations, the ecstatic utterances of Bisṭāmī such as "Glory be to me", it was Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (244-309/857-922) who emerged as the most controversial and enigmatic figure. Rejected at the time by both theologians and *ṣūfis* for his alleged advocacy of *ḥulūliyya* (positing the possibility of a personal union with God as represented in his classic statement "I am the Truth") he was sentenced to death by crucifixion. Ḥallāj's detractors and admirers range from charges of political subversion (Glasse, 1989: 144) to accolades of having died as a martyr of mystical love (Schimmel, 1978: 62). Whatever the case might be, his impact on the subsequent expressions of *taṣawwuf* is undeniable.

In this section the attempt has been made to show that it is difficult, if not fundamentally flawed, to view the total phenomenon of *taṣawwuf* as a progressive, sequential development from one phase to another. The latter position often forces one to forge monopolies of knowledge onto particular exponents of a doctrine or to posit an evolutionist, lineal development where none exists. In an otherwise challenging paper on *taṣawwuf*, Tayob also appears to support the sequentialist argument in the following citation: "Sufism ... proceeded to a more mystical, personal encounter with God where asceticism was considered only a phase in a broader development. The famous woman saint

Rabi'ah al-Basriyyah (d.801) and Mansur al-Hallaj (d.922) were some of the principal exponents of this kind of Sufism.” (Tayob, 1996: 8). Asceticism, as mentioned previously, is considered the base of *ṣūfism* and not merely a phase. Moreover, one could hardly posit a sequentialist, or evolutionist “development” of ideas between two near contemporaries such as Ḥasan and Rābi‘a. It would appear more correct to say that these two saintly people in their personal encounter with God and with asceticism - in the sense of inner detachment from worldly things - as their base emphasised different aspects of their experience of God. Ḥasan as mystical “lover”, however, we cannot deny; nor can we deny the fact that his encounter with God was personal. Margaret Smith, on the other hand, with her Purgative (purification of the senses) - Illuminative (purification of the will) - Unitive (attainment of the goal through self-abnegation) paradigm of historical *ṣūfic* development appears to have uncritically adopted those of Isaac of Nineveh in order to justify her own sequentialist perspective. (Smith, 1995: 169). Apart from the inherent problems in locating this paradigm in the historical unfolding of *ṣūfism*, should we re-define the Purgative life as meaning the purification of the will, the Illuminative life as the attainment of direct knowledge of God through the purification of the soul, and the Unitive life as direct experience of God through the purification of the spirit, then it becomes apparent that all these elements were variously present, not in any sequentialist way, but with differing degrees of emphases in particular exponents of *taṣawwuf*. Needless to say, a major factor influencing the different ways in which particular *ṣūfis* gave expression to their personal experiences of God were influenced not only by the introduction of Greek philosophy into the Islamic world during the Caliphate of al-Ma‘ūn (d.218), but also by the increasing systemization and formalization of Islamic Law (Rahman, 1979: 132). In this respect *taṣawwuf* appears to have followed the general trends of formalization and specialization evident in almost all branches of Islamic knowledge such as Islamic law, grammar, etc. (Danner, 1972: 71-7). In the seven exponents of *taṣawwuf* selected as representatives of the formative period we discern an amalgam of almost all

the major elements that informed later expressions of *taṣawwuf*. These elements - asceticism, gnosticism, mystical love, etc. - have been classified by Schimmel into two broad categories: the “voluntaristic approach” (or the mysticism of personality) with its emphasis on the experiential side of *taṣawwuf*, and the “gnostic approach” (or the mysticism of infinity) with its emphasis on the epistemological side of things (Schimmel, 1978: 5-6) - the latter finding its greatest expression in Muhyidin ibn ‘Arabī (560-638/1165-1240).

2.4.1.1 A Period of Consolidation

From Abū Sa‘īd Ibn al-‘Arabī (d.341/952) to Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (450-505/1058-1111).

While the previous centuries had produced written works of a high order on *taṣawwuf* by authors such as Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Muhāsibī (d.243/857); Abu Saīd al-Kharrāz (d.286/899), and Ḥākim al-Tirmidhī (d.295/908), these mostly functioned as practical guides and doctrinal expressions of *taṣawwuf*. With Abū Saīd a new era is inaugurated - that of theoretical consolidation. An author of many books (al-Sulamī, 1986: 427; al-Qushayrī, n.d.[Vol.1]: 176), the one that stands out, however, as a milestone in theoretical composition is his *Ṭabaqāt al-Nussāk* (Generations of the Pious). Against the background of increasing tensions between the legalists and the *ṣūfis* and the rapidly escalating anti-heresy campaign of the legalists against them a definite social need arose to counter these hostilities. Abū Saīd is considered the first amongst many to rise to this need (Arberry, 1963: 66). The *Ṭabaqāt*, lost to posterity, was a hagiographical study of the lives, views, and spiritual persuasions of *ṣūfis* up to his time. Close on his heels was Abū Muḥammad al-Khuldī (d.348/959) with his book *Hikāyat al-Awliyā* (Stories of the Saints). This book too, has unfortunately been lost. While the main thrust of the latter two works was ostensibly biographical in nature, the *Kitāb al-Luma‘* (The Book of Illuminations) of Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d.378/988) is considered the first comprehensive treatise on *taṣawwuf* (Nicholson, 1979: 28) dealing with, inter alia, the various spiritual gradations - the

famed stations (*maqāmāt*) and states (*aḥwāl*) of the *ṣūfic* journey - a detailed account of *ṣūfic* ethics, and detailed discussions on the technical vocabulary employed by the *ṣūfis*. Because of the unprecedented character of this book Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Abd al Bāqī Surūr in their introduction to the *Kitāb al-Luma'* refer to it as the *al-Kitāb al-Umm* - or the principal and paramount work (literally translated "The Mother Book") - of *taṣawwuf* literature (al-Ṭūsī, n.d.: 10). Amongst the immediate products of Abū Naṣr who made their influence felt was his student Abū Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d.412/1012). Nūr al-Dīn Shuwaybah (al-Sulamī, n.d.: 31-42) in his introduction to the *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyyah* by al-Sulamī records twenty nine known works written by him. It was the *Ṭabaqāt*, however, which earned him his fame. One of the main lines of influence exercised by this work was on the celebrated Persian Sufi poet al-Jāmi' (d. 898/1492) who based his work, the *Nafaḥāt al-Uns* (Breaths of Intimacy), on another Persian work the *Ṭabaqāt al-Ṣūfiyyīn* (Generations of the Ṣūfis) by Abd Allah al-Anṣārī (d.481;1088) who, in turn, based his work on the *Ṭabaqāt* of al-Sulamī. (Arberry, 1963: 71). If it is to the credit of Abū Naṣr, author of the "Mother Book", that he had produced a student of the stature of al-Sulamī, then it is similarly so to the latter's credit for having produced an equally illustrious student in Abu l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī (d.465/1072). Al-Qushayrī's *al-Risālat al-Qushayriyya* (The Epistle of al-Qushayrī) has emerged as a classic amongst *ṣūfi* literature and is probably one of the most studied works in *ṣūfi* circles. The book, largely written as a counter to the distortions and accretions which were threatening to mar the name of *taṣawwuf* (al-Qushayrī, n.d.[Vol.1]: 16)), is divided into two parts. The first section, like that of the *Ṭabaqāt* of al-Sulamī, concentrates on biographical sketches of earlier *ṣūfis*, while the second section deals with the principles and methods of the *ṣūfi* way. Arberry is probably correct in saying that the *Risāla* has given us "our most concise and authoritative description of *ṣūfi* doctrine" (Arberry, 1963: 71).

However, and concomitant with this productive literary development in *taṣawwuf*, we meet another *ṣūfi* scholar inspired by the *Kitāb al-Luma'* of Abu

Nasr, the famed contemporary of al-Qushayri, Ali ibn Uthman al-Hujwiri (d.450/1057), author of the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* (al-Ṭūsī, n.d.: 7). While the *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* is similar to the *Risāla* in composition, a noteworthy feature of the book is its extensive use of labelling particular ṣūfī groupings as *Tayfūris* (followers of Bisṭāmī), *Junaydis* (followers of Junayd al-Baghdādī), *Nūris* (followers of Abu l-Ḥasan Nūrī) etc. It is not inconceivable, given the popularity of this work, that this penchant for labelling by Hujwiri exercised a significant impact on the practice of formalized name-giving which came to characterize the direction of *taṣawwuf* two centuries later. By making this observation, however, we cannot ignore the fact that other factors such as the formalization of the Legal schools of Islamic thought also played a major role in the development of this process.

Two other authors who may be classified as “major” during this period are Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d.386/996) and Abū Bakr al-Kalābadhī (d.390/1000-). While the general tenor of Abu Ṭālib's work the *Qūṭ al-Qulūb* (Nourishment for the Hearts) is characterized - like the *Risāla* of al-Qushayrī - by an attempt to locate *taṣawwuf* within mainstream Islam, and concentrates too, as Abū Naṣr did, on a detailed exposition of the “stages” and “states” of the *ṣūfī* journey, a distinguishing feature of the book, nevertheless, is the fact that the first twenty four chapters of the book alone is dedicated to a description of a variety of litanies, devotional prayers, particularly those of Qurʾānic origin, and the benefits that accrue from such practices. The combined features of this work therefore render it at once as both an exposition of *ṣūfī* doctrine and a practical guide for those in need of methodological tools (See al-Makkī, 1992). An interesting reference to another work (the *ʿIlm al-Qulūb* - “Knowledge of the Hearts”) of Abū Ṭālib's is made by Julian Baldick (Baldick, 1992: 56). The book, according to Baldick, appears to be of a more “theosophical” nature and meant for the elite alone. This gradation of people into categories according to their spiritual and intellectual capacities (*istiʿdād*) is not foreign to *taṣawwuf*. A casual glance at, for example, any of the stages described by Abū Naṣr will reveal a consistent reference to distinctions between people into *ʿawām* (ordinary people), *khawāṣ*

(the elite), and the *akḥaṣṣ al-khawāṣ* (the superlatively elite). This acknowledgment of different capacities probably has its roots in the Prophetic saying, “Address people according to their capacities to understand”

Al-Kalābādhi’s *Kitāb al-Ta‘arruf li-Madhhab Abl al-Taṣawwuf* (Book of Inquiry into the Doctrines of the Sufis) differs in structure to that of his contemporary Abū Ṭālib and confines itself almost exclusively to an exposition of the doctrinal aspects of *taṣawwuf* with a view to proving that the doctrines of the *ṣūfis* were never in contravention of mainstream Islam; or, if they appeared to differ, that they were firmly rooted in the primary sources of the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh). Arberry regards this work as an apologia of Sufism (Arberry, 1963: 69). But more than being an apologetic work it eminently reveals a context of theological strife amongst parties contesting for social and intellectual space in a religion that embraced the entire gamut of human existence. But while during this era a theological victory meant, in a very real way, a political victory too, the *ṣūfic* debate and contentions cannot be reduced to mere clamouring for political power. On the contrary, the *ṣūfis* largely viewed themselves as a corrective to the abuse of political and institutional power. In fact, the tension that appeared to exist between the *ṣūfis* and the jurists is somewhat exaggerated. The tension ultimately existed between those jurists employed by the state and the *ṣūfis*; and not between the *ṣūfiṣ* and jurists per se. Moreover, most of the *ṣūfis* themselves were eminent jurists. Needless to say, beyond the perimeters of the conflict, the *ṣūfis* believed, and unapologetically so, in the inherent correctness of their position.

In this milieu of mutually opposing tendencies emerged Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (450-505/1058-1111). Al-Ghazālī was a voluminous author but his magnum opus still remains the *Iḥyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (The Revival of Religious Knowledge). The *Iḥyā* is divided into four parts dealing with aspects of worship, personal behaviour; the deadly sins, and the principles of salvation respectively. The range of topics he covers in these sections include questions of epistemology, canon law, devotional practices, *ṣūfī* training, spiritual discipline, eschatological issues

etc. (Arberry, 1963: 69). Ghazālian iconoclasts, such as Baldick, who believe that he has been given more attention than he deserves in the West (Baldick, 1995: 65), still remain unpersuasive in the face of the evidence that more than forcefully suggests the fact that he had to a significant degree brought to a conclusion the attempts at reconciliation between some of the jurists and the *ṣūfis* of that era started by his predecessors from the fourth century onwards; particularly those of al-Qushayrī and Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (Trimingham, 1973: 65). Much has been said about this impressive figure in Muslim history - and it would certainly be incorrect to accord to him a totalising impact - but his impact and contribution is most succinctly summed up in a fitting description by Cyril Glasse:

After al-Ghazali the voices of the different schools were not stilled, but a fresh measure of unity and harmony had been achieved ... It was as if the centre had reasserted itself, and as if Ghazali had looked at the pieces of a puzzle, each claiming to be the complete picture of Islam, and put them all in their proper place. (Glasse, 1989: 188).

As a concluding comment to this segment, what may be considered new and original about this period is the classification and systematization of the *ṣūfī* way. Little which is significantly new in terms of content and doctrine is introduced. Moreover during the periods of Formation and Consolidation the *ṣūfis* were not strictly identifiable in terms of specific orders. Students would gather around a shaykh - respected for the depth of both his/her knowledge and piety - where they would often devote themselves to years of training. While practices at times diversified considerably with the establishment of the orders a century later, the system of education and training, however, remained standard almost throughout the history of *taṣawwuf*. The main features of this system are indicated in the

nature of the shaykh-*murīd* relationship, and the question of *ijāza* (authorisation).

The shaykh-*murīd* relationship entailed three important features. The first is the *Ibbās al-Kbirka* which entails the donning of a patched frock indicating the aspirant's initiation into *taṣawwuf*. The second is known as the *Talqīn al-Dbikr* which is the shaykh's instruction to the *murīd* regarding the type and nature of the *dbikr* (invocation) to be performed. The third is the *suḥba* which refers to the nature and quality of the *murīd's* companionship with the shaykh (Schimmel, 1978: 102). Furthermore, the teachings of the *ṣūfī* adepts, along with the different *dbikr* forms, were handed down from shaykh to *murīd* in a continuous chain of transmission called a *silsila*. The *silsila*, however, would be deemed deficient without the *ijāza*. The *ijāza* refers to the right, or licence, granted by the shaykh to the *murīd* for the purposes of furthering the shaykh's teachings and practices. There are, however, normally three levels of *ijāza*. The first is the *ijāza tabarruk*, which is normally given by the shaykh to those who merely seek the blessings (*baraka*) of a particular *dbikr*. This *ijāza* is normally given to any one of the *ʿawām* who seeks such blessings. The second level is the *ijāza jawāziyya* (authority to enter the order). This *ijāza* is bestowed upon a neophyte who has recently entered the order and attaches him/herself to the shaykh. Such a one is normally referred to as a traveller (*sālik*). The third and highest level is the *ijāza irshād* which is the actual investiture that entitles the *murīd* to act in an independent capacity as a shaykh or as a *khalīfa* (representative or deputy) of the shaykh.

In the *Bā ʿAlawī* order the first is commonly referred to as a *kbirqa majāziyya* (the donning of a “metaphorical” cloak) since the investiture, in a sense, is not yet “real”. The second is referred to as a *kbirqa jawāziyya* (here the donning of the *kbirqa* symbolises permission to enter the order). The third and highest level is called the *kbirqa ijāziyya* (the *kbirqa* of investiture). (al-Badawi, n.d: 11-2).

Nonetheless, it was only from the twelfth century onwards that the *ṭarīqas* were formalized and officially adopted particular names by which they came to be identified (Trimingham, 1973: 103). It is to this period that we now turn.

2.4.1.1.1 A Period of Organisation: The Establishment of the Ṣūfī Orders

The 6/12th century marks a crucial juncture in the history of *Sūfism*. This is the period that marks the formalisation of the *ṣūfī* orders. But before we turn to the topic at hand it is important to mention an equally crucial figure whose impact on the future unfolding of *taṣawwuf* was as controversial as it was remarkable and diverse - that person was Muḥammad Muhy al-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī (560-638/1165-1240).

2.4.1.1.2 Muḥy al-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī: A Crucial Hiatus

The debate around Ibn ‘Arabi centres predominantly on the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (the Unity of Being). This doctrine has been interpreted variously as a type of pantheism, an existential monism, or as a cognate of the Hindu *advaita* doctrine of non-duality’ (Burckhardt, 1995: 30; Glasse, 1989: 414; Houtsma[Ed.] et. al, 1987: 683). More recently, the term “panentheism”¹⁰ - a term that incorporates both the transcendent and immanent aspects of God and which is rapidly gaining currency - appears to offer a more precise definition for the concept of *waḥdat al-wujūd*. But whichever way one might gravitate in the ideological debate there can be little doubt that both in extent (geographically speaking) and in depth (metaphysically speaking) his impact has been immense (Chodkiewicz, 1990: 56-69). The doctrine of the “Unity of Being”, which finds an echo in the Hellenistic emanationist doctrine of the “active intellect”, may be viewed from two broad but mutually complimentary dimensions. The first is the metaphysical doctrine of the “Five Divine Presences” (the *Ḥaḍarāt al-Khams*), while the second is the doctrine that describes the process, in six stages, of divine emanation or the process of the self-determination of Being.

In summary the “Five Divine Presences” take the following hierarchical structure:

i) The *Hābūt* derived from the Arabic “Huwa” meaning “He”. This is God in His ineffable absoluteness as “Beyond-Being” - and metaphysically “located” in the *ghayb al-ghayb*, the unseen of the unseen. In vedantic terms it is the “Brahma beyond Qualities.”

ii) The *Lābūt* derived from *al-Ilāh* or the Divinity. Here *Ilāh* takes the form of a personal God in His aspect of the Merciful, the Forgiving etc. - namely, as “Brahma Qualified”. It is at this level that differentiation or polarity sets in. But while these differences subsist it is at these two levels that we speak of the absolute divinity of God.

iii) The *‘Ālam al-Jabarūt* or the “World of Power”. This level describes the first, hierarchically, of the “manifest” or created worlds. It is the domain of the supraformal and the symbolic - angels, archetypes, certain levels of paradise and the Throne of God (*al-‘arsh*). It is also the domain of the created Intellect - the “eye”, in other words, which acts as the channel for the beatific vision of not only the resplendence of Paradise but ultimately of the Truth itself.

iv) The *‘Ālam al-Malakūt* or the World of Dominion. This is also referred to as the animic or subtle world inhabited predominantly by the Jinn - beings created from “smokeless fire” (Qur’ān, 55: 15). It is also considered the domain of the lower paradises and the infernal states.

v) The *Nāsūt* or the *‘Ālam al-Mulk* - the Human World or the visible World of Nature.

The last three worlds are those of “manifestation” or “existence”.

All five presences are connected by a common axis which imparts to them, and in particular the last three, their “realness”. (Glasse, 1989: 128-32).

Moreover, and more specifically of ibn ‘Arabian formulation, are the multiple degrees of self-determination.

i) The stage of *Aḥadiyyah*.

Being at this level is absolutely one (the presence of *Hāhūt*). But because Being in its aspect of *Hāhūt* is also described as “All-Possibility” He therefore contains within Himself the potential for self-determination (*ta‘ayyun*).

ii) The stage of *Waḥdab* or Unicity.

This is the stage of internal differentiation and distinction when Being creates - and presents to Himself - the “ideas” or prototypes that prefigure the “manifest” world (see above). These prototypes are called the *A‘ayān al-Thābitah*.

iii) The stage of *Wāḥidiyyab* or Unity.

At this stage the emanations (or determinations) take on an existential form fashioned along the pattern of the ideal prototypes mentioned earlier. While the ideal emanations are described by infinity it is the existential emanations at the levels of the *‘Ālam al-Jabarūt*, *Malakūt*, and *Mulk* that take on the aspect of finiteness. It is at this level that God is to be understood, in Ibn 'Arabian terms, as “Creator”. The relationship therefore between the Divine and the human (or material world), in creational terms, is to be understood as a process of progressive self-revelation or self-uncovering (*tajalliyāt*). While this process, according to Schuon, posits an essential unity between God and the world it should not be confused with a substantial identity (the pantheistic position) between the two. This view of Schuon, severely criticised by M.S. Raschid (Raschid, 1981: 66-7), evokes the image of the classical *ṣūfī* adage that the world is the “shadow of the Absolute.” (Bakhtiar, 1979: 14-5). While the object essentially casts the shadow and is not different to it, the two can never be identical in substance. God therefore is immanent in as much as He is essentially one with the world, and transcendent in as much as He is above and beyond the evanescence of finiteness.

The last three stages are, according to Ansari, particularised determinations:

iv) *Ta‘ayyun Rūhī* or spiritual determinations of Being in souls.

v) *Ta‘ayyun Mithālī* or determinations of Being in symbolic forms.

vi) *Ta‘ayyun Jasadī* or determinations of Being in corporeal forms (Ansari, 1986: 102-6).

These are the basic concepts of Ibn al-‘Arabī that infused the perspectives, in one way or another, of almost all the major exponents of the *ṣūfī* orders which came to proliferate after his time i.e. from *ṣūfīs* as diverse as contemplatives such as Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (605-672/1207-1273) and Nūr al-Dīn Jāmi‘ (817-898/1414-1492), to political activists such as Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar (1626-1699) and Amīr ‘Abd al-Qādir of Algeria who fought against the French colonialists during the 19th century. Muhyi l-Dīn ibn al-‘Arabī, while having had definite precursors in the likes of Dhū l-Nūn al-Miṣrī, Bisṭāmī, Ḥākīm al-Tirmidhī, and Manṣūr al-Ḥallāj, was pre-eminently a product of the intellectual climate of his era in the sense that he had both access to and mastered a metaphysical vocabulary that was denied to many of his predecessors.

At this critical juncture, as mentioned earlier, in the historical march of *taṣawwuf* there emerged the institutionalisation of the *ṣūfī* orders.

The following discussion will be restricted to an analysis of some of the major orders only and with a particular emphasis on those orders that had the occasion to sink their roots in the Cape Muslim milieu.

2.4.1.1.3 The *Qādirīyya* Order

One of the first of the *ṣūfī* orders to emerge was the *Qādirīyyah* of ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (470-561/1077-1166) who was also a *Ḥanbalite* jurist. Born in Jilān in Persia he finally settled in Baghdad where he started propagating his teachings only after his fiftieth year. Abd al-Qādir himself, however, was not the official founder of the order. The establishment of the order was left to his sons, particularly Abd al-Razzāq (528-603/1134-1206) who took charge of the *Ribāṭ* (spiritual centre) after the death of his father (Nizami, 1989: 8-9). The order, nevertheless, did not gain in popularity until after the 15th century (Trimingham, 1973: 43). When it did, it became nearly ubiquitous to the entire Muslim world. This partly explains the variety of *dhikr* formulas, or litanies, engaged in by adherents of this order.

However there are certain standard formats by which the order may be distinguished. The first is the recitation of the phrase *lā ilāha illa Allāh*. This is performed with the *dhākir* (invoker, rememberer) facing the *qiblah* (the direction of Makka) in the sitting position of prayer with closed eyes. When the word *lā* is recited then the sound, as it were, should be drawn from the navel up to the shoulders and arrested there. The word *ilāha* is then recited with the sound being drawn from the brain. Thereafter the phrase *illa Allāh* is recited and directed, with great vigour, in the direction of the heart. This recitation is accompanied by a simultaneous movement of the head in the same direction. The purpose of this *dhikr* is to impress upon the consciousness that the ultimate objective in life is to gain nearness to God. The second *dhikr* is the *dhikr* of the name of the “essence” or the name of *Allāh*. This is executed with either one, two, three, or four strokes (*ḍarb* pl. *durūb*). The *dhikr* of one stroke (*ḍarb*) is performed by engaging the concentration of the heart in a forceful aspiration of the name *Allāh*. This may be done with short pauses between aspirations for a lengthy period of time. The *dhikr* with two strokes is to be performed in the sitting position of prayer while facing the *Qibla*. The *dhākir* first invokes the name of *Allāh* to the right of his breast and then, more forcefully, onto his heart. The purpose of this *dhikr* is to dispel from the heart all earthly distractions. The *dhikr* with three strokes is performed by sitting cross-legged. The first stroke is then directed to the right knee, the second to the left, and the last - once again more forcefully - to the heart. For the *dhikr* with four strokes the *dhākir* should once again sit cross-legged. The first stroke is applied to the right knee, the second to the left, the third to the heart, and the fourth directly out in front of him. Each stroke must be accompanied by a forceful aspiration of the word *Allāh* with a progressive increase in intensity. This *dhikr* may be performed singly or in a group, loudly (*dhikr jalī*) or silently (*dhikr khafī*). The *dhikr jalī* however, as a preparatory form of training, normally precedes the *dhikr khafī* which is reserved for the more advanced practitioners (Valiuddin, 1980: 51-3). Then there are also a number of other standard litanies and invocations engaged in by devotees of this order¹¹. The order is generally characterised by a

spirit of peace, tolerance, intense piety, generosity, and humanitarianism (Rahman, 1979: 159). Its adherents may often be identified - although not uniquely so - by a distinct love for the wearing of green apparel in the form of turbans, thawbs, or shawls. This is done in deference to the Prophet's (pbuh) love for the colour green. The order remains, to this day, one of the most organised and systematic of all *ṣūfī* orders.

2.4.1.1.4 The *Subrawardiyya* Order

Another distinctive order to emerge during this period was the *Subrawardiyya*. The roots of this order may be traced to ‘Abd al-Qāhir Abū Najīb al-Suhrawardī (d.563/1168) who was a student of the historically underrated Aḥmad al-Ghazālī (younger brother of Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī) and also a rector of the famed Niẓāmiyya Academy in Baghdad. But it was left to his remarkable nephew Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar al-Suhrawardī (539-632/1144-1234) to extend the influence of the order to other parts of the Islamic world. While Abū Najīb, author of the profusely translated *Adab al-Murīdīn* (Ethical Rules of the Ṣūfī Disciples), lived a life of seclusion in a *ribāṭ* he had built on the banks of the river Tigris, Abū Ḥafṣ, patronized by the 'Abbasid Caliph al-Nāṣir (who reigned from 575-622/1180-1225), lived a much more active social life as a politician and roving ambassador for the Caliph. However this does not mean that he had renounced the ascetic practices of his uncle. In fact he himself received his initial training in the *ribāṭ* of Abū Najīb (Trimingham, 1973: 32) and later on both encouraged and espoused the virtues of *khalwa* (seclusion), particularly for younger aspirants on the *ṣūfī* path. In his book *‘Awārif al-Ma‘ārif* he suggests that the young aspirant who spends too much of his/her time in amusement (*lahwī*) and other forms of incorrect behaviour (*ghalaṭ*) should be ordered with “seclusion and retreat and that the Shaykh should choose his own *zāwiya* and place of retreat (*khalwa*) for him so that the young aspirant may take charge of his whims and involvement in affairs which do not concern him...” (al-Suhrawardī, 1983: 109). The great

thirteenth century chronicler of Muslim events, Ibn Khalikān, also reports that he had taken up residence in the *khalwa* of Abū Hafs for purposes of his spiritual training (Trimingham, 1973: 37). However, despite the fact that the *‘Awārif al-Ma‘ārif* became one of the most studied texts amongst *ṣūfī* circles and despite the fact that it had spread as far as India, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kashmir, it never really emerged as a popular order. It is, however, this concern with the importance of *khalwa* that inspired the emergence of one of the most influential branches of the *Subrawardiyya*, namely, the *Khalwatiyya* of which Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar, known as the Tāj (or Crown) of the *Khalwatiyya*, was a major exponent.

2.4.1.1.5 The *Khalwatiyya* Order

The origin of this branch is variously attributed to either Muḥammad b. Nūr al-Balīsī, Shaykh ‘Umar al-Khalwatī (d.800/1397), or Shaykh Yaḥyā al-Shirwānī (d.869/1464) (Glasse, 1989: 121). Shaykh ‘Umar, however, is the most commonly agreed upon founder. The order, like its precursor the *Subrawardiyya*, is generally characterised by rigorous discipline in the form of vigils, fasting, extensive retreat, and deep respect for the shaykh (or spiritual master) and has also vigorously promoted ibn ‘Arabi’s doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Friedlander, 1989[Vol.2]: 234). Like all *ṣūfī* orders they have certain litanies (*awrād* sing. *wird*) and invocations that are fundamental to the order. One such litany is the *Wird al-Sattār* (the Covering Litany) composed by Shaykh Yaḥyā al-Shirwānī (referred to as Yahya al-Bākūrī in the well-known manual on the *Khalwatiyya* called the *Tarsi‘ al-Jawābir al-Makkiyya* (the Adornment of the Makkan Jewels)) (al-Qaṣbī, n.d.: 69). A *dhikr* of equal importance to the order is the *al-‘Asmā al-Saba‘* (the Seven Divine Names). This *dhikr* is strictly connected to the seven stages of the *nafs* (soul) as defined by the *Khalwatiyya* and its corresponding spiritual illuminations in the form of different colours. The form that this invocation takes is referred to as the *Talqin al-Dhikr* where the shaykh exhorts the aspirant to

recite at the appropriate moment the particular name or phrase dictated to him by the shaykh. In the *al-Asmā' al-Sab'a* the first phrase to be recited by the aspirant is *lā ilāha illa Allāh* (there is no divinity beside God). This recitation corresponds to the first stage of the *nafs* which is the Carnal Soul (*al-Nafs al-Ammāra bi l-Sū'*). The purpose of this invocation is to subdue the Carnal Self. Its corresponding colour of illumination is blue. The second invocation after successful completion of the first stage, is the name of *Allāh*. This corresponds to the Reproaching Soul (*al-Nafs al-Lawwāma*) and its light is yellow. The third name is *Huwa* (He) which is the stage of the Inspired Soul (*al-Nafs al-Mulbama*) and its light is red. The fourth name is *Yā Haqq* (the Truth) which is the stage of the Tranquil Soul (*al-Nafs al-Mutma'inna*). Its corresponding light is white. The fifth name is *Yā Hayy* (the Living) which is the stage of the Contented Soul (*al-Nafs al-Rāḍiya*) and its corresponding light is green. The sixth name is *Yā Qayyūm* (the Eternal) which is the stage of the Approved Soul (*al-Nafs al-Marḍiyya*) and its light is black. The last name is *Yā Qabbār* (the Subduer) which corresponds to the stage of the Perfected Soul (*al-Nafs al-Kāmila*) and its light is a pure, colourless light.

Each one of these names has to be recited one hundred thousand times before going on to the next one (Trimingham, 52-3; al-Qaṣbī, n.d.: 51-65). We witness here a well-developed spiritual psychology with a strong emphasis on the role of the *nafs* in the general spiritual progress of the aspirant. The *dhikr*, however, of the *al-Asmā' al-Sab'a* is virtually a blueprint of the *Laṭā'if al-Sab'a* (the Seven Subtle Names) of its precursor the *Subrawardiyya*. In the *Khalwatiyya* form the names *Yā Qabbār* (the Subduer) and *Yā Haqq* (the Truth) have been substituted for *Yā Raḥmān* (the Merciful) and *Yā Raḥīm* (the Benevolent) of the *Subrawardiyya* (Rahman, 1979: 160). Two other important *Khalwatiyya* practices are, firstly, the recitation of the Verse of the Throne (*āyat al-kursiy*) (Qur'ān, 2: 255), and the recitation of Glory be to God (*Subḥān Allāh*, commonly known as the *tasbīḥ*), Praise be to God (*Alḥamdu lillāh* or the *taḥmīd*), and God is Great (*Allāhu Akbar* or the *takbīr*), immediately after the completion of the prescribed prayers.

The second is the communal gathering after the death of an individual on the first, third, seventh and fortieth nights for liturgical purposes (Trimingham, 1973: 201). It is important to note, however, that much of the “foundational” material which informs the various invocations and litanies of the different *tariqas* have their roots in the Qurʾān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (pbuh). It is more often the particular formats of these invocations - coupled with the Qurʾānic and Prophetic foundational material - that represent the choices of the masters of the particular orders rather than the base material itself. An important branch of the *Khalwatiyya* - and particularly so for purposes of this dissertation - is the *Sammāniyya-Khalwatiyya* of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Karīm as-Sammani al-Ma’ani of Medina (d.1163/1750) and author of the *Rāṭib Sammān*. This *Rāṭib*, which includes elements of both the *Qādiriyya* and the *Khalwatiyya*, is often performed in a group and lasts for a few hours. Devotees gather in a circle around the Shaykh and follow him in the various bodily movements and postures indicated by him. The *Rāṭib* itself is divided into four parts and is preceded by the recitation of salutations on the Prophet, his household and companions. Thereafter the *dhikr* takes the following format :

- a) The recitation of *lā ilāha illa Allāh* in six different variations. The first three are performed in the sitting position (called the "Sitting *Rāṭib*") while the other three are performed standing (the "Standing *Rāṭib*") and accompanied by stamping of the feet while swaying in various directions.
- b) The second part commences with the seventh *dhikr* "Ahum Ahhhum" accompanied by dancing in a circle and ends with
- c) at the end of the tenth *dhikr* with the commencement of the *dhikr* "Ahil Ahhhil".
- d) The final *dhikr* in the form of "'Am! Ah! 'Am!"; which is the twenty-third *dhikr* constitutes the fourth part of the *Rāṭib*.

The *Rāṭib* is often accompanied by high states of ecstasy and spiritual intoxication and has been popular in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago (Bakar, 1989[Vol.2]: 278-9).

2.4.1.1.6 The *Rifā'iyyah*

Along with the *Qādirīyya* and the *Subrawardīyya*, one of the oldest orders is the *Rifā'iyya* (also commonly referred to as the "Howling Dervishes"). The founder of this order is Ahmad ibn 'Ali a-Rifa'i (499-578/1106-1182) who was born and spent most of his life in the marshlands, or *Baṭā'ih*, of southern 'Irāq. The initial impact of this order was far greater than the *Qādirīyya* which only came to eclipse it after the fifteenth century. The order became notorious for its extensive miracle-making in the form of eating live snakes, piercing their bodies with lances, walking on live coals, etc. (Schimmel, 1978: 248; Schleifer, 1989[Vol.2]: 195). Scholars differ about the origins of these practices but there can be no doubt that many of its practitioners firmly believe that Aḥmad al-Rifā'ī himself was the originator (Bakar, 1989[Vol.2]: 278-9). The most popular practice of the *Rifā'iyya* however, is what is referred to in the Cape as *Ratiep* (piercing the body with sharp instruments), or *Dabbūs* and *Rapai* as it is known in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. The *Ratiep* generally takes place in the form of a gathering, either publicly or privately, of the *Khalīfa* (spiritual leader) and his students who offer their praises to Allāh and their respectful salutations to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and their patron saint. These praises, salutations, and additional litanies are accompanied by music played with rhythmic precision on tambourines. Once the required level of spiritual concentration has been achieved the actual piercing of the body commences. These normally start with the younger practitioners and then gradually progress to the older and more experienced groups who are capable of far more astonishing feats. The ceremony is then concluded by a prayer of thanksgiving for the spiritual protection afforded to the practitioners during the course of the *Ratiep*. These practices have in fact, been designed to demonstrate the superiority of the spirit over the body¹². It would be a mistake, however, to accord to practices of this kind, whether of the *Rifā'iyya* or any other order, a primary status. In fact there is not a single work of any of the masters of the *ṣūfī* orders which I have read that even vaguely refers to any of these practices. While the works of 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī are well-known; the lesser

known work too, of Ahmad al-Rifāʿī, *al-Burbān al-Muʿayyad* (the Solid Proof), is written in a similar vein. What emerges from these works is "the need to realise an authentic spiritual life at the highest level possible ... as well as the correct understanding of Islamic doctrines as interpreted by the Sufis" (Bakar, 1989[Vol.2]: 274-5). The more dramatic practices, however, came to play a significant role in certain communities and consequently came to assume a level of disproportionate importance in the popular imagination. It is for this reason that an eminent *ṣūfī* of modern times, Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Maḥmūd, referred to the some of the *ṣūfī* orders in Egypt as the "religion of the streets" (Gilsenan, 1993: 230). The *karāmāt* (or "miracles" as spiritual gifts from God) were never intended for public consumption or display.

2.4.1.1.7 The *Shādhiliyya* Order

Another major order founded during this period was the *Shādhiliyya*. The spiritual head of this order is Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī (593-656/11196-1258). His spiritual genealogy is interesting in the sense that he was a student of both ʿAbd al-Salām b. Mashīsh (d.625/1228), a student of the renowned Abū Madyan Shuʿayb (1126-98); and Abū l-Fatḥ al-Waṣītī (d.632/1234), one of the appointed successors (*khalīfas*) of Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī. Abū Madyan himself had met and enjoyed a close spiritual communion with Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī (Trimingham, 1973: 46-7)).

The Shadhiliyya can best be described by what Danner (1989[Vol.2: 27) calls a "normative Sufism" - or a *ṣūfism* of the sober, Junaydī type that incorporates a strict adherence to the orthodox tenets of the *sharīʿah* combined with the almost universally received *ʿasharīte* theology of mainstream Islam. This is a possible indication - albeit highly speculative - that al-Rifāʿī himself and his close students, particularly his *khalīfas*, did not initiate some of the contra-normative practices - such as the eating of live snakes etc. - with which the *Rifāʿī* order became identified¹³.

While al-Shādhilī was not a prolific writer he left behind a number of *aḥzāb* (litanies) such as the *ḥizb al-Baḥr* (litany of the sea), the *ḥizb ul-Barr* (litany of the land), *ḥizb al-Naṣr* (litany of the sea) etc. which form the standard recitals of the *Shādhiliyya* order.

Amongst the *adḥkār* which al-Shādhilī strongly recommended were the following: *al-ḥamdu lillāhi* (Praise be to God), *astaghfiru Allāh* (I seek forgiveness of God), *wa lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illa billāhi* (and there is no power and no strength except with God). Al-Shādhilī further recommended that these three phrases be recited collectively throughout the day (Maḥmūd, n.d.: 137).

Another well-known *dhikr* of his are the words *Yā Allāh* (O Allah), *Yā Nūr* (O Light), *Yā Ḥaqq* (O Truth), *Yā Mubīn* (O Evident One) (Maḥmūd, n.d.: 167). Amongst the Qurʾānic verses which he regularly recited for *dhikr* purposes were the Verse of the Throne (*Āyat al-Kursiyy*) and verses 285 and 286 at the end of *sūrat al-Baqara* (the Heifer) (Maḥmūd, n.d.: 164). All of these practices are well-known in the Cape.

Another important contribution of al-Shādhilī was his development of the *dawāʿir* (sing. *dāʿirah*, "circle"). These were, according to Danner, "geometric representations, generally of circles within squares or vice versa, containing Qurʾānic verses or Divine Names or the names of the archangels, which seem to have been used as visual supports of meditation." (Danner, 1989[Vol.2]: 29). These also came to serve a secondary theurgical or talismanic function. However it is not in the particular *dhikr* forms and practices that we need to look for the distinguishing characteristics of the *Shādhilī* order but to its external social practices. Unlike most other orders they are not distinguishable by dress code, defining colours, and other external paraphernalia. Members of the *Shādhilī* order are fully integrated with civil society. Their life-styles too, were not those of recluses or of seclusion. They lived lives of contemplation and inner detachment within society (Danner, 1989[Vol.2]: 31).

It was left however, to his great student Shaykh Abū l-‘Abbās al-Murṣī to establish and extend the influence of the *Shādhilī* order. His role, in turn, was perpetuated through two outstanding students of his, al-Busīrī (d.694/1295) who wrote the famous eulogy of the Prophet (pbuh) called the *Qaṣīdat al-Burdab* (the Mantle Poem), and Ibn ‘Aṭā Allāh al-Iskandariy (d.709/1306) who wrote the renowned *Kitāb al-Hikam* (the Book of Aphorisms) (Trimingham, 1973: 49-50; Danner, 1989[Vol.2]: 32-3). These works are famed throughout the Muslim world, particularly in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. A connection, however, which is often overlooked is that between the *Bā-‘Alawiyya ṭarīqa*, founded by Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Bā ‘Alawī (574-653/1178-1255) - who was also a student of Abū Madyan - and the *Shādhilī* order. This order - to be examined in greater detail later - which has been completely underrated even by a scholar as impressively thorough as Trimingham who has restricted it to “a lineal tariqa with little influence” (Trimingham, 1973: 73) - is definitely in need of greater study, particularly with regard to its *Shādhilī* links.

Sayyid Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr Sumayt in his book *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* (A Gift for the Intelligent) - which has become a standard work with the later *Bā-‘Alawiyya* - refers to this link when he says that “the outer teachings of them (the *Bā-‘Alawiyya*) are based on the knowledge and practical principles as expounded through the wise guidance of Imām al-Ghazālī and the inner teachings are based on the realisation of the spiritual realities and the purification of *tawhīd* as expounded by the *Shādhiliyya*; and their knowledge is the knowledge of the adepts, and their defining characteristic is the obliteration of all characteristics (*wa rusūmubum maḥwa al-rusūm*) (Sumayt, n.d.: 37). We notice here a link that goes beyond a mere filial one. It is in fact an identification with the *Shādhiliyya* at the highest and most essential level - that of the spiritual and celestial realities, and *tawhīd*.

A clue to the neglect of this order, let alone the link between the orders, may possibly be contained in the last phrase of the above quotation that their “defining characteristic is the obliteration of all characteristics.” Danner - as

already alluded to above - in discussing the distinguishing characteristics of the *Shādhiliyya*, states that their “their tracks in history cannot be pinpointed because they had no visible signs of adherence to the *Shādhiliyya*” (Danner, 1989: 31). It is the tracing of some of these “tracks” that will engage a part of our attention later in this study.

2.4.1.1.8 The *Chistiyya* Order

The fertility of this seminal period seemed all-embracing, and further to the east of the Islamic world, particularly in India, the *Chistiyya* order had reached a moment of vigorous flowering in the person of the Indian *ṣūfī* Muḥammad Mu‘īn al-Dīn Chistī (536-633/1141-1236). The order allegedly traces its origins in the third/ninth century to a town in Afghanistan called Chist and not, as is often supposed, to Mu‘īn al-Dīn himself. In fact Shaykh Mu‘īn al-Dīn Chistī was a student of a well-known *Chistī* master called Khawāja ‘Uthmān Harwāni (Rizvi, 1989: 127). The order, however, attained its fame under Shaykh Mu‘īn al-Dīn whose teachings were further expounded and elaborated upon by his student Shaykh Quṭb al-Dīn Bhakhtiar Kaki (d.1236). Other early influential figures of this order were Shaykh Farīd al-Dīn Ganj Shakar (d.1265), a student of Shaykh Quṭb al-Dīn, and Shaykh Farīd’s student Khawāja Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā (d.1325) who was responsible for consolidating the *Chistiyya* order in the North of India (Bhatnagar, 1984: 106). The *Chistiyya* order with its emphasis on the love of God has probably developed the most varied and systematic forms of *dhikr* (Valiuddin, 1980: 75-92). To inculcate this love of God in the aspirant they strongly recommend and stress the importance of the *dhikr bi l-jabr* (the loud invocation) (Valiuddin, 1980: xxiv).

Significant and unique to the order though, is the system of breath control devised by their adepts. The *pas-i anfaas* (controlled breathing) consists of the *habs-i nafs* (restraining of the breath) and the *basr-i nafs* (the stopping of the breath). The *habs-i nafs* has a dual function. On the one hand, it is a purificatory

process (*takbliya*) whereby the breath is captured in the stomach and then restrained in the breast by drawing the navel inwards. This practice is meant to expel all affectations from the mind and often results in feelings of ecstasy. On the other, it is a 'filling process" (*tamliyya*) whereby the breath is inhaled and held in the stomach by inflating the stomach. The *basr-i nafs*, being the second component of the *pas-i anfaas*, is achieved by gradually decreasing the lengths of the inhalations and exhalations until breathing comes to a halt. This, like the *tamliyya*, aspect of the *habs-i nafs* is meant to produce heat in the heart (Valiuddin, 1980: 83). The one who has mastered breath control, or the *pas -i anfaas*, is called a *sahib-i anfaas*, or "a master of articulated breath." (Rizvi, 1989[Vol.2]: 137). Another form of devotional expression unique to the *Chistiyya* are the mystical *Qawāli* songs. The origins of the *Qawāli* are variously attributed to either Shaykh Muḥīn al-Dīn himself or to Amīr Khusraw (d.726/1325). The lyrics are normally taken from a repertoire of metaphorical love poems, or poems evoking images of earthly beauty, with the purpose of guiding the soul towards a contemplation of the Divine realities (Waley, 1989[Vol.2]: 80; Trimmingham, 1973: 55).

2.4.1.1.9 The *Naqshbandiyya* Order

The *Naqshbandiyya* was founded by Shaykh Muhammad Bahā al-Dīn Naqshband (717-791/1317-1389) of Bukhāra in the mid fourteenth century, although there are accounts to the effect that the *silsila* (chain of transmission) for the order was established much earlier by Shaykh Abū Yaḥyā Yūsuf al-Ḥamadānī (d.1140) in the early twelfth century. (Bhatnagar, 1984: 179; Nizami, 191989[Vol.2]: 165).

The *Naqshbandiyya* order is one of the few orders that trace their *silsilas* to the first *khalīfa* Abū Bakr al-Siddīq (ra) - the other two being the *Bisṭāmiyya* and *Bektāshiyya* orders. (Bhatnagar, 1984: 175-6).

According to Nizami, it is perhaps likely that "no mystic order...has had such far-reaching impact on the attitude of Muslim peoples in different regions as the

Naqshbandiyyah.” (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 162). Starting from central Asia it spread to Turkestan, Syria, Afghanistan, and India and Western Turkey. (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 162; Bhatnagar, 1984: 179).

Before the arrival of Shaykh Bahā al-Dīn, four students of Shaykh Yūsuf al-Ḥamadānī were instrumental in laying the foundations for the order: Khawāja ‘Abd Allāh Barqī, Khawāja Ḥasan Andāqī, Khawāja Aḥmad Yisiwī, and Khawāja ‘Abd al-Khāliq Ghujdawānī. Khawāja Aḥmad (d.1166) was the one who took charge of organising the *silsila Khawājakhān* (the initiatic chain of the order) while Khawāja ‘Abd al-Khāliq (d.1179) was largely responsible for the formulation of the doctrines that came to define the order. (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 165).

The foundational principles formulated by Khawāja ‘Abd al-Khāliq for the order were the following:

- a) *būsh dar dam*: or “consciousness in breathing”. This means the conscious remembering of God as one inhales and exhales.
- b) *nazar bar qadam*: or “watching over the steps”. This means to maintain a watchful eye over every step one takes on the mystic path.
- c) *safar dar watan*: or “the inward journey”. This implies that the seeker should maintain his/her focus on the inward life with the aim of understanding the world of inner experience.
- d) *khalwat dar anjuman*: or “solitude and retirement in company”. In this condition internal spiritual practices should continue even while in the company of others.
- e) *yād kard*: or “recollection”. This indicates the frequent recollection of the names of God.
- f) *bāz gard*: or “restraining the thought”. This emphasises the importance of maintaining one’s focus on God.
- g) *nigāb dāsht*: or “keeping a watch on thought”. Complimentary to *bāz gard* it means that the initiate should endeavour to prevent extraneous thought from interrupting the focus on God.

h) *yād dāsbt*: or “enduring recollection”. This means unceasing concentration on God. (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 166-7; Bhatnagar, 1984: 180).

These eight ideas formed the core of Khawāja ‘Abd al-Khāliq’s teachings. His students later added three more:

a) *wuqūf-i ‘adadī*: or “a pause for performing recitation”. That is, to pause in between recitations with the concentration firmly fixed on God.

b) *wuqūf-i zamānī*: or a pause for reflection. This means to pause for the purpose of taking account of how one has spent one’s time. This includes expressing gratitude towards God for time well spent and repentance for errors committed. (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 167; Bhatnagar, 1984: 180).

c) *wuqūf-i qalbī*: or a pause for the sake of experiencing God’s presence. This means to maintain the heart in a state of alertness and responsiveness to Divine communication.

While there are two aspects within the *Naqshbandiyya* order that appear to be more sharply emphasised than in other orders viz. the reverence they accord to their spiritual mentors and “their consciousness of mission” (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 163), they nonetheless enjoy a discursive tradition of differences in interpretation and metaphysical conceptions that may yet be unparalleled in other orders. The metaphysics of Ibn ‘Arabī, for example, appears to have gained considerable attention within this order. Before Shaykh Aḥmad al-Sirhindī’s (d.1563) time nearly every shaykh of the *Naqshbandiyya* order, including Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmī (d.1492), had embraced Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought. Shaykh Aḥmad set himself the task of rebutting Ibn ‘Arabī’s *waḥdat al-wujūd* with his own metaphysical interpretation which he called *waḥdat al-shubūd* (unity of consciousness). Approximately two hundred years later, Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi responded by attempting a reconciliation between the thought of Shaykh Aḥmad al-Sirhindī and Ibn ‘Arabī. This debate was preceded by a similar one in which the equally celebrated *Naqshbandī* shaykh Khawāja Bāqī Bi’Llāh (1603) “had reconciled the thoughts of ‘Alā‘ al-Dawlah Simnānī and Ibn ‘Arabī.” (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 185).

Another feature that distinguished the *Naqshbandīs* from other *ṣūfī* orders was their political approach and outlook. Characterised by a higher degree of activism they placed the responsibility for good governance almost exclusively on the rulers. The approach of other orders was one in which the rulers were not conceived in such absolute terms. Their attitude is encapsulated in Nizami's quotation: "As you are, so shall be your rulers." (Nizami, 1989[Vol.2]: 163).

With the extent and intensity with which *murāqaba* is emphasised in the order they also embraced, as a central concept in their order, the *al-maqāmāt al-sabʿa*, or the *al-nufūs al-sabʿa* (the seven stations of the soul). The seven stages of the *nafs* (soul) are covered in greater detail elsewhere.

In line with the strict normative nature of this order they also generally propounded the superiority of the silent *dhikr* (*dhikr khafī*) over the loud *dhikr* (*dhikr jalī*). However, it would be a mistake to believe that this was always, or absolutely, the case. Khawāja ʿAlī Ramitīnī - one of the foremost *Naqshbandī* shaykhs praised by Jalal-al-Dīal-Rūmī and referred to as *Ḥaḍrat-I ʿazīzān* - was once asked why, as a *Naqshbandī*, he performed the dhikr aloud. His response was: "For a novice loud repetition of the name *Allāh* is needed; advanced mystics could do it through (silent repetition in) the heart." (Nizami, 1989: 167).

In addition to the major orders mentioned above, namely the *Qādiriyya*, the *Rifāʿiyya*, the *Subrawardiyya*, the *Shādhiliyya*, the *Chistiyya* and the *Naqshbandiyya*, two other orders of similar status the *Kubrāwiyya*, and the *Mawlāwiyya*, played a significant role in the shaping of Islamic spirituality throughout the Muslim world. However their impact on *taṣawwuf* at the Cape remains either negligible or nothing at all. The *Kubrāwiyya*, founded by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (540-618/1145-1221) of Khwārizm was initially a major order with numerous branches. *The Kubrāwiyya* along with most of its derivatives are now extinct with the exception of Khwārizm where traces of the order are still to be found (Waley, 1989[Vol.2]: 1989[Vol.2]: 80; Trimmingham, 1973: 55). The *Mawlāwiyya* founded by Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (605-672/1207-1373), has survived

up to today and is still a powerful force in the lives of many Muslims. Moreover, the *Mawlāwiyya*, after having been banned by Kamal Attaturk along with their tekkes, shrines, and *zāwiyas*, under Law 677 of the Turkish Republic in 1925 (Friedlander, 1992: 117), saw a public revival of the order twenty-eight years later in 1953 through clever ruse and guile by Sadettin Heper and Halil Can. They accepted the mayor's proposal that the occasion should not be a dervish ceremony but rather a celebration of one of the great poets of Turkey (Friedlander, 1992: 112). Since then the order has never yet failed to make its presence felt.

2.5 Spiritual Tendencies

There are a number of spirituo-psychological tendencies within *taṣawwuf* as such that do not form a part of the characteristics and features of any particular *ṭarīqa*. Amongst these tendencies may be counted the *malāmatiyya*, the *zubbād*, and those referred to as *majdhūb*. An interesting fourth type also emerged in a category of *ṣūfī* referred to as the *tawwābūn*.

The way of the *malāmatiyya* is referred to as “Path of Blame”. (al-Hujwīrī, 1982: 62). Glasse, as quoted elsewhere, states that it is the designation of a tendency, or of a psychological category, of people who attract blame to themselves despite their being innocent.” (Glasse, 1989: 249). The tendency locates its roots in the *nafs al-lawwāma* (the reproachful soul) that acts as the mechanism through which self-conceit and arrogance are kept in check. (al-Hujwīrī, 1982: 62). The ultimate quest of this way is to “loosen a positive quality from the grip of the lower self” by subjecting the self to humiliation.

The *zubbād* (sing. *zābid*, ascetic), on the other hand, are those who commit themselves to a life of renunciation and abstemiousness. (Newby, 2002: 217). The renunciation starts with abstinence from all worldly comforts and sinful acts with the objective of detaching the soul from the world. Such detachment, it is

believed, increases the potential of *qurba* (nearness) to God. According to Ibn al-ʿĀrif:

...asceticism is the ardent aspiration of the heart towards Him alone; it is to place in Him the aspiration and desires of the soul; to be preoccupied uniquely with Him, without any preoccupation, in order that He (to Whom be praise) may remove from thee the mass of these causes. (Glasse, 1989: 436).

The *majdhūb* is sometimes referred to as a “holy fool”. (Glasse, 1989: 248). Through the power of Divine attraction (*jadhba*) it appears as if the “attracted” one has been overcome by a temporary state of derangement. The state may, however, also take on a semblance of permanence. Hujwīrī describes the condition in the following way:

So long as the the seeker’s progress is connected with acquisition (*kasb*) it is pernicious, but when the attracting influence (*jadhba*) of the Truth manifests its dominion all his actions are confounded, and he loses all power of expression; nor can any name be applied to him or any description be given of him or anything be imputed to him. (al-Hujwīrī, 1982: 194-5).

While *tawbah* as an act of repentance is not specifically a *ṣūfī* trait, a unique class of *ṣūfī* adepts emerged during the course of Muslim history that prompted Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Quddāma to compile a hagiographical work entitled the *Kitāb al-Tawwābīn* (The Book of Repenters) on

the history of renowned repenters since the era of the Prophet Ādam (pbuh) up to his own time. One of the characteristics of this class of *ṣūfī*, as it appears from the *Kitāb al-Tawwābīn*, is that after the process of *tawbah*, the *ṣūfī* normally commits him/herself to an act of public service that serves to function as a continual act of penance.

As intrinsic aspects of the spiritual culture engendered by *taṣawwuf*, this study will attempt to locate, along with the *ṭarīqas*, the extent to which these features were represented in the spiritual culture of Islām at the Cape.

2.6 The Thirteenth to Nineteenth Centuries: A Short Review

The trajectory of *taṣawwuf* spanning the seven hundred years between the 13th and 19th centuries has been a chequered one. The crystallisation of the orders was accompanied by a greater crystallisation of the rules, which governed the functioning of the orders. As a consequence of these developments *zāwīyas*, *tekkes*, *ribāts*, and *khanaqas* - all of which are pre-eminently *ṣūfī* institutions - took on a much more formal character. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume that this era marked a period of total decline. To do justice to this period it would be more accurate to speak of a relative decline for the original ideals of *ṣūfism* as an authentic spiritual way and as the most central aspect of Islām were kept alive by many orders and masters of *ṣūfism*. Also, in our analysis of *ṣūfism* during this era we have to distinguish between *ṣūfism* as active and influential agent in a qualitative sense and some of the contra-normative *mujarrabāt*, or spiritualist¹⁴, practices and the *shataḥāt* (extravagances) that masqueraded as *taṣawwuf*. To gain further theoretical clarity on the aforementioned we have to know by what criteria we distinguish between the normative and contra-normative. For purposes of this dissertation the juristic categories of *masbrū'* (or that which has a basis in the Quran or *Sunnah*) and *ghayru masbrū'* (that which does not have such a basis) are instructive. Normative practices may be construed to be that for which there is a firm textual basis in the Qur'ān or *Sunnah* whether

directly (*bi l-mantūq*) or by implication (*bi l-mafhūm*). Contra-normative practices, as a consequence, are those for which no such basis exists. The practice of visiting graves may serve to demonstrate the point. Visiting them for purposes of being reminded of the *ākhirā* (the hereafter) does not constitute, according to the above distinction, a contra-normative practice, as opposed to visiting them for purposes of circumambulation for example. This is so for the reason that the former has a basis in the Prophetic saying “I used to forbid you from visiting the graves but now you may do so” (Ibn ‘Abd Allāh, 1991[Vol.1]: 345-6) while the second has no such basis. Sources - whether of the revelational or quasi-revelational kind - and intellectual content or cognition are crucial to our understanding of what constitutes normative or contra-normative beliefs and practices. For the same reason, a belief in angels or *jinn* - whether they agree with our own perceptions or not - does not constitute a contra-normative belief in Islam, or even a popular one for that matter. They are too firmly based in the primary sources of Islam and therefore must be regarded as expressions of “true” Islam. More immediate to our purposes and, as an example of the former, we could mention the *Shādhiliyya* order. As a vehicle of normative *ṣūfism* it refused to appeal, according to Schimmel, “to the lower classes who needed more exciting means of getting onto the Path” (Schimmel, 1978: 254).

By the onset of the nineteenth century the "religion of the streets" - as it was referred to by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd - had become uncomfortably populous. However there were still many such as ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābalūsī (1641-1731), Shāh Wali Allāh of Delhi (1703-1762) and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Alawī al-Haddad (d.1719) who maintained the focus on the practices, doctrines, and benefits of normative *ṣūfism* - benefits alluded to sacred *ḥadīth* : “My servant does not cease to approach Me with superogatory acts of devotion, until I become the foot with which he walks, the hand with which he grasps, and the eyes with which he sees.”

2.7 Revivalist *Ṣūfism*

The so-called revivalist movements of *taṣawwuf* occurred against this backdrop of relative decline which had set in - in varying degrees according to circumstance and place (Arberry, 1963: 119) - a few centuries before the advent of the 19th century. However, before discussing these movements, a quick review of the causes of this decline may be necessary. That there were manifestations of popular expressions of *taṣawwuf* is undeniable. Most forms of popularisation have their attendant hazards. In the social broadening of *ṣūfism* - whose concentration was pre-eminently on the qualitative aspects of the interior spiritual life rather than on a quantitative increase in adherents - there occurred a number of ruptures. If *taṣawwuf* is to be viewed in its combined aspect as comprising certain doctrines (the intellectual content) and certain methods (its spiritual practices) then it is precisely here that we need to look for its causes. In our view the rupture first set in at the doctrinal level. The *tawḥīd* of the *ṣūfis* as the attainment of a unified vision of God and realized in *maʿrifa*, or gnosis (not to be confused with the rational theology of al-ʿAshʿari often embraced by *ṣūfis* as a theological position), and later on the metaphysics of Ibn ʿArabī, formed the main doctrinal positions of the *ṣūfis*. The popular imagination, now progressively engaged in the general social broadening of *ṣūfism*, lacked the intellectual discipline to sustain and support these doctrines. In this imagination, therefore, these doctrines were rapidly replaced by pagan or semi-pagan beliefs and superstitions. Two examples may demonstrate the point. Prostration to God was transferred to prostration to saints because of a belief in their semi-divinity. Circumambulation around the Kaʿba was transferred to circumambulation around their graves for the same reason. This rupture in doctrine then, naturally lead to a second rupture between doctrine and method. While initially the *ṣūfi* methods (or spiritual practices) were largely meant to serve the doctrines such as the attainment of nearness to God they were now transformed into self-fulfilling mechanisms of unbounded superstitions. It is this second rupture which finally provided the popular imagination with an unrestricted

licence for the invention of all sorts of practices - the development of methods of communication with *jinn* and other spirits, the sacrificial slaughtering of animals in the name of saints, etc. - which are not even remotely connected to the higher ends of *ṣūfism*. *Taṣawwuf* as spirituality, rapidly gravitated in the direction of the *mujarrabāt* as spiritualism.

The emergence of the revivalist movements within this context had an interesting new focus, namely, the person of the Prophet Muhammad himself. This approach, called the *Ṭāriqa Muḥammadiyya* and initially developed by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Sirhindī (d.1034/1625) (Ansari, 1986: 63; Schimmel, 1978: 369-373), found its most powerful expression in the normative-oriented revivalism of the *ṭarīqas* rather than the traditionalist-oriented revivalism. The chief exponents of the *Ṭāriqa Muḥammadiyya* during the 19th century were Aḥmad al-Tījānī (1150-1231/1737-1845) of Morocco, Aḥmad b. Idrīs (1173-1239/1760-1837) born at Maysūr near Fez in Morocco but settled in Makkah. This place formed the base for the spread of his teachings, and his two most influential students, Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Sanūsī (1206-1276/1791-1859) and Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Mirghānī (d.1268/1851). Further to the east in India the chief exponent was Aḥmad Barelvi (d.1831)¹⁵.

Aḥmad al-Tījānī, originally a *muqaddam* (a sectional leader) of the *Khalwatiyya* order and also a member of a number of other orders (Trimingham, 1973: 107) - membership to more than one order by now being quite common - later renounced all his previous affiliations and asserted that he had been directly initiated by the Prophet (pbuh) himself in order to start his own independent *ṭarīqa*. According to Glasse (1989: 403) the *Tījānis* further claim that his is the only authentic *ṭarīqa* and that all others should be abandoned. He correctly observes that this claim “is foreign to the spirit of most, if not all, the other *ṭuruq* who generally accept that the esoteric viewpoint has at any one time different representatives, acknowledge each other, and respect the sanctity of great spiritual masters, even of other lines” (Glasse, 1989: 403). However, the “foreignness” of this claim might ring a bit more familiar given the demoralizing impact made by the European colonialists on the one hand and the

highly fractured social conditions of Muslim society on the other. It is not improbable to assume that he attempted to unify the Muslims by binding them to a single spiritual lineage. Apart from the outstanding leadership the *Tijāniyya* produced, it would be otherwise difficult to understand the massive influence exercised by them - especially on the educated youth (Doi, 1989[Vol.2]: 296) - if such an apparently naive and exclusivist position was meant to be regarded as integral to the order.

Aḥmad b. Idrīs, more puritanical than Aḥmad al-Tījanī, and who was forced to flee from Makkah to Asīr, produced two influential students of completely different persuasions; the previously mentioned Muḥammad al-Sanūsī and Muḥammad ʿUthmān al-Mirghānī. Muḥammad al-Sanūsī was the reformist and political activist and generally railed against all forms of dancing, music, and excessive physical movements during the performance of *dhikr*. al-Mirghānī on the other hand, adopted a more quietist approach, was embraced by the *ʿUlamā* of Makkah, and generally approved the usage of music and the accompaniment of rhythmical physical movements during devotional practices - although he too condemned any excesses in this respect (Trimingham, 1973: 116).

Of major import during these turbulent times were the common features underlying - and almost in paradoxical fashion - the aforementioned groupings. The first is that contained in the very notion of the *Ṭarīqa Muḥammadiyya* which impacted (or was meant to impact) upon both doctrine (or belief) and method (or ritual). The newly emphasised concentration on the spirit of Muḥammad (pbuh) appeared to be designed to both offset the dangers inherent in an abstract metaphysic of Divinity and Being far too abstruse for the lay person to understand - the spirit of Muḥammad (pbuh) seemed more congenial to this understanding - and, by such concentration, to bring some of the more decadent practices closer to the spirit of the prophetic *Sunnah* (norm). The second was the call for a united and activist political stance against a common aggressor in the form of European colonialism. Even the more traditionalist *Darqāwiyya* shared this feature. The third is that both al-Sanūsī and al-Mirghani probably in order to

more effectively accomplish the first two features - all laid claim to having united within themselves all the essentials of the previous *ṭarīqas*. In this claim to comprehensiveness they differed with al-Tijāni only in the sense that the latter's inspirations were more direct, namely, from the Prophet (pbuh) himself.

Mulay ibn ʿArabī of the *Shādbiliyya* on the other hand, and with the exception of the political one, displayed none of the other features in the process of the founding of the *Darqāwiyya*. This seems to vindicate the view that the *Shādbiliyya*, while having experienced a degree of decay, did not popularise itself - through excessive contra-normative practices - into a state of decadence which seemed to describe the condition of a number of claimants to other orders. The need for internal reform was minimal - therefore its “traditionalist” character. Moreover it was in the person of al-Darqāwī, with the powerful and creative expression he gave to the *Shādbiliyya* order - to the extent that he was hailed as the *mujaddid* (or renewer) of the 19th century (Glasse, 1989: 94) - that imparted to the order its “revivalist” character.

Along with this complex interaction of *taṣawwuf*, in all its diversity, with the religious, social, and political milieus of the 18th and 19th centuries there emerged the seeds of another reformist cum revivalist movement that spilt over into the 20th century. This reformism came in the form of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (1254-1314/1838-1897), Sayyid Aḥmad Khan (1232-1316/1817-1898), Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1265-1323/1849-1905), Rashīd Riḍā, and later still in the form of Mawlānā Abū l-ʿAlā Mawdūdī, Sayyid Quṭb, and Muḥammad Quṭb.

The locus of their reform, however, was centred more on the impact of modernity and its accompanying spirit of scientific positivism against the backdrop of the scientific and technological backwardness of the Muslims in general. Fazlur Rahman, in his analysis of this era, regards this *salafite* “positivism” and activism as a return to the more dynamic and activist milieu of the Prophetic era. Mere preaching on the part of the previous Muslim leadership - which he deems a sign of the decadence of Islam - was now transplanted by the more “Islamic” activism of the nineteenth century leadership. The only problem with this assessment lies with the causes he

seems to provide for this phenomenon. He seems to imply that there was a subtle intellectual cognition on the part of the nineteenth century leadership to return to the activist and life-positivist force that Islam was during the initial Prophetic era. In this respect I consider Rahman to be guilty of de-contextualising the issues that the Muslims as an historical entity had to contend with. A common contextual feature of the 1st/7th century and the 12th/19th century in the Near and Middle East was the fact that there existed a well-defined concept of a real and threatening “other” as *kāfir* (inimical unbeliever) - the Quraysh of the former period and the European colonialists of the latter. It was this feature, in my opinion, which provided the social springboard for the activist spirit of Islam. On the other hand, during the period of Islām's political supremacy the contours of the “other” as *kāfir* became progressively more blurred and emerged in a new guise of decadent Muslim leadership, whether of a political or religious nature. Since traditional Islām has never advocated *jihād* as a means of overthrowing decadent Muslim leadership (even the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty encouraged by extreme decadence was not referred to as *jihad* but as *khurūj* - military assault) the more peaceful means of preaching seemed to have been employed in addressing the new, less threatening “other”. The possible contention that Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb; as a pre-modern activist proponent of Islām refutes these observations, then the reply is that it was only after the *Wahhābites* had fully constructed their criteria for *kufir* as inimical unbelief (which included many Muslims perceived by them as deviant) that their activism, sometimes with horrific consequences, became activated. The problem with this “salafite” analysis is that it fails to take cognizance of the positive contributions made, at every level, by people during this period of relative decline such as Aḥmad Zarrūq (See al-Khushaym, 1975), Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar himself, and many others. In short, it leads to a massive oversimplification of historical issues far more complex than imagined by the *salafiyya* movement.

Meanwhile the almost despairing picture painted by scholars such as Arberry, Trimmingham, and others of the future of *taṣawwuf* in the modern world seems to

be unfounded given the massive attention that *taṣawwuf* has been given both in translations of classical sources and in original works by highly competent contemporary scholars. This new resurgence places me in agreement with Schimmel when she says in the concluding remarks of her book *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* that “those who have experienced the dark night of the soul know that the sun at midnight will one day appear and the world will gain new beauty once more.” (Schimmel, 1978: 407).

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt, in some detail at times, with the origins and meanings of *ṣūfism*. During the course of the discussion I have tried to highlight some of the more important areas of contemporary *ṣūfic* studies.

Firstly I have tried to show, via a lexical analysis of the term *ṣūfī* along with the selection and analysis of a representative number of definitions of *taṣawwuf*, that *taṣawwuf* has little in common with the popularised notion that it is a garbled collection of superstitions, incomprehensible rituals, and magic etc. I then tried to demonstrate how these meanings, definitions, and sayings of the earlier *ṣūfis* were contained within the context of the general historical unfolding of *taṣawwuf*. In this respect it appears to me that the sequentialist discourse (with its evolutionary bias) does not do justice to those who have been considered masters of the Way at any particular historical moment. Schimmel's call for more detailed studies of the lives of particular *ṣūfis* is one which, therefore, needs to be responded to with seriousness. Thirdly, I have touched on the fact that while a comparative study of *taṣawwuf* with other religious traditions may have its own terms of relevance that such a comparative study ultimately has nothing to do with how a Muslim (or a member of any other tradition) reads and experiences what s/he perceives to be the texts of his/her own traditions. Fourthly, I have mentioned and given special emphasis to certain important doctrines and spiritual practices with a view to establishing whether these emerged either explicitly or implicitly in the spiritual culture of Muslims at the Cape. Fifthly, the

discussion on the 18th and 19th centuries are important for the possible parallels which may exist between them and *taṣawwuf* in the context of the 16th and 17th centuries' Malay-Indonesian archipelago. This link is seldom made because of the massive attention - almost tantamount to a bias - given to *taṣawwuf* in its Near and Middle Eastern contexts. In this respect particular attention will be given to the role of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar.

And finally, I have primarily tried to show that *taṣawwuf* has been, and still very much is, a living tradition amongst almost all sectors of Muslim society and therefore of immense relevance to Islam at the Cape. The main thrust of this dissertation will therefore be to examine to what extent the roots of this tradition came to flower in the climate of Islām at the Cape.

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CHAPTER THREE

Origins of Islam at the Cape

3.1 Introduction

Via a broad consensus of historians the main streams of slaves who arrived at the Cape emanated from the East Indies, India, and Africá. (Bradlow and Cairns, 1978:86; Davids, 1980:31; Da Costa, 1989: 28-31).

Crucial, however, to our understanding of the emergence of Islam at the Cape is an understanding of the influences that impacted on the shaping of Islam in these areas in the first place.

3.2 Islam and The Malay-Indonesian Archipelago

Two important debates surround the coming of Islam to the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago. Firstly, the arrival and eventual spread of Islam in the Archipelago and, secondly, from whence it had arrived.

3.2.1 Early Muslim Settlements: 7th to 12th Centuries

A wealth of evidence seems to support the fact that substantial Muslim settlements occurred in a diversity of regions in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago. According to Roland¹⁶, Muslim tombstones were discovered at Baros in North Sumatra as early as 44-48AH/665-669AD. This is remarkable for if the evidence is true then these settlers would have been at least of the *Tabi'ī* (Successors)¹⁷ generation of Muslims if not of the *Ṣaḥābī* (Companions)¹⁸ generation itself. Furthermore the dates on these tombstones would reasonably be able to justify the claim that these Muslims settled there a while before the dates on the tombstones. 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib died in the year 41AH/663AD. This consequently marked the inauguration of the *'Umayyad* Dynasty. These were turbulent times for the first generation of Muslims and there were many that remained neutral in the conflict between the supporters of 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib and the *'Umayyads* (Irfān,

1984:95). It might, therefore, not be unreasonable to assume that some of them left the Arabian Peninsula in search of an environment more congenial to them. Support for this view could be found in the fact that many Muslims - particularly those who belonged to the family of the Prophet - fled the oppressive rule of al-Ḥajjāj a few years later to settle in Kerala.¹⁹ These first settlers, therefore, may well have settled in these areas as refugees - and not for trading or missionary activities as might initially be assumed. On the contrary, as victims of a debilitating internecine conflict the latter observation could well explain the absence of any substantial missionary work on the part of these first settlers.

The next palpable body of evidence with regard to Muslim settlement in the archipelago is provided by the Chinese Documents recorded by Chinese merchants who passed through the area. Roland²⁰ states that the documents provide evidence for the existence of Arab communities in the Kalingga Kingdom of Java as early as the 7th century. According to Bakar (1991:260) these sources record the first settlement of Muslim communities to have occurred on the West Coast of Sumatra during 74AH/674AD. Al-ʿAṭṭas (1969:11), on the other hand, referring possibly to the same sources, locates these Arab settlements in Palembang in East Sumatra and further adds that an Arab chief headed the community. The Gregorian date he provides is identical to that of Bakar with a slight variation in the *Hijri* date. He estimates it to be 55AH (al-ʿAṭṭas, 1969:11). Seekins (1991A:4) merely records the fact that Chinese records seem to indicate that Muslims may have arrived as early as the 7th century. These documents cited by various authors are either mutually contradictory - in which case they need to be re-examined - or, which is more likely the case, given the rapid establishment of Islam a few centuries later, they reflect a much wider settlement of Muslims in the Archipelago than initially believed.

Kasimin (1991:143) cites evidence of an 8th century Muslim presence in the Archipelago where he states that in the 8th century Muslim Arabs from India and the *ʿAbbāsīd* Empire (750-1258) were already in Indonesia. It is unlikely that these settlements refer to the same as those reflected in the Chinese Documents for the

reason that the *ʿAbbāsids* came to power in the year 750AD - more than 70 years after the settlements referred to by these documents.

The next round of settlements also seems to have a Chinese link. After a massacre of between 120,000 - 200,000 Muslims in Canton in the south of China in 265/877 - reported by the famous Muslim traveller and historian al-Masʿūdī (d.345/956) - many of them fled and settled in the north-western coastal city of Kedah in the Malay Peninsula (al-ʿAṭṭas, 1969:11; Bakar, 1991:260-1). Further evidence of a separate and independent Muslim -presence in the Archipelago is provided by Mayson (1963:9) where he alleges that as early as the 9th century they were visited by Arabs - some of them merchants - but the majority priests, whose chief resort was Gresik.

Gresik is located on the eastern coastal belt of Java. Concerning the impact of these visits and settlements of the Arabs, Mayson (1963:8) goes as far as to say that the Malays did not exist as a separate and distinct nation until after the arrival of the Arabians in the eastern seas, an event of the 9th century.

While I have not been able to locate references to 10th century Muslim activities or settlements in particular, reference with regard to the early presence of Muslims during the 11th century is made by Bakar (1991:261). He alleges that Muslim traders settled in Champa in 430/1039. Further evidence of a Muslim presence in the Archipelago during the 11th century is provided by a Muslim tombstone of a woman by the name of Faṭimah bint Maimūn (461/1082) buried in Gresik, East Java (al-ʿAṭṭas, 1969:11; Bakar, 1991:261; Kasimin, 1991:143). What ought not to escape our attention is that the ascription of children to their fathers is a predominantly Arab/Muslim custom. This tradition has its roots in the verse of the Qurʾān: "Call them by the names of their fathers: that is more just in the sight of God" (Qurʾān, 33: 5).

With regard to 12th century Muslim activity in the Archipelago, the Achinese (or Malay) chronicles has it that Islam was introduced into the northernmost tip of Sumatra during the year 506/1112 by an Arab missionary called Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh ʿĀrif. A student of his by the name of Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn spread his teachings as far as Priaman on the West Coast of Sumatra (al-ʿAṭṭas, 1969:11).

3.2.1.1 Establishment of Islam: 13th Century onwards

There is general agreement that the establishment of Islam and Muslim missionary activity started from about this time onwards (Kasimin, 1991: 143; Bakar, 1991: 261). While the first period constitutes a Period of Settlement and Expansion, the second period may fairly accurately denote a Period of Establishment and Consolidation.²¹

This distinction becomes important in our attempts to both understand the impact of this region on Islam at the Cape and in gaining an idea of the similarities that marked the three areas under discussion in this dissertation viz. the Archipelago, India, and East Africa. With reference to Islam in the Archipelago Da Costa (1989:44), citing Holt et al, is probably correct in that prior to 1282 North Sumatra had already come under the *influence* (italics mine) of Islam - if "influence" here is to be understood in the sense of establishment and not mere settlement and expansion. The previously mentioned activities of the Arab missionary, Shaykh ‘Abdullah ‘Ārif, seem to provide further support for this position. The Achinese Chronicles, according to al-Aṭṭas, in fact locates the establishment of Islam in North Sumatra during the year 601/1204 when Johan Shah assumed power as the Sultan (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:11). The *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* further relates that by the middle of the 13th century a missionary by the name of Shaykh Ismā‘īl was sent as head of a Muslim delegation by the *Sharīf* of Makkah to assist in the propagation of Islam in North Sumatra - particularly in the Pasai region that incorporated the Perlak and Samudra areas (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:11-12). The *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, composed in about the 14th century (Kasimin, 1991:259) and the later work the *Sejarah Melayu*, composed during the 15th and 16th centuries (Brittanica Online: Sejarah Melayu), give different accounts of the conversion of Merah Silu (later known as al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ who died in 1297). According to the former he embraced Islam 40 days prior to the arrival of Shaykh Ismā‘īl and, according to the latter, shortly after his arrival. There can, however, be little doubt that it is the selfsame Merah Silu who, in 1281, sent a delegation of merchants from Sumatra to China that included two Muslim ministers bearing the names of Sulaymān and Shams al-Dīn (Kasimin, 1991:144). Further credence can therefore be accorded to the conclusions of Holt et.al that Islam was already

established in this region prior to 1282. (Da Costa, 1989:44). While Seekins (1991A: 5) is of the opinion that Marco Polo, travelling through Northern Sumatra during the year 1292, provided the first reliable evidence of Islam in that region, it would appear more accurate to say that Polo's observations merely confirmed a process of the establishment of Islam set in motion a number of years before his arrival.

The Kingdom of Pasai, established between 1250 and 1281, may therefore rightfully be called the "first genuine Muslim creation" (Britannica: Online) and which acted as the first major centre of Islamic learning in the Archipelago (Bakar, 1991:263).

By the 14th century a host of new evidence - ostensibly far more palpable than those yielded by the previous century - seem to endorse not only the process of the establishment of Islam but a definite quickening in the pace of that process. Ibn Baṭūṭah - who visited Sumatra during 746-747/1345-1346 - observed that Islam was already widespread and widely practiced. By that time already the then ruler al-Malik al-Ẓāhir (son of the previous al-Malik al-Ṣālih) enjoyed engaging theologians and jurists, including Muslim scholars from as far as Shiraz and Isfahan in Persia, in theological debates (al-Kaf, 1990:120; Bakar, 1991:263). Ibn Baṭūṭah further noted that al-Malik al-Ẓāhir was of the Shafite school of thought (Seekins, 1991B:3). Further north on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula in Terengganu a boundary stone inscribed entirely in Arabic and dated between 1303 and 1387 demarcates the boundaries of the "countries of Islam" (Seekins, 1991:3; Kasimin, 1991:145). The emergence of a *Dār al-Islām* (a country or area of land governed by a Muslim ruler according to the rules and regulations of the *sharī'ah*) clearly indicates that by now Islam had become firmly entrenched in the archipelago. By the middle of the 14th century too Aceh, located on the northern tip of Sumatra had fully converted to Islam. From there Islam spread to Minangkabau - a stronghold of Shaivite-Mahayana tantric cults during the 14th century - where it became the dominant religion at the turn of the 17th century (Da Costa, 1989:44; Britannica Online: Islamic Influence in Indonesia).

According to al-Aṭṭas (1969:12) Islam was introduced into Sulu situated between the eastern tract of modern Malaysia and the Borneo region and the southern

regions of the Philippines, during the latter half of the 8/14th century by an Arab missionary by the name Sharīf Awliyā Karīm al-Makhdūm. Following in his footsteps was another Arab missionary by the name of Sayyid Abū Bakr (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:12). It is further asserted that Sayyid Abū Bakr was in fact the first *muftī* (supreme jurisconsult) appointed to the post in the Sulu Archipelago (al-Kāf, 1990:120). He married the daughter of Raja Baginda and succeeded him as the Sultan of Sulu near to the end of that century (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:13; al-Kāf, 1990:120).

3.2.1.1.1 The Malaccan Empire

In the turbulent currents of the rapid fragmentation, growth, and coalescence of old and new empires and kingdoms that had swept Southeast Asia after the 13th century (Hall, 1996:10-12) there emerged a new and powerful Muslim kingdom in the form of the Malaccan Empire at the beginning of the 15th century. It may be safe to assume that this occurred sometime between 1400-1414 with the conversion of its enigmatic ruler Parameswara, who later assumed the name of Iskander Shah (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:12; Bakar, 1991:265; Seekins, 1991A:7). While it appears evident that it was largely through the promptings and proselytising efforts of the Pasai kingdom that Malacca had come to embrace Islam, it was Malacca itself that finally provided the lead in the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago (Bakar, 1991:265). The importance and impact of Malacca is indicated in the saying that Java was "converted in Malacca" (Bakar, 1991:266). While the latter saying might not be entirely true its short and meteoric rise saw it functioning as the most important emporium in Southeast Asia by the turn of the 16th century.²² At the height of its power it collapsed in 1511 under the Portuguese during the reign of its last ruler Sultan Maḥmūd (893-917/1488-1511), who was the student of a mystic Shaykh (Bakar, 1991:266).

3.2.1.1.2 Java

The origins and establishment of Islam in Java, however, seem to be somewhat more obscure than the kingdoms previously mentioned. This, according to Woodward (1989:53), may be a result of "the paucity of reliable historical sources dating to the period of contact and conversion." Nevertheless a significant body of evidence seems to exist pointing to the emergence of Islam in various parts of Java before Malacca started exercising a substantial influence in the Islamising of Java. Da Costa (1989:44), citing Kahane, mentions that the Javanese had already started embracing Islam during the 11th century. Ibn Baṭūṭah apparently also met a *ṣūfī* shaykh by the name of Shaykh Abū Mas‘ūd ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd al-Jāwi who hailed from Indonesia, in Aden, Yemen around 1328.²³

Furthermore, a Muslim presence in Java, and specifically at the Majapahit court, was already known near to the end of the 14th century (Woodward, 1989:73). In East Java too, the presence of a Muslim community was felt between 1415 and 1432 (Da Costa, 1989:44). As for definite missionary activity, we seem to be on a firmer footing in the person of a Sayyid Mawlānā Malik Ibrāhīm who engaged in active missionary work in the coastal town of Gresik between 1399 and 1419 (Bakar, 1991:266; al-Aṭṭas, 1969:13). However, the emergence and final establishment of Islam in Java - and in particular inner Java - can only be linked, substantially, to two important events. The first is the demise and fall of the last of the great and powerful Hindu-Javanese kingdoms, the Majapahit Kingdom; and the second, the rise of Malacca as a centre of Islamic learning and propagation. With regard to the former, scholars differ about the actual date of its collapse. According to al Attas (1969:13) it is linked to the assumption of power to the Majapahit throne by Raden Patah (son of the previous Hindu king) who embraced Islam at the hands of Raden Patah (Sunan Ampel), this son of an Arab missionary, before 844/1440. According to Woodward (1989: 54), the fall is dated at 1478. Hadiwijono (1967:5) dates it even later at 1518. Whichever way one looks at it, and despite the historical obscurity which seemingly engulfed 15th century Java (Hall, 1996:11), there can be little doubt that with the assumption of Muslim leadership in

Majapahit the process of the establishment of Islam in Java was well on its way. This process however - despite the assumption of political power by Muslims - still remained a gradual one. The main impetus was provided by the latter event viz. the more rapid and more complete process of Islamisation that occurred in the Malaccan region. Missionaries such as Sunan Bonang and Santri Giri who studied under a Shaykh by the name of Wali Lanang (originally from Jeddah in the Arabian Peninsula) in Malacca were instrumental in the process of conversion throughout the Javanese countryside (Bakar, 1991:267). Along with the tremendous prestige that Islam had gained as a cosmopolitan culture and along with its dominance of the Northern ports of Java it was merely a matter of time for the weakened hinterland to submit both politically and religiously to the powerful Muslim commercial cities (Hodgson, 1974: Vol2, 548). By the early 17th century the Islamisation of Java was completed during the reign of Sultan Agung (Hadiwijono, 1967:6). He was also responsible for “turning the tide in favour of a mystically oriented, imperial Islam” (Woodward, 1989:59). The completion of this process, however, is dated slightly later by Bakar (1991: 267-8) who cites as evidence that it was only after 1182/1768 that the “authority of the Hindu law books” was replaced by Islamic legislation. Hodgson (1974:551) too - and contrary to Geertz - is of the view that the process of Islamisation (or the “triumph of Islam” as he calls it) was complete. In that regard he takes Geertz to task for allowing his historical interpretations to be influenced by what he considers to be Geertz’s personal identification with a certain school of modern “*Shariah*-minded” Muslims. These Muslims, according to Hodgson (1974;551), were fixated by a perception of continued Hindu influences corrupting and obscuring the pristine message of original, or true, Islam - hence the view, according to them, that the Islamisation of Java was never really complete. By the end of the 16th century though, most of the Indonesian rulers had embraced Islam with the exception of Bali in eastern Java that remains up to today a centre of Hindu-Buddhist civilisation (Hall, 1996:12).

3.2.1.1.3 Route of Conversion to Islam

At the end of the 15th century, shortly before the fall of Malacca, the Moluccas (or Spice Islands) embraced Islam (Hall, 1996:12; Da Costa, 1989:45). Thereafter Islam rapidly spread amongst islands such as Ternate and Tidore (home of Imam ‘Abdullāh Qādi ‘Abd ul-Salām - popularly known as Tuan Guru - and which by the time of his arrival in the Cape in the late eighteenth century already had, despite its small size, twenty-five mosques (Davids, 1980:44). At about this time too Islam had also spread to Ambon on the island of Seram (Da Costa, 1989:45). The Celebes, with Macassar (home of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar) as the chief centre of Islamic learning, converted to Islam a century after the Moluccas at the end of the 16th century (Da Costa, 1989:45). Moreover, with the fall of Malacca, the Muslim capital was moved further south to Johore (Britannica Online: Islamic Influence in Indonesia) and, with the complete Islamisation of Sumatra during the 16th century Aceh succeeded Pasai as the main commercial harbour (Bakar, 1991:266; Britannica Online: Islamic Influence in Indonesia). However, and in a bizarre sequence of events, a mutual antagonism emerged between the Muslim states of Aceh and Johore in their quest for control of the Malaccan Straits (Britannica Online: Islamic Influence in Indonesia). In 1582 Aceh attacked Johore with the Portuguese coming to the assistance of Johore. After the repulsion of the Achinese forces the Portuguese were honoured with a personal thanks from the Sultan of Johore. In 1587 Johore turned on the Portuguese in Malacca who subsequently routed them. For this victory over Johore the Portuguese were congratulated by the Achinese. A number of years later the Dutch - motivated by their own special interests - formed an alliance with both Aceh and Johore to drive the Portuguese out of the Moluccas. After this victory the Dutch established a base in Batavia (present-day Jakarta) in 1619 (Seekins, 1991b:7). Up to contemporary times, these power struggles and shifting alliances - albeit on a lesser scale - were not unfamiliar to Muslims at the Cape either.

While an observable and ordered "route of conversion" - starting from Sumatra (particularly in Pasai), and extending through to the Malay Peninsula (particularly the Malaccan Empire), then on to Java, the Moluccas, the Ternate islands, and the Celebes

respectively - is evident; no such order is apparent in the actual process or pace of Islamisation vis-a-vis any particular area. In some areas it was rapid such as in Malacca, while in others it was gradual and fragmented such as in Java. Important for us to examine at this stage are the origins of Islam in the Archipelago and the factors that impacted upon the emergence and shaping of Islam in that region.

3.2.1.2 Theories on the origins of Islam in the Archipelago

While few scholars would deny that the origins of Islam in the archipelago are multiple in nature, there remains some dispute with regard to the dominant influences. Kasimin (1991:146-154), in an interesting discussion on this dispute, has identified three broad theories with regard to these origins.

3.2.1.2.1 Harrison's Theory

The first theory is that held by Harrison who suggests that Islam originally came from Gujarat in India. The evidence he advances in vindication of his theory is that the gravestones at Gresik - and particularly that of Mawlānā Malik Ibrāhīm - and other gravestones at Pasai were identical to those at the port of Cambay in Gujerat. Additional evidence is provided by the fact that the inhabitants of the archipelago turned to India for cultural inspiration and commercial prestige (Kasimin, 1991:147). Seekins (1991a:4) too, while allowing for a host of Islamic influences from Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel, Bengal, and even Persia, as possibly being instrumental in the Illumination process in the archipelago, nevertheless favours Indians from Cambay in Gujerat as having provided the main stimulus for this process (Seekins, 1991b:3).

3.2.1.2.2 Marrison's Theory

Marrison who holds the view that Islam originated from the Coromandel and Malabar coasts furnishes the second theory. The evidence he advances in favour of this view is that the vast majority of the inhabitants of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago were, and still are, adherents of the *Shāfite Madhhab* (school of thought) (Kasimin,1991:47-8). Apart from these coastal regions the rest of India had

embraced the *Hanafi* school of thought. Furthermore, he contends that a Hindu king had ruled Gujerat until 1297 and that Gujerat had only been islamised during that year. Meanwhile the ruler of Sumatra, as mentioned previously, had already sent a mission to China in 1281 - well in advance of the islamisation of Gujerat - that included two Muslim ministers. Woodward also provides powerful support for this view, and in particular with regard to Malabar influences. He distinguishes between two sources of Javanese Islam viz. the Muslim communities who inhabited the South of India, particularly Kerala; and the Muslim empires of the Deccan and North India (Woodward, 1974:54). Kerala, according to him, was dominated by Arab traditions, while the Deccan was dominated by the Indo-Persian religious and political orders. The impact of the latter on Javanese Islam may be witnessed in the theory of kingship, royal rituals, and certain mystical theories that pervaded the political and religious ethos in Java. The all-important influence of the former, on the hand, is observable in the similarities that described the basic elements common to both societies. Both communities, for example, are *Ulamā*-centric, emphasise the memorisation and recitation of Arabic texts, venerate saints, and saw its leaders at the forefront of quasi-messianic rebellions and radical political movements during the colonial period. Further evidence cited by Woodward are the similarities in certain ritual observances such as engaging in pilgrimages²⁴ to sacred graves and a ritual feast - known as Slametan in Java and Nercha in Kerala - at which blessed food is distributed to all male members of the respective communities. His citation, however, of the five daily prayers and the fast of Ramadan in support of his theory is somewhat mystifying as these are common to all Muslim societies. But perhaps the most important evidence adduced by Woodward is his observations on the similarities in mosque architecture between the two communities and, more particularly, the fact that both communities subscribe to the *Shāfite* school of thought (*Madhhab*). This latter observation has, almost singularly, cast the most doubt on greater Indian influences on the Malay-Indonesian archipelago; and, in particular on Gujerati influences as proffered by the first theory (Lubbe, 1989:37). Another striking feature of Woodward's argument is the fact that Kerala was never incorporated into the Indo-Persian political order up until

the 19th century when India finally succumbed to British colonial rule. The influence of greater India itself on Kerala - as evidenced by its *Shāfīte* tradition - was therefore minimal. The question that almost naturally begs to be answered is from whence Islam came to Kerala. According to Woodward again, Kerala formed an important link in the Indian Ocean spice trade since the Roman Empire and that significant populations of Arabs, Jews, and Christians were already present in South India as early as the first century. Furthermore, Kerala continued to act as a major entreport in trade linking Arabia with India and that it was often the first "landfall" for merchants coming from Southern Arabia (Woodward, 1974:54-7). The influence of Southern Arabia (and in particular the *Ḥaḍramawt* in Yemen as we shall discuss later) are crucial to our understanding of the shaping of Islam in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago in general, and to certain overlooked aspects of Islam at the Cape in particular.

