CHAPTER III
HUMANISM IN THE NOVELS OF CHARLES DICKENS AND JAYAKANTAN

Humanism Defined

Humanism means love of man, the whole man with all his weaknesses, instincts and impulses. It may be defined as a system of thought in which human interests, values and dignity are held dominant. Humanism implies devotion to the concerns of mankind, it is an attitude of mind that concentrates upon the activities of man rather than upon the supernatural world, the world of nature or the so called animal kingdom. The history of Western Humanism goes back to the Renaissance when it arose as a result of the study of the ancient classics that emphasized things human and of this world as contrasted with the material preoccupation with the supernatural and in the other world. Historically, humanism is a Renaissance doctrine which stresses the essential worth, dignity and greatness of man as contrasted with an older view that man was wicked, worthless and doomed to destruction both in this life and in that to come. Renaissance humanists, deriving their beliefs from the study of ancient poets, historians and philosophers, came to believe that man is capable of
living a life of reason, dignity, morality and even happiness.

The humanism of Rajaram Mohan Roy, who is rightly remembered for his many social reforms was essentially a part of his fight against the evil aspects of Hinduism. Service of mankind was one of his primary loves, and he even contemplated a universal religion which, he believed, would be embraced by mankind as a whole.

Gandhi's humanism, similar in several respects to Tagore's had a profound mass-appeal because of the Mahatma's dedicated devotion to the cause of the lowly and the downtrodden. But the humanism expounded by Gandhi and Tagore has a mystical and religious bias. Dr.V.S. Naravane has made a few significant remarks in this regard:

The ideas of both Gandhi and Tagore are rooted in those broad intellectual movements which shaped the course of Indian thought in the nineteenth century. They were both humanists. Gandhi's humanism had a moral-social basis, while Tagore's was coloured by his aesthetic mystical experience:
but both were firm believers in the worth and dignity of the human individual. .... In the world-view of both Gandhi and Tagore the idea of Love plays a dominant part: they regard love as the magic wand which dissolves all contraries and opens the gateway to truth.... (113).

M.N. Roy believed in developing the ideas of a democratic society founded on radical humanism before the society itself was reformed. Like most of the humanists, he starts with the famous protagorean dictum, "Man is the measure of all things" and builds up his system of "new humanism".

Mulk Raj Anand, an internationally reputed Indo-Anglian novelist, calls his humanism "Comprehensive historical humanism" which has developed from his intense preoccupation with the whole man. In fact Arnold's writings are frankly and admittedly inspired by his love of man. He says: "And as my media as a writer were the memory and imagination, the substance of my work became the whole man, and the whole gamut of human relationships rather than only one single part of it" (78).
Man, then, is the central concern of humanism, and its efforts are directed towards the recognition of the dignity of man as man. Its chief aim is the achievement of man's happiness, of course, here and now.

Humanism as a way of life for the contemporary man has its devotees all the world over, and its sway over the intellectuals of the twentieth century is profound. P.T. Raju, an eminent Indian thinker, declares that the present age is an age of humanism (15).

**Dickens and Jayakantan as Humanists**

Both Dickens and Jayakantan are humanitarian novelists. In their novels both of them carry a crusade against the evils existing in the societies of their times. Dickens is a committed writer. Though he is not a Marxist, his outlook is conditioned by his humanism. All his novels reveal a consistent philosophy of humanism. With the steady progress of his art, Dickens drifts more and more towards humanism and social reform. "Dickens' whole career and achievement, indeed, were singularly consistent. Though he grew and developed, he never lost the living sympathies that lie at the heart of his greatness" (Edgar Johnson, 1126).
He is sympathetically moved by the sufferings of the poor and the miserable factory workers, small children groaning under the whip of tyrannical teachers, convicts subjected to the hardships of a rigorous prison life and litigants moving about law courts without getting justice. He arouses the public conscience to these evils of the English society.

Like Dickens, Jayakantan too is a socially committed writer and follows the policy of communism in his earlier novels. Unlike Dickens, Jayakantan is a Marxist novelist. His central preoccupation in all his short stories and early novels is with humanism. He has given voice to the lamentation of the destitute and the depressed. He is an artist who has portrayed the handicapped, glorified the dumb and narrated the tears of the blind. His concern for the downtrodden, untouchables, miserable and ill-treated workers, suffering humanity, orphans, beggars and prostitutes is revealed in his works. He satirises the shams and hypocrisies, follies and foibles, superstitions and meaningless customs of the people of his times. But he becomes a non-committed writer as he drifts away from communism.
Dickens as a Humanitarian Novelist

Dickens is an unceasing champion of the underdog. A friend of the downtrodden and lover of the factory workers, Dickens has broad-based his art on deep love of mankind, and profound humanism. His humanism makes him a novelist with a mission, his mission being to write for the betterment and uplift of the underdog of the society. He is a crusader in the cause of humanity; he writes not for arts sake but for the sake of man, for refining and ennobling him. He has always written to engender compassion in the hearts of man for the oppressed and the downtrodden. As a patron of the underdog, Dickens fills every line of his work with the milk of human kindness. His humanism makes him use his heart for the service of humanity. National barriers have no significance for him and he regards all mankind as one. If there is any division, it is that of the rich and the poor, of the haves and have nots and his purpose is to focus attention on the plight of the have-nots, arouse sympathy for them and thus have their way for betterment. The poor and the lowly, factory workers, small children, convicts and litigants moving about low courts without getting justice are objects of Dickens's humanistic attention.
Humanism in the Early Novels of Dickens

The middle of the 19th century saw the beginning of a great social movement for the amelioration of the living conditions of the working classes. Dickens with his instinctive democracy was on the side of the poor. The name of Dickens is preeminently associated with the humanitarian novel. After the publication of *NN* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* Dickens became a sort of professor i.e. propagandist or champion of humanitarian causes and he held this position for nearly thirty years. He turned the light of his knowledge upon a great variety of English scene and character, but especially upon workhouses, debtor's prisons, pawn-broker's shops, hovels of the poor, law offices, dark streets and dark alleys, the London haunts and hiding places of vice, crime and pain. His theme was always the downtrodden and the oppressed, the poor and the destitute. He was their advocate, for them each of his novels after pp is a lawyer's brief. Whenever he touches upon the topic of poverty, he becomes a writer with a purpose. He has great faith in the poor. To the best of his ability, he always tries to present them in a favourable light. His heart bleeds for the poor because even in the most adverse circumstances, they maintain their innocence and
honesty. He wants to reveal their essential humanity, and the fact that, given proper facilities, they would develop into respectable citizens.

His *ix* reveals him as a great humanitarian whose heart is full of milk of human kindness for the poor who are good, innocent and kind, and not for those who make their poverty an excuse for committing crimes.

Dickens has a great sympathy for Mr. and Mrs. Micawber. He models them on his own parents. The picture of the poor Mrs. Micawber with babies at her breast exerting herself to help her husband in his adversity and promising never to desert him is pitiable indeed. The poor woman even attempts to run a boarding establishment for young ladies, but in vain. The picture of Mr. Micawber threatening to cut his own throat when the creditors demand their payment is also pitiable. Moreover, his admonition of David Copperfield to spend less than his income followed by a request for a loan is not only ridiculous but also expressive of Mr. Micawber's impecunious condition.

Dickens gives us the picture of captain Hopkins in the King's Bench prison. He evinces great sympathy
for numerous insolvents living in the debtor's prison in no secret terms.

Mr. Mell is a poor teacher working in Mr. Creakle's school. Dickens is full of sympathy for him. Mr. Mell is insulted by purse-proud Steerforth and dismissed by Mr. Creakle merely because he is poor and his mother is living like a beggar in an alm's house. Mr. Mell's poverty is adequately pointed out by Tungay's account of the cobbler's refusal to mend his shoes. Tungay says, "Here! The Cobbler's been", he said, "since you've been out Mr. Mell, and he says he can't mend 'em and more. He says there ain't a bit of the original boot left and he wonders you expect it" (DC, 77).

Dickens has spared no pains in describing the sorrows and sufferings of the Peggottys. His portrait of Peggottys, Ham, Little Emily, Mrs. Gummidge and Mr. Barkis are memorable for their simplicity and innocence. These poor characters are gentle, kind, unselfish, generous and magnanimous. Peggotty is as good as gold and as true as steel. He is patient with Mrs. Gummidge and supports her as if she were a member of his family. We feel only respect for him, although in class and condition, he is one of the lowest classes. He and his
family are in no way different from the moral point of view, from members of the superior classes. He commands our respect by his honesty, generosity and industry and by the accident of birth and position.

Barkis is dull and lethargic, incapable of those which we associate with civilized life. His courtship of Peggotty is ludicrous and his methods of showing love are uncouth. But he is a true lover. He works for his bread and does no man any harm. He is a good husband to Clara Peggotty and is capable of deep and sincere love. Ham gives his life for his cunning rival Steerforth. Peggotty is a mother-substitute for David Copperfield. Little Emily in all her innocence is ensnared by the aristocratic villain Steerforth.

Dickens shows poetic justice in the end of the story and rewards all of these poor characters with peace, contentment and prosperity. He transports most of them to Australia where they begin their life anew. Australia proves to be their land of opportunity (Paul,IX 167).

Dickens is a man with moral vision. He does not have any sympathy for the criminal poor like Uriah Heep. Dickens has no sympathy for hypocritical swindlers
whether poor or rich. He hates all crime. Thus Dickens is a great champion of the poor.

Both Dickens and Jayakantan are moved by the sufferings of children.

