Chapter 5

Romantic Love and Compassionate Marriage

The assumption that Romantic Love is a prerequisite for conjugal bliss is a relatively recent concept and hence all our expectations about marriage now depend upon the existence of this indefinable phenomena called love. Distinguishing between Romantic love and Mature love Betrand Russell, in his work *On Marriage and Morals* precisely points out that romantic love should form the motive for a marriage but the kind of love that is necessary for a marriage to remain happy, and fulfill its social purpose is definitely not romantic, but something more intimate, affectionate and realistic.

D. H. Lawrence’s *Women in Love* (1920) and T. Jayakanthan’s *Oru Nadikal Nadagam Parikiral* (1971) explore the success and the failure of the main characters to achieve fulfilment and wholeness in man-woman relationship. The institution of marriage is seriously questioned in these novels and the novelists offer solutions that they feel would be appropriate to set right this relationship. The novels highlight the importance of the relationship and portray some of the intricacies that have to be resolved if one is to achieve happiness in this union. Issues like the importance of love in marriage, submission and dominance of the self, assertion of wills, bullying and various problems related to this relationship are discussed at length by the main characters in the novel. Misconceptions regarding love, and lack of clear perceptions regarding its importance in man-woman relationship create conflicts in the relationships of the characters in both the novels.
A direct sequel to *The Rainbow, Women in Love* continues the theme of marriage and the ideal sexual relationship that is to be established to derive fulfilment in this bond. Lawrence, whose main preoccupation in this novel is to give a vivid representation of the two types of man-woman relationships, and their effect on the individual and the society, also strives to expose the constructive and destructive aspects of love, by projecting the contrasting relationships of the two pairs of lovers-Birkin and Ursula and Gerald and Gudrun. If the Birkin-Ursula relationship intends to preach "[... ] the viability of conjugal love as the foundation of all human values" (Cavitch 62) the Gerald-Gudrun relationship is introduced by Lawrence, to illustrate the catastrophic effect of a bond that is devoid of real love and that is based on "mutual exploitation and assertion of the Wills" (Inderjit 73) of the couples on each other.

As a novel that analyses in depth the relationship between man and woman in a post-Independent, Tamil society, Jayakanthan's *ONNP*, presents in a remarkable manner, the trials and tribulations that threaten to hamper marital harmony in the modern scenario. Jayakanthan attempts to dramatize through the theatre metaphor, the constructive and destructive aspects of man-woman relationship by employing a kind of contrast in the characterization of the main characters-Kalyani and Ranga. While Kalyani's attitude towards love and life represents the positive aspects of the relationship, Ranga's attitude towards these issues represent the negative aspects of this union. Though the contrast between the two couples, Ranga and Kalyani and Dhamu and Pattambal is not as conspicuous and striking as the contrasting relationships between Birkin and Ursula and Gerald and Gudrun in *WL,*
Jayakanthan refers to the other couple from time to time to illustrate the contrast.

Lawrence’s *WL* and Jayaknthan’s *ONNP* deal primarily with the problems confronted by the main characters as a result of the contrast in their attitude to love. If difference of opinion regarding love creates pre-marital conflicts in the Birkin-Ursula relationship, it creates post-marital frictions and disharmony in the Ranga-Kalyani relationship. If the Birkin-Ursula relationship is mainly intended by Lawrence to propagate his strong conviction on the importance of conjugal love in which the partners strive to achieve an ultimate union by retaining their individuality and independence, the Ranga-Kalyani relationship is also meant by Jayakanthan to promulgate his firm faith on the importance of marital love, in which the partners should try to achieve wholeness by acknowledging and accepting the individuality of each other. The frictions that are caused in their relationships are mainly due to the firm convictions the characters have with regard to love and life.

Birkin, the frustrated young man who has lost faith in everything in the modern mechanized world realizes that humanity can be saved from disintegration only through the establishment of a perfect man-woman relationship. He therefore insists on the importance of this bond and strives to achieve it through marriage. In the course of his discussion with Gerald on love and marriage he tells him, “I know - - - The old ideals are dead as nails-nothing there. It seems to me there remains only this perfect union with a woman-sort of ultimate marriage - and there isn’t anything else”(*WL* 51). But the “ultimate marriage” that Birkin longs for is not based on the usual notions of love which involves a kind of merging together of the individualities of the partners. The word “love”, Birkin observes has been so misused
and misunderstood, that it has lost its real significance and meaning in the present scenario. It is high-time, he feels the word is “prescribed, tabooed from utterance for many years, till we get a new, better idea” (WL 122). Birkin, who does not believe in the romantic idealization of love as the ultimate in life is also of the opinion that it is not an absolute emotion that is necessary in life. Love to him is just an emotion like any other feeling and therefore cannot be considered an absolute one. He maintains that “Love is one of the emotions like all the others. [. . .] But I can’t see how it becomes an absolute. It is just a part of human relationship, no more. And it is only part of any human relationship. [. . .] Love isn’t a desideratum - it is an emotion you feel or you don’t feel, according to the circumstance” (WL 121).

