CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION.

The sociological study of Muslims in District Aligarh refers to the study of whole community in its past and present perspective towards social, economical, political and religious fields. In this District there reside Muslims of different shades, castes and tribes. The largest number of Muslims are those whose ancestors embraced Islam during the regime of different Muslim governors appointed in the District. There are Muslim 'Rajas', 'Zamindars' and 'Nababs' who received 'jagirs' in rewards from Muslim rulers. There resides several Muslim families in proper Aligarh as well as in its adjoining areas whose land ownerships were confiscated by the Britishers. There are certain Muslim families whose ancestors during Muslim regime held high positions and their descendants are now leading their days in humility. There live well to do Muslim Rajput families whose ancestors were honoured and decorated by Muslim rulers. The same position they still want to maintain. The social and religious study of different high and lower castes of Muslims reveal that most of them have borrowed different customs from Hinduism. In the light of the preachings of
Islam when different high and lower castes of Muslim have been evaluated there were found among them practices of various superstitions and syncretic believes. The manners and traditions discussed here among Muslims have been traced from the Hinduism, being living since a long among the native communities.

District Aligarh being situated in between the 'Duab' of two famous rivers Ganges and Jamuna, from its earliest days remain the central meeting place of various tribes and nations. From the time of Sultan Mahmood Ghaznavi -997-1130 A.D. down to the accession of Emperor Jahan-gir the immigrant races of Muslims in District Aligarh had developed themselves into an Indianized heterogenous community. The Muslim community, however, presents a sharp contrast to the vast Hindu majority towards religion and certain manners and customs imposed by the Islam. The Muslim community though came into the contact of several dominating sub-castes of Rajputs, e.g. Badgujars, Jadons, Jats, Meos, Chauhans, Gahlots, Bhaps or Bhattis or Jaiswars, but politically and culturally they maintained an exclusiveness towards the old indigenous inhabitants of this area. The Muslims in this particular area enforced its rigidity in ideas and actions, exerted its influence upon the inhabitants traditions and manners. The religion of the old inhabitants of this area equally proved strong. Though Islam moulded the character of the old inhabitants of this area, the inhabitants of this area
equally moulded the character of immigrant Muslims. If we cast light on their language, culture and manners, we can easily mark, the Muslims of this area differ to the Muslims of other parts of India.

Muslims of District Aligarh are the mixture of two types of stocks, one whose ancestors immigrated from foreign countries and made the District as their new homes, the second are those Muslims whose ancestors embraced Islam and are called in local language as 'Nau-Muslims'. The migrated Muslims after some generations mixed into the local converted Muslims and became local in real sense. They support the local people in most of the affairs of life and administration. The local converts as well as foreign Muslims are not now much distinguishable and they comprised as Muslim masses.

The converted Muslims 'Nau-Muslims' are sticked to Islam and do not materially alter their outlook and social position. The change of religion occurred in their own environments and atmosphere. Among them still exists their own superstitions and caste restrictions. Many converted Muslim Rajputs still prefer to designate themselves by their original clan, and add in their names their family prefix, as 'Kunwar'. The 'Lalkhani' converted Muslim Rajputs still relates themselves to the 'Surajvanshi' clan and feel pride being related to the Badgujar's clan. Mostly the 'Nau-Muslim' add in their names 'Shaikh', but the converted Badgujar Rajputs of this District add in their
names 'Khan'. For example Kunwar Ammar Khan, Kunwar Meraj, Ahmad Khan etc. At present in this District there are several old Zamindars and Landlords, they are called as 'Rajas'. About such 'Rajas' once Emperor Jahangir remarked, "The people of this country (Rajaur in Kashmir) were in old times Hindus, and the Landlords are called Rajas. Sultan Firuz Tughlaq made them Mohammadans, but they are still called 'Rajas'. They still have the mark of the time of innocence. One of these is that just as some Hindu women burn themselves along with their husbands (bodies), so these women (the Rajaur Women) are put into the grave along with their (dead) husbands. I heard that recently they put alive into the grave a girl of ten or twelve years along with her (dead) husband, who was of the same age. Also when a daughter is born to a man without means, they put her to death by strangulation. They ally themselves with Hindus, and both give and take girls..... I gave an order that hereafter they should not do such things, and whoever was guilty of them, should be capitally punished." The orders of Emperor Jahangir could not brought much reform in the custom of 'Sutti' as well as 'infanticide'. The same practice among the Rajputs as well as other Hindus continued on during the reign of Mughal Emperors. Emperor Shahjahan also tried to bring reform in District Aligarh towards that end and, brought out strict orders against above practices.
In this District, there found three types of converted Muslims. There is a group of 'Nau-Muslims, who embraced Islam voluntarily coming into the contact of Muslim missionaries. These missionaries were famous and pious Muslims, they played an important role with this group. The shrines of these holy saints still exist in proper Aligarh as well as in its adjoining areas. The second group of these converted Muslims are those who embraced Islam for the sake of worldly benefits. During the reign of Aurangzeb most of the Hindus acquired high posts after embracing Islam. Such converted Mohammedan landlords, Zamindars and Rajas, who still hold big properties in this District, they acquired all being the associates of Emperor as well as having faith in Islam. The third group of those 'Nau-Muslims, about whom it is said that they were forcibly converted by Mughal Officers. They are mostly untouchables and belongs to lower castes. This should be noted that these forcibly converted Hindus returned to Hinduism whenever they got a chance. The fact becomes clear when we


observe the policy of Mughal Emperors towards the indigenous majority communities. By the middle of the 14th century there was a fairly large number of Hindus in Government services. They held highest posts in the revenue and accounts departments rather than army. The Mughal Emperors awarded the highest rank among the Rajput nobility of this Aligarh District. The Hindu higher class was free to profess his religion and to follow its practices, they ever maintained the rule of untouchability and other caste restrictions, even among their converted Muslim relations. The caste differences, pollution and other social and cultural distinctions which still exists is the legacy of the past.

