CONCLUSION

The fable, indeed, has been a preferred narrative genre in India. The avowed aim of this study has been to foreground the fable-compositions in the sense of a tradition, while maintaining the inherent distinctiveness of each composition. The analysis of the various texts of this tradition makes it possible to make a few observations about them and also suggest the course further study on the subject could take. While some of the ideas that emanate from the study of these fables equally apply to the various texts of other narrative genres in India, some thought are specific to the fable-texts.

Issues like the narrative and its discursive function, narrative as independent of the author, philosophy as the basis of narrative relate as much to the fable-narratives as to any non-fable narrative in India. But there are certain specific points about the Indian fable. The discursive function of the fable-narrative is much more precisely focused than the other narratives; each fable-narrative develops its own philosophical/political/ethical system; there is a greater sense of form about the fable-narrative than the non-fable-narratives like the fairy tale; the narrativity of the fable-narrative is a much more conscious act and the relationship between narrative and discourse is well worked out here as also the relationship between the prose and the poetic forms.

The fable-narratives are very concise. The idea behind the narrative is not to tell a story to depict a character or a situation, but to depict a character or situation to make a point more forceful than if otherwise stated. There is an understanding that Indian people knew the viability of the fable-form, the very idea of employing the fable as a part of the situation. Bhishma is lying down on the bed of arrows, slowly but surely he is marching towards death. He is entreated by the Pandavas to impart them valuable knowledge on polity and ethics. Every narrative is a concentrated narrative. He as well as his listeners knows that the apparent form of the fable is not fiction, not other-wordly, but, on the
other hand, every aspect of the fable relates to the human world. The narrative is the most symbolic act here. From the moment Bhima starts, for example, the fable of the Jackal and the Tiger, the listener knows that a point is going to be proved. And hence at every stage the narrative enacts a part of that final discursive thought. This is the reason why the fable-narrative as a discourse is much more concentrated than the other non-fable narratives.

Each fable has an immediate objective. The *Panchatantra* is addressed to princes who are extremely averse to learning; the *Jatakas* too address not so wise audience. In the *Jatakas*, in fact, the narrative is very closely linked to the problems that inspire the telling of the narrative. Therefore, the listeners even know as does the narrator that the narrative is exclusively devoted to a particular religious discourse. The fable does not tell things to be done or aimed at, but the fables become those things, through the actions of the characters. This is how a discourse co-opts a fable completely.

The fable-narratives delineate tradition, because, as discussed they grew as a different type of literature. The sharing of the stories and story-motifs has also been phenomenal in this tradition. There has been enormous intertextual associations among the all the fable-compositions, and yet it is remarkable how each composition posits its own specific agenda. Each composition represents a specific stream of the fable-tradition. The *Panchatantra*, in particular, with its numerous recensions throughout the world reveals how sweeping in its influence a text can become. From its own adaptations of the *Jataka* fables to itself being adapted in the folk narratives around the world, the text puts forth significant points about textuality.

Indeed, the relationship of the fable-narratives with the folk culture comes in way more expressed in the fable-narratives than the non-fable narratives. The thing to remember is that a fable-text, like in the *Panchatantra*, can both be placed in the academic context as well as the folk context. With numerous allusions to the *Arthasastra*, *Natyasastra*, *Nitisastra* and the like it would be seem as if the fable-narrative would be frozen in the academic circles, but the fact that such texts later became an integral part of the folk
imagination goes on to show that even the authoritative texts of the Indian culture, because they were a part of the oral tradition, disseminated well in the social sphere, so that allusions to them in the fable enhanced their interests. Likewise, though the *Jataka* must have been known primarily as a religious literature, but it became so absorbed in the folk that eventually led to the famous inscriptions on the stupas.

Indeed, the fable-narratives of India contain a great treasure-house of knowledge, while at the same time they shed significant lights on the Indian history of those times. In fact, some of the knowledge contained in these texts about the contemporary affairs shows a greater sense of history.