

Stellenbosch and the Muslim Communities, 1896-1966

Stellenbosch en die Moslem-gemeenskappe, 1896-1966

ستلینبوش و الجماعات المسلمة ، 1896-1966م.

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Abstract

This study intends to investigate a facet of the race relations of the town of Stellenbosch within the context of state ideology and the reaction of the various local communities towards these policies. Against various internal and external forces, certain alliances were formed but these remained neither static nor constant. The external forces of particular concern within this study are the role of state legislation, Municipal regulations and political activism amongst the elite of the different racial groups. The manner in which the external forces both mould and are moulded by identity and the fluid nature of identifying with certain groups to achieve particular goals will also be investigated. This thesis uses the case study of the Muslim Communities of Stellenbosch to explain the practice of Islam in Stellenbosch, the way in which the religion co-existed within the structure of the town, how the religion influenced and was influenced by context and time and how the practitioners of this particular faith interacted not only amongst themselves but with other “citizens of Stellenbosch”. Fundamental to these trends is the concept of “belonging”. Group formation, affiliation, identity, shared heritage and history as well as racial classification – implemented and propagated by both political discourse and communal discourse - is located within the broader context of Cape history in order to discuss commonalities and contrasts that existed between Muslims at the Cape and those in Stellenbosch.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie ondersoek rasseverhoudinge in die dorp Stellenbosch binne die konteks van staatsideologie, sowel as die reaksie wat verskeie plaaslike gemeenskappe op hierdie staatsbeleide getoon het. Bepaalde alliansies wat veranderend van aard was, het as 'n reaksie op verskeie interne- en eksterne magte tot stand gekom. Die eksterne magte wat veral betrekking het tot hierdie studie, sluit in die rol van staatswetgewing, stadsregulasies en politieke aktivisme onder die elite van die verskillende rassegroepe. Die wyse waarop hierdie eksterne magte tegelykertyd deur identiteit beïnvloed is en bygedra het tot identiteitsvorming en die wisselende wyse waarop sekere groepe met mekaar geïdentifiseer het om spesifieke uitkomst te verkry, word ook van nader ondersoek. Hierdie tesis maak gebruik van 'n gevallestudie van Stellenbosch se Moslem-gemeenskappe om lig te werp op die Islamitiese geloofsleer in Stellenbosch, die naasbestaan van godsdiens binne die dorpstruktuur, die invloed wat konteks en tyd op godsdiens gehad het (*vice versa*), asook die interaksie wat volgelinge van hierdie geloof onderlings en in verhouding met ander “inwoners van Stellenbosch” gehad het. Die konsep “tuishoort” is fundamenteel tot hierdie tendensies. Groepformasie, affiliasie, identiteit, gemeenskaplike erfenis en geskiedenis, sowel as rasseklassifikasie – geïmplimenter en versprei deur beide politieke- en gemeenskaplike diskoers – word ook in hierdie studie binne die breër konteks van Kaapse geskiedenis ondersoek, om sodoende die ooreenkomste en kontraste wat tussen die Kaapse- en die Stellenbosse Moslems bestaan het, in detail te bespreek.

Abstract (Arabic)

هذه الدراسة تتوخى البحث في مظهر من مظاهر العلاقات التي تخص الأجناس المختلفة لسكان مدينة " ستلينبوش " ، ضمن سياق العقيدة أو الأيدولوجية، ورد فعل هذه الجماعات مقابل هذه السياسات المنتهجة من قبل عدة قوى داخلية وخارجية، هناك بعض التحالفات التي تشكلت إلا أن هذه الأخيرة بقيت على حالها لا هي نشيطة ولا هي جامدة أو ثابتة .

فالقوى الخارجية على وجه التحديد قيد هذه الدراسة تلعب دورا هاما في التشريع الرسمي , سواء تعلق الأمر بالتعليمات البلدية أو النشاطات السياسية بين الأوساط النخبوية للمجموعات العرقية .

إن الأسلوب التي تنهجه هذه القوى الخارجية في كلا الحالتين سواء منها ذات الطبيعة الأساسية أو ذات الطبيعة المقولبة لتمييز بعض المجموعات العرقية عن أخرى قصد بلوغ أهدافها هي الأخرى ستكون قيد التحقيق .

هذا البحث اهتم بدراسة حالات الجماعات المسلمة القاطنة بمنطقة " ستلينبوش " لتشرح وتبين عن كتب الممارسة الدينية لهذه الجماعات الإسلامية بستيلينبوش، بالطريقة التي يتعايش بها الدين الإسلامي مع بقية النسيج الاجتماعي للمدينة ، والكيفية التي أثر وتأثر بها هذا الدين ضمن هذا السياق الاجتماعي ، فضلا عن العامل الزمني الذي لعب دورا أساسيا في هذا المضمار ، ثم الكيفية التي يتعامل بها معتنقوا هذا الدين ، ليس فقط مع بعضهم البعض وإنما مع بقية المواطنين الآخرين من منطقة " ستلينبوش " .

إن الاتجاهات الأساسية لمفهوم " الانتماء " ، التشكيل الجماعي ، الانتساب، الهوية ، التاريخ والإرث المشترك هذا فضلا عن التصنيف العرقي طبقا وتماشيا مع الخطاب السياسي والخطاب الجماعي ، وهذا يتماشى مع السياق العام والأوسع لتاريخ مدينة كيب تاون ، لكي يمكننا الحديث عن المجموعات الإسلامية ومقارنتها مع بعضها البعض سواء التي في " كيب تاون " أو التي في " ستلينبوش " .

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Finally I would like to dedicate this work to a dearly departed friend who realized I could make it even before I did – *à Serge*.

Nomenclature of Muslim Terms

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Ahl-kaf</i> | reference to the Muslims of the Cape |
| <i>Anno Hegira</i> | Muslim Calendar year |
| <i>Ansars</i> | the inhabitants of Medina during the time of the Prophet |
| <i>Caliphs</i> | the four religious leaders that appeared during the formation of the schools of thought |
| <i>Da'wah</i> | missionary work conducted by Muslims |
| <i>Dar-al-Islam</i> | the space of Islam and knowledge |
| <i>Dar-al-Kufr</i> | the abode of the non-believer |
| <i>Hadith</i> | details about the life of the Prophet |
| <i>Hafiz</i> | one who memorises the Quran (plural: <i>huffaz</i> . Feminine form: <i>hafizah</i> , plural: <i>huffazah</i>) |
| <i>Hajj</i> | the pilgrimage to Mecca |
| <i>Halaal</i> | that which is authorised for consumption within Islam (<i>Haraam</i> : that which is not authorised) |
| <i>Hijab</i> | traditional Muslim garments |
| <i>Hijra</i> | the flight of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina |
| <i>Imam</i> | the religious leader of the <i>jama'</i> |
| <i>Jama'</i> | a group or congregation (plural is <i>jama'ah/jama'ah</i>) |
| <i>Janaazah</i> | death notices |
| <i>Jihad</i> | efforts to convert the non-believer (<i>Jihad of the sword</i> - combating secularism and Western domination) |
| <i>Jumu'ah</i> | Friday prayers |

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Kaaba</i> | black stone in Mecca through which the Prophet was taken to Heaven by Gibril |
| <i>Khalifa</i> | the rightly guided leaders |
| <i>Khula</i> | means by which the wife can divorce her husband |
| <i>Labarang</i> | <i>Eid</i> |
| <i>Langgars</i> | prayer houses |
| <i>Madrassah</i> | Muslim religious school (plural: <i>madaris</i>) |
| <i>Masjid</i> | mosque |
| <i>Muhajirun</i> | the migrants |
| <i>Purdah</i> | the wearing of the scarf/veil |
| <i>Ramadan</i> | one of the pillars of Islam- the period of fasting |
| <i>s.a.w.s</i> | Sallal-lahu alayhi wa sallam (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) |
| <i>Salat/Salah</i> | formal prayers in Islam |
| <i>Sharia</i> | Islamic Law |
| <i>Sunnah</i> | practical guide to leading a Muslim life |
| <i>Talaaq</i> | uttered three times during divorce |
| <i>Ulama</i> | the governing body of Islam |
| <i>Ummah</i> | community of believers or the “nation of Mahommed” |
| <i>Zakar/zakah</i> | the giving of alms |

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Stellenbosch and the Muslim Communities, 1896-1966

Literature Review

Recent research has shown that from the beginning, “white” and “brown” people in Stellenbosch lived together, initially in the same houses, on the same plots and eventually side by side after the manumission of the slaves in 1838.¹ This racial phenomenon is not unique to Stellenbosch. However, this town provides a useful microcosm in which the concept of diversity² in the face of adverse conditions, such as discriminatory legislation, may be studied and compared to the macro discourse of relationships on many levels such as race, class, gender and religion. The micro-narrative may be used to either enhance or question existing theory. The practice of Islam is often considered monolithic. Change and continuity, conflict and harmony amongst the different races and amongst Muslims themselves will be placed in the context of race, class, political, religious and identity frameworks. What is of importance is the manner in which certain role players attempted to maintain hegemonic power over religion, space and economic power and this, at times, directly and indirectly involved the “non-white citizens of Stellenbosch”.³ This study not only provides a discussion on the Stellenbosch racial communities but furthers the importance of micro history, by locating the experiences of the different groups within the broader context of colonial history. Three concepts that will be of particular interest within this study are race, class and religion. Two contemporary authors have made an impact with their works not only because they grapple with the issues of race relations within the town, but because they allow unheard voices to emanate from within their narrative. In tracing Hermann Giliomee’s

¹ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, p. xiii. Please note that the author’s knowledge of Afrikaans would not permit him to make academic reference to works in the Afrikaans language. He has therefore relied on translations of all works which are cited in Afrikaans. My grateful thanks to Yasmine Raziet, Zainap Osman and Stefan van As for the tumultuous amount of time spent in translating key areas for this contribution towards the history of Stellenbosch.

² With this I mean the co-existence of people of different origins, races, classes, religions, cultural practices and languages.

³ The dynamics of race relations between “white” and “brown” peoples is discussed by G. Hendrich, “Die Dinamika van Blank en Bruin Verhoudinge op Stellenbosch, 1920-1945”, unpublished Master’s Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2006.

approach to these issues, texts which relate to the broader context of South Africa, in particular *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (2003) provide a valuable framework in which his later works such as *Nog Altyd Hier Gewees: Die Storie van 'n Gemeenskap* (2007) can be read. This work examines the nature of race relations in Stellenbosch from the early years when burghers, slaves and a small group of “free blacks” built up the town, to the tragedies of the Group Areas Act. He places much focus on the relationship between Afrikaans speakers of all races and discusses not simply the conflicts which arose between “white” University of Stellenbosch students and the “coloured” community during the “Battle of Andringa Street”; he shows nonetheless that, somehow, the communities had a working relationship. Much focus is placed on the inhabitants of what he calls Stellenbosch’s “District Six”, *Die Vlakte*, and he traces the relationship between racial groups from times of cohesion to the apartheid era. What he does insist upon is that the town was established by immigrants of varying origins, under varying conditions and of varying religious affiliation.⁴

Hilton Biscombe documents oral testimony of the predominantly “coloured” community of *Die Vlakte* in his work, *In Ons Bloed*, (2006). He looks at the conditions in *Die Vlakte*, the role of education and the church, popular culture, sports and recreation, economic activities, the role of the University of Stellenbosch, the “Battle of Andringa Street” in the 1940s as well as political change before and after apartheid. This book was compiled to give a voice to individual experiences. Very little expansion is made on the interviews and they thus provide valuable insight into the “real experiences” of the inhabitants of Stellenbosch. The concepts of perception and reality will be unravelled throughout this text. Focus was placed largely, if not entirely, on the “coloured” community of Stellenbosch with four and a half pages plus one page of pictures (out of 232 pages) being dedicated to “Die Moslemgemeenskap en-geloof”.

Certain distinct trends are evident in the two works cited above. Firstly, they are in Afrikaans and thus designed for the community of Afrikaans speakers. Whilst the psychology behind writing the history of a people for a people is comprehensible, it is my belief that the information provided through the valuable oral resources obtained could be beneficial to

⁴ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van 'n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. xviii, xiii-xiv, 141.

understanding race, class and religion in a wider context beyond the Afrikaans-speaking world. As Giliomee himself expresses:

Hierdie studie van my val êrens tussen die mikro-en makrovlak. Dit is nie bloot 'n stuk plaaslike of mikro-geskiedenis nie, maar probeer die lewens en lotgevalle van bruin, swart en wit mense op Stellenbosch as deel van die geskiedenis van die streek, kolonie en die land (makro-geskiedenis) te skilder.⁵

They both place a major focus on the “coloured” community of Stellenbosch and they both show a sensitivity to those who were disadvantaged by political domination. They both also provide a starting point for the deconstruction of the concept of being “coloured”. Entangled, but yet to be fully deconstructed, would be the role of all religions, not just Christian, in the making of the Stellenbosch communities. Whilst Muslims were considered “Malay” and the “Malay” were inadvertently consumed within “coloured” identity through State discourse and self appropriation, the complexities of being Muslim and the personal struggles attached to being an adherent of that religion within a non-Muslim environment, certainly created further challenges than those of Christian “coloureds”.

The Muslims of Stellenbosch are either included within “coloured” history, which then disguises many differences that existed on religious grounds, or discussed separately as a religious entity within the public historical domain. The manner in which these groups of Muslims are located within historical discourse reflects the prevailing problems of identity and affiliation within these communities.

Studies that focus purely on the Muslim Community (and not communities) have contributed towards understanding the history of the Muslims in Stellenbosch but they also isolate the group/s, entrenching the perception of a homogenous “Muslim community”. Magmoed Kara has completed a pamphlet on the rise of the Muslim community, the development of Islam in

⁵ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van 'n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, p. xviii. (Translation: This study of mine lies between the micro and macro levels. This is not merely a piece of local micro history, but tries to depict the lives and experiences of the brown, black and white people of Stellenbosch as part of the history of the struggle over colonialism and the land – macro history).

Stellenbosch and the symbolic nature of the mosque as a testament to overcoming apartheid. Unfortunately, he does not provide a comprehensive source list neither does he discuss macro trends within his research. Much of his work for the earlier periods is based on secondary material and for the later periods, he relies on oral testimony. He is currently working on the history of the people of Du Toit Station. Much of his work is based on the 38-page pamphlet written by Moosa Patel, *Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap*, (1997), created for the centennial celebration of the mosque in Stellenbosch. Patel makes use of oral testimony as well as works that discuss slave society in Stellenbosch, general history books on race relations on Stellenbosch, the works of Yusuf Da Costa and Achmat Davids, minutes of the mosque and the Stellenbosch Islamic movement as well as on one of the academic studies which focuses on the “Malay Community of Stellenbosch” by J. B. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies deur die Maleise Gemeenskap Stellenbosch” (1955). Whilst all these sources discuss the Muslim community as a whole, they barely discuss the plural nature of the Muslim communities based on various ideological and interpersonal differences: one form of Islam – that of the “Malay Muslims” – is accepted and reiterated *ad verbatim* within these and subsequent publications. Greeff’s work is fairly comprehensive on the “Malay” culture and Afrikaans language up until the 1950s but he places a major focus on linguistic traits rather than social cohesion and diversity within Islam. Much of his work is based on the practice of Islam although he does, already in the 1950s, enlighten the reader to the need of incorporating written and oral sources. Unfortunately, he makes use of one informant, Imam Achmat Toefy.

That which has been documented provides a valuable foundation on the Muslim communities of Stellenbosch but none, as yet, convincingly places the micro-narratives within the macro discourse. Accounts either foreground the amicable relations between the races and within the races but more investigation is needed to appreciate the diversity and porosity of ethnic, religious and racial identities as well as inter-group relationships. The turbulent impacts introduced by State legislation on identity and on behaviour are also minimally signposted within the discourse. Whilst class, race and religion can be rigid and are often remembered as such, interdependence is fundamental to this work. The porous and changing bonds which brought unlikely groupings together and which kept some apart will be the approach taken within this body of work.

One of the major historiographic myths is the origins of the early slaves. The first Muslims brought to the Cape were slaves, political exiles and prisoners who were captured in Africa, India, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and numerous parts of Indonesia.⁶ Figure 1 shows the percentage and places of origin of 4890 immigrant slaves from 1652 to 1818.⁷ Many of the exiles were classified as “Indian” according to the records of 1701.⁸

| PLACE | Africa | Ceylon | India | East India | Mauritius | Malaya | Others | Unidentified |
|--------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|
| % | 26,65 | 3,10 | 36,40 | 31,47 | 0,18 | 0,49 | 0,40 | 1,31 |

Whilst one cannot assume that all slaves were practitioners of the Islamic faith, a large portion followed the teachings of Mohammed (s.a.w.s).⁹ The generic term “Malay” had become synonymous with the practitioners of the Islamic faith. David Achmats rejects the terms “Cape Malays”, “Malay Quarters” and “Malay Muslims” as was used in official documents at the Cape. He rejects these terms as erroneous and unhistorical; instead, he uses the term “Cape Muslims”. Muslim culture originates from the Islamic ideology and not from race, tribe, colour or cast. Historically speaking the term is fallacious because the early Muslims did not entirely originate from the Malay Peninsula as many came from India and the islands of the Indonesian archipelago, as well as from Africa.¹⁰ Muslims reached the Cape around 1654 when the Dutch East Indian Company used it as a penal colony for political prisoners. Slaves, political exiles and convicts were brought from India, especially Bengal, Coromandel and the Malabar-coast; from Indonesia, especially the Celebes and Java and later from Macassar. According to Davids, over 50% of the total slaves came from India thus forming the embryo of the Cape Muslim Community. They were reinforced by the slaves from Ceylon, Indonesia and Arabia. Those from Arabia hardly played a role in the establishment/development of Islam at the Cape.¹¹ Much debate has surrounded the origins

⁶ S. Van der Schyff, *The Traditions of the Bo-Kaap community*, p. 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁸ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 11.

⁹ *Sallah-lahu alayhi wa sallam* – May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. Uttered each time the Prophet’s name is mentioned or written.

¹⁰ A similar observation is made by S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part II)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/12/article08.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

¹¹ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. xiv-xv.

of slaves and the origins of the earliest majority of Muslims at the Cape. It is clear that not one type of Islam was established at the Cape nor had an impact upon the practice of Islam at the Cape. Similarly, Islamic adherents certainly made an impact upon what later became known as “Malay” culture and “Malay” identity.

Many studies have focused on Muslims living both in Muslim states and Muslims living in non-Muslim states.¹² This study will discuss the growth of Islam in a state in formation. Jacques Waardenburg in his study on Muslims and “others” states that studies on Islam:

(...) should pay attention to the ways in which Islam as a religion and a way of life was interpreted and practiced in these communities, the relations that crystallized between various Muslim groups and organizations themselves, the visions of Islam that arose, and the patterns of interaction and communication that developed between these Muslims and others, that is to say non-Muslims, around them.

How did Muslims view others who were not Muslims? Where and when have Muslims been in closer contact with others? How did they behave and what kinds of relations developed with these other people? Whom did Muslims consider really different from them, really the “other”? On what kind of occasions did Muslims open up to others, becoming aware of real differences while entertaining further relations with them? Where did the imagination impose itself on reality, and where did realities correct false images?¹³

In the case of Africa, it is said that Islam goes through a process of “Africanization” in which the religion is adapted to a local environment.¹⁴ This seems to follow a one-directional approach. What is unique in the instance of the Cape is the multi-directional influence local culture has on Islam and the reverse. Within the global study on Muslim communities, much research has been focused on specific religious communities in specific contexts but as Waardenburg points out, further research on relations between Christian, Muslim, and Jewish persons or groups in given situations and contexts is needed. Only then may we become more able to explain and understand what happens in situations of tension and conflict between groups with different religions alongside other social forces.

¹² D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context* (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003).

¹³ J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context*, pp. 12-13, 16.

¹⁴ D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, pp. 42-137.

Let me suggest three areas in which I think such research is urgently required: 1) Attention should be paid to the ways people *view their own religion* with the acceptance of differences existing within this religion, *as well as other religions* while accepting that they have a certain validity, at least for the adherents (...) 2) Attention should be paid to the ways in which people *identify themselves at all*, with or without the help of religion. In many cases people no longer identify themselves primarily through their religion, but rather for instance according to their ethnicity, nationality, social class, profession, or causes to be served, including political adherence. People may identify themselves in different ways in different situations and contexts. Changes of identity often have to do with experiences that are linked to new and sometimes critical situations, or to contexts in which traditional communal structures are falling apart and in which people have to individualize themselves to survive, as is certainly the case in Western societies. Certain groups discover themselves as being oppressed, and subsequent liberation and emancipator movements tend to affirm the newly articulated identity of their members (...) 3) Attention should also be paid to empirically observable changes in religious communities, the religious leadership, and current changes of orientations in religions like Christianity, Islam, and Judaism ...

So I suggest research should be done among such people about their mutual perceptions, ecumenical activities, cooperation and dialogue even with adherents of other religions, shared ethical concerns, actions of human solidarity, development of self-critical views, and awareness of political and other forms of abuse of religion.¹⁵

Within the practice of Islam, ideological differences do give rise to variations in the manner in which the religion is practiced, challenging the concept of the “brotherhood of Islam” and introducing a variation in cultural practices. Whilst there are in existence various schools of Islamic thought represented in the Cape, within this study, much ideological differences become prevalent amongst those of the *Hanafite* and *Shafite* traditions. In this context, these are closely linked to ethnic origins. The majority of the former tend to be “Malay” whilst the “Indians” form the bulk of the latter. Eric Germain’s study on the Muslims of the Cape, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane* (2007) provides a thorough assessment on the interaction between Muslims in the Cape, as well as providing insights on how “Indian” Muslims maintained close links with India, with other Indians and were often closer to Indians of other religious practices than their Muslim counterparts. As Bill Freund remarks, he captures the themes of jealousy and resentment and how these worked within the framework of Islamic fraternity and co-operation. Whilst it is believed that he does not encapsulate the later post-apartheid writings on identity, he does provide a contextual understanding of identity

¹⁵ J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context*, pp. 59-61.

trends.¹⁶ For Germain, Islam becomes a defining category with ethnic and racial categories becoming secondary but at times, racial categories did in fact underline identity, and this needs to be shown because it influences the manner in which identity formation takes place in the present. Heinrich Mathee's *Muslim Identities and Political Strategies* (2008), shows how identity formation can be subject to and influenced by loyalties to a real or imagined "community". He makes a very poignant argument about how identity is formulated in relation to others but at the cost of excluding the indelible "Other". The obtuse nature of inclusions, erasures and silences often influence the manner in which we create our identity.¹⁷

One also needs to discuss the role of religion on an individual level.

On a scholarly level, it becomes apparent that on an empirical level, religious identities vary and that a religious community is not as homogenous as is often represented or imagined. Someone's religious identity is part of a whole range of identities in daily life, and in most cases it is not as exclusive or dominating as people imagine. Religious communities consist of people with very different motivations and identities and for whom a given religion has a significance that is ever more individualized. Although religious leaders may try to strengthen the homogeneity of their communities, in practice the "real" identity of persons in modern contexts turns out to be much more fluid than the "official" norms would allow. One learns what it means to be of a certain religion, to identify with that religion but this can obstruct what the author refers to as normal communication between human beings of different backgrounds.¹⁸

So, whilst this study may pay close attention to a particular town and a particular group of people within that town, inferences will be made to the broader context of the Cape. Similarly, that which happened in the Cape impacted upon the practice of Islam and race relations in Stellenbosch.

¹⁶ B. Freund, "Review of *L'Afrique du Sud musulmane: Histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*", H-Net Book Review, August 2008.

¹⁷ H. Mathee, *Muslim Identities & Political Strategies: A Case Study of Muslims in the Greater Cape Town Area of South Africa, 1994-2000*, p. 16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Methodology

Identity politics within the discourse on South African history foregrounds the dilemma of *whose* language, culture or story should have authority when the very concept of what it is to be a South African is bound by the notion that South Africa is a nation. Throughout Africa, the implausible nation state has attempted to regroup different languages, ethnic and religious groups into one “homogenised State”.¹⁹ Previously, these concepts were constructed upon the assumption of linguistic-racial exclusiveness, despite their being obvious overlaps at certain stages within the past. By creating a narrative, attempts are made to capture, reorder and reinvent the self in society. It has been suggested that fundamental differences among societies can be grasped by [re]interpreting the stories people tell about themselves and others. These stories can be created by an elite to bring different peoples together to act in certain situations but one could also look at – what has been described as “bottom narrative” – the manner in which individual stories lead to identity-making by the very protagonists themselves. Opportunities can allow for the reshaping of stories in order to reshape the self, communities and societies. Despite division, differences and sectional loyalties, alliances are formed and broken and are often multiple in nature. They are relatively inconsistent and become finally impotent when the goal becomes obsolete. Separations along linguistic, ethnic or religious lines as well as alliances across these boundaries all provide material for creating a narrative, but its value is often linked to specific goals within a specific context. Benedict Anderson argues that the difficulty comes in knowing what to remember and what to forget. The tension created in identity formation is two-fold. There is a need for a “hermeneutics of suspicion” whereby certain fundamentals are desirable: rereading of authorities, a questioning of positions, reputations, traditions, influences; and a need for damaged identities to be reassembled, for silenced voices to be given speech and a need to examine local actions as well as placing that in relation to international contexts. In this sense, identity-making requires considering not just those conditions and trends that are binary opposites (differences) but also what is common within previously constructed groupings.²⁰

The writing of a “nation’s history” inadvertently poses certain challenges. Firstly, there is the pressure of providing a version of history that is acceptable to all, yet impossibly inclusive of all. Secondly, as part of the nation-building process, a shared common experience is

¹⁹ D. Cruise O’Brien, *Symbolic Confrontations*, p. 28.

²⁰ M. Chapman, “The Politics of Identity: South Africa, Story-telling, and Literary History”, *Journal of Literary Studies*, Vol. 18, December 2002, pp. 224-236.

desirable, at least within groups that perceive to have had a common past. “Memory is identity and we cannot have a divided identity”.²¹ However, South Africa has never been a single nation but was composed of several nations. Thirdly, this approach can consume community and individual experience under the mythological single-version approach. “Many have warned of dangers inherent in the relationship between history and nation. History written within the force-field of nationalism easily lapses into selective myth-making, heroic teleology, or romantic anachronism”.²² This can also occur if history is created not for the value that the past held but for the sake of furthering present goals.²³

The history of segregation and apartheid within South Africa has led to a great surge in land claims history. Whilst land history may be useful to create a clearer picture on the dispersion of communities, the question arises as to whether this phenomenon can be seen beyond the obvious financial implication. Can reclaiming physical space help with recovering the loss of memorial space? Discriminatory practices led to loss on many levels and dealing with loss varies on an individual basis. Compensation for lost land, in its own way, acknowledges past injustices and this may be seen as complimentary rather than being oppositional to recounting personal experiences bound within memorial space if the two are compatible. Reclaiming of land for financial gain at the expense of a truthful or rather a holistic recollection of past experiences can inhibit the understanding of the change over time and can also exclude those that have no claim to land but who have a claim on memorial space. Land claims history can be dangerous to memory if one aspect of the past, for example, the era of forced removals, places blame on one party, forsakes other amicable interactions and instills a sense of shared loss at the expense of all other memories. In trying to create a narrative on the history of the Muslims of Stellenbosch, the forced removals from *Die Vlakte* and the relations between the racial groups post 1940, remain the area of research which has any appeal. Those within these communities who did not share in this experience or who had a different experience to the same phenomenon felt they needed some form of justification for not having shared in the experiences of “their community”.

One of the biggest obstacles encountered within this research project was having to deal with diverse living beings, each with their own needs and perceptions of what the documenting of

²¹ Kader Asmal at launch of series, *Turning Points*, *Daily News* April 2, 2004.

²² C. Bundy, “New nation new history? Constructing the past in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 85.

²³ Whig history.

the past can and should provide. Whilst certain selective information is available in the archival material, the social patterns of human interaction become hard to piece together because of the scarcity of available sources. One then relies on oral testimony to try and gain a better understanding of living conditions. What I attempted to achieve is a clear distinction between the pre- and post-forced removal era. Prior to the forced removals, from the testament of the interviewees of *In Ons Bloed* as well as other testimonies, it is clear that the sadness felt about the loss of land and lifestyle within Stellenbosch after the forced removals had influenced the manner in which race relations are remembered. In a way, the “non-white” communities are expected to show their racial difference and membership to their respective communities by assuming a common discourse of disdain for anything “*Boere*”.²⁴ Using the Minutes of the Stellenbosch Municipality, an attempt was made to create a narrative about life in Stellenbosch. Clearly, the Minutes provided a rather idealistic impression as attempts were made to create a citizenry of Stellenboschers based initially on the quality of person and not on race *per se*. State legislation had an impact on what the Municipality wished to achieve and that which it was compelled to assume. Similarly, actual experiences of people could only be ascertained through personal testimony of people who lived in the town during the 1930s onwards. Hilton Biscombe attempted to showcase the actual voices of the “coloured” members of Stellenbosch with a particular focus on the forced removals era. In a personal correspondence with one of the researchers who eventually left the team working on the documenting of the history of the “coloured people of Stellenbosch”, it is evident that the initial philosophy behind the project differed somewhat from the final product. The initial idea was to express the deep divisions in Stellenbosch, to develop a shared understanding of people that lived and worked in *Die Vlakte* in order to heal the memories of the past. By informing the rest of Stellenbosch and exposing them to the raw emotions of those who had to leave, the communities wanted to have some form of closure on the period of the forced removals and of racism. It is also stated that the idea was to construct “an identity” of the people through oral history. “Not one of the objectives were (*sic*) achieved through this project. I have not found one person that is happy with the book. The bias of the author also came through in the book. Very few people can identify themselves with the book, because of this bias”. It was also stated that the cultural, social and economic impact of the Muslim community within the “coloured community” was by no means shown nor were the actual histories of the Muslim people documented accordingly. “A lot of Muslim people were

²⁴ Whilst the term has been used by historians in different contexts, there is no doubt that the term is used in a derogatory manner within the “coloured” communities of Stellenbosch to refer to “whites”.

interviewed but not with the aim of extracting knowledge in terms of the Muslim community... I did only a few interviews with the aim of getting views on the Muslim community. But [because of] the anecdotal nature of the book it slipped into the cracks and is not mentioned in the book”.²⁵

According to Paul Thompson, all history depends ultimately upon its social purpose. Through local history, a town can seek meaning for its own changing character. Oral history can be used to transform both the content and purpose of history. Through oral testimony, a plethora of unexploited personal recollections can be juxtaposed with existing information and with official documentation to provide a personalised recollection of the past. The oral historian chooses who he/she wishes to interview and the nature of the interview, bearing in mind the objective of his/her study. Not all those interviewed fit into the framework chosen after the preliminary readings and as such, certain selections have to be made. However, the reconstruction of history should be a collaborative approach with the non-professional. Through oral history the community should be given the confidence to write its own history. Preliminary research studies can never be completely inclusive but can stimulate further studies. Through further studies and through accessing a variety of accounts, local history can steer away from communal myths. Accordingly, oral history can offer a challenge to the accepted myths of history.²⁶

What Hilton Biscombe did achieve was the exposure of the personal accounts of those who lived, worked and were removed from *Die Vlakte*. The interviews are a valuable source of information on the personal recollections of those who were directly affected by certain State and municipal decisions. By reinterpreting his interviews without any particular objective in mind, it became clear that specific questions were asked with certain desired responses in mind. Interview BIS 1 clearly shows that the respondent became annoyed with the interviewee who attempted to guide his response in the desired direction. After a “pause” in the interviewing process, a clear change in response can be seen. A clear pattern also appeared in the selection process during the compilation of the book. However, the transcripts did provide some nuanced ideas about the relations amongst the “coloured community” of Stellenbosch. In the interviews conducted for this particular study,

²⁵ Personal correspondence with one of the ex-researchers, M. Kara, (anonymous) electronic mail received on Friday 3 October 2008.

²⁶ P. Thompson, *The Voices of the Past: Oral History*, pp. 1-5, 10-11, 15, 17, 20-21.

interviewees were asked to recount any aspects of their past they could recall. The interview process was extremely long but an attempt was made not to elicit any desired responses. By juxtaposing the oral testimony with the Minutes of the Municipality of Stellenbosch as well as with the local newsletter produced by the Municipality, many correlations were found which supported both methods of research. What became problematic is that many respondents felt they were betraying their “community” by revealing certain “anecdotes”. Many have asked for anonymity with regards to certain statements. It is clear that certain statements made within the Biscombe interviews were also “off-the-record” but because this was not clearly indicated within the transcripts, all interviews within this study will remain “anonymous” for ethical reasons; however, the examiners will be supplied with a separate sheet containing the names of those interviewed both by Biscombe and his research team as well as by myself.

As an outsider to both the Muslim and “coloured” communities of Stellenbosch, it is inconceivable to be able to portray the emotional turmoil of the racism and the forced removal era. However, certain observations regarding behavioural changes help to gain a peripheral comprehension of a changing racial environment. 1940 seems to mark the realisation that race was fundamental to coexistence. Municipal Minutes show that the leaders of the town were fundamentally perturbed by the “Battle of Andringa Street” because it marked the beginning of the outward expression of racial differences. In order to counterbalance Municipal discourse, recollections of those who had lived the experience of these changes provide some insight, but this needed to be contextualised within the changing eras.

Another area of concern was the desire, by the inhabitants, to have a hegemonic “coloured history”. Within the body of this thesis, it will be shown that the creation of a common identity in itself may have been doomed from the initial planning stages of the Biscombe project. Firstly, what constituted a “coloured” varied tremendously from those who were “white”, married to “coloureds” and thus requesting to be considered “coloured” to those who were “Indian Muslim” yet were also affected by similar conditions. Secondly, within the “coloured” groups, some attempted to work with the system rather than against it. Thirdly, whilst Muslims may have considered themselves as part of the “coloured” experience, had shared many spaces with “coloured non-Muslims”, they also had very different experiences related to religious affiliation. On a methodological level, authors are always open to some

form of bias. It is impossible to provide the entire story and thus certain choices have to be made. One of the fundamental problems of trying to create a narrative is derived from the snapshot pieces of material one has access to. Biscombe might not have been able to satisfy the needs of all those affected, but what he has shown is the diverse manner in which experiences are lived and recounted – on a personal level, he has shown that one cannot create a common identity. He has provided a platform to begin from, a structure from which to build onto. In order to successfully achieve this would be through other testimony from diverse sources. Because this thesis covers the period from 1896, there is simply no possibility of gaining personal experiences from the people themselves unless through diaries. For later periods, many active citizens have moved from the town, taking with them valuable information. For example, the only records available at the mosque in Stellenbosch are the minutes from 1961 and correspondence from the 1970s onwards. Relying on testimony about family histories cannot be considered infallible as some errors may and have been repeated through the generations. Similarly, mistrust of researchers outside of the actual communities seems to resonate. I have been extremely fortunate to have met people willing to share their information, recollections and personal archives with me, but major gaps still exist and I have had to rely on supporting arguments through a *mélange* of State discourse and personal recollection, both with very different advantages and disadvantages.

One of the greatest challenges has been the emotional and communal detachment from what becomes “the subject of investigation” in order to draw a more “objective” conclusion. The individuals and the community expect certain results which are not always conducive to academic research which expects a high level of objectivity. Secondly, that which is passed down orally from generation to generation is at times subject to romanticism and self-glorification. Alliances are often evident within the research, not always related to personal gain but familial ties. Family can be extended to a congregation of like-minded beings. This can be useful to strengthen community ties but it can also unconsciously neglect other individuals who played an instrumental role within that society: “Historical memories are constantly refashioned to suit present purposes”.²⁷ This also questions that which is remembered. Major trends like feelings towards certain members of a community are generally more reliable because these somehow survive other upheavals. This emotional state

²⁷ Daniel F. Bouchard (ed), *Language Counter-Memory, Practice: Select Essays and Interviews with Michel Foucault*, quoted in G. Baines, “The Politics of Public History in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 169.

can influence the way in which further situations are evaluated, similarly, later events can blur previous experiences. Hindsight can be very detrimental to memory. “Pierre Nora holds that memory is in a permanent state of flux, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, whereas history is a representation of the past, a critical discourse which is suspicious of memory.”²⁸ However, in the absence of information, one has to use memory in conjunction with other sources. Often the sub-text can be read but this requires the investigator with his/her own shortcomings, to evaluate and at times make value judgements. As Marita Sturken points out, “history and memory are ‘entangled rather than oppositional’.”²⁹ When respondents attempt to share their “unbiased” opinion, they often request anonymity, especially if one lives in a small community where reputation reigns supreme. At times they have recollections that counter other recollections. Jan-Werner Müller makes the following observation which I feel can be applied to a local hegemonic discourse:

The dominant memory serves to validate a certain social order ordained by the past, to legitimate the status quo. Consequently, it prescribes what should be remembered (as well as how it should be remembered) and what should be forgotten. However, counter-memories can exist amongst individuals or groups in civil society who refuse to forget or remember what it prescribes. Such counter-memories exist in private spaces and individual minds and provide a potentially threatening undercurrent to the social order. Their ability to survive depends on what claims to political resources and state power the individual or group is able to muster.³⁰

Another major issue of concern is being sensitive to “investigating” a community. As an outsider to Stellenbosch as well as being an outsider to the Muslim faith, one is always aware that the emotional and ethical journey should be as exemplary as uncovering yet another discourse which can co-exist with that which is already in existence. However, history writing, memories, and stories, can never be “free”. They will always be laden with

²⁸ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de mémoire*”, *Representations*, Vol. 26, 1989 quoted in G. Baines, “The Politics of Public History in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 168.

²⁹ G. Baines, “The Politics of Public History in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 167.

³⁰ Jan-Werner Müller, “Introduction; The power of memory, the memory of power and the power over memory” in Jan-Werner Müller (ed), *Memory & Power in Post-War Europe*, quoted in G. Baines, “The Politics of Public History in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 169.

meaning³¹, but as Jeff Guy points out, one of the essential roles of the historian is to act as guardian and propagator of informed, critical, disinterested history.³²

With these problem areas in mind, I have approached this topic in two ways. As a “professional” historian I have made use of archival documents especially with regards to how the State and by extension the Municipality of Stellenbosch dealt with the “citizens” of Stellenbosch. Municipal Minutes also provided a window into situations where the public responded to legislation and at times challenged legislation. As a “public” historian, I have made use of oral testimony which I have gathered myself as well as re-interpreting the valuable source of interviews conducted by Hilton Biscombe and his research team in establishing the foundation for his work, *In Ons Bloed*. I have also made use of two members in particular of the Stellenbosch Muslim community in order to further my understanding of the Muslim faith, but also to gain some knowledge on the workings of the Muslim Communities of Stellenbosch.

Not many scholarly works appear on this specific topic and those that do, are in the Afrikaans language. In order to obtain varied opinions on works in Afrikaans, I have asked more than one person to translate these texts to avoid a uni-focal interpretation which could be methodologically dangerous.

Much of the information on the history of Stellenbosch has been obtained from archival and secondary source material. From the 1930s to the 1960s, this official information is read alongside oral testimony. Whilst I have endeavoured to create a narrative on the existence of the communities between 1896 and 1966, much valuable information is unobtainable. Because this thesis covers a seventy-year period, salient points will have more bearing on the argument of this thesis and by no means am I judging the importance of the study material on a value basis for the communities involved, but rather on the value it will bring to the argument or arguments made within this preliminary study on a complex and varied group of communities. Much of the research problems evolve around the concept of identity.

³¹ S. Nuttall, “Telling ‘free stories’? Memory and democracy in South African autobiography since 1994” quoted in S. Nuttall & C. Coetzee (eds), *Negotiating the Past: the Making of Memory in South Africa*, p. 88.

³² J. Guy, “Battling with Banality”, *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, Vol. 18, 1998, p. 158 quoted in G. Baines, “The Politics of Public History in post-apartheid South Africa”, H. E. Stolten (ed), *History Making and Present Day Politics: The Meaning of Collective Memory in South Africa*, p. 171.

Because the focus of this study is on the interactions of the inhabitants of Stellenbosch and the impact of macro changes on these interactions, chapters 2, 3 and 4 make use of the plethora of secondary sources available on race relations and the forming and renegotiating of alliances at the Cape in order to contextualise the case study of Stellenbosch within a broader context.

The Complexities of Identity

Changes in South Africa have resulted in altering, affirming or abandoning of identities. Examination of the associations between religion, race, class and political decisions and the forging and renegotiating of alliances are pivotal to understanding the manner in which Muslim identities have evolved.

Historiographically, Mohamed Adhikari has emphasised that historical writing on the “coloured community” tends to accept “coloured identity” both as a “natural” category and as a static entity. Instead, he emphasises the need to recognise that identity was, and is, continuously constructed by those identifying as “coloured” and by those external to that identity. He proposes a shift of analysis of racial identification to that of racial identity formation. He argues that the terms “coloured” as well as “community” need to be deconstructed because identity is locational, never fixed, and varies to such an extent that micro history could help understand the complex nature of this concept.³³ The role of the individual also plays a pivotal role.³⁴ The idea of “being coloured” has been an area of contention for the “Cape Muslims”.

Achmat Davids differentiates between historical terminology officially used to define “Cape Malays”, “Malay Quarters” and “Malay Muslims”, opting for the term “Cape Muslims”.³⁵ By the 1990s, he reverted back to the “Malay” and “Indonesian” classifications.³⁶ This

³³ M. Adhikari, “The product of civilization in its most repellent manifestation: Ambiguities in the racial perception of the APO, 1909-1923”, *Journal of African History*, Vol. 38, 1997, p. 283.

³⁴ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 43.

³⁵ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. xiv-xv.

³⁶ G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 255.

redefinition stimulates the need to question identity labels, to attempt to understand how they came about, what impact a specific label may have had on a community and to whom the birth and propagation of that structured identity can be attributed.

Because this work deals with the manner in which the Muslims from diverse origins form part of the discussion on the history of the Cape, geographical location is not necessarily a defining factor of cultural identity – although it has been used to define identity. I thus use the neutral and inclusive term, Muslim, to denote all those that followed the Muslim faith but who happened to, at one time or another, live in the Cape – their date of arrival within the Cape having no bearing on the fact that they belonged to a “Brotherhood of Islam”. In this way, those that migrated from the Cape, those that were resident in other places in South Africa as well as those that were never initially part of the Cape communities yet have some affiliation to the Cape tradition, are not excluded by the discourse. (However, should I refer to other authors’ works, I shall retain their terminology). John Gilchrist described the “Cape Malays” as a:

[...] distinctive community even among the Coloured peoples of South Africa and are distinguished above all by their common allegiance to the Islamic faith. As Islam has many customs regarding marriage, home life, dress and other communal activities, the Malays can also be recognised by their way of life which is obviously different to that of all the other Coloureds. Politically, however, they have generally identified themselves with the political aspirations of the Coloured peoples.³⁷

Various complexities are illuminated within this statement. Firstly, that the generic hegemonic term introduced during the early 20th century, “coloured” community, comprises various “peoples” of diverse origins and cultural and linguistic practices. Secondly, that the “Cape Malays” formed part of the “coloured” community and shared a common political outlook but not necessarily social and religious affiliation. Farid Esack believes that “The Cape Malay community is not ‘sometimes referred to as Cape Coloured community’ but forms a sub-group of the latter”.³⁸ Whilst they may have shared similar views at certain

³⁷ J. Gilchrist, *The Challenge of Islam in South Africa*, p. 31.

³⁸ F. Esack, “Islam in Southern Africa: A Rejoinder to Nkrumah”, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 53, The African Jigsaw, March 1992, p. 75.

moments in time, they are a specific group, rather than a sub-group, because of their religion which had a profound effect on their cultural practices. The term “Cape Malay” and “Cape Muslim” are also problematic in that it assumes that all those following Islam were one homogenous group, their origins and particularities being thwarted by a dominant discourse. Esack tends to believe that categories of “Indian Muslim” and “Cape Malays” are increasingly invalidated by migratory patterns and inter-marriages, but I believe that this pattern changed over time and one should place it within a historical context. “Indian Muslims” and “Malay Muslims” have a very different history, culture, language preferences and tradition, and it has been noted that they have few points in common.³⁹ Certain particularities are still existent and should be celebrated rather than dissolved. Regardless of origin and traditional differences in the practice of Islam, the term Muslim pertains to the underlying principles of Islam which are common to all believers.

As noted, identity is a complex issue, which in the South African context, is often attributed to political change and racial classification imposed by the State. South Africans have multiple identities in multiple contexts, multiple identities in a common context and common identities in multiple contexts. Despite the low percentage of Muslims in South Africa, they are more conspicuous due to certain tenets related to religious practice such as the mosque and the veil.⁴⁰ It is believed that the term “Malay” was applied to Cape Muslims by the “colonialists and apartheid authorities [as an] acknowledgment of their Islam, rather than their race”.⁴¹ It will be shown that this classification was also adopted by the adherents and was not simply an imposed identification by the authorities. The early Cape history classified people according to various and changing criteria. From slaves and non-slaves, to Christians and non-Christians, from Dutch East Indian Company workers, free blacks, “Khoisan”, “Hottentots”, to “white” and “black”; at each turn, this classification became more racial and based on skin tone. Various works have appeared documenting the evolution of social stratification at the Cape.⁴² By the 1870s, society at the Cape was clearly defined in terms of “white” and “black”.

³⁹ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, pp. 44-45.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴¹ S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part II)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/12/article08.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

⁴² This debate will not be entered into within this work but see for example R. Elphick & H. Giliomee (eds), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840* (Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman, 1989); T. Keegan, *Colonial South Africa and the Origins of the Racial Order* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1996); R. Ross, *Cape of Torments: Slavery and Resistance in South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1983); N. Worden, *Slavery in Dutch*

Those who were “black” were subdivided into “Malays”, “Hottentots”, “Kaffirs”, “Bechuans”, “Fingos” and “Mixed and Other”. According to Vivian Bickford-Smith, the term “coloured” was used by “whites” in the mid 19th century to describe all “blacks” who were “non Bantu-speaking Africans” and this term was later assumed by some people to define themselves, particularly by the “Malay” elite in the 1890s to further the political aims of those who wished to distinguish themselves from the “Natives”. (It must be noted that the Muslim youth activists of the 1960s, embraced being called “black” on a political level but safeguarded being “Muslim” as a religious label.⁴³) He describes the complex issue of the dialectical relationship between racialisation by “whites” and self-definition – the assuming of said political label in order to challenge State policies.⁴⁴ The rise of the term “Cape Malay”, according to Shamil Jeppie, has been attributed to I. D. Du Plessis’ *The Cape Malays* (1944), in order to isolate “coloured Muslims” from other “coloureds”, making them a distinct race.⁴⁵ However, a clear distinction is made by J. Mayson, *The Cape Malays of Cape Town* (1861), who mentions the term “Cape Malay” in relation to those of Muslim affiliation. He talks about their eating habits, their non consumption of pork products and clearly differentiates the appearance of and demeanour of Muslims and non-Muslims. “Many of both sexes occasionally wear a wooden sole fastened to the naked foot... The coloured cap ... the sandals of wood, formerly formed a part of the national dress; but being adopted by Mahometan converts of every class, are now regarded as badges of a common faith”. However, he also makes mention of a letter sent to him by Dr Camilleri, a missionary worker amongst the “Malays” from 1849 to 1855, who makes mention of “Anglican Malays”,⁴⁶ which is suggestive that the term had multiple meanings amongst the early settlers. Du Plessis makes the differentiation between “Malay” and “Mohammedan” (often used as synonyms) but he states that strictly speaking, “Malay” should be used for “that section of the *Muslim* community in which the descendants of Malay slaves and political exiles are to be found”. The two groups he identifies are the “Cape Malays”, whose home language is Afrikaans and “Indians” who speak their own languages as well as English.⁴⁷ This distinction is made more

South Africa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); R. Shell, *Children of Bondage: a Social History of Slavery at the Cape of Good Hope 1652-1838* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994).

⁴³ G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-Apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 255.

⁴⁴ V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, pp. 443-465.

⁴⁵ G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-Apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 254.

⁴⁶ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, pp. 13-14, 33.

⁴⁷ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, p. 1.

around types of Muslims rather than as a method of separating Muslims from the “coloured race”. By 1949, it was observed that:

The Cape Malays are Mohammedans and their religion is the strongest link that holds together the heterogeneous group they are today. Notwithstanding the fact that the two Mohammedan groups, Malays and Mohammedan Indians, live side by side at the Cape, the terms “Malay” and “Muslim” are in popular speech synonymous. When a Malay adopts the Christian faith he ceases to regard himself a Malay...⁴⁸

Islam welded its adherents together into a “compact community”. They were known as the “Malay”; however, in the 1950s the term became increasingly religious rather than a racial classification. They were considered a group within the “coloured people” which exhibited a strong community spirit and which was highly regarded because of the sobriety, self-respect and civilisation of its members.⁴⁹

However, hegemonic discourse does not necessarily correlate with a dominant political discourse. I echo the conclusions of Robert Shell who believes that liberal South African history can intimidate local communities from critically interrogating their own pasts. Too much attention is placed on “oppression” at the expense of what can be seen as inspirational, internal divisions are not always the result of colonialism or apartheid and he stresses the need to unravel these issues.⁵⁰ Whilst the State may have played a major role on identity formation, other factors and political players at times enhanced these boundaries, in the process establishing a dominant identity located in a common history. Identity was used as a tool to create unity, to fight a common battle, to classify and at times to oppress. It is sometimes more comfortable to clearly demarcate the good from the bad; these boundaries, much like identity, were neither rigid nor fixed; certain choices which deemed incorrect in contemporary debate, need to be accepted for the purpose they tried to achieve in the past. Realities can somehow be difficult to accept. I draw on the words of Imam Achmat Cassiem who stated that the most deprived human being is one who is unable to distinguish truth from

⁴⁸ H. Gerber, *The Cookery of the Cape Malays: Food, Customs and 200 old Cape Recipes*, p. 13.

⁴⁹ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 173.

⁵⁰ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 23-24.

falsehood.⁵¹ Our distribution of blame and passing judgement on past actions, even those which eventually became detrimental to the very groups being “protected” from total exclusion, need not necessarily open the spaces needed to renegotiate what it means to “belong” to a particular group or to “belong” in part to various groups. A sense of belonging, shared heritage and shared experiences may lift the burden of an oppressive past, which tends to dominate contemporary historical discourse, but the journey through that past need not necessarily be considered in binary oppressor/oppressed terms. Like any story, distinct villains and heroes make for easy reading and clear conclusions may be drawn. The recollection of the various and conflicting individuals, community and State interactions, and the collating of all these varying versions, make it difficult to decipher truth from falsehood. It is not my intention to glorify one segment to the detriment of another nor entrench Manichean stereotypes. Rather, I intend to portray the boundaries between heroes and villains as being porous to the point that no clear conclusions can be reached, to the point that these two opposing stereotypes, which are often rigidly applied and accepted, are interchangeable.

“White brothers, Native cousins and the Sisterhood”

Whilst this work will concentrate on the issue of “coloured” identity and the Muslim communities within, it is important to state that this phenomenon of imposing and probable assuming of an identity, is not solely located within the “coloured” community. As Vivian Bickford-Smith states, “[...] Malay ethnicity was subsumed within a broader Coloured ethnicity, just as Afrikaner and English ethnicities could be subsumed by white ethnicity”.⁵² The terminology “white”, which will be used in this thesis to clearly demarcate racial issues which were later at the forefront of the “coloured” identity dilemma, came into being in order to place the one (“non-white”) as a clear and distinct group from the other (“white”). This has three implications. Firstly, that the two separate groups had very different and distinct spheres of influence and hurdles. Secondly, that all Europeans, Dutch South-Africans (later Afrikaners) and English speakers shared a common bond against a common enemy, and thirdly that gender differentiation was non-existent.

⁵¹ Imam Achmad Cassiem, “Muslim Struggle Against Apartheid: Neither Oppressed Nor Oppressor Be”, <http://www.islamonline.net> (accessed 19 March 2008).

⁵² V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, p. 456.

It is important to keep in mind that certain individuals within the white racial group had to overcome this imposed identity because they realised that outside racial differences, commonalities existed between the racially defined groups. This could be seen at a group level within a so-called homogeneous group such as the Afrikaners during the South African or Anglo-Boer War, “The colonial Afrikaners regarded with pride the achievements of the Northern Republics, and this sentiment was fortified by the dislike of rural people for the city-dweller and the ‘capitalist’”⁵³ or at an individual level, for example Beyers Naudé who had to overcome issues within his own so-called group on both a racial but also a religious level.⁵⁴ One need only refer to the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) to showcase the differences that existed within the so-called “white” group. The war broke out because of differences over ideology (and economic appropriation) but this war also forced “white” people to align themselves within either of the two rigid ethnic groupings. People were expected to re-examine their history, demarcate and assume a created rigid allegiance and identity.⁵⁵ This is not uncommon in times of war but the implications led to a need to re-create “white” unity from 1902 which had implications for the other racial groups within the country. The hegemonic power of State legislation and political ideology is apparent in all groupings. One could argue that, eventually, the “white” population “democratically” voted in an oppressive regime which would ensure the belief that “[w]hites and blacks cannot live together, unless the black man is in a state of subjection to the white.”⁵⁶ However, many who were supposed to belong to the group of “oppressors” resisted.

⁵³ G. H. L. Le May, *British Supremacy in South Africa 1899-1902*, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Various authors, *They Shaped our Century: The Most Influential South Africans of the 20th Century*, (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1999)

⁵⁵ The Anglo-Boer War is not an area of focus within this study but mention is made to illuminate that identity crises exist across time and racial groups. Many people of mixed “Afrikaner/British” descent for example, had to grapple with how identity was linked to allegiance. Another example would be the dilemma of the “hendsuppers”(those Afrikaners who surrendered to the British) and “joiners”(those Afrikaners who joined the British in the War against their own people). For further reading: A. Grundlingh, *The Dynamics of Treason: Boer Collaboration in the South African War of 1899-1902* (Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2006); T. Pakenham, *The Boer War* (Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 2004); P. Warwick, *The South African War: The Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902* (Harlow Essex: Longman, 1980); For personal experiences of the war see for example D. Reitz, *Commando: A Boer Journal of the Boer War* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers (Pty) Ltd, 1990); Field Marshal Lord Birdwood, *Khaki and Gown: An Autobiography by Field Marshal Lord Birdwood* (London: Ward, Lock & Co Ltd, 1941); J. Brandt, *The Petticoat Commando or Boer Women in Secret Service* (London: Mills and Boon, 1913); MSB 839 1(1) The Diary of Freda Schlosberg, held at the National Library of South Africa, Cape Town; MSB 635, 1(1) The Diary of H. R. Langmore, held at the National Library of South Africa, Cape Town; for how the different groups were stigmatized and how this was disseminated even to the youth see for example E. Ames, *The Tremendous Twins or How the Boers Were Beaten* (London: Grant Richards & Co, 1900).

⁵⁶ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: A Biography of a People*, p. 181.

Similarly, the term “native” also grouped very different groups of “black African” people together, neglecting cultural as well as economic (class) differences. The manner in which “natives” were considered also varied between “Briton” and “Boer”. Both protagonists differed fundamentally in their strategy of conquest over “non-white” people but for the purpose of this thesis, despite their being multiple facets to this ideology, I shall assume for now that both had the same complicit objective as was evident in the political discourse: white domination.⁵⁷ Needless to say, both the “white” and “coloured” groupings at the Cape, considered the “native” as the “other”. Much research has gone into this rather simple distinction I choose to assume for this thesis, and many divergent views and explanations have appeared. As with all studies on race relations, there were moments of interaction and mutual dependency. However, the debate remains open if one considers the result of the 1994 election in which the National Party retained its power within the Western Cape, largely due to the “coloured” vote. A distinction is made between the original inhabitants of the Cape, the “Khoi” and the “San”, who interacted on many levels with the early slaves and settlers, and whose gene pool have contributed to the rise of the “coloured” groups; but, these original inhabitants have always formed a separate entity to the Bantu-speaking black Africans to whom the term “native” applied.

The complexities surrounding gender issues have seen a separate field of study dedicated to deconstructing this important field of research. Both the political dispensation of the early colonial period and the ensuing vote for women, relegated women to a merely utilitarian status in the eyes of the hegemonic discourse. However, women during the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War played a pivotal role⁵⁸, yet the granting of the vote in the 1930s was simply seen by some as a means to curb the black vote.⁵⁹ The manner in which women were regarded during the Victorian era by the British was also markedly different to that shared by the “Boers”. At the end of the 19th century, women did not share in the decision-making process neither in Britain nor in South Africa. It was believed that Boer society shared much

⁵⁷J. Maphalala, “The African people and the Anglo-Boer War”, Ramose M. B. (ed.), *A century is a Short time: New perspectives on the Anglo-Boer War*, p. 184.

⁵⁸See for example E. Brink, “Man-made women: Gender, class and the ideology of the volksmoeder”, C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945* (Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, 1991); E. van Heyningen, “The Voices of Women in the South African War”, *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 41, 1999; P. Krebs, *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

⁵⁹H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: A Biography of a People*, pp. 412-413.

with Victorian society⁶⁰, yet one cannot escape the obvious differences.⁶¹ According to Cheryl Walker, “[...] white women were custodians of ‘civilised values’, icons of the ideology of racial superiority, to be revered, protected and firmly controlled by their men”.⁶² Within the “coloured” community a similar experience was shared. For example, the African Political Organisation’s Women’s Guild provided a support for “coloured” men furthering the cause of the community⁶³; as Valentine Moghadam puts it, “[...] masculinity of the public sphere and the femininity of the private sphere”.⁶⁴ The classical religious institutions were also places of patriarchal hegemony in which women acceded certain roles granted to them by a male elite – this phenomenon exists not only within the Islamic faith, but also relates to the Christian faith.⁶⁵

Whilst there are cases of equality between the biological sexes, for example Fatima Geyer, an *huffazah*⁶⁶ who concluded in an interview in the 1990s that she never received any recognition for her ability to recite the Quran not because of her gender but because of her social class,⁶⁷ religion and state remain areas in which anomalies continue to exist for the rights of women. Muslim women engaged in traditional Islamic marriages have been the subject of debate within law journals. Adherents to Muslim, Hindu and Jewish religious legal systems live according to unrecognised customs and practices in the eyes of the law. Whilst the current constitution recognises the diverse nature of the citizens of South Africa, any form of marriage (including Traditional marriages) that are “potentially polygamous in nature”, are not valid. For an Islamic marriage to be recognised, it has to comply with the provisions of

⁶⁰ H. Ross, “A Woman’s World at a Time of War: An Analysis of Selected Women’s Diaries during the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, p. 35.

⁶¹ See for example B. Theron, “Victorian women, gender and identity in the South African War: An overview”, *Kleio*, Vol. 38, No.1, 2006.

⁶² C. Walker, “The Women’s suffrage movement: The politics of gender, race and class”, C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, p. 321.

⁶³ See P. Van der Spuy, “The Politics of race, gender and class in Cape Town, South Africa, c1910: Dr Abdurahman and the African Political Organisation”, paper delivered at The African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Annual Conference 26-28 November 2004, University of Western Australia. Conference title: “African Renewal, African Renaissance: New Perspectives on Africa’s Past and Africa’s Present”.

