CHAPTER III

THE ANIMAL TALES

The animal tales have a long tradition in India dating back to antiquity. These simple tales speak of the eternal truths relevant to all times and to all people, and thus said to have an universal appeal which is considered to be the foremost characteristic of fables. Originally these fables constitute an essential part of the oral literature that was handed down to us as folklore.

The animals that feature here are wise, sacred, just and helpful and at times foolish, cunning, selfish and conceited representing the gamut of human behaviour with its positive and negative aspects. In fact the existence of animal kingdom here has been accepted as an extension of human society, with these tales being retold at a later date in popular as well as poetical works.

In Indian literature, the animal fables appear as a genre in full length in the world famous works of Panchtantra (200 B.C.). Prior to this, numerous animal stories are found scattered in the Vedas and Upanishadas, as well as being sandwiched in between the main plots of the two Indian epics of Mahabharata and Ramayana. For example, in Upanishads there are stories centering around animals like the one about dogs who assembled around a white dog so that he could
procure food for them through hymns\(^1\) or the story of Janasruti who attracts the attention of pious Raikva to the conversation of two flamingos.\(^2\) Likewise the oldest epic of Ramayana, in which the life of 'Rama' provides the main inspiration, innumerable monkey stories are to be found, with their leader being Hanuman and their interaction with the other animals and birds, like Jatayu (eagle), Jamvan (bear) all constituting the important characters of the main plot. In the other major epic of Mahabharata also there are several animal stories interwoven with the main plot. Yet most of these stated above cannot be called fables in the true sense because the basic element of moral discourse is missing although the very presence of these animal stories indicates that the tradition dates back to the pre-Panchatantra times. In this regard the renowned Indologist Prof. Winternitz, points out that "these are not fables in the true sense and merely revolve around the animal characters\(^3\)."

In the ancient sculpture and relief works like those of Bharhut dating back to 2-3 century B.C., several animal figures are found. Moreover in the Buddhist works also, a number of fables are present, mostly adapted from the existing works or motifs written as well as oral. The most prominent example is of the Jataka stories that draw material extensively from the prevalent popular animal tales besides other sources. On closer scrutiny we find that more than one fourth of the total of five hundred and forty eight

\(^{1}\) Chandogya-Up. :1-12  
\(^{2}\) Chandogya-Up. :4-1  
stories of Jataka are animal stories. These include stories of birds like parrots, vultures, falcons etc. In some, animals are the protagonists while in others the side characters. In Jatakas this is made possible by assimilating the animal characters into the human world through the concept of Bodhisattva who is born and reborn several times as a human being, or some animal or bird, interacting with the human characters. Here the question arises as to why a large number of fables were adapted in the various works. It could be attributed to the very characteristics of fables the foremost being simplicity of the plot and universal appeal. The existence of works like Panchatantra suggests that a vast reservoir of fables would have been available, in addition to other variety of parables, for adaptation and utilisation as per the need which in the case of Panchatantra was to impart the education of moral conduct, the 'Nitisastra'. In the case of fables especially, the objectives were, besides entertainment, to solely impart education, religious or secular. In this regard Panchatantra is a major milestone dating back to 200 B.C. The fables in Panchatantra had well organised fixed forms, told by using the technique of dialogues or 'Samvads' and the message emerging all through the story. Truly, in Panchatantra animal characters predominate. On the basis of this work only the renowned European scholar Theodore Benefy has formulated his theory ¹ that the majority of the world's folk tales originated from India. This he attributes to the various crusades whereby the stories got widely dispersed

¹ History of Indian Literature: Winternitz, Maurice, vol III p.329
and assimilated in the local areas all over the world, the
typical example being the countries of Arabia and Persia.
Benefy points out further, "Nitishastra was written with the
objective of imparting knowledge about worldly affairs in
a simple, down to earth form in an interesting manner".
Similarly, in the prologue of his work Panchtantra also, the
author, Vishnu Sharma points out that it was written to
educate the three princes of Miharopya in South India who
were uneducated and unruly. On being approached by their
father Amarshakti, the King of Miharopya, Vishnu Sharma, an
eminent scholar and at that time aged eighty years, promised
to fulfil this challenging task of making the princes well
versed in 'Nitishastra' within a period of six months. The
work of Panchtantra is the outcome of this vigorous and
brilliant endeavour. It contains five chapters on the so
called 'Science of Conduct'. These collectively came to be
called Panchtantra, meaning the five golden rules. The work
is a blend of fables, sutras and citations, interwoven
closely with one development leading to another. The five
chapters advocating the main rules of Nitishastra are
arranged as follows:

1. Mitra-bheda - Rift in friendship
2. Mitra-Samprapti - Benefits of friendship
3. Kakolukiyam - The dialogue between a crow and an owl
4. Labdh prnasym - Unattained gains
5. Aprikshit karak nam - Actions done without thinking

Thus, due to its very nature animal fables, whether
influenced by the Indian works or developed independently
exist in all the countries, although the content and objective may vary from one country to another and from time to time.

In the case of Japan too the animal fables constitute an important part of the folk lore. In the 20th century, a Japanese folklorist Yanagida Kunio began the inexhaustible work of the compilation of folk tales. In his pioneer work, 'Mukashi-banashi Meii', sixty three titles are included under the category of animal stories and their subtypes. Similarly, another equally comprehensive work "Nihon-Mukashi-banashi Shu-sei" (abbreviated below as Shusei), an anthology of Japanese folk tales compiled by Dr. Keigo Seki gives ninety six titles including the subtypes.

In view of the contents and objective, broadly speaking there are of two types. First, those explaining the origin of things, like the story giving the reason as to why frogs croak in the rainy season (Tonbifuko)\(^2\), secondly, those stories related to interrelations and complications in the animal world, a typical example being the story of a fight between the monkey and crab (Saru Kani Kassen)\(^2\). Besides this, there is another category in which the animals coexist and interact with human beings. For example the story of Saru Muko\(^4\), the Monkey Bridegroom. Since the animals do not necessarily play the central role in this type and the moral connotation is absent too, these are not considered as fables here.

\(^1\) Nihon Mukashi banashi Jiten: pub. Kobundo; p. 639
\(^2\) Taisei: vol. I, p. 302
\(^3\) Taisei: vol. I, p. 141
\(^4\) Taisei: vol. II, p. 72
Being a part of the folk lore and having been widely acclaimed, in Japan in medieval times animal fables were extensively adapted in the motifs painted on scrolls as well as illustrations in short novels in the form of *Emakimono* and *Naraehon* respectively. These works generally speaking were called 'Otogizoshi' the term being translated as fairy tales or nursery tales. Yet these works have altogether different connotations. *Zoshi* was a trend of popular literature for all, more for the platonic pleasure of adults. It's contents were based on religious propagation especially of Christianity, social satire etc. and were written in a very interesting and simple way although not necessarily meant for children. These works were written with the objective of gaining instant popularity and to earn livelihood rather than any serious academic pursuits. In such *Otogizoshi* works, several animal stories are adapted which centre around the animal world only, while in others, the plot revolves around the human beings and some animal, like the story of *Urashima Taro* in which the main characters are a fisherman and a turtle living under water. Such kind of *Otogizoshi* works, were especially popular in the *Muromachi* period (1090-1128).

Prior to this, animals appeared in the works of *Setsuwa* literature that was at its zenith during the heydays of Buddhism in Japan. As mentioned earlier, the genre of *Setsuwa* literature draws material extensively from Buddhism and there are several animal stories which are adapted partly because of their presence in the original Buddhist
literature and partly because of their simplicity and appeal. Here, again, the animals are seen as mere characters contributing to the evolution of the plot to make it interesting rather than contributing to a moral discourse. Thus the animal tales for preaching directly to the human beings are seldom found in Japan. This is diametrically opposite to the Indian context where animal fables of all kinds exist imparting some kind of message, social, moralistic or political. This could be explained by the fact that according to the Indian concept of the world, the different forms of creations are alike and between Gods, Demigods, spirits, men and beasts, the difference is not qualitative but merely quantitative which is capable of being levelled off. In other words their roles are interchangeable.

In Japan, on the contrary, it is clearly demarcated in terms of vertical relations and the beasts, who are but subordinates to human beings, cannot be convincingly accepted at par and thus effectively are unacceptable for preaching to the human beings. Therefore, generally speaking, the concept of animal tales existing for the sake of moral discourse conveying the message explicitly is missing in Japan. Inspite of this very basic difference in the approach numerous identical animal tales exist in Japan. Their evolution must have been influenced by the existing popular Buddhist tales at some stage or the other as several motifs have been readapted reflecting this basic difference in approach to the animals. Thus in Japan, several animal

\[1\] History of Indian Literature: Winternitz, Maurice, vol. III, p. 306
tales exist which are the prototypes of Indian ones, and their very presence in the Buddhist literature, that had infiltrated into Japan since ancient times, does throw light on the connection to some extent. In *Konjaku Monogatari* itself several animal stories are present. Especially in Volume Five which is the focus of this study, in more than one third of the stories animal characters appear but all these are not fables in the true sense except for the following ones:

Vol. V.

Story No.13.: The three animals follow the path of Bodhisatva and are jumps into the fire in order to offer his flesh to the guest.

Story No.14.: The lion offers his flesh to vultures in order to save the baby monkey kept in the lion's custody.

Story No.18.: The nine coloured deer leaves his mountain dwelling and saves a drowning man who in return attempts to get this rare deer trapped and killed.

Story No.19.: A man saves another fellowman, on a turtle's insistence and gets into trouble.

Story No.20.: The fox proclaims itself to be the King of animals and dies while attempting to conquer even the lions.

Story No.21.: The fox uses the influence of lion and when pestered, arouses Buddha's mind (aspires for enlightenment) and is thus benefited.

