Translating al-Mawwaq to be used as a primary source to address curriculum deficiencies in the South African Darul Ulooms

(Thesis)

Translating al-Mawwaq to be used as a primary source to address curriculum deficiencies in the South African Darul Ulooms

By

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Declaration

I, Shoayb Ahmed (student number 04877277), hereby declare that the dissertation entitled: "**Translating the work of al-Mawwaq to be used as a primary source to address curriculum deficiencies in the South African Darul Ulooms"** is my own work and all sources have been acknowledged with full references.

Signed: Shoayb Ahmed

Date: 31 October 2019

Abstract

It is knowledge that ultimately changes the face of the world because it allows the individual to conduct himself in a dignified manner conscious of his Creator. The Darul Ulooms in South Africa ever since inception have played a very important role in guiding the Muslim community.

However, when we trace the development of Islamic knowledge with specific reference to the early days of Islam with the presence of the Prophet Muhammad in Madinah, to the thriving Islamic scholarly ambience in Spain, to the transformation of the desert of Mauritania through the *mahdarah* into a vibrant land of scholarship until the establishment of Darul Uloom Deoband in India we observe that true scholarship results in greater tolerance and better coexistence between people.

Islamic scholarship underwent different changes to adapt to different environments and circumstances. Likewise, the Darul Ulooms in South Africa need to embrace some changes and reforms to its curriculum to remain relevant and to continue to provide the desired guidance for the country. Al-Mawwaq, who was a Spanish Muslim scholar from Granada, authored a book wherein he discussed important concepts related to Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism that could be incorporated under the broader topic known as the Objectives of the Shariah, which is common in the present discourse on Islam. The themes and topics in his book will be suggested as important inclusions to the Darul Uloom curriculum in order to address some deficiencies.

Common words:

Mahdarah, Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh), Spain, Sufism, Darul Uloom, scholar, mufti, Objectives of the Shariah, madrasa, curriculum, reform

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Chapter One

Introduction and Methodolgy for the thesis

1.1 Introduction to the study

This chapter provides a general overview on the study. This will include the introduction, the purpose of the study, which is to document the features of the Islamic education in Mauritania and its rich scholarly legacy in the form of the manuscripts that have been authored by its scholars and the manuscripts that arrived from abroad. With regard to the manuscripts from abroad, reference is being made to the manuscripts that originated in Spain and were preserved in Mauritania and Morocco. This will require some research and information about both Mauritania and Spain so that there is a better understanding about the society and the circumstances under which people there, study and the details related to their methodology and biographies of the scholars. This will contribute to filling the very gap to be covered by the thesis which will show how the subject matter of al-Mawwaq's book could be used to enhance and overcome some aspects or deficiencies in the Darul Uloom curriculum in South Africa and above all, the question to bear in mind in the course of writing this thesis, which involves a study of the scholarly atmosphere and academic legacy in Mauritania, its positive and negative aspects. It involves a study, translation and interpretation of al-Mawwaq's[1] book and thereafter using the contents thereof to address certain deficiencies within the current Darul Uloom syllabus in a South African context. A suitable methodology for the research work will also be outlined.

1.2 Knowledge in Islam

Ever since the first revelation of the first verses in the Quran when the Prophet Muhammad was instructed to recite (Quran: 96,1), Muslims took on the responsibility of acquiring knowledge. This desire and thirst was further motivated by the teaching and statements of the Prophet Muhammad to impart whatever little knowledge a person may have. An example of this is his statement on his last and only pilgrimage (*hajj*) which was some eighty days before his death. On this occasion the Prophet addressed the pilgrims and said: 'Let those present convey to those who are absent.' (al-

[1] Muhammad ibn Yusuf, commonly known as al-Mawwaq was a Spanish Muslim scholar and the author of the book 'Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din'. He died in Granada, Spain in 1491 (897 A.H)

Bukhari 1993:52). This statement reaffirmed what he said earlier during his life when he advised his companions: "Convey from me even if it is a single verse." (al-Mubarakfuri 1990: 360).

After the Prophet's death and the subsequent spread of Islam to other parts of the world, there was a greater urgency to preserve the teachings of Islam and to teach it to others. Initially, and for centuries thereafter, scholars resorted to travelling extensively in search of knowledge.
Many of their journeys and the subsequent difficulties they experienced were documented. At the same time, the scholars resorted to writing and, as time progressed, institutions were established from where knowledge could be imparted. Scholars documented their knowledge, their understanding and even the statements of the Prophet. (Trouati 2010: 16).

The formal process of documenting knowledge began with the instruction of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz (d. 720) who was one of the Caliphs. This task was undertaken by Muhammad ibn Shihab al-Zuhri (d. 741). One of the first to author a book on Islamic Jurisprudence was Imam Abu Hanifah (d. 767), while one of the first compilations of *hadith* was the *Muwatta* by Imam Malik (d. 795). This *Muwatta* contains about 1942 narrations. (Ghawji 2003: 29). Thus, we find a book like S*ahih al-Bukhari* compiled by Imam Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari (d. 810) which contains over 7000 traditions (*hadith*) of the Prophet. The *hadith* was gathered and compiled by Imam al-Bukhari who originated from Samarqand in Uzbekistan. This book eventually became so acclaimed that it received the distinction of being the most authentic book after the Quran. This book spread throughout the Muslim world and continues to be taught even in the countries where Muslims are regarded as a minority. (Brown 2007: 65-69).

The system which involves the chain of transmission (*isnad*) has been utilized to such an extent that any single *isnad's* authority can be challenged if there is sufficient ground for it. A fabricated or tampered *isnad* was almost impossible to pass without being detected. There are even continuous chains of transmission from a scholar today that link up to Imam al-Bukhari and eventually to the Prophet Muhammad. (Azami 2010: 130).

The spread of knowledge is also influenced by geographical factors-through the study of history and the biography of the Prophet Muhammad in the early days in Makkah when the Muslims were persecuted, after which they were granted permission to migrate. The first migration was to Africa,

more specifically to an area known then as Abyssinia and today is in the region of Sudan. The Christian king of Abyssinia had provided them with sanctuary. So Africa was the first home of Islam outside the Arabian Peninsula. Wherever the Muslims settled they were concerned about establishing a place for prayer (mosque) and, most often, this place fulfilled the role as an educational and social institution from where the young and old were educated on matters of their faith. (al-Buti 1990: 195).

Regardless where the Muslims travelled to, they always dedicated time and resources to acquiring and imparting knowledge. They were not deterred by their surroundings or the lifestyle. So whether it was the more sophisticated societies of Baghdad in Iraq, Damascus in Syria and Cordoba in Spain or the simple rugged desert villages in Mauritania, they continued to impart knowledge.

Thus, when the geographical location and the importance of acquiring and imparting knowledge, are merged, we find that Muslims in Africa also dedicated time and resources to knowledge and thus they built centres of learning. Two great and prestigious centres of learning must be mentioned; the first being al-Qarawiyyeen in Fez, Morocco and the other the al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Both these institutions were built over 1000 years ago and interestingly enough women were behind the establishment of both these institutions. They continue educating thousands of students to this day. (Halm 2001: 78).

1.3 Literature Overview

As the years progressed and Islam spread further into the African continent, two other major centres of Islamic scholarship featured. (Hill: 2009). These were:

(1). The historic city of Timbuktu in Mali and

(2). Mauritania.

My focus is on Mauritania because it is regarded as one of the better-kept secrets in the world of Islamic scholarship. (Kratli 2004:7).

The land of Shinqit is the Saharan Arabic name for the country we now call Mauritania which, historically (before the days of the geographical borders), actually incorporated Mali. This country is the very place from which the great Almoravid Empire that extended up to Spain began. This is

why a book authored by a Spanish Muslim scholar, whose book is amongst a Mauritanian collection of manuscripts, was selected. To many it was a country that was associated with slavery and regarded as one of the last countries in the world which still practised some forms of slavery. (https://mg.co.za/article/2018-06-15-00-mauritanias-slavery-problem0).

Instead, the land of Mauritania has had important influences on the development of Islam in the West and Central Sudan. It was even the Mauritanian Sufi centres (*zawaya*) that somewhat influenced certain movements including Sufi movements that spread Islam in Senegambia. (al-Jamal 1996: 102-103).

From the 17th century, the country witnessed a cultural revival. (Mayarah 2013: 2). This revival manifested itself in many ways but probably most significant is the establishment of the traditional schools (*mahdarah*) which adapted to the nomadic lifestyle of the people and was very effective in influencing the educational life of the people. One fruit of this system was the writings of the scholars who were products of the traditional schools. The writings reflect the personalities of the authors, the sense of their epoch and the particularities of the place. A classical example is off al-Mawwaq himself who used a harsh tone with reference to another scholar, Ibn Hazm. In the very next sentence, al-Mawwaq acknowledged his mistake and said: “I was wrong to have said that.” (al-Mawwaq 2002: 315).

The manuscripts are a good indication of a vibrant scholarship when discussing the cultural heritage that existed, but they did not get the required attention. But with the various challenges that these countries faced that included colonization, poverty and the lack of resources, the works of their scholars were neglected. These works contain important parts of African and Islamic history that many don’t even know exist. (Ngom 2017: 3). These manuscripts are not limited to the scientific aspects but are also a clear proof of how culture can flourish in the desert. Despite harsh conditions they produced manuscripts of good quality. This is with regard to the quality of its binding, the paper, the calligraphy and the richness of its content. (Kratli 2004: 11).

The collection of manuscripts in Mauritania contains a few that were preserved in Mauritania that actually have their roots in Spain. This is after the Muslims left Spain in 1492. (http://www.albayan.ae/paths/book/2010-02-28-1.223731).

According to Mohameden Ould Salem (Aramco World: 2003), a Mauritanian researcher and scholar who published his thesis on the history and development of the Mauritanian manuscripts, who said that if an Andalusian manuscript from the 12th century was compared with a Mauritanian manuscript from the 19th century, the similarity in style is so close that it could be assumed to be by the same calligrapher.

Ulrich Rebstock (2003: 12) stated in his catalogue on the Arabic manuscripts in Mauritania, that the Mauritanian manuscripts cover a wide range of topics ranging from Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Quran, history, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, mysticism (*tasawwuf*) to prose and other aspects of the Arabic language. (Kratli 2004:10).

1.3.1 Biography of Shaykh al-Khadim

This research will include a biography of a contemporary Mauritanian scholar, Shaykh al-Khadim, together with the names of his teachers and the books he studied. Because he is still alive, and a graduate of the traditional Mauritanian educational system (*mahdarah*) and a person who teaches at his own *mahdarah*, his biography will provide useful information and insight into the educational system. This will provide a deeper insight into the type and calibre of scholars this land produced. It will also provide us with some insight into the strengths and weaknesses of their approach. This will enable others like the administrators of Darul Ulooms in South Africa to draw from the positive aspects in the traditional Mauritanian education and perhaps make certain meaningful changes to their own approach. This may also encourage others to research the lives of other prominent Mauritanian scholars and their legacy.

1.3.2 Biography of al-Mawwaq

A book will be selected from Shaykh al-Khadim's collection of manuscripts. I will study and analyse a book authored by a classical scholar. For this I am inclined to select a book authored

by a Spanish scholar, known as al-Mawwaq[2] who died in 1491 whose book titled: *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din* is part of a Mauritanian collection. The reason for preferring the word Sanan in the title instead of Sunan is because this in line with the Arabic lexicon like *al-Qamus al-Muhit* by al-Fayruzabadi (1996: 1558) wherein the former refers to the 'way' or 'path'. Thus, the title would refer to the 'Ways of the rightly guided people…. This was confirmed telephonically by two contemporary scholars. The first is Dr. Abdul Hakim Anis, who is a senior researcher based in the UAE and the second is Shaykh Hasan al-Kettani, a senior Moroccan scholar.

I will have to provide a profile in English of the author which will provide additional insight into the type of education and environment the author was exposed to in Spain. Thus, we could deduce why and how scholars and education was able to flourish in a society that saw Muslims co-exist with Christians. The researcher reviewed some of the literature that discussed al-Mawwaq. The book by Kathryn Miller titled Guardians of Islam, published in 2008 deals with a specific ruling in Islam. It deals with the obligation to emigrate from a land ruled by non-Muslims to a Muslim ruled land. Another work by the same author deals with a study of two religious edicts (fatwa) on the same topic. One of these was issued by al-Mawwaq.

The other author who mentions al-Mawwaq is Alejandro Sanjuan in his book titled: 'Pious Endowments. This too deals with a specific matter, in this case various juristic matters related to endowments in Islam.

The specific fatwa pronounced by al-Mawwaq is not the focus of this thesis, although his book *Sanan al-Muhtadin* does contain issues in fiqh and matters related to Sufism as well as some discussion on matters of theology (aqidah). The candidate did not focus on specific fatwa's and neither on al-Mawwaq's juristic acumen but rather on how the content and themes of his book can be used to address and reform the Darul Uloom curriculum. So, both Miller and Sanjuan cite al-Mawwaq's views on a specific issue while discussing it in the context of the Maliki School. These are specific issues and the Maliki School is not the focus of this thesis. There is also work

[2] Muhammad ibn Yusuf, commonly known as al-Mawwaq was a Spanish Muslim scholar and the author of the book 'Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din'. He died in Granada, Spain in 1491 (897 A.H)

by Spanish writers like Luis Seco de Lucena Paredes titled: 'La Escuela De Juristas Granadinos En El Siglo XV'. With the aide of Google Translate, the candidate was able to familiarise himself with the content of this work. It is clear that the Spanish work does not include any new or additional information than was already mentioned by myself in the thesis. In fact, the Spanish author's main reference is an Arabic reference which I have referred to.

While discussing the Darul Ulooms, the candidate referred to references by Muslim scholars who were directly associated with the Darul Ulooms like Dr. Ebrahim Moosa and Zaman and other non-Muslim scholars like Ingram, Reetz, Sikand and Metcalf. The latter are not Muslim and thus provide an objective historical and ideological overview of the Darul Uloom. They do speak about the need for reform but do not actually deal with specifics within the current curriculum. They do make some reference to the need for reforming the way Islamic Jurisprudence is taught as well as the need to address contemporary ideologies. There is also the work by an Indian Deobandi graduate, Waris Mazhari. While his work is important, it was not given too much attention because his main works are in Urdu and the candidate is not familiar with the language. However, some articles in English including an interview that was conducted with Waris Mazhari (conducted by Victor Edwin in August 2014 from: www.scoop.co.nz/stories; www.warismazhari.blogspot.com) about the madrasas and reform were reviewed. Most of his suggested reforms are based on the Indian context, hence he suggests teaching Hindi and English. He does suggest some other curriculum reforms but these are largely based on the introduction of the natural and modern sciences. He suggests the inclusion of modern ideologies and some suggestions in teaching Islamic Jurisprudence (fiqh). Others suggested the inclusion of some computer studies and vocational training. This too is not relevant to my research.

The South African Darul Ulooms will dismiss any claims to reform especially if these are under the guise of modern sciences. This thesis however suggests curriculum reforms using the existing traditional subjects and adapting the approach to teaching these along with the themes extracted from al-Mawwaq's book. The candidate provides specific suggestions that deal with almost every individual subject taught at the Darul Uloom.

In addition, Waris Mazhari is a member of the team of scholars involved in a project launched in 2017 known as Madrasa Discourses aimed to address issues related to the curriculum and the effective training of Muslim scholars. This initiative is headed by Prof Ebrahim Moosa, who is a South African and a graduate from a Darul Uloom in India. Hence, the candidate relied

extensively on his work because of its relevance to the South African context. Thus, the work of Prof Ebrahim Moosa is more than sufficient and Waris Mazhari's work would not be necessary. (www.academia.edu/39210578/Madrasa_Reform article by Ghulam Rasool Dehlvi on 17 June 2017).

In fact, the candidate has included many more suggestions which are more specific in nature. He cited very specific possible reforms to almost every subject taught in the Darul Uloom. He suggested the introduction of other classical subjects that have been extracted from al-Mawwaq's work and even suggested additional titles of books that could be used in the curriculum.

1.3.3 An overview of the subject matter of the book titled: Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din by al-Mawwaq

In order to study and analyse the content, the book will have to be translated from Arabic into English. The author, al-Mawwaq, discusses nine principles which deal with the stages and ranks in religion in two separate methods. So the translated version will be a summarized and condensed version of the main ideas expounded on by al-Mawwaq. It is unknown whether any attempt was made in English in South Africa to provide an academic study on a Spanish-Mauritanian scholarly work. This will include some comments on the author's reason for writing the book, his style and his thinking. These will be placed into an African and a South African context indicating how others, particularly scholars could benefit from his work as well as how has his work contributed to the specific science of Islam.

The subject matter that the nine principles cover is also one that has preoccupied many scholars internationally and more recently in South Africa. This is the topic of the 'Objectives and the Intent of the Islamic Law'(*Maqasid*). Al-Mawwaq's book also deals with the objectives (*maqasid*) of Sufism. The Islamic Peace University (IPSA) in Cape Town has established a Chair dedicated to Maqasid Studies in 2016 and a course dedicated to teach this subject. This work lends credence to a more moderate approach to the Shariah, an approach that in recent times has become synonymous with the scholars of Sufism. This work will prove that the approach which allows for some flexibility is indeed the method of classical traditional scholars like al-Mawwāq. The principles discussed will prove to be very useful to scholars involved in the field of Islamic Jurisprudence.

al-Mawwaq appears to combine the subject of 'the higher purposes and intents of the Shariah' (*maqasid*), with the spiritual objectives (related to *tasawwuf* or also referred to as Sufism) in his book. Finally, it will correct some of the misconceptions in the West and among many Muslims that the Mauritanian heritage represents a small contribution to Islam's tapestry and they were not really isolated but rather a significant part of the Muslim academic legacy. This holds true when we read about the oldest library in Mauritania that was established in 1782. (Kratli 2004:8).

1.4 Stating the Problem:

The traditional system of education in Mauritania has produced some accomplished scholars but it is being taken over by more modern methods and approaches. (Nahwi 1987: 490) Therefore, there is a need to document this system along with its strengths and weaknesses so that Islamic institutions in South Africa, particularly the Darul Ulooms and others elsewhere could benefit from their successful methods and avoid making the same mistakes.

This may allow other institutions, be they traditional Darul Ulooms or tertiary institutions, the opportunity to benefit from the approach and methodology followed in the Mauritanian traditional school (*mahdarah)*. The reason for this is that although the Mauritanian scholars may be regarded as isolated from the rest of the world, their system of education still produced an amazing scholarly legacy and their scholars have excelled in various sciences particularly the Arabic Language and its poetry.

George Maqdisi estimated that those classical Arabic works that have been translated and published represent only about 10% of what is available in the libraries. And of that, only 10% had been edited adequately. (Qualey 2015: 2).

The above statement by Qualey is with regard to Arabic manuscripts across the world. This could motivate researchers and academics to work on editing and annotating some of these and thus exposing scholars to the wealth of information and knowledge that these manuscripts may contain. One of the things this thesis aims to do is to make a case for the manuscripts in Mauritania.

This research will focus on a book that was preserved among the plethora of manuscripts in Mauritania which according to some researchers are about 36 000 in number. There are manuscripts of al-Mawwaq's book in other places like Morocco and Tunisia.

There is a need for greater awareness regarding the manuscripts because many are left in steel trunks and with the passage of time the manuscripts deteriorate. Many manuscripts are in a poor condition and in urgent need of stabilization and repair. Unfortunately, the rudimentary facilities and the harsh environment that these medieval manuscripts are exposed to make it very unlikely to survive. (South Africa – Mali Project: 12). It must be noted though that most of the studies that were done on the manuscripts focused primarily on cataloguing and preservation.

To date, there has been no real attempt to translate some of these works into English. This could be attributed to the fact that many are not familiar with these scholars. Thus, there is a need for biographies that would provide insight into their lives and more importantly on their academic contributions. In addition, there is no known English translation of al-Mawwaq's book.

From my observation and analysis of the Darul Uloom curriculum in my capacity as a former student and subsequently establishing an institution modelled on the lines of the Darul Uloom, I realized that the curriculum does not adequately prepare the graduate to deal with the challenges our society presents. My observations correspond with the observations made by scholars and academics who have written about the Darul Ulooms and some of whom have been associated with these institutions. Dr. Ebrahim Moosa and Zaman amongst others have impressed on the need for reform within the Darul Ulooms. (Hefner & Zaman 2007: 64; Moosa 2015: 145). Chapter Six and Seven of this thesis will discuss the Darul Ulooms and the curriculum followed in these institutions. Therefore, including the subject of the objectives and intent of Shariah (*maqasid*) and the approach and content to other topics as discussed by al-Mawwaq into the Darul Uloom syllabus is significant and could assist in addressing some of the challenges and deficiencies. Once students understand the objectives of the Shariah in matters of Islamic Jurisprudence and the objectives in mysticism (*tasawwuf*), they will then graduate with a more comprehensive understanding which will enable them to deal with whatever arises in a better manner. The student will be equipped to

provide legal verdicts (*fatwa*) on new juristic matters and he/she will be able to guide people in matters of Sufism and thus prevent outbursts of intolerance that could result in violence.

In the South African context, there is a gap in the approach and methodology in teaching Islamic Jurisprudence, in the understanding and application of certain concepts of Sufism and certain aspects related to the understanding of what constitutes a 'bad' innovation as well the approach to dealing with contemporary politics in some of the Darul Ulooms. This is related to the students' inability to deal with and apply the principles of his knowledge from the classical books to contemporary situations. Thus the student is unable to relate to the broader community. This gap appears in the students understanding of Sufism as well, with the result being, the biased affiliation to certain Sufi Orders or personalities and disregarding others. This is based on my personal experience as a former student at one of the Darul Ulooms, thereafter instrumental in establishing another and subsequently teaching in it for seven years. So al-Mawwaq's book will assist in providing a sound understanding of the objectives (*maqasid*) of Shariah and Sufism and, thereafter we will attempt to use these concepts in addressing the challenges within the Darul Uloom curriculum. The Darul Ulooms may have other issues that require reform, but this research aims to specifically address issues and deficiencies related to the curriculum.

This is of concern because, according to the US based PEW Forum on Religion and Public Life which is a non-partisan fact tank that informs the public about issues shaping America and the world, the Muslim population in South Africa in 2010 was 1.5% of the total population. According to them, this was likely to double by 2030 that is to 3%. (www.pewforum.org/2011/01/27).
Assuming the projected 3% is the reality, then this means that the Muslim student or graduate from the Darul Uloom must know how to interact and co-exist with the broader community in this case the other 97%. This failure to relate and co-exist sometimes leaves the student alienated and often encourages them to withdraw even more and live in their own cocoon. Because of their inability to coexist, they sometimes fall prey to extremist ideas like those proposed by groups like ISIS and Boko Haram.

1.5 FOCUS OF THE RESEARCH/ RESEARCH GAP

1.5.1 Teaching methods in Mauritania

This research therefore aims to introduce the students and the lecturers at the Darul Ulooms to the scholarly legacy and academic atmosphere in the deserts of Mauritania as well as the methods they use to teach and study along with the various challenges and obstacles they face. This will probably prevent this legacy from being completely forgotten and neglected. The somewhat primitive methods adopted in this country still produced scholars who served in powerful positions in the national government of Mauritania while others serve as senior researchers on International Fiqh Organizations. One such scholar is the renowned Shaykh Abdullah ibn Bayyah[3]. In general, the scholars of Mauritania have a reputation for their excellence in the Arabic Language and its poetry. (Sanni 2016: 2). It may also bring to the fore some of the disadvantages of this system which may have been responsible for the weaknesses. Through this study, similar mistakes in our institutions- particularly the Darul Ulooms in South Africa - could be corrected and the mistakes the Mauritanians have made, could be avoided. Very often, reform is associated with merely introducing technology in the classroom. The Mauritanians have proven otherwise. They have displayed that the reliance on memorization with very little or no usage of technology still produced accomplished scholars.

Therefore, this research will attempt to address two gaps in Islamic Education. Firstly, one with regard to the Mauritanian scholarship and its legacy. This is specifically dealing with the *mahdarah* educational system and how more academics could be encouraged to conduct scholarly research on the Mauritanian manuscripts. The Timbuktu manuscripts were fortunate to have received some attention from a non-Arab and non-Muslim country like South Africa, so perhaps this thesis could motivate scholars and academics and possibly governments to contribute towards the preservation and annotation of the Mauritanian manuscripts.

The other, which is more important deals with the South African Darul Ulooms. This will involve tracing the origins of the Darul Uloom, its curriculum and then an analysis of the current curriculum. The themes presented by al-Mawwaq will be used among other possible recommendations and possible ways to enhance the existing curriculum.

1.5.2 The significance of this research

[3] Shaykh Abdullah ibn Bayyah was a Judge in the High Court in Mauritania, Head of Shariah at the Ministry of Justice and the First Minister of Islamic Affairs. He is ranked 11th in the Muslim World's 500 most influential people. (www.binbayyah.net) (www.themuslim500.com).

This research will be useful in that it will expose the scholarship in Mauritania and give the English speaking reader access to the works of the Spanish scholar, al-Mawwaq and the Mauritanian scholars. Previous research in English on this topic focused on the intellectual legacy of West Africa which covers a host of countries. This research may encourage other academics to study Arabic and then choose to work on these manuscripts either by contributing and participating in its preservation and then in either translating or annotating it. It will provide additional insight into the life of the author of the manuscript and his accomplishments as well as his strengths and weaknesses The researchers selection of al-Mawwaq is also significant since al-Mawwaq was a classical scholar who combined thorough knowledge of Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism. His commentary to a famous Maliki work, *Mukhtasar al-Khalil* is highly acclaimed. His commentary is titled: *al-Taj wa al-Iklil*. In it, he linked the opinions of different Maliki scholars with a variety of sources and references within this school of Islamic Jurisprudence.

The candidate opted to select al-Mawwaq rather than some South Asian scholar because as long as the recommendation is a classical scholar the Darul Ulooms will be more receptive and will not brush him aside as being some ‘modernist’ or ‘antoginist’. In addition, since the thesis aims to suggest ways to enhance the Darul Uloom curriculum, it is therefore appropriate to introduce the scholars in the Darul Ulooms to other classical scholars, in this case a classical Maliki scholar. The Darul Ulooms are not averse to other classical scholars even if they were from different legal schools. They do teach *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* that is an exegesis of the Quran authored by two Egyptian Shafi’scholars. One was Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (d. 1505) and the other was Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (d. 1460). Another is the book in Hadith terminology entitled: *Nukhbat al-Fikr* by Ibn Hajr al-Asqalani (d. 1449), who was an Egyptian Shafi scholar. These books are prescribed in the Darul Uloom in Deoband as well as in the South African Darul Ulooms and these scholars lived in a similar era like al-Mawwaq who died in 1492. Hence, if books by scholars from other legal schools are prescribed, there will not be any problem introducing another.

In addition, there are subtle scholarly links between the Hanafi and Maliki scholars. In the past, one of Imam Abu Hanifah’s foremost students was Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani (d. 805), who was also a student of Imam Malik and one of the foremost narrators of the book titled:

al-Muwatta by Imam Malik. In recent times, a famous Deobandi scholar, Muhammad Zakariya Kandehlawi (d. 1982) authored a volumous commentary to *al-Muwatta* titled: *Awjaz al-Masalik.* Muhammad Zakariya Kandehlawi is revered amonst South African scholars and there are scholars in the country who are his students.

al-Mawwaq's views can be useful to scholars of Islamic Studies within a South African context because it is firstly written by an author who found himself in a Spanish society that included Muslims and people from other faiths, and secondly, the subject matter equips the scholar with the tools that would enable him to have a comprehensive understanding of the working and application of Islamic Law and Islamic spirituality (*tasawwuf*). Thus, South African scholars could use this knowledge and apply it in their context in the Darul Ulooms because there has been an increased interest in Islamic spirituality and thus a sound understanding of the objectives of Sufism will contribute towards better co-operation and understanding amongst the scholars. It will contribute towards enhancing the present curriculum with a more comprehensive approach to the subjects of Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism. The aim of the thesis is not simply to prescribe al-Mawwaq's book in the Darul Ulooms but more importantly, the ideas presented by al-Mawwaq will be used to address certain deficiencies within the current Darul Uloom curriculum in South Africa, thereby producing graduates who are more competent and capable in dealing with the rapid changes globally. Such graduates and scholars will hopefully emerge and will contribute towards nation-building and better coexistence.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There is very little or no biographical work in English on the scholars of Mauritania and Spain. The books by Kathryn Miller and Alejandro Sanjuan do not provide additional biographical information on al-Mawwaq's other than that which the candidate has already provided. In fact, some Spanish works include some Arabic references in the footnotes. Upon reviewing it, it was found that a book like: *al-Daw al-Lami' fi Ahl al-Qarn al-Tasi'* by al-Sakhawi (1992: 10/98) only contains one line on al-Mawwaq. The footnote also makes reference to *Durrat al-Hiyal fi Asma al-Rijal* by Abu al-Abbas al-Meknasi, known as Ibn al-Qadi (1971: 2/141). This book contains two lines on al-Mawwaq.

The little that is available on Mauritanian is a result of the French military commanders who travelled through the country. However, much of their attention was directed on the manuscripts.

Until recently most desert libraries were off limits because of their geographical location and distribution. Only in the last two decades have such efforts started to bear fruits because of the efforts of academics from the USA and Germany. (Kratli 2004:13).

Some American and European Muslims have travelled to Mauritania to study and once they returned to their respective countries and became active Islamic scholars, they began speaking about their teachers. An example is of the American scholar, Hamza Yusuf when he describes his teacher Shaykh Murabit al-Haj (d. 2018). (http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=mswvx1Nghak).

Al-Mawwaq's work in Arabic which was published in 2002 is in about 380 pages. So the challenge is for the researcher to present a condensed translation and interpretation of the main ideas of the book from Arabic into English.

One of the major limitations or obstacles that may be experienced in undertaking such a task is in possibly undertaking a journey to Mauritania having to endure the cost of travelling to the country along with the tough and harsh conditions to get a deeper insight into life there and probably obtain more references. The other would be the tedious and time consuming task of relying on a volume of Arabic references. So in order to present the information in this thesis, the content must be read and then the main ideas translated before it can be documented. Other limitations deal with references in other languages. There are additional works in French, Spanish and Indonesian. The candidate is unfamiliar with these languages.

Some scholars have addressed issues pertaining to the Darul Uloom, particulalrly Deoband. These works are in Urdu and the candidate is not proficient in Urdu.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTION:

The following questions are significant in this research which forms the primary research question:

I. What are the prevalent issues emanating from the present curriculum within the Islamic educational institutions of South Africa, with specific reference to the Darul Ulooms?
II. Of what significance is the Mauritanian Islamic scholarship for South African Islamic educational institutions?

III. How can the translation and reading of the book by al-Mawwaq assist in filling the gap in the Islamic educational curriculum in South Africa?

The secondary research questions emanating from the primary questions above are:

- Why is there a need to study the manuscripts in Mauritania?
- What is so important about the traditional schools (*mahdarah*)?
- Of what significance and importance is the book by al-Mawwaq?
- What do we know about the Darul Ulooms?
- Are the Darul Ulooms adequately preparing graduates to deal with new issues and enabling them to co-exist with the broader community?
- What is meant by the subject that deals with the objectives of the Shariah (*maqasid*)?
- Why should the *maqasid* be taught in the Darul Ulooms?
- How can the subject of *maqasid* be applied by Muslim scholars in contemporary issues?

1.8 METHODOLOGY (THEORY/MODEL/METHOD)

1.8.1 Mauritania and its traditional schools.

This will require some discussion on the history and geography of the region and perhaps some discussion on the relationship between the people with their neighbours, particularly Morocco and Mali which both had a history of Islamic scholarship. I will have to look at the traditional schools (*mahdarah*) and the nature of these traditional schools and the approach and methodology used to teach. Why were they so effective? Even today, we witness foreigners leaving their comfort in places like the USA and the UK to travel to the deserts of Mauritania to study Arabic and various other subjects. One of these is the prominent American scholar, Shaykh Hamza Yusuf.

1.8.2 Importance of a sound methodology.

Methodology is the most crucial part of any scholastic writing, as it reveals the source, the procedure, the process and the evaluation of information for reliability. There are different approaches to writing a research work but in this case, we shall be leaning towards the qualitative methodology approach. In the words of Creswell (2009:22),

In order to understand the research and the methods that will be utilized it is essential that a few aspects are understood:

Research is defined as the tools and techniques used to refer to any kind of investigation that is intended to uncover interesting or new facts. (Walliman 2011: 1), while Pandey cited P. M. Cook, who defined it as "an honest, exhaustive, intelligent searching for facts and their meanings or implications with reference to your given problem. Thus its purpose would be to discover answers to questions through the application of a scientific procedure." (Pandey 2015: 8).

Any researcher has access to a variety of research methods. After understanding the nature of the methods the researcher can choose the methods that best suit his intended research and provide answers to questions raised and would address the problems. These are briefly as follows:

I. Historical: when adopting this method, the researcher is concerned about where events take place? Who was involved? When did the events take place and what kind of human activity was involved? This can be both quantitative and qualitative in nature.
II. Descriptive (survey or case-study): This method relies on observation which is either written or recorded. It aims at examining situations.
III. Comparative: this is often used with the historical method to compare people's experiences with different societies.
IV. Evaluation: this is a descriptive type of research designed to deal with complex social issues. (Clarke 2005: 39).
V. Applied: aims at finding a solution for an immediate problem.
VI. Experimental: which entails studying aspects related to the future and is largely quantitative in nature.
VII. Conceptual or philosophical: usually related to some abstract idea or theory used by philosophers. (Kothari 2004: 3). This is largely qualitative in nature. (Pandey 2015: 11).

These methods are either quantitative or qualitative in nature. Therefore, understanding these two approaches and methods is essential.

I. Quantitative: this method is specific and well-structured. Its measurement and requirements are fixed and predetermined. It involves describing trends or the explanation of the relationship among variables. It involves creating purpose statements that are

measurable. It involves collecting numeric data and analysing trends, comparing groups or relating variables using statistical analysis and interpreting results. (Creswell 2012:13).

II. Qualitative method aims to understand the experiences and attitudes and it aims to answer questions about the 'what', 'how', or 'why' of a situation, rather than 'how many' or 'how much' which are answered in quantitative methods. (Patton 2002: 3).

The research is largely based on literature research as well as recognized translations of some Arabic sources. It will also include historical and descriptive methods. Thus the qualitative method will be most appropriate. Nicholas Walliman cites D. B. Bromley (1986:26) who suggests ten steps for qualitative research: (Walliman 2011: 73).

I. Clearly state the research problems.
II. Collect background information.
III. Suggest several interpretations to the research questions.
IV. Use these to direct your search for evidence that might support or contradict.
V. Continue looking for relevant evidence and eliminate contradictions.
VI. Cross-examine the quality and source of evidence.
VII. Check the logic and validity of the arguments.
VIII. Select the strongest.
IX. Suggest a plan of action.
X. Prepare a report as an account of your research.

This method is employed because the subject demands the historical study of Mauritania and its scholarship and Spain since the arrival of the Muslims, the Spanish scholar, a translation from Arabic into English, the history of Islamic Education in South Africa with specific attention to the Darul Ulooms and its curriculum and various levels of application of Islamic principles of jurisprudence. This thesis follows a qualitative approach which is historical, descriptive and comparative in nature. The thesis contains non-numerical data and provides a historical account of Islam and education in Mauritania, Spain and South Africa. It describes the Islamic education in these countries and in the Darul Ulooms and thereafter compares the education between the South African institutions and the Darul Uloom in Deoband, India. It answers questions around 'what', 'why' and 'how' about Islamic education in Mauritania, Spain & South Africa along with

similar questions about al-Mawwaq and his book. It provides suggestions as to how the Darul Uloom curriculum could be enhanced.

There is no need to have included a discussion on curriculum theory because this research is not proposing an entirely new curriculum. It is rather maintaining it with adjusting the approaches to teaching some subjects and including other subjects or topics that were extracted from al-Mawwaq's book.

1.8.3 Translation: approaches and challenges.

Another important component of the research involves translating al-Mawwaq's book titled: '*Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din*' from Arabic into English.

The researcher is suitably qualified to conduct research of this nature because of his formal studies in an Arab institution and environment more specifically in the cities of Riyadh and Madinah both in Saudi Arabia, thus making the researcher competent and proficient in the Arabic language. In addition, the researcher had been teaching Arabic and Islamic Studies for the greater part of eighteen years. The researcher is the author of two books on the biographies of Muslim scholars in both the 20th and the 21st centuries. The research material for these books were all translated from Arabic into English. While preparing their biographies the researcher familiarized himself with their approaches and curricula used in studying various disciplines related to Islamic Studies. With the result the researcher is now able to distinguish the strengths and weaknesses in the different approaches and methodologies. This insight into the scholarship was enhanced through his travels across the Arab and Muslim world visiting old scholars and institutions in Syria, Turkey, Yemen, Morocco, Egypt, India and Jordan. These travels commenced more than twenty years ago and continue to this day where the researcher still conducts various journeys. In addition, the researcher was part of a team of six translators who translated an Arabic book that was authored by Shaykh Muhammad Alawi al-Maliki (d. 2005) into English and was published under the auspices of the International Peace University in Cape Town in 2015.

Translation from Arabic into English can be complicated. In fact, it is regarded as an art that requires more than simply having knowledge of two different languages. (Johnson-Davies 2006: 111). While English and Arabic are two completely different languages…. So the translator is

attempting to provide a rendering of the main themes that is both comprehensible and pleasurable to the reader of English. The first requirement is to ask what is the purpose of my translation? The translator needs to establish the actual text that needs to be translated, the intention of the writer, the intention of the translator and the readership? (Newmark 1988:45).

The answer to this will help select the type of translation; intra-lingual, inter-lingual, interlinear, literal and communicative. (Dickens 2002: 19). Bell mentioned that there are three important components to translation. They are the nature of the translation, the translation process which involves the knowledge and skill of the translator and the meaning of text that needs to be translated. (Bell 1991:79).

There are a few hindrances and problems that a translator will face and he will have to overcome. These are: lexical and stylistic due to the different order of words, prosodic (related to the rhythms and sounds), phonetic (related to speech sounds), grammatical, sentential (related to the sentence structure and its pronunciation), cultural (sometimes due to ecological conditions like the word *yathlaju* which could mean to freeze or to delight and soften a persons' heart, textual and technical (where the translator is unsure of what something means like the word *faqih*. Is it a law student or a jurist?). Some translators make the mistake of being too literal. The tense should be kept the same between the languages. (Bahameed 2008: 3; al-Hamdalla 1998: 267-28). There are also issues related to the failure to find the equivalent in the second language. This is because the intercultural equivalence does not exist due to the lexical gap. An example is the word *tayammum* which refers to the use of sand for ablution when water is unavailable. (Bahameed 2008:8). The lack of adequate knowledge in translating technical terms is also a problem. (Dweik 2013:5).
There are also problems when translators import the linguistic structure of their native language because of the lack of a good understanding of the foreign language, in this case Arabic. (Bennoudi 2007: 1-2).

These are all aspects that must be considered when translating al-Mawwaq's book because it was authored about 600 years ago and the implication of certain words may have changed over time. In addition, the book deals with some technical terms related to Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism. Al-Mawwaq's book is rather lengthy and to include a translation of his book to this

thesis would have added approximately 200 pages to this thesis. However, this thesis aims to use the themes and ideas presented by al-Mawwaq to enhance the Darul Uloom curriculum. Therefore, the candidate is required to be proficient in Arabic and he must have sound knowledge and understanding of translation, its theory and its processes.

1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena and, in many cases to challenge existing knowledge. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. (Swanson 2013: 1-15).

This thesis aims to research the scholarly atmosphere in Mauritania and the biography of a Mauritanian scholar and the biography of the Spanish scholar, al-Mawwaq, the author of the book that will be translated and thereafter its ideas and themes will be used to enhance the Darul Uloom curriculum. It will also analyse the curriculum of the Darul Ulooms in South Africa after tracing its roots to Deoband in India. This is a historical, descriptive and critical methodology.

The book by al-Mawwaq deals with two important concepts, namely; the higher purposes, intent and objectives of the Shariah (*Maqasid al-Shariah*) and the other is Tasawwuf (also known as Sufism). This thesis will attempt to encapsulate issues related to both concepts with specific focus on the curriculum in the Darul Ulooms.

Maqasid al-Shariah has been defined as the branch of Islamic Knowledge that answers all questions of 'why' on various levels. It explains the wisdoms behind rulings such as enhancing social cohesion (which is one of the wisdoms behind charity), or maintaining an intellectually-sound community and individual, (which is one of the wisdoms behind the prohibition of intoxicants). *Maqasid* are also ends that laws aim to achieve by blocking or opening certain means. It is also the group of divine intents and moral concepts upon which the Islamic law is based. (Auda 2008:4).

Tasawwuf or Sufism has been defined as the knowledge that deals with purification of the heart. True devotion to Allah in the ways He likes by the means He likes. It involves acting upon knowledge and acquiring good character and rid of the bad. (al-Yaqubi). https://www.facebook.com/ShaykhMuhammadYaseen/posts/the-basics-of-tasawwuf-by-sayyid-shaykh-muhammad-al-yaqoubi1-definition-purifica/378673375590426/.

One of the earliest scholars to write about the topic of *Maqasid* was al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 908). Subsequent scholars like al-Ghazali (d. 1111) and others also wrote about the subject. Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 1388) is regarded as the scholar who conducted the most in depth study of the subject but yet he failed to provide one comprehensive definition. Instead he elaborated on its types in his book *al-Muwafaqat*.

Fadl Zadah in his article states that Dr. Ahmad Raissouni suggests that perhaps the reason why al-Shatibi did not provide a single definition of the topic is that he assumed it will become clearer after reading his book *al-Muwafaqat* which is dedicated to the subject. In addition, he may have intended to write this book for the well-established and accomplished scholars. (www.fiqh.islammessage.com/NewsDetails.aspx?id=3424).

The book by al-Mawwaq is based on verses 32-33 of Surah Fāṭir of the Quran that translates as: *Then We made Our chosen slaves inherit the Book. But some of them wrong themselves; some are ambivalent; and some outdo each other in good by Allah's permission. That is the great favour*.

Al-Mawwaq discusses three categories of people in nine levels. He commences his discussion with the ninth level and then the preceding level until he reaches level one. Thereafter he discusses these nine levels again but this time he begins from level one until finally reaching level nine.
He discusses the etiquette and conduct of these three categories of people that Allah mentioned. In his style he has in some way followed the example of a renowned scholar, al-Māwardi (d. 1058), also known as Alboacen and author of the book, 'Etiquettes of the world and of religion' *(Ādāb al-Dunyā wa al-Din).*

So al-Mawwaq's book addresses the spiritual intents in the Shariah along with aspects related to Islamic Jurisprudence and this could be regarded as a merge between the two theories. The research theory here involves an analysis of the curriculum in the Darul Ulooms and then illustrating how the content and subject in al-Mawwaq's book could prove to be valuable in this regard by enhancing the curriculum.

