

The Founding of The Muslim Community of The Strand in The Early Nineteenth Century, 1822-1928

Ebrahim Rhoda*

Introduction

This paper traces the origins of the free Muslim community of Mosterd Bay (now called the Strand¹) to the early 19th century and argues that Mosterd Bay became one of the first cohesive and sustained rural Muslim community in the Cape. The Strand lies about 50 km southeast of Cape Town on the False Bay coast. (See map) The town is bounded by the Hottentots Holland Mountains in the east, the Lourens River in the west and False Bay to the south. The N2-Highway forms the northern boundary of the town. Today in 2017 the Strand and the adjacent town of Somerset West fall under the Helderberg sub-council of Cape Town Unicity.

Evidence includes both oral sources and documentary sources about Imam Abdus Sammat and other *free blacks* of Indonesian origin who moved into the interior and settled on farms in the Boland before settling at Mosterd Bay. This movement to the interi-

or is discussed in the context of Muslim missionary (*dawah*) activities at the Cape.

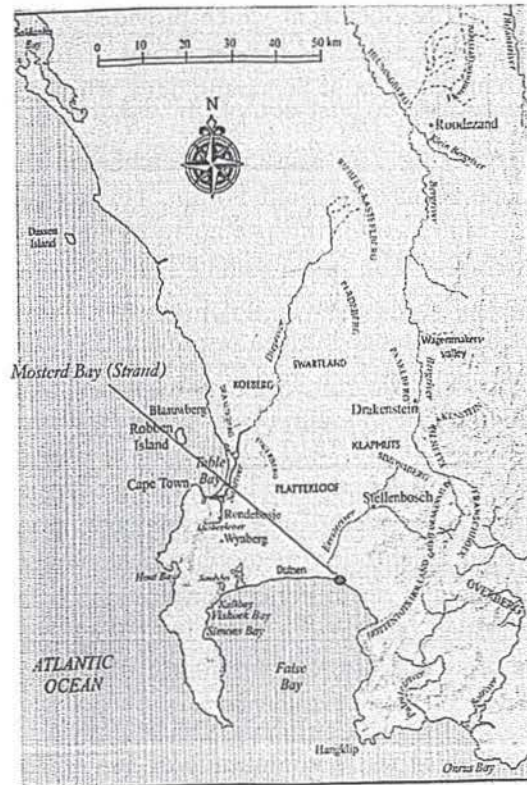


Fig.1 Map courtesy 'Trials of Slavery' Van Riebeeck Society, no.36.

Documentary sources for Muslim communities at the Cape in the 18th and early 19th century are very limited by comparison with sources for Christian churches that have baptismal and marriage registers and minutes of meetings and other events. The lack of such documents makes the task of the researcher very challenging, as Adiel Bradlow points out². However, in the current research, narrators of the oral history of the Muslim community provided valuable information going back to the latter half of the 19th cen-

(*)Bağımsız Araştırmacı.

- (1) Peggy Heap, *The Story of Hottentots Holland*, Somerset West: Peggy Heap, 1993, pp. 143-6. Vlooibaai, Mosterd Bay, Van Ryneveldsdorp, Hottentots Holland Strand, Somerset West Strand and Somerset Strand are among some of the names by which it was known. Faure de Kock, *Die Strand en sy Meise*, Strand: Mediator Drukkers, 1996, p.4. In 1918 the name 'The Strand' was adopted. *Standard Encyclopedia of Southern Africa*, Volume 10, p.317. In 1937 the town's name was shortened to just 'Strand'.
- (2) Adiel Bradlow, 'Imperialism, state formation and the establishment of a Muslim community at the Cape of Good Hope, 1770-1840,' unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town (1988), p.85.

tury, and Much of this oral evidence was later corroborated by archival documents.

The document which provided a way into the research is the testament of Imam Abdus Sammat of Semarang, Java, who died at Mosterd Bay on 7 March 1838. While networking with Muslim researchers in the Cape Family Research Forum, I was given the reference for this testament in the Cape Archives³. The Imam's name had not come up in the oral history and I had not known of his existence but the testament provided information which made it possible to trace Imam Abdus Sammat back to his residence in Cape Town c.1810. Documentary sources that gradually came to light through further archival research (other testaments, household inventories, memorials, death registrations and death notices, and reports from Christian missionaries) revealed the existence of a rural Islamic community at Mosterd Bay in the early 19th century.

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This was a community of *free blacks*, mainly of Indonesian (Javanese) origin. Mosterd Bay, a place illegally occupied by freed slaves of diverse ethnic origins, independent of missionary or state control, provided the space for Imām Abdus Sammat and his followers to establish an enclave of Islam in the rural area.⁴ The present-day Muslim community of the Strand can trace its roots to that community in Mosterd Bay.

It is often assumed that the Muslim community of Mosterd Bay were descendants of the followers of Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar.⁵ The Dutch exiled Shaykh Yusuf to the Cape in 1694 and he died at *Zandvliet* in May 1699⁶. The present-day Muslim community of the Strand would be greatly honoured if this were so, but archival research leads to the conclusion that it was compatriots of the great Shaykh Yusuf who founded the Muslim community of the Strand in the 1820s.

According to an undated own publication it is claimed that the Nurul Islam congrega-

tion of the Strand was established in 1796⁷, but to date no documentary evidence has been found to corroborate this claim. The oral history is not invalidated by the lack of documentary proof, but there seem to be some time gaps and inconsistencies. Imam Ismail Latief was born in 1932 and died in 2005 at the age of 74, the fourth generation of the Latiefs at the Strand, but four generations do not go back as far as 1796. Imam Ismail Latief's father was Imam Abdurakieb Latief who died in 1955 aged about 67 years.⁸ His grandfather was Imam Basier Latief and his great grandfather was also named Imam Abdurakieb Latief. On the available evidence, the oral history, it is most unlikely that Imam Ismail Latief's congregation could have been established at Mosterd Bay in 1796. The earliest official documents which confirm the presence of Muslims at Mosterd Bay date back to 1822.

Free Blacks at the Cape: Origins and Status

By way of background to the history of Mosterd Bay it is necessary to understand the position of *free blacks* in Cape colonial society. According to Shell, Elphick and Giliomee, and De Wet, manumitted slaves were known as *free blacks*.⁹ Davids also applies the

(3) I am most grateful to Hadji Irefaan Rakiép, adirect descendant of Tuan Guru and an eminent family and community historian, for giving me this reference in January 2003. Hadji Irefaan Rakiép passed away in July 2005.

(4) *Lêer P3, 1/3, NG Kerk Argief, Kaupstad. Uit die Dagboek van eerw. P.D. Luckhoff, Maart, 1830. Vertaal deur eerw. G. Meyer, Maart, 1958, p.2.* Luckhoff confirms the presence of the Muslim fishermen at Mosterd Bay.

(5) This assumption is made for instance by Heap, *Hottentots Holland*, p.143, and De Kock, *Die Strand*, p.4. The latter was commissioned for the centenary celebration of the Strand Municipality.

(6) Achmat Davids, *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap Athlone: The South African Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research*, (1980), pp.38-39

(7) Ismail Latief and Ismail Petersen, *Nurul Islam, Strand, 1796*, p.3. Undated (presumably 2000) cyclostyled booklet about the history of the Nurul Islam congregation.

(8) WCARS, HAWC 1/3/43/5/8, entry no. 301/55. Death registration of Abdurakieb Latief indicates that he was a 'Malay Priest' and that he died on 28 August 1955 at his residence at 38 Market Street, Strand. His age was recorded as 'unknown' but according to his eldest son Omar, was estimated to be 67 years.

(9) R.C.H. Shell, *Children of Bondage* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994, p.432 and R.Elphick & H.Giliomee (eds), *The shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1979, p.147 and G.C. de Wet, *Die Vrybevolking in die Kaapse Nedersetting, 1657-1707*, Onge-publiseerde proefschrift vir die graad Dokter in Wysbegeerte, Universiteit van Stellenbosch (1978), p. 4.

term *free blacks* to convicts who were brought to the Cape to build the new breakwater and remained at the Cape after serving their term, and to political exiles from the East who remained at the Cape after their release from Robben Island.¹⁰ Tuan Guru¹¹ who was released from Robben Island in 1793 was a case in point. In addition some free men of Asian origin who settled at the Cape were categorised as *free blacks*.¹² The *free blacks* were predominantly from the islands of present-day Indonesia or from India, while a smaller number were of Mozambican origin and a few of Chinese origin.¹³ In 1830 *free blacks* made up 18% of the total and 35% to 40% of the coloured population of Cape Town.¹⁴

Most *free blacks* lived in cramped conditions in the poorer quarters and alleys of Cape Town.¹⁵ Shell refers to the formidable disadvantages which freed male slaves faced, including 'prejudice, poverty, the inability to obtain credit, and also the extreme difficulty of obtaining gainful employment in the Cape's oscillating and insecure economy'.¹⁶ In most occupations preference were given to the 'poor whites' of Cape Town.¹⁷

De Wet lists Dutch East India Company officials, the burghers, immigrants and *free blacks* as free men of the Colony¹⁸ but the Company and burghers did not regard *free blacks* as the complete equals of Europeans and no petitions have been found from *free blacks* applying for burgher papers.¹⁹ According to Elphick and Giliomee the legal status of *free blacks* was ambiguous at best, and Shell states that the exact legal status of *free blacks* is disputed by historians.²⁰ *Free blacks* did enjoy certain privileges (they could buy and sell land and own slaves, if they could afford to) but they were also subject to legal restrictions. The house of a *free black* could be searched without a warrant. Curfew regulations compelled *free blacks* to carry lanterns at night and they had to obtain passes to leave Cape Town for a few days.²¹

Despite the restrictions on their movement, *free blacks* seem to have been relatively mobile in the pre-emancipation era. Some moved away from Cape Town into the interior even before Ordinance 50 of 1828 which made 'Hottentots' and *free blacks* equal before the law.²² For instance, Imam Abdus Sammat was listed as a *free black* on the *Opgaafrollen* of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and Hottentots Holland between 1810 and 1822.

The occupations of *free blacks* and the services they offered allowed them access to and residence on farms. Elphick and Giliomee list a range of useful occupations of *free blacks*: masons, carpenters, cabinet-makers, coopers, saddlers, basketmakers, tailors, shoemakers, hatmakers and haberdashers, bakers, greengrocers and butchers, and fishermen.²³ A heading of the *Opgaafrol* of Stellenbosch of 1829 categorises *free blacks* as self-supporting (*zich zelve erneerende*).²⁴

According to Elphick and Giliomee the annual *Opgaafrol* (census) at the Cape is the only systematic source as to the size and make-up of the *free black* community.²⁵ In 1825 Hendrik Ryk de Vos, the field-cornet for the ward of Hottentots Holland, enumerated

(10) Davids, *Mosques*, p.42.

(11) *Ibid.*, pp. 44-5: Tuan Guru or Imam Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam was a prince from Tidore in the Ternate Islands. He arrived at the Cape as a State Prisoner and was incarcerated with two compatriots on Robben Island for thirteen years. His alleged crime was that he conspired with the English against the Dutch. Whilst on the island he wrote a book on Islamic jurisprudence by hand in Malayu and Arabic. By 1800 his handwritten Qurans, written entirely from memory were widely in circulation among the Cape Muslims. It is believed that Tuan Guru, which means 'Mister Teacher' was the founder of the school for the slave children in the 1790s after his release from Robben Island.

(12) Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of*, p. 147.

(13) *Ibid.*, p. 147

(14) Shirley Judges, 'Poverty, living conditions and social relations - aspects of life in Cape Town in the 1830s', unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town (1997), p. 140.

