CHAPTER -V

Behaviour of animals in Sanskrit Fable Literature

The behaviour of animals generally means, every higher or lower animal must solve a number of problems if it is to survive. Each animal must find food, on the one hand, and avoid becoming food itself, on the other. In many cases an animal must prepare a nest for its offspring, and feed and care for them when they arrive. Animals and birds enliven our world. They obtain their nourishment by feeding on plants, other living creatures and their dead remains. All animals, to some extent, have the capacity to modify their natural habitat where they live. Most of the animals can adapt themselves to their surroundings. Animals belonging to the same group have some or the common features in them.

The behaviour of animals depends upon several factors. As lower animals unlike men, have only specific needs – the need of security of themselves, and the members of their family, the need of food, the need of maintaining territorial jurisdiction of their habitat, and such other matters, animals behave in different manners in different circumstances.

For many animals, ‘territorial behaviour’ is the striking feature. The area of a territory defended by a pair depends upon location, abundance of food, natural barriers etc.

Through animal behaviour people came to understand how animal conduct live. It is often difficult when writing about animal behaviour to avoid ascribing human thoughts, motions and feelings to other fellow creatures.
Different animals have their own method of food arrangement and food habits. For some little creatures like ‘Ant’ and ‘Rodents’ food is not needed immediately, it may be stored away for future use. On the other hand, a ‘leopard’ carry a kill high into the branches of tree. Having caught the prey, the hunter’s animal like lion, tiger, wolf etc. must kill it as quickly as possible to being wounded during a long struggle. This is extremely important, for a wounded animal stands very little chance of survival. If a member of the ‘Cat’ family kills a bird (for example) it sets about plucking it with great care before swallowing single mouthful.

Animals are grouped into different categories according to their intelligence and other habits. The fox is always sly while the Cow is gentle. The lion and the tiger have a majestic air while the horse is swift, sleek and intelligent. The slow going elephant does not forget its attendant nor does he forget a man that tease him. Monkeys are very near the mankind. The peacock is gay while the Crow is shrewd. The tortoises is slow going but sure-footed, the hare is swift but act to laze on the road.

Many animals are able to convey messages to each other and to signal their intentions by means of body language.

Cleverness of this kind of animal is very common in the living world, and has led people over the ages to become obsessed with the nature of animal intelligence, and with the need to discover what goes on inside the animal mind.

Through all these behaviour observed by naturalists are not recorded by Sanskrit writers, they have given a clear idea of some striking behaviours of many animals in their fables. The story of animal behaviour largely embraces their work and its disciplines which have gone for to illuminate the mind and manners of animals.
Information about animal behaviour was also incorporated into folk-tales and fables. The stories all had a strong moral purpose, clarifying virtues and elucidating expectations. Some bestiaries also used animals to tell the truth about people.

In the fables, the animals are used as convenient metaphors for human behaviour, and the fables success depend upon the fact that their characters are based upon a general recognition of biological reality.

Similarly, the cunning nature of the fox as understood by everyone in the Middle Ages and it formed the basis of countless fables including those of *Reynard (the fox)* where ‘Reynard’ was the hero in all these fables. The shrewd movement of foxes was noticed by fox hunters in England, and the villagers observed its cleverness on stealing domestic poultry. All countrymen understood the nature of the fox, and this was the crucial to the enormous success of the folk tales of ‘Reynard, the fox’ which were widely circulated during the middle ages. (*Reynard the Fox – an European fable* and Reynard was the hero of survival medieval European cycles of verified animal tales that satirize contemporary human society).

He symbolised the triumph of craft over brute strength, usually personified by Isengrim, the Greedy and dull witted wolf, casting animals allowed in each character to be used/ endowed with instant personality without any need to elaborate.

It is not our intention to give an account of the varying behaviour of wild or domestic animal in general way, but the behaviour which have been recorded by the author of Sanskrit fables which the subject of our present discussion.
Behaviour of Animals – Food Habit, Enmity with other Animals, Cleverness etc. found in Sanskrit Fable Literature

This chapter includes the behaviour of animals adequately, their food habits, enmity of bird and beasts wherever necessary, their skill, intelligence also their cleverness as found in the animal fable literature.

The fable writers of India were intelligent people who closely observed the behaviours of birds and beasts of India. Their descriptions of the behaviour of animals are generally correct. But they sometimes use certain animals in a different way to serve their purpose.

Lion:

In the animal fable literature, the lion plays a significant part in the Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit writers have always treated this animal as the king of the jungle. Throughout the history of man, the lion has been considered the symbol of strength. There is a saying — "Strong as a lion" or lion-hearted. The lion has been chosen in the Kāśikāvatī as a standard of comparison (Upamāna) while describing the heroism of a person. In courts throughout the world, the lion was used on shields and crests and banners to indicate power. Probably this was not because anybody could prove that a lion could defeat all other animals in combat, but because lions strike such terror in man and in other beasts. As it looks so majestic and strong, lion is called the king of all wild animals.

The lion in Sanskrit fable is depicted as the majestic king of the beasts in the forest. Of course, in some fables the lion has been depicted a weak and irresolute ruler, gullible and easy to manipulate, though he certainly possesses some fine qualities: magnanimity, loyalty and basic sense of right and wrong. But sometimes, he is wanting of judgement, and is not a master of his own thinking because; it is the noble bull (Sanjīvaka).
who was slain unjustly by the lion (*Pingalaka*) even though they were
good and virtuous friends of each other.