⁶⁴ V. Moghadam, “Gender, National Identity and Citizenship: Reflections on the Middle East and North Africa”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1999, p. 137.

⁶⁵ Several studies have been conducted on this issue. See for example A. Engineer, *The Rights of Women in Islam* (London: C. Hurst & Co, 1992); V. Moghadam, “Gender, National Identity and Citizenship: Reflections on the Middle East and North Africa”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1999.

⁶⁶ One who has memorised the Quran.

⁶⁷ See for example, Y. da Costa & A. Davids, *Pages from Cape Muslim History*, pp. 125-127.

the Marriage Act 25 of 1961. Under Islamic law, a Muslim husband may divorce his wife by uttering the words *talaaq* three times but this privilege is not offered to women.⁶⁸ Monogamous Islamic marriage may be converted but this would then mean that the marriage falls under the South African common law. This would offer some protection to Islamic women but contradicts Islamic law. The repercussions of not having the marriage recognised by the State imply that children born within the religious marriage would be stigmatised by those outside of the religious community as being born “out of wedlock”. Should the husband pass away, succession rights for the widow and her children become problematic.⁶⁹ In the case of divorce, custody and alimony battles may ensue. Many Muslims have resorted to a “dual legal identity” in which they marry in terms of *Sharia*⁷⁰ and in terms of the South African law in order to overcome these obstacles. However, one should consider that Muslim women can also request and apply to dissolve their religious marriage through *khula*⁷¹ despite the fact that divorce is not encouraged and women have to apply with the Islamic judiciary and as such, the concept of divorce is thus more complicated.⁷² The effects of the social stigma of divorcees could make an interesting area of research.

A pamphlet on the *Duties of the Muslim Mother* written by Maryam Jameelah Begum, dictates that the primary role of the Muslim mother is to persuade her children (no assumption is made they she may not wish to nor be capable of having children) to abide by the teaching of the Quran and the *Sunnah* (the practical guide to living a Muslim life). Islamic teachings on *purdah*⁷³ demand that the woman lives in privacy and dignity, to spend most of her time at home, occasionally visiting relatives or female friends. She is to be diligent about her housework, supervising and disciplining her children and keeping busy with *salat*, Quranic readings, and other virtuous works.⁷⁴ From this pamphlet it is evident that the mother is central in the education of her children, discipline and domestic domain. Focus is certainly placed on educating the girl-child to become a respectable and good Muslim woman. Little

⁶⁸ The author acknowledges that this process is more complex, the details of which have no scope within this particular study.

⁶⁹ C. Rautenbach, “Islamic marriages in South Africa: *Quo vadimus?*”, *Koers*, Vol. 69, No. 1, 2003, pp. 121-152.

⁷⁰ Islamic law.

⁷¹ This is the agreement between husband and wife whereby the wife may dissolve the marriage if she returns her dowry to the man or surrenders any claim to unpaid dowry.

⁷² N. Gabru, “Dilemma of Muslim Women regarding divorce in South Africa”, *Obiter*, Vol. 26, Issue 2, 2004.

⁷³ The wearing of the head-scarf.

⁷⁴ M. Begum, “Duties of the Muslim Mother” issued by the Islamic Propagation Centre, printed in Durban. This was kindly loaned to me by one of the Muslim families living in Stellenbosch.

mention is made regarding male children. Interacting with some Muslim women in Stellenbosch, it is clear that they feel that male children are more privileged and this gains momentum the older he becomes. Women are also expected to lead a solitary lifestyle, placing all their energy into their homes and their families. The woman is obliged to prepare the next generation of mothers with her domestic wisdom. Ironically, it is expected that the woman be literate and have a certain amount of intelligence to guide her children on the path to being a devout Muslim; this is certainly conducive to a patriarchal system. Some illuminating similarities may be drawn with the role of the *volksmoeder*⁷⁵. However, this pamphlet is somewhat extreme within the large continuum with which Muslim women have to negotiate their existence. The role of women in Islam is complex and much debate has ensued regarding the equality of the sexes, the anomalies between Quranic teachings and the *hadith*. One example of this debate can be seen in Fazlur Rahman's "The Status of Women in Islam: A Modernist Interpretation".⁷⁶ This chapter grapples with the manner in which certain practices such as the wearing of the head-scarf were not so much related to interpretation of the Quran but more with the social context in which women had to be protected from being defiled by those who did practice Islam. Whilst it is not my intention to enter into this debate within this study, what is significant is that a copy of this chapter, which had clearly been studied and comments made within the margins, was found in the small body of archives housed at the mosque in Stellenbosch.⁷⁷ Whilst my brief encounter with the Muslim communities of Stellenbosch over the last eight months prevents me from making any broad and distinctive conclusions about the progressive or conservative nature of this *jama*⁷⁸, what has been noted is the manner in which women seem to fulfil a very instrumental role within the broader "Muslim community".

⁷⁵ The idea of the "Boer mother of the nation" who was expected to espouse similar characteristics amongst her children but relating more to the Dutch Reform and nationalistic principles. See for example E. Brink, "Man-made women: Gender, class and the ideology of the *volksmoeder*", in C. Walker (ed.), *Women and Gender in Southern Africa to 1945*, p. 273.; E. van Heyningen, "The Voices of Women in the South African War", *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 41, 1999, p. 28.; P. Krebs, *Gender, Race and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War*, p. 56.

⁷⁶ F. Rahman, "The Status of Women in Islam: A Modernist Interpretation", H. Papanek & G. Minault (eds.), *Separate Worlds: Studies of Purdah in South Asia*, (New Delhi: South Asia Books, 1982).

⁷⁷ The rudimentary archives located at the mosque in Stellenbosch are not only sparse but no resemblance of a cataloguing system has been implemented. I shall refer to any archival material from this source as SMOS. It would appear that Archival material on the Muslim communities of the Cape are generally scarce (following an enquiry with Melanie Gusteyn of the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town in March 2008) as records are handed down by those families actively involved within their respective communities, through the generations. The value to historical and heritage studies has yet to have made any broad impact upon the Muslim communities (although some sporadic studies have been conducted). Perhaps one reason could be that Muslim history is still very much attached to "Cape Coloured" history in the Western Cape.

⁷⁸ The formal name given to the congregation of those who practice Islam under a single Mosque.

Historically, The Muslim women of Stellenbosch, have assumed many of the roles outlined within the pamphlet mentioned above; however, not all Muslim women wear a headscarf, many have attained tertiary education, their position within a taxing political and economic dispensation, as well as the equality they have attained within the framework of the town, have meant many have gained paid employment and economic independence. It is worthy to note that the original Muslims of the Cape did not veil themselves.⁷⁹ It is believed that visitors from Turkey in 1861 requested that women cover their heads out of doors.⁸⁰ Some women have transformed “feminine spaces of influence” into income generating projects which compliment the income of the mosque.⁸¹ Whilst the mosque maintains the complete separation of males from females (as is practised within Judaism), certain “mixed” spaces have arisen such as the Gujjatul Islamic Youth Organisation. Certain orthodox Muslims take great offence to having a forum where the sexes are mixed,⁸² not just from within the community but from abroad.⁸³ It is problematic to expand these rudimentary observations to all facets and to all adherents of the religion, but it is evident that the *jama'* of Stellenbosch could be considered a less conservative community than most.⁸⁴ How far this tolerance extends is unclear and one undoubtedly has to consider if this has changed over time.

⁷⁹ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 14.

⁸⁰ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, pp. 48-49.

⁸¹ A group of women known locally as the “A Team” established a network of chefs who sold Halaal meals to congregants after mosque on a Friday. The income generated contributed to funds for community development. SMOS, The official audit conducted by Rousseau & Vennote and Partners for the Stellenbosch Goejaratul Jamaah (31 December 1983) attributes R4500 income to the Women’s Association compared to R63 taken in from collections. However, this “collection” is supplementary to the *zakah* fund (giving of alms) which is obligatory for all Muslims. The rules pertaining to the 2,5% contribution on all income and assets for *zakah* are complicated. Details can be seen for example in *The Muslim Views*, Vol. 22, No. 8, August 2008, p. 39.

However, what is of importance is that this contribution is used for the benefit of those Muslims in need. There are eight categories of recipients. For further details consult M. Omar, *The Rules of Zakáh*, (Cape Town: South African National Zakák Fund, 1986). This concept is important when one analyses trends in class stratification.

⁸² A recent example was recounted by Y. Raziet who had invited International students at the University of Stellenbosch to join the Muslim Society on campus. They politely declined because the Association was mixed.

⁸³ SMOS, a letter dated 28 December 1988 to “Dear Brothers in Islam” from Nazeem Ahmed Afriqi from Karachi, Pakistan, complains about the establishment of the Youth Club in which membership is open to both men and women. The author impresses on the committee to apply the rule of the *Ayat* from the Quran. He quotes in Arabic and gives the following translation: “O, Muslims, you are the best of peoples who have been taken out for the guidance of mankind. You command them with good deeds and prevent them from the forbidden things, and you have firm faith in Allah.” It is unclear to what extent one could interpret this to outlaw the mixing of the sexes but what is apparent is the manner in which a local decision can impact a broader Muslim world.

⁸⁴ Whilst all mosques in the Cape tend to provide more capacity for men than for women (amongst other information, the seating capacity for all the Mosques in the Western Cape are listed in *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims*), The Waterloo Mosque in Landsdowne, Cape Town, can accommodate 500 males but no provisions are made for females, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims 2003 -2004*, pp. 220-221.

Chapter Outline

Because this thesis investigates the delicate relationship between identity based on changing alliances and the role of religious practice within the broader context of Cape history, two broad areas of focus will be investigated. Theme I will contextualise the macro changes whilst the impact of these changes will be used in the case study of Stellenbosch in Theme II. Theme I will comprise chapters 2-4, based primarily on secondary source material, whilst Theme II will consist of chapters 5-8 and will be based mainly on primary archival material and oral sources. Because changing identities are being discussed in relation to religion and class allegiances in the context of political changes, there is a need to contextualise Islam at the Cape as well as the formation of the “coloured elite” in Cape Town.

Chapter 2 will discuss the nature of Islam, differences in ideology and the different influences that arrived at the Cape followed by the rise of Islam through immigration and conversion at the Cape in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 will look at the manner in which the State became increasingly defined by racial categorisation and how this affected “coloured” and Muslim politics and to the forging of alliances between the different groupings which led to the creation of the concept of “Citizens of South Africa”. In Chapter 5, the battle to create a “citizenry of Stellenboschers” prior to 1940 will be discussed and changes within this citizenship post 1940 with the “Battle of Andringa Street” will highlight the shift in nationalistic ideology and its effect on the “coloureds” of Stellenbosch, based on Municipal decisions (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 will use personal testimonies and interviews to investigate the effects of such policy changes within the “coloured” and Muslim communities. Chapter 8 will then look at aspects which affected the Muslim communities as a separate sub-category incorporated within the “coloured” racial grouping.

THEME I: Macro Changes in “Brotherhoods” and “Citizenships” in the Cape

Chapter 2

From Mecca to the Cape: The Birth and Propagation of Islam

The initial development of the Islamic faith was to unite “believers in the Almighty Allah” in a “brotherhood” of like-minded individuals who would profess the same faith and create a “community” of “believers”. Much like the superfluous nature of identities in South Africa, the “brotherhood of Muslims” also underwent various transformations, eventually becoming “brotherhoods in Islam”. This chapter will discuss the rise of these separate “brotherhoods” within the perceived monolithic religious “community” and the manner in which several schools of ideological thought proliferated and spread to the shores of the Cape.

There are close links between the three traditional monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. They are sometimes referred to as the Judeo-Christian-Islam or Abrahamic religions because of the role Abraham plays in all three religions. Despite possessing more commonality than difference, conflict arose between the three religions around the seventh century.¹ Elements which are common to all three include: the belief that the human being is responsible for his/her actions; they accept that there are certain norms and rules that have to be obeyed and that these norms were revealed by “God/Allah/Yahweh”; they believe that there is some form of grace for harmful actions which the human being should accept; that there is a distinct community that lives in accordance with the prescribed lines; they all accept that there is one supreme being that is not of ordinary knowledge and who reveals himself in his own way; they affirm the creation of the world; they recognise a number of norms which are not limited to these three religions;

¹ For a detailed account of the religious conflicts, see for example D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); S. Lane-Pool, *Studies in a Mosque* (Lahore: The Book House, n.d); J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003); N. Leutzion & R. Pouwels, *A History of Islam in Africa* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2000).

they believe in service to God is a result of faith; and they believe in justice, peace, human life, compassion, repentance and the pursuit of these norms and values.²

Unfortunately, the fundamental principles of the respective religions have been influenced by a changing context and this has created different forms of conflict despite moments of cooperation. Christianity and Islam have historically been religious practices that have been, and still are, actively involved in converting “the other” to their religious ideology. It is here that confrontation is most visible – although social and cultural exchange can and does take place. In Muslim-Christian relations, three points are made by Jacques Waardenburg. Firstly, within most Christian and Muslim communities, people are concerned with their own religion, their own practice and interpretations and their own communal interests. Secondly, the identity of those in the groups is given by their religion and contact with those of other religions could infringe on that firm and fixed identity. Thirdly, “The fact that people’s religious or other views differ, does not in itself exclude practical cooperation (...) Instead, solidarities for just causes bring people together who may discover that they are inspired by common intentions and aspirations”.³

Judaism does not entail active proselytization – the religion is passed down through the mother and very little space is open, especially amongst the conservatives, for active conversion of others, not even through marriage. Conflict between Jews and Muslims has mainly been the fight over geographical space. There is no need to outline the obvious tension between Muslims and Jews on the international terrain. What is pertinent to this study is the manner in which Jews and Muslims, despite obvious religious differences and confrontations, were often subject to similar State pressures. Anti-Semitic feelings of the apartheid era were a manifestation of earlier sentiments towards any entity identified as “non-Christian”. From as early as 1842, the census would classify according to “white”, “coloured”, “Christian”, “Mahometan”, “Jews”, “uncertain” and “heathen”.⁴

² J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: relations in Context*, pp. 72-73.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁴ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 14.

Whilst Jewish-Muslim relations within South Africa – and in Stellenbosch in particular – is an area of research which could be pursued, within this thesis, I shall restrict my observations to the letter sent by the secretary of the Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation on the 100th anniversary of the Stellenbosch mosque in 1997 which may be suggestive of the working relationship of the two religious “brotherhoods”:

On the occasion of the 110th anniversary of the founding of your Mosque, the Jewish Community of Stellenbosch send you greetings and offer you our sincerest congratulations. May the friendship and respect which has always existed between our two Communities continue.

With best wishes

Dr G. Rosendorff (Secretary)⁵

This letter not only states that the two communities had amicable relations in the past, but also serves as a testament that the two religions can have a working relationship yet safeguarding their religious practices. It is most likely that the two Communities had more pressing local difficulties to enter into the global trend of considering each other the “enemy”. Some form of cooperation probably existed not only between the Muslim and Christian communities, but also with the Jewish communities.

In the following chapters, it will be discussed how religious differences had to be overcome between Christian and Muslim “non-whites” in the face of increasing political and social oppression. The porosity between religion and culture will also be discussed in the creating of a “Malay” and “coloured” identity. At times, religion had to be sidelined for other more pressing issues, however, certain organisations did engage in purely religious goals.

Islam, Islamisation, Arabisation and Africanisation

The complete history of the rise of Islam would be far too great to include in this thesis. Key aspects which are relevant to this work will be mentioned in order to contextualise the rise of

⁵ SMOS Letter from the Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation to the Muslim Community of Stellenbosch, dated 18 September 1997. Whether this perceived amicable relationship was reciprocal is debateable.

the various schools of thought at the Cape and in Stellenbosch. The nature of the bonds that unite Muslims will also be questioned.

The prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) made his impact on the communities of Mecca in 610 C.E. He created *Islam*, submission to Allah, expressed in prayer. Because Mecca had become dangerous, the first *hijra*⁶ took place in 622 C.E. which became known as year one in the *Anno Hegira*.⁷ His death in 632 C.E. created much dissention as to his successor or *khalifa*. Those that vied for power included his own family, the *muhajirun* or migrants who followed him to Medina, the Medinas or *ansars* who had pledged allegiance to him in 622 C.E. and the Meccans who pledged their allegiance in 630 C.E. Four *caliphs*⁸ appeared in the thirty years following Muhammad's (s.a.w.s) death. Abu Bakr, the father of Aisha, Muhammad's (s.a.w.s) second wife, was replaced after his death by Umar who reigned for ten years and sent armies from Egypt to Iran. Uthman took over from him for another ten years and also made considerable progress in expanding Islam. In 656 C. E., Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad (s.a.w.s) became the fourth. Ali, his followers and those of his son Husayn were known as *Shia* or *Shiites*. Their principle rival was Muawiyya, the son of a Meccan, who operated in Damascus. This dynasty became known as the *Umayyad*. They became known as the *Sunni*. Ali's son was killed by the *Umayyad* at Karbala in 681 C.E. and they eventually conquered the *Umayyad* in the 8th century. During this time, a group of *kharijites* had proliferated and rejected both the *Sunni* and *Shia*, and made their way to Oman and Zanzibar. By the first century of Islam, the majority of Muslims submitted to the *Sunni* regime under the *caliph* of Damascus. The religion began to become institutionalised – key passages of the Quran were interpreted, traditions of the Prophet were collected, the pilgrimage to Mecca was regularised in the twelfth month, they established a third Holy City, Jerusalem, and built the dome from which they believed Muhammad (s.a.w.s) had ascended to heaven on the wings of Jibril (Angel Gabriel) and this was when Arabic became used as a language of worship and learning. Arab culture and Islam were not synonymous. By 750 C. E., the *Abassids*, derived from another Meccan relative of Muhammad (s.a.w.s), took control and maintained a unified Muslim world for another 200 years from the capital Baghdad. During this period, the arts and sciences flourished, Muslim, Christian and Jewish scholars

⁶ Move to the city which later became known as Medina.

⁷ Muslim lunar based calendar which is ten days shorter than the solar/Gregorian calendar.

⁸ The "rightly guided leaders".

and artists used Arabic to develop calligraphy, architecture, mathematics, medicine, philosophy, literature, linguistics and other spheres of knowledge. It was described as a period of diversity, tolerance and intellectual richness.⁹

The basic tenets of Islam took form and were institutionalised. Within the first generation of the Prophet's death, the Quran was established. Those close to Muhammad (s.a.w.s) worked towards establishing a script under Uthman. *Sharia* or Islamic law took a further two centuries. This "constructed" Islam formed the body of canonical law. The *hadith* gave details of the Prophets (s.a.w.s) life and guided the moral well-being of the Islamic adherents. Using the Quran and the *hadith*, scholars used two principles to guide the faith: consensus, which were the main views of the doctors of the law and analogy, which stabilised the faith to the regulation of behaviour and governance of the complex societies under Muslim rule. They deliberately sought to be inclusive of the practitioners of other faiths. Using the Quran, *hadith*, consensus and analogy, scholars built up the doctrine to guide individual and collective behaviour. From this, different schools of jurisprudence emerged: *Malikite* school, which became dominant in North and West Africa and *Hanafite* and *Shafite* in the East of the continent. (There are variations in the spelling of these schools. For example, Stanley Lane-Poole refers to the *Hanafite*, *Shāfi'ite*, *Mālikite* and *Hanbalite*).¹⁰ It is important to note that these schools came about between the 8th and 9th centuries. A large portion of what has become known as the tenets of Islam are not from the Quran but, like any institutionalised religion, subject to man-made regulations beyond religious script.¹¹ Differences were small and neither interpretation was influenced by *Shia* and *Kharijite* authorities. Nevertheless, *sharia* law and the Quran became the portable versions of Islam which could then carry the five pillars of Islam into various contexts. Regardless of minor differences in the method, all Muslims are united by the five pillars: they all witness and profess that there is no God but Allah, with Muhammad (s.a.w.s) as His Prophet; prayers should be done five times a day with the second prayer on a Friday in the main mosque of the community (led by the *Imam*); alms should be given to the community and poorer members; fasting should occur in the ninth month of the year (*Ramadan*) in order to remember Allah's blessings, confess sins and recommit their lives to Allah; and *hajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca in the twelfth month in order

⁹ D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, pp. 3-10.

¹⁰ S. Lane-Poole, *Studies in a Mosque*, p. 166.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

to recommit but also demonstrate unity and equality between Muslims from all over the world. This final pillar should be made at least once in a person's lifetime. *Sharia* also deals with rights and responsibilities (and this would have included the manner in which slaves were treated), it deals with questions surrounding property and inheritance as well as concerns of justice, wealth, communal obligation, contracts, marriage and divorce, punishments, the condition of non-Muslims, and many more. In order to carry out these obligations, a mosque was to be established as a place of worship, discussion and teaching, a place of judgement was to be implemented and schools were to be established not only to teach the adherents of the religion but also to train doctors of the laws. Muslims living in a non-Muslim state were to conduct their lives like other Muslims, leaving politics to their "hosts". Whilst it is the obligation of a Muslim to extend their belief-system from the *Dar-al-Islam* (the space of Islam and knowledge) to the *Dar-al Kufr* (the abode of the nonbeliever) in what was termed the *jihad* – the efforts of converting the "non-believer" through preaching, persuasion and leading by example and overcoming any repressive measures which hinder Muslims from practising their faith – *jihad of the sword* (the radical aim of changing the status quo by combating secularism and western domination) was not encouraged in areas where ultimate victory was unlikely and where this could lead to a complete breakdown of governance. It is believed that chaos is worse than a repressive order.¹² Fundamental to the religion is the clear demarcation between Muslim and non-Muslim, all those who profess the faith are bound by the concept of a perceived "brotherhood". "And hold fast, all together, by the rope of Allah and be not divided; and remember the favour of Allah which He bestowed upon you when He united your hearts in love, so that by His grace you became *as* brothers..."¹³ Whilst the idealised notion of "Muslim First and Last" is strong amongst Muslims, they embrace multiple identities based on language, class, gender and region¹⁴ as well as, in certain instances, ideological differences.

Two interesting trends within the early establishment and consolidation of Islam appear. Firstly, Arabic was eventually incorporated and used as a uniting factor for the various ethnic and language groups situated in the Arabian Peninsula. This alludes us to the role language played in uniting different communities into a common "brotherhood of Muslims",

¹² D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, pp. 11-18.

¹³ *The Quran*, Chapter 3, verse 104.

¹⁴ G. Vahed, "Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 45.

“believers”, in contrast to the *kāfir*¹⁵, “the non-believer”.¹⁶ Prior to the conversion of Arabs to Islam, known as the “Time of Ignorance”, certain characteristics were evident. Devotion to his clan was one of the strongest ties the Arab had. The whole clan acted as one being, an injury done to one member would be revenged by all – cultural aspects such as a love for poetry were also prevalent. One of the most striking features was a belief in the purity of blood.

The Arab prized good blood as much in men as in his horses and camels. In these he saw the importance of breed, and in men he firmly believed the same principle held good. With the tenacious memory of his race, he had no difficulty in recalling the whole of a complicated pedigree, and he would often proudly dwell on the purity of his blood and the gallant deeds of his forefathers. He would challenge a chief to show a more noble descent, and hot disputes and bitter rivalries often came of these comparisons.¹⁷

Ironically, many of these early characteristics influenced Islam, once again showing how adaptable the religion is and was to local context. The concept of belonging and the manner in which the brotherhood was to overcome all else was supposedly one of the last utterances of the Prophet before his death in June 632 C.E./ A.H 11. “Ye people! Harken unto my speech and comprehend it. Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim. All of you are on the same equality: ye are one Brotherhood”.¹⁸ Praying in the direction of the *Kaaba* in Mecca unites all the “brothers” in the knowledge that all Muslims throughout the world are worshiping towards the same direction, symbolic of the united fundamentals of the religion, regardless of differences in schools of thought. Unfortunately, differences have arisen.

Islam may be a power for good in poor communities – that it can not only give them a pure instead of a degraded faith, but can also raise them socially and intellectually. But this good influence is very partial and limited, even among the poorer classes. In communities where all are poor, Islam is an excellent agent from improvement; but in countries where there are many grades of wealth and

¹⁵ The plural being *kuffār*.

¹⁶ J. B. Greef, “Die Gebruik van Arabies deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, Master’s Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 49.

¹⁷ S. Lane-Poole, *Studies in a Mosque*, p. 10.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

rank, the poor only ape in a humble manner the vices of those whom they are taught to regard as their “betters”.¹⁹

Secondly, the battle for succession amongst the early consolidators of Islam, was based upon genealogy. The battle of succession was based very strongly on bonds of “blood” much like the succession battles of the Imams of the early Cape.²⁰ Adherents of the different schools of thought sought distinction through proving descent from their founders. The most holy level was to prove descent from Muhammad (s.a.w.s) himself. This could only be from Fatima, wife of Ali, and this is known as the *Sharifian* or noble line. One of the most visible *Sharifians* was Idriss who founded the Islamic state of Morocco. Some Swahili east Africans also claim *Sharifian* descent. The second line of descent was those who were related to the *Quraysh*, the larger family of Muhammad (s.a.w.s) or the companions who joined him from Mecca and Medina. Another line was the first and second generations of Arab Muslims who distinguished themselves in war, diplomacy or institutional building. For those in sub-Saharan Africa, familial ties to Bilal Bunama, the companion of Muhammad (s.a.w.s), was sought because of his darker complexion and because he critiqued the racial attitudes expressed by “lighter Arab Muslims” towards African Muslims. It should be noted that a difference between Islam and *Islam noir* had proliferated.²¹ However, because Bilal was one of the first converts to Islam and because he became instrumental in the initial propagation of Islam in Africa, many biological and psychological ties between Africa and “black African Muslims” have been justified through his existence.²²

With the various schools of jurisprudence and the internal struggles for the succession of Islam, Sufism began to proliferate. Sufis were critical of *Sunni* Islam and were concerned that communities were forgetting the core principles of Muhammad (s.a.w.s) and Allah. They believed in the need to search for faith internally and not to be caught in external politics. Various orders were formed, often bearing the name of the founders.²³

¹⁹ S. Lane-Poole, *Studies in a Mosque*, pp. 113-114.

²⁰ To be discussed in Chapters 3 and 8.

²¹ D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, pp. 49-55.

²² J. A. Naudé, *Islam in Africa*, p. 2.

²³ D. Robinson, *Muslim Societies in African History*, pp. 19-20.

The concept of the *ummah*²⁴ was initially conceptualised to create a homogenous group of believers, transcending national boundaries as well as social and political divides. They were supposed to be committed to “The Book” (the Quran), those believing in it were expected to stand by it and derive their identity from it. By belonging to the “Brotherhood”, mutual respect, help and honour amongst adherents was to be entrenched. Common beliefs and practices were to also provide a sense of mutual security and protection, common actions against common enemies and through the network, a common sharing of pooled resources.²⁵ These characteristics are often misinterpreted, giving rise to a belief that Muslims are defined by their religion and as such, interact as a solitary unit. It is said that Islam is universal in the life of a Muslim and covers every aspect of his life in totality. Islam is thus considered to be not only universal but also central to identity and loyalty of believers.²⁶ In many instances, for example in the face of religious persecution, this might be the case. However, the rise of secularism and the particularities of feuding “brothers” often result in clear distinctions being made within Muslim settlements.

Islamisation of Africa

Traditional thoughts behind the Islamisation of Africa have led to four phases being identified. Firstly, Arab Muslims crossed North Africa from Egypt and Morocco from the East westwards. The second phase occurred in East Africa at the same time primarily through trade and not through armed conquest, which had occurred in North Africa. In the third phase, Islam spread from the north southwards across the Sahara by peaceful means of migration and trade from the eleventh century. The fourth phase occurred around the seventeenth century and instigated the establishment of various Islamic states in the sub-Saharan area. This does not preclude possible Muslim contact prior to the large scale settlement and conversion of people at the Cape from the 17th century.²⁷ In these states, there was some disintegration of social and tribal groups and Islam was used as a binding force for social cohesion. Traditional structures were disintegrating under social and economic factors but the religion adapted to make it more acceptable to Africans who had traditions of their

²⁴ “Community of Believers” or “Nation of Mahommed”.

²⁵ Y. Da Costa, “An Overview of the Challenges Confronting the *Ummah* in the 21st Century”, H. Solomon & F. Butler (eds.), *Islam in the 21st Century: Perspectives and Challenges*, pp. 10-11.

²⁶ J. A. Naudé, *Islam in Africa*, pp. 1-2.

²⁷ Some theories have surfaced which suggest possible contact with Muslim traders prior to 1652. See for example, S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part 1)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/11/article06.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

own such as beating the drum, dancing and traditional medicine. Trade became important as the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (s.a.w.s), himself was a trader. What can be seen in the north is that Islam flourished within an urban culture in which trade stemmed in towns and cities. The effects of the slave trade should also be considered when talking about the Islamisation of Africa. Similarly, the religion itself developed centres for the teaching of the indigenous population and for their eventual incorporation into the proselytisation force for the spread of Islam. Unlike Christian missionary work, the converted indigenous people became actively involved in Islamic missionary work. This provided an opportunity for personal shifts in status within a community and it made the religion more active at a grassroots level, with its own local flavour, which would appeal to the masses. Christian missionaries generally came from elsewhere and were not *au fait* with local customs nor were they willing to embrace local customs into a more Africanised Christianity.²⁸

Whilst many Islamic religious cultures had spread in Africa, they all followed the fundamental principles of Islam. They also adapted to local cultures and became indigenous to Africa. In the case of Islam at the Cape, the influences were multi-directional between religion, languages of the adherents and the State. Arabic words influenced local languages, the formation of new languages also influenced the manner in which Islam was taught. Rigid ethnic ties with the religion were also overcome.

The spread of Islam in Africa is said to have been least effective in Southern Africa which have almost “no indigenous Muslims, though there are immigrant Muslims in some of these countries from South Asia and Southeast Asia. Indian and Malay labourers imported into Natal and the Cape were partly Muslim ...”. Most of the African Muslims are *Sunni*²⁹, others follow the *Shia*³⁰ school but these are mostly from the Indian sub-continent.³¹ Despite this rather contentious remark that there are no “indigenous Muslims”, it can be seen that the institutionalisation of Islam had its roots in a trading class in the Middle East and spread across the world through direct contact and proselytisation of local inhabitants. Islam grew as

²⁸ O. Kokole, “The Islamic Factor in African-Arab Relations”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3, July 1984, pp. 687-702.

²⁹ Those that follow “custom”, tradition and law as laid down by past schools of thought.

³⁰ Followers of Ali.

³¹ O. Kokole, “The Islamic Factor in African-Arab Relations”, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 3, July 1984, pp. 687-702.

a religion because it was portable. Secondly, trade also meant seeing humans as a commodity, giving rise to the slave trade. Thirdly key aspects of the religion are maintained whilst absorbing local traditions in order to appeal to the local inhabitants and which provides some congruence between religion and local practices. In effect it converts the “non-believers” but retains certain elements of their ethnic practices. The Zanzibari Muslims, like the Cape Muslims, were influenced to a great extent by African traditional practices in their rites and ceremonies.³² Suleman Dangor mentions that the *nikah* has combined with features of African tradition; the same is visible in funerals whereby the deceased may undergo both Muslim and African traditional rites.³³ Fourthly there are inherent differences between Islamic practices dictated by the main schools of thought that have appeared. They may have certain criteria on the method of praise but fundamentally strive towards the same goals, worship the same God and follow the same key principles laid out in the Quran and the *hadith*. But two even more interesting points can be made about the rise of Islam at the Cape.

Firstly, the Muslim communities in South Africa are as indigenous as Muslims in other African countries because the original Muslim slaves mixed and intermarried with the original inhabitants of the Cape, much conversion took place amongst other “black” and “white” people, all of whom shared a common space, and eventually contributed towards a unique but very visible Muslim presence. In this sense, a fifth phase of Islamisation can be considered. One in which Muslims of varying origins, and following different schools of thought, who consolidated Islam at the Cape and proselytised from the south northwards. South Africa is a conglomerate of different states pieced together during the colonial era. It has been said that most African countries today are not nations, states or ethnic groups but areas of land demarcated by international boundaries but not necessarily possessing comprehensive State apparatuses or coherent self-identities.³⁴ Perhaps if one calculated the actual Muslim population in comparison to the general population within distinct geographical locations rather than on a national scale, if one also considered those who have a multi-religious ancestry, the presence of Islam would be more apparent. This presence leads me to my second point. Much focus has remained on other major trends in Islamic diffusion

³² S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 206.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

³⁴ M. Chapman, “The Politics of Identity: South Africa, Story-telling, and Literary History”, *Journal of Literary Studies*, Vol. 18, December 2002, p. 229.

yet the initial and subsequent spread of Islam from the Cape and later from Natal and the links maintained between the far south and the north certainly warrant a place within the dominant discourses pertaining to the spread of Islam.

Three distinct cultural patterns were visible in Muslim struggle history. The indigenous African culture, the western colonial capitalist Christian influences that arrived with the settlers and the influence of Islam that arrived with the political exiles and slaves. The slaves and exiles were a cultural force which had to resist European colonialism. Those who were Muslim were considered infidels because they were not Christian, were slaves, political exiles and “non-European”. The ideology of Islam encouraged and created social consciousness, identity and solidarity. Islam obligates its adherents not to obey racist authorities and laws and encourages all oppressed people to do the same. It gave assistance to those who were victims and attempted to eradicate those injustices. The earlier authorities at the Cape were highly regarded if one accepts the testimony of I. D. Du Plessis who recounts that Muslims were active in military operations in the early 1800s, were law-abiding and showed much respect for the rule of law in the Cape. When disturbances, such as the cemetery riots,³⁵ did occur, officials were surprised as they “were unanimous in their praise of this section of the non-European community”.³⁶ It was only after the radical shifts in political oppression that distinctive resistance was seen by the Muslims. However, it has been noted that the roots of oppression were strongly linked to the cultural heritage of the slaves and their religious affiliation, “[a]nd the heritage of the slaves was Islam”.³⁷ Unfortunately, this rhetoric makes a clear demarcation between an oppressor and the oppressed. Albert Memmi alludes us to the porous nature of the coloniser and the colonised, the same person may be both simultaneously.³⁸ This leads one to various questions. Not all slaves were Muslim, although many were and more converted at the Cape. Can slave heritage be linked to a particular religion if the religious affiliation of those slaves cannot be undeniably determined? Many of the “prize negroes” converted during their voyage to Simonstown.

³⁵ The Public Health Act of 1883 caused the closure of urban cemeteries in Cape Town. This was also a period in which a prominent Muslim figure, Abdol Burns, attempted to make some headway in the political arena. Religious and political factors led to an uprising by the Muslim communities of Cape Town against the authorities. A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 175.

³⁶ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, pp. 30, 45, 84.

³⁷ Imam Achmad Cassiem, “Muslim Struggle Against Apartheid: Neither Oppressed Nor Oppressor Be”, <http://www.islamonline.net> (accessed 19 March 2008).

³⁸ A. Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé, précédé de Portrait du colonisateur*. (Paris : Gallimard, 1985)

Does this mean that they truly believed in Islam or did their plight have any influence on their decision as is suggested by Robin Horton's view that rapid social change, industrialisation and incorporation into the world economy precipitated dissatisfaction with pre-existing belief systems which resulted in a "syncretistic conversion to monotheistic religions"? Robert Shell argues that economic marginality, racial exclusion, status, gendered notions of religion and marriage choices, a need for community identity and communal respect for the dead outweighed cognitive factors for conversion to a monotheistic religion. He makes a convincing argument that Islam was better organised and had a larger appeal across the racial board because it offered a secure social status and a place in a stable and self-assured community.³⁹ Whilst the adherents of Islam were active in grassroots conversion at the Cape, institutionalised Islam and the consolidation of Islam have often been attributed to certain key leaders. It is amongst these key leaders that dissention amongst the different schools of jurisprudence, often caused confrontation between the "Brothers of Islam".

Key Religious Figures from the Various Schools of Jurisprudence Who Propagated Islam at the Cape

Among the slaves of the Cape were several "divines" exiled to the Cape from Eastern Asia. Sheik⁴⁰ Yusuf, along with other disciples, was exiled in 1694.⁴¹ Yusuf was settled on Zandvliet (the farm of the Dutch Reformed Church minister, Rev Petrus Kalden at Faure)⁴² where he is believed to have established the first cohesive Muslim community, albeit a short-lived community as the entire community was shipped back to Indonesia after his death in 1699.⁴³ It is believed that his home provided refuge for fugitive slaves and other "Orientals" and this provides the first evidence that Islam was being established amongst the slaves as well as spreading from this point as they were "multiplying rapidly and increasing in numbers".⁴⁴ It is worth noting that Stellenbosch was located close to his area of influence and

³⁹ R. Shell, "From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904", *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 410-411, 457.

⁴⁰ Sometimes Shaykh.

⁴¹ A. Rochlin, "Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 214.

⁴² R. Shell, "Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997", paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 4.

⁴³ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, p. 39.

⁴⁴ R. Shell, "Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997", paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 4.

it could be for this reason that historians attribute the rise of Islam in the rural areas to his contribution.

He was a prince, a religious scholar and a sheik of the *Khalwatiyyah* Sufi order. He met with slaves secretly in their lodges and at his home. He is regarded by some historians such as I. D. Du Plessis as the pioneer of Islam in South Africa.⁴⁵ Like most of the political exiles sent to the Cape during the early years, Sheikh Yusuf was well-educated. He went on *hajj* at eighteen and studies for several years in Yemen, Damascus, Mecca, Medina and possibly Istanbul. He later became the leading religious figure at the Court of the Sultan Ageng of Bantam in western Java, some have argued, practising the *Shafite* doctrine.⁴⁶ If this is true, the earliest school of thought in South Africa would have been *Shafi*, but given his isolation outside of Cape Town, it is difficult to assume that he would have made a forceful impact on the communities of the early Cape. Sheik Yusuf is said to have provided some form of dignity to the downtrodden communities, created a socio-religious structure at the Cape and had converted many local “Khoi-Khoi” and runaway slaves to Islam.⁴⁷

The Rajah of Tambora in Java arrived in 1697 and was banished to Vergelegen where he was responsible for writing the first Quran in the Cape from memory as a gift to Simon van der Stel. His influence on other Muslims in the Cape was believed to be limited. His family converted to Christianity. His son assumed the name Abraham de Haan in 1721, David Sultania and Isaak Sultania became members of the Church in Cape Town and his daughter, Maria Dorothea Sultania was baptised in 1726. In the face of isolation, Islam gave way to Christianity. It is believed by Robert Shell that Piet Retief was a descendant of the Rajah of Tambora.⁴⁸

Tuan Sa'id from Yemen arrived in 1744 and was banished to Robben Island for eleven years. He then became a policeman and used his position to spread Islam amongst his captives. He

⁴⁵ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, pp. 2, 4-7, 31-34.

⁴⁶ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 2.

⁴⁷ S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part II)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/12/article08.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

⁴⁸ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, p. 40.

came with Hadjie Mattarim, both of whom were listed as “Mohamedaansche Priesters”.⁴⁹ Tuan Guru (Imam Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam) arrived on 6 April 1780 and after being incarcerated on Robben Island, was released in 1793. On his release he petitioned for a mosque site, but this was denied. He then led Muslims in an open air congregational prayer in defiance of the law. By 1781 he had handwritten a book on Islamic jurisprudence written in Malayu and Arabic. By 1800, his handwritten Qurans were in circulation within the community. He was considered the principle teacher of Islam in the late 1700s, hence his name, “Mister Teacher”. Some concern had been shown by the Earl of Caledon about leaving the slaves ignorant and at the prey of the “Mohammedan priests” who at that time had already established a school with 375 slave children. They were taught the precepts of the Quran and how to read and write Arabic. From this school developed the written form of Arabic-Afrikaans, Afrikaans written in Arabic script.⁵⁰ The first known mosque in Cape Town as well as the *madrassah* was established by Tuan Guru in 1797.⁵¹ Although he taught in Malayu, by the 19th century, Afrikaans had become the *lingua franca* for the Cape Muslims. It was also the medium of instruction in the school. Tuan Guru, by his own testament, identified himself as *Shafî* by religious rite and *Ashari* by conviction.⁵²

From the 1800s, spiritual leaders came from elsewhere. From 1800 to 1850, names such as Frans van Bengalen, Achmat van Arabia and Achmat van Bengal appear.⁵³ It is recorded that Frans had applied for land for a mosque in 1800 which was refused⁵⁴, not entirely surprising considering religious tolerance was only ushered in 1804. During the early years of Muslim conversion, Turks and Meccans travelled to the newly discovered province of Islam. They attempted to convert the *Ahl Kâf* from the *Shafîte* tradition, which had become the dominant form of worship, to the *Hanafîte* rite.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp.43-44.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.44-45.

⁵¹ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 207.; A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, p. 93.

⁵² R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, *paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005*, p. 15.

⁵³ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 217.

⁵⁴ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 182.

⁵⁵ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 219.

It is believed that the Cape Muslims were of the *Shafite* school of law as this was the school that was dominant in the Indonesian archipelago from where most of the “Malays” originated. However, it is clear that not one type of Islam was brought to the Cape neither that the majority of slaves, who possibly brought with them Islam, were from the Indonesian Peninsula. The majority of slaves came from India and Bengal from which the *Shafite* orthodox had disappeared in the 14th century, displaced by the *Hanafite* traditions. Achmat Davids points out the existence of *Shafite* communities on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. Robert Shell makes the statement, “...one might dare ask whether the *Shafite* “roots” of Cape Islam may not have been boosted in the historical literature in an attempt to maintain the complex, embattled yet persistent “Malay” identity of the Cape Muslims?” Frank Bradlow points out that a large number of slaves and important Cape “chief priests” came from Bengal, such as Frans van Bengal, who became chief Imam in 1806, and it is evident that regardless of where slaves came from, they were the most important and influential people to consolidate Islam at the Cape. It is unlikely that if the *Shafites* were dominant at the Cape they would have requested a *Hanafite* Imam – little less elect him as chief Imam. John Mayson points out that differences arose not so much out of doctrinal diversity but in claims of ecclesiastical candidates. Differences already permeated by 1824 when an Imam told a congregation led by Imam Jan van Boegies that he was not recognised by them because of the “separation”. The Imam also confirms the co-existence of different mosque disciplines.⁵⁶

It is evident that contact between other traditions and schools of thought were not just evident at the Cape but also by those going on *Hajj* to Mecca via other African states. They would have met other leaders of the faith.⁵⁷ Those that went to *hajj* and those that made contact with other Muslim communities, such as those in Zanzibar, provided a source of inspiration for the multi-religious atmosphere of Islam at the Cape.

Similarly, other Muslims visited the Cape as early as 1820. In 1820-21, distinguished Arabs from Joanna visited the Cape. “They were kindly received by the government, and were hospitably entertained by the Malays, whom they instructed in the faith and practice of Islam,

⁵⁶ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 11-13.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

and with whom they [had] since constantly corresponded, sending them supplies of the Koran and other books”.⁵⁸ The sultan of “St. Johanna” in the Mozambican Channel visited the Cape in 1834. The Comorian Islands had been founded by Muslims from Iran in 1506.⁵⁹ The Sultan may have been responsible for the schism within the Muslim communities. The white turban was a distinguishing feature of the *Sunni*, the red turban of the rival *Shiites*⁶⁰. Muslims began wearing either white or red turbans according to many paintings of the early Cape after the visit of the Sultan.⁶¹ Nonetheless, the most visible manifestation of difference was seen with the arrival of Abu Bakr Effendi.

In the 1850s, the Imams complained that the Cape Muslims had never had any missionaries sent out to them. They petitioned Queen Victoria on the grounds that they were taxpayers, but unlike their Christian counterparts, had never had any missionaries. Seven years later Abu Bakr Effendi was sent out to the Cape Muslims. He attempted to learn Afrikaans⁶² but because he was *Hanafite*, his only accomplishments were the establishing of a *Hanfite* congregation and a school in 1888, funded by amongst others, Barney Barnato, a mining magnate. Abu Bakr’s conservative approach resulted in him banning the eating of crustaceans, especially the Cape lobster, a popular dish amongst certain Muslims, as well as *snoek*.⁶³ His presence may not have had an enormous impact but he did open the communities to a wider Muslim world outside of South Africa and Indonesia and the Turkish *fez* which replaced the *toerang* and the handkerchief, was a symbol of that change.⁶⁴ Another major feat for Effendi was the establishment of a Muslim school for women. Both the authorities and the Muslim communities had neglected the education of female Muslims. Some Muslim women were converted to Christianity by a door-to-door evangelical offensive and it was this loss that prompted the Cape Imams to implement at least a rudimentary system of education for Muslim women, ahead of other parts of the Muslim world. In many of the priests houses in

⁵⁸ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 12.

⁵⁹ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, *paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ Those who believed in the enhanced power of the Imam.

⁶¹ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, *paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005*, p. 15.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶³ S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part III)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2006/01/article03.shtml (accessed 28 October 2008).

⁶⁴ Y. Da Costa & A. Davids, *Pages from Cape Muslim History*, pp. 81- 102; R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 430.

the 1850s there were smaller schools where Malay girls and boys received equal instruction in English, Dutch, reading and writing and the rudiments of their religion.⁶⁵ The English were often considered to have used divide and rule tactics to subdue the masses in newly conquered territories. Sending a *hanafite* teacher would and certainly did, increase tensions amongst the growing force of Muslims at the Cape. However, some animosity had existed before. Alternatively, it could be that some of the most influential Imams at the time requested a *hanafite* Imam. If this be the case, then to assume that the “Malays” were all from the Indonesian archipelago and that they all adhered to the *shafite* school of thought, needs to be considered in the light of what identity needed to be created amongst all Muslims in order to overcome external pressures upon the religion.

During the 19th century, leaders in local Islam were not united in working for the people’s welfare. They quarrelled amongst themselves on personal issues. This conflict was often publicised in *the South African Commercial Advertiser*, some battles even being fought in court. They would not agree on which leader should greet the newly arrived Governor of the Cape, as was the case in 1879 according to *The Cape Argus* 10-14 June 1879.⁶⁶ The Cape ‘*ulama* became a closed hereditary class. There are numerous examples of father-son relationships during the 19th and 20th centuries.⁶⁷ Several succession disputes have been documented and both Yusuf da Costa and Achmat Davids have mentioned that litigation was prevalent in the succession of mosques between 1860 and 1900. Religious leadership in any Islamic community goes to the most qualified and most sons of the Imam should be qualified. During the 19th century, it is believed that Muslim leaders confined their efforts to their own communities with informal and sporadic collective activities being rare. Indonesian Islam by the 13th century had already become less orthodox and mystical, incorporating other local spirits, deities and rituals. It was thus a religious practice that was open to context and could accommodate people from various traditional backgrounds. The quality of Islam at the Cape in the early years made the religion more successful to non-Muslims for the very reason that it was more flexible and inclusive than earlier forms of Christianity. The early Imams of the 19th century did not establish any formal associations to keep internal differences minimal.

⁶⁵ R. Shell, “Rites and Rebellion: Islamic Conversion at the Cape, 1808-1915”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 5, 1984, pp. 19, 438-440.

⁶⁶ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 219.

⁶⁷ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 18.

Whilst Shamil Jeppie believes that many of the early leaders lacked formal advanced Islamic learning from centres such as those in Mecca, Cairo and Tunisia, it seems that some, such as Sheik Yusuf and Abu Bakr Effendi, had, and the influence of those who visited or maintained links with the Cape, would certainly have shared their knowledge and experiences. He believes that rudimentary Islamic theology and jurisprudence were locally learned, transferred intergenerationally and shared casually amongst Imams.⁶⁸ Even if one was to accept that the growth of Imams at the Cape could be attributed to the few slaves and political exiles sent to the Cape, they had come from an area which had an established Islamic system in place. Many exiles were called “Mohametan priests” and they had undergone advanced training. Many political exiles were sent because they were creating religious havoc in the East. Whilst it is true that being an Imam provided supplementary income to those knowledgeable about the religion and whilst it is true that the passing of information and the desire to keep the role of Imams within the family, from father to son, it is likely that the fundamental concepts of Islam were passed down and consolidated by other Imams at the Cape as well as by those who later settled in the Cape or passed through the Cape. It was noted that the Muslim population had risen to such an extent that those in Mecca referred to Cape Muslims as *Ahl Kaf* which would suggest that exchange between the different Muslim worlds had taken place. In a description of the pilgrimage to Mecca which appeared in *The Cape Argus* in 1878, it is believed that the Cape provided the second highest number of pilgrims second to Java.⁶⁹

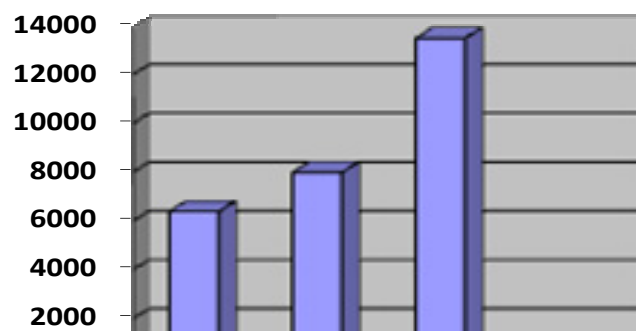
Familial ties often led to altercations in the succession debates. But the familial tie also existed not only between blood relatives but also between slaves and their masters. Imam Muding, interviewed by the colonial authorities in 1824-25, mentions that his father was brought to the Cape as a slave and was later purchased by an old “Malay priest” who taught him the religion and he in turn became Imam after his master died. This not only sheds some light on the strength of religious bonds between masters and slaves who converted, but it also highlights the manner in which status could be obtained through religion. Keeping in mind that Imams are elected by their communities, their knowledge and ability to profess the faith is constantly kept in check by the community. Imamhood could thus be obtained through

⁶⁸ S. Jeppie, “Leadership and Loyalties: The Imams of Nineteenth Century Colonial Cape Town, South Africa”, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, No. 2, May 1996, pp. 140-141.

⁶⁹ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, p. 22.

hajj, family succession and endowment from master to slave.⁷⁰ Sending one's kin on *hajj* also implied financial stability. Imams during this period often worked part-time in other work but also received supplementary income from their congregants. Major disputes would only have arisen if there were more people able to take on the role of Imam or if ideological differences would have appeared. The existence of disputes in the early 19th century would thus imply that knowledge had grown to such an extent that the stasis was greatly affected. Jeppie states that Abu Bakr Effendi was sent by the Ottoman Sultan after a request by Cape Legislative Assembly member Mr P. E. De Rouxbaix in order to solve a dispute between Muslim factions in the city in 1862. This would thus imply that tension had reached such a level that it required external intervention and that the early religious leaders must have had some knowledge about the different schools of thought and that each had attracted enough adherents to warrant concern. This dispute seems to have culminated in one type of Islam and one type of identity becoming hegemonic. Ironically, this occurred as the population of Muslims increased which should have seen even more diversity amongst the different schools.

*Figure 2 Muslim Population increase in the Cape:*⁷¹



(J. S. Mayson makes the observation that in 1842, there were probably 8000 “Mahometans” in Cape Town and its vicinity attributing 4000 of these to Cape Town itself and thus implying a further 4000 in the environs.⁷²)

⁷⁰ S. Jeppie, “Leadership and Loyalties: The Imams of Nineteenth Century Colonial Cape Town, South Africa”, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, No. 2, May 1996, pp. 144-145.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 151.

⁷² J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 15.

“Muslims have shown a readiness to learn from others and their culture and to communicate cultural achievements to others who have shown an interest in them”.⁷³ This seems to be the case not only amongst those who are not Muslim but within the Muslim communities themselves. The mosque is a place of learning and sharing of knowledge. Despite major battles between schools of jurisprudence, in the face of oppression against Islam, Muslims have worked together.

It would also appear that the Imams were pro-British. However, their political support was more attached to gains that could be made rather than a staunch political view. What is evident is that, according to Stanley Trapido, Imams had a close relationship between religious and political functions:

Imams did not establish their authority by ideas only. Communities are reproduced through deeply ingrained practices and these practices are in turn imbricated in ideology and discourse. When ideologies are internalized – when they become hegemonic – the distinctions between thought and action collapse and all that exists is social practice, taken for granted as ‘habit’... However, Jean and John Comaroff remind us that “the hegemonic proportion of any dominant ideology may be greater or lesser. It will never be total.”⁷⁴

Imams had an enormous amount of power and influence but their authority cannot be used to explain the entire shift from a diverse body of Muslim communities to a dominant “Malay” *Shafite* community, at least within the discourse. The Imams themselves were not a unified group. It was noted in the 1860s that the “Cape Malays [were] Sunnites – few of them aware of the existence of any other Mahometism than that which [was] familiar to their confraternity. Differences, which prevail[ed] among them, [did] not originate in any doctrinal diversity... but personal quarrels of imāms”.⁷⁵ The “community” itself may have needed to achieve a visible existence by creating a mythical united group for certain political purposes but they remained diverse. However, the manner in which the Muslim communities are seen may not reflect this diversity.

⁷³ J. Waardenburg, *Muslims and Others: relations in Context*, p. v.

⁷⁴ S. Trapido in S. Jeppie, “Leadership and Loyalties: The Imams of Nineteenth Century Colonial Cape Town, South Africa”, *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, No. 2, May 1996, p. 155.

⁷⁵ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 17.

Over the course of time, differences became blurred and some forms of expression were completely abandoned. Suleman Dangor attributes these to three factors: the role of the Imams, the impact of education (especially with the establishment of the *madrassah* in 1793 and the Mission School in 1913) and the influence of Arab institutions on students who went to Mecca or Cairo for their studies.⁷⁶ This meant that not only were differences which were apparent with the first Muslims of the Cape, but subsequent immigration of different schools of jurisprudence, were eventually restricted by a dominant hegemonic Islam, created probably because of increasing social and political oppression beyond religion. After serving their indentures, *Hanafite* Natal Indian Muslims settled in Cape Town and established their own mosques from 1892. Indian Muslims mostly spoke Urdu, Gujarati, Tamil, Sindhi, Kokanee and English. Cape Muslims spoke Dutch or Afrikaans. Differences were also seen in the types of work and the amount of capital within each grouping.⁷⁷ As was discussed, doctrinal differences had existed prior to the arrival of the new Indian Muslim traders who settled in the Cape.⁷⁸ By 1903, the British imported “Seedie boys” to Simonstown, former residents of Mombasa and Zanzibar, who were Muslims and followers of Ali Saaid, a lateral descendent of the Prophet.⁷⁹ Zanzibari Muslims and Muslims of Indian origin had abandoned many of their earlier traditional practices because of the religious climate at the Cape.⁸⁰

Whilst mention has been made of specific types of Islam that arrived at the Cape, it is important to note that the practice of Islam had undergone a transformation at the Cape. The dress of the early Muslims has been discussed in Chapter 1. The cultural exchange regarding food will be discussed in chapter 8. One of the clearest distinctions made by the Muslims of the Cape and their “brothers” in the global sense is in regard to the nature of alcohol consumption. Wine was strictly forbidden within the Islam of the early Muslims but it would appear that beer was in “common use”. “The more respectable regret this; especially as some of the lower classes [had] contracted a habit of improving their malt liquor by an infusion of

⁷⁶ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 207.

⁷⁷ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 21.

⁷⁸ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 194.

⁷⁹ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 11.

⁸⁰ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 208.

brandy”.⁸¹ It is believed that beer was being consumed by the Muslims until the 19th century.⁸² This could be indicative of the manner in which only certain tenets of Islam originally travelled to the Cape, changes which took place because of the new environment and it may point to questions on cultural exchanges which took place during this period - in particular, how Islam at the Cape differed from Islam in other parts of the world because of the multi-religious setting.

Various schools of jurisprudence arose which splintered the notion of a “Brotherhood of Islam”. These groups in the form of religious leaders were represented at the Cape and fellow Muslims who visited the Cape also entrenched the diverse nature of the practices of Islam during the early periods. Entrenched in the rise of the Muslims was the idea behind the classification of “Malay”. Discourses make a clear differentiation between “coloureds” and “Malays”, the latter being considered superior to the former. “The virtues which attach to the Malays are numerous; perhaps none of these are more striking than their cleanliness, their devotion to each other, their bravery, and their fidelity to the government under which they live”.⁸³ Thus, this term defines the early Muslims in religious terms and considers them as a homogenous entity despite the existence of sectarian differences.

⁸¹ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 27.

⁸² I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, p. 40.

⁸³ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 19.

Chapter 3

The “Brothers-in-Islam” Become “Malay”

This chapter will discuss the manner in which Islamisation took place at the Cape and the way in which being Muslim became synonymous with the term “Malay” in the context of further proselytisation of those in the Cape. Whilst the manner in which racial stratification unfolded in the Cape from 1652 would help explain the trends in identity formation of the “Malays”, for reasons of brevity within this thesis, I shall make mention of a few key concepts which underpinned the classification system, keeping in mind that citizenship rights, much like identity, is not static but always open to reinterpretation and re-negotiation.¹ Politically, the Cape was controlled by the Dutch from 1652 to 1795 when the British tried to secure a global hegemony and thus colonised the Cape. By 1803, the Batavian Republic was established under the Dutch who at this time were under Napoleonic control. In 1806 the British recaptured the Colony and their heavy presence was felt until the Union was proclaimed in 1910. The Pact Government of 1924 meant that certain concessions had to be made for the “white” communities at the expense of other communities. By 1948, the country fell to the National Party which formally institutionalised the already existent laws of segregation. Laws during each of these periods attempted to maintain “white Christian hegemony” and consequent legislation had to be implemented to combat a variety of forces. Initially, increasing pressures of Islamic conversion at the Cape led to Christian religious fervour to maintain Christian hegemony. An unintended consequence of this was a growth and consolidation of a group of non-whites and whites who turned to Islam for moral guidance and group identity resulting in economic growth and the growth of an all-inclusive “Malay” identity.

¹ V. Moghadam, “Gender, National Identity and Citizenship: Reflections on the Middle East and North Africa”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1999, p. 138.

Islamisation at the Cape

Early Cape Social Structure: Slaves, Free Blacks and the Rise of Islam

No strong colour prejudices existed between the early settlers of the Cape. Some of the first marriages at the Cape were between slave women and white colonists. The first school had a multi-racial character and land grants were made to non-whites adjacent to white landholdings.² Political organisation was never the priority of the Cape Muslim community. During the 17th and 18th centuries, primary focus was placed on religion. Bargaining for religious practices was however, not uncommon. This phenomenon could be attributed to the socio-political dispensation of the time. Muslims arrived as slaves, political exiles and convicts, working class people who contributed to the socio-economic structure of the Cape. Islam was banned from the onset of the arrival of Muslims to the Cape under the *placaat*³ of the Batavian Republic of the Indian Empire. The Statutes of India forbid the practice of any religion but that of the Reformed Protestant Church. By the 19th century, two “civilised” religions were recognised at the Cape: Christianity and “Mohammedanism” because they were both considered preferable to “African paganism”.⁴ Despite this discriminatory legislation, Achmat Davids believes that tolerance was displayed to religious practice at the Cape, as long as it was discreet.⁵ Private worship was allowed but no visible congregations were permitted to proliferate, as is required by Islamic *sharia* law. By 23 August 1657, the *placaat* prohibited slaves on the penalty of death from practising their religion overtly or for converting Christians or heathens. However, they were allowed to convert to Christianity. Thus Muslims practiced in secrecy, and, from an early stage, their religion was considered inferior and outcast, thus more appealing to those treated as social outcasts.

