CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In this concluding chapter, I would like to give a resume of the contents of the first six chapters of this thesis. This thesis is mainly concerned with 'The Mother Principle in the Metaphysics/Theology of Śrī Nārāyaṇa Guru'. However, the subject cannot be treated in isolation because the main trend of Guru’s Philosophy is Advaita originating from the Upaniṣads. The Śakti Principle becomes dominant in the Tantric tradition, which also has a long history. Therefore, I have given a short account of Tantric Philosophy stressing the main categories of the system.

In the opening chapter, a brief life sketch of the Guru is given and the list of work written by him. These work are mainly in the form of poems written in Malayalam, Sanskrit and Tamil. Apart from these poems, there are a few work in prose also. I have not made an attempt to discuss all these work.
However, I have selected for my study only a few work dealing specifically with the Devi concept. Of these work on Devi, some are in the form of prayers meant for devotees while others are metaphysical poems that deal with metaphysical aspects of the concept of the Goddess. This thesis mainly concentrates on these metaphysical poems. Three poems have been specifically selected for a close study namely 'Jananī Navaratnamañjari', 'Kālināṭakam', and Kuṇḍalinipāṭṭu'.

In the second chapter, I have dealt with the rise and development of Advaita Vedānta since I consider that the Guru belongs to the classical Advaidic tradition made popular by Śankarācārya. This led me to examine the basic insights given by the Vedas. A definition of Veda on a classical line has been given and the value systems of the Veda are briefly touched upon in this chapter. It is shown here how mokṣa or liberation is the ultimate value.

The Guru also has stressed Dharma and Mokṣa in his Metaphysics. In fact he was very fond of the word Dharma. He formed an association called Śrī Nārāyaṇa Dharma
Paripālana Yogam (SNDP Yogam). He also formed a Dharma Sangham constituted of Sanyāsi disciples. The word 'Dharma' should not mislead one to think that Guru was concerned only with altruism. He gives importance to transcendence as is seen by the fact that the last darśanam of his Darśanamālā is called Nirvāṇa Darśanam. Darśanamālā is a Sanskrit text, which deals with ten darśanas—Adhyāropadarśanam, Apavādadarśanam, Asatyadarśanam, Māyādarśanam, Bhānadarśanam, Karmadarśanam, Jñānadarśanam, Bhakti-darśanam, Yogadarśanam and Nirvāṇadarśanam. This work is not a compendium of all darśanas like 'Sārvadarśana samgraha' of Madhvācārya or 'Śaddarśana samuccaya' of Haribhadra. It is more in the form of ten visions of the Absolute, all these visions being based on Advaita. These darśanas are like beads, strung on the thread of the Absolute - sūtre maṇīgaṇa īva- to quote a phrase from the Bhagavat Gīta. The Guru follows the classical tradition and examines the technical terms like adhyāropa, apavāda, asatya, māyā, bhāna, karma, jñāna, bhakti, yoga and nirvāṇa of the Advaitic tradition. All the earlier nine
daršanas finally lead to Nīrvaṇa darśanam. This shows the importance given by the Guru to mokṣa. The Guru has attempted a subtle revaluation of these terms in restating Advaita Vedānta. This chapter also deals with Advaita Vedānta as a philosophical system and describes how this system became the most important of the philosophical systems of India. This chapter also describes the cosmogony, Monotheism and Monism in the Vedas. The next part of the chapter deals with Monism in the Upaniṣads to which the Guru’s philosophy is affiliated. He has explicitly used the term ‘Upaniṣaduktirahasyam’ in his Malayalam poem Atmopadeśa-śatakam to show his indebtedness to the Upaniṣads. Deriving from these, I have briefly touched upon the five major concepts of the Upaniṣadic Philosophy namely viz. Brahman, Māyā, Īśvara, Jagat and Jīva.

