The Imām of Simonstown

and his Diary

(1904 – 1928)

By

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Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Social Sciences in the Faculty of Humanities,

University of Cape Town

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Date submitted: 10 October 2011

DECLARATION

"I declare that ***The Imām of Simonstown and his Diary (1904 – 1928)*** is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references."

Signed ……..

Witness: ……

Date: 10th October 2011

DEDICATION

The thesis: *The Imām of Simonstown and his diary (1904 -1928)* is dedicated to the memory of Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban who, by virtue of his diary, immortalized the memory of the once vibrant and colourful Muslim community of Simonstown of one hundred years ago.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

After the Almighty, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Abdulkader Ismail Tayob. I remain indebted to you for the tireless and meticulous reading and studying of my periodical draft submissions; for your critical comments and advice; and for your constant encouragement. Thank you for the care. I am profoundly grateful.

I remember my belated parents as I submit this thesis; and thank them.

Thanks to the following people:

- My brothers, sisters and their families.
- My friend, Dr. Mogamat Noor Davids, who has been extremely kind and helpful with his invaluable advice in the completion of some intricate aspects of this thesis.
- The grand-children of Imam Muhammad Salih Saban, in particular Shaheed and Ridwaan Saban, who granted me the initial permission to pursue the studies.
- Dr. Yusuf da Costa, for your encouragement.
- Kashief Gamieldien, for the copy-editing and proof-reading of the text.
- All the Professors and my colleagues in the Religious Studies Department at U.C.T.
- The National Research Foundation for assisting with the funding of this study.
- Dr. Muhammad Haroon, for your constant encouragement and advice.
- The following people who related oral traditions that assisted me with my research:
    - Aunty Patty (Zainab Davidson) and her husband, Sedick of the Simonstown Heritage Museum.
    - Aunty Mona Karlie
    - Igsan Shaboedien
    - Goosain Manuel
    - Seraj Amlay
    - Ebrahim Solomon
    - Abdulkader Anthony
    - Aunty Zubeida Waggie
- The staff of the Simonstown Museum.
- The staff of the Cape Archives in Roeland Street, Cape Town.
- To all those who facilitated this study in any small way – I thank you.

A special thanks to Gheyria Fakier. Your unselfish support helped to bring this wonderful personality, Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban to life. I will never be able to repay you for making this study so enjoyable.

Last, but not least, *shukran* to Gadija Davids and **all** my children for supporting me with this work. This thesis belongs to all of you. Thanks!

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban and his Diary within the context of the Simonstown Muslim community that he served from 1904 until 1928. The thesis presents the Diary, transcribed, edited, and digitised, for the sake of understanding the Imām's contribution. It examines the Diary as a reflection of one man's witness, open to study from a number of perspectives. Firstly, it presents a background to the early Muslim presence in Simonstown and its links with the Cape slave community. It then constructs a biography of the Imām, mainly on the evidence culled from the Diary, but supplemented by secondary sources. It then turns to the Diary as the Imām's testimony. The Diary is compared with those of other diarists, who mostly represented a European dominant-class viewpoint of Simonstown. The thesis argues that the Imām's Diary provides another perspective on the town and its inhabitants. Finally, the study presents the Diary as an insider testimony of the Imām, his role and authority, in the Cape.

ABBREVIATIONS

Ar.	Arabic
Diary	Imām Saban's Diary kept from 1904 to 1928
E.D.	An earlier diary kept by Imām Saban before his term of leadership

A NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

I have only followed the conventional academic style for the transliteration when I used Arabic words in my own writing, but not for the proper names used in the Diary or when I quote directly from the Diary or from any other source. I used italics to indicate the foreign (Arabic or Malay) source of a word, except if it is used as a title before a name.

NOTE

I have used the spelling Simonstown except where I have quoted from another source.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN IMĀM SABAN'S DIARY AND IN THIS THESIS

Aid	(*ʻĪd*) Muslim festival after completing the fast during Ramadan or when pilgrims are completing their rites
Aliem	(*ʿĀlim*) Title given to a religious scholar
Amaanat	(*Amānah*) A trust
Bai'ah	Allegiance with a spiritual guide
Banguru	Allegiance with the *Imām* (appointing him to conduct domestic rituals)
Barakah	Blessing
Belaal	(*Muʻaẓẓin*) Person who makes the call (*Aẓān*) for prayers
Caderiya	Form of spiritual exercise presumably traced to the *Qādiriyyah Ṣūfī* order
Coemies *Maulūd*	The lunar night of celebrating the Prophet's birth, corresponding to 12th Rabbi ul-Awwal on the Islamic calendar
Diary	Imām Saban's Diary kept from 1904 to 1928
Doah	(*Duʻā*) Supplication
Emam	(*Imām*) Head of the Muslim community and its Mosque
Fatiga	(*Fātiḥa*) A specific prayer referring to the first chapter of the Qur'ān, recited on special occasions
Fatwa	Formal Islamic juridical opinion
Fitra	Payment due to the needy at the end of the fasting month of Ramadān
Galiefa	Teacher at Muslim school
Gatiep	(*Khaṭīb*) – assistant to the Imām
Gootbaar	(*Khuṭbah*) – Sermon
Hadith	Preserved recordings on the Prophet Muḥammad
Hajj	Annual Pilgrimage to Mecca
Hijri	According to the Muslim calendar
Ijarah	Lease
Ijazat	Permission

Jamaah/Jamaat	(*Jamā'ah*) Group
Jumu□ah	Friday Congregational Prayers
Kanaladorp	District Six, Cape Town
Kefayat	(*Janāzah*) – Funeral
Khilafat	Global Muslim Leadership
Kieblat	(*Qiblah*) – Direction Muslims face in prayer
Kitab	Book
Koorbaan	(*Qurbān*) – Animal sacrifice (ritual)
Koraan	(Qur'ān) Revealed Book of Muslims
Kramat	Holy Shrine
Labarang	(*'Īd*) Annual Muslim Celebration
Mahaar	Dowry
Mandie	(*Ghusl*) – Ceremonial Washing
Marboot	(From the Arabic *rabṭ*, to link) The Public announcer, Mosque official
Mentamaaf	Asking for pardon
Mimbaar	Pulpit
Moelute	(*Maulūd*) Celebration of the Prophet Muḥammad's birth
Monaraat	(Minaret) Tower (of Mosque)
Morreek	*Murīd* – Disciple
Mosafier	Pilgrim
Murshid	Spiritual guide
Musallee	(*Muṣallī*) Ordinary follower in the Mosque hierarchy
Nikah	Wedding ceremony
Pwasa	Fasting
Rampies	Preparation of fragrant sachets of orange leaves for *Maulūd*
Ratiep	A popular practice at the Cape since the Nineteenth century. The hitting of the body with skewers without causing the flow of blood, to the accompaniment of Arabic chanting
Rifa'i Sufi Order	Spiritual order named after Aḥmad al-Kabīr al-Rifā'ī
Riwayat (al-Barzanji)	Popular poetic biography on the Holy Prophet Muḥammad's birth, recited during *Maulūd* celebrations
Saiyyidi/Saidy	Title that denotes respect and also used to refer to the family of the Prophet Muḥammad
Seedies	East-African indentured sailors of the Royal Navy based in Simonstown
Seg	(*Shaikh*) – Muslim leader
Seg Belaal	Chief *Bilāl*
Shari'ah	Islamic legal system
Ṣūfī	Mystical, spiritual (person or order)
Tamatt	Initiation ceremony for children entering adult Muslim life
Tielawat	(*Tilāwah*) Recitation (of Qur'ān)
Tuang	Title of respect
□Ulamā	Religious scholars (plural)
Wakīl (Wikālat)	Agent (Agency)
Walī	Guardian

INTRODUCTION

The Cape narrative has been told almost exclusively from the perspective of the White dominant-class. Since the earliest arrival of Europeans at Cape, they diarised and recorded the history of the colonised peoples. Their narrative overshadowed the marginal voices of the dominated under-classes. Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban, who served the Simonstown Muslim community from 1904 until 1928, stands out as an exception in this regard. He was one of very few local under-class individuals who kept a diary of events, giving an eye-witness account of the historical realities and the socio-political context of the Muslims in Simonstown. No one else appears to have preserved such a detailed first-hand account of Muslim activity at the Cape. His Diary represents the narrative of one under-class community whose story had previously been neglected.

This thesis has several goals. Firstly, it presents the Imām's Diary in a form that makes it easily accessible for readers and future researchers. The Diary had been hidden for a long time, and some controversy arose over its content. This thesis thus presents the Diary in a definitive form. Secondly, this study makes an important corrective in the history of Simonstown. Drawing on information in the Diary and other sources, it presents a tentative historical account of the emergence of Simonstown's early Muslim community. It supplements, and challenges diaries that have ignored the Muslims. Thirdly, the study turns to the Diary as a personal account of an active Imām. It focuses on his reflections and self-understanding of his role as Imām. This testimony should be put against contemporary scholarship on Muslim religious leaders in the Cape. Using archival and other secondary sources, Achmat Davids led the way with his attempt to construct a history of Imāms in the Bo-Kaap with his *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*.[1] Others followed, like Robert Shell with his *A Prosopography of Cape Imāms: 1811 – 1865,*[2] and Shamiel Jeppie with *Leadership and Loyalties: The Imāms of Nineteenth-Century Colonial Cape Town*.[3] Some, like Abdulkader Tayob,[4] have also studied Imāms of the Cape in the contemporary period in his *Islam in*

[1] Davids (2011)
[2] Shell (1996)
[3] Jeppie (1996)
[4] Tayob (1999)

South Africa: Mosques, Imāms, and Sermons, building on this same historical background. Each of them approached the study of early Imāms on the basis of a thorough study of archival sources, including early Court Records and papers in the Deeds Office. The common pursuit of these studies was to understand the dynamics at play in the unfolding of the Cape Muslim community under the leadership of Imāms. In the light of these studies on Muslim religious leaders, Imām Saban's Diary is extremely significant in that it provides a first-hand account of an Imām's activities, from his appointment to his death. This study is therefore a significant contribution to the studies on Cape Imāms, giving a fresh perspective from an Imām's Diary and personal testimony. It presents the Diary as a primary source against which to confirm and assess some of the contentions held by Davids and others on early Imāms.

Theoretical foundation

My thesis will be guided by Maurice Halbwachs' notion on space and memory. He claims that individuals and groups are not alone in remembering. They create spatial frameworks, and their collective memories become part of an imagined social community. According to Halbwachs, space is cut up in order to compose a fixed framework within which to enclose and retrieve its remembrances.[5] A diary, any diary, is regarded as a work of memory, reflecting both the individual and collective partipation therein. Given the selective and subjective nature of any diary, the Imām's Diary is an anthology of his memories and that of his people. It is written in simple and often obscure language. This element of obscurity brings to the Diary its openness and potential for multiple interpretations.

This theoretical framework basically creates some scope to argue that the Imām's Diary is a significant contribution to our understanding of history. This is especially the case now that the under-classes are rediscovering their own history. The Diary of Imām Saban shows that the Muslim community was, and is a vibrant, active and determined one despite the fact that its identity and agency were written out of official history. This makes the work of this thesis significant as it gives a voice to the past – an active voice that belies the distorted and one-sided history of the "other".

[5] Halbwachs (1992)

The Diary is not a comprehensive story. It is riddled with silences and subjective views. It provides a birds-eye view of the period in which the Imām lived and some notion of the social nature of the community with which he was actively involved. While the Imām kept the Diary for himself, he also had in mind the long-term preservation of his work. He was not unlike other diarists. His preservation for later generations allows us to come in, and capture his memories and his detail.

I have positioned myself as an interpreter of Imām Muḥammad Saban's diary, which is his attempt to capture his recollections and his experiences in and for the Muslim community. He noted, among other events, births, deaths, meetings, social gatherings, anecdotes, dates, customary practices, personal opinions, etc. Collectively, all these draw a picture of a time-period and a space through the eyes of the Imām, using his memory and writing skills. He presented information, but also a collective framework for his community and its people. This thesis does not lay claim to the Diary of Imām Saban being a "history" of any sort – on Simonstown, on the Muslim communities of Simonstown and Cape Town, or on Muslim culture. Nevertheless, a substantial body of knowledge on these subjects can be extracted from the Diary. While the Diary was not intended to be a history-writing project, it required vigour and a measure of scholarly discipline to keep the Diary as meticulously as Imām Saban had done. Moreover, the Diary presents a testimony and a self-reflection of what an Imām thought of his work. Both of these elements, history and testimony, will be explored in this study.

In order to achieve the above goals, I have divided this part of my thesis into three chapters.

In Chapter One, I will argue that that the history of Muslim presence in Simonstown is concurrent with the broader history of Simonstown and with the slave history of the Cape. Here, I will briefly discuss the connection between the early Muslims of Simonstown and those in Cape Town. I will then describe how the Muslims in Simonstown became an organised community, and then locate Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban in the light of that community. I will discuss how they retained their own distinct identity in Simonstown, from their arrival in 1814 until 1911 when they purchased their own place of worship under the leadership of Imām Saban. In the absence of independent information, I will use Imām Saban's Diary to construct a biographical essay on him. I will furthermore discuss the

preservation and transmission of the Diary and briefly describe its content and the arrangement of material.

In Chapter Two, I place the Imām and his Diary in the broader context of diarists. I will compare his Diary and eight other diaries that were written in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries in the broader Cape, and in Simonstown in particular. I will then examine the general inclination of these diarists, and how their world-view and personal motivations appear to have impacted on the scope and limitations of their recordings. This exercise will embrace three dimensions. Firstly, I gauge the relevance of Imām Saban's Diary in the world of international diarists. Secondly, I show how the Cape narrative was told almost exclusively from the perspective of the White dominant-class. In this regard, I locate the foundations of the imbalance in the recordings of the Cape history, with specific reference to Simonstown. Thirdly, I will explore Imām Saban's world-view and motivations as a diarist, leader, and long-term, permanent resident of Simonstown. Here, I aim to locate the scope and value of his Diary as a new body of knowledge on a previously marginalised Cape community. I argue that his Diary may be used as a source of reference to fill the information vacuum left by the earlier diarists, by showing its usefulness in the reconstruction of a more comprehensive social history of Simonstown.

Chapter Three will seek to use Imām Saban's Diary as his personal testimony on the role and authority of the Imām. The Diary serves as a measure to assess some of the theoretical and historical contentions that have prevailed on Imāms at the Cape in the early Twentieth century. In the course of studying Imām Saban's reflections, I firstly aim to establish if, and how, the Simonstown Muslims retained and strengthened their own cultural identity in the face of a dominant Christian English culture that prevailed there. Furthermore, I will use his reflections to show the relationship between Imām Saban's community and the other cultural groupings in Simonstown, as well as the nature of their relationship with their co-religionists in the broader Cape.

Together with this thesis, I present a digitised copy of the Diary featuring the Diary in Imām Saban's own hand as well as an edited transcript thereof.

Chapter One

MUSLIMS IN SIMONSTOWN

And

IMĀM MUḤAMMAD ṢALIḤSABAN AND HIS DIARY

This chapter is a historical reconstruction of the origin of Muslims in Simonstown, of Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban and of his Diary. It begins with a general history of the town, and the earliest record of Muslims in it. I pieced together the emergence of important institutions of Muslims in the town. This is then followed by a biographical account of the Imām himself. Due to a lack of secondary sources, I have used the Imām's Diary and its notices to reconstruct his biography. The Diary is not an autobiography, but contains enough information on his appointment, his wife, his children, and his relations with the people of Simonstown and the Cape. I then turn to the Diary, and present its history, including the role of Imām Saban's family and offspring in the preservation and transmission of his Diary. I furthermore describe the contents of the Diary, the arrangement of its material, and the significance of the Diary as a historical document.

HISTORY OF MUSLIM PRESENCE IN SIMONSTOWN

There are divergent views as to when exactly the first Muslims arrived or settled in Simonstown. Author and researcher, Rayda Jacobs, holds that Muslims laid their roots there in the mid 1700's. According to Jacobs: "It is not known for certain when the first Malays came to settle in the picturesque village of Simonstown, but it is highly likely that they accompanied the Dutch soldiers who were sent from Cape Town by Governor-General Van Imhoff in 1743 to erect a landing station for ships of the Dutch East India Company."[6] To construct an understanding of the Muslim presence in Simonstown then, we need to go back to the origins of the town.

[6] Jacobs (2003, p. 157).

Due to its sheltered location, the Dutch used a section of False Bay, knows as 'Yselstein Bay', as winter anchorage. In 1687 when Simon van der Stel visited the area, he renamed the section situated between two mountains 'Simons Bay'.[7] The adjacent town was therefore commonly referred to as 'Simons Bay' until 1799 when it became known as Simonstown.[8] At that stage, it was only intended as winter anchorage and never as a permanent base for the Dutch. Workers who were brought to Simonstown during Dutch rule either helped with the ships or served the needs of the Dutch colonialists in charge of the operation during winter.[9] According to archaeologist Shelone Klatsow, many workers returned to the Cape after the winter, but "… a few soldiers, junior officials, and slaves resided in Simons Town permanently …"[10]

In 1814, when Simonstown became the official Naval-base for British rulers, a more permanent labour force was required.[11] It is on this history that Whisson basis his contention on the history of a Muslim presence in Simonstown. He holds that Muslims: "… could not have settled there much before the 1800's and could well have moved in with the expansion of activity which came in the wake of the first British occupation."[12]

Residency and Slave Lodge in Simonstown

There is a huge discrepancy between the known history of Muslims in Simonstown and other indications of their presence there. Rayda Jacobs' contention of an earlier arrival of Muslims in Simonstown indicates a clear link between them and the slave presence in Cape Town. Whisson's later date stands against her contention.

The existence of the Residency[13] in Simonstown with its slave lodge supports the idea of an earlier Muslim slave presence in Simonstown. The Dutch built the Residency as winter accommodation for the Governor at the Cape in the 1770's.[14] The presence of a slave lodge

[7] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 13)
[8] Ibid., p. 12
[9] Klatsow (2004)
[10] Ibid.
[11] Whisson (1972, p. 7)
[12] Ibid.
[13] The Residency was built in Simonstown for the Governor of the Cape in the 1770's for his retreat and pleasure.
[14] Bird (1823, p. 68)

below it was confirmed by Dr Anders Sparrman[15] who visited the Cape from 1772 to 1776.[16] Sparrman was a naturalist and a conscientious diarist whose account of events relating to the slave trade at the Cape was one of the most authentic and reliable. About the Residency he said: "It was a three-gabled house with a stoep the whole length on the seaward side. The main floor was residential, the basement was chiefly for slaves and the attic for stores."[17] According to Klatsow, "Simons Town was isolated, "… not the place most people would have chosen to live in … It was also physically difficult to get to "… a distant outpost "… a kind of exile."[18]

As harbour, moreover, Simonstown was the ideal place for smuggling and for the slave trade. In 1791 during the ailing Dutch period, Gideon Rossouw [19] purchased the Residency.[20] The "enregisterment" of slaves only became incumbent upon slave owners in the early 1820's.[21] By then Rossouw had passed away, but 30 slaves were registered in the names of his widow Suzanne De Necker and his sons.[22] Rossouw's son in law, well-known shipwright John Osmond[23] also owned a large number of slaves. In 1824 a total of 31 were registered in his name.[24] Between 1825 and 1827 Osmond registered another 6.[25] It appears that the Residency with its ample slave lodge below was a strategic purchase for Rossouw at the time. Both Rossouw and Osmond were among the wealthiest residents of Simonstown. At the time of his death in 1847, Osmond owned what is today known as the Cape Point Nature Reserve, the Oaklands holiday resort just outside Simonstown, and large areas in

[15] Anders Sparrman was a Swedish physician and naturalist. He visited the Cape from 1772 to 1776 to study the natural environment. He was a conscientious diarist and recorded eyewitness accounts of the brutalities he observed within the institution of slavery at the Cape. He later became active in the struggle for the abolition of slavery.

[16] Sparrman (1785)

[17] Ibid., p. 18

[18] Klatsow (2004)

[19] Gideon Rossouw was a resident of Simonstown. He bought the Residency in 1791 that served as a slave lodge as well. He was himself the owner of a large number of slaves, and was one of the wealthiest Simonstown residents who, with his family, owned a large number of slaves.

[20] Cape Archives, SO 6/78-SO 6/79

[21] Bird (1823, p. 70)

[22] Cape Archives, SO 6/78-SO 6/79

[23] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 84). John Osmond was born in Gosport, England in June 1769 and came to South Africa in December 1799 as a carpenter. In 1801 he was appointed Master Shipwright in the Naval Establishment at Simonstown. The following year he married the daughter of the late Gideon Rossouw, and wealthy widow, Johanna Suzanna de Necker. By the time he died in 1847, he had amassed a substantial fortune. When registration of slaves became compulsory, he was among the few residents of Simonstown who, together with his wife's family, owned the largest number of slaves.

[24] Cape Archives, SO 6/78-SO 6/79

[25] Ibid.

Glencairn.[26] For many like Rossouw and Osmond, their involvement in the slave trade appears to have played a major role in the acquisition of their ample wealth. It was Sparrman's sympathy for the oppressed and his vehement objection against the slave trade that made him the only European visitor to Simonstown who was outspoken about the existence of the slave lodge. Today the Residency referred to by Sparrman houses the Simonstown Museum. The origins of the Muslims of Simonstown are hidden in this slave history of the town.

About a year before Osmond registered 31 slaves, a number of Muslims, under the leadership of Abdol Gaviel, applied to the Governor of the Cape for an official Muslim burial ground (Appendix 1).[27] That same year, the Simonstown Muslims were granted part of the old Seaforth Cemetery as their official burial ground. From 1813, in fact, the Muslim community of Simonstown had already been using the ground unofficially. This was the first piece of land that they received from the British Government. The grant attested to their significant numbers and was an acknowledgement of their economic viability and contribution to the development of Simonstown.

The application Abdol Gaviel and others made for an official burial ground in 1823, as well as slave registers in the Cape Archives, confirm the fact that Gaviel, like many slaves in Simonstown, were Muslim. Many of Osmond's slaves could be identified as Muslim according to their names or country of origin, e.g. Bacchus, Dumat, Surrata, Bates from Java, Abraham and Lubin from Bengal and Abdol, Cedar, Saradien, Nakeba from this colony.[28] In 1825 he also registered Abdol (28 yrs old) and Salomon from this colony.[29] Judging by the application for the burial ground, Muslims also went by names like Thomas, Joseph, Carolus and others. In addition to these slaves there were also many other slave owners as well as "free Blacks" living in Simonstown. In view of the dire circumstances described by Klatsow during the Dutch period, it would have been difficult for Muslim slaves to openly group themselves as a community when they were first brought to Simonstown. Their application

[26] Brock & Brock (1976, pp. 85-86)
[27] Ibid., p. 208 (Appendix 1)
[28] Cape Archives, SO 6/78-SO 6/79
[29] Ibid.

for a burial ground by 1823 supports the idea that they practised Islam unobtrusively well before that time. How they structured themselves from 1772 when the slave lodge was first built is unknown at this point. As Klatsow says, the slave history was "completely opaque".[30] The physical representations of Islam created after the Dutch period (particularly the Muslim Cemetery) indicate that there must have been a considerable Muslim slave presence well before the 1800s.

MUSLIM INSTITUTIONS

The ground acquired by the Simonstown Muslim community in 1823 remained their official burial ground until the early 1900s. In 1910 the entire Seaforth Cemetery was closed and burials took place at the new Dido Valley Cemetery just outside Simonstown.[31] In addition to the cemetery, we look at the local mosque and, much later, the school that completed the institutional history of Islam in the town.

The earliest reference to a mosque was in the welcome address to the Prince of Wales, written by a delegation of Muslim leaders of Simonstown in 1860. They introduced themselves as: "We, the Gatiep and the congregation worshipping in the Mosque in Simon's Town, …" and signed the address: "Gatiep Abdol Gakiem, Galiefa Abdol Galiel, Belaal Abdol Mojiet, Belaal Sahaboo, Belaal Giardien, Belaal Samodien, Belaal Baderdien, Seg Ebrain. In behalf of ourselves and the congregation. Simon's Town, 17th day, first month, 1277 (2 August 1860)"[32] The signatories comprised a number of prominent leaders in Simonstown at the time. The most senior among them was referred to as the "Gatiep" (*Khaṭīb* – assistant Imām)[33] and they confirmed themselves as a delegation representing a larger Mosque Congregation. However, the mosque referred to by the 1860 delegation could not have been a formal one because no known mosque existed in Simonstown at the time. On the history of the Simonstown mosque, Whisson says: "A room was set aside for worship throughout most of the Nineteenth century and in 1876 a mosque was built. In 1925 the mosque was rebuilt on that same

[30] Klatsow (2004)
[31] Brock & Brock (1976, pp. 82-83)
[32] Ibid., p. 52-53
[33] Da Costa & Davids (1994, p. 169). Davids refers to '*Khaṭīb*' as the one who substitutes for the Imām of a mosque, or who is his second in command.

site and extensions for a school incorporated into the building."[34] Hadjie Bakaar Manuel[35], well-respected Trustee and Secretary of the Mosque Committee, lived in Simonstown all his life and described the history of the Simonstown mosque in this way: "In 1888 the services were held in an old house in Thomas Street; prior to this time the services were performed in different parts of the town, wherever opportunity arose."[36] He continued, "… we were waiting for news from England from the owner of the property to sell to our community."[37] He also says that: "in 1911 the Moslem community bought the property, but it was not until 1926 that the present buildings were built."[38] Deeds Office records confirm that the current mosque building was only transferred to the community in 1911, which makes Manuel's account more plausible.[39] Thus, the present mosque described by Manuel could not have been the same mosque that Khaṭīb Abdol Gakiem referred to in 1860. However, Manuel also mentions that in the early years Muslims used a number of different venues to perform their prayers.[40] Thus, the concept of a "congregation worshiping in a mosque" was not necessarily based on the existence of a specific mosque, but more on the presence of a community with some leaders claiming to represent them.

Throughout the Nineteenth century, the Simonstown Muslims did not have a school of their own. The Simonstown Moslem Mission School was founded in 1923. Bakaar Manuel was elected as the manager of the Mission School at its inception, and he confirms the month when it was officially opened and the reasons that led to its establishment: "… it was opened in July 1923 by the Mayor of Simon's Town. In 1922 all the Moslem children were expelled from the school which they then attended [English Mission School] owing to over-crowding. The Moslems were compelled to erect a

[34] Whisson (1972, p. 6)

[35] Hadjie Bakaar Manuel was born in Simonstown on 2 January 1878. He lived in Simonstown all his life. He collected the monthly Rental for the Noorul Islam Mosque from the community, from 1892, before its actual purchase, and became a Trustee and Secretary when the Mosque was purchased in 1911. Hadjie Bakaar was married to Imām Karriem Jarley's daughter, Bahieya.

