

Chapter: IV

Genre Study of *Aesop's Fables*

4.1 Introduction

"They were among the first printed works in the vernacular European languages, and writers and thinkers throughout history have perpetuated them to such an extent that they are embraced as among the essential truths about human beings and their ways."

-D.L. Ashliman

"Aesop was such a strong personality that his contemporaries credited him with every fable ever before heard, and his successors with every fable ever told since."

-Willis L. Parker

Aesop is legendary for the life he lived over 2000 years ago and mostly for the hundreds of fables that have been attributed to his name since. *Aesop's Fables* have reached countless generations since he is reported to have been alive, and they continue to be a part of the lives of many. It is believed that he was a slave who lived in Samos, a Greek island in the eastern Aegean Sea but some believed that he came from Ethiopia. The name of his first owner was Xanthus. It is also believed that eventually, he became a 'Free man'. In his biography Plannudes, he has been described as an ugly, deformed dwarf. There is a famous marble statue of Aesop at the Villa in Albani in Rome. His birth date and birthplace are still debated. However, it is believed that he spent much of his life in Greece at the court of King Croesus in Athens, some believed that he lived between 620 and 560 BCE.

In ancient Greece, at the temple of Apollo in Delphi some legends commanded the essence of Greek philosophy "Know thyself". The same concept was echoed by Socrates that "the unexamined life is not worth living" at the Athenian court. (Yoseloff Thomas, Introduction, in *Aesop without Morals*, p-2). Greek philosophy focus on self-criticism and introspection. This introspection leads the

Greek literature to self-criticism. It has expressed itself in tragedy, comedy and in fables. *Aesop's Fables* are one of these reflections of self-examination.

Plato sheds an important light on the situation of the fables in his days while telling a story on Socrates in the *Phaedo*. One of the friends of Socrates, who is in prison awaiting execution of his sentence, asks him about some poems which he was composing during his imprisonment. Socrates says that he has been doing this in response to a command that he had often received in a dream. He says that he has composed a hymn. Which is mentioned in *The Ancient Fable: An Introduction* by Holzberg Niklas:

realizing that the poet, if he is really to be a poet, must write stories rather than addresses, and since I was no storyteller, I took the fables of Aesop, which I knew and came readily to hand, and turned the first ones that occurred to me into verse. (Niklas Holzberg, p. 2)

This shows that Socrates was familiar with such fables. It will also bear noticing that this is the first instance in which there is any suggestion of the idea of versifying Aesop; an idea that has since borne generous fruit.

Aesop is recognized as the emergent of the folklore- fable during the ancient Greek period. His enormous popularity fetches him the credit of most Greek, Roman, and European fables. He was supposed to have been very ugly, and even mute from birth. As the result of his kindness to some priests, he was miraculously given the power of speech. (Meziriac M. D. *Life of Aesop* , P-7) Aesop used his power of speech both to mock as well as to impress his owners. Although some fables may be traced to sources predating Aesop, in Sumer, Assyria, Babylonia, and Egypt; some to Indian folklore and literature; and some to such lesser-known writers after Aesop as Babrius, Phaedrus, Poggio Bracciolini, and Jean de la Fontaine. The collection of Aesopic fables is the nearest source for such common expressions as *Sour Grapes*, *Familiarity Breeds Contempt* and *A Dog in a Manger* as well as for references to characters in such fables as *The Hare and the Tortoise* and *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*. The typical Aesopic fable, a short allegorical tale using animals to portray a moral,

has become a landmark to define the genre of fable in popular thinking. Today, the Aesopic fables, which have been developed in antiquity to teach political wisdom to adults, is commonly used to instruct children in practical wisdom and to entertain them with its fantasy world of talking animals.

Aesop's Fables are often defined on the basis of common internal characteristics. Aesopic fable is generally an allegorical tale of a brief, fictitious action occurring in past, usually between particular animals who act like humans, so that the actions suggest a moral, which may or may not be explicitly stated. Animal types in the Aesopic fable tend to represent types of human moral qualities and vices. For example, fox represents cunningness, ass represents stupidity, lamb represents helpless innocence and wolf represents ruthlessness. The Aesopic fable often appears as a cautionary tale, revealing through humor or through cynicism and satire, an amoral world that does not reward abstract virtue but rather a world that requires common sense and moderation for self-preservation. *Aesop's Fables* are often defined by contrast with the literary genres of folktale, allegory, parable, and proverb. Fable, like folktale, has animals with lives similar to humans but, unlike folktale, it has a short and simple narrative and usually gives an explicit moral. Although fable provides an allegory of the human situation in the actions of the animals, fable's use of animal characters and shorter narrative distinguish it from other forms of allegory. Fable differs from parable in its use of animal actors and its frequent humorous quality. Fable differs from proverb in its use of a brief narrative of the interaction of animals in addition to the brief moral statement common to proverb and fable. The Aesopic fable can also be defined by reference to its place in the development of the fable.

4.2 Development of fable in Greek literature

“The fable before Aesop seems to appear after the development of the Greek cities and states during the Greek Dark Ages”, (Holzberg Niklas, *The Ancient Fable: An Introduction*, p- 1). Perhaps because of the new urban environment offered greater intellectual stimulation and thus a greater possibility of understanding and appreciating ‘the metaphor’ - the basic concept underlying the fable may have

established. The fable in the Greek language is 'muzos', which is literally translated as 'myth' has its own evolution in the time, as with the development of the people using it. Some famous collections belong to the oriental traditions, which are the rich heritage of ancient wisdom or adventures literature. Other collections of the Greek and Roman show religious elements like the origin of the world or cosmology, the stories of Gods, heroes and men, where we can search for the fanciful transfiguration of the struggles of man against nature, of his advancement towards his redemption from ignorance, these are called 'myths'. With the advance of society, people need a different kind of fable, more critical towards man and society itself. *Aesop's Fables* came into existence at such time employing the animals as main characters, with the intention to define human nature- the bully, the insatiable, the sly, the fool, the vain, the arrogant, etc.

The pre-Aesopic fable seems to be directed toward a particular individual in a specific context. For example, Hesiod's *The Hawk and the Nightingale* is directed toward Hesiod's brother, and Archilochus's fable *The Lion and the Fox* is directed toward Archilochus's former lover. Also, such pre-Aesopic fables appear in verse, are serious in tone, and lack an explicitly stated 'moral'. *Aesop's Fables*, however, seem to have been prose compositions, either in oral form or in written form, using animal stories for comic effect as well as for conveying a political message. It is probable that the fables that might reasonably be attributed to Aesop originally lacked an explicitly of stated 'the moral'. Even today numbers of *Aesop's Fables* are found without any moral message. It is supposed that the morals attached to *Aesop's Fables* was result of the collection of fables attributed to Aesop compiled by Demetrius Phalerius around 300 B.C. ("Introduction," in *Aesop without Morals*, translated and edited by Lloyd W. Daly, p- 8. New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1961). According to Ben Edwin Perry, (Ben E. Perry, Introduction' in *Babrius and Phaedrus*, 1965, p. 10). The addition of morals came about from moving the book-maker's heading, which summarized a fable for the purpose of indexing it according to its moral application, from its place at the beginning of the fable to the end, where it served to reinforce the moral.

4.3 Translation and transformation of *Aesop's Fables*

Four significant collections of *Aesop's Fables* were published in the classical antiquity. The first collection, no longer exists, it was a work in Greek prose around 300 B.C. by Demetrius of Phalerum, was used as a reference book of fables for writers and public speakers. The second collection is Augustana recension, or critical revision of the text, which may with good probability of having been based on a first or second century A.D. compilation. Augustana recension was the basis for three other recensions, which include the fourteenth century edition of Maximus Planudes, which served as the vulgate version of the Greek text of *Aesop's Fables* until *Augustana recension* proper was published in 1812. The third collection is the work of Phaedrus, who used Demetrius's collection as the basis for his Latin verse version of the fables produced before 55 A.D., the probable year of his death. Phaedrus expanded the Aesop's material available to him and supplemented it with material from other sources and with material of his own invention. (Perry B.E., Introduction, in *Babrius and Phaedrus*, p-12) Phaedrus's collection was rendered in Latin prose as a part of the fourth or fifth century A.D. collection attributed to Aesop. This Latin prose derivation of Phaedrus became the basis for three medieval Latin prose paraphrases referred to respectively as *Aesop of Ademar*, *Aesop ad Rufum*, and *Romulus*, each of these modified the text by means of expansions, deletions, or additions. The fourth and last collection is the work of Babrius, who used Demetrius's prose fables of Aesop as the basis for his Greek verse version of the fables, produced in the late first or second century (Perry B.E., Introduction, in *Babrius and Phaedrus*, p-11). Babrius may also have used the Augustana collection, and he seems to have supplemented his Aesopic sources with Near Eastern fables, such as the Assyrian fables of Ahiqar and the Babylonian fable of *The Gnat on the Bull's Horns*. Babrius's collection was excerpted and put into Latin prose by Avianus around the beginning of the fifth century A.D. This collection of Avianus and the Latin prose paraphrases of Phaedrus were popular during the Middle Ages, and they inspired the verse imitations of Walter the Englishman and Alexander Neckham as well as the composition of original fables in verse by Odo of Cheriton. The Latin prose versions of Babrius and Phaedrus continued to be influential in the Renaissance with Heinrich Steinhöwel's Latin-German edition (1476-77) of *Romulus*, *Avianus*, *Petrus Alphonsus*, the *Facetiae* of Poggio Bracciolini, and

Rinuccio de Castiglione's Latin translation of some Greek prose adaptations of Babrius. 'First Steinhöwel's edition was translated into French by Julien Macho; then Macho's version was translated into English and published by William Caxton in 1484'. (Introduction, in *Caxton's Aesop*, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1967. p- 1). Significant English versions of Aesop after Caxton include the versions of John Ogilby (1651), Sir Roger L'Estrange (1692), and Samuel Croxall (1722). Of these, L'Estrange's version is the only one to add significantly to the underlying text of Steinhöwel's edition with fables from the Greek Aesopic traditions that were published after Steinhöwel's edition. (Introduction, in *Caxton's Aesop*, Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1967. p- 4) Modern critical work on Aesop dates from the writings of Neveletus on the Greek corpus in 1610 and that of Nilant on the Latin corpus in 1709. The scholars Richard Bentley (1662-1742) and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781) solved significant problems associated with the text. Modern critical editions, such as those of Émile Chambry (1925-26), August Hausrath (1940), and Ben Edwin Perry (1952), (Ashliman D.L. 'Introduction', in *Aesop's Fables*, p- 20) give first place to the earliest of the Augustana recensions and then added separately some material from later Augustana recensions. Laura Gibbs' translation of *Aesop's Fable* (OUP) World Classics (2002) contains 600 fables.

4.4 Time, Place and Life of Aesop

Aesop also spelled Æsop, Esop; Greek: Αἴσωπος, Aisōpos. Time and place of Aesop's birth has been remained a matter of debate. Many views and opinions have been recorded. A historian - Herodotus, advocates a theory about him and he deliberately mentioned that , Aesop may have been born in Thrace to the northeast of Greece around 620 B.C. same as K.D. Mueller mentioned in *A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*, Vol-I.

It happened to Homer, the prince of Grecian poets that the place of his nativity was never certainly known; and it would be as difficult to ascertain the country which gave birth to Æsop, so much have ancient authors differed upon this subject also. Some have thought him a Lydian born in the city of Sardis, the capital of that

kingdom; others have believed he drew his origin from the island of Samos. Some have maintained that she was a Thracian (Mueller K.D. p-191.)