The frame story of *Pañcatantra* begins with a description of lion
named ‘*Pingalaka*’ dwelling on the banks of ‘Yamuna’. It provided itself
with adequate food and shelter without the aid of attendants.

The lion normally fears and avoids man. Generally, they do not
attack man unless provoked. Sometimes the lion grew afraid if he looked an
animal when he had never seen before or some thrilling sound that he
never heard before. There is a reference that the lion ‘*Pingalaka*’ while
heard the roar of ‘*Sanjīvaka*’ (The bull) he thought that some very powerful
animal was living on the river bank. He was so frightened at heart and full
of terror that he left the place with his courtiers and even thought of leaving
that forest for safety.

Similarly, the fable ‘*Lion and the lone Ram*’ of *Pañcatantra* reveals
the anxious thoughts that made the lion trembling at first sight, but the
same animal when he saw in next morning grazing lonely, suddenly he
could assess the ‘Stranger’s strength accordingly to the proportion to his
diet and at once he killed the ram.

Lion’s nature is depicted through some fables where the lower and
weaker animals could subdue him very easily with the help of their
intelligence that is with cleverness.

The lions rest by day and do their hunting by night but unitedly. It
is said that in their combined hunts it is the lion that drives and the lioness
that kills, while the cubs waiting by her side rush into tear at, and feed on
the prey. Generally beasts of prey have necessarily to be more intelligent
than the herbivorous that they hunt and kill, for their prey intentionally
alert and wary.
The usual diet of lion consists of flesh of different animals, which are customarily grass-eaters. Lions, being beasts of prey have necessarily to be more intelligent than the herbivores, which they hunt and kill for their prey is intensely alert and wary. When a lion is not hungry, he pays no attention to other animals. It is stated in the Pañcatantra that lions do not eat any dead animals, which they have not killed for their food e.g.

“Nāham anyahatam sattvam kadācit bhakṣyāmi”.

In the animal fables it is seen that there is enmity between the animals in their own animal kingdom. There is conflict between the grass-eating species and flesh eating species of beast but that is natural enmity between them.

**Enmity between lion and elephant:**

In regards of enmity with other animals let us first discuss the case of Lion and elephant. Sanskrit fable writers have regularly discussed that there is a regular enmity and battle between a lion and an elephant. In one story of the Pañcatantra a lion became seriously wounded in a grim fight with a tusker.

It has been noticed in the ‘Animal –Films’ produced by naturalists that a ‘lion’ generally does not challenge on elephant for food, which they can over power. The female lion is always the prime chooser in a hunting expedition of lions. But lion or tigers never attack or kill any animal unnecessarily. However, a brave lion becomes like a jackal, when he comes out of the forest (Vanāt vinirgataḥ sūrah śiṁho api syāt sṛgālavaḥ).

There is a reference regarding enmity of lion and an elephant in the frame story of the ‘lion and the bull’ that a lion abandons a jackal even he falls in his lap, and kills an elephant instead (Śiṁho jambukamaṁkamāgatamapi tyaktvā nihanti dvīpam).
Therefore, there is very little truth in the stories of the ‘Lion and the Hare’, ‘Lion and the Bull’, ‘Lion and the Camel’, and ‘the lion and the jackal’ etc. in the Pañcatantra of the rampantly killing animals and bringing wanton disaster to the animal kingdom.

The ‘lion’ and the ‘elephant’ are described in Sanskrit literature as the eternal enemies of each other. Even the ‘Mūhurtta Mārtanda’ of Nārāyaṇa Dāvajña refers to this enmity. In one Sanskrit poem, the famous prose writer Bāṇabhaṭṭa has been described as a lion (Pañcatantra) tearing the temple of the elephant moving in the jungles of the Vindhya mountain.

The temple region must be targeted even by a hunter in order to kill an elephant easily. However, the said poem written as a complement of Bāṇabhaṭṭa describes that Bāṇa is a mighty ‘lion’ which tears apart, the temple (Kumbha) of the small poets who are like elephants viz “Kavikumbha Kumbhibhiduro Bāṇastu Pañcānanah”.

**Tiger:**

The ‘tiger’ is another famous hunter of the jungle. But there is no reference to the tiger taking a part in hunting in any of the Sanskrit fables. It is rather described as a decipher which unscrupulously killed its prey. This is merely an own idea of the Sanskrit fables. The reference to ‘tiger’ (Vyāghra) is found under the rule 5-3-81 in the Kāśikāvṛtti.

The tiger is mentioned in the Sanskrit fable literature as a wild animal, which aroused both fear and admiration of the people.

In the Hitopadeśa an old tiger kills a foolish traveller for its food. But tigers are generally not man-eaters. They attack man only when the man appears to them as a source of fear. Otherwise tigers generally avoid man, but once their instinctive fear of human has been overcome, they may become ‘man-eaters’ and are, therefore, greatly feared. Tigers start eating
men only in extraordinary circumstances. When they once taste human blood, they become regular man-eaters.

This instinctive behaviour of an old tiger has been reflected through the stories of Hitopadeśa whose strength was waning and gradually became too weak to hunt and pretending to donate a golden bangle to a traveller as a offering of peace. Thus lured by the golden bangle and by keeping utmost faith on this ferocious animal, the traveller was killed. The cleverness of the tiger has been clearly depicted through this above story\textsuperscript{13}. But this is a mere story.