3.2.1.2.3 Al-Aṭṭas's Theory

The third theory favoured by al- Aṭṭas is that Islam predominantly came to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago directly from the Arabs (Kasimin, 1991:148). He does not, however, completely discount Indian and Persian influences (Lubbe, 1989:37). In support of this position he distinguishes between the role of "external factors" - such as trade, economic and political autonomy and ties, and the arts etc.; and "internal factors" - such as writing and its impact on literature, thought, and culture in general (Kasimin, 1991:148). According to al-Aṭṭās, to concentrate on the former can yield little more than a superficial understanding of the complex historical processes and changes witnessed in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. It can even lead to completely erroneous conclusions if one wants to understand the revolutionary changes brought about by Islam in the archipelago (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:22). It is, therefore, to an examination of the latter - the "internal factors" - that one has to turn for a more complete understanding.

It is "language" according to al-Attas, "which is the silent, yet ever present witness whose words and vocabulary still hold captive the thoughts and feelings of

centuries" (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:22). This becomes even more crucial given the importance of Islam as a scientific and literary culture. It was this scientific spirit that informed the rationalistic conception of a unitary God in Islam - a spirit which appeared to be absent, because of their concentration on the aesthetic, in the introduction of Christianity to Europe and Hinduism and Buddhism to the archipelago (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:22). Davids (1991:68) too, contends that it is the *Sunūssiya* or Twintagh *Sifaat* (the Twenty Attributes) written by Muḥammad Yūsuf ibn al-Sunūsi (b.1486) and taught by Tuan Guru at the Cape during the late 18th and early 19th centuries that provided the slaves at the Cape with their understanding of a "rational unitary God" - an understanding, according to Davids, that missionaries with a Trinitarian conception of God failed to penetrate.

The Islamised Malay language - which eventually displaced the hegemony of the more aesthetic Old Javanese - therefore holds the key to our understanding of not only the impact of Islam on the Malay-Indonesian archipelago but also from whence that Islam came. Moreover, this displacement of Old Javanese with its preference for poetry is witnessed by the emergence of Malay prose as the dominant literary style of Malay-Indonesian literary expression. The continued presence of elements of the more aesthetic Hindu Javanese religious vocabulary in Islamic Malay prose can be attributed to the same ingenious missionary methods employed by Muslim missionaries in conveying Islam to non-Muslims by their creative adaptation of the Wayang theatre for the dissemination of the Islamic message (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:24).

Further evidence cited by Kasimin in vindication of al-Aṭṭas's view that Islam came directly from the Arabs are the following factors:

- a) Arabic words are more pervasive than any other language in the making of the Malay language.
- b) Malay grammar is largely based on Arabic grammar and
- c) That the language was finally adopted by the Arabs themselves. (Kasimin, 1991:154)

Another interesting observation in support of this theory is that after the establishment of Islam in the archipelago apparently no reference is made to Indian

scholars in the religious literature of the time or to religious works originating from India (Kasimin, 1991:149). Given, therefore, the predominance of the *Shāfīte* school of thought in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, the extent to which Arabic influenced its literary and scientific culture, the strong trading links with Southern Arabia, and the important roles played by Arab missionaries such as Shaykh ʿAbdullah ʿĀrif and Shaykh Ismail - and, given the de facto situation that the Keralan community on the Malabarian west coast of India is characterised by similar features - it becomes increasingly more apparent that the dominant influences were Arabian, and particularly Southern Arabian, in origin. An amalgam of al-Aṭṭas's and Woodward's theories, therefore seems to offer the most plausible explanations for the origins of Islam in the Archipelago.

3.2.1.3 The Spread of Islam

In the need to explain the establishment and rapid spread of Islam from the 13th century onwards the following theories have emerged:

- i) Trade
- ii) Intermarriages
- iii) Islam's ideological worth
- iv) Preachers and *Ṣūfis*
- v) Competition between Muslims and Christians
- vi) Political conveniences
- vii) Loyalty to Kings
- viii) Military conquests (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:18; Lubbe, 1989:37)

These theories in turn have elicited a number of responses with the significance and importance of the last four in particular being brought into question by a number of scholars.

For example, the "competition with Christianity" theory advocated by Wertheim and Schrieke, has been rejected by Bakar on the grounds that by the time the Portuguese arrived and conquered Malacca in 1511 the establishment of Islam had already been set in motion two centuries earlier. Malacca itself, and almost a century before the

arrival of the Portuguese, had acted as the centre of Islamic learning and propagation (Bakar, 1991:261). The question of "political conveniences" too raises a number of serious problems. Vis-a-vis whom or what were conversions to Islam made for political conveniences? If we assume that it was because of the political, military, and economic power and prestige wielded by the surrounding Muslim countries then the question that forces itself upon one is why did the process not repeat itself with the advent of European colonialism who were even more powerful politically, militarily, and economically than Muslim powers before them. We mentioned too that Aceh and Johore - both Muslim states - went to war with one another over control for the Malaccan straits. While each state, in turn, conveniently allied themselves to the Portuguese, they nevertheless maintained their religious identity and affiliation to Islam. These are some of the issues, which, in my opinion, cast considerable doubt on the "political convenience" theory.

Similar doubt is brought onto the "loyalty to Kings" theory - as a dominant factor in the process of the conversion and spread of Islam - by Hall's claim that "the acceptance of Islam by a ruler did not necessarily imply the conversion of its people" (Hall, 1996:12). According to him the trajectory of Muslim conversion was similar to that which occurred previously in the Hindu and Buddhist courts where rulers and the elite of society quickly and easily embraced the new religions but with penetration to the broader masses taking a much longer time (Hall, 1996:12).

With regard to the "military conquests" approach Seekins (1991a:4) is of the view that the Islamisation of the archipelago occurred through a process of assimilation and synthesis rather than through a series of "holy wars".

These are some of the criticisms articulated by a number of scholars with regard to the aforementioned four theories.

As for "trade" and "intermarriages" there can be little debate about its instrumentality in acting as vehicles through which Islam arrived and came to be established in the archipelago. However this sheds little light on who in fact were responsible for the rapid spread and diffusion of Islam throughout the archipelago.

al-Attas has forcefully argued the case for Arab influences in the process of establishing Islam in the archipelago.

3.2.1.4 The role of *ṣūfism* in the spreading of Islam

But what "stream" of Islam was responsible for its rapid dissemination? Recently the roles of *ṣūfism* and Islam's ideological worth have received considerable attention. Lubbe states that al-Attas has opened up "new perspectives when he advances in addition to economic and political drives the impact of *ṣūfism* as a reason, not only for the entrance of Islam into this region, but also for widespread conversions from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries" (Lubbe, 1989:37). The historian Ricklefs, according to Seekins (1991a:7-6), also seems to favour the role of *ṣūfism* over legalistic versions of Islam in the process of converting Indonesians because of the inherent mystical elements common to both indigenous Indonesian religious beliefs and the Indian religions. He sounds a note of warning though that - like all pre-colonial issues and events - no substantial historical evidence exists to support the presence of *ṣūfi* brotherhoods in the archipelago. The thesis of *ṣūfi* proselytization, according to him, must remain speculative. However, according to Malay scholars (Bakar, 1991:262), and almost in vindication of al-Attas's view that Western scholarship has a tendency to postdate important historical events to coincide with the coming of the West, a substantial body of evidence has emerged to support the dominant role of *ṣūfism* in the propagation and spread of Islam throughout the archipelago from the thirteenth century onwards. A number of factors appear to support this claim. Firstly, Lubbe's observation that an intensification of *ṣūfi* activity throughout the Muslim world after the collapse of Baghdad at the hands of the Mongols in 1258, coincided with the establishment and expansion of Islam in the archipelago (Lubbe, 1989:37-8). Secondly, that with the crystallisation of the *ṣūfi* orders during the 13th and 14th centuries, *ṣūfi* interpretation, expression, and practice became the dominant paradigm throughout the Muslim world well into the 18th century (Bakar, 1991:262). Thirdly, Bakar's observation that the widespread use of *ṣūfi* technical terms such as *faqīrs* (dervishes), *walis* (saints), and *shaykhs* (masters),

during the 13th and 14th centuries when Islam was established in the archipelago clearly indicate that the first active missionaries in the archipelago were *ṣūfis* (Bakar, 1991:262). Fourthly, the mystical climate that was endemic to the indigenous, animistic expressions of Javanese religion and the Hindu-Buddhist religions, rendered the Malay Javanese psyche far more receptive to the spiritual and mystical aspects of Islam than its more formal legalistic expressions. This fact has led A.H. Johns to conclude that an "Islam of the Wahhabi type" would have made little impression on the Javanese (Bakar, 1991:270). The above arguments in favour of the *Ṣūfi* thesis gained considerable support from a number of noted scholars. Hodgson (1974:Vol2/546) for example, is of the view that "the development of *ṣūfism* as a matrix of a faith of the masses brought forth a host of itinerant preachers whose moral, revivalist, and relatively non-communal preaching was accessible to people of any background. Islam in the archipelago was almost from the beginning as strongly *ṣūfi*-minded as it was anywhere else in the world at that period." Woodward (1989:54) is also of the view that, along with the *Ulamā* and the kings, *ṣūfis* too "were responsible for the establishment of Islam in the region of Java." Furthermore amongst the important features of Islam which al-Kāf (1990:120) mentions in his discussion on the contribution of *Ḥaḍramawt* to Islam in the archipelago are their *Sunni 'aḳīdab* (belief system), their *Shāfite* jurisprudence, and their *ṣūfī* orders.

The problem, however, with the *ṣūfī* thesis - as echoed by Ricklefs - seems to be fixated upon the presence, or lack, of formal *ṣūfī* orders, particularly during the 13th and 14th centuries. There may be three responses to this.

Firstly, that offered by al-Aṭṭas in his discussion on what he considers to be the three-phased introduction of Islam to the archipelago. In the first phase from 1200-1400 Fiqh or Islamic jurisprudence dominated in the shaping of the external character of the society. He calls this phase the "conversion of the body" (al-Aṭṭas, 1969:29). However this does not imply that *ṣūfism* was not the main motivating factor in the process of conversion. The second phase from 1400-1700 he calls the "conversion of the spirit" in which *ṣūfism* manifestly plays the dominant role while the first phase continues. The last phase from 1700 onwards he views as a continuation of the first

phase and a consolidation of the second but now accompanied by additional influences from the West.

The emphasis, therefore, on *fiqh* during the first phase in the need to impart to the society its Islamic identity has the effect of veiling the central importance that *ṣūfism* played in the actual conversion process. Secondly, in my opinion, if we assume the centrality of Southern Arabia - and particularly *Ḥaḍramawt* - in the initial conversion of the archipelago then the apparent lack of *ṣūfi* orders may be accounted for. The *Ḥaḍramawt* was dominated by the *Bā 'Alawī* Order (Trimingham, 1971:16,121). An integral feature of this order is the principle - shared with the *Shādhiliyyah* - "*Rusūmubum Maḥwa al-Rusūm.*"²⁵ It is this feature that has imparted to both the *'Alawiyyah* and *Shādhiliyyah* orders a measure of indiscernibility or social invisibility in society. A third and noteworthy explanation may be found in Bakar's distinction between *ṣūfism* as experience and spiritual practice and *ṣūfism* as doctrine and method (Bakar, 1991:263). With the relative "newness" of Islam in the archipelago the initial emphasis may have been on the spiritually experiential side rather than on the doctrinal and methodological aspects that describe the outer contours of the orders. Fourthly, the emergence of *ṣūfism* as formalised expressions of spirituality was itself a recent phenomenon at the time. The likelihood of finding it in such formalised structures on the archipelago during the 13th and 14th centuries is therefore very small.

What we do know however, and with greater definity than earlier Islam in the archipelago, is that since the time of Hamzah al-Fansūri (d.610) - a gnostic-type mystic - there is evidence of the crystallization of *ṣūfi* orders. According to Bakar (1991:270-1), Fansūri mentioned in one of his poems that he belonged to the *Qādiriyyah* order. This is apparently the first explicit reference to a *ṣūfism* order in the archipelago.

Other important figures to emerge after him were Shams al-Dīn al-Sumatrani (d.630) who continued the *Wujūdiyyah* (Oneness of Being) perspective of Ibn 'Arabī established by Fansūri in the archipelago; Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīri (d.1666) who opposed the *Wujūdiyyah* school; and 'Abd al-Ra'ūf of Singkel (d.1693) who introduced the

Shattāriyyah version of the *Wujūdiyyah* school into Aceh in 1697 (Trimingham, 1971:130; Bakar, 1991:268).

Another important dimension of *ṣūfi* culture in the archipelago is the legend of the "Nine Saints" or Walisongo which was established by Sunan Ampel (Radan Rahmet) about 1474. This council, according to Roland, always consisted of nine members. If one died, or travelled abroad, then he would be replaced by another *Wali* or saint²⁶. Further evidence of *taṣawwuf* activity in the archipelago is indicated by Winstedt (1950:35) when he states that the Dutch on their first voyage home from the Indies "returned with a Javanese religious treatise which included, inter alia, Imām al-Ghazālī's *Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Revival of the Religious Sciences) and Imām al-Nawāwī's *Talkhīs al-Minhāj*." It is a known fact too, that the works of these two scholars form important source material for the *Bā 'Alawiyyah* order (Sumayt, n.d.:54, 165)²⁷.

Moreover, amongst the orders that were directly introduced from Makkah after the 16th century were the *Qādiriyyah*, *Chistiyyah*, *Shādbiliyyah*, *Rifā'iyyah*, *Naqshabandiyyah*, *Shattāriyyah*, and *Aḥmadiyyah* (Bakar, 1991:271). Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar, on the other hand, may have introduced the *Khalwatiyyah*, into the archipelago during the 17th century. During the 18th century 'Abd al-Ṣamad ibn 'Abdullah (d.1800) introduced, via Sumatra, the *Sammāniyyah* order founded by Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm al-Sammānī al-Madanī of Madinah (Trimingham, 1971:130; Bakar, 1991:278). The *Rāṭib Sammān*, which includes the performance of a dhikr accompanied by various bodily movements and postures as indicated by the leader of the group, became one of the most popular *Rāṭibs* performed in the archipelago during the 18th century.

From the 15th to the 18th centuries, therefore, there can be little doubt about the centrality and dominance enjoyed by *ṣūfism* throughout the archipelago. There can be equally little doubt about its centrality and dominance in the spreading of Islam in that region.

3.3 Islam and India

Islam has a long historical tradition with India. According to Wolpert (1977:105) the first Muslims arrived in India in the Sind province as early as 644AD. The first significant Muslim conquest is dated at 711AD (Wolpert,1977:106). This was followed by the incursion of Maḥmūd al-Ghaznī (971-1030AD) into the Punjab bordering on Afghanistan, and annexing it as one his provinces (Wolpert, 1977:107; Mabbett,1968:90). Nearly two hundred years later Muḥammad of Ghūr captured the Ghaznavid garrison at Peshawar in 1179, then Lahore in 1186, and finally Delhi in 1193 (Wolpert, 1977:108). Through this massive penetration of India he left an equally huge foundation for the building of a Muslim empire (Mabbett, 1968:91). When Muḥammad of Ghūr was killed in Lahore in 1196, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Aybak - erstwhile slave of Muḥammad of Ghūr - declared himself the sultan of Delhi (Wolpert, 1977:109; Mabbett, 1969:93). The Sultanate of Delhi was thus founded.

In the year 1290 political power passed into the hands of the Khaljis. By 1320 the Tughluqid dynasty, under the leadership of Ghiyāth al-Dīn, was established. This lasted until the end of the 14th century when in 1398 - under the leadership of Timur - the Mongols deposed the Tughliqids. After much plundering and pillage by the Mongols, through a twist of what may be called historical irony, the next dynasty that emerged in Delhi, the Sayyids, were in fact relatives of the viceroy of Timur (Mabbett, 1968:98).

During the 15th century Islam in India was characterised by a rather tenuous rule with the rapid emergence and disappearance of a number of kingdoms. In Delhi the last of the Sayyids retired in 1448 (Mabbett, 1968:98-9).

It was the 16th century however, with the rise of the near legendary Moghuls, which witnessed a reversal of this political fragmentation - particularly in the north of India. The victory of the Moghul Bābūr was followed by the decisive conquest of Hūmāyūn (Mabbett, 1968:101; Glasse,1989:96).

It is this early establishment of Islam in India that has led Davids (1980:41) to observe that "these slaves (those sent to the Cape of Good Hope from India),

unlike the Indonesians, had a long tradition of Islam. Their faith could not be easily shaken..." This follows on his thesis that the Islamisation of Indonesia only started during the 16th century and that the majority of slaves who arrived in the Cape from the middle of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century were from India (Davids, 1980:40-1). This position of Davids is somewhat problematic. Firstly, it is mistaken, albeit unintended, to assume that strength of faith is contingent upon length of historical tradition. Those who are "new" to a particular religion often express a greater commitment and zeal than those born into a long legacy of such a tradition. Secondly, that Islam only entered the Indonesian Archipelago during the middle of the 16th century has been shown by scholars such as al-Aṭṭas and Bakar to be inaccurate. Thirdly, and more specific to this dissertation, too strict a division between Islam as represented by the Indian slaves and that represented by the Indonesian slaves could serve to obscure critical points of common ground that both these peoples shared.

While many slaves came from Bengal, it is similarly true that many came from the Malabar Coast too (Bradlow and Cairns, 1978:89; Davids, 1980:41). The Malabarians, and particularly those from Kerala, as mentioned earlier, were all adherents of the *Shāfīte* school of thought (or *madhhab*). It appears that the Keralan society was separated - and possibly marginalised - from the rest of India by more than merely cultural differences. The north, comprising the Mughal Empire and Deccan Sultanate, was also the centre of political strife. In a juxtaposition that appears to reflect the marginal status of Keralan society within the context of greater India Wolpert (1977:12) observes "So desperate was the political struggle for power in the north that Western Europe's vanguard, the Portuguese, who had reached the Malabar Coast in 1498 went unnoticed, undiscussed in Delhi." It is this marginalization too, that could partly explain why Kerala was not incorporated into the Indo-Persian political order until the rise of the British Colonial Empire in the 19th century (Woodward, 1989:55). It is to this community that we need to turn in order to understand the remarkable cultural integration - irrespective to origins - that characterised the earlier Muslim community at the Cape, particularly up to the latter half of the 19th century.

3.3.1 Keralan Society

It appears that Islam penetrated the Malabar Coast at a very early period. According to Dale (1980:24-6) evidence of Muslim settlement in Kerala - such as the building of mosques - can be substantiated from the 9th century onwards. He speculates, however, and owing to trade links between West Asia and India that settlements prior to the 9th century might well have occurred. These trade links, in fact, go back to the time of the Roman Empire with significant groupings of Arabs, Jews, and Christians already present in South India during the 1st century (Woodward, 1989:55). A long-standing familiarity may therefore be assumed between the western lands of Arabia and the south coastal regions of India. It is therefore not surprising to find support for Dale's speculations in Ḥamidullah (1953:117-8) where he notes that during the time of al-Ḥajjaj b. Yūsuf (41-95AH/661-714AD) many Muslims in Iraq fled from his persecution to take refuge in Malabar. This certainly locates Muslim settlement in Malabar from the 7th century.

Of more immediate importance to our discussion, however, are the observations of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. He recorded that there were Muslims at every port he visited on the Malabar Coast. The names he mentioned indicated Southern Arabian and Persian Gulf origins. These names and the practice of the *Shāfīte* school of thought reflect the Arab-Islamic influences in Malabar. These were the same influences that penetrated - via Muslim traders - into south-east Asia, particularly Indonesia (Dale, 1980:26).

Equally important too, is the presence of the *Ḥaḍramawt* Sayyids in Malabar. Sayyid ‘Alawī, a charismatic leader in Malabarian society, was born in Tarīm, which is one of the most important spiritual centres in the *Ḥaḍramawt* region of Southern Arabia. He arrived in Kerala in either 1766 or 1767. He was not, however, the first to arrive there. Two uncles of his preceded him. Sayyid Shaykh Jifrī had settled in Calicut in 1746 and another uncle, Sayyid Ḥasan Jifrī, had died in Tirurangadi many years before the arrival of Sayyid ‘Alawī, (Dale, 1980:113). "It is quite possible" Dale continues, "that other Sayyids may have preceded even Hasan Jifrī to the town." These Sayyids are all of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* that had its beginnings in the *Ḥaḍramawt* (Pouwels, 1987:148)

"These Sayyids", according to Dale (1980:114-5) "have transmitted their emphasis on orthodoxy of the Shafite school, the dominant legal school of Southern Arabia to parts of

India and especially to south-east Asia, as their immigration to these areas grew in volume from the 16th century."

3.3.2 Bengalese Connections

These, along with the strong *ṣūfi* strands, were the same influences that came to dominate the religious life of Cape Muslims. From the inception of Islam up to the arrival of Abū Bakr Effendi in 1862 - and contrary to the speculations of Shell (2000:334) to be discussed later - the *Shāfite* school of thought was virtually the only one prevalent at the Cape (Davids, 1980:52). From the middle of the 17th century onwards the Dutch took control of Malabar, the Coromandel Coast, and Bengal. These three areas acted as the feeding ground for slaves to the Cape (Da Costa, 1989:47).

Generally throughout India *ṣūfism* - and particularly the *Chistī*, *Suḥrawardī*, and *Firḍawsī* orders - played a major role in shaping the spirituality of its people (Wolpert, 1977:117). The *Chistī* influence will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven - particularly in the person of Sūfi Sāhib (1850-1910) and Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf who hailed from Bombay, and arrived in Durban, South Africa in 1895. Nonetheless, in Bengal too, according to Wolpert (1977:117) "ṣūfism...struck a responsive chord in the mass of Bengal's population..." It is significant that Achmat van Bengalen - one of the most charismatic leaders of the 18th century who arrived in 1783 - was born in Chinsura, Bengal (Davids, 1980:105). As significant is his declaration to the Colebrooke and Biggs Commission of Enquiry, that while he was born in Bengal, he remained, nonetheless, a person of "Malay extraction" (N. Inhabitants of C. of GH). This fact too signifies an important feature of the common ground that bonded the Muslims together well into the second half of the 19th century. At this point the religious landscape of Muslim society at the Cape experienced dramatic changes. The first was that of the arrival of Abū Bakr Effendi, mentioned previously; the second was the arrival of the "passenger Indians" in 1871 (Tayyob, 1995:55). These differences, and, at the time, accompanied by a distinct sense of "otherness", were entrenched by the establishment of two *Ḥanafī* mosques.

The first was the *Ḥanafī* mosque on the corner of Long and Dorp streets founded in 1881 by the children and students of Abū Bakr Effendi (Davids, 1980). The second was the founding of the *Quawatul* Islam mosque built in 1892 by the "passenger Indians". These Indians, unlike those who were previously brought to the Cape, emanated from areas with a strong *Ḥanafite* background (Davids, 1980: 185).

Up to this time the Malays were intimately identified with Islam at the Cape. But, according to Du Plessis (1972:5) the "influence of Java was on the wane, that of Turkey and Arabia on the upgrade." It might have been more correct to say that Turkey and India with their *Ḥanafite* influences were on the upgrade. The influences of Arabia, and Southern Arabia in particular were always there. Nevertheless Arabia, and the *Hijāz* in particular, became the central focus of Muslims during the latter part of the 19th century for at least three reasons. One was the beginnings of Muslim pilgrimages to Makkah. These pilgrims returned with all the prestige that the *ḥajj* bestows upon them. The second was that for the first time too locally-born Muslims, such as Shaykh Ismāʿīl Muʿāwiyya Manie and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, left during the late 19th century to study in the *Hijāz* (Da Costa, 1994:118). Thirdly, a number of Arab Muslims came to settle in the Cape. Amongst them were Shaykh Muḥammad Saʿīd Najjār and his father Shaykh ʿUthmān. Another was Muḥammad Sulaymān al-ʿAbādi who came from Tāʿiz in Yemen. He was the father of the late Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-ʿAbādi, well-known Capetonian *Ḥafiz*, and teacher of the Qurān (Da Costa, 1994:118).

On the other hand, while the arrival of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi and the Indians with their strong *Ḥanafite* backgrounds resulted in massive tensions within the traditionally *Shāfite* Cape community (Davids, 1980:49-56), these same Indians also brought with them a powerful strain of *Taṣawwuf* - particularly those belonging to the *Qādirī* and *Chistī* orders (Tayyob, 1995:58).

3.4 Islam and East Africa

While a quarter of the Cape slaves population came from the Indian subcontinent and another quarter from the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, nearly half came from

the East African coast, Madagascar, and the Mascarene Islands (Shell, 2000:330). The total number of slaves brought to the Cape from the above-mentioned areas between 1652 and 1808 - when the oceanic slave trade was abolished - was approximately 63,000 (Shell, 1994:40; Shell, 2000:330). More than 30,000 of these slaves, therefore, came from East Africa and its immediate environs. The significance of this is that the "trade which went to the Cape Colony was directly responsible for the diffusion of aspects of East African culture, especially of the Islamic-Bantu sub-culture of the Swahili community, to that territory" (Da Costa, 1989:34). It is important, therefore, for us to understand the dominant influences that impacted on this community.

3.4.1 The Impact of Islam on East Africa

"The history of Islam in East Africa" says Trimingham (1964:1) "belongs more to the Indian Ocean than to African history."

Even before the arrival of Islam there had been trading links between the East African Coast and the Arabian Peninsula (Kettani, 1982:105; Azveda and Prater, 1991:483). The first time, nevertheless, that Islam made contact with Africa was about 615AD when a number of Muslims fled the persecution of *Quraysh* in Makkah to take refuge in Abyssinia (Hitti, 1970:113-4; Watt, 1996:22).

Pouwels (2000) divides the establishment of Islam in East Africa into three phases viz. the Foundations (750-1500), the Middle Period (1500-1800), and the Nineteenth Century. For broader explanatory purposes I have adopted this categorisation rather than the more diffuse categorisation into the *Zanj*, *Shirazi*, and *Hadrami* periods provided by Trimingham (1964:1). These entities will, however, be referred to during the course of the discussion.

3.4.1.1 The Foundation 780-1500

According to Pouwels, a mosque and Muslim burial grounds, located in Shaga in the Lamu archipelago, dated between 780 and 850 AD provide the first substantial

evidence of Muslim settlement on the Swahili Coast. According to him too, the earliest mosque at Kilwa, on the other hand, dates back to the 13th century (Pouwels, 2000:25). But an earlier Muslim presence in Kilwa, whose sphere of influence extended from Zanzibar in the north to Sofala in the south, is recorded in the 10th century by al-Mas'ūdī (Trimingham, 1964:5-6; Pouwels, 2000:255). The 12th and 13th centuries appear to mark a watershed during this foundational period.

By the 12th century most of the coastal inhabitants had embraced Islam and adopted the Shāfī school of thought (Pouwels, 2000:256). By the 13th century, the so-called *Shirāzī* dynasty had taken political control of Kilwa (Matveiev, 1984:461). During the 14th century the first major migration of Arabs from Yemen, and especially the *Ḥaḍramawt* region, to the East coast of Africa occurred. The families who settled there were mostly from amongst the *Shurafā*- or the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) (Pouwels, 2000:256). According to Matveiev, the beginnings of Islam's expansion on the East Coast of Africa should be dated no later than the 12th century; with its establishment as the dominant religion of the area occurring during the 14th and 15th centuries. By 1329AD when Ibn Baṭūṭa visited Mogadishu, Kilwa, and Mombasa he observed that all the Muslims there were *Shāfītes* (Trimingham, 1964:6-7; Kettani, 1982:106). These were a people who appear to have taken their Islam seriously. This is borne out by Ibn Baṭūṭa's observation that "faith and righteousness are their foremost qualities" (Matveiev, 1984:468).

3.4.1.2 The Middle Period 1500-1800

This period may be viewed as a period of consolidation and crystallisation wherein the religious contours of the East African Coast known as Swahil takes on a more discernible and definite shape. The irony of this period however, is that this consolidation was accompanied by massive social and political upheavals. The first expedition to the East Coast of Africa led by Vasco da Gama in 1497 marked the beginning of this period (Kettani, 1982:105). In 1503 they attacked Zanzibar and by 1505 they occupied Kilwa (Kettani, 1982:105; Pouwels, 1987:38). Their assault on

Kilwa appeared quite devastating with the destruction of 300 mosques (Kettani, 1982:106). With their occupation of Sofala in 1508, effectively cutting off the gold and ivory trade routes, their occupation of the East African Swahil Coast was complete (Kettani, 1982:106-7; Pouwels, 1987:38).

Nevertheless, and despite these politically turbulent times, there appeared to be what Pouwels (2000:261) refers to as a "religious renaissance" in the Lamu archipelago. This renaissance was a consequence of the many *Bā 'Alawī* clans from the *Ḥaḍramawt* in Yemen that settled in the region. Amongst these *Sharīf* clans were the al-Ḥusaynī (better known as al-Saqqāf today), Jamal al-Layl, Abū Bakr b. Sālim, and al-Masīla. These massive migrations into Lamu resulted in Lamu becoming the centre of Islamic activity and culture throughout the East Coast between 1550 and 1800 (Pouwels, 2000:259-261).

Many of these clans moved further south to settle in all the major areas of the East coast (Pouwels, 2000:261) thus extending the *Shāfite* influence throughout the area. The near ubiquitous spread of *Shāfism* throughout the East African coast occurred despite the fact that the Omanis - espousing the *Ibādī* version of *Khārijism* - exerted a powerful political presence in Batu, north of Lamu, as early as 1303AD when Sulaymān al-Nabahānī shifted the Omani capital to Batu (Kettani, 1982:106). In fact the marginalisation of the *Ibādīs* was so thorough that many of them adopted the *Shāfite* school of thought in order to avoid communal ostracism (Trimingham, 1964:81). It is apparent therefore that at the communal and social levels the *Shāfite Ḥaḍramīs* were far more influential and effective than their *Ibādī* counterparts.

Moreover, and even before the Omani presence in East Africa, the *Shirazīs* - who claimed descent from Iran - founded the state of Zanj with Kilwa as its capital in the 10th century. By 1140AD they had extended their influence to incorporate Sofala in Mozambique. But despite this sweeping presence they appeared to have left as a legacy little else apart from their material culture. Trimingham (1962:10) states that the *Shī'a* influence could not have been strong and that in fact there "is no evidence that even the ruling classes of the Shirazi states were Shī'ites." Pockets of various *Shī'ite* sects however - particularly the *Ismā'īlis*, or Seveners - do exist in all the major centres along the East

African coast (Trimingham, 1962:104-8). The dominant and politically more activist *Ithnā ‘Ashariyya* sect, or Twelvers, on the other hand, only came to power in Iran with the formation of the Safavid Empire in 1501AD (Glasse, 1989:341). Before this there was no significant political presence of *Ithnā ‘Ashariyya Shī‘ism* in the Islamic world.

By the end of the 18th century East African Islam, at the hands of the influential *Ḥadramite sharīf* clans, was predominantly *Shāfi‘ī* (Trimingham, 1962:81).

3.4.1.3 The Nineteenth Century

A significant event preceding this era was the expulsion of the Portuguese by the Omanis from the northern coast of Mocambique to Somalia in 1728AD (Kettani, 1982:107; Pouwels, 2000:261). This ushered in an era of Arabization and a strengthening of Islam in the region. It seems, nevertheless, that the unparalleled rise of Islam in the post-Eighteenth century period was not only a consequence of this new political strength and confidence. "It would appear" according to Azevedo and Prater (1991:490) "that the answer lies in the activity of the Muslim brotherhoods or the tariqa and similar associations that sprang up every where on the Muslim coast during the period in question." Of importance here are the *Shādhiliyya*, *Qādiriyya*, *Bā ‘Alawiyya*, and *Rifā‘iyya ṣufi* orders. These four - and particularly the latter three - are of particular interest to the development and patterns of *Taṣawwuf* as it emerged in the Cape.

The *Qādiriyya* is said to be the strongest on coastal East Africa while the *Shādhiliyya* is the strongest in Zanzibar (Trimingham, 1962:97-8; Azevedo and Prater, 1991:490). The *Rifā‘iyya* too, has a substantial presence in Zanzibar and in some country districts on the Eastern coast (Trimingham, 1962:101-3). Of significance here is that the practice of *Rati‘ep* - which includes the piercing of the body with sharp instruments - is also practiced in the Cape (Davids, 1980:33). These will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six.

Amongst the most pertinent observations of Trimingham are those related to the *Bā ‘Alawiyya ṭariqa*. He says that the "Alawiyya founded by Muḥammad ibn ‘Ali ibn Muḥammad (d.1255AD), is the Ṭariqa of Zanzibar, not in numbers but in the sense that all the ‘religions’ have a link with it; a kind of loose allegiance in that

they have been allowed to recite certain awrād (litanies) special to the ṭarīqa" (Trimingham, 1962:102). This accords with the *Bā ʿAlawī* principle, mentioned earlier, that the distinguishing mark of the order is that they espouse no external characteristics through, and by which, the order becomes identifiable.

He further identifies two important ʿAlawī lines, namely, the ʿAidarūsiyya founded by Abū Bakr b. Abdullah al-ʿAidarūs (d.914/1509), and the Ḥaddādiyya founded by Abdullah b. ʿAlawī al-Haddad (d.1720). "An essential part of the ʿAlawiyya dhikr" he continues, "is the recitation of the Rāṭib al-Ḥaddād" (Trimingham, 1962:102). This link between the *Rāṭib al-Ḥaddād* and *taṣawwuf* practices at the Cape will be explored in greater detail in the following chapters.

The immense influence and sway that *Ḥaḍramawt* wielded over the minds and hearts of Muslims in East Africa is also indicated by Trimingham's (1962:86) observation that they prefer, in their search for knowledge, the traditional *ribāṭs* of Tarīm in *Ḥaḍramawt* to the influential Azhar University in Cairo.

The arrival of the *Ibadi* Omanis towards the end of the 18th century and their establishment of the Zanzibar Sultanate in the 1820s (Pouwels, 2000:162) did little to influence the *Ḥaḍramī-Shāfʿī* leanings of the general masses. It appears that the influence of the Omanis was limited to the arabization of the Swahili peoples (Pouwels, 2000:251).

3.4.2 Mozambique

Most of the influences regarding Islamic influences on the East African Swahili coast applied to the northern parts of Mozambique, particularly Sofala. As part of the Swahili network, Sofala was subordinate to Kilwa as early as the 15th century (Alpes, 2000:304). According to Kettani (1982:117) "most of the Muslims of Mozambique are Shāfʿī." The majority of these Muslims are from the Makua, Yao, and Anguni tribes - the Makua being the largest tribe in Mozambique. In describing the distribution of Muslims in Mozambique Alpes (2000:305) states:

Coastal northern Mozambique remained distinctly Muslim - Swahili at its northern extreme toward Cape Delgado, and shading off into Makua-speaking communities toward Angoche.

While he goes on to say that little is known about the Muslims of Mozambique during the mid 17th century - particularly in the interior - there can be little doubt that *Ḥaḍramī- Shāfīte* influences were present there too. Their continued commercial contacts with their Muslim counterparts in the Northern parts of Madagascar and the Comores (see below) - as Alpers (2000:305) clearly refers too - would almost certainly support such a position.

Muslim influence remained strong in northern Mozambique well into the second half of the 20th century. Frelimo, or the Liberation Front of Mozambique, formed in 1962 consisted mainly of Muslims. Their lack of education, however, resulted in very few Muslims being admitted into the ranks of its leadership. This was largely reserved for the mission-educated southerners. They were further alienated when Mozambique achieved independence in 1975. Amongst the reasons for this was Samora Machel's intense dislike for Islam. As an expression of his contempt he refused to take off his shoes when entering mosques and invited Muslims to breed pigs and eat them (Azavedo and Prater, 1991:494).

3.4.3 Madagascar

Approximately 53,04% of the total number of slaves landed at the Cape from Africa were from Madagascar (Da Costa, 1989:31). Of interest here is that the island of Madagascar has had strong historical ties with Indonesia dating back to the first few centuries of the first millennium (Da Costa, 1989:38). According to Verin too (1981:701-3), Indonesians settled in Madagascar either during or shortly before the year 500AD (see also Pearson, 2000:391). Another settlement occurred, for the latest, by the year 1300AD (Da Costa, 1989:38). This fact, and the fact that Islam entered Madagascar via East Africa has lead Da Costa to assume that it “is reasonable to deduce that during the slave trade at least some of

the Muslims on the Island adhered to the same school of religious jurisprudence and Sufi orders as those found in East Africa at the time." The speculations of Da Costa appear to be vindicated by Martin (1974). Following Shihāb al-Dīn al-Ḥaḍrami's criticism of Rene Basset - who apparently dismissed "too easily" certain oral traditions relating to the forbears of the rulers of Harar during the 18th and 19th centuries - he sheds, in the process, some important light upon the nature of Islam in Madagascar itself (Martin, 1974:387). Through Shihāb al-Dīn's research, Martin is able to show that the genealogical origins of the queen of Harar are clearly linked to a certain 'Aqīl ibn 'Alī. 'Aqīl was the son of 'Alī ibn 'Alawī (or 'Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥamdūn). Their lineage, according to the *San'ā al-Baḥr* and the *Masbr'a al-Rawī* of Muḥammad al-Shillī (1023/ 1614-5) may be traced to the renowned al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam (Muḥammad ibn 'Alī of Tarīm). 'Aqīl, therefore, was one of the *Bā 'Alawī* line of Sayyids (Martin, 1974:387-8). Because of this evidence Martin himself is able to dismiss as "ingenious" Kent's suggestion in his work *Early Kingdoms of Madagascar 1500-1700*, that the *ṣūfī* order in Madagascar was *Qādariyya*. For "Qādariyya" Martin observes, "perhaps one can substitute the 'Alawīyya" (Martin, 1974:387).

The inherent "synonymity" of the term "*Alawīyya*" with the Islamic legal school of thought "*Shāfīyya*" would therefore render the Muslims of Madagascar as followers of the *Shāfīte madhhab*.

3.4.4 The Comores

Not frequently mentioned in discussions on Islam at the Cape is the Comores group of islands. Shell (2000) however, mentions an interesting link. According to him, the South African Directory and Almanac 1834 (206) states that the Sultan Abdola of the Island of St. Johaana resided at 61 Bree Street in the Bo-Kaap (Shell, 2000:336). "Johanna" as Shell states, is in fact Anjouan, which is the most frequented Island of the Comores group located in the Mozambique Channel. "Anjouan" according to him, "was long subject to Muslim influence and was also a slave entrepot" (Shell, 2000:336). Further links between the Cape and the Comores are evident in the exchange of letters between the Cape and Anjouan in the year

1773 (Shell, 2000:336). This exchange took place between Sultan Aḥmad b. Sāliḥ of Mutsamuda and Baron van Plettenburg, the Dutch governor of the Cape Province at the time (Martin, 1974:382). Shell, citing Armstrong, mentions the probability that the Arabic interpreter of these letters aboard the Cape slaver, de Snelheid, might well have been Tuan Guru himself for he identified himself as the *Imām al-Mazlūm* (the oppressed Imam) Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Salām al-Tadūri (Shell, 2000:336). These Johanese connections were sustained well into the 1850’s (Shell, 2000:336). A mistake, I believe, made by both Shell and Mayson is their associating Islam in the Comores with *Shī‘ism*. This they link to a dynasty founded in 1506 in the Comores by the Shirazis of Iran. This has led Shell to speculate that the Sultan of Johanna, mentioned earlier, may have been responsible for a schism in the Cape Muslim community during his stay in Bree Street. The somewhat tenuous evidence he cites in support of this schism are the watercolour paintings of the early Cape that show the white and red coloured turbans worn by Muslims at the time. Citing Mayson he states that "the white turban is the distinguishing mark of the Sonnites [i.e. Sunni]; the red turban that of the rival sect of Shī‘ites" (Shell, 2000:336). The turbans worn by *Shī‘a ‘Ulamā* and *Mullas* since *Shī‘ism* became the state religion of Iran in the 16th century are black. Black symbolizes their mourning of the death of Ḥusain at Karbala (Ahmed, 1999: 49). Up to today, too, a casual observer on pilgrimage (*Ḥajj*) can easily identify the Iranian religious leaders by their black turbans. Moreover, the alleged Shirazi connection with East African Islam has of late been dismissed as a myth. "The claim of a direct link with Shiraz, or the gulf in general" Pearson (2000:47) states "can be discounted." Pouwels (1987) provides an excellent discussion on the dubious nature of this Shirazian dynasty. The alleged historical links between East Africa and Shiraz are contained in the Kilwa Chronicles composed during the 16th century. The problem with these claims, according to Pouwels, is that none of the many Arab and Chinese travellers who passed through these areas between the 9th and 14th centuries mentions the presence of any Persian peoples. It is safer, therefore, to locate the Shirazi traditions within the

concept of "origin myths" that are clearly identifiable with other African myths of a similar nature.

According to Pouwels (2000:18),

As in most African origin myths, their creators identify certain fundamental symbols and institutions as uniquely their own, all of which set them apart from other peoples. As other origin myths, too, they relate the appearance/creation of these symbols/institutions to a single significant episode. In reality, of course, such episodes usually conceal what were complex social and cultural transformations which took place over many decades and even centuries, while the traditions, like the civilization whose history they relate, are themselves the end products of this historical process. Cultures emerge, they do not spring into existence full-blown. History is an on-going process.

The research of Martin (1974), however, sheds significant light on the shape and nature of Islam in the Comores. Major Islamic influences through the *Bā 'Alawī* line are said to have reached the Comores during the 17th century. The celebrated *Bā 'Alawī* Sayyid, Abū Bakr b. Sālim (1514-1584) of 'Inat near Tarīm in the *Ḥaḍramawt*, had three sons called 'Alī, Ḥusayn, and Shaykhān. They were sent to Pate to assist the Muslims against a Portuguese attack. Ḥusayn returned to 'Inat in 1635 but left behind a son by the name of Aḥmad. Before 1676 the sublineages of both 'Alī and Ḥusayn b. Abū Bakr settled in the Comores. Salīm al-Muhājir, a grandson of Ḥusayn, was one of those who took up residence in Anjouan. From here, members of both lines established themselves on Grand Comoro (Martin, 1974:381-2). "It is likely" according to Martin "that the Ḥaḍramī Sayyids of the Abū Bakr b. Sālim line had become rulers of small sultanates on Anjouan in the Comoros by the end of the seventeenth century." In vindication of this view he cites the same letters from Sultan Aḥmad to Baron van Plettenburg. Martin therefore firmly locates Sultan Aḥmad in

the *Bā ʿAlawī* line of *Ḥaḍramī* Sayyids rather than the Shirazis of Iran who allegedly settled in Anjouan.

Another influential line of *Ḥaḍramī* Sayyids who settled in Anjouan were descendants of Muḥammad Jamal al-Layl who died in Tarīm in 845/1441 (Martin, 1974:384). One of his descendants, Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Qādirī, became a ruler of a sultanate in Anjouan. He returned to Tarīm where he died either in 1668/9 or 1571/2 (Martin, 1974:384). Members of the *al-Qādirī* clan, founded by the above-mentioned Muḥammad b. Sālim, also settled in Indonesia (Martin, 1974:384-5).

Martin, moreover, enumerates a number of other *Bā ʿAlawī* clans who held important positions at one stage or another in the Comores up to the 19th century. Amongst these are the following:

- a) Relatives of the Sultans of Mutsamudu who lived on the eastern flank of Anjouan.
- b) A number of descendants of Muḥammad al-Majdhūb b. Shaykh ʿAlī b. Abū Bakr b. al-ʿAlawī al-Ḥusayni. They are also referred to as al-Saqqāf.
- c) The descendants of Abdullah Bā ʿAlawī al-Ḥusayni known in East Africa as al-Masīla Bā ʿAlawī. They took up residence in Mohdi in the Comores.
- d) The famous Bā Faqīhs of Tarīm who also held political office in the Comores.
- e) The descendants of Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Marzūq b. Abdullah who fought in the Ethiopian jihads. His son, ʿAlawī, who fought alongside him, migrated to the Comores. According to Shihāb al-Dīn this lineage preceded that of Abū Bakr b. Sālim to the Comores, arriving there before 1097/1685-6 (Martin, 1974:384-6).

By the 19th century "both the lines of Ḥusayn and ʿAlī b. Abū Bakr b. Sālim included a number of sultans and paramount chiefs on Anjouan and Grand Comoro" (Martin, 1974:383). A member of this lineage, Sultan Aḥmad, became the ruler of Bambao during this century. This included the town of Moroni. A relative of the Sultan, Shaykh Muḥammad Maʿruf (1853-1905), founded the *Yashrūtī* line of the *Shādbilī* order in Moroni. (Martin, 1974:383). The dividing line between the *Shādbilīs* and the *Bā ʿAlawīs* is, in fact, a fine one, as indicated by Aḥmad b. Abū Bakr Sumayt in his *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*. Nevertheless, a possible reason for the shift in

Shaykh Ma'rūf's *ṭarīqa* affiliation could be the growing exclusivity and sense of privilege that appeared to mark the *modus operandi* of the *ʿAlawiyya* order during the 19th century (Serjeant, 1962: 249). Admission into the higher teachings of the order became, to a large extent, the preserve of members of the family only (Trimingham, 1962:73). The conflict therefore, that ensued between the *Ḥaḍramī Sharīf*, Shaykh Ma'rūf and his *Bā ʿAlawī* contemporaries, was almost predictable (Alpers, 2000:311). It is in this shift too, that we understand the success of the spread of the *Shādhiliyya*. The *Shādhilis* and *Qādirīs* managed to sustain a more universalist perspective. While previous to this, the most influential order on the East Coast was the *ʿAlawiyya* (Pearson, 2000:50), it was the selfsame Muḥammad Ma'ruf who made the *Shādhiliyya* the most popular order (Vikor.2000:458). According to Vikor (2000:455), the order, through the efforts of Ma'ruf, was established in the region at about 1880.

3.5 Ḥaḍramawt

During the study of the three areas of our concern - the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, India and East Africa - the centrality of the Ḥaḍramawt becomes apparent. These are the three areas from which the vast majority of political prisoners and slaves came to the Cape. They also arrived at the Cape during a time - between the 17th and 19th centuries - when *Ḥaḍramite* influences were at their peak. It is therefore reasonable to assume that these Muslims brought a significant part of this *Ḥaḍramite* Islamic culture - in its various Indian, African, and Malay-Indonesian forms - to the Cape. With regard to the latter position, Martin (1974:370) states:

A number of scholars have discussed migrants and migrations from the South Arabian Hadramawt to East Africa, including L.W.C van den Berg, Shihab al-Din al-Hadrami, R.B. Serjeant, and E. Cerulli. Three major currents are discernible in these movements from Arabia. They carried Hadramis to India in 1200, Hadramis and Yamanis to East Africa after c. 1250, and to Malaysia and Indonesia after approximately 1300.

He further observes (2000:389):

Whether in East Africa, Malaysia, or Indonesia, there was little difference in the practices and way of life they adopted.

To explain the similarities between these “cultural connections” Pearson proposes the concept of a “Littoral Society”. The idea behind this is that “there is a certain degree of commonality about all societies located on the shores of the Indian Ocean” (Pearson, 2000:42). In this respect the most important cultural platform, according to him, is religion; and, within the context of the coastal areas of the Indian Ocean, the religion of Islam. He acknowledges that all the terms of this concept have not yet been fully resolved. This striking commonality, nevertheless, of religious persuasion that marks these areas has led him to speculate to the extent of wondering “whether the Shafite Madhhab is peculiarly suited to maritime locations” (Pearson, 2000:48).

One of the problems, in my opinion, with the Littoral Society concept is that it acts more as a description of these coastal societies rather than provide substantial pointers to the causes of the emergence of the characteristics common to these regions. The commonalities that marks these regions has, however, been well made by Pearson (2000:48). It is no longer the facts, but a reasonable explanation of them that concerns him.

3.6 Obfuscating The Origins : Malayism a Crisis Of Identity

If the three main descriptive features that inform the common cultural platform of this “Littoral Society” are *Ḥaḍramī*, *Shāfiʿī*, and *ṣūfī*, then my contention is that it would be reasonable to assume that the Cape forms part of this cultural continuum; with the Indian Ocean acting, as it were, as a huge “Cultural Corridor” (see Pearson, 2000:48). This is not to submit that the Cape, particularly between 1667 and 1862, was exclusively *Shāfiʿite*. It is a submission, however, that it was predominantly so. It is precisely here that I find myself at variance with Shell (2000:334) who states:

One might well dare ask whether the Shafi “roots” of Cape Islam may not have been boosted in the historical literature in an attempt to maintain the

embattled yet persistent “Malay” identity for the Cape Muslims.

Two important issues emerge here viz. the question of the *Shafite* roots of the Cape Islam and the question of Malay identity. With regard to the former, the evidence he advances is not too convincing. The first of this is the Bengalese connection to the Cape. According to Hardy (Shell, 2000:334) the *Shafite* school had disappeared from Bengal by the 14th century and replaced by the the *Hanafite* school and a number of *Shi'ites*. Many of the Cape Muslims, according to Shell, had come from Bengal. While it might be true that the *Hanafite* school came to dominate Bengal it may still be disputed to what extent it had remained there. This, ironically, becomes apparent even through the example Shell uses to support his speculations. Citing Mayson he states:

The ancestor of the present chief Imam ["Abdul Roof," 1854] came from Bengal, at the request of Mahometans at the Cape, and was by them elected to that important office (Shell, 2000:334)

"Is it not natural" Shell therefore asks, "that Indian Muslims in the Cape wanting reassurance about the authority of their precepts, should have sent for one from their own homeland? Would a Shafī ‘Malay’ congregation have sent for an Imam from Bengal?" (Shell, 2000:3345).

The problem with this line of argument is that it might not be based on historical fact. The only chief Imām by the name of Abdul Roof at the Cape during this period was the first and chief Imām of the Nurul Islam Mosque in Buitengracht Street. He was Imām of the Mosque from 1844 to 1859 (Davids, 1980:197). The father of this Imām was in fact the well-known Tuan Guru (Qādi Abdul Salaam). Abdul Roof was his youngest son (Davids, 2000:127). Where the confusion with the Bengalese connection might have emerged is in the manner in which the

Mosque was founded. It developed, according to Davids, out of the ties of friendship that were formed amongst a group of students who were under the religious tutelage of Imām Achmat van Bengalen. The sons (including Abdul Roof) of Tuan Guru and those of Imām Achmat constituted the core of this friendship. The congregation they established was called the Muhammadan Shafee Congregation (Davids, 1980:127). Tuan Guru, the father of Abdul Roof, was clearly a Shafī. There is no reason to suppose that Imām Abdul Roof was any different. Furthermore, Imām Achmat van Bengalen, in his testimony to the Colebrooke and Bigge Commission Report, clearly states that he is a Bengalese of "Malay extraction" (Imperial Blue Book, 1825: 209). This raises the possibility that by the turn of the 19th century there were still influential *Shafi'is* living in Bengal. There is no reason to suppose too, that Frans van Bengalen, another influential early Cape Muslim and contemporary of Achmat van Bengalen espoused any other school of thought. When he left the Cape he settled in Batavia, not Bengal (Davids, 1980:101).

The other argument Shell uses is the apparent doctrinal differences that "can be firmly traced back to 1824" (Shell, 2000:335). The instance cited in this case is the rupture that occurred between Imām Achmat van Bengalen and Jan van Boughies (Shell, 2000:315). Jan van Boughies broke away from the Awwal Mosque to establish his own congregation at a mosque called the Palm Street Mosque in Long Street in 1820 (Davids, 1980:97). Mayson's identification of the problem as one of personal quarrels amongst the Imams and their aspirations to ecclesiastical office rather than any "doctrinal differences" appears to be the more correct one (Mayson, 1862:17-8). In fact Tuan Guru, on his deathbed, instructed Imām Achmat van Bengalen to prevent Jan van Boughies from taking his place after his death (Davids, 1980:118). When the Palm Street Mosque congregation fell into disarray shortly after its establishment in 1820, Imām Achmat van Bengalen attributed that to the "troublesome character of Jan van Boughies" (Davids, 1980:101). It is most likely this "troublesome character" that caused Tuan Guru so much concern.

Moreover, if there were any sensitive doctrinal differences then there can be little reason for them not having emerged prior to the death of Tuan Guru, let alone 17 years after his death in 1824. Jan van Boughies was, after all, the Arabic teacher of Achmat van Bengalen (Davids, 1980:116).

The second point raised by Shell - though not directly related to the terms of this dissertation, but nonetheless worthy of mention - is the more contentious "Malay identity" issue. The question that arises is at what point did this identity become an "embattled one"; and was it necessary to shore up the *Shāfite* claims in order to preserve this identity?

On the one hand, if we are able to prove the dominant *Shāfism* of the early Cape Muslims, then the need to boost the *Shāfite* "roots" of early Cape Islam with a view to sustaining an embattled Malay identity does not arise. On the other, the alleged "embattled" nature of the identity needs to be revisited. It appears that people such as Achmat van Bengalen had no qualms about declaring themselves "Malay", in as much that is, as a citizen of Holland for example, would identify him or herself as "Dutch". One of the first significant Muslim scholars in the Cape to throw doubt upon the dubious nature of the concept "Malay" was Achmat Davids (1980). This was followed by Shamil Jeppie (1988) in his critique of I. D. du Plessis who was largely responsible for the reductionism of the "Malay" to coon carnivals, Malay Choir Boards, and a variety of South-East Asian exotica and delights. In service to the Apartheid state the cultural - but inferior - "otherness" of the Malay had to be entrenched. My argument, therefore, would be that the term "Malay", to describe Cape Muslims, came into question only during the 20th century. This for two reasons: Firstly, the Muslims' growing consciousness of themselves as a cosmopolitan unit. With the arrival of the passenger Indians in 1881 and the many European converts to Islam the term "Malay" lost its applicability and force in describing the Cape Muslims. Secondly, during the Apartheid years the term was used in service of the Apartheid state's divide and rule policies. Many Cape Muslims, and particularly the intellectuals, resented this. It was in this context that a need to deconstruct the Cape Malay identity emerged. It was in fact, and to a very large extent, a product of the anti-racist political discourse of

apartheid South Africa. The question that arises here is can that same discourse, with equal force and applicability, be applied to 17th 18th and even 19th century Muslims who clearly identified themselves with their countries of origin? This is doubtful, nor would it be of any use in helping us to understand the nature of Islam as it developed and unfolded during these centuries.

During the 20th century - and particularly from the latter half onwards - the idea of a "Malay" identity indeed became an embattled one. But that was long after the Cape community had already acknowledged themselves as predominantly *Shāfi'i*. There can therefore be little intrinsicity between the dominance of the *Shāfite madhhab* during the 17th 18th and 19th centuries, and an embattled Malay identity that came under fire only later during the 20th century.

The question that remains though is why, in the first place, did Islam come to be identified with the concept of Malay? Ajam's (1986:42) observation that "local lore suggests a preponderance of Indonesian men of learning and refinement being among the exiles" probably alludes to an explanation. This observation also finds support in Du Plessis (1972:3) where he notes that during 1725, 1737, and 1749 a number of political exiles of "high standing" were brought to the Cape from Java. It appears that it is the prestige of these early Cape Muslim exiles from the Malay-Indonesian archipelago that firmly entrenched the idea of a Malay identity at the centre of the Cape Muslim community. Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar too, must have remained a powerful figure in the memory of the Cape Muslims throughout these years. This was demonstrated as late as in 1994 with the launch of the Shaykh Yūsuf Tricentenary Commemorations. Thousands of people turned out in support of the figure they have come to accept as the founder of Islam in South Africa. Identification with the origins of Shaykh Yūsuf was clearly visible in the dress adopted by many of the organisers of the Tricentenary committee (Ward,1994:41). But theories of identity and imagined communities apart, the sense of indebtedness within the Cape Muslim community to the founders of Islam in the Cape was clearly evident. This sense of indebtedness must have been present during the previous centuries too. Culture is mediated, and the Islamic cultural

patterns in the Cape were largely mediated through its Malay-Indonesian leadership.

3.7 Conclusion

We need to look as a consequence - and in conclusion - at both the causes and broader cultural patterns that influenced Islam not only in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, but also in East Africa and India, particularly along its Malabarian and Coromandel coasts, and to a lesser extent, its Bengalese forms. This is seminal to our analysis of Islam at the Cape and the particular forms of *Taşawwuf* that emerged there.

Central to this dissertation, as mentioned previously, is the question of *Ḥaḍramawt*. Two issues need to be looked at. Firstly, we need to look at the causes behind the massive *Ḥaḍramī* migrations to the above-mentioned areas. Secondly, we need to understand why the *Ḥaḍramīs* were so influential wherever they settled.

Located along the southern coastal areas of the Arabian Peninsula along the Indian Ocean, *Ḥaḍramawt* is within fairly easy reach of the three areas of our concern. South Arabians had a strong and well-developed maritime tradition stretching to the beginnings of the first millennium. Along with what Pearson (2000:37) calls "deep structure" matters, namely, favourable winds, currents and topography, the Indian Ocean posed something less than a daunting task for these seafarers. These factors alone however, were not responsible for these migrations. There were as Pearson (2000:47) further indicates, certain "push factors" that caused these. Al-Kāf (1990:118-9) lists five of these factors; the first of them specifically related to the era of the four righteous companions:

- a) Their extensive role in the early battles of the Muslims.
- b) Long periods of drought that plagued the *Ḥaḍramawt*.

c) Their zeal for religious studies that lead them to popular Islamic centres such as those in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, India, Makkah, and Medina.

d) Frequent civil strife and unrest that led many of them to take refuge in other countries.

e) Their sense of commercial enterprise that could not be satisfied by the scarce resources and unfavourable economic conditions within the *Ḥaḍramawt*.

What, on the other hand, were the causes of both the high standing and also the eventual conflict that derived from *Ḥaḍramī* Islam?

Amongst Muslims there is a traditional respect for those who claim descent from the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). There are a number of texts that may be adduced from the Qurān and the Ḥadīth literature that support and reinforce this respect. Those, therefore, claiming descent from the Prophet (pbuh) enjoyed enormous prestige and influence within the communities in which they resided. There can be little doubt that - in addition to some outstanding scholars from amongst the *Sayyid* and *Sharīf* classes - that it is this very prestige associated with their lineage, that both fostered and expanded their influence within these communities.

Ironically, it was this very notion of the nobility of lineage that led to the partial undoing of the *Bā 'Alawiyya* during the latter half of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century. The roots of this undoing may be traced to the *Shāfīte* school of thought itself. Imām Shāfī's genealogical roots are firmly embedded in the Arab lineage of Quraysh (Abū Zaḥra: 436).

The strong emphasis that this fact came to assume in the later *Shāfīte* legal discourse might well have found a strong resonance in the *Sharīfs* and *Sayyids* of the *Ḥaḍramawt*. This resonance might have been amplified by the additional fact that the *Sharīfs* and *Sayyids* were severely oppressed during the *'Umayyad* period (Shākir, 1982: 6). Nevertheless, the issue of lineage became so strongly emphasised in the *Shāfīte* school of thought that it was taken to extreme levels in the question of *kafā'a* in Muslim marriages - particularly by the *'Alawīs* (Ziadeh, 1957:515). The concept of *kafā'a* deals with the notion of equality of status or compatibility in a Muslim marriage. *Kafā'a* is the right of the woman. In other words, for a Muslim

male to marry a female he has to enjoy equality of status with her in terms of social standing, education etc. In the *Shafite* school of thought, nobility of lineage became a firmly emphasised criterion in measuring this compatibility. Viewed by many as contradicting the universal spirit of equality in Islam it has sometimes been the source of bitter conflict.

Such a conflict erupted in Indonesia at the turn of the 20th century; the effects of which are still felt today in Indonesia (al-Kāf, 1990:119-126; Serjeant, 1962:249). One of the leading scholars living in Indonesia at the time, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Sūrkutī, was asked whether it is permissible for an *ʿAlawī* female to marry a non-*ʿAlawī* male. He answered in the affirmative. The *ʿAlawī* leadership rejected this and used the *Shafite madhhab* to support their position. The result was civil unrest and rioting of an extraordinary proportion. Matters came to such a pass that the British, Dutch, and Saudi Arabian governments were called in to intervene in the conflict. Indonesian society was split with the *Ḥaḍramite Sayyids* having lost much of their influence (al-Kāf, 1990:124). This social disaster could also partly explain the low profile adopted by the *Bā ʿAlawīs* during the 20th century.

Nevertheless, their influential legacy - still closely linked to their venerated lineage as descendants of the Prophet - lives on; and it started with al-Imām al-Muhājir Aḥmad b. ʿĪsa in Ḥaḍramawt during the year 318AH (Sumayt, n.d.:96). He is generally regarded as the "father" of the *Bā ʿAlawī* lines. But the paramount *Sayyid* with whom all *Bā ʿAlawī* lines identify is al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam Muḥammad b. ʿAli Bā ʿAlawī (d. 1255AD)

While the *Shafite madhhab* was introduced into Yemen by al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Qurashī (d.438AH) (al-Jaʿdī, n.d.:87) - shortly after the arrival of Aḥmad b. ʿĪsa - it was not until the 13th century that the *Shafite madhhab* became the dominant one. This occurred when the Rasūlids (1232-1442) came to power in Yemen (Baynard, 1991:8). For the *Bā ʿAlawīs* this was the era of the charismatic leader al-Faqīh al-Muqaddam. And we note, not surprisingly, a corresponding emergence of Islam in its *Shafite Bā ʿAlawite* forms along the Malabarian and Coromandel Coasts of India, the East Coast of Africa, and the Malay-Indonesian

Archipelago. Forms, we might add, that informed the very essence of Islam at the Cape.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Mystic Beginnings: From the Orangh Cayen to Shaykh Yūsuf (1658-700)

4.1 Introduction

After the Mardijckers in 1658, by the time the first significant Muslim exiles arrived at the Cape in 1667, *taṣawwuf*, in all its diversity, was most likely the dominant stream throughout the Muslim world. Its impact was visible not only in the religious outlook and practices of the courtier, scholar, and ordinary Muslim, but also in the spectacular array of the arts, crafts, and architecture. A predominantly *sūfic* ethos suffused and defined both the spiritual and material culture of that time.

Throughout the Muslim world too, a general state of decline, or “a gradual and normal process of ageing” (Nasr, 1980: 36) as Seyyed Hossein Nasr²⁸ prefers to describe it, had started to set in. Often we tend to overlook this general condition in the Muslim world proper and hence tend to magnify our criticism of the weaknesses of Muslims at the Cape. In this respect it is worth quoting Lapidus at length:

By the end of the eighteenth century the worldwide system of Islamic societies had reached its apogee and begun its political decline. The Safavid state had been defeated by its Afghan invaders and, deserted by its tribal vassals, disintegrated completely. The Ottoman Empire went through a period of decentralization, though the concept of an imperial state had been unimpaired. The Mughal Empire disintegrated into numerous competing and feudal regimes. In Southeast Asia, a centralized regime had never been established over the Indonesian archipelago or the Malay peninsula, and the largest Indonesian state, the Mataram empire of Java, came under direct Dutch economic and indirect Dutch political control. In North Africa Muslim states

were being subverted by their declining commercial position in the Mediterranean, and provincial, tribal, and Sufi resistance was on the increase. The Sudanic states had long passed the peak of their commercial prosperity, though the Muslim communities were growing in influence in other parts of Africa. By this time much of the northern steppes of Inner Asia had come under Russian control and Eastern Turkestan under Chinese rule. (Lapidus, 2002: 218-9).

It was largely from such a background that the first Muslims arrived at the Cape. Significant too, is Lapidus' observation that "Şūfi resistance was on the increase." That, however, was not only the case in Africa, but also in the Indonesian archipelago as witnessed in the political exiles who arrived at the Cape, and eminently so in the person of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar.

4.2 The Orangh Cayen

The most well-known political prisoners to arrive at the Cape during the seventeenth century were Tuan Maḥmūd al-Qādirī and Tuan 'Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shah. They lie buried in Constantia at an approximate distance of one kilometre from each other. The name of a third who arrived with them has not been recorded and lies buried on Robben Island. Their arrival at the Cape is captured in the oft-quoted plaque displayed in the shrine of Tuan Maḥmūd situated on Islam Hill in Constantia. The plaque states:

On the 24th January, 1667 the ship, Polsbroek left Batavia and arrived here 13 May following with three political prisoners in chains; Malays from the west coast of Sumatra who were banished to the Cape until further orders, on the understanding that would eventually be released. They were rulers, Orangh Cayen, men of

wealth and influence. Great care had to be taken that they were not left at large as they were likely to do injury to the Company. Two were sent to the Company's forests and one to Robben Island. (Da Costa, 1994: 130).

Very little is known about the third. Even his grave on Robben Island has not been established. (Davids, n.d.: 1, 7)²⁹ Tuans Maḥmūd and Matebe Shah, on the other hand, enjoy a far greater presence and visibility in Cape Muslim history and memory. In honour of their contributions, sacrifices, and saintliness, shrines have been erected over their graves. These shrines, as elsewhere in the Muslim world, have played an important role in preserving the histories of these personages; the importance of which might otherwise have been lost to posterity. But before we explore their possible contributions in any greater detail a few key ideas need to be examined.

4.2.1 Shrines, Myths, and Symbol

While I stated earlier in Chapter Two that certain practices at the shrines of saintly people may have become over-ritualised and even exploited for monetary purposes - particularly in poorer countries - to the *ṣūfi*-minded, nonetheless, shrines also form part of a broader sacred text that has become deeply interfused with their invocations (*adḥkār*) and other devotional readings and practises. They have, in other words, become an intrinsic part of that sacred complex that both constitutes and informs *ṣūfic* symbology. It is for this reason that the erasure of shrines - as text - is considered an act of desecration. The desecration resides not in the destruction of the building that gives form to the shrine, but in the shrine as sacred symbol. "Scripturalist" puritans of so-called High Islam would have nothing of this. In Saudi Arabia, for example, and particularly in Makkah, Madina, and Jeddah, hundreds of shrines have been demolished. (Mostafā, 1997: 13). As testament to the will of those who regard them as sacred symbols some of these demolished shrines have re-emerged in another form. I have in my possession a framed and delicately

reconstructed photograph of the shrine of the first wife of the Prophet (pbuh) Khadijat al-Kubrā (Khadija the Great) that I received as a gift from Makkah. In this form her demolished shrine now decorates the walls in the homes of hundreds of people.

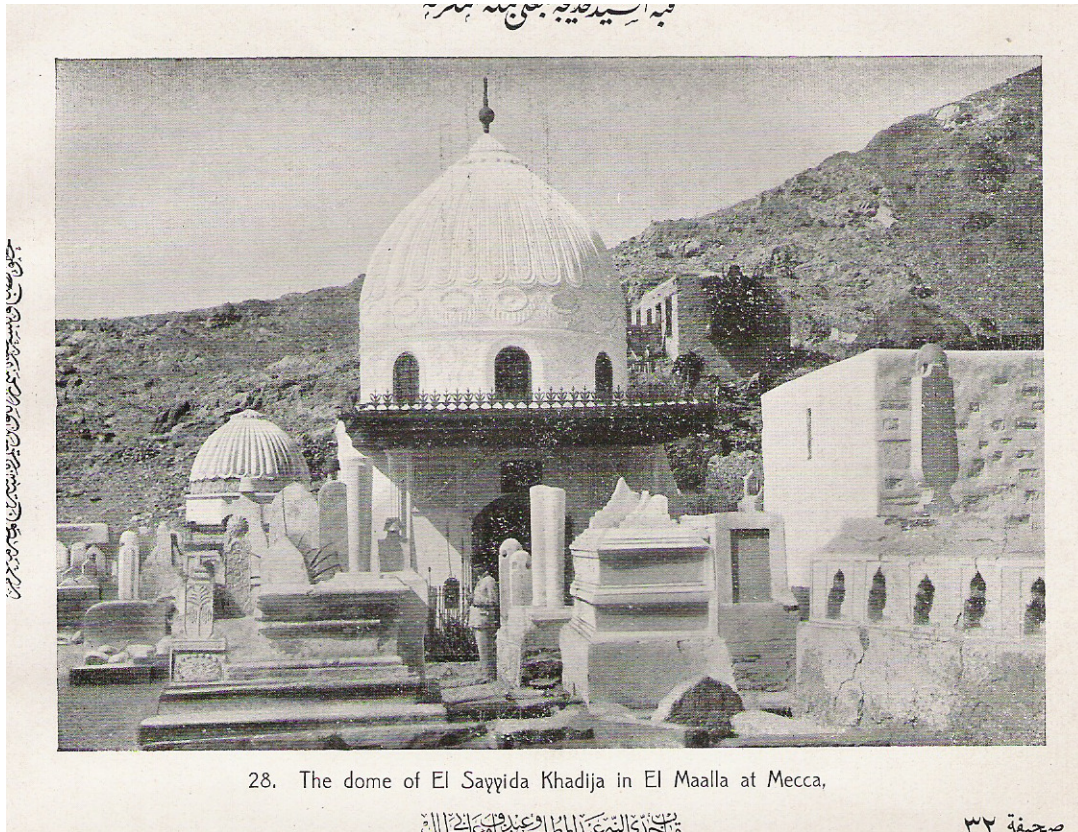


Figure 1: The Shrine of Sayyida Khadija (ra) demolished more than 70 years ago.

It is this will, interfused with a deep sense of the sacred, that has played a fairly substantial role in preserving the links between the founders of Islam at the Cape and later generations. Armstrong (2000: xi) captures part of the essence of this sacralizing process when she states:

A Muslim would meditate upon the current events of their time and upon past history as a Christian would contemplate an icon, using the creative imagination to discover the hidden divine kernel. An account of the *external history* of the Muslim people cannot, therefore,

be of mere secondary interest, since one of the chief characteristics of Islam has been its sacralization of history. [italics mine].

At the Cape Shaykh Yūsuf himself may have actively fostered this tradition of the building of shrines. Quite often he refers to his own departed shaykhs or other saintly personages with the benedictory phrase *qaddas Allah sirrabu wa nawwara dariḥabu* - May God sanctify his secret *and illumine his shrine*³⁰.

Along with litanies (to be discussed later) one way in which *taṣawwuf* “overflows into outer Islam” says Lings, “is through its dead - and this shows more clearly than anything else the central status of Sufism within the religion as a whole. A living Saint belongs firstly to his disciples and then secretly, through his presence, to the community as a whole. But dead, his presence is no longer secret; and there is scarcely a region in the empire of Islam which has not a Sufi for its Patron Saint.” (Lings, 1981: 119).

In addition to the above and particularly in the absence of a lettered culture - though this is not a necessary prerequisite - a number of myths and legends evolved to preserve that history.

According to Eliade, as related by Mukaddam, “myth is the symbolic patterning of human behaviour.” (Mukaddam, 1990: 29). The mythological patterning that unfolded in the Cape was steeped in a milieu saturated in *tasawwuf*. In fact we could well argue that without this milieu these myths may never have evolved. Schimmel (1994: 127), in reviewing some of the debates and critical responses surrounding *maulūd* poetry in Egypt during the 1930s, notes that it was Ṭāhā Ḥusayn who defended it, “for as an artist he was able to grasp their deeper meaning.” Commenting on the attitudes of rationalists and dogmatists she continues:

For rationalists do not understand the symbolic character of myth and strive to explain away whatever seems to be contrary to normal common sense, trying,

at best, to purify the kerygma from the mythological accretions, while dogmatists, on the other hand, require absolute faith in the external words or statements by which layers of deeper meaning are covered.

Given these proclivities for myth and symbol in artists we might well argue that there is an artist in every *Sufi*. It is for this reason too, that *Sufis* have been the most prolific writers of creative literature in Islam. Aware as they are of the multi-layered meanings embedded in sacred texts they often express themselves in mythopoetic forms - “adumbrating truths after the manner of myths” as Hodgson defines them, “which tell in multivalent images truths about life that every hearer can grasp at his own level of meaning.” (Hodgson, 1974 [Vol. 1]: 224).

Hodgson’s important observation that the framing of *ṣūfi* teachings in mythopoetic form is designed to accommodate different levels of people finds an echo in the Prophet’s (pbuh) way (*sunnah*) of “speaking to people according to their capacities to understand.” (al-Mālikī, 1990: 272). This has become a near maxim in general Islamic pedagogy and there can be little doubt that the *ṣūfi* shaykhs who arrived at the Cape were conversant with these methods. This awareness of the differing capacities of people is abundantly clear in the teachings of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar too. In his *Zubdat al-Asrār* he frequently refers to “people of knowledge”, “the people of knowledge and wisdom” etc.

In a passage of his *Zubda* (Dangor, 1990:7) - commenting on the *hadīth*, “Worship Allah as if you can see Him, for though you cannot see Him, He certainly sees you” - he says:

One of the people of intuitive perception (*dhawq*) among the Sufis (may Allah sanctify their secret) said that the stage of “worship Allah as if you see Him” is the stage of the common people among the travellers on the Sufi path; the stage of “although you cannot see Him,

He certainly sees you” is the stage of the elect among them. So understand that.

Ṣūfī discourse is acutely punctuated with an awareness of different capacities within people and finds its expression in the three-tiered typology of the common people (*‘awām*), the elect (*Khāṣ*), and the superlatively elect (*akhaṣṣ al-Khawāṣ*). (al-Ṭūsī, 1960: 68)). The level of the *‘awām* includes the novices (*mubtadi‘īn*) who are initiated into the path. It is at this level too that the *ṣūfī* masters have warned of the dangers of miracles and other extraordinary events that might in fact detract from the progress of the novice. Al-Ghazālī (1986 [vol.3]: 84) reinforces the point in the *Iḥyā* where he states:

The novice who has dedicated his time to remembrance (*dhikr*) and contemplation (*fikr*) may encounter numerous obstacles on the path such as self-admiration and egotism, including those states of ecstasy that he might experience and the initial appearances of miracles (*karāmāt*). Becoming distracted, or occupied, by any of these obstacles would interfere with his progress and eventually arrest it.

Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar expresses a similar position in the *Zubda* (Dangor, 1990: 20):

Those with knowledge of Allah, the exalted, agree that to adhere to the external of the Shariah is one of the conditions of sainthood, in addition to adhering to the inner aspect of reality. Otherwise the servant cannot become one of the *walis* in any respect, even if extraordinary things emanate from him.

Verily, performing extraordinary things in his case is only regarded as gradual ascending towards attaining *karāmāt*...

It is at this novitiate level that the origins of “popular” *Sufism* may be located. It is here that the mythopoeic *forms* of expression take precedence over the *content* - the meanings of which unfold at ever-increasing depths the further the aspirant travels along the way - and may even, depending entirely on the nature of the myth, come to masquerade as the most important aspect of the message. Few, if any, of the *ṣūfī* masters have ever encouraged miracles and magic in their teachings. Hodgson (1974 [Vol.1]: 399) is quite blunt about this: “The moral is not, as it might seem, that the mystic should depend extensively on miracles: no mystic taught this.”

While the contours between myth and miracle are often obscure, and equally often overlap in seamless ways, to dismiss these myths and miracles, however, with the knowledge that they were never taught by *ṣūfī* masters would be a mistake. Relevant to our purpose here is Cumpsty’s observation that the main question “about myth is not whether it is true”. (Mukaddam, 1990: 29). Expanding on Cumpsty’s idea Mukaddam relates, “the story in the myth may be historically true or it may be historically false or simply non-historical. The important thing to ask is rather, what is it meant to do?” (Mukaddam, 1990: 29). Much of what we know today about early Cape Muslim history has been mediated by myth and legend in the absence of which the density of its spirituality might have been completely lost to us. “It is the legends and myths” says Davids, “which give the historical events a cultural and spiritual relevance.” It is worth examining the functionality of myth in somewhat greater detail. According to Hooke (Mukaddam, 1990: 30, 41-2) there are five categories of myth³¹:

- a) Ritual myths that establish particular actions to secure the continuity of the proper order of things.
- b) Origin myths that explain the origins of significant things, people, or places.

- c) Cultic and Historic myths that narrate important and significant events affecting nations, communities and groups, including sacred places and buildings.
- d) Prestige myths that invest with an aura of mystery events such as the birth or exploits of a popular hero.
- e) Eschatological myths are the so-called “end-time” myths that deal, for example, with the second coming of Jesus and his final cataclysmic confrontation with the *dajjāl*³², and other matters detailing the events of the Final Judgement.

Schimmel (1994: 125) acknowledges though, that Islām, as a religion, offers very little in the way of mythological material. It is predominantly the poets and mystic thinkers who have ploughed the “mythological” motifs in the sacred texts with a view to expanding and enlarging on their meanings. An intrinsically symbiotic relationship, therefore, appears to exist between the mystically inclined - a tendency, of course, which also describes the majority of Muslim poets throughout the classical Islamic era - and “mythological” motif; and which also appears to have emerged very early in Islamic history. It is precisely because of the intrinsicity of this relationship that an environment congenial to the development and continuation of mythopoeiac articulations existed at the Cape - more of which, with recourse to Hooke’s and Schimmel’s classifications, will be discussed later.

Amongst Cape Muslims - particularly in the older contemporary generations - there also appears to be a strong sense of the symbolic meanings of things. These stretch from the overtly mundane to a more deeply sacred understanding of symbols.

Of the more mundane kind there is the example of the popular children’s game called “five stones”. This game was generally prohibited from being played indoors on the pretext that the five stones symbolised death - four of the stones stood for the carriers of the bier, while the fifth stone symbolised the bier itself. Playing indoors, it was believed, prognosticated the death of a family member. Many such superstitions rooted in a symbolic interpretation of events prevailed - and still do to a large extent - in Muslim communities well into the twentieth century. Many of the older

generation Muslims I spoke to were aware that that some of these interpretations were merely ruses to prevent accidents etc. Others, however, were not.

A more sacred understanding of things is revealed in the practice of numerology. This is an ancient practice in which the letters of the Arabic alphabet are assigned certain numbers and is known as the *abjad* system. The term *abjad* is derived from the first four letters that form a unique sequence according to their respective numerical values. For example, the *Alif* of the alphabet denotes the number 1; the *Bā* number 2; the *Jīm* number 3; and the *Dal* number 4. Hence the name *abjad* which is a composite of these four letters. These numbers are often used in the making of amulets³³. Its usage in the form of 786 is also common on Muslim tombstones to denote the benedictory phrase, *Bismillāhi al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*, ‘In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent’.

What is important here, nevertheless, is the fact that symbolic or mythopoeic interpretations are deeply etched into Muslim attitudes and approaches, all of which presuppose a legacy rich with symbolism and other extensions of the creative imagination.

4.2.1.1 Litanies

One of the key means by which *taṣawwuf* penetrates and extends itself even to the peripheries of Muslim communities is through the dissemination and practices of *dhikr* and litanies. Martin Lings, in an observation critical to the very thrust of this dissertation, says:

In addition to its most central members and to those who are initiates but not ‘travellers’, every great Ṣūfī order has at its fringe a large number - sometimes even thousands - of men and women who, without being formally initiated, seek the blessings and guidance of the Shaykh as regards the performance of voluntary worship in addition to what is obligatory. Such guidance often includes the transmission of a litany for regular

recitation; and through its litanies Ṣūfism penetrates the
outer world of Islam... (Lings,1981: 118)

This is one of the two ways, Lings maintains, in which the effects of *taṣawwuf* are made visible in the 'outer' world; the other way, as mentioned earlier, expresses itself through reverence for its dead. This often manifests itself in the form of shrines. One of the reasons, amongst many others, for litanies playing such an important role in general *ṣūfī* methodology is their memorability. Both the learning of litanies and their transmission to future generations require no literary skills. Through litanies, therefore, even the most unlettered communities are allowed entry into the pervasive spirituality of *taṣawwuf*. The infusion of this spirituality is effected by the aura of *baraka* (spiritual influence) that is believed to infuse both the recitations of the respective litanies and the transmission of such litanies.

Moreover, Lings' observation that investiture, or initiation into the order, is not a necessary precondition for the transmission of litanies, is one that Bradlow appears to overlook in his discussion on the role of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape. He is certainly one of the first to have established certain critical linkages between the unfolding of Islam at the Cape and *taṣawwuf*, but is in all likelihood incorrect in his assumption of the existence of continuous chains of investiture during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Bradlow, 1988: 123-4). This is a fairly common misconception, however.

The socio-political conditions at the Cape would have rendered the possibility of a functional *shaykh-murīd* relationship - to be discussed in much greater detail in our examination of Shaykh Yūsuf later - nearly impossible. This relationship is underpinned by the idea of *ṣuḥba* with its implications of both companionship and intensive education (Schimmel. 1975: 102). *Ijāza*, or investiture, is conferred only after lengthy periods of training that include the mastery of both doctrine and method. The available evidence at the Cape appears to indicate that this never happened.

4.2.1.2 The Impact of Tuans Maḥmūd al-Qādirī and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shāh

To what extent the early Ṣūfī masters such as Tuans Maḥmūd and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe left their mark on Cape Muslim society may be explored through some of the features previously mentioned.



Figure 2: The Shrine of Tuan Mahmūd

Previous to the arrival of the three shaykhs (including Tuan Matariem) in 1667 - a number of Muslims referred to as the Mardijckers - free people from Amboyna in Southern Molucca - arrived at the Cape in 1658. A “placaat” however, issued in 1642 by van Dieman and the Asiatic Council, and reissued in 1657 prohibited the public practice of Islam (Davids, 1980: 35). It was into this oppressive milieu that these early Muslims arrived. At the time of their arrival there were approximately 270 slaves at the Cape, some of whom were Muslim (Da Costa, 1994: 130).

The fact that the graves of Tuans Maḥmūd and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe have not only been identified but also preserved and honoured as shrines indicate a high

probability that many of these Muslim slaves - and likely including many of the Mardyckers - may have sought them out for religious instruction. Unfortunately, as a result of the extreme political oppression and deprivation suffered by these slaves, no written records exist that would have indicated the nature of the Islamic Law, the *ṣūfī* teachings, and the types of litanies that were taught to these slaves.



Figure 3: The Shrine of 'Abd al-Rahmān Matebe

However, from the agnomens “al-Qādirī” appended to their names we may quite confidently infer that some of the *Qādirī* practices were definitely taught. A particular characteristic of some of the *Qādirī adhkār* (sing. *dhikr*) is the force and intensity which accompany them - a style as widespread and as common to the Cape as memory can serve. This is particularly evident in the *ḥaḍrah*, or congregational *dhikr*. One of the formats as outlined by Da Costa³⁴ is the *ḥaḍrah* comprising three phases: the first phase consisting of the recitation of the *Mawlūd al-Nabī* of Sayyid Barzanjī, the second consisting of the *dhikr* proper, and the third of *madā'ih*, or sacred eulogies. The *ḥaḍrah* is then terminated with a *du'ā* (prayer). If this was one of the formats practiced by the early Qādirīs at the Cape then it would have been

impossible for that *mawlūd* to have been the Barzanjī. Da Costa, in further attempting to establish the *Qādirī* links of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar states, citing oral history as evidence, that he too had performed the *Mawlūd al-Barzanjī*³⁵. This too would have been impossible. Sayyid Ja‘far b. Ḥasan b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Barzanjī was born in AD 1690 in Madinah (See Annexure 8), only nine years before Shaykh Yūsuf died in AD 1764. A far more likely entry point to the “dhikr proper” - which is a central feature of *Qādirī* practices - would be the recitation of the *Burdah* composed by Sharaf al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Busīrī who died in AD 1298. Its popularity throughout Cape Muslim history would certainly support such speculation. With a renewed interest in *Qādirī* practices towards the end of the eighteenth century the *Mawlūd Barzanjī* might well have come to replace the *Burdah* in the *Qādirī ḥaḍrah* at the Cape. Throughout the Muslim world the impact of the *Mawlūd Barzanjī* was nothing short of overwhelming. Furthermore, some internal evidence for *Qādirī* influences may in fact be gleaned from the *d‘uā’* that follows the *ḥaḍrah*. Part of the *du‘ā’* recorded by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (1077-1166) himself in the *Kitāb al-Ghunyah* reads as follows:

Allahumma laka l-ḥamd shukran, wa laka al-mannu faḍlan, bi-nia‘matika tatimma al-ṣālibāt, nas‘aluka allahumma farajan qarīban, fa-innaka lam tazal mujīban, wa ṣabran jamīlan, wa ‘āfiyatan min jamī‘i l-balāyah, wa l-salāmata min ṭarīqi l-razāyah, bi-rahmatika yā arḥama l-rāḥimīn.

Allahumma ja‘l ijtīmā‘anā ijtīmā‘an marḥūman, wa tafarruqanā tafarruqan ma‘šūman, wa lā taja‘l finā shaqiyyan wa lā maḥrūman, wa lā taruddanā bi l-qāfiyati ilā gḥayrika, wa lā tuḥrimnā sa‘ta khayrika.

[O Allah, to You belong all praise as an expression of gratitude, and all favours as an overflowing blessing, and through Your grace righteousness is secured. We

ask You, O Allah, a quick relief from all anxiety, for indeed You never cease to be near. (We ask You too) for strength of courtesy in forbearance, for protection during all times of tribulation, and for safety from all forms of calamity, O most merciful of the merciful.

O Allah, bind our gathering with the bonds of mercy, and when we depart, let us depart with our honour and virtue protected. Cause not a single one of us to suffer misery and deprivation, and do not abandon us to anyone other than You, nor deny us the vastness of Your grace.]

(al-Jilānī, 1956 [Vol.2]: 150).

This is one of the most popular *d'ua's* after group dhikrs and other congregational religious activities in the Cape. The *d'ua'*, being a personal composition of Shaykh 'Abd al-Qādir, reinforces the view that *Qādirī* influences were already well established during the early phases of Islam at the Cape³⁶.

Taṣawwuf, because of its tolerance and “internal” nature, has the inherent ability to sustain itself and adapt to the most oppressive regimes. This sustainability was evident in the Soviet Union where Islam survived largely through the methods employed by the *tariqas*. These methods are evident in Cape Islam. The setting aside of Thursday nights as a time for *dhikr* and pious reflection appears - and supported by oral accounts - to be a practice that virtually coincided with the arrival of Islam at the Cape. Another feature of Cape Islam is the extraordinary awareness of the *maghrib* (sunset) prayers as “sacred time”. While this awareness does not exist to the exclusion of the importance of the other obligatory prayers, the possible reason for this awareness could be that the prohibitions - on pain of death - to which the Muslims were condemned, would have made it difficult, if not impossible, to exercise their duties during the day. The time of *maghrib* might have been that one moment when Muslims were granted a respite from the watchful eyes of the slave masters who represented the embodiment of these harsh laws. This would have

been a time that Muslims would have availed themselves of - by way of *Qaḍā al-Ṣalāt* (making up of the prayers) - in the fulfilment of the other obligatory prayers. Shaykhs such as Tuan Maḥmūd and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shāh might well have suggested this practice with their knowledge that under conditions of coercion, and particularly against the threat of death, it would have been permissible to take recourse to this practice of *Qaḍā al-Ṣalāt*.

The type of Islam, it appears, that was constructed during these hostile days was one that emphasised nightly vigils - a type of Islam, free from legalistic casuistries, which would have found a congenial space in the intrinsically tolerant and universalistic spirit of *taṣawwuf*. In fact, these nightly vigils eventually appeared to arouse the suspicions of the authorities. Shell states that “the authorities believed darkness allowed slaves and free blacks to gather together and plot.” (Shell, 1994: 275).

There is some speculation about whether Tuan Maḥmūd and Tuan ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shāh were still alive when Shaykh Yūsuf arrived at the Cape³⁷. There is a strong, albeit somewhat oblique, likelihood that they were alive by the time of his arrival. The evidence for this may be gleaned from the runaway slaves who were caught in Constantia. In 1695 a runaway slave persuaded other slaves to join him in his escape. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 2). He was the bearer of an amulet that promised to ensure a safe getaway by rendering them invisible. Davids’ interest in this incident appears to be a linguistic one. The amulet, according to him, presupposes that some form of writing skills were known to the slaves. From the religio-historical perspective, however, it presupposes that there was someone knowledgeable in the art of designing amulets. Located in Constantia, as it were, the people responsible for the making of the amulet would most likely have been either Tuan Maḥmūd or Tuan ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. There is, therefore, also the possibility that either or both of them were alive when Shaykh Yūsuf arrived. The making of amulets - being almost exclusively the province of the *ṣūfi*-inclined - at this early stage appears to render the origins of Islam at the Cape incontrovertibly *ṣūfi* in essence.

Beyond these there is little historical data to suggest precisely what type or level of Islamic knowledge - whether *shari‘ah* or *taṣawwuf* - was imparted to the Muslims by Tuan Maḥmūd and Tuan ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. A more comprehensive conception,

however, may be developed with reference to classical methods of Islamic teaching. *Taşawwuf*, in particular, is important in both aspects of doctrine and method. Very specific structures and standards were developed to a proper transmission of these teachings. The arrival of Shaykh Yūsuf at the Cape provides a paradigmatic opportunity to explore these elements.

4.3 Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar

4.3.1 Shaykh Yūsuf: The Myth and the Legend

Like so many great people, numerous myths and legends surround the person of Shaykh Yūsuf. As a preamble to, and in anticipation of a discussion on his socio-political and intellectual contributions, a number of these myths will be recounted here. These myths surrounding the man are an apposite example of how myth functions as “an action to secure the continuity of the proper order of things.” (Mukaddam, 2003: 51). At the Cape, as in Indonesia, Shaykh Yūsuf emerged in myth and legend long before any historical analysis of his life and times.

According to the *Lontarak Tuanta Salamaka ri Gowa*, a mythographical account of the life and times of Shaykh Yūsuf, and widely in possession of the people of Macassar and Bugis, Shaykh Yūsuf was the offspring of a union between *al-Khiḍr*³⁸ and a princess of Galarang Moncongloe, Sitti Āmina. His father, who was apparently an old man was originally referred to as *orang tua*, but was said to have had some peculiarities such as walking without his feet touching the ground and that his origins were unknown - hence the association with *al-Khiḍr*. It is also related that once on a Friday a ray of light was seen radiating from his navel into the sky. This event was also witnessed on a number of other occasions by a number of nurses who had tended to him at the royal palace where he was later housed. (Hamid, 1994: 3-4).



Figure 4: Courtesy Amlay House

During his lifetime too he was already regarded as a legend. A Dutch observer notes, commenting on his leadership qualities: “and the leader of his auxiliary troops, Shaykh Yusuf, a very influential high priest, stood, in the eyes of the populace, in an aura of holiness.” (Mukaddam, 2003: 49).

En route from Ceylon to the Cape, when the fresh water supplies were exhausted on the boat, it is said that after he dipped his foot into the sea the crew were astonished to discover that the buckets they used to collect the water were filled with fresh water.

(Dangor, 1994: 58). The legends continue after his death. Hans Kahler recounts:

Kramat is a festival held by Mah. At Cape Town by going to Zand Vlet in the month Schaban (sic), chiefly at any time after full moon before the fast of Ramadaan begins. Its origin is said to be that a good man in Batavia for his abilities incurred the displeasure of his prince and was forced to leave that country. The Dutch who held the Cape of Good Hope brought him to the Cape. He along with another 4 lived at Zand Vlet. In the course of time they died and were buried. And he (Jessup - *Yūsuf*) being the last survivor died also and is said and believed to have buried himself so that no man knew his grave until a herdsman overcome with fatigue

fell asleep on the spot where his grave was, and during his sleep held conversation with him from the ground. He informed his neighbour who went and searched that spot and found the body of the departed. The other 4 graves were not far off from that one. They built a durgah as in India...His grave is placed in the middle of a mosque. And people tell, every year it is seen to rise higher as a sort of miracle. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 21-2).