Story No.22.: The nose-cut monkey from Sravasti prays to *Sokra Devanam Indra.*
Story No.24.: The tortoise fails to listen to the advice of the cranes and falls down breaking his shell.

Story No.25.: The turtle deceived by a monkey manages to escape using his presence of mind.

Story No.26.: The elephant living in the forest performs filial piety for his blind mother and when held captive starves.

Story No.27.: The elephant in India on being pierced by a thorn makes a man remove it.

In the remaining stories of Volume Five of Konjaku the animal characters appear objectively to play a secondary role. The story 'five hundred merchants from India who encountered a Big Makra fish in the wide seas', is one such example and cannot be called a fable.

Besides Konjaku, in Japanese folklore there are several other motifs having close similarities with Indian ones which could be attributed to common origins, and inter-cultural influence or at times merely coincidental.

Some of these are given below:

1) Usagi to kame no kake kurabe: "The hare and tortoise race" in which the slow tortoise wins.

2) Nezumi no yome iri: The marriage of a mole, whose parents wish to marry her to the strongest person on earth.

3) Saru no chusai: While two cats fight, the clever monkey mediates by dividing the food between the two and ends up eating the whole.

\[1\] Konjaku Monogatari:vol.V, 28
\[2\] Taisei:vol.I, p.264
\[3\] Ibid.:vol.VIII, p.238
\[4\] Ibid.:vol.I, p.70
4) Inaba no shirousag ¹: The white hare of Inaba who line up the crocodiles in order to cross the sea on the pretext of counting.

Reverting back to the animal stories of Volume five of Konjaku Monogatari listed above, these can be grouped under the broad classification mentioned before viz., the stories related to the origin of things and those of the affairs of the animal world. Here we consider the latter first. On the basis of the animal stories in Volume five of Konjaku Monogatari, this broader group of 'affairs in the animal world' is further subdivided; firstly, the motifs with thematic message of the vanity of animals and secondly, the one with the central theme of the good and grateful nature of animals sometimes contrasted with that of the human beings. As pointed out earlier, the reason for restricting ourselves to Volume Five only is because, of all the volumes of the Indian section an exceptionally large number of animal stories are to be found in this volume.

The typical example of the former type in the above classification viz. the vanity of animals has four different variants with the central characters being the jackal, wolf or an ass.

1. First one is the story of an ass in the hide of a panther found in Panchtantra ², Kathasarita-Sagar ³ as well as Jataka ⁴.

2. The story of a jackal who, while living with a lion and influenced by it, even forgets about his real identity and

¹ Ibid.: vol. I, p. 382
² Panchatantra: Book IV, 7
³ Kathasarita Sagar: chap. LXII, p. 65
⁴ Jataka Stories: no. 189
inflated with pride attempts to kill the elephant all by himself like *Simh-Lamb Karneyo Katha* in *Panchatantra*¹ with other variants in *Katha-Sarit Sagar*², *Jataka*³, etc.

3. The fox on learning the spell of how to be King, becomes the King of animals but not being satisfied aspires to rule over even the Lion King or in some cases human beings.

4. A jackal/ass after getting dyed by falling into a dye vat pretends to be the King of animals but reveals his true form ultimately on encountering its fellow being.

In *Konjaku Monogatari*, we find types 2 and 3 of the above. One is titled as "The Indian fox that proclaims itself to be the King of animals, rides a lion and dies"⁴. The other one, although it has ceased to be a pure fable because of the inclusion of religious elements, is structurally closer to the story of the wolf who uses the lion's might to scare away the other animals. Here the former one viz. prototype of '3' above is related in *Konjaku Monogatari* as follows:

Once upon a time there was an old temple in Tenjiku where lived a Bhikhu who was always chanting sutras. A fox used to listen to it every day. There was a sutra which expounded that if anybody, be it an animal or a human being, kept his spirits high, could be the king. On hearing this, the fox thought, "I shall keep my spirits high and become the king of animals". So the fox held his head high and met another fox. Looking at the majestic pose of the first fox, the second one bowed in awe and crouched, and the first one

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¹ *Panchatantra*: Book IV, 2
² *Kathasarita Sagar*: chap.LXIII, pp.85-87
³ *Jataka Stories*: no.204
⁴ *Panchatantra*: Book I, 10
⁵ *Konjaku Monogatari*: vol.V, 20
jumped onto her back. As they moved further they met another fox. On seeing the majestic aura around the mounted fox she thought, "This must be a special fox", and sat down in reverence. She was called and made to hold the bridle of the riding fox and likewise they found another one to hold the bridle from the other side. This way they kept including foxes one after another in their company. Then they met a dog and the dog thought, "He must be the King of the beasts and I should pay my allegiance to him". He bent down and bowed respectfully. The fox called him like he had called the foxes earlier and soon a large number of dogs became a part of the retinue. Then he shifted himself to the back of a dog and proceeded. Like this, different animals joined the group and the fox kept shifting from one animal to the other. Next they met an elephant who found this very strange and he too reverently bowed. The fox called him and rode on him thus proclaiming himself the King of beasts. Next they met a lion who saw the entourage and thought, "This must be somebody great", and from the wayside knelt down respectfully. For a fox this should have been enough of an achievement but he was so excited that he wanted to become the king of even the lions. Planning thus, he called the lion. The lion complied and the fox said, "I wish to ride you. Let me do so immediately". The lion answered, "Of course Sir! You are the king of all the animals", and he complied. The fox thought, "I could never imagine to be the king of even elephants and here I am the king of lions". He held his head even higher, raised his ears arrogantly and paying no heed to the ways of the world
looked down contemptuously while getting onto the lion's back. He made the elephant hold the bridles on both the sides. They advanced thus to the wild forests thinking of inducting as many lions as possible. While proceeding the animals including the elephants thought, "The very sound of the lion makes our hearts sink with fear making us almost half dead and here because of our lord fox we are together and can be together with each other without any ill will." Incidentally, the lion roars at least once a day. Around noon time, the lion held his head high and snorting wildly, with a weary look on his face, looked around. All the animals sensed that something was going to happen and they suddenly froze to death out of fear. The mounted fox felt as if he was going to fall down when he saw the lion turn his fore limbs upwards with the ears erect. The fox regained his composure and encouraged himself by saying that he was the king of lions and held tightly onto the back of the lion. The lion suddenly roared like the sound of thunder. The roar echoed far and wide. At that moment the fox fell down and died instantaneously. All the animals including the elephants holding the bridle fell unconscious. The lion thought, "I made this fox sit on my back thinking him to be the king of animals. On hearing me roar casually he fell down to his death and what would have happened if I had roared in anger. I was taken in for a ride unnecessarily by a worthless fellow". Thinking this he quietly walked away towards the mountains. The other animals regained consciousness and walked back dumbfounded. The fox had died and some other animals also may have died.
Had the fox been contented riding just the elephants he could have averted his death but he became over ambitious and met his end. The moral from this story is that people should act according to their capacity and stop overdoing things, it has thus been told successfully.

This story is a condensed version of the Jataka story of 'Sabbadatha Jataka' retold with the objective of preaching the importance of knowing one's limit and the consequences of vanity. The Konjaku writer gives this indication in the story, that for the fox to be the king of all the animals especially the elephants should have been the limit but he attempted to ride the lion. As is evident from the opening portion of the story, it is one of those few examples of the Indian section in which the writer attempts to use his imagination and skill in writing. The details about the places are missing like most other stories of this section. On the other hand, the Jataka story attempts to highlight the weaker character of Devadatta, Buddha's cousin who repeatedly tried to kill Buddha Bodhisattva but in vain. In Jataka, the opening lines give the details of the places and persons describing Bodhisattva, as the one "who have mastered the three vedas and the eighteen branches of knowledge", and then goes on to describe the special features of the spell in question i.e. of subduing the world. It also points out the reason as to why the jackal could remember it by heart, on the basis of the Karmic cycle pointing the jackal to be a brahmin in a previous existence who had mastered the spell of subduing the world.

1 Jataka Stories: no.241
In Jataka story the pre-Buddhist concepts are retained. The jackal, in order to impress Boddhisattva, addresses him as, "Ho! Brahmin" rather than as,"Ho, Monk". On the other hand in Konjaku Monogatari it is the monk (Bhikhu) living in old temple quarters reciting sutras all the time, the contents of sutra being the spell of subjugating the world. Apparently the story originally is associated with the vedic cult rather than Buddhism.

The writer in Konjaku attempts to describe things at large in order to make the narrative more lucid. Thus it describes vividly how the fox goes on inducting various animals in the group. On the contrary, the Jataka merely sums this portion unrealistically as, "He repeated the spell and thus had several hundreds of jackals under his command and gathered all the elephants and horses, lions, tigers, swine and deer and all other four footed creatures: and their King he became under the title of Sabbadatha Attusk...". ¹

However the scope of the story in Konjaku is limited to the animal world, whereas in Jataka it is extended to the human world. The Jataka story goes on to describe how the jackal attempted to even be the ruler of that very kingdom and threatened the reigning king but finally fell victim to the plan of the wise minister, who actually was Bodhisattva reborn at that time as the King's minister. The Konjaku Monogatari story, without dwelling on the part related to

¹ Jataka Stories: Cowell, vol.II, p.169
the human world, restricts itself to the realm of animals only, yet creating an interesting plot. A closer scrutiny of the individual components reveal the elements of authority and submission, as the *Konjaku* story evolves. The vanity on the part of the fox implies cowardice and foolish submission on the part of the other animals. This continues till the end although the authority is eventually restored to the mighty lion due to the lapse on the part of fox who, puffed up with pride, did not realise its own limitations. On the other hand the *Jataka* story apparently has three objectives. Firstly, to show that Devadatta managed to get renown and support but lost it all because of his over ambitious nature without considering his limitations. Secondly, to portray the cool wisdom of Bodhisattva who helps to resolve the crisis without getting perturbed. Thirdly, as an old worldly tale to show the consequences of vanity which is symbolised by the jackal. In *Konjaku Monogatari*, the second and third types of the above objectives emerge as the central theme. In both cases, it is the lion's roar that brings about the fall of the proud fox. However, in *Jataka*, it is carried out to the extreme whereby, due to the presence of the whole battalion of lions, there is much loss of the 'lives of animals. So much so that people ate all the meat that they could and dried the rest and preserved it. The story ends correlating the origin of the practice of drying and preserving the meat with this incident. On the other hand, the *Konjaku Monogatari* story ends with a touch of realism warning
against the danger of overdoing things beyond one's capacity rather than relating the origin of things.