Herodotus describes Aesop as a slave from Thrace who served under Iadmon of Samos at the same time as the female Thracian slave Rhodopis. Herodotus also mentions that Rhodopis was later ransomed from slavery in Egypt by the brother of the famous poetess Sappho, who was born around 612 B.C. A comparison of the possible ages of Aesop, Rhodopis, Sappho, and Sappho's brother suggests the date of birth of Aesop as 620 B.C. According to Aristotle in the Constitution of the Samians, Aesop served as the slave of a certain Xanthus, then served as the slave of a certain Iadmon who later freed him, and then went on to gain a strong reputation among the Samians by telling them the fables. A controversial and romantic life of Aesop written in the first century A.D. relates that Aesop was then sent by the Samians to the court of Croesus in Sardis in order to persuade Croesus not to subjugate the Samian people. Croesus was so impressed with Aesop that he put aside his plans of conquest for Samos and gave Aesop a position at his court, which gave Aesop the leisure to write out his fables. Then, as a part of Aesop's continuing service to Croesus, according to the biographer and essayist Plutarch, Aesop went on a diplomatic mission to Delphi, where his life was brought to an end. Ben Perry also notices in *Babrius and Phaedrus, Aesopica*:

The *Life*, as taken from Rinuccio, is a crude, episodic 'biography,' presenting in a series of tales Aesop's rise from slave to royal adviser and concluding with his death at the hands of the jealous Delphians. The earliest version comes from Egypt and dates from the first century A.D. (Perry B. E.,p- 5)

Aesop had offended the priests of Apollo by suggesting that they had a great reputation abroad but lacked substance in person. In revenge the priests framed Aesop by putting a golden cup from the temple in his baggage, capturing him, and condemning him to death. In his defense, Aesop related two fables. The first, *The Frog and the Mouse*, tells of a frog that was carried off by a bird of prey attracted by the thrashing of a mouse being gratuitously drowned by the frog; the second, *The*

Eagle and the Dung-Beetle, tells of the inexorable vengeance of a lowly dung-beetle on an eagle that had refused to heed the dung-beetle's request to spare the life of a rabbit. The Delphians refused to heed the morals of the fables and threw Aesop over the cliff. However, according to Herodotus, the Delphians in the third generation afterwards paid blood-money to the descendant of Iadmon to atone for the crime of their ancestors. According to the dating of the Christian chronographer and historian Eusebius, Aesop died in Delphi in 564 B.C.

The modern view is that Aesop probably did not solely compose all those fables attributed to him, if he even existed at all. Modern scholarship reveals fables and proverbs of 'Aesopic' form existing in both ancient Sumer and Akkad, as early as the third millennium B.C. Jack Zipes also mentioned in *The Norton Anthology Of Children's Literature*: "There was never a written text of his stories and many critics believe that his tales are a patchwork of different authors". (Zipes Jack, p387.)

4.5 Purpose of *Aesop's Fables*

Aesop's Fables have always had a mixed reception. The classical rhetorical educator Quintilian advised children at the beginning of their education to practice translating, paraphrasing, abbreviating, and elaborating the Aesopic fables. In rhetorical theory and practice, the fable seems to have been a rhetorical device for enhancing persuasiveness in public speaking. As such, the fable was expected to be adapted to different circumstances, and so the actual wording of the fable would change from one circumstance to the next. In this context, Demetrius's collection seems to have been made as a reference work listing fables for use in rhetorical exercises and public speaking. The situations just described show a regard for the content of the fables but little regard for their textual form. The situation of the works of Phaedrus and Babrius suggests another aspect of the reception of *Aesop's Fables*.

On the one hand, putting the fables into verse raised these productions to the level of literary art, and the text of their fables in certain textual traditions remained fixed and received critical but brief attention. On the other hand, the works of both authors in other textual traditions were put into prose and spread across Europe, serving as the basis for vernacular editions of *Aesop's Fables*.

Thus, the fables enjoyed popular acclaim partly as a school text, and inspired literary works, although they were not necessarily artful themselves a fact underlined both by the anonymous or pseudonymous nature of the late classical and Medieval Latin prose paraphrases and by the constantly changing text. Today, *Aesop's Fables* continue to be considered useful as children's literature, and the process of adaptation of the fables continues, primarily for this younger audience. Modern scholars also exhibit an ambivalent attitude toward *Aesop's Fables*. Many tend not to critically analyze the literary aspects of relatively independent units of the corpus, such as the Augustana recension, or of groups of fables with a similar theme, or of the literary merit of individual fables. Such avoidance seems to result from a perception of a lack of literary sophistication in the Aesopic corpus and from the difficulty of proving something definitively from such an eclectic and non-homogenous text. Consequently modern scholars tend to discuss alternative aspects of the text, with some discussing the nature of the genre of fable and placing Aesop in that context. Robert Dodsley emphasizes the moral and also discusses the action, characters, and language appropriate for a fable. Ben Edwin Perry stresses the fictional, metaphorical, humorous, and satirical aspects of fable. Agnes Perkins, in comparing the Aesopic morals to the morals of the Buddhist Jatakas, proposes that Aesop's morals support action to one's personal advantage rather than action good in itself. H. J. Blackham analyzes fable according to Perry's definition as well as according to its use of images and its purpose. In addition, some scholars compare fable with other genres. Blackham compares fable with parable and allegory. Alternatively, both Margaret Blount and P. Gila Reinstein compare fable with folktale and fairy-tale. Blount suggests that folktale animals are closer to human and do not demonstrate a moral so explicitly as Aesop's animals, and Reinstein argues that *Aesop's Fables* present a cynical and self-reliant philosophy, whereas Grimm's folktales present a belief in a moral order with the ultimate triumph of good over evil.

Aesop's Fables served a multitude of addition purposes. Particularly, the fables emerged in time period of Greek history when authoritarian rule often curtailed freedom of speech and expression. The fables served as a means by which the government could be criticized without the fear of punishment. In away, these fables provide an opportunity to the weak and the powerless to speak against the strong and the powerful.

The subversive nature of the tales allowed lower classes in Greek society a means of escape from the society which was often oriented around the idea that “might makes right”. The fables also became a valuable tool for persuasion of specific points. Aristotle in his ‘Rhetoric’ argued that in absence of any concrete evidence for proving one’s point and supporting one’s argument. Fables served as a form of children’s entertainment beyond just a simple teaching tool. The fables transmitted important life lessons while describing ‘the world of childhood’. The primary character acted like children in child-like manner. The story also presented the challenges of adult hood preparing them to face the selfish, hypocritical real world shrewdly. The stories also provided an opportunity for self-reflection. Though animals and humans share similar traits, humans have the power of reason which allows them to make different choices about life and living.

4.6 Themes of *Aesop’s Fables*

Aesop’s Fables is a huge collection of around 313 fables on different subjects (*Aesop’s Fables*, by Aesop. Complete, Original Translation from Greek, translated by George Fyler Townsend. First published 1887, republished in 2007 by Forgotten Books.) As *Aesop’s Fables* travelled long voyage of time period certain changes might have been added. Mostly his fables travelled in oral tradition. Aesop travelled from one place to another telling various fables to the people. Samians sent him to court of Croesus in order to persuade Croesus not to attack Samian people. Croesus was highly impressed by the fables of Aesop that he put aside his plan of conquest on Samos and gave a good position to Aesop in his court, where Aesop got some leisure to write down his fables. Later on around 300 B.C. the four significant collections of *Aesop’s Fables* came in to exist by Demetrius of Phaeum, especially as the reference book of fables and for writers and speakers to quote. The major issue of Multiple Interpretations came when Phaedrus in 55 A.D. composed his ‘Latin Verse’ version of the fables which was based on Demetrius’ collection. ‘Phaedrus expanded *Aesop’s Fables* and added some stories from other sources and his own’. (Ben E. Perry, ‘Introduction’, in *Babrius and Phaedrus*, 1965 p-12) This Latin verse derivation of Phaedrus become the base for three medieval Latin prose referred to respectively as ‘Aesop of Ademar’, ‘Aesop ad Rufum’ and ‘Romulus’. Each version

was modified by means of expansion, deletions and additions. Some scholars have focused on the changes that individual authors make in their editions of *Aesop's Fables*. For example, Samuel Richardson, in addition to explaining his own changes, discusses those of Sir Roger L'Estrange and Samuel Croxall in their editions, especially in regard to the morals, in order to advance their own political viewpoint. Barbara Mirel discovers three methods of interpreting Aesop in various modern editions and shows how *The Fox and the Crow* is presented differently according to each. Mary-Agnes Taylor examines the changes made by various poets in favor of the ant in *The Ant and the Grasshopper*. George Clark compares the fables of *The Cock and the Jewel* and *The Swallow and the Other Birds* in the versions of Aesop and Robert Henryson. *Aesop's Fables* are 'ready to use' examples perfect to create deep impact on audience so different authors have edited, deleted and added some stories as per their local and milieu.

In general, *Aesop's Fables* can be classified in three major sections based on themes (I) the didactic tales, (II) the stories concerning social issues (III) the stories related to supernatural. The didactic tales are simple and direct they convey morals that can be applied in general, universally and eternally. For example, the story of *The Lamb and the Wolf* conveys the message that 'might is right'. In the story *The Ant and the Grasshopper* the moral is 'if you live without work, you live without food', and so on. The didactic tales are universal in the morals; even the morals of these fables are fresher today. The social issues of Greek society are closely woven in the fable like *The Man and His two Sweethearts* - One older than him and the other younger. The older one pulls out black hair from the man's head because she felt ashamed to be married with a man quite younger man. The younger one pulled out white hair from the head of her husband as she felt ashamed of marrying an older man. As both continued to pull white as well as black hair from their husband's head, he soon became bald and hairless. The moral is 'those who seek to please everybody please nobody.'

In another story of *The Man and His Wife* -the wife was hated by all the members of her husband's family. The man finds some excuse and sends her to visit her father house. Soon the man discovered that she is also disliked by the servants and other members of her father's family. The moral is 'Straws shows how

the wind blows'. There are many fables that deal with the supernatural matters and myths. There some fables about 'Nature's Myth' like Bat's hiding places; flying always at night alone, there are myths regarding Owls who are regarded as the wisest and most knowledgeable birds. There are fables that explain why Camels were not given horns, but deprived of a portion of his ears and why Horses allow men to mount him. There are also fables related to 'Creation Myths' like the how Zeus created first man, Poseidon the first bull and Athena the first house etc. there are also few stories of personified elements like the Truth, the Sin, the Sea, the Rivers, the Mountains, the Trees objects like the Pots, the Jars, the Charcoal-Burner, the Fuller, the Jewel etc. even the parts of body are personified such as the Belly, the Finger, the Toe etc. there are also fables that deal with general themes like human nature, cruelty and brutality in ancient Greek society, the role of destiny or fate in human life etc. lets discuss these themes in some detail.

4.6.1 A Human Being cannot Hide His or Her True Nature

Human being is a product of his or her own innate nature. Each individual possesses a mindset and temperament which is beyond his own control. However Human beings are endowed with rationality, intellect, logic, observation, emotions that help him to analyze his own behavior and thought process. Self analysis, introspection and contemplation are the qualities that only human beings possess. Animals live instinctively and their behavior and actions are instinctive and are motivated by the basic needs for food, sleep, fear or sex. On the other hand, human beings too have instincts but they are controlled by thought, logic and introspection. These qualities have helped them to create cultures and civilizations. The wise people of human society have emphasized on education, culture and training of human minds. They emphasized the need for development of virtues like love, brotherhood, pity, forgiveness and harmony to create an ideal human society.