Slaves, Convicts, Political Exiles and Free Blacks.

The Dutch East India Company served as an instrument for the Dutch Government whose sphere of influence stretched from some Indonesian Islands, Madagascar, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Bengal, and the coastal areas of South, East and West India. The first Muslim slave

² A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 177.

³ The Statutes.

⁴ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 168.

⁵ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 175.

recorded to have arrived in the Cape with the Dutch on 6 April 1652 was Ibrahim of Batavia.⁶ Persons imported to the Cape as slaves between 1652 and 1808 totalled 62 964: Africa 26,4%, Indonesian Archipelago 22,7%, Indian sub-continent 25,9%, Madagascar and Mascarenes 25,1%. In numbers, African mainland 16 622, Indian sub-continent 16 308, Madagascar and Mascarenes 15 804, Indonesian archipelago 14 292.⁷ However, the Commission of Inquiry of the 1820s mentions only 846 male and 422 female slaves who practiced the “Mohammedan” religion in Cape Town and 42 males and 16 female slaves in the country districts.⁸ It is most likely that fear of persecution may have influenced responses.

Further slaves, convicts and political exiles followed. The majority of the slaves imported in this period, especially those from India, were Muslim and they probably formed the embryo of the Cape Muslim community. Most were named after their slave traders and this might explain why many have acquired Christian names – although one cannot neglect the existence of Muslim slave-traders at the time. The establishment and spread of Islam at the Cape of Good Hope was in the beginning mainly the responsibility of the slaves from Bengal, the Malabar Coast and the mainland of India. They constituted more than 50% of the total slave population in the 17th century and “unlike Indonesians, had a long tradition of Islam”. It was only in the 18th century that they were assisted by slaves from the Celebes.⁹ As was discussed in the previous chapter, key religious leaders were also banished to the Cape as political exiles and they certainly helped create a cohesive Muslim presence in the region.

During the period 1652-1795, heavy penalties, confiscation and stiff fines were imposed on all those who encouraged their slaves to embrace Islam. Religious tolerance was slightly introduced from 1804, but the prejudices continued.¹⁰ The 1713 court case of Joudaan Tappa who was called a “Javanese pope”, led some convicts and slaves from the Lodge on a three-

⁶ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 5.; R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 1.

⁷ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 420.

⁸ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 172.

⁹ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. 31, 41.

¹⁰ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 417.

month rebellion at the Cape was questioned as to whether he was their religious leader and if he openly practised Islam with them. His affirmative reply sentenced him to have his tongue removed and then to be broken alive on a cross until dead. It is believed that from this public display, Islam was practised secretly at the homes of Muslims in *langgars* (prayer houses).¹¹ However, this did not deter Islamic practices. George Foster recalls in the 1770s that a few of the slaves had weekly meetings in private houses belonging to free “Mohammedans”.¹² The increase led to the Council of Batavia passing a resolution in 1770 prohibiting Christians from selling their slaves to “Mohammedans” and forbid the “masters” from allowing their slaves to be circumcised by a “Mohammedan priest”.¹³

Whilst religious leaders attempted to consolidate Islam at the Cape, it was the *Vryezwarten* of the Cape who were, according to Achmat Davids, responsible for the consolidation of Islam at the Cape.¹⁴ These were not Muslims but ex-slaves and ex-convicts who embraced Islam in the face of oppressive legislation. The original Muslims brought with them a wide variety of literate skills: Arabic, knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, the Quran, divine charms and mysticism. Imams also practised medicine.¹⁵ All these characteristics seemed to enthrall groups of people who had found themselves at the Cape with no encompassing identity to embrace. They could not maintain their links with their origins so they formed an ethnic group along religious lines. By 1834, the majority of “Free Blacks” lived in Cape Town and professed the “Mohammedan religion”. They were absorbed freely into the “Malay community” which formed the most important section of the “Free Blacks”.¹⁶ Islam thus provided a refuge for slaves separated from their families and tribesmen and a new familial link could be established based on religious affiliation. Much like the traditional family unit, the religious unit provided solidarity and tribal cohesion within a disintegrating cultural space.¹⁷ Their acceptance into the “Indian Muslim” milieu within the Western Cape is an area for further research as the present perception amongst “African Muslims” *vis-à-vis* their

¹¹ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 16-17.; S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part II)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/12/article08.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

¹² A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, pp. 214-215.

¹³ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 172.

¹⁴ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, p. 42.

¹⁵ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 424, 426.

¹⁶ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, pp. 161-162.

¹⁷ J. A. Naudé, *Islam in Africa*, p. 3.

“Indian” compatriots seems to show otherwise. “Some Indian Muslims tend to see black Muslims as an invasion into their world. They see us as economic refugees whose conversion to the religion was motivated by the desire to be given money and food”.¹⁸

By the close of the 18th century, local Muslim worship became regular owing to the large number of freed “coloured folk”. By 1799, Mizra Abu Talib Khan observed that he had met many pious and good Muslims who possessed considerable property, although this seems to be contradicted by many sources.¹⁹ Amongst them, Shaikh Abdulla, son of a native Meccan, who after some commercial ventures to the Cape, married a daughter of a “Malay” and settled there. This organised grouping of Muslims developed during the next century.²⁰ This tells us that not only was there a growing conversion of local “free blacks” but that external Muslims settled in the Cape. Those who came, contributed to the already elite group of Muslims who owned property – capital which would later become pivotal for the upliftment of the poorer Muslims, necessary for the franchise and which could be used to build mosques and other religious centres. The visitor also points to the exchange of views and people that occurred across the continent. One observation made was that inspiration was sourced from Mecca. The centre of authority brought a higher standard of orthodoxy by more and frequent communication. Most of the “Cape Pilgrims” being fairly well-off, attracted sympathy from the citizens of Mecca.

Another group that contributed to the rise of Islam were the “Prize negroes” who were captured at sea after 1808 by the British and were then landed either in Sierra Leone or the Cape until the 1850s. Archdeacon Merriman remarked in 1848 that those native families on Versveld Estate were of Mozambican origin “loved to be considered Malay” as religious conversion led to a sense of ethnic identity.²¹ These captured slaves were not returned home as it was feared they would be recaptured. Not all could be employed by the Navy and the

¹⁸ K. Brown, “Muslims in South Africa”, H. Solomon & F. Butler (eds.), *Islam in the 21st Century: Perspectives and Challenges*, pp. 28-29.

¹⁹ See for example, Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 10

²⁰ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 215.

²¹ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 423-424.

Army at Simonstown, so they were indentured for fourteen years as apprentices to private individuals after which they would become free men. These men were not proselytized by Christian missionaries, who most times refused, so turned to the growing number of Muslim tailors who had established themselves making army uniforms and a Muslim butcher for spiritual guidance. It was in 1808 that an official concern arose pertaining to the increase of Muslim conversion amongst the imported Mozambicans. By 1823, Imam Muding suggested that half of the Muslims in the Cape were prize Negroes, also in search of a new ethnic identity.²² By 1808, the Earl of Caledon, the first civilian governor of the Colony, remarked that the slaves from Mozambique were for the most part embracing “the Mohomedan faith”. In 1814, Rev. Campbell noted that there were about one hundred men, chiefly slaves, “Malays” and “Madagascars” (sic) in a mosque he attended. William Wilberforce Bird, a British Government official, commented after his survey of the Cape in 1822 that “Mohammedanism” was gaining ground amongst the slaves and free persons of colour at the Cape with more conversions amongst the “negroes” and “blacks” to Islam than to Christianity. Alarmed by this, two Cape Imams were interrogated in the 1820s. In the 1820s, William Wright, a Christian abolitionist wrote that daily increases in Muslim proselytes was visible in the town.²³ Some of these “Mozbiekers”, as they were referred to, settled in the Stellenbosch area and thus questions arise as to the ethnic origins of the early Muslims in the Stellenbosch area.

The easy access to the Muslim marital rites encouraged many slaves and later “free blacks” to embrace Islam. Slaves at the Cape could not marry in Christian churches until 1823, according to Ordinance 20. Children born out of wedlock were to follow the status of the mother according to the law. Imams performed many marriage ceremonies for slaves and because these were not recognised by the law, this solemnisation of the marriage vow which gave the actors some disillusioned measure of domestic stability, worked in the favour of the authorities as those married within the Christian faith could not be separated. They had to be sold into slavery as a couple.²⁴ The resemblance of a family life offered by Muslim leaders is arguably one of the reasons why the religion appealed to the early slaves. Sheik Yusuf, one of

²² R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 9-11.

²³ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 420-421.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 444-445.

the most prominent figures in the life of the Stellenbosch Muslims, is said to have offered this to his supporters.

Islam was officially unbanned and slaves granted religious freedom on 25 July 1804. Relaxation towards religious practice had already occurred around 1798 when the first *masjid* was consecrated on land owned by the free slave Saartjie van de Kaap. Because of the threat of war with the British, the Dutch needed the Cape Muslims to fight on their side and this might have influenced their leniency and subsequent permission to build a mosque.²⁵ What caused Islam to become more public was the reduction in military power and the Cape *Mardyker* tradition in which “free Malays” enrolled in two artillery battalions, the “Javaansche Artilleries”, in preparation for a British invasion. In exchange they were given the freedom of religious practise by 1804²⁶ as well as a burial ground.²⁷

Disillusionment with Christianisation

The Dutch East Indian Company baptised all its slaves born in the colony but not those owned by the settlers. Owners who proselytized their slaves were bound by Dutch reformed precepts to bring them to legal and social equality. Baptised slaves were not to be sold and thus many slave-owners encouraged their slaves to accept Islam.²⁸ In 1656, free Muslim servants, *Mardyckers*, were requested and they were prohibited from practising their religion in public or from being actively involved in conversions except if they wished to convert to Christianity. No inhabitants were to interfere with their practices.²⁹ It should be noted that conversion to Christianity was restricted to the Dutch Reformed faith until 1786. Hence the dominant religious discourse at that time excluded not only Muslim but also other Christian forms of proselytization. The baptism of slave children was encouraged but not always practised. If slave owners educated their slaves’ children with a Christian education, they

²⁵ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 10.

²⁶ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 17.

²⁷ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 182.

²⁸ S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part III)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2006/01/article03.shtml (accessed 28 October 2008).

²⁹ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 178.

were entitled to be baptised. It even became a condition for Company slaves to be baptised before they were manumitted.

Free blacks were free to choose their religion, Islam or Christianity, but it is fair to say that Christianity was preferred by the State as it worked very closely with the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC).³⁰ As Muhammed Haron comments, the DRC, to which many “whites” belonged, from the 19th and into the 20th century outlined three dangers that challenged them. *Die swart gevaar* (the black threat), *die rooi gevaar* (communists) and *die slamse gevaar* (Muslim) but they also considered the Roman Catholic Church a threat. The role of the DRC should not be under-estimated, having played an important part in the proselytisation of Christians, especially in Stellenbosch. The former two terms were later adopted in the political discourse especially during the apartheid era. The latter two question the challenges Islam, and to a much lesser extent, Catholicism provoked within Dutch Reformed missionary work. It is interesting to note that the political racial categorisation of the people in the Cape during the 19th century coincided with shifts within the DRC Synod in 1857 where congregants were divided along racial lines. Separate churches were established for “whites”, “coloureds”, “Indians” and “Africans” (the NGK as the Mother Church served the “whites”, the NG Sendingkerk for “coloureds”, the Reformed Church for “Indians” and the NGK in Afrika for the “Africans”).³¹

There was a concern over the neglect of Christian education. Many slaves professed no religion, others were attracted to Islam. The number of baptized Christians was small and it was observed that certain proprietors failed to discourage the persuasion of their slaves to Islam as the sobriety which the religion inculcated, served the purposes of, for example, the wine-cellars.³² By the 19th century, wine had come to dominate the Cape economy and wine estate owners preferred their overseers and wagon drivers to be Muslim which in practice would ensure that they did not drink. W. W. Bird makes this observation regarding Christian

³⁰ See M. Haron, “Three Centuries of NGK Mission amongst Cape Muslims: 1652-1952”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1999; M. Haron, “The Dynamics of Christian-Muslim Relations in South Africa (circa 1960-2000): From Exclusivism to Pluralism”, *The Muslim World*, Vol. 96, July 2006.

³¹ M. Haron, “The Dynamics of Christian-Muslim Relations in South Africa (circa 1960-2000): From Exclusivism to Pluralism”, *The Muslim World*, Vol. 96, July 2006, p. 424.

³² A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 216.

and Muslim labourers: “His sobriety, as it is affirmed, makes amends for some ill-habits attendant on Muhammedanism. Christians, slaves as freedmen, blacks no less than whites, are, it is lamentable to say, drunken”.³³

Prior to 1786, the Dutch Reformed Church was the only denomination of Christianity allowed in the Cape, however it has been noted that those of European descent practised their religion quite irregularly. After this period, the Wesleyan Methodists followed by the Anglicans and then the Roman Catholics used the conducive climatic and existing social structure to further their Christian Missionary work. During the period 1652 and 1804, Christian missionary work made headway amongst the “heathens” of the Cape. By 1808, the slave trade to British colonies was abolished which meant that slave owners had to rely on labour already present in the colony. However, because of the religious fervour of the missionaries, those baptised as Christian were to receive the same rights as those manumitted from slavery. This dilemma left many slave owners to choose between expropriating cheap labour or fulfilling their religious obligation of Christianising the heathens. Many “blacks” chose to follow the Muslim faith, rather than that of their oppressor. Islam provided material support for the poor and social status for the wealthier.³⁴

In 1824, the Royal Commission believed that many conversions to Islam were due to the fact that Muslim slave-owners were obliged to free their slaves if they turned to Islam. This was not the case neither in the laws of Islam, the *Sharia*, nor in practice. The Quran dictated that a Muslim could not enslave a co-religionist but this was different to freeing a slave who had only adopted the religion after being enslaved. Manumission of Muslim slaves by Muslim slave-owners would be an act of charity not an obligation. After the purchase of a non-Muslim slave, the slave normally adopted the religion of his master but this did not automatically mean manumission, although some cases were reported. In 1831, John Philip, the Cape missionary noted:

³³ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 9.

³⁴ V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, pp. 445-446.

The success they have had among the slave population may be easily accounted for on the following principles: I do not know whether there is a law among the Malays binding them to make their slaves free; but it is known that they seldom retain in slavery those that embrace their religion, & to the honor of the Malays it must be Stated many instances have occurred in which, at public sales, they have purchased aged & wretched creatures, irrespective of their religion, to make them free.³⁵

What Islam provided to those not freed after conversion was a sense of belonging. Whilst Christianised slaves remained segregated from their co-religionists and segregated within the social system, Muslim converts became real members of the extended community. They shared a seat at their master's table, they worshiped together and they had a sense of community and identity in the "Brotherhood of Islam".³⁶ Islam was also seen as a cultural revenge against the miseries of the Eurocentric slave regime.³⁷ However, slavery is justified both in the Bible and in the Quran. The first slave traders were Arab and there were Muslim slave traders at the Cape.

Funeral rites were another compelling agent towards conversion. In the 18th century, slave owners were burying their slaves themselves in shallow graves with very little dignity. In 1718, the Stellenbosch Church Council requested permission to bury the slaves next to, but outside, the Christian graveyard. By the 1740s, the slaves had a separate inferior graveyard in Cape Town. By the 1770s, separate graveyards were designated for "Malay", "Chinese" and "Dutch". The method and dignity as well as the elaborate burial of the early Muslims attracted some adherents. Unlike Calvinist burials, Muslim ceremonies were never a private affair.³⁸ John Philip from the London Missionary Society noted in 1831 that those who embraced Christianity gained no favour and remained a degraded race in life and in death. Christian "non-whites" were excluded from places of worship and were buried with very little dignity. On the contrary, if you were "Mohammedan" you were treated as brethren and

³⁵ R. Shell, "From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904", *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 431-432.

³⁶ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 173; R. Shell, "From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904", *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 433.

³⁷ R. Shell, "Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997", paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 9.

³⁸ R. Shell, "From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904", *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 454.

buried with dignity.³⁹ Islam, having had to grow outside of dogmatic Muslim surroundings, had also proven to encompass and encourage local practices, giving it a nostalgic appeal for many forcibly removed from their surroundings and cultural practices.

European Conversions

It has been argued that the growth of Islam within the first two centuries can be attributed to the conversion of slaves for whom Islam provided some form of status: intermarriage between Cape Muslim men and English women, the adoption of abandoned children, the attendance of Muslim schools by children of other races and faiths, attraction to Muslim rites and rituals which had assumed a traditional local flavour and prohibition on the sale of Christianised slaves and thus indirectly slave owners encouraged their slaves to adopt Islam rather than Christianity. Later conversion of “white” families, for example in Johannesburg, and other “white” individuals who had embraced Islam have been attributed to marriage into Muslim families, being impressed by the Islamic lifestyle and also the influence of Islamic literature.⁴⁰ It would appear that Islamic culture, literature and way of life had attracted adherents from within European ranks. This phenomenon adds to the complexities of locating an ethnic-based Muslim identity.

Lady Duff-Gordon remarked that emigrant girls from England turn “Malay” pretty often to avoid husbands who knew “billiards and brandy”, the two diseases of Cape Town.⁴¹ This was not endemic solely to the Cape. In other colonised countries in Africa, it was noted that the Muslims felt morally superior over the “decadent West with its adultery, gambling, abuse of alcohol and its pitiful indecisiveness”.⁴² It is ironic that a similar trend affected Arab lands before the rise of Islam. “It was in this town-life that the worst qualities of the Arab came out; it was here that his raging passion for dicing and his thirst for wine were most prominent”.⁴³

³⁹ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 453.

⁴⁰ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, pp. 208-209.

⁴¹ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 448.

⁴² J. A. Naudé, *Islam in Africa*, p. 8.

⁴³ S. Lane-Poole, *Studies in a Mosque*, p. 28.

By 1725, the moral presence of Islam was already evident. Outside the notorious Company brothel, a Muslim commented on how the Dutch Christians preached about the superiority of their religion whilst they allowed themselves to “behave like swine, like drunken, whoring pigs”.⁴⁴ This moral stance certainly impacted upon the number of conversions to Islam.

Muslims after 1838: A growing economic force

The “Free Blacks” and *Mardykers* were becoming increasingly prosperous and they were vital in propagating Islam at the Cape.⁴⁵ In the 1820s, the “Malays” constituted a large portion of the “lower class” of tradesman, fisherman, and mechanics of Cape Town. They congregated in small homes and had to pay extravagant rents.⁴⁶ By the 1860s, the first indentured labour arrived from British-ruled India to Natal. Further passengers who had paid their own fares were also shipped in. This consisted of a mostly small trader and merchant class which was mainly Muslim in faith.⁴⁷ It is believed that ten percent of the indentured “Indians” were Muslim whilst the majority of passengers were Muslim who were hoping to seek greater fortunes in the new land. These “Indian Muslims” were also joined by traders from Mauritius and East Africa.⁴⁸ Thus a certain middle class of Muslims were evident in the second wave of settlement in South Africa. One “Indian”, Mahomed Ebrahim Soofie arrived in 1896 and built a large number of mosques and Imam headquarters – thirteen in all in Durban – as well as a Masjid complex with an orphanage in Athlone in Cape Town in 1901.⁴⁹

By 1862, the Turks began taking an interest in the Cape after certain members of the Muslim community, through their “priest”, had intermitted that they required explanatory books for the religion from Constantinople. It was deemed necessary that an Imam versed in religious

⁴⁴ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 5.

⁴⁵ S. Morton, *From the Heart of Darkness: South African Islam (Part II)*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/12/article08.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

⁴⁶ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 162.

⁴⁷ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 7.

⁴⁸ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, pp. 205-206.

⁴⁹ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 8.

matters be dispatched. The British Government agreed and Abu Bakr Effendi was sent to the Cape by the Sultan. He only knew the Turkish language and an imperfect knowledge of Arabic and his presence was seen as detrimental to local customs and practices. However, the Cape Malays continued to have ties with Turkey, and used to hold annual services to celebrate the birthday of the head of the Turkish faith from 1867 until the end of the century. Similarly, a *Cape Times* notice on 18 July 1877, showed that the Turks also relied on the charity of the Cape Muslims. An appeal was made on behalf of the sick and wounded Turks, reiterating how the Sultan had helped Muslims in the Cape.

[...] now there is a fitting opportunity for us to show His Imperial Majesty the sultan our loyalty and appreciation of His Fatherly Kindness and interest in us. This is the most fitting opportunity we could have of showing the Turks that we regard them as our Brothers in the Faith, and that we rejoice with them in all their joys, and mourn with them in their sorrows.⁵⁰

This highlights not only the interaction between the Cape and Turkey, the aid Turkey gave to establishing Cape Muslims but also that it was thought possible that the Cape Muslims could provide financial aid to their “Brothers”, suggestive of an economic boom within some sectors of the Muslim communities at the Cape. This is supported by observations in the 1850s-1860s that the dwellings of the “Malays” in Cape Town were distinctive and the best of them well-built and large. Fifty years prior to this, they lived in small dwellings in obscure precincts of the town. “He may now be found occupying a large house, often his own property”.⁵¹ This raises questions around the perception that Muslims were amongst the poorest class of people at the Cape during this period.⁵²

Islam was considered an urban religion which had not made headways in the rural areas because it was a community-based religion which relied heavily on mosques and *madaris*. The Cape Muslims were the first to urbanise and remained the most urbanised of all the people in South Africa. Cape Town was considered the seat of “Mohammedanism”. Their

⁵⁰ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, pp. 220-221.

⁵¹ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 14.

⁵² This discussion should be read alongside remarks made in the opening pages of Chapter 4. The idea of poverty is relative and whilst a very small minority of Muslims could be considered wealthy, majority of the “coloureds” who qualified for the vote in the 1840s were Muslim.

numbers increased and they emigrated to different parts of the country, introducing Islam to the “natives”. Those Muslims in rural areas often had to lead a “double religion” in order to fit in with the rural community and to maintain trade links and clientele. In cities and towns, people felt free to claim allegiance to Islam. This may have had an impact on actual numbers recorded.⁵³ Some rural converts may have had to keep their faith secret⁵⁴ for practical reasons or perhaps they had yet to fully identify themselves as Muslim. Islam had thus a practical component to which non-Muslims could gain some form of economic power and social standing. Two types of conversion were visible. Cognitive in which a potential convert adopted the dress, claimed to have been a “Malay” or “Muslim” in order to obtain a favoured job (which indicates that Islam was revered amongst certain sectors of society, even if for financial gain), slipped into a mosque, attended a funeral of a Muslim friend and thus conversion related to social status, inclusion and identity. Domestic conversion related to conversion within the family household: the adoption of slaves, orphans, intermarriage with a non-Muslim.⁵⁵ The ensuing improvement in status was not necessarily acknowledged by the authorities but provided opportunities within the communities. For example, Imams in Dutch eyes were convicts but leaders of a clear alternative Cape community, what was termed, “colonial status inversion”. A convicted felon or a humble servant, a label placed on the individual by the state, could become a leader within the Muslim community. Achmat of Bengal, a slave in the eyes of the settlers, was appointed chief Imam in 1807.⁵⁶

Religion and propaganda

The growth of Islam led to a battle for the conversion of “heathens” in which certain attacks were made on the Muslim faith. Because of the number of European women converting to Islam, the Anglican Church embarked on a pamphlet war against Muslims in the 1860s.⁵⁷ An anonymous pamphleteer in *Abdullah ben Yusuf; or the Story of a Malay, as told by Himself* (translated from the Dutch, second edition, Cape Town, A.H 1295) describes the faults of his

⁵³ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 418.

⁵⁴ R. Shell, “Rites and Rebellion: Islamic Conversion at the Cape, 1808-1915”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 5, 1984, p. 11.

⁵⁵ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 419.

⁵⁶ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 6, 17.

⁵⁷ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 449.

people - clever in their business but generally ignorant about their religion. Few understood Arabic, in which all holy books are written, and those “Malays” that knew a few sentences by heart were ignorant of their meaning. Worse still is that many of the Imams were ignorant of the Quran. However, many “divines” (leaders) were fluent in Arabic, for example Abdul Walia who in 1862, greeted and spoke in Arabic to the new governor Sir Philip Wodehouse.⁵⁸ Rochlin attributes the authorship of this pamphlet to Abdol Burns but his own evidence shows that it is the work of John Arnold, the Anglican Arabist, who penned it for propaganda purposes.⁵⁹ This is one of many examples which show that the concern surrounding the rise of Islam had reached new levels.

No racial discrimination was visible in the early years of the Cape. Religious freedom fluctuated from outright condemnation to a propaganda war because Islam had grown over a relatively small space of time. Islam offered social and economic support and it provided an ethnic identity to those uprooted and marginalised from their own people. This emergence of a group of “Malay” people, with external connections and a fair amount of wealth, threatened Christian hegemony which was located in State institutions. But what it produced was a class of economically and intellectually able people to challenge State legislation and harness group support from within and outside its sphere of influence. Whilst religious affiliation had proven to forge a new identity, class ties were beginning to attack the social hierarchy.

Being “Malay”

The undulating relationship between peoples from varying racial, cultural and religious groups often led to conflict but more importantly led to the difficulty in searching for a personal identity. The concepts of “self” and “other” were changing, uncertain and at times contradictory. The small group of rich and eminent political exiles in the Cape made a marked impact upon the religious, cultural and political lives of their fellow Muslim followers of Islam during the 18th century. It is believed that by this period, more than half of the population at the Cape were slaves and of those, more than half were Muslim. They were increasingly considered “Malay” and one of their key functions was the interaction of the

⁵⁸ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 218.

⁵⁹ R. Shell, “Rites and Rebellion: Islamic Conversion at the Cape, 1808-1915”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 5, 1984, footnote 14.

“Malay” and Dutch colonialists. This relationship led to the development and use of the Afrikaans language and later Afrikaans culture through the use of Afrikaans vocabulary and syntax in gardening, cuisine and general lifestyle.⁶⁰ One of the key divisions between Muslims of “Indian descent” and those of “Malay descent” are the ethnic and cultural differences which have permutated over time.⁶¹

At emancipation in 1838, the “Malays”, the “Muslims”, stood out prominently as a distinct class in the community. They possessed a recognisable religion, which the mass of “Africans” did not. They became a sort of aristocracy among the “coloured” population. This prompted many writers to try and define what “Malay” meant. James Backhouse, a Quaker churchman, noted in 1840, that all those freed, joined the followers of Mohammed, or the “Malays”. There was even a tendency, as stated previously, to the horror of Christian missionaries, amongst some Europeans to embrace Islam. This made the ethnic terminology problematic. Nathaniel James Merriman, a newly arrived Anglican Archdeacon, wrote in 1848 that the Muslims had many enumerable proselytes from both the “coloured” and European people. John Mayson, an English army officer, noted in the 1850s that the term “Malay” applied to “mohometans (sic)” which included Arabs, Mozambique prize negroes, Hottentots, Christian “perverts” all lured by the Mohammedans where they could secure sympathy and aid. Ethnic origins thus were mixed and revolved around religion. In 1876, John Meuhleisen Arnold, a Christian missionary, stated that even English or Scottish bloods who had embraced Islam were being referred to as “Malay”. It would appear that even the European converts dressed like the Muslims.⁶²

In 1844-45, Professor C. Snouck Hurgronje made the observation that regular pilgrimages to Mecca are from people from the Cape of Good Hope. These people were derived from “Malays”, formerly brought to the Cape by the Dutch with a small mixture of Dutch blood. Some of their language had passed into the Dutch dialect of the Boers. They too had exchanged their mother tongue for the language of the Cape Dutch. What he outlines here is

⁶⁰ H. Roos, “Torn Between Islam and the Other: South African Novelists on Cross-cultural Relationships”, *Journal of Literary Studies*, vol. 21, June 2005, p. 50.

⁶¹ K. Brown, “Muslims in South Africa”, H. Solomon & F. Butler (eds.), *Islam in the 21st Century: Perspectives and Challenges*, p. 29.

⁶² R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, pp. 420-422.

the manner in which the “Malays” had become uniquely Capetonian but he also mentions how the co-religionists from abroad had kept in contact with the “Cape Malays”.⁶³

Literature in the 1850s had already alluded the authorities to the existence of this “ethnic group”. *Sketches of Some of the Various Classes and Tribes inhabiting the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope* (London, 1851) contains a chapter entitled “Malays”. Similarly, J. S. Mayson wrote *The Malays of Capetown* (Manchester, 1861). “Malayness” was being embraced and became ever increasingly visible. In the 1860s, Lady Duff-Gordon, an English aristocrat visiting the Cape, states that “*Malay* here means Mohammedan. They *were* Malay (in origin), but now they embrace every shade, from the blackest nigger to the most blooming Englishwomen”.⁶⁴

The growing phenomenon was even commented upon in 1891 by the census enumerator:

Originally of Asiatic origin this small class has become so leavened with foreign elements as to owe its distinctive existence rather to the bond of a common and uniform faith – Mohammedanism, than to any feeling of race. Designated by themselves as Muslim (Islaamsche) the national name “Malay” has, to a large number of colonists among whom they live, lost its proper signification and become synonymous with “Mohammedan”. It results therefore that a great number of persons of mixed race and many negro proselytes have been included in this class because they are Mohammedans and also that many have returned as Malays when not Malays...⁶⁵

The prosperity of the “Malays”

The early “Free blacks”, the majority of whom came from India, were primarily skilled artisans. In the formative years of Dutch settlement they were considered a threat to the “white” ruling class and in particular to the “poor white” colonists. The Cape Town City

⁶³ A. Rochlin, “Aspects of Islam in Nineteenth-Century South Africa”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, University of London*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1939, p. 213.

⁶⁴ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 448.

⁶⁵ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 414.

Council charged them exorbitant rents for houses to prevent them from accumulating property. The Council of Policy wanted Batavia to repatriate ex-convicts back to their places of origin, but this was not implemented. They were heavily controlled, often compelled to render services gratuitously, however they remained and managed to become “fairly prosperous”.⁶⁶

Islam is not just a socio-religious support system but an economic one as well. There was a relative amount of money available amongst Muslims. The concept of *zakar* is one of the tenets of Islam. Already from the early political exiles who had been well versed in the religion such as Sheik Yusuf who was well trained, would have impressed upon Muslims and converts the need for *Zakar*. *Zakar* is used for the good of a Muslim community. Muslims were becoming successful at the Cape. Muslim slave traders were equally successful and those who accepted the Muslim faith gained prosperous employment. Similarly, there was a noted influx of wealthier Muslims as well as upper class Muslims such as Sultan of Comores and Turkey. They would have seen the financial need of the Muslims if they were living in poverty. This is further evident in the number of Mosques that proliferated throughout the Colony. Economic growth and growth in numbers from Muslims settling in the Cape or from conversion, religious infrastructure such as schooling, even if secular, provided a backdrop for an increasing educated and prosperous class of Muslims who by the beginning of the 19th century had to fluctuate between increasing gains for the religious community and the needs for all “coloured” groups in the face of increasing State pressures. Whilst a distinctive Muslim “brotherhood” was being created at the Cape, Christian proselytisation also created a band of Christian “coloureds” who faced similar social and political conditions as their Muslim counterparts. The next chapter will investigate political changes which forged alliances between these two religious “brotherhoods” where the concepts of race and class overcame religious differences.

⁶⁶ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. 42-43.

Chapter 4

“You are one!”¹ : Merging classes and religions – the forming of a racial group in opposition to State politics

During the 19th century, Islam grew in North and East Africa through “brotherhoods” of Islam which cut across kinship groups, classes, professions, lineages and integrated units. Initially motivated by religious fervour, these groups became instrumental in political activism in countries such as Libya and Egypt.² Whilst no clear political activism, based strictly on religious affiliation, was evident in the Cape, the “Brotherhood of Islam” at the Cape became actively incorporated and eventually absorbed into the growing “coloured elite” which began to emerge in opposition to State changes. What this chapter intends to discuss is the manner in which State pressures, as well as “coloured” and “Muslim” politics, gave rise to the creation of a universal multi-ethnic and multi-religious “coloured” group at the Cape, that eventually became a racial category for later State legislation, and as sharing of a perceived common heritage.

The Role of the State

The 19th century saw that the institutions of serfdom and slavery had created an asymmetry between whiter skin and freedom and darker skin and inferiority. Coupled with this was a growing intolerance towards religious practices. Exclusion of slaves from the governing bodies of the Cape as well as discrimination on the grounds of Muslim marriages led to an increase in the dichotomy of the early society. The *Burgerwag*, the precursor to the police force, was restricted to Christians as fear of a Muslim revolt excluded people from this faith from partaking in any employment in which arms were distributed.³ Racial prejudice had become part of life, reinforced by economic factors between “white” and “non-white” labour in a free market.

¹ The shift from apartheid to democracy for all instigated a new philosophy, “Simunye, we are one!”, in which an idealistic metamorphosis from an ethnic to a common identity based on citizenship was expected.

² J. A. Naudé, *Islam in Africa*, p. 3.

³ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 181.

By the 1740s, “poor white” colonists were being economically threatened. Unsuccessful requests were made to halt Asiatic immigration and so the Cape restricted Muslim ownership of property to minimise the prospects of accumulating wealth.⁴ The slave era saw a distinction between those that were free and those enslaved. Between the 1820s and the 1830s, the British ushered in a new social plan which gave the Khoisan the same rights as free burghers (Ordinance 50 of 1828). By 1834 slavery was abolished and by 1838, those serving their four years bondage as so-called apprentices were freed. A degree of political equality emerged. This ushered a rush of freed slaves to the towns as they deserted their former masters in the agricultural areas. Quite a number deserted the Christian faith of their masters as well and embraced Islam.⁵ At this stage, social standing relied on land and capital accumulation and the way to expropriate this was through cheap labour. Under British rule, more “blacks” became “free” and this created tension between the two “white protagonists” who by this stage had managed to expropriate much of the land and capital. Thus ownership of land and economic differentiation had already informally created racial differentiation as those with resources were mostly “white”. By giving political “freedom” to more of the potential cheap/free labour force, that divide was likely to be threatened. Those of Dutch descent differed in ideology with their British counterparts; this manifested itself in the Great Trek into the interior in the 1830s⁶ and to the later establishment of the Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State which not only created disharmony for British political hegemony but created economic disparity between the British Colonies of Natal and the Cape, and the rest of the ideal “British” South Africa. Ordinance 3 of 1839 allowed for election of representatives to the Municipal Board. A voter had to occupy premises with a yearly rental of no less than £10. The Board had two tiers with a much higher qualification for the second. By 1840 it is recorded that only two Cape Muslims could vote in this tier which required property to the value of £1000, Carel Pilgrim and Frans van de Kaap. Between 1840 and 1842, 830 voters of the total 2 069 were “coloured”, the vast majority being Muslim as “it is almost certain that nearly all Christian “coloured” inhabitants would not have qualified”.⁷ Three reasons have been cited by Achmat Davids as to why Cape Muslims did not participate in Cape politics, none of which mention economic

⁴ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 183.

⁵ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 421.

⁶ H. Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: A Biography of a People*, p. 175.

⁷ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, pp. 184-185.

disqualification. By and large, he attributes the problem to mistrust, poor self image, a lack of confidence and a preoccupation with their religious consolidation and the leadership struggle.⁸ Their political inactivity was thus not bound within the concept of wealth nor racial discrimination but secular interests in their own religious battles.

The idea of a representative institution was not considered tenable by the British in 1842 as they feared that it would lead to class domination. In 1846 they accepted the principles of representative institutions beyond racial boundaries. Income relating to class was still maintained. The Colonial Secretary rejected motions by the Legislative Council to maintain a moderately high franchise qualification because it would have excluded a large percentage of the “coloured” community, “...who in the point of intelligence are qualified for the exercise of political power...”.⁹ By 1848, the British announced plans to implement the Legislative Assembly in the Cape Colony based on a property franchise in which all adult males had to earn a minimum of £50 per annum, or £25 plus board and lodgings supplied, or who occupied land and a house with a combined value of £25, could stand for the House of Assembly and could vote. Qualifications for the Legislative Council, on the other hand, were high – ranging between £2 000 and £4 000. This was established by 1853 and most Dutch men and a fair number of “coloureds” (as ex-slaves and Khoisan were beginning to be called) were able to vote. Voting rights meant equality with those who previously maintained all the power and was thus something to strive towards for those hoping for social upliftment through political means. This did not imply that economic gains were evident but it did provide an opportunity to at least strive towards economic, political and thus social betterment. However, poverty meant few “non-whites” could attain this level and the non-racial vote in effect had an implied racial classification. This can also be seen in the way in which those who may have been “coloured” and who were able to be voted into the Cape Parliament lost their “coloured” status as such a success was equated with “whiteness”.¹⁰ It was this desire to maintain the franchise that encouraged those considered “coloured”, and who qualified for the vote, to maintain their perceived status within the class structure. That which bound members of the economic elite together was their ability to vote within the franchise ballot.

⁸ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 186.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹⁰ R. Ross, *A Concise History of South Africa*, pp. 23-48.

By 1873, with the increase in the African vote, the franchise was raised. The Parliamentary Registration Act of 1887 dictated that land owned in tribal areas would not qualify the “African” to vote. The Ballot Act of 1892 raised the economic qualification from £25 to £75, but also introduced a simple education test – the voter’s ability to sign his name and to write his occupation and address. Whilst Achmat Davids suggests that a vast majority of Muslims who would have qualified on economic grounds, they would not have been able to make the educational qualification, based on the wills and inventories filed at the Master’s Office between 1890 and 1900 whereby the declarations are signed with an “x”.¹¹ Considering the major obstacles the Muslims had already overcome, perhaps one cannot rely solely on this source to draw conclusions about a community clearly exposed to *madaris* from an early period, whose members had learnt to cite the Quran, had become successful enough economically, and who had the services of learned men: the Imams. Their nonchalant stance might be related to the continuing religious battles within the community.

Political rights correlated with economic prosperity. Within the urban areas, kinship and occupational ties as well as cultural forms such as a shared history about oppression and bondage, “white” domination of power and resources and correlation between darker pigmentation and deprivation, helped forge ties and establish a cohort of “non-whites” willing to work towards a common goal.¹² The “Cape Malays” differed from the rest of the “non-European community” in many ways but their political, social and economic problems were largely the same.¹³

From the 1860s to the 1880s, members of the Malay elite such as Jongie Siers and Abdol Burns had leant their support to Cape liberalism by backing English speaking candidates, hoping they would maintain a non-racial stance towards the “Malay” community. By 1882, there was an increase in hostility to English racism against the “Malays” which resulted in them boycotting the 1882 Town Council and 1883 Legislative Council elections. After the closing of the Muslim cemetery and the continued English exclusion, they attempted to field

¹¹ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 188.

¹² V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol 36, No. 3, 1995, p. 445.

¹³ I. D. Du Plessis, *The Cape Malays*, p. iii.

their own parliamentary candidate in the late 1880s. First defiance campaign was organised on 17 January 1886 in response to the closure of the Tana Baru (Muslim) burial ground.¹⁴ An appeal was made for direct British intervention, but the response was negative as the evident schism between the white communities was evident at this time.¹⁵ What Abdol Burns had achieved was the importance of political organisation of all those in danger of oppression, the strength in unity and the need for representation on governing boards if concerns regarding the communities were to be effective.

By 1894, the franchise had been raised and discussions were under way to introduce segregation in education. At this stage, descendants of Christian slaves sought affiliation with their Muslim counterparts against an increasingly segregationist political atmosphere and they later assumed a “Malay” ethnicity.¹⁶ However, Farid Esack believes that the community referred to as Cape Malay is not of “mixed African, Asian and European descent but essentially of Asian descent”.¹⁷ This marked the beginning of political activity when Achmat Effendi, son of Abu Bakr Effendi, attempted to gain a parliamentary seat in the Cape Legislative Assembly. He was unsuccessful as he announced his decision during the 1893 Parliamentary session and conservative “white” politicians restructured the voting method thus blocking his victory under the Constitution Ordinance Act No 16 of 1893. Clear racial discourse was being used with some politicians not wanting a “Malay” or “Coloured” seated next to him. According to Davids, the 1894 election results indicated that Effendi, with the Muslim vote of Cape Town, would have had a reasonable chance of being elected.¹⁸

Due to the increasing social and political segregation, a Muslim candidate stood for the 1894 Assembly elections, Achmat Effendi. He appealed not only to the Muslim voters but also to the Christian “coloured” ones. By this stage the term “Malay” was being used to describe both groups and he promised to look after all his constituents regardless of religious affiliation. His main focus was on compulsory education. He did not win the election but his campaign had secured political “coloured” mobilisation under the Coloured Political

¹⁴ A. Davids, *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. 62-84.

¹⁵ The growth of the Afrikaner Bond emerged at the same time and allegiances with “Afrikaner” brothers in the North were growing.

¹⁶ V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, pp. 455-456.

¹⁷ F. Esack, “Islam in Southern Africa: A Rejoinder to Nkrumah”, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 53, The African Jigsaw, March 1992, p. 75.

¹⁸ A. Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, pp. 174-177.

Association. However, this mobilisation was challenged by the joining of two key prominent Christian “coloured” figures, J. Curry and J. M. Wilson, to the South African Christian Political Association (SACPA) in the hope of achieving equality of “coloureds” with “whites”. This however would have had religious implications for the Muslim communities. With the threat of the Anglo-Boer War, the “coloured” vote was needed once again and Cecil John Rhodes made use of his campaign, “equal rights for all civilised men” to regain their support. Certain political ploys were used to separate the “coloured” group from the other “black” groups and certain organisations, religious institutions and sports clubs specifically for “coloureds” were formed. Through these associations, members of rural and urban communities, both Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking, forged links through social activities. An interesting observation made by Bickford-Smith is that the “Malays” were not closed to the absorption of “others”.¹⁹ This could be suggestive of their poor bargaining power as a separate Muslim entity. During the war, “coloureds” were active in establishing Vigilance Committees to organise support for the war. It was hoped that they would achieve some status by showing active allegiance to the Crown. However, after the war, “white” unity betrayed this dream and by September 1902, members of the “coloured elite” established the African Political Organisation (APO) to promote unity between the “coloured” races, and to defend social, political and civil rights of the “coloured” communities. By 1904, the census now divided the Cape population into European, coloured and African, whereby “coloured” incorporated all those between the two poles.

Racial discourse began to replace earlier religious and class distinctions and by 1902, with the need to reinvent “white” unity, “coloured” freedom would be even more restricted. A sense of communal action developed. Prior to 1910 laws were promulgated by different States within South Africa. By 1910, they had all come under the rule of the British Empire. This resulted in the need for a cohesive community effort.

The Rise of a “Coloured” Elite

Marxist theory posits an economic basis of class determination in which classes are determined by economic production and when those who occupy similar positions in the

¹⁹ V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, pp. 456-459.

economic structure become aware of their common interests. Those who were involved in active paid labour realised that this would not only increase their means of consumption but also their political status. In order to maintain both, and by extension their social standing, would require education and training as earning capacity was directly related to attainment. High status occupation (professionals, educators, businessmen, senior functionaries), high income, superior education and the ownership or control of business enterprises are criteria located within a dominant class.²⁰ Similarly, amongst the working class, individual consciousness gives way to collective consciousness during economic struggles like the racial economic clash exhibited in the Cape between 1891 and 1902. Skill, sentiment, supply and strategy seemed to influence the manner in which “white” artisans were favoured by employers over “coloured” workers which also influenced and was influenced by the intricate membership of Unions during that period. The absence of racist rhetoric from “white” unionists in the Cape could have been the result of the lack of rigid divisions of labour specifically in the skilled trades between “whites” and “coloureds” that promoted co-operation.²¹

By the end of the 19th century, class allegiance through the Cape Liberal franchise meant unity for all “the Queen’s subjects” at the Cape - a common loyalty and interest without distinction of class or colour.²² Some antipathy to “Malays” between 1875 and 1882 was evident as Islam was fundamental in their cultural practices. A small “Malay elite” of western-educated petty bourgeoisie – shop keepers, fruit vendors, tradesmen, coachmen, fishermen, artisans and a few professionals – had proliferated, who could qualify for the franchise. However, because the original “Malay” Muslim communities had integrated with non-Muslim people of colour and because they shared in a common goal to achieve a certain position in society linked to the political vote, the generic political term “coloured” signified all those not “white” and not “native”, regardless of religious affiliation, regardless of their origin and date of arrival in the Cape. In order to have strength in numbers, this identity had to be assumed in order to achieve a specific goal at that time. According to Vivian Bickford-Smith, other factors also broadened the ethnic dimension that could subsume “Malayness”.

²⁰ R. Sklar, “The Nature of Class Domination in Africa”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1979, pp. 531, 533.

²¹ V. Bickford-Smith, “Protest, organisation and ethnicity among Cape Town workers, 1891-1902”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 7, 1994, p. 85, 93-100.

²² J. McCracken, *The Cape Parliament 1854-1910*, pp. 69-70.

He mentions the rise of Christian evangelism and rural migration to the Cape in the late 19th century which saw the percentage of Muslims amongst “non-Bantu-speaking black Capetonians” fall from 40% in 1875 to 22 % in 1904. He also mentions that industrialisation and new methods of production reduced “Malay” remunerative skills in artisanal work and traditional occupations of fishing and laundering. Fewer “Malays” were being apprenticed. This was a result of not only increased migration but of industrialisation and made an impact upon employment opportunities. Italian fishermen were threatening the fishing industry, trams and cars in the 1900s saw a decrease in the need for horse-drawn cab drivers. Growing separation of “blacks” from “whites” from the 1880s determined ethnicity based on skin pigmentation. An increase in the number of immigrants increased the pressure of employment opportunities as “African labour” was cheaper. This eventual scramble for remunerated employment also led to conflict between “non-white” people and differences were being made on appearance, language, and culture.²³ This increased the need for those with similar skin pigmentation, mixed culture and a perceived common heritage to create a system to safeguard their interests. This coupled with the need to create some unity amongst the “white” inhabitants of South Africa after the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, and the increasing political legislation implemented to heal “white” race relations, led to the establishment of a “coloured” elite to fight for the cause of the “coloured community” which by this stage consisted of Muslims and Christians of mixed descent. By 1902, some Capetonians had assumed the “coloured” classification to distinguish themselves from “black Africans” in the face of increasingly segregationist policies targeting “black Africans” such as the Morality Act of 1902 and the Native Reserve Location Act of 1902, hoping that these distinctions would provide better opportunities for those of lighter skin pigmentation.

Whilst the “coloured” community was aware of, and at times supported, the glass ceiling which they could not overcome, complicity between those “coloureds” above those of the lower class “coloured” provided a basis on which to align themselves more with the “civilised white groups” rather than with their own people. “Except for a handful of radical activists, politicised coloureds during the earlier decades of the twentieth century did not wish to effect fundamental changes to the society except for the abolition of institutionalised racial

²³ V. Bickford-Smith, “Black Ethnicities, Communities and Political Expression in Late Victorian Cape Town”, *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, 1995, pp. 339-451.

discrimination”.²⁴ Richard Sklar describes this as a “fusion of elites” in which those in a more dominant position appear to unite and act in unison on the basis of their common interest in social control. In colonial Africa, the Imperial powers favoured the emergence of a collaborative bourgeoisie. Class formation however is a consequence of political as well as economic determinants. The autonomy of the bourgeoisie is firmly established upon the foundation of indigenous political organisation.²⁵ Thus the increasingly visible “coloured” began to assume the political discourse and attempted to instil this ideology amongst the other “coloured” classes.

By the end of the 1880s, the concept of “colouredness” was firmly entrenched in Cape society within an elite that looked at the liberal Cape Constitution (which had in place the franchise) and the British Empire for their identity. This was used by Dr Abdullah Abdurahman who took the presidency of the African Political Organisation from 1905 as a blue print for “colouredness”.²⁶ What becomes apparent is that all those “non Bantu-speaking non-whites” formed an allegiance along racial, cultural and linguistic lines to gain upliftment for that particular group of people. This included members of the Muslim communities.

A key factor in upliftment was education. The Teachers’ League of South Africa was founded in Cape Town in 1913 probably in retaliation to the School Board Act of 1905 in which the Cape Government legislated segregation in education. Primary and secondary education was racially segregated with “white” education being compulsory and having more resources being allocated. Instigated by the A.P.O., this organisation as well as the *Educational Journal* established in 1915, were instrumental in shaping “coloured” self-definition and identity. Amongst the rising “coloured” petty bourgeoisie, racial oppression rather than class exploitation informed their political consciousness. The most salient features of “coloured” people were their intermediate status within the social order, their relatively

²⁴ M. Adhikari, “Abdullah Abdurahman”, *They Shaped our Century: The Most Influential South Africans of the 20th Century*, p. 439.

²⁵ R. Sklar, “The Nature of Class Domination in Africa”, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1979, pp. 537-538, 550.

²⁶ M. Adhikari, “Coloured Identity and the politics of coloured education: The Origins of the Teachers’ League of South Africa.” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 1994, p. 102. For a more detailed biography of the A.P.O. and the role of Abdurahman within the organisation, please refer to G. Lewis, *Between the wire and the wall: a history of South African “coloured” politics* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1987).

small number and their less significant economic and political power. They did not have much to bargain with and so proper negotiations were limited to small gains. Their identity remained fairly fluid and sensitive to context, somewhat different to racial identity, in a perpetual state of not being “white” but never wanting to reach the status of the “native”. Because of this rollercoaster, those who managed to maintain some social standing because of their economic position, often attempted to distance themselves from undesirable people, at times, those belonging to their own race. One could argue that race should not be a factor which unites those of a similar phenotype as it was a concept instituted by an oppressive system. Nevertheless, those that belonged to the “coloured” elite showed disdain towards those of a lower class. Dan Samson, in his presidential address to the League in 1916, differentiated between three classes of “coloured”. The “sunken class” were considered “an accumulation of filth, vice, dissipation and crime ... past social redemption”. The “sinking class” neither openly vicious nor the hardened criminal but one that was indifferent to its own advancement and with its faculties susceptible to corruption. Their indispensable needs [were] not prison accommodation, reformatories or police officers, but schools and teachers... education”. The “uprising class” were concerned about “their advancement in life, zealously watch[ing] over the moral and intellectual training of their offspring”. It would appear that a similar tri-partite class differentiation was made by the Coloured Commission Report two decades later. Correlations were made by the League in which ignorance would breed social degeneracy and knowledge would form the basis of progress and civilisation. Religion and professional values also merged. The association wished to instil the necessary skills for economic success but at the same time inculcating values of citizenship. For this to succeed, they required the aid of the state. The view held by the “coloured” elite of their brethren – rowdy, drunkards, criminals, immoral delinquents – was used by some to justify racial discrimination against all “coloureds”. This created animosity between the “coloured” classes as the elite demanded that individuals be judged on merit. From the three classes identified, it was possible for the elite to aid the “sinking class” to achieve values they held dear. They attempted to separate the “civilised” from the “savage”, the “progressive” from the “backward”. Cultivating “coloured” separateness would reap rewards from the State but would ultimately use the same criteria as what was considered an oppressive State. Eventually the “coloured” elite aspired to “white” middle class social attributes. As segregation increased, the League argued that “coloureds” and “whites” shared a symbiotic relationship and that they were fundamentally reliant on each other. It was only in the advent of increasing segregation and apartheid that Philip Scholtz, the elected president of the

League in 1923, condemned the teaching profession for being too class and race conscious. “We blame the European for making distinctions; and we do the same, in some cases with more severity”.²⁷ Needless to say that class alliances and racial inclusivity and exclusivity as well as the question of “coloured” identity shifted over time and in terms of historical specificity. Class conflict and the eventual implication on racial classification is by no means endemic solely to South Africa.²⁸

Enshrined in the role of education in the formation of a “coloured” identity is the dissemination of knowledge in the form of publications. The role of publications not only influenced group identity and solidarity amongst an elite class but also contributed towards a sense of nationalism, citizenship and brotherhood. Benedict Anderson conceptualised the notion of a nation as an imagined political community in which intellectuals use tools such as the press to develop nationalism.²⁹ The Municipal Newsletter of Stellenbosch attempted to create a sense of citizenship amongst *Stellenboschers* whilst religious newspapers, such as the *Muslim Views*, attempted to create solidarity amongst Muslims of varying practices. On a grassroots level, textbooks and articles can influence the reader into believing in an imagined reality. At times it would appear that separate histories are written, for example, for “coloured” or “Muslim” or “Indian” histories. At times the same key figures may appear in the different versions but are not automatically endemic to that particular version. There is a visible overlap in prominent figures and associations. For example, the role of the A.P.O. was instrumental in “coloured” history but also played a major role in “Muslim” history.

Religio-Político Organisation against the State

Up until the 1900s, no political organisation concerned purely with political aspirations of the Cape Muslim community was visible. Subsequently, two organisations were formed: the South African Moslem Association (1903) and the Cape Malay Association (1923), both of which aspired to serve the needs of the Muslim communities in the Cape. During this period

²⁷ M. Adhikari, “A drink-sodden race of bestial degenerates: perceptions of race and class in the *Educational Journal*, 1915-1940”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 7, 1994, pp. 109-129.

²⁸ J. Samoff, “Class, Class Conflict, and the State in Africa”, *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 97, No. 1, 1982, p. 115.

²⁹ P. Limb, “Rethinking Sol Plaatje’s Attitudes to Class, Empire and Gender”, *Critical Arts*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 2002, p. 29.

the African Political (later People's) Organisation (A.P.O.), a non-religious organisation, was formed in 1902.

Nematullah Effendi, son of Abu Bakr Effendi, founded The South African Moslem Association at the Cape in 1903. According to Suleman Dangor, it represented the interests of the Muslims³⁰ but according to Achmat Davids, it had a short lifespan because it did not enjoy the support of the Cape Muslims. Its leader had openly blamed the ignorance of the religious leaders for their problems, thus alienating them from supporting him. Others believed it championed for the rights of education beyond religious boundaries.³¹ It also alienated the "Indian Muslim" population and an Indian-Malay antagonism developed by 1910. The Government had fuelled this by implementing the Indian Policy whereby the Immigration Act of 1906 prohibited the immigration of persons with a criminal record and introduced a literacy test for immigrants. The "Indian problem" was already visible in the former Republics, with severe limitations being placed on the Indian population for fear of economic rivalry with "white" settlers. The Cape was probably aware of their success and was not keen, in the era of a renewed unity between the white settlers, to antagonise relations by allowing foreign competition. The "Malay Muslims", already facing problems of their own, and with a history of sacrificing the needs of other racial groups for their own, as was the case with the "native", were willing to allow the legislation to separate those with a common purpose, religion and even a common origin, to split the community. After the Anglo-Boer War, the South African Moslem Association attempted to recruit all "Dutch-speaking Malays" to fight the Government's attempts to create "locations" for them. Indian, Arab and Afghan Muslims³² were not allowed to join the SAMA. At Union in 1910, the political climate turned against Indians. The Immigration Regulations Act was passed in 1913 (which allowed the Minister of the Interior to declare any undesirable *persona non grata*) and the Indian Relief Act of 1914 allowed for the voluntary expatriation of Indians. The "Indian Muslims" had grown in number and were already estranged from their co-religionists on religious doctrines despite religious dogma which clearly states: "Surely *all* believers are brothers. So make peace between brothers, and fear Allah that mercy may be shown to

³⁰ S. Dangor, "The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present", *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 213.

³¹ Z. Cajee, "Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)", paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 15.

³² A large number had immigrated during 1907-1913. This will be discussed in chapter 8.

you”.³³ Those “Indians” who had immigrated after the 1890s, were predominantly traders and had developed superior attitudes to the “Malay” and “Indian” Muslims who had adapted to the local culture prior to their arrival. The politicians used the opportunity to cleave the two groups apart and thus the Indian Community established the Cape British Indian Association in 1910, which became the South African Indian Congress. The “Cape Malays”, who at this stage had been strongly affiliated to the “coloured” community, sought redress for political problems with the A.P.O. and not with the “Indian” association.³⁴

Subsequent Muslim organisations seemed to exclude on the basis of language and origin. In 1920, the South African Indian Congress was formed and in 1923, the Cape Malay Association. Each represented specific groups. This was representative of the main challenge to Islam in the 20th century - secularisation.³⁵ One of the leading figures in the Muslim community, Hadjie Ozier Ally, had addressed the “Stone Meetings” of John Tobin, the beginnings of a “coloured” political institution, and thus some Muslims viewed this organisation as pertinent to their goals.³⁶

The A.P.O. promoted the concept of a “coloured identity” as something that united the ex-bonded. By 1902, the objectives of the A.P.O. were expounded by W. Collins: the promotion of unity between the “coloured races” (and not race), better education, protection of the social, political and civil rights of the “coloured” people, the registration of all eligible “coloured” voters and the advancement of the “coloured” peoples of South Africa.³⁷

Nematullah Effendi’s brother-in-law, Abdullah Abdurahman took over the presidency of this organisation in 1905 in order to fuse the interests between the Muslim and Christian elites by the 1900s. Abdurahman (1872-1940) was one of the few Muslims considered to have made an impact upon “coloured” politics. Liberal historians consider him a distinguished leader whilst the more radical dismiss him as a collaborator and an opportunist. He entered public

³³ *The Quran*, Chapter 49, verse 11.

³⁴ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, pp. 194-195.

³⁵ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, pp. 22-23.

³⁶ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 176.

³⁷ Van der Ross, *Founding of the African People’s Organisation*, pp. 11-12.

life in 1904 by being the first “black” man voted onto the Cape Town City Council, a post he retained until his death which may, at the very least, be a testament to his diplomacy skills to have weathered what must have been a rather stormy battle during this period of increasing segregation. Through his position he worked for the socio-political conditions of the lower classes. In 1914, he was elected onto the Cape Provincial Council, also a post he retained until his death. His focus lay on education and health issues. Of primary concern was the prevention of feuding political factions. Whilst it is clear that Abdurahman believed strongly in guiding the “coloured” working class to achieving some social status within society, not all members of the “coloured elite” shared the same view.³⁸

During his presidency, the organisation expanded nationally and was considered the biggest “black” political party of its time. His success may have something to do with maintaining links with the “coloured” working class. Many examples show a separation of the elite from the working class but he maintained these links because of his love for traditional “coloured” food, the love for Afrikaans (at a time when English seemed to be the criteria of the “civilised” classes - although Achmat Davids disagrees with this saying he made acid comments about “Afrikaners” and had a “depreciating attitude towards Afrikaans and the Dutch Reformed Church”³⁹), his availability to those of the rank and file and his ability to reconcile differences between the authorities and the working class. Despite his following amongst the working class, his constituents were mainly the “coloured bourgeoisie” and the “respectable” working class community, as they were obviously in the privileged position of qualifying for the vote. They were westernised and shared in western values aspirations and social practices which requested that one be judged on merit. Abdurahman believed in the Cape liberal tradition that all citizens be equal in the eyes of the law, that the franchise be colour-blind and that the State was to ensure equal enjoyment of civil liberties. He is quoted as saying, “it is not race nor colour but civilisation which is the test of man’s capacity for political rights”. Perhaps his adversaries object to his continued belief in the franchise and a concept of civilisation which one can only assume meant being western, but perhaps it should be noted that at that time, no radical changes would have been beneficial to sustaining minor changes (which he did) as there was no cohesion even amongst his “own people”. What he did manage to achieve was some visibility for the “coloured” races. In 1906 and 1910 he was part of a delegation which tried to petition the British to veto the denial of the “coloured”

³⁸ This will be discussed at a later stage.

