Conclusion

Learning and teaching religion lay at the heart of Islamic civilization. Every Muslim society in the world has founded formal and informal systems to reproduce and disseminate Islamic knowledge. These systems mainly work at two levels. Institutions at the primary and secondary levels function to educate each and every one in the community regarding the essential basic tenets as well as general knowledge of the religion. Institutions at higher levels function to produce the ‘Ulama class, the true religious scholars, who are rendered with the responsibility of guarding sacred knowledge of Islam and sustaining the religious legacy of community through generations. This study is concerned about the latter, the systems that produce the ‘Ulama, their schooling, career, interests, public acceptance and roles in the society. It gives more insight into how the ‘Ulama have since long been attracting immense respect as the guardians of the Islamic religious tradition, and how they become capable of playing a vital role in the society they belong to. The schooling career of, and discourses held by, the ‘Ulama is important in the wake of increased academic and journalistic attention towards the entire idea of Islamic education in the post-9/11 period. The researcher expects that this study can enter to the debates surrounding a dual-faced allegation against Islamic education systems - that it nurtures religious extremism, radicalism and intolerance, and that it is pre-modern and resistant to change.

In order to make the case of ‘Ulama or the traditionalist Islamic scholar who go through a special kind of religious schooling, the researcher took up two similarly-looking traditional systems of Islamic higher learning. By making analytical as well as comparative study of Kerala’s Pallidarss tradition and Java’s Pesantren tradition, the researcher was trying to present some new dimensions to the increasing academic attention towards institutions of Islamic learning. This study advocates the diversity of Islamic educational systems, just like the cultural diversity of individual Muslim communities around the world, and calls for the need to explore these diverse institutions taking into consideration both the local contexts as well as the larger, global contexts.
The study on Pallidarss system of Kerala is part of bid to make the case of Kerala Muslims heard in any standard account of Islam and Muslim communities in the Indian subcontinent. Considered peripheral to Muslim history in South Asia, Kerala Muslims have so far received scant attention in any of the studies on Indian Muslims. The comparison with the Pesantren system in Java, and consequently, with the Islamic culture and religious life of Southeast Asia as well as South Arabia, is part of the bid to claim the position of Kerala Muslims in the historical legacy and scholastic tradition that have been being reconstructed by Indian Ocean Studies and Hadhrami Studies.

**Major Findings of the Study**

The similarities between Kerala and the Southeast Asian nations start from the geographical landscape, and are apparent in as diverse issues as seasonal climates, agricultural habits, plantations to eating and dressing habits. Coming to issues related to Islam and Muslims the similarity starts from the common Hindu-Buddhist past, a point that has played its part in the formation of an individual identity in the Muslim communities of both the places. Those who would explore the Little and Great traditions prevailing in Muslim societies across the world, especially those who live in the peripheral far from the Arab World, and precisely where the Sufi-Scholar missionaries stood with the propagation activities, they can easily find out the cultural colours of the past being existing in their present day setting, but mostly without compromising the essential parts of their great traditions.

The similarities between the two communities can be found in the arrival of Islam, the phases of community formation, the role of Arab settlements in the community formations, and in the exchange of Islamic knowledge and ideas through centuries. A major aspect that was dealt by this thesis is the influence of South India, specifically erstwhile Malabar, in the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia. This is an almost neglected part of historical explorations in both the places. This study claims that answers to the question that ‘who taught them what’ are at the root of similarities evident among Muslim communities in Kerala and Java. It has showed that the influence of Hadhrami Arabs - Sayyid families, Scholarly figures, Sufi missionaries and pious trade groups, and
in several examples personalities and families that embodied more than one of the four category - played a major role in creating answers for the questions of ‘who and what’ in both the places. This influence decided the mode and transformation of reproduction and dissemination of Islamic knowledge there. Consequently, this defined the dynamism of entire Islamic culture, the modes of thoughts, the individual and social behaviors, rites and rituals, the nature of scholars and their students, the characteristic features of Sufi orders, and the entire modifications until the effect of a larger globalization, which has ended any need of physical contacts for being influenced, thanks to the era of sophisticated communication technologies. Because of all these contacts, both Kerala and Java showcases an apt example of adopting an Arab-Islamic Culture that received needed indigenous transformations. The effect of this culture can be seen in many shades of culture at both the places - the style of mosque construction, localized Muslim names, anti-colonial struggle, lasting interest in Sufism and related rituals, both in its learned and popular varieties, like visiting graves, kissing hands, seeking Baraka, the habit of learning the life of pious ancestors, esoteric rituals of reciting Mawlids and Ratibs in groups. The study highlights similarities in many esoteric rituals like the popularity of Haddad Ratib, Java’s Barzanji Mawlid and Kerala’s Manqoos Mawlid, Java’s Dabus and Kerala’s Kuththa Ratib, and the increased attention given to the 12th century reformer Sheikh Muhyiddin Jilani.

The study makes the point that similarities and common scholastic legacy between Kerala and Java are more evident in two traditional religious higher education system developed in both the places and in transformations that are happening in these systems. The two systems show the education career of a traditional Islamic scholar in both the places, put the light on legacy of production and dissemination of Islamic knowledge in these two peripheral non-Arab Muslim societies, which have constantly kept in touch with the mainland and centre of Islamic culture and knowledge. We see four minimum basic elements in a Pesantren - the pondok (dormitories), the mosque, the study of classical Islamic kitab (texts), the Santri (students), and the Kiai (leader). In the Pallidarss also we see the same ingredients. However, instead of a separate lodging facility, the Pallidarss in Kerala utilizes the Masjid itself as the dormitory. Here the difference in Masjid
construction can also be seen. The researcher could not see any storied mosque outside Kerala, other than mosques built outside by Malayali Muslim Diaspora.