However, very often, in spite of education so-called culture and cultivation of virtues, the base of human nature has not changed. There are many stories in Aesop's fables that are based on the theme that one cannot hide or change one's basic innate nature. In the fable *The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*, a Wolf found Sheep's skin and wanted to be in disguise of sheep for easy prey. Accompanied Sheep, but at the end

reveling his true nature soon be caught and killed. The man who hides his or her ill intention soon be recognized and punished. In the fable *Aphrodite and the Cat*, the fell in love with handsome man, she approached Aphrodite and entreated her to turn into a beautiful damsel. Aphrodite agreed, grand her beauty of a damsel. When she married to the man, Aphrodite thinks to examine her, let down a mouse in the middle of the room. The Cat quite forgetting her present condition started up from the couch and pursued the mouse. Aphrodite was much disappointed and returned her to former place. Whatever change man may make but no longer can hide his habits and nature, at a certain point or level original nature pips out in a moment. In the fable *The Farmer and the Snake*, a Farmer found a Snake stiff and frozen with cold. He had compassion on it, took it up, and placed it in his boson. The snake was revived by the warmth and resuming its natural instincts, bits his benefactor, inflicting on him a mortal wound. Ungrateful men reword nothing against greatest kindness. If a man is by nature ungrateful, no mercy can bring upliftment in him. The fable *The Fawn and His Mother*, shows that no outward appearance can make change in nature, whatever extra attachments a man may make cannot help to hide his true nature. In this fable a young Fawn asked his mother, when she is larger than hound and swift in running, have horns as a defense then why she is frightened by hounds. The mother has no answer but to accept the fact that whatever he says is true but when she hears even a bark of a single hound she feels ready to faint and fly away as fast as she can. The bravery is a mark of mind not of might. No arguments can give courage to cowards; external thing cannot change original nature. Same theme line is marked also in the fable *The Vain Jackdaw*, once Zeus determined to create a sovereign over the birds and made proclamation that on a certain day all of them should present themselves before him, when he would himself choose the most beautiful among theme to be a king. The Jackdaw knowing his own ugliness searched through the woods and collected the feathers which had fallen from the wings of his companions. And stuck them in all parts of body, hopping to make himself the most beautiful of the all. When the appointed day all birds arrived assembled before Zeus, the Jackdaw also made his appearance in his many feathered finery, but when Zeus proposed to make him a king because of the beauty of his plumage. The birds indignantly protested and each plucks from him his own feather, leaving the Jackdaw nothing but a Jackdaw. People wear the mask of hypocrisy to hide their originality and for some time one may make change in their original personality but when the mask of hypocrisy is

revealed soon the ugly face of ill intention come out same as there are many fables like *The Kingdom of Lion, Charcoal burner and the Fuller, The Traveler and His Dog, The Got and the Goatherd, The Sick Lion, The wolves and Sheep, The Fox and the Monkey* etc. All these fables advocate that man cannot hide his or her true nature.

4.6.2 The Brutality of Day-to-Day Life in Ancient Times

The history of mankind is full of the struggle and miseries of the oppressed people. The powerful people always suppressed the ordinary people. The exploited them in various ways denying them the right to equality, dignity or even life. It was very difficult for them to survive. Equality had always been an ideal in all civilized society but there was equality among equals, not among all human beings. The common people had to struggle a lot to fulfill their daily needs of food, shelter and rest. The rich and the powerful fought for power and subjugated the masses into slavery. Greed for land, wealth and power made them cruel and heartless. For them to kill others was like hunting animals. This shows that in Ancient times, brutality and violence were the rule of the day. Greek culture was quite materialistic in nature. Even though, there were philosophers and thinkers who eulogized humanity in general, the supremacy of physical power and might ruled the entire Greek way of life. Even god and goddesses in Greek mythology had been shown cruel, tyrannical and vying for power. As Shakespeare said they killed people “for their sport”. In Greek culture, morality was subservient to might or power.

The very first Aesop’s fable *The Lamb and the Wolf* shows that where there is might, no one dares to speak against it. When Wolf attacked the Lamb, no one tries to save it. In many fables we see violence, death treachery and brutality. People feared the kings and people in power. They were suppressed and helpless. Ethics and morals were nothing more than the lip service. Even a great thinker like Socrates was put to death for speaking out against the authority. While the kings and warrior fought for expanding their territory, the ordinary people struggled for food, water and shelter. Slavery was quite rampant in those days and even Aesop himself is the example of these brutal systems of slavery.

In the fable *The Wolf and the Lamb*, once a Lamb astray from the fold, meet a Wolf, Wolf resolved not to lay violent hands on him, but to find some plea to justify to the lamb the Wolf's right to eat him so he addressed the lamb that last year he has insulted him, the Lamb replied in mournful tone that he was not then born, Wolf asked again he feed in his pasture, the Lamb replied he never tested grass, the Wolf again asked he drank from is well, the Lamb replied his mother's milk is food and water for him. He never drinks water. Up on which the Wolf seized him and ate him up saying he want remain super less, even though he refuted every one of his imputation, the moral of this fable is "The tyrant will always find a pretext for his tyranny".

This is the first fable of this collection. This small fable portrays whole caricature of contemporary society of ancient time. Rulers and powerful never need reason claim their agendas. Whatever they want or whatever they do they justify their deeds by any means. In another similar story *The Cat and the Cock*, a Cock catches by a Cat, the Cat ponder how he might find reasonable excuse for eating him, he accuses him of being nuisance to men by crowing in the night time and not allowing them to sleep, the Cock defends himself by saying that he does this for the benefit of man that they might rise in time for their labor. The cat replies although you bond in specious apologies I shall not remain super less and he makes meal of him. This shows that persons in a position does not care for truthiness, they take decision on their benefits.

The fable *The Aethiop* is a very keen satire on the society which thinks to colonies the rest of the world. They set the parameters as per their likings and force upon others to achieve it. Once the purchaser of black servant was persuaded that the color of his skin aroused from dirt contracted through the neglect of his former masters on bringing him home he restored to every means of cleaning and subjected the man to incessant scrubbing. The servant caught a severe cold, but never changed his color. This fable shows brutality of the human nature, powerful people want their things as they himself are. Here incessant scrubbing is not only physical act, it has more dipper meaning. In the fable *The Wild Ass and the Lion*, a wild Ass and a Lion get in an alliance so that they might capture the beasts of the forest with greater ease. The Lion agreed to assist with his strength while the wild Ass with greater speed,

when they had taken as many beasts as their necessity, the Lion undertook to distribute the prey. And for these purpose he divided three shares. The first share was taken by him saying that he is the king of forest. He takes second share as a partner with the wild Ass and also takes third share to allowing the wild Ass to go with his life. This is not just fable of a Lion and wild Ass; it represents the condition of the tyranny against tyrant. It is the condition of farmers and slaves. There was no place for justice in society. Person with powers always take the task of distribution, whether it is commodity or status and distributors are always in benefits.

4.6.3 One cannot Escape from His Destiny

The Greeks believed in fate that made or marred human life. Human beings were like puppets in the hands of fate. Aesop also believes in the inscrutable role of destiny in human's life. Although Aesop seems to falsify many traditional myths in his fables, but here in this case he supports the role of destiny. There are many Incidents in life which cannot be logically justified; one has to believe in the role of destiny. Aesop has seen his contemporary society; it was immense with the element of chance. As one of his themes is 'Brutality of Ancient Time'; only destiny remains as the remedy for the satisfaction of the people. It can be also understood as Aesop wants to amplify the importance of morals. For such consequences he needs some justifications of nature to balance the ideology of society. When someone suffers without any logical reason, only the element of destiny helps to justify such incidents. And it also keeps the faith of people in moralistic life, which is essential for healthy society.

Destiny is the recurrent theme in many fables of Aesop. No inanimate object nor animal nor human being can escape from the destiny. In the fable, *An Oak and Zeus*, an oak tree appeals Zeus to stop men from chopping him down. Zeus replies that it is his destiny to be chopped down because of its useful nature to carpenters. It is his destiny that cannot be avoided.

In the fable *The Father and His Dream*, an old man dreams that his son will be killed by a lion. He does everything to prevent it from happening. He builds a house for his son, and makes him stay there. He decorates the house with paintings

of game. The man's son approaches a painting of a lion, and he is so frustrated with being kept indoors that he strikes out at it. The painting falls on him and kills him. His fate is fulfilled. The lion kills him.

In the fable *The Frogs Asking for a King*, the Frogs, grieved at having no established ruler, sent ambassadors to Zeus entreating for a king. Perceiving their simplicity, Zeus cast down a huge log into the lake. The Frogs were terrified at the splash occasioned by its fall and hide themselves in the depth of the pool. But as soon as they realized that the huge log was motionless, they swam again to the top of the water, dismissed their fear, climbed up, and began squatting on it in contempt. After some they began to think themselves ill-treated in the appointment of so inert a ruler, and send second deputation to Zeus to pray that he would set over them another sovereign. Zeus then gave them an Eel to govern them. When the Frogs discovered his good nature, they sent yet a third time to Zeus to beg him to choose for them still another king. Zeus displeased with all their complaints, send a Heron, who preyed upon the Frogs day by day till there were none left to croak upon lake. The Frogs were destined to die and they did meet their end through their own move. There are many fables that advocate the same theme like; *The Raven and the Swan*, *The Astronomer*, *The Charger and the Miller*, *The widow and Her Little Maidens*, *The Ass and His Master* etc.

On the whole Aesop's themes are the mirror of his society. His themes are not based on idealistic view but the realistic view of life. It is surprising that, the motif of fable is to demonstrate a moral which is based on idealistic behavior. But apart from this pseudo realm Aesop deals with hard core reality of his time. He does not write for fame. If he wants fame then he would have painted the society in blue. He may have created highly idealistic characters and deal with the themes that present no ugliness of his society. Aesop's purpose is to expose the weaknesses of the society and prepare people to act wisely and pragmatically in all situations.

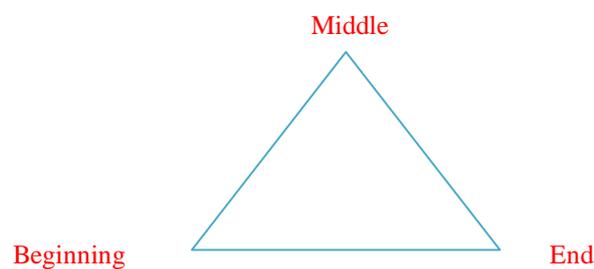
4.7 Plot construction of Aesop's Fables

Plot is the sequence of events in a story and their relation to one another as they develop and usually resolve a conflict at the end. The plot usually involves a

conflict or struggle between opposing forces. The discerning reader can see its development in a pattern during the course of the narration, whether its events proceed chronologically or are rearranged with flash-back. Even if a plot lacks a momentous pick in the action, it always includes the basic pattern of Beginning, Middle and an End. In most stories the beginning sets up the problem or conflict; the Middle is where the author introduces various complications that prolong suspense and make the struggle more meaningful and an End resolves the conflict to a greater or lesser degree. In successful stories the writer shapes these stages into a complex structure that impress the reader with its balance and proportion.

Aesop's fable contains very simple plot construction. These stories are more like small anecdotes rather than long sequence stories. It includes only one incident at a time, with very few characters, mostly two characters to carry on the dialogue. All the fables are individual they have no interlinking elements. Each stands on its own so, it has very simple plot pattern of the Beginning, Middle and an End.

(Story Arc Plot Pattern) (C.2)



Aesop's Fables are created for different audience from *Pañcatantra*. Its purpose is different. It intended to give on the spot examples and preaching in day to day conversation so it has to be very simple. It cannot bear the burden of long description and complexity of events. It should be handy and easy to remember. More over *Aesop's Fables* survived on the basics of oral tradition, not in written form. So naturally it follows easy plot pattern. It is hard for people to remember the description of places and ups and downs of events so unlike any other collection of fables, *Aesop's Fables* are very simple in form and design. *Aesop's Fables* are also used for giving handy examples, so sometimes a few fables are found without any moral message. The structure of *Aesop's Fables* follows a pattern with Beginning, Middle and End. This pattern is called the 'Story Arc'. It can be visualized as an

inverted check mark with tension leading to the climax, and then abruptly declining. Depending on the type of story, the rise may be gradual or sharp, but the endings almost always come speedily after the main climax. After all the desire to see how the story ends is what keeps audience reading the book.

4.7.1 The Beginning

Here the author hooks the reader by introducing the main characters and their goals and setting and the main conflict. The mood and the tone are set at the beginning and should be consistent throughout the story. The tension will fluctuate but overall the tone should be suspenseful, romantic or whatever from start to finish.

Almost all the didactic tales starts directly with the action of the characters. *Aesop's Fables* are very short in length. There is no scope for introduction, for instance, the story of *The Lion and the Mouse* begins like; "A lion king was awakened from sleep by a mouse running over face. Rising up angrily he caught him and was about to kill him." These lines directly alert the audience to the action of the characters, here Aesop silently introduces the characters like there is a Lion, who is a king, he is sleeping and he has been awakened by a Mouse running over his face. It means that the other character is a Mouse. The Mouse is mischievous and made a mistake of running over Lion's face. Each sentence has much to convey in few words. The story of *Ass and the Grasshopper* it begins like; "An Ass having heard some Grasshoppers' chirping, was highly enchanted; and desiring to possess the same charms of melody."