(15) Jackie Loos, *Echoes from slavery, voices from the past*, Cape Town: David Philip, 2004, p. 38.

(16) Shell, *Bondage*, p. 393.

(17) *Ibid.*, p. 393.

(18) De Wet, *Die Vrybevolking*, pp. 1-4.

(19) Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of*, p. 146.

(20) *Ibid.*, p. 155 and Shell, *Children of*, p. xxxii.

(21) Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of*, p. 146.

(22) *Ibid.*, p. 383.

(23) Free blacks were also employed in hostels, wine outlets, coffee shops and brothels; some were involved with illegal trading with passing ships.

(24) WCARS, 1/STB 16/125, *Opgaaflys* of Stellenbosch.

(25) Elphick and Giliomee, *The Shaping of*, p. 148.

a *free black* community at Mosterd Bay. He listed 19 *free blacks*, 14 of whom were from the islands of what is now Indonesia: Bonzo, Ongo, Salomon, Cadier, Nollo, Azam, Zien-go, Ronnie, Marja, Wiro, Abdol *vryswart*, *Vryswart* van Java, Kwasse, Isakiem and Abdol Sammat. He also listed seven 'Hottentot' women and a young girl of 11 years.²⁶ Why was there this concentration of *free blacks* of Indonesian origin at Mosterd Bay in 1825? The answer has much to do with the last named resident, Abdol Sammat.

Imam Abdol (Abdus) Sammat: from Java to Cape Town to Stellenbosch

The census of *free blacks* of Cape Town in 1807 lists a Samat of Java.²⁷ According to an undated census of Cape Town (probably 1809 or 1810), Abdus Sammat, 50 years old, was resident at number 1 Zee Steeg, Cape Town.²⁸ If we take 1810, rather than 1807, as his first year at the Cape, then Imām Abdol Sammat had been at least 22 years at the Cape when he had his testament drafted and signed in 1832.²⁹ His testament identifies him as a *Mohammedaansche priester* from Semarang, Java, resident at that time at Mosterd Bay with no kin in Africa.

To date no evidence has been uncovered to indicate that Imam Abdus Sammat was brought to the Cape as a convict. A 'Bapu Abdus Sammat' was found on the convict list of 1758 but he would have been too old to be the Imam Abdus Sammat who died in 1838. Nor has evidence been found that Imam Abdus came to the Cape as a slave who was later manumitted. If he had come as a slave he would probably have been listed on transfer documents under another name. 'Slaves' names were provided by the slave trader or the new owner, and the legal transfer was the place to rename (*hernaam*) a slave.³⁰

If the quality of the Arabic handwriting³¹ in his testament is anything to go by, Imam Abdus Sammat must have had some form of

schooling. It is interesting to note that while he wrote in Arabic script his spelling suggests Afrikaans pronunciation rather than Arabic, which indicates that he had been at the Cape long enough to acquire the creole language of the Cape. It is probable that Abdus Sammat was involved, either as a student or an assistant teacher in one of the Muslim religious schools in Cape Town. He referred in his testament to '*onse grootste priester Achmed woonachtig in Kaapstad*' and asked that he should come (to Mosterd Bay) and bury him when he died.³² The *priester Achmed* was Imam Achmat van Bengalen who carried on the school established by Tuan Guru in the Bo-Kaap for the children of slaves and free blacks. He was active as a teacher at the Dorp Street (Auwal) Mosque in Cape Town and became Imam of the mosque in 1822. Abdus Sammat's reference to *priester Achmed*, indicates that he had been in contact with him in Cape Town and held him in high regard. It is possible that Abdus Sammat was in the school run by Imam Achmat or received his training as an imam from him in Cape Town.³³

According to the 1815 *Opgaafrol*, 'Abdol Sammat' was living with July van Boegies in Stellenbosch.³⁴ The reasons for his move from Cape Town to Stellenbosch are not

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(26) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J276 for Hottentots Holland.

(27) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J41.

(28) WCARS, *Raad der Gemeente* (RDG) 115, *Lysvan Vrye geboren en Vryswarten met opgawe van ouderdom, geboorteplek en adres*. Undated census of free born and free blacks of Cape Town. [Probably 1809 or 1810]. I am Grateful to Jackie Loos for this reference. In *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, p. 102, Davids refers to Tuan Guru's son, the 16 year old Abdol Rakiep who is listed on this undated list of free born and free blacks. Tuan Guru was released from Robben Island in 1793. If AbdolRakiep was born in 1793 or 1794 then this Census could have been compiled in either 1809 or 1810.

(29) WCARS, MOOC 7/1/144, Folio 168 and 169. Testament of Imām Abdus Sammat

(30) Shell, *Children of Bondage*, p.239.

(31) See Appendix A of M.A Thesis of Ebrahim Rhođa for copy of the *imām's* signature.

(32) F.R. Bradlow and M. Cairns, *The Early Cape Muslims: A study of their mosques, genealogy and origins*, Cape Town; A.A. Balkema, 1978, p. 34, Imam Achmat of Bengalen became the Imām of the Auwal Mosque in 1822 and died in 1843.

(33) Imām Abdus Sammat's signature in Afrikaans with the Arabic font may be further evidence of his relationship with Imām Achmat of Bengalen. The latter wrote the treatise on Islam in Afrikaans in the Arabic script, *Al-Qawl Al Matin*, published in 1856, thirteen years after his death. Davids, *Mosques of*, p. 106.

(34) WCARS, J251, *Opgaafrol* for Stellenbosch ward.

documented but can be inferred from other documentary sources on the movement of Muslim teachers from Cape Town to the interior in the period of vigorous Islamic *dawah*, discussed below. It seems reasonable to conclude that Imam Abdus Sammat was sent out by the Islamic leadership in Cape Town to defend and propagate Islam in the face of Christian missionary activity in the interior.

Missionaries in Cape Town and the interior

By way of background to the history of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay it is necessary to understand the extent of missionary activity, Christian and Muslim, towards the end of the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th century, not only in Cape Town, but also in the interior.

During the closing years of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, Cape Town experienced a wave of fervent Christian missionary activity when the pietist movement in Europe reached the shores of Table Bay.³⁵ The South African Missionary Society (S.A.M.S.) was formed in 1799.³⁶ The missionaries targeted slaves, *free blacks* and Muslims and their activities seem to have led to the proliferation of *madāris* (Muslim schools) in Cape Town.

The first Muslim religious school (*madrassah*) was established in the Bo-Kaap in 1793, the year Tuan Guru was released from Robben Island. By 1807 the school had an enrolment of 372 slaves and *free blacks* and by 1825 the enrolment stood at 491.³⁷ According to the records of *imāms* and schoolmasters compiled by Shell for the period 1806 to 1866, there were at least 25 *imāms* and schoolmasters in Cape Town in 1832.³⁸ An article in the *Philanthropic Gazette* of June 1820, cited by Haasbroek, refers to the great number of 'Mohammedan priests' and 'several places of worship which they have ope-

ned' in Cape Town.³⁹ In 1832 there were at least 12 Muslim schools in Cape Town where slave and *free black* students were taught precepts from the *Qurān* and to read and write in Arabic.⁴⁰ According to Mason, the newly opened schools and mosques laid the institutional foundation for the sustained growth and consolidation of Islam at the Cape.⁴¹ The aforementioned statistics underscores the fact that Islam had the leadership and human resources to sustain the *da'wah effort*. The increase in the number of *imāms*, schoolmasters and *madāris* in Cape Town points to a conscious effort of Islamic *da'wah* by the Islamic leadership in this period.

I contend that these Christian missionary drives at the Cape during the last quarter of the 18th century and the first four decades of the 19th century precipitated the *da'wah* by the Islamic leadership in Cape Town. The Rev. John Campbell seems to confirm my contention about Islamic *da'wah* in Cape Town when he wrote in June 1812:

"Mabometism is greatly on the increase in Cape Town. They have, I believe, five mosques, in which they assemble for their worship. About twenty free Mabometans [free blacks] club together, and rent a large house, to which they invite poor ignorant slaves, to gain them over to their party. By this method an alarming number have been persuaded to join them, and rendered ten times more prejudiced against truth, and against all white people, or persons called Christians, than they were before. The masters say that such houses are dens of thieves, and receptacles of stolen goods which the slaves steal from them. Perhaps this circumstance may induce masters to attend better to

(35) Karel Schoeman, *The early mission in South Africa / Die vroeë sending in Suid-Afrika*, Pretoria: Protea Book House, 2005, p. 11.

(36) Schoeman, *The early mission*, p. 14.

(37) Achmat Davids, 'Alternative Education: Tuan Guru and the formation of the Cape Muslim Community', in A. Davids and Y. da Costa (eds), *Pages from Muslim History* (Cape Town: Shuter and Shooter, 1994), p. 51.

(38) R.C.H. Shell, 'A prosopography of Cape *imāms*, 1806-1866. Unpublished compilation of Cape *imāms*', 1976, pp. 1-58.

(39) L.C.S. Haasbroek, 'Die sending onder die Mohanmedane in Kaapstad en omgewing - 'n histories oorsig.' Unpublished M.A. Thesis in Theology, University of Stellenbosch (1955), p. 73.

(40) A. Davids, 'Alternative education: Tuan Guru' p. 51.

(41) John Edwin Mason, 'A faith for ourselves': Slavery, Sufism and conversion to Islam at the Cape, *South African Historical Journal* (46)(May 2002), p. 12.

the instruction of their slaves, which may ultimately prove a blessing and security to the colony."⁴²

Campbell's observation confirms the growth of Islam in Cape Town in 1812. In addition it becomes evident that the Muslims in Cape Town, according to Campbell, had some strategy to attract converts. He is also critical of the reluctance of Christian slaveholders to Christianise their slaves.

Achmat Davids, Robert Shell, John Mason and others have offered reasons why more slaves and free blacks converted to Islam than to Christianity in the early nineteenth century.⁴³ These historians submit reasons for conversion to Islam but do not indicate what precipitated the fervent Islamic missionary drive to which I have alluded to above.

Both Davids and Shell refer to the role of the convict *imāms* who remained at the Cape after serving their term and who became part of local society and promoted Islam. They suggest that these *imāms* played a greater role in the propagation of Islam at the Cape than the political exiles who were isolated and far removed from the broader community.⁴⁴ Adil Bradlow disagrees with Davids and Shell about the role of these *imāms* in promoting Islam at the Cape in the period 1770-1840.⁴⁵ He cites the lack of written sources from the early period and states that texts that have been found derive from the 19th century and refer mostly to theological issues.⁴⁶ However, inferences about the role of the imams may be drawn from other documentary sources, including the records of Christian missionaries.