The tiger prey on all types of game from full-grown elephant, bears and cattle to crocodiles and fish and usually hunt their prey alone. However, the tiger is not a bad-tempered animal under same species. In the Sanskrit fable literature it is mentioned that the tiger used to prey lower animals with the assistance of other animals like the jackal, wolf, crow and the lion. These are also stories\textsuperscript{14}. The tiger does not kill any animal with the help of other animals.

The tiger lives usually a solitary life leaving the tigress and cub alone. This animal is equally strong like lion and they find a sufficiency of food in the wild animals. Particularly they prey upon the weaker animals like deer, camel, goats, etc. which live in their forest.

The number of tigers that can exist in a particular area is controlled largely by conditions of shelter and food supply. This leads to a division of territory among tigers. A tiger shelters in a favoured locality and establishes its rights over the territory. However, to drive other animals out of its own territory the tiger urinates on its boundary to warn other animals of its class not to cross the boundary\textsuperscript{15}.

Though supreme in his forests there is one enemy, a tiger must fear and that is another tiger\textsuperscript{16}. He fears and avoids man, but competition with
his own kind is the more intimate factors in his struggle for existence. Tigers living in the same forest are a danger of which the panther is actually conscious. In the animal fables, the rank of tiger is always shown under the kingship of the lion in the animal kingdom.

**Wolf:**

One of the most feared animals in the world is the *wolf*. This animal is always represented as cruel and wicked. There are many stories, especially for children, in several countries, in which the wolf plays the role of villain.

The wolf (*vrka*) was an injurious animal which charged people. It created terror in the days of *Patañjali* (*Mahābhaṣya* 1.4.25). This animal was always feared by people. The *wolf* is a wild dog. There is a reference to this animal in the *Kāśikā*.

The wolves hunt in packs, but they became food rivals of the small carnivores and complete for food with the larger beasts of prey. Wolves prey mainly on cattle.

The cleverness of the wolf has depicted in *Pañcatantra* where he pretended to offer himself to his lord, master ‘Lion’ along with crow and the Jackal showing his devotion with full treachery. In a story of *Hitopadesa* the wolf is described as a villain. The wolf has tore the entrails of the poor camel and was devoured greedily with his friends.

The expression like *vrkabhitah, vrkabhitah, vrkabhitih* and *vrkabhi* clearly indicated the ferocity of the animal. In its own territory the wolves' chief competitor for large prey is the panther or leopard. A pack of hungry wolves or wild dogs will not hesitate to attack a leopard, a bear, or even a tiger.
Jackal and Fox:

Among the wild animals, the jackals and fox are the most common animal when they roam about near the household even today. These animals are known for their cunning and intelligence. There are many fables dealing with their cleverness, shrewdness, their humour, and their wisdom.

From early times the jackal was given the name of “lion provider.” Legend says that the jackal led the lion to its prey and was rewarded with the remains of the meal.

In India, it is commonly believed that jackals perform the same service for the tiger. Actually a jackal may accompany a tiger in its hunting, not as a guide but as a follower seeing an opportunity to feed on the tiger’s kill.

The frame story of the Pañcatantra shows that the Jackal always tried to get its food and status through his cunning behaviour. The innocent bull was killed by the lion as he convinced with the evil advices and shrewd politics of two jackals. (Karajaka and Damanaka).

The cleverness of the jackal has been described by the story writers of all over the world including India. In the ‘Kākolūkiyam’ chapter of the Pañcatantra, a jackal was able to escape alive from the trap of a hungry lion. In another story when the fox found himself unable to bite through the thick hide and get at the flesh of a dead elephant, he cleverly look the help of a wolf and tried to tackle his enemies through cunning manipulation. He thereby shows his enmity with his own race.

In the story of the North-Sea, a jackal outwitted the polar bear which lost its tail by listening to the false statement of the jackal. Again in the story of the ‘Jackal and the Elephant’ in the Hitopadesa a jackal crosses all the degrees of its natural cleverness and provokes an elephant to move through a marshy land where it met its death and present itself as a
sumptuous dish to the jackal. The jackal is clever, but its cleverness is exaggerated in Indian fables to impart some useful lessons to men.

**Enmity of Dog and Jackal:**

In a story of the Tantrākhyāyikā and the Pañcatantra the author describes that the domestic dog as the sworn enemy of jackals. The Kāśikāvytti describes that a dog (domestic) and a jackal are permanent enemies of each other. Domestic dogs and jackals belong to the same group of canine family. Jackals are a species of wild dogs – other wild dogs being the red – dog (Dhole) Koyote, hyena wolf, and dingo. The quarrel between the domestic dog and wild dog arises particularly from the sense of territorial possession. Sanskrit fable writers have correctly observed the inimical behaviour of dogs and jackals.

Now the enmity between the ‘dog’ and the ‘jackal’, which is described by Sanskrit writers, is always for the protection of the dog’s territory. This is the reason for dogs chasing a jackal in the night which fell into a pot of blue liquid of a washer man and become all blue, which is the beginning of the story of the ‘Blue jackal’ in the Tantrākhyāyikā and the Pañcatantra.

The author of the Pañcatantra describes that the jackal intuitionally starts yelling when other jackals start howling. This is a correct observation of the author. The howling habit has developed in jackals because they always maintain a connection with the wondering members of their group to know their exact locality of existence.

