CHAPTER VII

THE PANCHATANTRA — AN ANALYSIS

The Panchatantara has been written by Vishnusharma.

It contains, as the title of the book implies, five tantras or sections as under:

1. The Mitrabhedam,
2. The Mitrasampraktikam,
3. The Kakaecchuyam,
4. The Labhapanasam and
5. The Apareekshitakarana.

In addition to the five tantras or sections, the Panchatantara contains an introductory section called the katha-mukha, which is common to all the five sections of the book and it throws light on the background of the work. In this connection, the introductory portion of Jurgasiha's Kannada Panchatantra is important, for it gives more information about the origin of the work. It says that the stories told in the Panchatantara have been selected from the stories originally told by Shiva to Parvati and that some of these were collected by Gunadhyaya in the Paishachi language in a book called Brihatkatha, and that the author of the Kannada Panchatantra, Vasubhassabha,
took for his tradition of the Panchatantra stories from Guṇadhyā. This shows in fact the stories have come down from an immemorial tradition and that they were current amongst common people who spoke not Sanskrit, but Paishachi, the language of the common strata of the people.

At the beginning of the work, the author of the Panchatantra, Vishnusharma, invokes the blessings of the gods and scholars of the Hitasastra, so that the work would be completed without any impediment or hindrance.

It is significant to note that the story begins with the name of a country in Southern India—Mahileropys. The king of it is Amarashakti and he has three sons:


It must be noted here that the suffix "Shakti" does not signify any name of a member belonging to one of the four castes. Perhaps it stood at the end of the name of a person, who was a worshipper of Shakti.
All the three princes are dullards and averse to the study of any kind. So the King is depressed and ponders over the problem of educating them in the art of running a kingdom and handing over the charge of his kingdom to his sons.

Here Vishnusharma classifies the bad sons into three groups:

1. the son not born at all
2. the son who is a fool and
3. the son who is dead.

He says that of these three sons, the son belonging to the first class (not born at all) and the one belonging to the third class (the son who is dead) are good and not at all the son of the second class (the son who is a fool). He says the unborn son is the best one and the dead one causes grief to the parents only once but a foolish son causes grief at each and every step.

However, Amarakshiti, the King, is anxious that his sons be taught the sciences but is very much worried as they are dullards and averse to the study of any kind. So he seeks the advice of his pandits. They tell him that grammar alone requires a period of twelve years, after which the princes shall
be able to go in for the other antras. Then a minister by name Sumati enters and says that what all the courtiers say is well and good, but even then a royal road to learning may be devised:

"Very much the science of words is of unlimited extent, life also (on the contrary) is short, and the obstacles many; its essence, therefore, should be taken (grasped mastered) leaving out what is worthless, as milk is drawn from out of water by swans." He then recommends Vishnusharma, the Brahmin pandit, to whom the king asks to teach his sons in the art of running a kingdom and in general how to gain success in life.

It must be noted here that the Panchatantra gives importance to the

1. knowledge of the arthastra as is traditionally taught in the various named authorities and

2. power of common sense thought and analysis - Viveka.

His view seems to be that of these two factors, Viveka is the more important one as exemplified by the three pandits. But he seems to have thought that the knowledge of the traditional arthastra (polity) also was very important.
Then the King asks Vishnusharma to teach his sons in the art of running a kingdom and, in general, worldly wisdom. The king said that in return he would pay the pandit a hundred land grants, but the pandit said: "I am not the man to sell good learning for a hundred land grants." Vishnusharma then undertakes to teach and make them masters within the period of six months. He devises a new method of instruction through the fables:

which means:

"As an impression is made upon a raw (earthen or so) pot can undergo no change afterwards - so (following the same principle) in this work, the science of conduct (or policy) is taught to the youths under the guise of stories."  

The importance of the work is told by Vishnusharma himself as under:

which means: "Whoever always studies this science of

politics, or bears it (read to him and acts on it) never suffers a defeat at the hands of Indra (is never thwarted in his pursuits). 3

Incidentally there is a reference to the Hindu theory of a necessity of a son for gaining the heaven by the father. Everyone is said to be born burdened by the three debts:

1. Devaruna - the debt due to the gods and which he pays off by performing sacrifices and the worship of the gods.

2. Rushiruna - the debt due to the sages is paid off by the persons belonging to the first of the three classes - the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas - by a study of the Vedas and.

3. Pitiruna - is paid off by worshipping the ancestors by the performance of the Shraddha. It is now said that it is paid off as soon as the father gets a son.

The Rajmayaksa Smriti speaks of eleven kinds of sons. Of these the sons of one's own body are the

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the most important ones; here the Panchatantra following
the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that for winning
heaven only a son who is well-versed in the art of
is good.

The Panchatantra is a work that instructs
niti, the art of running a kingdom and in general,
of success in life. Their terms niti, jnana and yuktis
are used in India with a wide spectrum of connotation.
"The Panchatantra," says Arthur W. Ryder, "is a niti-
shastra or text book of niti. The word niti means
roughly 'the wise conduct of life'. Western
civilisation must endure a certain shame in realizing
that no precise equivalent of the term is found in
English, French, Latin or Greek. Many words are,
therefore, necessary to explain what niti is, though
the idea, once grasped, is clear, important and
satisfying."

"Niti," says Daniel H. H. Ingalls, "worldly
wisdom, sometimes the art of getting along in the world.

4. The Panchatantra, tr. by Arthur W. Ryder, Bombay:
"Niti is guiding, guidance, directing, direction," says Monier Williams, "management, a manner of conducting oneself, conduct, propriety, right or moral or prudent behaviour, prudent counsel, policy, political wisdom or science, political economy, state policy, statesmanship, the administration, of Government, moral philosophy, ethics, precepts for prudent and moral behaviour, prudence or policy personified (of naya); leading or acquisition, presenting, offering, relation support." "Niti-katha: any science, a discourse on political economy."6

Thus, the terms tantra, niti and yukti are used with a wide spectrum of connotation in India. From 'polity' upto 'morality' they vary according to context. Quite often, all the meanings co-exist. The tales glorify the 'clever' animal, which survives by outwitting its covert enemies. This secular moral - Be wise, 'Outwit your enemies - cannot be described as an ethical imperative. In fact, ethics is a system of imperatives.