In company of Muslim gentry and nobilities the Hindu majority developed its economic and social conditions. They raised their standard of food, clothings and material goods and began to offer their family members extravagance gifts on the occasions of marriages and births. The Muslims who had the means, were famous for their hospitality and generosity. Their extravagancy in some ways proved disastrous for them. Wealth seldom comes to stay. According to Islamic injunctions the Muslims could not accumulate wealth. The law of inheritance, which requires the distribution of properties, moveable and unmoveable, among the heirs according to a fix proportion was also responsible for their poverty. The doctrine of dependence upon God for
the fulfilment of all needs was positively encouraged by them. These characteristics of Muslims did not influence the Hindu majority, they continued to follow their own traditions.

The natives of this area picked up several new industries which Muslims brought with them. Muslim started to produce goods which would satisfy more and more sophisticated needs and tastes. Towards this end their contribution is regarded as the hallmark of Muslims. They gave the art of utensil making, object of decorations, making ornaments with copper, brass, silver and gold. They produced different designs in textile, and prepared different types of cloths. The tailored clothings became common among the local inhabitants after their establishment in this area. The names of different objects and materials which was not known by the local inhabitants was their original contribution, for example the names of different types of food, sweets, cloths, places and other objects.

The immigrant Muslims generally settled in proper Aligarh as well as in its proper towns. They were habituated of urban life. The development of proper Aligarh city and its adjoining areas took place during the rule of Muslim Governors. They increased the size of the proper town as well as developed several new settlements like 'Mauzats', and 'Kasbats'. The development which took place in Aligarh, helps us to understand that urbanisation can be regarded as
a Muslim contribution for the local inhabitants. They brought in the city several architectural developments. Their contribution towards this end are several masterpieces of mosques and tombs which still exist all over the city, and its adjoining areas. They brought in common public use, stone, bricks and mortar for the construction of their own houses. A visit of the older part of Aligarh or 'Balai Qila' gives the idea of how the new styles of domestic architecture they evolved along with the process of urbanisation, and also how this domestic architecture represents the typical elements of a common life. The Muslim architecture in the proper city is of new style, its arches are quite different to the Hindu architectures. The chief beauty of this style is the elegance with which the cufic and 'Tughra' inscriptions for the surface decoration, minarets are constructed with the bulbs of the domes. The tomb of 'Shaikh Shah Jamal' and other saints in the District as well as the city mosque which is known 'Jama Masjid' are of unique style.

Besides the construction work, Muslim rulers developed various resources and brought developments in other fields. In proper Aligarh as well as its Tehsils they adopted effective measures towards economic resources. They constructed roads, and increased internal peace. Provided different measures towards the protection of people from oppression, plunder and loot during journey on the roads.
They brought into force the Islamic Jurisprudence for the decision of criminal and civil suits. The trial was opened with the praise of God. The Judge was bound to invoke the guidance of Almighty in a set form before pronouncing the sentence. During Mughal Rule there were less speculation and dishonesty among the natives officers. During the regime of Emperor Shah Jahan canals were constructed which were an effective source of irrigation. During the reign of Sher Shah and his successors there were constructed great military high ways. At that time though the roads were not metalled even then there were security arrangement for the travellers against dacoity, arson and loot.

In 17th and 18th centuries the Muslim masses of this area found the English engaging themselves in military and political contests with the Indian Rulers. The English people when made efforts to take the area of this 'Duab' under their hold, the occupant Rajas and Nawabs tried to repel them. The Muslim rulers of this area were against the supremacy of Britishers. There occurred battles on various places in the District. The Muslim Nawabs and Rajas noted that their resources against Britishers were meagre, as Britishers were stronger in moral qualities as a nation as well as had superior intellectual and scientific material power. The passing of Muslim rule into the hands of Britishers means not merely political change but the challenge of a new culture, a new age. Muslims in this District were disunited
due to their family conflicts as well as property disputes. Apart from this there was hatred in between 'Nau-Muslims' and other high castes of Muslims. Over all Muslim of different castes, classes and tribes having differences in faith and practices presented themselves in a disunited front before the alien rulers. They had no courage to resist the political power of English as well as the administration of Western culture. Before the Muslim community of the District there were alternative to stick with the fundamental religious and cultural traditions. Education which was not widespread among them, the younger generation began to learn Western sciences. The Muslim community as well as educated Hindus, had build-up the Hindu-Muslim or Hindustani culture of which they were very proud. The decline of Mughal Empire and the rise of British power had a direct and adverse effect on the economic prosperity, political hegemony and social and cultural dignity, which the Hindus and Muslims had enjoyed for several hundred years. The British rulers ejected the intermediary Muslim nobles and Jagirdars, who used to let out their estates to Hindu farmers. They began to deal with them directly. The British officers to earn their fame among common farmers, made ordinary tenants hereditary landlords under their Permanent Settlement Act of 1793.

Apart from the above the Britishers acquainted people with several modern public amenities. They spread railways all over the District. The effect of this means of
communication has been most remarkable upon the masses. The high caste native Hindus who were expected not to travel by train due to contamination from their meaner fellow passengers, has been discredited by them. The city running water services through pipe-lines was also proved most successful, as it brought many conveniences for the city dwellers. The innovation of railways and city water services caused a modification in the rules of social life and traditional customs both among Hindus and Muslims. The city trade under the changed condition have been revolutionised. The use of telegraph in trade helped in finding out the fluctuating rates of different markets in India. The ancient merchant houses with large store-houses, the old means of communications, e.g. camel carts and bullock-carts disappeared from the area. The middle classes who were in the hands of big traders, began to deal directly with the distant markets and firms. The petty village cloth merchant or corn dealers began to deal directly with the agents in Bombay and Calcutta. The rates of articles became same all over the District. The resources of the District steadily developed by the construction of roads and bridges. In this small District there were appointed officers, their jobs were to attend the public problems as well as to regulate the action of Government property. The Britishers in real sense furnished number of facilities for the masses of this area. They settled the
land disputes, relieved people from the miseries of famine, spread artificial irrigation, established education system and postal system, introduced codified law with due regards of local customs and social wants. They organised medical facilities and sanitation. They put hold upon the corruption and oppression, saved people from unwanted incidents by their civil administration. They developed the concept of self-rule among the masses by establishing local-self government and municipalities

The English people who assisted people towards all affairs of public life, they committed certain blunders. They discredited the feudal Muslim aristocrats and abolished the land lords. Similar was the attitude of Britishers towards the services of the Muslims. They gradually began to remove Muslims and employed in place of them Hindus. The Britishers distrusted upon the old members of the services, who were largely Muslims. The higher and middle classes of Muslim had, to some extent, religious prejudices against the Britishers and their culture but they hated them mostly because they regarded them as usurpers, who were destroying the Muslim Empire to which they served from generations as well as they were likely to destroy the Muslim culture. Towards this campaign the Britishers built up a gang of Hindu conspirators in their support. The hatred among the Muslims day by day increased due to the various religious, economic,
cultural and social motives. They regarded English as the enemies of Islam. They maintained that the English education would by itself a means in spreading Christianity. This is fact that the British Government encouraged Christianity. 