Here also story begins with the action of the characters that an Ass was enchanted by Grasshoppers chirping. Second thing is that, at the same time the author introduces two characters. In both these stories, element of suspense is aroused very keenly that what happened to the Mouse when the Lion king caught him. In the second story the suspense is, whether an Ass can develop ability to sing like the Grasshopper or not. In another story, *The Wolf and Sheep* the story begins with the line "Why should there always be this fear and slaughter between us? said the Wolves to the Sheep. Here the story begins with the question by Wolves to sheep. Here two types of animal characters are introduced. Wolves are asking a

question to the Sheep. In another story *The Ass the Cock and the Lion*, it begins as “An Ass and Cock were in straw-yard together when a Lion desperate from hunger, approached the spot.” In just sentence three characters are introduced with their situation and condition. Both the stories arouse ‘the tension’ in the very first line. The curiosity occurs in the minds of readers regarding what could be the answer of the Sheep and what could happen to the Ass and the Cock.

In the fables of social issue, the author takes a few more words to introduce the characters, because in most of the social themes human beings are the characters. These types of stories consist of human social affairs. It requires introduction to the characters because their behavior is in the context, of situation and relationships. Without clarification one might fail to understand the situation, for example, in the stories *The Father and His Two Daughters* beginning lines are: “A Man had two daughters, the one married to a gardener and the other to a tile- maker.” Here in single line three characters are introduced with their interrelation and with their present condition. The daughters’ introduction as ‘Gardeners wife and Tile-maker’s wife’ has much to do with the story ahead. The following events of the story depend upon their husbands’ occupations. In another story *The Old Woman and the Physician* the beginning is like, this:

The old woman having lost the use of her eyes, called in a physician to heal her, and made this bargain with him in the presence of witness: that if he should cure her blindness he should receive from her some of money; but if her infirmity remained, she should give him nothing.

Here beginning sets whole plot-line of the story and two characters are introduced, an old woman and a physician. In addition the ‘condition’ is put forward, this condition shows the temperament of old woman and physician of that time. In the few strokes of pen, the author is able to draw the caricature of the society of his time. The ‘condition’ not only introduces the characters but also portrays the characteristics of the characters.

In another story of *The Man and His Two Sweet Hearts* the beginning portrays not only characters, but also paves the way towards conflict: “A middle aged man, whose hair had begun to turn grey, courted two women at the same time; one of them was young and other well advance in years”. Here three characters are introduced with their present condition and state. Here their relations and difference of age is the key feature for the upcoming conflict. In the same way the story of *Father and His Sons* the beginning lines are as follows:

A father had a family of sons who were perpetually quarreling among themselves, when he failed to heal their dispute by his exhortations, he determined give them a practical illustration of the evils of disunion; and for this purpose he one day told them to bring him a bundle of sticks.

Here, not number, but two opposite sides of the characters are introduced. One side is father and the other side is his sons. The author is in too much hurry or rather has not given importance to the numbers of characters because his focus is on events not on narration. Later we realize that the author was not in hurry as he takes care in depicting the core of the moral - ‘the evils of disunion’ at least in two three lines very much in the beginning.

In both these stories not only characters but the characteristics of the characters are also depicted in the portion of the Beginning. It is considered essential for the stories which are concerned with social issues. In the stories where animals have been portrayed as characters, there is no need to illustrate the characteristics because animals possess certain fixed characteristics. For example, a Lamb represents innocence, a Bull represents hard work. A Wolf symbolizes wickedness and so on. In case of human characters, it is necessary to mention their characteristics and Aesop has done it very effectively.

While in the mythological stories that contain Gods, Deities or Supernatural characters have very short beginning. All these characters require no introduction, they are known to everyone. People know them by their names. Moreover their characteristics are also known to everybody. They are mythical characters and myths

are known to everyone. For example, in the story *Zeus and the Monkey*, the story begins like “Zeus issued a proclamation to all the beast of the forest....” Here Zeus is mentioned without any introduction because everybody knows this character. There is no need to give further details that he is the king of the Gods can make proclamation. In another story *Zeus, Poseidon, Athena and Momus*, the beginning lines are: “According to ancient legends the first man was made by Zeus, the first bull by Poseidon and the first house by Athena” here there is no need for ‘How’ or ‘Why’ elements in the story, because it begins with the words “According to an ancient legend...”

So it requires no clarifications of events. People are familiar to all these myths and therefore the action that follows is more important than introduction. In the same manner the story *The Trees under the Protection of the Gods*, begins as follows:

The Gods, according to an ancient legend, made choice of certain trees to be under their special protection. Zeus chose an Oak, Aphrodite the Myrtle, Apollo the Laurel, Cybele the Pine and Heracles the Poplar.

Here there is no need to discuss of ‘Why’ and ‘How’, they are ancient myths. While in the story *The Cat and Aphrodite*, a Cat fell in love with a handsome young man, the Cat entreated Aphrodite to change her in to a woman. In the story *The Peacock and Hera*, the Peacock complained to Hera about his voice. In the previous story, the Cat wanted to become a beautiful woman so that she could attract the handsome man and marry with him. Aphrodite is supposed to be the Goddess of Beauty and only she can bestow the gift of beauty to the cat. Cat approaches Aphrodite because the myth of her being the ‘Goddess of Beauty’. Hera is the ‘Queen of Gods’ and as the myth goes, the Peacock is her favorite bird. Therefore the Peacock complains to her about his problem.

4.7.2 The Middle

The middle consists of a series of events or complicated occurrences, leading to an increase in the tension. This is also where the characters change and grow as

they deal with the conflicts they face. Some of the minor crises are temporarily resolved but the story continues in the direction of a major crises or climax. In the story *The Lion and the Mouse* the middle part also contains two events. The first is Mouse apologizes for his mistake and also offers to help him whenever the Lion requires. The Lion forgives him with a witty laugh. The second incident is when the Lion caught by some hunters and bound by ropes. Here characters grow and change, in the beginning the audience found that the Mouse was mischievous but in the middle part, the Mouse changes. He becomes polite and asks for forgiveness for his mistakes. On the other hand the change is also seen in the Lion. He was angry in the beginning but he becomes patient in the middle and accepts the apology of Mouse. Moreover, complication occurs, as the Lion is caught by Hunters. This change in the characters and growth provides new dimensions to the audience and complications arouse the tension which leads them to move ahead. On the contrary in the story “The Ass and the Grasshopper” both the characters are flat. There is no change or growth in them but there is an element of complication, the ass wants to sing like Grasshopper and he asks for what sort of food they live on, that gives them such a beautiful voice and the Grasshopper answers ‘the dew’. Here the answer ‘the dew’ arouses the tension, the Dew is not a food that anyone can live on. Tension leads the readers to move towards an end. In another story *The Wolves and the Sheep*, two events take place. In the first event, the Wolves try to convince the Sheep for peace and reconciliation between them. And the second event is that the Sheep are beguiled and they dismissed the Dogs from their heels. There is ‘the change’ in characters but not an element of ‘the growth’. The Wolves are usually the killers of Sheep. On the contrary here the Wolves are trying to create peace between them. On the other hand, the Sheep are usually frightened by the Wolves but here they accept the peace treaties offered by the Wolves. Here ‘the change’ in the characters creates tension in the minds of the audience; both the characters behave in contradictory manner. The tension is created about the future out come.

In the story *The Ass, the Cock, and the Lion* the middle part contains three incidents: First is as the Lion is about to spring upon the Ass, the Cock crows loudly. And the second incident is that the sound of cock’s crowing being an aversion to the Lion, he flees as fast as he can. The Ass, observing Lion’s trepidation at a mere crowing of the Cock summoned courage to attack the Lion. Here in the characters of

the Lion and the Ass ‘the change’ can be traced but element of ‘the growth’ is missing. In the beginning, the Ass was frightened by the Lion, and the Lion was about to attack the Ass, but in the middle part the Lion runs away and the Ass gathers courage to attack the Lion. This absurd situation creates tension or complications and that keeps the audience engaged with the development of the plot.

Fables containing the social issues are longer than the didactic fables. Didactic fables have generally two three events or incidents in the middle part while here there are sequence of events and actions. Human characters are more complex than animal characters; they are depicted with more depth and dimension than animal characters. The Middle part of the fables that contains social issues is more developed than any other types of fables. As there are more actions there are more dialogues also. Here moral message appears slowly and sometimes in hidden words. It is not loud, open and clear as in didactic fables. The audience itself has to discover and unfold it. Here, there are no wondrous moments or shocking events like didactic or mythical fables have. These types of fables are more realistic, and they move slowly towards the climax. Their action takes longer period of time. The story takes time to develop. It may be a day or months or season or years or in decades, but the Didactic fables are shorter in time. Action does not move to different places, it occurs on one spot. There are few dialogues and few actions.

In the middle part of *The Father and His Two Daughters*, the Father visits two daughters one by one, and asks about their well being. The Daughters are pleased to see their father, inform him about their prosperities and explain their wishes. The daughter who married to gardener said “All things are prospering with me, and I have only one wish, that there may be a heavy rain fall, so that the plants may be well watered.” The daughter who married to tile-maker said “I want nothing, but I have only one wish, that the dry weather may continue, and the sun shine remains hot and bright, so that the bricks might be dried.” Here in the conversation of the Father and the Daughters warmth of relationship is felt. These types of fables have familial sensitivity. Here the middle part is not of narration of incidents but fine mingling of dialogues too.

Similarly in the middle part of *The Old Woman and the Physician*, there are many action and events, when an old woman puts a condition: “That if the physician

cures her blindness, he should receive from her a sum of money: but if her infirmity continues she would give him nothing.” This condition provides very good human touch to the fable and becomes realistic. Here in the middle part, both ‘the change’ and ‘the growth’ both can be seen. ‘The change’ is in the Physician’s character and ‘the growth’ is in the character of the Old Woman. The Physician’s duty is to heal and cure the patients, On the contrary he starts stealing the precious thing from the Old woman’s house as she is blind. And ‘the growth’ has been displayed in the character of the Old Woman. In the beginning she was straightforward. She wanted to be clear about the mode of payment so she placed a condition, but in the middle part, she plays a trick, she refuses to pay the money, which was decided in the condition.

Here in both the fables, element of complication and tension arise. In the first fable the wishes of two sisters are totally opposite to each other. One wishes for heavy rain while other wishes for dry weather. This complication leads the reader to move ahead. In the second fable, the Old Woman puts a condition for payment. She was cured, she gets back her eyesight yet she refused to pay the money in spite of the condition. These situations create tension and readers’ interest in the story persists.

While the middle part of *The Man and His Two Sweet Hearts*, the elderly woman pulls out some portion of his black hairs because of the shame of marrying a younger man and the younger woman pulls out some portion of his grey hairs because of the shame of marrying an older man than her. Here there are only silent actions and some movement of time. There are no dialogues or events to build the story. On the other hand, in the fable *The Father and His Sons*, there is one event to build the story, here the Father asks his sons to bring him a bundle of sticks. He makes faggot of sticks and orders them to break it, the Sons fail to break it. The Father then opens the faggot, takes the sticks separately. One by one and asks his sons to break it and they break it easily. This incident itself is a whole story. In both these fables, the change is only that the man whose hairs were pulled out becomes bare headed. While ‘the growth’ can be seen in the sons, who were perpetually quarrelling among themselves, are enlightened with the importance of unity. Both the stories have an element of complication and tension. In the first story, action of pulling black and grey hair creates a kind of tension. While in the other story,

incident of bundle of sticks creates curiosity and complication in the minds of readers, which lead them to read story further.

