CHAPTER III

Society In The Pañcatantra
From the very beginning of this study we should always keep this aspect in mind that the historical writings on ancient India by both the European and Occidental scholars are still not the perfect interpretation. The source material is not of its contemporary background. The Sanskrit texts which act as sources are not the most reliable. During British rule James Mill's history of ancient India was the standard work on India. Mill in his "History of British India" (1817) made a chapter on Indian Civilisation where he maintained the theory that Indian society had remained substantially unchanged from the period of its origin (i.e., the coming of the Aryans), until the arrival of the British. The historical work of that period were written under the shadow of British administration. The writings of the following generation of Indian historians differed due to a clearly nationalistic point of view. In the 1920s and 1930s the study of ancient India made by Indian scholars was based on an unashamed glorification of the past. This was perhaps in part a reaction to the criticism of Mill and other writers and in part a necessary step in building of national self-respect. So in the writings of both the European scholars and the Nationalist School there is a strong tendency...
towards generalization embracing the entire subcontinent. To correct these biased attitude a search for new evidence and a rereading of the sources with a different set of questions in mind are needed. It requires fresh annotations of existing texts, not merely the familiarity with them but an awareness and understanding of analytical method. Studies in economic and social history in recent years have made attempts towards this achievement. Still no interpretation is perfect or final. So it will be wise to undertake the study without any bias and without taking anything as definite. In spite of this fact, to have a foundation for this sociological study we shall give a sketch of ancient Indian history.

The limits of India are for the most part well defined by nature. On the north it is almost completely cut off from the rest of Asia by impassable mountain ranges; and it is surrounded by the sea on the eastern and western sides of the triangular peninsula which forms its southern portion. But the northern barrier is not absolutely secure. At its eastern and western extremities, river valleys or mountain passes provide means of communication with the Chinese Empire on the one hand and with Persia on the other. For this reason countless hordes of Asiatic tribes have swarmed down the valleys or over the passes which lead into India. Hence the extraordinary diversity of races and languages, which together constitute the Indian
Empire. The literary and inscriptive records of Ancient India enable us to trace with a remarkable degree of continuity the course of Aryan civilisation through the periods. But it must always be remembered that these records are partial, in the sense that they represent only one type of civilization and only those countries to which this civilization had extended at any particular epoch. Unless this fact be borne constantly in mind, the records are apt to produce the impression of a unity and a homogeneity in the political religions and social life which never existed. We possess manifold sources of information for the social condition of the ancient India. These consist mainly of religious literature, (Brahmanical, Buddhist and Jain), accounts of foreign travellers and epigraphic records. These different authorities do not always agree, partly because they refer to different periods and localities and partly because they look at the social condition from different angles of vision. This causes some confusion and difficulty, but there is also a great advantage - because the scholars have no longer to depend as in the previous period upon the Vedic texts alone but is in a position to check and supplement other scholars' accounts, they are able to draw up a more reliable and comprehensive picture of the society as a whole.

In the history of Hindu culture the concept of dharma had multiple shades of meaning. Nature intermingled with norm
in this conception. The nature of things and the laws of their being and relationships as well as social moral and religious duties and norms were all explained by referring them back to this concept. The dharma of society, the law of its being, requires that it must have an idea of order where there are well defined functions as well as rules for determining who does what. So it is important that we should consider first the ancient Indian society as it is composed of many different elements, Aryans, Dravidians and the aboriginal people of India. It appears that amongst the Aryans, there was a particular principle of social ordering, called 'Varna Vyavaśā'. This was based on the idea of fourfold division of functions in society which were placed in a hierarchical order of decreasing importance, (i) religious and educational functions (ii) military and political functions (iii) economic functions and lastly (iv) menial functions. The people who performed these functions were called, brāhman, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra respectively.