In the third chapter, the discussion is continued by introducing a few great masters of classical Advaita. I have discussed the philosophy of Gaudapāda and how Śrī Nārāyaṇa Guru has followed Gaudapāda’s philosophy. The philosophy of
the *Upaniṣads* is stated in capsule form in what are known as the *Mahāvākyas*. Śrī Nārāyaṇa Guru mentions all these *Mahāvākyas* in his Sanskrit poem ‘Brahmavidyā pañcakam’. Of these *Mahāvākyas*, the Guru seems fond of the *Mahāvākyas*—‘prajñānam Brahma’. This is a *Lakṣaṇa vākya* or a definition of ‘Brahma’. The Guru uses the Malayalam term ‘arivu’ in lieu of this Sanskrit term. He has devoted one full poem called ‘Arivu’ to this subject and this term occurs many times in his *Ātmopadeśa- Śatakam*. The Vedic tradition has two sections or *Kāṇdas*. The anterior section deals with ‘karma’ and the posterior section deals with ‘jñāna’. The *Karma Kāṇda* deals with ritualistic *Brāhmaṇism* and is thus *yajña*-centric. The Guru was not interested in this section of the *Veda*. He gives importance to the *jñāna kāṇda* developed in the *Upaniṣads*. Therefore, it would be proper to call Śrī Nārāyaṇa Guru a ‘Jñāna Guru’ in the tradition of Gaudapāda, Śankarācārya and his followers.

The Guru has drawn inspiration from the philosophy of Śankarācārya. Śankarācārya’s *paramaguru* was Gaudapāda, though he has given his own version of *Advaita*, differing from
the *Ajātivāda* of Gaudapāda. Instead of *Ajātivāda*, he introduced *Māyāvāda* (*māyāmātram idam sarvam advaitam paramārthataḥ*-Ma.U.) This view has been much misunderstood. I have briefly touched upon the basic categories of *Śankara Vedānta* namely *Māyā*, *Saguṇa Brahma*, *Nirguṇa Brahma* and *Īśīvā*

In this study on the Guru and his philosophy, I have kept in view the fact that he has derived inspiration not only from the *Upaniṣads* belonging to the Vedic tradition but also from the *Āgamas*. I have explained the *Āgamas* and shown that the Guru has fully accepted the *Āgamas* that have the *Siva-Śakti* Principle as the Absolute. The *Śakta Āgamas* also follow the Advaitic tradition. I have traced the history of *Śakti* cult briefly and shown how this cult has spread everywhere in India from Kanyakumari to Kāśmir. The non-dualism of the *Tantras* as well as the special powers of *Śakti* are explained. The *Ābhāsavāda* of the *Tantric* system is also explained in detail, because the Guru also makes use of these lines of thought here and there in his works. I have already mentioned that the term *Karma* used in the Vedic context refers to the fire ritual, invocation of devatas etc. Śankarācārya uses the term *karma* often in this sense only.
I have shown how in the *Tantra* system the term *karma* is replaced by the term *kriya* as the spontaneous activity of Śakti. The Guru in his *Darśanamālā* has devoted one full chapter on *karma*. His treatment is akin to that of the Tāntrikās. He stresses the universal activity going on spontaneously. This is explained in detail in this thesis. I have also quoted relevant passages from the *Bhagavat Gīta* belonging to the *Vedāntic* tradition in support of this view.

The Guru was also averse to *Vedic* ritualistic action. For example, in his *Jananī navaratnamāṇḍjari*, of which a detailed study has been made in the 6th chapter of this thesis, he says: “He who has known *Devi* need not bother about ritualistic action” (*Illāraṇam kriyakal*). In his *Saṁmukhastotram*, he also speaks against *pitṛyāna*, a ritualistic procedure of the *Vedas* (*Luptapiṇḍa pitṛpratikriya caivatinnumitonnuminum*).