In a way it can be clearly seen that the middle part of the fables that contains social issues is stronger than the fables that are of didactic in nature. On the other hand the middle part of mythological fables involves an element of miracle or supernatural. Moreover in the middle part of such fables, Gods have given humanistic touch; they behave like human beings with limitation of human nature. In some fables where Gods are also performing their heavenly duties like giving justice, giving position, enhancing physical qualities of humans and animals etc. As in the fable *Zeus, Poseidon, Athena and Momus*, Momus played a role of a judge in the creation of respective Gods: Zeus, Poseidon, and Athena who have made first man, first bull and first house. There arises a dispute as whose work is most perfect. Momus is judging their work but as per his envious nature he finds fault in each work and declares none of these works as perfect. In the fable *The Trees under Protection of Gods*, Athena asks Gods their choice of trees. That is the reason why they do not choose the tree that give fruits. On the contrary in the fable *The Cat and Aphrodite* there is an element of miracle. On the request of the Cat, Aphrodite transforms her in to a beautiful damsel, so that the handsome man may fall in love with her and marry her. While in the fable *The Peacock and Hera*, peacock feels jealous while listening to a nightingale's song. He demands a pleasing voice from Hera. Instead of giving him a beautiful voice, she consoles him that he has given him extraordinary beauty and size with a gorgeous tail and painted plumage. Here Hera is advocating the will of fate. In a way the middle part of the fables that deal with social issues are elaborated with more literary quality than any other types of fables.

4.7.3 The End

In the portion of the End, the main conflict is resolved, and the loose ends are tied up. Tension falls quickly. A good ending leaves the audience satisfied even if they are not happy with the way things turn out. It is the same case with *Aesop's Fables*. Some fables are not ending happily, and aim at conveying moral message. Sometimes innocent may face tragic catastrophe, they may die, as in the real world.

The didactic fables have very clear moral message that can be Conveyed very easily. Sometimes in some fables the moral has given special mention, sometimes they are in inverted commas or written after some space at the end part of the fable. In the end, conflict resolves as in the fable *The Lion and the Mouse*. The Mouse recognizes the Lion's roar, he comes and gnaws the ropes with his teeth and sets him free. Thus the conflict resolves. Now the Mouse says a few words which are at the end part. He said. "You ridiculed the idea of my ever being able to help you, expecting never to receive from me any repayment of your favor; now you know that it is possible for even a mouse to can benefits on a lion." In this fable the moral is specially mentioned into inverted commas. The moral is explicit that one must not underestimate the power of a common man. While in the fable *The Ass and the Grasshopper* no specific moral message is given but the resolved conflict itself is a moral. When the Ass is pleased by the voice of the Grasshopper, he asks him what sort of food they lived on. The Grasshopper replied 'the dew'. The Ass decided that he would live only upon dew, and in short time he died of hunger. Here the end takes place quickly and the moral is, "One should not imitate other". The same is the case in the fable "The Wolf and the Sheep". It has no specially mentioned message as the conflict resolves, the moral pop up automatically. When the Wolves ask for treaties of peace and reconciliation on the condition that sheep must dispose of the Dogs from their heels, the poor sheep agree and afterward, the Wolves destroy the unguarded flock at their own pleasure. The moral is "One should never believe his enemy". On the other hand in the fable "The Ass the Cock and the Lion", the moral is separately mentioned, the conflict resolves as when the Lion flees away listening to the Cock's crowing, (there is a myth that Lions have aversion to cock's voice). The Ass observes his trepidation at mere crowing of a Cock and his confidence boosts up. He gallops after him to punish him. Soon the Lion attacks him and tears him to pieces. The moral is "False confidence often leads into danger".

On the whole, the endings of didactic fables are very short. There is sudden fall and only single event leads climax to an end. In most of the fables, there are often casualties of some characters. In the end the moral is clearly visible and general in tone, having universal quality in it. In the most of didactic fables, actions are spontaneous and automatic. While in the fables of social messages actions are logical and time bound. The End is slow in pace in comparison with the fables that have

didactic messages. Like in the story “The Father and His Two Daughters”, the ending part is a dilemma of father; here dilemma is moral. A daughter who had married to a gardener wishes a heavy rain in order that the plants may be well watered, while a daughter who had married to a tile maker wants to have a dry weather so with hot sun-shines so that her bricks might be dried. The Father’s dilemma is with whom his wish should be enjoined. The moral is "One cannot please both at a time". Here the moral is not specifically mentioned, it remains dilemma. The End has a humanistic touch. No big actions, no casualties are shown. Here, conflict remained unresolved, yet fable ends nicely with a moral. On the other hand, in the fable “The Old Woman and the Physician”, the conflict is resolved very interestingly. Here moral is not separately mentioned but it is woven in the dialogues of the old woman. Here the conflict resolves and the message appears at a time as she refuses to pay any money that she had promised to the physician. The physician summons her before the Judge, where the old woman comes and argues:

This man here speaks the truth in what he says; for I did promise to give him a sum of money if I should recover my sight; but if I continued blind, I was to give him nothing. Now he declares that I am healed. I on the contrary affirm that I am still blind for when I lost the use of my eyes, I saw in my house various chattels and valuable goods but now, though he swears I am cured of my blindness, I am not able to see a single thing in it.

Here the conflict is resolved; the problem of payment is settled in front of the court. The moral, "Shrewdness should be faced by being shrewd", appears automatically. While in the fable “The Man and His Two Sweethearts”, the moral is separately mentioned and conflict resolves in consequences. Here the result of actions that took place in the Middle results in the End. The Elder Woman ashamed to be courted by a man younger than her started pulling out some portion of his black hair. The young, on the other hand not wishing to become a wife of an old Man was equally zealous in removing every gray hair she could find. The result of this struggle is soon found out by the man that he did not have a single hair left on his head. The moral is "Those who seek to please everybody please nobody".

On the other hand, fables that contain mythical characters have judgmental ends; they end with the catastrophe of the characters. Either they are punished or deprived of something. Here the moral is in situation and condition of the characters. The endings are usually short, sudden, and general in tone. In these types of fables characters represent their whole race rather than the particular character. If someone has been punished, the punishment is for whole race. If someone has been deprived of something, the deprivation is for the entire race.

4.8 The Characters in *Aesop's Fables*

Aesop used his fables to mock the contemporary society, through allegory or by soliciting questions to the society. He had dealt with every human aspect, but intentionally he kept complexity of human nature away from his characters. Mostly *Aesop's Fables* are used as handy examples so its plots are very simple and obviously simple plots have simple characters. Most of the Aesop's characters are flat or static characters. In Aesop's fable element of the story is not in characters but in incidents. Simplicity of plot does not give much space to develop characters so there is no scope for much detail in delineation of characters. Sometimes in *Aesop's Fables*, fools remain fools, shrewd remains shrewd, innocent remains innocent, wicked remains wicked. It is not character but the situation of characters that gives moral.

By viewing Aesop's characterization, it is clearly sensed that Aesop's view on his character is truly monarchist. He wants his few characters to be authoritarian and few to be victims. He has clearly separated his characters into two parts as predators and prey. He believes that some powerful should rule and those who were weak and stupid are punished. Aesop also supports the hierarchy of Gods and Goddesses.

Aesop's characters can be largely classified into four major sections: **(i)** Animal characters **(ii)** human characters **(iii)** supernatural characters and **(iv)** personified characters. The major part is Animal characters while other characters have very small part to play.

4.8.1 Animal characters

Aesop's animal characters are portrayed on surface level. They behave according to their basic instincts, having no depth and complexity. They are static and flat, there is no development in them. The animals which are portrayed here are common domestic animals and wild animals. After surveying the fables one cannot help noticing that if Aesop was born in Samos, one of the islands of Greece, he has seen marine animals frequently. Yet in very few of his stories marine animals are portrayed. After surveying these stories, it can be noticed that he is very accurate in portrayal of his animal characters and their behavior. There are many reasons for this accuracy. One of the reasons might be the animals he chose to write. It is clear that Aesop wrote about some animals more frequently than others. Certain animal species are selected more than other species compared to their counterparts like mammals. They are depicted more than amphibians and with vivid description and accuracy. Aesop's selection of animals to write about with such accuracy might refer to animals available in his own environment. In other words he preferred writing about animals he knew other than writing about all animals. It can be understood though that he focused on domestic animals because they are probably the livestock of his master and he was in close contact with them and their potential predators namely the lion, wolf and fox. The variety of birds and insects that he dealt with can be understood since these two types of animals can be found almost in every country. Ann Chinn gives an interesting survey of animal mentioned in *Aesop's Fables*:

If Aesop's animals were divided according to the animal's types in the animal kingdom one can easily find the majority of mammals, birds, insects including a wide variety of each type and the minority of fish, reptiles and amphibians with a restriction of one type of animal. From the reptiles only the snake is portrayed and from the amphibians both the tortoise and the frog. Other types are mentioned in one story only like crustaceans (crab). (Chinn Ann, p250)

Here are some characteristics of frequently portrayed animals in Aesop's

Fables. The lion appears in more fables than any other animal. Aesop has portrayed him as the king of jungle, but the over-all impression of the lion in his collection does not create great image as the king of the forest. The lion is described as royal and just. He is the king who brings all the animals together to seek mutual agreements but here lion's kingdom is not so appreciable. The lion is a character with contradictory qualities. The lion for example, having grown too old to hunt, tricks animals into his cave by feigning illness. He is outwitted by a fox in the same fable. On the other hand, the lion, having fallen in love with a ploughman's daughter, agrees to rip out his teeth and claws. After fulfilling his agreement, he is no longer a threat. The ploughman withdraws the deal and the lion also loses out to his own greed. In the *Lion Who Comes Across a Sleeping Hare* instead of eating the hare, the lion chases a deer. He loses the deer and goes back to find the hare but the hare has already run off. Aesop's lion is at times just and kingly, while at other times, he is easily outwitted and greedy.

Next to the lion, the fox appears in more fables than any other animal. The fox is wily and generally wins any battle of wits against his enemy. The fox outsmarts shepherds, dogs and even lions. He is sly and tricks his foils into doing exactly what he wants with just a few words. He does not always win. In one fable, he climbs into the hollow of an oak tree to eat food he finds there. He eats so much that he is unable to get out again. When he sees grapes too high to reach, he blames the grapes, calling them sour. The fox, however, is intelligent. In one fable, he seeks help from a woodcutter. The woodcutter hides him but tries to tell the hunters where the fox is with gestures rather than words. The fox knows this and tells him, "I would thank you if your gestures and your conduct had agreed with your words."

The jackdaw, a bird of the raven family, is a covetous creature. He envies the raven, the eagle and pigeons. His envy is his downfall. In one fable, he envies an eagle and tries to imitate him. He swoops down and tries to carry off a ram, but his claws are caught in the ram's fleece. In one fable, the jackdaw disdains the company of other jackdaws and tries to share his life with ravens. The ravens, unfamiliar with his shape and voice, chase the jackdaw away. The jackdaw tries to go back to his kin and is denied their companionship. The jackdaw is an outsider and unwanted in most of the fables.

The wolf is a proud creature. He considers himself better than dogs that have to rely on their masters to feed them. He is cunning like the fox, and he is rarely outsmarted. In one fable, the wolf falls in love with his shadow. He is so proud of its length that he believes he should not fear the lion. When a lion captures him, he realizes that his ego was the cause of his downfall.

The eagle is consecrated to Zeus, meaning that he holds her higher than other birds and most animals. Being held in a high esteem by Zeus does not guarantee protection for the eagle. In one fable, he is pursued and tormented by a small scarab beetle. Even Zeus cannot protect her nest from the beetle's wrath. In one fable, a man catches the eagle and clips her wings. When the eagle is set free, she decides to develop her own way to keep from being captured by man again.