³⁹ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 197.

vote. In the 1920s and 1930s, he was active against the Pact Government's Civilised Labour Policy which would have affected the economic and political status of the "coloured" people. He also recognised the need for "black unity" against the ever increasing "white" supremacies and he spearheaded the movement to set up a primary school to provide secular education for Muslim children.⁴⁰

By the 1920s, the "coloured" intellectuals were seeking a more radical organisation and many were attracted to the *Afrikaanse Nasionale Bond*, the "coloured" wing of Hertzog's National Party. The Pact between Hertzog and Creswell had come into existence, General Smuts' South African Party in decline. It was in the decline of the A.P.O. that the Cape Malay Association made its appearance to relate to the social and religious needs of the Cape community. Members were encouraged to vote for Parliamentary candidates who most satisfied their needs.⁴¹ During the fluctuating political manoeuvring, J. B. M. Hertzog and the National Party attempted to harness "coloured" and "African" support. Support was solicited amongst the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union and the African National Congress. Amongst the "coloureds", Hertzog managed to break the hold of the A.P.O. which had been aligned to the South African Party. W. H. Le Grange, leader of the *Afrikaanse Nasionale Bond*, was making headway amongst the "coloureds" largely due to Hertzog's aligning "coloured" identity with the identity of the "Afrikaner" above that of the "African". A complicit bond between the two had been indicated amongst the "coloured" elite in the Teachers' League from 1913. After swaying the "coloured" support away from the A.P.O., Hertzog focused his attention on the Cape Muslims who had established the Cape Malay Association because they had been disillusioned by the A.P.O., arguing that it was not attending to the specific needs of the Muslims. Political unity was not of concern, religious sentiments were.

The association had gained much of the support of the Muslims at the Cape; they were a dominant voting power within the Cape, so their support was needed. Several key figures addressed the association's members in 1925 and support amongst both the "coloured" and Muslim Capetonians as a grouping above the "African" supported the Pact allegiance.

⁴⁰ M. Adhikari, "Abdullah Abdurahman", *They Shaped our Century: The Most Influential South Africans of the 20th Century*, pp. 437-441.

⁴¹ A. Davids, "Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey", *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, pp. 176, 198.

However, by 1926, the “coloured” and Muslim voters became disillusioned with the Pact alliance when the Coloured People’s Rights Bill of 1926 separated “coloureds” from “Africans” but also distinguished them from “whites”. Whilst the Pact alliance needed the support of the “coloured” vote, their primary target was the “white” voters who had established economic and racial hegemony. What the Cape Muslim Association had hoped to achieve was a better position for “Malay Muslims” at the expense of “Indians” and “Africans”. Whilst Achmat Davids points out that this went against the Islamic norm of the brotherhood in which all believers are a single entity, political distress caused these bonds to remain porous and open to manipulation by the “white” politicians. It should be added that the “coloured” elite were not passive victims in the process.

Further bonds of allegiance were made to the growing National Party on the grounds of a common language, Afrikaans, and a common cause for the love and pride of South Africa. Because of their strive to maintaining the Afrikaans language, the “Cape Malay Muslims” were categorised as part of the “civilised section of the population” in conjunction with the “white” and “coloured” groupings. Their motto was “South Africa first”, citizenship being a fundamental concept of civilisation. The Cape Muslim Association, under Mogamat Arshud Gamiet, stressed the importance of being a good citizen above all and better working relations with Cape Muslims and “coloureds”. Gamiet’s presidential speech avoided foregrounding the oppressive nature of “white” rule as an inherent part of the history of the “non-white” people, much like the discourse used by Abdurahman. He reinforced loyalty to the “whites” and addressed the public in Afrikaans, which by this stage, Abdurahman found “debauching”. A struggle thus ensured for the control of the Cape Muslims between Abdurahman and Gamiet. They both believed in “white” hegemony and both excluded “African” supporters, but they had divided the unity amongst “coloured” and Muslim supporters based in part on language.⁴²

The concept of citizenship was used as a dividing element because “Indian Muslims” still maintained their links with their origins. They considered themselves temporary sojourners in the Cape, probably because they were not embraced by any of the groups in the Cape, not even in the name of Islam. In the 1940s, “Indians” found it difficult to have any sense of

⁴² A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, pp. 198-203.

belonging. It was only in 1961 that “Indians” were considered permanent citizens.⁴³ This would have affected the manner in which “Indians” maintained strong links with the “Indian mother country” because of this binary exclusionary policy from above and within the “community”.

Garnier attempted to use this to secure a better status for “Malay Muslims” and this was encouraged by the political dispensation to avoid any cohesion between the Muslims in the face of the Areas Reservation Bill of 1925 which would solidify segregation based on race and origin. Assurances were made that the “Malays” would not be classified as Asian. Dr D. F. Malan, encouraged by community dissention, thus further divided “Indian” and “Malay” Muslim cohesion through stressing the commonality and development of the Afrikaans language by the “white” and “Malay” groups, and complimented Islam for enhancing key characteristics amiable to “white Christian civilised values” (even if these could not be extended to all “white” people): sobriety, loyalty, and love of hard work. He also assured them that they, like the “coloured” man, would receive the enhanced status which would ensure economic and political equality.⁴⁴ Political jargon surrounding the concept of citizenship secured “Malay” Muslim support and the interests of “whites”, “coloureds” and “Malay Muslim” cooperation was secured for “the good of the country”.

In the 1930s, a Muslim radical young intelligentsia emerged in opposition to the superfluous political allegiances which had been made. The Cape Malay Association declined in popularity and the Muslim Judicial Council was founded in 1945 in opposition to continued religious problems confronting the Muslims of the Cape.⁴⁵ This association was established to represent the needs of *imams* and for the protection of Islamic customs. It was a platform for the *‘ulama* and it served as the only official representative of Muslims and Islam to the State. It remained dominated by the Cape *sheikhs*.⁴⁶ Initially, the Council remained non-

⁴³ G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 261.

⁴⁴ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 205-206.

⁴⁵ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 15.

⁴⁶ R. Shell, “Islam in South Africa, 1652-1997”, paper presented at the Seminar on Slavery and Political Exile, Slave Lodge, Cape Town, 23 March 2005, p. 23.

political but by 1961, the result of strong Muslim youth movements and the implementation of the Group Areas Act, resulted in the Council adopting a more inclusive stance towards the ravages of the apartheid system. “Apartheid in any form could not be condoned by Islam”.⁴⁷

With increasing political segregation, “Indian” and “Malay” Muslims reconciled their differences and by 1942, the Cape Muslim Teachers’ Association opened membership to all Muslims irrespective of racial origin. Many Muslims later joined the Non-European Unity Movement which was the debating ground for the “coloured” intelligentsia, which felt particularly excluded because most Muslims had not had sufficient education and especially after the exclusion of Muslim girls for training at St Monica’s Maternity Home by the Anglican Bishop of Cape Town, Bishop Lavis.

Early Cape Muslims had no formal education. The first schools provided education to “non-whites” as a whole by missionaries, which included a majority of Muslims. Later secular Muslim schools were established by the community.⁴⁸ Firstly this indicates that a vast majority of the educated “coloured” elite would have been Muslim. Despite the fact that it was Christian mission education, religious education would have continued in the home and at *madrassah*. Secondly, if the community established their own secular schools, this implies that there was sufficient capital to embark upon such a mission. Thirdly, this was not always the wish of the State. The Cape Colonial Government had shown that it was willing to help the Cape Muslims ever since the Cape Malay Corps had fought on the British side in the War of the Axe (1848-1849). The authorities had expressed their gratitude by giving the Muslims pilgrimage acreage and ground for ecclesiastical purposes. The governor of the Cape, Sir Harry Smith also announced in 1848 that he would offer the imams of the Cape financial aid for schools from the Imperial coffers. Anglican Archbishop Robert Gray opposed the motion but, by 1864, the Cape Legislative Assembly removed the word “Christian” from the

⁴⁷ A. Davids, “Politics and the Muslims of Cape Town: A Historical Survey”, *Studies in the History of Cape Town*, Vol. 4, 1981, p. 208.

⁴⁸ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, p. 212.

education bill. It was argued that if the Muslims were paying taxes, they were entitled to State funding for education.⁴⁹

The most impressive achievement in Muslim education in the 19th century was the contribution of the Muslims to Afrikaans as a written language in the 1850s. The original Indonesian dialect had died out as a spoken language in favour of the Dutch *patois*. Language became linked to identity. In the first half of the 19th century, Afrikaner meant the offspring of a “Malay” slave woman and a Dutch father. By 1822, William Wilberforce Bird, the Colonial Secretary, described three classes at the Cape: the “Negro”, the “Malay” and the “Afrikander”. Harriet Ward in 1848 described the “Afrikander” as a caste between “Malay” and “European”. Lady Duff-Gordon in 1862 described a waiter as “Afrikander”, half Dutch and half “Malay”. Needless to say that the language Afrikaans had become synonymous with the “Malays”, and the Quran became the first holy book to be translated into Afrikaans.⁵⁰

In 1838, Rev James Willis Sanders, a Christian missionary stationed in Stellenbosch remarks about the educational efforts of the imams:

...they have always deeply sympathized with their brethren in slavery. They have raised a fund to make as many as they could free, and have opened schools for the instruction of the coloured...the black man has no desire to enter into the Christian church whose gates have been so long shut against him, he prefers joining with those who have been his friends in distress, who invite and encourage him to bring his children to the same school, to attend the same mosque and to look forward to meeting again in the same paradise.⁵¹

Muslim education encouraged conversion as the *madrasah* system was open to all children regardless of race or religion. Imams conducted lessons in what was becoming a universal Cape language, Afrikaans. This system also offered an alternative for those suspicious of the

⁴⁹ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 440.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 442-443.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 436-437.

Christian order.⁵² Religious education was offered and funded by the community but Indian and Muslim children had to attend government schools. Whilst it has been argued that Muslims generally lacked resources, it is interesting to note they had to fund, and did fund, their own Muslim institutions.⁵³ These institutions were located near places of worship, both of which were located close to the dwellings of the communities. Thus, political changes which affected residency affected religious as well as educational access.

The National Party won the elections in 1948 and by 1951, the Separate Representation Bill was introduced to disenfranchise “coloured” voters. Zanzibari Muslims were classified as “other Asians” in terms of the Population Registration Act and were forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act of 1952 which denied free residential, business, property and social and cultural religious rights and which introduced the formal and rigid racial classification of groups such as Indian and Coloured. Each group had their own declared “reserves”.⁵⁴ Subsequent to the Population Registration Act was the Immorality Act, barring inter-racial marriages and the implementation of Christian National education to promote Calvinistic values. This, and ensuing policies, *formally* separated “Malay”, “Indian” and “African” Muslims but this trend was already visible prior to state legislation and came, in part, from within the ranks of the communities in question. This trend continued throughout the rise of movements such as the Cape Muslim Youth Movement (1957) and the Claremont Muslim Youth Association (1958), formed to combat increasing segregationist policies. Old animosities surrounding identity continued to exist within these groups. By 1961, the “Call of Islam” attempted to reunite all Muslims in the face of increased discrimination. This trend was not endemic solely to the Western Cape. In 1970, The Muslim Youth Movement was established in Durban in response to growing segregation within Muslim groups. They rejected a purely “Indian identity” and embraced “African” Muslims into the organisation and also began making concessions for women.⁵⁵

⁵² R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 443.

⁵³ Z. Cajee, “Islamic History & Civilisation in South Africa: The Impact of Colonialism, Apartheid, and Democracy (1652-2004)”, paper presented at the Symposium on Islamic Civilisation in Eastern Africa, Islamic University of Uganda, Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 December 2003, p. 14.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 11.

⁵⁵ S. Dangor, “The establishment and consolidation of Islam in South Africa: from Dutch colonisation of the Cape to the present”, *Historia*, Vol. 48, no. 1, May 2003, pp. 214-215.

Whilst political mobilisation amongst “whites” may have caused allegiances to form and dissolve in order to obtain some form of place within the changing social and political structure, political pressures by the “white” politicians was not the only factor which caused this disunity amongst the mixed races. Existing class and religious dissention amongst people in their own communities were simply exemplified and manipulated to seek “white” hegemony. The renegotiation of what it meant to be “coloured”, “Malay” and Muslim was used as a political tactic but was not borne from a political discourse: it was rather manipulated within existing disparities. What the politicians had forced were allegiances based on a racial identity. Initially, however, the State was particularly concerned with the growth of Islam within a Christian State. It is also worth noting that in the 1950s, some “Malays” kept themselves apart from the “coloured people”.⁵⁶ However, current thoughts seem to maintain that Muslims in the Western Cape have more in common with non-Muslims than with other Muslims in South Africa.⁵⁷ This can, in fact, be extended to read that all “Malay” Muslims of the Cape had more in common with “non-Muslims” than with their “Indian Muslim” brethren.

Concluding Remarks on Theme 1

The early Cape political dispensation gave rise to differentiation between communities based on freedom very strongly linked to religious affiliation. Having being removed from their own surroundings, people at the Cape established an identity based on religion. This religion gave them social and economic standing. As the refreshment station grew from an agrarian to an industrialised economy, class cleavages were based on economic factors. As the political climate changed, increasing allegiances based on racial profiling created a correlation between class and race. But differences and divergence still existed. The State as well as the “white” group implicated within State institutions, continued to place all those not “white” and not “native” into the “coloured” classification. Increasing discriminatory legislation saw the need for the a multi-ethnic “coloured” elite to politically mobilise and unite divergent communities to overcome these laws which were also impacting on the “white” groups who were assuming discriminatory views, ushering discriminatory behaviour within the social domain. In order to create a united front, a common heritage was sought which negated the

⁵⁶ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 2.

⁵⁷ G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 280.

diverse nature of the origins, practices and religions of those previously bonded by legislation and now being bonded by a “shared history”. An imagined “coloured community” was instigated not only by State discourse but by an elite because of increasing tension. This was a conglomeration of different communities and differences of opinion did exist because of class differences and religious affiliations which had an impact on language, cultural practices and ideology. The “coloured community” incorporated not only people between the white- black continuum, but also “Malays” (those of ex-slave decent, be they of Indian or Javanese decent) as well as those Muslims who arrived after slave era. This attempt to create a homogeneous Muslim community which formed a strong part of the economic, social and political backbone of the “coloured community” is now considered as a part of the more dominant “coloured” history. The extent to which State legislation actually affected the “coloured community”, and in particular the Muslim communities at the Cape, and the oddities that existed between an overarching legislation and the implementation of that legislation on an interpersonal level, is most visible within micro history.

The Municipality of Stellenbosch was responsible for implementing State legislation as well as State ideology to its inhabitants. But to what extent was the Municipality effective in disseminating and imparting the sense of “white”, “coloured” and “native” classifications to its citizens? Referring back to Adhikari, “coloured” as well as “community” need to be deconstructed because identity is locational, never fixed, and varies to such an extent that micro history could help understand the complex nature of this concept. Events at the Cape had established a “Malay” identity, this identity was incorporated into the “coloured” identity in which a common history of suffering and oppression overrode any possible differences. “Indians” and “Africans” were initially excluded from the concept of “Citizens of South Africa”, as this became a key ideology within the growth of nationalism. What was constructed over time was a myth of common bonds. However, as Farid Esack warns, six notable Muslim leaders in the anti-apartheid struggle seem to be mentioned *ad verbatim* with historical discourse. They are reiterated by mostly non-South African historians, to such an extent that their association becomes established as history. Whilst a religious community

may feel proud that certain of its adherents were active and vocal, it is incorrect for any community to claim them as part of its exclusive heritage.⁵⁸

In a contemporary society, trying to define the concepts “Malay”, Muslim and “coloured” becomes problematic because the era to which one attempts to define this is ever-changing. Initially, slaves of Muslim descent and those who assumed this religion erroneously accepted the label “Malay”. Their origins were diverse. However, prominent Islamic religious discourse persuaded people to assume this name. Muslims became prosperous and with this an elite class was born. At the same time, a Christian group of prosperous people appeared and wanted to differentiate themselves from a poorer more uncivilised class. They too assumed the “Malay” label to differentiate themselves from others. Because the beginnings of the Afrikaans language found their roots within the Muslim communities, language became a defining factor. Having been cut off from their ethnic origins, these people accepted South Africa as their home and considered themselves “Citizens of South Africa”. In order to overcome religious and class differences in the face of increasing white discrimination, the term “coloured” was assumed, “other Asians” who held some economic power appended to this group. With the rise of Afrikaner nationalism, the need for the “coloured” vote saw the need to divide a rather powerful consolidated group of mixed people because attending to the increasing needs of the “white” united groups, and the rising “poor white” problem required that some “aliens” be sacrificed for those that considered themselves South African. Implementing legislation to reduce the power of the most populous group, the “Africans”, and the growing economic class of Asians, required the merging of brothers under the banner of a shared history and common goal – a common language. Once this was achieved and more rights were given to the “white” citizens, former allegiances had to be broken. “Coloureds”, Asians and “black Africans” needed to work together. However, in order to do this, a shared history of oppression had to be highlighted. Whilst the boundaries of class, race, common history changed over time, at each stage, certain adherents either remained stagnant or refused to accept common allegiance with those they considered inferior. At each stage, the concept of the “other” outside of the “brotherhood” was needed to reinforce the concepts of hero and villain.

⁵⁸ F. Esack, “Islam in Southern Africa: A Rejoinder to Nkrumah”, *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 53, The African Jigsaw, March 1992, p. 76.

This section has dealt with issues pertaining to the concepts of being part of the citizenship of South Africa: changing bonds that affected and was affected by state legislation, as well as group identity that came about within the groups concerned and which were affected by external factors. The next section deals with the case study of the “coloured communities” of Stellenbosch. This pertains to both Christian and Muslim adherents and investigates the manner in which group identity functioned and how identity, religion and relations in the town were affected by State legislation via the Municipality of Stellenbosch and how group dynamics affected decisions made at the Municipal level.

THEME II: Macro Changes in the Microcosm of Stellenbosch

Chapter 5

The Battle between the “Citizens of South Africa” and the

“Citizens of Stellenbosch”

The idea of being “Malay” was originally inclusive, embracing all those who accepted the Muslim faith. Undergoing several permutations, it later pertained to those whose origins lay within the slave era, obscuring differences of origin and religion. A rise in wealth amongst this group of people resulted in a co-dependence between all “coloured” people against the oppressive nature of the South African State. A growing disparity appeared between the “coloured” groups not only on an economic basis but also along fissures of ideology. “White” hegemony was accepted at the expense of other race groups and pressure was mounted to distinguish between the poorer “coloureds” and the elite. As nationalism gained momentum in the 1920s, a common bond was created across language barriers against those of Asian and purely “black African” descent. The “Citizens of South Africa” was a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, merging of people of varying origins against the newly “created non-South African ‘Other’”. This common bond between “coloured” people resulted in the need to create a common heritage based on the exclusion of other members of society. This was maintained not only by the communities themselves but was exploited by political actors hoping to gain control of the State under the guise of a common Afrikaner ideology. Whilst the tensions that arose in the Cape are certainly linked to that in other areas. The following three chapters will consider the “Mecca of Afrikanerdom”, Stellenbosch, and explore how political aspirations worked within the town and how the members of that town reacted and assumed their respective identities from 1892 until 1966. It is worth noting that the arrival of Islam to the

Cape is attributed largely to the slave era and it is believed that Stellenbosch was the chief slave-owning district.¹

The microcosm of urban geography can echo but also resist the bigger spatial shifts of the State. Within the everyday tensions, life experiences and minutiae of a small town can reveal how identities are constructed and patrolled over time within the context of State legislative changes. In this chapter, the micro issues of sanitation, environment, disease, and social ills become an area of focus for the Municipality of Stellenbosch and this will be investigated within race, class and religious interaction.

Stellenbosch and the End of Slavery

The second “white” settlement in the Cape in the 1690s in the district of Stellenbosch saw the establishment of a community of people with divergent cultural and social backgrounds who were compelled to work together in an unchartered environment, at least for those not originally from the area. Several works have been compiled on the history of Stellenbosch which will be used to contextualise the mood in Stellenbosch, prior to the timeframe being investigated.²

Pamela Scully alludes us to the role of class differentiation and particularly the role the industrial revolution during the shift in Stellenbosch from an agrarian society to an industrial town.

Within the context of a comparative approach, this work looks at the transformation and experience of one rural district in a period when members of

¹ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652- 1937*, p. 176.

² Whilst some reference will be made to the rural areas of the Stellenbosch district as a backdrop to the period in question, this thesis will focus on the urban settlement within the confines of the Stellenbosch Municipality. Because of the scarcity of archival information on the rural Muslims especially during the early years of settlement and because the Muslim communities were mostly concentrated within the town, the author acknowledges that the rural population contributed significantly to the workings of the town, but perhaps this avenue of exploration can be investigated within another study.

both the dominant and subordinate classes were wrestling with the implications of the expansion of the colonial economy.³

Scully discusses the relationship between the State and the former slave-owner classes after the abolition of slavery. Judicial prescriptive was sought to continue the dominance of the master class on a political, economic and social level. In the pre-industrial Cape economy, access to land gave members of the underclass (artisans in villages, peasants, rural workers) some freedom from permanent work. Mission stations⁴ provided some access to land but this meant that they were to adopt the Christian faith. Those that were stationed on missionary land provided seasonal labour to rural farmers, and thus had some income but this remained fairly minimal. Seasonal work did not benefit all farmers and many tried to petition for the closure of the mission stations. By the 1850s, 20% of the rural “underclass” were living on mission stations. Power was now deeply rooted in the access to land; land-owners formed an alliance but they had to fight the forces of Christian religious fervour. In the Stellenbosch district, the same patterns of land ownership continued after emancipation and collective hostility to emancipation and disappointment with the compensation given fostered the maintenance of class unity.

What is of great importance is that at the end of slavery, the village of Stellenbosch saw an influx of ex-slaves who rejected farm life. Many took on more domesticated employment; however, the district and the colony remained fairly agrarian. The different social and economic classes were dominated by a set of elite families with their roots in landholding who also strategically held positions in the Divisional and Municipal Councils, churches and judicial posts throughout the 19th century thus displaying hegemonic power in all spheres of life. Many who owned land used this to finance businesses in the village.⁵ As a result, the economic life of the village was inextricably linked to land ownership.

³ P. Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c1870-1890*, p. vi.

⁴ Established towards the end of Slavery in order for manumitted slaves to gain access to land, providing them a place to live and subsist.

⁵ P. Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c1870-1890*, pp. 1-2, 6-8, 18.

What becomes apparent in this system was the manner in which wealthier farmers kept their labourers subdued after slavery by snaring the rural underclass in debt and alcoholism under the “dop system” whereby workers were part-paid in alcohol. The poorer farmers kept their labour through the tot system. The “dop system” provided farmers with a compliant and docile proletariat. This system was by no means new and existed during slavery to keep workers docile, but this led to an increase in violence. So much so that an anti-dop lobby was started by Rev. J.H. Neethling of the Dutch Reformed Church, who saw the presence of canteens as part of the problem that encouraged anti-social “un-Christian” behaviour. He also complained about the cramped and unhealthy living conditions of the “coloureds”. This changing moral decline was becoming evident and this was linked to the social and economic processes of the industrial revolution. This state of affairs was not only prevalent in the Stellenbosch district, the Cape or South Africa, but on a global scale according to Rev Weeber of the Rhenish Missionary Society who compared the insolence and “moral decline” of the underclass of Stellenbosch to conditions in Germany: “It is happening all over the world. A spirit of liberty is taking possession of the classes”.

Another aspect Scully makes mention is that of the importance of micro history. Local studies are needed to give us “knowledge of the peculiar histories and divergent internal dynamics of differing communities and an analysis sensitive to consciousness and organisation as well as economic relations”.⁶ Whilst certain relevant aspects are pointed out, little focus is placed on the diverse nature of the “coloured” and “Muslim” communities. Much emphasis is placed on the power differentials between the “underclass” and landlords and farmers in the face of increasing industrialisation. Wayne Dooling stresses the point that despite differentials in wealth and status within the settler society of the Stellenbosch district, conflict and cooperation, neighbourliness and paternalism characterised social relationships within the settler community.⁷

Francois Smuts’(ed), *Stellenbosch: Three Centuries* (1979), provides a brief overview of the major themes such as the involvement of churches within the community, the school system,

⁶ P. Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c1870-1890*, pp. v, 52, 55, 84, 91.

⁷ W. Dooling, *Law and Community in a Slave Society: Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c.1760-1820*, p. 85.

social life within the town but because the book covers such a large period, the authors of the chapters are left with very little space to enter into an enormous amount of detail nor are they always able to move beyond the descriptive. It is also evident that, given the context within which this work was commissioned, focus is strategically placed on that which adhered to the dominant discourse of the time. For example, twenty pages are dedicated to the Dutch Reformed Church, five to the Anglican Church, with one paragraph relegated to each of the Methodist, Evangelical Lutheran, Presbyterian and Catholic Churches, the “Jewish Congregation” and the “Moslem Congregation”.⁸ This provides a valuable starting point from which to expand and it does place the town of Stellenbosch within the Cape social, political and economic structure; however, it pays little tribute to the role of Muslims within the town.

Stellenbosch and its Early Inhabitants.

After the end of slavery, labour was of primary concern as the Colony had become an agrarian society based quite strongly on farming. Cheap labour was the only manner in which farmers could expropriate profit – conditions on the farms were as rigid in some respects as slave labour according to Pamela Scully. In the post-1834 period, the slave-owner classes required the aid of the State to retain what Scully terms the essential features of society ante-emancipation. Failure of “free-slaves” to engage in wage labour was rendered idleness; in turn, idleness was defined as vagrancy, and vagrancy was then labelled a crime. In the Cape, the former master class looked to the State to provide the mechanisms for the continuation of the political, economic and social domination they had enjoyed as slave holders. By the 1850s, nearly 20% of the rural underclass were living on mission stations which provided them an opportunity to work their own land. Some farmers petitioned for the closure of the stations so that they could benefit from the free labour market. Wealthier farmers knew that the stations would provide seasonal labour when necessary. The Masters and Servants Act of 1856 then allowed the State to dictate the rules of behaviour, discipline and punishment in order to regulate the relationship between master and servant. Class privilege and class power were now to be endorsed by contract rather than by ownership of labour.⁹ This legislation worked for the wealthier farmers but poorer farmers had relied heavily on coercive physical measures to control their labour. Reconstruction of the post-

⁸ F. Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch: Three centuries*, pp. 245-271.

⁹ P. Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c1870-1890*, p. 4.

emancipation society, particularly in the Western Cape, left economic, legal and social power in the hands of the former master class; however, there was a differential access to that power. This Christian religious fervour meant that a lot of “coloured” members of society saw Christianity as means of obtaining economic independence. Thus a large proportion followed some form of Christian faith as this also implied the attainment of “civilised” values to which one strove towards to move up the social ladder. Nonetheless, many “Malays” also wished to partake in social and political upliftment but they had to rely on their artisanal skills and educational attainment to lead them to political and economic prosperity – and by extension social standing.

Stellenbosch was the second oldest settlement at the Cape with a large concentration of slaves which had reached 10 703 within the district by 1799¹⁰, and an increasing number of “free blacks”¹¹ who became the focus of Christian missionary societies.¹² Part of this religious fervour was located in mission schooling. Hence the first slave school was established in 157 Dorp Street in 1799 by Mewes Janse Bakker who had attracted 38 pupils by October 1810 in the hope of converting the “heathens”.¹³ By 1824, the school could accommodate 70 children. Unlike other villages where slave children attended the same elementary schools as “Europeans”, presence was fairly regular in the slave schools of Graaf-Reinet and Stellenbosch.¹⁴ This should be placed in the context of Islamic missionary work, based on religious practice but which also influenced social behaviour such as the non-consumption of alcohol, the need to contribute towards uplifting fellow Muslims and leading a good life. Ebrahim Rhoda makes mention of a report in 1817 by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Report in which complaints are made against the “Mohammedan priests” in the interior who actively and successfully were converting the “heathens” to the “delusion of the false prophet”¹⁵, which implies that not only was there an active Muslim *da'wah*¹⁶ mission present in the area, but that because of their active involvement in converting non-believers there was a substantial amount of Muslims present to warrant such concern. What this may signify is

¹⁰ F. Smuts, *Stellenbosch: Three Centuries*, p. 274.

¹¹ A term used for manumitted slaves, those who had been incarcerated and subsequently freed and allowed to continue living in the Cape as well as to Asians who settled in the Cape.

¹² K. Schoeman, *The Early Mission in South Africa/ Die Vroeë Sending in Suid-Afrika*, pp. 11-13.

¹³ F. Smuts, *Stellenbosch, Three Centuries*, p. 274.

¹⁴ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 171.

¹⁵ E. Rhoda, “The Founding and Development of the Strand Muslim Community 1822-1928”, unpublished Master’s Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2006, p. 27.

¹⁶ Islamic Missionary work carried out to convert non-Muslims to Islam.

the manner in which Mohammedans (as they were referred to at the time) were part of the discourse not as a racial group nor as an entity with a specific identity but rather as a religious institution which was threatening a dominant Christian hegemony. Rhoda in essence questions Pamela Scully's view that Christian mission stations at the time of emancipation testified to the weakness of Islam in the rural Western Cape.¹⁷ Perhaps this may have less of a correlation with religion and more with the growing economic needs of the "free slaves". If society in Cape Town itself was changing towards personal economic self-sufficiency and if there was mobility amongst "free blacks" then perhaps the conditions under which this new entity had to live and their inability to gain paid employment¹⁸ (which would later be critical for their political rights under the vote) would have led more "free blacks" to consider the economic gains by living on Mission stations. What had emerged were differences between "non-white" people on religious and class levels. It is noted that in 1838, a surge of ex-slaves flocked to the villages of Worcester, Tulbagh and "especially Stellenbosch", many of whom were classified as "paupers" during the measles outbreak of 1839.¹⁹

By 1865, a great shift occurred as agrarian society prepared for an urbanising and industrial capitalist economy. More "free blacks" moved into the town and by 1865, the largest population was located in the municipality of Stellenbosch village 2975, Environs 1003, Eerste Rivier 1269, Hottentot Hollands 1605, Moddergat 1029, Klapmuts 674, Bottelary 352.²⁰ In 1842, 268 Muslims lived in Stellenbosch, by 1875, this figure had reached 619.

Commercial activity between farmers and merchants saw an increased affiliation between capital accumulation and State interaction. By the 1870s, access to markets, to labour and to the source of capital became a major concern of the district's elite and this in turn created the conditions for a more overt expression of political consciousness. Class lines correlated with race. Because those "free blacks" found it difficult to accumulate any capital, they remained outside of the trading and farming areas which was controlled by the "white" ruling class although the Census of 1865 does list one "coloured" wine farmer (226 "white" farmers) and

¹⁷ P. Scully, *Liberating the family? Gender and British slave emancipation in the rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823-1853*, p. 75.

¹⁸ For an analysis on slaves, refer to R. Shell, *Children of Bondage* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994).

¹⁹ J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 191.

²⁰ Census 1865, Cape Colony Publications (CCP) G20-'66.

28 merchants (62 “white” merchants). The dominant class with their roots in landholding were able to influence legislative decisions in their favour thereby increasing their capital and overall power within the town. The most prominent families in Stellenbosch included the Faures, Kriges, Myburghs, Neethlings, De Waals, Marais, and the Du Toits. Many who owned land used this to finance businesses in the village. For example G. Krige owned “Sweet Home” and “Oude Libertas” as well as the local distillery. A. B. De Villiers owned the farm Idas Vallei (which was later used for “coloured” settlement). Because these elites were also involved within state and religious institutions within the town, they could use their position to further personal capital accumulation. For example, a letter was requested by one of the members of the Municipal Committee to appeal to the Government about the slow pace of the train between Cape Town and Stellenbosch which was affecting the business men of Stellenbosch. This concern was raised not because of poor service delivery but because it was affecting personal business dealings.²¹

During this period, Stellenbosch and Paarl experienced less severe degrees of stratification within the ruling class because there was no significant “poor white” or *bywoner* class. As the Industrial and Mineral Revolutions unfolded, the competition for access to State power and capital intensified, fluid alliances between merchants and “progressive” farmers became a feature of politics at district and parliamentary levels. By the 1890s, a strong notion of paternalism towards “coloureds” took shape. Voting amongst those in the underclass was controlled. During elections, drink, money and coercion were used to guide voters to the right decision.²²

Another facet of the emancipation period and the Industrial and Mineral revolutions was the free flow of information and religion. The spread of Christianity was of relative importance but the work of the Mission Stations as well as the desire of Christian Missionaries to convert the “heathens” to a respectable self-empowered group of people was most times at odds with the goals of the dominant land owning class. Capital expropriation seemed to be of major concern and allegiances formed along class lines bridged the gaps between religion,

²¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 15 January 1895, p. 258 and Minutes of 29 January 1895, p. 261.

²² P. Scully, *The Bouquet of Freedom: Social and Economic Relations in Stellenbosch District, South Africa, c1870-1890*, pp. 18, 36, 90.

economics and State with some individuals maintaining control of all these domains in order to secure a dominant economic hegemony. This opened the space for more Islamic *da'wah*. Whilst it is difficult to ascertain the full extent of the influence of the Muslims at that time, considering the formal establishment of the Muslim community in 1896 under a single Mosque, one can assume that Muslims, were relatively successful economically and, as will be discussed at a later stage, socially.

From the manumission of slavery in 1838, the population of urbanised “coloured” people increased; as a consequence, a “coloured” neighbourhood, *Die Vlakte (the Flats)*, had developed within the town of Stellenbosch by 1850. By the 1960s, roughly 3500 people lived in the area, 90% of whom were “coloured”. Hermann Giliomee describes the area as Stellenbosch’s “District Six” – it was still considered more peaceful, safer and neater. He states that there was no overcrowding and unhygienic circumstances warranting it to be declared a “slum” as was done with “District Six”. However, forced removals under the Group Areas Act and declining political rights of the “coloured” people, have tainted the memories of what was once a peaceful co-existence. Stellenbosch was a place until the 1930s, where “coloured” and “white” races shared a common language and culture.²³

Creating “Citizens of Stellenbosch”

State legislation is disseminated and upheld through local representatives.²⁴ Similar trends could be seen and were implemented both by the State and the municipalities of South Africa to maintain “white” hegemonic power over “non-white” groups. At times this worked, at times it created unlikely alliances but at other times, the municipalities were so engrossed in creating the utopian town, that state legislation and political ideology were somehow negotiated for the good of the town and not that of the State.

²³ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van 'n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, p. xiii.

²⁴ During the British rule of India, Indian Nationalists noted the manner in which political hegemony dissipated from the State through the municipalities in order to divide and rule the local population. Class, religious and ethnic cleavages were used as a tool to divide the potential of a united oppressed uprising (the film, *Gandhi*, directed by Richard Attenborough, 1982). A similar observation is made about the split between Hindus and the “Muslim brotherhood” during the negotiations for Indian Independence – a time when religious differences should have been sacrificed for independence from a common “oppressor”; S. F. Mahmud, *A Short History of Islam*, p. 679.

The village of Stellenbosch was founded in 1670, district boundaries were formed under a proclamation on 11 July 1804, with electoral divisions being created under Ordinance No. 7 on the 23 May 1837.²⁵ A proclamation established the Divisional Council on 12 July 1855 although by 5 June 1840, several proclamations had been declared in the name of the Municipality of Stellenbosch. By 5 November 1940, the areas of Idas Valley and Cloetesdal, (later renamed Cloeteville), instrumental for the relocation of the “coloured” and Muslim citizens of Stellenbosch, were included in the area of the Stellenbosch Municipality. By 1946 under Government Notice No. 1195 dated 14 June 1946, the prospect of establishing a “Native” location called Kaya Mandi was gazetted in accordance with the Stellenbosch Areas Proclamation No 244 of 1942 (Gazette 3102 of the 9 October 1942), in which the restrictions of “natives” to enter the area of Stellenbosch had been implemented.²⁶ The rise of a more rigid Afrikaner Nationalism and the eventual repercussions of the National Party’s apartheid system in 1948 eventually destabilised the “peaceful co-existence of white and non-white people”.

Stellenbosch has often been described as the “Mecca of Afrikanerdom”. Due to several extenuating and outside influences, the town of Stellenbosch, had to adapt to a changing political framework, but this change was by no means achieved easily and without resistance. One of the key forces which attempted to create an institution of shared citizenship with patriotism towards a town and not an ideology was the Municipality of Stellenbosch. Through Municipal Council minutes, the general manner in which the Municipality attempted to unite its citizens can be painted.

The Early Years, 1890s-1930s

From the establishment of Stellenbosch, racial groups lived in relative harmony. The earliest mention of the “coloured” people is made in documents of the early 19th century. However, the term was not restricted by race or colour but rather to economic status. “Poor whites” were at times classified in the same category. It was considered a group without racial boundaries. By 1838, it would appear that religion became the cornerstone of the “free

²⁵ KAB 1/STB 19/194, The History of Stellenbosch, p. 1.

²⁶ KAB 1/STB 19/194, The History of Stellenbosch, pp. 29, 41, 82.

slaves” lives. As they moved into town, “coloured” areas began to emerge.²⁷ As the population began to increase, insufficient infrastructure and overcrowding became a key area of focus for the Municipality of Stellenbosch.

Environment, Disease and Sanitation

The early records of the Stellenbosch Municipal Council minutes²⁸ focus largely on environmental issues, disease outbreak prevention and the securing of decent living conditions for all of its “citizens”. The acquisition of water seemed to be the area of most concern during this period as well as the procuring and planting of trees and the prosecution of those tampering with either. The obsession was prevalent to the point that all trees that needed to be trimmed or cut required permission from the Municipal Board. By 1912, it is clear that one of the primary concerns of the municipality was the acquisition and use of water. Advertisements in both English and Dutch forbid the public from using water for irrigation during the nights of Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, as well as the whole of Sunday. The water in the “sluits” was to run freely into the river.²⁹ Advertisements in 1914 prohibited the use of water from the mains for any other use but domestic purposes between the hours of 8am and 6pm during the summer months.³⁰ Contamination of water works was also prohibited. Mr A. J. Bosman complained that Mssrs de Villiers and brothers were washing wine, beer bottles and casks in the “sluit” in Andringa Street which was considered a nuisance and a danger to public health.³¹

Another area of concern was the living conditions of the residents. Several complaints had been received by concerned citizens requesting that the authorities rectify abominable situations. It would appear that poor living conditions were prevalent across the racial continuum. Those not adhering to municipal laws regarding health issues were fined.³²

²⁷ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van 'n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 23, 49-50, 56-57.

²⁸ Hereinafter referred to as Municipal minutes.

²⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/13, Minutes of 20 February 1912, p. 192.

³⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Minutes of 24 February 1914, p. 283.

³¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 11 September 1894, p. 230.

³² *See for example*, KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Meeting of 7 July 1891, in which Mrs Collins is warned to keep her house and premises clean and to provide proper accommodation for her servants, p. 5; Meeting of 18 August 1891, Abdol Kariem is fined 2/6 for allowing 3 goats to roam the public streets, he is later prosecuted for this contravention according to the Minutes of 1 September 1891, pp. 9-10; Meeting of 30 August 1892, Hector

Disease control was another active policy of the Council. Unlike statements made that the Cape Town Municipality did not seek preventative measures to protect its “coloured” citizens, the Stellenbosch Municipality actively enrolled the services of health professionals, seeking advice on how best to avoid disease and epidemics. A 1907 Public Health Committee reported back on how much it would cost to build wash houses in *Die Vlakte* and ways in which to dissuade people prone to tuberculosis, namely the “coloured” communities, from storing wet clothes in the same room that they slept in – it was found that the main victims of tuberculosis were members of the “coloured community”. The Committee felt that it could not forcibly remove and segregate those suffering from tuberculosis but had agreed that rooms occupied by the “consumptive” were to be disinfected and, on their death, their bedding destroyed. It was also agreed that knowledge about the disease had to be taught to the community. Since this occurred, the inspector reported that he could see improvements in cleanliness and a decrease in overcrowding amongst the “coloured community”.³³ However, the 1912 report by the Public Health Committee continued to mention the problems of tuberculosis amongst the “coloured” community and suggested that a census be taken to ascertain whether overcrowding was the problem. It was suggested that if it were the case, “stringent measures” would be taken. In the Mayoral report of 1914, it is stated that deaths relating to tuberculosis doubled from four in 1913, to eight in 1914.³⁴ This suggests that despite attempts to decrease the number of infections, other factors had to be attended to in order to curb the infections. Because of the poor living conditions under which the “coloured labouring class” lived, the Mayor’s Report of 26 August 1913, outlined two resolutions. Firstly to stop overcrowding and secondly, to bring every part of the town into as sanitary state as possible.³⁵ In the same report, the Superintendent was requested to attend to the overflowing of water from the drains in *Die Vlakte*.³⁶

Sanitation had been the key to preventing contagious diseases. By 1910, the plans for the proposed wash house and swimming bath for “coloured” people was approved by the Public Health Committee. All owners of land across from the proposed site had to give their

Gideon and Elsie Daniels fined for burying a horse in a shallow grave in *Die Vlakte*, pp. 73-74; on the 6 December Elsie Daniels was fined 5/- for allowing a horse to roam in Bird Street, p. 91.

³³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 29 October 1907, pp. 684-685; Public Health Report of the Stellenbosch Municipality, point 4, pp. 744-746.

³⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/14, Mayors Report, 8 September 1914, pp. 433-436.

³⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/14, Mayors Report, 26 August 1913, pp. 149-150.

³⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/13, 16 August 1912, Report of the Public Health Committee, point 2, pp. 281-282.

permission. One objection was made by A. Gabrier, but he later sold his property to the Municipality and thus the plans were put forward.³⁷ It was only in 1916 that an area of open land, to the east of the Dutch Reformed Church graveyard in *Die Vlakte*, was earmarked as a public washhouse.³⁸ The Finance Committee recommended that a sum of £1200 be used for the establishment of the wash houses and public baths.³⁹

Similar preventative schemes were seen in the Bubonic Plague outbreak in Durban, Natal. Fear that the plague would reach Stellenbosch resulted in advertisements in Dutch and English newspapers encouraging people to exterminate rats and mice and to notify the Municipality if any of these rodents started dying in large numbers – all those who brought a rat, either dead or alive, to the Municipal offices between 3pm and 4pm (except Saturdays and Sundays), would receive 1p for each; as a result, three prizes were to be awarded to three people who brought in the most rats within a three month timeframe. The minimum amount had been restricted to fifty.⁴⁰ It was not uncommon for possible disease outbreaks to be advertised in both English and Dutch so as to effectively inform all members of the town.⁴¹ This suggests that the town was accepted as a multi-lingual environment.

Whenever there was a threat of any outbreak, emergency special meetings were convened to try and ascertain the cause of the outbreaks.⁴² Tenants themselves were reprimanded for not keeping their residence clean⁴³ and the Municipality worked in close conjunction with all its citizens to maintain a healthy living environment. However, this did not prove to always be effective.

In 1914, cases of typhoid fever emerged, especially amongst the “coloured” children, caused by drinking water from the furrows. Plans were made by the Municipality to make sure no

³⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/12, letters from 4 July 1910, p. 82 and 21 July 1910, p. 88.

³⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/15, Report of the Public Health Committee, 18 January 1916, pp. 1-2.

³⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/15, Report of the Finance Committee, 18 January 1916, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/13, Minutes of 19 March 1912, p. 209.

⁴¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, 30 August 1892, possible cholera outbreak, p. 74; 1 August 1893, possible smallpox outbreak, pp. 144-145.

⁴² KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 2 July 1895, p. 292; Special meeting held on 17 July 1895, p. 294.

⁴³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 15 January 1895, tenants of “Sweet Home” are ordered to clean their premises within 48 hours, p. 258.

furrows of water were to be allowed to stand and an active educational campaign was launched.⁴⁴ By 1916, the Public Health and Lighting Committee had reported that the resistance of the “coloured” community was so low that efforts should be made to procure serum to inoculate the population.⁴⁵ In a later report by the same body on 14 March 1916, Mr Davidse, employed by the Municipality to remove refuse from *all* homesteads, was “reminded” to remove kitchen refuse not only from the “white” properties, but also from those of the “coloureds”, insisting he ring his bell loud enough to warn all the inhabitants of his approach.⁴⁶

By 1915, cases of Enteric fever convinced the Municipality to engage a district nurse to attend to the poor, to provide education to them on contagious diseases and recommendations were made that all yards in *Die Vlakte* and other affected areas be cleaned.⁴⁷ By 1916, the sanitary inspector reported that only one case of scarlet fever, one case of tuberculosis and one possible case of typhoid fever had been reported. These improvements were noticed especially in the “coloured quarters” with regards to cleanliness both inside and outside the premises. However, concern was expressed that landlords were partly responsible for poor living conditions, raising the rents before any improvements were being made, thus prompting quick action by the Council to insist that landlords improve the living conditions of their tenants.⁴⁸

A notice was sent to all landlords in the Township that their properties would be inspected and if they did not comply, “... all offenders w[ould] be prosecuted without notice and without respect of person”,⁴⁹ that is, regardless of race, religion or class. The Committee also required all landlords to provide sufficient “privy” facilities for their tenants.⁵⁰ A letter was sent to Mr J. G. Holm requesting him to construct a further three “privy’s” in the “Malay camps”. Mr Kendrick was also requested to construct a “privy” for his four hire houses in *Die*

⁴⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Report of the Health Committee, 10 December 1914, p. 494.

⁴⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/15, Report of the Public Health and Lighting Committee, 1 February 1916, point 23, pp. 12-15.

⁴⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/15, Report of the Public Health and Lighting Committee, 14 March 1916, point 5, p. 43.

⁴⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Report of the Finance Committee, 6 July 1915, points 1 and 2, pp. 615-616.

⁴⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/15, Minutes of 5 June 1916, pp. 88-90.

⁴⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 27 September 1892, p. 80.

⁵⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 19 December 1893, letters sent to Mr von Backstroom, P. Marais and Dr Smuts, p. 182.

Vlakte.⁵¹ The connection between disease outbreak and toilet facilities saw much increase in demanding that adequate facilities be provided by landlords.⁵² Many people were fined for not providing enough “privy’s”.⁵³ By 1916, the Public Health and Lighting Committee recommended that no building plans be approved unless at least one toilet facility was to be provided for each family occupying the premises and each house was to have at least one tap.⁵⁴ Applications for improvement in water supply and sanitation were treated with equal concern, regardless of the race of the applicant. For example, the letter from a Mr Raziet, a Muslim resident, requesting that the “sluit” outside his home be extended, was attended to with some haste.⁵⁵ The Council meeting of 13 June which resolved to fix several holes and ditches in *Die Vlakte*, is testament to the Councils commitment to maintaining and improving services to all areas of the town.⁵⁶ In the meeting of 17 October 1905, it was resolved that all the drains in *Die Vlakte* would be the responsibility of the Municipality, a large financial undertaking but one that would result in the improvement of the sanitation system in *Die Vlakte*.⁵⁷ This level was not simply inherent amongst the authorities but was visible amongst landlords themselves. Those who owned “hire houses”, ostensibly rented out to “coloured” and “Malay” inhabitants, were generally concerned about the water and road conditions around these houses.⁵⁸ The Council inevitably resolved those issues brought to their attention.

Poor sanitation was not simply the result of poor living conditions but also due to poor animal husbandry and slaughtering practices. Simon Willemse complained about the stench of blood found in *Die Vlakte* near the Dutch Reformed Church burial ground. It would appear that the Pound Master, Mr von Backstroom, had not followed the necessary procedure for the discarding of animal remains and was duly reprimanded by the Board.⁵⁹ This eventually culminated in the banning of slaughtering cattle, sheep, pigs and goats in the township of

⁵¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 9 April 1895, p. 278.

⁵² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 19 November 1895, p. 321.; Minutes of 24 March 1896, p. 337; Minutes of 20 October 1896 reports the following for not having sufficient privy facilities. C. L. Olson, 3 rooms no closets; J. Marais cottage no closets; C. Berens 3 rooms closets in bad State; Estate of A. v Coller 9 rooms no closets; J. J. Van der Byl 17 rooms 1 closet; P. H Haupt 4 rooms 1 closet in bad State; H. Neethling 12 rooms no closet; W. Krige 17 rooms no closets; J Krige 2 rooms no closets; W Krige 12 rooms no closets, p. 378.

⁵³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 5 November 1895, p. 317.

⁵⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/15, Minutes of 9 May 1916, pp. 73-74.

⁵⁵ KAB 3/ STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 21 February 1905, p. 145.

⁵⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 13 June 1905, p. 197.

⁵⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 17 October 1905, p. 262.

⁵⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 10 November 1891, Mr Robert Kendrich complains about the state of the “sluit” (water canal) near his hire homes in *Die Vlakte* as well as the state of the streets at the corner of his hire houses in Ryneveld Street, p. 22.

⁵⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 5 December 1893, p. 179.

Stellenbosch by butchers.⁶⁰ Similarly, those issued with butchery permits had to fulfil certain criteria. Ismael Mohamed was issued with a warning to alter his premises to the correct specifications of the health report, failing which he would be prosecuted for running a butchery in a premises unsuitable for that purpose.⁶¹ Mr Markotter appeared before the Board to request that his client, Sheik Abas, be allowed to open a butchery on the premises of Mr W. A. Krige, opposite the Victoria bridge. The application was denied as the premises and surrounding areas were considered unsuitable. It is later seen during the meeting in December 1910, that Shaik Abas had placed his “slaughter poles” outside the jurisdiction of the Council.⁶² What this alludes us to is one of the earliest possible *halaal* butcheries in the town.⁶³

The number of pigs within the town area was also an area of concern, probably for health reasons, but much to the benefit of the Muslim and Jewish residents of the town. By the 21 February 1894, discussions were underway to prohibit pigs from grazing within the commonage.⁶⁴ By 23 January 1895, certain people, such as Mrs Backstroom, were requested to remove their pigstys from within “Sweet Home”, a residential area, mostly occupied by “coloureds”.⁶⁵ By 1907, recommendations were made in the Public Health Report, that the public should be encouraged to impound any pigs roaming in the town, those to be found were to be shot.⁶⁶ It appears to have remained unresolved by 1915, when it is recorded by the Sanitary Inspector that pigs continued to roam in du Toitsville, *Die Vlakte* and other places. He recommended that the owners should be located, prosecuted and the pigs, shot.⁶⁷

By 1915, during the annual meeting of ratepayers, the Mayor expressed that progress had been made, especially after specific attention was given to the “coloured” inhabitants. He urged members that the degradation of the “labouring classes” would injure the whole

⁶⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 18 December 1894, p. 255.

⁶¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 6 February 1906, p. 310.

⁶² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/12, Minutes of 19 October 1910, p. 130; Minutes of 12 December 1910, pp. 149-150.

⁶³ In Cape Town, it has been noted that during the 1860s, every butcher in Cape Town had to keep a “priest” (*Imam*) in “his pay” in order to accommodate the dietary obligations of the Muslims, J. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 13.

⁶⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, 26 September 1893, the fining of Hector Gideon and Maria Brookes for allowing pigs to roam in Ryneveld Street, p. 161.

⁶⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 23 January 1895, p. 262.

⁶⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 24 December 1907, pp. 717-718

⁶⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/14, Report of the Public Health and Lighting Committee, 14 October 1915, pp. 676-678.

“community”. The aim of his Council was to banish preventable diseases from the town and to “make Stellenbosch a model town”.

By 1915, well before the apartheid era, certain steps had already been taken to close down houses occupied by “coloured” people, deemed by the Municipality as unsanitary.⁶⁸ Steps were implemented to educate the “coloured” groups in conjunction with providing better infrastructure for them to live within. The Mayor remarked that the only way infectious disease could be fought was to increase the resistance of the “coloured people”. He believed this could be done by bettering their living conditions and educating them on proper nutrition.⁶⁹ If this could not be achieved, they were moved. These measures were not bound in a racially defined discourse although there was some correlation between race, class (as this pertained to “poor whites” living in “coloured” areas) and forced removal.

Social Problems

Despite the endless number of health and environmental issues faced by the Municipality, issues they tried to rectify and which affected mostly the poorer classes of residents, the major obstacle during this period was the social problems that had proliferated within certain areas.

Complaints were received that gambling was rampant in the streets of *Die Vlakte*, a complaint which was referred to the Magistrate.⁷⁰ Complaints were also received that “drunk men and women” were roaming the streets and a letter was sent to the police to attend to the matter.⁷¹ The problem had reached such epic proportions that the Council intended to procure a cart to transport “drunken men and women to gaol”.⁷² A further complaint is recorded in the meeting of 11 August 1896.⁷³ Whilst the problem had been an area of great concern, not just in Stellenbosch but in other areas as well, the authorities were aware of the potential of using

⁶⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Annual Meeting of Ratepayers, 2 September 1915, pp. 649-650.

⁶⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Mayors Minutes, 7 September 1915, pp. 651-653.

⁷⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 7 June 1892, pp. 52-53.

⁷¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 2 July 1895, p. 292.

⁷² KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 30 July 1895, p. 297.

⁷³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/6, Minutes of 11 August 1896, p. 362.

alcohol as a method of subduing labourers. Many of the moneyed class accumulated wealth because of cheap labour. This labour was procured by reducing salary costs through the “dop” system. The dilemma was between moral/Christian values and appropriation of capital. Many of those serving in legislative roles had to maintain law and order, certain values but they also had vested interests in their own capital accumulation. This dilemma culminated in an ironic clampdown on illegal beer houses but at the same time an extension of who was eligible to buy “Kaffir beer”. A meeting of Municipalities held in King William’s Town from 14 to 15 October 1912, resolved to substitute the words “coloured people” to “farm labourers and the like” in legislation which had previously closed any place which sold liquor to “coloured people”. The meeting also resolved to allow the propagation of “Kaffir Beer houses” after it had been “proven” through medical testimony that “Kaffir beer” was necessary for the health of the “natives” as “statistics showed the enormous decrease of crime following the establishment of Beer houses in Durban”.⁷⁴ Despite concerns raised over alcoholism, a docile labour force was more desirable. By 1914, the problem of alcohol abuse had increased in Stellenbosch.⁷⁵ However, despite legislation which affected Municipalities throughout the region, concerns within the Municipal area of Stellenbosch continued to be raised and possible solutions sought.

The Mayor’s Report of 1915 showed that the improvements made within the town had been noted at the Municipal Congress in Oudtshoorn. The electricity system had been completed much to the satisfaction of householders (although substantial charges were imposed on those wanting electricity in their homes)⁷⁶, drinking water supplies had been ameliorated through the laying of extra piping, and the establishment of a new training college was testament to Stellenbosch becoming an educational centre. The Mayor admitted that everything possible should be done for the physical and moral wellbeing of the children in the town. However, he condemned the home-life as not exercising the same good influence over the children as it had done in the past. Drunkenness amongst the “coloured people” had become such an issue that new efforts were to be implemented to promote moderation and sobriety, although one does ask whether this was for the benefit of the “coloured” communities, or the “white” communities, despite his insistence that he was speaking for “all children”. “The more we

⁷⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/13, Report back on the 22 October 1912, pp. 322-324.

⁷⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/14, Minutes of 2 February 1915, p. 523.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

raise the coloured people, the less the white race will deteriorate. But how can there be anything but retrogression when our children are familiarised with disgusting, brutalising sights and when, in addition, they are tended and served by those who come from homes where immorality and drunkenness are common”.⁷⁷ What is interesting to note in his comment is the manner in which he connects raising the “coloured” with the “white” race. He shows the level of dependency of the two races and further makes no distinction between children of all races. One feels the strong patriarchal manner in which “coloureds” and children of all races need to be guided and protected within the municipal discourse.

Race relations: State Discourse and the Municipality

By 1902, the State had issued guidelines to which the municipalities had to adhere. Instructions to persons registering voters under the Provisions of Act 14 of 1887, Act no 9 of 1892, Act 19 of 1898 and Act 48 of 1899 for electoral divisions of the Colony, Cape of Good Hope, had to follow certain criteria for the vote. Although the vote was still based on class boundaries and income, already, voter registration had included a racial classification. All those that filled the following criteria could be registered. According to point 14, those eligible to vote in the Parliamentary elections were:

(a) every male person who can sign his name and write his address and occupation and who possess any of the following qualifications. 21 years old, a natural born subject of his Majesty the King, or a subject of his Majesty, born before 18 January 1806 a subject of the Batavian Government resident in this Colony, those naturalised. It excluded those convicted of murder or treason unless they had been pardoned or those of unsound mind. Those convicted of rape, theft, fraud, perjury or forgery had to wait 5 years after they had finished their sentence. They had to be resident in the area they wished to vote for at least 12 months. The value of property had to be £75. If they were sharing, each occupants share had to be £75. They had to have receipts for at least 12 months salary of not less than £50 per year. b) those who voted in 1893 had to fulfil the same criteria except they could occupy a property worth £25. To facilitate the identification of the voters, the Registering officer should have, in the column *Race Distinction*, put “E” for European/white, “M” for Malay, “K” if a Kaffir, “F” for Fingo, “H” for Hottentot possessing the marked characteristics of that race, “C” for Chinese, “I” if Indian and “O” if a coloured person of mixed or other coloured race.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/14, Mayors Report, 8 September 1914, pp. 433-436.

⁷⁸ KAB 1/STB 19/162, Election papers of Stellenbosch 1834-1904, pp. 3-7.

Whilst State discourse had already implemented racial classification, not every aspect of municipal interaction involved racial classification. The Municipality of Stellenbosch sub-economic housing scheme application form for the rental of houses required age, name, occupation, income, name of employer, marital status, children, other persons living in household, period of residency in Stellenbosch, reason for leaving present address, present number of rooms and present rental but does not ask for the applicant's race.⁷⁹ However, a "special addition for coloureds", points 22 and 23, require proof of residency for at least six months and no refuse, dirty water, etc, to be thrown into borehole latrines. Minutes of the Municipal meetings rarely mention to which racial group specific citizens belonged, however, references are made to "Malay Quarters", "coloureds" in general, issues pertaining to "coloureds" and "Malay" is used to define Muslims rather than those of slave origin. It is with the application for grounds for a mosque that one sees a slight shift in terminology.

Religious Tolerance

Stellenbosch had been a town established on Christian principles, celebrating sobriety and morality at every occasion. Whilst religious tolerance had eventually taken root, State and municipal relations with Christian denominations had been established not only through practical support of these institutions but also through financial support. From early cash book records, it is noted that certain ecclesiastical ministers were paid by the Divisional Council of Stellenbosch.⁸⁰ Early Christian influences had made the citizens of Stellenbosch fairly puritan even towards their own racial group. A letter from Mr van der Posts complains about "white" males and females bathing in the nude opposite his property in the Eerste river. It was resolved to warn all people that bathing in any river within the limits of the Municipality without the appropriate swimming gear would be prosecuted.⁸¹ In this manner, Christian ideals were entrenched within the Municipal Council.