[36] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 125)

[37] Ibid., p. 125

[38] Ibid.,p. 125

[39] Cape Town Deeds Office (1911, Deed No. 9922)

[40] Bird (1823, p. 68). William Wilberforce Bird was Customs Controller at the Cape in the 1820's. His account of the Cape mosque history confirms the use of temporary venues to perform services.

suitable building. This they did in six months by hard work and collecting for the building fund."[41] The school is discussed in more detail later in this study.

THE IMĀMS OF SIMONSTOWN

Imām Saban was not the first Imām of the town, but not much is known about his predecessors. Moreover, without the benefit of his Diary, Imām Saban himself may have been completely forgotten as well. There was a gap in the oral record as to exactly when Imām Saban was the Imām.

Between leaders like Abdol Gaviel in 1823 and Khaṭīb Abdol Gakiem in 1860, there is no clear indication about who played the role of religious leadership in Simonstown. I was also unable to establish who filled this position after Khaṭīb Abdol Gakiem. It is known that from 1888 Imām Karriem Jarley performed this function, until his demise on 30th August 1904. For later generations of the Simonstown Muslim community, it was generally unknown who succeeded Imām Karriem as religious leader of that community from 1904 until 1928. It was known that Imām M. Arifie Manuel shared the Imām's duties with M. Gosain Solomon from 1928 until the latter passed away on 7th May 1938. Imām M. Arifie Manuel then led the community until his death on 31st January 1950. Imām Amien Baker succeeded him. Imām Arifie Manuel's son Imām Mogamat Salie Manuel then took over the reins from Imām Amien Baker in 1968.[42] This was the period during which the 'coloured' community was moved from Simonstown. Nearly the entire Simonstown Muslim community was forcibly moved to Slangkop – with Imām Mogamat Salie Manuel as their leader.[43] Today, Slangkop is known as Ocean View.

[41] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 125)

[42] M. Karlie (2009, pers. Comm., 25 July)

[43] Muller (1969). The apartheid Government's forced removal of people of colour from central areas in the country started in 1967. A few years later the Simonstown coloured community was moved to Slangkop. Muller describes the feeling of resolution that engulfed the Simonstown coloured community after many appeals and attempts to redirect the government's plans to move them. He also discusses the plans the people made in anticipation of the move. He said: "All the Malays (actually, only the men – though the women could have voted) have elected a special Mosque Trust Committee, which is trying to raise funds to buy land and build a new mosque in Slangkop. It is planned that this mosque will have two school-rooms attached to it (like the present mosque)."

Thus, when the Ocean View Muslim community speaks of its previous leaders, they refer to the leaders of the Simonstown Muslim community. The memory of these leaders was kept alive by oral tradition, photographs, and prayers for them - with the exception of Imām "Mogamit Saleh Saban" whose existence appeared to have gone unnoticed.[44] His identity and role as Imām only became known when his Diary began to be circulated among the Ocean View families in the early 1990's.

IMĀM MUḤAMMAD ṢALIḤ SABAN

When I received a photocopy of Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban's diary from the Simonstown Museum[45], it was the first time I came across information on the Imām who led the Simonstown Muslim community for the period 1904 to 1928. Imām Saban was the author of a diary that contains valuable information on the entire period of his leadership of the Simonstown Muslim community. Yet, his story has not been told countless times; his place in Simonstown has been ignored in both oral and recorded history. I decided to use Imām Saban's own autobiographical statements to reconstruct a biography on him. In this exercise, I did not employ text-critical or religio-historical or other methods as are applied in the construction of biographies of mythical or historically significant figures.[46] I simply based myself on Imām Saban's Diary and a few other sources.

In an entry made on 15th March 1912, for example, he says he had been: "… acting as the Emam under the *Jamaat* [congregation] of Simonstown for 7 years, 4 months and 13 days".[47] According to this entry, he assumed his position as the Imām of the Simonstown Muslim community around the 2nd November 1904, about 2 months after Imām Karriem Jarley's demise. Imām Karriem's death is also recorded in this Diary as follows: "Emam Abdol Karriem died on the 30th August 1904 on Tuesday night at 8:30pm. Buried on 31st Wednesday afternoon 4:00 pm."[48] Close to the end of the Diary, I came across an entry (in

[44] These are my personal observations over the years as I grew up in Ocean View.

[45] While working on a particular project on the slave history, I was given a photocopy of the diary for the purpose of my research. At the time I was unfamiliar with the writer. It was only later that I realised that this was the Imām who served that community between 1904 and 1928.

[46] See for example, Reynolds & Capps (1976) who propose an interesting approach on studying biographies of individuals, written and re-wrtten over time.

[47] Diary p. 41

[48] Ibid., p. 3

another hand) noting Imām Saban's death: "Emam Mogamat Saleh Saban of Simons Town died on Wednesday afternoon at 2pm 3rd October 1928. Buried on Thursday the 4th October by Emam Basie of Cape Town. Age: 75. Jarmardill Olla 19th 1347"[49] I calculated that Imām Saban had served the Simonstown community for the longest term (i.e. nearly 25 years). This is the kind of information that can be used to construct a biography of the Imām.

Judging from the information in the Diary, Imām Saban appears to have been an ardent record keeper. I also discovered that he had also kept a separate diary prior to his leadership, noting important dates and matters he deemed noteworthy.[50] These included the date of death of important family members and events related to his position as assistant Imām (*Khaṭīb*) at the time. I could not obtain a copy of that diary, but had access to a transcript of some of its content.[51] The copy of the second diary, the subject of this thesis, became the basis on which to piece together a biographical sketch on the Imām. In this way I hope to overcome the lack of information on this Imām within the Simonstown community.

Reference to Imām Saban in the writings of local Muslim historians

In as much as Imām Saban was relatively unknown to the later generations of his own community, he was similarly unknown to the Cape Muslim community at large. The *Moslem Outlook*, a newspaper that circulated among Muslims for two years from 1925 to 1927, named many of the Imāms at the Cape, but did not make mention of Imām Saban. The only documented reference to Imām Saban that I was able to obtain was by Dr. Yusuf da Costa. He refers to a meeting held in 1914 by the Cape Muslim leaders for a unified Friday *Jumu□āh* (Congregational Prayer). After discussing the details of the meeting, he stipulated the names of all the local Imāms who signed the *Jumu□āh* Agreement. Imām Saban is noted as "Imam

[49] Diary p. 377. This information was documented in the diary by Imām Saban's daughter Hajera.
[50] I. Shabudin (2009, pers. Comm., 20 March)
[51] Transcripts of certain sections of Imām Saban's old diary are held at the Simonstown Heritage Museum.

Muhammad Salih", the sixteenth witness to sign the Agreement.[52] Dr Da Costa did not provide any more information on this particular Imām, in contrast with the other signatories whom he identified. I have not come across any mention of Imām Saban by other local historians.

At the start of my research, none of the families in Ocean View seemed to know much about Imām Saban. A few people who had heard about him thought his surname may have been 'Sahabudien'. Some thought he may have been from 'up the line' (i.e. not from Simonstown) and may have been related to the 'Shabudins'. My initial contention was that because the Imām was not originally from Simonstown, his descendants left the area some time after his death. The absence of families with the 'Saban' surname in Simonstown or Ocean View supported my contention. I later discovered that although they were generally unaware of the link, some Ocean View families were in fact connected to Imām Saban. These links are discussed later in this chapter.

Public records on Imām Saban

The lack of information available on Imām Saban caused me to explore every entry in the Diary that could possibly bridge this gap. Because I had already established his date of death, I decided to research his biography from a different angle. I hoped that some death records would disclose who his parents were or provide some new information. To this end I pursued Dido Valley Cemetery records located at the Simonstown Municipal Offices in Noordhoek, because this was the official burial place in 1928. However, there was definitely no record of Imām Saban's burial at Dido Valley Cemetery. His name was absent from both the index[53] and the actual records.[54] I tried to establish his burial place during my interviews with the

[52] Da Costa (1994, p. 109). Prof. Da Costa refers to the Jumu'ah dispute. Imām Saban attended that meeting and recorded not only the outcome but the place where it took place, the spirit of those who participated, the agreement reached and the implementation of the agreement just a week afterwards.

[53] Dido Valley Cemetery Register (1910-1957)

[54] Simonstown Municipality Record of Interments in Dido Valley Cemetery

community, which also left me empty-handed.[55] No information could be found in the Death Registers in the archives because Imām Saban did not own any fixed property at the time. After many more failed attempts to locate records on the Imām, I finally found his death recorded in the Home Affairs Death Registers located at the archives.[56] His date of death was confirmed as 3rd October 1928 and he was registered as "Priest".[57] This corroborated my contention that he was the Imām of the Simonstown Muslim community until 1928.

His origins

The Home Affairs Death Register indicated that he was 74 years old when he passed away, that the cause of his death was multiple sclerosis and that he died in Simonstown and was buried there.[58] From this information I established that he was born in 1853 or 1854.

His parents

I was unable to locate any definite information on the Imām's father. Most of Imām Saban's entries were made both in English and Arabic. His Arabic recordings at least revealed his own lineage. At times he referred to himself in the Arabic script as: "*Muhamad Saleh ibn [son of] Khaṭīb Sha'ban*'.[59] The Arabic here clarifies two things. One, that his father had been an elder or *Khaṭīb* (assistant Imām). I concluded that he must have grown up in a home of Islamic learning and leadership. He does not, however, clarify in what area of the Cape his father filled this position. Secondly, it states that he was the son of "*Sha'ban"* (which later became 'Saban'). In addition to this reference in his Diary, a *kitāb* (book) found in Simonstown, had the name: "Muḥammad Shaleh ibn [son of] Saban ibn [son of] Yusuf Aqil ad-Din" inscribed on the cover.[60] My contention is that that was Imām Saban's own *kitāb*. In the old diary he kept before he became the Imām, he had recorded events that took place

[55] G. Manuel, S. Amlay, T. Manuel (2009, pers. Comm., 3 April). No one had any knowledge of his burial place. Goosain Manuel's father (Hashim) was the son of Ismail Manuel, husband of Imām Saban's daughter Maymoena. Seraj Amlay is the eldest son of Mansoor Amlay who was the son of Abdul Basier Amlay who was married to Imām Saban's other daughter Marroffa. Tasliem's grandfather was Sedick Manuel, son of Ganief Manuel who was married to Imām Saban's daughter, Jogera. All of them are currently living in Ocean View, but were unaware of their connection to Imām Saban before these interviews.

[56] Cape Archives, HAWC 1924 Death Records

[57] Ibid., Death Records, Name of Deceased

[58] Ibid., Burial Place of Deceased and Cause of Death

[59] Imām Saban's reference to his lineage e.g. "Muhamad Saleh ibn Shabaa'n" appears in various entries in the diary in the Arabic text.

[60] International Peace University of South Africa (2006, p. 16)

before 1904. Here he made the following entry which identified the name of his grandfather as "Arkil" which is short for "Aqeeluddien": "Thursday 11th June 1868 at 4:00 am Otatta [grandfather] Arkil, Bappa's father died."[61] "Bappa" is a known term used for "father" among the Malay Muslims in Cape Town. Thus the entry relates to the death of his father's (Sha'ban) father "Arkil". Where they originated from is still unknown.

In the old diary he also recorded the death of his mother, Magediya: "Dear mother Magediya died on Monday at quarter past 10 o'clock. March 16th 1874. Barried Tuesday at 2 O'clock 1292 Hijri 27 Muharram. She died 8 days after her son Mogamat Sharlig married with Natie [Imām Saban's wife 'Momenatie'] Jassiem".[62] He did not disclose where she died and provided no other information on his mother.

His Siblings

Imām Saban's Diary only makes reference to his sister Aisha who lived in Paarl (and later in Mowbray). It appears that they had a good relationship despite the geographical distance between them. Their children visited each other from time to time and Aisha's son appears to have lived with Imām Saban for a while. In an entry on 3rd March 1912 he noted: "My sister Ayesa's son Dollie Mokatiel whent away from me. Left the house on Sunday night 3rd March 1912. Going stay by Buttaa Mamatt in the Kloof."[63] Another entry on 12th January 1916 states: "My sister Ayesa, her 2 daughters, Galima & Noechy Mokatiel of Paarl came for a visit by me for one day only…."[64] Aisha's husband, Mokatiel Ismail was a tailor in Paarl and was also the *Bilāl* (person who makes the call to prayer) at the mosque in Paarl. When he took ill, Imām Saban visited him with Doolie on 27th July 1919: "I, the undersigned whent to Paarl on Sunday morning on the 27th July 1919 to see Mokatiel Ismail. Was very ill. Had a telephone by Police station for Paarl. Myself & Doolie came back the same day."[65] Mokatiel Ismaiel passed away on 5th November 1925 and was buried the next day: "Emam M. Saleh, A. Basier Amly, Emam's wife Marriyam & little son M. Aressaat Mona Ismaiel; we went to

[61] E.D.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Diary p. 41
[64] Ibid., p. 114
[65] Ibid., p. 170

Mokatiel's Kefayaat [funeral] in Paarl Friday the 6th November 1925 came home the same day."[66] Surprisingly, Aisha's death is not noted in the Diary.

In the old diary, Imām Saban notes the following: "7th January 1864 Miragie Saban was born in the month of Rajab, Miragie night."[67] This appears to be Imām Saban's brother. He is not mentioned in the later diary and may have passed away by that time. Imām Saban also records the death of two of his sisters. He recorded that: "My sister Gadija died on Friday at half past 3 O'clock on the 28th February 1850. Moslem month 24 Rabbi al-Akhir. She was 6yrs and 24 days".[68] He must have obtained this information from other sources as this death occurred before he was born. Another entry reads: "Sunday midnight 12 April 1870 Imām's sister Jogera Saban died."[69]

Other family members

In the old diary Imām Saban also notes the death of other family members. His grandmother Sharsea, died on Friday 31st December 1852. 19 Rabbi al Awwal.[70] He also notes the death of an aunt: "Anty Sadr Majebool died on Monday 10 January 1853. Moslem month 29 Rabbi al Awwal."[71] An entry in the later diary states: "Gatieb Majebool of Cape Town, Short Market Street, died on Monday morning 1:15am. Buried the same day, 13th July 1914 by Emam Moos."[72] Majebool appeared to be an uncommon surname, which suggests that this may have been of the offspring of his aunt Sadr.

In the old diary Imām Saban identifies his mother, father, grandparents, and an aunt. The diaries also indicate that he had at least three sisters and one brother. It appears that Aisha may have been the only sibling alive after 1904, because she is the only sister Imām Saban refers to in his later diary. The above entries on his family do not directly offer any clarity on

[66] Diary p. 313
[67] E.D.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

Imām Saban's identity, but they do suggest that his family lived at the Cape and that their history goes back well into the slave period.

Marriage and children with Momenatie

When Imām Saban recorded his mother's death, he noted that it was 8 days after he married 'Natie [short for Momenatie] Jassiem'. Based on this, his marriage to Momenatie took place on March 8th 1874. Thus he had been married to her for about 30 years when he became the Imām in Simonstown. Less than two years later, he noted that: "My dear beloved wife Momenatie died on Friday night at 10 pm on the 10th August 1906, buried on Saturday 11th … Age 55 years old. Buried by myself Emam M. S. Saban & Emam Abdol Rakieb of Wynberg …".[73] She was thus born in 1851 or 1852, which made her about 2 years older than him, and about 23 years old when she married him. Imām Saban himself presided over her burial, assisted by Imām Rakiep of Wynberg. Not much else was recorded on Momenatie except for the following entry: "Somerset Strand. My late wife, Naatie's cousin, Aa-isha died on Saturday 23rd April 1910."[74] I have been unable to establish further connection to the Strand. Imām Rakiep's presence at her funeral may also be an important point that indicates a connection to him or to Wynberg. Imām Saban had 4 children with Momenatie whom I could identify: i.e. Maymona, Marroffa, Khuwayla, and Abdurahman. From the Diary entries, I was able to construct a list of Momenatie's children and grandchildren (Appendix 2).[75]

When Momenatie passed away, her children were already in their twenties. According to the Dido Valley Cemetery records, their eldest daughter Maymona was born in 1881/82.[76] She was married to Ismail Manuel, brother of Hadjie Bakaar Manuel. None of their dates of birth are recorded in the Diary, but those of their children are. Moreover, Marroffa's marriage is recorded: "Emam M.S. Saban's daughter Marruffa got married with Abdol Basier Amley on Sunday 3 pm in the Masjiet on the 12th April 1908 by Seg A. Ragiem. Witness: M. Arifie & H. Bakaar."[77] Thus two of Imām Saban's sons-in-law, Maymoena's husband Ismail

[73] Diary p. 16
[74] Ibid., p. 36
[75] Family Tree on Momenatie's children constructed on the basis of Imām Saban's Diary (Appendix 2)
[76] Simonstown Municipality Record of Interments in Dido Valley Cemetery.
[77] Diary p. 19

Manuel and Marroffa's husband Abdul Basier Amlay, hailed from influential Simonstown families. Ismail was the son of Zakaria Taal. Abdul Basier was adopted by Achmat Amlay when he married Abdul Basier's sister, Darwisha Slamdien of Sandvlei.[78] Both of them built a close connection with the Imām and remained among his greatest supporters. His third daughter Khuwayla, however, moved to Cape Town with her husband, H. Safidien Leeman.[79] From the Diary entries, though, it is clear that this couple also continued to support the Imām. They visited each other regularly and remained closely connected.

After Momenatie's death, her daughters continued to play an active role in their father's life. Although he lived with his second wife and their children, the older children and their spouses supported him morally, intellectually and materially. They even assisted with the payment of his rental and other expenses when necessary. The names of his sons-in-law (especially Ismail and Abdul Basier) are mentioned profusely in the Diary during his engagements within his own community and with others outside, reflecting their consistent support for him. Ismail was a student of Shaikh A. Ragiem Iraqi of Cape Town. Perhaps because of his interest in religion, he was one of Imām Saban's strongest and most loyal supporters.

Marriage and children with Maryam

About six months after Momenatie's death, Imām Saban married Maryam:

> Emam M.S. Saban got married with Amilo Dollie's daughter Marriyam Cape Town on Sunday morning at the Masjiet [Mosque] of Emam Cassiem Kanallah Dorp by Emam Ebrahema Gallie on 17th February 1907. Mahaar was two pounds.[80]

The marriage took place in "Kanaladorp" (District Six) in the Mosque in Aspeling Street. From this marriage the Imām had 5 children. For obvious reasons the age difference between Momenatie's children and Marriyam's children was great. Imām Saban's children with Marriyam were Jogera, Fatima, Gadija, Mogamat Aressaat, and Mogamat Seddick

[78] Z. Davidson (2010, pers. Comm., 12 October)

[79] The date on which Khuwayla married H. Safidien Leeman and moved to C.T. is unknown. She may have been older than Maymoena and could have married before Imām Saban's Imāmat as well.

[80] Diary p. 15

(Appendix 3).[81] All their children were born during Imām Saban's term as Imām. This meant that their births were recorded as were those of other members of his congregation.

In addition to his own children, Imām Saban refers to a number of children in the Diary as his "adopted" sons or daughters. These were mostly children from among the Simonstown families. A chart shows the different diary entries relating to them (Appendix 4).[82]

Links between Simonstown and Cape Town

The Saban family moved to Simonstown either because of the Imām's work (e.g. duties in the dockyard) or because he was invited by Imām Karriem. He may also have arrived there from Cape Town. As shown above, there are those, like Rayda Jacobs, who speak of the connection between Simonstown Muslims and the Cape Town Slave community from the mid-1700's.[83] There is ample evidence that there remained a close connection between the Simonstown Muslim community and the community of Muslims in Cape Town. In his earlier diary, Imām Saban notes that: "In 1899 Hisham Ni'matallah Effendi chaired a meeting in Cape Town. Present was Emam Abdul Rakiep, Emams Moosa, Ebrahim, Dout, Gamsa, Saleh Saban [Simonstown], Jalaloedien of Kalk Bay. Emam Abdul Karriem [Simonstown] was absent due to illness."[84] Simonstown also benefited from teachers who were sent there from Cape Town before. The presence of many of Tuan Guru's hand books in Simonstown as well as oral tradition lead me to believe that he may have been one of those who sent his students there to teach.[85]

These books reveal the probability of the presence of Tuan Guru's students in Simonstown during the early 1800s. Oral tradition by Simonstown families corroborates this contention. They identify their progenitor as Khaṭīb Ismail, one of Tuan Guru's students.[86] Khaṭīb Ismail

[81] Family Tree of Marryam's children constructed on the basis of Imām Saban's diary (Appendix 3)
[82] Chart on Adopted children and related activities constructed on the basis of Imām Saban's diary (Appendix 4)
[83] Faber (2003, p. 157)
[84] E.D.
[85] In 1985 when renovations were made to the Simonstown Mosque, many of the old books that were left behind by previous generations were going to be destroyed. A number of my friends and I took possession of the books for safekeeping. Many of them were books from Tuan Guru's School. In 1999 I handed those in my care over to the Simonstown Heritage Museum.
[86] Muller (1969)

was also known as Tuan Guru's *Bilāl*.[87] Khaṭīb Ismail himself was never known to have lived in Simonstown, but I located the grave of his son, Khaṭīb Abdol Gakiem in the old Seaforth Cemetery. The inscription on the gravestone was in Javanese and made reference to his father Khaṭīb Ismail. I therefore believe that although Khaṭīb Ismail himself may have stayed in Cape Town, his offspring moved to Simonstown and played an important role in the spread of Islam there.

Another close link to Cape Town was via Khalīfa Abdol Galiel – one of the members mentioned in the welcome address to the Prince of Wales in 1860. As the title "*khalīfa*" was the Arabic reference to "teacher" at the time, Khalīfa Abdol Galiel was probably the official teacher of the Muslims of Simonstown around the mid 1800s. From the Diary I detected a family link between Khalīfa Abdol Galiel and the Imāms of the Galielurrahman Mosque in Cape Town. These entries support my contention that he hailed from Cape Town under the family name of 'Khalieluddien' and was sent to teach the Muslims of Simonstown. Over the years the surname 'Khalieluddien' was shortened to "Khalil". Khalīfa Abdol's offspring in Simonstown adopted the surname 'Karlie' under the English, while the family in Cape Town adopted the surname Gallie.[88] The Diary indicates that Khalīfa Abdol's son Noegie Karlie initially aligned himself as a *murīd* of Imām Mogamat Gallie of Ellis Muir Street Mosque in District Six. He became an active member of the Simonstown mosque community during Imām Saban's time. This was how Imām Saban recorded Khalīfa Abdol Galiel's funeral in his Diary:

> Gatieb Gadjie Kalill up at Good Gift died on Tuesday night on the 7th February 1922, age 105 years old. Buried by Seg Abdul Rahim [Al-Iraqi], Emam M.S. Saban, Emam Aminodien, Emam A. Bassier, Imām Yasien, Emam M. Sattley, Emam A. Rahman Wynberg, Emam Mogamit Galie, Emam M.Moos, Emam Rejalodien Kalk Bay, Emam Habiel & Emam Ebrahema.[89]

Nowhere in the Diary do we see so many Imāms attending a funeral in Simonstown. It therefore appears that the Cape Imāms had a great measure of respect and appreciation for

[87] E. Solomon (2009, pers. Comm., 4 October)

[88] Imām Ebrahim Gallie and his brother Imām Muḥammad Darweesh, the first Imāms at the Galilurrahman Mosque in Ellis Muir Street, Cape Town were known under the surname Khalieluddien. Over the years the later generations shortened the surname to Gallie. The Simonstown branch of the family changed it to Karlie.

[89] Diary p. 210

the sacrifices made by other scholars and teachers, like Khalīfa Abdol Galiel, who left Cape Town to teach in the outlying areas.

Kieyamoedien Basier and Sharief Arlie who taught the Muslim children in Simonstown during Imām Saban's time were not from Simonstown and may also have been sent from Cape Town.[90] It is therefore my contention that Imām Saban was more than likely also sent to Simonstown under the encouragement of the senior Cape Town ʿ*Ulamā* (religious leaders) to assist Imām Karriem as *Khaṭīb*.

Education

Not much is known about Imām Saban and his family prior to 1904 and therefore I could not establish where he was educated or what his formal studies entailed. From his writing style however, some suggestions could be ventured. The general level of education in Simonstown during and even after Imām Saban's time was very low.[91] Very few Muslims attained an education beyond standard four (grade six). One of those who did was Imām Amien Baker as shown in this Diary entry:

> A meeting was call on Tuesday night at 8:30pm in the Moslem School about the matter of Hadjie Achmat's child name Amien being send to Cape Town's school to learn further in Standard 5. The Principle did refuse to learn him further than standard 4. Further will call upon the Principle a meeting on Thursday night 1st November 1923 to deside the matter. Emam M.S. Saban.[92]

Imām Amien later translated the Arabic Qur'ān into Afrikaans and published it in 1959.

At a time when many people in Simonstown could not read or write in English, Imām Saban nevertheless chose this medium to preserve his recordings. His English, however, was not very good. While the handwriting in both languages was legible, Imām Saban lacked accuracy in terms of his spelling and grammar in English. He often used colloquial terms or

[90] Sharif Arlie was the first teacher of the Madrassa in Simonstown during Imām Saban's time, and Kieyamodien Basier was employed at the Simonstown Muslim Missionary School as the religious studies teacher in Imām Saban's time.

[91] Bangstad (2006, p. 35). According to Bangstad: "The average level of education is relatively low …"; Muller (1969). In 1969 Muller recorded that: "Only one member of the older generation has gone to the secondary standard … The others … have educations ranging from Sub A to Std. 3 …" Here he refers to the generation born in Imām Saban's time.

[92] Diary p. 256

translated verbatim from Afrikaans. The Diary is therefore fraught with errors such as this: "Since there was a Moelute in Simons Town, never a treatment being pass in Simons Town so long has their was given in Simons Town [Ever since the first Moulood was given in Simonstown, there has not been one better than this one]" [93] and "I, the undersigned bien [was] invited …" [94] His use of tenses is often incorrect, like: "I did received them with a respectable manner …" [95] He also makes many spelling errors such as these: parson [person or persons], exspences [expenses], correck [correct]. [96] Where he learned the language is unknown. He may have been influenced by his connection with the English atmosphere in Simonstown and the presence of the English Naval base. Nevertheless, it is still unique and remarkable for him to have kept such a diary in the first place and then to have selected this language in which to preserve his experiences.

In addition to his Diary, Imām Saban also wrote his own copies of other Islamic books (*Kitābs*). Imām Saban's grandchildren, brothers Shaheed and Ridwaan Saban preserved a collection of his books comprising a hand-written Qur'ān, some hand-written Malāyu texts, and some Arabic-Afrikaans *ḥadīth* texts which were written by Imām Saban. The collection also includes a beautifully crafted, colourful *Kitāb* on the *Maulūd* (annual celebration of the Prophet's birth) as well as other Arabic works.[97]

Like many other religious leaders during this period in the Cape history, Imām Saban also showed a preference for the Arabic-Afrikaans script.[98] He therefore often interspersed Arabic-Afrikaans script in the Diary. As an Imām at the Cape, his Arabic-Afrikaans tendency showed that he was at ease with Arabic writing. Imām Saban's Arabic recordings displayed a fair knowledge of colloquial Arabic, but not necessarily standard Arabic.