The imperatives of 'jainism' presuppose a world of competition and the survival of the fittest. Here nature is red in tooth and claw. It is a world of crooks, cranks and the foolish men. The good man is asked to be clever too. He may be excused if he is not good, but suffers immediately if he not not clever.

There could be several explanations for such a fierce competitive ethos. The easiest one is that this ethos is of the court, by the court and for the court. In this sense, it is closest to Machiavelli’s The Prince. The very king survives only by his wits because he is surrounded by the cheats, flatterers and exploiters; and his enemies are waiting just outside the door. The setting of the Banachantara may warrant such as ethos.

But, by and large in India, the general ethos supports this vision of life. Indians seldom underestimated the role of wicked men. They knew that men of the highest ethical sense live and should be praised. But they make fun of wickedness. India did not have the modern relativism.

"Those are good men who sacrifice self-interest for others. Those are idlings who think of others
while serving self-interest. Those are bad men who destroy others' interest for their own good. As for those who destroy others without any motive — we don't know that to call them." So said Bhartrihari, a much later poet. Evil is recognised in India, but is not accorded a metaphysical or fundamentalist value. Wickedmen should be and can be defeated by good men through their cleverness. No good man should make a fetish of his goodness. He must win in the service of goodness, or else he is a fool deceived by his goodness. This is the shishta or a gentleman's philosophy.

Therefore, this kind of didacticism does not make offence to art. It stimulates art. It accepts the clash of interests in the phenomenal world and refuses to be cramped by ethical or abstract imperatives. Whether this is true of all Indian works or not, it is certainly true of the Panchatantra. It is also true of the Nastisahatra, when Shri Aurobindo translated it as A Century of Life and not as A Century of Maxims.

This anti-didactic principle of art promoted by Oscar Wilde (Art is a-moral) is not relevant to this kind of didacticism. This is not anti-life. It teaches
the art of life rather than a system of ethics. It is empiricism of the purest kind in whose favour didacticism has been criticized by modern writers. It cannot do violence to art. "Morality should be an integral part of the action," says Leon T. Dickinson, "rather a preaching that we can label 'the moral' of the story. When, then, moral content is an integral part of a well-told story, as is true of the world's fiction, we value it highly as an enrichment of the story." 6

Keith observes: "The fable, indeed, is essentially connected with the two branches of science known by the Indians, as the Nitisastra and the Arthasastra, which have this in common, as opposed to the Dharmastras, that they are not codes of morals, but deal with man's action in practical politics and conduct of the ordinary affairs of everyday life and intercourse. We must not, however, exaggerate the contrast between these sastras, for in the Sastras, the Arthasastra and the Nitisastra alike, there is much common sense and

that is often in accord with practical morality, at no time can we regard the didactic fable as intended
merely to extoll cleverness without regard to
morality. There lingers around the work a distinct
influence of the Dharma, as was only to be expected seeing that the Panchatantra was intended
for the instruction of the young ones and the
instructors were Brahmins.7 The work, therefore,
passed as a text book of "artha", worldly wisdom
or "niti" or "polity", one of the four objects
of human desire, the others being the dharma,
religion or morally proper conduct and kama or love.
This practical purpose is in mind throughout the
book. It is, thus, in the words of Franklin Edgerton,
"a Mirror for Magistrates or Pursenepiegel".8

It has been pointed above that the
Panchatantra is a book that is meant for instruction
in worldly wisdom. Now the Yajnavalkyaswati speaks

7. A.B. Keith: A History of Classical Sanskrit Literature,
London: Oxford University Press, (19\textsuperscript{1}) p.245.
9. The Panchatantra, tr. by Franklin Edgerton, New Delhi:
Orient Paperbacks, (19\textsuperscript{1}) p.11.
of a conflict between the Dharmasastra and the Arthasastra and lays down that where there is a conflict between them, the doctrine of the Dharmasastra prevails. But in the Panchatantra, it seems that there is has been a contradiction between the Dharmasastra and the Arthasastra and that the characters in it always act according to the Dharmas, but with shrewdness, that is taught by the Arthasastra. The skill is perfected by the constant practice of moral self-keeping. Vishnusarma, the reputed author of the Panchatantra, is a Hindu and has his eye all along fixed on the Dharmasastra and careful to see that his work does not have aesthetic tendency and go against the principles of the Dharmasastra. His tendency is concerned principally with the Arthasastra. The fables here teach moral principles in such a way that they do not go against the principles of the Dharmasastra. There are stories in it, which by the implication, seem to cast a doubt on some principles of the Dharmasastra, but Vishnusarma puts them carefully in such a way as not to explicitly contradict them with the Dharmasastra. In all this
he has an eye on the dictum of the Dharmastra:

which means: "The Dharmastra or the Sutra in respect of the Dharma is stronger than the Sutra in respect of money or worldly wisdom." This means that when we are in doubt as to what course should be pursued in a particular situation, and the Dharmastra points to one way and the Arthasastra points to another, and there is conflict between the two, we should follow the way of the Dharma and not the way of the Artha or worldly wisdom.

Referring to morals, the work says that single-minded devotion and simplicity are proper only in relation of man and his god. But it says that in relation of human beings, man should not be of two minds or double-minded (dvaitasrava). The doctrine ultimately comes to this that in proper cases fraud should be practiced on one's own enemies. It says that some people think that fraud will ultimately be detected but the author of the work assures that fraud or dambha properly practiced cannot be detected even by the god Brahma himself.
It will, therefore, be seen that there is always a reference to the Natural law. One view is that it is highly moral and equitable and that the transmission of it rules automatically brings its own punishments in mysterious ways. As men's good deeds are always rewarded in this life or in some other future life and his bad deeds are always punished. There seems to be another view of the Natural law in which self-protection is the highest duty and all the other moral and religious duties are nothing when they go against self-protection.