Notwithstanding the fact that Muslims had already visited his grave as early as 1707 as Valentijn recorded after a visit to the Reverent Kalden at Faure (Davids, n.d.: 2, 21), these legends perpetuated the memory of Shaykh Yūsuf at the Cape. According to a Buginese and Macassarlian legend too, Shaykh Yūsuf lies buried, instead, at Lakiung. Dangor relates;

The King of Goa now sent someone to Bantam to bring back to Goa the remains of Sehe-Yoesoepoe. (according to legend Yusuf appears to have been buried at Bantam). But the Governor-General of the time refused the request. The King's envoy was very naturally upset about this. Fortunately the Shaykh appeared that night to the envoy in a dream and informed him that on the way to his grave, he could see a ray of light rising from the ground. From that place the envoy should take a handful of earth and take it with him to Goa.

The envoy, in accordance with the dream, put a little of the "sacred" earth in a type of pot known as *baloebae* and returned to Goa.

Before long the soil increased so much that the pot became too small and he had to acquire a bigger type of pot known as *Goembang*. But soon this was also too

small and now he took recourse to a *doeni* or coffin. And lo! It was not long before the soil, which had increased meanwhile, had actually taken the exact form of the long-deceased Shaykh with a Quran under the right arm and a rosary around the shoulders. Thus one finds to this day, at Lakiyoeng (Lakiung) in Goa the grave of the famous *wali*, Sehe-Yoesoepoe (Shaykh Yusuf). (Dangor, 1994: 50-1).

Moreover, there is also a shrine of Shaykh Yūsuf at Colombo in Ceylon. Few of the *awliyā* known to Islam has been honoured in this particular way. An enormous tribute to this man and his memory continues to be venerated even in the very soil - that continues to expand and grow - that holds him.

We notice here how a combination of myths - historic myth (in the form of the shrine), prestige myth (the aura of holiness that surrounded him and his miraculous transmutation of sea water into fresh water), ritual myth (visitations to the shrine), and origin myth (his mysterious birth with al-Khiḍr as the father) - have welded together to ensure the historical continuity of Shaykh Yūsuf in the consciousness of a people vastly removed in distance and place. While Schimmel acknowledges that there is little of the soteriological in Islamic spirituality, there is almost certainly a quasi-soteriological aspect in the manner that Muslims have come to venerate the memory of Shaykh Yūsuf - an aspect, amongst the many others mentioned above, that has undoubtedly played a seminal role in sustaining the memory of Shaykh Yūsuf in the traditional spirituality of Cape Muslims.

In a childlike, laconic poem, touching in its simplicity, the love for the Shaykh is captured - a love that has infused and sustained the many myths and legends around him:

In the island of Java afterwards
Sheikh Yusuf was in the village of Garang
With secret intentions

Against the Dutch, there happened
to be war. The one who was
the commander of the Dutch
was called Martinus
together with people from other islands
the Kings of Bima and Goa, so that it happened that
Sheikh Yusuf went to heaven.
(From a Javanese Poem).

A large part of Cape Muslim oral history expresses itself through mythopoeia. Behind the mythopoeiac forms though, are men and women often worthy of remembrance.

4.3.2 Shaykh Yūsuf: An Overview

Shaykh Yūsuf who arrived at the Cape in 1694 must certainly be regarded as one of the most remarkable people ever to have reached the shores of South Africa. In depth of vision, intellect, and spirit he appears to have dwarfed both captive and captor.

Much has been written about his political history. In this segment reference will be made to his political activities for contextual purposes only. The main focus here will be on his intellectual and spiritual history and contributions. In South Africa Achmat Davids was a pioneer in placing the political struggle of Shaykh Yūsuf at the centre of Muslim resistance to apartheid during the late 1970s and the early 1980s. Another pioneer in studies relating to Shaykh Yūsuf is Suleman Essop Dangor. His translation of the *Zubdat al-Asrār* (The Essence of Secrets) in 1990 made available, for the first time in South Africa, the thought of Shaykh Yūsuf. Yet subsequent to this enormous contribution of Dangor little analysis of Shaykh Yūsuf's thought has occurred at any significant level in the Cape - whether in mosques, Muslim educational institutions, or seminars. A large part of this chapter, necessarily limited as it must be, will be dedicated to such an analysis.

4.3.2.1 Birth and Early Education

Shaykh Yūsuf al-Khalwatī of Macassar (also known as ‘Abidīn Tādia Tjoesoep) was born in Goa, Makasar, on the 3 July, 1626; corresponding with the approximate *Hijri* date, 8 *Shawwāl*, 1036. (Dangor, 1994: 10; Abu Hamid, 1994: 3).

It appears that Shaykh Yūsuf was born into royalty. His father, ‘Abd Allah, bore the honorific title of “gallarang” meaning district or town head. (Dangor, 1994: 16). He was also related to the second Muslim ruler of Macassar, Sulṭān ‘Alā al-Dīn, by marriage. (Dangor, 1994: 10). Through his mother, Āmina, he was a nephew of King Bisei of Goa (Davids, 1980: 37). ‘Abd Allah either died, or divorced Āmina while she was pregnant with Shaykh Yūsuf. After the birth of Yūsuf she married Sulṭān ‘Alā al-Dīn. He embraced him as his own son and gave him the best education the royal court could offer.

Shaykh Yūsuf appears to have shown an aptitude for learning at a young age. He was taught the art of Quranic recitation (*qirā’a*) by one named Daeng ri Tasamang. In Bantoala, the most important centre of Islamic studies in Goa, he learnt Arabic grammar (*Naḥu*), morphology (*ṣarf*), logic (*manṭiq*), Islamic Law (*Fiqh*), and theology (*tawḥīd*) under the instruction of a Shaykh known as Sayyid Bā ‘Alawī b. ‘Abd Allah Ṭāhir. At the age of fifteen he furthered his studies under Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn al-‘Aydīd. (Abu Hamid, 1994: 4).

The names of both of these Shaykhs indicate *Ḥaḍramī* roots in Yemen - Bā ‘Alawī being the most obvious of the two. The al-‘Aydīd family is also a well-known *Ḥaḍramī* clan. With these two teachers formative *Ḥaḍramī* influences appear to be clearly indicated in his early education.

4.3.2.1.1 Aceh

At the age of eighteen, through the encouragement of Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn with whom he had studied for three years, he set out to study Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. (Abu Hamid, 1994: 5). Shaykh Yūsuf’s journey took him via Banten and Aceh where he spent the next five years - most of these probably in Aceh itself. He arrived at Banten in 1664 where he learnt about Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī who

was resident in Aceh at the time. This prompted him to go to Aceh. Some confusion, however, surrounds the person of Shaykh al-Ranīrī. According to Abu Hamid (1994: 5) and Bakar (1991: vol.2, 254) it was Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. ‘Ali al-Ranīrī. Van Bruinessen (1991: 254), however, disputes this. The name of the teacher, Muḥammad Jilānī, Shaykh Yūsuf mentions in his treatise *Safīna*, and also known as Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. Hasanjī b. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-‘Urshī al-Ranīrī, is considered by Van Bruinessen to be a corruption of two names that may be ascribed to an error made by a copyist of the treatise. According to Van Bruinessen Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. ‘Ali b. Hasanjī b. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Ranīrī - often, and mistakenly, regarded as the one who initiated Shaykh Yūsuf into the Qādirī order - had in fact left Aceh for Gujarat in India before Shaykh Yūsuf arrived there. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 254). This view finds support in al-Attas who also mentions that Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. ‘Ali al-Ranīrī had left Aceh in 1664. (al-Attas, 1986: 12). Shaykh Yūsuf was then most likely initiated into the *Qādirīyya* order by Shaykh Muḥammad Jilānī b. Ḥasan al-Ranīrī, the paternal uncle of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. ‘Ali al-Ranīrī. Moreover Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn b. ‘Ali al-Ranīrī belonged to the *Rifā‘īyya* and not the *Qādirīyya* order. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 254). His *Silsila* (chain of transmission) - quoted in full by al-Attas - seems to clearly indicate this. (al-Attas, 1986: 14-15; also See Annexure 4).

4.3.2.1.2 Yemen

In 1649 he left Aceh in Northern Sumatra for the Arabian Peninsula. His first stop was in the Ḥaḍramawt in Yemen.

At Nuhita he was initiated into the *Naqshbandī* order by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Bāqī al-Mizjājī al-Naqshbandī. This branch of the order was connected to the Indian Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn Zakariyya who was considered a rival of the more reformist *Naqshbandī* leader, the famed Shaykh Aḥmad Farūqī al-Sirhindī (1564-1624). Shaykh Tāj al-Dīn was a firm proponent of the *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Unity of Being) school of thought of Muḥyī l-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī (1165-1240). Sirhindī, on the other hand, developed the idea of *waḥdat al-shubūd* (Unity of Being in Vision) in opposition to Ibn ‘Arabī’s *waḥdat al-wujūd*⁸⁹. What is clear though, is that this encounter with Shaykh Muḥammad

‘Abd al-Bāqī marked the beginning of Shaykh Yūsuf’s odyssean voyage in the world of Ibn ‘Arabian metaphysics.

The next *ṭarīqa* he was initiated into was the *Bā ‘Alawiyya*. He was inducted by Shaykh Sayyid ‘Ali at Zabīd in Yemen. (Abu Hamid, 1994: 5; Van Bruinessen, 1991: 255). Van Bruinessen (1991: 255) is of the view that the “defective silsila” recorded by Shaykh Yūsuf with regard to this order reflects “his lack of deeper interest in it”. While the defective *silsila* may appear to reflect a lack of interest in the order, it may not necessarily be for the reasons implied by Van Bruinessen. The context within which Van Bruinessen discusses the matter seems to suggest that his lack of interest may have been prompted by the idea that the *Bā ‘Alawī* order was largely confined to the *Ḥaḍramī sayyids* and their disciples, and because the order does not seem to advocate any particular mystical doctrines, limiting themselves to the “recitation of a lengthy litany (ratib).” (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 255). These observations appear uncharacteristically reductionist on the part of Van Bruinessen. The *Bā ‘Alawī* order will be discussed in much greater detail in Chapter Five. Suffice it to say at this stage that the order, while it has on occasion, and mentioned in an earlier chapter, suffered severe criticism for exhibiting moments of inordinate clannishness, it is definitely not limited to *Ḥaḍramī sayyids*. Amongst its foremost proponents were non-*sayyids* such as Imām ‘Abd Allah b. Aḥmad Bā Sūdān and Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks (to be discussed later), a *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykh, was in fact married to a *Ḥaḍramī sayyida*, Jawāhir Bā Rūma. Nonetheless, and regardless of the merits or relevance of the charge, it is certainly true that the *Bā ‘Alawiyya* place more emphasis on lineage than any of the other *ṭarīqas*. But it is equally important to know that there are two distinct chains of transmission that define the *Bā ‘Alawī* order with Sayyid Muḥammad b. ‘Ali Bā ‘Alawī forming the nexus of both chains; the first is known as the Ancestral *Bā ‘Alawī* Chain of Transmission (*silsilat al-ābā wa l-ajdād*), and the second chain is the non-*Ḥaḍramī* line that includes Imām al-Ghazālī (a non-*sayyid*, non-*Ḥaḍramī* Persian by descent) and known as the *Shu‘aybiyya Madiniyya* Chain of Transmission (*silsilat al-Shu‘aybiyya al-Madiniyya*). This latter chain is named after the renowned Shaykh Shu‘ayb b. al-Ḥusayn, better known as Abū Madyan of Morocco. (Sumayt, n.d.: 68).

Excessive emphasis on the Ancestral Chain - as it sometimes appears - may serve to alienate some, but it is doubtful whether Shaykh Yūsuf would have paid much attention to such an emphasis. He would almost certainly have been aware of the attitudes towards the question of lineage articulated by the most authentic representatives of the *Bā ‘Alawī* order. Two positions, the first from one of the most renowned twentieth century *Bā ‘Alawī* Shaykhs, Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī, and the second from a contemporary of Shaykh Yūsuf, considered the *Qutub* (or axis) of the *Bā ‘Alawī* order, Sayyid ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Alawī al-Haddād, would serve to make the point. Sayyid Muḥammad (2003: 86) states in his *al-Taḥdhīr min al-Mujāzafa bi l-Takfīr* (Cautioning Against the Reckless Charge of Unbelief):

Those who boast about their lineage and ancestors are bereft of *baraka* (spiritual influence)...and if they persist in doing so their good deeds will come to naught. For the Prophet (pbuh) said, “Those who are remiss in their deeds, will find their ancestors unresponsive to their needs.” (Narrated by Muslim).

Further on Sayyid Muḥammad (2003: 87) quotes from a poem of Sayyid ‘Abd Allah al-Ḥaddād:

Do not be deceived by lineage
No! Do not be contented with who my father
was...
Follow the guidance of the best of Prophets,
Aḥmad, the guide of the Prophetic way.

Their practices are also not limited to one lengthy litany. The order is probably the most productive in the writing of litanies, partly for the reason that most of their doctrines are in fact, and in tandem with the *Shādhilī* order, embedded in and articulated through these litanies. There are also numerous *Bā ‘Alawī* works that are

dedicated exclusively to doctrinal matters - the essence of which is the teachings of al-Imām al-Ghazālī.

A more plausible reason for his lack of interest in the *Bā ‘Alawī* order may be ascribed to the order’s extreme caution in accommodating the thought of Ibn ‘Arabī. It is worth quoting at length from the *‘Alam al-Nabrās* of ‘Abd Allah al-‘Aṭṭās:

There are those who pursue those realities having neither tasted them nor attained the knowledge of their depths and profound secrets. They merely read the books of those who have written about these matters, such as the *Qutub*, Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Ali ibn ‘Arabī, al-Jilānī, and others. The harm, pitfalls, and potential for stumbling and straying in such practices far exceed their benefits, uprightness, and guidance...

My master Shaykh ‘Abd Allah al-Ḥaddād, may Allah sanctify his secret, has declared exempt (for reading purposes) from all the books of Ibn ‘Arabī, only his treatise entitled “*al-Quds fī munāṣaḥāt al-nafs*” (The Sanctuary for the Counselling of the Self)...The rest of the books are only suitable for people who have the aptitude for them...

That is why Imām al-Ghazālī, may Allah be pleased with him, when he reached the boundaries of *ḥaqīqa* (divine realities) in his writings, and wished to prevent those of deficient understanding from falling into their abyss or coming to harm, said: “We shall here stop the pen from writing for this is knowledge beyond which it is forbidden to divulge.”

This apparent ambivalence towards Ibn ‘Arabī is also noted by Bang where she states that “the works of Ibn al-‘Arabī seem to have been known (in the Bā ‘Alawī tariqa), but controversial.” (Bang, 2003: 15).

Shaykh Yūsuf’s unrelenting intellect and effusive spirituality would have prevented him from accepting such constraints. It appears, as is evident from the *Zubda* and his other works, that he was satisfied with issuing short, intermittent warnings about the “pitfalls” of misunderstanding the thought of Ibn ‘Arabī. For the rest, almost all his works are saturated in Ibn ‘Arabian metaphysics - ideas and thoughts that often express themselves, albeit in a more restrained way, in spontaneous outpourings of spiritual ecstasy typical of the *Hallājīan*⁴⁰ tradition.

4.3.2.1.3 Madina

It appears that Shaykh Yūsuf left the Ḥaḍramawt primarily to perform the *ḥajj* from whence he immediately proceeded to Madina. Here he was initiated into the *Shaṭṭāriyya* order by Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Kurānī (d. 1689) Shaykh Ibrāhīm was also one of the foremost scholars in the metaphysics of Ibn ‘Arabī (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 254). According to Van Bruinessen Shaykh Ibrāhīm “must have been a major, if not the most important, influence on Yūsuf’s intellectual and spiritual development.“. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 254).

Shaykh Ibrāhīm b. Ḥasan b. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Kūrānī is also regarded as the supreme authority of the seventeenth century in the science dealing with the ascription of chains of authority to particular teachers and texts. This is similar to the science of *isnād* (chains of transmission) in *ḥadīth* literature. His magnum opus appears to have been a massive index of texts compiled in ten volumes entitled *al-Umam li Īqāz al-Himam* (Foundational Texts for the Awakening of Intellectual Interest). This work has been printed in India. (al-Mālikī, n.d: 121-2).

Another interesting *silsila* in which Shaykh Ibrāhīm appears is the one cited by Shaykh Muḥammad Maḥfūz b. ‘Abd Allah al-Tirmisī in his *Kifāyat al-Mustafīd* under the heading *‘Ilm al-Taṣawwuf wa l-Awrād* (The Science of Ṣūfism and Litanies). He traces Shaykh Ibrāhīm’s *silsila* to the works of Imām al-Ghazālī - particularly *the Iḥyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* - starting with his own Shaykh, Sayyid Abū Bakr Shaṭā al-Makkī (under

whom he studied Ghazālī's works), through Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī to Imām al-Ghazālī. (al-Tirmisī, n.d.: 37).

That Shaykh al-Kūrānī was an authority in both the metaphysics of Ibn ʿArabī and the works of Imām al-Ghazālī is a striking indication of the depth of the man's learning. Little wonder, therefore, that he made such a huge impact on Shaykh Yūsuf.

Under the instructions of Shaykh Ibrāhīm, Shaykh Yūsuf copied three works which he also studied at the *ribāṭ* of Shaykh Ibrāhīm. (Dangor, 1994: 12). They are:

- a) *al-Durrat al-Fākḥira* of Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmʿī. This work is known for its complexity. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 254).
- b) An Arabic commentary of the above work by ʿAbd al-Ghafūr al-Lārī.
- c) *Risāla fi l-Wujūd* also of Nūr al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmʿī.

He also received an *ijāza* in the *Shaṭṭāriyya* order from Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn al-Mulk. (Dangor, 1994:12).

4.3.2.1.4 Damascus

It was in Damascus that the honorific title “Tāj al-Khalwatī” (Crown of the Khalwatiyya) was bestowed upon Shaykh Yūsuf. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 253). He was inducted into the order by the Imām of the Ibn ʿArabī mosque, Shaykh Abū l-Barakāt Ayyūb b. Aḥmad b. Ayyūb al-Khalwatī al-Qurashī. (Dangor, 1994: 12; Van Bruinessen, 1991: 253). With Shaykh Yūsuf's pedigree in learning it comes as no surprise that he was granted this honorific title.

Shaykh Yūsuf referred to Shaykh Abū l-Barakāt as an adept of the *Khalwatīyya-Aḥmadiyya* branch. This practice of enlarging the name of the “mother” order is common in most *ṭarīqas*. This enlargement is normally done in honour of an outstanding personality located within any given *silsila*. A new branch of the order then extends from that personality. Van Bruinessen links this name to Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn of Maghnisa (d. 1505) who is the selfsame Mulla Shams al-Dīn al-Rūmī in Shaykh Yūsuf's *silsila* (see Annexure 4). This branch of the *Khalwatī* order later

mutated into the *Khalwatiyya-Yūsuf* that emerged after the death of Shaykh Yūsuf in the South Celebes. The *Khalwatiyya-Yūsuf*, however, was not a mere replication of the *Khalwatiyya Aḥmadiyya*. It was in fact an amalgam of all the previous orders he was inducted into with the *Khalwatī* component remaining dominant. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 253).

4.3.2.1.5 Back to Makkah

It was in Makkah that the reputation of Shaykh Yūsuf was established. Recognised by the authorities for the depth of his learning he was granted a teaching post in the *Masjid al-Ḥarām* (the Grand Mosque) - referred to, up till today, as a *kursiyy* or “seat” of teaching. Historically this is a privilege granted only to the most advanced and outstanding of the ‘*Ulamā*’ (religious scholars). Here he became known as the “Jāwī ‘Ālim” (Javanese Scholar). It was during his Makkan days that he also appointed ‘Abd al-Fatāḥ Baṣīr al-Dharīr (Tuan Rappang) - who was then a student of his - to act as the *khalīfa* (deputy) of his order. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 6; Davids, n.d.: 2, 6).

He also married a lady by the name of Sitti Khadija - the daughter of a *Shāfi* Imām who also taught within the precincts of the *Masjid al-Ḥarām*. They had a daughter whom they named Sitti Samang, or Puang Ammanng. Sitti Khadija died on giving birth to this child. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 6).

In 1664, at the age of 38, Shaykh Yūsuf left for Jeddah to arrange for his passage back to Indonesia. During this short stay at the port city of Jeddah he married the daughter of another shaykh resident in the city. From this union they had a son by the name of Daeng Kare Sitaba. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 7).

4.3.3 Back to Banten

Instead of returning to his home in Goa, Macassar, Shaykh Yūsuf chose to settle at Banten. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 7). This choice might have been influenced by three factors. Firstly, Goa, under the leadership of Ṣulṭān Ḥasan al-Dīn was at war with the Dutch East India Company. By now the Dutch had taken control of Batavia. For

trading purposes, however, they had to extend their control to Macassar and the Southern Celebes. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 7). Secondly, Banten was entering a “golden age” of Islamic learning and economic prosperity. (Dangor, 1994: 14). Thirdly, it is also probable that the ruler of Banten, Pangeran Surya - also variously known as *Şulţān Ageng Tirtayasa* and ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ - had invited him to stay at Banten.

Nonetheless, to ensure that the Muslim community in South Sulawesi (Celebes) benefited from his teachings, he sent his *khalīfa*, Tuan Rappang, as a spiritual guide to them. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 8). Meanwhile Shaykh Yūsuf himself was chosen as the in-house religious instructor of *Şulţān Ageng*’s children. Amongst these children was *Şulţān Hajjī* who was to become a bitter opponent of his own father in later times. Moreover, Shaykh Yūsuf not only married the daughter of *Şulţān Ageng* but was also “appointed as Muftī and advisor to the *Şulţān*.” (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 8). He also taught his students at a section reserved as an Islamic school at the *Şulţān Ageng Mosque*. (Dangor, 1994: 14). From his extensive travels in pursuit of knowledge to his intensive teaching schedule at Banten, it appears that Shaykh Yūsuf was enormously committed to both the procurement and dissemination of Islamic knowledge - a commitment that was only matched by his own resistance to Dutch colonialism.

Şulţān Ageng must have felt a degree of concern at the depth of Shaykh Yūsuf’s teachings. He appeared fearful of misinterpretation and requested that Shaykh Yūsuf record in writing some of his teachings. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 10). It was at Banten then, it appears, that Shaykh Yūsuf also wrote a number of his works. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 256). Most of his works he composed in Arabic. Dangor lists 31 of them. (Dangor, 1994: 62-3). But he also wrote in Buginese, Melayu, and Macasseresse. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 8).

Abū Ḥāmid mentions that these works were intended for beginners. (Abū Ḥāmid, 1994: 10). The *Zubdat al-Asrār* (The Essence of Secrets), however, appears to be directed at more advanced students. This work will be discussed in greater detail further on.

4.3.4 Dutch Colonialism

In the meantime, the Dutch had managed to secure Macassar. One of the last remaining strongholds was Banten. Initially, Speelman, Governor-General of Batavia, tried to woo Şultān Ageng. This had the reverse effect of merely increasing the hostility of Banten, and in 1656 the Dutch blockaded the trade routes. The blockade was effective forcing Şultān Ageng to conclude a peace treaty in 1659. (Dangor, 1994: 21). This was a somewhat tenuous treaty for Şultān Ageng remained implacably opposed to Dutch interference in their land of birth. To sustain the economic development of Banten he encouraged British, Danish, and French investments. To this end numerous factories were built by these three countries. (Dangor, 1994: 21). Ageng correctly understood that there was no definable homogeneity to European colonialism in the Archipelago. Previously the Dutch had sacked the Portuguese from their “possessions”. The French too, were already at war with the Dutch. It is highly likely that Ageng was counting on British, Danish, and French support in the event of an attack by the Dutch. What he might not have considered sufficiently enough was the extent to which his own son, Şultān Hajjī, would revolt against him. Hajjī, apparently enamoured by Dutch ways, and apparently easily influenced, engaged in a separate peace treaty with the Dutch. As Crown Prince of Banten, this enraged the people, particularly those in government. One of his most scathing critics was the Prime Minister, Mangunjaya. To maintain the integrity of Banten, Ageng capitulated to his son’s call to exile Mangunjaya. Hajjī’s response to the exiling of the Prime Minister was to deepen his involvement with the Dutch. He surrounded himself with Dutch military advisors and soldiers, and adopted the Dutch dress code. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 11). He also tried to minimise the influence of Shaykh Yūsuf by employing the services of two shaykhs - one from Mocca and one from Ternate. When this tactic failed he tried to scandalise Shaykh Yūsuf by spreading a rumour to the effect that he had an affair with Ageng’s wife. This led to Shaykh Yūsuf and the queen’s imprisonment and subsequent release without charge. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 10). Ageng, deciding that he had had enough, demanded the reinstatement of his Prime Minister. Mangunjaya, however, he

discovered, had been murdered. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 14). War against his son was inevitable, precisely what the Dutch needed.

In 1682 he launched an attack against Şulţān Hajjī in his palace at Surosawa. Hajjī was besieged and called upon the Dutch to help him. After extended and bloodied battles Şulţān hajjī and his Dutch forces eventually defeated Şulţān Ageng. The British, Danes, and French were powerless against the onslaught and were also driven out. (Dangor, 1994: 26).

Şulţān Ageng, along with his two sons, Poerbaija and Kiedoel, and Shaykh Yūsuf, were eventually forced to flee from their Tirtayasa Palace. Shaykh Yūsuf was now 60 years old. With a party of no more than 5000 men - 1300 of whom were armed - they bombed and destroyed the Tirtayasa Palace, then fled to the mountains.

In 1683 Ageng was captured by his son and imprisoned at a castle in Batavia where he died in 1692. (Dangor, 1994: 27).

With Poerbaija having deserted Ageng shortly before his arrest, the task to lead the party fell to Shaykh Yūsuf. Under his leadership the remaining party fended off the relentless assault of Hajjī and the Dutch until 1686. By now Shaykh Yūsuf was already regarded as a saint. Despite their weakening position - Shaykh Yūsuf was severely wounded and the party close to starvation - he remained elusive.

Lieutenant van Happel finally used Shaykh Yūsuf's daughter, Asmā, to persuade him to surrender along with a promise of freedom should he do so. On the 14 December, 1683, he handed his kris over to Captain Ruitsch. The promise of freedom was never honoured. Along with Asmā, 12 Imāms, and other members of his party, Shaykh Yūsuf was imprisoned at the Castle of Batavia. (Davids, n.d.: 2, 13). From Batavia they were moved to Colombo (Sri Lanka) in September 1684.

The King of Goa frequently agitated for his release. In 1690, a special plea by a delegation of the King of Goa was refused. To curtail the agitations and growing restlessness of the populace Shaykh Yūsuf, at the age of 68, along with 49 of his followers were banished to the Cape. His party, which included 2 wives, 12 children, 12 Imāms, and a number of friends, arrived at the Cape on the 2 April, 1694 on a ship name de Voetboeg.

He was received by Governor Simon van de stel and housed at Zandvliet (Faure) near Eerste Rivier with a monthly allowance of 12 Rix Dollars. On the 23 May, 1699 he died at the age of 73. (Dangor, 1994: 39).

It was this political history of Shaykh Yūsuf that formed the inspiration for Muslims at the Cape when the opposition against apartheid in South Africa intensified during the 1970s and 1980s.

We now turn to his intellectual and spiritual history.

4.3.5 From the Kris to the *Qalam* (Pen)



Figure 5: Shaykh Yūsuf and Companions

It appears that after Shaykh Yūsuf handed over his kris to Captain Ruitsch in a symbolic gesture of his surrender, that he once again applied himself with equal assiduity to his pen. Three of his important works *al-Barakat al-Saylāniyya* (The Flowing Grace), *Maṭālib al-Sālikīn li man Qaṣada Rabb al-‘Ālamīn* (The Requirements for Those Who Travel Along The Path of the Lord of the Worlds), and his *Ghāyat al-Iqtisār wa Nihāyat al-Inzār* (The Focussed Objective of the Ultimate Vision) were all composed during his incarceration in Ceylon (Keraan, 1994: 49).

While a large part of this analysis of Shaykh Yūsuf will focus on his thought and metaphysics, it is equally important to capture his spirit. As a preamble to that, it may be instructive to attempt to locate him within the idea of *taqdīr* (divine predestination) and *ṣabr* (forbearance). This idea - seminal to Muslim spirituality at the Cape - will emerge in another chapter in the context of Davids' analysis of the *‘Asharite* theology; a theology, on its own, I believe, that does not sufficiently explain Cape attitudes regarding the idea of *taqdīr* and *ṣabr*. To overlook this, is to overlook the seminal role *taṣawwuf* played in the construction of those attitudes. While they regularly coalesce (as will be shown later) in the outlook of any one

scholar or individual, there is nonetheless no intrinsic or necessary link between *taṣawwuf* and ‘*Asḥarite*’ theology.

Noteworthy in respect of the spirit of Shaykh Yūsuf are his introductory comments to the *Ghāyat al-Iqṣār*. He states:

When we were - through the power of the first decree of Allah and through the execution of His eternal decree - descending upon the abode where Ṣafiyya Allah, Ādam bin Jinān resided on the island called Sirandīb (Ceylon), some of our brothers from amongst the companions and pilgrims from the beloved ones requested that I write the treatise Ghāyat al-Iqṣār wa Nihāyat al-Inzār...Then we turned to Allah, the Most High, for His help to arrive easily at a decision, and I said: “And by Allah, with whom is all success, and in whose hand is the domain of accomplishment...may Allah educate you with it and may you gain understanding from it.” (Keraan, 1994: 28).

These are the words of an exiled man who had recently emerged from the brutality of guerrilla warfare. He had been the victim of both Dutch persecution and extraordinary duplicity on the part of his brother-in-law, Ṣulṭān Hajjī. Important to understand here, however, is the idea of predestination, particularly as it is viewed by the *ṣūfis*.

Incorrectly seen as a prospective philosophy it is often construed as a senseless and defeatist fatalism. On the contrary - and as we are able to witness in the life of Shaykh Yūsuf himself - and many others like him - it is best understood when viewed as a retrospective process. If the term “fatalism” is to be used at all, then the phrase “a pragmatic fatalism” would probably approximate the closest. *Ṣabr*, conceived within a framework of *taqdīr*, is a condition - particularly espoused in *ṣūfī* teachings - that imparts a sense of enduring nobility to the sufferer and, under

conditions of injustice, an almost disarming dignity to the victim. This general Muslim trait - by no means exclusively Islamic, but readily emphasised by Şūfism - is sometimes overlooked when discussing the plight of slaves at the Cape, particularly those who were the students of these shaykhs. A Muslim primarily sees him/herself as a slave of God. A sense of victimhood - wholly spurned by those inspired by *taṣawwuf* - is considered an insult to the faith. This spirit is captured by Tabbarah (1978: 230) where he records:

In his book Islamic Şūfism, Dr Zaki Mubarak shows that “the persevering face adversities with resignation, considering that these come from God. Upon contemplation, one finds that Divine Care puts hardships in our way according to a Divine Wisdom. And (in the time of distress) the ignorant or foolish are those who feel aggrieved, melancholic and gloomy, while the wise are those who look for signs of goodness in the hardships that God afflicts them with.”

This quality of forbearance is still starkly visible in Cape Muslim attitudes today. A quality, in all likelihood, that is part of the legacy left behind by the *şūfī*-inspired founding fathers of Islam at the Cape.

The extract by Shaykh Yūsuf cited earlier represents the perspective that the “Hand of God” is latent in all things and that it only becomes manifest at the end of the task or event. When it does become manifest then it is considered an act of courtesy (*adab*) towards God to accept the outcome in a forbearant manner. This belief, of course, continues in that courteous acceptance of *taqdīr* may, in turn, determine favourable outcomes for the future. *Taqdīr* then, is essentially the province of God in His ineffable aspect, while *ṣabr* is the province of the human being in his/her capacity as an agent of free choice. The *taqdīr* of God is, however, neither absolute nor inexorable as *ʿAsharite* theology might appear to imply. There is a symbiotic relationship, and one extensively explored by *şūfīs*, between *taqdīr* and acts of

courtesy towards God - of which *ṣabr* is a crucial one. In his analysis of the *ḥadīth al-Du‘ā yarudd al-Qadā* (Prayers deflect the decrees of God), Imām al-Ghazālī draws the analogy of a battlefield. 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 *qadā* (predetermined decrees) of God. Without the shields there will be no protection; likewise, without *du‘ā* there is no protection against the preordaining capacity of God. (al-Ghazālī, 1996: 90). The making of *du‘ā*, like *ṣabr* in the face of adversity, is considered pre-eminently a matter of courtesy towards God, which may either yield favourable future outcomes or prevent unfavourable ones in the first place. In neither of these attitudes is fatalism indicated. The apparent resignation, therefore, of people such as Shaykh Yūsuf against overwhelming odds, is one that ought to be understood in this spirit. In this *ṣūfī* perspective, 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 Yūsuf, 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.

A later example of this paradox of intrinsic human freedom as a function of submission to a higher deity alone is expressed by Imām Muding as late as 1825 in his testimony to the Colebrooke and Bigge Commission. Dealing with the question of slavery he says:

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 perspective may be summarised by the classical *ṣūfī* attitude that a Muslim stands between the alternatives of *shukr* (gratitude) and *ṣabr* (forbearance). When the outcome is positive he/she is thankful, when negative, forbearant.

4.3.5.1 The Doctrines of Shaykh Yūsuf

There can be little doubt that Shaykh Yūsuf was significantly influenced by the thought of the Andalusian mystic Muḥyi l-Dīn ibn ʿArabī (1165-1240). Most of his prominent teachers - as we have seen earlier - were proponents of *Ibn ʿArabian* thought. Ibn ʿArabī's metaphysics is visible in nearly all of Shaykh Yūsuf's works.

In his discussion in the *Zubdat al-Asrār* regarding the three types of *dhikr: lā ilāha illallāh, Allah Allah, and Huwa Huwa*, he states:

It is incumbent on the servant when he is invoking the above-mentioned invocations to understand the meaning of the phrase that there is no object to be worshipped, nor sought, nor desired, nor loved, nor beloved, nor causer, nor existent Being except Allah; and whatever exists besides Him is a shadow of His, the Exalted. And a shadow is something non-existent; in actuality it has absolutely no existence even if it is visible with the naked eye. So understand (this) because the terminology among the people of Allah, the Exalted, is that anyone whose existence is dependant on someone else, his existence is for someone else, not for himself. If that is the case, it is clear that everything besides Allah does not exist in reality. (Dangor, 1990: 5).

To the end of this discussion, and commenting on the phrase *Huwa Huwa*, he states:

...the object of this symbolic expression is that the inmost nature of the Exalted One flows in existing manifestations and external objects of existence; or He alone is the manifestation in everything, and through everything and nothing else. (Dangor, 1990: 6-7).

Ecstatic utterances of the *Hallājīan* type are also encountered in many of his works. Elsewhere in the *Zubda* he states: “Now no-one will experience all we have discussed nor accomplish it except the one who is us and we are He externally and internally, in the world and the hereafter.” (Dangor, 1990: 37).

In his *al-Barakat al-Saylāniyya* a similar expression is found: “To divulge the secret of Divinity is heresy. And no one knows this except he who is He and we are He.”⁴¹

It is clear from these statements that Shaykh Yūsuf had fully embraced the *Ibn ‘Arabīan* perspective of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (Unity of Being). According to Shaykh Yūsuf *waḥdat al-wujūd* is a stage in which one becomes “free from otherness”; one in which all sense of duality dissolves. (Dangor, 1990: 38). This is a realised state of spiritual identity with God that is preceded by the stage of *qurba* (nearness to God). At this stage of realisation, according to him, “knowledge, the knower, and the known are one, not different, as otherness (*ghayriyya*).” (Dangor, 1990: 39).

Metaphysically this idea is commonly referred to as monistic pantheism. Further analysis, however, of Shaykh Yūsuf’s view of *waḥdat al-wujūd* - and, one might add, Ibn ‘Arabī’s view himself - reveals that the concept of monistic pantheism is somewhat inadequate in explaining the paradox inherent in *waḥdat al-wujūd*. To this end pantheism’s cognate, panentheism - which appears to be gaining currency in contemporary metaphysical discourse - appears to offer a far more compatible interpretation. Panentheism is broadly defined as follows:

...the view of Reality according to which the Godhead or Absolute not only includes and is the Cosmos (as in pantheism) but also transcends it (as in acosmism). The Godhead does not reside dualistically or even holistically in the universe as a soul in the body (as Ramanuja and other theistic pantheists assert), but rather monistically *as the universe itself*. Therefore (*contra* Shankara) the Cosmos is absolutely real and of the essence of the Supreme, as it is the *real* (not illusory) transformation of the Godhead. But the Godhead in its

transcendent absolute nature is infinite, eternal, unchanging etc, and hence it is also beyond Cosmos. That is the paradox of reality, that the one and the same reality can be both and *equally* unchanging, infinite, eternal, etc and *also* changing, finite etc. This paradox is reconciled through the fact of emanation - the one transforms itself into the Many, while not diminishing its status as the One.⁴²

In the *Ibn ʿArabian* perspective, however, the Cosmos - contrary to that stated in the aforementioned definition - is not considered “absolutely real”. Nor is it, strictly speaking, “illusory”; rather, it is a manifestation that holds within itself the mystery of Divine immanence - a mysterious interpenetration of God and the Cosmos that may be comprehended by juxtaposing the ideas of *absolute* and *relative*. While the above enlarged definition more adequately articulates the essential elements of the concept, Thompson’s definition of panentheism, albeit brief, more readily accommodates the Ibn ʿArabian perspective. Panentheism, he says, is the “belief that God is within everything (*but not simply identified with the universe* [italics mine]).” (Thompson, 2003: 111). It is the manner in which the idea of “identity” is conceptualised that distinguishes the *Ibn ʿArabian* view from the former definition. Absoluteness, or absolute reality, is ascribed to the Godhead alone. This is more consistent with the four-fold neo-Platonic view of metaphysics as expounded by Plotinus (204-270 CE) - a perspective that corresponds considerably with that of Ibn ʿArabī.

According to Rafudeen (n.d.: 31) Plotinus mentioned that there are four grades to reality:

- a) The One (or Godhead)
- b) The Intellect (Nous)
- c) The world-soul - comprising an “upper” and “lower” world-soul and
- d) The material world.

In this graded Ontology of Being - that includes the notion of “Beyond Being” in the One, or Godhead, as the ineffably transcendental - there is a successive process of emanations (*ta‘ayyunāi*) down to the material world. The latter world is the “dark world of matter”, according to Plotinus; or the “world of shadows”, according to Ibn ‘Arabī. Each emanation, as it were, becomes “dimmer” - and therefore less real - the further it moves from its source. (Rafudeen, n.d.: 32).

It is precisely this condition, as we related earlier, that Shaykh Yūsuf refers to when he stated that, “whatever exists besides Him is a shadow of His...and a shadow is something non-existent.” “Non-existence” in Shaykh Yūsuf’s metaphysics, however, implies contingent or dependent existence, and not absolute nothingness, or absolute non-being.

Schuon attempts to explain this paradox, as we mentioned in a previous chapter, by positing that the difference between the object and its shadow is one of substance, not essence. God, in other words, is absolutely real; the Cosmos, relatively real.

This paradox is expressed by Shaykh Yūsuf. Quoting Shaykh Muḥammad b. Faḍl Allah al-Burhānfūrī, he states:

That everything in existence, from the standpoint of Being, contains within itself the quintessence of the Real; but from the standpoint of emanation, it is different to Him. (Dangor, 1990: 44-5)

He provides textual support to demonstrate this paradox by quoting two verses from the Qurān. The one states: “He is the First and the Last; the Evident and the Immanent” (Qurān, 57: 13), while the other states: “He is the One to whom nothing can be compared.” (Qurān, 42: 11). (Dangor, 1990: 45).

God, however, has the capacity to combine apparently contrary aspects within Himself. (Dangor, 1990: 45). Ultimately the resolution of this paradox is not to be found in rational, or discursive, analysis, but through a process of absorption into the One by engaging in supererogatory acts such as dhikr; and articulated in the *ḥadiith*:

My servant continues to come closer to Me through supererogatory acts until I love him. When I love him I become the hearing through which he hears and his sight through which he sees and his hand with which he grasps and his feet with which he walks and his tongue with which he talks and his mind with which he thinks. (Dangor,1990: 24).

Total absorption into the One marks the point of recognition that there is essentially no separation between the Divine and the human. This stage of realisation, referred to by Shaykh Yūsuf as the stage of *'ubūdiyya* (absolute servanthood) marks the highest stage of spiritual realisation to the point that the “invoker becomes the invoked, the knower becomes the known, the observer becomes the observed, the witnesser becomes the witnessed...the Lord becomes the essence of the servant and the servant the essence of the Lord due to his annihilation (*fanā'*) in Allah, the Exalted, and his subsistence (*baqā'*) with Him, Glory be to Him.” (Dangor, 1990: 21). This ecstatic state, in which there is a continuous vision of multiplicity in unity and unity in multiplicity, is followed by a restoration to consciousness which, in effect, is a return to the state of viceregency in which the servant once more assumes the role of God’s representative on earth. It is in this sense that the “servant remains a servant although he has ascended, and the Lord remains the Lord although He has descended.” (Dangor, 1990: 22).

The locus for the realisation of multiplicity in unity and unity in multiplicity is the spiritual heart. The spiritual heart is God-centred and a unitive force. The *nafs* (lower self), on the other hand, is world-centred and a dispersive force. To re-actualise the innately unitive vision of the heart, the dispersive tendencies of the lower self have to be reduced or completely removed - the point at which, according to Shaykh Yūsuf, all sense of duality ceases to exist in the individual ego. (Dangor, 1990: 23).

The primary method advocated for this process - referred to as - *tazkiyyat al nafs* (purification of the lower self) - is *dhikr*.

4.3.5.2 Shaykh Yūsuf's Methodology of *Dhikr*

Central to the *Khalwatiyya* doctrines of spiritual psychology is the concept of the Seven Stations of the Soul - or Self - (*al-Nufūs al-Sabʿa*). In general, according to the *Khalwatiyya*, there are two aspects to the Soul: 1) The Passional Soul (*al-Nafs al-Shahwāniyyā*) and 2) The Rational Soul (*al-Nafs al-Nāṭiqā*). The Passional Soul is what the “philosophers” normally refer to as the “vital spirit”. When its effects cease, death ensues. The Rational Soul, on the hand, is that which is variously referred to as “the heart”, “the subtle human faculty”, and the “reality of man”. It is this aspect that is in need of purification, and to which “legal and moral commandments are addressed.” (al-Badawi, 1997: 1-2). The Seven Stations of the Soul are connected to this latter aspect.

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Khāliq al-Shabrāwī (1887-1947), founder of the *Shabrāwī* branch of the *Khalwaiyya* order in Egypt, lists the stations in the following order (al-Badawi, 1997 1-2):

- a) *al-Nafs al-ʿAmmāra bi l-Sūʾ* (The Inciting Soul) that incites to evil.
- b) *al-Nafs al-Lawwāma* (The Reproachful Soul). This is the station in which the soul acquires the ability of self-reproach and self-criticism and is able to oppose the worldly tendencies of the Passional Soul.
- c) *Al-Nafs al-Mulhama* (The Inspired Soul). Through self-reproach the soul becomes attracted to the the ʿālam al-quds (The World of Sanctity) and starts to receive inspirations -hence the term “inspired”.

- d) *Al-Nafs al-Muṭmaʿinna* (The Serene Soul). When the worldly agitations of the Passional Soul cease and forgets its pleasures it attains a degree of inner serenity and becomes at peace with itself.
- e) *Al-Nafs al-Rādiya* (The Contented Soul). This stage of spiritual contentment is attained when the stations themselves start to lose their importance in the sight of the Rational Soul. In other words, it becomes extinct to its own wishes.
- f) *Al-Nafs al-Marḍiyya* (The Soul ‘Found Pleasing’), that is, pleasing to both the Creator and created things.
- g) *Al-Nafs al-Kāmila* (The Perfect Soul). The perfected soul is the one that is commanded to return to people and act as a guide along the spiritual path.



Figure 6: Symbols of the Warrior and Scholar

An identical classification with a slight variation in the order of the stations is found in the *Naqshbandī* order (al-Kurdī, n.d.: 471-2). Significant, of course, is the prominent role that both these orders assumed in the life of Shaykh Yūsuf. There can be little doubt that he was aware of this classification. In fact, the central role that the idea of the *nafs* holds in the spiritual psychology of the Cape may be attributed to the very strong likelihood that Shaykh Yūsuf emphasised these teachings - which are far more accessible to the ordinary person than his metaphysics - to many of those who sought his guidance.

The process of *tazkiyyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul) through *dhikr* eminently embraces these seven stations. This process of purification through *dhikr* is also

adumbrated in Shayk Yūsuf's somewhat unique classification of the 4 *qiblas* (sacred directions).

The first *qibla* is the *qiblat al-ʿamal* (*qibla* of action) which is the one in Makkah which all Muslims face during their prayers. This is the *qibla*, according to Shaykh Yūsuf, of the common people (*ʿawām*). The Qurānic verse that indicates this *qibla* is: “Turn in prayers towards the *Masjid al-Ḥarām*.” (Qurān, 2: 149).

This level corresponds with the novitiate formulation of the *dhikr lā ilāha illallāh* as the *dhikr* of the tongue - which is the *dhikr* of the “common people”.

The second *qibla* is the *qiblat al-ʿilm* (*Qibla* of Knowledge). This is indicated by the Qurānic verse: “And whithersoever you turn there is the Face of God.” (Qurān, 2: 115). This is the *qibla* of the elect (*khawāṣ*) and associated with the *dhikr, Allah Allah*. This, the *dhikr* of the heart, is correspondingly regarded as the *dhikr* of the elect.

The third *qibla* is the *qiblat al-Sirr* (*Qibla* of the inmost Secret). This is alluded to, inter alia, in the verse: “And He is with you wherever you might be.” (Qurān, 57: 4).

This spiritual awareness of Divine companionship (*maʿiyya*) is connoted by the phrase *maʿakum* (is with you) in the above-mentioned verse. This is the *qibla* of the superlatively elect (*akhaṣṣ al-Khawāṣ*) and corresponds with the *dhikr, Huwa Huwa* - which is also the *dhikr* of the latter class of *dhākrīn* (rememberers), the *akhaṣṣ al-khawāṣ*.

The fourth *qibla* is the *qiblat al-tawajjub* (the *Qibla* of Sustained Spiritual Realisation). The expression: “The heart of the servant is the throne of Allah“ points to this stage. (Dangor, 1990: 36; Keraan, 1994: 27).

This is the *qibla* of those who have realised *waḥdat al-wujūd* and corresponds with the *dhikr, Āb...Āb*. This aspirated form of the *dhikr* - oftentimes pronounced *Hu...Hu* as in the *Bā ʿAlawī ḥaḍra* (congregational *dhikr*), for example - symbolises that sacred nexus between the human and the Divine as articulated in the Qurānic verse: “When I have created him in due fashion and breathed into him of my Spirit...” (Qurān, 15: 29).

It is also a symbol of the “universal breath” as mentioned by Schuon in the following descriptive passage:

The “remembrance of God“ is like breathing in the solitude of high mountains: here the morning air...dilates the breast; it becomes space and heaven enters our heart.

This picture includes yet another symbolism, that of the “universal breath”: here expiration relates to the cosmic manifestation or the creative phase and inspiration to reintegration, to the phase of salvation or the return to God. (Schuon, 1979: 59).

Nicholson makes an even more direct connection in his commentary on Rūmī’s “Song of the Reed”. “Rūmī” he states, “uses it (the reed) as a symbol for the soul emptied of self and filled with the Divine Spirit. This blessed soul, during its life on earth, remembers the union with God which it enjoyed in eternity and longs ardently for deliverance from the world where it is a stranger and exile.” (Nicholson, 1978: 31).

An echo of this is found in Shaykh Yūsuf’s own description of the *dhikr*, *Āb...Āb*. In his *al-Nūr al-Hādī ilā Ṭarīq al-Rashād* (The Direct Light to the Guided Path) where he expounds on the “conditions of Remembrance and its reality” (Keraan, 1994: 20) in which he discusses the four-tiered *dhikr* of *lā ilāha illallah*, *Allah Allah*, *Huwa Huwa*, and *Āb...Āb*, mentioned earlier, he states, with reference to the last form:

...when your tongue says “āh...āh”, then your heart should say simultaneously “You are Eternal” ...And if you have confirmed that “He Allah is Eternal” (then) believe (that) in your heart without separating yourself from Allah in His Eternity.” (Keraan, 1994: 21).

These are the broad levels of *dhikr* - much more nuanced in its details of course, and which require a separate study - that Shaykh Yūsuf advocates and which the aspirant is expected to complete during the course of his/her spiritual training.

4.3.5.4 The Mechanics of *Dhikr*

One of the methods that Shaykh Yūsuf accords particular prominence to is one that is also well known to the *Naqshbandiyya* order. (See al-Kurdi, 1343 AH: 421-3; also see Annexure 1).

In his *al-Barakat al-Saylāniyya* (The Flowing Grace) he provides a graphic description of one of these methods:

...there are some methods that those who are qualified in these arts have mentioned. The first word that is recited is “Lā” and this has to be recited gently and taken from beneath the navel to the top of the brain by elongating the “Lā” of negation.

The next word “Ilāha” is then taken and drawn down to the right side while emphasising the vowel sound “I” of the word “Ilāha” and clearly vocalising the “Ha” at the end of the word. Thereafter pause for a moment while imagining the extinction of everything except Allah, including oneself. This is followed by moving the head to the left while reciting “Illallāh” and striking the phrase upon the heart with force. The intensity should be of such a kind that its “heat” permeates the entire body. At this, Allah, the Most High, alone should be affirmed. And it should be known, through this, that there is no real influence in existence except Allah.

Shaykh Yūsuf’s personal preference for the *Naqshbandī* style of *dhikr* also appears to be indicated by his citation of the two *ḥadīths* attributed to the Prophet (pbuh) that state: “The best of invocations is that which is done silently” and “The best *dhikr* is the silent one.” (See Annexure 1). This position - in typical *Naqshbandī* fashion - is

also strongly argued for by Shaykh Muḥammad Amīn al-Kurdi in his *Tanwīr al-Qulūb* (Illumination of the Hearts) (al-Kurdi, 1343 AH: 516-18).

The *Khalwatī* order, on the other hand, grants both the loud (*jabrī*) and silent (*khafī*) forms of *dhikr* equal status. (al-Rāfī, n.d.: 40-1).

It appears likely that it is largely these *Naqshbandī* methodological leanings - apart from the obvious intellectualist infusions into the order - that imparted the “aristocratic” character to the *Khalwatiyya-Yūsuf* branch of the order in the Indonesian archipelago. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 252). In the archipelago, Shaykh Yūsuf’s aristocratic order stands in contradistinction to the more exuberant and ecstatic practices of the *Khalwatiyya-Sammān* order. It is ironic - but for reasons we will discuss later - that in the Cape the exuberant *Sammāniyya* practices became by far the more popular expressions of group *dhikr*. These practices, until well into the twentieth century, were referred to as “samman werk” - “werk“ literally translates into “work” in English, and is most likely the Afrikaans translation from its Arabic equivalent “amal” which, in turn, is often used synonymously with “dhikr“.

4.5 The Impact of Shaykh Yūsuf on Cape Thought and Practices

Bradlow, on the one hand, has argued for a significant impact through his postulation of an early formation of *ṣūfī* networks and cells that enabled the slaves to benefit from Shaykh Yūsuf’s teachings; and Rafudeen, on the other, for a minimal impact, based on demographics - for example the small number of Muslim slaves at the time - and social alienation determined by stringent Company laws.

It is difficult, however, to assess the nature of the impact without the background - albeit brief - that has been sketched earlier. It becomes even more difficult when we overlook the *ṣūfī* way of doing things.

While we may acknowledge, either way, significant contact or minimal contact, the *ṣūfī* system of perpetuating orders does not depend on numbers. Vitally important to the perpetuation of *ṣūfī* orders is the *shaykh-murīd* (disciple) relationship on the one hand, and the *ijāza-silsila* system on the other. It is only through a coalescence of these four elements that the order has any chance of perpetuating itself. The most

important set of this quaternary is the *shaykh-murīd* relationship. The institution of the second set is dependent on the quality of that relationship.

Shaykh Yūsuf himself was acutely aware of the importance of this relationship. To this end he cites the oft-quoted *ṣūfī* adage that “whoever does not have a spiritual guide Satan is his guide.” (Dangor, 1990: 29). He also considers *bayʿa* (oath of allegiance) a crucial aspect of cementing the relationship between the shaykh and the *murīd*. (Dangor, 1990: 30). The decision of the shaykh to bestow an *ijāza* of the order upon a *murīd*, thereby inducting the *murīd* into the *silsila* and consequently empowering him/her to perpetuate the order, would depend on two factors: firstly, the qualities inhering in that *murīd* and, secondly, knowledge of the doctrinal and methodological principles of the order. This combination of self-mastery and knowledge of the principles of the order requires years of tutelage, or an equivalent background of learning. A mistake often made with regard to an understanding of the *ijāza* system is a failure to distinguish between a shaykh invested with *ijāza irshād* - to whom Shaykh Yūsuf makes reference as the *shaykh al-bayʿa wa l-talqīn* (the shaykh of initiation and instruction) (Dangor, 1990: 29) - and one given *ijāza tabarruk*. The *ijāza tabarruk*, bestowed by the shaykh of the order, is purely for the sake of obtaining the blessings of that order and in no way qualifies one, unlike the *ijāza irshād*, to initiate others into the order or confer *kbilāfa* upon them⁴³. Given the socio-political conditions at the Cape during his stay at Zandvleit and the fact that he only stayed there for five years makes it hard to imagine that he had either the time or the inclination to fully induct any of those slaves - regardless of their numbers - into either the *Khalwatiyya* or *Naqshbandiyya* orders.

With regard to the effort and time a *murīd* needs to advance along the path he quotes the celebrated Shaykh al-Junayd al-Baghdādī. Shaykh Junayd was asked, Shaykh Yūsuf relates in his *Zubda*, “By what means did you arrive at this stage?’ He answered, pointing with his hand to his cheek: ‘By placing this on the doorstep of my shaykh for forty years’”. (Dangor, 1990: 31).

Shaykh Yūsuf’s own spiritual and intellectual journey started at a very young age. In addition, he spent years abroad in pursuit of his studies and spiritual advancement. His standards would have been very high. These standards are evident in the very

structure and description of his order in Indonesia as “aristocratic”. Of the few people whom we know he inducted as a *khalīfa* (deputy) in Indonesia was Abu l-Faṭḥ ‘Abd al-Basīr al-Darīr al-Khalwatī - the previously mentioned Tuan Rappang whom he granted investiture in Makkah. (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 257-8).

I share the view of Bradlow that there were *ṣūfī* networks of sorts that enabled contact with Shaykh Yūsuf at Zandvleit. The need to establish contact with him would have been as strong then as the need for spiritual support and succour as that expressed in the letter of the Buganese slaves to September of Boughies (of whom more later) in the mid 1800s. However, the staggered and periodic visitations of slaves to Shaykh Yūsuf, despite his profound concern for them, would have done little to lower his standards. Shaykh Yūsuf appears to have been a *ṣūfī* shaykh and scholar with an enormous concern for the integrity of *ṣūfī* orders. No investiture simply meant no *ijāzas* and no *silsilas* through which to perpetuate the orders. (See Annexure 5). The stark evidence for this is the absence of the *Khalwatīyya-Yūsuf* order, as it is still practiced in Indonesia today (Van Bruinessen, 1991: 252), from Cape Muslim culture for almost 300 years. Except through the mediation of the *Chistī Habībī* order (to be discussed later) and possibly of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ Hendricks of the *al-Zāwiya* (also to be discussed later), and the arrival of Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Naqshbandī from Syria in 1950⁴⁴ there is no evidence to suggest that the *Naqshbandī* order, as expounded by Shaykh Yūsuf, was ever practiced. The *Naqshbandī* forms of *dhikr*, for example, with its embedded *Ibn ‘Arabian* formulations are no where indicated in Cape practices. More specifically, the *Ibn ‘Arabian* doctrines of Shaykh Yūsuf are virtually unknown in the post-Shaykh Yūsuf intellectual history of the Cape.

Shaykh Yūsuf would have considered it necessary, however, to create a matrix - albeit somewhat tenuous - that would have enabled the fugitive slaves to act as the precursive bearers of at least the rudimentaries of Islam and its spirituality. While Shaykh Yūsuf’s concern for Islamic spirituality was both serious and profound, he had equally serious concerns for the preservation of Islamic Law. This is evident from his statement:

...to adhere to the external aspects of the Sharī‘ah is one of the conditions of sainthood, in addition to adhering to the inner aspect of reality. (Dangor, 1990: 20).

To this end he would have taught the Muslim slaves the basics of Islamic Law, particularly with respect to all aspects of worship (*‘ibāda*), the funerary rites, and how to read the Qurān. He would almost certainly have taught them a number of *awrād* (litanies), *adhbkār* (invocations) and *mawlūds* (encomiums in praise of the Prophet). These are the traditional vehicles of Islamic spirituality through which *taṣawwuf* penetrates Muslim communities. In this regard Dangor’s speculations concerning the *mawlūd* ceremony witnessed by Thunberg on the 28 June 1772 are probably correct. While it “was long after Yūsuf’s demise” Dangor observes, “it quite possibly could be a continuation of the sessions that were initiated by Shaykh Yūsuf and his disciples.” (Dangor, 1994: 38)⁴⁵. Historically the *Khalwatiyya* have been active in the promotion of *mawlūd* celebrations. In fact the first *mawlūd* in the Turkish language was composed by Suleyman Celebi (d. 1429) in 1391. He was a shaykh of the *Khalwatī* order. There is little reason to believe that Shaykh Yūsuf would not have encouraged this practice at the Cape.

Along with the essentials of Islamic Law and a diversity of litanies and invocations he would also have ensured that a framework for practical ethics was in place. This would have included at least aspects of the *maqāmāt al-sab‘a* (Seven Stations of the Soul) and certain elements of *‘aqīda* (Islamic belief system). Interwoven with the tenets of *‘aqīda* and general *taṣawwuf* teachings, the idea of *taqdīr* would have featured prominently. This idea, as mentioned previously, would have been regarded - though necessarily not limited to such a conception - as both a dignifying and survival mechanism.

4.6 Conclusion

In summary, the more complex metaphysical doctrines of Shaykh Yūsuf - the mastery of which he would almost certainly have considered a necessary condition for the bestowal of *ijāza irshād* - were not taught to those who sought his guidance

and instruction. The more accessible aspects and practices of Islam and *taṣawwuf*, such as the certain litanies and invocations, were almost certainly taught to them - evidence of which is liminally present throughout the unfolding of Islam at the Cape. Precisely the same conclusions may be drawn with regard to Tuans Maḥmūd and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ghaibie Shāh. They would have been constrained by even greater limitations than those which Shaykh Yūsuf encountered.

Shaykh Yūsuf was also an extraordinary social and political activist. He would also have shared much of his experience gained during his years as a resistance fighter in helping to organise and strengthen the slave communities at the Cape. Dangor (1994: 23) considers this impact to be of a three-fold nature:

- a) A psychological one in which he focussed on the restoration of their dignity as human beings.
- b) The encouragement to create socio-religious structures - correctly identified by Da Costa as one that would have been inspired by the *taṣawwuf* perspective - that ensured the establishment of the first Muslim community in the country and,
- c) Through the conversion of many slaves to Islam he contributed to the numerical strength of the community. This numerical increase provided the much-needed impetus for the growth and stabilisation of that community.

Across the years, of course, Shaykh Yūsuf’s memory sauntered on with pride and reverence in the visitations of thousands of Muslims to his shrine. The previously humble building that marked his grave was transformed by Hajjī Suleiman Shāh Muḥammad with a compact but dignified structure in the “Moorish” style). The architect commissioned for the design was K.K Kendall. The building was completed in 1925 and the foundation stone was placed by Sir Frederick de Waal. (Dangor, 1994: 41).

These visitations and tributes to Shaykh Yūsuf culminated in the Shaykh Yūsuf Tercentenary Commemorations that celebrated 300 years of Islam at the Cape. On the 4 April 1994 thousands of Muslims filled the city of Cape Town to pay their

respects to the man they all consider the founding father of Islam in South Africa. In that same year Shaykh Yūsuf was declared a national hero in Indonesia - a fitting tribute to a man whose spiritual and intellectual history still remain, ironically, relatively unknown in the Cape. In this respect Moosa is probably correct in stating that “Shaykh Yūsuf’s impact on the Islam at the Cape was perhaps more symbolic than real...”. (Moosa,1995: 131). His impact in the years to come, however, may prove to be “more real” and even greater.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Towards Consolidating Islam at that Cape (1700-1807)

5.1 Introduction

Considerable disagreement exists regarding the dynamics of the growth and development of Islam at the Cape during the eighteenth century - particularly up to 1770. Davids and Shell are of the view that the growth was slow and chequered. Bradlow, on the other hand, appears to differ with some of the basic assumptions that Davids and Shell engage in motivating their positions. The aspect of this debate that is relevant to our purposes is the question of conversion.

5.1.1 Growth and Development of Islam in the Eighteenth Century

In support of their position, Davids and Shell cite the following factors:

- a) The repressive nature of the Statutes of India that expressly forbade the practice of religions other than the Dutch Reformed Church.
- b) The practice of isolating Muslim political exiles.
- c) The relative scarcity of Free Blacks who may otherwise have provided the necessary leadership to the Muslim slaves.

Along with the available statistical data that appear to indicate that the followers of Islam were small in number for most part of the eighteenth century, Davids also cites, as additional support, a statement of a certain Abdol Barrie who was one of the first students at the Dorp Street *madrassah*. According to Abdol Barrie “the school was established in 1793 with very few students but the number increased so rapidly that soon - in 1795 - a mosque was required.” (Davids, 1991: 37).

In stark contrast to this is the position of Adil Bradlow. The first of the arguments cited in (a) above he considers to be “historically inaccurate” (Bradlow, 1988: 84). He dismisses the view - and, by implication, the impact it may have had on conversions per se - that there was a change in approach of the ruling classes

towards Muslims after the granting of religious freedom in 1804. “While the public practices and spread of Islam were officially proscribed throughout the entire period of Company history” he says, “Muslims continued to be subject to an array of repressive policies and practices until well into the third decade of the nineteenth century.” (Bradlow, 1988: 84). It is certainly debatable whether the declaration of religious freedom in 1804 had no effect on the future unfolding of Islam, particularly in respect of emboldening the public posture of Muslims. This emboldening and hence a greater visibility of Islam at the Cape would almost certainly have created conditions favourable to conversions, even if by “favourable” we mean mere accessibility to the teachings of Islam. On the other hand, and contrariwise, we could well argue that the very repressive nature of the political state may have served to both reinforce the convictions, and more solidly cement the bonds, of faith within the Muslim community. Political repression, particularly if it is not directed at religion per se, has never served to destroy or inhibit the growth of any religion. It requires *religious* persecution as such and in the forms of execution or expulsion of its adherents to realise that purpose. The ideologues of Nazi Germany and those of the Spanish Inquisition, for example, were well aware of this. And yet even the latter approach, oftentimes, and at best, only enjoys partial success as was also evident in France. The Calvinist Huguenots arrived as refugees at the Cape during the late seventeenth century precisely because they were “fleeing France to preserve their religion.” (Elphick and Giliomee, 1989: 527). Along with the Dutch at the Cape they flourished anew.

Against the second and third arguments of Davids and Shell cited earlier, Bradlow holds - and very cogently in this case - that the “implication of such an approach is to deny the lower classes the ability to formulate their own responses and challenges to the structures of ruling class hegemony.” (Bradlow, 1988: 85).

There is little gainsaying the fact that leadership - as Davids tries to argue as the predominant preserve of the Free Blacks - is important to the growth, organisation, and advancement of communities. But this fact, on its own, cannot deny the slaves an intelligent faith-based response to the repressive conditions they experienced. This view, in support of Bradlow’s position, is argued for by J.E Mason. While his

argument deals with matters of conversion it equally applies to the ability of slaves to “formulate their own responses” to ruling class hegemony. Quoting Robert Heffner he states that conversion is linked to both “faith and affiliation”. This dyad references two equal responses; one, “the at least nominal acceptance of religious actions or beliefs deemed more fitting, useful, or true” and “the acceptance of a new locus of self-identification, a new, though not necessarily exclusive reference point for one’s identity.” (Mason, 2002: 15). By “emphasising the ‘affiliation’ side of Heffner’s equation” Mason continues, “historians of Islam at the Cape have had a tendency, as Richard Eaton put it in another context, to ‘see any religion as a dependent variable of some non-religious agency, in particular an assumed desire for social improvement or prestige’”. Mason, 2002: 15). “Faith”, on the other hand, according to Karen Armstrong, “is deeply ingrained in the human psyche. The worshipping of gods occurred as soon as they became recognisably human.” (Mason, 2002: 15). It is that capacity, moreover, that enables the human being to articulate the “wonder and mystery that seem always to have been an essential component of the human experience of the beautiful yet terrifying world.” (Mason, 2002: 15-6).

To this Mason adds:

Few worlds were more terrifying than the one that the slaves, Prize Negroes, and Free Blacks of the Cape shared and the *spiritual hunger* that many have argued always accompanied slavery was a vital part of their lives. 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 flesh is heir to.” [italics mine]. (Mason, 2002: 16).

These slaves at the Cape were normal human beings with normal human impulses and aspirations. It is their very humanness that renders their oppression so tragic. It is the structural violence engendered by repressive systems that leads to all sorts of

deprivation - social, economic, educational etc. It is within this context that “spiritual hunger” becomes such a vital part of the lives of slaves. It is the *ṣūfī* networks established by Tuans Maḥmūd, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shāh and Shaykh Yūsuf, Bradlow argues, that served to meet this hunger. (Bradlow, 1988: 123-4). While not as developed, as Bradlow appears to present these networks - a position that shall be argued against throughout this dissertation - there is little by way of counterargument to controvert the existence of such networks.

In one of his most recent works, *Islam in Southern Africa, 1652-1998*, Shell provides a list of eighteenth century “bandiet (convict) imāms”. He states:

Among them were men such as Sapoer (n.d.); Abdul Radeen (n.d.); Abdullah van Batavia (n.d.); Joudaan Tappa Santrij (mentioned in sources in 1713) (santrij ḡ scholar; he is known as “the free Javanese Pope” - the first Muslim martyr at the Cape); Fortuijn Alawie Saïid van Mokka (1744) and Hajjie Mattavaan (1744); ...imam Fakirij van de Negerij Niassinna (1746); Agmat a prince from Ternate, and Al Jina Abdullah (these two were banned on the same day in October 1766); Noriman van Cheribon (1767) (he ended his servitude in the slave lodge); imam Abdullah(1780); imam Noro (1780), imam Patrodien (1780); imam Abdullah, Prins van Ternate (1780) (also known as Tuan Guru); and an imam simply recorded as Achmat (1795) (he, too, ended his sentence in the slave lodge.

“All these men” says Shell, “were listed as *‘Mahometaanse Priesters’* or Muslim leaders in the voluminous *bandietrollen* (convict census).” (Shell, 2000: 330). While extensive research is required to trace and provide some of these names with even a semblance of a context, as imāms, however, they would almost certainly have left their mark on those who met or associated with them.

A strong argument may therefore be made against the case that views the growth of Islam between 1700 and 1770 as negligible. The citation by Davids of Abdol Barrie's observation on the explosion of numbers in students at the Dorp Street madrassah between 1793 and 1795 allows for alternative interpretations to the one posited by him. For example, initially there may have been a degree of slowness in adapting to these new structures on the part of Muslim slaves. There may also have been a lingering scepticism, motivated by uncertainty and fear, with regard to Company attitudes towards these new developments. More pertinently, since religious freedom had not yet been granted, there may have been many who were initially reluctant to reveal their convert status. Many interpretations as there might be, it is difficult to avoid the logic in Bradlow's assertion "that the dramatic spread of Islam, that occurred in the nineteenth century, did not occur in a vacuum." (Bradlow, 1988: 87).

5.2 Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh and Tuan Kapitie Low

Bradlow observes that the reason for two of Shaykh Yūsuf's followers staying behind at the Cape acts as a pointer to the possibility "that certain links existed between the slaves of the town and the Shaykhs." (Bradlow, 1988: 123). To this may be added that it is the very "spiritual hunger" referred to by Mason earlier, as a desperately felt need, that may have persuaded Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh and Tuan Kapitie Low to remain at the Cape. A very powerful echo of this need is expressed much later in 1760 in a letter addressed to September of Boughies (of whom more later) by a slave in Stellenbosch. Part of the letter, filled with all the pathos of a suffering human being, states:

...I know from the time we spoke with our fellow Baganese people, you said we were suffering and this concerned you, for we are a broken suffering people in miserable conditions...*will you lead the children who*

came from the places of Boeloe Boeloe and Sanja-C
[italics mine]. (Davids, 1991: 74).

The needs of those slaves who lived much earlier at the turn of the seventeenth century would have been no different.



Figure 6: Shrine of Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shah on Signal Hill

If, as oral history appears to indicate, that Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh and Tuan Kapitie Low were among the forty nine followers who arrived with Shaykh Yūsuf at the Cape then there is a strong likelihood that they would have sustained those links - inspired by their concerns for the Muslim slaves - that were developed during the five-year “Shaykh Yūsuf” period.

These two imāms enjoyed an extended companionship (*ṣuḥba*) with Shaykh Yūsuf. Of interest here is that only Shaykh Hasan Ghaibie Shah bears the agnomen *al-Qādirī*. If oral tradition is correct in having identified him as a *Qādirī* shaykh then it appears in all likelihood that he was a *ṭariqa* shaykh in his own right. Tuan Kapitie Low, on the other hand, may have been one of the advanced students of Shaykh Yūsuf. Unlike Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie, he bears no such agnomen. Nonetheless, he

would almost certainly have been invested with *kbilāfa* (deputyship) of the order. For this reason the likelihood that he may even have been instructed by Shaykh Yūsuf to remain at the Cape is fairly strong. The two dominant *ṣūfī* strands indicated in Shaykh Yūsuf, as mentioned earlier, were the *Khalwatī* and *Naqshbandī* orders. There is little reason to assume that at least Tuan Kapitie Low would have been any different. Unlike many *ṭarīqas*, however, the *Qādirīs* generally have a strong culture of identifying their *Qādirī* affiliation wherever they might be or settle. This is most likely a consequence of the *Qādiriyya* order having been the first established *ṭarīqa* to emerge in such an organised way and having been, for hundreds of years, the most dominant and widespread order. In recent years the *Tijānīs* have exhibited similar assertive patterns. This “assertiveness”, however, does not stem from a sense of arrogance or superiority, but from a sense of *futūwa* and *murūʿa* - spiritual nobleheartedness and chivalry.

At the turn of the seventeenth century these two *ṣūfī* shaykhs would doubtless have continued where Shaykh Yūsuf left off. Their methodologies of instruction would not have differed greatly either. They would have instructed the slaves in the rudimentaries of Islamic Law and spirituality. The focus, once again, would have been on the more accessible aspects such as the teaching of litanies, *mawlūds*, and *khalwatī* practices such as commemorating the dead on the 7th, 40th, and 100th nights. The latter practice is still strictly observed in contemporary times.

Nearly every *ṣūfī* order has recognised the efficacy of these practices in acting as vehicles to perpetuate at least the core of Islamic Spirituality. These are the “forms” through which the “essence” - after sufficient training, learning, and discipline - may eventually be realised. In imparting these forms there is always the hope that those competent enough would emerge to teach the doctrines that ultimately infuse these practices. In the *ṣūfī* scheme of things there is a profound faith in providence.

It is unlikely however, and as mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation, that any of these shaykhs would have invested their *murīds* with *kbilāfa* or *ijāza irshād*. Prevailing social and educational realities would have dictated otherwise - realities alluded to by Mason where he states:

The subtleties of high theology might well have been beyond the grasp of poorly educated slaves and Prize Negroes. But the shaykhs within their tariqa and the emerging Quranic schools ensured that at the very least all converts understood the fundamental teaching of Islam.

(Mason, 2002: 17).

For “converts” in the quoted extract we may also read “Muslim slaves”. The fact that many of these slaves may have been born Muslim - either in the Cape or their countries of origin - is not a sufficient condition to merit investiture. Mastery of the doctrines, principles, and methodologies of the order, including self-mastery, are all important prerequisites for *ijāza irshād* of any order. It is for this reason that the idea of *ṣuḥba* is such an important precondition.

The *ijāza*, at most, that may have been conferred on any of these *murīds*, is the *ijāza tabarruk* that normally accompanies the *talqīn al-dbikr* (conferring the right to perform the *dbikr*). The purpose of the *ijāza tabarruk* has both a sacred aspect and a practical function. Its sacred aspect of *baraka* (spiritual influence) is considered necessary to evoke a sense of sacred identity with the uttered litanies. Its practical function is to ensure that - in the absence of competent adepts - the *dbikr* will be passed on from generation to generation. In other words, *ijāza tabarruk* is a type of minimal guarantee that will ensure the perpetuation of the various litanies as sacred forms. It is at this more general and diffusive level of *ijāza tabarruk*, rather than *ijāza irshād*, that the *ṣūfī* networks sustained and perpetuated themselves down the years.

For this reason I find myself at variance with Bradlow where he declares his point of departure for his analysis of the development of Islam at the Cape. He states:

This practice whereby khilafa was passed on from shaykh to murīd forms the cornerstone of the analysis of the development of Islam at the Cape during the

seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for it encapsulates the dynamic of the process of Islamization during this period. (Bradlow, 1988: 123-4).

The shaykhs he mentions later on in vindication of this statement were all political exiles who arrived at the Cape already endowed with such investiture. They were not part of a continuous authorised chain of transmission (*sanad ijāza*) from the time of the earlier shaykhs such as Tuan Maḥmūd, Shaykh Yūsuf, and Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh. However, this criticism of Bradlow’s understanding of the process of investiture in no way undermines his fundamental assertion that Islam was in fact mediated through *ṣūfī* networks across the centuries. The implications of our different understandings will become clearer much later on.

If we view *taṣawwuf* as a tetrad of “*taṣawwuf* as metaphysics”, “*taṣawwuf* as ontology”, “*taṣawwuf* as ethics”, and “*taṣawwuf* as methodology” (see Chapter Two) then it becomes evident that the focus on *taṣawwuf* as expounded by the early *ṣūfī* shaykhs at the Cape would have been on the latter two, including limited, but meaningful, references to the second. The more complex doctrines viz “*taṣawwuf* as metaphysics”, are normally taught to only those who have advanced substantially along the path - in *ṣūfī* terminology they are those referred to as the “*muntabīn*”. Without a working knowledge of at least this aspect of *taṣawwuf*, *ijazāt* (sing. *ijāza*) *irshād* are rarely conferred upon *murīds*.

Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh and Tuan Kapitie Low have also enjoyed their fair share of mythopoeic reconstruction. According to Davids (n.d.: 3, 22), Tuan Kapitie Low (also known as the *Jawi Tuan*) was initially considered the “more important” of the two. Miraculous cures after visitations to his grave were often reported. Nonetheless, oral accounts I have heard attribute similar miracles to Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh. Another symbol that acts as a refrain in these accounts is the image of light. There are frequent reports of the shrine of Shaykh Ḥasan enveloped in a halo of light. There are also reports of a beam of light that has been seen to stretch from his shrine to Robben Island - a beam that is said to symbolise the spiritual connection between his shrine and the one on Robben Island.

A possible explanation for the greater popularity enjoyed by Shaykh Ḥasan' shrine in later times could be the fact that the Reverend Bernard Wrankmore, in 1967, selected his shrine as the base at which he engaged in his protest fast against the death in detention of Imām ‘Abd Allah Haron. (Omar, 1987: 75). Omar relates that about 500 visitors “climbed Signal Hill to visit the Priest at the Muslim shrine.” (Omar, 1987: 75). Amidst puritanical protests from many imāms, shaykhs, and some Muslim organisations against his presence at the shrine, hundreds of stories of miraculous events at the shrine circulated amongst ordinary Muslims. Regardless of the complex political responses of the time, Shaykh Maḥdī Hendricks (d. 1981) of the *al-Zāwiya* had welcomed his vigil at the shrine. This tolerance of his may be attributed to a thorough grounding in the principles of *taṣawwuf*. More than the miracles, therefore, these stories spoke more deeply of the profound traces of *taṣawwuf* in the attitudes of ordinary Cape Muslims - attitudes that a growing puritanism on the part of Cape *‘ulamā* and certain Muslim organisations during the second half of the twentieth century had been unable to alter. Subsequent to his 67-day fasting vigil, Reverend Wrankmore embraced Islam and left for Australia.

Nonetheless, we do know that historical records evidence the fact that two of Shaykh Yūsuf's companions, along with a daughter of his (Davids, n.d.: 2, 21), remained behind at the Cape. Oral tradition and legend appear to reinforce, rather than belie, the fact that these two shaykhs were the companions of Shaykh Yūsuf. It would be difficult - if not blatantly incorrect - to dismiss these traditions as mere unbelievable testimony. In this respect it is well to remember that the oral accounts of Shaykh Yūsuf - shrouded as they are in myth and legend - preceded, in the Cape at least, any academic study on his political and intellectual history. These myths and legends, far from falsifying his role, have indeed vindicated it.

5.3 *Ṣūfis* of the Atlantic Ridge

Amongst the prominent *awliyā* (sing. *walī*, meaning saint, or friend of Allah) buried along the Atlantic Ridge are Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn, Tuan J‘afar, Tuan Sayyid ‘Alī, and

Shaykh Muḥammad Zayd. The histories of these *awliyā* in particular are shrouded in myth and legend. Little tangible historical data exist about them.

5.3.1.1 Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn

Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn is one of those *awliyā* born into Cape Muslim history almost exclusively through legend. According to Davids he was “apparently banished to the Cape in 1716 (footnote on confusion of dates) and incarcerated on Robben Island.” (Davids, n.d.: 3, 13). Davids also considers his history to be vague. (Davids, n.d.:3, 37). Likewise, Jefferys in the *Cape Naturalist* states “that his place of origin and his story remain a mystery.” (1937, [Vol.1, 4]: 120). Unfortunately, there are no primary sources that would enable us to establish more tangible connections regarding his history. It appears that oral history, interlaced with myth and legend, is the only recourse to his history.

A number of legends have spawned around his person. One holds that he made his way from Robben Island to the mountain slopes of Beltjies Bosch near to Oudekraal by unknown means. A second legend states that he swam from Robben Island. Yet a third, alluded to earlier, claims that he walked across the water. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 13-4). A present day legend claims that at noon time a spirit on horseback is seen to cross the Atlantic from Robben Island to take lessons from his teacher. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 14).



Figure 7: Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn in the Background near Oudekraal

Whether the legend of Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn walking across the water is true or not is irrelevant. What is historically meaningful is that some time during the latter part of the eighteenth century there were enough people who believed him great enough to do it.

Dauids also ascribes the *‘Alawiyya ṭarīqa* to both Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn and Tuan Ja‘far - of whom equally little is known. This ascription is based on the rather thin - if not dubious evidence - that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī (of whom more later), a spiritualist of the the *‘Alawī* order, had “discovered” their graves. How exactly this discovery took place - through supernatural means or simply stumbling across the grave - is unclear. Nonetheless, Dauids appears to link the *‘Alawī* status of Tuans Ja‘far and Nūr al-Mubīn to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s discoveries, who himself was an *‘Alawī* shaykh.

Oral accounts of these graves furnished by my late father Ḥasan Hendricks (b. 1919) who, in the company of his father Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks (b. 1869), frequented the shrines of Nūr al-Mubīn and Tuans Ja‘far as a young boy appear to predate visitations to these graves even before the arrival of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm to

the Cape in 1880. Similar accounts were related by a number of octogenarians I interviewed. Another clue to the early existence of these graves may be gleaned from a statement attributed to Tuan Guru (d. 1807). Presumably addressing his students he is related as having said: "...one day your liberty will be restored to you, and your descendants will live within a circle of *kramats* safe from fire, famine..." (Du Plessis, 1944: 33). K.M Jefferys, in 1934, in fact wrote a series of articles to the *Cape Naturalist* entitled "The Malay Tombs of the Holy Circle". Da Costa, himself a contemporary *khalīfa* of the *Ḥaqqānī Naqshbandī* order, dismisses the idea of a "Holy Circle" as the invention of Jefferys and "that the term did not have Muslim origins." (Da Costa, 2005: 59). While Da Costa argues against the continued mythologizing of Cape Muslim history - particularly in contemporary times - his choice of the "Holy Circle" as a point of departure might not have been the best one. Unlike Da Costa, my reading of Jeffreys evokes a sense that he was heavily dependent on Cape oral history. It is reasonable, therefore, to assume that this idea was communicated to him by Muslims themselves. The likelihood of this is increased by the fact that Muslims do have a history steeped in mythos. On the other hand, the statement may be read as one that expresses an awareness on Tuan Guru's part of a number of graves of *awliyā* that predate his arrival at the Cape. Amongst these graves, already studiously visited by Muslims at the Cape, may have been those of Tuans Nūr al-Mubīn and Ja'far. The fact, moreover, is that most of the graves of the *awliyā* that dot the Cape Peninsula landscape are dated before the arrival of Tuan Guru.

Nonetheless, it is possible that Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-'Irāqī was the first to identify these shaykhs as members of the *'Alawī* order which was later construed as a "discovery" of the graves. With the shaykhs of *ṭarīqas* the affiliations of other shaykhs are something of a perennial interest. Before the arrival of shaykhs such as 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-'Irāqī and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, there appears to be a distinct lack of interest in the *ṭarīqa* affiliations of the earlier shaykhs.

A responsiveness to sacred symbol, however, remains firmly embedded in the Cape Muslim psyche. Leading up to the shrine of Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn are 99 steps. Once again this is indicative of how sensitive Cape Muslims are to the function of symbol

in their lives. The 99 steps almost certainly symbolise the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah (*asmāʾ Allāh al-ḥusnā*) - the melodious recital of which forms a central *dhikr* in the spiritual culture of the Cape.

5.3.1.1.1 Tuan Jaʿfar, Sayyid ʿAlī, and Shaykh Muḥammad Zayd

Shortly beyond Bakoven on the mountain ridge is the grave of Tuan Jaʿfar. This is one of the most popular and highly frequented *kramats* in the Cape. There is a widely known legend that speaks of a mighty serpent that guards his grave - a symbol that may well speak of the spiritual power or strength of character he commanded.



Figure 8: A Ceremony at Tuan Jaʿfar’s Shrine near Bakoven.

Further up the ravine is the grave of one said to be his wife. In the adjacent vicinity are two other graves. One is said to belong to Tuan Jaʿfar’s student Sayyid ʿAlī, and the other to a shaykh of the *Qādiri* order, Shaykh Muḥammad Zayd. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 37; Mansoor (ed.), 2001: 34).

According to Davids, official historical records exist that show that the area between Camps Bay and Hout Bay were inhabited by a large number of runaway slaves, many of whom were Muslim. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 37). The slaves who sought these shaykhs for much needed spiritual and moral support would have ensured that their memories were preserved for posterity. There is little doubt too, that stories in praise of their shaykhs - perhaps initially expressed in metaphor and hyperbole then crystallised into myth and legend - would have spread far beyond the small groups who clustered around their teachers. Today this location marks a special place of interest and gathering for the *Qādiriyya Muḥammadiyya ṭarīqa*. The long historical traditions that a diversity of *Qādirī* orders have enjoyed with these shrines also tend to cast doubt on the ascription of the *ʿAlawī* order to Tuan Jʿafar.

A telling point picked up by Bradlow is Davids' argument "that from early as 1713 a small but permanent Muslim community was established in Cape Town; a consequence of the freeing of a large number of convicts after a smallpox epidemic swept through the town." (Bradlow, 1988: 80-1). Elsewhere, Davids mentions that with the 1882 smallpox epidemic the Muslims defiantly refused medical assistance of any kind. Instead they turned to "azeemats" (talismans) for protection. (Davids, 1987: 66; Davids, 1984: 68). We have already seen as early as 1695 that slaves turned to *ʿazī mats* for all sorts of solutions. It is therefore very likely that these freed convicts would have sought out the assistance of these shaykhs such as Nūr al-Mubīn, and, in the process, perpetuated their legacies and memories.

Citing Davids, Bradlow mentions: "...from 1743 onwards, the ranks of these Muslim convicts were strengthened with the arrival of some very outstanding exiles." (Bradlow, 1988: 81). Amongst these exiles were Tuan Sayyid ʿAlawī and Hajji Matariem.

Before turning to Tuans Sayyid ʿAlawī and Hajji Matriem we need to review a group of *awliyā* who appear to be more "interstitially" located in the Cape Muslim spiritual environment.

5.3.1.1.2 The *Awliyā* of Deer Park

Scattered along the wooded slopes of Table Mountain in the nature reserve area of Deer Park lie a number of graves attributed to *awliyā*. In Cape Muslim memory five names have emerged: Sayyid Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Qādirī, Sayyid Jabbār, Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥaqq al-Qādirī, Sayyid Muḥammad, and Sayyid Muḥammad al-Ilāhī. (Mansoor (Ed), 2001: 48). Amongst these Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Qādirī features the most prominently. His grave was apparently discovered by a lady who did her washing at the stream that lies adjacent to the grave. He was regularly observed in the act of performing his prayers at the site that now marks his grave. Davids describes the idyllic setting of Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Qādirī’s shrine:

The shrine is situated in a mountain ravine, adjacent to a fast flowing mountain stream. To reach it from the Deer Park side the stream has to be crossed. Leading from the stream is a pathway, neatly laid out with mountain stones which in turn leads to five red painted steps. These steps lead to a platform in the centre of which the grave is situated. The grave is surrounded by an ornate steel rail. (Mansoor (ed), 2001: 49).

Equally little is known about the remaining four. The *ṭarīqa* they appear to be associated with - as indicated by the agnomens of two of them - is the *Qādirī* order. Up till today predominantly members of the *Qādirī* order frequent these shrines. How precisely their names emerged is difficult to say. However, it was not unusual to find the ascription of names only appearing very late in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As late as 1860 even Shaykh Yūsuf’s name was not yet inscribed on his tomb. Da Costa quotes from a visitor to the shrine of Shaykh Yūsuf during the early 1860s:

The people of the Cape of Good Hope hold [the] tomb of their saint in great veneration...When we arrived at [the] place, we got off the cart to pay our respects to the saint...*There was no inscription or any sign showing who this personality was and where he had come from; but the people narrated from their ancestors that he was a Muslim scholar who had come from Java, by the name of Shaykh Yusuf and said that they had seen many of his extraordinary events* [italics mine]. (Da Costa, 1994: 141).

Tayob (2000: 1) highlights the difficulties faced by the historian of Islam at the Cape in his research paper, *Oral Tradition on the Kramat of Sayyid Malik and Its Environs*. “A high degree of hermeneutic suspicion is required” he says, “to listen to the spaces between the archival record for the pain and denial in the history of South Africa.” Oral tradition, on the other hand, he regards “as a powerful corrective that highlights the silences, and the muted voices that barely reach the ears of the general public.” The problem, however, as he notes, is that there is an equivalent subjectivity in oral tradition, which, therefore, demands a similar “vigilance and hermeneutic suspicion” as is the case with archival records. He pertinently adds, though, that oral testimony cannot simply be rejected because it is oral. Da Costa’s quotation of a visitor to the shrine of Shaykh Yūsuf stands in strong vindication of this. That visit occurred 160 years after the death of Shaykh Yūsuf, and yet his name and importance to Muslims were still firmly etched in Cape Muslim memory - clear evidence of the tenacity with which Muslims held on to oral accounts of their history. It is this tenacity of Cape Muslims, despite all the legends that have been woven around their leaders, which invite particular caution against presumptuous dismissals of their oral accounts. It is with this sense of caution that I consider the presence of the graves of the *awliyā* in Deer Park. Muslims may have displayed considerable weaknesses in their understanding of, at times, even the most basic tenets of Islam - particularly during the nineteenth century - but they also displayed

an impeccable seriousness towards those they revered as the authentic spiritual leaders at the Cape. An impeccability, as Davids alludes to, that is “clearly evident” in the exquisite condition of the shrine of Sayyid ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq al-Qādirī and its environs.

There is also general agreement that Deer Park was frequented as an outpost for runaway slaves. (Mansoor, 2001: 48). According to Tayob, there “is sufficient evidence that slaves walked up the mountain.” (Tayob, 2000: 8). Moreover, wherever Muslims settle or congregate on a regular basis, they invariably organise their daily business around religious structures. As much as this is still the case today, it would equally have been then. Islam in the life of a Muslim is paramount. A structure including a religious leader or leaders would almost definitely have emerged within the precincts of Deer Park.

Beyond mere historical speculation though, the shrines that dot the mountain ridges of the Cape may also be “read” as a powerful text expressing the profound influences of *taṣawwuf* on the general culture of Muslims at the Cape.

5.3.1.1.3 Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir (Bismillahi Shāh)

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir, or Bismillahi Shāh, may well be September of Boughies of recorded history. September emerges in Cape history through a moving letter addressed to him by a fellow Bughanese in Stellenbosch. The full text of the letter - referred to previously - appears as follows:

This letter comes as a message from Stellenbosch, you sent me. Brother September, I announce that I have been sick for two months and that no human medicine (can cure me). Brother September, I seek encouragement from you because I know you care about our Buganese people. I request from you brother, if you have compassion, actually for your Buganese race, because I know from the time we spoke with our

fellow Buganese people, you said we were suffering and that this concerned you, for we are a broken, suffering people in miserable conditions, thus my request to you, Brother September, if you are compassionate for your suffering Buganese compatriots, will you lead the children who came from this place of boeloe boeloe and sanja-c. (Davids, 1991: 74; also Shell, 1994: 60).

Davids, in his unpublished manuscript, *Slaves, Sheikhs, Sultans, and Saints*, gives the most detailed account of September. He makes the important point that the letter clearly indicates that there may have been a well established network of communication amongst the slaves. This observation of Davids holds important implications for the spread of Islam during the eighteenth century and may further vindicate Bradlow's view that the roots of Islam may have been sunk more deeply than conventionally believed.

It appears that the greatest obstacle might not have been the apparent lack of opportunity to establish such networks but, at a broader level of inter-slave communication, language itself. The diversity of languages of slaves at the Cape prompted Shell to dedicate an entire chapter in his "Children of Bondage" under the heading "The Tower of Babel". According to Shell an "Indian observer claimed that it was not uncommon even as late as the 1760s for slaves to communicate in sign language and 'peculiar noises' since they could not communicate with each other otherwise." (Shell, 1994: 60).

Figure 9: Grave of Bismillahi Shah on the slope of Devil's Peak overlooking Walmer Estate

While the language barrier may have indeed slowed the process of Islamisation at the Cape - in both aspects of strengthening the intellectual understanding of Islam and conversion to it - it may well be that for this very reason the recitals of litanies assumed the prominence that they did. Arabic, with its mellifluous sounds and rhythms, is a highly memorable language. Even today there are hundreds of teenage Muslims who have memorised the Qurān at the Cape without understanding a single word.



