CHAPTER-VI

POSSIBILITIES AND EXPLORATIONS OF BUDDHIST NARRATIVES
Jātaka and Avadāna tales are considered to be the most prominent among major Buddhist narrative forms. Through a number of narrative approaches, these tales may be valued with artistic as well as aesthetic views. The Buddhist narratives thus revealed a new realm of possibilities in the literary approach. It helped to explore various new methods and techniques in the field of narration. Interpretation of storytelling, the mechanism of story construction, systematic structure, identical plot, vocabulary and sharpness in moral ideals, establishment of cultural milieu and the like are some of the possibilities of these tales. The present chapter focuses on the possibilities and explorations of Buddhist narratives along with its variant narrative techniques.

Jātaka and Avadāna as Moral tales

Jātaka and Avadāna represent the moral codes of Buddhist religion. These stories aim to create a new world of ideals. Gautama Buddha was the one who tried to bring a new awakening in both social and literal activities. He focused on the medium of storytelling as a path to establish his ideas and doctrines. Thus these narratives had a moral tenor. These tales help to cultivate moral conduct and good behavior among the
masses. Jātaka tales enclose moral tales in connection with animal fables. It had slight variation from folk tales. It had some particular purpose, which may be religious or philosophical. Sometimes it provides some message to the society. It is also associated with rituals.

Both animals and human beings take part in these tales. They directly or indirectly take part in the story. In Jātaka tales human beings directly or indirectly participated. Most of the tales are described by the Buddha. In the beginning of the tale human beings/ Buddha himself played a crucial role and when the story line moves animals/any other creatures play main roles, in the last segment they again appeared to conclude the tale. These tales follow a systematical method in describing moral ideas. In these moral tales small animals examined larger ones with their intelligence; they created their own space in the world. These tales were prepared for the satisfaction of human beings. Here two opposite components are combined for a special effect. A number of Jātaka tales postulate the animals with two extreme abilities; one is superior to the other. But in most of the tales inferior one predominates. These tales had a practical side that these
narratives had an independent frame. That any other religion can utilize its possibility. Because of its independent frame any of tales can be converted into Buddhist model of narration. The central figure Bodhisattva appeared in the beginning and concluding sections, the left portions are independent. That can be applied to any circumstances. Any religious and philosophical ideals can be intermingled with these. Moral tales put forward a particular ideology which provides a guiding principle.

**Biographical accounts**

The Jātaka tales can be called the biography of Buddha. It demonstrates the previous births, life events and experiences. 547 Jātaka tales portray various births of Bodhisattva. Each birth had a particular intension. The tales reveal that they are narrated by Buddha in front of his mendicant group and common people. Buddhist disciples in saṅgha community had certain internal conflicts; if the problem is serious they approached their master i.e. Buddha. Then he used to recollect his previous birth experience to comment on the current issues. Thus the whole Jātaka tales illustrate his experiences. 547 Tales consist 547 variant experiences that had suffered by
Buddha. These experiences consist almost all the states of life, from a small creature to the extreme level of lives.

**Juvenile Literature**

Most of the children’s literature is based on the experiences of child. Plot of the story- situations, characterization and style of the tale are attributed in the level of a child. Among Jātaka tales a number of them can be treated as Juvenile literature. Those are bounded with experience of childish mannerisms. In spite of complex religious ideals these tales provided firsthand knowledge to children about moral codes. Like juvenile stories these Jātaka tales also present the basic difficulties of mankind. It also recommends the children to be aware of such literary types.

Juvenile literature provides more prominence to plot. The inter related plot of Jātaka also provides the realm of amusement. Children interested in supernatural elements and magical rudiments happened around them. Jātaka tales gave them the chance to understand these worlds. These tales are in a straight forward narration. The description of places along with nature, animals as the leading roles can influence the children. They can locate animal kingdom and their lives
rather than human world. These tales teach ethical principles to the coming generations. The emotions and human attitudes imposed to animals or any non-living elements for fulfilling the higher dreams are the main feature of these literature. This way of presentation can influence the minds of children. The extreme heights of man demonstrated by these animals can inspire the inner life of children. The main characters of these tales are animals, birds, super natural personalities, saints, kings, and the like. Certain tales transport the children towards outside the human world. The leading characters should be convincingly real and easily identified. True personalities can also be take part in this narration. The trustworthiness of characters depends up on the nature of author/composer. Their activities increase the strength of the story line.