In the Jataka version, contrastive elements continue throughout and are extended to the human beings ending as the story of a battle of wits rather than might unlike the Konjaku story.

In Japan, an analogue of this theme is present in the folk tale named; "Inu to kitsune no ryoko". The journey of a fox and dog is included in Nihon Mukashi Banashi Taisei. Here too the central theme continues to be the vanity of animals represented by the self bragging fox. Popular in Tono city of Iwate prefecture in Japan, the plot in short is as follows:

A dog and a fox travel together. The fox brags that she has supernatural powers and can see the past and predict the future and claims to know even witch craft. The dog is sick of her boastful talk. Soon they reach a river flowing between the cliffs which has to be crossed. There is a narrow log bridge and the dog insists on the fox crossing the bridge first as he would prefer to remain behind such a god like creature who can perceive all. Ultimately the fox agreed to lead. Midway the dog barks. Startled by the bark, the fox falls into the river. The dog laughs, "Oh! God, you can perceive the past and predict the future and still could not foresee what was ahead of you". The dog hurriedly went away. Here the fox bragging about bewitching human appears natural in Japanese context where fox is

1 Taisei: vol.I, p.263
regarded as a trickster having a supernatural powers to transform itself into human beings.

However such a deceitful and bragging fox reminds one of the proverb, "Ass in the lion's skin". The story behind the origin of this proverb is in *Konjaku Monogatari* ¹, paired with the above story of the vanity of the fox which is as follows:

Once upon a time there was a mountain in Tenjiku and there lived a fox and a lion. The fox used to imitate the lion's might and scare away animals. On learning this, the lion visited him and asked him the reason for doing so. The fox swore by the Gods to convince him that he was not scaring the animals but the lion did not believe it. The fox tried to escape but fell into a pit accidentally. It was a deep pit and there was no way that the fox could get out. Just then he thought of the transient nature of the world and earnestly desired for Buddhahood. In the past Bodhisattva too offered his flesh to the tiger while aspiring to attain Buddhahood ², "I am also in the same position today", he thought.

Just then there was an upheaval caused by the six types of earthquakes and the six heavens shook up completely. Then *Manjushri* and *Sokro Dewanam Indra*, disguised as ascetics came by the pit and asked the fox, "What is it that you wish for?" The fox replied, "If you must know then you pull me out first". They did so and got the fox out of the pit and asked again, "Tell us fast." Now as the fox was out of danger, he forgot all about the Buddhahood and thought of

¹ *Konjaku Monogatari*: vol. 5, 21
² *Konjaku Monogatari*: vol. 5, 14
fleeing from there without saying anything. The Gods could perceive his intentions and immediately transformed themselves into the appearance of subjugating demons with a sword and a spear in hands and assaulted the fox. Petrified the fox related what he had felt earlier. The Gods on learning this felt pity for him and said, "As you have earnestly aspired for Buddhahood, after you die you will be reborn in the realm of Buddha and shall be known by two names of Daibenzaiten or Sarasvati and Kenrojishin the Prithvi. In actuality you shall lead the 8700 'ganas' (demons) and bestow happiness upon the masses" saying which they disappeared. The ascetic at that time was Manjushree (goddess of learning) in her previous birth. Similarly, the fox at that time was the Dharani in her former birth. This Bodhisattva is ten thousand feet in height (3000 m) and has eight hands, two folded together while in the remaining six he holds a key, a plough, a sickle, a scythe etc., and grows five kinds of grains thus bestowing happiness upon the people and enjoys the following of nine hundred million and four thousand 'ganas' (demons). Thus the single minded devotion of even a moment has miraculous retributions. The proverb, "fox in lions skin (ass in the lion's skin) is also derived from this incident and it has thus been told successively.

As compared to the earlier plot this story obviously is a combination of popular folk and religious elements with the central theme being the benefits of invoking the name of Buddha with complete devotion. It is also regarded as the story behind the origin of the proverb, "Ass in the lion's
skin". As mentioned earlier, the stories of Volume Five are mostly presented as popular tales with little traces of their Buddhist origin. This story is an exception as it relates the benefits of remembering Buddha and also concludes with the birth identification in typical Jataka style. Its prototype in the original Jataka is Jambuka Jataka 1 and Viraka Jataka 2. In the latter, one of the protagonists is the Bodhisattva born as a marsh crow and his wicked cousin Devadatta born as an ordinary crow, who tries to copy him but is drowned. In the former prototype of Jambuka Jataka the jackal lives with a lion and feeds on his leftovers but later influenced by the lion's might forgets his own identity and attempts to kill an elephant and meets his end. Here the first half of the story is similar to the story of Konjaku Monogatari. The jackal and lion live together, the weaker one dependent on the stronger, and using his might gainfully the jackal attempts to copy the lion. On the other hand, the latter half of the Konjaku story has strong shades of religious discourse pointing out the merits of single minded devotion.

Generally speaking, this concept of chanting the name of Buddha or remembering him with single-minded devotion in order to attain salvation, became popular in the post Heian period (858 A.D) as Buddhism spread to the masses. Several popular Buddhist sects emerged in the period of constant chaos that prevailed due to the ongoing warfare and the rise and fall of various warrior families in the preceding

1 Jataka Stories: no.335
2 Jataka Stories: no.204
Kamakura period (1192-1333). The objective of these emerging sects was comforting the people who were at a loss as to whom to look up to for protection in the age of degeneration of law and order (Mappo).

Regarding this proverb of "Ass in the lion's skin" linked with this theme, the Jataka story directly associated with it is the one of 'Sihacamma Jataka'. Here the ass is made to wear the lion's skin by his master in order to scare the people away. It is not treated under the theme of vanity of animals in this case because the master is instrumental in forcing the ass to act thus. In the above narratives the elements of human beings or Gods and animals, diffidence and submission are obviously contrasted.

The second subtype of the broader group considered here as 'affairs of the animal world', is predominated by the central theme of the good natured animals. It is further extended as the motif of gratefulness of animals versus the ungratefulness of the human beings with this being widely present in India in the works like Panchtantra, Jataka, Katha-Sarit Sagar etc. There are several stories highlighting the helpful nature of animals. Some such stories in Jataka are Saraba Miga Jataka about a stag that saved a King on hunting expedition, Rohanta Miga Jataka about a golden deer caught in the trap who did not cry out for fear of disturbing and scaring his fellow beings, Cullahasa Jataka about the King of wild geese and his faithful captain. Besides these there are others which are

1 Jataka Stories: no.189
2 Jataka Stories: no.483
3 Ibid. : no.501
4 Ibid. : no.533
contrasted with the ungrateful nature of human beings or at times even animals like Maha Kapi Jataka ¹ in which the man attempts to kill his benefactor monkey, Javasakuna Jataka ² about the helpful woodpecker and the ungrateful lion.

In Japan also there are stories about the extraordinary helpful nature of animals and their being faithful companions. For example, the story of "Momotaro" ³ the peach boy who is helped by a dog, monkey and a pheasant on his expedition to the island of Ogre. The story of Urashima Taro ⁴ also relates how the turtle takes his benefactor Urashima Taro on a rare trip to the dragon's palace in the submarine world. In the story 'Hachi no Okage' ⁵, the three animals rescued by the prince, a bee, a turtle and a monkey help him win the hand of the princess. However, these stories, seldom contrasted with the ungratefulness of the human beings are numerous in Japanese folklore clustered under the sub-heading of 'Dobutsu hoon' ⁶ or the animals requital of kindness.

In section five of Konjaku Monogatari which is the focal point of this study, the stories grouped under the category of the 'affairs of the animal world' are of two types viz, the one in which the good deeds of animals are treated with treason by human beings and secondly, about the good nature of the animals in general. The typical example of the former is the story of the unique deer which is discussed hereafter in detail. The Konjaku story ⁷ of "The nine

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¹ Ibid. : no.516
² Ibid. : no.308
³ Taisei : vol.III, p.69
⁴ Ibid. : vol.VI, p.22
⁵ Taisei : vol.II, p.315
⁶ Ibid. : vol.VI, p.53
coloured deer who walked out of his dwelling in the
to save a man" is as follows:
Once upon a time, in Tenjiku, there lived a stag with nine
coloured coat on his body and snow white horns. Nobody knew
its whereabouts. On the foothills where he lived there was
a river. There lived a bird close by who had been his
companion for years. One day a man drowned in the river
while crossing it. Struggling in the water he cried for
help calling the names of Gods trees, mountains, heaven and
the dragon Gods. There was nobody there to hear his cries
in that deserted place. The stag used to come down to the
river once in a while to drink water. He heard the screams
of the drowning man and said. "You need not worry. You get
on my back and hold my horns. I shall carry you ashore".
Saying this the stag jumped in the river and brought the man
ashore. The man was overjoyed on being saved. With folded
hands and eyes brimming with tears he said, "I have been
saved because of you only. How can I repay you for this
deed?" "I want only one favour that you do not tell anybody
about my whereabouts. My skin is nine coloured which is
unique and my horns are white like snow. If anybody gets to
know about my whereabouts I shall be killed because of my
skin and horns. This is the reason why I live here in deep
hiding in the mountains. On hearing your call for help my
heart was moved and I could not restrain myself from saving
you." the stag said. The man promised not to tell anybody
and expressing his gratitude he departed. He came back to
his village and did not tell anybody about this incident.