One kind of character developed by Dickens was that of the victim of society - usually a child. The possibilities of childhood for romance or pathos had been suggested by Shakespeare, by Fielding, and by Blake: but none of these had brought children into the very centre of the action or had made them highly individual. In his second novel Dickens centred his story on a child, Oliver Twist, and from that time onwards children were expected to be necessary characters in his novels. Little Nell, Florence Dombey, David Copperfield, stand out in divine innocence and goodness, in contrast to the evil creatures whose prosecution they suffered for a time. And further they represent in a most effective manner the complaint of the individual against society. For with Dickens the private cruelty which his evil-minded characters inflict is almost always connected with social wrong (Lall, HT 35).
The novels of Dickens belong entirely to the humanitarian movement of the Victorian Age, of which they are indeed, in the sphere of fiction by far the most important product and expression. He was from first to last a novelist with a purpose. In nearly all his books he set out to attack some specific abuse or abuses in the existing system of things and throughout he adopted the role of a champion of the weak, the outcast and the oppressed. Humanitarianism was indeed the keynote of his work and, as his enormous popularity carried his influence far and wide he may justly be regarded as one of the greatest social reformers of his Age.

Corruption and evils were running rampant in every nook and corner of the Victorian Society and the novelists took upon themselves a self-imposed task to eradicate the evils that had already attracted the pens of the intellectuals. Among the Victorian novelists Dickens was the greatest social reformer who directed his pen to root out the evils of Victorian Society. In almost all his novels whether sad or humorous, he laid his finger on the drawbacks and evils of the Victorian Society which Shakespeare had already hinted in *Hamlet*:
"The oppressor's wrong the proud man's contumely
.......... the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes (3.1.71-74).

Dickens was a humanitarian novelist and luckily for him there was no Dr. Johnson to condemn his reformative zeal. In the Victorian Society, Dickens became very popular because he harnessed his pen for the amelioration of the sufferings and pathetic conditions of the poor and downtrodden.

Dickens did not believe it possible for the lower and the criminal classes to raise themselves by elective franchise to a higher moral or intellectual plane. To him parliament was the dreariest place in the world; so he sought to arouse the conscience of the British public. He accordingly attended meetings of philanthropic societies, visited jail and prisons, holding long conversations with the keepers and went on addressing the ever-increasing audience of his novels. Through him spoke the heart and conscience of Britain which had found no responsive voice in Sir Walter Scott.

Dickens was no doubt a social reformer, but he himself did not take up the cudgels in his hands, nor did
he personally work as a social reformer like Shaftesbury. His role as a social reformer was simply to arouse the public conscience to these evils and induce practical social reformers to introduce healthy reforms in the contaminated stream of social life. Dickens blazed the track for other social reformers who had to pursue the lives of reform suggested by him in his novels for removing the evils and shortcomings in the world of education, prison life, law courts etc.

Dickens railed against the social, political, economic and educational drawbacks of his times. As a crusader for the oppressed sections of English society, Dickens first attacked the stony-heartedness of organised charity.

"In Oliver Twist ..... Dickens ..... is feeling that he must convey a message through his fiction to his hard-hearted generation" (Evans, 179)

In OT he showed that the poor Law Reform Act had only strengthened institutionalism by giving authority to unkindness. In Mr. Bumble all selfish dispensers of public charity stand condemned and in OT their helpless victims find an everlasting symbol. Dickens exposes the weakness of the Parish administration. The novel shows in lurid colours the misadventures of a poor boy, Oliver
who was born in a workhouse and fell in the hands of thieves and receivers who brought him up in the standards of Fagin's academy.

"The workhouse world is full of a bitter and pitiful comedy. Here Dickens's irony serves him as a sharp-edged sword with which he attacks the demons of cruelty and callousness" (Paul, OT 139). In the baby-farm under the care of Mrs. Mann

twenty or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws rolled about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female, who received the culprits at and for the consideration of seven pence half penny per small head per week ..... She appropriated the greater part of the weekly stipend to her own use, and consigned the rising parochial generation to even a shorter allowance than was originally provided for them. Thereby finding in the lowest depth a deeper still: and proving herself a very great experimental philosopher' (OT 4).
Here children suffer unimaginable cruelties - a child dies as he is 'overlooked in turning up a bedstead; (OT 5); another is 'scalded to death when there happened to be a washing'. (OT 5). The members of the board managing the workhouse were very sage, deep, philosophical men: and when they came to turn their attention to the workhouse, they found out at once, what ordinary folks would never have discovered - the poor people like it! It was a regular place of public entertainment for the poor classes: a tavern where there was nothing to pay; a public breakfast, dinner, tea and supper all the year round; a brick and mortar elysium, where it was all play and no work! "Oho!" said the board, looking very knowing, 'we are the fellows to set this to rights; we'll stop it all, in no time. So, they established the rule, that all poor people should have the alternative (for they would compel nobody, not they), of being starved by a gradual process in the house, or by a quick one out of it' (OT 10).

And so the diet was given with so much munificence and prodigality that
The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again; and when they had performed this operation (which never took very long, the spoons being nearly as large as the bowls) they would sit staring at the copper with such eager eyes as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed: employing themselves, meanwhile, in sucking their fingers most assiduously, with a view of catching up any stray flashes of gruel that might have been cast thereon (OT 11).

And so naturally when Mrs. Sowerberry offers Oliver the cold bits of meat which were left for the dog Trip and when his eyes glisten at the mention of meat, the angry Dickens bursts out bitterly:

I wish some well-fed philosopher, whose meat and drink turn to gall within him, whose blood is ice, whose heart is iron, could have seen Oliver Twist clutching at the dainty viands that the dog had neglected. I wish he could have witnessed the horrible avidity with which Oliver tore the bits asunder with all the ferocity of
there is only one thing I should like better; and that would be to see the Philosopher making the same sort of meal himself, with the same relish (OT 27).

The descriptions of the slum and the funeral scene are deeply moving. A poor woman has died of starvation. Her old father and mother rave dementedly—

the funeral is arranged by Mr. Sowerberry—

the priest is late—

the bier is on the brink of the grave—

the ragged boys attracted by the spectacle play a noisy game at hide and seek and jump backwards and forwards over the coffin—

Mr. Sowerberry and Bumble sit by the fire with the clerk and read paper—

the old man and woman wait in the damp clay, with a cold rain drizzling down—

the clergyman comes after an hour, reads much of the burial service as he can compress in four minutes and walks away—

the old man falls down in a swoon—they throw a can of cold water over him and after some time turn him out of the churchyard. The undertaker asks Oliver how he likes all this. The boy replies 'Not very much, Sir:', "Ah, you'll get used to it in time, Oliver", said Sowerberry, 'Nothing when you are used to it, my boy!' (OT 37).
The scene of Fagin's court is a fine specimen of Dickens's rudimentary criticism of the social abuses of times. Here 'the insolence of office' is subjected to an indignant attack. The insolent magistrate is presented in his utmost impoliteness, haughtiness and callousness to the sufferings of the wretches who have the misfortune of coming to his 'dispensary of summary justice' (OT 67).

OT is an angry warning that any society that does not take care of its unfortunate children must face the dismal problems of its Fagins and Sikes. It is an angry protest on the moral plane. No concrete suggestions are offered to fight out the evils described in the book. If there is any obvious 'lesson', Dickens the moralist points it out in these words at the end of the book:

I have said that they were truly happy; and without strong affection and humanity of heart and gratitude to that being whose code is Mercy, and whose great attribute is Benevolence to all things that breathe, happiness can never be attained (OT 392).

Surely this is no answer to any social problem from any political angle; it is purely Christian morality.
In GE Dickens exposes the inhuman conditions of the prison houses and the cruel treatment meted out to the prisoners. He touches the injustices of the poor Law, delays in administration of Justice. The administration of Justice was so harsh that many people were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, transported to Australia or sentenced to death even for minor offences. Society's attitude to orphans and stray children was severe and unsympathetic. They were driven to a life of crime or to early death. There was a wide and unbridgeable gulf between the rich and the poor. The gentry looked upon the poor people as belonging to an altogether different species. They thought it beneath their dignity to associate with the poor. That is why Pip cuts off all connections with Joe and all his old friends and relatives, when prosperous. Dickens does not approve of the suspicious and unsympathetic attitude which society took with regard to orphan children or the children of criminal parents. He is for making efforts to save these poor children from being driven to a life of crime.

In *Pickwick papers* Dickens has emphasized quality and attacked moral traditions. Keenly poignant are the pictures of prison life and the terrible life of
the streets. There was no limit to the greed and cunning of those like Tom Rocker in charge in debtor's prison. If they came across a rich person, they did not hesitate to eat him to alive. Far more wretched was the condition of the prisoners in the side of the prison. Pickwick was distressed to see Jingle there slowly starving to death. Sam once described to his master how in his earlier days he had his abode under the arches of the Waterloo Bridge. There one saw such sights of the misery of the shivering and the hungry that would pierce one's heart.

Dickens's characterisation of Sam Weller is a proof positive of the fact that he has the greatest sympathy for the poor classes. Sam is shown as a cockney without any education whatsoever and yet character is that of a gentleman of refined tastes. The result of this sympathetic treatment of the poor is that the general public came to know more about the poorer classes and to have a greater sympathy for them. In his treatment of the poor, Dickens shows also an intimate knowledge of human motives. We are made to see that although they might be illiterate and backward, yet they think and feel as the wealthier classes do. Their language might not be cultured, their mode of life below the average, yet they behave in a human manner. It is
this "humanitarian motif" in Dickens that has made him so widely popular. He has shown the vices and follies that exist in the lives of the poor classes and how best they can reform themselves. The attitude of Dickens is, in this sense, constructive and beneficial.

Dickens is a story-teller of the common lives of commonplace people in commonplace surroundings. He took the trivialities of everyday life, the little worries, the little pleasures, the little hardships, the little comedies, the little tragedies, and irradiated them with his glorious humour and overflowing sympathy.