Some of the major differences between Pallidarss and Pesantren include; the education in Pallidarss is completely free. The students have nothing to pay. Besides, the resident community and well-wishers often give them Hadya and Sadaqa in cash and kind. In Pesantren, the student has to find out his living expenses, though the education is free for them. In most of the Pesantrens the expense of the food as well as the responsibility of its preparation is upon the students. In the Pallidarss system, it is the Mahallu committee that bears all the expenses and takes all the responsibility of installing and running a Pallidarss. The Mudarris is an employ under them. The committee would pay him, and he has not to think about finding the financial expenses of the Pallidarss. In the Pesantren system it is the Kiai himself responsible for the running and finding expenses of the Pesantren. In many Pesantren villages, the Pesantren Kiai happens to be the richest man, or the elitist person, among all of the residents. In case of Mudarris of Pallidarss, they generally do not be rich people. There are more resemblances than differences among the Pesantren Kiai and Pallidarss Musliyar. Both are very influential people, and they have a very good influence over the common people. Both Kiai and Musliyar dress in an indigenous style. However, the dress of Musliyar and their students are closer to the Arab culture than that of the Kiais. Traditionalist scholars in both the society keep same kind of theological positions in issues they have conflict of opinions with the modernists of their land. The issues being discussed between the modernists and traditionalists are almost same, like the tawassul, istigasa, visitation of qabar, the language of Friday Jumu'a Khutuba, rituals related to death, Mawlid, ratib, etc. To be linked to a working network of 'Ulama, their students and of those who are spiritually related to them is a characteristic of traditional religious higher education system in both the places. The Pesantren/Pallidarss played a key role in consolidating the traditionalist authority and support when both the places witnessed modernization and secularization and the consequent emergence of a number of religious organizations since the onset of 20th century. Striking resemblances emerge when the curriculum and syllabus of Pesantren and Pallidarss are compared. The majority of the Arabic texts known as Kitab
Kuning in Java are known in the Pallidarss milieu of Kerala. Whereas the Javanese scholars authored a number of commentaries, super commentaries, explanatory works and glosses on the major classical Arabic texts in order to make its understanding easy for Pesantren students, Kerala scholars also did the same for Pallidarss and Shari'a colleges there. While some Kerala-borne texts have found places in the syllabus of Pesantren, like Fathul Mu'in and Adkiya, no Indonesian works are found in Kerala system. The approach to the studies of Quran and Hadith and the Usul of both is same in Pesantren and Pallidarss. The Asha'ari- Shafi-Gazali influence in theology, Jurisprudence and Tasawwuf respectively is at the heart of syllabuses at both Pallidarss and Pesantren. In Fiqh, the bigger texts are almost same like fathul mu'in, Mahalli and Tuhfa. In the primary level localized modifications are done, but both based on Shafi Madhhab. The immense care and unending insistence on teaching classical Arabic grammar are common in both the places.

A major difference comes in the Ma'aqulat subjects. While the Pesantren has a very low-profile presence of these subjects, the preeminence of these subjects in the Pallidarss syllabus is obvious. No texts of Mantiq, Falsafa, Falak, Hisab and Kalam are included in a regular syllabus of Pesantren. The entire group of texts known in Kerala Pallidarss in the Ma'aqulat subjects is almost unknown in Pesantren. The conclusion one can reach at regarding this is that the syllabus of Pallidarss curriculum, initiated by Ponnani Makhdum scholars was similar to what it is continued so far in Pesantren of Indonesia. The importance on Fiqh, Ash'ari theology, Ghazalian Tasawwuf and Arabic grammar, in addition to Tafsir (jalalain and Baidawi) and moralistic Hadith was the characteristic of this syllabus. The Kerala Pallidarss syllabus underwent a radical change following the establishment of Vellur's Baqiyat Arabic College and large scale presence of Malayali knowledge-seekers there. Baqiyat was, as we discussed above, inspired by Nizami Syllabus which had its main focus on rational or intellectual sciences flourished in Persian-Arabic Islamic culture, developed and promoted by epochal scholars like Taftazani, Dawwani, Jurjani, and others. The Pesantren did not get that influence upon their syllabus and curriculum. Now the modern Islamic colleges of Kerala that are fast
replacing the traditional *Pallidarss* system has adopted a new approach towards this rational subjects reducing its presence in their syllabi.

Finally, we have seen the new trends in the field of Islamic education being taking place at both the places. The new changes cannot be taken and dealt with in one setting, because one can see a lot of differences in the focus, aim, objective, education philosophy, vision and mission of each new experiment in this field. Majority of the new experiments are based on the objective that the graduates of the religious institutions should not be left out of the mainstream job-market. The impact of job-oriented western education on the religious education system is so rampant that almost everybody in the field has started asking questions like ‘what is the job-value of this subject’, ‘why we should learn that knowledge’, ‘what we can earn with this’, ‘why we should include this fruitless complex text in the curricula’, etc, and most of the experiments go after answering these questions, and end up with a tailor-made syllabus that would produce a good and qualified job-seeker, but never a good, prolific and qualified religious scholar in the genre of the old greats, who were experts in diverse fields of knowledge simultaneously.

While concluding this study, the only realization that the researcher has in mind is that this study makes only a tip and more explorations are needed in this area.