CHAPTER IV

Beast used as symbols of different types of men in the Hitopadeśa

The Hitopadeśa of Nārāyaṇa is the third book in the series of the Pañcatantra class of books. The ur-Pañcatantra was written by Viṣṇu Sarman. The ur-Pañcatantra is now lost. Hertel published the first book of the series by collecting materials from traditional sources under the title of Tantrākhyāyikā. The book has been published by Harvard University (Harvard Oriental Series). The Pañcatantra described as the textus simplicior is the second book of the series which was probably written in 11th century A.D. The Hitopadeśa of Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita is a work which has been reproduced where many other new stories written by the another himself have been added. In this book of fables also beasts play a significant part in many stories. The lion, the tiger, the jackal, the ass, the elephant, the hare, the deer, the turtle and the monkey play a significant role of great practical significance in several stories.

Lion:

Lion is recognised as the king of beasts. It enjoyed the status of the National Animal of India till a few years back. Its status has been occupied by the same majestic animal whom we find in the Pañcatantra. The lion acts as the wise ideal king who generally does not become involved in controversial actions. The most of the stories of lion in Hitopadeśa are bor-
rowed from the Pañcatantra. Therefore, there is not much material left to be discussed on lion in the present chapter. However, we find one new story on lion, that is, the story of the lion, the cat and the mouse. In this story a lion 'Mahāvikrama' regularly faces menace of a mouse. The mouse appears from its hole and grows the manes of the lion. It may be noted here that the rat or the mouse constantly grows or bites substances which are not its food in order to prevent its teeth from growing unnaturally, long. The lion was annoyed, but it could not prevail over the mouse. Therefore, the lion 'Mahāvikrama' invited a cat 'Dadhikarna' to its den and regularly shared a part of its kill. The mouse was afraid of the cat and did not come out of its hole for several days. But when it was terribly hungry it came out of the hole and fell a prey to the cat. Now, because the mouse was dead, the lion started to ignore the cat. The lion refused to share its meal with his friend.

This story is very significant. There are many ungrateful men in the world like the Mahāvikrama, who adore useful people for their selfish purposes till they are in a difficult position. But when their purpose is served, they neglect their benefactor.

Tiger:

The tiger is a cunning beast in the Hitopadeśa and the Pañcatantra. In the Hitopadeśa, a tiger appears as a hypocrite. The tiger being old could not catch any prey. Therefore, the tiger thought out a new plan. By holding a golden bangle in its paw, it constantly tried to allure
padestrians. One day when a greedy padestrian belived the wicked tiger and agreed to receive the bangle as a gift from the tiger and went to take bath in the nearby lake before, receiving the gift, the greedy man sunk in to deep mire and the tiger fell upon him and devoured him.

The story suggests that there are many such hypocritical men in this world like the wicked old tiger who wear the gurb of pious people for the sake of gaining their selfish end. This story immediately reminds us of the story of the cat, the hare, and the kapinjala bird in the Pañcatantra. The cat is pretended to be very old and possessing only an impaired auditory sense. It invited the kapinjala bird and the hare near him and killed them.

The story of the rat-tiger in the Hitopadeśa also gives us an adequate knowledge of the character of persons who become big in life through artificial means. The story first appears in Śānti Parvan of the Mahābhārata. In the Hitopadeśa, the story is nicely described by the Narayana. One day a small rat fell from the mouth of a crow in the courtyard of a hermit. The rat was always chased by a cat. The hermit converted the cat in to a dog now in order to save it from the tyranny of the cat. The dog was then chased by a tiger. Now, in order to save the dog from the tiger, the hermit turn in to a tiger. But, after some time the new tiger felt that it was a rat only, and not a real tiger. It started to think that so long as the hermit was alive, everybody would remember the proper identity of the new tiger which was a rat. Therefore, the tiger planned to kill the hermit. The hermit knew it and changed it
again into a rat. The rat-tiger in the *Pañcatantra* and also in the *Mahābhārata* refers to those mean people who never become grateful to the benefactor and try to betray him for his small interest. There is a story in the *Grimm’s Tales* of a similar nature where a fisherman received the grace of the water-god by the grace of whom the fisherman became the owner of a house. Thereafter, he became king, the emperor and the Pope by the grace of the god. But when the fisherman desired for more power, the water god again reduced the artificial Pope to a houseless poor fisherman living on the bare beach.

