Foreword

It is believed that the celebrated Sanskrit fable, Pañcatantra, has been exhausted in terms of translation, and critical editions, and there remains nothing to exploit anymore. Then why should anyone take it up as the principal text in his/her doctoral research? There is no doubt that a significant amount of work has been done in this field. A number of renowned scholars have examined the text and established its date, structure and genre. They have unanimously agreed that like the characteristic feature of the beast fable, the “animals are actuated by human motivation, speak like human beings and reveal themselves as rather transparent instances of certain human types” in Pañcatantra. In other words, the beast characters are humanised and endowed with man’s emotions. A scholar observes, “We see before us the eternal man and the eternal woman. These stories show men and women, their virtues and vices, their strengths and weaknesses, their wisdom and folly.”

Although scholars have argued and concluded that the beast characters are allegorical representation of human psychology, they have never taken an interest in studying the text from this perspective.

This dissertation, therefore, attempts a study based on the inter-actions and intra-actions of the beast characters, and to identify the elements of emotion depicted in the Pañcatantra, and tries to find out how the human emotions, even elementarily, are represented in the form of inter-actions of the humanised beast characters.

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