Ursula, on the other hand, is so obsessed with the idea of love that it is the greatest thing for her and there is nothing beyond it. Believing love to be the ultimate in life she wants a kind of absolute surrender in love since, love surpasses the individual, but for Bikin the individual is more important than love. She is so possessed with this issue that Birkin calls her repeated query as to whether he loves her a kind of “war-cry” (WIL 244). Ursula is not only shocked by Bikini’s adamant refusal to acknowledge the fact that he loves her, but is also equally surprised to note that he is least concerned about visual appearances when he says that he considers her neither attractive nor beautiful. Birkin aspires for a love that is above visual appearance and common norms and notions regarding love. He wants to establish a “final and irrevocable relationship” (WL 144) with her not based on love but on something beyond it. He tells her “I can’t say it is love, I have to offer-and it isn’t love I want. It is something much more impersonal and harder and rarer” (WL 136).
When she persistently asks him whether he loves her he says “I, don’t know. At any rate I don’t feel the emotion of love for you-no, and I don’t want to. Because it gives out in the last issues”(WL 136).

An actress by profession Kalyani too like Birkin, does not believe in the concept of romantic love and maintains that it is not really necessary in life. But Ranga, a journalist, who initially did not believe in love later upholds the supremacy of love and insists on its necessity in man-woman relationship. The change is Ranga’s attitude towards love, primarily gives rise to doubts and uncertainties in his mind, which indirectly bring about frictions in the Ranga-Kalyani relationship and create marital disharmony. He has never considered love, as a great emotion that was necessary for life, until he had met Kalyani. He had earlier thought of love only as an absurd emotion, and had never felt it as essential in man–woman relationship. In fact love had no place in his relationship with his first wife as he had then regarded it only as “an absurd thing, […] a kind of absurd imagination (ONNP 63).” and so he neither believed in it nor allowed it to creep into his life. He had married Devaki, his first wife only because he felt that “A man needed a woman as his companion and hence he had married a woman. He was happy with her and felt she was convenient for him. He liked her and felt that he was responsible for her welfare. When she died he felt sorry for her and regretted her absence”(ONNP 64). But in his relationship with Kalyani, he expects love from her because he now considers love as not only an important emotion, but also as imperative in man-woman relationship. He says:

In a marital relationship, two people who are in no way related to
each other till then, start living together from a particular day, binding
themselves as one, in all happiness and sorrow. This is a unique
experience and definitely, there should be love. If love is not necessary
in man-woman relationship, then the marital bond itself will turn
out to be as Bernard Shaw commented, a kind of recognized
prostitution”\((ONNP\ 167)\).

He admits that, like most people, he has himself lived a life without love, but now
he is convinced of its essentiality in life and so he declares “A Samsara without
love is prostitution”\((ONNP\ 195)\).

Ranga, like Ursula, has now developed a romantic illusion of love and hence
expects Kalyani to acknowledge its importance and accept its indispensability in
man-woman relationship. But Kalyani, who attributes a greater meaning and
significance to love, is convinced that the kind of love Ranga professes is not
necessary for life. As a person who does not believe in the romantic aspect of love,
she only feels that most of the problems in life are caused by romanticizing emotions
like love, and sacrifice for love. She feels that “In the name of love and sacrifice,
many people have spoilt their life. You know they have made many human emotions
ugly and dirty, in this manner”\((ONNP\ 193)\). She states very clearly that such kind of
romantic love, may be necessary in stories and in drama but is not necessary for
life. Sincerity, honesty, discipline and compassion she maintains are more important
in man-woman relationship than this kind of love. To be sincere, honest, true and
compassionate to each other is real love to her. She tells Ranga “If this is not love,
then let that high and mighty love stay where it is. Nothing is going to go
wrong” (*ONNP* 166). But to Ranga this so called sincerity, etc “[...] is necessary in a business contract, but is definitely not the basis of a relationship in which two hearts join to live together” (*ONNP* 167).

