Conclusion
CONCLUSION

This conclusion is focusing on findings emerging from the study on the central theme of ‘The Development of Islamic Studies in Kerala during 18th to 20th Centuries A.D’. This part is also arranged according to the thesis.

Chapters I and II of the thesis are considered to be the preamble to the study. These chapters are serving as the stepping stones or background to the major theme. Other chapters namely III, IV, V and VI are dealing in detail with four main branches of Islamic studies namely Quran, Hadith, Fiqh and Tasawwuf. All other Islamic intellectual exercises are merely steps to these four spheres of knowledge. We can analyse and evaluate the whole intellectual ventures through the study of these four spheres of knowledge. The time-span of 1700-1999A.D truly represents the intellectual horizon not only of this period but also of the past and future of this time span.

This period witnessed tremendous progress in printing technology and pedagogy. Therefore this research-venture can be adjudged as a comprehensive and objective study on the intellectual legacy of the Muslims of Kerala. The absence of a deep study on the evolution of the cultural and intellectual legacy of Kerala Muslims further elevates the validity and relevancy of the present thesis.

Coming straightforward to the theme, the contents of first and second chapters can be summed up as follows. The various instances like commercial and trade relations between Arabia and Kerala, the role of Arab traders, early missionaries, Sufis and Sadat in the advent and propagation of Islam in Kerala; friendly approach of indigenous rulers
and masses towards Islam and the favorable factors made by social circumstances are discussed.

It is a thought provoking historical fact that the Islamic societies emerged at all cross-roads of world history from mosques. Here in Kerala also Islamic community emerged from mosques and the lamp of wisdom lit in these mosques.

Some historical factors and landmarks can be perceived in sociological and cultural self determination and resurrection of any society. Dars, Maktabs formation of Arabic Malayalam, creative Muslim leadership and hearty welcome from the indigenous leaders and people are such landmarks in Kerala Muslim’s history. An Islamic society with all its radical features and perfection was prevailing in Kerala ever since its early times. The well organized community led by Ulama and Umara and followed by a disciplined Muslim rank and file surprised the history.

The house holds were centered around the mosques and new mosques were set up to cater the need of the newly erected settlements. The symbiotic relationship between mosques and society that prevailed in the halcyon days of Islam was perceivable in Kerala. It is also understood from this study that the academic movement launched by mosques through Darses, the creative harvest of Arabic-Malayalam and an imaginative leadership were the most progressive, effective and timely step of Kerala Muslims. However the great criticism of these reformative steps is the failure to modernize and synchronize these steps with newly emerged technology and social trends. This haven of scholars failed to expand and rejuvenate the ethnic knowledge consciousness launched by Dars system and its process dissemination of knowledge. Kerala, which was the play ground of Islamic scholars and organizations, however failed to preserve the momentum triggered by the explosion of creativity.
Conclusion

through Arabic Malayalam literature. This failure resulted in the extinction of a society in which spirituality and creativity moved in tandem.

The foreign invasion further hindered the social and intellectual; progress of Mappilas of Kerala. Slavery and exploitation have been alien to any Islamic society. Further rising the banner of revolt against exploitations and slavery has been the religious and historical duty of Islamic society. The sum total of the revolutionary spirit of Mappilas of Kerala was also the same. There was an ever-vigilant leadership of revolutionary scholars to make Mappilas aware and prepared in this regard. This leadership empowered the Mappilas to wage rebellion against the invasive powers and later to participate in India’s national struggle for freedom. The intense hostility towards the British had driven the Mappilas away from modern English education. This approach discouraged the ulama from creative educational reforms. The unpleasant result of this self imposed isolation was that the Muslims had missed the opportunity to progress visa-a-vis to other communities. The balance sheeting of these historical phenomena is still in progress. A researcher’s conclusion in this regard is that it would take some more time to heal the wounds and fractures of the tree that fell down before the British dominance. However, even in this cloudy situation, there is a silver-lining that spreads hope and relief and serves as a source of revolutionary spirit—namely anti imperialist literature by some Islamic scholars. These literatures are great asset to the study of Islamic studies in Kerala. At present when imperialism and neo-colonialism, through their hidden agenda, grip over the life and culture of a society, these literarily works provide the force for survival to Kerala society in general and Mappila Community in particular. These medieval literary works are still
luminous manifestoes capable to lit the flames of revolt against imperialism. They are transcending the time in their light.

While analyzing the developments and contribution in the field of study of *Quran* in the period under study, the region has contributed some important works on *Quranic* studies in earlier times. In this regard several chapters of Holy *Quran* were translated into the local language. But the major attempts have carried out so late in 1960’s. By the appearance of *Tafsir al Quran al Hakeem* of C.N Ahmed Maulavi in 1956, *Tarjama al Quran* by K.Umer Maulavi in 1970, *Tafsir al Quran* by T.K AbdullIlah Maulavi in 1967-70, *Fath al Rahman fi Tafsir al Quran* by K.V Muhammed Musliar Koottanad in 1981-84, *Tarjamat Ma’anil Quran* by Abdul Hameed Madani in 1997 were came in to being.