⁷⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/55, Subeconomic Housing Scheme Application Form for rental of House, pp. 292-296.

⁸⁰ For example, Johannes Neethling, a Dutch Reformed minister, was receiving a salary of £300 per year in 1858, Fredick Carlyon, chaplain of the Church of England, received £100 in 1850, Thomas Henry Peters £100 for 1863, Jacob Philip Legg, £100 for 1875, KAB 1/STB 19/195, Record of Appointments of the Divisional Council of Stellenbosch, pp. 5-6.

⁸¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/8, Minutes of 7 February 1905, p. 141.

Whilst there may have been considerable Christian religious fervour within the town, Jamat Kariem appeared before the Board on behalf of the “Malay community in the township”, to request the acquisition of land in *Die Vlakte* to build a mosque.⁸² The committee did not seem to have been opposed to the idea but referred his application to the Public Works. A special committee was to select suitable land, but they could not agree. The “Malay community” had requested a certain piece of land and the Board decided to post a notice calling for any objections against the site being designated for the mosque.⁸³ This was not unusual, an application for tennis courts by the Braak and Eclectic Clubs in Adderley Street underwent the same procedure with objections being received by Dr Smuts and J. Krige.⁸⁴ It was later recorded in the meeting of 5 July 1892, that one objection had been received by Mr Frans Herman. It is not clear if Mr Herman was against the site being used for Islamic worship; he lived in Banhoek Way in *Die Vlakte*, but it is clear that no other objections were raised. It would appear that both the Council and the general public, save one soul, were not opposed to sharing a religious platform with adherents of the Islamic faith. The motives behind Mr Herman’s objection remain unclear but it would appear that he was a difficult member of society.⁸⁵ Whilst the absence of objections might have implied religious tolerance, it was only in 1896 that a definitive and instantaneous decision was made to grant land for the building of a mosque.⁸⁶ However, one should consider that this was not prime land. According to the Deeds of Transfer (see Appendix 1), the land to the east was the “old burial ground”. This is supported by the testimony of one interviewee who recalls there being a graveyard next to the mosque.⁸⁷ In 1893, an application was made to the government to close the burial ground located near the Dutch Reformed Church “in the Flats”.⁸⁸ Much debate had already occurred regarding the re-classification for *Erven* to be sold. The Department of Agriculture agreed to sell land between Banhoek road and Mr du Toit’s land, except for the

⁸² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 10 May 1892, p. 49.

⁸³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 21 June 1892, p. 57.

⁸⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 28 February 1893, p. 111.

⁸⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6: Mr Herman appeared before the board on numerous occasions, complaining about several different problems. On the 31 August 1892 he requests that a lamp placed outside the home of Mr Legg be moved to his property, p.71. On the 22 October 1892 he appeared before the board to complain about contractors who failed to remove rubbish heaps, cut the grass and undergrowth on Station Road, p. 88. On the 12 September 1893 he appears before the board after impounding a roaming pig, requesting that he be reimbursed for paying “the boy” to take the pig to the pound. He was under the impression that those that impounded livestock were entitled to a third of the fine, p. 158; 26 September 1893 he complains that his ground in front of his house in Banhoek has been washed away by rain, p. 162; 21 November 1893, he appears to object against the erection of a fence by Mr P. J. Von Backstroom, p. 173.

⁸⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 17 November 1896, pp. 389-390.

⁸⁷ BIS Interview 35, p. 28.

⁸⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6 Minutes of 4 May 1893, p. 144; Minutes of 13 August 1893, p. 147.

burial ground⁸⁹ - Mr du Toit's farm was situated on Station road.⁹⁰ The Committee had identified an area "in the Flats" for Erven with the exception of the burial ground.⁹¹ The fact that land had become available after the initial request in 1892 (according to the Title Deeds the land became available on the 26 March 1895) and because this land was situated next to the "old burial ground", could have been the reason why this land was made available to the "Moslem Community" with such haste.

By 15 December 1896, a letter was received from the surveyor, Mr P. A. Mader, requesting a diagram of the Erven in *Die Vlakte* so as to remove Erf 4 now sold to the "Moslem community" from the general plan.⁹² From this letter, it can be concluded that in fact the land was paid for sooner than expected although the actual Deed of Transfer is dated 16 March 1897. Similarly, there is a marked change from "Malay" to "Moslem" within the Minutes. In this sense, a definitive distinction is made between the two terms. A similar distinction is made in the letter from Mr J. Cassiem dated 5 July 1910, requesting new burial grounds for the "Muslim Community" as the present ground was deemed unsuitable.⁹³ However, Jammatt Cassiem asked permission for the "Mohammedan" community from Cape Town to come for a picnic⁹⁴, so it would be difficult to ascertain what term the Council actually wished to use for those following Islam. It must be noted that the inclination of the Minute recorder might have some influence in this analysis. One definitive factor is that a distinction was made for religious purposes but this did not extend to discussions on living conditions and social problems. This could possibly be because the Muslims would not have suffered from the same "alcohol" and "gambling" social problems that other "coloured" members of the town had assumed or it may have to do with the clear class distinctions beginning to permeate within the town. However, as was mentioned before, some form of alcohol consumption was prevalent amongst the Muslims in the Cape during the 19th century but whether this phenomenon was visible in Stellenbosch is unclear.

⁸⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6 Minutes of 4 December 1894, p. 249.

⁹⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6 Minutes of 26 September 1893, p. 164.

⁹¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6 Minutes of 26 September 1893, p. 164; Minutes of the 10 October 1893, p. 165.

⁹² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 15 December 1896, p. 399.

⁹³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/12, Minutes of 18 October 1910, p. 80.

⁹⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/13, Meeting of 21 February 1911, p. 23.

Class Distinctions

What becomes increasingly visible during the early years is the class distinctions being made between the poorer and wealthier groups. The Municipality promoted the development of those “coloureds” who were able to lift themselves out of economic poverty. Finances were very much linked to social ills as well as poorer living conditions. The increase of gambling and alcohol consumption would have repressed certain members of the “coloured” communities from growth. Key tenants of sobriety, morality and development maintained by the Municipality would have been similar qualities found within the Muslim communities. Muslims support each other religiously, socially and economically and as a class of people, would have had more chances of succeeding against immorality and regression. The Municipality supported endeavours to gain better working conditions by approving many dealers’ licences for those who applied. In 1899, general dealers’ licences were granted to Hassiem Cassiem and Mahomet Abraham.⁹⁵ In 1900, to Cariem Jamat, Mahomet A and Mahomet A.C.⁹⁶ Sheik Abdullah applied for a general dealer’s licence in 1909, but this was refused.⁹⁷ Sheik Abraheim applied for a general dealer’s licence on the premises of Mr Krige on 5 November 1912, but this was also refused.⁹⁸ It would appear that the nature of business was still of importance and given the need to tightly control the practices of butchers in the town due to the proliferation of disease, these applications were denied. However, Ismael Kasmal’s application in respect of the Sentizky premises in Banhoek road was approved.⁹⁹ Those activities which did not threaten the health issues of the town generally seemed to be more successful.

The Council also became involved in actively creating employment for “coloureds”. The fire brigade was established in 1893 and manned by the “coloured” members of the town.¹⁰⁰ Those gained in self-employment as domestic help or as washerwomen for the growing number of students, were also protected by the Municipality. A washerwoman appeared before the Council to complain about the number of people washing in the River leaving no

⁹⁵ KAB 3/STB 8/3/1/1/1/4 Cash Book Stellenbosch Municipality 1892-1900, entry number 29 and 34, 5 June 1899, p. 149.

⁹⁶ KAB 3/STB 8/3/1/1/1/4 Cash Book Stellenbosch Municipality 1892-1900, entry number 152, 1 December 1899, p. 166; entry number 183, 16 January 1900 and entry number 202, 30 January 1900, p. 169.

⁹⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/10, Minutes of 21 April 1909, p. 50.

⁹⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/13, Minutes of 5 November 1912, p. 344.

⁹⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/14, Minutes of 11 March 1913, p. 49.

¹⁰⁰ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 14 and 17 January 1893, pp. 107, 109.

room for her to work. The Committee resolved to find further space for the washerwomen.¹⁰¹ By the 1920s, a distinct class of successful “coloured” enterprises had emerged. Certain members of both the Muslim and “coloured” communities formed a distinct class of persons, in line with what the Municipality hoped to achieve, living in good conditions, being self sufficient, having enough of an income to participate in the vote, in sharp contrast to a large percentage of “coloureds” still living in squalid conditions and gained in unskilled employment. It must be noted that these conditions extended to the poorer class of “white” citizens.

There was a distinct growth of a wealthier class of “coloured” and “Malay” inhabitants who, along with their “white” counterparts, formed the core of the actual “citizens of Stellenbosch”. The key to social success was economic prosperity, owning property and becoming a ratepayer. As a ratepayer, decisions affecting the town would be open to your input. For example, ratepayers were requested to attend a meeting to discuss spending £10 000 on the new Town Hall. Notices were displayed in both Dutch and English to attract as many of the citizens as possible.¹⁰²

At the same time, the number of students at the University of Stellenbosch had grown, but they were considered as outsiders and undesirable to the ideals of the actual Stellenboschers. Tolerance towards student comportment in the town was volatile. They were carefully monitored and any infringement was reported. For example, Abraham Theron laid an official complaint against two university students for contravening Municipal Law Section 36 of the Municipal Regulations, playing cricket in the streets.¹⁰³ However, the Municipality realised the growing importance of the student presence. When Prof A. H. Mackenzie made a request to the Municipality for sponsorship of bursaries for Victoria College students, the precursor to the University of Stellenbosch, it was resolved to donate £17 per year towards educational institutions as this was “worthy of community support”.¹⁰⁴ The nature of the interaction between students, “citizens of Stellenbosch” and the Municipality will be discussed in subsequent chapters within this thesis. For the purpose of this section, the appearance of a

¹⁰¹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 24 October 1893, p. 168.

¹⁰² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/7, Minutes of 15 June 1903, p. 712.

¹⁰³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 16 August 1892, p. 68.

¹⁰⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/7, Minutes of 17 November 1902, p. 637.

fairly upwardly mobile class of students meant barriers between the different classes of Stellenboschers and the new arrivals had to be renegotiated and made a large impact upon the changing demographics of the town.

Changing Demographics

Whilst the Municipality was concerned with the welfare and establishment of a healthy and prosperous town, political debacles were on the increase especially after the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902, whereby “white” unity amongst English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking “whites” became a priority. The Cape had still relied heavily on the support of the franchise “non-white” vote in situations where the “white community” seemed divided over political ideology. The political environment has been well documented, the details of which fall beyond the scope of this thesis, needless to say that within the battle for political hegemony between the “white” groups, and the promises of inclusion for “coloureds”, left room for the Municipality to attend to the needs of all its citizens across racial barriers.¹⁰⁵ Racial classification became more intense and allegiances between “white” and “coloured” groups continued to create cleavages between those considered to be “Brothers-in- Arms”. Stronger segregation between “natives” and the “white” and “coloured” groups as well as class cleavages also seemed to emerge. It was the priority of the politicians to control the influx of “natives” but to also provide separate but equal amenities for the “white” and “coloured” groups.

The ever-increasing urbanisation of “non-whites” in the face of an already overpopulated town, saw the necessity to plan alternative accommodation for the different racial groups. The concept of “citizenship” pertained to the various races who were permanently situated in the town. This sense of belonging was not initially bound by racial classification. However, the changing demographics of the town as well as political changes affected the manner in which accommodation of the different groups unfolded. By 1936, the racial composition of the town required new approaches to peaceful co-existence.

¹⁰⁵ For a detailed account of political changes and its impact on the “coloured” communities of Stellenbosch, please refer to J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford university, 2001; H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 115-140.

Population Census for Stellenbosch (1936)¹⁰⁶

| | European | Native | Asiatic | Coloured | Total |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Urban | | | | | |
| <i>Male</i> | 2359 | 117 | 30 | 1688 | 4194 |
| <i>Female</i> | 2625 | 60 | 22 | 1865 | 4572 |
| <i>Total</i> | 4984 | 177 | 52 | 3553 | 8766 |
| Rural | | | | | |
| <i>Male</i> | 1695 | 800 | 3 | 5494 | 7992 |
| <i>Female</i> | 1550 | 404 | 0 | 4969 | 6923 |
| <i>Total</i> | 3245 | 1204 | 4 | 10463 | 14915 |
| Total | 9229 | 1381 | 55 | 14016 | 23 681 |
| <i>Male</i> | 4054 | 917 | 33 | 7182 | 12186 |
| <i>Female</i> | 4175 | 464 | 22 | 6834 | 11495 |

Plans had been implemented to acquire extra land and to construct alternative housing. Prospects of building “coloured” areas had been planned in Ida’s Valley (later called Idas Valley) and Cloetesdal. However, whilst the political discourse had become much more racially classified, it was accepted that the “coloured” groups in the town were essential.

Unfortunately, the increasing influence of a racially bound Afrikaner Nationalism eventually made an impact on the stasis between community and municipality by the 1940s. By then the need to create “coloured” neighbourhoods emerged not simply to house “coloureds” but to eventually separate them from the “white” races.

¹⁰⁶ KAB 1/STB 19/194, History of the Stellenbosch District, inside cover.

Chapter 6

The Big Bang: Separate “Citizenships of Stellenbosch”

Chapter 5 discussed the desire to create a “Citizenship of Stellenbosch” based on characteristics external to racial classification.¹ However, under the pressures of a changing political environment, racial cleavages appeared amongst the Citizens of Stellenbosch. The inhabitants were, according to their own testimony, fairly oblivious to major political and ideological changes taking place in the 1930s. It was with the “Battle of Andringa Street” that the townsfolk comprehended that the racial stasis of the pre-1940s, was on the brink of change. This chapter will discuss the rise of separate citizenships, the traumatic explosion of the “Battle of Andringa Street” and its aftermath, as well as the implementation of the Group Areas Acts which became significant in the latter 1960s and the 1970s.

The Rise of Separate Citizenships in Stellenbosch, c. 1940s-1960s

By the beginning of the 1940s, the Municipality, quite unaware of an increase in major racial tensions within the town, continued with rectifying issues pertaining to disease, environment and the establishing of a cohesive and model town. However, shifts were evident in how the Council dealt with the separate racial groups. One case in particular which underscores the excesses of the racial system, was that of a “European” child treated in a “non-European” ward of the hospital because no rooms were available in the “European section”. The Council felt that one room was being used as a dining room in the European section which could have been converted to a bedroom.² The Hospital Committee was requested to justify its actions and so the Medical Superintendent had to explain that these extenuating circumstances were needed to save the child’s life and that the child was completely isolated from the “non-European section”. The Council accepted the explanation but ruled that under no account

¹ This perception is based on Municipal discourse during the period c. 1890 – 1940. During the period 1832-33, “European” agitation towards accepting “coloured” children at the government school in Stellenbosch reflects the possibility of existing tensions between the races. Whether this was based on race or class is yet to be determined, J. S. Marais, *The Cape Coloured People, 1652-1937*, p. 270.

² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/55, Minutes of 23 January 1940, p. 8.

would they accept a similar situation and that should the need arise, this should be avoided in the future “even at the cost of additional work necessitated by rearrangements which would open up accommodation in the European section”.³ This case is indicative that a definitive shift and classification along racial lines (with separate amenities) had clearly been entrenched by the beginning of 1940 within the ruling elite of the town. However, it is unclear as to whether this racial feeling was deeply rooted within the psyche of the Municipal members or if the case had warranted specific attention at the request of the family in question. What is evident is that racial classifications were being used within formal discourse to assess the needs of the Stellenboschers. Three distinct groups are mentioned: “European, Coloured and Native”. Despite this classification, similar social and environmental problems (seen in the pre-1940s) continued to be the focus of the Council.

The Health Report of 1939-1940 reveals that venereal diseases prevalent in Stellenbosch were Syphilis and Gonorrhoea. Those mostly affected were the working class “non-Europeans” interspersed with working class Europeans. Three “European” males, three “European” females, four “Native” males, one “Native” female, twenty-one “Coloured” males and twenty-six “Coloured” females had been treated for venereal diseases. Despite the higher prevalence amongst the “coloured” groups, what this indicates is that similar medical issues were present amongst all the races within a specific social class. It also gives a glimpse into the lifestyle choices of the different groups and is indicative of the continuing social ills within the “coloured community”. Unlike the previous era, environmental crises were on the decline. By the 1940s, the plague was unknown in Stellenbosch although active eradication of all vermin was still a priority. Water supply to the town had become more efficient and plans to extend water supplies to Ida’s valley were to be implemented when the area fell under the Municipal jurisdiction in 1941. At this stage, residents had to collect their water in drums from the town. Housing for poorer “Europeans” and “non-Europeans” were considered inadequate and conditions very poor. The condition seems to have been worse amongst the “coloured” group although it is mentioned that the “better class of coloured person” owned their properties. Amongst them were tradesmen and building contractors. Those living in poorer conditions had no bathrooms and the washing facilities provided often had to serve at least twenty dwellings. The majority of the tenements were overcrowded because of the small

³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/55, Report of the Joint Infectious Diseases Hospital Committee, 10 January 1940, p. 27.

wages and high rents demanded by landlords. Several of the places had been described as “slums and will be dealt as such immediately the Council have their housing schemes completed”. A “few of the lowest fallen Europeans were found to be living amongst the Coloured element”. Housing schemes for “Europeans, non-Europeans and Natives” were under way. Once completed, the “natives” living amongst the “Coloured” and privately owned property of private individuals would be compelled to move there. Houses occupied by “natives” at that time, would become available for the “Coloured” people. This quantifies the pecking order of the time. Clearly, “poorer Europeans” were of primary concern and the “natives” were to be relocated in order to uplift the “coloured” groups to an acceptable level of subsistence. This clearly permeated to the manner in which “coloureds” located themselves between “white” and “native” extremes. It was found that the health amongst the “natives” living in the tenements was good and the incidence of infectious disease rare. There were very few recorded “Asians” in the town, all of whom were shopkeepers who lived in dwellings attached to their enterprises. No special arrangements were made for this race as “they [were] treated similar to the Cape Coloured and enjoy the same privileges and facilities”.⁴ Small pockets of “natives” and “coloureds” lived within the town and in Du Toitstasie/ Du Toit Station until 1965.⁵ Whilst it is clear that decisions were being made along racial categorisation, finding solutions to social ills was of primary concern and deeply entrenched in this was the need to separate the races. Strong focus was placed on the issue of class distinctions despite the influence of a more racial discourse. Whilst this was occurring at an institutional level, racial interaction and co-existence became problematic amongst the inhabitants after the altercation between some members of the “coloured” and “white” groups in July 1940.

The Battle of Andringa Street

The “Battle of Andringa Street” marked a definitive change in race relations within Stellenbosch. The changing nature of Afrikaner identity and politics and the rise of a more definitive Nationalist ideology were being played out in Stellenbosch. Bruckner de Villiers, parliamentary candidate for the National Party, was pivotal in harnessing the “coloured” vote in Stellenbosch. His political career provides insights into the fluid nature of Afrikaner identity during the 1920s and 1930s, particularly in relation to the “coloured” population. De

⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/54, Health Report for the year July 1939 - June 1940, pp. 232-242.

⁵ US I.M.S no. 65, June 1965, pp. 5-6.

Villiers lost the election for the National Party in Paarl and Stellenbosch because he believed that Dr Abdurahman, leader of the A.P.O., had turned the “coloured” vote against him. Because of these Nationalist losses, it is believed that the campaign was heightened in Stellenbosch to harness the support amongst “coloured” voters in Stellenbosch. De Villiers had relied heavily on the support of the University of Stellenbosch student body, the majority of whom had nationalist affiliation. Conflict between a Fusion and Coalition of the National Party and the South African Party led to increased political consciousness within the town. The Afrikaans-speaking population was increasing and the option of who would offer the best deal for the “coloured” voters saw some dissention between the “coloured” and “white” citizens of the town. The key features of this battle resulted in an increasingly Afrikaans orientated nationalism, heightened by the solid presence of Nationalist students of the University of Stellenbosch who encouraged politicians to use the town as a battleground for what commentators of the 1930s eventually labelled Stellenbosch, the “Mecca of Afrikanerdom” – Dr Malan even calling it the “heart of Afrikanerdom”.⁶ Nationalists throughout the country would look to the growing intellectual hub as a model for a workable system of segregation, the beginnings of which were taking place in Stellenbosch. Whilst at the Cape, the concept of being Afrikaner meant common language, common heritage and a common aim of creating a citizenry of “South Africans”, the influence of those not native to the Cape, and thus less exposed to the idea of a “coloured Afrikaner identity” which could work with and formed part of “white Afrikaner identity”, increased tensions between those native to the area, regardless of race and religion, and those “immigrants”, having been exposed to the politics of the Afrikaner Republics and discriminatory legislation against “non-whites” in other parts of the country. This in effect created tension between a growing nationalist State at the top, an increasingly “white” Afrikaner Nationalist portion of the Stellenbosch community living amongst, what the Municipality of Stellenbosch had tried to maintain, “citizens of Stellenbosch above all else”.⁷ It was in the culmination of the “Battle of Andringa Street”⁸ that both the “non-white” citizens of Stellenbosch and the Municipality

⁶ J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2001, pp. 89-116.

⁷ In an interview with Shenaz Ismael, a former resident of Stellenbosch, on 28 April 2008, the phrase “we were Citizens of Stellenbosch” and “we were a very close-knit community” was reiterated throughout the interview.

⁸ For a full recount of the “Battle of Andringa Street”, please refer to H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 155-172; J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2001, pp. 182-192; for personal accounts from those in Stellenbosch at the time, please refer to H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 180-190.

became aware of the increasing dissention amongst what was becoming a renegotiated idea of what it meant to be Afrikaans.

By 1938, there were approximately 1500 students at the University of whom 96% were Afrikaans speaking and being described as “rabidly nationalist”. The student body was described as being political in nature. Stellenbosch was to produce the future leaders of the country and so the need to indoctrinate them with the correct political ideology was of importance. Student national organisations had become increasingly divided along English-speaking/Afrikaans-speaking lines and the idea of inclusivity of diverse student bodies became a driving force towards establishing more radical student politics. With the advent of World War II, allegiance was shifting from the British Empire to Afrikaner Nationalism and a stronger affiliation with the Axis powers. During the war, it was common practice to stop and commemorate all those fighting and all those who died for two minutes. This was known as the noonday “Pause”, a tradition started in World War I and resurrected in World War II. As a sign of growing discontent with having to plead allegiance to the British Empire, and in protest against South African involvement in the war, a group of Stellenbosch University students had planned to disrupt the noonday “Pause” in Cape Town. What became known as the “Battle of Adderley Street” took place on Saturday 27 July 1940. During the two minute silence, Afrikaans-speaking students are alleged to have disrupted the commemoration by walking in the streets when everyone had stopped, singing in Afrikaans to the tune of *Deutschland über Alles*. Clashes broke out between the students and those commemorating the moment of silence. The event was described as a defeat for the students. On their return to Stellenbosch, skirmishes between the students and “coloured” members of the town broke out that evening outside the newsagent Senitzky’s shop. Reports in the newspaper following the clash published letters from residents of the town, wishing to reiterate that the students alone were responsible for the skirmishes. What the “battles” had unveiled was the increasing tension being felt by Afrikaans speakers, especially amongst the student body. It was felt that the “coloured” groups in the town had become “threatening” towards the “white” population, especially the Afrikaans-speaking section of the community. Anti-war sentiment and allegiance to the British Empire were also areas of concern for the Afrikaner nationalists.⁹ The Non-European United Front of South Africa issued a pamphlet entitled “Who Caused the

⁹ *The Cape Times*, 29 July 1940, 30 July 1940, 31 July 1940; *The Stellenbosch District Mail*, 2 August 1940 and 9 August 1940.

riots: Mass Assaults on non-Europeans”.¹⁰ The pamphlet exaggerates the extent of the attack, if one considers the testimony of those who recall the incident, but illuminates some interesting characteristics on how the “non-European elite” considered race relations during this period. Firstly, the rise of Afrikaner nationalism was inextricably linked, according to the opinion of the author of the pamphlet, to Nazism and Nazi Germany. Secondly, “the students together with some residents” were responsible for the attack on the “unoffending Coloured people”. Clear distinction is made that the “outsider students” and only a few “Stellenboschers” were responsible, but no shared responsibility was taken by the “Coloured community”. Present oral testimony would suggest otherwise. Thirdly, a clear link between the “humiliating defeat” by the students during the “Battle of Adderley Street” in Cape Town and the events in Stellenbosch are made. Interestingly, the point is made that they were “determined to wreak their vengeance out on somebody” which would suggest that the events were circumstantial rather than premeditated. Fourthly, there is a clear distinction made of the “white” population. Fifthly, a differentiation is made between Afrikaner nationalism and the Government. “Because the government refuses to free the non-European, they dare not take steps to stave the Nazi menace in our midst”. Whilst there is some animosity towards the Government, Afrikaner nationalism was perceived as being more threatening than the current dispensation. Lastly, the bold caption “Citizens! Non-Europeans! Europeans! South Africans all!”, is suggestive of the desire to re-create the concept of equal citizenship.

A special meeting was held by the Council on Tuesday 30 July 1940 to discuss the events of the conflict between the students of the University and the “coloured” people of Stellenbosch. Both parties were represented and pleaded to the Board. The “coloured” people were represented by Reverends Knottenbelt and Brown, the students by Mr J. L. Badenhorst, chairman of the Student Council of the University of Stellenbosch. The representatives of the “coloured” people believed that the “coloured” homes and people attacked were the victims whilst the University representative reiterated that it was not only the students who were involved but Afrikaans-speaking members of the Stellenbosch public. Rev Knottenbelt requested that better control be maintained over the students; that ammunition and weapons should be recovered from student boarding houses; that the students pay for the damages incurred by both “white” and “coloured” property; that “foreign flags” be removed from

¹⁰ SU D. F. Malan Collection, MS 1/1/1671, “Who caused the riots: Mass assaults on non-Europeans”, July 1940.

display; and that a better system of selling newspapers be implemented.¹¹ It was reported by both reverends that doors even within homesteads they had visited in the “coloured” homes had been damaged and that many from the exterior sought refuge within these homes. It was alleged that even women had been attacked. Rev Knottenbelt believed that the reasons given by the students, that is the insolence of the “coloured” people towards Afrikaans-speaking students and residents of the town, was not the sole concern. He had heard that the students wanted the “coloured” people removed from the area, a matter which he believed should be for the residents of Stellenbosch to decide and not the students who had come to the town to study and who should remain out of the politics of the town. A clear demarcation is made between those that belong to the body of “Stellenboschers” and those who were temporary sojourners. The student representative did not deny that the students had acted out existing aggression towards “cheeky coloureds”, but insisted that blame should also be found amongst those members of the town who assisted the students in the attack. They were willing to raise funds for all the repairs of those homes of people not directly involved in the clashes. They also wished to dispel as myth that the attack was planned prior to the clashes. A working relationship was guaranteed between the “white” people and students of the town with *responsible* “coloured” people. The definition of responsible was not clarified. Mr L. Hofmeyr, the Mayor, stressed the need for all citizens to keep the peace. He also dismissed allegations that he had taken sides in the matter. He had requested the “coloured” people to return to their homes and after they expressed concern over their safety, he offered to drive them home personally. He did not think this could be misconstrued as taking sides but was a way in which to disperse further tension. At the end of the meeting it was decided that changes would be made to the selling of newspapers, that the students would in conjunction with the Board, raise funds to repair the damages made to the properties and that letters of sympathy would be sent to all those who suffered any damages. The public would also be encouraged to speak to the Board if they had any problems before turning to violence.¹² The “coloured” community had intimated that they wanted a full enquiry into the events of the clashes.¹³

¹¹ The latter decision had a direct bearing on the clashes which broke out when members of the different races queued together to buy the evening paper. It was believed that if there were separate facilities available for the different races, these clashes could have been avoided.

¹² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/54, Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council, 30 July 1940, pp. 174-179.

¹³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/54, Minutes of 4 September 1940, pp. 216-217.

The actions of the students had certainly highlighted the increasing tension between Afrikaans-speakers, English-speakers and racial groupings in the town. The Town Council was unwilling to apportion blame to either side and felt itself trapped between creating a cohesive community in the town and an increasing nationalistic political ideology. What the event also marked was the need to [re]consider the student body within the workings of the town and this marked the beginning of the need to work ‘in conjunction’ with the prevailing new political dispensation (at this stage being safeguarded by the University body) on the part of the Municipality.

Divisions amongst those in the Council with regards to the positioning of the University students became apparent in 1941. A request was made by a member of the *Reddingsdaadbond* (RDB)¹⁴ to the Council to hire out rooms at a reduced rate for the RDB’s congress to be held in Stellenbosch later that year. The Council was split over how to deal with the request as it would assist only one section of the community. The Mayor responded by stating that the Municipality, which represented all sections of the community, could not assist the activities of an organisation that provided support to a single sector of that community.¹⁵ It would appear that as nationalist political consciousness increased, further pressure was placed on the Municipality. As this fervour increased, decisions made by the Council were also at times reversed. Goolum Husein Sarif was appointed as a Commissioner of Oaths for the Stellenbosch district in 1945. However his appointment was cancelled by the Justice Ministry on 2 February 1946.¹⁶

By the end of World War II, the National Party worked towards uniting Afrikaner support with the Dutch Reformed Church, the *Broederbond* and other inclined organisations, against the threat of Communism and also the rising threat of “black urbanisation”. Christian education and the need to curb a rising native infiltration in the job market were key areas of concern to maintain a stasis closely aligned to racial hierarchy. In Stellenbosch, the increase of “natives” as well as the increased tendency to treat “coloureds” and “whites” as equals in certain areas became an area of concern for the growing National Party. The “coloured” vote

¹⁴ An organisation that looked at the needs of “poor whites”.

¹⁵ J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2001, pp. 270-271.

¹⁶ KAB 1/STB 19/194, The History of Stellenbosch, p. 117, files number 48/714 and 17/13/2, pp. 117-118.

had still been important and so National Party candidates downplayed the policies of apartheid by insisting that the system could help develop the “coloured” population yet still insisting that the Afrikaner was the natural protector of the “non-European” people of South Africa. Despite the economic value “Indians” brought to the town, they too were a source of anxiety for Stellenbosch nationalists. Cleavages which already existed amongst the “coloured” and “Indian” population in the Cape (although there is no evidence to suggest this existed in Stellenbosch) meant that calls by the Nationalists to halt “Indian” migration to the Cape met with little resistance from the “non-white/non-native” cohort. By 1946, the number of Indians in Stellenbosch was only sixty-nine.¹⁷

Stellenbosch had increasingly become the intellectual capital of Afrikaner Nationalist thought which affected the manner in which the Municipality had to deal with its citizens across political, racial and religious boundaries because these boundaries always remained porous. However, the increasing tension of political ideology saw a sharp shift in the manner in which the Municipality had to deal with “non-whites”. By 1948, the National Party had taken over the Government and the restrictions on “coloured” and “native” voting rights, and to some degree social rights, dissolved. What followed was a rigid system of classification and control of ownership of land as well as the close monitoring of the “non-white” groups.

State Legislation: Macro Impositions on Micro Situations

The Group Areas Act of 1950 introduced new features to an already existent system of separation which existed throughout the country but less so in Stellenbosch. What the Act enhanced was the control over inter-racial changes in ownership and occupation of property throughout the entire country. The Government was empowered to make those decisions and to enforce the said decisions. From the early years of colonisation, certain areas had been set aside for “natives”. After Union, the Natives Land Act (1913), clearly demarcated land for appropriation for “whites” and “natives”. Within the urban setting, “natives” leased plots on the outskirts of the towns and thus haphazard settlements normally developed on the outskirts of “white” towns. The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 ushered in the need for municipalities to create “locations”, in which the “natives” were compelled to live and in

¹⁷ J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2001, pp. 298-301.

which their movements and actions monitored. The Natives Resettlement Act (1954), the Natives (Urban Areas) Amendment Act of 1955 and the Group Areas Amendment Act of 1956, gave Government the power to relocate the “natives” to these “locations”. Because of considerable tension between “white” and “Indian” traders in Natal and the Transvaal, the Asiatic Land Tenure Act was passed in 1946 in which “Asians” were also monitored. The Group Areas Act of 1950, the four Amendments and the Group Areas Development Act, brought the “coloured” people of the Cape into the system of control. Special committees had to be established by municipalities to ascertain which areas would be suitable for each racial group. Reference and Planning Committees had to get approval from the Group Areas Board who advised the Minister of the Interior. Once an area had been proclaimed, one year’s warning was given to the inhabitants, although permits could be sought annually to remain in an area zoned for another racial group.

Conditions in Cape Town varied somewhat to those in Stellenbosch. More representatives of the different “racial groups” meant that greater resistance and alliances could be formed. By 1956, it was estimated that 275 400 “Whites”, 271 300 “Cape Coloured”, 67 000 “Malays”, 8 000 “Indians”, 1 300 “Chinese” and 64 900 “Africans” lived in Cape Town.¹⁸ The “Africans” had taken over much of the unskilled work as the “coloured” classes became more engaged in skilled work. However, it was decided that no further “African” migration would be desirable in order to protect the employment opportunities of the “natural home of the Coloured people”.¹⁹ Following the laws of supply and demand, the more labour available, the cheaper it becomes. By having an increase in the “African” population, remuneration packages would decrease.

Initially, the Cape Town City Council refused to co-operate with the Government. It prepared no maps showing ownership of land nor did it draw up zoning plans. The Committee of the Group Areas Board had to eventually subpoena Council officials to give information about population, property evaluation and town planning. They were of the opinion that the Act in Cape Town would cause hardships and asked for exemption of industrial and commercial areas from racial zoning. Because of this, the Land Tenure Advisory Board and the Group

¹⁸ This should be read alongside the three categories that appeared in Stellenbosch: “white”, “coloured” and “native”. No distinction as such was made between “Asian” and “coloured” and this had some implications on those seeking to retain some form of Asiatic identity. It had further repercussions on the manner in which “Indian Muslims” and “Malay Muslims” formed their identities.

¹⁹ M. Horrell, *The Group Areas Act: Its effect on Human Beings*, pp. 25-28, 72-73.

Areas Board drew up and advertised their own proposals. Many suggestions were outlined, the most pertinent to this thesis, that the “Malay Quarter” be reserved for “Malays” and the establishment of Rynlands Estate, east of Athlone, for “Indians” and the portion of Duinefontein, adjoining Rynlands, reserved for the rest of the “Malays”. They would be moved to partially developed and isolated areas, and those who prospered in established areas would suffer financially. Other areas were proposed for mixed “coloured” and “white” settlement. In essence, “white”, “coloured”, “Malay”, “Indians” and “other Asians” would be separated. By August 1956, a public hearing was held in Cape Town to discuss the plans. The Cape Town City Council boycotted the proceedings but some officials were compelled by law to give evidence. Twenty four organisations representing “coloured”, “Malay” and “Indian” groups of different religious, cultural and sporting interests had combined to form the Group Areas Co-Ordinating Committee to try and protect the interests of the “non-white” groups. Civic groups, church representatives and “Moslem priests” gave evidence. “The Chief Moslem Priest in Cape Town said that the Moslem community was totally opposed to the separation of the “Malay” and “Coloured” people into different racial categories”. The spokesperson for the Wynberg Mission Church also said there was no justification for separating the “Coloured and Malay communities: the only difference between them was in regard to religion...”.²⁰ Members of the Non-European Group Areas Co-Ordinating Committee disapproved of the Act, stressing that they did not want any “whites” to move either. What can be ascertained is that racial groups had lived alongside each other in vast areas, applying a system of segregated areas based on race would interrupt the “diversity of multi-racial Cape Town”. Different racial groupings and religious differences are visible at this time. “Whites” formed one homogenous group, “Coloureds” being the generic term for “Malays” and Muslims, according to the chief Imam, and “Malays” (being Muslim) and Christians according to the Wynberg spokesperson. What can be seen within the context of Cape Town is that “Malays” had become integrated within the “coloured” communities (both now assuming a more “Malay” common identity) and that they had distinguished themselves from the “white” and “native” groups. “Indians” were classified separately despite the porous nature of their sense of belonging – “Indian Muslims” and “Hindu Muslims” were two separate entities. Because of the multicultural setting of Cape Town, all races had become interdependent and, much like the social setting of Stellenbosch, a sense of a non-racial community had been formed. The Municipality of Cape Town also attempted to resist these

²⁰ M. Horrell, *The Group Areas Act: Its effect on Human Beings*, pp. 77-82.

major changes but were eventually compelled to conform. Because of the larger population and the visibility of larger representation of each “race”, separate areas were constructed to house the “white”, “coloured” and “Asian” groups. What this created was a similar context to that of the post Anglo-Boer War period in which “Malay Muslims” were absorbed into the “coloured” entity, “Indian Muslims” having to establish themselves amongst other “Indians/Asians” and thus the bond of being “Asian” superseded that of a common religion. Ideological tensions between “Indian Muslims” and those of “Malay” descent did exist but the battle to which the “Malay” was being confronted was not one of religious practice but cultural belonging. Rather than calling for *all* Muslims and “coloureds” not to be separated, “The Chief Moslem Imam” took great offence to the proposed segregation of “Malays” and “coloureds”. Trends within the smaller towns were different.

Within smaller populated towns, other forms of classification occurred. It has been discussed how alliances between “Muslim” and “Christian” “coloureds” had taken place in Cape Town. “Asians” were not included and this was prevalent even in religious associations which should have, by definition, kept “brothers in Islam” together.

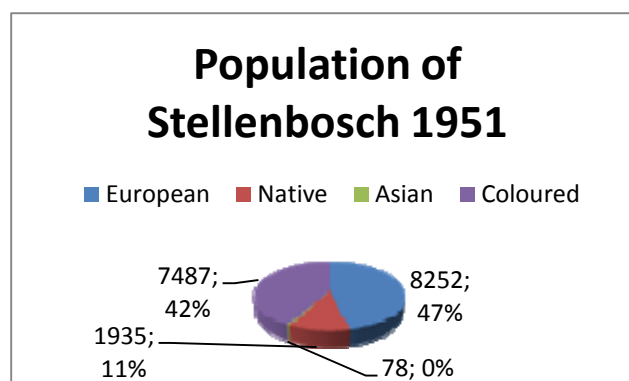
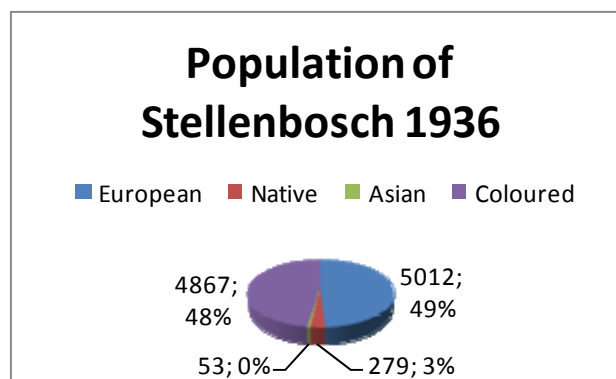
In Paarl, reference is merely made to “whites”, “coloureds” and “natives”. The generic term “coloured” is taken to include both Christian and Muslim adherents. “Indians” that were non-Muslim were left in a precarious situation. Affiliation across religious grounds is clearly visible in the following statement, with some cohesion amongst “Malay” and “Indian” Muslims: “While Europeans have had their schools provided for them from State funds, the Coloured people through their churches and by industry and determination have built their own. They have contributed thousands of pounds towards the costs of six churches, two mosques, eight primary schools and three halls.”²¹

During this period, in Stellenbosch, racial groupings and classifications had been entrenched within local discourse. Increases in the population of each racial group ushered in the need to make more separate provisions for each grouping as well as to restrict rentals so as not to impoverish the different groups. By this stage, there was a distinct correlation between income and racial classification. With this in mind, the Council had been advised that because

²¹ M. Horrell, *The Group Areas Act: Its effect on Human Beings*, pp. 84-85.

of income disparities between the races, a ceiling for economic rentals was desirable. “Europeans” were not to pay more than £30 per month, “coloureds” £20 per month and “Bantus” £15 per month.²²

The following charts indicate the racial groupings in Stellenbosch in 1936, 1951 and the approximate population distribution in 1955.²³ The Census for 1955²⁴ and 1962²⁵ generally show a marked increase of all the racial groupings. Despite the increase in the number of “Asians” and “natives”, these two groups were progressively marginalised within the discourse pertaining to racial groups in the town. One example of this is the absence of any mention of “Asians” in the 1955 census (the fourth chart) according to the Municipal newsletter distributed within the town. One can only assume that they were incorporated within the “coloured” percentage. However, it is worth noting the increase in the number of “Asians” from the 1955 approximation to the 1962 census.



²² KAB 3/STB 1/1/122, Minutes of 24 November 1954, p. 1.

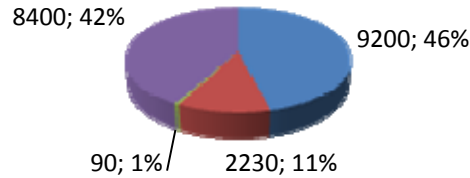
²³ US I.M.S January 1956, p. 1.

²⁴ US I.M.S July 1955, p. 3.

²⁵ KAB 3/STB 1/1/175, Minutes of 17 April 1962, p. 23.

Population of Stellenbosch 1955 approx

European Native Asian Coloured



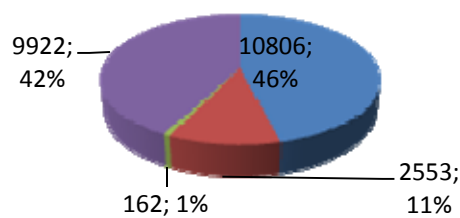
Population of Stellenbosch 1955

European Native Coloured



Population of Stellenbosch 1962

European Native Indian Coloured



Prior to any forced removals, “non-whites” lived in four areas within the town. “Natives” lived in Kaya Mandi, Idas Valley and Du Toitsville had a majority of “coloureds” and the area of *Die Vlakte* housed other “coloureds” surrounded by “white” neighbourhoods. Other “islands” of “coloured” people lived in “white” neighbourhoods and “Malays and Indians” lived in the central part of the town. By the 1950s, only 24 “coloured” families who owned their houses lived in *Die Vlakte*. Two families lived and owned property in Du Toitsville and

seven others in various parts of Dorp Street and Krige Street. Other “coloured”, “Indian’ and “Malay” families lived in the town but were renting homes from mostly “white” landlords. However, two “Malays”, Mrs Moosah and Mr Abrahams, rented out homes to 15 and 30 families respectively. Sjeg Allie rented out to 34 families on the bridge to the Strand and on the corner of Market and Dorp Streets. Habiep Hassim rented to 19 families in Du Toitsville. Two Indian residents, Mr Pillay and S. Kahn rented out 15 homes and each owned businesses in Idas Valley. The rest lived in Idas Valley but half of these were renting.²⁶ It was clear that a conglomerate of people owned majority of the properties and part of the initial plans for the Group Areas Act was to implement methods by which people could own their own properties in their “own” areas, unfortunately dictated by legal dispensation. Because land was scarce, members of the Group Areas Board had already begun testing the suitability of land for housing in Cloetesdal by 1958.²⁷

The Town Council welcomed three members of the Investigation Committee of the Land Tenure Advisory Board, who would inspect the proposed plans of the Council. New proposals and alternatives were advertised and open for objections by any member of the Stellenbosch public.²⁸ But despite increasing pressures placed on the Municipality of Stellenbosch to relocate and appropriate prime property for the “white Citizens of South Africa”, they continued to tend to the specific needs of those members of the town considered desirable. At times, decisions of the Town Council were subject to greater legislative policies to be later implemented, at times they were reprimanded for their actions.

In 1958, Mr Cassiem Osman had applied for the erection of a brick wall to enclose his *stoep*, at his property at 238 Bird Street, Lot 6 Du Toitsville. Plans were submitted but because the wall encroached on Bird street which was now proclaimed a road, no building activity was officially allowed. The Town Planner, Mr Tinsdale, visited Stellenbosch to ascertain whether permission was to be granted and in his report mentioned that, “the area where this property is situated is zoned for general business purposes, and if the property is acquired for such

²⁶ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 195-196.

²⁷ KAB 3/STB 4/1/158, Meeting of 25 March 1958, point 11, p. 3/14a.

²⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/123, Minutes of 1 March 1955, p. 1.

purposes, it will disappear anyhow, stoep and all”.²⁹ Ironically these are one of the few houses still remaining to date. It would appear that the Council often approved certain improvements often against legislation. G. Raziet had been allowed to erect a shop premises in Banhoek Road. In a letter from the Provincial Roads Engineer to the Stellenbosch Town Clerk on 24 July 1954, the Council was reproached for contravening legislation concerning construction within the town, Section 146 of Ordinance 15 of 1952. The letter, reference no: 94/A68/1, point 4, out rightly threatened the Council that if they continued to contravene legislation, all new developments would be condemned. “Your Council is earnestly requested in its own interests to ensure that the law is strictly observed in future as the Administration might insist on the demolition of any structure which is erected within the prescribed width of a proclaimed road or the building line applicable there to”.³⁰

Another example in which racial segregation was often “overlooked” was in the issuing of taxi permits. It was reiterated to the Municipal Board by the Road Transportation Board that the renewal of taxi licences had to coincide with the “taxi apartheid” policy. Taxi drivers were expected to apply for transportation licences according to the class of passenger. Separate taxi stands for “Europeans” and “non-Europeans” were also obligatory. At that time, there were nine vehicles registered for “Europeans” and thirteen for “non-Europeans”.³¹ The Municipality had obviously contravened the Road Transportation Board directives and were thus duly warned.

Whilst the problem of increasing racial segregation continued on a national level, the Municipality of Stellenbosch, unlike that of Cape Town, actively sought to work within the system to avoid any unwarranted impositions from the State. Whether this is indicative that they believed in the “separate systems” is arguable.

²⁹ KAB 3/STB 4/1/158, point 67 (b)(2) “Encroachment on stoep of Cassiem Osman”, p. 1/61, p. 1/143, p.1/73.

³⁰ KAB PAA 602, letter to Stellenbosch Municipality RE: Raziet G, reference F105/11/5.

³¹ KAB 3/STB 4/1/158, General Purpose Committee Meeting of 21 January 1958, point 81, “Renewal of Taxi Licences – racial Segregation”, p. 1/65.

Housing the “coloureds”

The increasing “coloured” population was a cause for concern for the Municipality. The Mayor, Dr E. Theron had discussed the issue with Minister P.W. Botha on 12 May 1962, to try and harness the support of the Ministry to help in this endeavour.³² Details were open for discussion. The Board of Management for the Coloured Group Area recommended that a public meeting be held to discuss the implications of the proposed scheme and to explain the details to the “coloured” community.³³ The Council attempted to encourage public participation with any form of major decisions which would affect the Stellenboschers. Primitive methods in the earlier period saw the decision to employ Simon Willemsse to go from door to door with a billboard on his mule to invite people to a public meeting to discuss new regulations.³⁴ By 1945, a monthly newsletter was used to communicate Council decisions to the public as well as to harness a sense of pride within the town. *Inligtingstuk Munisipaliteit Stellenbosch* was a free monthly periodical established in December 1945 which produced about 1500 copies and had a wide audience, as far as Australia. It was a very popular newsletter which published the views of the Council and kept the public aware of major decisions made by it and any planned activities which would affect them. The periodical alternated between Afrikaans and English – fairly symbolic of the political and cultural changes taking place at the time. In the April issue of 1948, the Council commemorated all those who worked towards making the town “beautiful”. Visitors have commented on the beautiful architecture and they realise that only a few great names are known. In this section entitled, “A foreman, A Mason and Two Daily Labourers”, they commemorated the hard work of “a few of the many fine workmen” in Stellenbosch: Foreman Gert Mey laid the paving in front of Town Hall along with his two native assistants, Johnson and Alfred. Johnson speaks English and Afrikaans, Alfred neither. He follows the tone of his chief. “For some three years the three people worked together...”. Mention is also made of a mason, a “coloured” man, Martinus Silvester, who has been in the Council’s employ for more than nine years. He built the wall behind the Theological Seminary. All the walls and masonry on the Town Hall sites are his. What the article does is to provide a space to commemorate not only “white” artisans but the “non-white” artisans considered to have made a considerable contribution to the architecture of the town.³⁵ It fails to fully impart the impact the “coloured” and “black” communities had upon the architecture of the town in later

³² KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/175, Minutes of 22 May 1962, p. 22.

³³ US I.M.S no. 46, October 1963, p. 2.

³⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6 Minutes of 24 April 1894, p. 202.

³⁵ US I.M.S no. 29, April 1948, pp. 2-4.

years. Debates and updates about the separate group areas developments formed the basis of much of the material contained in this newsletter during the 1950s and 1960s.

By 8 May 1962, the Council reported that there were approximately 11 000 “coloureds” in Stellenbosch and using the rate of increase over the prior ten years, they estimated this number to reach 22 500 by the year 2000. It was mentioned that 1000 residential plots could be made available in the Idas Valley area which could accommodate about 6 000 people, six persons per plot. The Cloetesdal area, provisionally demarcated a “coloured” area at the time, could provide a further 800 plots. It was decided that sufficient space was available for the current population. At that time the Divisional Council had estimated that the Cloetesdal area would cost R158 310. Development costs would not differ with those in the other proposed area of relocation. However, costs of improving communications, roads and linking the areas with the town and each other were still to be calculated.³⁶ It would appear that the Council might have opted not to move the “coloured” people out of the town because this would have incurred higher costs than relocating them to Idas Valley and what has become known as Cloeteville. Another major obstacle for the construction of houses for the coloured population was that in many instances, land that had been procured by the Municipality, had been bought with certain stipulations. Land obtained in 1949 had the following provisions:

That no non-European, Natives or Asiatics be housed by the purchaser or its successor in title at any place on the property purchased to the north of a line running parallel to the south-western boundary of the homestead block at a distance of 100 yards measured towards the southwest along a line at right angles to the said southwestern boundary. Existing coloured tenements however are not to be affected by this provision. That to the southeast and northeast of the homestead block only European housing of a good type suitable for the environment, and to be determined according to recognised town planning principles will be allowed, the purchaser to determine the layout and conditions, it to be understood however that in such European housing, facilities may be provided and used for the housing of bona fide domestic servants employed by persons occupying such European housing.³⁷

³⁶ KAB 3/STB 1/1/175, Minutes of 8 May 1962, p. 14.

³⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/175, Minutes of 12 June 1962, p.2.

The Council had originally considered the idea of “Europeans” buying land in Idas Valley for housing their “coloured” staff. However, it was decided that “Europeans” buying land in “coloured” group areas was a contravention to the principles of the Group Areas Act. Long leases would be awarded to “Europeans” to appropriate land, and build houses for their staff but those would eventually have to be appropriated by the “coloured” employees. Further suggestions were made by the Council to encourage “European” employers to help their workers construct their own homes.³⁸ However, they were not opposed to intervening or bending this rule for desirable persons. Catharina and Flora Bergstedt were two spinsters having difficulty maintaining their property in the “coloured” area. Sifac Investments, a “white-owned” company, was willing to purchase their property but an application had to be made to the Department of Development. A letter dated 23 July 1969, appealed to the Department on behalf of the two ladies. “They are a very good class of coloured person, but are entirely unable to maintain this property any longer...they have for a long time, tried to dispose of this property to a coloured person but without success”. Unfortunately the appeal was unsuccessful.³⁹ But it does show the Municipality’s eagerness to intervene *for the right candidate*.

The demarcation areas for the “two race groups in Stellenbosch” were proclaimed in the Government Gazette, 24 August 1962, after the Group Areas Board had completed its investigations in 1956. The demarcations generally followed the recommendations of the Town Council made at that time.⁴⁰ What was problematic was that the Government had procured the land between Idas Valley and Cloetesdal, the farms Nietvoorby and Helderfontein, which would create problems for the Council to keep the two settlements united and would mean that separate public buildings would have to be constructed.⁴¹ But before major relocations could take place, infrastructures had to be implemented. Notice was given in the Government Gazette that the area formerly occupied by “coloured” people was now rezoned for “whites only”. However, not all “white” citizens were adhering to the new law. Concern was raised by the Council over the proclamation of group areas for Stellenbosch in which it was illegal for a “non-European” to reside in a “European” area except for bona fide servants, but this was restricted to them and not their families.

³⁸ US I.M.S no. 46, October 1963, p. 6.

³⁹ KAB CDC 80, reference 32/1/2102/3, letter to the Department of Development.

⁴⁰ US I.M.S no. 32, August 1962, pp. 3-4.

⁴¹ US I.M.S no. 36, October 1962, pp. 1-2.

Inspections were being carried out by the police section of the Government's Departments. "The Council is not anxious to interfere with the domestic arrangements of members of the community, but it must necessarily obey the law of the country and much unpleasantness could be eliminated if the public generally is willing to co-operate".⁴² Thus began the dilemma of a Municipality attempting to safeguard the interests of their "citizens" and greater political legislation.⁴³

In 1962, plans to demolish houses occupied by "coloureds" had already been decided. Some discussion went on about the demolition of houses either unoccupied or "soon to be unoccupied". Mrs Jackson remarks that the dwellings occupied by "coloured" families on the corner of Banhoek Road and Bird Street are constructed from raw brick and clay and are in an advanced state of dilapidation; demolition is, therefore, recommended. Mssrs W. L. and B. Perel suggested the demolition of five dwellings and one shop at no 18 and no 20 Beyers Street and 71, 73 and 75 Andringa Street. The houses of 18 and 20 Beyers Street and 75 Andringa Street at that time were already unoccupied whilst the others were still occupied.⁴⁴ This marked the era of "forced removals".

By 28 August 1964, the Group Areas Act could officially be enforced. Those areas affected were "Merrimanlaan, Birdstraat, Hammanshandweg en Joubertstraat".⁴⁵ However, by 1964, disappointment with the slow response of the National Housing Commission was expressed in the I.M.S newsletter in April 1964. The Council believed that it recognised the needs of the people but bureaucratic red-tape had hampered the efforts of the Council to establish the housing schemes in Idas Valley which had been planned from 1961.⁴⁶ This also hampered the need to build separate service facilities for the "coloured". By 1955, the medical superintendant had already requested that the Council make land available in Idas Valley to

⁴² US I.M.S no. 37, November 1962, pp. 2-4.

⁴³ It should be noted that discussions surrounding these issues date back further as is seen in the discussion further on in this chapter on comments made by Aaron Cupido.

⁴⁴ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/175, Minutes of 8 May 1962, p. 20.

⁴⁵ US I.M.S no. 56, August 1964, p. 5.

⁴⁶ US I.M.S no. 52, April 1964, pp. 1-2.

build a “non-white” hospital and maternity ward but this too was delayed because of bureaucracy.⁴⁷

Despite the overwhelming efforts to push “coloureds” out of the centre of town, simultaneous plans were being made to try and establish a separate governing body run by “coloureds” for “coloured” townships. A meeting between a Government Commission and the Executive Committee of the Cape Province Municipal Association was held on 8 May 1962 to discuss the viability of establishing self-contained, self-sufficient autonomous cities and towns for “coloured” people – broadly controlled by the Government – in the same manner in which provincial administration controlled local authorities. The Association supported the idea of the development and upliftment of the coloured urban population. However, it was believed that the “coloured” group lacked the background, experience and education to competently govern themselves at that moment and it was believed that patient training and guidance would eventually allow them to control their own institutions. Financially, it was said that the “coloured community” contributed very little to the municipality in terms of rates and the amenities they had were being largely subsidised by “European” ratepayers. The Association believed that if they had to support their own municipal areas, the burden would be intolerable for the communities living within the boundaries of the “coloured” settlement. A sufficient number of trained administrators amongst the “coloured” community was already a cause for concern and the cohort was unanimous in deciding that it would have been disastrous to create separate autonomous authorities parallel to those already in existence. It was therefore resolved that co-operation and aid would be better implemented to uplift the “coloureds” economically and socially within the existing structure.⁴⁸ This co-operation was beneficial to both parties. Whilst this decision may have been based on economic viability, the establishment of separate towns for “coloureds” was vehemently opposed by some members of the community. A radical plan to shift all “coloureds” out of the town to an area between Vlottenburg and Jamestown saw the establishment of the Coloured Protection Board of Stellenbosch. One of the main activists on this Board was Aaron Cupido. Faced with the prospect of being relocated, he bargained for certain geographical boundaries to be demarcated within the town of Stellenbosch where “coloured” groups could live. He

⁴⁷ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/122, Minutes of 18 January 1955, p. 8.

⁴⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/175, Meeting between the Commission and the Executive Committee of the Cape Province Municipal Association to discuss the idea of separate local authorities for coloureds, 8 May 1962, pp. 34-37.

reminded the authorities that Bruckner de Villiers, a key National Party politician who actively sought the co-existence of a “coloured” and “white” community in the town, had made provisions for “coloured” ownership of land by procuring, through National League funds, land in Idas Valley where “coloured” people could buy and build their *own* homes.⁴⁹

In an interview with Aaron Cupido, after discussions commenced on relocating all “coloured” in Stellenbosch to the outskirts of Jamestown, he approached the chairman of the Ratepayers’ Association of Idas Valley. He was told not to bother, “*The Boere will do as they want*”. Unhappy with this response, he formed the Stellenbosch Protection Society, to defend the rights of the “coloureds” of Stellenbosch in the face of the forced removals. After drafting a letter, he went to Du Toit’s Station where he mustered eight signatures and sent a letter to the Group Areas Committee in Stellenbosch, requesting that he represents the “coloured” inhabitants at the next meeting. The application was accepted. At the meeting in 1956, Mr Cupido recalls addressing Mr A. P. Venter, Provincial Representative for Stellenbosch and former secretary to the National Party candidate Bruckner de Villiers in the 1930s. De Villiers was the brother-in law of Jan Marais and had procured land in Idas Valley which he sold to his “coloured” supporters for under £10, payable over three years. Mr Cupido remarked that many never paid him in full but this was more a gesture of thanks to his “coloured” constituents rather than a financial endeavour. In addressing the Board, Mr Cupido vividly recalls reminding Mr Venter of the deeds of the then late Senator de Villiers. He added that what Stellenbosch was then was because of the “coloured” manpower: “If we had to move, we could no longer be called people from Stellenbosch. *We would have no name* (emphasis added). We wanted to be called people from Stellenbosch. Remember, we had always been here”. He proposed two options to the committee; either to use natural borders such as rivers or mountains or manmade boundaries such as streets, to separate “coloured” areas from “white” areas.⁵⁰ Whilst this may appear to some as collaboration with an unjust system, perhaps if people, such as Aaron Cupido, had not been vocal, greater losses would have occurred for those who had procured some financial and economic stability as well as a home of their own within Idas Valley. Similarly, regardless of any active resistance, one can only assume that the idea of losing a part of the “citizens of Stellenbosch” might have combined with the economic implications to convince, what can be described as rigid

⁴⁹ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, p. 199.