Nature is red in tooth and claw. Therefore, throughout the book conflict between worldly wisdom and higher moral ethics is nicely depicted. Many times higher code is against practical and worldly wisdom. It is interesting how the characters choose between them. The author seems to draw our attention to their loop without openly praising or condemning their choices. For example, the story of the Lion and the Camel, which is very similar to the frame story of the first book or section of the Panchatantra. Therefore, we see that in the Panchatantra high moral considerations are not lost sight of. In fact,
they are actually mentioned and professed. But yet sometimes not followed. Here the profession of high
morals itself is made an instrument of deceit and
treachery. Karataka, the fox, in bringing
misunderstanding and enmity between Pingalaka, the
Lion-King and Sanjeevaka, the ox, possesses an
inherent for bringing about the destruction of
Sanjeevaka, which has an absolute faith in the fox.
High morals are a means of treachery. Here Katataka
pretends to be drawn into opposite directions by its
loyalty to the King Pingalaka and its loyalty to
its friend Sanjeevaka. It further says that as
Sanjeevaka has come to Pingalaka relying on the word
of Karataka and on the guarantee given by Karataka
of safety; and as Pingalaka is now going to kill
Sanjeevaka, Karataka's loyalty to the friend has
greater weight morally than loyalty to the king,
Pingalaka. But even this profession of high ethics
is made an instrument of treachery. Therefore, "life
actually lived is not always edifying," says V.S.
Naravans, The Panchatantra faces this fact
squarely. As Sthirajivi, the Chief Counsellor to
the king of Crows, points out, the world is full of
unscrupulous people, and piety does not always protect us from them. Good deeds are seldom appreciated.

Ingratitude dogs our footsteps. The Panchatantra therefore, recommends shrewdness, realism and freedom from excessive sentimentality,

"But it shows that the virtuous man need not be simpleton and that our actions can be reasonably meritorious without being tiresome."10

In the following verses, Vishnusarma teaches the desirability of practising fraud and treachery:

which means:

"The trustful strong are caught
By weaker foes with ease:
The wary weak are safe
From strongest enemies"11


which means:

"All counsellors draw profit from
A king in worries spent,
And that is why they always wish
For his embarrassment." 12

3) न विज्ञापं विन्दा सायुज्यामयि सिस्मयति।
विज्ञापातिरित्यन्त्रणं दितेगाहिँ विदारितः। 13
which means: "An enemy is not reduced to submission
or brought under away. Even gods cannot subdue
an enemy without securing his confidence. For the
lords of the gods cleft the foetus in Diti's womb
through confidence gained." 13

Here a question arises whether fraud and
treachery can be practiced by a conscientious man.
The author seems to think that even conscientious
man should practice fraud and treachery against
a wicked enemy. But he has not pictured any
moral conflict. This is perhaps due to the fact that
the lion is here thinking of fraud and treachery

12. Ibid

13. The Panchatantra, ed. and tr. by M.R. Kale,
for only self protection and not for protecting against the jackal to kill it or do any harm to it.

Another instance may be quoted thus:

which means:

This is a perfect instance of casuistry and of the devil quoting the Bible. Damanaka is now here telling falsehood, trying to destroy the friendship and create dissension and dis-unity between the lion and the bull, Pingalaka and Sanjeevaka. In speaking to Sanjeevaka, the bull, Pingalaka, Damanaka pretends to be in mental conflict. On the other hand, its conscience tells it that it should not divulge in the mantra or secret confided to it by the king Pingalaka. It may be noted here that the mantra here is itself a falsehood. This divulging of the matters mantra of his master is a sin and ought not to be done. This is one side of the matter. As against this consideration, there is an opposite consideration
equally conscientious and supported by the Dharmaśāstra. Sanjeovaka had been brought to the Lion by the Fox himself assuring it that there was no fear from the Lion. Now the Lion itself was going to kill it. If the Lion killed it, that murder would go to the account of Damanaka and that would be a sin. Because one person does anything relying on the word of another, and is killed by a third person, then the sin would come into the person who originally brought that person into the dangerous position. That would be Mitrabheda. Thus the conflict was between Śramaṇa (Śramaṇa) and the Mitrabheda...between disloyalty to the king and disloyalty to the friend. Placed within this conflict Damanaka pretends to think that Mitrabheda is the greater of the sins and avoids it in the only way possible, namely by divulging.

Therefore, the Panchatantra is a book which instructs the princes in the art of running a kingdom. The Rajaneti includes within its scope the ultimate control of the society and of every member of it. To say that the Panchatantra is a work meant
for princes to teach them in the art of running a kingdom is to say that every person who is a subject and is made to that rule should study the work in order to know his own position in the polity and society and regulate his conduct intelligently according to it. One thing that comes into prominence while reading the Panchatantra is that the interests of the rulers and the ruled are antagonistic to each other and that they are always in conflict. Vishnusahara says that he who seeks the food of the kings becomes hated by the subjects and he who seeks the food of the people an object of hatred for the kings. The best example for this is the story of Dentila in the Mitrabhodam of the Panchatantra.

The frame-story of the first book is entitled as the Mitrabhodam or the separation of friends. The frame-story begins with Vardhamana, the merchant, who sets out for his business tour. He had two bulls, Sandeevaka and Sanjeevaka. It once happened that the leg of the bull Sanjeevaka got stuck up in the muddy banks of the river Yasuna. The merchant waited for sometime, but the leg of the bull would not come out of the mud. He continued
his journey with his friends and servants. But he left behind him a troop of servants to look after the bull Sanjeevaka. They waited for sometime, but the leg of the bull did not come out of the mud. So they too went away leaving behind the bull and joined their master Vardhamana and reported to him that the bull Sanjeevaka died. The merchant performed the necessary rites and proceeded further. The bull however, was not dead but became stronger by eating the green grass that grew on the banks of the river Yamuna. The bull became a very close friend of the king of the forest, Pingalaka. They spent their time in narrating stories, exchanging views and subhashitas.

At this the jackal ministers, Karataka and Damanaka, got angry over the friendship of the king and the Bull, for they were discarded by the King. So they devised a plot so that the Bull was killed by the Lion King itself.

All the interlaced stories are in the *Birabhadram* have been narrated by the two jackal ministers to the Lion to persuade him to kill the Bull. Of them, the *Monkey and the Wedge* has been
narrated to show that one should not poke one's nose in others affairs; the story of the Lion and the Rabbit which illustrates the shrewdness and wit of the Rabbit. The fable of the Swans and the Tortoise has been narrated to illustrate the maxim that one should take advice from his close friends and act accordingly. The fable of the Three Fishes shows that one should act cautiously and have an eye for the future, are some of the interesting and famous stories.

It is interesting to note here that the author of the Panchatantra does not give much importance to the travels and adventures of the merchant Vardhamana, for we are never told of him any more in the stories. Perhaps this incident concerning Vardhamana serves only as a beginning.