Nonetheless, three important features may be gleaned from the letter. One, that he was regarded as a leader amongst the Buganese slaves; two, that he was their spiritual guide; and three, that he was a healer - most likely of the *mujarrabāt* (tested spiritual remedies) type for the writer intimates that “no human medicine” can cure him. That he was a practitioner of the *mujarrabāt* is reinforced by Davids’ account of one of his methods. “Once when a slave injured his hand” Davids recounts, “September cleaned the wound by first licking it then washing it with water.”

With the paucity of information on his life it is difficult to establish his *ṭarīqa* affiliations. Nonetheless, it is through the Michiel Smuts murder case in 1760 that the strength of the man’s character becomes apparent. Smuts was killed by a group of slaves led by one of his own slaves, Alexander of Sumatra. These slaves then sought the refuge of September on the slopes of Table Mountain and Devil’s Peak where he worked as a shepherd. It is likely that it is in these surroundings that he ministered to the religious and spiritual needs of the slaves. The letter, however, was discovered

and used as evidence that he was fomenting rebellion against Company rule. For his refusal to reveal the identity of the correspondent he received the death sentence.

According to Davids, he "...was broken on the wheel...[but] so brave was September that he did not utter a single cry of pain as his limbs were torn from his body." (Davids, n.d.: 3, 10).

For his followers who accepted him as their spiritual head and mentor he certainly died a death worthy of their respect. It is likely that his burial spot would have been preserved by those who knew and buried him. The reasons for and the circumstances surrounding the gruesome nature of his death - which September most likely anticipated - may have led to the air of secrecy and mystery that surrounds the grave. The *Guide to the Kramats of the Western Cape* describing the graves along the slopes of Devil's Peak states:

One such grave is that of a mysterious auliyah (sic), Sheikh Abdul Kader. The location of the grave was only known by a few selected confidants of the Sheikh. They were told to keep the location secret. (Mansoor [Ed.], 2001: 53).

It is a custom in many parts of the Muslim world, particularly in *ṣūfī* circles, to bury their shaykhs and saints at the location where they most frequently taught their students, or at a location strongly associated with them. This tradition has its origins in the burial of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) in the house of his wife ʿĀʾisha (ra). The slopes of Devil's Peak would have been strongly associated with September of Boughies.

The grave that overlooks Walmer Estate from an elevated vantage point above De Waal Drive bearing the name Bismillahi Shāh may well be September of Boughies. Davids' speculations regarding this connection are, to say the least, highly credible.

A legend relates too, that one by the name of Junaid Mazier noticed on Fridays after Jum'a prayers a man making his way to the mountain slopes of Devil's Peak. To satisfy his growing curiosity he decided to follow him. By the time he reached the

mountain slope he saw the man heading fro the grave of Bismillahi Shāh and disappearing into it. (Mansoor [Ed.], 2001: 52-3). The name Bismillahi Shāh, if indeed he is September of Boughies, is a strange yet fitting name. Translated into English it means: “In the name of God, a King!”

5.3.2 The *Awliyā* of Simonstown and the False Bay Coastline

As early as 1687, Simon van der Stel noted that runaway slaves were hunted along the shores of False Bay. (Davids, n.d.:3, 28). According to Davids these runaway slaves probably explain the existence of kramats in the False Bay region viz. Kalk Bay, Muizenberg and Simonstown. (Davids, n.d.:3, 31). With regard to the kramat in Muizenberg bearing the name Sayed Abdul Aziz, very little is known. It was apparently discovered by a lady who was directed to its location in a dream. The grave was subsequently relocated to another spot. (Mansoor [Ed], 2001: 22). In Kalk Bay too, another kramat is located along the mountain slopes in a cave. Equally little is known of this *wali*.

The False Bay area was officially opened for settlement by 1740 with the majority of its occupants being Free Black fisherman of Malay extraction who had already settled there from the end of the seventeenth century. This area, according to Davids was “dominated by ‘Malays’ until the end of the nineteenth century.” (Davids, n.d.: 3, 29). In Simonstown itself, Baron van Imhoff ordered the development of what was then known as Simon’s Bay in 1741. Fisherman’s huts, however, owned by the DEIC were already present in the area. To the fisherman populace were added Cape Muslim artisans, both of the Free Black and slave classes. Muslims, therefore, appeared to have formed the first permanent community in the Simon’s Bay area. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 29). A *langgar* also existed in Hospital Lane throughout the nineteenth century and serves as evidence that religious practices were extensively engaged in during that time. This *langgar* was later replaced by a mosque in 1876 in Alfred Lane. By the 1820s they were a fully established community with a burial site requested by Imām Abdol Gafiel - the Imām of the Simonstown community at the time. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 29-30).

The two most significant of the *awliyā* buried in Simonstown are Imām Ismail Dea Malela and his son Imām Jalil Dea Malela.

5.3.2.1 Imām Ismail Dea Malela and Imām Jalil Dea Malela

Preceding these two personages - who lie buried on a terrace in Goede Gift above Runciman's Drive in Simon's Kloof, Simonstown - was a remarkable man known as Abdul Dea Koasa, the father of Imām Ismail. He was banished from Pemangon, Sumbawa, to the Cape in 1753 and incarcerated in the slave dungeon in Simonstown. In 1755 he effected his escape by digging a hole through one of the walls and fled by boat to the vicinity of Buffels Bay. Despite numerous attempts he was never recaptured. His hiding place was between Buffels Bay and what is today known as the Antonie's Gat Cave in the Cape Point National Park. He later befriended a farmer with whom he developed an intimate friendship. Because of some extraordinary spiritual gifts attributed to Tuan Abdul Dea Koasa he was appointed as the special advisor to the farmer.

A few years later in 1786, his son, Imām Ismail Dea Malela who was born in 1753 - the year in which Abdol Dea Koasa was captured - was also captured and banished to Simonstown. After his release, Imām Ismail married a slave woman who bore him two sons - Abideen and Jalil. Abideen died at a young age.

Meanwhile Abul Dea Koasa - wanted man as he was and with a reward offered for his capture - continued to keep his whereabouts secret. His hiding place, however, was known to his descendants, and it was in that secret location that they took their lessons from him, especially his son Imām Ismail. After the death of Abdol Dea Koasa, Imām Ismail, most likely appointed his *khalīfa*, continued his teachings. His son, in turn, Imām Jalil Dea Malela became the deputy after the death of his father.

In succeeding years numerous miracles and other extraordinary events have been attributed to the two shaykhs. There are accounts of numerous spiritual appearances they make at designated times and places and of a "strange spiritual energy" that pervades the location of their grave. Probably the most well-known account of the miraculous power that surrounds the area is the case of a huge fire that raged

through the area during the 1940s. The grave of these two *awliyā*, however, were unscathed. Neither the grass, leaves, nor trees surrounding the area were touched. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 32).

Of enormous interest is the manner in which oral history has preserved the memories of these *awliyā*. Up till recently their names were incorrectly recorded as Sayyid Musa and Shaykh Suleiman/Abdus Samad. Even Davids is cautious about the manner in which he relates these oral accounts. He states,

Who Sayyid Musa was or where he came from, nobody knows. He was probably an early run-away slave who found refuge in Simonstown. I assume he died there and was buried on this isolated spot in Runciman's drive...

Little is known of the kramats of the South Peninsula. Only the one *aulia* (sic) in Simonstown has been named, and even this name is uncertain. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 33).

In the absence of any supporting historical data Davids' caution is unquestionably understandable. Davids nonetheless provides three orally related ways in which the graves were discovered. One states that they were discovered by a group of workers working near the site; a second relates that a Christian man had in fact discovered them; and a third relates that it was discovered by Shaykh Abd al-Raḥīm al-ʿIrāqī. None of these is true, but it appears apparent from the latter case that certain legends were already being constructed around the person of Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥīm al-ʿIrāqī. Recent research, however, has quite clearly revealed the origins and identities of these people. Their lineage has in fact been traced through the Dea Royal Family of Pemangong, Sumbawa in Indonesia to Sultan Kaharrudin (d. 1674). The real names of these *awliyā* were apparently known to the members of the family all the years and also to the 25 Mohammedan Trust Members as early as 1924. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, too, was also aware of their real names. On the 16 July

1932 a letter (See Annexure 9) - which also includes a discussion on the History of its Patron Saints - was sent requesting that the Crown Land be granted to the Muslim Trust Committee of Simonstown in which Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ referred to these *awliyā* by name. It was fear of “spiritual” reprisals that kept the families members from sharing this information with others. Within the family too, *kitābs* (religious books), diaries, swords and other religious artefacts are a closely guarded secret. Nonetheless, this is a noteworthy case that demonstrates that there is a core of truth at the centre of many oral accounts of some remarkable people who made their impact on Cape Muslim history at the Cape.

The available information, however, makes it difficult to establish which particular *ṭarīqa* they espoused. Most of the accounts to date deal extensively with their royal connections and the miraculous events for which they became known. The *mujarrabāt* aspects of Islamic Spirituality at the Cape - as will be discussed in much greater detail later - also appeared as the dominant feature on this westerly side of the Cape Peninsula. One of the documents, however, quite clearly indicates that they embraced the *‘asharite ‘aqīda* of al-Sanūsī. The events, nonetheless, indicate that they were steeped in spiritual practices.

Their burial location too is typical of the pre-Guru period. The graves are located on a hill at the foot of the mountain, next to a stream, and surrounded by trees. Meanwhile, in central Cape Town, the *ṭarīqas* were rapidly relocating themselves within the burgeoning urban environment itself. This new drift towards the urban centre, as we shall discuss later, was to dramatically alter the trajectory of Islām for years to come⁴⁶.

5.3.3 Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī and Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Motura (Hajji Matariem)

Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī and Shaykh Motura arrived at the Cape in 1744 registered in the “Bandietenlijse” as “Mohamedaanse (sic) Prieste” (Muḥammadan Priests). (Davids, 1980: 17). Bradlow makes the interesting observation that Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī was a student of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and that Sayyid ‘Alawī was in fact only released after, and possibly because of, the death of his shaykh. (Bradlow, 1988: 126). It is

not uncommon for a fully qualified shaykh to remain a student of one he regards as more senior to himself. Initially both of them were condemned to life imprisonment in chains on Robben Island. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, however, died after ten years on the island. A year after his death Sayyid ‘Alawī was released. (Davids, 1980: 17). Once again there are legends that speak of the enormous impact these two shaykhs must have made on their fellow inmates. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān became known for his miraculous cures and the spiritual comfort he provided to those who were either physically ill or in sheer misery as a result of their incarceration. The island, it was said, became too small to hold him. He, like Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn, was seen walking across the sea to visit his fellow slaves on the mainland. (Mansoor [Ed.], 2001: 15-6). After his death in 1754 his memory would have been preserved by those who sought his spiritual counselling. Visitations to the graves of shaykhs regarded as *awliyā* are common practices with *ṣūfī*-inspired individuals or groups. At the heart of these visitations lies the practice of *tawassul* - seeking the intercessionary assistance of the saint. As one of the central concepts in practical *taṣawwuf* the idea would almost certainly have been taught to his students. Apart from the associated *baraka* (spiritual influence) with the shrines and graves of the *awliyā*, it is particularly this practice of *tawassul* that has kept alive the links, from generation to generation, between the shaykhs and the communities of Muslims in the Cape across the years. With the freeing of slaves and convicts who served their sentences during the time of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān’s incarceration his fame would have reached the slaves on the mainland long before his death. Likewise, as a prominent student (Bradlow, 1988: 126) of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān and also a shaykh in his own right, the reputation of Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī would also have preceded his release from Robben Island.



Figure 10: Tuan Sayyid 'Alawī at Tana Baru

There is however, some speculation about where they were detained and from whence they were shipped - Yemen or Batavia. Tuan Sayyid 'Alawī is said to have hailed from Mocca (or *al-Mukhbā* in Arabic) in Yemen. Up until the nineteenth century, Mocca was the principal port for Sanā'a in Yemen. Later, but during the same century, the status of chief port fell to Aden. During the eighteenth century Mocca was still under the control of the Ottomans who used it as their main port for trading purposes from Yemen. Since the early sixteenth century up to well into the nineteenth - and despite a series of rebellions - the whole of Yemen remained largely in the hands of the Ottomans. (Ibrahim, 1998: 202-3). While the Dutch appeared to have a trading station in Mocca at the time (Davids, 1980: 44), they almost definitely enjoyed little sovereignty in that area. It is unlikely, therefore, that they were deported from Mocca. Sayyid 'Alawī, nonetheless, is a typical *Ḥaḍramite* name and quite clearly indicates his origins. On the other hand, the identity of Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥmān Motura is more clearly indicated by the name through which he is more popularly known, Hajji Matariem. This name suggests a number of alternatives by which to establish the relationship between Hajji Matariem and Tuan Sayyid 'Alawī. Firstly, as a "haji" he would almost definitely have performed his *ḥajj*

in Makka. He may also have spent a few years studying there or in the Ḥaḍramawt from whence Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī followed him to Batavia as a student of his. The practice of students following their shaykhs to their lands of birth was fairly common during those days. Secondly, the name “Matariem” is most likely a corruption of the name “Maṭr al-Dīn” as Da Costa has tried to show. (Da Costa, 1994: 133). Names such as these meaning “The Rain of Religion”, Nūr al-Mubīn meaning “The Clear Light”, and Nūr al-Īmān (Nuruman) meaning “The Light of Faith”, are hardly, if ever, found in peoples of Arab extraction. These compound names connoting strong identities with effusive and luxuriant natural environments are more common to the Indian subcontinent and the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Motura, it seems quite apparent, is definitely of Indonesian origin. Therefore another alternative that suggests itself is that Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī of Mocca may have been born into one of the many migrant *Ḥaḍramite* families that by then had settled in Indonesia, and subsequently became a prominent student of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān in Indonesia itself. This alternative appears the most persuasive for toponyms such as “of Mocca” (*al-Mukhbā’i*), “of Irāq” (*al-‘Irāqī*) etc. - a practice common throughout the Muslim world even today - are normally adopted only after migration and not while a person is resident within that city or country.

In Batavia they may have jointly led the resistance against the Dutch, subsequently captured together, and deported to the Cape. The possibility that Tuan ‘Alawī was a student of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān is increased by the fact that he died nearly fifty years after the death of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān definitely appears to have enjoyed seniority at least.

As a member of the *Sāda Bānī ‘Alawī* (the ‘Alawī clan whose genealogy is traced to the Prophet Muḥammad [pbuh]) he would almost certainly have been of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṣūfī ṭarīqa*. By association, the shaykh to whom he would have attached himself - even if he were a *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykh in his own right - would in all likelihood have been of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* too.



Figure 11: Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Motura on Robben Island

One of the distinguishing contributions of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* to the spiritual culture of *ṭaṣawwuf* is the number of stylised devotional writings it has produced, probably more, even by conservative estimates, of any existing *ṭarīqa* in the history of *ṭaṣawwuf*. In fact, and unlike many *ṭarīqas*, devotional writings are one of the key platforms from which they induct others into the order. There is not a single ‘*Alawī* shaykh, for example, who would not be familiar with the *Rāṭib al-‘Aṭṭās*, the *Rāṭib al-Ḥaddād*, and the *Rāṭib al-‘Aydrūs* - all of which are still popularly recited at the Cape. There is a strong probability that these *rāṭibs* were introduced to the Cape by these shaykhs.

By the time Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī was released from Robben Island his reputation would already have reached the mainland. While little is known of his life either before or after his arrival at the Cape, the legends reflect the awe and respect of those who met and learnt from him. At night, it was related, with doors locked and barred he would enter the Slave Lodge with a Qurān in his hand to teach the Lodge slaves. Later he would return with food. Even the slave masters and guards of the Lodge failed to detect his visits. Historical evidence suggests that he was appointed

as a policeman after his release and therefore enjoyed easy access to the Slave Lodge. There is little doubt, though, that he would have entered their lives in a way that would have relieved them of the trauma of their subjugation and provided them with the spiritual nourishment they desperately needed. As a *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykh he would have taught them - in addition to the basics of the *sharī‘a* - some of the better known *‘Alawī* litanies. It is most likely too, that it was Sayyid ‘Alawī who led the *mawlūd* session described by Thunberg in 1772. By inference from two Comorian letters discussed later, the possibility exists that it might well have been Tuan Guru himself who led the ceremony.

His function as a policeman, however, has come under critical scrutiny. Bradlow, who is not in favour of this view, cites ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Alawī - a resident at Faure - as expressing his doubts about whether Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī would have been privileged with such a job after eleven years in prison. The fact, as Davids’ research indicates, and contrary to ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ‘Alawī’s perception, is that the job of a policeman at the time was considered a menial task. That Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī would have accepted a menial job is not surprising. Many *Ṣūfī* shaykhs, including many of the *Bā ‘Alawī* ones, adopted the *Malāmatiyya* approach. The *Malāmatiyya*, however, is not a *ṣūfī* order but a method, as mentioned in chapter two, that acts as a form of spiritual discipline. Glasse describes it in the following way:

Rather than being an order, it is the designation of a tendency, or of a psychological category, of people who attract blame to themselves despite their being innocent...but it can also be a measure of self-defence in order to hide a spiritual aptitude until a time of ripeness or, as a deliberate self-humiliation, to purify and loosen a positive quality from the grip of the lower soul (*an-nafs*). (Glasse, 1989: 249).

In this approach the initiate, or even the shaykh, is required to subject him/herself to public acts of servility, and even mendacity, with a view to disciplining the lower

soul. In the *Ghazālian* tradition - whose teachings form the basis of spiritual ethics in the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* - the recalcitrant or self-inciting soul (*al-naḥs al-‘ammāra bi-l-sū*) forms the biggest veil between God and the individual. Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī would have showed little hesitation in accepting this job.

Contrary to Bradlow’s claim that Sayyid ‘Alawī may have entered the Lodge in “defiance of the Company” and that that is a question that the “conventional wisdom is not willing to entertain”, Sayyid ‘Alawī’s acceptance of the post may have served him well in two respects: one, and previously alluded to, that the menial nature of the job would have been of little relevance to him other than acting as a check on his *naḥs*; and two, if a non-defiant way of achieving the same ends was available to him, then for what reason choose otherwise? With his homeland under occupation, and a relatively small Muslim population at the Cape, open acts of defiance might well have meant extended prison sentences or even death. As one of the lone shaykhs amongst Muslims at the Cape he would also have realised that ministering to the needs of the Muslims would have been incumbent on him by way of *farḍ kifāya*. This basic precept in Islam would have been known to him. His motivation to teach Islam to the slaves would have been driven by his intellectual, moral, and spiritual commitments rather than by defiance; unless, of course, we construe the very act of teaching Islam to mean an act defiance. The question, however, appears to be one of method rather than commitment to beliefs. Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī certainly chose the least defiant of methods. This is not to deny that those of the *ṣūfī* persuasion are not capable of defiant resistance. The very reason for the presence of these exiles in the Cape - and eminently so in the case of Shaykh Yūsuf - is sufficient testimony to that. But theirs was a defiance tempered by a deep sense of pragmatism - a pragmatism that has, as its source, the understanding that the final outcome of things rests ultimately with God. Dismissed, and oftentimes condemned, as a slavish quietism by late twentieth century Islamic movements - for the most part *salafite*-inspired - this was a spirit that became seriously misunderstood. *Ṭaṣawwuf* is driven by a spirit conceived within its very being as *in situ* with God. Within this spirit, hatred, impractical defiance, and belligerence and anger, are seen as incompatible with the nature of God. Shaykh Yūsuf would have been an embodiment of the *ḥadīth* quoted

by himself in his *Zubda*: “Verily My Mercy precedes My anger.” (Dangor, 1994: 28). In like fashion, those driven by the spirit of *taṣawwuf* would accord precedence to compassion and forgiveness over hatred and vengeance. Injustice, reprehensible as its consequences might be, is also seen as a fatal moral flaw within the perpetrator - not something to rebel against necessarily but, more often, a flaw to be rectified. The human, as a theomorphic being, gains his/her greatness through the spirit, not materiality. That the *ṣūfīs* unequivocally emphasise the pre-eminence of the world of spirit over the world of matter is a phenomenological truth. Their actions, therefore, have to be read and interpreted according to that standard. To this Davids adds:

It is the determinism inherent in the Ash‘arite Rational-Traditional philosophical theology which conditioned the slaves in the acceptance of their subjugation, and assured for them good treatment from their Free Black slave-masters, who feared the ‘acquisition‘ (iktisab) of evil which they might attain through injustice and ill treatment of their slaves. This explains, apart from the fact that this system gave them social mobility, why the slaves never resisted their slavery...(Davids, 1991: 66).

Davids’ observation that the slaves would have been guaranteed good treatment because of their masters’ fear for acquiring evil through “iktisab” if they behaved otherwise, is a strange one. There is a whole corpus of Islamic Law - regardless of one’s theological beliefs, *‘Asharite*⁴⁷, *Mutazilite*⁴⁸ or otherwise - that deals with the necessity of treating slaves well. Linking the slaves acceptance of their social status with the idea of “determinism” in the *‘Asharite* theology is a noteworthy one however. But in the absence of a *ṣūfī* analysis it reflects, at best, only part of the truth. *‘Asharite* theology, while forming the backbone of the *Abli Sunni*⁴⁹ stream of Islām, appears in the standard works of *taṣawwuf*, if at all, in liminal form only. The dignified endurance, particularly of the shaykhs and other Muslim leaders at the Cape, is more properly located in *taṣawwuf* rather than in *‘Asharite* theology. In

other words, in the *experience* of God as ever close Who has a Way (*sunnat Allah*) that will ensure the fulfilment of justice whether in this life or the next; as opposed to the *idea* of determinism as incorporated into a philosophical system of “Rational-Traditional theology”. In the *taṣawwuf* perspective, the decrees (*taqdīr*) of God are perennially tempered by His mercy (*raḥma*) and compassion (*raʿfa*) - *taqdīr* never occurs outside of, or to the exclusion of, *raḥma* and *raʿfa*. It is this capacity of *taṣawwuf* to connect, experientially, with the needs of the slaves that made it the powerful force it was in early Cape Islām. *ʿAsharite* theology, of course, came to play a more central role in nineteenth century Islām.

From the time he was released in 1755 until his death in 1803, Tuan ʿAlawī spent nearly fifty years propagating and teaching Islām amongst the slaves at the Cape. He may rightfully, as Davids observes, be considered the first Imām of a settled Muslim community at the Cape.

Along with his contemporary, Tuan Nuruman (Paii Schaapie), they were instrumental in laying the groundwork for Imām ʿAbd Allah b. Qāḍī ʿAbd al-Salām (Tuan Guru).

5.3.4 Tuan Nuruman (Paii Schaapie)

Paii Schaapie, as he was more popularly known, appears in the prototypical *ṣūfī* mould of the *zāhid* (ascetic) and *tawwāb* (repenter). With respect to his *tawwāb* status he is in the company of great *Ṣūfī* shaykhs of the past who had repented of their misdeeds. In the *Kitāb al-Tawwābīn* (The Book of Famed Repenters) by the famous *ḥanbalīte* scholar, Imām Muwaffaq al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Quddāma al-Maqdasī (1146-1223) he recounts the hagiographies of some of the best known of these *tawwābīn*. Amongst this class of saints are celebrated personages such as Fuḍayl b. ʿIyāḍ⁵⁰, Mālik b. Dīnār⁵¹, and Bishr al-Ḥārith al-Ḥāfi⁵². Shell draws the parallel between Paii Schaapie and the Christian ascetic Francis of Assisi. (Shell, 1993: 424).

As a slave Paai Schaapie arrived at the Cape in 1779. According to Davids he was perhaps the only slave who acquired the status of *wali* at the Cape. (Davids, n.d.: 4, 8). Hudson describes the impact of his repentance:

There died a few months since in the slave lodge a very extraordinary character of this cast. He had been through the early part of his life guilty of every crime that could disgrace human nature. In the latter part of his time he took an oath to spend the remainder of his existence in penance for his former wicked crimes and gained so much upon the people of his tribe of cast that he was appointed their priest, their doctor, their necromancer, in short, was considered their oracle on all occasions...

His bearing, his figure was interesting but nothing of that veneration struck you at first appearance till the character of the man was known. Then he held you with that attention a person reclaimed from vice to virtue will ever inspire. (Shell, 1993: 420-1)

Of equal importance in this description is the response of that nascent Muslim community to his repentance. After repentance (*tauba*) Islamic Law holds no sway over the past misdemeanours of a person. This is consonant with the meaning of the *ḥadīth* “*Kullu banī Ādam Khaṭṭāʾ wa Khayru l-Khaṭṭāʾin al-Tawwābīn*” (Every human being is a sinner, and the best of sinners is the one who repents). (al-Maqdasī, 1992: 327). While this is a feature of Islam in general, in *ṣūfī* milieus it takes on the form of a maxim. It is this relentless pursuit to realise the mercy, compassion, love, and nearness of God that has often set the *ṣūfīs* on a collision course with the more puritanical and rigorist legalists. *Ṣūfīs* are implacable in their quest to assert the superiority of the spirit over the letter. It is not surprising, therefore, that Paai

Schaapie attained the status that he did in the Muslim community of his time - a community that would have been saturated in the spirit of *taṣawwuf*.

Paai Schaapies penitential vows lead him to work in public houses between sunrise and sunset. (Shell, 1993: 425). This act of public penance is similarly indicative of a strong *Malāmatī* strain during the second half of the eighteenth century. This strain is even more sharply visible in the character of Paai Schaapie than Tuan Sayyid ʿAlawī.

Amongst the tasks he assigned to himself was the sinking of wells between Cape Town and Green Point with the purpose of providing water for the cattle that grazed there. He also applied himself to the repairing of roads. (Shell, 1993: 425).

What is most significant about Hudson’s account though, is that he “enjoined others guilty of misconduct in a short penance to assist him for a short while in his labours.”

Amongst the *Malāmatī*-oriented *ṣūfīs* this is a way to induct initiates into the *ṭarīqa*.

He is also known for his *mujarrabāt* (tested spiritual remedies) practices. An anonymous English officer recounts in his “Gleanings in Africa” that a young woman suffering from a certain ailment sought his advice. “With the greatest composure” the officer writes, “he took a small box from his sack, and striking into it a few sparks from the steel, it immediately caught fire and emitted a somewhat fragrant vapour, with which he bedewed her forehead and temples of the fair supplicant. It had an instantaneous effect, for she took her leave with gratitude and apparent relief from the pain.” (Shell, 1993: 425).

In another case he designed an *ʿazīmat* to assist a few runaway slaves in their attempt to escape. They were caught, and he, in 1786, imprisoned for complicity in their attempt to escape. After his release from Robben Island he acquired the status of a Free Man. This new-found status may well have facilitated his function as a religious guide within the community.

The question of his educational background and the *ṭarīqa* to which he belonged remains something of a mystery. Du Plessis says that “he was not a man of learning, but a simple and lovable character who distributed sweets to the children when he left his solitary hut on Signal Hill where he passed most of his time.” (Du Plessis, 1944: 35-6). To what extent “he was not a man of learning” is difficult to say. There

are two aspects to Paai Schaapie's life that may have prompted this observation in Du Plessis: firstly, his wayward past, and secondly, in the simple and ascetic way of life he came to lead - in the images, as it were, that he "distributed sweets to children...loved animals...and [his] caring for injured animals." (Du Plessis, 1944: 36). Another account relates that a group of "young malays", on passing his cottage on a certain night, witnessed a beam of light stretching from his room into the evening sky. Driven by curiosity they approached the window from where they saw Paai Schaapie immersed in prayers. (Du Plessis, 1944: 36).

Apart, possibly, from the nature of his wayward past, none of these images point to either his learning or lack of it. They point, instead, to that powerful sense of compassion and total immersion in the remembrance of God that is a hallmark of the ascetic *ṣūfīs*. His choice of a "solitary hut" on Signal Hill as a spiritual retreat (*khalwa*) - and which he likely used as a base for his *murīds* - reinforces the ascetic nature of his spirituality. This is complimented by his manner of dress. The ascetic character of the man that captured the imagination of people like Hudson is visible in his old English great cloak, the calabash acting as a cover for his head, the girdle around his waist, and the bamboo stick in his hand - an endearing pastoral figure in the heart of Cape Town.

As for his religious education, a number of possibilities do suggest themselves. Pure conjecture as this might be, these are based on the fact that Paai Schaapie was received, with near unanimity, as a spiritual leader at the Cape.

Paai Schaapie may have received religious tuition prior to his arrival at the Cape, the results of which came to fruition only after his capture. He may also be an example of that classic, but rare, order of *ṣūfīs* known as the *Uwaysiyya*. The *Uwaysiyya* are those considered to have attained a degree of spirituality by sheer force of personal experience that would be otherwise difficult to achieve in the absence of a spiritual guide and formal instruction. (Shah, 1968: 79). This possibility is the one I consider the most likely. A third possibility, however, and one that I have been unable to establish in the prevailing literature, is that he may have met and benefited from the teachings of both Tuan Sayyid 'Alawī and Tuan Guru who were both established shaykhs during their time. While he appears as an active spiritualist before his

imprisonment on Robben Island in 1786, he might well have received some formal religious instruction from Tuan Guru who was already on the island at that time. The prevailing literature and oral history, however, project him as an independent spiritual leader. This might well be the case. Nonetheless, as a realised *ṣūfī*, it is his spiritual and curative powers that are most sharply accentuated.

Even after his death many sort - and still do up to today - the blessings of his final resting place. “Women” says Du Plessis, “wanting a son, men who longed for success, girls who have been jilted - all sought his aid.” (Du Plessis, 1944: 36). Another tradition that has continued is the gathering of a mound of soil from his grave by those travelling abroad, especially on *ḥajj*. Paai Schaapie’s love for the earth of the Cape, it is believed, would ensure, through the very soil, their safe return.

Paai Schaapie died in 1810 and lies buried in the Tanu Baru cemetery. A piece of land was granted to him by Janssens as a token of the friendship between them. While Janssens may well have been inspired by French Revolutionary ideas of freedom and liberty, we also notice a readiness on the part of early Cape Muslim leadership to compromise where circumstances allowed for such opportunities. It is a readiness, however, in which we discern a confidence in the greatness and power of the spirit to eliminate prejudice, bigotry, and even misunderstanding. Their struggles against their oppressors appeared more centred in intellectual and spiritual resistance than any instance of defiance could possibly claim. With sheer numbers and territory still on their side their defiance was well spent in their homeland; in the Cape, on the other hand, that spirit of open defiance transmuted into a spirit of inner resistance. *Ṭaṣawwuf*, while accommodating both the exoteric and esoteric teachings of Islām, nonetheless emphasises the esoteric. Spirit-centred as it is, it emphasises, unremittingly, that human dignity is a dispensation of God, not people. It is the sheer force of this emphasis in Islāmic teachings that both informed the early Cape Muslim leadership and enabled them to rise above the oppressive strictures they were subjected to. Paai Schaapie may yet have been “a man of simple learning”, but in the greatness and intelligence of his spirit he transcended in stature many of those with a claim to erudition.

A reasonable guess at his *ṭarīqa* affiliations would be one that favours the *Bā ‘Alawī* order. One of the key ideas underlying this *ṭarīqa* is that of *rusūmubum maḥwa al-rusūm* - the erasure of all formalities. Many of the *Bā ‘Alawīyya* shaykhs have extended this idea to include the manner in which one must be buried. Paaī Schaapie’s request not to have a shrine built over his grave is in line with this principle. (Davids, n.d.: 4, 11). Locally in Cape Town, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ Hendricks - as an *‘Alawī* shaykh - made a similar request to his *murīds*. One of his own teachers too, Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd (d.1936)⁵³ - one of the greatest *‘Alawī* shaykhs to have taught in Makkah - did the same.

In Tuans Sayyid ‘Alawī and Paaī Schaapie, we see the emergence of a new class of *ṣūfīs* in the Cape, a class of urban *ṣūfīs* that marked the end of an era - an era that belongs to those who lie buried along the forested mountain ridges and hills of the Cape Peninsula. The major difference between these two eras is the institutionalisation of Islām. During the era of the “Ṣūfīs of the Forests” spiritual ministrations, despite the more severe character of socio-political oppression, were conducted in an environment free from the communal conflict that came to wrack nineteenth century Islām at the Cape. The more intensely spiritual nature of this period, and hence the apparently purer forms of *taṣawwuf*, did not, as Bradlow appears to indicate, arise through any degree of de-emphasising the *sharī‘a*. The more “purer” forms prevailed as a result of the absence of institutionalised Islām. Ironically, Tuans Sayyid ‘Alawī and Paaī Schaapie, precisely because they are absent in all of the accounts that deal with the institutionalisation of Islam from 1795 onwards, appear more readily identifiable in character with the “Ṣūfīs of the Forests”; this, despite the fact that the former died in 1803 and the latter in 1810. It is through the institutionalisation and organisation of Islām - with all the attendant hazards of this process - that resulted in the ensuing conflict during the nineteenth century. If anything, and as argued later in Chapter Six, a weakening in both *sharī‘a* and *taṣawwuf* only served to exacerbate the conflicts.

Nonetheless, while the activities of Paaī Schaapie “helped to make Islām visible at in Cape Town” (Davids, n.d.: 3, 10) it was Tuan Guru who organised and consolidated Islām at the very heart of the city. According to the authors of *Cape Town - the*

making of a city, Tuan Guru “presided over the shift from a hidden and mystical form of Islam to a more open and public practice of the faith.” (Rafudeen, 2004: 6).

5.3.5 Imām ‘Abd Allah b. Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Salām (Tuan Guru)

5.3.5.1 His Background

Moosa notes that Imām ‘Abd Allah b. Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Salām (1712-1807), better known and henceforth referred to as Tuan Guru, may be “regarded as the second spiritual father of Islām at the Cape.” (Moosa, 1995: 132). As the second most revered figure in Cape Islam, however, less is known about his background than that of Shaykh Yūsuf. Nonetheless, some of the sketchy details available provide an interesting context.

The Sultan of the Trinate group of islands in the Moluccas embraced Islam in 1495. Tidore, an important island in this group and where Tuan Guru was born, adopted Islam in the year 1512. (Davids, n.d.: 4, 12). By the time Tuan Guru was born 200 years later we may assume that Islam was fairly well established in that region. By the middle of the eighteenth century, when Tuan Guru was already a matured man, there were 25 mosques in Tidore. (Davids, 1980: 44). At the time Tidore was also considered the centre of Islam in that region. (Davids, n.d: 4, 13). Furthermore, the title “al-Qāḍī” (judge) appended to his father’s name, ‘Abd al-Salām, would indicate that he emanated from a family well schooled in matters of religion. (Bradlow, 1988: 145).

The general picture that emerges is that Tuan Guru was rooted in a milieu profoundly influenced by the teachings of Islam.



Figure 12: Shrine of Tuan Guru at Tana Baru

5.3.5.2 Arrival at The Cape: Two Comorian Letters

Standard historical accounts of Tuan Guru's arrival hold that, along with three others - Callie Abdol Rauf, Noro Iman, and Baderoedien (Patrodien in Shell's list cited earlier) - he arrived at the Cape as a State Prisoner in 1780. The *bandietenrollen* (Convict Census) of 1780 records that they were taken prisoners for having conspired with the English. (Davids, 1980: 44). The assumption is that Tuan Guru was arrested in Tidore and shipped to the Cape in 1780. Two Comorian letters written in Arabic on the 4 November 1773 (18 *Sha'abān* 1187) and located by James Armstrong in the Cape Archives throw considerable doubt on this version. According to Armstrong a Cape slaver *Snelbeyd* under Roeloeff Pieterse was despatched from Cape Town on "a routine slaving voyage to Madagascar." (Armstrong, 1982: 100). They decided instead to head for Anjouan in the Comoros for the purpose of refreshing before turning to Madagascar. They missed Anjouan and spent the next two months (20 August - 20 October) searching for the port city along the coast of the Comoros. Fourteen days after their arrival in Anjouan they

were given two letters - one written by the ruler of Anjouan and the other by a member of his court - addressed to Baron Joachim van Plettenburg requesting commercial contacts between the Cape and Anjouan. According to B.G Martin, as cited by Armstrong,

...the copyist identifies himself as 'Abdallah T.d.u.r.i. (Tadwari, Taduri ??) in the 'land of the Kav; the same hand occurs in the colophon of the second letter where he calls himself the 'oppressed' Imam 'Abdallah ibn al-Mazlum Qadi 'Abd al-Salam al-Taduri (?) the Shafi'i by religious rite, the 'Ashari by conviction. (Armstrong, 1982: 101).

The ship, along with the letters, returned to the Cape on the 10 March 1774. (Armstrong, 1982: 100). Shell also notes that Armstrong "mentions the possibility that the Arabic interpreter on board was Tuan Guru." (Shell, 2000: 336). Indeed it appears patently clear that it is so. The phrase in the "land of the kav" also appears to indicate that Tuan Guru had by then already considered himself domiciled at the Cape. It also raises the interesting question of a six-year period (from 1774-1780) for which absolutely nothing is accounted for during his stay in that period at the Cape. Armstrong notes that it "was common VOC practice to employ their Malagasy slaves as interpreters on their slaving voyages." (Armstrong, 1982: 101). It is possible that Tuan Guru was regularly used as an Arabic interpreter on those extended slaving voyages. It may be that he had become aware of the burgeoning desires of the English to wrest the Cape from the Dutch, sided with them, and got arrested in the process. It is recorded in the *bandietenrollen* that he was arrested for conspiring with the English. He was imprisoned on Robben Island in 1780. The hitherto unaccounted for 6-year period also raises the possibility that he may have made an impact on the slaves at the Cape long before his release from Robben Island in 1792. While his prison sentence lasted for approximately 12 years he spent "alternate spells in the slave lodge and Robben Island." (Loos, 2005: 9). The general picture

that emerges from this is that Tuan Guru was exposed to a far wider range of slaves than previously considered. Tuan Guru was certainly a man with a mission and he would have availed himself of the opportunities he had with the slaves in bringing to fruition his desire to consolidate Islam at the Cape.

It was during the period of his imprisonment that he set about writing copies of the Qurān from memory and other works which have been compiled in a Compendium consisting of 613 handwritten pages. 400 of these are in Arabic and the rest in Malay. (Rafudeen, 2004: 1). An understanding of this text is fundamental to an understanding of Tuan Guru's role and contribution to Islam at the Cape.

5.3.5.3 Tuan Guru's Compendium: An Overview

A problematic with earlier analyses and interpretations of Tuan Guru's precise location in *taṣawwuf* and general religious outlook has been the inaccessibility of the Arabic language. (Rafudeen, 2004: 17). Even the Malayu section (pp. 438-607) is sufficiently interspersed with Arabic phrases and sentences to render intelligible the nature of the content. Rafudeen's pathbreaking analysis and translation of most of the Compendium should go a long way in demystifying the text and enabling non-Arabic speaking students to engage that text in more productive ways. Nonetheless - and with a view to locating Tuan Guru more tangibly within the *ṣūfī* tradition - there are certain structural elements within the text that need to be examined.

Achmat Davids - Muslim progenitor of Islamic cultural studies at the Cape - is of the opinion that Tuan Guru was predominantly a rationalist philosopher in the *ʿAsbarite* mould. In support of this he focuses on the theological work of Shaykh Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Sanūsī of Tlemcen (d.1490)⁵⁴ entitled *Umm al-Barāhin* (The Demonstrative Proofs) and its commentary written by his student Shaykh ʿAbd Allah al-Malālī. The *Umm al-Barāhin* is also known as the *Sanūsīyya*. (Rafudeen, 2004: 57-8). The *Sanūsīyya*, however, is more popularly known in the Cape as the "twintig sifaats" (The Twenty Attributes). Rafudeen is also of the view that the *ʿaqīda* component is "the most important section of the Compendium." (Rafudeen, 2004: 57).

While it is true that Tuan Guru was an *‘Asharite* theologian - and a fairly insistent one compared to Shaykh Yūsuf, for example - Davids’ inordinate concentration on that dimension of Tuan Guru’s thought leads to a somewhat exaggerated account of his rationalism. He states, for example, that the *Ma‘rifat al-Islām wa l-Īmān* (Knowledge of Islam and Faith) “deals *exclusively* [italics mine] with the concepts of belief (*‘aqīda*) and as such deals with that part of the *Sharī‘a* (Islamic Law) known as the *‘ilmul Kalām* i.e. the principles of belief or the knowledge of the existence of God...” (Davids, 1991: 65).

Whether we assume that the title *Ma‘rifat al-Islām wa l-Īmān* refers to the segment ranging from pages 7 to 25, or whether it refers to the entire Compendium, then Davids observation that it deals “exclusively” with *‘aqīda* would be incorrect on both accounts. The section that appears under the rubric *Ma‘rifat al-Islām wa l-Īmān* takes a form akin to the Socratic method of enquiry in which “the dialectic is the process of eliciting the truth by means of questions aimed at what is already implicitly known...” (Blackburn, 1996: 104).

Amongst the questions that occur for which answers are provided are: “What is your progeny? What is your nation? ...What is the apex of faith? What is the heart? What is its body?...” etc. Not a single question of *kalām* is raised in the entire tract.

If we consider the Compendium as a whole then there are three distinct sections that address matters of *‘aqīda*. The segment ranging from pages 106 to 129 deals with the text (*matn*) of the *Umm al-Barābin* of Shaykh al-Sanūsi; pages 130 to 149 appears to be a similar treatment of *‘aqīda* - this becomes evident from the Arabic phrases interspersed within the Melayu script; and finally, from page 305 to page 437 is Shaykh al-Malālī’s commentary (*sharḥ*) of the *Umm al-Barābin*. If incidental references to *‘aqīda* in other parts of the Compendium of 613 pages are included then approximately a quarter of the Compendium deals with *‘aqīda*. While *‘aqīda* is strongly represented in this work, it is certainly far from an exclusive treatment as Davids maintains.

On the other hand, a different set of observations, but equally problematic, are offered by Bradlow. He states:

At one level...Tuan Guru was engrossed within the mystical traditions of Islam. Yet his writings indicate that he did not visualise the mystical practice of Islam as a separate form of activity from other dimensions of Islamic practice. Indeed the integration of *mystical philosophy* (italics mine) with the more mundane concerns of fiq and shariah indicate that he acknowledged the importance of temporal matters in the lives of his followers. *It is therefore this tendency of a more integrated form of social practice that sets Tuan Guru apart from his contemporaries* (italics mine). (Bradlow, 1988: 145).

Indeed Tuan Guru was “engrossed within the mystical traditions” as we shall discuss shortly. But two problems present themselves in Bradlow’s text. One, that a “mystical philosophy” is expounded in the Compendium; and two, that Tuan Guru was the first to engage “a more integrated form of social practice” - by which we understand an integration between *taṣawwuf* and *sharīʿa* and its subsequent translation into the *realpolitik* of Muslim organisation and institutionalisation during the nineteenth century.

Starting with the latter it is difficult to see how Tuan Guru was unique in his approach of integrating *taṣawwuf* with *sharīʿa*. Bradlow’s concept of integration appears premised on the assumption that purer forms of *taṣawwuf* uncluttered by “mundane concerns of fiq and shariah” were practiced during the pre-Guru period. That the relations between the shaykhs and *murīds* during the pre-Guru period were more fluid and less formalised than the post-Guru period may be true. What is highly contestable though, is Bradlow’s inference that this fluidity may be ascribed to a lesser emphasis placed by the pre-Guru shaykhs on the formal aspects of the *sharīʿa*. It is not the lack of emphasis on the *sharīʿa* that resulted in apparently purer expressions of *taṣawwuf* but the repressive conditions that made the more public practices of Islām such as the Friday congregational prayers, for example, impossible

to perform. Even the normal obligatory prayers would have been difficult to perform during the course of a normal day. Whatever our notions about the *sharīʿa* or *fiqh* might be, no *ṣūfī* shaykh has ever neglected to teach the basics of Islamic Law to his/her *murīds*. In authentic *ṣūfī* circles the difference that might characterise their teachings would be one of emphasis - normally in favour of Islamic spirituality - and not one of priority. The problems that emerged in the post-Guru period were institutional - an institutionalisation, too, that merely imparted a greater visibility to the *sharīʿi* aspects of Islām. With Tuan Guru's juristic and scholarly pedigree Tuans Sayyid ʿAlawī and Paaī Schaapie would in all likelihood have deferred the more operational aspects of institutionalisation to Tuan Guru. In Islamic Law they would almost certainly have regarded him as their senior. But this circumstance in itself in no way makes him less of a *ṣūfī* than his two illustrious contemporaries. Shaykh Yūsuf himself, after all, was firmly engaged in formal Islamic institutions in Goa before his capture by the Dutch.

With regard to Tuan Guru's "mystical philosophy" in the Compendium there is none in either format and/or presentation as they appear, for example, in Shaykh Yūsuf's writings or as they are presented in any one of the known classical works on *taṣawwuf*. Both his *taṣawwuf* affiliations and strong mystical leanings are revealed in the choice and structure of his devotional writings.

5.3.5.4 Tuan Guru's Compendium: In the *Bā ʿAlawī* Tradition

The general tenor of the Compendium reveals a man embracing, with equal conviviality, topics as diverse as the scholastic theology of Shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan ʿAlī al-ʿAshʿarī (d.935), encomiums to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh), the prescription of talismanic remedies, arguments concerning the finer details of certain juristic issues, extensive quotations of selected chapters and verses of the Qurān, an equally extensive list of selected *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (pbuh), and the recording of numerous litanies. In short, he is a prototypical traditionalist *ahlī sunnī* shaykh with a strongly punctuated *ṣūfī* tendency in an equally prototypical *Bā ʿAlawī* mould.

His *Bā ‘Alawī* affiliation, however, is not as immediately evident in his writings as it is in the writings of Shaykh Yūsuf - writings that quite clearly reveal his *Khalwati* and distinctively *Ibn ‘Arabian* leanings. The difficulty in establishing his *Bā ‘Alawī* affiliation - immediately evident to anyone familiar with the order though - is that the indications are oftentimes nested both within certain supplications and within the choice of litanies. It is also apparent in the selection of certain standard chapters and verses of the Qurān.



Figure 13: Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī with descendants of Tuan Guru at his Shrine

The first indication of Tuan Guru’s *Bā ‘Alawī* affiliation is contained in the following supplication:

In the name of Allah the most Merciful, the Benificent.

O Allāh, make the reward of what we have recited - of the Glorious Qurān and of the salutations we have invoked upon the Prophet (the Salutations and Peace of Allāh be upon him), and what we have recited of the formula “There is no god but Allāh, Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh (the Salutations and Peace of Allah

be upon him)”, in this gathering - make this a gift that reaches and a mercy that descends as a reward magnified in honour of the Prophet (the Salutations and Peace of Allāh be upon him).

Then may the reward extend to the souls of all our shaykhs, our teachers, all the friends of Allāh, the most High, and the learned of the pious, the righteous bondsmen, and the ascetics who are the People of the *Silsila* - to all of them. *Then to the soul of the Faqīh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī and to the souls of our Masters of the Bā ‘Alawī - to their branches and their roots and especially to their children* [italics mine]. Then to the souls of my father and my mother, my grandfather and my grandmother, my brothers and my sisters, my wives and my sons and my daughters, and to all the deceased of the Muslims.

O Allāh! Make this a means of redemption from the fire. The Salutations and Peace of Allah upon the unlettered Prophet and upon all his companions. Beyond description is your Lord, the Lord of Might, of all that may be ascribed to Him. Peace upon all the Messengers; and all praise to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. (Compendium, p. 150-1).

An identical supplication is also recorded on page 460 of the Compendium. The second indication, which in fact confirms the *Bā ‘Alawī* implications contained in the abovementioned supplication, is in Tuan Guru’ choice of litanies - particularly with regard to those written by non-*Bā ‘Alawī* shaykhs - and those chapters and verses of the Qurān specifically selected for liturgical purposes.

The “non-*Bā ‘Alawī*” *aḥzāb* (litanies, sing. *ḥizb*) that have become a defining feature of the *Bā ‘Alawī* prayer books and included in the Compendium are:

- 1) The *ḥizb* of al-Imām Yaḥyā b. Sharaf b. Murrī al-Nawawī (1233-1277)⁵⁵ known as the *Ḥizb al-Imām al-Nawawī*.
- 2) The *ḥizb* of Shaykh Muḥyī l-Dīn ibn ‘Arabī known as the *Ḥizb al-Wiqāya liman Arāda l-Wilāya* (The Litany of Protection for those Seeking Sainthood).
- 3) The *Ḥizb al-Barr* (Litany of the Land) by al-Imām Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī.
- 4) The *Ḥizb al-Baḥr* (Litany of the Sea) also by al-Imām al-Shādhilī.

Supplementing these *aḥzāb* are a number of other features common to the *Bā ‘Alawī* prayer books⁵⁶. Almost all these features are present in Tuan Guru’s Compendium. Amongst the more prominent features are:

- 1) Three variations of the invocation through Allāh’s 99 Names - *the Asmā’ Allāh al-Ḥusnā*, or “The Ninety Nine Beautiful Names of Allāh.”
- 2) The *Ṣalāt al-Tasbīḥ* - a lengthy prayer of four cycles (rak‘āt) that is recommended to be performed at least once in a lifetime.
- 3) The following selected chapters and verses from the Qurān:

Chapters:

- a) Sūra Yā Sīn
- b) Sūrat al-Jinn
- c) Sūrat al-Wāqī‘a
- d) Sūrat al-Sajda
- e) Sūrat al-Mulk (or Sūrat al-Tabāarak, as it is commonly known)
- f) Sūrat al-Kawthar
- g) Sūrat al-Kāfirūn
- h) Surat al-Ikhlāṣ
- i) Sūrat al-Falaq and
- j) Sūrat al-Nās

Verses:

There are numerous verses that correspond with those in the standard *Bā ‘Alawī* prayer books. Two of the most prominent ones in the Compendium are the *Āyat al-Kursī* and the *Āyat al-Kifāya*.

An interesting addition to the devotional works of the Compendium is the *Du‘ā l-Sayfī*. (See Annexures 6 and 7). This work is variously attributed to ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (ra) (Padwick, 1996: 290) and his grandson ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn (d.712) (Padwick, 1996: xv-xvi).

As a *ṭarīqa* with strong ancestral claims to the Prophet (pbuh), these two personages play seminal roles in the spirituality of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa*. (al-‘Aṭṭās, 1968: 12). While this *du‘ā* is not well represented in other *Bā ‘Alawī* prayer books, it is, nonetheless, not surprising that he selected it for inclusion in his own compilation. It is ironic that the descendants of the Prophet (pbuh) were often subjected to the worst persecution in Muslim history. (al-Shak‘a, 1983: 126). This partly accounts for the strong appeals to protection against injustice and oppression in their litanies. In *shāfi‘ite* milieus there is an equally strong identification with the past suffering of the *Ablu Bayt* (family of the Prophet). The reasons for these may be discerned in the position of Imām Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī (767-819) ⁵⁷ himself. During Imām al-Shāfi‘ī’s short stay in Yemen he was arrested for suspected complicity with the *‘Alawiyyīn* (descendants of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib) in their attempt to topple Ḥammād al-Barbarī whom Ḥārūn al-Rashīd had appointed as the governor of Makkah and Yemen in the year 183AH/799CE. (al-Daqr, 1987: 93-4). The suspicions that he may have been a *Sbī‘a* were lampooned by him in some of his poetry (Salīm, n.d.: 121,) but there is little doubt about the profound affection he had, and the equally serious political support he showed, for the *Ablu Bayt*. (Salīm, n.d.: 48, 89). This position of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī also explains why every member of the *Bā ‘Alawī* order with an ancestral claim to the *Bānī ‘Alawī* clan belongs to the *Shāfi‘ī* school of thought.

A comparison therefore between the *Ḥizb* of Imām al-Nawawī - a *shāfi‘ite* luminary but not of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* - and the *Du‘ā al-Sayfī* reveals identical patterns in its *affective* spirituality. As an example, two tracts of each of these *ḥizbs* demonstrate, under threat of persecution and injustice, the extraordinary trust in Divine providence.

Seeking the *fons et origo* of Divine Justice Imām al-Nawawī implores in his *ḥizb*:

O Allah! I ask you to place me and them amongst Your bondsmen and in Your protection and in Your assembly and Your generosity and safety and in Your group and Your refuge, from every Satan and ruler and human being and Jinn, and from every tyrant and envious one, and from every predatory animal and scorpion, and from every beast of burden - (which) You my Lord - hold firmly by their forelocks. Indeed, my Lord holds watch over the Straight Path (Literally, “is on the straight path”). My Lord is sufficient for me against those under His Lordship.

An almost identical plea is found in the *Du‘ā al-Sayfī*:

And I seek refuge in You O Lord, from the tyranny of every tyrant, from the oppression of every oppressor, from the envy of every envious one, from the deceit of every deceitful one, from the injustice of every unjust one, from the excuses of those who dissemble, and the machinations of those who machinate, and from those who delight in the misfortunes of others.

It is noteworthy too, that the prayer of Ma‘rūf al-Karkhī⁵⁸ included in the Compendium, and almost certainly taken from the *Iḥyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* of Imām al-Ghazālī, evokes similar themes of protection against oppression. A part of it reads: “God, the affectionate, is enough for me against him who oppresses me. God, the Stern, is enough for me against him who hurts me by evil.”

It is through *aḥzāb* such as these that we gain an understanding of the complementarity that exists between the devotional writings of Tuan Guru and his ‘Ash‘arite theology.

At the theological level the *Umm al-Barābīn* (or “twintig sifaat”) functioned as a critique *against the prevailing Trinitarian doctrines* of the ruling class and Church. Additionally, and reflexively of course, it also “provided the slaves“ as Davids observed, “with an understanding of a rational unitary God, which the Christian missionaries with the concept of Trinity could not penetrate.” (Davids, 1991: 68).

The devotional, or pietistic, writings, on the other hand, provided a more direct critique of *the socio-political order of the time*. It is in this sense that a complementarity existed between the two viz. between the Ḳashʿarite theology as a critique of prevailing Christian theology, and the devotional writings as a critique of the socio-political order; and not, as Rafudeen maintains, a complementarity between the *Umm al-Barābīn* as “an oblique, but fulsome, critique of the socio-political order that existed in Tuan Guru’s time” and the pietistic writings as a more direct critique of that order. (Rafudeen, 2004: 53). There is no link between the *Umm al-Barābīn* and any socio-political order, for that matter. The complementarity, therefore, is not one of *degree*, but one of *perspective*.

Rafudeen, however, infers, quite significantly, that such supplications are “not merely emotional bulwarks against oppression but formed part of a theological-pietistic complex that helped subvert the very order that instituted it.” (Rafudeen, 2004: 54).

The measure for understanding the importance of this observation lies within the very role and function that pietistic writings assume in the *Bā ʿAlawī ṭarīqa*; which accounts, too, for the unparalleled number of pietistic writings within the *ṭarīqa*.

In the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*, as in the *ʿAlam al-Nabrās*, the centrality of Imām al-Ghazālī and Imām al-Shādhilī in the *Bā ʿAlawī ṭarīqa* is recognized. The outward (*ẓāhir*) of the *ṭarīqa*, as we mentioned earlier, is, according to ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-ʿAṭṭās, “as Imām al-Ghazālī has described: knowledge and action according to a wisely guided pattern. Their inward (*bāṭin*) is as Imām al-Shādhilī has described: realization of the quintessential truth (*ḥaqīqa*) and the purification of beliefs (*tawḥīd*).” (al-ʿAṭṭās, 1968: 20).

That Imām al-Shādhilī represents the “inward” and hence the essence of their spiritual teachings and doctrines explains the absence - particularly during the

earlier phases of the *ṭarīqa* - of systematically recorded mystical and metaphysical writings. This is encapsulated by the following tract in the *‘Alam al-Nabrās*:

Shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī was asked: “Why do you not write about the path?” He replied: “My companions (meaning his students) are my writings.”

“It has been said” continues al-‘Aṭṭās, “that the path of the *Shādhilīs* is folded up into their *aḥzāb*, particularly with regard to the realization of divestment (*tajrīd*), and the knowledge of *tawḥīd* in the sincerity of servanthood (*‘ubūdiyya*).” (al-‘Aṭṭās, 1968: 20).

As evidenced by the compilation of his works in the Compendium, Tuan Guru has certainly demonstrated that he is a paradigmatic *Bā ‘Alawī shaykh*.

5.3.5.5 The Compendium and *Ḥadīth* Literature

An examination of some of his selected *ḥadīths* also reveals interesting patterns. Four themes appear predominant: i) The importance of the five obligatory prayers (*ṣalāh*) ii) The importance of acquiring knowledge iii) The importance of correct beliefs (*tawḥīd*) and iv) Related to both the obligatory prayers and the acquisition of knowledge viz. the building of Mosques.

Approximately 31 *ḥadīths* are related to *ṣalāh*, 18 to knowledge, and 12 to *tawḥīd*. The mentioning of Mosques appears in different contexts with one expressly extolling the virtues of building a Mosque. In this regard Tuan Guru relates:

The Prophet, may the Salutations and Peace of God be upon him, said: “Whosoever builds a Mosque, Allah will build for him a palace in Paradise and forbid for him seven doors of hell. His light in his grave will be from the Light of Allāh, the Most High. On the Day of

Resurrection there will be light in front of him, light to his left, and light to his right.

These concerns, while certainly not exclusive to the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa*, nevertheless remain both paramount and integral to the very conception of the *ṭarīqa* - the implications of which we shall examine later.

5.3.5.6 The Compendium and *‘Ilm al-Mujarrabāt* (The Science of Tested Spiritual Remedies)

Apparently anomalous to this discussion on Tuan Guru’s writings are the fairly extensive prescriptions of talismanic and other spiritual remedies for certain ailments - whether of the physical, spiritual, and psychological types.

While many may wish to locate these methods in the Hindu, or animistic, practices of the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, the truth is that these methods have always been known and exercised throughout the Muslim world. Whether the origins of these practices may be located in Shamanistic forms of mysticism or in gematrian Kabbalistic practices - to which some reference will be made later in Chapter Six - is, however, irrelevant to our purpose. The fact is that wherever these methods are applied in the Muslim world they have a distinctly Islamic imprint on them. Nonetheless, those who choose to argue from within a traditional Islamic framework would have a difficult task supporting their rejectionism of some of these practices. The practice of talismanic cures and other related practices are fairly well documented in classical Islamic sources. A more detailed discussion, with particular reference to Tuan Guru’s Compendium, will be engaged in the next Chapter.

5.3.5.7 The Compendium and *Fiqh* (Islamic Law)

Two works, predominantly in Malayu, constitute the last 169 pages of the Compendium. The first (pp. 438-481) is entitled the *Kashf al-Kirām fī Bayān al-Niyya ‘anda Takbīrat al-Iḥrām* (The Noble Unveiling Towards Clarifying the

Problem between the *Niyya* and the *Takbīrat al-Iḥrām*). This treatise deals with the question of combining the *takbīrat al-iḥrām* (the raising of the hands while reciting “Allāhu Akbar” at the start of the prayers) with the corresponding *niyya* (or statement of intention) which is a prerequisite for the soundness of the prayers. This polemic has occupied, if not dominated, juristic discourses within the Malay-Indonesian archipelago for centuries. The Arabic interspersed between the Malayu text, nonetheless, certainly reveals an erudite command of the *Shāfiʿī* school of thought.

The second treatise deals with matters of *ʿaqīda* (beliefs), *ṣalāh* (prayers), and *ṣawm* (fasting). The treatise is entitled *Bidāyat al-Mubtadiʿ bi Faḍl Allāh al-Mahdī* (A Beginners Guide through the Grace of Allāh the Guide).

The *Bā ʿAlawiyya* is an order that regards *ʿAsharite tawḥīd* and *Shāfiʿite fiqh* as integral components of the *Bā ʿAlawī* way, with its spirituality embedded in its many *awrād*.

“The pursuit of knowledge” says Bang (2003: 19) of this order, “is held as a way of applying one’s soul - together with the remembrance of God through the saying of specific *awrād* ...Combined with this is a system of ethics.” Moreover, citing ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Ḥibshī, the late nineteenth-century founder of the Islamic College (*ribāʿ*) in Sayʿūn, Bang quotes:

These are the exercises that purge evil
Knowledge, good manners, and numerous *awrād*

She continues by stating that the “aspiring seeker is advised to apply himself to the sciences in all its branches (*furūʿ*). (Bang, 2003: 19). The importance the order places on *fiqh* is captured in a quatrain of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sumayt,

Fiqh is the measure of all sciences
An ocean without coasts
Unknown the number who perish in it
Unknown the ships which traverse it. (Bang, 2003: 20).

The balance between *sharī'a* and *ṭarīqa* has always been a central concern of the *Bā 'Alawī* order. Tuan Guru did not introduce a greater emphasis on the *sharī'a* - those *Bā 'Alawī* shaykhs such as Tuan Sayyid 'Alawī and Hajji Matarim who preceded him would have established similar patterns in any case - but he would have ensured that the *sharī'a* remained operative in the religious expressions of Muslims at the Cape.

The Compendium, however, quite clearly reveals Tuan Guru as a paradigmatic *ṣūfi* shaykh of the *Bā 'Alawī* order.

5.3.5.8 Beyond the Compendium

According to the *Bā 'Alawīyya* the building of Mosques and *madrasas* is not only a social responsibility but an integral part of its methodology “for their method is to divide their time between worship, gatherings of knowledge, ethics, *awrād*, and *aḥzāb*. (al'Atṭās, 1968: 2). The *Bā 'Alawī* has a strong “missionising” aspect to it.

Shortly after his release from Robben Island, Tuan Guru established a *madrasa* for the Muslims in 1795. This was followed by a Mosque in 1804. This, the last decade of the eighteenth century during which Tuan Guru was released also witnessed profound socio-political changes within Cape society. This, too, was a period that marked a palpable growth within the nascent Muslim community. (Davids, 1987: 59). The fundamental and irreversible changes that swept through Cape society at the time is captured by Bradlow:

The coalescence of a complex series of historical factors in the last decade of the eighteenth century, however, did initiate fundamental changes in the nature of both the practice of Islam and the structure of the muslim community...By the end of the century, Company rule had collapsed in all but name. (Bradlow, 1988: 141).

The response of Muslims to those changes was quick and almost seamless. “The Cape Muslims” Shell states, “were the first to urbanize and remained the most urbanized of all South Africans.” (Shell, 1993: 415).

A number of factors contributed to the acceleration of Islam. By 1770 the proportion of Free Blacks compared to the Free Burghers was small - 352 in a population of 8088. Nonetheless the Free Blacks manumitted their slaves at a far greater rate than the Europeans. (Rafudeen, 2004: 29-30). Additional growth also came via conversions and intermarriages (miscegenation). By the end of the eighteenth century the majority of Free Blacks and Eastern slaves were Muslim a factor on its own that may have encouraged the establishment of a madrasa.

Concomitant with rapid urbanization, however - or the opportunity to engage the process in an independent way where no such opportunity existed before - is the challenge of assimilation. Muslims were now faced, almost *ab initio*, with the task of developing structures and institutions that would serve their new found needs. According to Da Costa the assimilatory social processes were set in motion by the spatial limitation of Muslims to Cape Town. “Assimilation” he says, “was encouraged by the following factors: active Muslim participation in the labour market of the urban area; the organisational structures of a common religion; common languages among different national groups...[and] a local system of predominantly religious education.” (Da Costa, 1989: 57-8).

It is precisely at this level and particularly with regard to Muslim organisational structures and religious education, that the toughest challenges presented themselves. Tuan Guru, inspired by his *Bā ‘Alawī* ideals, was faced with the formidable task of coherent religious structures in a socio-political milieu that had refused for well over a hundred years to provide even the most rudimentary forms of education to those of non-European extraction. “Slavery” as Mason puts it, “was a secular excommunication, often supported, as at the Cape, by religious exclusion.” (Mason, 2002: 6). Indeed since the time of the arrival of Tuan Maḥmūd, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Matebe Shāh, and, in particular, Shaykh Yūsuf, up to the time of Tuan Guru, parallel, albeit covert, religious instruction had taken place in the form of *ṣūfi* networks. Mason, however, appears to have accepted Bradlow’s argument that the

ṣūfī shaykh, before he died, “ensured the survival of the *ṭarīqa*, and of Cape Islam, by investing others with the authority to initiate new members. In this way, several *ṭarīqas* came to be established at the Cape, each with [its] own network of shaykhs and *murīds* [initiated members of the *ṭarīqa*].” (Mason, 2002: 9-10).

To the end of chapter four I argued against the likelihood that shaykhs such as Shaykh Yūsuf, for example, invested any of their *murīds* with *ijāza irshād* - an *ijāza* that is only bestowed when the shaykh is satisfied with the overall credentials of the *murīd*. Time and the absence of any infrastructure that would have made this type of investiture possible simply did not exist. Part of the responsibility that accompanies this type of investiture is to keep the order functioning by teaching its principles, tenets, and central doctrines. It is through these means that we are able to identify the hundreds of established *ṭarīqas* that exist in the Muslim world today. It is the *ijāza cum silsila* system that makes this possible. In the Cape, on the other hand, both Tuan Guru and Shaykh Yūsuf’s *ṭarīqa* affiliations have only been uncovered late in the twentieth century. This occurred not through invested and authorized generations of shaykhs of their respective orders at the Cape, but by dint of studying their texts and particular historical circumstances surrounding them.

That even Tuan Guru appeared to show little interest in perpetuating the *ijāza-silsila* mode of investiture is indicated by the somewhat perfunctory manner in which he recorded a *silsila* in his Compendium (p. 459). The *silsila* was most likely recorded for demonstrative purposes only. It is certainly not the type of *silsila* that would be used for transmission purposes.

5.3.5.9 Institutionalization of Islām

It was as a consequence of urbanization and assimilation that Tuan Guru recognized the need to institute formal structures through which to organise the Muslim community. With the madrasa (1795) and the Mosque (1804) in place he developed a four-tiered structure of *Qāḍī*, Imām, *Bilāl*, and *Merbout* - in that order of authority - to manage the religious affairs of the community. A *khaṭīb*, as an assistant to the Imām was also introduced a bit later. This formalised structure may create the

impression that Tuan Guru deliberately superimposed the *sharī'a* over the pre-existent informal *ṣūfī* networks. As a *Bā 'Alawī* he was consistent with the *ṭarīqa*'s firm but equal emphasis on both *sharī'a* and *ṭarīqa*. The establishment of formal structures had a simple twofold effect:

- a) It merely imparted, *mutatis mutandi*, a greater visibility to the implementation of certain aspects of the *sharī'a* - such as the performance of the five daily prayers and the Friday congregational prayers (*jum'ā*) in particular and,
- b) The opportunity to publicly exercise their religious duties that would have been the desire of Muslims since the very first time they set foot in the Cape.

Reading too much into the apparent shift that occurred in the *sharī'a-ṭarīqa* dichotomy between the pre-Guru period and the institutionalisation of Islam, as a shift in favour of a more coercive *sharī'a*-based one, may be a highly flawed reading. Since the twelfth century, and particularly under the influence of Imām al-Ghazālī, the process of Islamization was characterised by an amalgamation of *sharī'a* and *taṣawwuf*. (Newby, 1983: 36). This process remained relatively uniform in character until well into the nineteenth century. At the Cape both Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru were fairly representative of this trend. There is no reason to assume that any of the other shaykhs at the Cape, of whom much less is known, were any different. Failure to recognise this link with global Islam at the time - colonialism after all, like the *ḥajj* itself, was very much a globalising agent - would result in a failure to both assess the actual impact Tuan Guru made in his lifetime and the consequences of his loss after his death. "It was predictable" says Moosa, "that the death of a charismatic figure like Tuan Guru would create a leadership vacuum." (Moosa, 1995: 136). This is true, but it was much more than just his charisma that was lost. It was his learning too. "In traditional Islamic instruction" Rafudeen observes, "the teacher's commentary explicates an often concentrated text - as is indeed the Umm al-Barāhīn." (Rafudeen, 2004: 9). In like manner, the rest of the Compendium too, as "concentrated text", would have been taught, expounded, and expanded upon by Tuan Guru. Tuan Guru was the axis of his own teachings.

The entire gamut of his writings, and not only the *‘Asharite* theology and *fiqh* aspects, would have been regarded by him as traditional *Sunnī* teachings. That would include his *mujarrabāt* teachings too. Under his tutelage, however, and as an *‘ālim* (scholar of Islam) he would have ensured a balanced exposition and understanding of the various subjects contained in his Compendium. That was set to change in the “vacuum” he left.

Tuan Guru might well have consolidated the *ṣūfī* network established before his time but he certainly had reservations about a number of things - not least of all the question of succession to his post as *Qāḍī*. The structure he had set up was a skeletal one designed to create a sense of order and organisation in a community he most likely considered in its formative stages only. The skeletal structure he implemented was also more socio-religious in conception than juridical. Tuan Guru would have had few illusions about the Muslim community’s capacity at that stage to erect a formally constituted *Qaḍā* (judicial) structure. A semblance of such a structure only appeared as late as 1945 with the formation of the Muslim Judicial Council (*al-Majlis al-Qaḍā al-Islāmī*).

With the creation of his socio-religious structure Tuan Guru also appeared to have had the organisation, orderly function, and progress of the community in mind much more than the erection of an anti-ruling class structure. Whatever degree of defiance subsisted within those structures would more likely have been a latent, rather than a manifest function. Tuan Guru’s vision appeared more focussed on the future of the Muslim community than its present engagement with the authorities of the time. The measure of resistance - as indicated by the two *aḥzāb* mentioned earlier - would be one that placed its trust in God rather than in any measure of social activism. A trust too, one might add, that would have extended in time beyond the immediate repressive conditions. It is related by Du Plessis - part of which was quoted earlier - that Tuan Guru said: “Be of good heart, my children, and serve your masters; for one day your liberty will be restored to you, and your descendants will live in a circle of karamats safe from fire, plague, earthquake and tidal wave.” (Du Plessis, 1944: 33).

If any credence is to be given to this narration, then at most it reflects the quiet confidence and trust - after all other options had been explored - in Divine

providence; an approach that has often led to the charge of quietism against the *ṣūfīs*.

The latter half of the statement, however, appears problematic. A cursory glance at those texts in the Compendium dealing with issues of “divine protection” reveals that all of them are qualified with the phrase *inshā Allah* (God willing). In deeply religious circles the absence of that phrase from any articulation expressing a future need, wish, or hope would be considered a lack of respect towards God. In *ṣūfī* circles in particular, *adab* (observing good manners) towards both God and people is a central virtue. Some of them have even defined *taṣawwuf* as the realisation of “good character” (*ḥusn al-kbulq*). (Dangor, 1990: 15). Appending that phrase to Tuan Guru’s statement above would impart a completely different meaning compared to the “religious millenarianism” ascribed to it by Moosa (1995: 134).

In this context his statement may be understood to mean that if they exercise patience, provisionally do the bidding of their masters, then their reward would be freedom from oppression and natural calamities. God willing, of course.

In fact, the charge that Tuan Guru - other than desiring simple justice for those oppressed like himself - entertained notions of any future earthly utopia is rendered even more remote by two *ḥadīths* quoted in his Compendium. The one *ḥadīth* states: “The world is a prison for the believers and a paradise for the unbelievers” (p. 169); the other states: “The world has the value of a corpse and whosoever seeks it is a dog.” (p. 171). Regardless of the authenticity of these *ḥadīths*, they reflect his attitude towards worldly things - hardly the vision of a millenarianist.

Nonetheless, at the age of 90 and with failing health he had to elect a successor. This process appeared to be somewhat problematic. His first choice was one named Riejaab. (Davids, 1980: 100). Riejaab, however, passed away before Tuan Guru. ‘Abd al-‘Alīm, amidst some reluctance on his part, was eventually elected with a promise of support from Achmat van Bengal. It was Achmat, however, who had been given “the rules and laws of our religion.” (Davids, 1980: 103). It appears therefore, that Achmat van Bengal was invested with the *khilāfa* (deputyship) of the *Bā ‘Alawī tariqa* and not ‘Abd al-‘Alīm. This appears to indicate that Tuan Guru clearly distinguished between the office of the *sharī‘a* as the necessary but exoteric aspect

of Islām and the *ṭarīqa* as the esoteric aspect. He selected the more competent Imām, Achmat van Bengal, to represent the *ṭarīqa*. Achmat van Bengal's eligibility to act as Imām, however, would have been affected by his slave status at the time of Tuan Guru's death. This act of full investiture may have been one of the few ever to have occurred during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. But, as it appears, it was not enough to sustain the *ṭarīqa* in its full integrity. By the time Tuan Guru was buried in the Tana Baru in 1807 the first step towards internecine conflict at the Cape had been set in motion.

5.4 Conclusion

Eighteenth century Islām is eminently marked by one of consolidation on the one hand, and contrast on the other.

From the turn of the century, with spiritual leaders like Shaykh Ḥasan Ghaibie Shāh and Tuan Kapitie Low, we notice a covert but determined effort to sustain the religion of Islām at the Cape. For most of the century Islām was kept alive in the hills, mountains, and forests of the Peninsula through loose but effective formations of *ṣūfi* networks. While the identities of some of them, such as Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn and Tuan Ja'far for example, are vague, their impact, nonetheless, must have been considerable. There were those who escaped from prison and there were those who were eventually released, but they remained implacable in their commitment to Islām. Others, like September of Boughies, died in ways worthy of the description "heroic".

By the third quarter of the eighteenth century the transition from the forests to the city had started. The *taṣawwuf* teachings and practices continued in the slave lodges and homes of individuals. But in the sweeping changes that had engulfed Europe, particularly in the form of the French Revolution, social and political change was inevitable at the Cape. It was into this space that Tuan Guru stepped. With the establishment of a *madrasa* in 1793 and a mosque a few years later in 1804, Muslims were now irrevocably faced with these institutional challenges. The problems and internecine conflicts that emerged were acrimonious, but they resolutely held on to

their identities and beliefs as Muslims. This latter fact almost singularly pays tribute to the extent that the earlier religious teachers - with their *ṣūfī*-inspired teachings and practices - were successful in consolidating Islām at the Cape.

In the massively contrasting landscape that the Muslims were now allowed to practice, they continued to attract the most converts to Islām. Islam assumed a public face, and so did their conflicts. The fault line of the conflict, however, stretched through the institutionalisation of Islam. With the exception of the *ratiep* half way through the eighteenth century, the binding spirit within the Muslim community remained animated through their *dhikrs*, *mawlūds*, and litanies.

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Bā ‘Alawī Prayer-Manuals:

Mukh al-Ibāda li Ahli l-Sulūk wa l-Irāda (The Essence of Prayer for those on the Spiritual Way and the Seekers).

Khulāṣatu Shawāriq al-Anwār (The Quintessence of the “Lights of Illumination”) - compiled by Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālīki.

Khulāṣatu l-Madad al-Nabawī (Quintessential Prayers for those who Seek the Spiritual Support of the Prophet) - compiled by al-Imām Muḥammad b. Sālīm b. Ḥafīz.

CHAPTER SIX

Madrasas, Mosques, Memorials, and Magic: 1807-1880

6.1 Introduction

Despite the obscurities of the 18th century, 19th century Islām must certainly be one of the most chequered and enigmatic in the history of Islām at the Cape.

During that century alone the Supreme Court heard 20 cases in which Muslims contested either the appointment or practices of the Imām. At least 9 mosques were built and, by 1832, approximately 16 Muslim schools were in operation - 4 official and the remainder home-based. All of this in a “small residential area not even a mile in extent, nor a quarter mile at its widest.” (Davids, 1980: 10).

Bo-kaap, the heart of Islam in South Africa, appeared to have become a multi-chambered cacophony of disputes and dissension. Yet it continued - as it still does today - to produce men and women of exceptional intellectual and spiritual talents.

While hampered by internecine wrangling they also demonstrated a remarkable degree of unity when confronted by a common enemy. (Davids, 1995:55). Beyond Bo-kaap, of course, Islām had also started taking root elsewhere. On the far end of the Cape Peninsula in Simonstown a *langgar* (prayerhouse) was already in use from the beginning of the nineteenth century. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 29).

It is noteworthy that the only personages to be buried with the status of *walī* during the nineteenth century were those who arrived at the Cape before the turn of the century viz. Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī (d.1803), Tuan Guru (d.1807), Paaī Schaapie (d.1810), and Sayed Abdol Malik (d.1833). Others who were honoured by the community with that status had to wait another century.

To what extent, therefore, *ṣūfī* practices and networks of the eighteenth century were consolidated or developed during the course of a somewhat turbulent nineteenth century will form the primary focus of this chapter.

6.1.1 Sayed Abdol Malik (Sayyid ‘Abd al-Malik) of Batavia

The shrine of Sayed Abdol Malik is located in Upper Buitenkant Street adjacent to the St Cyprians School and directly opposite the Jewish Home for the Aged.

The information inscribed on his grave claiming that he “arrived with Prince Yūsuf...and died in Cape Town, 21st September, 1669” is, of course, incorrect. (Mansoor [Ed.], 2001, 46).

Achmat Davids is perhaps the only historian to have dealt with his life in any detail. According to him Sayed Abdol Malik was already a free man in 1793 and actively supported Tuan Guru in the establishment of the Dorp Street *madrassa*. The Cape Almanac, too, registered him as a “Malay Doctor” resident in Dorp Street. In the *opgraffrolle*, in 1817, he is also listed as a “Malay Priest”. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 25). This dual classification as both a “doctor” and “priest” may indicate that he practiced as both a religious leader and a practitioner of spiritual medicine.

The esteem in which Tuan Guru held him is indicated by the fact that Tuan Guru appointed him as one of the executors of his estate and as the guardian of his two children, Abdol Rakiep and Abdol Rauf. According to Davids, however, Imām Achmat van Bengal acted as the de facto guardian of the children. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 25).

Moreover, Sayed Abdol Malik himself became the owner of eight slaves, all of whom were Muslim. Five of these slaves became trained artisans. While it was known, too, that he treated his slaves well, he apparently fell foul of the Protector of the Slaves Office for failing to honour his promises of manumission. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 25; Davids, 1995: 63). As an astute businessman he is also regarded as one of the wealthier Imāms at the Cape during his time. Sayed Abdol Malik died at the Cape in 1833.

A number of legends also surround his person. School children at St Cyprians have reported conversations they had with an old and friendly “Malay man” within the precincts of the school. There are also reports of lifts being given to him from Long Street to the location of his grave. By the time the driver reaches the spot he is said to have disappeared. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 24).

Oral tradition links Sayed Abdol Malik to the *Qādirī tariqa* and has become one of the most frequented sites for the various *Qādirī tariqas* at the Cape.

By the time Sayed Abdol Malik died in 1833 there were already two established cemeteries in Cape Town. Davids understandably raises the question about the peculiar choice of location for his grave in Upper Buitenkant Street. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 25). While he does not proffer an answer to this, it is likely that Sayyid Abdol Malik may have withdrawn himself from the impending conflicts that threatened to emerge within Cape Muslim society. This may also explain, despite the fact that he was given guardianship over the children of Tuan Guru in his will, why he withdrew and delegated the responsibility to Imām Achmat van Bengal. While not abandoning his home at Dorp Street, he may have chosen the slopes of Deer Park to establish a spiritual retreat where he spent extended periods conducting his *dhikr* sessions and imparting his teachings to the slaves who frequented that area. As a man of some affluence he would certainly have had the means and the time to do this. It has almost always been the custom - as mentioned previously - for the shaykhs of *tariqas* to be buried at the place from where they conducted their lessons. This oftentimes comes as a personal request from them.

What happened to his students - and even those of Tuan Sayyid ‘Alawī and Paai Schaapie - is difficult to say. What we do know, however, is that Islam, in both its organisational and mystical dimensions, assumed a far more dramatic aspect during this century. It is this “theatrical” aspect that has captivated the attention of so many and that has produced such a variety of responses.

6.2 *Madrasas* and Mosques

Three important milestones of the 18th century impacted in numerous ways on the shaping of Islām during that century. In 1804 religious freedom was declared, in 1808 the Oceanic Slave Trade was abolished (Shell, 1994: 312), and in 1834 an end was put to the very institution of slavery. The locus of Islāmic activity shifted from the rustic woodlands - the forests and mountain slopes - to the *madrasas* and mosques of the city.

It is against this backdrop, and still very much regarded as second class citizens, that the story of the Muslims with all their accompanying problems of adjustment and organisation unfolded. To the credit of the Muslim slaves is Mason's observation:

One suspects that it would be hard to find a cohort of enslaved and oppressed converts better educated in the tenets of their religion than the Muslim converts of the Cape. Şūfi orders flourished, and within them shaykhs introduced converts to the spiritual disciplines of their paths. (Mason, 2002: 17).

But it was yet an education that was forged at the centre - with all its attendant limitations and weaknesses - of massive deprivation.

6.2.1 *Madrasas*

By 1807 the *madrasa* that was founded in 1795 had 372 Free Black students and slaves. By 1825 this number had increased to 491. (Da Costa, 1992: 8). During this period another major and two other minor *madrasas* were also operative. Davids notes that while there was some rivalry amongst these *madrasas*, they generally taught the same syllabus. (Davids, 1994: 51). By 1832 the number of *madrasas* had increased to twelve at the Cape. Despite the apparent rivalry amongst the schools the majority of slaves were embracing Islām in quite stupendous numbers. Christian missionary efforts, on the other hand, were much less successful. Between 1810 and 1824 only 86 out of a total of 35,698 slaves were baptised as Christians. (Davids, 1994: 51).

Tuan Guru's writings provided the foundational texts for these *madrasas*. During the years 1820 and 1821 further support for the educational base of Cape Muslims was provided by a "number of distinguished Arabs from the island of Joanna in the Mocambique Channel." (Da Costa, 1989: 67). These "distinguished Arabs" maintained their links with the Cape Muslims, often sending them copies of the Qurān along with a number of other books. Precisely what type of books was sent,

however, is unclear. The educational base apparently received a further boost by a number of European converts to Islam during the 1840s. (Davids, 1994: 74).

By 1854, with the continual growth of schools and students a need was created to co-ordinate these schools in a more organised structure. To this end an Imām *Mootā* - or superintendent general - was appointed to oversee the co-ordination of these schools. (Davids, 1994: 51). The one elected to this post was Imām Achmat Sadick Achmat (b. 1813) who was the son of Imām Achmat van Bengal. (Davids, 1994: 74). The system apparently started to disintegrate by 1863. It was at this stage, in 1862, that Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi (of whom more later) arrived at the Cape. His arrival inaugurated a new phase in the history of Islām at the Cape.

Throughout the years of development of the *madrasa* at the Cape the chief works prescribed were those of Tuan Guru. To what extent the full gamut of subjects covered in the Compendium was taught is somewhat unclear. There is little doubt, nonetheless, that enormous attention was paid to both *‘aqīda* (beliefs) and *ṣalāh* (prayers) - as they still are today. These are extensively covered in the Compendium. It is perhaps this continued emphasis on *‘aqīda* in contemporary Muslim society that magnified for Davids the extent to which it was covered in the Compendium. Rafudeen provides an excellent reason for this emphasis. It is worth quoting the full text of his observation in this respect:

...the transcription [of the *Umm al-Barāhīn*] oriented the Muslim slaves and free blacks in a fully coherent, rationally enunciated and self-sustaining world view that, on the one hand, provided cognitive grounds for their beliefs while, on the other, shielded them from arguments that may have been advanced by Christian missionaries and, more significantly, dissolved the temporal power of their colonial “masters” by locating it in a wider ontological sphere.

This self-sustaining ontology necessarily implies a mode of being, a mode of relating to reality that ran parallel, as

it were, to these other modes, not being dominated by them and indeed, since “true”, to be privileged over them. (Rafudeen, n.d.: 7).

Apart from the *ṣalāh* and certain aspects of the *ṣiyām* (fasting), there is a general paucity of *fiqh* (Islamic Law) in the Compendium. Where it is indicated in any comprehensive way it is dealt with in a specialist manner - and that too in a minute detail of the law regarding the *ṣalāh*⁵⁹. The likelihood of *fiqh* having been taught from the Compendium is, therefore, quite remote. One of the sources for *fiqh* instruction may have been provided by two separate works of Tuan Guru recorded by Davids as *the Al-Tilimisani* and the *Talilul-Chairah*, both of which, he says, “deal extensively with Islamic ritual practice and the related laws.” These two works were translated from the Melayu into Arabic text by Tuan Guru in 1797. (Davids, 1994: 54). Another work that may have been taught at these *madrasas*, and which possibly made an early entry into the Cape Muslim milieu, is the *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (The Straight Path) of Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī. This work, referenced by John Schofield Mayson as the “Sirata Oestakien” and “used in their religious services” (Mayson: 1963: 22), is also in the private collections of a few Cape Muslim homes. According to al-Attas the work was started by al-Ranīrī in 1634 and completed seven years later. “It deals” he says, “with the science of practical judgements pertaining to religious practice (*al-fiqh*), but treats only those aspects concerned with devotional duties (*‘ibādāt*).” (al-Attas, 1986: 25). In 19th century *fiqh* the *mu‘āmalāt* (practical duties) received little or no attention. In fact, as Jeppie observes regarding the testimony of Imāms Muding and Achmat van Bengal to the Colebrooke and Bigge Commission in 1825 in their evidence on the religious faith and practice of Cape Muslims, that not even the *ḥajj* and *zakāt* (alms tax) received a mention. This, Jeppie says, “was hardly necessary given the situation of local Muslims.” (Jeppie, 1996: 152). Concern for the legalities of the *ḥajj* perhaps assumed importance only after 1834 when the first pilgrim, Gastordien or Carel Pilgrim, performed the rite and returned in 1837. (Jeppie, 1996: 144). From the testimonies advanced at this Commission there is evidence, however, and particularly that of Imām Achmat van Bengal, that

some aspects of the *mu‘āmalāt* were known. In his testimony on slaves, for example, Imām Achmat says:

If a slave wished to be sold or redeem his freedom and separate from his owner, he would be allowed to go out to earn the means to purchase his freedom, or to obtain a purchaser, and this would not be objected to; but for the purchaser to sell the slave against his will would be considered a crime, as I have stated and forfeit his title to be received as a Mahometan (sic). (Imperial Blue Book, 1835: 210).

Whether he would “forfeit his title...as a Mahometan” is debatable, but the rest of his testimony are fairly standard regulations regarding slavery in Islamic Law. His view, too, that flogging of miscreants is not allowed, clearly indicates his understanding that corporal punishment is prohibited in a non-Muslim state. None of these laws is mentioned in the Compendium. Apart from the *Bayān al-Dīn* of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi - which also appears largely oriented to Cape Muslim needs - there is no other religious text that deals with the *mu‘āmalāt*. It emerges, therefore, that there was an oral tradition of teaching that ran concurrently with the texts that were taught at the *madrasas*. While this oral tradition may have been started by Shaykh Yūsuf, it may have been Tuan Guru who instituted this tradition in a more specialised manner, particularly with those he deemed suitable for religious leadership within the community. According to Rafudeen, “...in traditional Islamic instruction the teacher’s oral commentary explicates an often concentrated text.” (Rafudeen, n.d.: 9). After 1815, with the emergence of Afrikaans as a common language at the Cape (Rafudeen, n.d.: 31), the potential for the teaching and transmission of the available texts were further enhanced. In addition, the teacher-*murīd* relationships that developed over the years through the established *ṣūfī* networks further facilitated this process. But in the absence of “concentrated texts” and in the absence of a successive chain of qualified teachers, the quality of knowledge is bound to founder.

This is precisely what happened at the level of the *mu‘amalāt*, and, to an extent, even in the *‘ibādāt*. Moreover, while Afrikaans developed as a common language of communication, it appears that it had a short life as a means of instruction. The original texts from which they were taught were written in Melayu and Javanese. The spread of Afrikaans was so rapid that by the mid nineteenth century they had forgotten these languages. Hence the Muslim’s plea in a petition⁶⁰ to the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope in 1862 for a qualified teacher to be sent from abroad who could teach them from these texts.

Two instances may well demonstrate this. In the case of the *mu‘amalāt*, the Muslim responses to the smallpox epidemics in 1812, 1840, 1858, and 1883 - well documented by Achmat Davids in his “The Revolt of the Malays” - were quite extraordinary. Given the fact that there may have been a degree of logic in their revolt against an oppressive and discriminatory system and that their burial and dietary laws may not have been respected, there appears, nevertheless, a complete absence of both an informed *shar‘ī* (legally based) response and an awareness of the massive contributions Muslims had made to medicine over the centuries. For hundreds of years Muslims were at the forefront of medical teaching and development. By the tenth century Razes (850-925)⁶¹ had already engaged in advanced studies on measles and smallpox. His works on medicine the *al-Ḥāwī* (The Great Collection), the *Liber Pestilentia* (in which smallpox and measles are discussed), and his *Kitāb al-Mansūrī (Almansor)* - along with the *al-Qānūn fī al-Ṭibb* (The Canon of Medicine) of Ibn Sīnā 980-1037)⁶² - were the officially prescribed works in European institutions for hundreds of years. (Savory [Ed.], 1976: 116; Glasse, 1989: 331). At about the same time during the tenth century the first hospital for lepers was built in Baghdad. (Sadar and Malik, 1994: 108). Moreover, “Ibn al-Khatib (1313-74)” according to Hourani, “was perhaps the first to understand the way in which plague spread by contagion”; and adds, that because of the extensive studies undertaken by Muslim doctors in the area of drugs and pharmacopoeia, that “it has been said that the pharmacy as an institution is an Islamic invention.” (Hourani, 1991: 202-3). Islamic Law, too, has a sophisticated set of legal precepts that deals with matters of plague and contagion. Quarantine was enforced since the

earliest days of Islam - even during the days of the Prophet (pbuh). Woven into these legal precepts, particularly with regard to life-threatening situations, are principles such as *al-Akhdh bi Akaff al-Dararayn* (the necessity of choosing the lesser of two “evils” with a view to protecting life) and *al-Ḍarūriyāt Tubīḥ al-Maḥẓūrāt* (necessity renders permissible originally impermissible means). During the nineteenth century, according to Davids, Muslims “resisted vaccination, quarantine, and hospitalisation.” (Davids, 1984: 48). Davids’ outstanding and intensely sympathetic treatment of the matter could not, however, prevent him from concluding that the Muslims’ responses, based, as they were, on the idea that such diseases were predetermined by God and hence had only to be treated with fasting and prayers were conditioned by their “limited understanding of Islam.” (Davids, 1984: 44). It is this “limited understanding” that may have further increased the prejudice of the ruling classes. Ironically, in this case, Muslims at the Cape were seen in contravention of the very science that their counterparts elsewhere in the Muslim world were, to a great degree, instrumental in imparting to those who had come to dominate them.

As an example of the *‘ibādāt*, John Schofield Mayson - himself considerably ignorant of Islam - relates a case in which a group of Muslims on a tour of the countryside were faced with the choice of either continuing or abandoning the noonday *ṣalāh* because of overcast weather. The choice they had was whether it would be the “greater sin, to pray at the hazard of turning their backs on the keblah (sic), or to omit praying altogether.” They chose the latter alternative and went on their way. (Mayson, 1963: 19). The simple solution, of course, would have been to pray in whichever direction they deemed the most correct.