Among the people who were already in India there prevailed perhaps another system called 'jāti', which consisted of numerous groups, divided on hereditary lines and performing different functions fixed by birth. As the concept of jāti with its connotation of birth is quite different from that of Varna which means category, coming together of Aryan and pre-Aryan people might have resulted in a compromise of two social systems.
But, that was not done because of the superimposition of the concept of Varna on that of jāti, and the arrangement of jāti which were divided into numerous exclusive groups, under the idea of fourfold Varna.

The literal meaning of Varna is colour. The idea of dharma is fully articulated in the theory of Varna áśrama dharma. The Varnavyāvasthā we have already discussed. It refers to caste, of which there were four major ones i.e. brahman (priest), Kṣatriya (warrior), vaisya (trader) and śudra (the agriculturalist or of any low profession). To these four were later added the untouchables, who were in fact outside the caste frame work. The literal meaning of áśrama is refuge. In this context the reference is to the four stages into which a man's life was divided, student (brahmacārī) house-holder (gṛhaustha), retired from professional and domestic duties (paribṛājaka) and finally ascetic (sannyāsī).

Briefly dharma refers to the norm of conduct and of duties incumbent on each man in accordance with his caste and the order of life. The proper working of dharma was dependant on the fact that every individual must recognize the duties he was expected to perform and act accordingly.

In the Tantrākhyāyikā we have the reference of the lives of Brahmins, farmers, architects merchants, paribrājakas,
weavers, barbers, royal servants, lawyers, fishermen, maid servants, king's bed makers, washermen, sages, archers, carpenters, cooks, royal maidservants, bird hunters, caṇḍālas, doctors and sorcerers, thieves, magicians, nursemaids, etc. As the Tantrākhyāyikā reflects general life in ancient India we have mentions of people belonging to lower castes in a great extent. The rules of dharma were formulated by the law makers who were by and large members of the brahman caste and who naturally tried to maintain the superiority of their caste.

Thus it is quite logical that the equality of all before the law was not recognized. Thus it is quite logical that the equality of all before the law was not recognized. Here we find the advice that he who aspires to attain the three pursuits of human existence (dharmaṁthakāmāh) should not visit a brahmin empty handed (without any gift). He is entitled to curse others when angry. The status of a brahmin is so much above the other castes that to show proper respect to brahmin bhiksū who will be his guests the merchants' son tells his nursemaid to smear the whole house with holy cowdung (to purify the place), to perform the daily duties with extra care. Though poor he orders her explicitly to offer the brahmins food as much as possible. Also in their honour he calls a barber and with his help tidies himself up. He is at liberty to go inside the royal harem. The queen sends for him to read aloud holy scriptures at religious ceremonies. Ten days after the birth of a brahmin
son the rite of name giving (nāmakarana) is to be performed. He takes the gotra of his father. A brahmin is to wear the sacred cord, the rosary, the holy water pot and the sect mark on his forehead.

Though the highest status and dignity were assigned to the brahmins emphasis was also laid on the superior knowledge and qualifications on which the status rests. A brahmin's son is to spend his early days in pursuit of knowledge. His meals would come from a merchant's house. If he did not eat the cooked food he would get a measure of grit (saktusetikā). A brahmin used to keep students in his house and they helped his wife in performing the household duties. The brahmins had agnihotragraha (the room where the sacred fire is kept) where they used to light holy fire. We find in Book V a brahmin who had a pet mongoose whom he kept in the agnihotragraha and raised just like a son fostering with fatherly love and kernels of corn (dhanyakaha). There was the ritual of brahmaṇa bhojona (offering hospitality to brahmins) on suspicious days - like the day of the moon's change. This ritual was held to be a very sacred one, people used to feed brahmins in order to collect 'punya' or merit. Even the very poor one who could not afford to make both ends meet performed this ritual as a religious duty.
Certain restrictions were there for the brahmins regarding the taking of food. And we find in the story of Book II (śāndilimātā) first with kṛṣṇa-tila and then with śukla-tila prepared gruel (kṛṣara) for brahmana bhojana. If a brahmin took everything he was to be an outcaste (tyjyah). A brahmin is not above punishment or (prāyaścitta).17