This is the only section in the work that contains a large number of stories. There are a few stories similar in theme, for example, the frame story and the fable of the Lion, the Fox and the Camel, where the Camel is killed by the Lion. Here in this fable, the three come to an agreement that they should
divide anything they get for their food. But once they do not get any prey for their food. The Fox in the fable advises the Lion to kill the Camel, so that they could survive. The Lion at first rejects the plea but at last gives in and kills the Camel. In both the fables, the Lion regrets its actions, but is soothed by its followers.

The second book is known as the Hitra-sampraktikam and shows the benefits of friendship and discusses at length how even the weak are capable of saving themselves against their powerful enemies through mutual help, illustrating the maxim, "A friend in need is a friend indeed."

It is narrated in the frame-story that the Birds fly away with the net of the hunter. They come to their friend Himanyak, the Mouse, who cuts the net and frees the friends. All of this is being watched by Laghupatanaaka, the Crow, who now seeks the friendship of Himanyak, but both of them are enemies by nature. Now here is a lengthy and very interesting discussion on the choice and type of friends.
At last both of them become close friends. They have two more friends in time to come. They are Manthara, the tortoise and Chitrangada, the deer. This story shows how the deer is caught in a net and how he is saved by the united efforts of his friends.

But it is interesting to note that the pigeon King Chitrangada, does not appear at all in the other stories of the section.

The third section of the book is entitled the Kekabheeraswam, where we find the enmity between the crows and the owls. The frame story tells us that the king Arimandana seeks the advice of his four ministers as to what should be done to the captive Sthirajivan. The answers are somewhat singular. But the ministers instead of giving advice directly, they give lectures on the excellence of kindness, treachery, bribing and of the employment of force respectively. These answers are, however, intended to indicate how Sthirajivan is to be treated. Raktakesh means to say: Hear Sthirajivan's advice, he says spoke to his own master in favour of peace, and that is the
right advice. Therefore, treat him well and use him to make peace with the enemy. While Krrarakasha holds that the captive is to be used to create discord in the enemy’s camp, Diptaksha says that he is to bebe the opposite party and Vakrarasa says that the war is to be continued and Sthirajivin’s life is to be ended without mercy. Thus the advice is double dealing, closely related with the frame story.

Some of the interesting interlaced stories are the *Ass in the Lion’s Skin* and the *Hare and the Tortoise*.

This is section in which the traditional teachings of the great Hitisatra writers like Brihaspati, are given. It deals with the traditional six ways of dealing with a foreign king but adds that there is a seventh way which is less wasteful but requires great skill on the part of the persons who undertake to carry outs a policy.

The fourth section is called the *Labdhaprapasnaham* in which the Monkey escapes his life from the dangerous and cunning Crocodile. The Monkey
who lives on the top of a tree on the banks of a river and the Crocodile, who lives in the river, become very close friends. The Monkey gives his friend the Crocodile every day rose-apples and they spend their time in narrating stories of every kind. Now the Crocodile goes to his house and offers his wife the rose-apples. She thinks that the heart of the person who eats them every day must be full of nectar and so she decides to eat the heart of the Monkey. The Crocodile tells his wife that he cannot take his friend to his house and sacrifice him for her sake. But she remains adamant and the Crocodile at last agrees to bring his friend to his house. He thus goes to the Monkey and invites him to the house; the Monkey sits on the back of the Crocodile and they reach the mid-stream, when the Crocodile tells his friend all that has happened. The Monkey never hesitates; he says that he has left his heart on the 'top of the tree' and had been told earlier, he could have brought it with him. The poor Crocodile believes him and takes him back to the banks of the river, when the Monkey jumps on to a branch of
The fifth section of the book is called the Apareekshitakarakam or "Ill-Considered Action". The frame story deals with a certain merchant named Manibhadra. He once dreams a dream in which the Goddess Laxmi appears to him and tells him that she would appear to him the next day and as soon as she is beaten by him she would turn out into lumps of gold. She appears to him the next day in the form of a Jain sanyasin and the merchant does as he is instructed in the dream. This is seen by a barber, who had come to the house of the merchant. He also invites a number of Jain sanyasins to his house and beats them; thinking that they would also turn out into lumps of gold. The neighbours hear the noise and take the barber to the court of justice, where he is sentenced to death. The frame story ends with another inter-laced one wherein four Brahmins go out in search of wealth. Three Brahmins get wealth. The fourth one was not satisfied with the gains of his friends and he goes on alone. At last he sees a man with blood dropping down his body; for a wheel was whirling on his head. The Brahmin puts a question to him and as soon as he asks this, the wheel leaves the other's head and settles on the head of his own. The other friend of this Brahmin, the gold-finder, wondering why his companion delayed, follows his footsteps. Then there are a number of inter-laced stories. The story ends with the words of the gold-finder: "...good fortune always comes through the favour of fate..."
The construction of the fables in the Panohatantra is simple indeed. First a verse is told which sums up the general statement and also the particular instance, for which is the fable that follows it, is an example. The main story is told in prose. To take an example, let us examine the following fable:

"No knife prevails against a stone;  
Nor bends the unbending tree;  
No good advice from Needle-Face  
Helped indolence."

"How was that?" asked Victor. And Check told the story of THE UNTRACTABLE MONKEY: In a part of a forest was a troop of monkeys who found a firefly one winter evening when they were dreadfully depressed. On examining the insect, they believed it to be fire, so lifted it with care, covered it with dry grass and leaves, thrust forward their arms, sides, stomachs, and chests, scratched themselves, and enjoyed imagining that they were warm. One of the arboreal creatures in particular, being especially chilly, blew repeatedly and with concentrated attention on the firefly.

Thereupon a bird named Needle-Face, driven by
hostile fate to her own destruction, flew down from her tree and said to the Monkey: "My dear sir, do not put yourself to unnecessary trouble. This is not fire. This is a firefly." He, however, did not heed her warning but blew again, nor did he stop when she tried more than once to check him. To cut a long story short, when she vexed him by coming close and shouting in his ear, he seized her and dashed her on a rock, crushing face, eyes, head and neck so that she died.

"And that is why I say:

"No knife prevails against a stone..."  