Despite these weaknesses, however, what the Muslims demonstrated in their struggle against overwhelming prejudice was a religious sentiment that was unshakeable. This sentiment was almost certainly strengthened by the egalitarian spirit of Islām and a rationally persuasive system of beliefs. With slaves and the sons of slaves becoming amongst the most prominent leaders and teachers in the Cape Muslim community this aspect of Islām must have struck a powerful chord in the Cape slave milieu.

The most serious problems, however, that the *madrasa* system faced, in addition to the general paucity of qualified teachers in the mould of Tuan Guru, was an equivalent paucity in the availability of a diversity - both in extent and depth - of reading material. The *madrasa* system, therefore, became one of rote learning called “koples” (*literally*, head learning) in which the students were required to memorise certain lessons and regurgitate them the following day before proceeding to the next one. (Davids, 1994: 50). While this system may have worked for the lay person in need of basic knowledge, and as it is still practiced in many *madrasas* today, it was simply inadequate for the purpose of producing deeply learned scholars in the religion.

To what extent the devotional writings such as the *awrād* and *aḥzāb* contained in the Compendium were taught at the *madrasas* is difficult to say. Apart from Quranic memorisation and recitation as such - of which Cape Muslims compare with the best in the world - three areas appear to stand out in this respect.

- a) Firstly, those verses of the Qurān that have been traditionally compiled and dedicated as *aḥzāb* such as the combination of *sūrat al-Falaq*, *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ*, *sūrat al-Nās*, *sūrat al-Fātiḥa*, *āyat al-Kursiyy*, and the first five verses of *sūrat al-Baqara* joined to the last four of that chapter. This combination of chapters and verses of the Qurān is popularly referred to as the “voorwerk” (introductory preamble) to any *dhikr* at the Cape. To this, usually, are added the *ṣalawāt* and *tablīl* (the recitation of *lā ilāha illallāh*). The other selected chapters and verses, such as the *āyat al-Kifāya*, mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation are also strongly indicated in Cape Muslim devotional recitals.
- b) Secondly, are the recitations of the *Asmāʾ Allāh al-Ḥusnā* and
- c) Thirdly, are the encomiums to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). To these would have been added recitals of the *Barzanjī*, the *Burda* and the *Sharaf al-Anām*.

Strangely enough, none of the four major *aḥzāb* represented in the Compendium viz, the *ḥizb al-nawawī*, the *ḥizb al-wiqāya*, the *ḥizb al-baḥr*, nor the *ḥizb al-barr* is known in the *dhikr* culture of the Cape. Likewise - and with the exception of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf of Ḥabībia - the *du‘ā al-Sayfī* is also completely unknown.

Extensive investigation in this respect yielded a purely negative result. Three possibilities present themselves as an explanation for this absence. One, they were never taught, which is unlikely; two, that they were eclipsed by the dominance of the *ratiep* (to be discussed later); and three, that they were displaced by the popularity of the various *rātibs* of the *Bā ‘Alawī* order and the *dhikrs* of the *Qādiriyya* and *Sammāniyya*, all of which experienced massive revivals at the turn of the twentieth century. A combination of the latter two appears to offer a plausible explanation.

The *mujarrabāt* aspects of the Compendium in the form of *‘azī mats* and other spiritual remedies were in all likelihood not meant for public consumption. In fact the Compendium in its present form was almost certainly not compiled by Tuan Guru. The disjunctures in some parts of the text⁶³ and the random placement of the *mujarrabāt* aspects appear as fairly persuasive evidence that it was not compiled by him.

Generally, however, the strong emphasis on *‘aqīda* and the strong strain of spirituality that infuses the Compendium provided a sufficiently powerful text to support the Muslims through one of the most difficult periods in the history of Islām at the Cape. In the ensuing conflict that engulfed organised Islām it is highly probable that the more mystical streams of teaching - while maintaining Tuan Guru’s teachings at the centre of their curricula - shifted towards the *langgars* and home-based *madrasas*. Islamic Spirituality as mediated by the various *ṭarīqas*, and with its strong emphasis on the unitive aspects of Islām, has a tendency to withdraw from internecine social conflicts.

6.2.1.1 Mosques: Imāms and Memorials

The chief locus for conflict at the Cape was the mosque. This started almost immediately after the death of Tuan Guru in 1807 when Jan van Boughies and Frans van Bengal seceded from the Awwal Mosque to establish the Jan van Boughies (or Palm Street) Mosque in Long Street. (Davids, 1980: 114). The vacuum left by Tuan Guru was indeed an enormous one. Its repercussions were felt almost throughout

the nineteenth century in which both the *shari'a* and the *tariqa* were the most serious casualties.

While Bradlow concedes that the differences between Tuan Guru on the one hand, and Jan van Boughies and Frans van Bengal on the other, may have been personal, he regards the apparent political differences between the two parties as equally, if not more, serious. (Bradlow, 1988: 168). He further concedes that while it is unclear whether Tuan Guru's anti-collaborationist stance was "a conscious manifestation of anti-colonialist sentiments", he nonetheless hastens to add that what "is clear is that even this vague sense of non-collaboration evident in Guru's (ra) approach, contrasted starkly with the blatant and opportunist collaboration of Frans and Jan." (Bradlow, 1988: 170). These attempts to graft upon early Cape Muslim behavioural patterns such dichotomised responses of collaborationist and non-collaborationist are symptomatic of Muslim academic and political analyses during the apartheid era. The evidence provided by Davids in the selection of a Muslim leader for the Javaansche Artilleries against the British in 1806 roundly controverts Bradlow's "collaborationist" theory. In a letter dealing with the selection of such leadership it is recorded:

At that time Imam Abdullah [Tuan Guru] made Rajab a priest and also Jan van Boughies a priest. At the time Governor Janssen requested (or called) the service of the community. The Governor (Janssen) sent the mayor to lead the people of the time. The priest Imam Abdullah was in the mosque when he was offered the krist. The Imam said thank you but I am an old man. The mayor asked who shall lead. Imam Abdullah said Frans shall lead the community, thank you, Old Frans. After a time (or later) Frans handed the krist over to Jan van Boughies. (Davids, 1990: 9).

The letter has other interesting features such as the implication that at that time there appeared little conflict between Tuan Guru and Jan van Boughies. The tensions may have developed after that and only shortly before Tuan Guru's death. He would certainly not have appointed the two of them as priests if it were any different. The letter, however, dismisses the notion that the two parties were divided along ideological lines of collaborationism and anti-collaborationism. Mayson appears to have it right when he says,

Differences, which prevail among them, have not originated in any doctrinal diversity, but in the claims of ecclesiastical candidates, and in the personal quarrels of Imāms. Disputes consequently take place in their congregations, and are fomented by the ambitious, in order to induce parties to follow them. On the death of a priest a division of his congregation often takes place: a part adhering to his son, should there be one to succeed, and the remaining portion enlisting under the banner of some pretender. (Mayson, 1963: 18).

Through extensive litigations, in-fighting, and separate congregations within the same mosque the leadership woes of the Jan van Boughies Mosque continued, unremittingly, until the end of the nineteenth century. The Awwal Mosque too, while not as dramatic as the disputes of the Jan van Boughies Mosque, had its own set of problems. Imām Achmat van Bengal, for example, precipitated a crisis shortly before his death in 1843 when he failed, or refused, to appoint a successor. After his death there were at least four contenders for the post. A few years earlier in 1836 the simmering leadership crisis for the position of Chief *Qāḍī* between Imām Achmat van Bengal and Jan van Boughies erupted in the public sphere. Numerous letters appeared in the South African Commercial Advertiser - dubbed by Davids as "The Imām Disputes of 1836" - in which the contending parties vociferously argued for their respective claims. (Davids, 1980: 208-220). It appeared that Jan van Boughies

pegged his case against Imām Achmat on the slender thread that he was once his Arabic teacher. (Davids, 1980: 117).

Whatever the nature of the dispute might have been between Tuan Guru and Jan van Boughies, it almost certainly occurred shortly before the death of Tuan Guru. Tuan Guru would otherwise not have appointed him an Imām in 1806 as mentioned earlier. A possible reason for the conflict may be that when he realised that Tuan Guru was nearing his end he insisted on full investiture (*ijāza irshād*). In the *Bā ‘Alawī* order such an insistence would be regarded as a severe breach of *adab* - or exemplary conduct. (Badawi, n.d.: 12). The behaviour of Jan van Boughies - competent as he might have been - appears to present him as a somewhat ambitious man. Whatever happened, though, must have invoked the ire of Tuan Guru. This is clear from Imām Achmat’s testimony where Tuan Guru is recorded as having said, “that Jan van Boughies can never take my place, as long as he lives, and whoever gives him my place must answer for it on the day of judgement.” The acrimony of the differences between the two is probably most starkly revealed by the conclusion of the letter in which Imām Achmat reveals that “Jan van Boughies never made his appearance during the illness of Imaum Prins Abdulla neither did he come to his funeral which was a respect owed to him.” (Davids, 1980: 212-3).

These conflicts replicated themselves at all the mosques founded during the nineteenth century. According to Davids the “type of conflict which occurred in the Jan van Boughies Mosque and the readiness of the disputing parties to seek redress through the Cape Supreme Court, became a pattern of virtually all mosques in Bo-Kaap.” (Davids, 1980: 124).

The 1830s, too, was a period of extensive memorials which were used “by Cape *Imāms* as a means of making demands or solving problems” - one of the more serious of these memorials being the one instituted by Imām Achmat van Bengal requesting from the Colonial Office to acknowledge his appointment as the Chief Imām of the community. (Davids, 1995: 64-5). Davids considers these controversies as a natural extension of the “growing pains” and “dynamism” of that early community. (Davids, 1980: 124). Habibul Haq Nadvi, however, while acknowledging in his *Foreword* to the *Mosques of Bo-Kaap* the momentous and

historic contribution of Davids' work - which indeed it is - quite reasonably questions Davids' interpretation of these events. According to Nadvi,

A contemplative reader has to remark that the Muslim history of the Cape in the nineteenth century would have been different, had there been no inner tension, conflict and division. The construction of rival mosques and division among the congregation, the court litigations and the derogatory remarks of the courts etc., support our thesis that Muslims, owing to division, lost dynamism...

A critical review of the contents of the following chapters [of *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*] can alone reveal how the community was weakened owing to the unending conflict. (Davids, 1980: xix-xx).

With the amount of energy, time, and money wasted in these conflicts it is difficult to disagree with Nadvi's observations. It also most certainly reinforced official prejudice amongst the ruling classes.

With regard to the general tenor of the quality of the Imāms during the nineteenth century - with the exception of a very few - there appears a virtual consensus on their lack of competence. With respect to their responses to the smallpox epidemics of the nineteenth century Davids observes, "there were no real 'Alims' of note who could have come to a decision through 'itjmah'⁶⁴." (Davids, 1984: 69). Jeppie further notes that there "is no indication of any of them [Imams] having advanced Islamic learning from the great centres of Islamic education such as those in Makkah, Cairo, or Tunis..." (Jeppie, 1996: 141). Mayson also adds that he has "been assured that the priests possess but a slender stock of learning." (Mayson, 1963: 23). He also alludes to a new cleavage in the "clerical" order that may have started with the introduction of the pilgrimage era in the Cape Muslim milieu. In 1854 he visited Ḥajji Samoudien who was one of several others who regarded the "non-pilgrim priests as ignorant

and self-constituted.” (Mayson, 1963: 18). It is questionable, of course, whether their own pilgrimages to Makkah had advanced them beyond their non-pilgrim peers in any significant way. Their *hajj* experiences, however, would have sensitized them to a completely different quality of scholarship that they would have encountered in Makkah and Madīna and may, as a consequence, have magnified for them the incompetence of the locally educated Imāms. Both the proliferation and shrinkage in the number of Imāms during the nineteenth century is captured by Jeppie where he states:

A look at four periods in the nineteenth century is revealing of the open market in the trade of religious titles. In 1811 three Imāms were reported. Fourteen years later in 1825 there were two senior leaders and five minor ones...Nine years later the number more than doubles. A high total of thirty Imams appear in the residential records of the city for 1834. In that year of the abolition of slavery the city boasted a veritable colony of Imams. This was to shrink by 1860 when only 15 Muslim leaders are listed in the directories. (Jeppie, 1996: 150).

While it is not the purpose here to merely document these weaknesses in any detail, the prestige myths about their predecessors that circulated in nineteenth century Muslim society had, at their core, a degree of historical substance to them. Shell articulates this core where he states that the “original Muslims from Indonesia brought with them a wide variety of literate skills, Arabic, knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, the Koran, and divining charms.” (Shell, 1993: 424). The problem naturally emerged when these Imāms attempted to replicate the roles of their learned forebears in the image of the myth and not the substance - hence the temptation to, and the florescence of, a predominantly charismatic form of leadership during this period. A misconception sometimes encountered is the notion that the *ijāza* system of transmission only applies to the *ṭarīqas*. In the traditional

system of learning it equally applies to the *sharīʿa*. The *ijāza* system, in fact, forms the nexus of the traditional system of Islāmic education, and acts as the channel through which the *balance* of spiritual influence (*baraka*) is maintained in both the *ṭarīqa* as sacred way and the *sharīʿa* as sacred law. It is from this perspective that a too inordinate and literal concentration on fiqh is somewhat frowned upon in traditional *ṣūfī* circles. Such a focus would be deemed bereft of *baraka*. Imām Achmat van Bengal may have been one of the few recipients of the *ijāza irshād* (or *khirqa ijāziyya* as the *Bā ʿAlawī* order refers to it) in which a *murīd* is invested with the authority to confer a similar *ijāza*, in turn, upon any of his own students. Whether he conferred such an *ijāza* upon any of his sons or those of Tuan Guru - despite the fact that they were students of his - is doubtful. The fact that he did not appoint any of them to succeed him as the Imām of the Awwal Mosque appears to indicate the contrary. It is in the general absence of this practice, and the rapid disappearance of it in particular instances, that we may locate the rapid decline in both *ṭarīqa* and *sharīʿa* practices. In traditional Islamic circles - and as quite clearly evidenced in the practices of Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru - the absence of *ijāzāt* (sing. *ijāza*) implies the absence of competent people to succeed.

The problems of authorised Imāms, nonetheless, appear as early as 1825 in the testimonies of Imāms Muding and Achmat van Bengal. This is clearly indicated by Imām Achmat where he states “that there are many persons who officiate as priests and instruct the people, but they are not authorised to do so.” (Imperial Blue Book, 1835: 209). On the other end of the historical spectrum, according to Moosa, “...it was only in the early twentieth century that trained ulema exerted any real influence in South Africa.” (Moosa, 1995: 140).

While the above presentation, on the one hand, might appear somewhat uncharitable, on the other, it is certainly to the credit of some of them that they recognised these weaknesses. During the *ratiep* disputes of the 1850s (of which more later) the Imāms, according to Shell “also complained that the Cape Muslims had never had any missionaries sent to them.” (Shell, 1993: 430). When faced with issues that challenged their professional qualifications they were unashamed to admit to their ignorance. From our location in history it may be easy to dismiss their

leadership frivolities as mere primal urges in service of a general catharsis to power. But such a reduction would leave us somewhat ignorant - or at least unappreciative - of the many contributions they left in their wake.

These contributions are visible in the more accessible Common Religious Practices of Muslims as they unfolded in the Cape cultural milieu.

6.2.1.2 Mosques: *Mawlūds* and Commemorations

The cultural-cum-ecological base for almost all of these practices is the Awwal Mosque, and as continued and instituted by Tuan Guru. (Mukadam, 2003: 56; Davids, 1980: 94).

Probably the most prominent and enduring of these common religious practices is the celebration of *mawlūd al-nabī* (celebration of the Prophet's birthday). At the Cape, with the exception of a few mosques, the *mawlūd al-nabī* - usually scheduled for the 12 *Rabī al-Awwal* of the Islamic lunar calendar - is normally accompanied by a practice referred to as *rampie-sny*. This ceremony is normally conducted by the women in the mosques where orange and fig leaves are cut, scented, wrapped in sachets, and later handed to their men folk who then wear the sachets to their segment of the celebrations. Within the lavishly decorated mosques the ceremonies occur in an ambience of colour, exceptional fragrance, and the harmonious chanting of encomiums and other litanies.

While Davids holds the view that *rampie-sny* is a practice unique to the Cape and "not an importation from the Indonesian Archipelago" he nonetheless seeks to establish a link between the ceremony and Hindu mythology. According to him "the word *rampie*...must be derived from the word *Rampa*, which in Hindu mythology is the name given to three heroes, especially Ramachadra." (Davids, 1990: 4-5). In tandem with this connection this linkage is apparently further augmented by the fact that "the epic poem [the *barzanjī*] recited during the cutting of the orange leaves and the making of the *rampies* expounds the heroic deeds of the Prophet." (Davids, 1990: 4). In as much, that is to say, as the three heroes of Hindu mythology are celebrated in Hindu festivals. As an extension to the logic of Davids' reasoning this had the additional effect of attracting Hindu slaves to Islām. As an alternative to this

view, the word *rampie* could simply be derived “from the Malay word *rampai*, meaning a mixture.” (Du Plessis, 1953: 33). While the ceremony, even today, is strongly associated with Hindu practices, it might well have been a product of the creative genius of the Cape Muslims themselves. Moreover, there is little reason to believe that Hindu slaves may have been converted to Islām through its purely ceremonial acts. It appears unlikely that Hindu slaves would have accorded greater preference to a set of ceremonial acts of which they knew little over those of their own in which they might well have experienced a sense of spiritual fulfilment. While these slaves may have been “attracted” to these ceremonies in the purely inquisitive sense of the word, their conversion to Islam almost certainly occurred at a more fundamentally cognitive level and as a response to an ideological challenge.

Moreover, in the anthropological sense these acts may be viewed as the minutiae of ethnographic observation. (Monaghan and Just, 2000: 44). If read, in a typically but often useful Geertzian manner, as texts - and as Davids is wont to do - then we may falter by engaging a hermeneutic that reads too much into the transference and bridging of words into new and different cultural practices. In Cape Muslim vocabulary the words *poewasa* (fasting) and *batja* (reciting of the Qurān), for example, have distinctively Sanskrit origins. (Davids, 1990: 12). These words were bridged into the Afrikaans vernacular spoken at the Cape without rendering these practices “syncretic” in any way. It appears, in many instances, that many of these words were adopted and bridged into the Afrikaans based on the primary lexical meanings of the original Melayu and Sanskrit meanings. The word *rampie* may just have been such an adoption.

At the functional level these *mawlūd* practices and their associated *rampie-sny* acted as the binding forces - within an otherwise seriously divided people - for the cultural and religious integrity of that nascent community. From this perspective, rather than functioning as so many forms of resistance and protest against a dominant colonial other, they may be read as superlative texts offering critically important opportunities for the devotional healing of the wounds of their internecine struggles. *Mawlūd* celebrations are also invariably a product of *ṣūfī*-inspired milieus. It is no coincidence that it is only the more purist-minded who objects to these celebrations.

It is not only *rampie-sny* they object to, but the *mawlūd* as such. In a similar vein, Jeppie raises the question that no Imams objected to the “popular” *ṣūfī* practice of visiting the shrines during the nineteenth century. (Jeppie, 1996: 146). The answer is provided in the very framing of the question. The Muslim milieu at the Cape, including most of its Imāms, was essentially *ṣūfī*-inspired. No *ṣūfī*-inspired Muslim, according to my knowledge, has ever objected to this practice. They may object to particular manifestations of the practice, but never to the practice as such. In fact, from the *ṣūfī* perspective, one of the more encouraging memorials of the nineteenth century would be the one instituted by Imām Achmat van Bengal in 1838 to protect the shrine of Shaykh Yūsuf with a view to ensuring unrestricted access to it by the Muslims of the Cape. (Davids, 1995: 64).

Other *ṣūfī*-inspired practices at the mosques served similar purposes. A very common one up till today, and mentioned previously, is that of honouring the dead on the third, seventh, fortieth, and hundredth nights. This practice is still common in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago today. Kasimin relates that it “is customary to hold a special feast called *kenduri arwab* (feast of the deceased) on the third, seventh, fourteenth, fortieth (or forty-fourth) and hundredth day after the death.” (Kasimin, 1991: 200). With the exception of the fourteenth and forty-fourth nights the practice at the Cape is identical. It is also similarly referred to as an *arwāḥ* (a dedication to the souls of the dead) in the Cape. Here, too, these ceremonies are often repeated on an annual basis after the hundredth night. As devotional acts they are normally conducted in a spirit of profound respect for the dead and are often attended by even those who may have had considerable personal differences with the deceased during his/her lifetime. It is for this reason that the absence of Jan van Boughies at the funeral of Tuan Guru, and presumably at the *arwāḥ* ceremonies that followed, would have been regarded as a fundamental breach of the ethics of Islamic spirituality. These ceremonies serve to establish the essentially spiritual continuities between the participants and the dead, and are designed to assert the supremacy of the primordial purity of the soul over the vicissitudes of temporal existence. Amongst the textual bases for the primordially of the soul is the the verse of the Qurān, “*fa idhā sawwaytubu wa nafakhtu fībi min rūḥi faqa‘ū labu sājidīn*” (And

when I have fashioned the human being in due proportion and breathed into him/her of My Spirit, then prostrate yourselves [the Angels] in obeisance) . (Qurān, 25: 29). The plural form of the word *rūḥ* (spirit or soul) is *arwāḥ*, hence the name for the ceremony. It is in this spirit that the verses of the Quran, the litanies, and *du‘ās* are recited and dedicated to the *arwāḥ* of the dead. The actual dedication of Qurānic verses and *du‘ās* to the dead is referred to as *tabarru‘* (*literally*, a donation) in Arabic. With the exception of certain ultra rationalist “modernists”⁶⁵, not even the most “scripturalist” or purist-minded of Muslims - to my knowledge - object to this act of *tabarru‘*. They do indeed object to particular expressions of it.

The *gadat*, as another *ṣūfī*-inspired practice, was most likely held on Thursday nights in the mosques and homes of individuals. The term *gadat*, derived from the *Rāṭib al-Ḥaddād* of Sayyid ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād, clearly indicates the ascendancy of that litany and the dominance of the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* during the nineteenth century in Cape Muslim practices. There were, however, most likely numerous other litanies that were recited at the same time.

The mosque-associated *langgar* (prayerhouse) that became a feature of a number of home-based spiritual retreats also functioned as a centre for the recitation of litanies and *dhikr* practices. The term *langgar* is almost certainly derived from the Shaivite cult of the “royal *linga*, or phallic emblem, in which the magic potency of the god-king was supposed to be concentrated and through which the material prosperity of the realm was ensured.” [Italics Mine]. (Hall, 1996: 4). According to another source “Linga means Leena that is submerged in devotion.”⁶⁶. Hadiwijono, citing van Akkeren, furthermore states, “that the reason why the presumably Islamic doctrine of the baits⁶⁷ found acceptance on Java, and has been able to continue till the present day, can be explained from the influence that the *lingga*-cult exercised in Java.” (Hadijiwono, 1967: 137). While the linguistic connections between the two terms appear inescapable, this may yet be another example of how words with common etymological roots come to denote, at least outwardly, practices of an entirely different religious coloration. What is significant to our purposes, however, is that the term *langgar* is more commonly used by the *Khalwatiyya-Samman* in the South Celebes and not by the *Khalwatiyya-Yūsuf*. According to van Bruinessen, “the

Khalwatiyya-Samman often have their own prayerhouses (*musalla, langgar*) and tend to isolate themselves from other believers, while those of the *Khalwatiyya-Yusuf* do not have special places of worship...” (van Bruinessen, 1991: 252). Van Bruinessen further notes that the *dhikrs* of the *Khalwatiyya-Yusuf* are “silent” while those of the *Khalwatiyya-Samman* are “loud and ecstatic”. (van Bruinessen, 1991: 252). The features common to Cape Muslim practices are the *langgars* and ecstatic forms of *dhikr* - features that appear to support the thesis that the influences of Shaykh Yūsuf were on the decline quite early in the history of Islām at the Cape.

What is of particular interest though, and likely an indication of how deeply Muslim practices came under the influence of *ṣūfī* modes of spiritual exercises, is the general “litanisation” of Islamic practices that would not ordinarily be classified as specifically *ṣūfīc* in expression. Two such practices in particular were evident at the Friday *Jum‘a* prayers. One is the “Twintagh Siefaats” (the Twenty Attributes of God) - which is a strictly theological treatment of the divine predicates of God - that came to be recited in a liturgical manner between 11:00 am and 2:00pm on Fridays in the mosque. The manner in which this was performed even led Mason to the conclusion that “Sunusi’s Sufism allowed him to borrow a Sufi liturgy that ‘proved the most popular and convenient part of the manuscript for rote learning.’ The liturgy became known as the ‘twintagh siefaats’, the twenty attributes of God.” (Mason, 2002: 18). While the manner in which the “twintagh siefaats” is written has been designed for rote learning, it has certainly never been intended for liturgical purposes, nor has it ever been meant to be read as such. The second is the manner in which the Friday Arabic *khuṭbas* (sermons) came to be read by the Imāms from the *mimbars* (pulpits). These *khuṭbas* - usually selected masterpieces of Arabic sermons written many centuries ago - were chanted in melodious tones from the *mimbar* until well into the early years of the twentieth century⁶⁸. In other words, they were chanted in the same rhythmical ways in which they performed their *dhikrs* and other litanies.

It becomes apparent from this review that the one area in which the Cape Muslims were united and in which a co-operative consensus is visible was that of the *ṣūfī*-inspired practices. Around these, and within those very mosques, the institutional problems raged on unabatedly. While the Imāms complained about a lack of Muslim

missionaries in mitigation of their general ignorance, these conflicts no doubt exacerbated the educational woes of the community. Nonetheless, what was preserved of the original *ṣūfī* teachings most likely, and predominantly, became disseminated through the home-based *madrasas* and *langgars* - which, in turn, acted as the support structures and feeders to the practices in the mosques.

6.3 *Ratiep*, the *Mujarrabāt*, and “Malay Magic”

Considerable confusion surrounds the question of *ṭaṣawwuf* as a spiritual way to attain the nearness of God, and the *mujarrabāt* as apparently tried and tested spiritual formulae that often yield results of a miraculous nature. The practice of *mujarrabāt*, always viewed as the province of a selected few - and of which *‘ilm al-ḥurūf* (the science of letters) forms a major part - was normally carefully monitored by Muslim governments to prevent, or at least minimize, quackery and charlatanism. No *ṣūfī* master, including Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifā‘ī (1106-1182), has ever publicly encouraged acts of a miraculous nature. Contrary to those who view *ṭaṣawwuf* as a miracle-producing industry, anyone who has in fact read the works of the established *ṣūfī* masters would be aware of the gravity with which they view miraculous occurrences or miracle-producing acts - some positions, including that of Shaykh Yūsuf, which we have already mentioned. On the other hand, *ṭaṣawwuf*, with its intense focus on the spiritual dimensions of religion, and with the demanding prerequisites it marshals for the validation of such acts, certainly does not unconditionally dismiss miraculous manifestations as pure chicanery. Unlike its purist-minded or ultra rationalist counterparts, there is therefore a margin of tolerance for these acts within the very conception of *ṭaṣawwuf* as a project centred on spirituality. Padwick, too, recognises that there is no intrinsicity between *ṭaṣawwuf* and *mujarrabāt* when she states that “there is a science of letters (*‘ilmu ‘l-ḥurūf*) and of their inner meaning and philosophical value (*‘ilmu ‘l-jafī*), connected with their numerical values, *and not confined to mystical circles.*” [italics mine] (Padwick, 1996: 99).

The differences too, between *taṣawwuf* and the *mujarrabāt* may readily be understood by the definitions for “spirituality” and “spiritualism” provided in the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Social Sciences*⁶⁹. According to David Yamane spirituality is “a quality of an individual whose inner life is oriented towards God, the supernatural, or the sacred” while spiritualism, according to James McClenon, is “based on the belief that it is possible to communicate with the deceased after their bodily death” and includes such practices as mediumship, extra-sensory perception, psychokinetic phenomena, and other parapsychological issues. In this respect, spiritualism and magic⁷⁰ share the common objective of harnessing or manipulating supernatural forces.

From this perspective, *Ratiep*, as a “miracle”-producing act is more correctly associated with the *mujarrabāt* than with *taṣawwuf*. While the knowledge informing *ratiep*, and other cognate practices, may be regarded as “arcane”, the very miraculous nature of the act, for which purpose it has been instituted in the first place, is sufficient vindication of its predominantly *mujarrabāt* status.

Ratiep, however, came to dominate the spiritual ethos of at least the first half of the nineteenth century and therefore deserves a separate treatment.

6.3.1 *Ratiep*

Elsewhere in the world *ratiep* is referred to as the *dabbūs* ceremony. In Arabic the word variously means iron awl, skewer, or more usually, a small sharp nail. (Bakar, 1991: 272; al-Muṣjam al-Wasīt, [Vol.2] 1973: 270). In Sumatra it is also known as the *rapāʿi*, most likely derived from the name of Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿi. (Bakar, 1991: 272). This ceremony - briefly discussed in a previous chapter - undoubtedly constitutes one of the most controversial practices in the history of Islām. Even one of the foremost mystics and *ṣūfī* poets of Islām, Abd al-Raḥmān al-Jāmiʿ (d. 1492)⁷¹, often severely criticised in purist circles, has rejected and denied that such a practice may be attributed to Aḥmad al-Rifāʿi. (Bakar, 1991: 242).

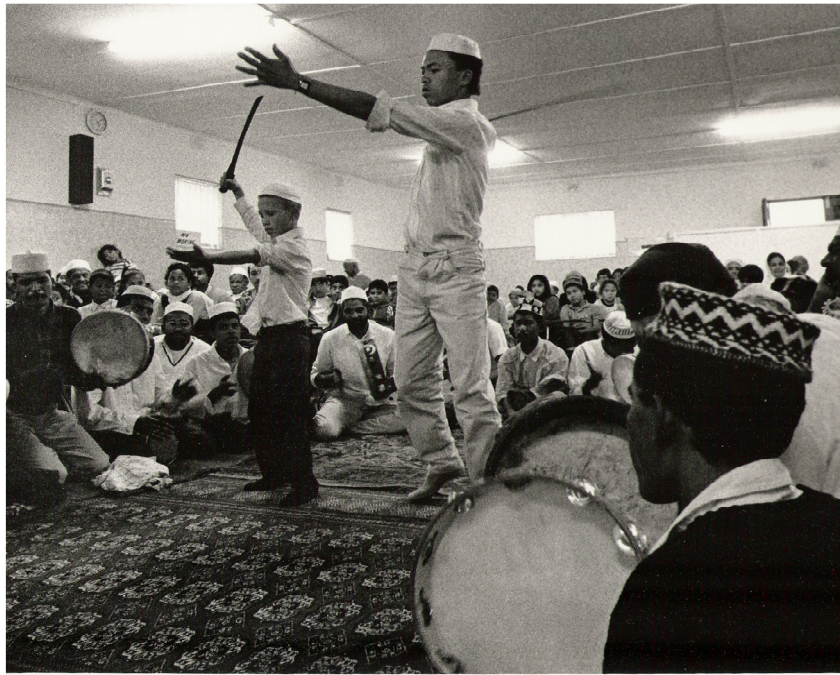


Figure 14: A Ratiep Ceremony: Photo by Adil Bradlow

One of the most comprehensive studies on the *ratiep* ceremony at the Cape has been made by Karim. The subtitle to his thesis “An analysis of the *Rātib al-Rifāʿiyya* in South Africa”, may, however, be somewhat misleading. The term *ratiep*, as applied to the *dabbūs* ceremony, is unique to the Cape. There are two possibilities that may serve to explain its local usage. Firstly, it may be a corruption of the word *rātib* itself. By the nineteenth century the various *rawātib* (Arabic sing. *rātib*) such as the *Rātib al-Ḥaddād* and the *Rātib al-ʿAttās* enjoyed complete ascendancy in the *dhikr* sessions of Cape Muslims. Because of the general ascendancy of these *dhikrs* the very term may have been appropriated as a label for the *dabbūs* ceremony in its corrupted form of *ratiep*. Secondly, it may also be the corrupted form of the word *rapāʿī*, which is the Malayu adaptation of *Rifāʿī*. Moreover, there is not a single compilation of Sayyid al-Rifāʿī’s supplications, litanies, and invocations that bears the name *rātib* - his most famous compilation being the *al-Sayr wa l-Masāʿī fī Aḥzāb al-Sayyid al-Imām al-Rifāʿī* (The Journey and Pathways through the Litanies of al-Sayyid al-Imām al-Rifāʿī). Strictly speaking, there is no practice in the *Rifāʿī* order called the *Rātib al-Rifāʿī*. It is moreover ironic, despite the local popularity of the

Rifāʿī order, that two of his most famous *duʿās*, the *duʿa al-Fāqa* and the *duʿa al-Jalāla*, are unknown in the Cape.

Nonetheless, the origin of this practice has proven to be one of the most troublesome to locate. While in the Cape it is usually associated with the piercing of the body with sharp skewers and swords, and sometimes handling red hot chains and playing with fire, elsewhere it includes the eating of live snakes, and eating glass. (Schimmel, 1975: 209; Newby, 2002: 185). Some attribute this to the Mongol invasion of Muslim lands in the aftermath of which certain shamanistic practices were introduced. Others, more commonly, attribute the practice to an incident said to have occurred to Sayyid al-Rifāʿī himself. Ṣalāḥ ʿAzzām relates in his introduction to the *al-Burbān al-Muʿayyad* of Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī that in the year 1160 (555AH) he visited the grave of the Prophet (pbuh) while performing his *ḥajj*. At the grave his salutations on the Prophet (pbuh) were met with a similar response from the grave. At this point he became overwhelmed by an ecstatic state and recited in poetic form:

This is a nation of spirits in which I am present
Stretch out thy hand so my lips may be graced by kissing it.

In front of thousands of witnesses, the account goes, the hand of the Prophet was seen to stretch from the grave while Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī kissed it. (al-Rifāʿī, 1971: 15). This much of the account is agreed upon by many scholars. It is the event subsequent to that which claims the controversial origins of the *dabbūs* ceremony. One report claims, as related by Karim, that immediately after this experience he commanded his disciples to kill him as “he did not wish to live any longer, having achieved the pinnacle of his spiritual journey.” (Karim, 1998: 98). They reluctantly proceeded to stab him but to no avail. The daggers simply had no effect.

In another version the students themselves were overwhelmed by a state of spiritual ecstasy and, in the frenzy of the moment, proceeded to kill themselves with their daggers. Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī, by touching their fatal wounds, summarily restored them to life⁷².

These stories of stabbing, killing and mass suicide, blatantly apocryphal as they might be, are considered by some branches of the *Rifāʿī* order as the founding source for the *dabbūs* ceremony. Measured against the stern and sober orations of Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī himself these stories become even more mystifying. Amongst many orations of a similar kind in the *al-Burbān al-Muʿayyad* he says:

To Allah belong angels bare and naked who dance beneath the Throne. They remember Allah and tremble in their remembrance of Him. These souls dance through Allah and for the sake of Allah. But you, O impoverished one, you dance through yourself and for the sake of yourself. They (the angels) are the true rememberers while you are deceived and seduced by yourself. The (genuine) People of the Way (al-Qawm) refer to their trembling at the remembrance of Allah as dancing only when the impetus for their trembling stems from the soul. (In this way) they relate their dancing to the dancing of the soul and not to the dancing of the body...These dancers (*rāqisūn*) are liars, while those (*dhākirūn*) who engage in the remembrance of Allah will be remembered on the Great Day either amongst those who are cursed or those who have earned the love of Allah. (al-Rifāʿī, 1971: 45).

None of this means that Sayyid al-Rifāʿī is in principle opposed to bodily movements and melodious chanting (*simāʿ*) during *dhikr*. On the contrary, after exhorting his audience to embrace the character and ways of the deeply pious people (*ṣāliḥīn*) he states:

I do not say to you that I consider melodious chanting reprehensible in your case because I myself have

realised that station...but I say to you that it is reprehensible in respect of those poor people who fall short of the requisite standards, for in the very act there are tribulations that could plunge them into the deepest errors. (al-Rifāʿī, 1971: 45).

From al-Jāmī's comments we also know that the *dabbūs* ceremony was already well established by the fifteenth century. The first account we have of the *ratiep* at the Cape is one which occurred during 1813 at Diep River at the house of the freeman Mammatt of Maccassar. (Cape Archives, CJ 805 Folio 825 No. 12). The ceremony was held on the 16 August at midnight and ended in disaster with the free Black Griep of Mozambique fatally wounding Abdul Saatjie with a sword. Interestingly the court records refer to the event as a "Callifat" and appears to offer some support for the view that the term *ratiep* was only adopted after the ascendancy of the *Bā 'Alawī rātibs* much later in the century. In fact most of the available documentation during the eighteenth century refers to the act as *khalifa*.

Most of the eye-witness descriptions of the *ratiep* during the nineteenth century are those of Christian missionaries. The first detailed account we have is that of the New England missionary, George Champion, who accidentally encountered a *ratiep* in April 1835. In a style typical of his time he writes:

Woe is me for I am in the midst of heathen! I was walking in the streets tonight, and hearing a confused noise of singing, beating of drums etc. I directed my steps to a one story house whence it proceeded. It was a ceremony of some Mahometans. I saw through the window 12 or 15 men seated around a small room, drumming and singing in great excitement, while one of the number half-naked was performing a variety of eccentric movements, throwing himself into every possible position and at the same time catching a chain

which he threw into the air. At times the noise would wax louder and louder and the dancer (or priest) would become so furious in his gestures and features that I could easily imagine him a demon incarnate. This religion of the false prophet is increasing in Cape Town the number of votaries in the opinion of all. (Shell, 1993: 426).

In the mid-nineteenth century Alfred Cole provides a more graphic description in which he describes the room, the mats on the floor, the burning of incense, the ceremonial dress, the chanting of verses of the Qurān, the stripping of the young men of their shirts and the subsequent dancing, jumping, and shouting. He continues:

...at the same moment two of the young men seized the boy, and plunged a sharp instrument like a meat-skewer through his tongue...[Then] one of the young men took a dagger and plunged it into a fleshy part of his side...then walked around and showed himself...then some red hot chains were brought in, and thrown over an iron beam, when another of the Malays seized them with his bare hands, and kept drawing them fast over the beams. All the while...the Malays kept up their hideous shrieking of the Koran sentences...the noise, the sight, the weapons, and the red-hot chains, together, formed a scene bordering on the diabolical; except that there was such evident jugglery in the whole affair. (Mason, 2002: 20-1).

In an even more extended account Anonymous in the Cape Monthly Magazine of 1861 describes a *ratiep* in almost cinematic detail. The full range of the performance

is laid bare. Starting with a description of the stage, the props, and gaily dressed audience the writer takes his reader through the quiet, silent, and dignified beginnings to a climax that “sent a shuddering thrill through the frame.” The climax is then sustained through a series of gestures and movements in which the actors - shouted on by their *khalifa* - are seen to plunge all sorts of sharp objects into their vitals. The pace and the excitement are “fast and furious”. The entire act, however, is “horribly heathenish” and reminds him “somehow of diabolical rites, and priests of Baal cutting themselves with knives, and awful human sacrifices.” The denouement is an anti-climax. The *khalifa* approaches him and says “that master shall see plenty pretty play directly.” “The illusion is gone” he says. “The awful, mystical ceremony dwindles into a mere sleight-of-hand trick, to degenerate still lower into trumpery juggling.”

It appears easy to understand why the *ratiep* ceremony inspired such awe, dread, and derision in its observers. The words “diabolic” and “heathen” appear in almost every description. As Christian missionaries with a message from God the very act must have challenged their notions of reality - an admission, of course, they dared not make. Trapped in an etic paralysis of their own strongly constructed sense of alterity they would have been unable to see, as Mason observes, that the “*ratiep*...led converts towards a deeper and more powerful truth than the truth of slavery.” (Mason, 2002: 24). To reinforce the polarities dividing their worlds Mason continues:

God entered their lives to reconstruct souls that white supremacy 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 violence and the frenzy of the *ratiep* brought the quiet of inner peace. (Mason, 2002: 24).

The derisive images employed in describing the *ratiep* also emerge in service of descriptions for even standard Muslim practices. Mayson, quoting from Campbell’s depiction of a Friday *Jum‘a* prayers held some time in 1814, informs us of how it

“may serve to convey an idea of the grotesque character of the services held within the walls of the modern mosque.” (Mayson, 1963: 22). While Campbell’s account reveals elements of considerable decorum in the manner in which they conducted the *Jum‘a*, his depiction appears somewhat more comical than grotesque. With respect to the *ratiep* depictions they are also useful precisely for the particular elements of the ceremony that they reveal. From personal observations of the *ratiep* - and particularly as described by Anonymous - the basic practices appear not to have changed in any significant way. The incense burning, the *bank* holding the different swords, skewers, and knives, the plumes and flags in full Islamic regalia, the *khalifa* with his assistants behind the *bank*, the two rows of men lined up facing each other in seated positions, and the tambourines are all still the same. The actual ceremony, too, has hardly changed. Today, as in the past, there is the chanting of litanies accompanied by the rhythmic beating of the tambourines while the participants - starting with the younger members through to the more senior ones - engage in the ritual piercing of the body to a set of intense gyratory motions. It ends off, as it started, within an ambience of solemn silence.

I.D Du Plessis, in his discussion of the *ratiep*, while heavily dependent on and freely borrowing from the language of his predecessors - but never as gross as Anonymous’s “half-frenzied band of wild dark figures...circling slowly round and round...” - nonetheless exercises a strongly measured caution in judging the event. In his account there is no framing of the performance as “diabolical” and “heathenish”, nor any talk of jugglery. On the contrary, he raises the interesting distinction between the *ratieps* that were held for public consumption and those performed privately. He states:

At the present day it is possible to witness a Chalifah at least several times a year. As already stated, it is not infrequently performed as a means of public entertainment...However it is far more profitable to attend a Chalifah performed for its original religious significance, in the right atmosphere in some hall in the

Malay Quarter, where the only Europeans are a few privileged guests, and where its performance differs little from its counterpart a century ago.

It is necessary to put oneself into the right frame of mind, into a state of receptivity, without bias or criticism. (Du Plessis, 1953: 62).

Mason picks up this theme of the dual profile of the *ratiep* in one of the most outstanding discussions on the issue to date. “Was the *ratiep*” he asks, “mere jugglery, a sleight of hand? Perhaps by the mid-nineteenth century it sometimes was.” (Mason, 2002: 21). By then the *ratiep* had assumed such an excessively public profile that even Muslims started to express their displeasure. The problem started in mid-1854 (Bradlow, 1988: 202) and culminated in 1856 with a petition by the then Chief Priest Mochamat Achmat (the son of Imām Achmat van Bengal) “praying to be allowed the playing of ‘Calipha’.” Bradlow conflates the entire problem into one of government manipulation. According to him De Roubaix, then acting Superintendent of Police, had banned the performance in the interest of public peace. Subsequent to the protests of three Imams in particular, Imam Mochamat Achmat, Imam Gamiem Achmat, and Imam Saddick Achmat (all the children of Imam Achmat van Bengal), a Commission of Enquiry was established to address the matter. Bradlow observes:

...this tends to capture the essential aspects of the state’s new approach in dealing with the spread of Islam. On the one hand, the crisis around the practice of *khalifa* demonstrated the growing sophistication of state strategy. While one arm of the state was used to initiate the crisis, others were used to defuse it. (Bradlow, 1988: 204-5).

This was the beginning of a strategy he concludes, “that was to erode the structural independence of the Muslim community, leading to their ultimate integration into the structure of ruling class hegemony.” (Bradlow, 1988: 2006).

There is certainly a measure of truth in Bradlow’s position. But it is hard to believe that this was entirely of the State’s making. Numerous other Imams also expressed their dissatisfaction. According to Davids the “Achmat brothers stood alone in their insistence that *Ratiép*...constituted an integral part of Islamic practice. Most of the other *imams*, even their friend, Abdul Rauf, claimed that this was not the case.” (Davids, 1994: 75). Moreover, thirty years later, in 1886 during the cemetery riots, the Muslims were the first in South Africa to engage in civil unrest against the government. It is difficult to manipulate a people at such a collective scale when there is communal consensus on a particular issue. In the case of their burial rights it existed; in the matter of *ratiép* it was clearly not so.

A number of factors, however, may be adduced to explain the crisis. Firstly, the *sharī‘a* insists on respect for the privacy of others. Even the loud recitation of the Qurān is prohibited in the presence of someone who wishes to sleep. This aspect is fully integrated into the ethics of *taṣawwuf*. Secondly, one of the six maxims (or universal principles) of the *sharī‘a* is concern for the protection of human life (*ḥifẓ al-ḥayāt*)⁷³. This is probably the most compelling objection to the practice. It is this exposure to such a potentially life-threatening act that has left the vast majority of *ṭarīqas* with at least strong reservations about it. Thirdly, and the one pertinent to our purpose, and as alluded to earlier, is that the subsequent popularisation of the performance with its inevitable decline in both substance and quality - as it is in the case of most popularised versions of anything - may have caused considerable concern amongst some of the imāms and parents who may have feared for the safety of their children. On the other hand, as victims of a slaveholding society Imām Mochamat Achmat, probably one of the few lines of Imāms with a relatively thorough grounding in both *sharī‘a* and *ṭarīqa*, would have seen the benefits that the practice had for such a society. This is not to argue, in any way, that *ratiép* is exclusively a product of slaveholding societies. Indeed quite the opposite is true. The practice was already well established in other parts of the world before Muslims

were colonised and subjected to slavery. Nonetheless, one could make a strong case for the relevance of the practice within a slaveholding society - as Mason lucidly sets out to do, and which we shall examine later. This was most likely the position of Imām Mochamat and his brothers and probably the basis on which Imām Abdul Rauf agreed upon a compromise of one performance a year on the 12 *Rabʿ al-Thānī* of the Muslim calendar. To gain a firmer grip on the problem it is important to understand how the imāms may have thought about it. In this respect I disagree with Davids where he states that there may have been some disagreement about whether it constituted an “integral” part of Islām or not. There are many non-integral, or non-essential, acts that enjoy a fairly convivial space in Muslim societies. I suspect that the question was not about integrality (or *rukniyya*), but one of *masbrūʿiyya* (legitimacy) or *munāsaba* (appropriateness). There were those amongst the Muslims who were opposed to it on the grounds that it was *ghayru masbrūʿ* (illegitimate). In this case they may have shared the same sentiments of the “missionaries and settlers [who] had long scorned its practice claiming it to be ‘barbaric’, ‘uncivilised’, and a ‘nuisance’.” (Bradlow, 1988: 202). It is in this context that Imām Mochamat’s statement in his petition may be understood where he says, “we trust that your Excellency will convey our feelings to that Gentleman [de Roubaix], in order that he might know that we do not belong to those [Muslims], who we are sorry to say, are misled by some white people.” On the other hand, there may have been those, like Imām Abdul Rauf, who had no problem with its legitimacy but who felt that the excessive popularisation may have become *ghayru munāsib* (inappropriate). His agreement to the *ratiep* as an annual event has all the elements of a *munāsaba* consideration. Had he regarded the matter as strictly illegal according to the *sharīʿa* he would not have compromised, regardless of his friendship, as Davids seems to imply. In short, matters related to questions of *masbrūʿiyya* deal with them from a perspective of principle - there were certainly principled objections within the Muslim community itself; while those dealing with questions of *munāsaba* would do so from a perspective of degree - the degree to which *ratiep* had become popularised appeared to have been a concern of Imām Abdul Rauf.

There is, nonetheless, that window in the first half of the nineteenth century to which both Du Plessis and Mason have turned as demonstrative of a more serious and meaningful practice. Mason of course, unlike Du Plessis who seems to imply that the *ratiep* had its origins in the Barong dance of Bali (Du Plessis, 1944: 37), recognises that it “has been a part of Islamic practice on the Indonesian islands from the time that Islam first arrived in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries” and that therefore, it was a “part of the religious world in which the exiled shaykhs of the eighteenth and nineteenth century Cape came to maturity.” (Mason, 2002: 22-3). Contextualising *ratiep* in the Cape as a slaveholding society Mason states:

Like all religious rituals *ratiep* expressed meanings that were multiple and elusive. Most importantly, it satisfied the sufi imperative to lead believers toward an experiential knowledge of God. In this way it would have been especially attractive to non-literate or semi-literate slave, Prize Negro, and free black converts who struggled to find meanings in the Quran. The *ratiep* also demonstrated the power of God to protect the believer from physical peril. This freedom from corporal reality doubtlessly appealed to slaves and Prize Negroes. The ‘total loss of control over his person and personality’ was at the very heart of slavery (and the near slavery of Prize Negroes). Slaveowners expressed their domination of their slaves in large part through the slaves’ bodies. It was the body that the owner bought and sold, the body that the owner put to work, the body that the owner raped and flogged. The *ratiep* provided slaves with a sphere within which their owners’ claim to and power of their bodies could be challenged. The believers’ triumph over fire and steel made this quite plain. (Mason, 2002: 23).

It is the efficacy of *ratiep* as a channel for “experiential knowledge” that may have been one of the factors that convinced Imam Mochamat Achmat in his attempts to preserve the centrality of *ratiep* amongst the Cape Muslims. His position, along with his brothers, also suggests a greater sensitivity to some of the arcane arts than his counterparts. But they may equally have overlooked the fact that, within the Cape context, the very *raison d’etre* for its efficacy was slowly being eroded; and that the erosion was not merely a result of a change in colonialist social conditions but also a result of the growing suspicions amongst the Muslims themselves with respect to both the bona fides of the practitioners and the legitimacy of the act according to the *sharī’a*. The irony is that while *ratiep* was practiced in secret and as an arcane discipline during the first half of the nineteenth century there were many more converts to Islam at that time than during the latter half. Perhaps already during the early phases of the second half of the nineteenth century the *ratiep*, as a ceremony predominantly focussed on exhibitionism, had lost its appeal as a way to meaningful spiritual liberation. It had become a ceremony by the Muslims and for the Muslims, but still effective enough to disturb the lone missionary whose purpose, as Mason puts it, was to come “to Africa to save souls.” (Mason, 2002: 3).

Mason also attempts to define the location of *ratiep* within the general spiritual milieu of Islām. To this end he cites Yusuf Da Costa as saying, “that it is ‘highly probable’ that the *ratiep* has its roots in the practices of *sufī tariqa*...” (Mason, 2002: 23). It is, however, the function and not so much the “provenance” of *ratiep* that concerns him. Notwithstanding, he considers *taṣawwuf* a necessary prerequisite to a correct understanding of the function of *ratiep*. As a final elaboration on my own view that *ratiep* is closer to the *mujarrabāt* than *taṣawwuf*, I shall cite two instances from Mason in his own explication of both. Regarding *taṣawwuf* he says:

...the Sufi path is a...discipline of mind and body whose goal is to directly experience ultimate reality. Sufis believe that only in this way can men and women attain a true knowledge of God, knowledge that is beyond rational thought and human perception. The Sufi ideal is

a 'state of annihilation' that is 'the systematic destruction of the ego [leading] to a sense of absorption in a larger, ineffable reality. (Mason, 2002: 22).

With regard to the *mujarrabāt* (although he does not use the term) he says,

The *ratiep* provided slaves with a sphere within which their owners' claim to and power over their bodies could be challenged...So too, did the cures of the "Malay doctors". Through the *ratiep* and the healing power of Islamic medicine, slave and Prize Negro converts repossessed their bodies and demonstrated their mastery over them. Their faith in their single unitary God allowed them, for a time, to reclaim 'persons and personalities'. (Mason, 2002: 23).

The focus of *taṣawwuf*, as the first citation indicates, is on the destruction of the ego (or *nafs*). The *nafs*, as it were, is considered the biggest veil (*ḥijāb*) between the individual and God. During the process of *tazkiyat al-naḥs* (purification of the self) the focus is on the "vertical", or inner and esoteric dimension, of spirituality. In this process miraculous manifestations may even constitute a distraction in the attempt to purify the self - hence the extensive warnings against these manifestations by almost all the *ṣūfī* masters. On the other hand, the *mujarrabāt* are specifically designed to effect miraculous results. The idea of *khāriqun li l-āda*, or defying the so-called natural laws, is strongly indicated in the *mujarrabāt*. In this latter sense, the practice is eminently about miraculously "reclaiming" - to use Mason's term - particular states, such as reclaiming one's health over an invasive disease (hence spiritual remedies and cures), or reclaiming the power of the spirit over the body (such as in *ratiep*) etc.

Interestingly enough, there appears to be a greater consistency and continuity of tradition in some of the *ratiep* groups than in those of a purely *taṣawwuf* stream.

One of the foremost proponents of the ratiép practice, *Khalīfa* Abdullah Petersen who died in 1996, is a case in point. His personal compilation of *adhbkār* (sing. *dhikr*) called *Al Anwaaroel Athkaar (al-Anwār al-Adhbkār)*, is probably one of the most reliable compilations of handwritten manuscripts available. It is not only valuable as a repository of the most well-known invocations and litanies that have been recited over the years at the Cape, but also for the fact that it is one of the few compilations that is strongly centred on *silsilas* and *sanads*⁷⁴. His *silsila* which extends across six pages, is one of the most comprehensive I have seen in any handwritten manual in Cape Town. The *silsila* itself is also one of the most well established *silsilas* in the *Naqshbandī ṭarīqa*. Its inclusion in the manual in such a prominent manner is somewhat anomalous though. When questioned by Karim about his *ṭarīqa* practices he replied:

We used to do the *Gadat* every Tuesday night, in my house, the *Ratibs* of *Iduroos*, *al-Haddad*. Syed Mohamed al-Iduroos was my *murshid* and he was *Chistiyya*, so I was initiated in that *silsila*. I had my own *jamah* too, when we made *‘Ismul latif*, *Ratib al-Attas*, *Ratib al-Qadiri*, *Barzanji*. He paused to think and I prompted him about the *Naqshbandi*. *We made all the Ratibs, but not Naqshbandi*. [italics mine]. (Karim, 1998: 112).

While there is no distinctive *Chisti silsila* in his manual - the one which appears to be his primary *ṭarīqa* - there is nonetheless a strong representation, and in a manner not replicated in many local works of this nature, of *Qādiri* and *Bā ‘Alawī sanads*. Despite the anomalies though, the work stands as a testimony to the fact that traditional conceptions of the manner in which *ṭarīqas* are received, preserved, and transmitted were operative, albeit confined to a few only, for many years at the Cape. Considerable research, however, still needs to be done in locating and establishing primary sources of this kind. Unfortunately, personal and family taboos

surrounding some of these manuscripts render more extensive research on this matter somewhat difficult. Some of those that I have had the privilege to look at are no more than regular compilations quite freely available in printed editions today. As a preamble to our discussion on the *mujarrabāt*, and as an example of how *ratiep* and the *mujarrabāt* are intimately linked to thaumaturgic practices, a case cited by Karim is instructive. At a *Rifāī* initiation ceremony held at the house of Shaykh ‘Ali Akbar Shah on the 25 November 1996 in Rylands, the shaykh had the following to say:

The West often invents and points out the faults of the Muslims. They fear Islam because we can draw upon a power more than any other religion. A schoolgirl puts on the *ḥijāb* (a veil) and the mighty French government armed with nuclear bombs has to legislate against her rights! Their revolutionary slogan of freedom, equality and brotherhood remains an elusive slogan. Unfortunately while the west is aware of the power of Islam, many of us are ignorant of its power. If we do know that it is a power, we do not know how to tap into it. The Shaikhs are the doors to obtaining power. We can cut bodies in four pieces, dont worry, no blood, no mess. They recite a few *ayat* of the holy Qur‘an and they put the pieces together, and no joins will be visible. (Karim, 1998, 101-2).

We notice here an interesting collocation of *Islām-as-power* with respect to how it might be understood by the “West” and how it is understood by the shaykh. Notwithstanding the misgivings that many may have regarding this collocation, the relevant point is how intimately questions of power are related to the *mujarrabāt*, including the *ratiep*. I have personally attended a number of gatherings and religious colloquies of a similar type in which thaumaturgy as *power* is the preponderant

theme. In the purely *ṣūfī*-oriented gatherings, *dhikr* sessions, and initiatic practices (*bayʿa*), references to miracles and similar thaumaturgic acts are more often than not studiously avoided.

The *bayʿa*, or rite of initiation, is considered indispensable when embarking on the spiritual path. (Stoddard, 1983: 54). These ceremonies may differ considerably from *ṭarīqa* to *ṭarīqa*. The *bayʿa* ceremony, however, described by Karim is also illustrative of the initiatic process in those practices or *ṭarīqas* with a heavily accentuated *mujarrabāt* aspect.

The five neophytes who had presented themselves for initiation were requested to seat themselves around a rectangular, green sheet about 2 metres in length and 1 metre wide. All present had to be in a state of ceremonial purity (*wuḍū*). A tray containing a jug half filled with milk, along with five empty goblets, a bowl of sugar and a teaspoon were placed in front of the shaykh. He then instructed the neophytes to focus their gaze on his forehead. The process of sacralizing the milk took the form of the shaykh adding teaspoonfuls of sugar to the milk while reciting from a prayer manual until the sugar bowl was empty. At this point the *fātiḥa* was recited followed by invocations from another prayer book. The neophytes then proceeded to drink from the goblets in cycles of three sips each with each cycle prefaced by the *tasmiyya* (reciting “*Bismi Allahi l-Raḥmāni l-Raḥīm*”) until the goblet was empty. Throughout the process they had to maintain their gazes firmly fixed on the forehead of the shaykh. Thereafter each one had to pronounce that their induction into the order was entirely through their own free will and volition. A rolled cloth was then presented to them. With their right palms facing upwards and their left downwards they held the cloth while the entire group recited further invocations. The concluding litany that followed comprised a recital of the *ṣalawāt* [invoking the praise of the Prophet (pbuh)] 5 times, the *istighfār* (to recite “*astaghfiru Allah*” - I seek the forgiveness of Allah) 1000 times, a recital of the last four *sūras* of the Quran once each, with the exception of *sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* which was recited 1000 times. The session was completed with a recital of the *tablīl* (to recite “*lā ilāha illallah*” - there is no deity but Allah) 1000 times. After this the neophytes had to observe three to

five performances before they were allowed to participate themselves. (Karim, 1996: 101-3).

A number of symbolic meanings are evident in this initiatory process. The milk and sugar replicate the rites of passage for a new born child with its mixed symbolism of the sweetness of the spiritual life and its necessary, prefatory spiritual weaning indicated by the milk. The rolled cloth evokes the Quranic image of “And hold fast to the rope of Allah.” (Quran, 3: 103). This is a symbol of the unbroken chain of transmission that extends to the Prophet (pbuh) himself. An uncommon part of the practice, however, is the continuous focus on the forehead of the shaykh. This is to reinforce the shaykh, in this particular initiation, as the “door to spiritual power.” This is consistent with the *mujarrabāt* initiations.

There is, however, a degree of secrecy about these practices that are not always shared with non-initiates, and this follows an age-old dicta as Ederies Shah puts it, that “Knowledge is power; Knowledge shared is power lost.” (Shah, 1968: 12). That is, knowledge shared with the uninitiated. With respect to the *mujarrabāt* ceremonies Shah summarises their common features in the following manner:

Following the principles of secrecy and initiation, other important common features are magical words and special ceremonial dress. Rituals, with few exceptions, involve some form of sacrifice, actual or implied, and the use of symbolism, magical words - Words of Power - are uttered; mystical movements are made; special apparatus, in the form of weapons and talismans, are extensively employed. Next in significance come the preparation of spells and charms, generally with animal, vegetable, and mineral contents, in that order of prominence. (Shah, 1968: 12).

It is the *mujarrabāt* as spells and charms that we shall engage in the next section.

6.3.1.1 The *Mujarrabāt*

“The history of man is the history of magic” says Egyptian-born Rollo Ahmed in his book *The Black Art*. (Ahmed, 1994: 17). Ederies Shah, however, presents a more measured consideration of the matter when he states:

Magic is a part of human history. It has sometimes played a decisive part, as in the case of Moses at the court of Pharaoh. More often it has been of less, though still great, importance. In either case it cannot be ignored. (Shah, 1968: 14).

The most reliable and detailed accounts of the antediluvian origins of magic appear to emerge with the establishment of Shamanism amongst the Turanian peoples of Siberia. From here, according to those who subscribe to the culture-drift theory, these practices spread westwards to Scandinavia, the Eskimos, and finally to North and South America. Eastwards they spread to Japan and China, and southwards, to India, Babylonia, Rome, Greece and Egypt. Siberia, Japan, and China are considered Turanian-Mongol centres for magical development and rediffusion, while India, Babylonia, Rome/Greece, and Egypt were centres for magical synthesis and rediffusion. These were the established centres up to the seventh century of the pre-Islamic era. (Shah, 1968: 3, 10). Eliade generally concurs with this description and states that shamanism is “pre-eminently a religious phenomenon of Siberia and Central Asia.” (Eliade, 1964: 4). The word shaman itself comes through the Russian from the Tungusic *šaman*. (Eliade, 1964: 4). Eliade, however, takes the argument further by asserting that the ideology, mythology, and rites of the Arctic, Siberian, and Asian peoples in fact preceded shamanism - or are, at least, the products of practices parallel to it. In this sense he states, “they are the product of the *general* religious experience and not of a particular class of privileged beings...” (Eliade, 1964: 7). This latter view of Eliade’s, albeit more sensitive to the sacrality of human experience, finds an echo in the second theory posited by Shah that states that since

“man is a symbol-inventing animal” (Shah, 1968: 13) many of these magical and medicinal practices may have emerged independently, and as a matter of coincidence, in different regions of the world.

The question of religion and magic has always been a controversial one. But there can be little doubt that magic, as Shah avers, “shares with religion more characteristics than most people have cared to discuss”; and, that like religion, “it has a supernatural basis: the appeal to a force greater than man.” (Shah, 1968: 15-6). While the similarities in particular cases may end here⁷⁵, the commonality of a “supernatural basis” cannot be ignored. One of the central verses in the Qurān that refers to the practice of magic is the following:

They followed what the evil ones falsely attributed to Solomon. The real blasphemers were they and not Solomon. The evil ones taught humankind sorcery and that which was revealed to the two angels at Babel, Hārūt and Mārūt. Nor did they teach anyone such things except that they warned, “We are only a trial.” So do not disbelieve in the guidance of God. From these two angels people learnt to cause division between man and wife. But they harm naught except by the leave of God. And they learned what harmed them, not what profited them; and they knew that those who traffic in sorcery would have no share of the happiness of the hereafter. (Qurān, 2: 102).

While the Qurānic term, *sihr*, used in this verse best translates as “sorcery” rather than “magic” (as Yusuf Ali and Pickthall translates it), one of the main debates surrounding this practice in Qūrānic exegeses, is whether the practice is real or merely illusory. While it is beyond the scope of this study to engage this polemic, the vast majority of Muslim scholars is of the view that it is in fact real, with only the *Muʿtazalites* (theological rationalists) and a minority of *Sunnī* scholars - such as the

ḥanafite scholar, al-Jaṣṣās (917-980)⁷⁶ - demurring. (al-Rāzī, n.d.[vol.3]: 213; al-Ṣābūnī, 1990 [vol.1]: 71). For explanatory purposes, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (1149-1209)⁷⁷ in his *al-Taḥṣīn al-Kabīr*, expands on the term *siḥr* and provides, in his words, a “general classification” of the different forms of magic into eight categories. He classifies them in the following manner:

- 1) Chaldean magic, which he links to astrology and various spirits associated with the stars.
- 2) Spiritualism which he considers a true form of spirit-magic, and also linked to hypnosis.
- 3) Talismanic magic (*‘azīmat*s) which often harnesses the spiritual powers attributed to the *jinn*.
- 4) Legerdemain, or the normal sleight-of-hand magic, common even today for general entertainment.
- 5) The art of jugglery and related acts, which al-Rāzī seems to classify as a separate form of magic to the previously mentioned one, and makes the note that this is, strictly speaking, not a branch of *siḥr*.
- 6) The use of drugs to induce delusions in the audience.
- 7) Mastery of the Word of Power (*al-Ism al-‘aḥḍam*) which is the key to harnessing the power of the *jinn*.
- 8) Magic by connivance in which the “thaumaturge” employs certain designated persons to investigate the background of the one who solicits his/her help.

A somewhat overlooked personage of the arcane arts, including alchemy, in Muslim history is the role of Hermes the First. A number of Muslim scholars considers Hermes to be the Prophet Idrīs (pbuh). Sa‘īd of Toledo (d.1069) observed:

Sages affirm that all antediluvian sciences emerge with the first Hermes, who lived in Sa‘īd in Upper Egypt. The Jews call him Enoch, and the Muslims Idrīs. He was the first who spoke of the material of the superior world and of planetary movements. He built temples to

worship God...After the flood the sciences, including alchemy and magic, were carried out of Memphis, under the more renowned Hermes the Second. (Marshall, 2001: 217).

The Hermetic doctrines formed the basis of the cosmological doctrines developed by the *Ismāʿīlī Shīʿa* branch called the *Ikhwān al-Ṣaffā* (the Brethren of Purity). Ibn ʿArabī himself drew quite extensively on the Hermetic teachings. ʿAfif al-Ṭabbārah, while reserving judgement on the authenticity of the story, cites from the *Akhhbār al-Ulamā* (Hagiographies of the Learned) of Jamāl al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Yūsuf al-Qifṭī that *Hirmīs* was born in Egypt and called *Irmīs* by the Greeks, and is in fact the selfsame Idrīs referred to in the Qurān. (Ṭabbārah, 1991: 56). Another version relates that he was born in Babel, and was intimately connected with *Hārūt* and *Mārūt*. (Ṭabbārah, 1991: 57, al-Qurṭubī, 1967 [Vol. 2]: 51). Regardless of the authenticity of the story, however, both the Prophet Idrīs (pbuh) and the Prophet Sulaymān (pbuh) feature prominently in the mystical world of the arcane arts. Nonetheless, much more is known about the Prophet Sulaymān (pbuh) who is even more extensively referenced in the Qurān. Amongst the numerous references to him in the Qurān is the following:

And most certainly we gave David and Solomon knowledge...And Solomon was David's heir and said: "O you people! We have been taught the speech of birds and to us has been given a degree of all things. Most certainly this is a clear distinction." And before Solomon were gathered his hosts of Jinn and humans and birds, and they were paraded in order and ranks. At length they arrived at the Valley of the Ants. Said one of the ants: "O you of the ants proceed to your habitations lest Solomon crush you unknowingly. (Qurān, 27: 15-8).

The details of what is generally referred to as Solomonic Magic are so vast as to require a study on its own. While it would be quite easy to dismiss all of these as “un-Islamic” the truth is that these sciences have occupied the attention of some of the finest minds produced in Muslim history. Exegetes - amongst many others - of the order of al-Zamakhsharī (1075-1144)⁷⁸, al-Bayḍāwī (d.1291)⁷⁹, and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī himself, have all provided extensive commentaries on these matters. The Seal of Solomon, for example, the figure that attracts, binds, and seals evil spirits, is even a popular magical artefact in the Arabian Nights. (Shah, 1968: 31). The *al-Mandal* (Arabic for the “Circle of Power”), is regarded as an indispensable figure within which the magician seeks protection. It may be this concept that inspired Tuan Guru’s “Holy Circle of Protection”. According to Tayob,

This mystical Islam was the most prominent social force among ordinary Cape Muslims during the pre-modern period. The esoteric teachings of Shaykh Yusuf and Tuan Guru’s talismans for psychological and physical cures spanned the range of this essentially secretive form of Islam. (Tayob, 1995: 42).

Muslim scholars generally divide the different forms and types of the *mujarrabāt* into “permissible” (*mubāḥ*) and “forbidden” (*ḥarām*) - or beneficial and harmful. This distinction is inspired by the belief that many of the *mujarrabāt* practices possess a reality of their own and are not merely illusory. (al-Ṣābūnī, 1990: 65). It is therefore considered necessary to develop and employ a set of *mujarrabāt* techniques to neutralise the purported harmful practices. In this respect it is the *mujarrabāt* as *counter-magic*, rather than magic per se that is deemed permissible. As counter-magic many spiritual remedies are even prescribed prophylactically to prevent the eventuation of a suspected evil or disease. In fact, the wide dissemination of that branch of medicine referred to as *al-ṭibb al-nabawī* (Prophetic Medicine) may have emerged as strongly as it did to counteract many of the harmful *mujarrabāt* practices. While there are the “purer” forms of *mujarrabāt* practices, this

form of medicine, however, both promulgated and came to absorb many of the *mujarrabāt* practices, such as talismanic cures for example. There is also a decidedly Islamic historical context within which, and from which, Tuan Guru developed his *mujarrabāt* prescriptions. We have previously mentioned late seventeenth and late eighteenth century examples of ‘*azīmat*’, or talismanic practices. ‘*Azīmat*’, as the case stands, may be utilised for both beneficial and harmful purposes.

As another example of this practice at the Cape, Mayson relates that in 1853 an Imām “Adol (sic) Bazier” was convicted by the Supreme Court for having issued a “post rider” with an ‘*azīmat*’ for the purpose of acquiring a sum of money from a mail bag. Apparently the ‘*azīmat*’ was designed to protect the rider from detection. (Mayson, 1963: 28). There can be little doubt that this anecdotal account of recourse to ‘*azīmat*’ is but one of hundreds that occurred at the time.

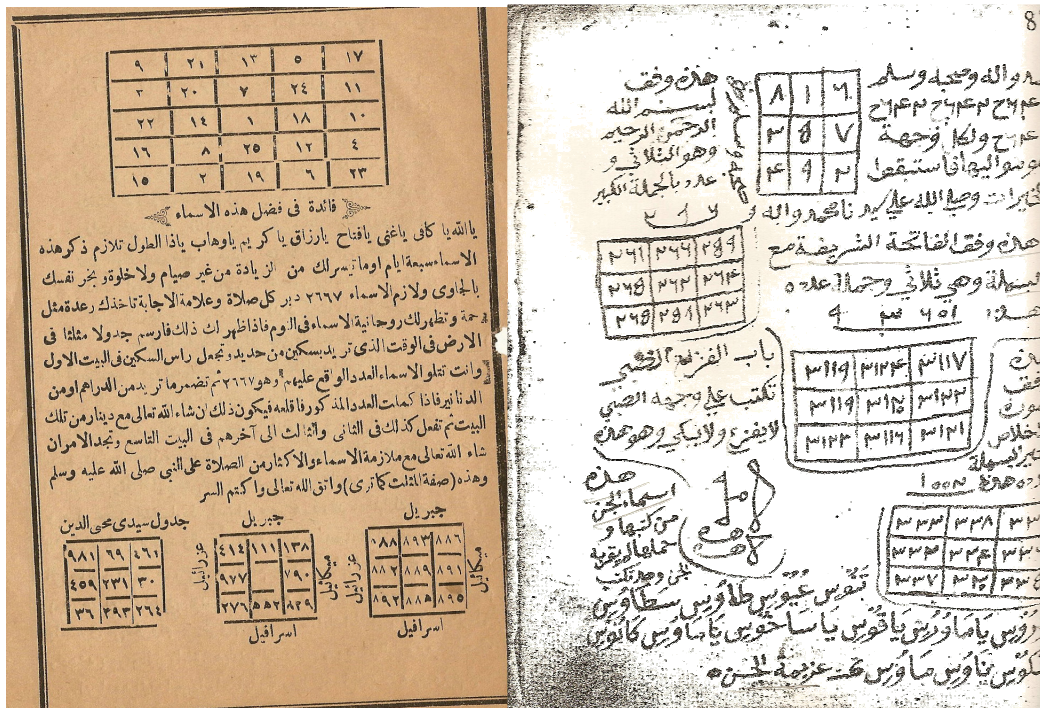


Figure 15: Examples demonstrating the similarities between the Mujarrabāt of Imām al-Ghazālī (spuriously attributed to him) on the left and Tuan Guru's Compendium on the right.

Some of the foremost scholars of classical Islām have given considerable attention to this practice. Imām al-Suyūṭī (1445-1505)⁸⁰ in his *Medicine of the Prophet* says:

So you should know that reciting āyāt and wearing talismans (containing written āyāt from the Quran) are indeed effective if they are acceptable to the patient, and accepted with his consent as a means of effecting a cure. (al-Suyūṭī, 1994: 167).

Further on he relates:

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar used to teach these to his children when they were growing up, and while they were still young, he would write them as a text and hang it around their necks. (al-Suyūṭī, 1994: 171).

In his *Ṭibb al-Nabawī*, Imām Abū Abd Allah Muḥammad al-Dhahabī (1274-1347) - known for his scholarly rigour in *ḥadīth* literature and favoured in puritan circles for that reason in particular - has the following to say:

Know that talismans (*ruqā*) and spiritual charms (*ta‘āwīdh*) are effective and beneficial if they are accepted (by the patients) through compliance and consent. Talismans and spiritual charms are a means to taking refuge in Allāh, the Sublime, the High, and serve the purpose of setting the process of healing in motion; in as much as this, too, is the case with medicine.

Blameworthy talismans are those scribed in other than the Arabic language so that the meanings are unknown. If the meanings are known, however, then this is a recommended practice. (al-Dhahabī, 1961: 136).

Al-Dhahabī further notes that “the initial prohibition on talismans was either directed at those of pagan origin, or the prohibition may, initially, have been absolute, but

was subsequently abrogated.” (al-Dhahabī, 1961: 136). Nevertheless, given the extent and diversity of opinion that exist within the classical era, there remains little doubt that the debate emerged within a context of differing interpretations of certain Quranic verses and *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (pбуh) - including, in the latter case, claims to authenticity. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that a committed *‘Asharite* rationalist such as al-Sanūsī - intellectual and spiritual mentor to Tuan Guru - had written a complete work on the subject of spiritual healing called the *Mujarrabāt al-Sanūsī* (The Tested Spiritual Remedies of al-Sanūsī). (See Appendix 2). This work would most likely have been known to Tuan Guru before his arrival at the Cape. Moreover, with the centrality of Imām al-Ghazālī in the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* he may have been exposed to two popular works dealing with the *Mujarrabāt* attributed to him. One work is entitled *Mujarrabāt al-Ghazālī* or *al-Sirr al-Maktūm*⁸¹ (The Hidden Secret), and the other *al-Jawbar al-Ghālī fī Khawāṣ al-Muthallath* (The Precious Jewel [for teaching] the Inner Nature of the Talismanic Arts). There are striking similarities between the talismans in his Compendium and those contained in these two books.

Moreover, in the *Bā ‘Alawī* stronghold of Zanzibar, Bang states that there are a number of manuscripts in the Zanzibar National Archives that deal with medicinal matters. “There are” she says, “books of herbal recipes, magic, and books outlining the tradition known as *Ṭibb Nabawī* (Prophetic Medicine).” Amongst these is the *Kitāb al-Raḥmān fī l-Ṭibb wa l-Ḥikma*. This copy dates back to 1728⁸². (Bang, n.d.: 12).

The *Ḥaḍramis* had ploughed the Indian Ocean across and along its littoral coast stretching from Zanzibar to the archipelago “long before the boats of the British East India Company arrived in Indian Ocean waters.” Bang continues,

Like today they served as cultural links in the sense that a large number of people of Arabian origin were born, lived, worked and died in Zanzibar, Java, Calicut, or Kalimantan. In the process they left their imprint on the

place (the most notable being the religion of Islam) and absorbed elements not Arabian in origin.

(Bang, 2003: 4).

These travels and migrations created a *Bā ‘Alawī Ṣūfī* network that facilitated both the “transmission of prayers and texts...” (Bang, 2003: 6).

From these observations we note that Tuan Guru’s inclusion of these arts is not as anomalous as they might initially appear. He is very much in line with the standard practices as they manifested themselves at various periods throughout Muslim history by the most scholarly of Muslim savants. He also appears to have been very much a part of the early *Bā ‘Alawī* network that stretched from the archipelago to East Africa and Zanzibar.

Further evidence of the fact that the wearing of amulets enjoyed a wide acceptance even in the most learned of Muslim circles is its inclusion for legal consideration in the *Encyclopaedia of Islamic Law, A Compendium of the Views of the Major Schools*, which is an adaptation of two of the most widely read works on comparative fiqh in the Muslim world - albeit not the most authoritative - the *Al-Fiqh ‘Alā l-Madhāhib al-‘Arba‘a* (A Comparative Study of the Four Schools of Law) and *al-Fiqh ‘alā l-Madhāb al-Khamsa* (A Comparative Study of the Five Schools of Thought - this includes the Ja‘farī School). According to the Compendium under the heading “Touching of the Arabic Script of the Quran” while in a condition of ceremonial impurity it states:

All the schools of law concur that it is prohibited to touch the script of the Qurān without the prescribed purity, but they differ regarding the permissibility of someone in a state of minor impurity of blood and excrement writing the Quran, reading it from a script or from memory, touching it through an intervening medium *and wearing it as an amulet*. The Malikis⁸³ observe that it is not permissible for a person to write it

or touch its binding even through an intervening medium, although that person may read it from a script or from memory. But the Malikis, differ among themselves *regarding wearing it is an amulet*.

The Hanbalis⁸⁴ state that writing it and *carrying it as an amulet* with a cover is permissible. The Shafiis say that it is not permissible to touch its cover even if detached from it and its hanger while it is hanging from it, although it is permissible to write it, *carry it as an amulet*, and to touch a cloth embroidered with Quranic verses.

According to the Jafari⁸⁵ school...it is not forbidden [in a state of impurity] to recite or write it, *or carry it as an amulet* and to touch its non-Arabic transcription excepting the glorious name, Allah...[italics mine]. (Bakhtiar, 1996: 23-4)

Nonetheless, the *mujarrabāt* did not simply enjoy a mere presence at the Cape from the second quarter of the nineteenth century onwards, but became one of its most dominant features - the effects of which are still visible in contemporary Cape Muslim society. The practice of “doekoem-werk” (“Malay” black magic) says Davids, “became an inherent part of the nineteenth century.” (Davids, 1991: 71). In vindication of his view that the *ṭariqas* did not play a role in the “making of the slave world” he cites the practice of “doekoem-werk” as one that contradicts the purity of the “spiritualism which the Turuq generate and nurture.” (Davids, 1991: 74). Evidently, according to him, it was the *ʿAshʿarite* theology with its concept of “iktisaab” that accommodated this practice. According to his understanding of “iktisaab” as “acquisition”⁸⁶ - normally understood as “the capacity for free choice” - any individual is potentially exposed to the acquisition of evil that subsequently acts as a “hindrance to the acquisition of piety”. (Davids, 1991:71-2). Because of this potentiality as conceived within an *ʿAshʿarite* construct of theology, *doekoem-werk* is

accommodated to counteract such evil. This is a somewhat unique theory in Islamic thought. Rafudeen on the other hand, and closer to a traditional conception of the matter, considers the validity of the *mujarrabāt* from the *ʿAshʿarite* perspective from the point of view that as long as the practitioners ascribe the effects to God as the ultimate Cause, and as conceived within that theology, then the practice is permissible. (Rafudeen, 2004: 50). The opposing perspective to these practices is advanced by Tayob in his discussion on Islamic reformism. According to him, the latter “was at best uneasy with the presence of magic and superstition prevalent in Muslim society” for the reason that “these were attributed to the effects of a degenerate Sufism which, in local cultures and customs, was believed to have contaminated Islam.” (Tayob, 1995: 33). He then cites the late Ismail al-Farūqī, a modernist *sympathique extraordinaire* of *Wahhābite* theology, as having considered Sufism as being anathema to Islam. (Tayob, 1995: 38). While Rafudeen’s observation is closer to a traditionalist understanding of the *mujarrabāt* practices in Islām, and, on the other, while al-Farūqī’s view appears closer to a reductionist, purist pronouncement, neither of the two provides a satisfactory explanation for the proliferation of the contra-normative *mujarrabāt* during the nineteenth century. The *mujarrabāt*, for example while often resorted to in Makkahn society, are much less pronounced and practiced there than in Cape Town despite the fact that *ʿAshʿarism* and *ṭasawwuf* - while officialdom there both claims and wishes otherwise - are widely represented in that society. In Cape Town, on the other hand, there are numerous practitioners of the *mujarrabāt* who know absolutely nothing of *ṭasawwuf*, including some *ratiep* practitioners.

My own interpretation for the proliferation of a number of contra-normative practices at the Cape is, as alluded to previously, a rapid decline in the general epistemological base at the Cape - both in *ṭasawwuf* and the *sharīʿa*. Rafudeen, for example, mentions three conditions that validate the practice: One, that the practice of amulets and talismans contain the name of Allah or His attributes; two, that they are written in Arabic⁸⁷; and three, that the believer does not believe that they in themselves protect from or ward off evil. (Rafudeen, 2004: 50). To these we may add the very stringent training that prospective practitioners are subjected to in the

Traditional systems of *mujarrabāt* education. The stark irony of this is the apparent absence of any written manuals during the nineteenth century that deal specifically with the aspects of *mujarrabāt* training. Most of the Cape “doekoem” manuals I have seen deal with the formulae only and not the teachings. Not even Tuan Guru’s Compendium alludes to the subject in any specialised way. He may, of course, have orally transmitted some of the teachings to a select group of his students.

The result of this is some of the bizarre practices prevalent at the Cape. One of these is mentioned by John Schofield Mayson:

Charms are in common use and produce their effects...On the sale of premises, in Market-square, belonging to the Free Church of Scotland, the minister bought an old building, in Loop Street, for the use of the Mission, this house being, at the time of purchase, inhabited by Malays. These occupiers opining that the premises would be used for church and school purposes were very unwilling to remove. At length they left reluctantly having first procured from their priest an egg covered in maledictory writings. This they hid under the doorsteps, and trusted to its magic power to effect the good man’s ruin. (Mayson, 1963: 23).

The theme of the egg is a very popular one, even in the more ancient grimoires. A similar practice is available in the *al-Jawbar al-Ghālī* spuriously attributed to Imām al-Ghazālī, but widespread in the Muslim world nonetheless. This practice is normally associated with *siḥr*, or so-called “black magic”.

Another practice, the origins of which I have been unable to establish in the Cape, but almost definitely going back to the nineteenth century, is the usage of the *ṣubḥa* (rosary) in an oracular fashion. The practitioner sits with the motionless rosary suspended from his/her right hand. When the question is posed the practitioner enters a meditative repose for a certain duration of time. The answer that the

enquirer seeks would be either negative or affirmative depending on the pendular motion of the rosary. The motion of the rosary, it is claimed, is directed by the numen to whom the practitioner is affiliated. Most of the respondents questioned in this regard have claimed that the “gift” was granted to them after some life-changing event - either through the loss of a loved one, a powerful dream, or, as in one case, after a near fatal car accident. In all cases, though, they were either aware of, or knew, others who engaged in the practice. There appears, however, to be no traditional transmission of this practice or any documented records that attest to its origins at the Cape. This practice falls under the category of *arrāfa* and *kabāna*, or divination and soothsaying.

A practice, however, that many would regard as anomalous with specific reference to Tuan Guru is his fortune-telling book and a dice with letters from the Arabic alphabet. (Mukadam, 2003: 55). There can be little doubt that this practice is an aspect of *arrāfa*. In this practice prayers are recited while the dice is thrown. The letter that appears face up references a segment in the book which is then consulted. This reference, in turn, references certain verses in the Qurān from which significant future events are determined or from which the recommended remedy is procured. (Mukadam, 2003: 55). This practice Mukadam ascribes to the ingenuity, both social and spiritual, with which Tuan Guru had treated the personal suffering and disadvantaged conditions experienced by the Muslims at the Cape. (Mukadam, 2003: 55).

A particularly macabre practice that also appears to have had fairly early origins at the Cape is that called “Riding the Grave” (*kubus ry*). Hans Kahler gives a particularly graphic description of the practice. The ceremony takes place at any designated grave - normally of a saintly personage - and usually after the second half of the night. At the start of the act the practitioner (*dukun*) calls upon his deceased spiritual guide (*ustādh*) who has to assist him in the process. The Qurānic verse “*alam tara kayfa fa‘ala rabbuka bi aṣḥābi l-fil, alam yaj‘al kaydabum fī taḍlīl*” (Quran, 105: 1-2) is then recited. The *dukun* then says: “I call upon you to perform such and such an act.” The verse is then repeated while invoking the *baraka* (spiritual influence) of the angels, the dead *ustādh*, and all the dead. While the

dukun lies with his hands outstretched on the grave he then digs a hole beneath his navel if the work is for a good purpose or above his navel if it is for an evil purpose. When the hole has been opened then he has to insert the *gambar* into it and then close it up. If, however, it is for a good purpose the *gambar* has to be kept in the hand while he sets out to fulfil whatever his purpose might be. In this case the *gambar* in the hand has to be held above the hole while reciting: “Nothing can go wrong with the name of Allah, and He is the hearer and the wise. O Allāh, make it easy and do not disappoint me.” With the other hand that is rested on the grave a fistful of soil is then gathered from that spot. With his purpose continuously in mind he then proceeds to scatter the soil over the grave without looking at where he is casting the grains of sand. During the process the *dukun* avoids approaching the grave from the front. He should instead approach it from behind, or from the side furthest located from the head of the grave. At the completion of this rite he should once again call upon his *ustādh*, inform him that the act is done, and thank him. After this the Qurānic verse “*wa l-samā’i wa l-ṭāriq...fa l-yanzuru l-insāna mimmā kbuliq*” (Qurān, 86: 1-5) is recited in conclusion. The *dukun* then has to request that his *ustādh* now release him from the ritual. (Kahler, 1971: 183-4).

While this ritual would evoke revulsion in most Muslims, *ṣūfīs* and otherwise, the fact is that it has often been associated with *ṣūfī* practices. Karim referring to the “Initiation of the Grave” rite mentioned by Desai in connection with the “Riding of the Grave” ritual correctly counters by observing that it is derived from “Malay Magic and certainly not mentioned in any Manual on *Tasawwuf*.” (Karim, 1998: 101). It is this perennial inability to distinguish between specifically *taṣawwuf* practices and certain *mujarrabāt* ones that has resulted in the confusions that we so often encounter in discussions on the matter. The reason why the established *ṣūfī* masters and manuals on *taṣawwuf* berate the idea of *karāmāt* so extensively is for the very fact that they are considered the channels to the greatest aberrations and deviations. That the miraculous aspect of things came to dominate at the Cape is evidenced by the very naming of the shrines of *awliyā* as “*kramats*”. This nomenclature is unique to the Cape. Even Shaykh Yūsuf does not use the term. The standard Arabic term, also used by Shaykh Yūsuf, is *ḍarīḥa* (from which the word *darga* is derived).

Eliade articulates this view from a somewhat different context when he says that the shaman's "seance almost always has recourse to ecstasy; and the history of religions is there to show us that no other religious experience is more subject to distortion and aberration." (Eliade,1964: 12). To this we might add the so-called black arts (*siḥr*) of the *mujarrabā*.

Another act akin to the above-mentioned one is that which is known as "sympathetic magic" - another practice categorised as *siḥr*. Kahler, citing from a Cape grimoire he had seen, mentions the following example:

Make the figure [of the intended victim] from clay or wax. Then write on the head...*tabbat yadā Abī Lababin wa tabba* (Qurān, 111: 1) high on the forehead: *innā sayaslā nāran dāta lababin* (Qurān, 111: 3); on the right arm: *wa 'mrātuhu hammālata 'l-ḥatabi* (Qurān, 111: 4); left arm: *fī ḡīdihā* (Qurān, 111: 5); right leg: *ḥablun mim masadin* (Qurān, 111: 5); left leg. [italics mine] (Kahler, 1971: 186).

Despite the diversities of opinion within the classical Islamic sources, orthodox Islām generally has reacted with some vehemence to *siḥr* practices - whether of the sorcerous or necromantic forms. According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfa⁸⁸, sorcerers - both Muslim and non-Muslim - incur the death sentence, regardless of whether they intended to kill the victim or not, if they either acknowledge their sorcery or admit to it. Remorse or repentance for their actions is also not accepted. The *ḥanbalite* and *mālakite* views are similar to that of the *ḥanafite* one regarding *Muslim* sorcerers with the exception that a *non-Muslim* sorcerer is not sentenced to death except if he/she deliberately intended to kill a Muslim. The *ḥanbalite* school of thought, on the other hand, differs from the *mālakite* one in that, according to the more authorised of the two prevailing opinions within that school of thought, the sorcerer's repentance is accepted. The *shāfi'ite* school of thought is the most lenient in this respect. According to Imām al-Shāfi'ī the sorcerer neither becomes an

apostate nor is he/she sentenced to death by the mere fact of practicing as a sorcerer, except in the case where the sorcerer deliberately intends to kill the victim, ascribes the power of the sorcery to other than God, or firmly believes that all forms of sorcery are permissible according to the *sharī'a*. The repentance of the sorcerer is also accepted. (al-Ṣābūnī, 1990 [vol.1]: 78; al-Rāzī, n.d.: 215-6; 'Abd al-Raḥmān, 1986: 167-8).

It is noteworthy, however, that there are no known cases of sorcerers having been put to death during the time of the Prophet (pbuh). A few cases are documented during the era of the Companions (*Ṣabāba*), with one in which the *Khalīf* Uthmān had expressed his extreme displeasure in the case where 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar al-Khaṭṭāb had executed a sorcerer who had attempted to bewitch his sister Ḥafṣa. Some commentators hold the view that his indignation was a result of the execution having been performed without his knowledge and the obligatory trial by court. There are seven cases of execution that have been recorded during the time of the Successors (*Tābi'ūn*). (al-Qurṭubī, 1967: 47-9). Beyond these two historical periods evidence of such executions become fragmentary and appear, at the legal level at least, to have been exercised with extreme caution.

Relevant to our purpose here, and the reason for this very cursory overview of the Islāmic *Sunnī* schools of thought on the matter, is that a simplistic understanding of the more lenient *shāfi'ite* approach to these practices may very well have contributed to the encouragement of some of them in a predominantly *shāfi'ite* Cape milieu.

To link practices such as these to a “degenerate Sufism”, as al-Farūqī does, is equally simplistic. Practices such as these are endemic to every conceivable religion known to humanity. The Qurān, as revelation and hierology, ultimately emphasises the sacrality of all things, and is therefore eminently aware of, or eminently expresses - depending on one's point of view - as all sacred texts do, the existence of supra-normal forces. Religious texts are, in their very conception, supramundane. It is for this reason that the Qurān as the articulation of an essentially ineffable reality, rather than denying the existence, potentialities, and efficacious nature of these supra-normal forces, instead provides a set of corrective guidelines that would ensure a

proper relationship with such matters within the scope of its monotheistic demands. These guidelines are encapsulated in the benedictory phrase “*lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illa billah*” (there is no strength and power except in God). Theologically speaking, it is the process of the *ascription of supernatural power* that imparts to the act its “spiritual congruence” or “spiritual aberrance”. It is for this reason that the Qurān says, “They followed what the evil ones (*Shayāṭīn*) falsely attributed to Solomon. The real blasphemers were they and not Solomon.” (Qurān, 2: 102). The Prophet Sulaymān (pbuh) having been granted the power to control the *jinn* and the *shayāṭīn* (Satan) ascribed this power to God. The “evil ones”, on the other hand, are considered “evil” for the very reason that they ascribed the possession of power to themselves. Congruity of belief, as it appears, does not reside in dismissing these supra-normal forces, but in correctly locating the source of power. Rather than ascribing these deviant acts to *taṣawwuf*, the more honest approach would be that mentioned by Tayob in his discussion on the “The Modern Islamic Paradigm.” He states, referencing al-Farūqī:

In principle, the modern Islamic paradigm’s ontology consisted of two modes of reality: the ultimate and transcendent God, the Creator, and created reality. This kind of dualism left no space for either human or spirit hierarchies. The modern obliteration of angels, holy men, and miracles, was a key feature of the new Islamic paradigm.” (Tayob, 1995: 33).