Though the position of a brahmin was inviolable, still in the story of The Brahmin and the Three Rogues, we find that all of them were not held as god incarnate. People did sometimes dare to make fools out of them. In this story we find a foolish brahmin - he was carrying a goat on his shoulder for animal sacrifice (paśubandhanam). Being foxed by three cunning people he abandoned the goat and they had a feast with it. In the Tatrākhyāyinā we feel a note of contempt and derision towards the paribṛājakas who were supposed to be saintly but in actual life did not act according to the direction of Dharma Śāstras. A bhikṣu who belonged to the third Āśrama (stage of life) had to live a life of restraint and denial marked by anicaya i.e. not given to hoarding. But we find in a story of Book II, a certain paribṛājaka named Jūṭakarṇa hiding the remnant of his food, begged from the houses of brahmins in the alms bowl on wall peg. The name (bhatsphika) (Big buttocks) also suggests that the paribṛājakas in that period were not what the law books directed them to be. They
were to maintain the restraint of eyes, speech and action but neither Jñātakarṇa nor Āṅgadāpiśika followed any of these compulsions. In the story of Āśāghabhūti we have a monk who used to hide money in his clothes which Āśāghabhūti in his turn stole from him. Though supposed to live on meagre necessity they also used to receive valuable gifts from good people and earned money with them. Thus we see that though the brahmans worked out the complicated and what seemed to them, almost foolproof concept of dharma, the actual working of society was not strictly in accordance with the plan. The thread of social protest winding through these stories was indicative of the recognition that further changes were imminent.

However we find that they used to maintain the general rules. As for example they abstained from movement in the rainy season and took shelter in the houses of brahmans, and they did not overstey out of season. After rains when movement was permitted they did not stay for a second night in the same village.

The lot of one belonging to the lower caste was not an enviable one. He had few privileges and many obligations. Thus we find in the description of the life of an archer what hard labour they had to carry out in order to earn their livelihood. Nigāda is the son of a Kṣatriya in a Śūdra woman. He belongs to
the Mixed Caste or Varnasaimara. Even in the depiction of archer's looks we almost hear the note of untouchability. He had been described as though he is a sub-human creature, who looks like the god of death himself - possessing vicious appearance, his skin cracked, rough and ugly and his eyes blood-shot. He gets up very early in the morning, enters the jungle and hunts animals with arrows smeared with poison. He kills animals and dissects them, and folds the meat. He sells the meat of deer and other animals and thus earns his livelihood. He spreads out a net to catch animals and birds scatters kernels of grain over it and hides himself not far away. When animals are trapped he comes out with a club in his hand, surrounded by his dogs, the ferocious ones - specially trained for killing rabbits, boars and other animals. A bird hunter spreads his net on tree tops and catches birds in the evening. When the trees are big he plants atiruktakas surrounding the tree, he climbs on those to spread his net on the tree top. They also take animals from jungles and sometimes foster them.

Here in the Pañcatantra we have an antevâsika weaver. He lives at the end of the village. The weaver is a drunkard but he has a heart for hospitality. So he orders his wife to make arrangement for the guest. As he is an alcoholic, he goes to town and drinks his heart's fill with his friends. He comes back
at dead of night; his garments awry, with staggering gait and so badly under the influence of liquor that he is unable to speak his words properly. He enters the house, curses his wife and beats her. The picture is still prevalent among the uneducated and the labour class.

We have here gomilaka another weaver. He was so poor that he could not make both ends meet. So he left his village and went to another in hope of the betterment of his financial condition. He earned one hundred dinârâs in three months' extremely hard labour, but he was destined to be poor throughout his life and lost his meagre wealth again and again by Fate. The story is very touching and speaks volumes of the hardships and hazards of a weaver's life.