Kalyani, is not only able to understand Ranga’s concept of love, but is even surprised to see the enthusiasm with which he discusses these issues. While she considers the affair between her sister, Pattambal and Dhamu, one of her artists, merely as a case of infatuation, Ranga is convinced that, real love exists between them, because Pattu is prepared to commit suicide if her mother refuses to give consent for her marriage. Ranga admires Pattu for her “firm, true, pure and high value of love” (140) and he always felt that “the love between Pattu and Dhamu was superior and pure because they considered their love more greater than life itself” (*ONNP* 140). Ranga is surprised by Kalyani’s reaction to not only Pattu’s love affair, but also by her attitude to the news of two lovers who committed suicide. Ranga is of the opinion that “Only if one loves another to such a great extent will one be ready to sacrifice one’s life for the other” (*ONNP* 155). But to Kalyani, dying for the sake of love is pure absurdity. She believes that one has to live to prove the real significance of love. She asks “What is this? How can you see the greatness of love in the death of lovers? Instead of dying, they should have lived together, only then I can understand the magnanimity or greatness of love” (*ONNP* 155). Though the decision to commit suicide may be absurd, Ranga feels that it is the “sacrificial nature, the strong determination and stubbornness” (*ONNP* 140) that are present in their bond that constitutes real love. When he continues to proceed with the discussion on this issue Kalyani calmly tells him that love is not an emotion that
can be discussed, but has to be experienced. She asks him “What is there for us to talk so much about love? We know that we love each other, then why?, Why should there be any discussion about it. Is love to be understood by mere talk, definitely no, it can’t be understood by talks”(ONNP 150). When Birkin’s efforts to convince Ursula of his concept of love fails, and she misunderstands it to bullying, Birkin too, subscribes to Kalyani’s view and says “What was the good of talking anyway?. It must happen beyond the sound of words”(WL 242).

The contrast in their attitude to love, is the main issue that creates friction in the relationship between the two couples-Birkin and Ursula and Ranga and Kalyani. Ursula, not only wants Birkin to acknowledge the fact that he loves her, but also expects him to declare it to her so as to convince her. But Birkin will not admit it since he attributes a greater significance to love than the usual connotations that most people including Ursula give. He tells Ursula “I tell you, I don’t believe in love like that. I tell you, you want love to administer to your egoism, to subserve you. Love is a process of subservience with you-and with everybody. I hate it”(WL 144). Ursula is so possessed with the idea that every time they meet, she requests him to confess his love for her, while he adamant, in his faith, bluntly refuses to do so. Though he later admits his love in order to pacify her, he makes it clear that he wants something more than that in their relationship. He says “I love you right enough, but I want it to be something else”(WL 145).

Like Ursula, Ranga too suspects Kalyan’s love and repeatedly asks, her whether she really loves him. He not only wants her to accept his view of the importance of love in man-woman relationship, but also wants her to declare her
love for him in a convincing manner. In Ranga’s efforts to convince Kalyani, he even resorts to snubbing her by stating that she cannot understand the feelings of lovers, or the significance of love because, she lacks a heart that is capable of experiencing love. He plainly asks her, “Kalyani at the age of thirty even if you don’t love me, it’s okay, but have you ever loved anybody at any time in your life?” (ONNP 156). Kalyani can neither understand why Ranga entertains such doubts, nor realize initially the gravity of the situation. In another discussion they have on the same matter, he openly asks her whether she really loves him. Kalyani who cannot accept his views on love calmly replies “I don’t know. I have been thinking so until you asked me yesterday. I am fully convinced that I love you, but I don’t know, whether it is the same as what you feel is love. But one thing, the type of love you say is not really necessary for life” (ONNP 166).

Kalyani, like Birkin, does not admit love as a requisite in man-woman relationship and stresses the need for certain things above love as essential to make this bond meaningful. When Birkin and Kalyani declare that the kind of love that Ursula and Ranga expect is not necessary for life, both Ursula and Ranga want to know if it is not love then what else is really necessary in life. While Birkin insists on a relationship that is above love in which there are no “obligations and terms of agreement” (WL 137), and in which there is fusion without merger, Kalyani also stresses on a relationship that is not based on the illusion of love but which takes into consideration sincerity, honesty, discipline, and compassion as necessary for establishing a good relationship.

Ranga cannot accept Kalyani’s conviction that love is not necessary for life,
and Kalyani can neither make him understand that she is not against love, but is only against the romantic type of love that tries to glorify everything. According to her “The decision taken by a man and a woman to get married itself, is sufficient to prove that he or she is in love with the other. If it cannot be understood that love exists in it where else do you expect to find it” (ONNP 195). But Ranga states very clearly that her view cannot be accepted as he himself, like many others in this country had lived a life without love. He firmly believes that a marriage that lacks love and sacrifice, is a mere business contract that is entered upon by two people for their own convenience and comfort. Love to both Birkin and Kalyani is thus not the absolute in such a relationship and they believe that something beyond love is more essential to establish a good man-woman relationship. While Lawrence insists on a kind of physical fusion without the merging of individualities, Jayakanthan lays emphasis on a relationship that takes into consideration not only the physical aspects of love, but many other qualities that are necessary for maintaining a good union. Both Birkin and Kalyani do not believe in the conventional aspects of marriage. He says “I am not interested in legal marriages [. . . ] Marriage in the old sense seems to me repulsive” (WL 343-344). Kalyani too attaches no importance to the legality of marriage because she considers the relationship itself more important than the name given to it by society. The fact that she has physical relationship with Ranga without any expectation from him proves the faith she has in him. Jayakanthan says “Ranga the man was more important for her, not the name of the relationship. She was least bothered about what other people would say of their relationship, or even how long it would last” (ONNP 108). Later while discussing divorce with Annaswami she
tells “The mind is more important, not customs, rituals and laws for they cannot bind a couple for long. Do you think Samsara is the biding together of two people forcibly by rituals and law?”(ONNP 202).

