CHAPTER VI

Summing-up

Comparative literature in the literary scenario of today is a thriving academic discipline. General studies on the backgrounds and achievements of selected writers have come out in large numbers. Mere repetitions are of no use. Thematic studies attempt to narrow down the probable subjects, and to bring out thematic and cultural comparisons. The present study has analysed almost everything connected with love patterns in the selected novels to present the findings in terms of similarities, dissimilarities and significance.

This is a parallel study since there is no perceptible influence of Hardy on Jayakanthan. However, analogies owing to the similarity of the subjects and the social backgrounds have helped the researcher choose the themes of love, marriage, chastity and fulfilment for this study. Both Hardy and Jayakanthan, as woman-centred novelists, have discussed at length woman’s rejection of suitors and selection of the right lover, the problems and solutions in her marriage, her attitude to chastity and her quest for fulfilment in life.

Chapter I defines love and limits the theme of love to the healthy relationship between man and woman tending towards marriage. It presents a historical perspective of
the theme of love as dealt with in fiction until Hardy in English and Jayakanthan in Tamil. It discusses the age, life, career and range of either writer in brief.

Novelists like Richardson, Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters and George Eliot in England until Hardy discussed love in fiction in order to teach the moral that promiscuous love leads to ignominy and ruin. Feminist novelists dealt with the loss of chastity in reaction against the male chauvinist society. Hardy was the first to discuss woman's sexuality openly and her longing to establish a fulfilling sex relationship either inside or outside marriage. Woman in his fiction claims sexual equality with man. Hardy freely discusses seduction, immoral pregnancy, unholy burial and murder. Consequently, he incurred the wrath of the conservative Victorian reading public.

Tamil novelists until Jayakanthan discussed traditional morality in their fiction. Puthumai Pithan wrote short stories. Akilan and the others, as pointed out in the Introduction, were lesser writers who did not transcend the intended sex appeal in their works. For the first time, Jayakanthan wrote novels discussing subjects like premarital and extramarital sex. Woman in his fiction searches for a satisfactory sex relationship.
Hardy depicts the impact of the age of science on British countryside. He describes the struggle of the rural folk against the invasion of urban ways of life. His early novels delineate the rural women’s successful resistance of the urban men’s temptation. But in his later novels, the rural women fall victim to the amoral urban men, and cannot escape sophistication. Hardy associates deception with urbanization. Education in the selected novels of Hardy promotes urbanization.

Jayakanthan depicts a casteless society of affluence in the selected novels. He claims that the indigent lower classes of the pre-Independent India, on whom he wrote his short stories and early novels, had grown in wealth in the post-Independent era. He believes that urbanization is conducive to growth. Hence education is a means of job and security for women in the selected novels.

Hardy lived in the countryside while Jayakanthan has been in the city of Chennai right from the age of eleven. Hardy was devoted to country life, and so nature descriptions abound in the selected novels. Jayakanthan, on the other hand, depicts the ups and downs in the life of the people of towns and cities in the selected novels. Hardy’s neglect of town life has made critics dub him a novelist of limited range. Jayakanthan is at home both in country and in town. Both writers have drawn on their
personal lives. Hardy’s novels are in the third person narrative while Jayakanthan has experimented with different narrative techniques. Both are guilty of too many authorial comments. Being a tragic novelist, Hardy does not believe in the happy home that Victorian novelists delighted in depicting. His heroines are left miserable at the end, or die. Hence he is known as a pessimist though he called himself a meliorist. Jayakanthan discusses the problems that women face. Hardy believes in Schopenhauer’s interpretation of Hinduism that salvation consists in detachment. Jayakanthan, too, believes that salvation is possible through detachment.

Hardy and Jayakanthan are great novelists of considerable popularity and academic reputation in their respective languages.