Efforts by Christian missionaries to proselytise among the 'heathen' and slaves were not confined to Cape Town. Stellenbosch, the second oldest settlement at the Cape with a large concentration of slaves and *free blacks* in the district,⁴⁷ became the focus of a plethora of Christian missionary societies.⁴⁸ The S.A.M.S. had co-ordination and network-

ing in missionary work as an objective, but doctrinal, ecumenical and logistical differences led to the formation of *Het Stellenbosche Medewerkend Genootschap* (S.M.G.)⁴⁹. Armed with a constitution for the S.M.G. approved by Landdrost Ryno van der Riet, the local missionaries and villagers of Stellenbosch set out 'to extend the Kingdom of Christ to the benighted and the heathen, especially in the wideflung district of Stellenbosch'.⁵⁰

The slave school established in Dorp Street, Stellenbosch, in 1799 by Mewes Janse Bakker⁵¹ had 38 pupils in October 1810.⁵² In 1814 Sebastiaan Tromp (though his services were short-lived) was assisting Bakker with the teaching of adult slaves, and the school had substantial support. In 1815 the Stellenbosch School Commission, consisting of the local Landdrost and the minister and elders of the Dutch Reformed congregation, decided to take over Bakker's school in order to have more control over the slaves. (Bakker was not an ordained minister and his career as teacher and missionary in the slave school

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(42) John Campbell, *Travels in South Africa* (Cape Town: C.Struik (Pty) Ltd., 1974.), p. 5. After the death of Dr. J.T. van der Kemp in 1811 the Rev. John Campbell was expressly sent to the Cape in 1812 by the Directors of the Mission Society in London to personally inspect the settlements. Over a period of seventeen months Campbell visited twelve missions of the London Missionary Society in South Africa. (John Campbell, *Travels in South Africa*, p. vi.)

(43) Davids, *Mosques*, pp. 31-47; Shell, *Children of Bondage*, pp. 357-62; J.E.Mason, 'A faith for Ourselves', pp. 3-24.

(44) Davids, *Mosques*, p. 42; Shell, *Children*, p. 360.

(45) Bradlow, 'Imperialism, state formation', p.85.

(46) *Ibid.*, p. 85.

(47) Smuts, *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 274. It is stated that 10 703 slaves lived within the magisterial district of Stellenbosch in 1799.

(48) Karel Schoeman, *The Early Mission in South Africa / Die Vroeë Sending in Suid-Afrika*, pp. 11-13.

(49) Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 276.

(50) *Ibid.*, p.276.

(51) A.H. Huussen Jr. and S.B.I. Veltkamp-Visser, *Dagboek en brieven van Mewes Janse Bakker (1764-1824)*, (Amsterdam: Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut, 1991), pp. 17-20. Bakker was the chief mate on the VOC ship *het Vertrouwen*, when it was seized by the British in Simon's Town at the time of the First British Occupation. His enforced stay of almost two years at the Cape brought him into contact with people greatly influenced by Rev. Helerus Ritzema van Lier and the pietist movement. Bakker then devoted his life to the mission to the slaves at the Cape.

(52) In 'Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 274.' it is stated that Meeuwes Janse Bakker, Dutchman who was the chief mate on a 300-man naval vessel which had been shipwrecked in a violent storm off the coast of America, was one of forty survivors. Out of gratitude for his salvation, Bakker decided to devote his life to bringing the Gospel to the heathen in South Africa. At the beginning of 1799 Bakker started on his own account to teach a number of slave children at his Dorp Street house on Sunday afternoons. The building is still at 157 Dorp Street.

had become a matter of controversy.⁵³ Bakker's clash with the church establishment is not the concern of this study but it is interesting to speculate as to whether Imam Abdus Sammat came to Stellenbosch to counter the influence of the school.)

Imām Abdus Sammat's presence in the Stellenbosch area in 1815 could probably be the reason for a Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Report of 1817 which alludes to the success of Muslim missionary activity in the interior:

"The prevention of the instruction of the Cape Negroes (prize Negroes) by missionaries is the more deeply to be regretted, as the Moham-medan priests from the interior have been actively and successfully engaged in making prey of their ignorance, and turning them to the delusions of the false prophet".⁵⁴

This extract refers to the refusal by Governor Somerset to allow the Wesleyan Methodist missionary McKenny to preach to the 'heathen' (slaves and *free blacks* and Khoi) when he arrived at the Cape in 1815⁵⁵. Somerset's refusal is also discussed in the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Report of 1818⁵⁶ which mentions the 'Mohametan priests' in the interior who were successfully converting slaves to Islam. The 1817 and 1818 reports of the Wesleyan Missionary Society thus provide evidence that *imāms* who moved into the rural areas played a significant role in the promotion and propagation of Islam.

The movement of Imam Abdus Sammat and other free blacks of Indonesian origin to Hottentots Holland and Mosterd Bay.⁵⁷

By 1820 Abdus Sammat had moved from Stellenbosch to the Hottentots Holland area. One could speculate that his experience in the period 1815-1820 had convinced him that Stellenbosch was not the place to form a cohesive Muslim community, as the Christi-

an missionaries in the Stellenbosch area had such overwhelming human resources.

The *Opgaafrol* of 1820 of Hottentots Holland records Abdol Sammat as a *knecht* on the farm of Myburgh.⁵⁸ According to records compiled by field-cornet Ryk de Vos in 1824, at that time Peter Gerhardus Myburgh was the owner of the farm *Paarl Vallei*.⁵⁹ which indicates that in 1820 Abdus Sammat was living in the area that is now Somerset West. In the same year he moved to the farm *Gustrouw/Fortuintjie*, property of Messrs. Gosling and Wilkinson.⁶⁰ This farm was situated near Mosterd Bay, not far from present-day Gordon's Bay.

Between 1815 and 1821 many of *Imām* Abdus Sammat's *free black* compatriots were scattered on farms in the Stellenbosch, Hottentots Holland and Moddergat wards. The *Opgaafrollen* enabled the tracking of the movements of some of the free blacks from Cape Town into the interior where they settled on farms in the Boland before coming to Mosterd Bay. *Imām* Abdus Sammat's mo-

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(53) Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, pp. 273-8

(54) Rhodes University, Cory Library (RU/CL), The Report for the year 1817 of The Committee for the Management of the Missions first commenced by the Rev. John Wesley, the Rev. Dr. Coke and others; and now carried on under the direction of the Methodist Conference London, p.24.

(55) Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 276. 'Governor Somerset still retained De Mist's "Kerkorde" of 1803 which among other, prohibited missionaries from holding religious services in public buildings within the area of established Christian congregations because it was considered to infringe on the rights of ordained ministers. It was also ruled that anyone who proposed to give religious instruction to the unconverted first had to submit to examination by the local church council; once a prospective 'Teacher' had been approved by the church council, he would be permitted to give instruction to the slaves and the unconverted of the congregation, but was not allowed to perform the functions of a minister.'

(56) UR/CL, The First Report of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, (WMMS), London, 1818, p. 31.

(57) See Appendix B. of the M.A Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for the arrival of free blacks at Mosterd Bay. In both the *Opgaafrollen* and the testament the *imām* is listed as Abdol Sammat, but the *imām* signed his name in Afrikaans in the Arabic font as Abdus Sammat.

(58) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J261, Folio 26, Entry no. 71. For the first time it is indicated that Abdol Sammat is employed in some capacity. It has been pointed out earlier that the *free blacks* sustained themselves. Shell points out that *free black knechts* had no institutional contractual protection like Company *knechts*, but they could negotiate their own wage. Shell, *Bondage*, p.13.

(59) WCARS, I/STB, vol. 11/23, *Opgaaf* of farms, their owners and livestock, 1824. Further evidence of Peter Gerhardus Myburgh's ownership of the farm is to be found in the Slave Office document SO 20/13 in which the slaves of the farm *Paarl Valley* are appraised on Return no. 3917.

(60) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J262 of Hottentots Holland

vement from Stellenbosch to the Hottentots Holland basin between 1815 and 1822 suggests a definite objective,..the formation of an enclave of Islam in a rural area outside Cape Town. As he worked his way from Stellenbosch to the Hottentots Holland between 1815 and 1822, it seems probable that he had contact with his *free black* compatriots who then decided to join him at Mosterd Bay.⁶¹

No evidence has been found as to when Imam Abdus Sammat decided that he would make his home at Mosterd Bay. It is not known whether Mosterd Bay was his destination from the time he left Stellenbosch, whether he heard about it along the way, or whether it was only on arrival in Mosterd Bay that he decided it was a suitable place to settle and establish a Muslim community.

Mosterd Bay had much in its favour as a place for a settlement. It was far from the influence of the Christian missionaries. Squatting on government land, on farms or moving from district to district was a phenomenon before and after 1838.⁶² Scully confirms the presence of squatters at Somerset West beach.⁶³ Legally *free blacks* could own land, but in practice many of them were too poor to buy land⁶⁴ so squatting on government land at Mosterd Bay would have been an attractive option. There were fresh water streams and a vlei. False Bay had long been a source of food for the inhabitants of Stellenbosch, Moddergat, Hottentots Holland and the surrounding areas. So it was for the new settlers of Mosterd Bay, though over time the sea which sustained them also claimed the lives of many of the fishermen.⁶⁵

The *Opgaafrol* of 1822 shows that by 1822 Imam Abdus Sammat and at least five of his compatriots had erected huts at Mosterd Bay.⁶⁶ Smuts confirms that in 1822 some huts were already standing or were in the process of being erected.⁶⁷ The first five *free blacks* who settled at Mosterd Bay with Imam Abdus Sammat were Seding of Java, Borno

of Java, Salomon of Java, Rachiem of Java and Cadier of Timor.⁶⁸

The archival records reveal that Seding of Java had been living on the farm *Paarl Vallei* in the Somerset West area;⁶⁹ Borno of Java on the farm *Voorburg*;⁷⁰ and Salomon of Java on the farm *Gustrouw*, all in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland, near present-day Gordon's Bay.⁷¹ In 1820 Imām Abdus Sammat himself was living on the farm *Paarl Vallei* in Somerset West⁷² and in the same year he moved onto the farm *Gustrouw/Fortuintjie* near present-day Gordon's Bay.⁷³ Cadir of Java (probably Cadier of Timor) was living on the farm *Harmonie*, also in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland.⁷⁴ To date it has not been possible to establish where Rachiem of Java lived before he moved to Mosterd Bay.

I would argue that these five *free blacks* of Indonesian origin were the core group, with Imam Abdol Sammat, of the Muslim community in Mosterd Bay, one of the first cohesive and sustained rural Muslim community at the Cape, to which the present-day Muslim community of the Strand can trace its roots.

(61) WCARS, 1/STB 2/21, *Extract from the Daybook of the Landdrost of Stellenbosch dated Tuesday, November 22, 1825*: In a court case between some of the free blacks at Mosterd Bay and Hendrik Morkel about grazing rights, Morkel complained about Abdol Sammat's stallion which was running loose and causing great injury to his stud. If Imam Abdol Sammat travelled on horseback, this would surely have aided him in his missionary activities.

(62) Pamela Scully, *Liberating the Family? Gender and British slave emancipation in the rural Western Cape, South Africa, 1823-1853*, Cape Town: David Philip, 1997), p.75.

(63) Scully, *Liberating the family* ? p. 75.

(64) Shell, *Bondage*, p. 39.

(65) WCARS: MOOC 3958/37, folio 5689, death notice of Ongo Taldien who came to Mosterd Bay in 1823. Ongo drowned in the bay on 15 February 1842. MOOC 6/9/426, folio 1459, death notice of Abdol Waggie who was born in Cape Town. He drowned in the bay in 1877. After his death his family received Lot 33 at Mosterd Bay as a quitrent grant in October 1882. MOOC 6/9/447, folio 1063, death notice of Kieamo Daniels who was born in Cape Town. He drowned at Mosterd Bay in 1878. After his death his family received Lot 40 at Mosterd Bay as a quitrent grant in October 1882.

(66) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J268 of Hottentots Holland.

(67) Smuts (ed), *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 213.

(68) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J268 of Hottentots Holland.

(69) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J254.

(70) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J265.

(71) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J261.

(72) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J262.

(73) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J262.

(74) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J268.