Birkin’s concept of an ideal marriage is thus not based on the common implications associated with love but, on something beyond that. During the discussion with Gerald he says “You’ve got to take down the love and marriage ideal from its pedestal. We want something broader”(WL 366). Marriage to him is based on a kind of balance achieved in which the individualities of the partners are not impaired. He insists on a sort of “equilibrium” that is to be accomplished on a “pure balance of two single beings”(WL 137), without the mingling or merging of identities. Arguing to Ursula about the irrevocability of a pure union he tells her “[...] it is the law of creation, One is committed. One must commit oneself to a conjunction with the other for ever. But it is not selfless - it is the maintaining of the self in the mystic balance and integrity - like a star balanced with another star”(WL 144).

Ursula could neither understand Birkin’s concept of love nor his theory of “ultimate marriage” - the type of “strange conjugation” in which “Star Equilibrium” is to be achieved. She only sees Birkin’s desire for something more than love as an attempt to bully her and therefore retaliates in a fierce manner. She feels that like all males he was trying to boss over her and bully her into submission, She tells him “[...] You don’t love me! You only want your own ends. You don’t want to serve me, and yet you want me to serve you. It is so one sided [...] You want yourself, really, and your own affairs. And you just want me to be there, to serve you”(WL 242). So when later Bikin tells her “I want you to drop your assertive Will, your frightening
apprehensive self-insistence that is what I want” (WL 243) it’s only natural that as an independent and emancipated woman she feels that he is trying to bully her into submission. She realizes that Birkin cannot tolerate the ‘Self’in her. She tells Hermione “He wants me to sink myself - not to have any being of my own” (WL 286). She therefore knows the kind of love he wants and is equally determined not to yield to his bullying. She says “No - I don’t - really. I don’t want to give the sort of submission he insists on. He wants me to give myself up - and I simply don’t feel that I can do it” (WL 285). Birkin’s persistent insistence on something beyond love is seen by Ursula as only as “a mere lust for bullying and domination, and the fight between them, because she will not accept his notions” (Hough 78). Hough also admits that the constant bullying continues to such an extent that at one juncture she almost gets fed up of the whole issue and begins to hate him. But soon they are reconciled and are mutually conscious of the fact that they are irrevocably bound together, yet Birkin would rather die than accept the kind of love she offers. The fact that they are reconciled in the end only illustrates that their relationship is a union that is capable of achieving “equilibrium”. Their quarrels and conflicts are only superficial and are only used to demonstrate their individuality and independence. They are in the end able to attain “the free, proud, singleness” which is the crux of Birkin’s and of course Lawrence’s theory of man-woman relationship. They are able to “realize the relationship of unity and separateness - the profound connection between two beings who are nevertheless externally different” (Hough 80) through recognizing and accepting the positive aspects of this union.

Ranga, who is convinced of the importance of sacrifice in love and in marriage
feels that if Kalyani's love is genuine she should be prepared to relinquish everything she has, including her drama troop and come and live with him as his wife in his small room. He tries to substantiate his argument by referring to the fact that he himself is able to do so because of the deep love he has for her. But Kalyani argues that his decision to leave his relatives and come and stay with her, is his own wish and not due to her compulsion, while if she also does the same, it will be harmful to both. She says "[...] yes definitely it will be the end of our relationship, because in such an arrangement you derive satisfaction, whereas in some way it causes dissatisfaction to me" (ONNP 195). No amount of rational logic convinces Ranga, and he sticks to his conviction that she is not capable of sacrificing anything for his sake, because the love she has for him is definitely lesser than the love he has for her. He disagrees with her view and says "If you really love me, you will not feel that dissatisfaction. [...] I feel, you don’t give the amount of concern I give for our relationship" (ONNP 195-196).