Chapter II deals with the patterns and the process of woman’s love in the selected novels under Part I and Part II respectively. If man is attracted to more than one woman, woman also is attracted to more than one man (Fitzpiers, Angel, Sarangan, Prabu, Fancy, Elfride, Malathi and Kalyani). Hence there is a pattern of relationship in her life. She usually gets physically tainted in terms of kisses and embraces given by her early suitors. She sometimes indulges in premarital sex. However, when she selects a lover suited to her in every
way, she rejects the other suitors. This process of rejection of suitors and selection of the lover pervades all the selected novels, and hence can be accepted as a theory of universal application.

Hardy describes woman's love pattern in the light of her sufferings caused by her lover and traditional morality. Hardy's heroes reject their women for premarital lapses. Jayakanthan's heroines fight society's outdated sexual morality and try to form satisfying sexual relationships. They also face problems created by their heroes (Ranga and Prabu), though some men help their women at the end (Sarangan and Shivagurunathan).

Though the usual love patterns in both novelists are triangular and rectangular, there is variety in the treatment of love. Hardy treats premarital and extramarital relationships and rape to sustain the reader's interest. His novels evince a progression of maturity from novel to novel. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, his last but one novel, is the consummation of his narrative art. Variety in Jayakanthan's selected novels results from his treatment of different kinds of sexual relationship. He presents romantic and marital love, premarital and extramarital affairs. All his selected novels evince masterly handling. *Sila Nerangalil Sila*
Manitharhal can be considered his consummate novel on love.

Fancy in *Under the Greenwood Tree* succeeds in love in spite of her inherent vacillation. She causes her chosen lover Dick pain owing to her secretive and deceptive nature. In the rest of the selected novels, the heroines suffer because of the harshness of their lovers. Elfride in *A Pair of Blue Eyes* is put to undue suffering by her lover Knight because of his idealism: he does not want to marry any woman whom another man has kissed. Thus Elfride's romantic affair with Stephen gets in the way of her relationship with Knight. Eustacia in *The Return of the Native* is not for love but for a life of dance and music in Paris. The adulterous tendency that she manifests in her dance with Wildeve is not helpful to her love for any man under the sun. Grace in *The Woodlanders* is worse. Though she is married to Fitzpiers, she invites her lover Giles to a hut at night with immoral intentions. Nor does she exhibit deep love for either her lover or her husband. In *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Alec deflowers Tess and discards her. Angel loves her but deserts her when he learns her past. Though none of the heroines forms a satisfactory love relationship, they always have the eagerness to form one.
Jayakanthan discusses different kinds of problems resulting from love in the selected novels. In Parisukku Po, Lalitha indulges in adultery. She dangles between her husband Mahalingam and her lover Sarangan. Prabu deflowers Ganga in Sila Nerangalil Sila Manitharhal. Ganga obeys her family's verdict and seeks him out. Finally, society prevents her from forming a satisfactory relationship with him. Ranga in Oru Nadihain Nadaham Parkiral is unable to accept his wife Kalyani's self. It is her disease and, not her love, that unites them at the end. Malathi in Ovoru Kooraikum Keele gives up her premarital affair with Raju and marries Shivagurunathan. She does so not for love but to avoid the shame of remaining a keep. Sita in Sundara Gandam marries Suhumaran without love, and loves Giridharan, whom she does not marry. Nor does she lose her virginity. Thus none of Jayakanthan's heroines in the selected novels is able to form a fulfilling sex relationship.

Though the heroines of the selected novels love more than one man each, they select one among the suitors each to be the lover. The reasons influencing the selection are similarity of tastes and interests and maturity of the lovers.

Chapter III discusses marital problems and solutions. Marriage involves social factors like education, status
and money. Individual traits such as likes and dislikes look magnified when the lovers live under the same roof after getting married. This chapter discusses the problems that affect marriage under Part I. The solutions to these problems are dealt with under Part II.

Both Hardy and Jayakanthan believed that happy married life is rare. Hardy’s heroines suffer because they are not wise in choosing the right men to be their lovers. Male chauvinism, society’s double moral standard and the infidelity of the spouses cause them marital problems. Jayakanthan discusses women’s difficulties in the traditionally male-dominated Tamil society. His women face problems in their married life because of their desire to find fulfilment in love with men other than their husbands. Premarital affairs and men’s inability to accept the individuality of their wives also cause problems for women.