1 Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5, 18
Once the Queen of that Kingdom dreamt of a nine coloured stag. She got up from her sleep and craved so much for the animal that she took ill and was bedridden and morose. When the King enquired from her the cause of her sickness she said, "I saw a nine coloured deer in my dream. It definitely exists somewhere. I must have its skin and horns or else I shall die". The King immediately announced all over his kingdom, "Whosoever finds such a deer or tells about its whereabouts, shall be handsomely rewarded with gold, silver and all that he wishes".

The man who was saved by the nine coloured deer also heard of the announcement. Unable to control his lust for the reward he forgot all about the promise he had made to the stag and went to the palace asking for an audience with the King. He told the King, "I know the place where the nine coloured deer lives in the mountains. If you send a company of your men with me immediately I shall take them to that place". The King was very pleased to hear this and said, "I shall lead the company to the mountain myself".

accompanied by the man, he led a huge company and set out to get the deer. The man guided them to the spot where the deer lived. The deer unaware of all this was sleeping in his dwelling in the interior. His bird companion was surprised to see the procession approach from afar. He rushed to the deer and began to chirp loudly in an attempt to wake him up but in vain. Finally the bird came closer, pecked at his ear and said, "The King has come with a big company in search of you for your skin. They have surrounded the valley. Now it is impossible for you to
escape as you are trapped completely". Warning thus the
bird flew away. The deer naturally surprised, looked around
and saw the King and his men approach. As there was no way
to escape, the deer himself walked up to the King's
palaquin. He was surrounded by the King's men who were
ready to strike with the arrows held ready in their bows.
The King ordered his men, "Hold on for a while without
striking. This deer does not look to be an ordinary one.
He is approaching me without any fear of the surrounding men
ready to strike. Let us watch him for a while". The
soldiers withdrew their arrows and the deer approached the
King and said, "Your Highness! I have been living here in
hiding, deep in the mountains because of my rare skin. No
one knows my whereabouts. Tell me, Oh King, how did you
come to know about it." The King replied, pointing to the
man, "I learnt about you from this man with pock marks on
his face standing beside me." The deer looked at the man
with pock marks and realised that it was the same man whose
life he had saved. The deer cried and cried and narrated
the whole incident to the King. The deer then said to the
man,"You had assured me that you would not tell my
whereabouts to anyone when I had saved your life. Have you
forgotten all about that promise and have now come with the
King to take my life? When you were drowning I saved your
life, even without caring for my own self. It is a pity
that you have forgotten about it so soon, and you do not
seem to even remember it". The man stood speechless.
The King declared, "From now on no one will kill deer in my
country and anyone who defies my orders shall be killed and
his house destroyed".

The King returned to the palace and the deer went back to
his dwelling happily. After that there were no droughts,
epidemics or storms in the kingdom. The harvest was in
plenty and nobody remained poor.

Thus it is said that it is the human beings who forget
favours while it is the animals who help the human beings.
It is true of the past as well as the present.

The nine coloured deer in this story was the present Buddha
himself. His close companion, the bird was Ananda in past
life and the King's consort was Sundari in her former life.

The man who drowned and was saved was the present Devadatta.
It has thus been told successfully.

In Jataka Book this motif appears as "Ruru-Jataka"; suggesting the ungrateful nature of the human beings
symbolised by Devadatta the cousin of Buddha who was the
merchant who nearly drowned. Comparing the two, we find the
beginning in the Konjaku Monogatari story as a simple
introduction of the place and person, whereas the Jataka
story is detailed and gives the background of the culprit as
that of a "spoilt son of a merchant who had lost everything
and in a bid to escape his creditors jumps into the river".

The deer here is a golden coloured deer who lives on the
banks of the river Ganges a natural abode in India for the
animal. On the other hand in Konjaku he lives on a mountain

1 Jataka Stories: no.482
and his place of dwelling too is described as that of a mountain country rather than of the plains.

In Jataka the theme of the story too is revealed by the deer itself when he says, "Better save a drowning log than a man like you". Here the deer even protects the wretched man a second time when the King orders him to be killed for his misdeeds by intervening, "Let the wretch go and give his meed?" ¹ The concluding part of the story in Jataka brings forth a very practical problem. The protection conferred on the deer resulted in explosive population growth of the deer in the kingdom who in turn devoured the crops and placards then were invented in order to scare them away. The writer of the story of Konjaku Monogatari could not have perceived this problem in the absence of any firsthand knowledge of Indian conditions and so he ends the story abruptly without touching upon the resultant problem. The contrasting elements are present all throughout in the form of animals - human beings, kindness - cruelty, reward - punishment, lust - magnanimity. Incidentally, personified in different characters, these represent the contradictory aspects of human nature like the human beings shown as an example of betrayal and treachery as also as a symbol of protection and faithfulness in the form of the King who keeps his promise till the end. Inspite of this aspect being portrayed the theme of the ungrateful nature of human beings predominates.

In the Jataka story the fellow companion of the deer, a bird, remains faithful at the time of crisis. On the contrary, the man whose life he had saved reveals his

¹ Jataka Stories: vol. III-IV, p. 165
whereabouts and comes to get him killed thereby enhancing the gap between the two. In Jataka the sequence of events from the standpoint of the treacherous man evolves as follows; Bad - Good - Bad.

The spoilt son of the rich merchant appears to have been transformed when, with tears of gratitude in his eyes, he promises the deer that he would not reveal his whereabouts to anyone, but soon he forgets and shows his original self. On the other hand the treacherous nature of this man is neutralised by the King's strong character who gives protection to the deer saying that nobody will kill deer in his kingdom and stood by his promise. Even when his people complained to the King that the increased population of deer was devouring all that was meant for human consumption he remained firm in his stand and said,"Be it the people's wish or not, I cannot wrong the deer to whom I promised life and peace".

The Konjaku Monogatari story on the other hand begins directly without any antecedents of the protagonist. The plot develops with the focus on the deer in terms of the elements given below: The normal good intention - betrayal by man - King's kindness being the neutralising factor. Moreover the Konjaku Monogatari story, from the standpoint of the man, could be represented as follows: help by an animal - betrayal of the benefactor - punishment. In the Konjaku Monogatari story, the modifications make the story convincing in the Japanese context. The description of the landscape is Japanised with the deer living in the mountains

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1 Jataka Stories: vol.IV, p.165
in seclusion with the river flowing down below where the man is drowning. Such description portrays the image of a mountainous country rather than the plains. The writer also very conveniently deletes the concluding portions related to the excessive population of deer, since in Japan originally the deer are not seen commonly and such a problem naturally could not have been conceived by a Japanese writer.

In *Ujishui Monogatari*, a story collection of the 12th century almost on the lines of *Konjaku Monogatari* compiled by Fujiwara no Takakuni, the same story appears as that of the "nine coloured deer who lived deep inside the mountains out of fear of being caught".¹ The plot of the story is identical with some minor variations like the elimination of the birth identification portion. Similarly, the ungrateful man although pardoned is ultimately exiled.

This theme of helpful nature of animals and ungrateful nature of man is extended further in the story "The blind elephant in a grove performs his duty to the mother."² The *Konjaku Monogatari* story is short and is as follows:

Once upon a time there was a grove in the land of Tenjiku. There lived an elephant mother who was blind. She had a son who looked after his blind mother and would not leave her alone even for a short while. He gathered fruits and plants for her to eat and fresh water for her to drink. This went on for years. Once a man lost his way in the woods and reached the grove and walked about helplessly. The son elephant helped him and showed him out. The man came out of the mountains and reached home safe and happy. He then went

¹ *Ujishui Monogatari*: Story no.92
² *Konjaku Monogatari*: vol.5, 26
to the King and said, "I know the place where Gandhastin lives. It is a rare kind. Oh! King, capture it". On hearing this the King led his company of best men and went to the grove and with the help of the man, he captured the elephant. As the man pointed towards the dwelling of the elephant both his limbs fell to the ground as if they had been chopped off. Seeing this, the King was awe struck but still he captured the elephant and brought it to the capital and tied it in the stable. The elephant refused to eat and drink. The attendants found it very strange and reported this to the King. The King himself went to the stable and enquired, "Oh! elephant why do you not eat and drink". The elephant replied, "My mother is blind and cannot walk and look after herself. I have been looking after her but ever since being caught like this, there is nobody to look after her and she must be suffering due to hunger. Thinking of her I feel sad and helpless. How can I eat and drink here when my mother has not eaten all this while".

The King's heart was moved and he ordered the elephant to be released. The elephant returned back happily to the grove to his mother.

The elephant was Buddha in his previous birth. After crossing the river Nirenjara there is a pipal tree and towards the east of this tree there is a big grove with a stupa located there. In north side there is a pond also. This was the place where the blind mother elephant lived. This has thus been told successively.

Inspite of the identical sequence of events, the story also has the extra elements of filial piety and supernatural
forces. The limbs of the treacherous man were chopped off automatically in a strange manner. Yet the King does not enquire about the reason for it and captures the elephant. Later deeply moved by his filial piety for his blind mother he releases the elephant.

