CONCLUSION.
This dissertation encompasses the history of the evolution of Tarakeswar as a place of pilgrimage with reference to the cult of Lord Taraknāth from 1729 to 1951. Hence, it puts forward a profile of the socio-economic and religious perspectives of the pilgrim town alongside the changes that took place over the years.

Primarily, it points to an elucidation of the salient features of Svayambhulingam which are obviously related to the presiding cult of this non-purānic place of pilgrimage. It has been propounded that the revelation of Lord Tāraknāth and the consequent emergence of Tārakeswar since 1729 happened initially in association with a member of the Gopa caste and the Chhatri zamindār of Bāligari, not far-off from this pilgrim centre. The subsequent addition to this process was a Dashnāmi Giri Sannyāśī who led to the establishment of the monastic system under the patronage of the aforesaid Chhatri zamindār, that lasted for over two centuries at Tārakeswar.

II

Tārakeswar has also been studied in retrospect with reference to the historical geography of the region in which this place of pilgrimage is situated. It has been shown that the retarded civic evolution for long owed much to the seasonal floods of the Dāmodar that told heavily on the growth of cultivation and population as well. Besides the Kaibarttas and the Gopas, all were found to have been outsiders to this place of pilgrimage.

Noticeably, the age-old rituals and beliefs of the original inhabitants came easily to terms with the Mohānta culture resulting in the popular form of Saivism with its bearing on fairs and festivals.

Reference has also been made to the possible influence of the Nathpanthīs on the religious history of Tārakeswar along with the prevailing trend of adherence.
to popular Tăntrik rites in and around the religious complex which developed definitely under the patronage of the Giri Mohântas.

III

It has been emphasised that the evolution of the pilgrim town owes greatly to the evolution of the monastic system put forward by the Dashnâmi Giri Sannyâsîs with preceptor-disciple lineage. Hence, the Târakeswar Math was the nucleus, around which the temple-zamindâri evolved in due course.

The indulgence of the Giri Mohântas in commercial transactions including usury has been brought within the purview of discussion in the given context along with their endeavours primarily to extend and consolidate the estate-zamindâri.

With an overall commitment to keep a good hold on the twin institutions up to the end of the 18th century, the Giri Mohântas overcame the forces of destabilisation that often threatened the Târakeswar Math during this period under review.

IV

The evolution of the monastic system during the 19th century witnessed the same process of extension and consolidation of the temple-zamindâri by dint of the perseverance of the Giri Mohântas. The only noticeable feature in this process was their determined efforts at categorising the properties acquired over the years as nîj (self) and debutter (in the name of the deity). Besides, the tradition of playing the role of tâlukdâr that had begun during the preceding century remained unchanged till the end of the Giri regime.

Another noteworthy development during this phase of the monastic system was the spread of education on traditional as well as modern lines along with the humanitarian measures that continued remarkably till the end of the Giri regime. The gradual development of this pilgrim centre in this phase owed much to the extension of the railway network that happened during the tenures of the
last two Giri Mohantas. Despite these, the diminishing trend in the monastic system became conspicuous that ultimately led to the overthrow of the said regime.

V

The verdict given by the District Judge on 6.11.29, in connection with the Title Suit 28/1922, brought about the overthrow of the Giri regime. Satishchandra Giri, the last Giri Mohanta was made the victim against whom the allegations ranged through moral turpitude, defalcation of funds and damage to religious property.

Despite earnest efforts, the last Giri Mohanta failed to adhere to his position at the Tārakeswar Math and to control the administration of the Math even through his Chela (disciple) as was proved by the appointment of Dandīśwāmī Jagannāth Āshram by order of Mr. Justice S.Mukherjee in the month of Agrahāyan, 1344 B.S. (1937 A.D.). Thus ended the long-drawn Giri regime that helped grow this place of pilgrimage in name over the years.

VI

It has been emphasised in the ensuing discussion that the Satyāgraha movement facilitated the removal of the Giri regime at Tārakeswar. This was resorted to in 1924 to remove the glaring abuses that had crept into the management of the twin institutions.