The Britishers received the 'Diwani' rules from Mughal Emperors on the condition that they would maintain the Islamic Judicial system. As soon as they found themselves powerful enough, put an end to all religious tribunals and established civil courts in which all the higher officials were Britishers and the lower officers were Hindus. This hurt the economic interest of Muslim 'Ulemas', 'Kazis' and 'Muftis', who found themselves out of work. The teachers of 'Madarsas', who were engaged to impart religious education were abolished. At the same time the deplorable condition of the masses, specially of the cultivators and artisans, under the British regime was economically disastrous and emotionally distressing. The 'Ulemas' as well as higher and middle class of Muslims, who were associated with the Royal Court had close contact with the common people being their religious teachers and guides and had sympathy with them as their brothers-in-faith. The independant 'Ulemas', who were associated with the puritanic reform movements, were bitter enemies of the British Government. From the social point of view Muslims of this District had a bitter grievance against the foreign rulers because they regarded them as an inferior race and avoided social contacts with them. The secular character of British Administrators, the Muslims
maintained it as irreligious. The high standard of living, Muslims condemned as vain and wasteful. The easy social relations between men and women appeared to them to be immoral.

The above repercussions on the part of higher and middle classes of Muslims was one of the forced submission, and the part of 'Ulemas' and the masses one of bitter resentment and hostility. Before 1857 there started a struggle for the liberation of India from the clutches of Britishers. This unrest took the shape of the revolt in 1857. In this revolt there took part, by Hindus and Muslims equally together with chiefs and rulers of the states. The participation of Muslim 'Ulemas' and other masses developed into a religious fervor, and turned into a powerful movement. The British officers from the beginning were against the Muslims, therefore they showed their doubt regarding 'MUTINY' upon the Muslims. In revenge of the same they hanged thousands of Muslims even on the slightest suspicion of being implicated in the movement. They confiscated the 'Jagirs' and other properties of many Muslims. Besides this, they replaced Muslims by Hindus on their cultivable lands as well as Government services. After the Mutiny the new policy of Government threaten to ruin the higher and middle classes of Muslims and caused upon them great distress.

The future of Muslims became dark without any ray of hope. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, a man of high intellect
and moral stature was the great admirer of Britishers and western culture. For him the hatred between English and Muslim was a matter of great distress. After the revolt of 1857 he assessed the future of Muslims absolutely dark. First he made up his mind to leave India, but he could not do so due to his moral conscience. He decided next to remain in India to guide and help his people 'Qaum', through that terrible crisis. He drew up a comprehensive plan to save the Muslims from material and spiritual ruin. He tried his best effort to create reconcilitation between Indian Muslims and the Britishers. This was his most important mission. He wrote several articles in which he insisted upon Muslims to dine and sit with the English people, Muslim can use their utensils and even eat flesh of animals slaughtered by them. Towards this end he wrote thought-provoking articles in his journal 'Tahzibul-Akhlaq', and a number of major and minor religious matters. Next effort of Sir Syed Ahmad was to dispel the prejudice of Muslims related to higher and middle classes against the English language, modern science and western culture. He felt that by learning and acquiring as well as by serving upon higher posts in Government, Muslim can enjoy more or less status as they had during the Mughal Empire. He took first step towards this end in 1862, set up an organisation under the name of 'Scientific Society'. The society's job was to translate scientific and historical works from English to Urdu and to publish them, that Hindus
and Muslims both may become familiar with the Western Sciences and may appreciate its values. His great achievement towards this end was the foundation of the college at Aligarh. The college was his focal point for the reform and progress of Muslims and Hindus both. The foundation of college was the turning point in Sir Syed's life. He was opposed by Muslim 'Ulema', the masses, the people of his own class as well as by many narrow minded Englishmen. Yet with the help of some enlighten Muslims, broad minded Englishmen and Hindus, he became successful. Among educated Muslims there developed the sense of understanding about English people as well as about their institutions. The British rulers when realised the attitude of educated Muslims and found them realistic towards themselves, they extended whole hearted cooperation with them. The Government according to this new social change, changed its policy. It managed to win over the higher and middle classes of Muslims by awarding them a substantial share in higher education and Government services. The Muslims when found their sons appointed on higher posts, accepted Sir Syed Ahmad Khan as their leader, through them they could easily secure the goodwill of the Government. Sir Syed's heroic efforts within a very limited time made Aligarh College a model of the time. The college brought much emphasis on the physical and moral development of the young students as well as on their intellectual training.

English people though did much with the country
as well as with the people but could not succeed in exciting any ardent feeling of devotion to their rule. The educated and sensible people were of the opinion that English Government was meant only for that days, a constitution on popular basis was out of the question. Each classes of the various communities had its special grievances. The nobility had the feeling that they were excluded not only from their occupations but also from military services. They disapproved the British law of impartiality which abolished the traditional distinction between the gentlemen and the menials and allowed the menials to drag a 'Nawab' or 'Raja' before the ordinary court. The middle classes who approved the British rules, were equally against their restrictions. They joined the camps of Nawabs and Rajas towards destesting the educated interlopers. Business though spread and became much popular but the traders even showed their discontentment. At that time it was not possible to make a large fortune in a short time. The business class raised objection against direct taxation and the income taxes. The town artizans and labourers found their handicrafts less remunerrated because they had to compete with machine made goods. The English regime was much liked by the ordinary villagers. On one side they became the owner of the land and on the other side had no sense of modern
amenities like sanitation, medical aid etc. Towards the clearance of revenue, they were granted reasonable protection for life and property. They were fairly contented. They were secured against the moneylenders as well as there were special instruction to the local officers regarding the sale and mortgage of their ancestral lands.