The jackals are the creatures of night. They are nature’s scavengers, clearing the remains of dead animals, left from the kills of lion, domestic livestock and they eat the rodents and fruit and vegetables also.
The story of ‘Citrāṅga’ in the Pañcatantra the domestic dog ‘Citrāṅga’ moved to a different land in search of food and there the dog was a constant target of local dogs\textsuperscript{11}. In this case also the reason of quarrel is intrusion of ‘Citrāṅga’ into the territory of local dogs. It is always found that when a dog chases other dogs to drive them out of its own territory, ear-marks a particular boundary with its nails to warn the intruders against their illegal infiltration into its land\textsuperscript{32}.

The dog is always a loyal pet animal of its master. In a story of the Hitopadeśa, a dog refuses to bark when a thief enters into the campus on the ground that, its master is unkind in giving its meal\textsuperscript{13}. That is a mere story. A dog intuitionally barks at the approach of a foreigner. The braying of the ‘Ass’ is not unusual in this situation.

In the Hitopadeśa\textsuperscript{14}, the mouse was converted into a cat by a large, because the mouse was chased by a cat. This is quite a natural affair, because the mouse is a food of the cat. When the cat was converted into a dog, it was constantly chased by a dog. This is also a regular affair in the animal kingdom. There is no reference to the enmity of the dog and the cat except in this story, which originates in the Mahābhārata\textsuperscript{15}. In Western literature, the phenomenon has been nicely described. When there is incessant rain, the English people describe it as ‘It is raining cats and dogs’.

The quarrel between the cat and the dog is intuitional. The author of the Hitopadeśa describes that a dog has a regular habit of biting shoes even it is made a king. This is a correct observation of Nārāyaṇa, the author of the Hitopadeśa. (Svā yadi kriyate rājā, sa kum nāsnaṭyupānāham)\textsuperscript{36}.

**Monkey:**

The ‘monkey’ is described in different ways in the fables of the ‘Tantrākhyāyikā’ and the Pañcatantra.
In two stories it is a wise animal. But what is more important in the present contest is that the authors of the two famous books of fables give an appropriate idea of the fickle nature of this animal. A foolish monkey in the \textit{Pañcatantra} tried to pull out a wedge from a half-divided wood of a carpenter and met its death. This is a natural description of the behaviour of monkey. \textit{Bāṇabhaṭṭa} rightly says that a monkey which is not fickle is rare to find in the world “\textit{Kapiracapalo jagati durlabhah}”\( ^{38} \) – (sixth \textit{ucchvāsa} )

\textit{Somodeva} also says in his \textit{Yasastilaka campu}:
\begin{quote}
\textit{“yah svabhāvo bhaved yasya} \\
\textit{sa tasya dūratikramah} \\
\textit{na hi śikṣāśatenapi} \\
\textit{kapir muṇcati cāpalam”}\( ^{39} \) \textit{- (Second Ucchvāsa)}
\end{quote}

It is a common experience of village and city dwellers that monkeys never remain calm. They constantly move their hands and feet with or without any necessity.

The monkeys could never make houses for them to live. There is a story in the fourth book of \textit{Pañcatantra} where they spoiled the nests of the sparrows being unable to tolerate her advices on making a house for them.\( ^{40} \) It is also a fact that birds ordinarily do not build nests except at the time of laying eggs.

Their chief enemies are men and the larger beasts of prey. In India the arch enemy of the monkey is the panther. The larger reptiles are also their foes. A python will seize and strangle a monkey in its massive coils, and crocodiles kill and eat them when they come down to drink. The frame story of the fourth book of \textit{Pañcatantra} has given such an idea. The clever monkey hardly saved its life from the grip of a crocodile trying to kill it.
The monkeys have an instinctive dread of snakes, a recognition and fear not displayed by other wild animals.

No monkey has ever got the idea of using anything as a weapon. That they may attack in self-defence, is behaviour common to all creatures. Courage in these circumstances is largely an individual quality. Monkeys in India are not flesh-eaters and are therefore not prone to attack other animals. In Africa, the Chimpanji becomes occasionally flesh-eater.

The cleverness of monkey has been reflected through the frame story of the Fourth Book of Pañcatantra that describes the ready witted behaviour of the monkey (Raktamukha). When he realised that he had been tricked by the ungrateful crocodile who wanted to kill him for his heart, he intelligently escaped death. But this is also a story.

The monkey is also very revengeful animal as it is described in the Fifth book of Pañcatantra. A pet monkey took revenge on the king as he betrayed the trust of the monkeys family who were under king’s protection.

The greatest enemy of the monkey is the ‘Panther’ or the tiger. There is an amusing story in the ‘Burmese folk tale’ under the title ‘Twin: the tiger and the Monkey are sworn enemies’. Even the sight of a tiger produces great alarm among the troops of monkey.

Generally banana and black jambu are the favourite fruits of monkeys, though they eat a varied diet of flowers, fruits, seeds, insects and other small animals, birds, and eggs of reptiles. ‘Raktamukha’ the clever ‘monkey’ lived on a big jambu tree near the river. He ate those sweet fruits everyday as described in the Fourth Book of Pañcatantra.
Cat:

The Cat is a hunting animal. Its behaviour is always suspicious. The cat before pouncing upon its prey remains still for sometime like an honest animal.