In 1823 Wiro, Bonzo, Azor, Ongo and Marjam, all of Java, joined the group at Mosterd Bay.⁷⁵ Prior to 1823 Wiro had been living on the farm *Herberg* in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland.⁷⁶ Bonzo of Java had been living on the farm *Harmonie*, also in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland.⁷⁷ Ongo resided at 40 Waterkant Street in Cape Town in 1815.⁷⁸ It is not known where Azor and Marjam were resident prior to Mosterd Bay.

In 1824 Singo of Java arrived at Mosterd Bay.⁷⁹ Azam, Kwassa, Nollo, Ronnie, Isakiem, Zingo and a *vryswart*, all from Java, and Abdol van de Kaap joined the settlement in 1825.⁸⁰ Allie of Java came to Mosterd Bay in 1826.⁸¹ He was followed by Darius van de Kaap and his wife Minerva of Batavia in 1827,⁸² Potro of Java in 1828⁸³, Seding of Java Junior and Jamier of Timor in 1829⁸⁴, Sakier of Timor in 1830⁸⁵ and Kameding van de Kaap and Simon of Java in 1832.⁸⁶

Prior to 1824 Singo lived on the farm *Fortuintjie* in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland, while Kwassa of Java was on the farm of Daniel Malan, most probably *Altona*, also in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland.⁸⁷ A free black named Alie was listed by field-cornet Neethling in the census of Stellenbosch in 1817⁸⁸. This could be the Alie who came to Mosterd Bay in 1826.

In 1815 Darius van de Kaap and his wife Minerva of Batavia were living in Stellenbosch⁸⁹ and they seem to have followed Imām Abdus Sammat from Stellenbosch to Mosterd Bay. In 1821 and 1822 they were resident on the farm *Paarde Vlei* in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland⁹⁰ and by 1824 the couple were residing in a house on the farm *Voorburg* belonging to Philip Hendrik Morkel, in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland.⁹¹ They settled in Mosterd Bay in 1827.

Before settling at Mosterd Bay Potro was living on the farm *Zandberg* in the

field-cornetcy of Moddergat.⁹² Simon of Java was living on *Paarde Vlei* in the field-cornetcy of Hottentots Holland before coming to Mosterd Bay in 1832.⁹³ It is not known where Sakier of Timor, Zingo of Java, Kameding van die Kaap, Abdol van de Kaap and Jamier of Timor lived before they settled at Mosterd Bay.

The undated census (c.1809 or 1810) of *free blacks* and free born of Cape Town, referred to earlier, indicates that some of the *free blacks* who settled on farms in the Hottentots Holland basin and then moved to Mosterd Bay had lived close to Imām Abdus Sammat in Cape Town. Amongst them were Nollo, Singo, Seding Sen., Seding the younger, Azam, Ongo, Salomon and Potro – all from Java.⁹⁴

In the three years after Imam Abdol Sammat with five compatriots settled at Mosterd Bay in 1822, another 13 *free blacks* from Java settled at Mosterd Bay. By 1832, at least 28 *free blacks* from Java and other Indonesian islands had come to settle (along with other *free blacks* and Khoi) at Mosterd Bay. Was this movement of free blacks of Indonesian origin, first to the farms in the rural areas and then finally to Mosterd Bay, co-incident? The evidence strongly suggests that the movement gained momentum between 1822

(75) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J268.

(76) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J254.

(77) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J254

(78) WCARS, Raad der Gemeente (RDG) 115. Census of *vryswartes* and *vrygeborenes* in Cape Town.

(79) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J274.

(80) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J276.

(81) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J283.

(82) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J286.

(83) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J288.

(84) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* 1/STB, 16/25.

(85) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J294.

(86) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J302.

(87) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J265.

(88) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J256.

(89) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J251.

(90) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J265 and J268.

(91) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J274.

(92) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J288. It is indicated that Potro was on the farm *Zandberg*. Further confirmation that *Zandberg* was in the field-cornetcy of Moddergat is to be found in the *Government Notice of the Colonial Office, Cape of Good Hope, 20th December 1848*, p.60. WCARS, Library ref. 352.0687.

(93) WCARS, *Oppgaafrol* J254.

(94) See Appendix C. of M.A Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for names of *free blacks* and place of residence in Cape Town.

and 1825⁹⁵ and that Imām Abdol Sammat was probably the driving force in the establishment of the settlement at Mosterd Bay.

In March 1830 the Dutch Reformed missionary, Rev. Paul Daniel Luckhoff, confirmed the Islamic presence at Mosterd Bay where he was recuperating in one of the four holiday huts on the beach. In his diary he referred to the shabby reed huts and fishing boats of the 'Mohammedan fishermen'.⁹⁶

The *Opgaafrol* of 1832 shows that 17 of the 28 free blacks of Indonesian origin were still living there in 1832. Some of those whose names are not recorded in 1832 may have died, or they may have moved elsewhere. In 1840, two years after Imam Abdol Sammat's death, almost 50% of these free blacks of Indonesian origin were still living at Mosterd Bay.⁹⁷

376 The formation of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay

I would argue that a number of factors facilitated the formation of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay. Firstly, the initial preponderance of free blacks from the islands of the Indonesian archipelago, mainly from Java.⁹⁸, who shared not only a common bond of the Islamic faith, but also a common language, Maleyu, greatly contributed towards the cohesion of this rural enclave of Islam at Mosterd Bay. Apart from shared roots and shared faith, the free blacks of Indonesian origin would also have shared experience as slaves or convicts before they became free blacks at the Cape.⁹⁹

Two important components of community formation is a common language and a common faith. The free blacks of Indonesian origin probably spoke several of the 60 or more Indonesian languages, of which Maleyu was the most widely spoken and understood.¹⁰⁰ 'The language of the Indonesians at the Cape, Melayu, provided a com-

mon bond among the Indonesian slaves and became the religious language of the Cape Muslims.'¹⁰¹ One of the narrators of the oral history of the Strand, my aunt, the late Ragiema Crombie (1900-1990), could not speak Melayu but she could recite in Melayu the rules for taking ablution before performing the five daily prayers, learned by rote from her old *khalīfah* (teacher), Imām Moosa Karan from Java¹⁰². A hundred years earlier the old *imāms* from Java must surely have used Malay in their teaching at Mosterd Bay.

Communication between the Indonesian free blacks and free blacks of other ethnic origins and even the Khoi was possible through the *lingua franca* at the Cape during early 1800s. Shell refers to the trading language, which the slaves from the East had acquired from the Portuguese and brought to the Cape and which was easy to learn.¹⁰³ Most of the free blacks at Mosterd Bay had been long enough at the Cape to acquire this *lingua franca*.¹⁰⁴

The settlement at Mosterd Bay had the benefit of Islamic leadership under the guidance of Imam Abdus Sammat.¹⁰⁵ Per-

(95) See Appendix B. of M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for details about the movement of the free blacks of Indonesian origin between 1822 and 1825.

(96) *Lêer P31, 1/3, NG Kerk Argief, Kaapstad. Uittide Dagboek van eerw. P.D. Luckhoff, Maart, 1830. Vertaal deur eerw. G. Meyer, Maart 1958, p.2.*

(97) See Appendix B. under column for 1840.

(98) WCARS: The *Opgaafrol* J276 of Hottentots Holland for 1825 lists nineteen males at Mosterd Bay of whom fourteen were from Java.

(99) For discussion of the lives of free blacks at the Cape, see earlier section; for discussion of the experience of slaves at the Cape see Shell, *Children of Bondage*, and Ross, *Cape of Torments*.

(100) J. Laffan Morse (ed), *Funk & Wagnalls Standard reference encyclopedia*. New York: Standard Reference Works Publishing Company Inc (1963), vol. 13, p.4895.

(101) R.C.-H. Shell, 'The establishment and spread of Islam at the Cape from the beginning of Company rule to 1838.' Unpublished. B.A. Honours thesis, University of Cape Town (1974), p.40.

(102) WCARS, HAWC 1/3/43/5/1, entry no. 121, Death registration of Imam Moosa Karan (1842-1932), who died at the Strand at the age of 90. The imam's nickname was *kechiel* which in Maleyu means small.

(103) Shell, *Bondage*, p. 63.

(104) See Appendix E of M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for *Opgaafrolen* J302(1833); J309 (1839) and J310 (1840) The names of the settlers at Mosterd Bay reflect the cosmopolitan nature of the settlement prior to and after emancipation.

(105) The early Muslims of Stellenbosch later came to the Strand for their religious services at least once a month, [very likely due to the influence of Imam Abdus Sammat.] Smuts (ed) *Stellenbosch 300 Years*, p. 271.

haps the greatest binding force in the settlement was their *imān* (faith) in Islam, which enabled them to resist attempts by the missionaries to convert them to Christianity. Haasbroek refers to this depth of *imān*: 'In die eerste plek kan aangemerkt word dat die Mohammedaan baie sterk godsdienstig is en dat as hy eenmaal duidelikheid het, hy baie sterk by sy oortuiging staan.'¹⁰⁶ (In the first place it can be noted that the Mohammedan is religiously very strong and once he has clarity, then he is unyielding about his conviction.) This deep religious conviction enabled them to preserve their Islamic identity as Mosterd Bay became a multi-ethnic settlement of Khoi and free blacks of diverse ethnicities.¹⁰⁷

Scully asserts that the importance of the Christian mission stations at the time of emancipation testifies to the weakness of Islam in the rural Western Cape¹⁰⁸ but evidence from Mosterd Bay suggests that her assertion should be qualified.

Sustaining an independent livelihood at Mosterd Bay

Mosterd Bay with its fresh water and abundance of fish.¹⁰⁹ was a place where the new settlers could sustain themselves. Ross points out that without a reasonably permanent stream, an independent existence was not feasible, and the small communities which attempted this were few and poverty stricken.¹¹⁰ At Mosterd Bay the streams dried up in summer but the nearby vlei was a source of water in summer.¹¹¹ Many of the *free blacks* of Cape Town were fishermen¹¹² and initially the group in Mosterd Bay virtually lived from the sea.

Small scale farming may also have contributed to an independent livelihood for some of the residents of Mosterd Bay. The earliest 19th century document relating to land leased for agricultural purposes by residents of Mosterd Bay is in a civil court case where Gatieb Railoun summoned Jan Sal-

mon for eighteen shillings for the non-payment of rent for garden ground for a year, October 1887 to October 1888. Gatieb Railoun in turn had leased the land from Philip Myburgh.¹¹³ A similar case was recorded on 9 August 1889 when Philip Myburgh summonsed Baravie Gafodien of Mosterd Bay for non-payment of two pounds for garden ground leased for a year.¹¹⁴ These civil court cases confirm that some of the settlers at Mosterd Bay were farming on a small scale for subsistence and may have been selling produce to the local community.¹¹⁵

There are also indications in the archival records that some *free blacks* in Mosterd Bay kept livestock on a small scale. In 1825 the *free black* Cornelius Stynhard and the

(106) Haasbroek, 'Die sending aan Mohammedane,' p.138.

(107) See Appendix E. of the M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda. The *Opgeafrol* for 1833 (J302) reveals the multi-ethnic nature of the Mosterd Bay settlement. In addition to the *free blacks* of Indonesian origin we find listed a *free black* from Ceylon and two from 'Sina'. Also listed were Jan Snees, David Kaffer, Claas Hottentot, Willie Baastart, Cornelis Stynhard and wife, Leendert Hottentot and wife and Librecht Hottentot and wife. Potro, who is mentioned in Abdol Sammat's testament is listed as a married man with his wife, most probably one of the Khoiwomen. The *free black* Darius of the Cape settled with his wife Minerva of Batavia at Mosterd Bay in 1827. Incidentally, the name Minerva survived into the twentieth century at the Strand. The old woman was known as 'Sies Nerfie' (*Sies* is the shortened version of *Siesie* which is a respectful way of addressing elderly women). When the *free black* Cornelis Stynhard took Hendrik Morkel to court for impounding his cattle in November 1825 it is indicated that Kamedien, the son of Wiro of Java was herding his father's cattle. (1/STB 2/21, *Extracts from the Daybook of the Landdrost of Stellenbosch, dated 19 November, 1825*). *Opgeafrol* J294 for 1830 indicates that Betjie, the Hottentot, is Wiro's wife. According to the *Opgeafrol* J276 of 1825 the ratio of males to females at Mosterd Bay was 3:1. The females listed were all Hottentots. Cross-cultural marriages indeed took place at Mosterd Bay.

