INTRODUCTION

_Pañcatantra_ is the most popular collection of didactic fables and stories for the ordinary man, which is second only to Bible in circulation. The stories of it are connected with the nature and the whole animating world. It represents the popular culture, which is far different from the so-called classic culture in its form and content. A study on _Pañcatantra_, using the modern tools of language studies with a cultural approach thus may be relevant.

These tales first written in Sanskrit were very ancient and do the exact date of composition is not known. Some scholars like Arthur. W. Ryder, Hertal, Winternitz are of the view that they were already known by the Indian people five thousand years ago. Foreign travelers, who visited India in those days, must have made these tales popular in their own lands, for we can see how much the stories of _Pañcatantra_ have influenced Aesop, the Greek story teller, and La Fontaine, the French poet.
Pañcatantra is so called because it is divided into five tantras or tactics such as mitrabheda, mitralābha, kakolūkiya, labdhapraṇāśa and aparīkṣitakāraka. It is also known as pañcopakhyāna. This text deals with the traditional story telling device in the most befitting manner. In it most of the characters are animals and insects who think, talk and behave like human beings.

Viṣṇuśarma, the author, extracted the essence of all the celebrated works in some collective stories for the children but at the same time composed the most valuable compendium on policies. The direct intention of the author is to preach the irresponsible young princess of the ruler Amaraśakti. Thus, Pañcatantra is essentially a didactic storybook, which serves a number of functions like fiction, political science and ethical text in nature.
Basic Plot of the *Pañcatantra*

*Tantra I Mitrabheda*

The first chapter deals with the jackal Damanaka gaining favour with the lion and climbing the ranks rapidly, and the subsequent plot by the jackal to bring down the bull who also grew very close to the king out of pure jealousy. The plot succeeds and the bull is murdered by the lion unjustly. The basic moral of this story is that one must not accuse others falsely, and should strive to preserve friendships.

*Tantra II Mitralābha*

The second book tells of the story of the crow who upon seeing the favour the rat performed to free the pigeon and her companions, decides to be friend of the rat despite the latter's initial objections. The story line evolves as this friendship grows to include the turtle and the fawn. They collaborate to save the fawn when he is trapped, and later they work together to save the turtle, who herself, falls in the trap. This story indicates the fact that friends are an integral part of life.
**Tantra III  Kākolūkīya**

The third *tantra* in the book, not unlike chapter I, deals with deceit and glorifies it to a certain extent as it deals with the crow who pretends to be an outcaste from his own group to gain entry into the rival owl group. And by doing so, he gains access to their secrets and learns of their vulnerabilities. He later summons his group of crows to set fire on all entrances to the cave where the owls live and suffocate them to death. This story reveals the importance of mental strength and deceit which are stronger than brute force.

**Tantra IV  Labdhapraṇāśa**

The fourth *tantra* deals with the artificially constructed symbiotic relationship between the monkey and the crocodile. Crocodile risked the relationship by conspiring to acquire the heart of the monkey to heal his wife, the monkey finds out about this and avoids this grim fate. This tale informs that one must never betray friends, and should stay vigilant at all times.
**Tantra V  Aparīkṣitakāraka**

Originally the fifth *tantra* of the book, deals with a Brāhmin who leaves his child with a weasel friend of his and upon returning and finding blood on the weasel's mouth, he kills it. He later finds out that the weasel actually defended his son, and killed a snake that attempted to kill the boy. This story indicates the fact that one must never rush in making judgements.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyse the narrative devices used in *Pañcatantra*. The thesis is divided into mainly five chapters as follows:

The first chapter is 'An Introduction to Narratology'. It discusses narratives, narrative theories, narrative literature, especially in Indian tradition and story telling. This chapter is essential for a general awareness of narratology.

The second chapter estimates 'Origin and Reconstruction of *Pañcatantra*'. It deals with the connection between folk culture and the *Pañcatantra* stories. And this chapter also discusses its stages of development.
In the oral tradition, the valid knowledge and moral ideas are transmitted spontaneously through word of mouth from one generation to the next. For easiest transaction, they used songs, tales, proverbs, legends and so on. Thus the stories of *Pañcatantra* are originated from a stream of oral tradition. So the origin of *Pañcatantra* is closely connected with folk culture.

In this chapter the reconstruction of *Pañcatantra* is explained. For this purpose the versions of *Pañcatantra* are classified into five heads.

1. The Tantrākhyāyika
2. Pahlavi version
3. The southern *Pañcatantra*
4. Bṛhatkatha version
5. Nepalese version

The third chapter discusses '*Pañcatantra an Allegorical Method of Narration*'. It explains the nature of allegory and objectives. It also deals *Pañcatantra* as an allegorical method of narration. The use of the frame story, the practice of emboxing stories, the emphasis on moral values, the introduction of sub
tales, the elements of soft satire and the lively presentation of animal characters are the important features of the allegorisation attempted in *Pañcatantra*.

The fourth chapter evaluates 'External and Internal Narrative Devices in *Pañcatantra*'. It discusses the structural devices in *Pañcatantra*. The structure of the work is closely related from the starting level to the ending portion and also each story is connected with some kind of narrative techniques.

The fifth chapter discusses 'Social and Political Aspects of Narrative Devices in *Pañcatantra*'. It deals the social aspects, with narrative device, especially in social inequalities, social consciousness, Hindu belief, moral awareness etc. And also it explains *Pañcatantra* on privileges, poverty and servitude. At the same time this chapter explains the philosophical and political aspects of narrative devices in *Pañcatantra*. Finally this thesis sums up the observations conclusions and the final findings of these five chapters.