In District Aligarh the greater number of population is of Hindus, then comes Muslims, next to them are other castes like Jains, Christians, Sikhs etc. In this district there is no uniform population of Muslims, The population of Muslims in greater number is in 'Upper Duab'. It is due to the nearness of Delhi. In proper Aligarh Muslims are found in greater number in comparison to its other parts. On examination of the social organisation and hierarchical order of the Muslims, it is marked, that it resembles with the caste system among Hindus. The whole community is broken into different castes, endogamous units, over and above of it there is hierarchical organisation. Among different castes there is allocation of functions. The rituals and method of worship resembles to the majority communities. There is concept of pollution on the basis of occupation, this fixes the position of various units in the social scale as high, low, clean or unclean.

Among the different castes of Muslims at the apex are Syeds. They are found mainly in Tehsil Atrauli and other part of the district. They are mainly engaged in Government
and religious services. Their educational standard is high and economically they are better than other castes of Muslims. They are considered to be the descendant of the early Islamic nobility of Mecca and Madina. This respect Syeds expect from the Muslims of different castes, but at present no due consideration is given towards them. At present in this District Syeds are divided into two sects, Shia and Sunni. They do not intermarry. Besides this, Syeds are known by other names like 'Baghdadi', 'Tabrezi', 'Jafri', 'Siddiqui', 'Rizvi', 'Raza' etc. Apart from this there are some syeds subdivisions, who do not directly relates themselves to the Prophet's family, they claim to be the spiritual descendant of Syed saints as 'Chishti', 'Jalali' and 'Qadriya' etc.

The Shaikhs rank second on the social scale. The term Shaikh denotes pious spiritual guides and religious teachers but in India it denotes a distinct group of people. The Shaikhs of District Aligarh narrate different stories regarding their origin. Some of them who hold high positions say to be the descendant from early Muslims of Mecca and Madina. During the time Prophet Mohammad there were two sections of Shaikhs, (i) the Muslims resident of Mecca who gave shelter to Prophet and their fellow immigrants were known as 'Ansars'. (ii) the other Muslim citizens of Mecca who migrated to Madina with Prophet were called (Muhajrin). Thus each Shaikh in Aligarh traces his origin from the above two sections. There are other Shaikhs who relate themselves
to the four 'Khalifas' and their names are set accordingly as 'Usmani', 'Qureshi', 'Siddiqui', etc. Apart from this the greater number of Shaikhs are those who embraced Islam. They say themselves 'Shaikh' as they embraced Islam under some reputed Shaikh or 'Sufi' or 'Kazi'. The study of the individual castes of Muslims in Aligarh makes clear that there have occurred changes among lower to higher castes. There are several examples of Muslim traders, Government employees and other industry owners. Since their socio-economic status raised, they began to add in their names the prefix of 'Shaikh Siddiqui' and 'Syed', who originally either were 'Bhishti' or 'Bisati' by caste. There are numerous instances of converted Rajputs, who have added in their names the title of 'Khan' and claim to be a Pathan descendant. The butchers (Qassabs) of Mohalla Upper Cote in Aligarh, claim to be Qureshi descendant of an Arab tribe and say themselves 'Shaikh'. The claim of such pseudo 'Shaikhs' and 'Pathans' do mean their assimilation in pure 'Shaikh' and 'Syeds' or 'Pathans'. Though there has passed one or two generations, even then there is going great tussel between these castes in proper Aligarh. The basic cause of the rift is, the lower castes of Muslims who possess themselves as pure 'Syed', 'shaikh' and 'Pathan' have gradually given up their traditional practices and customs. They have acquired the customs and prectices of higher castes. Their women now
come out in 'Burqa' (viel). Their daughters and sons have joined University and live like the sons of higher castes of Muslims. They have started to perform all religious rites such as marriages and funerals according to the higher castes of Muslims. The census report 1861 and 1891 furnishes an elaborate lists of all such lower castes, but at present due to their merger into the higher classes of Muslims, their correct figure is not traceable. The 'Julahas' (Weavers) now claim as 'Shaikh Momin' or 'Shaikh Ansari', the 'Mirasi' (Musicians) claim to be 'Qurreshi', the 'Qassab' (Butchers) claim to be 'Shaikh Qurreshi', the 'Bhishtis' (Watermen) claim to be 'Abbasi'.

The third in social order comes the 'Mughal' and (Pathan'), both are equal in social status. About 'Pathans' it is said they came from Afghanistan or from Pashto speaking tribes of North West Frontier Provinces. 'Pathans' are settled all over the district, and divided into four major sections as 'Yusufzai', 'Lodi', 'Ghauri', 'Sherwani'. Within these divisions there are further sub divisions into smaller sections, who say themselves 'Ghilzai', 'Mohammadzai', 'Durrani', 'Afridi', 'Bangash', 'Dilzak', 'Khatak' etc. In this group there is also mixture of some lower castes of Muslims, whose origin cannot be traced. Most of them are engaged in Government and private services. Some of them run private businesses. The 'Pathans' residing in villages are cultivators. Education among them is not much wide.
The 'Sherwanis' and 'Lodis' and 'Ghauris' have much progressed in educational fields and have acquired highest posts in Government of India. Most of the 'Sherwanis' are engaged as Professors and teachers in Muslim University Aligarh as well as in other Universities of India.

Nesfield maintains that there is no barrier in marriages among the 'Ashraf' castes like 'Syeds', 'Mughals' and 'Pathans'. He is wrong in this assumption. The rule of endogamy among 'Ashraf' castes are far more strict than those observed by the lower castes of Muslims. The tendency of maintaining the purity of blood among higher castes of Muslims is predominanting. 'Shaikhs' and 'Syeds' specially prefer to marry their sons and daughters within very limited circles. Some time the endogamous circle becomes so narrow that they include only the extended kinship group of one's father and mother which is called 'Kuf'. If a suitable match is not available in the 'Kuf' or within the limited endogamous limits and there is need to establish marriage relationship, they trace a group of equal status. Higher castes Muslims marry their daughter and sons late, but they hesitate to give their daughters in marriage to man of lower caste. A higher caste Muslim feel proud of his superiority and, boasts as, "we can take your daughters, but will never give you our daughters."