The Candéla is the most reprehensible among the prâtîloma (Mixed Castes). He is the son of súdra from bráhmana mother, which is the most sinfu union. He belongs to the class of untouchables (âsûîâs). The Candélas have been considered out of the varna order. They have been put in the category of crow and dog. Nobody is allowed to take anything from a Candéla.

In the Pánchatântara we find the merchant going from place to place by bullock carts, or on camel back. He leads a life of
danger. He may earn money through honest means like Bardhamanaka or by dishonesty which Papabuddhi follows. Somilaka accumulates his wealth in dinaras (golden coins). A merchant's son may be brought up by the nursemaid. In the single emboxed story of Book V we find that the nursemaid who reared the merchant's son from the very childhood is so much attached to him that she does not forsake him even when he lost all his wealth, fame and good breeding. And she always obeys him whatever he bids her to do.

A good number of people earned their livelihood by serving in the royal household performing the daily core. A barber goes to the palace at night comes back in the morning and immediately goes back again. The fate of a barber's wife is somewhat better than that of the weaver's. As we find in the story 3, the barber addresses his wife as bhadre and asks her to bring him the razor case. Only when she throws out to him the razor without a word and without moving from the inside of the house does the barber get angry and insulted and throws the same razor at her. The price for this misconduct is really great. As for cutting the nose of his wife the judges order that he be impaled upon a stake. Only after hearing the facts of the case from the monk do the judges spare the barber. The barber in Book IV story 2 also has to pay for his hasty action, and from it learns the lesson that:
In the Tantrākhyāyikā we have glimpses of different scenes of the everyday life in the royal palace. A maid servant is seen in the royal harem washing clothes while she exchanges news with another maid. The kings were used to rare luxury they had the best in everything. So one king in the Panchatantra has in his palace an incomparable couch. The bed has a very fine upper coverlet and double pillows—it is broad as a Ganges sand bank and is very soft and of fragrant perfume. Naturally several bed-makers are appointed for its maintenance who are always near at hand for the lord’s command. As soon as the king shouts for them bit by the flea, they come hurrying, and carefully search the bed spread on both sides and find the bug and kill it. A number of cooks are there in the kitchen of the palace. Their hands rubbed with each other while working, are covered with smoke, they are wearied with the toil of handling cooking spoons. Men also serve the king as herdsmen of kine and horses. The serving maids are to be seen in the royal harem pounding sandal wood paste for a long time and serving under the haughty and insolent orders of the palace girls. Besides the ministers and other royal dignitaries (see the chapter "Polity in the Panchatantra") we have the ordinary guards who protects the members
of the royal household by regular attendance. In Book II story 5 we see these guards turning the deer loose in the forest.

Among the ordinary folk we have the peasants, who labour hard in their fields. He sows the seeds and when the sprouts spring up he has to select the good ones and sow them again. At night they warp their body in grey cloak and with bow and arrows guard their grains from wild animals. In Book III story 1, the farmer dressed in this style while watching his field suddenly comes across the ass in panther's skin. He gets scared and starts to slink away very cautiously but when the ass foolishly takes him for a she-ass and runs after him braying the watchman knows by the sound that it is an ass and turns round and kills him with an arrow.

The fishermen are seen in the Tantrākhyāyikā busy with catching fish by fishing nets. From the story 5 in Book II we may presume that there were many ponds and lakes on the outskirts of the town which were free to all for catching fish as we find still in the villages.

Apart from the doctors the sorcerers also made their livelihood by making people free from evil spirits. The king's son being stricken with fever (He is shocked hearing the deer talk in human language) - the king addresses all the physicians
and devil, doctors and ask them for the cure of his disease in exchange of huge sums of money. The sorcerer bewitched people in thousand ways. The magician could make himself invisible.