Imām Saban usually consulted prominent religious leaders at the Cape during his time, like Sh. Abduragiem al-Iraqi, Imām Abdul Rakiep of Wynberg, Imām Basier of Cape Town and

[93] Diary p. 122
[94] Ibid., p. 255
[95] Ibid., p. 114
[96] Ibid., p. 254
[97] S. Saban & R. Saban (2009, pers. Comm., 15th March) Aressaat's sons displayed a number of old *Kitābs* of Imām Saban's that had been in their father's care with the diary and which had remained in their care.
[98] Da Costa & Davids (1994, pp. 100-102)

others. His consultation with many of them on various occasions makes it difficult to identify who his elders or teachers were.

Vocation & Sustenance

It appears that Imām Saban did not receive any income from the Masjid committee prior to 1912. Shell, in his *A Prosopography of Cape Imāms 1811 - 1865*, shows that the early Cape Imāms were self-sufficient and not dependent on Mosque funds.[99] Imām Saban was already 58 years old when he noted the following:

> I, the undersign.ed did call the hole Jamaa in Simons Town on Friday night in the Masjiet on the 15th March 1912. a Report of my Povrmess at present time that I am 7 years & 4 months & 13 days act as Emam under the Jamaa of Simons Town. Know after all disqusst at last purposel of Mogamit Sahaid Sollomon & second by Noeg Kalill to suport me by the Jamaa to grand me one pound per week & Belall Yatim Raven is the receiver & Treasurer to deliver the wage of one pound every Saturday. Signed: Emam M.S. Saban. [100]

The Diary confirms that Imām Saban did not depend much on his services to his community to provide him with a source of income. He was also otherwise engaged for his sustenance. From time to time he noted that he worked at the Railway Goods Shed: "… Comance to work again on 4th November 1918 at the Rly [Railway] Good Shed;"[101] and, "I, Emam M. Saleh Saban got sick at the Good Shed in Simons Town on Thursday 17th August 1922 …".[102] He also mentioned other employers: "I, M. Saban start working by Mr Albertyn from the 1st June 1922 on the same condition has by the old man, C.P. Albertyn, has [as] Foreman."[103] It is, however, unclear what type of work he performed for these employers.

Imām Saban was also listed as a tax-payer for a two-wheeled delivery cart from July 1922, at a time when very few Muslims owned vehicles of any sort in Simonstown.[104] Diary entries, and accounts recorded at the back of the Diary, also substantiate the fact that he

[99] Shell (2005)
[100] Diary p. 41
[101] Ibid., p. 155
[102] Ibid., p. 228
[103] Ibid., p. 220
[104] Simonstown Municipality Register of Vehicle Licences Issued - Wheel Tax Register for 1920 – 1926.

supplemented his earnings by doing the laundry of the more affluent families in the area, and used his own cart for deliveries: "I, the undersigned Emam M. Saleh Saban got sick again on Thursday 30th August 1923 going to Fish Hoek with the washing by cart …"[105]

Thus, while performing his duties in the community he also continued to earn an income independent of them. He also received some donations and help from individuals, but it appears that he did not receive many special favours as the Imām, because he notes: "I, the undersigned Emam M.S. Saban did keep is children Hajera, Gaditja, Fatema out the School from the 26th May 1925 because the reason back of school fee."[106]

From 1921 onwards, the Imām seemed to experience intermittent illness. There were times when he became seriously ill, because he says: "… very ill. … Avryone came on my gotting sick …"[107] At one point his children offered to contribute more significantly to his upkeep: "… my three daughters & sons in law - Mymona & Ismaiel, and Marroffa & Basier, Gowayla & H. Safidien, from each one ten shillings for my rent & avry week a few shillings & groceries. With great thanks to them all the kind peoples and also from Abdurahman avry week a few shillings…"[108] Apart from the contributions his older children made towards his upkeep, the mosque congregation also started a collection to assist him: "Also very good & kindness from Gatieb M. Gosaine & Gatieb M. Arifie to collected avry Fridays & Sunday night a few pennys by the Jamaa in a money boxes by the Masjiet for me, Emam M.S. Saban for a help for my living because I am not able to go & work. 8th September. … Comance 8/9/22."[109] By the time the community started the collections Imām Saban was already 68 years old and it appears that his age and intermittent illness may have motivated them to do this. Before that period, he sustained himself and his family by means of various jobs.

Illness

Before his demise on 3rd October 1928, the Imām made a careful note of the times he was struck with illness or had to withdraw from mosque activities as a result of an accident. The

[105] Diary p. 248
[106] Ibid., p. 300
[107] Ibid., p. 213
[108] Ibid., p. 228
[109] Ibid., p. 228

first time he said that he became ill was on 5th February 1915 when he wrote: "I Emam M. Saleh Saban got sick, very ill on Friday morning at 10.30am on the wagon in the work…."[110] He did not disclose the cause of his illness, but about a month later he complained about a heart problem:

> I, Emam M. Saleh Saban got very ill on Wednesday night 9pm on the 10th March 1915 with a great paen under the art. Doctor Wright did atend on my sickness. Very ill till Saturday, got a little better since Sunday afternoon the 14th instant. All S.T. peoples come & visit avry day. Out side peoples also. Names: Emam A. Rakieb of Wynberg, Emam Basier & other peoples of Cape Town.[111]

At times such illness debilitated him to the extent that he had to delegate the work to his *Khaṭībs*, as seen here: "I, the undersigned Emam M. Saleh Saban bien sick on Friday 27th June 1924. Gatieb M. Gosaine did Gootbaar [Friday Congregational Sermon]."[112]

The person who recorded Imām Saban's death in the Diary (who may have been his daughter Hajera) did not disclose many details other than the time of death and the fact that Imām Basier of Wale Street, Cape Town, presided over the funeral. The official Death Register, however, revealed the cause of death as "arterial sclerosis" (a heart attack).[113] His reference to the pain under his heart may be related to a heart problem he already had in 1915. There was no indication that he had been bed-ridden before his death and his handwriting did not indicate that he was gravely ill.

Death

Imām Saban's burial place could not be established with certainty. The Home Affairs Death Register listed his burial place only as 'Simonstown Cemetery'. The old Seaforth Cemetery was closed in 1910, which means that Imām Saban should have been buried in the Dido Valley Cemetery. However, I was unable to locate his burial records at Dido Valley. I encountered an entry in the Diary where an old man was still buried in Seaforth Cemetery after 1910: "Old Emandien Arwalie, … died … 23rd March 1915. Buried … in the old

[110] Diary p. 95
[111] Ibid., p. 96
[112] Ibid., p. 272
[113] Cape Archives, HAWC 1924 Death Records

Mohamedan Cemetery by Emam M.S. Saban. Age: 100 & 8 months old."[114] According to the Home Affairs Death Register, Ismail Manuel was the person listed as "causing burial".[115] This appears to be a reference to the person responsible for the funeral arrangements of the deceased. It was therefore possible that Imām Saban's older children may also have buried him with their mother, Momenatie at the old Seaforth Cemetery. During my interview with Imām Saban's grandchild, Igsan, he disclosed that he had taken his mother to Seaforth Cemetery to visit her father's grave before she departed on her pilgrimage to Makkah. At the time she could not identify the exact location of his grave, but told Igsan that Imām Saban was buried at Seaforth Cemetery. [116]

THE DIARY

Transmission and preservation

While Imām Saban continued to enjoy the support of most of his older children from his first wife even after his second marriage, they did not appear to play any role in the preservation and transmission of his Diary. The fact that most of their children and grandchildren had no knowledge of the existence of the Diary until very recently substantiates this. The greater portion of the Diary was written after Imām Saban's second marriage. It appears that Maryam and her children were the custodians of the Diary during and after Imām Saban's lifetime. After his demise, the Diary remained in his home with Maryam and his daughter Hajera. M. Aressaat, his only living son at the time of his death, was too young to have known its significance, although some family members believe he took charge of the Diary after the Imām's death.

When I compared the recording of Imām Saban's death with other entries, it appears to have been written by his daughter, Hajera. She continued with the registration of some important events over the years. Even as late as 4th September 1934, there is an entry written in the same hand and signed by Hajera. Entries signed by Aressaat only started from

[114] Diary p. 99

[115] Cape Archives, HAWC 1924 Death Records. At that time Marriyam's only living son Aressaat was 8 years old and could not take charge of the funeral arrangements. Also, Marriyam may have taken a backseat because Imām Saban was going to be buried in the old cemetery where his first wife Momenatie was buried. As a student of religion under Sh. Abduragiem Al-Iraqi and a close companion of Imām Saban, it made sense that Ismail Manuel was recorded as the person in charge of the burial.

[116] I. Shabudien (2009, pers. Comm., 20th March)

15th August 1937. He recorded some events in Simonstown and signed it off in this way: 'By Emam's son Aressaat'. There is a clear distinction between Hajera's handwriting and that of her brother Aressaat. Both of them tried to retain the Imām's writing style, but their entries were only in English. Their recordings were also not as structured, systematic, or consistent as the Imām's. They nevertheless provided some insights into the leadership and the running of affairs immediately after the Imām's death. The later entries substantiate my view that Aressaat started keeping the Diary at some point between 1934 and 1937, but definitely before his mother's death on 3rd November 1943. At that stage Aressaat was a teenager (between 13 and 17 years old). In general, Marryam's older children appeared to have taken a keen interest in the Diary and its continuation.

In an interview with Aressaat's sons, Shahid and his brother Ridwaan, they confirmed that the Diary had been in the "protective custody" of their father.[117] The book had been wrapped in silver foil, and treated with the utmost care and respect until Aressaat's death in 1981. Thereafter, it remained in the care of his family, specifically Shahid. Between them, Aressaat and his son Shahid had taken care of the Diary for more than 50 years.

In the early 1990's the Diary was handed over to his father's sister, Khadija Shabudin, with whom it remained. After Khadija's death, the Diary is said to have remained with her son, Igsan Shabudin. According to Igsan he was approached by some families to establish the details of the birth or death of their forefathers. While the Diary had previously remained carefully tucked away in silver foil wrapping, it was during this time that it was circulated and photocopied. During this time, some pages were removed from the Diary.[118] By his own admission, Igsan Shabudin was the last known custodian of the original diary. He could not recall to whom he had given it, but it was not returned to him.

[117] It is my contention that because the diary had remained in Marriyam's home, it was handed over to Aressaat, because he was Marriyam's only living son at the time, and also because of the interest he had shown in the diary.

[118] I. Shabudin (2009, pers. Comm., 20th March) The Diary appears to have been numbered by someone other than Imām Saban. According to its numbering, pages 1, 2, 26, 34, 101, 159 and 303 had been removed from the original diary before it was copied. In my interview with I. Shabudin he confirmed that some pages had been torn out of the diary after it was shown to a few interested Simonstown families.

The copy of the Diary in my possession is a photocopy of the original. Someone at the Simonstown Museum photocopied the original diary while it was in circulation among members of the Muslim community. Before embarking on this study, I obtained permission for my research from the Saban family.[119]

Description

The Diary is about 35 cm long x 22.5 cm wide. This is approximately 5.5 cm longer and 1.5 cm wider than an A4. It had a solid, heavy, hard cover with a sewn binding, and weighed approximately 2.5 kg.[120] Due to the size, thickness, and alphabetical demarcation, it was assumed to have been very similar to the log books used by the Naval Office in Simonstown at the time. [121]

The Diary was written primarily in English, with Arabic inserts. Birth and Death records were entered in both English and Arabic. Marriage records and memoranda were only kept in English, except for the *hijri* date (Islamic dating system) supplied in Arabic.

Arrangement of Material

The Diary consists of 425 pages containing more than 2000 entries written in Imām Saban's own hand throughout the duration of his leadership. Imām Saban divided the pages of the Diary by hand into specific subject categories. Births, marriages, and deaths were each noted separately. General newsworthy events or incidents relating to his community or the Muslim community in the broader Cape were noted under the heading "memorandum". At the back of his Diary Imām Saban registered his own business matters. He also noted important addresses and telephone numbers.

[119] To obtain permission for my research on the diary and publication of my findings, I was initially referred to Igsan Shabudin (son of Imām Saban's daughter, Gadija). I handed him a copy of the proposal for my thesis. Igsan gave me his verbal permission for my research and publication of my findings on his grandfather and suggested that I also contact his cousins (Shahid and Ridwaan Saban, sons of Imām's son Aressaat). Upon this suggestion, I approached the brothers with my proposal. They validated the authenticity of my copy of the diary and gave their written permission for my research and publication of my findings. They were extremely receptive and also assisted by providing additional information about their father (Aressaat). They also displayed to me various other *kitābs* of Imām Saban that had been in their father's care. I then proceeded with studies on the Imām and his diary.

[120] I believe that Imām Saban used the thick logbook with its heavy hard-cover binding for its sturdiness and durability, because he intended to continue his recordings for a lengthy period, and because he intended to preserve those recordings.

[121] I. Shabudin (2009, pers. Comm., 20th March). He disclosed that Imām Saban used an old Navy logbook as a diary.

Birth records

A total of 387 births were recorded in Simonstown between 1904 and 1928, and 36 additional records were kept of the births of relatives in other areas of Cape Town. Imām Saban's birth records reflected the names of the parents, the sex of the baby and the time and date of birth. He also records the baby's name and notes by whom he/she was named. He always started with the father's name, except when it was an illegitimate child. In this case he usually noted that the mother was unmarried. Sometimes he commented on the health of baby and mother.

Marriage records

A total of 107 marriages were recorded in Simonstown between 1904 and 1928, and 72 additional records were kept of marriages attended by the Imām in other areas of Cape Town. On the marriage records, the Imām provided the names of the bride and groom as well as the names of their parents. He also gave a detailed account of the date, time, and place where the marriage took place. He was specific about the mosque where the ceremony was performed, and the officiating Imām, and also named the witnesses and the dowry paid. He generally omitted details of the marriage reception or other peripheral details and restricted his recordings to the formalities or rituals performed. Occasionally, he noted other details about the couple or the circumstances. He also pointed out the nationality of the groom if he was not one of his Malay congregants.

Death records

A total of 221 deaths were recorded in Simonstown between 1904 and 1928, and 248 additional records were kept of the death of relatives that occurred in other areas. On the death records, Imām Saban included the name and age of the deceased, as well as the date and place of death and the names of the deceased's parents. He also recorded the date, time and place of the burial, and the name of the person who performed the burial rites. It appears that he constructed these sections in advance; therefore some sections were left open in cases where he did not know the details. If the cause of death was due to an accident or in any way unusual, Imām Saban noted it.

A breakdown of the number of births, deaths, and marriages recorded for Simonstown and Cape Town is attached (Appendix 5).[122]

CONCLUSION

I have shown here that the Simonstown Muslim history is concurrent with the broader history of Simonstown, especially its slave history. During the early Dutch period the existence of Muslims was greatly obscured. Later, during the English period, a distinct Muslim identity emerged. Throughout the Nineteenth century, the physical manifestations of their presence and function as a religious entity in Simonstown increased. Their connection with the Muslims of the broader Cape and the support they received in terms of Islamic teachers also became more noticeable.

At the turn of the Nineteenth century, when Imām Saban became the Imām of the Simonstown Muslim community, he started recording their religious and cultural activities. Through his Diary, we have an invaluable historical record without which the reconstruction of a comprehensive social history of Simonstown would be impossible. His meticulous recordings over a lengthy period, shows a tenacity and commitment not easily matched among slaves and ex-slave communities. The greater part of the Diary translates into a comprehensive database of births, deaths, and marriages in the Simonstown Muslim community for the period 1904 to 1928. His memoranda are more general, but reveal a wealth of information on the cultural activities of Cape Muslims as well as other noteworthy historical developments. While Imām Saban was not explicit about his own background, I was able to piece together some significant elements of his personal life by relying on his Diary.

After his death, Imām Saban's Diary was carefully preserved. When it was publicised decades later, it became somewhat controversial. Nevertheless, the Diary is treasure of data and the self-reflection of an Imām. Imām Saban, through his Diary, did not serve his community only as Imām, but became a powerful voice of the Muslim presence in Simonstown. Today, he lies buried among the early Muslim pioneers of Simonstown.

[122] Breakdown of births, deaths, marriages extracted from Imām Saban's diary (Appendix 5)

Chapter Two

IMĀM SABAN'S DIARY IN PERSPECTIVE

This chapter presents the Diary of the Imām in relation to and in comparison with other diarists. I briefly describe eight diaries that were written in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries in the broader Cape, and in Simonstown in particular. I briefly examine the general inclinations of the Cape diarists, and how their world-view and personal motivations impacted on the scope and limitations of their recordings. I also note the presence of the occasional oriental diarists among the predominantly white European visitors, who also diarised their Cape experiences. In the light of these diaries, I then examine Imām Saban's world-view and motivations as diarist, leader, and long-term permanent resident of Simonstown. I also identify the scope and value of his Diary as a means of filling the information vacuum left by earlier diarists.

DEFINING DIARIES

There are many terms used to refer to personal recollections, including 'diary', 'journal', 'chronicle', and 'travelogue'. A brief description is given to identify each. The word 'diary' originates from the ancient Latin word '*diarium*', which is derived from the term '*dies*' (meaning days)[123]. Its Latin reference indicates that the practice of diary keeping started centuries ago. Diaries are characterised by a number of specific elements. They are usually written in a book specifically formatted for the entry of dates, memoranda, events, the emotional experiences, or other matters of importance to the diarists.[124] Diaries contain contemporaneous information entered by the diarist on a daily basis (hence *diarum*), or at least on a regular basis. It consistently covers the diarist's personal observations, personal interests, and self-reflections over the period for which it is intended. The traveller may use a diary for the duration of a specific journey; the explorer may use it to record a particular expedition; or the teacher, to follow the progress of students over a one-year period. The specific format and content differ from diary to diary, according to the personal preference

[123] Paterson (1990, p. 102)
[124] The Oxford Dictionary (1989, vol. iv, p. 612)

of the writer. The writing style used for diaries is frank and its contents and disclosures uncensored. Diaries therefore present rich personal testimonies of the events and issues they describe.

Like the diary, the journal is a day-to-day account of events, journeys, transactions or other experiences, written down regularly as they occur. It is also kept for private use. The term 'journal' is derived from the Latin word '*diurnalis*' meaning 'daily'.[125] The journal is also known as a daybook or the book into which information was originally entered.[126] The terms 'diary' and 'journal' are often used interchangeably. The Cape Diaries of Lady Anne Barnard, for example, are also referred to as a 'journal'.[127]

The chronicle is quite a different form of writing to the journal and the diary. It is a more specific historical account of facts or events arranged chronologically.[128] The chronicle presents an uninterrupted, detailed account without analysis or interpretation by the writer. The chronicle does not conform to the characteristic format or grid found in diaries and also lacks the private nature and frank writing style of diaries and journals.

The term 'travelogue' is derived from the word 'travel' and from the 'logue' in words like 'monologue'. It can therefore take the form of a talk, lecture, or discourse, in this case specifically on travel. The presentation is usually accompanied by notations such as slides, motion pictures or a travel documentary.[129]

In this thesis, no distinction will be made between these terms. The word diary will be used for all personal records and reflections made in writing by a contemporary witness. Such diaries are known for their ability to transport the reader back to the past through their eye-witness testimonies. Most celebrated diarists are ordinary people whose diaries catapulted

[125] *Websters Dictionary* (1961, p. 1221)
[126] Ibid.,
[127] Barnard (1999, pp. 180,190)
[128] *Websters Dictionary* (1961, p. 402)
[129] *Oxford Dictionary* (vol. viii, p. 447)

them into the public eye.[130] The medium of diaries take us beyond the cold, official administrative and archival records, into a real world of history. Nicholas James Shepherd refers to diaries, reports and memoirs, as "… textual representations of the past …".[131] Researchers in different fields of study have long used diaries as sources of information. Diaries often reveal important data about a particular historical setting. They may also serve to enhance the value research if used with qualitative and quantitative analysis to ensure descriptive and numerical precision.

There is another side to a diary, though. The format of the diary is also often constructed to reveal the self identity of diarists, which is invaluable to ethnographers and other social scientists. Modern-day historian, Robert Shell, for example, relied extensively on the diaries of Andrew Sparrman and Lady Anne Barnard, for his recreation of the world of slaves at the Cape.[132] The recreation of the spatial history at the Cape was also facilitated and verified through early diaries. In this study, the factual and subjective elements of a diary will be distinguished, but put alongside each other.

I selected the testimonies of eight diarists with vastly different orientations to create a background for understanding the significance of Imām Saban's Diary. I identify these diaries, and then discuss their general value for my study. I begin with the diaries, background, and personal motivations of Lady Anne Barnard, Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, Anders Sparrman, Mirza Itesa Modeen, and Omer Lutfi Effendi. In particular, I ask how they reflected on the interests of the under-class communities of the Cape. Then I turn to the diarists on Simonstown. In order to examine the way in which one under-class community, the Muslims in Simonstown, were represented. I then present the diaries of James Prior, Sarah Norman Eaton, and James Holman, ask how they described the early Simonstown communities without any reference to the parallel existence of a Muslim community. Imām Saban's Diary, thus, stands out among general diaries of the Cape, and the diaries on

[130] The slave diary of the American Adam Plummer, published on August 1 7th 2003 was written between 1841 and 1905 and became famous as the only known first-hand account of life in bondage. The diary of the teenage Jewish girl Anne Frank, written during Hitler's rule, became famous as an eye-witness account of the cruelty of life under German occupation.
[131] Shepherd (1989)
[132] Shell (1994)

Simonstown. It presents a greater historical depth, with a particular subjective approach from an Imām's perspective.

GENERAL DIARIES ON THE CAPE

Lady Anne Barnard, Mirza Abu Taleb Khan, Anders Sparrman, Mirza Itesa Modeen, and Omer Lutfi Effendi were visitors to the Cape who kept diaries in one form or another. All experienced the Cape during significantly different time-periods, and had different reasons for being there. Mirza Itesa Modeen landed there by co-incidence, Mirza Abu Taleb passed through as a visitor, and Lady Barnard, Sparrman, and Lutfi were each commissioned to the Cape for a specific purpose. This being said, the diarists varied in social status and cultural background. Some were from the dominant or aristocratic groups and others from the under-classes. These factors impacted on their perceptions and experiences and subsequently their diaries. The only quality they all shared was their passion to record. Among the predominantly white European males that engaged in diary writing, Lady Anne represented the odd female voice. According to Jackie Loos:

> Most travel writers who described life at the Cape during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries, were European men who chose to regard slavery as a necessary evil … unaware of – or unmoved by the tension and brutality that characterised their relationships with their slaves. These male Christian voices have tended to overpower the cadences of the handful of women and the occasional Oriental who commented on Cape society during the slave era.[133]

The Cape history was therefore largely written from the viewpoint of a selected, privileged few with brief, but interesting recordings from the occasional Bengalese visitors. I will firstly describe the background of each diarist and discuss the scope and limitations of their different interpretations of the marginalised communities at the Cape.

THE DIARISTS

Lady Anne Barnard,[134] accomplished Scottish travel writer and artist, arrived at the Cape in 1798 as the wife of the first British Colonial Secretary, Andrew Barnard. Eldest daughter of

[133] Loos (2004, p. 1)
[134] Barnard (1999)

Earl James Lindsay, her aristocratic background and social skills earned her the position of official hostess to the first British Civil Governor to the Cape. A passionate writer and observer of people, she kept a daily diary covering various aspects of life at the Cape. Her recordings included observations on the English administration, and portrayed the existing tensions between the groups, especially between the English and the newly conquered Dutch. Her perceptions of the 'other' ethnic and racial groupings at the Cape were revealed in her frank and intimate disclosures. Because of the vast spectrum of topics covered, its constancy and its long-term nature, Lady Anne's diary was published, and became an important source of reference on many social and political events of that period.

Mirza Abu Talib Khan's[135] family hailed from Isfahan in Persia. He himself was born in India after his family migrated there. Khan settled in Bengal and married the daughter of a Prince. He assisted the English rulers with their administration in Bengal and became very familiar with their culture. He left Bengal on the 8th February, 1799 (1st Ramadan 1213) to travel to England. In June 1799, his ship docked at False Bay (Simonstown) where he spent about 10 days. After that he travelled to the Cape by land, where he spent about a month. Khan kept a diary of his travel experiences and briefly described the different communities he encountered. At the end of the winter season (by mid-August), he left the Cape and continued his journey to England and France, until 4th August 1803, when he returned to Calcutta in Bengal. Upon his return, he revised, abridged, and arranged his diary into its present format – which consists of two volumes. Khan passed away in 1806. Initially written in Persian, Charles Stewart translated Khan's diary into English in London in 1810.

Anders Erikson Sparrman,[136] son of a Swedish clergyman, was exceptionally brilliant and studied Medicine at Uppsala University from age 14. Sparrman was one of the apostles of the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus (1707 – 1778), who inspired 17 of his students to travel to distant corners of the world to document local cultures and natural surroundings. They travelled on their own, or joined expeditions across land and sea – covering every continent. Eight volumes (covering over 5000 pages on their work and explorations) were published in

[135] Khan (1810)
[136] Sparrman (1785)

2008. This publication, produced over a period of eight years, was devoted to the studies of the students of Carl Linnaeus. Sparrman arrived at the Cape on 12th April, 1772 as a tutor to the Governor's (Kirsten) children, as well as to fulfil his mission of searching for new plant and animal specimens, and of studying the local cultures. He returned to Sweden in 1776 where he received an honorary doctorate, which had been awarded in his absence. He recorded his scientific findings, and also kept an extensive diary of his experiences at the Cape, especially his journey on foot into its interior. His diary was called, "Anders Sparrman Travels in the Cape 1772 -1776. A voyage to the Cape of Good Hope towards the anartic Polar circle round the world and to the country of the Hottentots and the Caffres." His diary was translated from Swedish and printed in two volumes in London. Sparrman passed away in 1820.

Of Bengalese origin, Mirza Itesa Modeen,[137] sailed to Britain in 1765 as an emissary of the Mogul Emperor Shah Alum. He was sent to deliver an appeal to King George III for a protective force to be stationed in Ilahabad against the Dutch East India Company, which was buying up the land of the Bengalese. As the only Muslim on his ship, he gained everyone's respect for staunchly upholding his religious practices under trying circumstances. His ship visited the Island of Mauritius, and stopped over at the Cape for two weeks. In the Cape, Modeen aligned himself with the Bengalese slave communities. His travels lasted two years and nine months. He did not appear to have been commissioned to report on his travels and kept a diary for his own personal reference. Modeen preserved detailed descriptions of the various cultural groups he encountered. His diary was called, "Shigurf-namah i-velaet" or Excellent Intelligence concerning the travels of Mirza Itesa Modeen in Great Britain and France." His diary, written in Persian, was first translated into Hindi, and later into English, with notes by James Edward Alexander in London in 1827.