The jungle cat as mentioned in the tale of Pañcatantra resembles the domestic cat. It hunts for food in the daytime. It generally eats mammals and birds and also preys upon poultry. In the Tantrākhyāyikā, there is story of a ‘jungle cat’ which wearing a garb of an ascetic killed an innocent ‘kapiñjala’ bird and a hare while approaching it for an important verdict of a dispute. The story is retold in Pañcatantra also. The cleverness of these animals is reflected in this story.

The jungle cat is not a creature of the night. It hunts for food in the daytime. It preys on small mammals, birds and when near villages on poultry. Very swift and exceedingly strong for its size, it can attack animals bigger than itself.

Being the lower carnivorous animal the ‘jungle cat’ becomes the natural prey of other stronger beasts of prey like lion, tiger, wolf etc. whom he considered as its enemies.

Elephant:

The behaviour of elephants is remarkably mentioned in many stories of Sanskrit literature as well as other works. Elephants usually live in well organised herds. It is unique in appearance. Another distinguishing feature of the elephant is a pair of tusks.

There is a tale in the Pañcatantra that a lion who had been in a fight with a bull-elephant and was severely gored by his enemy’s tusks, had to keep to his lair in the cave. It seems that there is an enmity between the lion and the elephant.
The elephants are tribal and social by nature. They have their community laws, rules and regulations. This animal is one of the most intelligent one. The elephant has definite personalities of their own. The wild elephants are caught, tamed and trained. The leader elephant takes great care of its entire herd and tries to protect them from all possible danger. The reference is given in a story of *Pañcatantra* about the leader elephant and its entire herd. The elephant assuring the rabbit that they would never trap the lake again and went away from there with herd.

*The elephant hates and fears dog. However, ‘the dog may bark but the elephant moves on’* - is sometimes said to indicate the superiority of the great two popular clamour, but the best form of the phrase is, *‘Though the dog may bark the caravan (Kafila) moves on’.*

In matters of food habits of elephants Sanskrit writers have described the nature of an elephant and a dog that -

"Lying on the ground,  
And showing his face and belly,  
A dog does this for the giver of food;  
But the majestic elephant watches patiently.  
And eats after hundreds of coaxing words’.*

The **elephant** is one of the most intelligent animals. The elephant has a good memory. The elephant make clearly marked trails in their wanderings over hundreds of miles of jungle in search of food. The elephant scatters its Urine on lookers occasionally. The most interesting thing about the elephant is that it learns to understand human speech. The elephants have definite personalities of their own*. The authors of the fable literature of India have described in at least two stories that the elephant is a simple animal, which can be befooled even by some smaller animals like the hare
and the jackal. These stories are interesting and have high didactic value. But apart from the simplicity and innocent behaviour in normal situation, nothing more can be said about this land-living beast.

**Mongoose:**

The *mongooses* are the common animals as found in the villages of India. The mongooses prey upon snakes, often on highly venomous species like cobra. They may attack and kill animals much larger than themselves. But their usual prey is rat. The mongooses take vegetable food, but have a preference for meat. They live mainly by hunting. They commonly hunt by day, usually early in the morning and in the evening. As to enemies, they are chiefly man and the *beasts of prey*.

**Enmity between mongoose and serpent:**

The enmity between the mongoose and the serpent (*Ahinakula*) is universally known. It has been described as an enemy of serpents in the *Kāśikā* also. Where ‘ahi’ is described as a permanent enemy of the mongoose. Even if the mongoose has had no previous experience, it acts out of natural instinct.

The *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa* describe its inimical behaviour towards snakes in two stories, the quarrel between mongoose and serpent, where the serpent dies. The quarrel is instinctive between these two enemies. Naturalists say that the mongoose kills serpents on many occasions for food. But in the above stories, the mongoose kills but does not eat the serpent. Sanskrit writers have regularly described the enmity between a mongoose and a serpent as of permanent nature. Modern naturalists have also observed this enmity of these two animals. In Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* there is a description of a fight between a mongoose and a serpent. Some naturalists have arranged a fight between these two animals in a zoo on experimental basis and found that the instinctive enmity
of these two animals as described by different authors in the West and the East is true.

The mongoose can overpower a deadly venomous snake easily because of its clever manoeuvre. Moreover, it has been observed by the scientists that a mongoose can tolerate six times of that dose of snake venom which can instantly kill a rabbit.

**Camel:**

The camel is another animal, which is used by the people for transportation particularly in desert areas. But this animal is very rarely mentioned in the animal stories of the world though it played an important role in some fables in the *Tantrakhayika* and the *Pañcatantra*.

In the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* a camel due to its laziness becomes the prey of a jackal couple in a stormy weather. Naturalists have not furnished any clear idea about camel’s laziness.

**Donkey and Ass:**

The *Pañcatantra* and the *Hitopadeśa* frequently mentioned about the behaviour of the Donkey and Ass in its various stories. Both the animals are treated as beasts of burden since long. Donkeys have a reputation for its patience, and also being slow, stubborn, and sometimes stupid often they are overworked and underfed.

In the story of the ‘singer-ass’, in the *Pañcatantra* the author clearly observes that the donkey forgets the punishment it has received, and begins its normal life of a donkey. This meek animal, which is as innocent as a cow, proves his foolishness in a story of the *Hitopadeśa* which tries to signal his master about the presence of a thief in the household, and is beaten. The presence of a foreigner probably provokes this sentiments in the animal particularly at night due to the attack of a sudden fear.
Hares and Rabbit:

The hares and rabbits are good runners among the rodents. In the various stories of Pañcatantra and other works both hares and rabbits are described as most clever and cunning animals.