The picture of a society cannot be complete without its rogues and scoundrels. Naturally the thieves also have their rightful place among others in the Tantrākhyāyikā. The thief who stole onions in Book IV story 1 was punished in a funny way. As for the forfeit of the theft he was given three alternatives. He might pay one hundred rupees as fine or he might have one hundred lashes or he might have one hundred mouthfuls of onions. The thief being a fool as well, accepted the last one and had to have the all three consecutively. There is another thief in the Pañcatantra who came to steal a pair of cows from a brahman. As he went along a brahman ogre who also came to take away the brahman’s heart met him and quarrel started between them as to who would be the first taker. The noise woke up the brahman and he made both of them depart. That a thief can also be very understanding and friendly is shown in the very amusing story of the Pariśīṣṭa II. Here the old merchant whose young wife never embraced him, suddenly threw her arms about her husband and held him close. The merchant catching sight of the thief reflected that it was through him
that this thing had happened, and being pleased requested him to take away everything he had but the kindly thief said in a friendly wise way that today he would not take anything but if the wife failed to embrace the merchant again, he would come back. The story of the three rogues who cheated in a wonderfully clever way the brahmin of his goat is one of the most popular stories of the Tantrākhyāyikā.

Like the barber the wheelwright in the Pañcatantra also was made a fool of by his wife. The frivolous wife very cunningly made him a laughing stock to the public as he carried his wife along with her lover on a cot and went from road to road showing her off and declaring - 'victory be to my chaste wife'.

None can doubt the delicate sense of humour of the author. His characters charm us with the quaint propriety of the sentiments ascribed to them. All the characters have an appeal, reminding us of the common humanity which, after all underlies the enormous superficial differences between the races of men.

So far we have tried to picture the every day life in the Tantrākhyāyikā world, raising curtains upon different scenes from different stories - like colourful vignettes taken of the ancient Indian general life.
How we shall try to show in what light women were held in the Satrākhāyañīkā. Every Sanskrit scholar knows in what respect and veneration ladies like Gaurī, Urmāpadi, Śakuntalā, and Śītā were held. Sometimes they took part in the administration of the empire and instructed the subjects as to the duties and rights of women, superintended the management of the palace and its treasuries. The character and ideals of Hindu women may be inferred from the conduct of Kaitrtya, the wife of Vajñavalkya. Senayanti and Śāvitrī were women whose lives would have purified the national life of any people. The intellect and character of Śāra, the fidelity of Śakuntalā and the devotion and love of Śītā would do honour to any nation.

... but the general opinion of the Peneśattra is in total contrast to this high estimation of Hindu women. As the Peneśattra is the mirror of life in general the women in these stories also do not lose to be someone worth worshipping. The author of the Peneśattra with fitting remarks tries to open the eyes of the public towards the weaknesses and shortcomings of womenfolk. Instead of idealising he probes into the very nature of common women and comments: out of sheer greed women commonly grant their favour to wicked and foolish men. Friendly hearts come to an end in women's quarrels. It says: the conduct of women is changeable. True and false, harsh and gentle in speech, savage and at the same time compassionate, unrousious and generous, lavish in
spending yet taking in great amount of wealth from many sources - such is the nature of women. Women of course are light in morals and do all manners of things who is not afflicted by consequences due to women? Association with women is so poisonous that it compels a man to murder his only true friend. Thus we find in the main story of Book IV, the crocodile ready to kill his friend the ape, soliloquises, "This business of women is exceedingly grievous and yet it is the cream of life. For the sake of a woman I am committing this horrible crime much as I condemn it. The Pañcatantra farther regrets - gold is proved by a touch - stone, a man is said to be proved by his conduct in business, but there is no known way of proving women. Whosoever desires the threefold benefits of religion, worldly success and love, should not come empty handed to see a brāhman, a king or a woman.