Ranga is initially quite sure that he can discuss these issues and convince Kalyani of his views, but unfortunately in his enthusiasm to persuade her, he only ends up torturing her with his spiteful and sarcastic comments. He even accuses her as a self-centered woman who is primarily concerned with her welfare. She on the other hand, though depressed, does not show her feelings and entertains no hatred towards him. Inspite of Ranga's spiteful and vindictive words, Kalyani always sees some kind of truth and beauty in whatever he says and therefore never feels offended even though he intentionally wounds her. She only feels that he has a right to speak his opinions and gives a patient hearing although she does not agree with it. Kalyani
in fact, is not even quite aware of why and from when Ranga has such doubts. She wonders whether she has miserably failed in convincing him of her love. The irony of the situation, is that Ranga’s misconceptions regarding Kalyani that he entertains appear to be justified because she, by her good nature, does not try to interfere, thinking that it is best to leave him to his ways.

Ranga identifies his inability to acknowledge the “Self” in Kalyani as the main problem that has led to frictions in their relationship. As an intellectual he is aware of the importance of the “Self”, but he admits that in his personal relationship, like most Indian men, he is not able to accept it. He confesses to her:

A woman however much, she is good, worthy, disciplined, the men in our society cannot stand the Self in her, he cannot digest it. It is the same disease that has come on me. I can understand intellectually that you have got that Self. A man in our society will even live with a woman who does not have brains [...] But in spite of all the good qualities a woman has, if she has a Self, a man who is willing to maintain a friendship with her finds it difficult to live with her (ONNP 251).

Ranga admits that he as her husband is not able to accept the Self in Kalyani, even though he is intellectually aware that it is this same Self that has actually drawn her to him, and that has enabled her to establish herself as an actress with individuality. He honestly discloses to her that it is the same Self “that which is making you live, that which has given you an individuality, that which drew me to you, is this Self. But I cannot live as your husband tolerating your Self” (ONNP 252). So he suggests that
they should separate and continue to live as friends, as it will be possible for him to accept and acknowledge her “Self” in that relationship than in their present relationship, because the man-woman relationship is the only relationship in which there is a lot of expectations from the partners, and when it is not realized it leads to endless problems. After having lived with her for sometime he is now convinced that “One cannot live with a woman with strong individuality, in a free emotional life” (ONNP 252). Ranga, inspite of his education, and sophisticated attitudes to life, is still incapable of accepting Kalyani’s individuality in his personal relationship and he confesses this inability to her:

I did not live my life with you as I expected. It was not possible to live so. The blame is not yours, but mine. However intelligent I am, an intellectual by nature, that is all to the to the outer world. In my private life, in the relationship between husband and wife, one cannot live intellectually I cannot live intellectually my intimate life. I have understood that love and sex are concerned more emotionally than intellectually (ONNP 254).

The irony of the situation Jayakanthan feels, is that this inability to tolerate the Self of the woman is entertained even by educated and intelligent men like Ranga and Anandaraman (hero of KEC), who are intellectually aware that they should acknowledge their wife’s individuality and independence. Jayakanthan identifies the duality and hypocrisy of Indian men as the prime reason for this problem. Stating the dual nature of Indian men, Jayakanthan in his preface to the novels Kokilla Enna Cheithuvital and Samukam Enpathu Nalu Per, observes that men in our country
are very enthusiastic in upholding equality, freedom, women’s rights and other
civilized codes of conduct as imperative in the social framework, but when these
principles enter the institution of the family they “seem to destroy the serene, sacred
purity of the family which is considered by them to be a shrine” (KEC 5). He also
observes that there is always a conflict between an individual’s perception of these
ideas in relation to the society and in relation to the family. He admits that “Man is
able to exercise his ideas on equality and freedom only in the society in which he
does not hold much responsibility, while in the family circle where he shoulders
much responsibility and in his personal relationship, he is unable to digest the
individuality of the woman and so denies these principles” (KEC 5). The relationship
between Ranga, and Kalyani, bears testimony to this fact.

Marriage to Fullerton “Creates a context of continuous intimacy through
which a man and a woman are able to discover and expand the many facets of the
Self” (20). But unfortunately instead of allowing scope for the expansion of the
Self, it most often leads only to the annihilation of the Self, if marital harmony is to
exist between couples. Though Birkin and Ranga, are intellectually aware that they
should accept, acknowledge and respect the Self of the woman are unable to
recognize it in their personal relationships and it creates problems in their lives.
Frieden rightly remarks that “love has been customarily defined at least for women
as a complete merging of egos and loss of separateness - togetherness, a giving up
of individuality rather than strengthening up of it” (55).