Being a good and quick runner, so proud of it, once a hare was defeated by a slow and steady tortoise, who reached the destination a mark of their racing point. In the ‘Kākolūkīyam’ chapter of the Pañcatantra, the cleverness of the hare and rabbit is found through different stories such as ‘The Lion and the Hare’, ‘the Hare and the Elephant’ etc.

Both these animals generally feed on almost every kind of vegetation, they feed on grasses, leaves, berries, roots, corn and in winter on the bark of trees and shrubs. They became food for many predators, such as wolves, foxes, owls, hawks and jungle cats very often. Therefore, the hare and rabbits have many enemies, like foxes, mongooses, wild cats even village pie dogs prey upon them. Their only defence against the many animals that feed on them is speed. Some species can leap 20 feet in one bound, and all can change direction between jumps to confuse and to throw off close pursuer.

They escape their enemies by crisscrossing the tracks, and by taking and inquisitive, their behaviour is interesting. It races across the ground playing hide and seek with any intruder. The shrewdness of the hare is particularly described in the Sanskrit and other fables. The wise storytellers of India rightly observed their clever character in practical life which has been nicely utilises in stories.

Rat and Mouse:

The rat (and mouse) is another rodents and small animal which sometimes creates a menace, possess the habit of gnawing ropes, wood and all such objects. In a story of the Mahābhārata discussed above, a ‘rat’ is
described as an expert cutter of a strong string of a hunter’s net which can hold a tiger. In another Sanskrit fable, a rat (mouse) gnawed the manes of a lion. In a Burmese (Myanmarese) folk-tale, a mouse easily gnawed a strong rope that tied a bull.

Now, neither the string or a rope, nor the manes of a lion is the food of the rat or the mouse. Scientists say that the animal instinctively gnaw a rope, a cloth, a wood etc. in order to avoid the abnormal growth of its teeth which is always possible in the case of this rodents unlike the teeth of other animals.

The author of the Pañcatantra describes that rat-king 'Hiranyaka' of the Second Book lived on underground citadel having several gates. The rat prepares several outlets for easy exit in his underground dwelling which is the intuitive behaviour of this animal to protect itself against predators. In a Central African tale a rabbit also lives in a safe habitat under the earth with several passages to escape from its dwelling if there is an attack of the enemy.

Though a rat or rabbit is a small animal, ‘Nature’ bestows upon this animal the intelligence to escape easily from the raid of the enemy.

**Crocodiles:**

Among the aquatic animals, crocodiles are the common figures that creates amusement to the story lovers.

In the fable stories of Sanskrit and other literature, crocodiles are described both as a clever as well as foolish water animal. The toothy, wide mouthed crocodile is a popular character, and often plays an important role in folk tales not only in India but also other countries of the world which also has a wonderful moral, beautifully woven into it.
In the Burmese folk tale also it is described that the tiger and the crocodile seems to be alike in their cunning nature, in their ferocity, in their fondness for human flesh, and in their swiftness and strength. The stories like "The Rain Cloud, the crocodile" and "How the crocodile lost its tongue" are some of the amusing fables in Burmese folk tale.

In the ‘folk tale of India’ a story about ‘A jackal and a crocodile’ describes the cleverness of the crocodile, who tried to kill a jackal pretended to be dead on the bank of the riverside. But the jackal outwitted the crocodile and hardly escaped from the mouth of the hungry crocodile. In a Central African tale we find the story of the friendship of the hippo, the crocodile and the baboon where both the hippo and the crocodile have tried to kill the baboon treacherously for its meat (liver) but the baboon kept his presence of mind and hardly saved its life just as the monkey from the cunning crocodile in the Fourth Book of Pāñcatantra, where it is described the wicked nature as well as foolishness of crocodile who betrayed his friend, the monkey. The crocodile further repent for his foolishness to divulge the truth to the monkey in the mid sea, but it was too late. These are stories. Being a strong animal, it probably does not possess the cleverness of rabbits or hares as it can defend itself adequately against enemy unlike the other animals.

The crocodiles generally feed upon small kinds of mammals, tortoise, fish, frogs etc. Though they feed almost exclusively on fish. Some of the big ones occasionally take cattle, goats or even a human to vary its diet. They have their enmity with equally cunning animals like monkeys, jackal as well as human beings, because it is the human being only who could entrap the big gharial and condemn its power through confinement. There are many series of tales dealing with the adventures of the crocodiles.
Snake:

'Snake' is another dangerous animal among the reptiles. There are many tales about snakes in the *Pañcatantra*\(^2\) such as *Nakulasarpakathā*, or *Krṣṇasarpakathā*, *Vakamūrkhasyakathā* (Hitopadeśa)\(^3\) etc. where it is found that the snake having its instinctive nature always tried to devour small creatures as its food.

Snakes are the great enemies of Mongoose as it is universally known. They are also enemies of other small creatures like crows, crane, frogs, fishes etc. once, a 'Black Snake' was killed by a crow who took advice of a jackal\(^4\).