⁵⁰ Interview, Aaron Cupido, 14 July 2008, Stellenbosch.

and uncompromising in other areas of the Cape, the authorities to reach some form of compromise.

By 1964, “coloureds” could officially be relocated to their new “townships”. New houses were built, as well as other services. The Municipality in conjunction with the Department of Coloured Affairs granted land on 10 January 1967 to the Old Apostolic Church of Africa in Idas Valley to house the 497 adults and 383 children who had been attending the “white” church in Borcherd Street.⁵¹ In a letter from the Municipality to the Department of Coloured Affairs dated 9 June 1966, churches in the coloured area of Cloetesdal included St Mary’s Anglican Church, The Methodist Church of South Africa, NG Sendingkerk, United Mission Church, Apostoliese Geloofsendin van Suid Afrika, Die Katolieke Kerk, Christian Gemeentes and Church of the Nazarene.⁵² Whilst there was a Catholic church, an earlier application to establish a school by the Roman Catholic Church in Idas Valley in 1940 had been rejected.⁵³ The first “coloured” hotel was being built on the corner of Protea and Helshoogte Road. Plans were also in action to provide entertainment facilities such as a bioscope and a dance hall were also being reviewed.⁵⁴ By October 1965, the hotel was almost ready to be opened.⁵⁵ Whilst many “non-whites” had moved freely to Idas Valley, many were forcefully removed from the centre of town and relocated in Cloeteville. It was the removal of the 1960s and 1970s that disrupted the channels of communication between the people of *Die Vlakte* and the Council. By the mid-1970s, a Relationships Committee attempted to bridge the divide between the “white” and “coloured” Stellenboschers.⁵⁶

“Natives” as the “Other”

Throughout the early years of increasing segregation, discourse regarding racial groupings maintained the “natives” as being the undesirable others. The Mayor of Stellenbosch, Mr C. F. D. Smit had suggested that a Committee for Native Administration be established to assess the complexities of the increasing number of “Bantu” people in the Western Cape and the

⁵¹ KAB CDC 236, application no 32/1/4527/3, granting of Erf in the residential area, Luckhoff and Kahler streets.

⁵² KAB KUS 5/2/1/F426, p. 35.

⁵³ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/55, Report of the Lands Committee, 18 March 1940, p. 248.

⁵⁴ US I.M.S no. 64, May 1965, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁵ US I.M.S no. 68, October 1965, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁶ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van ‘n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 235-236.

possible effects it could have on the “European” and “coloured” population. After the 13th annual meeting in Stellenbosch in 1963, problems such as the removal of the “Bantu” from the Western Cape, the supply of liquor to the Bantu and changes to legislation regarding the Bantu were discussed.⁵⁷ The Stellenbosch Municipality was concerned over the increase of “natives” in the town, not simply because of the fear of the *swart gevaar* but in relation to the competition between cheap “native” labour and maintaining certain levels of employment for the “coloureds” who had supported the idea of a separate system, much in line with conservative Afrikaner Nationalism. It would appear that there was concern over the influx of “natives”. The Town Council had been aware of this problem and warmly received the new incentives to curb the influx into the Western Cape by the Minister of Native Affairs.⁵⁸ It was decided that the Council would not employ “native” women from elsewhere to work in the hospital.⁵⁹ However, the Department of Native Affairs had insisted that the “natives” be allowed to trade in their locations and that other races were prohibited from doing so. The Municipal Council of Stellenbosch had stipulated that “natives” only be allowed to work as employees and not as independent traders as certain services were being rendered by “coloureds” and “Europeans”.⁶⁰ The porous nature of what constituted a “native” in terms of the influx control regulations became problematic for the Municipality when they had to issue and renew permits. Mr W. J. Van Tonder from South West Africa had applied for an Ovambo youth to reside with him in Stellenbosch until the end of 1958. He was now applying for an extension. Natives from South West Africa were not subject to the same legal restrictions applying to extra Union natives; however, the Council decided not to grant the extension.⁶¹

By 1962, talks were underway to try and replace Bantu labour in the Cape with “coloured” labour. Business, legal and agricultural leaders were asked to form a local committee. Councillor C. F. D. Smit was nominated to represent Stellenbosch.⁶² Despite these decisions, the need for “Bantu” labour remained. This meant that existing legislation had to be

⁵⁷ US I.M.S no. 47, November 1963, p 4.

⁵⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/123, Minutes of 1 February 1955, p. 1.

⁵⁹ KAB 3/STB 1/1/123, Minutes of 19 June 1955, p. 3.

⁶⁰ KAB 3/STB 4/1/158, General Purpose Committee Meeting of the 21 January 1958, point 53, “Trade in Kaya Mandi”, p. 1/53. J. M. Swartbooi had already applied for a general dealer’s licence to operate at 86 Kaya Mandi.

⁶¹ KAB 3/STB 4/1/158, Public Health, Housing and Native Administration meeting, 11 March 1958, p. 3/31, point 8.

⁶² US I.M.S no. 38, December 1962, pp. 3-4.

renegotiated. Act 76 of 1963 meant that “Bantu” people could live in any location and the permit system ceased to exist, although authorised officers were appointed to “expel anybody from a location if his or her presence [was] considered undesirable”.⁶³

Whilst the Council had to deal with the races as groups, the size of the population as well as the undying need to create a united and peaceful town, often led to oddities in the application of the law. For example, in 1963 a local beauty pageant was held and a new “Miss Kaya Mandi” elected. The Board had been asked to sponsor the transport costs of the local “Queen” to attend the national pageant in East London. No provisions were made within the statutes for the Board to pay for her travel expenses, nonetheless the Councillors in their personal capacity, raised money between them to send her to East London.⁶⁴

Destruction of a Single Citizenry and the Rise of a “Brotherhood of coloureds”

State legislation had transformed the earlier objectives of the Municipality from creating a “Citizenship” based on non-racial characteristics to the creation of separate “Citizenships” based on racial categorisation. This in effect influenced the manner in which group affiliation could manifest much like the transformation of the hierarchy in Cape Town. Afrikaner Nationalism as an ideology had strong intellectual ties to the University of Stellenbosch student and lecturing bodies and despite being considered temporary residents in the town, and by extension the “outsiders”, political activism culminated in the “Battle of Andringa Street” which not only symbolised the physical changes taking place in the country but also the ideological segregation infiltrating into the minds of some of the “white” residents of the town. It is not my intention to restrict changes to outside forces but from the discourse accessible, namely the Minutes and the publication of the Municipality, it would appear that the sudden change in the behaviour towards “coloured” residents, the restriction of “coloured” rights not only enhanced an affiliation of all “non-white” and “non-native” people but culminated in a sense of disappointment and desire to negotiate any privileges which could, still, be salvaged. Similarly, one cannot completely exonerate Municipal actions. However, the bonds between people of similar ambition and objectives had to be renegotiated to accommodate increasing racial classifications after the 1940s.

⁶³ US I.M.S no. 43, July 1963, p. 12.

⁶⁴ US I.M.S no. 47, November 1963, p. 2.

With the need to realign and unite, “coloured” identity began to overcome class and religious differences because no distinction between the two was being made during the latter period of the 1940s. This inevitably created further problems of identity. The following chapter will discuss the effects of the changes in macro policies and the manner in which the “coloured” people of Stellenbosch began assuming their newfound position within their local society.

Chapter 7

Sad Endings and New Beginnings

With the increasing urbanisation of Stellenbosch, “coloured”, “Malay”, and “Indians” shared the same geographical space. Differences of religion or origin posed few problems. Whilst the early period of the Municipal records shows the level of acceptance of “white” and various “non-white” groups, the establishing of the Groups Areas Act closed the previously porous boundaries. In terms of identity, “Malays” were Muslim for any matters pertaining to religious affairs. They were otherwise regarded as “coloured”. However, “Indians” and “Other Asians” had to renegotiate their place within a system which only made provisions for “whites”, “coloureds” and “natives”. Despite the marital boundaries being fairly porous, as intermarriages occurred between “Indians”, “Malays”, Muslims and Christians, links with “India” and an affiliation to a purely “Indian identity”, with strong links with “Mother India”, made this negotiation difficult. However, these “citizens” were considered instrumental in the workings of the Stellenbosch communities. In cases where “Indians” were asked to leave Stellenbosch and live in Asian areas in Cape Town, petitions and pleas were made to the authorities not only by the individuals and communities themselves but provisions were also made by the Municipality.

This chapter will discuss, using oral testimonies, how the different racially classified groups interacted with the Municipality and with each other from the 1940s to the 1960s. Because no distinction is made between the “coloured” and Muslim Stellenboschers¹ with regards to their shared experiences during this period, oral testimonies from both sections will be interwoven. The obscure relationship the inhabitants had with the University of Stellenbosch will also be discussed. Because the Muslim communities had been absorbed into the “coloured community”, very little religious distinction was made between “coloureds” and other groups of the town. Christian “coloureds” referred to all Muslims as *slamse*, regardless of their

¹ In this section, the English term *Stellenboschers* and the Afrikaans term *Stellenbossers* shall be used interchangeably according to the manner in which those interviewed made use of the term.

ethnic or ideological origins. The particular plight of one “Indian Muslim” family will begin the discussion. Because no official category existed for this family within the town, and because they were unwilling to renegotiate their identification with “their home” – India – the following case study provides an example of how, because of their affiliation as “Citizens of Stellenbosch”, they were accommodated not only by the authorities, who should have instigated State legislation, but also by the “coloured communities”.²

Shenas Ismael’s father, Abdul Habib Ismael Punjani and her mother Juleka moved to Stellenbosch in the 1930s. They were from Porbander in India. Because her father wanted his children to be proud of their roots, he maintained that they safeguard their “Indian” status. They lived in Merriman Avenue, Du Toit’s Station and were eventually relocated to Cloeteville in the 1970s. What she recalls is that because they were, and insisted on being, classified as “Indian”, they were supposed to move to the newly developed Indian location in Rynelands, Cape Town. They were offered the possibility to be re-classified as “Malay”. When they were approached by the authorities, “coloured”, “Malay” and the “European” communities, instigated by “a Professor from the University of Stellenbosch”, signed a petition to implore the authorities to allow them to remain in the town. “My dad was a benefit to them as far as putting an input into the community and therefore they did not want us to leave. We were very grateful and thankful...the Council was wonderful to also give us a business and housing”. She remembers vividly the role of “Old minister Curry” who had arrived at their home one morning with a bunch of keys. Unlike other emotional recollections of forced removals, Shenas Ismael recalls that the removal had actually proven beneficial. Their home in Du Toit’s Station consisted of bedrooms for eight people. What was offered to them in Cloeteville was two houses and a business. The narrator was extremely grateful to be allowed to stay in Stellenbosch, although one should keep in mind that they should not have been placed in such a situation. They were not keen to move to Rynelands, a place unknown to them and away from a life and a community which they were unaccustomed to. “We were real citizens of Stellenbosch because we were born and bred here”. In the same manner, the family had a strong affiliation with India. Letters and postcards were exchanged between family in India and the family in Stellenbosch. Two issues are visible. The first is

² The author acknowledges the difficulty in making broader conclusions about “Indian Muslims” based on the study of one particular family. This is an area for further research and is subject to locating other “Indian Muslim” families who lived in Stellenbosch at this time, the majority of whom have relocated.

related to identity and belonging. Many Indians who had married “Malay” men or women were provided the opportunity to be reclassified, but Ismael’s father insisted that they maintain their Indian identity. He was proud of his culture and wanted his children to share in this pride.³ As was discussed, this affiliation to the “Mother country” was by no means particular. It is worth noting that until 1961, Indians were considered temporary residents of South Africa. and as such, they needed some form of security – real or perceived in the mythical notion of what India represented. It is clear that this family were placed in the dilemma of maintaining familial ties with India and negotiating their familial ties to the town of Stellenbosch. Ironically, by not renouncing their link with their “Indianness”, they were on the verge of losing their “Citizenship” in the town of Stellenbosch, despite the obscure nature of this citizenship. Ironically, the interviewee moved to Cape Town in the 2000s partly because she no longer felt a strong affiliation to the town. What her case presents is the dilemma between a real sense of belonging and belonging to a greater community in which one can become completely isolated either because of distance or because of the new *mélange* of identities to which the cosmopolitan is exposed.

The second aspect introduced by this case study, is the manner in which the authorities would, according to the applicant, renegotiate their interaction with the inhabitants of Stellenbosch, despite the radicalisation of State legislation. Aaron Cupido recounted his altercation with the authorities over the proposed removal of Cassiem Osman and his family. Cassiem Osman had received a letter to say he should relocate to Athlone. After having established himself within the community, he approached Cupido who later wrote a letter to the Group Areas Board outlining what an asset Osman had been within the community and that he knew no other home, nor no other community than that of Stellenbosch. The request was successful, and the descendants of Cassiem Osman still live in Stellenbosch today.⁴ The concept of belonging to the town of Stellenbosch was not only profound within the inhabitants but was a comprehensible concept to the authorities.

Varying perceptions of the interaction between the “citizens of Stellenbosch” and the authorities were shared during the interviewing process. One respondent believes that the

³ Interview, Shenias Ismael, 28 April 2008, Cape Town.

⁴ Interview, Aaron Cupido, 14 July 2008, Stellenbosch.

Municipality had not attended to the needs of their family after her father was killed in a job-related accident whilst working for the Municipality.⁵ The Municipality was described as giving people options⁶, making sure that there was housing for all people⁷, but even though it attempted to create some stability economically, the forced removals caused much social turbulence.⁸

Beyond Citizenship, Beyond the “Brotherhood”

The role of the Municipality in developing a model town with separate amenities for each racial group within the broader concept of maintaining a “Citizenship of Stellenboschers” cannot deflect from the reality that the creation and implementation of the apartheid system had a personal and real impact on the “citizens” of the town. The apartheid system merely institutionalised segregation that had proliferated over the years. However, with the loss of the “coloured” franchise and the instigation of the Group Areas Act, political loss of power affected not only economic but social and personal facets of life. Throughout this period identity had to be negotiated to fit the system but one concept that seems to permeate is the feeling of belonging to the town. One cannot imply that this was solely the creation of the Municipality, but it was fairly instrumental in maintaining this even during periods where conflict between State and Municipality could erupt. As delusional as it may have appeared to be at times, the Municipality, rather those who were on the Board, believed to be creating a model town, at times at the expense of what really made the town: its people. But they were aware of the changing environment. “At a time when not only our country but many parts of the world around us are ringing with the fame of our town because of its beauty and achievements, it is most distressing to be brought down to earth with the realisation that fundamental principles of living together in a well organised community are being discarded”.⁹

The impact of the forced removals in terms of psychological trauma is difficult to capture in any piece of academic work. Regardless of the motivation behind trying to establish the

⁵ BIS Interview 18, p. 4.

⁶ Interview 43.

⁷ Interview 47.

⁸ Interview 44.

⁹ US I.M.S no. 40, March 1963, pp. 3-4.

apartheid system, despite the desire to create separate but equal facilities for the “coloured” members of the town, the ideological goals were severely undermined by the practical outcomes. It is not my intention to exonerate the Municipality of Stellenbosch from the trauma nor to excuse a pernicious system caused by this period of history. However, the Municipality was active in trying to enhance a feeling of citizenship amongst the permanent residents of the town, even if, at times, this was in conflict with State legislation.

“Bantu temporary sojourners” in Stellenbosch were rarely offered the opportunity to partake in the political or social order of the time. Great strides were made to initially treat “coloured” and “white” inhabitants as equals, attempting to uplift poor “white” and poor “coloureds” to the same economic and social (and by extension during the franchise period, to the same political) level as those of the middle and upper classes, previous religious differences set aside. Increasing external pressure and rising radical Afrikaner Nationalism eventually culminated in the establishing of the apartheid Government in 1948. But prior to this, certain fissures had been pried open, allowing racial classification to seep through the varnish of the idealistic harmonious town setting. “White”, “coloured”, “Kaffir”, “Malay” and other classifications resulted in distinct categories of “White”, “Coloured”, “Asian” and “Bantu” arising in the early 1900s. By the 1950s, these categories were once again diminished to “White”, “Coloured” and “Bantu”: the previous two being considered the “two races of Stellenbosch”, the latter, “temporary sojourners”, much like their Asian counterparts. The “Malays” as a term referring to those of slave descent became a quantified term after the application for the land for a mosque in 1896.

Records initially mention “Malay” contingents appearing before the Board. All documents relating to the Muslims of Stellenbosch further refer to “Moslem”, “Mohammedan” or “Slamse”, the third now being considered a pejorative term. Whilst this change in terminology becomes more inclusive of all those who practice the Islamic faith, further references to lifestyle and living conditions makes no differentiation between Muslims and Christian “coloureds”. The increasing classification by the State and implemented later by the Municipality of Stellenbosch, an impression I have attempted to portray through using Minutes of Meetings, correspondence and Municipal publications, needs to be counter-balanced by the testimony of the actual “Citizens of Stellenbosch”. For obvious reasons, the

feelings between the different racial groups can only be contextualised from personal testimony from those who recall their experiences during the 1930s onward. During the period of heightened racial classification, clear differences in experience were often felt by the “coloured” and “white” groups. For the purpose of this thesis, focus will be placed on those who constituted the “coloured” group.

Between Ideology and Reality

“The young people believe that the older generation did nothing against the Group Areas Act. This is not true. We did react”.¹⁰ Contemporary approaches to understanding the nature of relations during the apartheid era can sometimes neglect the context, the actual experiences and the alternative subtle methods which had to be used to bargain for social, economic and political signification. Imam Fuad Samaai remarks, “Even sincere white researchers will never be able to capture or comprehend the destruction of the social fibre of a once closely-knit community where even gangsters showed a great measure of respect to the community at large...”.¹¹ Similarly, how does one capture the manner in which different people lived, overcame obstacles and considered themselves during a vast and continuously changing political period. Personal recollections of experiences during the 1930s to the 1970s can provide a window into the way people thought, acted and felt.

According to Henriëtte Lubbe, Hilton Biscombe’s, *In Ons Bloed* (2006), conveys “the feelings of rejection, pain, bitterness and anger that were generated by racial oppression as a result of segregation and apartheid”. Accordingly, she values the book for portraying the individual voices of those who had to cope with what has become known as Stellenbosch’s “District Six”, as well as providing a wealth of new evidence.¹²

Whilst it is evident that the forced removals were a physical manifestation of what had been brewing ideologically for quite some time, the manner in which the strive towards creating a “citizenship of Stellenboschers” can only be truly evaluated through the testimony of those it

¹⁰ BIS Interview 1, broad translation from Afrikaans, p. 28.

¹¹ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. v.

¹² H. Lubbe, “Book Review of *In Ons Bloed*”, *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 58, 2007, pp. 306-308.

claimed to unite. Using the transcripts of the interviews conducted by Hilton Biscombe and his research team to create a personal account of life in Stellenbosch during this period, it is my intention to discuss the manner in which the Municipal goal of creating a unified town may have been achieved, but it also created other unintended consequences.

Race Relations between “Whites” and “Coloureds”

It is evident that the different races lived together and that race relations between “whites”, “Jews” (who faced several issues of their own during the apartheid era), “coloureds”, “Muslims” and “other Asians” were good prior to the legislation of apartheid.¹³ One man recalls, with nostalgia, the amicable relationship his father had with the “white” groups in the 1940s.¹⁴ Another remarks that he was a butcher and had many “white” clients. One of his closest friends was a Mr Steyn.¹⁵ This sentiment seems to resonate well into the 1960s. One interviewee mentions that even in 1953, racism was not prevalent in *Die Vlakte*. It is added that she did not feel the effects of apartheid and that the atmosphere in *Die Vlakte* and in the *Dorp* was good. “Ons het geweet waar’t ons behoort”.¹⁶ A similar sentiment is shared by another interviewee about the 1960s. He was unaware of real racial tension and believed that maybe in big cities and towns there was more of an awareness about racial tensions but not in his surroundings.¹⁷ At times, these interactions went beyond pleasantries and permutated into an almost familial tie. One “coloured” lady was “adopted” by a “white” family and received a property from them after their death.¹⁸

During World War II period, a similar sense of loss and anticipation was felt by all, across the racial barriers.¹⁹ Besides the obvious ideological differences between those who supported the war and the rise of radical Afrikaner Nationalism, a sense of shared concern had been evident across the racial divide. One interviewee recounts how she would knit jerseys, scarves and socks with other women across the racial divide because they shared in a

¹³ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. xx, xxi, xxiii, xxv, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 36, 89, 142.

¹⁴ BIS Interview 14, p. 4.

¹⁵ BIS Interview, 24, pp 9, 21.

¹⁶ BIS Interview 11, pp. 21-26.

¹⁷ BIS Interview 13, p. 19.

¹⁸ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 24.

¹⁹ BIS Interview 4, p. 21.

common sense of loss and fear.²⁰ Whilst these testimonies show some form of collegiality, racism and classism did exist. It was entrenched to such a degree that it was often not challenged but accepted as the “natural order”. They could possibly have nostalgically misremembered the true nature of race relations. Similarly, the impact of the apartheid era has eroded many memories of the “good” relations within the town.

Significantly, many interracial and interreligious marriages occurred.²¹ One of the rat-catchers was married to a “coloured” lady.²² A Mr Smith is reported to have moved to Swaziland with a “coloured” employee of the Nylon Cafe in the 1950s due to the implementation of the Immorality Act which forbid miscegenation and mixed marriages.²³ Similarly, Europeans, such as Germans, French and Poles had inter-married with “coloureds”.²⁴

Others simply remember the effects of the entrenchment of racial discrimination within the town. They believe that even before apartheid, “coloureds” were second class citizens.²⁵ Whilst they agreed that during the 1940s children of different races played together, their parents often continued to consider “coloureds” as “Hotnots”.²⁶ This portrayal of any “brown citizen” may have contributed to the shared sense of identification as a “coloured/Malay”, regardless of the origins of these terms and the implied meanings. They believed interaction between the races was simply for economic reasons and when the “white” communities needed “coloured” bands to play for their functions.²⁷ The services of Muslim tailors had been procured by prominent men such as Danie Craven and D. F. Malan, because they were known for their expertise.²⁸ However, one interviewee comments on the very close relationship between her mother and D. F. Malan’s wife which clearly went beyond any financial interests.²⁹

²⁰ BIS Interview 20, p. 23.

²¹ BIS Interview 32, p. 32.

²² H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 175.

²³ BIS Interview 17, pp. 27-28.

²⁴ BIS Interview 1, p. 6; BIS Interview 15, p. 5.

²⁵ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 100, 135, 137, 145, 146-147, 193, 194.

²⁶ BIS Interview 2, p. 34; BIS Interview 14, p. 21.

²⁷ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 22, 110, 162.

²⁸ BIS Interview 10, p. 12.

²⁹ Interview 42.

The realisation of ideological change manifested itself in physical forms. The “Battle of Andringa Street” in 1940 was certainly a major turning point for all the respondents. The opening of Woolworths at the beginning of apartheid also created an uneasy feeling. “Whites” were served first, “coloureds” ignored. This came as a shock to many for they could not comprehend the concept of such blunt, uncivil racial division. Apparently, a Mr Solomon attempted to intervene but he was reassured that the community had already expressed their contempt of the attitude of the staff.³⁰

With the implementation of formal apartheid, certain physical changes occurred in the town. One of the first “coloured” policeman hired before apartheid, eventually resigned because he was no longer allowed to sit in the front of the police vehicle.³¹ A similar story is recounted by a matron who had worked for the prison services and who also had to sit at the back of the police van after apartheid, she also resigned.³² A deep separation between employees and employer, each with their own set of rigid codes of conduct, existed.³³ This differentiation had always existed but had become flagrantly racial during apartheid. Different schools had been established for “white” and “coloured” children.³⁴ Initially these differences were the result of other factors, in substance still fairly racially bound, but complete segregation could be implemented under the new system. Different schools, sporting facilities and entertainment areas were formally entrenched for the two groups after apartheid was implemented.³⁵ However, each group could make use of the facilities as long as the functions were separate.

What is evident from the testimonies is the difference made between the different “white” groups, described in binary opposite terms of “good’ or “bad”. “Europeans” and the “whites” of Stellenbosch were conceived as being in sharp contrast to the “boere”.³⁶ Looting of antique

³⁰ BIS Interview 20, p. 26.

³¹ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 172.

³² BIS Interview 34, p. 10.

³³ BIS Interview 18, p. 11.

³⁴ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 65

³⁵ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 103.

³⁶ Helen Bradford makes the distinction between Afrikaner and Boer, the latter referring to all those who trekked into the interior. A similar differentiation can be seen within the “coloured” communities of Stellenbosch. They believed that concepts of “Citizenship” and “belonging” varied between the majority of “whites” who remained in the Cape and who considered the “coloured” to be their “brothers” compared to those

furniture was attributed to the “boere” and not the “whites” in general.³⁷ Some out rightly state that there were good “white” people, “not all were bad”.³⁸ Some described the “boere” as by nature being rude.³⁹ Differences were highlighted between “insiders” and “outsiders” of Stellenbosch.⁴⁰ It was noted that it did not matter whether you were “white” or “coloured” during the 1940s, everybody was friendly. It was those “whites” who came from outside that looked at this integration oddly.⁴¹

Being considered an “insider” or “outsider” also pertained to “non-white” migrants by the “non-white” inhabitants. Peter Fischer moved from District Six to Idas Valley. He found it hard to be accepted by the “coloured” community but after they realised he was a good soccer player, he became part of the “Stellenbossers”.⁴²

Strong ties are evident between the people of Simonstown and those of Stellenbosch. Not only was there a migration of “Mozbiekers” – the captured slaves from slave ships which left Mozambique and the surrounding areas – but several families had their roots in Simonstown and eventually moved to Stellenbosch.⁴³ This exchange of people and their ideas, had to also undergo some form of transformation in order to become “real citizens of Stellenbosch”. The father of one of the interviewees had moved from Franschhoek and eventually became a “Stellenboscher”. He recalls that his father became a “genaturaliseerde Stellenbosser. Gevestigde Stellenbosser”.⁴⁴ Whilst one could become a “Stellenboscher”, a clear distinction was made between a “natural born citizen” and an “adopted” citizen.

One local that seems to have made a profound effect on the “coloured community” was “Oubaas”. Luckhoff was a high school for “coloureds” whose principal was Mr Coetzee,

who had to renegotiate the concept of a solely “white brotherhood” in the north. With the rise of Afrikaner Nationalism, this latter perception had taken root within Cape society.

³⁷ BIS Interview 2, p. 61.

³⁸ BIS Interview 12, p. 12.

³⁹ BIS Interview 35, p. 30.

⁴⁰ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 11.

⁴¹ BIS Interview 2, p. 34.

⁴² BIS Interview 22, pp. 12-13.

⁴³ BIS Interview 17, pp. 1-9.

⁴⁴ BIS Interview 14, p. 10.

nicknamed “Oubaas”. He was extremely strict but always attempted to ensure that “coloured” students succeeded in their studies. One interviewee recounts how he paid a special visit to her mother to insist that the girl continue with her studies.⁴⁵ The teachers at the school were dedicated and often did more than what was expected in order to ensure that their students succeeded. One teacher that appears to have been politically active was Ronnie Britton, a History teacher at Luckhoff. Just before Matriculation examinations, the interviewee recalls that Mr Coetzee came to warn Britton that the security police were coming to collect him. He escaped although his whereabouts after that were never known.⁴⁶

One reproach that is made by the “coloured community” is that the “white” people did not support but neither did they fight against apartheid.⁴⁷ This has become an area of much debate and topic. Whilst it is evident that many people did support the system, not all were “white” and not all “white” people did support the system. Reasons behind this remain varied and complex. The power of persuasion and indoctrination can overwhelm any sense of logic or common sense. In an interview with a “coloured” gentleman, a certain anecdotal story emerged which could provide some insight into the order of obedience. He recounted how his parents had always said that one should never smile at a “black African” person because they would count your teeth. The implication being that they would steal even the teeth from your mouth. The moral implication of this anecdote may seem racial in a contemporary perspective, but what one could comprehend is the power one placed and the belief one had in parents and institutions. One never questioned, neither did one disobey. That was the order of obedience instilled in all racial groups, an order that only a few truly could overcome to end the apartheid era.

Relations with the University of Stellenbosch

The relationship between “coloureds” and the students of Stellenbosch as well as the University varied. A differentiation is made by one commentator on the “Battle of Andringa Street”. He believes that the majority of students had come from the North and they were the ones involved in the incident. He does not believe the locals were involved as he states that

⁴⁵ BIS Interview 7, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁶ BIS Interview 13, pp 9-16.

⁴⁷ BIS Interview 38, p. 34.

the locals were not horrible people.⁴⁸ This is closely linked to the rise of Afrikaner nationalism and the perceptions about “the people from the North”, in other words those from the former Boer Republics. In Chapter 4, it was discussed how the unification of the “white” races had led to a renegotiation of common ideologies which included a more radical legislation to control the “non-white” races, as was done in the former Republics prior to the Anglo-Boer War. Much in line with the clear binary oppositional manner in which “whites” were considered, judgement is passed based on origin. The narrative on the “Battle of Andringa Street” in the previous chapter, clearly attributes *partial blame* to both “whites” from the “North”, “South” as well as on some locals. It will later be mentioned that some responsibility is shared by some of the “coloured” members of the town who were involved in the altercation.

After the “Battle of Andringa Street”, relations between the “coloureds” and “whites” had changed but it was added not towards the “white man” in Stellenbosch but towards the “white students”.⁴⁹ University students were seen as outsiders and troublemakers.⁵⁰ Some people avoided any contact with the University students, especially after the 1940 incident.⁵¹ Whilst some interviewees insist that the students had very little contact with the residents of *Die Vlakte*, one interviewee mentions that some students used to do missionary work in *Die Vlakte* during the 1940s and 1950s.⁵² Others differentiate between the different students. “Some students were nice, such as those from Monica, others became arrogant, especially after the *Klip oorlogie*.”⁵³ Things were never the same after”.⁵⁴ A similar sentiment is shared regarding the teaching staff of the University.⁵⁵ Special mention is made of integrating efforts of Professors Wilcocks, Thom and de Vries.⁵⁶ One interviewee recalls the efforts of Dr Cruse, a History professor at the University, who exposed her to books from an early age. She eventually became a teacher and she attributes this to his great efforts.⁵⁷

⁴⁸ BIS Interview 24, p. 24; BIS Interview 25, p. 24.

⁴⁹ BIS Interview 2, p. 39.

⁵⁰ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 22, 24.

⁵¹ BIS Interview 11, p. 6.

⁵² BIS Interview 14, p. 18; BIS Interview 18, p. 21.

⁵³ The local name given to the “Battle of Andringa Street”.

⁵⁴ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 184, 201, 203

⁵⁵ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 134, 184.

⁵⁶ BIS Interview 21, pp. 7-8.

⁵⁷ BIS Interview 7, pp 1-5.

The University provided employment for “coloured” and some “native” men whilst “coloured” women washed the clothes of the University students to earn an extra income.⁵⁸ Certain employees believed that the University was good to them.⁵⁹ It was mentioned that varying opinions had much to do with the attitude one had with the University.⁶⁰ It is arguable that if one accepted the status quo and failed to question the system, relations would have been amicable. Much of the way in which people interacted across the racial line would have had something to do with the way in which one was indoctrinated from an early age. If the “white” man was to be addressed as “baas”⁶¹ and the same ideology used in later interactions, this would have resulted in an agreeable situation for both parties. “White” hegemony would not have been challenged and indoctrination amongst “coloureds” to believe in the two-tier system would have been left in a state of stasis.

In general, those who worked at the University prior to the implementation of apartheid had been taught supplementary skills. However, it is noted that people had changed after and that a relationships committee, “Verhoudingskomitee” had been established to bridge the growing dissension.⁶²

One of the major problems in the relationship with the University was that “coloured” and “white” staff had different conditions of service. No “coloureds” were allowed to attend the University.⁶³ Some students who showed potential could go to the predecessor of the University of the Western Cape but this was referred to by the communities at the time as “Bellville Bush College”, no doubt a remark denoting its perceived inferiority as a tertiary institution.⁶⁴ With the implementation of apartheid, tighter controls were introduced such as stricter control of leave and bonuses. Following the advice of Professor Thom, a “white” academic within the institution, a Union was started to redress “coloured’ working conditions.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ BIS Interview 9, p. 18.

⁵⁹ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 183.

⁶⁰ BIS Interview 17, pp. 32-33.

⁶¹ BIS Interview 18, p. 18.

⁶² BIS Interview 21, p. 11.

⁶³ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 180.

⁶⁴ BIS Interview 14, p. 14.

⁶⁵ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 186.; BIS Interview 19, p. 12.

Fissures within the “coloured” communities

Die Vlakte was considered a place that was safe and harnessed a caring community.⁶⁶ Some admit that there were some “crummy” areas.⁶⁷ One family in Andringa street had a three-bedroomed home for ten inhabitants during the 1940s. It is mentioned that during this period, people in *Die Vlakte*, generally struggled economically.⁶⁸ This is reiterated by another source who adds that the sense of community would obliterate any financial shortcomings.⁶⁹ Whilst many people had been told that they had to leave *Die Vlakte* under the Group Areas Proclamation, many who did not own their properties were forced out for economic reasons. Apparently, the rents had exploded forcing many to find alternative accommodation.⁷⁰ It was believed that most people rented their homes from Jewish landlords.⁷¹ However, ownership of properties was mostly in the hands of a few, as was discussed above, but not all landlords were Jewish neither were all Jews landowners. Some “coloured” people were themselves landlords. It is mentioned that a Jewish lady, Mrs Spitz, rented a shop from a “coloured” man.⁷²

The general social atmosphere may have been warm but there were a number of social problems. There were a number of “skollies”⁷³ from whom people kept their distance.⁷⁴ At times they would steal from people’s homes.⁷⁵ One interviewee mentions that one could leave their homes open during the 1950s⁷⁶, another adds, “Man *Die Vlakte* was ons klein Distrik Ses”, but continued to stress that *Die Vlakte* had spirit, it had gangs but one could walk at night, feel safe, and a minimal amount of crime was evident.⁷⁷ Similarly, there were social problems such as alcoholism⁷⁸, which would affect multi-religious homes and prove to be offensive to Muslims.⁷⁹ The “Brigade of Stellenbosch” was established in 1938 to combat the declining moral and social comportment of the youth in *Die Vlakte*. One positive outlook on

⁶⁶ BIS Interview 2, p. 53.

⁶⁷ BIS Interview 3, p. 8.

⁶⁸ BIS Interview 5, pp. 1-2, 29.; BIS Interview 8, p. 3.; BIS Interview 35, p. 2.

⁶⁹ Interview 41.

⁷⁰ BIS Interview 34, p. 29.

⁷¹ BIS Interview 1, p. 3.

⁷² BIS Interview 2, p. 10.

⁷³ Afrikaans term for *thugs*.

⁷⁴ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 117.

⁷⁵ BIS Interview 5, p. 3.

⁷⁶ BIS Interview 8, p. 3

⁷⁷ BIS Interview 16, p. 7.

⁷⁸ BIS Interview 3, p. 9; BIS Interview 14, p. 22.

⁷⁹ BIS Interview 5, p. 4.

the move to Idas Valley and Cloetesville was that two branches were established and thus it was believed to have become even more effective.⁸⁰ The same respondent adds that the forced removals had divided the sense of community of *Die Vlakte* but had inadvertently pushed the communities to become more self-reliant. A similar view is expressed by another respondent who believes that if it were not for apartheid, “coloured” people would never have owned their own homes. He also adds that some “coloured” construction contractors actually became economically empowered because of the construction of “coloured” homes.⁸¹

By the 1950s, “The Band of Hope” was established by some members of the “coloured community”, to fight against alcoholism and crime. Christian and Muslim children were encouraged to listen to the society deliver messages to the youth.⁸² Supposedly the Government wanted “good” people to have a positive influence on the “bad” characters but improper planning led many people to be relocated to poor housing conditions which in turn made them turn “bad”.⁸³ One interviewee recounts the tale of her life in *Die Vlakte*. After the death of her grandmother, her mother became an alcoholic. The family unit was dispersed amongst various extended family members. Unlike other interviewees who felt that the forced removals were negative, she is grateful because the family acquired a decent home in Cloetesville. It is suggested that the hardships of life during that period had caused many to drink in order to forget their problems.⁸⁴ However, it has been noted that alcoholism had its roots during the earlier periods of the establishment of Stellenbosch. The “dop” system instigated by the farmers had become an area of concern for the creation of a healthy model town by the authorities. Subsequent changes in legislation may have contributed towards the problems in the town.

Generally there was a sense of community. Similar facilities were shared by the “non-white” communities and this extended to practical tools such as a cart which was used for selling items but also used by Muslims for burials.⁸⁵ Children from Idas Valley, Jonkershoek,

⁸⁰ BIS Interview 19, pp. 15-19.

⁸¹ BIS Interview 28, p. 5.

⁸² BIS Interview 5, p. 9.

⁸³ BIS Interview 2, pp. 62-63.

⁸⁴ BIS Interview 17, p. 10.

⁸⁵ BIS Interview 9, p. 14.

Jamestown, Vlottenburg, Kylemore and Raithby all went to the same schools.⁸⁶ Sports kept the communities together. Parents, children and teachers all reunited for sporting events. At times, competition was high between the different clubs and this at times led to tension.⁸⁷ Whilst schools had integrated children of different religious backgrounds, Muslims were not encouraged to join soccer clubs. They were told not to touch “our” sport.⁸⁸ Christian and Muslim teams would play in separate teams but would play against each other. This was a law instigated by the communities themselves.⁸⁹ However, another source mentions that this only occurred for a very short period of time.⁹⁰ Another source states that it was a State legislation that denied “Bantus” and “Muslims” from joining “coloured” clubs⁹¹; they could, if they wished, form separate clubs. Muslims at that time were either “Malay” or “Indian”. The majority of those Muslims in Stellenbosch were considered “Malay” and as such, were considered and treated in the same manner as “coloured” people. The same interviewee later states that this separation was not law but derived within the Soccer Union. Spes Bona, one of the many “coloured” soccer clubs, had apparently started this trend between 1940 and 1941. Some questions surrounded the rigid religious differentiation when it was clear that political legislation in Stellenbosch made little differentiation between the “races/religions” of the “non-white/non-native” group. However, it was confirmed by at least one source that the decision was not a manifestation of “Muslim-Christian” antagonism but rather an individual reaction to religious affiliation. “Nee, van ons mense self...Man is ‘n sort van ‘n, nie almal nie”.⁹² The question remains why it was implemented in the first place and why there was a strong religious influence between the sports clubs.⁹³ Those clubs which accepted all religions such as the Glandies Club, were considered elite.⁹⁴ Despite these oddities, there is a strong sense within the communities concerned that school, church and sports were attributes which kept *the community* together.⁹⁵ Personal recollections within this study have suggested otherwise.

⁸⁶ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 81.

⁸⁷ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 124, 127.

⁸⁸ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 128.

⁸⁹ BIS Interview 2, p. 55.

⁹⁰ Interview 51, 16 July 2008.

⁹¹ BIS Interview 16, p. 16.

⁹² BIS Interview 16, p. 17.

⁹³ This will require further investigation outside of this particular study.

⁹⁴ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p.135.

⁹⁵ BIS Interview 2, p. 54.

Differences between the different “coloured” groups also seemed to be prevalent along class lines. There were certainly people that used their lighter complexion for their own gain within the oppressive system of apartheid. Tension had obviously been created between the “coloured” communities who had to endure endless obstacles and others who were considered “one of those”, meaning, those who could manipulate the system because of their skin pigmentation.⁹⁶ Many of these lighter skinned “coloureds” were ostracised by their communities. However, the system itself and not the individuals should perhaps be the focus of resentment. Status amongst the community was linked to the level of education and the qualities of being a moral and good citizen.⁹⁷ There is also some indication that differences along class and especially financial standing had created an atmosphere of jealousy.⁹⁸ This manifested in certain groups from certain areas reserving their sections at the cinema. People from *Die Vlakte* and Du Toit’s Station had separate seating arrangements.⁹⁹ “Natives” were not allowed to go to “coloured” cinemas.¹⁰⁰ Several incidents had occurred for example between the “farm boys” and the Vlotenburg group.¹⁰¹ It has been noted that everyone came from *Die Vlakte*, Idas Valley and other areas for dances but “the poorer ones” tended to attend the English School dances,¹⁰² although one lady insists, rather nostalgically, that everyone lived well and had a good economic life.¹⁰³

Politics and the Earlier Generations

Politics was considered to be non-existent in *Die Vlakte*.¹⁰⁴ In general, people in *Die Vlakte* were not interested in political issues. They just went on with their lives.¹⁰⁵ It was said that “coloured” voters went to the meetings of both the SAP and the NP. They were convinced that the NP would always attend to the “coloured” needs. It is suggested that the voters never really knew the implications of what “national” stood for in the National Party. However, the role of Bruckner de Villiers was re-stated and it was emphatically reiterated that de Villiers did what he did for the “coloured” community solely to their advantage. During the Group

⁹⁶ BIS Interview 20, p. 15.

⁹⁷ Interview 39.

⁹⁸ Interview 45.

⁹⁹ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 107-108

¹⁰⁰ BIS Interview 9, p. 6.

¹⁰¹ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 108.

¹⁰² H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 113.

¹⁰³ BIS Interview 2, p. 50.

¹⁰⁴ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 198.

¹⁰⁵ BIS Interview 16, p. 30.

Areas era, the interviewee mentions that between the two racial groups and the Municipality, great contemplation on how the Act could be implemented took place. Specific recognition is given to the Municipality for ensuring that the “coloured” people maintained Idas Valley.¹⁰⁶

Some “coloured” people did remain in the town but not for long as “coloured people give in too quickly”. The “coloureds” had walked a long road with the “whites” therefore they always voted National Party.¹⁰⁷ In these statements, the two interviewees born in the 1930s both admit that the “coloured” people were at times responsible for their own shortcomings. Despite obvious disappointment with the National Party, allegiance to the party remained.¹⁰⁸

How integrated were the “Slamse”?

The Muslims were known as “Slamse” (a derivative, it is proposed, from Islam), then “Moslem” and finally “Malay”. It is believed that “Malays” came from Malaysia and that Muslims were always referred to as “Slamse”.¹⁰⁹ During the 1940s, it is remarked that there was no difference between Indians and Muslims.¹¹⁰ However, one interviewee differentiates between the “Moore kinders” (Arab children) and the “Slamse kinders” (Malay Muslim children) in the 1950s.¹¹¹

A nostalgic remembering is shared about the relations between Muslims and Christians. There is a general consensus that everyone worked together, celebrated Christmas and “Labarang” (*Eid*) together¹¹², both communities helping each other and providing moral and economic support to one another. The mosque is believed to have been built by both Christians and Muslims.¹¹³ Both Christians and Muslims attended Christian schools and Christian services together.¹¹⁴ The Christians did not see the Muslims as strange and were

¹⁰⁶ BIS Interview 1, pp. 27-30.

¹⁰⁷ BIS Interview 2, pp 67-68.

¹⁰⁸ BIS Interview 11, p 14, a poem written to P. W. Botha contains the line, “His rod and his sjambok hits me, But I will dwell in the house of the Nationals forever...”.

¹⁰⁹ BIS Interview 1, p. 16.

¹¹⁰ BIS Interview 3, p. 14.

¹¹¹ BIS Interview 23, p. 20.

¹¹² BIS Interview 12, p. 5.

¹¹³ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 25, 43, 49

¹¹⁴ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 31.

accommodating.¹¹⁵ Muslims even attended Christian schools.¹¹⁶ There even seems to have been some friendly banter between the religious groups. At times Christian children would play jokes on their Muslim counterparts by “hiding” their shoes after having entered the mosque, a place of worship, within which there are certain rituals which should be performed. Ironically, this “sacrilege” does not seem to affect those interviewed.¹¹⁷ However, there seems to have been a very strong reliance between the two religious “coloured” groups. One “non-Muslim” respondent comments that “we could not have survived without the Muslims”.¹¹⁸ Another specifically mentions the name of the Muslim that helped his family move to Cloetesville.¹¹⁹ Certain Muslims stand out amongst the communities for aiding not only their own community but the Christian communities as well.¹²⁰ This is reconfirmed by the testimony of a member of the family in question.¹²¹ However, one respondent, born in the 1920s, claims that the Muslim people were not very involved in the community and made no extraordinary contribution.¹²² It is mentioned that Muslims were not involved in protests but rather held forums.¹²³ It could be for this reason that they were considered inactive by some. It has been mentioned by at least two interviewees that a Muslim man had used his truck to fetch reinforcements from Kaya Mandi during the “Battle of Andringa Street”.¹²⁴

On the surface it would appear that relations between the Muslims and Christian “coloureds” in the town were amicable. They had contributed to the economic and social atmosphere amongst the “coloured”. They also seem to have had a working relationship with the authorities. It was believed that the authorities did not attempt to restrict the Muslims because

¹¹⁵ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 52.

¹¹⁶ See for example, H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, pp. 53, 57

¹¹⁷ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 53. Although BIS Interview 2, p. 48, names the 4 “culprits” who threw, and not hid, the shoes in a stream in Merrimanlaan. I make use of the term “sacrilege” as this “game” was seen as innocent but could be evidence of a deeper misunderstanding or incomprehension of what was considered sacred to Muslims. The point I attempt to touch upon is the uni-dimensional manner in which religious tolerance was instilled within the “coloured community”. This is also evident in the extent of the knowledge about Christianity Muslim interviewees portrayed and the limited knowledge Christian “coloureds” seem to have about Islam. *Labarang* (Eid) seems to be a well known Islamic practice amongst all those interviewed but there seems to be no further interest shown in trying to understand other aspects of Islam within “a community” that claims to have had a “deep respect” for each others’ religions. Of course the Christian religious fervour of that period might have played a major role in this phenomenon.

¹¹⁸ BIS Interview 23, p. 3.

¹¹⁹ BIS Interview 26, p. 39.

¹²⁰ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 156.

¹²¹ BIS Interview 36, pp. 18, 20.

¹²² BIS Interview 27, p. 27.

¹²³ BIS Interview 15, p. 16.

¹²⁴ BIS Interview 18, p. 17; BIS Interview 31, p. 26.

they were afraid of their “mystical powers”. “Hulle was bleddie bang vir die slamse, die slamse toor mos ook”¹²⁵, however it is probable that the relationship between the Muslim communities and the legislators were amicable because they were needed within the structures in place and they had a history of being able to renegotiate their place within changing structures.

During the establishment of the Group Areas Act in Cape Town, provisions were made for Muslims of both “Indian” and “Malay” origin. In Stellenbosch, despite the obvious working relationship of both “Indian” and “Malay” Muslims and the rest of the communities, no provisions were made, except for those considered “desirable Stellenboschers”. A possible explanation was offered by one interviewee who said that the Municipality had offered the Muslims their own piece of land where they could live. However, it is alleged that they declined as they insisted that they were comfortable living “mixed” as they had done in the past.¹²⁶ As yet no evidence has been found in any archival sources, this is still a most plausible explanation.

Communities, Brotherhoods and Citizenships: Concluding Remarks

Various communities of people arrived at the Cape from 1652. Distinct groups were classified according to class: slave owners and slaves. These were not racially bound as there were slave owners of Arab origin who were part of the elite. Miscegenation and intermarriage saw the merging of what later became racial groups and religious groups. Over time, Muslim and Christian, “white” and “non-white” were part of the social stratification, present in all classes of people. The rise of Muslim proselytization was of concern and worked as an impetus for Christian conversion. Previous chapters have already alluded to the porosity of the terms “Malay” and “coloured”. As political constraints became increasingly racialised, “non-white” Muslims and Christians worked at times together to overcome complete isolation. Muslims also overcame inter-religious differences to safeguard against Christian hegemony. A “brotherhood” of those fighting against racial exclusion enabled the concept of desirable “non-white citizens of South Africa” to work with their “white” counterparts at the expense of other members of their “racial brotherhood” who did not share in the same

¹²⁵ BIS Interview 2, p. 59.

¹²⁶ BIS Interview 2, p. 47.

ideology and who had been unable to measure up to the criteria of that time based on finances and level of education. With the need to re-unite the “white citizens of South Africa” certain negotiations led to the exclusion of the “non-white” groups from political and social prosperity. Throughout this period, State legislation and political activists negotiated, on behalf of their communities, classifications based on race.

In Stellenbosch, classifications were fairly similar to those prior to emancipation in 1834. No visible political activity took place. Religious conversions were highly important and because there was a smaller population of Muslims, Christian hegemony seemed to have been more successful than it had been in Cape Town. Most Muslims preferred to move to the city. There were, however, dispersed bands of Muslims in what was then the rural Cape. The establishment of the Slave Church in 1808 made Christianity more appealing than it was in the Cape. Religious bonds saw the growth of separate Christian “coloured” and Muslim communities. With the establishment of the Municipality of Stellenbosch, the desire to create a “citizenship of Stellenboschers” of varying racial and religious groups meant that until political influences from the “outside” affected the stasis, focus was placed on creating a “model town” with little poverty, good facilities, no disease, and instilling a common moral comportment amongst all its citizens. The idea of being a citizen of a town was not solely endemic to Stellenbosch. A similar trend can be seen in the Strand ¹²⁷ and Simonstown. ¹²⁸ What made Stellenbosch different is the manner in which this concept still radiates in contemporary society. Racial classifications implemented by the State and the communities differentiated between the “two official groups” of the town, but both accepting the exclusion of “outsiders”. The concept of being “Malay” meant all those from the East. Distinctions between Christian and Muslim “Malays” came about with the purchase of land and the establishing of the mosque. Municipal discourse changed from “Malay” to “Moslem”. This change, in a sense, included those not from the East (initially this meant those from the Indonesian Peninsula); but, what it had done was make a distinct difference on religious affiliation. As was the case in the Cape, Muslim and Christian “non-whites” shared a

¹²⁷ Mr Crombie mentions this sense of belonging to the town of the Strand in a Muslim documentary entitled *An Nur*, aired on SABC 1, Sunday 29 June 2008.

¹²⁸ S. Bangstad, “Islamisation, gender and the social structure of memory in a Cape Muslim community: a preliminary survey”, seminar at the University of the Western Cape, 2000, makes reference to one interview he had with a habitant of Simonstown. The interviewee refers to the “Simonstownians” who exhibited a similar attachment to each other and to the town prior to the forced removals of 1968. “We were all one big happy family”, p. 8.

common living area, common facilities and were considered by the Municipality as “Malay”, being part of the “coloured” community. In the quest to create a brotherhood of Stellenbosch, racial differences were minimal. Equal facilities were to be established for all racial groups. The rise of intellectual Afrikaner Nationalists “from the North” looked with disdain on the working relationship of the different groups. This led to conflict and the desire to create unity amongst “whites” against “coloureds”. Differences between the “coloured” groups also existed. However, the history of the town, the inclusion of the different “coloured” groups and the desire to create a common “citizenship” had to negotiate State changes in 1948. “Separate but equal” became a motto but this was incomprehensible to the “insiders” of Stellenbosch who always believed in equality beyond racial differentiation. It can also be seen that this was acceptable if it adhered to certain hegemonic criteria. Interaction, intermarriage, and adoption of characteristics were all aspects acceptable towards creating a “citizenship of Stellenboschers”. The Municipality took on the role of the patriarch of the extended family. It attempted to protect its citizens but it certainly had to maintain this within a changing political environment. Blood relations were separated under the new system, new ideas adopted. Adoption of children from other racial groups seemed to be a common phenomenon during the pre-apartheid era. In the Cape, Muslims adopting children caused concern because of the rise of Islam. In Stellenbosch, one is reminded of William Bergstedt who was raised by a “coloured” family when at 14, he was removed by a priest because he was a “white” boy living with a “coloured” family.¹²⁹ Despite the perception that a family unit was being created, this case highlights the inherent differences that eventually seeped through regarding racial differences. It was acceptable for each section of the family unit to exist, as long as it was maintained within the racial boundaries.¹³⁰

Whilst changes led to increasing marginalisation, ties with the patriarch, with the system of the Municipality remained, even if this authority had to become more nationalist in practice. Identities had to be deconstructed in order to reconstruct a new concept of unity. With a change in political hegemony, these identities had to be renegotiated by the system but much like the adopted child, remnants of the past persisted. One constant throughout the process of change was religious difference: the difference between Christians and Muslims.

¹²⁹ BIS Interview 29, p. 23.

¹³⁰ This resembles the story of *Fiela's Child* (1986) by Dalene Mathee .

With the planning of the Group Areas, it is believed that the Muslim communities rejected the desire to have a separate area for themselves. Two aspects are of importance: knowing that Muslim meant “Malay” in the eyes of the authorities, this would exclude any Muslim not of “Malay” descent; secondly, it showed that the Muslims really did feel integrated within “coloured” society, even if this required accepting “Christian hegemony” in a period where racial oppression seemed more pressing. To what extent this may be true will be the focus of the next chapter. Whilst the increasing radical Nationalism had forged even stronger links between the “non-white” groups in Stellenbosch, religious differences still existed. As in other areas in the Cape, varying forms of Islam also prevailed in Stellenbosch.

Chapter 8

The “Coloured Community” and the “Brotherhood of Islam” in Stellenbosch

The existing historical appendices on the Muslims of Stellenbosch show how integral they were to the “Stellenbosch community” and how “coloured” and “Malays” had become an identifiable group in relation to “whites”. They shared similar views and overcame similar problems. Indeed, the Municipality made no distinction between the two, the adherents themselves made very little distinction between the two. Contemporary accounts make use of *Die Vlakte* to discuss the manner in which the forced removals impacted on the amalgamated “coloured community”. Alliances were a common phenomenon amongst minority groups for various reasons but the forging of ties did not dissolve group particularities. Unlike Cape Town which afforded more geographical and intellectual space to the many accepted racial groupings, Stellenbosch enforced a framework in which only three groups could operate and live: “white”, “coloured” and “black”. What becomes apparent is the ongoing tension between time and space. The battle between time frames (context), geographical space and memorial place has led to the teleological and ahistorical need to create a common heritage and a shared sense of loss (amongst those who consider themselves the victims) and responsibility (those confined within the rigid category of oppressor), very much aligned to racial classifications, at the expense of individual and communal diversity.

In Chapter 5, the idea of a citizenship of Stellenboschers beyond racial categories was a driving mechanism of the Municipality and had infiltrated the communities involved. The racial atmosphere was widely deemed to be amicable both within Municipal and community discourse. In Chapter 6, a clear distinction was made between the pre and post 1940 period in which the idea of a “citizenship of Stellenboschers” had to be renegotiated under State pressure and because of the influence of more rigid nationalism based on race, greatly influenced by “outsiders”. Under these conditions, Muslims became increasingly considered in the same manner as “coloureds”. As Chapter 7 showed how “coloureds” and Muslims began assuming a common identity in order to confront increasing marginalisation, personal recollections support this argument. This chapter will begin to investigate two broad themes:

firstly, Muslims as a monolithic religious group in relation to “others” and secondly, Muslims as a heterogeneous religious entity and how that changed over time.

Myths, rituals and symbols play an important role in the religious world.¹ Myths contribute towards creating an ideal environment in which people can be inspired to mobilise and conduct their religious experience. Rituals are repetitive patterns which serve as a reminder for communal ties and experiences and induce emotions, conduct and meaning. Symbols provide a framework in which meaning is transferred. Within the first section, a broad overview of what has been said about the role of Muslims in Stellenbosch, the contributions made to the economic and social life of the town, what made the Muslims particular in relation to the other “coloured” communities and the impact of the forced removals on the Muslim communities will be discussed in relation to myths, rituals and symbols. The myths surrounding the succession of the Imamhood, the establishment of the mosque and the naming of the street in which the mosque is located has served as a source of inspiration for the Muslims of Stellenbosch. Similarly, the establishment of the *madrassah* was a symbolic feat over a hegemonic Christian education many Muslims were compelled to participate within the formal mainstream educational structures provided for the “coloureds”.

What becomes problematic is that the reproduction of certain myths which remain unchallenged could conceal even greater achievements such as the possibility that Stellenbosch had in fact established one of the first cohesive rural communities of Muslims in South Africa. Similarly, myths that are unchallenged can exclude, or at least be perceived to exclude, members of the “group” who should be sharing in the mythical experience. Rituals within Islam such as the marriage ceremony, the burial rite, *Eid*, are all spaces in which food becomes a central feature. The mosque is undoubtedly the central symbolic feature of the Muslim communities of Stellenbosch. It serves as a testament to a history of overcoming not only external pressures against the religion but also internal dissensions. What becomes apparent in locating these concepts within the atmosphere of shared and mixed Muslim and “coloured” spaces, is the manner in which a perceived congruence is imagined within the rituals of the Muslims. From the oral testimony in chapter 7, sharing in Muslim experiences

¹ H. Mathee, *Muslim Identities & Political Strategies: A Case Study of Muslims in the greater Cape Town area of South Africa, 1994-2000*, p. 22.

by non-Muslim “coloureds” entailed religious festivals and the consumption of “Malay” food. What remains specific to the Muslims are the myths and symbols surrounding purely Muslim places.

In the second section, the existence of Muslims of varying origins and practices will be discussed in the context of a hegemonic “Malay Muslim” identity within Stellenbosch. The implication of these two themes and the impact it had on the notion of a shared history, one of the goals of the *In Ons Bloed* project, will conclude this section. Social identities are often constructed through compliance, internalisation and eventually identification and this involves “constructed memories of the past” but this communal identity often reflects hegemony of a particular social identity. In some cases, religious and ethnic similarities can be stronger than ethnic and religious differences.²

Before discussing the particularities of the Muslim communities, a brief history of the shared religious struggles of the “Brotherhood of Islam” within the Stellenbosch context will be offered.

Muslims in a Non-Muslim Environment: The Growth of Islam in Stellenbosch

Fervent missionary work was being carried out in the Cape between the 18th and 19th centuries which led to the establishment of the South African Missionary Society (S.A.M.S) in 1799. Stellenbosch was the second oldest settlement at the Cape with a large concentration of slaves³ who became the focus of Christian missionary societies.⁴ The S.A.M.S had a coordinating network which worked towards objective but doctrinal, ecumenical and logistical differences hence the *Het Stellenbossche Medwerkend Genootschap* (S.M.G) was formed. The S.M.G was approved by landdrost Ryno van der Riet, the local missionaries and villagers of Stellenbosch set out “to extend the Kingdom of Christ to the benighted and heathen, especially in the wide-flung district of Stellenbosch”. What became evident was that

²H. Mathee, *Muslim Identities & Political Strategies: A Case Study of Muslims in the greater Cape Town area of South Africa, 1994-2000*, pp. 26-27.

³The slave population in the Stellenbosch district numbered 10 703 in 1799, F. Smuts (ed.), *Stellenbosch: Three Centuries*, p. 274.