There are several major Muslim Rajput septs like
'Bias', 'Badgujars', 'Bhatti', 'Bisan', 'Chauhan', 'Chandel', 'Panwar', 'Rathor' in proper Aligarh as well as in its adjoining areas. Their family traditions and customs are still different than the common Muslim. They are found in greater number in Aligarh District. They do not mix with Muslims of lower occupational castes. They base their position as the old rulers of this district, and maintain that they belong to higher descendants. Therefore they prefer to marry among higher castes of Muslims like 'Syeds' and 'Shaikhs' etc. The Muslims of higher castes abide by their own rules of endogamy, they do not like such marriages. Generally the Muslim Rajputs choose their marriages in their own small circle. They are justified in their stand as during Mughal rule in India, their sons and daughters were married among the Muslim Nobles and Emperors. Sometimes, when they do not find suitable partner within their own group, they prefer to marry among Hindus of equal status. There are several examples in this District, some Rajput families on one side are Muslim and on the other side Hindu. Muslim Rajputs in their customs and observances, still follow some of the Hindu practices. They still abide by the Hindu rules of exogamy and generally do not marry first cousin, either cross or parallel. In some cases they develop marital relationship in distinct degrees, exogamous kin-ship in which marriage is prohibited on both paternal and maternal side. Though they are Muslim but act against Islamic law of marriage.
Islam permits the marriage among near kins, both cross and parallel.

Below the higher castes of Muslims and Rajputs, there resides a number of clean occupational castes, which constitute the bulk population of District Aligarh. They are the descendant of the members of Hindu clean castes who have been converted to Islam from the different castes. Among many occupational castes, there are both Hindu and Muslim sections, such as 'Barhi' (carpenter), (Darzi) tailor, 'Dhobi' (washer), 'Kumhar' (potter), 'Lohar' (blacksmith), 'Nai' or 'Hajam' (barber), 'Teli' (oil presser) etc. All these Hindu and Muslim occupational castes towards business enterprises are united in one. But for social and ceremonial purposes each of them is limited to itself. On the occasion of marriages ceremonial feasts, ritual ceremonies, they act as a separate unit. All the clean occupational castes can be put into three categories (i) castes which are entirely Muslims, their counterpart are quite different to them and are pure Hindu, (ii) castes which have larger section of Muslims than Hindu, (iii) castes which have larger Hindu section than the Muslims. Among each of these categories there found varied type of mixture of Hindu Muslim customs and traditions.

The caste of 'Atishbaz' (firework maker), 'Bhand' (jester), 'bhatyaras' (inn-keeper), 'Bhishti' (water carrier), 'Momin Julaha' (Muslim weaver), 'Mirasi' (Musician), 'Qassab' (butcher) and 'Faqir' (begger) are now entirely Muslim. Their
counterpart Hindu caste do not exist, if there exist, they are known by different names among Hindus. Take for example 'Bhishti', among Hindus their counterpart are known as 'Kahar'. These two differ in all respects. Similar is the case of 'Nai', Faqir etc. Muslim 'Nai' is called as 'Hajjam' and Hindu Faqir is called as 'Harjala'. About 'Bhands' (jester) it is said, they are the descendant of 'Bahrupiyas' among Hindus but W. Crooks contradicts. He maintains that 'Bhands' are inferior than 'Bahrupiyas'. The caste of 'Bahrupiyas' is purely Hindu and have their own traditions and customs. The 'Qassab' (butchers) is purely a Muslim caste, its counterpart caste among Hindus is 'Khatik', which is regarded as depressed class caste. Among Muslims there is still a caste of 'Chikwa'. It resembles to 'Khatik'. It is the only goat meat supplying caste among Muslims. It is a separate Muslim case, 'Chikwa' do not slaughter cows because of the past traditions. The Muslim caste for supplying the beef and cow meat is known as 'Qassab'. There is no proper origin of 'Qassabs' is available. Some say Qassabs are those who formed a separate branch of 'Chikwa'. On slaughter of cow and beef they were outcasted from the 'Chikwa' caste. There is vast difference between the two castes. The 'Chikwa' and the 'Khatik' are guided by their own religious Hindu and Muslim codes.
There are larger section of Hindu and Muslim both among 'Darzi' (tailor), 'Dhuniya' (cotton carder), 'Kabariya' (greengrocer) 'Manihar' (bracelet maker), 'Saikalgarh' (metal sharper) and 'Rangrez' (cloth painter). The caste of tailor is an ancient one known as 'Suji'. The caste is purely occupational, it do not hold the status of a separate caste. It is an occupational case which can be adopted by any person belonging to any caste. 'Kabariyas' caste is still a distinct and corporate caste. Among them Hindu and Muslim customs and traditions are combined. 'Kabariyas' residing in villages belong to Hindu religion and in proper town they profess Islam. William and Nesfield maintain that 'Rangrez' (cloth painters) as a separate caste but it seems that they do not constitute a distinct group which can be called a caste. The profession of cloth painters day by day decreasing on, therefore most of the 'Rangrez' have adopted other professions. There are certain Muslims in the District who are following this old profession.

The caste of 'Dhobi' (laundryman), 'Kumhar' (potter) and 'Teli' (oil pressure) constitute large number of Hindu group than Muslims. All these castes have their own endogamous rules, their own customs for ceremonial observances. 'Dhobi' among Muslims are treated superior than 'Bhangis'. They enjoy social status equal to other castes like 'Nai', 'Chikwa' etc. Prof. Hutton in his book maintain 'Dhobis' as low in the social scale on account their occupation. The case of 'Kumhar' is still endogamous and practice.
many Hindu rites. Muslim potters generally in proper Aligarh are known as 'Kasgar'. Risely considers that 'Teli' (oil pressure) have been recruited from the higher Hindu castes because oil is used by all Hindus for domestic and commercial purposes. According to the traditions of this District, Teli rank quite low in the social hierarchy. They rank slightly higher than the 'Chamars'. The Telis of this District are endogamous and divided into several subdivisions as, 'Bhalim', 'Desi', 'Doasna' etc. They marry in their 'Kul'.