"NN exposed what was going on behind the doors of private schools. This novel revealed to the public the vulgar and brutal ignorance of a certain class of teachers in private academies" (Lall 36). Dickens also gives us a picture of the conditions of work in factories that had sprung up all over the country as a result of the Industrial Revolution. But while he paints the educational system in ugly colours he has both praise and blame for the Industrial system. While some employers
are depicted as mean and exploiting, some are also portrayed as generous and considerate.

'Dotheboys' Hall run by Wackford Squeers and his wife is an unforgettable sketch of what a school ought not to be. There were strong rumours at that time that some schools in North of England were frauds. They fleeced the parents, and exploited the children and taught them nothing. Dickens personally investigated the conditions there and was moved to righteous indignation by the dishonesty and inhumanity he witnessed. In fact Dickens's verbal cartoon aroused public indignation and a number of real Dotheboys' Halls in England were closed down or reformed.

How forcefully the picture of Dotheboys' Hall stands out! The very name is significant. The sole aim of the institution is to 'do the boys', to exploit the orphans. The one-eyed squeers and the huge Mrs. Squeers are as ugly within as they are without. They skim the young ones entrusted to their care. The food given to the children is microscopic in quantity and horrible in quality. And to take away their appetite sulphur and treacle are forced down their throats. They are ill-clothed and very often they are deprived of the very
shoes they came in. For soap, towel and water they have
to compete with one another. The rooms are unheated and
ye have to sleep four or five on a hard bed. For
anything or everything they are beaten and scolded. Mr.
and Mrs. Squeers and even their son master squirees take a
hand in thrashing the boys. If a boy gets fever because
of the insanitary conditions of the place, Mrs. Squeers
calmly announces that the urchin is pretending. She
proceeds to beat the fever out of the impudent youngster.
No wonder many boys die after residing a while in this
paradise.

By drawing Squeers and Dotheboys' Hall Dickens
made sure that education in England would no longer be
left to the tender mercies of unscrupulous charlatans.

It is said that, as a result of the influence
this book exerted on the public, school boy's
backs were no longer caned, school boy's meat
became less tough and more plentiful, and their
milk was no longer so diluted with water" (Lall, HT
37).

Jayakantan as a Humanist : Humanism in the Early Works of
Jayakantan

Like Dickens Jayakantan too is a humanist.
Dickens drifts more and more towards humanism with the steady progress of his art whereas Jayakantan gradually drifts away from humanism after his novel *Pāricikkupō*. When he writes his first two novels, *Vālkkai Alaikkiratu* and *Unnaippōl Oruvan* he is a communist and a committed writer. The characters in these novels are drawn from the lower strata of society. Even as he is writing his novel *PAP*, he drifts away from the communist party. From this novel onwards his characters are drawn from the middle and upper class societies.

"Like Dickens, Jayakantan is eager to portray the lives of the parasites of society". (Cēcutācan 12).

A member of audience participating in a 'Meet the author's programme' sponsored by Sakitya Akademi in Madras asked Mr. Jayakantan: 'In your early writings you took up working class subjects and chose your characters from the proletarian sections. But later on you switched over to writing about middle class and affluent people. Was it because that you were frustrated with writing for the working class or because you wanted to show off your acquaintance with the upper class life, values and culture?'. Mr. Jayakantan did not agree with the contention
of the questioner. He had written about middle class life also when he was writing about the working men's life. Likewise even when he was taking up middle class themes he had not stopped writing about the working class life. 'A writer has to reflect the change in the society. Don't you know that the working class of the fifties itself has now changed into the middle class?' he shot back. (Viswanathan, Indian Express, Saturday, Dec 16, 1989).

In his novels written after PAP Jayakantan becomes a non-committed writer. After becoming a non-committed writer, he accepts traditional views, Hindu faith customs and rites and rituals and advocates them.

In his preface to Putia Vārppukāḷ, a collection of short stories Jayakantan writes: "My short stories are the outcome of my efforts to represent to you what I actually see" (60). This statement of Jayakantan is true of all his stories. He represents himself as a naturalist and impressionist. This shows how minutely he observes this world. In the words of one Western Critic, "Jayakantan's motivation is similar to that of Balzac, Zola and Gorki, that is, concern for the lot of
common man. He creates recognizable types, families, and human backgrounds" (Franklin 22).

Like most of the writers in Tamil, Jayakantan began his literary career as a short story writer. It is these short stories that brought him fame and name and got him the title "Cirukatai Manan" by people's Manram.

The short stories of Jayakantan reveal his humanistic approach. In many of his stories one character or the other, placed highly or lowly, displays in a flash as it were his or her lofty human spirit and humanism. It is seen, for instance, in the bully and pimp Carañkan in VA, in the quack "bird-astrologer", Manikkam in UO; the battered Harijan ex-serviceman, Ammaci in Prajayam; the unwashed Cannäci, Oñkur Cvamikal with his baby talk and strange laughter in Vilutukal and the urbane and sophisticated jail superintendent Rakava Aiyyar in Kai Vilãnu. In his preface to his novel VA Jayakantan writes:

The characters in this novel have some good in them. They also have their defects because they are men. There are also those who have been cast away by us as well as those from whom we have moved away. Life does not cast them away. They live too (5-6).
Jayakantan paints the feelings and passions, aims and achievements of the people of India. Many of his earlier stories dealt with the lives and loves, trials and tribulations and the cupidity and nobility of the humble and the lowly. During those years, and even subsequently, the criticism was occasionally made that he seemed to be able to write only about the "lower strata" Commenting on the point in an interview, Jayakantan said:

I write to refute generally held notions. Few generally held notions seem to be true. Either as a pastime or because of lack of time people formulate or get attached to some notions. But even those who subscribe to the view that there should be a new turn often 'hold the notion' that I have all along been writing about people of the lower strata. But haven't I really been writing about high level people among the so called 'lower strata' .... Who belongs to the higher strata and who to the lower strata? That cannot be determined by their position or by their place of living. It is by how they are ... how they live - that a
That was not a mere later day rationalization. More than nine years earlier he had made a similar assertion. "However lowly and 'decadent' are the matters that I have to take up broadly for depiction in my story, I tend to place special emphasis on whatever is elevating and meaningful for life embedded in them. And thus I sing of the glory of life" he wrote (Jayakantan Munnuraikal 70-71).

Jayakantan believed that among the obscure blossoms in the dust that he wrote about there were flowers of beauty and fragrances. "I want to proclaim to those very obscure blossoms in the mire that they are roses, jasmines, and even parijathams that are specially pleasing to God", he wrote. (Jayakantan Munnottam 130-132).

Jayakantan argued that life was full of complexity and that every issue pertaining to life was replete with contradictions. "I try to depict in my stories the nuances, emotions and meanings - as I view them - with as much sobriety and fineness as I am capable of" (Jayakantan, Munnuraikal 60). Neither the attitude
nor the results could commend themselves to the Zhadanovs in the communist party or others who believed in the "Proletarian" formula.

Even the independent critic, K.N. Subramanian once said: "Though Jayakantan supports progressive policies, three-fourths of the stories he writes are not in consonance with such progressivism" (quoted in Jayakantan preface to *Pramāmpatecām*). In a preface to a collection of stories entitled *Malai Mayakkam* published in 1962, Jayakantan indicated that his stories were not conceived by him as vehicles for soap-box rhetoric or propaganda for a political line. He wrote:

I regard it as my duty as a man to examine another man's course (without prejudice) bearing in mind the possible impact on him of the social milieu in which he lives, to avoid the temptation of rejecting it simply because it is not in accord with my own beliefs, and to see the human dharma in that man's action. But some progressives say that I have begun to stay away from the right path. Let me tell them something! This is a matter relating to Art. Perhaps laws and books on moral codes alone may take no note of human emotions. But not Art.
The doctrines I personally believe in will tend to have a certain flexibility in so far as they relate to the way I depict the emotions of characters in my stories. I see in each of them the Human being with his potential for growth, affection and humanism" (6-7).

How should a discerning person distinguish between what is "progressive" and what is "non-progressive"? Posing the question in his Preface to Pramūḍāpatīcam Jayakantan wrote:

The man who has an old-fashioned tuft is a reactionary. Our Puranas are all reactionary. Our sāstras are in their entirety reactionary. Such views are held up by some as very 'progressive'. Changing your name (from Sanskrit to Tamil) is progressive. Spouting atheism is progressive. Talking about foreign examples at the drop of a hat is progressive. Decrying ourselves is progressive. Breaking the idols of gods is progressive. Categorising progressiveness and reactionaries in this fashion cannot be regarded as the hallmark of perceptive men. He who rejects selfish greed, refuses to direct hatred against one or more
sections of mankind, but who strives, with favour, to lead a life exemplifying a commitment to the progress of mankind and a more elevated life for all - such a man is indeed progressive to that extent, entitled to the respect of those possessed of human hearts.

Viewed in that light the Sankara Sarma of our story living among ..... arrogant, hollow, double-faced Brahmins who decry our past and kill India's soul is an outstanding revolutionary!

My Sarma may have adopted a course and a code of conduct that are at variance with my course and my beliefs. But even after I realize that the basic objective that I have set before myself is the same as that believed in by Sarma, it will be ungenerous and unjust to subject him to condemnation and verification..... The spirit of humanism that he displays in his deep desire to render intellectual service and safeguard and promote spiritual values is not in conflict with the spirit animating the true progressive (4-6).

The central characters of Unnaippōl Oruvan were
drawn from the very "lowest strata" of society, from the ranks of the humblest of slum-dwellers. It was the duty of the progressive to exploit such wonderful material in an "appropriate" fashion. In this connection Jayakantan wrote:

Some say, 'Temples! puranas! Itihasas! You talk about them and write about them! How stupid! Look over here, look at the masses! ....

And they point only to the slums. In the midst of the very people they point out, there is a temple, there is some sort of faith in our sastras.