1.10 Data Sampling and Analysis.

In qualitative research, data sampling is that part of research in which data is gathered, processed and interpreted or analysed to form the basis of the research. The research is designed to involve the "plan of how to proceed in determining the nature of the relationship between variables." (Kobus ed., 2007:70). The researcher shall be making use of literary works from all categories of the research work.

Data that has been observed, experienced or recorded close to the event are the nearest one can get to the truth. This is known as primary data while the written sources that interpret or record primary data are called secondary sources. The types of primary data that are relevant to this thesis will be based on observation which is based on the researchers' personal observation of the curriculum and the students at the Darul Ulooms. It also involves participation which in this case is my personal experience as a student and subsequently a co-founder of a Darul Uloom (although it went by the name: Ma'had) and the person responsible for its curriculum. (Walliman 2011: 70). For insight into the Darul Ulooms, the work by B. Ingram is useful because of his personal interaction with the institution in Deoband as well as his stay in South Africa interacting with Darul Uloom graduates. The works by Ebrahim Moosa, Sikand and Reetz among others are also very useful and have been consulted in the later discussions pertaining to the Darul Ulooms.

Because of the nature of the research, a substantial amount of the data will be historical in nature and this will include biographies, diaries, accessible documents, literature, books, magazines, cultural and analytical historical data. (Pandey 2015:80).

The research could include non-written data like television documentaries and survey data that would include government census and cultural data. (Walliman 2011: 78). The research will include online data.

Referring to existing literature throughout the research process contributes to a better understanding of one's own empirical work says Corbin/Strauss (2008) in Ina Peters, 2014:11.

In analysing our data, we shall be using the inductive-interpretive approach to contextualize our findings, since there is substantial amount of historical content. Our interest is to discover the teaching methods employed by the Mauritanian scholars and the secret behind the manuscripts. It also aims to discover the details and specifics with regard to the Darul Ulooms in South Africa and the curriculum used. After translating the Arabic text of al-Mawwaq's book into English, the researcher wants to examine how the principles mentioned in the book by al-Mawwaq may be applied by Muslim scholars in their institutions or in resolving contemporary issues and addressing curriculum deficiencies.

1.11 DEFINITION OF TERMS

There will be a number of words or terms that will be used throughout the research and it is therefore important that these are understood. Some of these are:

Mahdarah: This is the name given to the traditional Mauritanian schools. Elsewhere in the world the word madrasa is more commonly used. It could also be called *Mobile Cultural Bedouin institutions* that are unique because of their simplicity but still boasted a fairly high standard of education. (al-Nahwi 1987: 213).

Maqasid al-Shariah: The branch of Islamic knowledge that explains the wisdoms behind rulings. They are also the ends that the law aims to achieve by blocking or opening certain means. It is also the group of divine intents upon which the law is based. (Auda 2008:4).

Tasawwuf and Sufism: The branch of Islamic knowledge that deals with purification of the heart. It involves acting upon knowledge and acquiring good character. (www.livingislam.org/m/mbl/tsw_e.html).

Fiqh and faqih: Literally means to understand but it refers to that branch of Islamic knowledge that involves understanding the practical laws applicable in daily life that are extracted and deduced

from the detailed evidences in the Shariah. So the *faqih* would be the person who mastered the subject and is also known as the jurist and specialist in Islamic Jurisprudence. (Ahmed 2005: 10).

Hadith: This word is commonly translated as Prophetic tradition and it refers to what was transmitted on the authority of the Prophet Muhammad, his deeds, his sayings, tacit approval, or description of his features, meaning his physical appearance. However, physical appearance is not included in the definition by the jurists. (Azami 1977: 3).

Zawiyah: commonly refers to Sufi centres or hospices where devotees would gather. It has a broader connotation in the Mauritanian context. (www.oxfordislamicstudies.com).

Shaykh: This is a title used to refer to a scholar of Islamic knowledge, a Sufi leader or even a leader within a tribe. (www.britannica.com/topic/sheikh).

Murabitun: the warriors who are known as Almoravids.

Darul Uloom: literally means 'house of knowledge' which refers to Islamic seminaries where students undergo a rigorous course, the duration of which is six years or more, during which they study the Arabic Language and various Islamic subjects. (www.encyclo.co.uk/meaning-ofDarul%20Uloom).

Shariah: Translated as Islamic Law. It is used in the Quran to refer to 'revealed way of life'. This includes all the aspects in Islam that govern the life of a Muslim. (Auda 2007: 56).

1.12 RESEARCH PLAN

The proposed format of the thesis which is expected to be completed in two years will be as follows: The introduction will discuss the reason for selecting this topic. This will be followed by seven chapters that will cover the following areas:

Chapter One: Introduction and Methodology to the study

This chapter provides a general overview on the study. This will include the introduction, the purpose of the study, the very gap to be covered by the researcher and above all, the question to bear in mind in the course of writing this dissertation and will also outline the suitable methodology for the research work among other things.

Chapter Two: Mauritania: History and geography

This chapter will look at the entrance of Islam into Mauritania. Islam entered the region of Mauritania in around the 11th century through the Muslim traders. It will also provide a brief overview of life in Mauritania. This thesis will be dealing with the traditional educational system in Mauritania and therefore understanding the history and social makeup will contribute to a better understanding of the scholarship and the manuscripts in the country.

Chapter Three: Education in Mauritania and the manuscripts

Having discussed the history of Mauritania in the previous chapter, this chapter will look at the scholarly atmosphere and climate in the country – style of teaching with specific reference to the traditional education which follows the *mahdarah* system. This chapter would also include a biography of a Mauritanian scholar, Shaykh al-Khadim, in whose collection one manuscript of al-Mawwaq's book was found. Shaykh al-Khadim is also a graduate of the *mahdarah* educational system and a contemporary example of Mauritanian scholarship.

Chapter Four: An insight into Muslim Spain, its scholarship and the biography of al-Mawwaq

An important part of this thesis is a translation and study of al-Mawwaq's book, titled *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din*. However, since al-Mawwaq was from Spain (Andalus), it is necessary to understand the scholarly environment in Spain during his time and the scholarly links between Spain and West Africa in general and specifically Mauritania. A copy of the manuscript of al-Mawwaq's book was found in Mauritania and in Morocco. Therefore, this chapter will address this including the biography of the Spanish scholar, al-Mawwaq.

Chapter Five: A discussion of some of the topics and ideas presented in al-Mawwaq's book.

This chapter will provide reasons for selecting this book and then a translation and discussion of the themes discussed by al-Mawwaq. In order to complete this, the researcher had to read the complete book in Arabic and then summarize it in English. The discussion of the themes will be preceded by a discussion on the methodology used in the translation.

Chapter Six: The Darul Ulooms in South Africa and its historical and ideological roots.

This chapter will provide a brief introduction into these institutions, their historical roots, establishment and the approach in teaching. It will identify some of the weaknesses or criticisms levelled against the curriculum.

Chapter Seven: Application of themes identified in al-Mawwaq's book to the Darul Uloom curriculum.

This chapter will include some of the researchers' comments on the book and how these can address the issues raised with regard to the curriculum in the Darul Ulooms, thereby reforming it.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher will summarise the overall findings made and draw up a conclusion. Some recommendations for supplementary research work will also be discussed and made available.

Chapter Two

Mauritania: The history of the inhabitants and their religious affiliation and the geographical landscape of the country.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will address the early history of Mauritania including its name and the entrance of Islam to this region. It will also look into the geographical nature of the country and its inhabitants. One of the gaps that this thesis aims to address is to highlight the academic legacy in Mauritania along with its strengths and weaknesses. It will bring to the fore, additional information on the manuscripts in the country and the academic contribution by scholars today in preserving, editing and translating these. The academic legacy will be appreciated and understood once there is sufficient information on the history of the country and its people and its landscape. It will provide insight as to why they adopted a certain system of education that is unique to them and it will help us understand why this impacted on the type of education that took place and how and when the lessons were conducted. It also helps in understanding the state of the manuscripts specifically dealing with its degeneration and what needs to be done to preserve it. It may serve as motivation for scholars to dedicate more time and attention to preserve it. This lends credence to the next chapter which will focus particularly on the Islamic education in Mauritania and the manuscripts in the country.

2.2 Geography:

Mauritania is a country in northwest Africa on the Atlantic coast and forms a geographic and cultural bridge between the North African Maghrib (the region that includes Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) and the western most portion of Sub-Saharan Africa. It also forms a transitional zone between the Berber populations of North Africa and the African peoples in the region. (www.Britannica.com).

Senegal lies to the southwest, Algeria to the northeast and the Moroccan annexed region of the Western Sahara lies to the northwest. Its capital city which is also the largest city in the country is Nouakchott, which is located on the Atlantic coast.

Most of Mauritania is low-lying desert which forms part of the Sahara. Along the Senegal River, the southwest is semi-arid Sahel with some alluvial fertile soil. A wide sandstone plateau runs through the centre of the country from north to south. (Sacko 2007 :169).

Zones of climate and vegetation depend on the intensity of the rain and length of the rainy season. During the winter months, the hot, dry north-easterly wind known as the *harmattan* blows. This then recedes towards the north and its opposite, the south-western monsoon, a warm humid wind coming from the ocean appears. (Trimingham 1959: 1).

The Arabs called the region south of the Sahara Bilad al-Sudan (The Land of the Blacks) in opposition to the Bilad al-Bidan (The Land of the Whites), that is North Africa and the Sahara. Some also referred to it as the Land of the Zanj (Blacks). (Trimingham 1959: 1).

This region was known by a number of names; the desert of the veiled people, the land of Takrur and the land of Shinqit and Mauritania.

From very early days, the Sanhaji inhabitants were known to cover their faces with lengthy turbans because of the heat and the sand storms and thus the land was known by their description.

The name Takrur is reference to a region on the banks of the Niger or Senegal River and according to some historians it includes Adrar, Takanat, Qiblah, the coast till the land of Sudan of West Africa. Its leader, known as King Warjabi had accepted Islam in the 11th century and promoted Islamic ideology. He died in 1040, thus the name Takrur became synonymous with the West African Muslims. (al-Nahwi 1987: 21; Hopkins & Levtzion 1981: 77).

It is possible that Quran teachers had already made progress in Takrur as early as the 10th century. If this is true, then the King Warjabi's conversion might have been the result of clerical efforts rather than a top-down Islamization process. In any case, there is a possibility that the spread of Islam in Takrur by the 10th century may be a bit too late. By the last quarter of the 10th century, Cairo already had a significant neighbourhood that housed Muslim pilgrims from Takrur. (Ware 2014: 115).

The name Shinqit on the other hand was known, although it referred to a small region that gained prominence after the smaller village namesake that became popular for its scholarship and also for serving as a departure point for the pilgrims to Makkah. (al-Nahwi 1987: 20).

In the 1660's Shinqit became a trading centre for salt, cloth and books. (Reese 2014: 45).

The name Mauritania is somewhat recent and possibly has Roman nuances with Amazigh roots that means; 'Our Land'. It could possibly refer to the famous Moor tribes who resisted the Romans. (Wald al-Salim 2010: 18).

Another explanation is that the name is from Mauros which is Greek for brown and Tania in Latin referring to land. So Mauritania is the 'land of the brown people'. (al-Nahwi 1987: 27).

The Spanish also used the word *Moors*. They used it to refer to an old Roman location and then expanded its usage and used it to refer to Arabs and Muslims. So when the Spanish colonized the Philippines and found that about half the population were Muslim, they also referred to them as Moros. (al-Nahwi 1987: 25).

2.3 Mauritanian history

According to Wald Salim (2010:12) Mauritanian history passed through a few periods. These periods are listed as follows:

I. The Ancient period that ended in the 7th century.
II. The Middle period that commenced from the Muslim conquest in the 7th century until the fall of Timbuktu in 1591. This is also known as the Sanhaji period.
III. The Modern period that is also known as the Hassani period because of the dominance and consolidation of power by Bani Hassan or the Arabs from 1591 until 1778.
IV. The Contemporary period that commenced from the end of the siege in 1778 until the land was occupied by the colonialists in 1903.
V. The period after the Second World War or the Cold War or even after the establishment of an independent state in 1960.

These periods along with various other aspects related to Mauritania, its history and its society will be discussed in this chapter so that the reader obtains a comprehensive understanding.

There were a number of famous cities and towns that developed as a result of religious and trade connections. Some of these are: (Wald Salim 2010: 235-254).

- Oulata: To the south-east of Mauritania and it was established in the 8th century (2 A.H.). This city flourished because of the traders between Oulata, Sijilmasah and Mali. In around 1352, Ibn Batuta (d. 1369)[4] passed through the city intending to travel to Timbuktu. In the late 11th century the town exported salt to Timbuktu. Some Portuguese sources maintain that by this time all the inhabitants were Muslim with the oldest inhabitants being from the Soninke.
- Tichit: This city was established in 1142 by Sharif Abdul Mumin who was a student of the erudite scholar, Qadi 'Iyad (d. 1149). It also had a salt centre by the 16th century. The internal conflict which was religious and political gave rise to other powers. A number of the jurists (*fuqaha*) were also involved in the dispute over the taxes.
- Wādān: This town is situated about 100 km north east of Shinqit and was established in 1152. There were many famous schools (*madrasa*) in this area.
- Shinqit: This city was originally part of the Adrar to the north west of Mauritania and was established in 1261. It gained more prominence through the pilgrims and the scholars who settled here.

2.3.1 Inhabitants and life in Mauritania

It is important to understand the inhabitants because the impact of Islam and education is different from tribe to tribe. There are certain tribes that produced more scholars. The country's population mirrors its geographic location and inhabitants include black African groups, the Arab-speaking groups and ex-slaves. Relations between the different ethnic groups have at times been tense. Much of the country's population was nomadic with some groups engaged in farming in the more fertile south. But because of the droughts, it became increasingly difficult to maintain that lifestyle so many settled in developing urban areas. While slavery had been practised in Mauritania by all ethnic groups, this institution was eventually eroded and legally abolished in 1981. (www.oxfordbibliographies.com).

Historically there appears to have been three main ethnic groups: The Black African tribes, the Sanhaji tribes and the Bafour Berber tribes. (al-Nahwi 1987: 30).

[4] Ibn Batuta was a Muslim Moroccan scholar and explorer who travelled to different parts of the world over a period of thirty years.

Others have preferred to refer to the inhabitants as Negroes who were divided into two principal groups; those of West Africa who spoke what could be called Sudanic Languages and the Negroes of the east who were called Bantu. (Fage 1961: 5; Diallo 1993: 20).

Writers such as Wald Salim analysed societies in detail. He stated the social make-up of Mauritania was as follows: (Wald Salim 2010: 14-16).

I. Hassan (Arabs): they were on the top of the social ladder and they comprised mainly of Arab tribes who entered Mauritania from the 14th century. They relied on raids and plundering and seizing the booty from those who they defeated. They are considered to speak a very pure form of Arabic.
II. Zawaya (Talabah): this group occupied the second rung on the social ladder. They were peaceful tribes who were inclined to religion and knowledge. They assumed positions as imams, mufti's (people responsible for pronouncing legal religious verdicts) and judges and were engaged in teaching. Some were traders and they were responsible for digging wells. Most of these were from the Almoravid (*murābitun*) tribes. This classification was not always the case because there are reports that indicate that all Sanhaja tribes were known as 'People of the Zawiyah'. In addition, there are reports of questions from the Sahara that were posed to the jurists in Spain (Andalus).
III. Al-Lahmah (Allies): They were composed of various groups who were defeated in various raids and battles. The majority of these were from the Sanhaja. They were involved in caring for the livestock that belonged to the *zawaya* and the Hassan.
IV. Al-Sunnā' (Artisans and Teachers): Many of these were ironsmiths by profession and they comprised of Arabs, Sanhaji and Sudani. This group was very close to the *zawaya*.
V. Al-Zaffānun (musicians and poets): They engaged in music and poetry. Some of these actually originated from Arab-Andalusia backgrounds. The majority were from the Tuareg and the Hassan and they were close to the Hassan.
VI. Al-Harrātin (black Moors): These were people who were darker in complexion and they were from the Bidān Arabs (white Moors) and some were from the freed slaves.
VII. Al-Ariqqā: These were groups of Black African slaves who moved through the desert with the trade caravans. There were a few slaves who originated from Morocco.

The most popular inhabitants of Mauritania are the Sanhaji tribes who arrived in this region during the migration that took place in the 3rd century from Northern Africa. As their water sources dried out, they moved further to the west and settled in different parts. About 2000 – 2800 years ago, the Berber were considered the inhabitants of this region and they seemed to have acclimatised and adapted despite the tough weather conditions and the drought. There has been some debate over the origins of the Ethiopian people, who according to some historians were among the first inhabitants of the greater Sahara.

The researchers like Bobah ibn Muhammad of the University of Nouakchott were presented with another unanswered question. When was this land inhabited? About 1000 years before Jesus, two and four wheeled conveyances or wagons came to this region. The question that eluded many is that other than about 800 rock inscriptions across the desert, they don't know how and who brought these. It is known that these were used around that period to the east of the Mediterranean by the Romans and the Libyans. (Wald al-Salim 2010: 20).

While the Moors constituted 75% of the population, about 33% is made up of the Bidan, which is literally translated as 'White Moors' indicative of individuals of Arab and Amazigh descent. The remainder has Sudanic-African origins. Roughly one-third of the population is made up of four main ethnic groups; Tukulor, Fulani, Soninke and the Wolof. The Moors, Tukulor and Soninke share a broadly similar social structure. (www.britannica.com).

The influx of the Arabs took place in the 8th century of the migration. The Maghafirah were regarded as the most powerful Arab community and their dominance increased when they defeated their cousins in a battle in 1630.

The African tribes seemed to settle in the south of the country while the Sanhaji seemed to dominate most of the country until the arrival of some of the Arab tribes. However, there are some historians such as al-Tabari (d. 923) and Ibn al-Athir (d. 1232) who maintained that the Sanhaji are of Arab Qahtani genealogy. Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) and others maintain that they were Berber. There is yet another group who argue and try to prove that the Berbers do in fact have Arab origins. (al-Nahwi 1987: 29).

The Lubis are supposedly the ancestors of the Sanhaji and the most famous of these are the Germantes who were Christians. There was also a Jewish presence which dates to about 600 BCE.

After the conflict with the Christians, many Jews moved further west while some may have remained to the north of the desert. Fernandes, a Portuguese writer maintained that in 1506 there were wealthy Jewish traders in Oulata and possibly a Jewish suburb in Wādān. Historically though, the Jews were city dwellers and their presence in the desert was merely for trade purposes. (Wald Salim 2010: 24).

There also appeared to be a Persian connection. A Roman historian, Sylvester mentioned that migration took place after they joined the army of Hercules. Some of these Persians lost their way at sea and found themselves in the desert. The word 'Nomad' actually originates from the Persian word *nomad* which means 'sand', thus referring to the people who lived in the desert, surrounded by sand. There are reports indicating that the Phoenician sailors had arrived on the North Coast of Africa about 1500 years before the birth of Jesus. In fact, on the Mauritanian coast there is a town named 'Tanit' which refers to a Phoenician goddess. (Wald Salim 2010: 27-29).

This debate is somewhat irrelevant today because all who live in Mauritania were in some way Arabicized. In fact, virtually all inhabitants are Sunni Muslims and adhere to the Maliki[5] School of Islamic Jurisprudence. The Constitutional Charter of 1985 declares Islam as the state religion and Shariah as the law of the land. (www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mauritania).

2.4 Religious history of Mauritania

Historically it seems like the inhabitants were Christians, Jews and fire-worshippers and when Islam arrived, the population embraced it. The history of the Jewish community is not very clear but there seems to have been a Jewish community in Cyrenaica which is established from Roman sources particularly of the first and second centuries A.D. (Fage 1961: 13).

One of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, 'Amr ibn al-As (d. 664), reached Tripoli in Libya and sought the Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab's (d. 644) permission to continue with his conquests. The Caliph did not grant him permission. He was followed by the third Caliph, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (d. 656) who appointed Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh (d.656) as a commander and permitted him to march into Africa.

[5] One of the four Islamic Schools of jurisprudence that gets its name from its leading scholar, Imam Malik ibn Anas (d. 795) who resided and passed away in Madinah.

There are reports that indicate that during the reign of one of the Companions, Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan (d. 680), an army of about 10 000 soldiers was prepared and they faced the Byzantines and they eventually seized Tunis. (al-Jamal and Ibrahim 1996: 45).

These attempts were followed by others until 'Uqbah ibn Nafi' (d. 683) conquered the city of Kayrawan in 666 and continued until he reached Sous in 682.

Ibn 'Adhari (d. 1312) in his book *al-Bayan al-Mughrib fi ikhtisar akhbar muluk al-andalus wa al-Maghrib* (2013: 43) stated that 'Uqbah travelled to different regions and even stayed for a while in the Haskurah region (the Greater Atlas area) and even built a mosque in Sous (a city in present day Morocco). Some historians state that 'Uqbah reached Oualata in Mauritania and left his son there. In 734, one of 'Uqbah's grandsons spread Islam into the Sous region.

Ibn Khaldun was of the view that groups of the Lamtuna and Sanhaji tribes embraced Islam sometime after the Arabs entered Spain, around 700. While al-Zuhri, was of the view that they embraced Islam between the years 724-743.

Arab sources confirm 'Uqbah's raids in the north but some have not with certainty confirmed him reaching the south. Ahmad al-Tawfiq who is a researcher, stated that one has to be somewhat sceptical to say with certainty that such a journey was really undertaken. (Wald Salim 2010: 42)

The Berbers initially resisted and killed 'Uqbah in 682 (63 A.H.) and they established a state that lasted for about six years. During the reign of Abdul Malik ibn Marwan (d. 705), one of his generals known as Nu'man al-Ghassani clashed with the Berbers and eventually defeated them and many accepted Islam. There were about 12 000 Berber soldiers who were incorporated into the Muslim army. (al-Jamal and Ibrahim 1996: 46).

Regardless of the contentions above, we are certain that Uqbah's grandson, Habib ibn 'Ubaydah ibn 'Uqbah reached the outskirts of Awdaghost. He brought with him gold and many prisoners.

Between the years 744 and 774, the Sanhaji state was clearly under the Fihri's, who were the grandchildren of 'Uqbah ibn Nafi'.

It was only in the third century after the migration that the Muslims in this region became more organized and challenged the powerful Ghanaian Empire. Islam was firmly entrenched in the

region through the efforts of the Almoravids (*murābitun*) between 1035 and 1146 (426 – 541 A.H). Reports indicate that the beginning of the Almoravids can be traced to a Sanhaji leader named Yahya ibn Ibrahim al-Lamtuni. About a century later, after the leader, Yahya ibn Ibrahim returned from the pilgrimage (*Hajj*) and he brought with him a scholar who would teach the people the tenets of their faith. It was in 1059 that Abdullah ibn Yasin established a hospice or retreat (*ribat)* which entrenched the teaching of Islam in the lives of the inhabitants of the desert and he and his followers were known as the Almoravids (*murabitun*). (al-Nahwi 1987: 31; Wald Salim 2010: 49).

2.4.1 The Almoravids (*murabitun*) and their role in Mauritania.

Yusuf ibn Tashfin (d. 1106) was one of the very influential Almoravid leaders who in 1071 (464 A.H) marched with his army towards the west and he is responsible for many developments in the region including establishing the city of Marrakesh in Morocco in 1069. It was Yusuf ibn Tashfin who conquered and established the city of Fez in 1074. (Wald Salim 2010: 64).

The Almoravids were able to take control of the Adrār region which is presently near the city of Atār in Mauritania. They were able to unify the people in sound faith which seemed to somewhat alienate itself from Ashari doctrine. This is because the desert Bedouins were simple unsophisticated people who were not inclined to theological philosophical debates and technicalities in matters of belief but they adhered to the Maliki school of Islamic Jurisprudence.

It is important to mention that the vast majority of the Muslim World who are adherents to one of the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence, follow the Ashari or Maturidi schools of Islamic Doctrine and Theology. These two schools are attributed to Imam Abu al-Hasan al-Ashari (874-936) and Imam Abu Mansur al-Maturid (853-944).

According to Brown (2007:137), the original ahl al-hadith, early Sunni creed, from which the Asharis evolved continued to thrive alongside its rival Sunni orthodoxy as well. This competing orthodoxy exists in the form of some of the followers of the Hanbali School.

However, the Maliki School was influenced with Ashari doctrine because of Shaykh Abu Bakr al-Bāqillāni (d. 1013). Abu ‘Imran Al-Fasi (d. 1041) travelled to Iraq and was impressed with Bāqillāni’s theology and he then studied Hadith in Makkah under the tutorship of Abu Dhar al-Harawi (d.1045). (Wald Salim 2010: 94).

The Almoravid Empire extended over Mauritania, Morocco, the Western Sahara, Gibraltar, Tlemecen (now in Algeria) and a great part of what is now Senegal and Mali as well as into Muslim Spain and Portugal in Europe. (www.historyfiles.co.uk/KingListsAfrica/AfricaMauritania).

2.4.2 The period after the Almoravids.

The Almoravid state eventually collapsed but we cannot say with certainty what the actual circumstances were that led to the collapse but there are some indications. After the disagreement between Yusuf ibn Tashfin and Abu Bakr over the Kingdom of Maghrib, the state split into two; the north was ruled by Yusuf and the south by Abu Bakr. The complete disintegration of the state took place between the years 1146-1300. (Wald Salim 2010: 127).

This was followed by an era of the Lamtuni Emirate which actually meant the arrival of the Banu Hassan descendants of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, a cousin of Prophet Muhammad. However, Ibn Khaldun was of the view that they had Yemeni origins. With the arrival of the newcomers to the region there was bound to be conflict and with the result there were battles between Banu Hassan and the Ibidokal. The latter was defeated and had no choice but to accept a peace treaty that contained certain conditions:

- None from the Sanhaji could carry any weapons.
- Guarantee safety of the other tribes who were more religious or had a strong inclination to knowledge.
- The Hassani dialect (Arabic) must be spoken and not Berber.
- All members of the Banu Hassan were entitled to hospitality.
- The nobles from the Ibidokal now became subjects and followers.

This war changed the history of the Sahara forever but some writers chose to ignore it because it Arabicized the region and its inhabitants. (Wald Salim 2010: 172).

Between the 13th and the 15th century the area was influenced by Sudan of the West; that is the Kingdom of Mali and the Songhai State. The Masufa tribes of the Sanhaja were involved in trade. Timbuktu and Oulata were the two most important cities to the north of the Niger River and the West Sahara. Oulata was also known as Biru. Timbuktu developed at the hands of the Tuareg who

were one of the tribes of the Masufa and, with time, it became an important city for Shanqiti jurists who had Sanhaji origins.

There was political conflict between different tribes that included a battle between Sani Ali (d. 1492) and the jurists of Timbuktu. Even the Songhai State was attacked by al-Sa'adi.

2.4.3 The Europeans in Mauritania.

While these internal conflicts were problematic, an even greater threat was imminent, with the arrival of the Portuguese on the Mauritanian coast in 1443. The area of Arknin, in particular, and other areas in West Africa was one of conflict between different European nations, between the years 1600-1800.

The Portuguese were in the region between 1443 and 1633. They were followed by Holland until 1678 and then Holland and Germany until 1711. France was in the region between 1720 and 1728 and again in 1763. The Europeans were primarily interested in trade but the ensuing conflicts that resulted had an impact on the people in the region. (Wald Salim 2010: 190).

France was the most active European country in the West African region and they established a trade base near the Senegal River and they traded mainly in slaves. (al-Jamal and Ibrahim 1996: 105).

By the 18th century, Britain emerged as holding a large share of the external trade. By 1785, more than half the slave trade was in the hands of British merchants. (Fage 1961: 75). Despite the presence of the Europeans, the Mauritanians were able to preserve their culture and education, especially through the preservation of the Arabic language. Even the non-Arab tribes adopted Arabic as their language.

We can confidently say that the Hassani dialect (Arabic) dominated from the 14th century but it only consolidated its influence even to the northern and eastern parts of the country only between 1600 and 1700.

This was the time of the Bidān (white Moors) who comprised mainly of two tribes; the Sanhaji veiled-people and the Hilali who were from the Banu Hassan. By this time the Hassani language seemed to be like a fusion between Arabic and some Berber words. The Bidan had their own

distinct habits in their dressing and their weddings but they still adhered to the Maliki School of Islamic Jurisprudence.

The internal conflicts and battles forced many to move from the north to the south. This changed the desert landscape.

2.4.4 The Sanhaji people and their lineage

Some writers have posed a question as to why the Sanhaji tribes gave up their lineage and their history.

When Arabic began to dominate, the Berbers eventually abandoned their language. This could also be possibly attributed to religious affiliation and secondly to identify with the Arabs, who were victors, who were better to be identified with, then the Berbers who had been defeated. Another reason, perhaps could possibly be because the Berbers did not have much of a written tradition. Theirs was mainly an oral one and it continued to be spoken at home and thus the women preserved it more. However, with time, we notice that in Mauritania, both men and women mastered the Arabic language. Another factor could be based on the rule that says the defeated imitate the victorious. Thus the Berber adopted the language and ways of the more powerful who at the time were the Arabs. The Arabic language seemed to be able to unite the Berber tribes with their different dialects. It soon became the language of religion and trade.

The Hajj journey also contributed greatly to the spread of Arabic and many spoke about the famous journey by the Sanhaji leader, Yahya ibn Ibrahim (d. 1057). By the end of the 13th century there were Muslim scholars from the area who maintained contact with scholars in the east. One of these was Shaykh Mukhtar al-Kunti (d. 1811). (Wald Salim 2010: 195-201).

2.4.5 The effect and influence of the Sufi Orders in Mauritania

The Sufi Orders contributed to the spread of Arabic and the culture. The Sufi hospices (*zawiyah*) were sometimes forced to move from place to place because of the nature of the terrain and weather conditions. The region was known for three main Sufi Orders:

I. The Shadhli Order which is attributed to Shaykh Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhli (d. 1258). This order spread and continues in Mauritania through two of his followers; Shaykh Ahmad Zarruq (d. 1493) and Shaykh Muhammad ibn Nāsir al-Durai (d. 1674).
II. The Qadiri Order which is attributed to Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jaylani (d. 1167). It spread through Shaykh Ahmad al-Bakkari ibn Muhammad al-Kunti (d. 1552), Shaykh Mukhtar al-Kunti (d. 1226) and Shaykh Muhammad Fādil al-Qalqami (d. 1879).
III. The Tijani Order which is attributed to Shaykh Ahmad ibn Muhammad Sālim al-Tijani (d. 1230). Shaykh Muhammad al-Hafiz ibn al-Habib al-Alawi and others from Wādan and Shinqit took the order from its founder and promoted it. (Hiskett 1984: 244-251).

There is another Sufi Order known as the Ghatfiyyah Order which is actually a branch of the Shadhli Order. Its first shaykh was Muhammad al-Aghtaf Salim al-Dawudi (d. 1218). This order resisted the French occupation. Some members of this group promoted the concept of migrating rather than to continue living under the French. About 600 men with their families left in 1908 to Libya, Jordan and Turkey. (Wald Salim 2010: 227-228).

2.5 Factors that led to the spread of Islam

The main factors leading to the spread of Islam were: http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/hts/v74n3/51.pdf

I. *Trade relations*. Through the settlement of traders, elements of Islamic civilization became absorbed into the folkways of local culture. Traders entered into contracts with others and, very often, when caravans passed through certain villages, some Muslim traders chose to settle there.
II. *Scholarship*. This was when Muslim scholars settled in different areas and thus contributed to the spread of Islam. There were also itinerant North African scholars who settled in West Africa.
III. *Some Arab nationals who arrived from different Arab countries* and settled in the country may also have contributed to the spread of Islam.
IV. *Religious imperialism.* There was a period in the last century when animists were converted to Islam. Also conquests brought large numbers of slaves and this was more of an aid than

a hindrance in the spread of Islam. The large numbers of slaves who embraced Islam eventually settled in different parts of the region. This contributed to the spread of Islam.

V. *Opening-up of Africa by European powers*. The arrival of the Europeans enabled communication, security and the growth of towns. In some towns, the detribalized or those who were temporarily isolated from their religious milieu, feeling the need to link themselves with another social group, found their common denominator in Islam. Sons of local chiefs accepted Islam in order to be with the majority and escape the feeling of being despised. Western civilization had weakened the foundations of the local religions and thus paved the way for a social revolution which prepared the way for the adoption of a universal religion, which was Islam.

There were some subjective factors which derive primarily from Islam as a civilization: Religious and social integration. When communal life was disrupted through conquest, slavery and forced removals, individuals and families feel the need for a religion that will help them reintegrate into the social structure. Islam proved to be that factor.

I. Accommodation and syncretism. The way Islam adapted itself to animist peoples which took place through marriage and other ways. At first, Islam does not appear to demand a violent break with the past. Yes, Islam does have a set of laws and regulations that govern every sphere of life which may seem to be in conflict with local customs, but in reality many Islamic elements fall within the framework of African customary law. Institutions like polygamy have proven to be serious obstacles to the adoption of Christianity, while Islam on the contrary regards this as part of the marriage system.

II. Cultural prestige which was facilitated through the system of intellectual and material culture. Islam is the religion of the Book (Quran) and from that stems the superiority that Muslims displays when confronted by pagans. The desire for knowledge and pride in its acquisition has also been an important factor.

III. The different religious values. Christianity has never been able to escape the dilemma as to whether it is justified in utilizing material and spiritual means for its expansion. Islam has never had this problem. Religion is the vital cohesive element in the Islamic system. It is certain rituals and customary observances that first strike people when they come into contact with another religion. Thus some of these rituals and observances in Islam are the

daily prayer, the Ramadan fast and the death ceremony. Likewise, the clerics are not members of a priestly class-instead this profession is open to all willing to undergo the required training. Islam has provided answers to the problems of this world and the next, it offers a heaven and the utter certainty of being the true faith.

Islam became an African religion through the meeting of cultures. (Trimingham 1959: 29-40).

2.6 Conclusion

So the entrance of Islam into West Africa in general and into Mauritania influenced the landscape and the lives of the people. It influenced their language, their conduct, their dealings, their scholarship and their culture. Small Islamic empires that were established also contributed when they tried to implement some of the Islamic teachings. They promoted knowledge and therefore some Europeans have noted that in some areas like Mali, for example, there were 4000 scholars who were dedicated to the study of Islamic knowledge. The society was also greatly influenced by the interaction and exchange between traders. (al-Jamal and Ibrahim 1996: 109). What system did the Mauritanians adopt in teaching Islam and how effective was it? This will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Traditional Islamic Education in Mauritania and the Arabic manuscripts in the country

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the history of Mauritania and how Islam and Arabic were eventually entrenched within the society. Islam as a religion encourages its adherents to acquire knowledge and to impart it. Muslims were motivated by the statements of the Prophet Muhammad such as, "The acquisition of knowledge is compulsory upon every Muslim" (Ibn Majah 2009: 81) and "Convey from me even if it is a single verse." (Asqalani 1986: 231).

The inhabitants of Mauritania and its immigrants endured the harsh desert conditions and established institutions of learning. The scholars from this country engaged in writing and this is evident in the thousands of manuscripts that require attention. This chapter will address the traditional methods of Islamic education and the scholarly ambience in the country and the style of teaching with specific reference to the traditional *mahdarah* system. It will provide insight into the advantages and disadvantages of this system and the condition of the manuscripts. The chapter would also include a biography of a Mauritanian scholar, Shaykh al-Khadim, in whose collection al-Mawwaq's book was found. While there are manuscripts of al-Mawwaq's book in the library in Fez, Morocco, the one with Shaykh al-Khadim is preserved in his private collection.
Since this research was in some way inspired by the presence of a Spanish manuscript (al-Mawwaq's book) in Mauritania, it therefore commenced with a discussion on Mauritania and its educational legacy. Later, Mauritania's educational revival was inspired by Spain (Andalus). It was from Africa that Islam spread into Spain, hence Islam and its scholarship in the African region of Mauritania was discussed before Spain.

Islamic education was in essence both an oral and an aural tradition and thus the process of narration (*riwayah*) and the chain of transmission (*isnad*) are central components in the transmission of Islamic knowledge. This transmission took place by the student reading to the teacher, or even the teacher reading for his students, thereafter the teacher gifting a book to the student or even documenting something for his student. Once the teacher is satisfied with the students' progress, he granted authorization (*ijazah*) to the student either verbally or in writing.

(Haddad 2005: 1/186-187). Sometimes the teacher examined the student to ascertain whether or not he was deserving of the authorization. (Makdisi 1981: 148-153).

The mosque was the first place where aspiring students would gather to learn. This commenced from the time of the Prophet Muhammad. The initial centres of learning were in Madinah, Baghdad and Damascus. Formal madrasahs were established in Iraq in the 11th century (5th century after Hijrah). Whereas the mosque was considered to be a charitable trust (*waqf*), the madrasah was under the control of its founder. The academic drive continued until the famous al-Azhar University was established in Cairo, Egypt in 967 and al-Qarawiyeen in Fez, Morocco in 868. (al-Nahwi 1987: 48-52; Makdisi 1981: 30-33).

3.2 Islamic education in Mauritania – the *mahdarah*.

The Islamic education in Mauritania assimilated with the landscape and the nature of the people and their lifestyle. While the rest of the Muslim world is familiar with Islamic Education that took place in the *madrasah*, the Mauritanians educated their children and their adults in the *mahdarah*. The *mahdarah* may be defined as a traditional nomadic community-based educational institution that covers various branches of knowledge. It commences from the primary level up to a university level. It is responsible for spreading knowledge throughout the Sahara and even in neighbouring African countries. (Wald Maqam 2014: 2; Muhammadu 2002: 47).

The word *mahdarah* with reference to an educational institution does appear in some classical Arabic books like in the travels of Ibn Jubayr[6] (1964: 14) and the compilation of Islamic legal edicts (*fatwa*) by al-Wanshirisi[7] (1979: 156). The Mauritanians did not call their institutions a '*madrasah'* or a '*khalwah'* or one of the other traditional names used in the Muslim world. They selected a name unique to them, their lifestyle and their style of teaching. So, just as the people of Shinqit would protect their livestock with thorny bushes joined in a circular pattern, similarly students from all over would gather in a circular fashion around their teacher. It could possibly be

[6] He was an Arab geographer, traveller and a scholar from Andalus. He died in Egypt in 1217 (Zarkali)
[7] Abu al-Abbas al-Wansharisi was a scholar and jurist from Algeria who passed away in Fez, Morocco in 1509. He compiled legal verdicts in the Maliki School in a 12 volume book. (Zirkili 1998: 269-270)

derived from the Arabic word that refers to that with which wealth is protected or it is the place where people present themselves. (al-Nahwi 1987: 61).

The *mahdarah* system was established in 1039 with the arrival of the scholar, Abdullah ibn Yasin al-Jazuli (d.1057). The process of teaching continued after his death, particularly in the four main cities; Shinqit, Wadan, Tichit and Oulatah. (Wald Maqam 2014: 3).
It could also be attributed to the efforts by Abu Bakr ibn Umar (d. 1087), who after abandoning Ibn Tashfin, brought a scholar with him to establish schools in the region.
The academic revival and resurgence in Mauritania could also be attributed to the Muslims who fled Spain after the fall of Granada in 1492. As Andalusia collapsed, the changes reverberated across the Sahara. (Lovejoy 2009: 219; al-Nahwi 1987: 184).
Even C. Doul, a French traveller who visited the region in 1887 observed that these "Bidan (White Africans) convert their tents into true academic centres." (Muhammadu 2002: 52).
While the French Minister of Primary Education, Chaigneau stated in his report in 1934: 'The Bidan embraced Islam centuries ago and there was and still is among them scholars and jurists well known throughout the Arabic speaking world. And because they are proud of their past, they don't even consider our culture and neither do they trust us.' (Muhammadu 2002: 57).

The lessons in the *mahdarah* focussed on all the Islamic Sciences and included the Arabic Language, Sufism, Mathematics, Geography, Medicine and Astronomy. These institutions never fail to admit aspiring students regardless of gender. If the number of students increases substantially, then the head teacher revises the timetable to accommodate all the students. The Bedouin inhabitants of the village take care of the needs and meals of the students. Every family would usually take care of about 1-5 students. These Bedouins have proven that an academic revival can take place in tents and on the backs of camels. Sometimes the entire institution moved and, at times, only the head teacher moved in response to an invitation from a neighbouring village. (Waldad 2013: 3-4; al-Nahwi 1987: 55).

In most cases, the *mahdarah* is an individual-based system. A teacher who is an accomplished scholar takes charge of teaching, educating and nurturing his students. Sometimes, a *mahdarah* may have more than one teacher because it is situated in a larger village and thus not possible for

a single teacher to conduct multiple lessons daily. So the other teachers in the village associated with the *mahdarah* assist in fulfilling this responsibility. In the case of Shaykh Ma al-Aynayn (d. 1910), he taught other teachers who in turn taught students. He was, in modern terms, similar to the dean of a faculty with others in the department assisting him. (Wald Maqam 2014: 4-6).

A unique feature of the *mahdarah* is that it allowed the student to select a subject that he would study privately with his teacher. Some of the Quran teachers received remuneration in the form of a goat or camel but the teacher of the other Islamic Sciences in the *mahdarah* taught without any remuneration but was willing to teach any time of the day or night. He received gifts from the students or from their families. The student on the other hand is not forced to attend but rather has to take responsibility for his own attendance. This system has proven to be very positive in the development of the student because he is not subject to constant monitoring and thus there is no need for any punishment. If the student transgressed, then the teacher reprimands him privately with a great degree of love. With the result, there is a very loving, respectable and humble relationship between the student and the shaykh. A common slogan amongst the teachers is: 'Our students are our teachers.' The teacher is deeply concerned about the well-being of his students and this affection and concern is reciprocated by the students as well. (al-Nahwi 1987: 59-60).

The system at times is so informal that sometimes a student is taught while walking, at times at the teachers' home and at times while tending to his animals. (al-Nahwi 1987:173).
There is no examination because the system is not based on progressing from one level to the next. There is no harm or embarrassment if a student decides to repeat a text. So it is more of a continuous assessment which seems to produce better results. The main shaykh of the *mahdarah* is aware of all the students' academic progress along with their character and conduct. He lives with them and observes them in the mosque and outside. Many institutions produce educated people but not scholars. The *mahdarah* produced both. (Muhammadu 2002: 53-54).

The special features of the *mahdarah* may be summarised as follows:

I. Freedom: the student is free to choose where he studies, what he studies and with whom as well as the duration of his study.
II. Compassion: This is common among the students and between students and teachers.

III. Equality: There is no class or racial or even age distinction. At times, there may be an elderly man studying a certain text alongside much younger students.
IV. Students are cared for and taken care of by the residents of the village. At times, a goat or a cow is gifted to the students on special occasions like weddings.
V. No fees: Wealthy students are supported by their families, while less fortunate students are supported by the shaykh and by residents of the village. (Muhammadu 2002: 54; www.binbayyah.net/arabic/archives/3898).