It will be seen that the fable is made up of a simple plot. There are no complicated sub-plots. The story deals with one subject and incident and it comes home to the reader easily. The stories do not require any more details. Indeed most of them find their place among the great short stories of the world. So the stories are well-knit ones. The author of the Panchatantra must have been a master in the art of story telling.

Generation of story-tellers are now in possession of well perfected stories. They are being utilised for a positive...
to serve a worldly wisdom. Human survival is the main source in the stories in the Panchatantra. Later moral tales have nothing in common with this wisdom for social and personal survival. The dominant motif of the animal tale is peculiarly shaped by the survival media. The Panchatantra has these elements rather than the virtue. Thus the animal tale retains its original landscape of "nature red in truth and claw". It is a cruel competitive world in which creatures live by their cleverness and take the advantage of the foolishness of others. This picture and world-view is still retained by the animal tale. Its humanisation is only superficial.

Another important and the most distinguishing characteristic of the Panchatantra stories is the insertion of a number of stories within the frame-story. The characters in the main story and also within the story narrate stories to justify and illustrate their statements. "The construction of the whole work," says Arthur Macdonnel, "comes to resemble that of a set of Chinese boxes. This style of narration was
borrowed from India by the neighbouring Oriental peoples of Persia and Arabia, who employed it in composing independent works. The most notable instance is, of course, the Arabian Nights. It seems that the combination of the story interest for educational purposes must have lead to the boxed structure. Professor Kerr in his Epic and Romance has shown how in framing of the epic, a large number of ballads is a condition precedent. In the same way, creative genius must strive to organise these bits into a total epic story.

By the same analogy, a number of well organised and retold stories in the disjointed form can only be organised in a boxed structure, which is its first and final literary form. The animal fable by its very nature has to be short. The human tale of the epic can have some single primitive view of life, such as courage and pietas. The animal fable can have none except the non-moral lesson of the survival of the fittest, the law of the jungle. Therefore, separate

16. A History of Sanskrit Literature,
identities of the animal fable have to be retained but the art of organising them and keeping them within the reach of memory and retaining the story interest in a written down form, is one and the same. Thus the highest literary sophistication that the animal fable can achieve is the boxed structure and none else. Therefore, the surprise expressed by some scholars over the cleverness or the superficiality of the boxed framework in which the Panchatantra is written is misplaced. The process is inherent in the nature of the fable itself. It has to be a series of fables. Because, the situations cannot be discrete and in keeping with the variety of situations singly placed. It should be obvious that the imagined quality superinfused by human analogy upon the animal world basically should not be sustained for long in human organisation. Because, the order of the animal consists of this disorder and constantly comes back. Thus that which is recalled is recalled again.

The boxed structure clearly indicates using a loose story as an aid to memory for the professional story teller. The loose narratives
of a teacher teaching royal pupils through the animal stories an entire political or behavioural science require a curriculum of a memorised pattern of situations illustrating them. The boxed pattern has often been described as baroque in nature comparable to Medieval architecture. But it might have issued from humbler motives.

But the refinements of the boxing seen in the Panchatantra must be accounted for in the existence of a professional teacher. Baroque art must have other impulses but its development in the art of structuring can only be the outcome of a hereditary profession perfected from generation. Aesop's can be accounted for in the narrations of clever slave's resorting to the subterfuges of animal fables to bring home the bare truths to the aristocrat without rancour. But the professionalised irony as well as the economy of the Panchatantra clearly indicates a professionalism. But it can be said that Vishnusharma was a perfector of many others who had gone before him, each modifying the respective tale, condensing wit, adding wit style and suspense to the little ones.
Another feature of the Panchatantra is that a number of verses have been embedded in between the stories. Many of the verses have been taken from the epics, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, and the nitisastra works and the Subhaschitas.

These verses are all of very high order and attractive style. It seems that Upama or comparison has often been made use of. But the most prevalent alankara is the Svabhavokti, which is mainly found in the works which are realistic. But some scholars are of the opinion that these verses come in the way of narration. Therefore, Macdonnel says: "The sententious element is here (in the Hitopadesa) much more pre-eminently than in the Panchatantra and the verses introduced are often so great as to seriously impede the progress of the narrative. These verses, however, abound in the wise maxims and fine thoughts." This may be called a doha of the writer but it must be noted that the verses have their own merit. It must be borne in mind also that the main purpose of the work is instruction. In such works there should be a use of proverbs and verses which can be remembered easily.
at will. So the insertion of these verses is justified. They contain the essence of the niti or polity in question. It seems that the writer of the book put these mnemonic verses in between the discussion to justify the statements made by the characters. They are all authoritative and are shown to make the reader believe that the statements made by the characters are all correct and are in accordance with the prevailing customs and laws. Therefore, the verses have been introduced into the main story in order to justify the statements made by the characters. Thus they are not impediment but a help. "These wise maxims," says Arthur W. Ryder, "it is which make the real character of the Panchatantra."

The verses in the Panchatantra can be grouped in three classes. The first group of verses can be as the ones that appear at the beginning of each fable, which sums up the general maxim and the particular instance, which is an example for the general maxim. "Frequently verses are embedded," says Daniel H. H. Ingalls, "in Sanskrit prose works. In popular works
such as the fables of the *Panchatantra* and the *Hitopadesa*
verses are used in order to sum up in brief or in
striking manner the moral of the preceding tale.  

The following ones can be given as examples:

1. 

\[ 
\text{मुहृद्या हितकामानि नेन अर्तिकिना मा च च्याँ।} \\
स कृत्वा इव दुकुलिनो कहावृत्ति विलम्बिति। 
\]

which means: "He who does not act up to advise of 
friends desiring his welfare, he, the evil minded one, 
whose mind is perverted, who has not the wisdom to know 
his interest will destroy himself like tortoise."  

2. 

\[ 
\text{अधिकारिर्यांलिङ् कृत्वा ज्ञेयं ज्ञेष्ठ ज्ञानशुले।} \\
\text{अजाधुक्तु कहसासाध्य गृहो उत्तीतिको यथा।} 
\]

which means: "A man is not able to enjoy wealth (even 
after acquiring it) when fate wills it like 
Somalika who was bewildered on reaching a large forest."  

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18. *Panekrit Poetry from Vidyakara's Treasury: Cambridge*  
   The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press (1968), Verse p.41

19. *Our translation.*

"The wisdom offered," continues Dr. Ingalls, "is sometimes what we should call moral, sometimes what we should call cynical, but in either case, it is usually good advice expressed in a minimum of words."