In its prototype, the Mataposak Jataka¹, the elephant abandons the company of eighty thousand animals in order to take care of his blind mother and lives on Mt. Candorana. Rest of the story is almost the same with slight variations like the elephant is a magnificent unique white elephant but not the Gandhahastin. The benefactor man guides the King's men himself to fetch the elephant and thus symbolises betrayal but there is no mention about whether he is punished or not on being receded to the background and the plot develops around the King and the elephant. Even in the birth identification portion also there is no mention of the man who in fact is instrumental in developing the plot.

Finally, the Konjaku Monogatari story mentions about the location of the dwelling of the elephant in the concluding portion and in Jataka also the location of the place where the elephant lived with his mother is pointed where the King had a city built and later it became the eternal venue of the elephant festival. Similarly in Mahavastu too there appears "the Jataka of the female elephant" ² which is structurally alike except for the thematic message of fillial piety. In Jatakas there is another prototype of this theme in Silavanaga-Jataka³ in which this ungrateful

¹ Jataka Stories: no. 455  
² The Mahavastu: vol. III, p. 126  
³ Jataka Stories: no. 72
man is identified as Devadatta. Furthermore in Konjaku too, this theme appears differently in the story title 'The elephant of Tenjiku pierced with a thorn in the foot abducts a man to remove it'. Here the elephant bestowed a treasure on his benefactor in return. Thus here the theme is restricted to the help being met with goodness, highlighting the grateful nature of animals.

In Japan this theme is incorporated in works like Shasekishu and in folklore being treated as 'Ningenmujo'. A hunter is saved by a rare wolf after falling from a cliff. He later kills the animal with the help of another fellow hunter. This folk tale of Shizuoka Prefecture is a part of the broader theme of ungrateful human beings and grateful animals.

The typical story associated with this theme of ungrateful human beings versus the grateful animals is that of a man who in spite of repeated warnings from other animals saves a fellow human being and gets into trouble himself because of the man he had saved. Ultimately he is rescued with the help of other animals. In Indian context it is there in Panchatantra etc. as the theme of grateful animals and the ungrateful woman. Here the main characters are a lion, a bird, a snake and a woman who are saved by the noble Bodhisatta.

In Japan it is widely found in the folklore as well as Konjaku Monogatari. The story of Konjaku Monogatari, especially in its initial part, has strong resemblance with

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1 Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5-27
2 Taisei: vol.VI, p.96
3 Panchatantra: vol.I. The Ungrateful Man
4 Taisei: vol.VI, p.93
5 Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5, 19
the traditional Japanese folk tale of Urashimataro mentioned earlier. The latter half of the Konjaku story is the typical example of ungratefulness and betrayal by men. In the folklore type of classification, it is treated separately from the former motif classified under the theme of unkept promise. Yet, both these are identical in projecting the untrustworthy nature of human beings. The second half of the story is as follows:

Several years passed and once the man who had rescued the turtle was sleeping when he felt something sneak under his pillow. He raised his head and saw a turtle which was three meters long. Out of amazement he uttered, "Who are you? O turtle". The turtle replied, "I am the one you had saved once, from a man who had captured a turtle and was going to kill it, by buying it. I wish to repay you for your kindness. Today I have come to inform you that in the vicinity of this region there is going to be a calamity and the river nearby is likely to be flooded. So not only human beings but even the animals are going to be drowned. Even this house of yours, then will be immersed in water. You should immediately prepare a boat and as soon as the river is in flood you should depart, to save your life and that of your close ones". The man found it difficult to believe but he still thought that there must be some reason for what the turtle had said and he kept a boat ready in front of his house making all the necessary arrangements in case of need. The same evening there was a heavy downpour with the winds blowing strong which continued till the evening. Next morning at dawn the river overflowed from upstream and
flooded the whole area around it. Since the boat was ready, his family hurriedly got into the boat. After rowing for some distance they found that they were in calm waters and saw a turtle drowning. He called out, "I am the one who visited you yesterday please save me and take me also along with you". "Get in quickly". The man got him in the boat quickly. Soon after they found a snake drowning. When he saw the boat he requested, "Save me please otherwise I shall die". The man refused saying, "Never. Even a small snake is dangerous what to say about a big snake. You will bite us even if we foolishly decide to pull you out of the water".

The turtle intervened, "He will do no such thing. Just let him be inside the boat with us. It is good to help such creatures". The man allowed the snake to be pulled into the boat. The snake coiled himself towards the pier. It was big in size but since the boat was also quite big it did not pose any problem. As they moved further a fox came by. On seeing the boat she too called for help. The turtle suggested, "Let us save her". The fox was also allowed into the boat. As they proceeded further they saw a man drowning and as the boat neared the drowning man the turtle said, "Let us not have him in the boat. The animals remember the favours and are grateful but the human beings are treacherous. They do not remember kindness. Let him die". The man said, "On seeing such a dreadful snake drown my heart was moved and I saved him, then how can I now let another fellow human being drown in front of my eyes and not save him". He thus allowed the drowning man also into the
boat. The man thus saved was naturally overjoyed and with his hands folded in gratitude cried bitterly. They then moved to a designated place and when the water settled finally, everyone went back to his respective place. After some time the man who owned the boat met the snake. The snake said, "I have been wanting to meet you. I wish to give you something for saving my life. Please come with me". He guided the man to a place with a huge grave. The snake wriggled inside it and asked the man to follow him. It was scary yet the man followed it. Once inside, the snake pointed towards a huge treasure and said, "This whole treasure is mine. Take as much as you like. I present it to you for saving my life". Saying this the snake disappeared. This man sought help of some people and carried back as much of the treasure as possible. He became rich overnight. Soon after the man was visited by the same person whom he had saved from drowning much against the wishes of the turtle. On being asked the purpose of his visit, he said, "I have come to thank you for saving my life." At the same time he was amazed to see the wealth of the host and could not help asking, "Where have you acquired all these riches from?" The host narrated the whole incident from the beginning. The man said, "You have acquired all this wealth unexpectedly. Thus you ought to share it with me". The host out of his decency gave him some of it. The man was not satisfied with this and said, "Why are you giving me so little. You have not earned this wealth but have got it by chance. So you should just share half of all the wealth with me." The host said, "What nonsense! It was
given to me by the snake in gratitude for my help. You, on
the other hand, instead of being grateful for what I did for
you, are demanding a share. It is quite strange. In spite
of this I shared some of it with you, but you are not happy
and insist on having half of it. It is absurd and
unreasonable." On hearing this reply the man got angry and
went away throwing whatever was given to him. He straight
away went to the King and complained, "There is a person who
digs open the graves and steals the precious things kept
therein". The King sent his men to arrest the person and
put him in jail. He was tortured day and night with his
hands and legs tied. The man screamed out in pain and was
almost unconscious. Then one day he suddenly found something
wriggling by his pillow. It was the same turtle he had
saved before. The man enquired, "How come you are here?"
The turtle said, "I came to know that you are being unjustly
punished for something that you have not done and I have
come here to see you. Did I not stop you from helping the
man into the boat? Have you now realised that men are
ungrateful and are not worthy of being helped. It is
pointless to discuss all that now. You cannot remain in
this state forever". The turtle disappeared to come back
with other animals who were rescued by the man. The fox and
the snake together conceived of a plan to rescue the man.
It was decided that the fox will cry in the palace. On
hearing its cries the King will be concerned and will ask
the fortune-teller to predict its significance. The King
has a daughter whom he loves above all. At that time make
the fortune teller predict that something serious is going
to happen to his daughter. Then let the turtle and snake
make the princess seriously sick. All of the animals
promised to do according to the plan and departed.
Next day, a large number of people gathered in front of the
prison and talked among themselves, "Thousands of foxes
cried in the city and the King is disturbed because the
fortune teller, when asked by the King, told him that the
princess was likely to be inflicted with a serious disease".
Soon after the princess had a strange disease in which her
stomach swelled up and she was in a critical condition. In
the palace there was a great turmoil.
While this was going on, the King asked the fortune teller
the reason for his daughter's illness. The fortune teller
said, "It is because you have jailed some innocent person".
The King then enquired about whether there could be such a
person in prison who appeared innocent. The officials
questioned all the inmates of the prison and finally came to
this man. After listening to his story they went back to
the King and reported everything. The King called the man
and enquired about his so-called crime. The man repeated
the whole incident right from the beginning. The King on
listening to the man's version felt sorry for imprisoning an
innocent man and ordered for his immediate release. Then
the King said, "Now that treacherous man should be
punished". He sent for him and gave him a rigorous
punishment.
On the other hand the man in prison was released and he then
was reminded of the turtle's saying that men are ungrateful
beings and he realised that the turtle was right. It has thus been told successively.

The prototypes of this theme in Japan are found in classical works like the Ujishui Monogatari as well as in the folk literature as the motif of Ningen-Mujo, "the ungrateful human beings" mentioned earlier. On the other hand in India we find its variants in Jataka also. The Jataka story of 'Saccamkira-Jataka' evolves around a prince, a snake, a rat and a parrot, the prince representing the human beings. The message of the story is explicit from the stanza: "They knew the world, who'd framed this proverb true. A log pays better salvage than some men." Besides Jataka it is present in Panchtantra and Katha-Sarit Sagar with the same thematic message.