(B.4)

No.	Animal Characters Names	Number of appearance as character	Qualities of animal characters
1.	Wolf	22	Bossing, foolish, wicked, cruel and dominating
2.	Lamb	7	Innocent and Mick
3.	Bat	2	Shifting sides, wise
4.	Weasels	3	Faithful, courageous,
5.	Ass	19	Foolish, innocent, obedient, gullible
6.	Grasshopper	3	Sometimes wise, sometimes foolish
7.	Lion	27	Bravery, honest, trustful and mighty
8.	Mouse	10	Foolish, wise, smart,

9.	Scorpion	1	Wise,
10.	Locusts	1	Devouring, destructive, hardworking
11.	Cock	7	Fool,
12.	Crane	3	Foolish, innocent
13.	Ants	2	Miserly ,hardworking, united
14.	Dog	22	Boastful, faithful, loyal, selfish, wicked
15.	Mole	1	Innocent,
16.	Bull	14	Powerful, devoted and loyal
17.	Hare	7	Wise, fearful, boastful,
18.	Tortoise	2	Wise, boastful, foolish, friendly
19.	Stork	1	Wise, faithful, calm, friendly, and knowledgeable
20.	Snake	6	Wicked, dangerous,
21.	Bear	3	Boastful, foolish
22.	Swallow	3	Foolish
23.	Crow	8	Wise, cunning, lazy, groupistic mentality
24.	Flies	1	Carefree
25.	Goat	8	Foolish, innocent, fearful,

26.	Pigeon	5	Innocent
27.	Swan	3	Wise, faithful, calm, friendly, knowledgeable
28.	Horse	8	Loyal, foolish, proud, boastful
29.	Lioness	2	Proud, mighty, strong
30.	Cat	4	Selfish, active
31.	Piglet	1	Innocent, wise
32.	Mule	3	Foolish
33.	Frogs	8	Boastful, foolish
34.	Stag	5	Innocent,
35.	Jackdaw	4	Hypocrite,
36.	Eagle	12	Powerful, foolish
37.	Monkey	10	Stupid, hasty, thoughtful, friendly, smart, active
38.	Birds	3	Foolish, trustful, Innocent
39.	Crab	2	Foolish,
40.	Mouse	10	Learned, smart
41.	Hawk	3	Powerful, loyal, innocent

42.	Dolphin	3	Wise, friendly, helpful
43.	Boar	3	Strong, wise
44.	Bee	1	Foolish, wise, united
45.	Goose	1	Innocent, Foolish
46.	Seagull	1	Innocent
47.	Leopard	1	Foolish, Wicked, cruel
48.	Hen	2	Innocent
49.	Camel	2	Foolish, trustful, powerful, loyal, innocent, gullible
50.	Wasp	2	Wicked
51.	Calf	2	Innocent
52.	Peacock	2	Innocent
53.	Fox	30	Cunning, knowledgeable, wise, boastful
54.	Lark	2	Wise, faithful
55.	Nightingale	1	Innocent, playful, wise
56.	Geese	1	Innocent, slow, foolish
57.	Elephant	1	Mighty, gullible
58.	Gnat	2	Boastful, proud

59.	Owl	3	cunning, foolish, faithful, knowledgeable

4.8.2 Human characters

Aesop has used human beings in a large number as his characters: however they are not from any high positions of society. His human characters are rustic people who are associated with labour. Aesop intentionally does not use any courtly or religious characters in his fable. Aesop's way of telling fable is quite witty; his tone may sometimes hurt someone's feelings. The reason of his death is also the same; he offended the priests of Apollo at Delphi. The Delphians threw him over the cliff of the mountain. It also makes a sense that layman requires more wisdom than of those who are in powerful position. One of the major themes of *Aesop's Fables* is 'Might is Right'. If might is right then there is no need of wisdom.

His very frequent human character is Shepherd. The shepherd represents an everyman. He, however, is a constant victim of fate. He rarely comes out on top. He tends to be foolish in his endeavors. In one fable, he takes in a wolf cub and raises it with his dogs. The shepherd thinks that the wolf will help guard his flock. The wolf, however, ends up killing most of his sheep, and the shepherd has to kill him. The shepherd also wears out the patience of the townspeople in one fable. He calls out that a wolf is attacking his sheep just to see them come running. When a wolf really does attack, the people of the town do not believe in his cries for help, and he has to watch the wolf carry off his sheep.

Another important human character is the Ploughman. He also represents a common man in the fables. He is a man who is at times kind and at times vengeful. In one fable, the ploughman sees an eagle caught in a net. He is so taken by the eagle's beauty that he frees it. The eagle, grateful, saves the ploughman from being crushed to death. The ploughman shows his vengeful side when a snake kills his child in one fable. He lies in wait for the snake, and when he sees it, he strikes out at

it with an ax with all his strength. In one fable, the ploughman is on the verge of starvation and slaughters his animals one by one in order to survive. Finally, he has to resort to killing his oxen. His dogs run away, afraid that if he would kill the animals that provide his living, they are surely next. The acts show the ploughman to be at the whim of fate. He can only react to what he is given and behave accordingly.

4.8.3 Supernatural characters

A Greek scholar Plato exiled literature in his ideal state. One of his arguments was based on portraying mythical Gods having human behavior. It is the same case with *Aesop's Fables*. His supernatural characters have magical power but they are rarely used for betterment of humans. Their anger, jealousy, and greed are like that of ordinary human beings. They are short tempered and interested in superfluous things which degrade their spiritual status. Their proclamations are illogical and they are often selfish. Almost all the supernatural characters have touch of human malice. People are scared of them rather than love and worship them. As Greek mythology was polytheistic, there are many gods and Goddesses. Aesop has used some of these Gods and Goddesses in his fables.

There is a very little scope to develop any characters so Aesop takes these gods and goddesses with their pre-accepted images. The most frequently used character is of Zeus, the king of the Gods. He is merely a character for Aesop to use as a foil to humans and animals. In one fable, Zeus makes the fox, the king of all beasts. He then tests the fox by releasing a beetle in front of him. The fox reverts to his nature and chases the beetle. Zeus is sensitive to criticism. In one fable, he is so angered by Momus's criticism of his creation that he banishes Momus from Olympus. Zeus is also sensitive to slights. When the tortoise does not attend Zeus's wedding because she does not want to leave her home, Zeus condemns her to carry her home with her eternally as the shell of her body.

The rest of the gods and goddesses appear in this collection twice or thrice with very short role to play. They appear with their typical nature. According to mythology, Heracles was the illegitimate son of Zeus and Alcmena, the wisest and most beautiful of all mortal women. Hera was enraged at Zeus for his infidelity and

even more so, that he placed the infant Heracles at Hera's breast as she slept and allowed him to feed, which caused Heracles to be partially immortal, thus, allowing him to surpass all mortal men in strength, size and skill. He is the God of power and strength. People ask him or pray to him for strength. In one fable, when a Wagoner whose wagon is stuck into deep rut, instead of trying he starts crying loudly for Heracles to help him. Heracles appears and asks him to help himself, and never pray to him until he has done his best, otherwise his prayer would be in vain. Another God is Hermes. Character of Hermes has not been given much importance. He appears only three or four times in whole collection. He is a messenger of God and the God of trades, the son of Maia Maiestas and Zeus. The word mercurial is commonly used to refer to something or someone erratic, volatile or unstable, derived from Hermes's swift flights from one place to another. He is often depicted holding the caduceus in his left hand. Determined to learn in what esteem he was held among the mortal, gives richness who pleases him. In one fable he wants to estimate value of his statue, in disguise of a man approaches and asks for price to sculptor. First he asks about the statues of Zeus and Hera. Then he was sure that his statue will be definitely valued more as he is God of trades and messenger of Gods. But instead of offering the high value, the sculptor said that if he would buy both the statues of Zeus and Hera, he will fling the statue of Hermes in bargain. In another fable, a poor carpenter made offering day by day and begged the statue of Hermes to make him rich, but instead he become poorer and poorer. One day he hits the statue of Hermes and breaks his head and outcomes the stream of gold. Here carpenter expresses his wonder on the contradictory and unreasonable behavior of Hermes. In another fable Hermes suggests to a philosopher not to judge the action of Gods. Once Hermes decides to test the prophetic power of blind Tiresias. Disguised as a mortal, he steals the man's cattle and reports them missing. The prophet knows the fact and tells him that Hermes has done so. Thus, he is reduced to a foolish, mean-minded person.

Poseidon has very small part to play. He appears only twice or thrice in whole collection. He is the brother of Zeus and Pluto, each of them presiding over one of the three realms of the universe, Heaven, Earth and the Netherworld Poseidon was associated with fresh water. Poseidon was worshipped by the Romans also as a god of horses, and the creator of the first bull. He appears with his conventional

nature. Another God is Momus. He is God of satire, mockery, censure, writers, poets; a spirit of evil-spirited blame and unfair criticism. His name is related to meaning 'blame' or 'censure'. He is depicted in classical art as lifting a mask from his face. In Aesop's Fable he is portrayed as a character with fault-finding nature. Because of this nature, he was banished from the Olympus by Zeus.

Aesop has also mentioned some of the goddesses from the mythology, but they have very small part to play. They are presented with their typical nature and conventional supernatural powers.

Hera is one of the chief Goddess of Greek mythology. She is the protector and special counselor of the state. She is the daughter of Saturn and sister but also the wife of the chief god Zeus and the mother of Mars and Vulcan. Hera also looked after the women of Greece. She appears with peacock. Once a peacock complained about his voice to Hera. He said that as he is beautiful, he must have a melodious voice; moreover he was the pet of Hera but Hera modestly advises him that it is not possible for all to have everything. She gives an example of other birds that eagle has strength, nightingale, a song; the raven, has favorable and the crow has unfavorable auguries. There are all contented with the endowments allotted to them. Another important goddess is Athena. She is often depicted with her sacred creature, an owl, which symbolizes her ties to wisdom. She is the creator of the first house. She is the virgin goddess of poetry, medicine, wisdom, commerce, weaving, crafts, magic, and the inventor of music. Another important Goddess is Aphrodite. She is the goddess whose function encompasses love, beauty, sex, fertility and prosperity. According to Greek mythology Aphrodite was born of sea-foam. In Aesop's fable she appears with her conventional nature and powers. In one fable a cat falls in love with a man. Being Aphrodite's pet animal, she approaches to her and asks to make her beautiful damsel. Aphrodite grants her prayer but examines her true nature and finally she returned her in to her original form.

Greek Gods and Goddesses are also popular with their Roman names also these Greek and Roman names are as follows;

(B.5)

Greek names of the Gods and Goddesses	Roman names of the Gods and Goddesses
Zeus	Jupiter
Hera	Juno
Poseidon	Neptune
Ares	Mars
Hermes	Mercury
Athena	Minerva
Heracles	Hercules
Aphrodite	Venus

4.8.4 Personified characters

It is also good score on the part of the author that he has mentioned some personified characters; it shows the creativity and the imaginative power in him. Aesop has taken some objects from day to day life and derived some beautiful morals. The reason behind his personification can be; the quality which he wants for his characters is hard to find in living object. Moreover inanimated things also have something to express, which he wants his readers to notice.

In many of the fables, the cave is a place of trickery. In one fable, a goatherd finds some wild goats and herds them into a cave with his own. He plans to keep the wild goats, so he feeds them better than he feeds his own. When he lets all of the goats out again, the wild ones run away saying they cannot trust one who would treat other goats better than his own goats. An aging lion uses a cave to trick his prey into coming to him. A lion and a fox use a cave to lure a stag to his death twice.

Many of the fables that involve trees treat the trees as characters rather than objects. The trees complain about their fate. In one fable, the oak tree complains to Zeus about men cutting him down. Zeus says it is the tree's own fault for being so useful to carpenters. The trees argue and boast among themselves. In one fable, a

silver fur tree boasts that it is beautiful and slender, and therefore it is better than a bramble. The bramble replies that he would rather be a bramble than worry about a woodcutter's ax. The trees also pass judgment on wrongdoers. In one fable, a man murders a traveler and claims his hands are stained from climbing a mulberry tree. When the murderer is caught and hanged from the tree, the tree tells him that he has no sympathy because, "You are the one who committed the murder, and yet you wiped the blood on me".

Statues provide humiliation for many other characters in the fables. In one fable, a man keeps a statue of a Demi-God in his home. He offers it an abundance of sacrifices only to be told by the God himself that he must stop squandering his wealth. In one fable, an ass carrying a statue of a God assumes that the travelers in his path are bowing down to him. The ass, full of pride, refuses to go any further, and his owner beats him for his impudence. Even the Gods themselves face humiliation when there is a statue involved. In one fable, the God Hermes disguises himself as a mortal man to find out how esteemed he was in the eyes of man. He goes to a sculptor and asks his prices for various statues. When he asks about the statue of himself, the sculptor tells him that he can have the statue of Hermes free if he purchases two of the higher deities.

The ax is a symbol of hard work. As a tool, it only appears in a few fables. The fables containing an ax usually deal with dishonesty. In one fable, a woodcutter loses his ax, and Hermes retrieves it and a silver ax for him. Another man tries to take advantage of Hermes and loses both his ax and any favor the God might have given him.

