The stories of the Pañcatantra are a great storehouse of information for the social, cultural, economic and religious life of ancient Indian people. This is perfectly natural, because literature, of whatever kind it be, cannot exist isolated from the life of the people. It reflects their fears, their apprehensions and superstitions, their ideas to gain some objective, material or otherwise also the education and the way of life of that period.

The opinion that the Indian tradition is simply mystical or spiritual is taken for granted by most Indians, particularly the educated Indians - whose intellectual diet is almost exclusively Western. Most people now are not very concerned with matter of the spirit, so they take it that as regards things of this world the ancient Indian civilization has nothing to contribute. My objective in this study is to show that the continuity of ancient Indian values has not been totally lost, these values can be reconsidered and used in the task of India’s development. In this work attempt has been made to present in a brief span an account of the Indian tradition especially in
its intellectual dimension as found in the Pañcatantra text. The work deals with Indian values - philosophical, social, moral, political and aesthetic - as revealed in the Tantrākhāyikā edition of the Pañcatantra which has been taken as the text of this study. I hope that a general picture of ancient Indian life and thoughts will emerge from these pages for the intelligent layman, who has no specialized knowledge of Indian philosophy or culture and who is not likely to have the time and patience required to read up the vast literature involved.

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I shall consider my work justified if through reading it people of my country come to have a more enlightened view of their past culture.

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