The *mahdarah* provided an educational and social function and it preserved the culture. Because it is set in harsh surroundings, much tougher than the prestigious institutions in Cairo and Baghdad, it helped refine the students' character and ego. Students even share in other chores like obtaining water from the wells, milking the animals and constructing their own huts. (Waldad 2013: 8; Makdisi 1981: 9-32).

Their contributions to society could not be ignored and in 1981, UNESCO undertook a campaign to revive the *mahdarah*. There are a number of factors that contributed to the spread and the success of the *mahdarah*. These are: (al-Nahwi 1987: 79-80).

I. The importance of knowledge in Islam and the importance of having people dedicated to learning and teaching in a Muslim society.
II. The caravans of traders that passed through villages which facilitated the exchange and interaction between traders and scholars. This helped the spread of knowledge.
III. The annual pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah. Many scholars embarked on this journey and in doing so passed through many villages and towns and interacted with other scholars and visited various *mahdarahs*.
IV. The arrival of the Europeans to the country which facilitated the way for paper and its introduction to the society. Thus, many scholars were now more capable of writing and authoring their works. Their works contained great amount of detail which was a symbol of their scholarship. (Mayarah 2013: 3).
V. People who migrated to Shinqit included numerous scholars.
VI. Tribal wars forced some to flee to other parts of the country. With the result the *mahdarah* moved with the scholar and he continued teaching wherever he settled.

VII. Mauritanian scholars travelled to other countries and returned with books and even various Sufi Orders. This proved to be a positive addition to the education in the *mahdarah*.

VIII. The nature of the Bedouin lifestyle was that they were always in search of greener pastures. The drought forced people to move to other areas and thus the *mahdarah* moved as well.

3.3 Educational tools in the *mahdarah.*

The tools and instruments used in the *mahdarah* by the students are unique and cheap and are not used in the institutions in the Middle East.

The tablet or slate (*lowh*) which is a wooden board and the reed pen are two fundamental tools. These tools are inexpensive and accessible to all. The ink most commonly used is black in colour made with a combination of water, milk and some paste from the gum-tree. They are able to add various materials to produce other colours like green, blue and red. Even with the availability of paper, they still use the tablet because they believe it is better and helps a student memorize faster and helps in retaining the information for longer periods. (ed. Jeppie and Diagne 2008:296).

The student is required to write the lesson on the tablet, thereafter he reads it to the teacher who corrects the recitation and pronunciation. The student then repeats it many times until he commits it to memory. Thereafter, he recites it to the Shaykh of the *mahdarah* from his memory, initially all at once, then line by line while the Shaykh explains it. (al-Abudi 1997: 108-117).

The system in the *mahdarah* dedicated much time and attention to the supporting sciences in particular the Arabic language and its related subjects. The basic education which involved teaching young children the Arabic alphabet was carried out by women. (ed. Jeppie and Diagne 2008: 166).

These were regarded as the keys to unlock the knowledge of the Islamic Sciences. Next in order of importance was the Maliki school of Islamic Jurisprudence. This was followed by the remaining subjects like Quran exegesis, Hadith, Sufism and other subjects. The approach is based on memorization and excessive repetition. (Wald Maqam 2014: 7-8; Waldad 2013: 4).

3.4 The reliance on memorization

The process of memorization followed is undertaken in a few ways:

I. Collectively: where a group of students study a text together.

II. When the text is divided into different portions depending on the level of difficulty.

III. Students master one text before proceeding to the next.

IV. They used poetry to simplify other texts. The rhyme helps a student memorize faster. Poetry as a pedagogical tool in the *mahdarah* learning system in which memorization was a standard practice also became an identity symbol. (ed. Stewart 2016: 3).

V. Emphasis on early memorization and continuous revision and repetition. Sometimes as much as 1000 times. They have weekly sessions when various didactic poems are revised.

VI. Memorize the text prior to attending the lesson. This means that some students are encouraged to memorize a text before attending the class. This allows them to save time and in a short time qualify to listen to the commentary and explanation presented by the teacher.

VII. A student memorizes that which he requires in his life. So if he is memorizing a text in Fiqh and he comes across the section on Hajj and he knows that he does not have the financial means to undertake the journey, then he moves on to the next section.

VIII. The environment impacts on the academic progress. So if a child did not memorize the Quran and some poetry texts at a young age, then this is regarded as a failure on the side of the parent.

IX. Organizing special gatherings to revise texts that have been memorized. These are usually during the weekends.

X. Utilizing the early hours of the morning about one hour before dawn to reaffirm and consolidate what was memorized.

(al-Mukhtar al-Shanqiti 2011:p. 3-6; www.atbaa-sunna.blogspot.com/2011/01/blog-post25.html).

Usually, a student joins the *mahdarah* at a young age, and after memorizing the Quran which usually is when he about ten years old or, if he delays, then by 12, after which he proceeds to study the other Islamic Sciences. Recent neurological studies on the relationship between memorizing the Quran and the impact this process has on the brain has shown that it contributes to developing the memory capacity of the brain and other essential skills. (Casewit 2015: 12).

Some students remain in the *mahdarah* for as long as ten years. It must be stated that memorisation is an important feature of Islamic education and very often anecdotes are cited of those who possessed prodigious memories. (Makdisi 1981: 99-102).

Usually, lessons commence in the morning after breakfast, with a break for about one hour for siesta and resumes until sunset. In some cases, the time between Asr (late afternoon prayer) and Maghrib (prayer after sunset) is used for the recitation of Hadith or to teach females.

In the *mahdarah*, students' progress from basic Fiqh texts, like *al-Akhdari*[8] until they reach the more advanced works like *Mukhtasar al-Khalil*[9]. They would normally complete one text before proceeding to the next. The number of periods or lessons would be reduced depending on the students' ability to memorize and comprehend. Students are encouraged to repeat texts until they master it. Some students have even spent three years revising *Alfiyah Ibn Malik*[10]. (al-Nahwi 1987: 171; al-Abudi 1997: 108-117). Because the educational system in the mahdarah relies greatly on memorization and the didactic texts, al-Mawwaq's book, Sanan al-Muhtadin is not taught as part of the curriculum, but it is highly regarded by the senior scholars of Mauritania who rely on it in their research and to verify information.

3.5 Criticism of the *mahdarah* and its challenges.

The system in the *mahdarah* has been criticized mainly because: (http://arabliss.wordpress.com/2012//10/30).

I. The Bedouin nature of the people associated with the *mahdarah*, which makes them content with very little and does not encourage them to want to change or to adapt to different ways. (Wald Maqam 2014: 9).
II. The tough social and economic conditions have contributed to the poor infrastructure. (The severe drought forced many people to move to the cities.)

[8] A Fiqh text on the laws of the worship according to Maliki School written by Abdurrahman ibn Muhammad al-Akhdari (d.1575)
[9] A major reference work in the Maliki School by Khalil ibn Ishaq al-Jundi (d. 1374)
[10] An important poetry text comprising of 1000 verses on the laws of Arabic grammar by Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Malik (d. 1273)

III. The modern schooling system that provided a better chance for employment resulted in many youth abandoning the *mahdarah*. (Muhammadu 2002: 63).

IV. Its emphasis on memorization without understanding.

V. Over-emphasis on the foundational subjects. This means that a student would spend years studying and memorizing the laws of Arabic grammar without progressing to any of the other important subjects.

VI. Not much attention is given to ensure that students learn the proofs and evidences in matters of Islamic Jurisprudence. Instead they merely memorize the opinions in the Maliki School.

VII. Insufficient attention is given to the language of teaching. (Muhammadu 2002:54).

VIII. Many times they sufficed with commentaries that were written on certain classical books and thus scholars failed to engage with more writing.

IX. At times there was little or no consideration for issues that have multiple views.

X. The absence of subjects like Mathematics in the curriculum.

(al-Mukhtar al-Shanqiti 2011:1; www.atbaa-sunna.blogspot.com/2011/01/blog-post25.html).

For centuries the *mahdarah* was solely responsible for educating the younger generation. The modern schools challenged this. During the French Occupation of Mauritania, they banned the opening of Arabic Schools except after obtaining special permission. Children were required to carry certain identification cards as proof that they were enrolled at an institution. However, after the French failed to force its culture upon the people, it established its own Islamic Schools and tried to lure the children of the scholars by offering them scholarships. Their schools taught Islamic studies without the life of the Prophet Muhammad and Islamic history. These French Islamic Schools provided scholarships, accommodation, allowance and clothing. This was to divert children away from the *mahdarah*. The *mahdarah* could not cope with this. Within 10-15 years, families that once had a history of scholarship had lost all. (al-Nahwi 1987: 346, 424).

Initially, the Muslim scholars opposed the modern schools insisting that they were Christian-backed and this proved to be successful in keeping many children away. However, as time progressed and the country gained its independence, the Mauritanians (government and the public) embraced these schools and fewer youth joined the *mahdarah*. (Muhammadu 2002: 65-66).

Independence came with a certain degree of reverence for the French, so a student or scholar from the *mahdarah* would not qualify for any kind of employment outside the *mahdarah* because

of his lack of competence and proficiency in French and the lack of the necessary skills the country required to develop. Some scholars from the *mahdarah* tried to adapt by enrolling at various universities. However, statistics carried out in 1977 indicate that 98% of all teachers in the country had studied in the *mahdarah*. (al-Nahwi 1987: 436). Despite the claim made by some that the graduates from the *mahdarah* were not competent enough, these very graduates still comprised of the largest percentage of teachers in the country. This means that these graduates provided a very important service to education in Mauritania.

The country experienced severe drought in the 1970's and, as a result, many people abandoned the villages and moved to the towns and cities in search of jobs or to enrol in formal study programmes that would provide them with the necessary certificates and qualifications and opportunities to employment and a better life. The drought impacted negatively on the livestock and the *mahdarah* could not be sustained.

Wealth had taken over and became more of a status symbol. People were exposed to more comfort and were thus less willing to endure hardships or difficulties even for the sake of acquiring religious knowledge.

The demographics of the country had changed. In a space of ten years, some villages evolved into towns. This impacted on the need for livestock and the price of camels and cattle dropped greatly and the youth needed to work in order to earn a livelihood. The *mahdarah* could not cope with urbanization because it was designed as a nomadic institution. (al-Nahwi 1987:426).

People's approach to education had changed. Initially people acquired knowledge solely for the pleasure of Allah. The influence that religious scholars once had over the people began to decrease. (Muhamadu 2002: 65-66). People were now concerned about acquiring an income. The modern school is based on economic wealth. The student is asked from a young age about his future. So he grows up with this in mind expecting to earn a certain salary. Thus, the school is a rung on the ladder towards achieving this. He goes through the system of examinations and obtains a qualification that adorns his wall. The modern system is a 'finance-driven' establishment. While in the *mahdarah*, the student is there solely to acquire knowledge and he understood that

knowledge and excessive wealth and luxury are opposites. In the *mahdarah*, the student is not aspiring to attain any certificate and neither is he thinking of any salary. So the *mahdarah* is a goal and not a means to something else. It is a spiritual establishment that nurtures the mind and the soul. (al-Nahwi 1987: 447).

During the period of the French colonization, the Mauritanians zeal and enthusiasm for their faith increased and thus their desire to educate their children about their faith. However, globalization presents different challenges. (Muhammadu 2002: 68).

The various technological changes that have taken place and continue taking place have had an impact on the *mahdarah* and its relevance. (Muhammadu 2002: 65-66).

Despite the challenges, the *mahdarah* still has a very important role in Mauritanian society. It helps to eradicate illiteracy but its benefit depends to what extent it assimilates with the current changes. In 1950 there were 2300 pupils in the new primary schools and by 1985 there were 140000. In 1960, there were two educators with university qualifications and by 1986 there were 1386.
The *mahdarah* is caught between current educational approaches and its own approach based on freedom and values. In the modern school system, students are ready and willing to protest and demonstrate for trivial reasons like the volume of homework, contrary to the *mahdarah* where students at times didn't have decent food but bore this patiently because they regarded their main objective as the acquisition of knowledge. (al-Nahwi 1987: 444).

The present education and reform movements are calling for parental and community participation in children's education, because generally, as family ties weaken, parents become less involved in their children's education. Education research based on empirical studies show that small groups along with interactive learning circles and individual learning styles are far more effective in conveying knowledge than larger classrooms. (Casewit 2015: 15). The Islamic system and the *mahdarah* in particular, is based on individual learning.

The relevance of the *mahdarah* depends on how willing it is to embrace new teaching methods and perhaps some changes to its curriculum with perhaps some greater focus on the teaching of

history and introduction of subjects like mathematics to its curriculum. Its independence allows it to develop without being bound or restricted by certain governmental regulations. It needs to keep the employment sector in mind and thus there is a need to blend its curriculum with national and international needs. In doing so it could still maintain and preserve the culture and values of the citizens of the country.

The Mauritanian government is aware of its role and has tried to assist by: (al-Nahwi 1987: 466-467).

I. Providing psychological and financial support for teachers and students at the *mahdarah*.
II. To advance the teaching methods so that time is used to greater benefit.
III. Enable the graduates from the *mahdarah* to assimilate into society by granting them certificates equal to their colleagues in the formal schools.
IV. Encourage well-wishers to establish more endowments that are exclusively used to cover the expenses of the students.
V. Strive to make the mosque the hub for all teaching in the *mahdarah*.
VI. Establish special study circles for Islamic Sciences for females and to benefit from the experiences of other areas in Mauritania.
VII. To dedicate special attention to the Quranic sciences, Hadith and its sciences and sound belief (*aqidah*).
VIII. To focus on developing and refining character.
IX. Establish some exemplary *mahdarahs* which could serve as model institutions for others.
X. Establish a link with the National Educational Institute and provide workshops for teachers in the *mahdarah* to enhance their skills.

3.6 The Mauritanian scholarship and the written legacy:

Mauritanian scholarship was not isolated from the rest of the Muslim World. It was influenced in various ways by trends in other parts; in doctrine and belief (*aqidah*) it adopted the Ashari[11] School that was taken from Iraq, in Fiqh, it adopted the Maliki School which had its roots in Madinah,

[11] Attributed to Abu al-Hasan al-Ashari (d. 936) after whom one of the two famous schools of Islamic theology is named.

Saudi Arabia, in Sufism (mysticism) it was influenced by al-Junayd[12] who was from Iraq and in Arabic grammar it was influenced by Khalil ibn Ahmad[13] from Basra in Iraq. There was also a very significant Moroccan influence that was strengthened by the Almoravids *murabitun*. (Yahya Aali 2012: 7).

The Muslims in Spain (Andalus) and their scholarship also influenced scholarship in Mauritania. (Saalim 2004: 1). According to some researchers, if an Andalusian manuscript of the 12th century was compared to a Mauritanian manuscript of the 19th century, then it could possibly be thought to be by the same author because of the similarity between them. (Aramco World: 2003; ed. Jeppie and Diagne 2008: 295).

Shaykh Abdul Mu'min, who founded the city of Tichit and Haj Uthman, who founded the city of Wadan, were students of the scholar Qadi 'Iyad (d. 1149) were responsible for spreading and promoting knowledge in Mauritania. There are other examples like that of Shaykh Abdullah ibn al-Haj Ibrahim al-Alawi (d. 1817) who travelled from the south of Mauritania to the Maghrib where he remained for about six years studying under the scholars in Fez, Morocco and imparting his knowledge to them. He even attended the gatherings of Sultan Muhammad ibn Abdullah and conducted lessons in his presence. When he planned to return to Mauritania, the Sultan asked him to go to the Royal Treasury and take whichever books he desired. It seems like he took many books because it did not reach all at once, but rather at different intervals. Some records indicate that there were four trunks of books and he carried three loads with him. (Yahya Aali 2012: 28).
The Mauritanians excelled in the Arabic Language, poetry and Islamic jurisprudence and they authored many books in this regard. (Reese 2014: 20). This gained momentum in the beginning of the 18th century and reached its climax in the 19th century. The 17th century seemed to be an era during which the study of the sciences of Islamic Shariah flourished. (Mayarah 2013: 2; www.elmourageb.com/826).

A number of Mauritanian scholars were highly acclaimed. One scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Mahmud Wald al-Tarkazi (d. 1904) who memorized *al-Qamus* (An Arabic lexicon) challenged

[12] He was one of the famous early Sufi scholars of Baghdad who died in 910.
[13] Khalil ibn Ahmad al-Farahidi (d. 786) was a famous philologist, grammarian and a lexicographer from Iraq.

the scholars of the al-Azhar University in Cairo and they acknowledged his brilliance. He was even appointed as the first adviser to the Ottoman Sultan, Abdul Hamid (the second, d. 1918) in the beginning of the 19th century. (Talib 2012: 1; www.aqlame.com/article10611.html).
Shaykh al-Tarkazi was even asked by Sultan Abdul Majid (d. 1944) to prepare an index of the Arabic manuscripts in Spain. (Mayarah 2013: 4; www.elmourageb.com/826).
In the tribe of Jakanat there were about 300 females who memorized the famous Hadith work, *al-Muwatta*[14] in addition to various didactic poems. (al-Mukhtar al-Shanqiti 2011: 2).

The scholars of the *mahdarah* fulfilled various roles in the Mauritanian society. Some served as advisers to the statesmen, others were scribes at government level, some were politicians, others resisted occupation, while a large percentage led the five daily Salat and provided guidance to the community through legal verdicts (*fatwa*) and general advice and religious guidance. (Muhammadu 2002: 55).

Many Mauritanian scholars roamed neighbouring West African countries and promoted the teaching of Islam. Once tribal leaders accepted, they very often requested teachers to come to these countries to teach them their new faith. During the Hajj journeys many Mauritanian scholars interacted with scholars from other parts of the world and thus they were acquainted with the *mahdarah*. The eagerness to continue studying led some Mauritanians to institutions in places like Fez, Cairo and Madinah. Through their interaction, the *mahdarah* became known. (Muhammadu 2002: 60-63).

The scholars of the *mahdarah* also played a major role in resisting foreign occupation. Initially, the scholars carried their pens and their swords. They even resisted French culture by ensuring that peoples' adherence to their faith was stronger. (al-Nahwi 1987: 334-339). The first known resistance (*jihad*) in West Africa was in Mauritania during the 17th century. Scholars were divided along scholar and warrior lineages. (www.spice.stanford.edu/2009).

The intermarriage of Mauritanian scholars and women from different African tribes, as well as many African scholars who took different Sufi Orders from Mauritanian scholars also contributed

[14] A famous collection of Hadith by Imam Malik ibn Anas (d. 795) who was from Madinah.

to the recognition of the *mahdarah*. Around the 12th and 13th century, Sufi orders began to spread and they contributed to the social order of African Muslim societies and the spread of Islam. Their influence was so prominent that the word 'Shinqiti' not only referred to a geographical location, but became more synonymous with knowledge and a strong memory. (al-Nahwi 1987: 264-269). Shaykh Abdul Hayy al-Kettani (d. 1962) a scholar from Morocco said: "The excellent memory of the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad is not strange, because the Shinqitis are excellent in memorization."
(www.binbayyah.net/arabic/archives/3898).

There have been a few attempts by scholars to introduce the *mahdarah* system in some way in other parts of the world. Shaykh Hamza Yusuf who established al-Zaytuna in California in the USA is one example. (Wald Maqam 2014: 6).

3.7 The Manuscripts in Mauritania:

The expulsion of the Muslims from Andalus influenced the transmission of scholarship south of the Sahara. The presence of the Qadiri Sufi Order also contributed to the spread of scholarship. The collection of books and manuscripts in various libraries across West Africa demonstrate that influence in the region was along three main axes, perhaps the strongest being from Spain (Andalus) and Morocco (Maghrib) and following trans-Saharan routes from Ottoman domains from the 16th century, with the influence of the pilgrimage route to Makkah always important. (Lovejoy 2011: 217-224).

Many researchers are certain that the Mauritanian education was clearly influenced by Andalus. The emigration of Muslims from Spain to the western Sudan and the Sahara started before the fall of Granada in 1492 and continued long into the 16th century. For example, Ali ibn Ziyad al-Quti, from Toledo, Spain moved to Tuwat in the Sahara in 1468 and taught in Timbuktu. (Lovejoy 2011: 222).

As the *mahdarah* developed, its students began transcribing books and carried it along with them to other parts of the country where other scholars would purchase it. Some books were sold for

very high prices because of its importance and its scarcity. There is an example of a scholar who purchased a copy of *al-Qamus* by Fayruz Abadi (d.1414) for twenty camels. (al-Nahwi 1987: 151). Some of the notes of certain scholars were eventually gathered, collated and published. So the Mauritanians needed to preserve their writings despite the harsh environment that included the intense heat, rain, termites and animals like goats that may have consumed some of the parchments. They did not have trunks or boxes, instead their books, like other valuables were stored in leather bags. They were particular on binding their books. This was generally undertaken by women who were highly skilled in this. They carefully selected the leather, tanned and coloured it. Many manuscripts were destroyed because of human neglect, moisture in the air that promoted the formation of moulds that damaged the pages and conflict with the colonialists who plundered the manuscripts and moved it to European cities. Some scholars used to hide the manuscripts by burying it in holes or in caves and then sealing it with mud.
Some manuscripts deteriorated due to its dispersion through inheritance, tough weather conditions, or because it was mishandled. Manuscripts were even stolen and sold on the black-market and at times some owners discarded damaged manuscripts. (ed. Jeppie and Diagne 2008: 267-274; al-Nahwi 1987: 153).

It is estimated that about 120 works were authored in one century of which about one hundred were related to the Quran and its sciences. In addition, there were hundreds of commentaries and marginalia and many works on Sufism. Some scholars wrote extensively like Shaykh al-Mukhtar al-Kunti (d.1811) who, authored over thirty books while Shaykh Ma al-Aynayn authored about 125 works. Because of their passion for poetry, the likes of Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ahmadiyah composed a poem of 15 000 verses on the exegesis of the Quran. (al-Nahwi 1987: 246; Hunwick 2008: 311).

Some of the oldest and most precious collections of West African manuscripts are found in Boutilimit, Shinqit, Nima, Wadan, Oulata and Tichit in Mauritania. The oldest in the Mauritanian collection dates back to the 10th century and is written on gazelle skin. (Ngom 2017: 5).

Due to the Mauritanians passion and zeal for knowledge, many scholars began collecting books and very soon they found themselves having huge libraries. Certain families that had scholars

would usually have much larger libraries. Shinqit had many libraries. One library had 1000 books of which only 20 were published. These libraries contained books on the Islamic Sciences that included topics like Arabic, Medicine, Engineering, Mathematics and many more. There is a library that was established by Shaykh Muhammad ibn Hibt al-Kabir that contained about 1400 volumes. It even contained a book by Abu Hilal al-Askari that was transcribed in Granada, Spain (Andalus) in (1087) and is still in fairly good condition. The city of Oulata had more than twenty libraries. (al-Nahwi 1987: 154). The world's only known complete manuscript of a work on grammar by the Spanish Arab physician and philosopher, Ibn Rushd (known as Averroes; died in 1198) was found in Boutilimit in Mauritania. (Ngom 2017: 5). The oldest manuscripts are on parchments made from the skin of goats or gazelle which was used till the 11th century. Paper used there was produced elsewhere in Egypt, Maghrib or Spain. However, by the 13-14th century, African markets were invaded by paper. (Kratli 2008: 9).

Most known libraries have been surveyed over the last ten years but only a few inventories and categories exist. The first to receive inventorial attention was the one established by Shaykh Siddiya al-Kabir in the 1810's which was reviewed by Louis Massignon[15] a century later. Much later it was reviewed by Charles Stewart who microfilmed its contents. (Kratli 2004: 12).

Another important resource is Ulrich Rebstock's catalogue of Arabic manuscripts in Mauritania (1989) which contains a brief description of 2239 works with the largest percentage attributed to Fiqh-28%. (Kratli 2008: 12). There were some French military officers like Colonel Louis Archinard (d. 1932) who was instrumental in drawing scholarly attention to the traditional libraries of Mauritania. His substantial collection of manuscripts is now at Bibliotheque Nationale de France. In 1934, Du Puigaudeau and Senones, two female scholars stopped in Boutilimit and were shown the Shaykh Siddiya Library which comprised of two rooms with wooden chests that contained hundreds of books, that included Moorish Qurans and much more. (Du Puigaudeau 1937: 95-96). These two women visited another library that was established 150 years before by the Shinqiti scholar, Sidi Muhammad Ould Habott, that contained about 300 works. An English traveller, Bruce Chatwin saw this library in 1970. (Kratli 2004: 19).

In the early 1960's, with funding from UNESCO, Mukhtar Ould Hamidun and Adam Heymowski of the Royal Library of Stockholm were able to conduct a country-wide survey inventorying about

[15] A Catholic scholar on Islam and a pioneer of Muslim-Christian understanding. He died in 1962.

2000 works by 425 authors and they estimated the existence of about 40 000 manuscripts. (Kratli 2004: 22). In her 1994 survey, Genevieve Simon-Khedis listed about 40 libraries with holdings ranging from about 10 to 6000 items each. Only three are public institutions. The IMRS (Mauritanien de la Recherche Scientifique) established in 1975 holds about 6000 manuscripts representing 72 collections. This was followed some three years later by ISERI (Institute Superieur des Etudes et Recherches Islamiques) who in the first five years acquired about 3000 manuscripts, which were more than doubled in 1995. Between 1979 and 1997, Rainer Oswald, Ulrich Rebstock and Tobias Mayer photographed over 2500 manuscripts or 134000 pages of text from more than 200 private libraries in Mauritania preserved in IMRS. These were eventually scanned and made available in the early 2000's through OMAR (Oriental Manuscript Resources) which is an online database. (Bruckner & Kandzin 2001: 401-405).

The great value and the poor condition of these manuscripts and the lack of expertise and resources, both financial and technological, prompted IMRS to seek foreign help. The University of Tubingen in Germany collaborated, microfilmed and catalogued 2239 manuscripts. A three volume catalogue was published in 1985 and republished in one volume in 1989. Charles Stewart microfilmed, indexed and catalogued 120000 pages of material between Oct 1987 and Dec 1989. Eventually a four-volume book was produced in 1990, and another in 1992-93 recorded 3134 records in a five volume 'Catalogue of Arabic Manuscripts of IMRS'. (Kratli 2004: 23).

A different more encyclopaedic initiative was launched by the London based al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation which documents first-hand information. Khedis was able to visit 41 libraries in 14 locations. After independence, money began to dwindle and thus there was a need for a national repository. Since the mid-nineties, two ways have been adopted, creating collective repositories in the major manuscript rich towns, or providing private owners with the financial and technical means to properly preserve their collections at home. Along with the above, the building of a new manuscript centre was undertaken in 2003. (Kratli 2004: 25; Hunwick 2008: 307).

A setback is a lack of a general catalogue of all the manuscripts preserved across Mauritania and the lack of coordination and integration of all the efforts. Another reason is the inability to promote and publicize a number of noteworthy initiatives which would generate scholarly attention and interest particularly in the English speaking world.

For the historian and scholar, these manuscripts are particularly important as they represent the only written material available for the pre-colonial period. These manuscripts also reflect the civilizational legacy in general but more specifically the written and recorded heritage. The manuscripts carry the collective memory of the past, the scholars, their identity, memories, thoughts and a summary of their experiences. They are rich in thought, scientific and religious content and highlight the constructive role played by the predecessors, the educational institutions and the undeniable contributions they made to the growth of the Islamic civilization. (ed. Jeppie & Diagne 2008: 265). Taking advantage of what was done in the west in the field of manuscript codicology and preservation and the work in the east and elsewhere in Africa could help successfully generate a conservation strategy. Until recently, most desert libraries were off limits because of their geographical location and distribution. However, in the last two decades these efforts have started to bear fruits. (Kratli 2004: 13).

The Mauritanian manuscript tradition was largely a 'literature in school for the school.' (Stewart 2016: 3)

3.7.1 Book markets, libraries and trade.

By the 16th century, the trans-Saharan trade entered its golden age and many trade centres became prominent cultural hubs. Products were brought from as far as Persia, India and China and were sold in Timbuktu, Shinqit or Sijilmassa. The period of economic and intellectual prosperity lasted for about three hundred years. Muslim travellers confirmed the importance of books and its products and they attested to the flourishing book trade and arts such as calligraphy and book binding along the main caravan routes. With time, paper became as valuable as salt. There was an increasing demand for specific services and skills like copyists, scribes, calligraphers and binders. (Kratli 2004: 4-6).

In her book 'On Trans-Saharan Trails', Lydon details the existence of a lively book trade between Western Sudan and Morocco in which Sahelian scholars organized special trips to the markets of Morocco in order to fill their collections with the latest works on jurisprudence, Quranic exegesis, mysticism and theology. (Reese: 2014: 20). Books were of two kinds: the finer editions and important works like the Quran and cheaper copies of works used for instructional purposes. Books were collected and housed by the scholars in mosques, *zawiyahs* and individual collections in

homes. Individual collections passed from one generation to another according to a well-established patrilineal system while institutional libraries were formed by direct acquisition as well as by charitable gifts (*waqf*).

Despite being geographically isolated, the Mauritanians were able to establish libraries relying on purchasing books, authoring their own, transcribing books and gifting books. Shaykh Muhammad Yahya Oulati (d. 1912) listed one hundred titles of books that were given to him in Tunisia on his return from Hajj. (Muhamamdu 2002: 59). There is the example of Sultan Ismail of the Alawi Empire who was a keen collector of manuscripts and on one occasion he had 50 Christian captives. He agreed to free them in exchange for 100 manuscripts each. (al-Nahwi 1987: 152).

The scholarly and literary tradition that grew out of it is documented by an impressive manuscript heritage that is about 40 000 in number in a region where such activities are hard to imagine and even harder to record. Some Mauritanian cities like Shinqit became important spiritual and intellectual hubs. This was mainly due to the large number of students and libraries. (Kratli 2004: 8).

3.8 The biography of Shaykh al-Khadim:

The following is a profile of the life of one of the contemporary Mauritanian scholars who is a product of the *mahdarah*-a teacher, an author and also a person in whose personal collection of books and manuscripts was a copy of al-Mawwaq's book that is an important part of this thesis. Shaykh al-Khadim and other Mauritanian scholars refer to al-Mawwaq's book in their research, although the book is not formerly taught in the *mahdarah*.
The main source of the information in this biography is from the writings of one of his students in the introduction to a book written by Shaykh al-Khadim. (Ahmad Yahya 2000: 1-52).

Muhammad al-Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Khadim was born in 1938 in a town about 70 km North East of Nouakchott.His lineage could be traced to Abdullah ibn Ja'far. Ja'far (d. 700) who was the cousin of the Prophet Muhammad. His mother was Izzah, the daughter of Muhammad al-

Mawsawiyah. In order to understand the scholar, it is necessary to look briefly at the parents because he was raised by them. This is where the foundation of knowledge was laid.

His father, Ahmad was a scholar who excelled in the seven modes of recitation of the Quran and the sciences of the Arabic Language. Ahmad had studied under and benefited from some of the reputable scholars of Mauritania. He was a brilliant person who was known for his exceptional memory. He used to listen to a lengthy ode once and thereafter was able to repeat it accurately. He was also an accomplished scholar of traditional medicine and treated various illnesses. He passed away in 1973.

Shaykh al-Khadim was raised in this scholarly environment. As a young boy, he was taught the Arabic alphabet by his paternal grandmother who thereafter taught him some of the Quran. He read about two-thirds of the Quran with her and completed it with his father. He thus memorized the Quran at a very young age. Thereafter, as per the guidance of his father, he studied the rules of Quran recitation (*tajwid*), biography of the Prophet (*sirah*), Arabic grammar and poetry from the six popular *diwans*.

His father then sent him to Shaykh Ahmad ibn Ahmad Yahya who taught him the books authored by Shaykh Mawlud ibn Ahmad Faal. This was followed by additional lessons under the tutelage of Shaykh Mukhtar ibn Ablul, Shaykh Muhammad Aali ibn Ni'mah and then the erudite scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Saalim ibn Alamma. He studied Arabic grammar, Fiqh of the Maliki School and the science of Hadith.

In total he is said to have spent twenty years studying during which he had to endure harsh and difficult circumstances where in most cases, students survived on water only, with little or nothing to eat. If they had something, then it was dry bread. The *mahdarah* where he studied was about 60 km from his home and this distance was covered on foot. During this period, he lived in a hut that was attached to the mosque and left only to pray therein.

As a student, he was also known for his exceptional memory. In fact, when he attended a lesson, he memorized all the poetry and other aspects that were cited during the lesson. When he returned

home, he transcribed it so that he did not forget it. He memorized a few sections form the famous Maliki reference work, *al-Khalil* by simply listening to it being recited to him. He was blessed with profound understanding, and as a student, other students would seek his assistance in revising the days' lessons. His teachers observed all these traits and his abilities and even hinted at his readiness to teach.

He read extensively and was questioned by his teachers on numerous aspects. He answered favourably and he was then granted an unconditional authorization (*ijazah*) to teach and even to pronounce *fatwa*.

After his formal graduation, a number of students left the *mahdarah* with him and they became the core group of students around whom his own *mahdarah* developed. Eventually, students from far and wide began flocking to his *mahdarah*. As was mentioned earlier in the chapter-the *mahdarah* is a mobile institution, that moves depending on the surroundings. So when the drought intensified, his *mahdarah* moved to within a few kilometres of the capital Nouakchott, to the north east. He taught throughout the day and into the night, still finding time for research, writing and worship. He continued in this way for about ten years.

Some of the reasons for his success may be attributed to:

I. Shaykh al-Khadim's academic position amongst the scholars because of his vast knowledge.
II. His dedication and devotion to teaching. He never engaged in any activity that was not related to or connected to knowledge.
III. The strategic position and location of his *mahdarah*.
IV. As time progressed, some of his students who had excelled and had obtained *ijazah* from him had also resumed teaching in the *mahdarah*. In this way they relieved him of some of the elementary classes.

Shaykh al-Khadim has authored a number of books on various subjects and topics. These include didactic poems, commentaries and even summarized and condensed versions of lengthier books. His written works are more than fifty in number and may be summarized as follows:

I. Quran: he has authored a poem on the ten famous scholars to whom the modes of recitation are attributed.
II. Hadith: A poem on the severity of the incorrect recitation of the Hadith.
III. Islamic Belief (*aqidah*): A commentary to a poem written by Shaykh al-Mukhtar ibn Bonah, titled *Wasilat al-Sa'adah.*one of his works was published for the first time in 1996.
IV. The Principles of Fiqh (*usul*): He authored about six works. His book on this subject titled: *'Sullam al-Matali' li Dark al-Kawkab al-Sati'* was published in 1998.
V. Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*): He authored about ten works. One of these is titled: '*Marami al-Mujtadi min Sharh Kafaf al-Mubtadi'* which was published thrice.
VI. Sufism: He authored about thirteen works.
VII. Arabic (including grammar): about thirteen works.
VIII. Logic: He has five works.
IX. History: He has two works.
X. Poetry: He composed many in praise of the Prophet Muhammad, eulogies remembering his teachers, wisdoms and social matters, mysticism and supplications.

He enjoys a high and respectable position among the scholars because of his extensive knowledge and his profound understanding. He has an amazing ability in dealing with matters of disagreement among the scholars. He adopts a fair and unbiased approach. Sometimes he adopts a third opinion simply to avoid the disagreement or by choosing a view that could be considered in the middle.

3.8.1 His approach in Sufism:

Shaykh al-Khadim had formerly taken the *Shadhli*[16] Sufi Order from his teacher, Shaykh Muhammad Saalim ibn Alamma in (1955) and remained attached to his spiritual guide and mentor until he passed away. He then consulted some people who informed him that he was the successor. He continued searching until he made contact with al-Tah ibn Alamma (one of the sons of his spiritual guide). Al-Tah had taken the Tijani[17] Sufi Order from Shaykh Ibrahim Niyas (d. 1975) and so Shaykh al-Khadim was initiated into the Tijani Order in (1973) and only disclosed this in

[16] A Sufi Order founded by Shaykh Abul Hasan al-Shadhli (d. 1196) from Morocco.
[17] A Sufi Order founded by Shaykh Ahmad al-Tijani (d. 1815)

1982. He began guiding and correcting some of the ways of the ignorant aspirants who were associated to the Sufi Order. This was done in accordance with the principles of the Shariah.

3.8.2 His personality:

He is a personification of piety and noble character. He is not deterred by status and position and remains humble, kind, generous and a supporter of the truth. He is a dedicated and loving son. This was confirmed by his father a week prior to his demise in the presence of two witnesses when he stated that he was pleased with his son.

3.9 Conclusion:

The details on the educational system in Mauritania and the scholarly legacy represented by the manuscripts in the country serves as a response to the 18th-19th century philosopher, Georg W. F. Hegel, who in his lectures and articles, alleged that Africa had no history and development to exhibit. The historian, H. R. Trevor followed Hegel and in 1965 argued that perhaps in the future there will be some African history to teach. He maintained that there was only the history of the Europeans in Africa. (Nobili 2013: 2).

The details presented in this chapter disprove these claims because very often the desert is associated with ignorance and primitive ways, but the Mauritanians along with their *mahdarahs* have proven that this is not true. They had a vibrant and productive educational system that contributed greatly to the educational and academic legacy of the country. In the last three centuries, no other system or institution in North and West Africa was able to achieve such proficiency and expertise in Arabic and poetry. The *mahdarah* can be very useful in showing the rest of the world how to maintain values in society and educate people regardless of financial means. They need to navigate through the modern challenges and find effective ways to ensure that the *mahdarah* remains relevant. However, the presence of thousands of manuscripts leaves aspiring researchers and scholars with many opportunities. There is a need for an ambitious mass digitization initiative to prevent any further loss of content and to ensure long-term preservation for the purposes of perpetual access, duplication and migration. If properly managed, it will create the capacity to build digital libraries. The functionality of data-based and data-driven resources such as AMMS and OMAR will have to be combined so that the need to consult physical manuscripts is limited. Even though, much of the work that has been done by AMMS and OMAR

is largely outdated because of the significant changes in the information industry over the last two decades, which include the rapid growth of the internet, human-computer interaction and digital humanities as an academic field concerned with structuring and analysing data using new methods such as text-encoding, digital scholarship and geospatial analyses. (Kratli 2014: 61-62).

The next chapter will profile the Spanish scholar, al-Mawwaq, whose book *Sanan al-Muhtadin* is an important part of this thesis. It will trace the scholarly link between Spain (Al-Andalus) and West Africa in general and particularly Mauritania.

Chapter Four

An insight into Muslim Spain and the biography of al-Mawwaq

4.1 Introduction

The book authored by the Spanish Muslim scholar, al-Mawwaq is an important part of this thesis and thus this chapter will provide a short biography of him. However, in order to understand the personality and appreciate his work then and even today, one must understand how Islam entered Spain along with some insight into Islamic scholarship in the region. The history of the region is important because prior to Islam there was political instability and social injustice. This changed with the arrival of Islam and the establishment of vibrant educational institutions. The relationship between the Spanish Muslim scholars and Muslim scholars from other parts of the world is also very important because it is al-Mawwaq's book that was found in a Mauritanian scholar's collection. There are manuscripts of his book in Morocco and in Tunisia as well. Thereafter this chapter will briefly discuss the Muslim-Christian relationship in Spain because the lessons learnt then will assist us as South African Muslims to better co-exist with different religious groups in the country. This may also prove to be useful for graduates from the South African Darul Ulooms.

4.2 Islam in Spain (711-1492)

This section of the chapter intends to provide a chronological account of some of the main events related to Islam in Spain from the conquest in 711 until the fall of Granada in 1492.

The chronology of the main phases in Andalus were as follows: (ed. Ibrahim & Salih 2007: 366).

The time period	711 - 756	Conquest of Spain and Umayyad rule
	756 - 856	A glorious period
	856 - 913	A period of weakness
	913 - 979	A glorious period
	979 - 1009	Amiriyah Empire
	1009 - 1031	End of Umayyad rule
	1031 - 1091	The split into smaller states
	1091 – 1145	The reign of the Almoravids

	1145 – 1223	The reign of the Almohads
	1223 - 1492	Reign of Bani Ahmar and the fall of Granada

Historically the country was known as Andalus and this name could be traced to some 'savage' tribes from Scandanavian countries like Sweden, Denmark and Norway. These tribes resided in this region for some time and the Arabs referred to them as vandals (*fandaal*) and the land was known as '*Fandaalasia'* and, with the passage of time, it became Andalus. Eventually, these tribes left Andalus and were replaced with various Christian tribes who were known as the Goths or Visigoths. Some of these vandals crossed over from Europe into Africa, the equivalent of present-day Tunisia and Algeria because they were attracted by its natural wealth. These were descendants of the Goths and remained there until the Arabs conquered the land. When the Arabs learned that the vandals had crossed over from Europe into Africa, they referred to their territory of origin with a distorted version of the original name 'Vandals' and thus called it 'Andalus'. They continued ruling the land until the Muslims arrived. (al-Sirjani 2014: 13; ed. Jayyusi 1992: 5).

Prior to the Muslim conquest, Spain was politically unstable, social injustice was widespread and the economy was struggling. Despite this bleak image, the Goths were able to establish a powerful political system with an army that was able to defend the land. (al-Sirjani 2014: 16).

The Muslim conquest of Spain took place in 711 after Islam had spread across North Africa and entered countries like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and parts of Morocco. In fact, Islam had reached North Africa about 70 years before the conquest of Spain. The Muslims were then faced with two options; either march further south into the Sahara or, north across the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain and Portugal. They chose the latter. (al-Sirjani 2014: 19-24).

Musa ibn Nusayr was the Muslim commander who was able to ensure that the vast majority of North Africa was under his control. He appointed a Berber, Tariq ibn Ziyad who was one of his most accomplished generals in charge of Tangier, a city in Morocco. The city Sibtah however, remained under the Christians. (James 2012: 11-12 and al-Sirjani 2014: 27)

Musa ibn Nusayr had to overcome various obstacles that included:

I. He had very few ships that could be used to cross the sea from Morocco to Spain. To overcome this, he built ships and ports in North Africa.

II. There were a few islands to the east of Spain whose inhabitants were Christian. Thus he feared a counter attack from the east. He conquered these islands and thus protected himself from any attack from the east.

III. The port of Sibtah was strategically located but it still remained under the Christians and this was of concern to him. He overcame this obstacle when King Julian of Sibtah agreed to enter into an alliance with the Muslim general, Tariq ibn Ziyad, against King Roderick.

IV. The number of people who were with him was small. Therefore, he had to increase the number of Muslims and, in doing so, he could be reassured of greater support. He embarked on a process of educating the Amazigh people about Islam and thus he was reassured of their support for him.

V. On the other side, the Christian population was huge and they were being led by a powerful king.

VI. The land of Andalus was still unknown to the Muslims and therefore any attempt to lead his army into a foreign land could prove to be risky and dangerous.

The first band of Muslims comprised of 500 men and they were led by Tarif ibn Malik in 710. Their task seemed to be mainly a reconnaissance mission during which they studied the southern Andalus and reported to Musa ibn Nusayr. (al-Sirjani 2014: 37; Lane-Poole 1903: 13).