But our friends close their eyes to all these. They do not regard the 'people' in the slums as human beings: they do not conceive of their having human feelings. They point only to their bellies.

They think of people as a mean rabble by using whom they can fulfil their own stupid designs. This is their general tendency.

They reject the notion that India had ever "lived". It is all falsehood, according to
them. They assert that it is they who will make India live 'How could anything have lived before we came on the scene?' they even make bold to ask. Such men are blind! .... They are perverts. In whatever field they exist, they strive to bring about destruction - but with lofty slogans.

To keep on talking about them is a waste of time. But not to talk about them is dangerous. We should be on our guard to ensure that their vociferous and inane arguments do not overwhelm us,

Where does India 'live?' The places vary, but the 'levels' that are immanent in each are similar. In the slum too dwells the sanctity of the temple. Inside temple the degradation of the slum has permeated. He who by his efforts perceives - who has darshan of - the loftiness of man emerging in any place comprehends the soul of this land of ours, the soul of humanity' (Preface to UP 5-7) he wrote.

The short stories that appeared in the monthly journals Tamarai and Caracvat show Jayakantan as a
committed writer. He deals with the poor, the workers and orphans and their problems in his work.

*Oru Piṭi Coru* (1951) is about the people of the lower strata of society. They have incurred the hatred and displeasure of the society. They are coolies. If they don't get a handful of food, they will be deprived of their life. The little Maṇṇanakāṭṭi takes away by force the food in his mother's hands. Maṇṇanakāṭṭi and his mother hail from a slum area at Madras. She has no permanent job. When she does not get any job, she makes her livelihood by selling her body. That is her way of life. About their way of life Jayakantan writes:

Prostitution is not a profession to Račatti or Māriyāyi. Their main job is to carry firewoods from the timber shop which is opposite to their platform. When they don't have their job, when there is drought, when there is a great demand, they will do some other work (13).

In the short story *Vēlai koṭuttavan* (1956) the coolie karumān Kantan gives some work to Račatti. The work is to cook food for him. They understand each other well and become life partners. They belong to the lower
strata of society. Kantan is not even considered to be a human being by the society in which he lives.

In the short story Tireṭil (1958) Jayakantan presents the religious feelings of a press worker. Vināyakamūrtti, an important character in this story is a machine to his master. He plans to get married. But his mechanical life affects his health. The doctors declare that he is suffering from hernia. As a result, the marriage is stopped. Thus Jayakantan presents the sufferings of a worker in a sympathetic manner.

Jayakantan raises his characters in his short stories to the level of human beings. Manṇāṅkaṭṭi, Kantan, Rācāṭti, Kaṇṭiammai, Vināyakamūrtti, Muniammai, Raṅkan, Cappāpati, Rākāvan, Kōvintaṅ, the leper-beggar Vēlan, Nantakōpāl - all are treated as worse than dogs by the society. They are victims of the disintegration of the society. They are the pivots round which Jayakantan's stories revolve. Jayakantan paints their life as he sees them. He does not subject their life to research. Nor he does he raise the question: Why do they lead such a life?. He just wants to show that that is their way of life. The short stories of Jayakantan show
his deep love and sympathy for the poor and the downtrodden.

Jayakantan makes an effort to find out the feelings and passions of human beings in the world of animals. Kēvalam Oru Nay, Nikki - these stories are examples to this point. The friends Vēlaṇ and Mannāru become enemies because of some land dispute. They drive away the dog that they have brought up with love and affection. Vīraṇ, the dog feels sorry for their enmity. He is orphaned. This is the story of Kēvalam Oru nāy. Nikki is a high breed dog in a rich man's house. It mingles with the street dogs and is happy. In that world there is no division between the rich and the poor. This we don't find in the world of human beings. Thus the problems of human life are shown through the world of animals.

Jayakantan attacks the traditional views and habits of Hindus in his short stories. The society does not approve of a man marrying a woman he loves and leading their married life. It subjects them to hardships and miseries. The Hindu faith stands as an obstacle for their prosperity. This is the plot of Putia Vārpukkal. The short story entitled Yuka Canti attacks
the Hindu faith that the widows should not remarry. Kītā is a child widow. Her parents do not welcome her remarriage. Kītā's grandmother welcomes her move. The shocked grandmother after reading Kītā's letter tells her son thus: 'Yes, my son. I am mad. I haven't become mad now. This is old madness. Let it go with me. She is freed from her madness all of a sudden" (25).

Akpi pravēcam (1965) is one of the later stories of Jayakantan. This is the story of Kanka, a poor girl. She is a college girl. She is raped. Jayakantan treats her pitiable plight with sympathy. He allows her to wander as a human being without being dubbed as a raped girl. Through this story Jayakantan attacks the traditional views.

Jayakantan lashes the shams and hypocrisies of the modern civilized society. This we find in his short stories Tamilaṭci, Paṭṭapam Cirikkiratu, Rikcākārap Pācai, Section 54, and Paṭṭini Paramparai.

Jayakantan's short stories reveal his outlook on social life. They deal with the problems of the society. Jayakantan was a member of the communist party in the beginning of his career. This enabled him to enrich his
experience. This experience of his blossomed into humanism. His humanism is an important aspect of his attitude to life. The downtrodden, the poor, the untouchable, the people who are denied of their life, the beggars and the prostitutes are his characters. Jayakantan represents their life and presents their customs and superstition and attacks them. This humanism of Jayakantan which is prevalent in his short stories pervades the other writings and works of Jayakantan.

Jayakantan's humanism finds its finest expression in the novels of Jayakantan. In many of his novels one character or the other, whether placed high or low, displays in a flash as it were his or her lofty human spirit. It is seen, for instance, in the bully and pimp, Cāraṅkan in VA; in the quack "bird astrologer", Māṅikkam in UO; the battered Harijan exserviceman, Ammāci in pralayam; the unwashed sanyasi, Ōṅkūr Cvāmikāl with his baby talk and strange laughter in Viḻutukal and the urbane and sophisticated jail superintendent, Rākava Aiyyar in Kai Viḻaṅku.

Jayakantan becomes a non-committed writer in his later novels. This causes a change in his attitude towards life. His early works reflect his experiences in
the society. But in his later novels he justifies and explains the behaviour of his characters.

"His novel VA reveals the limitless love he has for humanity" (Virācāmi 163) The main characters of this novel are Rācā and Taṅkam. Rācā is an orphan who has deserted his home. Taṅkam is an orphan without none to protect her. Rācā saves her from her distress and marries her. Rācā is opposed to the suppression in the society. He is eager to put an end to Citamparam pillai and Cārāṅkaṇ. But he is quite unaware of the means and ways of destroying them. His is an individual struggle. What he can do is to elope with Taṅkam. Cārāṅkaṇ and Raciya are declassed characters with no affinity for society. They have been neglected by it. Jayakantan depicts not only their world. He also presents the world of hypocrites like Chairman Citamparam. The poor and the downtrodden find a prominent place in this novel.

Vy (1964) gives an accurate picture of the life of the slum-dwellers at Madras. Jayakantan records the life of the humblest slum-dwellers carefully and minutely. He describes the life of the heroine Taṅkam thus:

"After many days Taṅkam wanted to dress her hair. In day
time she is seen painted with cement and lime mortars. Since she has to return from her work a little late she can't even wash her body in that house" (13).

"The bathroom that is common to ten families has no door. Tankam uses her sari as a screen and finishes her bath. At the entrance only ladies and children are seen, no man is there. Men can't come home as they are working under the table in their office. All of them are coolies" (13).

The conflict between Tankam's motherly affections and passionate love, the change of attitude in Citti when he realizes that quack "bird astrologer" has arrived to share his mother's affection, the struggle, the trouble and tribulations of the people living around them in the slum area - all these are depicted in such a way as to elicit our sympathy for them. In this connection P.K. Sundararajan and S. Sivapathasundaram write:

Jayakantan who portrays characters on the basis of humanism presents a suffering woman from the lower strata of society in his novel Unnaippōl Oruvan. As a result of the miseries resulting from poverty she does not know who the father of
her son is. In this miserable condition she goes in search of a new lover to support her. When her heart is torn between her love for her lover and motherly affection for her son, her little son despises her and goes away from her. Noticing the anxiety of the mother to bring back her son, the new lover deserts her. When the helpless woman is experiencing labour pain, an old lady who is giving her a helping hand, finds her little son and brings her home. Even in her pitiable condition, her little son despises her. When his mother dies after begetting a female child, he takes upon himself the task of bringing up the child in a casual way. The way in which Jayakantan portrays the difficulties that a poor lady faces in fulfilling her natural desires kindles the sympathy of the readers.

Life in the slum area is presented in the novel Prajayam also. The novel presents the pitiable plight and the despicable condition of the people when a storm is in its fury. Pāppātti, Mānikkam and Pēṭciamāl, pakkiri and kōkilā are treated worse than beasts by society. But the old man Ammāci seems to be a man of self-respect. He
looks sane even though he has been subject to so many hardships. The people in the slum area are experiencing suffering. But they are not mentally upset. Only Celvan belonging to the upper class society experiences mental problems. Jayakantan's immense faith in humanism reaches its apogee in *Yārukkanā Aḷutān*, a moving talk about Joseph, an illiterate dish-washer in a run-down hotel who sees God in every human being.

*Yārukkanā Aḷutān* is the story of Joseph. He cannot give expression to his feelings. When he comes to know that his friend wants to possess his wife, he sacrifices her for him. His master Natarāca Mutaliyar accuses him of theft. Jayakantan looks at the co-workers of Joseph with a spirit of humanism. The saint who is deprived of his money and the woman staying in the hotel are sympathetic towards Joseph. *Karugaiyināl Alla* and *Kaivilāṅku* (*Kāval Teyvam* 1964) deal with the common people of society. *Karugaiyināl Alla* is about Kantacāmi Mutaliyar who is suffering from epilepsy. He works hard unmindful of his deformity. *kaivilāṅku* is about a prisoner. These novels deal with the lives of the people drawn from middle class life. These people are tossed hither and thither like the dry leaves. They do not know why they toil and moil or why they are exploited and
cheated. They cannot come together and find a solution to their problems.