The attempt to persuade Kalyani to accept Ranga’s views on love and life can
be considered as a clear instance of bullying of a different kind. There is no physical
torture as in most cases, but one cannot ignore the fact that there is terrible mental torture. At one stage she even wonders whether she really lacks the capacity to love, the ability to hold a man as he himself accuses her of. When he suggests divorce as a solution to their present problem, she accepts it though she herself did not want it, because she knew it was too late to convince him of the love and affection she has for him. Moreover she thinks that it is best to leave everything to his choice because she is quite sure that any intervention from her side, will only create more problems. When he discovers that it is impossible to destroy Kalyani’s individuality he suspects her love and comes to the conclusion, that she lacks real love. This attitude of Ranga, Jayakanthan, observes is a common problem of most people who are in love. He points out in his preface to ONNP that “it is a common practice of most people who are in love, to indulge in trying to destroy the individuality of their loved one, and when the other person is not willing to loose his or her individuality, they either accuse the other of lacking the desired amount of love they have, and either destroy the love or destroy themselves ”(12).

The higher level of bullying that we see in Ranga-Kalyani case also exists to a great degree in the Birkin-Ursula relationship. From the beginning Ursula, is consciously aware that Birkin is not able to tolerate her Self, but she is equally determined not to yield to his bullying. In the discussion she has with both Hermione and Gudrun, they warn her that it will be very difficult to live with him since Birkin is the type of man who will stick to his views and try to forcibly enforce them on her. Her resolution not to surrender to his obstinate will, makes her retort in a violent manner towards him. Unlike Ursula, Kalyani does not retort violently to
Ranga, but only tries to argue her stance in a very calm and convincing manner, though he intentionally spites her many times. She articulates her opinions very frankly, without any intention of wounding him but unfortunately Ranga misunderstands her composed and unbullying nature to lack of love and maintains that this kind of detached attitude is not ideal for establishing a good marital relationship.

Jayakanthan admits that in most marital relationships, the desire to bully and dominate the other to submission rather than aim at achieving marital harmony by acknowledging the individuality of the partner, creates frictions and conflicts and threaten to destabilize the bond itself. In his opinion, this novel definitely “represents a higher level of bullying that takes place between a husband and wife, and Kalyani is my own imaginary creation of how I would like a wife, who is being bullied by her husband to tackle the situation” (ONNP 8). He observes in the preface to the novel that Kalyani’s “calmness and unbullying nature itself creates doubts about her love for him in Ranga’s mind, and when she does not make any efforts to clear these suspicions, the doubts are only confirmed by him” (ONNP). When the lawyer insists that they should live separately for one year to prove that they don’t love each other she tries to discourage the idea for knew for sure that it would be the end of their relationship. But Ranga, is not conscious of the fact that she was prepared to wait even a “Yugha” if he would definitely come back to her. In a contemplative mood she consoles herself by saying to herself “I am ready to wait for a Yugha - this is also love. Perhaps separation will make the heart grow fonder and that is why the lawyer is laying such stipulations” (ONNP 246).
If the Birkin-Ursula relationship is intended to demonstrate the constructive aspects of a relationship, the Gerald-Gudrun relationship is introduced by Lawrence to demonstrate the cancerous nature of a bond that is born purely out of passion, and that attempts to grow based on domination and assertion of the wills of the couples on each other. Their relationship does not allow any room for separateness and singleness of identity due to the lack of clear perception of the importance of love and marriage in this union. Both Gerald and Gudrun do not have a healthy attitude either to love or towards marriage and therefore their union is born out of mutual passion and insists on “fusion in passion” (Macleod 123) alone. While for Birkin, the “finality of love” (144) rests on establishing a perfect, eternal bond with one woman, to Gerald the very idea that a woman’s love would make his life grow wholesome appears to be ridiculous. Love to him is not a very important emotion and is nothing but a passing episode in one’s life. To Gudrun too, it is just a temporal thing and she conceives of it only “as a means of sensual understanding and casual expression of nature” (Macleod 133). Neither believes in true marriage as a means of achieving wholeness and fulfilment in life. For both Gerald and Gudrun, marriage is only an established social order and has nothing to do with genuine love. To Gerald “Marriage was like a doom to him. […] He was not willing to accept this. […] Marriage was not the committing of himself into a relationship with Gudrun. It was a committing of himself in acceptance of the established order, in which he did not livingly believe, and then he would retreat to the underworld for his life” (WL 345) For Gudrun too, “Marriage is a social arrangement, […] and has nothing to do with the question of love” (WL 282). While Gerald accepts the institutional aspect of
marriage without understanding its real significance, to Gudrun, the very thought of marriage drives her mad and hence they fail to realize what true marriage entails. She tells Ursula, “[...] marriage is just impossible. There may be, and there are thousands of women who want it, and could conceive of nothing else. But the very thought of it sends me mad. One must be free, above all free” (WL 366).