Consistency in portraying the characters is the main feature of these Jātaka tales. These tales maintain a particular structure along with easily accessible introduction. The boosting of certain personalities or characters can also strike the children. The attitude of such heroes always stays in the memory of children. In most of the Jātaka tales Bodhisattva is the hero,
who is considered to be the perfected one, while imposing all the good habits on him, the author can impress the children.

**Folklore**

Jātaka and Avadāna tales employ variant elements of folklore. Buddhist scholars utilized the possibilities of folk tales to establish their religious ideals. Jātaka and Avadāna tales employ the reinterpretation of popular folktales. It also portrays the life style, customs, society and personalities of various regions. A popular folktale can be converted into a religious tale by imposing religious ideals in it. While analyzing Jātaka tales, there are a number of popular tales imposed with Buddhist ideals and presented in a different style with a systematic structure. The literature of Jātaka employs a number of tales, which are popular as folktales without any religious ideals. It is impossible to fix the position of these tales that which happened in the first, popular or religious tale. Popular themes are interpreted on the basis of the necessity of the preacher or the narrator to attract the concentration of major strata of the society. Thus a number of folk themes get interpreted along with divergent socio religious purposes. Buddhism adopted variety of folktales to expose the core of
religion and its doctrinal elements. The theme of the tale enhances the Buddhist doctrines and human virtues. Conversion of a popular tale into Jātaka tale is as follows;

1. **Popular Theme**

2. **Convincing Introduction** along with time and place.

3. **Present situation**, description of an event happened in the surroundings of the narrator.

4. Connecting the events with any **past experience** of the Buddha, it may be the original Jātaka part.

5. **Connecting both past and present events** along with the result of Karma doctrine

**Identification of characters**: Characters with positive attitude are Bodhisattva. Most of the anti-hero characters appeared in these tales are monks/upāsakas, Śakra and any super natural powers. Bodhisattva tried to lead them towards salvation. In humanate tales both positive and negative characters are from saṅgha community.

The study of Jātaka and Avadāna tales under the discipline of folklore provides variant outlooks on the identity of human beings along with animals, birds and various creatures. These tales gave prominence to both human world and animal
kingdoms. Jātaka tales portray the past lives of a religious personality who suffered much from the society to reach the final destination. He faced various levels of struggles to find out the self. He identified his past to make beautiful present and future for his fellow beings. Buddhist tales always keep a deep affection towards society. Buddha’s sayings, speeches and activities were much more focused on common people and their routines. Avadāna tales treated mythical elements but it had not much affinity towards folk elements. They employ variant of cultural elements, ritual practices and customs as a part of narration. The innocence of folk traditions are absent in these tales because of their religious affinity.

The exploration of folktales lies on the experience of man obtained from sense organs and instinct imitations. Tradition and culture can be treated as the prominent factors of these tales. It accepts the changes from generation to generation; same story accepts drastic changes through time and situations. The process of additions and omissions along with regional variations makes the tales a new one. Personality of publisher affects the essence of the tale. The main functions of these tales like amusement and edification of knowledge are
also associated with folklore. Identifying both folk tales and other literary types along with its versions is the most prominent factor of folklore.

Art

The purpose of Indian art has been to communicate great truths to mankind through architectural sculptural and pictorial reconstructions. Every Indian religious structure and art form may be regarded as a replica of an unseen celestial religion\(^1\). Buddhist art employs a group of monuments, including, cave-paintings and architecture and sculptures. Most of them are of religious themes. Buddhist art is meant popularly those monuments and paintings which have for the main purpose of popularizing Buddhist ideals. Buddhist art is narrative and representational in character. It includes easily recognizable in shape, didactic stories and life of the Buddha, his previous births, gods, demi-gods of popular beliefs yakṣa, yakṣīṇī, gandharva, kinnara and others recognized by Buddhism. Buddhist monuments like stūpas were carved with the stories of their faith. It conveys the conceptions like bodhi, karuṇa and prajña. Buddhist art forms are the byproduct of Buddhist

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narratives. The depiction of Jātakas and Avadānas in Buddhist art forms had got great prominence all over the world. The possibility of Buddhist narratives can be traced from the period of king Aśoka.