Jayakantan brings out their ignorance and innocence in the novel Varukkaka Alutān. The innocent Joseph works like a bull and finishes the work assigned to him. He is unmindful of the world around him. His master Natarāca Mutaliyār imagines that it will be good if all the people are like Joseph. Muttu, a worker asks him to advance some money. This he does not like. He wishes that Muttu should be like Joseph. At this Muttu says, "There is only one thief, Joseph in the world of masters. If all people are like him, we can't come anywhere near you" (114).

The Slum-dwellers' life presented in both UO and Pralayam abounds in quarrels and problems. They never fail to make use of the opportunities at their disposal to solve the problems arising out of poverty. They want to solve the problems at once. People like battered Harijan ex-serviceman think about their problems. But his relatives cannot keep pace with his agile thoughts. Jayakantan portrays only such people in his early novels. He has created Prammopatecam with the same point of view.

The central theme of the story is the encounter and confrontation between a high minded, learned and
orthodox Brahmin cook Sankara Sarma and his assistant Seshadiri an equally highminded Communist, athiest and an activist in the hotel workers' union. The conflict between the two is irreconcilable but each comprehends the sincerity and mobility of the other. Each perceives that the other too is inspired by manithābhimānam in his fervent adherence to the cause and course he believes in. Being men of decent instincts, neither can conceive of demolishing the other and grinding him into the dust (Venkataramani XXVII).

The characters portrayed in his novels UO and Prajāyām have a common personality. They are normal people living amidst us. They are not abnormal. Nor are they escapists. In UO Taṅkam wants to enjoy her life. Though Citti is a little boy, he faces life with courage and confidence. Cēcātri and Ciṭṭiholō opposite views. They have different approaches to life. Maitrēyi possesses the power of determining the course of her life. Pāppātti frankly accepts the changes in life. "Jayakantan's approach is objective. He portrays his characters in their own environment. He considers it his duty. He paints them as they are. He does not probe
into their inconsistencies in their life. If he had tried to do so, he would have become a realist" (Totatri, Jayakantan.38).

Humanism in the Later Novels of Dickens

Unlike Jayakantan Dickens reveals the philosophy of humanism in his later novels also.

In *DC* Dickens provides a scathing criticism of the system of teaching in schools run by masters like Creakle and his companions Canning. Reforms are suggested by Dickens in the education of children. The academy run by Dr. Smart provides a model for all educational institutions.

*BH* is a tragedy which was suggested by the legal proceedings arising from the estate of one William Jennings who had died in 1798, leaving property at Birmingham worth many millions. The case of Jarndyce and Jarndyce is a commentary, at once tragic and satirical, on the abuses of the old courts of chancery, the delays and costs of which brought misery and ruin to the litigants. The novel tells the sombre story of hearts worn to despairs and minds driven to madness by the inscrutable injustice and the infinite delays of the law.
From the physical fog that blots out the city of London, Dickens here passed to the dreadful night of spiritual darkness that is at its thickest and most terrible in the workings of a system of law that had lost touch with human needs. In addition to this theme, there is the shocking case of young Joe, symbolic of utter destitution leading to death by starvation.

As Edgar Johnson in his Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph says "It (Bleak House) regards legal justice not accidental but as organically related to the very structure of that society" (762). Each of the important characters in this novel represents some part of Dickens's diagnosis of the infection he finds in the body of society in Victorian England. His attack is directed against law and society. The very name of Dedlock illustrates Dickens's symbolic point, for all of Leicester's friends are dedicated to deadlock in social conflict. Dickens extends this indictment of social deadlock to the general disease which infects the caste system, the Parliament, the economic system, and orthodox religion. Mrs. Jellyby represents religious stupidity which devotes itself to foreign missions at the expense of the happiness of her own home. Her daughter, Cadely tries to escape from the stultifying home atmosphere by
way of marriage to Prince Turveydrop, a young man who has a Leech-like father.

The whole political structure in England is based upon a foundation of exploitation, poverty, and misery. We are shown the wretched hovels of the brickmakers near the town of St. Albans. Within the damp and musty cottages of the brickmakers, we see a woman with a black eye nursing a poor little gasping baby by the fire, and a man stained with clay and mud, looking very dissipated, lying at full length on the ground, smoking a pipe, and similar other distressing sights. Worse still is the London slum of Tom-All-Alones. This is a filthy locality of dilapidated houses, reeking with foul stains and smells, dripping with dirty rain, and sheltering with its ruined walls large members of wretched human beings. Every other day, a house in this slum comes crashing down, wounding or killing some of the inmates. Such accidents make a paragraph in the newspapers and fill a bed or two in the nearest hospital. But nothing is done to remedy this hopeless state of affairs. Questions are asked in Parliament, and the matter is discussed repeatedly without any concrete steps being decided upon to improve the conditions of life in such slums.
In *HT* Dickens directs his fire against the unimaginative heartlessness of the industrial set-up of the day which condemned thousands to a life of poverty and misery in the name of economic progress. This novel is a denunciation of utilitarianism and the laissez-faire theory. Dickens attacks two aspects of the mid-nineteenth century England. In Bounderby he has immortalised the capitalist employer who takes shelter behind laissez-faire economic doctrines to line his own pockets at the cost of the poor 'hands'. In Thomas Gradgrind he exposes the absurdity of a system of education that lays stress on facts and figures and so-called proved scientific theories to the total exclusion of the gentler and nobler impulses of the heart.

The utilitarian principle finds its exponents and champions in the two leading characters of *HT* - Gradgrind and Boundery. Gradgrind's theory of education is evidently an offshoot of his utilitarian attitude to life. This man emphasizes the importance of facts, and fails to attach any importance to feelings and emotions. He wants to develop the reasoning faculty of the pupils in his school and, to that end, he exhorts the new school master to teach the boys and the girls in his model school: facts and facts alone and to root out everything
else. Gradgrind is a man of realities, a man of facts and calculations, a man who proceeds upon the principle that two and two are four and nothing more. This "eminently practical man" (9) goes about with a rule, a pair of scales and the multiplication table always in his pocket because life and human beings are matters of facts and figures for him. He addresses Sissy as "girl number twenty" (3) and the definition of a horse in his view must take into account such facts as the number of this animal's feet, teeth and similar other details, while the first-hand knowledge of a horse which Sissy happens to have is of no account to him. Boys and girls must not exercise their fancy, because facts do not permit the use of the fancy; for this reason carpets must not have representation of flowers on them, and wall-paper must not have representations of horses on it. The new schoolmaster engaged by Gradgrind is himself a product of the same theory of education and has accumulated countless facts pertaining to a large number of the branches of knowledge. Dickens explicitly condemns this schoolmaster then he says about him: "If he had only learnt a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more" (7).
Gradgrind has a matter of fact home (Stone Lodge) and looks forward to "making an arithmetical figure in Parliament" (8). He brings up his own children in accordance with his theory of education. Being an eminently practical man, he does not allow his children to wonder at anything; he does not allow them to learn the usual nursery rhymes; he does not allow them to see a face in the moon; he takes every possible precaution also to suppress their natural instincts. He regards the circus as a triviality, and severely rebukes his "metallurgical Louisa" (10) and his "mathematical Tom" (10) for having felt inquisitive about what goes on inside a circus. These children are fed only upon facts and are starved of the opportunities to develop their imagination and feelings. Gradgrind succeeds in stamping out whatever tenderness of fancy or imagination they have. The sad consequences of utilitarianism are to be seen in the fate which Louisa meets in her married life, wrecking of Tom's career, and the self-interest which governs the actions of Bitzer.

Bitzer is yet another illustration of the disastrous consequences of the utilitarian approach to life. Bitzer has grown into a young man without any feelings or sentiments; he is not even prepared to marry
in order to rear a family; he believes in the most rigid economy, not only saving a certain sum regularly from his wages. Besides, self-interest has now become his governing principle. In order to gain promotion in the Bank, he would not mind sacrificing Tom by handing him over to Boundary to be prosecuted for robbery. When Gradgrind reminds Bitzer of having been educated at his school, Bitzer retorts that his schooling was paid for, that it was a bargain which ended with his leaving the school. On this occasion, too, Dickens makes an ironic commentary on Gradgrind's philosophy according to which everything is to be paid for, nobody is ever to give anybody anything without a price, gratitude is to be abolished and every inch of the existence of mankind from birth to death is to be a bargain across a counter. This is the kind of attitude to life which results from the practice of utilitarianism.

Bounderby of Coketown, banker and industrialist is another embodiment of the utilitarian principle. He illustrates the principle of laissez faire. Bounderby is described as a "man perfectly devoid of sentiment" (12). He is a close friend of Gradgrind, and has an equally practical mind. But Bounderby goes one step further: there is no human touch in him at all, as there is
certainly in Gradgrind. Bounderby is opposed to the abandoned Sissy being adopted by Gradgrind who is moved by human feelings to take that girl under his protection. Bounderby is a man "made out of a coarse material" (12). He constantly boasts of his being a self-made man: he looks upon his workmen as tools by using which in the proper manner he can enrich himself. He is proud of having a housekeeper with aristocratic connections and never tires of exalting this lady's background just as he never tires of insisting upon his own humble birth. He is frankly contemptuous of the needs, requirements, and demands of his workmen, because he thinks that these people would not be satisfied with anything less than turtle soup and venison, with a gold spoon. His treatment of Stephen, both when Stephen seeks his guidance in the matter of his domestic life and when he is called upon to supply inside information about the activities of the workers union, shows his utter callousness. He dismisses Stephen from employment without realizing the enormity of the damage he is doing to a man whom he himself recognized as a "steady hand" (63). Wealth is all that matters to him; he fully represents that greed for money which Dickens condemned so much. He regards industrial smoke as "meat and drink"
(112) for the workers and for the factory-owners; this smoke is, in his opinion, the healthiest thing in the world in all respects, and particularly for the lungs. The monotonous labour of the workers is described by him as "the pleasantest work there is, the highest work there is and the best-paid work there is" (113). There is no room in his thinking for any improvement in the working conditions of his labour force. The only improvement that is possible now is to lay down Turkey carpets on the floor of the factories. Dickens's portrayal of Bounderby is as severe as a condemnation of utilitarianism as could be imagined from the pen of a great satirist.