Animals are the major part of 'The Aesop's fables' but there are other characters representing natural elements, objects and occupations.

(B.6)

Trees as characters			
1.	Pomegranate	8	Plane-Tree

2.	Apple-Tree	9	Olive-Tree
3.	Bramble	10	Fig-Tree
4.	Axle-Trees	11	Flower
5.	Fir-Tree	12	Rose plant
6.	Oak tree	13	Amaranth tree
7.	Plane-tree		

(B.7)

Other Characters			
1.	Charcoal Burner	28	Aethiop
2.	Fuller	29	Huntsman
3.	Father	30	Tradesmen
4.	Son	31	Milk-Woman
5.	Boy	32	Brazier
6.	Fisherman	33	Reeds
7.	Wagoner	34	Woodman
8.	Herdsmen	35	Bird catcher

9.	Farmer	36	Philosopher
10.	Groom	37	Carpenter
11.	Traveler	38	Bald
12.	Salt Merchant	39	Knight
13.	Butcher	40	Innkeeper
14.	Astronomer	41	Hart
15.	Physician	42	Prophet
16.	Woman	43	Blind
17.	Miller	44	Man
18.	Horse	45	Cobbler
19.	Rider	46	Sun
20.	Vine	47	Trumpeter
21.	Widow	48	Prisoner
22.	Maidens	49	Soldiers
23.	Shepherd	50	Robber
24.	Daughters	51	Countryman
25.	Mother	52	Buffoon

26.	Thief	53	Horseman
27.	Arab		

4.9 Settings in *Aesop's Fables*

Setting is the place and time of the story to set the scene. The writer attempts to create in the readers visual imagination, the illusion of a real world in which the story take place. When the writer locates the narrative in a physical setting, the reader begins to accept fiction as reality. The setting of a story furnishes the location for its world of feeling the different emotional associations awakened in reader's mind. A sense of place is essential if readers are to be engaged with in the fictional characters. Situations time and place help in making the characters seem real but to be most effective the setting must also have a dramatic use.

The fables are pastoral in setting. Many of them take place in fields and pastures or on farms. Some take place in rural markets. The difference, however, is that the setting makes very little difference when it comes to morality. In a typical pastoral tale, the characters tend to be more moral and ethical because of their closeness to nature. In these fables, nature itself is sometimes the moral or immoral, benevolent or cruel. In fable no. 73, the sun and wind play a game at the expense of an innocent traveler.

Each fable is set in a natural environment. Most of the animal-based fables take place in either pastures or rivers. Fables dealing with mules, foxes, wolves and sheep usually take place in pastures. Others are set in barnyards, caves or mangers. The fables relating to humans generally take place on journeys, in fields or, sometimes, in their homes. Many of the fables dealing with humans are set on the road. Characters are usually travelers who meet with their comeuppance along the way, typically at the hands of an animal.

4.10 Myth in *Aesop's Fables*

Greek civilization was one of the most ancient civilizations of the world and it is exceptionally admired all over the world. It has influenced not only European literature but the world literature at large. Like almost all ancient mythologies, Greek mythology is polytheistic, for the centuries Greek people worshiped many Gods and Goddesses considering themselves as their progenitors.

Personal and public life styles of Greek people are reflected in their mythology as it was deeply woven with their existence. For centuries education in Greece meant learning and reciting epic poems based on their myths. Myth has always been a subject of interest for Greek people. They used to listen to these myths from professional performers accompanied with lyre. Most of the bed time stories were heroic and adventurous deeds of Gods and Goddesses. Most of the important public and religious festivals were linked with specific mythological incidents.

Greek myths encompass all the aspects of human life. Gods and Goddesses were individually associated with each phase of life with their myths like; birth, death, arts, education, commerce, war etc. Moreover some Gods and Goddesses are associated with certain elements like the sun, the moon, the earth, water, ocean, wind etc. Chief occupation of ancient civilizations was agriculture so, some God and Goddess and their myths are associated with agriculture and pastoral life. Being associated with certain aspects Gods and Goddesses create a typical image on human mind. As a result literature gave shape to a typical nature of a particular God and Goddess. The importance of Greek mythology is still relevant in the modern times. Many important events or inventions are named after some mythical characters of Greece.

According to famous anthropologist of nineteenth century James Frazer, symbols, image, rituals and myths have developed from primitive time. In his book *The Golden Bough* he shows a general development of modes of thought from magical to the religious and finally to the scientific. He traces human consciousness from the primitive to the civilized state. The primitive people observed some natural

phenomena and their repetition. They tried to find reason behind it. When they failed, they feared them and calling them magic or miracle. When this fear subsided and, when they became somewhat social, they named them religion. When they came closer, and became civilized, they named them science. Broadly speaking, the roots of myths are as deep as human history.

In primitive period the most affecting elements of human life were natural elements like water, fire, air, sun, moon, trees, mountains, rain, rivers etc. The need of such elements creates deep impact on human life. The basic archetypes were derived from such elements, like essentiality of water developed a sense of gratitude, which is converted into its personification as a God. This is the same case with other elements also. Now same elements have many forms like water such as rain, river, ocean etc. Each element has different task in human life so they were personified as different Gods. As drinking water is collected from river, it links its quality with the feeding quality of the mother. So river is personified as goddess or associated with femininity. While ocean is used of sailing, transporting and fishing which are more of male's domain. So it is personified as God or associated with masculinity. Now nature's cycle is not fixed sometimes there is famine or heavy torrential rain. Primitive people reasoned about this type of phenomena. When they failed to find any reason, they mythologized it as the idea of God's anger and grace. In a way, they mythologized the natural phenomena according to their experiences of nature.

It is the same case with all the ancient myths that some or other way they were the experiences of primitive men which were mythologized. As primitive life became more complex, their myths also got complex. When they wanted their Gods to be like them, they added the shades of goods and evils.

There are many Gods and Goddesses in Greek mythology. Aesop has mentioned some of them in his fables such as, Zeus. He is the supreme to all and the father of many other Gods and Goddesses. According to ancient Roman and Greek religion and myth, Zeus or Jove is the king of the Gods, and the God of sky and thunder. As the patron deity of ancient Greeks, he ruled over laws and social order. He was one of three Gods of the Capitoline Triad, along with Hera and Athena. He possessed the sovereign power of the king of Gods. He is one who appoints the king, bestows a royal reward that pleases him, gives boons,

counsels mortal beings on earth and deprives or punishes if one is not satisfied by whatever is given. Another important Goddess is Hera, the protector and special counselor of the state. She is a daughter of Saturn and sister (but also the wife) of the chief God Zeus and the mother of Mars and Vulcan. Hera also looked after the women of Greece. Peacock is her pet bird.

Another important Goddess is Athena. She was the virgin Goddess of poetry, medicine, wisdom, commerce, weaving, crafts, magic, and the inventor of music. She is often depicted with her sacred creature, an owl which symbolizes her ties to wisdom. He is the creator of first house. Heracles is the God of power and strength. He represents masculine strength, which was extremely important in those days. People worshiped him for strength. According to mythology, Heracles was the illegitimate son of Zeus and Alcmene, the wisest and most beautiful of all mortal women. Hera was enraged at Zeus for his infidelity, and even more so that he placed the infant Heracles at Hera's breast as she slept and allowed him to feed, which caused Heracles to be partially immortal that, allowed him to surpass all mortal men in strength, size and skill. Another important God is Hermes a messenger of God and the God of trade the son of Maia Maiestas and Zeus. Hermes has influenced the name of many things in a variety of scientific fields, such as the planet Hermes, and the element Hermes. The word mercurial is commonly used to refer to something or someone erratic, volatile or unstable, derived from Hermes's swift flights from place to place. He is often depicted holding the Caduceus in his left hand, gives riches to those who please him. Another important God is Poseidon, who was the brother of Zeus and Pluto, each of them presiding over one of the three realms of the universe, Heaven, Earth and the Netherworld Poseidon was associated with fresh water. Poseidon was worshipped by the Romans also as a God of horses, Creator of first bull. Another important God is Momus, he was God of satire, mockery, censure, writers, poets; a spirit of evil-spirited blame and unfair criticism. His name is related to meaning 'blame' or 'censure'. He is depicted in classical art as lifting a mask from his face. He is a faultfinder. The Goddess Aphrodite is the most widely mentioned deities of Greek mythology. Her functions encompass love, beauty, sex, fertility and prosperity. As per Roman mythology she was the mother of the Roman people through her son Aeneas. The God Apollo is one of the important Olympian deities. He has been variously recognized as a God of light and sun, truth and prophecy, healing, plague, music, poetry. Apollo is the son of Zeus and Leto and

has twin sisters. Thus, Frazer refers to myths as, ‘the experience of the world by the primitive people.’

Another important theory came into existence in 1930s with the Swiss psychologist Carl G. Jung, a student of Sigmund Freud. What Freud believed about myths is in his work *Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming*, that myths are “distorted vestiges of the wishful fantasies of whole nation, the secular dreamers of youthful humanities.” But this definition requires supplementary elaboration which is done by Jung in his theory of collective unconsciousness. What Jung means by collective unconsciousness is the ‘Sense’; the ‘Sense’ is divided into two parts, namely the personal or the superficial layer of the unconscious and the supra personal or deep layer. The second is the collective unconsciousness. The second type of sense is much more universal in nature as it represents the primordial types of man’s primitive instincts. Here Jung redefines the Freudian concept of instinct in terms of ‘archetypes’. Jung’s concept of the instinct and the archetype are that they are neither a speculative nor a philosophical but an empirical matter. He tries to show that these instincts take ‘definite forms’ and are empirically veritable. As the most spontaneous expression of the collective unconscious, dreams seem to be the ideal source of archetypes. Archetype may also be identified in ‘fantasies’ produced by deliberate concentration. On the whole Freud and Jung both believe that the collective unconscious is the instinctual expression. There are some basic instincts that create archetypes, which are elaborated in myths, symbols, images and rituals.

Primitive people created rituals to please their Gods. They offer them the things they love. They sacrifice men and animals. They sing for them, dance for them. They have created festivals for them. With all these means, they believe that their Gods would be pleased and grant them whatever they want. With all these rituals they mythologize the idea of pleasing their Gods. There is whole set of ritual myths.

Primitive people have mythologized specific ways to please specific Gods. As there are many myths in *Aesop’s Fables* which indicate this type of act. There are many fables in which characters try to please their Gods. In many fables Zeus is introduced and many characters try to please him. Zeus is the king of the Gods and

most powerful among celestial beings. He has power to choose a king among worldly beings. In one fable, Zeus made proclamation that all the birds should present themselves before him, where he would himself choose the most beautiful among them to be the king of all beasts and birds. The Jackdaw, knowing his own ugliness, searched through the woods and fields, and collected the feathers which had fallen from the wings of his companions, and stuck them in all parts of his body, hoping thereby to make himself the most beautiful of all. In this fable it is depicted that hypocrisy and only outer decoration is meaningless. While in another fable, it is outlined that whatever you offer, if it is with true heart, it will please God. Here Zeus issued a proclamation to all the beasts of the forest and promised a royal reward to the one whose offspring should be deemed the handsomest. The monkey came with the rest and presented, with all the tenderness of the mother, a flat nosed, hairless, ill-featured young monkey as a candidate for the promised reward. In another fable, a Bee from mount Hymettus, the queen of the hive, ascends to Olympus to present Zeus some fresh honey from her combs. Zeus, delighted with the offering of honey, promises to give whatever she asks. But unfortunately she asks for a sting because if any one approaches to take her honey, she may kill him. Zeus is much displeased but as he had promised her, he gave her a sting but at the cost of her own life. This fable shows that if someone tries to harm other, harms him or herself. While in other fable, once a crow was caught in a snare. He prayed to Apollo to release him, making a vow to offer some frankincense at his shrine. But when rescued from his danger, he forgot his promise. Shortly afterwards, again caught in a snare, he passed by Apollo and made same promise to offer frankincense to Hermes. Hermes soon appeared and said to him that he would not believe him as he has not fulfilled his previous promise. On the other hand in one fable a herdsman tending his flock in a forest lost a bull-calf from the fold. After long and fruitless search, he made a vow that, if he could only discover the thief who had stolen the calf, he would offer a lamb in sacrifice to Hermes, Pan, and guardian Deities of the forest. No longer afterwards, as he ascended a small hillock, he saw at his foot a lion feeding on the calf. Terrified at the sight, he lifted his eyes and his hands to heaven and said that he vowed to offer a lamb to the guardian Deities of the forest if he could only find out who had robbed him. Now he has discovered the thief, but he would offer a full-grown bull if he could save himself from the lion.