Omer Lutfi Effendi[138] was commissioned by the Ottoman Empire to accompany Abu Bakr Effendi to the Cape in 1862.[139] Little else is known about Lutfi's personal or academic

[137] Modeen (1827)
[138] Effendi (1991)
[139] Ibid., p. 33

background. Achmat Davids[140] explains that their arrival at the Cape came as a result of the British government having received a request from a Cape parliamentarian, Mr P.E. de Roubaix, for a religious guide to be sent to the Cape Muslim community. Lutfi himself thought that that the Muslims at the Cape had "lived in ignorance and had gone astray for many years". According to him the Turkish ruler was deeply concerned about this situation: ''… since the news reached His Majesty he ordered that a Muslim scholar be sent immediately to teach and train them …'' After assisting Abu Bakr Effendi to establish Islamic schools, Lutfi left the Cape on 5th May, 1866. On his return, he recorded his experiences with the Muslims at the Cape, and his account of these events was published about ten years after he left its shores. His account was called by South African publishers as 'The Travelogue of my journey to Cape of Good Hope."

Lutfi's 'diary' is unique among the diaries presented here, and calls for some justification to be included in this study. The translator from the original Ottoman Turkish text into English, Dr. Yusuf Z. Kavarci, called it 'Travel Accounts to the Cape of Good Hope."[141] The document appears to be a report compiled either for Sultan Abdul Aziz,[142] his sponsor in Istanbul, or for the general public. Lutfi acknowledges his sponsor, and seems give the impression that it was a diary of some sort: ''without spending a penny I travelled by the grace of the Khalifate [Sultan Abdul Aziz] into so many faraway countries and visited them and stayed in some for one month and some of them for a few years."[143]

On closer study, however, Lutfi's "Travelogue" does not conform to the characteristic style of diaries. It lacks the elements of regularity, consistency, contemporaneousness, and formatting (allowing spaces for dates). It also falls short of the definition of a travelogue. A "Travelogue" is more suited to the category of "chronicle" in its historical account of facts or events arranged chronologically. Lutfi's diary is divided into subjects with headings such as "The language …" or "The way the people learn". He relates, for example, the progress of the students at his school on a single page as follows: "after 15 days we opened a school …"

[140] Da Costa & Davids (1994, p. 82)
[141] Ibid., p. 3
[142] Effendi (1991, p. 36)
[143] Ibid., p. 36

and, “within 20 days we collected more than 300 pupils … “… then after 2 years three of them memorised the Qur’an …” and, “within 3 years … “the majority learnt Islamics …” and, “[T]hey learnt perfectly the religion of Islam in only four years.” These notes clearly indicate that Lutfi keenly followed the education project for which he was sent to the Cape. Regardless of its format, Lutfi’s “Travelogue” is commonly referred to as his ‘diary’. For this reason, and the fact that it is one of very few accounts on the early Cape Muslims, I selected it for study in this section.

THE DIARIES: IMPRESSIONS AND RECORDS

I now intend to provide a brief description of the diaries mentioned above to show how most of the authors reflected a Euro-centric view of the Cape and its inhabitants. I present an account of their impressions, and their reflections on Cape slave society. The diaries enabled these writers “to present ‘others’ as less than fully human and lacking the essential ingredients of humanity”.[144] However, not all the diarists shared this perception. I also intend to show that there were some exceptions to this rule. Some diarists, like Sparrman, identified with the humanity of the downtrodden sections of the Cape society.

Mirza Abu Taleb Khan

Mirza Abu Taleb’s diary was called, ‘The travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan in Asia, Africa and Europe during the years 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802 and 1803.” When Mirza Abu Taleb Khan landed in False Bay (Simonstown) he was “much struck with the appearance of this town, and the beauties of its port …”[145] This was his brief description of the town in 1799 during the first British occupation of the Cape:

> This town is situated at the bottom of a verdant mountain, clothed with a variety of flowers and odoriferous herbs. It consists of about 30 houses only: these are, however, very regular and well built, and each of them contains a pipe of running water: …[146]

[144] Shepherd (1993, p. 1)
[145] Khan (1810, p. 54)
[146] Ibid., p. 55

He also relates that Simonstown was abuzz during winter, with numerous slaves and other workers occupied with servicing the large number of ships that docked there.[147] Khan found lodgings in the town with a Dutch family (the Barnets) of whom he says: "… His family consisted of his wife, two children, and five slaves: …"[148] Most of his diary entries on Simonstown relate to the problems he encountered on the ship, with his lodgings, and his encounters with the British. Mirza Abu Taleb does not mention the slaves, and thus not even the Muslims among them. Because of his family's upper-class Persian aristocratic background, and his relationship with the British in Bengal, he appeared to be drawn to the English. He hints at his reasons for this when he says, "[I]t [the European culture] may have a good effect and may be imitated by the Mohammedans."[149] He therefore spent most of his time in the company of the English, especially with members of the Royal Navy:

> From the captains of the ships of war I also received the greatest attention. They invited me twice to entertainments on board and sent their own larger[150] to convey me. Upon entering and leaving the ship I was saluted by the discharge of a number of pieces of cannon, and was treated in every respect as a person of consequence.[151]

After a disagreement with his landlord in Simonstown, Mirza Abu Taleb travelled to the Cape by land.

Mirza Abu Talib's stay at the Cape coincided with Lady Anne Barnard's period of residence there. She notes her first contact with him in her diary: 'Tuesday 2 July. Had a visit this morning from the Persian chief.'[152] Lady Anne did not view Mirza Abu Talib in the same light as she did the local Cape Muslims. She was drawn to his aristocratic way and often invited him to attend her functions at the Castle. She also refers to him in her diary as 'Khan *Saijb*' or 'Persian Chief.'[153] She spent time producing a painting of him, and he appeared to be at

[147] Klatsow (2004); Whisson (1972, p. 7)
[148] Khan (1810, p. 54)
[149] Ibid., p. 4
[150] 'larger' – ancient English term used for a small boat or tug.
[151] Khan (1810, p. 4)
[152] Barnard (1999, p. 180). The journey from False Bay, Khan explained took him a day. This would then have made it impossible for him to have been at the Castle in Cape Town on the same morning of his departure. I imagine that he was mistaken with his date and he may have departed fromFalse Bay on the 1st of July and not on the 2nd. This is an example of how diarists corroborate or authenticate the stories of other diarists. Lady Anne Barnard's diary, in fact, also identifies the Captain whose name is obscured by the translator of Khan's work, as Captain Richardson.
[153] Barnard (1999, p. 180)

ease and delighted with her company. His diary reflects his appreciation and admiration for her in these words: "daughter of an English nobleman and has all the dignified manners of person of quality."[154] At one point she relates: "Khan Saijb was too much harrasd by the dissipation of the Cape and left the ball early to write up 4 or 5 days of his journal."[155] It was obvious that they had also found common ground in their interest in diary keeping.

Apart from Lady Anne, Mirza Abu Talib also extensively engaged the company of other English friends. His diary speaks of his attraction to a particular Scottish woman: "… she had quite the elegant behaviour of our Indian princesses, and completely won my heart".[156] About his experiences with the British at the Cape, he writes: "Were I to relate all the civilities I received from General Dundas and other British officers, they would fill a volume. I cannot however refrain mentioning the many delightful evenings I passed at the house of Lady Ann."[157] His inclination towards the company and lifestyle of the English upper classes both in Simonstown and at the Cape was therefore clear.

When Mirza Abu Taleb Khan arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, the Muslims there were in the process of developing a more visible and structured Islam. It was an exciting time in their history, when leaders like Tuan Guru were disseminating Islamic principles, and were openly promoting a culture of teaching and learning. Among the Muslim slaves, a number of them shared Mirza Abu Talib's Bengalese background.[158] Mirza Abu Talib was aware of the sizeable Muslim presence at the Cape, because he wrote: "In this town there were 7 to 8 languages spoken. The common people were the Malays and the Negroes."[159] He also mentioned that the Javanese language was still spoken at the Cape at that time. He also describes some of the Muslims he met at the Cape, saying:

[154] Khan (1810, p. 74)
[155] Barnard (1999, pp. 180, 190)
[156] Khan (1810, p. 75); Barnard (1999, p. 186). Lady Anne also describes Khan's infatuation with Miss Cooper (mentioning the full name). She writes: "I shew him my sister's picture and Miss Coopers, both handsome … he seemd enchanted and exclaimed particularly about the black eyes of Miss Cooper" He said to her, The taste for beauty in my country leans much to dark hair and eyes… "
[157] Ibid., p. 73
[158] Davids (1994, p.47)
[159] Khan (1810, p. 72)

> Most of these people were originally slaves who have either purchased their freedom or were manumitted by their masters. Among them I met many pious good Musselmans [Muslims] several of them possessing considerable property.[160]

While he acknowledged the Muslims as an integral part of life at the Cape, his observations were more casual and more general than those he made on the English. He notes: "I hired lodgings in the house of a worthy *Musselman* [Muslim] who behaved to me with the greatest attention and kindness and as I was always invited by English officers, I passed my time very pleasantly and lived at a small expense".[161] This entry appears to contain the essence of his different relationship with the two groups.

On the whole, Mirza Abu Talib's observations were more concentrated on his surroundings and the social life of the English. His Diary therefore does not shed too much light on the history of the marginalised communities at the Cape, particularly the early Muslims.

Lady Anne Barnard

As one of only two women from the ruling English class that came to the Cape during their first occupation, Lady Anne was an integral part of the British governing structures.[162] Her diary is called, 'The Cape diaries of Lady Anne Barnard 1799 – 1800". Like many travel diarists, the parameters of her diary are broad and all-inclusive. She writes about the weather, describes her physical surroundings, comments on social life, and most of the time also expresses her own feelings and opinions. The major part of her diary describes her experiences and observations as the British grappled with governance in the newly acquired Cape colony. Her aim appeared to be capturing and preserving her experiences relating at the Cape; its challenges, cultural diversity, adaptations, losses and victories.

It is from this perspective of authority that she built relationships with the underclass communities at the Cape.[163] Her observations about them were based on preconceived

[160] Khan (1810, p. 72)

[161] Ibid., p. 70

[162] Barnard (1999). Lady Anne Barnard was one of only two English women at the Cape at the time.

[163] The term 'underclass', is used to denote the various social, cultural and religious communities at the Cape, subjugated or enslaved by their English rulers.

notions "… the women slaves in this country are in no respect so good as the men, they are greater drunkards, thieves, lyars – rakes and more indolent except in the performance of these duties."[164] With her aristocratic background, she was highly critical of their state of cleanliness: "One of the worst points of slaves particularly of women is the dreadful smell that they leave behind them – a fox is a rose to it."[165]

Lady Anne hardly explored any detailed relationship with the slaves or Free Blacks. She appeared to stick to her biases about them: "There is no looking for principles, truth honesty sobriety or chastity amongst the slaves … Prefer to be evil - would rather steal a dollar than receive ten fairly, the more I see of them the more I am of the opinion."[166] She also writes: "… they know the master of the Slave lodge whips them for certain things if they are found out and therefore they must not do them so as to be discoverd."[167] She continues: "was I to bring forwards some of my small losses [small items stolen by slaves] I might unveil several, but while they confine themselves to meat and drink I say nothing, the knowledge between good & evil is the *untasted* fruit for them."[168] She believed that, "at the corruptd point they now are … it is by fear only they can be governd, gentleness makes no impression on them."[169] Based on her Eurocentric understanding of the slaves, Lady Anne stereotyped all slaves in this way.

Lady Anne's interactions with the indigenous people revealed a similar lack of a close interaction or understanding. On one particular occasion she met an elderly Hottentot woman and wanted to know if the old woman knew where she was going after her death. Her Dutch translator informed her that Hottentots had no religion or ideas on the subject. She later referred to the old lady as: "…the poor soul unconscious of being possessd of a soul".[170]

[164] Barnard (1999, p. 85)
[165] Ibid., p. 86
[166] Ibid., p. 105
[167] Ibid., p. 86
[168] Ibid., p. 86
[169] Ibid., p. 105
[170] Ibid., p. 293

Lady Anne was a colonialist trapped in her white aristocratic background. The information she provided on the under-classes was naturally fraught with biases, and does not appear to be dependable in terms of gathering authentic information.

Anders Sparrman

When Sparrman arrived at the Cape in 1772, the Dutch were still in charge and slavery was firmly entrenched. Shortly after his arrival, Sparrman left the Cape to undertake a voyage to Antarctica with Captain Cook. While waiting to leave Simonstown, he noted the progress of a building which he described in this way: "In its original form it was a three gabled house with a stoep the whole length on the seaward side. The main floor was residential, the basement was chiefly for slaves and the attic for stores."[171] These slave quarters are also referred to by the archaeologist Shepherd.[172] This was the first time a European reported the existence of a slave lodge in Simonstown. His note on the slave lodge was written in the period described by Klatsow as 'completely opaque' in terms of the slave history of Simonstown.

Sparrman's initial stay at the Cape was brief, but when he returned in 1776 he journeyed on foot into the interior of Southern Africa. It was normal practice for Sparrman to record his discovery of new plant or animal species, and his encounters with various cultures: "… none but a lover of natural history can imagine what pleasure we enjoyed together among the herbs and flowers."[173] But he did not ignore the social and political context of this travels. When he observed incidents of extreme violence against slaves, he recorded them too:

> I have seen suffering immoderately severe punishment inflicted on them by their masters to which they were more asking for water than for mercy … but it is said for as long as their blood still in flame they must not receive any refreshment of drink … they would die in a space of few hours. – spikes thrust up the backbone and vertebra between skin and cuticle in sitting position. They are then able to live for several days as long [as there was] no rain. Humidity will bring end to their life.[174]

[171] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 170)
[172] Shepherd (1989, p. 32)
[173] Sparrman (1785, p. 342)
[173] Ibid., p. 339
[174] Ibid., p. 340

Sparrman did not set out to become a champion for the cause of the under-classes, but as he as witnessed Dutch cruelty first-hand, the course of his writings changed. His teachings as the son of a clergyman, disciple of Dr. Carl Linneaus, and a scientist, appear to have sensitised him to the violence taken for granted by so many other Europeans. Therefore, when he says he: "came to Nana–River and was told by the [white] widow that her husband was beheaded by slaves",[175] he makes this assumption: "… there may be another angle. The father could have been cruel."[176] Here he defends the slave violence as an act of reprisal. Even when he encountered extreme slave-on-slave violence, he placed the blame squarely at the feet of their Dutch slave-masters: "I am convinced that it has its origin in the very essence of slave trade … some slave-owners outdo the very tigers in cruelty …"[177] The 'cruelty' he refers to also showed itself in other ways, like the instance where: "… a master refused to marry him to a slave lady. He killed her and then himself."[178] Sparrman noted: "But how many instances not less dreadful than these might be produced to this purpose. These however may suffice to create all that abhorrence for the slave trade which so unnatural a species of commerce deserves…"[179]

Sparrman was also the one diarist who used his pen to expose many dark details about the slave experience to the world. Sparrman's diary does not describe the lives of the Muslim slaves and under-classes at the Cape. Yet, he was one traveller who wrote about the existence of a slave lodge in Simonstown as early as the 1770's.

Itesa Modeen

Modeen was more directly interested in the underclasses, particularly the Muslims. When Mirza Itesa Modeen landed at the Cape in 1765, the oppressive regime of the Dutch was severe. Before arriving at the Cape, he spent about 2 months in Mauritius where he visited: "… seven musalmans [Muslims] who were natives of Hooghly, Bulwar and Umbo and C and who had come together to pray at the feast [after the fast of Ramadan]…"[180] He also

[175] Sparrman (1785, p. 341)
[176] Ibid., p. 370
[177] Ibid., p. 341
[178] Ibid., p. 370
[179] Ibid., p. 385
[180] Modeen (1827, p. 14)

observed and recorded the ill-treatment meted out to slaves there: "[T]hose who are wealthy live upon fine wheat and rice which are imported from Bengal and other countries; the poor people and slaves are fed upon Indian corn …"[181]

Although his Diary portrays a cordial relationship between himself and the English, Mirza Itesa Modeen was more interested in the under-class communities. As in Mauritius, he preferred the company of the slaves at the Cape: "I visited some of these slaves, and although they had forgotten the Hindee and Bengalee languages, yet we were able to converse by signs".[182] He appears to have spent much of his two week stay in their company, because he also says: "They used to fish for me."[183] Other than his encounter with the Bengalese slaves, Mirza Itesa Modeen did not describe an organised Muslim community at the Cape and appears to have slept on his ship.

Mirza Itesa Modeen also spent time observing the Hottentots. He gave quite a detailed description of their lifestyle, among others: "The clothing (of the Hottentots) is undressed skins, and their diet raw and half-raw meat, also milk, mutton and wild fruits. They are of a good stature and corpulent and are so swift and active in the chase that they catch with ease wild boars and deer…"[184] He also described some of their hunting habits.

Mirza Itesa Modeen also gave attention to the dominant cultures. He admired the industriousness of the English people in worldly matters, but he did not want to adopt their culture.[185] While aboard ship, he noted an incident where some European sailors sacrificed their lives to save the ship during gale force winds. He admired the fact that they had "no fear" in making the ultimate sacrifice to save other lives[186] Even for the Dutch he had words of admiration. He acknowledged that, "They built a beautiful city near sea." and also said, "They are great horticulturists."[187]

[181] Modeen (1827, p. 16)
[182] Ibid., p. 24
[183] Ibid., p. 24
[184] Ibid., p. 23
[185] Ibid., pp. 215-216
[186] Ibid., p. 14
[187] Ibid., p. 22

It is unfortunate that Mirza Itesa Modeen's stay at the Cape was so brief. His meagre observations at least gave some idea of the effects of slavery on those early Bengalese Muslims. Because of his exposure to the politics in Bengal, he appeared to understand the phenomenon of oppression and slavery, and noted the extent of the cultural alienation they suffered as a result of their enslavement.

Omer Lutfi

When Omer Lutfi arrived at the Cape in 1862, he found a community of Muslims free from the oppressive institution of slavery. However, they were still an under-class community dominated by the British.

Lutfi's 'Travelogue' is an example of a 'diary' that collects contradictory information, even on his relationship with his superior, Abu Bakr Effendi. He wrote a letter to someone he calls a 'lovely sister' in Cape Town, immediately after his departure from the Cape. This letter is included in the present publication of 'Travelogue'. The letter describes serious tension between Lutfi and Effendi[188] at the time of his departure from the Cape. He says: "… it is evident and clear for you that my father [referring to Effendi] brought me over there from very far and distant country. He spoke very bad words and insulted me, instead of having with me a good relationship … I tried to be patient regarding the attitudes of my father [Effendi] towards me, finally I couldn't take it." He decided to "pass over this ocean" he said "… instead of falling at the painful hands of my father …" He explains that when he went to greet Effendi, "… he did not even look at me or listened to me" And yet, on the following page,[189] which contains the epilogue to his diary, he presents a contradictory account. He writes of a harmonious and friendly departure. These two successive pages were apparently both written by Lutfi. The letter appears to have been written shortly after Lutfi's departure from the Cape, while the epilogue appears to have been written close to the time of publication in 1876. By using this method of reflecting back, diaries, journals and chronicles are clearly open to error or even contradiction.

[188] Effendi (1991, pp. 31-32)
[189] Ibid., p. 33

About Muslim leadership at the Cape, Lutfi said: "These ones had some books in Javanese language and they taught them knowingly or unknowingly to the Muslims. These *hajis* [Muslims who had performed the pilgrimage] were called Imāms and their followers were called *murīds* [disciples]."[190] He portrayed a negative relationship among the twenty Imāms in the Cape: "each one of them divided the Muslims as *murīds* into twenty parties and each party developed some hatred and anger against the other…" The Imāms then commanded the people to hand their *fiṭra* (charities) and sacrificial animals over to them while each of them: "… had a big store in his home …" Each of the Imāms apparently also received "more than five or six hundred sheep or rams". [191]

Lutfi also wrote about the conflict among Muslims that emerged after his arrival. According to him, the problem started after Effendi explained to the people that by shouting during their gatherings of *zikr,* they were acting "… against the *Shariah* [Islamic Laws] …"[192] The people immediately "… left all that they were involved in for so many years".[193] This angered the Imāms who subsequently instigated their followers against Effendi: "Therefore we strongly warn you all not to go to him at all."[194] He also stated that after he spent four years teaching and training the Cape Muslims, ''… all were guided to the straight path.''[195]

Lutfi's 'Travelogue' provides an account of his experiences of Islam and the Muslims of the Cape during the mid-1800s. His Travelogue contains valuable information on the early Cape Muslims on mundane aspects of life. He speaks about their language, dress code, the way they conducted their marriages, the relationships between men and women, and how the Muslims were different from the non-Muslims.[196] He also notes the Muslim visits to, and veneration of, Muslim shrines,[197] as well as his journeys to the Imāms outside the Cape region.[198] He confirms the existence of the close relationship between Imāms and their

[190] Effendi (1991, pp. 23)
[191] Ibid., p. 31-32
[192] Ibid., pp. 24-25
[193] Ibid., pp. 24-25
[194] Ibid., pp. 24-25
[195] Ibid., p. 5
[196] Ibid., p. 21
[197] Ibid., p. 27
[198] Ibid., p. 26

followers, and the tension that emerged when Effendi articulated his opposition to some Cape traditions. Lutfi's 'Travelogue' is one of the rare voices describing the under-class community of Muslims at the Cape. Unfortunately, for this study, there is nothing that he mentions about Muslims in Simonstown.

DIARIES ON SIMONSTOWN

I now turn my attention to diaries that focussed specifically on Simonstown. I will show how these diaries generally ignored the presence of slaves, and Muslims in particular. Moreover, this 'omission' has continued into the Twentieth century. Brock and Brock wrote a popular book on Simonstown, and relied on the diaries to be discussed below.[199] Published in 1976, the book is the only rich source of cultural, religious, and social information on the town, and is relied upon extensively by researchers. While it provides a good account of the history of buildings, the Royal Navy, the many reminiscences of visitors to Simonstown, the general milestones, its administrators and personalities, it does not mention Imām Saban. Even the information provided on his community of Muslims is scanty in comparison with its coverage of the histories of other communities. Although the book was published six years after the apartheid forced removals, it does not deal in any detail with that significant aspect of the Simonstown Muslim community's history. The impression created by the book is in keeping with the views of the European diarists that preceded Imām Saban. The Muslim presence in Simonstown appeared to be inconsequential and undeserving of the attention given to the white community.

Mirza Abu Taleb Khan was the only non-European diarist who visited and wrote on Simonstown. The other visitors who wrote on Simonstown were James Prior, Sarah Norman Eaton, and James Holman. I will discuss their diaries in this section, in the same way as the Cape Town diaries were discussed in the previous section.

DIARISTS WHO VISITED SIMONSTOWN

[199] Brock & Brock (1976)

James Prior[200] was a naval surgeon who served aboard the Nisus in 1810. He arrived in Simonstown at the end of August 1810 and, like many others, travelled to Cape Town by land. Prior's diary contained valuable observations of his travels, which was published as "Narrative of a Voyage in the Indian Seas in the Nisus Frigate to the Cape of Good Hope during the years 1810 and 1811."

Sarah Norman Eaton[201] travelled to the Cape with her family in 1818, on the invitation of her brother John Bardwell Ebden – one of the members of the first Legislative Council of the Cape. She compiled a comparative grammar of the English, French and Italian languages which was published in 1830 by a London firm, and also translated the Hebrew version of the Gospel of St. Luke. An ardent writer, Eaton's original recordings on the Cape are held in safe-keeping in the South African Library in Cape Town, which issued this statement about her work: "Her … remarks [on the Cape] on personalities, customs, and daily life at the Cape have a flavour of its own. Types of housing, food, the two theatres … the slaves and the governor and his friends are all subjects for comment." Only 25 copies were printed of this Journal by the writer. It is called "From leaving London June 22 1818 and of a voyage to the Cape of Good Hope". Eaton remained at the Cape and passed away in June 1878.

James Holman[202] (15 October 1786 – 29 July 1857), known as "The Blind Traveller", was an adventurer and author – best known for his diaries on his extensive travels. Son of an apothecary, he was born in Exeter in England. In 1798 he entered the British Royal Navy and was appointed Lieutenant in April 1807. Three years later, he was struck by an illness that first affected his joints and finally his vision. Having served in the Royal Navy at the time of his illness, Holman was often allowed to travel aboard English warships to fulfil his passion for visiting new places. In 1834/35 he published a book in 4 volumes, under the title of "A Voyage round the world, including travels in Africa, Asia, Australasia, America, etc".

[200] Prior (1820)
[201] Institute of Historical Research – London University; Mimeography (1953)
[202] Holman (1834)

ANALYSIS

James Prior

When James Prior arrived in Simonstown, it did not appear to be much more densely populated than during Mirza Abu Talib's visit 9 years earlier. On 3rd September 1810 Prior notes:

> It consists of about 40 houses scattered along a bank overhanging the beach … these, with a few small shops, an inn kept Mynheer Vanderskaffe, for the accommodation of strangers, the barracks and a small navy yard, compose the village.[203]

Other than his general observations, he does not describe the people who occupied the 40 (or so) houses. However, he made an interesting observation on his journey from Simonstown to Cape Town by land:

> On the verge of a creek a strong stench proclaimed our approach to the whale fishing establishment of False Bay. Considerable numbers of whales, from 20 to 30 feet in length, resort here between months of May and October and are taken by fisher men, principally of the Malay race, in different boats: The present is considered very successful, 16 fish already cut up. Each fish is valued at 1000 rix dollars, the dollar being reckoned at 8 schillings currency or according to the present rate of exchange with England, about 3 shillings sterling and half the proceeds pay all expenses.[204]

He also described the size of the whales and the whale-fishing months. As his quick calculations show Prior's main interest was clearly the economic value of the whale fishing industry. By 1822 Bird names whale-fishing as the Third largest industry at the Cape:

> "In point of interest the whale-fishery ranks next to agriculture and to vineyards. There are 7 fisheries at the Cape of Good Hope. One at St. Helena Bay on the Northern Coast; two in Table Bay; three in Simons Bay and one on the Eastern coast in Algoa Bay."[205]

[203] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 180)
[204] Prior (1820, p. 6)
[205] Bird (1823, p. 81)

Prior's diary does not shed any further light on the social activities in Simonstown, but his observations at least confirm the presence of a group of 'Malays' already active as whale-fishermen in that area by 1810.