HT also contains graphic pictures of the ugliness of industrialism which was raising its head in the Victorian Age. Coketown is described as a town of machinery and tall Chimneys out of which unending columns of smoke rose upwards for ever and ever. The streets of the town, whether large or small, are exactly like one another: they all go in and out at the same hours with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work. Thus the monotony of the workmen's life is fully conveyed to us. The need for any relaxation or physical relief is never realized by the employers. In fact the workmen are not men at all: they are "hands", so many
hundred hands, "so many hundred horse steam power" (61). These men are not supposed to have any souls; they are hands which have to work upon "the crashing, smashing, tearing mechanisms, day in and day out" (61). Time goes on in this industrial town like its own machinery, so much material used, so much money made. The man who makes money through the labours of these hands regards the smoke of the chimneys as meat and drink for the capitalist. Any sympathy for the workmen is regarded by this capitalist as "humbugging sentiment".

Dickens's criticism of the economic system is plain. He is obviously opposed to the excess of selfish capitalism. He knows that too many workers are underpaid. If something is not done to organise our economy so that labours have a fair chance to make a reasonable living, he states, there will be a trouble.

Dickens is aware of the threat of revolution or other violence. Yet Stephen, a sympathetic character, does not join the union. The organizer Slackbridge is given a most offensive mannerism of speech and the general impression of the union is that it forms because foolish capitalists will make no concession to reality. Workers join a union in an effort to protect themselves.
Dickens says, in describing the Coketown hands, that when they rise 'like the sea', they do harm chiefly to themselves. This is their dilemma. The implication is that strikes and violence do not help in the long run.

This is also the moral of his later novel *TT.* Revolution, as he sees it, is merely a monster that is begotten by tyranny and always ends by devouring its own instruments. In Sydney Carton's vision at the foot of the guillotine, he foresees Defarge and the other leading spirits of the terror all perishing under the same knife - which, in fact, was approximately what happened. This novel, as well as *HT,* contributes evidence to show how deep was Dickens's horror of revolutionary hysteria.

Apart from his supreme value as an entertainer in fiction, Dickens earned the gratitude of posterity for awakening the social conscience. In an age marred by callousness and complacency Dickens never lost his faith in fundamental human goodness. Although he could see with clear eyes the stronger impersonal evil created by society, he continued to believe in the kindly fatherhood of God and in the triumphant power of love. Organisations, whether political or charitable or
religious and systems, no matter how efficient, were no substitute for the warm human relationships that were based on man's responsibility for his fellows. In his ideal of spontaneous benevolence flowing from some inexhaustible fountain of human goodness Dickens saw the great solvent of the grief and misery that poisoned life around him.

Dickens changed and developed. He felt no longer content with improvisation, and he was no longer satisfied with attacking isolated evils such as the working of the poor law or the inequities of some Yorkshire private schools. He began to attack what seemed to him the root of all contemporary evils, namely money; money is the great subject of the novels of the second part of his career.

The first novel in which the theme of money as the root of all evils appears is *Dombey and Son*. It is a novel about the British merchant. The scene is overwhelmingly London. The stage-coach has gone; the railway has taken its place, London of this novel is being torn up to make the way for the railway. Indeed, the dominant image of this novel is the railway; it is an image of change and destruction.
Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend* is certainly his most thoroughgoing attack on the society of his day.

In Mr. Podsnap Dickens expresses uncompromisingly his hatred and scorn of the materialism of his times and its deliberate blindness. Podsnap is a businessman. His friends are the new-rich Veneerings, who are only too eager to take up the Boffins when the old dust-man inherits the dust-heaps actually existed. They were in fact huge heaps of rubbish and refuse. They were enormously valuable, for their owners raked them over for the jewellery and coins found in them, while their other contents - bones, broken bottles, cooking utensils, skins and so on could be sold to a variety of industries. They were, of course, the breeding-places of disease, but they also bred money for their owners and Dickens in his novel looks upon them as the great source of money. The disease-ridden dirt, Dickens seems to say, is what Mr. Podsnap and his kind are trafficking in; it is where their power and luxury come from; it is this which allows them to live in deliberate ignorance of the society and it promotes further corruption.
of the natural sympathy of man for man (Lall, BH 21).

In his novels he attacked the injustices of the Poor Law, delays in administration of justice, the cruelties of schoolmasters, imprisonment for debts and so on. But he was not a pioneer in these attacks. He was not a pioneer; in fact he was often behind the times. He seemed topical to thousands, he was not too topical for them to see the point, nor too advanced to have the public conscience on his side. Detached now from his time he may seem more original and adventurous than he was: for then he was only giving wider publicity in 'inimitable' form to a number of social facts and social abuses which had already been recognized if not explored before him. He shared a great deal of common experience with his public, so that it could gratefully and proudly say, 'How true!'. He so exploited his knowledge that the public recognized its master in knowing but he also shared with it an attitude to what they both knew, and caught exactly the tone which clarified and reinforced the public's sense of right and wrong and flattered its moral feelings.
Dickens's social satire has been criticised by a number of eminent critics on the grounds of a deficiency of intellectual strain in his writings. He appears to be rather superficial. The social evils are symptomatic of some hidden malady, something basically wrong with the system. Dickens does not care to investigate this malady or attack this system. Dobree is of the view that this giant never grew up intellectually. Whenever he touches upon social reform or anywhere begins to think, he falls below the level of second rate. Such a view about the lack of reflectiveness in Dickens is expressed by Hugh Walker in *The Victorian Era in Literature* (20).

The criticism levelled against Dickens by Dobree or Hugh Walker is not totally unjust. But it should be clearly understood that Dickens sought the solution of social problems in the change of spirit in men rather than in any change in the fundamental structure of society. One might say that he directs his anger at the human beings that constitute society rather than at society as an institution. His quarrel is with human beings: Why are they so petty and narrow minded, so brutal and inconsiderate? The truth is Dickens's criticism of society is almost exclusively moral. Hence the utter lack of any constructive suggestion anywhere in
his work. He attacks the law parliamentary government, the educational system and so forth, without very clearly suggesting what he would put in their places. Of course, it is not necessarily the business of a novelist, or a satirist, to make constructive suggestions, but the point is that Dickens's attitude is at bottom not even destructive. There is no clear sign that he wants the existing order to be overthrown, or that he believes it would make very much difference if it were overthrown. For in reality his target is not so much society as 'human nature'.

It is wishful thinking to suppose that laws are changed on the protests of the poets and writers. If we come to ask whether any piece of legislation or any particular reform was directly due to Dickens's work, the answer must be 'no'. In this connection Rajinder Paul observes: "In all practical matters his ideas ran alongside those people more closely connected with practical things; he did not initiate, and in his major designs he did succeed" (OR 21). The most impressive thing about reform between 1832 and 1870 was its sloth. No genuine attempt to meet his objections to the Poor Law was made till the appointment of the Royal Commission of 1905. Private persons were still imprisoned for debts
over 20 pounds until 1861, and imprisonment for debt was not formally abolished before 1869. Effective compulsion on local authorities about Public Health only began in 1866 after still another epidemic of Cholera, and the local Government Board was only set up in the year after Dickens's death. The Civil Service was thoroughly reorganised only in 1870, and the foundations of a natural system of education was delayed till the same year. In the face of these facts it is clear that the immediate effect of Dickens's work was negligible.

Still the fact remains that a great number of Dickens's contemporaries adopted his reformism seriously. Whether it is true or not, (that Dickens lacked reflective vein) the fact remains that a great number of his contemporaries - not all of them fools by the standards of the time - and yet a great number after him - not all so wise - adopted his reformism seriously. His novels at least created a climate of awareness conducive to effective practical reform. As Harry Blamires rightly points out, "Social passion is a continuing factor in Dickens's work and encourages reformers and revolutionaries to claim him for their own" (358).
Dickens was a social reformer but he was not a belatant propagandist in the sense H.G. Wells is. H.G. Wells's method in eradicating social evils was quite different from that of a bully and a hector whereas Dickens achieved his aim by gentle persuasiveness. Compton Rickett rightly remarks that Dickens "proved to be that type of reformer who could moralise with smile on his lips, and mix his sermonic powders in such excellent jam that his contemporaries did not realize for a while that he was doctoring them for their good" (499).

Dickens's criticism is relevant to all ages. It is true that Dickens is a great writer for any age and much of his satire is of enduring significance. His criticism reminds us of the grave faults common more or less to all mankind. In this connection Rajinder Paul writes: "He was truly a Victorian and yet he is for all ages. His revolt was simply and solely the eternal revolt; it was the revolt of the weak against the strong. He did not dislike this or that argument for oppression. He disliked a certain look on the face of a man when he looks down on another man. And that look on that face is the only thing in the world that we have really to fight between here and the fires of Hell" (21).
Humanism in the Later Novels of Jayakantan

While Dickens continues to be a humanist in his later novels also, Jayakantan ceases to be a champion of the underdog in his later novels. As long as Jayakantan is a committed writer he is a humanist and staunch supporter of the poor and downtrodden. When he ceases to be a committed writer, his outlook on life undergoes a change. The early Jayakantan's attitude to life is different from that of the later Jayakantan. The later Jayakantan has little sympathy for any section of the society. He becomes an independent and non-committed writer.