Then comes another type of verse which has been inserted by the writer to show importance of the statements made earlier. Such verses are usually taken by authoritative works such as the epics and the nitisastras. Some examples may be quoted here.

1. अम्लात्मना महिंशा पुण्यं विनिष्ठेः कांग्रावजीवी।
   अमलेनात् अ महिंशेष तस्तेत्तां पुदीयते॥
   which means: "Of all articles of sale, perfumery is the best; what is the good of commodities like gold and others! since in the former case what is bought for one is sold for a hundred." 22

2. नितम्बिकृ पतिते हर्षेऽरौधि अतोऽवर्तमाल।
   नितां दिक्षते तुम्हारे प्रत्यास्मात् प्रह्लादविनम्॥
   which means: "When a deposit is made in the house (the merchant (receiving the money) prays to his (favourite) deity saying -If the depositor dies (would die) I will make you the preferred present". 22


Another type of verse seems to be constructed by Vishnusharma for a proper story at a particular instance. Such an instance in which Vishnusharma speaks of Hiranyak, the Mouse, in the hole in which he lives:

उज्ज्वलं बलर दुःखं जीवितशास्त्राय ।
अवसम्पूर्णासमातं भृत्ति श्रस्मुद्रं विनेन ||

which means:

"The mouse in social ethics skilled,
Saw danger coming. Then
He built and was residing in
A hundred-gated den."

Coming to characterisation, we must note that because of brevity, we do not have fuller opportunities for the depiction of characters in a fable. As usual, animals, birds, human beings and sometimes gods and supernatural elements have also been used as characters.

An outstanding feature of the animal and bird characters in the Panchatantra is that they are all given meaningful names - thus the lion is Madotkata, the merchant is Jeernadhana, a fish is Anagatavidhata and sometimes gods have also been introduced and some of their names are also given - Mahadeva and Veshnu. All the characters behave just like human beings; we forget for a moment that they are animal and birds in the garb of human beings. The book is thus, pervaded by a quaint humour which transfers animal kingdom all sorts of human beings and actions. They engage in disquisitions about gods, saints and exchange views about subtle views of ethics. Thus Taine remarks: "La fable, par nature, cache toujours les hommes dans une bête - C'est par des qualités humaines qu'elle point les animaux." 24

Karma and Kartara are also two characters in the Panchatantra and their speech is dramatic. These two characters represent the two streams of thought arising and fighting in the mind of Somalika. Apart from his mind, they don't want to exist, or even he supposes that they exist apart from his mind, yet it must be noted that they work on the mind. They are comparable to the ghost in the Hamlet or in the three spirits in the Macbeth, but Vishnu Sharma's use of them is more profound and artistic.

The animals and birds in the fables are endowed with their stock characteristics. Therefore, the dog is faithful, the lion majestic, the fox cunning and the ass patient and hard working. But it is only in the fable of the Monkey and the Crocodile that the monkey plays an unusual role, which is against its instinctive behaviour. Here in this story, the monkey escapes with his life by his wit and understanding.

Thus sometimes the stock character is altered and transgressed. It is often reduced to represent some special quality. A free character is
thus born. It is individualised and plays a peculiar role for a particular situation. The Crocodile is first shown to have been clever enough to deceive the Monkey, but gives himself away by talking boastfully. The Monkey invents a characteristic plan and says that its heart is on the top of the tree. And the foolish Crocodile takes him back to the banks of the river. He is fooled. It is totally a human drama/bourgeois existence.

In other words, we cannot stop at going to the origins of the stock animal characters. Once they become linguistic habit and more individualised, human, political characteristics adhere to them. They begin to represent human types.

It is here that the main beauty and spell of the animal tale lies. It makes the animal tale a genre, a human drama. The jungle life becomes the exterior, but the situation is human. It transcends the allegorical attributes of the respective animals. It is as genre that animal fable is still alive in the colour comics of Walt Disney and Hannah Barbera.
This is the first step toward releasing the animal fable from its fixed meanings and taking it to the level of a literary form. But here we must admit of a severe limitation. Though freed, still animal fable cannot compete with modern fiction with its complex human characters, such as the ones created by George Eliot or Henry James. That kind of complexity is outside the scope of the animal fable. It is no use expecting an animal fable indulging in internal monologues of a Mrs. Bloom. All that has happened is that one kind of type has been replaced by another; the stock character has been replaced by the social or individual type.

It is not difficult to associate the stock characters of human epics with the stock characters of the animal fable. Homer generally describes his heroes with some stock epithet such as wise, cunning and so on. So also Vyasa does. Though the animal fable is not directly used, we do meet epithets like the lion, the fox etc., which must have been originated in the stock of epithets emerging from the fable. The genius of the poet might have expressly humanised in the characters of these heroes, but the
recognition of a class seems to have been with the origins of the animal fable.

On the other hand, the humanisation of the animals through the social relationships is the more dominant impulse. For example, the Lion demanding every day an animal for its food is clearly a reflection of a human quality, super imposed on the totally non-political existence of the animals. This super imposition could be described as the second stage in the development of the animal fable.

Thus a well meaning friend may not be able to help a person because of the person's own stupidity. Two birds decide to take a Tortoise from a dead lake to another more pleasant one - as an act of friendship. They hold a stick in between their beaks and the Tortoise hangs to the stick holding it with its mouth. The Tortoise is amazed by the aerial decency and exclaims something. But before its poetic words are uttered, it has slipped down to the ground and is smashed to the jelly. The aim of the story is that even friends cannot help a fool. But here the foolish Tortoise assumes a quality more than the confirmed fool like the Donkey.
This poetic overtone is the highest that an animal tale can achieve. The limitations imposed by its brevity has its compensating advantages. Even the kindness of the cranes throw to cruelty because they have taken the tortoise into an environment which does not belong to them. Such a quality has the justness of George Eliot. Silas Marner has lost his gold, but he gets back the golden locks of an orphan child, lying on the place where he had hid his gold. The girl was a burden to her mother; she now fills in the vacuum in Silas' life. The only difference between the 'justness' of the tortoise story and that of Silas Marner is the crudity of the animal fable. Its symbolism is unconscious; George Eliot's conscious. But probably this might be interpreted as its strength. The brevity of the animal fable leaves much ground for readers' imagination, which is an advantage.

