

**Power Conflict in Vishnu Sharma's *Panchtantra* ”**

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**ABSTRACT :**

Power is natural instinct found in every human being and in animals also. Power pioneers conflict because persons who are powerless are jealous towards the powerful. Due to instinctive desire of getting authority of power any how the conflict is created. *Panchtantra* by Vishnu Sharma is a book on 'niti' which focuses on political matters and ethics aptly deals with power and conflict. It is said that power can corrupt to the uttermost level. Humans who have power are seen often misusing it for their personal matters. This world has power as its base and it is run by those who wield it. *Panchtantra* can be seen and analyzed from this angle.

Key words: conflict, power, jealous, misusing etc.

Power represents ability to get things done to achieve goal and to have influence over others .Abraham Kaplan describes power in the book, “Power and Conflict in organizations” that “ The most general sense which can be attached to the notion of power is that it marks the ability of one person or group of persons to influential the behavior of others ” (12).

Power has always a purpose to exercise it whether deliberately, consciously or unconsciously. Power is a motivation, It springs from goals and in turn helps to redefine or shape one's goal. There are some tacit or unexpressed values that are commonly involved in the exercise of power. These values compel us directly and inevitably to enter in to the process of power. Ian Robertson in the book “Principle of Sociology ” describes the power as “ Power is the capacity to participate effectively in the decision making process” (135). Power helps in processing decisions and is embedded in all sort

of organizational structures, whether they are business firms, schools government offices or religious places.

P. K. Mohanty quotes the definition of conflict in his book *A text book of political sociology* rendered by Gillin and Gillin as “Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek this ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or by threat of violence “ ( 46).

The conflict is pioneered by the desire of power .Though such conflict is considered as negative thought but it is not negative every time. Sometimes for healthy competition conflict is required in human life. C N Shankar Rao in his Book *Principles of sociology* quotes Marx on conflict who regards “conflict as normal, not an abnormal process ” and he believes that “The existing conditions in any society contain the seeds of future social changes”( 731).

Vishnu Sharma's *Panchtantra* didactic note focussed on 'niti' to teach the art of successful life based on wit and wisdom. It is based on situation of teaching politics to four princess of the Kingdom '*Mahilaropya* . A successful leader needs wisdom in order to run his kingdom successfully. So wisdom and knowledge is necessary for a King. The *Panchantra* was authored by Vishnu Sharma in 200 BC .It contains total Five Books , Book- one titled as “The Loss of Friends”, Book- two ”The Winning of Friends”,Book- three “Crows and Owls”, Book- four “Loss of Gain” and Book- five “Ill-Considerd Action”.

The Book one of *Panchtantra*, deals with the conflict arising out of desire of power between the jackals 'Victors' and 'Cheek' and the bull 'Lively'. The crisis of power was cause of conflict between them. The cunning approach of jackal brought the fatal end for the bull by creating friction in friendship between the lion and the bull. Proving its significance the book one has been named as “Loss of Friend”. Intelligence and knowledge are keys to adherence of power ,not only in politics but also in social, religious and economical perspective. The importance and value of money power in society has been emphasized through different stories .A person with riches is honoured in the society, no matter if he lacks in skill. This shows the value of money in human life. Ryder in his book “The complete *Panchtantra* 'writes “Whom fortune does not render pride” (Ryder 47) .This shows how money gives pride and strength to a

person and the value of money power in human in human life. The *Panchtantra* preaches that the authority of power should be obeyed and worshipped like deities so to maintain discipline and harmony in the society. Power attracts human beings because the respect lies in the hierarchy of power. A person in high hierarchy levels respected by the society, while the state of powerlessness makes a person like dead and are not given respect even by their own relatives and society or friends. Vishnu Sharma's *Panchtantra* deals with 'niti' and wisdom of life and ethics for leaders also so to run kingdom successfully. The aspects of *Panchtantra* is very versatile that it bore the subjects of modern world as ecocriticism with the combination of epics mythology. The influences and importance of power and the inevitable situation created due to need of power leads a person to achieve power consciously or unconsciously.

The Book II of *Panchtantra* teaches people the importance of the strength and power of integrity and value of wit and wisdom. The power of wit and intelligence of a leader takes him on peak of hierarchy and make him respectful in society. The *Panchtantra* preaches to make friendship with reliable and trustworthy persons (friends) because a loyal and witty friend is like a rescuer for his friend in all pitfalls of his life. Chandiramani writes in his book "Pandit Vishnu Sharma's *Panchtantra* "about the significance and importance of a true and loyal friend. It says as:

"When you are rich  
All men are your friends  
But when calamity strikes  
Only a true friend stands for you" (112).