There are multifarious differences between the stories of Jayakantan which were written when he was in the communist party and those written after he left it. The partisanship and the optimistic outlook which were apparent in the stories written when he was a member of the communist party paved the way for a kind of detachment and a sense of alienation and aloofness which are discernable in his later stories. That is why an American critic named Albert B. Franklin writes: "Jayakantan began his literary life as a communist,
having joined the party when he was twelve. He has since become disillusioned with the communist party" (22).

After becoming a non-committed writer Jayakantan explores several significant themes including sexual taboos, mental illness, women's rights, man-women relations, the cult of the 'film star' and the tyranny of "community opinion". And he never hesitates to make explicit the reasons why he considers these themes relevant and significant.

The old hackneyed charges levelled against Jayakantan are: How could the march of socialism benefit by the kind of stories he writes? Why doesn't he write on the most and urgent and crying social issues of the hour? To these charges Jayakantan replied that he would never be a clown who would strut on the stage with a "regal" gait, proclaiming that he was a revolutionary and that he created literature exclusively for the uplift of society. "This does not mean that I consider those who do so necessarily as clowns. They may even be dressed for the regal role. But I am not donning robes for any role. I am what I am" (Preface to RM 5).

A man should be judged not on the basis of the labels that he sported on his lapel but what he stood for
and what he died. In his Preface to Kurupīṭam he declared: "A truly 'revolutionary' spirit, self-respect, and a determination to struggle for one's rights are to be embodied in one's thoughts, not merely in the slogans one shouts" (7).

Some asserted that he dealt too explicitly with sex that he had come under the influence of Freudianism. Jayakantan responded by pointing out that he had heard the name of the father of psychoanalysis but had made no study of his work. "Even if one wrote on the basis of Freudian insights, it is not a matter for shame. But to mention my name in that connection will mean according to me undeserved respect!" (Preface to Ricimūlam 6). He went on to explain his personal position.

Sex is not a mere bedroom issue. It is a social issue too. Like hunger ....

Those who investigate social evils do not look at hunger only. They see too how a cruel society gives rise to many abominations in the relations between the sexes.

When you look at revolutions.... and examine in the society concerned the manner in which women were suppressed and the relations between the
sexes were constricted, you can see..... the place that should be accorded to a proper understanding of the sex issue.

To consider it as an issue of the rich is rank stupidity.

A person who does not have a healthy outlook on the sex issue is not a developed person. A society of such persons cannot be a mature society. Thus sex becomes an issue here - a social issue.

Because of the constraints that exist, the development of individual into well-rounded human beings becomes difficult. Even those with education and wealth find it a problem to evolve into large-hearted human beings” (preface to RM 8-9)

In his Kōkilā Enna Ceytu Viṭṭā Jayakantan deals with the arrant sexism of even a seemingly sophisticated and educated male who is enormously concerned with his image as a "modern" person with a "scientific" outlook and a "commitment" to radical transformation of the country. Editor Āṅantarāmaṇ who has won high praise for the lofty and "modern" views that
he purveys to his admiring readers finds it acutely admirable to reconcile himself to the idea of real freedom and equality for his wife, Kōkilā. "We are yet to become conscious of the fact that a woman is a human being too and that it is natural for her to have desires and weaknesses even as we have. Nearly by refusing to acknowledge the existence of this state of affairs we cannot expect to progress" (12), says Jayakantan in his preface to the story.

"Jayakantan is highly influenced by Markist views about society and arts though he is little reluctant to declare openly that he is a Marxist" (Samuel 118).

In those days Jayakantan was proud of being a full-time member of the Communist Party. But he did not have deep faith or interest in Marxism. In his introduction to RM, he himself says:

Some say I am writing stories which are woven around the working class, the destitute, the poor, the hungry and the prostitutes with the impact of the ideals of Marxism. Yet, I am not going to repudiate these statements. I don't know whether such statements are true or not since I am not well versed in Marxism. In my
earlier days I was proud of such statements since I was then in the Communist Party (121).

Jayakantan thought that worshipping Marx, sympathising with the poor and being angry with those who did harm to them was Communism. In his *A Literary Man's Political Experiences* he writes:

I had always viewed myself as the unattached hero of my story, my life, my time. The reason for this is simply that I had, on my own volition, made myself the child of an ideology. The communist party became my gnana thanthai - an expression that he rather clumsily translated as intellectual father. I regarded myself as the gnana putra of my gnana thanthai. But when a gnana thanthai deteriorates and becomes an agnani, the gnana putra will not accept and adopt the former's agnana. If this is understood, it will become clear to you that I have subjected communists to critical scrutiny out of a sense of duty towards them (221).

It is because of such an attitude that he could not identify himself with Communism. A communist's outlook on life has not affected Jayakantan.
The gnana putra who drifted away from gnana thanthai is now a prodigal son. Though his humanism, which is an outcome of his contact with his gnana thanthai, finds its finest expression in his short stories and early novels, in his later works we find that he is attracted by the aspects of the upper-class society.

At the beginning of his career Jayakantan sympathises with the poor and paints their life with his love for the downtrodden. But his clear outlook on life changes as he becomes a non-committed writer. He thinks that he is common to all and that he is superior to all. In his preface to RM he writes: "I do not belong to any party. I am what I am" (120).

The humanism that we find in his short stories finds its finest expression in his novel Prajâyam. The hero of the day time passenger train is an old man, Ammâci. He is a character in the novel. He life in the slum area forms the plot of the novel. The relationship and behaviour of pâppâtti, Mânikkam, Kôkilâ while in poverty are shown in this novel. He paints their life as he sees them.
We find for the first time subjective trend in his novel. We cannot find a character like Celvan in his early novels. Celvan belongs to the upper strata of society. He engages himself in reading in a solitary room upstairs. He has sexual relationship with pāppāṭṭi. He is an educated and inefficient man. He does not think about any other world except his. He is totally different from Joseph, Kantacāmi Mutaliyār, Caṅkara Carmā, Ammāci and Cēcātri. In short, Celvan is a self-centred man.

From this novel onwards Jayakantan's objective attitude gives place to subjective attitude. He does not choose characters that affect other human beings. His characters feel alienated, highly philosophical, spiritual and mentally sick. They ignore their relationship with the outside world. Their world is presented elaborately. Their passions, feelings and principles against humanism raise their heads.

In the capitalist society workers forming the majority do their work aimlessly. They form a wheel in a machine. They are instructed to obey the commands of their masters. They have no right to enjoy the things they produce. Money rules over the society and a few
accumulate wealth. As a result, the society disintegrates. Man feels isolated and alienated. Jayakantan's novels reflect the feelings and passions of the modern man.

Jayakantan, the non-committed writer describes himself as an independent and superior writer: "Makaparatā is taking place in Indian political arena. I have vowed that I shall resort to no weapons in the war" (Political Experiences, 18).

Alienated characters dominate his novels written from a high pedestal. The next novel Vilutukal is a case in point. Ōṅkūr Čvāmikal and his disciples reject this world in their own way. Ōṅkūr Čvāmikal is always in meditation. He is presented as a lifeless wood. His disciples resort to kāncā and forget this world.

Cāraṇkaṇ in PAP is an alienated character. He is the principal character in this novel. He violates the conditions laid down by his father and leads a life of his own. He is an artist, an expert in western music. He tries to popularise modern art that he has brought with him. When a girl tells him that she is not able to understand modern art, he says: "Why do you take pains to understand modern arts? Try to understand it. That
is the value of art. It can make you realize what you can't understand' (Jayakantan, PAP 195).

In this connection P.K. Sundararajan and S.Sivapatha Sundaram write:

In his novel Pāricikkuppō (1966) Jayakantan's character cāraṅkaṇ is a musician. Since he has understood the universal nature of the Western Music in the world, he wants to make Karnatic music a common language of the world, infusing life into it. His refusal for setting music for films shows his immense interest and high regard he had for the loftiness of music. In this novel Jayakantan pays attention to drawing also. Lectures on Modern Art also find a Place in this novel (255).

Cāraṅkaṇ appears to be an artist who neglects the duties of an artist to the society. He does not know the truth that realization comes only after understanding. His intention is neither to move close to the society nor to understand humanity. He tries to mobilise the support of the people for his views and ideas. In this connection Cēcaïyā says "He does not know how to speak. He knows neither Tamil nor Telegu. He has
become a White man. It is painful to look at him. He does not even appear to take efforts to come close to us" (Jayakantan, PAP, 75).

Even Lalithā, the object of Cāraṅkaṇ’s love is not able to move with him freely. Realizing that he cannot come close to society and mingle with it freely, he says: "Well, Paris has not invited me. But India drives me away. Paris will not drive me. Hence I go to Paris. Paris has not driven away any artist so far" (Jayakantan, PAP 348).

Cāraṅkaṇ wants his society to accept what he feels as art. He is totally alienated from his society as he is able to segregate freedom from social obligations and relationships.

When he (Jayakantan) produces Rācārāmaṇ a great change has taken place in his outlook on life .... He drifts away from the normal world. He sees the people of the world as mentally sick, as speaking of free love, and as experiencing problems in sexual life. He has the ability to change them into good objects of art. We can see this ability of Jayakantan in Ricimūlam (Totātri 70).
In RM Rācārāmaṇ is a victim of Oedipus complex. His ego is thoroughly immersed in the traditions and customs of society. He is well-versed in the Vedas. He is a genius. He has been a lonely person since childhood. Unlike the children of his age, he was good at studies. He wanted to enter and see his mother's bedroom. When she was away, she entered the bed-room. At that time, he was five years old. His mother came in. Frightened, he hid himself under the cot, but she drove him away. This bitter experience in his life made him feel lonely. He went away from his mother. He was isolated from his environment. Jayakantan seeks the help of Freud to describe this isolation. "If we undertake a psycho analysis we can see that Rācārāmaṇ is an abnormal case" (RM 57). This character exhibits a kind of psychological perversion called mother fixation which has been explained by Freud as Oedipus complex.