Among Muslim this has been noted that the caste differs from the occupations of the individuals. In this District there are number of 'Darzis' (tailors), 'Kabaryas' (greengrocers) whose caste differs from their occupations. Most of the 'Darzis' belong to higher castes among Muslims but carrying on the occupation of 'Darzi'. Similar is the case of 'Dhobis' and greengrocers. Most of the Muslim of mixed higher castes carrying out the above professions. As the matter is concerned with the caste, it is social unit, it effects its reaction on its members either directly or indirectly in the matters like marriage and social and economical intercourses. An occupational unit on the other hand can be identified with a certain exclusive social group, there is no caste restriction upon its members. The occupational group bear no caste identifications, it is purely united for trade union purposes. On the whole it does not
function as a distinct social unit. In District Aligarh there is a caste of 'Bisati' (general merchant), 'Panwala' (betel seller) etc. such trades are carrying on by these people related to different castes ranking high and low both. In such cases the caste status is not affected.

Among the clean occupational castes it has been noted, as an individual changes his profession, his caste generally vanishes. When he adopts the new profession, there emerges his new caste. Among Muslim Rangrez (cloth printer), 'Bhatyaras' (inn-keepers), there have gradual decline of their social unit. Some time back 'Rangrez' were a distinct caste but the recent census report do not specify 'Rangrez' as a separate caste. From some time back the profession of cloth printers dyers have been reduced considerably. There has opened in the city number of laundry shops, there in, the same work is done. In order to earn their livelihood the cloth printers have had no other choice but to leave the traditional occupation and take up some other work. Similar is the case of 'Atishbaza' some time back it was a distinct social unit, now gradually dis-integrating and vanishing. The same is true with the 'Bhatyaras' (innkeepers). Before the installation of railways and other means of quick transportation, travelling from one place to another was very troublesome. People used to travel in the day and rested at night. At that time there was the provision of inns (sarai) for taking shelter during the night.
journey. From the start of railways, inns generally lost their significance and with the inns 'Bhatyaras' as a social unit disintegrated. There are number of 'Bhatyaras' at present in this District who are engaged in different occupations. Many descendants of Bhatyaras either have opened shops in the towns or they took up the occupation 'Nanbai' (baker). At present in District Aligarh the 'Nanbai' (baker), 'Bawarchi' (cook) and 'Halwai' confectioner) together constitute almost one social unit. The changing socio-economic conditions of the District, during these days, giving birth to some new castes. There are several 'Julahas' (cotton carders) adopting the profession of 'Qassab' (butchers), as the supply of beef day by day increasing on. The 'Faqir' (beggars) who depended upon the traditional profession, now entering into day-labourers because of the deteriorating condition of their old profession.

The Muslim community in Aligarh acquired in due course of time features of the native castes. The Muslim society based upon caste system has created social discrimination. This is against the philosophy of Islam. Islam gives emphasis upon equality and universal brotherhood. Islam discards the distinction based upon linage or occupation. According to Prophet of Islam, every Muslim, irrespective of his rank or his birth is equal in the eye of God. Every Muslim shall be judged and discriminated by God alone.
on the basis of his deeds bad or good. Islam centres around two basic principles. (i) oneness of God - 'Wahdahu-La-Sharik' and (ii) brotherhood among all the believers of 'Allah'. According to Muslims, God is the only creator of this universe and there is no one else to share His glory. Between God and His believers there is no other intervening authority. Every person is equal to every other irrespective to his power and wealth, each shall be judged by Allah in the light of his deeds. The whole structure of Islam coming after into the control of Hinduism became the victim of social discrimination. In this area, though people embraced Islam, yet the idea of Islam, could not be substantially enforced and brought into practice. The idea of equality and brotherhood exists to this day but in practice there have been social grades within the Muslim society. The social segregation in Aligarh led the Muslim social organisation split on the lines of the already established Hindu caste system.

Islam lays stress upon the cultivation of good virtues. It stress upon 'Namaz', 'Roza', 'Haj' and 'Zakat'. Islam is a practical religion, the negation of the fundamental practices is counted as sin. What is right and just must be not only practical but also wholeheartedly propagated. Islam insists upon to earn one's own living by honest seeking. By good deeds and by performing kind services to others, Muslims prepare themselves in advance to enter into the paradise
after inevitable mortal end. They have no superstitions. Islam stress upon great respect and devotion to parents and sons. Similarly the parents as duty bound take care of their children as their means allow to them. To memorise the 'Koran' still regarded as a sacred achievement. The devout of Islam still feel proud of their religion and maintain that 'Salvation' (Nijat) lies only in following the path of Islam. They adhere strictly with the broad features of Islamic injunctions. Those who have firm faith on the religion, observe the fast of 'Ramzan'. They avoid even to shallow the spittle all the day of its continuance. Some rigid Muslims keep fast even on the march and in battle fields, though under such conditions the observance of the fast is optional. The month of 'Ramzan' is regarded as the month of religious purification. Still among Muslims there is found great eagerness for breaking the fast together at the residence of one another, turn by turn. Muslims take part wholeheartedly in offering 'Zakat' (charity). The Muslim who can easily afford the pilgrimage, annually goes to Mecca. The pilgrimage to Mecca annually is an event of importance. Among Muslim still there is found a craze for 'Haj', and each wants to become 'Haji'. Though pilgrimage to Meccas is essential for all Muslims all over the world but under Islamic rules, it is compulsory for those who can afford the journey keeping good health. Besides this, they
are free from all family liabilities. Edward Terry, "praises the religious tenacity of the Muslim community who would rather prefer to die than to eat or drink, which their Islamic law forbids them".

