CONCLUSION

The attempt in this thesis has been to derive the emotional paradigm in *Nalacaritam* which has been regarded as the arch text of Kathakali since its ardent recognition in the beginning of the twentieth century. Critics have enthusiastically affirmed the architectonic perfection of *Nalacaritam* emphasising not only the flawless structure of the play but also the careful delineation of characters including the protagonist and minor and subsidiary characters thereby generating the appropriate *bhava* and *rasa*. The concept of paradigm is traced within the framework of semiotics, the study of signs. The insights of literary semiotics are employed here. The origins of the concept of the emotional paradigm has been traced by applying the findings of Antonin Artaud on the Oriental theatre tradition. His insights, particularly on Kathakali, where the ‘plastic stage language’, acquires a rare precision and purity through the language of signs, gestures and the transformability of signs form the basis of this enquiry. On the basis of explicit conventions, a range of fixed meanings correlated to performance constituents especially in terms of characters and emotions have been identified. This reading of *Nalacaritam* attempts to understand it both as a literary text and as a dramatic performance and the interface between these two different codes has been examined.
At the outset of this study a discussion of literary semiotics and theatre semiotics has been attempted. It was in 1930s that the term structuralism came more or less to merge with the term semiotics and it further developed into a wide range of explorations. In these, for the analysis of performing arts where visual signification is a prominent aspect, the analytic method of the American semiotist C.S Peirce is adopted as a theoretical basis. Peirce’s classification of signs into the iconic, indexical and symbolic is applied to the images of Nājadāracītām. Concepts like denotation, connotation, paradigm and syntagm are made use of where found necessary. Among them the concept of paradigm is discussed closely as it provides ample scope for analysing the text from a variety of perspectives. A paradigm which presents something in absentia is a range of meaningful units from which a message may be composed. For instance, a symbolic image like ‘lotus flower’ is presented elaborately through the language of mime and gestures to generate the sentiment of sringara without it being directly or overtly stated or expressed.

It was Thomas Kuhn, who perhaps first started the discussion of paradigms and paradigm shifts in the field of scientific studies. He asserted that a new paradigm evolves mostly on the cultural plane and due to paradigm shifts new methodological imperatives and modes of analysis become necessary. Paradigm shifts occur when socio-political-cultural
milieu undergoes changes and this calls for fresh examination and re-defining. Considering the social history of emotion, when a paradigm shift occurs it has a profound impact on literature and art. In this light, *Nalacaritam* can be seen as reflecting a paradigm shift that took place sometime at the beginning of the twentieth century. The concept of individuality has undergone a suitable change evincing some sort of an interiority which has socio-political overtones.

A paradigm which is equivalent to emotion becomes an emotional paradigm. Moreover, what can be taken as significantly substituting emotion also becomes an emotional paradigm, and it can be traced in *Nalacaritam*. In the case of *Nalacaritam*, by deliberately distancing itself from the epic and inserting more emotional space, it becomes more dramatic. In the treatment of Nala’s story, the author draws on the *Mahabharata* and also on *Naishadiyacarita*, but has remodelled these versions by interlinking different strands of the story, investing new situations and dramatising situations with theatrical potential. The relevance of *Nalacaritam* and the reasons for its ardent recognition in the beginning of twentieth century and the textual aspects are discussed in chapter II of this dissertation. These aspects of *Nalacaritam* are compared to *Sakuntalam* which bears some similarity in certain respects. Purification through penance is a motif that is central in both the works. The social
context of Kerala of the twentieth century accounts largely for the enthusiastic new response evoked by these two classics. The concept of love and marriage was redefined at the beginning of twentieth century as a consequence of the transition from joint family to nuclear family. Again considering the social history of emotions it can be seen that the very concept of emotion has also changed with the changes in the society. The human substance dominant in the text also draws attention in the theoretical examination as various interpretations unanimously suggest that it carries a full scale dramatisation of human life and political situations. Since Unnayi Varier thoroughly humanizes the story imparting poignant situations that would have considerable dramatic piquancy and theatricality the text is analysed using the ‘human dimension’.

As this dissertation is mainly concerned with the range of emotions in the text, the imagery is analysed from that angle. Chapter III takes a close look at the dominant images of forest, fire, river, ocean, bird flower etc. The semiotic analysis of Pierce is followed here. They are classified as iconic, indexical and symbolic contributing to the new emotional paradigm. It is argued that in the paradigmatic presentation of emotion these images contribute effectively.

An analysis of the performance text is done in Chapter IV of the dissertation. As far as a Kathakali text is considered it is only one third of its
culmination on stage. The performance text of *Nalacakritam* is analysed by examining the six different units of acting like *slokas, dandakams, padas, kallasams, attams* and other set pieces of choreography. These structural elements are elaborated by artistes on stage and so occasionally the aspects of Kathakali performance in general are also incorporated. In order to specify the theatrical aspects of transformation of the linguistic text to theatrical text the delineation provided in the *attams* are described with exemplification of a *sloka* from Day One, the famous *padam* “O, lotus-eyed Bhaimi”, monologue of Nala in the Day Three, improvisation in acting of the forest scene in the Day Three and some other interpolations. In this aspect the performance manual of Kalamandalam Krishnan Nair is followed. Hence the expression of emotions manifested in the paradigmatic presentation are evident from the highly stylised mode of acting of *Nalacakritam*. As it is an emotive structure as a whole, it is to be regarded as an objectified emotional paradigm.

Considering the emotional paradigm of *Nalacakritam*, Damayanti is redefined according to the attitude of various characters of the text. Chapter V takes up all these threads and examines Damayanti as the pivot or the corner stone of the emotional paradigm. The various positions and attitudes taken by other characters in relation to Damayanti are examined. Nala, Kali, Woodsman, the Swan, Puskara, Rtoparna and other characters
have various attitudes to her. While these attitudes are varied, this gives an aura of rich complexity to the heroine who would otherwise become just an ideal, classical, stereo-typed figure. Against this chiaroscuro of varied attitudes, Damayanti appears bold in her actions and resolute in responses. Two centuries back Damayanti was considered as a representative of the Indian concept of womanhood inherited from the past, according to the paradigm prevalent in that time. But in the twentieth century she is viewed in the light of the shift in the paradigm, as the concept of individual has changed. Since the total structure of the text is emotive in its nature, emotional paradigm becomes the hall-mark of the text. Damayanti assumes a new dimension, a new dynamism veritably justifying the contention that Nalécaritam (Nala’s story) is verily Damayanticalcaritam (Damayanti’s story). These aspects are revealed in the semiotic analysis as the signs and codes operative in the text reflect the social context.