Rācārāmaṇ is an isolated individual. He lives in an individual dream world. What he saw in the bed-room of his mother is recorded in his subconscious mind. In his dream he sees his mother and has sexual relationship with her. Thus he spends his school days. After his meeting with Cārata Māmi, a woman of his mother's age, she appears in his dream instead of his mother. He has
sexual contact with her. His loneliness gets intensified. As a result, he renounces the world and becomes a sanyasi. He philosopher. The world becomes a mystery to him. His sastras, education, philosophy, frustration - all these combine together and make him a philosopher. When Sāratā Māmi advises him to get married, he says: "Your child is burning there - come after burning your property - Rācārāma - I - all are burning well (Jayakantan, RM 92).

The world, education, art - all are illusions in the mind of Rācārāma. They appear to be a mist before him. He does not take any effort to understand this world. He considers the people in the world as uncivilized. He is alienated from all human beings. "All people that I have seen, known - the issueless campuvaaiyjan, Ĉārata and her pet Rācā Rāma who abandoned her - all are beasts (Jayakantan, RM 55).

Prapu who is leading the life of a capitalist is another alienated character in Cila Nerańkalil Cila Manitarka. To Prapu his own life is a mystery. He fails to understand his wife and children, his house, profession and wealth. He cannot understand the relationship between him and his wealth. He says: "All
rich people are like that. They know there is no connection between themselves and their wealth" (Jayakantan, CN 343).

He says further: "I played a record in the radiogram the day before yesterday. Its speed was thirty three. I changed it to seventy eight. Only then was it good. Otherwise it would be dull" (Jayakantan, CN 343).

Venku Māmā in CN is a sadist whereas Kaṅkā, the heroine of the novel is portrayed as a pervert. Jayakantan employs psycho analytic method to record the feelings of Kaṅkā. He uses the stream of consciousness technique in this novel. What happens in the mind of kaṅkā is presented clearly. It is the shock resulting from her sexual relationship that has caused her main problem. When Prapu speaks to her about her marriage, she expresses her desire to be his concubine.

Venku Māmā derives pleasure by beating up his wife. But he is a famous lawyer and an orthodox Brahmin in the outside world.

The eldest son of Alaṅkāra Vaḷḷiammāḷ is impotent. He is driven away by his wife. "Jayakantan in his Cila Nēraṅkalīl Cila Manītarkal has not only made the
emotional self the sole indicator of the being and becoming of an individual, but sees it wield a decisive influence in the individual relations with the society" (Encyclopaedia of Tamil Literature 541).

After becoming a non-committed writer, Jayakantan thinks that to analyse the problems of the society is not the responsibility of a writer. He desires that a writer has social responsibilities. He thinks that the writer should not participate in any movement. Most of the works of Jayakantan expressing such views are concerned with sexual problems.

Even when he was a committed writer he had written short-stories dealing with sex. In UO, Yārukkanā Alutan and Pralayam Jayakantan speaks of sex life. In these novels sex is not the main problem. It does not change the nature of characters. It is shown as a part of life. The relationship between Tankam and the parrot astrologer is not something unusual. There is no mystery in it. It has brought out no change in their minds. When Joseph realizes that he is unfit to live with his wife, he justly goes away from her. The relationship between Māṇikkam and Kōkilā is just natural. The relationship between Kantacāmi Mutaliyār and Kauri is just
the outcome of sympathy. The characters involved in sex life in these novels are drawn from the lower strata of society. They have been affected much by the social problems that Jayakantan deals with.

While Dickens is not good at describing sexual love, Jayakantan speaks of free love in his novels written after he became a non-committed writer. Sex has the power to determine life. Celvam, prapu, Kaṅkā, Venku Mama, Rācā Rāmaṇ, Ānanta Rāmaṇ, Raṅkā, Kalyāṇi, Kamcalai—the lives of these people are determined by sex. "His later novels are based upon the theory that sex is the fundamental cause for all the social and psychological problems. Jayakantan has also made frequent references to Western psychologists. One of his characters Muttu Vēlar has made reference to Sigmund Freud and D.H. Lawrence. Traces of D.H. Lawrence's philosophy of sex can be read in Jayakantan's Oru Mapitan, Oru Vītu, Oru Ulakam. Western techniques like interior monologue and stream of consciousness are also handled in his novels Āṭum Nārkālikal Ᾱṭukirpana and Cila Neraṅkajil Cila Manītarkal" (Tōtatri, Kalkiyum Ckāṭṭum 74).

According to Jayakantan sex is a social problem. Sex is like hunger. It is a hindrance to the life of a
person who is mentally strong. Both sex and hunger are responsible for the changes in society.

We notice two different kinds of attitude in Jayakantan's portrayal of sex life. One is portraying different kinds of problems and the other is suggesting remedies to these problems and solving them.

Vehku Māmā is a sadist. Kānkā leads an unconventional life. In ON Rāṅkā is a genius. Kalyāṇi wants to bring him under her control. Rāṅkā wants to possess her. Each possessing the other is the life of love. This is the philosophy that Jayakantan reveals in this story. All these characters are abnormal personalities.

Jayakantan takes efforts to suggest remedies to these problems in four novels of his - CN, Camūkam Enpatu Nālu pēr, ON and OM.

In these novels Jayakantan speaks of free love. Portrayal of Kānkā's character is a case in point. She wants to be the concubine of Prapu. She raises the question whether she cannot beget a child without indulging in sex life. She wants freedom in sex. This free sex exists in different forms. In Camūkam Enpatu
Nālu pēr Muttu Vēlar quotes D.H. Lawrence, Russel and Freud and speaks to Cukuṇā of free love. In his opinion thinking and intellect have no place in free love that discards all restrictions.

"Just as we remove our dresses, we give up manners and become naked like birds, animals, barbarians and giants. Why such spiritual freedom in becoming free in both body and spirit? so asks Muttu Vēlar (Jayakantan, Camūkum enpatu Nālu pēr 16).

We can enjoy free love if we are freed from intellectual dominion and social restrictions. This idea is emphasized by Jayakantan through Muttu Vēlar and Cukuṇā. Here we find a mixture of Freudism, Lawrencism and debates of the French about free love. This seems to be the remedy for the problems arising out of sex. We infer this from what Jayakantan says in his later novels. We cannot say this is the view of just one character because in his preface to his novel ON Jayakantan writes:

Kalyāni is not my wife. Nor is she my lady love. It is me. Rāṅkā is none other than me. I am Anṇācāmi. I am all the characters in this novel. You must notice that all characters in this novel are neither totally good nor entirely
bad. The persons I met in my life are disguises in my person (153).

This statement of Jayakantan shows that the ideas that he expresses through his characters are his own. His characters are his mouthpieces. Hence what he says about sex or sex life can be thought of as his own views. The solutions he suggests for sex problems are his own. He speaks of sex problems through Raňka:

As far as I am concerned, making conjugal life an intellectual one is not so easy. Love or sex is connected more with passions than with intellect. I require married life only when I want to have passionate relaxation (Jayakantan, ON 255).

To lead such a life of free love, one must have an ideal. Jayakantan insists on such an atmosphere in his novel OM. The hero of this novel Henry bathes naked. He says that Baby, the naked girl would bathe like him. His aim is to understand her. He rejects town civilization, modern industrial life and electric lights. He is critical of them. He is jubilant to see hurricane lamps burning. Jayakantan tries to show that man can live freely only in primitivism. This philosophy of Jayakantan is similar to that of D.H. Lawrence on sex.
Like D.H. Lawrence Jayakantan speaks of free love in his novels. He says that instinctive life is the best one. According to D.H. Lawrence man's intellect is a hindrance to sex life.

We have shown above with illustrations how Jayakantan's Muttu Vēlar, Raṅkā and Kaṅkā reflect the views of D.H. Lawrence.

Jayakantan's short stories and early novels written when he was a committed writer show his humanism and objective approach to life. He painted the world as he saw it. But when he becomes a non-committed writer, his attitude to life undergoes a change. Jayakantan, who acts as a mouthpiece of the poor and downtrodden in his early novels, depicts the plight of women, deal with man-woman relations and presents in detail the thoughts and feelings of two generations in day to day life. He keeps aloof from the society. He considers himself to be a great man and thinks he is totally different from others. He says that there should be no literary criticism. He argues that critics have no right to criticise literature. In this way he makes himself alien.

In his later novels characters opposed to his humanism find a place. He tries to find explanation for
his broken thoughts through society and philosophy. He chooses extraordinary people as the characters of his short stories. He creates an illusion that the society is full of such people. These people are nothing but the reflections of his ego. When he portrays these characters, Freudism and impressionism creep in without his knowledge.

In the formative days of his artistic career, Jayakantan's thematic conceptions had a marked rootedness in the Marxian economic philosophy especially those aspects of Marx in which there was a happy coalescence of material health and humanitarian fervour. But the evolution of his artistic self saw him moving decisively towards questions of the psychic maladies of the individuals, the emotional disturbances in men and women, and their bearing on the larger issues of social concern; and so forth (Encyclopaedia of Tamil Literature 541).

Jayakantan's later short stories are not without traces of his earlier humanism. It continues as a part of his outlook on life. But he drifts away from his humanism in his later novels. This dichotomy we find in Jayakantan's outlook on life.