(108) Scully, *Liberating the family?*, p.75

(109) Heap, 'Hottentots Holland', p. 145 describes prolific catches of up to 100 000 harders at the Strand in the early days.

(110) R. Ross, 'Rather mental than physical', in N. Worden & C. Crais (eds), *Breaking the chains: slavery and its legacy in the nineteenth-century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994). p. 164.

(111) WCARS, LND. 1/626: L5962, Letter to the Under Secretary for Agriculture by Gatieb Ryloon 1898. The vlei in the vicinity of the second mosque at Mosterd Bay, constructed in 1896 is indicated on the attached groundsketch of the site of the mosque. The vlei also appears on the surveyor's map of Mosterd Bay of 1879. Ref. WCARS, M4/845.

(112) Elphick and Giliomee, 'The shaping of', pp. 214-224.

(113) WCARS, 1/SSW 2/1/1, Civil Records, Case no.1 dated 1888: Gatieb Railoun was the plaintiff and Jan Salmon the defendant eventually paid up.

(114) WCARS, 1/SSW 2/1/1, Civil Case no.19 (dated 9 August 1889. Philip Myburgh, plaintiff and Baravie Gafodien, the defendant.

(115) Imam Abdus Sammat refers to his garden produce in his testament; and according to the late Hadji Armiem Railoun, a third generation descendant of Gatieb Railoun, Oupa Crombu, of Java, the patriarch of the Crombie-family of Stellenbosch and the Strand, had a huge garden in the vicinity of the present-day Nurul Anwar Masjid on Ben Friedman Square, Strand.

free black Wiro of Java took Hendrik Morkel to court for impounding their livestock and for whipping two boys with a *sjambök*. Morkel denied that he had whipped the children and claimed that the cattle were grazing on his ground, but the plaintiffs claimed that the animals had been grazing on government land. The court record notes that Cornelius Stynhard had four oxen and two horses and that the son of Wiro of Java was herding his father's cattle.¹¹⁶

Movement of ex-slaves to Mosterd Bay after emancipation

In the years before emancipation the ward of Hottentots Holland had a substantial slave population. In 1834-5 field-cornet Ryk de Vos enumerated 532 slaves (84 children under the age of six, 265 male slaves and 183 female slaves) in the Hottentots Holland ward for compensation purposes.¹¹⁷ After the ending of the apprenticeship period in 1838¹¹⁸, the settlement at Mosterd Bay grew rapidly. Yusuf Da Costa refers to the movement of large numbers of ex-slaves from the countryside to Cape Town after 1838.¹¹⁹ On a lesser scale there was a movement of ex-slaves to the rural Islamic enclave of Mosterd Bay both from Cape Town and from farms in the Boland.¹²⁰ Free access to land at Mosterd Bay must surely have encouraged many to join the settlement at Mosterd Bay to stake out a place in the sun. In the immediate pre- and post emancipation era, land in the metropolis of Cape Town must surely have been expensive and scarce

Kerry Ward cites Ludlow who traced the pattern of movement of the freed people, contracting themselves as wage labourers over a series of farms before finally settling on the Christian mission station at Groenekloof.¹²¹ At least eight of the *free blacks* of Indonesian origin who in 1810 were living close to Imam Abdus Sammat in Cape Town¹²² had followed a similar pattern moving from Cape

Town to farms in the wards of Stellenbosch and beyond, before finally settling at Mosterd Bay and forming a Muslim community there.

Freed slaves in the Hottentots Holland basin had the option of settling at one of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission stations in Somerset West, Raithby or Sir Lowry's Pass if they were Christian.¹²³ A number of slaves whose forebears were Muslim became Christians and settled at these mission stations in the Hottentots Holland area.¹²⁴

However, the *Opgeafrol* statistics indicate that many freed slaves and others came to settle at Mosterd Bay after emancipation in 1838. According to the Hottentots Holland *Opgeafrol* for 1842, there were 5 white males and 4 white females while there were 43 coloured males and 47 coloured females resident at Mosterd Bay.¹²⁵ By the 1851 *Op-*

(116) WCARS, 1/STB 2/21, Extract from the daybook of the Landdrost of Stellenbosch. Commencement date of case: Saturday 19 November 1825. I am grateful to Jody Sarich, from Chicago who is researching the Morkelfamily of Hottentots Holland and their slaves, for this reference.

(117) WCARS, SO 20/13, Appraisalment of Slaves in Hottentots Holland 1834-35. [Calculations of the break-down and totals are my own].

(118) Slaves were emancipated on 1 December 1834, but they had to work another four years as 'apprentices' to their owners, to secure a labourforce for the farmer. 'Slaves were to be freed from bondage but not from labour.' Nigel Worden 'Between slavery & freedom in C. Crais (ed), *Breaking the chains*, p.118.

(119) Y. Da Costa, 'From social cohesion to religious discord', in A. Davids (ed), *Pages from Muslim History* (Cape Town: Shuter & Shuter, 1994), p.104.

(120) The movement from Cape Town to Mosterd Bay may well have been assisted after 1843 by the coach service between Cape Town and Swellendam which had a stopover at Somerset West. From 1846 a thrice-weekly horse-drawn omnibus operated between Cape Town and Somerset. The railway line to Wellington via Eerste River was completed in 1862. Heap, *Hottentots Holland*, p. 99. 'The earliest name of the village was Somerset (from 1817). This was followed by Somerset Hottentots Holland, doubtless to distinguish it from Somerset East which was founded in 1825. In the 1850s it became West Somerset, this being eventually reversed, and Somerset West it has remained ever since'. Heap, *Hottentots Holland*, p.114.

(121) Kerry Ward, 'Links in the Chain', Nigel Worden & Clifton Crais (eds), *Breaking the Chains*, p.317

(122) See Appendix C. of M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for place of residence of free blacks in Cape Town, circa 1810.

(123) Master and Servant, Addenda to the documents of the working council of 21st July 1846 including memorials & report by the resident magistrates on the missionary institutions (Cape Town: Saul Solomon & Co., 1849), Condition no.10, p.37.

(124) The Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Society for 1868, p.42: *Somerset West. Our Congregations are composed of emancipated slaves and their children, Negroes from the East and West coasts liberated from slavevessels, and some of Mohammedan parentage who have embraced Christianity.*

(125) WCARS, *Opgeafrol* J314.

gaafrol the community at Mosterd Bay had increased from 99 to 160. According to Hopkins, *Reeds in 1851 is daar aan die Strand 'n vissersdorpie met 32 huisies of hutte en 'n bevolking van sowat 160 Maleiers en ander kleurlinge*.¹²⁶ (Already in 1851 there is a fishing village near the beach comprising 32 houses or huts and a population of 160 Malays and other coloured people.)

Shirley Judges in her study of poverty, living conditions and social relations in Cape Town in the 1830s refers to the close bond between *free blacks* and slaves.¹²⁷ She points out that when slaves lived apart from their owners they occupied the same houses as *free blacks*. Loos observes that freedom came at a price, as the freed slaves were suddenly responsible for maintaining themselves and their children in sickness and health.¹²⁸ She points out that the small *free black* community in Cape Town supported the freed slaves. Shell also refers to the assistance freed slaves received from a sympathetic free black Muslim community at the Cape.¹²⁹ Freed slaves were probably accorded similar assistance by the settlers at Mosterd Bay. The eventual allocation of the quitrent grants partially confirm this as three to four families were sharing small plots near the sea.¹³⁰

The growth of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay in the second half of the 19th century.

In 1864 Wesleyan missionaries complained about their mission at the Strand, lamenting the attitude of the few Christian parents, who were few in number, towards the education of the children.¹³¹ This report confirms the preponderance of the Muslims at Mosterd Bay, although the actual numbers are not given. However, a Wesleyan missionary report of 1879 reveals that 75% of the 800 coloureds at the Strand (Mosterd Bay) were Muslim.¹³²

The population growth from 160 in 1851 to 800 in 1879¹³³ indicates a definite migration to Mosterd Bay, especially of Muslims, probably freed slaves who embraced Islam. The writer's own slave forebears embraced Islam and joined the settlement at Mosterd Bay after emancipation.

Other evidence that Muslims came from Cape Town to settle at Mosterd Bay has come to light in the archival records. For example, in a court case involving housebreaking at one of the houses at Mosterd Bay in July of 1875, a witness declared that the wife of the owner of the house was in Cape Town to visit her sick father.¹³⁴

In December 1878 when Kieamo Daniels, a fisherman at Mosterd Bay drowned, his death notice indicated that he had been born in Cape Town.¹³⁵ Kieamo Daniel's brother, Semaar Daniels, came from Cape Town, requesting to be declared the beneficiary and executor dative of the estate of Kieamo Daniels (since Islamic marriages were not legally recognised).¹³⁶

Official confirmation that these settlers at Mosterd Bay had illegally occupied government land is to be found in the preamble to the Mosterd Bay Crown Lands Act of

(126) Hopkins, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*, p. 127.

(127) Judges, 'Poverty', p. 140.

(128) J. Loos, *Echoes of Slavery*, p. 38.

(129) Shell, *Bondage*, p. 393.

(130) See Appendix D. of M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for names of recipients of quitrent grants in 1882. Two to four families were huddled together on the same small plot near the beach.

(131) The Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the year 1864, p. 52.

(132) The Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the year 1879, p. 104: 'At the Strand, where the population consists of six hundred Malays and about two hundred other persons of colour, the congregations are good, but not many have hitherto made a profession of religion.'

(133) *Ibid* and Hopkins, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*, p. 127.

(134) WCARS, 1/STB 2/45, Court Case dated 2 July 1875: Abdol of Mosterd Bay, a labourer, vs. Isaac Hendricks for housebreaking and theft. The witness Feda testified that she lived near Abdol's house and had been looking after the house because Abdol's wife was in Cape Town visiting her sick father. She testified that she saw Hendricks taking away a table and a box of clothes. (Abdol lived on Lot 25 in present-day Market Street.)

(135) WCARS, MOOC 6/9/447, folio 1063, Death Notice of Kieamo Daniels who drowned off Somerset West on 9th December 1878. The estate of Kieamo Daniels received Lot 40 in 1882.

(136) WCARS, MOOC 6/9/447, folio 1063. Affidavit by Kieamo Daniels' brother, Semaar Daniels, dated 24 March 1902.

1881.¹³⁷ The insolvent estate of Imām Sadan Slemmen offers additional evidence of this. Hopkins also states: 'In 1871 *verskaif agttien visserskuite in Mosterts- en vier in Gordonsbaai 'n beenkome aan meer as 'n honderd man, wat met hul gesinne op kroongrond op die strand woon.*¹³⁸ (In 1871 eighteen fishing boats at Mosterd Bay and four at Gordon's Bay were providing a refuge for more than one hundred men who were staying with their families on Crown land near the beach.)

Islam at Mosterd Bay after Imam Abdus Sammat's death in 1838.