Jātaka tales had referred to a number of performing arts along with its practices. The GuțțilaJātaka mentions that Bodhisattva was born in a musician’s family. He was an expert in all branches of music. This tale shows the common people’s response towards musical activities during rainy seasons. In CullapalobhanaJātaka and Padakusalamanava Jātaka also describe about musical and dance performances. KhantivadiJātaka and SonakaJātaka also represent certain specimen of dancing. A number of musical instruments used in ancient times like bheri, muraja, alambara, anaka, vīṇa, kharamukham, veṇu, sammatāḷa, mṛdaṅga, paṇava and mutinga are also mentioned in these tales. A number of references regarding performing arts can be traced from Jātakas. The pictorial representation of Jātaka tales also highlights the dancing and singing poses. The most remarkable factor in Buddhist art is its symbolism. It is the pictorial language in which the artist conveys his ideas. Buddhist
narratives in arts can be treated as a mirror of spirituality. These are also the reminders of certain principles and aims of Buddhist religion. The possibility of Buddhist narratives are treated through these art forms.

In the paintings of Ajanta, the episodes of Jātaka and Avadāna tales are portrayed. It consists of the tales like HamsaJātaka, SāmaJātaka, RuruJātaka, NyagrodhamrgaJātaka, SarabhaJātaka, SibiJātaka and SaddantaJātaka along with certain Avadānas. In the cave no: 17 of Ajanta there is the depiction of MatriposakaJātaka and VessantaraJātaka. In the segment of MatriposakaJātaka, an elephant is illustrated as devoted his parents. King Vessantara with his attendants at city gate is depicted in the wall of cave no: 17. In the same place there is a scene from SamakaJātaka, in which a boy is depicted as serving his blind parents. The same tale segment can be traced from cave no: 10. Fragments of many scenes of the same tale like the shooting of an arrow towards Sama, the realizing of his fortuitous mistake, parents weeping up on the body and also the boy’s revitalization to life are depicted. This description of tale segments communicates the message of dharma doctrine, the result of karma and Buddhist
perfections towards society. The possibilities of these narratives as a medium to propagate religious and moral ideals are evidenced from these paintings and sculptures.

**Psychological Aspect**

Buddhist narratives provide great prominence to psychological aspects. Most of the characteristic features of Jātakas and Avadānas possess some of psychological ideals. The life experiences its variations, the result of karma, concept of birth and death, rebirth, non-existence of external world, nirvāṇa and the other religious and philosophical principles can be viewed in psychological level. Jātaka and Avadāna tales possess variant advises related to various topics along with different parables. This type of description is fully concentrated on the minds of the listener/reader. The ultimate aim of all these advises are to overcome the superstitions of the minds and to find out the correct path towards nirvāṇa. Buddha psychologically approached the society that he addressed various stratum of society with powerful ideologies on various levels. Purity of mind through various lives is described in Buddhist narratives. Besides these, the portrayal
of Buddhist narratives in art also possesses psychological effects.

The psychological aspects of Buddhist narratives had got wide acceptance all over the world. Its main aim is to treat the mind and to set free men from the bonds of self-indulgence, hate and hallucination. For good actions one should have a static mental state. It should obtain only from love and affection towards fellow beings. Buddhist narratives and philosophical texts named this affection as ‘Metta’; it is a mental discourse towards the surroundings. Buddhist narratives treated this as a core subject. These tales demonstrate the perfect ideals of man through his own conduct and attitude towards others. They promote the message of compassion and service. The reality of suffering and its transcendence along with elimination is the main psychological aspect of these tales.