I briefly touch upon *Kāśmir Śaivism*, a system derived from the *āgamic* tradition, which became popular in Kāśmir, since in Guru’s work one comes across the technical terms used in this system. The system is derived allied to the *Tantras*. 
The 36 *tatvās* of this system are explained. Nevertheless, to say, based on these facts, that the Guru was a follower of Kāśmir Śaivism is, according to me, extending the argument too far. A more objective appraisal of the Guru’s writings will show that he follows the Advaitic tradition, making use of *Tantra* in certain works.

Having thus dealt with the background of the Guru’s philosophy in the 2nd and 3rd chapters, the 4th, 5th and 6th chapters are devoted specifically to the main subject of this thesis namely “The Mother Principle”. Chapter four is devoted completely to a description of the *Devi* principle as *Mahāmāyā* in the best Tantric tradition. The Guru’s *Māyādārśanam* from his *Darśanamālā* has been quoted in full in this chapter. It has been shown that *Mahāmāyā* can be considered as the Immanent Absolute though the *Devi* is transcendent also. In this connection, the *Māyāvāda* of Śankarācārya is introduced again and the subtle difference in approach between the *Tantras* and *Advaita* in the treatment of *Māyā* is explained. Śankarācārya’s *Māyāvāda* has been severely criticised by Ramanujācārya. His seven objections (*anupapattis*) are also explained. The *Advaitin*, from his point of view, has
refuted these objections. The term Māyā as it occurs in Śankara Vedānta is a complicated one. However it is useful in explaining the relationship between Para Brahman and Jagat. Jagat itself can be viewed in three ways.

1. As real.

2. As indescribable.

3. As insignificant.

This is explained in the Vedāntic manual Pañcadaśī. Since, for the Tāntrikās, the world has emanated from parāśakti, it is real. But this reality is dependent on Śiva. In Guru’s works, both the standpoints of Tantra and Advaita Vedānta can be seen. Only a contextual valuation of the texts will help to resolve the apparent contradiction involved in the treatment of the subject. However, this problem has not been dealt with in this thesis due to the constraints on the length of the thesis. An attempt has been made to show these contexts fully by studying various works of the Guru. A straightforward reading of these portions of his works will help to resolve all doubts in this matter. These doubts arise because the subject is looked upon both from
the transcendental and immanent angles as the contexts demand. Therefore, one should have a total picture in the mind before attempting any exegesis.

The 5th chapter is concentrated on the term ‘Śakti’ itself. The use of the term in the Vedas is indicated. A few contexts in the Upaniṣads, where the term is used, are also shown. A famous mantra from the Śvetāsvataropaniṣad - māyām tu prakṛtim vidhyām māyinam ca Maheśvaram- is quoted and explained. The entire Kenopanishad implicitly praises the power of Brahman i.e., Śakti. The story explaining the power of Śakti as given in this Upaniṣad is fully explained.

Next, I have dealt with the concept of Śakti in Tantras and Purāṇas. The term Śakti occurs in many Purāṇas and I have mentioned the names of a few Purāṇas.

Another technical term for Śakti occurring in the Tāntric literature is Kūndalini. The Guru has also used this term in his works. This thesis makes an elaborate study of the term and how the term has given rise to spurious practices. The thesis quotes modern writers like Dr. Bharati, Gopi Krishna and Jones, along with Ramaṇa Mahaṛṣi, a true exemplar of Advaita Vedānta.
Sri Ramaṇa Maharṣi says:- “The practitioners of this system concentrate on psychic centres (cakras) in the body in order to generate a spiritual power they call Kundalini. The aim of this practice is to force the Kundalini up through a psychic channel (the suṣumna) that runs from the base of the spine to the brain. The Kundalini yogi believes that when this power reaches the Sahasrāra (the highest cakrā located in the brain), self-realization will result”. Sri Ramana Maharshi never advised his devotees to practice Kundalini Yoga since he regarded it as being both potentially dangerous and unnecessary. The elaborate discussion was warranted by the fact that the Guru has written a Malayalam poem called ‘Kundalinipattu’. Since this poem has been confused with Kundalini yoga etc., I have taken pains to explain the poem standing within the advaitic tradition. It should be remembered that the aim of the poem is to describe the union with Śiva. It does not describe the usual Kundalini Yoga with cakras and nādies. One commentator, Kavi Damodaran, has interpreted this poem in a narrow way using the cakrā symbolism etc. But I feel that this poem belongs to the Śaiva-Tantric tradition emphasising non-dualism. The following lines of the poem explain this standpoint clearly.
We have already seen that in his *Kundalini Pāttu*, the Guru does not mention *cakras* or *Dēvatās*. He has taken a metaphysical standpoint on Śaiva *Tantrāgamas*.