In the first page of Book IV we have an excellent depiction of feminine character vibrating with all its jealousy, possessiveness, curiosity and other signs of deepest emotion. As the crocodile began to put off the time of returning to his home because he formed an affectionate attachment for the ape, his wife among her women friends was grieved at heart because of the long separation from him and said, "Where is he, my beloved? What is he
doing away from home that interests him so great? Then one of her women friends said, "How can you have either home or wealth from such a husband, when you do not know what he is about? But I saw him with my own eyes in a place on the seashore amusing himself in secret with some she-ape or other, and showing the greatest affection for her. Know this therefore and do without delay what needs to be done".

Hearing this the crocodile's wife was overcome with grief, and she gave up all her household duties, and wearing soiled garments, anointing her body with oil, threw herself on her bed, while her women friends stood about her. Coming back to his house the crocodile found his wife in this state. In great distress of mind he inquired, "What is the cause of this illness of her?" But not one of her women friends would say a word. He asked again and again with great insistence. Finally one of them who was like a second self to the crocodile's wife showing signs of the deepest emotion said, "Sir, this illness of hers is incurable". After much persuasion she told him that the one and only remedy for her malady was an ape's heart.

The true nature and wiles of a feminine character cannot be depicted more vividly.

The author does not spare the menfolk and discloses that some use their women in getting their own ends. The deceitful
person shows his wife to others as if she is a stage performer. This is still done in human society. In modern times also we find people securing jobs or worldly goods by misusing the youth and beauty of their wives without a qualm of conscience in their hearts. What is striking is that even as early as the Tantrākhyāyikā period we perceive the same attitude. The author also admits that taking a friend home and introducing him to his wife and sharing food from one plate are the common courtesy and it still prevails.

The author also pointed out the common traits of women. As for example: kings, women and creeping vines as a rule embrace whatever is beside him. If men are only shrewd enough they can dally with women. As wisdom spreads in a learned man so is the affection among fond women. If a man, even with a great store of wealth, puts trust in enemies, or in a wife that has no affection for him his life is ended then and there. A young and beautiful wife does not embrace an old husband. Maidens can be enjoyed but for a brief space of time. By telling one's sorrow to a devoted wife, the heart seems to find rest.
We find a few quotations from law makers regarding the marriage of a girl. The sage in Book III story 9 adopted a mouse maiden and brought her up carefully. When she reached the age of twelve, the sage began to think about her marriage and remembered the sloka of Manu: If a maiden beholds her flux in her father's house, unmarried, that maiden is unmarriageable, her parents are considered to be śūdras, (members of the lowest caste). He considered this a sin as Hanu reprehended. Also the author echoes Manu in Book I and says: A disobedient woman must be shunned. About marriage the Pāṇcatantra repeats the advice of Manu and says: Only between two persons who are well matched in means and in blood, shall there be marriage of friendship, but not between the high and low. In the frame story of Book V we see the brahmin's wife arising and going to the nearby river to purify herself and to wash her soiled garments on the tenth day after the birth of her son and this also indicates the general custom of the day.

Family life in the Pāṇcatantra has its usual ups and downs. In Brahmin family we can see the husband and wife leading a somewhat peaceful life. In Book II: story 2, we rise the curtain on the scene where the Brahman and his wife were talking in the early morning. The brahmin wanted to perform the rite of offering hospitality to other brahmans on the day of the moon's change. His wife replied in a very srewish voice, "How can you..."
entertain brahmans when you are so hopelessly poor!" The brahmin was struck dumb, perhaps because it was quite an unusual behaviour of Śāṇḍilī Mātā, his wife. He gently remonstrated her and with the story of the "Too Greedy Jackal" showed her that it is never good to be too thrifty.

Next morning Śāṇḍilī Mātā was seen busy with the household chores and the duties necessary for entertaining the brahmans. And when she was changing sesame of equal value, white for black, the brahmin came in and seeing the process said smiling: 'not for nothing does Mother Śāṇḍilī trade sesame for sesame, husked for likewise husked; there must be some reason for this. This shows how the two lived in complete understanding and co-operation.