**Cultural Criticism**

Like any medieval and modern stories Jātakas and Avadānas can be interpreted for cultural criticism. Tales produce the power of inner vision and also these are the
production of inner vision. These tales followed traditional methodology along with contemporary literary styles. The insight of the composer is quite appreciable, that these narratives treated the philosophical, religious and literal functions with timely changes. The diverse attitude towards narrative techniques and the conversion of oral tales in to written narratives made the Buddhist narratives a new experience. The divergent structure along with artificial medium of philosophical transmission made the stories more acceptable to the common people. Neglecting the attitudes of modernism, Avadānas and Jātakas directly touch the contemporary life without any type of struggles with history. It can be considered as a suitable media which reveals the political, religious and literal stream embodied cultural functions. As a product of culture Buddhist narratives leave the ages.

The composers showed the role of these narratives in society to break the barriers of religion and philosophical ideals. These tales leave the space for discussions and arguments. These literary genres collect the problems faced by the society and persons and interpreted with realistic
narrations. It also tried to reveal the new realm of lives those are unknown to the literary world. Besides the essence of philosophy the human emotions are also enclosed with the plot of the stories.

The socio cultural importance of these tales related to the life of the lay men, people from various strata of society like traders, farmers and the like. These tales reflect the thoughts, beliefs, manners and customs of the time. These tales described Buddhist religion and philosophy along with unparalleled documents of Indian social history.

Buddhist narratives work as a vehicle of culture and tradition between common people and monks. These narratives explore the life of common folk, their life, emotions and sentiments. Prominence of Buddhist ethics and ignoring the cast system are the main socio cultural aspects of this literature. As Kum Kum Roy observes ‘the Buddhist Jātaka treats justice on the one hand of the justice as a means of regulating the relationship between the rulers and the ruled and on the other hand, justice as regulating relations amongst the
ruled’. To portray the charitable actions and practice of dharma by humans and non-humans is the highlighting feature of these narratives.

**Motifs**

The Buddhist narrative literature reflects variant types of motifs. The motif changes along with the situations. The importance of these motifs extinct with their dual purposes conveyed the composer. It also helps to increase the beauty of the tale. They connected historical elements with poetical fictions. It describes the philosophical ideals, rebirth cycle, past lives, compassion, good deeds and pāramitas in the form of imaginative elements.

Religious motifs are moralizing didactic motif. It can be traced from Jātaka and Avadāna tales. In these tales virtuous people are pleased and acquire a better life in the next birth and also the evil ones are punished with the circle of sufferings. The results of karmas are acquired through various births. The recognition of previous life stages of Buddha in the form of tales inspires the listeners. But when they find

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divine elements in these tales, the actual aim of the same turns to mystery. The other religious motif possesses by these tales are the sacrifices. These sacrifices had variant realms like self, body and soul. These variant levels of sacrifices can attract the minds of the listeners. Both Jātaka and Avadāna tales have a variety of popular motif. It includes various magical rudiments, conversation of non-human beings, motifs of journey, voyage, mystery, asceticism and renunciation. The rebirth motif is also dominant in Jātaka and Avadāna tales.

Narrative motifs of Buddhist Jātaka and Avadāna tales migrated to variant strata of society. Certain descriptions, episodes, situations and narrative devices become popular by the adaptation of the same by various literary genres. They spread over larger areas crossing the barrier of countries and language. These tales migrated to various countries through caravan traders and their journey. Telling and listening the stories of travelers and native people helped to create a vast treasure of tales in Buddhist accounts. These narrations fully concentrated on authorial narration and it had also variable focalizations. Parables are described with a moral tone and
never meant for leisurely entertainment. Reclusiveness in motifs cannot be traced from these tales.

Above descriptions make it clear that Jātakas and Avadānas are the treasure house of variant motifs. Certain objects which convey a particular meaning can be considered as a peculiar feature of these motifs. The smallest recognizable element that goes to make up a complete story is also a motif of Jātakas and Avadānas. Narrative motifs into straight bunches can be traced from these tales. It had got great prominence because it moves with generations carrying drastic changes and various cultures. Transmission of tales by caravan leaders had brought variations in language, style, culture and society.