Sarah Norman Eaton

About 8 years after Prior's visit, during October 1818, Sarah Norman Eaton travelled to Simonstown to spend a week with friends.[206] En route there, Eaton made ample entries describing the carriage, the roads, and the scenery in great detail. When they neared Simonstown, she noted: "About 5 miles from Simonstown we passed the whale fishery where there are huts and small houses for those engaged in the trade".[207] She clearly identified the huts that Prior had seen. Eaton also noted: "There were 25 whales caught there this season which was just over". While she offers additional information about the whaling activity over the previous season, she does not say anything more about the community that plied that trade, except to mention their living quarters.

In Simonstown Eaton notes that she was extremely well-received by her brother's acquaintances: "The civility I met with from them (my brother having gone with me, to introduce me) could not fail of making my stay among them pleasant."[208] Once in Simonstown, Eaton appeared to spend an extremely enjoyable time being entertained and dined by her English counter part that caused her to comment: "As there is a very pleasant English society, this – to an English person, attached to English habits – is a desirable place of residence."[209] She gave detailed descriptions of the individuals and families she met – even those who, like her, did not live in Simonstown.

According to Eaton: "There are about 12 resident families, beside the Bachelors …"[210] She did not mention the Muslim families in Simonstown, but she did,

[206] Eaton (1953, pp. 64-71)
[207] Ibid., pp. 64-71
[208] Ibid., pp. 64-71
[209] Ibid., pp. 64-71
[210] Ibid., pp. 64-71

however, describe some habits of the slave community she encountered in the broader Cape:

> Not being instructed in any moral duty, nor having any laws to regulate marriages among them etc., etc. It is not to be wondered at that they are loose in their principles, and often inclined to vicious habits, particularly theft – having no other motives to deter them from vice, than the fear of corporal punishment.[211]

Unlike other Europeans, slaves and other under-classes were only visible as deviants. She could not see beyond her prejudice to the very people who made her leisurely and English life possible. She did not acknowledge the groups who caught the fish, who provided the vegetables, who served the Europeans, and who lived parallel lives in Simonstown.

James Holman

In 1828 James Holman arrived in Simonstown from Rio de Janeiro aboard the H.M. Brig. Falcon which docked in the well-established English Naval Base.[212] Being in the habit of travelling with English Naval officers, he took up residence "at the house appropriated for Captains in the Navy …" and added: "I had the pleasure of being under the same roof with two friends, Captain Pole … and Captain Polkinghorne."

Shortly after his arrival, Holman: "… visited the burial ground for the purpose of ascertaining the spot where my old friend, the late Captain Charles Acland of the Royal Navy was interred …"[213] At the graveyard he observed: "There was a remarkable enclosure here, surrounded by a low wall, where sixteen seamen and three boys are interred in one grave; … Mr Rawson, a midshipman of the same ship … lies interred in a separate grave close to this enclosure."[214] Holman described the well-known cemetry in Simonstown, but he hardly noticed the Muslim burial of Abdolgaviel established five years earlier (1823).[215] Holman also notes that: "I

[211] Eaton (1953, pp. 77)

[212] Holman (1834, p. 105)

[213] Ibid., p. 104. Holman states that he was at times "accompanied by a person well-acquainted with the localities of the place" who presumably related and described the surroundings to him.

[214] Many British and other foreign sailors who lost their lives at sea were buried here.

[215] The grant for the Muslim Cemetery is discussed in Chapter 1 of this work.

occupied myself in exploring Simonstown and its neighbourhoods…"[216] He did not, however, write about the slaves and other communities who lived in the town.

During his six-month stay at the Cape, Holman built a close relationship with John Osmond, who was a well-known slave owner in Simonstown. On Saturday 27th he noted: "… I this evening accompanied some friends to visit Mr Osmond, a man of remarkable industry and integrity, who had amassed a large property by his own good sense and exertions."[217] Holman appears to be impressed by Osmond's achievement, although he does not mention the means by which he built his fortune. Upon his departure he expressed sadness at the prospect of losing this friend: "I embarked at a late hour this evening taking leave with regret of Mr Osmond and his amiable family, unable to express half so fully as I could wish my gratitude for their hospitality and kind assistance, …"[218] Although Holman built a close relationship with one of the biggest slave-owners, he does not speak of the presence of slaves or any other working-class communities in Simonstown. His accounts should be regarded as extremely flawed.

While it is possible to compile some history of Simonstown from the above diarists, it is clear that constructing a full and balanced social history based on their observations, is more difficult. In view of the perceptions contained in the above diaries, I find Shamiel Jeppie's conclusions appropriate when he says: "The Nineteenth century context of Orientalists' imaginings of the 'Other' and the colonial paternalism and condescension towards the colonised have shown to apply to Cape Town as well".[219] While many of the above diarists wrote about the largely Christian English society with whom they identified, they did not describe the other group whose religion (Islam) was being practiced parallel to theirs in Simonstown. Once again, I find Jeppie's description of this behaviour apt. He holds that, "…it was this Christian consciousness that cluttered their view of the 'Other'."[220] Diarists on Simonstown generally ignored those living in the shadows of the slave society. Even their descendents were generally ignored up to the 1970's.

[216] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 208)
[217] Holman (1834, p. 105). John Osmond, wealthy Simonstown resident and slave owner is discussed in an earlier chapter of this work.
[218] Ibid., p. 108
[219] Jeppie (1996, p. 143)
[220] Ibid., p. 142

IMĀM SABAN THE DIARIST

I will now turn to Imām Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Saban's Diary. It was written approximately a century after the diaries of Barnard, Khan, Prior, Eaton, Holman. By this time the Muslim community of Simonstown had already emerged from the shackles of slavery and carved for themselves a distinct identity in the town. However, nothing was recorded about their activities or development. Imām Saban's generation of Muslims were the successors of the 'Other' that the earlier diarists neglected.

While Imām Saban shared with the above diarists the passion of observing and recording, his Diary was in many ways different from theirs. In the first place, his Diary covers a much longer period than the others and focused on matters pertaining to one particular community. The Imām was not a traveller, as Khan, Prior or Holman were, nor was he temporarily stationed at the Cape, as Barnard, Sparrman, or Lutfi were. Imām Saban was a permanent resident at the Cape and long-term leader of the under-class Muslim community he served in Simonstown. For these reasons, his perspective on life at the Cape was different from the other diarists and an invaluable corrective to their accounts.

His reason for keeping a diary was also different from the varied reasons of the other diarists. He speaks as the Imām of the community he describes. Because he held the most powerful position in his community, part of his goals would have been to maintain and build his community's Islamic identity. In keeping with this motivation, he kept a meticulous record of his community's ritual and cultural activities. He also recorded many broader issues related to their functioning in the town, and in the broader network of Muslims at the Cape. His general memoranda were succinct and to the point. He did not concentrate much on generalities, such as the weather, his personal opinions or emotions, or discussing relationships. Nevertheless, his Diary is a storehouse of information and insights worthy of closer inspection.

I will now present Imām Saban's Diary for its focus, its source of history, and its reference to him as a diarist, an Imām of a community, a civilian in Simonstown, and a member of the

religious class. Moreover, I will show how its format, its regularity over 24 years, and its frankness guarantee it a special place among the diaries of the Cape.

PASSION TO RECORD

Imām Saban's Diary displays his extraordinary passion for recording detailed and meticulous notes on his observations. From the many examples that portray his accuracy and meticulousness, there are a few that stand out. In order to show the extent of the details in his Diary, two of his recordings will be compared with reports in the *Moslem Outlook*.

The first recording is on the *Khilāfat* (caliphate) meeting held at the Cape in 1925. The purpose of this meeting was for Muslims to establish a local body to represent South Africa for the purpose of electing a global Muslim leader after the fall of the Ottoman Sultan. Imām Saban attended that meeting with all the Imāms, who numbered 27 in total, and recorded it in this way:

> On Sunday afternoon 24th May 1925 a address & welcome being given the Grand City Hall, Cape Town for the Seg Serai Wally came from Macca for a vissit to Cape Town. All Emams & all Moslems of Cape Pininsular was invite on Sunday 24th May 1925 at 3pm in the City Hall. All Emams nearly was present, exsept a few was mishing …[221]

He continues to describe the procedures in his Diary:

> President Gamiet took the chair, Emam Sadlie Batcha (recited from Quran), Emam Mogamit Galie he make the first doha, the Seg Serai gave a speech in Arab[ic], Shaikh Achmat Beyardien read the same in English, President Gamiet read the same in Dutch, a few Indians gave speech, and treasurer Hajie Samdaan did put a few words *Margabaan* was *Zieker* [Welcome and singing of praises on the Prophet] by all the Moslems what was in City Hall … Emam Rejaldien of Kalk Bay made the last Doah.[222]

The Moslem Outlook gave the same date for the meeting as Sunday May 24, 1925, and indicated the venue as Grand City Hall. "Welcome Arshad Gamiet, Welcome by Imam Awaldien, Sayed Seraj Wally gave address in Arabic, Shaikh Ahmad Behadien translated Dua

[221] Diary p. 302
[222] Ibid., p. 301

by Imam Rejaldien.[223] Clearly, Imām Saban's recording presented more detail, particularly on the Imāms who participated in the meeting.

The same detail and care can be seen in Imām Saban's recording of the widely publicised arrival to the Cape of Kwajah Kamaluddin and Lord Headley from England. *The Moslem Outlook* reminded its readers of the importance of the event: "Monday 22, 1926. Will ever be remembered as a red letter day in the history of the Muslims in South Africa." This article was published on 27th February 1926.[224] The editorial heading read: "Large attendance greet the Khwajah and Lord Headley". *The Moslem Outlook* also gave a description of the welcome proceedings.

Imām Saban's record was equally thorough:

> Al Hadjie Lort Headly & Al Hadjie Kamalodien arrive[d] in Cape Town on Monday morning with [the] Mail Steamer from England in [the] Docks, landing at 8:30. The Moslem Mission Society and all Emams & Moslem Peoples welcome[d] them. [They] came from [the] Docks with Carriages & Motor Carts [cars] & walking [some walked?] from the Docks true [through] Adderley Street, Wale Street & Long Street, up to Mr Doctor Gool's house. Also a meeting was held in the Citty Hall the same evening at 8pm. The Hall was crowd[ed] up. Lotts of peoples was standing – now place for sit [i.e. there was no place to sit]. [A] speech was given [by] Sir Al Hadjie Lord Headly & Al Hadjie Kamalodien. A Doha was made from [by] Seg Achmat & Emam Aminodien. [It] finish[ed] at 10:05pm. 22nd February 1926. [Ar. 9th Sha'baan 1344][225]

These two examples show the reliability of the data contained in Imām Saban's Diary. Its entries, recorded over 24 years, provide a wealth of data for anyone interested in the history of Simonstown and the Cape in general.

DIARIST ON HIS OWN COMMUNITY

Imām Saban's Diary is a meticulous record of events and festivals in his community. I begin with a description of the rituals recorded then turn to the pastoral duties performed by him, and other festivals and events. His entries provide a full and comprehensive picture of an Imām and his congregation.

[223] Moslem Outlook (May 30 1925, p.6)
[224] Ibid., (Feb. 27 1926)
[225] Diary p. 322

Rituals

Imām Saban recorded all the rites of passage conducted by him or his associates in his community. This was how he recorded the births in his community:

> Hadjie Achmat Baker's wife Fatema [gave] birth [to] a baby boy born on Monday morning [at] 3am on the 21st July 1913. Named Abdol Ragiem by Emam. [Ar. 16th Sha'baan 1331][226]

At times he also described the proceedings.

> The [w]hole Jamaa of Simons Town, all men, bien [were] invited for the child's baptisim on the 7 days [7th day after birth] on Thursday evening on the 13th May 1920 [as well as] some womans, at the Emam's house [in] Hospital Lane. The child's hair bien cut from [was cut by] Gatieb Agecien & Gatieb M. Arifie & G. Gosaine and Seg Arruna Majiet. Name was given from [by] the Emam [h]insilf.[227]

Marriage ceremonies were also recorded with all the relevant details. In his recordings of burials, he was specific as to who performed the actual burial, although some recordings show that it was collaboration between Imām and his assistants. "Mogamit Saleh, son of the late Seg Najaar M. Osman of Macca, died on Monday morning at 3am 16th April 1928. Buried the same day at 4pm by Emam Abu Bakaar of Claremont. Age: … "[228] The recording of the above rituals sometimes revealed Imām Saban's template for his entries. Here, the age of the deceased was not known, and he thus left a space to be filled in perhaps later.

Imām Saban also kept consistent records of circumcision rituals (*Soenat*) and the ritual slaughter of sheep at festivals (*Qurbān*). He records two occasions where a group of boys underwent this procedure. In 1912 he notes:

> Small children, boys, of Simons Town bien Sonatt [circumcised] on Monday the 30th December 1912 by Mogamit Van De Skaift of Kimberley. Names of Parents: Cassiem Fakier - one boy name M. Tayeb, Cassiem Anthony - two

[226] Diary p. 71
[227] Ibid., p. 190
[228] Ibid., p. 365

boys Abdol Monaem & M. Amien, H.M. Bakaar one boy - Mogamit Noor, M. Ismaiel - one boy Jacreyar …[229]

About eight years later, he records another *soenat*: "Jaffaar Sardick & Artissa's 3 boys bien Soonatt by Emam Rejalodien of Kalk Bay on Sundy on the 22nd February 1925 by their house Cole Point Road."[230] Imām Saban was explicit about identifying the boys who were circumcised, their fathers, and even the person who performed the *soenat*. The care and consistency with which he recorded these rituals assists with establishment of the regularity and trends relating to their observance.

The first time Imām Saban records a *qurbān* is in 1912. As with the circumcision rituals, he meticulously listed the names of the children for whom the *qurbān* was performed and the names of their fathers, as shown here:

Labarrang, called the (Eudool Doha) was on Monday the 10th November 1913. Also had sheeps to Koorbaan [slaughter].
3 sheeps for Hadjie Achmat Baker - Amley house
1 sheep for Emam M.S. Saban - Masjiet
1 sheep for Cassiem Fakiere - Masjiet
1 sheep for Abdul Sataar Mooses - Masjiet
1 sheep for Mogmood Khan - Masjiet
1 sheep for M. Gosain, the Cook - Masjiet
1 sheep for Sainy Taall's son Abdol - Jabaar's house.[231]

Imām Saban was also meticulous about recording the number of sheep slaughtered for each child and even the venue at which it was done. From his recordings, we can see that the ritual slaughter was not carried out every year, perhaps pointing to economic changes in the community that may be further investigated.

Another ritual that we find recorded in Imām Saban's Diary is the graduation ceremony for children who had completed the reading of the Qur'ān (*tamat*). He would record details about the children who took part, where the ceremony took place, and the Imāms who

[229] Diary p. 59
[230] Ibid., p. 291
[231] Ibid., p. 73

tested the children. His detailed recordings shed some light on the interaction of Imāms at such cultural and educational events.[232]

Imām Saban also records the annual religious celebrations and practices like festivals (*Eid* or *Labarang*), birthday of the Prophet (*Maulūd*) and fasting (*Ramadan*): "Labarang Ramdaan being on Friday on the 13th September 1912, fasting full 30 days."[233] At times he pointed out that the Festival was held on the same day throughout the Peninsula or in all the suburbs, "We finish Pwassa [fasting] Ramdaan on Monday, fasting 29 days. Made Labarang the Aid [Eid] on Tuesday the 2nd September 1913. Cape Town all Suburb the same day."[234] Here, Imām Saban gives the impression that there may have been very early indications of a discrepancy on Eid day celebrations, which continues into the Twenty-first century. His keen sense of detail also offers additional insights, in that we are able to trace the number of days fasted, from his diary.

Pastoral duties

Imām Saban's detailed recordings of domestic problems, family disputes, and community conflicts testify to the fact that a fair amount of pastoral care and guidance was required of the Imām. In recording such matters, he is crisp and relatively objective. Although there are exceptions, he generally does not deem it important to record his own feelings or the reactions of those whom he counselled.

When he recorded divorce cases, he kept to the bare facts, "Solomon divorce his wife Fatema 21st on Saturday evening with two witness all there."[235] He clearly deemed it important to note that the duly required witnesses were present. At times he also identified them. Occasionally, when there were problems of a more sensitive nature, Imām Saban noted that religious leaders, like Imām Abdurrahman Cassiem were called upon to assist or ajudicate in matters.[236] In one instance a serious accusation of sexual misconduct was made against a prominent community member and trustee. A number of other entries also reveal

[232] Diary p. 63
[233] Ibid., p. 53
[234] Ibid., p. 72
[235] Ibid., p. 53
[236] Ibid., p. 325

the trust that other minority groups had in his ability to resolve matters between them.[237] The way in which he recorded matters of dispute in particular says something about the Imām. It reveals a type of self-assessment and a commitment with which the Imām performed his tasks. It also portrays a sense of responsibility and accountability towards what he recorded in his Diary.

His recordings show that his pastoral care was not limited to dispute resolution. A number of diary entries also show his concern for the sick in his community. He recorded his visits to them in hospital, and the times when he accompanied them home after they were discharged. These entries show a different side to community life in the early 1900s. In 1919 on the first anniversary of the 'flu' epidemic which took the lives of many in Simonstown, Imām Saban noted his own contribution to the alleviation of their pain. He records prayer meetings at the cemetery to commemorate their loss by reciting the Qur'ān together.[238]

CulturalPractices

Imām Saban's Diary abounds with recordings of cultural practices and occasions observed by his community. These are distinct from the religious practises which are integrally part of Islam, such as the marriage ceremony, burial procedures, and the naming of new-borns. On cultural practices of Muslims during the Eighteenth century, Jeppie has the view that the Cape Islam generally '… was not an orthodox scriptural but a mystical syncretic religion.'[239] Davids agrees and further explains that cultural practices, while not an integral part of Islam, but were nonetheless insisted upon by local Imāms, as in the case of the '*Ratiep*'.[240] At the Cape, these practices included the *Maulūd*, *Rampies-sny*, *Ratiep*, and *Gaddats*.

The *Maulūd* celebrations were performed in commemoration of the birthday of the Prophet. This usually includes recitation of the Qur'ān, songs, and poetry in honour of the Prophet, and sharing of meals and food. In recording the numerous *Maulūd* celebrations, Imām Saban was careful in inidentifying the occasion of the particular day on which the

[237] Diary p. 255
[238] Ibid., p. 174
[239] Jeppie (1996, p. 141)
[240] Davids (2011, p. 40)

birthday of the Prophet was celebrated (12th Rabbi-ul-awwal). He calls it *Coemmies Maulūd*, "Coemies Moelute being on Saturday night on the 12th November 1921 made till the morning 6am finished (12th Rabbi-al-awwal 1340)".[241] This recording makes it easy to retrace both the Lunar and Gregorian dates of this occasion.

In addition, he mentions the wider celebrations which take place over many days, and in different places. Imām Saban names the different groups that participate in the celebration of the *Maulūd*. He called them "teams" and mentions '*Shaikh* of the *Maulūd*' under whom each group operated. In addition he provides other details which offer further insights to the particular occasion as a whole. Here he notes:

> Claremont. A Moelute being given of the Jamaa [group], young boys & old mens & womans & young girls, on Sunday 14th February 1926 in the School room, Drapey Street. Seg Tiefly & Seg Mogedien with their Zekir Jamaa [group] was Zieker against Claremont & Tailors of Cape Town from 8am to 7:58pm – finish. Moelute was by Emam Armien bin late Emam Abdulah. Emams was present: Emam Magmoet of Claremont, Emam M. Saleh of Simons Town. whent from Simons Town with motor lorrie of Mr Wathly. Emam M. Saleh's fare was free, given from this Zikier Jamaa [group], Seg Tiefly & Seg Mogedien.[242]

Many teams held their *maulūd* functions over the months, but Imām Saban was serious and meticulous about recording the specific details of each one, from the time, date, and venue of the *maulūd*, right down to the method of transport used to travel to other areas, and the names of other Cape Imāms present. His description of these occasions thus gave it a vividness and distinctiveness of its own. His recordings indicate that women were also very active in the *maulūd* and formed their own teams, like this one, "Mona Ismaiel & Fatema Arstrie Slarmie & them's Jamaa [group] – Girls and Young Mens – gave a Moelute on Sunday afternoon from 12.30pm … on the 12th February 1928".[243] Imām Saban also noted another activity related to the *Maulūd* that was restricted to women, "The total of girls and women for cut rampies on Saturday afternoon the 28th November 1925 from the ziker jamaas

[241] Diary p. 214
[242] Ibid., p. 320
[243] Ibid., p. 362

moelute is 57 girls and women in the masjid from 1pm."[244] The practice of '*rampies-sny*', entails the cutting of orange leaves, scented and folded in a colourful sachet. The women in the mosque prepared the rampies during the afternoon before the *maulūd* and distributed it to the congregation during the evening services.[245]

Imām Saban's keen sense for detail also include visits to the *Kramats* (local shrines) on specific occasions and the customary style of greeting of those who depart on their annual pilgrimage to Makkah. Imām Saban's Diary reflects a number of occasions when families gathered at the *Kramat* in Faure outside Cape Town, over the Easter weekend, which is still the practice today:

Imām Saban also identified the occasions when he took part in these visits:

> Mysilf & wife & children whent to the Cramatt on Saturday with train on the 3rd April 1915 with other Simons Town peoples. Came back on the 6th instant, Teusday evening… nice weather, except Monday night was raining & wind blowing hard.[246]

He also noted this occasion:

> Gatieb M. Arifie Manuel went to Belsfontein Cramaat … with wife and daughter Armena. Also again whent to the Makasadain's [Macassar's] Kramat Towang Yousoph with is wife and children Armena & Gamat Jain… on Thursday 25th January.[247]

The Islamic date that he provides in Arabic indicates that this was not a casual visit or a picnic. Imām Saban's Diary generally distinguished between casual visits or picnics to the *Kramat* and those undertaken by pilgrims to pay respect to their forebears who had brought Islam to the Cape.

Another practice recorded by Imām Saban is the traditional way in which relatives and friends at the Cape bid farewell to those who departed on the pilgrimage to Makkah. Imām

[244] Diary p. 314
[245] Davids (2011, p. 38)
[246] Diary p. 96
[247] Ibid., p. 237

Saban kept a record of his community members who left for Makkah and meticulously noted many details of their departure:

> People whent Mosafier [pilgrims departed] to Macca. Edaroos Slarmie, Sahaidien Potts & is wife Solayla whent from Simons Town. Lieve their house at 12.15pm on the 24th December 1927 on Saturday afternoon whent on board at the Docks at 7pm on board the Dutch Steamer S.S. Clip Fontain. People also the same Steamer: Emam Magmood from Claremont & Ranie Badidien & is wife & some other people – about 100 people including children. The Steamer lieve the Docks on Sunday morning 7am. Nearly all Simons Town people whent up long with them by a first class carriage for our silf… I, Emam M.S. Saban was by Edaroos Slarmie Emam Rejaldien by Omara Potts.[248]

From this type of entry we are able to identify the Simonstown families who embarked on the pilgrimage during Imām Saban's time, the exact dates of departure, the method of transport used, the time the steamer left the Docks and also the practice of accompanying the pilgrims to the Docks. After their departure, Imām Saban's Diary shows that there remained a connection between himself (as Imām) and the pilgrims, "2 Tellegraph received from Port Elizabeth from Edaroos Slarmie & from Sahaidien Potts on Wednesday on the 28th December 1927".[249]

Imām Saban's painstaking attention to the recording of his activities reveals that the duties of the Imām extended way beyond ritual and general pastoral duties. He recorded occasions where he acted as mediator on unpleasant occasions, such as this:

> 4 childrens was by the Court before the Majestrate for making a noise in the public street before the Byescope [Cinema] on Saturday. [The] case was on Tuesday, Labarang Day on the 6th May 1924. One boy [was the son] of ... [parent's name], one from ... [parent's name], one from ... [parent's name] [&) one from ... [parent's name]. I, Emam M. Saleh when[t] to the Court and spoke with the Majestrate & ask[ed] for mercy in case [in view] of our great day, Labarang Aidil Fitaar. So the Majestrate let them off with out punishment, but did warant [warn] them for a next time. I am Emam M.S. Saban.[250]

On another occasion, he notes his role as a buffer between two different communities.

[248] Diary p. 353
[249] Ibid., p. 353
[250] Ibid., p. 272

> [I] received a letter from Mr W. Runciman M.L.A. & Municipalaty Counsells to Warren [warn] my Moslem peoples all in Simons Town to put a stop not to pick anymore the Hottentott Figs and damage anything at the new Cemetery again anytime. I did sent round to all Moslem[s] also the letter [dated] 16th February 1912. Signed: Emam M.S. Saban, Mohamedan Priest. [No Arabic][251]

From the explicit nature of Imām Saban's recordings, we are also able to see his community's general adherence to the requirements of the Simonstown local authorities: "10th November 1913 … Also I got a permitt from the Municipality of ST for to Koorbaan at the masjiet premises. [Ar. 10th Dhil Hija 1331]"

There were also the seemingly small victories that Imām Saban deemed worthy of recording, such as this one:

> The Court Case in Simons Town before Magistrate Grahm & Green about pulling fish at the Cole Point betch [beach] of Jaffaar, & Cotton? of big betch. Jaffaar won the case. He is alow to pulling fish any time has [as] [he may find] useful. On Thursday 9th October 1919.[252]

While this entry appears insignificant, it gives an indication that even in those early years there may already have been attempts at restricting the local communities who depended on the fishing trade. While Imām Saban's Diary adds to our present understanding of the varied role of the early Imām, it also constantly provides new insights into the Simonstown history.