Apart from Imām Abdus Sammat's testament, which states that he was an *imām* at Mosterd Bay, there are few documentary records of Islamic activity at Mosterd Bay for the period 1838 to 1864. There is no conclusive evidence as to who succeeded Imām Abdus Sammat after his death in March 1838. Despite this it become clear that the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay continued to grow in this period.

Oral history coupled in some instances with documentary evidence such as death notices and death registrations, as well as Christian missionary records have been used to account for the history of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay in this period. The death notices and death registrations corroborate the names of Muslims who according to the oral history lived at Mosterd Bay during the period 1838 to 1864.¹³⁹

For Islam to have survived at Mosterd Bay, some sort of Islamic education and practices must have taken place in this period. One can assume that initially the congregants would have used one of the reed huts for the purpose of *salāh*, *jumu'ah*, *miarāj*, *Maulud al-nabī*, *rātibul-Haddād*, *salawāt*, *tarawīb* in *Ramadān*, *Eīd* celebrations, *janāzah* and the traditional prayers on the seventh, 40th and 100th night after the death of a family member.¹⁴⁰

Scully could find no documentary evidence, but she believes it is probable that marriages were solemnised in the homes of the Islamic community at the Strand between 1823 and 1853.¹⁴¹ Shell states that by the 1820s Muslim *imāms* were routinely performing marriage ceremonies for slaves.¹⁴² Abdol Sammat as an *imam* resident at Mosterd Bay would certainly have performed these *nikahs*. (Islamic marriages).

There is some documentary evidence of marriages that could have taken place at Mosterd Bay while Imam Abdol Sammat was still alive. In 1825 Ongo Talodien was listed on the Hottentots Holland *Opgaafrol* as a resident at Mosterd Bay. This is the Ongo mentioned in 1832 in the testament of Imām Abdol Sammat as an alternate executor.¹⁴³ In his own testament, filed on 12 May 1837, Ongo stated that he was a married.¹⁴⁴ Imām Abdus Sammat was still alive at the time so it seems reasonable to conclude that he performed marriages at Mosterd Bay. For example, the marriage of Saban Wanza to Eva Wanza may have taken place c.1834 when Imām Abdus Sammat was still alive. The couple were born in Stellenbosch and died at Mosterd Bay, Saban in 1879 and Eva in 1895. Saban Wanza's death notice stated that he was married by Malay rites.¹⁴⁵ Eva's eldest son was 60 years old when she died in 1895.¹⁴⁶ This means that their marriage might have taken place circa

(137) WCARS, CCP 6/2/1/23, Mosterd Bay Crown Lands Act of 1881. Extract from the preamble: 'Whereas certain persons have, for considerable periods of time, occupied certain erven or plots of Crown land adjoining the sea shore at Mosterd Bay, in the division of Stellenbosch, and have from time to time erected buildings thereon without having received any title to such lands, but without having been interrupted by the Government in such occupation, or in the erection of such buildings:' (WCARS, MOIB 2/1373, folio 3. In the insolvent estate of Imam Sadan Slemmen in 1869 it is indicated that Imam Sadan Slemmen was the owner of two houses on crown land at Mosterd Bay.

(138) Hopkins, *Die Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk*, p. 127.

(139) See Appendix E. of the M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for details of Muslims who were born at Mosterd Bay between 1838 and 1864.

(140) Imam Abdus Sammat requested in his testament that these prayers should be performed after his death.

(141) Scully, *Liberating the family 2*, p. 117.

(142) Shell, *Bondage*, p. 320.

(143) WCARS, MOOC 7/1/144, Folio 168 & 169. Testament of Imam Abdus Sammat

(144) WCARS, MOOC 7/1/169, Ref. 116. Testament of Ongo Talodien. Here for the first time we learn that Ongo's surname was Talodien.

(145) WCARS, MOOC 6/9/371, Folio 3474, Death notice of Saban Wanza filed on 8 November 1897.

1834, but it is not known whether they were married in Stellenbosch or at Mosterd Bay.

Other significant documents of the Muslim community of Mosterd Bay are the testament and death notice of Ongo Talodien and his memorial for land. From Ongo's testament, we learn that after his first marriage to Nella by whom he had two children, Spasie and Salie, he married an apprentice, Dolphina, of Johannes Brink, owner of the farm *Knorboek* in the Sir Lowry's Pass area.¹⁴⁷ This is an example of the situation described by Judges: 'Slave women had formal and informal unions with free men and slave men were involved with free women.'¹⁴⁸ Ongo's two children by the slave Nella, Spasie and Salie were born into slavery.¹⁴⁹ Dolphina, Ongo's second wife, was among the 28 slaves of Johannes Brink Senior, including Spasie and Salie, who were appraised for compensation purposes in 1834-5.¹⁵⁰ The Hottentots Holland *Opgaafrol* of 1840 records that Dolphina was with her husband, Ongo, at Mosterd Bay.¹⁵¹ Further evidence that Ongo and Dolphina were married is to be found in Ongo's death notice.¹⁵² Dolphina made her mark on the death notice and both Spasie and Salie, Ongo's children by his first wife, Nella are listed.¹⁵³ The children of Ongo were also at Mosterd Bay in 1842. This is one example of a *free black* who married an *apprentice* and after final emancipation in 1838 was united with his family at Mosterd Bay.

The first madrassah and the langgar at Mosterd Bay

In 1864, according to a Wesleyan missionary report, the 'Mohammedan children' of Mosterd Bay were no longer attending the school (in a hall that had been built near the beach in 1851)¹⁵⁴ because a Muslim school (*madrassah*) had been opened.¹⁵⁵ The *madrassah* may have been established at Mosterd Bay to counter the attempts of the Wesleyan-Methodist missionaries to proselytise the children of the Muslim fishermen.

The *madrassah* was probably in the *langgar* of Gatieb Railoun. According to local oral history, he established his *langgar* circa 1864, behind the present-day Rialto Cinema in an area later known as Heyneke Street.¹⁵⁶ The 1879 Government Surveyor's Map of Mosterd Bay confirms the oral testimony regarding this site.¹⁵⁷ The map indicates that 'Gatieb Railing' occupied Lot no. 8, the erf eventually granted to Gatieb Railoun as a quitrent on 27 October 1882.¹⁵⁸ He had occupied this erf for at least 20 years before it was granted to him.¹⁵⁹

(146) WCARS, HAWC 1/3/44/5/1, Death registration of Eva Saban. The ages of her five boys and four girls were listed with the registration of her death. The eldest son was 60 years old.

(147) WCARS, MOOC 7/1/169, folio 116. Testament of Ongo Talodien: Ongo states that he was married to Nella, but he left her because of her *slegt gedrag* (bad behaviour). A Nella, born in 1811 was listed in the Slave Register of Johannes Brink Senior and she would have been 26 years old when Ongo lodged his testament. Two Dolphinas were listed in the same register, one born in 1791 and the other in 1819. Ongo probably married the younger Dolphina who would have been 18 years old in 1837.

(148) Judges, 'Poverty', p.140. Judges points out that some slave mothers had free children, some slaves had free sisters or brothers, some slave children had free parents, uncles or grandparents.

(149) Spasie and Salie were appraised in 1834-35 which proves that Nella, Ongo's first wife, was also a slave of Johannes Brink Senior.

(150) WCARS, SO 13/20, Appraisements of Slaves for the District of Stellenbosch, 1834-35. In this register Return no.3948 is listed as the return of the farm *Knorboek* of Johannes Brink Senior.

(151) WCARS, *Opgaafrol* J310. In the list of all those over the age of 16 residing at Mosterd Bay, Dolphina's name follows immediately after Ongo's. Spasie and Salie were not listed, probably because they were under 16.

(152) WCARS, MOOC 3958/37, folio 5689. Death Notice of Ongo Talodien of Batavia. Ongo, a fisherman, drowned in Mosterd Bay on 15 February 1842. Many fishermen from Mosterd Bay drowned over the years.

(153) It is interesting to note that the ratio of adult males to females at Mosterd Bay in 1825 was 3:1. This implies that some of these *free blacks* at such as Ongo, had to look elsewhere to find wives.

(154) Heap, *Hottentots Holland*, p.150.

(155) The Report of the WMMMS, London, 1864, pp. 45-53.

(156) Oral history narrated by Oesman Rhoda (1906-1996) over Easter week-end 1988. Rohan Ramotar of Durban, the son of Jaria Ramotar, nee Rhoda wanted to know where his mother was born. Rohan's mother is the granddaughter of Samodien Rode. Rohan Ramotar was on vacation in the Cape and it was on this occasion that my father Oesman Rhoda pointed out the site where Gatieb Railoun had his *langgar* and where the house stood in which Rohan Ramotar's mother was born.

(157) WCARS, M4/845, Map of Mosterd Bay 1879.

(158) See Appendix D. of the m.a. thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for recipients of quitrent grants at Mosterd Bay in October 1882.

(159) WCARS, MOOC 6/9/3721, Folio 26635: Death Notice of Ryloen Java (also known as Gatieb Ryloen / Railoun) died in the Strand in 1906. He was born in Batavia in 1840 and probably settled at Mosterd Bay as a young man in his mid-20s. The small erf which he received as a quitrent grant on 27 October 1882 was granted according to the Mosterd Bay Crown Lands Act no. 4 of 1881, ref. CCP 6/2/1/23. He married Jamiela Wentzel, the daughter of the fisherman Galiel Wentzel, c.1865. Jamiela was born at Mosterd Bay in 1839 and died there in 1909. Death registration ref: HAWC 1/3/43/71). Gatieb Railoun's eldest son, Emardien, was born c.1866 and died in 1940. (Death notice MOOC 6/9/7355, ref. 72702).

It is also possible that the *madrassah* was in the *langgar* of Imam Sadan Slemmen on Lot 16. The inventory of the insolvent estate of Imam Sadan Slemmen in 1869 indicates that one room of his property was used as a 'Malay school'¹⁶⁰, but there is no conclusive evidence as to where it was situated in 1864.

According to the late Imam Ismail Latief who was Imam of the Nūrul Islam Masjid in Faure Street, Strand, for 50 years, his father told him that there had been another *langgar* off Wesley Street, opposite the old police station. The surveyor's map of 1879 indicates that Imam Sadan Slemmen lived on that exact site, on Lot 16, which he eventually received as a quitrent grant from the government.¹⁶¹

The records of the insolvent estate of Imām Sadan Slemmen indicate that he used a room in one of his two houses as a 'Malay church' (*langgar*).¹⁶² Hopkins notes: 'In 1864 staan daar in die groeiende dorpje Mostertsbaai al verskeie goeie huise...' ¹⁶³ (In 1864 there were in the growing little town of Mosterd Bay a couple of good houses.) This is the first documentary evidence - supported by oral testimony - that a room in the town was being used as a *langgar*.

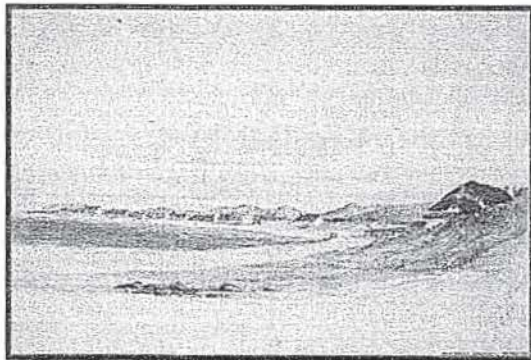


Fig. 2 Mosterd Bay in 1864. Courtesy Museum Africa.