Hardy’s heroines in the selected novels face problems in their married life. Fancy’s fickleness does not predict happiness for Dick in marriage in Under the Greenwood Tree. Hardy does not depict her life beyond her wedding. Of the four heroines whose married life he discusses, three die a short period after their marriage. Unrequited romantic love for Knight kills Elfride in A Pair of Blue Eyes soon after she marries Luxellian.
Eustacia's impossible love for romance against a background of heath and poverty forces her in *The Return of the Native* to commit suicide. Society's double moral standard in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* results in Angel's rejection of his wife Tess. In an attempt to prove her love for her husband, she kills her rapist. She gets killed on the gallows for her crime. The only heroine who rejoins her husband is Grace in *The Woodlanders*. But her future with an inconstant husband is bleak.

Hardy treats love as a problem in the selected novels. Premarital lapses, impossible desires and inborn caprice on the part of the women, and male chauvinism resulting from the society's double moral standard and infidelity on the part of the men, besides poverty, are the causes of marital disharmony in the selected novels of Hardy.

Some women in Jayakanthan do not remain happily married for long (Lalitha and Sita), while some others successfully struggle to form marriage relationships (Malathi and Kalyani). Jayakanthan leaves some heroines helpless without any prop in their life. Ganga and Sita are left forlorn for loss and preservation of chastity respectively.

Jayakanthan suggests that premarital and extramarital lapses are harmful as it happens in the case of Lalitha,
Ganga and Malathi. Lack of means is the problem for Malathi. The husband's unwillingness to accept the wife's individuality is Kalyani's problem. Sita suffers owing to parental control and her husband's infidelity. In short, premarital and extramarital affairs, poverty, infidelity and the husband's chauvinism are the marital problems in the selected novels of Jayakanthan.

Solutions to marital problems are scarce in Hardy but quite a few in Jayakanthan. Though some of the heroines do not resort to solutions to their marital problems, the reader can always suggest solutions. Money would have solved the problems faced by three heroines in Hardy (Eustacia, Grace and Tess), and two in Jayakanthan (Malathi and Sita). If man recognizes woman's sexual equality, most of her problems will be solved. Traditional male domination causes problems for Elfride, Eustacia and Tess in Hardy and for Kalyani and Sita in Jayakanthan. Hence man's recognition of woman's sexual equality and their fidelity besides money are considered to be the solutions to marital problems by Hardy and Jayakanthan.

Chapter IV deals with chastity as a cultural trait of woman's life. It defines female chastity and discusses the problems caused by the loss of chastity and its reconstruction under Part I, and the solutions suggested
by the selected writers through a redefinition under Part II.

British society in Hardy's time ill-treated the woman who had lost her chastity. However, Hardy's heroines do not try to preserve their chastity conscientiously. Fancy in Under the Greenwood Tree is flippant, and dails with three lovers. Elfride in A Pair of Blue Eyes allows Stephen to kiss her and embrace her, then falls in love with Knight, and finally marries Luxellian. Eustacia in The Return of the Native dangles between Wildeve and Clym, marries Clym, and tries to run away with Wildeve. Grace in The Woodlanders loves Giles, marries Fitzpiers, and then kisses Giles, and tries even to sleep with him. Tess in Tess of the d'Urbervilles is raped by Alec, marries Angel, and cohabits with her rapist. Thus none of the heroines is strictly chaste. Tess of the d'Urbervilles is chosen for a detailed study since Tess's loss of chastity is the predominant theme in this novel.