These lines have been voiced through the character Turtle 'Mantharaka' to teach the lesson of wisdom and true friendship between the mouse and the crow 'Laghupatanaka'. It enhances the strong bonding of friendship between the turtle and the crow. A true and loyal friend is always ready to help his friend whenever he is in difficult situation and is always ready to sacrifice himself for the cause and benefit of his friend irrespective of his richness or poverty. A true friend is one whose friendship grows deeper and deeper day by day while the friendship of bad people results in vain. The book -two "The Winning of friend" images money like a source of energy for human beings. It says :

“A snake without fangs  
And a man without money,  
Merely exist” (Chandiramani 105 ).

These lines have been given in reference to the situation where a indocile mouse ‘Gold’, who used to eat all grains kept in alm-bowl of the saint Crop-Ear hanging high on a wall .The mouse would come and jump to reach bowl and eat all the grains there. The saint’s friend Wide-Bottom realized the miraculous power of mouse was his treasure and the strength of family and his community . He solved this problem by digging all the wealth from the hole of the mouse .As soon as the treasure was taken away by the saint Wide-Bottom , the members of the community of the mouse ‘Gold’ left him and all the strength of the mouse was drained away and he became weak. The saying goes as;

“The wealthy men are men of force  
And they are scholars all, of course:  
The mouse who lost his wealthy store,  
Is now a mouse and nothing more” (Ryder 195).

The power of money makes a person rude and as soon as money is lost the person loses all his energy ,wit ,wisdom and meet his fatal end.

The book- three “Crows and Owls” is about various war strategies, to get victory over the enemy and shows the political conflict between two dreaded enemies the crows and the owls. The war strategies and the usefulness of a counsellor and the power of his wit ,loyalty and diplomacy to save his Kingdom by giving right advice to his king is the main theme of Book -three.The book three of *Panchtantra* enhances the true quality of a leader and states that a true leader should be intelligent enough to deal adverse situations to save his citizens and country or kingdom. The twenty -six types of ‘functionaries’ have been mentioned who could be subjugated to win a war without using a physical weapon. The role of spies gives strength and security and adds power to a Kingdom. The saying goes as “The King well served by his spies who knows the functionaries of his foes, who knows his retinue no less, is never plunged in deep distress” (Ryder 245).

The preaching was rendered by saint 'Narada' to the 'Pandava 'King Fight-Arm(Yudishthir) in the epic *Mahabharata*. The practical wisdom taught by 'Narada' which is useful for every king or monarch to get victory over enemy through the help of loyal counselors and the spies.

Book -four of' *Panchtantra* titled as "Loss of Gain" shows the consequences of false friendship between people of different creeds .The story " The Potter Militant" is a good example of conflict between chivalry and the cowardliness and how genes and creed helps in shaping the personality, behaviour and attitude of an individual. The crocodile lost his wise friend monkey due to his disloyalty and lack of wisdom. It also renders moral and teaches value of being loyal towards friends, family ,society and country.

Book –five titled as "Ill-considered action" renders the consequences of the action done in haste by the people without analyzing the result. The killing of loyal mongoose by the wife of Brahmin 'Goldly' in the story, "The Loyal Mongoose" is very good example of action done without knowing the fact leads a person in difficulty and leaves for repentance. The story "Three Breasted Princess" show the gender conflict between the male and female. The humour and comedy has also been introduced in *Panchtantra* in the story "The Musical Donkey" .The story shows the wit of jackal that creates humour in the text by making the sarcasm on donkey's vocal music. *Panchtantra* is found to be one of the greatest treaties on political science and human conduct. It consists of deep insight and wisdom of human life. *Panchtantra* is a complete book of power and conflicts,in which the animal characters have been given voice to teach wit and wisdom to live peaceful and harmonious life.

K.S.Srinivasan aptly points out about it, " *Panchtantra* Tales from *Panchtantra* ,Kathasamsatgra,and Brihatkatha are as much part of the National psyche" (qtd in Mani Meitei, 205).

## **Conclusion**

Pachtantra though an animal fable can be compared with humans and same chracteristics can be found in humans as do we find in animals. Its style is very unique

and diction applied is simple but different. Its author has tried his level best to tell us the tale of animals in a style that is appreciable and much comprehensible.

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