The masjids and jama'ahs of Mosterd Bay: a miniature Bo-Kaap

A pattern similar to that of the Bo-Kaap seems to have developed at Mosterd Bay

with regard to the number of *masjids* and *jama'ahs* within a single Islamic community.

By 1879 there were 600 Muslims at Mosterd Bay and a *masjid* had become a necessity. It is probable that the Market Street *masjid* in the Strand was constructed in the 1870s or even earlier as the *masjid* with a house was registered as a quitrent grant in October 1882.¹⁶⁴ From oral sources we learn that *Imām* Tata Lanie Baderoen, *Imām* Taliep Cassiem and *Imām* Basier Latief were very involved with the construction of the *masjid*. The late *Imām* Ismail Latief was told that his grandfather and others carried rocks from the Mosterd Bay reef for the foundation of the *masjid*.

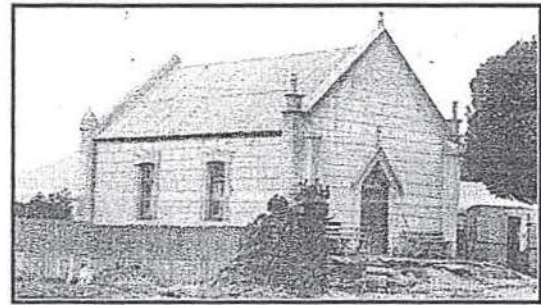


Fig.2 The first mosque built in the mid 19th century

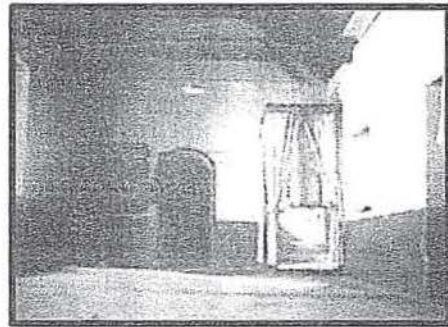


Fig.3 The second mosque built in 1885.

(160) WCARS, MOIB 2/1373, folio 3, Insolvent estate of Sadan Slemmen, 1869.

(161) WCARS, M4/845, Government Surveyor's Map of Mosterd Bay, 1879.

(162) WCARS, MOIB 2/1373, Insolvent estate Sadan Slemmen, 1869.

(163) Hopkins, *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk*, p. 129.

(164) Deeds Office (DO), Volume 6, folio 1417, Erf register of the Strand. The quitrent grant, Lot 27, on which the *masjid* and a house were erected, was registered on 27 October 1882 in the name of Baderoen Priest. This Baderoen Priest was Imam 'Tata' Lanie Baderoen who remained *imām* of the Market Street Masjid until his death in 1927. Death Notice ref: MOOC 6/9/3721, folio 26635. Mogamat Sahiet (Imam Doenie) succeeded his father and remained *imām* until his death in 1943. Death notice

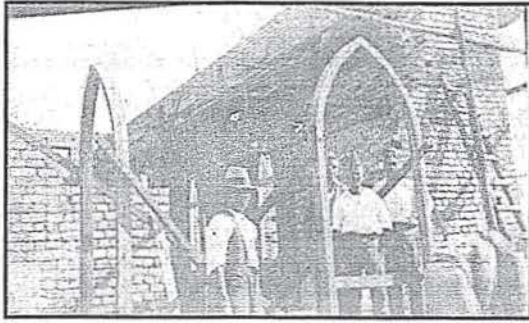


Fig.4 The third mosque under construction, 1928.

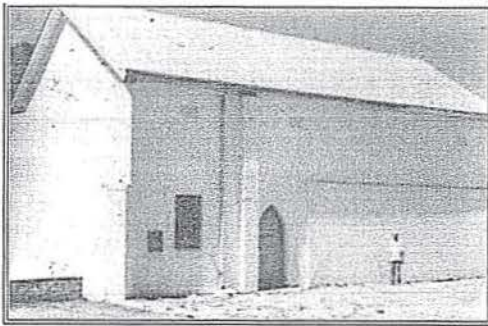


Fig.5 The completed 3rd mosque in the 1960s.

It seems likely that during the construction of the Market Street masjid, Gatieb Railoun was operating from his *langgar* in Heyneke Street with his *jama'ah* probably based on familial relationships.¹⁶⁵ In 1885 his *jama'ah* constructed their own *masjid*, a stone's throw away from the Market Street *masjid*.¹⁶⁶ The fact that by 1885 Mosterd Bay had two *masjids* reveals groupings that had developed over time. In 1950 after major alterations this second *masjid* in the Strand was named the Nürul Anwar Masjid.

According to oral sources, with the registration of the Market Street masjid in 1882 a split occurred which led to the establishment of a third *jama'ah* under the leadership of Imām Taliep Kassiem. This third grouping operated from the *langgar* off Wesley Street.¹⁶⁷ In 1928 the third *jama'ah* built their *masjid*, the Nürul Islam in Faure Street, not even 50 metres from the second *masjid*.¹⁶⁸

The existence from 1928 of three *jama'ahs* each with their own *imām* and stru-

ctures of operation and administration is evidence of the groupings in this little enclave of Islam, but there is no evidence of any court case about *imāmat* succession from the founding of Mosterd Bay to that time. From 1882 when the first *masjid* was registered until 1928¹⁶⁹, only one *jumu'ah* was held for the whole community and this shows that the community benefited from a strong and prudent Islamic leadership. Initially, the *jumu'ah* was held in the Market Street *Masjid*, but natural growth in the community required the *jumu'ah* to be moved to the bigger Nürul Islam *Masjid* in Faure Street in the 1950s.

Whatever divisions there might have been, Islam survived. The pioneers of Islam at Mosterd Bay strongly embedded the teachings of the Holy *Quran* and the *Sunnah* of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) in the Muslim community. It is interesting to note that, though not part of the *dinn* of Islam, certain practices and traditions

ref. MOOC 6/9/10340, folio 87852. The third eldest son of Imam 'Tata' Lanie Baderoen, Imam Kassiem 'Beyman', then held the position of *imam* until 1947.

(165) Deeds Office (DO), Volume 5, folio 1221, Erf register of the Strand. Ryloen Java, alias Gatieb Railoun received Lot 8 as a quitrent grant on 27 October 1882.

(166) WCARS, LND 5962: On 19 July 1892 Gatieb Railoun stated in a letter to the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works that seven years earlier on the authority of Mr G. van Rheede van Oudtshoorn, the then Civil Commissioner for Stellenbosch, he and his congregants had built a church on Government Land at Somerset West Strand which they have ever since used for their religious meetings. This letter confirms that the second masjid was established in 1885. WCARS, LND. 1/626: L5962. On 16 May 1898 Gatieb Railoun wrote on behalf of the community to the Under Secretary for Agriculture requesting an additional piece of land adjacent to the mosque, in order to enlarge the mosque that had been erected on land granted to the Malay community on 1 April 1896. This *masjid* together with the new Malay cemetery in Gordon's Bay Road were the first *waaf* properties established by Gatieb Railoun on behalf of the Strand Muslim community. Gatieb Railoun was imam of this *masjid* until his death in 1906. (Death notice reference: MOOC 6/9/542, folio 784.) On the death notice it is indicated that Gatieb Railoun was born in Batavia. Gatieb Railoun was succeeded by his compatriot Imam Moosa Karan who served the *jama'ah* until his death in 1932. Gatieb Railoun's second eldest son, Kamalodien Railoun, succeeded Imam Moosa Karan and served the *jama'ah* until his death in 1948. (Death registration of Kamalodien Railoun HAWC 1/3/43/57.)

(167) DO, Volume 5, folio 1268. Erf register of the Strand. Sadan Slemmen received Lot 16 as a quitrent grant on 27 October 1882.

(168) The group responsible for the establishment of a third *jama'ah* broke away because of a *sharia* issue regarding the registration of the first *masjid* in 1882. Archival records reveal that the masjid was not registered as a *waaf* property in the name of the congregation.

(169) The year 1928 is used to demarcate the focus area of this paper. However, much later in 1972 a split occurred and since then two *jumu'ahs* are held in the Strand.

like *ratibul Haddad*, *laylatul bara'ah*, the 7th, 40th and 100th night prayers for a deceased person were instituted by the pioneers. These practices and traditions are still upheld in the Strand Muslim community. To this day many words of Maleyu origin listed by Achmat Davids are still used by the elderly in the community.¹⁷⁰ The traditional *tjuker* (from Malayu *birtjuker*) or name-giving ceremony is still being practised in the Strand. In Cape Town the word *doopmaal* is used instead.

Da Costa points out 'that during the latter half of the nineteenth century most of the adherents of Islam amongst the different national origin groups at the Cape, assimilated into a single identifiable socio-religious group or community'.¹⁷¹ This most probably occurred at Mosterd Bay if one looks at the diverse origin of the settlers.¹⁷² Strong Islamic leadership most probably secured that the enclave survived and developed into one of the strongest rural Muslim communities in the Western Cape.

The Islamic leadership at the Strand was not only concerned with the retention of their community's Muslim identity. Of great concern to the leadership was the secular education of the community. In this regard Imam Moosa Karan occupied the important position as chairman of the committee that was to embark on fundraising for the establishment of the Strand Moslem Primary School.¹⁷³ Community worker and leader Mr. Hassan Khan in 1926 stated:

*"They as Muslims should recognise their duties as fathers in bringing up their children to become worthy citizens of South Africa. Islam enjoined that the ideal of education was one that should be practised by every earnest Muslim. They should sacrifice in order to give every child in the community a decent education."*¹⁷⁴

Seven state-aided Muslim primary schools were established between 1912 and 1928 in the Cape Peninsula and some Boland towns.¹⁷⁵ Ajam aptly describes the purpose of these schools:

*"Each school was located in a residential area with large concentrations of Muslim families who assured its continued existence because it provided them both Islam-oriented and secular instruction. In every locality the school was the focus of non-formal education, a venue for cultural activity symbolising community involvement in and identification with its purpose."*¹⁷⁶

Just over a hundred years later since the founding the Mosterd Bay Muslim community the leadership at the Strand had seen to it that their own Muslim community had become an integral part of the overall effort to educate their community secularly.

Octogenarians Hadj Armien Baderoen (83) and the late Hadj Tagoedien Railoun (81) were among the first pupils to benefit from this education. In a community radio programme they gave a vivid description of the first day when the Strand Moslem Primary School opened its doors in 1929.¹⁷⁷

(170) Achmat Davids, 'The Afrikaans of the Cape Muslims from 1815-1915: A socio-linguistic Study'. Unpublished Afrikaans M.A. Thesis, University of Natal (1991), p.25. Some Maleyu words still in use among the elderly in the Strand are: *gbielap* (from Malayu *kilat* - lightning); *ghoentoe* (from Malayu *guntur* - thunder) and *djamang* (from Malayu *djamban* - toilet).

(171) Da Costa, 'From Social cohesion and religious discord', p.105.

(172) See Appendix E. of M.A. Thesis of Ebrahim Rhoda for names and origin of settlers at Mosterd Bay.

(173) 'The Moslem Outlook' 9th January, 1926, p.9.

(174) 'The Moslem Outlook', p. 9. Mr. H.Khan was introducing the mayor of the Strand, Mr.H.A. Haylet with the opening of the bazaar in the Strand Town Hall. The Muslim community organized the bazaar to raise funds for the construction of the Strand Moslem Primary School which opened in 1929 in Fagan Street. Under the Cape Provincial Administration Mr.H.Khan served as manager of the Strand Moslem Primary School from 1928 until 1952.