**Variant outlook**

Indepth narration along with internal explanation makes the Avadānas and Jātakas more interesting. Internal structures of these tales are vast as human life span. It can be treated as the life story of certain religious leaders who were the participants of social reform movements. It is also the explanations of human emotions with wide range of advisory notes.
The deep narrative modes seen in Avadānas and Jātakas provide them an artistic meaning. The aesthetic sense, time discrimination in narration made them prominent among other literary forms. The description of incidents, experiences, ideas, emotions by narrator is quite personal. The intensity of narration varies with the level of narration. This method had wide acceptance among readers, because the readers used to compare the narrative elements with their personal life. Thus all these narrations are both extracts from social and personal lives. These narratives provide spaces for imagination, emotions, curiosity and expressions.

Major Buddhist narratives like Avadāna and Jātaka are actually the interpretation of worldly fictions along with biographical records. Its mechanism of construction is easily accessible to common readers/listeners. It also leaves spaces for narrator, teller and reader. Most of the Avadāna and Jātaka tales assume that they were prepared for oral transmission. The influence of Bhāṣakas can be traced from the structure of the tale. Narrator/ composers had choices in language, variant viewpoints and plot. Buddhist narrators utilized the possibilities of variant literary styles. Variant view point of
plots by author, narrator, composer, character, spectator and any secondary character can be traced from these Avadāna and Jātaka tales. Description of complex religious doctrines with the sequence of events is the peculiarity of these narratives. There should not be any difference in the ideology of the tales. Most of the possibilities of flashback episodes can be traced from Jātaka tales. Narrative spaces of these tales can be treated along with sub plots and religious doctrines.

Jātaka and Avadāna tales migrated into various traditions. The description of ship wreck and water nymph came into Jātaka tales from other countries. The Valāhassa Jātaka mentioned some shipwrecked mariners; they escaped from a city of goblin with the support of flying horse. Among Jātaka tales certain tales are continuation of other tales. Mittavinda Jātaka is the best example and the same is repeated in thrice. Combination of myth and moral ideals can be traced from these tales. In Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, Yakṣa, Kinnara and Garuḍa met each other. Canda kinnara Jātaka and

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4 ibid.III. 369.
5 ibid. V. 537.
6 ibid.IV .485.
BhallāṭiyaJātaka\textsuperscript{7} treated same theme and describes sufferings along with sentiments.

In most of the Jātaka tales the character of monkey contribute comic effects. He represents the actions of wicked people in order to convey the after effects of wicked actions. MahāpingalaJātaka\textsuperscript{8}, GarahitaJātaka\textsuperscript{9} and the like portrays monkey as comic character. Certain Jātakas portrays series of events along with variant time periods. The SutasomaJātaka\textsuperscript{10} portrays the life of four generations of king Sutasoma. The plot of KumbhaJātaka\textsuperscript{11} mentions the after effect of alcoholism. It is a part of social awareness activities by Buddhist mendicant group. They advised the common people to be free from drinking and robbery.

Ethical norm in Jātaka and Avadāna can be treated as a characteristic feature of Buddhist religious teaching. Avadāna tales portray the endless theme of human actions and its appropriate rewards. The monk character tried to communicate the distinctiveness of Buddhist ethics. These tales motivate the

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\item \textsuperscript{7}ibid. IV. 504.
\item \textsuperscript{8}ibid. II.240.
\item \textsuperscript{9}ibid. II.219.
\item \textsuperscript{10}ibid. VI.525.
\item \textsuperscript{11}ibid. V. 512.
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masses for performing virtuous deeds. It highlights the importance of pāramitas and distinguishes the Bodhisattva from the inferior arhants and pratyekabuddhas. They teach worldly wisdom along with religious ideologies.

Buddhist narratives are associated with specific locations and geographical areas. Treatment of variant time frames, regions and different human, non-human characters in a single narrative is the most prominent exploration of Buddhist narratives. In the realm of moral teaching a story could be cited to illustrate the good and evil results of moral and immoral conduct respectively through these characters.