This is more than just an obliteration of “angels, holy men, and miracles”; it amounts to the denial of an entire supernal realm as unambiguously articulated by the Qurān, and, as a consequence, much of the Qurān itself. These perspectives, however unwittingly, present the difficulties that their advocates experience in presenting consistent theories - while they cannot be completely denied - of what constitutes manifestations of “low” or “popular”, or even “degenerate” Islam.

In Cape studies on the *mujarrabāt* practices I.D. Du Plessis appears to have the most nuanced approach. Linking similar practices to the Romans, the oracle of Delphi, Egyptian soothsayers, the Voodoo rituals of Haiti etc., he recalls Ederies Shah's dictum quoted earlier that man "has always tended to link the unknown with the supernatural: *omne ignotum pro miraculo*, the Romans said in their own terse way, from which it follows that all knowledge kept from others means power." (Du Plessis, 1944: 71).

While I am not of the opinion that *mujarrabāt* practices, including the *ratiep*, are produced by blighting social conditions, they are, nonetheless, almost certainly encouraged by such conditions. The aspect of "power" as control and reclamation - as J.E. Mason mentions - is sharply indicated in these practices. With a rapidly declining epistemological base and continuing socio-political deprivation, the allurements to regaining control of their "persons and personalities" (Mason, 2002: 23) through "superior" preternatural means must have been very strong indeed. It is not accidental that even today the practitioners of the *mujarrabāt* are referred to, in Afrikaans, as a "slim man" or a "slim vrou" (meaning in the Cape context, a man or woman endowed with preternatural knowledge), and not the learned of the *ulamā*. Some justification for this view is found in Du Plessis' observation - being fully aware of the fact that the European at that time was regarded as the tyrannical "other" - where he states:

It seems peculiar that the Europeans, whose history teems with the exercise of "magic" in all its forms, should invariably associate it with the East, and in South Africa, with the Malay. The European is either convinced that such things do not happen, or else he regards every Malay as a potential magician, *capable of setting forces in motion against which he has no defence*. In the latter case, it does not occur to him that the average Malay, while sometimes believing in and fearing "Malay tricks," is as ignorant of these practices as the Europeans." [italics mine]. (Du Plessis, 1944: 75).

The superlunary potentialities to power promised by the *mujarrabāt* that may have left their vanquishers fearful and defenceless would certainly have featured strongly in their own conceptions of the practices. A fact, however, of which Du Plessis might not have been aware, is that the majority of clients, in at least three cases of those practicing these arts I know of, are people of European extraction. This might have been the case then as now.

While Du Plessis, furthermore, may be correct in stating that the “average Malay” is ignorant of these practices, and that, as he poignantly concludes his discussion on “Malay tricks” that “whatever the future may reveal, there is no reason why the Cape Malays should be unduly associated with an activity that has been indulged in by all peoples in all ages,” there is, nevertheless, no gainsaying the fact that the degree and extent of the practices - and, in many cases, their forms and manifestations - as they emerged during the nineteenth century were both excessive and contra-normative.

Their shortcomings, however, were starkly evident to them. To address both the escalating institutional conflicts that had now started to ravage the community during the mid-nineteenth century and the growing crisis of qualified Muslim leadership, they requested the presence of a learned Muslim arbiter whose expertise they could trust. The person who arrived was Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendī.

6.4 The Arrival of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendī

The letter that brought Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendī to the Cape at the beginning of 1863 encapsulates three important features: one, the memory of themselves as an enslaved people; two, their regard for the British Empire; and three, their awareness that they were in need of qualified Muslim teachers. The letter, written in the form of a petition to the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope states:

As is well known, 85 years ago some of the Javanese islands fell into the hands of the above mentioned government. We were all tied up in chains, enslaved and brought here. We were afflicted with suffering and

problems; the honourable British Empire set us free from the slavery of the previous government and gave us liberty. For that we thank the Empire for its help and grace, and in case of necessity it is incumbent upon us to sacrifice ourselves for its cause. We once more express our thanks and gratitude.

It is obvious that each nation has to know and apply its religion and way of life and it is natural that we also ought to observe our way of life and practice. But we forgot our language of origin, the language of Javanese the books and treatises in our hands are all written in that language and therefore we obviously need a teacher to read and teach them.

Since the situation is like this, it is requested to bring a scholar-teacher from a Muslim country in order to teach and train us.

By 16 Shawwal 1278 (16 April 1862)

Signature

Muslim People

Cape of Good Hope (Effendi, 1991: 7).

This letter was prompted by the endless disputes surrounding the appointment of the Imām at the Palm Tree Mosque. At one point Mr P E de Roubaix who was a member of the Cape Parliament and sympathetic to the Muslims witnessed a fight within the mosque between the opposing factions. This episode convinced him that the Muslims were desperately in need of expert guidance. (Davids, 1980: 52). In consultation with a number of Imāms the petition was drafted.

According to Omar Lutfi Effendi, who accompanied Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi on his journey to Cape Town, within 15 days of their arrival a school was established on

the corner of Bree and Wale Streets (Davids, 1991: 2) and that within 20 days of its establishment they had enrolled 300 pupils. (Effendi, 1991: 15).

The works that were taught at this school, as Effendi relates, were “the ‘*al-Fiqh al-Akbar*’ in the belief and ‘*Multaq al-Abbur*’ in Fiqh” (Effendi, 1991: 15). Beyond these, *tajwīd* (rules governing the correct recital of the Qurān), memorisation of the Qurān, and a *tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qurān) called the *Rūḥ al-Bayān* were taught. According to Abdal Hakim Murad, the *Rūḥ al-Bayān*, written by Isma‘īl of Bursa (d.1742), is a ten volume *ṣūfi* exegesis of the Qurān. Since no particular order was established or espoused by Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi it appears that his focus on *taṣawwuf* was more on the teachings than the practices. Moreover, two of his own works, the *Bayān al-Dīn* (The Explanation of the Religion), which he completed on the 7 October, 1869, and the *Marāṣid al-Dīn* (The Essential Observances of the Religion) were also taught at his school. According to Argun, the wording of the *Bayān al-Dīn* is almost identical to the *Multaqā* which was written by the famous *ḥanafīte* Syrian scholar, Muḥammad Ibrāhīm al-Ḥalabī. (Argun, 2000: 67). The *Marāṣid al-Dīn*, however, has not been found. Argun speculates that this work has been lost because it was not published. (Argun, 2000: 69). Under the auspices of Sulṭān ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd II⁸⁹, the *Bayān al-Dīn* was finally published in Istanbul on the 10 October, 1877. (Argun, 2000: 68).

Another *ḥanafī* work that I have been unable to locate in any historical account of Shaykh Abū Bakr’s life is the *Kitāb al-Waṣīyya*⁹⁰ compiled by Shaykh Muṣṭaphā ‘Ashir. It is published in the *‘Uthmānī* script of the second half of the nineteenth century and bears the official stamp of the “Moslem Theological School of Cape Town.” This work forms part of a classical genre called the *Kutub al-Waṣāyā* (Books on General Religious Counselling and Guidance). Amongst this genre of works are the renowned *Naṣā’ih* (another term used synonymously with *Waṣāyā*) of Shaykh ‘Abd Allah b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād and the *Waṣāyā* of Ibn ‘Arabī.

The *Kitāb al-Waṣīyya* of Shaykh Muṣṭaphā was likely used for the general spiritual edification of the students at the Moslem Theological School and contains the following nine tracts:

- 1) *al-Waṣīyat al-‘Āma* ((The Book on General Counselling)

- 2) *al-Risāla li Abī Ḥanīfa* (A Letter from Abū Ḥanīfa)
- 3) *al-Fiqh al-Akbar* (The Great Understanding) - this is the work mentioned earlier.
- 4) *Al-Fiqh al-Absaṭ* (The Broader Understanding).
- 5) *Kitāb al-ʿĀlim wa l-Mutaʿalim* (The Book Concerning the Relationship between the Teacher and the Student).
- 6) *Al-Wasiyya li Ibnihī Ḥammād* (Religious Counsel to his son Ḥammād).
- 7) *Al-Waṣiyya li Tilmīdhīhī* Yūsuf b. Khālīd b. ʿUmar al-Baṣrī (Religious Counsel to his Pupil Yūsuf b. Khālīd b. ʿUmar al-Baṣrī).
- 8) *Al-Waṣiyya li Abī Yūsuf* (Religious Counsel to Abū Yūsuf).
- 9) *Tarjumat al-Imām Abū Ḥanīfa min Kitāb Ilām al- Akhbār* (Imām Abū Ḥanīfa's Interpretative Analysis of the Book of Disseminating Information).

Appended to the first five of these tracts are the *silsilas* of the compiler, Muṣṭaphā ʿAshir, that he traces to Imām Abū Ḥanīfa. Of noteworthy interest in these *silsilas* is the inclusion of Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī⁹¹ - the teacher of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar - in almost all of them. If this work were taught during the third quarter of the nineteenth century then it probably marks one of the very few incursions of the Traditional Islamic methods of teaching into the Cape Muslim educational milieu. Unfortunately, the presence of Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi in the Cape was marred, ironically, not by a continuation - let alone a resolution - of conflict, but by an escalation in that conflict.

While the *ḥanaḥī-shāfiʿī* dispute that erupted after Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi's arrival at the Cape shall not be engaged here in any detail, a brief biographical sketch is necessary to understand the nature of his contribution to Islām at the Cape.

According to Argun he was born Khashnaw in 1835 which is a village situated in the plains of Shehrizūr, 192 km from Lake Urmia. At that time Shehrizūr was paired to Mosul in present day Irāq. The inhabitants of Shehrizūr are all of Kurdish extraction. Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi is therefore considered a Kurd and not a Turk. (Argun, 2000: 5). His lineage also, it appears, may be traced to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) through the son of the *Khalīf* ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, Imām Ḥusayn. He is therefore regarded as a *Sayyid* of the *Ḥusaynī* line - a reason, Argun observes, that may have

been instrumental in his selection to arbitrate in the conflicts at the Cape. Traditionally, as indicated in Chapter Three, there is enormous respect amongst Muslims for the descendants of the Prophet (pbuh). If the received opinion of the Muslims at the time was that he was indeed a *Sayyid* then it certainly appears that it did not act in his favour. All historical accounts of his sojourn at the Cape project him primarily as a *ḥanafī*, and as an antagonistic one at that. Whether the Muslims were aware of his status as a *Sayyid*, or whether they believed that he was, is hard to say.

What is certain, nonetheless, is that his educational background was vastly superior to any that was known at the Cape since the arrival of Tuan Guru almost a century earlier. The description rendered by Argun reveals that he had a thorough grounding in both the religious and secular sciences. The Osmanli Islamic school at which Shaykh Abū Bakr studied for 12 years offered both streams of education. The curriculum of the school reveals that in addition to the religious subjects he also studied economics, mathematics, logarithms, geometry, psychology, physics and chemistry. Comparative studies of all four *ṣunnī* schools were also engaged. (Argun, 2000: 15-6). Of interest to our purpose is that *taṣawwuf* was also prescribed as a subject - one that is absent in many modern day Islamic schools. In 1861 at the age of 26, shortly before his arrival at the Cape, he was employed as a teacher in Erzurum - the capital of the province of the same name - in north-eastern Turkey at the central Sarayönü Islamic school. (Argun, 2000: 14).

The positive contributions a scholar of this magnitude could have made were subsequently submerged in the ensuing *ḥanafī-shāfiʿī* dispute that merely exacerbated conditions at the Cape. While a sizeable portion of the blame may be ascribed to the general ignorance of Muslims at the Cape a portion of that blame must also certainly be born by the Osmanli Ministry of Education. If it is true, as indeed Shaykh Abū Bakr himself argued in Court in 1866, that he was a *Shāfiʿī* and that “he had never been anything else,” and further stated “I studied in Baghdād, where they are all pure Shāfiʿī” then the imposition of the Osmanli Ministry of Education to teach a *ḥanafī* curriculum must certainly be regarded as lacking in wisdom. It is this imposition that Argun offers as an explanation for Shaykh Abū

Bakr teaching a *ḥanafite* syllabus at the Moslem Theological school, and not the widespread claim that he himself was a *ḥanafī*.

Argun vindicates the position of Shaykh Abū Bakr on two further grounds: one, that the conflict at the Cape was an inter-*madhhab* (within the *Shāfiʿite* School of Thought) one and that he was questioned in court by the Muslims in order for them to contextualise his own juridical arguments and two, that as a qualified scholar he was aware that “Islamic law, by allowance for juridical reasoning and legal extension through systematic inferential analysis does not bind a person to any of these Islamic legal schools but allows a scholar of any of these schools to teach the legal jurisprudence of another.” (Argun, 2000: 43). A response to the first would be that there were no inter-*madhhab* disputes of any substance - the very reason for their requesting expert help from abroad. Disputes there were, but they were one’s founded - or foundering - on an acknowledged ignorance on their part regarding the only *madhhab* to which they had been exposed for well over two centuries. There was little reason, in my opinion, not to address these problems from within the *Shāfiʿite madhhab*. The second argument, while correct in essence, is somewhat facile in the context of the Cape educational milieu. The traditional approach to teaching comparative fiqh is to allow the students to gain a degree of mastery over one school of thought before introducing them to the others. The choice of *madhhab* is normally determined by the prevailing one within in any particular community. This approach is determined by the fact that the complexities within comparative fiqh can be exceedingly confusing to the beginner student. The same methodology is employed in *taṣawwuf* teachings. This was the standard practice in the Ḥijāz even during Ottoman rule, and of which Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks (b. 1871), was a product. Moreover, if we further delink Argun’s argument from both the Osmanli and Cape educational milieus and accept that as an independent scholar he chose to teach the *ḥanafī madhhab*, then there can be little doubt about his *ḥanafite* affiliations.

It appears that the most persuasive argument for his teaching the *ḥanafī* school of thought - if we accept that he was a *shāfiʿī* - was the fact that he was compelled to teach the *ḥanafī* curriculum as required by the Osmanli Ministry. While the

introduction of different schools of thought, certainly desirable within itself, may have been done in a better way, the ensuing dispute had the effect, however tenuous, of forcing Muslims at the Cape to broaden their horizons.

Another fact that may have contributed to the conflict is the sense of the petition which implies that they expected a teacher to educate them from those Javanese texts that were available at the Cape, the language of which they had by then forgotten. Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi might not have been the candidate they expected. He was, however, a learned man. Those who saw beyond the immediate conflict - and not unsurprisingly the grandchildren of Tuan Guru - made full use of the potential within his learning to enrich the religious milieu at the Cape.

Generally, however, the conflict may be viewed as an amalgam of an ignorance rooted in severe socio-economic deprivation and - relatively speaking, of course - an unintended missiological mishap.

While *taṣawwuf* is listed as one of the subjects taught at the Osmanli Islamic school there is no mention in any of the prevailing literature that points to the *taṣawwuf* affiliations of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi. This may well be a result of the general reformist and normative-oriented currents that swept the Muslim world at the time when the phenomenon of one shaykh belonging to more than one *ṭarīqa* (Baldick, 1989: 134), or none at all but affirming a broad and somewhat diffusive identity with *taṣawwuf* as such, was fairly widespread. He certainly introduced none of the *Mawlāwī* doctrines or practices of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī (d. 1273) into the Cape. These are still unknown in the Cape even today. A possible, but highly speculative, connection with a *ṣūfī ṭarīqa* and Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi could be made with the influential normative-oriented *Khālīdī* branch of the *Naqshbandī* order that was founded by Khālīd al-Shahrazūrī (1776-1827), who hails from the same region as Shaykh Abū Bakr. One of the features of this branch, like its *Naqshbandī* precursor in the figure of Aḥmad al-Sirhindī (1564-1624), is its insistence on “summoning rulers to follow Islamic law.” (Baldick, 1989: 148). The branch, however, was suppressed by Şulṭān Maḥmūd II (1808-39). It later resurfaced in eastern Turkey under the leadership of Muṣṭaphā Fehmi (d.1881). (Baldick, 1989: 148-9). Despite the fact that the Ottoman Empire was one of the most implacable opponents of puritanical

Wahbābism, and while the aforementioned speculation may be suspect, there is little doubt that he was of the normative-minded *Ulamā*. These become apparent in three instances mentioned by Omar Lutfi Effendi in his travelogue:

- 1) His disapproving comments on the manner in which they commemorated the dead according to the *Khalwatī* practices on the 7th, 40th and 100th nights, followed by the yearly commemorations after that.
- 2) The practice of having a meal after the burial of the deceased and the group recital of *sūra Yā Sīn* while sprinkling incense onto the incense burner. This, he says, they would perform for up to four hours while shouting as loudly as they could. To these recitals would be added “some more darods and Dhikrs.” (Effendi, 1991: 24).
- 3) His visit to the tomb of Shaykh Yūsuf where he observed “that they did not give what they had with them to the poor people, but put them in the middle of the tomb.” He further noted that there “were more than 200 rolls of cloth and other things inside the tomb,” and that there “were more than 500 bottles of lavender water in a corner.” (Effendi, 1991: 27).

It is somewhat unclear whether Omar Lutfi Effendi is objecting to the actual *Khalwatī* practice as such or whether he is doing so because of the manner in which they do it. He notes, for example, that the practice of supplying so much food to the devotees must have come at an enormous financial burden to the nearest relative of the deceased.

He expresses his astonishment in the following manner:

Think that poor man! Was he to pity himself or to take care of the murids of his imam by feeding them. While the poor man earned 5-10 qurush per day as something barely to live on, now he fell under the 10,000 qurush debt. And he could not pay off that amount for many years. This foolish tradition let the Muslims get poorer and poorer. (Effendi, 1991: 24).

However, the practice of feeding the gathering on these designated nights as it is done at the Cape is certainly not borne by a single, nearest relative of the deceased. It is normally a collective enterprise. Whether it was in fact done that way during the second half of the nineteenth century, or whether Lutfi's observations were a matter of pure inference, is also difficult to say. He would certainly have had a point if that were the case. With respect to both the first and second practices mentioned above Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi, as related by Lutfi, explained to them that these practices were contrary to the *sharī'a* with the result that "that they left all that they were involved in for so many years." (Effendi, 1991: 25). This latter observation of his was most certainly in the case of a vast minority only.

Regarding the practice of visiting the shrines of the *awliyā* neither Lutfi nor Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi appears to have had any principled objection to it. On the contrary, Lutfi both acknowledges and testifies to the occurrence of extraordinary events that appeared to have occurred there. He states that he himself had seen "that the majority of patients who suffered from epilepsy and malaria had been cured after their visitation to the tomb." (Effendi, 1991: 27-8). His critical focus, however, once more appears on the waste of food and other items that the visitors place in the tomb. The attitudes of both Omar Lutfi and Shaykh Abū Bakr appear to be in a Traditionalist normative-oriented, and not a purist, mould. This interpretation appears to be supported by the fact that they had similar objections to what they most likely considered to be the corrupt practices of some of the imāms. These objections, they believed, invoked the ire of the imāms against them. He cites the case of one imām's directives to his congregation with respect to the distribution of the *fiṭra* and the sacrificial meat of the *ʿAyd al-ʿAdḥā*:

O my followers! You must give all your fitrabs, your sacrificial meats of Adha feasts and whatever you have as charity, according to these books (the manuals of fiqh the Imam had with him) to your Imam whom you follow; if you give it to any other than your Imam, it will not be accepted by Allah. (Effendi, 1991: 23).

Supporting his *sharī* (legal) case with *fiqh* manuals at his side must have both profoundly amused and disgusted Omar Lutfi. It appears therefore that it was obviously not the *sharī'a* as such, or even *taṣawwuf* per se, that Omar Lutfi and Shaykh Abū Bakr objected to, but the fabrications in their name for purposes of financial exploitation.

Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi further established another Theological college in Kimberley where a similar curriculum was instituted. He died in 1880 and lies buried in the Tana Baru cemetery. Mired as he became in both social and domestic conflict - as it was the case with his first wife Rukea Maker - he most likely focussed his energies on developing a solid basis of basic Islamic teachings while reserving more advanced lessons for a select few only, amongst whom was Imām Abdol Rakiep, grandson of Tuan Guru. (Effendi, 1991: III). Argun, as a trained scholar himself in Islamic Law, is correct in observing that the legality of crayfish and the *Jum'a* issue were petty and bigoted. A somewhat different approach, however difficult it might have been under the circumstances, may yet have produced more positive results.

Regarding his *taṣawwuf* contributions, apart from the *Rūḥ al-Bayān*, the only other work that approximates to its teachings is the *Kitāb al-Waṣiyya*, which predominantly deals with Islāmic ethics (*Akhlāq*). If he were a practitioner of *taṣawwuf*, or a member of any particular order, then he appears to have focussed on the doctrines and teachings, rather than the practices. There also appears no recorded objections on his part against the common practices associated with the *ṣūfī* inclined such as the practice of *Mawlūd al-Nabī*, commemorating the night of *Mīrāj* (the Ascension of the Prophet), and *Nisf al-Sha'abān* (or *Laylat l-Barā'a*). This also appears to have been the approach of a number of subsequent *ulamā* who came after him. Apart from Omar Lutfi's claim that the Muslims stopped their *Khalwatī* practices of commemorating the dead on certain designated nights, the arrival of Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi marked no significant ruptures in the nominal *taṣawwuf* practices still prevalent at the Cape, but neither did his arrival inaugurate any more authentically based mystical traditions. His impact on the general *taṣawwuf* culture at the Cape, therefore, appears somewhat minimal. The degree of the impact, however, appears to have been curtailed by the extent of the conflict

that surrounded him, rather than a lack of interest on his part to promulgate such teachings.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter we have discussed the progressive weakening and regression that beset the Muslim community after the death of Tuan Guru. While this fact paradoxically establishes the enormity of the role Tuan Guru played in the history of Islam at the Cape we cannot, for that reason, ignore the fact that the majority of Muslims suffered under, and had to endure, the most atrocious social conditions. It is for this reason that Davids, while critical of the Imāms responses to the smallpox epidemics, refrains from judging them too harshly. While it is difficult to accept the bigotry of their excessively ambitious struggles for leadership, it might equally be, as a reciprocal act of ignorance - if not downright hubris - far too easy to simply dismiss them as an incorrigible bunch of charlatans. For those who care about Islām as a religion, they succeeded in preserving it where others failed under similar conditions. Davids expresses this empathy where he observes:

Their lifestyle was characteristic of any community living in a culture of poverty. Overcrowding, squalor, and ignorance were commonplace. (Davids, 1991: 60).

Towards the end of the same paper he states, reinforcing the gravity of the above social conditions:

They were the insanitary 'Kaffirs' of Woodstock and the dirty 'Malays' of Boom Street. Their race made them incapable of civilised living. Thus it was easy to suggest that 'the sooner the Malays are made to reside in a separate district the better for all concerned.' (Davids, 1991: 73).

Turkey has its “Whirling Dervishes”, Egypt its so-called “Howling Dervishes”, and the Cape - as an extension of the theatrical “dervish” genre - its “Rifāī Dervishes”. These, according to Schubel, are expressions of religious theatre designed “to bring religion to the poor and illiterate.” (Karim, 1998: 100). Indeed, from a conflated social perspective with a very specific audience in mind, it may mean just that. But religious theatre is much more than taking the message to the “poor and illiterate“. It has also been invented, according to Schimmel, “to make a sacred event visible.” (Schimmel, 1994: 102). These observations, however, are from the perspective of the audience, who, we might add, may not all be illiterate and poor. The *mawlawī* dervish performance, for example, executed with grace and subtlety, has inspired the most sublime of human emotions in both those who have refused to deny the actors a voice, and within the actors themselves. Friedlander articulates her own perceptions in the following manner:

Mevlana Jalalu'ddin Rumi was aware of the movement and sound in all of the planet. The sema (whirling dance) of dervishes is an expression of the cosmic joy experienced by the simultaneous effect of annihilation and glorification.

Mevlana has described sema in many ways. “It is the witnessing of the state of perceiving the mysteries of God through the heavens of divinity.” (Friedlander, 1992: 87).

While *ratiep* may not be prefaced with such poetically inspired sublimities, and, for example, while the annual Bull Fighting ceremony in Spain - for the very reason presumably that it is not a “religious” act - may not inspire the same horror and disgust as the *ratiep*, it nonetheless had actors who, inarticulate, poor and illiterate as they themselves might have been, sought to overcome through an act of spiritual volition the slavery they were subjected to in the name of civilised humanity. For the devotees, as actors, it was indeed “a spiritual concert of physical triumph.” “By

shocking the audience”, Karim continues, “theatre achieves far more ‘cognitive’ penetration than dogma or discourse. This is achieved in *Ratib*.” (Karim, 1998: 100). Moreover, *ratiep*, as a hierophanic ritual of the kratophanic type in which the power of the sacred is sort both in order to be made manifest and to challenge, there is, in the words of Eliade, “an ‘eternal new beginning,’ an eternal return to an atemporal moment, a desire to abolish history, to blot out the past, to recreate the world.” (Eliade, 1964: xvi-xvii). While *ratiep* may not have been conditioned by the slaveholding society at the Cape, there was yet an eminent need to recreate that world; and this they did by confronting the “profanities” of a hostile world with a sacred act that was at once, in *their* experience of that act, both dignifying and - to rephrase Rafudeen’s statement - subversive of the very order that encouraged it.

At other levels of the *mujarrabāt* too, often random and desperate remedies were developed; but they were designed not only to heal and to cure, but to rescue, bind, and unite - in a vortex of an often spurious sacrality - a community that had foundered precariously for almost a century on the edges of unremitting institutional conflict.

It was their Qurānic recitals, *mawlūd*, and *dhikr* practices, however, more than anything else, which affirmed the common collective identity of the Muslims at the Cape during this time. Beyond the institutional divisions that tore them apart and sometimes disgraced them in the eyes of others, these ceremonies welded them together in a state of elevated togetherness - particularly the *mawlūd* with its capacity to maintain the centrality of the Prophet (pbuh) alive and firmly rooted in the collective memory of Muslim communities. At the heart of these ceremonies were the lingering strands of the *taṣawwuf* spirit engendered by the founders of Islām in the Cape. The *ṣūfi* networks that were strong and durable enough to effect a relatively stable transition of Islām into the rapidly changing socio-political conditions of the early nineteenth century, had, by the mid-nineteenth century receded into a state of liminal obscurity. It is this condition that led David’s to conclude, quite mistakenly, that the *ṭarīqas* did not play a role in the making of the slave world⁹². Indeed, as he correctly observes, “doekoem-werk” as a form of

spiritualism was dominant; but *taṣawwuf* as spirituality was merely dormant, not dead, let alone, as he appears to imply, non-existent.

With a weakening in the epistemological base, however, nineteenth century Islām may more precisely be described as the century of the *mujarrabāt*. Nonetheless, there were others who were determined to revive and continue the established practices of *taṣawwuf*. These religious leaders form the subject matter of the next chapter.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

The Crystallisation of the *Taşawwuf* Orders (1880-1945)

7.1 Introduction

Muslim internecine conflict did not die with the death of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi in 1880. On the contrary, both inter and intra-Mosque litigation continued unabatedly. The communal problems were to culminate in one of the most divisive conflicts that engulfed the Cape Muslim community - the *Shāfiʿī Jumʿa* (Friday Congregational Prayer) issue. Davids speculates that the conflict most likely had its origins in the late 1870s when numerous Mosques by then had been established. The polemic centred on whether *Jumʿa* ought to be held at one Mosque or whether multiple *Jumʿas* were allowed within the borders of one city with respect to the *Shāfiʿite* school of thought. This culminated in the *Hiempu*⁹³ agreement in 1914. According to this agreement the Jamia Mosque in Chiappini Street was selected as the Mosque in which *Jumʿa* was to be held every Friday, along with a scheme that allowed other Imāms to deliver the sermon on a rotational basis. The agreement collapsed shortly after it was accepted for implementation. (Davids, 1980: 56-7). A respite to this intra-faith conflict, however, was provided by the Cemetery Disputes. The Tana Baru burial ground was closed by the authorities on the 15 January, 1886. Two days later in defiance of the law the Muslims buried a child in the cemetery. (Davids, 1985: 95). Subsequent to this there was an “upheaval that lasted for three days.” (Davids, 1985: 96). This was most likely the first case of social unrest in South Africa and, according to Davids “probably the most significant expression of civil disobedience...of the Nineteenth century.” (Davids, 1985: 96).

Despite their internal problems, therefore, Muslims had the ability to unite when faced by a common threat - and particularly so when their most important religious symbols were threatened. Within the precincts of the Tana Baru are buried the likes of Tuan Guru, Paai Schaapie, and Tuan Sayyid ʿAlawī - the very people who had provided them with the spiritual support and succour that continued to animate their love for Islām despite their institutional woes. The Tana Baru to them was much

more than just a cemetery. It was a sacred symbol interlaced with legends that still eloquently and audibly spoke to them about the sacrifices and struggles they endured under a brutalising colonialist system - a system that sought to both relegate and entrench them as a lower order of human being. The *shrines* of their *awliyā*, however, were the embodiment of the *ṣūfī* teachings that taught them that spiritual dignity and honour are solely bestowed by God. While the theory may have been lost the spirit was kept alive through praxis - through *dhikrs*, *mawlūds*, litanies, and visitations to those they respected most. Through a *ṣūfī*-inspired praxis these Muslims survived despite the fact that millions of enslaved Muslims elsewhere, and particularly in the Americas, were stripped of their religion. (Da Costa, 2005: 60). According to Baker, in excess of “ninety percent of the Cape Muslims managed to maintain their identity and in comparison a few American Muslims managed to maintain theirs.” (Baker, n.d.: 19). It appears that *taṣawwuf*, indeed, played a seminal role in preserving Islām at the Cape.

In other parts of the Muslim world anti-*taṣawwuf* *Wahhābism* was ascendant, but not yet powerful, nor financially strong, enough to influence the Muslim world as it did later in the twentieth century. Meanwhile, Cape *taṣawwuf* was on the verge of a new revival. By the 1880s wealthier families could afford to send their children for more advanced religious training to some of the major religious educational centres in the Muslim world. These students were complimented by a new influx of *ṣūfī*-inspired teachers from abroad - some of whom settled in the Cape while others returned to their lands of birth, but without failing to leaving their mark on Cape Islām.

In his *Introduction to Slaves, Sheikhs, Sultans and Saints*, Davids states, with the possible exception of Tuan Abdul Malik, that “there were no outstanding sufi Sheikhs in Cape Town during the nineteenth century.” (Davids, n.d.: Intr, 29). In the context quoted, Davids refers to an *‘ulamā* class of *ṣūfī* shaykhs. This view finds support in Moosa’s observation that “it was only in the early twentieth century that trained *‘ulamā* exerted any real influence in South Africa.” (Moosa, 1995: 140). According to Davids, it was Sayyid Muḥsin b. Sālīm al-‘Aydārūs (d.1934), Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Qāḍī (d.1916), Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī (d.1942) and Shaykh

Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks (d.1945) who were responsible for the revival of the “shariah-centric” *taṣawwuf* traditions and practices at the Cape from the beginning of the twentieth century. (Davids, n.d.: 5, 1). “They were not only sufi Sheikhs,” he observes, “on the contrary, they were also learned theologians.” (Davids, n.d.: Intr., 30).

By the first quarter of the twentieth century Zwemer had recorded the presence of a number of “zawiyas” at the Cape. Amongst the “mystic” brotherhoods he identified were the *Qādiriyya*, *Rifāʿiyya*, *Naqshbandiyya*, *Chistiyya*, and *Shādhiliyya*. (Da Costa, 1994: 135). The “zawiyas” Zwemer identified were most likely *langgars*. The first *zāwiya* established at the Cape was the one by Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks. Between 1880 and 1945, while there were elements of these latter practices prevalent at the Cape, the dominant orders were the *Chistiyya*, the *Qādiriyya*, the *Rifāʿiyya*, and the *Bā ʿAlawiyya*. It is, however, difficult to write about these orders and its proponents in any exclusivist sense. While one or other order remained dominant in their particular approaches, they were invariably affiliate members of one or more additional orders.

It is in this period too, that we notice the emergence of more genuinely and authentically grounded *ṣūfi* traditions. In this chapter we shall examine these orders and some of its most prominent figures.

7.2 The *Chisti*⁹⁴ Order

The shaykh most singularly responsible for the founding of this order at the Cape is Mawlāna ʿAbd al-Laṭīf who lies buried in the precincts of the Ḥabībiya College at Doornhoogte in Athlone. It is difficult, however, to discuss his contribution in isolation from another outstanding personage who came to South Africa, Shah Ghulām Muḥammad, better known as Ṣūfi Sāḥib.

7.2.1 Şūfī Şāhib: A Synopsis

Davids pertinently observes that few men in the history of South Africa has contributed so much to the advancement of Islamic culture as Şūfī Şāhib. (Davids, n.d.: 5, 23).

He was born in 1850 in India in a village called Ibrahimpatan located in the district of Ratnagiri (Kokan). His father, Shah Ibrahim b. Qāḍī ‘Abd Allah Siddīqī was the Imām at the local mosque in the town of Kalyan which is situated approximately 65 kilometres from Bombay. His initial education was provided by his father. On the death of his father in 1872 he was appointed as the Imām of the mosque and also assumed his teaching responsibilities at the local madrasa. (Jawodeen, 2005: 28). It was an experience of his in 1892, which occurred during a lesson he delivered to his students on the *ḥajj*, that was to change the course of his life. During the course of his lesson, it is related, he saw a vision of the *Ka’ba* that left him transfixed. The message of the vision was one that urged him to perform the *ḥajj*. (Jawodeen, 2005: 19; Davids, n.d.: 5, 23). Along with his wife Zainab Bi, and sickly mother, Rabia Bi, he left to perform his pilgrimage. At the tomb of the Prophet (pbuh) in Madina he had an experience that inspired him to embark on a new spiritual journey. He was convinced that he was in need of a spiritual guide. (Jawodeen, 2005: 19; Davids, n.d.: 5, 23).

On his return to his hometown in Kalyan he resolved to leave for Baghdad. At the shrine of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlāni he met a *Qādirī* master, Shaykh Ghulām Muṣṭaphā Effendī. He was adopted as a *murīd* and spent the next six months in an intensive programme of spiritual training. At the end of this period he was instructed by Shaykh Ghulām Muṣṭaphā to return to India and continue his spiritual training with the *Chistī* master Khwaja Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah (d.1904). It was Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah who was responsible for sending Şūfī Şāhib to Durban. It is related that one of the illustrious past masters of the *Chistī silsila*, Ḥaḍrat Khwāja Naṣīr al-Dīn Chiragh-i-Delhi who had died centuries earlier, appeared to Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah in a dream with the directive that he had to appoint Şūfī Şāhib as the spiritual guide to the Muslims of Durban in South Africa. (Jawodeen, 2005: 20).

Meanwhile in Durban, one by the name of Shaykh Aḥmad Sayyedi, had predicted the coming of Şūfī Şāḥib to Durban. In the company of a group people, shortly before he died he is related as having prognosticated:

Too many people are on the wrong path. The time is near when a friend of Allah will come here and by the Barakat (blessing) of his footsteps infidelity and darkness will disappear and the light of Islam will be everywhere and if you want peace in this world and the hereafter you must follow him. (Jawodeen, 2005: 20).

Shaykh Aḥmad Sayyedi, however, was an enigmatic character and virtually unknown amongst his fellow Muslims. He was born in Madras in 1820 and arrived in Durban in 1860. Most people ignored him when he spoke about Islām, was poorly dressed, and usually slept in the yard of the mosque. (Davids, n.d.: 5, 24). In the context of his spirituality he appears as one of those belonging to that category of *şūfī* known as the *majdhūb*⁹⁵ (one in a state of “holy madness”). He was, according to Davids, an adherent of the *Qādirī* order. (Davids, n.d.: 5, 23).

When Şūfī Şāḥib arrived in Durban in 1895 he identified the grave of Shaykh Aḥmad Sayyedi who had died three years before his arrival. It was Şūfī Şāḥib who ordered the building of a shrine over his grave and instituted the annual *urs* (commemoration) which is held in his honour. It was he too, who named him Badsha Peer (King of Spiritual Guides) - the name for which he is now renowned.

Şūfī Şāḥib settled at in Riverside near the Umgeni river where he purchased a plot of land to build a *khanqah* (spiritual hospice). It is interesting to note that the manner in which he established the suitability of the ground for the *khanqah* was similar to the manner in which the Prophet (pbuh) established the plot of ground for the first mosque in Madina. According to Jawodeen (2005: 21) the “land was chosen after a free rein, horse-drawn cart carrying Soofie Saheb and a few others stopped independently at a spot where the current Riverside Darbar is located.” Similarly, and shortly after the Prophet (pbuh) arrived in Madina, he selected the location for

the first mosque where his free roaming camel came to a halt. Nonetheless, this marked the beginning of a number of institutions established by Şūfi Şāhib. By the year 1900 numerous people wished to join him as his *murīds* in the *Chisitiyya* order. Towards this end he left for Hyderabad where his mentor and guide Khawaja Ḥābīb ‘Alī Shah invested him with *kbilāfa* in the order. (Jawodeen, 2005: 20). This is a classical, traditional example of how long and arduous the process can sometimes be before investiture takes place. These were people, undoubtedly, who had a sophisticated understanding of the processes, the standards, and the culture of the *ijāza* system of Islamic education.

Like his saintly predecessors too, a number of miracles are associated with him. The land that was selected for the *khanqah* was purchased from a Hindu called Narainsamy who owned the property with a temple on it. He was apparently eager to sell the property for the reason that a python on the land had prevented people from visiting the temple. To the astonishment of those present he spoke to the python and commanded it to leave. The python emerged from its hiding place, approached Şūfi Şāhib, gestured as if in salutation and disappeared in the direction of the lagoon area. (Jawodeen, 2005: 21).

During his stay in Durban he was “able to develop and complete 14 mosques and *khanqahs* in a short period of 16 years.” (Jawodeen, 2005: 23). This is a remarkable achievement by any standards. Meanwhile the growing Kokan population in the former Transvaal region (Gauteng) were well on their way to establishing themselves as a settled community in that region. The families of this Kokan community - in contrast to the many other *ḥanafī* settlers of Indian extraction who worked there as traders - were all of the *shāfi‘ī* school of thought. It was this that led them to inviting Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf to act as a teacher to the Kokani community. Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf was of the *shāfi‘īte* persuasion. (Jawodeen, 2005: 23). After completing his spell of teaching he resolved to return to the Zakaria Mosque in India where he functioned as the Imām. His first stop en route, however, was Durban. Here he joined his brother-in-law, Şūfi Şāhib, who urged him to stay on and assist him in establishing the Riverside *Khanqah*. Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf agreed and

subsequently served in a dual capacity as religious instructor to the students of the *madrasa* and to those who were functioning as teachers at the institution.

A striking feature of Şūfī Şāhib's religious approach is his attitude towards those of different faiths and non-Muslim communities. He had no qualms about purchasing land from a Hindu priest; he also saw no problem in praying for the successful outcome of a court case in which a Hindu by the name of Parsee Rustomjee had been falsely accused of smuggling opium into the country. The majority of those who converted to Islām under his influence were those of the Hindu faith and the Tamil communities. (Jawodeen, 2005: 22-3).

In approximately 1903 Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Latīf requested leave of Şūfī Sāhib to return to India with his family. Şūfī Sāhib meanwhile had made plans to go to Cape Town and hence suggested that Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Latīf remain in Durban until his return. It was this decision of his to leave for Cape Town that altered the course of Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Latīf's life. In Cape Town, Şūfī Sāhib purchased the land in Doornhoogte, Athlone, using the same methods he did at Riverside. (Jawodeen, 2005: 23). During his stay there he inducted a number of *murīds* into the *Chistiyya* order. On his return to Durban, despite his knowledge that Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Latīf had plans to leave for India, he instructed him to leave for Cape Town with the purpose of taking charge of the newly established *khanqah* in Athlone. In 1904, in compliance with the wishes of Şūfī Sāhib, Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Latīf resolved to dedicate himself to the development of the *khanqah*, now known as the Ḥabībia Mosque.

7.2.1.1 Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf: From Ratnagiri to the Cape Flats

Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf was born in the year 1859 in the same village as Şūfī Sāhib in Ratnagiri. Here he received his early Islamic education and later furthered his studies in Bombay. (Da Costa, 1995: 14). Given his impressive lineage of scholars and jurists it appeared inevitable that Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf was destined for a life of Islamic education and spirituality. He too was inducted into the *Chisti* order by Khwāja Ḥabīb ʿAlī Shah. The link between Ḥabīb ʿAlī Shah and the family of Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf was effected by the Mawlānā's brother, Qāḍī Ḥasan, who had already previously been inducted into the *Chisti* order. This occurred towards the last

quarter of the nineteenth century when Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf was in his thirties or forties. (Da Costa, 1995: 14). Khwāja Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah made numerous visits - and most likely through the prompting of Qāḍī Ḥasan - to the village of Ratnagiri. The result was that the entire family became inducted into the *Chistī* order.

After he had qualified as an *‘ālim* in Bombay he spent most of his time as an imām at the Zakaria Mosque and as a teacher at the adjacent madrasa. Shortly before he left India for South Africa he was the principal of the Zakaria Madrasa.

The instruction from Khwāja Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah to invest Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf with the status of *khalīfa* in the order came a short while before Ṣūfī Ṣāḥib left for Cape Town in 1904. Apart from his obvious competence, this investiture was most likely conferred at this point in anticipation of a major role envisaged for Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf in the Cape. He was invested with three spiritual lines: the *Chistī*, *Qādirī*, and *Ḥabībī* branch of the *Chistī* order.

7.2.1.2 Establishing the Ḥabībīa Complex

On his arrival in Cape Town in 1904 he had a wood and iron shack constructed for him on the plot of ground in Doornhoogte that was previously purchased by Ṣūfī Ṣāḥib. This part of the Cape Flats was virtually uninhabited at the time. A “jungle” as one individual referred to it; and to which the Mawlānā famously responded: “This jungle will one day become a bustling city.” (Davids, n.d.: 5, 27).

Da Costa provides a graphic description of that part of the Cape Flats at the time:

The whole of the Cape Flats was a largely sandy area. Most parts of the natural vegetation had been destroyed by the cutting of trees for firewood, and replaced by different types of grasses and shrubs. Doornhoogte was generally undeveloped, and with a high water table the area was subject to considerable flooding during winter. In addition, there was not a single mosque or madrasah in the whole of the Cape Flats. (Da Costa, 1995: 18).

On the first Friday after his arrival in Doornhoogte, with a tree providing some shade, a tree stump as the *mimbar* (pulpit), and a few sheets of cloth rolled out on the ground, the first Jum‘a was performed on the Cape Flats. (Davids, n.d.: 5, 26; Da Costa, 1995: 18). Efforts towards the construction of the Ḥabībia complex started almost immediately and by 1905 the foundations were laid along with a more comfortable brick and mortar lodging for Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf. The rest of his family also arrived that year. Along with the additions of a kitchen, an orphanage, a storeroom, and rooms to accommodate travellers, the Ḥabībia complex became a bustling centre for Islamic tuition and learning. (Da Costa, 1995: 19; Davids, n.d.: 5, 27). The inspirational leadership of this man was immense.

7.2.1.3 Introducing the *Ṭarīqa*

The programme of learning instituted by Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf is probably one of the most rigorous witnessed in the history of Islam at the Cape. Of particular interest is the care and concern he showed in ensuring that he had a well-stocked library. His extensive collection of books consisted of both the printed variety and a number of handwritten manuscripts. He was himself also an accomplished calligrapher. (Jawoodeen, 2005: 27).

According to Da Costa (1995: 19) one of the first steps he took “was to bring all the Chisṭīyya mureeds into a single group; those who had been inducted into the Order at Kokan and new ones whom he inducted at the Cape.” The programmes he arranged for them were fairly intensive. These assumed a variety of formats.

Firstly, there was the *Ṣalāh* programme which took the following format:

- 1) After *Fajr* (dawn prayers): the recitation of *sūra Yā Sīn* followed by the invocation “*Yā Badī‘a al-‘Ajā‘ibi bi l-Khayri Yā Badī‘*” (O Creator of all wondrous things in goodness, O Creator) - 1200 times. This would be followed by the *Du‘a al-Khātam* (concluding prayer after Qurānic recitals) and the recitation of the *shajara* (*lit.* tree, most likely comprising the *Chisṭīyya* chain of transmission).

- 2) After *Thubr* (noonday prayers): recitation of *sūra Ikhlāṣ*, followed by *ṣalawāt* (invoking praise upon the Prophet [pbuh]). Each of these would be performed 1200 times.
- 3) After *Maghrib* (sunset prayers): Quranic recitals until *‘Ishā ṣalāh*.

The following would be recited after all the obligatory prayers: *Āyat al-Kursiyy*, and *Tasbīḥ* viz reciting *subḥānallāh* 33 times, *alḥamdulillāh* 33 times, and *Allāhu Akbar* 33 times with the *tahlīl* (reciting *lā ilāha illallāh*) completing the hundredth *tasbīḥ*. (Jawwoodeen, 2005: 28; Da Costa; 1995: 19).

Secondly, there were special nights set aside for certain devotional practices. These were every Thursday night, and the 6th, 7th, 11th, 18th, and 19th nights of every month. During these times the *tablīl* would be recited for three to four hours. On Thursday nights, however, the *Khatmi Khawājakhān* was also included as part of the *dhikr* programme. This is very popular amongst the *Qādirī* and *Naqshbandī* orders.

Thirdly there were the days set aside for commemorative purposes. These included the commemoration of the Prophet’s (pbuh) birthday (*Mawlūd al-Nabī*), the remembrance of the day of *‘Āshūra* - the tenth day of *Muḥarram* of the Islamic calendar which marks the day on which Imām Ḥusayn, the son of Sayyidnā ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, was martyred, and also annual commemorations of the eponymous founders of the different *ṣūfī* orders and other celebrated personages. These commemorations are normally referred to as an *urs*⁹⁶.

Fourthly were the performance of certain “extraneous” *dhikr* programmes such as the recitation of the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād* and the *Rātīb al‘Aydārūs* of the *Bā ‘Alawī* order, and the *Garwyn Sharīf* of the *Qādirī order*. (Jawwoodeen, 2005: 28).



Figure 16: Inside the Shrine of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf at the Habibia Mosque

Moreover, the Mawlānā had his own personal programme of *dhikr*. One of them would be that on certain nights of the month he would stand on the stoep of the mosque, bare-headed, and only wearing a *thawb* and a *lungi*⁹⁷. In this position he would stand until the early hours of the morning intensely engaged in *dhikr*.

Two litanies that appeared to appeal to him in particular were the *Dalā’il al-Khayrāt* of Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad al-Jazūlī (d.1465) and the *Du‘ā al-Sayfī* (Da Costa, 1995: 19; Jawoodeen, 2005: 28), which is also included in the Compendium of Tuan Guru. Tuan Guru and Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf are the only two *ṣūfī* masters at the Cape that I am aware of who recited the *Du‘a al-Sayfī* as a regular *wird*. This may possibly be attributed to their exceptionally strong identity with the *ahlu bayt* (family of the Prophet [pbuh]). The performance of *Tabajjud Ṣalāh* (a specific set of prayers normally performed after midnight) also seemed to be a part of his regular supererogatory devotions.

The depth and extent of his spiritual culture are also indicated by his love for and teaching of the *Mathnawī* of Jalāl al-Dīn al-Rūmī. (Jawoodeen, 2005: 24-5). His was probably the first, and the last, time that the *Mathnawī* was taught in South African *madrasas*.

While the dominant feature in his *ṭarīqa* practices was the Chistī line, noteworthy about Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s general *ṭarīqa* approach is his inclusiveness. This trend became particularly evident during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar being a fairly early example of this approach. But more than the Mawlānā merely being an example of that new general trend amongst *ṣūfī ṭarīqas*, his approach appears to eminently reflect his own concern for the unity of Muslims. According to Jawoodeen (2005: 29), “one of the Hazrat Moulana Abdul Latief’s great accomplishments was the cementing of relations between Muslim people hailing from diverse cultural backgrounds on the Cape Flats and unifying them around the deen of Islam.” Those efforts, one might add, extended beyond the confines of the Cape Flats. With Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks of the al-Zāwiya in Walmer Estate an intimate relationship was forged between the two. Two issues are significant in this respect: one, Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s invitation to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ to deliver the inaugural *Kbuṭba* (Friday sermon) after the Ḥabībia mosque had been established and two, perhaps even more significantly, the fact that he had entrusted the education of his own children to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. (Da Costa, 1994: 112; Owaisi, 2001: 108). The inclusion by Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf of the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād* and *al-‘Aydārūs* into his general *dhikr* programmes may well have been a product of their intimate association. There are other similarities of approach and methodology that will become clear during the discussion of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ’s role. Nonetheless, the spirit of inclusiveness introduced by the Mawlānā appears to have left its mark even many years after his death. Up till today different *taṣawwuf* groups are allowed to perform their respective congregational *dhikrs* at the mosque. Even *mujarrabāt* practices such as the *ratiep*⁹⁸ was accommodated there.

Some controversy surrounded the annual ceremony that was held on the occasion of the tenth Muharram in honour of the martyring of Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (ra). The ceremony referred to as the *ta’ziya*, was, like the *ratiep*, another example of the theatrical genre of a profoundly felt emotional piety. The procession, starting at the Habibia Mosque, proceeded along a designated route through the streets of Athlone until it finally returned to the mosque. Accompanying the procession was a model of

the shrine of Ḥusayn (ra) that appeared to form the central focus for the cathartic act designed to re-enact, and hence relive, the pain of the brutal killing of Ḥusayn (ra). Mawlāna ‘Abd al-Laṭīf also clearly saw the need for advanced Islamic education in the Cape Muslim community. There appears to have existed a graded system of education with the more advanced levels focussed on the development of competent imāms. Amongst these imāms Jawoodeen (2005: 27) recounts were the following: Imām ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Gamieldien (father of the late Shaykh Shākir Gamieldien), Imām Sudley Dollie, Imām Hassan Jakoet, Muḥammad Kajal, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Umar, and Dawud Hafejee. These imāms acted in various capacities at both the mosque and the *madrassa*. He also charged some of his *murīds* with the organisation of major functions such as the *urs*, the *‘Āshūra* programme and the *Mawlūd al-Nabī commemorations*. Amongst these was Shaykh Yūsuf Mia Parker al-Ḥabībi who in fact became one of his *khalīfa*’s and his brother-in-law. The other person whom he invested with *khalīfa* was Sayyid Shah Aḥmad of Karda in India. (Jawoodeen, 2005: 29). These are the only two known persons upon whom he bestowed *khalīfa*. In the person of Shaykh Yūsuf too, we notice a similar gravity and caution in the bestowal of *khalīfa*. The question of *khalīfa* is one of the nexuses around which authentically *taṣawwuf* traditions are developed and through which they are ultimately perpetuated.

However, I do find myself somewhat at variance with Jawoodeen’s interpretation of Ṣūfī Ṣāḥib’s and Mawlāna ‘Abd al-Laṭīf’s apparent consideration of the role of *taṣawwuf* in the general ambit of Islamic education. He states:

For Hazrat Moulana Abdu Latief and Hazrat Soofie Saheb there was no compulsion in teaching the practice of tassawwuf. Any person seeking to set out on the path of tariqa had to do so voluntarily. (Jawoodeen, 2005: 27).

The problem with this sort of interpretation lies, as mentioned elsewhere, in drawing too sharp a distinction between *sharī‘a* and *taṣawwuf*. In strictly *ṣūfīc* milieus, such

as those from which Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Laṭīf and Ṣūfī Ṣāḥīb emerged, the question of *taṣawwuf* becomes a matter of degree and intensity, and not one of inclusion or exclusion; or compulsory and voluntary. The *ṣūfic* categories of *‘awām* (common people), *khāṣ* (the elite), and the *akhṣ al-khawāṣ* (superlatively elite), have been formulated precisely to determine the level at which students are inducted into the process of *taṣawwuf*. It would be at the latter two levels that questions of voluntary induction would be an issue. At the level of the *‘awām* virtually every *murīd* at the college would have formed a part of the more common and less demanding *ṣūfī*-inspired practices such as the *mawlūd al-nabī* and the various other commemorations. In other words, they would all have been an intrinsic part of the *taṣawwuf* ethos that informed the very conception of Ḥabībia as an Islamic institution. The rigorous programmes after the *ṣalāb* and certain designated nights would, however, definitely have been performed by the more advanced students only, and by those, in particular, with a propensity (*isti‘dād*) for them.

Nonetheless, throughout all these activities - educational, spiritual, and administrative - he managed to write two books. The first, a work on *taṣawwuf*, is called the *Riyāḍ al-Ṣūfī* (The Gardens of the Ṣūfī) and a work on jurisprudence which he did not complete. (Da Costa, 1995: 19).

Moreover, it appears that one of the successes of the Ḥabībia complex may be attributed to a well measured delegation of competent people to supervise the multifarious tasks instituted by the Mawlāna. The judicious manner in which he appointed his *khalīfas* and *imāms* is sufficient evidence for this. While his spiritual credentials appear impeccable, he also demonstrated a profound degree of worldly wisdom.

7.2.1.4 His Demise

After years of hard work and successfully having supervised the regular functioning of the Ḥabībia complex he resolved to perform his ḥajj in 1910. After his *ḥajj* he left for India, most likely with three important places in mind: his hometown, the shrine of Khwāja Mu‘īn al-Dīn Chistī, and the shrine of his teacher and mentor, Khwāja Ḥabīb ‘Alī Shah who had died in 1904. Before his final return home to Cape Town,

he passed through Durban where his close companion and mentor Şūfī Şāhib had already passed away on 29 June, 1911. It was a deeply broken-hearted man, according to Jawoodeen (2005: 29), who arrived back at the Cape. He lived to continue his own mission for another few years until his death on the 17 April, 1916. The orphanage - the deepest expression of his love for children - the mosque, and the madrasa all stand as monuments to this man's achievements. The shrine, too, that encloses his grave, many would consider a fitting tribute and symbol to his legacy.

7.3 The *Qādirīyya*, *Sammāniyya* and *Rifā'iyya* Orders

Amongst the most important *Qādirī* and *Rifā'i* shaykhs who arrived at the Cape during the pre-1945 period were the previously mentioned Sayyid Muḥsin b. Sālīm al-ʿAydārūs al-Qādirī (d.1934), Mawlānā ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm al-Siddīqī al-Qādirī (1892-1954), and Sayyid Maṣṣūr al-Rifā'i who died in Madīna in the 1950s.

The entry point for the *Sammāniyya* into Cape spiritual practices, however, appears to be much more diversified than most of the other *ṭarīqas*. Unlike the *Qādirī* and *Bā ʿAlawī* orders, there appears to be no putative shaykh/s for the *Sammāniyya* at the Cape; this, despite the near ubiquitous nature of this *dhikr* form during the first and much of the second half of the twentieth century. The *Sammān dhikr* appears to have been introduced either by visiting *ṣūfī* groups to the Cape, or by shaykhs who belonged primarily to other orders but with the *Sammān dhikr* as an affiliate practice.

7.3.1 Sayyid Muḥsin al-ʿAydārūs and his Companions

Some time during the late nineteenth century Sayyid Muḥsin was born in a mountain hamlet near Aden in the Ḥaḍramawt. He reportedly displayed considerable promise as young student and emigrated fairly early in his life to Mombasa in Kenya where he established himself as a religious teacher. It was here too that he met his first wife, Mariam, who was originally of Hyderabad in India. (Jaffer, 2001: 50).

In 1909 he left Mombasa for Cape Town where he settled for approximately ten to eleven years. While little is known about the actual reason for his departure to Cape Town, these extensive voyages with a view to propagating Islamic *ṣūfī* teachings and practices were typical of the *Ḥaḍramī* shaykhs. Nonetheless, a close association developed between Sayyid Muḥsin and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ from the time that he arrived at the Cape. Whether Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ originally had a hand in encouraging him to visit the Cape is difficult to say. In 1920, shortly after the establishment of the al-Zāwiyah mosque, he once again left for Mombasa. He left for seven years and returned in 1927.

It was this period, his second return to Cape Town, which witnessed the greatest impact of Sayyid Muḥsin. Shortly after arriving at the Cape he married his second wife, Khadija Kamrudien Parker. This marriage clearly indicated that Sayyid Muḥsin regarded his relationship with the Cape in a very serious light. He also returned with two of his most eminent companions - his *muqqadam* (first deputy in the Order), or *khalīfa*, Sharīf Muḥammad, and the brother of Sharīf Muḥammad, Sharīf Ibrāhīm.

While Sayyid Muḥsin established a Zāwiyah in both Mombasa and in Mauritius - the latter which he visited on an annual basis⁹⁹ - his teaching and *dhikr* sessions were largely home-based at the Cape. It appears that he considered the Zāwiyah established by Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks as sufficient for their mutual purposes of spreading the spirit and practices of *taṣawwuf* in Cape Town.

The home-based programme which he instituted comprised *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād* recitals on Thursday evenings and *Garwayn Sharīf* recitals on Sunday evenings¹⁰⁰. His selection of a central *Bā ‘Alawī* litany for recital on a regular basis demonstrates the inclusivity of the approach that marked the approach of the majority of the *ṣūfī* masters fairly soon after the institutionalisation of the *ṣūfī* orders in the thirteenth century. This methodology is also evident in Shaykh Yūsuf’s approach. These two litanies, however, appear to have been the standard recitals with the Sayyid. In addition to these he also performed the *Ism al-Laṭīf* and the *Bismillah Dhikr*. (Da Costa, 1994: 137). Da Costa (1994: 137) also mentions that he passed on the *Sammān* practice to his students. Hanief Allie, who was a young *murīd* of Sayyid Muḥsin, appears to be at variance with this view¹⁰¹. According to him, the *Sammān*

form of *dhikr* was integrated into the *Qādirī* practices by Sayyid Muḥsin's student, Sharif Ibrāhīm and not by Sayyid Muḥsin himself

A number of extraordinary events are also ascribed to him. Amongst the most famous of these is his encounter with a lion at the Rhodes Zoo situated along De Waal Drive. Apparently his piety had been challenged by some influential people. His response was to request access to one of the caged lions at the Zoo. After much and heated deliberation the Zoo Keeper relented. To the astonishment of the people gathered outside the cage the leader of the pride advanced and meekly laid himself at the feet of the Sayyid. He then raised his paw and placed it in Sayyid Muḥsin's hand¹⁰². Sayyid Muḥsin, a polyglot of sixteen languages, was then seen in conversation with the lion. (Mansoor, 2001: 51).

Another miracle attributed to him is the one commonly ascribed to the *abdāl* (sing. *badl*, meaning "substitute" or "replacement") category of saints. These are the *awliyā* considered to have been granted the ability to be present at more than one place at a time. As a manifestation of this gift it is reported that a group of his murīds, after having taken leave of him, left for the shrine at Robben Island. On arriving at the shrine Sayyid Muḥsin had preceded them and was already deeply engaged in an act of dhikr. (Mansoor, 2001: 51).

The revised version of the *Guide To The Kramats Of The Western Cape* also attributes the discovery of the *kramats* of Shaykh Nūr al-Mubīn and and Tuan Sayyid Ja'far to Sayyid Muḥsin. In earlier accounts of these "discoveries" Achmat Davids attributed this to Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-'Irāqī.

There were very few *murīds* who were invested with *khilāfa* by Sayyid Muḥsin. One of the *murīds* who was inducted into the *Qādirī* line with a particular emphasis on the *Garwayn Sharīf* was the late Aḥmad Reagal. A copy of the *Garwayn Sharīf* inscribed with the *ijāza* granted to Aḥmad Reagal is in the possession of his brother who, at the time of writing, resided in Bellville.

The companionship between Sayyid Muḥsin and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ was an intimate and profound one. According to al-Zāwiyah oral history Sayyid Muḥsin stayed at a number of residences before finally settling in Mountain Road on the boundary of University and Walmer Estate. Apparently his wish had always been to

enjoy a closer proximity to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ. During the last few weeks of his terminal illness Sayyid Muḥsin expressed the desire to return to his native Ḥaḍramawt where he wished to be buried. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ apparently implored him to stay in Cape Town expressing his wish, in turn, that he wanted to be buried in the same location as Sayyid Muḥsin. Sayyid Muḥsin, despite himself, consented. These bonds of intimacy and spiritual love are not unusual amongst the shaykhs of *taṣawwuf*.

In 1934 Sayyid Muḥsin died at his residence in Mountain Road. The *janāzah* (funeral prayers) was performed at the al-Zāwiyah with Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ assuming full responsibility for all the burial rites. The students of Sayyid Muḥsin and those who came to know him saw it fit to honour his legacy at the Cape with a shrine - the first ever after the death of Sayyid ‘Abd al-Malik more than a century earlier.

His *muqaddam*, Sharīf Muḥammad, continued with much of the teachings and practices initiated by Sayyid Muḥsin. Interesting, though, is the fact that he was fluent in English and worked as an interpreter at the Magistrate’s Court in Cape Town¹⁰³ - a fact that appears to indicate that there were a number of migrant workers of Arab origin at the Cape whose influence or impact on Cape Muslim society has not yet been adequately accounted for. A number of these were of Somali and Zanzibari origin, many of whom brought particular *taṣawwuf* practices to the Cape. According to Da Costa, prior to the establishment of the 1950 group areas act in Simonstown, Imam Mūsā Davis regularly performed the *Sammān Dhikr* in Simonstown. He received the *Sammān* form of *dhikr* from Somali sailors who either ported or settled at the Cape. Another *ṣūfī* shaykh, Ahmad Hajji of Faure, had, in turn, brought the *Sammān dhikr* from Zanzibar. (Da Costa, 1994: 165).

Nevertheless, both Sharīf Muḥammad and Sharīf Ibrāhīm were equally instrumental in fostering and perpetuating *Qādirī* practices at the Cape.

Sharīf Muḥammad also had a son and a daughter whose names were Sharaf and ‘Alawiyya respectively. ‘Alawiyya became an adopted daughter of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks and took up residence at the al-Zāwiyah. Sharīf Ibrāhīm, the younger of the two brothers and who became a resident of Wynberg in Batts Road, also started a number of *Qādirī* groups.

One of the still living *khalīfas* of Sharīf Ibrāhīm's *Qādirī* line is Imām Ismā'īl Niekerk - a 96 year old resident of Milan Street in Walmer Estate. Ismā'īl Niekerk is also a war veteran who spent a number of years in Egypt during the Second World War. During his years in Egypt he developed a fair degree of proficiency in the Arabic language. Although sickly, Imām Ismā'īl is still capable of fluently reciting large tracts of the various *adhb̄kār* he was taught by Sharīf Ibrāhīm from memory and also providing insightful comments on these *adhb̄kār*.

His *bay'at* (oath of fealty) with the shaykh was a simple one in which he was required to seat himself in front of Sharīf Ibrāhīm with his knees adjacent to the knees of the shaykh. During the traditional hand-clasp a handkerchief was placed over their hands as a gesture symbolising the imprimatur of the shaykh and the closure of the pact. With hands still clasped the *dhikr* of initiation, or *talqīn al-dhikr*, was dictated to him. This was followed by a recital of *lā ilāha illallāh* three times over a full glass of milk - half of which was drunk by the shaykh and the remaining half by Imām Ismā'īl¹⁰⁴. Milk is a common artefact in these initiatic rites and symbolises, as mentioned elsewhere, the spiritual nourishment and prefatory weaning of the neophyte to a potential future of independent shaykh-hood. Compared to the initiatic rite of the *ratiep* discussed in Chapter Six this process is a very simple one. From extensive personal observation, this simplicity is what generally distinguishes the initiatic rites of the more purely based *taṣawwuf* orders from those with a heavily accentuated *mujarrabāt* aspect. In the former case questions of power are de-emphasised, if present at all. The focus appears implacably centred on the purification of the self, attaining nearness to God, and the realisation of humility in the heart. In the very humble surroundings of Imām Ismā'īl's room, where the interview transpired, he mentioned that a week prior to the interview he warmly held the hand of a Christian - a simple gesture to most of us, but very significant to him. "I took and held his hand" he said, "because he said to me that God is good." "Those of us" he continued, "who realise that God is good have seen the *haqq* (truth) so I had to take his hand." He broke and wept intensely. This is the heart of the ecstatic experience. It is also the essence of that endearing

humility that will always strike a resonant chord in the hearts of those who feel compelled to realise the Compassion of God.

For more than 60 years Imām Ismā‘īl assisted and later continued the work of Sharīf Ibrāhīm amongst hundreds of the poorer and less advantaged communities along the Cape Flats and the Mitchell’s Plain areas. Thursday and Saturday evenings were the days of the week he dedicated to the *Qādirī* practices. There is also a distinctive *Sammānī* aspect to the form of his *dhikrs* - a form that was almost certainly taught to him by Sharīf Ibrāhīm.

To people such as Imām Ismā‘īl Niekerk, shaykhs such as Sharīf Ibrāhīm, Sharīf Muḥammad, and Sayyid Muḥsin al-‘Aydrūs encapsulated the distilled essence of God in His aspect of the Compassionate through the teachings and practices of their *tarīqas*.

7.3.1.1 Mawlānā Shah Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī

It is impossible to do justice in a sub-segment of a chapter to the life and contribution of a scholar such as Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī (1892-1954). His first visit to Cape Town in 1935, albeit short is sufficient, however, to merit at least a passing reference to his impact on Cape Islām.

Born at Meerut, in India, where the first Indian Muslim war of Liberation occurred in 1857, his religious education started at a very young age under the tutelage of his father, Mawlānā Shah ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm al-Siddīqī. His early education was continued by his older brother Mawlānā Shah Aḥmad Mukhtār al-Siddīqī who eventually settled in Durban and founded the *Dār al-Yatāma wa l-Masākīn* (Home for the Orphans and the Poor). Later in his life he studied under the celebrated Indian scholar Shaykh Aḥmad Riḍā Khan of Berelvi in India. (Mohamed, 2005: 86; Habībia, 1995:2).

In 1917 he obtained a bachelor’s degree with distinction and continued his extensive pursuit of knowledge in Makka, Madīna and North Africa. To his already impressive curricula of studies he added a study in the Yunānī System of Medicine. As a

practitioner of this system he earned the title of *al-Ṭabīb al-Hindī* (The Indian Doctor) in Madīna. This was an affectionate title in honour of the free services he had rendered in this capacity. (Habibia, 1995: 2).

He was also renowned for his impressive public orations the first of which he delivered at the age of nine. He spoke a number of languages which included Urdu, Arabic, Persian, German, Swahili, French, and English. (Mohamed, 2005: 86). He also travelled extensively throughout the world and has been dubbed the “Roving Ambassador of Peace”. A distinguishing feature of both his preaching and writing was that he “presented Islam in a simple, logical manner, which appealed to the layman and intellectual.” (Mohamed, 2005: 86). It is this broad appeal that led to more than fifty thousand people embracing Islam through him. To his credit, too, is the establishment of numerous mosques, institutions, and orphanages, and a number of publications. In South Africa he established the *Muslim Digest* and *Ramadan Annual* in Durban and was the patron of The Islamic Publications Bureau founded by the renowned *Sayed and Sons of Athlone*. In Singapore he founded *The Real Islam* and in Mauritius *The Prophet’s Birthday Annual*. (Mohamed, 2005: 86; Habibia, 1995: 2).

Some of the titles of his own works also reflect the diversity of the topics he engaged. Amongst these are the following:

- a) The Ideal of Islam
- b) The History of the Codification of Islamic Law
- c) The Cultivation of Science by the Muslims
- d) The Spiritual Culture in Islam
- e) Miracles in the Light of Science and Philosophy
- f) The Universal Religion
- g) The First Teachings of Islam (the Shāfi‘ī school of thought)
- h) The Elementary Teaching of Islam (the Ḥanafī school of thought)

He also wrote a number of works in French, Arabic, and Urdu.

The general approach, however, of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī was *taṣawwuf* driven. While the *Qādirī ṭarīqa* was his primary order he was also an acknowledged master in the *Chistīyya*, *Naqshbandīyya*, *Suḥrawardīyya*, and *Shādhiliyya* orders. A

critical bond was also forged between himself and Mawlānā Faẓl al-Raḥmān al-Anṣārī (d. 1974). In an extract, worth quoting in full, Yasien Mohamed reveals the multi-faceted nature of the relationship, on the one hand, between the shaykh and *murīd*; and, on the other, the care and strictness exercised in the transmission of *ijāzah* in the more authentically based chains of transmission. He states:

In the very next year (*in 1937, the year after he had married Mawlānā's daughter - author's note*), Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Alīm Siddīqui wrote a letter from Saudi Arabia stating that none of his children could carry on his work; and that the one capable person, his son-in-law, had also forsaken him. On reading this letter, tears flowed freely from Mawlānā Ansari's eyes. To this day, that tear-stained letter stands as testimony of the love and loyalty he had for that great saint Mawlāna ʿAbd al-Alīm Siddīqui. It was at this time that Mawlana Siddīqui accepted his son-in-law as his *murīd* in all the *silsilabs*: Qadariyyah, Chistiyyah, Naqshabandiyyah, Suhrawardiyyah and Shadhiliyyah. And within the precincts of the Kaʿbah, Mawlana ʿAbd al-Alīm transmitted to him *ijāzah* (authority) in all spiritual matters. (Mohamed [ed], 1999: 16).

One of the central dhikrs in the *Qādiri* line of Mawlānā ʿAbd al-ʿAlīm al-Siddīqī is the *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* (or Spiritual Assembly)¹⁰⁵. The *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* is divided into two parts: (a) The *Khatmu Khawājakhān* (or the Saints' Spiritual Service), and (b) the *Dhikr* proper.

The *Khatmu Khawājakhān* is further divided into a number of segments:

- A) Recitation of the *Fātibah* (opening verse of the Qurān) as a dedicated recital and gift to the soul (*rūḥ*) of the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh).

This is followed by:

- i) Another single recitation of *sūrah Fātiḥah*
- ii) Recital of *sūrat al- Ikhlāṣ* three times
- iii) A single recitation of *Bi Raḥmatika Yā Arḥma al-Rāḥimīn* (through Your Mercy, O Most Merciful of the Merciful).

B) The Spiritual Service is then delivered in the following manner:

- i) Recital of *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah* 7 times;
- ii) Recital of *Sūrat al-Inshirāḥ* 79 times;
- iii) Recital of *Darūd Sharīf* (or the *Ṣalawāt*) 100 times;
- iv) Recital of *Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ* preceded by the *Basmallah* (to recite *Bismillah al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*) 1000 times;
- v) The recital of *Darūd Sharīf* for the second time 100 times;

This is then followed by a recital of the following names of Allah 100 times each:

- a) *Yā Qāḍiy al-Ḥājāt* (O Fulfiller of needs).
- b) *Yā Kāfiy al-Mubimmāt* (O Thou Whose Help sufficeth Thy servants in their highest undertakings).
- c) *Yā Dāfi'a l-Baliyyāt* (O Thou Who removeth evil from Thy servants).
- d) *Yā Ḥall al-Mushkilāt* (O Thou Who resolveth the difficulties of Thy servants).
- e) *Yā Shāfiy al-Amrād* (O Bestower of health on the sick).
- f) *Yā Rāfi'a l-Darajāt* (O Thou Who raiseth the status of Thy servants).
- g) *Yā Munazzil al-Barakāt* (O Bestower of Blessings).
- h) *Yā Mujīb al-Da'wāt* (O Thou Who accepts the supplications of Thy servants).
- i) *Yā Arḥma l-Rāḥimīn* (O Most Merciful).
- j) *Āmīn* (May it be so)¹⁰⁶.

The above segment marks the end of the *Khatmu Khwājakhān*.

The *Dhikr* proper has two aspects: the actual wording and the methodology. The wording and the structure are as follows:

- a) The recital of the *Fātiḥah* as described above.
- b) The recital of the following *dhikr*:

- i) *Astaghfir Allāh* 3 times, followed by *Astaghfir Allāha Rabbī min Kullī Dhanbin wa Atūbu ilaybi* (I seek the forgiveness of Allah, my Lord, from every sin and solicit His pardon).
- ii) The recital of *Lā ilāha illallāh Muḥammadu Rasūl Allāh* (There is no deity other than God and Muḥammad is His messenger).
- iii) *Ash-badu an Lā ilāha illallāh wa Ash-badu anna Muḥammadan ‘Abdahu wa Rasūlahu - Ṣall Allāhu ‘alaybi wa ‘alā Ālihi wa Sallam* (I bear witness that there is no deity other than God and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His servant and His messenger - may the blessings and peace of God be upon him and his family).
- c) Recitals of the following:
 - i) *Lā ilāha illallāh* (100 times).
 - ii) *illallāh* (100 times).
 - iii) *Allahū* (100 times).

According to Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm the minimum requirement for the performance of this *dhikr* is to do it at least once a week in a group on a Thursday evening after the *‘ishā* prayers. If it is not possible to perform it in an assembly then the individual has to do it at least once a day after either the *fajr* prayers or the *‘ishā* prayers.

With the exception of the last section (c) the rest of the *dhikr* is performed in a seated position - in a circle if it is a group - with the head bowed in the direction of the chest. The last section (c), however, has an additional and very specific methodology.

The phrase *lā ilāha illallāh* is customarily referred to as the *dhikr al-naḥī wa l-iḥbāt* (the *dhikr* of negation and affirmation) with the *lā ilāha* segment constituting the aspect of negation and *illallāh* the aspect of affirmation. Moreover, the ideas of negation and affirmation, according to Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm, are intrinsically linked to the concepts of the Lower Self and the Higher Self.

The Lower Self, as it were, is the arena in which the destructive and blameworthy attributes of the self - such as power, arrogance, conceit, and lust - find their space and expression. It is only through the negation of the Lower Self that these negative attributes may be obliterated. The negation itself is effected through the formulaic

phrase *lā ilāha* that connotes a divestment of power from “others” and “otherness” - or *ghayriyya* as Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar puts it.

The bonds of attachment to the illusory power of “others” and “otherness”, on the other hand, find their liberation in the affirmation *illallāh*. True power, in other words, only reside in God; all else is falsehood. The phrase *lā ḥawlab wa lā quwwata illa billāh* (there is no true power or strength except in God) is a complimentary and affirmative statement of this Divine condition. It is, therefore, the affirmative recognition of *illallāh* that activates and allows the Higher Self to open up to the Divine Presence, reside in It, and invest itself, in turn, with the capacity to subdue the Lower Self.

In tandem with the view that *taṣawwuf* is essentially a path of “being” and “becoming”, and beyond the limits of purely intellectual cognition, Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm has prescribed a set of imaginative methods to aid in actualising the realisation of the Higher Self.

The seat of the Lower Self, he holds, is in the vicinity of the navel; while the seat of the Higher Self is the heart. When uttering the word *lā* the head should be bowed while imagining a cloud of black smoke in the region of the navel. Here the black smoke symbolises evil. Along with a prolongation of the utterance *lā* the head is lifted to the right shoulder. At this point it should be imagined that the black smoke is drawn outside of the body.

When the utterance of *lā* is complete with the head adjacent to the right shoulder, the recitation of *ilāha* then commences. The head is once again moved to the middle of the chest and then immediately raised up upon aspirating the final syllable *ha*. During the course of this motion the black smoke is drawn from the front point of the body parallel to the navel, and expelled through the upper part of the head. At this point the *dhākir* (rememberer) visualises a beam of light representing the blessings of God descending from above and which passes in an extending sequence through the shrine of the Prophet (pbuh) in Madina, through the hearts of all the order’s spiritual ancestors, until it reaches the heart of the *murshid* (spiritual guide). From the heart of the *murshid* the light is visualised as penetrating the same “window” in the upper part of the head from whence the first cloud of black smoke

was initially expelled. The *dhākir* then imagines the physical heart as one composed of light upon which is inscribed the word “Allāh” in illumined Arabic characters. As the visualised light connects with the heart the *dhākir* simultaneously envisages a beam of light emanating from the forehead. At this point the phrase *illallāh*, accompanied by a forward thrust of the head, is struck with force upon the imagined heart of light. As the “splashes” of *illallāh* resound the *dhākir* imagines corresponding splashes of light on the disc of the heart of light.

All of the above, from the initial utterance *lā* to *illallāh*, is repeated 100 times, after which the *dhākir* takes a short break of three minutes with eyes closed and in self-meditation, or *murāqabah*. At the end of the three minutes the *dhākir* closes this segment with a recital of *Ḥaqq Ḥaqq Lā Ilāha Illallāh Muḥammadun Rasūl Allāh Ṣall Allāhu Alayhi wa Sallam*.

The exercise of *illallāh* as the second part of this segment of the *dhikr* is performed in the same way as *illallāh* mentioned previously. This is also repeated 100 times but with the focus resolutely on the affirmation of the Divine Presence.

The last utterance *Allāhū* is executed in an equally affirmative manner except that during the utterance of the second syllable *hū* the *dhākir* imagines him/herself completely immersed and absorbed in an all-embracing halo of light.

According to the *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alim “our absorption in this exercise should ultimately bring us to experience that everything of the world is unreal and that Allāh alone exists in truth, just as we have been told in the Holy Quran in Sura al-Raḥmaan: ‘Everything of this world is fleeting and only the Personality of thy Lord of Majesty and Honour is eternal’ (Qurān, 55: 27).”

Through this brief excursion into the *dhikr* practices and objectives of *dhikr* as expounded by Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alim al-Siddiqī we note a number of striking resemblances in the approaches and methodologies of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar and the Mawlānā himself. Regardless of conservative, rationalist, or puritanical responses to such methods the aims of *taṣawwuf* as such and as articulated by the masters in the field have always been one, and that is to realise the all-embracing nature of the Divine Presence. This realisation - diligently pursued through a variety of *dhikr* methodologies - is considered a necessary prerequisite for the full flowering

of the highest virtues and values enunciated by Islām. While the paths, moreover, are many, the goal is one. “The number of paths to Allāh, the Sublime” writes Shaykh Yūsuf “is equal to the number of breaths breathed by all living creatures. But the shortest and the most elevated and the most accessible way to the desired goal is for the traveller to firmly set out to attain to the essence of Allāh, the Sublime, without turning to others and otherness.”¹⁰⁷

While the *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* was most likely drafted for the spiritual edification of Cape Muslims during his second visit in 1952, there remains a high probability that he instituted the same or similar practices during his first visit in 1935. The sheer centrality of the *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* in many *Qādirī* orders is sufficient grounds to support such speculation. A conundrum here, of course, is that while the *Ḥalqat al-Dhikr* is in the possession of a few households at the Cape, there remains a relative absence of this practice in the Cape Muslim community. The infusion of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-Siddīqī’s influence on Cape Islām appears centred on his teachings rather than the practices, particularly amongst the more erudite non-*‘ulamā* class of Muslim thinkers. For more conclusive results, however, far more research is required in this area. Nonetheless, additional influences of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī are patently visible after his second visit. A number of institutions and organisations such as the Ḥabībībiyyah Ṣiddīque Brigade, the Ṣiddīque Primary School, and the Ṣiddīque Mosque in Elsies were established as a result of this visit. (Da Costa, 1994: 138).

Mawlānā Siddīqī, after an illustrious career as a “roving ambassador” of Islām, passed away in Madina in 1954 and lies buried in the *Jannat al-Bāqī* close to his forefather, the first *khalīf* of Islām, Abū Bakr al-Siddīq (ra).

7.3.1.1.2 Sayyid Manṣūr al-Rifā‘ī

Sayyid Mansūr al-Rifā‘ī, the son of the Grand Shaykh of the *Rifā‘ī* order in Madina, Sayyid Ḥamza al-Kabīr al-Rifā‘ī, resided for a number of years in Cape Town during the 1920s and 1930s.



Figure 17: Sayyid Mansūr al-Rifāʿī

According to Fakhruddin Owaisi “old residents of Wynberg and Lansdowne, where the Sayyid resided in Cape Town, claim that he also passed down Rifa’iyyah practices to certain Shaykhs in Cape Town to practice it with their followers.” (Owaisi, 2001: 110). Before moving to Mars Road in Wynberg, however, he lived for a while in Black River where he became enormously popular with the residents of Black River for his “unusual gifts” in the administering of spiritual medicine through sacred potions, *ʿazī mats*, and prayers of healing¹⁰⁸. Sayyid Mansūr received his early training in the *Rifāʿī* order at the hands of his father and older brother, Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī who opened the first mosque in Paris in 1926¹⁰⁹, in the Zāwiya which Sayyid Ḥamza established in his house in Madīna.

What is certain, though, is that he bestowed an honorary *ijāzah* through the agency of his father, Sayyid Ḥamza, in the *Rifāʿī* order upon Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ of the al-Zāwiya. (Owaisi, 2001: 110). The line of induction for this *ijāzah* extends through one of the foremost *Rifāʿī* shaykhs of the nineteenth century - if not one of the most outstanding ever in the history of the *Rifāʿī* order - Sayyid Muḥammad Abū

I-Ḥudā al-Şiyādī (1266/1849-1327/1909) who was born in the city of Shaykhūn in Syria. Sayyid Abū I-Ḥudā was the author of hundreds of works on *taṣawwuf* with a particular emphasis on the *Rifāʿī* order. He was also appointed as one of the chief advisors to the last Ottoman Sulṭān, Abū Ḥāmid II. His main work on the *Rifāʿī* order, however, is the *al-Ṭarīqat al-Rifāʿiyyah* (The Rifāʿī Way)¹¹⁰. A copy of this work inscribed with the *Rifāʿī ijāzah* issued by Sayyid Mansūr to Shaykh Muḥammad Şālīḥ is lodged in the library of the al-Zāwiyah. A separate written *ijāzah* is also lodged in the library. (Owaisi, 2001: 110).

Sayyid Mansūr himself was in fact a general in the Ottoman army before the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1924¹¹¹. After the dismemberment of the Ottoman structures, while not an *ʿālim* himself in the strict sense of the word, he was inspired by his father and older brother, Sayyid Aḥmad al-Rifāʿī, to embark on a life as an itinerant *şūfī*.

In Cape Town he established his reputation as a *şūfī* healer when he cured the daughter of Hertzog after extensive medical treatment had apparently failed to produce any results. For this feat he was granted a permanent residential permit to stay in South Africa¹¹².

Up till today this line of the *Rifāʿī* order is considered amongst the most influential in the world, and, like the *Khalwatiyyah-Yūsuf*, is generally characterised by an “aristocratic” approach to *taṣawwuf*. This line also completely eschews the *dabbūs*, or *ratiep*, forms of *dhikr*. It is, therefore, almost certain that none of the present day *ratiep* groups has any affiliation to this line.

7.4 The *Bā ʿAlawī* Order

While a number of shaykhs during this period at the Cape contributed considerably to the perpetuation of *Bā ʿAlawī* practices, two of the most prominent personalities in this respect were Shaykh ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad al-ʿIrāqī and Shaykh Muḥammad Şālīḥ Hendricks. There is evidence, however - as it is the case with Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Laṭīf - that both of these shaykhs also embraced a more inclusivist approach regarding their *taṣawwuf* practices.

7.4.1 Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad al-‘Irāqī: An Overview

According to the oral traditions of the Abdurauf family (descendants of Tuan Guru) it was the daughter, Sayyida Salāma, of Imam Abduraqeeb (grandson of Tuan Guru) who was responsible for bringing Shaykh Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī to Cape Town. While in Makkah she was informed of a “poor but great and very learned Aaliem and saintly person.” (Abderoof, 1987: 156). She then proceeded to make the necessary arrangements to bring him to Cape Town. In Cape Town he married a lady by the name of Hajji Mariam said to be of Chinese descent (Davids, 1991: 140). They took up residence at 8 Church Street in Bo-Kaap and later converted part of their home into a *madrasa*. While he apparently did not officiate as an imām¹¹³ at the Zīnat al-Islam Mosque in Muir Street, he was a regular attendee there until his death in 1942. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 19).

It was not long before he won the respect of the Cape Muslim community for the depth of his learning. Even the newspapers, according to Davids, frequently referred to him as a “Professor of Moslem Theology.” (Davids, 1991: 140). He also emerged as one of the most prolific writers in the Arabic-Afrikaans at the time. Amongst the many manuscripts he wrote were the following in chronological order:

- a) *Sharḥ Kifāyat al-‘Awām* (1898) (A Commentary on the book “Essential Knowledge for the Lay Person”) - a book dealing with the basic theological concepts of the Muslim belief system. It is akin in style and content to the *Umm al-Barābīn* of al-Sanūsī. (Kahler, 1971: 139).
- b) *‘n 5 talige woordelais en kort sinnetjies in ‘Arab, Farsies, Hindustānī en Afrika-Engels* (1900) (A Five Language word list and short sentences in Arabic, Persian, Urdu[?], English, and Afrikaans). According to Davids this book was written as a guide for travellers to the East and in particular for the pilgrims to Makkah. (Davids, 1991: 142).
- c) *Tuḥfat al-Atfāl* (1900) (A Gift for Children). According to Davids this work deals with matters of *tajwīd* (rules for the correct pronunciation and intonation of the Quran). (Davids, 1991: 140).

- d) *Tafsīr Sūra Yā Sīn* (1905). (A Commentary on the Quranic Chapter “Yā Sīn” - Chapter 36). This manuscript was printed in Bombay. (Kahler, 1971: 144).
- e) *Tafsīr Sūra Yūsuf* (1905). (A Commentary on the Quranic Chapter “Yūsuf” - Chapter 12). The manuscript was completed in 1905 and printed in Bombay in 1908. (Kahler, 1971: 145).
- f) *Risālat fī Bayān Faḍā'il Laylati Nisf al-Sh'abān wa l-Du'ā al-Wārid fihā* (1909) (An Epistle Expounding the Benefits of the Middle of the Month of *Sh'abān* and its Accompanying Prayer). The introduction to this work includes an explanation of the common practice at the Cape on the fifteenth night of *Sh'abān* during which *sūra Yā Sīn* is recited thrice between *maghrib* (sunset prayers) and *'ishā* (evening prayers) with a *du'ā* interspersed between each of the recitals. (Kahler, 1971: 108).
- g) *Kitāb Ilm al-Farā'id* (1910) (The Book on the Rules of Inheritance). According to Davids the book deals with much more than just inheritance. It includes discussions on marriage, divorce, pilgrimage, and even theological ideas. He therefore considers the book “mis-named”. The work was formally printed in 1913. (Davids, 1991: 138, 141; Kahler, 1971: 90).
- h) *Hidāyat al-Wahbābī Li Tārik al-Ṣawāb*¹¹⁴ (1911) (A Gift of Guidance for Those Who Have Abandoned the Right Way). This work deals with the controversial *Jum'a-Thubr* polemic that bedevilled the Muslim community during that time. (Kahler, 1971: 81; Davids, 1991: 141).
- i) *Mohammedan (sic) Calendar* (1913). This production started the tradition of the Ramaḍān calendar at the Cape. It included the times for commencing and breaking the fast and also the times for the five daily prayers. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 18). The calendar also appears interspersed with religious counselling. In the extract provided by Kahler (1971: 103) Shaykh al-'Irāqī explains that visiting the graves of Muslims is a *sunna* (recommended act) and that the best time to do that is between noontime on a Thursday until dawn on the Saturday. He quotes the famous Quranic exegete, Imām al-Quṭubī, as his authority in stating that between these times the deceased are aware of those who visit them.

He also co-authored a work entitled *Aḥkām al-Tajwīd* (Rules Governing the Recitation of the Qurān) in 1906. (Davids, 1991: 139).

7.4.1.1 Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī and *Taṣawwuf*

While no specific writings on *taṣawwuf* were written by him he apparently left that task to two of his students, Shaykh Ṭā Hā Gamiendien and Shaykh Muḥammad “Geyer” Isaacs. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 19). In 1910 Shaykh Ṭā Hā wrote and translated for the first time at the Cape the *Rātib al-Ḥaddād*, while in 1937 Shaykh Muḥammad Geyer transcribed copies of the *du‘ā al-Safar* (the prayer for the month of *Safar*) and in 1939 the *du‘ā Nisf al-Sh‘abān* (prayer for the middle of *Sh‘abān*). (Davids, n.d.: 3, 19). As students of Shaykh Muḥammad al-‘Irāqī these clearly indicate strong *Bā ‘Alawī* influences. Shaykh Muḥammad Geyer, however, erroneously ascribes the *du‘ā* of *Sh‘abān* to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī (Kahler, 1971: 176). This *du‘ā*¹¹⁵ was in fact formulated by Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād and compiled by his son, al-Ḥabīb Ḥasan b. ‘Abd Allah al-Ḥaddād (al-Mālikī, n.d.: 104) - hence the assumption of *Bā ‘Alawī* influences. While Shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Jīlānī composed his own *du‘ā* for that occasion, I am unaware of anyone at the Cape in fact who recite that *du‘ā* on the night of *Nisf al-Sh‘abān*. His description, however, of the *du‘ā* of *Safar* and the accompanying *ṣalāh* (Kahler, 1971: 176-7) - even in the very wording - coincides identically with a prayer-manual on *du‘ās* and their methodology entitled *Kanz al-Najāḥ wa l-Surūr fī l-‘Ad‘iyya allatī Tashrah al-Ṣudūr* (The Treasure Chest of Success and Bliss through Prayers that Expand the Breast) considered one of the most authoritative in *Bā ‘Alawī* circles. The latter work was compiled and written by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Muḥammad ‘Alī Quds (1863-1915)¹¹⁶.

Of particular interest are his three works, *Tafsīr Sūra Yā Sīn*, *Tafsīr Sūra Yūsuf* and his *Risālat fī Bayān Faḍā’il Laylati Nisf al-Sh‘abān wa l-Du‘ā al-Wārid fihā*.

In the Cape spiritual milieu *sūra Yā Sīn* is one of those chapters of the Qurān that is recited as a litany at many gatherings of *dhikr*. It is recited as part of the general funerary rites, on the night of *Nisf al-Sh‘abān*, and as a preamble or conclusion at many group *dhikrs*. This Qurānic chapter, in short, infuses the very spiritual culture

of Muslims at the Cape. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī must have realised this very soon after his settlement at the Cape. His composing a commentary on that chapter reflects not only a strong endorsement of that culture, but a need to support and enhance that culture by strengthening its epistemological base. Coming from Makkah, as he did, he would have been aware of the emergent anti-*taṣawwuf* *Wabhābīte* ethos that was slowly gaining ground in the Arabian Peninsula. This may have been an attempt to shore up a degree of cognitive resistance to any possible future attempts to undermine that culture - attempts which did in fact emerge not too long after his death.

His commentary on *sūra Yūsuf*, too, is most interesting. This chapter of the Qurān has proven problematic to some in the past. There are three aspects in particular that have proven somewhat vexing to the puritanically-minded. The first is the fact that the Prophet Yūsuf (pbuh) is regarded as the prototypical model for dream interpretations. It was this very gift of his that led to his release from prison. According to the Qurān he successfully predicted a drought that threatened to engulf Egypt. He was therefore able to provide a solution to countering the potentially devastating effects of the drought. For this he was released and appointed by the Pharaonic regime as the supervisor of the Public Treasury and the granary storehouses - a type of Minister of Finance in modern terms. Herein lies the second problem. By accepting the position he appears to provide an alternative political approach to an unyielding non-collaborationism. Thirdly is the apparent relationship - referred to by some as the *Qiṣṣat al-Ishq* (the love story) - that developed between the Prophet Yūsuf (pbuh) and Zulaykha who was married to a “Grand Chamberlain” in the Pharaonic court, but who was a eunuch.