(175) Mogamed Taslim Ajam, 'The raison d'etre of Moslem mission schools in Cape Town and its environments from 1860-1980 with special reference to Dr.A.Abdurahman and the modernization of Islamic schools'. Unpublished Education Doctoral Dissertation, UCT, 1986, p. 29. Ajam lists the following schools: Rahmani-yeh Institute, Aspeling Street, Cape Town, 1913. Talfallah Institute, Draper Street, Claremont, 1917. Salt River Moslem Primary, 1917. Simonstown Moslem Primary School, 1923. In the Boland Paarl Moslem School was established in 1917 whilst the Strand Moslem Primary School and Worcester Moslem Primary School were both established in 1928. The dates of establishment of Paarl and Worcester schools were obtained telephonically from these towns.

(176) Mogamed Taslim Ajam, 'Moslem mission Schools', p.31

(177) On 14 October, 2003 Hadj Armien Baderoen and the late Hadj Nieftagoedien Railoun related their experiences of the opening day of the Strand Moslem Primary School in 1929 on 'Voice of the Cape' community radio.

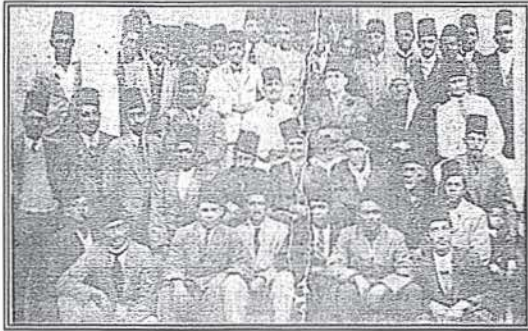
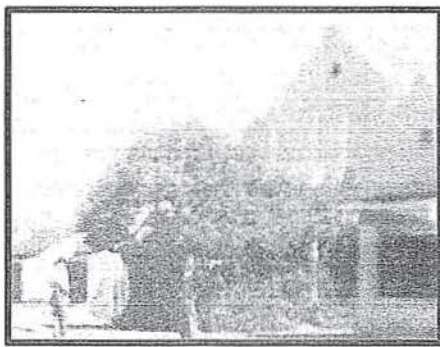


Fig.6 Prince Ikraam of Turkey on the stoep of the Muslim School in 1931. Fig.



7 The Muslim School in the 1950s

Conclusion

The founding of the Mosterd Bay Muslim community came about because of the convergence of major events in the early 19th century. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, Muslim *free blacks* were willing to move from urban Cape Town to the rural areas in search of greener pastures. One could look upon the movement of these Muslim *free blacks* to establish their own community as a minor *hijrah* away from slavery to a space where Islam could be practised independently of state and Christian missionary activity. Christian missionaries conceded that the *imams* were making headway in the interior by converting slaves and *free blacks* to Islam.

The continuous growth of the Muslim community at Mosterd Bay after emancipation and during the latter half of the 19th century (as evidenced by the establishment of *langgars* and *masjids* and the opening of the first madrassah) points to strong Islamic lea-

dership at Mosterd Bay. It could be argued that Christian missionary activity in the Hottentots Holland basin during the latter half of the 19th century (and the first quarter of the 20th century) probably strengthened the resolve of the Muslims at Mosterd Bay to retain their identity.

Yet, despite this missionary failure to convert the Muslims to Christianity, the community of both Muslim and Christian fishermen at Mosterd Bay have learnt since the early days to live side by side in harmony. All fishermen in those days faced the same dangers and challenges of the sea with their tiny fishing boats. The very sea which sustained them also took the lives of many of them. It was this common bond among fishermen that enabled Muslim and Christian to live side by side in harmony through generations.

Peggy Heap refers to this relationship of the fishermen at the Strand when she states:

*"It is recorded that on Fisherman's Sunday, when the church was decorated with trek nets and other tools of the trade, the Malay fishermen joined in the service of thanksgiving for the harvest of the sea".*¹⁷⁸

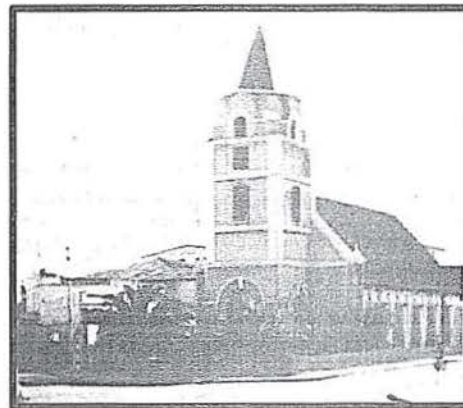


Fig.8 The Wesleyan Methodist Church, 1950s.

This harmonious relationship of Muslim and Christian fishermen was perhaps aptly portrayed early in 1944 when the Wesleyan Methodist community at the Strand held a

(178) Heap, *Hottentots Holland*, p. 180.

special service in the Wesleyan Methodist Church (See picture) to sympathise with the Muslim families and the Muslim community when four Muslim fishermen drowned in the bay.¹⁷⁹

Skipper Awie Josephs, a staunch Methodist was on the *Mavis* as his own boat was in for repairs.

At the inquest held on 4 January 1944 he described how a freak wave had swamped the *Mavis* just as they were approaching the opening in the reef. Consecutive waves smashed the *Mavis* on the reef.¹⁸⁰ On that fateful, beautiful summers day on 28 December 1943 the fishing community witnessed this incident when the *Mavis* was about 500 metres from the shore. Before their very eyes they saw how skipper Atiefie Kassiem (45), Allie Railoun (35), Samsodien Latief (22) and Saban Wanza (20) lost their lives to Mosterd Bay.¹⁸¹

The latter half of the eighteenth century is interspersed with drownings of fishermen at Mosterd Bay as pointed out earlier. Tragic incidents like these in the lives of fishermen, irrespective of race creed or religion only serve to make the existing bonds even stronger.

During my youthful years in the late 1940s I can recall that Christian neighbours reminded us to go home as it is almost *maghrib*. (Prayer just after sunset) Such was the relationship between Muslims and Christians almost 120 years later since the first Muslims and Christians settled at Mosterd Bay.

While certain aspects of this study are speculative and some of the evidence circumstantial, a considerable body of evidence from oral and documentary sources, some not previously cited by researchers, has been presented to support the following conclusions:

Hitherto unknown documentary evidence presented in this paper allows me to conclude that the Strand Muslim community was not founded by the descendants of the followers of Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar. On the available documentary evidence it is also not possible to assert that the *jama'ah* of the late *Imām* Ismail Latief was established in 1796. Evidence gathered in this study indicates that Imam Abdol Sammat of Semarang in Java and his free black compatriots, with their Cape-born brothers founded the Strand Muslim community in 1822. The evidence suggests that their movement from Cape Town to Mosterd Bay was a gradual process. Several of the first settlers, including Abdol Sammat, seem to have migrated from Cape Town in a series of stages, first to Stellenbosch or to farms in the Hottentots Holland basin, then to Mosterd Bay. Nonetheless I contend that their movement into the interior and their settlement at Mosterd Bay was deliberate, motivated by a desire to propagate Islam, a goal which they may have seen as particularly urgent, given the rapid expansion of Christian missions in Cape Town and its environs.

The final emancipation of slaves in 1838 ensured the numeric growth and development of this community as confirmed by the census of Mosterd Bay of 1879. Present-day Muslim families of the Strand who are in some cases seventh and eighth generation descendants of the early settlers are living proof of the continuity of a sustained Muslim community that has existed for 195 years.

Strong Islamic leadership at Mosterd Bay, especially during the latter half of the nineteenth century, rendered Wesleyan missi-

(179) *Cape Times*, 6 January, 1944.

(180) *Cape Times*, 6 January, 1944.

(181) The late Hadj Nadeem Daniels (78) witnessed these drownings as a 16 year old. He fought valiantly to suppress his tears as he related to me the story of the *Mavis* at his residence in Naomi Street, Strand in September 2003. He saw the two young fishermen, Samsodien and Saban disappearing under the waves as they attempted to swim ashore.

onary attempts to proselytize, futile. Despite familial rivalry amongst the Islamic leadership, the community survived and is today in 2017 one of the strongest Muslim communities in the rural Western Cape.

The colonial government subtly acknowledged the role the settlers had played in the development of the village of Mosterd Bay when they were granted legal title to the Crown land they and their descendants had occupied for almost sixty years.

The structures which the leadership established at Mosterd Bay ensured the retention of the inhabitants' Islamic identity. In addition, prudent leadership spared the community the conflict which the Muslim community of the Bo-Kaap experienced in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Yes, the settlement of fishermen was destroyed in the 1960s by the Nationalist Party government, which made use of the Slum Clearance Act for this purpose, but to this day three *masājid* established by our forebears still stand proudly as symbols of defiance of the inhumane system of *apartheid*.

Glossary of Arabic words

<i>ansars:</i>	the helpers
<i>tarawīh:</i>	special formal prayers performed at night during <i>Ramadaan</i> , the month of fasting.
<i>auwal:</i>	(in this context) the first
<i>dawab:</i>	missionary work
<i>Eīd:</i>	celebration after fasting or after performance of the pilgrimage
<i>Hadji:</i>	title accorded to a person who has performed the <i>hadj</i> , the pilgrimage to Mecca
<i>hijrah:</i>	flight
<i>imām:</i>	a prayer leader / one who is in charge of a mosque / a founder of a school of thought / a politico-religious leader
<i>imamat</i>	persons holding position of <i>imam</i> of a <i>jama'ab</i>
<i>imān:</i>	faith / depth of belief
<i>janazah:</i>	funeral
<i>jama'ab:</i>	congregation
<i>jumu ab:</i>	the Friday congregation prayer

<i>kbalifab:</i>	(local usage) teacher
<i>keramat:</i>	name given to a <i>Wali</i> (holy man) of Allah or the place where he lies buried
<i>laylatul bara'ab:</i>	night of power
<i>langgar:</i>	a place for prayers and where Islamic classes may be conducted
<i>Maulana:</i>	a title given to a religious scholar
<i>madrassab:</i>	a school (in the South African context it refers to an Islamic school)
<i>madāris:</i>	plural of <i>madrassah</i>
<i>masjid:</i>	mosque
<i>Maulud al-Nabī:</i>	the celebration of the birth of the Prophet, praise be upon him (p.b.u.h)
<i>miarāj:</i>	the ascension of the Prophet through the seven heavens
<i>opgaafrol:</i>	census
Holy <i>Quran:</i>	The holy book of Muslims
<i>Ramadān:</i>	the month of fasting
<i>rātibul-Haddād:</i>	a combination of litanies and invocations
<i>nikah:</i>	(in this context) marriage / marriage contract / matrimony / wedlock
<i>sabr:</i>	patience
<i>salāb:</i>	the formal prayer in Islam
<i>salawāt:</i>	refers to special invocations recited on the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)
<i>Sharia:</i>	Islamic laws
<i>shaykh:</i>	a title given to a religious scholar
<i>Sunnah:</i>	Practice of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)
<i>tarawīb:</i>	formal nightly congregational prayers performed during <i>Ramadān</i>
<i>waqf:</i>	held in trust on behalf of the community

Endnotes

Key: 1/SSW - Records of the Landdrost district of Somerset West
 1/STB - Records of the Landdrost district of Stellenbosch
 CCP - Cape Colonial Publications
 DO - Deeds Office
 HAWC - Home Affairs Western Cape
 LND - Department of Land
 MOIB - Master of the Orphan Chamber Insolvency Branch.
 MOOC - Master of the Orphan Chamber
 SO - Slave Office
 UR/CL - Rhodes University, Cory Library
 WMMS - Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society
 WCARS - Western Cape Archives Records Service.