Woman in Jayakanthan's Tamil society enjoys equal rights and opportunities. Still, society looks askance at the woman who has lost her chastity. Jayakanthan's heroines are also not careful in preserving their chastity. Lalitha in Parisukku Po is not chaste when she marries Mahalingam. She indulges in adultery with Sarangan, too. Prabu rapes Ganga in Sila Nerangalil Sila
Manitharhal. Kalyani in *Oru Nadihai Nadaham Parkiral* is no virgin when she marries Ranga. Malathi in *Ovoru Kooraikum Keele* sleeps with Raju before she marries Shivagurunathan. The only chaste heroine is Sita in *Sundara Gandam*. The novel *Sila Nerangalil Sila Manitharhal*, which is an exclusive study on rape and its harmful effect on the heroine's marriage prospects, is studied in detail.

The reconstruction of lost chastity occurs in either novel according to the cultural background the author belongs to. In the West, Christ promised heaven to the fallen Eve with his boundless love. Tess attempts to reconstruct her lost innocence through her husband Angel's love. But he rejects her. In the East, Rama accepts Sita after her rescue and proves her innocence. Ganga hopes to offset her sin by accepting Prabu as her husband. But he also rejects her. Thus the reconstruction of lost chastity creates problems for the heroines. Both writers condemn the ill-treatment meted out to unchaste women by society.

Tess requests Angel to forget her past and to accept her love. He does so after returning from Brazil and enjoys perfect peace and happiness. Ganga, too, will do well to forget Prabu and marry any one of the many men ready to marry her, as does Malathi in *Ovoru Kooraikum*
Keele, forgetting Raju and marrying Shivagurunathan. Hence both Hardy and Jayakanthan redefine chastity as forgetting the past lapses, and remaining true to each other in marriage.

Chapter V deals with woman’s fulfilment. Love, marriage and chastity are worldly aspects of woman’s life. The researcher feels that this study will be incomplete if the spiritual side of the heroines’ life is not analysed. "Fulfilment" as the title of the last chapter in *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* has triggered off the researcher’s inquiry in this line. Fulfilment is not conclusion. It means full satisfaction. A superficial reading of the novel does not locate the heroine’s fulfilment. Hardy’s affinity to Schopenhauer’s philosophy is the key to the inquiry for female fulfilment in his fiction. Schopenhauer believed that the universal Will, acting in human desire, renders life miserable since desire is boundless. He preached that detachment results in fulfilment. He held that the Hindu idea of Nirvana or detachment is salvation. Jayakanthan is a Hindu. He refers to the bliss that he attained on a visit to a monastery. Both Hardy and Jayakanthan believe that detachment is salvation.

When Tess and Angel reach Stonehenge as they are on the run after Alec’s murder by her, Angel urges her to
escape from the police. She refuses, says that she has had enough, and hands herself over to the police.

Tess's attainment of spiritual fulfilment is implicit while that of Ganga is explicit. Jayakanthan has written the novel Gangai Enge Pohiral to show how the fallen Ganga of Sila Nerangalil Sila Manitharhal leads a life of detachment on the banks of the Ganges, and is washed away in fulfilment and bliss by the waters. Jayakanthan's heroine Kalyani watches life as a spectator would watch a play. She lives in detachment and, hence, attains spiritual fulfilment.

The heroines in the selected novels seek fulfilment in love, marriage and the reconstruction of lost chastity. Hardy's heroine Fancy is too fickle to reach it. Elfride is foiled in her attempt by the cruelty of her lover Knight. Eustacia and Grace have aims other than love. Though Tess loses her chastity, she reconstructs it through Angel's love and attains fulfilment in a satisfactory sexual relationship with him, though for a short time.

Jayakanthan's heroines also search for fulfilment in love, marriage and chastity. Lalitha is undecided between her husband and her lover. Ganga is unable to establish a satisfactory sex relationship with Prabu. Kalyani's husband Ranga does not recognize her love till the end.
Malathi marries Shivagurunathan only to avoid being called Raju's keep. Sita's chastity does not help her live with either her husband or her lover.

The authors hold that earthly fulfilment cannot be permanent since one has to depend on something or somebody else to reach it. Lasting fulfilment, according to them, is possible in renunciation.