The composers/ writers of Buddhist narratives have the ability to present interesting plots in a systematic structure. The situations described in these tales had resemblance with life event. It cannot be called the imitation of one’s life. It is the remodeling or reshaping of life events with certain religious and moral thoughts. Emotions of common people had given prominence along with imagination of composers. To a certain extent it is against an anti-social activity. It gives life to various characters who were the representative of marginalized wing of human and animal world. The ultimate
aim of the narratives will reach its destination through less number of characters.

The speeches and discourse can be traced from the concluding portion of the tales are used for educational purposes. For example, this tale is narrated to show the ideal of finding good companions for a moral life. Both Jātaka and Avadāna tales put forward certain methodology regarding prose writings. Most of the tales are in the form of conversations, dialogues and narration of events, persons and ideals. It helps to precise wide narration in to a particular realm. Narrative personification makes the tales more affectionate to the readers and listeners. The retelling of certain regional folk elements and myths makes the tales more interesting to the common people. These tales convey the emotions of common man without harming their thoughts. Most of the tales did not provide any type of arguments. The composers systematically planned the stages of plot development. They highlight both general and prominent themes along with affectionate and new circumstances. Same way these tales also highlights religious and moral ideals
through examples. Direct and indirect narrations are treated separately throughout the tales.

Recreation of past events along with establishment of experiences is the characteristic feature of these tales. The action of characters with respect to situations and incidents makes the tales more impressive. The decisions and actions of the characters help to develop the story line. These tales increase the anxiety of readers and listeners and conveys a particular religious and moral doctrine. Artificiality of plot cannot be traced out in Buddhist narratives. Descriptions, dialogues and moralization are the main narrative purposes convey through both Jātaka and Avadāna tales.

The most prominent feature of Buddhist narrative is its continuity and sequential arrangement of events along with the use of time. The possibility of variant levels of narration is the characteristic feature of Buddhist narratives. There are particular link to connect these divergent levels. These levels of narrations are possible through the doctrine of rebirth, karma, cycle of birth and death.
Exploration in the realm of Translation

The native tradition of Jātaka, i.e. Sinhalese tradition, was translated into Pāli in 430 A.D. The accuracy of this tradition has been discussed by Prof. Rhys Davids in the introduction to the first volume of his ‘Buddhist Birth stories’. The Jātakas are proceeded in the Pāli text by a long introduction, ie. Nidānakathā. This has been translated by Prof. Rhys Davids along with forty Jātaka tales. The popular translations of Jātaka tales by E.B.Cowell have adopted some common principles of translation like uniformity in technical terms and transliteration. This is a group process by a number of scholars like Mr. Robert Chalmers, Mr. W.H.D. Rouse and Mr. H.T. Francis and Mr. R.A. Neil. This translation had got great acceptance.

Translation of Jātaka tales requires the creativity of translator. Jātaka tales had a particular structure and it consists of five parts. 1. Story of the present, 2. Story of the past 3. The verse giving a moral statement 4. Explanation of the verses. 5. Identification of Past story with present. The translation of these tales does not provide any importance to these structures. In the English translation E.B. Cowell maintains the structure.
The regional variations and the ideology of translators changed the purpose of the original versions. The translation of Jātaka tales in regional languages utilized only the moral sides of the stories. Thus they become a part of juvenile version of Jātaka Tales. Here the originality and real function of the narratives had altered.

The verses used in Jātaka tales are of simple structure along with complex meaning provide more of an analytical and creative challenge to the practitioner of translation. The problem of translation in Jātakas within the frame work differentiates by the concepts of equivalence, untranslatability and describes the process of interpretation and reinterpretation. In these narratives verses infused into prose make the problem even more challenging for translators. To confine the core of the verse in another language, to achieve the same regular pulse in a different vernacular is an act of genius. The verses in Jātaka tales had a purpose to establish any of the Buddhist doctrines. Translations of these verses often fail to convey the same.