DIARISTS ON SIMONSTOWN

Imām Saban's Diary exhibits an ardent diarist whose interests generally appears to be balanced and not limited to his own community's activities. As he recorded the personal matters of his own community, he also recorded some pertaining to his acquaintances in the white community, such as "Simons Town – Dead. Mrs Albertyn [Imām's employer's wife] died on Monday night on the 2nd February 1914…"[253] or: "Mr C. P. Albertyn got married with Mrs D. Van Blerk up at Mount Pleasant on Thursday 19th December 1918 at Kalk

[251] Diary p. 41
[252] Ibid., p. 174
[253] Ibid., p. 84

Bay…"[254] Unlike most of the other diarists, Imām Saban was as meticulous in his recordings on important religious personalities in that community, "The Dutch Minister Mr Reverend Veldon of the Dutch Reformed Church died on Friday morning the 9th of January 1914. Buried in Paarl on Sunday at 4pm on the 11th instant."[255]

Imām Saban often recorded events that appeared not to be directly linked to the functioning of his community. His Diary contains recording such as this one, "The Governor Prince Arthur of Cavinaught & Princess & Son arrive in Cape Town with Mail Boat on Wednesday the 17th November 1920 at 10:30 a.m."[256], and this one, "Stone [foundation] being lade down was for new Light House at Cape Point … on Saturday the 25th April 1914."[257] On the whole Imām Saban's Diary reflects a broad interest and a cordial relationship with the broader town, particularly with the Mayor, Mr Runciman, as seen here:

> A Public Meeting bien held of Mr W. Runciman M.L.A. on Sunday morning 10am in the Alfred Lodge, Alfred Lane in purpose to collected new Trusties & every thing fresh again upon the Mohamedan Mosque of Simons Town.[258]

He also recorded the contribution the Muslims to Simonstown's community, "Collection of the Mayor fund, the War Under the Moslem people, mens & womans for three weeks sending round. The sum of £ 1-17-4 handed over to the Town Clerk of the municipality."[259]

It was not easy for a small Muslim community to retain their distinct identity in a busy cosmopolitan town dominated by Europeans. Yet, in his Diary, Imām Saban describes a community that was fully integrated into the activities of the town. On Peace Day celebrations on 5th August 1919, he notes that children from all 'race' groups in Simonstown took part in a march. He also noted that the municipality and individual business people provided the Muslims with transport.[260] Imām Saban's depiction was attested to by

[254] Diary p. 161
[255] Ibid., p. 78
[256] Ibid., p. 197
[257] Ibid., p. 88
[258] Ibid., p. 31
[259] Ibid., p. 89
[260] Ibid., p. 170

Mayoress Chaswell, Guest Speaker at the Muslims Orphanage Bazaar in Cape Town. According to her, she had been: "… Frequent in contact with Muslims in Simonstown and that taught me what a quiet, law abiding and loyal people these Muslims are …".[261]

Jeppie's view of the early Cape Imām also confirm's Imām Saban's depiction: "The Imāms were gentle in their politics. Though modest in their political ambitions they were profoundly ambitious in their efforts to find a notable status within Cape Town …"[262] Jeppie holds that most early Imāms, managed their relationships with the different socio-political groupings around them, with great diplomacy.[263] Imām Saban's conciliatory attitude was therefore not unusual. What is unusual is that his Diary provides excellent support for this view.

INSTITUTIONS

I will now turn to the diligent records kept by Imām Saban in relation to the Muslim institutions in Simonstown, particularly the Mosque, and the first Muslim Missionary School. These institutions were physical manifestations of a community liberated from slavery 70 years earlier. They represent the culmination of serious efforts by the early Muslim pioneers of Simonstown.

Muslim Cemetery

Imām Saban's passion for recording accurate details of important events serves us well in establishing exactly when the Dido Valley Cemetery was used for the burial of Muslims. He even recorded the day (Sunday 11th June 1911) when he invited Imām Abdurrakiep from Wynberg to ensure the accuracy of the *Qiblah*[264] at the new Dido Valley Cemetery:

> I, the undersigned, did let Emam A. Rakieb of Wynberg came to Simons Town to put the Keblaat [Qiblah] wright [right] at the new Cemetery, Dido Valley on a Sunday 11th June 1911. Whent long [went along] H. G. Khalill & Arruna Majiet.[265]

[261] Moslem Outlook (February 20 1926, p. 13)
[262] Jeppie (1996, pp. 157-158)
[263] Ibid.
[264] *Qiblah* is the direction towards the Holy Mosque in Makkah that Muslims face during prayer.
[265] Diary p. 31

Even the additional information that Imām Saban offers in this entry is particularly noteworthy. Khaṭīb Hadjie Khalill,[266] who went along, was one of the oldest community members and is earlier referred to as one of the first *Khalīfa's* (teachers) who taught the Simonstown community in the 1860's. Shortly after the *Qiblah* was checked, Imām Saban records the first burial that took place at Dido Valley, "Mogamit Gayier Mamatt's sister Ciyeriaa's child died on Wednesday evening 8pm on the 28th June 1911… first Kefayaat [funeral] buried new Cemetery Dido Valley."[267]

Imām Saban's detailed entries actually facilitate a further look into that period. In one case in 1915, an old man was buried at the old cemetery. Because Imām Saban was conscientious enough to record his age, we could establish that he lived in the period of slavery.[268] Other entries confirm that many who had relatives buried in the old Seaforth Cemetery had continued to gather there to remember their deceased.[269] Just two weeks before Imām Saban's death, he made this entry: "In the same morning [16th September 1928] was Telawaat in the Old Cemetery for all Dead families by H. Achmat & Jamaa [congregation]. Work was made by Emam M.S. Saban."[270] In line with his concern for accurate preservation of information, Imām Saban's recording at this stage of illness is remarkable.

The Mosque

From the entries in his Diary, Imām Saban appears to have taken it upon himself to ensure a continuous record of the purchase and development of the Mosque. When the mosque building was purchased, he made a note of the date and the amount paid by the Mayor, Mr Runciman.[271] His consistent, careful recordings brought many other details to light such as when, and how, trustees were elected,[272] who the members were, when and from whom

[266] Khaṭīb (Gatiep) Hadjie Khalill is discussed in the first chapter of this work
[267] Diary p. 44
[268] Ibid., p. 99
[269] Ibid., p. 127
[270] Ibid., p. 375
[271] Ibid., p. 21
[272] Ibid., p. 31

new carpets were received,[273] and how funds were raised for the mosque. All this information is preserved in Imām Saban's own hand in his Diary. We are also able to establish from his records the different stages during which the community organised bazaars, *Khalīfa* displays (*Ratiep*), and collection drives, to raise money for the mosque. In 1925 he notes that the following:

> Whent out for colleck for Masjiet round suburbs on the 20th December 1925. Names all: H. Bakaar, Tiefly Manuel, Abdulah Manuel, Ismaiel Manuel, Jossop Slamang, Samsodien Jinkins, Cassiem Fakier, Kiemie Mamat, Moosa Davids, Tallep Manuel. Cape Town, Claremont, Wynberg. 21 pounds 9 shillings.[274]

This is one of the many instances where the full names of the collectors are mentioned as well as the areas where they went to collect. When building work started on the mosque in October 1927, Imām Saban was 73 years old. He described the renovation process, "On Sunday morning from 9am on the 23rd October 1927, laying the concrete for the platform of the Monaraat [tower]. All mens was present to work – carying sand and stones."[275] He also listed the names of those who assisted. The following week he recorded: "500 Bricks came for the monaratt [tower] of the Masjiet for Sunday to work on the 30th October 1927. Order all Moslem Jamaa [congregation] to come work on Sunday the 30th October 1927. On Sunday the 6th Nov. 1927 laying cement on the stoep of the Masjiet."[276]

Muslim School

Thanks to Imām Saban's penchant for recording events, we are also able to follow the events relating to the establishment of their first Muslim school. He recorded from the time of its initial conception, through the preparatory meetings, the establishment of a School Board, appointment of teachers, and finally to the opening of its doors. This is typical:

> A meeting being held on Monday evening at 8pm in the Moslem School with the Meyer Mr W. Runciman [regarding] the affair of the school to comance [to start the school and for the Mayor to] open the school for our children on

[273] Diary p. 22
[274] Ibid., p. 315
[275] Ibid., p. 348
[276] Ibid., p. 349

> the 1st of July 1923. a teacher to take on for 10 pounds per month. The Municipality will grand 25 pounds per year to help. Also Committee being form for the School Board the same time. 15 Committees being point out all names is put down. Names: H. Bakaar, Hadjie Achmat, Yatiem Raven, Ayeraan, Tolly Clarke, H. Mogamit, Hapie Boraan, Astrie Slarmie, K. Fakier, M. Marzaan, Sodaan, Salamoon, Gayedien & Ismaiel Manuel.[277]

Imām Saban identifies the major role players in Simonstown, including those who travelled back and forth to Cape Town to finalise matters with the education department. In fact, he sketches a clear picture of the hurdles that his community had to overcome in this particular area. From his entries we can see that the extension of the Mosque to accommodate the school was the result of improvisation rather than long-term planning. What also comes through very clearly in the many follow-up meetings is the speed and determination with which his community responded when their children's education was threatened.

Imām Saban's Diary reveals all the role-players in the establishment and development of the physical institutions. The details he preserved so conscientiously, gives credence to all those who participated in the planning, fundraising, building and otherwise of these institutions. He gave credit to all, big and small.

<u>On other ʿ*Ulamā* and Imāms – in the broader Cape</u>

Imām Saban formed part of the fraternity of ʿ*Ulamā* at the Cape. It appears that among the Cape Imāms he was unique in recording the distinct public space they created for themselves. His records cover nearly all the Imāms who prevailed during his time, their successors, and the formal, informal, or sporadic meetings between the Imāms. His Diary provides a view on the relationships among them, and their difference of opinion on political matters.

Imām Saban's recordings are very specific about the titles of the religious leader (ʿ*Ulamāʾ*). In his Diary, the title of '*Sheg*' is ranked above the '*Imām*'. The '*Shegs*' were usually the ones who presided over meetings, gave lectures, and offered prayers at the beginning and end of meetings. There were only a few of them who carried the title of '*Sheg*', like Shaikh

[277] Diary p. 239

Mogamat Osman Najaar, Shaikh Achmat Behardien, Shaikh Mogamat Salieg and Shaikh Abdurragiem al-Iraqi. Imām Saban himself had a special reverence for Shaikh Abdurragiem. He referred to him as *Saidy*[278] and often invited him to significant occasions like this: "The Moslem new School was given name on Sunday at 2pm with Telawat Koraan & Moelute … The name given by Emam M. Saleh & Seg Abdol Ragiem…"[279] He records many burials of *Ulamā* over which Shaikh Abdurragiem presided, like this one: "Emam Farratt of Cape Town died on Sunday night 8pm. Buried on Monday afternoon on the 21st August 1916 by Seg A. Ragiem…"[280] Shaikh Abdurragiem also performed many marriage ceremonies and was a regular examiner of students during the *tamats,* as in this case: "Mogamit Salegh Baharodien Gamie's son Achmat being Tamatt in Stellenbosch on Sunday 27th April 1913 before Seg Abdol Ragiem of Cape Town…"[281]

At times Imām Saban made a special note of the number of people who attended a funeral of a religious leader. It seems that this indicated the public stature of the 'Shaikh' or 'Imām' in question. The funerals of these two Imāms are a case in point: "Emam Abdullah of Claremont died on Sundy morning on the 2nd April 1922. Buried in Cape Town Cemetery by is brother Emam Abdul Rakieb. Age: 72 years old. About 500 people." In the case of Ebrahima Gallie, Imām Saban records the following: "Emam Ebrahema Galliy of Kanaladorp, Cape Town died Sunday night on the 20th July 1913. Buried Monday by Seg A. Ragiem, Emam Hassiem, Emam M. Bayanodin, Emam A. Rakieb of Wynberg, Emam Amenodien." He adds that it was the "larges Funeral".[282] The size of the funeral as recorded by Imām Saban, indicate the standing of these two Imāms in the community.

Jeppie holds that at the start of the Twentieth century the annual pilgrimage did not any longer play any meaningful role in the elevation of the rank of the *Ulamā*. The title "Shaykh" and the length of their study abroad, were the factors that increased their chances of promotion within the hierarchy of the clergy. Imām Saban's Diary reflects Jeppie's

[278] Diary p. 375. Saidiy is a term that denotes respect and is also used to refer to the family of the Prophet Muḥammad)
[279] Ibid., p. 239
[280] Ibid., p. 119
[281] Ibid., p. 63
[282] Ibid., p. 68

contention. It portrays the emergence of a new hierarchy of clergy, with the "Shaykh" at the top of the rank.[283]

CONCLUSION

The Cape narrative was told almost exclusively from the perspective of the White dominant-class. In this chapter I show how this narrative overshadows the marginal voices of the dominated under-classes at the Cape at large, and in Simonstown in particular. The purpose of the under-classes at the Cape was mostly to serve and fulfil the needs of the dominant-class. It appears, therefore, that this was the context in which the presence of the under-classes was generally undervalued in the diaries of the European visitors.

Imām Saban's Diary represents a new body of knowledge on a community which existed parallel to the White community. No one else appears to have preserved such a detailed first-hand account of Muslim activity at the Cape. Without expressing opinions or making judgements like most diarists, his apparently factual, simplistic description of events as he saw them, reveals significant forces and trends of the era. The discovery of Imām Saban's Diary provides the narrative of the marginalised voices that had previously been neglected.

While the Imām's primary focus was the preservation of the history of his own religious community, his recordings about related matters opens up the landscape into the world of the Cape Muslims in an unprecedented manner. Moreover, his recordings of events in Simonstown tell us about a town and its early relations with people of colour. The Imām takes us through the courts, the town's key events, and also the unequal relations in the town. In the next chapter, I present the Imām's portrayal of religious authority.

[283] Jeppie (1996, p. 158)

Chapter Three

THE ROLE OF THE IMĀM ACCORDING TO IMĀM SABAN'S DIARY

This chapter deals with Imām Saban's role as an Imām, as he himself viewed it, and how his leadership represented the forms, traditions, and practices at the Cape, that began in the Nineteenth century. Davids, Shell, and Jeppie have provided perspectives on Cape Imāms on the basis of archival records and secondary sources. They presented fascinating insights on how the Imāms at the Cape adopted and invented traditions. Davids' work focuses on their role as Imāms, while Jeppie focuses on their social and political authority. Imām Saban's Diary provides its own invaluable perspective. It is a lively depiction of the Imām and his work, his community, other Imāms, and the broader society of which he was a part. The Diary is a personal testimony of an Imām in action, and worthy to be put alongside the reflections of Davids, Jeppie, and Shell. The Diary generally confirms what they have found, but gives the Cape Imām a personal quality that is not found in archives, newspapers, government reports, and travel accounts.

In the following, I present a perspective of an Imām through the Diary of an Imām. I begin with his appointment, the factors that placed him in his position of authority, and how he sustained that position. I pay particular attention to his strict observation of the rites of passage, his promotion of education, his relationship with the broader Cape Muslim community, especially the *Ulamā*, his relationships with the political authorities in Simonstown and in the broader Cape, and his efforts at creating unity and an Islamic identity within his community. The ritual and pastoral side of his role accounted for about three-quarters of his Diary. I therefore believe that most of his concentration was in this area, which is worthy of general presentation and analysis.

Appointment

With regard to his appointment as the Imām of the Simonstown Muslim community, I found no documented or oral evidence on how, when, or by whom Imām Saban, or any of the early Imāms in Simonstown, was appointed. An entry he made on 15th March 1912, however, says he had been: "… acting as the Imām under the *Jamaat* [congregation] of

Simonstown for 7 years, 4 months and 13 days".[284] This meant he assumed his position as the Imām of the Simonstown Muslim community at the beginning of November 1904, shortly after Imām Karriem Jarley's demise. As far as the appointment of the early Cape Imāms go, Abdulkadar Tayob points out two important influencing factors, viz. their approval by the incumbent scholar, or other learned scholars, and the higher level of Islamic education they enjoyed compared to the rest of the community.[285] Both of these factors appeared to have played a role in Imām Saban's appointment.

Tayob refers to Tuang Guru's authority in his sanction of Agmat van Bengalen as his successor. After the Tuan's demise, he was quoted by Agmat van Bengalen in support of the latter's right to leadership over Van Boegies: "Remember Van Boegies can never as long as he lives take my place and whoever gives him my place must answer on the day of judgement, and not to me."[286] Tuan Guru's pronouncement effectively excluded van Boegies from taking the position of Imām, and Achmat van Bengalen was initiated into the position without any competition. Van Boegies and his compatriot Frans van Bengalen then left that mosque and proceeded to open what is today known as the Palm Tree Mosque.[287]

The strength of Tuan Guru's decree evidences the Imām's authority at the start of the formation of mosques at the Cape. There were a few Imāms at Cape at this stage. Davids having studied the central position of the Imām in the Cape Muslim community, views the position of Imām as, "… the highest attainment, the status symbol above all other status symbols in the Cape Muslim community". This statement establishes the fact that in order for an aspirant to attain the Imām position, he was qualified in the necessary skills and knowledge of all levels within the hierarchy of the unique Cape Muslim clerical order.

Imām Karriem Jarley, predecessor of Imām Saban, did not exclude any possible successors as Tuan Guru had done. Imām Karriem, however, does appear to have tacitly sanctioned Imām Saban's succession by allowing him to represent him on various occasions before he

[284] Diary p. 41
[285] Tayob (1999, pp. 27-29)
[286] Ibid., p. 27
[287] Ibid., p. 27

passed away. Imām Karriem was highly revered by his community and his grave in the 'Old Seaforth Cemetery' is a place of visitation and veneration. Disciples of the *Rifā'ī Ṣūfī* order have a particularly strong connection with that site because of Imām Karriem's known practice as a 'Shaikh' of that order.[288] For a lengthy period of time, his family had his tombstone removed to obscure its location and prevent its desecration by the practitioners of 'black magic'.[289] Imām Karriem also enjoyed strong support in Simonstown and the sanction of someone like him would therefore have facilitated Imām Saban's appointment. In fact, Imām Saban's old diary indicates that he was already acting as Imām Karriem's *Khaṭīb* (assistant) at ritual functions from the late 1890's.[290] This meant that he had already been identified as the most suitably qualified candidate to take over the Imamate.

Imām Karriem would not have approved of Imām Saban had he not possessed the necessary skills and education to lead his people. There were other *Khaṭīb*s in Imām Karriem's time, which Imām Saban refers to at the beginning of his Diary. Due to their ages, most of them may have been unable to carry this heavy burden of responsibility. Khaṭīb Jacreya Taal was already in his mid-fifties and passed away in 1906.[291] Another, Khaṭīb Hadjie Khalil, also known as 'Khalīfa Abdol Galiel',[292] was already in his early eighties when Imām Karriem passed away.[293] Goosain Solomon and Mogamat Arifie Manuel were much younger than Imām Saban and only emerged as *Khaṭīb*s during his time. On 30th Sep 1905,[294] and on 26th August 1908,[295] Imām Saban refers to M. Arafie Manuel as '*Bilāl*'. It was only in November 1912[296] that M. Gosain was promoted to *Shaikh Bilāl*, and up to 1915 both he and M. Arifie retained those titles. Imām Saban later confirms indirectly that they could not have been equipped with the required knowledge to take over at that time. He describes this situation:

[288] E. Solomon (2009, pers. Comm., 4 October). *Rifā'ī* order (known at the Cape as '*Ratiep'*) founded by Shaikh Ahmad Rifā'ī of Baghdad (1119 – 1182).
[289] Ibid.
[290] Refer to Chapter 2 for definition of '*Khaṭīb*'.
[291] Diary p. 13. *Khaṭīb* Jacreya Taal passed away on 4th February 1906 at age 58.
[292] Refer to Chapter 1 for discussion.
[293] Diary p. 210. Refer to Chapter 1 for discussion.
[294] Ibid., p. 2
[295] Ibid.,p. 18
[296] Ibid., p. 58

> 1915 5th February - I, Emam M. Saleh Saban got sick, very ill on Friday morning at 10:30.a.m. on the wagon in the work. could not attend the Jomaat [Friday Congregational Prayers] to Gootbaar [deliver the sermon]. Achmat Amley did take the mimbaar [pulpit] by order of the *Jamaat* because know [no] one else was not able to do the work & understan the Gootbaar [sermon].[297]

One of the known duties of an Imām was to deliver the sermon at the weekly *Jumu□āh* (Congregational Prayers). This is normally done in Arabic. The above situation indicates that there did not appear to be any other candidates ready for the position of Imām in 1904.

Imām Saban more than likely moved to Simonstown a few years before his appointment because there is no evidence to confirm that he was born there or that his family was originally from Simonstown. In addition to Imām Karriem's strong recommendation, his acceptance by the Simonstown community, first as assistant, and later as Imām, would still have required some evidence of his 'worthiness' in terms of knowledge and other skills and qualities. As the son of a *Khaṭīb*,[298] many entries in his Diary show that he appears to have developed the appropriate wisdom and temperate character for that position. Thus, Imām Saban appeared to have been identified by Imām Karriem as the one most suited at the time to educate others. As time elapsed, the Diary showed a leadership contingent developing under his guidance: "On Friday night, Moelute [commemoration of Prophet's birthday] night, was made: Gomie Clarke – Belall, H. Basier Amly – Belall, Gayedien – Marboot, Mogamit Gosaine made Gatieb, Mogamit Arifie made Gatieb, H.M. Bakaar made Gatieb On the 6th January 1917."[299] Imām Saban appears to have guided his deputies (*Khaṭībs*) until they were ready to perform the required tasks: "I, Emam M. Saleh whent to Cape Town to attend the Cival Court at Caledon Square on Friday morning on the 2nd August 1918. Came back by the 2:05 pm train. Gatieb M. Ariffie assist me to Gootbaar [deliver the sermon]."[300] These *Khaṭīb*s emerged as the leaders of the Simonstown Muslims after Imām Saban's demise. One of them, Mogamat Arafie Manuel, became Imām and in 1945 he became one of the founder members of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC).[301] In light of the

[297] Diary p. 95
[298] Refer to Chapter 1 for discussion.
[299] Diary p. 127
[300] Ibid., p. 151
[301] Davids (1985)

above, it appears that Imām Saban was unrivalled as a successor to Imām Karriem in terms of knowledge, and that his transition to Imām of the Simonstown community was a peaceful one.

An Imām's authority

The authority of the Imām of early and mid Nineteenth century Cape Islam seems to diminish with the emergence of trust committees. Tayob holds that the Imām's position of authority remained intact until the mid-Nineteenth and early-Twentieth centuries. He locates the shift in this position from the period when disputes within the Palm Tree Mosque, the Nurul Mohamedia Congregation, and the Pilgrim Mosque, spilled over into the public and legal arena. Tayob concludes that it was at this stage that the secular court's intervention ultimately gave rise to greater community participation in the running of the Cape mosques in the form of Trust Committees.[302] This flow of events drastically minimised the Cape Imām's authority within the mosque. While this may be true for some of the Cape mosques, the diminished power position of the Imām did not seem to be the case in Simonstown, either during, or before, Imām Saban's time. As far back as the 1860's 'Trustees' or 'Committee' members did not appear to exist in the Simonstown Mosque.[303] It was only when the mosque building was officially purchased in 1911 that Imām Saban refers to the existence of a Trust Committee:

> A Public Meeting bien held of Mr W. Runciman M.L.A. on Sunday morning 10am in the Alfred Lodge, Alfred Lane in purpose to collected new Trusties & every thing fresh again … and new rules did also pass by the majority & 8 Trusties bien purpose, old Trustie Argedien Davids & 7 new ones.[304]

There are no diary entries, however, that indicate the involvement of that Trust Committee in the running of the mosque before or after that period. To all intents and purposes, it appears that the Mosque did not function under its members, but under the Imām. Even the election of a new committee appeared to be a mere formality in response to a

[302] Tayob (1999, p. 30)
[303] Refer to Chapter 1 for discussion
[304] Diary p. 31

requirement by the Master's office: "… order came from Cape Town the Master and Attorney … 31st August 1911."[305]

These are important factors to bear in mind when assessing Imām Saban's position in the Mosque. It is also clear from the Diary that the new Trust Committee was not intended to monitor, or supervise, and thereby minimise the duties of the Imām. The Imām was the chairperson of the Committee! Imām Saban was elected Chairperson of that Trust Committee: "A Public Meeting bien held of Mr W. Runciman M.L.A. on Sunday morning 10am in the Alfred Lodge, Alfred Lane in purpose to collected new Trusties … The new Trustees are: Emam M.S. Saban (Chairman), …"[306] In fact, it was his position as Chairman of the Trust that appeared to further legitimise and strengthen Imām Saban's position of authority and leadership. His sanction was entrenched as an integral part of mosque activities, and meetings held without him did not carry any weight. On occasion, when the other Trustees disregarded his authority, he refused to attend or sanction their meetings:

> A meeting being held from the Trusties of the N.J. Mosque for the Jamaa [congregation] on Sunday the 13th April 1913 at 10am to see the plan for renewing the Mosque. The Jamaa [congregation] was call from Gatieb Agedien & the Trusties. Did not reconise [recognise] the Emam M.S. Saban, did call him as a other man the same. I, the undersigned did not being present by the meeting that day and also don't know nothing of them is doing… Signed: Emam M.S. Saban, Mohamedan Priest of Simons Town.[307]

Two years later, when they did the same thing, he once again refused to attend their meeting and regarded the proceedings as illegitimate.

> Mohamedan Mosque of Simons Town. The Trusties call a meeting in the Masjiet [mosque] on Sunday on the 5th December 1915. call the Jamaa [congregation] at 9.a.m. For the trusties doing the many years pass with out respeck the Emam … The Emam did not attend the meeting on that occasion …[308]

[305] Diary p. 32
[306] Ibid., p.31
[307] Ibid., p. 62
[308] Ibid., p. 105

He also signed this entry formally as if to emphasize his position of authority and refers to the fact that he was officially appointed as Chairman of the Trust Committee by the Mayor of Simonstown, Mr Runciman, in an official meeting of the Muslim community: "Sign: Chairman – bien made by W. Runciman, Emam M. Saleg Saban Hospital Lane. 5/12/15 Simons Town."[309] The apparent absence of a functional Mosque Committee supports the contention that Imām Saban's initial appointment as Imām was, for the greater part, by virtue of Imām Karriem's sanction and not that of any Trust Committee.

There was, however, a different modus operandi in the mosques outside the Cape. Davids believed that the clerical order as it functioned at the Cape was unique and a necessary innovation, "… forced upon the Cape Muslims by their local milieu with its built-in prejudice against a community who had just shaken off the shackles of slavery.'"[310] According to Mufti Ebrahim Desai in a juridical view (*fatwā*), this is not the way Imāms are supposed to be appointed. In response to a question on this matter, he notes that the appointment of Imāms should be "an *ijārah* [lease] agreement …"[311] He also points out that "the nature, place and times of work must be specified", and "Wages may also be fixed on the basis of the amount of work to be done." According to him, the terms of reference, in particular the employee's role and remuneration must be explicit to both parties. Mufti Desai's *fatwā* on the matter is thus clear: "Basically (the appointment of an Imām takes place on the basis that) the trustees (of the mosque) and the Imām enter into a contract of *ijārah* (lease/hiring) and the contractual agreement is binding on both parties (Imām and trustees)."[312] Moulvi Ahmed Ebrahim Bemat Sahib's in-depth exposition on the rules and regulations related to the running of the masjid, confirms this manner of appointment.[313] One of the responsibilities of the trustees, he says, is: "To appoint a qualified Imām".[314] Chief Mufti Maulana Mufti Sayyid Mahdi Hasan of the Deoband Dar-ul-'Ulūm, supports this position.[315] Tayob, similarly, holds that this was the process prevalent in the Transvaal since

[309] Diary p. 105

[310] Davids (1980, p. 125)

[311] Desai (2002, p. 113). *Ijārah* is the hiring of a person to perform a particular service for an agreed-upon *ujrat* (remuneration), which is offered in terms of the '*urf* (custom of the people).