The findings from a detailed study of the themes of love, marriage, chastity and fulfilment in the selected novels are presented below in terms of similarities, dissimilarities and significance.

**Similarities**

Hardy and Jayakanthan were similar in many respects. They were not formally educated. Both wrote their novels for serial publication. They became controversial for their frank discussion of female sexuality. They gave more importance to female characters than male. Women, according to them, are capable of more love and suffering.

There are both triangular and rectangular relationships in the selected novels. Women claim equality with men in terms of sexual relationships. They feel attracted to more than one man each. Some women are deep in love (Elfride, Tess and Ganga) while some others are superficial (Fancy, Eustacia, Grace and Malathi). Women deep in love usually fail to marry their lovers
(Elfride and Ganga). Ideal love fails (Eustacia and Sita) while practical love succeeds (Grace and Malathi). Women who are not in deep love are influenced not so much by love in their selection of the lovers as by status and prestige (Grace and Malathi). Women cause problems in love by their caprice and sexuality. Society and the lovers do not accept women’s equality (Elfride, Grace, Tess, Ganga, Kalyani and Sita). Hence while men do not suffer for their sexual lapses (Fitzpiers, Angel, Prabu and Suhumaran), women are deprived of happy married life (Elfride, Tess and Ganga). The traditional dominant role of the male is the cause of this problem for women in the West and the East. All the women in the selected novels exhibit a tendency to search for suitable lovers. Some married women do not remain content with their husbands if they come across men suited to them (Eustacia and Lalitha).

Most women reject suitors and select a lover each for similar tastes and interests, and for the lover’s maturity.

Hardy and Jayakanthan have discussed the problems that arise in marriage for their women. Poverty prevents some women from getting married (Tess and Malathi). Some others suffer in marriage because of their fickleness. Premarital and extramarital relationships also cause
marital disharmony (Elfride, Eustacia, Grace, Lalitha, Malathi and Sita). Male chauvinism is a big problem for married women in both the cultures (Elfride, Grace, Tess, Kalyani and Sita). The women who stray from the cultural observance of chastity cause marital problems (Elfride, Tess, Ganga and Malathi).

Money solves many problems. It offsets lack of education and low status. Man’s recognition of woman’s sexual equality is the key to the resolution of most of the marital problems (Dick, Angel, Mahalingam and Shivagurunathan). According to the writers, if man and wife forget their past and remain true to each other, they will have optimum adjustment in marriage.

Hardy and Jayakanthan underline the reverence in their cultures for female chastity. Women have a tendency to protect their chastity. They feel guilty when they lose it. They lose it because of ignorance, poverty and the desire for sexual gratification. Both societies look down upon unchaste women and cause them problems. After some time, the unchaste women get over their sadness and try to reconstruct their lost chastity through love for men whom they want to marry. The lovers, however, do not cooperate with them but cause problems for them. Even though there are solutions, the affected women reject them, and are led by the society’s opinion, only to render
their life miserable. In both novelists, the women who lose their chastity are declared unfit to marry by public opinion.

Hardy and Jayakanthan bemoan the harshness of traditional morality towards women for their loss of chastity. In the male-dominated British and Indian societies, men are not blamed for the loss of their chastity. The writers consider it unjust to single out the weaker sex for a lapse, which is common to both the sexes. They think that the reconstruction of lost chastity through love does not pay since the lovers reject their women for the loss of their chastity. The solution suggested by the writers to the loss of chastity is that women should be deaf to society's opinion and marry the men prepared to accept them.

Though life is miserable for the heroines, they have a tendency to search for fulfilment in love and marriage. The heroines' fickleness, society and culture cause problems preventing them from attaining it. When they try to form satisfying sex relationships disregarding social mores, they are prevented from doing so by the traditional customs and habits of their societies. Loss of chastity is a strong impediment to fulfilment. Its reconstruction through love also gets in the way of women's fulfilment. Men hate the women who have lost their chastity. However, Hardy as a realist and Jayakanthan as a humanist help their
women persist in their search for fulfilment. Tess and Ganga attain fulfilment through detachment.