General problems of translation were attached by the nature of prose. Translation of Jātaka tales presents the
original texts in a different shade and also it focuses the attention on the hidden realities of the tales. Translations of Jātaka tales paved the way for creative adaptations, retellings, interpretations, personification and elaborations of stories. These bind together communities, languages, religions and cultures. Translation of Buddhist narratives represents the power of dharma among the people. They help to reinvent the cultural identity. Complexity in Buddhist narratives arises in the case of translating technical terms and philosophical terms. While translating the translator put another term which is similar to that or which had the same meaning. These translations help to provide a cross cultural exchange, transmission and expansion of religio-philosophical knowledge.

Another problem which creates complexity in the translation of narratives is the thematic translation. It may affect the exact structure of the literature. Through the analysis of the story or anything else under thematic translation could not provide cultural context and the nature of the society. Thus the function of the literature changes in the realms of practical aspects, appropriation and attitude. This type of thematic
translation had a close resemblance with Prakaraṇavakratā of Kuntaka; which is also a type of reinterpretation.

Poetic expressions like alaṅkāras are obviously cultural in target because it takes orientation from entire cultural practices and beliefs. Alaṅkāra is an exclusive device and is the one which relates entirely on cultural awareness to take full outcome. Without that cultural reference, a metaphor is merely a ridiculous contrast. Most of the Buddhist narratives enriched with alaṅkāras like Upamā and Arthāntaranyāsa. The wide use of these makes them a part of discourse. In the case of Jātaka tales the translator did not provide any serious concentration towards these.

Language had a peculiar nature that it accepts and omitted certain characters through the usage and situations. While expressing a feeling or an idea through a particular word, it may become less important during translation. Realistic, semantic, and syntactic functional uniformity between source and target language exhibit a structural divergence in respect to the use of grammatical words. Buddhist literature is often given the freedom to create a language of its own with a unique vocabulary of names, events and things that have great
significance within the Jātaka tales. However, when that has to be translated, it possesses problems such as maintaining relevance, accuracy and context.

In the Jātaka tales numerous names are given to characters. This literary permit is used in almost every culture in the world, and is the origin of many fictional characters and places. Most of the tales portray the characters like ascetic, merchant, king and like others with a particular name, which had close connection with Buddhist religion. They were devotees or followers of Buddha. These Jātaka tales were also known as animal fables. These animals reside in the localities of Sinhalese region. When the same stories were translated into regional languages the animals were replaced by the regional ones and are representing the nature of human beings.

Translators of Buddhist narratives faced with certain challenges, but at the same time it increases the beauty of the text. It is very tough for the translator to do justice in the target text. In the realm of Buddhist translation; problems and their complexity are very high. Cultural gap between languages makes translation more complex. The reason behind complexity was due to the words used in early Buddhist
narratives which were in Pāli. It portrays the world in varied way and has its own structure, grammar rules and syntax variance. The content and the style are already present in the original and as a result, the reproduction happens. The most particular problems that Buddhist translators appear are unreadable text, missing references, several constructions of grammar, dialect terms and ridiculously vague terminology, untranslatability, deliberate misnaming and particular cultural references etc.

Translation of Buddhist narratives aims at transmitting knowledge, culture, and standards of living beings. Translating these prose extends to a very vague cultural shade including ideology, folklore, social rules, manners, customs, and traditions that cannot be translated easily. Certain translations did not provide any information regarding the chronology, lifestyle, culture, ideology, and their motives. There happened only the reproduction of words along with indistinguishable circumstances. A translator in the realm of Buddhist narratives should be aware of these complexities.
Retelling of Buddhist Narratives.

There are a number of translations as well as reinterpretations on both Jātaka and Avadāna tales. Many scholars have recently from east and west like attempted in studying and retelling Buddhist narratives. A number of translations and the like are available in many languages. Thus these stories deal with contemporary social issues along with Buddhist ideals and moral thoughts. Even then the general themes of the stories remained the same.

Buddhist narratives were used by the great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore. He made use of certain Buddhist narratives to compose some beautiful dramas, plays and poems. The poems of Tagore like Śreṣṭha- Bhikṣa, Pūjariṇī and Mūlyaprāpti adopted the theme from Avadānaśataka, Sāmānyakṣati is the interpretation of Mākandikāvadāna . The literary works like Parīśodh, Śyāma, Mastak vikray, Śāpmocan, Mālini, Rāja and the like are based on Mahāvastu Avadāna.