But in the household of the weaver or the wheelwright we find deception, disloyalty and turbulence. The weaver threatened his wife in front of the guest and ordered insolently, "While I am gone to town drinking liquor with my friends, do you carefully tend the house". He returned drunk, with staggering gait and under the influence of liquor abused his wife profusely. But he had an absolute match in his wife, who was unchaste and in the absence of her husband having information from a procuress donned her adornments and started out to go to her lover. As a result she got beating from the husband. In the household of the barber also there was no peace. Even if the barber tried to be
polite and understanding towards his wife, she would not leave him in peace. By cunning and deception she trapped him and almost sent him to the galore. The conjugal life of the wheelwright and his wife also was full of dishonesty and faithlessness. The wheelwright's wife just to save her own skin, made her foolish husband a laughing stock to the public.

Observing these stories of confusion and cunning as well as the peaceful households of Brahmin families, we can safely conclude that the upperclass family led a peaceful life compared with that of the lower class. Unfortunately we cannot make any sweeping conclusion basing on these sundry instances.

Transport is a very important part of the national economy because it helped in disposing off the products of the trade to their proper destination. We see in the frame story of Book X, Barhe-marjeka the merchant, collected a load of wares for

\[ \text{Conveyence} \] Mathurā and departed from the city on a trading journey in a wagon to which two cartbulls were harnessed.\(^7\) The carts had wheels.\(^7\) The merchants also used camels as means of transport.\(^7\) Chariots elephants, horse and asses were used for riding.\(^7\) Boats were generally used to cross the rivers.\(^7\) Bridges were also built for crossing rivers.\(^\)\(^7\) Men even used to carry passengers on their back and worked as a kind of transport.\(^7\) There was the use of palanquins. Men used to carry
It with passengers inside. Thus the system was rather developed according to the needs of those times.

There was barter system in vogue. In exchange of four she-goats one could get a cow that is young and rich in milk and that has all the best qualities and that brings forth live calves. The use of coin was fairly common. Rūpaka was used as coin. One she-goat used to cost two rūpakas. The onion thief was to pay one hundred rūpakas as a fine. We have also the mention of dināra on several contexts.

The art of house building attained a considerable standard. The terms purī meaning cities and fortis and prakara meaning ramparts or walls have been used in the book. Men lived in well-built houses and beautiful mansions of bricks enclosed by walls.

The houses were divided into several apartments fitted with doors, windows and bolts, and had columns and screens. They used to clean the houses smearing cow dung. There were deep wells made of bricks that held clear water. In the city there were restaurants and hotels. Construction of different types of temples and alters involved intricate knowledge of geometry and architecture.

The people of the Pañcatantra wore many kinds of clothes
and garments fitting to the positions they held. The king was used to all kinds of fineries. Even his couch was incomparable - it had fine bedsheets, beautiful big, soft coverlets and many soft and beautiful pillows.93 All kinds of people from monks to householders used cots and pillows.94 People used myrobalan fruits (āmalakam) and bathrobes or snānasāṭikās in their bath.95 Rich people had many servants and maids obeying their beck and calls.96 People used to wear clothes made of cotton, wool, silk and animal skin.97 Course garments were also worn by them.98 The sacred cord was worn by the brahmins.99 It was generally worn over the left shoulder and under the right arm. Both men and women freely used ornaments in their daily life.100 Gold, silver ornaments and gems enhanced their beauty.101 They also wore garlands of flowers and put flowers and buds in their hair and decorated their bodies with sadalwood paste.102

Music was very much in vogue in the Tantrākhyāyikā period and we have mentions of many musical instruments such as vinā pipes, lutes, drums, tabors, conch shells, and bells.103 Shrevs or drums and conchshells were used in battle-fields.104

Various utensils and tools have been mentioned in the
Tantrākhyāyikā. Some of these were used for household purpose and some in trade and hunting. Household utensils were - jar, pots, lamp, matchstick, spoon, shovel, balls, pillows, bowls, etc. The monks used triple staff, firewood, water vessel, sieve, tooth brush etc. They used halfskull as drinking glass. The monks had metal almsbowl which they sometimes hung on a wallpeg. They had cots also. The archers used bows and arrows, shovel, knife and rope, leather trap and sticks. The farmers also used bows and arrows to kill animals and birds who were harmful to harvest. Brahmins had sacred cord, the rosary and the holy waterpot.