The style of the Panchatantra is very simple indeed. The prose that is used for the main story is simple and is without unnecessary details. So the
story is told within the very limited words possible. And the verse is used for summing up the general statement and the illustration, which is narrated in the story. These verses are mnemonic in character and thus they can be by-hearted for quoting them as when occasion arises. It is thus because of the simplicity that the Panchatantra and the Hitopadesa are taught to the beginners of Sanskrit language. "The Hitopadesa," says Peterson, "has been, and will long continue to be the book most commonly put in the hands of a beginner in Sanskrit." 25 And "owing to its merit," says Macdonnel, "the (Hitopadesa) is one of the best known and most popular works of Sanskrit literature in India, and because of its suitability for teaching purposes, is read by nearly all beginners of Sanskrit in England." 26.

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It will now be seen that the Panchatantra is a work of art, or kavya. And "kavya means," says A.K. Warder, "as a form of art." Mamata says:

"काव्यम् यशोद्यण्यकृतम् मन्त्रविपलेव नित्तितन्रदाते।
सवं पदविनवतः काव्यासामि तत्सैपूजः॥"

which means: "Poetry is for bringing fame to the poet, bringing him money for imparting knowledge of vyavahara or worldly transactions, for the removal of what is not auspicious, for the highest bliss and for advice as if coming from a beloved woman." Each and every one of the characteristics enumerated in the verse can be seen in the Panchatantra.

The Panchatantra has already brought fame or success to those who understand the lessons taught therein and follow its teachings. It did certainly bring money and opulence to those who follow its teachings now; it teaches us how to attain success in our dealings with the world. One characteristic of the Panchatantra is that though it appears to be solely concerned with worldly wisdom, it is soundly based on a deep faith in God and the Karma theory.

which says that meritorious acts or *punya* will always bring happiness; and sinful acts unhappiness; thus the *Panchatantra* is meant for removal of the insausicious, though it does not teach directly the way to attain the heaven or the *noksha*, yet in many lessons it says that *tapas* would give one *noksha* or parshuriti or highest happiness.

The *Panchatantra* says:

> शैताण्डकारणि मही हनि लोकः।
> जनाय चाली चलापम मधि यस्मिन सुरभी।

which means: "If a man were to suffer part of the hardships such as exposure to cold or heat and the like, which he (as a servant) undergoes for the acquisition of wealth, he would be free from the terrors of worldly existence (he would get *noksha*)." 29

The *Panchatantra* is pervaded by the *Karma* theory. Man's life on this earth is only one of his many lives. This life is conditioned by the past lives and what we have done in those lives. If one has committed *sin*, punishments for them may come in this life and there is a distinction made between

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Motilal Banarsidass, *death, death, Jata's vehicle, in court, and its concealment*.}

---
what is a punishment according to the law of karma and what is a punishment inflicted by the king and his laws on account of ... offence.

According to the thought, some things are both sins and offences. The king may punish the offences but the God punishes for the sins we commit. The law of karma works in a mysterious way. This idea never comes in Aesop.

The verse

which means: "In this revolving world (where birth and death, follow each other in rotation) who, I should like to know, that dies is not born again? He is counted (regarded) as born in this world, who outshines (others in) his family?" is based on the fundamental philosophical doctrine of Karma in which every Hindu believes. Every man that is dead is reborn again either as an animal or a person or an insect etc., Every living being that is born dies. So the soul goes round this Samsara or world from birth to death and from death to birth again. These births and deaths are for giving a soul a life and body for the enjoyment

30. *Ibid* Verse 1.27.
of rewards for the past good actions or karmas, and to suffer punishments for past bad actions or sins.

The Verse

विद्याः विभूति भिज्युः सुमेधुः परिपतिताः।
कृपास्वयं विद्यायाः सुमेधुः तिर्यकाः प्रतिपादाः॥

which means: "Even the fair, always borne on the hearth and treated with oil, turns gray if deprived of the oil; how should not servants then be alienated if not treated with affection (previously) ever greatly honoured and treated affectionately." 31 Vishnusharma, the author of the Panchatantra, gives the ground for his belief in luck or fate. A man loses a small thing or does not do anything at all. But sometimes he gets an infinitely great reward or punishment. He believes that luck or fate does not work arbitrarily or haphazardly. The lucky man who has done something good in this previous birth and gets reward of it in this birth; or if the man has done an evil action in a previous birth and gets the punishment for it in the form of a fatal accident. Thus the

31 Ibid. Verse 1.82. Tr. by P. R. Kale.
belief of Vishnu Sharma in fate or luck is a rational one and not a superstitious. It is based on his assumption that the Universe in which we live is governed by moral law and that every act of us has a moral value and reward or punishment.

But it must be noted here that Vishnu Sharma is a believer in both fate and effort. He says that we must do our efforts till the end and the result is governed by the fate or karma. Thus when the hunter in the story at the beginning of the second section casts his net, and catches some birds, the birds flew away with the net. The hunter tried to get his net, but in vain. Then he says:

\[ \text{च हि भविष्यो भावनाय भक्ति यथा करत यथासि हि जयथासि} \]

which means: "What is not to happen can never take place; and what is destined to take place comes to pass though no effort be made (for it). What is destined to be (remained in one's possession) passes away even though lying on the palm of the hand (so sure in one's possession)." 

32. \text{Ibid.}
Therefore, the Panchatantra is mainly based on the Karma theory according to which the soul is immortal and is always in search of pleasure and happiness. This search is made in a world which is essentially moral and ethical and awards pleasure or happiness to the soul for a good act, or punya done by it or a punishment for morally bad act done by it. This law of karma mainly works in the soul in its life as man or is embodied in a human body. And this karma law works especially in this life on this earth. The earth is, therefore, called the karmabhumi—field of karma.

The life of the soul as being a superior in pleasure or happiness is called the life of the Devas or the gods in heaven and life inferior to that of a human being in pleasure and happiness is the life of souls in various regions of hell and of the beasts and birds and insects in this world.

The soul has certain faculties which always are with it potentially and sometimes and
and normally in full operation, but sometimes in defective operation. The soul is said to have desire and the faculty to hear the sounds from it and the faculty to taste the various substances in it, and the faculty to touch them. These five faculties are called the Jhamendriyas or the faculties of obtaining knowledge of the external world. When the faculties are further developed we get the power of imagination, and remembrance and we can imagine tastes, smells and touches etc., which are not in the present but which we want to have or avoid in the future.