The collective work Katha o Kahini is consisted of a number of poems with regards to the theme of Jātaka and Avadāna tales. Śreṣṭha bhikṣa is the story of Vastrāvadāna of
Avadānaśataka. *Mastak vikray* is the story of king of Kosala and his protagonist king of Kāśi. It highlights the self-sacrifice of the king of Kosala. He was willing even to offer his head for helping a poor merchant. This story is the reinterpretation of AjnatakundilyaJātaka of Mahāvastu Avadāna. Naṭīrpūja retells the story of Śrīmati, a maidservant of Bimbisara. Portrayal of the same was found in Avadānaśataka. A slight variation is that Tagore described the character Śrīmati as a dancer. The same theme was treated in the poem Pūjāriṇī. The drama Mālini describes the plot of MahāvasthuAvadāna, in which Mālini was the daughter of the king of Varanasi. This narrative portrays the religious activities of Mālini and also the rivalry between Brahminism and Buddhism. Tagore reinterpreted the same theme with Mālini as a protagonist and Supriya and Kṣemenkara as supporting characters. Another drama entitled Fālguni, portrayed the tale of Makkhadeva from MahāvastuAvadāna. Tagore’s another symbolic drama Rājā treated the theme of KuśaJātaka. Tagore’s poem Abhisāra treated portrayed the theme of Upaguptāvadāna. The plot of Nagaralakshmi is taken from Kalpadrumāvadāna. The poem Acalāyatan had its origin in Panchakāvadāna of Divyāvadānamālā. Tagore’s popular work Canḍālikā is based
on the story of a low caste woman Prakṛti, from Śārīrakarṇāvadāna. Thus Tagore utilized the Buddhist narratives by creating new literary genres and new theatre forms.

From this it is clear that later writers had accepted the stories of Jātaka and the like to fulfill the contemporary needs. They can be treated as the final products or outcome of Buddhist teachings. Both Jātaka and Avadāna tales can be considered as moral tales. They put forward exhaustive and extensive meaning of moral ideals like honesty, self-control, good deeds and religious ideals. Best example is pañcaśīlatatvas. Such tales focused various strata of society.

Among Buddhist narratives the Jātaka and Avadāna tales describe the biography of Buddha and his disciples. The life experiences and teaching of Buddha are intermingled in these tales. These tales can also be included in juvenile literature. The plot and characters along with moral and comical elements easily attract the mind of the children. Besides these, both Jātaka and Avadāna tales treated folk elements for the purpose of propagating religious and moral elements. A popular folk tale can be easily converted into a Jātaka or
Avadāna tales. A number of Jātaka and Avadāna tales have their oral versions with regional variations.

Buddhist narratives are also utilized for various art and architectural forms. Use of Buddhist symbols and portrayal of Jātaka and Avadāna tales is the peculiar feature of Buddhist art. Another prominent possibility of Buddhist narratives is the psychological approach towards the listeners and readers. The systematic structure of both Jātaka and Avadāna tales increases the curiosity by dragging the attention of people. These tales psychologically interact with the audience about religious and moral ideals. These tales are also the medium to reveal the social, political, religious and literal stream of early society. They act as a vehicle of culture and tradition between the mendicant group and ordinary people. These tales spread the ethics along with altruistic virtues and values.

Buddhist narratives are the treasure house of various motifs. Both Jātaka and Avadāna tales consisted of sequential narrations; they put forward new literary techniques along with religious, narrative and popular motifs. The nature of the tales and their interaction in human affairs makes the tale more popular. Intellectual tradition of both Jātaka and Avadāna tales
began with philosophical and linguistic analysis. Reinterpretation of myths found in abundantly and these increase the acceptability of the ideas among common people. These tales are the source of worldly knowledge and serve the society as anticipation of future events. They have the power to persuade human expectation towards their secure future. The most prominent exploration of Jātaka and Avadāna tales lies on shaping of social and ethical realities. Both Jātaka and Avadāna tales implement morality, virtual acts of charity, service, self-sacrifice, nobleness and dharma doctrines.

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