The religion of Islam is a way of life. In it there are fewest number of festivals. In India, in Islam there has cropped up various devices of festivals and feasts. In Islam there are certain feasts which should be celebrated with marked solemnity. Its number are multiplying on in course of time, and its old institutions have gone under modifications. At present in Aligarh as well as elsewhere there are celebrated number of feasts and festivals. Some of them are performed on the occasion of great rejoicing and others on the occasion of solemn recollection and even mournings. The solemn celebration of 'Idul-Azha' or 'Id-i-Qurban' (the feast of sacrifice) takes place on the 19th of 'Zil-Hajja', the twelfth month of the Muslim year. It is the most important Muslim festival. The festival of 'Idul-Fitar' (breaking of the fast) is observed on the 1st 'Shawwal' the tenth Arabic month. It is performed after the long-drawn fast of a whole month of 'Ramzan'. This is a festival of rejoicing and thanks-giving. After 'Idul-Azha', the Muslim community celebrate 'Moharram'. 'Moharram' is celebrated as the anniversary of the martyrdom of Hussain at 'Karbala'. On the 10th of the Muharram, specially the 'Shia' community among Muslims bring out the procession. The
'Sunni' generally keep themselves aloof from Muharram celebration. They regard the procession as heresay 'Biday'. 'Sunni' devote themselves in pious deeds. Some Muslim keep fast and some recite the story of the sufferings of Husain. The 'Shia' conduct 'Majlis', their words stir the whole assembly to lamentation and tears. In District Aligarh, Tehsil Atrauli the procession of Muharram is brought out with great pomp and show. There carried out coffins covered with bows and arrows, 'Alams' in different colours, with which people accompany with sobbings and lamentations. Some 'Shia' in company cut and slash themselves, so that the blood comes out from the several places. On the 14th night of 'Shaban', the eighth month in Muslim calendar year, there is celebrated 'Shah-i-Barat' or 'Lail-ul-Barat', the night of record. On this night it is supposed that lives and fortunes of the mortals for the coming year are fixed and registered in the heaven. The night is celebrated with great merriment. There takes place extensive firework and illumination in the mosques and houses all over Aligarh District. Muslim all over the night wake and depute themselves in prayers. Most of them go to the grave-yards and read 'Fateha' on the graves of their deceased ancestors and relatives. The shrine of Shah Jamal and other saints of the District becomes a distinguishing feature of popular celebration. The Prophet's anniversary day is equally important for the Muslims. It is believed his birth day took
place on the 12th of the third month of 'Rabi-ul-Awwal', and also on the same day he left this world for heavenly abode. Therefore the first twelve days of this month are celebrated by 'Milad Sharif' (the noble birth day) of the great Prophet Mohammad. Besides this there takes place, the anniversary of 'Shaikh Shah Jamal', 'Barchi Bahadur', 'Ambia Aulia' which is celebrated with great pomp and show. At the shrine of these saints there gathers famous 'Qawwals' (singers). On music they sing songs which is liked by all classes of Muslims. There takes place 'Fateha Khuwani' in which well-to-do people of the city contributes for distributing sweets and cooked food to the participants.

The other festivities in the District takes place according to the customs and ceremonies of the Muslims of different classes. They vary according to the localities and notions of particular families, and the social statuses. The birth of a child in almost all families of the Muslims is regarded as the event of great importance. If the issue is male, the joys are unbound. If the male child borns in a rich man's family the feasting banqueting takes place for several days with music and dances. The relations assembles to congratulate the parents of the new-born. Thereafter different feastivities like naming of the child 'Aqiqah', the rite of 'Bismillah' (pronouncing the name of God) takes place with great pomp and show. Thereafter the rite of circumcision 'Khatna' is celebrated with great rejoicings. Fryer says, "They circumcision the foreskin of the male, which
is performed by a barber, at eight years of age, with feasting and carrying the boy about in pomp, with music and great expression of joy". Apart from this, there are celebrated other several ceremonies which are peculiar among different castes and tribes of Muslims in this District.

The marriage ceremony is next eventful celebration. Among all castes of Muslims generally the marriage takes place in early ages, it is maintained as a family affair and the marrying couple have no right to raise any objection in this matter. Traditionally the Muslim boys are not allowed to see the girl before they were lawfully married. The details of marriage ceremonies among Muslims are diverse and complicated. On the day of marriage, the bridegroom is finally dressed and decorated by flowers. The bridegroom in marriage procession starts for the bride's house on horse back, accompanied by his friends and relatives. In the way rejoicings take place with firework and music. On reaching the bride's house the 'Nikah' ceremony takes place. The 'Kazi' or 'Mulla' reads the 'Nikah'. The marriage among Muslims being a contract between the wedding parties, a dowry is settled, which is payable to the bride on demand or in case of divorce. The consent of bride for the same is necessary before the 'Nikah' ceremony. Thereafter, feast takes place and the guests are entertained by songs and dances. Many formalities are performed when the bride is first introduced to the bridegroom after the 'Nikah'
The death among Muslims is regarded as a serious mournful event. The dead body is first given bath and wrapped in a cloth which is called 'Kafan'. After saying prayer for the departed soul 'Namaz-i-Janaza', the dead body is carried on shoulders to the graveyard accompanied by friends and relations on foot. All the way people recite 'Takbir' and read 'Darud-Sharif'. Generally no food is cooked about three days in the family of deceased person. Thereafter takes place the ceremony of 'Sayyum' on the third day. On this day 'Koran' is read and food is distributed among the poor in the name of deceased person. On the fortieth day the ceremony of 'Chahlum' takes place in the same manner. In some families there takes place annual 'Fateha' in the name of deceased person and the cooked food is distributed among the 'Faqirs'. Among lower castes and other sects of Muslims there happens some differences in the performance of death ceremonies.