The mystical symbolism of this chapter as traditionally understood is eloquently expressed by Yūsuf ‘Alī where he states:

The Quranic story...is less a narrative than a highly spiritual sermon or allegory explaining the seeming contradictions in life, the enduring nature of virtue in a world full of flux and change, and the marvellous

working of God's eternal purpose in His Plan as unfolded to us on a wide canvass of history. (Ali, 1946: 548).

Yūsuf Ali continues by saying that this story is a “favourite with Muslim poets and Ṣūfī exegetists” and particularly renowned for its symbolic beauty and depth in “Jami’s great Persian masterpiece *Yūsuf-a-Zulaikbā*.” (Ali, 1946: 548).

Nonetheless, the problematics surrounding the chapter came to the fore with the emergence of the *Khawārij* (sing. *Khārijī*, Seceders). This sect emerged shortly after the death of the Prophet (pbuh) during the leadership conflict¹¹⁷ between ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and Mu‘awiya b. Sufyān (d. 680) and later splintered into a number of sub-sects. Amongst the more important of these sects was the ‘*Ajārida*¹¹⁸. As a rigorously puritanical and literalist movement, and particularly because of the so-called “Qīṣṣat al-‘Ishq”, they declared *sūra Yūsuf* an odious fabrication and removed it from their readings of the Qurān. (al-Shahrastānī, n.d.: 128). Generally too, the *Khārajite* political approach is unyieldingly uncompromising as demonstrated by their refusal to accept arbitration between the two warring factions.

By the late nineteenth century the emergent *Wahhābite* movement was already identified as a neo-*Khārajite* movement. Mogamat Hoosain Ebrahim speculates that Shaykh Ismail Edwards may have left Makkah in 1924 to further his studies at the Azhar in Egypt because of the growing dominance of the *Wahhābis* in the *Hijāz*. (Ebrahim, 2004: 83-4). If that indeed was the reason then it may have been somewhat premature at the time. This will be discussed in greater detail later. Shaykh Ismail, however, was certainly correct in anticipating an ascendant *Wahhābism*. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī himself might have been beset by similar fears and, for that reason, readily accepted the invitation to come to the Cape. This would have been an opportunity for him to both practice his own interpretation of Islam in an environment more congenial to his spiritual temperament, and to empower a fledgling community with the capacity to resist any future incursion of *Wahhābite* ideas at the Cape. In this respect he, along with other like-minded shaykhs at the time, appears to have been fairly successful. This indeed became the

case in post-1950 Islam at the Cape, and it is precisely with this legacy instituted by the likes of Shaykh al-ʿIrāqī that I find myself differing with certain contemporary interpretations of the tensions between so-called folk Islam and “legalist” Islam. Mukadam, for example, states:

Puritan clerics today, however, are disdainful about the role of *dhikr*, especially the *dhikr jabrī* (loud remembrance) or the melodied form. Perhaps the cold and rigid interpretation of law is being conducted as an absolute, without cognisance or consideration of the psychosocial experiences and the spirituality of ordinary people. *Maybe it is a reflection of the constant dynamics of power that have to be sustained in the religious hegemony of the clerics over the laity.* [Italics mine] (Mukadam, 2005: 55).

Elsewhere he states: “Legalist ʿulamāh have constructed elaborate and intricate theologies in order to elicit the ideal form Islam must take. On the other hand common Muslims have interpreted the Quran and its symbols to cater for their immediate interests.” (Mukadam, 2005: 60).

As it is the case with the *sharīʿa-taṣawwuf* dyad, the cleric-laity one has also been dichotomised in far too exclusivist terms. There are puritan and non-puritan clerics; similarly there are those of the laity who have embraced puritanist perspectives as expounded by the puritanical clerics and those who have not. The tensions that came to exist at the Cape do not have their origins at the level of the “common” Muslim’s interpretation of the sacred texts - whether of the Qurān or the established corpus of *ḥadīth* literature. The tensions are eminently located at an inter-cleric level of starkly contrasting approaches. Those of the laity who religiously pursue the common practices at the Cape do so with the understanding that the earlier shaykhs at the Cape fully encouraged and supported these practices on the basis of *their* textual interpretations of the Qurān and *ḥadīth* literature. Their conflict with some of

the post-1950 *‘ulamā* may, therefore, be more correctly understood as a defence of the legacy left behind by the earlier *ṣūfī*-inspired shaykhs, rather than as one between an inherently laical interpretation of the *sharī‘a* as opposed to clerical interpretations. A classic example of this inter-cleric conflict is that of Mawlānā Ibrahīm Khuster Siddīqī al-Qādiri Razvi of Mauritius who arrived at the Cape in 1970. Some of his *taṣawwuf* views were severely opposed by the *tabligh jamā‘at* and some members of the Muslim Judicial Council. On the other hand, Shaykh Ahmad Behaardien, then President of the MJC, had come out in defence of Mawlānā Khuster. Some of his lectures were violently disrupted by his opponents. (Da Costa, 1994: 138). What patently started as an inter-cleric conflict of interpretation degenerated into violence among the laity. The stark dichotomies that usually accompany discussions on “high” and “low”, or “scripturalist” and “popular/folk” Islām etc. certainly need to be redressed.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī’s work on the benefits of *Nisf al-Sha‘bān* would also not merely have been a random selection. Unlike the events of the *Mi‘rāj* (the Prophet’s [pbuh] celestial journey) and *Laylat al-Qadr* (“The Night of Power” in which it is related that the Qurān was first revealed to the Prophet [pbuh]), there appears to be a relative paucity of textual evidence in the case of *Nisf al-Sha‘bān* to justify setting it aside as one of the sacred nights to be commemorated. For this reason it has come under particular criticism by the more puritanically-minded. To counter this apparent misperception of its lack of textual support, Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī dedicated an entire book, *Mādhā fī Sha‘bān* (What is there in *Sha‘bān*), in which he sets out to redress the problem. It is not unreasonable to assume that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī, keen as he was to strengthen the *ṣūfī*-inspired base of Cape Islām, composed his work on *Nisf al-Sha‘bān* with a view to securing that base - a reason, in all likelihood, that was similar to the one that motivated Sayyid Muḥammad to write his. Paradoxically, Shaykh Ismail Hanief, while leaving the Ḥijāz for Egypt because of the emergent *Wabbābism* in that country, appears to hold similar views regarding the *Nisf al-Sha‘bān* event. (Ebrahim, 2004: 111). His general perspective in this regard, however, appears more influenced by the neo-*Mu‘tazilite* ethos that prevailed in Egypt during the 1930s and

1940s. While it is not the purpose here to engage this polemic, the view that it is not upheld in Egypt (Ebrahim, 2004: 111) is almost certainly spurious. Even some Egyptian newspapers regularly cover aspects of the event during the month of Sha‘bān. Views and perspectives such as these, however, belong more and found greater expression in post-1945 articulations of Islām in the Cape Muslim community.

While the core of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm’s writings and practices persuasively locates him in the *Bā ‘Alawī ṭarīqa* - there is yet a hitherto undisclosed dimension of his other *ṭarīqa* affiliation viz. the *Sammāniyya*. One of the chief contemporary practitioners of what may be called the *‘Alawī-Sammāniyya dhikr* is Imam ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Jacobs (better known as Imām Dollie). Imām Dollie - who leads the *Jami‘yyat al-Tawfiq Dhikr* group - received his *ijāza* in the *sammān dhikr*¹¹⁹ from a close student of Shaykh al-‘Irāqī, Shaykh Dāwud Abrahams (d.1977)¹²⁰ who resided on the corner of Marsden Road and Upper Cambridge Street in Walmer Estate. The unique feature of this *sammān dhikr* is its combination of certain *Bā ‘Alawī qaṣīdas* with the *mawlūd al-dayba‘ī*¹²¹. The two renowned *Bā ‘Alawī qaṣīdas* that accompany the recital of the *mawlūd al-dayba‘ī* are *Yā Arḥam al-Rāḥimīn* by Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥusayn b. Ṭāhir ‘Alawī (1778-1855)¹²² and *Allāh Allāh Rabbunā*, by Sayyid ‘Alī b. Ḥasan b. ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aṭṭās (1707-1759)¹²³.

Legends, too, surround the character of Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī. Oral history relates that he would instruct people who sought his help during times of crisis to meet him at the shrines of either Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn or Tuan Ja‘far. By the time they reached the shrines - even if they hastened there by motorcar - he would already be there waiting for them. Davids ascribes the presence of the pens and ink-holders to the possibility that it was most likely at these locations that he wrote his numerous books. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 20).

It is also certain that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī had either known or had been a student of Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd. In a letter addressed to ‘Abd al-Bārī, older brother of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, in which Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd thanks him for the assistance he rendered to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ during his

lengthy stay in Makkah, he requests, at the conclusion of the letter, that ‘Abd al-Bārī extend his greetings to Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī¹²⁴.

He is also known for his many miraculous cures and also for having “discovered” the graves of many *awliyā*. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 19-20). Davids correctly observes that the “Tombs of the Holy Circle” were already well-known at the Cape long before his arrival. (Davids, n.d.: 3, 19-20). His “discoveries” were perhaps in the nature of identifying the *awliyā* buried in those graves. The legend of his “discoveries”, however, appears to point more to the spiritual awe in which he was held. But regardless of the legends, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī has indeed left an indelible imprint on Cape Muslim spirituality and practices.

7.4.1.2 Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ Hendricks

The next *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykh to arrive at the Cape after Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī was Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ. While I have been unable to locate the specific *Bā ‘Alawī* spiritual genealogy of Shaykh al-‘Irāqī, it appears that the branch most clearly indicated in Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ’s approach was the *Bā ‘Alawī-Ḥaddādiyya* line. (See Annexure 3). But, like so many of his time, he was also an affiliate member of other *ṭarīqas*.

7.4.1.3 His Background

Shaykh Muḥamad Ṣālīḥ Hendricks was born in 1871 in Swellendam. His parents were Imām ‘Abd Allāh Hendricks (also known as Imām Ḥajjī Ḥijjī) and ‘Ā’sha van der Schyff. He was the youngest of three brothers, ‘Abd al-Baṣīr, ‘Abd al-Bārī, and Sulaymān, and had two sisters, Āmina and Khadīja. (Da Costa, 1994: 108). His father presided as the Imām of the small Muslim community in Swellendam at the time.

While little is known of his earlier education Da Costa relates that he had often travelled to Cape Town by mail cart¹²⁵ to take Islamic lessons from Tuan Abd al-Jalīl (more commonly known as Tuan Abdul Kalil) of Chiappini Street in the Bo-Kaap, and also from Imām Isma‘īl Mu‘āwiyya Manie who resided in Van der Leur Street, Cape Town. (Da Costa, 1994: 106). Family history relates that his father, as a

relatively wealthy man at the time, had initially prepared the young Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ to pursue medical studies¹²⁶ in the United Kingdom. Arrangements to this effect were apparently at an advanced stage which appears to indicate that he had most likely completed his high school education. It was at this point, however, that the event that would change the entire direction of his future occurred.

Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mālikī, grandfather of Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī, was an itinerant *ṣūfī* who had recently arrived at the Cape from Makkah and frequently shuttled between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth in search of Muslim communities and furthering the aims of Islām. It was during the course of one of his many trips between the two cities that he discovered the small Muslim community in Swellendam. Here he befriended Imām ‘Abd Allāh Hendricks and persuaded him to send the young Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ to Makkah to study the “medicine of the soul” rather than the “medicine of the body”. The friendship that was forged between the two families during this time still continues up to the present. Imām ‘Abd Allāh agreed, and together, in 1888, Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mālikī and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ left for Makkah.

His father left for Makkah during 1890 with the dual purpose of performing his ḥajj and also to visit his son. The following year in March he died in Makkah.

7.4.1.4 In Makkah

Between the time that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī had left Makkah in 1880 and the arrival of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ in 1888, significant social, political, and educational changes were already well on their way.

With the deposition and eventual death of Makkan governor Sharīf ‘Abd al-Muṭalib b. Ghālib in 1886, a so-called “New Age” was instituted by the appointment of the new governor, ‘Awn al-Rafīq who was fifty years old at the time. (de Gaury, 1951: 255-8). He apparently made himself more amenable to the populace by eschewing the pomposity and decorum of public appearances and seldom addressed in his public receptions issues pertaining to political or administrative matters. Gerald de Gaury describes his public profile in the following manner:

Instead of the scarlet and gold gown and great turban of his predecessors, he habitually wore a small white turban, and a black dress, and when travelling used a nomad's kerchief and fillet. He made his daily public reception a formality at which he seldom spoke of politics or of the daily administrative matters, reserving them for review with his Wezir and Treasurer, or when closeted with the Wali and the officers directly concerned with the matter in hand. This new and comparative seclusion, today usual, but then astonishing, led to his being thought of as a philosopher, that word in Arabic signifying something more of the mystic and hermit-like pensiveness than it does in the English tongue. (de Gaury, 1951: 258).

While ʿAwn al-Rafīq almost certainly effected a change in the excessive public decorum of previous governors, de Gaury's rendition of his character would even in present day Makkah be dismissed as an oneiric romanticisation of ʿAwn al-Rafīq's tenor as a governor. At the time of his governorship ʿUthmān Pasha Nūrī was the *wālī*, or regional prefect, of the Ḥijāz. Al-Rafīq harboured an intense dislike for ʿUthmān who seldom consulted him on major decisions affecting his area of governorship. The Ottoman Şulṭān ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd II (1876-1909) was, at the time, well disposed towards ʿAwn al-Rafīq and summarily relocated ʿUthmān Pasha to Aleppo in Syria after al-Rafīq had staged a protest exodus from Makkah to Madina in the company of "leading members of his family, a number of notables and merchants, the Mufti of the Shafites, and a long train of minor judges and holy men." (de Gaury, 1951: 258). ʿUthmān Pasha was replaced by Ḥusayn Jamīl Pasha. Jamīl, while more diplomatic than ʿUthmān, was nonetheless similarly inclined to restrict the influence of al-Rafīq. (de Gaury, 1951: 260). Jamīl's inclinations were not unfounded. Soon after al-Rafīq realised he had the support of the Şulṭān he unleashed his own reign of terror. The "new age" de Gaury romanticised, by all

accounts, appeared “new” in its external trappings only. Even some of those who had initially joined him in his protest exodus felt the brunt of his wrath. All those, too, whom he suspected of maintaining their links with ‘Uthmān Pasha were either imprisoned or banished. Amongst these were Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-‘Ujaymī, Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh Kurdī - one of the foremost imāms of the *Shāfi‘ites* at the time - and Shaykh ‘Alī Zayn al-‘Ābidīn Hindiyya. (al-Sibā‘ī, 1984: 551). Moreover, he dismissed and exiled the Custodian of the Ka‘ba, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Shaybī, and replaced him with another more compliant member of the clan of Shayba¹²⁷. In addition to these expulsions, in 1896 he exiled some of the most influential religious leaders in Makkah. Amongst these were Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Sirāj the *muftī* (chief juris-consult) of the *ḥanafi madhab*, Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Ābidīn Ḥusayn the *muftī* of the *mālikī madhab*, Sayyid Ibrāhīm the First Deputy in charge of the running of the *Masjid al-Ḥarām*, Sayyid ‘Alawī Saqqāf the Grand Shaykh of the *sāda* (descendants of the Prophet [pbuh]) in Makkah, and Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Zawāwī. This appeared to have evoked the chagrin of the Sulṭān, but little seems to have been done about it. It appears that the Sulṭān at this stage had too many problems in Istanbul to pay much attention to the waywardness of his governor in Makkah. (al-Sibā‘ī, 1984: 552).

He also established a notorious secret police force called the *Khaznāwiyya*, the members of whom he chose from the local populace. They appeared to have had a two-fold mission: one, to spy on the very populace from whom they were chosen, and two, chosen as they were from the ordinary classes, part of the mission was to demean members of the so-called aristocratic classes within Makkah itself. (al-Sibā‘ī, 1984: 551-2).

He also appears to have been a man prone to excessive idiosyncrasies. He doted on those he believed to be his supporters and ruthlessly persecuted those he suspected of plotting against him. He is also said to have taken a so-called *majdhūb* (holy madman) by the name of ‘Alī Bū off the streets, bathed and clothed him, and forced others to pay their respects to him. (al-Sibā‘ī, 1984: 553).

What astonished the Makkan people though was his random destruction of the shrines that enclosed the graves of those whom they considered as *awliyā*. In this

respect he regarded himself as the sole judge with the power to determine who were to be considered *awliyā* and who not. It did not stop there however. Towards the end of his governorship he had developed an intimate relationship with Shaykh Aḥmad ʿĪsā of the Najd region. Under the influence of Shaykh Aḥmad's *salafite* views he proceeded to destroy all the shrines with the exception of the shrine of Sayyida Khadija (ra), first wife of the Prophet (pbuh), and the shrine of Sayyida Ḥawwā (ra), wife of the first Prophet Ādam (pbuh), said to be buried in Jeddah. (al-Sibāʿī, 1984: 553). These were later removed by the *Wahhābite* rulers themselves. ʿAwn al-Rafīq died in 1905 and by then, with his growing power, had reinstated all the pomp and ceremony that had accompanied the public performances of his predecessors. In this respect de Gaury states:

And as his power increased his character and even appearance changed. His photographs disclose a beetling haughtiness, the Turkish records a smooth directness in his letters. As so often before, a Sherif had with patience recovered some of the power filched from his Emirate by the Ottoman Walis. (de Gaury, 1951: 260).

The extract quoted above also appears to locate de Gaury's romanticisation of ʿAwn al-Rafīq's rule in similar anti-Ottoman sentiments that had largely started to filter through the Arab world.

To worsen matters in the Ḥijāz and in Makkah in particular, the Ottomans established a *madrassa* in Makkah called the *Rashīdiyya* towards the end of the nineteenth century in which Turkish was the main language of instruction. Even Arabic grammar was taught through the medium of the Turkish language. This convinced many within the Ḥijāz that the Ottomans had by now embarked on a determined programme of Turkification. (al-Sibāʿī, 1984: 580). Tensions such as these were replicated in other provinces of the Ottoman Empire and these were some of the causes that led to its final collapse. Rightly or wrongly, the Ottoman

Empire was rapidly being viewed as an incarnation of Turkish hegemony rather than a Muslim *Khalifate*. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ himself, however, while not always favourable towards its political style remained an admirer of Ottoman culture. Under Ottoman rule too, *taṣawwuf* was assured of remaining the dominant stream in the Ḥijāz. (Da Costa, 1994: 106). This was the milieu out of which Shaykh al-ʿIrāqī stepped, and into which Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ came. But while Makkah fell to the *Wahhābis* on October 13, 1924, it took a long time after that before they could impose their rigorist interpretations on the Ḥijāz, if, indeed, they ever really succeeded. The *ṣūfī* shaykhs, although under duress, continued disseminating their *taṣawwuf* teachings for a long time. In many quarters in Makkah, Madina, and Jeddah today they are continuing to do so - hence my observation earlier that Shaykh Ismail Hanief's decision to leave Makkah for Egypt because of the *Wahhābite* incursions may have been premature.

Despite the political problems in the Ḥijāz, Makkah remained one of the foremost centres of traditional Islamic education and in fact had the potential to become a university city in the manner of Bukhārā many centuries earlier. Three of the most important madrasas that were established during the nineteenth century in Makkah were the *Madrasat al-Falāḥ*, the *Madrasat al-Ṣūlatiyya*, and the *Madrasat al-Fakhrīyya*. Many of the Cape *ʿulamā* studied at one or another of these madrasas during the twentieth century. These madrasas are:

a) The *Madrasat al-Falāḥ* - along with its branches in Jeddah and Bombay in India - was established in 1824. Shaykh Nazeem Muḥammad, erstwhile President of the Muslim Judicial Council, was a student at this madrasa.

b) The *Madrasat al-Ṣūlatiyya* was established in 1873. It was founded by an Indian scholar, Shaykh Muḥammad Raḥmat Allāh al-ʿUthmāni who had fled the British occupation during that time. It was named in honour of an Indian lady known as *Ṣūlat al-Nisāʾ* (possibly meaning "The Fearless Lady")¹²⁸ who had selflessly assisted him in establishing the school. Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ Hendricks, and his four sons after him, Shaykh Aḥmad (died during his first year in Makkah), Shaykh Mahdī (1928-1936), Shaykh Ibrāhīm (1928-1936), and Shaykh Mujāhid (1948-1956), all studied - amongst other institutions - at this madrasa and,

c) The *Madrasat al-Fakbriyya*, established by Shaykh Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Ḥaqq Qārī in 1878. He was initially a student of Shaykh Muḥammad Raḥmat Allah and then later a lecturer at the *Ṣūlatiyya*. Inspired by his shaykh he set himself the task of establishing another *madrasa*. To this end he solicited help from numerous influential personages in India who eventually gave him their full support. (al-Sibā‘ī, 1984: 580-3).

From this it becomes evident that a number of eminent Indian scholars played a major role in furthering the expanding educational needs of Makkah at the time. It appears that during the time of the British occupation in India they wasted little time in redirecting their resources elsewhere. The further development of the *madrasas*, however, became progressively ignored during the second half of the twentieth century. In 1949 the Umm al-Qurā University was established. The majority of teachers who taught at these madrasas were then shifted to Umm al-Qurā.

Nonetheless, on his arrival, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ set himself down to a rigorous programme of learning, and under the constant supervision of Sayyid ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Mālikī who acted as his guardian *in loco parentis*. Amongst the prominent scholars of the time from whom he received his tuition were Shaykh Muḥammad Sa‘īd Bāb Sayl, Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd, Shaykh Bakrī Shaṭā, Shaykh ‘Uthmān Shaṭā, Shaykh Muḥammad Sulaymān Ḥasb Allāh, and Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī (1842-1912). Three of these shaykhs became the consecutive Grand *Muftis* of the *Shāfi‘ī madhab* in Makkah. Shaykh Muḥammad Sa‘īd was the first, then followed by Sayyid al-Ḥibshī. However, Sayyid al-Ḥibshī only accepted the appointment after Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd agreed to act as his chief assistant. After the death of Sayyid al-Ḥibshī, Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd became the official Grand *Muftī* of the *shāfi‘ī madhab* in Makkah. Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasb Allāh himself was offered the post of Grand *Muftī* in 1886 but declined.



Figure 18: Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ in his study at the al-Zāwiya

According to Bang:

The two most prominent Makkan teachers within the [Bā ‘Alawī] network were ‘Umar b. Abī Bakr Bā Junayd and Muḥammad Sa‘īd Bāb Ṣayl. Both were ‘Alawīs of Ḥaḍramī origin and imbued with the same spirit of social involvement that had marked the order since the beginning of the 19th century. As teachers, these two men came to have a very significant impact also beyond the Makkah-Ḥaḍramawt axis. They were teachers of a young generation of ‘Alawīs arriving from overseas, as well as others who came to Makkah or religious studies. (Bang, n.d.: 8).



Figure 19: From L to R: Sayyid ʿAbd al-Rahmān ʿAlawī, Sayyid Mansūr al-Rifāʿī, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ, and Sayyid Ṣāfi ʿAlawī

Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ's induction into the *Bā ʿAlawī* order, however, came primarily through Shaykh ʿUmar Bā Junayd. Nonetheless, nineteenth century Makkah was prominently represented by the *Bā ʿAlawī* order. Sayyid Ḥusayn al-Ḥibshī, for example, inducted the previously mentioned Shaykh ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Quds into the *Bā ʿAlawī* order. Moreover, nearly every one of the leading shaykhs in Makkah at the time was a proponent of one order or another. Shaykh Bakrī Shaṭa, too, is the author of two widely read works on *taṣawwuf* entitled *Kifāyat al-ʿAtiqiyā wa Minhāj al-ʿAṣfiyā* (Sufficiency for the Pious and the Way of the Pure) and *Hidāyat al-ʿAdbkiyā ilā Ṭarīqat al-ʿAwliyā* (Guidance for the Intelligent to the Way of the Saints). (Abū l-Khayr, 1986: 144). It was also with Sayyid Bakrī Shaṭā that Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ studied the *Iḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn* of Imām al-Ghazālī, one of the main - if not penultimate - works in the *Bā ʿAlawī* order. It appears, therefore, that while the students were inducted into the order by a particular shaykh there existed within the Makkan network of teaching a set of complementarities that reinforced and strengthened what each of the others were teaching.

Amongst his renowned fellow students in Makkah were Shaykh ʿAbd Allāh Bā Kathīr (who was the head of the Bā Kathīr delegation that arbitrated in the *Jumʿa* Dispute at

the Cape in 1914), Sayyid ‘Abbās al-Mālikī (grandfather of the late Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī, and later chief *Qāḍī* in Makkah), and the aforementioned Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd Quds.



Figure 20: Sayyid ‘Abbās al-Mālikī

A distinguishing feature of the Makkan ‘*ulamā* too, was their insistence on a scholarly grounding in both *taṣawwuf* and the *sharī‘a*. But while the two were never regarded as rigidly dichotomised polarities a thorough grounding in the *sharī‘a* was seen as an indispensable prerequisite for advanced studies in *taṣawwuf*. The entire system of education, however, was infused with the spirit of *taṣawwuf*.

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Under the guidance of the above-mentioned teachers, and numerous others too, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ therefore studied a wide variety of *sharī‘a*-related subjects such as *Usūl al-Fiqh* (The Principles of Islamic Law), *Fiqh* (Islamic Law), *Ḥadīth* literature, *Muṣṭalaḥa l-Ḥadīth* (The Principles of Ḥadīth Studies), *Tafsīr* (Qurānic Exegesis), *Ulūm al-Qurān* (The Principles of Quranic Exegesis), *Balāgha* (Arabic Rhetoric), *Naḥū* (Arabic Grammar), *Āyāt al-Aḥkām* (Detailed studies of the verses of the Qurān dealing specifically with Islamic Law), *Aḥādīth al-Aḥkām* (Detailed Studies of Ḥadīth literature dealing specifically with Islamic Law - the counterpart of *Āyāt al-Aḥkām*) and *al-Qawā‘id al-Fiqhiyya* (The Axioms of Fiqh).

Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ, it appears, was also a bibliophile. On his return to Cape Town he shipped hundreds of books dealing with each of the above-mentioned subjects, and more, such as histories on the lives of the Prophets, numerous works on *taṣawwuf* etc. His own approach and methodology of teaching as a reflection of what he learnt in Makkah shall be dealt with later during his period in Cape Town.



Figure 1: Sayyid 'Alawī al-Mālikī, son of 'Abbās al-Mālikī

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Meanwhile his sojourn in Makkah was also marked by a number of tragedies. As mentioned earlier, his father died in Makkah after performing his *ḥajj* and visiting him in 1890. He also married the sister of Dr A. Abdurahman, Ruqiyya Abdurahman. This marriage took place after the parents of Dr Aburahman, 'Abd Allah and Khadija, had escorted their son to Britain to pursue his medical studies. From Britain, in the company of their daughters, including Ruqiyya, they travelled to Makkah to perform their *ḥajj*. It was during this time that they met and married. Soon after the marriage she gave birth to a son, Abd Allah. The son died, and shortly after that his wife, Ruqiyya. His eldest brother, 'Abd al-Baṣīr, who came to visit him in 1895, also died in Makkah. Two years earlier, in 1893, his mother had died in Cape Town. Later he married an Arab woman, Jawāhir. After his return to Cape Town she failed to adapt to the conditions at the Cape and requested leave to return to Makkah. They divorced and she was sent home.

These personal tragedies, however, appear to have strengthened him in his firmness of purpose. According to oral accounts of numerous people who knew and met him, he had an almost inscrutable manner of dealing with the most difficult of situations. His conduct, manner, and general bearing many ascribed to his immersion in the teachings of *taṣawwuf*.

7.4.1.5 To Zanzibar

In about March of 1903 he left Makkah for Zanzibar where he stayed for a number of months. It appears that a post for a temporary assistant *Qāḍī* had emerged during that time, and that through the mediation of his fellow student Shaykh 'Abd Allāh Bā Kathīr, who was also a resident of Zanzibar, it was suggested that Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ be appointed to that position. This appointment was ratified by his teacher Shaykh 'Umar Bā Junayd.

According to Bang (n.d.: 10), Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ is listed as a “shaykh of the Alawī tradition, a teacher, and a scholar” by the foremost chronicler of the *Shāfiʿī ʿulamā* of East Africa, Abdallah Saleh Farsy, in his work *The Shāfiʿī ʿUlamā of East Africa, ca. 1830-1970: A Hagiographical Account*.

It was in Zanzibar that the relationship between Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sumayt - author of the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* - and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ was cemented. During his tenor as an assistant judge and teacher he was active in shaping the *mawḷūd* celebrations in Zanzibar. (Da Costa, 1994: 107). While he contributed to the organisation of these ceremonies he also adopted some of the indigenous practices which he, in turn, introduced into Cape Town. While in Zanzibar he also added a number of books to his already substantial collection. From Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sumayt he received at least twenty copies of the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb*. These copies were meant both for distribution amongst some of the Cape *ʿulamā* and for teaching his more advanced students.

Later that year, in July 1903, he finally decided to return to Cape Town.

7.4.1.6 Return to Cape Town: In the *Bā ʿAlawī* Tradition

Endemic to the Cape at the time were the continuing controversies and the by now increasingly senseless arguments and hostilities. Da Costa describes the Muslim social milieu he was entering in the following manner:

Shaykh Muhammad Salih arrived home in July 1903, blissfully unaware that he was coming into a community that was tearing itself apart on religious and religious-related controversies; and this in spite of its history as victims of European slave activities in Africa and Asia, and despite the depth of its suffering and humiliation at the Cape. (Da Costa, 1994: 107).

Newspaper descriptions of him as a Muslim “professor”, a “Mohammedan Bishop”, “Moslem Intelligence” etc. merely served to fuel the animosity against him. He was to meet with even greater opposition from certain quarters later on.

Meanwhile, as mentioned earlier, his wife failed to adjust to life at the Cape. He divorced her and sent her back to Makkah. There was no offspring from this marriage. Shortly after that in 1905 he married Kubra Toefy. This marriage produced fifteen children - eight daughters and seven sons.

For seventeen years after that he used his house as a base to teach his close students. He also taught at the Palm Street and the Nūr al-Ḥamadiyyah Mosques - both of which are situated in Long Street - and oftentimes conducted *Jum'ā ṣalāh* at the Jami'ah Mosque in Lower Chiappini Street.

In 1920, after the usual ritual of court cases and litigations, he successfully established the Azzawia Mosque. The inaugural *khuṭbah* (sermon) was delivered by the previously mentioned Sayyid Muṣṭafā 'Alī al-'Aydārūs of Surat in India. Amongst the delegation that was present at the opening were Sayyid 'Abd al-Ṣamaḍ al-Rifā'ī of the then Lourenzo Marques in Mocambique and Sayyid Muḥammad al-'Aydārūs of the Commores who later became the principal of the Zeerust High School in the Transvaal (North West Province)¹²⁹.

It was here that he set himself a programme of teaching that appears quite daunting in its presentation. According to Da Costa,

Shaykh Muhammad Salih continued a programme of teaching which has probably not been equalled by any other religious scholar in Cape Town. There is very little doubt that he made one of the greatest contributions to Islamic religious education in the history of Cape Town and its surroundings (if not in the whole country), and that he taught large numbers of students (commonly known in the Muslim community as *Zawiyah murids*). He therefore continued the tradition, in both the fields of education and *Tasawwuf*, that had been begun by the early Muslim "masters" at the Cape, such as Shaykh Yusuf of Faure, *Imam* Abdullah al-Mazlum (*Tuan Guru*), and *Tuan* Sa'id. (Da Costa, 1994: 111-2).

While some of the hostility continued in the form of labelling his followers as the “elitists of Walmer Estate” (Ebrahim, 2003: 21), by 1925 some of his efforts had finally won some adulation. Hoosain Ebrahim relates that some of the readers of the *Moslem Outlook* newspaper solicited the following:

When will other Imams follow the example of Shaykh Muhammad Salih Hendricks of Walmer Estate, who, every Sunday, expounds the Quran to a gathering of hundreds of Moslem (Muslim) men and women who would otherwise be less profitably engaged. (Ebrahim, 2003: 27).

According to family oral accounts he slept between 9:00 or 9:30 at night to 2:00 in the morning with an afternoon siesta of one hour after *Thubr* prayers and lunch. The rest of his time was almost exclusively dedicated to teaching. A daily regime of his took the following format:

- a) After *Fajr* (dawn) prayers he held classes for Imāms until shortly before 10:00am.
- b) From 10:00am he had special classes for members of the *Abli Bayt* (or Descendants of the Prophet [pbuh]) and a number of other students of Arab extraction. These classes were conducted entirely in Arabic.
- c) After *‘Aṣr* (late afternoon prayers) he conducted classes attended by younger members of the community, amongst whom were family members of the Habibia Mosque in Athlone.
- d) Between *Maghrib* (early evening prayers) and *‘Ishā* (late evening prayers) he held classes mostly focussed on Quranic reading and basic teachings of *Fiqh*.
- e) After *‘Ishā* he conducted classes for various groups based on the level of their advancement. During this time he also had a special group of about ten people to whom he taught advanced lessons on *taṣawwuf*.
- f) Sunday mornings he taught the *Iḥyā ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* of Imām al-Ghazālī from 11:00am to 12:30.

- g) Every alternate Sunday he held classes for ladies from 4:00pm to 5:30pm.
- h) Thursday evenings were exclusively dedicated to *Tafsīr*.

The works he predominantly taught according to subject were as follows:

In *Fiqh*:

- a) The *Risālat al-Jāmi'a* by Shaykh Aḥmad b. Zayn al-Ḥabshī - for beginners.
- b) The *Matn al-Ghāya wa l-Taqrīb* by al-Qāḍī Abū Shujā'a Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Aḥmad al-ʿAṣfhānī - for intermediate students.
- c) The *Sharḥ* (commentary) of the *Matn al-Ghāya wa l-Taqrīb* by Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī - for more advanced students.
- d) The *Mughnī al-Muḥtāj ilā Ma'rifat al-Ma'ānī Alfaẓ al-Minhāj* by Shaykh Muḥammad al-Khaṭīb al-Shirbīnī. This work is considered one of the most authoritative commentaries on the *Minhāj al-Ṭālibīn* of Imām Abū Zakariya b. Sharaf al-Nawawī. Shaykh ʿUmar Bā Junayd was considered the foremost specialist on this work during his time.
- e) *The Marāqiy al-Falāḥ Sharḥ Nūr al-Īdāḥ* by Shaykh Ḥasan b. ʿAmār b. ʿAlī al-Sharanbalālī al-Ḥanafī. This was one of the basic *ḥanafī* texts taught at the al-Zāwiya.

In *Tafsīr*:

- a) The *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* by Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ṣuyūṭī and Imām Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī
- b) The *Tafsīr al-Kabīr* of Imām Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

In *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*:

- a) The *al-Waraqāt* of Imām al-Ḥaramayn al-Juwaynī along with a number of commentaries on this work such as the *sharḥ* of Shaykh Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī, for example.
- b) The *al-Muṣtaṣfā* of Imām al-Ghazālī.
- c) The *Minhāj al-Wuṣūl ilā ʿIlm al-Uṣūl* by al-Qāḍī Naṣīr al-Dīn ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī l-Qāsim ʿAlī b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī.

In Arabic Grammar:

- a) The *al-Ajrumiyya*
- b) The *Alfiyyatu Mālik*

In *ʿAqīda*:

- a) The *ʿAqīdat al-ʿAwām* of Sayyid Aḥmad al-Marzūqī al-Mālikī al-Makkī.
- b) The *Umm al-Barābīn* of al-Sanūsī.
- c) The *Jawharat al-Tawhīd* of Imām Ibrāhīm al-Laqqānī along with a commentary of the *Jawharah* by Shaykh Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī.

In *Taṣawwuf*:

- a) The *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* by Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sumayt.
- b) The *Naṣāʾiḥ al-Dīniyya* of Sayyid ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAlawī al-Ḥaddād.
- c) The *ʾIḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn* of Imām al-Ghazālī along with its commentary by Sayyid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ḥusaynī al-Zabīdī entitled *Itḥāf al-Sādah bi Sharḥ ʾAsrār ʾIḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn*.

These works formed the core of the curriculum as it was taught at the al-Zāwiya over the years. The actual teaching, however, was complimented by numerous other works such as the encyclopaedic *al-Majmūʿ* of Imām al-Nawawī and the *Fatḥ al-Qadīr* of Ibn al-Humām of the *ḥanaḥī madhab*, for example.

This programme also constituted the core of the teachings as Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ had been taught in Makkah. Similar curricula will be encountered at most *Bā ʿAlawī* institutions throughout the Muslim world - the *Dār al-Muṣṭaphā* located in Tarīm in the Ḥaḍramawt being one of the better known at the moment.

The *adhkār* and *awrād* that were practiced are also firmly rooted in the *Bā ʿAlawī* tradition. These included recitals of the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād*, the *Rātīb al-ʿAydarūs*, and the *Rātīb al-Aṭṭās*. The former was performed on Thursday evenings, while the latter two were recited on Saturday Evenings. In his personal capacity or in the company of selected *murīds* he also performed a number of other litanies such as the *Dalāʾil al-Khayrāt* and the *dhikr* of the *Aṣḥāb al-Badr* in which the 313 names of those who fought at the Battle of Badr form the core of the litany. He also performed the *Khatm al-Khawājakān* according to both the *Qādirī* and *Naqshbandī* versions. To these liturgical practices Da Costa adds the *naṣr wa l-falāḥ*, the *durriyya*, and the *Yā Sīn* with the seven *mubīns*. (Da Costa, 1994: 113).

Most visible in his public *taṣawwuf* profile, however, was the attention he paid to the *mawlūd al-nabī* ceremony. He would spend up to three months in advance of

Rabī al-Awwal - the month in which the Prophet (saw) was born - in preparation of this celebration. There were three components to the celebrations: the men's *mawlūd*, the women's *mawlūd*, and the children's *mawlūd*. These were held, as they still are today, on different days of the week. The highlight of the celebrations was the women's *mawlūd*. Significant in his approach to the *mawlūd* practice was the fact that he only allowed regular students of his to participate in the *mawlūd jamā'a* (group). The *mawlūd* that was - and still is - recited at the al-Zāwiya is that of al-Barzanjī. Weeks before the actual ceremony he would teach the text of the *Barzanjī*, along with a number of commentaries on it, to his students. This he did to preclude the degeneration of the ceremony into mere entertainment - particularly of the competitive kind. As a typical *Bā 'Alawī* in the *Ḥijāzī* mould he was determined to maintain a balance between praxis and theory.

Three other orders into which Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ was inducted were the *Rifā'iyya*, the *Qādiriyya*, and the *Naqshbandīyya* orders. He was inducted into the *Rifā'i* order by Sayyid Mansūr al-Rifā'i who, as mentioned earlier, was the son of the Grand Shaykh of the *Rifā'i* order at the time, Sayyid Ḥamza al-Rifā'i. (Owaisi, 2001: 110). The wording of the *ijāza* granted clearly states that it is an *ijāza irshād* that entitled Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ to induct others into the order. His *Qādiri ijāza* was granted to him by Sayyid Muḥsin b. Sālīm al-ʿAydārūs from Makkah. (Owaisi, 2001: 110). The *Naqshbandī ijāza* was granted at a ceremony that was conducted by a *Naqshbandī* delegation from Madina at the shrine of Tuan Jaʿfar in 1934. At this ceremony (the *ilbās al-kbirqa*) he was invested with a green turban and a green *thawb*¹³⁰. The line of induction was through that of Shaykh Amīn al-Kurdī, author of the *Tanwīr al-Qulūb* - a copy of which was handed to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ at the investiture.

When his two sons, Shaykhs Mahdī and Ibrāhīm Hendricks returned from Makkah in 1936, he started applying himself more vigorously to his *taṣawwuf* activities. While he left them in charge of the various study circles that were structured according to different levels of advancement, he focussed largely on a smaller group designated almost entirely for *taṣawwuf* teachings. To this group he taught the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* of Sayyid Aḥmad b. Sumayt in the Arabic language. It was through the members of

this group that his *taṣawwuf* teachings and practices were continued through subsequent generations within the community. Some of them such as ‘Abd al-Wahhāb Abrahams and Muḥammad Nūr Toefy presided as imāms at the mosque. Along with the latter two, other close students of the shaykh such as Aḥmad Sirāj (Seraai) and Muḥammad Nūr Bardien (Ghudayfi) were instrumental in the form and structure that the *mawlūds* took. In the typical manner of *ṣūfī* lodges they, along with a number of others, were resident students at the al-Zāwiya. Others, such as Hajji Isma‘īl Salām (d. 1978), were granted *ijāza* in the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād* which he in turn handed down to his son-in-law, Khidr Parker. When Khidr died in 1991 the son of the late Hajji Isma‘īl, Jamīl, took charge of the *Ḥaddād dhikr*. This tradition still continues in that family. (Da Costa, 1994: 164). In this way, with many other imāms and families, the *Bā ‘Alawī* and *mawlūd* practices were widely disseminated throughout the community.

Amongst the more prominent of the Cape imāms who initially studied with Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ was Imām ‘Abd al-Baṣīr Baṣīr (d. 1962). Imām ‘Abd al-Baṣīr later left for Makkah where he became a student of Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd. Amongst the practices he encouraged were the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād*, the *Rātīb al-‘Aṭṭās*, and the *Rātīb al-Naṣr wa l-Falāḥ* - copies of which, according to Da Costa “he had written in impeccable Arabic script.” (Da Costa, 1994: 164-5). According to Da Costa too, it “is highly probable that Imām Abd al-Basir had received these practices from Shaykh Muhammad Salih Hendricks and/or from his own teachers in Makkah” and continues by adding that it “is interesting to note that during the lifetime of Imam Abd al-Basir...the Bo-Kaap was characterised by a large number of *Maloud Jama‘at* which, amongst other things, celebrated the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (saws) every year.” (Da Costa, 1994: 165). There was not a student, and particularly the imāms amongst them, who were not introduced to these practices by Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣālīḥ. The likelihood, therefore, is that Imām ‘Abd al-Baṣīr was initially introduced to these practices by him which were later reinforced by his teachers in Makkah.

One of his young protégès at the time, Hanief Allie - ex-principal of Habibia Primary School and who later married his daughter, Sakīna - continued many of the *Bā*

‘*Alawī* practices in his personal capacity and also introduced the *mawlūd* celebrations into Habibia Primary. This became one of the major annual events at the school. He was also one of the lead reciters of the *mawlūd Barzanjī* at the al-Zāwiya.

Beyond his *taṣawwuf* activities he also played a major role in trying to unite the imāms around the *Jum‘ah* controversy that split the Cape Muslim community in 1914. The foreign delegation that was invited to solve the problem was headed by Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ’s close friend and colleague, Shaykh ‘Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Sālim Bā Kathīr. According to Da Costa the “collapse in the agreement as a result of the attitude of Imam Amino must have caused considerable consternation to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ [who] had hoped to strengthen the Islamic base of the religious activities of the Muslims.” (Da Costa, 1994: 110).

He also played a significant role in fostering an awareness of the Islamic dress code for women. Despite the antagonism he encountered from the community there were many who responded to this call. According to Da Costa this was “a major victory for Islam in a country in which the dominant culture was (and still is) colonialist and Christian. By covering their *aurahs* the Muslim women sent out a powerful signal that they wanted to adhere to the cultural values of Islam.” (Da Costa, 1994: 109).

He also wrote two published works on *fiqh*. The one is entitled *Kitab Van Hadji op die Mathv, Hab, Sha, Ve, A* (The Book of Ḥajj on the Madhab of Shāfi‘ī) and the other on *ṣalāh* entitled *Deze Ketab es van Salaah op de Madhab van Emaam Shafvia* (This is a Book on Ṣalāh According to the Madhab of Imām al-Shāfi‘ī). A third written work of his exists in manuscript form in the al-Zāwiya library and is a fairly comprehensive treatment of Islamic inheritance.

In 1945 after 43 years of religious service he passed away at his home. While the *murīds* of the al-Zāwiyah were divided on the matter, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ had apparently requested during his lifetime that a shrine should not be built over his grave. After a lengthy deliberation in the presence of his two sons, Shaykhs Mahdi and Ibrahim, they decided against the construction of a shrine.

7.5 Conclusion

During 1880 and 1945 - the year in which the Muslim Judicial Council was founded - there were numerous other shaykhs and imāms who significantly contributed to the perpetuation of the *ṣūfī*-inspired practices that found a home on Cape soil since the inception of Islām at the Cape. Amongst these shaykhs, some of whom died in the post-1945 era, were Imām Ismail Ṭālib (d.1962) who studied in Makkah until 1898 and encouraged the recital of the *Mawlūd al-Barzanjī*, Imām ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Qāsim Gamieldien (d.1921) who translated the *Kanz al-‘Arsh* (Treasure of the Throne) in 1907. Shaykh Ismail Edwards (d.1958), mentioned previously and who had studied in Cairo until 1930, produced a *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād* text accompanied by a transliteration and a translation into Afrikaans. (Da Costa, 1994: 135-5; Davids, 1991: 148, 151). The prevailing historical literature do not present these figures as *ṣūfī* shaykhs per se and their *ṭarīqa* affiliations remain somewhat obscure. In contrast to the cases of the personalities focussed on in this chapter, evidence of any organised transmission of the known *ṣūfī* practices appear difficult to establish with respect to the abovementioned shaykhs and a number of others who were known for their promotion and encouragement of these practices during their lifetime. Extensive research is still required in this respect, particularly with regard to some of the Egyptian-trained scholars who came under the influence of neo-*Muṭazalite* views. They appeared quite at ease with *mawlūd* celebrations but articulated intrinsically anti-*taṣawwuf* views. Anomalies of this type are not uncommon during the post-1945 period.

The *ṣūfī*-inspired scholars covered in this chapter, however, were unambiguous in their teachings and practices of *taṣawwuf*. In fact *taṣawwuf* - while firmly based in normative interpretations of the *sharī‘a* - appeared to constitute the most central aspect of their Islamic activities. As Moosa observed, and quoted previously, it was only in the early twentieth century that trained *‘ulamā* exerted any real influence in South Africa.” (Moosa, 1995: 141). Between the Habibia Soofie and the al-Zāwiyah institutions the Cape witnessed an unparalleled incursion of classical Islamic texts into the Cape Muslim milieu.

The personal contribution of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ to the al-Zāwiyah library, for example, numbered in the hundreds. Many of these works of which there were multiple copies were distributed to an inner circle of his students who had been taught the Arabic language, and also to many imāms at the Cape who had taken their initial training from him.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī, on the other hand, appears to have followed in the tradition of the early Muslim savants in that he had composed, quantitatively speaking, a number of works that were only matched by the output of Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru; and, somewhat later, by Shaykh Ismail Hanief Edwards. Davids ascribed the presence of the “pen, ink, and ink-holder” which Jeffreys observed at the shrine of Tuan Nūr al-Mubīn in 1936 to the possibility that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm may have composed most of his works at this shrine. (Davids, n.d: 3, 20).

This period, however, may best be described as that in which the *taṣawwuf* orders crystallised and came to fruition after nearly a century in which both the teachings of *taṣawwuf* and the *sharīaḥ* suffered considerably as a consequence of both a hostile social environment and an inordinate display of ambition by largely incompetent religious leaders. While many of these problems continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the level of Islamic education, spirituality, and culture had doubtlessly received an enormous boost through the learning, commitment, and efforts of these scholars.

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Interview with Nusayba Davids, Newfields, 14 November 2005

CHAPTER EIGHT

Contentions, Conclusions, Suggestions, and an “Afterword”

8.1 Contentions and Conclusions

The aim of this study has not been to examine the merits or demerits of *taṣawwuf* traditions, nor has it been designed - although oblique references are evident on occasion - to address concerns such as those raised by Tayob in his analysis of contemporary *ṣūfism* in South Africa where he states:

The great control of the shaykhs over unquestioning followers, the exaggerated religious claims, are examples of issues that have not been dealt with...In this regard, it seems that the turn to *ṣūfism* may be less conscious than I have given it credit. The awareness of symbols, their elusiveness, and the search for the core needs a greater sense of alertness. (Tayob, 1999: 13).

Apparently apodictic or even *quasi a posteriori* statements such as these are often in need of critical analyses themselves. Engaging the challenges inherent in such statements would, of course, naturally produce their own and oftentimes interesting results.

Seminal to this study, however, has been Tayob's contention that it is difficult to speak about truly mystical traditions at the Cape even during the earlier periods of *taṣawwuf* as they emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries. (Tayob, 1999: 12). If by “mystical traditions” here are meant the formal transmission of particular doctrines and methods through unbroken chains of invested *khalīfas*, then this study purports to have shown, contra Adil Bradlow, that this has indeed been the case. Telling in this respect are the two cases of Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar and Tuan Guru. In the former case, and prior to Suleman Dangor's pathbreaking translation of his *Zubdat al-Asrār* in 1991, there is a complete absence of his doctrines, thought and

methodologies from the Cape Muslim cultural, social, and educational milieus. Another possibility for this absence is the traditional *Bā ‘Alawī* resistance to Ibn ‘Arabian thought - a possibility that may further indicate the broad sweep of *Bā ‘Alawī* influences at the Cape. In Tuan Guru’s case, speculations about his *Bā ‘Alawī* connections only emerge in academic writings and discussions after 1994. Auwais Rafudeen’s post-doctoral work on the Compendium of Tuan Guru completed towards the end of December in 2004 is the first substantial attempt to locate Tuan Guru in that tradition. Both of these cases, therefore, point to two imperatives: one, the need for more detailed case studies of personages such as Shaykh Yūsuf and Tuan Guru; and two, the importance of the Arabic language in Islamic Studies with a view to gaining greater access to the thought and ideas of these personages. Much of the random speculations so evident in earlier studies may be attributed to a lack of access to this language.

Nonetheless, while there certainly appears to have been an absence of traditional structures such as the *ijāza* system, for example, through which the more advanced doctrines and teachings of *taṣawwuf* are normally perpetuated, the spirit of *taṣawwuf* appears to have been preserved in the litanies, *mawlūds*, and shrines of those regarded as *awliyā*.

Another aim of the study has been to show to what extent *taṣawwuf*, in all its diversity, has been represented at the Cape as measured against a broader historical unfolding of *taṣawwuf* in general. Towards this end an entire chapter was devoted to the tracing of the trajectory of *taṣawwuf* through its early origins to the post “revivalist” spirit of *taṣawwuf* during the nineteenth century and beyond. A comparison between this broader development of *taṣawwuf*, along with the multifarious character of its historical expressions, appears to show that *taṣawwuf* may be far more deeply entrenched and represented in Cape Muslim society than initially believed.

Taṣawwuf, as an overarching term designed to both explore and embrace the totality of Islamic Spirituality, oftentimes manifests itself at two different but complimentary levels - the communal and the personal. At the communal or group level it manifests itself as a path, a way, or an order, commonly known as a *ṭarīqa*.

This organised expression of *taṣawwuf* only emerged during the thirteenth century with the founding of the *Qādirī ṭarīqa*. At the personal level, on the other hand, *taṣawwuf* often expresses itself as a spiritual effusion compatible with the spiritual-cum-psychological tendencies or predispositions of the individual. These tendencies have traditionally expressed themselves as *zuhd* (asceticism), *malāmatiyya* (votaries of contempt), *‘ishq* (intense lovers of the Prophet [pbuh]), *jadhb* (holy fools) etc. and are traceable to the very early years of the inception of Islām. Moreover, these tendencies are not the product of, nor limited to, any particular order, but may find their expression in varying degrees and emphases in any order. This study has attempted to show, and possibly for the first time, that *taṣawwuf* in both these aspects were represented at the Cape from as early as the eighteenth century. Hence the view that *taṣawwuf*, as measured against the historical expression of *taṣawwuf* elsewhere, may have been more broadly represented than initially believed. These aspects, however, as it is with so many other aspects raised by this study, beg for further investigation.

Another important distinction that appears not to have been addressed in previous studies of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape is that between *taṣawwuf* and the *mujarrabāt*. To this end this study has made a distinction between *taṣawwuf* as “spirituality” and the *mujarrabāt* as “spiritualism”. David Yamane and James Mclenon’s respective differentiations - mentioned in Chapter Six - between “spirituality” as a project centred on an inner life oriented towards God and the realisation of the sacred; and “spiritualism” as one that has as its primary focus the production of states and events that are miraculous in nature, serve as informative criteria to establish the essential difference between *taṣawwuf* and the *mujarrabāt*. For this reason alone it is worth re-examining and recapitulating at some length some of the views expressed earlier in another Chapter.

In line with the above-mentioned distinctions and definitions this study therefore places the *ratiep* practices at the Cape, unlike Goolam Karim (1998: 4), in the *mujarrabāt* rather than the *taṣawwuf* category. While the approach of this study concurs with Karim in that the “notions of great and little, folk, popular and mystical serve rather a taxonomic function than an appraisal of the veiled canvass that is

Islam...” (Karim, 1998: 196) there is yet a need for a conceptualisation of categories that approximates to traditional articulations of the subject at hand. Not even a phenomenological study - which Karim’s is and which this study similarly espouses - can ignore this fact. Virtually every standard work on *taṣawwuf* - while often referencing miraculous events as asides to some significant occasion - eschew its production, or even expectation, as a potential hindrance to spiritual development. The *karāmāt* (miraculous events) that virtually all *ṣūfīs* acknowledge are those of the *unsolicited* variety that are normally read as a manifestation of God’s providence. The active inducement of the miraculous, or the manipulation of spiritual forces to effect such an occurrence, has, on the other hand, always been classified as an act of the *mujarrabāt*. The purpose here, of course, is neither to denigrate the *ratiep* nor to merely dismiss it as an aberrant act, but to contextualise it within the much broader framework of Islamic Spirituality. While Karim makes a spirited case to locate the *ratiep* in *taṣawwuf* as such by invoking a plethora of theory in support of such a view, the difficulties encountered in such an exercise yet remain quite patent. In brief, he is forced to reinvent mainstream *Sunnis* as a regnant nomo-centric majority pitted against an essentially *eros*-centric *taṣawwuf* that happens, in this case, to share a common emotional base with the spirit of a ”protestant” *Shī‘ism*. Given the somewhat confusing leaps and shifts in his discussion on *Sunnism* and *Shī‘ism*, he proffers the following distinguishing features of the two groups:

Sunni piety is formalistic and scripturalistic, based on the texts of the Qur‘an and the *Hadith*, whilst the *Shi‘a* interpretation owes an emotional allegiance to the Prophet, and his family, followed by a long chain of Imams and living divines whose qualifications are based on both external and internal piety rather than scholastic achievements. (Karim, 1998: 197).

The *ratiep* ritual, according to him, “demonstrates the nexus between the protestant Shia‘ expression of Islam and a dramatic form of *tasawwuf*[which] is evinced by the

inclusion of chains in the ritual, symbolic of the journey of the Prophet's martyred grandson at Kerbala as prisoners..." (Karim, 1998: 197).

The problematics that emerge from such an analysis are many. For example, would the opposition of the celebrated *ṣūfī* saint and poet al-Jāmī⁶, and many like him, be included in the rejectionist nomo-centric *Sunni* majority? Given the scepticism with which the *ratiep* ceremony has been received within *Sunnī taṣawwuf* then this assertion would most likely include the vast majority of *Sunnī ṣūfīs*. Few - regardless of personal taste and inclination - would hazard the expulsion of a figure like al-Jāmī into a "formalistic nomo-centric expression of Islam", particularly if such definitions are rendered in service and support of a single act such as the *ratiep*.

Moreover, and notwithstanding the ecumenism of Shaykh Faḍl Allāh al-Haeri, *Shī'ism* has always been an implacable opponent of *taṣawwuf*. One of the main reasons for this opposition is the fact that the *ṣūfī* shaykhs have always been viewed as a threat to the infallibility of the Imāms¹³¹. (al-Shakā⁶, 1983: 179). Comparisons between the *ta'ziya* ritual held in honour of Imām Ḥusayn (ra) on the tenth of Āshūra during the month of Muḥarram have little else in common apart from the public and "theatrical" nature of the event. Karim's own extensive comparison between the *ratiep* and the *ta'ziya* ceremony (Karim, 1998: 124-6) does not take the argument significantly beyond this observation. The physical lashings that accompany the *ta'ziya* ritual are designed to inflict pain as an act of redemption for their supposed failure and betrayal of Ḥusayn at Kerbala, and not, as it is the case with *ratiep*, to demonstrate the superiority of the spirit over matter. The resemblances are purely external. The phrase "protestant Shia" too, as Karim expresses it, is an oxymoron if it is not meant in other than its purely linguistic meaning as those who protested against the Umayyad hostility towards the family of the Prophet (pbuh). Other than this, *Shī'ism* is far more hierarchical, scripturalist, and organised in the Roman Catholic sense than *Sunni* Islām. In fact, one of the challenges that *Sunnī* Islām faces is the near absence of a centralised ecclesiology¹³². One of the benefits of this is that it allows for a degree of elasticity and fluidity of opinions - ultimately represented in the four schools of thought - that are absent in more hierarchically based religious structures. One of its problems - and depending

entirely on one's personal perspectives and approaches in this matter - is that the *Sunnī* world invariably experiences a degree of difficulty in reaching consensus on certain pressing issues. This indeed is the case with *ratiep*. While the majority of scholars - *ṣūfī* or otherwise - have expressed their disapproval, regardless of whether it is conceptualised as a *mujarrab* or *taṣawwuf* act, there remains a significant minority who have expressed their approval. Conceptualising the *ratiep*, however, as a ritual of the *mujarrabāt* forms - forms that are common to almost all religions - would obviate the need of having to reinvent standard typologies in the manner of Karim¹³³.

Within the context of Cape slavery, from beneath the debris of their human subjugation, Karim's observation, as quoted in Chapter Six, that the *ratiep* was indeed a "spiritual concert of physical triumph" (Karim, 1998: 100) is doubtlessly true. But as a triumphant act of reclaiming the power of the spirit over the body, and of demonstrating the power of God in theatre to others, it corresponds in spirit and essence to the standard *mujarrabāt* practices. In fact, as an act of "spiritualism triumphant", it hardly stands in need of *taṣawwuf* to buttress the interest and fascination it has exercised over the minds of people.

Another area of contention that this study has sought to address are the near theomachaic claims that with the establishment of the first *madrasa* in 1795 and the first mosque in 1804 as symbols of institutionalised Islam, a *sharī'a*-centric Islām now entered to displace a *ṭarīqa*-centric Islām. This appears to be the view of both Bradlow, as previously mentioned, and Karim (1998: 199). This study has attempted to show that with the institutionalisation of Islām and the newly-found freedom to practice its rites the *sharī'a*'s aspect merely gained a greater visibility. The *ṭarīqa* aspects continued as they were originally taught - through praxis in the form of litanies and *mawlūds* etc. The romanticisation of the pre-Guru period as a predominantly *ṭarīqa*-based period is certainly tempting given the general dearth of information available in this period. A scrutiny of the primary sources, however, and particularly those of Shaykh Yūsuf, clearly indicates that very little of his *taṣawwuf* teachings, if any at all, found an entry point into eighteenth or nineteenth century Islām. The practices he instituted, nonetheless, were almost certainly perpetuated by

those who had access to him. These practices, in turn, were supplemented and reinforced by a number of Muslim leaders who arrived at the Cape throughout the eighteenth century.

The problems that beset the Muslim community during the post-Guru era were almost undoubtedly of an institutional nature that had little in common with either *taṣawwuf* or the *sharīʿa*. In fact, one could well argue that it was in the absence of a firm grounding in the *sharīʿa* that the problems found the space to escalate in the way that they did. This would certainly not be an implausible contention. Moreover, the process of institutionalisation has never been without its concomitant allurements to power and position. This was the case even during the so-called High Caliphal days of Islām. All the four eponymous founders of the *madhāhib* (sing. *madhab*) - Imām Mālik, Imām Abū Ḥanīfa, Imām al-Shāfiʿī, and Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal - suffered as a result of their opposition to the corrupting influences of institutionalisation. Ebrahim Moosa, in his most recent work, *Ghazālī and the Poetics of Imagination*, captures Imām al-Ghazālī's attitude towards the potentially corrupting influences of institutionalisation in an excellent translation of a passage from Ghazālī's *Mizān al-ʿAmal* (Balance of Deeds) in the following manner:

In some parts of the world, whenever there is cohesion in a sect or discursive tradition [*madhab*] and those who vie for political office fear that they will fail to engender subservience, they proceed to invent issues! They then create the impression that it is necessary to create division and promote prejudice. So many people will dispute whether the official flag should be black or red. One group will say: "The true flag is black." Another will say: "No, it's the red one!" And so the goals of the leaders are accomplished in making the masses subservient to the extent of getting them entangled in a false conflict. While the masses mistakenly believe it to be a vital matter, the leadership knows fully what the

real purpose was in fabricating this matter. (Moosa, 2005: 256).

Mistaking the institutional conflicts at the Cape for a hegemonic entry of a *sharīʿa*-centric Islām is tantamount to inventing a map for a place that does not exist, and then resolutely proceeding to believe in its existence. Moreover, all “centricities” are in need of an established core. It is very unlikely that the supposed dominant core of the *sharīʿa* existed at that time in the manner which some of the prevailing historical accounts project them. Even in the Compendium of Tuan Guru matters of *ʿaqīda* and *taṣawwuf* as praxis are the dominant themes. By the mid-nineteenth century, while the litanies and *mawlūds* steadily sauntered on in the mosques, homes, and langgars, the broader Muslim community had already started to smart under the growing awareness of their rapidly increasing ignorance of *sharīʿ* matters. This culminated in the early 1860s, as we have seen, in a desperate plea for expert assistance from abroad.

The period between 1880 and 1945 is the one that witnessed an unprecedented, yet limited, introduction of a number of trained *ṣūfī* scholars into the Cape Muslim milieu. This period, by virtue of the extensive primary material that is extant, has been the most challenging to address. While there can be little doubt that this period inaugurated the crystallisation of the *ṣūfī* orders at the Cape in a manner in which it had not been possible to achieve earlier in its history, the fact remains that it is equally impossible to do full justice to this period within the confines of a single chapter. Virtually every single *ṣūfī* shaykh referred to in Chapter Seven is in need of an independent treatment. A more in depth study of this period - including a study of certain personages not even mentioned in this Chapter - may yet prove to controvert many of the assumptions implicit in that Chapter. That, indeed, would be a welcome development. The histories of the people residing in the Faure region - home of Shaykh Yūsuf - for example, is potentially one such area.

Moreover, the background to *taṣawwuf* provided in Chapter Two, and the genesis and unfolding of Islām in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, India, the East African Coast, and the Ḥaḍramawt as presented in Chapter Three, have been designed with

the specific aim of acting as a critique to the overworked and reductionist charge that all forms of locally-based *taṣawwuf* and *mujarrabāt* expressions of Islām - particularly in Indonesia - are little more than syncretistic pockets of older Hindu and Animistic forms of mysticism. This critique is then sustained as an important sub-theme throughout the dissertation. In their discussions on the “local” and “global” in Islam, Talal Asad and Van Bruinessen have proven indispensable to the theoretical underpinnings and assumptions originally brought to this dissertation.

8.2 Recommendations for Future Research

In general, it is hoped that this dissertation - with all its limitations - would provide a workable point of departure for future studies in this area. In this respect two key tasks this dissertation has set itself were:

- a) to act as a corrective to a number of presumed inaccuracies in the historical data of some of the prevailing historical literature dealing with the same or similar subject matter, and
- b) to provide new information and insights on the nature and character of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape.

Others have served as challenging and provocative foils to much of what has contributed to the making of this dissertation. It is hoped that, in the attempt to accomplish the two latter-mentioned goals, that this dissertation would render a similar service.

By far the single most important academic challenge that remains is to engage a study of individual shaykhs who have contributed significantly to the culture of *taṣawwuf* at the Cape - particularly in those cases where a substantial amount of primary sources are available. Amongst these personalities are Shaykh Yūsuf himself, Tuan Guru, Imam Ismail Dea Malela and Imām Jalīl Dea Malela, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī, Imām ‘Abd al-Laṭīf of Habibia, Sayyid Muḥsin al-‘Aydārūs, and Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks.

There can be little doubt, however, with the number of primary sources lodged in numerous homes at the Cape and the extensive nature of privately-based *dhikr* groups and *mawḷūd jamā‘ats*, that this area of study is yet in need of extensive

excavation. Further investigation of the primary sources may also enable more complete studies of those personages not mentioned above. The availability of more primary sources and information on Paaï Schaapie and Sayyid Alawī of Mocha, for example, would substantially enrich our understanding of the impact of *taṣawwuf* on the Cape. A thorough investigation, as intimated previously, also needs to be made of the residents of the Faure area. With the roots of many of them in the *Ḥaḍramawt*, such an investigation would compliment to a considerable extent the impact of *Bā ‘Alawī* practices on the Cape.

8.3 An “Afterword”: Beyond 1945

In the strict literary sense of the term, this is not an “Afterword”. I have named it such, however, for the reason that the original project of this dissertation was meant to equally incorporate an analysis of the post-1945 period into this dissertation. From the outset, however, this journey proved to be one of immense discovery. One such discovery was that little substantial, in fact, and contrary to my expectations, existed on the impact and influence of *taṣawwuf* as such on the Cape Muslim community - particularly during the pre-1945 era. This demanded a rapid revision of the initial goals set for this study. The decision was then taken to contribute to a fuller treatment of this period rather than present a more diluted version of the impact of *taṣawwuf* as it unfolded over the course of three centuries up to the present time.

As an additional aid to future researchers, even if it is by way of providing a small peg on which to suspend an idea, or by way of adding a contentious point, I conclude this dissertation with a brief overview of the post-1945 era.

The establishment of the Muslim Judicial Council in 1945 inaugurated a new era at the Cape.

Amongst the shaykhs who made their contributions well into the second half of the twentieth century but whose impact was already felt in the pre-1945 period were Shaykh Isma‘īl Ḥanief (d.1958), Shaykh Shākier Gamiendien, Shaykh Iḥsān Gamiendien, Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Dien, Shaykh Āmin Davids, Shaykh Aḥmad Behaardien (d.1973), Shaykh Mahdī Hendricks (d.1981), and Shaykh Ibrāhim

Hendricks (d.1966). The latter three, all of whom studied in Makkah, along with Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Dien who studied in Egypt, were staunch proponents of the *tasawwuf* perspectives. Others too, who made significant contributions were Shaykh Muḥammad Tayb Jassiem (d.1972) and Shaykh Abd Allāh Jamāl al-Dīn (d.1948).

By the 1950s and 1960s numerous other *‘ulamā* were returning from Makkah and Egypt, each a proponent of the particular perspectives they had embraced during their years of study.

By the early 1970s the Cape Muslim community started to feel the brunt of a new conflict as the differing perspectives coalesced, jostled, and finally triggered into combat mode. The first recorded instance of such a conflict is recorded by Da Costa:

Of course, the growth of *tasawwuf* did not go unchallenged in the Muslim community, and there have been a number of examples of very vocal opposition to its teachings and its spread. For example, in 1970, matters came to a head with the visit of *Maulana* Muhammad Ibrahim Khuster. According to reports in *Muslim News*, members of the *Tablighi Jama‘* under the leadership of Abd al-Rahman Salie, Shaykh Umar Gabier, the chairperson of the Muslim Judicial Council at the time, and Shaykh Abu Bakr Najaar, also then a member of the Council, came out strongly against some of the ideas expressed by *Maulana* Muhammad Ibrahim Khuster during his lecture tour of the Cape Peninsula that year. This opposition to the *tasawwuf* perspective degenerated into attempts to disrupt the *Maulana’s* lectures. (Da Costa, 1994: 138).

Noteworthy, however, in this documentation of the conflict is the fact that Shaykh Aḥmad Behaardien, the then President of the Muslim Judicial Council, had come out strongly in support of the *tasawwuf* perspective. (Da Costa, 1994: 138). Mawlānā

Khuster, who made a number of visits to Cape Town starting in 1968, eventually established the Sunni Razvi Society International at the Cape. (Owaisi, 2001: 112).

Indeed, the period spanning the thirty years between 1960 and 1990 was one of extraordinary ferment.

Apart from Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī who arrived for his second visit in 1953 and the *Naqshbandī* shaykh from Syria Sayyid ‘Abd al-Qādir who arrived in 1950 and who was the *murshid* of Imām Ḥasan Walele, a number of other eminent *ṣūfī* personalities had also left their mark on the Cape. Amongst these were the renowned Faḥr al-Raḥmān al-Anṣārī al-Qādirī who visited the Cape during 1970 and 1972. It appears that he met with no opposition on both visits. His lasting impact is evident in a work entitled *Islam to the Modern Mind*, edited and compiled by Yasien Mohamed and Mahdie Kriel, and published by Hidden Treasure Press in 1999.

Later the Ḥusami Mosque in Cravenby was established by Sayyid Ḥusamuddin al-Qādirī who hailed from Karda in Kokan, India. (Owaisi, 2001: 112). This mosque has enjoyed a short but energetic role in the promotion of *taṣawwuf* ideas in the Cape. Sayyid Husammudin also rallied a significant number of *murīds* in service of the *Qādirī ṭarīqa*. The present imām at the mosque is Shaykh Fakhruddin Ahmed Owaisi a young, dynamic exponent of *taṣawwuf* teachings.

Another *ṣūfī* line that has made a significant impact on Cape *taṣawwuf* is the *Ashrafi Chisiti* order. A large number of Muslims - particularly of Indian extraction - were initiated into this order on the two occasions that Pir Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ghafūr Bakhshullah Shah al-Ashrafī visited the Cape in 1981 and 1985. The *Ashrafi* originally established a mosque in the Grassy Park area. The Grassy Park mosque under the leadership of the Zalgaonker family has since hosted a number of other eminent shaykhs of the *Ashrafi* order such as Mawlānā Madni al-Jilānī and Mawlānā Hashmī Jilānī. (Owaisi, 2001: 112).

Yet more *ṣūfī* masters from the Indian sub-continent were forthcoming in the figures of Ḥaḍrat Ambar Shah Warisi, who, it was said, travelled across the Indo-Pak subcontinent in *iḥrām* clothing while spreading the teachings of *taṣawwuf*. According to Owaisi, too, it was he who had “popularised the Chisti practice of holding Qawwali gatherings.” (Owaisi, 2001: 112). Another, Ḥaḍrat Khālid Shah

(d.1984) who hailed from Sind in Pakistan made a number of visits to the Cape since 1966 and established the *Ṣābirī* branch of the *Chistī* order. The *Chistī* order was further reinforced by the visit of a renowned *Chistī* shaykh, Pir Maḥbūb, ‘Alī Shah, who, according to Owaisi, “was the grandson of the most eminent Ṣūfī saint of Kokan (India) in this century, Khawaja Faqir Muhammad Shah (d.1992).” (Owaisi, 2001: 112). Khawaja Muhammad Shah and Sufi Saheb were colleagues and students of the same shaykh.

A major boost to the *Qādirī* order also emerged in the person of Ḥaḍrat Zayn al-‘Ābidīn al-Qādirī who also visited the Cape on a number of occasions starting in 1961 with his last visit ending in 1983. He was also responsible for the founding of the *ṣūfī* centre, the Ghawthiya Manzil, in Athlone in 1980. (Da Costa, 1994: 138). Ḥaḍrat Zayn al-‘Ābidīn enjoyed a wide support from different layers and sectors of the Cape Muslim community.

In between the staggered florescence of these *ṣūfī* orders emerged a number of youth and student organisations who were quite radically different in orientation to these *ṣūfī* orders. Prominent amongst these were the Muslim Youth Movement founded in Durban in 1970 (Tayob, 1995: 106), The Muslim Students Association first established at the University of Cape Town in 1968 (Tayob, 1995: 110), and the Call of Islam founded by the then Mawlānā Farid Esack who broke away from the MYM during 1983. (Tayob, 1995: 151-2). While it is interesting to note that Mawlānā Faḍl al-Raḥmān al-Anṣārī was invited to the first annual convention of the MYM, who, according to Tayob, represented “a crystallization of the modern and traditional in contemporary Islam”, it was in fact the Call of Islam that was closer to a *ṣūfī* orientation than both the MSA and the MYM. This is evidenced by a Handbook composed by Farid Esack for the spiritual edification of the members of the Call of Islam. The Handbook is replete with *ṣūfī* teachings and references. The MYM and the MSAs, on the other hand, never embraced the *ṣūfī* perspectives of Mawlānā al-Anṣārī and progressively moved in the direction of reformist and revivalist interpretations of Islam. The mutations and genesis of these movements are both complex and multivalent and impossible to do justice to in an “afterword” of this

nature. Abdulkader Tayob's *Islamic Resurgence in South Africa* has dealt extensively with these issues and is seminal to any further exploration in this regard.

During 1985, however, another debate erupted in public between Mawlānā Ibrahim Adam and the Sunni Council of South Africa. The charge was that the Deoband-cum-tabligh oriented Mawlānā Adam had delivered a scathing but false attack against Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī by claiming that he “had bought the Khilafat by elevating Ala Hazrat (Imam Ahmad Raza Khan) to the status of the Prophet.” (Muslim News, Friday, 15 March, 1985). The debate escalated into a heated public one with a broader focus on the differences between *Wahhābism* and *Sunnism*. “Wahhabism is the crux of the problem” stated a Muslim News heading. (Muslim News, Friday, 15 March, 1985). Mawlānā Ibrahim Adam was invited to a debate at the Ghawthiya Manzil in Athlone by the Sunni Council represented by Mawlānā Abd al-Hādī al-Qādirī and Mawlāna Ahmad Mukaddam al-Qādirī. Mawlāna Ibrahim Adam failed to make his appearance.

To add to the growing complexity of the theological contours at the Cape, numerous young Cape Muslims, and particularly those who had received their initial Islamic education from Imām Ismail Johnstone, departed for the Madina University in Madina, Saudi Arabia. Imam Ismail, previously a student of Shaykh Ismail Ḥanif Edwards (Ebrahim, 2004: 128), had later in his life fully endorsed the teachings of Shaykh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb of Qasīm in the Najd region of Saudi Arabia. In their earlier incarnations most of his students had been similarly inspired by their teacher. Invigorated by confirmation of these teachings at the Madina University they returned to the Cape to re-engage the debates on *bid‘a* (reprehensible innovations), *shirk* (idolatry), and the legitimacy of *taṣawwuf* within the broader framework of Islām - *taṣawwuf*, in this perspective of course, constituting the greatest potential for *bid‘a* and *shirk*.

With the Shaykh Yūsuf Tercentenary Celebrations in 1994 - which in itself posed a serious challenge to the *Wahhābite*-inspired Muslim thinkers and ‘*ulamā*’ - a new consciousness of the intellectual and spiritual role of Shaykh Yūsuf was inaugurated. Previous to that, and in the throes of a rapidly changing political landscape that engulfed apartheid South Africa, most of the studies and Islamic Movements in the

Cape - such as the Qiblah Mass Movement founded by political activist Achmat Cassiem - focussed largely on the political relevance the earlier Muslim exiles and savants held for Muslims at the Cape. That was to change dramatically in the post-1994 period. New reflections on the life and thought of Shaykh Yūsuf became a central feature of Muslim theological discourse - particularly amongst the educated and academic classes of Muslims. Dangor's 1991 translation of the *Zubdat al-Asrār* became a staple work in these discussions. The initial aims, however, were never realised as originally planned.

Two important events continued the momentum of the re-awakening to *taṣawwuf* during the 1990s. There were the two visits of Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Mālikī in 1997 and 2000 respectively. Yūsuf Da Costa described his first visit as a *Storm of Spirituality Which Engulfed the Cape*. (Muslim Views, May: 1997). Fakhruddin Owaisi observes that the Sayyid “being an eminent scholar...respected and recognised throughout the Islamic world gave Sufism at the Cape, the Shariah justification it was so desperately seeking.” (Owaisi, 2001: 114).

Soon after Sayyid Muḥammad's visit Shaykh Muḥammad Hisham Kabbani of the *Naqshbadiyya* in the USA arrived at the Cape in 1998. His visit also left in its wake numerous people who had been initiated into the order. Two prominent Cape personalities were inducted as senior members of the order viz. Yūsuf Da Costa and Imām Ḥasan Walele. Da Costa was appointed as the *khalīfa* of the order in South Africa.

Ṣūfī activity appeared unabated as more eminent personages from abroad arrived to strengthen the *taṣawwuf* base of Islām at the Cape. Amongst these were Shaykh Aḥmad ‘Alawī b. Murādī of the *Shādhiliyya-‘Alawiyya* order. He arrived with a delegation of 70 of his *murīds*. The purpose of their visit was to inaugurate the *zāwiyah* established by Shaykh Mahdī Hendricks who is the *muqaddam* of the order in South Africa. In 1999 Shaykh Asif Durokovic Ḥusaynī of Bosnia arrived at the Cape. During the course of numerous visits to various mosques at the Cape he inducted a number of *murīds* into the *Rifā‘ī* order, of which he is a shaykh. Others to arrive were Shaykh Ḥazim Abū Ghazāla of Jordan and a shaykh of the *Qādiriyya-*

Shādhiliyya order. He visited the Cape on two occasions, 1997 and 2000. (Owaisi, 2001: 115).

One of the youngest orders to be established at the Cape is the *Tijāniyya*. The Grand Shaykh of the order, Shaykh Ḥasan Cisse also arrived at the Cape in 2003 when numerous *murīds* were inducted into the order. One of the last shaykhs to arrive at the Cape was Martin Lings (Shaykh Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Dīn) of the *Maryamiyya* order. Martin Lings, however, has been a regular visitor to the Cape since the order was established a number of years ago.

The post-1994 period, therefore, witnessed a proliferation of *ṣūfī* activity that was almost unparalleled in its intensity after the founding of the Muslim Judicial Council in 1945. The post-1945 period, on the other hand, also witnessed unparalleled opposition to the teachings of *taṣawwuf*.

As a period of contrasts and conflict, followed by energetic *taṣawwuf* activity in the post-1994 era, it remains an area well-deserving of a separate study.

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ENDNOTES:

¹ It appears that Hodgson and Van Bruinessen use the terms “shariah-minded” and “reformist-minded” as countervailing terms to “piety-minded” or “ṣūfi-minded”. I regard this as somewhat problematic. The term “shariah” is far too diffuse to admit of any precision in this context. On the other hand, the term “reformist” (or *muṣliḥ*) - used in the sense of obliterating accretions with a view to returning to a purified form of Islām - is unknown in classical Islamic literature and only emerged during the eighteenth century. The classical term “mujaddid” (renewer) has never been understood in this way. *Tajdīd* (renewal) refers to the process of a powerful conscientisation and awakening of people to the spirit of Islām through the reformulation and renovation - *and not the excoriation* - of traditional principles and practices in dynamically new and creative ways. By traditional I mean those beliefs, acts and practices that have received the approval of the majority of Muslims at any one particular time. With respect to practices the commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet (pbuh), for example, would be considered a traditional one despite the fact that it was officially instituted long after the Prophet’s (pbuh) death. With regard to beliefs, the *‘Ash‘arite* formulation of *‘aqīda* is similarly considered “traditional”. The later formulation of *‘Ash‘arite* theology did not exist in that form during the time of the Prophet. It emerged with Abū l-Ḥasan al-‘Ash‘arī only centuries later. The same holds true for the development of Islamic jurisprudence. “Reformism”, if understood in its traditional context as “renovation”, simply meant accepting the regulatory role of the *sharī‘a*, and not as a hegemonic code that seeks to obliterate any new addition to religious practices. On the other hand, “reformism” as advocated by the *salafī-wahhābi* stream seeks precisely such an obliteration. For this reason the movement harangued against the *‘Ash‘arite* theology, the four schools of juristic thought (with the exception of a very qualified acceptance of the *ḥanbalite* school), and practices such as the *mawḷūd al-nabī*, *tawassul* (intercession through saintly personages), the visiting of graves and shrines etc. Initially the *salafī* end of the equation merely provided a degree of intellectual respectability to an otherwise simplistic and rigorist literalism.

For purposes of this dissertation, where necessary, I employ the terms normative and contra-normative whenever the act coincides with or appears to violate a standard norm of the *sharī‘ah*. Moreover, while many discussions on *sharī‘a* and *taṣawwuf* have tended to exaggerate the differences between the two (See Endnote, 8, below), I consider Hodgson’s description of the *sharī‘a* as “responsibility” and *taṣawwuf* as “responsiveness” the most useful in approaching the possible tensions that may arise between the two. With both being eminently *religious phenomena*, this distinction accommodates the natural intersection that exists between the two. The puritanical-minded, on the other hand, views the two as inherently antagonistic, with *taṣawwuf* as the foreign accretion. In line with this reasoning there are very few Muslim scholars, *ṣūfi* or non-*ṣūfi*, who are not normative-oriented. The history of *taṣawwuf* and *ṣūfīs* appears to reveal that a puritanically-minded *ṣūfi* is, however, a contradiction in terms. The closest that any *ṣūfi* order has come to that is the *Sanūsīyya* founded by the Libyan shaykh Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alī al-Sanūsī (1791-1859). (For the *Wahhābite* influence on the *Sanūsīyya*, See Glasse, 1989: 351-2).

² Quoted from the unpaginated introductory page of John Ralston Saul’s *The Collapse of Globalism*. London: Atlantic Books. 2005.

³ Geertz also observes that the use of the term “Islam” to mean “both the religion and the civilisation it animates” may act as an impediment to an analysis of the civilisation. In tandem with the distinction between Christianity as a religion and Christendom as a civilisation he recommends Hodgson’s concept “Islamicate” to distinguish Islamic civilisation from more essentialised interpretations of Islam itself. He laments the fact that in order to advance a “world-historical” approach to Islamic civilisation this term has not caught on. See, *Which Way to Makkah?* The New York Review of Books. Volume 1, Number 10, June 12, 2003. 28.

⁴ For an extensive discussion on the concept of *tawassul*, see Yusuf Da Costa’s informative interpretive translation entitled *As-Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Alawī al-Mālikī on Tawassul*, Dome Publications, 2003.

⁵ The term “salafite” is derived from the phrase “salaf al-ṣāliḥīn” (the pious ancestors) and was traditionally understood as a historical phase incorporating three historical periods: a) the time of the Prophet (pbuh) until his death in AD 632/AH 41; b) the period that includes the four *khulafā al-Rāshidin* (the four rightly guided *khalīfs*, Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, ‘Umar al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān, and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib) up to the death of the last of the Companions of the Prophet (pbuh) in approximately AD 716/AH 98; and c) the period of the *Tābi‘ūn* (Successors to the Companions) up to AD 961/AH 350. The period of the Companions is oftentimes further divided into two segmentary periods. The first incorporates the era of the four *khalīfs* from 11AH to 41AH with the death of ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and is referred to as the period of the Greater Companions (*Kibār al-Ṣaḥāba*); while the second stretches from 41AH to 91AH and is known as the era of the Lesser Companions (*Ṣiḡbār al-Ṣaḥāba*). (Al-Khudrī Bik, Muḥammad: 1983).

This historical period, however, was transformed into an Islamic Movement by Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī and Muḥammad ‘Abduh at the turn of the twentieth century. The Movement’s primary purpose was to modernise Islām and embed it in a rationalist base. For example, the health aspects of the fasting is emphasised by this neo-Mutazilite Movement rather than its spiritual benefits. “The fast is healthy and good for the stomach” as Glasse describes their approach. (Glasse, 1989: 344). When Rashid Riḍā (d. 1935) joined ‘Abduh he generally adopted this secularised rationalist approach. Towards the end of his life though, Riḍā gravitated strongly in favour of the *Wahhābīte* doctrines of Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhāb. His journal *al-Manār* (The Lighthouse) became one of the most powerful mouthpieces for *Wahhābīte* doctrines. (Caesar, 2003: 249). Two key features of this movement was its visceral anti-*ṣūfī* stance and its call to abandon the standard four schools of thought in favour of a more utopian *laissez-aller* approach to Islamic Law. From Morocco to Indonesia the *Manār* gained an enormous following. It was on the back of this popularity that the ultra conservative *Wahhābis* of Saudi Arabia made a near ubiquitous impact on Muslims throughout the twentieth century - an impact that has more recently been described as Islamic Fundamentalism and widely associated with militant expressions of Islam.

⁶ Dr Miṣ‘ad al-Nabrāwī was a lecturer of the author of this dissertation at Umm al-Qurā University in Makkah and widely acclaimed as one of the most outstanding exegetes of *Āyāt al-Aḥkām* (Qurānic verses specifically related to legal issues) in the Middle East. He has recently passed away.

⁷ The term *bāṭinī* is derived from *bāṭin* meaning “secret”, “inner” or “esoteric”. The word *bāṭiniyya* refers to all those sects, such as the *Nusayriyya* in Syria of whom the late President Ḥafīz al-Assad was an adherent, who have renounced the outer or exoteric practices of the religion and substituted them with a plethora of eclectic and heteroclitic beliefs and practices. While *bāṭinis* with an Islamic coloration in the form of their veneration of Salmān al-Farsī from whom both ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib and the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) are said to be emanations, they are strictly speaking not regarded as an Islamic sect. (Glasse, 1989: 30-1).

⁸ The tensions between *sharī‘a* and *tasawwuf* (or *ṭariqa*) have been greatly overstated in many recent studies of the subject - the most acrimonious period for these apparent tensions being the 10th and the 11th centuries of ‘Abbāsīd rule, to which Imām al-Ghazālī responded in the form of the *Iḥyā’ Ulūm al-Dīn* and a number of other writings. One of the most common reasons advanced for this tension is the growing division between the *‘ulamā* as the custodians of Islamic Law with their emphasis on pragmatic worldly concerns, and the *ṣūfīs* with their emphasis on the spirit and the noumenal realm. The causes, however, I believe, need to be more thoroughly re-examined. Similar tensions become apparent much earlier in Islamic history and long before these multivalent dimensions of Islām became as methodically defined or identified as they were by the 10th and 11th centuries. A classical example in this respect is the well-known animosity that existed between Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Layla and Abū Ḥānifa N‘umān b. Thābit (d.150AH/767CE) - founder of the *ḥanaḥī madhhab*.

During Umayyad times Ibn Abī Layla was the chief *Qāḍī* (Judge) in Damascus and an ardent supporter of the Umayyad Dynasty. When the Umayyads were overthrown - with the support of Abū Ḥānifa - in 132AH/750CE by the ‘Abbāsīds, Ibn Abī Layla engaged in a dramatic volte-face by claiming that he had dissembled all the while as the chief *Qāḍī* during Umayyad times. The ‘Abbāsīds

accepted his excuse and subsequently appointed him chief Qāḍī of the ‘Abbasids. Abū Ḥanīfa was appalled by this and set himself on a collision course with the state that finally ended with his death in detention. The problem, as Abū Ḥanīfa saw it, were the allurements to power and fame potentially inherent in any form of institutionalisation. That a gifted jurist such as Ibn Abī Layla had succumbed to such corruption must have confirmed this for Abū Ḥanīfa. (al-Sharqāwī, 1981). This example, relocated in the 10th and 11th century Islamic world could easily be construed as a typical example of the inherent conflict between the *sharī‘a* and *taṣawwuf*- the “*sharī‘a*-minded” and the “*ṣūfī*-minded”. The fact is that Abū Ḥanīfa was an even more gifted jurist. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj al-Ṭūsī (d. 988) expresses a similar view in his *al-Lum‘a* where he states:

As for those who reject *taṣawwuf*, and who have merely embraced the exoteric aspects of knowledge for the reason that they have not understood the (spirit of the) Book of Allah nor the directives of the Prophet (pbuh) except - as mentioned - for the externals of the message, and those aspects (of the Divine word) that are amenable to polemical argumentation; these people, particularly in our time today, strongly tend in this direction for the reason that it brings them closer to political power, to the attainment of rank and fame in the eyes of the common people, and the procurement of worldly benefits. (al-Ṭūsī, 1960: 33).

There are numerous examples of eminent Muslim scholars who advocate caution - while never denying its importance - against the potential corrupting influences of institutionalisation, particularly when such institutions assume a heavily accented political aspect. Similar processes, as we shall discuss later, while at a much reduced scale, may be observed at the Cape when Islam moved into the public domain.

⁹ Not only is it difficult to “plumb the depths of this experience”, but there is also the danger of “falsifying the integrity of the individual experience.” See Hodgson, 1974, Vol.1.: 400.

¹⁰ This idea is more extensively elaborated upon in Chapter Four.

¹¹ See Chapter Seven for another example.

¹² See Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion on the matter.

¹³ A number of contextual issues relating to some of these practices are discussed in Chapter Six.

¹⁴ The differences between *taṣawwuf* as spirituality and the *mujarrabāt* as spiritualism are extensively discussed in chapter six.

¹⁵ See Trimungham, Chapter 6.

¹⁶ Online: www.geocities.com/athens/5738/frame.htm

¹⁷ The majority of Ḥadīth scholars have defined a *Ṭabī‘ī* (or Successor) as someone who has either met or seen a *Ṣaḥābī* (defined in 2 below) (Al-Khaṭīb, 1981:410).

¹⁸ A *Ṣaḥābī* (or Companion), according to the majority opinion, is someone who has met the Prophet (pbuh) as a firm believer in his message, and who died as a Muslim. In this regard it matters not whether the person has been in the company of the Prophet (pbuh) for a long while or merely a short moment; or whether the person has narrated any *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet (pbuh) or not; or whether the person has accompanied the Prophet (pbuh) into battle or not; or whether the person has merely seen the Prophet (pbuh) and not personally met him; or whether the person - while being in his

(pbuh) company - has been unable to see him through a defect such as blindness, for example (al-Khaṭīb, 1981: 387).

¹⁹ See p.19 "Keralan Society" of dissertation.

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Because of the huge similarities in the unfoldment and development of Islam between the East Coast of Africa and the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, I have based my classification of the development of Islam in the archipelago on Pouwel's model for East Africa (See, The East African Coast, c. 780-1900 CE, by Randall L. Pouwels, in Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwells (eds), The History of Islam in Africa, PP.251-271).

²² Ibid

²³ Ibid

²⁴ The term "pilgrimage" is often used by historians of Islam to describe the act of visiting the graves and shrines of Saints and other revered personages in Islam. Strictly speaking this is an incorrect usage. The term used in every Arabic text - whether for or against the practice - is "ziyārah", which, in fact, translates to "visitation". The Arabic equivalent of "pilgrimage" is "Ḥajj". This "equivalence" renders the usage of the term in the context of visiting graves and shrines quite ridiculous.

²⁵ See Chapter 2 of dissertation, p. 7.

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ In the *Tuḥfat al-Labīb* on p.165 Imām al-Nawawī is referred to as the *Imām al-Fuqahā* (The foremost of the jurists). This adequately expresses the position that Imām al-Nawawī enjoys in *BāʿAlawī* circles.

²⁸ In an essay entitled *Decadence, Deviation and Renaissance in the Context of Contemporary Islam*, Nasr makes the following observation with respect to the two terms *decadence* and *deviation* often employed to describe the general decline of Islam usually referenced, but erroneously according to him, from the 13th century onwards:

In contrast to traditional Islamic scholarship where in all branches of the sciences terms are already defined and always used with a specific meaning in mind, there has appeared during the past century among a large number of modernized Muslims a tendency towards ambiguity and the careless use of many important terms. Words and expressions have been used by many modernized Muslims in such a way that they betray the state of cultural shock and often the inferiority complex *vis-a-vis* the West from which these Muslims suffer. (Nasr, 1980: 35).