The Muslims were encouraged to proceed with conquering Andalus after they were assured by King Julian of his assistance who was eager to take revenge against King Roderick. Finally, one year after preparing, in 711, an army of 7000 under the leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad was ready to enter Andalus. They passed the Straits of Gibraltar and then faced a Spanish army in the south which was defeated after a fierce battle. When King Roderick heard about the Muslim advances in his country, he prepared a huge army that comprised of 100 000 soldiers. When Tariq heard this, he realised that his small army could not face this large army. He requested reinforcements from Musa ibn Nusayr who complied and sent Tarif ibn Malik with an additional 5000 soldiers. In the year 711 and in the month of Ramadan, the battle of Guadelete (Barbat) took place and continued for eight days. The Muslims were victorious even though 3000 of their soldiers were killed. (al-Sirjani 2014: 43-53; Lane-Poole 1903: 20). This victory encouraged Tariq ibn Ziyad to march towards the north of Spain, in particular the Gothic capital, Toledo. This also resulted in

many volunteers from Morocco and neighbouring areas who were know eager to join Tariq's army. Even Musa joined the Muslim armies in Spain and remained there until 713-714 organising the affairs of the new state until both he and Tariq were summoned by the Caliph, Walid ibn Abdul Malik to Damascus. When he left, he appointed his son, Abdul Aziz as his successor over the new state. (ed. Jayyusi 1992: 9). At the same time, King Roderick's army and many of the Spanish people were in some way shocked at the defeat and not eager to continue fighting.

The Spanish thought that the Muslim army was only in search of booty and once the battle was over and the booty secured, they would return to Africa. And thus, they indirectly contributed to handing over one of the fairest provinces of Spain for eight centuries to the Muslims who dominated the region. (Lane-Poole 1903: 20; James 2012: 51).

After the initial victories, the Muslim army considered advancing towards France, but they were defeated by Charles Martel in 733 and the Battle of Tours had vindicated the independence of France and set a stop to Muslim conquests. By 759, Muslim lands fell to the Gauls and the Franks, so that they lost everything beyond the Pyrenees. (Lane-Poole 1903: 30; ed. Jayyusi 1992: 16).

The initial conquest of Spain eventually resulted in almost all its inhabitants accepting Islam. The non-Muslims had to pay a land tax (*kharaj*) if they had cultivable land and a protection tax (*jizyah*). (Lane-Poole 1903: 44-47, 73). The Muslim presence in Spain witnessed eras under different leaders with different approaches and interpretations of the teachings of Islam. These resulted in times of internal tension, revolts and conflict. The Muslim presence went through different periods under different dynasties and different leaders. The Umayyad period lasted from 755-929. They were followed by the Berber Almoravids under Yusuf ibn Tashfin (d.1107), who had complete control by 1103 and lost to Alfonso by 1133. They were followed by the more radical Almohads who were led by Muhammad ibn Tumart who took Seville in 1146 and then Cordoba. They lost to the Christians in 1212 in the Battle of Navas de las Tolosa in which the King of Castille defeated the Almohads. This was the turning point in the "Re-conquest of Spain". One of the most influential Muslim leaders was the Umayyad, Abdurrahman (1st) (d. 788), who arrived in Andalus in 755 and shortly thereafter assumed the throne and later Abdurrahman (3rd). who ruled for about 50 years between 912-961. (Glick 2018: 359; James: 2012: 12, 134). Abdurrahman (1st) was an

important statesman who also paid much attention to construction of buildings. One of his projects was the erection of the main mosque in Cordoba in 785 and he even built his own palace which he named “Rusafa”. (ed. Jayyusi 1992: 21).

Andalus reached its peak by 1031 and then slowly plunged into a state of division and chaos because of internal and external enemies. For a period close to six hundred years, the Empire was under a central ruler called a Caliph. Finally, a time came when the Calpihs were weak and some were even prisoners in their own palaces. The Muslim state was divided into smaller divisions or factions (*taifa*) who at times fought one another. This was a complex period in the history of Andalus because the fragmentation that occurred was not merely political, but also social. The very strands that kept the people together were now being torn apart. (Phillips 2005: 96; ed. Jayyusi 1992: 49).

In 1072, Palermo, the capital of Sicily fell, and in 1095, Pope Urban (2nd) summoned western civilization to a Crusade. (Menocal 2002: 47). The fanatical views of the Almoravids and the Almohads changed the face of the cities to the south, but the Christian victory from the north resulted in further Muslim losses and the eventual loss of Cordoba in 1236. Ferdinand (3rd) of Castille captured the city of Seville in 1248. (Menocal 2002: 51).

By 1277, there was little that remained that could be called Islamic Spain, except for Granada, but its intellectual and cultural impact on the rest of Europe was, in some ways, reaching its peak. Muhammad (12th) handed the keys to the city to the descendants of Ferdinand (3rd) and Alfonso; Isabella and her husband, Ferdinand of Aragon.

The fall of the city of Toledo also had consequences on the region and Andalus with Granada as its last Muslim enclave fell to the Christians in 1492. (Zaimeche 2005: 17).

With the Spanish Christian re-conquest, in 1501, Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity or to leave the country. Those who converted were called Moriscos and by 1615 there were no Moriscos in Spain. (Constable 2018: prologue; Menocal 2002: 228).

4.3 Education in Muslim Spain and the relationship between Spanish Muslim scholars and scholars from other parts of the world.

4.3.1 Islamic Education in Andalus

The mosque served as a place of worship but also an important institution for imparting knowledge. The building of mosques was supported by the leaders and statesmen and this propelled the religious devotion and the acquisition of knowledge. There were study-circles in the mosques. Abu al-Qasim Khalaf ibn Ibrahim who was also known as Ibn al-Nahhas (d. 1117) taught for many years in the Grand Mosque of Cordoba. These study-circles were frequented by many and it is for this reason that many Andalusian Muslims regarded the Grand Mosque in Cordoba as one of the most important mosques in Islam after the Grand Mosques in Makkah and Madinah. (al-Warakli 2017: 4). This was not the only mosque where these lessons were conducted. The Grand Mosque of Seville, the mosque in Malaga and the Bayazin Mosque are other famous mosques. The latter is where al-Mawwaq conducted his lessons.

The Andalusians introduced classrooms nearby the mosques that were dedicated to teaching children. In the vicinity of the Grand Mosque of Cordoba there were 20 such centres to teach children. Here children spent a few years learning how to read and write and memorize the Quran. These lessons were followed by additional lessons on grammar as well as some poetry. In this way, the child entered into his teenage years with some appreciation for the Arabic language. Some children were taught by instructors who charged a fee. Sometimes the remuneration included essential food items like oil and flour. The teacher even received gifts on special occasions like the days of Eid and when the child completed the memorization of the Quran. The details of the curriculum were determined by the norm in the area. (Zunati 2015: 3-4). Thereafter they were permitted to attend the lessons with the more senior scholars.

Some parents chose to use their shops as places to educate children. Palaces and homes were also used. The homes of the scholars were frequented by many. Even the hostels that were built to serve as accommodation for the travellers was also used as venues to impart knowledge.

This continued for many years until the first formal madrasa in Andalus was established in the 13th century by Sultan Abu al-Hajjaj Yusuf ibn al-Ahmar (d. 1354) in Granada. (Ibn Adhari 2/245). Al-Madrasa al-Yusufiyah in Granada was probably the most famous and reputable institution. It was here that famous scholars like Ibn Juzay (d. 1356) and Qasim ibn Lubb (d.

1378) taught. (al-Warakli 2017: 9). There were some schools that were funded by the state. Primary schooling was compulsory because nobody employed the services of a person who was illiterate. (Makki :45). It is very difficult to specify an exact age when high school education commenced. Students who excelled were encouraged to join different professions and some even served as judges (*qadis*) and government officials, while others continued studying.

As stated earlier in this thesis, the Muslims were encouraged by verses in the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad to pursue knowledge wherever they went. They did so in Mauritania and did the same in Spain. (Rustum 2009: 15).

Not long after the Muslims had arrived in Spain, the scholars started playing an important role in law in Andalus. When Islam entered Andalus, the Muslims followed the school of Imam al-Awzai (d. 774). The Maliki School enetered during Imam Malik's time through some of his students like al-Ghazi ibn Qays (d. 815), Ziyad ibn Abdurrahman al-Lakhmi Shabtun (d. 819) and Yahya ibn Yahya al-Laythi (d. 848). Around the second half of the 10th century, a Shafi scholar named Qasim ibn Muhammad al-Sayyar (d. 889) arrived to Andalus from the East and he began teaching the Shafi School. There were some scholars who took on this school. Around the same time, the Zhahiri School gained some prominence. (Zunati 2015: 7).

One of the first judges (*qadi*) whose method in court is known was Mahdi ibn Muslim who was appointed in 738. What is interesting is that one of the first influential scholars was Mu'awiya ibn Salih al-Shami, a Syrian who arrived in 740. He was known for his knowledge of hadith and his independence as a scholar who did not align himself to any of the schools of Islamic Jurisprudence. (ed. Sayyusi 1992: 850).

From the 8th century, scholars from Andalus travelled out of the country eager to acquire knowledge from the scholars in other parts of the Muslim World. In around 792, the school of Imam Malik and his book *al-Muwatta* spread in Spain through his student, Yahya al-Laythi (d. 848). Yahya had travelled to the east and studied under Imam Malik (d. 795) in Madinah and elsewhere after which he returned to Andalus. (ed. Ibrahim & Salih 2007: 378). The official adoption of the Maliki School was due to the leaders, Hisham (1st) (d. 796) and his son, Hakam (1st) (d. 822), although the views of Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), a famous Spanish scholar who differed

from the four Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence with regard to use of analogical reasoning in Islamic legal verdicts also received substantial following. There were also some who followed the Shafi School. (ed. Sayyusi 1992: 859-861).

Baqi ibn Makhlad (d. 889) travelled to Iraq to study under some of the scholars there including Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855). He eventually returned to Cordoba where he passed away. These travels were not restricted to scholars of the Islamic sciences. Muhammad ibn Abdun was a scholar of medicine and he also travelled to Iraq and returned to Andalus in 971. (Imam 2006: 8-16). Some Andalusian scholars like Abu Bakr ibn al-Arabi (d.1149) accompanied his father on his travels to acquire knowledge. Another scholar, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ali from Granada, studied in Andalus, then in Tunisia and Madinah. He eventually taught the *Muwatta* in Makkah. Abu al-Walid al-Baji (d. 1081) stayed in Makkah for 3 years and was closely linked to a famous narrator of *Sahih al-Bukhari* known as Abu Dhar al-Harawi. (Warakli 2007: 17, 21, 26, 36; Rustum 2009: 46).

The scholars from Andalus shared a close relationship with the scholars from Morocco (Maghrib). Early on there was a relationship between the scholars of Fez in Morocco and the scholars in Cordoba and Sibtah. Some scholars even travelled from Andalus to Marrakesh. (2010: 1). The scholars of the Maghrib embarked on an active collective transcribing initiative of books. This was done to popularize the book and to make it more accessible to the public. This meant that when a book was in a few volumes and transcribing it would be time-consuming and tedious for a single person, they divided the book among a few scribes and, in this way, the process was quickened. (Rahmani 2013: 1).

Scholars from the east also travelled to Andalus and those who returned to the east spread the knowledge and the books of the Andalusian scholars. Some of these travels was to perform pilgrimage (Hajj) to Makkah and Madinah and it was here that they met many other scholars who congregated for the annual pilgrimage. (Baayoun 2013: 4). The city of Cordoba became famous for its scholars who excelled in all sorts of learning. Students from all parts of the world travelled to Cordoba eager to study poetry, the sciences, or to be instructed in divinity or law; so it became the meeting place of the eminent in all matters, the abode for the learned and the place of resort

for the studious. Its literary men were always vying with each other to gain academic prominence. Cordoba was to Andalus what the head is to the body. (Lane-Poole 1903: 130). Every branch of science was studied there and medicine received more attention and greater discoveries by the doctors and surgeons of Andalus were made than it had gained during all the centuries that had elapsed. Albucasis (d. 1013) (Abu al-Qasim Khalaf al-Zahrawi) was a notable surgeon and some of his operations coincided with modern practices. Avenzoar (d. 1091) (Ibn Zuhr) made medical and surgical discoveries and Ibn Baytar (d. 1248) was a pharmacist who travelled all over to find medicinal herbs on which he wrote an extensive treatise. Abbas ibn Farnas (d. 887) was one of the first to make glass from stone. He was also a scholar of mathematics. (Imam 2006: 18).
The scholars studied and even wrote about mathematics, geography, gardening and farming. (Rahmani 2013: 4). Averroes (d. 1198) (Ibn Rushd) was the chief link that connected ancient Greek philosophy with that of medieval Europe. Astronomy, Geography and Chemistry were subjects studied with ardour in Cordoba. There was never a time in Europe when literature and poetry became the speech of people. In architecture and the arts, Andalus was pre-eminent with buildings like the Grand Mosque of Cordoba and the city of al-Zahra which could not have been erected unless the workmen had been highly skilled in their crafts. Silk weaving was a cherished art in Andalus and the city Almeria was known for silk and carpets. Pottery was carried to great perfection. (Lane-Poole 1888: 140-147).

This was achieved because the leaders were patrons of knowledge and the scholars, and very often the leaders were scholars in their own right. One example is of the leader, al-Hakam who sent people to all parts of the east to buy manuscripts and bring it back to Cordoba. His representatives were constantly searching the booksellers' shops in Cairo, Baghdad and Damascus for rare books for the Sultan's library. When the book could not be bought, he had it copied. He gathered 400 000 books at a time when printing was unknown and every copy had to be transcribed by a professional copyist. (Lane-Poole 1888: 155).

Eventually, the scholars of Andalus excelled in the Islamic Sciences and many authored important works in different subjects. The science of Quran exegesis (*tafsir*) developed in the 9th century and advanced in the subsequent centuries. The first Andalusian scholars to author works

on the Quran were Abu Marwan Abdul Malik ibn Habib (d. 853) and Abu Musa al-Hawwari (d. 852). The oldest Andalusian tafssir is by Ibn Abi Zamanin (d. 971). (Lopez 2017: 76, 81).

Abdul Jalil ibn Musa al-Ansari al-Qasri (d. 1211) authored a book on Quran exegesis in 60 volumes. With regard to the field of Hadith, they established a centre to examine and test any person who arrived in the country from abroad and claimed to be a scholar of Hadith. The government even undertook to promote certain books of Hadith and they encouraged scholars to teach it. Scholars authored books in Hadith, theology, Islamic Jurisprudence, Sufism and history (Salamah 2017: 9-11). One of the earliest proponents of Sufism in Andalus was Ibn Masarra (d. 931) and later another Andalusian scholar known as Ibn Arabi (d. 1240) also promoted Sufism, although, there were scholars who disagreed with his understanding. (ed. Jayyusi 1992: 910-920).

Other reports state that the Caliphs library contained 600 000 volumes and its index was in 44 volumes. (Baayoun 2013: 13). Knowledge and scholarship flourished and some of the institutions that contributed were: (Imam 2006: 21).

I. The mosques. This was where scholars conducted lessons in different subjects and was accessible to all. Abu Ali Al-Qali (d. 967) conducted a lesson every Thursday in the al-Zahra Mosque in Cordoba where there were 400 people transcribing the lesson.
II. The maktab. These are best described as primary institutions where the children were tutored.
III. The homes of scholars. Many scholars conducted special lessons from their homes.
IV. The palaces of the statesmen. Many statesmen were scholars or they patronized the scholars. They organized large gatherings where scholars would be invited to discuss issues or even to debate different topics. Muhammad ibn Tumart (d. 1129) who was the founder of the Almohad dynasty spent time studying in Andalus and later called for a return to *ijtihad* and not a biased adherence to the Maliki School. The Caliph, Ya'qub al-Mansur memorized one of the famous books of Hadith. (Salamah 2017: 4-10).
V. The libraries. There were many public and private libraries and the presence of scribes all contributed to this scholarly environment. (al-Rawashidah 2001: 75).
VI. Women were not excluded from acquiring knowledge. In one part of Cordoba there were 170 women who were copyists who were dedicated to writing the Quran. There

was Umm al-Hassan bint Abi Liwa Sulayman ibn Asbagh from Cordoba. She narrated from Baqi ibn Makhlad and studied with him. (Nadwi 2007: 270).

VII. The people of Andalus were very particular on making sure that their children received a sound education. They commenced their education by memorizing the Quran from an early age. This was followed by various other subjects. (Warakli 2000: 96).

Between the years 1238-1260, Fernando (the 3rd) conquered Valencia, Cordoba, Seville and Murcia. The city of Granada took over as the home of knowledge. In both, Cordoba and Granada as well as the rest of Spain, religious sciences and the natural sciences were taught. People from all over the world were eager to go to Cordoba to study poetry, the sciences or religion. The inhabitants were also known for their courteous and polished manners. (Lane-Poole 1903: 130). The factors that contributed to the spread of knowledge were*:* (Daud 2014: 18).

I. The political power and authority. The leaders patronized learning and scholarship.

II. There was a very healthy academic environment which was conducive to learning, research and writing.

III. Positive competition. The inhabitants of Spain were eager to keep up with the scholarly developments in the east, in places like Iraq.

IV. The tolerance that existed between Muslims and non-Muslims encouraged one another to learn from the other. An example is of Gerbert d'Aurilac (d. 1003) who later became Pope Sylvester (2nd). He completed his education in Cordoba and was a respected scientist and scholar in Europe. (Daud 2014: 22).

V. The state supported architectural developments that supported education. It built libraries and schools.

VI. The translation movement encouraged research. Many more books became available as works were being translated from Arabic to Latin and from Greek to Arabic. The city of Toledo was the centre for translation. Gerard of Gemona (d. 1157) was an Italian scholar who began studying Arabic and thereafter engaged in translating important Arabic works on astronomy, medicine and other subjects. Another famous translator was Michael Scott from Scotland who studied in Toledo in 1220 and he was assigned to translate the works of Averroes, Avicenna and al-Khawrizmi. (Daud 2014: 8; Gill 2009: 76).

Even the Christian leader, Rodrigo patronized a translation of the Quran and established around himself a circle of like-minded individuals who shared a common body of theological opinions. (Pick 2004: prologue).

Peter the Venerable is credited for being responsible for the first translation of the Quran into Latin. As the Islamic Empire expanded, Christians, Jews and Muslims all developed profound attachment to the many benefits of the Arabic language. The Christians loved to read poems and romances of the Arabs and they even studied the works of Arab theologians, musicians and philosophers, not to refute them but to form a correct and elegant Arabic. Many young and talented Christians read and studied Arabic books. They seem to find in Arabic what Latin failed to provide at the time. (Menocal 2002: 65).

- There was an active and profitable book trade. Ever since al-Mamun established Bayt al-Hikmah in Iraq, there was a greater interest for scholars to travel even to Europe to acquire books from Greece and elsewhere and then work on translating it. (Baayoun 2013: 13).
- There were a number of educational endowments that featured prominently in Andalus. These promoted the culture of scholarship. There is the example of a lady known as Khadijah bint Ja'far al-Tamimi who around the years 1003-1004 endowed a great number of books to the benefit of her daughter. During the Nasrid period in Andalus, there were special endowments that were set up in favour of needy and foreign students. Books were also donated by scholars to students. During the period 961-976 there were funds utilized to teach the Quran to the children of the capital's poor families and for this at least three schools were established in the vicinity of the Friday Mosque of Cordoba. (Debassa 2011:3-7).

4.3.2 Spanish Muslim influence in West Africa in general and particularly in Mauritania:

As Andalus collapsed, the changes reverberated across the Sahara. However, the Spanish influence in West Africa existed even before the fall of Granada. There was Abu Ishaq al-Sahili, an Andalusian poet and architect in 1324 who was associated with the construction of the Graand Mosque (Dyingere Ber) in Timbuktu, Mali. (Lovejoy 2011: 219-220).

The Mauritanians have always been conscious of their relationship with Andalus. In fact, they, along with the Muslims of Spain and Morocco, all adhere to the Ashari School in theology, the Maliki School in Islamic Jurisprudence and the recitation of the Quran as per the mode of Imam

Nafi'. There were strong cultural and scholarly links between Cordoba, Fez and the Sahara. This finally resulted in the Mauritanians reliance on some didactic poems and books that were written by Moroccan and Spanish Muslim scholars. In Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) Ibn Rushd, the prominently-featured Andalusian scholar and his books were relied upon by the Mauritanians. They were familiar with the jurist and his name sake, grandson who was a prominent philosopher and scholar. In the Arabic Language, the Mauritanians relied on the works of Muhammad ibn Malik who was an Andalusian scholar. (Saalim 2004: 2). Some examples of Spanish scholars and their works are *Alfiyah* Ibn Malik[18] in Arabic grammar, al-Shatibi[19] in the science of the recitation of the Quran (*qirat*), al-Qurtubi[20] on Quran exegesis (*tafsir*), Abu al-Walid al-Baji[21] and Ibn Abdul Barr[22] in *Hadith* and *Fiqh*. (al-Sirjani 2014: 224). Abdullah ibn Yusuf (d. 1059) was responsible for the cultural and academic exchange that took place between Morocco (Maghrib) and Shinqit with the teacher that he brought from Sous in Morocco. (Aali 2013: 24).

In fact, Mauritanian script and calligraphy was even influenced by Spain. If one was to examine Mauritanian manuscripts and compare it with the Spanish Arabic manuscripts in Mauritania, then a person would almost certainly state that the latter was written in some *mahdarah*. Some decorations in the Mauritanian town of Oulata show a strong connection with Andalus. There are some Mauritanian families that regard themselves as having Andalusian roots. (Saalim 2004: 1-4). Some researchers assert that this cultural and academic relationship was even stronger after the fall of Granada. (Wald al-Mufid: 85). Even Al-Mawwaq makes reference to a senior scholar in Tunisia who reviewed his book and commended him on his work. (Tanbakti 2000: 563). This is also an indication of how the scholars cooperated and interacted with one another.
The Spanish Muslim scholars were travelling to North and West Africa and to places like Morocco, Mauritania and Timbuktu in Mali before the fall of Granada in 1492.

[18] A compilation of one thousand verses of poetry on the laws of Arabic grammar by Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Malik (d. 1273)
[19] A compilation of 1173 verses of poetry by al-Qasim ibn Fayza al-Shatibi (d. 1194) on the laws of the recitation of the Quran and the different modes.
[20] Muhammad ibn Ahmad (d.1272) is the author of the famous work on Tafsir of the Quran.
[21] He was a famous jurist and scholar of Hadith, who authored a commentary on the Muwatta (d. 1081).
[22] He was a renowned scholar and famous for many books among them is a work on the Prophets Companions (d. 1071).

In Mali, Mansa Musa came to power in 1307 and in 1324 he travelled for the pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Makkah. During his journey, he passed through Oulata. It is important to note that his entourage included an Andalusian poet. This is also an indication that some of the scholars and poets travelled to West Africa long before they were forced to. (Bovill 1958: 86-89).

Another example is of Ali ibn Ziyad al-Quti who was a Goth, who purchased a copy of *al-Shifa* by Qadi Iyad (d. 1149) in Tuwat, in the Algerian Sahara. After the sale was concluded, he stated that he was on his way to Bilad al-Sudan (Land of the Blacks). This was in 1468. The word al-Qut refers to the Goths which means that he was a Spanish Muslim and not someone of Berber or Arab origins. This means that a Spanish Muslim emigrated from his home country to West Africa in 1468, a quarter century before the fall of Granada and much earlier than the Moroccan expedition to Timbuktu of 1591. (Hofheinz 2001: 3-4). The famous Mahmud Ka'ti was a descendant of Ali ibn Ziyad al-Quti. Thus, the oldest manuscript in the Ka'ti collection appears to be a Quran copied on vellum in Ceuta in 1198 and there are some that were copied by Andalusian writers. (Hofheinz 2001: 11-13; Lovejoy 2011: 222).

So it is this rich scholarly tradition that is responsible for the spread of books authored by Andalusian Muslim scholars to other parts of the world. One such book is the book authored by al-Mawwaq that is an important part of this thesis and can be found in Shaykh al-Khadim's collection in Mauritania and in the library in Fez, Morocco.

4.4 Muslim-Christian relations in Spain

It is necessary to shed light on the Muslim-Christian relations in Spain because al-Mawwaq lived in Granada when there were Christians and Jews living in the city. It is almost certain that he interacted with them and these relationships may have impacted on his personality and perhaps on his development as a scholar and thus even on some of his views. Al-Mawwaq did contribute to the discussion on whether or not Muslim minorities should continue living under non-Muslims, or are they obligated to emigrate. Two legal opinions (fatwa) were discussed by Kathryn Miller in this regard. This fatwa however, is not the subject of this thesis. (Miller 2000: 256-288).

A person is, to a large extent, a product of his society. The history of medieval Spain demonstrates some of the ways people of different religions and cultures can interact in the same space. It is often described as *convivencia*, which is understood as, something more problematic and interesting than simple tolerance between different groups sharing the same space. It describes a cultural situation in which potential cooperation and interdependence in economic, social, cultural, political and intellectual spheres coexist with the continual threat of conflict and violence. (Pick 2004: 1).

Initially, the Christians regarded the Muslims as infidels and their mortal enemy and spent efforts trying to drive them out. However, within a few generations of the Muslim conquest, a vigorous rate of conversion to Islam from among the variety of older ethnic groups, and from the Christian and pagan groups made the Andalusian Muslim community much larger, but also one of thoroughly intermarried and intermixed ethnic and cultural origins. Even the governors and their children who were direct and linear descendants of Abdurrahman, who himself was half Berber and half Syrian, were nearly all children of once Christian mothers of the north. (Menocal 2002: 36-37).

Andalus was the site of distinctive interfaith relations. In the 10th century, one of the Caliphs had even appointed a Jew as his foreign minister. The Christian bishop was a member of the Caliphs diplomatic corps. Another example is of Hasdai, who was a prince of Andalusian Jews became a powerful foreign secretary to the Caliph. Hasdai represented the Muslims in negotiations with the Greek-speaking Christian emperor in Constantinople in 949. These negotiations were to discuss ways of dealing with a common enemy, the Abbasids of Baghdad. The meeting took place in the lavish Andalusian city of Madinat al-Zahra (Naseri 2014: 13; Menocal 2002: 40, 73, 82).
Richard Fletcher in his book on Moorish Spain notes that by the year 1000, 75% of Andalus had converted to Islam. The remainder kept their Jewish and Christian faiths. (Gill 2009: 74). However, Charles Tieszen (2013: 26-34) maintains that only 20% of the Christians converted to Islam by the 9th century. So according to him there was no rapid religious conversion. Instead many Christians maintained their belief for generations. According to him, many of those who did convert did so as a matter of convenience and because of the added social and economic benefits. If this is the

case, then it should be celebrated because it is an indication of a great level of tolerance without coercion.

As good as the above sounds, this was not without problems. There were raids against the Christians of the north by al-Mansur. There were bitter civil wars between rival Muslim factions and ethnic groups that tore apart this Ornament – Cordoba. (Menocal 2002: 42). There were some like the Christian priest from Cordoba, Eulogius (d. 859) who felt that inter-religious contact between Muslims and Christians should be prohibited. There were those Christians who set certain boundaries that allowed for varying degrees of inter-religious mixing, while other Christians looked at these boundaries with disdain and sought stricter boundaries to define their communities. (Tieszen 2013: 1, 10). The archbishop of Toledo, Elpandaus (d. 802), seemed to accept the permanency of Islam on the peninsular without completely abandoning his cultural heritage, integrated into the new culture around him. He maintained a familiarity with Arabic philosophy and science. At the same time, he sought to preserve and expand the orthodoxy of his Church while managing relations between Muslims and Christians. (Tieszen 2013: 36). It is evident that the Christian experience in Toledo was different from Cordoba. This depended largely on the approach taken by the religious leaders. So if religious leaders today adopt an approach of tolerance and respect, then we could achieve a degree of mutual coexistence, as long as political leaders don't manipulate them to their advantage.

However, during the 11th century, some of the North Christian territories began to consolidate and began expanding to the south. Thus, there were many Muslims who were living in Christian cities. These were the Mudejars, as they were called by the Christians, along with Arabized Jews and Mozarabs or Arabized Christians. (Menocal 2002: 47). The Church was hostile in attitude and in 1095 Pope Urban (2nd) summoned western civilization to a Crusade. The extreme views of the Almoravids, and the more radical Almohads, changed the composition of Muslim cities. The Umayyad leader planned to undertake an important project. The old church of San Vincente was the largest in Cordoba and had been built on the ruins of a Roman temple. Abdul Rahman planned to make this the site for a Grand Mosque. The aesthetics of the mosque was typically Andalusian from the start with part adaptation of local vernacular forms and part homage to Umayyad Syria. However, he sought permission from the Christians for this and offered an alternative piece of land in another part of the city for them to rebuild their church. (Tieszen 2013: 29; Menocal 2002: 58).

The Interior of the Cathedral of Cordoba and the Mosque of Seville are tokens of religious tolerance. So, even architectural structures and landmarks can show the world how peace and harmony can be achieved between Muslims, Christians and Jews. (Cluett 2015: 4). Even the Church of San Roman on the hill in Toledo had many Arabic inscriptions but it was never a mosque. (Menocal 2002: 118). Muslim craftsmen were hired to build buildings including churches in Christian cities and there are even records of some churches having used church bells. (Tieszen 2013: 30). The Jews civic and political state improved substantially within the Islamic political establishment, when compared to their state in the rest of Europe. They were previously at the lowest end of the social and political spectrum to the covenanted status of 'People of the Book, which granted them religious freedom and the ability to participate in all aspects of civic life. This freedom meant unlimited opportunities in a booming commercial environment. They did not have to abandon their orthodoxy and principles in order to be part of the polity and culture of the time. Instead, they were able to enrich their Judaic and Hebrew heritage. (Menocal 2002: 80). The Almohads attitude to the Jews did not contribute to this tolerance. They presented the Jews with three options; conversion to Islam, exile or death. (Gill 2009: 110).

The inhabitants were united around Arabic as a common language and thus the cultural landscape was altered. Many Jews adopted the Arabic language because it was the language of culture and power at the time. (Cohen: 2008: 28-38). The Arabized Christians and the Muslim children of Christian women in places like Cordoba spoke their ancestral mother tongue. About 200 years after the fall of Muslim Sicily, the Norman Christian ruler wrote letters in Arabic to Muslim philosophers in North Africa. Hebrew became a versatile language that was no longer confined to the synagogue and even Arabs sang Hebrew songs. Muslim and Jewish philosophers like Averroes (d. 1126) and Maimondes (d. 1204) wrote in defence of human freedom as a result of the tolerant world they were born into. (Naseri 2014: 13).

Intermarriage was another important factor that contributed towards the tolerance that the people enjoyed. Sometimes, though, it may have been politically motivated. Even Caliph Mansur married two Christian princesses, one was from the kingdom of Leon and the other was from Navarre. Alfonso made Toledo a major Christian centre. He had a son from the widowed daughter in law of his rival, al-Mu'tamid of Seville. He had a daughter named Teresa who eventually became the

Queen of Portugal. With the result, the non-Muslim tax payers (*dhimmi*) were able to thrive within this social and political ethos. (Menocal 2002: 73, 91).

The coexistence that the people of Andalus enjoyed was even witnessed in their customs and practices. One example is the veil or the head-covering for women. There were Christian women who chose to walk around veiled so that they were unrecognized. (Constable 2018: 3).

Even economically, the country thrived because the coexistence made it the juncture where Western Europe, the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic World formed an independent economic system. (Phillips 2005: 97).

Dario F. Morera (2016: 1-10) regards all that was achieved in Muslim Spain including the multicultural coexistence as a myth. He asserts that Christians were forced to convert to Islam and they were treated harshly. He also maintains that the academic progress must be attributed to the Greeks. He claims that what was achieved and the statistics provided by many writers is exaggerated. Morera's claims are problematic because:

I. Christians could not have been forced to accept Islam because this is against the teaching of the Quran that is explicit in verse 256 of Surah al-Baqarah "There is no compulsion in religion." They were free to worship but were punished for blasphemous statements.

II. The academic success cannot be attributed to the Greeks. The examples of the huge libraries that the Caliphs had, in contrast to the much smaller ones in other parts of Europe, is proof. The massive translation campaign that existed in Toledo where even non-Muslims were involved in translating from Arabic into Latin. The index of the Arabic works authored in Muslim Spain in all subjects and sciences is extensive.

III. The coexistence and tolerance disproves the notion that the Christians were treated harshly. They enjoyed a degree of respect because the teachings of Islam had afforded the Jews and Christians that respect when it referred to them as People of the Book. In fact, it was the tolerance that motivated many to accept the religion of Islam and the Arabic language. (Vaughan :2006: 18).

IV. Indeed, there were Muslim and Christian groups who intermittently fought against one another. This is expected when people of different religions, languages and cultures

> live together. However, this was not widespread and not on a large scale. If this was a common occurrence, we would have probably read about large scale ethnic cleansing bloodbaths.

The article by John Fox and S. Khalaf (2006: 146) summarizes the situation in Andalus: "The Andalusian experience is recognized for its tolerance and cultural syncretism among Muslim, Christian and Jewish faiths over a period of eight centuries. The period of peaceful coexistence and tolerance that the people of Andalus enjoyed was disrupted. But it took a long time. In fact, over a period of 500 years, the Christian attitude changed from a relatively easy one to a more hostile one. Pope Innocent (2nd) in 1215 noted that in some regions a different dress code distinguished the Jews from the Christians. Traditional clothing was a symbol of regional identity and not religious affiliation. That is why, as fashion changed, many Christians chose to wear elements of Muslim dress especially the *toca* or the turban-like head covering. (Constable 2018: 13-24, 43).

This discussion in this chapter intended to convey the various aspects from the initial Muslim conquest in 711 until the fall of Granada in 1492. Coincidently, 1492 is the year that al-Mawwaq died. Since al-Mawwaq and his book are very important in this thesis, the period after 1492 will not be expanded upon. Suffice to say that there was a period during the Spanish inquisition when mosques were converted to cathedrals, Arabic was prohibited, Muslim clothing was prohibited and the bathing and ablution facilities that Muslims had were closed. This was an attempt to force Muslims to convert to Christianity and thus, by the 16th century, all bathhouses in Granada were closed. It reached unreasonable levels to an extent that in 1547 a woman from Toledo was brought before the Inquisition for eating like a Muslim (squatting around a tray with her relatives and eating couscous). (Constable 2018: 104). This kind of intolerance, if not curbed, leads to violence and destruction like the world witnessed in 1992 when the Serbian army destroyed over a million books and more than 100 000 manuscripts in Sarajevo and killed thousands of people. On September 11, 2001, the world witnessed the bombing of the Twin Towers in USA where many lives were lost. The atrocities committed by extremist groups like ISIS and others against Muslim and non-Muslims. Most recently, in March 2019, 50 people were killed in a mosque in New Zealand.

The world needs to learn from the example of Spain and work towards better understanding and tolerance between people across the globe. It could be said that the founding father of western Islamic culture that was displayed in Spain (Andalus) was the survivor of a coup in Damascus. Eventually the people were, to a large extent, united behind a common culture despite different religions. So, the world needs to respect and tolerate one another despite their differences.

4.5 Biography of al-Mawwaq

The thriving academic ambience produced many renowned scholars who were specialist in various subjects and sciences and who had authored numerous books. Some of the biographies of these scholars have been documented in specific books like the book by Ibn al-Faradi titled *Tarikh Ulama al-Andalus* (The History of the Scholars of Al-Andalus)[23] and *Nafh al-Tiyb* by Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maqarri al-Tilmisani. The following is the biography of al-Mawwaq, who was one of the scholars from Granada and one of his books; *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din'* is an important part of this thesis. It must be mentioned that both the classical scholars and the contemporary authors do not provide detail on al-Mawwaq's early life. Some of the Spanish authors make reference to al-Sakahwi and Ibn al-Qadi. (El Koubaa 2018: 115). In fact, al-Sakhawi in his book *al-Daw al-Lami'* that is dedicated to biographies or profiles of people who lived in the 9th century after Hijrah has literally one line on al-Mawwaq. (al-Sakhawi 1992: 10/98). Ibn al-Qadi merely has two lines on al-Mawwaq. (1971: 2/141). Contemporary writers like Kathryn Miller and a Spanish author, Luis Seco de Lucenas Paredas do not provide much detail. In fact, they referred to the book by al-Tanbakti and other Arabic references. (Miller 2008: 272-272). A. Sanjuan focusses on the endowments in Andalus and makes reference to some of al-Mawwaq's views in Islamic Jurisprudence on the topic but does not provide insight into his biography. (Sanjuan 2007: 17-18). Other writers discuss specific issues related to Sufism or Islamic Jurisprudence without additional biographical information.

His full name is Muhammad ibn Yusuf ibn Abi al-Qasim al-Abdari, Abu Abdullah, more commonly known as al-Mawwaq. (Zirikli 1998: 154; al-Sakhawi 1992: 10/98). He was a scholar and a Mufti from Granada in Andalus and one of the scholars in the legacy of scholarship in Andalus. Some references mention that his maternal grandfather was Muhammad ibn Sa'd, known

[23] This book was edited by Ibrahim al-Abyari and published by Dar al-Kitab al-Masri in 1983.

as Ibn Baqi (d. 1389). This is significant because Ibn Baqi was also a scholar and thus al-Mawwaq comes from a scholarly tradition.

Al-Mawwaq studied under a number of prominent scholars in Granada. Some of them were:

I. Abu al-Qasim ibn Siraj (d. 1444) who was a Judge (*qadi*) in Granada and one of the people with whom al-Mawwaq studied Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and benefited from him in writing his commentary to the Maliki work, *Mukhtasar al-Khalil*. (al-Hijwi 1977: 257).
II. Muhammad ibn Asim al-Wazir (d. 1453), who also served as a Judge and is the author of
III. *Tuhfat al-Ahkam*. (Makhluf 1931: 249).
IV. Muhammad ibn Abdul Malik al-Minturi (d. 1431) who was his maternal aunt's husband and a student of al-Mawwaq's grandfather. Al-Mawwaq studied many subjects and books with him including various books on Sufism that included *Risalat al-Qushayri, Hikam Ibn Ataillah* and its commentaries and the books of Abu Talib al-Makki. (Makhluf 1931: 248).
V. Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Lakhmi (d. 1468). (al-Hijwi 1977: 261).
VI. Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Ansar al-Tilmisani known as al-Rassa' who was also the Mufti of Tunis (d. 1489). (Tanbakti 2000:562).
VII. Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Manzhur.

It is important to note that al-Mawwaq never left Granada which was a thriving centre of scholarship and Sufism. Mention is made of Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Abdurrahman al-Gharnati (d. 1183) who is responsible for developing a kind of 'critical evaluation' that contributed to a kind of renaissance in *fiqh*. There was also Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi (d. 1388) known for his important work on the *maqasid* and the renewal of juridical methods. (ed. Jayyusi 1992: 873). These were scholars in Granada and al-Mawwaq could possibly have been influenced by the thoughts and trends that were prevalent in the city and the legacy of such scholars. He remained in the city and served its people even after the occupation by the Catholic monarch. (Harvey 2005: 156). This was even after Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibnYahya al-Wansharisi (d. 1508) in Fez had issued a legal religious verdict (*fatwa*) insisting that the Muslims migrate from Andalus after the Christians assumed power. Many scholars migrated to Algeria, Tunis and to Morocco. Al-Mawwaq was one of those who remained in Granada. (al-Hajji 2003: 40). He continued to deliver the sermon in the al-Bayyazin Mosque for many years. (Tanbakti 2000: 562).

A number of scholars studied under him and benefited from his tutelage. Some of them were:

I. Abu al-Abbas Ahmad al-Daqqun (d. 1515).
II. Muhammad ibn Ali al-Azraq (d. 1489).
III. Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Qasim known as al-Zaqqaq (d. 1506).
IV. Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Dawud al-Balwi (d. 1484).

His contemporaries held him in high regard and this is established from their statements and testimonies in this regard where they praised him for his piety and his immense knowledge. An example is the statement by Muhammad ibn Ali al-Tilmisani in the commentary to *al-Shifa* titled *'al-Manhal al-Asfa fi Sharh ma tamas al-Hajat min alfaz al-Shifa'* (manuscript: p. 3): "The prolific scholar, Imam, orator and one whose knowledge encompassed the laws of the Maliki School and its finer juristic matters." (Tanbakti 2000: 562). Al-Hattab referred to him as a righteous scholar, orator and mufti of Granada.

Al-Mawwaq authored a number of books. Some of the titles are:

I. *Al-Taj wa al-Iklil* which is a large commentary to *Mukhtasar al-Khalil*. This book is an indication of his precision and verification in attributing different statements in the Maliki School to the different scholars. It is a highly regarded and reliable book according to Maliki scholars. (al-Hijwi 1977: 262).

II. *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din*. This is the book that is an important part of this thesis and will be dealt with in the next chapter. Al-Mawwaq sent the book to a number of scholars including the Mufti of Tunis in 1482 who after reading it approved of the content and praised the author. (Tanbakti 2000: 563).

III. A book on the permissibility of the songs of the mystics.

The bibliographers are unanimous that he passed away in 1492 (Zirikli 1998: 154) at an advanced age. The references don't provide details about his funeral and burial, although it is very likely that he was buried in one of the famous cemeteries in Granada. It is possible that the lack of detail about his funeral is because the year of his death coincided with the arrival of the Spanish Christians to the city and the subsequent fall of Granada. Thus, there was additional secrecy about his funeral. The author of *Nayl al-Ibtihaj* mentions that when the Christians seized the city they asked about the most knowledgeable person. They were directed to al-Mawwaq. He was summoned and the Christian Minister extended his hand and al-Mawwaq kissed it. When al-

Mawwaq left the Ministers court, people criticized him for this. However, not long thereafter the Ministers hand began swelling and he experienced severe pain. Al-Mawwaq was again summoned and asked to supplicate for the Minister. (Tanbakti 2000: 562).

The author of *Salwat al-Anfas* stated that al-Mawwaq's grave is next to the grave of Abu Jidah in Morocco. This is incorrect because al-Mawwaq, the Andalusian scholar, never left Granada. It is likely that the al-Mawwaq being referred to here is Yusuf ibn Ahmad who died in (1605). (al-Sharrat 1997: 351).

4.6 Conclusion

Maria Rosa Menocal titled her book on Islamic Spain as 'The Ornament of the World' because according to her that is exactly what Andalus was. What was achieved during the Muslim rule is something that ought to be marvelled and celebrated. It was a period when Jews, Christians and Muslims lived side by side and despite their intractable differences and enduring hostilities, nourished a complex culture of tolerance and it is this difficult concept that is hopefully conveyed along with a legacy of amazing scholarship. (Menocal 2002: 22).

Islam and the West have common roots and share much of their history. Their confrontation today arises, not from essential differences, but from a long and willful determination to deny their kinship. (Bulliet 2004: 11). Muslims, Jews and Christians were striving for one another's power but not necessarily fighting each other. Muslim and Christian leaders would create alliances to defeat mutual enemies. Religion did not always dictate who was friend or foe. Peace and harmony are subjective terms. It can be argued that toleration of another in one's own city as opposed to genocide and expulsion is a much better option. Muslim Spain represents a grey area that cannot be defined as completely peaceful and neither was it in a state of continuous conflict. (Vaughan 2006: 2).