Examine the all afore mentioned works produced in this field it is very disappointing to say that no acclaimed and worth mentioned creation has not yet been compiled so far. This time is synchronic with the literary revolution in Muslim world when many classical works were produced on *Quran* in Arabic and other languages. Even the debate over the permissibility of the translation of *Quran* was appeared only many years after in Kerala. In 20th century, the study of *Quran* was progressed only through the denominational controversies among various religious out-fits. But unfortunately, no work worth presenting before the world was written in this belated period also. In this period many *Quranic* literary works from Arabic and Persian were translated into Malayalam, but they were up to the mark. More attention was paid to the translation of the literary works produced to support the global Islamic reformist movements of 20th century. We can not underestimate the intellectual contributions of Kerala Muslim Community despite its linguistic and civilizational constrains such an advancement could not be seen in other
regional languages. The denominational contest in 20\textsuperscript{th} century, to a great extent remarkably contributed to this achievement. It is also noteworthy here that in modern times a new trend has appeared and that is to debate with the Holy \textit{Quran} and modern science. In this connection several noted works have published focusing on the \textit{Quranic} perspective on various modern and scientific disciplines and issues. All these efforts enabled to promote intellectual exercises within the frame work of religion of Islam.

While analyzing the \textit{Quranic} studies in Kerala for an objective evaluation another notable fact worth mentioning is that lack of translated versions of masterpieces of national and international acclaim. Besides \textit{Tafhim al Quran} of Maulana Maududi and \textit{Fi dhilal al Quran} of Sayyid Qutub, this genre of Islamic studies is almost void. It is agonising that notable works of international fame such as \textit{Tafsir al Manar} of Rashid al Rida, \textit{Al Jawahir fi Tafsir al Quran} of Maulana Ali Jauhar Tantawi, commentary of Abul Kalam Azad, \textit{Holy Quran} of Maulana Abul Majeed Al Dariyabadi are still to get their translated versions in Malayalam. Even the works written in Malayalam are not translated from Malayalam into other Indian languages and foreign languages.

Another aspect of the \textit{Quran} translations in Kerala is their inclination towards certain religious organizations. The translations often try to propagate the ideology of their sect through the translations. As such the interpretation of \textit{Quran} is often carried out at par to their ideological preference. But the translation of C.N Ahmed Maulavi is a rare exemption to this regional practice. The semantical broadness of Holy \textit{Quran} is often sacrificed to cater the ideological limitation of certain organizations.
The situation in the field of the study of Hadith was deplorable in the period under the present study. Even though the scholars spent years for the learning of Hadith, no remarkable works were produced in this area barring some works written in the last decades of 20th century. In Kerala, no serious task comparable with the great ventures in Arabian countries or study and research in Urdu and Persian was undertaken in the field of the compilation of Hadith. This statement is made considering the contribution of Kerala Muslims who rendered their service in foreign countries. Even if Kerala is a land of numerous scholars and scores of Arabic Colleges the state still lacks genuine works on Hadith. Translations of the renowned and acclaimed works have not yet made their charisma in the region, even the masterpieces of north Indian Scholars like Shah Waliullah al Dehlawi(1111A.H), Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith al Dehlawi, Shaikh Abdul Aziz Dehlawi(1159-1239A.H) are still unknown to the region. Regarding the original work in Hadith we have only a few titles such as Mirat al Mishkat, a commentary of Mishkat al Masabih, in eight volumes by Shaikh Ismail Musliar Malabari, Khairu darain done by Abdul Qadir Fadhfari (1895-1944), Sihah al Shaikhain of Valakkulam Abdul Bari (1880-1965).

In short the status of Hadith studies in Kerala is very sympathetic as compared to Quran studies in the region. The first regional translation of Quran appeared in 1854. But the translation of Hadith works did not come into being during those years. Also the prohibitory orders against Quran translation were not extended to the translation of Hadith works. This positive atmosphere could have boosted the translations of Hadith works. But the real picture is quite sympathetic. The translations of notable Hadith works would have appeared in Kerala years back.
The situation is somewhat different in the case of Fiqh studies. World famous work, namely ‘Fath al Mui’nm’ was produced here. Some commentaries were written on the same by the regional scholars. Besides fatwa (legal verdict) emerged out of creative debates and responses to polemics rejuvenated the study of Fiqh. But due to regional constrains these ventures covered only the tail-end of Shafii’ school of jurisprudence. A school of jurisprudence imbibing the socio-economic features of this land was not developed. The major reason for this situation was the extinction of free and bold traditional approaches. In this discipline, the region has contributed some works on various jurisprudential issues and certain commentaries and translations. When compared to Quran and Hadith studies, Fiqh studies would have to get a wider acclaim. But here also the state of affairs is not different. Religious scholars in Kerala had asserted a significant stress to the study of Fiqh from the very beginning of Islamic studies in the region. The above mentioned classical works are the precious offspring of this outlook.