The next category of animal fables commonly found is that of relating the origin of things. In other words, to explain the how and why of things and such tales are numerous in Japan. Most common of them is the one explaining the reason for the enmity between cats and mice. To name a few popular tales of this category in Japan there is Uo-dorobo, the fish thief explaining why the dupe has no tail; Meshi dorob' the 'Rice thief' explaining why the monkey's face is red; Kaeru to Ushi explaining why frog's belly is big and Tonbi Fuko about why frogs croak in rains etc. In this context it is interesting to note that many of the Indian animal fables adapted or implanted in Japan are modified to this

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1 Jataka Stories: no.73
2 Jataka Stories: vol. I, p.180
3 Taisei: vol.I, p.24
4 Ibid. : vol.I, p.41
5 Ibid. : vol.I, p.402
6 Ibid. : vol.I, p.302
type, i.e., explaining how and why of things. Obviously the fundamental difference in the approach of the Japanese and the Indians towards the animals could be bridged by modifying these stories thus. Incidentally, it is these modified versions that are the most popular in Japan, being widely adapted. However, the foremost example of this type is the fable of monkey and the crocodile. In Japan it explains the reason why the jelly fish has no bones and is popular as the story of 'Kurage hone nashi'1. "The Jelly Fish is without bones" is a story, having a simple and interesting plot with didactic connotations. Its original form being widely found in India and popularly adapted in the Buddhistic works also. Its presence in Jataka stories in three different forms speaks for its popularity.

Originally it is present in the old texts like Panchtantra2, Jatakas, Katha Sarit Sagara 3. With some variation, for example in Panchtantra, it is the theme story of section four, highlighting the importance of having the presence of mind even in the worst circumstances. In Jatakas it has three variations i.e. the first version titled as Vanarinda-Jataka 4 expounds the virtues of truthfulness, foresightedness, lawfulness, a fixed resolve etc. in living beings. The second one titled Sumsumara-Jataka 5 is merely cited as an example of the repeated attempts of the wicked cousin of Buddha, Devdatta to kill Bodhisatta whereas the third variant named Vanara-Jataka 6 is somewhat like the

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1 Ibid. : vol.I, p.253
2 Panchatantra: bnoook IV
3 Katha Sarit Sagara: vol.I
4 Jataka Stories: no.57
5 Ibid. : no.208
6 Ibid. : no.342
Panchtantra story propounding the importance of promptness even in a crisis.

In Japan, the story is included in the Indian section of Konjaku Monogatari. This modified version of the Indian story in Konjaku portrays it as the motif of the folly of animals attempting to outwit one another. The Konjaku story which is more or less the same structurally as the Indian variant is as follows:

Once upon a time in Tenjiku there was a mountain by the bank of a river where dwelt a monkey. He lived by eating the fruits grown there. Close by in a river there lived a turtle with its mate.

The female turtle said to the partner, "I am bearing your child, but due to some stomach ailment, I shall have problem in delivery. You have to get me the medicine for a safe delivery." "Which medicine are you talking about"? the male turtle enquired eagerly.

"I've heard that the monkey's liver is the ideal medicine for stomach ailments." On learning this the male turtle conceived a plan and came to the shore to meet the monkey.

On approaching the monkey, the turtle asked, "Friend do you get all the different varieties of eatables around here?"

The monkey complained," What to tell you. I am always short of food." The turtle said, "Near my place there are forests where the fruits and vegetation of different kinds grow in plenty. Let me take you there so that you can eat as much as you like and bring the rest here".

1Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5, 25
The monkey oblivious of his plans happily said, "It is a great idea. I definitely want to go." The turtle said, "Well then let's go" and carrying the monkey on his back said, "Let's proceed". On the way he tells the monkey, "You do not know the truth. My wife is pregnant but she is suffering from a kind of stomach ailment. I have heard that monkey's liver is the best medicine for it. So I have enticed you actually in order to take your liver."

On learning the truth the monkey said, "It is really regrettable, I wish you had told me the truth beforehand. Have you not heard that we monkeys do not have livers inside the body. Instead we keep it on some tree nearby. Had you told me before starting I would have given you my liver as well as that of the others. Now even if you kill me but do not get the liver inside my body it would be a worthless effort. What a great pity." When the monkey lamented thus, the turtle believing him said, "Well then, let's go back together so that you can fetch me the liver".

"That is very easy once we reach the shore." the monkey replied. The turtle carrying the monkey on his back came back to the shore. No sooner did they reach the spot, the monkey jumped off the turtle's back, ran and climbed onto the tree. Then looking down at the turtle he said sarcastically "Oh turtle, you are foolish. You even believed that there could be liver outside the body". The turtle thought "this fellow has taken me for a ride" but helpless as he was, he looked up at the monkey and in the same manner said, "Hey monkey! you are a fool too. Where do
you think fruits grow in the river bed" and saying this he went back in the sea.

In the yore also the animals were slow witted like this.
Even the human beings are also alike it has thus been told successively.

This story is more vivid when compared to *Jataka* variants, possibly more like its counterpart in *Panchtantra* having no prologue or the birth identifications sections. In *Jatkaras* variants the central plot too is comparatively much more chronological except for the *Sumsumara Jataka*. On comparing these three we find that in *Vanarinda Jataka* the crocodile stands still like a rock, waiting for the monkey to step on but the monkey on noticing something unusual, clearly puts it to test and comes out safe. The *Sumsumara Jataka* is far more vivid and descriptive with the inclusion of dialogues freely. For instance while inviting the monkey over, the crocodile says, "Sir monkey, how do you live by eating the same fruits every day in this old place. On the other side there are endless number of mango trees and labuja trees with fruits as sweet as honey. Is it not better to cross over to the other side and have all kinds of wild fruits to eat."

The third *Jataka* version of *Vanara-Jataka* gives the plot in a very chronological way.

It is the *Panchtantra* story as pointed earlier which is very vivid more so while describing the human emotions like the conversation between crocodile and his wife. Crocodile after having lost his prized catch once does not give up,

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1 *Jataka Stories*: no.57
2 Ibid. : Vols. I-II p.111
and again attempts to befool the monkey saying "Dear monkey it was a joke. I was testing your friendship" but in vain and could not succeed in convincing the monkey of his friendship again.

The narrative analysis of the story reveals the contrastive components of friendship and betrayal, cleverness and foolishness prevailing throughout. In the locale also it is the land versus the sea. Smartness on the part of the turtle, conversely speaking reflects the gullibility on the part of monkey. The Konjaku writer has attempted certain changes in the characters as well as description, the foremost being his preference for turtle to crocodile possibly because it is the most commonly associated reptile with the sea in Japan rather than the lesser known crocodile there.

Further more as seen in the case of most of the stories of this volume five the writer avoids using proper names for places as well as characters. Thus by giving a neutral character to the plot he has incorporated such elements as the popular beliefs associated with the monkey in Japan. For example in the Indian variants the mate of crocodile needs the monkey's liver due to a stray desire to eat his liver, aroused possibly when he saw the healthy and well built frame of his body. On the other hand in the Konjaku story it is demanded with a logic. The turtle's mate suffering from stomach ailments desires to have the monkey's liver for its cure. According to the conventional medicinal beliefs popular in Japan, monkey's liver is regarded to be

\[\text{Panchtantra: vol. IV, p. 469}\]
good for stomach ailments particularly the ones associated with child birth. In Ishikawa prefecture, the small intestine of the monkey is precious as a rare cure for child birth. There the lady owner of Maruo Inn had preserved such a dried intestine wrapped in Japanese paper and kept in the dressing table drawer. It was given to her by her mother-in-law when she was married into the family. It seems that before delivery she had tied it to the stomach to ease child birth. Furthermore, according to some hunters of Senami in Ishikawa, the dried intestine called Hyaku-hira is chopped into small pieces using scissors and kept in hot water for a while and then drunk. These are possibly derived from traditional Chinese medicine that considers different parts of the monkey's body as effective for curing various diseases. For instance "the medicines prepared by using its brain are good for neurological disorders as well as headaches. The powdered charred remains of his head are given to the mentally retarded children or those having mental disorders. Similarly its intestine, liver and fetus are effective to cure gastric disorders, heart diseases and uterine diseases." 

According to some old Japanese accounts, in some provinces in Japan, the hunters, on catching the monkey would immediately remove his liver and gall bladder. These were widely known to be good for pregnant women for curing headaches and were thus sold as prized items. These popular beliefs associated with child birth and monkey's liver, the author used effectively in portraying the character of the monkey in the story.

1 Mono to Ningen no bunka shi 34-Saru: Hirose Shiruzu pp.82-84
Incidentally in the Indian versions of Jataka, Panchatantra etc. the crocodile's wife's demand for a monkey's heart and not the liver seems strange as there is no mention of her being pregnant and, moreover, no such belief exists here. Another element that makes the Konjaku story interesting is its concluding portion where the motif is treated in a very simple and naive manner as a battle of wits rather than conveying any religious or ethical message. Both the monkey and turtle take turns to outwit one another. The developments are initiated by the above mentioned reason for getting the monkey's liver by the turtle's wife. Above all it is the the example of the folly of animals and ultimately puts both the animals on equal footing with their share of cleverness and foolishness, that could be graphically represented as below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{clever} &= \text{stupid} \\
\text{turtle} &= \text{monkey} \\
\text{stupid} &= \text{clever}
\end{align*}
\]

Obviously such modifications contributed to the popularity of this theme which otherwise would have been left in obscurity just like the bulk of other stories of Indian origin found in the Indian section of Konjaku Monogatari. In other Japanese works this theme is found in Shaseki-shu \(^{1}\) a Setsuwa collection. The plot is of a simple one with the protagonists being the monkey and Sea Dragon. The plot develops due to the Sea Dragon's pregnant wife's wish for

\(^{1}\) Shaseki-shu: vol.5, 8
monkey's liver and the rest of the story is identically narrated in a chronological manner devoid of vividness. In Japanese oral traditions this motif is eventually transformed as the one explaining the origin of things as to why Jelly fish has no bones. ¹ Here the locale and characters are totally Japanese. A monkey is needed for the ailing dragon princess due to the medicinal value of the monkey's liver. The turtle successfully manages to allure the monkey to the dragon's palace on the pretext of showing him his dwelling on the sea bed. There a Jelly fish, the gate keeper at the palace, is gossiping with others, "Look at the poor monkey being brought all the way from the human world, to be killed for his liver to be given to the ailing princess". The monkey overhearing it conceived of a plan. On entering the palace he began to cry loudly and when asked, replied "I had hung my liver on a tree for drying. It appears as if it is going to rain. My liver might get washed away." On hearing this the King is in a fix as to what to do because he had got the monkey for its liver only. Finally he ordered that the turtle should be carried to the shore so that the liver could be fetched back and thus the monkey manages to escape. Finally on learning that the prized catch slipped due to the carelessness of the Jelly fish it was beaten up so badly that all its bones cracked into bits. Since then the Jelly Fish has no bones.