Tortoise:

The tortoise who wanted to fly in the open sky and took always help from the swan, ducks, eagles etc. for this purpose as mentioned in the *Pañcatantra*\(^5\), *Hitopadeśa*\(^6\) Aesop’s fable and Jātaka tales. The tortoise is again described as an ambitious water living animal in the fables of *Magic Drum*\(^7\) such as the ‘Wild ducks and a tortoise’, ‘The friendship of the tortoise and the eagle’ etc. which are originated from early Sanskrit animal fable literature.

The popular story in the Aesop’s fable the hare and the tortoise shows that though he is lazy in walking yet he has the determination to reach the goal in time and succeeded accordingly. The author of the *Pañcatantra* rightly observes the lazy character of these animal for which he names it ‘Mantharaka’.

Crab:

The behaviour of the crab is described in the Sanskrit fable literature as clever, and as a wise water-animal in different stories.
The ‘Crab’ is found in some stories of the *Pañcatantra*. In one story the crane is shown as the enemy of the crab. In this story the crab cleverly managed the situation when he came to know the evil intention of the cunning crane and killed him⁷⁸.

There is a reference to another behaviour of crab as found in the story of the ‘Blue jackal’ also in the fourth book of the *Pañcatantra* that the *crab* sticks fast to whatever it catches hold of, that is, the grasp is of adamantine nature⁷⁹. The author rightly says that-

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"bajra lepasya mūrkhashya nārīṇāṁ karkatasya ca
eko grahastu mīnānāṁ nilīmadva payuryathā"
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As a water living animal, the crab generally feeds on small fish, other insects living in the marshy land.

The crab is replaced by ‘makara’ in the *Kathāsarit sāgara*⁸⁰ who with complete presence of mind cut off the head of the wicked crane and acted as a saviour of other water living animals in the lake.

**Frog:**

*Frog* is another aquatic animal found in many stories in the fable literatures. In the *Tantrākhāyikā*⁸¹ and the *Pañcatantra*⁸² there is an amusing story of frogs riding on a serpent. Infact, it is the nature of frogs to ride on any floating object in water. In a famous tale of the West, frogs rode even on the log king sent to them by Jupiter.

**Behaviour, food habits, enmity, cleverness etc. of the ‘Birds’ in Sanskrit and other fable literature**

Numerous kinds of birds are mentioned in the fable literature of India i.e. *Pañcatantra, Hitopadeśa* and other works. Birds are considered as
biped animals. Different birds have their different food habits, behaviour, cleverness as well as enmity with other animals as per their nature. These are found in the fable literatures which are remarkable in many aspects.

‘The Vulture’s trust’ is one of the stories found in the Hitopadesa where ‘Jaradgava’ the wise Vulture was killed by its own people.

The term “Gṛdhra” now a common name for all vultures. The Śakūnta birds, again who protected the infant Śakūntalā were apparently a species of the white scavengers harmless vultures as mentioned in the Mahābhārata.

Vultures belong to the family of birds of prey. They are the best known scavengers of the world. Vultures feed on carrion. Unlike other birds of prey, Vultures rarely hunt live food.

The owls are also birds of prey which are usually active at night. Because of their nocturnal habits, hooting calls and silent flight. Owls have always been regarded as birds of mystery. There is a tale in Hitopadesa about “The Owl and the Wild Goose” where the innocent goose met its tragic death, living on a big tree with an owl. The enmity of Crow and Owl (kākoluka) is nicely described first in the ‘Sauptikaparvan’ of the Mahābhārata where ‘Aśvatthāman’ observed in dead of night owls attacking sleeping crows on a tree. The Kāśikā also describes the owl as an inherent enemy of the crow.

In the fable literature it is seen that there is constant enmity between some birds and qudrupeds or between members of their own race. But in most fables beast and birds of various jatis or kinds are found to be living together happily or in a friendly way- e.g. in the Mitralābha Chapter of the Pañcatantra the story about Four Friends, in the Mitrabheda chapter of the Pañcatantra, ‘the lion and the bull’, ‘the lion and camel’ etc. where these animals are roaming together in a friendly terms.
**Enmity between crow and owl:**

In the *Kākolūkiyam* chapter of the *Pañcatantra*, the *Tantrākhāvyāikā* and also in the *Jātaka* there are stories about the eternal enmity between the **crow** and the **owl**. The never enduring enmity of the two races started when the crow humiliate the owl publicly and deprived the owl from its coronation for the quarrel may be territorial possession. The night ranger owl probably thinks that the crow unduly occupied his territory on a big tree\(^91\).

The author of the *Pañcatantra* describes the owl as an arch enemy of the crow. We have already discussed that this phenomenon is first discussed in the *Mahābhārata*. According to the Sanskrit grammarian their enmity is of a regular nature between the two bird one of which is night ranger.

In this case also the enmity on the quarrel may be for the territorial possession. The owl does not see in day time. The crows which choose the tree–top as their residence probably enter into a conflict with the owls residing in the same tree at night for the above reason.

In the fables the Crow is generally found wicked by nature. However in some stories the crow is described as a wise bird as in the Second Book of *Pañcatantra*.

Among the birds the crow is most wily (*narāṇām nāpito dhūrtah pakṣīnām caiba vāyasa*)\(^92\).

The house crow is famous for the notoriety for thieving for which it is called “*Caurikāka*” as ‘lavenam coraitvā to courikākah prajāyate’ \(^93\). This instance is found in a fable of *Pañcatantra* as “*Vāyasadampaṭi kathā*”\(^94\).