Besides these, the souls have (got) five faculties of karma or action namely:

1. Speech
2. Locomotion
3. The faculty of seeing things
4. The faculty of excreting things from the body undesirable or waste matter and
5. The faculty of enjoyment.

The soul transmigrates from one body to the other, from one life to the other, with all these faculties. Even the gods have got these faculties.
and no more and likewise the lowest worm. Therefore, the manifestation of life in heaven and in the lowest hell are essentially of the same nature.

This makes the life of human beings and gods and lower animals essentially of the same nature. But it is said that the life of man has one special characteristic namely its search for proff and action according to Dharma or highest conception of moral and religious duty. It is said that this alone distinguishes man from other manifestations of life.

So it is said that the search for food fear and sexual copulations are common for all life to both to men and beasts. But man has got a distinguishing and an additional character namely dharma.

Now this dharma has the opposite tendency to that of the jnanendriyas and karmendriyas which seek only momentary pleasure and relief. Dharma is meant to control these lower faculties.

But what happens when man is in conflict between dharma and the lower faculties is interesting. In a truly religious character, dharma always conquers
and controls and lower faculties. But this conquest and control are not of a permanent character and from time to time religious soul also succumbs to the onslaughts of the attractions of the lower faculties. Some times if the intellect is not very clear, dharma becomes superstitious and for a religious man it is very difficult to distinguish in some instances from a superstitious man.

There are a number of stories in the Panohatantra in which the influence of karma or fate is discussed at length. But fate is such a subtle thing that we cannot say whether our efforts conquer our fate. People who are convinced of the supremacy of fate argue that it is the fate that decides and directs our efforts.

In the Vasishtha, the question of fate vs. effort is taken up and discussed at length. Vasishtha comes to the conclusion that the fate and effort are not entirely distinct things. One effort and the will behind it, as manifested and exercised in our past lives with its tendencies in the present...
in the present life, are called fate and that our efforts in this present life are called Purushakara or Paurusha. Vashishta says that our past actions and tendencies are our fate and our present efforts against it are our Paurusha and that when adverse to each other, they are like two he-sheeps fighting each other and that the less powerful of them succumbs.

Some of the following verses can be given as examples in defence of the karma theory in the Panchatantra:

1. नामाभ्यो न ते न मद्व के मधुः
   प्रवाहं प्रवते च युगायनांकां

which means "A man gets the fruits of his own karma and not the fruits of another's karma." 33

This is the principle of the (great) karma theory. A man is responsible for all of his actions and not for the actions of anybody else. It seems to be a depressing theory and, therefore, makes a man helpless.

But the very word Karma, action, shows that the karma and its fruits are due to the actions willed by the man and the actions are within the control of a strong will. The Karma theory, therefore, is an invitation to a man to put forth his best and strenuous efforts to obtain his own happiness.

2. कर्म के अर्थों भविष्य भविष्य विनाश है गते।
कर्तव्यसमयं जनस्यं नस्य है भविष्यता

which means: "What is not to happen can never take place; and what is destined to take place comes to pass as though no effort be made (for it). What is not destined to be (remain in one's possession) passes away even though lying on the palm of the hand (so sure in one's possession.)."

34. Ibid. II. 10
The teaching of Vishnusharma is fundamentally that the karma law is a moral law, which excretes itself and which can never be evaded. He teaches that good actions take us after our death to heaven and before our death bring us pleasure and happiness, and that bad actions bring unhappiness in this world and take us to hell after our death.

All our worldly wisdom is subject to this inevitable moral law of karma. Vishnusharma's teaching is, therefore, that our worldly wisdom should never lead to immoral acts though they seem to be profitable at present. A good illustration of this is the incident in the story of Chitragreeva in the Mitrasampraktikam. Chitragreeva and its flock of followers are caught in a hunter's net and they go to Hiranyaka, Chitragreeva's mouse-friend, and ask it to cut with its teeth the net and free them. Hiranyaka proceeds to cut that part of the net which is holding the king Chitragreeva. But the king says that Hiranyaka should cut that part of the net which is holding its servants - the other pigeons first - and after that only cut the part which holds Chitragreeva himself. Now this is against worldly
wisdom. It dictates that one should first of all should care for his own safety and then for the safety of others. Chitragreeva asking that the part of net binding him should be cut later is acting against the counsel of worldly wisdom of self-preservation. Therefore, Hinranyaka gets angry and reminds Chitragreeva of worldly wisdom and that self-preservation is the first duty of a master and that the safety of the servants comes only in the second place.

But Chitragreeva does not accept this advice. It points out that it was a master of the other pigeons, which were its servants. These servants had followed him leaving behind them their wives and children in the nests. If while cutting the net of Chitragreeva, the mouse happens to break the teeth, it may not be able to cut the nets holding the other pigeons. And it may also happen that while yet the mouse is engaged in cutting Chitragreeva's net, the hunter might turn up and catch all the birds. Chitragreeva does not finish his argument at this stage. This argument does not go against the maxim of worldly wisdom of self-preservation first.
Chitragreeva refers to the karma law and points out that good actions lead to heaven and bad ones lead us to hell. This goodness and badness of actions is not to be determined merely by worldly wisdom and expediency. It depends on the moral law which says that in case of necessity we have to sacrifice all selfishness and self-preservation and sacrifice ourselves for the good of others. This is the ultimate argument and worldly wisdom cannot meet it. The others here means ones own people and relatives and does not include enemies. Vishnu Sharma does not believe in world brotherhood. This world may contain some friends for us, but mostly contains indifferent people and also of enemies. As against these indifferent people and enemies, self-preservation and worldly wisdom is to be followed. Such following of worldly wisdom is not against the moral law.

But so far as our own people are concerned, worldly wisdom must give way to the dictates of morality. This is illustrated by Chitragreeva's conduct on this occasion. The great quality of faithfulness and confidence between master and servants, between the king and the subjects is illustrated by taking the instance of the
two kings. The elephant may be a king of a herd of elephants and there is confidence and faith between them and the elephants live in groups following their leader. The lion is also a king of all the beasts but there is no confidence or faith or love and the lion does not live with groups of beasts following it.