⁴K. Schoeman, *The Early Mission in South Africa / Die Vroeë Sending in Suid-Afrika*, pp. 11-13.

religion was inextricably linked to the education system. The slave school of Stellenbosch was established in Dorp Street in 1799 by Mewes Janse Bakker and had 38 pupils in October 1810. By 1815, the Stellenbosch School Commission, consisting of elders of the DRC and the local landdrost, took over the school in order to have more control over the slaves and thus their religious well-being.⁵ This did not impact upon the *da'wah* of the early Muslims. According to the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Report of 1817:

The prevention of the instruction of the Cape Negroes (prize Negroes) by missionaries is the more deeply to be regretted, as the Mohammedan priests from the interior have been actively and successfully engaged in making prey of their ignorance, and turning them to the delusions of the false prophet.⁶

Contrary to this belief, Ebrahim Rhoda states that the Christian missionary work was so overwhelming that Muslim missionary work was almost impossible. He speculates that *Imam* Sammat moved from Stellenbosch because his experience from 1815-1820 convinced him that Stellenbosch was not the place to form a cohesive Muslim community, as the Christian missionaries in the Stellenbosch area had such overwhelming human resources.⁷ However, the Muslim community of Stellenbosch had grown tremendously. The 1842 census showed that there were 6 492 Muslims in Cape Town, 268 in Stellenbosch, and 300 in Worcester. By 1875, this number grew: Stellenbosch 619, Paarl 194, Worcester 100.⁸ In 1885, 120 Muslim families were recorded as living in the Stellenbosch district.⁹ It is important to note that during this period, the count for Stellenbosch included the environs which included, amongst others, the present day Strand and Somerset West. In the census of 1946, it is observed that “Malay Muslims” formed part of the sub-group of “coloureds” whilst “Indian Muslims” were counted in the figure for “Indians”. By 1946, there were 43 640 “coloureds” and 60 954 “Indians” in the Union of South Africa.¹⁰ In 1936, the “Malay” group in the Cape numbered 30 996 but had grown to 56 542 by 1951. The “Malays” were distributed across the Cape with highest number being in Cape Town, followed by Somerset West, Paarl, Stellenbosch

⁵ F. Smuts, *Stellenbosch: Three Centuries*, pp. 273-276.

⁶ E. Rhoda, *The Founding and Development of the Strand Muslim Community, 1822-1928*, unpublished Master's Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2006, p. 27.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28

⁸ R. Shell, “From Rites to Rebellion: Islamic Conversion, Urbanization, and Ethnic Identities at the Cape of Good Hope, 1797 to 1904”, *Canadian Journal of History*, Vol. 28, December 1993, p. 417.

⁹ Y. da Costa & A. Davids, *Pages From Cape Muslim History*, p. 105.

¹⁰ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master's thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 12.

and then Worcester. The total number of “Malays” in Stellenbosch was 270 by the 1950s. According to Imam Achmat Toefy, twenty “Malays” lived in Andringa Street, fifty in Banhoek Way, eight in Borchard Street, twelve in De Villiers Street, four in Dorp Street, three in Du Toit’s Station, fifty in Idas Valley, fifteen in Merriman Lane, and eight in Ryneveld Street.¹¹ However, Moosa Patel disagrees stating that the census of 1955 showed a Muslim community of 440.¹² Whilst the precise number of Muslims within Stellenbosch cannot be determined as yet, there was a general trend shared amongst the various viewpoints that the number of Muslims did in fact increase within the area. The growth of Muslims within the town led to the need to consolidate Islam through the establishment of a mosque.

Myths, Rituals and Symbols

The Mystery of the Imams

Historically, one of the central figures within the Muslim community is the Imam. Amongst other duties, he is expected to perform all the tasks laid down by the *Sharia*. He is responsible for the increase of Islamic knowledge; he is the official representative of the *jama’* (the community of Muslims); he has the right to safeguard the community by withholding any information deemed to be detrimental to the community; and he is expected to conduct his life in a manner that befits his position as a leader to whom his people look for guidance and advice.¹³ He is normally elected as Imam and enters into a contract with the community and is duly remunerated for his services. Interestingly, Imam Achmat Toefy said that neither the Imam nor those in the service of the community received any compensation during the 1950s.¹⁴ It is not uncommon to have more than one Imam at one mosque. It is unclear whether the early Imams were under the obligations stipulated in later contracts but it is known that he was central to the social and religious life of his community. In the 1950s, the Imam of Stellenbosch was considered the most important person in the *masjid*. He led the services and prayers. In choosing a new Imam, education did not play as big a role as his manners, the respect he gained from the community and his ability to read and give his sermon in Arabic. The Imamhood is not an inherited profession but the “Malays” believed in

¹¹ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, pp. 40-41.

¹² M. Patel, “Die Stellenbosse Moslemgemeenskap”, *Ad-Da’wah*, Vol 4.5, September 1997, pp. 6-7.

¹³ SMOS, Conditions of Employment for the post of Imam.

¹⁴ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, pp. 78-79.

the importance of having a candidate *au fait* with the community rather than an Imam that was educated but had no sense of the very community he was to serve. Historically, evidence from the 1860s shows that most congregants would back the son of an Imam, on his passing, if he had one, regardless of intellectual capacity.¹⁵ In certain situations, this would lead to conflict.

In Cape Town, the existence of the multiple schools of Islamic tradition often resulted in breakaway communities establishing their own mosques and *jama'at*. In the Strand, familial ties rather than ideological differences resulted in the establishment of three mosques.¹⁶ In Paarl, the Breda Street Masjid was the first mosque established in 1889 under the guidance of Imam Habel Domingo. It is believed that Jakoef du Toit had purchased the land for the mosque in 1887 and was also instrumental in the building of the mosque but he was unhappy with Domingo's appointment over that of his son, Imam Kiamdien du Toit. Apparently the case was taken to court by Jakoef, where he was unsuccessful. A second mosque (Masjied Uthmania established in 1892¹⁷) was built and his son was appointed as Imam. By 1946, the two communities had united.¹⁸ Currently, all three mosques in Paarl are administered by the same committee and they are served by the same Imam, Maulana Yunus Suleiman, who had served a term as co-Imam in Stellenbosch.¹⁹ In this instance, familial rather than ideological differences had created dissention within the communities of Muslims in Paarl. The mosque in Stellenbosch has undergone turmoil but has remained the only mosque in the town which has and does serve all Muslims regardless of ideological differences.

Playing such a pivotal role within any Islamic community, the succession of Imams should be the most recorded and most easily accessible information one could find about a particular community of Muslims. Much controversy has surrounded the succession of Imams in Stellenbosch. One account testifies that the first Imam of Stellenbosch was Abdul Gabier, followed by Imam Mustafa Toefy and then his son Imam Agmat Toefy.²⁰ Moegammad Kara

¹⁵ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, p. 18.

¹⁶ Refer to E. Rhode, "The Founding and Development of the Strand Muslim Community, 1822-1928", unpublished Master's Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2006.

¹⁷ Anon, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims 2003/2004*, p. 416.

¹⁸ A. Bester, "Paarlose moskees staan as bakens vir verskuifde Maleierbuurt", *Die Burger*, 30 September 1995.

¹⁹ Anon, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims 2003/2004*, pp. 416, 418, 426.

²⁰ H. Giliomee, *Nog altyd hier gewees: Die Storie van 'n Stellenbosse Gemeenskap*, pp. 95-96.

mentions Imam Abdul Gabier, Imam Mustafa Toefy and Imam Achmad Toefy.²¹ Magmoed Kara mentions that the first Imam of the *masjid* was Imam Abdul Gabier (although he adds that nobody seems to know when he began his duties), followed by Imam Mustafa Toefy and then proceeds directly to the “present Imam Mughamad Shakier Vermeulen”.²² In the brochure compiled for the official opening of the *Madrassah* in 1988, Imam Mustapha is described as the first Imam of the *masjid* “as it stands today” although Imam Gabier is acknowledged as the leader of the *masjid* when it was still used as the “slamse skooltjie” – Imam Agmat Toefy is also acknowledged.²³ Ironically, the *Stellenbossiana* issue on “Die Moslems van Stellenbosch” details the arrival of the slaves and the growth of Islam at the Cape but no mention at all is made about Islam in Stellenbosch.²⁴ Moosa Patel states that all indications show that Abdul Gabier was the first Imam followed by Imam Mustapha and Imam Achmat. He mentions that *Hajji* Mohamed Davids, father of *Hajji* Gamied, also served the community as Imam. He also adds that in 1917, Imam Abubakar served the community.²⁵ Imam Mustapha Toefy returned from pilgrimage and took the role of Imam in 1922, his son, Achmat, succeeded him in 1938. By 1971, his son, Nawawie, had become Imam. In 1993, Nawawie Toefy retired and was replaced by Imam Fuad Samaai. *Hafiz* (one who can recite the Quran) Sedick Johaar also served as Imam.²⁶ Nawawie Toefy said in a letter dated 12 June 1986 that the first Imams were *Galiefas*²⁷ who travelled from town to town, teaching the scriptures. He believes Imam Gabier established himself in the town in about 1840. His grandfather then married Imam Gabier’s daughter, Rukeya, “wat skatryk gewees het”²⁸, became Imam and his son, Achmat succeeded him.²⁹ This letter served as the foreground for a later article published in the *Eikestadnuus*, which added the names of Imams Nawahwie (*sic*) Toefy, Fuad Samaai and Yunus Suleiman.³⁰

²¹ H. Biscombe, *In Ons Bloed*, p. 48.

²² F. Gabru, “Stellenbosch local records Muslim history”, *Muslim Views*, November 2007, pp. 21-22.

²³ SMOS, Programme for the opening of the Gujjatul Islam Madrassa, 16 October 1988, pp. 2-3.

²⁴ B. Strüwig, “Die Moslems van Stellenbosch”, *Stellenbossiana* (the Stellenbosch Museum newsletter), Vol. 21, No. 1, October 1997.

²⁵ M. Patel, “Die Stellenbosse Moslemgemeenskap: Goejjatul Islam Mosque Centenary Celebrations 1897-1997”, *Ad’da’wah*, Vol. 4.5, September 1997, pp. 6-7.

²⁶ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, pp. 21-22, 29, 35

²⁷ Teachers.

²⁸ “Who was very wealthy”, which would thus support his argument that they helped those families in need and placing some questions on the financial status of the early Muslims in Stellenbosch.

²⁹ NAW personal recollection of his family’s history.

³⁰ N. Toefy, “Moslems sedert vroeë 1800’s (*sic*) hier”, *Eikestadnuus*, Vrydag 10 Desember 1999 (Millennium Bylae).

In an interview with Nawawie Toefy, Achmat's son, it is said that Achmat was not interested in becoming Imam and that the day his father died, he knew very little about being an Imam. According to Imam Nawawie Toefy, Imam Achmat Toefy had to go on an intensive course in Cape Town to fulfil his "duties" as new Imam, thus his succession was very much linked to familial obligation. Imam Gatiep helped his father in this process. It is also stated that the family originated from Claremont in Cape Town and that his grandfather, Mustafa, had married the daughter of the first recorded Imam in Stellenbosch, Imam Abdul Gabier. Like most Imams at the time³¹, leading the Muslim community was not their only employment. Both Mustafa and Achmat were tailors. Because most people were poor, the family often contributed towards the well-being of those less fortunate. Nawawie was well-trained for the succession of Imam in Stellenbosch when in 1953 at the age of 14, he was sent to study in Mecca. On his return he studied in Cape Town and eventually became Imam after the death of his father in 1971.³² Magmoed Kara provides a more comprehensive analysis of past Imams in his unpublished pamphlet on the Muslims of Stellenbosch. He mentions the following people who had taken on a role as Imam at some stage within the history of the mosque: Abdul Gabier, Mustafa Toefy (1924-1937), Achmat Toefy (1937-1970), Nawawie Toefy (1970-1993), Sedick Johaar (1990), Fuad Samaai (1993-1995) and Yunus Suleiman (1996).³³ According to the Muslim Guide for the Western Cape, past Imams include Mustafa Toefy, Achmat Toefy "(?-1971)", Nawawie Toefy (1971-1998), Maulana Yunus Sulaiman (1996-1997), Imam Fuad Samaai (1989 – present), Assistant Maulana Shakier Vermeulen (2002 – present).³⁴ During the planning for the "People's" History Project, Imams Mustafa Toefy, Achmat Toefy, Shareef Sallie, Ebrahiem Hercules and Nawawie Toefy are mentioned.³⁵ It is unclear whether the breakaway faction of the Muslim community, Mr. M. Hercules (to be discussed later) was the same person as the Imam Hercules referred to above. Minutes of the Meetings of the *Jama'at* for the late 1960s and 1970s refer to a Mr M. Hercules and the *Janaazah*³⁶ list does have a E. Hercules who died 27 May 1984.³⁷

³¹ Shamil Jeppie makes the argument about the need of Imams to supplement their income by procuring other forms of employment in "Leadership and Loyalties: The Imams of the Nineteenth Century Colonial Cape Town, South Africa", *Journal of religion in Africa*, Vol. 26, May 1996, pp. 139-162.

³² Interview with Imam Nawawie Toefy conducted by Moegammad Kara in Stellenbosch, transcript pp. 3-6.

³³ CORN Author unknown, "Stellenbosch Masjied".

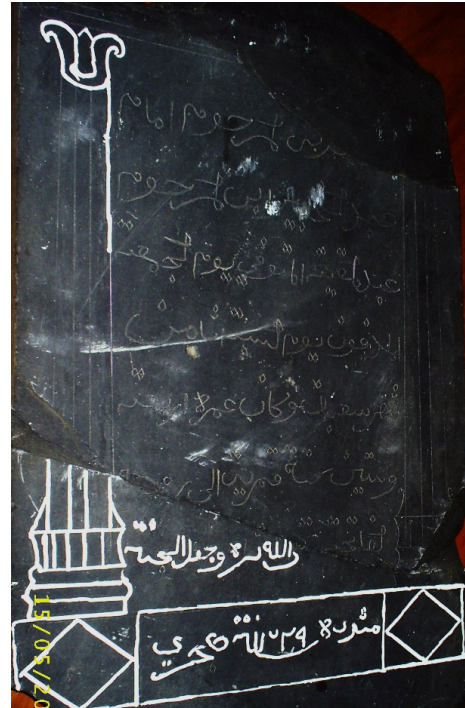
³⁴ Anon, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims 2003-2004*, p. 414.

³⁵ NAW Agenda and areas of research outlined by the "People's History Project".

³⁶ Death notices.

³⁷ KHAN "Gujjatul Islam Jamaah: Janaazahs for the period 1963 to 1992" compiled by Igsaan Khan.

What can be ascertained by the plethora of different versions is that little consensus can be made regarding the most fundamental concept of who ran the mosque and who was the central figure from the time of its inception. From an analysis of the tombstone supposedly retrieved from Imam Gabier's grave (see picture below³⁸), it can be seen that the Imam died at sixty-four. If he was succeeded by Imam Mustafa Toefy in 1922, he would have been born in 1857-1858. If the later date of 1924 is taken, this would mean in between 1860 and 1861. This would thus mean that he could not have established himself in the town in the 1840s. The second problem that arises is related to the reading of ancient Arabic script. According to one transcription, the tombstone reads Imam Abdul Gabier but the name Abdul Mugayyah is also mentioned.³⁹ A more recent transcription reads "Imam the leader, Abdel Moukit".⁴⁰ The question then arises if this is really the tombstone of Imam Gabier and if not, into which era of the history of the Imams in Stellenbosch does this Imam fall?



This phenomenon illuminates several problems encountered in attempting to create a narrative on the history of Muslims in Stellenbosch. Firstly, no records seem to be available for the earlier period of Muslim settlement and one has to rely quite heavily on narratives passed down through the generations. Even in the 1950s, it is observed that new Muslims in the town simply introduced themselves to the Imam and immediately became members of the community, no formal registration being needed.⁴¹ However, one of the pillars of Islam is the giving of alms and the *jama'at*⁴² fees and this would be registered. However, these records are also scarce and difficult to locate as those serving as treasurer at the mosque would safeguard these documents in his own personal archive.

³⁸ Photograph taken at the Muslim Library in Stellenbosch, 15 May 2008.

³⁹ NAW transcription of the supposed tombstone of Imam A. Gabier.

⁴⁰ Transcribed by Mustapha Saidi, Arabic Section, Department of Modern Languages, University of the Western Cape, personal correspondence, 15 October 2008.

⁴¹ J. Greeff, "Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch", unpublished Master's thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 45.

⁴² Contributions made by adults for the upkeep of the mosque.

Secondly, no archival system seems to be in place at the mosque, although Moegammad Kara has begun donating valuable information in his possession to the mosque. In 2002, it is recorded that the 1913, 1956 and 1961 Minutes, the 1931, 1933 and 1953 Cash Books as well as the Group Areas Act eviction notice of 1965 were the only archival sources available.⁴³ Whilst sifting through the miniature archival resources of the mosque, minutes from the 1970s as well as other records were found which indicates that even the minimal records housed within the mosque are not catalogued. An appeal was made to the communities during the Friday *Jumu'ah* (prayer) but no response was forthcoming. Either the communities had no information to share, either they feel that what they do possess is of no value or they may continue to feel despondent because of the outcomes of previous attempts to write a comprehensive history on the Muslims of Stellenbosch. A "People's" History Project was organised by the Muslim Community in 2002, probably in response to the *In Ons Bloed* project.⁴⁴ The lack of trust between community and "biographer" seems to be eminent even if one does research with members of that particular community. Distrust even extends to the institution one is attached to. One of the members of the research team for *In Ons Bloed* categorically stated that the involvement of the University of Stellenbosch was undesirable and proved to influence the method of research.⁴⁵

Thirdly, the distinction between written and oral sources seems to become blurred as the same informants are instrumental in both forms of documentation. It would appear that Moosa Patel had access to minutes of meetings held at the mosque, but none of the enquiries made have led me to the whereabouts of these minutes. It would appear that each committee recorded their minutes and kept them in their own private archives.

Fourthly, because of the need to rely on the same sources, any inaccuracies or myths are repeated in subsequent versions. Whilst the mere existence of Islam from the latter parts of the 19th century within Stellenbosch is a symbolic achievement against a religiously inhospitable environment, it is evident that there had been a strong presence of Muslims in the area prior to the life of Imam Gabier. The familial ties linking the Gabier and the later

⁴³ NAW Agenda and areas of research.

⁴⁴ NAW Agenda and areas of research.

⁴⁵ Interview 50.

three generations of Toefy Imams would certainly further the argument about familial successions of Imams in the early years at the Cape, but it is highly plausible that some religious leader/s had preceded the more well-known family of Imams of the 20th century. This would challenge the current narrative that the first established and consolidated (even though there were three mosques) rural settlement of Muslims was in Mosterds Bay, present day Strand. Mention is made about the “Mohametan priests” in the Stellenbosch area, in the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Report of 1818, and so one would assume that Stellenbosch had a growing presence of Muslims even if they had no official mosque as yet.

Nawawie Toefy mentions the existence of nomadic *Galiefas*⁴⁶ and these could have been mistaken for “priests”.⁴⁷ What is evident is that there was, prior to the establishment of the mosque in Stellenbosch, a settlement of Muslims who were visible by Christian missionary workers and who had established a place of worship. They had not constructed a place of worship either because they lacked the financial means or because Christian fervour was too influential. But this was not restricted to Stellenbosch. The last will and testament of Saartjie van de Kaap, who donated land for a mosque in Cape Town, outlines the insecurity of Muslims at the Cape. She dedicates her house as a mosque “for as long as the Mohammedan religion will be allowed in the Colony”.⁴⁸ A similar observation was made in 1854. A visit to “Carel Pilgrim” elicited curt responses about Islam at the Cape, because of “fear that information might be sought to be used against his church and creed...”.⁴⁹ The fear of losing the ability to practice Islam could have inhibited Muslims from wanting to become too visible, especially in a small town where they were clearly a minority. Land became available within the “Malay quarters” from 1893 and this provided an opportunity to purchase and make visible the presence of Islam in the town.

Centrality of the Mosque

A mosque is a vital institution for Muslim communities. It is not merely a place of worship but is at the centre of social interaction. It is a centre of learning and propagation of religious

⁴⁶ Teachers.

⁴⁷ NAW Testimony of Nawawie Toefy, signed 12 June 1986.

⁴⁸ KAB MOOC 7/1/188, No 131, The will of Saartjie van de Kaap.

⁴⁹ J. S. Mayson, *The Malays of Cape Town*, pp. 16-17.

norms and is the disseminating point for the regulation of communal and social life and as such, is pivotal for the community's cultural life.⁵⁰ A mosque can also serve as a site of contestation, reflecting class, language and ethnic divisions amongst Muslims. Mosques reflected power structures in Muslim societies and the differences of the communities within "the community" were often underlined in the running of the mosque.⁵¹

"Before the first mosques were built, the Malays tended to congregate about the houses of the imams where religious services were held. Later when the first mosques were built, Muslims formed themselves into a series of compact Muslim communities, each with its own mosque".⁵² The first prayer house, *langgar*, was the first communal site to which the early Muslims are believed to have congregated. According to some, this was situated on the corner of Crozier and Andringa Streets. However, other sources say that the prayer house was located on the north-west corner of Borchard and Andringa Streets.⁵³ The two conflicting accounts appear not only in brochures of the mosque but the former appeared in the *Muslim Views* in November 1997⁵⁴ whilst the latter appeared in the September 1997 issue of *Ad-Da'wah*.⁵⁵ Both accounts were published for the centenary celebrations of the mosque in Stellenbosch but no consensus seems to have been reached on this important detail. According to Imam Nawawie Toefy, this house belonged to the Carriems.⁵⁶

This prayer house was used until Nieftagoedien Ras supposedly bought the land where the current mosque is now situated in Banhoek Way.⁵⁷ However, according to the Municipal meeting of 17 November 1896,

⁵⁰ F. R. Bradlow & M. Cairns, *The Early Cape Muslims: A Study of their mosques, genealogy and origins*, pp. 1-2; G. Vahed, "Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 45

⁵¹ G. Vahed, "Unhappily Torn by Dissentions and Litigations: Durban's 'Memon' Mosque, 1880-1930", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, Vol. 36, No. 1, 2006, pp. 23-49.

⁵² J. Greeff, "Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch", unpublished Master's thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 75.

⁵³ M. Patel, "Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap", pp. 8-9.

⁵⁴ Whilst the author of the newspaper article is stated as Fatima Gabru, it is evident that her information was supplied by Magmoed Kara.

⁵⁵ Author stated is Moosa Patel.

⁵⁶ NAW Testimony of Imam Nawawie Toefy signed 12 June 1986.

⁵⁷ CORN Author unknown, "Stellenbosch Masjied"; M. Patel, "Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap", pp. 8-9; this is also repeated in all the different texts prepared by Magmoed Kara who

A deputation consisting of six Malays appeared before the Board on behalf of the Malay families living at Stellenbosch, in order to purchase a certain Erf in *Die Vlakte* from the Municipality. The Board resolved to sell them Erf No 4 on the Banhoek Road for the sum of Forty pounds stg for the purpose of building a church. Whereupon they undertook to purchase said Erf for the said sum of £40 and to pay off cash at once £30 and the balance of £10 by the end of February 1897 when transfer will be given. Further to pay all expenses such as transfer dues: survey expenses and transfer. They also undertake to submit a plan of the building to the Board before starting to build in order that the Board may approve of the same.⁵⁸

According to the cash book of the Municipality of Stellenbosch for 1892-1900, it is clear that



the Muslim *community* had bought the land for the mosque and the *community* was responsible for the rates from 1897.⁵⁹ The transfer deeds issued support this argument (refer to Appendix 1). The local Muslims of Stellenbosch managed to buy the land for the mosque and built the *masjid*. Prior to the building of the mosque, Muslims from Stellenbosch had to travel to the Strand for the Friday *Jumu'ah* as well as for other important festivals as it was the nearest

town with a *masjid*. The first *masjid* was built in 1897 but the minaret was only added twenty-five years later. Between 1934 and 1935, the *masjid* was supposedly broken down and a new one built within two months with the help of both Muslim and Christian artisans.⁶⁰ Whilst the mosque is of great religious symbolism to the Muslims of Stellenbosch, it also serves as a testament to the working relations between the different religious communities. By the 1990s, two *madaris* were built in Idas Valley and Cloetesville. It was only in 1991 that an appeal was made across the country for funding to expand the *masjid* of the time.⁶¹ By 1993, it was extended to its present day form (see picture above⁶²).⁶³ From the buying of the

provided the information to Fatima Gabru of the *Muslim Views* (see article "Stellenbosch local records Muslim history", November 2007).

⁵⁸ KAB 3/STB 1/1/1/6, Minutes of 17 November 1896, pp. 389-390.

⁵⁹ KAB 3/STB 8/3/1/1/4, Cash Book Stellenbosch Municipality 1892-1900, entries no 13, 22 September 1897, 1s.3p paid by Abdol Raziet on behalf of the Moslem Community and entry 27, 30 September 1897, 9s.5p was also paid by Abdol Raziet on behalf of the Moslem Community, p. 103; entry number 14, 23 September 1898, 12s.6p was paid once again by Abdol Raziet on behalf of the Moslem community, p. 127; entry number 54, 17 October 1898, 1s.8p paid by Abdol Raziet on behalf of the Moslem Community, p. 130; entry 122, 6 November 1899, 1s paid by Abdol Raziet for the Moslem Community, p. 164.

⁶⁰ F. Gabru, "Stellenbosch local records Muslim history", *Muslim Views*, November 2007, p. 22.

⁶¹ SMOS, Letter of appeal for the extension of the Masjid, undated.

⁶² Photo of the Stellenbosch mosque taken 28 July 2008.

land in 1896 to the last major renovations of the *masjid* in 1993, the community in Stellenbosch managed to finance all major constructions and renovations to their facilities within the town. This is a testament to their financial ability as well as their determination to be self-reliant. Currently, much of the symbolism of the mosque is masked by its survival of the “forced removals era”.

The forced removals of the 1950s and 1960s had a marked impact upon the practice of Islam at the Cape. In Cape Town, new settlements required establishing new places of worship. Communities were certainly forced to establish new familial and social relations and new religious communities had to be formed. Islam dictates that prayer should be done at least five times a day.⁶⁴ Whilst Christian services are normally held once a week, over the weekend, devout Muslims are expected to attend mosque for all prayers. Within Cape Town, a proliferation of new mosques appeared in areas with a high concentration of Muslims (see Appendix 6 for the distribution of Mosques in the Cape). At Stellenbosch, one mosque was built and despite the Group Areas Act, Muslims were allowed to enter “white” Stellenbosch for the purpose of prayer simply because they refused to abandon the symbol of their religious affiliation. However, having been relocated to the outskirts of the town, the “trek” in to town five times per day within a non-Muslim work environment proved to be a great achievement for those who wished to fulfil their religious obligations. The weekly holy day of Muslims is not a day of rest as is the case within Judaism or Christianity.⁶⁵ Jasmina Raziet, daughter of Imam Achmat Toefy, mentions that being such a distance from his place of worship and having his community spread across the town, led to her father eventually passing away one year after the move to Idas Valley.⁶⁶ It is with pride that the Stellenbosch Muslim communities managed to safeguard the mosque within the rezoned “white area of Stellenbosch”, but the forced removals had created hardships especially for the Muslim communities. Through traditional festivals, some form of cohesion between the communities divided by geographical space was made possible.⁶⁷ It is unclear why the communities did not establish mosques in the new settlements of Idas Valley and Cloetesville (4 kilometres apart from one another and both 3 kilometres from the existing *masjid*), but in a letter of

⁶³ Anon, “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

⁶⁴ *Fajr* in the morning, *Dhur* at midday, *Asr* mid afternoon, *Magrib* towards sunset and *Eshaa* at night.

⁶⁵ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 82.

⁶⁶ Recounted to her granddaughter Yasmine Raziet during the research phase of this thesis.

⁶⁷ Anon, “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

appeal for funds in the 1990s, it is stated that it was beyond the financial means of the Muslims as 96% were “working class”.⁶⁸ However, from personal testimony and from an analysis of the business ventures of the prominent members of the Muslim communities⁶⁹, the reasons may be more closely linked to the symbolic nature of having one mosque in a rezoned area rather than financial constraints.

The Missing “G”

Another myth surrounds the name of the street on which the mosque is located. According to some, the street was called “Banghoek”, because the Malay word “bang” was equivalent to the Arabic name “athan” – the calling of Muslims to the *masjid*, and this would have been prior to the subsequent building of the minaret. According to the myth, “The name of the road temporarily lost its meaning when the ‘g’ was left out and the name Banhoek was used. The replacing of the ‘g’ in the name was done by our forefathers and was very important to the history of the Muslims of the town”.⁷⁰ “The first *masjid* of Stellenbosch was finally built in 1897, on Banghoekweg, where the present *masjid* stands. It is believed that the name of the street is a reference to the Malay word ‘bang’ used to refer to the muezzin’s call to prayer – ‘die muezzin bang’”.⁷¹ However, from the Transfer Deeds of 1896 (Appendix 1), it can be ascertained that *prior* to the building of the mosque, the street was referred to as “Banghoek Street”, although plans obtained from the Municipality for the proposed erection of a wall made for “A. Gabier, Priest”, mentions the name “Buitenkant Street” (see Appendix 2). The Municipality response to Mr Gibbons on behalf of the “Members of the Moslem Mosque” who had requested permission to build a “vestry” at the site of the mosque in 1909 refers to “Banhoek Road”. Further plans dated 23 September 1913 for the modification to the “Moslem School” refer to “Banhoek Road”.⁷² Correspondence between the Secretary of the Muslim School, Mr A. Crombie and the Municipality confirm that even the Muslims referred to the road in front of the mosque as “Banhoek Road” in 1915.⁷³ Plans for the renovation of

⁶⁸ SMOS, Letter of appeal for the extension of the Masjid, undated

⁶⁹ POOL Inventory compiled by Isgaak Pool on the 12 June 2003 regarding businesses in *Die Vlakte*, at least fourteen Muslim owned businesses can be deciphered by the author, I. Poole, “The Interest Group – Luckhoff Concerns and Group Areas”.

⁷⁰ Translation from Afrikaans, M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslingemeenskap”, p. 10.

⁷¹ F. Gabru, “Stellenbosch local records Muslim history”, *Muslim Views*, November 2007, p. 22, in reference to the booklet of M. Kara, *Gujjatul Masjid: 1897, Geskiedenis*.

⁷² Refer to Appendix 3

⁷³ CORN letter dated 17 September 1915, from A. Crombie to the Municipality of Stellenbosch.

the “Gotjatul Mosque” dated 30 December 1932 as well as the proposed plans of 19 April 1941 for the building of a caretaker’s cottage on the site of the mosque also refer to “Banhoek Road”.⁷⁴ To what extent the famous ‘g’ could be attributed to Muslim existence and the efforts of “the forefathers” to reinstate its significance is by no means conclusive. The reason for the rise of this “myth” is more than likely to have its origins in the perceptions “non-Muslims” had about Muslims and the fear (*bang* in Afrikaans) that arose around the mysticism of the religion itself.⁷⁵

Education of Muslims

Another institution vital to the symbolic existence of Islam is the *Madressah*. On 23 April 1911, the Muslim School Council was established in Stellenbosch. The Council collected school fees and provided a teacher for the children’s Islamic education. Fundraising within Stellenbosch and the surrounding areas led to the school being opened in 1916 however the Council was opposed to building a high school next to the *masjid*. Most Muslims would receive their formal education in Christian schools and receive their religious instruction within the *Madressah*. By having spaces in which “non-whites” of varying religions were able to interact, created some form of tolerance and mutual respect for the different religions. This would also have consolidated ties between the “coloureds” of Stellenbosch as they shared living, educational and religious space. Most interviewees of Stellenbosch show an understanding of the different religions even if this is rather restricted to the celebrating of *labarang*⁷⁶ by non-Muslims whereas the Muslims were often compelled to partake in Christian festivities during their schooling.

Established on 3 March 1962,⁷⁷ the Stellenbosch Islamic Movement educated members and encouraged and organised Islamic and other educational lectures, discussions, debates, studies and exhibitions. They promoted and propagated the teachings of Islam and provided social services to Muslims, for example, those in hospitals. They also provided assistance to indigent and disabled people within the Stellenbosch area. It was open to both sexes.

⁷⁴ Appendixes 4 and 5.

⁷⁵ Discussion with Tazneem Wentzel, Zainap Osman and Nuraan Motlekar, 20 October 2008.

⁷⁶ Eid.

⁷⁷ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 26.

However, despite it being an intellectual as well as a social organisation, it did not intend to entertain differences of opinion. The draft constitution mentioned that “any members who consistently act[ed] in a manner contrary to this constitution [would] be liable to suspension or expulsion as determined by the executive committee”.⁷⁸ This was removed in the final Constitution.⁷⁹ For over ten years the movement had gained strength and were recognised by larger Islamic bodies. For example, they were invited to participate in a Children’s Day – to encourage young children to become involved in Islam through the *Madressah* – on 1 October 1972 at Athlone Stadium.⁸⁰

By the 1990s, *Madaris* were built in Cloetesville and Idas Valley as well as a Muslim library in Idas Valley.⁸¹ Within the early years of the *madressah*, teachers from other towns such as Simonstown and the Strand offered their services.⁸² These were eventually replaced by Stellenboschers who had succeeded in their Islamic studies and who had become revered intellectuals within the community.⁸³ The Muslim library was established on 1 May 1996. It was to provide a resource centre but was also established to document the history of the Muslim community in Stellenbosch.⁸⁴

Prior to the establishment of the *madaris*, private individuals gave lessons in Islamic education. With the implementation of the Group Areas Act and with the voluntary move of Muslims to Idas Valley and Cloetesville, new provisions had to be made for the Islamic education of children. Some secular schools were established until the main *madaris* were built.⁸⁵ Despite the establishing of the *madaris*, oral testimony has shown that ideological differences that exist within Islam, encouraged many *Shafite* Muslims to obtain their religious education in Cape Town.⁸⁶ Plans were implemented to construct the school in Idas Valley in

⁷⁸ SMOS, Handwritten draft of the Constitution of the Stellenbosch Islamic Movement, point 17.

⁷⁹ SMOS, Constitution of the Stellenbosch Islamic Movement.

⁸⁰ SMOS, Letter of invitation from the Muslim Assembly (Cape) to the Stellenbosch Islamic Movement dated 13 July 1972.

⁸¹ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, pp. 18-20, 35-36.

⁸² NAW Details obtained from the programme of the official opening of the Idas Valley Madressah in 1988.

⁸³ The details of the prominent figures of Muslim society in Stellenbosch can be accessed in M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap” or in M. Kara, “Gujjatul Masjied: 1897, Geskiedenis”, published brochure, 2006.

⁸⁴ Anon, “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Interview 42.

1976 but the land proved to be unsuitable. What proves phenomenal is that 99% of the money raised, R115 238, came from the community in the town. Much of the construction, like that of the mosque, was done by volunteers, after hours. By 1988, the Islamic Education Council was using the facilities as the headquarters for the Boland area.⁸⁷

Contribution to the Economic, Social and Cultural Life

Muslims formed an integral part of the economic life of the town. Within the Cape, “Muslims composed a large portion of the lower class of tradesmen, fishermen and mechanics ... They became a sort of aristocracy among the Coloured population”.⁸⁸ Within Stellenbosch, Muslim craftsmen and artisans played a pivotal role in the development of the town itself. They erected buildings and were also well known for their tailoring abilities.⁸⁹ Certain Muslims were visibly active within the economic environment. Ownership of land amongst Muslims was also visible. According to financial records, Abdol Gabier had owned property within the town as he paid municipal rates.⁹⁰ He was also a taxi driver as well as being Imam.⁹¹ Mustafa and Achmat Toefy were well known tailors. Imam Nawawie Toefy recounts how his father had made clothes for Danie Craven and a tuxedo for D. F. Malan.⁹² He recounts how the family lived in Borcherd Street and later moved to Banhoek where his father had a shop and a café.⁹³ Jasmina Raziet, his sister, said she was born in Andringa Street and they later moved behind the mosque in Borcherd Street. Her father bought the house from “Old Mr Meiring”. She does however reconfirm that they had a shop at the Gaiety Bioscope and that they had a shop at the corner of Andringa and Banhoek Way.⁹⁴ A number of Muslim-owned businesses also proliferated within the town by the 1940s.⁹⁵ Similarly, through personal testimony in Chapter 7, “wealthier” Muslims assisted their communities – both “coloured” and Muslim.

⁸⁷ NAW Details obtained from the programme of the official opening of the Idas Valley Madressah in 1988.

⁸⁸ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 42.

⁸⁹ Anon., “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

⁹⁰ KAB 3/STB 8/3/1/1/4, Cash Book Stellenbosch Municipality 1892-1900, entry number 96, 3 November 1897, £1.17s.6p, p. 109; entry number 141, 18 March 1899, £1.9s.2p, p. 143; entry number 128, 8 November 1900, £1.13s.4p, p. 164.

⁹¹ KAB 3/STB 8/3/1/1/4, Cash Book Stellenbosch Municipality 1892-1900, entry number 7 “cab licence”, 16 January 1899, 15s, p. 137; “special cab licence for one day” - entry number 1, 23 January 1898, 2s.6p, p. 138; entry number 45, 7 February 1900, 2s, p. 171.

⁹² Interview with Nawawie Toefy conducted by Moegammad Kara, Stellenbosch.

⁹³ Interview with Nawawie Toefy conducted by Moegammad Kara, Stellenbosch.

⁹⁴ Interview with Jasmina Raziet conducted by Yasmine Raziet, Stellenbosch 15 July 2008.

⁹⁵ NAW Die Belangegroep- Luckhoff Aangeleentheid en Groepsgebiede documents the construction, eateries, general dealers, tailors and hairdressing establishments of the Muslim and “coloured” communities.

From within the Muslim communities, certain sports achievers also proliferated such as Omar Henry, Omar Arnolds and Laam Salaamoedien Raziet who excelled at cricket. Excelsior cricket club consisted of mostly Muslims.⁹⁶ Salaamodien Raziet played cricket from an early age. In 1956, he played in the “non-white” South African cricket team (consisting of “coloured”, “black” and “Indian” players) against Kenya.⁹⁷ Sport often reflects the values, prejudices, divisions and unifying symbols of a society. It can be considered a “microcosm of the fissures and tensions of a deeply divided society”.⁹⁸ Various accounts have arisen pertaining to this area of research therefore, no further details will be given in this specific work.

The Role of Language

One of the first academic accounts written about the history of the Stellenbosch “Malay” community was the Master’s thesis of J. B. Greeff in 1955. The first illuminating point he makes is the need to rely on both oral and written sources when dealing with a community that is mostly orally based. Much of the focus of his study was on the use of Arabic as a religious language and the acceptance of Afrikaans culture and language for social purposes. He believed that because Afrikaans was being more frequently used amongst the “Malays”, with the threat of distinction of the “creolised” Arabic, the need had arisen to record the manner in which Arabic words had been used. He also shows how Arabic is a unifying element which unites all Muslims in the faith. Whilst his thesis attempts to discuss the growth of Islam in Stellenbosch, he tends to focus on the tenets of Islam in general. However, he does present the manner in which the influence of Muslims, and the influence upon Muslims, is multidirectional in the Cape and in Stellenbosch. The manner in which Afrikaans had impacted upon the Muslim communities and the way in which Muslims were becoming Afrikanerphiled is a case in point. Arabic sermons had to often be summarised in Afrikaans in order for the community to understand.⁹⁹ Many “Malay” words such as *piesang* (banana),

⁹⁶ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 28.

⁹⁷ More details on their success can be seen in M. Allie, *More than a Game: History of the Western Province Cricket Board, 1959-1991*, (Cape Town: Cape and Transvaal Book Printers, 2000).

⁹⁸ G. Vahed, “Cultural Confrontation: Race, Politics and Cricket in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s”, *Culture, Sport, Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2002, p. 79.

⁹⁹ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, pp. 1, 7, 64.

bang (scared), *baie* (many, a lot), *piering* (saucer), and *blatjang* (chutney), were becoming used in the creolised Dutch.¹⁰⁰

But with this interaction and exchange, the threat of a loss of identity began to proliferate within the Stellenbosch context. Imam Achmat Toefy commented on the intermarriage of “Malays” and Christian “coloureds” and how the Muslims had become engulfed in “coloured” culture to the point that many became indifferent to Islam. He felt that the “Malays” were in danger of disappearing.¹⁰¹ It is interesting to note that this occurred at the same moment of an increased alliance between “coloureds” and “Malays” within the greater Cape context.¹⁰² It can also be noticed that the politics of creating a “citizenship of Stellenboschers” prior to State oppressive policies probably had its roots in the perception that in the everyday life the “Malay” does not see himself as “Malay” or Arab but more as Afrikaans. “The Malays do not know the grammar of Arabic therefore they cannot write nor have a conversation in Arabic. Even within the correspondence between the elders of the community on religious matters is conducted in Afrikaans. Afrikaans has become the written language”.¹⁰³ The common use of Afrikaans amongst “coloured”, “Malay” and “white” was ironically seen as a sign of an identity shift amongst the communities. This was especially evident amongst the “coloured elite” of Cape Town who wished to further their working relationship with the “white” system by assuming Afrikaans as the *lingua franca*.¹⁰⁴ However, the extent of the use of the language prior to 1940 is questionable in Stellenbosch. One of the key problems giving rise to the “Battle of Andringa Street” was the manner in which Afrikaans-speaking “white” people considered “coloured” reaction to Afrikaans culture and language.¹⁰⁵ Within the “coloured” community in Cape Town, Afrikaans language and culture was being readily assumed. Voting patterns seem to illustrate this point if one considers the support harnessed by the National Party. Stellenbosch seemed to have been on the cusp during the 1940s. Supporters of the A.P.O. and the English-speaking South African Party were reluctant to vote for the National Party especially after the *Klip-oorlog*.

¹⁰⁰ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 16.

¹⁰¹ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 8.

¹⁰² Refer to Chapters 4 and 6.

¹⁰³ Translation from Afrikaans, J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 158.

¹⁰⁴ As is discussed in Chapter 4.

¹⁰⁵ See Chapters 6 and 7.

The efforts of Bruckner de Villiers and the National Party eventually led to alliances formed between Afrikaans speakers.¹⁰⁶ But whether this included Muslims is debatable. Whilst Greeff makes the observation that Afrikaans was becoming more of a written language amongst the “Malays” of Stellenbosch, it was only in 1961 that Minutes of the *Jama’at* meeting were recorded in Afrikaans.¹⁰⁷ Whether this is indicative of the use and spread of the language or of the numerous new immigrants and visitors to the town is difficult to determine. The existence and influence of “Indian Muslims” within the town who were predominantly English-speaking may also have had some influence on the running of the mosque compared to the reality of the use of Afrikaans as a working language amongst the “Malay” Muslims.¹⁰⁸ Much interaction has also been noted between Muslims in the town and those abroad as well as with other Muslim associations in English-speaking areas of South Africa.¹⁰⁹

What is most probable is the growing allegiance between “coloured” and Muslims in the town during increased marginalisation and the “coloured” elite had already made some form of renegotiation with the language as Afrikaans was originally considered a slave derivative. This coupled with the fact that from the Population Registration Act of 1950, “coloured person” included any member of the “Cape Coloured, Malay, Griqua or Other Coloured Group”¹¹⁰ meant that both from within, as “coloured” and “Malays” shared a common heritage, and from the exterior, State classification, alliances based on language were eminent.

Different *Samoosas*?

It has already been noted that Muslims and Christians shared in each other’s festivals and communal life within the town was amicable. Whilst certain respondents have stated that

¹⁰⁶ For a full analysis of voting patterns related to language use, please refer to J. Duffy, “Afrikaner unity, the National Party, and the Afrikaner nationalist right in Stellenbosch, 1934-48, unpublished Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2001.

¹⁰⁷ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 24; SMOS Minutes of the *Jamaat*, 1961.

¹⁰⁸ Stellenbosch seemed to attract many Muslims from other towns and countries. M. Patel remarks that the “Indian Muslims” arranged the welcoming of the renowned Maulana Abdul Siddique in Stellenbosch in 1925. M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 24.

¹⁰⁹ SMOS, Numerous letters and correspondence.

¹¹⁰ *Coloured Persons Education Act No. 47 of 1963*.

Muslims were integrated into the social events of the “coloured” community, it is worth noting the terms *halaal*¹¹¹ and *haraam*¹¹² as this would certainly have restricted the extent of this interaction.¹¹³ One of the most profound contributions would have been the influence of food. I. D. Du Plessis remarks that no aspect of “Cape Malay” life has been more closely interwoven with life at the Cape than “Cape Malay” cookery. Close contact between colonists and “Malays” led to the intercultural exchange of food habits, enriching both culinary genres, the new infusions symbolic of the “Occidental/ Oriental” blend. Hilda Gerber noticed that eating was (and still is) an integral part of the religious tradition. Specific recipes are reserved for all aspects of religious practices from marriage to funerals. Not only did the “Malays” become renowned for their culinary prowess but it was also a very important facet which entrenched a stronger relationship between “master” and “slave” during the slave era. The interaction between “Malay” cooks and their “master” family often resulted in a stronger more familial tie rather than a purely economic engagement.¹¹⁴

Very little difference between “coloured” and “Malay” cuisine is visible as many “coloureds” in the Cape are of slave and consequently Indonesian origin. By the 1950s, it was observed that the “Malays” really liked *curry*, especially *pienang* (a Javanese type of *curry*). Food stuffs assumed “Malay” names such as *atjar*, *sosatie*, *bobotie*, *tassal*, *blatjang*, *sambal*, *bredie*, *roeti*. “Malays” were also very strict concerning meat. Gamad Daniels was the Muslim butcher in the 1950s.¹¹⁵ Typically, *Breyani*, chicken *curry*, *roti*, rice, leg of lamb, roast chicken, sweet yellow rice, steamed vegetables, onion and tomato salsa and *day*¹¹⁶ are served for *Eid*. This is an occasion where the entire family comes together and where everyone helps in the preparation of food.¹¹⁷ Indeed food plays a central social role in most “coloured” and “Muslim” families. The cross-cultural influence dates back to the early years of Dutch settlement in the Cape. “Malay” cooking is influenced largely by “Indian” cuisine hence the *curries*, *rotis* and *samoosas*. Baked puddings, tarts and biscuits show the strong

¹¹¹ Lawful.

¹¹² Forbidden.

¹¹³ For a more comprehensive understanding of what Muslim can and cannot intake, please refer to Y. Raziet, “Food Tourism: A Case Study of La Concorde Café”, unpublished Master of Philosophy assignment, University of Stellenbosch, 2007.

¹¹⁴ H. Gerber, *The Cookery of the Cape Malays: Food, Customs and 200 old Cape Recipes*, forward by I. D. Du Plessis, pp. 9, 11-12.

¹¹⁵ J. Greeff, “Die Gebruik van Arabies Deur die Maleise Gemeenskap op Stellenbosch”, unpublished Master’s thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1955, p. 44.

¹¹⁶ Butter milk, chopped green dhani (coriander), salt and crushed chilli.

¹¹⁷ Interview with Jasmina Raziet, Stellenbosch, 2 August 2008.

Dutch influence whilst the preserves are indicative of the Huguenot influence.¹¹⁸ Not only are mealtimes a moment of celebration, but provide a space in which familial ties can be entrenched. The following dedication entitled “The Melting Pot”, reflects the profound effect food and mealtimes can have.

As I enter my grandmother’s domain, I’m greeted by the tantalizing smell of chilli powder, turmeric, leaf masala, onions, tomato and green peppers, infusing in the great glittering stainless steel pot, heated by the blue-orange flame on the bulky black gas stove – engulfing the base of the pot.

She embraces me so tenderly I feel like I’m sinking into the arms of a soft cuddly teddy-bear. She has that motherly touch that can make everything better. After some chit-chat, she continues to rule her domain with precedence. Listen to the sound of the metal spoon click clack against the inside of the pot. This is not all you hear in this most inviting environment. Little ones wanting to play cook and help Ouma with making the food. Trying to hear what Ouma is saying over the noise of whining little ones and the Muslim radio station playing – which forms the background noise of the kitchen – is a mission!

Then without realising it, you are drawn into the whirlwind of spices and pleasant sounds. The room is filled with so many voices that are all talking and laughing at the same time. This is the unique way of bringing generation after generation together in one place, doing something that we enjoy. Spending quality time with each other and listening to stories of days gone by. This results in the strengthening of bonds between the members of the family.

The glimmering pot is removed from the stove and placed on the great sturdy wooden table. All eyes on Oupa as he removes the lid – in our eyes the gesture is in slow motion as we all watch in suspense to catch a glimpse of our creation – to inhale the smell and imagine the taste of the food on our lips. Then suddenly, the room is filled with the unique aroma of “soul food”, mingled together with laughter and chatter. This is the place in the house where everyone is drawn in an embrace of togetherness.¹¹⁹

The Muslims were known for their cuisine, and in particular their *koeksisters*¹²⁰ made with spices and coconut.¹²¹ However, among some “coloureds” there was a taboo against food prepared by Muslims.¹²² They were taught that by their parents but this did not dissuade them from still buying Muslim products. This was not only prevalent amongst the “non-white” races but across the racial divide. “My mom used to sell spices and she would always advise on giving spices to [the European community] and advise how to cook and things like that or

¹¹⁸ F. Williams, *The Cape Malay Cookbook*, p. 7.

¹¹⁹ Written by Yasmine Raziet, 6 October 2003.

¹²⁰ Traditional donut.

¹²¹ BIS Interview 8, p. 15.

¹²² BIS Interview 9, p. 14.

if they needed a pot of breyani or curry, she would cook and give it to them and this is what life was about in Stellenbosch. It was a close-knit community whether it was coloured, Malay or Christian or whatever, it was a close-knit community”. Commenting on race relations, she added that the “European people of Stellenbosch” used to feel sorry and in many ways, “in the quiet, they were our friends”.¹²³ Food can thus be seen as a unifying and cross-acculturation of varying traditions and people’s of varying origins. However, it is also within food that one can see distinctive features of those origins. Certain spices are used in both “Malay” and “Indian” cuisine. The manner in which they are referred to and the manner in which they are used, vary.¹²⁴ This is by no means restricted to completely different cultures. For example in India, spices are generally cooked whole in the North of the country, grilled and ground in the South. The next section on differences between “Malay” Muslims and “Indian” Muslims can best be described using the analogy of the *samosa*. They both fundamentally contain the same ingredients, they both taste the same but their method of preparation does differ.¹²⁵

As discussed, it is widely, if not nostalgically, believed that prior to the legal racial segregation, there was relative peace amongst the people. “Coloured” people were divided into two groups: the “Muslim Cape Malays” and the Christian indigenes. Both groups were affected by the same difficulties but clear distinctions were drawn on religious affiliation. It has been argued that Christian projects were subsidised by the government and often had sister institutions within the “white areas” which would subsidise their brethren. The already unpalatable social setting made many Muslims feel “obliged to drink, socialise in mixed gatherings, not wear *hijab*¹²⁶, and to not let it be known that they pray”. If Muslims did not have a mosque, they had no place for community gatherings and they would lose contact with each other. Prayer times became a chore rather than a fulfilment. They were seemingly taught to “fear the blacks”, that they were not part of South Africa (“they were just there”), they

¹²³ Interview with Shenaz Ismael, 28 April 2008, Cape Town.

¹²⁴ This can be seen in the comparison of recipes in F. Williams, *The Cape Malay Cookbook*, (Cape Town: Struik Publishers, 1994) and R. Makan, *Die Suid-Afrikaanse Indiër-Kookboek*, (Cape Town: Struik Publishers, 1989).

¹²⁵ The method of folding *Samosas* within these two groupings varies. However, most Muslim families in the Cape break their fast during Ramadan with *samosas*. This is not a “Malay” tradition as Hilda Gerber points out in 1949 that “[t]his is an Indian dish that all Malays like, but that few of them can make”, H. Gerber, *The Cookery of the Cape Malays: Food, Customs and 200 old Cape Recipes*, pp. 63, 118. This is yet another example of the manner in which food can be seen as representative of the cross-fertilisation of cultures which gave rise to a particular Cape Diaspora.

¹²⁶ The traditional Muslim gear.

were taught that they were “inferior to whites” and that Islam was “inferior to Christianity”.¹²⁷ What can be seen is that the experiences in other parts of the Cape, differed somewhat to those experienced by Muslims. There are clear obstacles to which only the Muslim adherents were confronted. However, their continued desire to have a “common history” written about the “coloured” people of Stellenbosch, despite many shortcomings, is testament to the close relations formed between the “two coloured groups”.

Brotherhoods of Islam?

Chapter 2 discussed the different schools of thought within the Muslim world. Chapter 3 mentioned the process of Islamisation at the Cape. “Malay” and “Indian” Muslims had arrived in the country. Conversions at the Cape as well as immigration to the Cape resulted in a growing visibility of Islam at the Cape but this became increasingly “Malay” in identity. Linguistic, regional, social class and socio-economic status formed part of the Muslim identity and generated differences in belief and practice. Differences arose in not what Muslims believed but how they practised. These differences created varied identities and it thus becomes difficult to talk of a “community” but more appropriate to refer to “communities”.¹²⁸

Despite several restrictions in movement, Muslims settled and grew within the Stellenbosch area, with a large number of Muslims of varying origins either visiting the enclave or settling in the town, at least temporarily. Within the periods 1907 and 1913, fifteen residence permits were issued to Muslims of Indian origin in Stellenbosch, four were issued for the Strand and Somerset West and fourteen for Paarl.¹²⁹

There are few “Indian Muslims” living in Stellenbosch. Many have intermarried with “Malay Muslims” and have assumed a more “Malay” culture. Similarly, Muslims have married

¹²⁷ L. Achmat, *Muslims Under Apartheid*, www.islamonline.net/English/Views/2005/07/article06.SHTML (accessed 28 October 2008).

¹²⁸ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 46.

¹²⁹ Please refer to Appendix 7, table of Residence Permits tabulated from the copies of Asian Permits issued by the Department of the Interior from 1907-1913, KAB PIO 3/1 – 3/9.

Christians¹³⁰ but this has not always met with the approval of the respective families.¹³¹ One critical difference between the two is the manner in which “Indians” in general continue to identify with an “Indian culture” rather than that of their “host nation”. One of the major distinctions made between “Indian” and “Malay” Muslims is the manner in which they arrived in South Africa. Those “Indian” Muslims that were not indentured tended to differ in terms of caste, occupation and linguistic group being mainly Gujarati Muslims. They attempted to distinguish themselves from the rest and regarded themselves as part of the commercial bourgeoisie rather than working class. Marked differences in earning capacity have been noted between “Indian Muslims and Malay Muslims” and this has been largely attributed to educational levels, unemployment and the earning capacity of those employed.¹³² Language differences and the ability of “Indians” to adapt to the English language as a tool for better enterprise has been considered a condition which has furthered their economic success in other areas of English-speaking South Africa.¹³³ The language policy within Stellenbosch would suggest the adoption of Afrikaans rather than English. What has been found is that “Muslim Indians” tend to be closer to their Indian geographical roots – which is at times an imaginary India which is both mystical and mythical – and this is more important than religious bonds.¹³⁴

Similarly, classification of “Indian Muslims” as “Asians” coupled with the acceptance of separation to secure “Malay” interests increased the divide between the two groupings. Whilst Muslims were originally bound to accept that they were “brothers”, ironically, more allegiance was shown between Hindu and Muslim “Indians” in Natal during the 1890s than between Hindus and Muslims. In establishing the Natal Indian Congress in 1894, Indians were drawn together across class and religious barriers because they felt a common affiliation

¹³⁰ For example, Zainap Osman’s father, Ashraf, has both Indian and Malay Muslim ancestry whilst her mother, Adelah, a Christian, has French, Polish and “coloured” ancestry. Testimony of Zainap Osman,

¹³¹ Interview 53, Muslim lady recounts how her ex-fiancé’s Christian family did not approve of the relationship.

¹³² G. Vahed & S. Jeppie, “Multiple Communities: Muslims in post-apartheid South Africa”, J. Daniel, R. Southall & J. Lutchman, *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, pp. 252-253.

¹³³ E. Germain, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane: histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*, pp. 51-52.

¹³⁴ F. Landy, B. Maharaj & H. Mainet-Valleix, “Are People of Indian origin (PIO) “Indian”? A case study of South Africa”, *Geoforum*, Vol. 35, 2004, pp. 207-210.

towards India as their “motherland”¹³⁵, probably closely linked to the manner in which they were being treated as “non-Citizens of South Africa”.¹³⁶

One area in which the debate surrounding “Indian” and “Malay” Muslim interaction and the perceived hegemonic power within the communities of Stellenbosch is visible, is within the name of the mosque. It is believed that the original name of the mosque was “Gujaratul” because the people responsible for building the mosque were from India. “...the majority [of] the money was put in by Indians, therefore they gave it [the name] ‘Gujaratul’... the Malay community was just a working class community, they didn’t have a big source of income, the Indians had more income, they were the business people and they had more money...”.¹³⁷ Early documents refer to the “Moslem Community at Stellenbosch”¹³⁸ or to the “Malay Mosque Stellenbosch”¹³⁹ but by 1909, an application lodged to the Municipality refers to “The Gotjatul Mosque”.¹⁴⁰ In 1981, the name “Gujratul Muslim Jamaat” is used.¹⁴¹ A letter sent by the *Jama’at* in 1982 is written on a letterhead entitled “Stellenbosch Gujratul Muslim Jamaat”.¹⁴² In the correspondence between the Board and its lawyers, the name “Goejratoel Muslim Jama’at” is used.¹⁴³ By 1987, the Municipality refers to the “Gujjatul Islam Jamaat”.¹⁴⁴ In 1997, the mosque is referred to as “Goejjatul Islam Mosque” (and later “Goejatul” within the same article)¹⁴⁵ as well as “Gujjatal Islam” and “Gujjatul Islam” within the same article¹⁴⁶ – the former more likely to have been a typing error as the information was based on that of M. Kara’s booklet which refers to “Gujjatul”.¹⁴⁷ Presently, the mosque is

¹³⁵ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 47.

¹³⁶ A similar trend can be seen between Hindus and Muslims in India during the fight for Independence. Religious differences eventually arose as independence became imminent.

¹³⁷ Interview 42, Cape Town, 28 April 2008.

¹³⁸ Deed of Transfer.

¹³⁹ Plans submitted for the erection of a wall in front of the mosque which does not reflect the Muslim School building and as such one can assume was submitted between 1897 (as the initial *Masjid* is reflected on the plan) and prior to the building of the school block after 1909.

¹⁴⁰ Refer to Appendix 9

¹⁴¹ SMOS, Letter from the Municipality to the Secretary of the Stellenbosch Gujratul Muslim Jamaat, 12 January 1981 and 20 February 1981.

¹⁴² SMOS, Letter from the Jamaat to the Municipality, 16 April 1982

¹⁴³ SMOS, Letter from Cluver and Markotter to the Goejratoel Muslim Jamaa, 7 March 1983.

¹⁴⁴ SMOS, Letter from the Municipality to the secretary of the Gujjatul Islam Jamaat, 9 July 1987. A similar letter is sent on 6 December 1988.

¹⁴⁵ M. Patel, “Die Stellenbosse Moslemgemeenskap: Goejjatul Islam Mosque Centenary Celebrations 1897-1997”, *Ad-Da’wah*, Vol. 4.5, September 1997, pp. 6-7; refer to Appendix XXXX, the Centenary Celebratory Calendar for *Goejjatul Islam Stellenbosch 1897-1997*.