Following Dr. Nataraja Guru, an attempt has been made to clarify the metaphysical import of this poem. It is hoped that this thesis will put an end to further long erroneous evaluation of the poem.

In the 6th chapter, Goddess as the mother of the world is described. For this purpose, a rather detailed study of the poem ‘*Janani Navaratnamañjari*’ has been undertaken. In order to show that the poem is in the best *Tantric* tradition, a comparison has been made with ‘*Lalita sahasranāmam*’, a popular religious text used for daily recital. For this comparative study, I have examined the technical vocabulary of ‘*Janani Navaratnamañjari*’ and ‘*Lalita sahasranāmam*’ and exposed the common denominator between these two works.
The thesis subsequently discusses the description of Devi as ‘Kālī’. This was prompted by the fact that the Guru has written a long poem previously mentioned as ‘Kālī Nāṭakam’. The chapter concludes with a detailed appreciation of this aesthetic poem. The derivation of the name ‘Kālī’ and certain purānic anecdotes are quoted. Even in this poem, full reference is made to Siva because Śakti cannot be treated as separate from Siva. The worship of Kālī is popular in Bengal and in Kerala. The Guru has however written prayers and hymns to many deities such as ‘Vināyaka’, ‘Subrahmanya’, ‘Siva’ and ‘Devi’. But his treatment of ‘Kālī’ is to support his metaphysics of the Śiva-Śakti principle as the Absolute. The chapter also discusses about the khecarimudrā because in the Yogadārśanam of Darśanamālā, the Guru mentions about khecarimudrā.

\[
\text{dyānam antar bhruvordṛśṭir} \\
\text{jiḥvāgram lambikordhvataḥ} \\
\text{yadā syāt khecarimudrā} \\
\text{nirālasyādi nāśinī}
\]

“When meditation is done with gaze between the eyebrows
And the tip of the tongue fixed above the uvula,
Then happens Khecarī mudrā.
Which dispels torpor and fatigue”

*Khecarī mudrā* is a technical term that figures in *Tantra* and *Kāśmir Śaivism*. ‘*Siva Sūtras*’, which is an authoritative text of *Kāśmir Śaivism*, defines Khecarī as follows:-

*Vidyāsamutthane svābhāvike khecarī śivāvasthā*

“On the emergence of spontaneous supreme knowledge, occurs that state of movement in the vast unlimited expanse of consciousness, which is Śiva’s state i.e., the Supreme State of Reality.” The symbolism and imagery used by the Guru strictly belong to the classical Indian idiom. However, the meaning behind this symbolism is, strictly speaking, of universal import. In other words, following his predecessors, the Guru is addressing a global audience, i.e., he has taken up the mantle of a ‘*Jagat Guru*’ - World Teacher.

Modern Science has established that the Universe is driven by Energy in various forms - mechanical, electrical, nuclear, chemical, magnetic etc. It is also common knowledge
that one form of energy can be converted to another. Albert Einstein proved that matter can be converted to energy and he derived the famous equation \( E = mc^2 \), where \( E \) is the energy, \( m \) is the mass (amount of matter) and \( c \) is the speed of light. Nuclear power plants as well as nuclear bombs work under the same principle, demonstrating the fact that Energy can be used for constructive as well as destructive purposes.