**Elephant:**

The stories of elephant are completely new in Nārāyana’s *Hitopadeśa*. The story of the hare and the Lord of the elephants found in the *Pañcatantra* is repeated in Nārāyaṇa’s work. There is practically one story of the elephant in the *Hitopadeśa* where one elephant was allured by a jackal with the false hope that the elephant would be made king. The elephant with its robust body had very little intelligence. It moved through mire at the advice of the jackal and was caught in deep mud. Then the jackal fell upon the elephant and devoured it. This is a highly interesting story of great practical value. The jackal has a small body, but it is always intelligent. The elephant has a big body, but it appears less intelligent than the jackal. Simplicity is good but sometimes it can invites danger. The elephant is an innocent animal. It proves a fool on many occasions. The story represents those men in the world who are creduliduous and greedy. Such men having little
intelligence but more greed may often be a prey to the tricks or cunning fellows.

**Jackal:**

The famous story of the blue jackal in the *Tantrākhyāvīka* and the *Pañcatantra* reappears in the *Hitopadesa* of Nārāyaṇa. Though the contents of the two stories are same, there are some differences in the story of the *Hitopadesa*. In this story when the jackal found it difficult to come out of the washerman’s pot, it pretended like a dead jackal and was thrown away by the washerman. In the story of the *Hitopadesa* jackals are not only described as cunning beast but also wise and practical quadrupeds on several occasions. The blue jackal in the *Hitopadesa* could make other animals fool, but not the jackals. An old jackal clearly understood that it was a jackal and no other beast that was befooling the entire animal kingdom. Therefore, they started to yell in the evening near the jackal. The ‘blue jackal’ immediately responded to the yell. Its real nature was realised by all and was killed by other animals. Thus, there is no other difference between the treatment of the story from its earlier versions. The symbol contained in the story has been already discussed. The symbol can be easily understood by readers.

The story of the jackal, the deer and the crow in Nārāyaṇa’s *Hitopadesa* is a new story of jackal. In this story a jackal becomes a false friend of a deer and planned to enjoy its delicious meat through a tricky game. The deer was caught in a trap of a hunter but its life was saved by a
The deer was released by the hunter thinking that it was dead. The deer immediately rushed its own place. When the hunter threw a staff towards the deer, it hit the jackal, and it died.

This story of the two beasts, one innocent and other cunning, teaches that there are many wicked people in the world like jackal who make friends with simple and unsuspecting people like the innocent deer. For the sake of fulfilling their own nasty purposes. Such wicked men become a prey of their misdeed under the order of the Providence.

**Monkey:**

The monkey sometimes plays the part of a fool and sometimes it behaves like a wise animal in Sanskrit fables. In the story of the monkey which pluck up a wedge from a parted wood behaves as a part of fool. However the fickle character of the monkey is more vividly described in the story of the *Pañcatantra* rather than its foolishness. The story reappears in the *Hitopadeśa*.

The story of the monkey and the talktive birds is retold in the *Hitopadeśa* (Vigraha, story no-1). There is another interesting story of monkeys trembling in winter and the sparrows advising them to build a house in the *Pañcatantra* which is retold in the *Hitopadeśa*. The story clearly suggests that foolish men cannot tolerate the advices of learned men in spite of immense difficulties faced by them.
Ass:

It has been already said that the Ass is a foolish creature. In the *Hitopadeśa* \(^{19}\) an ass which started to bray signalling the master that there was thief was severly beaten by the master. It was not the job of the ass but of the dog. The master of the ass was angry and beat down the ass for disturbing his sleep. The *Hitopadeśa* advises the readers in the story people should not transgress their own spheres of action and interfere in others' affairs. In the story of the thoughtless ass in the *Hitopadeśa*, the ass symbolises those people in the society who interfere with the duties of other men and receive the punishment for their foolish deed.

It has been shown in the story of the blue jackal in the *Pañcatantra* \(^{20}\) that an animal cannot give up its own nature even when it ascends to an honourable possition. The *Hitopadeśa* \(^{21}\) reproducing the story of the *Pañcatantra* and remarks very clearly:

′śvā yadi kriyate rājā
tat kim nāśnātyupānaham′ (v.58).

(If a dog is made king, can he give up the habit of biting shows?)

Thus, Nārāyaṇa lays a greater emphasis on the inherent character of man in the story, rather than the hypocritical character of wicked people in the story.

The ‘ass in tiger’s skin’ is a story in the *Hitopadeśa* \(^{22}\), which, we have shown, first appears in the *Tantrākhyāyikā* \(^{23}\). The symbol of the
story is already discussed in the present dissertation.