Having understood the importance of knowledge in Andalus and its role in a more tolerant society, the next chapter will provide a translation from Arabic into English of the main ideas presented in al-Mawwaq's book.

Chapter Five

A discussion of some of the topics and ideas presented in Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din by al-Mawwaq.

5.1 Introduction

Having discussed various aspects related to the Muslims in Spain including a biography of al-Mawwaq in Chapter: 4, this chapter will focus mainly on a translation of the main ideas presented by al-Mawwaq in his book '*Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din*.' Al-Mawwaq's book is in Arabic and rather lengthy and therefore a translation of his work will not be presented but a study of the themes along with mentioning any alternate views to those expressed by him. In order to understand the ideas in the book, it is important to have some insight into the author and his era. Al-Mawwaq's biography was discussed in Chapter. 4 (4.5). Since al-Mawwaq's book was written over 500 years ago, it is necessary to introduce the book and its manuscripts. This forms part of the educational and scholarly legacy of the past and how a book written in Granada, Spain ended up in Morocco and then in Mauritania. The chapter will commence by providing some answers as to what is the topic of the book. Where and why was it written and for whom? What is known about the manuscripts of this book? What is the aim of this translation and what approach or methodology will be used to translate the book?

5.2 Introducing the book

The book titled: '*Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat' al-Din* translated as: 'The Ways and Practices of the Rightly Guided People in the stations of the Religion' was authored by al-Mawwaq in Granada. The title of the book was confirmed by al-Mawwaq himself and by the biographers who documented his life. (Tanbakti 2000: 563). It appears that he wrote the book for the Muslim public and for the scholars because, as the Spanish Inquisition gained momentum and the Muslims were faced with legal verdicts (*fatwa*) instructing them to leave the country to live under Muslim rulers, this resulted in many actually leaving. Al-Mawwaq was one of the few who remained in Granada. These verdicts are not the topic of this thesis. However, it has been discussed by some contemporary scholars like Kathryn Miller. (2000: 256-288). Al-Mawwaq quotes from many scholars who lived in his era and those who lived before him. He did not restrict himself to scholars from Spain but relied on the works of scholars like al-Barzali in Tunisia, al-Nawawi (d. 1277) in

Syria and al-Ghazali (d. 1111) in Naysapur. He included discussions from Sufi scholars and from accomplished Muslim jurists. In addition, some of his teachers were students of the scholar, Ibrahim ibn Musa al-Shatibi (d. 1388) who authored *al-Muwafaqat*. It is possible that some of his views had spread through the country. (Tanbakti 2000: 491).

His book is largely in support of the Sufi approach following the methodology of his teachers while discussing some of the views of al-Shatibi and the influence of the Zhahiri[24] School in parts of Granada. He discussed some seemingly controversial aspects in his time which have remained controversial to this day in many Muslim communities. He presented the arguments and provided the views of the scholars of the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence (Hanafi[25], Maliki[26], Shafi[27] and Hanbali[28]). He did however give preference to the opinions of the Maliki School. Very often he supported a statement with of proof from the Quran or from statements of the Prophet or the scholars and even supplemented it with anecdotes from various scholars. He cites a few examples to illustrate a principle. Some of these examples are repeated elsewhere in the book in different discussions.

So the subject matter of his book could be regarded as a combination of the etiquette of Sufism and the etiquettes of the juris-consult (*mufti*). It could be regarded as an amalgamation of the Objectives (*maqasid*) of Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism.

5.3 Al-Mawwaq's era

Al-Mawwaq lived at a time when politically there were a number of leaders and rulers from the Banu Ahmar. He also witnessed the Spanish Castilian armies take over various parts of former Andalus without much resistance. He witnessed how some Muslim leaders dethroned their fathers or brothers to assume power and control. All this internal strife until finally, Granada which was the last stronghold fell in 1492. There is no doubt that al-Mawwaq was affected and influenced in some way by these political tensions and this is possibly why he encourages people to listen to and obey their leaders in order to maintain a greater level of peace and stability in the country.

[24] This is a school of Islamic Jurisprudence founded by Dawud al-Zhahiri (d. 883).
[25] This school is attributed to Imam Abu Hanifah (d. 767) who was from Iraq.
[26] This school is attributed to Imam Malik ibn Anas (d. 795) who was from Madinah.
[27] This school is attributed to Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi (d. 820) who lived in Makkah and passed away in Egypt.
[28] This school is attributed Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 855) who was from Iraq.

After a Muslim presence of about 700 years, there is no doubt that the culture of the Spanish population would definitely have been influenced by the Arabic language and the Muslim culture. This was discussed in Chapter: 4 (4.4). Despite the Muslim influence on the people, the period during which al-Mawwaq lived was when the Spanish Christians began to reassert themselves. In doing so, they began denouncing some of the practices associated with the Muslims like the clothing and even the Arabic language.

Granada lies in the south of Spain and it was regarded as a Muslim city with a reasonable presence of Jews and Christians. There were a few Jewish suburbs in the city. The Christians who lived in the city had migrated to the city from other parts of Spain. Despite it being considered a Muslim city, there was a great deal of tolerance and coexistence between the Muslims, Jews and Christians.

As was mentioned in Chapter 4, there were many Muslims who were migrating to Morocco and to Algeria to avoid the forced conversion to Christianity or in compliance with the *fatwa's* that were being issued that required Muslims to live under a Muslim ruler. There were those who chose to remain in Granada and al-Mawwaq was one of them. They may have chosen to adhere to their Islamic teachings and practices secretly and thus the approach of the Sufis was more appropriate. Many fled the inquisition in the north and moved towards the south. Some may have settled in Granada while others continued until they reached North Africa. However, since Granada was a Muslim city and Arabic was widely spoken by all and now the Spanish were slowly reclaiming their position, this meant that the social and political climate had changed. Thus, there were Muslim scholars like Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi who adopted a different approach to Islamic Jurisprudence with the intention of making matters easier for the inhabitants. His approach was based on giving due consideration to the Objectives and Intent of the Shariah (*maqasid*). Although al-Mawwaq never met al-Shatibi, because the latter died in 1388, he studied under a few of al-Shatibi's students. Through the reading and translation of the book it will be established that al-Mawwaq was not really influenced by any of al-Shatibi's views. Instead, he adopted the approach of the Sufi scholars, particularly the work of Ibn Lubb and al-Minturi. This is an indication of al-Mawwaq's competence and independence as a scholar. He was a thinker who applied his knowledge and thus not necessarily bound to the views of all his teachers.

5.4 The manuscripts of the book

The researcher relied on the copy of *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din* that was published in 2002. It was edited by Muhammaden ibn Sayidi Muhammad Humayyin who attempted to trace the manuscripts. The editor heard about the book while he was still in his youth and his teachers were always referring to it. However, due to the lack of financial resources and other constraints it was not published earlier. The editor obtained some manuscripts in 1997 and transcribed it. He concluded that:

I. The main copy was the Hajariyah edition preserved in Morocco that was published in 1897 in 191 pages.

II. There are copies in Mauritania written in 1969 in 198 pages. According to a specialist on Mauritanian manuscripts, Mohammedan Salim, there are eight copies in different libraries in Mauritania, one of these is part of Shaykh al-Khadim's collection.

III. There are two copies in Tunisia. One was transcribed in 1604.

IV. The researcher was fortunate to obtain copies of three manuscripts of al-Mawwaq's book from his teacher, Dr. Idris al-Fasi, who is deputy-head of the oldest university in the world, al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, Morocco. The researcher is not aware if copies 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 were previously made available to the public. The details and descriptions are obtained from the index to the Qarawiyyin manuscript collection titled: *Fahras Makhtutat al-Qarawiyyin*, by Muhammad al-Fasi al-Fihri, vol. 4/56, 312, published in Fez in 1989.

The first page of each of these will be attached hereunder:

Figure: 5.4.1 (no 1358 at the Qarawiyyin Library in Fez, Morocco) of the Hajariyah copy of al-Mawwaq's book. This copy is in 104 pages and the page size is 14 by 19cm. It is written in a Maghribi script without any reference to the date when it was transcribed. Microfilm no: 99/074

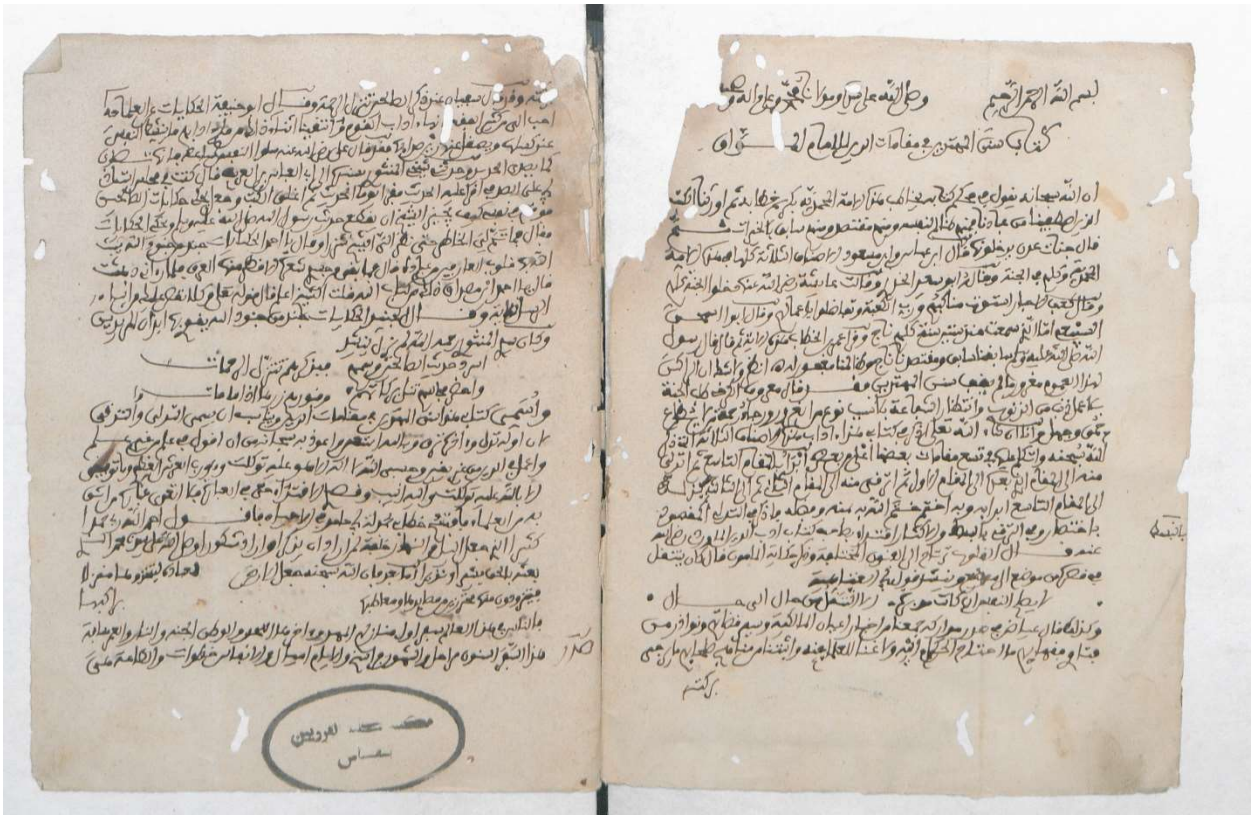
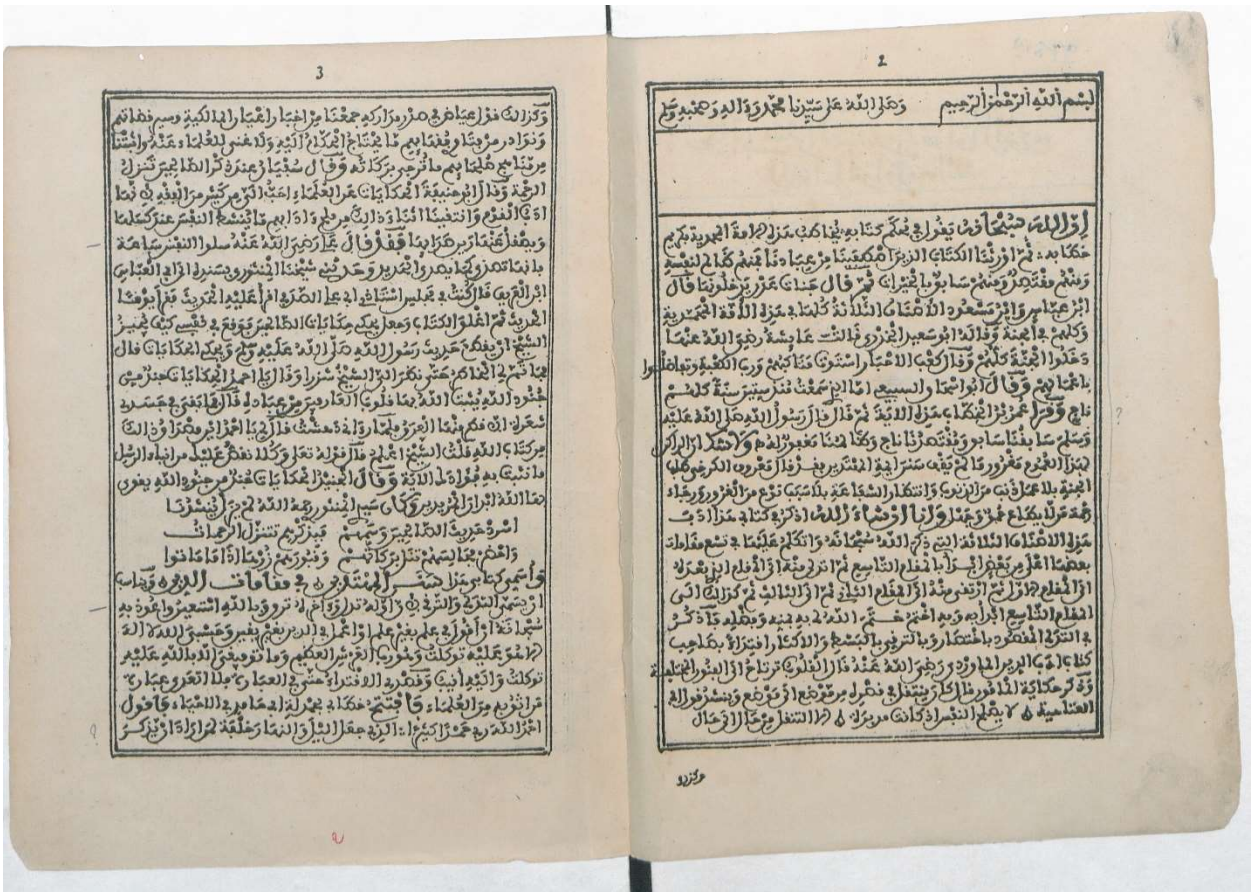


Figure: 5.4.2 (no. 1593 in the Qarawiyyin Library in Fez, Morocco). Written in the Maghribi script in 150 pages, 15 by 18 cm. Average size script, the key issues are in red. There is no reference to the date when it was transcribed or to the person who transcribed it. Microfilm no: 99/644.

Figure: 5.4.3 (no. 2965)



5.5. The methodology in the translation and the aim of the translation.

Translation from Arabic to English can be complicated because these are two completely different languages in terms of the very alphabet, script and grammar. So the translator is attempting to provide a rendering that is comprehensible to the English reader. The translator must be mindful of the actual text that must be translated, the intention of the author and the intention of the translator. (Newmark 1988: 45).

So the aim of this chapter is not to present a translation of the entire book, but rather to present a summary and a discussion of some of al-Mawwaq's ideas. These ideas will then be discussed in Chapter 7 of this thesis with the aim of using it to address the important research question that involves addressing some of the deficiencies in the current Darul Uloom curriculum in South Africa.

5.6 A discussion of some of the themes presented by al-Mawwaq.

The authors' introduction is very important because it introduces the reader to the main theme and purpose of the book. The book is based on verse: 32-33 of Surah Fatir in the Quran: "Then, We (Allah) made our chosen slaves inherit the Book. But some of them wrong themselves, some are ambivalent and some outdo one another in good by Allah's permission. That is the great favour. They will enter Gardens of Eden…"

Al-Mawwaq adopted a style where he discussed nine stations in the religion and how the three categories of people mentioned in the verse; the one who wronged himself, the ambivalent and the one who hastens in good will all eventually enter Paradise. The word 'station' is a translation of the Arabic word '*maqam'* which could be translated as 'ranks', 'categories' or even 'stages'. However, the word 'station' appears to be the most appropriate, given the nature and content of the book.

The nine stations are:

9. The Station of those who are serious in matters of the religion.
8. The Station of the elite amongst the scholars.
7. The Station of those who are engaged in something important if not the most important.
6. The Station of those who are engaged in something good if not the best.
5. The Station regarding the presence of a good intention which can change something permissible into an act of virtue.
4. The Station that deals with a person who acts on the lesser of the two evils.
3. The Station of confusion.
2. The Station of those who are tested by disobedience to their Creator.
1. The Station of those who neglect themselves.

Al-Mawwaq discussed these nine stations beginning from the ninth to the first and then again from the first station ending with the ninth. So the book begins and ends with the ninth station. As a result of his approach many examples are repeated.

In this chapter, some of the main themes will be discussed because these encompass the ideas of his book. Some of these are the very themes that have been identified and used to suggest ways of enhancing the Darul Uloom curriculum which will be done in Chapter 7. In doing so, the names of the scholars and their books will be omitted. Al-Mawwaq's view will be presented along with any opposing views and the comments and analysis by the researcher. The themes that will be discussed are:

(a) Dealing with the concessions in Islamic Jurisprudence and the role of the mufti.
(b) Dreams.
(c) Innovation (*bid'ah*).
(d) Jihad and the oppressive leader.
(e) Sufi music and humour.
(f) The consideration for norms and habits in Islamic Jurisprudence.
(g) Finally, a brief synopsis will be presented of some of the other topics covered by al-Mawwaq in his book.

5.6.1 Dealing with concessions in Islamic Jurisprudence and the role of the *mufti*.

Al-Mawwaq discusses the topic of concessions and emphasizes on the need for the scholar or mufti when he is approached with a question to direct the questioner to the concession or the easier of the two opinions. This discussion is significant because, very often when Muslim scholars are approached with a question, then many assume that the most difficult or the most stringent view is most correct or more in sync with the spirit of Islamic teachings. This is not necessarily correct.

However, al-Mawwaq did not discuss the types of concessions related to his suggestion and this could appear to be misleading to some, especially a person not grounded in Islamic Jurisprudence. A discussion of the types of concessions will be presented and then the approaches of the scholars in this regard.

The scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence have defined a concession as those Islamic laws that have been introduced by Allah based on some valid excuse that the people have, taking their situation into consideration. These excuses include dire necessity, travel or severe illness. This would normally be a lighter form of the original ruling. (al-Zuhayli 1993: 28).

An example would be the consumption of carrion. The original ruling is that this is prohibited but it would be permissible for a person who is starving and his life is in danger. This is established from verse 195 in Surah al-Baqarah in the Quran that states "And do not cast yourselves into destruction…"

In fact, the scholars have ruled that it would be compulsory for such a person to consume it to preserve his life. (al-Zuhayli 1993: 29).

Another example is of the concession given to a traveller and a person who is ill to abstain from fasting because of the difficulty and the inconvenience. In this regard it is mentioned in the Quran in Surah al-Baqarah, verse: 184 "O you who have faith! Fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you attain piety. For a specific number of days. But if any of you are ill or on a journey, then he should fast a number of other days…". The initial ruling is that fasting in the month of Ramadan is compulsory on every sane Muslim, male and female, who is mature. The traveller and the one who is ill, if they experience undue difficulty by fasting or it will aggravate the illness, then they are permitted to adopt the concession. They will have to make up for the missed fasts later in the year after the month has elapsed and their situations have returned to normal.

Another concession that the Shariah has made in financial dealings is the permissibility of selling something before it actually exists. The original ruling in Islam is that a person may not sell something or enter into a transaction regarding an item that does not exist. However, this is something required by people and thus it was permitted. An example would be, paying a tailor at the beginning before the garments are actually sewn. (al-Zuhayli 2007: 303).

The above are some examples that have been accepted by the majority of the scholars and have its basis in the text. However, this does not seem to be what al-Mawwaq was referring to.
He was referring to the different juristic opinions that exist within the Islamic Schools of Jurisprudence. It may well be that scholars differed over a certain matter and some opinions appear to be much easier than others. In this case, will it be permissible for a follower of a school to follow the opinion of a scholar from another school simply because the latter's opinion is easier and more convenient? It was here that al-Mawwaq encouraged the scholars and *muftis* to direct people to take the concession or the easier opinion.

His view here is not something that all the jurists have agreed upon. There are two main approaches by the scholars; one group is strict and harsh and they prohibit following the concessions of the scholars. This group maintains that the Shariah came to teach us to control our desires and not to fall prey to temptations. By allowing a person to follow the easiest opinion, he will move from one scholar to the next looking for the easiest and most convenient for him. This in reality is following his desires and wishes. (al-Ghazali 1904:389).

The other group is more lenient and thus they allow a person to follow the easier of the two opinions. This group maintains that there is nothing within the Shariah that prohibits this. In fact, according to them, on the contrary, there are statements from the Prophet Muhammad where it is mentioned that he was never given a choice between two matters except that he chose the easiest as long as it was not sinful. (al-Bukhari 2008: 160).

This discussion may be concluded by stating that it would be permissible for a person to follow the easier of the two opinions if there is a genuine need and he fears some degree of inconvenience. The reason is that the lay person is required to seek guidance from the scholars while the scholar is required to provide a solution to the person who posed the question to him. If not, then the person will violate the Shariah. With the result, a person questions the scholar who he is comfortable with and has confidence in his knowledge. It is mentioned in the Quran in Surah al-Anbiya, verse: 7 "Ask the People of the Reminder if you do not know."

It is also of paramount importance that the juris-consult (*mufti*) is aware of the etiquette and ethics of disagreement. He needs to be aware that if a matter is disagreed upon between those who permit it and those who prohibit it, then it is not permissible to criticize the opposing view. Similarly, the *mufti* must distinguish between his own preference or personal opinion that he chooses for himself and the state of the questioner. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 66-67).

5.6.2 Dreams as credible evidence in Islam.

Another topic that received some attention from al-Mawwaq is that of dreams and whether it could be used to establish actions or practices in Islam. He affirms that the scholars are unanimous that dreams cannot be used as basis for establishing legal rulings. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 57).

This is in accordance with what the scholars of Islamic Jurisprudence have said. They have stated that dreams are not definitive, nor can an established practice be abrogated by it and neither can a previously unestablished practice (*Sunnah*) be established by a dream. (Haddad 2005: 1/160).

There is however a statement of the Prophet where he said: "A true dream is one-forty-sixth of prophet-hood." (al-Bukhari 2008:30). He also said in another narration: "Whoever sees me in a dream has definitely seen me because Satan cannot take my form." (al-Bukhari 2008:33).

In the light of the above two narrations, there is an aspect that al-Mawwaq has not discussed and that is with regard to a person who claims that he saw the Prophet in a dream and he was advised by him to do certain things or he may have seen the Prophet do something. This is very significant in the discussion on dreams because as the narrations from the Prophet cited above confirm that such dreams are indeed true. In addition, there are some adherents of different Sufi Orders who often make the claim that they were advised by the Prophet or some pious sage in their dreams to act in a particular way.

The scholars differed on this matter and there are three views; one group maintains that this is acceptable and in fact binding upon the person who saw the dream, the second group maintain that a legal ruling cannot be established through a dream because the scholars are agreed that a dream is not one of the methods of transmitting the religion. The third group maintains that it would be

permissible as long as it does not violate an established law or principle of the Shariah. (al-Mawsu'ah 1992:11).

It is very difficult to discern between a person who is truthful about his dream and one who is not. Furthermore, we live at a time when there are many opportunists and so the safest position would be that whoever claims that he saw the Prophet in a dream and he was advised by him to do something, then in this case it will be permissible for the one who saw the dream to act upon it, as long as it does not violate the principles of Islam. (Haddad 2005:1/160).
However, al-Mawwaq indicated that certain devotional practices that do not violate the principles of the Shariah could be established by dreams. He supported this with an example of one of the sufi scholars of Baghdad who saw the Prophet in a dream. He asked the Prophet to supplicate to Allah so that his heart does not become spiritually dead. The Prophet advised him to recite a certain litany 40 times daily. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 58).

There is one more aspect that al-Mawwaq did not discuss and that is with regard to authenticating the hadith based on a dream. The narrations from Prophet Muhammad are one of the primary sources of law in Islam. The scholars applied a rigorous process in verifying its authenticity by checking the credibility and the reliability of the narrator. So, having discussed devotional practices and dreams without discussing whether or not dreams could be used in authentication of Hadith, leaves the discussion incomplete. It should have been discussed so as to provide guidance in all aspects related to dreams.

Such dreams are beneficial but only confirm suspicions that were already in circulation with regard to certain narrators before the actual dream took place. There is a large number of hadith specialists who do not endorse this form of authentication, while there are others who maintain that this will definitely be considered based on the strength of the person's truthfulness, his trust-worthiness and his high rank among the scholars. (Haddad 2005:1/163).

Since the science of hadith, the criteria for verifying narrators and the categories of acceptable and rejected narrators have been documented, it would be safer to apply these in present day authentication. This is more scientific and academic and can be verified, unlike a dream.

5.6.3 Innovations (*bid'ah*).

Al-Mawwaq discusses the topic of innovations in the religion which seemed to be a contentious issue during his time and remains so to this day. This is a polemical discussion that some scholars in Andalus were uncomfortable discussing, particularly when they were asked if an innovator should be declared as an infidel. They preferred to avoid the discussion. (ed. Jayyusi 1992: 899).

The contentions and debates arise from the understanding of the words of the Prophet Muhammad when he said: "Indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is the guidance of Muhammad and the worst of matters are the innovations and every innovation is a deviation." (Muslim 2008:403). There is another narration in which he said: "And the worst of matters are the innovations and every innovation is a *bid'ah*. Every *bid'ah* is a deviation and every deviation is in the Fire." (al-Nisai 2001:308).

These narrations are considered among the fundamentals of the religion but these need to be understood in the context of numerous other texts on the topic and the spirit and essence of the Shariah along with its general principles.

The scholars have differed over the interpretation of these Prophetic statements as to whether there are good and bad innovations. Al-Mawwaq however cites examples that support his understanding and the understanding of those scholars who opine that there are good and bad innovations. While this appears to be the stronger opinion, he does not discuss the opposing view.

Thus a discussion on innovations will be presented along with some of the examples cited by al-Mawwaq. The point of contention is the technical definition of the word *bid'ah* which appears in the Prophetic statements.

The first group adopt a literalist interpretation of the narration and maintain that every innovation is bad. Thus according to this group anything that was not practised by the Prophet is unacceptable and must be rejected. This group, however, was faced with a problem when questioned about worldly innovations like cars, cellphones and other technological advancements. They respond by

distinguishing between worldly and religious innovations and thereafter assert that the innovations in religious matters are prohibited. This sounds good, however, they must provide proof to justify this distinction. Because they insist on a literalist interpretation, and in doing so they must then be consistent in their understanding. If not, then what prevents the other group from making the distinction between good and bad innovations?

Assuming that their distinction of innovation into worldly and religious is considered, then they have *de facto* ruled that every worldly innovation is permissible. This is certainly not what they intended because of the serious consequences if left unrestricted. They, too, will agree that there are worldly innovations that are good and others that are bad. (al-Maliki 2015: 282).

The other group begins by adopting a different definition of an innovation (*bid'ah*). They maintain that it refers to everything innovated in contravention of the Lawgiver's command and the latter's specific and general proof. They continue by saying that the wording of the Prophet's statement is general and has been restricted to refer to anything that was introduced and did not have any basis in the Shariah. Thus, if it has a basis in the Shariah, it will be regarded as a praiseworthy innovation and if it has no basis, then it will be regarded as a blameworthy innovation. Many of these scholars go on to mention that innovations in the religion can be classified into five categories: (1) one that is obligatory, like the preservation of the religious sciences through the authoring of books, (2) an innovation that is desirable and recommended like the establishment of schools, (3) an innovation that is permissible like the variety of foods and clothing a person has, (4) an innovation that is disliked and discouraged, like the elaborate decoration of the mosques and then (5) those innovations that are reprehensible and frowned upon. (al-Maliki 2015: 290, 317).

This group relies on a number of proofs and among these are statements of the Prophet like the authentic narration in which he said: "Whoever introduces a good practice in Islam will obtain its reward and the reward of all those who act upon it after him, without decreasing in their reward in any way, and whoever introduces in Islam a bad practice, he will have the sin and the sin of all those who act upon it after him without decreasing in their sin in any way." (al-Nawawi 2008: 108). This narration (*hadith*) classifies any innovation into that which is acceptable and that which is rejected.

Furthermore, it is important to note that some of the Companions of the Prophet did rule and declare certain matters as innovations. However, if there was, along with their classification of the matter signs of disapproval or condemnation, then this would be considered bad. While if this was not the case, but rather there was approval, then this means that they did not imply that the matter was a deviation. (al-Maliki 2015:298).

An example of the first, is a narration wherein the person said: "I was with Ibn Umar when a man uttered the words for Fajr (pre-dawn) *al-salatu khayrun min al-nawm* (prayer is better than sleep) during the Zuhr (after midday) and Asr (late afternoon) call to the prayer. Ibn Umar said: "Let us leave, this is an innovation (*bid'ah*)." (Abu Dawud 1969:367). Here the person introduced something that was condemned by the Prophet's Companions. Their condemnation is an indication that this was unacceptable.

An example of the second is another narration wherein a person asked Ibn Umar about the mid-morning prayer (*duha*). He said: "An innovation, but a blessed innovation." (Ibn Abi Shaybah 2008: 3/371). The Companion commented with regard to this prayer which is, in fact, a voluntary prayer. His description of such a prayer as 'blessed' is deemed as his approval. The community of Companions did not object or disapprove of this and thus this remains a recommended practice.

Another argument used by those who restrict the understanding of innovation (*bid'ah*)-in this case, the first group is the lack of a Prophetic action. Very often the critics use it as evidence to condemn anything new. The essence of this argument is that because the said action was not practised by the Prophet and the pious predecessors, it is either prohibited or an undesirable innovation.

This conclusion that they derive, from the fact that the Prophet and the pious predecessors did not practice the said action, is false. Failure to execute an action cannot be considered as proof, but rather as an absence of proof.

One of the scholars who al-Mawwaq quoted very often responded to this when he commented on those who disapproved of the supplication after the obligatory prayer. "The main proof for those who object to the supplication after the obligatory prayers is that this practice was not the habit of the pious predecessors. Assuming the above is indeed correct, then know that to abstain from an

action does not guarantee a ruling in the omitted practice – but rather, it is proof of the permissibility to abstain from the said practice. Thus, using this to establish impermissibility or dislike is incorrect, especially if the practice has a basis within the Shariah, like the act of supplication." (al-Maliki 2015: 328).

Some of the other practices cited by al-Mawwaq that would be considered as bad innovations by the first group are visiting the grave of the deceased on the 7th day or the 7th month after the person has passed away, recitation of the Quran and passing the reward to the deceased, mentioning the Companions in the Friday sermon and the recitation of Surah Yasin over the deceased. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 230,241).

The scholars have discussed the meaning of the Prophet's omission of various actions and the reasons and the implications thereof.[29]

In fact, there are actions of the Companions that may be considered as innovations but they became Sunnah and desirable after the Prophet's approval. These actions were initiated by the Companions and the Prophet did not question this but rather he approved it. One example is regarding the Companion Rifa'ah and his innovated invocation at the time the Prophet was leading the sunset prayer and he said: "May Allah hear whoever praises Him." Whereupon Rifa'ah said out loud: "Our Lord! To You belong all praise, abundant, excellent and blessed!" Later, the Prophet asked who had said this and declared that the angels were competing to be the first to write it down. (al-Bukhari 2008:109). This narration is proof of the permissibility of innovating an invocation inside the prayer (*Salat*) other than what is received from the Prophet, as long as it does not contradict what is received from the Prophet. (al-Asqalani 1986: 332).

5.6.4 Jihad and the oppressive leader.

Al-Mawwaq discusses the topic of Jihad with specific reference to dealing with oppressive and sinful leaders. This topic is very important, more so in contemporary situations where governments

[29] For a detailed discussion on this and other aspects related to innovation, refer to the book, 'The Way of the True Salaf by Shaykh Muhammad Alawi al-Maliki, translated into English and published by the International Peace College of South Africa in 2015. The researcher of this thesis was one of the translators.

and leaders are accused of being corrupt and oppressive and at a time when the Arab and Muslim World has witnessed the Arab Spring that began in Tunisia and spread to Egypt and then Syria. These uprisings subsequently saw the rise of groups like ISIS who continue to promote an armed and a violent revolution.

Al-Mawwaq emphasizes on the need to listen and obey the leader regardless of how good or bad he is because of the consideration of the Islamic principle of avoiding harm is preferred over the acquisition of good. In this case, opposing the leader may be good but the ensuing result may be far worse. He may react harshly against those who oppose him and it may result in greater bloodshed and violence. So the public welfare and safety is more important than individual satisfaction. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 146-148).

In this regard he cites the different opinions between the People of the Sunnah (*Ahl al-Sunnah*) on one side and the Mu'tazilite[30] and the Khawarij[31] on the other. Al-Mawwaq promotes the position of the People of the Sunnah while the latter two groups believe that the leader must be opposed. The latter two groups maintain that the law of Allah is supreme and must be implemented. This is also the position of some modern extremist Muslim groups. Al-Mawwaq does not cite their reason or proof but it is based on their understanding of verses in the Quran, among which is verse: 44 of Surah al-Ma'idah "And whoever does not rule with that which Allah has revealed, then those are the disbelievers." And the statement of the Prophet: "Whoever among you sees any evil, then he must rectify it by his hand. And if he is unable to do so, then by his tongue, and if he is unable to do so, then by his heart, and that is the weakest form of faith." (al-Nawawi 2008: 380).

In clarifying the position of the People of the Sunnah, he discusses the importance of obedience in Islam and how it is the cornerstone to happiness. He quotes a statement of the Prophet to support this wherein the Prophet said: "Religion is good counsel." The Prophet was questioned as to who

[30] Mu'tazilite: They are a rationalist school of Islamic theology. They worked to resolve the problem of trying to reconcile the justice of a powerful Creator with the reality of evil. Politically, they punished and even killed those who did not conform to their views.
[31] Khawarij: They are also known as the Haruriyah. They disassociated themselves from the Companion Ali and declared him a disbeliever as well as anyone else who did not accept the peace process. (Ibn Kamal Basha 2005: 86)

should be counselled and he replied: “Allah, His Messenger, the Muslim leaders and the general public.” (al-Bukhari 2008: 21).

In explaining the good counsel to the leaders, he emphasizes on the need to obey the leader and to patiently bear the difficulties. He quotes various classical scholars who went to the extent of saying that a person needs to obey the leader even if he usurps your wealth and physically punishes the person. He supports this with reference to some of the Companions of the Prophet like Ibn Umar who prayed behind al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf (d. 714) who was a known tyrant and a sinful person who openly consumed alcohol. Some of the pious scholars from the early generations used to say that if they were granted just one accepted supplication, then they would have utilized it for the leader. The reason for supplicating for the leader is that if he was good and righteous, then the public affairs would be good. Thus, they preferred the interest and welfare of the public. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 151; Ibn Taymiyah 2005: 3/175-176).

This position does not in any way condone oppression but is simply advising people how to deal with the leaders. So the narration used by the groups who advocate openly opposing the leader can be understood here to mean that every person must act within his own capability. So the one who can speak to the leader and advise him about his actions should do so, while others may advise him in writing and others may pray for his guidance. Perhaps the present democratic system, if applied correctly and fairly where people are allowed to express their dissatisfaction verbally or through peaceful demonstrations and finally through the voting process is a reasonable solution and one that is in accordance with the understanding of al-Mawwaq.

The statement of the Prophet in this regard is very relevant. He said: “The best *jihad* is to speak the truth in front of an oppressive leader.” (al-Sijistani 1969: 514).

5.6.5 Sufi music and entertainment.

Al-Mawwaq discusses this in the context of the need for a person to engage in such actions that relax the mind so that a person is rejuvenated. This is specifically referring to the type of chants, movements and dances that some of the sufis engaged in. It has been defined as listening to sweet and pleasant voices accompanied with tunes with or without musical instruments. (al-Sagharji 2001: 437).

There were scholars among the jurists who permitted it and others who prohibited it.
Those who prohibited it were harsh in their condemnation and some even went to the extent of rejecting the persons' testimony as a witness in court. They insisted that such a person must repent. There were some jurists who maintained that this practice was so abominable that no other act of worship ought to be conducted in the place where these 'dances' took place.
Many of these scholars prohibit singing as well. Much of their condemnation is based on their understanding of verse: 6 of Surah Luqman in the Quran, "But there are some people who trade in distracting tales to misguide people from Allah's way…" and the narration that states that music breeds hypocrisy in the heart. (al-Azhim Abadi 1995:220).

While the scholars and jurists who permitted it do so with certain conditions. There were some who permitted it for women only and during joyous occasions like a wedding celebration, the birth of a child or when a child memorized the Quran. The words that are sung must be appropriate and relevant to the occasion and thus have an impact on the listeners' heart. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 116).

This is disputed by others in this group who maintain that it is permissible for men as well. They cite examples of scholars who danced in a state of spiritual ecstasy. (Ba Alawi 2006: 48). They support their argument with proof from the life of the Prophet Muhammad where he attended and witnessed a group of African men singing and dancing in the courtyard of the mosque in Madinah. He even permitted his wife, Aishah to watch and listen. (al-Nawawi 2008:432-435). There are some who responded to this by saying that the above narration regarding the African men was without instruments and it was a war dance and not mere entertainment. This may be the case but this took place on the day of Eid which is a day of happiness and celebration, so why would they be engaged in a war dance on a happy occasion? (al-Qari 2016: 85; al-Mawwaq 2002: 172-173).

There are some scholars who have stated that the ruling on sufi singing and music is divided into three categories: 1) That which is prohibited. This is applicable to most of the people who are unable to control their desires and cannot protect themselves from temptations. 2) It is permissible for those people who have no intention but simply to enjoy the beautiful voice. 3) It is desirable for those who are overcome with the love of Allah and have the intense longing for Him. (al-Qari 2016: 45-46).

This discussion is replete with various opinions of the scholars that sometimes seem to be conflicting, but it seems like many have included the injunction to beautify the voice when reciting the Quran, the recitation of poetry in praise of the Prophet or in defending his honour, singing at weddings and joyous occasions, the chanting of the sufis and those who sing with or without instruments about things that distract a person and turn a person away from his Creator. It is clear that there are aspects that are unanimously agreed upon its permissibility like the recitation of the Quran and there are aspects that are unanimously agreed upon its impermissibility like the singing that turns a person away from his Creator or is obscene and promotes vice. Between these two is the grey area, that is singing with or without instruments about things that are neither explicitly prohibited and neither are they recommended.

It would perhaps be wise to be cautious because of the narration from the Prophet wherein he said: "There will most certainly be people from among my followers who will regard as permissible, alcohol, the swine and musical instruments." (al-Bukhari 2008:106).

Due consideration must be afforded to the narrations wherein mention is made of the African men and their dance in the courtyard of the mosque. This perhaps is an indication for us today that since Islam has spread to all parts of the world and people with different cultures and habits have entered the religion, they ought to be allowed to express their joy in their own way as long as it does not violate the principles of the Shariah. There is no harm in that which gathers the thoughts and directs ones' attention to Allah. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 210).

The essence of Sufism is to purify oneself, to follow the truth in the Quran, fear Allah and regret over ones' sins. The objective is not to wear a certain type of clothing, or to cry when someone sings and to be engaged in singing and dancing. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 209). This form of sufi chanting or music is not the goal and objective but rather a means. The scholars have inferred from the words of the Prophet: "The legal punishments must not be applied because of doubts or uncertainty." (al-Mubbarakfuri 2003:572). Thus a person who acts on a matter wherein the scholars have differed cannot be reprimanded. (al-Qari 2016: 86).

Al-Mawwaq also discussed the need for different forms of relaxation and light-hearted moments. He cited the example of playing chess. While some scholars disapproved of it, he is inclined to the position of others who said that it was permissible as long as the person does not over indulge in it. He maintained that there was no harm in that which gathers the heart and thoughts and directs the person to his Creator. He also discussed travelling to visit the shaykh, spiritual guide and colleagues which will serve as a means acquiring knowledge, repelling depression and oppression, learning something new. In the case when a person travels to a place where he/she is unknown, the absence of fame and attention removes ostentation and pride. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 175-176, 181).

5.6.6 The consideration for norms and habits in Islamic Jurisprudence.

al-Mawwaq discusses the role of norms and customs and to what extent can a Muslim imitate a non-Muslim in practice. He does not discuss its basis within the Shariah but rather cites a few examples of how and when it should be considered.

It must be noted that one of the major maxims used by Muslim jurists is one that states: 'The norm should be considered in a legal ruling.' (al-Nadwi 1991: 256). This maxim has its basis in verse 228, of Surah al-Baqarah: "Women possess rights similar to those held over them to be honoured with fairness." The Arabic word in the verse is *ma'ruf* and it has been translated here as 'fairness' while the scholars of Quran exegesis have stated that the word refers to every good characteristic or quality that is pleasing to the mind and people are comfortable with. (al-Qurtubi 1994:116).

In the verse, the couple are directed to fulfill one another's rights according to the norm and in a manner that is pleasing to the heart and mind. There is no doubt that this norm changes according to the different regions and people's circumstances.

The consideration by the jurists for the norms of people can also be established from the statements of the Prophet. One example is the incident wherein a woman complained to the Prophet about her husband who was not financially providing for her and her child. The Prophet advised her: "Take in fairness that much that is sufficient for you and your child." (al-Bukhari 2008:65-66). The

woman was not informed about a specific amount and therefore the scholars have interpreted this to mean that it is left to the norms and habits of the people.

It must be noted that the scholars have not accepted these norms and habits unconditionally. Instead they have provided some detail and that includes differentiating between those norms that are considered by the Shariah and those that are not. Thus, if any norm contradicts an explicit text, then the norm will be rejected. For example, in some parts off the world the consumption of alcohol has become normal and the practice of the people. However, this norm contradicts and violates the text in the Quran and thus it will be ignored.

The scholars have also added that the particular norm or habit must be regarded as a general rule and widespread across the country. If it is the practice of a minority or confined to a family or village, then it may not be considered. (al-Bugha 1993:278-280).