¹⁴⁶ F. Gabru, “Stellenbosch local records Muslim history”, *Muslim Views*, November 2007, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴⁷ M. Kara, “Gujjatul Masjied: 1897, Geskiedenis”, published brochure, 2006.

known as “Gujjatul Islam”.¹⁴⁸ Once again very little consensus can be reached on the name of the mosque. Should more information become available, this could be an area of further research.

However, what can be ascertained thus far is that some “Malay” Muslims in the early period of the establishing of the mosque were financially stable, owning property, running businesses, and would have made some contribution to the building of the mosque. Secondly, it is quite evident that the buying of the land for the mosque, the building of the initial *masjid*, further extensions, the building of the *madaris* as well as the building of the minaret were communal activities which at times involved not only Muslims but Christians as well, not just from Stellenbosch but from other towns. The question thus arises as to why certain sectors of the brotherhood wish to foreground the impact of their particular grouping at the extent of the others when quite clearly, one of the tenets of Islam is working towards building the Muslim community as a whole? One person has been accredited with purchasing the land for the mosque, one grouping claims to have “built the mosque”. Perhaps, the answer lays in the struggle of finding an identity which is exclusive and exclusionary. One example can be seen in the establishing of the Cape Malay Association in Stellenbosch.

In chapter 4, we saw that the formation of the South African Indian Congress in 1920 was in response to the South African Moslem Association at the Cape which was founded in 1902 and its successor the Cape Malay Association of 1923. In a meeting on 6 June 1925, it was decided that the Cape Malay Association should be started in Stellenbosch. Their priorities included providing the necessary facilities for Muslims at hospitals. The Stellenbosch branch played a leading role in the association. Imam Mustafa Toefy was sent on a campaign to harness support in the North. Stellenbosch was thus considered instrumental in the establishment of the association.¹⁴⁹ However, given the context under which these associations had formed distinguishing between Muslims of “Malay” descent and those of “Indian” descent as well as on language issues, sectional differences may have arisen because of the threat of exclusion. In the 1950s, it is noted that the followers of Islam are not known globally as “Malays” but Muslims. The term “Maleier” is connected to the slaves and

¹⁴⁸ Anon, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims 2003/2004*, p. 414.

¹⁴⁹ Anon, “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

political exiles of the early years who came from Malaysia and Indonesia. Their language, food and hard work strongly influenced the Cape but Muslims from other countries, for example India, also came and settled in the early centuries.¹⁵⁰ What might have arisen, beyond sectional differences, was hostility between established and developing Muslim communities.¹⁵¹

In Cape Town, ideological differences often led to dissention and the formation of rival communities within the brotherhood of Islam. In smaller towns, familial ties often led to dissention and the forming of rival mosques. In Stellenbosch, despite ideological differences and dissention brought on by fear of exclusion, the mosque remained central and pivotal in eventually reuniting communities of Muslims into a brother and sister-hood of Muslims in Stellenbosch.¹⁵² Given the lack of available resources and the documentation of debates surrounding the mosque in Stellenbosch, one cannot disregard the possibility that major disputes and factions could have occurred along religious ideological differences. What remains evident, is that individual confrontations did occur and that these were enhanced under the forced removal era.

In the 1980s, a separate *jama'* was formed under the leadership of Mr M.Hercules. For ten years there was great division amongst the Muslims of Stellenbosch. This division proved to be most visible during festivals, weddings and funerals. Many attempts were made to solve the dispute but even the Muslim Judicial Council was unable to establish unity amongst the Muslims. Under Imam Fuad Samaai, some form of unity prevailed. Under the chairmanship of Mr Ebrahim Sawant, the breakaway *jama'* was dissolved in 1990.¹⁵³ It is believed that Imam Fuad Samaai was instrumental in bringing about unity amongst the communities and for implementing a new system of consultation.¹⁵⁴ In 1989, it is recorded that the Imams were

¹⁵⁰ M. Patel, "Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap", pp. 14-15.

¹⁵¹ J. Kearney, "Representations of Islamic Belief and Practice in a South African Context: Reflections on the Fictional Work of Ahmed Essop, Aziz Hassim, Achmat Dangor and Rayda Jacobs", *Journal of Literary Studies*, vol. 22, June 2006, p. 141.

¹⁵² From minutes of various bodies which formed in Stellenbosch, it is evident that both women and men were integral in the consolidation of Islam in Stellenbosch.

¹⁵³ M. Patel, "Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap", pp. 35-36. No mention is made of these facts under the heading "Abdication and Separation" (*Afstigting en verdeeldheid*) in a press article by the same author, M. Patel, "Die Stellenbosse Moslemgemeenskap", *Ad-Da'wah*, Vol. 4.5, September 1997, pp. 6-7.

¹⁵⁴ M. Patel, "Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap", pp. 35-36.

concerned about the “trouble” created by certain members of the community fuelling friction between the Imams themselves. They regretted the manner in which people attempted to influence the one against the other. This is set in the backdrop of major *ulama* at the Cape who were exhibiting sectarian differences. “We here in Stellenbosch and the Boland should ensure that their differences do not cross our borders and cause us to fight amongst ourselves”.¹⁵⁵ An invisible border between factional fighting outside of the Boland and some form of unity within the Boland might have thus existed. By 1991, three Imams were in place at the Stellenbosch mosque. It is stated that should any member of the Muslim communities have any grievances against any of the Imams, they should follow the correct protocol. It would appear that many anonymous complaints had been made, adding to the dissention amongst the communities. What Imam Fuad Samaai does show is that some resemblance of unity had returned by 1991. “We have managed to overcome our petty differences which kept us apart for so long... Unity is not based on having a single *masjid* and a single community per se, but more important is the fact that unity implies oneness of purpose and goal, oneness in heart, oneness in feeling, concern and respect”.¹⁵⁶ The draft constitution of the Gujjatul Islam *Jama’ah* later accepted the interpretation of Islam of Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaa’ah which is accepted and recognised by the four schools of jurisprudence; *shafi*, *hanafi*, *maliki* and *hambali*.¹⁵⁷ It is interesting to note that this occurred during the era in which the demise of apartheid was eminent. A letter from the Islamic Council of South Africa warned the “Brothers in Islam” that sectional identities needed to be buried in the face of the prospective political change. “If we do not prepare ourselves now, while the reset of South Africa are in the negotiation process, we will be caught unaware and our destiny will be moulded for us more by default than by design”.¹⁵⁸

Reference is already being made to the need for unity in the meeting of the *Jama’at* in the 1960s. This would imply that despite a visible split in the community in the 1980s, problems had arisen at least by the 1960s.¹⁵⁹ There is a sense of personality clashes between some of the Board members including Mr M. Hercules who later founded the splinter *Jama’*.¹⁶⁰ By

¹⁵⁵ SMOS, Shura Committee Report, July 1989.

¹⁵⁶ SMOS, Shura Committee Report, March 1991.

¹⁵⁷ SMOS, Draft constitution for the Gujjatul Islam Jamaah, undated.

¹⁵⁸ SMOS, Letter to the Stellenbosch Jamaat from the Secretary General of the Islamic Council of South Africa, Ismail Kalla, dated 18 April 1991.

¹⁵⁹ SMOS, Minutes of the *Jamaat*, 26 October 1969, p. 9.

¹⁶⁰ SMOS, Minutes of the *Jamaat*, November 1969, p. 12.

1970, it would appear that one Board member complained that people were talking about him behind his back.¹⁶¹ Calls were made once again for people to work together.¹⁶² A memo from the Building Committee responsible for the *Masjid* extensions outlined the increasing criticism being placed on those working towards extending the mosque. It is alleged that *Jama'* members generally lacked physical and emotional involvement in the project, even amongst Board members. The Gujjatul tradesmen had also proven to be “unreliable, mercenary, irresponsible and without pride. Quite a few *jama'ah* members had exploited the project for personal gain”.¹⁶³ In 1967, Imam Achmat Toefy reiterated his standpoint that no other *masjid* or school would be established during his lifetime but rather existing facilities would be upgraded.¹⁶⁴ Certain religious traditions were executed within the communities in order to provide a sense of joint identity within the town and also with other Muslims in the world. After dismantling of the Group Areas Act, Muslims became divided between Idas Valley and Cloetesville. Disintegration and disunity within the communities were largely attributed to the implementation of the Group Areas Act.¹⁶⁵ Whilst the forced removals era might have cleaved the communities further apart, confrontation was visible before. During the 1980s, ideological differences once again became evident after discussions were held on creating a basic guideline for the revival of the Muslim communities in South Africa which made mention of the creation of a cultural committee to revive “Islamic-Malayan culture, eg. Poetry, song, art, folklore, folkdress etc...”, and this would have been at the expense of “Indian” Muslim ancestry and thus contributed to any sectional differences that may have existed.¹⁶⁶

“Gujjatul Islam Mosque”¹⁶⁷ has been described as having overcome the apartheid regime as the mosque remained in the rezoned “white” area of Stellenbosch, the adherents ignoring the forced removals notice sent to them in 1965. One could extend the sense of achievement to the overcoming of dissent and possible ideological differences which existed amongst

¹⁶¹ SMOS, Minutes of the *Jamaat*, 26 July 1970, p. 33.

¹⁶² SMOS, Special Meeting of the *Jamaat*, 14 February 1971, p. 42.

¹⁶³ SMOS, Memo from the Building Committee, undated.

¹⁶⁴ M. Patel, “Honderdjarige Geskiedenis van die Stellenbosse Muslimgemeenskap”, p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ Anon., “Stellenbosch Masjied”.

¹⁶⁶ SMOS, Guidelines for the revival of Islamic-Malayan culture, authored by Abubakr Abdullah, 27 April 1987.

¹⁶⁷ Translated as “The Proof of Islam”.

themselves whilst maintaining a single *masjid* – a phenomenon which other towns within the environs of Stellenbosch have not always been able to achieve.

In Search of a Common History

The heritage project which gave rise to *In Ons Bloed*, was initially aimed at creating a narrative about the “coloured” people of Stellenbosch and the effects of the forced removals of *Die Vlakte*. Several problems arose, many of which were attributed to the compiler of the aforementioned compilation. However, several shortcomings in the project were predestined within the scale and area of research. Firstly, the very nature of a perceived “coloured” identity was constructed not only by the people themselves – needed in retaliation to shared oppressive legislations and the reality of daily existence – but was enhanced by Municipal decisions to treat all those not “white” and not “native” as one homogenous entity. Whilst the connotation of the term “coloured” meant some affiliation with the Indonesian Peninsula, slaves of various origins were indentured at the Cape, and many moved to Stellenbosch after Emancipation. Unlike the Cape which made provisions for “Malays” as a sub-group of the “coloured” communities, in Stellenbosch no such differentiation was officially made. Intermarriage and miscegenation blurred any classifications that could have been made on a purely racial level. Islamic religious practice is instrumental in identity formation and at times, religious differences had to be forsaken in the advent of more pressing issues. The trials and tribulations of the Muslim communities of Stellenbosch were often aligned to gains made within the broader “coloured” communities, but were specific with regards to overcoming Christian hegemony as well as dissention within the various Muslim communities. Being separated from the mosque during the forced removals era was an entirely different experience to that of Christian “coloureds” separated from their churches. No common identity can be written about as no common identity remained static throughout the period covered in this thesis. Secondly, it has been noted that most “Indian Muslims” consider themselves Muslim first, secondly as coming from a particular place in India, thirdly as an Indian and finally as a South African.¹⁶⁸ Thirdly, experiences varied across geographical spaces. Commonalities existed between “people of colour” who lived not only in *Die Vlakte*, but who were dispersed throughout the town. Fourthly, not all “coloureds” had the same experience of the forced removal era. Some are quoted as benefiting in some way,

¹⁶⁸ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 62.

others decided to move before the actual implementation of the forced removals. The following extracts from a letter received by the Committee attempting to retrieve information about *Die Vlakte* show the manner in which experiences, and those held accountable, vary within the same “community”. One response to the call for information on *Die Vlakte* stated:¹⁶⁹

Dit was destyds waargeneem dat meeste van die destydse **VLAKTE-EIENDOM-EIENAARS** verhuis het na **IDASVALLEI**, terwyl **VLAKTE-EIENDOM-HUURDERS GE-DUMP** was in **CLOETESVILLE**¹⁷⁰

Ek saal nooit kan vergewe en vergeet van die **HAARTSEER** toe my oorlede ouers **STOKSIEL ALLEEN** in die vlakte oorgebly het, nadat almal toe reeds geskuif, en al die geboue van die **VLAKTE** reeds **GE-BULLDOZER** was (n **DORRE LANDSKAP**). Hul het die “**VERKRAGTING**” hewig teengestaan, maar moes op die ou end ook maar verhuis.¹⁷¹

EK HOOP DAT BOVERMELDE INFORMASIE DIE SKULDIGES SE GEWETES SAL PLA, EN DAT HULLE SAL HELP MET DIE REGSTELLING VAN DIE DESTYDSE VERKRAGTING, OF HULLE DIT NOU WIL ERKEN OF NIE. MET HULLE STEMME TOT DIE DESTYDSE BEDELING, HET HULLE TOESTEMMING GEGEE TOT DIE GEMORS WAARIN ONS, ONSSELF BEVIND.¹⁷²

The writing or re-writing of a group or community’s history is always bound within the interest of the group that embarks upon the project. Individual, familial and communal experiences vary and with this, interpretations and recollections become selective and at times exclusive. Not one account can be completely inclusive and appropriate for all members. *Histoire totale* is associated with the French Annales School of historical thought approached micro-history of a community, a town or a region in the hope of creating a “holistic” history of the area of research.¹⁷³ If the fundamental “community” under

¹⁶⁹ POOL Document sent Die Belangegroep – Luckhoff Aangeleentheid en Groepsgebiede by Isgaak Pool, 12 June 2003.

¹⁷⁰ It was perceived then that most of the Vlakte property owners moved to Idas Valley, while Vlakte property renters were dumped in Cloetesville.

¹⁷¹ I will never be able to forgive or forget the **SADNESS**, when my deceased parents remained in the Vlakte **SOUL ALONE**, after everyone already moved, and all the buildings of the **VLAKTE** were already **BULLDOZED** and was (a **BARREN LANDSCAPE**). They stood firmly against the “**INFRINGEMENT**” but also had to move in the end.

¹⁷² I HOPE THAT THE ABOVE MENTIONED INFORMATION WILL BOTHER THE GUILTY PARTY, AND THAT THEY WILL HELP WITH THE AMENDING OF THEIR INFRINGEMENTS OF THOSE YEARS, WHETHER THEY WANT TO ADMIT IT OR NOT. WITH THEIR VOTES TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAT TIME, THEY GAVE PERMISSION FOR THE MESS IN WHICH WE FOUND OURSELVES.

¹⁷³ P. Burke (ed), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, Chapter 5.

investigation is actually composed of various communities with varying experiences, not one *opus* could possibly pay tribute to all those concerned in the area of research.

This chapter has concentrated on the workings of the Muslims of Stellenbosch and has demystified certain popular folklore to which the communities adhere. This should encourage further questioning of what has been accepted as truth thus far. Many communities of varying origins, ideologies and individual goals attempted to create a homogenous “Muslim Community”. By providing various interpretations, the diverse nature of complex societies can be portrayed and within the various histories, a fuller understanding may be achieved but this will remain open to further interpretations as undiscovered material becomes available.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Islam originated under the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) in the Arabian Peninsula in the 6th Century (C.E) in the hope of creating and uniting likeminded individuals who would serve Allah and who would differentiate themselves from other religious adherents under the “Brotherhood of Islam”. After his death, several ideological battles took place and various forms of Islam grew and expanded throughout the world. With the arrival of the Dutch in the Cape in the 17th century, people of varying religious affiliations (including those that professed no particular faith), conglomerated and influenced the religious climate of the growing colony. Much debate has surrounded the origins and religious affiliation of the early settlers, especially those indentured slaves and political exiles who later became known as “Malays”. This classification was profoundly influenced by the dialect which emerged and which became the *lingua franca* of the early slaves, in turn, influencing the growth of the Dutch *patois*: Afrikaans. Not to undermine in any way the ethnic roots of these slaves, the exact distribution of their various origins become fairly secondary to the growth of the distinctive “Cape Coloured” who still form the majority “race” within the Cape. This homogenously classified group celebrate a genetic pool that connects at the very least, three continents: Europe, Africa and Asia. Much attention is drawn to the historical connection with the Indonesian Peninsula which eventually became hegemonic in the sense that this particular linkage was promoted to a far greater extent than any other possible heritage. In order to overcome obstacles, a sense of unity amongst all those with even the most meagre tie to the East, in conjunction with the growing classification by those with political hegemony, led to this form of identification being not only legislated but assumed by its adherents. Through the exchange of rituals celebrated by the various racial groups, a common set of cultural practices, in conjunction with legislations, created a perceived “Cape coloured” identity. This adds to Ian Goldin’s theory that the “coloured” group was constructed by “white” political hegemony to serve as a “client group” and a buffer between the “black” majority and the “white” minority.¹ The assuming of a “Malay” or “coloured” identity was not only due to legal dispensation but also due, in part, to personal choices made amongst the

¹ I. Goldin, *Making race : the politics and economics of Coloured identity in South Africa*, pp. 26-27.

respective protagonists. If choices and changes could occur *within* the so-called “coloured” group, external factors cannot be the sole contributor to a “coloured” identity. This is even more prevalent within the discussion on assuming a religious identity and the transitions which occurred around the term “Malay”.

Two religious movements grew at the Cape during the 17th to the 19th centuries. The form of Christianity which became rooted at the Cape, as well as the influence of missionary workers, led to the desire to proselytise the “heathen”. Because Christianity was considered the religion of the “oppressor” and because within this religion some attempt at discrimination existed, many turned to Islam. Certain Europeans also preferred the sober lifestyle of the “Mohammetans” to that of the “debauched Christians of the Cape”; within Islam, a certain social status could be achieved. Within this religious climate, “Malays” embraced either of the two religious affiliations. Eventually, “Malay” became the generic term for those who followed the Muslim faith. This term became inclusive of all those who followed any teaching of the Islamic schools which had arisen. This process had two effects: those who were of “Malay” descent but who were not Muslim had to renegotiate their ethnic identity, and those who had no “Malay” connection but who were Muslim had to accept the fallacious term. This was particularly evident during the period of “anti-Islam” when the threat of an increase of Muslim adherents led to the need to unite as a religious “community” against increasing restrictions being enforced upon religious tolerance. Eric Germain refers to a “pan-ethnic religious identity” by the mid 19th century. Certain symbols of the Islamic faith provided opportunities for Muslim adherents to celebrate their particularity. Absorption of other groups at the Cape had ended and a “fusion of identities”, which had been established in the slave era, had to be renegotiated with the arrival within the mid 19th century of “Indian Muslims”.² This increase of new immigrants as well as those who converted at the Cape, led to the visible proliferation of the religion. In turn, the authorities thus reacted: “Indian Muslims” were thus absorbed into the “Malay” grouping and as a religious entity of “Malays”, all Muslims worked towards establishing Islam at the Cape. With the increase of State interventions in the advent of increased economic competition from the Indian arrivals, the need arose to destabilise the union between “Malay” and “Indian” Muslims. This worked in the favour of those Muslims who also wished to establish their own particular “school” of

² E. Germain, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane: histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*, p. 144.

Islam and as a consequence, one saw the rise of separate religious institutions at the Cape based on religious ideology. Whilst this difference in religious ideology often resulted in the establishing of separate symbolic places of worship, certain familial attachments were more prevalent in smaller towns. Within the Stellenbosch context, individual differences arose during the 1960s which proliferated into a split amongst the Muslim communities in the 1980s. Places of Muslim education became the site of the ideological differences that existed.

With the advent of the Anglo-Boer War, economic pressure and the need for “white” racial solidarity as a healing process after the war, as well as the growing “poor white problem”, resulted in political alliances being formed and former origin-based or religious-based affiliations to be renegotiated. Political legislation had become increasingly “anti-Asian” and stronger cultural and language links between “white Afrikaans speakers” and “coloured Afrikaans speakers of the Cape” were sought. The rise of a “coloured elite”, not bound by religious affiliation but by class alliances, had proliferated and the “better” class of “coloured” was aligned to the “better class of white”. The need to disassociate from the “lower classes of non-whites” as well as the “Asians” arose in order to negotiate some form of settlement and provision for what was considered the “coloured group”. This led to confrontation between Muslim coreligionists. Attempts were made by “Indian Muslims” to marry “Malays” and reclassify themselves as such in order to benefit from the progress made by “Malays” and “coloureds” at the expense of “blacks”³ and “Asians”. The Cape Malay Association showed sympathy towards Afrikaner Nationalism and promoted fraternal links based on language and culture. By 1938, this political alliance disintegrated under the threat of increasing marginalisation of the “coloured” groups which included “Malays” (Muslims) and Christian “coloureds”. With the institutionalisation of apartheid, tensions reinforced a group ethnic identity, beyond religious differentiation, amongst the different “non-white” and “non-black” groups. By 1961, youth activists condemned apartheid as being anti-Islamic and the *Call of Islam* began to reject the term “Malay” and called for a Muslim identity across ethnic divisions.⁴ It is worth pointing out at this stage that “Indian” solidarity unfolded with the increasing political activities in India prior to its Independence from Britain in 1947. Racial issues were restricted, and class and caste alliances across religious barriers were

³ With this term I refer to the manner in which people chose to classify themselves during the period in question. Currently, many “non-white” people, for strategic reasons, embrace their “black-African roots”.

⁴ E. Germain, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane: histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*, p. 402.

enhanced. Ironically, despite the all-encompassing nature of Islam, the concept of “Brotherhood amongst all Believers” as is dictated by the Quran, was at times sacrificed for other agendas.

This study has outlined the macro initiatives that formed the basis of changing allegiances based on economic, political and religious factors. These alliances and the changing legislations, affected and effected, were visible in what became known as the “Mecca of Afrikanerdom”. Much of the apartheid and Afrikaner Nationalist discourse is based upon the town of Stellenbosch as many of its instigators were a product of its University. However, many aspects are neglected when the complexities of a town and its peoples are not considered. This is not the history of “brown” Stellenbosch but the history of the Stellenboschers.

Initial interaction between the races seems to have been amicable. Of major importance to the political arm working within the borders of the Municipality were originally focused on environmental and social issues in the hope of creating a “Citizenry of Stellenboschers” of equal class. The evidence does not show that any formal racial cleavages were in place; however, economic disparity was closely linked to racial categorisation and this may have its origins within the slave era and the subsequent rise of powerful families of landowners. Many ex-slaves seem to have either settled or passed through Stellenbosch. A distinct increase in the “coloured” population and the subsequent rise in the number of Muslims can only suggest that the town, despite subsequent changes, was a conducive environment. Clearly, more Christian “coloureds” were visible probably because of the first “slave church” which provided some status within the changing political environment. Through personal testimony and through the assessment of Municipal Minutes, the period from 1896 to 1940 - despite the possibility of individual altercations – showcase the geographical space as an environment of racial tolerance. Religious tolerance and the growth of the Muslims within the town can only be partially recovered because of the poverty of available sources. Interaction with the Muslims was restricted to areas of sport and food consumption habits, with very little clear understanding of the actual faith being shown on the part of the “coloured” Christian congregations. Major religious festivals were celebrated together but clearly, Muslims

attending Christian schools were more informed about Christianity than Christians were on Islam.

The “Battle of Andringa Street” was the first sign for the Municipality and the “non-white” residents that macro changes were infiltrating the stasis of the town and these were being introduced into the psyche of the people by “outsiders” of varying origins and ideologies. At this juncture, macro policies impacted upon the microcosm. Within this climate, the Municipality had to deal with a changing macro political environment as well as the micro changes within its constituency. As the “coloured elite” had done in Cape Town, certain negotiations had been entered into in order to secure some semblance of rights for the “non-white” / “non-black” communities. Certain offers such as land and housing were made and unlike in Cape Town, many “coloureds” of the town, accepted to move before the era of the forced removals. Whilst the “Malays” and “Indians” of Cape Town had reserved areas under the Group Areas Act, the Muslims of Stellenbosch had become integrated within “coloured” society and as such, considered themselves “coloured”. Religious differences continued to exist despite the alliances between Christian and Muslim “coloureds”.

Afrikaans had become the *lingua franca* in the town and new immigrants who wished to be integrated had to appropriate the language as their own in order to be successful. Germain makes a similar argument about the “Indian” Muslims who had become successful because of their ability to adopt languages for the commercial environment.⁵ Some form of cohesion between “all coloureds” had taken place and negotiation was not bound by religion but by the “worth” of the person/family within the town structure which, at times, overcame racial classification. Whilst there is no denying the effects of institutionalised racism and forced removals, the manner in which certain “coloureds” worked within the system and the fact that some “coloureds” perceived that era has having been beneficial in certain ways cannot be denied and should be allowed to co-exist as their *own* realities, alongside other testimonies. The most obvious example would be the manner in which the forced removals had impacted upon the religious practices of the Muslims of the town. At this point, the dilemma of place,

⁵ E. Germain, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane: histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*, pp. 51-52.

space and time on communal memorialisation and the historical discipline would be worthy of mention.

Earlier historians of the Imperialist School of thought⁶, Settler History or the Colonial School of thought⁷ and the Afrikaner Nationalist School of thought⁸, concentrated on the “white” perspectives in relation to the “Other” in order to show how the group overcame all obstacles.⁹ Liberal historians¹⁰ focused on the basic unity of mankind, the dignity of the human personality, the fundamental rights of the individual without respect to race or creed, the benefits of education, the power of reason and the possibility of reasoned progress.¹¹ They were, however, criticised for their inability to reconcile evidence, their unfair portrayal of the Afrikaner, their inability to demonstrate the incompatibility of economic integration and political separation, their optimism over progress and their projection of present concerns and perspectives to events of the past. Their political concerns had permeated into their academic endeavours.¹² What they had attempted to achieve during the 1920s and 1930s was to write “non-whites” into history by changing the perception of the “white” population. During the 1950s and 1960s, this took place within the backdrop of decolonisation and the need to create unity amongst the races. However, they foresaw a united “non-white” population against a “white population”, common ties and rigid alliances which did not exist.¹³ Radical or Revisionist historians¹⁴ concentrated on the experiences of the masses and the exploitation of

⁶ Historians such as Alexander Wilmot, John Chase, William Holden, John Noble, Henry Cloete and E. B. Watermeyer.

⁷ For example the works of G. M. Theal and G. E. Cory.

⁸ For example the works of U. G. Louts, J. Stuart, J. H. Hofstede, rev S. J. Du Toit, C. P. Bezuidenhout, J. A. Roorda-Smit, F. Lion Cachet, J. D. Weilbach, C. N. J. Du Plessis, N. J. Hofmeyer, W. J. Leyds, E. Godeë-Molsbergen, W. Blommaert, C. F. Muller, G. B. Gerdener, C. Potgieter, N. H. Theunissen, J. L. Franken, H. B. Thom, G. D. Scholtz, J. A. Wiid, A. J. H. Van der Walt, D. W. Kruger, B. J. Liebenberg, P. J. Van der Merwe, F. A. Van Jaarsveld...

⁹ See for example: C. Saunders, *The Making of the South African Past: Major Historians on race and class* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1988); K. Smith, *The Changing Past: trends in South African Historical Writing* (Johannesburg: Southern Book Publishers, 1984); H. M. Wright, *The Burden of the Present. Liberal-Radical Controversy over Southern African History* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1977).

¹⁰ For example W. M. Macmillan, E. Walker, C. W. Kiewiet, S. H. Frankel, H. M. Robertson, S. Van der Horst, R. Horwitz, D. Hobart Houghton, F. Wilson, M. Wilson, I. D. MacCrone, D. Welsh, S. Patterson, L. Marquard, E. Brookes, F. Troup, A. Paton, T. R. Davenport...

¹¹ H. Wright, *The Burden of the present: Liberal-Radical controversy over Southern African History*, p. 4.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

¹³ See for example the work of C. Saunders, *Writing History: South Africa's urban past and other essays* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1992).

¹⁴ From the mid 1960s to the early 1970s, one could look at the works of Harold Wolpe, Martin Legassick and Rick Johnstone; from the mid 1970s to the early 1980s, Rob Davies, David Kaplan, Mike Morris and Dan O'Meara; the “third wave” includes the works of Shula Marks, Stanley Trapido, Charles van Onselen, William Beinart, Peter Delius and Tim Keegan.

“non-white” labour. Class division, expropriation of profit and the exploitation of labour reflected socio-economic structures. They wished to explain rapid economic growth and the rigid social inequality of the racial system.¹⁵ Schools of thought are normally criticised for lacking objectivity as a particular discourse encourages counterproductive divisions and hostilities. Stereotypes are promoted, evidence is selected accordingly and problems are oversimplified. Whilst they are idyllic for creating a sense of identity and a sense of collectivity against a common enemy, they remain hegemonic in approach and interpretation as they inadvertently exclude key aspects or players which are directly related to the changes exhibited within communities over time. Whilst the focus of this thesis has been on the Muslim communities of Stellenbosch, the relationship and the interaction of all the different races as well as the locating of local narrative within the macro and the influence of the micro on the macro is the only way to gain a fuller understanding of the complexities of relations between people and various religious, political and social institutions.

After 1994, the terms “Malay” and “coloured” were not considered “politically correct”. National reconciliation preferred concepts that united rather than divided the people of South Africa. The French equivalent for “coloured” is *métis*, which literally translates as “interwoven”. This term could more accurately represent the *métissage* of the various peoples at the Cape. Progressive Muslims during apartheid preferred to steer away from ethnic identities such as “Malay” and “Indian”, opting for “so-called coloured” as a way of showing solidarity. After 1994, the “so-called” was dropped but claims by the Indian and Malaysian nations were made to encourage the reclamation of “identity”. Farid Esack asked what Muslims should call themselves in such a manner that Germain remarks it became an “either/or” scenario. In response, he states that it all depends on when religious affiliation stops being a judicio-religious term but a socio-cultural one. Within the formation of the social identity, three areas should be considered: the economy and migratory influx, political organisation and the role of civil society.¹⁶

¹⁵ See for example F. Johnstone, “The most Painful to our Hearts: South Africa through the eyes of the New School”, *Revue canadienne des études africaines/Canadian Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1982; J. Lewis, “South African Labour History: A Historiographical Assessment”, *Radical History Review*, Vol. 46, No. 7, January 1990.

¹⁶ E. Germain, *L’Afrique du Sud musulmane: histoire des relations entre Indiens et Malais du Cap*, pp. 13-14, 405-406.

The history of the people of Stellenbosch, and in a broader sense, any community that has had to renegotiate their identity, should consider the shifts of the three aforementioned areas of research. The Muslims of Stellenbosch are composed of communities of varying origins influenced not only by their religion but by their particular Schools of thought, by their social environment, by the interaction between each other and with other groups, and the role that macro policies and micro assumption of those policies played in their sense of belonging. By embarking on a project whereby only one sector of a created “community” is assessed, not only excludes the “Other” but forces all those within the “so-called community” to conform to one hegemonic version. The *In Ons Bloed* project attempted to rewrite the experiences of those in *Die Vlakte*. Many affected by segregationist policies had moved voluntarily from the area prior to the actual forced removals - certainly, fierce coercion may have “forced” many to leave beforehand. Some moved to Idas Valley and Cloetesville because they wanted their own land. Others moved because their sense of belonging was attached to the people and not to the place. Not all those who suffered under the same discrimination lived in *Die Vlakte* but in other areas in the town but felt the same emotional experience. The motives for moving as well as motives behind those who worked within the repressive system varied but, perhaps, the deciding factor amongst individuals cannot be reflected in a history of the “coloured people”. Linda Hutcheon points out that there are no unitary, closed, evolutionary narratives of historiography but histories in the plural.¹⁷ Many involved had other issues beyond that of the group, such as religious affiliation. In seeking compensation for the loss of land, those who rented but were forced to move as contracts were not renewed should also be allowed to share in the emotional experience. Similar events may have occurred in the *Die Vlakte* area of Stellenbosch as was experienced in *District Six* in Cape Town but to make this comparison would belittle the effects this had on this particular set of communities. There is a certain affiliation of people who suffered similar experiences and who seek some form of memorial space but this does not have to be linked to a particular place in order to give the experience credence and value. It is for this reason that *In Ons Bloed* attempted to allow the voices of the people to create their own narrative, whose narrative is quite another issue considering the debates surrounding the “true history of the people of Stellenbosch”. Linked to this is the following argument: can the history of a group of people be encapsulated within one era when it is evident that relations between people and between people and the State were continuously being renegotiated? Context and timeframe thus need to be considered. If one

¹⁷ G. Vahed, “Cultural Confrontation: Race, Politics and Cricket in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s”, *Culture, Sport, Society*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2002, p. 79.

was to decontextualise the title, *Nog Altyd Hier Gewees*, the novice might assume that the “coloured” people of Stellenbosch were the original inhabitants of Stellenbosch when it is fairly evident that they “arrived” in the era of Dutch settlement. The original inhabitants might well have been the “Khoi” and the “San”. But the context within which these words were uttered, that is during the debate on whether to remove all “coloured” people out of the town of Stellenbosch and thus removing them from the very place which had begun to define them, give credence to the reason behind reaffirming connections to the land of Stellenbosch – the town. A similar trend of justifying existence and land appropriation was exhibited by the early settlers and promoted through the above-mentioned earlier Schools of historical thought. The distinction between those who “originally belonged” to the town and those that later migrated also diminishes their role within the town and their shared experiences.

The experiences of the “peoples of Stellenbosch” is one of forging and breaking of alliances in the advent of more pressing issues. Interdependence and interaction were predominant amongst all peoples regardless of race even during the apartheid era. This was not endemic to Stellenbosch nor did the nature of these interactions work in isolation within the town. The title of this work attempted to capture the nature of these phenomena: Stellenbosch as a microcosm within the broader Cape structure. Muslims as a conglomerate of various Muslim communities who serve as the case study to highlight the porous nature of relationships; and communities because from the establishment of the colony, many communities were the original inhabitants of the Cape and subsequent arrivals of other communities have resulted in a conglomerate of nation states with various nations, tribes and communities who continue to renegotiate their identities within an increasingly narrow nationalistic framework of the “New South Africa”. Similarly, on a smaller microcosmic scale, the belief in certain myths which feed the hegemonic discourse of those in power within a micro institution can also warp the complexity of a diverse history. Whilst it is understandable and desirable that histories are passed on along the generations, these accounts need to be carefully critiqued because of the strong nostalgic (either positive or negative), influences of a selective memory. During the period of conservative Afrikaner Nationalism, a dominant discourse strongly guided the “white” youth into believing that through birth, South Africa was their domain.

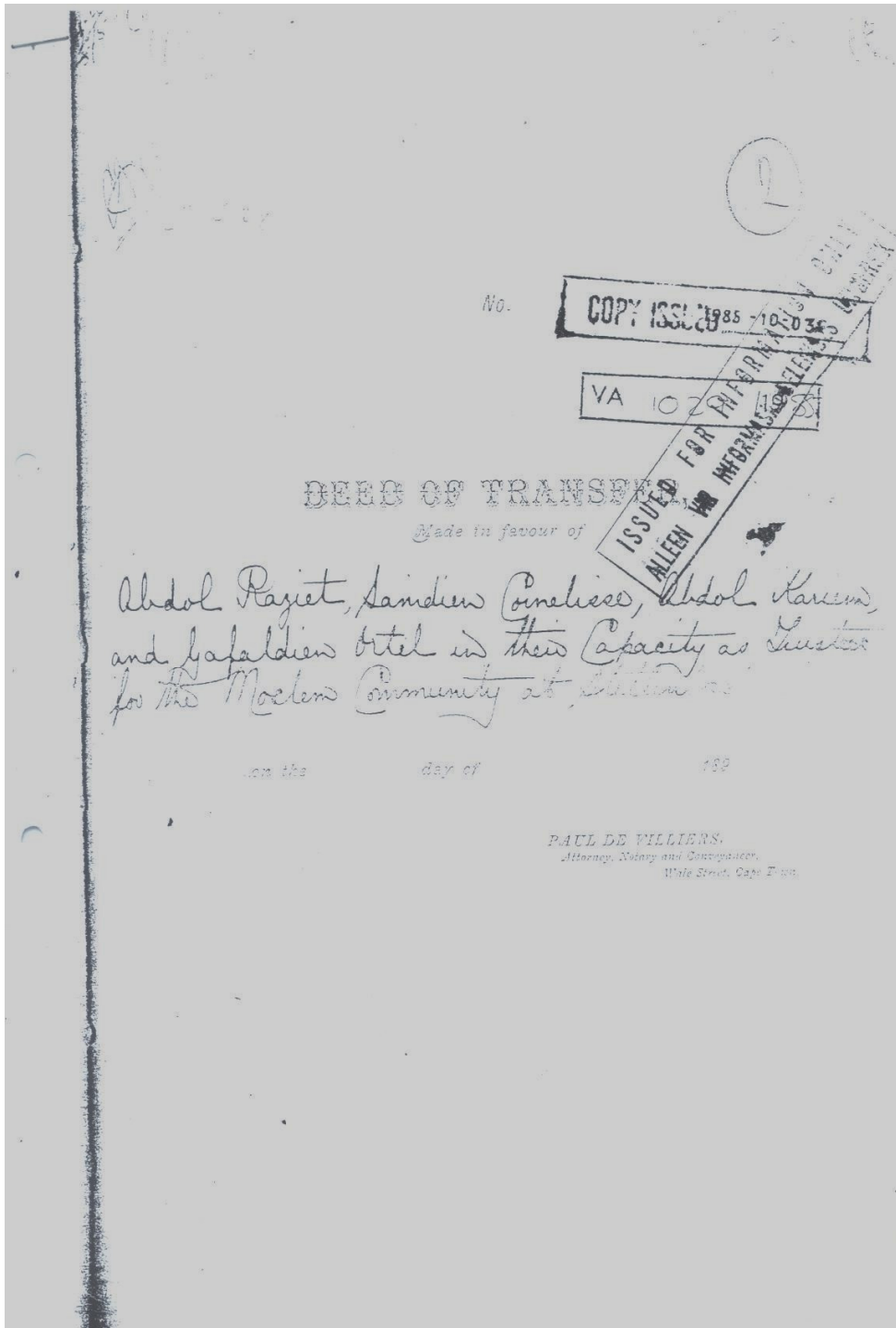
It has been said that in the absence of any framework, a nostalgia for certainties, like that of the apartheid era, are sought.¹⁸ In trying to renegotiate identity in the present, aspects of the past are sought. Apartheid was a difficult period in the history of the “non-white” peoples of Stellenbosch. However, what it did provide was a framework in which identity could be easily accepted because of its rigidity. It is in overcoming the racial discourse and the snapshot view of a past located solely in a racist context, that a more just identity/ies can be located. A binary oppositional history, can perpetuate a racist way of thinking. “The challenges before us is to find ways of recognising race and its continued effects on people’s everyday lives, in an attempt to work against racial inequality, while at the same time working against practices that perpetuate race thinking”.¹⁹

¹⁸ G. Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 2000, p. 68.

¹⁹ Z. Erasmus, “Race and Identity in the Nation”, J. Daniel *et al* (eds.), *State of the Nation: South Africa, 2004-2005*, p. 30.

Appendix 1

Deed of Transfer of the Stellenbosch Mosque (19 March 1897)



DEED OF TRANSFER,
 BY VIRTUE OF A POWER OF ATTORNEY.

Prepared by
PAUL DE VILLIERS,
 Conveyancer.

Deed of Transfer
 No. 100
 1895

Know all Men whom it may concern,

PAUL DE VILLIERS appeared before me, Registrar of Deeds, he being duly authorized
 16th day of March 1895

as his Attorney, dated the
 16th day of March 1895 at Stellenbosch
 in the presence of Messrs P. W. van Jacob Johannes
 Jacob Daniel Kuge, Willem Frederik
 Jacob van Blommestein and Johannes Wilhelmus Herman
 in their capacity as Commissioners of the Municipality
 of Stellenbosch

whom Power of Attorney has this day been exhibited to me. And the said Appraiser does
 that his constituent had truly and legally sold, and He, the said Appraiser, in his capacity as Attorney
 aforesaid, did, by these Presents, Cede and Transfer, in full and free Property, to and on behalf of
 Abdul Rajet Samdien Conlisse, Abdul Karim and
 Jafaldien Otel, in their capacity as Trustees of the
 Moslem Community at Stellenbosch
 or their Successors in Office

Heirs, Executors, Administrators, or Assigns, certain pieces of ground situated
 in the township of Stellenbosch, being Lot No 4 of
 the divided land granted to the Commissioners of the
 Municipality of Stellenbosch on the 26th March 1895
 measuring sixty seven square rods and sixty (60) square
 feet.

- Bounded N by Commonage
- E by Old Burial Ground
- S by Banghoek Street or
- W by Lot No 3

as will more fully appear from the annexed
 diagram framed by the Surveyor subject however
 to such conditions as are therein or in the aforesaid
 deed of grant mentioned or referred to

REGISTERED FOR THE DEEDS
 REGISTER

I have read and approved the foregoing and these presents be despatched
 by the Registrar of Deeds
 Cape of Good Hope
 the 1st day of August 1891

Therefore the said Appraiser, renouncing all the Right and Title ^{the said} heretofore had to the Premises, ^{the said Municipality} acknowledged and declared ^{the said Municipality} to be entirely dispossessed of and disentitled to the same; and that, by virtue of these Presents, the said ^{Abdol Razet, Samdieu Conelness, Abdol Karim and Hafaldien Otel} Executors, Administrators or Assigns, now is, and henceforth shall be, entitled thereto conformably to local custom; moreover promising to free and warrant the Property thus sold and transferred, and also to clear it from all Encumbrances and Hypothecations, according to the Laws respecting the Purchase and Sale of Landed Property; Government, however, reserving its Rights; and finally acknowledging ^{the said Municipality} to be satisfactorily paid the whole of the Purchase Money, amounting to a Sum of

City Council
act

In Witness whereof, I, the said Registrar, together with the Appraiser, ⁷⁻¹ have subscribed to these Presents, and have caused the Seal of Office to be affixed thereto.

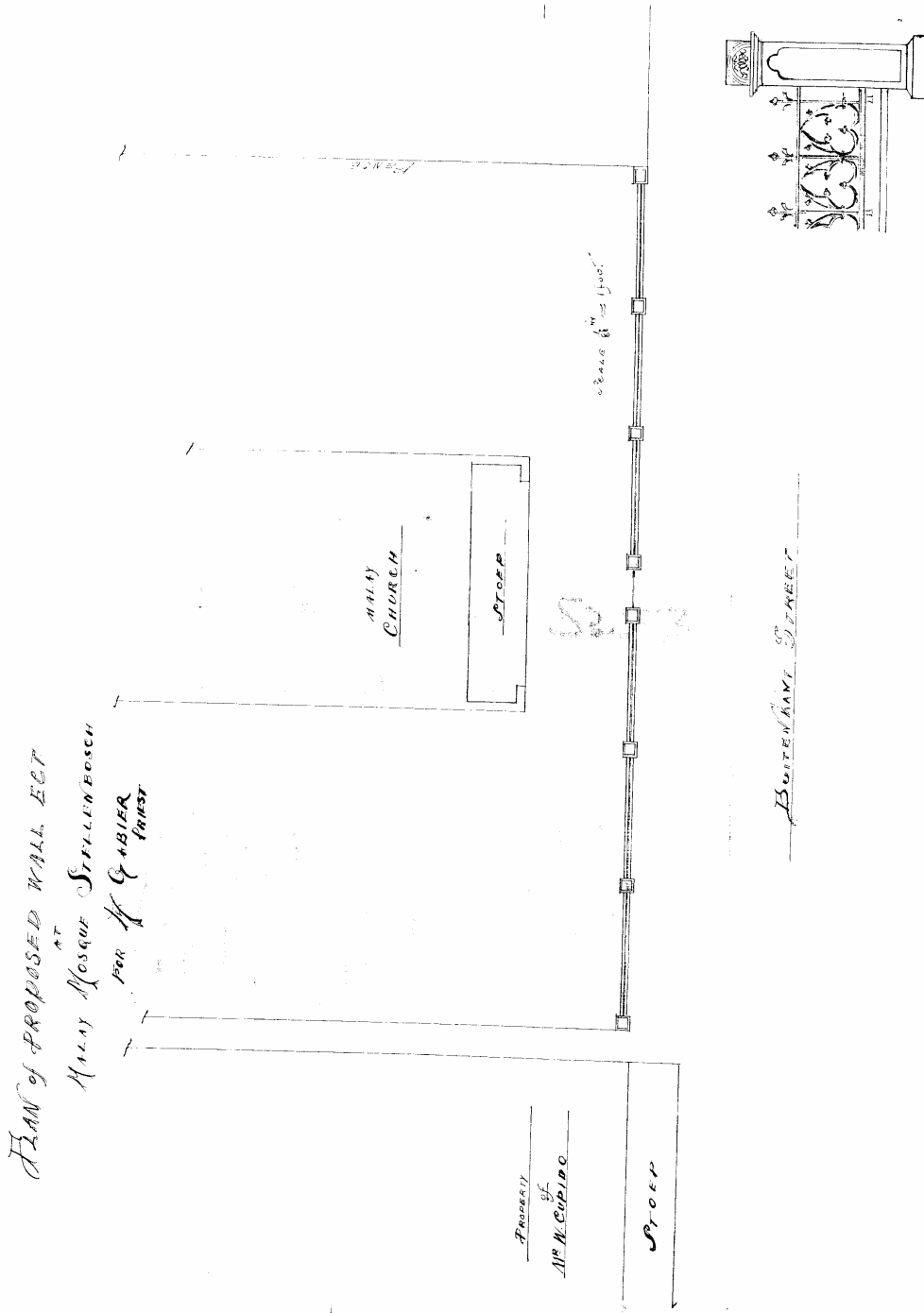
Thus done and executed, at the Office of the Registrar of Deeds, in Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, on the ^{1st} Day of the Month ^{August}, in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Ninety-^{one}

In my presence,

Registrar

Appendix 2

Proposed Wall Erection Application for the Mosque (3 March 1903)



Appendix 3

Proposed Alteration to the Moslem School (17 September 1915)

Plans for Proposed Alterations (23 September 1913)

To The Municipality
of Stellenbosch.

Re Alteration Moslem School.

Sir

On behalf of my school Committee
I herewith respectfully wish to ask
your Council Permission for the
enlargement of our Moslem School
Building situated in Bankhoek Road.
Specification etc. relative to the above
application are herewith enclosed.

Trusting your Council will be favourably
disposed towards the said application
I am

Dear Sir

Your respectfully
A. Crombie
Secretary
Moslem School Stellenbosch

application made.

Yours faithfully,

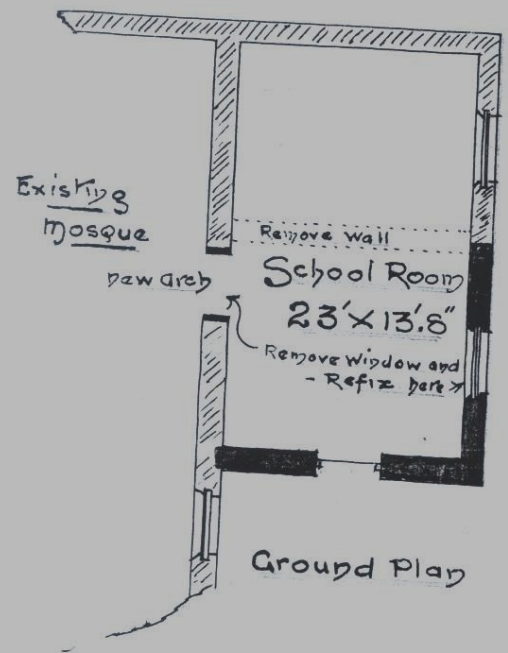
Mr. J. M. L. L.

Responses to proceed -

23/9/18

was lettered
acting Chairman
Pitso Moshe

Proposed Alterations and
Addition
to Moslem School
in Bahhoek Road
Stellenbosch

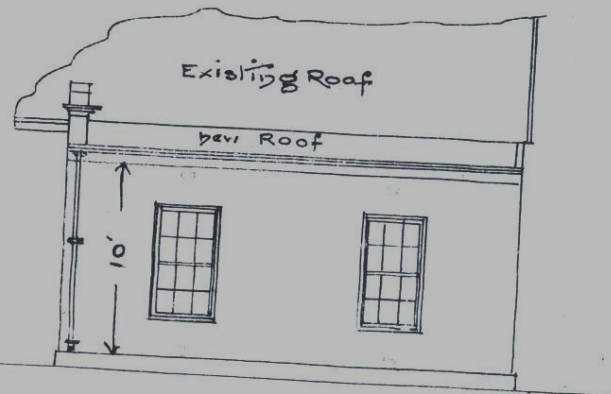


Ground Plan Scale 5ft. to 1 inch

A. Crombie,
Secretary,
Moslem School



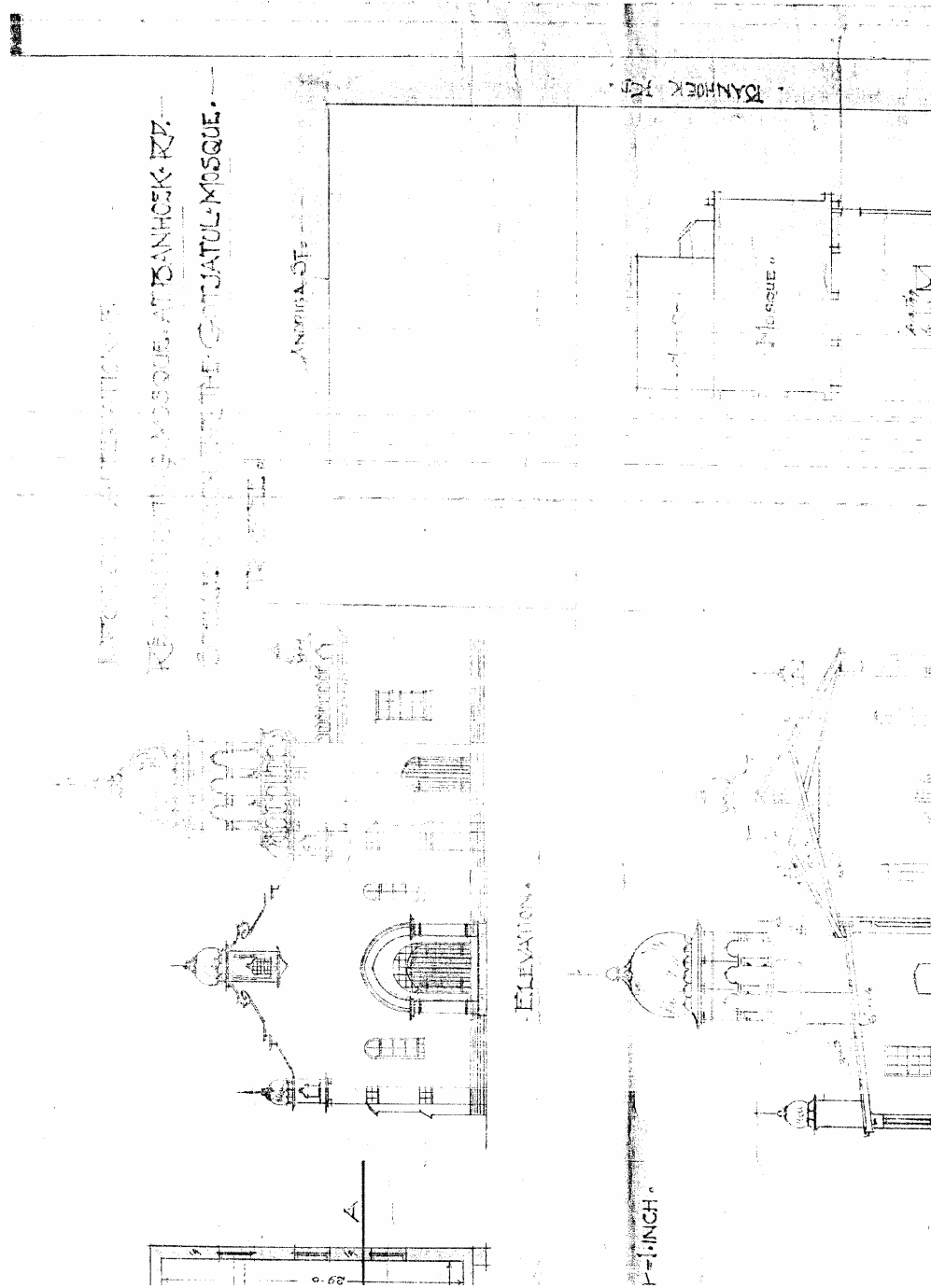
Front Elevation



Side Elevation

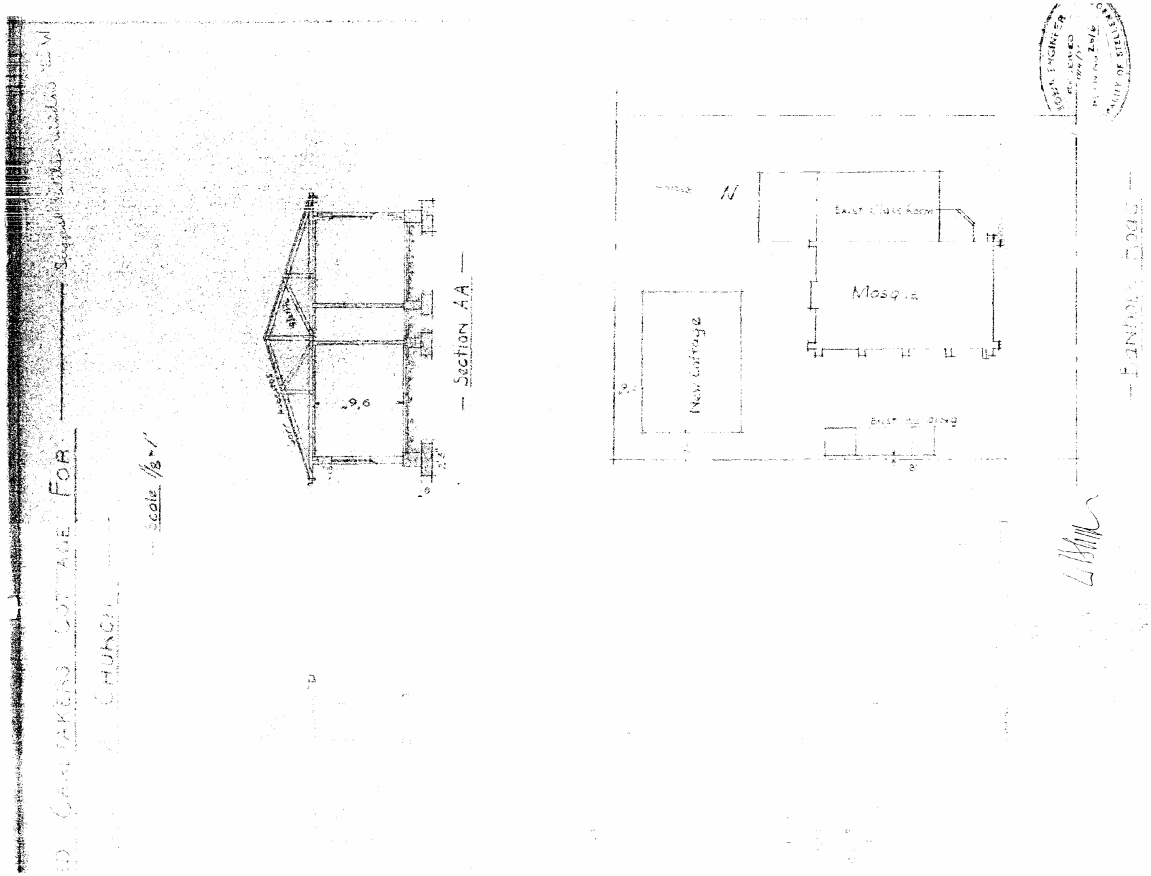
Appendix 4

Proposed Alteration of the Gotjatul Mosque (13 December 1932)



Appendix 5

Proposed Alterations for a Caretakers Cottage (19 April 1941)



Appendix 6

Distribution of the Mosques in the Western Cape¹



¹ Anon, *The Companion: Essential Guide for Muslims*, 2003-2004.







Appendix 7

Asian Permits Issued by the Department of the Interior, 1907-1913

STELLENBOSCH

| PIO File | Year | Permit | | |
|----------|---------|--------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| PIO 3/1 | 1907 | 340 | Mahomed Osman and son Shaik Hassan Mahomed | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/2 | 1907-8 | 568 | Abdol Cassiem | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/3 | 1908-9 | 929 | Asraf Laloo Moonshee | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 949 | Shaik Abdulla | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 977 | Sidick Ismael | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 992 | Baloo Ramcaran | Indian Hindu |
| | | 993 | Dhoola Ayda | Indian Hindu |
| | | 1066 | Luchmon Motie (Mofie?) | Indian Hindu |
| PIO 3/4 | 1909 | 1300 | Shaik Abdullah | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1317 | Ebrahim Kader | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/5 | 1909-10 | 1859 | Moosa Ahamed | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/6 | 1910-11 | 2371 | Abdul Cader | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/7 | 1911 | 2418 | Abdol Rahman | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/8 | 1911-12 | 2869 | Shaik Ally | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 2933 | Shaik Abbas | Asiatic (?) |
| | | 2946 | Sassor Habib | Asiatic (?) |
| PIO 3/9 | 1912-13 | 3641 | Girdar Tricam | Asiatic (?) |
| | | 3642 | Abdol Carim Hajee Cassim | |

STRAND/ SOMERSET WEST

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------|----------------------|-------------------|
| PIO 3/2 | 1907-8 | 499 | Ahmed Suliman | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/4 | 1909 | 1222 | Fakeer Hasan | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1223 | Fakeer Essak | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/5 | 1909-10 | 1922 | Hoosem Khan and wife | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/6 | 1910-11 | 2169 | Seta Dulabh | Indian Hindu |

PAARL

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| PIO 3/2 | 1907-8 | 682 | Abdol Latief Garnie | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 683 | Shaik Osman | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 684 | Shabodien Shiriff | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/4 | 1909 | 1517 | Shaik Osman | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1519 | Shaik Omar | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1520 | Abdol Hamid | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1521 | Ahmad Mahomed | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1522 | Hassan Ismail | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 1558 | Willie Isa | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/7 | 1911 | 2458 | Abdul Cader + Wife, Rokea + Children | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 2464 | Jawarie Muttie + Wife+ Child | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 2637 | Samsodien Kariem | Indian Mahommedan |
| PIO 3/8 | 1911-12 | 2905 | Ahmed Ismail | Indian Mahommedan |
| | | 2914 | Abdullah Ally | Asian (?) |

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The names of those interviewed (1 – 53) were made available to the examiners but for ethical reasons will not be attached to this thesis as they have requested anonymity.

BIS *(Interviews conducted by H. Biscombe and his team.)*

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Interview

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Iconography

Photo Stellenbosch Mosque, 2008, taken by Z. Osman.

Photo of the supposed tombstone of A. Gabier, currently housed in the Muslim Library, Stellenbosch.