The Mahābīr Dal had been organised to fight against the authoritarianism of the last Giri Mohanta of the Tārakeswar Math. To make the whole project a complete success, the Dal solicited help from the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (B.P.C.C.) for the start of the movement. The B.P.C.C. took the decision to sanction the movement at the behest of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Dās, President of the B.P.C.C. The Satyāgraha movement, therefore, began on 20 May, 1924 following the failure of the talks for a compromise between the District Magistrate and the Secretary of the B.P.C.C. It has been
shown that the Government showed no hesitation to apply its power to suppress
the Satyāgrabhis.

Besides the direct involvement of the B.P.C.C, the Akālīs as well as the Muslims
participated in this movement up to a certain extent in order to weed out
corruption from the twin institutions. The participation of the female volunteers
in this movement has also been taken note of in the ensuing discussion.

This movement had come ultimately to an end following the decision of the
incumbent Mobānta to abdicate in favour of his Chelā (disciple), Prabhāchandra
Giri, on 22 Sept, 1924. It has been put forward that the Satyāgraha movement
lost much of its thrust simply because of the lack of human as well as material
resources in the given context.

VII

It has been propounded that the interregnum between the passing of the Giri
regime into oblivion and the advent of the Āśram order of the Dashnāmī
Sannyāsīs in the administration of the twin institutions witnessed the tenures of
two Receivers — Amulya Chandra Bhādurī and Rāshbehārī Mukherjee.

The appointment of the new Mobānta at the Tārakeswar Math coincided with
the setting up of a new administrative hierarchy in accordance with the order
passed on 29.8.34 by the Calcutta High Court. Mention has been made of the
endeavours of the new Mobānta from a different order of the Dashnāmī
Sannyāsīs to fight boldly against corruption that flourished over the years in the
twin institutions along with his determination to initiate remarkable changes into
the rituals performed within the temple. The traditional outlook of this Mobānta
has been made a point, in so far as his interest only in the promotion of the
Sanskrit language.

However, his disenchantment with the litigation strengthened his
determination to resign in favour of his trusted disciple, Hrishikesh Ashram in 1952 (1358 B.S.). This definitely proves again that the age-old principle of Guru Siṣya Paramparā dies hard at the Tārakeswar Math.

VIII

Tārakeswar is a celebrated place of fairs and festivals of different types from the month of Baisākh to that of Chaitra of the Bengali calendar year. It has been found that casteism plays an important role in almost all the sacred performances except during the time of fairs and festivals which are held at frequent intervals.

Emphasis has been made on the relative similarities of some of these rituals with those performed by the devotees of other religions. The rituals performed by the Mobāntas as well as by the Sebāyet priests within the temple conform to sanskritised prescription while the folk rites are mostly found to have been performed during the Gajan festival. It has incidentally been noted that the priestcraft that developed during the Giri regime was definitely in contrast to its counterpart in the other purānic places of pilgrimage all over India, as it was devoid of professionalism.

Mention has also been made of the festivals organised completely in the local context with incidental reference to the inclination of the Giri Mobāntas to Śakti pūjā alongside an unwavering commitment to the presiding deity. Moreover, reference has been made to the proof of compromise with the lokāyata (popular) culture on the part of the upholders of Brāhminical religion.

It has also been noted that the pilgrimage to Tārakeswar and its bearing on fairs and festivals over the years emphasise the capacity of this pilgrim town for accommodating people from all castes on the common platform of Hinduism as is proved from the ever increasing flow of pilgrims over the years.
An endeavour has also been made in this dissertation to understand the importance of the cult of Lord Tāraknāth in terms of being the sheet anchor of the economy of this place of pilgrimage.

The involvement of the priestly community seems more direct in the socio-economic context because of the exclusive nature of its occupation. Besides the Sebāyet priests, the barbers, potters, florists, water-carriers and the milkmen also depend almost completely on the cult of Lord Tāraknāth. But the owners of the rest houses are found to have been belonging to a peripheral group in so far as the temple economy is concerned. Over and above, the Tārakeswar estate remains short of becoming exclusively a profit oriented enterprise despite its sustenance in the temple economy.

The exposure of this temple town by virtue of the improvement in the communication system resulted in the development of this place of pilgrimage as also a commercial centre. Hence, this study reveals that Tārakeswar always remains like other places of pilgrimage, a refuge for those seeking fulfilment of material and psychological needs as well as spiritual satisfaction in an ever changing socio-economic scenario.