This evolution from the Indian classics to the Japanese folklore, propounding to retain ones' presence of mind even in the most adverse of circumstances, and to explain the

¹Taisei: vol.I, p.253
origin of things, viz. the reason why Jelly fish has no bones, must have passed through various stages, the turning point being the Konjaku story.

Another story of Indian origin, used to explain the origin of things is the tale of a turtle and two cranes. This again is an example of the Konjaku writer's ability to develop a plot that could convince a Japanese reader and arouse their interest. Originally this tale is found in the old classics of Panchtantra and Hitopadesha. 1 In Panchtantra 1 in the first volume it is presented as Murukh-Kachhapa Katha the story of the num-skulled turtle with the central theme being the consequences of not paying heed to the warnings of ones friends and well wishers. In Katha-Sarit Sagar 1 too the central theme is the same while on the other hand in the Buddhist Jatakas it warns against over talkativeness. This very message is clearly stated in the post script of the story "it is not the only time brethren that Kokalika has been ruined by talking, it was the same before." 4

Here Bodhisattva is born as a minister to the King who is very talkative. This very wise minister, uses this particular incident that happened before their eyes, to admonish the King of over talkativeness. Generally speaking there are other Jataka stories warning against over-talkativeness. In Takkariya Jataka 5 itself four episodes are interwoven to convey this message viz, "O

1 Hitopadesha: IV, p. 99
1 Panchtantra : book I
1 Katha Sarit Sagar: chap. IX
4 Jataka Stories: vol. II, p. 124
4 Jataka Stories: vol. IV, pp. 156-157
teacher! not thou only but many another likewise has come to misery because he set not a watch upon his words." In Konjaku Monogatari, the story begins on a simple note omitting any details about the place and persons. The story titled as "The turtle fails to pay heed to the cranes' instructions, falls down, has the shell broken" is as follows:

Once upon a time, in India there was severe drought and water had dried all over and not a single leaf remained green. There in a pond lived a turtle. The water of the pond had dried and the turtle was on the verge of death. The cranes came flying there and the turtle addressed them, "You and I are related due to the Karmic cycles of previous births. The Buddha has also pointed out in his discourse that the turtle and crane are one. In scriptures numerous examples about such a relationship of ours are cited. Now there is drought all over and this pond is dry. There is no hope of my survival. Help me some how and save my life".

The crane replied, "What you say is true. You are on the verge of death. It is a pity. On the contrary, we cranes can fly as we like high or low. In the spring seasons we can see the beautiful and colourful flowers bloom. In summers we watch the luxuriant growth of the crops. In winters the frosty and snow covered landscape with the frozen rivers and inlets look beautiful. Like this the view of each one of the seasons is really beautiful. Moreover we can enjoy the intrinsic beauty of the jewelled pond located in the heavens. On the other hand you are restricted to

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1 Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5, 24
this pond only. We feel bad for you and so even before you asked us we had thought of taking you to some other place where water is available. The problem is that we cannot carry you on the back nor are we so strong to hold you. The only thing we could think of is to make you hold a stick in your mouth which two of us shall hold in our beaks and carry. I wonder how it is going to work because you are basically very talkative. If you happen to say something and unawares I attempt to answer by opening my beak it would be disasterous. What do you think?" The turtle replied, "If you promise to carry me, I shall stitch my mouth and will not utter even a single word. Would anyone like to risk his life". The cranes said, "Old habits die hard. Still we do have confidence in you". The turtle pleaded, "Believe me I will not utter even a word. Please take me from here." The two cranes held a stick from both the ends and made the turtle hold it and carrying him thus flew high up in the sky. The turtle who had always lived in the pond only, could see the beautiful mountainous landscape dotted with mountains, rivers, valleys, cliffs for the first time in his life and was very excited. Out of excitement he thus could not help asking, "What place is this?" The cranes also uttered absentmindedly, "This place....." The moment they opened their beaks, the turtle fell down and died. Therefore those who are talkative by nature do not even care for their own lives. Buddha's sayings like, "Watch out your words and control the mind" actually corresponds to this only. Besides this the popular saying "The untrustworthy
turtle had his shell broken" is derived from this incident, it has thus been told successively.

The Konjaku writer, has skillfully used proverbs and phrases, religious and popular in the plot. In the beginning of the plot he has skillfully used the proverb of 'frog in the well' and used it to describe the conditions of the amphibians restricted to their habitat as compared to the winged birds who have the whole world to themselves. Similarly he, by using the sayings like 'old habits die hard' and quoting scriptures warns against overtalkativeness. On the other hand the Jataka story, although Buddhistic in nature, has no references to the scriptures or the sayings of Buddha in the central plot except for the prologue in which the context is stated and the birth identification portion in the epilogue. The core of the story is like the Panchtantra story and ends with the warnings of the Minister to the King for talking too much. In the Jataka 1 version only the facts about the place are described, like "the pond is located in the region of Himalayas whereas the birds live in the same region on the plateau of Mount Cittakuta." Otherwise the core story is short and chronological. It is the Konjaku story which is then most vivid of all other variants of this story whether in India or Japan. The Konjaku writer has changed the original pair of turtle and wild geese to that of turtle and cranes. Now, possibly on finding the familiar characters, he has extended his imagination wildly thereby rendering a typical Japanese version of this plot. In Japan the turtle

1Jataka Stories: Vol. II. p. 123
is paired with cranes to form a traditional pair and symbolising good fortune and longevity. This auspicious combination was especially popular in the Heian period (794-858) considered as an auspicious design for the bridal robes or kimonos and placed together with the pine decorations. According to the history of Japanese textiles,¹ to this basic design of turtle and crane pair, plums were added in Kamakura (1192-1333) period subsequently followed by the bamboos in Muromachi period (1392-1540) which has been handed down to date, being associated with ceremonial occasions and popularly known as 'Shochikubai.'

In Heian period around the time when the Konjaku writer, or writers, would have lived, the design of a crane holding a branch of a pine was regarded as a popular auspicious symbol. Considering this popularity of the pair the writer would have adapted it to replace the original pair of turtle and wild geese. Now with the familiar characters at hand the writer apparently even forgot that he was relating the story of an alien land and went on to describe the landscape of his own land rather than that of Tenjiku which he had never seen even in a picture. In all other variations this description of the landscape related by the cranes is very sketchy. For example in the Panchantra story it is as follows: "While flying above, the turtle saw people pointing to something strange being carried by the birds."² In Jataka there is no mention of how the landscape looked to him, as he was flying high up in the sky. On the other hand the Konjaku story describes it very vividly using the typical

¹ Nihon no bijutsu 9: p.82
² Panchantra : book I, p.172
Japanese concept of "Shiki" meaning four season. This description suggests that the turtle lived in a mountainous country, with clearly demarcated four seasons, which most probably is the writer's own country and with this in mind he describes the landscape, appreciating the changing seasons. Here not only the scenic description but even the dialogues are much more vivid. The turtle while persuading the cranes to carry him to another place, reminds him of their old association from the previous births and even quotes from the scriptures whereby the Buddha preached the turtle and cranes to be complementary to each other. Finally the birth identification is completely missing and unlike Jatakas the story ends with the quotations from scriptures as well as the popular sayings associated with this story.

Thus the Konjaku story on one hand admonishes against over talkativeness and on the other hand relates the consequences of being distrustful, not paying heed to other's warnings. In spite of these variations the structure of the plot is common. The very central element of the plot are the land/sea and air creatures in other words birds and animals. The turtle fails to adjust to the fact of remaining quiet and thus has a fall. So it ends at the point from where it started physically i.e. the dilemma of the turtle in the beginning and now hope replaced by endless despair.

In Japanese folk lore this story is present and it is associated with the origin of things, in this case explaining the cracks on the turtle's shell.¹ The plot is

¹Taisei: vol.1, p.339
identical except for the finale whereby the turtle after falling from above does not die because of the protection given by his hard shell. On the other hand the shell is so badly shattered that even now the marks of crack are visible on it.

Another link in this series of stories relating the origin of things is the one about the association of hare with the moon. This is the most widely or rather universally prevalent fact although having multiple connotations in different cultural contexts influenced by the position of moon in that particular part of the globe. For example Indians regard it to be in jumping posture. There is also a belief that someone resides on the moon, e.g. Indians believe that an old woman constantly weaving thread on a 'charkha' also resides on the moon. Similarly in China the rabbit is regarded to be standing erect on its hind feet and pounding the rice for making rice dumplings. Here, the 'charkha' or 'spinning wheel' and pounding of rice in a wooden mortar represent two different components symbolising their respective cultures. Moreover, Chinese believe that there is a Judas tree and a giant who is constantly trying to cut the tree but in vain. Whatever be the difference in cultural contexts, a picture of the full moon with the profile of rabbit on its orb would be familiar to most of the people. The story relating this association is of Indian origin found in pre-Buddhist times as well as adapted in Buddhist Jatakas also. In Konjaku the story titled

1 Konjakumonogatari no Tekki: Ikeyami Junichi chap.5
"While the three animals pursue the path of Buddhahood, the hare jumps into the fire"; is as follows:

"Once upon a time in the land of Tenjiku (India) there lived three animals - a hare, a fox and a monkey together. All the three of them followed the path of Bodhisattva, aspiring to attain the Buddhahood. Each one thought, "Due to the sins committed in our previous births we are born thus as worthless animals. In our previous life we did not have any compassion for the others. We were so mean that we did not offer anything to others. We committed all kinds of sins and so suffered in hell for a while and now are born as animals. This time we should not repeat that and should try to do some virtuous deeds. We shall respect the elders like parents and elder brothers, love youngsters as brothers and do all possible things for others without caring for ourselves". When the Devanam Indra saw them resolve thus he thought, "These creatures although born as animals excel in thoughts". Even the human beings kill other living creatures, plunder wealth, kill their own father or mother, breed animosity with their own sisters and brothers and are double faced smiling outwardly with malice in their hearts, appear loving while their hearts are filled with contempt. Do these animals really mean what they are saying? Let me put them to the test". Resolving thus he transformed himself into a thin old man weak and weary, and approached the animals.