The story of the ‘Thirsty crow’ in the Aesop’s *fable* states its cleverness and perseverance to quench his thirst- very nicely. Its cleverness is also depicted through some fables, such as – “*The Crow and the Black*
Snake. "The lion and the Camel", "The Goose and the crow" etc. some other interesting fables found in Pañcatantra and Hitopadeśa.

The cleverness of crows can be easily understood from some distinct behaviours of the bird. The bird remains constantly alert against any danger. It is an extremely difficult task to shoot or take a photograph of the bird, which instantly fly away scenting danger. But the crow is also fooled by the cuckoo, which lays its egg in the nest of crows.

Being an omnivorous bird, the foods of the crow are varied, which includes, grains, plants, small creatures like, mouse, frogs etc. and dead animals. It acts as cleaner or as good scavenger in the earth. In the fable literature the crow though small creature always feed on animals with the assistance of other carnivorous animals like jackal, lion and tiger.

The parrots (śuka) rank as among the most intelligent of birds. They are good at mimicking human voice. The author of the Pañcākhvāṃtī has correctly observed the behaviour of parrots possessing the capacity of mimicking the human voice. Such an extraordinary capacity of the bird in the relevant story of the work has created a serious difficulty for the society. The parrot living with a hermit uttered sweet words. But the parrot living with a Bhill knew only bad words to dispose the incoming guests.

The story of the ‘Twin Parrots’ in the Pañcatantra shows their innate behaviour brought up in different atmosphere represents that nature or character depends on good or bad companions they belonged to.

The parrot is described in the Hitopadeśa as a devoted messenger to the royal swan king Hiranyakagha possessing all qualities of a messenger. A Parrot is a grain eater bird. It mostly eats wild fig-fruits, some other seeds – wild and cultivated.

Among the aquatic birds like swans, stroks cakravākas, goose etc. are mentioned in both Pañcatantra and Hitopadeśa. These birds are also
mentioned in the *Kāśikāvyttī of Jayāditya*. In the *Kāśikā*, vaka or cranes are mentioned as attractive birds among the water-living birds. The stork and crane both are equally cunning birds as mentioned in the fable literature. The expression *ākhanikavka* appears under the *patresamitādi* class of *Jayāditya* which refers to a person who does not leave his parental abode in the search of a new avenue of life\(^{102}\).

The crane is too greedy so comes to grief. He is the type of hypocritical and heartless villain as described in the *Pañcatantra*. The crane is very often described as *‘Vakadhārmika’* for the reason that it silently sits by the side of a tank or lake like an ascetic, but suddenly picks up its prey from water. There is a reference to such a crane in the *Pañcatantra*\(^{103}\).

Among the bird’s fable in the *Pañcatantra* there is another kind of bird mentioned as *Bhārundāḥ* or two faced bird. In the Fifth Book of *Pañcatantra* the author gives reference to this strange bird but it destroyed due to their disunity.

All these water living birds generally feed on grains, insects, shoots and small fish or other small reptiles. Their relation or enmity depends on each other. However, stronger reptiles like crocodile or a snake etc. are equally responsible for their enmity with other animals as well as for their existence.

**Filial compassion of animals found in Sanskrit fables and other literature**

Parental affection is another characteristics found among the animals in fable literature. In one fable of the *Pañcatantra* a lioness has been described as bringing up a motherless jackal cub brought it by the lion’s den.
alive with great care as its own young by nourishing it with her milk. The lioness loved the jackal as her own progeny even it grew up. This is not a mere story, but there is some truth in the motherly behaviour of the lioness.

In the world of lower animals, there are many instances of the females of a particular species, loving and rearing the young one of another animal. The wolf is famous for this behaviour. The female wolf sometimes pick up a human baby, but instead of killing it brings up the baby with its milk. The baby behaves like the wolf when it grows. It runs at a speed at the sight of men and other animal using its hands also as fact like the foster mother. However a wolf might, when hungry, try to lift an unprotected child.

_**Romus**_ and _Romulas_, the founder of the city of _Rome_ were wolf-boys. In India, the name of _Ramu_; the wolf-boy is best known to all. In the _Jungle book of Rudyard Kipling_ there is an amusing story of a wolf-child.

Like wolves, some other animals also nurture and bring up babies of other mammals on many occasions in a similar manner. This behaviour is noticed even in some birds occasionally. According to the _Mahābhārata_ (1.72.12-13). Some ‘Šakunta birds’ have protected the infant Šakuntala when she was leaving alone by a nymph.

The jackal cub which was brought up by the lioness in the story however, behaved like a true jackal when it grew up. The story describes that when one day the jackal confronted a tusker in the jungle it fled away, while its two ‘younger brother’, the two lion cubs challenged the tusker though they were not a matched for the tusker.

There is a realistic description of the behaviour of the jackal and the lions in the story. A lion is a lion, it is famous for its bravery. “The lion, though young, falls upon elephant whose rampart like massive temple is sullied
with ichors; this is the nature of the valiant. Age is not, indeed, the cause of valour”.

It has been rightly said by *Bhartrihari* in his *Nītiśataka-

"sinīhah śiṣurapi nipatati madamalina kapolabhittīṣu gajeṣu prakṛtiriyam sattvavatām na khalu vayastejasohetuh" *109*

The jackal is a jackal; it has not the courage to face the elephant. So he moving with them flees out of fear. He discourages the lion cubs also in their action. A jackal is, however, is no way a match for a lion.

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