The following is one example of how the jurists have considered the norm and habit of the people. There are instances for example when a person approaches someone like a carpenter and requests him to make a cupboard. The client provides the description and the size and other required details while the wood and other fittings will be provided by the carpenter. This transaction is acceptable according to many jurists irrespective of whether or not the client paid a deposit or not. They have ruled in favour of such a transaction based on the norms of people and the need for such transactions. Although if one were to apply an understanding based on analogy than this transaction would be declared as impermissible because it involves paying for something that does not exist. (al-Bugha 1993: 307).

The scholars who have written about the principles of Islamic Law have also discussed how certain laws could change because of changing times and circumstances. It is known that even the languages and the usage of certain words may change and thus the norm of the people must be considered. If a person enters a market in a certain country and the people trade with more than one currency. In this case, when he is given a price, then it will refer to the most commonly-used currency. (al-Zarqa 1993: 227).

After this brief introduction to the topic, al-Mawwaq's statements and examples can be appreciated. Al-Mawwaq stated that not everything that the non-Arabs did was prohibited. It was only prohibited if the Shariah prohibited it or it violated the principles of the Shariah. Thus, the scholars permitted the wearing of a certain garment that was worn by the Christians because it protected a person from the severe cold. This is supported by the practice of the Prophet when he accepted Salman's suggestion to dig a trench prior to one of the battles. This practice was unknown to the Arabs and Salman who was a Persian had experienced this in Persia before travelling to Madinah. The Prophet accepted it and this proved to be a very important strategic decision. Similarly, the Prophet was seen on occasions wearing a Syria-Roman cloak. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 249-250; al-Mubarakfuri 2003:377).

There is no record of the Prophet having told any of the non-Arabs to abandon their dress in favour of the Arabs dressing. Therefore, people's habits and norms in food and family matters must also be considered as long as they are not imitated in matters that violate the Islamic principles. Very often, people cite the narration wherein the Prophet said: "Whoever imitates a nation then he is considered as being from among them." (al-Sijistani 1969:214). They use this narration to condemn all forms of imitating people of other cultures or countries. This is incorrect because as was demonstrated above that the Prophet used a military tactic that was adopted from the Persians who were fire-worshippers. Thus, it could be said that whatever is good and beneficial and does not contradict the Islamic principles then this ought to be considered and whatever is not then this would be rejected. At the same time, people should not be deceived by claims that the Shariah is based on the welfare and interest of the public and thus certain explicit laws need to change because the times have changed.

5.6.7 A brief synopsis of some of the other topics discussed by al-Mawwaq.

Al-Mawwaq discussed various other topics or themes in his book. A brief synopsis of some of the other topics will be presented. He discussed the role and importance of knowledge and differentiated between that amount of knowledge that was essential and necessary on every individual and the other branches that were important for the society to function in the best possible way. In this regard, he referred to the basic religious knowledge as being essential on every Muslim, while knowledge of medicine, farming, agriculture and trade are important for a

prosperous society. So, some people within the community must be encouraged to take on the responsibility to acquire knowledge in these areas. He emphasized on the importance of a sound intention. Thus, if a person studied medicine with a noble intention of serving the community then he will be rewarded, however if a person pursued the study of religious knowledge for fame and ostentation, then this person is sinful. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 167, 266).

In this discussion he dealt with whether or not there was a need for students to study certain rational subjects like logic. In doing so he alluded to those scholars who condemned the rational sciences and those who permitted it. Some consideration should be given to the rational sciences because people are different and they have different abilities and levels of understanding. This proved to be useful for some jurists who engaged in preempting or hypothetical scenarios in their lessons with their students. This trained the students and equipped them with certain skills and the ability to apply their knowledge.

Related to knowledge is his discussion at various places in the book on the role of the juris-consult (*mufti*) and how he ought to conduct himself, always mindful of the etiquettes of disagreement. At the same time, unnecessary debate and argumentation is frowned upon. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 281).

Because of the knowledge the scholars possess, they are best placed to enjoin the good and forbid the evil. However, in doing so, they need to adhere to some rules because their conduct or approach if incorrect, could actually drive people away from the religion. If there are two opinions in a matter and a person acts upon the weaker, then he should not be condemned for this. Because, in trying to stop people from a disputed matter, the person may get involved in a greater evil. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 242, 263).

Al-Mawwaq also dedicated a great deal of time in his book to aspects related to Sufism, in particular discussing aspects relevant to the spiritual aspirants' devotion and worship. In aiming to attain closeness to his Creator, the spiritual aspirant must develop his character and avoid destructive qualities like backbiting. How he goes about enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is very important. Al-Mawwaq ends his book with over fifty pages dedicated to advising the aspirant to adhere to various daily litanies and supplications (*adhkar*). He mentions numerous

litanies and prayers that should be recited throughout the day which are essential in the individual's spiritual development.

The discussion on the etiquette of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is applicable to the scholars, the Sufis and every other person who may not be included in the two categories. In fact, these may be regarded as important life lessons.

A person must understand the situation before he/she condemns someone for something wrong. Al-Mawwaq cites the example of a person may who may perpetrate a sin in order to avoid something more serious. He may speak a lie in order to protect an innocent person's life. At times a person is very eager to forbid evil that he/she witnesses in the society. However, in doing this he must never declare any person as a disbeliever because of a sin he/she committed. Instead of condemning people, al-Mawwaq adopted a very encouraging approach, one that gives people hope. In this regard, he maintains that people must be encouraged to repent. Therefore, a person engaged in supplicating to his Creator, even though he is not fully attentive and concentrating is still better off then to be engaged in backbiting. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 114, 130). He warns about the person who in trying to stop something that may be disputed among the scholars, gets involved in a greater evil. The greater evil is that he has now become a cause of mutual hatred between people which is more serious than consuming wine. In forbidding or preventing something wrong, a person must never be deceived by Satan. Al-Mawwaq cites the example of a man who reacts harshly to his wife because his clothing is dirty. However, the hurt he caused his wife is worse than his soiled clothing. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 242, 269).

5.7 Conclusion

Even though al-Mawwaq died in 1492, many of the themes and discussions in his book are very relevant to a Muslim today. More so, since he lived in a time when the Muslims in Granada lived with Christians and Jews in the city, his discussions will be very useful to contemporary students of Islamic knowledge and spiritual aspirants'. With this in mind, the next chapter will be dedicated to providing an overview of the Islamic seminaries or Darul Ulooms in South Africa. Thereafter, Chapter 7 will be dedicated to applying some of these themes and discussions in al-Mawwaq's book to the current curriculum in the Darul Ulooms with the aim of enhancing and filling the gap in the approach to teaching Islamic Studies.

Chapter Six

The Darul Ulooms in South Africa and their historical and ideological roots

6.1 Introduction

An important part of this research is addressing the gap within the current Darul Uloom curriculum in order to have students who are better equipped to deal with the changes in the modern world and also to enable better coexistence with other religious groups in South Africa. The ideas and themes presented in al-Mawwaq's book that were discussed in Chapter Five and some of the positive lessons learnt from the Mauritanian traditional institutions (*mahdarah*) in Chapter Three are to be applied to the Darul Ulooms in a manner that will enhance the current educational level. However, before this can be done, there is a need to understand Islamic Education within the South African context from the beginning until the inception of the first Darul Uloom as well as the structure of the curriculum and the approach to teaching various subjects. This chapter will provide an overview of the history of Islamic education in South Africa until the first Darul Uloom was established. In order to understand the South African Darul Ulooms, it is essential to understand the history, concept and ideology of the Darul Uloom and how it was imported to South Africa. Thus, this chapter will also discuss the basis and the model upon which the Darul Ulooms are based. A significant reference on the Darul Uloom in India and its affiliates in South Africa is the work by Brannon Ingram published in 2011 and in 2018. In his research on the Darul Uloom, he travelled to India where he lived in the Darul Ulooms guest-quarters and interviewed many students and scholars there. He subsequently travelled to South Africa where he also interviewed graduates from the Darul Ulooms in this country. Furthermore, being non-Muslim, he is expected to be objective and not biased in any way. There are other references that were authored by Muslim scholars like Ebrahim Moosa and Zaman as well as other non-Muslim academics like Sikand and Reetz who have written about the Darul Ulooms. These have been consulted as well.

6.2 Overview of the history of Islamic Education in South Africa until the establishment of the first Darul Uloom.

It is necessary to shed some light on three centuries of Islamic education in South Africa, because when the past is known, the present situation will be undertood and thereafter scholars will be better placed to plan for the future. The context and development of Islamic education in the

country will be understood. The beginning of Islamic education in South Africa can be traced back to the arrival of the Muslims in 1658 from Indonesia. Initially, the public practice of Islam was prohibited by the Dutch East Indian Company. (Shaikh 1994: 4-6). Shortly after the arrival in 1658, a Sufi scholar, Shaykh Yusuf (d. 1699) of Macassar arrived as a political prisoner in 1694. He was an Islamic scholar and a Sufi of the Khalwati Order. The Muslims of Indonesia are followers of the Ashari School in Islamic theology and the Shafi School in Islamic Jurisprudence. Thus, this became the feature of the Muslims in the Cape. He introduced Islam to the slaves and within a short space of time a small Muslim community developed. He engaged in teaching them the basic tenets of Islam. (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 23; Dangor 1981: 32, 53).

The Indian Muslims formally arrived as indentured labourers in 1860 and they settled in Natal. Although they respected the Arabic Language as the language of the Quran, they used Urdu as a religious language. (Shaikh 1994: 8).

The first person associated with formal Islamic education was Qadi Abdussalam, more commonly known as Tuan Guru (d. 1807) who was a prisoner on Robben Island from 1780 until 1793. He founded the first mosque and madrasa in Dorp Street in Cape Town. These home-based or mosque-based madrasa classes developed and increased thereafter. By 1825 there were 2 Islamic schools in the Cape which had about 425 students and by 1832 there were about 12 mosque madrasa. (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 51, 71).

In 1860, Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi who was a Turkish scholar arrived in the Cape as per request from the Muslims of the Cape to the British colonizers to teach the Muslim community their religion on a higher level. Abu Bakr Effendi was an accomplished scholar and he even authored a book on Islamic Jurisprudence titled *Bayan al-Din*. He established a school for Muslim girls and another school to teach theology. (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 76-98; Sonn: 1994: 14).

As the Muslim population grew and many children were attending state schools, parents realized that their children needed to be socialized according to a set of Islamic values that began with learning how to recite the Quran and the method of praying. Dr. Abdullah Abdurrahman (d.1940) who was a Cape Town-based medical doctor and a social activist established the first state-aided

Muslim mission (primary school) in Cape Town. By 1957, there were about 15 such schools. (Shaikh 1994: 19-20).

Arabic was introduced in state schools in 1975 and in the 1980's Muslim private schools were established. Presently there are over 74 such schools that combine Islamic knowledge with the other subjects. Graduates from these schools are eligible to enrol at any of the universities in South Africa. However, due to the exorbitant fees of the Muslim schools and its inaccessibility to the broader community, the traditional madrasas still flourish. (Tayob 2011: 43).
By the 1990's, Arabic was offered in 8921 primary schools and in 1124 state secondary schools. More recently the establishment of foreign-based schools, both Egyptian and Turkish, have added a different dimension. In the Egyptian al-Azhar schools, Islamic Studies is taught by Egyptian teachers and modern subjects are taught by South African teachers.

On a higher level, the University of South Africa was the first to introduce Arabic in 1963 followed by the University of Durban-Westville in 1975 and the University of Cape Town in 1982. The following institutions offered Islamic Studies: Durban-Westville in 1974, Rand Afrikaans University in 1976 and the University of Cape Town in 1986. Due to a lack of student numbers in recent years, many departments were closed. (Mohammed 2002: 30).
In fact, since 1930, 192 theses have been presented on Islamic Studies in South African Universities with 134 of these presented in the 1980's. (Sonn 1994: 16). Muslims generally welcomed the establishment of departments of Islamic Studies within South African universities, however, there were some who were of the view that Islam could not be taught within the university environment. This view was largely held by supporters or affiliates of the Darul Ulooms. (Haron 2014: 56).

Historically, Muslim religious leaders and scholars studied in the Middles East or in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent. Shaykh Muhammad Salih Hendriks (d. 1945) left South Africa in 1888 to study in Makkah. There is very little doubt that he made one of the greatest contributions to Islamic religious education in the history of Cape Town and its surroundings. He continued the tradition of Islamic education and Sufism. His sons and grandsons continued this legacy and maintained

strong scholarly links with the scholars in Makkah to this day, particularly with Shaykh Muhammad Alawi al-Maliki (d. 2004) and his son, Ahmad. (Da Costa & Davids 1994: 106).

Students travelling abroad to study Islam continues to this day but local opportunities were created when in 1973 the first Darul Uloom was established in Newcastle, Kwa-Zulu Natal. It was established by Qasim Sema (d. 2007) who studied in a Deobandi-affiliated institution in Dabhel, India. He also studied under some prominent Deobandi scholars like Yusuf Binnori (d. 1977). (Akoo 2006: 10-13). The curriculum in Newcastle was based on the Nizami course structure from Deoband, India and the syllabus was taught in English. Less indigenous to South Africa and more in keeping with the Deoband spirit are the Darul Ulooms in Azaadville and Johannesburg which teaches in Urdu. Even Arabic is taught in Urdu. The founder and principal of the Darul Uloom in Azaadville, Abdul Hamid Ishaq is a graduate from Deoband while the founder and principal of the one in Lenasia is Shabbir Saloojee, who is a graduate from a Deobandi-affiliate institution in Dabhel, India. Today many other such seminaries (Darul Ulooms) exist throughout the country. The first Barelwi Darul Uloom was established in 1989. (Sayed 2010: 5, 29, 74). Thus, the Deobandi scholars were instrumental in establishing the first Darul Uloom and the Barelwi Darul Uloom was established after tensions erupted between the two groups- Deobandis and Barelwis.

More recently, there have been other institutions that have been established with the aim of trying to overcome the dichotomy between secular and religious knowledge and to combine an academic approach. The aim of these institutions is also to improve the standard and competency of the graduates. One example is the Islamic College of South Africa (ICOSA) established in Gatesville, Cape Town in 1991. It offered a 4-year B.A Honours degree and afforded students the possibility of pursuing post-graduate programs at the different universities. (Mohamed 2002: 30).

However, ICOSA evolved into the Islamic Peace University of South Africa (IPSA) which offers an accredited undergraduate and post-graduate program. IPSA was established in 2005 but only received accreditation from the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) for its academic program in 2013. The al-Madinah Institute offers a one-year intensive program. The Council of Islamic Theologians (Jamiat al-Ulama) has also initiated its own advanced program. It has tried to bridge the gap between secular and religious education by encouraging its students to pursue a

university degree concurrently while studying Islamic Studies. (Sayed 2010: 56; Lo & Haron 2016: 57). One of the scholars of Cape Town, Shaykh Taha Karaan, established a Darul Uloom in 1996 that has made excellent progress in raising the standard and proficiency of its students in the Islamic Sciences. The curriculum in this institution differs from that in Newcastle, Zakariya and even the Nizami curriculum and it focuses on providing a sound understanding of the views and the legal framework of the Shafi School, along with the introduction of some other prescribed books. (www.duai.org.za/curriculum).

The Muslims in South Africa have opted to establish sociocultural and educational institutions with specific objectives of carving out a niche for themselves within the host country in which they have settled. By 2012, Muslim institutions in South Africa had produced about 2000 graduates. (Lo & Haron 2016: 41, 59).

The changing political climate globally has opened up doors for students in other countries. Prior to the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994, many countries did not have cordial diplomatic relations with South Africa. Post-1994 some countries have relaxed the visa requirements and some of the Muslim scholars from other countries have visited South Africa. This has encouraged students who have travelled to these countries and are pursuing advanced Islamic Studies at institutions in Yemen, Turkey, Mauritania and Morocco.

6.3 The madrasa and its role in the Muslim community

Having presented a chronological synopsis of the development of Islamic education in South Africa, this section will be dedicated to the Darul Ulooms in the country, because these Darul Ulooms and their curriculum form an important part of this thesis. The themes and topics discussed by al-Mawwaq in his book which were discussed in Chapter 5 will be used to offer some support to enhance and reform the existing curriculum of the Darul Ulooms that will be the topic of Chapter 7.

A discussion will be presented on the Darul Ulooms in South Africa that will include the very name or concept, its ideological roots and links and the subsequent establishment of the first

institution of this nature in South Africa until the present where there are more than ten such institutions. The need to understand these madrasas has increased after the events of 11 September when many madrasas were presented in a negative light and there was growing distrust of these institutions because they were seen as breeding grounds of Islamic extremism or fundamentalism. It must be noted that these accusations of being the breeding grounds for terrorism are not new, but they have occurred since the colonial period in India. (Harris & Reifield 2006: 57). It has received more attention now due to the extent of the lives lost in the September 11 incident and because of the increased media coverage.

Sir W. H. Sleeman (d. 1856), who was a British soldier and administrator in British India, after visiting madrasas in India in the early 19th century recorded these impressions about madrasa graduates: "Perhaps there are a few communities in the world among whom education is more generally diffused than among Muhammedans in India. He who holds an office worth twenty rupees a month commonly gives his son an education equal to that of a prime minister. They learn through the medium of the Arabic and Persian languages, what young men in our colleges learn through those of Greek and Latin – that is grammar, rhetoric and logic. After his seven years of study, the young Muhammedan binds his turban upon a head almost as well-filled with the things which appertain to these branches of knowledge as the young man raw from Oxford; he will talk as fluently about Socrates and Aristotle, Plato, and Hippocrates, Galen and Avicenna and, what is much to his advantage in India, the languages in which he has learnt what he knows are those which he requires through life. (Nadwi 2007: 2).

This holds true today as in the early 19th century but relates only to part of the syllabus. The discussion on the syllabus will follow in Chapter 7.

Historically, students were sent to madrasas to acquire Islamic education. The madrasa specializes in teaching classical theological and legal texts, commentaries to Muslim scripture, the Quran, emphasis on studying the Prophet's life and traditions, complex details on how to navigate public and private norms. All the secondary disciplines are also taught like Arabic and logic. (Moosa 2015: 13). This is the general approach of the madrasa in South Africa and in other parts of the

world with variations in the standards of education and the emphasis on certain subjects in some places more than in others.

Madrasas advance the Muslim public understanding of morality, ethics and conduct in an Islamic society which ranges from intimate matters affecting the family, that would include marriage, divorce, death and burial, to banking practices, national politics, governance and complex questions of international relations, war and peace. Madrasa's also support and maintain the practices of rituals, prayer, meditation, piety and the remembrance of God. (Moosa 2015: 22).

The following is a summary of a description of a madrasa by Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Nadwi (d. 1999), who spent a major part of his life in a famous madrasa known as Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama in Lucknow, India. He maintained that the madrasa is an institution for the human-being's upbringing and a place where those who call to Islam are trained. It may be likened to the powerhouse of the Muslim community which provides energy to all of mankind. It is a place where a world-view is cultivated and humanity is thereby sustained and the intellect is nourished. It is not specific to any particular nation or culture. It transcends decadence and decline, for it is nourished and sustained by the Prophet Muhammad's message which is universal and timeless. (Nadwi 2007: 2-3).

The Darul Ulooms are traditionally known as madrasas but the transition and evolvement from being called madrasas to Darul Ulooms happened during the time of one of the lecturers at the Darul Uloom in Deoband, India about 13 years after its establishment. (Rizvi 1980:145; Ingram 2018: 80).

6.3.1 The historical and ideological roots of the Darul Uloom

Islamic intellectual activity in India began very early from around the end of the 7th century. There were accomplished scholars who were acclaimed by reputable scholars like Ahmad ibn Hanbal of Iraq. Arabic was always studied in India by the Muslim scholars, but Turkish and Persian also influenced Muslim scholarship and eventually Urdu as well. Eventually Urdu became the language of Islamic literature in India. (Hamidullah 1954: 129-132). The first formal

madrasa is said to have been established in 1191 in Ajmer, India. During the rule of Muhammad ibn Tuglaq (1324-1351) there were about 1000 madrasa's in Delhi alone. (Sikand 2005: 51).

As the British colonized India, they banished all religious education. Many resisted this occupation and the Darul Uloom in Deoband was founded in response to the British and their ruthless quashing of the uprisings in India in 1857. The founders wondered how India would recover from such a catastrophe. They decided that this would be achieved by reviving India's Muslims through a renewed engagement with religious knowledge by way of a new kind of seminary, dependent not on courtly largesse but on individual Muslim donations with a central administration, a salaried faculty and a slate of exams to gauge students' progress. (Ingram 2018: 21). This was one area in which it differed from traditional madrasas.

These efforts culminated in the inauguration of the institution known as Darul Uloom Deoband in 1866 by its founders Qasim Nanotwi (d. 1880) and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (d. 1905) who were both Islamic religious scholars who themselves were trained in a madrasa in Delhi. (Rizvi 1980: 59). Both these scholars had also studied under Shah Abdul Ghani al-Dehlawi (d. 1824), who was a product of the legacy of Shah Waliullah al-Dehlawi (d. 1762) who revived the scholarly tradition in India with special emphasis on the teaching of Hadith. Shah Waliullah also spent some time studying under prominent scholars in Makkah and Madinah. He returned to India in 1732. (Rizvi 1980: 72; Harris & Reifield 2006: 177; Sikand 2005: 63).

The curriculum adopted in Deoband was based on the Nizami curriculum (Dars Nizami). It is important to note that the Mughals had patronized Islamic educational institutions. The most well-known example of this mutually-dependent relationship between the Mughal administration and the scholars (*ulama*) was Farangi Mahal, a family of scholars named after the residence in Lucknow, India that was given to the family by the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzeb (d. 1707). A member of this family, Mulla Nizam al-Din (d. 1748) created the Nizami curriculum in the 18th century, stressing on rational sciences to prepare young scholars for work in the civil administration. As per his design, it contained only one work of Hadith, a book titled *Mishkat al-Masabih*. During this time the scholars did not regard the rational and Islamic sciences as rivals,

but rather as complimentary parts. The founder of the Nizami curriculum understood that the rational sciences provide the intellectual resources for comprehending the religious sciences. There were some scholars who voiced their dissatisfaction when they observed the influence of Greek and other ideologies. (Ingram 2018: 86; Sikand 2005: 48, 119). There are some who trace the origins of the Nizami curriculum to Nizam al-Mulk Tusi (d. 1092) who established Madrasa Nizamiyah in Baghdad. (Rizvi 1980: 49).

The special features of the Nizami curriculum was that each text was carefully selected for its pedagogical merits commensurate with the level of development of a student. The original goal was to produce a student who could think logically, who had acquired excellent writing and linguistic skills and enough of Islam to address issues beyond basic questions. It fulfils what could be referred to as a basic college education. The Nizami curriculum not only fosters intellectual exchange, it also links them to a historical memory of predecessors across ideological orientations. The pedagogy involves a penchant for polemics. But it is one link in a long chain of curriculum developments. (Moosa 2015: 88, 139).
The candidate does not provide a detailed analysis of the Nizami curriculum because it is not the main feature of this thesis. The main focus of the thesis is the South African Darul Ulooms which are modelled along the lines of the Darul Uloom in Deoband. The Darul Uloom in Deoband itself has steered away from a strict and rigid adherence to the Nizami curriculum. This happened soon after its inception when one of its senior lecturers proposed excluding many of the rational subjects and the introduction and inclusion of more Hadith texts. Hence, there is no need for a detailed discussion on the Nizami curriculum but rather of the Darul Uloom curriculum.

With time the scholars of Deoband adjusted the curriculum-firstly, with regard to the duration of the course which was reduced from about 9 years to about 7 years; thereafter, in the content. They reduced the number of rational subjects and introduced a more intense study of Hadith. although Nanotwi preferred the inclusion of the rational sciences as opposed to Gangohi who preferred to exclude it. (Ingram 2018: 88, 107). In some way, Deoband represented a fusion between religious and Sufi conservatism and political pragmatism. (Sikand 2005: 76).

The aim of Darul Uloom Deoband as per its constitution is to teach Islam, impart good morals, avoid any government influences, establish other institutions and provide a free education. It had a separate consultative council that was tasked with administrative matters of the institution.
With regard to its thought, it adhered to the mainstream Sunni ideology which manifested itself in the Maturidi school of theology, the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence, particularly the school of Imam Abu Hanifah (d.767), and the inclusion of the Sufi Orders, particularly the Chisti[i32], Naqshbandi[33], Qadiri[34] and Surawardi[35] Orders. The practical application of these was an extension of the legacy of Shah Waliullah as per the teachings of its founders, Qasim Nanotwi and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi. (Rizvi 1980: 108, 325). Some of the salient features of the Deobandi thought are a somewhat moderate religious ideology, a strong educational system, a zeal in preaching, spirituality and reform and a sustainable political ideology. (Qasimi 2016: 4-5).

With time, the Deobandi influence spread rapidly and therefore someone like Wilfred Cantwell Smith declared: "Next to the Azhar of Cairo, Deoband is the most important and respected theological academy of the Muslim World." (Ingram 2018: 19).

The Deoband thought and approach spread beyond the boundaries of India and Madrasa Sawlatiyah was established in Makkah in 1875 and another institution in Madinah in 1921. (Qasimi 2016: 3). The Deobandi thought spread in India and in places like South Africa through the writings of its scholars which included the compilation of their religious edicts (*fatwa*). These legal rulings were an important link of the Deobandi branches in and outside India. The compilation of the rulings by Rashid Gangohi has been, and still is, regarded as a reference for various Deobandi

[32] A Sufi Order that began in the town of Chist in Afghanistan and promoted by Moinuddin Chisti (d. 1236)
[32] A Sufi Order that got its name from Baha al-din Naqshband (d. 1389) who was from Bukhara, Uzbekistan.
[33] A Sufi Order that got its name from the Sufi scholar Abdul Qadir Jilani (d. 1166) who was from Iraq.
[34] A Sufi Order attributed to Diya al-Din Abu al-Najib Surawardi (d. 1168) who was from Iran.

groups across the world. Darul Uloom Deoband even started publishing its own legal rulings. The teachings and writings of Ashraf Ali Thanwi proved to be influential in deepening the outlook of the school's thought. He was also revered for being a reformist Sufi and thus he had a large network of disciples around him. The travels by prominent Deobandi scholars to different parts of the world on lecture tours or to attend conferences and the Tabligh Jamaat (revivalist movement) were assisted by the flow of migration from India to parts of Britain, East and South Africa. Deobandi graduates were the main channel of its translocal and transnational influence. Preaching and teaching were important to them and many opened schools like it wherever they went. Since its inception till around 2003, Deoband had about 25457 graduates of which about 20% were from other countries. (Ingram 2018: 258; Reetz 2007: 143-144).

The Deobandi thought was not without its fair share of controversy and criticism. It was accused of being anti-Sufi and a promoter of Salafi-Wahhabi[36] ideology.

They were perceived to be anti-Sufi because of their attempt to cleanse or reform existing rituals and beliefs, but Deoband cannot be merged with the Salafis who often reject the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. Initially, the Deobandi critique was against the Barelwis[37], then the Ahl al-Hadith, then the Hindus and other non-Muslims. The strong ideological slant of Deobandi sectarianism has perhaps in some-way inspired jihadi groups internationally but not in South Africa. (Reetz 2004: 87).

They were incorrectly called Wahhabi's with whom they only shared a certain bent for the radical and puritan interpretation of the Islamic texts. (Reetz 2004: 2). Examples in this regard are some of the ideas of Muhammad Ismail (d. 1831) on innovations (*bid'ah*) and commemorating the Prophet's birth (*mawlid*) that inspired the Indian Salafi movement. Also one of the founders of Deoband, Rashid Ahmad Gangohi had revered the book titled; *Taqwiyatul Iman* by Muhammad

[36] An Islamic religious movement founded by Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab (d. 1792) which has been described as ultraconservative and often used as a synonym for the Salafi movement. It originated in present day Saudi Arabia.

[37] A Sunni school that derives its name from the town of Bareili in India which was the hometown of its founder Ahmad Riza Khan (d. 1921).

Ismail which seemed to promote Wahhabi ideas. Gangohi had reprimanded another Deobandi scholar, Ashraf Ali Thanwi (d. 1943) for attending a *mawlid* which was a function commemorating the birth of Prophet Muhammad. (Ingram 2018: 113-225). An example in South Africa is when the Council of Muslim Theologians (Jamiatul Ulama) in 1981 printed the Saudi scholar, Ibn Baz's (d. 1999) fatwa against commemorating the Prophet's birth (*mawlid*). (Ingram 2018: 347). This was yet another example of the Deobandi support of Saudi-Wahhabi ideas.

The battle over the control of mosques between Deobandis and Barelwis that started in Pakistan in the 1970's and the 1980's was replicated in countries like South Africa. There it was fought in the name of Tablighi versus Sunni paradigm. (Reetz 2007: 155).

With regard to Sufism, the Deobandis have positioned themselves as treading a middle way between those who unmoor Sufism from its grounding in Islamic Law and those who reject Sufism altogether. Although their Sufi positioning has its roots in early Deobandi thought, it has become a salient feature in recent history when Deobandis have been on the defensive because of the perceived antipathy to Sufism. For Ashraf Ali Thanwi (d. 1943), an influential Deobandi scholar, who said that no self-respecting Islamic scholar was worthy of the name without having studied al-Ghazali's (d. 1111) *Ihya Ulum al-Din*. (Ingram 2018: 35-39). Both the founders of Darul Uloom Deoband had taken the teachings of Sufism and spiritual guidance from Haji Imdadullah Makki (d. 1899). (Moosa: 2015: 110). In recent years Deobandi scholars like Abdul Hafiz Makki (d.2017), who was also a disciple of Muhammad Zakariya (d. 1982) attended Sufi meetings and conferences on 'religious reformation' which resulted in the establishment of Sufi hospices. These were engaged in educational and missionary activities. (Reetz 2007: 158).

Recent developments have raised speculation about the influence of the Deobandi educational movement and its role in the formation of international radical and militant Islamic thought. The reference to the Taliban of Afghanistan and to their Deobandi theological connection contributed to this as much as the active Pakistan-based religious parties wedded to the Deobandi school. (Reetz 2007: 141).

This is not entirely correct because the radical militant interpretation of Islam is attributed to a number of factors that include the spread of Salafism, although the modern usage of this term can be ambiguous and confusing. The reason being is that, as the word 'Salaf, suggests, it refers to the pious early generations of Muslim scholars who were revered by all Muslims. It has evolved to being one of the manifestations of Islam. Thus it is not a movement with a structured leadership and neither is it a school of thought. It is an approach in dealing with the Quran and the Propehtic narrations with emphasis on the methodology of scholars like Ibn Taymiyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim. Some Salafis reject the schools of *fiqh*, while others maintain that Muslims do not need to follow a school, but are allowed to. The Salafis may be classified into three groups: (1) the purists, they focus on purification of the faith through education and propagation, (2) the political Salafis, who emphasize on the need to apply their understanding to the political arena and (3) the revolutionary Salafis, who take a militant approach and argue that the current context calls for violence. (Ali 2018: 1-3). Wahhabi or Wahhabism could be classified as an orientation of Salafism that takes its name from Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhab (d. 1792) who was from modern day Saudi Arabia.

The call to return to the tenets of Islam has been regarded as Salafism or fundamentalism. There are some who were classified as Islamists. Thus, Islamism could be regarded as a brand of modern political Islamic fundamentalism that aims to recreate a true Islamic society. Hasan al-Banna (d. 1949) of Egypt, who was the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood and Maududi (d. 1979) of Pakistan are two proponents of this approach. Neo-fundamentalists on the other hand insist on implementing the Shariah in a strict literal interpretation without much concern for the state or the political component. These are the networks of the madrasas in Afghanistan and Pakistan whose model is the Darul Uloom in Deoband. (Roy 2002: 4).

The neo-fundamntalists superseded the Islamists in their battle (*jihad*) against the Western world. This could be attributed to the growing Saudi-Wahhabi influence on religious and educational networks in Pakistan and Afghanistan through scholarships. There was an active development of the madrasa network in Pakistan and Afghanistan in the 20th century with the majority linked to Deoband or its sister institutions like the Darul Uloom in Binnori Town, Karachi.

These scholars or students also known as 'Taliban' were radicalized through the resistance to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the policy of Islamization that was led by General Zia al-Haq after his take-over of Pakistan in 1977. The Pakistani intelligence (ISI) used the scholarly networks to identify recipients of weapons that they would dispatch to. Many madrasa students saw *jihad* as a religious duty. They went on an individual basis to fight in Afghanistan or against the Indian troops in Kashmir. Some Afghani scholars like Burhanuddin Rabbani who studied in Egypt had returned to Afghanistan with some of the ideas of the Muslim Brotherhood. Arab funding was another big contributing factor. The Saudis, for example, were eager to help the fighters because they wished to fight communism and also to undermine the Iranian influence in the region. Thus, the Saudis introduced a stronger and stricter version of Salafism. (Roy 2002: 10-15).

The radicalization of the Deobandi movement is not found in its own ideology, which has always been rather conservative. Thus, the link between Deoband, the Taliban and radical militancy is because of the theological roots of the Taliban and the fact that some Deobandi scholars and Afghan Taliban praised the likes of Usamah ibn Laden and offered to protect him and members of the al-Qaeda Movement. With time, many radicalized Muslims from different parts of the world looked at Afghanistan as a place to receive training and be initiated into the ranks of different Islamic radical movements, after which they returned to their countries aspiring to perpetrate some violent crimes. Not all Deobandis are supportive of the Taliban but they have a 'scripturalist' approach. Some Deobandi scholars have admitted that they supported the Taliban in Afghanistan in their opposition and resistance of occupying armies, but they did not physically assist them. (Sikand 2005: 142; Zaman 2007: 50).

6.3.2 Internal tension and split

Even though the founders and subsequent scholars affiliated to Deoband agreed on the ideological foundations, there was some tension between the more politically-aligned faction represented by Husayn Ahmad Madani (d. 1957) and Ubaydullah Sindi (d. 1944) and those who advocated scholarly pursuits represented by Ashraf Ali Thanwi and Anwar Shah Kashmiri. There were also certain Deobandi scholars like Shabbir Ahmad Uthmani (d. 1949) who was in favour and supported the creation of Pakistan. This group broke away and established the Jamiat Ulama Islam while the Jamiat Ulama Hind sided with the Indian National Congress. (Reetz 2007: 145). As the

years progressed, there were family feuds between the Qasimi/Tayyib and Madani families which eventually resulted in a split. Darul Uloom Deoband was closed for 5 months in 1982. When it was reopened, another institution bearing the same name was opened in the same city administered by one of the factions. (Noor, Sikand, Bruinessen 2008: 75-78; Reetz 2004: 3). This is significant because some of these tensions influenced South African scholars who studied in India or Indian scholars who visited South Africa on lecture tours and subsequently influenced the outlook and approach of the Darul Ulooms that were established in South Africa.

So a Deobandi can be a graduate from Darul Uloom Deoband, or a graduate from any of the hundreds of seminaries formed on its model, or someone who adheres to its ideologies and dispositions or Deoband's 'concentric circles of influence'. (Ingram 2018: 32). This relationship extends to one between teachers, students, alumni and patrons which Metcalf describes as "concentric circles of influence". (Ingram 2011: 13). So, Deoband did not refer to a pedagogy but to a system of allies mutually descended from an increasingly distant institution with which they maintained as close a relationship as they could. The madrasa is the central node in an intricate network bound by texts, institutions and ideas. As the network expanded, it carried certain ideas with it. (Ingram 2011: 2-3).

The discussion on the Darul Uloom in India and South Africa and the subsequent suggestion for reform in South Africa must include some reference to Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama in Lucknow, India. The reason being that some influential South African Muslim scholars had studied at the latter institution and were actively involved in the affairs of the South African community. One of the most influential was Moulana Ihsan Hendriks (d. 2018) who served as the President of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) in Cape Town and even established the Abul Hasan Ali al-Nadwi leadership Academy in Cape Town. The MJC was established in 1945 and is a large body of scholars which was previously headed by South African scholars who studied in the Middle East. (www.mjc.org.za).

The other reason for the importance of Nadawtul Ulama in this discussion is that it was established in 1898 with the intention of promoting greater synthesis between the traditional Islamic sciences and modern knowledge. It was established as a reaction to Deoband's hostility to modern

knowledge. Its academic program was supervised by Shibli Nomani (d. 1914). He studied in India but made contact with some Egyptian scholars like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (d. 1897) and Muhammad Abduh (d. 1905). Shibli's student, Sayid Sulayman Nadwi (d.1953) made contact with another Egyptian, Muhammad Rashid Rida (d. 1935) and thus some Salafi ideas and approaches penetrated Nadwatul Ulama. Shibli Nomani introduced English into the curriculum, but he was branded by some conservative scholars as a disbeliever. (Harris & Reifield 2006: 138-143; ed. Hatina 2009: 176: Sikand 2005: 124).

Nadwatul Ulama was eventually regarded as the chief promoter of Islamic madrasa education in India and a turntable to the Arab world. The efforts of the Moroccan scholar, Taqi al-Din Hilali (d. 1987) who spent some time studying in India, as well as those of Abul Hasan Ali al-Nadwi (d. 1999), contributed towards strengthening the link between Nadwatul Ulama and other institutions globally. (Harris & Reifield 2006: 138-143).

6.3.3 Darul Ulooms in South Africa

Muslims of Indian origin had arrived in South Africa in around 1860 and some of these had established links with the Darul Uloom in Deoband as early as 1866. In fact, between 1866 and 1976, about 199 South Africans graduated from Deoband. The South African Muslims continued to remain involved, even through their financial contributions to the institutions. By 1910, there were large financial donations from South Africa to Deoband. With the result, the largest interaction between the Deoband school and foreign Deobandi networks exists, perhaps with its branches in South Africa. (Ingram 2011: 11-12).

Public consciousness of Deoband in South Africa was inextricably linked to the Tabligh missions in the 1960's, even though Deobandi scholars lived and taught there as early as the 1920's. In fact, Tablighi activity was very much part of the curriculum in the Darul Uloom Zakariya and Azaadville. (Reetz 2007: 155). The founder of the Tabligh missions was Muhammad Ilyas (d. 1944) who studied under 3 prominent Deobandi scholars, thus the link to Deoband. This is one of the reasons that some regard the Tablighi Movement as an off-shoot of the Deobandi movement. (Metclaf 2002: 8). However, not everyone linked to the Tabligh missions has a formal connection

to Deoband. (Ingram 2011: 15). The first institution founded by a Deobandi scholar was the Council of Muslim Theologians (Jamiatul Ulama Transvaal) in 1922 and was revived in 1935 by Ebrahim Sanjalwi (d. 1983). One of the early South Africans to graduate from Deoband was Muhammad ibn Musa Mia (d. 1963) who graduated in 1925. It was the Council of Muslim Theologians who undertook the initiative to publish a commentary by a prominent Deobandi scholar, Anwar Shah Kashmiri's (d. 1933) to *Sahih al-Bukhari* titled as *Fayd al-Bari*. (Ingram 2018: 260, 307-309).

South African scholars continued to travel to India to study in Deoband or its affiliated institutions. South African student numbers in Deoband peaked in 1977 with 25 students. This is probably why the first South African Darul Uloom was established in Newcastle, only in 1973 by Qasim Sema (d. 2007), who himself had studied under prominent Deobandi scholars in India and graduated from one of its sister institutions. Qasim Sema sought the assistance of Yusuf Binnori (d. 1977) to devise a syllabus for the Darul Uloom in Newcastle. Yusuf Binnori was a prominent scholar who graduated from Darul Uloom Deoband and was closely connected to two other Deobandi scholars; Anwar Shah Kashmiri (d. 1933) and Husayn Ahmad Madani (d. 1957). Yusuf Binnori was the founder and rector of a Darul Uloom in Karachi, Pakistan. The Tabligh missions had also impressed upon the need for a local Darul Uloom. It is important to note that Qasim Sema was also influential in organising the first national Tabligh gathering (*ijtima*) in South Africa that took place in 1961 in Ladysmith. The first graduation took place in 1977 and the special guest was Mohammed Asad Madani (d. 2006) who was the son of Husayn Ahmad Madani and he also served as the President of the Council of Muslim Scholars of India. (Akoo 2006: 46, 63, 79). This is an indication of the strong Deobandi connection that existed from the inception of the first Darul Uloom in South Africa.

The Darul Uloom in Newcastle even inspired similar institutions in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. To date there are about 400 graduates from Newcastle. Amongst these are a significant number who were able to secure jobs in different professions which for many is proof of the viability of the program and its curriculum. (Lo & Haron 2016: 51-52).

Deobandi education in South Africa is not as homogenous and univocal as in South Asia. It is not only a madrasa, but it is also shaped by the missionary Tabligh movement and by the Sufi scholars of Deobandi background. After the establishment of the first Darul Uloom, two other institutions were established; one in Lenasia and the other in Azaadville, both suburbs of Johannesburg, which are both prime examples of this composite trend. They embody Deobandi tradition with a close affinity with the disciples of a Deobandi Sufi scholar, Muhammad Zakariya Kandehlawi (d. 1982) who was also a nephew of the founder of the Tabligh missions. Some of Husayn Ahmad Madani's students are in South Africa, while Qari Tayyib (d. 1983) former rector of Deoband visited South Africa in 1963. The presence of students of prominent Deobandi scholars and their subsequent visits to South Africa helped change the negative perceptions that some people had about Deoband and this helped change perceptions about Deoband. Many SA students had taken the pledge of fealty which is an important aspect in Sufism from many of the Deobandi scholars already mentioned as well as from Badr Alam (d. 1965). (Reetz 2016: 88; Qasimi 2016: 9-10).

The institutions in Newcastle, Azaadville and Lenasia have included in their academic program an option for a student to memorize the Quran and also a 6 year course that is modelled along the Nizami curriculum and the Deoband syllabus. (Sayed 2010: 15). In the Johannesburg based institutions, Arabic, English and Urdu are taught but the main emphasis is on Urdu- in fact it is the medium of instruction. This is justified by claiming to maintain and preserve the legacy of the past luminaries, more especially those associated with Deoband, because it is the spoken language in India and the medium of instruction in Deoband. These institutions began as small private institutions and were thereafter modernized. The location is largely related to the apartheid segregation policy. Graduation from these institutions provide easy entry into the 'opportunity networks' of Gujerati descent. This means that they would be considered for employment ahead of graduates from other institutions. The orientation of these institutions is greatly dependent on the perspective of the founder. He and his family will guide the institution for generations. (Reetz 2016: 89-91).

These institutions have tried to recuperate anthropocentrism in an ever more bibliocentric world in a number of ways insisting that knowledge cannot come from books alone, but requires the

guidance of an expert, accentuating the Sufi concept of companionship (*suhbah*) as the sine quo of moral self-formation and reasserting the indispensibility of the scholars (*ulama*) who can help the less learned make sense of difficult and perilous issues. (Ingram 2018: 55).

The South African Darul Ulooms have for some time been accepting foreign students and thus certain changes had to be made to the curriculum, especially with regard to teaching Islamic Jurisprudence where one of the other schools had to be accommodated. A few indigenous Africans have also enrolled at these institutions. The first Barelwi Darul Uloom in SA was established in Ladysmith in 1989. (Sayed 2010: 60-74).