Aesop has used his characters, not as mere characters, but they are mythical symbols also. His characters are representatives of particular types. Aesop used them as collective nouns like; a lion, a wolf, an ass etc. Aesop's characters represent whole race and behind his characters there lie mythical symbols which are rooted in public mindset very deeply, for example, a lion as the king of jungle. Whenever the lion appears in any fables, he is portrayed as king. Now at the very first stage there is no logic behind any wild animal's appearance as a king. Yet something is still there. When the author portrays a lion as the king of jungle, everybody is easily convinced that lion is king of jungle. Not only the Greek people but the people all over the world accept the lion as the king of jungle because it symbolizes kingship because of its strength and royal qualities. These types of symbols are handed over from generations to generations.

From the primitive time men have been impressed by the might, size and appearance of the lion. Lion may not be superior in strength than some animals but can defeat larger animals than him. The fearless behavior of the lion always fascinates people. Whenever they face him, they feel fear. In the same way, in primitive time, when people lived in groups and when they faced a person who was better in might and size, they feared them. Later this fear turns in to respect and then in admiration. The might of a leader is compared with the might of lion. Thus, with the passage of time, kingship and lion generated kind of inter-link with each other. The same thing is set in the minds of people for centuries and then it becomes the symbol all over the world. This is the same case with Ass and Camel. Ass and camel both symbolize stupidity: both the animals are associated with labor. The look and the behavior of these two animals symbolize stupidity. There are many other animals, that are less intelligent than these two but their appearances create these types of symbolism.

In the same way all the characters that represent their characteristics are symbols which are largely accepted by whole race. These types of symbols also contain geographical elements prevalent in those days. It was quite impossible for people to live on high mountains. So they believed their Gods were very powerful as they lived on mountain like Mount Olympus. Thus mountains became sacred for

them. In the same way, some natural elements are personified and worshiped by people.

Even people have certain images also as in the story '*The Charcoal-Burner and the Fuller*'. The Charcoal-Burner asks the Fuller to come in his neighbor but the Fuller refuses because the Charcoal-Burner is black in colour. People do not accept black colour as black colour is simply a colour like any other colour. It is in collective unconscious of the people that they do not like black colour. Black colour represents darkness of night. In primitive time, nights were more dangerous, as wild animals used to hunt and kill at night. Visibility is almost to zero therefore darkness has an element of fear. It is also associated with evil. This fear is deeply rooted in the minds of people. Moreover in one fable 'the Aethiop', Aethiop was a black servant. His purchaser does not like his black colour. He thinks that his black colour is due to neglect of his former masters. They have not cleaned him properly, so his black colour arises from dirt. So by every means, he tries to clean him. Heavy scrubbing resulted in serious wounds. This fable represents the mindset of the people; they consider black people unhygienic, dirty, uncultured, and less civilized.

Another important image is the image of Oracle or Astronomer. Aesop does not support this image but he mocks at it. In one fable it is portrayed that once the Astronomer at night was observing stars in the sky to make a prophecy, but accidentally fell into deep well when he cried loudly to help, some neighbors came to help and address him that he should concern more on what is on earth rather than what is in the sky. There are also many images regarding birds. The Greek people consider an owl as knowledgeable and solitary bird. An owl is often depicted as sacred creature of Goddess Athena. In one fable, an owl in her wisdom counseled the birds to pull out certain seeds and plants. First she advised on acorn to pull it out from the ground as it would produce mistletoe, from which an irremediable poison will occur. The next advice was to pluck up the seeds of the flax, which men had sown, as it was a plant which bore no good to them. And lastly, the owl, seeing an archer approach, predicted that this man, being on foot, would contrive darts armed with feathers which would fly faster than the wings of the birds themselves. The birds paid no heed to these warning words. But afterwards finding her words true

they wondered at her knowledge and deemed her to be the wisest of all birds, however she no longer, gave them advice and lived in solitude.

Another image regarding birds is image of bats flying alone at night. In one fable Aesop depicted the reason that once there was a fight between birds and beasts. Bats fearing their own insecurity, always fought on the side which they felt were strongest. When peace was proclaimed their, deceitful conduct was apparent to both the sides. Therefore being condemned by each for his treachery, they were driven forth from the light of day, and henceforth, concealed themselves in dark hiding-places, flying always alone at night.

There are also some images about men-animal relationship. It is shown in *Aesop's Fables* that certain animals fall in love with men. In one fable the cat falls in love with a man, approached Aphrodite to transform her into a beautiful damsel in order to attract the man. On the demand of her favorite pet, Aphrodite transformed her into beautiful damsel. Later, to examine her real nature at the place of marriage, Aphrodite let out a mouse. Forgetting her present status the cat sprang from couch and pursued the mouse to eat it. Aphrodite was so much disappointed that she restored her to her former state. In another fable, the lion falls in love with the daughter of a woodcutter. He demanded her daughter in marriage. Her father being unwilling to grant permission refused his request. He showed his willingness to accept the lion as the suitor of his daughter on one condition that the lion should allow him to extract his teeth and cut off his claws, as his daughter was very much afraid of both. The lion willingly assented to the proposal. But when the toothless, clawless lion returned to repeat his request, the woodman was no longer afraid of the lion and refused to give her daughter. In both the fable, Aesop depicts that man-animal relationship is not possible.

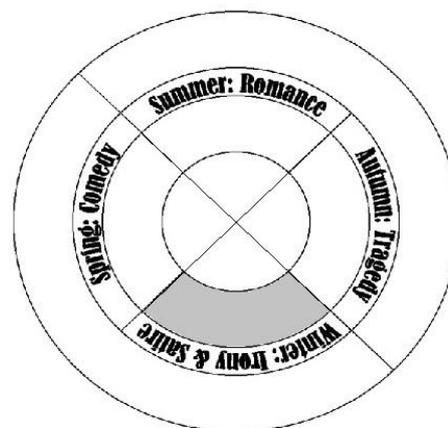
In another such fable animal are fooled by men. There is an image of horse. Horse is largely used by men to carry heavy load or to ride it. According to fable, the horse was independent and free but a Stag intruded into his domain and his pasture. The horse, desiring to revenge himself on the stranger, asked a man if he was willing to help him in punishing the Stag. The man replied that if the horse would agree to carry him. He would contrive effective weapons against the stag. The horse

consented and allowed the man to mount him. From that day he found that instead of obtaining revenge on the Stag, he had enslaved himself to the service of man.

There are also many images which are depicted in *Aesop's Fables* that certain Gods are associated with certain elements, animals and trees, as peacock is the pet of Hera, cat is the pet of Aphrodite, the first bull was created by Poseidon, the first house was made by Athena, the first man was made by Zeus. In association of trees with Gods; Oak is associated with Zeus, Myrtle with Aphrodite, Laurel with Apollo, Pine with Cybele and Poplar with Heracles.

Jung succeeded in elaboration of myths but he could not mingle literature with myths. He was a psychoanalyst rather than the man of literature. The task is beautifully managed by Northrop Frye, in 1950s. He developed his theory on the previous two -Frazer and Jung. He enunciated a new system of literary archetypal criticism. He depicts his theory as portraying rhythms in the world. There is a natural cycle, the rhythms in the world of the nature. In nature, we have the seasonal rhythms like, spring, summer, autumn and winter and diurnal rhythms as dawn, noon, evening and night. In human life there is a cycle of birth, marriage, death and dissolution. In the organic cycle of human life, there is a single pattern of significance, out of which myth constructs a central narrative around a figure, which is partly the sun, partly vegetative fertility and partly a God or archetypal human beings.

The Figure depicting Season and Literary Archetypes: (C.4)



Considering the tone of *Aesop's Fables* and its motif, we can conclude that it falls within the genre of satire. According Northrop Frye, satire represents darkness,

winter and dissolution phase, myth of the triumph of these powers, myth of floods and the return of chaos and of the defeat of hero and subordinate characters. There are many myths of this type in *Aesop's Fables* as in the fable *Zeus, Poseidon, Athena and Momus*, where Zeus drove Momus out from his position as judge and expelled him from the mansions of Olympus.

Another types of chaos depicted here is absence of justice. There is no place for ideal justice in *Aesop's Fables*. In his fable 'Might is right' meek, timid, poor, innocent, suffer while, powerful, wicked, shrewd win. Even Gods support those who are able and powerful. Whole society lives under terror and fear of the powerful.

The further point of Northrop Fyre is Deductive and Inductive method. In deductive method is, one moves from general truth to an elucidation of the particular truth, while in inductive method one moves from the particular truth to general truth of life. *Aesop's Fables* are very good example of this type. There are many myths that contain inductive approach. Aesop sets example by narrating fable and generate moral in general tone. as in the fable *Heracles and the Wagoner*. Once a wagoner was driving along a country lane, when the wheels of his wagon sank deep into a rut. The rustic driver stupefied and aghast stood looking at the wagon and did nothing but uttered loud cries to Heracles to come and help him. Heracles, it is said, appeared and thus addressed him that he should put his shoulder to the wheels, goad on his bullocks and never pray to him until he himself has done his best upon it or henceforth his prayer will be in vain. The moral of this fable is 'Self help is the best help'. The fable demonstrates by the example of the wagoner that one should try his best before asking for the help of others. In the same way, all the myths of Aesop follow inductive approach. They set an example and upon this, he deduces a general truth of life.

4.11 Craftsmanship in *Aesop's Fables*

Aesop's Fables have enriched literature with great amount of proverbs and sayings. Many of his characters have become iconic. The titles have become references and morals have become proverbs. Critics commend the fables for their

simplicity, humor, sharpness, and wisdom, and for the literary quality of particular productions. Critics like Lloyd W. Daly in the introduction of *Aesop without Morals* also made remarks with the lack of literary quality in *Aesop's Fables* like:

The style of the fables is simple and direct. They are told in language that is unpretentious and free alike from high-flown verbiage and from colloquialism. (Daly L. W., p- 11)

When one stops to think that the fables are not merely the product of the pen of a single author, he will realize that this feature of their style is one that had been fixed by convention and represents deliberate restraint rather than inept colorlessness. This restraint is in keeping with the general crispness and economy of narrative that is everywhere observed. The situation is usually described in a very few words, an incident is outlined with equal brevity, and a result indicated. The fable of *The Goose That Laid the Golden Eggs* is a good example. It consists of three sentences. The first sets the stage: "Hermes was worshiped with unusual devotion by a man, and as a reward he gave the man a goose that laid golden eggs." The second tells what the man did: "The man couldn't wait to reap the benefits gradually, but, without any delay, he killed the goose on the supposition that it would be solid gold inside." The third tells the result: "He found out that it was all flesh inside, and so the result was that he was not only disappointed in his expectations but he also lost the eggs."

Each fable is told from the point of view of an omniscient narrator. The narrator, presumed to be Aesop, tells the fables the way one would tell a joke at a party. Each tale shows wit and insight into the nature of its characters. Animals and inanimate objects have a voice. In one fable, *A Bramble and a Fir Tree* both the tree insults each other. In one fable, a plane tree takes umbrage with the insults of two men resting in its shade. In one fable, a mulberry tree passes judgment on a murderer.

The Gods, highest of all beings, humanized in their vanities and foibles, become mere characters rather than high deities. In one fable, Hermes falls victim to his own vanity when trying to buy a statue of himself. In one fable, Zeus, the king of

the Gods, is tricked into betraying his consecrated eagle by a small scarab beetle.

While not a single fable gives a character's point of view, each fable is rife with the perspective of the moral by animal, person, deity or object. The narrator of these fables knows the nature of his characters and their motives. The most interesting thing about the point of view in the collection is that of the moralist. The morals provided with the fables were never a part of the original tales. Orators who used the fables to drive home their point usually attached the morals at a later date. The fables can be compared to modern day anecdotes in a political speech.

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