He addressed them, "I am old and helpless, unable to do anything on my own. Will three of you together look after

1 Konjaku Monogatari: vol.5, 13
me. I do not have any children and am so poor that I am unable to fend for food for myself. I have heard that you are all caring and full of compassion helping others. On hearing this the three animals replied, "It is our pleasure that you have come to us for help. From now only we shall take care of you". Then the monkey immediately climbed the trees and gathered fruits like chestnut, pears, persimmon, malt, jujube, *tachibana* (a citrus fruit), camellia, *akebia*, *stauntonii*, *hexaphylla* etc. Then he went to the village and from the gardens fetched soybeans, red beans, brinjals, cucumber, gourd, melon, cow peas, fox tail millet, barn grass, chinese millet and offered it to the old man requesting him to eat whatever he liked.

Next the fox went to the altars built on the graves and brought back rice cakes, cooked rice, fish like bonito, abalone, kept on the graves by people. The old man ate as much as he liked to his heart's content. Like this many days passed. The old man said, "These two animals are full of compassion for others They are actually pursuing the path of Bodhisattva".

On the other hand the rabbit, carrying the light of burning incense went in search of something that he could offer. He frantically rushed in all directions with his ears raised straight, back curved, eyes wide open, the fore limbs shorter and every part of his body symbolising his alert state but, yet failed to get anything.

Now his friends monkey and fox and even the old man began to give him scornful looks for this at times despising him and even spanking his back. The hare tried his best yet was
unable to find anything to offer to the guest. Finally the rabbit thought, "In order to find something for the old man to eat, I went to the mountains as well as the plains in search of food but could not do it openly as I am constantly in fear of being caught by men or killed and devoured by beasts. My life is always in danger and I am perpetually in fear of losing it any moment and of being destined to die purposelessly. Instead of living like this I should rather offer my flesh to this old man and by this virtuous deed, get rid of this animal cast for ever. Resolving like this he approached the old man and said, "Very soon I am going to offer you something delicious. In the mean while please gather some dry wood and make a fire here to cook." Saying this he went away. The monkey collected some wood and the fox got some fire. Then they lit the fire and waited for the hare. Now on finding him return empty-handed the monkey and the fox complained furiously, "We expected this from you. Tell us what have you got? You only know how to mislead people by telling lies. You made us collect wood and make a fire with what idea! Tell me are we now going to cook you!".

The hare replied, "I tried my best everywhere but I did not have the good luck to find any food. So I offer my own roasted flesh to the guest" and uttering this he jumped into the fire. At that time Devanam Indra showed his true form and imprinted this image of the hare jumping into the fire on the surface of moon, in order to make known to the whole world his sacrifice.
The cloudy patch on the surface of moon is the smoke coming from the burning hare. The hare living on the moon is said to be the one who had sacrificed himself and so the whole world should recall his deed when looking at the moon, it has thus been told successively.

This story inspite of the striking resemblance to the Indian version structurally, has some variations. Firstly, as commonly seen in most of the stories of the Indian section of *Konjaku* the details about the locale are missing. On the other hand the *Jataka* story describes the locale pointing it as being near Benaras with a hill on one side and river on the other, with a bordering village nearby.

Furthermore, the *Konjaku* writer has modified the arrangement of things. For instance originally there are four animals viz. monkey, jackal, otter and a hare. In *Konjaku* in an attempt to make the story realistic to Japanese, the otter is dropped thus retaining the three animals and jackal is changed to a fox, a more familiar entity for the Japanese than the jackal the modification being done without affecting the main structure.

The range of food items that the animals fetch in the case of the Indian story and its Japanese version is a striking example of the creativity on the part of the *Konjaku* writer symbolising the difference in the food culture of the two races. In the first place the monkey in the Indian story gets a bunch of mangoes from the forest a typical Indian fruit whereas in the *Konjaku* story the monkey gets a variety of seasonal fruits some typically Japanese like the Persimmon. This range of fruits fetched for the guest
suggests the summer time. This consciousness of time is consistently maintained in the story as the eatables brought by the fox are associated also with the offerings made during the summer festival of Bon. In the Indian story the jackal goes to the neighbouring village and steals a pot of curd milk commonly found in every household freshly prepared every day in the countryside.

On the other hand in the Konjaku version, the fox walks up to the grave yard and collects eatables placed on the altar like cooked rice, rice cakes, varieties of fish. Japanese have evolved a typical system for cremation. In the ancient times the dead bodies were buried and historically big burial sites were found in the Kofun-Jidai, the period named after its burial sites (4th to 7th century). After the introduction of Buddhism, possibly the practise of cremation was adopted and performed under the guidance of Buddhist priests. Yet the custom of burial was also retained in a modified form for the remains like the bones etc. which were not discarded completely but buried in the grave yard and a grave stone and an altar in front was erected thereby creating a miniature grave. On the altar, the offerings of foods, flowers etc. are made on commemorative occasions like death anniversaries of the person or the annual events associated with the dead like Bon festival held in July. Thus usually in the graveyards, the altar of at least some graves have some food items and flowers kept on it, possibly coinciding with the death anniversaries. On the other hand during the Bon season the food items are placed on the stands of most of the graves as
it is customary for the Japanese people to visit their family graveyards at this time, clean it, hold memorial services for their dead ones and make offerings of flowers, cooked food etc. In the *Konjaku* story considering the variety of food items that the fox could manage to get from the graveyard, the writer apparently has the image of *Bon* season in mind. The fox in Japanese context is commonly known for bewitching people especially the travellers by taking human forms and also for its extraordinary sense of smell. In spite of such physical differences, the spirit of performing virtuous deeds is identical. The *Jataka* story it is emphasised in terms of pursuing the holy path, viz. observing fast, giving of alms etc. On the other hand in the *Konjaku* version the traces of Confucianism emerges as the animals talk of more practical virtues of daily life like respecting elders and loving the youngers as Confucian ethics emphasises due decorum in all human relationships specially between the young and the old.

The *Konjaku* story describes the condition of the hare very vividly. His frantic efforts to find something for the guest, his helplessness and above all the subtle mockery by his friends that eventually left the hare with little option. Through the contrastive elements of the support and rejection, appreciation and humiliation the narrative evolves.

Incidentally this vivid picture of the valorous hare has been appreciated by the famous *Taisho* writer *Akutagawa-Ryunosuke* who drew material from *Konjaku Monogatari* extensively and appreciated the talent and
creativity of the Konjaku writer for this attempt, which otherwise has been mostly ignored for being dry and chronological.

Finally the Konjaku story is thoroughly realistic whereas the Jataka has the element of supernatural. In the end the hare after jumping into fire is burnt to death. In Jataka story he does not die but continues to live with his associates while his picture is imprinted on the face of the moon. The act of hare's valour is portrayed as follows: "rising from his bed of the kusa grass and coming to the place he thrice shook himself so that if there were any insects within his coat, they might escape death, then holding his entire body as a free gift he sprang up and like a royal swan alighting on a cluster of lotuses, in an ecstasy of joy he fell on the heap of live coals, but he does not burn to death". On the contrary he felt, "as if he had entered a region of cold" and is thus saved and continues to live with his other associates following the holy path, though his gesture is imprinted on the "orb of the moon". Incidentally, in the case of this particular plot, inspite of the vividness and creativity on the part of the author to make it realistic to Japanese, it is not very popular nor adapted widely, as its prototypes in the Japanese folklore are missing although there are several motifs with the hare as the main character. For instance the most well known one is "Inaba no shiro usagi" the white hare of Inaba found in the ancient work of Kojiki (the old chronicles 712 A.D.). The white hare of Inaba who, in order

\[1\text{ Jataka Stories: vol.III, p.37}\]
to cross the sea, calls all the crocodiles living there on
the pretext of counting their population. However, as he
stepped on the last crocodile waiting next to the shore, the
crocodile guessed his true intentions and tried to snatch
the jumping hare whereby the hare's coat came off.
The Japanese children conceive the image of the moon with
the presence of a rabbit. This is evident from such annual
events like moon viewing held in autumn. Similarly, the
lullabies relating this are also there like: Usagi, Usagi
nani mite haneru (Rabbit, Rabbit! What makes you jump)/Jugo
ya no tsuku mite haneru (The full moon makes me jump).
Thus the presence of Indian animal motifs is conspicuous in
Japan which originating from the Chinese classics like
Daishu Kyo, Gobunritsu, Rokudojikkyo and works like
Kyoritsuiso, Hoenjurin, Daitosaiiki have been assimilated
into Japanese folklore. Yet, the most popular theme of
Indian origin in Japan is not the animal tales but the story
of Ikkakusennin or Rsyasringa which is discussed in the next
chapter.