Some graduates from the South African Darul Ulooms were able to find jobs in English-speaking countries like Australia and Canada. Deobandi leadership regards this as a way to entrench traditional values and conservative religious thought while others feel they perpetrate traditional ways of thinking and demonstrate inflexibility in their social and educational programs. Others use this to justify the excellence of the academic program offered at these institutions.

The Darul Ulooms in Lenasia and Azaadville are 'reformist' with a certain sectarian bent that would regularly criticize all dissenting readings of Islam. In the late 1990's the ideological alignment of Deobandi schools in South Africa underwent various shifts due to the cultural and political changes and the ties with South Asia weakened. The sectarian differences between Deobandi, Barelwi and other Sufi Orders that were once unknown in the country, Salafi and Ahl al-Hadith began to grow. (Reetz 2016: 98).

6.4 Conclusion

The Darul Ulooms in Lenasia and Azaadville and others that follow a similar approach play a role in understanding Muslim global networks and how they are adapting to the current processes of globalisation creating different visions of the world. These different visions strive to pose as contrasting developments to financial globalization as centred in the west. Religious and cultural competence is turned into political, social and economic development. Bridging the gap between tradition and orthodoxy and secular modernity, they face intense contestation. (Reetz 2016: 102).

These institutions see themselves as the interpreters and defenders of the religion and they view themselves as agents of positive social change within the Muslim community. They regard themselves as the sole purveyors of traditional Muslim theological knowledge. In the process, they compete in more ways than one with the Muslim university graduates who are popularly called 'shaykhs' and like their co-religionists, the Darul Uloom graduates are known by the appellation 'maulana'. (Lo & Haron 2016: 47).

Islamic education has evolved over three centuries and contribution to the preservation of Islam in the formative years after the arrival of Tuan Guru and thereafter during the apartheid years. In the current post-apartheid era, Muslim are exposed to an open society with global challenges, making it essential for Muslim educational institutions to prepare their graduates to confront the challenges of secular modernity, or to come to terms with it. In doing so they could make a larger more meaningful contribution to society while still maintaining their religious identity. (Mohamed 2002: 30).

Thus, the next chapter will be dedicated to providing some real and practical suggestions based on the themes in al-Mawwaq's book and the lessons from the traditional Mauritanian example to enhance and perhaps reform the current curriculum within the Darul Ulooms in a way that tradition is not vanquished but rather reaffirmed and that it remains traditional and modern. The themes and reasoning adopted and discussed by al-Mawwaq in his context in Granada, if added to the current Darul Uloom curriculum, will enhance and reform the content and result in scholars who are more tolerant and who can provide relevant guidance and solutions to the South African Muslim.

Chapter Seven

Al-Mawwaq and reform within the Darul Ulooms in South Africa

7. 1 Introduction

The informal nature of the Darul Ulooms had for some time been regarded as an impediment to further education in formal institutions of higher learning. It has also negatively impacted on job opportunities beyond the scope of serving as imam or as a madrasa teacher because job prospects require school certificates, for which the Darul Uloom offers no way out. Consequently, there is a decline in local South African's quest for Darul Uloom education. This can be attributed to the importance of modern education, a lack of a good success plan on the part of the teachers, the lack of a dynamic curriculum, lack of a stable and reasonable income and the lack of a religious council in intervening to regulate the activities and salaries of the scholars. (Hisham, Rufai & Mohd Noor 2011: 105).

The absence of modern knowledge results in intellectual deficits. A theologian with deep understanding of history or socio-biology will appreciate the development and evolution of values formed within religious systems and discourses. Complexity and the interweaving of disciplines mark the world of knowledge today. Traditional madrasa scholars are still very much committed to a linear understanding of knowledge. Knowledge has two components; information and reasoning. The acquisition of information or data is regarded as linear, while reasoning is regarded as developmental and non-linear. (www.quora.com/Is-knowledge-linear).
So in the Darul Uloom context, the students spend much of their time gathering information and not sufficient time is spent on the reasoning. This was one of the criticisms directed to the *mahdarah* in Mauritania. Robust internal debate about the future of the madrasa curriculum will in all likelihood continue. (Moosa 2015: 78).

The Nizami curriculum is considered as ultraconservative, stifling and outdated today. It was modern in its time by giving considerable room to rational contemplation and non-religious subjects such as logic, geometry, the art of debate and research and philosophy. (Reetz 2007: 140).

The researcher served as a student for a period at the Darul Uloom in Azaadville and was later instrumental in establishing another institution in Pretoria based on the Deobandi model with a few minor adjustments to the curriculum. These adjustments included teaching in English and adding a few different texts. He assisted in drafting the curriculum and subsequently taught in this institution for 7 years and has interacted with graduates from different Darul Ulooms in South Africa. He is therefore well-positioned to suggest reforms to the Darul Uloom curriculum. There will be some reference made to the works of other scholars who have also identified the need for reform. These include some non-Muslim as well as Muslim scholars.

This chapter will be dedicated to suggested and recommended reforms to the Darul Uloom curriculum in South Africa. These reforms will be discussed in two ways. Firstly, some general recommendations and thereafter the specific themes addressed by al-Mawwaq that were identified in Chapter 5 of this research.

7.2 General recommendations for reform in the Darul Ulooms

It was stated in Chapter 6 that the Darul Uloom curriculum was modelled along the Nizami curriculum that originally included rational subjects. The current South African version includes religious sciences only. Furthermore, Deoband differed from the traditional madrasa. The traditional madrasa refers to those institutions that provided Islamic education for free and teachers did not receive any remuneration and it did not have a structured course and timetable. The Darul Uloom in Deoband differed in that it offered a fixed program of study with examinations and a salaried staff among other changes. (Reetz 2016: 84). Even though Darul Uloom Deoband regards itself as a traditional madrasa, the founders decided to change and deviate from the traditional practices and provide salaries for the teachers with a structured academic program. Thus some 150 years after the inception of Deoband, the seminaries in South Africa need to make some adjustments that will keep them effective and relevant. This is necessary because the Nizami curriculum, and the curriculum in Deoband at the time of its inception, were products of a specific society and understanding suited to the particular social and administrative needs of the time. (Noor, Sikand & Bruinessen 2008: 45).

A classical scholar like Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) suggested teaching history of disciplines, biographies and the history of texts and authors, so that the beauty and complexity of the Islamic

scholarly tradition may be appreciated. Deobandi scholars such as Yusuf Binnori (d. 1977) and Shibli Nomani (d. 1914) realized that there was a need for reform. In fact, it was Shibli Nomani who referred to the scholars as slaves of prescribed texts with reference to their slavish attachment to ancient texts and their equally stubborn refusal to consider new proposals. Shibli was concerned over how fiqh was taught with too much attention on the marginal notes to the classical fiqh books. Other Deobandi scholars such as Ashraf Ali Thanwi (d. 1943) viewed Shibli's freethinking with some alarm. He was dismissed as being too rational in his approach. Hence, his suggested reforms did not receive much attention. Shibli spent a few years at one of the huge Darul Ulooms in India, known as Nadwatul Ulama and he failed to introduce many of his reforms in this institution. Shibli was influenced in some way by Ibn Taymiyah and even authored a boo on him wherein he referred to him as a reviver of the faith (mujaddid). This is another possible reason why the Darul Ulooms disregarded his suggested reforms. His suggested reforms are not relevant to the South African context. (Moosa 2015: 152, 242). Some Deobandi scholars even opposed Sayid Ahmad Khan's (d. 1898) intended reforms. However, later, Deoband and Aligargh University entered into some agreement that resulted in Deoband graduates even serving as teachers at the Aligargh University. (Sikand 2005: 82). Another Deobandi scholar, Ubaydullah Sindhi (d. 1943/44) who was greatly influenced by Shah Waliullah, was also critical of the education in Deoband

He too suggested the introduction of English and some modern sciences. His suggestions were also rejected. He was also criticized for being too political in his approach because of his affiliation with the Free-India Movement. He does not feature in current discourses if any around change and reforming the curriculum in South African Darul Ulooms. (Hefner 2007: 68). Therefore, these were not given too much attention and the approach was to focus and concentrate on the current curriculum and propose ways on how the subjects taught could be taught more effectively and further enhance it with additional classical subjects that were deduced from a classical scholar like al-Mawwaq. This approach would possibly be more palatable with the administrators of the Darul Ulooms and will not be dismissed as 'modernist'. This approach can thus be considered to be unique, because to the candidates knowledge it has never being suggested previously even by other critics of the Nizami curriculum.

7.2.1 The language and cultural appeal of the South African Darul Ulooms.

In a post-Apartheid democratic South Africa, the Darul Ulooms are still less indigenous to the country and more in keeping with the Deobandi Asian spirit. Of particular reference are the seminaries in Lenasia and Azaadville that continue to teach in Urdu. Even Arabic is taught in Urdu! This is a potential problem because it could result in racial segregation. In the two Darul Ulooms in greater Johannesburg, Azaadville and Lenasia, the teachers are of Asian descent. Previously these institutions employed teachers who came from India or Pakistan and who were not conversant in English. In more recent years, they began employing South African-born Asian teachers who are graduates from these Darul Ulooms. At the time of preparing this thesis, the researcher was not aware of any indigenous African scholar who taught at the Darul Ulooms. Very often students who are not inclined to study Urdu are told that this was the way and method of the illustrious predecessors. This is making specific reference to the reputable founders and other scholars associated with Deoband. This then is an indication of a language and a cultural bias. This is further supported when local indigenous black African students, students from other African countries and even students from abroad like Malaysia are required to study Urdu and attend lessons that are conducted via the Urdu medium. Therefore, there is a genuine need to move beyond the followers of Asian descent and address the needs of the local black community. (Reetz 2016: 100). In fact, some of the prominent Deobandi scholars like Anwar Shah Kashmiri (d. 1933), Zakariya Kandehlawi (d. 1982), Yusuf Binnori (d. 1977) and others authored some of their monumental works in Arabic. The Darul Ulooms could benefit from the experiences of the *mahdarah* in Mauritania which earned a reputation for its mastery and expertise in the Arabic language. Proficiency in Arabic, and English, as an international language of communication, will allow the Darul Uloom student the opportunity to access the Islamic research including the manuscripts, the vast majority of which has been written in Arabic, and then present it to the world in English.

7.2.2 Embracing reform or modernity within the Darul Ulooms.

The Darul Ulooms seem to focus on certain textual matters that are aimed at merely comprehending the text prescribed in the curriculum without focus on real-life issues. There are some subjects like Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) that is taught in a way that allows for some hermeneutics and analysis. This may be attributed to curricula and administrative problems. These could be rectified by providing professional development opportunities for the teachers

and lecturers. In doing so, teachers are upgraded in different pedagogical skills and thus suitable adjustments could be made to the learning environment to make for more effective learning. This may even correct the somewhat authoritarian relationship that exists between teachers and students. (Sikand 2005: 104).

The curriculum needs to be reviewed from time to time and improved. There could possibly be an educational board that is tasked with reviewing the syllabus on a regular basis and in doing so they could eventually make the shift in some subjects from being book-centered to student-centered. (Sikand 2005: 150-151: Hisham, Rufai & Mohd Noor 2011: 105-106).

Failure or reluctance to improve the curriculum is motivated by the fact that the Darul Uloom and its administrators are seen as the custodians of authentic Islamic education and not necessarily opposed to modernity. In fact, some see reform as a move towards secularization. They maintain that authentic Islamic education is manifest in its content and in the way it is taught by the founders of Darul Uloom Deoband and its affiliates. In fact, the former vice-chancellor of Deoband, Qasim Nomani said: "Those who want the alternative education should go to the institutions which impart it, but we will be aligned to our original mission." (Qazi 2017:6). They have, however, embraced some modern developments particularly the internet which they have used quite effectively to promote their institutions and to extend their influence globally.

Standards are not achieved because of the lack of adequate experts in various disciplines. Also, carelessness of the students who are often unwilling to work hard. Often, graduates eventually become teachers. So if the institution through its revised syllabus produces excellent graduates, inspired and motivated to research and think, they will be able to inspire their students. (personal opinion from experience. (Sikand 2005: 125). One way to produce experts is to reform the curriculum and thereafter allow for the dedicated and competent student to continue specializing in a specific science. This means that the curriculum should be structured in a way that would cater for two streams of students; 1.) those who desire to become specialist scholars. 2.) those who wish to attain a reasonable understanding of the religion and thereafter move on to join regular schools and other disciplines. (Sikand 2005: 135).

Thus, the reform must be directed to the revision of some of the texts related to theology and Islamic Jurisprudence. The study of theology and other subjects, (according to Noor, Sikand & Bruinessen (2008: 21-37; Harris & Reifield 2006: 270-280), must include:

I. Past and present texts with regard to theological discourse that will deal with some past ideologies like the approach of the Mu'tazilites as well as modern trends like neo-Salafism, existentialism, post-modernism and the concept of causality. Some books on theology were written over 500 years ago and still make reference to Greek philosophy. Often, this not understood by the teacher and the student. Just like Imam al-Ghazali and other scholars mastered Greek philosophy and thereafter they were able to refute it, similarly, scholars today must familiarise themselves with modern ideologies and trends. (Harris & Reifield 2006: 278: Karamali 2017: 7).

II. Modern developments in finance like crypto-currencies along with the inception of Islamic banking and related products within Islamic Jurisprudence and the working of global economies.

III. A fair understanding of the developments in modern medicine and different procedures like cloning.

The branches of knowledge mentioned above are experiencing changes and developments at a rapid pace. Very often the Muslim scholar has to provide an answer or is required to guide a questioner on the validity of financial instruments like derivatives or bitcoin or cloning in modern medicine for example. Thus, there is a need for the scholar to be familiar with these developments as they occur. When a person approaches a Muslim scholar with a query on a certain issue and finds that the scholar is unable to respond or does not understand the question, then very often the questioner loses confidence in the scholars' academic ability and looks elsewhere for a solution.

7.2.3 Reforming and engaging the texts within the Darul Uloom curriculum.

There is a need for more lucid texts because inertia has turned the texts into invaluable monuments of the past. As a result, students lack the ability to engage the classical works of the scholars in order to meet the needs of the modern, changing world. There is a belief that the favourable reception of a text or the good reputation of a scholar is a sign of divine approval. (Moosa 2015: 145). Once the scholar has the notion that the text or the scholar has been divinely

approved, then he/she does not really attempt to understand it, let alone critically engage the text. He/she is content with attaining the blessings from reading the text.

The scope for the interpretation of the texts is very limited and may not necessarily allow for much development. This may be attributed to the students' lack of confidence in the Arabic language and hence he/she avoids engaging any text that was not formerly taught in the Darul Uloom curriculum. Many trends in some way or the other come under the scholastic approach to reading source texts, whether it is the Deobandis, the Barelwis, the Tabligh or the Taliban and ISIS. In these there is a traditionalism that insists on the essential aspects of worship, or on dress codes and on rules for applying Islam that rely on the opinions of scholars that were usually codified between the 8th and 11th centuries. In the case of Deoband, some of these opinions were codified in the 19th century. There is no room for differing or even a re-reading which are often considered to be baseless and unacceptable forms of modernization.

7.2.4 Training students in the art of debate and research

Debate, discussion and research must be encouraged and the teaching of the text must be combined with pragmatic learning. The debates between two classical Spanish Muslim scholars; Ibn Hazm (d. 1064) and al-Baji (d. 1081) were published. These scholars used to meet in the Caliphs palace and engage one another in respectable scholarly debates. A Mauritanian scholar, Muhammad al-Amin al-Shanqiti (d. 1973) authored a book on the etiquette of research and debate. More recently, there is a book authored by a Syrian scholar, Muhammad Abu al-Huda al-Ya'qubi titled: *Ahasn al-Muhadarah fi Adab al-Bahth wa al-Munazharah.* Students must be encouraged to read these and other books beyond the scope of the prescribed syllabus. To aspire to do this, they must acquire the expertise from, and involve, university academics.

While the public schooling system and the universities encourage students to express themselves and give their opinions and articulate their doubts and concerns, the exact opposite is found often in the Darul Ulooms. Here, a student is expected to be quiet and he must listen attentively. The researcher recalls an incident when a student merely asked one of the teachers in a Darul Uloom

if he could be exempt from studying Urdu. The response given was that the student needed to go back to class and not question the wisdom of his teachers in deciding what is taught and how it is taught. There is little or no room for discussion, exchange of ideas or debate. Thus, many young graduates have to cope with a sort of dual personality; that is living the life of the Darul Uloom or assimilating with their cultures and their societies.

7.2.5 The need for modern knowledge in the Darul Uloom.

The absence of modern knowledge results in intellectual deficits. A theologian with a deep understanding of history, science, medicine, or socio-biology will appreciate the development and evolution of values formed within religious systems and discourses. Complexity and the interweaving of disciplines mark the world of knowledge today. (Moosa 2015: 78).

Teachers and students need to be more adequately prepared to contribute towards nation building and the development of the society they live in and should therefore possess the necessary skills and knowledge that will enable them to function in that role. (Hisham, Rufai & Mohd Noor 2011: 106).

In this regard, the direct impact of the Darul Ulooms on Muslim socio-politico involvement in South Africa is limited. There is a limited interaction that is through the Tabligh Jamat, the Jamiat and personal connections of individual scholars. The involvement by the scholars would certainly impact on important aspects like the legislation around the recognition of Muslim marriages and subsequently on the application of the Islamic laws of inheritance. (Reetz 2016: 97).

7.2.6 Recognition and accreditation of the Darul Uloom certificate.

To date there is no formal recognition by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) of the Darul Uloom certificate in South Africa. (Reetz 2016: 89). The administrators of the Darul Ulooms are not keen on pursuing this, because they regard themselves as fulfilling a different role in the community. They regard themselves as fulfilling a purely religious role, guiding and educating the Muslim community about their faith. This, they maintain does not require any accreditation by any non-Muslim organization. The criteria by which the Islamic educational

institutions, in particular the Darul Ulooms are measured and assessed are different from those used to measure western educational institutions. It must be noted that there are individual graduates from the different Darul Ulooms wo have went on to pursue post-graduate studies at various universities. In addition, the International Peace University (IPSA) in Cape Town offers an accredited program. This is not a traditional Darul Uloom. The Darul Uloom run under the auspices of the Council of Muslim Theologians (Jamiatul Ulama) has made strides by encouraging its students to enrol for a university program. Their Darul Uloom certificate has still not been accredited

Western paradigm measures Islamic movements and educational institutions against expectations of the promotion of economic development, social advancement and liberal democracy. While the Darul Ulooms and similar institutions rely on their own perspectives based on their own objectives, which is primarily to acquire the pleasure of the Creator and thereafter serve the religion. Western analysts rarely see changes in these institutions as relevant. Likewise, the Darul Ulooms regard any changes in western-based institutions as merely motivated by the desire to succeed financially in the world. (Noor, Sikand & Bruinessen 2008: 71-72).

Thus, the Darul Ulooms are not training individuals for the job market. Perhaps the Darul Ulooms could introduce vocational subjects and practical training which will promote financial independence of the scholars. There is a need for more effective usage of Waqf for educational development. The Darul Ulooms may have to consider options of Open and Distant learning. (Basheer 2013: 7-8).

Many graduates from these Darul Ulooms cannot work in any career other than Islamic Studies educators or imams. Serving as Islamic Studies educators is also somewhat restricted because the Islamic Schools will prefer an educator who has a teaching qualification which is registered with the relevant authority in the country like the South African Council of Educators (SACE). Therefore, if the certificate is recognized by state universities, this could encourage graduates to pursue their studies in other fields and make a greater impact on society. This will contribute towards the professionalization of the Muslim scholar. (Haron 2014: 12-13).

A recognized certificate will also afford graduates the opportunity to complete a teaching qualification and thereby serve as registered and approved educators. This will also help decrease the tension and disjoint between western university-educated individuals and madrasa-educated

scholars. Scholars could acquire post-graduate qualifications in education and thereby provide an important service to the education sector in South Africa. Mufti Taqi Uthmani who is a contemporary Deobandi scholar has managed to combine traditional Islamic education with 'modern' knowledge. He holds various degrees and even served as a High Court Judge in Pakistan. He is active in many Islamic financial institutions all over the world. (Hefner 2007: 80).

Many find it frustrating to communicate with the scholars and struggle to make them understand that a contemporary context requires a different literacy such as knowledge of the humanities, social sciences, politics and science to produce a competent theologian. (Moosa 2015: 275).

These are similar problems to those identified within the *mahdarah* in Mauritania which have been discussed in Chapter. 3.5 of this research. Some of these problems include the fact that the teachers in the *mahdarah* were not remunerated, the certificate was not accredited, modern schooling provided the opportunity to more career options than the *mahdarah*, the absence of modern knowledge and the emphasis on memorization without understanding the context. The Darul Ulooms must address the real world benefits which refers to how its graduates can make an impact and what the needs of the community are, as well the salary discrepancies. Many students come from poor families and employment is a reality. Thus, if the salary discrepancies and the relevance of the scholars to the real world is reviewed, it could play a major role in empowering the community under the leadership of the scholars who will be financially independent. (Noor, Sikand & Bruinessen 2008: 48).

7.3 An analysis of the current curriculum within the Darul Ulooms

Before actually presenting the specific recommendations for reforming the Darul Uloom curriculum it is essential that there is an understanding of the current curriculum. The South African Darul Ulooms have generally moved away from the Deoband course that is taught over eight years and have thus adopted a six or seven-year course. At one stage, the Deoband syllabus included 28 subjects and almost 100 books. In around 1995, the institution introduced an Urdu/Persian syllabus and an extensive 8-year Arabic program. (Sikand 2005: 97). The Darul Ulooms in South Africa have introduced a one-year bridging course which is aimed at students who perhaps have no prior knowledge of the recitation of the Quran in Arabic and other basic

essentials. While, in the case of the Darul Ulooms in Azaadville and Lenasia, this bridging course is also used to teach some basics of the Urdu Language that would include reading and writing skills.

In Newcastle, the average teaching time is about 6 hours daily and classes are conducted in English with a few lessons conducted in Arabic. The first year is primarily focused on the Arabic language with lessons dedicated to grammar, etymology, comprehension and some Arabic conversation. There is some time allocated to the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and some to the rules of reciting the Quran (*tajwid*).
As the students' progress into the second year and the subsequent years, there is less focus on Arabic grammar and etymology. However, rhetoric and some prosody are introduced in the 4th year.

The students are introduced to Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) of the Hanafi School in the 2nd year, some Hadith and the translation of the meanings of the Quran from Arabic into English.
The teaching of Islamic Jurisprudence continues until the 5th year with various other classical texts being introduced which are meant for gradual progression in the knowledge. So, the students' first exposure is to *fiqh* is a book titled: *Nur al-Idah* by al-Shurunbulali (d. 1658) and then *Mukhtasar al-Quduri* by Ahmad al-Quduri (d. 1627), thereafter *al-Ikhtiyar* by Abdullah al-Mousili (d. 1284) which is followed by *al-Hidayah* by al-Marghaynani (d. 1782). These are all texts in the Hanafi School whose founder died in 767. Over the years, the institution has introduced texts in the Shafi School of Islamic Jurisprudence to accommodate the students from the Cape and the foreign students. In 2007, it even began teaching some Maliki *fiqh*. (Sayed 2010: 60-65).

From the 2nd year, Hadith is also introduced which continues until the 6th and final year during which the students are expected to complete four of the six canonical works of Hadith; *Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abi Dawud* and *Sunan al-Tirmidhi* and selected chapters from the remaining two books, namely; *Sunan Ibn Majah* and *Sunan al-Nasai* and *a* selection from *al-Muwatta.*

The Arabic reader and the translation of the meanings of the Quran continues while the students are exposed to the Islamic laws of inheritance.

In the 4th year the students are taught Islamic Theology (*aqidah*) based on the book titled: *Fiqh al-Akbar* and *Sharh al-Aqa'id al-Nasafiyah by al-Taftazani* (d. 1390), Islamic History with specific focus on the period of the four rightly guided Caliphs after Prophet Muhammad. In the 4th year the students study the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence with specific emphasis on the book titled: *al-Wajiz* by a contemporary scholar, Dr. Wahbah al-Zuhayli (d. 2015) and also some exposure to the other religions. The classical Hadith work known as *al-Mishkat* by al-Khatib al-Tabrizi (d. 1340) is taught in the 4th and 5th years.
The principles that deal with Hadith terminology and the sciences of the Quran are taught in the 5th year when a classical Tafsir known as *al-Jalalayn* is also taught.
(www.darululoomnewcastle.co.za/course-syllabus/).

In the Darul Ulooms in the Johannesburg region, the 1st year of the 7 years is dedicated to teaching Urdu and some basic essentials including some readers in Urdu. This year is a preparatory year for the rest of the course.
The 2nd year concentrates on Arabic Grammar, etymology, syntax, and literature. These subjects are all taught through the Urdu medium. The students are taught basic *fiqh,* also through the Urdu medium. They are taught some basic Persian and some texts on the rules regarding the correct recitation of the Quran (*tajwid*).

In the 3rd year they continue with some Arabic Grammar, syntax, etymology and *tajwid*. The students are introduced to some exegesis of the Quran (*tafsir*) and *Mukhtasar al-Quduri* in *fiqh*. They are taught some of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad and some logic.
The 4th year sees a continuation of *tafsir*, Arabic literature, syntax, *tajwid* and *fiqh* but a different text titled as *Kanz al-Daqa'iq* by Abu al-Barakat al-Nasafi (d. 1310). The laws of Islamic Inheritance are introduced along with the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence which is based on the book *Usul al-Shashi*.

In the 5th year, *tafsir* continues along with the Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence with focus on a different text known as *Nur al-Anwar* by Mulla Jiyun (d. 1715) and *tajwid*. *Al-Hidayah* by al-Marghaynani (d. 1782) is introduced as the text in *fiqh*. The new subjects are rhetoric, Islamic theology (*aqidah*), the Principles of *tafsir* and some of the rules on the modes of recitation of the Quran.
In the 6th year, the students study the classical work on *tafsir* known as *al-Jalalayn*, a classical Hadith work known as *al-Mishkat* with a continuation of *al-Hidayah*. They are introduced to the principles and terminology of Hadith.
The final year is dedicated to a reading and teaching of the six canonical books of Hadith including *al-Muwatta* and *Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar*. (www.duz.co.za/index.php/general-information/courses).

The above, when compared with the curriculum at Darul Uloom Deoband, is very similar. However, due to the lengthier duration of the course they have added a few more subjects. The subject logic is taught from the 1st to the 5th year. The similar *fiqh* books are taught with the inclusion of *Sharh al-Wiqayah* by Ali ibn Sultan al-Qari (d. 1605). There are extra works dedicated to teach Arabic Literature, poetry and the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence which is taught in the 4th, 5th and 6th years. There are different books taught to strengthen the Arabic literature and understanding from the 1st year until the 6th year. Islamic inheritance and an introduction to other sects and ideologies in Islam is introduced in the 7th year. The principles of *tafsir* and *hadith* are taught in the 6th and 7th years respectively. Some philosophy is taught in the 6th year. The six canonical books of Hadith, along with the *Muwatta* by Imam Malik (d. 795), *Sharh Ma'ani al-Athar* by Abu Ja'far al-Tahawi (d. 933) and *al-Shama'il* are taught completely in the 8th year. (www.darululoom-deoband.com).

When the curriculums of the three Darul Ulooms mentioned above are compared, it is clear that the broader overall structure of the curriculum is the same. The two South African institutions have less content in some subjects because of the course being shortened to six years. The curriculum for Islamic Jurisprudence has common books that are taught with one or two additions in the respective institutions. All are primarily focused on teaching the Hanafi School with a great emphasis on *al-Hidayah*. Like many of the older fiqh books, this book also deals

with the debates within a respective fiqh school. These debates ensured that the best positions within a school would be followed by the masses. The different commentaries written on al-*Hidayah* kept the scholars engaged and also ensured that the respective schools' extrapolation of laws to newsituations would always be of the highest quality. This is an excellent book that covers sections on worship, marriage, divorce, finance and business and inheritance. About a quarter of the book is dedicated to matters of worship, while the remaining three-quarters of the book is dedicated to marriage, divorce and financial transactions, government and the judiciary. (Karamali 2017: 24-25). It provides very few guidelines on government and judicial matters. This is understandable because governments and the style of governing changes. Thus, some additional work on this topic along with international law and some comparative law must be included. The Darul Uloom in Newcastle has included some Shafi works to accommodate the students who follow that particular School.

It is interesting to note that the Darul Uloom Deoband in India has included the teaching of logic from the 1st to the 5th year. It has also included a more extensive study on Islamic History, the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence and Islamic theology. The South African Darul Ulooms would benefit from the curriculum in Deoband by adding more Islamic History. This would provide useful insight to the student to the rise and fall of nations and the finer details of different civilizations. The Indian scholar, Abul Hasan Ali al-Nadwi (d. 1999) has a useful book analysing the history of the world titled: "What the world lost as a result of the decline of the Muslims" The study of Islamic History should include the development of Islamic scholarship in the different parts of the world. A reading into the evolution of the different Islamic sciences is very important. It helps the student understand how the respective science developed as well as the different approaches and methodologies used by the scholars in writing and studying these subjects and sciences. An example in the subject of Quran exegesis a student will learn about the different methodologies and approaches used by the scholars. The student will familiarise himself with those scholars who concentrated on law in the Quran, while others concentrated on polemics and others on the language of the Quran. This is very useful for a student when he/she eventually studies a particular subject.

However, all three Darul Ulooms have not included in the curriculum any study of the Objectives of the Shariah, any formal study of Sufism, the Islamic approach to politics, anthropology, ethics and reasons for disagreement among the scholars, research methodology and contemporary issues related to finance and medicine.

The formal study of Sufism is interesting because, often the institutions fail to manage the interrelationship between the academic program and Sufism. In other words, are they promoting a madrasa and Sufi hospice (*zawiyah*) or a *zawiyah* within a madrasa? (Harris & Reinfield 2006: 73).

A useful book on the understanding and application of the concept of *maslahah* is the book authored by Dr. Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti (d. 2013). The old fiqh books deal with some issues that may no longer be relevant. This includes discussions on slavery, usage of wells and bartering in business transactions. However, if the approach to teaching fiqh is changed in such a way that the students understand the principles used by the jurists, then they will be equipt and able to utilize these in modern situations. So instead of three or four books in the Hanafi School, it would possibly be more effective if one or two are taught.

It would be very useful if some classical books that deal with comparative *fiqh* are included. These books like *Badai al-Sanai* by al-Kasani (d. 1191) and *Fath al-Qadir* by Ibn al-Hummam (d. 1457). These are acclaimed books within the Hanafi School and engage in academic discussions within a single school and also discuss the views in other schools. This is done with reference to the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence.

These books provide insight into the reasoning and application of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence in deducing Islamic legal verdicts. It helps develop the juristic acumen and provides insight as to how different jurists used proofs and evidences to substantiate their legal verdicts and support their understanding while maintaining their decorum with fellow scholars. The inclusion of *'Ila al-Sunan* by Zafar Uthmani (d. 1974) will help establish the link between the juristic ruling and the evidences from the statements of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. This book is in about 20 volumes, so time may only allow for the teaching of the

two introductory volumes and perhaps selected Hadith from different chapters of the book. (Zaman 2007: 64).

This may be supplemented with a comparative study of the approaches adopted by the scholars in the study of the subject that deals with the 'principles of Islamic Jurisprudence'. The Hanafi scholars adopted an inductive approach through which they identified juristic theories and principles from juristic and legal responses. The Shafi scholars adopted a dedcutice approach that involved deducing the principles from the sources. This approach developed a framework for extracting rulings from the texts. (Ramadan 2009: 44-58). Therefore, if students are exposed to both methodologies and approaches they will graduate with a variety of skills and tools with which they could appreciate the processes, approaches and methodologies used by the jurists and it may enable them to effectively extract verdicts for new issues when they arise. This will provide useful insight into the reasons and the ethics of disagreement among the scholars. It develops the critical-thinking ability.

The Nizami curriculum as well as Deoband allocated much time to the teaching of logic. Logic and dialectics are important in teaching, amongst other things, how to define a legal argument. Logic was used extensively in theology (*kalam*) which often used rational arguments for different tenets of faith. While the classical books on theology provide a sound basis, these books like *Sharh al-Aqa'id al-Nasafiyah* deal with issues related to Greek philosophy. There is a need to address modern ideological trends. For a long time, the Darul Ulooms taught students how to refute and present rebuttals of other ideologies. Very often this breeds hatred.
Dialectics was used in debates on the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*). Logic was used extensively in the discussion on (*kalam*) which used rational arguments in matters of faith. (Karamali 2017: 6). The principles of Islamic Jurisprudence which incorporates (*kalam*) demonstrates how the accepted sources and evidences in Islam could be used to infer legal rulings. Thus, the combination of logic, *kalam* and *usul al-fiqh* enabled the graduates to provide rulings and also rationally demonstrate how a ruling was indeed the command of Allah.

The discussion and study of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence contains a complex topic that deals with analogy (*qiyas*), particularly on the legal causes ('*illat*) and how it is determined and

then applied in order to extrapolate a new ruling. A large amount of rulings is based on legal causes. In also helps the scholar in situations where different evidences lead to different conclusions. Thus, the Darul Ulooms must reconsider the approach to teaching these subjects. (Karamali 2007: 6-21). It may therefore be more effective to teach two books on the subject with extensive usage of examples and thereafter practical application to be conducted by students. Some scholars like Imam al-Ghazli have written extensively on individual topics in the subject. Al-Ghazali authored a book titled: *Shifa al-Ghalil* that specifically deals with legal causes (‘*illat*).

The subject that deals with the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*usul-fiqh*) demonstrates how the laws are extrapolated from the acceptable evidences in Islam. Many scholars while writing about this subject have discussed the actions of Prophet Muhammad. This discussion could be extended to include the approach and method of dealing with people from other cultures. Once a student has a sound understanding of this, he could apply these principles when faced with any new issue. The Darul Uloom in Newcastle teaches one contemporary text only, while the other Darul Ulooms teach two texts. These texts are good but sometimes difficult for a student to understand because of the style. It is therefore suggested that an approach is followed whereby an introductory text is taught, followed by an intermediate text and thereafter an advanced text. The introductory text could be a modern text in order to provide the student with a good overall understanding. This may be supplemented with a classical text. The reason being that the Darul Uloom students first introduction to the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*) is through a book tited: *Usul al-Shashi*. The style, language and layout of this book is a bit difficult. Some students are resorting to simplified versions of the book. With the result, many students do not understand the subject and fail to see the link between the ‘principles’ and the rulings in Islamic Jurisprudence.

The Darul Uloom curriculum places a great amount of emphasis on the study of Hadith. The student is exposed to thousands of narrations during the course. The study of Hadith generally involves two components: 1). Learning the meanings of the Hadith. 2). Learning about Hadith criticism and the narrators. (Karamali 2017: 18). Perhaps, instead of completing some of the books like *Sunan al-Nisai* and *Sunan Ibn Majah*, the student could be exposed to the methodologies employed by the compilers of Hadith in documenting these narrations and a

wider variety of scholars and commentators who authored commentaries to these books. This develops the students thinking ability and broadens his perspective and understanding because he is exposed to a range of different understandings and interpretations of the Hadith. In this way the student will develop the ability to apply his understanding of the Hadith to various situations that may arise. Some time must be allocated to study modern trends in the field of Hadith.

The Quran is the first and most important source in Islam. It is therefore somewhat surprising to note that not much attention is given to the exegesis of the Quran. While some Darul Ulooms have included a book titled: *Safwat al-Tafasir* by the contemporary scholar, Shaykh Muhammad Ali al-Sabuni, others suffice with simply teaching students the meanings of the words and verses in the formative years. In the latter part of the Darul Uloom curriculum, *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* and *Tafsir al-Baydawi* is taught. It must be noted that *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* is an excellent work. However, it is fairly concise and could therefore be regarded as an introduction to the classical longer books on the subject. Some time must be allocated to familiarise the students with other works on the exegesis of the Quran because different scholars focussed on different aspects in their writing. Some exegesists concentrated on the laws extrapolated from the Quran, while others concentrated on the language and others on matters of theology.

The South African Darul Ulooms must include a more structured program dedicated to teaching research, public speaking and how to present Islam to people of other faiths. This must be done in English because it is the official language of the country and is an international language and the graduates will eventually have to present what they have learnt to the public in a manner that is understood. The teaching of Arabic must be expanded, perhaps to include the memorization of a didactic text dealing with Arabic grammar. This provides the student with a solid foundation and greater confidence in his overall ability to comprehend and navigate around books that were not formerly taught during the Darul Uloom course. This will contribute to more extensive reading. This is an important lesson from the Mauritanian *mahdarah*. A good foundation in the Arabic language along with the figurative expressions and the subtle connotations of words will contribute to the students' appreciation of the discussions in theology and usul al-fiqh and ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the exegesis of the Quran. The theoretical training must be complemented with Arabic poetry. (Karamali 2017: 4, 18).

The Darul Uloom in Deoband has perhaps included some of these in its specialization program during which they have afforded the student the opportunity to study journalism, English literature and computer studies, in addition to specializing in the various Islamic Sciences.

7.4 Themes identified in al-Mawwaq's book that could be useful in reforming the Darul Uloom curriculum.

The book *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din* by al-Mawwaq discusses some themes that are crucial in addressing specific issues related to reforming the curriculum within the Darul Ulooms. These themes have been critically discussed in Chapter 5 and will be presented in this chapter with specific reference to the curriculum in the Darul Ulooms. Specific suggestions will be made that would enhance the curriculum and thereby produce graduates who are more suited to deal with the challenges in the country.

Al-Mawwaq lived and died in Granada, Spain and was an influential person and scholar in the city. He is almost certain to have interacted with people of other faiths in addition to his daily interaction with Muslims. His perspectives are therefore very important especially since his book appears to be broadly discussing the Objectives of the Shariah (*maqasid*) with specific relevance to Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and Sufism.

This is important since a substantial amount of time in the Darul Uloom is dedicated to teaching Islamic Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and the principles of *Fiqh*. There are selected students who, after graduating, pursue an additional one or two-year specialization course during which they are trained as juris-consults (*mufti*).

In addition, the principals of the Darul Ulooms, in particular the one in Azaadville and the other in Lenasia are both promoters of Sufism. Both the principals are regarded as disciples of different Deobandi Sufi shaykhs. Abdul Hamid Ishaq from Azaadville had taken the pledge of fealty with Shaykh Zakariya Kandehlwi and later with Hakim Akhtar (d. 2013). (www.ka.org.za/content/about-hazrat-maulana-shah-abdul-hamid-ishaq). While Shabbir Saloojee of the other Darul Uloom in Lenasia (Zakariya Park) had also taken the pledge with Shaykh Zakariya and thereafter with Mahmud al-Hasan Gangohi (d. 1996).

(www.duz.co.za/indez.php/component/content/article/48-articles/302-biography-of-hazrat-moulana-shabbier-ahmed-saloojee). This is significant in proving that these people are not anti-Sufism as is alleged by some, but rather they subscribe to a Sufi Order and have adopted a 'reformist' approach to Sufism with a Wahhabi bent. Since these institutions are affiliated to Sufism, al-Mawwaq's book will appeal to them even more because he addresses important concepts related to Sufism and the spiritual development of the Muslim individual.

7.4.1 The Objectives (*maqasid*) of the Shariah:

The topic of the Objectives of the Shariah must be introduced as a subject within the Darul Uloom curriculum. It is therefore imperative that a brief introduction to this subject is provided.

The subject deals with the wisdoms behind the rulings, such as enhancing social cohesion, as one of the wisdoms behind charity. These wisdoms also include developing consciousness of God, which is one of the rationales behind regular prayer, fasting and supplications. It also includes the good ends that the law aims to achieve in blocking or opening certain means towards achieving something. Thus, the Islamic ban on intoxicants is aimed to preserve people's minds and souls. When the objectives of the Shariah are understood with reference to protecting people's honour, dignity and property, the Quran's mention of a death penalty as a possible punishment for rape or armed robbery may be appreciated. These objectives also include the body of divine intents and moral concepts upon which the Islamic law is based such as justice, free will and human dignity.

The Objectives of the Shariah are classified according to a number of dimensions which are:

I. Necessities. These are further classified into what 'preserves ones' faith', soul, wealth, mind and offspring. These necessities were considered essential matters for human life and the preservation of these is the objective of any revealed law.
II. Needs. These are what the society requires in order to ensure that the society functions in an optimal way. The absence of these makes life uneasy and difficult. Examples of such needs are the need for people to engage in trade with one another.

III. Luxuries. These refer to those aspects that make life easy and comfortable. This would include the removal of certain types of impurities and the etiquettes of eating and drinking. (Ibn Ashur 1945: 80-85; al-Shatibi 1991: 2/7-9).

The Objectives of the Shariah are closely linked to the notion of the 'common good' (*maslahah*). In recent times it has been used to justify verdicts (plural of *fatwa* is *fatawa*), that are, at times, in contradiction with the clear proofs from the Quran and the Sunnah. One such example is the case with the prohibition of usury (*riba*), which refers to exploitation. Therefore, the scholars must understand the scope of *maslahah* and be able to evaluate the advantages to be derived from applying it in the light of the developments over time and in diverse contexts. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali in his book titled: '*al-Mustasfa min ilm al-usul*' stated that *maslahah* is meant to preserve the Objectives of the Shariah. Thus, whatever ensures the protection of the Objectives is *maslahah* and should be considered, and conversely, whatever goes against it should be avoided. (Ramadan 2004: 38-39).

The Darul Uloom must therefore, include the subject about the Objectives of the Shariah into the curriculum along with the contemporary readings into the subject. These objectives are divided (*maqasid*) into 'general', which are observed throughout the entire body of Islamic law such as the ones mentioned and the newly proposed one such as 'justice'. The 'specific' objectives are those that are observed through a certain chapter of Islamic law, such as the welfare of children in family law and preventing monopoly in financial transactions. And, lastly, the 'partial' objectives which are the 'intents' behind specific scripts or rulings such as discovering the truth in seeking a certain number of witnesses in certain court cases or banning Muslims from storing meat during the Eid festival or at times of need. (Auda 2008: 7-9).

Therefore, the study of the Objectives of the Shariah is crucial in the current Islamic revival and reform as it will enable and assist in making much of what the scholars say contextually relevant. Some of the examples are:

I. To be able to deal with a 'contemporary *ijtihad'*
II. To enable them to differentiate between the means and the ends when pronouncing Islamic verdicts or rulings (*fatwa*).

III. It would assist in in the interpretation of the Quran and the Hadith by identifying the intent behind these verses and narrations.
IV. It may serve as greater source of identifying common ground between the schools of Islamic law.

The process of understanding the texts on the basis of the Objectives of the Shariah is highly demanding both spiritually and intellectually. It requires extensive knowledge of the texts, the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence, the contexts, a comprehensive vision that is allied to specialized skills that will be able to produce an efficient result. The combination of spiritual and intellectual abilities requires perpetual effort, regular self-criticism and the disposition that allows the individual to comprehend the other's point of reference. (Ramadan 2009: 312).