Many items of food are mentioned in the book. Kings had fine edibles spicy with candied sugar and treacle, pomegranates and the three spices - black and long pepper and dried ginger and that which included the very fine meat from beasts of the land, water and air. The monks also had various dainties containing dried sugar and molasses, pomegranates and delicious with sticky substances. They used to have their almsbowls full with food at begging time. People ate rice, fish etc. The prince fed the deer with dried sugar pomegranates, cornflakes etc. The sages used to eat fruits and different kinds of root. The brahmin's son in Book V story 1, while plying through his studies used to receive sacrificial
offerings of food in the house of a certain merchant and when he did not eat there, he received a measure of grits. In Book II story 3 we find Sāṇjīlī-mātā preparing gruel with sesame with which the master of the house entertained brahmins.

As the Pañcatantra is primarily a book of animals and birds, we must mention their food habits also. In the frame story of Book I we see saṃjīvaka the ox, getting stronger day by day eating blades of fresh green grass. The cobra eats young birds.125 Herons eat fish and crabs.126 Swans eat lotus shoots.127 The bees love to drink the honey of the waterrose, blue lotus blossoms, and heavily fragrant jasmine flowers.128 It also seeps the ruts of an elephant.129 A mongoose eats fish.130 Patridges love sesame grains.131 Goldy the mouse in the frame story of Book II diligently prepared a very large heap of husked millet kernels for the crow and the crow, Laghupatanaka, also went into the forest thicket and saw there a wild buffalo, that had been killed by a tiger and when he had eaten as much as he pleased on the spot he took a piece of the meat and gave it to Goldy, the mouse. The crow eats carcasses of beasts, fish and frogs.132 Serpent drinks air,133 forest elephants eat leaves and grass.134 Cats love to taste patridges.135

So far the main features of the society of the Pañcatantra have been sketched. Now we will try to summarise it by recapitulating. There were four main castes which consisted of
the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and the Śūdras. We have not discussed the Kṣatriya caste here because it is done as a separate chapter. Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas were superior to Vaiśya, while all the higher classes were superior to the Śūdra. The kings and the nobles represented the ruling or the military class and the real power of the state rested with them, the priestly class was made up of Brāhmaṇas. The Vaiśya and the Śūdra classes were responsible for the smooth functioning of the social machinery.

Different types of arts and crafts were practised in the Tatrākhyāyikā period. Besides other occupations important place was given to weaving, carpentry, metal work, pottery, leather work, hunting, trade and commerce. Agriculture seems to be one of the main occupations. Wheat, paddy and barley were the staple food. Honey, liquors of various kind, milk, dried sugar, sweet meats from milk were the other different kinds of drink and food.

The everyday life and the requirements of the people are also referred to in this chapter. The living places like grāma, nagara and janapada are mentioned in the book. People used to live in houses, made of bricks or mud. Family life though sometimes turbulent were not very hazardous. The transport system was considerably developed. The things of daily use were various utensils, tools, furniture, dress and ornaments.
Without entertainment or amusement life becomes boring, so we have also the mention of different musical instruments.

Thus having surveyed this fable literature from the sociological point of view we perceive the necessity of this study as indispensable for the understanding of Indian culture in its true spirit. The sociological trends revealed by the Tantrākhyāyikā indicate that India and Indian people were not very poor in those days. They had ample to eat, ample to drink and ample material to enrich their hearts and souls.