[312] Ibid., p.35

[313] Bemat (1978)

[314] Ibid., p. 152

[315] Ibid., Foreword. Chief Mufti, Maulanā Mufti Sayyid Mahdi Hasan applauds the writer's exposition on mosque regulations.

the late Nineteenth century, "The responsibilities of the [Trust] committees included the rights to appoint, dismiss, and remunerate the Imāms and religious scholars (*Ulamā*)."[316] Mufti Desai describes the relationship between Imām and community as a formal, contractual lease agreement, which could be terminated by the trustees if they found the Imām to be in breach of his contract.[317] As seen in Imām Saban's case, this was not the practice at the Cape.

As far as the Cape Mosque discourse goes, Tayob refers to a Supreme Court verdict in an 1866 mosque dispute: "This judgment suggested that the community, or part of it, could exercise some right to the choice of leadership in the mosque…"[318] And also: "This body of members represented another force in the Cape mosque, one which often threatened the central place of the Imām …"[319] Although the Simonstown community succumbed to the trend towards Trust Committees, the relationship appeared to have been more along the informal lines described by Tayob as: "… cemented by ritual services provided by the Imām …"[320] The convergence of the Imām and the people, or the ruler and the ruled, although tension-filled at times, did not reduce Imām Saban's position of authority in Simonstown, but appeared to increase it. From the Diary, the provision of ritual services played a key role.

The *Murīd* or *Banguru* System

At the Cape, the community's acceptance of the Imām as a leader was based on the *Ṣūfī* pattern of taking *bai'ah* (pledge of allegiance or *banguru* as it was referred to at the Cape). Jeppie identifies the Cape Islam as: "…not orthodox, [not] scriptural, but a mystical, syncretic religion …"[321] The Imām emerged as the *murshid* (spiritual guide) and the initiate became his *murīd* (disciple). Imām Saban refers to his "morreeks" (*murīds*) in his Diary. Omer Lutfi in his 'Travelogue' refers to the existence of this system when he arrived at the Cape with Shaikh Abubakr Effendi in 1862.[322] It was this *Ṣūfī* style of relationship that kept

[316] Tayob (1999, p. 63)
[317] Desai (2002, p. 113)
[318] Tayob (1999, p. 31)
[319] Ibid., p. 31
[320] Ibid., p. 30
[321] Jeppie (1996, p. 141)
[322] Effendi (1991, p. 23).

the fabric of the earlier Muslim communities intact and provided the Cape leaders with power and legitimacy. The Imām's relationship with his *murīds*, however, was more extensive, more practical, and much more profound than the spiritual leadership of the *Ṣūfī* shaikh. The *banguru* system was a type of informal social contract between Imām and community – collectively and individually, and not between the Imām and a committee. It is this greater, more pervasive relationship of commitment that Imām Saban describes in his Diary. The Imāms, Jeppie holds, were, "On the whole … deeply respected as leaders, if not revered as living saints".[323]

Imām Saban took his commitment to care for his people very seriously. He served them, guided their activities, and at the same time strived to be economically independent of them. It was only after 7 years that the community decided to give him a wage of one pound.[324] Therefore, despite the existence of a committee, it was not the contractual relationship that existed between Imām Saban and his community, but the reciprocal relationship (*banguru*) identified by Tayob in the early Cape mosque discourse. Tayob describes the relationship like this: "Rituals constructed the bonds of commitment and loyalty between community and religious leaders …"[325] While a higher level of Islamic education, and the sanction of a pious scholar, ensured Imām Saban's appointment, it was his meticulous attendance to his community's rites of passage, and his constant observance of their cultural rituals, that entrenched him as their Imām. He took his community's challenges to heart and acted as their advisor, mediator, adjudicator, and comforter. When Muslim children were born in Simonstown, Imām Saban named them in the traditional way depicted by him. We can see that these functions also served as a practical training ground for his *Khaṭīb*s to learn the various ritual procedures. When they married, he performed the rituals of the marriage ceremony and guided the *Khaṭībs* and witnesses. When their loved ones passed away, Imām Saban was the one who presided over the burial and performed the rituals. His assistants usually performed the ceremonial bath and preparation of the body.

[323] Jeppie (1996, p. 157)
[324] Diary p. 41. Refer to Chapter 1 for details.
[325] Tayob (1999, p. 47)

In the face of the level of service he provided, the community reciprocated with their committed allegiance to him. In terms of the normative practice of Muslims in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad as reflected in *Sharī'ah*, the rites of passage could be conducted by the *walī* (the father, or legal guardian).[326] In Simonstown, under the *banguru* system, these rituals were performed by the Imām. This was the system in which Imām Saban flourished and enjoyed his community's support, and this was how his position of power and authority was sustained. Jeppie captures the significance as a public ritual that was "central to the role of Imāms … and as much as they were essential in the lives of Muslims, they re-iterated the Imāms'power."[327]

This form of allegiance or *banguru* was not simply based on residence within a particular geographical space. Sometimes, *murīds* moved to other areas where another Imām presided, or they married someone from a different area. The relocation of a congregant, however, did not mean that he would automatically become the *murīd* of the presiding Imām of that area.

According to the Diary, there were some Simonstown Muslim residents who did not have an agreement of allegiance with Imām Saban. A Simonstown resident approached Imām Saban to complain about one of his *murīds*, but he was not entertained because he was not Imām Saban's *murīd*. The Diary states: "… [resident] is not my Morreek [*murīd*] that is under me to be the leader …".[328] From Imām Saban's entry one can see that these residents were not automatically entitled to enjoy his services or participate in mosque affairs. Tayob confirms this attitude of many of the *'Ulamā* when he says: "When the shaykh was asked to officiate at a funeral service of a non-*murīd*, he would not reject the invitation outright but would send one of his students to represent him".[329] The following entry exhibits the case of a Simonstown resident whose Cape Town Imām continued to preside over his family functions in Simonstown, "Abdol Arzize Dowed up in the Garden gave a work [prayer

[326] If any woman marries without the permission of her guardian (*walī*), then her marriage is void, then her marriage is void, then her marriage is void.(Reported by Abū Dāwūd & others and classed as *Ṣaḥīḥ or* authentic). The father is the guardian, next to the father comes the closest male.
[327] Jeppie (1996, p. 155)
[328] Diary p. 163
[329] Tayob (1999, p. 47)

session] on Sunday afternoon at 1pm at his house… work made by Emam Abdol Ragman Saleh of C. Town, Strand Street on the 25th January 1920 Sunday."[330] It was, however, the norm for the resident Imām to preside over such functions, and the Imāms who followed this system frowned upon this autonomous behaviour by some *murīds*. All Muslim residents were required to show deference to the resident Imām by seeking his permission to invite another Imām to perform their rituals. The seeking of *ijāzat* (permission) is at the core of the institution of *banguru*, or *bai'ah* (allegiance). In fact, the system of allegiance and permission runs deep and permeates even the daily operations of the Muslim community. In Imām Saban's case, he legitimised every incident and function that took place in his community either by his attendance thereof or at least by his sanctioning of it. This was also how he kept his hand on the 'pulse' of his community. Again, he confirms Jeppie's view, "No marriage could take place without the Imām, no birth sanctioned without the Imām to name the child, no burial complete without Imām there leading the ceremonies".[331] In Imām Saban's case, not even his *Khaṭībs* could function without his permission or his supervision. Thus, when the *Khaṭībs,* who had been groomed by him, and who assisted him, operated without his permission, he was deeply unhappy and noted his disapproval here, "… [his *Khaṭīb*] when [went] to gave Garnie Jarley his child name with out my order and not come to ask me now [no] one."[332]

While it may have been due to personal differences, this display of autonomous behaviour by his *Khaṭībs* may also have been due to the encroaching power-positions of mosque committees. However, Imām Saban did not take the matter of his authority lightly and applied measures to bring them back into line. In the proceedings of this burial, he ignored one of his *Khaṭībs*, "… Jabier Jardine came to me to bury his child, dead born child of his wife Japorra. Do avrything mysilf only sent … [*Khaṭīb's* name] to the Kooboor [grave]. Not asking … [another *Khaṭīb's* name] nothing to do."[333] According to the Diary, the *Khaṭīb* in question appeared to have understood the 'message'. Although there were incidents like these, Imām Saban's *Khaṭīb*s generally respected his authority and usually sought to re-

[330] Diary p. 181
[331] Ibid., p. 156
[332] Ibid., p. 171
[333] Ibid., p. 173

establish a positive relationship with him. Most of the time they did this by requesting his performance of a ritual as in this case: "… Masage [message] by Ismaiel Jacreya. … [*Khaṭīb's* name] got something to gave me to do, but not know what way to come."[334] In this instance, the *Khaṭīb* sent a message to Imām Saban. Here we see the practice of another tradition in Muslim communities. In sensitive matters, a third person is usually approached to mend relationships. Where an elder or learned scholar is concerned, it is a further sign of respect to give the elder the option to indicate his availability to meet. Thus we see this deference in M. Gosain's use of Ismaiel Jacreya to bridge the gap between himself and Imām Saban.

What is also clarified in the Diary is the fact that, despite the occasional problems, the community as a whole accepted Imām Saban's authority, and it was usually the rites of passage, or the performance of some cultural practice, that opened the door for the re-establishment of their allegiance, as seen here: "… came to me to ask to Koorbaan [slaughter] a sheep for her child … I did told her all talks [rumours] what she have done before and did not had respeck to me. I did tell her what I have to tell her…"[335] It appears that once again, Imām Saban used this opportunity to correct his community's actions and re-affirm his position of authority.

While Imām Saban generally encouraged the concept of *banguru* within his community, he knew how far to take it. When required, he extended his pastoral duties towards 'outsiders', as seen here:

> A little young boy from Cape Town came from the Former Terry [Reformatory] … to the hospital of Simons Town, sick, on the month of June 1925… of Cape Town was by me to say he is the Wakiel [legal guardian] and father over the child and I, Emam M. Saleh will have the rite to look after the boy in hospital. 4th July 1925, Saturday.[336]

There was only one occasion where he recorded the incidence of a *murīd* actually withdrawing his allegiance. He wrote, "… [name of *murīd*] sent me a masage … that I mush

[334] Diary p. 171
[335] Ibid., p. 173
[336] Ibid., p. 304

rop out [erase] is name out my book he is not my Moreeck [disciple] anymore …"[337] This person was obviously unhappy with Imām Saban's way of dealing with matters. Because the pledge of allegiance was a conscious decision on the part of the follower, it meant that the delivery of service by the Imām was a very serious matter. Any negligence on his part, whether real or perceived by his *murīds*, had an adverse effect on the relationship.

The allegiance that existed between the Imāms and the *murīds* was not restricted to a particular region. Imām Saban's commitment to his *murīds* extended to attending functions in other regions, outside of Simonstown. In other words, wherever his *murīd*s needed his support, he gave it to them. This may have been standard behaviour for all the Imāms of the time, but through his Diary, we can confirm that this was the type of support Imām Saban gave to his *murīds*. Sometimes the marriage ceremony of some of his *murīds* took place in another town. In the case of weddings, it was the bride's father who would hand his daughter over to her new husband during the *nikāh* (marriage ceremony). As was the practice in the Cape, though, the father would hand over his *wakālat* (authority) to perform the ceremony to the Imām to whom he was allegiant (*murīd*). On such occasions Imām Saban showed his support by attending the ceremony, as he did here: 'Mogamit Fish got married on Sunday morning about 10am in Claremont on the 23rd November 1913 with man named Ismaiel's daughter Kulsoom by Emam G. Yasien of Cape Town. 10 shillings Mahaar [dowry]. Witness: Emam M. Saleh Saban, Emam Sahaybodin of Wynberg, Gatieb Abdol & Gatieb of Emam Yasien…"[338] In this case it was a family who had moved from Simonstown to Diep River. The bride's father appeared to have remained allegiant to Imām Yaseen and therefore elected him to perform the ceremony.

In addition to the naming of newborns, marriages and burials, Tayob refers to another rite of passage, viz. the *tamat*. He says: "The next landmark was when boys (and later also girls) concluded the complete recitation of the Qur'ān in the religious school. On the occasion of this accomplishment, a *tamat* ceremony acted as a kind of initiation rite for children

[337] Diary p. 263
[338] Ibid., p. 76

entering adult Muslim life."[339] Imām Saban records a number of *tamats* in the Diary. One such occasion is particularly noteworthy: *"*Mogamit Salegh Baharodien Gamie's son Achmat being Tamatt in Stellenbosch on Sunday 27th April 1913 before Seg Abdol Ragiem of Cape Town & another children at present, all of Simons Town."[340] This Baharodien family had been Imām Saban's *murīds* before they moved to Stellenbosch. The connection between them remained so strong that Imām Saban went to great lengths to attend this auspicious event:

> … Emam M. Salieg & Nooge and H. Mogamit lieve Stellenbosch at 1:20pm. Arrive at Mullers Vlie at 3:45pm… Walking from Stellenbosch to Muller Vley the same day Sunday to ketch the mail train for Cape Town. Arrive in Cape Town at 6.5 pm, lieve Cape Town by the 6:35 pm for Simons Town. Arrive at 7:48 evening. All went well.[341]

Imām Saban attended this function with a number of his congregants. Although he was nearly 60 years old at the time, he endured great inconvenience in order to show his commitment to his *murīds*. The Baharodien family's commitment to Imām Saban was equally strong, as the following entry shows: "Cassiem Anthony came to stay in Simons Town again on Wednesday on the 4th September 1918. resident at Cole Point Road & put imsilf with is family under me on Friday night the 6th September 1918."[342]

From Imām Saban's Diary we are able to see the intricacies and challenges of this reciprocal relationship between leader and congregation in intimate detail. It was a cautious and tentative relationship conditional mostly on the Imām's performance, but also on the perceptions of his *murīds*. This relationship between Imām and *murīds* did not have the formal binding powers of the *ijārah* (lease) agreement, but had a deeper binding power of mutual social commitment. The Cape Imām's position as leader, as Imām Saban's case, was based on the relationship of trust which he builds with individuals and families over time. Any neglect on his part, or his untimely resignation, was not against the terms and conditions set out by a committee, but against the people who trusted him and depended

[339] Tayob (1999, p. 30)
[340] Diary p. 63
[341] Ibid., p. 63
[342] Ibid., p.152

on his leadership. *Banguru* was therefore anything but straightforward, and its fluidity required careful management by the Imām in authority.

Davids argues that "This clerical order at the Cape was unique and the position of the Imām presented them with the highest attainment, the status symbol above all status symbols".[343] Both Davids[344] and Jeppie[345] concur that this clerical order at the Cape was an innovation and unique. Jeppie believes that this innovation was "… used and modified by their Twentieth century successors".[346] Imām Saban's Diary clearly testifies to how this hierarchy operated and was maintained.

As much as Imām Saban was challenged to retain his own position of power and legitimacy, he was also challenged with uplifting his community. In other words, he needed more collective activities in his community that would enable inclusive participation for all his Muslim residents. Moreover, with the Naval Dockyard of the ruling British almost literally on his doorstep, there was a continuous flow of foreign sailors through the small town. Some passed through and others remained in the town for various periods of time. The Diary is also a reflection of the skills and strategies he applied to develop such a distinct Muslim identity for his people under highly cosmopolitan conditions.

Relations with others

Another dimension of the multi-ethnicity of Simonstown was the presence, within the Muslim community, of other minority groupings, particularly the Indians and the *Seedies*. I will firstly look at the role of the Indian community. They first arrived in South Africa in the second half of the Nineteenth century. Some of them settled in Simonstown, primarily for business purposes. One of Imām Saban's biggest challenges was to integrate this group into the existing Muslim community. The Indians were generally an exclusive group of Muslims with their own traditions and rituals. They did not fit in easily with the existing community, and often performed ritual functions among themselves. *The Moslem Outlook*, in one

[343] Davids (1980, p. 125)
[344] Ibid.
[345] Jeppie (1996, p. 139)
[346] Ibid., p. 157

editorial, records the challenge of the Indian community in Cape Town who, it reads, "should have a place for prayer and that it should be their very own".[347] This was the attitude that led to the creation of the 'Indian' Mosque named *Kuwat-ul Islam*, Loop Street, Cape Town.

Simonstown did not witness the development of an Indian mosque. Imām Saban's Diary gives us numerous descriptions of relations between the Indians and the settled "Malay" Muslims there, "Goolab S. Achmed, Indian man, gave a work [prayer session] with Telawaat [Qur'ān recitation] & a Doha Salamaat [supplication to God for peace] upon his children & all Indian children of Simons Town …"[348] Imām Saban appeared to have applied his conciliatory skills to build relations with the Indians, as is evidenced by this correspondence:

> Mr M. C. Jadawat's son Ismaiel Jadawat left Cape Town for India to his grandparents long with S.A. Golabb & another Indian on the 28th September 1911 on Thursday with the German Boat S.S. Prince Regent. … 'Received a letter from S.A. Golabb from Suratt, dated 13th December 1911, on the 23rd January 1912 and [I] sent an answer the same day. [I also] Received another letter write [written in] Indian, date[d] 24th January 1912.[349]

Imām Saban was obviously on very friendly terms with these families to the extent where they corresponded on an on-going basis when they went to India. Similarly, the rest of the Malay community also found ways of building bridges, as seen here:

> M. Gosaine, an Indian Man – the Cook – gave a Dinner Party for all Indian Peoples of defren [different] places by Hadjie M. Bakaar's house (in) Alfred Lane. Also Emam Kasiem, Emam Abdol Ragman & Emam M. Saleh of S. Town was present on the 21st September 1913.[350]

Imām Saban also offered his services, as in this case: "S. Achmat Gollab, Indian's wife Marriyam died Sunday night 12 pm 14th May 1911. buried Monday afternoon by Emam M.S. Saban."[351]

[347] Moslem Outlook, (February 27 1925)
[348] Diary p. 253
[349] Ibid., p. 41
[350] Ibid., p. 72
[351] Ibid., p. 44

Although they accepted Imām Saban's position of authority, the Indians retained a measure of exclusivity and often kept to their own group. Again, this is reflected in the Imām's Diary, "I, the undersigned whent long with S. Achmat Goolab & other Indians, all of Simons Town, to the Constantia's Cramaat [shrine of] Towang [Saint] Seh A. Galiem, on Sunday morning 1am with a wagon of Cape Town on the 15th March 1914."[352] Imām Saban was clearly discreet and strategic and did not insist on complete integration. Unlike his position with his own Malay community, with whom he took the matter of *banguru* very seriously, he recognised the need for diplomacy with the Indians. They, in turn, recognised his efforts and supported him as a group. They often showed their willingness to be part of that mosque community, "Collection Received for the School Board from Indian peoples at the New Docks of Sir J. Jackson from the Saidy on the 4th May 1908. 2-9-6."[353] Before the mosque building in Simonstown was purchased, they contributed to its upkeep, "Received a new carpet for the Masjid, a present from the Indian peoples on Friday morning before waakto [the time of] Jomaat [Friday] 23rd October 1908."[354] Imām Saban appeared to identify a relationship of mutual support which would benefit the growth of the mosque and his community, composed largely of fishermen and Dockyard employees. After the mosque building was purchased, the Indians requested separate Indian representation on the Trust Committee, which the Malay sector, under the guidance of Imām Saban, considered and approved (Appendix 6).[355] Thus, while the Indian community lived under his jurisdiction, he respected their ethnicity and preferred cultural practices. He allowed them the space to retain their own identity without allowing them to undermine his authority as Imām, "Indian man, Abdul Karriem's wife Galima birth, a miscaretts [miscarriage] on Wednesday morning on the 15th April 1914. Buried by Achmat Amley by order of Emam M.S. Saleh Saban."[356]

Even when a member of their own community performed a ritual for them, they still sought Imām Saban's sanction. Achmat Amlay, who presided over the burial, was very knowledgeable and highly respected by Imām Saban. Later, in 1915, Amlay is seen delivering

[352] Diary p. 84
[353] Ibid., p. 22
[354] Ibid., p. 22
[355] Ibid., p. 31 (Appendix 6)
[356] Ibid., p. 75

the Friday '*Khuṭbah*' (Sermon) with the approval of the 'Malay' congregation, "Achmat Amley did take the mimbaar [pulpit] by order of the *Jamāt* [congregation] because know [no] one else was not able to do the work & understand the Gootbaar [sermon]." This matter did give rise to some dissatisfaction among Imām Saban's assistants, but he rose above it, and even acted against the prejudices held by some sectors of his community. It was the practice of this inclusive worldview that is reflected in Imām Saban's Diary, and in his role as Imām. Under his leadership, Simonstown developed an inclusive mosque community and avoided the creation of separate 'Indian' Mosques as was the case in many other suburbs and towns in Cape Town.

The other minority group of Muslims were the *Seedies*, who also made Simonstown their home under different conditions.[357] The *Seedies* were East-African indentured sailors who joined the Royal Navy in Simonstown. Although they were only contracted for two years, many of them did not return to their own countries, and remained in Simonstown. Unlike the Indians, those who remained in Simonstown, usually married local Cape Muslims, making the integration of these two communities inevitable. Their presence brought to the small isolated town another brand of ethnicity, with cultural variations that had to be interwoven. The sustained *Seedie* presence presented an additional challenge within the mosque community, requiring diplomacy and open-mindedness from its leader. As with the Indians, Imām Saban's sensitivity to the 'other' eased his task of absorbing the sailors into his majority Malay community. Their integration was easier, however, because many of their cultural practices coincided with the Cape culture. They celebrated special occasions with similar prayer sessions as the Cape Malays, as seen here:

> Sidey Boy of Zinzabar name Barka Moosa H.M.S. Hyhacinth, the Head man & his Jamaa [group] gave a work, a Fatigaa [prayer session] in the Naval Dockyard for the late Alie Bin Moosa did died on the 17th August 1915… At present Simons Town Jamaa [congregation] also invide.[358]

[357] Seedies: East-African indentured sailors of the Royal Navy in Simonstown.
[358] Diary p. 104

In fact, it was the *Seedies* who brought the widely-recited '*Riwāyāt al-Barzanjī*'[359] to the Cape.[360] To this day, this eulogy is still recited at the Cape during *Maulūd* celebrations.

Although the *Seedies* had their own learned people among them, Imām Saban often performed their rites of passage, as seen here:

> I, the undersigned let married a Sidy Boy the name of Mezacy from Zinzabar with a daughter of Abrams the name of Jobayda in my house on Friday night 9pm on the 29th of July 1921… Witness: Gatieb M. Arifie, Gatieb Ismaiel Manuel. Present 6 other Sidy Boys…[361]

Sometimes, the Seedie's also married Christian women from the Simonstown community, and were responsible for many conversions to Islam. Often Imām Saban and his *Khaṭīb*s witnessed these conversions, which the Imām then recorded in his Diary: "I, the undersigned let married a Sery Boy name Sarleg with Armina, a Cristen [Christian] girl got Moslem [embraced the Muslim faith], on Friday night at my house July 16th 1920. Married money [dowry] fife [five] shillings. Witness: Gatieb Agedien Gatieb M. Arifie."[362]

Imām Saban was, in actual fact, officially appointed to perform the burial rites of foreign Muslims in the employ of the Royal Navy in Simonstown, who paid for these services, as indicated here:

> Received the Funeral Expenses of Seary Boys from the Commander Dulten of the H.M.S. Talbot on Tuesday 12th … 1918 at 10 am in East Docks from Paymaster H.M.S. Talbot account 29 pounds 4 – 6. [E]xpenses of 5 Siery Boys being buried with the sickness of the Influenza that happened in South Africa during the month of October 1918.[363]

While he was always ready to preside at their funerals, Imām Saban created a balance by allowing them to perform their own rituals if they preferred, as in this case: "A Cidy Boy

[359] Popular Muslim poetry in praise of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, universally recited to celebrate his birth on twelfth Rabi'ul 'Awwal. It is a poetic biography of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad with his birth as its main theme.
[360] Imām al-Sayyid Jā'far ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Abdal Karīm al-Barzanjī (1690 – 1766 C.E.) who wrote the widely-recited '*Riwāyāt al-Barzanjī*' hails from East Africa.
[361] Diary p. 202
[362] Ibid., p. 178
[363] Ibid., p. 155

name Salaah's child, a boy, died on Sunday morning on the 10th June 1917. Buried by is own Priest Aboo Mogamit of H.M.S. Princess."[364] In another instance he notes: "A work being given for the Sidy Boys of Zinzabaar in the Masjiet on Sundy 4th December 1921 - made by themsilf Emam Aboo Mogamit of Zinzabaar …"[365] Although he was the leader of the entire community, he applied a balanced approach and allowed them the leeway to perform rituals on their own in the mosque.

Beyond his particular relations with one group or another, the Diary shows an Imām who built and nurtured personal relationships of trust within the broader society. His employers, for example, knew him as a leader with integrity, whom they could entrust even their business interests to, as in this case, "Nicholas Albertyn got married in Cape Town on Tuesday afternoon on the 12th February 1918 and whent to country the same day for Honymoon for 2 weeks'lieve … M. Saban look after the Bussiness…"[366] Mr Albertyn was one of the people who owned the most vehicles in Simonstown.[367] These included both 2-wheel delivery carts and 4-wheel transport vehicles. Entries throughout the Diary indicate a long-standing relationship between Imām Saban and Mr Albertyn. This is an illustrative example: "C.P. Albertyn's son C. Albertyn lieve Simons Town on Friday morning on the 9th April 1920 for country by the 8am train lieve Simons Town. See him off N. Albertyn & E.M. Saban."[368] As few families owned their own vehicles in those days, Imām Saban could call upon Albertyn and others to provide transport for his community even at short notice: "Emam Laarney died on Saturday afternoon on the 12th November 1927… We all whent was Loorie [truck] of Mr Albertyn to the Kefayaat [funeral] in Somerset Strand."[369]

Cultural Pratices

Cultural practices at the Cape included the *Maulūd*, *Rampies-sny, Ratiep, Gaddats* and *Tilāwah*. They are extensively recorded and described by Davids.[370] Imām Saban supported

[364] Diary p. 129
[365] Ibid., p. 217
[366] Ibid., p. 144
[367] Simonstown Municipality Register of Vehicle Licences Issued - Wheel Tax Register for 1920 – 1926
[368] Diary p. 182
[369] Ibid., p. 350
[370] Davids (2011, p. 38)

the idea of various cultural and religious groups (*jamā'ahs*) functioning separately and developing their distinct identities.