The Gerald-Gudrun union illustrates a relationship, that is born of mere physical attraction and that is based on the carnality alone. A sense of insecurity and alienation seems to govern their relationship which is purely sensual and therefore deadly and destructive. On the night of his father’s death, Gerald virtually feels alienated, deserted and destroyed and is convinced that only a physical intimacy with Gudrun will resume him back to life and he therefore stealthly enters her room in the middle of the night. He entirely depends on her to restore him, through sheer physical intimacy with her, and she in turn accepts his request not out of love, but out of sympathy for him. In the conflict that ensues between them in the end she openly declares that it was not love, but only sympathy, that drew her to him in their first intimacy. She says “When you first came to me, I had to take pity on you,. But it was never love” (WL 433). The chapter entitled ‘Snowed Up’ gives a graphic account of the confessions of both Gerald and Gudrun that their relationship is not based on real love, but on other considerations. While sex for Birkin and Ursula is a transcendental experience, for Gerald and Gudrun it is a struggle for dominance, and hence fails to be meaningful and life-promoting. Thus Gerald and Gudrun “could neither fully respond in love, nor really love each other, as theirs is a tie of companionship of convenience, not a vital refreshing tie” (Inderjit 131).
Gerald “a representative of both a deadly social system and of a ruthless life destroying energy in the personal sphere” (Hough 75) is a divided personality. Though he is a successful ‘Industrial Magnate’ to the outside world, in his personal life he is a failure because of his inability to establish a healthy relationship with a woman. Gudrun unlike her sister is not able to achieve success in this relationship as a result of her assertive nature and her will to dominate and possess Gerald under her control. Moreover she entertains hopes of getting married to Gerald, not out of genuine desire to establish a relationship, but purely out of jealousy which definitely is not a right reason for marriage. She realizes that she lacks something that her sister possesses, and immediately jumps to the conclusion that it is the stability of marriage. In a jealous mood, she ruminates over her present condition and asks herself, “What was she short of now? It was marriage - it was the wonderful stability of marriage. She did want it, let her say what she might. She has been lying. The old idea of marriage was right even now - marriage and the home” (WL 368). Thus the lack of a sincere desire on the part of both Gerald and Gudrun to establish a union also proves to be detrimental to their relationship.

The union between Gerald and Gudrun is not a mutually satisfying one as it is rooted in the struggle for domination and assertion of wills, and is therefore incapable of achieving equilibrium. The conversation they have towards the end of the novel not only reveals the fact that they don’t love each other but also expresses clearly their incapability to establish a genuine relationship. Both try to assert their wills on each other which eventually leads to a crisis in which Gerald even wants to kill Gudrun. He suspects Gudrun’s fascination for Loerky and it creates added
tensions in his mind which ultimately makes him commit suicide. Their relationship is therefore “neither vital, nor life-promoting, but only fatal and debilitating” (Inderjit 133). Comparing the two relationships Sheila Macleod observes:

The struggle between Birkin and Ursula, is a struggle that is capable of equilibrium as well as compromise in that each partner is allowed in his/her complementary separateness and singleness, while the Gerald-Gudrun relationship allows of no separation. It insists on fusion-in-passion, in which each demands and gives all to the other.

(123)

People like Ranga, Jayakanthan affirms, will not achieve wholeness in man-woman relationship because of their in ability to acknowledge the individuality of their partners. Ranga, whose mind is troubled with conflicts is really in a fix thinking of his relationship with Kalyani. He is aware that all these problems are self invited, and he even feels jealous of Kalyani, who has no such doubts and uncertainties because of the clarity of mind she possesses. He is also equally conscious of the fact that only she can build some confidence in him, and enable him to find a solution to the present problem. Referring to the dilemma of the situation Jayakanthan observes:

Ranga is aware that he does not possess the clarity of mind and happiness that she possesses. He is equally conscious that it is a self invited situation - his agonies, pains and conflicts. He secretly wants to set right this situation, but in order to achieve that, he needs some positive approach, some clarity. Some doubts have to be cleared, some
confidence is to be born. He is aware that she is the only person who is capable of doing it. Only Kalyani, can give that clarity of mind and thought. All doubts can be cleared only by her, and she can only create confidence in him (ONNP 151).