The most important contributions of Kerala made during this time span in mainly related to Tasawwuf. It shows the spiritual vivacity of Muslims in Kerala. Keralites are obliged to Sufis and their refined glorious mentality for the tremendous growth in Tasawwuf. Sufis had an important role in the socio-cultural life of the people and they prepared a strong foundation for Tasawwuf. They contributed richly to the Mappila literature. ‘Muhiyudin Mala’ Viruthams of Icha Masthan, Kappa Pattu, Safala Mala are only a few among them. If they are remaining obscure to the world, it is due to linguistic incapacity of Keralities to present them before the world and the distance that exist from the global scholars.

The cardinal feature of Sufi works was their popularity and simplicity. These were well accepted by all people, from ignorant house-
wife to learned scholar. These works, studied with all the qualities of philosophical insight and spiritual depth won popularity through their musical charm. The fragrance of these literary works was spread through the humble service rendered by Sufis to the masses. Prosaic research works in the field of Tasawwuf were scanty. It happened due to the absence of the use of printing technology and text book system in those days in Kerala. In early period Sufis followed popular methods and straight to heart approach.

The reformist movements and organizations appeared in 20th century produced many original studies and translations. But they demolished the glory of Sufi tradition. The reformist movements attempted to modernize a society that had grown up with Sufi world view and life-style. But they targeted to uproot such a world view and life-style. The scholarly organization launched to resist the reformist deviations, spent their energy in superficial debates and polemics and alienated the Sufi tradition from the field of action. The reformist-traditionalist debate unfortunately created a sceptical approach towards Sufism, even among the traditionalist scholars. The reformist effect on the traditionalist scholars was visible from the fact that they became indulged in Fiqh and drifted away from the heavenly world of Sufism. No significant development had taken place in the field of Tasawwuf after the institutionalized partisan approach adopted by the elite-scholars in 20th century. The pedagogy of Madrasa and text books spread in all nooks and corners in Kerala. It drifted people away from spiritual epistemology and made them inclined to mechanic pedagogy. This new pedagogical system was denominationally partisan, competitive, and institutionalized. Now this system has reached the climax of institutionalization. This
institutionalizing tendency has not delivered anything of historical relevance.

It was institutionalization that emerged out of the denominational controversy between traditionalists and reformists. The result of activism of both competing factions was identical. They expressed conflicting ideals but adopted same methods. The achievement worth mention of both factions was the introduction of modern methods and approaches in the field of education. But it was achieved by demolishing the placid and pristine brook of spiritual stream. The traditionalists defended the spiritual stream outwardly but in post-partisan period, they sacrificed the spiritual stream for convenience.

It is to be noted that unique learning centers had existed in Kerala since a long period. Darses, Darul Ulum Vazhakkad, Maunatul Islam Sabha, Lajanatul Islamiyya run Madrasas and neo-Muslim training centers. The modern religious organizations ushered Arabic colleges, orphanages, and Hifz al Quran Colleges. These institutions succeeded, to a great extent, to spread the Islamic learning and culture. But they focused more on organizational caderisation.

About one dozen of Shariah colleges and more than 120 Arabic Colleges pass out hundreds of scholars every year. This scholastic presence has, but failed to produce the proportionate growth in the religious propagation, creative progress and intellectual debate. It exposes the defective learning process and orientation imparted to the religious students. These graduates are deployed as Khatibs, Qazis, Imams, Mudarris, Sadar Muallim, Muallim after their education. But these graduates have never been given adequate training, orientation, motivation and refreshing in order to perform their duties, systematically and creatively either during their education or thereafter.
The non availability of Arabic publications is another noteworthy shortcoming. Even though some publications are available for name sake, these are neither regular nor meticulous. There is no serious move from the side of the scholars to promote original work in Arabic and to preserve the rich tradition of the past generations.

The institutions of religious learning have mushroomed in every nook and corner of Kerala. It ushered a boom in education. The contribution of these institutions to spiritual and intellectual advancement is, however deplorably disproportionate with resources spent on these institutions. No literary work of international academic standards is produced from these institutions of learning. The literary style is superficial and many institutions are snobbish. The scholastic presence and literature works were not used for beneficial debates; but for lowly tendency of groupism and mutual irreverence. These literary works lacked the quality of those works which inspired intellectual debates in Islamic world. Most of the literary works composed here were influenced by the nouveaux riches of gulf boom period. There was no single work on 'Islamisation of knowledge' or 'Islamic Science' or Islamic Banking which inspired philosophical revolution among American Muslims or in Persia, Malaysia and Egypt. Further such works were not introduced to the Kerala reading community in its due times.