The ass was presented as a tiger by its owner in the story. It was its outward appearance only. Inwardly the ass remained an ass. There are many people in the human society who sometimes pose as learned or wise or dignified gentlemen. But an attractive gurb alone can not change the character of these men. These men behave in their natural way forgetting the new status which is a purely artificial one.

Reference notes:

(1) "nirapekśo na kartabyo bhṛtyaiḥ svāmi kadācana.
nirapekaṁ prabhuṁ kṛtvā bhṛtyaiḥ syandadhikarṇavat”
Hito.,Bn-II (Suhrdbheda) story -3, pp.52-54

(2) Pañ.,’uṣtrakākādikathā’ p.160

(3) “kaṇikaṇasya tu lobhena magnaḥ pāmke sudustare.
ḥṛdbhāyāgheṇa samprāptaḥ pathikah sa mṛtu yathā.”
Hito.,Bn-I (Mitralābha) Story no 1 ,pp.30-40

(4) “kṣudramarthapatiṁ prāpya nāyāṅvesaṇapataparau.
ubhāvapi kṣayaṁ prāptau purā śaśakapiṇjalau.
“śaśakapiṇjala-kathā” Story no-3, Pan.,Bn -3 (Kākolukiya) pp.372-379

(5) “nīca śāṅghyapadaṁ prapya svaminaiḥ hantunicchatī.
mūśiko byāghrataṁ prāpya nuniṁ hantuṁ gato yathā”
Hito. Story no 5 Bn- IV(Sandhi) pp.16-18
(6) Mb. XIII (III,515) V-4254

(7) "The Fisherman and his wife" The Grimm’s tale by W.F.P.Burton pp.53-60

(8) "śaśaka-gajajuthapakathā," story no-2 Pan., Bn-III (Kākolukiya) pp.365-371

(9) "upāyena hi yacchakyāṁ na tacchkyāṁ parākrmaih. śṛgālena hato hasti gacchāṁ paṁkavartmanā." Hito., Bn-I (Mitralābha) Story no-8 pp.150-156


(11) "Caṇḍaraśṛgāla-kathā," Story no-10, Pan., Bn-I (Mitrabheda)

(12) "āḻmapakṣyāṁ parityajya parapakṣeṣu yo trataḥ. sa prairhanyane mudho nīlavarnaśṛgālavat." Hito., story no-7 Bn-III (Bigrahah) pp.48-52

(13) Hito., Bn-I (Mitralābha)

(14) "Kilotpātivānara-kathā" Pan., Bn-I (Mitrabheda), Story no-1 p.16

(15) "abyāpārēṣu byāpāram yo naraḥ kartumicchati. sa bhumaṁ nihataḥ sete kilotpātiva vānaraḥ" Hito., Bn.- (Suḥṛdbheda) Story no-1, p.18.

(16) "vidvānebopadeṣṭabyo nāvidvamstu kadācana. vānaraṁupadisyāthā thānabhraṣṭa yayoh khagāḥ." Hito., Bn-III (Vigrah)p.7, Story no-1

(17) "upadeśo na dātavyo yadṛśe tadṛśe jane."
paśya vānarmukhana sugṛhiṁ nirṛṭhiṁ kṛtah.

"vānaracatakadāmpati-kathā," Story no-18 Pan., Bn.- I (Mitrabheda) pp. 212-213

(18) Hito. Bn-4, (Vigrah), p. 8

(19) "parādhikāraracāśhaṁ yaḥ kuryaṁ svāmiḥiteccchayā.
    sa viṣidati citkārād gardabhāstādouto gardabhāstādito yathā"

Ibid., Story no-2 Bn-II (Suhrdbheda) pp. 19-23

(20) "Caṇḍaravaśīgīla-kathā" Story no-10, Pan., Bn- I (Mitrabheda), pp. 141-144

(21) "yaḥ svabhābo hi yasyāsti sa nityāṁ durātikramaḥ.
    svā yadi kriyate rājaḥ tat kim nāsnaṁtyupānahaṁ."

Sloke no.-58, Hito., Bn-III (Vigrah), Story no. 7 pp. 49-52

(22) "suciraṁ hi carannityaṁ kṣetre sasyamabudhimāṁ.
    dvīpicaramaparicchanno vāgdoṣaṅgardabho hataḥ."

Hito., Stoy no. 2, Bn-III (Vigrah), p. 11

(23) "Ass is panther-skin" Story-1, Tan. Bn- 3 (Kākolukiyaṁ), p. 96