Ranga’s inability to understand Kalyani’s love is also partly due to his inferiority complex which is a result of his inferior social position compared to that of Kalyani. Right from the time the decision to get married is taken Ranga is fully conscious of their financial inequality. The decision to hire a house for them to live for which he insists that he pays rent is an instance of how he tries to get over the inferiority complex of not only having a house of his own like Kalyani, but also illustrates the typical Indian male ego which prevents him from living on his wife’s income. Ranga is equally conscious that Kalyani’s birth, her profession and her environment have all greatly contributed to her having acquired the qualities of a woman of high class. She has unconsciously imbibed these qualities and they have laid a deep root in her psyche, whereas he is aware that he lacks these qualities. The statement “I am truly a member of the Adisesiah family only. I am not like you. Why for that matter, I have not grown to that extent that I wished. In my personal life I am not yet a sophisticated man” (ONNP 254) gives evidence to the inferiority complex he suffers. The difference of opinion regarding growing roses that takes place on the second day of their marriage is also an instance to illustrates his inferiority complex. He is not able to understand the sentiments behind Kalyani’s growing these rose plants, but instead considers them only as a snobbish activity since so much of money is wasted for no great humanitarian use. This incident in
one way sows the seed of conflict in Ranga’s mind which later leads to other conflicts between them.

Lawrence also refers to the Birkin-Hermione relationship to depict the destructive effect of a union, that is again not based on love, but on other considerations. Birkin and Hermione, had been lovers for quite sometime, but they fail to establish a good relationship because of the assertive Will of Hermione. She is a “split personality because there is a great gap between what she feels and experiences and what she actually said and thought”(Draper 80). She craves to establish man-woman relationship with Birkin not due to any real desire for the relationship, but because she feels she will be able to achieve wholeness in the union. Birkin’s strong repulsion towards her is mainly because of her strong will, and her lack of spontaneity. An intellectual and a member of the “Kulturttrager” - a medium for culture of ideas, she only wants the relationship, to exercise her will on Birkin. But Birkin fully conscious of her “affected passion, mental illusion and bullying Will which fired her with a passion to acquire power over men and matters”(Indejit 131) breaks away from her though she tries her best to have him under her control.

Jayakanthan refers to the relationship between Annaswami and his wife to illustrate the contrast between the old, conventional attitude to marriage and the new, modern perspective of viewing the same relationship. Marriage for the majority in India, is a life-long bond, whatever may be the problems involved in it, and therefore it is only natural for people like Annaswami, to be surprised to see the casual way in which Kalyani refers to their decision to go in for divorce. When he tells her “The
meaning of Samsara is that it should last long" (ONNP 214). Kalyani immediately remarks "That is all applicable to people like you and mami. Even if you don't like her, or she likes or dislikes your affairs, the relationship will alone continue strongly, that Samsara is different" (ONNP 214). After advising her to obey her husband and go and live with him, he tries to console her by saying that the laws are now even more powerful than Gods, and hence it is not that easy to get a divorce. But Kalyani who maintains that the mind to live together is more important than laws and rituals asks Anaswami "Do you think Samsara is binding together two people forcibly, by rituals or law?" (ONNP 215). The Dhamu - Pattu relationship presents a union that is born of infatuation and not based on true love. The frictions that occur and the unhappiness that Pattu experiences though not discussed in detail are only referred to by Jayakanthan to illustrate the fact that romantic love and mere physical attractions are not the criteria for establishing a good man-woman relationship.

Although Women in Love, has been acclaimed by many as a novel that analyzes at length the issues related to man - woman relationship, yet critics like Langman feel that the novel only, "affirms the necessity of the social bond and explores the values of which the bond can be renewed, but does not offer a final solution" (83) to the issues raised. He even alleges that "Lawrence has failed to resolve problems he believed he was resolving, or at least set out to resolve" (81).

To Lawrence, most marriages end in failure as a result of preconceived notions of love and the attempt of the partners to assert their wills on each other. People like Gerald, Gudrun and Hermione pretend to be in love only to feed their individual egos and hence the desire to possess than to belong to one another
dominates, and creates frictions. Of all emotions, love has been made the most counterfeit because of idealization and this to Lawrence leads to many problems in life. The desire to establish a relationship that is devoid of ego should be the primary objective of both man and woman. Lawrence insists that man and woman should remain true to each other without fusing or merging together and try to retain their individuality and achieve fulfillment in their duality. Jayakanthan too feels that the concept of love has been drastically misunderstood and bullying is often understood to be love, and hence the urge to, punish and divorce, dominates the partners. Such a type of love will only lead to frustrated and disillusioned people like Ranga who fail to achieve wholeness in this relationship. Both Lawrence and Jayakanthan are of the view that marital happiness is possible only if the partners try to understand, supplement and complement, instead of trying to dominate, possess and crush each other.

An analysis of the two novels reveals that both Lawrence and Jayakanthan have attempted to analyze the significance of love, and the importance of retaining the Self in man-woman relationship. Birkin and Kalyani the authorial voices are against the concept of romantic love, while Ursula and Ranga insist on the importance of romantic love in man-woman relationship. While Lawrence insists on a kind of fusion, without the merging of individualities, Jayakanthan lays emphasis on a relationship that has to take into consideration, not love alone, but many other qualities that are necessary for maintaining a good man-woman relationship.
Works Cited