The Imām was usually required to participate or, at least, grace the proceedings with a prayer. Imām Saban's Diary reflects his presence at numerous such gatherings, such as this one: "The Captain Mona & … their Moelute Jamaa [group reciting praises in commemoration of the Prophet's birth], Young Boys & Girls of Simons Town whent to the Kramatt, [shrine at] Bells Fontain, Cape Town … 30 peoples. Emam M. Saleh Saban whent long with them."[371]

These *maulūd* groups travelled throughout the entire Cape to compete against other groups. Each team had their own '*Shaikh*' (leader). Although the *maulūd* proceedings lasted for hours and sometimes for the entire day, Imām Saban honoured them with his presence for most of the time. He also regarded it as a symbol of *barakah* (blessing) to open these sessions with a particular reading from the *kitābs* (religious books):

> Seg Sahaid Sollomon & his Jamaa [congregation] of the Jekeer [*dhikr*] Clubs [groups reciting praises of God] of Simons Town gave a Moelute from the morning 8am the full day for all Moslem of S.Town, mens & womans & 2 Tiem of Jekeer [groups reciting praises of God] peoples - one from Cape Town & 1 from Wynberg on Sunday the 7th March 1915. Emam M.S. Saban got the work in hand.[372]

Imām Saban appeared to acknowledge female representation in these cultural events. He also recognised their contribution in the mosque and in the community in general, "I, the undersigned Emam M. Saleh Saban did call a meeting for all the womans Jamaa [groups] of Simons Town in the School Room for the reason to try about a carpet for the masjid … 22nd March 1925."[373]

Imām Saban was actively involved when they filled the train coaches as they made their way together to a *tamat, maulūd* or other cultural outing like this one:

[371] Diary p. 324
[372] Ibid., p. 95
[373] Ibid., p. 295

> Mysilf & wife & children whent to the Cramatt [shrine] on Saturday with train on the 3rd April 1915 with other Simons Town peoples.came back on the 6th instant, Teusday evening… [N]ice weather, except Monday night was raining & wind blowing hard. Teusday morning the Karley [river] came down very full. [C]ould not pass with cart. [T]o[o] full of water, whent round other way to the Faure siding.[374]

Pastoral Care

In addition to strengthening his community's cultural activities, Imām Saban embraced his social responsibility as healer, or peacemaker in his community. He often intervened between family members, as in this case: "Also brought for Osman Mooses to go to is mother & father to mentamaaf [apologise] for them for all what have don't agains them all the time. is father & mother gave him maaff [pardoned him] on Friday afternoon at 6pm on the 8th September 1922…"[375] He also often played peacemaker in other community disputes, like this one: "… [names of two members of community] had a dispute. I, the undersigned when up to Salabaat 's house at the Garden to settle their affair and make them satisfied. Emam M.S. Saban."[376] His arbitration skills were not only called upon in personal matters, but also to settle disagreements like this one, which was handled in a more formal manner:

> A dispute between [two members of the Muslim community] about ownership of the Masjiet Property – that [one member] will prove that the Comunity don't got the right of the Masjiet. This case was came on Sunday on the 25th October 1925 at 3pm. The Emam M.S. Saban was appoint for justice on that case. Mr D. Mooses & Mr Ebrahim Richards was a point has 2 delagates to notice the case going on …[377]

Even the *Seedies* turned to him with their personal problems, "Great trouble with the Cerie Boy name Salaar belonging to the H.M.S. Asterea & his wife Galima, but I settled their affair & made Soloog [peace] between them … 21st November 1913"[378] This relationship with the *Seedies* continued over many years, "A Sidiy Boy name Amjair & is wife Bayda had a trouble

[374] Diary p. 96
[375] Ibid., p. 228
[376] Ibid., p. 194
[377] Ibid., p. 312
[378] Ibid., p. 78

between them two came to me on Tuesday the 11th December 1923 to Judgemen their case."[379] He also acted as mediator when there were religious differences between them:

> A gelaaf, dispute between Sarif Arlie & Sarif Abdol Ragman of H.M.S. Dublin about the matter of Moelute night - about the paper lantern & the children walking round in the time of Asrakall [singing praises on the Prophet]… Thursday night 25th October 1923. Emam M. Saban was Judgement [adjudicator].[380]

In this case there had been a difference of opinion between two *Seedies* about the validity of a particular practice during the *maulūd* celebrations, which Imām Saban had to resolve.

Even Naval officials considered Imām Saban to be influential over the *Seedies* in the Simonstown dockyard, and often consulted him on matters pertaining to them. In this entry he noted, "The Comander of the H.M.S. Lowerstaff came to me to inquire about the Lieve of the Sidie Boys asking avery time for religous affair - on Saturday afternoon on the 10th November 1923. Gave my address to the Comander."[381]

The manner in which he approached the challenges within his own mixed community, and the bridges he built, revealed excellent social and psychological skills. His many informal 'adoptions' discussed in the section on his biography, was another practical extension of his healing and conciliatory methods. As with his peacemaking efforts, he always sought to offer his people a sympatheic ear to their pain and suffering. During the influenza epidemic that hit the Cape in 1918, his Diary reflects an unprecedented number of deaths in Simonstown, especially among children. A great outpour of grief followed, and the Cape was in dire need of healing. Orphanages were erected in some areas, and many other forms of material support were given. On the first anniversary of this disaster, Imām Saban used the occasion to mobilize and unite his community in prayer:

> I, the undersigned did invite all the Moslem peoples, mens and womans by the Moslem Cemetery, Dada Vally – New Cemetery Glancairn – for a Telawaat Koraan [Qur'an recital] from 7am to 12am for all is benefit and also for all the dead pepels that

[379] Diary p. 263
[380] Ibid., p. 255
[381] Ibid., p. 257

> dead with the Havy sickness what was happened. Telawaat Jamaa, Achmat Amley, H.M. Bakaar, Mogamit Marzaan …. I am Emam M. Saleh Saban.[382]

Imām Saban appeared to understand that leaving the precincts of Simonstown and spending a lengthy period of time at the graves, could offer them peace and reconciliation. As a man of religion, this was his way of guiding his small community towards facing their loss and finding peace. Praying together for their loss was also a way of healing and uniting them as a community.

Islamic Institutions

Jeppie states that, "While they [the Imāms] did not establish any formal '*Ulamā* association they were founders of mosques and religious schools for Muslim children."[383] The Diary presents some vivid examples of this engagement by Imām Saban in relation to the establishment of the Muslim School in Simonstown. The central role played by the Imām comes out clearly in the Diary.

The Diary is not very explicit about the education that Muslim children received, but when their children's secular education was challenged, the community's feelings became abundantly clear. According to the Diary, all Muslim children, as well as coloured children of other religious persuasion, were expelled from the St. Francis Primary School in September 1922. Bakaar Manuel later explained that the missionary school was overcrowded, which led to the expulsion of Muslim and Christian children.[384] When this happened, it was as if all other activities, individual or collective, came to a halt to ensure the continuation of the Muslim children's secular education. Imām Saban played an active role in addressing the problem, from the time it first emerged that a decision was taken to exclude their children from the Missionary School. He notes:

> I, the undersigned Emam M.S. Saban and … [other committee members] … whent to Mr Runciman, the Chairman of the School Board on Thursday evening at 8pm to is house on the 21st September 1922 to inquire about the matter of the our Moslem

[382] Diary p. 174
[383] Jeppie (1996, p. 141)
[384] Brock & Brock (1976, p. 125)

> Children will be put out of the school – if it is true. Answer: yes, it is true – not only the Moslem children, but the collurn [coloured children too].[385]

His next step was to unite his community around this issue and seek advice from the experts in Cape Town, like Dr Abdurahman:

> [I] call[ed] a meeting in the Masjiet [mosque] on Friday evening at 7:30pm for all the Moslems … decide again by the majority to send 2 men to Doctor A. Rahman, the chairman of the School Board in Cape Town, for a help for us all, children parents and explain the matter what become upon our children in Simonstown. The 2 men came back with a good massage so far at present that Doctor A.Rahman will sent a [reply] on Monday. Consider to wait for the answer of Doctor A. Rahman.[386]

He continues to record the on-going attempts by his people to solve their problem, like:

> A meeting on Sunday evening the 1st October 1922 to explain the Jamaa [congregation] what is the answer from Dr Abdurahman and to decide what to do … that 5 men have to see Reverend Slingsby on Monday. Hadjie Bakaar did sent a letter to Rev. Slingsby we whant to see him & what time. The answer came that he can't say anything at present…" and: "Monday I, the Emam M. Saban received a letter from Rev. Mr Slingsby a answer that we can't see him. We have to see the School Board of theirs. H. Bakaar did see Mr Tregiden, the Secretary. He sent us again to go & see the Magestrate Mr Boyes.[387]

Imām Saban noted the steps taken:

> The Massage [message] from Doctor Abdurahman was that we must try & ask Rev Slingsby to get our children in school again for the 3 months till the end of this year. the same time we have to try to build our own school. The Jamaa [congregation] did consider & decide this matter came to far to do it on one of our places longside [beside] the Masjiet [mosque]…[388]

Thus one of the first Muslim Schools at the Cape was started in Simonstown through the perseverance of Imām Saban and his community:

[385] Diary p. 229
[386] Ibid., p. 229
[387] Ibid., p. 229
[388] Ibid., p. 229

> [R]eceived the plan for the building of our school on Friday on the 27th October 1922 … The Jamaa [congregation] agree … On the next day 2 men whent up to Doctor Abdurahman Cape Town Ayeran Adams & Yatiem Raven, 2 men whent to Mr W. Runciman with the plan.[389]

Although they were a working-class community, Imām Saban and his people took on the challenge of paying a teacher for their children's education, as we see here after the building was completed:

> A meeting being held on Monday evening at 8pm in the Moslem School with the Meyer Mr W. Runciman the affair of the school to comance. Open the school for our children on the 1st of July 1923. a teacher to take on for 10 pounds per month. The Municipality will grand 25 pounds per year to help.[390]

At the same time they employed a separate teacher for religious teachings:

> … Sarief Alie is engaged by the School Board Committee for teacher for the Moslem children's Arabic School to learn the Koraan. Engaged on Sunday on the 24th June 1923 for 6 pounds 10 shillings per month start from Monday the 2nd July 1923 for 3 months to try, by Emam M. Saleh, Hadji M. Bakaar & all Committee of School Board.[391]

The Imām in Public Life

According to Tayob, "Leadership of a mosque as an Imām provided the basis for representing Muslims at official levels as priest."[392] Imām Saban enjoyed this position among the authorities of Simonstown. Thus, when people in his community encountered problems, he was the one to intervene on their behalf. He also acted as the buffer between the officials and his community. This was one instance where Imām Saban referred to himself as "Mohamedan Priest". According to Tayob this title held a particular connotation: "… "priest" and "Imām" identified two very different groups and communities. The Imām was a leader in a particular mosque, while "priest" was a title used for announcing that

[389] Diary p. 230
[390] Ibid., p. 239
[391] Ibid., p. 240
[392] Tayob (1999, p. 35)

authority in public."[393] It appears that Imām Saban's Diary demonstrates this distinction. He used this title to entrench his authority in official matters, like the one above.

While he had an all-embracing policy, and so encouraged respect for authority, he was not averse to engaging the representatives of the British colonial rule if necessary, as in this instance:

> I, the Emam M. Saleh, G. Argedien, G.M. Gosain, G. Arifie, we when [went] to Mr W. Runciman on Saturday evening at 7:30pm up to is house to ask Mr W. Runciman about the free gift towards our Masjiet [mosque] what he has promise for a time pass. Mr W. Runciman promise to let have a cheque for 20 pounds on Monday morning 27th July 1925. 25th July 1925.[394]

Mr Runciman appeared to appreciate Imām Saban's leadership skills and influence over his community. This is confirmed by the fact that Imām Saban was appointed as Chairman on the mosque Trust Committee by Mr Runciman himself.

Not only did Imām Saban engage the officials of Simonstown, but he played a leading role as chairman of the Simonstown branch of the Cape Malay Association when the Cape Muslims aligned themselves politically.[395] The Imāms of the Cape appeared to have had multiple goals and objectives underlying their decisions. Tayob points this out in his analysis of the Cape mosque discourse of the early Nineteenth century:

> The fourth mosque in the Cape was granted to the Muslims by the state in return for participation in its war effort against the Xhosa in the Battle of the Axe… "In this case, Muslim volunteers were prepared to serve British colonial interests in return for land for a mosque… "From the perspective of the mosque discourse, the nature of the war as a form of colonialist expansion was secondary. The mosque discourse was not an anti-colonial discourse; neither was the Cape mosque a colonialist wing of the state. The mosque discourse in the Cape was simply concerned about establishing a mosque, which included the possibility of supporting or opposing colonialism.[396]

[393] Diary p. 35
[394] Ibid., p. 305
[395] Refer to Chapter 2
[396] Tayob (1999, pp. 37-38)

Some scholars argue that the election of a Chief Priest, for instance, was a mere political ploy by the Nationalist Party to streamline Muslim leadership at the Cape.[397] While this may have been the Nationalist Party's intentions, the political position of the Cape *Ulamā* was not as clear-cut. Tayob puts it aptly when he says, in the above case, "What appeared to be general support for the British was the hapless appropriation of Muslim sentiments for a mosque".[398] To leaders like Imām Saban it was not just a matter of being pro- or anti-Nationalist government. It was about creating a political space for a community of Muslims who had, not too long before, been deprived of that almost 'sacred' space.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the world of an Imām at the beginning of the Twentieth century takes shape through the lenses of Imām Saban. His Diary represents an eye-witness account of the historical realities and the socio-political context of mainly the Muslim community, their challenges and responses. He describes the multiple identities of the Imām and the complexities of his role under a system known to us now as the *banguru*. This formidable system of authority and control appeared to pervade nearly the entire Muslim religious experience – from birth to death – permeating his/her political, intellectual and cultural life. It was this system that protected the Imāms, reinforced their authorities in their respective constituencies, and provided them with a support base. However, it was also a system in which the Imām had to provide a whole range of services to ensure his base. It was through this support base that Imām Saban was able to represent his community with higher state authorities, and with the Muslims in greater Cape Town. It was not a perfect system, however. The Imām's position was never unchallenged, or established beyond opposition.

While his sustained delivery of ritual services entrenched the local Imām's position of power, it was also this delivery of ritual services that sometimes sparked dissention and breakaway groups. Through his Diary, Imām Saban describes this system in action. His Diary is therefore an excellent measure for assessing the theoretical and historical contentions on Imāms at the Cape in the early Twentieth century.

[397] Ebrahim (2004)
[398] Tayob (1999, p. 38)

CONCLUSION

Memory is retrieved from space. This is Halbwachs' central theory, on which I have positioned this thesis. The major and central concern of this thesis has been to present and interpret Imām Muḥammad Sāliḥ Saban's anthology of memories to retrieve a particular historical 'space' occupied by the Simonstown Muslim community. This under-class community which had been disconnected from its contribution and heritage by the dominant European forces was given a powerful voice by Imām Saban and his Diary.

I have taken the reader back to a period before Imām Saban became the leader of the Simonstown Muslims. I have shown the presence of Muslims in Simonstown since its inception and how their omission from its recorded history was the result of a biased European construction of that history. Imām Saban's leadership and passion for record-keeping challenges that one-sided history. The Diary is, therefore, presented in this thesis as a means of retrieving and reconstructing the collective memory of those whose narrative had historically been neglected and overshadowed.

Held up against the memories of earlier diarists, I have shown how Imām Saban's Diary serves the purpose of reconnecting the Simonstown Muslims to their origins. In his Diary he depicts that community of the early 1900s as a vibrant, dynamic, and colourful community, who occupied a distinct and formidable space parallel to others in Simonstown. Imām Saban's narrative in fact belies the constructions of knowledge on Simonstown by the dominant European class. His depiction of the physical spaces they occupied there facilitates the retrieval of the collective memory of the Simonstown Muslims, and the restoration of the severed connection to their ancestors. It was in these spaces that their oppression, emancipation, reconstruction, building and sustaining took place. It was also from these spaces that they were ultimately and forcibly removed again.

This thesis turned to Imām Saban's Diary for discussion of the theories of local scholars and historians on the role of the early Imām at the Cape. Its eye-witness accounts of recorded events in the history of the Cape Muslims, supplement the writings of historians working with the archives and contemporary observers. As a diary, kept and maintained over a period of 24 years, it brings to life the work of an Imām in a way that an archive can only

hint. This Diary, then, confirms the pioneering work of Davids and Jeppie, but also puts into vibrant perspective an Imām, his authority, his deputies, his community, and his colleagues. I used its vivid recordings to identify the collective religious, social, and political ambitions of Muslims under the leadership of the '*Ulamā*. The Diary also bears testimony to the development of a powerful clergy class whose domination and authority over its congregants were entrenched by the structures and hierarchies its members invented.

While Imām Saban's Diary offers an opportunity to remove the alienation of one under-class community from their rightful 'space' in history, it is "riddled with silences and subjective views" which renders it open for further study and interpretation.

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3. Interviews with a group of Ocean View families including Goosain Manuel, Seraj Amlay, and Tasliem Manuel on 3rd April 2009.
4. Interview with Hadjie Mymoena Karlie on 25th July 2009.
5. Interview with Ebrahim Solomon on 4th October 2009.

APPENDICES

1.

The following letter corroborates the existence of an early Mosque community as part of the Simonstown community:

> *'To His Royal Highness Prince Alfred Ernest Albert. (Historical Simonstown – p.52/53)*
>
> *Sir, - We, the gatiep, and the congregation worshipping in the Mosque in Simon's Town, rejoice in once more seeing your Royal Highness in this place, although only for a very short time. We now beg to approach you as British subjects, enjoying the free exercise of our Mahommedan faith in the midst of those professing other religions; and to assure your Royal Highness that our hearts swell with thankfulness to Her Sublime Majesty our Most Gracious Queen for that freedom; and for the great interest which Her Majesty takes in our welfare as shown by the presence of one of her beloved children in South Africa at this moment. The whole of the followers of Islamism in this colony have hailed with great joy your advent to these shores, but none more so than we the Mussulmen of this town who have the honor of now expressing to your Royal Highness our sentiments of affection for our beloved Sovereign and devotion to her throne. You are now about to leave us, but we hope only for a time; and we beg to assure you, before taking leave of your Royal Highness that we shall devoutly pray that God will shield and direct you now and ever, safely restoring you to your august parents.*
>
> *Gatiep Abdol Gakiem, Galiefa Abdol Galiel, Belaal Abdol Mojiet, Belaal Sahaboo, Belaal Giardien, Belaal Samodien, Belaal Baderdien, Seg Ebrain.*
>
> *In behalf of ourselves and the congregation. Simon's Town, 17th day, first month, 1277 (2 August 1860).*

Imam Saban's children and grandchildren from Momenatie as recorded in the diary

Daughter Mymoena

married

Ismail Manuel

Child's Name	D.O.B.
1. Aysha *Lambaar Josop Ismail* *Sandvlei 15th July 1928*	10th June 1906
2. Jackereya	13th Oct. 1908
3. Hashim	23rd March 1911
4. M. Taufick	11th June 1912
5. Gasinaah	4th Dec. 1915
6. Saba	8th Sept. 1917
7. Soefia	19th Sept. 1919
8. Abdul Muttalib	7th Oct. 1921
9. Armena *Died 10th July 1923* *(One month old)*	5th June 1923

Daughter Marroffa

married

Abdul Basier Amlay

12th April 1908

Cole Point Road

Child's Name	D.O.B.
1/2. Gasant/Goesain *Died at birth*	4th August 1908
3. Fatima	4/5th May 1911
4. M. Mansoore	11th June 1913
5. Kulsoom	26th May 1915
6. Dawood *Died 26th Oct. 1918*	7th July 1917
7. A. Ragiem *Died 15th July 1920*	14th Sept. 1919
8. Maryam	16th April 1921
9. Ismaiel	20th Dec. 1922
10. Gadija	27th Sept. 1924
11. M. Mustafaa	15th Oct. 1926
12. M. Yussoph	25th Aug. 1928
Sister Fareeda - Dbn	

Daughter Khuwayla

married

Safideen Leeman

Child's Name	D.O.B.
1. M. Saleh	1st July 1912
2. M. Moosa *Died 28th June 1915*	2nd March 1913
3. Kulsoom *Visited 29th Aug 1914*	???
4. Fatema	1916
5. Baby Boy *Died after birth*	14th June 1917
6. Miscarriage	15th Nov. 1919
7.Baby Boy *Died half hour after birth*	30th Dec. 1922
8. Abdullah	16th Feb. 1924
9. Galiema	5th Jan 1926

Son Abdurahman

married

Maryam

Child's Name	D.O.B.
	1. Wynberg Flat?

Imam Saban's children from Marriyam as recorded in the diary
Father: Amilo Dollie - Sister Hajeraa, Brothers: M. Salagodien, M. Sardick, Adam Dollie
Died:3rd November 1943 - Buried by Emam Arafie Manuel and Emam Basier

Daughter Zogera / Jogera

married

Gamaat Ganief Manuel

- Born 24th February 1908
- 14th Feb 1922 - went to Paarl to learn sewing
- 28 Aug 1924 - received glasses from Dr Druiff in C.T.
- 15th Feb 1925 - Lambaar to Gamaat Ganief (Arifie Manuel's son)
- 23rd Sep 1926 - married Thurs after Maghrib by Emam Basier. Witnesses: Ismail Manuel, A. Basier
- 17th Sep 1926 - Baby Mogamit Sedick. Named by Emam A. Basier
- 9th April 1928 - Baby Lootfiyaa (died 9th April 1928)

Daughter Omie Salamah

- Born 6th February 1910
- Flower girl for Emam Mogamat's daughter of Wynberg
- No other mention of her

Son Mogamat Sedick

- Born 23rd February 1912
- 12th March 1912 - went to Paarl
- Died 16th March 1918 - Age 7yrs and 3 weeks.
- 23rd June 1918 - 100 days

Daughter Hajeraa

- Born 13th November 1913
- No issue

Daughter Gadija

married

..... Shabodien

- Born 2nd November 1915

Taken from interview:

- Children:
- Irfaan - Wife Maryam
- Igsaan (deceased) - Wife Raldeah
- Soeraya - Husband Igsaan Hendricks
- Rashieda - Husband Ismail Hendricks

Died -

Daughter Fatema

married

M. Jakoop Hartley

- Born 17th June 1918

Taken from notes:

- 1943 Abdul 'Aziz.
- 1944 - Stillborn

Son Mogamat Aresaat

married

- Born 7th May 1920

Taken from interview:

- Son - Shaheed
- Son - Ridwaan

Diary entries relating to adopted children

Male Abdul Basier

married

Fatima

- Children:

1. 23rd June 1912 - Marryiam
2. 2nd Oct 1913 - Amina (Claremont)
3. 10th July 1916 - Yousoof
4. 12th December 1918 - M. Siddick
5. 29th April 1920 - Moredaka

1915 - A. Basier moved to Imam Saban from Kenilworth while looking for a place

Female Jappora

married

Jappie Jardine 11th May 1916

- Children:

1. 29th Sept. 1917 - Gaditja
2. 20th Aug 1919 - Fatema
3. 18th Sept 1922 - stillborn

Female Kulsoom Mosely

married

Abdul Wahab Boraan 3rd Oct 1919

- Children:

1. 16th Dec 1920 - Gawaa
2. 21st Sept 1922 - M. Taype
3. 26th Oct 1925 - Mymoena (Claremont)

22 Dec. 1918 - became engaged

- 17th Sept 1919 - left Imam's house to live with her own mother. 19yrs old at the time. Raised by Imam and Momenatie from age of 8 months.
- 3rd Oct 1919 - married

5th February 1924 - Hajj with husband, 2 children + brother Sahaid (left from Imam's house) - returned 7th Oct 1924

- 10th May 1924 - son Taype died in Makka

Male Abdul Ragman Marthinus

- 20th Jan 1919 - Left Imam's home with all his things
- 27th Sept. 1923 - paid Imam's doctor's account
- 18th Oct. 1925 - Celebrated 31 years of being Muslim with a maulood and sadaqa.
-

Female Banoo Amlay

married

.....

- Achmat Amlay's daughter
- 14th February 1919 - Achmat Amlay and Imam fetched her from Cottage Hospital

Male Abdul Barrie

married

.....

- Son of Achmat Dollie of Kimberley
- 1st Jan 1922

Female Jainab

married

Samsodien Jinkins

- Children:

1. 8th May 1912 - Mogamit Tayeb
2. 28th Oct. 1913 - Sadiyaa

17th Nov. 1913 - Jainab went to Cottage Hospital - very ill.
5th Dec. 1913 - Jainab died in Cottage Hospital. Buried 6th Dec. by Imam Saban.

Male

married

-

5.

Breakdown of No. of Births, Deaths and Marriages
Simonstown and Cape Town between 1904 and 1909

	Simonstown	Cape Town
1904		
Births	**6**	
Deaths	**7**	**2**
Marriages		
1905		
Births	**7**	
Deaths	**12**	**6**
Marriages		**1**
1906		
Births	**13**	**1**
Deaths	**8**	**1**
Marriages		**2**
1907		
Births	**10**	
Deaths	**5**	**5**
Marriages	**5**	**4**
1908		
Births	**10**	
Deaths	**10**	**5**
Marriages	**3**	
1909		
Births	**8**	
Deaths	**4**	**3**
Marriages	**1**	
1910		
Births	**18**	
Deaths	**7**	**6**
Marriages	**2**	**1**
1911		
Births	**14**	**2**
Deaths	**12**	**4**
Marriages	**2**	**2**

1912		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**14** **4** **3**	**2** **12** **3**
1913		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**15** **8** **8**	**1** **6** **6**
1914		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**19** **5** **11**	**1** **10** **2**
1915		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**18** **9** **3**	**2** **12**
1916		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**15** **8** **6**	**2** **8** **1**
1917		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**21** **9** **11**	 **1** **4**
1918		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**11** **24** **1**	 **11**
1919		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**21** **8** **6**	**1** **11** **2**
1920		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**23** **13** **3**	 **6** **1**

1921		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**20** **9** **8**	**2** **12** **2**
1922		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**15** **9** **2**	 **5** **1**
1923		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**19** **13** **6**	 **4** **1**
1924		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**29** **10** **1**	**2** **10**
1925		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**9** **7** **12**	**1** **2** **3**
1926		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**23** **5** **3**	**1** **2**
1927		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**11** **9** **7**	**1** **7** **2**
1928		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**18** **6** **3**	
TOTALS		
Births **Deaths** **Marriages**	**387** **221** **107**	**19** **151** **38**

6.

“A copy of letter sent

To: Hospital Lane, 11/11/10

Mr S. Ahmed, Secretary J.M. C.C.(**?**)
Simons Town.
Dear Sir
Re. Your Club's offer of the16th November 1909 I beg to inform you that it has bien decided at a meeting held recently to accept your kind offer of one third of the cost of the building and yoursilf & another member of your Club as Trusties to the Mohamedan Mosque. I may mention that your letter concluded as follows: viz. “I therefore beg to say that if your community will accept the above names, two, as trusties for the Indian side then the Charity offer(s) your community the sum of one third the cost of the building. A/C Cheque down.”

Signed: Emam M. Salig Saban

H. M. Bakaar (Hon. Secretary) Mohamedan Mosque (Simonstown)”