Whatever might be true, the Muslims after their settlement in this area adopted almost all Indian ways of life. They loved the place and made it their permanent resort. In the beginning though there were social exclusiveness, but the forces of adjustment were at work. There occurred the fusion of Hindu and Muslims both in thought and action. Though Islam banned most of the customs and traditions observed by Muslims but it could not exert any check on the natural flow of the progress of assimilation,
when the people of different creeds and communities inhabited in the same area. The simple and colourless Muslim society acquired in the course of time the features of the Indian society. On the death of her husband the Muslim women generally give up the wearing of colourful dresses and ornaments in the manner of their Hindu sisters. The caste system and class consciousness has also taken root in the rank of Muslim community. Most of the Muslims on the occasion of 'Holi' festival dress themselves in Indian fashion. A saffron-coloured cap and red garment most of the Muslims wear on this occasion in villages. Most of the Hindi hymns are sung by village Muslims. The heroic deeds of 'Ala-UDHAL' in Hindi most commonly sung by the Muslims in villages, and the people used to be strangely influenced by hearing them. Due effect of these story narrations, there is found a common language of masses which is called as 'Khari Boli'.

The lower caste Muslims in their society are found attached to the various Hindu religions formulated by Hindu saints. For example, there are found the caste of 'Vairagis'. They belong to the ascetic group of Hindu mendicants. There is found a group of Hindu and Muslim 'Faqirs' who put around their neck the garland of roses and 'Tulsi' leaves and believe in the carnation of Rama and Krishna, as God appointed prophets. They maintain that 'Bismillah' means Vishnu and hence Muslims also worship them indirectly. The Muslim 'Vairagis' say that the salvation 'Mukti' can be achieved only by repeating the name
of Vishnu. They say that their way of life is different from 'Gita' and 'Koran', and have no business with Hindus and Muslims. A majority of the Muslim villagers have joined this creed. Apart from this they are followers of several Muslim saints like 'Suhrwardia', 'Chishtia', 'Naqshbandia', 'Qalandaria' etc. These 'Sufis' in India regarded themselves as responsible for the spiritual welfare of the people. These 'Sufis' are regarded as responsible for the conversion of Hindus to Islam in India. But the 'Sufism' itself became at the popular level and it developed irreligious off-shoots. An off-shoot of 'Suhrwardia' order is called 'Jalali' order who take hashish and eat snakes and scorpions, their leader possess the right of sexual intercourse with any women of the sub-order. In this area there are found 'Qalandars', they are wandering mendicants. They some time earn their bread by showing the dance of bear and monkeys, some time these 'Qalandars' begin to beg here and there. Their leader was Abu Ali Qalandar. They do not offer the five times daily prayers. A variety among the 'Qalandars' are known 'Mazdubs' (the saturated one). Their spirituality is doubted in Muslim society. They are habituated of intoxicants. The 'Qalandarias' shave their heads and all hairs on their face, and roam here and there wrapped in blankets. Some roam naked like Hindu 'Yogis'. The Madaris of Aligarh have borrowed several syncretic features from Hindu 'Yogis' as well as from Christianity Judaism. They use hashish, neither pray nor keep fast, rubbing on their persons ash
like Hindu 'Sanyasis', some time go naked here and there. The 'Dafalis' of Aligarh also show their affinity with 'Qalandryas'. They keep small drums and assist people who visit the shrines of Ghazi Mian at Bahraich or Ajmersharif, at the shrine of Khuwaja Moin-ud-Din Chishti.

There are other several practices which from the point of view of orthodox Muslims is regarded as heterodox. The use of Amulets (Tawiz) containing verses of Koran or other pious formulae is prepared and distributed by such 'Sufis', and the people ardently use them either to get relief from certain diseases or evil eyes. In this District even in this enlighten century, there is in use of extensive variety of such amulets, both among Hindus as well as Muslims, suitable for almost every conceivable clamities and misfortunes. There is common use of 'Imam Zamin', this is another form of amulet used by all the Muslim sects, specially the 'Shias'. Some time on the erruption of crop diseases, villagers hang amulets in their fields. In the whole district the tomb of saints are held in veneration by the mystics, the elite and the common people. On each Thursday and Friday there takes place huge gatherings at their mausoleums. The visitors taken away earth from the graves of these saints, which is regarded as a remedy of different diseases. Among Muslim there is practice of various magic 'Saifi-Amal', this corresponds to the Hindu magical practices, they use and eat filthy things to gain power even upon an enemy or upon an evil spirit.
The Muslim masses residing in remote villages act upon folk-believes. Some of them are in the habit of syncretic practices. Hindu and Muslim equally believe in the effect of eclips of the Sun and the Moon upon a pregnant woman. On the day of eclips she lies straight, being afraid that her child may not born deformed. There are certain days like Wednesday which is considered most unfortunate for the child birth. On the occasion of 'Chatti', the sixth day when the mother of the child takes bath of purification, the village goddesses and saints are worshiped. The fear of the evil eye, which is common superstition in villages and towns, Muslims mostly cast off 'Nazar' in favour of their younger sons and daughters. They generally protect their children from the sight of deformed or mutilated persons. The 'sweeping and blessing' (Jhar Phunk) is done upon the person suffering from the evil eyes or spirits. The 'Molvi' or some 'Dafali' is called on the occasion, he waves the branch of some tree and blows some recited formulae upon his head. This perhaps have been borrowed from Hinduism or have been imported from other part of the world. Various small communities of Muslims in villages have retained Hindu customary rituals and practices, despite their conversion to Islam. On the occasion of marriage and birth they worship village deities and goddesses. Muslim women in villages worship 'Shaikh Saddu', they maintain that depression and hysteria are caused by him upon women. Goats or kids are slaughtered
to perpetuate him and to protect women and children. The 'Sitla Mata', the Hindu goddesses of small-pox is most commonly worshipped by the Muslims in villages. The malignant soul (Bhut, Pret and Churail) of the different victims is supposed to wander here and there, it some times comes upon women and children, and harms upon their health. It is casted by 'Molvis' or 'Dafali'. On the occasion of birth among Hindus as well as Muslims both gun fire takes place to inject courage in the baby. Besides this an arrow and Koran is placed under the pillow of the new mother after the child birth to cast-off the evil spirits. On the occasion of illness of some family members among Muslims most commonly the animals are sacrificed, its meat is kept under his cot, and the same is distributed among the poors and needy persons. Some time instead of animal meat, there is kept cooked food under the cot and the same is distributed among the poor and needy persons. There are other several syncretic believes which are performed both among Hindus and Muslims of this District.