While Nasr agrees with the fact of a general decline in the Muslim world he disagrees with the demarcation of that decline at the 13th century. He also questions the usage of the terms "decadence" and "deviation" in analyses of such a nature - terms that normally postulate a decay of scientific knowledge in the Muslim world as a fundamental reason for that decline. Nasr's views are a commendable alternative to the prevailing Muslim literature spanning most of the twentieth century that deal with causes of the decline of Muslim civilisation. Lapidus, as we shall quote shortly, locates the decline at a much later date.

²⁹ This, the last work written by the late Achmat Davids is entitled *Slaves, Sheikhs, Sultans and Saints, The Kramats of the Western Cape* and is frequently referenced throughout this dissertation. I have a personal copy of the manuscript that the author passed on to me for comments and proof-reading shortly before his death. The format I use for purposes of citation is to list the number of the chapter immediately after the colon, followed by a comma, then the page numbers listed in the manuscript as I received it. I have also corrected aspects of the text only where the errors are obviously typographical.

³⁰ In his work *Maṭālib al-Sālikīn liman Ṭalab Rab al-Ālamīn* (The Requirements for Those Who Travel Along the Path of the Lord of the Worlds) he invokes this benedictory phrase on his teacher Sayyid Sharīf ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Naqshbandī al-Lahorī.

³¹ In addition to Hooke, Schimmel also offers a useful classification of myths. Hooke’s Ritual and Origin myths correspond in meaning with Schimmel’s Aetiological and Anthropological myths respectively. Their classifications of Cultic/Historical and Eschatological myths are identical; and while Schimmel makes no mention of Prestige myths, Hooke, in turn, makes no mention of Soteriological (the doctrine of salvation through a person in theology), Theogonic myths (explaining how deities come into existence), and Cosmogonic myths (explanations about how and why creation came into existence). The former two - like Theogonic myths - Schimmel considers to be virtually absent in Islam. (Schimmel, 1994: 125-7).

As a prototypical example of a Historical myth she mentions the *kiswa* (embroidered cloth covering) that traditionally covers the *k’aba* as having inspired the covering of the graves at the tombs of saints with a cloth referred to as the *ghilāf*. In as much, she avers, as the *kiswa* is cut into small pieces to be distributed amongst devotees to attain its blessings, similarly the *ghilāf* is periodically cut up for the same purpose. (Schimmel, 1994: 35).

For purposes of this dissertation, however, the term “myth” is not to be understood in one of its common lexical meanings “as a widely held but false belief or idea” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2003). On the contrary, the usage here corresponds more broadly with Joseph F. Kelly’s definition as described in the following passage of his paper *The Basic Ideas of Mircea Eliade’s “The Sacred and the Profane”*:

In popular jargon, the word "myth" is misused to mean something which is not true or which is legendary, but the term myth technically means *a dream-like symbol that evokes and directs psychological energy, vehicles of communication between the conscious and the unconscious, stories that convey the deepest Truths people know, the ultimate meaning of reality for a particular society or culture*. Often myth is conveyed by means of a vivid story or legend, but each society has a larger fabric of myths. When all of these kinds of stories of a group of people are taken together, we have a culture's attitude toward life, death, and the universe itself.
(<http://www.jcu.edu/bible/101/Readings/EliadeSacredSpace.htm>)

Cumpsty too, regards “Myth” as spoken symbol and that it “is not necessarily the opposite of truth.” (Mulakaddam, 2003: 43).

The view, however, that most pertinently captures its meaning as intended here is Dillistone’s description of its usage as employed by Eliade. He states:

He (Eliade) is convinced that myths and symbols are of the very substance of spiritual life and that their function as expressions of human dependence upon transcendent reality and a meta-empirical purpose can never be destroyed or dismissed.” (Mukaddam, 2003: 43).

³² *Dajjāl* means a “deceiver” or “imposter” and may appear in the form of a false prophet shortly before the second coming of the Prophet ʿĪsa (pbuh) or Jesus. He is also sometimes referred to as the anti-Christ. His mission would be to lead people into unbelief and sow general corruption. The second coming of Jesus will mark a cataclysmic confrontation with the *Dajjāl* in which Jesus will emerge victorious. Soon after that, it is said, the Day of Judgement will follow. (Glasse, 1989: 91).

³³ There are a number of practical reasons why numbers are often utilized in the making of amulets (*tāʿwīdh*, sing. *Taʿāwīdh*), or, as they are commonly known at the Cape, *ʿazīmat*s. Shaykh Hakim Moinuddin Chisti cites three reasons: one, that the Qurānic verses may be too lengthy to fit onto the small pieces of paper upon which they are normally written; two, if there is an urgent and immediate need for the formulation then writing them in longhand may take much too long; and three - which is likely the most important consideration - is that in the case of loss or damage the words of the Qurān are not exposed to desecration. (Chisti, 1991: 133).

³⁴ Da Costa, Y. 1998. *The Coming of the Qadiri Order to the Cape* (Part 1). Muslim Views, October.

³⁵ Da Costa, Y. 1998. *The Coming of the Qadiri Order to the Cape* (Part 2). Muslim Views, November.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Al-Khidr* (or the “Green One”) is a spiritual persona sometimes identified with the figure in the Koran 18: 64: ‘One of Our servants, unto whom We [God] had given mercy from Us, and had taught him knowledge proceeding from Us.’ (Glasse, 1989: 224). He is also the one normally associated in the famous encounter between the mysterious un-named figure and the Prophet Moses in *Sūrat al-Kahf* (Chapter of the Cave) between verses 61 and 83. Glasse further states that he “is known throughout the Islamic world” and that “he is a personification of the revealing function of the metaphysical Intellect, the ‘prophetic soul’, the projection into the soul of the centre of Being.” (Glasse, 1989: 225).

³⁹ For an extensive comparative study between Sirhindi’s *waḥdat al-shubūd* and Ibn ʿArabi’s *waḥdat al-wujūd*, see M.A.H Ansari, *Sufism and Shariab: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirbindi’s Effort to Reform Sufism* (UK, 1986), Ch.4.

⁴⁰ The term “Ḥallājīan” is coined from the famed Abū l-Mughīth al-Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (857-922). One of the most controversial *ṣūfīs* in Islamic history he was condemned to death for his ecstatic utterances in public such as “I am the Truth.” Even some of the most celebrated *ṣūfīs* known to Islam differ about his status. Amongst those who reject him are ʿAmr b. ʿUthmān al-Makkī, Abū Yaʿqūb al-Nahrajūrī, and Ibn ʿAlī Iṣfahānī. On the other hand, those who accept him are Ibn ʿAṭā, Muḥammad b. Khafīf and Abu l-Qāsim Naṣrabādī. (al-Hujwiri, 1982: 150).

⁴¹ Translated from a personal copy in the possession of the author.

⁴² www.kheper.net/topics/worldviews/panentheism.html

⁴³ See Chapter 2 pp.52-3

⁴⁴ Da Cosata, Y. 1998. *The Coming of the Naqshbandi Order to the Cape*. Muslim Views, December.

⁴⁵ The *maulūd kitāb* most likely recited at this ceremony was the *Sharaf al-Anām*. Even today this is the most popularly recited encomium at mosques in the Cape. However, Abdul Talib Baker, based on an interview with Shaykh Amien fakier, incorrectly ascribes this wok to a certain al-Bukhari from Iraq.

See, A. T Baker, *Survival Mechanisms for An Islamic Identity At The Cape: A Cultural Linguistic Study*. Unpublished Essay. (University of Western Cape. n.d.) 24-5.

The work was more likely written by Shaykh Aḥmad b. Qāsim b. Muḥammad al-Būnī (1653-1727) who was born and died at Būna in Algeria. This author is renowned in the Muslim world for his numerous compilations on encomiums to the Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and was one of the foremost *ḥadīth* scholars of his time. See, Khayr al-Dīn al-Zirkilī, *al-ʿAlām: Qāmūs li Ash-bur al-Rijāl wa l-Nisāʾ min al-ʿArab wa l-Mustʿaribīn wa l-Mustashriqīn* (Beirūt, 1983) Vol.1: 199.

The likelihood of the *mawlūd* being the *Barzanjī* is also slim. Sayyid Jʿafar al-Barzanjī, as mentioned earlier in the main text, was born in 1690 and died in 1764.

The *Burda*, on the hand, composed by Sharaf al-Dīn al-Busīrī (d. 1298), is more popular at congregational *dhikrs*, rather than at *mawlūd* celebrations as such.

⁴⁶ For this information on Imāms Ismail Dea Malele an Jalil Dea Malele I am heavily indebted to the assistance of Ebrahim Manuel who is an ancestor of the two Imāms. All of the documentation I have researched is available at The Heritage Museum situated in Simonstown, Amlay House, King George Way. In particular, the following documentation has been consulted:

- a) *History of Imam Ismail Dea Malele and Imam Abdul Jalil Dea Malele of the Simonstown Kramat in Simonstown, South Africa: History of Imam Ismail Dea Malele* Link Established on the 7 September 1999.
- b) *History and Dates on Simonstown since 1725: Descendants of Sultan Kabarrudin 1674*. 4 May 2000.
- c) A Proposal to have an empty school renovated as a museum in honour of the two Imāms. 10 May, 2000.
- d) A Public Notice of a kitāb (Manuscript) establishing the links between the Dea family in Pemangong, Sumbawa, Indonesia, to the Dea family in Simonstown. This kitāb is available for viewing at the Heritage Museum. Undated.
- e) A Public Notice inviting objections to the names of the said Imāms. 28.4.2000.
- f) A document entitled: *The Legend of the Sultan, Political Exile, from Slave to a Saint, originated from Pemangong, Sumbawa, Indonesia to Simonstown, South Africa, 1753 - The link was established on the 7th September 1999 on the basis of the Inscriptions handwritten in the Strazontal Method in a Kitaab/Diary*. February 2003.

The documentary “Antonie’s Gat” produced by South African author, Rayda Jacobs, has also been consulted.

⁴⁷ Shaykh Abū l-Ḥasan al-ʿAshʿarī (873-935) is regarded as the founder of *sunni kalām* (Islamic scholastic theology). He was born and raised in Baṣrā in present day Iraq and was a *Mʿutazalite* and the student of al-Jubbāʿī (d.915) until the age of forty. At this point he abandoned the strictly rationally *Mʿutazalite* teachings in favour of a theology that combined philosophical methods with traditional discourse. It is this combination of rationalist philosophy with traditional methods of theological enquiry that is referred to as “kalām”. By the fourteenth century ʿAshʿarite theology dominated the Muslim world. He is also a descendant of the famous companion of the Prophet (pbuh) Abū Mūsā al-ʿAshʿarī. (Glasse, 1989: 51-2; Newby, 2002: 34)

⁴⁸ This was the intellectual movement that spawned speculative scholastic theology in Islam and generally referred to as rationalists. This movement is widely regarded as a reaction to the literalist rigorism of the *Khārījites* (seceders) who abandoned ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib in his dispute with Muʿāwiya over the question of Muslim leadership. Its putative founder is considered to be Wāṣil b. ʿAṭāʾ (d. 748) who distanced himself - hence the name *mʿutazali* - from the teachings of his teacher Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (642-728). The two important founding concepts of the *Mʿutazlites* are a) the idea of *al-Manzila bayna l-Manzilitayn* (the position between two positions), meaning that a sinner is neither a believer nor an infidel, which was an intermediate position between the *Khārājites* who believed that sin resulted in apostasy and others who believed that it had no essential impact on belief; and b) that the Qurān was created, as opposed to the general belief that the Qurān was the uncreated word of God. They also referred to themselves as the *ahl al-ʿadl wa l-tawhūd* (the people of justice and unity). Unfortunately the inquisition (*mihna*) that was instituted by ʿAbbāsīd Khalīfa Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Maʾmūn

(783-833) - who in later years adopted the *Mutazalite* doctrines - severely damaged the reputation of *mutazalism*. Hundreds of scholars who refused to acknowledge the doctrine that the Qurān was created were exiled or imprisoned. This is one of the great ironies in Muslim history coming from a man who had established the famed *Bayt al-Ḥikma* (House of Wisdom) and who had done so much to advance the cause of knowledge. (Glasse, 1989: 291-93; Newby, 2002: 161; al-Sha‘aka, 1983: 251-2).

⁴⁹ The *Abli Sunnis* who constitute the vast majority of Muslims throughout the world are those who generally subscribe to the four standard schools of law: the *ḥanafī*, *mālīkī*, *shāfi‘ī*, and *ḥanbalī* schools, and who believe in the validity of the political leadership of Abū Bakr al-Siddīq, ‘Umar al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān b.‘Affān, and ‘Alī b. Abi Ṭālib - the four, respectively, who assumed the leadership of the Muslim community after the death of the Prophet (pbuh). The *Shī‘a*, on the other hand, only recognise the leadership of ‘Alī b. Abi Ṭālib.

⁵⁰ Fuḍayl b.‘Iyāḍ (d.803) was born in Khurasan and operated as a highwayman between Merv and Baward. After his repentance he left for Makkah and then settled in Kufa. He became an authority on *ḥadīth* literature and was held in high regard by the *‘Abbāsīd Khalīf*, Hārūn al-Rashīd. (Baldock, 2004: 102).

⁵¹ Malik b. Dīnār (d.243) was born and died in Baṣrā. In a lengthy account of his repentance he relates that he was a police warden and an alcoholic. Tragedy, however, struck him in the death of his two-year old daughter. On the eve of *Niṣf al-Sha‘bān* (the middle of the month of the Muslim month *Sha‘bān*) two years after his daughter’s death, he writes, he experienced a life-altering dream in which an encounter with his daughter led to his repentance. He became an ascetic and, like Fuḍayl, became a renowned narrator of *ḥadīth* literature. (al-Maḡdasī, 1992: 209-211).

⁵² Bishr b. al-Ḥārīth al-Ḥāfi (767-282) settled and died in Baghdād. He was also born in the same years as Imām al-Shāfi‘ī. Known for his excessive hedonistic activities, he went on to become one of the most renowned ascetics in Muslim history. al-Ḥāfi means barefooted, for after his repentance he refused to wear any foot wear. (al-Maḡdasī, 1992: 216-7).

⁵³ Shaykh ‘Umar b. Abi Bakr Bā Junayd was born in the Ḥaḍramawt in the year 1853 (1270AH). His mother died two days after his birth. After the young ‘Umar completed his recital of the Qurān his father, Abū Bakr, migrated to Makkah where he settled as a merchant. In Makkah he memorised the Quran and became the student of numerous scholars residing in Makkah. His Grand Shaykh was Shaykh Muḥammad Sa‘īd Bāb Ṣayl (d.1911). He was also a student of the famous Sayyid Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān, and many *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykhs. As one of the foremost scholars of his time he was appointed the *muftī* (chief jurisconsult) of the *Shāfi‘īte madbhab* in Makkah. He died after a short illness in 1935 and lies buried in the cemetery in Makkah popularly known as the *Ma‘alā*. The area of the cemetery in which he is buried is called the *Ḥawṭā al-‘Alawīyyīn* (the Sanctum of the *‘Alawīs*) in honour of his status as one of the leading *Bā ‘Alawī* shaykhs. (Mamdūh, n.d.: 422-25).

⁵⁴ Shaykh Muḥammad Yūsuf al-Ḥasanī al-Sanūsī (d. 1486) was born in Tlemcen in Algeria. He was not only a scholar of *‘aqīda* (Islamic tenets of belief) but also a renowned scholar of jurisprudence and *taṣawwuf*. In addition to the *Umm al-Barāhīn*, written for beginner students, he also composed the *al-Sughrā* on *‘aqīda* for intermediate students, and the *al-Wuṣṭā* for those of a more advanced level. In Tlemcen today his grave is honoured with a dome. (Rafudeen, 2004: 59).

⁵⁵ Imām al-Nawawī was born in Nawā, a village south of Damascus in Syria. At the age of 35 he became the principal of the famed Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Ashrafiyya. Amongst his numerous writings his two most renowned works are the *al-Majmū‘* (The Great Compilation) in *Shāfi‘īte* jurisprudence and his commentary on the *ḥadīth* collection of Imām Abū I-Ḥusayn Muslim (816-873). He is also considered one of the most authoritative interpreters of the *Shāfi‘īte* legal school of thought. He died at the fairly young age of 45.

⁵⁶ Three important *Bā ‘Alawī* prayer-books in which these litanies and verses of the Qurān are contained are the following:

- a) *Mukh al-‘Ibāda li Abli l-Sulūk wa l-‘Irāda* (The Essence of Prayer for those on the Spiritual Way and the Seekers). This is one of the most well-known Bā ‘Alawī prayer books.
- b) *Kbulāṣatu Shawāriq al-Anwār* (The Quintessence of the “Lights of Illumination”) - compiled by Sayyid Muḥammad ‘Alawī al-Māliki. All four recensions of this work in my possession contain the four aḥzāb.
- c) *Kbulāṣatu l-Madad al-Nabawī* (Quintessential Prayers for those who Seek the Spiritual Support of the Prophet) - compiled by al-Imām Muḥammad b. Sālim b. Ḥafīz.

⁵⁷ Imām al-Shāfi‘ī is the eponymous founder of the *Shāfi‘ite* legal school of thought (or *Madbbab*). He was born in Palestine and raised in Makkah. After spending a short while in Baghdad he left for Egypt where he settled and died at the age of 54. A tomb has been erected over his grave in Cairo.

⁵⁸ Abū Maḥfuz b. Fīrūz M‘arūf al-Karkhī (d.815/6/ or 817) is one of the celebrated *ṣūfi* adepts of the Baghdād school. His parents were either Christians or Sabians. He became a teacher of the equally famed Sarī al-Saqatī. He was known for his generosity and devotedness. (Nakamura [Trans.]: 1996: 109-110).

⁵⁹ See Chapter Five, pp.248-9

⁶⁰ See Chapter Six, p.324 for full text of petition.

⁶¹ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakariyya al-Rāzī (850-925) was a physician of Persian descent. His many works were translated into Greek, Latin, and then later into modern European languages. His impact on medicine was immense. He also pursued studies in theology, astronomy, and music. His research into alchemy was also a major contribution to more modern understandings of chemistry. (Glasse, 1989: 331-2). He was also a *Mutazalite* (rationalist) by theology.

⁶² Abū ‘Alī Ḥusayn b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sinā (980-1037), was born near Bukhāra of a Turkic mother and Persian father. Known in Europe as Avicenna he was dubbed “The Prince of Physicians”. As a philosopher, physician, and polymath he was a prodigy on all counts. He also memorised the Qurān at the age of ten and was already a lecturer by the age of fourteen. At the age of sixteen he lectured in medicine and by eighteen he was regarded as a master of all the known sciences. His most influential work is the *al-Qānūn* (Canon of Medicine). Thomas Aquinas was also greatly influenced by his Neoplatonic interpretations of Aristotle.

As a young man he purportedly lived somewhat of a hedonistic life, but spent his last years in the *taṣawwuf* tradition of the *tawwābīn* (repenters). (Newby, 2002:93-4; Glasse, 1989: 175-6).

⁶³ For example, a *du‘ā* on page 93 of the manuscripts breaks off on that page and continues on page 102. Also the *Ḥizb* of al-Imām al-Nawawī starts on page 198 and continues until page 201 where it breaks and continues on page 208.

⁶⁴ *Ijmā‘* is the process through which - by way of recourse to the primary sources such as the Qurān, *ḥadīth* literature, and *qiyās* (analogical reasoning, or applied analogy) - consensus of agreement on a specific legal ruling may be reached.

⁶⁵ For a lengthy, but by no means exhaustive, discussion on the debate between the “modernists” and the “traditionalists” on this matter see John R. Bowen’s *Muslims through Discourse* pp. 251-72.

⁶⁶ See, www.urday.com/shivalinga.htm

⁶⁷ The three “baits” cited by Hadjiwono are the the “Bait al ma‘mûr”, the “house of liveliness” as he translates it; the “Bait al muhâram” or the “forbidden house”; and the “Bait al muqaddas” or the “sacred house”. These baits symbolise three important concepts in the *lingga* cult, viz. the head, the chest and the sexual organs respectively. (Hadjiwono, 1967: 133-4). The *Bait al ma‘mûr* spawns the head (with its associated elements such as the mind, brain etc); the *Bait al muhâram* spawns the chest (with its associated elements of liver, heart etc.); and the *Bait al muqaddas* spawns the scrotum (with its associated elements of testiculi, mani, or semen, etc.). In this way, according to Hadjiwono, “God pervades the whole body of man with His Essence by taking His way through the head, the chest (or heart), and the sex-organs, the three most important parts of the human body.” (Hadjiwono, 1967: 134).

Dr Akkeren’s speculations that the “doctrine” of the three baits found acceptance in Java through the existence of the *lingga* cult is, however, somewhat mystifying. These names are ubiquitous to the Muslim world.

⁶⁸ Interview with Imâm Farid Manie, Azzawia Mosque, April, 2005.

⁶⁹ <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/ency/Spiritualism.htm> and <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/ency/Spirituality.htm>

⁷⁰ See Endnote, 14.

⁷¹ Nûr al-Dîn ‘Abd al-Rahmân Jâmî (1414-1492) is a celebrated Persian poet. He is the author of *al-Lawâ’ih* (Flashes of Light), “Salmân and Absal”, “Yusuf and Zulaykha”, and the Bahâristân (Abode of Spring). (Glassse, 1989: 205).

⁷² www.qadiri-rifai.org/english/qurso/pirs/bio_rifai.htm

⁷³ The six maxims, not listed here in order of priority, are as follows:

- a) *Ḥifẓ al-Ḥayât* (Protection of Life)
- b) *Ḥifẓ al-Dîn* (Protection of Religion)
- c) *Ḥifẓ al-Nasl* (Protection of Progeny)
- d) *Ḥifẓ al-‘Aql* (Protection of Intellect)
- e) *Ḥifẓ al-Mâl* (Protection of Property)
- f) *Ḥifẓ al-‘Ird* (Protection of Character).

⁷⁴ *Sanad* is sometimes used synonymously with *silsila* as “an uninterrupted chain of authorities.” In the context used here it means the regular ascription of certain litanies to their eponymous founders or to those shaykhs strongly associated with the litanies. The only uninterrupted chain of transmission in the *al-Anwaaroel Adbkaar* is the Naqshbandî silsila.

⁷⁵ Colin Campbell considers magic to be that which “covers any attempt to control the environment by either untested or untestable means” such as through charms and spells, for example. “It is”, he continues, “the practical aim of gaining control over the environment that principally distinguishes them from the religious ones.”

While both religion and magic may consist of non-empirical beliefs, the primary differences between them are the following:

- a) Magic focuses on the manipulation of impersonal forces; Religion, on the other hand, is primarily oriented to the worship of supernatural beings - either propitiated or worshipped, and
- b) Magic is employed to achieve the ends of individuals; Religion, however, is usually directed at the needs of communities.

The chief difference here is that of orientation - in the case of magic it is primarily manipulation and in religion it is worship. (See *Encyclopedia of Religion and Social Sciences* [Online: <http://hrr.hartsem.edu/ency/Magic.htm>]).

These differences approximate those between spiritualism and spirituality respectively.

⁷⁶ Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Rāzī al-Jaṣṣāṣ (917-980) lived and died in Baghdad, Iraq. He is famous for his Quranic exegesis that deals exclusively with the verses related to Islamic Law in the Qurān. The work is entitled *Aḥkām al-Qurān*. Later in his life he became the Grand Mufti of the *ḥanafite madhab* in Baghdad. Theologically he had strong *Muʿtazalite* tendencies and has often been criticised for his extreme attachment to *ḥanafite* points of view. (al-Qaṭṭān, 1983: 377-8).

⁷⁷ Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī was born south of Tehran and died in Herat. He is regarded as a philosopher, theologian, and historian. His magnum opus is his *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (The Great Commentary), also known as the *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* (The Keys of the Unseen). He studied in Rayy and embraced the *Shāfiʿite madhab*. He was an implacable opponent of the *Muʿtazalite* theological school of thought. (Glasse, 1989: 332; Newby, 2002: 58-9).

⁷⁸ Abū l-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ʿUmar al-Zamakhsharī is of Persian extraction and best known for his commentary on the Qurān called *al-Kashshāf ʿan Ḥaqāiq al-Tanzīl* (The Unveiling of the Truths of Revelation). The commentary typifies his *Muʿtazalite* perspective but is widely studied in *Sunni* circles. He is also one of the foremost grammarians of the Arabic language. His work on Arabic Grammar is entitled *al-Mufaṣṣal* (The Elaboration) and the one on *Balāgha* (rhetoric) is called *Asās al-Balāgha* (The Foundations of Rhetoric). (Glasse, 1989: 431; Newby, 2002: 216).

⁷⁹ ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar al-Bayḍāwī is a Persian scholar who eventually became chief *Qāḍī* of Shirāz in present day Iran. His Quranic commentary *Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Asrār al-Tawīl* (The Lights of Revelation and the Secrets of Interpretation) is regarded as one of the most authoritative commentaries. The commentary is considered as a reliable distillation of the opinions of most commentaries preceding his. Many of his opinions are also taken from al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations.

⁸⁰ Imām Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī was born in Asyūṭ in Egypt. He is one of the most prolific writers in the *Shāfiʿite* school of thought. He wrote several works on history, jurisprudence, grammar, and part of the famous commentary known as the *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*. (Newby, 2002: 198).

⁸¹ Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-Ṭabaṭbāʿī ascribes this work to Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. (See, al-Ṭabaṭbāʿī, Muḥammad Ḥusayn 1984 *al-Mizān: An Exegesis of the Qurʾān*. Translated by Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi. Tehran: World Organisation for Islamic Services).

⁸² The author of this dissertation is in possession of a published version of this work printed in 1938.

⁸³ The eponymous founder of the *Mālikī* School of Law is Abū ʿAbd Allāh Mālik b. Anas (94-179/716-795). He was born and died in Madina. Both Imām Mālik and Imām Abū Ḥanīfa studied with Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq. His most famous work is the *al-Muwattāʾ* (The Path made Smooth).

⁸⁴ The founder of the *Ḥanbalī* School of Law is Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (164-241/780-855). He lived and studied in Baghdad where he became a student of Imām al-Shāfiʿī. His magnum opus is the *Musnad* which is a vast compilation of ḥadīth literature. This compilation was completed by his son, ʿAbd Allāh, after his death. Amongst the four *Sunni* Schools of Law which include the *Ḥanafī*, *Mālikī*, and *Shāfiʿī* schools, his is the most recent.

⁸⁵ The Twelve-Imām *Shiʿites* consider Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq (80-148/699-765) as the eponymous founder of the *Jʿafarī* School of Law. While he was the teacher of both Imāms Mālik and Abū Ḥanīfa he is also venerated in *Sunni* circles as a master of *taṣawwuf*. He died in Madina. His death precipitated a crisis in *Shiʿa* circles. Those who regarded his son Ismaʿīl, who predeceased him, as the designated heir to his spiritual legacy became known as the Seveners, or *Ismaʿīlis*. Apparently he revoked this designation after his second eldest son, ʿAbd Allāh also died before him, and appointed in their stead his third eldest son Mūsā al-Kāẓim. Those who accepted Mūsā al-kāẓim as the officially designated leader became the Twelvers, or *Ithnā ʿAshariyya*.

⁸⁶ Lexically, the term *iktisāb* means “acquisition, gaining possession etc.”. Theologically, however, it usually connotes the capacity for freedom of choice. The more commonly used term is “kasb”.

⁸⁷ There appears no consensus on this though. Some regard it as sufficient that the practitioner understands the language that s/he is using in formulating the remedies. See al-Dhahabi’s observation on p.311.

⁸⁸ Imām Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu‘mān b. Thābit (81-150/700-767) is the founder of the *Ḥanafī* School of Law. He is of Persian descent and lived and studied in Kufa and in Madina for a short while. He also worked as a silk merchant, a profession he inherited from his father. He died in prison at the age of 67. The *Ḥanafī* School of Law is the largest in the Muslim world today.

⁸⁹ Şulṭān ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd II was the last *şulṭān* of the Ottoman Empire and reigned between 1876 and 1909 when he was deposed. He was replaced by the Committee of Union and Progress that was supported by the commander of the Ottoman army, Shevket Pasha.

⁹⁰ The author of this dissertation is in possession of a copy of this work donated by one of the descendants of Shaykh Abū Bakr Effendi.

⁹¹ Of interest, too, is the inclusion of Shaykh Ibrahim al-Kāfirī in Shaykh Mu‘ammad ‘Alī’s *Silsila to the Ḥayāt al-Ḍaym al-Dīn* of Imām al-Ghazālī (See Annexure 11).

⁹² See p. 32.

⁹³ According to Davids “Hiempu” means “alternation” to describe the rotational scheme that was agreed upon. (Davids, 1980: 57).

⁹⁴ See Chapter Two, for a short history on the emergence of this order.

⁹⁵ The term “majdhūb” is derived from the word “jadhaba” meaning to pull, attract, or draw. Glasse (1989:248) states that a “majdhūb is a ‘holy fool’, one who is in some way mad, or seemingly mad, but possesses an aura of sanctity. The state may be temporary or permanent.” This state is encapsulated by a saying of ‘Abd Allah al-Yāfi‘ī (d.1367) who said:

The say: “Thou art become mad with love for thy beloved.” I reply:
“The savor of love is for madmen.” (Glasse, 1989: 248).

⁹⁶ Ahmed Mukadam describes an *urs* as a ceremony that “commemorates the anniversary of a waliullah’s [Friend of Allah] passing away.” Lexically *urs* means a “wedding”. During the lifetime of a saint he/she is considered a “beloved of Allah”. On passing away a spiritual union is effected between the beloved and the lover. It is this idea of “spiritual union” that has given rise to the term *urs*. (Mukadam, 2005: 36).

⁹⁷ A skirt-like wrap-around worn mostly in Yemen, India, and the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.

⁹⁸ The caption below a photograph on p. 38 of *the Habibia Soofie Masjid Centenary Magazine*, 2005, erroneously refers to what is evidently a *ratiep* ceremony, as the *Rātīb al-Ḥaddād*. The caption states that the “Ratib ul Haddad” was held in the “old madressa hall next to the Mosque.”

⁹⁹ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November 2005.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November, 2005.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November, 2005.

¹⁰² Hanief Allie holds the view that this feat was performed by Sayyid Muṣṭafā ‘Alī al-‘Aydārūs from Surat in India and who delivered the inaugural *kbūṭba* at the al-Zāwiyah in 1920. According to him, Sayyid Muḥsin was present when the incident occurred, but not the one who performed the act.

¹⁰³ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November 2005.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Imām Isma‘īl Niekerk, Walmer Estate, 11 November, 2005.

¹⁰⁵ The author of this dissertation is in possession of a manuscript of this *dbikr*.

¹⁰⁶ I have maintained the original English translations of Mawlānā ‘Abd al-‘Alīm al-Siddīqī throughout *these adhkār*.

¹⁰⁷ From the *Maṭālib al-Sālikīn liman Qaṣada Rabb al-‘Ālamīn* by Shaykh Yūsuf.

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Nusayba Davids, Newfields, 21 November, 2005.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 2005.

¹¹⁰ An Arabic online version of this work is also available at:
<http://www.rifaieonline.com/abulhudda.html>

¹¹¹ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November 2005. This is also supported by the oral history at the Al-Zāwiyah.

¹¹² Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, 20 November, 2005.

¹¹³ Contrary to this, Mogamat Hoosain Ebrahim in his book entitled *Shaykh Ismail Hanief Edwards: His Life and Works* states that Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī did indeed act as one of the imāms of the Zinat al-Islām Mosque. (Ebrahim, 2004: 74).

¹¹⁴ The title of this book is seriously mistranslated by Davids as “Guidance in accordance with the way of the Wahhabis”. (Davids, 1991: 141).

¹¹⁵ The author of this dissertation is in possession of one of the original copies penned by Shaykh Muḥammad Geyer Isaacs.

¹¹⁶ Shaykh ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Muḥammad ‘Alī Quds was born in Makkah. His grandfather ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Khaṭīb was originally from the city of Ḥijr in the Ḥaḍramawt, Yemen. He was a contemporary of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks in Makkah, both of whom studied at the feet of the same shaykhs. Amongst their teachers were Sayyid Zayni Daḥlān, Shaykh Muḥammad Sulaymān Ḥasb Allāh, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Daḥhān, Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd, Shaykh Sa‘īd Yamānī and Sayyid ‘Uthmān Shaṭā. He is also the author of numerous works on a variety of subjects and was considered one of the foremost poets of his time. He was eventually appointed as a lecturer at the *Masjid al-Ḥarām*. (Quds, 1998: i-ii).

¹¹⁷ The problem emerged as a result of a dispute concerning accession to the leadership of the Muslim community. After a somewhat protracted conflict two arbitrators were chosen from each side to resolve the problem. A large group of ‘Alī b. Ṭālib’s supporters disagreed with the arbitration under the slogan *Lā ḥukma illa lillabi* (The prerogative of command belongs to God alone) and continued to support violent confrontation against Mu‘āwiyya. They subsequently left ‘Alī’s faction and declared all the parties involved in the arbitration as unbelievers.

¹¹⁸ Derived from the name of the leader of this faction, ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Ajrad.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Imām Abdul Gameed Jacobs (Imām Dollie), Walmer Estate, 19 October 2003.

¹²⁰ Shaykh Dāwud Abrahams was one of those *ṭarīqa* shaykhs described in *Bā ‘Alawī* circles as a *kbumūlī* (those who prefer isolation and anonymity). Ḥabīb ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Aṭṭās describes them as “hidden and unknown, their state veiled to the extent of being almost unperceivable.” (al-‘Aṭṭās, 1968: 4). There are in fact a number of these types in Cape Muslim society.

¹²¹ The *mawlūd al-dayba‘ī* was composed by Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Shaybānī al-Yamānī al-Zabīdī al-Shāfi‘ī, better known as Ibn al-Dayba (1461-1537). He was born in Zabīd in Yemen. He is known as a historian and a scholar of ḥadīth and has written numerous works in both fields. (Zirkilī, 1984 [Vol. 3]: 318).

¹²² Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh Ṭāhir ‘Alawī was born in Tarīm in the Ḥaḍramawt and later studied in Makkah and Madina. He was one of the leaders in the revolt against the *Yāfi‘īs* in 1848. As a scholar he excelled in both Arabic grammar and Islamic jurisprudence. Amongst his better known works in Islamic jurisprudence is the *Sullam al-Tawfiq* (The Ladder of Success) and in grammar the *Miftāḥ al-Trāb* (The Key to Arabic Grammar). He died in Masila in Yemen. (al-Zirkilī, 1984 [Vol. 4]: 81).

¹²³ Sayyid ‘Alī b. Ḥasan al-‘Aṭṭās was born in Ḥarīḍā in Ḥaḍramawt. While he was a scholar of Islamic jurisprudence he is better known for his poetry and *taṣawwuf* writings. His famous work in poetry is entitled *Qalā‘id al-Ḥisān* (The Exquisite Necklace) and in *taṣawwuf* the *Kbulāṣalat al-Maghnam fi l-‘Ism al-‘Azam* (The Quintessence of the Benefits of the Great Name). He settled and died in Baḥrain in a village called al-Ghiwār, known today as al-Mashhad.

¹²⁴ An original copy of this letter written by Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd in Arabic and dated 1320/1902/3 is lodged in the al-Zāwiyah library. Also see Annexure 10.

¹²⁵ Imām ‘Abd Allāh Hendricks had in fact operated the postal route between Swellendam and Cape Town.

¹²⁶ Many years later, with the hope of fulfilling his late father’s wish he encouraged his own son, Ḥasan Hendricks (father of the author of this dissertation), to embark on a medical career. Unfortunately, to the disappointment of both father and son, Ḥasan was forced to abandon his studies at the University of Cape Town during the fourth year of his medical studies due to the outbreak of the Second World War and severe financial constraints.

¹²⁷ The clan of *Shayba* (*Bānī Shayba*) have been the traditional keepers of the *K‘aba* since the time of the Prophet (pbuh).

¹²⁸ The original name was most likely *Ṣawlatiyya*, from the word *ṣawla*, meaning attack, assault fearless etc. The vernacular pronunciation *Ṣūlatiyya*, is the only one by which it is recognised today.

¹²⁹ Interview with Hanief Allie, Kimberely, November 2005, and also affirmed by al-Zāwiyah oral history.

¹³⁰ The father, Hasan Hendricks, of the author of this dissertation was present at this investiture.

¹³¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr’s otherwise ingenious attempt in his *Ideals and Realities of Islam* to explore the common ground between *Sunnism* and *Shi‘ism* through *taṣawwuf* cannot remove this historical fact. On the contrary, I read his observation that “Shi‘ism as a whole is a more esoteric interpretation of the Islamic revelation (than Sunnism) and contains in its teachings *elements akin to those of Sufism* [italics mine]” (Nasr, 1988: 127) as a tacit acknowledgement of this tension between *Shi‘ism* and *taṣawwuf*.

¹³² The oftentimes pejorative usage of the term “clergy” or “clerics” by some Muslims who rail against the office of *‘ālim* in Islam and in a manner designed to equate that office with that of the Christian Church amounts to little more than a social phobia. The *‘ulamā* in Islam, despite the pretences of some of them to the contrary, have never enjoyed the institutional power conferred by the Church upon their clerics. This is not a criticism of the Church, just an observation.

¹³³ During the course of his discussion Karim does mention in paraphrased form the famous saying of Imām Mālik b. Anis, eponymous founder of the *Mālikī madhab* who said: “He who learns jurisprudence and neglects Tasawwuf becomes a reprobate; and he who learns Tasawwuf and neglects jurisprudence becomes an apostate. But he who combines both will reach the Truth.” (Nasr, 1988: 125).

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Annexure 1: The Flowing Grace

- هذا الكتاب المسمى بالبركة السيلانية
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم.
- ٣ رب يسر ولا تعسر يا كريم. الحمد لله رب العالمين
والصلاة والسلام على سيدنا محمد امام الانبياء
والمرسلين وعلى اله واصحابه كلهم اجمعين. وبعد الرسالة
- ٦ المصممة بالبركة السيلانية من الفتوحات الربانية
مذكورة فيها انواع طريق الذكر اسمائه ومعانيه
وكيفياته بعون الله تعالى وحسن توفيقه. قال بعض
العارفين من اهل هذا الفن بان الذكر هو على ثلاثة
- ٩ انواع. فالاول له ذكر النفي والاثبات، وهو قول "لا اله
الا الله". والثاني يقال له ذكر المعجز والجلالة، وهو
١٢ قول "الله الله". والثالث يقال له ذكر الاشارة والانساف،
وهو ذكر "هو هو". ويقال ايضا للذكر الاول ذكر اللسان
والثاني ذكر القلب والثالث ذكر السر. فلاجل ذلك
- ١٥ يقال للذكر الاول ايضا قوت اللسان والثاني قوت القلب
والثالث قوت السر وقال بعضهم ايضا "لا اله الا الله"
حياة القلب و"الله الله" حياة الروح و"هو هو" حياة السر.
- ١٨ ثم، اي الذكر الاول يكون معناه: لا معبود بحق الا الله.
وعند المبتدئ وعند المتوسط: لا مطلوب او لا معبود او
لا محبوب حقيقة الا الله. وعند المنتهي: لا موجود
٢١ على الحقيقة الا الله. فالاول من الذاكرين يقال له
اهل البداية من العوام والثاني الخواص والثالث خاص
الخواص. فلعل قارئلا يقول: كيف نفى هذا العالم وقد

- رايناه بعين الراس انه موجود بلا شك في ذلك ولا ريب؟
 فيقال في الجواب: وهو كذلك، غير ان في اصطلاح اهل
 ٣ الله العارفين بالله تعالى يقال: عندهم لا موجود في
 الحقيقة الا من قام بنفسه، وهو فان وجوده خيالي لا
 حقيقي. وان صح القول بان وجوده مجازي فالوجود الخيالي
 ٦ المجازي النفي. اي لا يعد وجودا عند اهل الله العارفين
 بالله تعالى فاعلم ذلك ثم ان الذكر مطلوب، فينبغي
 للسالك ان يشتغل بذكر الله بموجب آية { فاذكروني
 ٩ اذركم } فيكفيك هذا شرفا. بغير ذكر كان غير ان افضل
 الذكر قول "لا اله الا الله" بنص الحديث: وقالت ام
 المؤمنين عائشة رضي الله عنها: كان رسول الله صلى
 ١٣ الله عليه وسلم يذكر الله كل احيانه، اي كل اوقاته
 في جميع حالاته كلها... اما فهيم نص قوله تعالى { وان
 كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني } الآية؟ فمن جملة الاتباع له
 ١٥ صلى الله عليه وسلم كثرة ذكر الله تعالى. فاعلم ذلك
 ان كنت من اهل السعادة الكبرى وصاحب المرتبة. وقال
 بعضهم رضي الله عنهم ان الشهادة تكون شهادتين. فالاولى
 ١٨ يقال لها الشهادة المختصة، والثانية يقال لها الشهادة
 المطلقة. فاما الشهادة المختصة فهي كلمة "اشهد ان لا
 اله الا الله واشهد ان محمدا رسول الله" واما الشهادة
 ٢١ المطلقة فهي "اشهد ان لا اله الا الله وحده لا شريك
 له واشهد ان محمدا عبده ورسوله". فاعلم ذلك، ثم ان
 كل ما سوى الله المسمى بالعالم يكون قائلا اسم الوجود

٣ عندهم لا موجود: عندهم موجود ٦ / النفي: السر ٧ / ثم
 ان: ثم ن / ١٣ كلها... اما (كلمة غير واحد في الاصل) /
 وان: قل ان (القران)

- واسم العدم في حالة واحدة غير ترجيح احدهما عن الاخره .
 فان ذلك، ان راينا الى جهة نفسه في حد ذاته يقالها
 معدوم لانه ليس موجودا قائما بنفسه . وان راينا الى ٣
 جهة موجوده جاريا لعدم قيامه بنفسه ، فاعلم ذلك . فحينئذ
 يكون معنى "لا اله الا الله" من حيث الظاهر هو نفي
 الوهية ما سوى الله تعالى واثبات الوهيته جل وعلا . ٦
 واما من حيث الحقيقة فهو اثبات وجود الله ونفي وجود
 ما سواه تعالى . ثم الذاكر بهذه الكلمة اي كلمة "لا
 اله الا الله" يكون على اربعة اقسام . فالاول من قالها ٩
 بلسانه وقلبه غافل عن معناها وغير مصدق به ، هو المسمى
 باسم المنافق . والثاني من قالها بلسانه وقلبه حاضر
 بمعناها ، وهو المسمى بعوام المؤمنين . والثالث من قالها ١٢
 وحصل له الذوق والنتيجة في مجال ، وهو المسمى
 بالرجل الخاص . والرابع من قالها ونفي من كل شيء سوى
 الله فلا يرى في شهوده عند قوله اياها الا الله ، هو ١٥
 المسمى بخاص الخواص ، فاعلم ذلك . قال بعضهم عند المكاشفة
 الحاصلة عند الذكر بعون الله تعالى ثلاثة اقسام .
 فالمكاشفة الحاصلة من قول "لا اله الا الله" يكون من ١٨
 القلب ، والمكاشفة الحاصلة من قول "الله الله" يكون من
 الروح ، المكاشفة الحاصلة من قول "هو هو" يكون من السر .
 ثم قال بعضهم فان خاصية ذكر "لا اله الا الله" ميل ٢١
 القلب الى الحق تعالى سبحانه وتعالى ، وخاصية ذكر "الله
 الله" ميل الروح الى الحق تعالى ، وخاصية ذكر "هو هو"

٢ يقالها : يقال لها / ٦ واثبات الوهيته : واثبات الوهية /

٩ من : ما / ١٣ من قالها : ما قال لها / ١٩ القلب : قلب /

ميل السر الى الحق تعالى. اللهم نور قلوبنا بذكر" لا
 اله الا الله" وشرح ارواحنا بذكر" الله الله" واكشف
 اسرارنا بذكر" هو هو"، بفضلك وكرمك يا ارحم الراحمين، ٣
 فاعلم ذلك. ثم ان بعض الاشغال الذي ذكره القوم من
 اهل هذا الفن: فاؤل ما يبدئ بكلمة "لا" يكون باللفظ
 من تحت السرة الى فوق جانب الدماغ بطول "لا" النافية. ٦
 وبكلمة "اله" يكون الميل الى جانب اليمين بتعين كسرة
 همزة "اله" وفتح هاءها. فسكن ساعة لحظة وهناك يتخيل
 نفي جميع ما سوى الله حتى عن نفسه وبعد ذلك. فيميل ٩
 بنفسه الى جانب اليسار عند قوله "الا الله" ويضرب بها
 على القلب الصنوبري بالضرب الشديد، بحيث يعم حرارته
 على جميع البدن، وهناك يلاحظ اثبات الحق تعالى. ويعرف ١٢
 فيه بان لا مؤثر في وجود الا الله. فحينئذ يحصل له شيء
 من نفحات الحق تعالى وفتوحاته بحيث لا يدخل تحت
 الحصر بفضل الله تعالى وكرمه. ولا يعرف ما قلناه الا ١٥
 من ذاقه مع المداومة عليه. فلاجل ذلك قال بعض اهل
 هذا الفن والعارفين قدس الله اسرارهم الجميع: من لم
 يذوق لم يعرف بغيره. بعض الاسرار الربانية التي منحها ١٨
 لبعض عباده من الكمل العارفين: ولا يجوز افشاؤها لغير
 اهلها، كما قيل افشاء سر الربوبية كفر. ولا يعرف ذلك
 الا من كان هو ونحن هو. وقال بعضهم من الاكابر: من ٢١
 قام قيامهم وصام صيامهم وذاق طعامهم ففهم كلامهم،
 فاعلم ذلك. ثم ان الذاكر يقول "لا اله الا الله"

- بشرطها كلها او يقول "الله" او يقول "هو هو" سرا
وجهرًا. فصار فانيا في الله وباقيا به سبحانه، فصل
المقصود الاعلم. ثم نقول لك ان بعض نتائج الذكر ٣
الحاصلة عند الذكر هو للمستغرق في الله، وعدم الشعور
عما سواه تعالى في هذه المقام. قال سيد العارفين
وامامهم حضرة الشيخ الاكبر والامام الافخر سيدنا ٦
ومولانا الشيخ محي الدين ابن عربي قدس الله سره:
انا غريق في بحر حال غبت فيها عن الوجود والعدم.
ثم ينبني لسالك الذكر عند قوله "الله الله" ان يلاحظ ٩
بان ظاهر الحق تعالى محيط بباطنه، كما كان عند قوله
"هو هو" يلاحظ بان باطنه عين اظهره، وعند قوله "هو هو"
بان آخره هو عين اوله، فالكل واحد. وهو الاول في ١٢
عين اخريته والآخر في عين اوليته، وهو الظاهر في عين
باطونه وهو الباطن في عين ظهوره. فكيف لا يكون كذلك؟
وهو سبحانه متصف {بليس كمثله شيء} في كل شيء. فلهذا ١٥
قال بعض الاكابر منهم: لا يعرف ما قلناه الا من كان
هو ونحن هو اي "جان" اي "دوست" فاعلم ذلك. ثم ايها
الطالب السالك ان تنور قلبك بذكر الله تعالى وصفا ١٨
عن الكدورات البشرية. تجل الله تعالى فيه بانواع
التجلي على قدر مقامك حتى صار عرشه سبحانه وتعالى.
فتكون من المؤمنين حقا بنص الحديث: "قلب المؤمنين عرش ٢١
الله". فاذا كان كذلك فلا يطرؤ عليه الغفلة ابدا لوصوله
الى مقام خاص الخواص. كما قيل للشيخ بالحسن الساذلي

- بشرطها كلها او يقول "الله" او يقول "هو هو" سرا
وجهرًا. فصار فانيا في الله وباقيا به سبحانه، فصل
المقصود الاعظم. ثم نقول لك ان بعض نتائج الذكر
الحاصلة عند الذكر هو للمستغرق في الله، وعدم الشعور
عما سواه تعالى في هذه المقام. قال سيد العارفين
وامامهم حضرة الشيخ الاكبر والامام الافخر سيدنا
ومولانا الشيخ محي الدين ابن عربي قدس الله سره:
انا غريق في بحر حال غبت فيها عن الوجود والعدم.
ثم ينبغي لسالك الذكر عند قوله "الله الله" ان يلاحظ
بان ظاهر الحق تعالى محيط بباطنه، كما كان عند قوله
"هو هو" يلاحظ بان باطنه عين اظهره، وعند قوله "هو هو"
بان آخره هو عين اوله، فالكل واحد. وهو الاول في
عين اخريته والآخر في عين اوليته، وهو الظاهر في عين
بطونه وهو الباطن في عين ظهوره. فكيف لا يكون كذلك؟
وهو سبحانه متصف {بليس كمثله شيء} في كل شيء. فلهذا
قال بعض الاكابر منهم: لا يعرف ما قلناه الا من كان
هو ونحن هو اي "جان" اي "دوست" فاعلم ذلك. ثم ايها
الطالب السالك ان تنور قلبك بذكر الله تعالى ووصف
عن الكدورات البشرية. تجل الله تعالى فيه بانواع
التجلي على قدر مقامك حتى صار عرشه سبحانه وتعالى.
فتكون من المؤمنين حقا بنص الحديث: "قلب المؤمنين عرش
الله". فاذا كان كذلك فلا يطرؤ عليه الغفلة ابدا لوصوله
الى مقام خاص الخواص. كما قيل للشيخ بالحسن الشاذلي

- يقول: "لو احتجب الحق عني لما عدت نفسي من المسلمين" فاعلم ذلك. قيل بل وفي حق حضرته صلى الله عليه وسلم قال ذلك الكلام، فافهم ذلك، فضلا عن حضرته تعالى في هذا المقام. قال الشيخ ذو النون المصري قدس سره: "توبة العوام من الذنوب وتوبة الخواص من الففلة." وقال الشيخ سيد الطائفة الجنيد البغدادي: "لو اقبل شخص على الله تعالى الف الف سنة وعرض عنه لحظة لكان ما فاته اكثر مما ناله" ٥٥٥ وقد حكى ان احدا من الكابر ٣
- كامل العارفين بالله تعالى راي في منامه حضرة رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم انه قال: "من عرف طريقا الى الله تعالى ثم رجع عنه يعذبه الله تعالى بعذاب لم يعذبه احدا من العالمين" فاذا كان كذلك ايها الطالب الصادق بالجد والاخلاص، ان كنت من اهل السعادة فلا ترجع عن طريقك اليه تعالى، فانه قابلك بالقبول وقربك اليه سبحانه. فانه قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: "من طلب شيئا جدا وجد" قال الله تعالى في الحديث القدسي: "من طلبني وجدني ومن وجدني احببته ومن احببته قتلته ومن قتلته فعلي ديته ومن علي ديته فانا ديته." وفي هذا المقام قال تعالى: "كنت سمعه وبصره وفؤاده" وكلمه بعد كلام طويل، فافهم ذلك. وقال تعالى ايضا: "لما ارادني لي اعطيتمهم ما لا عين رات ولا اذن سمعت ولا خطر علي قلب بشر." وفي هذا المقام ايضا قال الشيخ ابو الحسين الصوري: "التوبة هي ان تتوب من كل شيء سوى الله." ٦ ٩ ١٢ ١٥ ١٨ ٢١

- حتى قال بعضهم: "من لا توبة له لا مقام له ومن لا مقام له لا زلفى له." فلها قالوا رضي الله عنهم: "ليس في العبد انفع له من التوبة." اما علمت قوله سبحانه:
- ٣ { ان الله [تعالى] يحب التوابين ويحب المتطهرين } اي من الذنوب الظاهرة والباطنة والمتطهرين من النجاسة الظاهرة والباطنة، فاعلم ذلك. وقوله تعالى { توبوا الى الله جميعا ايها المؤمنون لعلكم تفلحون }، وقوله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "توبوا الى الله ايها المؤمنون فاني اتوب الى الله كل يوم مائة مرة." او كما قال عليه السلام
- ٩ وقوله: "التائب من الذنب ١٠٠٠" وقوله ايضا: "التوبة تجيب ما قبلها." وقوله ايضا صلى الله عليه وسلم: "لو لم تذبوا لاتي الله بقوم يذنبون ثم يستغفرون الله فيغفر لهم" وغير ذلك من الايات والاحاديث القدسية والذبوة في فضيلة التوبة، فتمسك بها. قال بعض العلماء
- ١٥ بالله تعالى ان من علامة توبة القلب البعد والكره عن هوى النفس، بموجب اية { ان النفس لا مارة بالسوء }، وعلامة توبة الروح هي عدم القنوط عن رحمة الله، كما قال الله تعالى { لا تقنطوا من رحمة الله ان الله يغفر الذنوب جميعا } الاية. وعلامة توبة السر هي الفرار عما سوى الله، بموجب اية { وتوبوا الى الله جميعا ايها المؤمنون } الاية. ١٠٠٠ تسعد ان شاء الله تعالى. ثم من هنا نذكر المراقبة، وهي على ثلاثة اقسام. فالاولى منها يقال لها مراقبة القلب والثاني مراقبة
- ٢١

- الروح والثالثة مراقبة السر. ثم ان مراقبة القلب هي
 الخوف من عذاب الله تعالى، وان مراقبة الروح هي الخوف
 من مفارقة الله تعالى، وان مراقبة السر هي المعرفة ٣
 بان الله تعالى هو اقرب من نفسه، فاعلم ذلك. واما
 علامة مراقبة القلب فبان يكون راضيا بالبلاء بموجب
 قوله تعالى {والصابرون في الباساء والضراء} لانه صلى
 الله عليه وسلم يقول: "اذا احب الله عبدا ابتلاه." واما
 علامة مراقبة الروح فالجد في العمل مع الاخلاص فيه
 بموجب قوله تعالى {وما امروا الا ليعبدوا الله مخلصين
 له الدين} واما علامة مراقبة السر فالتمسك بحبل الله
 بموجب قوله تعالى {ومن يسلم وجهه الى الله وهو محسن
 فقد استمسك بالعروة الوثقى} لانقطاع لها. فتحقق بهذه ١٢
 كلها حتى تكون من خيار عباد الله المنتهين اليه
 سبحانه وتعالى. قال المؤلف عفى الله عنه من هنا تختم
 هذه الرسالة المباركة بذكر فضيلة للتمسك بذكر الله
 تعالى. قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: "اهل الذكر هم اهل الله
 خاصة." فاذا ذكر الله ايها السالك باي ذكر من الاذكار.
 ولكن قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: "افضل الذكر قول: لا
 اله الا الله" وقال "وخير الذكر اخفاه" وقال "خير الذكر
 الذكر الخفي" وقال "خير الرزق ما يكفي" وقال ايضا "اذا
 احب الله عبدا الهمه لذكره." وقال صلى الله عليه
 وسلم: "اذا اراد الله ان يجعل عبده اوليائه اكثر من
 ذكره." وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: "اذا احب الله عبدا

THE FLOWING GRACE

By: Shaykh Yūsuf al- Tāj al-Khalwatī al-Makāsarī

In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Beneficent.

My Lord, ease the matter of writing for me and do not make it difficult, O Gracious One. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. And may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon our Master Muhammad - paragon of the Prophets and the Messengers - and upon his family and all his Companions.

This short treatise which is called *The Flowing Grace that flows through the Divine Openings* mentions the different types of invocations (*dhikr*), namely, their names, meanings, and methods. May this be accomplished through the support of Allah and His gracious mediation.

Some of the gnostics who are well versed in this science have said that remembrance (*dhikr*) divides into three categories. The first is the *dhikr* of negation (*naḥī*) and affirmation (*ithbāt*) which is the phrase *lā ilāha illallāhu* - There is no god except Allah. The second is called the pure (*mujarrad*) and majestic (*jalāla*) *dhikr* which are the words *Allah-Allah*, the third is called the *dhikr* of allusions (*ishārah*) and breaths (*anfās*) which are the words *Huwa-Huwa*.

The first *dhikr* is also called the *dhikr* of the tongue (*lisān*), while the second is called the *dhikr* of the heart (*qalb*), and the third the *dhikr* of the secret (*sirr*). Therefore the first *dhikr* is referred to as the nourishment of the tongue, and the second as the nourishment of the heart, and the third as the nourishment of the secret.

Others also say that *lā ilāha illallāhu* is the life of the heart, and *Allāh-Allāh* is the life of the soul (*rūḥ*), and *Huwa-Huwa* is the life of the secret. The meaning, then, of the first *dhikr* is that there is no object of worship - in truth - except Allāh.

With the *mubtadi*⁹ (novice) and the *mutawaṣṣit* (the one who has reached the intermediate stage) the meaning is: there is no object of worship, or no object of love - in reality - other than Allah. With the *muntabī* (the one who has reached the final stage) the meaning is: there is no true existent (*mawjūd*) except Allah. The first group of rememberers (*dhākirīn*) is called the *ahl al-bidāya* (the novices) of the common folk, the second group is called the *khawāṣ* (the elect), and the third group is called the *khās al-khawās* (the superlatively elect). Perhaps at this stage someone might ask: “How is it possible for this world to be negated while we witness - with our senses - that it exists without a shadow of a doubt?” The answer to this is: that is indeed so, except from the point of view of the People of Allah (*Ahl Allāh*) - those who possess true knowledge of Allāh, the Most High - there is no real existence other than that which exists through and by itself. And the existence of the world is transitory and ephemeral, not actual. If it is true to say that the existence of the world is metaphorical (*majāz*) then it is also true that an ephemeral, metaphorical existence is essentially non-existence; that is, such an existence is not considered true existence by the People of Allah - those who possess true knowledge of Allah, the Most High. So know that.

And indeed *dhikr* is a requirement. It is necessary for the traveller (*sālik*) to occupy himself with *dhikr* by virtue of the verse:

Remember Me and I will remember you. (Qurʾān, 2:
152).

This verse is sufficient for you to realise the honour accorded to *dhikr*. Without *dhikr* there is nothing. The best *dhikr* according to the clear text of a Prophetic Tradition is the phrase *lā ilāha illallāhu* - There is no god except Allah. And the Mother of Believers ‘Ā’isha (may the satisfaction of Allāh be upon her) said that the Prophet (may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) used to remember Allah, the Most High, all the time, that is, every moment of his life and under all circumstances. Have you not understood the clear text of Allah's word:

And if you are of those who love Allah, then follow me
(Muḥammad). (Qurʾān, 3: 31).

Amongst the ways of following the Prophet (may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) is to engage in abundant remembrance of Allah, the Most High. So know that, if you count yourself amongst those who are blessed and possessed of spiritual rank.

And some of them (may the satisfaction of Allah be upon them) have said: The Testimony (*shahādah*) are two Testimonies. The first is the Authorised Testimony (*shahādah mukhtaṣṣah*) and the second is the Absolute Testimony (*shahādah muṭlaqah*). The Authorised Testimony is to say: *Ash-hadu an lā ilāha illallāhu wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan rasūl Allāh* - I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His messenger. The Absolute Testimony is to say: *Ash-hadu an lā ilāha illallāhu waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu wa ash-hadu anna Muḥammadan ʿabdahu wa rasūlahu* - I bear witness that there is no god except Allah Who is unique and without partner and I bear witness that Muḥammad is His slave and messenger. So know that.

Moreover, everything else besides Allah - which is referred to as creation - simultaneously bears the quality of existence and non-existence without one aspect holding precedence over the other. This is so for the reason that if we view creation from its inner aspect - its quintessence - then it may be said that it does not exist because it has no independent existence. However if we view it from its outer aspect then it may be said to exist although it does not exist through and by itself. Know that, for then the meaning of "There is no god but Allah" with regard to its exterior meaning (*ẓāhir*) is the negation of divinity of everything other than Allah, the Most High; and the sole affirmation of His Divinity, the Sublime, the High. But with regard to its true meaning it is the affirmation of the existence of Allah and the negation of real existence from everything other than Allah, the Most High.

Now the rememberer (*dhākir*) who remembers Allah with the formula *lā ilāha*

illallāhu may be divided into four categories. The first is he who recites it with his tongue and his heart but is mindless of its meaning and does not believe in it. He is a hypocrite (*munāfiq*). The second is he who recites it with his tongue and his heart and is mindful of its meaning. He is to be counted amongst the generality of believers (*muʾminīn*). The third is he who recites it and experiences its taste and its results. Such a one belongs to the spiritual elite. The fourth is he who recites it and becomes oblivious to everything except Allah. There is nothing that he witnesses, while reciting, except Allah. Such a one belongs to the superlatively elite. So know that. Some of them have said that the spiritual illumination (*mukāshafah*) attained - with the assistance of Allah - during *dhikr* comprises three categories. The *mukāshafah* which is attained by the phrase *lā ilāha illallāhu* occurs by means of the heart (*qalb*); the *mukāshafah* which is attained by the words *Allāh-Allāh* occurs by means of the soul (*rūb*); and the *mukāshafah* which is attained by the words *Huwa-Huwa* occurs by means of the secret (*sirr*). Then some of them have said that the special quality of the *dhikr lā ilāha illallāhu* is to stimulate the heart towards the Truth - High and Exalted is He. And the special characteristic of the *dhikr Allāh-Allāh* is to stimulate the soul towards the Truth - the Most High. And the special characteristic of the *dhikr Huwa-Huwa* is to stimulate the secret towards the Truth - the Most High.

O Allah, illuminate our hearts with the *dhikr lā ilāha illallāhu*, and delight our souls with the *dhikr Allāh-Allāh*, and unveil our secrets with the *dhikr Huwa-Huwa* through Your Grace and Your Generosity, O most Merciful of the Merciful. Thereafter there are some of the methods that those who are qualified in these arts have mentioned.

The first word which is recited is *lā* and this has to be recited gently and taken from beneath the navel to the top of the brain by elongating the *lā* of negation. The next word *ilāh* is then taken and drawn down to the right side while emphasizing the vowel sound "i" of the word *ilāh* and clearly vocalising the "Ha" at the end of the word. Thereafter pause for a moment while imagining the extinction of everything except Allah, including oneself. This is followed by moving the head to the left

while reciting *illallāh* - and "striking" the phrase upon the heart with intensity of force. The intensity should be of such a kind that its "heat" permeates the entire body. At this Allāh, the Most High, alone should be affirmed. And it should be known, through this, that there is no real influence in existence except Allah. At this point he will receive some of the fragrances of the Truth, the Most High, and some of His inspirations in such a manner that will be unlimited - through the Grace of Allah, the Most High, and through His Generosity. And no-one will comprehend what we have said except one who has experienced these *adḥkār* with regularity. Therefore some of the masters of this art and some of the gnostics - may Allah sanctify their secrets - have said:

He who has not experienced cannot comprehend that which lies beyond his limitations, namely, the sublime secrets which Allah bestows upon some of His slaves who have attained perfection in knowledge (*Al-Kummal al-Ārifīn*).

It is not permissible to divulge these secrets to other than those who are qualified to receive them, as it has been said: "To divulge the secret of the divinity is heresy. And none knows this except he who is He and we are He." And some of the eminent ones have said: "The one who performs his prayers as they do, and who fasts the way they fast, and who tastes their food, will understand their language." So know that.

Moreover, if the rememberer says *lā ilāha illallāhu* with all its conditions, or he says *Allah-Allah*, or he says *Huwa-Huwa* silently or aloud, and becomes extinguished in Allāh and subsistent in Him, the Sublime, then he would have attained the highest goal. We also say to you that some of the results of *dhikr* that are attained during *dhikr* are exclusively for those who are immersed in Allah and who perceive nothing other than Him, the Most High, while experiencing this station (*maqām*). The master of the gnostics and their Imām, the blessed Shaykh al-Akbar (the greatest Shaykh), the Imām al-Afkhār (the most splendid Imām), the

master, our reverent Shaykh Muhy al-Dīn ibn Arabi (may Allah sanctify his secret) has said: "I am immersed in the ocean of my state (*ḥāl*). I become extinguished in it from both existence and non-existence."

Moreover, it is necessary for the one who travels on the path of *dhikr*, when he says *lā ilāha illallāhu* to perceive that the outer aspect of the Truth, the Most High, is encompassed by His inner aspect. Similarly when he says *Allab-Allab* he perceives that His inner aspect is, in essence, none other than His outer; and when he says *Huwa-Huwa* he perceives that His Last (*ākhir*) is, in essence, His First (*awwal*). Both are, essentially, one. He is the First in His "Lastness" and the Last in His "Firstness" He is the Outer (*ẓāhir*) in His Inner-ness and the Inner (*bāṭin*) in His Outer-ness. And how can it be other than that? He, the most sublime, is described by "There is none like unto him" with regard to everything. Therefore some of the eminent ones have said: "None understands what we have said except he who is He and we are He", that is, "Jaan" or "Doost" (love). So know that.

Thereafter O seeker, O traveller, if your heart becomes illuminated with the remembrance of Allah, the Most High, and purified from all human impurities, then Allah, the Most High, will become manifest in it in a variety of manifestations according to the level of your station (*maqām*) until the heart becomes His throne (*‘arsh*), glorified be He, the Most High. Then will he be of the true believers as stated by the clear text of the Prophetic Tradition: "The heart of the true believer is the throne of Allah." And if this is the case then negligence will never overtake him for the reason that he has now attained the station (*maqām*) of the superlatively elite. It has been said that Shaykh Abu l-Ḥasan al-Shādhilī used to say : "If the Truth becomes veiled to me then I would not count myself amongst the believers." So know that.

It has also been said that he in fact stated this while referring to the presence of Muḥammad (may the Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him) - let alone the presence of Allah, the Most High, with regard to this station. So understand that.

Dhū l-Nūn al-Miṣri (may Allah sanctify his secret) has said: "The repentance of the common folk is to repent from their sins while the repentance of the elite is for their negligence (*ghaflab*)."
And the Shaykh, the master of the Ṣūfis, Al-Junayd al-Baghdādi, has said: "If a person devotes himself to Allah, the Most High, for a thousand thousand years and then turns away from Him for a short while, then what he has lost would be far greater than what he has gained." It has been related that one of the eminent ones who had attained perfection in his knowledge of Allah, the Most High, saw the Prophet of Allah (may the Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him) in a dream and he (the Prophet) said: "He who has known a way to Allah, the Most High, and then abandons it will be punished by Allah a punishment with which He will not punish anyone else".

If this is the case O truthful and sincere seeker and if it is that you belong to the family of the Felicitous, then do not renege from your way towards Him, the Most High, for indeed He has accepted you and drawn you near to Him, the Glorified. Verily he (may the Blessings and Peace of Allah be upon him) has said: "He who seriously seeks shall find." And Allah, the Most High, has said in a sacred Tradition: "He who seeks Me shall find Me, and he who finds Me becomes beloved to Me, and He who is beloved to Me will be slain by Me, and he who has been slain by Me his ransom becomes obligatory on Me and he whose ransom is obligatory on Me, I will be his ransom." He who has attained this station, the Most High says of him: "I am his ears and his eyes and his heart." So know that. The most High has also said: "When he wanted Me for My own sake I gave him that which no eye has ever seen, nor any ear has ever heard, and which has never occurred to the heart of any person." With regard to this station the Shaykh Abū l-Ḥusayn al-Ṣūrī has also said repentance (*tawbah*) is to repent from everything except Allah.

Some of them have even said: "He who does not repent will not attain to any station, and he who does not attain to any station will not attain nearness to Allah." Therefore some of the elect (may the satisfaction of Allah be upon them) have said: "There is nothing more beneficial to the slave than repentance." Have you not understood the words of the Glorified One: "Indeed Allah loves those who

repent and loves those who are purified” (Qurʾān, 2: 222), namely to repent from both outer and inner sins and to be purified from both outer and inner impurities. So know that.

And His words, the Most High: “And turn to Allah, all of you, O believers, for perhaps it is that you may be successful.” (Qurʾān, 24:31).

And his words (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon Him): “Repent to Allah, O believers, for indeed I repent to Allah one hundred times every day.”

And his words: “He who repents from a sin is as one who has never sinned.”

And his words: “Repentance removes all sin that were previously committed.

And also his words: “If you do not commit any sins then Allah will deliberately cause a people to commit sin.” They will then seek His Forgiveness and He will forgive them.

There are many Qurʾanic verses (*āyāt*) and Prophetic and Holy Traditions with regard to the merits of *tawbah*, so adhere to them. Some of those who are knowledgeable of Allah, the most High, have said: “Amongst the signs of the heart is to refrain from and reject the whims of the self (*nafs*). This in accordance with the verse, “The human soul is certainly prone to evil.” (Qurʾān, 12:53).

And the sign of the repentance of the soul is not to despair of the Mercy of the Allah, for Allah, the Most High, has said: “Do not despair of the Mercy of Allah for indeed Allāh forgives all kinds of sin”. (Qurʾān, 39:53).

The sign of the repentance of the secret (*sirr*) is to flee from everything except Allah. This accords with the Quranic verse: “And turn to Allah, all of you, O Believers... ” so that you may attain happiness with the Will of Allah, the Most High.

We now turn our attention to *Murāqaba* (self-observation).

There are three categories:

The first of these is the observation of the heart (*murāqabat al-Qalb*).

The second is the observation of the soul (*murāqabat al-Rūḥ*).

The third is the observation of the secret (*murāqabat al-Sirr*).

As for the “observation of the heart” it is to fear the punishment of Allah, the Most

High. The “observation of the soul” is to fear separation from Allah, the Most High; and the “observation of the secret” is the knowledge that Allah, the Most High, is nearer to one than one’s self. So know that.

The sign (*alāma*) indicating that the “observation of the heart” is operative is to be contented with the trials of Allah. This accords with the Quranic verse: “And to be firm and patient, in pain, suffering, and adversity” (Qurʾān 2: 177). This is so for the reason that he (may the blessings and peace be upon him) has said: “If Allah loves his slave he will test him.”

The sign that the “observation of the soul” has been established is seriousness in deeds along with sincerity. This accords with his words, the Most High: “And they have been ordered with nothing else except to worship Allah sincerely...” (Qurʾān 88:5). As for the sign of the “observation of the secret”, it is to hold on and cling to the rope of Allah. This accords with the words of Allah: “Whoever submits his whole self to Allah, and is a doer of good, has indeed grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold.” (Qurʾān 31:22).

Realise all of these so that you may become of the chosen slaves of Allāh - those who have attained His nearness. Glorified be He, the Most High.

The writer, Shaykh Yusuf, says: Here comes to an end this blessed treatise that has described the merits of adhering to the remembrance of Allah, the Most High.

Said the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “The people of *dhikr*, they are the true family of Allah.” Therefore, O traveller, remember Allah with any *dhikr*.

However he (may the blessings of Allah be upon him) has said: “The best of invocations is the phrase *lā ilāha illallāhu*.”

And he has said : "The best of invocations is that which is done silently".

And he said: “The best *dhikr* is the silent *dhikr*.”

And he said: “The best livelihood (*rizq*) is that which suffices.”

He also said : “If Allah loves His slave He will inspire him with His remembrance.”

And he (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) further said:

“If Allah wishes to appoint His slave as one of His friends (*awliyā*) then He causes them to engage in much *dhikr*.”

And he (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

“If Allah loves His slave then He habituates him to His *dhikr*.”

And Allah, the Most High, has said in a Holy Tradition (*Hadith Qudsi*): “*lā ilāha illallāhu* is my fortress and he who enters my fortress is safe from my punishment.”

And He has also said : “He who remembers Me in himself, I will remember him in Myself. And he who remembers Me in an assembly I will remember him in an assembly better than his assembly.”

It has been narrated that the prince of Believers, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭalīb (may the satisfaction of Allah be upon him and may Allah honour him), had said: “O messenger of Allah show me the shortest path to Allah, the Most High, and the easiest on His slaves. He (the Prophet) replied: “O ‘Alī, persevere in the remembrance of Allah (*dhikr Allah*).”

There are many Qur’ānic verses and Prophetic and Holy Traditions that mention the merits of *dhikr*. However what has been mentioned ought to suffice you, my brother, for spiritual excellence and happiness if you are truthful in your quest and sincere in your attitude so that you may become of the chosen slaves of Allah through the high rank of the generous Prophet and the great Messenger, the Master of the two worlds, Muḥammad (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). And our teachers are included in this.

Annexure 2: Mujarrabât As-Sannûsî

No. 2741.

fol. 40 ; lines 11 ; size $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$; 6×4 .

مجربات السنوسى

MUJARRABĀT AS-SANNŪSĪ.

A work on prayers recited by the author. As he recites he makes observations upon the supernatural powers contained in these prayers. The work is fully described in Berlin, No. 4164.

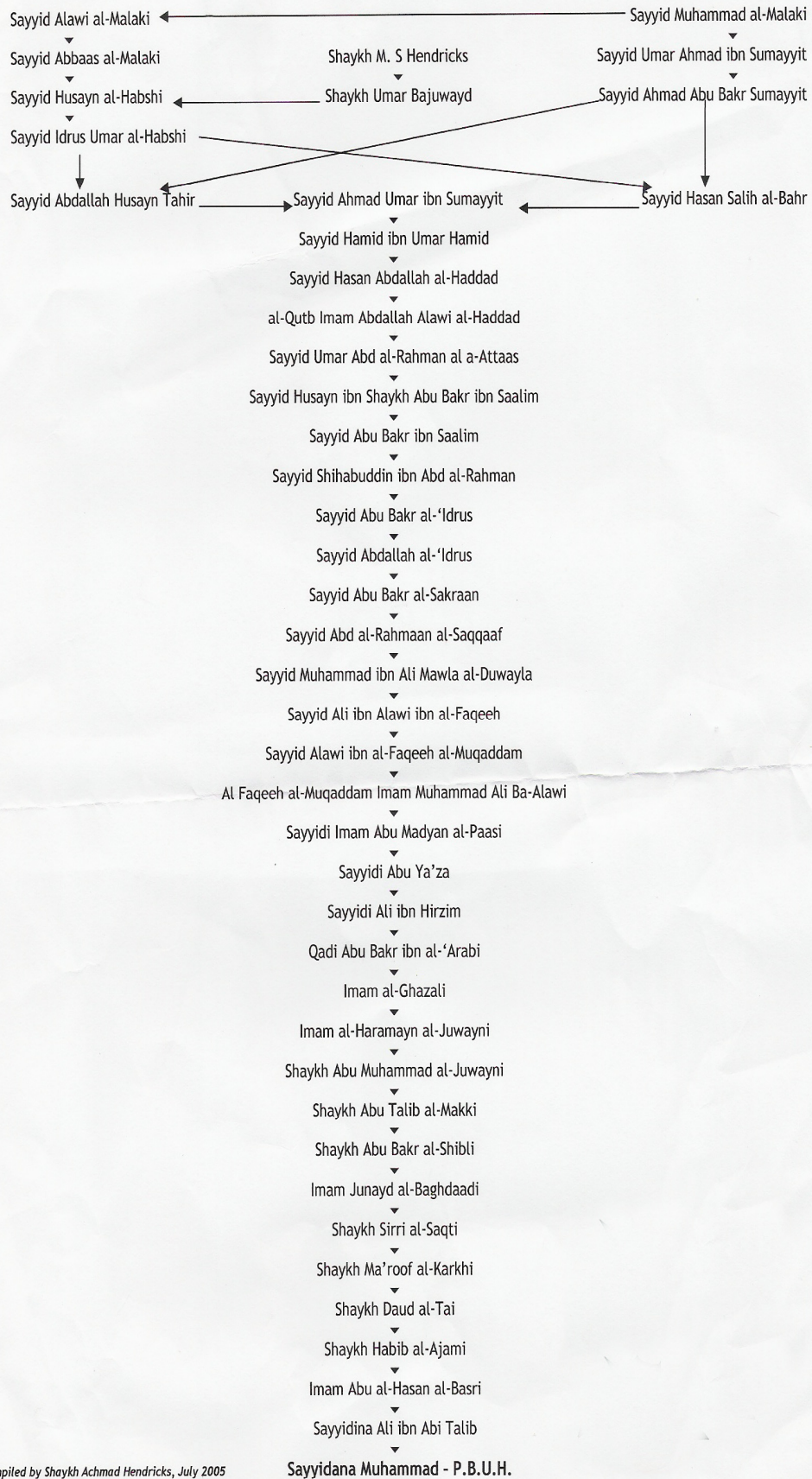
Author : Abū 'Abdallāh Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf al-Ḥasanī as-Sannūsī أبو عبد الله محمد بن يوسف الحسنى السنوسى, a distinguished Ṣūfī of the 9th century A.H. His authority on Ṣūfism, theology, jurisprudence and certain other branches of Arabic culture is accepted generally. He is the author of numerous works, seventeen of which are noticed in Brock., vol. ii, p. 250. He died in A.H. 892 = A.D. 1486. See Brock., *loc. cit.*; Berlin, No. 4164.

Beginning :—

قال الشيخ العلامة الحمد لله ذى الجود و الكرم
واعلم انى اذكر فى هذه الازراق من الفوائد الشريفة التى هى
مجربة صحيحة النخ *

**Annexure 3: Bā ‘Alawī Silsila of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ
Hendricks**

SILSILAT ULAMA MAKKAH



Annexure 4: A Rifāʿī Silsila of Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī

Silsila of Nūr al-Dīn al-Ranīrī

‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 661);
▼
Ḥasan al -Baṣrī (d. 728);
▼
Ḥabīb al-‘Ajāmī (d. 737);
▼
Dāwūd al-Ṭā‘ī (d. 781);
▼
Ma‘rūf al -Karkhī (d. 813);
▼
Sarī al-Saqāṭī (d.867);
▼
Junayd al- Baghdādī (d.910);
▼
Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d.945);
▼
Ḥamalī (‘Alī?) al-‘Ajāmī;
▼
‘Ali ibn al-Būriyārī
▼
Abū ‘Alī Ghulām ibn Turkān;
▼
Abū al-Faḍl ibn Kāniḥ;
▼
‘Ali (Abū al-Faḍl) al-Qūrī? al-Wūsiṭī;
▼
Manṣūr al-Rifā‘ī (Manṣūr al-Baṭā’ihī, d. 1145);
▼
Aḥmad ibn Abi al-Ḥasan al Rifā‘ī (d, 1182);
▼
‘Ali ibn ‘Uthmān;
▼
Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibrāhīm ibn al-A‘rab ibn ‘Alī;
▼
Muḥammad (cousin, son of maternal uncle of above);
▼
Qaṭṭb al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Rifā‘ī;
▼
Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-Rifā‘ī;
▼
Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad;
▼
Sayyid al-Shar if Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Samarqandī;
▼
Burhān al-Dīn Ibrāhīm al-‘Alawī;
▼
Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr al-Ḍujā‘ī;
▼
Shaykh Ismāīl ibn Ibrāhīm al-Jabartī;
▼
Shih āb al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Raddād;

▼
Qāḍī Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Saʿīd Gīn al-Ṭabarī;

▼
Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Masʿūd Abī Sakīl al-Anṣārī;

▼
Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Faḍl;

▼
Sayyid al-Shaykh Fakhr al-Dīn Abū Bakr ibn Abd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs al-ʿAdanī (d. 1508);

▼
Sayyid Abd Allāh ibn Shaykh ibn Abd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs;

▼
Sayyid Shaykh (ibn Abd Allāh ibn Shaykh ibn Abd Allāh) Şāhib Aḥmadābād (d. 1582);

▼
Sayyid Abd Allāh al-ʿAydārūs (d. 1610);

▼
Sayyid Muḥammad al-ʿAydārūs Şāhib Sūrat (d. 1620);

▼
Sayyid Abū Ḥafş ʿUmar ibn Abd Allāh Bā Shaybān al-Tarīmī al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 1656);

▼
Shaykh Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī al-Ḥamid al-Rānirī

Annexure 5: Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar Khalwatī Silsila

Shaykh Yūsuf of Macassar's Khalwatī Silsila



Ayyūb b. Aḥmad al-Khalwatī al-Qurashī al-Dimashqī



Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿUmar al-Harirī al-Shāmī



Shah Walī al-Ḥalab al-ʿAjamī



Aḥmad al-Rūmī



Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb al-ʿAintabi



Mulla Darwīsh (or Dāwūd) al-Rūmī



Mulla Shams al-Dīn al-Rūmī



Uwais al-Qaramānī al-Thānī al-Rūmī



Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn al-Aqsarāyī



ʿAbd Allah al-Arzinjānī



Yaḥyā al-Shirwānī



Saur al-Dīn Pir ʿUmar al-Rūmī al-Aydinī



Dede ʿUmar al-Khalwatī al-Rūmī



Abū ʿAbd Allah Muḥammad Nūr



Ibrāhīm al-Zāhid al-Jilānī



Jamāl al-Dīn al-Tabrīzī



Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Tabrīzī



Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Tābrīzī



Rukn al-Dīn Sinjāsī



Muḥammad al-Abharī



Abu l-Najīb al-Suhrawardī



ʿUmar b. Muḥammad Suhrawardī



Abū Aḥmad Aswad al-Dīnawārī



Mumthad al-ʿAlawī al-Dīnawārī



Junaid al-Baghdādī

Annexure 6: Ad-Du‘â’ As-Saifi

No. 2691.

foli. 11 ; lines not fixed ; size 13×8 ; 9×6.

الدعاء السيفي

AD-DU'Â' AS-SAIFÎ.

The well-known work on prayer, designated with fifteen different titles (see No. 2768/5 below) ; of which the title noted above is that commonly known. It contains a prayer which 'Alî, the 4th Caliph, learnt from the Prophet and it was dictated by 'Alî to a man of Yemen, who had been directed in a dream to seek 'Alî and learn it

from him. In *Muhaj ad-D'awât* (see No. 2716 below) a reference to the fact is supplied :—

عن ابي عباس قال كنت ذات يوم جالسا عند امير المؤمنين على
ابن ابي طالب و دخل ابذه الحسن فقال يا امير المؤمنين
بالباب فارس يطلب الاذن عليك فقال اذن له فدخل
رجل و قال السلام عليك فقال علي و عليك
السلام ثم ادناه و قربه فقال يا امير المؤمنين انى صرت اليك من اقصى
بلاد اليمن وانا رجل من اشراف العرب و كنت
يا امير المؤمنين نمت ليلة فهتف بي هاتف ان ارحل الى
خليفة الله على بن ابي طالب واسئله ان يعلمك
الدعاء الذى معمه [sic] رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ففبه الاسم
الاعظم فامنن يا امير المؤمنين و علمنى هذا
الدعاء ثم دعى بدوات و قرطاس النخ *

The same work states that the prayer was transmitted in two different forms, the words varying slightly.

Both forms of the prayer are quoted in *Muhaj ad-Da'wât*, foll. 92-105, and the present work is a copy of the second version. In *Muhaj* it begins as follows :—

دعاء اليماني برواية اخرى و هو ايضا مشتمل على دعاء السيفي
..... و هذا الدعاء بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم الحمد لله رب
العالمين و العاقبة للمتقين اللهم انى احمدك و انت للحمد
اهل النخ *

Our copy is incomplete at the beginning and opens abruptly thus : *كثرة ما نشرت من المطايا*. For a copy of the prayer according to the first version see No. 2768/3 below, which begins thus :—

الحمد لله انت الملك الحق الذى لا اله الا انت النخ *

The work is especially cherished by the *Şâfis* on account of the supernatural powers it possesses.

Annexure 7: Isnâd As Saifî

اسناد السيفى

ISNÂD AS SAIFÎ.

A treatise containing directions for the recitation of Du'â as-Saifi (No. 2768/3 above) and explaining the supernatural powers contained therein in Persian. On fol. 31^a the following fifteen names of Du'â' as-Saif are enumerated:—(i) دعاء سيفى . (ii) العرز (iii) اليمانى . (iv) العرز الاعظم . (v) العرز البر . (vi) العرز المرتضى . (vii) حرز الصحابه . (viii) دعاء قضاء العاجة . (ix) سيف . (x) يد الله . (xi) عين الله . (xii) قدرة الله . (xiii) سهم الله . (xiv) برهان الله . (xv) مصمام الله .

The author's name is not known.

Beginning:—

الدعوة فى اللغة الطلب المطلق وفى عرف ارباب الدعوة عبارة عن طلب ظهور آثار الاسماء الالهية مع رعاية الشرائط المخصوصة المعهودة بين اهل الدعوة *

Written in Nasta'liq, but an Arabic passage which is quoted is written in Naskh.

The colophon of the scribe runs thus:—

ختم شد دعاء مغنى و اعتصام و دعاء سيفى حرز اميرين بعون الله
رب الكونين از دست محمد ابو الحسن بيغوى بهارى سنه ۱۹۱۳ ع *

No. 2769.

foll. 84; lines not fixed; size 12½ × 7½; 9½ × 3.

المجموعه

AL-MAJMU'AH.

Annexure 8: Mawlid An-Nabî

HISTORY.

99

No. 1037.

foll. 16; lines 13; size $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6$; $6 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$.

مولد النبي

MAWLID AN-NABÎ.

The well-known work, containing an account of the Prophet's birth and of his early life, written in the rhymed prose commonly used for recitation on his birthday celebration.

Author: Ja'far bin Hasan bin 'Abdalkarîm bin Muḥammad bin 'Abdarrasûl al-Barzanjî ash-Shâfi'î al-Madanî جعفر بن حسن بن عبد الكريم بن محمد بن عبد الرسول البرزنجي الشافعي المدني
Beginning:—

ابتدى الاملاء باسم الذات العليه فانقول هو صالى الله عليه

وسلم سيدنا محمد بن عبد الله بن عبد المطلب النخ *

The author, a man of great piety and learning, was born at Medina in A.H. 1101=A.D. 1690. He received his education at his native place, and became known for his elegant writing and profound knowledge in the Shâfi'ite law. He held the distinguished posts of *Khatîb* (preacher) of the Prophet's mosque, and of Principal of the Madrasah attached to that mosque. He was also appointed the jurisconsult of the Shâfi'ites (مفتى الشافعيه) at Medina. He wrote several books, and died at Medina on Friday, the 27th Shâ'bân, A.H. 1177=A.D. 1764. See *Tâj at-Ṭabaqât*, vol. xii, part ii, fol. 182^b; *Silk ad-Durar*, vol. ii, p. 9; and *Brock.*, vol. ii, p. 384.

For other copies see Cairo, vol. i, p. 405; and Berlin, No. 9536.

The work has been printed in Cairo, A.H. 1307. /1889

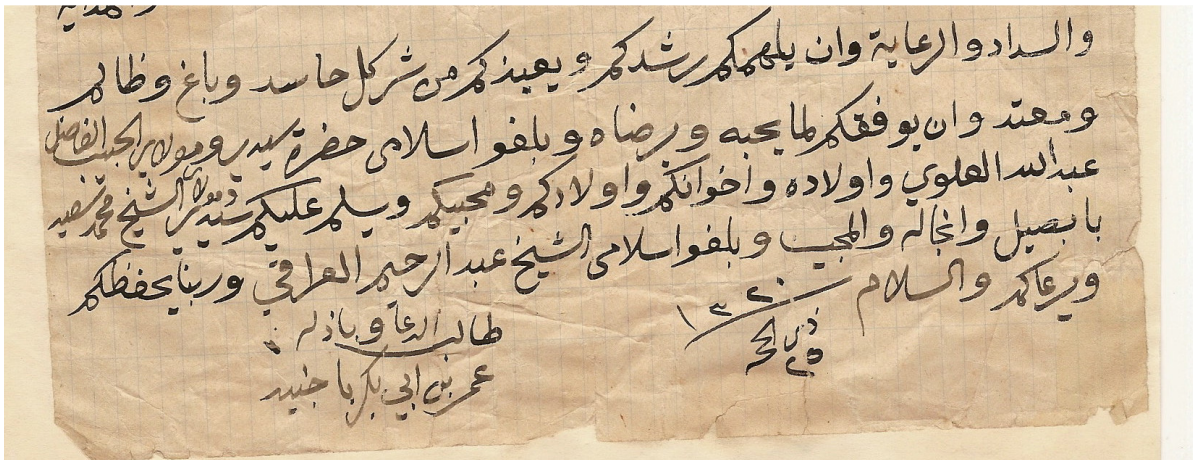
Written in fair Naskh. Not dated. Probably 19th century.

Annexure 9: Cape Times Coverage of Petition for Simonstown Shrine

THE CAPE TIMES
EDITION
MONDAY – 16 TH JULY 1932
MUSLIM SHRINE AT
SIMONSTOWN
COUNCIL DECIDES AGAINST
ITS ERECTION
(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT)

The Works Committee reported at today's meeting of the Town Council that it had carefully considered the application to erect a Moslem Shrine in a portion of the Council's water area adjacent to High Level Road. A lengthy letter had been received from Sheik Mohammed Salie Hendricks of the Azzavia Mosque, one of the Leaders of the Moslem Community in Cape Town and in this the priest had given full details of the alleged Discovery of the Shrine and the history of the patron Saint, namely the political exile Tuan Ismail Dea Malela and his son Tuan Abdul Jaliel of Simonstown. A letter had also been received from the British Naval Authorities, who shared with the Simonstown Council in the water supply from the springs in that area, and who objected to the proposed Shrine in view of the danger of contamination of the water supply. After going carefully into the letter and while anxious to do all possible to meet what was felt to be a genuine desire on the part of the Simonstown Moslem Community, the Council regretted that the risk of pollution of the water supply precluded any possibility of allowing the Shrine to be established. It was decided to inform the Moslem Officials to this effect.

Annexure 10: Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd’s Letter



Translation:

(And we ask our Lord to grant us)...assurance in doing right and divine protection; and to inspire you along the right way, and to grant you refuge from every malicious envier and tyrant, and from every oppressor and transgressor. May (Allah) grant you success in matters beloved to Him and according to His satisfaction.

Extend my salutations to my liege, the reverent Sayyid al-Ḥabīb ‘Abd Allah al-‘Alawī and his children; and also to your brothers and your children and their loved ones.

My liege, Sayyid al-Shaykh Muḥammad Sa‘īd Bāb Sayl - along with his descendants and loved ones - also extends his salutations to you.

Extend my greetings, too, to *Shaykh ‘Abd al-Raḥīm al-‘Irāqī* [italics mine], and may our Lord preserve and protect you.

With *salām* (peace)

Requesting a *du‘ā* (prayer) and making one for you.

‘Umar b. Abī Bakr Bā Junayd

Dated: 25 Dhū l-Ḥijja, 1320/March, 1903

[This letter by Shaykh ‘Umar Bā Junayd was addressed to ‘Abd al-Bāri Hendricks, older brother of Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks, in which he thanked ‘Abd al-Bāri for the support he had given to Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ during his seventeen years in Makkah.]

**Annexure 11: Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ's Silsila
to the Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn**

Iḥyā ʿUlūm al-Dīn: Silsila of Sh. M. S. Hendricks (al-Zāwiyah) to Imām al-Ghazālī

Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Hendricks



Sayyid Abū Bakr Shaṭā al-Makkī



Sayyid Aḥmad b. Zaynī Daḥlān



Shaykh Uthmān b. Ḥasan al-Ḍimyāṭī



Shaykh ʿAbd al-Lāh al-Sharqāwī



Al-Ustādh Muḥammad b. Sālim al-Ḥifnī



Shaykh al-Badīrī



Mullab Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī



Muḥammad Sharīf



Abū Ishāq al-Tanūkhī



Al-Taqī Sulayman b. Ḥamzā



ʿUmar b. Karam al-Daynūrī



Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū l-Faraj ʿAbd al-Khāliq b. Yūsuf al-Baghdādī



Al-Imām Ḥujjat al-Islām Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad al-Ghazālī