For this, there is a need for the curriculum to blend the works of classical scholars like al-Ghazali (d. 1111), Qarrafi (d. 1285), al-Shatibi (d. 1388) and al-Mawwaq (d. 1492) with the contemporary scholars like Ibn Ashur (d. 1973), Ahmad Raissouni and Abdullah bin Bayyah. These scholars are a combination of the classical scholars who are considered to be pioneers on the subject of the Objectives of the Shariah and the contemporary scholars who have attempted to apply it to our modern context. Some of the contemporary scholars mentioned already along with others like Auda and Karamali offer a fresh approach to Maqasid. This research does not intend to explore the subject of Maqasid in detail, but it rather aims to illustrate al-Mawwaq's achievement by in some way merging the sciences of Sufism and Maqasid.

The Deobandis were never opposed to Sufism. On the contrary, they have seen Sufism as an essential part of a Muslim's moral life. They sought to reorient Sufi practices around an ethics of self-transformation. (Ingram 2018: 20). Their positioning has its roots in early Deobandi thought- it has, however, become especially salient in the recent history, when Deobandis have been on the defensive because of their perceived antipathy to Sufism. (Ingram 2018: 35). There is therefore a need for them to study the Objectives of Sufism as expounded by the prominent Sufi scholars of the past and the subsequent development of the different Sufi Orders. This must include the evolution of Sufism to this day and how it has impacted on people in different ways. Al-Mawwaq discussed important aspects that are often discussed and taught by the Sufi scholars.

These include topics like: 1. The essence of Sufism 2. The role and importance of a person's intention 3. Sufi music and the sojourn of the Sufis 4. Specific aspects related to worship and devotion 5. Backbiting and similar bad characteristics 5. The importance of adhering to different supplications and litanies.

The discussion on the Objectives includes the aspect on differentiating between the means and the end. This may be applied to Sufism and thus prevent many debates and conflicts. The essence of Sufism is to refine ones' character and to direct the individual to Allah. Thus, the remembrance of Allah and the litanies are the means to achieve it. Often, people are preoccupied in debates over whether or not these supplications should be spoken loudly or not. In doing so, they abandon the actual objective and begin labelling one another with derogatory terms. Therefore, the development of the students' characters and spirituality are equally important. (Awwamah 2013: 203, 413). Al-Mawwaq discusses this by citing numerous examples which he uses to guide the scholar. He stated that a person may perpetrate a sin in order to avoid something more serious. For example, a person may speak a lie in order to protect an innocent persons' life. Another example is that of a person who sincerely makes an effort to abandon some sin. The individual may be guilty of listening to obscene music and consuming alcohol. He fights the temptation and tries to avoid drinking alcohol, hoping that perhaps this will help him abstain from listening to the obscene music. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 114, 126). These are key concepts in understanding Sufism.

A sound understanding of the Objectives of Sufism will help place the issue of 'dreams' into proper perspective (see Chapter 5.6.2). The student will be able to ascertain to what extent the 'dreams' can be used as evidence or if the 'dreams' have any significance in his spiritual development.

7.4.2 An approach to knowledge:

The acquisition of knowledge in Islam is not only important but also regarded as an act of worship as is evident from the words of Prophet Muhammad: "Whenever a group of people gather in one of the houses of Allah (mosque) reciting the Book of Allah (Quran), among them and mutually studying it, then peace and serenity descends upon them, they are enveloped by

mercy and enshrouded by angels and Allah mentions them among those in His divine presence." (al-Sijistani 1969: 2/148).

There are instances when graduates from the Darul Ulooms disregard other professions and even discourage students from pursuing other careers. Al-Mawwaq discussed the concept of knowledge and differentiated between the purely religious sciences and other knowledge and professions that are essential in order for creation to survive and society to live and progress. He referred to professions in agriculture and medicine which could be considered as essential. He also referred to other professions that were futile.

The Darul Uloom must approach knowledge in this way where it embraces other professions. This will ensure that the students are not disassociated from the age they live in. (Hefner 2007: 103). This was evident in Spain where Muslim scholars also excelled in the sciences and in architecture. If this is done, there will greater harmony and more cooperation between the Muslim religious scholars and the graduates from other faculties.

The amount of knowledge accumulated especially in the 20th century is notable. The scientific revolution has had consequences that have influenced human behaviour and societies. The internet and social media are some of these developments. These scientific developments have resulted in more specialized fields of knowledge. Thus a Darul Uloom graduate who is a specialist in the texts and the curriculum taught will not be able to assimilate the range of changes because it exceeds their field of expertise. The experimental sciences present explicit and complicated questions to Muslim scholars and jurists. The knowledge acquired in neuroscience, physics and biology have all contributed to these complex questions. The intervention of Fiqh academies could possibly be a solution, but theses academies require accomplished scholars in the traditional Islamic sources and the other fields of knowledge to sit together.

Al-Mawwaq infuses this discussion with the importance of sincere intention, a concept often stressed upon by Muslim scholars and Sufis. The Muslim, engaging in any other profession, is mindful of fulfilling an obligation to the Creator and thereby hopes to serve creation.

There is a need to reintroduce some studies on the rational sciences as long as it does not distract the students from the revealed sciences. The early Hanafi jurists were known for engaging in hypothetical discussions which involved a process of critical thinking and presupposing what would happen in the future. This approach in *fiqh* is closely connected with those who engaged in the study of logic and other rational sciences. By the 9th and 10th CE jurists from the Shafi and Maliki schools also engaged in these hypothetical discussions and the usage of the rational sciences even influenced their approach to writing on the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence (*usul-fiqh*). (Ibn Nujaym 1985: 4/307; al-Hijwi 1954: 353). While this should not be abused, it is beneficial in developing the critical and problem-solving ability within a student. Students may be trained on how to apply the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence along with their understanding of the Objectives of the Shariah to provide solutions to new issues that the community is facing.

7.4.3 Innovations (*bid'ah*)

People are often labelled as innovators in the religion for some view or practice that is generally different from the vast majority of Deobandi scholars. It is for this reason that the Deobandis have been accused of being anti-Sufism and pro-Wahhabi because of their understanding of the concept of innovations (*bid'ah*) in Islam. This stemmed from the 1960's when the Deobandi scholars were involved in a reformist campaign against certain Sufi rituals, particularly of the Barelwi School. The Deobandi-Barelwi contestation is commonly known as the Tablighi-Sunni controversy. (Reetz 2016: 85).

Thus the Darul Uloom curriculum must embrace the understanding of what an innovation is and the distinction between a 'good' and a 'bad' innovation. This approach, which was explained in Chapter 5.6.3 is in line with the vast majority of the Muslim scholars across the globe. The work of Izz al-Din Abd al-Salam titled *Qawa'id al-Anam fi Masalih al-Anam* is a useful book in this regard. It is more embracing of other views and will therefore promote greater tolerance and allow for more dialogue and less conflict. A constricted understanding of what constitutes an innovation in Islam has been the cause of violent outbursts by some radicalized young Muslim scholars.

7.4.4 Concessions in Islamic Jurisprudence:

Post-1994 in South Africa, there have been a number of indigenous South Africans who went to the Darul Ulooms and students from many parts of the world who have arrived in the country eager to memorise the Quran and study the Islamic Sciences at one of the Darul Ulooms. In addition, there are Muslims from other countries who have migrated to South Africa. All of this has presented the scholars with new and more complex questions. Previously, South African Muslims were identified as having followed two of the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence; the Hanafi and the Shafi Schools. However, with the arrival of Muslims from other countries, there are now adherents to all four schools. Therefore, there is a greater need for the scholar to have some knowledge of the opinions within the four schools to provide a solution to the juristic questions posed to them by different individuals, taking into consideration his/her respective school. This requires insight into the workings and the rulings of the other schools of Islamic jurisprudence. A classical book by Ibn Rushd (d. 1199) titled *Bidayat al-Mujtahid* can be used to train students in comparative *fiqh*. Such books help develop the juristic acumen and the ability to reason and apply the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence to different situations. It also provides insight as to how different jurists may deal with a single text, each using it in a different way to extrapolate what will assist him in reaching a verdict or proving his respective view. The students may also be introduced to at least one reliable fiqh book in every School of Islamic Jurisprudence.

The writings and research of contemporary Muslim jurists and members of the International Fiqh Academy and other regional Fiqh academies are useful. It is in these academies where scholars present detailed and thorough research on many new and contemporary juristic matters. Muslim scholars often collaborate with specialists in other disciplines before presenting their verdicts. The resolutions are usually published in journals or are available online. Students must be exposed to these as well.

Al-Mawwaq promotes the idea (see chapter 5.6.1) that the scholar must direct the questioner to that which is the easiest because the more difficult is not necessarily the more correct. The scholar can only do this if and when he is familiar with all the opinions on a given issue. Thus,

there is the need for students at the Darul Uloom to be exposed to multiple views and to expand in their reading beyond the scope of their prescribed texts.

7.4.5 Ethics of Disagreement:

There have been Darul Uloom graduates who regard themselves and their institutions as the only acceptable voice and authority on Islamic matters. Very often these graduates were very critical of anyone who differed with them or even graduated from an institution that was not directly affiliated to Deoband. Initially, the Deobandi critique was against Barelwis, then Mawdudi (d. 1979), then the Ahl al-Hadith, the Salafis, then the Hindus and then other non-Muslims. The strong ideological slant of Deobandi sectarianism has in some-way inspired radical or extremist tendencies. The age of social media has provided people with access to information from different sources. Thus the scholar is faced with many unusual questions and scenarios and some may seem very radical or even un-Islamic. Therefore, there is a genuine need for the Darul Ulooms to dedicate some time to teaching the 'Reasons for Disagreement' and the 'Ethics of Disagreement' among the scholars. The scholars must be taught the link between the principle of Islamic Jurisprudence and the ruling. Two very useful books could be introduced; one deals with the effect of the Hadith on the differences among the jurists. This book is titled: *Athar al-Hadith al-Sharif fi Ikhtilaf al-A'immah al-Fuqaha* authored by Shaykh Muhammad Awwamah. The other deals with the effect of the disagreement among the jurists on the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence. It is titled: *Athar al-Ikhtilaf fi al-Qawa'id al-Usuliyah fi Ikhtilaf al-Fuqaha* and is authored by Dr. Mustafa al-Bugha. Once scholars are familiar with the reasons for the scholarly disagreement, they will appreciate the opposing view. This will contribute towards a more ethical debate and tolerance rather than condemning the one who disagrees. This will result in greater respect for one another and in turn there will be greater co-operation and subsequently more effective leadership for the Muslim community. A young graduate will realize that the view of the Darul Uloom is not the only acceptable view. Scholars from other parts of the world have different perspectives and very often these other perspectives need to be considered because they are more in conformity with the spirit of the Shariah and the South African context, than a view that perhaps originated in India or may have been pronounced a few hundred years ago.

Muslim scholars in the past and present have authored books on the reasons for disagreement and the etiquette of disagreement. One example is a book authored by Shah Waliullah Dehlawi (d. 1762) titled: '*al-Insaf fi bayan asbab al-Ikhtilaf*' whom the Deobandis are indebted to and with whom they identify. More recently there are works authored by Dr. Taha Jabir al-Alwani (d. 2016) and Shaykh Muhammad Awwamah.

7.4.6 Jihad and the oppressive leader:

The Darul Ulooms have often been accused of being breeding grounds for extremist ideas. These accusations are often supported because of the madrasas antiquated ways and its stubborn resistance to modernization. (Noor, Sikand & Bruinessen 2008: 11-14). The reality is that these institutions are not 'terrorist factories' but pious reformist institutions that combine scholarship with a dynamic mobility that has propelled Muslim scholarship across the globe. (Ingram 2018: 30).

However, the Darul Ulooms can allay these concerns that many people have by introducing the subject of Islamic politics and contemporary issues that include democracy and governance. All the verses from the Quran and the statements of Prophet Muhammad that deal with *jihad* and leadership must be studied with due consideration to the discussions presented by the jurists of the four schools of Islamic Jurisprudence and within the framework of the Objectives of the Shariah. It may be useful for the Darul Uloom to expose the students to the development, ideologies and thought of contemporary Islamic Movements like the Muslim Brotherhood and other modern reformist trends.

When this is understood and the scholar knows how to navigate through the changing political climate globally, then perhaps many lives could have been saved and perhaps the emergence of extremist groups like ISIS and Boko Haram could have been avoided. The scholars would have been better equipped to deal with those young men and women who were lured by slogans to migrate from their countries to go and reside in the land of the Caliphate in Iraq and Syria. They would be able to deal with a person who is a self-proclaimed leader of the Muslim world.

The subject would deal with in depth studies of the qualities of the leader and how and when he may be appointed and by whom and the administration of the state. Indeed, circumstances have changed where in the past many Muslim scholars wrote on this topic, while living in lands that were often governed by Muslims or the Muslims were the majority. The principles mentioned by the past scholars that pertain to the state and the citizens are very important and applicable today. Traditional scholars like al-Juwayni (d. 1085) authored '*Ghiyath al-Umam'*, al-Mawardi (d. 1058) who authored *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyah*, the historiographer, Ibn Khaldun (d. 1406) who authored the *Muqaddimah* and in recent times Shaykh Abdul Hayy al-Kettani (d. 1963) authored '*Taratib al-Idariyah'* which are books that deal with the state and the Caliph. These books along with some reading into political science and international relations are essential additions to the curriculum.

The inclusion of political studies would provide the much sought after guidance to the Muslim community of South Africa in the post-apartheid era. There have been lively debates between the Muslim scholars on the question of whether it is possible for them to participate in the political life of the country. Some Darul Uloom graduates refuse any kind of contextualized approach on the basis that the Islamic principles are not open to interpretation. Thus, they deduce that: 1. There are no elections in Islam. 2. A person should not desire or aspire for political office. 3. The democratic system is not an Islamic concept. This understanding is out of context and restrictive and, with the result, the young graduates isolate themselves and disassociate themselves from all relations with their social and political environment in order to live a ritualistic and literalist understanding of the Islamic principles.

This guidance will help in educating the Muslim to make meaningful contributions to the country and thereby to be good citizens. The al-Azhar University in Cairo held a seminar on the Islamic perspective and understanding of citizenship *(fiqh al-muwatanah)* in 2019. These studies will be useful if studied and adapted to the South African context. These studies use the Quran and Sunnah and the writings of the jurists to emphasize on the role of the citizen and what he/she has to contribute towards a better society. The Muslims in South Africa are a minority with a history that dates back to the arrival of Shaykh Yusuf in 1694. Over the years they have contributed to the political, economic and social developments of the country. However, because some scholars

have chosen to isolate themselves from the mainstream and in the involvement of the affairs of the country, this has possibly impacted on the Muslim community. They have been criticized for not being patriotic and are not concerned about the affairs of the country. This subject will address this.

Once the student understands the role of the state and the citizens' rights and responsibilities along with the principles that govern the concept of enjoining good and forbidding evil which have been elucidated by al-Mawwaq, he will be better equipped to deal with issues of corruption and injustice that the state and individuals are often guilty off. This, along with a sound understanding of the concept of jihad as is mentioned in the Quran and the statements of the Prophet as per the directives and guidelines outlined by the Muslim jurists, will diffuse the dissatisfaction with the state before the scholars fall prey to the slogans of radical groups like ISIS. The classical fiqh books have dedicated chapters to jihad and the rules that govern it. This must be supplemented by the works of contemporary Muslim scholars like Muhammad Sa'id Ramadan al-Buti, Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Ali Jumuah. Since al-Mawwaq discusses aspects of fiqh and Sufism, it is necessary that the Sufi understanding of jihad is included in this discourse. Many of the Sufis and other Muslim scholars are of the view that the greater jihad is the effort a person makes in order to suppress one's ego and caprice. Al-Mawwaq chose to remain in Granada at the time when the Spanish Christians were taking over the land.

7.4.7 The consideration for norms and habits in Islamic Jurisprudence:

The Darul Ulooms must include some study of anthropology so that its students are familiar with different cultures and their respective norms. While Islam is a 'religion' and not a culture, any religion finds expression and is interpreted within a culture. Al-Mawwaq affirms this by stating that people's norms and habits with regard to their food and family matters must be considered. They should not be followed in their behaviour and practices that violate the Islamic principles. (al-Mawwaq 2002: 251). This is imperative because there are local indigenous South Africans who have embraced Islam. Very often they are caught between their cultural practices and the interpretation of Islamic texts that they have been exposed to within the Darul Uloom. One example is marriage. In an Islamic marriage contract the groom grants his wife dowry which is an amount that is agreed upon between the couple. It belongs to the wife. Will this take the place

of the lobola which is common in African tradition or not? In the case of lobola, whatever was given belongs to the wife's family. The lobola is costly and if it belongs to the wife's family, does it mean that the groom must grant her dowry in addition to what was already given?

The encompassing character of the message of Islam is its universality. Therefore, a return to the sources (Quran and Sunnah) will allow us to establish a distinction between the religious principles that define the identity of Muslims and the cultural trappings that these principles necessarily take on according to the societies in which the individuals live or have been associated to. In the case of the Darul Ulooms, these principles have often taken on Indian trappings and sometimes blended with Arabic culture. The universality of the principles allows Muslims to live within their national cultures through a process of integration. It must not be that if one culture is identified with Muslim principles, it interferes with adaptation to another context, or it presents itself as the only authentic Muslim approach. Thus, there must be a distinction between the principles that are purely religious that allow the individual Muslim to live in any environment, and the cultures that are a specific way of living out these principles, that have been adapted by various societies. It is difficult, for example, to distinguish between permissible and forbidden art in the West or in a country like South Africa. This is because cultural expressions often blend both types, so it is difficult to draw a line between what is permitted and what is not. Thus, a more comprehensive approach is required. (Ramadan 2004: 78, 219).

Early Muslim scholars were intimately familiar with the environments and the norms and practices of the Muslims and non-Muslims in their societies in which and for which they were required to pronounce legal verdicts and rulings. Thus, they included it as one of the things that ought to be considered in Islamic legal matters as was explained in Chapter 5.6.6. This is one of the reasons that made them so confident and pragmatic. Scholars today can regain this confidence through better knowledge of the world and its complexities.

The world is a global village and, with large numbers of people of different cultures and backgrounds embracing Islam as well as the changing political and economic factors, the result can be seen in millions of people having to leave their own countries in search of employment

and a better life. This process has resulted in many Muslims from various African countries who have settled in South Africa. These migrant Muslims, along with those South African Muslim citizens, now form part of a broader society whose main characteristics are diversity and religious and cultural pluralism. Therefore, there is a need for the scholar to be familiar with the environment and the principles that govern these, so any clashes between cultures, may be avoided. The Darul Ulooms must produce scholars who master the texts that would include the revealed sources and the classical works of the scholars and these graduates must understand the context they find themselves in. Furthermore, understanding the various cultures will foster greater tolerance and better co-existence.

7.4.8 Understanding the Prophet's actions

Chapter 5.6.6 provides some detail from al-Mawwaq's book with examples of how the Prophet Muhammad accommodated other cultures and practices of people who were not Arabs.

The curriculum must include a study of the Prophet's actions and its categories. Very often, Darul Uloom graduates impose certain practices upon people or present it in a manner that would seem that these are obligatory. This is based on their interpretation and understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's actions. The scholars and specialists on the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence like al-Juwayni, al-Zarkashi (d. 1392) and others have categorized the Prophet's actions into various categories: 1. Those actions or practices that were done habitually. If done with the intention of following the Prophet and adhering to his teachings in this regard, then a person will be rewarded; 2. Those actions that were done as acts of worship. In doing these a person must follow the Prophet's example; 3. Those actions that were done as per his human nature or his natural disposition like the movement of the limbs or standing and sitting; 4. Those actions that were permitted exclusively for the Prophet like him fasting continuously for two days. It is essential that the scholar understands which of these are obligatory, which are recommended and which are optional. (al-Zarkashi 1988: 4/176-180; al-Asnawy 1923: 3/17).

The early scholars from the time of the Companions of the Prophet understood the prophet's actions in this way. It is often mentioned that Abdullah ibn Umar rigidly followed the Prophet Muhammad in all his affairs. When he travelled to perform the pilgrimage (*hajj*) he made his

camel kneel at the very same place where the Prophet made his camel kneel. This however was not the practice of all the Companions. There are some actions of the Prophet regarding which the scholars differed. There were some who maintained that these were done instinctively or as per his habit and therefore not recommended, while others maintained that it was done religiously and thus people are recommended to follow his example. An example of this nature is the Prophet's decision to perform *hajj* while mounted on his camel or his decision to enter Makkah through a certain mountain pass. (al-Zarkashi 1988: 4/178).

If the Prophetic actions are presented in this way, it would help in avoiding the situation where many Darul Uloom graduates impose certain practices upon the public under the pretext that they have to follow the way and example of the Prophet to the minutest detail. Sometimes they disregard some people or consider them less religious because of their different approach in dealing with the actions of the Prophet.
This approach and understanding of the Prophetic actions will also contribute towards a better understanding of others and subsequently more tolerance and better cooperation.

7.5 Conclusion

The topics identified in al-Mawwaq's book which are to be used in reforming the deficiencies within the Darul Uloom curriculum are comprehensive and address the knowledge base of the scholar. It also addresses the character and spiritual development of the scholar which is in essence what Sufism aims to achieve. This latter has been inferred from verse: 282 in Surah al-Baqarah "And fear Allah and Allah will teach you." (al-Sagharji 2001: 31).

A friendly critique of the madrasa education is in not acknowledging its inability to provide a broader picture of Islamic ideas and its failure to effect the intellectual transformation of contemporary Muslim societies, especially in the sphere of religious thought. The critique is described as a friendly one because it is not presented by someone antagonistic towards the Darul Ulooms, but rather by someone who believes that the Darul Ulooms have played a major role and can play an even greater and more effective role. The madrasas can offer something of value, provided they are receptive to reform and change and their graduates are effectively educated in skills and knowledge. They are repositories of classical learning and seeds for

intellectual sophistication that might challenge the shallow discourses of fundamentalism and revivalism that often pass as Islam today. (Moosa: 2015: 43).

The proposed reform using the ideas from al-Mawwaq and the general remarks before it and the modernization is in fact the recovery of the authentic holistic Islamic understanding of knowledge that once dominated Spain. If this is done, then the scholars will reclaim their role as spokespersons of Islam at the same time providing them with the means to prosper and the tools with which they can engage and integrate with the rest of the people of this country, thus ensuring a more tolerant society.

The next chapter will conclude this research and also propose some recommendations for higher Islamic education.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

8.1 A summary of the research

The topic of this research is: Translating the work of al-Mawwaq to be used as a primary source to address curriculum deficiencies in the South African Darul Ulooms. The thesis aimed to address the gap and problem statement that concerned the curriculum within the South African Darul Ulooms. These were addressed by using the themes discussed by al-Mawwaq in his book titled: *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din.*

The very notion of reform within the education of the Darul Uloom may be a cause for debate and dispute. Some scholars may regard the idea of reform as an attempt to change Islam. Others resist the idea of reform because they believe that the teachings of Islam are universal and continuous as long as mankind exists. Thus, it is suitable for all times and places.

The basis for 'reform' may be inferred from the Quran and the traditions (*hadith*) of the Prophet Muhammad. The word '*islah'* translated as 'restore', 'repair' and 'reform' is used in the Quran in the context of Prophet Shu'ayb in Surah Hud, verse: 88 "I do not desire to oppose you, and do that which I forbid you to do. I desire nothing but reform (*islah*) as far as I am able."
The Islamic sources, particularly the Hadith contains the word '*tajdid'* which means 'renewal' 'revival' or even 'reform'. The Hadith being referred to is when Prophet Muhammad said: 'Indeed, Allah will send to the Muslim community every hundred years someone who will renew its religion.' (al-Sijistani 1969: 4/180).

The Prophet's statement is very clear that the Muslim community will be guided throughout by scholars who will help it and 'renew' or 'revive' the religion. This renewal does not refer to any change in the fundamentals and the principles of Islam but on the way it is understood and implemented in different times and different contexts. It could also refer to such individuals who will return the community to its pristine teachings and spiritual state whenever they deviate. These 'reformers' or 'revivers' are not necessarily confined to a single place or country. They could be found in different areas based on the religious needs of the specific communities. Thus, reform is crucial for the sustainability of the Muslim community.

In completing this thesis there was some discussion on Islam in Mauritania and its traditional educational institutions known as the *mahdarah* and its scholarship along with the influence of the Sufi Orders that has produced thousands of manuscripts and books. The scholars and books in Mauritania are recognized in the Muslim world for their excellence in the Arabic Language and the Maliki School of Islamic Jurisprudence. It also highlighted the links between Mauritanian scholars and scholars from Morocco and even Spain. This academic and scholarly exchange resulted in al-Mawwaq's book being eventually discovered years later in the collection of a contemporary Mauritanian scholar known as Shaykh al-Khadim. Despite the successes of the *mahdarah*, it too faces challenges in the approach to teaching, the nature of the curriculum and whether it is training Mauritanian youth for the job market. As was mentioned in Chapter: 3.5, the Mauritanian government has undertaken to advance the *mahdarah* in its administration, teaching methodology and in assisting students and teachers there in obtaining some form of recognition for the years spent studying in these institutions.

The researcher read al-Mawwaq's book, *Sanan al-Muhtadin fi Maqamat al-Din* which is in excess of 300 pages and thereafter presented the main ideas and themes in Chapter. 5 of this thesis. Al-Mawwaq is important because any discussion on 'reform' within the Darul Ulooms will not be welcomed by the scholars there. Many of the Darul Uloom scholars are averse to any change and regard the slightest suggestion of 'reform' as an attempt to modernize the teachings of Islam. Others regard the discussion on 'reform' as an idea being promoted by orientalist scholars or Muslim scholars influenced by the West. Others regard the notion of 'reform' as a move away from their Deobandi tradition. Therefore, al-Mawwaq's book is very important because he was a traditionally-trained Muslim scholar who balanced the study of Islamic Jurisprudence and its related sciences along with knowledge and practice of Sufism. In addition, he is not some modern scholar who may have been influenced by some orientalist, but rather a scholar who died about 500 years ago. He lived in a society that bore some similarities with ours in that in Granada at the time, there were Jews and Christians who resided there as well. Hence, the ideas and themes discussed by al-Mawwaq are very relevant to the Muslim community in South Africa who have to interact with adherents of other faiths on a regular basis.

The topics and themes are specifically useful in attempting to enhance and reform the Darul Uloom curriculum. Many of these themes mentioned by him in his book are contentious issues over which the scholars spend hours debating. These debates sometimes result in conflict and disunity among the Muslim scholars which in turn has a negative impact on the general community because they seek guidance from their scholars.

A correct understanding of the topics discussed by al-Mawwaq will contribute towards preparing graduates who are more accomplished and competent in the Islamic Sciences and in the way they deal with those who differ with them. This will contribute towards greater understanding and tolerance between Muslim scholars and the broader community. The legal verdicts (*fatwa*) that these scholars would then pronounce would be more embracing and will reflect a person who understands his/her society. The journey that al-Mawwaq's book underwent, having been authored in Spain and thereafter it reached Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania is a good indication of how scholars exchanged ideas and how vibrant they were as well as how they benefited from one another. In the age of the internet when the world has become a global village, this has become a lot easier, because scholars can communicate with other scholars in any part of the world and share books as well as their research. Similarly, the scholars from the Darul Uloom may be encouraged and motivated by this journey to benefit from fellow Muslim scholars from different parts of the world, even though they may not have any affiliation to Deoband.

Al-Mawwaq discussed various topics that are related to both Islamic Jurisprudence and Sufism that could be broadly incorporated under the subject of 'The Objectives of the Shariah' also known as the *maqasid*. Some of the themes discussed by al-Mawwaq include: 1. Dealing with concessions in Islamic Jurisprudence. 2. Dealing with innovations (*bid'ah*) in matters of religion. 3. Dreams and its implications in Islam. 4. Jihad and the oppressive leader. 5. Sufism with specific focus on the aspects related to music and etiquette of the Sufi. 6. The consideration for norms and habits in Islamic Jurisprudence. 7. The spiritual development of the individual. 8. Some guidelines and etiquettes when enjoining good and forbidding evil.

The rise of Islamic institutions may be attributed to: (Lo & Haron 2016: 26-27).

I. The resilience of the traditional African Muslim educational system that survived the colonial era despite different attempts minimize its influence as was the case of the French in Mauritania with regard to the *mahdarah*.
II. The role of the regional centers of learning such as Timbuktu in Mali, Kayrawan in Tunisia, Shinqit in Mauritania, Qarawiyyin in Fez and al-Azhar in Cairo.
III. The widespread belief among many African Muslims that many Arabic and Islamic departments in post-colonial national universities are too narrow in scope and poorly resourced to accommodate the educational needs of local Muslim communities.
IV. The widespread belief that many Arab and Islamic departments at various universities are dominated by orientalist scholars who may have an anti-Islamic bias.
V. The presence of the global network of the Indian-based Deobandi Islamic revival among Muslim communities in South Africa and their impact in other countries. This impact is through graduates from South African Darul Ulooms who return to other countries to establish similar institutions. The researcher is aware of his own students who have returned to Gambia and Zanzibar where they have established Islamic institutions which are currently engaged in educating the local Muslim communities.
VI. The proliferation of Islamic institutions in the Middle East and neighbouring countries since the Islamic revival in the mid 1980's. This revival together with the oil boom led to a surge in funding for Islamic institutions and for students to study in the Arab countries, who thereafter return to establish their own institutions.

These topics and themes are intended to address the deficiencies in the South African Darul Uloom curriculum. Therefore, it was important to trace the development of higher Islamic education in South Africa with specific reference to the Darul Uloom from the first one established in 1973. Since the Darul Ulooms have been modelled along the Nizami curriculum and implemented in the Darul Uloom in Deoband, India, it was therefore necessary to trace its development and the subsequent changes since its inception in 1866. The Darul Ulooms have produced hundreds of graduates who have served and continue to serve the Muslim community

locally and, in recent years, some have even gone on to have made an impact on Muslim communities internationally.

Could the scholars in the Darul Ulooms in South Africa perhaps develop their own curriculum? Since Islam is a universal religion with a rich scholarly and academic tradition that commenced from the time of the Prophet as was observed throughout this thesis, it is therefore imperative that the institutions remain relevant but also keep in line with practices and approaches of Islamic institutions globally. Thus, there are core aspects of the curriculum that will remain the same regardless of the country. These will include the works studied related to Arabic grammar and the books of Hadith for example. The Darul Ulooms in South Africa could include other works of other scholars or even develop some material that is exclusive to the South African context which could be included in the curriculum. However, the development of material requires qualified scholars who are capable of doing this.

However, the Darul Ulooms must address the challenges in order to remain relevant and in order for the graduates to play a meaningful role within South Africa and to contribute towards a greater degree and sense of tolerance and in doing so dispel the alleged accusations that these institutions have contributed towards radicalism in the form of groups like ISIS and the Taliban.

Suggestions and recommendations were presented as to how some general reforms could be made to the Darul Uloom curriculum and, thereafter, the specific themes identified in al-Mawwaq's book with the aim of transforming the curriculum. The themes in al-Mawwaq's book were identified and then used to address specific areas related to the Darul Uloom curriculum.

These suggested reforms to the curriculum may be presented to scholars and educators at the respective Darul Ulooms with the hope that they may embrace these suggestions and begin the process of reforming the curriculum. In order for these reforms to be implemented effectively, some of the teachers at the Darul Ulooms may have to be empowered with necessary knowledge and skills. This thesis is specifically addressing the deficiencies within the curriculum in South African Darul Ulooms. There are however other aspects or areas within the Darul Ulooms that are in need of reform. These include the administration and management style adopted in these institutions, the process and manner in which they raise funds from donors to maintain the

institution which includes the payment of salaries and the teaching methodology and pedagogy. There is a need for more effective usage of waqf (Islamic endowments).

However, as was mentioned previously, the scholars are averse to anything 'new' or anything that does not have its origins or the approval of the scholars in Darul Uloom Deoband. Sometimes, this is because of the distinction between religious knowledge and worldly or temporal knowledge.
Hence, there is a greater possibility of these suggested reforms being accepted and considered in a new institution. The opportunity has presented itself through the initiatives by some local black African Muslims. They hosted the first South African Black Muslim Conference in Johannesburg in April 2019. It was attended by Black African Muslim scholars and academics from across the country to deal with issues related to the Black Muslim community. Some of the resolutions that were taken at the conference were specifically directed towards the more effective training of indigenous Black African male and female Islamic scholars. The researcher attended the conference and subsequently participated in the follow up meetings to work towards the realization of the indigenization and contextualization of Black Muslim scholars in South Africa. Thus, the recommendations presented here may be used more effectively in this new initiative that will contribute to producing Islamic scholars who have a strong link to the Islamic principles and traditional Islamic scholarship across the world and are relevant to the South African context.

8.2 Recommendations on future research opportunities that result from this research.
This thesis has presented opportunities for research on various other topics and areas that could enhance the Darul Ulooms even more and perhaps contribute to its sustainability. These additional focus areas that require some research and effort could make the Darul Ulooms more effective players in Islamic education globally.

Most West African Muslims have embraced the Arab-Islamic civilization while most Southern Africans have not come into direct contact with it. The western colonial penetration of Africa was greater in the southern part of the continent than the Arab influence. (Lo & Haron 2016: 15)

In the post-9/11 era, scarcity of research or the lack of transparency in any Islamic institution leads to accusations of extremism and fanaticism. Thus, modern Islamic institutions are challenged to adopt the enduring qualities of academic transparency and also of bureaucratic management, financial accountability and record keeping. Another challenge is that most of these institutions are dependent on external donors, mostly from transnational Muslim NGO's. This raises the question of accountability. Are these institutions accountable to the donors? If knowledge production is crucial to reforming Africa's system of higher education, the Islamization of knowledge movement can be detrimental to the production and Africanization of knowledge itself. Islamization is not value-neutral. It adopts the cultural values and specific religious practices of the donor individuals and countries and the developmental agents. (Lo & Haron 2016: 31).

Deobandi graduates saw to the religious needs of the diasporic Muslim communities, taking their place in the vanguard of the revitalization of the religious activities by asserting their Deobandi Muslim identity. This was further accelerated when the Darul Uloom exported itself via the formation of branches globally. (Lo & Haron 2016: 47). With the result, the Darul Ulooms have extended their sphere of influence to various other countries. There are South African graduates who are actively involved in Muslim communities in places like Brazil, Chile and Australia.

If the Darul Ulooms are receptive and welcome the proposed reforms to the curriculum, then the graduates will be more effective in the manner they deal with challenges and the changing environment. These graduates will be effective in South Africa, while those who travel to other countries will be able to adapt to their new environments and tolerate the cultural differences and the different opinions.

This will also inspire the next phase of reform which is in the process of training *muftis*. The *mufti* plays an important role and he pronounces the legal verdict (*fatwa*). In the South African context, every town or locality where there is a reasonable Muslim community has a *mufti*. People approach him with questions ranging from aspects related to the five daily prayers, business and financial related matters, marriage and divorce matters and the dissolution of the deceased's estate. The *fatwa* has two essential aspects: it must first and foremost be founded on

the sources of Islamic law and on the juridical inferences and extractions arrived at by the *mujtahid* scholars and the *fatwa* must also be formulated in the light of the context of life, the environment and the specific situation that justifies it being made, which is in fact its cause. So the *mufti* is a kind of legislator for the Shariah. (Ramadan 2004: 48).

So perhaps this research will contribute towards the establishment of a revised framework and process to train and educate aspiring *muftis*. This will require a structured and effective curriculum that will include the works of classical scholars like *I'lam al-Muwaqqi'in 'an Rabb al-'Alimin* by Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 1350) and *'Uqud Rasm al-Mufti* by Ibn 'Abidin (d. 1836) and the works of contemporary scholars. A number of contemporary Muslim scholars have addressed this in their books. These include Muhammad Taqi Uthmani, who is Pakistani-based Deobandi scholar whose scholarly work is recognized throughout the Muslim world. The other is Abdullah ibn Bayyah, who is a Mauritanian scholar who studied in the traditional *mahdarah* and thereafter was recognized for his expertise as a jurist and like the former has also been involved in the International Fiqh Academy that is based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

The world has changed and all these transformations have serious consequences. But it all happens as if the thinking of Muslim scholars had stalled, particularly in the field of economics and medicine. The phenomenon of globalization is a reality and many study it and perceive its shortcomings but hardly ever offer an alternative, or at least a critical perspective based on the principles of Islam and an understanding of the context. In the meantime, the opposite is happening; the Islamic world has produced economic and financial institutions that exist on the fringes of the prevalent system, the so-called Islamic banking. This system according to some, condones the global system because they do not resist it, instead they choose to work from within it. Observing the world economic order and its injustices objectively is one thing, but coming to terms with it by adapting to it is another. (Ramadan 2004: 175). Al-Mawwaq discussed the different branches of knowledge and he differentiated between the sacred knowledge and the knowledge that is essential for the society to function optimally. He referred to a subject as medicine as something necessary. So, similarly, the world cannot function without economy. The world economy has evolved substantially since the era of al-Mawwaq to a point where we have advanced banking systems, different financial instruments, derivatives and

crypto-currencies. A revised curriculum in the Darul Ulooms could be the catalyst for a dedicated course for students aimed at providing them with a robust understanding of finance and economics. Scholars may be motivated to provide research on the positive and negative aspects of the present Islamic banking institutions and present other alternatives and solutions to avoid another economic crisis.

The next axis of reform is the emergence of a fresh discourse open to feminine perspectives. This may appear to be sexist, but must be understood within the South African Darul Uloom context. The Darul Ulooms do not allow for co-education. Instead they have separate institutions that provide tuition for males and other institutions for females only. The first institution dedicated to educating females was established in 1983 with a syllabus that was not as intensive as that for the males. (Sayed 2010: 34-42). Over the years there have been some developments to the syllabus but in many cases the structure of the curriculum, the administration and even the teaching was conducted by males. Hence, there is a need for reform within the Darul Ulooms for females as well. However, this discourse should be conducted with the involvement and participation of the women. This would require them to study and express themselves more. They would use the scope for interpretation provided by the texts within the framework of the principles of Islamic Jurisprudence and the Objectives of the Shariah and the various opinions of the scholars to construct a discourse on Muslim women. This would include discussion on women's rights, decision-making between couples, issues related to divorce and the custody of children, social involvement and female participation in academic and political debate. Many women are engaged in liberation movements and they promote an 'Islamic feminism' that includes their right to be respected for wearing the hijab and adhering to their Islamic principles. The Darul Ulooms must recognize these changes and adapt and reform their curricula to understand these changes. Those concerned must also reform the education of the existing female Darul Ulooms in the country to address the issues that confront the females and also address the deficiencies within the curriculum for the females. There are useful lessons that may be learnt from the female scholarship in Spain and in Granada in particular as well as in the Mauritanian *mahdarah* where females excelled in different Islamic sciences as well as in the Arabic language.

The chapter dedicated to Mauritania and its scholarly achievements and the manuscript legacy presents another opportunity. Once the Darul Uloom curriculum has been enhanced and the graduates will have greater proficiency in Arabic and in English, specialized departments could be established dedicated to the manuscripts. This would be the South African Muslim's contribution to Thabo Mbeki's African Renaissance. These departments could train graduates in the art of preservation of manuscripts and codicology. This could eventually culminate in graduates editing, annotating and translating these manuscripts and in doing so providing a great service to African scholarship.

We live in the age of specialization where individuals dedicate their time and energy mastering specific areas. Similarly, the Darul Ulooms could possibly offer specialization courses where students spend an additional period mastering a subject along with all classical and contemporary research on the subject. If not, then the administrators or concerned individuals could establish an academy dedicated to research and specialization. It will be essential for such an institution to utilize the skills and expertise of Muslim scholars within the country who have graduated from various Islamic institutions both locally and internationally. This will provide some of the diversity the students need to be exposed to. Such institutions will have to cooperate with international Islamic research centers, Islamic educational institutions of higher learning and *fiqh* academies both in Muslim majority and in Muslim minority countries. The Darul Ulooms could enter into agreements where the graduates undertake exchange programs and spend a period of time in different educational institutions enhancing and developing a specific skill. There is also the possibility of students being assigned to a particular scholar who is renowned for his expertise in a subject. This scholar could mentor the young graduate and thus nurture and develop him into becoming a future specialist in the subject. The Darul Ulooms in South Africa could benefit from the initiatives by the Darul Uloom in Deoband which has over the years introduced various specialization courses. There are opportunities for students in Deoband to study and specialize in journalism, computer studies, English literature, *tafsir*, *hadith* and *fiqh*.

We are currently living through a silent revolution within Muslim communities, where more and more young people are looking for a way to live in harmony with their faith while participating in the societies that are their societies. These Muslims are constructing a 'Muslim personality'

that will soon surprise many of their fellow citizens. They are slowly going through the process of shaping a South African Islam-faithful to the principles of Islam, dressed in Indonesian, Indian, Arab and African cultures. This movement will soon exert considerable influence over the Muslim community in view of globalization. (Ramadan 2004: 4). The competency and relevance of Muslim scholars and their ability to navigate through these changes will greatly determine whether or not this revolution is positive or negative. If the Muslim scholars are adequately prepared to offer the suitable guidance to the youth, then this may just be the catalyst for a positive revolution. However, if the scholars are unable to provide the desired guidance, then the youth will be left to fend for themselves and find their own solutions that may contradict the Islamic principles. When this happens, then the community will be faced with a negative revolution.

The Islamic sciences are the means by which Muslims can protect their faith and live and practise their religion. They are instruments that the scholars use to provide the Muslims with a general understanding and a framework that allows them to remain as Muslims, regardless of their circumstances. In the same way, the environment is a space wherein the Muslim finds the resources for them to be in harmony with their faith. The environment is a means through which an identity may come into being. (Ramadan 2004: 69).

Perhaps all of these could materialize with the establishment of an advanced research academy or think-tank that will take into consideration all of the above. It would also have dedicated scholars to study the lives and thinking of prominent contemporary Muslim scholars and use their experiences and achievements as a foundation for the future. These would include, but is not limited to, scholars like: Shaykh Yusuf of Macassar (d. 1699), Shah Waliullah (d. 1762) and Ibrahim Niyas (d.1975). The research must be published online and forums must be created for new graduates to meet to discuss various aspects that concern the people of South Africa. This academy must have a dedicated group of scholars that will deal with matters of disputes. It must identify specific graduates from Darul Ulooms to continue their education in other fields like economics, politics, social-sciences and medicine. It must have dedicated scholars who deal with projects that are common to the people of South Africa like drug abuse, gender violence, corruption and striving for a better understanding between the people of South Africa.

Bibliography

Arabic

Note: Many of the Mauritanians do not really have surnames, but rather distinguish themselves by their fathers using the word 'wald' which means son of. This is very much the same as the Arabs in other countries do using the word 'ibn' which also means son of. People are more familiar with many scholars in this manner instead of using their real first names. The researcher has considered this in the bibliography.

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