In ancient Indian Philosophy, the concept of Energy in its various forms is contained in the Sanskrit word Šakti which is recognised as the cause and origin of the Universe and also the driving force that runs the Universe in its present form. Thus Šakti or Energy has been given the status of the Divine Mother. Human beings are dependent on their biological mothers for physical and emotional sustenance. In the same way, they derive their spiritual sustenance from the Divine Mother representing the Cosmic Energy or Šakti. The wielder of this power or Šakti is conceived as God in Hindu Philosophy. Šakti and God are complementary - one is useless without the other. Šakti or Power needs a Šakta or God to wield that Power to create and sustain this Universe. Without Šakti, God is powerless.
Śakti is worshipped in India as Saraswathy, Lakshmi and Kālī, representing the various manifestations of the Cosmic Energy that pervades this Universe. The worship of Śakti in the form of the Universal Mother is a catharsis that cleanses and purifies the mind and intellect of the base and negative qualities like greed, lust, anger, envy, vindictiveness, hatred, selfishness etc., and leads to the rejuvenation of the positive qualities of the human spirit like truth, love, justice, compassion, etc.

The divine Energy is present in all living beings as the spirit. Thus hurting, maiming or killing of any living being is tantamount to an attempt to destroy the divine Energy present in that being and this becomes a negation of the worship of the Universal Mother or Śakti.

Śri Nārāyaṇa Guru has recognised this Universal aspect of the divine energy and he exhorts us to extend our love and compassion to all living beings and asks us not to cause distress even to an ant.
It is possible to explain, demonstrate and quantify the lower forms of energy such as the energy released during biochemical processes in the bodies of living beings. However, such an explanation or demonstration is not possible when one considers the divine Energy that transcends all the lower forms of energy. Ancient Indian Philosophy calls this transcendental Energy as ‘Parāśakti’. While the lower forms of energy maintains the body functions, it is the divine or higher form of energy that sustains the spirit that is associated with all living beings.

In conclusion, I would like to state that I have entered here upon a study that requires a deep religious commitment and a genuine sense of the sacredness of the ‘Supreme Reality’ for the attainment of the supreme liberation in this life itself.

This thesis is a very humble offering of a few flowers at the feet of Mother Goddess by a humble devotee. I have derived the power to write this thesis through the grace of the Mother Goddess and I repeat here the words of Jagat-Gīru Śankarācārya who wrote a wonderful hymn on Mother Goddess:
pradīpa jvālābhir divasakara nīrājana vidhiḥ
sudhā sūtescandropala jaḍalavair arghya racanaḥ
svakīyair ambhoḥhis salila nidhi sauhitya karaṇam
tvādiyābhir vāgbhis tava janani vācām stutir iyam.

(Saundarya Lahari-100)

“To carry out the ritual propitiation of the sun by waving
of lighted flames,

To offer oblation to the moon, the source of nectar, by
particles of moonstone water,

To appease the deep with offerings of water of its own

Such, oh Mother, is this wordy praise with words your
own”

(Tran. by Dr. Nataraja Guru)

This thesis is offered in the same spirit as that of Jagat-
Guru Śankarācārya, in humble devotion to the Mother Goddess.

“ΑΟΜ ΓΕΡΒΡΑΗΜΑ ΓΕΡΒΡΙΣΝΟΗ
ΓΕΡΩΡΔΕΒΟ ΜΑΗΣΒΑΡΑΗ
ΓΕΡΟΥΑΚΣΑΤ ΠΑΡΑΜ ΒΡΑΗΜΑ
ΤΑΣΜΑΙ ΣΡΙΓΕΡΑΒΕ ΝΑΜΑΗ”

|| ΑΟΜ ΣΑΝΤΙΗ ΣΑΝΤΙΗ ΣΑΝΤΙΗ ||