**Dissimilarities**

Hardy and Jayakanthan were also dissimilar in many ways. Hardy was brought up in the Dorset countryside, and so he loved rural life. Hence most of his novels have rural backgrounds. Jayakanthan, on the other hand, has lived in town since his boyhood. As a result, all the selected novels have urban settings. Hardy gives more importance to the sufferings of his heroines. He resorts to fate and society's double moral standard for this purpose. Three of his five heroines die and the other two (Fancy and Grace) do not seem to have a bright future in store for them. On the other hand, Jayakanthan's concern is to show how the women of his day face problems in their effort to form congenial sex relationships. He juxtaposes traditional morality and modern ways of life. His women struggle to free themselves from the clutches of tradition. Three out of his five heroines (Lalitha, Kalyani and Malathi) succeed while the other two fall prey to tradition.

Hardy does not view education and status as helpful to his women in their married life. His heroines face problems because of their formal education. Eustacia and Tess are not content with their lot because of their
education, and so they suffer. Grace’s education weans her away from her love for the country Giles and makes her fall victim to the wayward Dr. Fitzpiers. Class distinction in Hardy plays a major role. Fitzpiers’ class is an important inducement for Grace in her choice of him as her husband. Tess’s class forces her to visit the Stoke-Urbervilles and to be raped by Alec d’Urberville.

Jayakanthan sees education as promoting the welfare of his heroines. It obtains jobs for Ganga and Sita. Malathi suffers only because she is not educated enough to get a job. Status plays almost no role in his selected novels. Even a drama actress [Kalyani] improves her status through education.

Education, however, is a tool. It can be used for good as well as bad purposes. Its utility depends on the individuals, not on education as such.

Hadry’s heroines find it difficult to be separated from their problematic husbands since, in the male-dominated British society of Hardy’s time, traditional morality did not easily admit of separation (Grace and Tess). Men in Jayakanthan’s time have learned to accommodate themselves to female sexuality. Therefore they accept even unchaste heroines (Lalitha, Ganga, Kalyani and Malathi).
Hardy thinks woman’s fulfilment possible in sexual relationship though her problems do not let her keep it for long, while Jayakanthan does not. Hardy’s Tess has momentary fulfilment when she rejoins Angel. Hardy seems to suggest that man and woman reach fulfilment in their sex relationship in ideal circumstances. None of the heroines of Jayakanthan attains fulfilment in sexual relationship.

Contribution

This study brings out a few universal facts. Woman’s sexuality transgresses social morality as much as that of man does. In days when traditional morality one-sidedly insisted on the strict observance of female chastity, woman was suppressed for a time for her sexual vacillation. Society has, however, come to terms with her sexual equality in the long run. Most women select their lovers from among several suitors each. Most of them tend to be tainted sexually by suitors before their marriage. Man should forgive his wife’s guilty past and accept her love for happy married life. Men in Hardy’s time were unwilling to do so. Most men in Jayakanthan’s time, who live a century after those of Hardy, have learned this lesson.
If woman keeps her loss of chastity secret, she will not ruin her reputation. However, a married woman’s adultery is an act of treason to her husband’s faith in her.

Woman tries to get fulfilled in love. She searches for fulfilment in marriage. She tries to retain her chastity seeking fulfilment. The problems that she faces in these aspects of life tend to prevent her from being fulfilled. Lasting fulfilment is possible in detachment. That salvation consists in detachment and that the individual soul is immortal illustrates the unity of religions and the universality of human experience.

This is the first comparative study on the two selected authors. The areas suggested for future researches are a general study on the selected writers and a study of the influence of Hardy’s pessimism and Jayakanthan’s humanism on plot and themes. This dissertation heralds thematic studies on love, marriage, chastity and fulfilment in the works of other authors not only in English and Tamil but also in any two languages in the world.