APPENDIX

An Interview with Jayakantan on 10 June 1994 in the presence of Sirpi Balasubramaniam, Head of the Dept. of Tamil, Bharathiar University.

Question: In your early novels and short stories you took up working class subjects and chose your characters from the lower strata of society. But in your later novels you write about the people of middle and upper class societies. Why is there such an inconsistency in your approach to life?

Jayakantan: My message and spirit is the same in all my works. Love of humanity is my subject. When I take up middle class themes, I write about the working class life also. Moreover, the working class of the fifties itself has now grown into the middle class. I don't want to create a conflict between the capitalists and the working class. Hence I don't deal with the working class too much in my later novels. The sole aim of my writing is to spread the message of humanism and nationalism among the people.

Question: Are you a character in any of your works? Is any of your characters modelled on you?

Jayakantan: No, I am above my characters.
Question: Why do you give too much importance to women characters in your novels?

Jayakantan: Because I am a man.

Question: Have you come under the influence of Freudism since you deal with sex too explicitly in your later novels?

Jayakantan: No, I have heard of the name of the father of psychoanalysis. But I have not studied any of his works. Nor have I written on the basis of Freudian insights.

Question: Why haven't you employed the stream of consciousness technique throughout your novel *Cila Nēraṅkalil Cila Manitarkal*?

Jayakantan: There should be variety in technique. Hence I employ different methods in narrating the story of *Cila Nēraṅkalil Cila Manitarkal*.

Question: What is your opinion of Charles Dickens?

Charles Dickens is an admirable writer. I started reading his novels only when I heard readers admiring him. I have studied his novels and found similarities between us. Dickens and his novels were responsible for the enactment of so many acts which put an end to the sufferings of men, women and young children working in factories and mines. The child labour was abolished as
a result of his writings. Similarly I have dealt with man-woman relations and fought for the rights of women in my later novels. It is as a result of my writings that the emancipation of women has taken place in Tamil Nadu.

Question : What, according to you, is the responsibility of a writer to society?

Jayakantan : The writer must be honest and faithful. He must paint life as he sees it.

Question : What is your masterpiece?

Jayakantan : Each work of mine is a master's piece.

Question : Of all the novels you have written, which do you like most?

Jayakantan : I like Oru Maqitan Oru Viçu Oru Ulakam most. It seems to be the first novel in Tamil devoid of love and sex. It is the first novel of mine that saw its second edition in too short a period.

Question : You are not writing much these days. Why?

Jayakantan : You are crossing the boundary. Read the available works of mine deeply. I go on writing as ever before. If you don't read it, it has not reached you perhaps. In fact, a few of my novels are still incomplete. Moreover, my works are sold like hot cakes. Hence copies
of my books are not available so easily in the market. My creations should be read out of interest, not merely for the research.

Question: Have your works been translated into English?

Jayakantan: Not all of my works. A few works of mine have been translated into English, German, and Russian. Soon efforts will be taken to see that the other works of mine are also translated into English.